

TRAINING THE VITAL KEY TO SUCCESS IN BUSINESS



Stella Adams

"The key to a successful business is training" said Mrs. Stella Adams, the new Personnel Director.

She feels that much of the training can be done 'on the floor' by qualified instructors, but it is important to ensure that time is given 'off the floor' for subjects that require concentration.

"The training of part-time staff is particularly important. They have a vital part to play in our business and we should make a special effort to fit training into their varied hours."

Management training and development is essential in the growth of any company and this is an area on which she will concentrate during the coming months.

Communication is another important aspect of modern business. Much has already been done to improve communication through Management and Staff Advisory Councils. The continued improvement of communications is an on-going project.

Mrs. Adams is no stranger to the Company. In 1964 she joined the Southampton store as Staff Office Supervisor and was later made Personnel Manager. Before leaving Owen Owen in 1972 to join Broadbents of Southport, Mrs. Adams transferred to Stafford House as Personnel Controller.

After five years with Broadbents as Personnel Manager, Mrs. Adams felt it was time to change, and looking towards a career with a larger company, she joined F.W. Woolworth as Regional Personnel Officer in the Liverpool Region.

Her area ranged from Crewe to Stornaway, the whole of Ireland and the Isle of Man, covering 250 stores and 15,000 staff.

REINFORCED

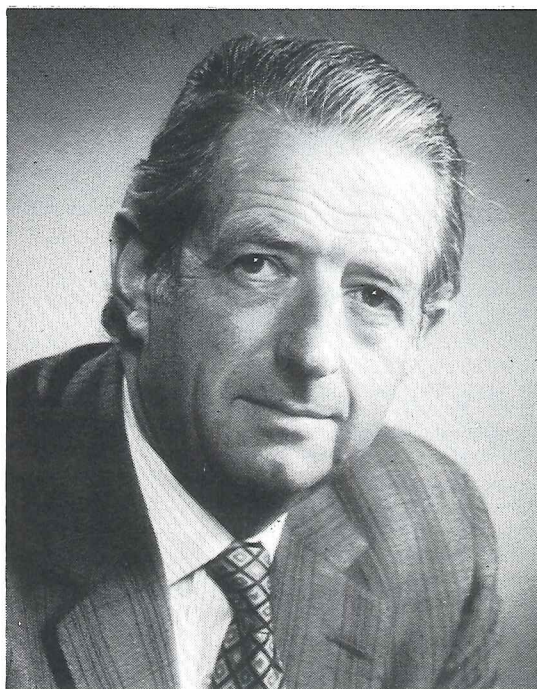
That was in 1977. Nearly two years later, Mrs. Adams returned to Owen Owen to take on the duties of Personnel Director.

She says of her new position, "I feel that the time spent with other companies has reinforced my view that this company is highly professional with highly professional management".

Mrs. Adams and her husband have lived in a flat in Blundellsands since they first moved to Liverpool. She says the view across the Mersey to Birkenhead reminds her of the view across the Solent to Fawley.

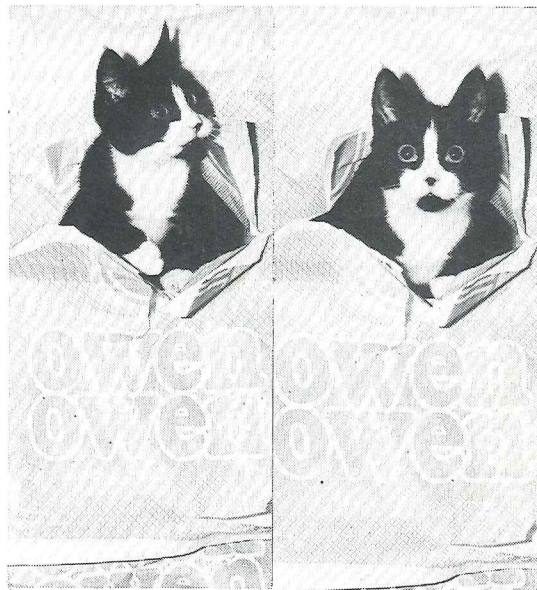
Among her interests are collecting button hooks and crocheting. She finds the latter very relaxing. Her husband is an avid collector of cigarette cards.

SALES SMASH £100m MARK



Mr. J.A.H. Norman, Chairman.

"Purrfectly" at home in Richmond



Meet Owen and Owen, twin kittens who seem "purrfectly" at home in front of the camera.

The cuddlesome twosome are owned by a customer of our Richmond store who named them after the company. A full feature on our Richmond store appears inside.

Group sales in the year to January 27, 1979 of £102,461,000 exceeded £100,000,000 for the first time and represented an increase of 18.2% on the previous year.

Group profit, before taking account of the Hudson's Bay share in Robinson's profits and of extraordinary profits on property sales, amounted to £2,948,000, an increase of 21.6% on the previous year.

Sales and pre-tax profits contributed by the three main businesses (and including Slough and Uxbridge from June 1978) were as follows:-

	Year to Jan. 1979	Year to Jan. 1978	Inc./Dec.	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Sales				
U.K. Stores	68,219	57,584	+10,635	+ 18.5
Canadian Stores	28,629	26,457	+ 2,172	+ 8.2
Plumb Contracts	5,613	2,676	+ 2,937	+109.8
	102,461	86,717	+15,744	+ 18.2
Profits				
U.K. Stores	2,075	1,695	+380	+ 22.4
Canadian Stores	546	662	-116	- 17.5
Plumb Contracts	327	67	+260	+388.1
	2,948	2,424	+524	+ 21.6

●The breakdown of the Chairman's Statement to shareholders continues on Page Two.

Holidays and cash to be won

Fantastic prizes are being offered for winners in this year's merchandise promotion competitions. Continental holidays for two will be awarded to the successful general manager and central buyer, and two weeks' additional salary for the sales manager and staff.

Seven departments, with potential for increased sales and profitability, have been chosen for the competition. Special attention, leading to improved merchandise presentation and sales growth, will be given to: Lingerie, Ladies' Knitwear, Young Owen, Furnishing Fabrics, Kitchenware, Toys/Electronics, and Gifts/Home Gifts.

Both Electronics and Home Gifts are new departments. It is hoped that the micro-chip revolution will greatly boost the develop-

ment of our electronic games and toys.

