

Trees at the centre help with studies

CLWYD District Manager John Hampson volunteered for a spot of spadework when Manweb donated 50 young trees to Colomendy Environmental Studies Centre.

Several varieties of trees were planted in the extensive grounds of the educational centre at Loggerheads, Mold, by visiting schoolchildren from Liverpool, under the expert guidance of gardener Malcolm Malam.

John Hampson (pictured right) said: "We are delighted to donate these young trees to improve the local environment, and at the same time help the children visiting the centre with their nature studies."

Also pictured are (front row l-r) Nick Crowley, Claire Hawley and Christina Tarabiea, all pupils of St Francis of Assisi School, Garston, Liverpool, and (back row, l-r) the centre's gardener Malcolm Malam and Head Teacher Roger Taylor.



£50 MILLION DEAL FOR MANWEB GAS



Powerful Allies...Manweb's Director Power Marketing, Colin Leonard (right) and Alliance Gas Managing Director Kris Maroe sign the new contract.

MANWEB Gas has signed a deal to take further gas supplies worth up to £50 million from Alliance Gas following the Manweb subsidiary's successful first nine months in business.

Launched in July last year, Manweb Gas Ltd competes with established gas suppliers, including British Gas for industrial and commercial customers. The domestic market is not currently open to competition, but were it to become so Manweb Gas is confident that it would be a major player in this market.

Growth

The new contract with Alliance Gas — signed by Manweb Director, Power Marketing (also Chairman of Manweb Gas), Colin Leonard, and Alliance Gas

By
Graeme
Cooper

Managing Director Kris Maroe — will ensure Manweb has enough gas available to meet a planned growth in business over the next three-and-a-half years.

To date Manweb Gas has signed supply deals with leading regional companies including Marks & Spencer Financial Services, Chester City Council, Greater Manchester Police, ICI Runcorn and Liverpool City Council.

Commenting on the new deal with Alliance Gas, Colin Leonard said: "Our gas sales business has proved extremely successful. We now have an annual turnover in excess of £4 million, and are supplying gas to more than 300 sites. We are delighted to be signing this new deal,

which builds on the excellent relationship established with Alliance and allows us to carry on offering the best deal to customers."

Venture

Alliance Gas Ltd is a joint venture between British Petroleum and Norway's Statoil and Norsk Hydro. The company has access to extensive gas fields in the North Sea.

A MATTER OF POLICY

IN furtherance of our environmental policy Contact has been printed on re-cycled stock: Lakeside extra wove.

No price rise — and hope for reduction

MANWEB has announced there will be no increase in electricity tariffs from April 1993. The company will not increase prices above current levels for 12 months from 1 April.

Last April, with inflation running at 4.3%, Manweb prices increased by only 1.9%. So over a two year period prices will have fallen in real terms by at least 4%.

Chief Executive John Roberts said: "Our aim is to provide a quality service at low cost, and I am pleased that we are able to give good news on prices to our customers. I hope that later this year after the publication of the Government's Energy Policy Review we will be in a position to announce a price reduction."



"NEVER thought I'd see him sitting behind a desk!" Who is this whacko character at Manweb? turn to page 12 to get the lowdown.

Budget — how it affects your tax — Page 2

Partnership for records project — page 3

Win a pair of binoculars — page 4

Customer focus special — Pages 5, 6, 7, 8

Romantic re-union — page 10

Splats the way to do it — page 12

RESTRUCTURE WILL BRING CFU INTO MAIN STREAM

THE 132,000 volt (132kV) Distribution Network is the area traditionally associated with Manweb's Central Field Unit.

By
**GRAEME
COOPER**

CFU, as the unit is known, is indeed responsible for operating and maintaining Manweb's 132kV substations, overhead lines, underground pressure assisted cables and associated equipment over an area of approximately 5,000 square miles.

Central Field Unit is located at Prenton, Wirral, and shares the office building with North Wirral District and Regional Accounts.

Transmission

In 1979 the Manweb Transmission Section was established when the operation and maintenance of the 132,000 volt system was transferred from the then Central Electricity Generating Board. Following the transfer of Head Office specialist departments in 1988, the Transmission Section was renamed Central Field Unit.

CFU undertake major multi million pound 132/33kV construction projects for the Company and make a significant contribution to the ten Districts, enabling them to carry out their electrical and civil construction programmes.

Central Field Unit Manager Dennis Davies took over

responsibility for the Unit last year and major restructuring has since taken place to ensure that the CFU management structure is 'flatter' and that it integrates with the main stream divisional organisation.

Dennis said: "We've structured things to make it easier for us to provide service to the ten Districts, who are amongst our major 'customers', and who take electricity supplies from the 132/33kV Network, and who can call upon the CFU for specialist services.

Responsibilities

"The CFU Section Managers now have more responsibilities, but they have also been given the power to make decisions and get things done."

This go-ahead philosophy has already seen the CFU involved in an increasing number of district projects, as well as support work for Head Office. All this should help to make the Central Field Unit much more familiar throughout Manweb, and banish forever any jokes about "CF Who?"



Dennis Davies



Adrian Whyte



Peter O. Jones



Steve Lloyd



David Langdon



Peter R. Jones

ADRIAN WHYTE — CONSTRUCTION MANAGER

Adrian is responsible for the design, budgeting, construction and project management of all of the Company's 132/33kV Substations and 132kV cable projects such as replacement and new installations throughout the Manweb area. Each of these multi-million pound projects is expertly handled by a small team of project engineers.

Adrian says: "The key to a successful project is good project management, a good team and keen control of costs at every stage."

PETER O JONES — OPERATIONS MANAGER (NORTH)

STEVE LLOYD — OPERATIONS MANAGER (SOUTH)

Peter and Steve are jointly responsible, on a geographical split, for the operation and maintenance of the 132,000 volt network. Between them they operate and maintain the 132kV Distribution System, which takes energy from the National Grid Company to the main supply points within the Districts. Peter and Steve are responsible for the supply of energy to some of Britain's largest industrial customers. Peter says: "Good communication is essential to ensure continuity of supply to such important customers." Regular monitoring of 132kV plant and lines, using 'condition based assessment', is essential to ensure that supplies remain available during severe weather.

Steve said: "Overhead lines are monitored for corrosion and substation equipment subject to infra red surveys to identify any weaknesses before they become a problem."

