

Winter 1971

# Wright ahead

the Head Wrightson magazine



# FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

This Christmas issue of Wright Ahead is being published at a time when Head Wrightson is short of new orders for plant and equipment, castings and forgings. We are in company with almost all similar firms in the United Kingdom and indeed the whole western world. Unfortunately sharing unpleasant experiences does not make them any the more pleasant although perhaps it does help to make them more bearable.

Much of the responsibility for a revival in orders for HW's products rests with others – Mr Heath and Mr Nixon, Vic Feather and Hugh Scanlon, the Boards of large public and private industries like the Steel Corporation and ICI. But there is much more we can do ourselves.

First and foremost we have to make sure that the Company's finances remain strong. I know that it is hard to talk about money when people are worrying about jobs, but without money and the ability to borrow more there would be no orders for HW. So that is our first duty. To keep the Balance Sheet strong so that our customers, our suppliers and our bankers have confidence in HW – which they all do now.

Secondly we must drive to get more orders at home and abroad. Our intensive efforts to sell are spread far and wide as you will see from this issue of Wright Ahead – from Chile to Thailand, from Australia to Brazil, from South Africa to Finland. This is the positive imaginative side of selling. To go out confident in the strengths of HW with good products to sell, whether they be tinning lines or sinter plants, cast steel or forged steel valve bodies, ball mills or tunnel segments.

Finally we must continue to improve our skills, design production and commercial skills, looking all the time for ways to achieve a better result in less time. There is no end to this search. It is the spur of new ideas which leads to the new investment for which we are all waiting.

I believe that the revival of demand will come and that if we battle on resolutely through the next six months Head Wrightson will then enjoy a period of progress better than we have had for years past. May I wish you all a Happy Christmas, and express the hope and expectation that 1972 will show the renewed prosperity and increase in jobs in HW for which we are all working.

John Eccles

# THOUGHTS FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON

*front cover*  
Skiers at Diablarets, Switzerland

To the overseas greetings on the opposite page Wright Ahead adds the following 'thoughts for the festive season'.

To all our retired personnel, particularly the old veterans, we extend our warmest greetings. To those of our colleagues who have met adversity, bereavement or sickness, we hope that the coming year will bring comfort and healing.

To all our readers at home and overseas we wish a very happy Christmas and a good New Year.



# GREETINGS FROM OVERSEAS

Christmas in England can be portrayed as a religious festival or the seasonal family reunions or an uproarious excuse for excessive eating and drinking. Whatever way, the traditions of Christmas are still very strong, even though your favourite carols are now delivered from loudspeakers in the midst of a modern-style shopping precinct rather than performed 'live' on the village green and this year will be no exception to the customary mixture of dances and dinners, parties and present-giving, mince pies and mistletoe.

As far as the weather is concerned, there is generally more snow on the Christmas cards than there is on the ground – to the relief of motorists and the disappointment of children – but the English Christmas is still very much a mid-winter festival. Hence the diet of roast turkeys and plum puddings, drinks and family gossip round the fireside, and the general feeling of warmth and hospitality which every family likes to offer visitors from the cold outside. Somehow Christmas in England wouldn't be the same in a heatwave, and not withstanding the increasing pressure from travel agents for us to spend Christmas in the sun, it is perhaps the one time of year when we are content to make the most of our uncertain climate.

But what about the rest of the world? Christmas, like the old British Empire, is one of those things on which the sun never sets, and all over the world Christmas is celebrated according to local custom and climate. It is perhaps interesting to read how some of our colleagues abroad will be spending *their* Christmas.

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## Australia

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The Australians spend Christmas in much the same way as the British, so there is no need for emigrants, either permanent or

temporary, to feel out of place. Of course the one big exception is the weather, and the fact that Christmas falls in mid-summer when many people take their annual holidays.

Christmas Day itself is normally reserved for church going and family reunions, with the usual mid-day meal of roast poultry and plum pudding followed by a lighter meal in the evening, and liberal quantities of ice-cold drinks served all day.

Activities on Boxing Day range from sleeping off the effects of the day before to participating in a multitude of sporting events – it all depends on your constitution.

Temperatures during the Christmas period are frequently up in the 100's, so it is not surprising that Australians flock to the many beaches in vast numbers to enjoy swimming, sailing, surfing or simply sunbathing.

We asked Jack Wright *managing director HW Australia* for a typically Australian greeting. This proved more difficult than expected, for despite comments from many to the contrary, he assures us that the Australians speak English. He suggests the following well-known greeting among the 'true' Australians: 'How are you going mate, all right?' which more often than not is reduced to 'Ou ya goin mate oright!'

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## South Africa

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Like the Australians, the South Africans enjoy a warm, summer climate during the festive season, with temperatures in the nineties. As a result the traditional 'feast' at mid-day is becoming less popular, and people either eat cold turkey or have their main meal in the evening. Picnics are very popular too, as is relaxing in swimming pools and cooling off with ice-cold beer.

Christmas is the schools' main holiday period, and many families choose either the cooler weather of the Cape or the sub-tropical heat of the Natal Coast for a 'Christmas summer holiday'. As far as work is concerned, the building trade shuts down for the whole month, and most engineering shops write off most of December from the point of view of production!

Ken Hurst *technical sales manager, HW South Africa* who sent us this report, offers greetings in three languages in common use in South Africa:

From the Afrikaans 'Alles van die beste' (All the best); from the Zulus 'Izintho ezinhle N'gaso Sonke Isikaath' (Everything of the best at all times), and from the English the more down-to-earth 'Down the Hatch!'

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## Chile

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Chile's capital, Santiago, is another place which basks in warm sunshine over the Christmas period. According to Chris Cowell *executive director of United Consortium Chile* the city is quiet at Christmas and looks no different from any other weekend in summer. There are no special decorations in the streets, no Christmas trees, no carols and the few Santa Clauses in lightweight robes and wilting whiskers look a little out of place!

In spite of the lack of outward appearances, the Chileans are by no means backward in entering the spirit of the festive season. The celebration starts on Christmas Eve, and little work is done in the offices as everyone is busy with preparations for the office parties. These begin at about mid-day but end fairly early so that people can leave for the coast or the lakes in the South at the start of their summer holidays.

In Santiago itself the temperature is around 90 degrees, so the swimming pool becomes a 'must' on Christmas Day and plum pudding is definitely not on the menu. The temperature drops a little in the evening, and the main attraction is the open air cafes where you can eat empanadas (the Chilean equivalent of Cornish Pasties), drink wine and dance the cueca until either you or the wine gives out!

