

eCHO

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CULHAM SCIENCE CENTRE & HARWELL BUSINESS CENTRE

JULY/AUGUST 2000

Harwell expansion programme unfolds



The two-storey building will be a flagship development for the company, located on a two-acre plot to the south of the Harwell site, outside the boundaries of the perimeter fence.

Construction is likely to take between nine and twelve months, including interior finishing to suit AEAT's special IT requirements. A key feature of the development will be purpose-built training suites where customers who have purchased AEAT software can visit Harwell for induction tuition.

Staff from two divisions of AEAT's Engineering Software business - CFX and Hyprotech - who currently work in buildings 8.12, 8.19 and 404 at Harwell, will move to the new offices. Some 180 staff will be accommodated.

"The new building is very good news for AEA Technology and the Harwell International Business Centre," comments Susan Adams, AEAT head of property and facilities. "It will provide excellent modern accommodation for our success-

ful engineering software business as well as superb facilities to host and train customers from the UK and beyond."

The development forms the first phase of an unfolding expansion programme for Harwell which will include the development of existing buildings, new commercial offices, new amenities and ongoing site improvements.

Speaking about the project, Ian Rodham of UKAEA's

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This Month

Drugs alert



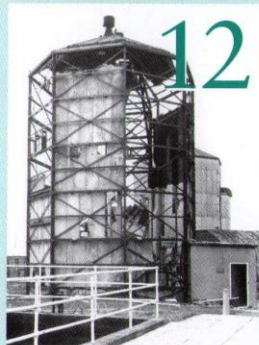
Musical heirloom



Peaks conquered



Celestial towers



from page 1

central property unit, said, "AEA Technology is already a major tenant at Harwell and we are extremely pleased that the company has chosen to make this important investment in the site. The development represents a significant milestone in UKAEA's plans for the regeneration of this world-renowned centre for science and engineering.

"Looking to the future, economic indicators suggest that the county will consolidate its strong position as an influential

location for science and technology businesses," continues Ian. "The government's recent decision to locate the £550m synchrotron light source at Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, ensures Oxfordshire's future as a world centre for research and development."

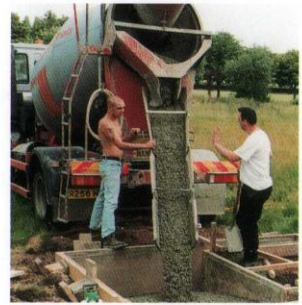
Harwell International Business Centre has a 'development ceiling' of 240,000 sq m - 2.5m sq ft - for new and existing space. A comprehensive master plan is in place to cater for organisations looking for a headquarters location or new

privately developed office or research space.

As well as large-scale developments, Harwell encourages the growth of smaller companies. The Harwell Innovation Centre, a joint venture with Oxford Innovation, is the county's largest business 'incubation centre' offering some 28,500 sq ft of space.

The new development will be managed by ProLogis Developments Ltd. The development site will be accessed via a new spur road in between the two roundabouts on Fermi

Avenue. Disruption to staff will be kept to a minimum during the construction period.



Start of phase one construction work to build the new electrical sub-station.

Architects, Richard Johnson & Associates, have designed a brick building with a pitched roof, sympathetic to the local environment.

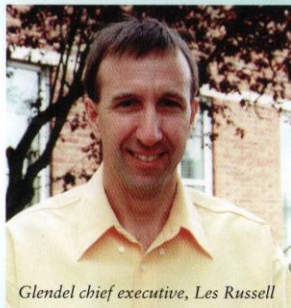


• Harwell Innovation Centre •

The Harwell Innovation Centre is now home to six companies. Two, namely Stop Press and NPL, were mentioned in last month's ECHO. Since then, the following businesses have chosen to locate at Harwell:

Glendel Ltd describes itself as a novel drug delivery company. Its technology - using human red cells as the delivery medium - was based on work at the University of Ulster in Coleraine, where the company has a science incubator unit. Les Russell, chief executive, chose to locate the administrative headquarters at Harwell because he lives locally and felt it was important to be able to access Oxford's established biotechnology network. The innovation centre also provides high quality serviced accommodation suitable for meetings with investors and potential collaborators.

Micro Medics MED designs, develops and arranges manufacture of equipment for the urology and gynaecology markets. Managing director, Fred Davis, had been running the business from a purpose-



Glendel chief executive, Les Russell

built office at home in Harwell village. The company was formed four years ago and now employs five staff, specialising in urinary disorders. With over three million women in this country alone suffering from incontinence there is substantial demand for the company's products. Sales in the UK are made through the company's own sales people and overseas through a network of agents.

