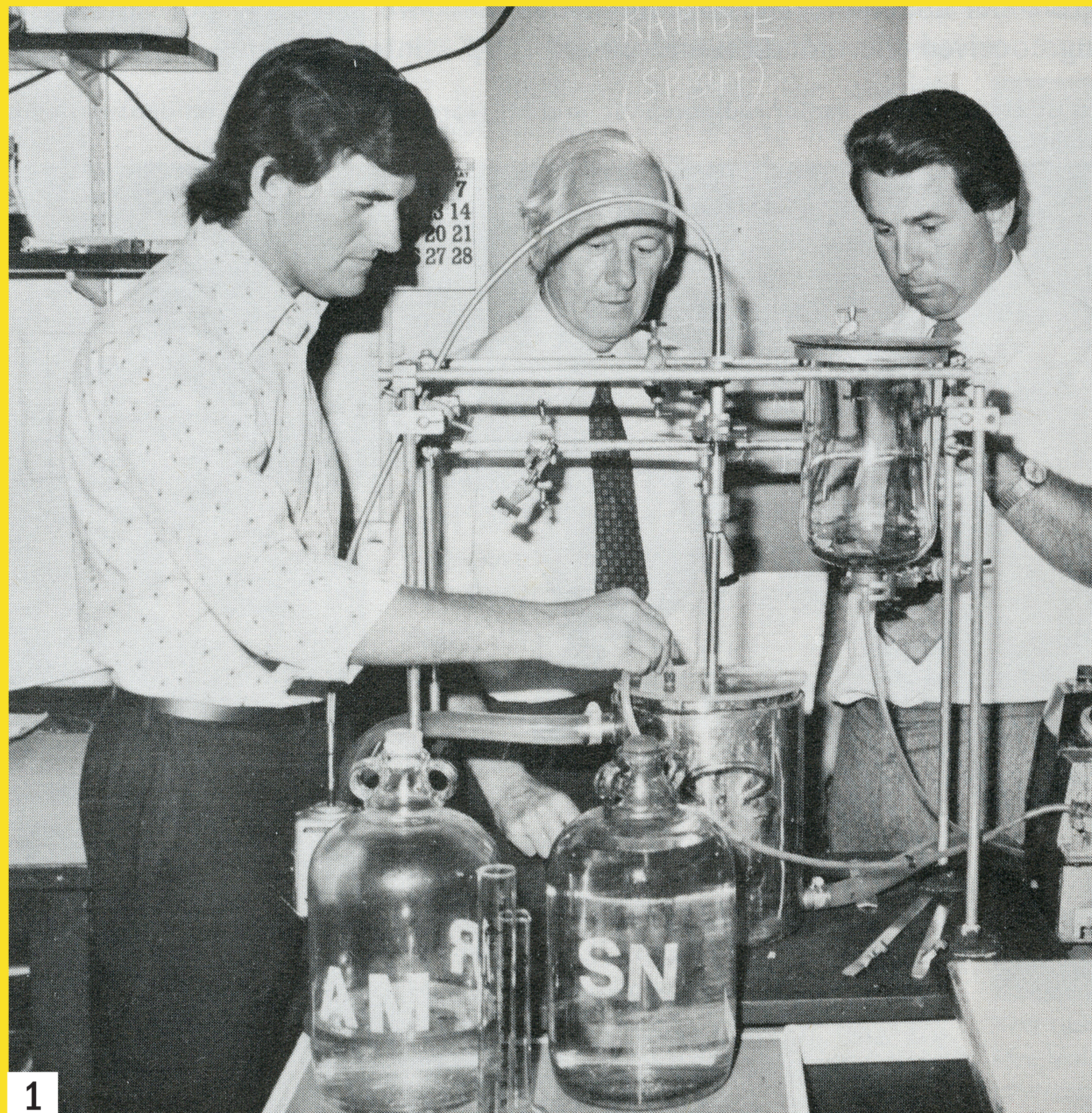


# Science Labs and Dark Rooms

Iford Limited had a strong tradition of investing in scientific research and development. A full time chemist was employed by the company as early as 1888. This enabled Iford Limited to improve their existing products, innovate in the development of film and to compete with other companies.



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"... Jack Coote was instrumental amongst others in the company, in pushing forward new developments [...] radical, you know, it was the early seventies. So he - the company - devised the Iffospeed system which was this new paper, chemicals for it, and a dryer and the press went mad for it. It was terrific. Kodak didn't have anything like it, Agfa didn't have anything like it at all and so Iford paper sales started to really shoot up." Keith Davidson

"We were in direct competition with Kodak and Kodak made very good red representation [in their colour slide films] and Iford Film was known to have a rather green slant to its colouring. So all the work that we were doing was trying to improve our colour representation, which meant that a lot of the photographs that we took weren't of people, well they weren't of a thing, they were exposures just to expose the grain of the film, or the colour of the film ..." Jennifer Pardue

Much of the research took place in dark rooms but there were more traditional chemical laboratories as well. Before the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act the labs and darkrooms were hazardous places to work.

"... As you emptied stuff down the sinks they went along an open gully which had like a metal grating over it, so someone tipping one chemical in at one end could mix with another chemical being tipped in at the other end, and suddenly there'd be a bad smell and you'd all have to get out the lab quick!" David Alcock



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## The Faces & Places

Pictures (top to bottom):

1. Vic Wells (left) and John Riches assisting David Stevens in the X-ray research lab, 1976.
2. Ken Sheldon, 1970. Copyright Keith Davidson.
3. Technical Service Team, 1975. Copyright Keith Davidson.
4. Technical Service Team, London, 1988. Copyright Keith Davidson.
5. Mike Moore, Amateur Products Specialist, 1970. Copyright Keith Davidson.

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