

Issue 79 www.wrti.org.uk

# Inventique®

The newsletter of Wessex Round Table of Inventors August 2007

**JOIN THE BRITISH INVENTORS SOCIETY** [www.thebis.org](http://www.thebis.org)

**Next WRTI meeting  
WEDNESDAY 12 SEPTEMBER**

■ **GUEST SPEAKER** Peter Kemp of Permabond engineering adhesives ([www.permabond.com](http://www.permabond.com)) will be followed by an Inventors' Clinic in Room HC 017, Herbert Collins Building, Southampton Solent University, commencing at 6.30pm.

● *Non-members wishing to attend should e-mail: [secretary@wrti.co.uk](mailto:secretary@wrti.co.uk) or tel Mike Overy: 01420 562 378. Map: [www.streetmap.co.uk](http://www.streetmap.co.uk) (SO14 0RP) [www.wrti.org.uk/events](http://www.wrti.org.uk/events)*

■ **THE WRTI** will once again be sponsoring quality WRTI entries to the British Invention Show at Alexandra Palace (17-20 October). Entries should be good prototypes, pre-production or production units with required IP protection filed. If you are interested in exhibiting, please contact Mike Overy ASAP.

■ **INCOMING WRTI CHAIRMAN** Peter Hebard has offered to mentor individual club members with their inventions and ideas.

● *E-mail: [chairman@wrti.co.uk](mailto:chairman@wrti.co.uk) or tel: 01590 622 517.*

■ **MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS** are now due. Cheques for £30 payable to WRTI can now be sent to treasurer Mike Wright, Sorrento, Limes Close, Bramshott, Liphook, Hants. GU30 7SL. Or on-line via PayPal ([pay\\_treasurer@wrti.co.uk](mailto:pay_treasurer@wrti.co.uk)) or by standing order.

## Invitation to participate...



THE UK'S LARGEST INNOVATION EXPO RETURNS

**T**HE BRITISH INVENTION Show returns to London's Alexandra Palace on 17-20 October with a wider remit and an even larger exhibition.

Over 200 inventors and inventions from Australia, Algeria, Cameroon, China, Croatia, India, Iran, Malaysia, the Phillipines, Taiwan, UK, Ukraine and the USA will be displaying and selling their latest innovative products and ground-breaking concepts.

Now in its seventh year and incorporating the British Innovation & Technology Show, the event is mounted in association with the British Inventors Society and features numerous free lectures by market leaders. It is supported by

government partners including UK-IPO and UK Trade & Investment.

In addition to putting design, ingenuity and originality to the test, a panel of 18 judges from the British Inventor's Society will also judge exhibitors' products for their ecological and social benefits before presenting the prestigious British Invention, Innovation and Design of the Year Awards at the Awards Dinner 20 October. WRTI members won three medals at last year's show. ■

● **The British Invention Show VII Ltd, 15 Peppermint Road Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 1RY**  
**Tel: +44 (0) 1462 451111 or 459999**  
[show@thebis.org](mailto:show@thebis.org)  
[www.britishinventionshow.com](http://www.britishinventionshow.com)

### MEETING INVESTORS THE EASY WAY...

THE SECOND ANNUAL Inventors Showcase exhibition will take place at Thinktank, Birmingham's science museum on 20 November – and will be attended by investors hoping to plough £millions into 'the next big thing'.

"We had massive success with last year's exhibition," said Inventors Showcase MD Casey Jones. "We're in the final stages of arranging a national distribution deal for one inventor who exhibited at the show, and are securing £multi-million investments for others. We're always looking for that special inventor who can redefine the word "brilliant!"

● [kate@inventors-showcase.com](mailto:kate@inventors-showcase.com) Tel: 0121 355 8181 [www.inventors-showcase.com](http://www.inventors-showcase.com)

Wessex Round Table of Inventors meet at 6.30pm on the second Wednesday of each month at Southampton Solent University, East Park Terrace SO14 0RP

## VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

BEFORE I BEGIN submitting my regular View from the Chair for future issues of *Inventique* – dredging up 300 words of exquisite prose to order (I hope!) – it is incumbent upon me to acknowledge the contribution of one of the WRTI's founder members.

I'm sure I speak for everyone at the club in proffering heartfelt thanks to Richard Little for so ably taking over as our Chairman after the shocking sudden death of David Nicholas in December 2004.

David was a hard act to follow, and it says much for Richard's affability, bonhomie and sheer grit that he was able to hold the club together – and even explore new avenues of expansion – during what was a very difficult period.

