

Behind the scenes. Bolton Street College 1963

By Gabriel Daly

Before, during and after the international competitions in 1963 a huge amount of work had to be done in the background to help ensure a successful outcome. Gabriel Daly was heavily involved in behind-the-scenes action and below he sketches out some of his memories of the time

Goods Store

A few weeks before the event one of the larger rooms in the Surveying Department was taken over and cleared of all equipment and furniture. This was to make space for the reception of the huge number of deliveries of new tools, equipment and measuring instruments required for the running of this new (to Ireland) competition.

Dermot Ward was appointed to devise and run the system of goods inwards and outwards. He was also responsible for pursuing orders and arranging payments to suppliers.

Seamus Greene and I were appointed to assist Dermot. Our duties were to record deliveries, check the integrity of the order, place them in an appropriate section for eventual distribution, and to inform him of any discrepancies.

We took delivery of all hand tools such as hammers, chisels, rulers, pliers, planes honing stones, oil cans, levels, cutters, drill bits, electrical fittings and wiring, clips, screws, nuts and bolts, precision measuring gauges, meters, torches, mallets, paint brushes and kettles, welding rods etc. We also took delivery of sheets of silver and leather for the Silversmiths and Jewellers.

Elsewhere in the Linenhall and Bolton Street workshops, machinery was being installed. The individual stores were being kitted out with new shelving, and worktables or benches were arranged for each competitor. As this task was completed teams of workers arrived at our room to take delivery of the equipment for that particular trade centre. The store was cleared within days, as I recall, and whilst Dermot continued to process the invoices, Seamus and I moved on to assist elsewhere.

The Drawing and Copying Centre

Many of those involved in the event at the time were unaware of the existence of the Drawing and Copying centre yet it provided an essential service.

The regulation at that time required each participating country to submit a working drawing for each trade entered by them. The suitability of each submission was considered by an international panel of technical experts in the trade. (This is done to ensure competitors have adequate time to complete the task and to ensure a fair of range of processes) Sometimes a drawing is chosen as submitted, otherwise a compilation or even an entirely new draft is agreed.

One of the smaller Architectural studios containing the larger drawing boards and drafting machines was utilised as the centres drawing office. Several draughtsmen were employed. One of these was Jim Roche who, for many years, taught part-time night classes in technical drawing in Bolton Street. If my memory serves me, one or two of his colleagues were similarly employed.

In an adjacent room a large dyeline photocopier had been installed and this was operated by Michael Lynch the technician. The dyeline printing machine was purchased from Ilford in Clonskeagh. They also supplied the special coated paper and developer. Furthermore, they provided a maintenance engineer (Victor....) who remained on standby in Bolton Street for the duration on the competition

The chosen draft was submitted to this drawing office where it was redrawn. A master tracing was then prepared. Even drawings requiring no changes had to be passed on to the centre for tracing as all drawings had to be prepared on tracing paper for reproduction by the dyeline process. From the master tracing the workshop drawings were copied on a large dyeline machine. The hard copies were passed back to the draughtsmen for trimming. The trimmed copies were delivered to the relevant technical expert for distribution among contestants. I assisted Michael with the copying and collating.

As a memento of their visit to Ireland, further copies of all drawings were printed folded and bound in A3 size albums for inclusion in a presentation to the international representatives on departure.

The 12th International Apprentice Competition

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A few weeks before the event one of the larger rooms in the Surveying Department was taken over and all their equipment and instruments was cleared from the shelves, drawers and cupboards. This was to make space for the reception of the huge number of deliveries of new tools, equipment and measuring instruments required for the running of this new (to Ireland) competition.

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