Molecular Simulations Incorporated (MSI), is a leading provider of molecular

• INsight •

modelling and simulation software for both life science and materials science research. The company's computational chemistry software is used by chemists and engineers at R&D facilities world-wide to organise scientific data, share information, and develop, analyse, and simulate novel compounds and processes. MSI has its corporate headquarters in San Diego, USA, and a European HQ in Cambridge.

SECOR Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of SECOR International Inc. of the USA, one of North America's leaders in innovative environmental management. SECOR provides a full spectrum of environmental and engineering services ranging from initial site assessment through corrective action plans and site closures. For further information contact Dr Frank Dennis, managing director, on 01235 821403.

Year end highlights

AEA Technology has published its results for the year ended 31 March 2000. Financial highlights can be summarised as:

- Turnover increased 2.3% to £366m
- Adjusted operating profit increased 4.4% to £35.3m*
- Adjusted profit before tax increased 5.1% to £31m*
- Adjusted earnings per share increased 3.6% to 25.6p*
- Recommended total dividend of 11.1p per share, up 6.7%

* adjusted to write back the amortisation of goodwill of £1.3m

Air traffic safety deal

Air traffic over the UK is increasing rapidly and more than £100m is invested in new and updated air traffic control equipment every year to deal with the growing number of aircraft. This equipment requires thorough assessment to ensure it meets the needs of the aviation industry without compromising safety.

Under a new five-year agreement AEA Technology will supply experts in aviation and risk assessment to National Air Traffic Services Limited (NATS). AEAT staff will provide safety management advice and help during the design, implementation and maintenance of new air traffic control equipment. AEAT's Consulting business has been providing support to NATS for several years.

D-Day dead remembered

Over 250 people attended a wreath-laying ceremony at Harwell to commemorate troops who took off from the wartime airfield to land behind enemy lines in Normandy in June 1944 on the eve of D-Day.

The ceremony was arranged by Jim Hooper, an ex-UKAEA staff member between 1955 - 1982. Fifteen colours of the Regimental Glider Pilots, Parachute Regiment and Oxfordshire units of the British Legion marched to the memorial stone, led by Alan Ryder, from Princes Risborough playing the bagpipes. Colours were dipped as Joanne Grealy, from Abingdon Brass, played the Last Post and Reveille.

Among the veterans was 82 year old Sam Field of 52nd Oxon

& Bucks Regiment and latterly Harwell's building section, who had taken part earlier in the 60th Dunkirk re-union. Sam's niece Pat Napper, of UKAEA's legal department, accompanied him. Also present was ex-Staff Sgt. Maurice Herridge, one of the original glider pilots who took off from RAF Harwell.

The ceremony formed part of a millennium weekend of entertainment including a pensioners' tea party and sing-along, a 1940s dance and 'songs of praise' event.



Air Commodore David Vass, from No.2 Group in High Wycombe, laid the RAF's wreath.



Veteran Sam Field who was accompanied by niece, Pat Napper of UKAEA.

MRC knighthood

Professor George Radda, chief executive of the Medical Research Council has received a knighthood in the Queens birthday honours for services to biomedical science. He came to Oxford in 1956 from Hungary and explored the use of nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) to investigate complex biological material. As a result of his work a magnet large enough to accommodate the human body was installed at Oxford's John Radcliffe hospital in 1983. He is a fellow of Merton College and the Royal Society and has been awarded many prizes and accolades in his field.

Kids on

Three coaches, carrying 120 children from Sutton Courtenay Primary, Culham School and St Nicholas in Abingdon enjoyed a day out at the Science Museum thanks to UKAEA and other sponsors. Rita Atkinson of AEAT was organising secretary for the Sutton Courtenay Fun Days which included the trip as part of its activities. "Some of the children had never been outside Oxfordshire before and certainly got a lot out of the visit. For some reason they were particularly interested in the Victorian water closets!" says Rita.



New classrooms for Gambian school

Gordon Harrison, manager of the Fusion special purpose workshop, would like to thank everyone who helped him achieve his goal - to build two classrooms and a library at a school in the Gambian village of Serukunda.