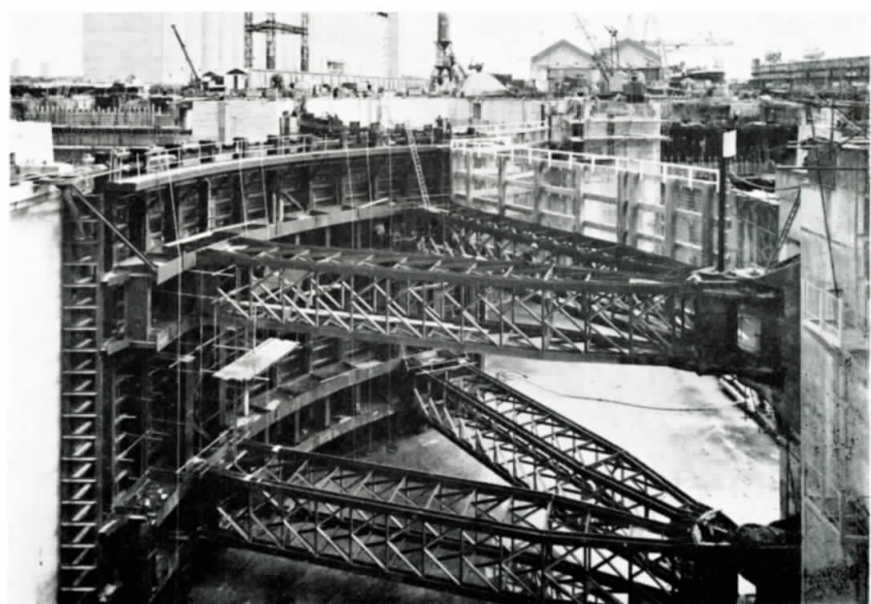
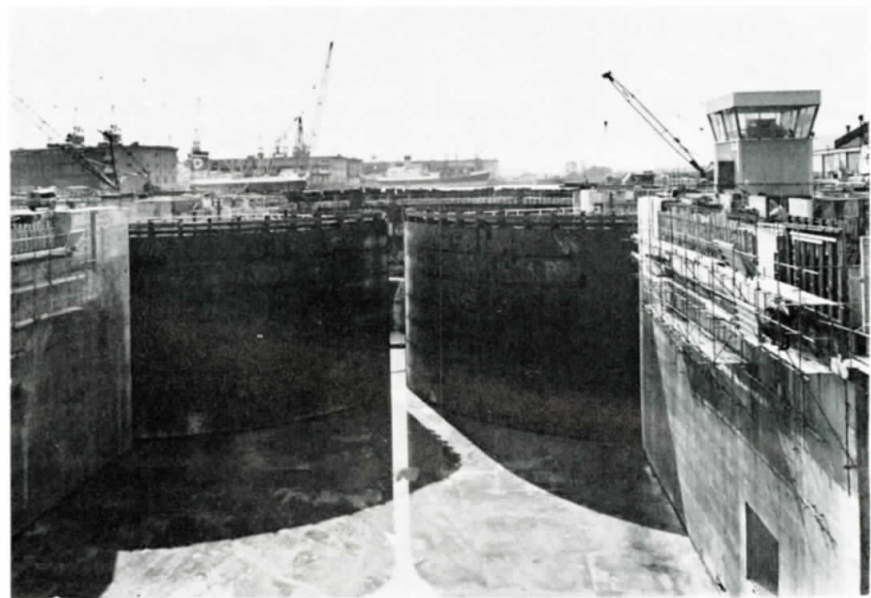
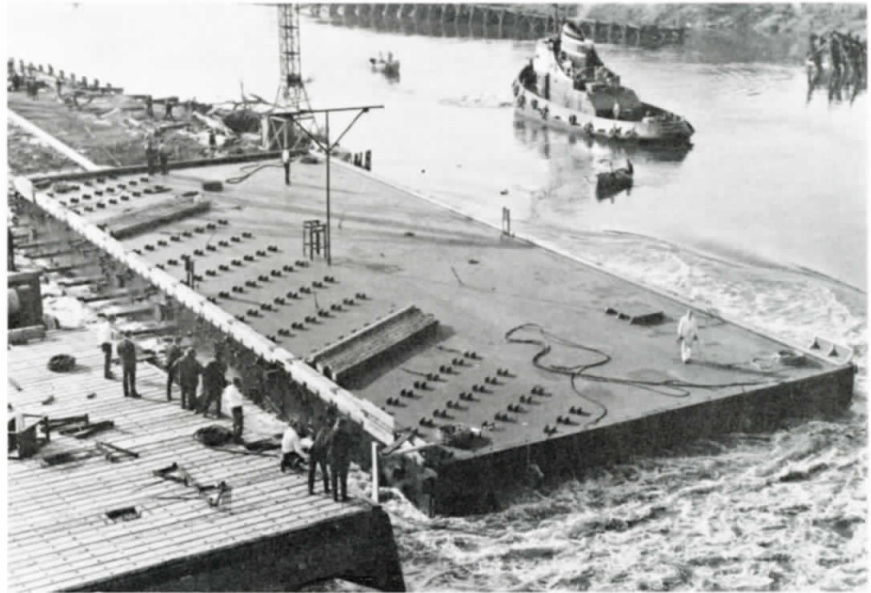
Chris sends us a greeting not only in Chile's language but also in her present spirit! 'Los trabajadores de Chile saludan a sus companeros de Inglaterra y les desean una muy feliz Navidad y un prospero Ano Nuevo'. ('The workers of Chile salute their comrades in England and wish them a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year').



# MORE DOCK GATE LAUNCHINGS

On three consecutive September evenings there was more than the usual tidal ripple on the Tees at Thornaby as three massive dock gates slid into the river at the start of their journeys to London and Liverpool docks. Timed to coincide with the evening high tides at 5.0, 5.30 and 6.0 pm respectively, the launches went off without a hitch, watched by a keen audience of HW employees, children, pressmen and members of the general public.

Altogether more than 1,100 tons of mild steel fabrication were launched into the river on the three days and, to the relief of all, towed smoothly away by the waiting tugs. No doubt some of the more experienced watchers were remembering an earlier incident when a gate had become firmly stuck, causing considerable consternation before it was floated clear!



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## Guard and sector gates for Liverpool

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First of the three gates to leave the slipway was the largest – a 730 ton guard gate for the Seaforth docks scheme at Liverpool. This massive structure, measuring 133 ft long by 55 ft by 12 ft deep, formed the last part of HW Teesdale's contract with the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board. Already in position on site are two huge sector gates, believed to be the largest of their kind in the world, but conveniently made in sections so that they could be transported by road.

The purpose of the guard gate is to act as a safeguard in the event of sector gate failure or during maintenance, and it can also be used as a floating caisson in other dock entrances.

*top:* Seaforth Guard gate launch

*centre:* Seaforth sector gates in situ

*bottom:* A reverse side view of the Seaforth sector gates during final erection stages



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## Mitre gates for Tilbury Docks

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The second and third launches were smaller by comparison, but the two 207-ton mitre gates for the Port of London Authority's Tilbury Docks were nonetheless the biggest mitre gates ever made by Head Wrightson. In addition, they had to travel further down the slipway than the guard gate, which certainly added to their impact.

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## More mitre gates - for Grangemouth

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Shortly before launching the PLA's mitre gates, HW Teesdale announced a further contract for mitre gates, this time three sets to be installed in the new lock entrance to Grangemouth Docks on Scotland's East Coast. These gates, scheduled for delivery

mid-1973, will be a little smaller than those at Tilbury, but they will still be in the heavyweight class, some 900 tons in all.

This new contract is with the Forth Ports Authority, and as with previous projects the consulting engineers are Messrs. Rendel, Palmer and Tritton. Besides the gate structure themselves, the work includes provision of complex operating machinery, with special control features to cope with extreme tidal conditions.

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## The river - a liquid asset

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The recent spate of dock gate launches must have reminded many people, especially longer-serving HW employees, of the part the River Tees has played in the history of Head Wrightson at Thornaby.

Once, this particular bend of the river supported a flourishing shipbuilding and repair industry, but over the years since the

decline of the shipyards in the 1920's, Head Wrightson has acquired the land on the Thornaby side and no ships have been launched there, but the Company did manufacture landing craft during the last war, and the slipways were in regular use. Since the war a great many 'monsters' have started their journey to site in this spectacular way, including boilers for nuclear power stations, large vessels for chemical works and of course dock gates.

As a result of their recent dock gate contracts in Liverpool, London and Grangemouth, HW Teesdale are now Britain's most successful company in this field of manufacture, a success which would not be possible without the facility to launch structures into the river. In this respect and others the river will continue to be one of Head Wrightson's most valuable 'liquid assets'.

*below:* Port of London Authority mitre gate launch



# FLUORSPAR PLANT FOR THAILAND

One of HWPEL's latest overseas ventures is a £200,000 contract for a fluorspar concentration plant to be built in Northern Thailand for the Universal Mining Company (UNIMINCO). Fluorspar, a relatively unfamiliar mineral to the man in the street, is becoming more and more important in world industry, and the Thais are taking full advantage of their large natural supply. When HWPEL's contract was signed in the capital, Bangkok, earlier this year, the formalities were given extensive coverage on Thai television. Since then a party of five top representatives from the fluorspar industry have undertaken a lengthy tour of Europe which included a visit to Head Wrightson for technical discussions. Such is the importance the Thais attach to their expanding fluorspar industry.

