

## COMMUNICATIONS AT BRIDGE

Pupils from Bridge and Patricbourne County Primary School, near Canterbury have been working on a challenging project on 'Communications' in partnership with Kent County Council's Department of Highways and Transportation.

Deputy Headteacher, Jenny Vye, contacted Chris Tyler, County Co-ordinator for Schools/Industry Partnership, following the distribution of information about the Kent Education Business Partnership to schools during the Autumn Term 1991.

Jenny was interested in enriching the topic of 'Communications' for her Year 5 class by working in partnership with the business community. She wanted to look at Communications both in terms of personal communications and also from the viewpoint of travel and transport.

The topic started with Sheila Brooke from the KCC's Highways and Transportation Department visiting the school to explain to pupils why her department are interested in traffic counts of different types of vehicle and how they undertake this work. Pupils had the opportunity to gain 'hands on' experience of manual hand held traffic counters on which up to six different types of vehicle can be counted. They also were able to experiment with the much more sophisticated electronic counters which the Highways and Transportation Department have recently introduced.

The pupils were then able to develop their skills with the hand held counters, whilst watching a training video showing vehicles travelling along a section of the M2. Trying to count the vehicles travelling along a busy stretch of road helped the pupils to understand some of the difficulties experienced by KCC's traffic enumerators.



*Year 5 pupils at Bridge CP learning to use manual and electronic traffic counters with Deputy Headteacher Jenny Vye.*

Subsequently, the pupils have used the manual traffic counters to undertake their own traffic censuses in Bridge. On three occasions, at different times of day and different times of the week, the class has been divided into groups to count the traffic flow both in Bridge village and along the Bridge by-pass which was built in 1976.

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Following their practical work, pupils have developed their understanding of a whole range of National Curriculum subjects. The collection of empirical data has led to the construction of graphs in mathematics. Lively debates on the advantages and disadvantages of the by-pass and its impact on Bridge and written work about the project have enhanced pupils' oral and writing skills in a stimulating and rewarding way.



*Pupils from Bridge and Patricbourne CP School, near Canterbury undertaking traffic censuses as part of their 'Communications' Project.*

Exciting plans for the development of the project are currently being discussed. Pupils will soon be developing their Technology skills by designing their own cars benefiting from the expertise of a local garage. It is hoped to involve the local newspaper who will send a reporter and photographer to record this event, with pupils also having the opportunity to report the event themselves. The topic will then involve pupils visiting the Kent Messenger newspaper to see the various processes that a story goes through prior to publication.

*Chris Tyler*

*County Co-ordinator for Schools/Industry Partnership*

## SPLASH – A PLANNING AND BUILDING SIMULATION IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL

How do you fit four adults from business, local government and industry, a BBC film crew, a teacher and thirty children aged 9–11 in a tall but not very spacious turn of the century classroom? With difficulty!

The simulation, filmed for a National Curriculum Geography programme was a natural bringing together of work undertaken on 'Water in the Community'. The topic had encompassed elements of spoken and written English, Mathematics, Geography and Science.

The preparation for the learning situations within the Splash simulation were as important, if not more important than the knowledge input. The emphasis was on learning by doing. The afternoon, which led to teams competing to build a reservoir and waste water treatment works (sewage works to the uninitiated) in a certain defined area, would be enhanced by the realism of meeting those who would be involved in such real life decisions.

Previously, there had been work on scale, measurement, co-ordinates and direction as well as science work on water testing and role play using a simulation 'PORRSANTT', the BBC drama programme.

The local Enterprise Agency had put us in touch with Cascade, a local water softening company. A teacher, Liz Kohler attached to the Small Business Education Project had worked through the Porrsantt simulation with the children, as well as contacting one of the participants for the Splash afternoon, a local pet shop owner. Porrsantt proved especially useful because it not only brought to life work on the location of communications and scale but also introduced children to the idea of the limited resources and the competing interests of small leisure and social concerns. There were no right answers for just one individual.

In the first stage, the children allocated their roles and considered the role briefs - secretary, planner, builder, village person, factory owner and market gardener. The next stage involved deciding on sites, given a small scale map, and, consultation with the Adults Other than Teachers. These were a planner and environmental health officer, a water scientist and a petshop owner. To some extent the children came with some preconceptions about the power of certain of these groups and it would have been good for the adults to have been involved in at least chairing the groups who allocated the roles and decided on sites. For instance, the petshop owner had a good overview of the whole process. There was no need to worry about the children losing the 'ownership' of the simulation.

The intermediate stages involved the making of water and sewage pipes and a consideration of the applications of the other village consortiums, so their building (and profit making) could be delayed. Adults were again involved with each group at this stage. They could equally have been involved in quality control of the pipe making and in reviewing how each group had arrived at their decision.

The final stage involved the group directing their builder, complete with hard hat, against the clock (elements of 'Treasure Hunt' and 'Mousetrap' here).

In retrospect, the constraints of time were far outweighed by the realism of the learning that took place. Yes, one would have liked to have run the simulation either side of lunch.

The outcomes were not only those that were planned. It was a geography lesson, but there were unplanned conversations, frustrations and situations. Ideas of relief and river development would be incorporated in next term's work. There was the unexpected coverage of Technology: planning, making and review within an environment. Also a vast amount of spoken English and social confidence was gained.

Who knows if children in the class might be the builders, planners, scientists, show owners or even BBC producers of the future?

Special thanks to the Small Business Education Project, Southern Water, Gillingham Borough Council, Luton Arches Petshop, and the children and staff of Byron County Primary School, Gillingham.

*Stephan Jenkins  
Byron CP School, Gillingham*

## PUPILS BUILD FOR BUSINESS

**Y**ear 5 and 6 pupils at Cecil Road Primary School in Gravesend have been working with Gravesham Borough Council and a number of local businesses on a practical project that investigates change in the area.