In the October issue of ECHO last year, his appeal was featured. Having visited the Gambia on holiday he was astonished by the rudimentary education facilities - the only school had nearly 3,000 pupils, 57 classes and 29 classrooms. He began a personal campaign to raise funds to build

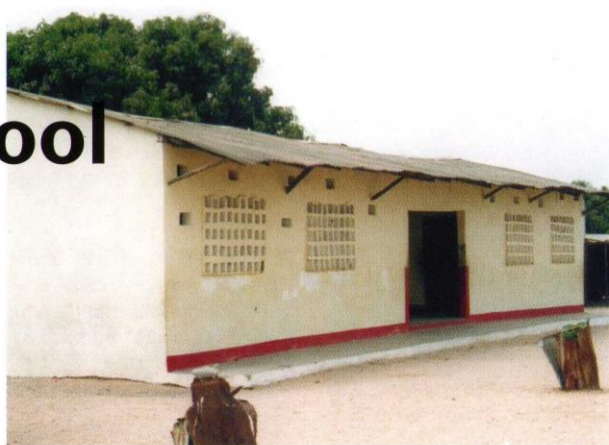
another block and, just six months later, the project is complete. The classrooms will accommodate 50 pupils each and the library is a valuable new addition for the school.

Gordon visited the school at Easter and, although the children were on holiday, received warm thanks and generous hospitality from the headmaster.

However, Gordon is still appealing for reading material to stock the library. The pupils often have to learn English from company publications. Any children's books - for ages 5-14 years - would be very welcome. Gordon is putting together another consignment which he will forward to the school. Stationery is also needed, such as pens, pencils, rulers, chalk, etc. Gordon can be contacted on C3468.



Headteacher, Ousman Baro, treated Gordon and his wife to a traditional meal at his home.



The building has thick walls and obscured windows to keep out the excessive heat.

User no. 1000

A project to study the weather conditions that determine the number of chicks successfully reared by hen harriers is the thousandth to access a national database of weather and atmospheric measurements hosted by RAL in Oxfordshire.



The Centre for Hydrology and Ecology (CEH) has joined forces with the RSPB to collect data on harrier breeding in Scotland and will combine this with rainfall and temperature statistics from the British Atmospheric Data Centre (BADC). Findings will be compared across Europe to determine the best breeding conditions for the species.

The BADC holds data from a variety of sources including satellites, balloons, aircraft, computer models of the atmosphere and ground-based instruments from the UK Met Office. Information is accessible free to non-commercial research projects following registration. BADC services are centred around on-line access via the world wide web at <http://www.badc.rl.ac.uk/>

eCHO Brief

Coffee morning

The World's Biggest Coffee Morning is celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2000 and is aiming to make it the best-attended event to date. Last year coffee morning hosts raised a staggering £2.2m for Macmillan Cancer Relief at over 23,000 events including some at Culham and Harwell. This year's date is 29 September. For more details about how to take part write to: World's Biggest Coffee Morning, FREEPOST (RG172), Bracknell, RG12 1ZX.

European Car Free Day

This novel initiative on 22 September is highlighted on the Environment Agency's environmental challenge calendar 2000. For more information telephone 01932 828882.

New bus passes Culham

Oxfordshire County Council has placed a new four-year contract with Thames Travel to improve the bus service from Abingdon to Dorchester, Shillingford and Wallingford which passes the entrance road to Culham Science Centre. From 26 June the 139 bus will stop on the relevant side of the main road at the Culham Science Centre entrance. For a timetable contact Thames Travel on 01491 874216.

Surveying at Harwell

A project by UKAEA to de-license parts of the Harwell site involves a three-week period of environmental monitoring from 3 July. The pilot zone covers an area from the main gate to B60 and the H9 lagoon and will involve temporary closure of certain routes. Later in the year further surveys will be carried out with borehole and trial pit excavations. For more details please contact UKAEA property management.

A first for CERN

Sixth formers, science staff and particle physicists from RAL joined schools from around Europe in logging in to the first live webcast from CERN, Geneva. The students were excited to learn first-hand about antimatter and how it is made and used at the European Laboratory for Particle Physics, CERN. RAL scientists Dr Michael Seymour and Dr Tim Adye were on hand to answer questions. The RAL link-up followed a year-long collaboration with St Augustine's school, where sixth formers are developing physics web pages for use by younger children.

Scaling the problem of drugs and work

A couple of years ago a young and promising trainee scaffolder began to suffer absenteeism, longer periods of sickness and became unreliable at work. To the shock of his employers the arrival of a probation officer revealed that he had become addicted to heroin.

The experience of witnessing a life of potential become one of despair in a matter of a few months was deeply distressing for everyone who knew the victim. His employer was so affected by the situation that he founded The Eiger Corporation



plc which provides solutions to drug and alcohol misuse in the workplace.

James Hill is chairman of a scaffolding company called OIC Group based on the North Culham Estate. His guiding ethos is that a company's staff are the only asset that will relentlessly appreciate in value through continued investment in training.