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## What is fluorspar?

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Fluorspar is the mineral form of the compound calcium fluoride. Until quite recently fluorspar, found in many countries throughout the world, was treated as a low priced low demand mineral, though there are certain crystalline forms which are very attractive and have been regarded as semi-precious. They are perhaps most commonly known as 'blue-john'.

In recent years the purest or 'acid' grade of the mineral has been used in the chemical industry to make such products as aerosols, plastics and refrigerants. The more common and less pure 'metallurgical' grade now finds a major new role as a flux in the basic oxygen steelmaking process, and as the base material from which artificial cryolite – an essential ingredient in aluminium smelting – is made. Both are booming industries: more and more steelmakers are changing to the

BOS process (which uses much more fluorspar than the open hearth method), and the world's only supplier of natural cryolite, Greenland, cannot meet the demand of the growing aluminium smelting industry. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that fluorspar is the subject of a great deal of world interest at present.

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## 'The Land of the Free'

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Thailand is something of an exception in South-East Asia – a country which has never been occupied by a foreign power throughout its long history. In fact, the name Thailand means 'Land of the Free'. Perhaps that is why the Thais are renowned as a friendly and peace-loving people, who also have a reputation for initiative.

Agriculture is Thailand's most important industry: she is the world's largest exporter of rice and for this and her other cereal

province – a district which prides itself with beautiful scenery, beautiful buildings and, apparently, some of Thailand's most beautiful women.

Traditionally fluorspar mining has been a manual process, requiring an enormous labour force often recruited on a temporary basis from the agricultural population. Nowadays the old methods of hand selection, crushing and sorting cannot keep pace with the demand for high tonnages of closely sized, good quality fluorspar. As a result, the mining operations are being mechanised and concentration plant is being introduced to improve the quality of the product. The plant which HWPEL are supplying to UNIMINCO will help to increase the supply of good metallurgical grade mineral, and at the same time HW R&D Division are co-operating with the Thais on ideas for acid grade concentration plant.

This relatively new venture is only just beginning to have an effect on the fluorspar markets



produce the country has been nick-named 'the granary of South-East Asia'. Another important export is rubber, and Thailand is famous for her teak and for her largely home-based arts and crafts industry. An old established tin mining industry is still flourishing, and the Thais are now making use of their traditional mining skills to exploit their many mineral resources, including fluorspar.

Most of Thailand's fluorspar is found in the North, in Chiangmai

of the world, but Thailand's enormous deposits of this unfamiliar but vitally important mineral promise prosperity for her mining industry for years to come.

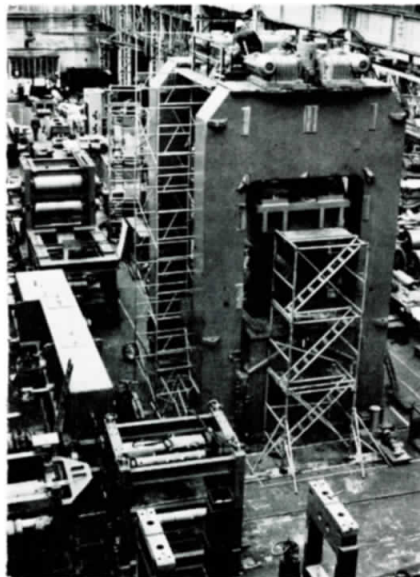
*photo:*  
Inside the grounds of Wat Phra Keo  
(Emerald Buddha Temple), Bangkok.



# HWM CONTRACTS FOR BSC

## Largest leveller commissioned at Clydebridge

The largest heavy plate leveller ever built by the HW Machine Co was delivered to the BSC's Clydebridge Works in Scotland during August, and commissioning took place in mid-November. The 400-ton machine stands 32 ft high, and its great size and weight called for special treatment in both transportation and erection. Even though it was taken to site in sections, there were still two 30 ft high by 18 ft wide frames to contend with. Special frames had to be made for the haulier's lorries to enable the constructions



to be loaded at an angle to conform with height and width regulations. Once delivered to site, the leveller was erected with the help of two 125 ton mobile cranes. The job required all the skill and experience of the operators, since the lifts were achieved when there were clearances of only a couple of inches. The new leveller is the third supplied by HWM to the Clydebridge Works. Its function is to flatten mild steel and alloy

plates up to 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  ins thick by 11 ft wide. Nine 14 ins diameter work rolls are supported by 30 back-up rolls, and its 275 horsepower motor enables it to handle plates at speeds of 40 to 80 ft per minute.

## Progress on continuous casting equipment for Lackenby

HWM are well advanced with a contract with the Distington Engineering Company to build part of two continuous casting plants for steel blooms and slabs. HWM are supplying the slab and bloom withdrawal sections for the continuous casting plants being supplied to BSC Lackenby Works. Their function is to withdraw the partially solidified blooms and casts from the mould, straighten the curved sections and cut them to length on exit tables. The slab caster has two separate strands, each capable of handling



widths up to 6 ft 3 ins and thicknesses between 6 ins and 10 ins, with their own withdrawal and straightening machines. Between them these two straightening machines weigh nearly 600 tons. The bloom casting machine has eight independent strands, each of which can cast blooms from 10 ins by 10 ins to 19 ins by 12 ins, again with its own withdrawal and straightening facility. Altogether this part of the equipment weighs more than 450 tons.

When the two units become operational next year, they will each be handling outputs up to 1 million tons per year.

## Cut-up line installed at Lackenby

In another part of the BSC Lackenby steelmaking complex, commissioning has been taking place on the latest heavy plate cut-up line to be supplied by HWM to a BSC works. The new line, described in our Winter Edition last year when work on the contract had just begun, is intended to complement the other HW cut-up line installed on Teesside – the one at Redcar – in producing accurately sheared and levelled steel plates up to  $\frac{1}{2}$  in thick for use in shipbuilding and general steel fabrication. During the past ten years HWM have built a total of five heavy plate cut-up lines for BSC works in Britain.

*above left:*  
Shop erection of the plate leveller for BSC Clydebridge. Also shown in the photograph are component assemblies of the continuous stretch leveller for Rautaruuki Oy, Finland

*above right:*  
The heavy plate cut-up line installed at the Spencer Works of BSC which is similar to the new Lackenby line



# MINISTER OPENS BIRMINGHAM REFUSE PLANT

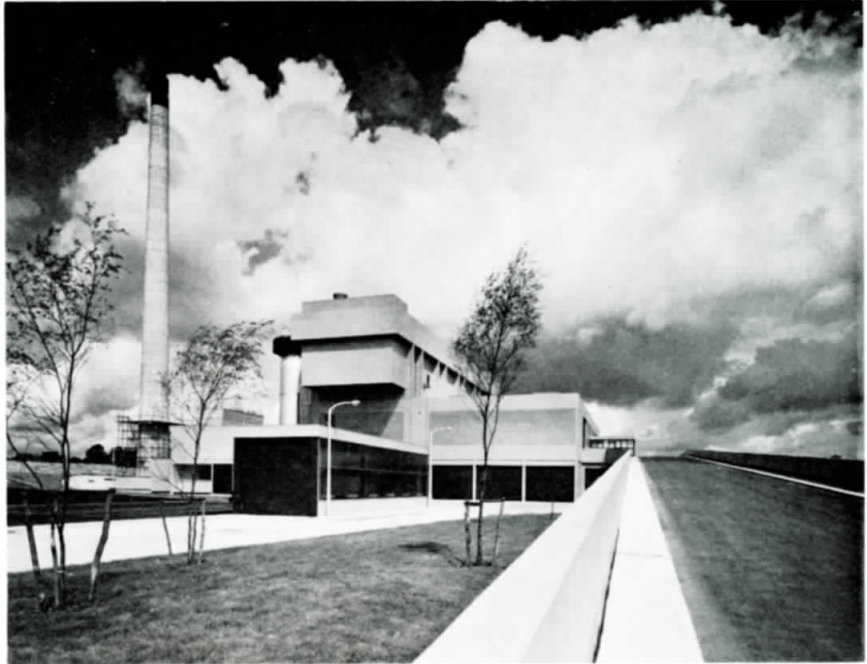
On Wednesday 22 September Mr Graham Page MP, Minister for Local Government and Development officially opened the City of Birmingham's new refuse incineration plant at Perry Barr. The ceremony marked the successful completion of HWPEL's second major contract for a Martin system plant, which included the supply and installation of all the mechanical and electrical plant and equipment including the incinerator grates, the handling equipment and the 300 ft high chimney stack.

