

Man with a love of countryside



KG Feb 14th 2002

RICHARD NEAME: Man of the country

Former High Sheriff dies after illness

A FORMER High Sheriff of Kent, Richard Neame, died on Sunday.

Mr Neame, of The Court House, Bishopsbourne, was 75 and had been ill for some time.

He was proud of the fact that he had followed in his father's footsteps in becoming High Sheriff.

His father, Lt-Col Cecil Neame, of Hardres Court, Upper Hardres, was High Sheriff in 1936.

Mr Neame, a former captain in the Grenadier Guards, was High Sheriff in 1987.

Educated at Eton College, he served in the Grenadier Guards from 1945 to 1953.

Farming extensively in Upper Hardres and Bishopsbourne, Mr Neame moved from the family home, Hardres Court, to The Court House, in 1976, where he farmed about 2,000 acres, mainly cereal, sheep and hops.

Mr Neame was very much a man of the country, with a particular love of trees, carefully nurturing existing woodlands on his estate and replanting, particularly after the hurricane in 1987, which devastated the stately avenue of beeches

leading down into the village.

He was a member of the council of the Kent County Agricultural Society, a committee member of the Kent branch of the Country Landowners Association, a member of the Society for the Protection of Rural England and of the Royal Forestry Society.

He was also president of the East Kent branch of the Grenadier Guards Association.

Mr Neame was a member of the old Bridge-Blean rural district council before it merged with others to become Canterbury City Council, and has also been chairman of Bishopsbourne Parish Council.

He recently gave to the village the recreation ground in The Street, which has been named Neame Meadow in his honour.

Last night, members of the parish council observed silence in his memory.

Mr Neame leaves a widow, Anne, daughters Vanessa and Camilla and grandchildren Natasha and George.

The funeral will be held at St Peter and St Paul Church, Upper Hardres, where his parents are buried, on Tuesday at 3pm.

ON FOR VILLAGERS PROVES A RUNAWAY SUCCESS



SPECIAL FEATURES:
Tiger-faced Stuart Hutley,
eight *Ref: pd 143200*



DRESSING UP: Children wore a imaginative variety of costumes

Ref: pd 143206

Jubilee fancy dress is full of character

DOUBLE CELEBRATION



RAISING THE STANDARD: The cross of St George has

FROM Spider-Man to Bob the Builder, children adopted their favourite characters for a village fancy dress parade at the weekend.

The event heralded the start of jubilee celebrations in Bridge which were timed this year to coincide with the primary school fete.

Hundreds of children, accompanied by their parents, processed through the village from the Red Lion pub car park to the school playing field for the fete.

They were led by Oyster Morris men and women who added their traditional brand of music and dancing to the spectacle.

Also adding a historic flavour to the event and dressed as characters from the era were the Sealed Knot civil war re-enactment group.

Earlier in the day, local residents put bitter memories of last year's flooding behind them to welcome the water in Nailbourne for a duck race.

Chairman of the jubilee committee, Alan Walton, who is landlord of the White Horse pub, said: "We decided to delay our jubilee celebrations to build them around our annual school summer fete.

"The whole day and evening was entertainment orientated and we are lucky to have three village pubs which were all very busy because there was so many people out and about.

"It was a chance to create a feel good factor and for some real community spirit.

"The fete raised about £4,000 for the school, but we were just content to cover our costs on the jubilee side of the celebrations."



PARTY MOOD: Harry and Jean Fairfax with their grandchildren, Laura, two, and Bethan, six *Ref: pd 143199*



LOOKING THE PART: Spider-Man and a young knight joined the parade *Ref: pd 143202*

KG June 27th 2002

ARCHBISHOP OPENS NEW CLASSROOMS

School's reward is £620,000 new block



TASTY CEREMONY: Dr Carey helps cut the celebration cake
Ref: pd 149609



LOOKS GOOD: Dr and Mrs Carey are shown the new building by head teacher of Bridge School Anna Newton
Ref: pd 149668



UNDER COVER: The Archbishop meets Toby Wyant
Ref: pd 149667

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, has officially opened an extension to Bridge School, which cost £620,000.

Dr Carey was joined by Kent County Council's cabinet members for education Paul Carter and Leyland Ridings and by the director of education in Kent Graham Badman.

Pupils performed poems and songs at the ceremony on Friday

by Sian Napier

and then Dr Carey unveiled a plaque to open the eight-classroom block, school hall extension and staff room.

The project, which took nine months to complete, was paid for by the Government's basic need bid scheme and the school.