He was prompted to set up the Eiger Corporation because he realised that the current system for helping drug addicts completely excludes the employer and that many managers may miss warning signs through ignorance.

"When you consider that 65% of people entering the workforce aged between eighteen and twenty-five admit to having used drugs - and that doesn't include the ones who have tried drugs but deny it - you

realise the potential scale of the problem," says campaign director, James Goff. "Our aim is to intervene at an early stage so that drugs, rather than people, are driven from the workplace."

The organisation's work encompasses establishing drug and alcohol policies, training, testing, counselling and rehab. A charity called the Eiger Foundation has been set up to provide support to young people whose lives have been blighted by drug abuse - by themselves or their parents. Their ambitious mission is to remove the desire for illegal drugs by the year 2015, principally by working with schools.

The Eiger Corporation staged a free seminar at Culham Science Centre earlier this year for Thames Valley based employers. Speakers included James Hill, Mark Goff, Paul McCabe of Oxford-based Energy and Vision who spoke about how drug addiction had affected him, and Detective Inspector Ian Robinson, drugs co-ordinator, Thames Valley Police, who presented an overview of the battle against illegal drugs and what employers can do to help.

For more information contact Mark Goff on 01865 408064 or email mwg@eigerproject.co.uk

Tomorrow's business stars



Young tycoons who formed a successful business called 'Zeal' which made a profit of more than £600.

A zeal for wire flowers helped pupils of St Helen and St Katharine School beat other hopefuls to take the Young Enterprise title in this year's Oxfordshire final. Sponsored by UKAEA and hosted at the Culham Science Centre, young entrepreneurs aged 15-19 from schools throughout the county competed to win a place in the south-east finals. Beyond this winners will attend the European finals in Germany. The scheme involves youngsters forming and running a company for a year including product development, sales, marketing and financial reports.



(from left) James Hill, chairman, and Edward Wood, CEO, Eiger Corporation plc, with Keith Hellawell, the government's anti-drugs co-ordinator at a breakfast meeting in London.

University reaches out

Oxford University is setting up a new unit to give local businesses a 'one-stop service' in their dealings with the University. The Business Liaison Unit (BLU) will forge new links between the University and high-tech businesses in the Oxfordshire area.

Steve Moss, head of the UKAEA's central property unit, is the UKAEA's prime contact with the new BLU. He said "The new unit is a welcome development and one which I hope will encourage contact between Harwell-based organisations and the University. I was pleased to show Joe Barclay and other key staff from the University around the site recently and I think they were impressed by the type and diversity of the work of the resident organisations."



Grassland displays

The complex history of the Harwell site has led to the current 'map' of wild flower grasslands, many in surprising places and often missing commonplace species.

The displays this June were memorable with drifts of pyramidal orchid against ox-eye daisies and hop trefoil above the RAF wartime runway beside Frome Road. Near the Meashill plantation there was also a carpet of birdsfoot trefoil with stemless thistle - otherwise known as picnickers' nightmare! - and lady's bedstraw, greater knapweed and cowslips going to seed on the edge of the Mound behind B521.

Wildflower grass mixtures have been used successfully to

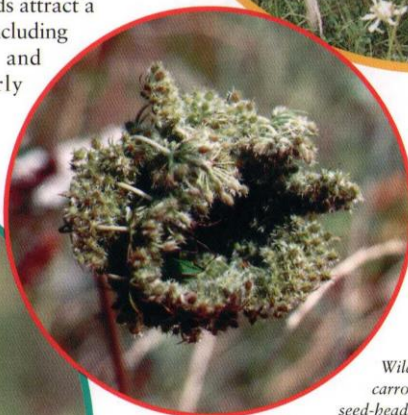
create diverse grassland across the site. Species include alsike clover, sainfoin, kidney vetch, yellow and white melilots, black medick and wild carrot. More permanent plants include ox-eye daisy, lesser knapweed, yarrow, musk mallow, meadow buttercup, self-heal, marjoram and common St John's-wort. Common blue butterfly and grasshoppers can also be seen. Wild carrot seed-heads attract a variety of insects including ladybirds, earwigs and some spectacularly marked shield-bugs.



Drifts of pyramidal orchids and ox-eye daisies



Bee orchid with unusual lip pattern photographed by Bill Temple outside B329.



Wild carrot seed-heads attract many insects.

NEW ORCHID FIND

As the project to map the locations of orchids on site has progressed site management has been able to bring in more orchid-friendly mowing regimes. As a result this year has been a good one for orchids on site.