A great deal of care was taken in designing the buildings which house the incineration plant to ensure they are both functional and attractive, and Birmingham Corporation are justly pleased with the result.

This magnificent new plant can handle up to 24 tons of refuse per hour – nearly three times as much as the other HW/Martin plant now operating in the UK at Exeter. With the Birmingham plant completed and working successfully, HWPEL's designers and engineers can now concentrate on two more large incineration plants for the cities of Coventry and Nottingham – which promise to be equally striking in their appearance.

## IPC chooses Perry Barr for autumn meeting

The Institute of Public Cleansing chose Birmingham as the venue for their Autumn meeting, on November 5, which was attended by public health officials from all over the country. Their official programme included a visit to the new incineration plant, where a team of HW specialists were on hand to point out the main features of the plant. The visit certainly proved a valuable opportunity to demonstrate the efficiencies of the HW/Martin incineration system to a large group of interested personnel.



# RUSSIAN TRADE- UNIONISTS VISIT HW TEESDALE

*photo: Tom Hurley Machine Shop senior foreman showing the visitors a Russian machine in use in Teesdale works*



The president of Russia's Engineering Workers Union, Mr Nikolai Dragunov, and the country's top fabricator, Mr Mihail Zhavoronkov, were special guests of HW Teesdale on September 16. Their visit had been arranged with Mr Alan Stoddart *works manager* by the Boilermakers Union to give the Russians some insight into everyday life in a British engineering works and to discuss matters of common interest with British trade unionists.

The visitors were accompanied by a Russian interpreter, Mrs Lubov Vasilieva, and by local and national representatives of the Boilermakers Union. They toured the HW Teesdale shops, taking a particular interest in fabrication. Among the people they met were Messrs. A Johnson, P Robbins and A Turley, senior shop steward for the boilermakers, welders and burners respectively. The conversation ranged from working conditions and safety to general living standards, including housing and social amenities. By coincidence Mr Stoddart had just returned from a visit to Russia during which he had looked at various machine tools, so he was able to comment on conversion factors and compare practices in the two countries.

To mark the end of a successful visit, the Russians presented souvenir badges to all the people they had met.



# HWIF STAGE WASHINGTON SYMPOSIUM

*photo: An English tradition of a break for a cup of tea during the symposium held by HWIF in Washington DC*  
*left to right: Messrs Homer Chen, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority; Ben Meynell, British Embassy, Alan Reed, HWIF; John Dowers, Dart Containerline Inc and Lord John Pentland HWIF representative in the USA*

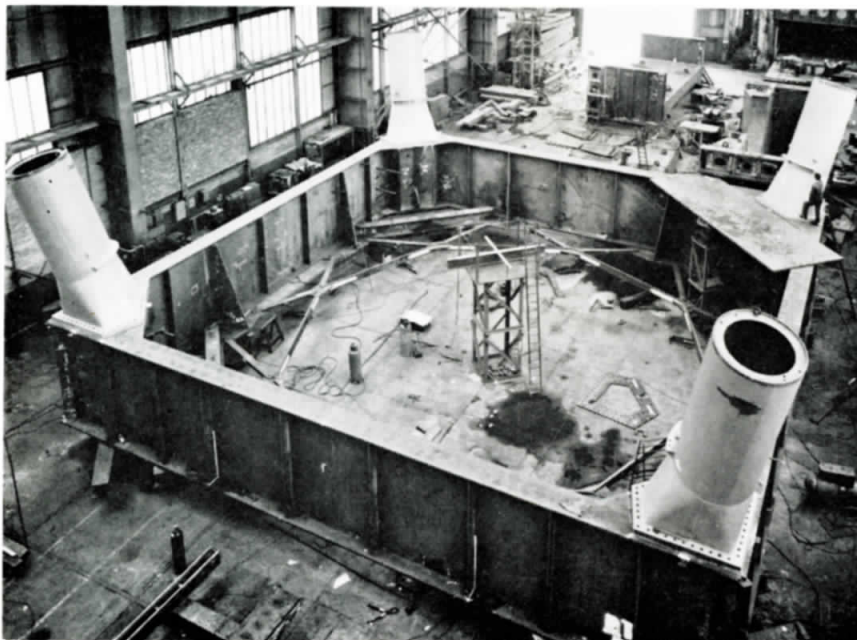


Throughout the world civic authorities are considering new schemes to build tunnels under their cities – for underground railways, pedestrian subways, water and sewerage schemes, telecommunications and other essential public services. HW Iron Foundries have long been producing cast iron segments to make durable linings for such tunnels, including various sections of the London Underground network. Most recent of these was the new Victoria Line, and further afield they successfully completed a contract for a large scale sewerage system under Manhattan, New York.

HW Iron Foundries established for themselves a considerable reputation as a result of the Manhattan project. To stimulate still more interest in America and other parts of the world, they recently staged in Washington DC their first-ever overseas symposium on cast iron linings for tunnels. Held in the Rotunda building of the British Embassy, the symposium attracted more than 100 leading representatives from government, transit authorities, engineering consultancies and engineering firms in the United States. Mr AJ Reed *HWIF* director introduced British and

American experts, who spoke on various aspects of tunnel construction with cast iron linings – its history, modern technology in iron casting, design and contracting factors and current projects. The Manhattan project was described in detail by Gus Fleischer of Poirier and Mclane Corporation, the tunnel contractors, and Mr Reed himself gave an example of another important use for cast iron segments – the lining of the mineshaft for Cleveland Potash at Boulby, Yorkshire which was undertaken by Head Wrightson. Other speakers representing HW were Mr Glyn Roberts *R&D* who talked about segment design, and Lord John Pentland of American British Electric Corporation, who is HW's representative in the United States. The guests also saw a film showing construction of London's Victoria Line Tunnel. The Washington symposium proved to be a very effective means of advertising HWIF's expertise in segment manufacture to an influential overseas audience, and has resulted in many enquiries, notably from Washington itself and from New York. It is now planned to repeat the exercise in other countries, such as Australia and Canada, as part of a world-wide marketing campaign for this major traditional product.

## SOMISA PLANT LEAVES FOR ARGENTINA



Most of the structural steelwork for the 32 ft hearth diameter SOMISA blast furnace has left HW Teesdale works for the site in San Nicolas, Argentina. Parts already shipped include the main columns and girders with their internal ties; the hearth, tuyere jacket and bosh casing and, on the furnace itself, all but the first of the seven tiers. Of the main structure only the first tier and the furnace top have yet to leave, and work on the mixer cars is also well under way.

With the site already established in San Nicolas (as reported in our last issue), the construction of the largest blast furnace ever made by Head Wrightson is due to start in the near future.

