

# 15+ YEARS of LOLA

- 1949 the Metropolitan Boroughs' Joint Standing Committee investigate the provision of an O & M service. (Organisation and Methods, not Orgies and.....)
- 1952 the Metropolitan Boroughs' (Organisation and Methods) Committee set up consisting of a team of 3 with a director.
- 1956/7 the MB(O&M)C studies 'the probable advent of electronic data processing in the local government field.' Tee hee hee.....
- 1958 The Metropolitan Boroughs of Bermondsey, Camberwell, Deptford, Greenwich, Lewisham, Southwark and Woolwich (The Conference of Metropolitan Boroughs in South East London) in conjunction with MB(O&M)C produced a report 'The Automatic Office', all the recommendations of which were accepted. So Greenwich bought time on the J Lyons & Co Electronic Office (LEO to you) machine at Cadby Hall (Hammersmith), yes, it was the cake people. The Unit itself moved to Bethnal Green Town Hall. We think they may now have been disturbed by all the movement of people etc. over the last few weeks.
- 1959 Derek Schartau joins as a programmer.
- 1961/2 In 1961/2 a LEO III machine (not just time on a machine) was purchased and placed under the control of a Joint Committee. Wot, like the LJC? No wonder....  
Derek became chief programmer. Rumour has it that people with such unlikely names as Cleall-Harding, AJOB and John Campbell Sheldrick joined the organisation around this time.  
It was the first Joint Computer Scheme in the country.  
The LEO was installed initially at the Licenced Victuallers Association building, then a converted workhouse owned by Camberwell Borough Council in Asylum Road and, later in the year, at the new purpose built building in Greenwich. We were the first to think of writing programs in such a form that any authority could use them, the 'variances being determined and brought into play by the use of facilities built into the programme.' Clever old us.
- 1966 The London Boroughs Management Services Unit (LBMSU) was set up. 'It met an increasing demand in work study and developed its computer tasks'. Bexley was brought in (now you know why Harry went there), and another LEO III was purchased from the Post Office (actually it was a LEO 326, the GT version) and installed at Southgate Road, Hackney in December, so that the South East suite of programmes could be used by the North East authorities of Hackney, Tower Hamlets and later Haringey. LBMSU Moved its headquarters to ~~3 Buckingham Gate~~ *The Surrey Victoria*, in August 1966 (ideal for watching the changing of the guard!).
- 1967 An in-depth study of Haringey's needs for computer facilities was commissioned.
- 1968 Haringey joined the consortium in April. In June, LBMSU published 'London Borough of Haringey Long Term Computer Study A First Report'.
- 1969 In January the Report on the Initial Study of the London Borough of Haringey Long Term Computer Project was presented to the Management Services Committee of the London Borough of Haringey, and its recommendations accepted. We have about a million copies of this report in one of the stationery stores to this very day.
- 1970 Hillingdon joined the consortium in March. In July LOLA was named (actually, it was very nearly called DRACULA, Direct Random Access Computers Used in Local Authorities) and an IBM 360/50 was ordered.

- 1971 on 25 March, the agreement to the terms of reference for the setting up of the consortium was signed by the mayors and burgesses of Haringey, Hackney, Hillingdon and Tower Hamlets; which established LOLA..  
In August the 360/50 was installed at Tower Point North.  
In October, LBMSU Computer Division (now LOLA) staff move from Victoria into ~~Tower Point North~~ *The Duke of Abercorn*, Enfield, though the LEO computer and supporting staff were still at ~~Southgate Road~~ *The Trafalgar The Rosemary Branch or the Lord Clyde* Hackney, Actually the operators at TPN at the time were Alec O'Connor, Frank Phillips and Norman Bennett, with the odd visit from Gerry Treadway.
- 1972 6 April, Haringey Rates, the first LOLA designed on-line application, "went live", and to quote LOLA News of that time "it was very boring because nothing went wrong".
- 1973 August, IBM 370/158 (2mb) installed.
- 1974 Late summer, the LEO and Southgate Road were closed down.
- 1975 LBMSU was absorbed into LAMSAC
- 1978 The Duke of Abercorn, LOLAs head office, was demolished to make way for a car park. Bill Myatt's nose for beer led LOLA to the King's Head.
- 1979 August, IBM 370/158 AP (Attached Processor) installed. 6 mb. !!!
- 1981 January, Magnuson M80/4 (4mb) installed (as well as the 370/158), July - Harry Pearman left to become computer supremo at Bexley. Just so he could walk to the office from home!. (*see also page 3*)
- 1982 Magnuson go bust, so an IBM 4341 installed. It has 8mb so we have a total of a staggering 14mb. Nb not the same actual machine as we have for Tower Hamlets at the moment.
- 1983 July, IBM 3081-D installed (24mb)
- 1984 Tony Renshaw takes up post of Applications Manager. Luckily, under the guidance of Tony O'Brien, he continues LOLAs Management techniques of Exhibitionist Transvestism in the LOLA cabaret by playing Fairy Tonibelle. The video is still available.
- 1985 September, Derek Schartau retires due to ill health, with a jolly good booze up at Haringey Civic Centre. He started with MB(O&M)C in 1959 as a programmer at Greenwich, climbing steadily until he became Director of Computer Services at LOLA.  
November, 3081 upgraded to K - 32mb (400 time the size of the LEO)
- 1986 January, Adrian Lepper takes up post of Director, wisely avoiding the LOLA Christmas party.

So if the following staff would care to send used fivers to the Information Office, I won't tell anyone how long you've been here (from when LOLA started): -

<u>Enfield</u>	<u>Southgate Road</u>	
Robin Andoe	Peter Anthony	Martin Jackson
Jean Bell	Gloria Beaubrun	Bill Myatt
Jim Cleall-Harding	Norman Bennett	Alec O'Connor
Beryl Dorrington	Paul Bryant	John O'Sullivan
Peter Evans	Fred Campbell	Frank Phillips
Dave Goodall	Howard Dobson	John Sheldrick
Tony O'Brien	Phil Gorin	Les Thurston
Brian Raper	Mike Green	Gerry Treadway
Noel Sant	John Hussein	Trevor Turner
Edith Steiner	Trevor Hutchins	<i>and apologies if I've missed anyone</i>

## Notes:

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### Abbreviations:

MB(O&M)C	Metropolitan Boroughs' (Organisation and Methods) Committee
AJOB	Tony O'Brien
TPN	Tower Point North – LOLA's offices in Sydney Road, Enfield
LAMSAC	Local Authorities Management Services and Computer Committee
Magnuson	Magnuson Computer Systems was a manufacturer of plug-compatible computers compatible with IBM mainframes. The Magnuson M80 range was available from the late 1970s. The company declared bankruptcy in March 1983. <i>From Wikipedia.</i>