RANK XEROX

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Vision

The house magazine of Rank Xerox Mitcheldean

Well set for 1993

Site director Gerry Lane draws attention to the Blue Book 'Managing for Results', which sets out specific objectives for each of the business areas. A summarised version of this has now been issued to all employees.

"THE CHANGE of organisation and move to a focussed factory concept is, I believe, one of the key developments of 1992, and is the way forward for the 1990's."

So said site director Gerry Lane in his introduction to the Year Start meeting of the management team held on Friday, 6 November, in the RX Business Services conference centre.

"It has allowed us to achieve better quality results, and is working well, though it needs a full year before expectations are fully achieved."

Looking at 1992 performance, he said it had been a year of mixed results but with some "very good stories", especially concerning employee satisfaction, safety and absence, "the best full year results we have ever achieved".

The Business Excellence Certification and European Quality Award were major highlights, and the European Data Centre (see page 5) was a big confidence boost to Mitcheldean.

We had launched three new programmes which had gone extremely well (better training was a big factor here), and they had attracted a lot of favourable comments.

There has been high strategic investment in EMC/interconnects, parts manufacturing and reprographics, and "we must continue to look at ways of offsetting reductions in volume and ensure improvements are not lost because of unplanned costs," he said.

There had been much more staffing flexibility and "the feeling is that people are ready to be involved, to share ideas."

Keith Grant (material & asset management), Kevin Horrobin (reprographics) and Dave Wood (electronics/interconnects) gave presentations on the past performance and future objectives of their functions and these are featured in the following pages.

Summarising these, Gerry emphasised: "As Manufacturing Operations, it is up to us to support the Business Divisions and provide them with competitive products. We have set ourselves new goals," and he shared some of the objectives of these with the management team.

Achieve delighted customers - "We have seen how A*delta*T can give us significant opportunities through waste elimination, and we now have to intensify the use of root cause analysis. Keep asking the question 'Why?' and it is surprising what answers you come up with."

Employ highly skilled and motivated people working in an environment to which others will aspire - We are in the process of developing self-managed work groups, he said. Improvements are also being made in critical skills planning, development process and training while as regards health and safety "we are probably the benchmark today - let's keep it that way."

Achieve benchmark product cost - Gerry warned: "We must think more about the impact on the total business as regards cutting cost to ensure we make the right decisions. We must eliminate waste using 'management by fact', not perception. Benchmarking is a big must for 1993 and improving tool acquisition and control processes presents a significant opportunity."

Achieve customer-driven speed and flexibility in delivery of products and services - We would be investigating an 'order to install' pilot in each plant linked to the supply/demand process – "There's no reason why we can't do it on all our lines." It was also intended to introduce supplier training in A*delta*T on the basis that "if we can help improve productivity within their business, they can give us a better service with improved competitive prices."

Be the productivity leader in all that we do – Employees' suggestions must be encouraged – some of the best ideas come from the shop floor. "We must drive for more vertical integration and that means more funding - if Mitcheldean can achieve a good financial position with no adverse costs, then funding will be available for us."

Achieve competitive advantage through environmental leadership and social responsibility – Waste reduction efforts, recycled packaging, suppliers' 'green' processes, optimisation of recycling will all help.

Gerry gave six breakthrough strategies to focus on in 1993: waste elimination (including supplier processes); self–managed work groups; training to close performance gaps; people, and process, certification; and visual controls.

"We aim for 1993 to be a year of significant productivity gain with Big Wave, asset management and motivated employees being the key enablers to that end goal."

Full attention from the management team in the conference centre.

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Kevin Horrobin – "We want to engage your talents and enthusiasm."

The Big Wave

Kevin Horrobin, manager, reprographics business centre, devoted his presentation to this major initiative and the improvements that it is intended to achieve.

HOW DO we make our products more desirable? And, since cost is key to their desirability, how do we reduce that and improve UMC (unit manufacturing cost)?

The answer is, in Kevin Horrobin's words: "Through a line–centred Kaizen policy – gradual, unending improvement involving everyone doing 'little things' better; setting – and achieving – ever higher standards."

Assembly operations are responsible for the product and its improvement, the productivity and the cost. Everybody else is responsible for supporting those assembly operations, and they must ask themselves: "Are we contributing to the product desirability?"

If not, they should be questioning what they are doing and why. Everybody should go after continuous improvement through Kaizen, and that involvement will accustom them to a process of change, said Kevin.

And changes there must be, in order to achieve increased build flexibility and the elimination of waste.

Product build and machine flow

We have to move away from the traditional progressive flow lines to line configurations which provide greater flexibility.

"We want to integrate new build and recycle assembly on the same product line and this is not possible with our present system.

"By centralising material and kitting it to the station 'ready for use' we can ensure that we efficiently utilise reprocessed parts. And as we put machines through the line, a kit will travel with them. These kits will contain a mixture of new and reprocessed components.

"With parts provided immediately in front of the operators, instead of behind them, we can minimise operator movement and reduce standard times on all our main build lines."

The new layout will be achieved in two phases: the first during the Easter break when two lines in building 1 will be reconfigured; the second when the two other lines are reconfigurated in the spring holiday.

"This will give us the flexibility we want plus other significant productivity benefits such as: better use of space for production instead of material storage; improved control of floor stock; and maximising the use of 88P311 (multinational packaging).

"We will be able to colour–code kits and, as they go out, new build can follow recycle and we can have model mix within the line."

At a later stage, there will be opportunities for material distribution by AGV (automated guided vehicle) and automated machine movement.

Quality control

Our QC policy must move from a defect containment and corrective mode into a defect prevention mode, said Kevin. Instead of an array of SPC charts, our emphasis in '93 will be on strengthening assembly process certification covering material, people, methods, tools and facility, so eliminating and/or controlling process variability.

Human resources

"We want to ensure within reprographics that we are working with our people. In conjunction with the bargaining unit representatives we're looking at a joint performance feedback and development system for all employees which is fair and just, and shows respect for the individual. We seek to employ people who attempt to achieve higher standards on their own, and work constantly to achieve continuous improvements and eliminate waste.

"We need people with common goals, whose attributes are directly aligned to the product desirability. We want people with enthusiasm, and a workplace that fosters the shaping of ideas.

"We really do feel that placing value on those who steadily perform – as well as the high flyers – is also important to us all."

Asset utilisation

Another big challenge which Kevin identified was maximising the utilisation of asset recycled parts and assemblies while protecting the environment.

"We have worked recently with Fuji Xerox and we are developing a routine where we can have an exchange of resident teams. We believe that, as a result, we shall have a common understanding and a partnership will develop, not just on design for manufacturing assembly but also on our recycling needs and the needs of the business."

Cost management

"Through the centralisation of kitting it will be possible to segregate waste more effectively and so help to eliminate landfill, and we do need to engage employees on environmental teams for waste control.

"We want to move away from managing the outputs to managing and controlling the inputs, and the challenge will be to eliminate non–value–added activity and tasks in such a way that we can understand better the complexity of our business, and can introduce processes to control the 'cost drivers'."

New product introduction

"We are engaging far too late in the product delivery process to influence the design. We must get involved at least a year earlier on new products that the product delivery process asks us to do.

"We are also going to improve control of the product start–ups to an extent where we achieve a mature quality target from day one."

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Plant, customer and marketing relationship

As a consequence of the foregoing, "we need to achieve better interface with the customer by direct communication and plant involvement, at all levels, in OpCo customer satisfaction reviews," said Kevin. "The OpCos are working with us to understand our plant processes and we, in turn, to understand theirs."

With plant build flexibility improved through mini flow–lines, better plant material flexibility is required. Reprographics has to steady down from a configuration variability. "We have already engaged on specific plans so that materials can improve their delivery and cost performance with our vendors.

"It is clear that build stability is very important if we are all to meet our quality and cost targets.

