

Goodbye to you my trusted friend...

In a previous Bulletin [1] we wrote about "Going back to the Seventies with Ammeters and Voltmeters". Our *Bulletin Designer* found a rather fetching graphic to illustrate the piece, in the form of a chap with flared trousers and a particularly offensively-patterned shirt. Walk in to a classroom dressed like that today and you would deserve any of the dug's abuse that came your way. In some ways, and through no fault of our own, we do that every other day in science teaching when we present children with the sort of apparatus shown in Figure 1.

This particular counter still works but we have said goodbye to it at SSERC. Previously, we kept such items as we knew that some schools were still using them. Now we are of the opinion that if they are, they shouldn't be. What sort of a message is this sending out about science education if pupils meet decades-old technology in our subject, then find themselves in front of a state-of-the-art LCD monitor in business studies?

There is, of course, a finance issue here. The author, freshly out of the classroom, is currently evaluating a spectrophotometer designed for school use that costs more than he was given for his annual requisition. (The same company sells a model that costs more than he paid for his car). We have no qualms about the



Figure 1 - Serviceable, but as up-to-date as the Hovis advert.

modern methodology advocated by CfE but hope that there is an appreciation that modern equipment is needed, and that the money is made available to bring science into the new millennium.

As ever, SSERC staff are able and willing to recommend equipment suitable for purchase by science departments.

Meanwhile, if you do have serviceable but outdated equipment that you can live without, it may be suitable for donation to the Third World. See www.labaid.org for details.

1. http://www.sserc.org.uk/members/SafetyNet/bulls/221/Physics_back_to_70s.htm