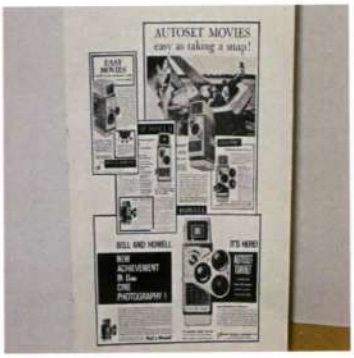
XEROX®

November 2006

50 YEARS OF XEROX MANUFACTURING AT MITCHELDEAN 1956 — 2006

The revolution that shaped the size of the Gloucestershire village of Mitcheldean began in 1940 when the directors of British Acoustic Films (BAF) were seeking a production site away from the wartime London Blitz. They discovered the old Wintle's Brewery (shown on front cover), at the time only in partial use with several spare buildings, and the decision to move production to Mitcheldean was taken almost on the spot.

The initial production involved much war work including the manufacture of search lights, fire direction tables and cine cameras, used by the Royal Air Force. 250 employees were in place by the end of the war when BAF went back to the cine camera trade, signing a licensing agreement to produce cine projectors with the American company Bell & Howell in 1946.



The factory soon needed new skills not readily available locally from the former coal mining surroundings, so training programmes were established to develop local people. Having attracted attention as a growing company, BAF and thus Bell & Howell, became part of the Rank Organisation in 1948 as Rank Precision Industries. This was coincidently the same year in which the term "Xerography" was first heard in the USA.

Growth in business continued and 1949 saw the first new building erected on the ridge above the old brewery, closely followed in subsequent years by two more as production expanded. Additions were made to the site in 1953 / 54 to house the press shop and automatic machine shop and a new plating shop was established in 1955 / 1956.

Fred Wickstead, who joined the team at Mitcheldean in 1948 as Production Manager, recalled how the new chapter in Mitcheldean's history began. "We were doing well with 8mm and 16mm cine equipment, with profits growing at 8% a year, but we foresaw that this business would decrease with the build up of competition from Japan. They could make lenses cheaper and they had the whole world as a market, while the terms of agreement with Bell and Howell excluded us from America.

We were looking for diversification and new products so appointed an agent in New York to look into what was being developed over there. He mentioned the Haloid Company's copier, but warned that certain of the 'big boys' in American history had turned down this product. Nevertheless, a meeting was arranged by Tommy Law, who was responsible to John Davis. They and the Chief Engineer, Stan Pratt, went over to have a look at the copier and a decision was made. John Davis was able to offer what Haloid wanted – a company with finance, that had traded regularly with America and had experience in world markets, as well as precision engineers and facilities for volume productions".

In 1956 an agreement between the American Haloid / Xerox Company and The Rank Organisation saw the formation of Rank Xerox and we now find ourselves 50 years on from that significant year, where Xerox became a brand name in the Forest of Dean, although it wasn't until 1959 when the first automatic plain paper copier rolled off the production line, the 914.

A report in a 1962 edition of the Vision (in-house magazine) proclaimed that 'Xerography has a tremendous potential. The 914 (left in photo) will copy anything written, typed, printed or drawn .... the prints emerge at six per minute'.

In 1963 more than £1 million was spent on more extensions and new buildings, much relating to a move into high volume production of a new machine, the 813 (right in photo) desktop copier, later succeeded by the 660.

The highlight of 1964 was the spectacular debut of the 813 at a launch in London, where shareholders and VIPs gathered at the Dorchester Hotel and were linked by closed circuit television to Mitcheldean. Guests watched as TV presenter Raymond Baxter, was followed by cameras on a tour of the factory, showing the 813 in production.

In 1965 the 914 was still being produced as cheaply as in 1960, despite inflation. The first year's production was expected to be 50 machines, ten years later output was more than 2,000 per year.


RANK XEROX

XERONEWS

ROYAL WARRANT GRANTED TO RANK XEROX

By 1966 the labour force had risen to almost 2000 and an announcement in the London Gazette stated that Rank Xerox had been granted a Royal Warrant.