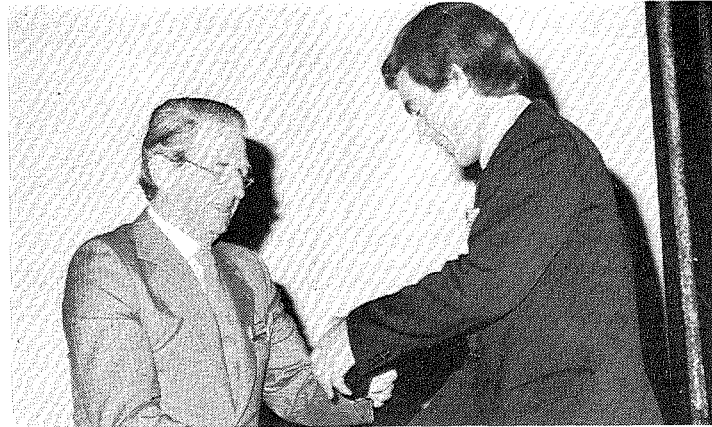
Two other competitions offering trips to New York, are being staged for general managers. 'Establishing a Kitchen Concept' is one theme, and judges will be looking for the best interpretation of an integrated kitchen, with the emphasis on visual display. The winner will spend a week's holiday studying American merchandise techniques in department stores.

A similar prize will be awarded to the general manager who has established the best Gift, Toy and Christmas stationary department in the Autumn half-year.



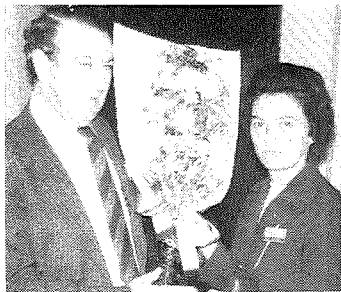
Tom Brent, general manager of Chester Store was recently presented with the Chairman's Award. Since his appointment to Chester in 1973, Mr. Brent has successfully fought off competition from another department store to ensure that Owen Owen is still number one.

Mr. Brent joined the company, as a salesman, in 1948 and became a sales manager in Southampton in 1950. He later held management posts in merchandising and buying before becoming a general manager in 1971. He is pictured receiving the award from the Chairman.



Central buyer of Dresses, Richard Bedingfield (right), receiving the Buyer's Award from the Chairman. The Dress department has been most successful since Mr. Bedingfield joined the company in 1976.

Gold watch for Brenda



Brenda Gibson in Chester was recently presented with a gold watch to mark her 25 years with the company.

Brenda, who is sales manager of the Linen department, originally worked for Richard Jones in Chester, which was acquired by Owen Owen in 1960.

Miss Gibson is pictured with Chester's General Manager Mr. Tom Brent.

FROM CANADA

'BEARLY' WORTH THE EFFORT...

Did you hear the one about the polar bears that spent New Year's Day in a Canadian Hospital Casualty department?

It all started because they both wanted to become ruling Polar Bear King.

Around the icy waters of Lake Ontario gather a group of devout swimming fanatics called the Polar Bears. The swimmers — all members of this exclusive club — compete annually for the title of "king" by enduring the freezing temperatures for as long as they can.

The favourite with the G.W. Robinson store was Donald Jones, a truck driver with the Hamilton-Fruitland warehouse. Don aimed to outdo the reigning "king" Freddy Sless — and he did it — with a win of two minutes, 21 seconds.

But Don's body didn't take too kindly to the battle. He blacked out and hit a telegraph pole while driving home.

While Don was tended in Hamilton Casualty, defeated Freddy attempted his revenge, and managed

to endure 20 minutes, two seconds in the lake, second time around.

But the lack of white fluffy fur also told on this aspiring Polar Bear "king", and Freddy staggered to Hamilton Casualty where he was treated for exposure.

The nurses are still trying to work out whether the menacing noise of teeth was just frozen chattering or continued rivalry.

Both Don and Fred are warm and well now and feel the whole episode was bearily worth it.

Bryant paddles for the top

Bryant Stage may be conquering Canadian waters later this summer, if he's chosen to represent Britain in the World Canoe Championships.

Bryant, who works as a joiner, has been with Plumb Contracts for six months.

Two months preparation is needed for the competition and Bryant is grateful to Plumb Contracts for allowing him this time off work.

A typical training day involves rising at 6 a.m. and doing an hour's

jog before breakfast, followed by a day of weightlifting, swimming and canoe practice, and an early night!

By the age of eight Bryant's canoe mania had set in. He admitted: "My intrepid attitude nearly lost me my first canoe, but I soon learnt my lesson".

He progressed through school and regional canoe teams, becoming a part-time instructor at a Welsh outdoor pursuits centre at the age of 18. Now 24, Bryant hopes to make his mark in the international world of canoeing.

From page 1

£100m record breaker

High level of investment

During the year the group spent £2.4 million on the acquisition of Slough and Uxbridge, £1.4 million on fitting out the new T.J. Hughes store in Birkenhead and the new Robinson store in North Waterloo and in modernising other stores. A further £1 million was needed to maintain our working capital — retail stocks, financing customer credit etc., — to meet inflation and general growth. So £4.8 million was invested in the future.

The following are extracts from the Chairman's Statement to shareholders on the year's trading:

U.K. STORES

"We had hoped that the full year's profits would have been higher, following the excellent first half. However, consumer spending lost its momentum in the autumn months, and although this was largely recovered during the buoyant pre-Christmas weeks, we then experienced the worst January in memory with strikes and weather disrupting normal shopping habits.

"In June we acquired Suters Limited following a negotiated settlement with members of the Suter family. Profits earned since acquisition were sufficient to cover interest charges on the purchase price, and thus met the targets we set ourselves during the first trading year of a new acquisition.

"In last year's report I referred to the developments we intended to make in physical distribution. During September, the Torrington Avenue warehouse in Coventry became the main distribution centre for all midland stores, thus concentrating the labour-intensive receiving and price-making procedure under one roof and releasing space and resources in the six stores for more productive use.

"In the Coventry store alone, some 16,000 sq. ft. on the fourth



Mr. T. Doyle — Managing Director of Plumb Contracts

floor has been progressively turned into selling area. During the current year, distribution in the northern region will come on to a similar footing, using the Bootle warehouse as the distribution centre, and a start will be made in the South-east where the warehouse acquired with the Suter business is fortunately well-suited to serve the stores in that region.

"The physical distribution of goods has to be supported by an equally effective information system to control merchandise inventory. In this area also we have seen many changes, and we are developing a computer-based purchase order system supported by electronic cash registers at the point of sale.

