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Smooth sailing for Virtual Wembury fundraising event

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An opportunity to showcase some of the Human Interface Technology Team's summer achievements in virtual heritage, healthcare simulation and augmented reality (AR) came about in early December, when the Village Hall at Wembury in South Devon hosted the team at a special Virtual Wembury evening event for the local community.

Joined by the South Hams local government representatives, Professor Bob Stone, Dr Jim Knight and postgraduate students Cheng Qian and Vish Shingari, presented a full range of interactive virtual reality and AR technologies and demos during the evening, ranging from the Virtual Wembury coastal scenario currently being developed in conjunction with the QE Hospital and Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, to a very new demonstration, illustrating the geographical and social impact on the Wembury area, had proposals been accepted in 1909 for a huge maritime dock complex.

The villagers were able to explore the dock layout, each wharf representing different historical periods, with vessels ranging from the Royal Navy's first submarine, Holland 1, to battleships from the two World Wars, even a large, old sailing ship and a Sunderland flying boat. They were also able to experience how things might have been had, for example, the Titanic docked there before her maiden voyage!

Villagers were also given a unique opportunity to "test drive" the results of recent HIT Team research, which uses non-contact sensors to detect and monitor patients' limb movements, translating them into on-screen activities in virtual environments, such as walking or even operating a pedalo at the seaside or on a lake. The developments also enable patients in units such as Intensive Care to control webcams and mini-robots located, for example, in other parts of the hospital, in gardens and other local or remote locations.

Following the Wembury event, and the launch of two data-gathering websites (part of a new project to address the potential to engage communities in the development Smooth sailing for Virtual Wembury fundraising event School of EECE and sustainability of Virtual Heritage projects see **www.virtual-wembury.net (http://www.virtual-wembury.net)** and **www.virtual-burrator.net (http://www.virtual-burrator.net)**), the Team has been approached by numerous organisations keen to become involved in future collaborative research and interactive technology projects and to feature the team's efforts at conferences and seminars throughout 2013. These include the new Army and Royal Navy National Museums, Maritime Heritage organisations and even companies involved in marine exploration and underwater archaeology. The Virtual Wembury eventwas attended by over 120 people of all ages and backgrounds, and all proceeds from the evening are being donated by the villagers to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Charity.

Professor Bob Stone is the Director of the Human Interfaces Technologies Team. You can find out more about Bob's work via the downloadable documents (under "related links") **on his website (/staff/profiles/eece/stone-bob.aspx)** .

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