A huge enthusiast for technology and all things inventive, Richard has been a great ambassador and mentor for the WRTI. He has now had to relinquish the chairmanship in order to concentrate on business activities with his company, Jenton International (itself a hive of innovation, which had its own feature on BBC World today); that level of commitment obviously requires his fulltime attention.

The good news is that this is not "Goodbye" but simply *Au Revoir*, because Richard has agreed to remain deputy chairman of our club.

"After all," he says, "You still have to have some fun in life!"

Thank you, Richard.

Sincerely,

Peter

**PETER HEBARD, WRTI Chairman**

### ● LONDON INNOVATION CONFERENCE

***Innovation is regarded as the key to success in today's fast-changing, knowledge-based economy. Aimed at directors and senior managers responsible for innovation, product developers, and customer service, sales and marketing staff alike, the Driving Business Growth Through Innovation conference takes place on 16-17 October.***

● [www.unicom.co.uk/innovation](http://www.unicom.co.uk/innovation)

**INVENTORATOR** Peter Hebard

# WRTI way to go...

A TEMPLATE FOR OTHER CLUBS TO FOLLOW?

**I**NVENTORS CLUBS come and go, but the WRTI goes from strength to strength. So what makes it so special?

Well, perhaps most importantly, the club is run by inventors for inventors. Far from the usual stereotypes, many members make a living from innovation and enjoy fostering future entrepreneurs.

Two heads are better than one, as they say, but twenty can turn the spark of an idea into a firm business prospect. Help and advice from like-minded club members is often far more valuable than external counselling, and our WRTI 'Inventors' Clinics' not only add a meaningful dimension to that process but are also great fun.

## Aims and objectives

WRTI aims to ensure that members' projects – whether they be from students, youngsters, women or seniors – are fit for market, and to confirm investor readiness. Success breeds success and we have much from successful members to draw on. But if we need to believe in our own ideas to succeed, we also need to take expert advice early on: trusted mentors who are prepared to give advice without strings are vital in refining an offering before it is launched into the wider world.

Publicity and promotion is the lifeblood of innovation. WRTI aims to secure backing for our winners to gain exposure by exhibiting at international shows, entering national competitions and of course featuring on the club's [wrti.org.uk](http://wrti.org.uk) website and in *Inventique* (which in truth are primary drivers of the WRTI's success).

Where do we go from here? The climate has never been better for invention. Most major corporates now recognise that they have to secure over 50% of their

innovation from external sources, and private equity needs new ideas to make the difference. However, getting your product chosen is still unbelievably tough. It's even tougher if you decide to go it alone, but the rewards may also well be greater, and there are now more Business Angels and city bonuses than ever looking to invest in you.

At the WRTI we aim to make the innovation process easier, to make it more fun – and above all to help 'make it happen' for more of our members. Both at the WRTI and nationally, I am personally focused on fostering more and better innovation, getting a wider spread of projects, securing better funding, better events and finding the best advice, finance and routes to market for all.

Our brand of mutual support works as well for university/company spin-outs as it does for the lone inventor's 'eureka moment', and a mix of opportunities is attractive to our potential investors. So if you have a well-researched proposal, come and join us.

If you live too far away for that, why not start your own club (we'll help you get off the ground)? And if you're a seasoned entrepreneur prepared to offer specialist advice for fun and for free, or are interested in investing, please let us know. ■

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● *New WRTI Chairman Peter Hebard filed his first patent at the age of 24 and has taken 23 new products to market. He is director of Realisations UK, a company focused on assisting startup and spinout technology companies. As both an MD and 'company doctor' he has a high-level business background in defence equipment, diesel engine, marine propulsion and market development, with a wide range of contacts to call upon.*

# The E.ON challenge: Come up with the next generation of energy-saving ideas



Above: Philippa Forrester and Oliver Heath seek new energy-saving ideas in the E.ON EnergyLab competition.

**T**HE UK's LARGEST integrated electricity and gas company, E.ON, has joined forces with former 'Tomorrow's World' presenter Philippa Forrester and former 'Changing Rooms' star Oliver Heath to launch 'E.ON EnergyLab' – a nationwide talent search to find Britain's next big innovations in energy efficiency. Deadline for entries is 30 November.

Philippa and Oliver form part of the E.ON EnergyLab judging panel who will be on the lookout for clever creations that could revolutionise the future of energy and how it is used.

Dave Clarke, from E.ON's Technology Centre, said: "This is the second year we've run E.ON EnergyLab and last year we unearthed an army of ingenious inventors with a wealth of energy-saving ideas – so we're really excited about the hidden talents we could uncover this year."

E.ON's retail business, branded Powergen, is a leading UK energy supplier, with approximately 5.5m electricity and gas customers.