"To this end we are working with our marketing colleagues to obtain better forecasts, and with logistics management to better understand how many finished products there are in the 'supply chain' between us and our customers.

"With this information we expect to be able to make more balanced decisions on changes to production programmes, without allowing excessive build–up of finished goods or parts inventory."

Implementation

The Big Wave thus comes in eight segments and teams are being formulated to implement these.

"All we are doing is appropriate to the direction in which we want to go. However, it too is capable of change for the better, and we encourage people to get involved; we want to engage your talents and enthusiasm."

Any news for Vision?

If you have, then please —

mail it to me in bld. 5/2,

or leave it at main reception for collection by me,

or post it to me at Tree Tops, Plump Hill, Mitcheldean GL17 0EU.

or ring me — ext. 566 or Dean 542415.

Myrtle Fowler, editor

Organisation changes

THE INTEGRATED supply chain functional responsibility for equipment, parts and supplies within Rank Xerox has been consolidated within RX Manufacturing.

This was one of a number of important organisation changes recently announced by Bernard Fournier, Rank Xerox managing director.

Shrawan Singh has become vice president and director, Rank Xerox Manufacturing and Supply Chain, reporting to Fournier.

The directors of the manufacturing operations at Lille, Mitcheldean and Venray — Pierre Coppernolle, Gerry Lane and Frans Stollman — report to Shrawan Singh, as do Allan Vickery, director, RX supply chain; Bob Fletcher, manager, materials; Graham Sweet, manager, process development & information management; Bernard Morris, director, human resources; David Maw, financial controller; Toru Nozaki, manager, central manufacturing resource & technical development; Charles McCann, manager, quality; and Andrew Smith, manager, licensing & joint venture operations.

Further organisational changes being made include the appointment of Kevin Horrobin as manager, asset recycling, as from 1 May, 1993. Kevin will report to Allan Vickery.

'Investor in People' success

WITH THE start of the New Year came the good news that Rank Xerox Mitcheldean had received formal recognition as an Investor in People through the Gloucestershire Training & Enterprise Council, acting on behalf of the Employment Department.

This followed the visit of GTEC assessors to the site in November last; they assessed our performance against the national standard in people development - a benchmark against which companies can measure their achievements in putting people at the heart of their business strategy.

Gaining recognition is a public endorsement of our commitment to and competence in the development and training of Rank Xerox people.

We'll be featuring the story behind this latest plant success in the next issue of 'Vision'.

Trophies for top trio

THREE RXMP employees went forward to receive prizes from Lady Edna Healey at the Royal Forest of Dean College prize-giving on 11 December.

Nadina Pensom received the Manpower Services Commission trophy for the student judged to have achieved 'the most outstanding results in any field of study' for her work on NVQ level 2.

"All the units related to my work placement, and ranged from text processing to health and safety," she told us.

Nadina Pensom

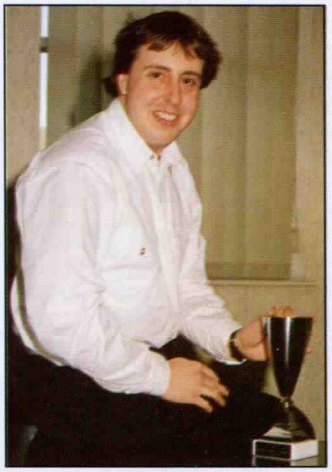
Now embarked on NVQ level 3, Nadina first came to us for work experience and joined as a trainee two years ago. Today she is employed as project assistant on John Overbury's technical team in building 1.

The other two cups - the Travers Metal Products Cup and the Rank Xerox Cup - were won by Mitcheldean staff for the second year running.

This time it was **Peter Bamford** who brought back the Rank Xerox Cup awarded to the best student on the BTEC national certificate course in electronics engineering.

When he came to us from Welwyn he was given the opportunity to undertake this study and, he says, "it helped me in my line of work, which involves putting boards through a machine test and repairing them in the EMC test & diagnosis section."

The Travers Metal Products Cup for the best student on the BTEC national certificate course in mechanical production engineering went to **Douglas Dobbs** for 'outstanding comprehension of his course'.



Douglas Dobbs

Doug first joined us as a supplementary worker in recycling's dismantle & clean section and it was then that he had his first opportunity to undertake further education towards gaining a BTEC national certificate.

He left in mid-1990 but, returning to his job as a quality inspector some months later, he was invited to continue the course. He moved to assembly work and is currently an inspector on the 5320/22 line, working in building 1 like his father Ken (MED) and "we interact occasionally", he says.

"My studies have made me more aware of how the quality system works and I've been involved in several improvement projects."

He is now into the first year of a two-year HNC course at GlosCAT.

Peter Bamford

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We must be more competitive

DAVE WOOD dealt with the electronics/interconnects business, picking up the most critical points from 1992 going into 1993.

TRACING EMC's journey from its transfer to Mitcheldean in 1990, Dave highlighted the integration of EMC materials and interconnects, the re-emphasis on convergence, the focus on internal suppliers, the formation of a benchmarking study team and the '93 business plan approval.

"Our challenge for '93 is to minimise the cost of electronics, thereby making machines more competitive whilst achieving our quality and delivery requirements.

"In terms of high technology assemblies we *are* competitive and, I think, world-class in certain important aspects. Low complexity assemblies is the end of the business where we have some work to do. We must maximise the benefits from the integration of PWBA/ interconnect business and deliver a competitive interconnect facility, which calls for radical changes."

It was important to utilise the valuable asset of employees and here communication and space were the two areas requiring particular attention, he said.

On quality, the message was "we must work more closely with our design and reprographics colleagues, continue the progress made with suppliers and keep up the high standards as regards procedures, ESD, house-keeping, etc."

Dave Wood — "Our challenge is to minimise the cost of electronics."

Delivery was becoming a much more demanding statistic for '93 with changing configurations and reductions in leadtime presenting quite a significant challenge. "All the soft tooling used to be handled by external suppliers - EMC have now taken on that task," Dave added.

There had been some $4-5 million investment over the past two years (and he quoted the environmentally-friendly nitrogen flow-soldering process featured here). "We must capture planned productivities and continue to seek further opportunities for investment to improve the process as necessary."

Dave presented an overview of the metrics of the electronics/ interconnects business and targets for 1993, and gave those present clear details of the size of the business ($56 million).

"Business spread is also changing. For example, electronics/harness shipments to our colleagues in Mitcheldean reprographics exceed $25 million. This makes them our biggest value customers, a position traditionally held by Venray.

"We live in a very competitive environment; we must be positive and concentrate on the things we do well - and we will succeed."

Soldering conversion saves all round

SWITCHING TO environmentally-friendly processes can often add considerably to running costs.

But a major development that is taking place in the EMC is not just environmentally advantageous; it is also generating significant reductions in operating costs, improving quality, reducing maintenance and releasing much needed production space. It's safer, too.

We're talking about the conversion of three conventional flow-soldering machines to nitrogen soldering, which commenced in December.

Commissioning of the first of these is due to take place during February following the installation by Electrovert, the machine manufacturers, early in January; conversion of the other two is planned to take place this summer.

The most visible part of the nitrogen retrofit package is a hood which fits over the solder pot in the soldering machine, enabling oxygen to be replaced by a nitrogen atmosphere.

Since there is then no oxidation, a very low solids flux, which is safer and easier, can be used.

This in turn means there is no need for cleaning of the PWBAs after soldering - flux on the back of the board is burned off as it goes over the solder pot.

Team members involved in the installation (1. to r.) Dale Parker, Frank Mooney (quality control), setting operator Steve Uppington, operations manager Guy Rainforth, setting operator Rob Scrivens and QA manager Derrick Cherry.

With oxygen, 'dross' is formed on the surface of the solder pot. "In an average day we produce a one inch thick crust of it and it's quite useless to us," says Dale-Martin Parker, the senior process engineer responsible for the project.

