

CHRISTMAS STARTS HERE!

BUT YOU'VE STILL TO PUT A HALF-SHIFT IN TOMORROW

The annual Staff Dance took place as usual at the Brandling House Banqueting Room in Gosforth Park on 23rd December with music supplied by the evergreen Silver Dollars plus the Johnny Taws Band.

It was obvious at first sight that Moss Bros. had covered the market in menswear and the ladies in what to wear or, in some cases, what to almost wear. A splendid crowd we looked all spruced up like a dog's dinner and rarin' to go. Soon the room was heaving with gyrating bodies and that was just at the bar; you should have seen the dance floor. Prompted by the band leader's eloquent request of "Noo a wantyez all te hev a gud time. Nee sittin' about on ya beheinz, yiv all te gerrup'n shake a leg", the floor was soon full with so many dancers that one gentleman was heard to comment to his partner who had just stood on his toe "I don't know why they call this ballroom dancing because there certainly isn't enough on this floor".

As with previous years, the food



was served in sittings but fortunately there was none of the mad scramble for seats that occurred last year (1970). As a result the food could be savoured at length without having the next occupant of your seat pouring his salad cream or grapefruit segments down your neck whilst defending his right to occupation with deft use of

knife, fork and elbow. In general, the comment about the food was that it was excellent both in quality and quantity although it became increasingly obvious as the night wore on, that one couple had not eaten sufficient, as they gradually devoured each other on the dance floor.

The Silver Dollars proved to be yet again the more popular of the two groups with both young and old and fans will be pleased to hear that there is no truth in the rumour that they are to be devalued.

One of the highlights of the evening was to see John Dean and his wife Vivienne performing their version of the Cha-Cha to the roar and delight of a vast gathering of supporters—Jack Fairbairn—and to see them finally awarded 5.8 points out of six by Jack to sweep the board clean (the first prize being a board duster.)

Yes, on the whole the night was a success although one or two regrettable incidents such as the bar closing at 1.00 a.m. and the writer losing the chance of winning a spot prize by the successful screening tactics of Ray Jackson's wife did threaten to intervene.

"It's a pity about that half-day tomorrow though!"

A. Wigham



COMPANY DINNER DANCE



AN OPEN LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,
When will Building and Civil Engineering Contractors cease to behave like the proverbial ostrich and remove their heads from the desert of the short-sighted, expeditious solution to their labour problems—namely the “lump”, the so-called “labour-only sub-contractor” etc.

It is difficult to ascertain the reasons for the extensive, and extending, use of this form of labour hire. Reasons, that is, that stand up to logical examination.

A popular reason put forward by site management of even the largest contractors, is that they have a tight rate in the estimate and they are “hiving off” a potential loss. In effect they are saying that Joe Bloggs and mates are more able to withstand the financial loss than a multi-million pound, national concern. Obviously this is errant rubbish—usually Joe Bloggs & Co. evaporate to greener fields as the pressures mount or get up to various antics and aggravation on site that eventually results in the parting of the ways.

Often site management will point out that labour-only gangs have the specialist expertise to produce the quality and quantity they require. Yet the same site management will interview complete strangers seeking labour-only employment in a particular field in which they purport to be experts. On learning that there is no requirement in that field, the stranger will offer to quote rates in perhaps half a dozen other fields—a veritable walking “jack of all trades” that can solve all the manager’s problems. It is sad to reflect on the number of occasions that the manager will turn his back on the years of his education, training and experience, by accepting such a solution and engaging such a complete “chancer”.

There can be little doubt that the decision to sub-contract labour is often the easy way out and the abdication of the responsibility to manage. The decision is invariably based on pure accountant-like or arithmetic analysis of a list of figures; requiring little or no managerial skill or technical ability. In companies or sections of a company, where such practices are prevalent, it is difficult to understand why highly-paid and educated personnel are employed to make such decisions.

Higher outputs and greater efficiency are other reasons quoted for the operation of “the lump”. Individuals who support this view, are in fact commenting on their own failure to compete with Joe Bloggs & Co. In other words they are acknowledging that they are unable to manage, organise and motivate operations to achieve satisfactory targets.

Supplying labour to a main contractor on a shift basis is another function of labour-only sub-contractors which is even more difficult to comprehend. It is usually said that such a sub-contractor has “the contacts and connections with a pool of first class men”. One such “labour-supplier” who provided up to 150 men to a large, national contractor on a motorway project, admits privately that he simply hired anyone who came to hand when he received an order for labour. Once the order was fulfilled he took no further interest in what took place. Undoubtedly the site management involved thought it was getting the best of labour at cheap rates.

