

Touchpaper

DECEMBER 1993

ISSUE 8

the waltham abbey newsletter

As
the year
draws to a close
we bring you another
issue of
the Waltham Abbey
Newsletter which is now
some two years old. The number
of ex-colleagues registered for Touchpaper
continues
to grow. The most recent
large increase has arisen from
the successful re-union in October, of
which a full report is to be found in this issue.

For those of
you who didn't make
the last re-union, due to a
prior comittment, please note
that the hall has already been booked
for October 21st next year. So, when you
all get your diaries at Christmas, make that your
first entry. Entering into the spirit of this festive season
(Goodwill to All Men ...) I shall not harangue you, this time,
about the lack of articles.

I must also be honest and admit
that I've been, comparatively, overwhelmed
with contributions so if I don't print your bit this time
it's because I'm saving it for any possible hard times ahead.
Please keep your articles flowing. It just remains for me to wish
you all a
HAPPY
XMAS
ETC!

Norman Paul Editor

Touchpaper: Publication Address

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Touch Bytes

EXTRACTS FROM YOUR LETTERS

FIRST A COUPLE OF QUOTES FROM GENERAL LETTERS

Wots awl this in the larst ishoo abowt me knot been abel to spel? I kan spel as wel as the nex purson!

By the ay, it was Ben Jonson (1573-1637) who said "It's a dull man that can only spell a word only one way: and he obviously had a bit of difficulty spelling his own name!

We ran another WA Club type Quiz here at Porton recently - te most interesting question we found to ask was 'What was Aladdin's surname?' Answer: 'Twankey' - obvious when you think about it.

All the best, Dave Salter

Thank you very much for Touchpaper and invitation to register. I shan't be able to play any active part and I'm unlikely to get to any re-unions as I normally limit mr driving to 50 miles or so. However the Newsletter is of great interest to me, even though most of my generation will be in their 80's, as I shall be next year! I occasionally see Dick and Doris Doe in Bury and also Roy Fisher and we're in regular touch with Don Hodge (now 89 and living in Norwich) and Vic Clifford in Northampton.

Yours Sincerely, Colin Lawson.

AND NOW A SELECTION ARISING FROM THE OCTOBER RE-UNION

Just a line to let you know how much Pauline and I enjoyed the re-union last Friday. It's almost 20 years since we left Waltham Abbey and ERDE and although we have kept in touch with some close friends it was most enjoyable to meet so many ex-colleagues and to renew old friendships.

I'm sure that this event will go from strength to strength and we are looking forward to next year 'get-together'.

Alf Hardisty

Eileen and I enjoyed ourselves immensely at the re-union. It seems extraordinary that few of our WA friends and colleagues ever seem to change much, despite gaps of up to 20 years since we last met. Obviously we are all growing older very gracefully indeed!

Regards, John Scrivener

...thanks for the re-union last Friday when Rita and I had a very enjoyable afternoon meeting many 'old' friends. It is surprising how the years roll by, but many faces were instantly recognizable. It was pleasing to see that so many took the time and trouble to attend. I trust that future re-unions will be held and that EWAs will continue to turn up in their hundreds.

Ron Rapley

Many thanks for all the efforts in organising the latest Re-union. It is very much appreciated.

Stan Wills

Congratulations on another super re-union and especial thanks for arranging the talks and tour of the North Site. In spite of the obvious changes, during the morning tour the air was heavy with nostalgia and reminiscence:

"Remember fishing with a bent pin over here? There were so many fish they had to queue up"

"..... tried to walk across those pipes and promptly fell in the canal. Took all afternoon to dry his clothes"

"... and after he'd retired they found a whole load of reports marked SECRET in the loo!"

"Ah! the chemical stores of blessed memory! I used to pop in there and sign a load of fictitious chits so that Charlie could balance his books before the stocktakers came"

"We used to play our own version of pin bowling on the verandah using 3" ball bearings. It was pretty rough and the doors at the end" and this is now a Grade I listed building.

"The BWD stores was a funny place. We desperately needed an unusual plumbing fitting which was in stock but we were firmly refused. A furious argument arose and eventually the storekeeper admitted that it was th ast one on the shelf and if he let it o he wouldn't know where to put the new ones wen they came in"

"This spot is where the 'Iron Fairy' crane toppled over trying to remove an overhanging banch by the Director's gaden. He was worried aout it breaking of in high winds and messing up his garden. As a result the whole thing smashed his wall and the road was closed for two days"

Of such stories are legends made. Remember that rule ('Confidential' of course) in the ERDE Rule Book?