DAVID LANGDON — SERVICES MANAGER

The 132kV network extends across all the districts within Manweb and also into other Companies and it is therefore essential that a co-ordinating plan exists to ensure that the security of supplies is not placed at risk. David is responsible for the production of this plan. He ensures that all parties involved in outages are fully informed of outage dates. David says: "It is vital that large customers, the National Grid company, Districts (via the System Operation Centre at Chester) and other Electricity Companies are fully informed and consulted when the long term plans are produced to ensure the impact of the outage is minimised."

PETER R JONES — TECHNICAL SUPPORT MANAGER

Peter is responsible for the provision of a specialist support service to the ten Districts. These take the form of Civil Design and Construction services for substations, a Computer Aided 33kV substation electrical design and drawings service, including wind farms and non standard 11kV customer integral substations, specialist services on high accuracy metering to the Company's largest customers and 33/132kV Pole and Tower line designs to Districts and CFU.

Peter says: "The Technical Support Group aims to offer a cost effective solution to satisfy the Districts' specialist service requirements."



Inside the Data Centre are, left to right: Paul Chandler, Planning Specialist from IBM's Business Recovery Service presenting the certificate to Mark Pearson, Disaster Recovery Co-ordinator watched by the Operations Support Manager, Peter Pugh.

Plans reviewed — a success

THE Data Centre's Disaster Recovery Plans have been given the OK by a team of IBM experts.

During January of this year, a team of IBM Business Recovery Specialists examined the Data Centre's Disaster Recovery Plans. This process was initiated last year when the mainframe computer services plan was successfully reviewed and certified for the first time.

This year, the plan which undergoes a continual review and updating, was thoroughly scrutinised by three members of IBM's Business Recovery Services based at Portsmouth. This culminated in a meeting at Chester hosted by the Operations Support Manager, Peter Pugh at which the plans were discussed and spot-checks performed on the documented processes

together with a visit to the Data Centres' offsite vital records store.

Since the last certification, the disaster recovery plans for the DEC VAX mini computer used by the Power Marketing Settlements System have been completed and tested. These were also reviewed and approved by the IBM team who have reflected this by extending the scope of the certificate accordingly.

Mark Pearson, the Disaster Recovery Co-ordinator commented: "This process is an excellent method of externally auditing the Disaster Recovery plans. We are currently in the process of developing new plans for the AS400 mini computer used by the Trading Division which I hope will also be approved during the next review in January."

BUDGET '93

and how it affects your tax

By
Helen Connolly
Taxation
Accountant

THE last of the Chancellor's Spring Budgets has brought a number of changes to employee taxation and news of tax increases in prospect. His next Budget will be in November this year; some of the changes which will affect you after that Budget are also mentioned below.

1. Personal allowances.

All personal allowances will remain at their 1992/93 level for the coming tax year; this will mean that most PAYE codes will not be changed.

The personal allowances are:

	1993/94
Single person	3,445
Married couple's allowance	1,720
Age Allowance:	
Single person (75+)	4,370
Single person (65+)	4,200
Married couple's age allowance:	
(75+)	2,505
(65+)	2,465
Widow's bereavement Allowance:	
One parent families	1,720
Blind person (allowable to each qualifying spouse)	1,080

*Excess over personal allowance withdrawn by £1 for every £2 of income over £14,200.

2. Married Couple's Allowance

From April 6, 1994 tax relief in respect of the Married Couple's allowance will be restricted to the lower rate of 20%. This will provide the same amount of tax relief for all married couples aged under 65, irrespective of whether one, or both, is a higher rate taxpayer.

For employees the restriction will be effected via PAYE. This restriction will also apply to the additional personal allowance (single parents), widow's bereavement allowance and to the relief for maintenance payments to a divorced or separated spouse.

In 1994/95 also, the Married Couple's allowance for those aged 65 or over will be increased by £200 in order to compensate for restriction of relief to 20%.

3. Rates of Income Tax

The band of income taxed at 20%, which the Chancellor introduced last year, will increase by £500 to £2500; a further increase to £3000 is planned for 1994/95.

The rate of 25% will apply to the balance of your income up to a threshold of £23,700; income over this level attracts tax at the higher rate of 40%.

Amounts paid under deed of covenant should continue to be paid net of 25% tax.

4. Mortgage Interest Relief

The limit for tax relief on home loans remains at £30,000. However, from April 6, 1994 relief will be given at 20% not 25% as at present. This measure will apply to existing as well as to new loans. The change will not affect those with life annuity home plan schemes who will continue to receive relief at 25%.

5. Stamp Duty

In an effort to stimulate the lower end of the housing market, the threshold at which stamp duty becomes payable has been doubled to £60,000.

6. Company Vehicles

As anticipated, there will be a significant increase in car scale charges.

CAR BENEFIT SCALE CHARGES PROPOSED FOR 1993-94

Original Market Value	Engine Size	New scales charges		
		High Business Mileage (18,000 miles or more)	Average Business Mileage (2,501 to 17,999 miles)	Low Business Mileage (2,500 miles or less)
£	cc	£	£	£
Up to 19,250	0-1400	1,155	2,310	3,465
	1401-2000	1,495	2,990	4,485
	2001+	2,400	4,800	7,200
19,251 to 29,000	All	3,105	6,210	9,315
Over 29,000	All	5,020	10,040	15,060

1993/94 will be the last year for which the benefit will be determined by engine size; from April 6, 1994 35% of the list price of the car will be used with reductions of one-third and two-thirds respectively if business travel exceeds 2500 miles and 18,000 miles per year.

Not surprisingly, a similar scale charge has been introduced for vans. This has been set at £500 for 1993/94 and will cover both use of the vehicle and the fuel provided.

The Chancellor has announced a 20% increase in scale charges for fuel provided free of charge for private use to company car users. The reduction to one half of the charge of business use exceeds 18,000 miles per year has been abolished.

Car fuel	Petrol		Diesel
	Engine Size		
< 1400	600	-	
1401-2000	760	550	
> 2000	1130	710	

7. National Insurance Contributions

For the coming tax year there will be no changes to NIC rates. In 1994-95 the rate at which employees will contribute will rise by 1% (to 8% for those within the Company Pension Scheme, and to 10% for those who are not).

8. Investments

a) Dividends: The amount of tax deducted by companies will reduce to 20%; basic rate taxpayers receiving dividends will not have to pay more tax, but higher rate taxpayers will have to account for the difference between 20% and 40%.

b) Capital gains: the tax-free threshold will remain at £5800.