The completion of a specially planned design engineering building in 1967 marked a further development of the site. In this building, electrical, mechanical and electronics engineers, draughtsmen, designers and technical experts were brought together to establish Mitcheldean as the European Design Centre for xerographic products.

Mitcheldean played a major part in the development of the 3600 and it was the company's first entry into the medium range copier market to compete with offset litho printers.

A team from Mitcheldean went to Venray in Holland to help start up an assembly line for the 3600 which then evolved into the 7000.

Expansion of the factory continued and an extra 220,000 square feet of additional space was added for the assembly of the successful copier.

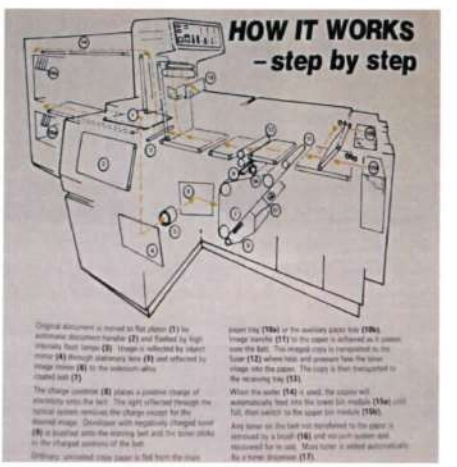
In 1969 Xerox Corporation acquired the controlling interest in Rank Xerox, which by then had 18,000 employees worldwide, amongst them 3,000 at Mitcheldean.

By 1970, after several years of unrestrained growth, the Mitcheldean Site increased from 34 to 67 acres as work commenced on a Supply Centre. At the same time, a feeder plant was purchased at Cinderford and employment peaked at over 4500. Several new buildings were added to the site between 1970 and 1975.

1971 saw the launch at Mitcheldean of the 4000 High Volume Copier, followed by the 4500 which evolved into the 5400 and then the 5600, a new high volume copier in the medium range, capable of producing 45 copies per minute. Using printed circuits, the 5600 marked the first entry into electronics.

Nineteen Burkhardt and Weber machines were used in Building 5 during the 1970s and 1980s for machining of die-castings for Xerox products and also the machining of gear boxes for Borg Warner, as part of an outsourcing arrangement.

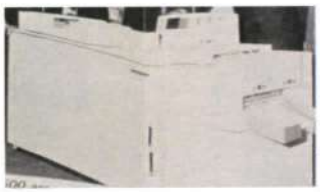
Mitcheldean was chosen to make the processor and input modules for the 9200 duplicating system in 1974 / 75. Parts were produced at both Cinderford and Mitcheldean and this high speed print system incorporated many technological advances, notably microprocessors, used for the in-built electronic diagnostic panel. The project involved an extensive re-tooling programme and £5m was invested to provide the most up to date production facilities, including computer controlled machine tools (the Burkhardt and Webers), at that time believed to be the most advanced installation of its kind in Europe. It had a development period of ten years from its original concept and made its debut at the Hanover fair in April 1975, but it wasn't until 2nd September 1975 that it was formally introduced in London. A press launch was held at Mitcheldean on 9th September which resulted in considerable coverage in local press and on TV.



At the same time, production of small copiers was revived by the introduction of the 2300, designed for the growing desktop market and a direct successor to the Xerox 2202. It broke new ground as the first big multinational product and was developed and designed by Fuji Xerox and assembled at the Lydney Site. It's claim to fame was that it was the highest volume product ever produced at Lydney.

1978 saw the final 660 to be produced at Mitcheldean on 14th June. Hundreds of thousands of production machines had been made over the years and there were still many thousands in the market. A great many of the machines were made at Mitcheldean, others had been made at Venray or refurbished by Lille with Mitcheldean support.

Between 1960 and 1980 the Mitcheldean site grew to become the largest copier manufacturing site in Europe and one of the most prominent manufacturing companies in the South West of England.



