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NEWS FROM THE CELLNASS ARCHIVE MANAGEMENT SOLUTION

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The Royal London and Bartholomew's Hospital

MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF AMALGAMATION

Amalgamation of laboratories can be a mixed blessing, bringing increased efficiencies on one hand but at the same time raising challenges. Not least among these is the centralisation and increased volume of samples being stored. We asked Steve Jones, Service Manager Cellular Pathology at the Royal London Hospital, to tell us about his experience of amalgamating – and why he and his colleagues turned to CellNass for a solution.

“The Royal London and Bartholomew's Hospital laboratories joined forces in 1994,” says Steve, “although it wasn't until 2006 that we aggregated them as part of a new move – driven by the Carter Report – toward gaining full benefit from automation by increasing the size of laboratories. It's an approach that actually works better for blood sciences, where items can be bulk-processed, than for cellular pathology, where you still need space for people and equipment.”

Staff in the resulting combined laboratory were dealing with 60,000 specimens a year, and due to a strict 'no cull' policy, no sample was ever destroyed. “Because we're a teaching hospital and do a lot of research, we save everything,” Steve explains.

Pressure increased further in 2012 when the laboratory was unexpectedly merged with that of Whipps Cross University Hospital, adding substantially to the volume

of blocks and slides. Whipps Cross already outsourced to CellNass as its archive management solution and it seemed sensible to look at the possibility of expanding this off-site strategy for the laboratories as a whole.

“We wanted somewhere with appropriate HTA-compliant facilities as well as proper organisational controls and systems. In fairness, there were not many options around at that time and no one else offered anything like the full portfolio available from CellNass. They were also from our world, knew the business we were working in, and had staff with the necessary laboratory background experience. We felt we could trust them. Some of our colleagues were worried about access to old samples, but we received a guarantee that any item could be returned within 24 hours.”

As space diminished, the outsourcing began. Specimens were also transferred to CellNass from two older off-site stores, containing material from the 1960s, 70s and 80s, whose environment had become unsuitable and whose lack of supervision gave cause for concern. Three years on, Steve Jones knows that he made the right decision.

“Outsourcing to CellNass has enabled us to maintain our policy of retaining samples indefinitely, which would otherwise have been impractical and costly. By freeing up a huge amount of premium space on hospital sites, as well as saving time, it has delivered very good value for money. When we consider the reasonable price, flexible service and reliable retrieval, along with the peace of mind that comes from knowing that the archive environment and staff are dedicated to our needs, we are happy to say that our experience with CellNass has been very positive.”





NEVER STANDING STILL

At CellNass we are busy planning for the future with additional facilities and exciting innovations designed to improve your experience of our service. In response to a steady rise in the volume of materials archived, we are now in the advanced stages of planning/construction of additional CellNass facilities and expect completion by the end of 2015.

We are investing in our people too. A good example of this is Cornelia Mocanu, a physics graduate who is working with us as part of a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP). This arrangement is helping us to maximise on the benefits of technology and knowledge while providing Cornelia with an opportunity to apply her degree in the real world. With her dedicated input and our recent investment in a fibre optic dedicated Ethernet connection, our plan to launch the 'CellTrak' software, for management of your archive, is much nearer to reality. You can read more about Cornelia's work on developing 'CellTrak' later in this newsletter.

We believe that innovation is one of the hallmarks of a high-quality company, and we are committed to bringing new ideas to market. One area on which we are focusing is a digitisation service for slides. In the future this could lead to a pre-screening capability for histology – helping transform laboratory productivity. Another is the partnership approach of cell banking, in which materials can be put to good use in the pharmaceutical sector and

income can be recycled back to contributing laboratories. Development of these ideas needs talented people and dedicated time, and CellNass is investing in both so you can benefit from a better service in the future.

If you are interested in our slide digitisation service or becoming a CellBank Partner please email me at paul.webber@cellpath.co.uk

We will of course be exhibiting at the IBMS Congress 2015, should you also be attending please do visit our stand and meet with our highly motivated Sales Team who will be more than happy to answer any queries you have about our CellNass service or, indeed, our comprehensive consumables range.