The new technology practically eliminates dross, with a resultant saving in solder and in operator time. An automatic feed continually monitors the level of solder in the pot, ensuring it remains constant - again saving solder.

"Since there are virtually no residues, we don't have to wash the boards with demineralised water so the water treatment plant can be decommissioned and there will be no waste water to tanker away off-site. Disposal costs are very high, so this is good for economy and ecology!

"And because we don't need to bake boards after washing, there's a further saving in electricity and space."

Rank Xerox is among the first UK companies to be involved with this new development and a great deal of preparatory work had to be carried out.

Says Dale: "We visited other sites where nitrogen flow-soldering was installed in laboratory conditions and had our own boards thoroughly tested before making a decision."

The nitrogen used in the process is supplied by BOC (who, incidentally, were one of the four European Quality prize-winners at the recent EFQM Forum when we carried off the top award).

Dale Parker lifts the lid off the new spray fluxer.

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The EDC, viewed from the east; on the right can be seen the pink-wrapped material being used for the sealing and insulation of the roof which will finally be grassed over.

Landscaping of EDC site commences

STAFF AT Mitcheldean cannot have failed to have noticed the changes to the former plateau at the northern end of the Rank Xerox Business Park.

Despite the bad weather experienced over the last few months, design and build contractor Wates Integra has made good progress and the concrete shell of the European Data Centre is now complete.

Internal works are progressing well and the mechanical and electrical services installation, which forms a substantial proportion of the contract value, has commenced.

The philosophy has, from the start, been to use local companies wherever possible and this has been done. W. F. Giles of Cinderford, EMP of Mitcheldean, Landrell Fabric Engineering of Chepstow and All Mass Cladding of Bristol are all integral members of the project.

Very shortly the first section of landscaping works will commence. In total, 140 semi-mature trees and in excess of 4,000 small trees and shrubs will be planted to complement the surrounding area, and to replace the small number of trees and shrubs disturbed by the construction works.

Wates Integra will hand the building over to Rank Xerox for specialist fitting out works to commence this autumn.

Guy Rainforth operates the control panel for the nitrogen supply; with him is Derrick Cherry.

Coupled with the smaller amount already used by building 5, it represents a significant order, and this enabled electro/mechanical commodity manager Dwight Lally and Amanda Peters, a member of his purchasing team, to negotiate a very favourable bulk supply contract.

The rocket-like insulated tank installed at the eastern end of the EMC building stores the nitrogen in liquid form at a very chilly -196C. Before use it goes through a warm-up process and is then piped as a gas into the soldering machine.

Fumes from the process are, of course, scrubbed before being released into the atmosphere – a procedure which applied to the old system.

Fitted in line with the converted flow-soldering machine is another impressive piece of equipment - a new spray fluxer for coating the boards prior to soldering.

"This is the best method to ensure that the low solids flux is applied evenly over the surface of the PWBA," Dale told us.

The system operates only when it detects the presence of a board, and "we can programme the controls to the correct spray pattern, so we can save about two-thirds of the flux previously used."

As well as introducing this new technology the conveyor system for bringing boards from hand assembly has been modified.

As section manager John Shields explained, "a control panel is used to direct the flow of boards, via turntables, to any one of the three soldering machines.

Amanda Peters (purchasing) puts the BOC nitrogen tank into perspective.

"This gives us greater flexibility - we now have six instead of three modes of distribution."

And that will improve quality even further.

Setting operator Mark Fisher directs the 'traffic' of boards to specific flow-soldering machines.

Xmas Greetings via XTV

FIVE GROUPS of people were able to exchange Christmas greetings face to face with family and friends across the Atlantic - for free - thanks to our XTV network.

During the afternoon of Sunday, 6 December, the Mitcheldean participants gathered at the times arranged with XTV co-ordinator Brenda Walshe, and Margaret Boseley (Gardner Merchant) served them mince pies with cream and hot and cold drinks, which added to the party atmosphere.

Brenda gave each group in turn a rundown on the procedure in the video-conferencing facility, after which she left them to chat in private with their contacts for about 15 minutes. Phil Birch and Huw Thomas (IM) were also on call to give any specialist support required.

QA engineer Tim Davies, Roger Gee (5317 subs) and Keith Jones (new technologies) all had links with Xerox Square, Rochester.

Tim had the biggest party of the afternoon with ten people this end and six more in Rochester. Said Brenda, "It would have been worth having the scheme for them alone, they enjoyed it so much."

Keith, his family and a mutual friend from Gloucester had a happy reunion on screen with some American friends they made when Keith was resident in Rochester.

"Neither friends nor family had had exposure to this technology before and they thought it wonderful. We were all impressed, too, with the hospitality shown on both sides of the Atlantic," said Keith, who is a regular XTV user.

Roger brought along his girl-friend, Patricia Pollard, who works on the 4235 line, and they had a chat with his mother who told them there was snow 'over there'!

Dave Bromage (MED) made contact with Webster; his wife, Mary Catherine, is American, and she was able to talk with her sister.

Brenda herself got through both to Welwyn (where her son, Peter, is in charge of the XTV facility) and Leesburg (her sister lives in Fairfax, Virginia) - so it was a three-way meeting.

"It was especially nice because my sister had never seen my grandson; at 18 months he was the youngest participant of all," Brenda told us.

"Everyone so appreciated the opportunity it made it well worth running the scheme. I hope they will spread the word and we shall have more joining in next year."

Better connections

THE XTV facility has been considerably enhanced recently – to provide dial-up connection to other XTV rooms and third party videoconferencing facilities via the public telephone network, and also provide the capability to allow participation in an XTV session (speech only) via a telephone link-up.

The room audio equipment, too, has been extended to allow easier participation from the rear platform as well as the presentation position.

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YEAR START . . .

Keith Grant, manager, material procurement & logistics, talks through some of the plans for 1993 for increasing the use of our material assets.

Making best use of our assets

RECYCLING IS a fairly high volume business today and it is reasonably successful. But there are opportunities we don't pursue - and are now looking at - for maximising our material assets, Keith pointed out.

"For many years we have recycled products, following pretty much the same process. Carcasses come back from the field and are stripped and processed to get the product to the highest level possible, so that the finished machines install like new, look like new.

"Almost all the asset-recovered parts used today come through a recycling programme requirement, with a limited quantity of emergency demands because of difficulty in new parts supply.

"It is not standard practice that we use asset-recovered material. The quality of the recycled product is good in terms of install performance, but there are no guarantees about reliability. We have no understanding of the lifetime of the parts."

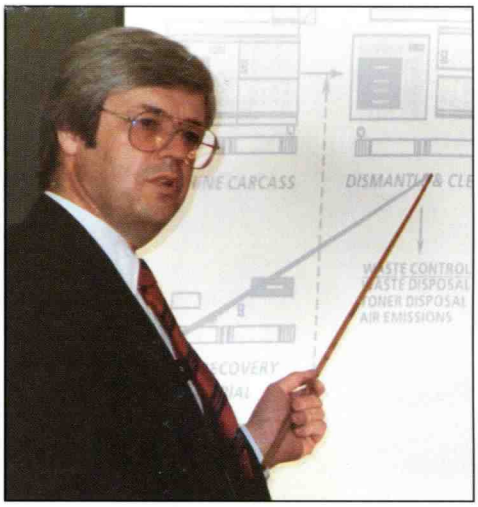
The solution is fundamentally simple. "It entails a single, common process applied to any field-returned assets, whether part or machine, so that they will join the incoming supply stream of material.

"To do this we are creating a new internal vendor who will be 'vendor quality assured' and will cover asset management and asset productivity (Vernon Smith has been appointed to head this function).

"Carcasses and parts from field operations and OpCos will go into our holding place in Hereford, where we also keep excess stock. In addition, we will increasingly bring in unserviceable inventories - that is, parts from copiers which have been replaced as spares.