*photo: The four main girders with the transition pieces into which the main columns will be fitted on site*



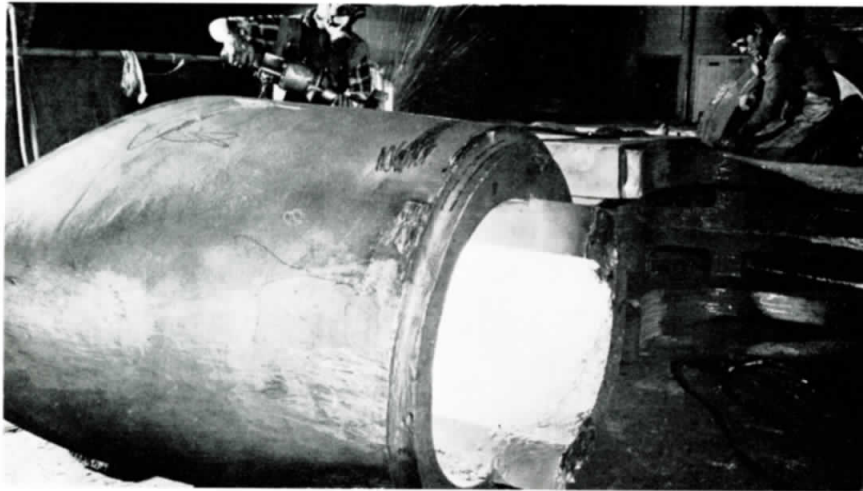
# STEELCAST

On 6 July 1971, it was announced that Steelcast Limited of Haverton Hill had become part of the Head Wrightson group. Steelcast, formerly a subsidiary of Davy Ashmore Limited, is now the third Head Wrightson steel foundry operating on Teesside, increasing our share of the castings market from about 4% to 7%.

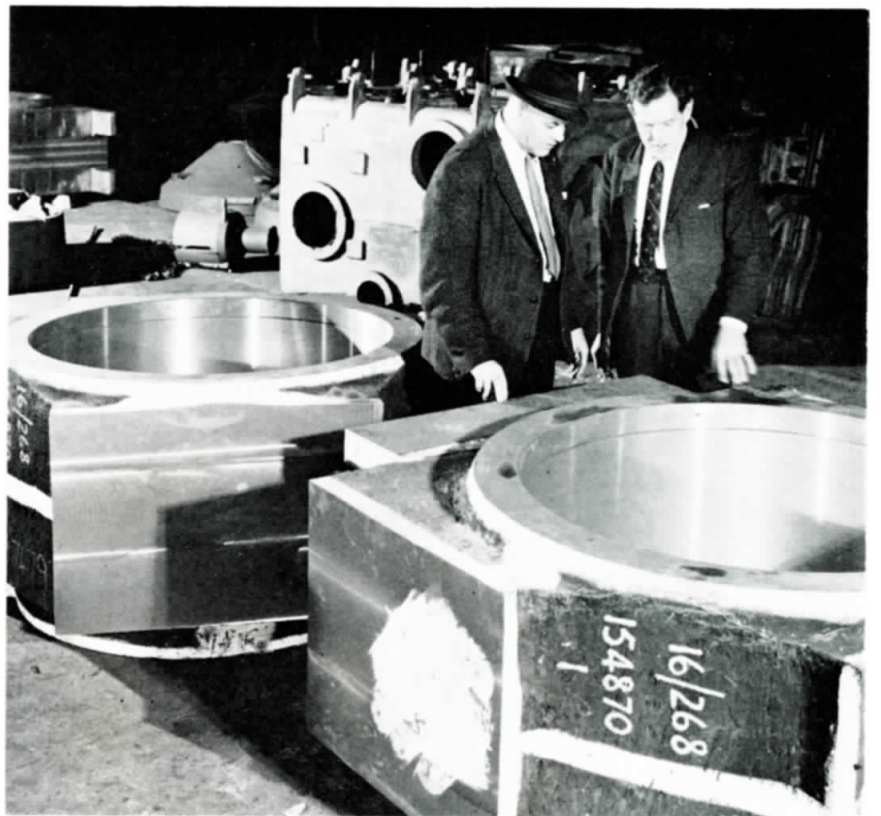
Dominated as it is by ICI's chemical works and the Furness shipyard, the foundry nonetheless occupies two substantial sites within a few hundred yards of each other, totalling 16 acres in all. The first comprises the melting and moulding shops, maintenance facilities and company offices; the second the dressing and pattern-making shops, with a large open area for additional storage. Before the turn of the century the main site had been a construction yard, and it was not until 1908 that the independent British Chilled Roll and Engineering Company started operations there. In those days the main product was rolls for use in rolling mills, but general engineering castings were made too. In 1936 the works became part of the Davy Ashmore group under the title 'Davy and United Roll Foundry Limited'. Thus it remained until 1969 when the roll foundry operations were discontinued as part of an internal rationalisation programme and the works became solely a jobbing foundry for medium-to-large steel castings. It was at this time that it acquired the name Steelcast to reflect its new role. The two electric arc furnaces in Steelcast's melting shops can produce castings weighing up to about 20 tons. The main products are mill and crusher castings as well as general engineering castings, made in a variety of steels but within a more compact range than those produced in the foundries at Stockton and Thornaby. Most are for customers in the UK, including the Davy Ashmore Group, but there is a growing export market. Modern foundry techniques are in operation and in particular Steelcast is probably the only foundry in Europe totally using the advanced furane air-set sand moulding system on an exclusive basis. This process, which eliminates the need for







mould drying stoves by using a self-hardening resin in a synthetic silica sand, produces better quality castings regardless of weather and other conditions. It is a cleaner, more accurate process with the added advantage that much of the sand can be re-claimed. The dressing and pattern shops, both on the second Steelcast site, were opened in 1957. These are well equipped shops capable of handling a variety of work, as is shown by the enormous stock-pile of patterns in all shapes and sizes stored both inside and out. There are over 300 people working at Steelcast, of whom 225 are foundry personnel. Despite the various changes in ownership, name and function which have taken place over the years, there are a great many long-serving employees at Steelcast. Visitors are often struck by the friendly and co-operative atmosphere throughout the foundry and offices – an atmosphere we are sure will continue in Steelcast's new role as an important new member of the Head Wrightson Foundries group.



left hand page

*top* : A general view of the pattern shop area

*centre* : A Wilson J Sansby and J Darker prepare moulds for Nordberg crusher castings

*bottom* : In the foreground E Barker moulder closes a mill chock—in the background S Snowdon

right hand page

*top left* : W Madden and E William dressing a ships stern frame

*top right* : F Wicks dressing a 16 ton back up chock

*centre* : W T Lowes *dressing supt* and E H Bridges *works manager* discuss some filter body castings





# TERRITORIAL AND ARMY VOLUNTEER RESERVE

Many people are of the opinion that the Territorial Army is dead, which is factually correct, but it has been replaced by a very active Territorial and Army Volunteer Reserve which is somewhat similar, but has a different role. In Teesside area for example the following Regiments and Corps are represented: Yorkshire Volunteers, Royal Army Ordnance Corp, Royal Signals, Royal Army Medical Corp, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Royal Corp of Transport, Paratroopers and the Royal Corp of Military Police.

A number of HW employees are members of the T&AVR and this article, written by JE Tyson of HW Teesdale, who is second in command 124 Corp Recovery Company REME (Volunteers), describes in more detail some of the activities of his unit. The 124 Corp Recovery Company (Tyne Electrical Engineers) REME (Volunteers) with its

headquarters at Newton Aycliffe and a detachment at Newcastle, is one of the largest REME units in the country and is very active both training and socially. The unit comprises a headquarters and four platoons each fully self-supporting with its own transport. The title Tyne Electrical Engineers has been inherited, maybe dubiously, from a volunteer unit formed at Clifford's Fort, North Shields in the early eighteen hundreds. Its role was the defence of the Tyne by the use of mines electrically detonated. They later became a searchlight company in both world wars. The unit was at one time commanded by Col Sir Mark Palmer of Jarrow fame. What does 124 Corp Recovery Coy get up to? Well obviously military training is the first priority, but also unusual tasks are carried out; the recovery of a cement delivery wagon at Keilder Forest, a Britannia aircraft at Teesside Airport and a sunken boat off Redcar, collection of crashed helicopters, in addition to the usual tank and equipment back loading. The latest exploit has been the recovery of a 100 ton steam shovel on behalf of the Beamish open air museum. This equipment was being driven down a narrow track to its permanent site, when, due to its weight the road

collapsed underneath it into a bog. The 124 Corp Recovery Company were called in to remove it and with the aid of a Centurion ARV and a Leyland the crews completed the job successfully. The photograph clearly shows the size of the task.