How can foremen control, supervise and feel responsible for, labour that they had no hand in hiring? Indeed a recognised part of a good foreman’s make-up is the ability to locate, hire and handle good labour. The removal of this responsibility is yet another case (there are many others) of the erosion of the authority and scope of the foreman. The effect of such a situation on the training, and future training, of foremen is disturbing to contemplate. No doubt top management in the future will be heard to bemoan the falling quality of foremen in this respect.

An issue of supposed concern with the various employers bodies is the annual drop in apprentice intake into the construction industry. Do they see the future training of skilled operatives being provided by Joe Bloggs and others? As with foremen, top management will wonder as to the cause of a decline in the quality of labour.

Employers’ Federations regularly issue statements condemning tax and insurance evasion that accompany the “lump”, whilst maintaining that properly operated, the system has a vital role to play. The conception of everyone being self-employed as a form of remuneration and employment has quite a Eutopian aura.

Indeed, if it were possible to carefully control and regulate its operation, then there could be a case made out for its continuation. However, as things exist, tax and insurance evasions (plus many other evasions and abuse of social services) are rife. For Employer’s Federations to argue and defend otherwise, is simply acting out a charade.

The national contractor referred to earlier in these comments who hired 150 men on a motorway project must have known that the labour was not being supplied on a legitimate basis. How else can labour be hired at a cost less than the true market cost, unless abuse or evasion was being practiced. Perhaps the contractor really believed that their sub-contractor had some magical source of labour which was unknown to the rest of the industry in the area and which was prepared to work for less money—to defend the “lump” is to believe this fairy tale.

It is acknowledged at present, that it is almost impossible to hire certain classes of labour without resort to labour only sub-contractors—examples being steel reinforcement fixers, kerblayers etc. Obviously individual sites, or for that matter individual companies, would find it extremely difficult to act unilaterally in changing the situation in such cases.

The Federations should think hard on the most recent case where an industry refused to acknowledge the truth as it knew existed and insisted on defending a lost cause rather than put its house in order—Road Haulage.

Everyone is familiar with the result of Government intervention in that instance. Once Whitehall grasps the full extent of this multi-million pound racket, presumably similar action will result.

The Construction Industry is constantly expressing concern as to the image it presents (or fails to present may be more accurate) to the general public. It is a pity that the industry cannot give that concern a ring of sincerity by taking its own initiative toward ridding itself of the greatest single scourge to that image—the “lump”!

Yours faithfully,
J. Dean

HELLO THERE FROM THE SOUTH



Despite stories that the Southern Area Staff are always on holiday in the New Forest or on the beach at Bournemouth as earlier *Brims News* have indicated!! the following should serve to correct this impression. The photograph above shows the almost completed Overbridge in Southampton Docks. It is an eleven span bridge over the main London/Bournemouth railway line and it is being built to relieve the Southampton city centre of container traffic from the new Western Docks where Brims are also carrying out a large area of surfacing work. The bridge has been built on an old council refuse tip (very smelly) and all supporting columns had to be piled with 120 ton Hercules Piles by Johnsons of Glasgow. The forty-six number supporting columns are on clusters of four number piles with pile-caps at a depth of eight feet which were not easy to construct when the water level was only four feet below ground level in this tidal area of the Docks. All supporting columns and

transverse beams were reinforced *in situ* concrete, and the inverted "T" beams and edge beams to the bridge deck were prestressed precast concrete supplied by Kingsbury Concrete of Retford. The "T" beams 496 in all weighed seven and a half ton each, and were all placed by our own Smith C30 with the well known Brims operator E. Wilson at his very best. The main span over the railway had to be placed during a night possession of six and a half hours work and our Ernie bless him, achieved it with a half hour to spare. The edge beams however, were too much for him weighing twenty tons and we used a hired Prestman Lion from B.C.H.C. The 2,500 cu.yds of concrete in the bridge deck was placed with Brims own Schwing pump operated by Bob Lague. The whole operation was completed using ready mix concrete over a four week period.

To the north approach of the bridge there is 2100 sq.yds of formwork to the abutment and retaining walls, which were filled in between to form the ramp with 5000 cu.yds. of

dredged sea ballast compacted with Bomag 90 and 72T vibratory rollers. We also had to contend with some 3000 cu.yds. of unexpected soft spots on the South approaches and then the client (the British Transport Docks Board) also asked us to construct a roundabout 100 ft. radius with two short sections of dual carriageway. We received the drawings on 26th November, 1971 for a completion date of 31st December, 1971. Nevertheless these difficulties were overcome by burning the midnight oil. We had traffic over the bridge and round the roundabout by Christmas Eve and by hook or by crook we'll have completion by the contract completion date of 29th February, 1972.

