

Community

Reunion for Strowger employees

EMPLOYEES who had once worked on 'Strowger' telecommunications equipment gathered at the New Venture Social Club on November 4 for the 21st Annual Strowger Reunion.

For many years, Strowger telephone exchanges ruled supreme in handling the 'backroom' function for anyone making a telephone call using a dial phone. The mechanical equipment, some of which was still in use as late as 1995, was once manufactured at the now-defunct telecoms site in Beeston Rylands; in its heyday, the site employed approximately 8500 people.

Advances in technology changes things, however, and the company moved on. The number of people involved

in manufacturing the original Strowger systems naturally diminished and so did the number of people attending the reunions. This year, for the first time, the organisers decided to open the event up to staff who had worked on another essential part of a telecoms network, the transmission system. The reunion included engineers, technical staff, sales staff, production managers and other staff who had worked on either of the products.

So it was a good crowd that chuckled at a work-related comedy sketch written by one-time Strowger engineer Brian Harrison. People then chatted to old work colleagues and friends as they tucked into a buffet provided at the New Venture Social

Club – this venue itself once the home of the Ericsson/Plessey Sports and Social Club on Trafalgar Road.

George Bird (73) had worked in the Manufacturers' Delegated Testing lab when the company was known as GPT. He said: "I think this is one of the best reunion evenings I've been to. The comedy sketch was very good, one of the best, and it's always good to catch up with everybody again."

A formal vote of thanks was given to the organisers by Phil Harvey and people were reminded to make a note in their diaries for next year's reunion: November 3, 2010.

Railwaymen's Memorial rededicated

THE Attenborough Railwaymen's Memorial, dedicated to the railwaymen who lost their lives during WWI, has been seeking a new resting place since it was moved from Attenborough Station during redevelopments, has finally found one – at the station.

After endeavours to find a new home for the memorial by the Beeston and District Local History Society, about 12 people attended a re-dedication ceremony conducted by Sue Hemsley-Halls, Minister in Charge of St Mary's, Attenborough, at

the station footbridge early in November.

The memorial had been found languishing in four pieces at Derby Station by Attenborough resident and railway employee Jim Cahill. Jim repaired it in his own time and, when he moved to the south, it was taken for stored to St Mary's Church.

However, when it was found that none of the six people mentioned on the memorial had Attenborough connections, it was decided that it wouldn't be appropriate for it to be erected inside the

church – and a new home has been sought ever since.

In the end, the Civic Society contacted the county councillor for Attenborough, Eric Kerry, who took up the challenge.

Cllr Kerry contacted Chris McLaughlan of East Midland Trains and, in just over a month, the job was done, with East Midlands Trains generously footing the bill.

Seasonal attractions could provide winning shot in photo competition

THE deadline is approaching for people to capture the best of Erewash borough in photographs – and win a prize.

The regeneration agency Erewash Partnership has set up a competition with support from the borough council's 'Pride in Erewash' campaign.

Entries can be in three categories: parks and gardens in the borough of Erewash, interesting architecture from different periods, and other features such as the Nutbrook trail or the Erewash Canal and the markets.

The Partnership is reminding people that forthcoming attractions in the borough may prove suitable subjects for snapshots in the 'other

features' category, as the Chestnut Fair takes place in Long Eaton from November 20 – 21 and the Long Eaton Christmas lights switch-on takes place on Friday, November 27.

Paul Calladine, market towns coordinator, said: "There are many interesting features in the borough that make fascinating photographs, particularly with the changing shades of autumn. But the fair in Long Eaton and the Christmas lights switch-on provides another opportunity for photographers to get that special picture which may be a winner."

Competitors in the Erewash Snapshot Competition are limited to submitting three entries,

which may be spread across the different categories. Postal entries need to be submitted to the Partnership office at the Old Police Station, Wharnclyffe Road, Ilkeston, by 5pm on Friday November 27 and electronic images by the same time next day.

The winner will receive shopping vouchers worth £100. There are also runners-up prizes of vouchers worth £50 and £25.

Entry forms and more information can be collected from the Partnership's office, town halls at Ilkeston and Long Eaton. For more information contact Paul Calladine at Erewash Partnership on (0115) 944 3944.

Clearing up at Attenborough Nature Reserve *by the Editor*

A FORTUITOUS sun shone on volunteers gathered to collect rubbish at Attenborough Nature Reserve earlier this week.

It had rained relentlessly the day before, and the forecast for the rest of the week wasn't so bright. But on Tuesday, as the volunteers pulled on warm jackets and boots made for walking in mud before grabbing litter picks and bags of bin liners, the sun shone and the nature reserve was transformed by blue skies and blue water.

Attenborough Nature Reserve wardens and helpers were joined by volunteers from Nottinghamshire Wildlife Forum, CEMEX, McDonalds Restaurant (Chilwell), Attenborough Sailing Club,

Nottinghamshire Youth Offending Service, Coca Cola Business in the Community and officers from Broxtowe Borough Council, including a young work experience student from China.

This is the tenth year that the group has met to collect the rubbish that gathers, either trapped in bushes or that has drifted to the edge of the riverbanks. The 5-hour annual collection is in addition to the normal twice-weekly litter-pick that council employees undertake.

The nature reserve is owned by CEMEX, the aggregates company, and is jointly managed with the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. Attenborough CEMEX MD Andrew Hindmarsh said: "This day's work is further

confirmation of all the work that has taken place over the past 10 years.

"It brings together people from different organisations, who work together for the benefit of the environment and the people who visit the nature reserve. This type of event only works with help from other organisations. The young offenders, for instance, have had a day here where everyone in the team treated them with respect and as equals, and it was plain to see that they appreciated that.

"CEMEX and the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust are grateful for the help we've received from all of the volunteers."