"By the end of 1979, all clothing departments in Owen Owen stores will be equipped with these cash registers and their optical character readers which will transmit the sales data from the price ticket into the machine at one stroke. The result will be a quicker transaction at the point of sale for customer and sales assistant and accurate information for the buyer on fast selling lines."

G.W. ROBINSON

"The value of the Canadian \$ continued to fall against sterling

making Robinson's \$ sales and \$ profits worth less in Sterling. The Canadian economy remained depressed. The new stores, still in their development stage, had an adverse impact on profitability.

"Against this background, Canadian management performance is the more creditable and I should like to reaffirm confidence in them. The six established stores all improved their dollar profitability, but not sufficiently to cover the expected losses in its first full year of Niagara Falls nor the first five months trading in North Waterloo and its pre-opening expenses".

PLUMB CONTRACTS LIMITED

"Plumb's had an excellent year — indeed, an exceptional one — with profits on certain overseas contracts being taken into account in addition to the contributions from a much enlarged level of shop-fitting work in the U.K. It is unlikely that this result can be matched in the current year unless significant overseas work is obtained, but we hope to see a continuing improvement in the U.K. performance."

FUTURE OUTLOOK

"Your Board's retailing strategy in both the U.K. and in Canada has been to create two self-supporting chains of department stores with strong market penetration in their trading areas.

"In the U.K., this has largely been achieved by acquisition and regeneration of old-established businesses in prime high street sites. In Canada, in partnership with the Hudson's Bay Company, it has been done by opening large new stores in newly-built shopping centres.

"Last year's changes and the programme for further new stores referred to in this statement bring these objectives to reality. Management's prime task is now to achieve an equally realistic profit performance from the sound base established in both countries."

Footnote: Unfortunately, Scene had gone to print before receiving news of how Bryant fared.

STAFF TRAINING MOVES WITH THE TIMES



Anne Crawshaw Group Training Manager

Staff training, like everything else these days, is becoming more and more sophisticated and mechanised. Yet nothing can replace the vital human influence and experience – of the Training Officers and Instructors.

The old method of 'sitting next to Nellie' to watch and learn is still widely-used, together with modern training methods.

Group Training Manager, Mrs. Anne Crawshaw feels that if "Nellie" herself is properly qualified to instruct, it can still be an excel-

But 'Nellie' still has a big part to play

lent training method, for Nellie then knows both her own job and how to teach it.

Anne, who reports to Personnel Director, Mrs. Stella Adams, has been the Group Training Manager for almost three years now, and has spent five years with the company.

Anne has been in retailing all her working life. She joined Owen as a store trainer in Chester before taking on the duties of Personnel Manager. She then moved to head office, while still living in Chester where she hopes to stay.

Aided by her secretary Janet Buckley, and working with the Training Officers, she is responsible for co-ordinating all the training of personnel, ensuring consistency in methods and keeping up the high standard.

The age of technology is catching up with retailing, and with the type of equipment in use today, detailed instruction is vital for all staff.

Even in the Training Department methods and equipment are changing.

Says Anne, "The presentation style of chalk and talk are limited. Participation is vital and visual aids are a must. We now use overhead projectors, video films, blackboards

and flip charts to name but a few aids."

Equipment, essential as it is, can have its drawbacks, like the time when all the overhead projector fuses blew, and another time when a film, being viewed by the Chairman, was so worn it was difficult to show.

ENCOURAGED

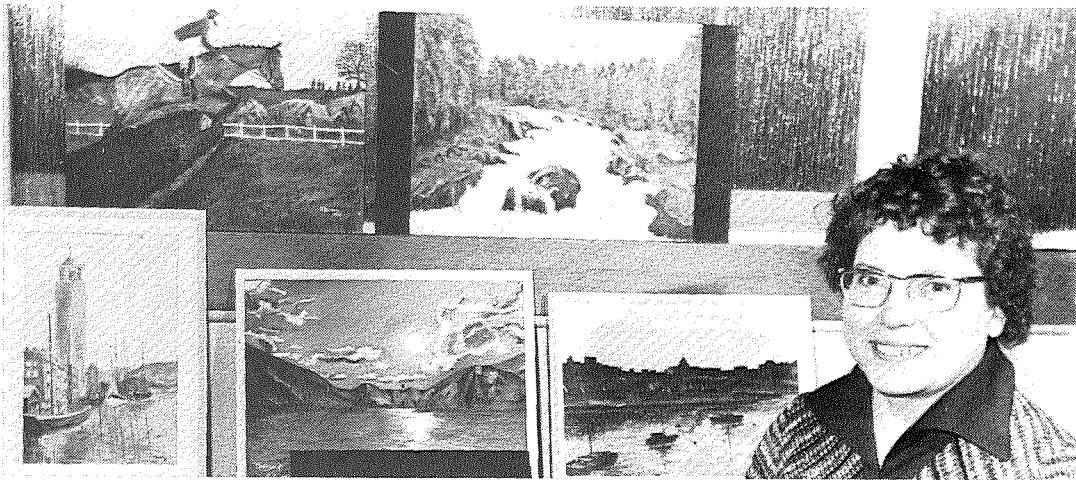
The training year for courses starts in February and continues until the end of October. After that it's flat out for the Christmas rush.

Young recruits are not only taught the basics of business; the cash registers and stock systems but are also encouraged to go on day release courses relevant to the development of their job and the company.

One of the Group Training Managers' duties is to set and mark the annual Proficiency Test, which is held in May and aimed at developing staff potential.

In-store training is carried out by instructors who have attended a course on Instructional Techniques. Said Anne, "At the end of the training courses, members are encouraged to give a frank evaluation of the course and this enables us to plan and improve training each year."

PUTTING JOSIE IN THE PICTURE



Josie Blundell is well-known as the artist who painted the pictures which adorn the walls of the Bootle Centre stockroom, yet she has had no formal training. She became interested six years ago, and since then has taught herself from books.

Section Head in the stockroom, Josie enjoys using oils, or etching on scraper boards. She has received plenty of praise for her talent, but prefers not to sell her work. She gives paintings to her friends and family – as far away as America!

TOP SECURITY AWARD FOR QUICK ACTING THELMA

Sales assistant, Mrs. Thelma Morgan leapt into action when she saw someone beating a hasty exit from Clayton Square – complete with a bulging black bin liner.

Shouting for assistance she pursued the suspect across the Square and seconds later spotted the person trying to hide in a taxi.