Many thanks to a first class staff:—
Engineer John Lavers
Gen. Foreman Peter Beaumont
Foreman Carp. Len Ferguson
Our very able office manager Les Brown and our Mountie quantity surveyor John Stevens

P.R. Everson
Agent

GREтна CHAT



Hello everyone, welcome to this edition of the 'Gretna News'.

As is usual with this contract, we have led the social scene yet again, with a Christmas Party at the "Collingwood", Dunston (organised with John Wood) which turned out to be quite a good night. We trust that Seaton Valley, Sunderland Incinerator, South Shields Incinerator and the Plant Yard enjoyed this as well.

On seeing Eddie Hall returning from the loo, as white as a sheet and not looking his usual self, Harry Tarn, who was himself not feeling one hundred per cent, was quoted as saying, "Seeing him makes me feel better already".

The Gretna Staff Dance was held at the Gretna Hall Hotel on 21st December and was attended by all the staff at the site, certain members of staff from Head Office, Dumfriesshire County Council staff and other invited guests. Everyone had an absolutely fantastic time. Comments were heard like, "The best dance I've been to in years", and "Why can't we have do's like this in Newcastle?".

The music was presented by Mr. Bell of Annan and his seven piece band and Keef's Mobile Discotheque.

Peter Martindale gave his version of the Highland Fling when he happened to fall on his back to the cries of "drunk again", "get him out", "don't serve him anymore", "get 'em off", etc., etc.

Harry Hart requested would it be possible to be shown around the site the next day but, on turning up, was white-faced and decided against sitting in a noisy, bumpy, Landrover necessary for journeys around the site. "Never mind Harry, next time you are up, we might fix up a visit for you."

Anyone who listened to the motoring programme *National Radio 4*

recently will have heard the presenter praising the excellent signs we have on this job, particularly the sign in the photograph which is a lot brighter than the dull signs that one normally sees on road improvement contracts.

We welcome to the site Chris Norris, on his return to the Company from Mason Pittendrigh, who will be moving into the Company's residence at Rockcliffe when Paul Dryden returns to College very shortly to go into his third year.

Eddie Hall—are you still wondering what happened to last Saturday and Sunday?

T. J. Dodd.

GREтна SPORTS NEWS

Five-a-side football team

Even though Gretna Green is sixty miles away, the LADS still decided to send a five-a-side team to Ponteland. Preparation for this was undertaken by a journey of twenty miles, twice a week to train at Carlisle Sports Centre. There was great enthusiasm for this until the circuit training commenced with Terry Dodd clapping out after one circuit. The rest of the lads (Malcolm, Keith, Brian and Paul) managed the circuits quite well.

Our efforts at first were not very successful but this was due to the fact that we had gone into the league half-way through the season. Nevertheless, in the future, we hope to uphold the name of Gretna with a magnificent play and sportsmanship and, following a spectacular 10-5 defeat of Seaton Valley Drainage, we are now confident of winning the championship.

The Darts News

The main problem on site appears to be how to beat the Ladies Darts Team from the Gretna Hall Hotel.

Never mind lads, you'll do it one day!

K. Brown & M. Donnelly.

A COMPARISON OF LIFE AT UNIVERSITY AND ON SITE

After the scenery and nightlife (?) of Gretna, Bradford seemed rather dull by comparison but now, as the snow begins to fall and the cold sets in, it begins to have a special warmth of its own.

The change in life took a bit to get used to with different working hours—work is occasionally done at University contrary to popular

belief—and also the different licensing hours which are of secondary importance of course.

The bookwork and theoretical content of the course appear to bear no relation to work done on site but there is some good news for the lads on our sites in the far north! There are several female civil engineers in the department with the prospect of more to come so, if they ever reach Gretna, be prepared to see some startling changes in the site appearances of the engineers.

Next week is Rag Week in Bradford and, as usual, the engineers will have a big say in it.

All the best to the boys (?) at Gretna.

L. McDonald
ex-Gretna (Green-boy)
Bradford University

The Indispensable Man

Sometime when you are feeling important.

Sometime when your ego's in bloom. Sometime when you take it for granted.

You're the best qualified man in the room.

Sometime when you feel that your going

Would leave an unfillable hole

Just follow this simple instruction

and see how it humbles your soul

Take a bucket and fill it with water

Put your hands in it up to your wrists

Pull it out and the hole that remains

is the measure of how you'll be missed.

You may splash all you please when you enter.

You may stir up the water galore.