The project, "A child's insight into tomorrow's world", encouraged the children to investigate the recent history of Gravesham. The focus was on economic change. Through resources provided by Gravesend Library and Gravesham Borough Council, the pupils were able to compare maps and photographs of the area, as it used to be, and as it is now.

One of the topics raised was the decline of heavy industry in the area. The pupils learnt how new industries can be attracted to provide jobs and thereby reduce unemployment levels. Through the special consultancy of Stephen Round, Senior Estates Manager at Gravesham Council, they became aware of the potential for redevelopment of land to provide employment. He was able to demonstrate that business enterprises can be sited in an environmentally acceptable manner.

The pupils were involved in design-and-build activities as they produced scale models of possible enterprise parks. Stephen Round arranged a visit to Springhead Enterprise Park in Northfleet. He arranged for them to visit some industrial premises - the ITEC centre, which specialises in computer technology, the Zest appliances manufacturing plant, and Procon, a car-phone installation and maintenance firm.

Stephen Round said:

"Springhead was an ideal choice because of the wide cross-section of businesses operating there.

The children did not see the noise and smoke they expected.

It had been encouraging to see that most of the children's models included recycling plants of some kind. This just goes to show that our environmentally friendly message is reaching the young ones of the borough."

Ann Munro, the children's teacher, said "Most of the class had never set foot in a business park before."

The children were enthusiastic.

"It's a lot nicer than I expected - it's laid out so the public like it."

The liaison between the school and business community was arranged in conjunction with Liz Kohler, Project Officer with the Small Business Education Project.

*Liz Kohler  
Project Officer  
Small Business Education Project*

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Beverley  
 Fry



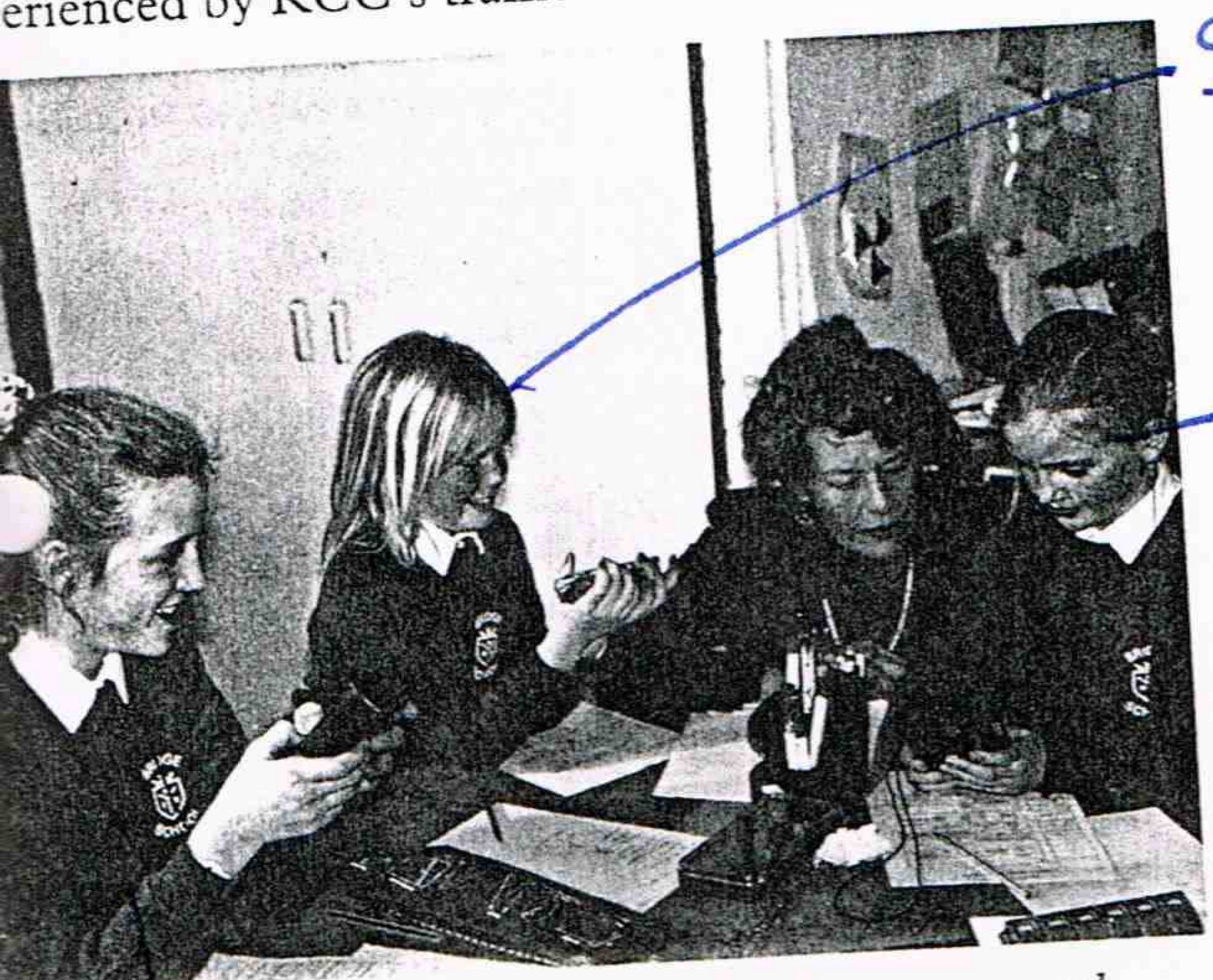
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Chris Tyler

County Co-ordinator for Schools/Industry Partnership



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Dear Jenny,  
 For village news can you name  
 the 5 girls in the 2 photos,  
 Long fields  
 29 Jan.