

Computer expert joins elite on TV

BY Jo Deeks

Email: editorial@haverhillweeklynews.co.uk

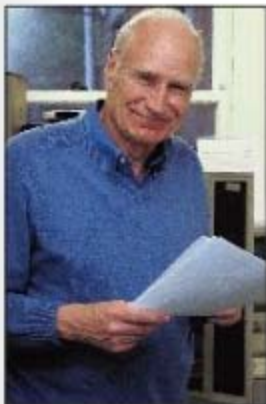
MILLIONS of television viewers will get a look at a new computer museum when it features prominently in a documentary to be screened on Friday.

The episode of *Brits Who Made the Modern World*, a series hosted by Peter Snow, will look at the untold stories of British scientific innovations, focusing on the development of Britain's £1.4 billion computer game industry.

In the early 1980s, two pioneering Cambridge undergraduates set out to achieve the seemingly impossible task of developing the world's first 3D computer game.

The result was Acornsoft's *Elite*, the game was released for the BBC Micro in 1984 and sold more than 150,000 copies.

The Centre for Computing History in Haverhill was even asked to program some of the machines.



■ ALL WILL BE REVEALED... below, Peter Snow during filming at Haverhill, and above, the groundbreaking game.

Luckily one of the directors, Jason Fitzpatrick, possessed the skills to create instructions in BASIC and an assembly code for the BBC Micro.

In fact, the team were so impressed with Jason's expertise and knowledge of the subject that he was interviewed by Peter Snow and will also appear in the programme.

Described by many as the seminal space trading game, *Elite* created a new genre in computer games. Featuring interstellar travel in a distant cluster of galaxies in the outer universe, *Elite* was arguably the first home computer game to use 3D vector graphics with hidden lines removed.

It came with a novella that set the scene and gave insight into the moral and legal codes within the game.

Brits Who Made the Modern World is due to be screened on Channel 5 at 7.30pm.