But stop and you'll find in a minute,

That it looks just the same as before.

The moral of this, is quite simple

Do just the best that you can.

Be proud of yourself, but remember

There is no Indispensable Man.

"GOOD MORNING—BRIMS!"

I seek them here, I seek them there,
I even seek them on the air.

Whenever they are needed, they never are about.

No wonder I often scream and jump and shout

And end up telling the caller "I'm sorry but he's out!"

Ann Fincham
(Telephonist)

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Overheard at the management dinner on Thursday, 20th January, 1972:

"And believe me gentlemen under that rugged exterior beats a heart of stone!"

THE CRACK IS...

Overheard on Washington Drainage Site

"but we can't go any *!?!** faster George, we don't drink diesel you know!"

That Richard Allan will lead the Turn-Key division in next season's Amateur Cup!

PLANT HUMOUR

Big Geordie—A big dragline having nine operators and thirty-six banksmen was working on dangerous work, as a precaution a roll call was taken at the end of each shift to ensure everyone was present. One night one of the operators was missing. A search party was organized and began searching the machine. After several hours the operator was discovered sleeping behind the dipstick.

Big Geordie—Plant fitters are still working to repair the jib of one of our big draglines. Damage occurred when the night shift did not lower the jib to let the moon go by.

Looking for Work—An unemployed plant operator was driving along in his car when he saw a low loader carrying a large 'dozer travelling in the opposite direction. There was no operator in sight so he quickly turned and followed. After several hours the loader arrived at the site. The operator followed and was just getting out of his car to ask the G.F. for the start when the dozer driver jumped out of the machines tool box.

One of our contracts has spoil heaps which are so high that there is snow on the top in June.

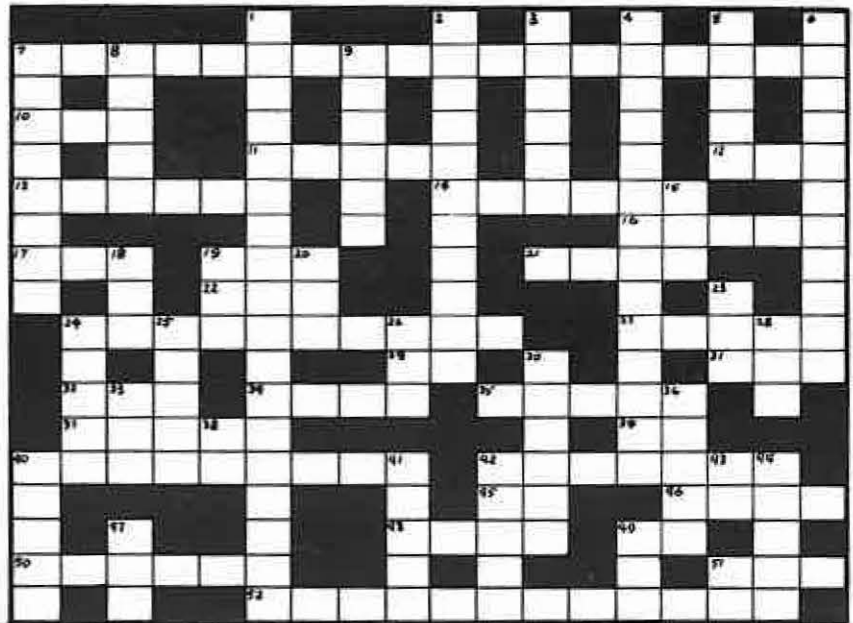
DEFINITIONS

Socialism—You have two cows and you have to give one to your neighbour.

Communism—You have two cows, the government takes both and sells you the milk.

Liberalism—You have two cows, the government takes both and gives you the milk.

Capitalism—You have two cows, you sell one and buy a bull!



CLUES

Across

7. As far as Brims can. Overseas maybe (5,13)
10. The night before (3)
11. It's enough to make you weep (5)
12. A hairy cousin? (3)
13. Depart (3-3)
14. Jack Fairbairn might have last Sunday (6)
16. Sweet swear word for polite company (5)
17. The one who takes this off the bolt (3)
19. Definite article (3)
21. With what the Pope made an article of clothing (4)
22. May be found on answer to 21 across (3)
24. A pipeline of convenience for the plant-yard (4-6)
27. Distance of hearing (5)
29. To be found in plant but not in plot (2)
31. Vantage point for Dartmoor prisoners (3)
32. Something to pay, but you wish you didn't have to (3)
34. Deposit (4)
35. To beg another bite, that's how it started (5)
37. Keep away from (5)
39. Has Ned come yet? No! then start (2)
40. The realm of 1 down (5-4)
42. If he's not there, he'll be...(7)
45. Inside for a start (2)
46. Presently (4)
48. It looks like gold but it isn't (4)
49. Cause is short of it (2)
50. To stack thus reduces accidents (6)
51. Encountered in the metric system (3)
52. You don't get drunk on this bend (6,6)