Best regards,

Paul Webber
Joint Managing Director.

THE POWER OF COMPASSION

As dedicated and highly experienced leaders in their field, you would expect CellNass and its specialist staff to show the utmost professionalism and expertise, but on top of those qualities there is also a need for sensitivity and care. After all, there is a human element and often a deep emotional value in every sample. The following, in which the people and location have been redacted to protect the feelings of all concerned, serves to illustrate why that is so important.

When samples belonging to a deceased child were requested by the parents, on the anniversary of their child's death, it became apparent that they had been inaccurately filed before being sent to CellNass. For the hospital's Pathology Services Manager this was a nightmare scenario.

"We knew the blocks hadn't been thrown away but they were clearly not where they should have been. Given the parents' strong emotional attachment to these samples it was very difficult to tell them what had happened."

The customer prepared a plan to help locate the samples and CellNass staff launched a major search, working tirelessly to retrieve them.

"The CellNass team could easily have been indifferent to the problem, but they understood the implications and I cannot believe the level of support they provided to both the hospital and me personally. It's no exaggeration to say that this was the most distressing time in my career, but I never felt abandoned by CellNass."

The pressure increased and after two weeks of intensive searching the blocks were found.

"CellNass kept me informed almost daily on how the search was progressing and it really felt that we were part of one big team. I cannot praise them enough for their determination to see the job through."

CellNass delivered the items to the hospital by hand and they were safely forwarded to the parents. CellNass Manager Colin Brewer commented:

"We knew this was a very difficult and traumatic situation for our customer and for the parents. Our efficient management systems and methodical approach to searching the archive paid off, but what also brought this to a satisfactory conclusion was the passion and tenacity of our whole team, pulling together and going the extra mile to achieve the right result."

Reflecting on the outcome, the Pathology Services Manager said:

"Just imagine the joy and relief when I could tell the parents that the samples had been located. You really find out who your friends are when you're facing difficulties like this."



LIFE IS BETTER WITH CELLNASS...

Interview with Jacqueline Smith – Interim Operations Manager for Histopathology – Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust

At Northampton General Hospital the storage of a large amount of histopathology material, reaching back 25 years, was reaching crisis point – with cabinets placed along the corridor, on different floors and 15 minutes away in another part of the hospital. As space ran out, the only way to create more was to rotate older material once it passed 25 years of age. The situation came to a head when borrowed space elsewhere in the hospital was needed for a different purpose, leaving no option but to look for an alternative, long-term solution for archiving.

Deputy Head of Pathology Mary Pendleton started the process by contacting David Carter from CellPath, regarding its CellNass service, having heard about its facilities through the CPA (Clinical Pathology Accreditation), and Jacqueline Smith continued with the communication when she took on the role of Histopathology Operations Manager.

"On auditing the CellNass facility in Wales I was struck by the efficiency of the whole process," says Jacqueline. "It was 21st century technology at its best. Compared to our situation there was so much room – it reminded me of a big superstore. I watched the whole process of slides being indexed and archived and was impressed by the speed and accuracy. Seeing the team

in action was reassuring and gave me total confidence. During the visit we had complete access to the whole facility and all the staff were helpful and friendly."

"Once the decision was made, we sat down and did the planning. The CellNass people really did their homework – asking lots of questions and assessing logistical issues they might face when removing our material. As a result, the uplift was perfect and there were no complaints from the outpatient area next door."

"CellNass also helped us manage the remaining slides and blocks we hold on site, with more effective storage solutions that make it so much easier to find things. Each year we now remove a single year of material to CellNass, always leaving the last five years' here in Northampton."

"The support we received was first class and nothing ever appeared to be too much trouble to the CellNass team. Our challenge at the start of the process was to find a long-term solution – and when you're forced to make a major change like this, you have to make sure it's better than what you had before. With CellNass we achieved this."



