The First Computer Matching Party  
Newark College of Engineering - October 1965

In October 1965 students from Newark College of Engineering (now NJIT) and New Jersey State Teachers College (now Kean) organized the first computer matching party. At the time NCE only had 4 women in its senior class while NSC had a large majority of female students.

A computer party was organized between the institutions and over 1500 people participated. The computer program that did the matching was designed and developed by NCE students and operated on the IBM 1620 which was the only computer at the school’s “IT” center.

An advanced model IBM 1620 boasted 16K of memory and the program was written in FORTRAN. The design challenges, formulas, and algorithms to make the best match had to be designed from scratch and some of the related student notes have been found and are displayed later. The joint committee developed a personal profile that looks rudimental in today’s world, but nonetheless was effective in matching and according to a follow-up study several matches resulted in marriage.

On the following pages are stories in the local Newark newspaper along with some of the recently found documents. It should be noted that the students in these pictures did not “dress-up” for the press day. At the time NCE required jacket and tie to attend all classes. (Students without J&T were sent to the Dean for disciplinary action). In 1970 the Student Council organized a protest and petition to eliminate the dress code.

This is a preliminary collection of material and full report and website is being developed. Please any corrections or additional information Info@nce-njit-first-computer-party-1965.com
NEXT QUESTION—Filling out the forms which will supply the computer information for getting compatible partners together are the Newark State lassies below. Left to right, they're Rosemary Prestigiaccone of Perth Amboy, Carole Autorino of Clifton, Barbara Knopf of Glen Ridge and Judy O'Donnell of Cranford.
A Light Side

‘Computation

By JANE C. SCHONER

AUTOMATION, finally—and, it goes almost without saying, festively—has come to the Light Side! First, faint, convivial encroachment can be traced to Newark College of Engineering, where socializing is in the process of being transformed from a lively, flirtatious art to a precise (figure ‘n’ facts) science.

The beginning, improbably enough, came last spring—back in the bright and balmy days when a young man’s fancy, by tradition, should have been taking off on all sorts of romantic flights. Instead, the young men at NCE used the sentimental season to muse on mechanical things and—in so doing—betrayed themselves of a Computer Party. They beguiled the girls—and some of the lads—at Newark State College into entering into their calculating plot and, between them, they’ve come up with the cooperative makings for a modern age whining ding that’s to take place on Oct. 16.

What it’s going to be, really, is the biggest blind date ever staged hereabouts. For, while there are all sorts of bright and off-beat facets to the romp, the principal one concerns the selection of dates for the night. Instead of ‘speaking for themselves, John,’ the lads—and (die and for shame!), the lasses too—are letting a computer do it for them.

During the summer, you see, when they should have been centering their attention on more frivolous things, the committee for the mass merry meet was busy drawing up a questionnaire to be filled out by prospective guests. The result of the group’s concerted endeavor runs to 42 searching queries that delve into everything, from age and educational status to television viewing habits and individual slants on philosophical issues. The answers, submitted in advance, will be transferred to IBM cards and, on party eve, run through a cold and calculating NCE computer which will match compatible pairs by code number.

The results will be posted on boards at Newark State College which is to be party scene and, as the guests arrive, they’ll check the list to find their partners. Everyone will know his—or her—own number in advance. The fun will come in locating the number (i.e., the person) the machine has selected as his or her date.

It promises to a mad, merry scramble since some 1,490 are expected to join in the fun. And locating partners will be only the beginning of the puzzlement. After they’ve finally met their evening’s fate, the guys and gals will have to decide which of the party’s many diversions they and their carefully catalogued preferences and compatible statistics will be happiest pursuing.

There’ll be something for almost everybody—dancing and folk singing for music buffs; a snack—

(Continued on Page W4)
Computer Party Committee - Ray Kasbarian of Newark, Pat Carney of Union, Carol Wallace of Linden, Sandy Kobus of Elizabeth, and Emerson Brigham of Newark.
Welcome to the NSC-NCE fall computer party; we hope that you have an enjoyable evening. If you have not received your IEM date identification card, or you have not been stamped, please report to front table before 8:00. Otherwise proceed as follows:

LADIES: Please report to the waiting room which has been designated for your last initial. Be sure to identify yourself to the room's hostess and she will mark the master sheet to indicate to your date that you have arrived. When your escort comes to call, the hostess will introduce you and then you will leave the room.

GENTLEMEN: Check the master sheet of the room which is the designated waiting area for your date. If her name is circled on the room's master sheet, inform the hostess of her number. She will then introduce you and you should leave the room to make it easy for others to meet.

When registration is closed at approximately 8:30 p.m., and you find yourself without a date or escort, please report to the COMPLAINT AND EXCHANGE DEPT. which is located in the center's faculty dining room. Here all others rendered stag by illness or weak feet, as well as those who mutually feel they are not meant for each other will be given a second chance. Report to the host and hostess of the facility and they will graciously assist you in your dilemma.

There will be a press room located across from the Little Theatre. Here a reporter will take your picture and your opinion for a story on the affair. If you have some time, please stop in and someone will be glad to talk to you.

In the event of any problems or emergencies report to the Alumni Lounge which is located at the main entrance to the building. This will be committee headquarters for the evening.

Thank you, and enjoy yourself

The Committee