

Midlands AGM is a hit

The Midlands Region AGM was a hit once again. Whether it was the excellent and interesting speaker, the venue or the opportunity to meet old friends we don't know, but it was attended by sixty nine Members, friends and guests.

Committee members re-elected were Sue Robinson (Chairman for the second year), Anita Pendleton and Gill Hallsworth who remain on the Executive. They will be joined by John Kavanagh as Deputy Chairman.

Other re-elected committee members are Bob Clarke, Bob Cross, Heather Cracknell, Alaco Millard and Ted Poole. A much welcomed new face is Sarah Charles – congratulations on joining such an active team.

The committee was delighted to welcome back Karen Morgan, a student at Matthew Boulton College, winner of the 2004 Endeavour Award. The 2005 winner was announced – Frances Clarke, of Birmingham City Council, who is also a student at the college. Frances has worked extremely hard this year and has succeeded beyond her own expectations. Well done.



Sue Robinson gives a housewarming gift to Delia Cannings for Matthew Boulton College, as it is moving into new premises in September. – Delia please do let us have some information and photos for our September issue – Ed.

Keith hits the road

Keith Aldis (we couldn't stop him) proudly gave a talk on the development of BICSc and many of the new initiatives that he is leading to drive BICSc forward. This was very interesting and a presentation that is well worth attending if you are one of the Regions on his UK tour (tickets are available at all venues and Keith is also available for weddings and stag nights).

Delia Cannings our Regional Co-ordinator gave an in depth talk entitled 'COPC and its real value.' Delia explained how a Centre would gain COPC approval and the additional information that is now required to support the assessment criteria. Members discussed proposed timings for assessing various skills and how the scheme is policed to ensure the highest standards. Attendees welcomed the opportunity to air their views on COPC and made suggestions as to how they can implement training within their organisations. The large number of questions illustrated just how very interested the audience was in this topic.

The Midlands Region provides useful Study Days with professional speakers at very affordable prices and always welcomes newcomers to its events – regardless of whether you live in the area.

Gill Hallsworth said, "I was most surprised at the high number of people asking for membership forms at the end of the event." •

Northern Lights

North East Region held its AGM at Newcastle University with a good turnout of over 35 delegates. The speaker was Lynn Howlett from the University who gave an excellent presentation on Performance Management.

A special vote of thanks was given to Jill Roberts as outgoing Chair for her hard work whilst in office. Derek Marsden retains a tight hold on the purse strings as Treasurer, also taking over as Secretary in Ann Townson's absence while she

suns herself on a Caribbean Cruise (don't panic Derek she is coming back with the cheque book - honest).

Lynn Webster will take over unopposed as Chair with Andrew Oxley, Doncaster MBC as Vice Chair.

The AGM was followed by a tour of the campus - cut short by very heavy rain. The University spans the ages from old Victorian, Georgian and Edwardian to the some of the 1960's carbuncles and through to contemporary new state of the art energy efficient building which posed some different cleaning challenges to Jennifer Molyneux and her team. •

Flushed with pride: Office toilets revamped

Good staff facilities, similar to those previously exclusive to visitors, are the order of the day according to design company Tilney Shane.

The red carpet treatment given to reception loos and meeting/board room loos is now filtering into staff toilets. Many staff today enjoy top quality flowers, art, piped music, sofas, hand cream and disposable toilet seat covers.

According to Tilney Shane the days of the office washroom being a hierarchal statement are drawing nigh.

Smart companies now realise that toilets are incredibly important to all employees; in many cases companies spend as much of washroom features and fittings as they do on the boardroom.

Cheryl Gurner, director of Bathrooms International believes that the washroom is now one of the few areas at work where hierarchy has no place, making a quick nip to the loo as an important element of the social life of an office. She said: "Some of the most modest looking buildings in London's Square Mile have urinals to die for and ladies' rooms that look like those of really swanky hotels.

Putting in beautiful marble or limestone basins, flattering mirrors and luxury soaps and hand creams doesn't only motivate staff, but also encourages them to look their best for clients – and that is a big bonus for employers.

The only trend that has not so far caught on is the female urinal, which is very comfortable and popular in mainland Europe. •

Olympic efforts to start BICSc Training in Athens

"We intend to begin BICSc training in Athens before the end of 2004 and to promote the BICSc vision of raising standards throughout Greece".

It was a bold statement of intent made by Dennis Paraskevopoulos, CPT Athens, at last year's BICSc conference held in Solihull when speaking as an invited guest at the moderators meeting. There were few present who would doubt Dennis, for his determination is legendary and immediately obvious to everyone he meets.

His personal odyssey has taken him around the world in a quest to provide the best training for his Greek compatriots. His journey began with his own Stage One COPC training taking place in Russia under the tutelage of Margarita Avdeeva, a fellow Chemspec distributor and BICSc Assessor at TRB, Moscow.

Herculean efforts by Dennis to ensure his long-term aim came to fruition culminating in an alliance with Solar Training Solutions, the Dublin-based BICSc training provider. Dennis achieved COPC Stages 2, 3, Train the Trainer and Assessor Award with Solar Training Solutions and recently ran a two-day carpet cleaning seminar in Dublin on their behalf.

Dennis has now achieved his goal and held a very successful COPC training course in December 2004. The event was attended by the first of many Greeks eagerly wishing to become pioneers in raising cleaning standards via the BICSc methodology. So impressed were participants that some are already enquiring as to when they may attend Stage 2 COPC, Trainer and Assessor courses!!!!!!

Concerned that students may not be fluent English speakers, CPT overcame language difficulties with the provision of simultaneous translation services that recently worked for the Greek Olympic committee. Radio transmitters, microphones and personal headphones for students ensured 100% translation of the finer points in cleaning science with this service being complimented via fully-translated PowerPoint presentations.

Already, plans are under way for the next course which is to be held in Cyprus!

The 2004 Olympic successes will soon be surpassed by this Greek/Irish alliance. •