NEW TRANSPORT SOLUTION FOR RECALLS

We take our responsibility for the safe return of slides and blocks very seriously and recognise that a patient's future well-being may be dependent on it. That's why we have been looking very carefully at ways of improving the safety of material whilst in transit, and of making a CellNass recall easily identifiable during its journey back to the laboratory.

First, we looked at the courier. We decided to continue our partnership with TNT to ensure a robust service. This decision took account of the high level of service received to date and the potential for further development of our working relationship, through which TNT has gained considerable knowledge of CellNass recall requirements.

Second, we looked at package integrity. We wanted to design a new transportation system that was resistant to human as well as mechanical handling. Our solution was to use multi-layered packaging. Each layer is specifically designed to fulfil its own function and then, in combination, to deliver an overall, unique, comprehensive answer.

Third, we changed the package identification: With large quantities of consignments being managed daily by TNT, we wanted your recall to stand out. Our box design made it clear to anyone handling the consignment that this one was different, important and in need of great care.

When the new packaging was finalised we met again with representatives from TNT to give further explanation of what was required of their organisation, to ensure in the first instance that they knew how to identify a CellNass recall, and to stress the importance of these consignments to both patients and hospitals. This information is now held 'on file' by TNT.

We know you will agree that these changes are a sensible precaution. Although the new packaging uses more materials, when elsewhere we are trying to reduce consumption of natural resources, we believe that safeguarding samples and having a recall system in which you can have total confidence outweighs other implications.

The 'new' CellNass recall solution has been in use since 1st January 2015 and has received positive feedback from customers.



'CELLTRAK' GRADUATES WITH FLYING COLOURS

Having completed a degree in physics and astrophysics at the University of Sussex in 2014, Cornelia Mocanu was looking to use and develop her data analysis skills in a medical-related environment. The ideal opportunity arose when she saw an online advertisement for someone to work on a project – as part of the Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) scheme at CellPath – to improve and finalise 'CellTrak', our online archive management and recall tool designed to give users greater control and improved visibility of their archived material.

Based on software developed exclusively for the CellNass service, 'CellTrak' will make your archive-related administration quicker, easier and more efficient by allowing you to manage your entire archive online with complete traceability of all catalogued material. You can directly recall material, request an uplift then, track your request at any time, day or night, as well as reviewing all previous activity. These and many more areas of functionality are being integrated at the heart of our service and we are adding further enhancements as the project continues. Suggestions for improvement are welcome, as they will help us ensure that 'CellTrak' meets every user's ongoing needs.

"'CellTrak' was already at an advanced stage when I joined CellPath but I was asked to take a fresh look at the system and make it more customer-friendly," says Cornelia. "My first step was to make sure I fully understood the process, so I physically completed numerous tasks, including recalls of material for customers, from

start to finish. This enabled me to see exactly what happens, first hand, and to work out how that could be improved and best reflected in the software."

Essential to the finalisation is a large-scale data pilot involving numerous customers. Cornelia has been transferring information on archived material and previous recalls from existing spreadsheets directly into 'CellTrak'. After internal checking of the data, a selection of customers will be visited to perform a live test, review how it works and identify any scope for improvement.

"I'm looking forward to sitting down with our customers and demonstrating what the system can do. Most importantly, they will see that the 'CellTrak' software makes the process more efficient, saves time and helps users to manage their own archived resource – in effect giving them greater control over their off-site material."

The next milestone will involve a reduction in manual transcription – so instead of an emailed request followed by a manual look-up, laboratories will be able to send a 'pick list' via 'CellTrak' directly to a member of the CellNass team for action!

"By the end of my KTP period I will have helped transform a previously manual process and bring forward the implementation of this excellent application for CellNass customers. I am also developing an easy-to-follow instruction manual, as a daily reference tool that will make 'CellTrak' accessible to more users. I will also be setting up a support team to help customers in the transition to 'CellTrak'."