For example one of the White helleborine colonies has produced about 350 spikes this year compared to 130 last year. One interesting development has been the appearance of a Bee orchid outside B329 which had a very unusual lip pattern, as the photo shows.

This year has also seen another orchid added to the list of those found on site - namely the Common twayblade. Some of the Common spotted orchid seedlings planted around the lagoons should be in flower now, even though they were not really expected to flower until next year.

The news has not all been good however as one of the two Common twayblades found has been dug up illegally, even though the digger was risking a fine of up to £5000. This same maximum fine is also applicable to other wild flowers dug up illegally.

The site has extensive grassland areas that require a carefully planned mowing regime in harmony with the life-cycles of wildflowers. Colonies of various orchids across the site and the newly created wildflower meadows require grass-cutting at specific times to help seeding and propagation.

The Sovereign approach

Sovereign Catering is the new name behind the catering arrangements at Culham Science Centre. The company was founded ten years ago by managing director, Peter Green. Sovereign is part of the OCS group of companies, a privately owned family business founded 100 years ago. Sovereign has a culture focused on building highly motivated contract-based teams who are dedicated to the provision of quality service to customers. The company believes that its greatest asset is its people and has developed a 'commitment to excellence' programme. At Culham they provide fresh food, deli bars, coffee shops, retail outlets and non-genetically modified foods. Sovereign is keen to hear your views so that the company can continually develop the range of services and products on offer to meet your needs. If you would like to give your feedback and suggestions please call Peter Green on 020 8756 5330, email: sovereign.c@dial.pipex.com



Sovereign's policy includes use of non-genetically modified foods.

Old violin gets Ruth tuned into the past

The restoration of an ancient violin will help Ruth Harper restore the fascinating story of her great grandfather who crafted the instrument during spare hours as a lighthouse keeper off the Scottish east coast.

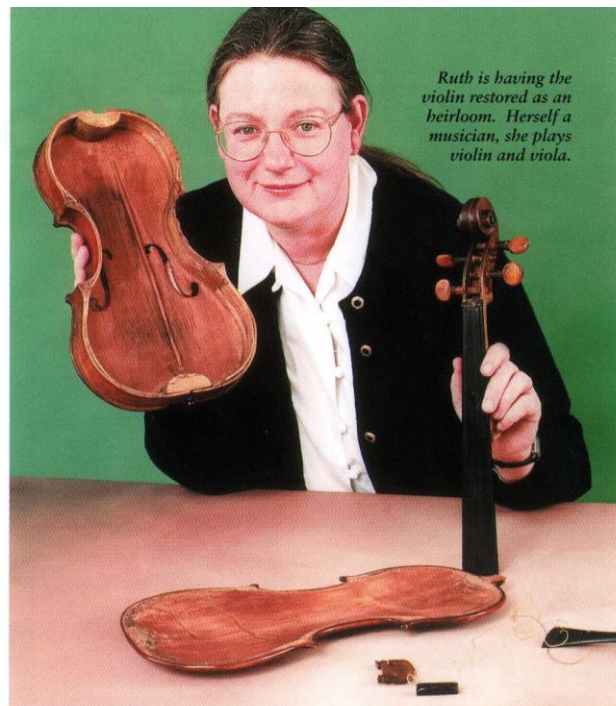
Ruth, who works as a team leader for AEA Technology's sensors and micro systems operation in H8, was given the instrument by her grandmother, a self-taught musician. At the age of eight Ruth was desperate to play the violin and the instrument played an important role in her tuition to become an accomplished violin and viola player. Today she regularly plays lead violin with the Wantage orchestra and plays viola for Oxford Sinfonia. Ruth still has a book of traditional Scots music which belonged to her grandmother and loves rediscovering her musical roots in informal gatherings.

Her great grandfather's violin is sadly in several pieces but this has revealed an inscrip-

tion he wrote inside. It confirms he made the instrument between 1900 and 1905. This and several articles he wrote for the People's Journal - a Dundee weekly paper - have given Ruth a wonderful insight into his life as a principal lighthouse keeper.

Robert Clyne was born in 1858 and took his first station on the Isle of May lighthouse at the age of 20. He was to spend nearly 40 years at different lighthouses including Langness, Rattray Head, Bell Rock, Butt of Lewis and Cromarty. Ruth believes he would have educated himself in many fields to occupy his erratic off-duty hours. An average shift was four hours on, four off. The work was physically very hard, operating the oil lamps, open to the elements, to warn passing ships of the treacherous coastline.