"Skylarking is strictly forbidden!"

Happy Days, Roll on the next Re-union

With un-exaggerated sincerity

Chris Evans

EDITOR'S COMMENT:

The above are just a selection from the many letters, notes and verbal comments on the re-union and I certainly appreciate your thanks.

It is obviously an event which is popular and I, in turn, wish to thank all those who supported the event, many of you travelling considerable distances to attend (as yet, we haven't managed to attract any of our ex-colleagues now residing abroad).

I would like to thank those who assisted and especially Ken Bascombe, who acted as liaison with the contracors and CIVIX regarding the visits and to Bryan Howard who made the booking arrangements for the hall. Our thanks also to Bob Watts of RW Atkins (site contractors) and his staff.

Thanks are also due to my wife, Doreen, for her continued patience and support (putting up with me), assistance in both preparation and her efforts on the day.

Norman Paul

DON'T FORGET THE DATE FOR 1994

SAME PLACE

Friday 22nd October

AND NOW IT CAN BE TOLD!

John Vernon's "First Impressions" in issue 6 jogged my memories of joining ERDE, also in late 1953, and made me wonder how I survived my early days at Waltham Abbey.

On my first day I was directed to the Rheology Section, but on protesting that I had understood that I was to work on Combustion Research I was quickly interchanged with Les Helps, who had joined the same day and had been directed to Combustion! This did not create a good initial impression of the efficiency of the administration at ERDE.

The first task given me by Gordon Adams was to study the polymerisation of gelling agents in pure nitroglycerine. Only vaguely aware of the potential hazards I was soon making my first contact with the custodian of the NG, George Whitbread, who placed me in the tender care of Harry Rumbold (a well known character who never removed his NG worker peaked cap). Armed with a plastic bottle, Harry took me to the magazine where we discovered that all the labels on the aluminium churns of pure liquid explosives had dropped off, owing to the damp. Unlike myself, Harry was completely unconcerned and proceeded to take each churn off the shelf and bang it down on the concrete before prising off its lid and sniffing for the familiar bouquet of NG. With my knowledge of handling NG limited to what I had seen in films I had always thought, until that moment, that NG was somewhat shock sensitive!

Having survived this first contact with NG I was only slightly bemused some weeks later when my laboratory colleague returned from stores, proudly bearing the largest retort stand, the largest glass funnel, largest filter paper and a 1 gallon aluminium beaker. However, my suspicions were aroused later that day when I noticed an empty gutta percha bucket on the bench next to the funnel, now filled with an orange-brown liquid. Suspicion turned to horror when I saw that, as each drop of filtered NG (confirmed as such by my completely nonchalant colleague) fell into the aluminium beaker a spark shot between funnel and beaker! Concurrently with this operation, Mr Brewin (SP2 at that time), had been chairing a meeting of the High Explosives Committee in the adjacent office and, having called a natural break, he wandered into the lab to pass the time of day with his bright young scientists and to enquire what they were up to. Once enlightened on this point it was amazing to behold, considering his portly constitution, how rapidly he disappeared next door and shepherded away the Committee members to reconvene at a distant venue.

The next morning my colleague was summoned to SP2's office and returned chastened and annoyed. He had suffered the worst punishment then available to ERDE management - he was transferred to Woolwich. I was left wondering whether a career at ERDE was something I could survive.

John Hicks

But survive you did John, but maybe that's another story, or stories?

a
PERSONAL NOTE

Since retiring from RO Summerfield at the end of 1991 I've continued with enough consultancy work to keep the old interests alive but without making it seem too much like work! It also keeps me in, irregular, contact with erstwhile ex-Waltham Abbey colleagues; including Dave Davies and Chris Robbins at Bishopton and Dave Tisley, K Birdi and Ron Craik at Summerfieldd. Elsa McFarlane first showed me copies of Touchpaper and I really owe her an apology for not 'joining up' at least 18 months ago.

Outside the contacts at RO I correspond occasionally with Colin Lawson (SP1). In february I learned from Colin of the death of George Williams. When I joined ERDE in 1949, 'G W' was my first superintendent, then SPRIII, later recast as P1.