It has just been awarded Beacon status by the Government, which is given to schools performing among

the best in the country and who share their successful practice with other schools.

Cllr Carter said: "The new buildings are fabulous and have made such an improvement to the school.

"I am sure both staff and children will enjoy learning in this wonderful new environment."

Head teacher Anna Newton said: "After the opening the Archbishop went around the school and spoke to the pupils. It was a really lovely occasion."



ON DISPLAY : Head Anna Newton, Paul Carter, Dr and Mrs Carey and Ailsa Williamson with Jack Coleman and Megan Blackwell who painted the presentation pictures
Ref: pd 149665



SCHOOL ADDRESS: Dr Carey talks to the pupils

Ref: pd 151659

Owners fear ruin of historic mansion



EXTREMELY CONCERNED: Amanda Harris-Deans of Higham Park with the plans which show development just 100 metres from her front door *Ref: pd 186947*

THE OWNERS of one of the most historic homes in the district are horrified that plans for a business park will ruin the countryside setting of the house.

Their fears follow the publication of a map which shows proposals for the massive expansion of Highland Court at Bridge to create a 70-acre business park.

Now Amanda Harris-Deans is furious to discover the new buildings could come within 100 metres of the front door of her home, Higham Park.

She and joint owners Patricia Gibb and her son, Barry, have spent the last seven years restoring the magnificent mansion and gardens which had suffered from years of neglect.

Dating back to 1320, it has many historic connections and was once the home of Count Louis Zborowski who created and raced the Chitty Bang Bang cars.

Now the work is almost complete and the house is popular with visitors because of its beautiful parkland setting and wonderful stately rooms.

But Miss Harris-Deans fears that its unique ambience will be destroyed if the business park is allowed to expand so close to them.

She said: "We were horrified when we saw the plans.

"We had no idea it was going to come so

by Gerry Warren

Anger over plan for business park

close to the front of the house. It is almost on our doorstep. I know we have a vested interest because it is our home, but it is also an historic Grade II star listed property whose setting should be preserved.

"We were also angry to discover that our house is marked as a conference centre on the plans, which it is not."

Already environmentalists and surrounding villagers have joined a chorus of complaint about the scale of the planned development.

Although no planning application has yet been submitted, it is expected that agents for Highland Court will try to have the development included in the Local Plan.

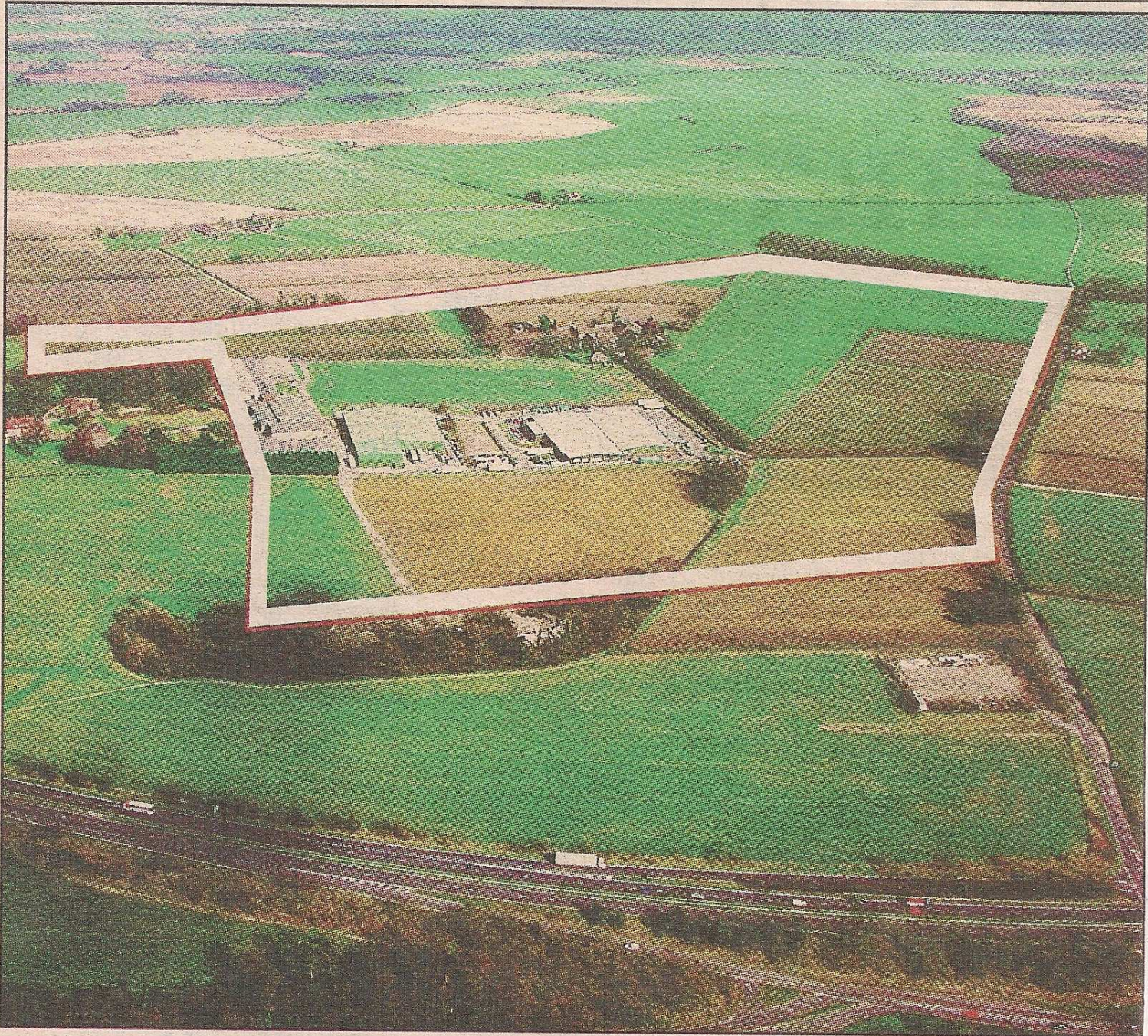
But already parish councils and environmental campaigners have written to the city council to protest. They are furious at the proposals to use prime green fields for the expansion.