All members of the T&AVR attend annual camp and these are usually at different locations each year. The writer for example has been to Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Nottingham, Norfolk in addition to three visits to Germany. Most T&AVR units still require recruits especially in 124 Corp Rec Coy's case HGV drivers, bulldozer drivers, and vehicle mechanics. Officers are also required, qualifications vary between Corps but in REME applicants must hold a minimum of HNC in an engineering subject.

## FROM THE FAMILY ALBUM

The season of parties, dances and annual get togethers is appropriate for us to reminisce on a souvenir from our family album of a social occasion of the past.

Reproduced on the opposite page is the Dinner and Dance programme celebrating the welcome home of ex-service employees which was held in the Borough Hall, Stockton-on-Tees, on Friday 23 January 1920. (the Borough Hall was formerly on the site of the Odeon and present GPO in Stockton High Street).

The programme of dances and concert interludes presents a sharp contrast to the modern vogue of entertainments where even the waltz, quickstep and foxtrot are strictly for the squares! Maybe you will smile at the programme details, but who is to say that the social occasions of today are more entertaining than those of the past. Perhaps the presentation of a similar evening would provide a lot of fun for the younger generation and a little nostalgia for the not so young. Gentlemen, take your partners for the Lancers.





# THE 1971 SNAPSHOT COMPETITION

Although the number of entries for this year's snapshot competition was disappointing compared to the previous year, it was however most pleasing to receive an entry from as far afield as South Africa. The judges, ably supervised by Fred Mothersdale *HW Teesdale* had a difficult job but were unanimous with their final verdicts. The subject 'People and Pleasure' brought a variety of topics which showed pleasure ranging from sleeping on the beach to a group of people throwing buckets of water at each other.

The prize winners were:  
**prints**

*first* J Wilson *HW Machine*  
*second* L Bell *HW Teesdale*  
*third* R Underwood *HW Teesdale*

**slides**

*first* B O'Connell *HW Teesdale*  
*second* G Robson *HW Teesdale*  
*third* G Herbert *HW Machine*

To all who participated in the competition – thank you for your interest and support. To the unlucky entrants – better luck next time. And to the prize winners – congratulations

*right: First prize print section*

*below: First prize slides section*



<p>Messrs. Head, Wrightson &amp; Co. Ltd</p> <p>EX-SERVICE EMPLOYEES WELCOME HOME.</p> <hr/> <p>Messrs. Head, Wrightson &amp; Co., Ltd., request the pleasure of</p> <p>Mr. _____ Company to DINNER in the Borough Holl, Stockton, on Friday, January 23rd, 1970, at 7 p.m.</p> <p>RES.V.P. to Works Timekeeper not later than Jan. 14th. 1970</p> <p>ORDINARY DRESS This ticket not transferable</p>	<p>PROGRAMME.</p> <p>Quartette ... Song of the Jolly Roger Mr. D. J. Jones' Party.</p> <p>1. Dance—Destiny Waltz - ..... Song ... .. D. J. Jones</p> <p>2. Dance—Two Step - ..... Monologue ... .. W. Dixon</p> <p>3. Dance—Barn Dance - ..... Quartette ... .. Rolling down to Rio Party.</p> <p>4. Dance—Lancers - ..... Duets ... .. Tenor and Baritone D. J. Jones and J. Wilyman.</p> <p>5. Dance—Waltz - ..... Monologue ... .. W. Dixon</p> <p>6. Dance—Barn Dance - ..... Song ... .. J. Wilyman</p> <p>7. Dance—Two Step - ..... Quartette ... .. Comrades in Arms Party.</p> <p>8. Dance—Waltz - .....</p>	<p>MENU.</p> <p>Toast - - - - - The King</p> <hr/> <p>Ox Tongue. Ham. Pressed Beef. Tomato Sauce. Pickles. Pastries and Assorted Cakes. Tinned Fruits. Milk Rolls. Bread and Butter. Bottled Beer and Mineral Waters.</p> <hr/> <p>Major Wrightson's "Welcome to Men." Vote of Thanks by Capt. Q.M. Robinson.</p>
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# IN DEFENCE OF DRINKERS



The horse and mule live 30 years  
And nothing know of wines and  
beers.

The goat and sheep at 20 die.  
And never taste of Scotch or Rye.  
The cow drinks water by the ton  
And at 18 is mostly done.

The dog at 15 cashes in  
Without the aid of rum and gin.  
The cat in milk and water soaks  
And then in 12 short years it  
croaks.

The modest, sober, bone-dry hen  
Lays eggs for nogs, then dies at 10.  
All animals are strictly dry:  
They sinless live and swiftly die;  
But sinful, ginful, rum-soaked men  
Survive for three score years and  
ten.

And some of them, a very few,  
Stay pickled till they're 92.

It might be thought that when it comes to home-brewing people can be divided into two clear types, brewers and non-brewers. However it is not so simple. Apart from the varying degrees of aversion to either beer or brewing there is the sub-division into those who brew for the brewing, and those who brew for the drinking. It need not be imagined that the former pour their produce down the drain, nor that the latter drink any more than their colleagues. For simplicity I refer to them as 'brewers' and 'drinkers'; how do they really differ? The brewer prides himself on his lager, brown ale, stout, old, light, mild, strong, or ordinary bitter. He is never happier than when he has reproduced the product of yet another brewery. But at the risk of my suggesting ignorance of the art among drinkers, and I have at this stage to identify myself with them, a typical drinker is rather like a man

looking at pictures who 'knows what he likes'. He may not be very clear whether his brew is brown and bitter or light and lively, but he doesn't care. He knows that it suits his palate.

Now which approach would old Father William, Joshua Tetley, John or Sam Smith have adopted? Surely they set out to produce a brew which their customers enjoyed and in defence of the drinkers I suggest a home brewer should produce a brew which his customers enjoy, and since he is his own best customer it is a matter of being able to say 'I know what I like'.

With this very simple advice, a potential drinker could go through the various proprietary packs available for the home brewer until he finds one to his taste. If that fails he can revert to the methods used when the choice was not so wide. There is really nothing to it. Start with a basic recipe and remember these three rules.

- 1 more sugar: more strength
- 2 more malt: more body
- 3 more hops: more flavour (bitter)

The man who introduced me to 'drinking' gets through about 150 gallons a year and he has never strayed from the following recipe. There are a large number of users of the formula and the resulting brew has received widespread approval. If you have been thinking of taking up home-brewing and have been put off by the thought that there are so many different packs and so many variations on them, stop worrying. Settle down to being a 'drinker' and enjoy it.

## Drinker's brew

2 oz	hops
2½ lbs	malt extract
3 lbs	sugar
4½ galls	water
	yeast
	nutrient
	citric acid
	salt

Boil the hops in a muslin bag in one gallon of water with a pinch of salt for about 1 hour. Pour into a non-metallic container (plastic dustbin) and add the malt, sugar, ½ teaspoon citric acid and the remainder of the water. Prepare the yeast and nutrient according to the manufacturers instructions and add to the mixture.

Allow the 'wort' to stand for 5 to 7 days at approximately 65°F by which time it should be ready for syphoning into clean bottles and should have the appearance of cold tea.

Put ½ teaspoon sugar into each bottle and leave the bottles in daylight for two days and then a cool dark place for one week. The brew requires decanting and this is simpler, as well as improving the beer, if it is chilled before serving.

Good health to you – home brewer. 'Cheers'.

# LADIES ONLY



As I was typing the above 'beer recipe' I thought the following might interest the lady readers and perhaps bring forth suggestions for a 'recipe column' or a 'Jimmy Young Corner' in Wright Ahead. How about it? The cakes in question have been sampled by my colleagues and they in turn have found them easy to make and very popular:—

## Coconut delights

*no cooking*

8 oz coconut  
2 tablespoons icing sugar  
Small tin of condensed milk  
7 oz cooking chocolate  
(milk or plain)

## Method

Melt chocolate by breaking into pieces and putting into a small basin (so chocolate melts deep). Place this basin into a pan containing small amount of water. Heat slowly. Whilst chocolate is melting mix coconut, icing sugar and stir in condensed milk. Blend together until firm and roll into small balls. Dip each ball into the melted chocolate (tongs are useful if available).