On a happier note, during our winter break in Lanzarote last winter, who should we bump into but Gordon and Olive Palmer, both in apparent good health and spirits. Needless to say there was a great deal of reminiscing (helped by earlier editions of Touchpaper that I just happen to have with me!) and the local wines and spirits. I'm afraid this wreaked havoc with my alcohol free diet imposed by my doctor but, then Gordon and a bar were always a life-threatening combination.

Eric Baker

and
A PERSONAL VIEW OF NORTH SITE

Last year I was contacted about the natural history of the N Site which resulted in being able to visit the site in June to check on the Bee Orchids at New Hill. Not having visited the site since the last re-union I thought I would comment on what I had seen. Most noticeable was the flattened area behind Powdermill Lane. No.9 has been preserved and looks quite good inside. The area around the burning ground and water wheel has been cleared back to the original ground levels showing the canal and railway (?) lines.

New Hill looked much the same - except the ground where most orchids were when I left, had been turned over due to a report of buried asbestos (nothing was found!). Even so, there were still a few plants around. There has also been considerable sycamore clearance around Newtons Pool but herons and deer seem undisturbed by this,

All things considered it was quite an interesting visit and my thanks to Ed Andrews (RO S.Site) for arranging this for me.

John Rowley

1993 Re-union Report

The second annual re-union for ex-colleagues and their spouses was held at the Waltham Abbey Town Hall on Friday 22nd October. The change in venue was forced by the closing of the Social Club earlier this year followed by the demolishing of the Club Hall. Nevertheless, The Town Hall was at least familiar to us all, even if the bar prices were much higher than we were accustomed to. This didn't seem to deter people too much, as indicated by the barman's comment at the end ... "Boozy lot aren't they!"



Almost 200 booked to come and most turned up. There were the inevitable extra arrivals on the day and the final number was around 190 - almost the limit of the hall.

There were people there who most of us hadn't seen for ages and I suspect that many had sore throats by the end of the afternoon.



We haven't got pictures of everyone there but a full list of attendees can be found overleaf.



As you may know we have over 280 people registered for Touchpaper and, of these, we have service details of 249.

A competition was run to estimate the total number of years service at the Establishments for these. Answers ranged from 2349 (Alan Short) to 8000 (Peggy Denty). The correct answer was 4666 and two people came fairly close. Ron Treadgold (4400) just pipped Tony Davis (4950) and collected the special prize of a framed collage of pictures from the North Site.

Ron was presented with his prize at the end of the afternoon as pictured above.

Special thanks are also due to Ron for providing the pictures reproduced here. He seems to have spent all day taking reels of film for which we are grateful. Of course he didn't take the one above but it was his camera!



The buffet was provided by our usual caterers and, for the price, seemed very good with a varied selection. I say seemed since, by the time I got there at the end, there was very little left. I trust this was because everyone had eaten well and not because there wasn't enough for the numbers catered for!



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PRESS INFORMATION FOR TOUCH PAPER

Preserving Voices of Experience

Middlesex University is recording the experiences of former workers at the Gunpowder Factory and preserving the tapes in its archive. University lecturer Dr Dan Weinbren explained:

'There are a number of written accounts of the history of this factory, but little about the experience of workers there. We want to supplement written accounts with people's views of what it was like to be employed there.'

An experienced oral historian he is training students to make use of recording equipment. He intends to send them out to meet people in their homes and record their life stories. It will be a great opportunity for students to sit and learn at the feet of those who have first-hand knowledge of work in Waltham Abbey.

If you, or somebody you know, would like to help with the project you can contact Dan Weinbren at Middlesex University, Queensway, Enfield EN3 4SF. Direct line 081 806 3856.