Miss Harris-Deans said: "We shall certainly be writing to lodge our disapproval because it would be disastrous for the setting of this wonderful house."

KG Aug. 1st 2002

July 25th 2002

ANXIOUS VILLAGERS OBJECT TO PLANS



COUNTRYSIDE THREAT: The white outline shows the scale of the proposed new business park

'Creation of jobs would benefit the community'

CANTERBURY desperately needs a big business park to retain and attract high quality companies, says the consultant promoting the redevelopment of Highland Court.

Michael Parkes says the city cannot continue to rely on low income tourist and retail jobs while other employers have to travel elsewhere to find higher quality work.

He said: "The Local Plan does recognise the need for a major employment centre but the problem is that the existing brownfield sites are too small and few and far between.

"Canterbury is surrounded by green fields and it is inevitable that some of that land will be needed.

"It can't be good for the city that people have to get on a train and go elsewhere to find higher quality jobs."

Mr Parkes, who had been meeting parish councils near the site to promote the plans, says the multi-million pound scheme would create up to 2,000 new jobs.

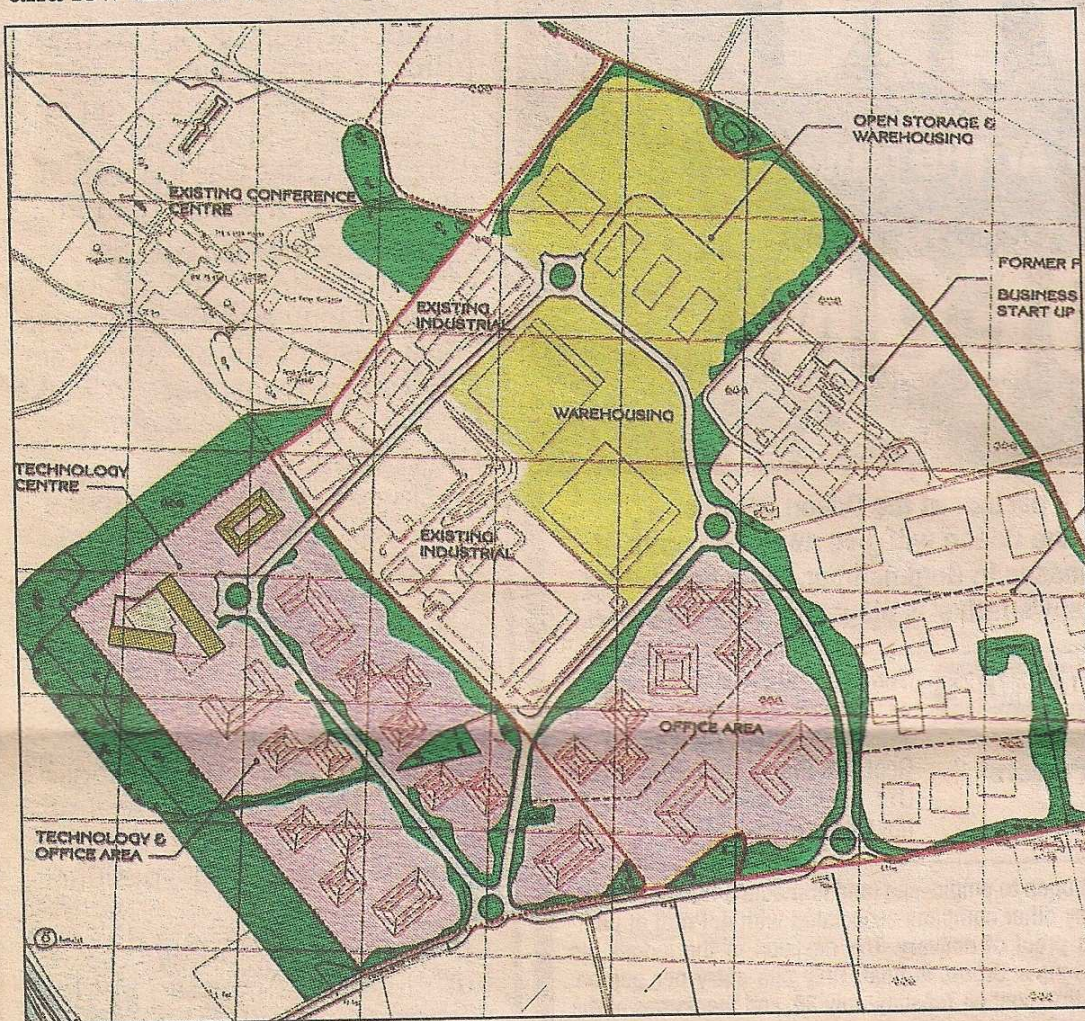
He added: "I have no doubt that a balance has to be struck and the feedback I have been getting is that people are in favour of a new business park

that would provide better jobs.

"Highland Court has the advantage of a wonderful access from the A2 and is close to Europe.

"Some of the opinions we are taking into account is the need to maintain the views of Highland Court and for new signage to the site.

"But I hope we will be able to persuade the city council to support the project and promote its inclusion in the Local Plan, which already recognises the need that Canterbury has for a business centre."