9. Inheritance Tax

The threshold for this tax will remain unchanged at £150,000.

10) VAT

Value added tax will be charged at a new lower rate of 8% on supplies of domestic fuel and power from April 1, 1994. The 8% rate will increase to 17½% with effect from April 1, 1995.

Taxable benefits

year ended April 5, 1993

IN early May, staff will be sent a statement detailing any taxable benefits notified to the Personnel Services Manager which they received from the Company during the year ended April 5 1993.

The Company has a legal duty to return details of all benefits to the Inland Revenue and the information shown on the benefits statement will be used for this purpose. Staff should therefore refer to this statement when completing their tax return, ensuring

that the details they enter agree with the information shown.

Staff may not be issued with a tax return every year. If they wish to complete one in respect of the year ended April 5 1993 and have not received one, they should contact the Inland Revenue.

It is important that staff read their benefits statement as soon as they receive it. If an explanation is required of any entry, please contact the Personnel Services Section at Head Office (int. tel. 2590) before May 24 1993.

CONTACT

The newspaper for staff and retired employees of Manweb plc, Sealand Road, Chester CH1 4LR, telephone 0244 652090 or 652099.

If you've an idea for a story or photograph, write, phone or come and talk to Editor Jackie Unsworth in Public Relations, Room 5E1, Head Office, ext. 2090, or Graeme Cooper on ext. 2099. At the following locations you can talk directly to one of Contact's District correspondents.

North Mersey: Pat Shaw, ext. 2204

Liverpool: Harry Robertson, ext 2160

Mid-Mersey: Mike Townson, ext 2231

Dee Valley: Kath Sadowski, ext. 2183

North Wirral: Janet Ford, ext. 2360

Mid-Cheshire: Diana Wood, ext. 2117

Clwyd: Min Williams, ext. 2187

Gwynedd: Hefyn Thomas, ext. 2250

Owensry: Cherry Garbett, ext. 2201

Aberystwyth: Keith Jones, ext. 2202

Hoylake Training Centre: ext. 2512

THE official launch of the Manweb Technology Project on March 11 1993 marked the beginning of the computerisation of all Manweb's network records, while at the same time providing technology training for unemployed people in North East Wales.

PARTNERSHIP FOR RECORDS PROJECT



At the official launch, Tim Harris, North East Wales TEC, Bob Dutton, Chief Executive Wrexham Maelor Borough Council, and Howard Kirkham, Manweb Director Network Services, have a chance to see the project in operation.

OVER the next two years Manweb will be converting all its network records from the existing paper system using state-of-the-art computer software.

This is a partnership project with Wrexham Maelor Borough Council and North East Wales TEC. In addition to computerising Manweb's Network records, it will also provide training for 70 jobless school-leavers and long-term unemployed in the area.

The trainees will be helping to convert the network records at Manweb's purpose designed Data Conversion Facility at Redwither Tower, on Wrexham Industrial Estate.

The first Manweb district to undergo conversion is Mid Cheshire. Helen Challinor, Mid Cheshire Drawing Office Manager said: "We are extremely enthusiastic about the project, and delighted to be involved at the outset.

"As the first district to be converted, we are helping to set up the correct

procedures for conversion, that will ensure a smooth operation of the new system."

Manweb is investing a total of £2.5m in the project, including fitting out the office accommodation, the cost of all computer hardware, and development of the specialist software.

At the recent launch, Howard Kirkham, Director Network Services, expressed his delight that Manweb is embarking on such a worthwhile project, highlighting the fact that "it is a great benefit to all those involved".

The North East Wales TEC is supporting the project with additional financial contributions for each trainee.

Wrexham Maelor Borough Council has supplied the trainees for the project from

**By
Rob
Skinner**

Wrexham Information Technology Centre (ITeC).

The day-to-day running of the project is coordinated by Eddie Cottle, GIS Data conversion Facility Manager, who is now based at Redwither Tower. As Eddie said: "The process of computerising the network records can be split into stages:

"Firstly, the map sheets are scanned to produce an electronic image that can be viewed on the workstation.

"Then, each image is accurately positioned using its real-world coordinates. In other words, the images are fitted together to re-create a life-like picture of the whole district.

"The district is divided into work areas, varying in size from one quarter of a kilometre square to two kilometres square depending on the network density in that area.

"Each operator then converts the network allocated to his or her work unit. The system has various features to assist in this process including rules for validation, and 'line-following' which allows whole cables to be converted automatically, saving time.

"A series of Quality Assurance procedures are then carried out to ensure that the conversion meets the Manweb quality standards.

"Finally, the supervisors have overview maps which allow them to look at the progress of all the work units within a district."

The Manweb Technology Project will help provide Manweb's districts with the most modern drawing office facilities available.

This will ultimately help the districts drive the network harder, while providing an unparalleled level of customer service.

Power Save on target for success

MANWEB's Power Save scheme aimed at reducing electricity demand in the North Wales town of Holyhead is on course to lower peak consumption by one megawatt — around enough power for an extra 1,000 homes.

Since the project was launched in December last year more than half of Holyhead's 3,500 households have taken advantage of Manweb offers on power saving lighting and other energy efficient appliances.

Manweb aims to achieve a reduction from around nine megawatts to eight by the end of May.

The Holyhead Power Save project is thought to be the largest scheme of its type in Europe, and is targeting homes and businesses with a range of 'demand side' energy saving measures. These range from the supply of low energy compact lights, to advising local commerce and industry on energy efficiency and assisting with its implementation.

Through the project Manweb is gaining valuable information on public attitudes towards energy efficiency, and the reduction in power load may also help the Company use its network more efficiently.

Manweb is investing £1/2 million in the scheme, which has received an £80,000 grant from the EC's SAVE (Specific Action for Vigorous Energy Efficiency) initiative.

Manweb Power Save Project Manager Peter Benstead said: "We are delighted with the response we've received from the people of Holyhead. The energy savings to date are well above what we had hoped for, and put us on course to meet our 1MW target."



Ruth Reynolds, Trainer, and Eddie Cottle, Data Conversion Facility Manager check on progress so far.