Without a second thought, she placed herself in front of the vehicle and refused to move. Her cries for help were answered when two plain clothes officers emerged from a crowd and took the suspect into custody.

And later, the heroine of Clayton Square's Lingerie Department was rewarded for her quick-thinking when she received the Company Award for security, the Walter Gittings Security Shield.

Mrs. Morgan's actions resulted in the recovery of nearly £200 worth of dressing gowns.

She shared the limelight with security-conscious store detectives – Mrs. Scott from Slough and Mrs. Mackay from Uxbridge and sales manager in Weston-super-Mare, Mrs. Jean Romeo, they all received thanks and rewards for their efforts.

Mrs. Morgan is pictured receiving the shield from the Chairman.



Brighton's winning ways

Brighton store rounded up a winning mixed football team for their spring match against the local Boots the Chemists.

The final score was 3 – 1 to Owen Owen, the scorers being Karen Gillespie and Tony Davis.

The team consisted – (back row, left to right): Roger Farnell, David Barnes, Martin Dexter, Tony Davis, Rob Stein, Paul Weller; Front row: Tina Edwards, Sue Vincent, Karen Gillespie, Debbie Lucas, Simon Hookway.

Suddenly they are all going soccer crazy

They've gone football crazy at Plumb Contracts and now boast a complete league of in-store six-a-side teams.

A few friendly five-a-side matches started the ball rolling. Then everyone wanted to play. Before long, a league of department teams formed, playing matches once a week for the season.

And now it seems everyone wants to win – in fact their goal is to win the championship shield which was made at the works.

The most fearless fanatic of the group is referee Black Belt Squires,

who has appeared faithfully to keep an eagle eye on the unscrupulous players.

And although at first he had to tackle an outbreak of shin-kicking, we're happy to say that's been kicked into touch . . . and replaced with the skills of soccer.

With their new-found confidence Plumbs extend an invitation to fellow enthusiasts for a game. Any offers?

A fine way to lose weight

The battle of the bulge is on at Finchley store.

A strict slimming club has been created with ten pence to be paid at the weekly weigh-in for no loss, and 50p for a gain!

Harsh fines – but the incentives are good ... the most successful slimmer in the club will win the pooled fines.

A poem was composed to sum up staff feelings.

*Time for action was the call,
Shrink and diet, one for all.
Each week the girls weigh in to see
Whose is the greatest fine to be.
All hope that in the weeks to come,
With thoughts of beaches, sand and sun,
The pounds will quickly slip away,
No more fines, we'll have to pay.*

Working together in Preston

Introducing the "twins" of Preston store's display team — Norma Smith (left) and Anne Hodgkinson.

Not related in any way, Norma and Anne have found that over the years of working together, telepathy has grown to astonishing proportions. "Some days we come into work wearing the same clothes and colour themes".

This understanding is invaluable in their work when one elusive item may be needed to complete the window effect. "Sometimes, I just cannot see the missing key to my display — but Anne will know immediately what's needed", explains Norma. "Then another day I'll do the same for her".

Norma has worked at Preston for five years and is display supervisor. Anne started three years ago.



Dynamic duo for Midlands

Introducing the dynamic duo at Wolverhampton ... Cyd Price and Jim Smith.

Cyd joined the Company in 1977 as stockroom assistant and later moved into display under Jim's supervision. They also travel to other Midland stores to help with special promotions.

Jim, who is display manager, joined the company at Coventry in 1971. In addition to keeping an eye on the Wolverhampton store Jim also looks after Kidderminster, Shrewsbury and Stourbridge.

A man of many talents, he not only directs fashion shows for the Midland stores but is also a first class model.



ANIMAL ANTICS IN NEWPORT

Variety is the spice of life ... and who should know better than Newport's display team Anne Jones and Adrienne Faulkner.

Coping with boisterous baby bears, an obstinate elephant and a kangaroo, which drove everyone hopping mad with its nocturnal habits, is all part of the job. And they wouldn't have it any other way.

For the two, who started together 15 years ago and now work part-time, are as enthusiastic today as they were then.

Kasy the Kangaroo, who was included in one of the many spectacular Christmas displays at Newport, ignored all protocol, sleeping soundly when the customers called in to see her and leaping to life at night.



Introducing Finchley's display team, Cheryl Holt, Elaine Stuppel and Anne Deacon.

Display manager, Elaine (centre) has been at Finchley for more than 10 years. She especially enjoys good food but to keep the telltale weight down she joins Cheryl for

weekly keep-fit classes. Cheryl has been with Owen Owen for five years and one of her main interests is helping out at the local hospital radio station.

Anne Deacon (right) is a recent addition to the team. She enjoys an energetic pastime in the evening — disco dancing.

SLOUGH: A proud team

A Slough team to be proud of ... Peter Curry (top left) display manager, Martin Fitzgerald, display assistant and a former employee of Selfridges, London, Carlene Lyte (bottom right) who works on display and in the Regional Ticket Studio, and Denise Hegarty, a part-timer in the Regional Ticket Studio.



Brighton's one-woman display 'team' is Mrs. Janis Greener (31), who has two children, a girl aged nine and a five-year-old boy. Her hobbies include reading, dancing, music, art and sculpture, and she also enjoys collecting antiques.



LET'S MEET

DISPLAY

TEAM

Walking line between success and failure



Eric Hodges

THERE'S a thin line between success and failure in display work — an item either appeals or it doesn't, and at the end of the day it's the ability of the staff of this department to ensure that there is no doubt as to the selling power of that particular item.

Admittedly, it's doubtful that the customer can tell the difference between a good and an excellent display, but even the untrained eye would glance disapprovingly over shoddy workmanship.

Happily, Owen Owen boast fine teams of Display personnel — men and women whose training enables them to transform a piece of merchandise into a glowing work of art, one which can attract customers like bees to a honey pot.

A good team can skilfully produce an effect which would encourage the customer to buy not only the main item, like a dress for instance, but the accessories which have been selected to complement it.

And here again, the vital word is appeal, as Mr. Richard Tankard, Display and Design Co-ordinator explains:

"Display personnel are among the most important people in the store. Our success now, and in the future, lies in the importance we place on the presentation of our merchandise".

It should tell a story

A product on display must be prepared and exhibited in such a way that it tells the customer all she needs to know, and how beneficial it would be to her if she bought it. It should tell a story, in a visual way.