=====
Further information: Dan Weinbren: 081 806 3856

ATTENDEES AT THE 1993 RE-UNION

Laura Abbott	Gladys Eckworth	Sylvia Krelle	Pearl Speller
Len Abbott	Dennis Eldridge	Dave Lee	Roy Speller
John Alexander	Irene Eldridge	Lyn Lennard	Terry Stemman
Sue Alexander	Mike Evans	Tom Lewis	John Stennett
Geoff Allen	Davina Evans	Glyn Lock	Rosemary Stennett
Yvonne Allen	Chris Evans	Mrs B Lock	Arthur Stokoe
Ron Ayerst	Janet Evans	Phyllis Lodell	Jean Stokoe
Mike Bagley	Nigel Evans	Vera Lodge	'Gudge' Taylor
Eric Baker	Valerie Evans	Roy Love	Audrey Taylor
Susan Ball	Roy Fisher	John MacDougall	Mary Tingle
Sue Barringer	Ron Fletcher	Bill Makinson	Peter Tingle
Ken Bascombe	Roy Ford	Dave Manners	Dave Tisley
Maxi Bear	Don Fossey	Denis Mansell	Ron Treadgold
Norman Blay	Mrs Fossey	Roy Martin	Ray Vaughan
Cliff Blunt	Brenda Fulbrook	Julie McGuchan	Mrs J Wackett
Gordon	Pat Fuller	Malcolm McLaren	Dennis Warren
Bob Brown	Pam Garrod	Penny	Bill Warren
Margaret Brown	Dawn Gilbert	Gwen Mead	Kath Weatherstone
Paul Bunyan	Yvonne Gillingham	Ross Millar	Allen Webb
Jim Burgess	Joyce Girvan	Sue Morgan	Mrs Webb
Frances Burgess	Victor Girvan	Derek Needham	Daniel Weinbren
Arthur Cadman	Peter Golding	Christine Needham	Sally Westlake
Pauline Callaghan	Jean Haigh	Alice Negus	Tony Whittaker
Ron Campbell	Brian Hammant	Muriel Nicholls	Geoff Williams
Celia Campbell	Alf Hardisty	Maurice Nicholson	Stan Wills
Roy Carrington	Pauline Hardisty	Ted O'Day	Arthur Witham
Andy Carter	Peter Hart	Louie Owen	Gladys Witham
Dave Catton	Kim Henshaw	W Owen	John Wright
Betty Chance	Eileen Henshaw	Dick Pace	June Wright
Joe Chance	Syd Hewitson	Jean Paddick	
Vera Chaplin	Ron Holt	Bernie Parker	
Mr Chaplin	Jan Holt	Audrey Parker	
Win Clark	Peter Honey	Norman Paul	
Eamon Colclough	George Horwood	Doreen Paul	
Geoff Colley	Bryan Howard	Dennis Pavely	
Pam Colley	Geoff Howell	Avis Pollard	
Bert Collins	Bernie Howes	Phil Pye	
Bob Cook	Liz Howes	Ivor Quickenden	
Ron Craik	Diane Howse	Mrs Quickenden	
Cecil Cullingford	Rita Hugill	Ron Rapley	
Tony Cunliffe	Steve Hutchings	Rita Rapley	
Helen Davies	Martin Ives	Dot Revill	
Tony Davis	Mrs B James	John Rowley	
Monica Davis	Jim Jeacocke	George Savill	
Wendy Day	Mrs P Jeacocke	John Scrivener	
Dave Debenham	David Johnson	Eileen Scrivener	
Marjorie Dentry	Sheila Johnson	Peggy Sharp	
Alan Dentry	John Kemp	Marjorie Short	
Peggy Denty	Jill Kemp	Alan Short	
Les Dingle	Eric Kendrew	Dave Sims	
Bernie Downes	Daphne Knight	Ron Smith	

FINANCIAL:

The charge made for the re-union was significantly higher than last year because of the cost of hall hire and the increased buffet cost. Due to the high turnout the event actually ran at a profit.

The balance after payment of all costs is £145-51...

We have already booked the hall for next year (£30) deposit, leaving the sum of:

£115-51

towards the cost of next years event

North Site Tours Limited



There were two opportunities for EWAs to visit the North Site on the day of the Re-union. The first of these was in the morning with a second opportunity at the end of the afternoon. There was considerable interest in these visits and most attendees opted to go on a tour. The first large group set off from the Town Hall around 10.15 and were met at the gate by one of our old 'coppers', now a part of the site security force. As you may expect there was considerable banter but he did eventually let them all in. It was a true Waltham Abbey greeting.

First stop was the library where CIVIX gave a presentation on what has been happening at the site since closure and what the plans were for the future.

Because of working constrictions the group had to keep together and were only allowed a limited access. Nevertheless it was a nostalgic but pleasant walk from the library, down the Long Walk to the Old Main Lab.

