



Michael Faraday Institution e.V.

in association with the

Institution of Electrical Engineers

MFI GERMANY

Annual General Meeting, 06 November 1999

Executive Committee's Report,
September 1998 to September 1999

Meetings

The 1998 AGM was held on 26th September, in Stuttgart.

Professor McCormick presented an absorbing SPT Lecture "3D Television – A Virtual Reality".

Freiburg Cross-border meeting.

Freiburg, the city of woods, wine and gothic mystery, deep in the Black Forest of Southern Germany, was the venue for the IEE Western European Cross-Border Meeting, on 9th-11th July 1999, organised by MFI Germany. This romantic university town, closely neighbouring both France and Switzerland and steeped in 900 years of European history with a wealth of cultural and scenic attractions played host to over sixty people comprising families, members and guests from Germany, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

On the Friday afternoon there was a technical visit to the acclaimed Fraunhofer Institute for Solid State Physics (IAF), where high power semi-conductor lasers are developed and diamond is grown! We were each able to verify that diamond is an excellent thermal conductor, as we sliced through ice with a sheet of diamond. The IAF Deputy Director Professor Dr. Peter Koidl, on behalf of the Director Professor Dr. Günther Weimann, welcomed the IEE group led by Dr. Malcolm Kennedy, the next IEE President at that time, since October 1999 President of the IEE. That evening Dr. Kennedy participated in an MFI-IEE Germany committee, and later commented that this was the first time he had been in an IEE committee meeting at midnight!

The main programme opened on the Saturday with a very topical theme. After the welcome message from Dr. Kennedy, Professor John Parkinson, Director of Science and Mathematics at Sheffield Hallam University, presented "The Eclipse Is Coming - Enjoy It!" to a packed audience.

The 11th August Total Solar Eclipse will darken skies across Europe, and in particular a band across Northern France and Southern Germany, through Karlsruhe, Stuttgart and Munich, home towns to many of those present. Professor Parkinson, founder and chairman of the UK Eclipse Co-ordinating Group, uses the moon as a ruler to measure the precise diameter of the sun, to characterise its behaviour, e.g. to determine if the sun is changing in size. The method requires a detailed knowledge of the moon's orientation and topography, and of course the exact position of the observer (now made simple through GPS). On the subject of safe viewing, the Professor Recommended always to view the onset of the eclipse indirectly, for example as an image projected onto a wall.

Three IEE Younger Members papers were presented: Simon West uncovered the mystery behind email communications, Christian Fischer spoke about interference cancellation reception techniques for the forthcoming third generation mobile communication systems, and Jonathan Paddison, the competition winner, presented innovative braking systems as components of railway safety critical systems.

Then ensued a lively open debate led by Clive Holtham on the subject of the recognition of UK Engineering qualifications in Europe. Typically only awards made by government authorised educational institutions are recognised, and awards issued as membership of what is seen as a club and paid for each year are held in low regard.

Meanwhile, family members had been organising their own activities in and around Freiburg, including a trip in a cable-car up to the Schauinsland.

On the Sunday a tour of Freiburg old City was made. The distinctive water channels, some 15km of which are still preserved, run through the streets and serve as a reminder to the time when buildings were largely wooden and destruction by fire was an ever present threat. The meeting closed with a welcome lunch in a restaurant beside the cathedral, before we said "Auf Wiedersehen, Bonne route, Tot ziens".

Activities:

The activities since the AGM have been pared to a minimum, and local events in all regions have virtually ceased. The noted activities have been:

- Counselling for membership applications from Germany.
- Presented "Colloquium on Opto Electronic Interfacing at Microwave Frequencies" on 20th April at Savoy Place, where Sandip Banerjee described a balanced electro-optical mixer for increasing the spurious-free dynamic range of a micro-optical link.
- MFI Germany represented the IEE at the VDI Accreditation Committee for the establishment of BSc and MSc courses in Germany.
- Participated at the University of Duisburg for the opening of the Semi-conductor Optronics Institute (HOZ).
- "Wireless LANs", 17th November, presented by Norman Steinberg, in Stuttgart.

- Hamburg hosted a double technical presentation on 10th April 1999: "Internet Enabling Technologies" by Simon West, and "Java Evolution and Applications" by Clemens Sietas.
- Digital Television was presented by Paul Suzes in inaugural meeting of YM in Nigeria.
- Participated at European microwave conference in München.

Students

Co-operation continues with Local Industry and VDI. We were able to help German student going to U K but very poor response from UK student who like to come for his training in Germany.

VDI Accredierung Committee

The German Centre was participating in this committee to work out the new degree courses which will be offered by German University and Fachhochschulen.

Special Interest Group

The Translator group did not meet during Freiburg meeting .New members have joined and contact are maid via Internet.

RPPI

As The Register of Professional and Personal Interest of the members have declined, the committee have decided to close this activities.

Centre Organisation

In order to comply with Budget constraints, meetings of full committee now takes only in conjunction with major meeting or the AGM, Executive meetings are held as necessary for the planning of such events. Cost reduction and rationalisation have been implemented in every respect.

At the end of this report ,I would like to thank all those who have helped to make our programmes a success .My special thanks are to our Secretary, our Treasurer ,Bob Slater and Peter Langheinrich for their work with the Newsletter, and lastly to Martin Wagner for his excellent contribution for MFI & IEE web side.

28.10.99

S.K.Banerjee