

North Hertfordshire College



A Perfect Day

The New Stevenage Centre
opened by
Her Majesty The Queen
on 14th March 2003



A Perfect Day for North Hertfordshire College



Her Majesty The Queen was presented with a posy of flowers by Catherine Watchorn, a learner from Supported Studies on her second year of an Independent Living course.

On 14th March 2003 North Hertfordshire College was highly honoured when Her Majesty The Queen, accompanied by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, officially opened the new College site in Stevenage.

The Queen and the Duke toured the site and enjoyed lunch prepared and served by learners of Chef School from the Centre for the Arts.

Early in 2003 the College was informed that the Queen had agreed to officially open the new state-of-the-art building. With an Ofsted/Ali inspection planned in February, the prospect of two different, but major events, for the College all within 6 weeks was somewhat challenging!



"King meets Queen", Karen King, Curriculum Arts Manager for Hospitality & Catering introduces The Queen to learners who prepared and served lunch in the Community Hall

While the College was preparing for inspection it also needed to prepare for its Royal Visit, this included talking to staff and learners plus Willmott Dixon, (Construction), Dyer Associates (Architects) and other contractors to ensure the building was finished.

Menu

Spring Salad

Crispy celery, spring onions, peppers, carrots and tomatoes on a bed of glass noodles drizzled with a black bean dressing

Seared Lamb Fillet

Coated with redcurrant and encased in a brioche and rosemary crust, resting on a potato and cream galette ribboned with a wild berry and port compote

accompanied by

Roasted new potatoes sprinkled with sea salt
Bouquetiere of fresh vegetables

Trio of Chocolate Torte

With layers of white, dark and milk chocolate flavoured with Tia Maria, Baileys and Frangelico

Coffee will be served
with celebration chocolates

When planning the Royal visit, the College received visits from Buckingham Palace, the Lord Lieutenant's Office, M15, Hertfordshire Police, the Royal Protection Team and the Royal Press Office.

Each visit came with a large contingent of well-dressed males, all with one main objective - the safety of the Head of State.

While the College was informed in February that the visit would go ahead it was early March before the Royal Protection Officer finally gave the all clear.

This was a real first for Further Education! Not only was The Queen opening the building, she was also having lunch in the Community Hall. A somewhat daunting prospect for all in catering, given that the new building does not have a kitchen facility to prepare and serve meals.

It took a few days for the catering team to believe that the Queen would be requiring lunch and yes, our learners would be needed to prepare and serve the meal without a royal chef in sight.

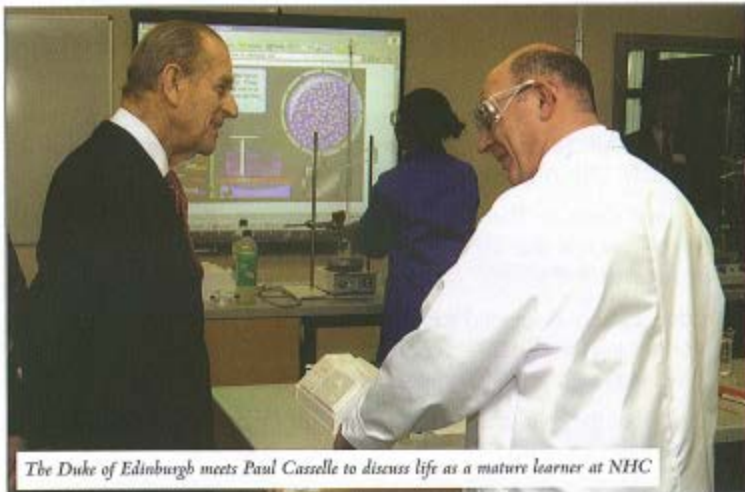


March 14th was "Red Nose" Day. The Queen was delighted that some of our learners have joined in

Menus were forwarded to the Palace and the Queen selected what we are informed is her favourite dish - lamb.

The College needed a kitchen to prepare the royal lunch and it was agreed that a marquee would be erected behind the community hall. However our biggest challenge was the security issues that simply grew and grew.