Down

1. Is Jack Fairbairn really this or is he pulling our legs? (4.2.3.5.4.)
2. The Brims elopement job (6.5)
3. ---of the shrew (6)
4. One of our offices (14)
5. A Nation Indigram (5)
6. Many of our G.F.'s could be called this (5.6)
7. See 40 down
8. On your guard (5)
9. Not ours (6)
15. The time has come for payment (3)
18. Attempt (3)
19. Ditto to 19 across (3)
20. Large Bird (3)
23. A busy worker, not employed by Brims? (3)
24. Complete (5)
25. President of U.S.A. (5)
26. A short sleep (3)
28. Obtained (3)
30. Colour the hair again perhaps (6)
33. ---gardner (3)
36. Row (5)
38. Independent television loses its authority (2)
40. And 7 down. Situated thus it should be a pleasure to work these (5.8)
41. A finger (5)
42. A scruffy boy could be covered in this (5)
43. Definitely not (2)
44. One who is past recovery (5)
47. Art turns to a living creature (3)
49. Where a barrister is called to and obtains refreshment (3)
51. I am not you (2)

ANSWERS ON PAGE 9

Compiled by
R. Grant,
Plant Depot.

THE LONGEST HEADING



The last issue of 'Brims Gretna Gazette' began "Who are we?" Judging from previous magazines we appear to be a Scottish firm with our Head Office situated on the border in Cumberland.

I should like to point out to the remaining un-indoctrinated readers that the North East Region is still alive and well under the "beady eye" of "Lenny the Lion", Mr. Pascoe.

We have not been mentioned in earlier dispatches because the contracts manager has just recently sold his whip thus allowing me to bring to your attention the Main Drainage Contract at Horraton, Washington, Co. Durham.

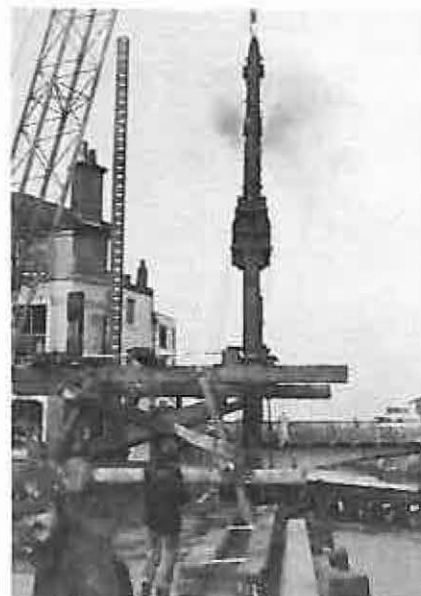
The jobs consists of 18in. and 12 in. drainage but the interesting feature is a 160 ft. long 4 ft. x 4 ft. heading as shown on the photograph above. This heading is to accommodate an 18 in.

sewer under Bonemill Lane. Work on this commenced on 28th October and was driven on (or in) by our G.F. George Teasdale who, despite insurmountable difficulties such as rock and bad ground, pushed the job on to finish ahead of schedule. At one stage he had an interesting problem when the men actually asked to be "rained off" in the tunnel! Water was pouring in and the heading had to be lined with polythene sheeting in an attempt to keep the men dry. During this trying period only 4 ft. was excavated in five days but once out of this ground the job was soon completed.

The client for this contract was Washington Development Corporation who were more than satisfied with the standard of workmanship and the safety precautions taken.

B.G. Winters

WHITBY WHIMPERING



Regular readers may be pleased to know that yet again we have a job in England. Our Whitby contract got off to a flying start at the end of November last year, when snow on the moors prevented us getting there. Then came the fog and Ernie Wilson lost his crane fogbound somewhere on the motorways for three days followed by one of the consulting engineers stepping backwards into the river out of a boat.

These small problems overcome, Whitby is now reverberating to the Delmag pile hammer, the residents not complaining too much although we are asked to stop for funerals.

The contract is for reconstructing an existing quay, which we hope to complete before the seaside visitors season starts. Staff have come from far and wide and include Phil MacDonald (ex Trimdon Street, Sunderland); Bill Archer (ex. Multi-Storey Car Park); Richard Horner (ex Teesside) and Cyril Towle who has at last left Beverley.

