

“The fuel tanks for the rockets were just across the road from where I worked.

Highly volatile stuff. It was known to freeze in the winter and steam in the summer. The steam was the more worrying and the fire party was sent for. The little wagon duly arrived, two men each side to operate the pump. Cooling water played over the tank soon restored order.

We could all breathe easy again - we would not be blown to kingdom come!”

WORKING AT HIGHDOWN



“One of the most important jobs at the test site was recording what happened to the rocket during test firing.

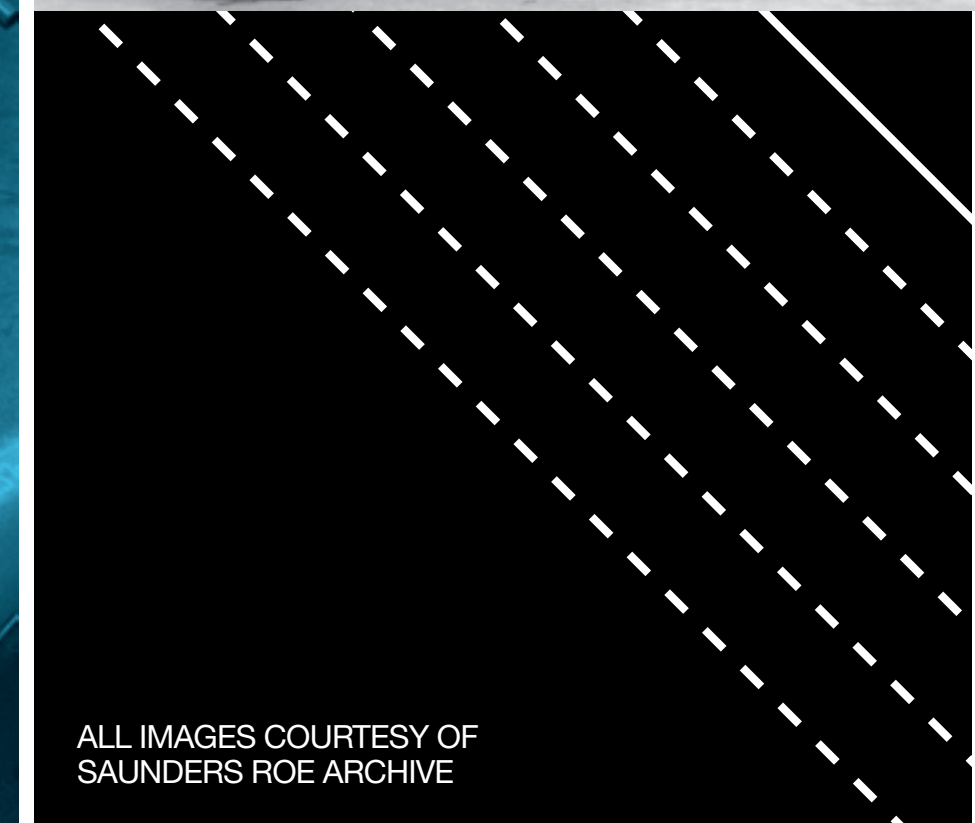
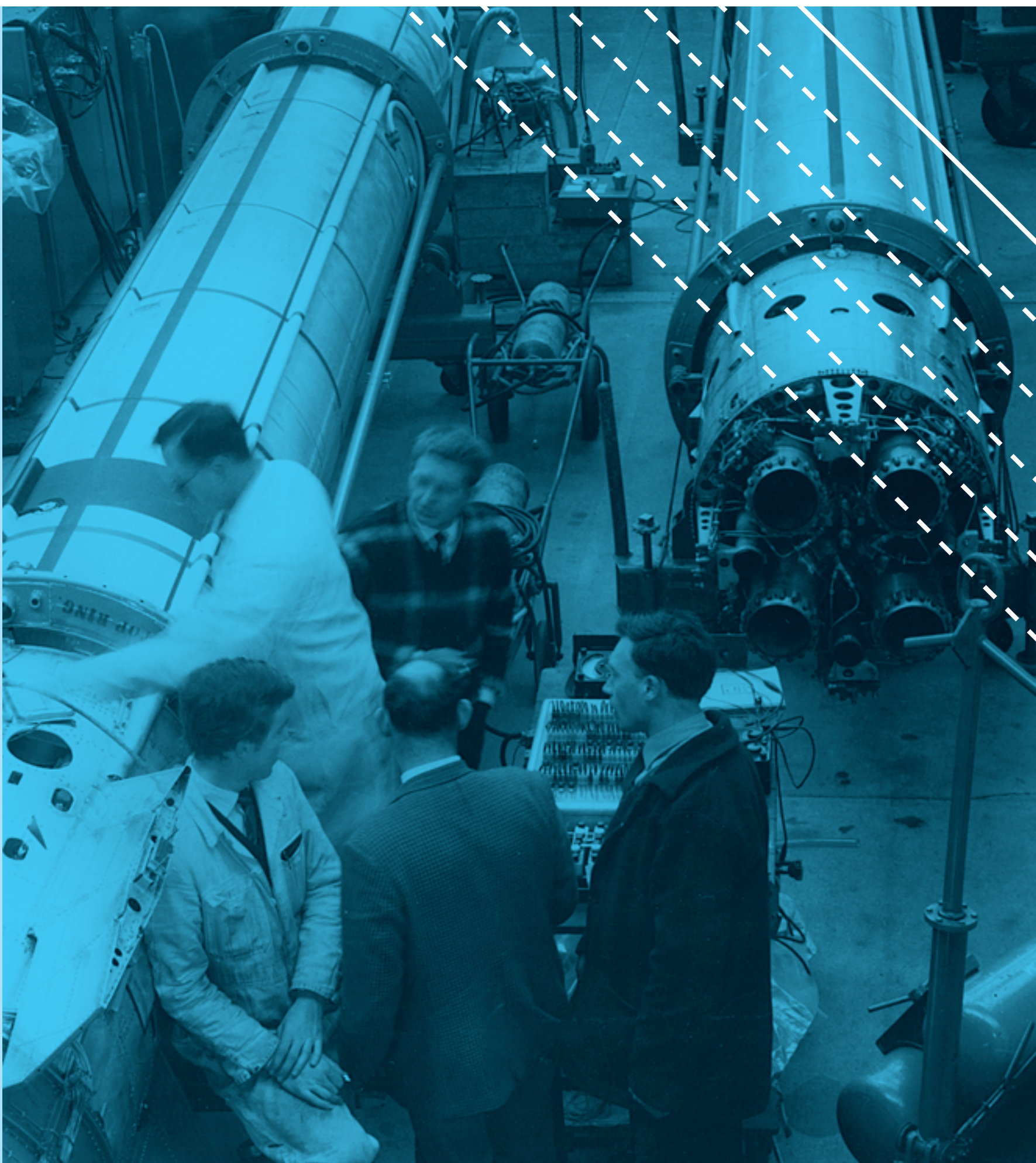
A team of people were employed to process hi-tech electronic data and take photos of corroded screws and warped components.

All the information was used to find any problems and help make the next rocket even better.”

THE MEMORIES OF HEATHER FRISE PHOTOGRAPHIC ASSISTANT 1961-1967

“The rocket site was a fascinating place to work. The 200 or so people employed there might have been viewed as a rather mysterious bunch by many local people. They were though a largely happy band, working at the cutting edge of British technology on a remote windswept cliff.

Working conditions were not always easy. The wind could often reach speeds of up to 100mph on the exposed headland. The big winter freeze of 1962-63 made the journey to the site particularly hazardous. Cars and buses had to edge up the narrow icy road to the headland, knowing that only a few yards stood between them and the swirling waters of Alum Bay 300 feet below.”



ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF SAUNDERS ROE ARCHIVE