Initial estimates indicated that around 350 people would be in the building on the official day, in fact almost 1000 people, including security were included. Each one provided their address and date of birth which needed to be checked prior to the event so they would be allowed in to the building on



The Duke of Edinburgh meets Paul Caselle to discuss life as a mature learner at NHC

the day. Even spectators on the College site needed to be checked before badges were issued. Around 35 plain clothes police mingled with the crowds internally, while externally our Travel and Tourism learners assisted with all the parking and pedestrians, working closely with the police and the College security team.

During the tour, the Queen and the Duke needed to embrace as many College areas and include as many learners and staff as possible. This could only be achieved if the couple were accommodated on separate tours. This idea was welcomed by the Palace who also insisted on separate tables for lunch with no top table, dispensing with as much royal protocol as possible.

With the tour planned, the menus agreed, the building continued to be worked on and with the floor area by the entrance hall being taken up and re-laid twice, we never doubted it would be complete!



The Queen, accompanied by Irene Moran, Head of Learning Shops, meets Bernice Downer and Aileen Harriss

Marketing designed the invitations and prepared a brochure. A working party of staff was established to ensure that everyone was aware of all issues surrounding the visit and the security services aware of our plans.

As the days passed we were informed of more security checks and after much discussion agreed to close the new Stevenage Centre at midday on Thursday 13th March, for the building to have a final security check.

Cutlery and china for the lunch was checked in, the flowers arrived, as did the plaque and the last minute arrangements including bucks fizz on arrival for staff and guests.

Thursday afternoon seemed surreal. The building quiet, with police sniffer dogs in every area, every fire hydrant checked, the floors being taken up, legs of tables taken apart, checked and then reassembled.

A last walk of the tour was undertaken to ensure timing was exact and the table plans agreed.



Partially sighted learner, Rita Cosgrove, tells The Queen about her success at the IT Learning Shop

Finally, the day arrived, the sun shone, and staff, learners and visitors arrived on time. Although queues formed outside waiting for security clearance, everyone was in good spirits.

Time simply flew by and at 12.35pm, exactly on time, the couple we had all been waiting for arrived! A guard of honour was formed by learners from selected Football Schemes from the car to the door. Even the Queen was wearing corporate colours - her outfit was in fact a tribute to Hardy Amies, one of the Queen's dressmakers, whose funeral took place that day.

The College and the Palace had around ten journalists in the building, however with the amount of flashes and clicking it seemed like hundreds. The Queen was radiant and the Duke buoyant, both spent time talking to learners and staff. They appeared relaxed and impressed with the new site and interested in all the College did.

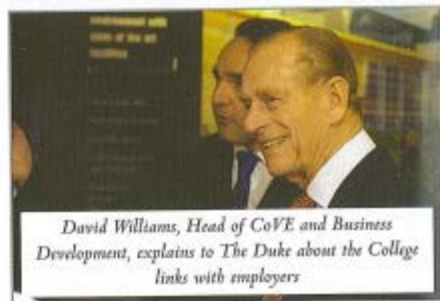
Lunch was amazing, our College learners excelling themselves and making us all very proud.

Finally, The Queen unveiled the plaque to officially open the new Stevenage Centre, and the visit was over.



Carol Stacey, Curriculum Area Manager for Supported Studies, introduces The Queen to members of her team and learners in the Supported Studies kitchen

This was an unforgettable day for North Hertfordshire College. During the last two years we have seen the development of a building for the 21st century with the most up to date technology placed in each classroom to enhance the teaching and learning experience.



David Williams, Head of CoVE and Business Development, explains to The Duke about the College links with employers

The design of the building is futuristic and realistic. It is a working building for North Hertfordshire communities.

Now the official opening is complete, the cameras and video recordings finished, the real work now starts to ensure that the vision becomes a reality - that the building attracts individuals to enter and develop their potential to meet the needs of the Hertfordshire community.

Now onwards to Hitchin...

My sincere thanks to all who contributed to making March 14th a Perfect Day.

