



Autumn 2017

Institute of Management Services – West Midlands Region

Volume 17/2



Autumn Programme 2017

The West Midlands Region warmly invites you to the following events:

Special points of interest:

- Visit to World of Wedgwood
- Visit to Mathew Boulton's Soho House
- Region Informal Dinner
- Region AGM

September – A visit to the World of Wedgwood, Stoke on Trent – factory tour and museum visit. The Wedgwood site has been completely redeveloped and includes shop and restaurant facilities. Members and guests invited Adult Tickets are £7 each and the Region will reimburse Members £5. Further details of Wedgwood World can be found at www.worldofwedgwood.com

October - a visit and guided tour of Soho House, Birmingham, the Georgian home of Matthew Boulton, one of Birmingham's early industrialist who was the partner with James Watt in the development and sale of early steam engines and a leading member of the Lunar Society of well known early scientists and industrialists. The tour lasts about 1 hour. Members and guests are invited and Adult tickets are £7 each and the Region will make a contribution of £5 for each member. Further details concerning Soho House can be found at www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/soho

November - Informal Dinner will be held at the Badgers Sett, Hagley. Members and guests are invited but are expected to pay for their meals. The Region will provide table wine. This is an opportunity to network with members and catch up with the latest Institute news.

January 2018 - the West Midlands Region AGM will be held in the Coffee Lounge of the George Hotel, Lichfield and members are invited to attend and hear reports and plans for the Region for the next year.

If you wish to attend please register by e-mail - see page 4

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IMPORTANT NOTICE – YOUR CURRENT E-MAIL ADDRESS

The West Midlands E-News Newsletter is now only delivered to our members electronically. To ensure you continue to receive your copy of the West Midlands E-News please ensure your current up-to-date e-mail address is registered with the Institute. This is particularly important since many Internet Service Providers have closed many of their legacy e-mail facilities such as wanadoo, freeserve etc

If you have changed or are in the process of changing your work or home e-mail address or internet service provider please ensure we have your new e-mail address details. You can update your e-mail address by sending your name, postal address and new e-mail address to admin@ims-productivity.com



*John Hopkinson
Chairman, West Midlands Region and Editor
of WM E-News*

....Germany ..a third more productive than the UK....foreign owned companies in UK ..50% more productive than British owned...UK wage rate rises lag behind inflation

Editorial - The UK's poor economic performance

In early July the Office for National Statistics (ONS) published a report which shows disturbing trends for the UK economy. National productivity after showing some signs of improvement has relapsed with the risk to our living standards. It is only by improving our productivity will we see our living standards improve. The UK's productivity has stagnated at the level it was almost a decade ago in 2008.

Compared to our G7 competitors and taking the UK's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per hour worked as 100, only Japan and Canada are less productive, with Italy, the United States, France and Germany producing more output per hour worked - with Germany being over a third more productive than the UK.

In the UK regions, the most productive regions are London and the South East, with our own West Midlands Region lagging behind with only Wales and Northern Ireland which are less productive.

Recent research by Bank of England analysts drawing on official data from 40,000 UK companies, show that foreign owned companies in the UK are at least 50 per cent more productive than their British-owned counterparts and the gulf is widening which the analysts argue is down to much greater levels of investment and better management by these foreign owned companies. Drawing on other research the Analysts also argue that part of the UK's problem is that family run firms where the position of chief executive is passed to the eldest son, are much less productive than firms in which management is chosen on merit.

Employment in the UK is continuing to run at a high level (with unemployment reduced to the levels of 1970) but wage rate rises continue to lag behind the rate of inflation which means in real terms we are becoming poorer, and if these issues are not reversed the UK will become a low wage, low productivity economy.

For the IMS as the UK professional body claiming expertise in the area of productivity these trends are matters of great concern.

Visit to the National Computing Museum, Bletchley Park

On Saturday 1st April a party from the West Midlands Region visited the National Computing Museum at Bletchley Park, Milton Keynes.

One of the principal exhibits of the Museum is the reconstruction of a working Colossus computer, which is generally regarded as the World's first electronic programmable computer.

The first Colossus computer was constructed during World War 2 in early 1943 by group of GPO Telephone Engineers led by Tommy Flowers from the Post Office Research Station, and used standard GPO telephone engineering components and 1,500 radio valves. Anyone who can remember radio valves, will recall they glowed and flickered and produced a lot of heat and had high failure rate, but the GPO engineers were confident that the failure rate was high because the valves in radios were switched on and off, but in the Colossus the valves would remain turned on throughout the war.