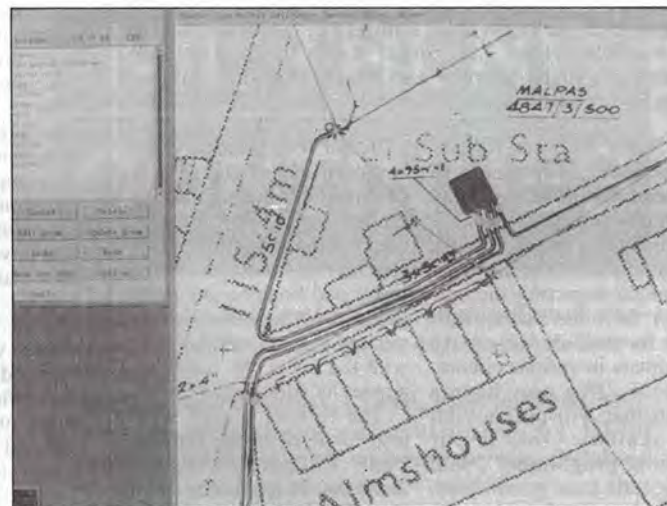
OPEN INVITE

DEE Valley annual open meeting for staff will be held on Friday, May 21 at The Chester Grosvenor starting at approximately 7.00pm.

Any retired members of staff wishing to attend should contact either Mrs Pat Twigg or Mrs Kath Sadowski at Rhostyllen. Please note that this year, due to the large number of staff involved, places will be allocated on a first come - first served basis.

HOSPICE BONUS

STAFF sales of Manweb Christmas cards last year resulted in a total of £1,232.50 being donated to the Gwynedd Hospice at Home Scheme. Manweb's Charities Forum, made up of representatives from Districts and Head Office, unanimously chose the Hospice scheme to benefit from Christmas card sales after considering several charities.



Close up of a terminal screen, showing where a substation and power lines have been added to the original image.

SWITCH OFF STORY GETS DoE BOOST

MANWEB is helping spread the word about energy efficiency throughout the country.

The Company features prominently in a newsletter produced by the Department of the Environment's Energy Efficiency Office, with an article entitled 'Manweb:

Switched On to Switching Off'.

The newsletter — called 'Efficiency Update' — has been distributed to all signatories to the Government's 'Making a Corporate Commitment Campaign' and will feature at various Energy Efficiency Office exhibitions throughout the country.



Robotic power comes to the Data Centre

MANWEB has invested in Robotic Power with the recent purchase of an Automated Tape Cartridge Library system (ATL) to manage and control the day to day usage of its tape cartridge storage media and to meet the expected demands from the business.

This is seen as another major step in our efforts to automate Data Centre operations as far as possible.

Requests

The purchase comprises the central storage library — capable of storing almost 6000 cartridges, 12 cartridge drives — for servicing requests for data storage/retrieval, the necessary control units — for

the drives, special interfaces — both hardware and software — for communication to the mainframe, and of course the robot itself — for the mounting and dismounting of cartridges.

The tape cartridges are utilised for providing an additional 'less expensive' storage medium for Company data that does not require instant access — as in the case of disk storage. The data storage medium also provides the mainstay of stored Company data for disaster recovery purposes.

Positioned

The ATL is circular in shape with the robotic body and arms positioned at the centre. The robotic arm rotates about the centre and selects and retrieves car-

tridges as directed by the system/customer requests. Attached externally to the Library are the 12 cartridge drives which service the many requests for data storage and retrieval.

Efficiency

The installation of the ATL will further increase the operational efficiency of the department by attaining sustained mount times for cartridge requests (160 plus per hour) over 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, by removing the need for manual intervention. The ATL will enable the Data Centre to fully exploit the 'unmanned' scenario and thus assist in the containment of costs together with increased service to our customers.



Above: Gary Newall, Storage Technology, making final adjustments to the robotic arm with Mike Gibbs, Computer Operations Manager, looking on. The circular design of the ATL can be clearly seen in the photograph with the 'empty' cartridge slots located around the inside. The 'eyes' of the robot are also in view — two bright lights above Gary. Picture by Mike Hall.



Right: Nigel Atkinson, Sub-project Manager for the acquisition of the ATL, and Jayne Williams, Tape Librarian, standing in front of the entry and exit ports for the ATL.

ACTING IT OUT FOR REAL



On location, left to right: Alan Reynolds and Bill Hughes, from the video company; Amanda Kelly Network Services, Liverpool; Keith Gore, Training Foreman, North Mersey and Mark Pearson, Jointer from Liverpool.

OUR employees have put themselves in the picture — along with professional actors — to show how Manweb can provide Extraordinary Customer Relations.

A number of comments were received from staff attending the two day Achieving Extraordinary Customer Relations programme, that the training video used did not depict enough "industrial scenes".

Gary Williams - Customer Services Training Co-ordinator, explained: "We listened to what OUR CUSTOMERS were saying and decided to film some new scenes, whilst adding more authenticity to the video by using some of our own peo-

ple. When we asked for volunteers the response was tremendous and all were full of enthusiasm.

Four new scenes were eventually added to the original video depicting the customer relations skills available to staff dealing with customers in various circumstances. "We now have a video that will play a vital and realistic role in our training programme", said Gary.

Filming wasn't without its lighter side. The production

unit had sought out a quiet residential location in a Liverpool suburb. Imagine their surprise when a batch of clucking hens arrived on the scene, then a concrete mixer and finally a gaggle of geese which immediately started a territorial battle with the hens. "So much for a quiet location," said Gary.

The following staff were also involved in the filming, Paul Fitzgerald, Kevin Andrews, Peter Reed, Keith Hornby and Anne Maria McKenna.

Training post for Nigel

FORMER Management Services Consultant Nigel Clark has 'gone back to his roots' with a move into the Trading Division.

Nigel, who has taken on a new role as Training Co-ordination/Procedures Manager within Retail Operations, originally joined Manweb as a Sales Trainee at St John's Shop, Liverpool, working his way up to Shop Manager at Garston following a spell at Southport Shop as a Senior Sales Assistant.

Liverpool-born Nigel, 28, who now lives in Wrexham, has taken on responsibility for

the practical development and administration of training initiatives such as the Business Basics scheme, Mystery Shopper and NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) courses.

He said: "I am looking forward to developing my new job, and will be talking to many people within Trading to identify their training requirements."

Nigel's fiancée Julie Foy also works in Trading, on MERAS training and co-ordination. The couple plan to get married in September.