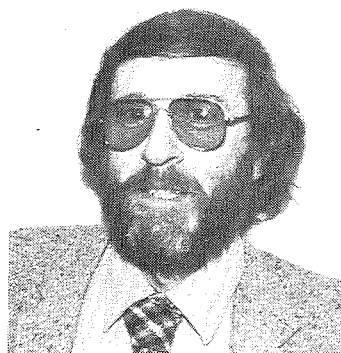
A RICHMOND RECRUIT



A recent recruit to the Richmond ranks is Gillian Mumford who joined the company in February. Before that she had spent 18 months with the Littlewoods Organisation.

And not-so-new to the store is Garon Pavier, Display Manager.

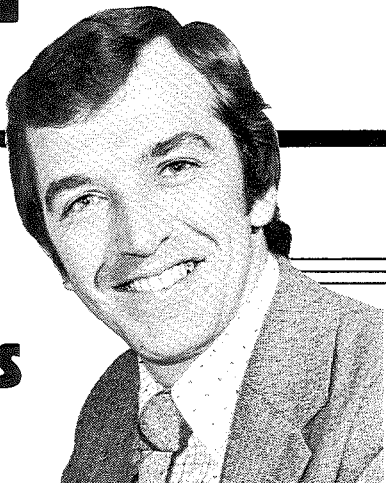
He lives with his wife and two children on a secluded island in the middle of the River Thames, which enables him to pursue his hobbies of sailing, music, reading, theatre and gardening.



MEET THE DISPLAY

TEAMS

By the thin green success failure



Richard Tankard

Promotional display on the other hand is a method whereby merchandise is sold on price — the ability to show a customer exactly what she can get for her money.

"In the past we have been very keen on this method, but today we are leaning more towards presentation on display and presentation on the fixture, to present merchandise to its best advantage", added Mr. Tankard, who joined the company in 1964.

Ensuring its selling power

The Owen Owen stores are at present divided into four regions. In each region a Senior Display Manager monitors the performance of the display teams in their stores, based upon the Company guidelines. These are issued by Mr. Tankard under the direction of the Company's Sales Director, Mr. Eric Hodges.

Sales display is very closely linked with sales promotion (specific promotions for specific products in the store) and the emphasis is on producing a common face to the public — it's essential that the store is immediately recognisable as Owen Owen.

But no matter how inexpensive or attractive the item, it's up to the display personnel to ensure its selling power.

Their skills in this field are essential, and it's for this reason that Scene magazine was asked to open the door on this department and introduce readers to the many faces in display in a number of our stores.



LONDON ROAD

London Road's display team: (left to right) Miss Gena Capper, Mr. William Ormrod, Mr. Thomas James Trellick and Mr. David Rogers.

COVENTRY: A lot of new faces

It has been all change for the Coventry display team in the last year with three new members. Leigh Bevan and Nina Necak joined the Company in March 1978, followed by Tim Dunne in December.

They have a wide range of hobbies between them including motor mechanics, which is Nina's main interest.

Tim and Nina like to take their creative abilities home — both are keen on painting. So is Display Manager, Bob Hebson — but on a larger scale — for he specialises in house decoration.

The athlete of the team is Leigh, who goes for badminton and ice skating in her free time.

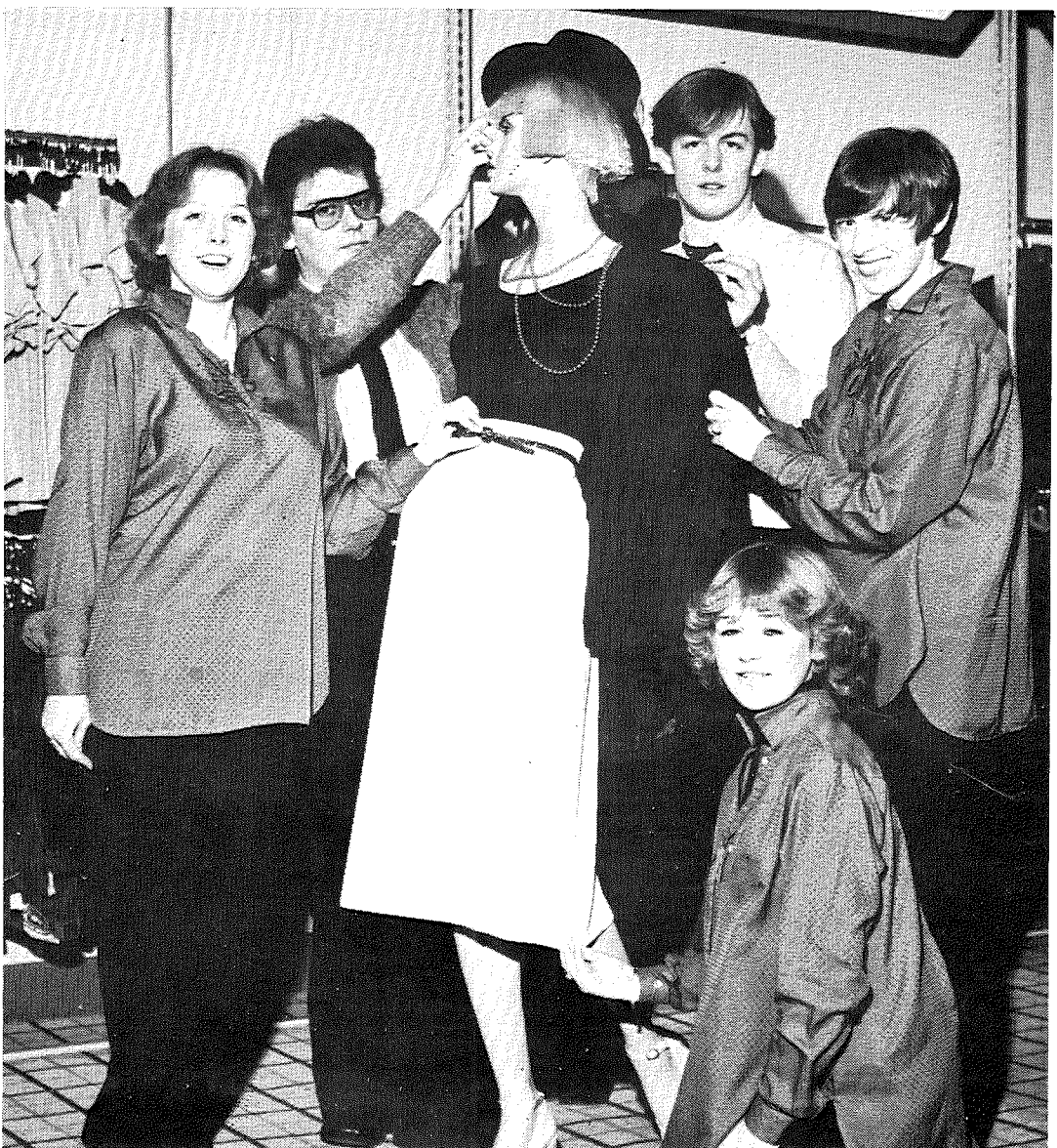
Left to right, back: Tim and Bob. Front: Leigh and Nina.