## E.ON EnergyLab

Britain's budding inventors and innovators are invited to enter one of two award categories:

### ● E.ON ENERGYLAB AWARD

This category is open to all, from potting-shed inventors and canny customers to innovative entrepreneurs, with the creator of the winning invention receiving a cash prize of £10,000.

### ● LIFE-IC TECHNOLOGY AWARD

Aimed at recognising, supporting and encouraging those who are already studying or working in the field of engineering or technology. The winner will receive a cash prize of £5,000 plus support and consultancy from world-class business accelerator LIFE-IC to help get their idea into production.

"Having spent seven years reporting on the technology of tomorrow, I can't think of a more exciting project to be part of," said Philippa Forrester. "I can't wait to see the energy-saving concepts that Britain's next generation of inventors will come up with."

## Heats, lights – and energy

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to one of a series of regional heats in Birmingham, Cambridge, Cardiff, Edinburgh and Manchester in January and February.

Regional finalists will then have the opportunity to pitch their ideas and present their prototypes to the panel of experts, vying for the chance to go head-to-head in the national final in London next April.

"The E.ON EnergyLab combines all of my passions – the environment, design and innovation – into a fantastic competition that is open to anyone and everyone, regardless of age or experience," said Oliver Heath. "This really is a talent search with a difference and I'd encourage anyone with a nifty idea that could help conserve energy to take part." ■

● Bright ideas should be submitted before 30 November 2007 to: [www.eonenergylab.co.uk](http://www.eonenergylab.co.uk)

"Big will not beat small any more. It will be the fast beating the slow." ● – Rupert Murdoch

# www.wrti.org.uk

THE INVENTORS WEBSITE

**CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE** Startups.co.uk

## Start-up advisor...

SO YOU WANT TO START A BUSINESS? READ ON.

**W**HEN YOU ARE starting a business, taking the risk and putting your time and money into something new that will change your life one way or another, you should have someone by your side.

Startups.co.uk is the number one online resource for starting a business, receiving over 130,000 site visits a month. Whether you are a budding entrepreneur ready to start a business for the first time or an established entrepreneur looking to do it a second time, startups.co.uk has all the news and information you need to get your business off on the right foot.

### Thought transference

Extensive 'how-to' guides explore the myriad issues you may face when transferring a killer idea from your head onto the market, and across the website's many pages

you will find need-to-know information on how to (take a deep breath): raise finance for your business startup, draft your business plan, access where to find premises, deal with tax, find out when to buy and sell, marketing, doing business online, wholesaling, insurance, technology, hiring and firing, and complying with legal issues such as health and safety.

### Stop press!

Startups.co.uk also brings you the latest in business startup news with daily updates as stories break, as well as profiles of some of the country's top business startups.

And on top of all that, the site also features a popular interactive forum, where businesses, aspiring entrepreneurs, regular visitors and casual browsers share their views and experiences on starting a business. ■

● [www.startups.co.uk](http://www.startups.co.uk)

### BOOK OF THE MONTH

#### The Innovative Leader: How to inspire your team and drive creativity

by Paul Sloane

Kogan Page 196 pages

ISBN: 0749450010 £9.99

How do successful leaders

drive innovation in their

organisations? This book contains examples from Virgin, Google, IBM, Toyota, 3M, Disney and WPP, plus advice, guidance and tools to help your team analyse problems and generate ideas, implement innovation processes, build a creative culture and develop creativity.

"Sloane... looks just the sort of person to assist managers in turning their 'cubicle dwellers into innovation warriors...'"

– Michael Murray, *The Independent*.



### WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

#### [www.inventionmail.com](http://www.inventionmail.com)

A new 'virtual community' website for inventors, InventionMail offers free facilities to enable them to collaborate, share their knowledge and experience, manage their projects or groups, upload videos of their working prototypes, promote their ideas and inventions, discuss issues and much more.

## BUSINESS LINK WESSEX INNOVATION CLINICS

Are you thinking about developing a new product or process? Have you invented something and don't know what to do next? Through its series of free Innovation Clinics, Business Link Wessex provides confidential and impartial guidance on such subjects as investigating an innovative idea, developing a new product or process, working with universities, exploiting inventions and intellectual property rights. Innovation clinics are held in the Bournemouth, Portsmouth and Southampton regions.

● Advice Hotline: 08454 58 85 58 [innovation@businesslinkwessex.co.uk](mailto:innovation@businesslinkwessex.co.uk) [www.businesslinkwessex.co.uk/events](http://www.businesslinkwessex.co.uk/events)

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