Over the years he wrote poetry, crafted objects and furniture in wood and metal and, in the Scots tradition, even made his own golf clubs and constructed a couple of holes beside one of



Ruth is having the violin restored as an heirloom. Herself a musician, she plays violin and viola.

the lighthouses on which to swing them! He also played an important role in early wildlife conservation. Birds were often attracted to the flashing light and Robert began to keep records of their number, ringing them to check migration patterns.

While stationed at Bell Rock - built by Robert Stephenson senior - his wife and seven children stayed on the mainland in the Signal Tower. Incredibly, wives would often use semaphore to communicate during separation. History shows that Bell Rock has always had a 'fiddler' and this may have prompted Clyne to turn his

talents in this direction. It was the first instrument he had made and incorporated maple for the back with a softwood front.

According to Newbury violin-maker and dealer, Philip Brown, the instrument has the look of a Scottish fiddle. Philip will be carrying out the restoration work for Ruth who plans to keep it as an heirloom. She has no need to play it, already owning a violin made in 1784 and a treasured new viola which Ruth recently bought from Philip because 'it is beautiful to look at, feels wonderful and produces a sound like vintage port!' she says.

When the violin fell apart Ruth discovered the inscription 'made at Bell Rock Lighthouse, Jan 1905, Robert Clyne'.



Robert Clyne was to spend nearly 40 years on lighthouse duty and discovered creative talents including violin-making.

Stay alert to road safety

Despite its rural location, the Harwell and Chilton sites are extremely busy with traffic, whether on two or four wheels, or on foot. Journeys across the site reach their peak during the rush hours.



PC Kevin Thorne who will be pleased to tackle any road safety queries you may have.

In numerical terms, some two thousand people work at Harwell every day and a further two thousand people travel daily to MRC, NRPB and the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory site. There are also about 350 visitors and deliveries daily, arriving in anything from cars and vans to 30-ton articulated lorries.

The message from UKAEA Constabulary is 'please don't switch off your road safety skills as you pass the police controlled entrance gates. The highway codes, laws, and regulations still apply. Be aware of people and traffic around you and keep safe'.

To help keep you safe, and within the law, UKAEA will be providing further information on road safety, highlighting any problems that may occur at the



Harwell International Business Centre. This information will address the concerns of the site tenants, whether pedestrians, cyclists, motor cyclists or car

owners. Should ECHO readers have any areas that they would like tackled, please contact Police Constable Kevin Thorne of the Constabulary.

Hyde Park hike raises Phab funds

Members of Phab, the charity that unites physically handicapped and able-bodied people, held a 'heartbeat hike' around the Serpentine lake in London's Hyde Park in June. Taking part, for the third time, was Stuart Full, who works as an administration assistant for UKAEA in B521. Stuart, who joined the authority in 1989, is a founder member of the Vale of White Horse branch of Phab and is area representative on the Oxfordshire committee. He attends his local Phab meetings every Thursday. Stuart raised over £100 through sponsorship by friends and colleagues which will go towards funding a cruise for Phab members on the Thames.

Phab is a charity that works to integrate people with and without physical disabilities through innovative projects and activities. There are approximately 20,000 members and nearly 500 local clubs. Phab works through social clubs, courses to develop people's potential, holidays and events.



Rolf Harris is Phab president and joined in the 'hike' around the Serpentine.

Quiz night in Dave's memory



(from left) Judith McDonald, Anne Maynard, Deniese Willis, Joy Coddling, Jenny Gibbard, Cleve Forty, Wendy Coombes, Nathalie Morris and Jenny Wagborn.

A successful fundraising quiz night was organised by the Culham Social Group (CSG) in memory of Dave Codling, a founding member of the group, who sadly died last year. Some £672 was raised for Imperial Cancer Research Fund.

Quizmasters Julian Hawes and Cleve Forty worked their way through 14 rounds of questions on diverse topics including 'guess the foreign language', 'define obscure words', dingbats and film themes. Of the 16 teams, the winner was 'Morland's R.I.P.' The wooden spoon went to Cosmic People who did well considering their oldest team member was about 11.

Lots of people at Culham donated raffle prizes ranging from

pot plants and bottles of spirits to a toy bus. Homebase DIY store in Abingdon also donated £10 worth of raffle prizes.

A cheque was presented to Natalie Morris of ICRF by Joy Coddling. ICRF fund an oncology unit at the Churchill Hospital, Oxford and have other units at Hammersmith, Cambridge and Leeds, with a research unit at Claire Hall. As the UK's second largest cancer charity 90p in each £1 donated goes to research.