BATH: On the sporty side ...

There's an active, competitive streak in the Bath display team. Stephen Wiltshire is a keen pool player, Noreen Uncles plays for a local ladies darts team, and Carol Williams did exceptionally well in a recent sponsored slim for charity, losing nearly one-and-a-half stone,

mentally handicapped. Display manager, Les Netherwood, who has been with the company for 22 years and worked in many of the stores, enjoys gardening, DIY and home decoration. Left to right: Carol, Noreen, Stephen and Les.



Adjusting the outfit is the Clayton Square display team comprising, left to right: Gillian Ireland, Roy Ackers, Martyn Shaw, Meryl Cooper and Valerie Irving.

FOCUS ON RICHMOND



Percy in Line for an award

Percy Harding must rate as Richmond's number one man when it comes to length of service ... and it hasn't gone unnoticed. For Percy will soon receive his long-service award, a carriage clock.

Percy, who now works an 18-hour week as handyman, joined the store, when it was Wright Brothers in 1930, as a porter/assistant in the furniture department, and three years later, at his own request, he became a driver's mate.

After the war he returned to the store as a driver, a position he held for 20 years, before being promoted to transport and maintenance manager.



The Richmond 'baby' doing just fine



Richmond no longer need shelter under the umbrella of England's bustling capital. It's become a town in its own right.

And the opportunities for young people are reflected in the comments of many of Owen Owen's staff who feel London has, for too long, influenced young people unfavourably.

These fears are unfounded say the young people who have made a niche for themselves in one of the newest Owen Owen stores.

One of Richmond's best adverts is 24 year-old Paul Clarke, (above left), who moved down south to become one of the youngest mer-

chandise managers with Owen Owen.

Paul, who is set to make a rosy future with the company, is one of many to make a home in this busy south London township ... a move, which it is hoped, many will follow as the three year-old store expands to offer secure job opportunities to young people aiming for management.

Richmond has been described as one of the best places to work, not only for its glowing prospects, but as one of the most attractive towns boasting endless historic sights, countless pubs and situated near enough to London for the shops and entertainment, and yet far

enough away for comfort.

Says Paul: "There are more opportunities here for a young person to make a go of it than anywhere else. The chances Owen Owen give to young people are tremendous."

Also happy in her decision to move was 18 year-old Adrienne Ryder (above right), whom we spoke to only six weeks after her arrival at Richmond.

Adrienne, who transferred from Clayton Square, is learning the ins and outs of trainee catering management, as well as assisting Richmond's catering director, Mr. M. Lloyd.

"One of the reasons I came was independence; you've got to leave home some time. I'd been in London about five years ago and really loved it and that's why I'm here."

But, leaving one's home town, family and friends in order to pursue a career can be an unnerving experience.

Most important, of course, is finding somewhere to live. For certain youngsters in management this is less of a problem. When Owen Owen took over the store, they also took possession of eight two-bedroomed cottages, which are rented out.

General Manager, Mr. Dennis King, said, "The South-east is very much an expansion area of the company at the moment. It's an on-going situation; we are going to need management in the store in the foreseeable future and I think young people will learn a great deal by taking the plunge and coming to the south".

Richmond's story began in April 1976 when an ornate building in the main shopping street was acquired by the company. It was to become a key to the gates of the south of England.

After the takeover, came the restructuring of the building. The old shop fronts were removed to be replaced by a modern frontage. One half of the store was completely required to meet the power demands of a new restaurant and hairdressing salon.



St. James's Cottages

Both these areas are now productive in profit and provide successful customer service. But two years later the modernisation programme is still going on.

Richmond prides itself on having come a long way in a short time. And while it is recognised that there may well be problems ahead, Richmond is fulfilling an important role down south and has every reason to succeed as the bouncing baby of the Owen Owen 'family'.

BIG NAME CUSTOMERS

Richmond may not be the biggest, but it's one of the best when it comes to name-dropping.

Bamber Gascoigne, Kate O'Mara and Patrick Cargill have been spotted among the milling crowds, not to mention Esther Rantzen, who must have found the goods and service to her liking because the store didn't feature in her famous 'That's Life' show!

Blowing the lid off the big bin caper...

Richmond's store detective couldn't believe her eyes when a man and his female companion began piling blouses into a plastic bin.

They collected no less than 15 blouses complete with hangers before heading for the door — and that's when the store detective swung into action.

Incidents like this have kept the store detective extremely busy in the Richmond store. In her first three weeks she apprehended a total of 18 shoplifters and saved the firm nearly £300 in stolen goods.

The cheeky thieves are often

those who come up with the most ridiculous excuses. The man who removed a jacket from its rail, rolled it up and proceeded to walk from the store. His excuse: simply, that he was going to his local to collect the money to pay for it — and that was 4.30 in the afternoon!

Why people shoplift is a mystery. "I once stopped a woman with £5,000 in cash in her bag and she'd just stolen a 75p necklace!" said the store detective.

Whatever the reasons the store detective has a job to do, and like the bin-trotting blouse-man, she aims at all times to put a lid on it.

BEATING THE CRISIS

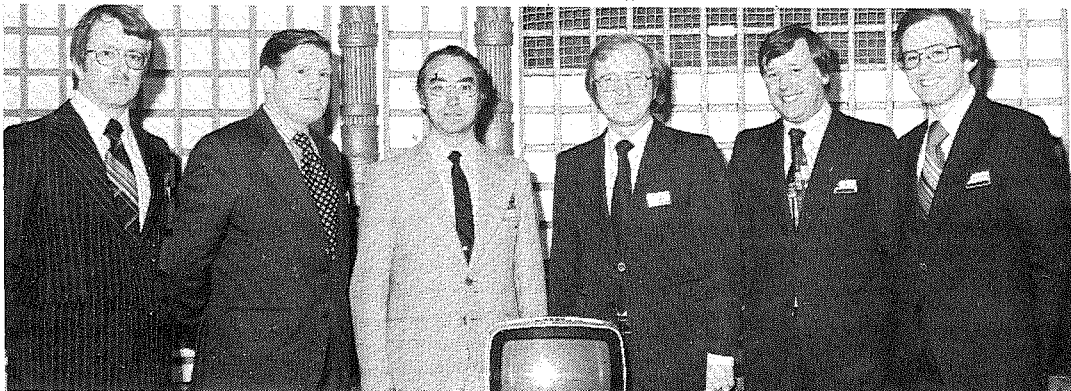
Devotion to duty does exist — even when it's least expected, as employees at Richmond demonstrated during a recent crisis.

