

BICC Wood Lane News and gossip - September 2006

1 Website

Peter Walton has been working hard to assemble interesting and varied material for the recently established website.

Some photos and articles are already there, together with back numbers of this Newsletter. The "History of the Film Society", which was digitalised by Tom Ruben, is also to be found there.

Most recently, with the kind support and approval of Pat Holder and her family, and of Ian Fordham and the relatives of Ted Morrison, Peter has scanned a full copy of the "History of Wood Lane" and loaded it on to the site.

Please visit the site at

www.BICCwoodlane.co.uk

and see if there are things that you can contribute.

Peter can be contacted at:

walton@blaxill.net

or

walton.peter@btinternet.com

2 Pensioners' luncheon

Once again **George Kitchie** is organising a luncheon for all Wood Lane pensioners. The date is Tuesday 17th October 2006 – 12 noon at Balfour Beatty, Mayday Road.

Full details can be found on the Wood Lane website.

3 London Open House weekend

The weekend of 16th and 17th September 2006 is "Open House" for many of London's famous and interesting buildings. In common with recent years, major contractors are also operating some "Open site" events. One of these is the major White City development that includes the grounds originally occupied by the laboratories.

There will be hard hat tours of the site from 10.00-17.00 on both days. Engineers and contractors will be present. The last entry will be at 16.30, and each tour will have a maximum of 30 visitors at a time. Pre-booking is necessary through Open House. For details of how to do this go to www.openhouse.org.uk/london/home.html and go to "Useful Information".

Some further details are annexed.

4 People news

- **Annette Burgess** (Communications and Electronics and Computer Development), wrote from New Zealand to say that she still keeps in touch with other exiles down under, including **Murray Irvine** and **Rob Corne**. Her trips to UK have yet to coincide with a reunion, but if you want to get in touch with Annette she is at:

annette@improveit.co.nz

- We learn that **Maurice Rothman**, former Head of Mathematics, is seriously unwell, and in a special unit at Farnborough Hospital.

- **Roger Jones** (Metallurgy Department) has claimed the distinction of being the last of the ex-Wood Laners who migrated to BSI. He worked there with **John Childs**, **John Taylor** and **Mike Squelch**, all of whom have retired. Roger has now joined that happy band of retirees, and looks forward to seeing many of us in future. To contact Roger send to:

rogerjones@northlake.wanadoo.co.uk

- Many of you will know that **Albert Pinching** is making a good recovery from the stroke that he had a three months ago. He has been grateful for all support and good wishes.

- Thanks to all who sent kind messages following **Freddie Irish's** recent sudden death. A tribute from **Alan Bangay** is attached.

- The attached photo was found by **Geoff Holder's** daughter Alison, whilst looking through her late father's papers. It is clearly taken on top of the HV building but, apart from Geoff himself (at the back), who else can you identify? The date is probably early 50s.

5 Skype

More and more people are using Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) for communication with friends. Skype is a widely-used system with a free download and, as long as you give mutual authorisation, two Skype users can chat freely (literally) using the system for as long as you wish.

For details go to: www.skype.com

Stuart Castle is one who has signed up, and he reports that his son is now over in Europe working in the aviation industry. Stuart and Tess will therefore have a strong incentive to come to Europe – hopefully to coincide with a reunion.

6 2007

We are still aiming for Friday 11th May 2007 (Lunchtime) as the 2007 reunion date.

Fred/Freddie Irish.

Fred joined the Wood Lane Met. Lab. during the period 1958-59, at the invitation of Peter Gregory who had known him from their days together at the BNF (British Non-Ferrous Metals Research Association). Fred was attached to the General Metallurgy Section under my leadership and was an instant hit with his colleagues and he and I became close friends for life. He later gained promotion to Section Leader.

Known for his repertoire of jokes, Fred could also laugh at himself. I recall him telling me about his interview for a job at the BNF as a young student. The interviewer was Dr. McKeown, a dour Scot, and all went well until he was asked about his hobbies. Fred said that he had to think quickly and came up with a few things including Meccano modelling. He got the job but, in his parting comments, Dr. M said, "laddie if you want to impress people with your engineering knowledge, don't tell them you play with Meccano!"

I am sure all Wood Laners will recall the technical report writing system in which drafts had to run the gauntlet of checking through the chain of command before authorisation by the Research Manager. I remember that Fred set himself the challenge of always including an obsolete word in his reports with the aim of getting one through the system, in particular, past Jim Condon's eagle eyes. I think he gave up when I became Department Head.

Fred was a keen Arsenal F.C. supporter and in his youth had been known to enjoy a game of football or even cricket. During the early 60s he talked me into taking up golf and would call in on a Saturday morning to take me and our golf clubs on his motorbike to a local public course. On one occasion we arrived to find the course covered with a thin layer of snow, and Fred rushed off to the shops and returned with a bottle of nail varnish to paint our balls red! I was never very good at the game and we eventually called it a day – or at least my wife did!

I could go on for ages with my personal recollections of Fred and I am sure there are many other Wood Laners who could do the same. I think that Albert Pinching got it just right when he wrote in his recent note that Fred was always young at heart and part of the life and soul of Wood Lane in its heyday. Fred left Wood Lane in the early 80s and carved out a new and successful career in accountancy coupled with skiing.

I was privileged to be asked by Fred's wife, Vivien, to say a few words at the funeral about his Met. Lab–Wood Lane days without being too solemn and perhaps with a touch of humour. Following a prior discussion with several Met. Lab. colleagues, I included one of our favourite amusing anecdotes from Fred's repertoire. Fred was a special kind of person and I ended my tribute saying that he will be sadly missed by his many Wood Lane friends.

Alan Bangay.



Annex – Open site at White City

White City

Previously the site of the 1908 Franco-British Exhibition and until recently an industrial wasteland, the White City development is regenerating this 46-acre site into London's premier shopping and lifestyle destination.

The completed development will contain over 260 shops, 4 department stores, cinemas, restaurants and food offers, leisure facilities and 4500 car parking spaces.

Major transport infrastructure works include a new 16-line underground siding for the Central Line, a complete remodelling of Shepherd's Bush Central Line station in partnership with London Underground, a new main line station on the West London Line, a new station on the Hammersmith and City Line and a new bus station surrounding and including the refurbished Grade II listed DIMCO Building.

Significant other investment in community benefits is being made such as the rejuvenation of Shepherd's Bush Green in partnership with London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Council.

The development is being carried out by Westfield Shoppingtowns Ltd.



Multiplex Construction (UK) Ltd, Ariel Way W12. Sat / Sun 10am-5pm/ Pre-book only through Open House (using the web pages).