SITE BLUEPRINT: The proposed layout of the business park

July 25th 2002

16 July 25, 2002

THE BUSINESS PAGE

www.kentonline.co.uk/business

To
Write to The Editor, 9 St George's Place, Canterbury, Kent
kentishgazette@thekmgroup.co.uk. Please include a day!



TRAINING TRIUMPH: Chris and Melanie Maclean accept the award from Claire Trevill and Graeme Endacott of Shepherd Neame

Pub wins training award

A COUNTRY inn near Canterbury has won the coveted Shepherd Neame Training Pub of the Year award.

Sponsored by the Investors in People team at the agency Business Link Kent, the award rewards the brewery's pubs which have demonstrated the most extensive and in-depth staff training.

Investors in People advisor Claire Trevill declared this year's winner as The Plough and Harrow, Bridge, run since 1991 by husband and wife team Chris and Melanie Maclean.

She said their dynamic and innovative approach to staff training had given the pub unrivalled staff retention rates in a business where employee turnover tended to be frequent and rapid.

THE PLOUGH AND HARROW'S WINNING WAYS



MORE THAN MERE FROTH: Chris and Melanie Maclean, centre, accept the Plough and Harrow's Training Pub of the Year award from Business Link Kent's Claire Trevill and Graeme Enadcott, human resources manager at Shepherd Neame

Pub gets people accolade

A LOCAL PUB has been awarded the coveted title "Shepherd Neame Training Pub of the Year 2002".

The award, sponsored by the Investors in People team at Business Link, was given to The Plough and Harrow in Bridge.

The delighted landlords, Chris and Melanie Maclean have been running the pub since 1991 and have developed a dynamic and innovative approach to staff training.