One understands that the landlady has a daughter and that everybody is getting down to sampling Whitby nightlife and the Angel Hotel.

E.A. Blyth
P.S. For those interested, the photograph shows staff standing back admiring their work.

E.A.B.

PEOPLE & PLACES

PLANT DEPOT NEWS

"Morning All"

Nice to be back at work again after all the festivities, isn't it? It's also rather pleasant to say ta-raa to the turkey and Christmas cake for a few months and welcome back the leek puddings and spotty dog. I must admit I found the pace rather fast this year and should admit that I'm losing my grip or getting old, but I won't! It has been said that a fella is really in his prime when he reaches twenty-nine. I've been in my prime for fourteen years now, so I think it's time I moved on a bit. From today I'm thirty (give or take a little) should anyone ask, as today is my birthday. It's also my wife's birthday. I don't know how she will take the news that she is now twenty-nine instead of twenty-eight, after all these years, although the diamond tiara present should smooth her over a bit. No doubt you're all wondering how your favourite department is doing and eagerly waiting for some news hot off the press. Not to keep you in agony any longer I'll tell you. Nowt! Nothing! Nix! No scandal, no lavish purchases, no nothing. All sections of the department are as busy as ever—



Ossie Lowery playing "dunshies" with his tippers,



"Blue Eyes" Hutchinson counting his scaffold clips.



John Hall pushing the plant through the workshops,



and last but not least, Bert Fairburn juggling the books.

All the fitters, labourers, machine men are alive and well, or so they say. We don't owe anyone any money. Unfortunately no one owes us any money. Matty Curran still insists on giving us all a safety lecture every morning. Assistant foreman Harry "Sailor" Cookson insists he's the best looking gaffer in Brims. Workshop fitter Les Stamps reckons he's the prettiest in the shop, although the rumours are that he is being hotly challenged by Ray Howarth and tipper driver George Thompson. Even "Les Girls" of the department are quiet and have nothing to offer scandal-wise. Marg. hasn't told me off for ages, Meggie hasn't argued with me for moons. Ruby, our talented Mrs. Mopp hasn't told me to "Shift ya byeuts" for weeks and weeks. Margaret still torments us all with her mini-skirts, and Elsie, dear Elsie, no longer gets ratty when we ask her when the happy event is due. So you see, dear readers, as I said before, we've Nowt, Nothing, Nix to report.

Must go now, as I can hear the lads in the workshop singing "Happy Birthday Dear Jackie" and I don't want to miss it.

J.S. Fairbairn

P.S. I wish someone else would volunteer to write Plant Depot News as I'm sure you would like to read something sensible for a change.

BRIMS 1972 NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

Buffet Dance was held on the 7th January 1972 in the New Forest Hotel, Ashurst, near Southampton.

We had a good turnout from all the sites in the south, but unlike last year we had no one in attendance from the North when Stan Sutton was present, nevertheless a marvellous time was had by all.

A vote of thanks is extended to Ken Harman of the Bournemouth site for organizing it in his usual first class manner.

We send our best wishes for a Happy and Prosperous New Year to you all in the north from the southern region.

P.R. Everson
Agent

TEESSIDE NEWS!!!

SAFETY CHATTER

APPRAISING, ANALYSING AND MEASURING OUR SAFETY PERFORMANCE

At this time of the year with the Festive Season well behind us we, in the field of safety, are left with the task of analysing and measuring our safety performance for the previous year.

George Washington once said "We ought not to look back unless it is to derive useful lessons from past errors and for the purpose of profiting by clear bought experience".

Surely a statement most applicable to accident case histories. It is often said that experience is the best teacher, but in the field of accident prevention much has been learned by a review of serious or unusual accidents. This might be called Accident Observation rather than Accident Prevention.

Nevertheless most safety officers are convinced that a thorough review of accidents which have occurred within their company has helped them locate unsafe conditions or unsafe practices that otherwise might have been missed. Likewise circulation of specific reports of these serious and unusual accidents often initiates immediate corrective action where otherwise no action would have been taken.

Busy management after reading details of an accident might be reminded of an unsafe condition or an unsafe practice on their own site which they had previously ignored. They might recognise a condition previously considered safe, to be on the contrary, a decidedly unsafe condition. Naturally the primary object of any safety appraisal is to discover hazardous conditions and to initiate correction of them. Accident investigation and cause analysis must be judged by the practicability of applying the remedy which will prevent reoccurrence.

The investigation of an accident is the fact-finding job. Fact-finding however is not the simple accumulation of statements, photographs, drawings etc. It is an exploration of what actually happened, a sifting of data and a serious consideration of the reasons for the accident.