Now Steve's a top manager

A MANWEB systems co-ordinator was a finalist in a prestigious Manager of the Year competition, and has received a glowing tribute from his manager for his achievement.

Steve Reece was one of the top five managers in the West Cheshire Management Charter Initiative (MCI) manager of the Year ceremony at the Glenda Jackson Theatre in Birkenhead.

Steve had to submit a portfolio of work reflecting performance to management standards which are used for measuring a manager's competence in the key roles of managing operations, people, finance and information. The national standards of best practice have been developed by the MCI to improve the performance of UK managers.

Reward

Steve, who works for the Trading Division, received a letter from Richard Bromley, Credit Finance Manager, congratulating him on his success — "A just reward for all the time and effort you have invested." Richard went on to say: "I can only commend you for the excellent image of Manweb that you promoted. I felt that all of the contestants thoroughly deserved to reach the final, and it was unfortunate that there could only be one first place awarded as in our opinion, you were all winners."

"I am sure that both you and Manweb will have benefited from this exercise and hopefully you will continue to do so as you put into effect the experience you have gained from this and your NEBSM Diploma course."

MCI Network Co-ordinator, Margaret Rome, said: "We were impressed with the level of entries to this first competition. We decided to instigate this award to show how important the standards can be in improving the performance of managers. If all managers within an organisation work to these standards, the performance of the whole organisation can be improved."

Steve is pictured above, receiving his certificate from Jenny Shackleton, Principal Wirral Metropolitan College.



and win a pair of binoculars

WE have two pairs of Tasco 165 RB compact binoculars to give away in this month's great competition. The answers to the seven clues below contain the consecutive letters OO. Just jot the answers on a piece of paper with your own name and work location (or home address, if retired) and send your entry to The Editor, Contact, Room 5E1, Head Office by May 7, 1993.

The first two fully correct answers drawn from the post-bag on that date will each receive a pair of binoculars.

The clues are

1. A deluge - following heavy rain perhaps.
2. Humorous drawing in a paper or magazine.
3. Descriptive of a banned topic that isn't to be mentioned.
4. Something to be grateful for - such as a TV programme starring Michael Elphick?
5. Sport played by Gary Lineker.
6. Bend forwards and down.
7. Select from the alternatives available.

Customer FOCUS

FOUR PAGE SPECIAL



Just some of the staff involved in the project. (Missing - Bob McMahon, Jim McLennan and Kevin Mawdsley to name but a few!) Left to right: Steve Sung, Ian Moulton, Bob Atkinson, Gary Morris, Barry Johnson, Dave Barratt, Mo Jefferies, Eileen Collier, Alan Atherall, Howard Baddock, Hilary Ryan, Dave Edge, Keith Leonard, Pat Hampson, Ian Basford, Tony Timmins, Lisa Healy, Graeme Cooper, Lynn Rawlinson.

PROJECT LAYS IT ON THE LINE

ONE of the main thrusts in improving customer service in 1993 will concentrate on how we as a company deal with customers on the telephone.

Changes set to improve standards

SEVERAL changes were made to the Standards of Service on April 1 and were the result of several months' discussions with Offer.

The principal changes are that many enquiries will be covered by the Standards however they are made, whereas most at present are only covered if they are in writing. Also all appointments to customers' premises on licensed business will be guaranteed whereas there is currently a limited range of appointments including changing and reading meters. These will continue to be the most common reason for an appointment.

The improvements to the Standards, many of which were initiated by Manweb, have been influenced by our market research which provides us with a clearer understanding of our customers' needs and wants. Although some of the changes will present new challenges Districts and Regions will be confident that the changes can be implemented without adversely affecting current performance.

Guaranteed Standard (GS) 1 has been improved by extending the period for notifications during which we guarantee to call out within 4 hours to a fuse failure on customers' premises to between 8am and 8pm on a normal working day (presently 8.30am to 5pm). Claims under GS2 (supply restoration) and GS5 (notice of supply interruption) no longer have to be in writing and the minimum notice under GS5 has been extended from 2 to 3 days. Although this may not seem like a dramatic improvement it is based on market research which has identified 2 to 3 days as the optimum notice period for domestic customers.

standards

By
TIM ELLIOT
Regulation Business
Manager

The target under GS3 for fitting a meter to an existing service line so as to provide a supply has reduced from 5 days to 3 days for domestic customers. Notifications under GS6 (voltage complaints) and GS7 (meter accuracy disputes) no longer have to be in writing nor do enquiries under GS8 which are usually account accuracy queries.

Precise

As previously mentioned many more appointments are now guaranteed than before April 1. Customers must be offered a morning or afternoon appointment in the first place and we must be more specific about the timing if requested to be. However we are not obliged to guarantee an appointment more precise than a 2 hour band.

All the guarantee payments are twice the level under the previous Regulations. Since Manweb had already voluntarily doubled the level in November 1992 there will be no change in our level of payments, merely a catching up by the rest of the industry with Manweb's initiative.

Some of the methods of monitoring performance under the Standards have had to be changed but these have been made easier because of devel-

opments to systems like DOJM, CARE, and RSVP. Further monitoring changes may have to be made to meet Offer's information needs when they become clear.

Improvements to all of the targets under the Overall Standards have been proposed to Offer although they were only seeking an improvement to OS7 (meter reading). However our Executive had decided in January that all targets should be raised in the light of our current high level of performance. The greatest challenge may be to meet the new target under OS7 but an improvement in performance will be a major step towards a reduction in the numbers and an increase in the reliability of account estimates which cause so many enquiries and complaints.

A revised Standards of Service Operations Manual is being prepared by the Regulator Relations Section and should become available in May but if you have any immediate queries which cannot be answered by supervisors or managers please address them to Tim Elliott or Roddy Manson at Head Office (Room 4W4, telephone 3505 and 3502).

ADVANCED LINKLINE

This is a service offered by BT to companies who wish to offer their customers either a free call (0800) or a local rate call (0345), wherever they might live in the United Kingdom.

It provides us with the ability to control the way in which calls on this number are spread across our three regional centres - this can relate to geographic area, the time of day and the day of the week. It also provides us with the option of diverting calls from one region across the other two regions in the event of a major emergency situation at one site.

At present market research indicates that we do not perform well in this area, and one look at the telephone directory certainly confirms that we do not make things easy for people trying to get in touch with us.