"It's simply amazing" was the advertisement theme for the Xerox 5600 in the USA. The new medium volume machine is simple to operate and is, amongst other things, the only full system producing complete finished sets; the only product with on-line finishing; the only copier / duplicator able to produce double-sided copies from double-sided originals automatically and, the only machine which can sort without a sorter. It was basically designed in Webster, the finisher was designed and developed in Milton Keynes by the Rank Xerox Engineering Group and the re-circulating document handler was made by Xerox of Canada. In 1980, Mitcheldean's main contribution to bringing the 5600 to market was to get it through all safety checks appropriate to the European market and to provide foreign language labelling and marketing / operating information.

In 1980, an outstanding feature of the 8200 programme was the speed with which it was designed and developed at Henrietta in the USA and modified to suit the requirements of Rank Xerox markets. Two teams from Mitcheldean were sent out to the USA to work in close cooperation with their opposite numbers. Our Manufacturing Engineers wrote the processes for some 100 completely new sub assemblies, ordered tooling and assisted with the build of six RX8200s in the model shop, converting them from 9400 processors shipped across from Mitcheldean. This enabled RX tool try-out prior to shipment to Mitcheldean for production use. Safety approvals were the main task of Mitcheldean. On the assembly floor, the first units were built alongside the 9400 and operators were trained on the line to produce both 8200 and 9400 machines.

The Xerox 9500 was introduced in 1980 - it was an advance on the 9400 and, whilst offering all the features of the 9400, had additional appeal for the customer who demanded something special in the way of copy quality. The machine was upgraded in 1983 and refurbished machines were also upgraded and retrofit kits made available for machines already placed with customers. The last machine built at Mitcheldean on 20th October 1983 was given a big send-off.

REFURBISHING

Refurbishing of machines was a rapidly growing activity that took off at Mitcheldean in 1980, initially on the 5600 machines when teardown was transferred back from Lille and then on the 9400. It was soon realised that facilities would need enhancing in order to cope with the bigger machines and so new cleaning booths were installed, chromium-plated trolleys were purchased and eventually a tunnel washing and drying machine, which coped automatically with the side panels, was installed.

Solvent spray booth

By 1985 the Refurbishing department occupied both floors of Bldg. 24 and 29 on the ridge and handled a whole range of models from small desk top copiers, through medium range and up to the biggest machines.

It took a couple of years, meant a £350,000 investment in new installations and involved the shifting of some pretty big equipment. Yet in 1986 the transplanting of refurbishing operations from one side of the site to the other, improving a sizeable part of it in the process, was achieved without any major disruption to the Mitcheldean programme.

Giant Vacuum cleaner

On 16th March 1982 Mitcheldean's latest machine came from under the cover of a codename and revealed itself as the Xerox 2830. A desktop copier which made multiple copies from both A3 and A4 originals. £3 million was invested in a purpose-built assembly line which used the latest computerised technology for assembly process and quality control. Designed and developed by Fuji Xerox, the new copier was assembled at a higher production rate than any product ever built by Rank Xerox previously.

The Xerox 8300 started life as the Xerox 8200 — a copier duplicator which offered the customer a wide range of features, but even though the machine operation was kept as simple as possible, training was needed to use the options properly. The problem was, how could the machine controls be rationalised in such a way that even untrained users would find it easy to make copies? The answer being a video screen and build it and its supporting electronic circuitry into the existing machine controller. The Application Software Design team from Mitcheldean were challenged to demonstrate its feasibility. Efforts were rewarded by success and the 8300 was on demonstration at the Hanover Fair in 1982. Orders were taken and the wheels set in motion for production at Mitcheldean. Production build was switched from 8200 to 8300 during September 1982 ready for an October launch and by the end of 1982 the machine had been launched in the UK, France, Holland and Germany.

With the loss of xerographic patent protection during the early 1980s, global competition became intense and the company was forced to restructure to maintain competitiveness with other worldwide suppliers. Appreciating the effects of restructuring on the local workforce, it was at this time that the company announced plans to provide 'sheltered' accommodation for small businesses in the original brewery buildings, now the MEWs.