Choosing to develop our own software, with Cornelia's help, has brought major advantages, particularly in terms of tailoring 'CellTrak's' functionality to our customers' precise requirements. It also gives us a chance to share a range of analytical information through management reporting tools, and to review trends so that our service for each customer can be personalised and optimised.

To find out more about 'CellTrak', and what it can do for you, or to request a demonstration, call Cornelia on 01686 611 305 or email cornelia.mocanu@cellpath.co.uk



Cornelia Mocanu, 'CellTrak' KTP

Speak to an existing user...

We will introduce you to a local contact where you can discuss the benefits of using our service in confidence.

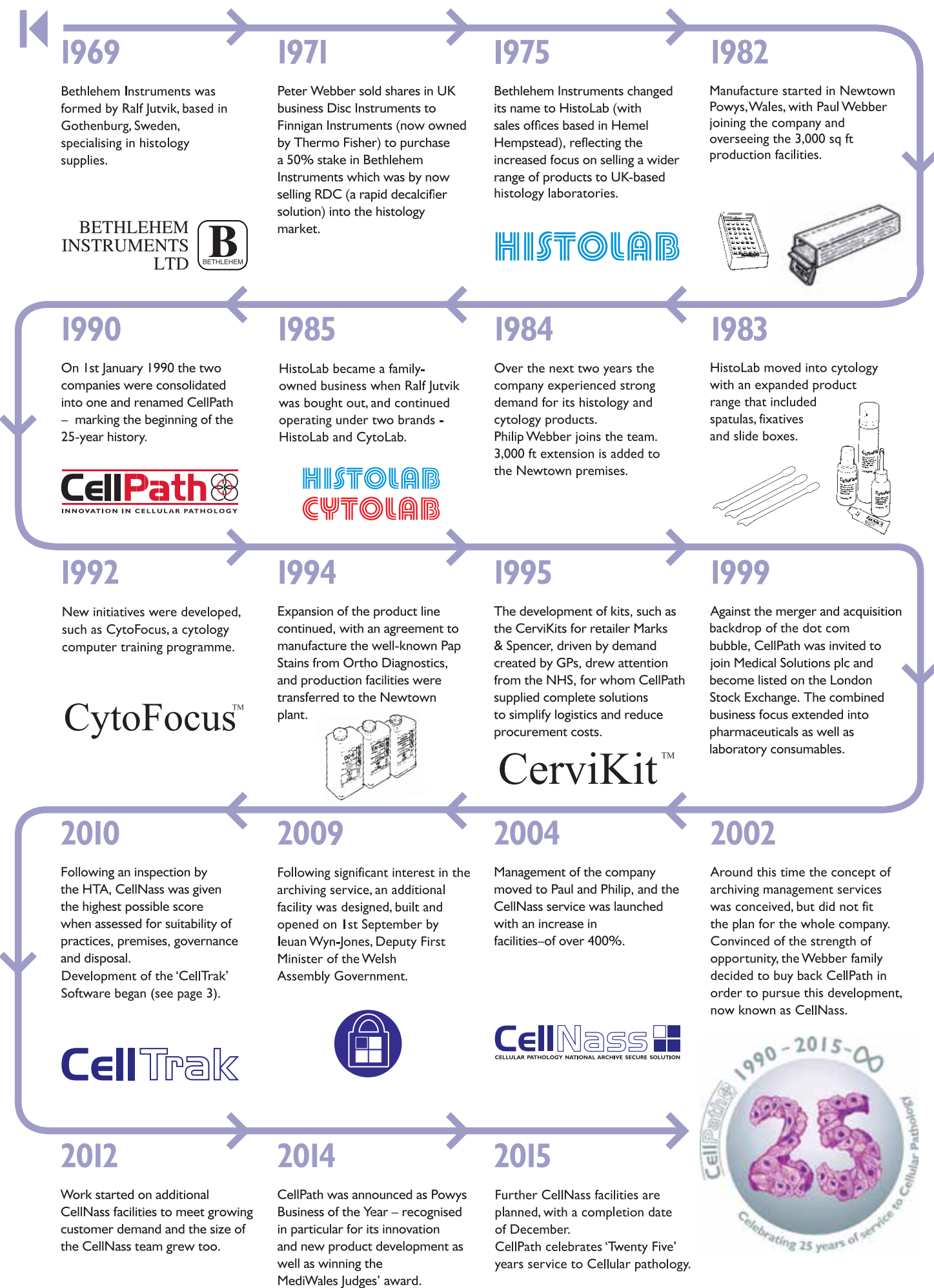
Email: feedback@cellnass.com



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF INNOVATION

Having passed the milestone of our 25th anniversary earlier this year, we thought it would be good to reflect on what we have achieved to date. Our story actually goes back a further 20 years or so, to the foundation of our predecessor Bethlehem Instruments.

From the seed planted in 1969 to the consolidation of our family-owned business in 1990 as CellPath, and from there to the present day, you will see a history of constant growth, innovation and success that gives us much to celebrate.



COLIN'S COLUMN

CellNass saves the day!

Those of you who avidly read this column, and wait with baited breath for the next instalment, may remember the last issue's comments on Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift. Well, we have just been in a Rorke's Drift situation. We have all experienced that moment, in the dark of the night, when the horror of the situation makes you awaken with sweat on your brow, the insurmountable problem looming before you and the enemy hordes gathering. This happened to a CellNass customer at the start of the year.

(See what the customer had to say in 'THE POWER OF COMPASSION' on page 2.)

Twelve blocks of PM material from over 25 years ago had been reviewed by relatives back in 2002, absolutely correctly, and handled in an exemplary manner with consent forms signed and all parties content. The rest of the archive material is now all nestled, cuddled and cosseted in the CellNass Vault. So what, I hear you say, could possibly be the issue?