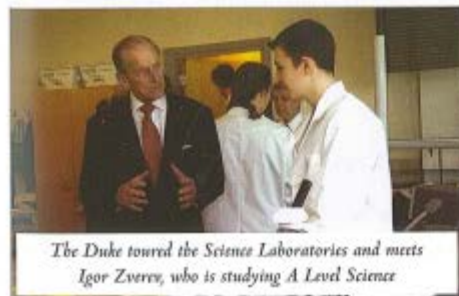
Trina Moore, Deputy Principal



The Duke toured the Childhood Studies classrooms and meets Hayley Birt



The Queen and The Duke left the building to rapturous applause



The Duke toured the Science Laboratories and meets Igor Zverev, who is studying A Level Science

Itinerary

- 12.35pm Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh arrive at the New Stevenage Centre. The Royal Party will be greeted with a guard of honour from learners on selected Football Schemes. Her Majesty The Queen will be presented with a posy of flowers by a learner from Supported Studies.
- 12.40pm Her Majesty The Queen will tour the ground floor including the Learning Shop, Supported Studies classrooms and the Learning Resource Centre. During the tour, The Queen will meet with representatives from the community and see displays representing activities on other College Centres. A display of the development of the New College Site including Willmott Dixon (Construction) and Dyer Associates (Architects) will also be included.
- 12.40pm The Duke of Edinburgh will tour the second floor, including Childhood Studies/Health & Social Care classrooms. Practical demonstrations will be available in the Science Laboratories and IT rooms. The tour will also include displays that reflect activities at the Goldsmith Management Centre and the College links with the University of Hertfordshire.
- 1.00pm Lunch in the presence of Her Majesty The Queen is served in the Community Hall. Buffet Lunch for other invited guests will be served on the Second Floor in the Learning Resource Area.
- 2.25pm Official opening of the New Stevenage Centre. This will take place in the atrium area of the ground floor. Speeches by the Chair of Governors, Mrs Tonia Millson-Cain and Principal Mr Roger Goebin. Her Majesty The Queen will unveil the plaque.
- 2.35pm The Royal Party depart to a guard of honour from learners on selected Football Schemes.
- 2.40pm Guests are invited to tour the building or depart.
- 3.00pm Tea and cakes will be served on the second floor.



The unveiling of the plaque to officially open the New Stevenage Centre

The exhibition was also visited by The Royal Party and was the final visit of the day after officially opening NHC's Stevenage Centre.

The Royal party had the opportunity to walk round the exhibition, which included exhibition stands, a series of networking events and seminars which ran throughout the day to promote the employment opportunities in Stevenage and the exciting achievements of Stevenage Businesses. The Royal couple took time to meet and speak with a number of exhibitors, business people and children and stopped to look at display stands including NHC's.

The Business Development Team developed one of the most impressive stands at the exhibition, with a large range of activities for visitors to participate in and enter a competition "Win a Computer for your School" sponsored by DELL Computers. Many College suppliers also sponsored the stand, which included stunning graphics, IT technology and plasma screens. Demonstrations from other areas of the College included learners from Motor Vehicle, Hair and Beauty and Fashion and Textiles all giving demonstrations on what they are studying. Visitors were also given information about the range of opportunities available at NHC.

Ann Moulder, Manager of Commercial Initiatives, from the Business Development Unit said, "Being involved in the "Innovation @ Stevenage" exhibition was a great experience. It was hard work and needed a lot of preparation but after the many compliments from the visitors we knew we had represented the College excellently."



The Queen meets well wishers outside the Innovation @ Stevenage Exhibition



Andy Harbor and David Williams present the computer to Russell Ball and Anna Matveeva

At the exhibition NHC ran a "Win a Computer for your School" competition.

The competition invited learners from local schools and visitors to answer questions on their observations of the NHC stand. The winner of the competition, Anna Matveeva from The Barclay School, was drawn randomly from hundreds of entries. NHC COVE Manager David Williams and Andy Harbor from DELL Computers presented the flat screen PC to the 6th form student and her Head Teacher, Russell Ball.

Russell Ball said, "We are delighted our student Anna won this competition and that we now have a brand new computer for our school." He added, "We will be putting the computer in the sixth form area for all the other students to use, to help them with their studies."



North Hertfordshire College
Stevenage Centre

officially opened by

Her Majesty The Queen
on 14th March 2003

STEVENAGE CENTRE

Monkswood Way
Stevenage
Herts SG1 1LA

HITCHIN CENTRE

Cambridge Road
Hitchin
Herts SG4 0LS

CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

Willian Road
Hitchin
Herts SG4 0JD

**GOLDSMITH
MANAGEMENT CENTRE**

Broadway
Letchworth
Herts SG6 3GB

For further information call Central Enquiries on

01462 424239

email:

enquiries@nhc.ac.uk

or visit our website:

www.nhc.ac.uk