Leave to set.

PS if you are feeling in a real party mood how about adding a drop of rum or brandy!

Sylvia Williams *Yarm*



## CONGRAT- ULATIONS

Congratulations to Miss Lynne Johnson *insurance dept* who has successfully obtained the London Chamber of Commerce Private Secretaries' Certificate.



Many congratulations to Miss Sylvia Iceton *HW Stampings* who was recently voted Hartlepool Secretary of the Year in a competition organised by the Hartlepool Junior Chamber of Commerce.

Sylvia, who is secretary to Mr Frank Brown *managing director* will now go forward to the national finals to be held in London on 29 December.

All our good wishes go with you Sylvia, good luck.

*Photo by kind permission of the Northern Echo*

## HWM TV SNOOKER PERSONALITY

Congratulations to Geoffrey Unthank *HWM design office* who has been invited to play in the Tyne Tees TV invitation snooker series knock-out competition. Geoff will represent Cleveland where he has been league champion for the last three years, scoring several breaks of over 100. The series will be transmitted early in the new year.

## AN APPRECI- ATION PARTY

A unique celebration took place on Friday 29 October, at the Swan Hotel, Billingham, when Margaret Haslock *HW Teesdale purchasing department* gave a very special party for some 150 friends, relatives, nursing and hospital staff, and office colleagues. It was Margaret's way of saying 'my sincere thanks for all your help, your prayers and your good wishes'.

For indeed the background to the party was that in August 1968 Margaret sustained serious injuries in a motor accident which necessitated hospitalisation for nine months and out-patient treatment and convalescence for a further six months. During her stay in hospital Margaret was visited every day by friends and relatives, and was inundated with letters and cards. Following her full recovery she felt she had to show her appreciation and thanks to all the people who had aided her when it was most needed.

### Mr A Brown

Alec Brown, a well known figure in local football died on 20 September following a long illness.

He was a driller in the Teesdale machine shop and had been with HW for over 31 years.

Alec, who was on the FA referee's list until he reached their retiring age had been for many years closely associated with the North Riding FA Council, the Middlesbrough and District football league and Middlesbrough FC juniors.

### Mr LW Needham

It was with deep regret that we heard of the death of Mr Leonard William Needham on 30 November 1971.

Mr Needham who was 66, was formerly Managing Director of the Sheffield based company, Head Wrightson Minerals Engineering Limited. His expert knowledge of colliery and mining technology was held in esteem by the National Coal Board and indeed by the international mining industry.

### Mr LW Smith

The Friarage staff and indeed all who knew Laurie Smith were most shocked to hear of his death on 2 November 1971 after a short illness.

Laurie, who was 51, had been with the Company since 1937 and most of his working life was in the service of the directors. He was personal assistant to Mr Richard Miles, and also to Sir John Wrightson and was appointed assistant secretary in 1963.

Over the years, thousands of memoranda with the signature LS have been circulated around the group. It was said of Laurie Smith that his knowledge of the Company was encyclopedic.



# SPORT & SOCIAL

## 1971 Interdepartmental Competitions

### Prize presentation night

During a special social evening in the HW Club on Saturday, 1 October Mr James Iveson *director and company secretary* presented awards to the winners and runners-up of this year's bowls, cricket and football inter-departmental competitions. The 1971 season was a most successful one in every way including a record number of entries in all the events. Thanks were expressed to all the competitors both winners and losers and to the organising secretaries:

Mr D Branson *bowls*

Mr D Fryer *cricket*

Mr R Nicholson *football*

Mr W Ferguson *social & athletic secretary*

and to the Groundsman Mr Otto Friis.

Recipients of awards were:

### Cricket

*winner HW Teesdale – Machine Shop*

H Armstrong, P Beeston, D Brocklesby, D Carr, K Close, B Cross, B Howat, G Outhwaite, D Phillips, D Randall, A Roxborough, M Round, E Stansmore, G Watson, S Whitmarsh

*runners-up HWPEL*

G Charlton, R Corke, C Fairs, D Good, W Grainger, G Hall, I Hayley, D Merryweather, T Newbold, D Normington, T Sawdon, D Skerry

### Bowls - single rink

*winner HW Machine Co – Staff*

W Gartry, J Harris, RS Marshall, N Philips, G Unthank

*runners-up HW Teesdale – Office*

C Ainsley, E McIntosh, D Morrison, T Richardson, J Wennington



*top:* HW Teesdale Machine Shop—winners of the 1971 Interdepartmental Cricket competition

*centre:* HWPEL Cricket team—runners-up in this year's competition

*below:* A selection of the 91 plaques presented to prize-winners in this year's Interdepartmental competitions. The smaller shields in the foreground were the runners-up trophies



### Bowls - three rink

*winner HW Teesdale – Bridge Yard*

R Brown, A Chesser, S Cotts, J Hall, A Heron, J Jones, D Lackenby, D Littlewood, W Merryweather, J Place, A Waton, J Wetherell, J White

*runners-up HWPEL*

R Berry, EJ Bland, B Carson, TH Edwards, RD Hodgson, AR Holligan, C Howard, B Laing, D Laurence, M Richardson, GF Smith, GW Stamp, SG Waites

### Football

*winner HW Stampings*

T Boylan, T Brown, J Close, M Day, J Hutton, D Kinsella, J Loughlin, N Pratt, B Rigby, I Short, G Thomas, M Wild

*runners-up HW Steel Foundry – Thornaby*

M Bradley, W Chilton, J Harding, T Hartley, D Holliday, J Major, J Payne, R Retallack, T Smith, G Trigg, K Waldby, D Westwood

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## HW golf section

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The 1971 HW golfing season opened with the Spring Stableford competition at Dinsdale Golf Club. Seventeen players entered, the winner being CH Moore *HW Teesdale* with 43 points and the runner-up D Good *HWPEL* with 36 points. A total of 24 members entered the club knock-out competition and some very good matches resulted. It was also gratifying to see new names appearing on the match result returns. A dramatic final between JA Stainsby *HWPEL* and M Round *HWT Machine Shop* resulted in a 2 and 1 win for John Stainsby. The Bob Sturges inter-company trophy played at Dinsdale on Saturday 2 October, was again well supported although the early starters were handicapped to some extent by fog. The trophy was won for *HWPEL* by Ray Shaw and MW Smith. (It is amazing how the trophy follows Ray Shaw around). The annual Stroke Competition based on gross scores returned in the Bob Sturges trophy was won by Ron Snowden *HWIF*. It was indeed pleasing to note the increasing entries for the various golf functions and the section anticipates still greater interest and more participation during the 1972 season.

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## HW Works Band concert dates

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**Saturday 19 February**  
Trinity Church, Middlesbrough  
at 7.30 pm

**Sunday 20 February**  
Brass Band Promenade Concert  
in the Town Hall, Middlesbrough.  
The bands taking part are :  
Head Wrightson Works Band  
Marske & District Band  
Cargo Fleet Works Band  
South Bank Town Band  
Lingdale Band  
North Skelton Band  
New Billingham Band

**Saturday 4 March**  
Northern Regional Qualifying  
Championships at Bede Grammar  
School Halls, Sunderland.

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HWM annual photographic competition —  
*top*: Winner of the colour print section  
*centre*: Winner of the colour slide section  
and overall winner  
*bottom*: Winner of black and white section

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## HWM Staff Benevolent Social Fund

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A presentation evening was held in October at the Fountain Hotel Ormesby at which trophies and prizes for the Summer Competitions were presented by Mr E Jopling *production director*. Results were :

**treasure hunt** D Barker  
**miniature golf** R Cooper  
**tennis** P Wilkinson  
**bowls drive** S Woolard  
**3rd Annual Photographic Competition winners:**  
**colour print section** DM Auld  
**colour slide section** N Teasdale  
**black & white section** J Wilson  
The overall winner, Neville Teasdale, was awarded the Llewellyn Cup.