To that end, a project has

By
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been established that will concentrate on achieving the following aims:

- one number only in the BT 'white' pages (0345 112211)
- provision of a Manweb number whereby customers will only pay a local call charge
- 80% of calls to be answered within 20 seconds
- 80% of calls to be answered without a further transfer
- where a transfer is unavoidable, only one transfer to be allowed per call

The project will establish a single number that customers can ring to take them to one of the three regional Customer Information Centres - this facility will be provided by BT's Advanced Linkline service (see inset). However, there is a lot more to it than just that. In addition to introducing the actual number, we also need to ensure that our company organisation, culture and systems are targeted at providing the customer with a solution to their problem, whatever that might be.

(Running in tandem with the Single Telephone Number project, we are also making a substantial effort to reduce the number of calls actually received. The main areas giving rise to calls for customer accounts are associated with estimated bills and card meters and by removing the source of the problems we will be able to reduce the overall number of calls received. The changes required will take place over the coming months, so by the time we are ready to implement the single telephone number, we will have reduced the volumes of calls coming into the regional centres.)

To manage the introduction of 0345 112211, a project team has been set up, drawn from across the Company. The full-time

NIL TREND CONTINUES

FOUR Manweb Districts made no guaranteed standards payments to customers during the month of February.

Staff in North Mersey, Clwyd, Liverpool and Mid-Cheshire have been congratulated by Chief Executive John Roberts, who said he was delighted to see the "nil payments trend" continuing and that such a high standard is being firmly established.

Commitment

In a letter to the four District Managers, Mr Roberts said: "I know this is due in no small part to the excellent commitment from everyone in your District and I would ask you to pass on my appreciation and congratulations for the first class service which has been provided to your customers."

Meanwhile, Oswestry District's five month run on "nil payments" came to an end in February.

Disappointed

District Manager Mike Jones said: "Unfortunately we didn't quite reach six months, as we had hoped, and had to make a payment for failing to inform a customer about a domestic shutdown. Everyone had worked so hard to make the six months and are very disappointed."



Mike and Kate (standing) hosting one of Bridle Road's Card Meter courses. On the left hand side of the table are (far end down) Ruth Moore, Clerk, Warrington, Mike McBride, Joyce Herbert, Accounts Clerk, Bridle Road, Eric Pownall, Meter Reader, Southport. On the right (far end down) are: Sandie Wall, Part-time Sales Assistant, Southport Shop, Jill Thompson, Part-time Sales Assistant, Southport shop, Jimmy Bingham, Meter Inspector, Bridle Road, Margaret Norton, Accounts Clerk, Bridle Road, Keith Cummins, Meter Reader, Southport.
Not pictured is Eric Stacey, Bridle Road Debt Control Operative, who played a key role in setting up the courses at North Mersey.

COURSE THE CAI

MANWEB is running a series of one day courses to help its staff provide a better service for card meter customers.

Most of the Company's 180,000 card meter users have no problems with this method of paying for their electricity, but about four per cent run into difficulties, which leaves them frustrated and often with a very poor view of Manweb.

Sorting out these problems can tie up a disproportionate amount of Manweb staff's time, so to find ways to prevent problems and improve customer service the courses have been set up to help staff identify problems, and come up with possible answers.

Steve O'Brien, Principal Assistant in Income, is responsible for organising the courses. He

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High quality and low cost can be complex

FOR many people the words 'high quality' and 'low cost' do not fit together easily. But Manweb is a company with a vision and has set its sights on being both these things.

The Company's vision is to be 'a high quality, low cost utility, providing extraordinary customer service'.

And with the recent launch of Manweb's Customer Focus Programme, all our dealings with the public are set to be revolutionised.

According to the Chairman of the Customer Focus Steering Group, Director Network Services Howard Kirkham, Manweb can be both 'high quality' and 'low cost' by finding ways of operating more efficiently and effectively — and that's essentially what the Programme is all about.

"When we talk about low cost, we don't mean an inferior service," he said. "It is possible to square low cost with high quality by providing value for money. There are many improvements we can make to help us all deliver a better service for our customers at least cost."

Since the programme was initiated in September 1992, Manweb has been rigorously examining the way in which we deliver customer service.

The Company carried out extensive market research, questioning approximately 2,500 domestic and business customers from throughout Manweb's region to measure their expectations of the service we provide, and the results held few surprises.

- Customers require:
- Enquiries answered quickly and courteously at the first point of contact.
 - Timed appointments.
 - Extended operating hours, outside of normal office hours.
 - Advance agreement on supply interruptions.
 - A reduction or eradication of estimated bills.
 - To be treated as individuals — not just 'another customer'.

Howard Kirkham said: "One of the biggest single reasons for complaint is estimated bills. Our Customer Information Centres receive between 40,000 and 60,000 telephone enquiries every week and a high proportion of these are about estimated accounts. We can't live with that underlying dissatisfaction."

As a major corporate scheme, it was

recognised that managers and staff from across the Company should be actively involved in the Customer Focus Programme.

In addition to the Steering Group, a full-time Working Group, headed by Project Manager Brian Sheppard, was established to get the project up and running.

A major task was to identify the main areas where we have regular contact with customers and then 'map' the actions of staff and the flow of documents and information within Manweb and between the Company and



By
Jackie Unsworth



the customer (see maps on page 8).

Using a system called 'business process re-engineering', these 'maps' were then analysed resulting in alternative, simpler ways of dealing with the customer.

"We initially looked at 23 different processes, such as meter reading, tenancy

changes, supply interruptions and account payments," said Mr Kirkham. "A number of these were very complicated, involved unnecessary duplication and were not providing the best customer service."

"For example, customer enquires were being passed through a number of depart-

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The Customer Focus Steering Group, comprising managers and staff from across Manweb, meets fortnightly to monitor the programme's progress and provide... Some members of the Group are pictured during a recent meeting, back row, l-r, Market Research Manager Tony Harper, Network Systems Manager McMahon, Head of Marketing Mike Nehrmann, Project Manager Brian Sheppard, Head of Information Services John Peaker, Head of Strategic Studies Tony Tubey. Front row, l-r, Head of Human Resources David Vernon-Smith, District Control Manager Jim McLennan, Director Network Services and Chairman Howard Kirkham, Gwynedd Direct Manager Steve Wood and Managing Director, Manweb Contracting Services Ltd, Allan Littler.