Harwell cyclists trail-blaze local route

Harwell cyclists took part in a number of local events during the week-long Millennium Festival of Cycling in June. On national 'bike to work day', nearly 70 cyclists joined organised group rides to work from as far as Thatcham and Stadhampton. In the evening members of HarBUG (Harwell bicycle users group) enjoyed a ride to Sandford Lock, using part of the National Cycle Network route which links Oxford, Abingdon and Didcot via Milton Park.

The grand launch of the first 5,000 miles of the National Cycle Network took place on Wednesday 21 June 2000. The official ceremony in Birmingham saw culture secretary, Chris Smith, formally opened the network. During the day, Sustrans supporters and Sustrans' local authority partners rode the whole of the network in a series of bike rides which were called the 'longest ride' being on the longest day of the year.

Local cyclists took part in celebrations to mark the

official opening of the national network by trail-blazing a potential future cycle route from Wantage to Didcot via Harwell. Riders included members of HarBUG, CTC Wantage section and supporters of Sustrans.

The mayor of Wantage and local councilors gave the riders a warm send-off from Wantage Market Place. Ride leader, Steve Swanton of AEAT, gave a brief address and presented a commemorative plaque to the mayor for Wantage Town Council. The route of about 10



Pre-ride briefing by leader, Steve Swanton of AEAT, watched by Wantage mayor, Jenny Hannaby.



Steve leads riders into the Harwell site via the Auldfieds Farm bridleway.

miles was predominantly off-road, following bridleways and quiet country lanes and took about two hours to complete.

Although the bridleways and the path beside the railway are negotiable, significant improvements are required to make them suitable for all-year cycling with all types of bikes and for all levels of cycling experience. Oxfordshire County Council has allocated £22,500 in this year's budget for cycle routes to Harwell, so there is a good chance that cyclists will see improvements in the near future. HarBUG is involved in discussions with the county and site manage-

ment to identify schemes that will bring greatest benefits from available funds.



Celebratory cake provided by Didcot Town Council.

For more information contact
 Marcus Jones 01235 433519
 marcus.jones@aeat.co.uk
 HarBUG web site:
 www.come.to/harbug
 Sustrans: www.sustrans.org.uk

Triathlon triumph

Under cool grey English summer skies over 130 brave competitors set off on the second Wantage triathlon. The event was once again sponsored by UKAEA and entry was a third up on last year. Among the beginners were Mike Bailey from NRPB and son Graham who demonstrated that, within reason, all ages can compete. Mike entered as a 'super-vet' (over 50) and Graham as a junior (under 18).

Mike reflects that there were many highs and lows, literally and mentally, as both the 35km bike ride and 11km run went over the Downs. "The last length was hard, being alone in the pool

as the rest of the first batch of 24 starters were out and on their bikes. However, to my amazement, I overtook half a dozen on the ride. The descent into Wantage was sheer exhilaration, but minutes later my legs were struggling to adjust to running, with the prospect of the steep climb up to the Ridgeway still three miles ahead."

Mike achieved his personal goal of completing the run without resorting to walking and, as a bonus, was not quite last. For those sorry to have missed it, there is a good event for beginners in Newbury on August 27 and the First Faringdon Triathlon on September 17.



Graham, as the only junior to enter, took the category prize, but in a respectable time and 25 minutes ahead of his father.

Six pairs of boots... Three peaks... One challenge!

In early June, Philip Agg of AEA Technology Consulting joined five family and friends to attempt the national 'Three Peaks Challenge' to climb Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon (the highest peaks in Scotland, England and Wales respectively) in the space of 24 hours.

The event was organised to raise funds for the Special Care Baby Unit at Wycombe General Hospital - where Philip's son Kieran was cared for last year during the early weeks of his life - and BLISS (Baby Life Support



On the summit of Ben Nevis.



Baby Kieran - in Philip's arms - welcomes the team at the finish.

Systems), a registered charity that donates life-saving equipment to most of the 253 neonatal units in Britain. A total of more than £3000 had been raised and anybody wishing to make a donation is invited to contact Philip on extension 3945 at Culham. Phillip recounts events,

"We duly set off up Ben Nevis at 5pm on Friday in the knowledge that we ideally needed to be up and down within five hours to keep on schedule. The weather turned out a treat, and with its upper slopes still coated in snow, the view from the summit of Ben Nevis was quite stunning. However, viewing time was limited and we made it down to Glen Nevis by 9.40pm, tucking into welcome bacon 'butties' before heading south. We then had our luckiest moment. A lorry literally rolled off the A82 south of Fort William and the road was closed for 90 minutes shortly after we passed through while the authorities brought in a crane to 'right' the lorry.