There will be three uses for this material when reprocessed: for a recycle programme requirement; to go into the new build line; and as spares.

"Machines will be dismantled to a single, predetermined level. Carcasses at that constant



Keith Grant – "This will open up doors currently closed to us."

configuration and level will go into our new build line so, if one goes in at Op.40, say, it will look exactly like a machine coming from Op.30.

"The parts dismantled from such carcasses, together with similar unserviceable subs returned from the field, will enter the recycled material repair (RMR) operation where they will be repaired and tested to 'as new' condition.

"Such repaired material will be moved to the point of demand (spares packing or assembly centre) via the site's internal vendor-pull system.

"Details of the material will be held within the database and therefore be more visible within the Xerox world, thus increasing the use of such material.

"A few customers require 100 per cent new machines and we will be able to comply with that small percentage.

"Where terminal products exist, we can still recycle in the traditional way, but for current and future new products, we shall use the process described.

"This business is important, firstly, to make sure we maximise the use of assets and, secondly, to reduce the UMC of our products by avoiding buying new. This will offer a tremendous opportunity and open up some doors that are currently closed to us."

From an inventory angle, the challenges for 1993 are: to enhance the UK vendor base to enable JIT delivery, and work closely with CCM to improve materials and logistics flow.

"The cost of our new product UMC is still too high," said Keith, "and we can achieve cost-down in two ways: firstly, through product design (an element of the Big Wave initiative) and, secondly, through vendors.

"We must use the A*delta*T process to identify supplier leadtime and cost reduction opportunities - and some cash is available to help suppliers start making improvements."

Towards zero land-fill

"Our key environmental

Spares/export pack goes green

WELL, ACTUALLY the department has turned mainly brown, we noted, as we made an eco-tour of the spares/ export packing facility.

No sign of those snow-white plastic chips, hardly any Bubblewrap, but stacks of cartons, boxes and paper, all biodegradable.

"We don't use Jiffypad protective pads for parts any more, and we have reduced Bubblewrap by about 95 per cent," manager Keith Parrett told us.

"A year ago we bought in a Padpak machine on a trial basis. It proved so successful we now have five, one for each of the pack areas," he said.

This equipment manufactures protective packing on the spot. It takes mouthfuls of brown paper, scrunching up two layers of recycled paper with an outer layer of ordinary paper, and crimping them together to produce packaging in lengths varying from 2 inches to as long as the roll of paper itself.

Manager Keith Parrett shows the packing produced by the Padpak machine which Shirley Coopey is operating.

Jean Whittington packs fuser rolls, protected in tubes, into MN3 re-used boxes.

Section manager Richard Passey watches Joyce Hardy operate the semi-automatic bagging machine.

Says section manager Richard Passey: "It's a lot easier to use being more flexible, and it's a lot cheaper as well as being environmentally friendly."

MN (multinational) packaging, the standard set of cartons and pallets, which we featured in an earlier issue of 'Vision', is used for everything that goes to the ELC in Venray and Webster.

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control objectives are to get rid of all ozone-depleting substances (this will finally be achieved with the removal of the degreaser in the fuser roll centre) and to achieve zero landfill.

"Most of the clean paper gets recycled, but much of the general waste you see in stillages goes into a hole in the ground somewhere, which is socially unacceptable and expensive.

"Developments in building 1 will help segregation of materials and I would like to see significant progress towards zero landfill in '93 and completion by the end of 1994."

Keith spoke of several environmental initiatives already taking place.

"None of the plastics from CBA machines going through asset strip goes to landfill; all is regranulated. Some is sold off but the vast bulk is being turned into totes which we are recycling back to vendors.

"Toner from asset recovery is sold to a company who use it to colour the black, biodegradable plastic bin bags they make.

"We have a whole range of other things we want to get into - from process waste to plastic coffee cups and pocket calculator batteries.

"Mitcheldean aims to become the leading plant in developing environmental initiatives," says Keith. "An environmental steering committee has been set up and employees will be involved through working groups to help tackle this challenging task."

Top Team save consoles — and costs

"I THINK it has generally been accepted that the older a machine gets, the more expensive recycling becomes. We question that." So says engineer Ken Miles, a member of the quality improvement team 'Console Cost Savings'.

This was selected as Mitcheldean's 'Top Team' for 1992 because it demonstrated good initiative in identifying an opportunity, showed good teamwork and improved productivity by cutting costs and leadtime.

Now it goes forward to Leesburg as an RXM & SC candidate for a Corporate Team Excellence Award.

It was electrician Mark Bennett, another member of the team, who actually sparked off the project.

He noted that, as time went on, more and more consoles on recycled 5018/28 machines had to be scrapped and replaced by new ones, largely because of just one component - the cover to the LCD display.

Said Mark: "Ken had worked with plastics before, so I asked him if there was something we could do to reduce this wastage."

Ken and Mark, with section manager Brian Daughtrey, then got together with materials analyst Rob Butler, planner/buyer Sue Morgan and Dave Parkhurst (production purchasing) to seek an alternative to fitting 80 per cent new - and expensive - consoles to recycled machines.

Team members (from left) Brian Daughtrey, Mark Bennett, Sue Morgan, Ken Miles and Rob Butler.

Having tried out the process, Mark Bennett trains Rebecca Coleman to carry out console repairs.

New LCD covers alone were not available - at least not then. But the team were determined to bring that 80 per cent right down to 5 per cent.

As they pointed out, "The console is the most customer-important area - you never use the machine without looking at the display and pressing the buttons.

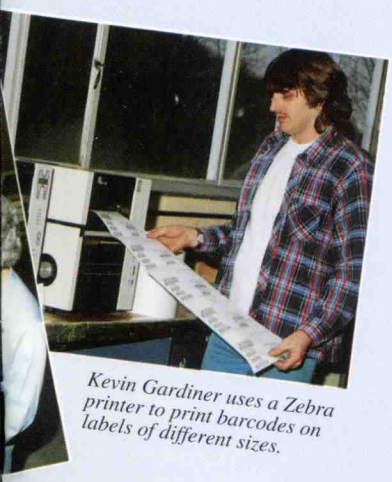
"We found that, of the four problem areas in recycling consoles, three - concerning labels, lamps and housing moulding - had been successfully sorted out. However, there was no satisfactory process available to remove the scuffs and scratches from damaged LCD covers."

The team identified two potential solutions: obtain supplies of new LCD covers, and generate a process to rework scratched ones.

The consoles come complete from a Far Eastern supplier, so an LCD cover was not identifiable as a separate component on the Mitcheldean materials system. "This meant we had to obtain drawings of the sub-assembly and extract a description of the component in order to locate a source of new ones," said Ken.

On the rework side, a recovery process was developed with a plastics company in Stroud who could save about 70 per cent of the covers by

Continued page 8



Kevin Gardiner uses a Zebra printer to print barcodes on labels of different sizes.

The boxes in this range retain lift-off lids but have been made stronger and collapsible so that they can be re-used either by ourselves or by our piece part suppliers.

For the 'uniques', there's a box-maker which makes any size box from 2 inches to 4 foot square out of cardboard. These can be either produced flat and built up and Sellotaped, or pre-built and either stapled or glued.

"We are looking to switch from a solvent-based glue to a biodegradable one," added Keith.

The workload varies dramatically from month to month. In November they put through around 1.1 million parts, ranging from huge blower motors and side panels for the 5047 to tiny screws; yet in October it was exactly half that figure.

Further help in increasing productivity has been provided by three semi-automatic bagging machines which have been installed over the past 12 months.

Each uses a reel of 2,250 bags (plastic, because the customers insist on it for their spares); these are labelled automatically with a barcode and part number (via a thermal transfer system) and each bag is presented open to the operator who puts the parts in, then presses a pedal, whereupon the machine closes the bag and seals it.

