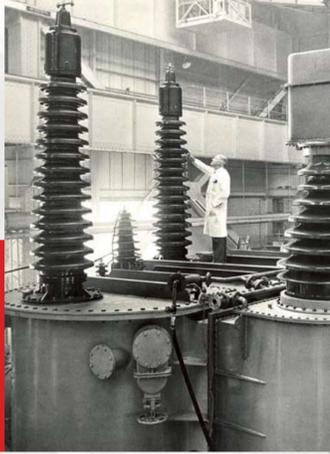


I had to turn up on Monday morning at half past seven, and he said you'll do forty-four hours a week; so that was from something like half past seven in the morning to five o'clock at night, with a lunch break and two ten minute tea breaks.

Barry Mingay. Born 1944, at HSPT 1959-2003

WORKING CONDITIONS



ASEA dance at Walthamstow Assembly Rooms 1948



apprentices take a break



cricket team 1985

Each had their own dining room facilities; the works offices, the drawing office and technical departments, and the sales office – there was a dining room for the managers, and a dining room for the directors ... I never joined the last one, but I went through most of the others.

Maurice Woollard. Born 1922, at HSPT 1936-1985

We used to have an enormous social club there; whacking great social club, and everything you could think of, from pigeon racing to darts, outings, musical trips.

Albert Bale. Born 1913, at HSPT 1965-2000

They became quite social events really, on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon or on a summer's evening over at Wadham Lodge sports ground, cricket between the departments.

Michael Lewis. Born 1940, at HSPT 1963 – 2003

In the offices we worked eight to half past four, but the volume of work was just so much you just had to get a move on with it, and you had to work the extra time. Very often I used to come here and sit with my husband and we'd be putting orders in envelopes – but that was it, and you just did it; and somehow you felt a great loyalty to the other people that were working there.

Josie Reynolds. Born 1947, at HSPT 1989-2003

As in factories across the country, the working week was gradually reduced from forty-four hours to thirty-seven. Pay was a constant bone of contention, particularly on piecework.

They had complete sections taking time studies ... and you never agreed a time you know. If they said that's a 100 hours, nah, nah, we'll never make any money on a hundred hours, it's got to be 120, 130. So you'd get these arguments go on and go on and by the time you'd finished arguing about it, the job's done.

John Brown. Born 1947, at HSPT 1963-2003

There was only ever one strike there; that lasted nine weeks. It was all about pay again – pay and conditions – and they went on strike for nine weeks; and then got back to work.

Barry Mingay. Born 1944, at HSPT 1959-2003

I started at ten shillings a week, and you got a half crown rise when it was your birthday. And then, if you worked well, they thought you were worth it, you sort of got a merit rise once a year.

Iris Woollard. Born 1919, at HSPT 1935-1952

The working conditions recalled by the interviewees are typical of the 1930s - 1970s era. Managers would be formally addressed, lunch facilities were separated along department, but after hours all staff could enjoy a thriving social club.

It was very much a hierarchy of Sales Office dominance, and this persisted for a long time, this attitude that we are superior to the works.

Maurice Woollard. Born 1922, at HSPT 1936-1985

Most people actually sort of, most departments kept to themselves, it was very friendly but because you worked in a certain area you only really had to, need to talk to certain people and you just worked in that area.

Hazel Dawson. Born 1945, at HSPT 1969-1971