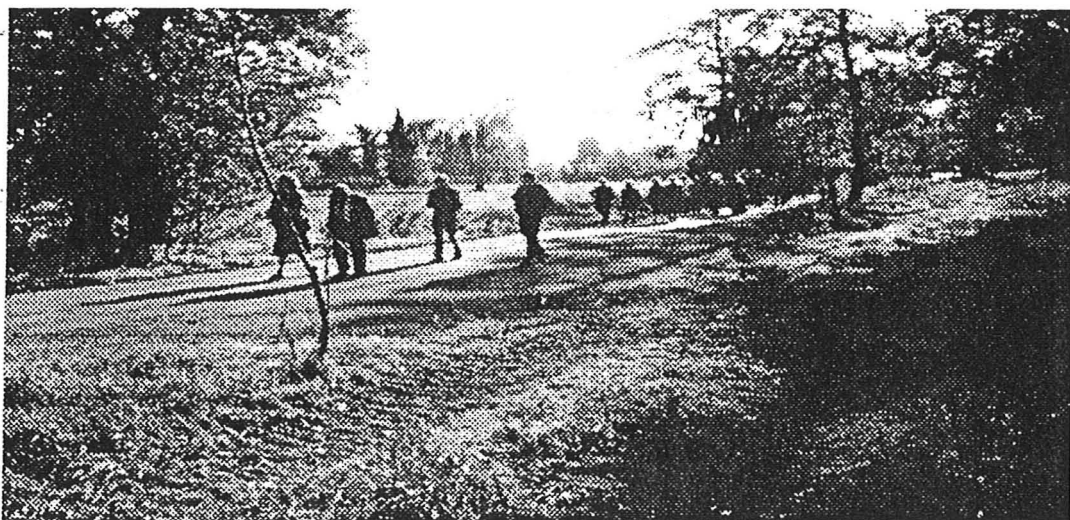
From there, east to Middle Road and up alongside one of the old canals to the old Chemical Stores. The route then led back to the roundabout, over the Bailey Bridge and back to the gate.

Comments from those returning to the Town Hall, just in time for the re-union, were very favourable and I think all those

The second group left the Town Hall just after 3pm and was much smaller. I think people were getting tired! As the re-union had to end at 4 we didn't see the second group again and I hope they got out alright and had as memorable a visit as the first.

It was an unique opportunity and, once again our thanks to the contractors site manager, Bob Watts, and his crew for their assistance. Whether such visits are to be repeated next year will depend on how much progress has been made.

Once again thanks to our roving cameraman, Ron Teadgold, for the pictures.



NEW FEATURE

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Introducing a new feature as suggested by Ike Eickhoff.

The idea is to advertise in the Newsletter
for news of people you have lost touch with.

Give the Editor the names.
If we don't have the information
We'll print it in the next edition
and see if anyone else can help.

To start the feature off:
Ike would like to know what happened to:

Ron Smith (scientific) George Baillie (engineering)

Brian Sharp (transport) Albert Barnett (H.W.)

Iris Rowlands (admin) Dave Swadling (admin)

Dick Cobbin (MoD PLoD) Ron Jones (scientific)

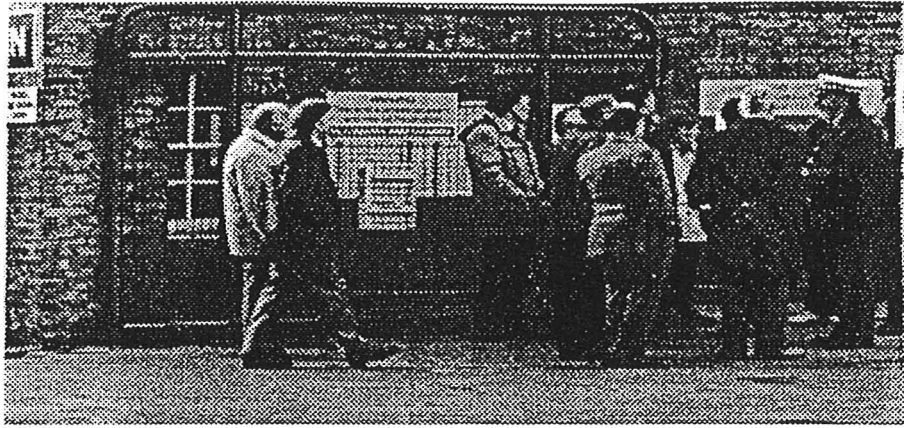
Hans Ziebland (scientific)

If you can help with any of the above either contact the Editor
or contact Ike directly. Ike has asked us to let you all know his new work address:

Peter (Ike) Eickhoff
PQS/POL
Government Buildings
Vassal Road
Fishponds
BRISTOL
BS16 2LU

tel: 0272 657361 xn 143

NEW FEATURE



"You can't All 'ave lost yer passes!"