Despite rail strikes and bad weather staff turned out to ensure that Owen Owen was open and

ready for business at 9 a.m., which was more than could be said of other local stores.

Those who weren't able to catch a lift into town made it by foot — and for one or two, that meant a three mile hike!

AWARDS

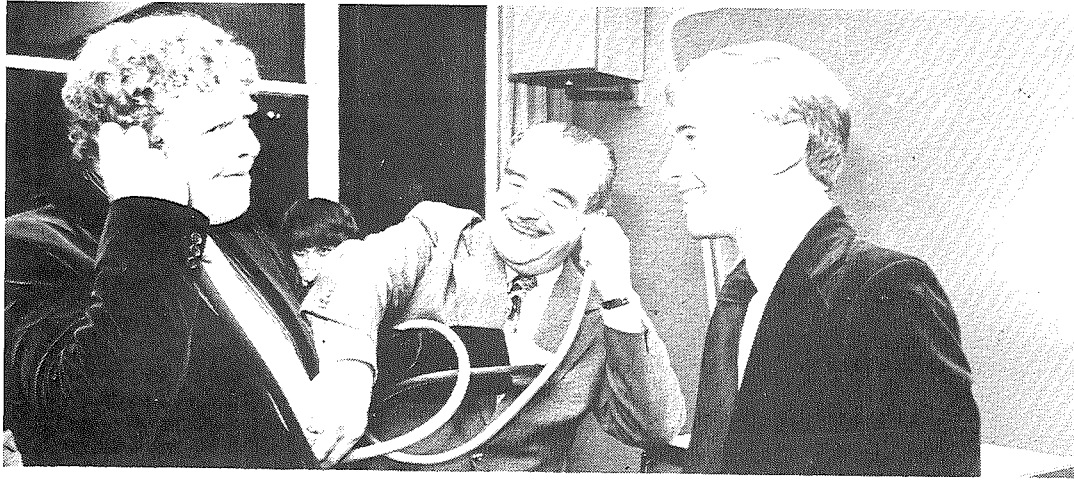


A portable television set was presented to each of the six general managers who qualified for the recent Top Six Awards. Left to right are: Mr. Michael Thomson (Brighton); Mr. Phillip Draycott (Evesham);

Mr. Russell Ford (Weston); Mr. Ken Speddings (Kidderminster); Mr. Barry Boycott (Shrewsbury) and Mr. Les Jordon (Preston).



A radio and cassette recorder were presented to the winners of the Buyers' Awards 'Top Six' competition. And the winners, left to right, are: Mr. Andrew Errington (Men's Outfitting and Accessories); Miss Sue Ross (Gifts and Furnishing Accessories); Mr. Joe Martin (Furniture).



Charles Boutcher will be sailing happily into retirement this month on a 19-foot catamaran, which he has designed and built.

Sales manager of Electrical and Kitchen furniture at T.J. Hughes in Liverpool, Charles worked for the Company in his youth, and after a long absence returned to TJs eight years ago.

In addition to sailing, Charles hopes to pursue his love of painting. One of his works has been sold for £25, so it's with some

Sailing into retirement

enthusiasm that he's planning a cruise around the lochs of Western Scotland, capturing the rugged scenery on canvas.

Says Charles: "I love the peace and beauty of Scotland, and the loch waters are always safe for boating."

Charles, who is a widower with two married children, has another

claim to fame. During the war he received a personal award from Field Marshall Montgomery for outstanding good service and devotion to duty.

Charles, pictured enjoying a joke during a promotion with 'Eddie Yates' from "Coronation Street", with Mr. Malcolm Humphries (right), Merchandise Manager.



After nearly half a century of service with the company behind him, Ernest Cowley has retired from Bootle centre. Joining Owen Owen as a porter in 1930, he moved into Despatch and Transport, later becoming supervisor. In 1971 he was appointed Transport Manager and held this position until his retirement in January. He is pictured here with his wife and Mr. Barry Johnston, distribution controller.

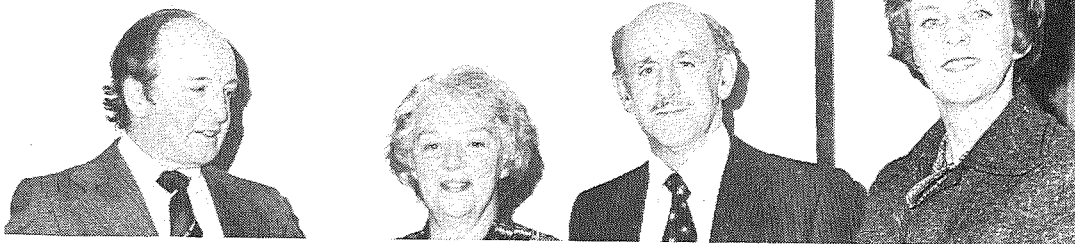
William's goodbye after nearly half a century



William Bailey of T.J. Hughes in Liverpool has retired after 48 years with the Company. A warehouse assistant when he started in 1931, William retired as Supervisor of the shoe stockroom.

Our picture shows, left to right: William Bailey; Mr. Peter Fleming - Director/General Manager; Mrs. Stella Adams - Personnel Director and Mrs. Bailey.

End of a 46-year link



After 46 years with Owen Owen Miss Dorothy Everett (married name Aird) has retired. She joined the company from school in 1933 and was made assistant to the manager in the Central Statistical Office in 1956.

A year later she took over as Manager until 1964 when she was made Office Manager at Whitechapel, and finally Central Credit Manager in Stafford House in 1968. Miss Everett is pictured with Mr. H.W. Plumb, Joint Managing Director (left), her husband Harry Aird (who also works for the company) and Mrs. Stella Adams (right), Personnel Director.