"We process in the region of 3 to 4 million parts per year," says Keith. "We once had a one-off order for 93,000, in different quantities. Done by hand it would have taken one operator six weeks to complete instead of the five days it actually took."

Of course, there are some unusual jobs which call for very individual treatment.

"For example, we sent an osteopathic bed from the medical centre back to the manufacturer; then there was the telephone booth which went to Venray for use on their site.

"But we did draw the line at a fire tender!" said Keith.

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Old tools bring new hope

WHEN ROGER Niblett (small batch) saw a piece in 'The Forester' about 'Tools for Self Reliance' he decided to lend a hand.

This national charity responds to requests from working people in developing countries for urgently needed hand tools, and Coleford churches were giving support as part of their annual 'One World Week'.

The newspaper article mentioned that unwanted tools could be taken to the Coleford Baptist Church building on a Saturday last October for refurbishing before being passed on to the charity.

Roger went along and was amazed at the pile of tools - over 350 of them - hammers, chisels, wrenches and saws; garden spades and forks; even a shoe-maker's last and a hand-plough with various attachments.

"But while there was no shortage of tools, apparently no one had offered to do any refurbishing," he told us.

"I took some to do at home, but I hadn't the necessary sand-blasting facilities which many of the tools required. I realised that it would take me weeks to make any impression on the pile."

He decided to ask for RX help, and went to see Charlie Walker (human resources). "He agreed that the company would sponsor the renovation work, using apprentice-power, and small batch section manager Bob Turner gave his support."

So a pile of rusty and, in some cases, damaged tools arrived in small batch. Under Roger's direction, apprentices Richard Wood, Matthew Whittington and Paul Manns set to work to give them a new lease of life - in the process gaining useful experience in milling, gritblasting, grinding and other operations.

In some cases the tools had to be mended or have parts replaced. Richard, for example, made a new spindle for the hand plough.

Pictured with some of the renovated – and rusty – tools are (from left) apprentices Richard Wood, Paul Manns and Matthew Whittington, and Roger Niblett (small batch) who initiated the effort.

Roger reckons that, to date, several hundred tools have been renovated. Said Sally Thomas, local co-ordinator and secretary of the Coleford Inter-Church Committee: "The tools are being taken to Southampton where they will be packed into kits for building, carpentry and mechanics respectively. Each kit will enable a group of four to six people, working together, to make a living.

"I can't say exactly where these particular tools will go, but the countries covered by the charity are Ghana, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

"The gardening tools, however, will be collected by a group called 'Support for Romania' and shipped out to places where they are needed (including the Striet Orphanage featured on the 'Challenge Anneka' TV programme).

"We are most grateful to Rank Xerox for allowing the use of their equipment, for assisting with transport, and for the services of Roger Niblett and his colleagues.

"Their help and hard work will allow these tools to quickly reach their final destination and enable people who had nothing to become self-reliant."

Top Team (continued)

polishing them so that they achieved the 'as new' appearance of the rest of the console.

Rework was cut-in in July 1992, while the necessary steps to obtain supplies of new LCD covers (from Singapore) were completed in time to enable these to be cut-in last December.

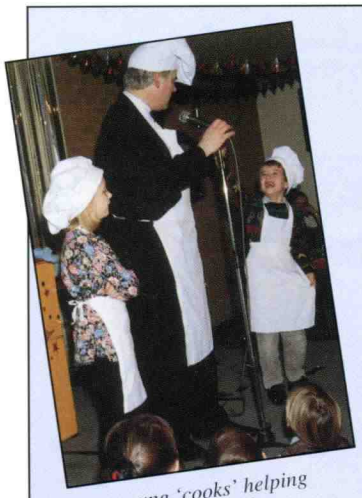
As a result, 75 per cent of damaged consoles can now be replaced by reworked assemblies, with just 5 per cent requiring new units.

Business quality and strategy manager Phil King, commenting on the project, said: "This is just one of the highly successful teamwork projects which are emerging at Mitcheldean, using the problem-solving process. The most notable thing about them is that they are capturing the best ideas of the people who actually work the process - not just the engineers and managers."

This happy outcome gives potential annual savings of around £150,000 with the possibility of benefitting other products and other sites.

PARTY FUN!

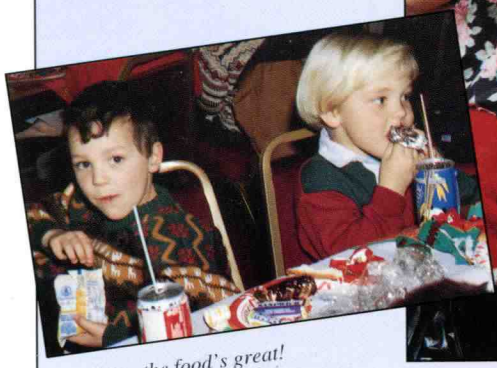
Happy 5 to 7-year-olds enjoyed a grand Christmas party in the clubhouse on 20 December.



Two young 'cooks' helping entertainer John Milner.

The rabbit was the star of Steve Crombie's magic show.

Santa had a gift for every child.



Tuck in - the food's great!

Hard work, this cracker-pulling.

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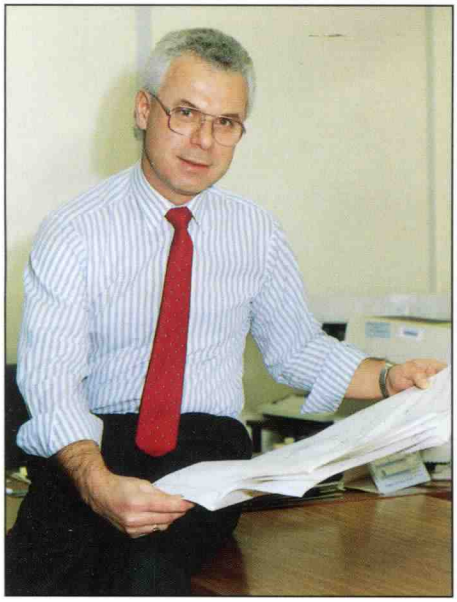
A man with a composite role



Ferruccio Marangon.

APART FROM his name, Ferruccio Marangon shows little sign of his Italian ancestry.

But he was only eight when, in 1957, his family came to England and settled in Coleford. Last year he went to visit relatives in Italy, confident he could cope with his native tongue. "I was quickly disillusioned when I was told I murdered the Italian language quite well!"

Engineering is, however, his professional language. While studying the subject at the then West Gloucestershire College, he did his apprenticeship with Fred Watkins (Engineering).

He came close to getting an early overview of industry - and Concorde - when he was involved in the modification of an overhead crane for the Filton workshops!

Today he gets an overview of, and involvement in, a wide spectrum of activities on site, from the re-layout of facilities to dealing with tenants.

For, this January, Ferruccio took over Mike Cooper's responsibilities for the duration of the latter's assignment with Xerox Egypt. These comprise the management of works engineering, the RX Business Park and the MEWS - quite a step up from his first job with us as a mechanical maintenance fitter when he joined in 1969.

His climb up the management ladder began when he was appointed supervisor of the mechanical maintenance team. Further promotion followed in the early '80s when he took over responsibility for mechanical maintenance work plant-wide.

Then, in 1984, his career path took an entirely new direction when he was invited to become an area personnel officer, working with the commercial and technical bargaining unit.

"This was a complete change for me. Beforehand I was working with objects; now we were talking about people - something rather more complex, I discovered!

"These were not the happiest days in the plant's history - we had to deal with extensive redundancy programmes at that time. However, thanks to good termination contracts, we saw many people starting up in businesses of their own, like our tenant EMP, which was founded by some of my former works engineering colleagues.

"From a personal development angle my time in the 'people business' did me a lot of good," he says, "but after three years I was happy to return to my old stomping grounds as maintenance manager."