Monday, 6th February 1984 was the day when demolition work began on the old plating and polishing shop building, clearing a way for new beginnings. The Mitcheldean Enterprise Workshops will provide a splendid opportunity for the people in this area to develop their business schemes in an attractive environment said Dick Holmes (EMSD Director) when he struck the ceremonial blow. Two other buildings were also cleared by mid-march. The MEWs were officially opened on 15th November 1984 by The Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire. HRH the Duke of Kent was due to perform the opening ceremony, but it was too foggy for his helicopter to attempt to land.

On 1st March 1983 the curtain went up on an entirely new generation of copiers — the 'Marathon' 10 series at the Lyric Theatre in London's Shaftesbury Avenue and attended by several hundred employees. It was a unique occasion in Rank Xerox history. Never before had the company announced, all on the same day, such a wide range of products which ranged from the 1020 and 1035 desk-top copiers (built at Mitcheldean) to mid-range 1045 and high-volume 1075 machines. Further products would be added later in the year.

Colour was introduced to the Xerox 1030 in 1984. The enhancement was not built-in on the assembly line, machines were modified in the field by means of an enabling kit. A service engineer simply fitted a new developer box housing and cover and made some minor wiring changes. Each developer box had a colour panel on top to identify it. This is not the first time Rank Xerox introduced colour, fifteen years earlier it was first in the field with a full colour copier know as 6500. The last 1030 (51,509th unit) came off the production line just before Christmas 1985.

SUPPLEMENTARY STAFF

It was also in 1984 when management recognised the need for additional employees to assist with the increasing workload and they reached agreement with the Trade Unions to engage a number of temporary staff for a short period of around six months. During the next few years, over 700 Supplementary Staff were recruited to meet the differing production needs of the time.

Having recruited this many employees, management became cautious regarding future production changes and the approach to hiring changed once more, this time to the use of Fixed Term Contract employees. This category of staff were hired and released in line with production demands, however, each time, it was an administration mountain to overcome in terms of contract signing and it wasn't too long before a different solution was considered. This solution was the use of contract staff.

In 1990, all the remaining supplementary staff were "converted" to core status and this is why we have a fairly large group of employees with between 15 and 20 years service, with most of our other long serving employees having more than 25 years service.

A certain amount of asset recovery has always taken place as a spin-off of refurbishing and in 1985 it was decided to centralise this activity at Mitcheldean. Anything which couldn't be given a new lease of life, or sold as uncontaminated material, was generated as scrap, but the main intention was to recycle as much material back into the business as possible.

The 1038 slotted in between the 1025 and the 1040 mid volume machines. It was designed in Japan, but not marketed there, and made its European debut in Paris in September 1985. More than eight configurations were being built on the same line, which was a feature unique to Mitcheldean.

September 1986 saw the product launch of the 1012. It came with a three-year warranty, comparable quality to that of the 1090, customer replaceable units, single component toner, an automatic exposure system, paper feed by-pass and paper feed module. The programme also brought with it some interesting innovations on the shop floor, together with a real teamwork approach.

Many months of dedicated commitment to the introduction of a new product reached a climax when, on 16th February 1988, the launch of the 5046 took place in London. It was the first in a new range of copiers named the 50 Series — to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary year of the invention of the xerographic process. Three variations of the machines were available and they had a host of productive features. Volume production started at Mitcheldean in January and several assembly operators, as well as technical and quality staff, went to America to assist with the building of their early machines.

The wraps came off two more 50 Series products in November 1988 when the 5028 and 5018 machines were introduced to the international press in Düsseldorf. Mitcheldean made the processors for these machines, which were the first small copiers to offer an automatic document feeder. It was decided to adopt a single cell build concept — unique to small copier manufacture— where a complete machine is built at a single assembly station rather than a flow line.

In February 1988, a significant milestone in Mitcheldean's history was marked by a ceremony to celebrate the production of our half millionth small copier. Guests included Eric Steenburgh (Senior Vice-President & General Manager BP&SG), Dick Holmes (EMO Vice President & Director), Shrawan Singh (Vice President, Control & Planning) and representatives from Fuji Xerox, the U.K. Company and Rank Xerox Executives, together with representatives from two of our biggest customers (HMSO & CEGB).