In modern safety programmes any accident investigation must involve and be the responsibility of the site project manager, by reasons of his familiarity with the worker and the

area of work, his knowledge of the machines and materials under his control. To assist in this matter he has the Company's safety officer, plant manager, plant inspector, insurance engineers and many others. He, with one of the others, will help the safety officer in formulating a practical procedure for finding the true causes of an accident.

Measuring a safety performance is an entirely different matter, when we have to consider the size of the project being undertaken, the number of workers employed, the number of man-hours worked, the conditions of work etc.

There is a great deal of difference between judgement and measurement. To judge is to arrive at a conclusion or decision by weighing or comparing. To measure is to ascertain quality dimensions or quantity by comparison with a standard.

In judging sites all are compared with one another. In measuring them all are compared with the same thing, namely the standard.

No doubt you will appreciate the difficulty of measuring site safety performance by just drawing up statistical reports of accidents that have occurred. We have to consider disabling frequency rates, disabling severity rates, reported minor injuries, not forgetting the near miss injury accidents and material damage accidents, which in effect when totalled give us our Company's annual accident frequency rates. Then we have an opportunity to compare our performance with that of other companies of comparable size. Before you receive our statistical returns for the past year let us all make up our minds that to achieve the object desired, we must do all in our power to combat the scourge of accidents in the years ahead. Accidents causing much pain and suffering are so unnecessary, if care is taken!

QUI COLLABORANT
M. Curran

Two inmates of an asylum were trying to escape. They climbed a watch tower, but could not see how to get over the outside wall. Then one of them noticed a searchlight. "We can turn it on," he said, "and point it over the wall and you can slide down it." "No fear," said the other, "you might let me get halfway down and then turn it off."

Q.S. CHATTER

Brian Wilson—Coming up to his first anniversary with the Company. Lives and works on Teesside. Ex Harbour & General, works principally on civil engineering contracts. Married and has just increased his responsibilities and reduced his income tax by becoming the father of a boy.

Frank Lowe—Responsible for smooth running of sub-contractors payments and documentation as well as many other Q.S. duties associated with Head Office. Been with Brims for seven years now and proves he is not as old as some allege by regularly beating folks half his age on the squash court.

Crawford Dunn—Started with Brims in 1966. He has worked on both civil engineering and building work. Has had spells at Southampton and Scotch Corner. Periodically disappears, alleging that he is in Croydon studying for I.Q.S. exams—he also passes one now and then!

A True Story (really)

A solicitor friend of mine, practising in Newcastle was consulted by a local G.P. with a view to raising a civil action against a patient of his.

The patient and his wife had been married several years with no sign of the family they were anxious to start. They consulted the doctor who ran some small tests and discovered a slight reproductive fault in the wife. A simple operation was performed by the doctor and in due course he presented his bill for 25 gns.

Four or five years passed without payment before the doctor finally sued his ex-patient in the county court.

When the defendant was asked why the account had not been paid, he replied, "I am sorry I have no money, I now have three children to support".

A.B.S.

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD

ACROSS

7 Pharr International; 10 Eve; 11 Onion; 12 Ape; 13 Set off; 14 Angles; 16 Sugar; 17 Nut; 19 The; 21 Robe; 22 Hem; 24 Tyne-tunnel; 27 Range; 29 An; 31 Tor; 32 Tax; 34 Dump; 35 Began; 37 Avoid; 39 Go; 40 Plant Yard; 42 Fishing; 45 In; 46 Soon; 48 Gilt; 49 Be; 50 Neatly; 51 Met; 52 Scotch Corner

DOWN

1 King of the Teddy Boys; 2 Gretna Green; 3 Taming; 4 Middlesbrough; 5 India; 6 Slave Driver; 8 Alert; 9 Theirs; 15 Due; 18 Try; 19 The; 20 Emu; 23 Ant; 24 Total; 25 Nixon; 26 Nap; 28 Got; 30 Retint; 33 Ava; 36 Noise; 38 It; 40 & 7 Point Pleasant; 41 Digit; 42 Filth; 43 No; 44 Goner; 47 Rat; 49 Bar; 51 Me;

CYGNET CLUB

BUMPER BUNDLE

A record number of events are being organised for this coming year. The provisional programme is as follows:

Month	Event
Feb.	Ski-ing Fishing at Ardrossan Ten-pin bowling
March	Wine tasting evening Darts competition
April	Folk night
May	May ball
June	Car treasure hunt Barbecue
July	"Mini-Golf" competition
August	Cricket Match— Scotland v. Rest
Sept.	Quoit competition Leek competition
Oct.	Stag night
Nov.	Darts competition
Dec.	Christmas party

Now is the time to become a member!