Ferruccio now found the job broadening somewhat. While Mike Cooper managed the RX Business Park, he assumed responsibility for the MEWS. "This meant I had to become an estate agent and deal with leasing negotiations. I also took on the energy mantle."

The efforts of the works engineering energy-reduction team which Ferruccio led were recognised when they were elected Mitcheldean's Top Team for 1990.

"As part of the project we introduced more efficient energy, lighting and detection systems. We are now able to generate our own electricity and have adopted a more favourable buying policy for power."

Last June Ferruccio's title became shorter but his involvement even more wide-ranging when he was promoted to facilities manager. This incorporated all the previous responsibilities - maintenance, MEWS, energy, plus all civil contracts, cleaning, waste disposal "and a hundred and one other things."

Environmental issues are ever more important aspects of his work. "We are moving increasingly to clean processes - using biodegradable cleaning agents - and to product re-use. Boxes, MN packaging, white paper, cardboard - you name it, we re-use it or send it for pulping and recycling.

"All this saves on energy and raw materials, which is good for us and good for the country.

"We want people to think more about conserving energy at work, just as they do at home. For example, leaving roller-shut doors open, windows open, lights on and machines running when not required doesn't help our costs. 'Be switched on, switch off' is the maxim to bear in mind."

Ferruccio's chief interest when he 'switches off' from work is music. In fact, it's a family theme, but in Forest style.

Like his brothers, Benito (a trombonist with Lydbrook Band) and Alberto (who used to play cornet with Cinderford Swanbrook Band before returning to Italy), Ferruccio is a bandsman. He's played cornet and tenor horn for Coleford Town Band, and is now the band's secretary.

Various members of the Marangon family have worked on site, among them Ferruccio's wife Mary. They have three children and all are instrumentalists, too.

William (14) and Nancy (12) belong to Coleford Town Band and play cornet and tenor horn respectively, while Thomas (17) can play the euphonium but is currently busy studying to become an engineer like his father.

There's one other activity which Ferruccio used to enjoy - he was once a member of the Forest of Dean Bowmen. "I have a Yamaha Compound bow (not your Robin Hood type exactly), but my only claim to fame as an archer is that I was placed third after the first round of a national contest. Unfortunately I couldn't maintain that standard!"

Obituary

WE REGRET to report the death of **Eva Thomas** on 24 November at the age of 77. She was supervisor of the engineering print room and had been with us for over 11 years when she retired in 1975.

Birth

CONGRATULATIONS TO Tracey (harnesses) and Billy Malsom (paint shop) on the birth of their son, Reece, on 9 November.

Caribbean wedding

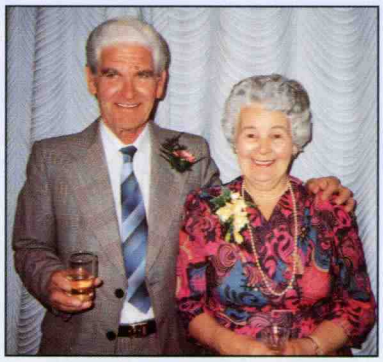
WINTER WEDDINGS can encounter weather problems; but materials analyst Nigel Wilce (recycle materials) and his bride, Karen Walding, who works in the European Patents Office on site, had no such worries when they were married on 20 November.

They had the ceremony in sunny Barbados in the grounds of their hotel, and resident guests were only too happy to attend. Karen had a bridesmaid and Nigel a 'best man', all part of the marriage package, and "the best man played us in on the cornet."

This was a very happy coincidence, for cornet playing features largely in the family. Karen's sister, Elaine, is the wife of Phil Turner (technical & quality manager, asset management) and all three are cornettists in Cinderford Swanbrook Band.

When the couple returned home, they had a church blessing to which they could invite family and friends - and this time it was Phil who played the cornet at the ceremony.

Nigel and Karen Wilce



Golden wedding

Congratulations to pensioners Ted and Peggy Simmonds who celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on 7 November at a party arranged for them by their family when they "danced the evening away".

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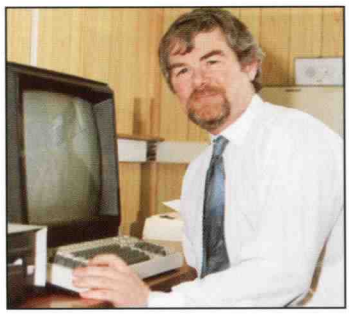
Service awards

30 years



Julian Shufflebotham

JULIAN SHUFFLEBOTHAM is best known on site as our Delta system specialist.

"It was the first computerised energy management system within Rank Xerox, and the second ever to be installed in this country. That was in 1976, since when it has been upgraded, expanded, and is currently saving us over £¼ million annually," he told us.

It has also been one of the 'stopping off points' for many an apprentice or IP student.

Julian was an electrical apprentice himself, and from the word 'go' he took off in a works engineering direction. From shift electrician he progressed to supervisor in 1968. He moved on to the engineering side in 1974 and "more or less stayed", devoting a great deal of time to energy conservation.

He's been instrumental in converting all three boilerhouses from oil to gas, and the recent generator project which he led, again a first for Xerox, is working very successfully, he told us.

"My time in engineering has presented many challenges - never two days the same - and that is why I have stayed in this sphere."

His latest challenge is acting as co-ordinator between RXMP and the contractors for the European Data Centre.

Julian's main hobbies are DIY and gardening, and he has his own cabin cruiser which he uses for trips on inland and tidal waterways.

25 years

Mike Carter's career has alternated between Welwyn and Mitcheldean sites. Actually it began at Elstree, where he joined the company as a quality engineer. He moved into photoreceptor production as manager, before coming to Mitcheldean as chief chemist in our works laboratory, which he later managed.

After becoming the site QA manager, he took charge of the Lydney satellite plant where the 2300 family was being assembled. Back at Welwyn in 1983, he held management responsibility for the ISC, then photoreceptor manufacture and eventually the EMC, transferring to Mitcheldean with the facility two years ago.

In October 1991 he joined the RXMO quality office and contributed to our application for the European Quality Award as a member of the Marlow and Venray interview teams on customer satisfaction.

Mike played hockey and cricket for the Lydney clubs during his first spell at Mitcheldean. Hockey umpiring is now his Saturday routine in winter.

He and his wife Mary have a family of three, including a hockey-playing son, James. Still at school, he was in the 1992 Midlands under-14 squad when they won the divisional hockey championships of England.

Daughter Marie is a nursery nurse near Ross while Sophie is in her final year at Newcastle University reading agricultural biochemistry.

Works engineering staff in building 5/1 have recently moved into a new and colourful location which, said **Geoff Duggan**, a member of the electrical team, is "a vast improvement on our previous one."

As chairman of the Sports & Social Club, Geoff is well known on site and he's very proud of what the club has achieved. "We've doubled our funds over the past four years, but I would like to see more support for club functions," he told us.

Geoff serves the community too - he's been a member of the Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service for 17 years and for the past six has run the Newent station. Being called out at 4am for a fire, helping to get a cow out of a ditch, then just time to grab a quick bath before coming to work - it's all part of the service!

He and his wife Mavis share an interest in gardening - "She looks after the flowers and I do the allotment." They have two daughters - Helen who was married last year, and Sharon who works in Barclays Bank - and a son, Andrew, who is taking a two years' course in electronics and communications at GlosCAT for his OND.

Geoff shares an interest with Andrew too; they are both members of Wolverhampton Wanderers and enthusiastically follow the Wolves.

25-year men - (from left) Mike Carter, Clive Burford, Tony Waltham, Roy Chamberlain, Geoff Duggan and Trevor Jones.

Gordon Jones has worked on various models in new build, from the 2400 to the 4000 and CBA families. About ten years ago he joined recycling, moving from CBA machines on to the 5090 high-volume copiers, most of the time on panel & pack activities.