Spring 1989 saw the launch of the 5012 and 5014, which were developed from the 1012 and brought the quality and productivity of higher volume machines to convenience-copier use. Production commenced at Mitcheldean early in the new year and involved some rebalancing of the assembly line, together with a retraining activity, due to the 40 per cent different parts being used and 80 per cent change in sequence of build.

The first major step towards the achievement of a world-class manufacturing facility by 1993 took place in 1990 with a new focussed factory being set up in Building 1. The 5012 / 14 facility commenced operations in April, closely followed by the 5018 / 28 line, leaving Building 4 in readiness for conversion into the Electronics Manufacturing Centre.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Until the beginning of May 1990, the Information Systems departmental staff located on site were UK MIS staff supporting Welwyn Garden City and Aylesbury as well as Mitcheldean and were split into systems development and operations groups.

With the transfer of EMO business in Welwyn to Mitcheldean and Venray, and following an internal organisation, Mitcheldean site gained a single dedicated MIS department in much the same way as Lille and Venray. The department had 30 full time staff who were supplemented by sub contract staff as required.

In 1994 Xerox Corporation awarded a 10 year contract to EDS to operate the Xerox worldwide computer and telecommunications network, approximately 1,700 Xerox people and contractors worldwide (about 600+ in Rank Xerox) were integrated into EDS over a period from 30th June to the end of 1994.

Making its debut at the Hanover Fair in March 1990 was a new 35 pages per minute copier that brought new and improved features to the Rank Xerox mid-volume range. Designed by Welwyn engineering and being built at Mitcheldean, the 5047 was a performance upgrade to the existing 5046. The most noticeable change to the 5047 was its shape and colouring. The edges were more rounded and the front panels of the paper trays were re-styled with curving contours which were replaceable independently of the actual trays. Three configurations were available and pre-configuration was carried out within the main line.

An entry level A3 copier, the 5317, was launched in the European region during June 1990. It represented a big investment and a major achievement. It was our first product where we achieved 50% integration of European sourced parts at the start of build, and also our first low-volume product out of Japan where we linked with a product delivery team in Welwyn to deliver a unique Rank Xerox machine. Environmentally friendly, the 5317 saved power by taking only 30 seconds to warm up and then started automatically. It was also designed for use with good quality recycled paper.

Full electronics production from the Electronics Manufacturing Centre took place on 24th September 1990. EMC (which was formerly based at Welwyn Garden City) was responsible for producing printing wiring board assemblies for Xerox products around the world. As well as internal advertising, two open evenings in Cheltenham and Chepstow had been held for job applicants to discuss employment opportunities in detail and at the same time, find out more about the company. A total of 69,000 square feet of floor space was available and, as PWBAs were highly susceptible to damage by electrostatic discharge, the facility was planned to ensure conditions were ideal. Amongst other things, the factory floor was covered with anti-static vinyl tiles, whilst the offices had anti-static carpeting and customers and staff alike were issued with ESD workwear as an anti-static precaution. A top priority to the facility was the installation of full air conditioning as tests at Welwyn had shown that this led to an improvement in quality of the finished product.

November 1990 saw the wraps come off a new 50 series low volume copier — the 5034 which was assembled at Mitcheldean. The advertisements for this model billed it as "a great little copier that thinks it's a great big one". It was the first 50 series copier to be equipped with a duplexing automatic document feeder that can invert originals for two-sided copying. The machine was shipped with its developer in place and the copy cartridge (a customer replaceable unit) was packed inside the stand.

The 4135 (left) laser printing system was (in 1990) the fastest cut-sheet electronic printer in the world, producing prints at the rate of 135 pages per minute. It was customised at Mitcheldean. The 4850 (right) highlight colour laser printing system printed black plus one other colour in a single pass at up to 50 impressions per minute. This system was also customised at Mitcheldean.