ON RDS

By
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But as well as problems of procedures and sys-
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while many Manweb staff deal with card meters in
some way — whether selling value cards in shops,
reading meters or dealing with customers' queries
— few had any idea of how their work affected
other parts of Manweb.

There was a real problem of ignorance and lack
of communication which was compounding the
original difficulties.

In establishing the framework for the courses
Steve aimed to get a broad mix of views from staff
in many different areas of the business. Facilitators
from local offices host the courses in districts.

At North Mersey Network Services Principal
Assistant Mike Norton and Training Manager Kate
Walker from the Region One Customer
Information Centre (Warrington) were course
facilitators.

Mike said: "The courses are very much about
staff pooling their ideas and experiences to see
where problems can be identified and solved. As
facilitators we are here to help people put their own
experiences forward as well as take up any new
ideas ourselves."

Staff throughout the organisation have been very
enthusiastic about the courses. 'If only we'd had
this course a few years ago we could have avoided
the problems!' is an often repeated comment.

Information from the courses is being fed into
Manweb's approach to card meters and how to
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amount of training to make sure people are
comfortable with the new ideas and can
deliver them," said Mr Kirkham.

"There must be a change of culture to turn
Manweb into a company that is predomi-
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Customer Focus Programme to ensure a con-
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The new shops' strategy has now been
fully integrated within the Programme, as
has the 'single telephone number' project
(see 'Project Lays It On the Line' — page 5).

The Programme has many implications for
staff. Many will find their roles changing and
they will be asked to be more flexible in the
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as CUDOS, DOJM and GIS — will also be a
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the best way to integrate these systems to
improve customer service.

The Customer Focus Programme will be
implemented over the next couple of years,
and many of the ideas will be piloted in parts
of the Company before they are widely intro-
duced.

Howard Kirkham said: "We have now
decided the main recommendations for the
Customer Focus Programme, but as yet there
are many specific details to be looked at,
including feedback from the staff who will
be involved.

"It is not sensible or necessary to imple-
ment these new ideas across the Company in
one go. Some of the more interesting and
radical ideas need to be tried out so that we
can get the bugs out!"

Write time!

**MORE letters have been arriving at Manweb,
full of praise for the first class service provid-
ed by staff. Satisfied customers have written
in asking us to pass on their thanks for a job
well done!**

GWYNEDD Meter Operative Melfyn Jackson gave
a helping hand — quite literally — to Bangor cus-
tomer Charles Davies. Alone in his house, Mr Davies
had trapped his hand in the hinge side of a divan stor-
age bed and had been unable to move for an hour.

"My hand was getting progressively more painful,"
he said. "It was truly a miracle when about 10.30am
the doorbell rang and by yelling at the top of my voice
I drew the attention of Mr Jackson, who had called to
read the meter."

The ambulance and fire services were soon on the
scene to release Mr Davies and take him to hospital,
where a check-up revealed that fortunately no bones
had been broken.

"Without Mr Jackson's help I would have stayed
trapped until my brother-in-law arrived home at 6pm.
I do not know what state I would have been in by
then," he said. "I think it is only right for you to know
about the prompt and kind manner in which one of
your staff acted to help someone in great need."

STILL in Gwynedd, Caernarfon customer Mrs
Eurgain Eames wrote in to say thanks for the "kind-
ness and co-operation" provided by the District during
recent power failures.

She said: "My husband is totally dependent on a
continuous electricity supply and I am most impressed
with the service provided by Manweb."

LLANGEFNI customers Mr and Mrs Parry also wrote
to Gwynedd District to say thanks to all the staff
involved in a rewiring job at their home — including
those at the District Office, the foreman and his staff at
Llangefni and the two electricians who completed the
work.

"We've had courtesy, friendliness and, above all,
excellent co-operation and work! They each deserve
our praise and thanks. They did Manweb well!"

ANOTHER Anglesey couple, David and Mair Parry of
Malltraeth, wrote in to sing the praises of Fred
Keen and his team from Gwynedd District and the
female staff they spoke to at the office in St Helens
Road.

They wrote: "Your service, from every level of
involvement, has been excellent. Your staff have been
unfailingly courteous, patient, informative, decisive
and — equally importantly — superbly professional.
It has been not only a pleasure but a most satisfactory
and satisfying experience to have dealt with each one
of them."

ST HELENS customer Mr N Edwards was delighted
with the 'efficient service' provided by Mid Mersey
employees Peter Shawcross (DRC Attendant), Dave
Gravener (Shift Electrician), Kenny Forber (Jointer)
and Dennis Brown (Craft Attendant), who dealt with
an electrical fault at his home.

"From the man who took the call, the electrician
who came out to make it safe and put our minds at
ease, and the two men who connected us back to the
mains, I would like to thank everyone concerned very
much indeed," he wrote.

ANOTHER Mid Mersey employee, Mains Foreman
Kevin Caldwell, came in for praise from Frodsham
pensioner Mrs M Spencer. She wrote: "I would like to
bring it to your notice that your Mains Foreman Mr
Kevin Caldwell was very kind and considerate to me
when our electricity was off for several hours.

"He brought me a torch and made sure I was all
right. I thought it was a very nice gesture and deserves
recognition."

AND still in Mid Mersey, Lymm customer Mrs Jo
Allen wrote to say thanks for the prompt service
provided by Gordon Maxton, Les Taylor and Gordon
Parks, when they turned out in bad weather conditions
to fix up a temporary power supply.

Mrs Allen had telephoned for help after a tree was
blown over, leaving her home off supply. She wrote:
"The team who arrived in next to no time were fantas-
tic. They were courteous, good humoured and worked
extremely efficiently. Our praise for them is bound-
less."

FRANK NEILL, who works in the Customer
Information Centre at Warrington, received a letter
from Helen Clark, of the Liverpool Housing Trust, to
thank him for arranging to have the electricity supply
put on at a house in Runcorn at short notice.

She wrote: "I don't think I have ever encountered
anyone quite as helpful before — nothing was too
much trouble"

LIVERPOOL District received a letter from Mr R J
Mackay, Manager of the Cherrybank Nursing Home
in Sefton Park, complimenting staff on their perfor-
mance in restoring supplies during a recent power fail-
ure.

The staff involved were Engineer Bob Connor,
Foreman Andy Scaratts, Jointer Tommy Lane, Shift
Electrician Reg Owens, Jointer's Mate Stan Hemmel
and DRC Attendant Frank Matthews.