The relatives wanted to review the material again. The slides were located as expected but an ominous 12-block-sized hole appeared in the archive – and no location slip was present. The material had not been returned, for whatever reason, to the correct box prior to its relocation to CellNass. So, now the enemy forces start to gather. Where can they be?

The customer sets staff to searching the hospital, and CellNass starts to review and open every box of the customer's archive, year-by-year, looking at the most likely options first. Four years into the records, the material is found! CellNass saves the day! The blocks had been laid over the top of others in a full block box!

Of course, there is no blame culture, but a few issues do arise from this. Failure to put a tracer slip in an archive box when things are removed should be a capital offence! (It is at CellNass!). This is compounded by a failure by whoever 'forced' the blocks into the wrong box just to think 'this cannot be right – there's no space'.

Oh and back to the start of this article. Those of you who avidly read this column... thank you! Finally, if you are not already benefiting from a long-term contract, please contact your Territory Manager. You could be missing out on additional benefits and fixed-term costs, and now the chance of a free rolling programme uplift each year. Something to seriously consider!

Colin Brewer
CellNass Manager
HTA Designated Individual

Contact Colin on Mobile: 07803 466125
Email: colin.brewer@cellpath.co.uk



WINNERS OF BOTH THE POWYS BUSINESS AND MEDIWALES AWARDS 2014

CellPath Ltd are proud to announce that it has won both the "Innovation" and "New Product Development" Award and the prestigious "Powys Business of the Year Award 2014". The awards are designed to showcase the extent of the business talent in the county of Powys. The fiercely contested competition saw the venue filled to capacity last December.

Left: CellPath Representatives attending the event.

The MediWales Innovation Awards 2014 celebrated the fantastic achievements of life sciences companies and individuals from the NHS in Wales. A priority sector in a tough economy, Welsh Industry's innovative partnerships with the NHS and academic institutions significantly contribute to the health and wealth of Wales.

The "Judges" Award, sponsored by ehi2, looked for a company that embodies the spirit of the "Innovation Awards" and demonstrates the greatest potential for future developments. CellPath came top of the pile for its CellNass service.



Above: CellPath Representatives attending the event with an ehi2 representative (far left).