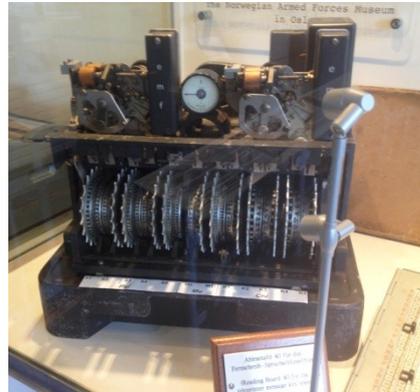
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Visit to the National Computing Museum, Bletchley Park continued.....

Ten Colossus machines were built and the machines upgraded, each with 2,400 valves to assist in breaking the German High Command Lorenz encoded messages.



The reconstructed Colossus Computer with volunteer technician



German Lorenz machine for encrypting most secret messages

The German Lorenz machines were used to encode the messages of the highest levels of the German Command – strategy directives on the conduct of the war from Hitler to his principal commanders.

The Germans were confident that due to its complexity the Lorenz code was unbreakable, but Bletchley Park code breakers with the aid of Colossus were decoding Lorenz encrypted messages transmitted by radio from Berlin to the German command centres and passing the decoded information to Churchill and Eisenhower and other Allied commanders within 6 days.

At the end of the War, such was the secrecy still surrounding Colossus machines that most of them were dismantled and because they were built from standardised GPO telephone engineering items, all the components were returned to the GPO engineering stores and then reissued to normal telephone exchanges. It was only by the early 1980s that the secrecy surrounding Bletchley coding breaking activities become declassified, and in the mid 1990s a start was made to reconstruct the Colossus from the few remaining drawings and photographs and descriptions, and from the knowledge of the remaining GPO engineers who had worked on the original machines.

The Museum also contains examples of early commercial mainframe computers and outlines the development of personal computers and calculators. This was a ‘walk down memory lane’ for many of the party, as they recognised and recalled computers from their early careers in 1960s, 1970s and 1980s and later. Over the decades there has been an exponential increase in processing power and memory capacity of computers and the miniaturisation of components. For example the computer on the early 1970s Apollo Moon Landing Module responsible for navigating and landing men on the moon and returning them to Earth had less computing power than found in an average modern mobile telephone.

Visit to Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) , Stratford upon Avon



A party from the West Midlands Region visited the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) at Stratford upon Avon on Saturday 20th May for a back stage tour. The RSC has a whole complex of buildings on land beside the tranquil River Avon. The land was donated by the Victorian Stratford Brewer Charles Flower, who also financed the building of the first theatre. Up to this time, despite William Shakespeare’s connections with Stratford, the RSC had been based in London, and there were doubts whether a small provincial town like Stratford could support such a theatre and attract sufficient visitors to the theatre.

The original Victorian Theatre completed in 1879 was destroyed by fire in 1926 and a new Art Deco theatre was built in the early 1930s, and in 2011 Queen Elizabeth formally opened the theatre which has been completely redeveloped at cost of over £112 million. The Art Deco facade for the main entrance area has been retained.

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Visit to Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) continued.....

In addition to the main theatre, adjacent to it and served by the same back stage areas is the smaller Swan Theatre. Both the main and Swan Theatres are modelled with the stage in the centre and the audience in tiers around the sides. In addition, at a little distance is yet another smaller theatre known as 'The Other Place' which also provides rehearsal space for the main theatres. The RSC premises includes an adjacent street of cottages used to house actors during the season, large storage areas and a modern office block for head office administration.

We were privileged to walk across the main stage where Shakespeare's 'Julius Caesar' was the current production, and to visit the wardrobe, scenery, technical and workshop areas. The RSC workshops produce nearly all the costumes and artefacts used in their plays, and launders and cleans all the costumes between each production. When not required by the RSC, the costumes and props are held in store and hired to other theatres and film companies.

There are about 750 staff employed by the RSC, and the RSC is a major World wide tourist attraction bringing visitors to Stratford and is a major component of the local economy.

Institute of Management Services—National Council Annual General Meeting 20th October

Please note that the IMS AGM will be held on Friday 20th October at 10.30 am at the George Hotel, Lichfield and is open to all members of the Institute.

The IMS Head Office e-mail address is now admin@ims-productivity.com and the office is open 4 days per week Monday to Thursday (inclusive)

West Midlands Region Board Members Directory for 2017

Region Chair –

John Hopkinson Hon FMS

Secretary and Membership Development Officer

Peter Storey FMS

Region Treasurer and Events

Co-ordinator—

Julian Cutler FMS

Steve Cullen FMS

Executive Members:

Bill Acres AMS



*Bill Acres
Executive Member*

To contact the West Midlands Region please reply to admin@ims-productivity.com mark your e-mail for the attention of the West Midlands Region.