The 4235 laser printing system, developed at Mitcheldean and Welwyn and manufactured and customised at Mitcheldean, filled a void in the market. It was well suited to remote and unattended operations and was the first to span production and departmental printing in a single product.

"Its got to be the biggest single investment and change of direction in Parts Manufacturing for over 20 years" was how a £2 million programme of re-equipping, re-layout and general upgrading in Building 5 was described in 1992. The main thrust of the project was to provide the technology that enabled Mitcheldean to produce low mass rolls required for Fuji Xerox designed low volume copiers, whilst at the same time, enabling the department to become a benchmark world-class supplier, and to enhance the environment for both people and processes.

LONG SERVICE ASSOCIATION

The Mitcheldean Long Service Association was formed in March 1953. Eligibility was then 12 years service — the significance of 12 years being the time span from the original occupation of the Brewery in Mitcheldean in 1941 by British Acoustic Films Ltd.

2003 saw the Golden Jubilee Year celebrated with a memento presented to employed members, together with a piece of anniversary cake for those attending the Annual Dinner.

Currently the Association has approximately 300 retired members plus 86 employed members, many of whom still enjoy attending the Annual LSA Dinner to reminisce with old friends and work colleagues.

Construction of the new Data Centre started right on target in July 1992 and guests, who included representatives from local government, the project implementation team and the Mitcheldean Management team, were welcomed at the 'turf cutting' ceremony. The Data Centre was a very important project for Rank Xerox, as it formed part of a large network which supported the information needs of the company into the 21st century. Mitcheldean had been selected from a number of locations and it was the first building investment for 20 years. On 1st July 1994, EDS took over the building on an extended lease.

The Fuser Business Centre had already been expanded to accommodate manufacturing facilities transferred from Venray for the production of 1045 pressure rolls, 3100 magnetic brush rolls and 3600 refurbish fuser rolls, then, as a result of a decision made in August 1992 that Mitcheldean should become the European Centre for fuser / pressure roll production, the area (in Building 36) was doubled in size and increased its output of rolls six fold by August 1993. The existing facility was already producing CBA / DBA and 1045 fuser rolls and had to be capable of handling many different types of rolls ranging in size from one to eighteen pounds.

November 1992 saw the UK launch of two powerful new desktop copiers — the 5320 and 5322. The two versions, which used the same base engine, were each produced in three configurations. The options available with the three configurations totalled over 100, all of which added up to the most features-rich low volume family of copiers ever marketed by Rank Xerox. Designed by Fuji Xerox, they replaced the 5018 model. The products were preconfigured and tested at Mitcheldean in the MEWs, whilst production was starting up in Building 1.

Production of the 5012 / 14 came to an end in January 1993 when its successor, the 5312 / 14 was launched in the UK. It was still the smallest of our range, and appeared no bigger than its predecessor, but the curved covers gave it a 'new generation' look. Another difference was the front loading paper trays which saved space and allowed the user to have two different sizes of paper available.

Aimed at the budget market that wanted a system with fewer features, the 5328 was launched on 1st September 1993 in most European countries. It replaced the 5028, retaining its good points and improving on its performance. Pre-configuration took place on the line, not in the field, and it was built from 'the ground up', something that had never been done before at Mitcheldean.

The 5334 was launched in two phases, in the UK, France and Germany in April 1994 and in all other Operating Countries in May 1994. It was regarded as the flagship of the convenience copier range; it was extremely user friendly and the most productive machine in its range, as well as being very competitively priced. The 5334 had more rounded contours than the 5034, but the most noticeable difference is the touch-sensitive screen user interface, similar to that of the 5340 / 50 work group copier made in Venray. It was the first time that this feature had been included on a small copier built at Mitcheldean.

The Document Centre System 35 was one of the first in the family of digital office systems that Xerox announced in 1995. The design and development of the DCS35 was managed by Xerox in Rochester, with the Image Output Terminal being designed at Welwyn, whilst Mitcheldean built the machines destined for the European market as well as manufacturing the IOTs for systems which were integrated in Webster.