The Touchpaper Christmas Quiz

NEARLY TWENTY QUESTIONS

SET BY BRYAN HOWARD

1. Which building was often referred to as the "Kremlin"?
2. Where was "NG Wells" ('unofficial mercury disposal') on North Site?
3. What was unusual about M438 Magazine on S. Site?
4. Where was the "Stockade"?
5. Which firm supplied the old RGPF Fire Alarms?
6. What form did the memorial take for Charlie Stacey?
7. Where was the last railway engine shed to be found at Waltham?
8. Which firm supplied the small scale railway for remote processing of explosives?
9. Which buildings on North Site were originally 'scheduled' as being of special historical interest?
10. What did 'P and M' stand for - the building was referred to as the 'P and M Room'?
11. What was H10 used for during WWII?
12. What 'penalty' resulted from falling into the canal when loading powder barges?
13. Where was the South Site Library?
14. In which year was the new North Site Canteen (later the Powdermill Club) opened?
15. How old is the ex-rigger's shop on North Site?
16. Where is 'Blow-Up Bridge' in London (so called when a WA Gunpowder Barge blew up at the end of the last century)?
17. How is Waltham Abbey obliquely referred to in the American National Anthem?
18. In which year were the first houses on the Monkswood Estate built?
19. What was the official speed limit in the Establishment?

IF YOU KNOW THE ANSWERS TO ANY OF THE ABOVE
SEND THEN TO THE EDITOR

NO PRIZES, BUT YOU WILL GET A MENTION IN THE NEXT ISSUE

DEADLINE DATE FOR ISSUE 9:

15th FEBRUARY 1994

WALTHAM IN THE NEWS !

I can't remember who sent in the following article but my thanks to you whoever you are. The article concerns the draining of Newtons Pool as part of the decontamination exercise

2,000 FISH MOVE TO CALMER WATERS

Explosives fear at beauty spot



IT'S HARD enough trying to pull 2,000 fish from a dried-up pond without hurting them.

But when there is a chance of stepping on plastic explosive, the job becomes more difficult than ever.

Experts from the National Rivers Authority had their work cut out as they launched the operation at Newtons Pool, Waltham Abbey.

They were called in by the Ministry of Defence to help clear an area in Powdermill Lane where the gunpowder factory once stood.

The MoD is 'decontaminating' the land before develop-

ing it as a public leisure area. Newtons Pool had been used for testing underwater explosives in the 1960s and it was thought that a 20lb charge of plastic explosive may have been left there.

Before Tuesday's operation the pool had already been drained and a ramp built to provide access across the silt and mud. NRA fisheries staff moved in to capture the fish.

Because of the risk from explosives the usual method of stunning the fish with an electric shock could not be used.

Instead they cast a giant

net and a total of 2,666 fish of seven varieties were rescued.

Some have been kept by the fisheries officers and others put in the nearby River Lea, which is dammed from the pool.

When the clean-up operation is completed the pool will be restocked with a suitable number of fish.

Will the public be at risk from explosive rubbish left by the old gunpowder factory?

"There will be no development on any contaminated land," a Waltham Abbey Town Council spokesman assured.

Decontamination work will be going on "for some time".

What isn't said here is that the advice of certain EWAs was urgently sought regarding the possibility of certain test charges which perhaps may have inadvertently slipped and been buried intact in the bottom ooze sometime in the past!!!

A TOUCH AMUSING

Another gem from Cyril Beck:



"I don't care if 'e is the ruddy decontamination expert.
I 'aint telling 'im where the ruddy bodies are buried!"

..... and here's one we pinched from a chemical company newsletter
- just couldn't resist it!



"For one awful moment I thought it was Jeremy Beadle!"

[Photograph taken at a trade exhibition in Cuba.]

HENRY RAMSBOTTOM'S INTERVIEW BOARD

(With apologies to Mr. Stanley Holloway)

By O. S. A.

You've been hearing a lot on the wireless,
Of the Ramsbottoms and Albert, their son,
—'im as was eaten by t' lion
At Blackpool last summer but one.