Farwell presentation made by Chester's General Manager Mr. Tom Brent (right) to Mr. Albert Austin, who was manager of the local chemist Cheers and Hopley, acquired by the company in 1973. With Mr. Austin are his wife, and Regional Head Mr. Chris Hassall (far left). Picture courtesy of Chester Chronicle.

An alert staff will beat the thieves, says security chief

Who better to keep an eye on law and order in our stores than former C.I.D. man Mr. Geoff Gales, who joined in October as Security Controller.

"It is a different life entirely. In the C.I.D. your job is the detection of offences, whereas your main purpose here is prevention.

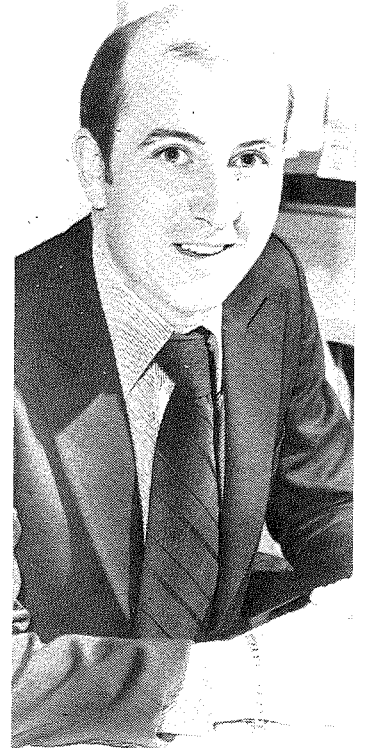
"One of the first things I did was to increase the number of store detectives and that has brought about a 25 per cent increase in the number of apprehensions."

Mr. Gales stressed that although security devices are there to prevent thefts, it was equally important for members of staff to pay attention to the goings-on in the stores.

And he added: "You can take on all the devices and put as many gadgets in a store as you like but there is no substitute for staff awareness; by being good sales assistants and by being alert.

"There are more people shoplifting than ever before, and more people who are good at it than ever before. It's full-time employment to some people and very profitable. Gone are the days when a shoplifter would steal a tin of beans and that was it. In one visit to a store these days, a shoplifter can clean out over £1,000 worth of goods."

Mr. Gales, formerly of the Metropolitan Police, worked as an Assistant Chief Security Officer in another department store group before joining the company.



Mr. Gales

A novel haven

A 'novel' haven for bookworms opened at the Southampton store recently. It is the Reader's Digest department which boasts a semi-circular centre window surrounding the attractive walk-around displays.



Julie's £1 fling nets

An impulsive fling won sales assistant Julie Ireland a £1,000 lottery prize. **her £1,000**

Julie, who works in Carpets at T.J. Hughes in Birkenhead, had always avoided gambling until the new Liverpool Arts Lottery moved into the store to sell their tickets. "It was only in the last half hour that I heard the lottery raffle advertised over the loudspeakers.

On impulse I decided to splash out on four 25p tickets, but never thought I'd win," she said.

Her ticket was picked by a customer, and it was Merchandise manager, Mr. Rene Priest who recognised Julie's name, and told her the good news.

WHAT'S NEW IN RARE SET...



Details to note: importance of checks; strong 50's influence; the shirtwaister dress; waist emphasis; tight trousers under full button through skirts; the cropped single buttoned jacket.



Details to note: importance of suits; pleating and back buttoning on straight skirts to allow ease of movement; use of velvet and velveteen; cropped and peplum jackets to emphasise the waist.



Details to note: use of co-ordinating checks; come-back of velvet for structured day wear; the real suit; return of the coat in 3/4, 7/8 and full length; navy as a sophisticated day wear colour.



Glamorous models from staff of the Finchley store at a recent fashion show run by our Glemby International Hair and Beauty Salon, Rare Set and the major fashion departments. Left to right are: Sandra Read, Debbie Flowerday (hidden), Amelia Noble, Cheryl Holt, Shirly Brewerton, Liz Babbs, Iris Goode, Pat Sothcott and Wendy Bancroft.

Waists and legs have stepped back into fashion for a glamorous and eye-catching Autumn '79.

They're being flaunted again, this time in soft, feminine fabrics and sleek satin. The hot, vibrant colours of summer have been toned down to give rich jewel shades — jet, amethyst, garnet, deep aquamarine, topaz and deep emerald.

The new look is here, for the first time in four years. And while summer sizzled with sensational colours; pencil skirts and wider shoulders, autumn will open the door to added elegance.

The most important trend to develop is the definite 'day' and 'night' look, where colour and shape play a vital role. New slim shapes will ensure that the fairer sex will become the alluring women the last few seasons failed to highlight.

Coats take a slim wrapover look with wide shoulders and shawl collars, in soft colourful tweeds, flannels and creamy boucle. A black base colour is favoured — topped with dashes of colour.

Jacket silhouettes are parallel, with edge to edge closing. There are short swing jackets, new three-quarter ones and a middle of the road double-breaster — in similar fabrics to coats.

It's femininity all the way with dresses. Slinky feminine fabrics — mainly in black — fall in drapes and pleats, with sweetheart necklines, elbow-length sleeves, and little matching boleros.

Suits — in flannel, gaberdine and tweed — are focusing on the slim, pencil skirts, with jackets falling into two extremes. Either go for the loose, edge to edge closing type, or show off a tiny waist in the belted look.

Exotic iridescent mohairs are an exciting feature in winter skirts — accompanied by flannels, satins, crepes and tweed. There are pleats, buttons and slits, but fullness is out.

Even the knitwear this season is figure-flattering with padded shoulders, shorter lengths and nipped-in waists. Embroidery and beading ornament the rich plain wools.

Blouses are more decorative to complement the slinky, formal look. There are button-down and shawl collars, pleats and Cossack necklines. Soft wools and silks are the favoured fabrics, with patterning still along the bright, flecked lines of summer.

Accessories are just as exciting — hats with everything. Felt pillboxes, trilbys, and the new beanie shape for the day; and velvet pillboxes and scull caps trimmed with sequins and feathers and veils for evening. Belts are wide and soft; bags small and neat. And stepping well into the scene are footless tights and sheer silk stockings with motifs. Gloves come in lace and beading for dressy evening-wear, but chilly days will be met by cheerful coloured woolly versions.

Bodywear in the shape of leotards, big T-shirts, tracksuits, and cat suits are all in silky triacetate or soft brushed cotton. There are also velvet and stretchy satins — all in bright vibrant colours to make your disco evenings zing!

Everything is in our favour for a successful Autumn.