A completely new type of digital office product was launched by Rank Xerox in April 1997. The Document Centre 220 range of products, of which four units were manufactured at Mitcheldean, combined all the functions of scanning, copying, printing and faxing in a single unit which produced single or double sided documents at rates of up to 65 copier per minute.

The first digital colour machines were produced at Mitcheldean in March 1998. The Docucolour 5750 was already in demand throughout Europe and was expected to be a major element of Xerox business over the next five years. In addition to supplying modules and kits for the initial assembly proving operations, Fuji Xerox supported Mitcheldean production start-up with three engineers.

In August 1998 the 212 / 214 digital copier moved from pre-production to a full flow line facility ready for its international product launch in September. These copiers replaced the Xerox 5614 light lens copier that was launched in 1995.

The team members from the DC340 (Silverstone) took it from the first new build of production prototype in September 1998 to full production deliveries by June, ready for the European product launch in July 1999. It was a compact machine that met all digital office requirements.

August 1999 saw the first volume production of a new Mitcheldean colour product, the Docucolour 12 aimed at the graphic design and specialist office market. It was available as a stand-alone copier or fully networked printer / copier. The main European launch was 23rd August, and in early October, the connected version (DCCS 50) followed the DC12 into the market.

The impending closure of the Light Lens business in 2001 allowed Asset Management to move from two buildings on the Ridge to a much more compact layout in Building 3. It was a massive project to integrate the various operations into a new business centre called Logistics, Returns and Recycle Services and every opportunity was taken to recycle and reuse existing materials to minimise total move costs. The Business Centre eventually became known as the Asset Recycling Centre (ARC).

In March 2001, the Low Volume Remanufacture team was engaged by Marketing in the delivery of the first digital library copiers into the Xerox Europe market. The product was required urgently by Office Systems Group to replace the ageing Light Lens units. LRRS obtained an upgrade kit that was designed and built in the USA to fit to second user DC420 family products. The first 15 sets of production kit were delivered to Mitcheldean in early April. The kits were built, tested and processes generated by the end of April to meet existing customer orders and installation support visits were undertaken by Mitcheldean staff.

As part of the global restructuring actions being taken by Xerox, the entire Mitcheldean Site was sold in May 2002, including the MEWs and related buildings, together with all site services. The deal, in which BMJ International became the new owners, saw the creation of The Vantage Point Business Village which was officially renamed on 21st June 2002.

Early 2003 saw major achievements and changes in the Asset Recycling Centre. New recycling methods were developed, ISO 9001:2000 requirements were successfully met and Hodaka remanufacture reached more than 130 units a week. ARC provided three customer services, remanufacture and refurbishment, parts supply and Rastor Output Scanner (ROS) repair and rebuild. The parts business was also important, as ARC took all returns for sorting and assessing, and if the condition allowed, they were stripped, checked and boxed for supply to service teams.

As a result of product discontinuation and ROS work being transferred to Dundalk, the last remanufactured digital machine was produced in the ARC department during September 2005 and it has pride of place in Mitcheldean Town Hall.

The Fuser Business Centre reached a significant milestone in its safety performance on 17th February 2006 by reaching five years continuous operation without a recordable safety incident / injury.

The safe working milestone was recognised in the presentation of a commemorative plaque by Kerstin Henseleit, Fuser Delivery Unit Manager.

Manufacturing at Mitcheldean continues in the Fuser Business Centre and associated support and production staff will continue on the site, which also houses Xerox Global Services, the Document Technology Centre and Xerox Document Imaging.

COMMUNICATIONS

The first issue of the VISION (house magazine of the Cine and Photographic Division of Rank Precision Industries Limited) was published in May 1960 with a circulation of around 1,000. In April 1973 it was decided to introduce a larger format with twelve pages.

Autumn 2002 saw the last edition (issue number 269) of the Vision magazine (now house magazine of Xerox Mitcheldean). Vision Extra and MITCH were also published , these were single-sheet double-sided publications produced as required to supplement the VISION.