"The Scottish weather proved too good to last, and Cumbria greeted us with cloudy skies and drizzle. Arriving on schedule at Seathwaite the team set off up Scafell Pike at 3.20am. We followed the demanding 'Corridor Route' and, as dawn began to break, the going certainly got tougher. However, we made it to the cloud-coated summit by 6am, before the short, steep descent to Wasdale Head. Feet and legs were now becoming painful.

"The weather continued its decline as we reached North Wales. With four hours to

spare, we duly set off up the Pyg Track. The path turns quite steeply for the last thirty minutes of the climb, and the physical pain, coupled with heavy rain and low cloud, were now taking their respective tolls. However, we made it to the summit of Snowdon by 3pm. After a quick rest in the Summit cafeteria, and with spirits raised, we all managed to hobble down to Pen-y-Pass car park in a total time of 23 hours 50 minutes! The combined senses of pain, relief and total elation blended into one, as a large welcoming party met the walkers".

eCHO Brief

Chilton Field update



The third in a series of UKAEA newsletters for members of the local Chilton community has just been published. It explains about UKAEA's plans at Chilton Field, the RAF catapult pit and the Southern Storage Area. To request a copy contact Paul Atyeo at UKAEA on 01235 432387.

Retirement thanks

Joyce Pickering, who worked for JCL mainly in the Stores and latterly in the Post Room, B424, has retired after 22 years at

Harwell. She would like to say thank you for the retirement gifts she received including garden vouchers and a beautiful basket of fresh flowers and goodbye to everyone she couldn't see before leaving. Joyce will be spending the summer months tending her large garden and, her husband suggests, learning how to use the lawn mower!

Ridgeway Speakers Club

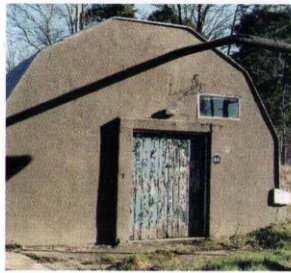
The Ridgeway Speakers Club in Abingdon provides a friendly environment for the complete beginner to become an effective speaker. It offers members the opportunity to develop their inherent ability - not by rules alone, but by practical experience in a friendly and encouraging atmosphere. Meetings begin at 7.15 for 7.30pm in the Guildhall, Abingdon on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Call George Gallagher-Daggitt (01235) 848288 for further information.

Harwell Laboratories RECREATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Change of address

The Harwell Laboratories Recreational Association has moved. It is now located at B455, Maxwell Avenue, Harwell. The telephone number remains unchanged, H3296, or email sec@recsoc.freeserve.co.uk

Celestial towers



End-on view of B44 laboratory.

The demolition of two innocuous sheds last month marked the closing chapter of the curious tower-shaped structures used by the RAF at Harwell during the war. The small brick structures, known as B43 and B44, were all that were remained of RAF Harwell's "Celestial Navigation Trainers".

Located 100 metres to the west of JCL's B344 offices once stood three octagonal-shaped towers. Wartime navigators trained in them to fly using the stars. In the blackness of the windowless towers, mock-ups of the night sky were projected onto a high circular ceiling, rather like today's planetariums.

Trainee gunners also used the towers. Strapped into a swivelling gun turret the gunner had to follow a quickly moving spot of light projected onto the

ceiling. He did this by using a second light source fastened to his gun mounting and the training greatly improved his reaction times.

Following the take-over of Harwell by the Ministry of Supply in 1946, B43 was adapted as a temporary home for a Van de Graaff accelerator. Harwell's only fatality occurred through a fall from the top of one of the towers being used in a scientific experiment. Two of the towers were subsequently demolished in 1966 and the third one rebuilt at the rear of B353, where it survived in its original shape until the late 1990s.

Meanwhile the adjacent single-storey sheds were re-roofed and used as laboratories for electronics work and stores for associated radioactive isotopes. UKAEA finally decommissioned them, after 60 years' varied use, earlier this year.

Demolition!



The three RAF training towers in 1962.

Midsummer reception

Around a hundred local people attended a midsummer evening reception hosted by John Wilkins, UKAEA head of Harwell site. The guests included parish, district and county councillors and representatives from Harwell/Chilton campus businesses, schools and the Harwell local liaison committee. During the fine summer's evening the guests were entertained by Margaret Scruby playing on a Paraguayan harp. Also present were representatives from RAL, RGIT and the Environment Agency.

Christine Dunsdon (left), headteacher of Chilton Primary School, John Wilkins, and deputy head Alison Ashcroft.



Pictured from left are Maureen and John McKeown (CEO, UKAEA) and Liz Morris, clerk to Chilton Parish Council.

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