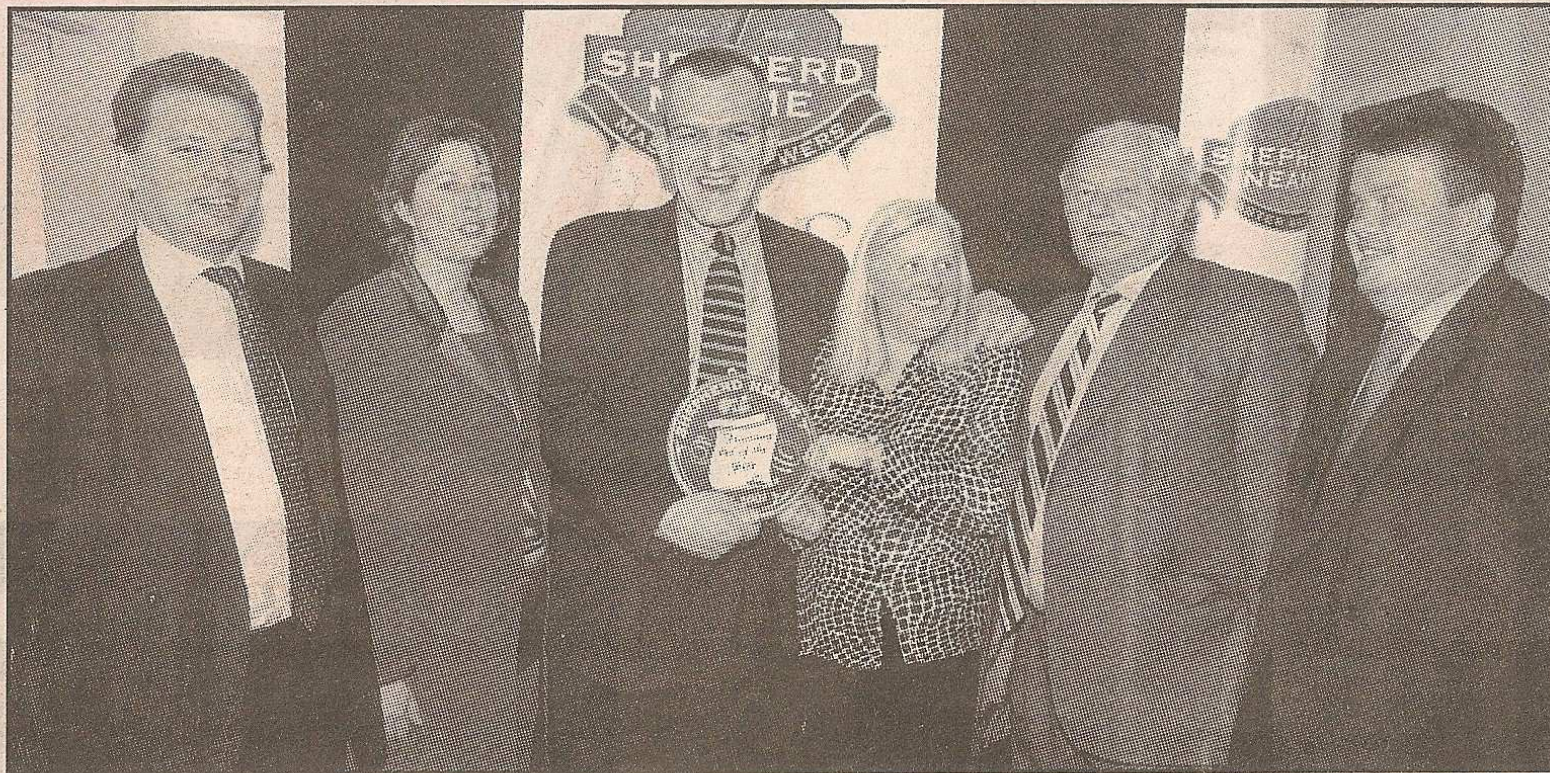
Chris Maclean said: "We have devel-

oped a strong training programme for staff, with the aim of maximising their potential. I hire people specifically for their attitude to training and acquiring new skills and have a partnership ethic to empower staff."

Claire Trevill, the judge and Business Link's Investors in People advisor, says: "Chris is self motivated in his approach to training. I was impressed by the pub's achievements and how they fitted into the broader company-wide training strategy. Chris and Melanie are real champions of training."

Graeme Endcott, human resources manager at Shepherd Neame, added: "The Plough and Harrow, did really well against tough competition from across the company"

This is the latest in the long line of awards for the pub. Accolades include entries in The Good Beer Guide every year since 1991, Shepherd Neame Cellar Master and Pub of the Year 1995, Shepherd Neame Cellar Award 1996, 1997, National Pub Promotion of the Year 2001 and National Marketing Pub of the Year 2001.