In January 2003, the first edition of the M&SC Magazine was published and replaced the previous publications that appeared in Venray and Mitcheldean. Today the magazine is known as the EHSC magazine.

The majority of content in this anniversary document is taken from in-house publications and is only a snap-shot of events that have taken place at Mitcheldean over the years. Our apologies if your favourite article is not included, but as you can see, publication space is limited. We hope you enjoyed the read !!

JUST A FEW FACES FROM THE LAST FIFTY YEARS

HERE ARE A FEW INTERESTING "DID YOU KNOWS" .....

- In 1940 Tommy Law (Company Director of British Acoustic Films) came to Mitcheldean to view the Brewery buildings.
- Fred Wickstead joined the company in 1948 as a Production Manager for BAF. He was ultimately to become Manufacturing & Logistics Vice-President for the Xerox Corporation in 1971. His role was pivotal in the history of the company, but especially in relation to Mitcheldean employees and the local community.
- In the 1950s Mitcheldean became Britain's largest manufacturer of 8mm and 16mm home movie cameras and projectors. The factory supplied the 16mm cameras that Sir Edmund Hilary took to the summit of Everest in 1953.
- In August 1964, Fred Wickstead (who was, at that time, Chief Executive Officer of the Rank Organisation at Mitcheldean) presented the Town Hall to the villagers of Mitcheldean. The building became the property of the Rank Organisation during the course of the development of the site at Mitcheldean.
- The Queen's Award for Export Achievement was won five times between 1966 and 1980.
- By the 1970s, energy saving modifications were built into many Mitcheldean products.
- November 1970 saw work commence on a new International Distribution Centre with a covered area of 350,000 sq ft. On 13th March 1972 it was shown to local councillors, local government officials, businessmen and press, prior to its full completion in July 1972.
- An Open Day in 1972 saw 14,000 people visit the site – at one time the queue of cars stretched for more than one mile at the Barton Corner entrance.
- Three full-time gardeners were employed at Mitcheldean in the seventies, creating and maintaining a landscaped environment at the 67-acre site.
- November 1979 saw a two-day Energy Conservation Exhibition on site – it marked the launch of our own energy conservation campaign which was part of a Xerox world-wide programme. Approximately 2,000 people attended the exhibition which took place in the Ballroom.
- In the 1980s, water-based paints were introduced to minimise the use of solvents.
- We achieved our first Million Hours without a Lost Time Accident in the summer of 1982.
- Production stopped at Lydney on 11th May 1983 after the plant had successfully built over 140,000 machines since it started up in 1979.
- As Director, European Manufacturing & Supply Division at Rank Xerox Limited and a Vice President of the Xerox Corporation, Dick Holmes played a major role in the success of both companies and, after his retirement, maintained a keen interest in the area and site operations.
- Mitcheldean was recognised as one of the top five factories in the United Kingdom and was selected to receive a 1989 Best British Factories Award, organised by the British Institute of Management.
- 19th October 1989 saw Mitcheldean Operations complete 2 million hours without sustaining a Lost Time Accident.
- Mitcheldean's millionth machine (a Xerox 5014) was produced on 14th December 1989 and presented to the Royal Forest of Dean College.
- In the 1990s, Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) were removed from all manufacturing processes - more that two years before European legislation came into place.
- On 2nd October 1991, Gerry Lane, Director of Mitcheldean Manufacturing Operations, presented a gold chain of office to the Chairman of Mitcheldean Parish Council, to recognise the site's 50 year alliance with them.
- The Fuser Business Centre became the first internal certified supplier at Mitcheldean in 1993.
- Between 1995 and 2002 more than £10 million was invested in new automated equipment for the machining and application of elastomers and polymers as high temperature resistant coatings for fuser rolls.
- Xerox Mitcheldean was again awarded a Gold Medal for Occupational Safety by the Royal Society for The Prevention of Accidents in 2000. This award had been received for nine years in succession.
- In the summer of 2001, two buildings in the MEWs were named the Holmes Building and the Wickstead Building in honour of the two men who made a major impact on the success of the site.

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