**Bye bye Ben**

Ben Massey, the marketing and communications manager at the British Pest Control Association, left the association in early February. Although Ben is going to pastures new, it won’t all be strange as he was head hunted by former BPCA CEO, Simon Forrester, and now joins Simon as his director of marketing and communications at the National Association of Jewellers.

Ben joined BPCA in July 2016. Since his arrival, he oversaw the redevelopment of the website, magazine and communication channels, as well as introducing initiatives such as the Contract Sharing Network and the British Pest Management Awards.

Ben said: “I’d like to think I leave the BPCA brand in better shape than when I arrived, ready for someone new to come in and realise the potential of the many exciting projects and opportunities that lie in wait.”

**Flying off to pastures new**

All in the pest control industry will be sad to hear of the retirement of Nigel Batten. Nigel seems to have been around forever – from 1973 to be precise! He will be at PestEx, so say goodbye to him then. Like many in the industry, Nigel began life at Rentokil, working as a second man on the sewer team, baiting for rats in central London.

Not a very glamorous start, but he soon found himself with a foot round in Victoria, followed by a territory with a van in South London. Working through the servicing roles, he ended up as a branch manager.

Practical experience over, he moved in 2000 to the supply side of the industry. First this was at Network, where he soon became known as ‘Network Nigel’ and then on to Killgerm. Urban bird training and problem solving became his pet subject.

Retirement now beckons. And very pleasant too, as Nigel lives on the Dorset coast and has a son in Indonesia, so he and his wife will regularly be migrating to warmer climes.

**A trio of acquisitions for Cleankill**

Following the purchase of Bristol-based Good Riddance Pest Control at the end of 2018, Croydon-based Cleankill has now completed the acquisition of Pest Control Bucks and Bird Control Sussex. Both purchases follow the retirement of the current owners: John Butler at Bird Control Sussex and Gerard and Joanne Ashcroft at Pest Control Bucks.

Operating from Hove, Bird Control Sussex has been providing specialist bird control services in Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire and Dorset for over 30 years. Pest Control Bucks is another long-established pest control business. It provides high-quality pest control solutions throughout the Buckinghamshire area and, interestingly, is one of very few companies to hold a licence for the control of the edible dormouse (Glis glis).

Commenting on the expansion, Cleankill’s managing director, Paul Bates, said: “These purchases are great additions to the Cleankill family. Both companies have exemplary reputations with strong customer bases and, like Cleankill, they understand the importance of professionalism and excellent customer service.”

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Oh... the irony!

Andrew Maltby, a pest controller for Nottingham City Council (NCC), got an amusing surprise when he took his Honda NC700 for a pre winter service. On removing the air filter the mechanic discovered a mouse had made himself, or maybe herself, a home in the filter.

Andrew has worked for NCC for nine years looking after all types of pests mainly within domestic properties. He lives in the Ashfield area of Nottinghamshire, some way away from the office, so a fully functioning bike is a priority. “How my bike continued to run amazed me,” said Andrew, “Maybe the fuel economy will improve now!”

Thermokil saves the day

Lifelong Mansfield Town supporter, Ryan Overton, came to the Stags rescue ahead of a crucial match against Macclesfield Town on Saturday 2 February.

Ryan, a director of Thermokil Insect Control Services, the Mansfield based company offering heat-based pest control service across the UK was contacted by head groundsman at Mansfield Town, Michael Merriman. Could Ryan help defrost what was likely to be a badly frozen pitch ahead of the game on Saturday?

Ryan didn’t hesitate. Friday morning he was at the club to survey the problem. He provided multiple heat treatment kits to attempt defrosting.

He told Pest: “The initial test on the Friday went very well so Saturday morning I returned to repeat the exercise. I’m please to say the pitch passed the referee’s inspection and the game was allowed to go ahead. Mansfield won 3-1 and went 7 points clear in the automatic promotion places.”

A backhanded complement

Martin Rowell of Red Rose Pest Control Services from Rossendale in Lancashire was a little taken aback when he – or rather a sheet from one of his giveaway notepads – appeared in the online version of The Sun.

The sheet had been used to give a customer at a local café a receipt. The comments posted by readers who saw this were encouragingly positive.

“Always reassuring when the cafe you’re in writes the bill out on the free notepaper they got from their pest control company.”

Another said: “I guess that’s your reassurance that their pests have been removed.”

And another: “At least they know there’s a problem and are dealing with it!”

The amusing thing is, Martin has no idea how the notepad found its way to the café, as it is not one of his customers.
Two for one!

Bristol-based Octavius Hunt welcomed Deb Christopher to the team in late 2018 as quality, health & safety manager. Deb has almost 20 years experience of the food industry, most recently for the Allied Technical Centre in Maidenhead, Berkshire. Since joining the team Deb has helped the company complete a successful transition to ISO9001:2015.

It’s not just Deb who has joined Octavius Hunt. With her each day comes Louis who provides plenty of ‘paws’ for thought time and is now an established part of the team. With a face only a mother could love, it’s lucky he’s so sweet and friendly!

Onwards and upwards for Harvey Environmental

In mid January, Martin Harvey, managing director of Harvey Environmental, welcomed his local Pendle MP, Andrew Stephenson, to the official ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of his new offices at Lomeshaye Bridge Mill in Nelson, Lancashire.

This move is just one of a series of activities being undertaken by Harvey Environmental to do things even bigger and better. The move to a bigger, open plan office space was one of the first changes to take place, facilitating better communication across the team, enabling Harvey to bring clients to its premises and to house the company’s growing fleet of vehicles and equipment. The company is also recruiting a sales director and introducing a fully automated paperless office system.

Martin Harvey, founder and managing director, as well as the immediate past president of the British Pest Control Association, said: “2018 was quite a year; we celebrated reaching a milestone £1m turnover and gained a wealth of new, big brand clients.

“Not bad for a company which started as a one-man band in 2001 with not a single customer to its name!”

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