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## The HW Annual Show

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The Annual garden produce and handicrafts show was held in the HW Social Club on Saturday, 28 August 1971. Although the entries were down on the previous year, which was a little disappointing to the organiser Mr JBA Suttill *HW Teesdale* the standard of entries according to the judges was the best yet. Certainly the exhibits presented an interesting and colourful array. In the horticultural sections Mr FG Addison scooped the board with 15 first and 8 second prizes, followed by Mr H Wain with 5 firsts and 5 seconds. Other prize winners were: (the number of 1st and 2nd prizes shown in brackets) S Nottingham 3 (1) and 3 (2), W Mason 2 (1) 3 (2), G Mohammed 2 (1) 1 (2), D Hall 3 (1), A Christon 1 (1) 2 (2), J Pinnegar 2 (1), JC Coulson 2 (1), R Clarke 1 (1) 1 (2), A Littlewood 1 (2). Prizewinners in the Handicrafts and Children's Sections were: Mrs R Sprigg, Mrs G Sprigg, Miss L Nottingham, Kathryn Littlewood, Valerie Sprigg, Barbara Sprigg, Jeffrey Littlewood, Kevin Nottingham, and Mark Wain. The judges were Mr JW Caldwell (Horticultural) and Mrs T Addison (Handicrafts).

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## HWM Treasure Hunt Final

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At 2.00 pm on Sunday 12 September 11 cars left Woolco car park in an attempt to find their way to an unknown destination, solving clues and finding treasure en route. At 4.15 pm the first car was sighted coming to the finish at Potto, but to the amazement of the organisers, it went speeding past and on to Osmotherly where by some chance all the remaining clues were solved even though this location was not on the official route. However the event went smoothly with everyone enjoying the beautiful sunshine until it was discovered that the organisers had omitted to give the competitors an envelope which was to be opened if the final clue could not be solved. Consequently 3 cars with frustrated crews were not seen again that day. One satisfied competitor was David Barker who returned a very high score to win the Rose Bowl.

# RETIREMENTS

We wish each of the following personnel a long and happy retirement:

### HW & Co Ltd

S Bates *49 years' service*  
TH Hall *44 years' service*  
F Lee *11 years' service*

### R&D Division

AN Lackenby *50 years' service*  
AE Taylor *25 years' service*

### HW Machine Co

AS Chapman *32 years' service*  
TW Frosdick *20 years' service*  
Mrs D Griffiths *11 years' service*  
FS Kay *18 years' service*  
A Larauogotia *24 years' service*  
JC Yorke *24 years' service*

### HWPEL - London

ETM Bell *22 years' service*  
HG Frampton *14 years' service*  
GE Linford *11 years' service*  
EW Mephram *21 years' service*  
RHA Robertson *15 years' service*

### HWPEL - Thornaby

JM Hope *34 years' service*  
H Rattray *19 years' service*  
E Sanderson *24 years' service*  
WH Ward *24 years' service*  
HW Welford *35 years' service*

### HW South Africa

RH Sturges *32 years' service*

### HW Stampings

O Billingham *34 years' service*

### HW Steel Foundries

Mrs P Cartwright *30 years' service*  
WL Copeland *18 years' service*  
G Featham *31 years' service*  
J Gouldsbrough *15 years' service*  
WH Hopper *40 years' service*  
Mrs E Marsh *30 years' service*  
R Marshall *44 years' service*  
JH Pennock *48 years' service*  
R Pinder *35 years' service*

### HW Teesdale

W Bean *20 years' service*  
J Howe *51 years' service*  
AW Hunter *48 years' service*  
N Kennington *48 years' service*  
A Metcalf *22 years' service*  
R Patton *32 years' service*  
W Price *49 years' service*  
GH Talbot *31 years' service*  
N Wilson *30 years' service*  
NE Young *36 years' service*

### Mr RH Sturges OBE – HW South Africa

During a cocktail party to celebrate the retirement of Mr RH Sturges OBE *managing director HW South Africa* he was presented with a farewell gift on behalf of the staff of HWSA by Mr Eric Brown the new managing director.

Many readers will recall 'Bob' Sturges who commenced with HW in 1939 and was managing director of HW Teesdale from its formation in 1957 until 1966 when he was appointed MD of HWSA. Bob is retiring to the Costa Del Sol in Southern Spain and all his friends throughout HW extend their good wishes for a long and happy retirement in the sun.

### Mr HW Welford – HWPEL Thornaby

Mr HW Welford *administration and co-ordination manager* retired at the end of November after 35 years service with Head Wrightson.

Harry joined Teesdale drawing office, blast furnace equipment section in September 1936 and was almost immediately seconded to Birmingham where he spent about 2 years on cinema design. Returning to the blast furnace section, he was involved in the setting up of McKee Division with Mr TH Stayman, and in 1947 moved to the new office of that division as chief draughtsman. On the formation of the separate company of Head Wrightson Iron & Steel Works Engineering Ltd Harry became engineering manager and, following the further change of name to the present company, he relinquished his engineering connections for his present position. All members of PEL staff, together with his many friends throughout the group wish him a long and happy retirement.

### Mrs E Marsh and Mr A Fisher – HW Steel Foundries

The retirements of Emily Marsh and Dick Fisher were celebrated in grand style by HW Steel Foundries when some 300 personnel and friends attended a social evening in the Embassy Club arranged in their honour.

### Mr O Billingham – HW Stampings

Mr Oliver Billingham retired on 10 September 1971 and was presented with an electric lawn



mower by Mr F Brown *managing director of HW Stampings* on behalf of the staff and work people. Oliver first came to Head Wrightson from the mills of the West Riding, in 1922 to work in what was then known as the Smith's Shop at Teesdale Works, now the site of the light machine shop.

For 10 years he worked in the various occupations of hammer driver, furnaceman and stamper, as well as assisting in the Heat Treatment Plant, with another well known smithy character 'All Night' Jackson. He then transferred to the Shear Shop, cutting up the steel for the hammers, and the 'crocodile' shears then in use, and to be used for years to come, became the love of Oliver's life.

From 1942 to 1951 he was foreman in charge of Teesdale Shear Shop.

In 1951 the Teesdale Stamp Shop was transferred to Seaton Carew and Oliver took charge of the amalgamated Shear Shop at Seaton Carew, cutting material for the joint force of hammers. His one regret was that his faithful 'crocodile' shear was not transferred with him, but was sold. In 1960 Oliver took his valuable experience and knowledge into the Steel Control Department, and successfully filled this position until retirement.

Oliver's outside interest has always been centred around club life, and the games league, and at one time he was no mean performer on the billiard and snooker table.

This interest, he assures us, he is retaining, and all at 'Stampings' wish him a long and happy retirement in which to enjoy it.



*above:*

Mr Oliver Billingham receiving an electric lawn mower from Mr Frank Brown on behalf of his colleagues at Stampings

*left:*

Mr RH Sturges OBE (*left*) and Mr Eric Brown

*below:*

Mrs E Marsh and Mr A Fisher after the presentation ceremony. *left to right* Arthur Garner, Fred Dryden, Mrs E Marsh, George Baker, WH Mather, Dick Fisher, Alan Thurston and Mrs Fisher



## MARRIAGES- BEST WISHES

**HW Teesdale**  
Mr B Gray *fitting shop* to Miss Alison Barnard



## ASK THE FAMILY

*photo:* Mr Joe Doran, Anthony, Helen and Mrs Maureen Doran



Most readers will know that Mr Joe Doran *personnel manager* and his family were the 1970 national winners of the BBC TV quiz programme 'Ask the Family'. The Doran family will again be appearing on your TV screens on Monday 27 December when they will be competing against the winners of the 1971 series.



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