But Mr. and Mrs. Ramsbottom
'ave other sons —so I 'ave 'eard—
But, what wi' the fuss about Albert,
Of 'Enry you don't 'ear a word!

Now 'Enry were quite a good feller
Getting on for thirty year old,
And somehow I think as the story
Of 'is interview board should be told.

'E'd 'ad quite a good eddication
('E'd been to night classes as well)
And 'e'd chatter for hours about motors
An' all about aircraft 'e'd tell.

One day, when reading the paper,
'E saw a nice job advertised—
'Twere down at the R.A.E., Farnborough—
Just t'sort o' job as 'e prized!

So 'e borrows a stamp from 'is Father
An' a clean sheet o' paper from Ma
An' 'e writes to the Chief Superintendent,
(An' thinks about buying a car).

Some six or eight months or so later
Our 'Enry 'e gets a reply:
"Dear Sir, Please come up to London
And an interview board let us try.

But before we go any further—
Thy expenses tha'll have to pay,
So please let us know if tha'rt coming
And don't let there be no delay".

Well, 'Enry, 'e borrows a fiver
('E belonged to a slate club, tha knows)
While 'is Mother packed up 'is pyjamas
An' laid out 'is best Sunday clothes.

'E paid for 'is ticket at t'station
(Twenty-six shilling it were),
An' 'e felt like a Government official
When t'porter addressed 'im as "Sir".

At last 'e got into London
An' found 'isself up in Kingsway
('E were feeling a little bit nervous
A-wondering as what they would say).

'E waited for hours in a lobby
An' were getting all bothered an' vexed,
When a door opens sudden afore 'im
An' a voice says "Come in—thar't next!".

There were a reight gurt long table in t'room like
An' six men at least in a row
Wi' a chairman stuck bang in the middle,
Who said in a voice deep and low—

" 'Tis apparent from this application
That 'Enry Ramsbottom you be ".
An' 'Enry—still a bit nervous—
With a grin replies, "Aye lad that's me".

" But 'tis also apparent ", says t'chairman,
" To Cambridge tha never has been ".
" Thar't wrong there ", says 'Enry a' smiling
" For t'colleges this morning I've seen.

" They were a'playing of what they called
I reckon its nowt of a game— ['Rugby',
Tha mun come up and see t'northern Union
An' I'll gamble tha'll say just the same ".

" Well, well, Mr. Ramsbottom " says t'chairman
" We'll leave that alone for a while—
Come—tell us now what are thy 'obbies? ".
So 'Enry replies with a smile—

" My 'obbies is several and varied,
None of 'em outstanding I fear—
But I think as my favourite 'obby
Is—an' as always been—beer ".

T'chairman were looking fair staggered
An' didn't right know what to say—
For most of 'em said as their 'obby
Was a-reading of Shakespeare each day.

However 'e turns to 'is neighbours,
" With Ramsbottom I've finished ", says 'e,
" Just ask 'im some technical questions
An' 'is replies to them all let us see ".

So they axed 'im a lot o' daft questions
About which 'e knew nothing at all,
On t'weather an' fishing an' sich like
An' 'ow 'igh is a man when 'e's tall.

Poor 'Enry were feeling fair flummoxed,
—'E couldn't think what 'ad occurred,
For t' job were supposed to be aircraft,
But on *that* they axed niver a word.

At last they axed 'im a question—
A question as wasn't too bad—
" Come Mr. Ramsbottom ", says t'chairman,
" What's thy ambition my lad? ".

Well 'Enry were getting far rattled,
" My ambition ", says 'e with a glare,
" Is to get *thee* on *this* side o' t' table
With *me* in *thy* easy chair ".