His younger brother Alan, who also works in the 5090 area as an electrician, has been with us 14 years, and another brother, Trevor, employed in the machine shop, was 27 years with us.

Gordon was sorry to say goodbye to panel & pack colleague Bill Wyatt who retired just before Christmas. "He's been a very good friend and I shall miss him."

While he admires Bill's gardening skills (Bill won 11 cups this past year at shows), Gordon doesn't go in for gardening himself. Rather than get his hands in the soil, he prefers to get them inside things like TV sets!

After five years in the machine shop, where he became a setter-operator, **Tony Waltham** took the chance to transfer to the electrical side of assembly work. He's spent the past 20 years as an electrician working on mid, high and low volume copiers and today is to be found on the 5320/22 line.

He's currently in his third year studying for a BTeC in electrical engineering, for which he has day release.

Gordon Jones, another quarter century server.

But electrical work is not his sole interest. We suspect he is the only person on site who owns a juke box, for which he collects old 45rpm records, mostly of 50s, 60s and 70s music.

Tony and his wife Sue have a 12-year-old daughter, Tina, and when she wants to throw a party, the juke box neatly solves the music problem.

Tony likes to do a bit of wood-turning, and has been renovating his old house for the past nine years. "There's one room to go, then I expect I'll need to start all over again," he says.

Roy Chamberlain has spent all his quarter century as a machinist, originally in the old machine shop and, since 1970, in small batch where, he says, "we can make anything - within reason."

This ranges from fixtures and emergency parts for the line to, just occasionally, something more novel - like the model of an Indian temple presented to John Flynn last autumn before he left to take up an assignment in Modi Xerox.

Roy has been a safety representative for about five years in building 5/1 where safety glasses are mandatory, and absolutely no one gets through without wearing them "which makes me about as popular as a traffic warden!"

His wife Eileen worked as a cleaner on site until her retirement last September. Their daughter, Karen, is a buyer in purchasing and has recently gained her HNC, while son Neil is studying for a master's degree in electronics at Birmingham University.

Roy has artistic talent; he likes drawing and painting and is the resident cartoonist. "When I retire I want to branch out into painting landscapes in oils," he told us.

Clive Burford started on the assembly of the 2400 model, going on to FR&T in the 4000 family department. He joined recycling about 12 years ago, first working on the 5600, after which "we started picking up the small copiers," and today he is normally on final run and test of the 5028 machines.

Clive's wife Jean was once employed in the print room; his brother Dennis clocked up 30 years' service in the machine shop before retiring, "and I had two other brothers working at a different times."

20 Years

Twenty-year servers seen here are (l. to r.) Terry Hook (QA), Keith Johnson (MED), Chris Marriott (health & safety), Dave Wightwick (asset recovery engineer), Eric Payne (5047 assembly), Dwight Lally (commodity operations), Elaine Gwilliam and John Beard (both harness assembly). Others who qualified recently were: Mike Scriven (paint shop), Graham Morgan (fuser rolls), Dave Meek (4235 assembly), John Young and Rob Lewis (both QA).

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They shifted the engineer's image

The inner workings of a Xerox desk-top copier are explained.

A demonstration of gear assemblies.

"MESSING ABOUT with bridges, getting your hands dirty and mending engines."

This is the perception of engineering that a team of eight Mitcheldean industrial placement students successfully changed during a day at Heywood Comprehensive School in Cinderford organised through Rosemary Steer of the Forest Education Business Partnership (of which Rank Xerox is a member).

On 25 November, a day of appalling weather, our IPs transported a whole range of demonstration equipment, including two desktop copiers, to the science laboratories of the school.

Having consulted with Bernard Lewis, head of science, they had prepared a programme of projects covering appropriate areas of engineering which, he said, provided learning opportunities well beyond the norm for a science and technology curriculum.

Geared towards year 11 pupils, the programme was designed to persuade them that an engineer is not just "a person in greasy overalls, spanner in pocket and carrying a clipboard."

A video told the history of Rank Xerox; it was followed by a lecture on the xerographic process and the parts of a copier - which brought forth the comment from one pupil, "I thought that it was very simple. It wasn't complicated at all." Gosh!

Pupils took part in an exercise to demonstrate our illustrated assembly process, while an egg packing project, with constraints on design - such as cost, environment, size and protection - was much enjoyed since, as another pupil put it, "it involved using imagination and brains."

There was continuity testing of wire harnesses which the pupils made themselves, and the use of Techno Lego to construct predefined gear assemblies "was good because it showed us how the gears work in a car."

The day was a great success, judging from the feedback via a questionnaire. "Even if the pupils from Heywood do not aspire to engineering, there is no doubt that the stereotype of spanners and grease has been banished," reports Mathew Hinton.

The other members of the IP team, which was led by Siobhan O'Hagan, were Martin Brett, David Callaghan, Iain Deakin, Paul Griffin, Michele Lawlor and Stephen Oram.

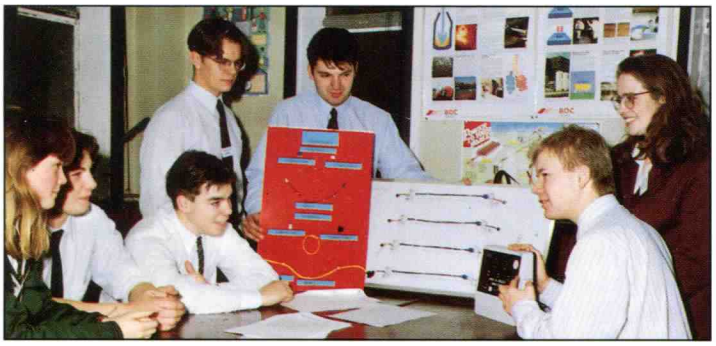
On 9 December the pupils were able to pay us a visit to see engineering practices in action.

While the whole project was still in the planning stage, Heywood, along with other schools, made a bid through the Education Business Partnership for a cash grant from car giant Toyota to develop science and technology within the curriculum.

"It was largely due to the fact that Heywood was already actively involved in a joint venture with Rank Xerox that it was one of four schools in Gloucestershire who were awarded grants," Rosemary Steer told us.

That made our IPs' efforts all the more rewarding.

Pupils see the continuity testing of wire harnesses which they made themselves.



Service awards (continued)

Clive sings bass in Drybrook Male Voice Choir along with Mike Salmon (MED), Malcolm Jones (materials) and other Mitcheldeaners, and at the time of our chat they were rehearsing for their traditional Christmas concert in the Forest Church.

"My two labradors keep me busy, too," added Clive.

Trevor Jones also works in building 12/2 - "It's where I started back in 1967 in the days of the 813, our first small copier." After that he went to Gloucester Trading Estate on sorter work, then to the satellite plant at Lydney where he was employed in the 660 sub-assembly press section.

"In fact, I've been engaged on sub-assembly and packing most of my time on site," he told us.

He's still involved with small copiers too, on the recycling side, and we found him surrounded by cartons and other packaging materials preparing 1025 and 5014/12 copiers for shipment.

For the past seven years, Trevor and his wife Marjorie have been enjoying Old Time Dancing and they take every opportunity to practise their footwork - they love ballroom dancing too.

Now get out of that!

EVERY YEAR our new intake of young people are sent on a 'Now get out of that!' course, otherwise known as Outward Bound, to stretch them to their physical, mental and emotional limits.

Which is how our six apprentices (two girls among them) experienced a very wet ten days in September in Snowdonia, North Wales.

Simon Young (son of fire officer Bob) told us that their activities included orienteering in the dark, a 24-hour serendipity exercise (fitting in a variety of tasks) and undertaking a three-day expedition over the top of Snowdonia.

And they didn't just *go* rafting; along with apprentices from other companies they had to design, test and 'sell' a raft.

