

Sellafield News

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London trip for lucky apprentices

Four Sellafield Ltd apprentices are among a group of seven lucky youngsters who were selected to visit London this week to take VIP a tour around the Houses of Parliament with local MP, Jamie Reed.

The group of four: Amy Ireland (a Control Systems Engineer), Amanda Smith (E & I, Thorp), Matthew Prior (Mechanical) and John Kelly (Mechanical) were invited by Copeland MP Jamie Reed as a way of recognising their outstanding achievement in the first year of their apprenticeships.

Speaking about the recent trip, John Kelly based in Pond 5, said: "The visit to London was really interesting and we all enjoyed ourselves. I couldn't believe how big the Houses of Parliament were! A big thank you goes to GEN II and to Mr Reed for taking us and showing us around."

Each of the apprentices were invited on the trip after receiving awards at the annual Deed Signing and Award Presentation Ceremony held back in October 2007.

Speaking about the apprentices, MP Jamie Reed said: "I am proud to be able to help organise this visit to Parliament. It is a small way in helping to recognise the significant achievements made by our local young people.

"These highly trained students are one of the key resources in securing a sustainable future for West Cumbria. All our futures depend on the ability of organisations such as GEN II to continue to provide high quality, relevant training and education."

Gen II is currently recruiting for the 2008 apprentice intake. Anyone interested in joining should phone Connexions on 0800 435 709 or visit www.gen2training.co.uk

Thorp update

Thorp began shearing fuel on 28 January for what is the second campaign of fuel since the plant was shutdown in April 2005. This campaign comprises up to 100te of UK AGR and overseas LWR fuel.

Production at the plant was being ramped up slowly as is normal after a shutdown in order to safely bring the plant back into operation. Unfortunately the elevator which takes the fuel from the feed pond to the shear cave failed during its operation. Shearing of fuel was stopped. We are now assessing the engineering work required to fix the elevator and resume production as soon as possible.

Monitoring has taken place in order to reassure ourselves and we can confirm that

there are no increased levels of radiation detected and discharges were unaffected. We have informed all our regulators of the incident including the NII and the EA. We have also informed the owner, the NDA.

This event has provisionally been classified as below scale on the International Nuclear Events Scale.

Thorp itself actually received permission to operate in January 2007 but has had limited throughput due to a lack of evaporator capacity within the High Level Waste Plants. The first campaign to shear 33te of fuel was completed in August 2007 and this dissolved fuel was processed in the Thorp Chemical Plants during November 2007.

Tough Guys!

A team of seven Sellafield Ltd graduates were among a group of 4000 adrenaline junkies who recently took part in an adventure race called the 'Tough Guy Challenge', to raise money for charity.

Stuart Beresford-Kelly, Tina Dwyer, Paul Hughes, Martin Johnson, George Royston Bishop, Izzy Styles and Andy Sutton all took part in the bi-annual event held on Sunday 27 January at South Perton Farm, Wolverhampton, raising more than £1000 for the Great North Air Ambulance.

The Tough Guy Challenge, which was founded back in 1986 by Grenadier Guardsmen Billy Wilson, involves an eight mile cross country run, encompassing a monstrous obstacle course made up of rope climbs, barbed wire, underwater tunnels, flame pits, 40ft drops, freezing cold water and loads of mud!

As well the £1000 raised by the group, Sellafield Ltd has also provided match funding for the seven, giving them another £200 to add to the pot.



Speaking after the event, Izzy, a Graduate Trainee Safety Advisor, said: "All the mud and obstacles and the danger just made it an irresistible challenge! On a more serious note though, we wanted to do something for an invaluable local cause. We would like to thank everyone who has supported us."

For more information and photos of the event please visit: www.toughguy.co.uk

Decommissioning double share experiences with radio listeners

Father and son, Brian and Paul Rose became radio stars last week after taking part in a 'generations' feature for BBC Radio Cumbria, to talk about decommissioning at Sellafield.

The feature, which aired last Thursday, detailed some of the decommissioning work taking place at Sellafield from the perspective of two workers carrying out the job.

Brian, a Project Engineer and Paul, a Project Manager on the Alpha Decommissioning Project, agreed to take part in the feature to share their experiences with listeners about the jobs they do, the challenges they face and the successes they have achieved throughout their time at Sellafield.

Told firstly from the perspective of Brian and his experiences of joining the company some 42 years ago as an apprentice, reporter Emma Borthwick then went on to talk to Paul about how his working experiences differ from his dad's and how he thinks the site has moved on.

"We get a lot of ideas from the guys who have been here a long time – the guys who have seen it all" said Paul as he spoke about the current challenges faced in his field of work.

"It's a good idea to get the older guys together as they can sometimes give you the best ideas on how to build your strategy and how to do the work", he added.

Speaking after the interview, Brian said: "Both Paul and I were surprised and honoured to have been asked to talk about our experiences in decommissioning."



"I think it will have been interesting for listeners to make the father/son' connection. I was able to respond to one of Emma's questions: 'What had given me the most satisfaction whilst working in decommissioning?' by talking about the work I had done on the installation of a Mixed Oxide plant as an apprentice, then through the commissioning stage, providing maintenance to the plant during its operational life, and years later in decommissioning - which involved size reduction and storing the particular material in crates within the plant building.

"Then, years later, when an acceptable waste route had been established, it was Paul who came along to empty the crates of their contents to complete the job I'd been involved in initiating all those years ago."

The full interview and photographs of Paul and Brian will be available at the end of the week on the BBC website. Please visit www.radiocumbria.co.uk/cumbria

Event report

An automatic isolation valve on a cooling tower within the High Level Waste Plants, failed to completely stop cooling water flow when tested.

Operations were transferred to another cooling tower when a conservative decision was taken to undertake the same test on the second tower. It was also found to be passing some water and therefore also failed the proof test. Safety was not compromised during the incident, which has been classified as Below Scale on the International Nuclear Event Scale, as more than one layer of additional safety measures were in place.

VIP visits to Sellafield 23 – 30 January 2008 included:

23/01/08 – British Energy
25/01/08 – Manchester University
29/01/08 – Stopwatch Media/RTE
30/01/08 – Project Services

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