HAND CLAPPIN', FOOT STOMPIN', FROZEN BUTT'.

Avid readers of *Brims News* will no doubt recognise the similarity between the title for this article on the Cygnet Club Christmas Party and that appearing in the January 1971 edition.

The difference? Well anyone who attended will agree that the title is more than appropriate to the conditions met in the barn of the Highlander Inn, Belsay on the night of Friday 17th December 1971. (Andrew Marr wishes to state that the choice of venue was not initially his and the fact that he only lives one and a half miles down the road did not in any way influence his agreement.)

Having herded the Brass Monkeys out, the stalwarts braved the arctic conditions (unfortunately still prevailing despite the use of comet heaters kindly loaned by the Plant Yard) to force a pint or two (or three or four) down their throats to try and generate some inner warmth. This done they then retired to the room in which the "disco" was playing (courtesy of "Keef" Jefferson from our Gretna site) to try and maintain the warm feeling by indulging in various forms of contortions that come under the general heading of Dancing. Hand clappin' and foot stompin' they soon forgot their frozen butts and the atmosphere became warm and cheerful but woe betide anyone who left the door open when crossing the courtyard to pay their respects to Mother Nature.

The food which was first class, was served at about 10.15 p.m. and the hot jacket potatoes were more than welcome, especially to those who had not as yet partaken in the dancing.

The beer kept on flowing; the music kept on playing and the dancers dancing but unfortunately all good things must end and so did the party. The cold forgotten, music still echoing in our ears we staggered away from The Highlander after an enjoyable night.

"What was that?"

"What?"

"Something going into the Barn"

"Oh its only the Brass Monkeys returning to roost."

A. Wigham

VENTURE CLUB

The next expedition is to the Lake District for a winter climbing weekend on the 28th/30th January 1972.

The Annual Dinner trip will be held in March also in the Lake District.

A committee has been formed to organise a one week summer canoeing expedition in Scotland from 19th to 25th June probably either on the River Spey in the Cairngorms or along the Caledonian Canal from Fort William on the West Coast through Loch Ness to Inverness on the East Coast.

A circular has been distributed to existing members of the Venture Club.

Anyone who has not received one but is interested please contact A.M. Marr at Head Office.

MANAGEMENT STUDY GROUP

The Group had a good turnout for their last meeting when Mr. J. Ryder, general manager and director, Smiths Dock Limited, gave an interesting and informative talk.

The next meeting will be a talk by Mr. Charles Baker, director, Durham University Business School, on 'An Aspect of Management' on 2nd February, 1972 held, as usual, at the Post House Hotel, Washington. This is followed by the Group's Conference and Seminar on 11/12th March, 1972 when the subjects will be 'Industrial Relations and Looking at the Future'. Amongst the speakers will be Jack Dash and Mr. Philip Gardner. The Conference will be led by J. Bescoby.

E.A. Blyth

CIVIL ENGINEERING COLLEGE

You may or may not have heard of the Bircham Newton Civil Engineering College. I have been sent here on a two year residential course studying various skills in civil engineering. We have our own site at the College where we train in concrete, formwork, timbering, drainage, kerb laying and a few others. I have visited sites whilst being here, once to a sewage works at Bedford, the steel works at Scunthorpe and the Olympia Building Exhibition. I had to work on site during my holidays for a short period to get the feel of site conditions. They are not as bad as some of them here at Bircham. We have education in which we study English, calculations, science and technology. This we now do in fortnightly blocks at The Norfolk College of Arts and Technology.

I have been sent on an Outward Bound course in the Lake District which was tough but I enjoyed it and it gives you more confidence in yourself being out on the mountains by yourself.

Before I leave the College I will have been on a plant course, crane course, levelling course and an oxy-acetylene cutting course.

There are quite a few good facilities in the evenings, we can watch television, go to our cinema which is free, or go to various clubs, e.g. football, judo, woodwork, go-cart, motor club, rifle shooting or aero-modelling. We have our own students club where there is a refreshments bar and table tennis. We have a large gymnasium which is open all the time for those who feel fit.

At the weekends there is usually a football match on Saturday and two on a Sunday. Once a month we hold a disco and coaches from various Youth Organisations. We have had our own version of "It's a Knock Out" and a Christmas Show, both times we were well supported and raised a considerable sum of money for various charities.

All in all the College is a good idea and I hope to benefit my career from it and look forward to next July when I leave and can put my training into use on one of your sites.

K. Hudson
Student

FOR SALE

One well used stick. Owner now decided to use subtle methods of getting his staff to work.