

PRESS RELEASE



West Lakes Academy Engineering Open Day

JUNE 15TH 2010

Partners

James Fisher Nuclear Service, Kier Construction

Date of issue June 21st 2010

**Catapults, LASERs and Remote Operated Vehicles at
Engineering Open Day at West Lakes Academy**

Operating remote demolition vehicles, solving real design problems and building medieval catapults were just some of the hands-on tasks undertaken by 55 year 10 students from West Lakes Academy during an Engineering Open Day. The event was organised by local company, James Fisher Nuclear Services in conjunction with Kier Construction and Westlakes Engineering, to encourage engineering as a future career for local students.

During the day, students were able to try for themselves a range of engineering equipment supplied by the companies, ask questions about the types of careers, training and job opportunities in the sector.

Commenting for West Lakes Academy, Head of Technology Rob Wynne, "We are delighted that our students have the opportunity to have practical hands on experience of a variety of highly technical engineering equipment, problem solving exercises and undertaking experiments. Our students are at the stage when they are facing decisions about their next career path and events like today, which enable them to test and

witness the huge variety of skills and jobs available at all levels in the engineering sector, are extremely helpful to them in making this important next step.”

The highlight of the day was the competition between groups of students to build trebuchets (medieval catapults) from a plan and kit of parts; and, then optimise them for range and accuracy. This challenged the students to apply basic engineering and scientific principles to a practical task. The theme of practical engineering continued throughout the day with manipulating and understanding 3-D Laser Scanning data; designing lighting lay-outs and ensuring the light levels were correct for the type of use; and designing a solution to a real-life measurement problem.

Most popular with the students was the hands on driving around an obstacle course with the Brokk remote demolition vehicle. This vehicle is used by James Fisher Nuclear Services to train operators and develop decommissioning solutions in remote and hazardous environments, often unsighted, with many metres between the operator and the vehicle.

To operate the vehicle, students had to work in teams of 2 to complete an obstacle course, and then reverse the vehicle through the same course. The tie breaking activity was to place a ball in a tank using the Brokk’s arm.

Commentating for West Lakes, Y10 student Naomi Keddie, “Using the Brokk was not only exciting and fun, it also gave a real insight into some of the extreme conditions in which engineers have to work. It puts into perspective the problems the BP guys are having in the gulf at the moment.”

At the end of the day, students had a greater awareness of the opportunities locally for training and the types of jobs available with local companies in the engineering sector. Phil Gerrard said “We are one of Egremont’s largest employers and we are committed to investing and growing our presence in West Cumbria. In order to ensure that we can continue to grow and develop we need to encourage the next generation to take up engineering as a career. Engineering offers a wider variety of jobs at all levels with training and development opportunities for a life long career in the sector.”

Commenting for Kier Construction, Nigel Griffiths, Project Manager said “We’ve had a great day, and had some real fun with the students helping them solve problems, build machines, and operate various pieces of equipment. We hope that it inspires students to go and train in engineering, construction or science. We need the next generation of engineers at all levels”

Rob Wynne summed up the day by saying, “ We’ve had a really enjoyable, but challenging day – and we hope that we can continue to establish close relationships with local companies to encourage our young people to develop the skills needed by the local economy so that they can remain and live in their home area.”

James Fisher Nuclear Services, currently employ 80 people delivering responsive engineering and support services in the Egremont and West Cumbria area. The parent organisation, James Fisher Group plc are currently investing £2.25m in the construction of a new rig hall at Bridge End Industrial Estate in the town. When complete, this new rig hall increases James Fisher Nuclear Services capacity to accommodate large-scale test rigs and simulated environments to trial solutions to engineering problem and train plant operators. The trials facility is fully supported by the specialist skills of James Fisher Nuclear Services’ engineers and scientists. West Lakes Engineering who also assisted in the Engineering Day, are the building designers working on the rig hall project.

Kier Construction are the main contractor building the new rig hall for James Fisher Nuclear Services, and is based in Carlisle. It are part of the larger Kier Group. Kier Construction are also currently building 4 new schools across Cumbria including the new West Lakes Academy which is due to be completed in 2012.

Ends

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Photographs

Attached Photographs.

Captions:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

James Fisher Nuclear Services (JFNS)

JFNS trading as JF Nuclear Ltd provides responsive engineering services to nuclear customers. With a West Cumbrian workforce of some 80 nuclear engineers together with local design offices, service facilities and rig halls JFNS is ideally placed to support Sellafield. Mechanical and CE&I design services provided include optioneering, design assessment & justification, design proposals, detail & manufacturing drawings, commissioning documentation and operating & maintenance instructions. JFNS has extensive practical experience in trialing and perfecting equipment in a rig-hall environment, rehearsing and training operatives for work in a hostile environment, practical development of innovative solutions. JFNS has an extensive plant characterization capability and routinely deploy cameras, LASER scanners and sonar buoys into environments with challenging access restrictions.

www.jfnuclear.co.uk

Kier Construction Ltd:

Kier Construction is part of the Kier Group, one of the UK's top building, civil engineering and services groups and has had a continuous involvement in the nuclear sector since 1981. It was successfully awarded the contract for building Schools for the Future in Cumbria and is currently constructing four premises including the new West Lakes Academy at Egremont.

www.kier.co.uk

West Lakes Engineering

Westlakes Engineering is now one of the fastest growing Civil and Structural Engineering companies in the UK. Quite significantly, it is home grown in Cumbria with head offices at Westlakes Science Park, Whitehaven and "branch" offices elsewhere in the North West.

www.westlakes-engineering.co.uk