As always, they finished with a presentation on what they had learned in terms of leadership, teamwork, communication and 'listening to other people's opinions' - all relevant to their careers.

During October our IPs were packed off to Bodmin Moor in Cornwall for the most challenging Outward Bound course organised for them since the company scheme began (that's official).

"Previously, the course was run nearer summer, and accommodation was provided at night. This time, it was not quite as easy," says IP Mary Jamieson.

"Not only were the activities more demanding, such as a 15-mile walk over rough terrain, but we were also expected to sleep out with only a plastic bag for comfort.

"In these rigorous conditions, LTQ, communication and teamwork skills were put to the test, with notable success.

"All the teams found the course very rewarding, despite its hardships, and thoroughly recommend it to next year's 'lambs to the slaughter'!"

In the inter-site competition between nine teams from Marlow, Welwyn and Mitcheldean, Welwyn took first and third while Mitcheldean had second and fourth place. And the Mitcheldean teams were judged to have given the three best presentations.

Positive help

SIXTH-FORMERS AT Newent, as at some other schools in the area, have set up a company under the Young Enterprise Scheme, another Forest Education Business Partnership initiative.

To assist them, two of our IPs, Michele Lawlor and Martin Brett, are acting as industrial advisers, giving them some guidance on organisation and administration on their weekly visits.

The company is called 'Positive' and their product is a T-shirt with a logo designed and printed by the school. Some have already been sold within the school and, says Michele, "They can't keep up with demand. We find their enthusiasm 'positively' infectious!"

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Charity challenge pays off

The Charity Challenge team hand over £1,105 to Dr Hunter for the special baby care unit at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital.

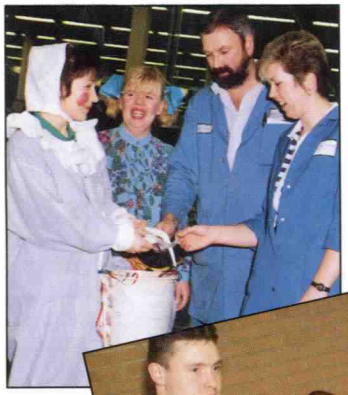
WHILE THE rest of the country was doing all kinds of things to raise cash for Children in Need on Friday, 20 November, here at Mitcheldean efforts were concentrated on a local charity for the very little - the special baby care unit at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital.

Harness centre staff, as before, were the live wires. During the morning, two celebrities - Andy Pandy (Sarah Montague) and Looby Lou (Pam Heathcote) - visited departments on site, bringing a smile to people's faces and persuading them to pop some cash into a bucket.

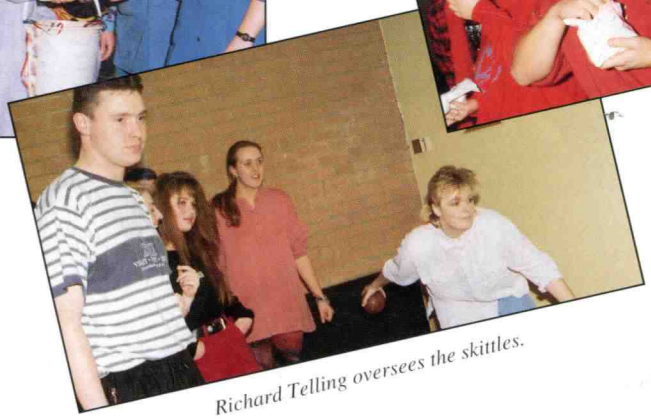
Both of the girls made their own costumes, and few would have guessed that they had been up all night, Sarah stitching away and Pam working a night shift.

Together with co-organiser Richard Telling (building 1 assembly), Sarah and her helpers spent the afternoon running a Charity Challenge event and, in the evening, a disco with music by High Energy, hosted by the Sports & Social Club.

Andy Pandy (Sarah Montague) and Looby Lou (Pam Heathcote) collect donations from Roger Roberts and Tina Bennett in building 3/1.

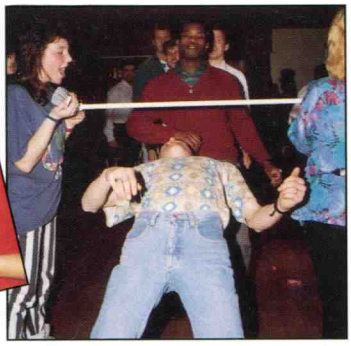


A sweet challenge with munchmallows.



Richard Telling oversees the skittles.

Eight teams took part in the challenges, which ranged from the traditional to the ridiculous. Harness centre produced four teams - Up The Workers, Not Quite All There's, Harness Misfits and Harness Warriors. Building 4 had the EMC Gladiators and The Ten Commandments, while building 1's team was Up The Cacket (don't ask us, ask them!).



Bending over backwards to contribute.

Each team, consisting of ten people, paid £10 to enter the Charity Challenge, with non-team members paying £2 to watch the fun.

The team challenges got people involved in every sense of the word - sometimes with very messy results! The Great Baked Bean Challenge, in particular, resulted in the male participants stripping to the waist in order to munch their way through a bowl of Heinz' best to find a hidden object - a plastic ring.

Whilst the limbo dancing challenge did not call for the removal of shirts and vests, the thickness of material might have made a difference when the barrier (two brooms held by helpers) was reduced to a mere eight inches above the floor. Only the most agile and the slimmest were in the running (or rather, wriggle) at that stage.

Chomping marshmallows at speed (have a go yourself, it's not easy!), trying to eat ring doughnuts suspended on string, and balloon and string races all provided entertaining spectacles for the onlookers.

There were also individual challenges, each bringing in £1 a time, including karaoke, press-ups, doing the splits and rave dancing.

Whilst all this was happening, Richard was running a skittles Round Robin for the teams - a marginally more sedate activity than the goings-on in the main function room.

Scoring for each challenge was on a points system with 10 points for a win. Up the Cacket emerged as the top team, but the real winners were the hospital who, on 10 December, were presented with £1,105 from the proceeds of the plant collection, donations, raffle and Charity Challenge (£1,080) plus a company donation of £25.

Receiving the money on behalf of the hospital's baby care unit, Dr Hunter said how absolutely delighted they were and how much they appreciated the splendid effort that had gone into raising it.

It was planned that most would be put towards the cost of a ventilator and the rest towards the purchase of a colour TV set for the family room.

Greetings to Emily!

With Emily Marshall at her 90th birthday party are (from left) Joy Joyce, Ray Marshall and Jean Downing.

'HAPPY NEW Year' and 'Happy Birthday' wishes go to Emily Marshall, who celebrated her 90th birthday on 7 January.

She worked in the wiring section of the former polishing & plating shop and has been a pensioner for some 30 years.

Her daughter, Jean Downing (ridge recycling), told us that Emily keeps active despite suffering from rheumatism. Her main enjoyment is in watching snooker - "She will sit up all hours for that," says Jean. She also likes to watch horse-racing, and she attends the Dilke Day Centre where she does knitting and basket weaving.

Emily's son Ray was a chargehand in assembly before retirement, and both his late wife, Jean, and their two daughters, Joy and Jill, worked at Mitcheldean (Joy is currently employed in purchasing).

In our 11th issue, exactly 31 years ago, we featured Emily attending the wedding of another of her daughters, having travelled thousands of miles to Nairobi in Kenya for the event.

Greening of the bowling alley

YOU CAN'T hear a pin drop when they're bowling in the alley on Sunday evenings. That's because, instead of knocking down skittles, they're aiming for a white 'jack' - playing short mat bowls.

After managing with a borrowed one, the Sports & Social Club has now acquired its own £700 mat - measuring 45ft x 6ft - which fits into the bowling alley, providing an additional facility for members.

"We've been getting a dozen or so men and women players coming along to use the four sets of woods," said Dave Lea, "and visits are being exchanged with Ross Bowling Club."

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