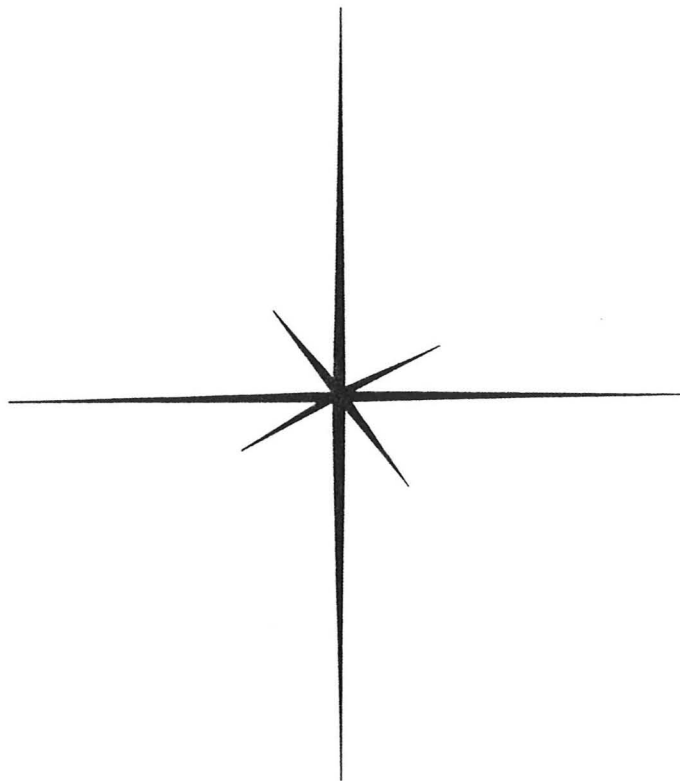
An' then I'll ax *thee* some daft questions
An' see what *thy* replies are
An' 'appen tha'll get a job here
An' 'appen tha won't get that far ".

The board then collapsed into laughter
When 'Enry 'ad finished 'is say.
" Tha'll do Mr. Ramsbottom ", says t'chairman,
An' I think tha can call it *thy* day ".

I'm very pleased to 'ave met thee
(I 'aven't laughed so much for a week)
An' I'll give thee a job down at Farnboro'
Tha's earned it—because of thy cheek ".

CONTRIBUTED BY 'GUDGE' TAYLOR

Merry Christmas



Happy New Year

Touchpaper Register

A full register was published in the September 93 issue (No. 8)

The next full register will appear in the September 94 issue.

Meanwhile, here are the latest updates and registrations:

<u>name</u>	<u>currently at</u>	<u>WA dates</u>	<u>WA section 's</u>
Sue Barringer	Waltham Abbey	1981 - 89	Canteen
Frances Burgess	Waltham Abbey	1967 - 77	NM
Pauline Callaghan	Waltham Abbey	1983 - 89	Messenger
Joe Chance	Nazeing	1976 - 83	P1
Betty Chance	Nazeing	1981 - 91	P2
Bert Collins	Bishop's Stortford [rtd]	1955 - 85	Machine Shops
Ron Craik	RO Summerfield	1979 - 89	P1
Helen Davies	Waltham Cross	1975 - 88	Canteen
Kenneth Downing	Hertford [rtd]	1952 - 68	Personnel
Robert Ford	Waltham Abbey [rtd]	1980 - 91	Transport/Services
Don Fossey	RO Summerfield	1979 - 89	P2
Pat Fuller	Nazeing [rtd]	1952 - 81	AS/GC
George Fuller	Nazeing	?	Electronics
Jean Haigh	Waltham Abbey	1984 - 89	Canteen
Kim Henshaw	Waltham Abbey	1958 - 89	Pool/E1/M2/PR/P2 etc.
George Horwood	Wood Green	1970 - 90	BWD
Martin Ives	PBI Waltham Abbey	1983 - 89	Polymer Rsch/Anal.
Barry James	DRA Fort Halstead	1973 - 91	NM/Haz. Ass.
Tony Kinloch	Imperial College LONDON		
Colin Lawson	Bury St. Edmunds	1937-52/56-75	P1/P2/P1
Phyllis Lowdell	Chingford	-	-
Julie McGuchan	Waltham Abbey	1981 - 89	Canteen
Phyllis Oddy	Cheshunt [rtd]	1954 - 87	Personnel/Security
Reg Powell	MoD London	1973 - 87	gc
Dave Service	Courtaulds COVENTRY		NP4
Peggy Sharp		1951 - 67	Labs/Telephonist
Bob Simkins	Devon [rtd]	1954 - 73	SE1/SAS/SP1
Ron Smith	Chingford [rtd]	1948 - 84	
Arthur Stokoe	Chingford	1953 - 77	DMXRD/NM
Audrey Taylor	Enfield	1986 - 89	Canteen
Peter Tingle	MDP LONDON	1984 - 91	MDP
Ian Wallace	Bath		

Please send any changes to your details to the Editor:

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