CHEERS: Chris and Melanie McClean (centre) celebrate their award with Shepherd Neame's managing director Jonathan Neame, Claire Trevill, Shepherd Neame chairman Robert Neame and the Faversham brewery's tied trade manager Graeme Endacott

Pub scoops top training prize

THE landlord of a village pub is celebrating after winning the title of Training Pub of the Year.

Chris McClean, licensee of the Plough and Harrow in Bridge, beat off nearly 100 rivals across the south east to pick up the title, which is awarded annually by the

Shepherd Neame brewery.

The award, sponsored by the Learning and Business Link Company, recognises pubs which operate personal development programmes for their staff, from induction through to review procedures.

Awards judge Claire Trevill said: "The standard of train-

ing and development was exceptionally high. The winners obviously realised that their staff were their most important asset."

Chris and wife Melanie received a plaque and a first class trip on Eurostar to Paris, with £250 spending money, as their prize.

Adscene March 29th 202

RESIDENTS ANGRY AT PLANS TO AXE TREE

VILLAGERS are on the warpath because developers want to chop down an ancient beech tree which survived the 1987 hurricane.

And they are angry that city council officials did not consult them about the tree in front of Bridge and Patribourne Primary School.

Cllr Bill Oakey says the village would agree to the tree at New Close being trimmed to two thirds of its size but not its removal.

Over 20 villagers attended a hurriedly convened site meeting to discuss the future of the beech.

"We can live with the removal of the crown but not the loss of the whole tree," Cllr Oakey said.

"It is disgraceful that the beech tree could have been felled without any consul-

tation whatsoever. We have had our own tree expert look at the beech and he said it could live for another 30 years at least.

"My real concern is the total lack of any form of consultation with local people over this issue.

"I hope we can put this matter on hold until proper consultation has taken place, and the views of parties like Kent Men of the Trees and conservationists can be taken into account."

Parish council chairman John Anderson said the tree had been standing for about 100 years and is a village landmark which is being studied by local children.

He said: "A lot of people are very angry that the villagers were not consulted about this at all. We have been in touch with the city council and registered our displeasure."

The tree has been given a month's stay of execution.



LANDMARK: The 100-year-old beech tree outside Bridge and Patribourne Primary School

Vet remembered

VILLAGERS packed St Peter's church, Bridge, to say farewell to much-loved local vet David Redfearn, who died last week aged 68.

More than 160 crammed into the church for a memorial service following Mr Redfearn's funeral at Barham Crematorium.

Former colleagues, owners of patients and friends as well as family attended the ceremony, which was conducted by the Rev Paul Filmer.

Instead of flowers donations were made to the Lord Whisky animal sanctuary which is based at Stelling Minnis.

ADSCENE 19 JULY 2002

BUILDING EXPLODES

By PAUL GORE

FIFTY firefighters were called to tackle a huge blaze after a cold storage unit at Highland Court Farm in Bridge exploded.

Within a matter of minutes of the blast on Monday, flames and billowing smoke had consumed the building.

Firefighters had trouble tackling the blaze, which lasted for more than an hour.

The nearest water supply was two miles away, forcing a team of men from Canterbury, Sturry, Wingham, Eastry, Folkestone, Ashford and Faversham to set up a relay of hoses to reach the scene.

Once the fire was in full swing the building became extremely dangerous to enter. The polystyrene-filled steel structure is essential for cold storage but was hazardous once alight.

The fire travelled up the walls and set the roof ablaze.

The asbestos ceiling began popping and exploding, sending lethal fibres into the air.

Pat Gibb, owner of the adjoining Higham Park, said: "I was in my house when I heard an almighty

explosion. After the initial blast there was a succession of bangs that sounded like gunshots.

"My first thought was that there was some sort of terrorist attack."

The gas in the burning refrigeration units added to the number of explosions as firefighters struggled to tackle the fire. Thick clouds of black

smoke streamed across the sky and marked the site for miles in every direction.

After a long battle in difficult circumstances, the 50 firefighters managed to save two thirds of the building.

It is thought the cause of the blaze was a faulty refrigeration unit.

Only one person was in the building when the fire

started and, after receiving treatment for smoke inhalation, was taken to the hospital for a precautionary check and later discharged.

● Also this week, firefighters spent 15 hours tackling a blaze of 300 tons of straw at Downbridge Farm in Staple Road, Wingham on Friday.



BILLOWING: The fire blazes behind the Gomez building