Mr Mackay wrote: "Our predicament was that we
had 22 elderly wheelchair-bound patients, most of
them with senile dementia and unable to comprehend
why there was no light (except emergency), no TV, no
heating, no hot water, and why they were detained on
the ground floor when they wanted to go to bed
because there was no lift service.

"Briefly, everyone involved on your side acted
promptly, courteously and efficiently.

"The failure was eventually traced to a damaged
service cable under Alexandra Drive. The three men
on the job worked ceaselessly in the most foul weath-
er, rain alternating with hailstones all the time, until
they effected a reconnection.

"We wish to thank the chap who took our first call
for help, the man who came and diagnosed that the
failure was not on our premises, the man who arrived
and traced the route of the mains cable from the house
to the street and pinpointed the trouble-spot, and final-
ly the heroes who had the dirtiest, coldest job of all."

CHRISTMAS DAY was very nearly a disaster for
Rainhill customer David Pointon, when at lunchtime
the electricity supply failed. An Emergency team from
Liverpool district soon sorted out the problem, and Mr
Pointon subsequently wrote to District Manager Bill
Tubey to say thanks to the staff involved.

He wrote: "My family and I are grateful for the
efforts of your staff and I would like to place our gra-
titude on record."

MEANWHILE, in Dee Valley, Electrician Mark
Booth was the subject of a letter from Old Rhosrobin
customer Judith Connolly, after he replaced her stor-
age heaters and supplied an extra one.

She wrote that Mark had "worked very hard, did not
stop for the 'constant cups of tea' and his work was
very neat, with no damage to the wallpaper.

"Everyone, including myself, is quick to complain
but I also believe in praise where praise is due."

AND in Oswestry District, employee Gary Evans was
praised for his "great presence of mind and courage"
during an emergency situation at customer P E
Wheeler's home in Wem.

Mr Wheeler wrote: "Thank you for dealing so
promptly with the transformer next to our house which
went on fire. We were surprised and pleased to have
power restored that same evening, considering the
extent of the damage.

"We would also like to say that Gary Evans showed
great presence of mind and courage in extinguishing
the flames at the base of the poles, using one of our
workshop fire extinguishers, thus almost certainly pre-
venting further damage."

SHOP STAFF also came in for praise. Paul Meacock
was the subject of a letter from customer John Mason
who called in at Chester Shop with his wife to choose
new kitchen appliances.

He wrote: "For a variety of reasons it was necessary
to cancel and reorder some of these items, making five
lengthy visits to your store. We also experienced prob-
lems with damaged goods being delivered and having
to be exchanged.

"Through all of these problems, I am pleased to say
that we had nothing but help and co-operation from
Mr Meacock, who at times must have been, like our-
selves, very frustrated.

"He showed concern and a professional approach
and we would have no hesitation in purchasing future
electrical equipment from your stores."

CUSTOMER Mrs Hilary Roberts, of Great Crosby,
visited Bootle Shop to complain about the breakdown
of the washing machine she had bought there... and
was so impressed with the 'help and consideration'
given by John Quick that she decided to write to
Manweb.

"As a result, the matter was satisfactorily conclud-
ed. Would you please pass on to him my thanks for
his courtesy and efficiency in dealing with this mater,"
she wrote.



ection.
Vaughan Roberts, Head of Income Bob
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COURSE ON THE CARDS

MANWEB is running a series of one day courses to help its staff provide a better service for card meter customers.

Most of the Company's 180,000 card meter users have no problems with this method of paying for their electricity, but about four per cent run into difficulties, which leaves them frustrated and often with a very poor view of Manweb.

Sorting out these problems can tie up a disproportionate amount of Manweb staff's time, so to find ways to prevent problems and improve customer service the courses have been set up to help staff identify problems, and come up with possible answers.

Steve O'Brien, Principal Assistant in Income, is responsible for organising the courses. He

By
Graeme Cooper

explained how they came to be set up.

"The Chief Executive, John Roberts, was aware of some of the problems we'd been having with card meters, so we carried out research to see what the causes were. The results showed that while there was no one specific area which was causing more problems than others, we ourselves could do a great deal more to avoid the difficulties customers were experiencing."

There were some problems related to the actual installation and setting of card meters, and others

concerning the problems of linking the right information to the customer.

But as well as problems of procedures and systems it also became apparent from the research that while many Manweb staff deal with card meters in some way — whether selling value cards in shops, reading meters or dealing with customers' queries — few had any idea of how their work affected other parts of Manweb.

There was a real problem of ignorance and lack of communication which was compounding the original difficulties.

In establishing the framework for the courses Steve aimed to get a broad mix of views from staff in many different areas of the business. Facilitators from local offices host the courses in districts.

At North Mersey Network Services Principal Assistant Mike Norton and Training Manager Kate Walker from the Region One Customer Information Centre (Warrington) were course facilitators.

Mike said: "The courses are very much about staff pooling their ideas and experiences to see where problems can be identified and solved. As facilitators we are here to help people put their own experiences forward as well as take up any new ideas ourselves."

Staff throughout the organisation have been very enthusiastic about the courses. 'If only we'd had this course a few years ago we could have avoided the problems!' is an often repeated comment.

Information from the courses is being fed into Manweb's approach to card meters and how to make the whole area of business easier for the customer, and ultimately better for Manweb.

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Quality and low cost complementary

By
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ments, there were rules and regulations to follow, and it was clear that these could be simplified to improve customer service.

"The more complicated the process, the more risk of something going wrong."

"We knew these processes were far too long and involved far too many people, so we set about challenging everything Manweb does, from a customer's point of view, to see how we could do better."

Every employee of Manweb will be involved in this culture change to help us

become more customer-focused and able to deliver the 'vision' of high quality, low cost. Staff are currently undergoing Achieving Extraordinary Customer Relations courses as part of this exercise.

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Customer FOCUS

FOUR PAGE SPECIAL

Road ode earns bouquet

Men with shovels came one day
In the merry month of May
Just like moles they dug up holes
Then swiftly went away

Men with shovels then returned
Laid pipes and filled in gaps
Alas, in rain they came again
Some problems there perhaps?

Men with shovels came again
In the sunny month of June
Dug once more just as before
But t'was not opportune

So men with shovels then returned
In July to view the scene
Without refrain they dug again
Where others had just been

Men with shovels duly came
In August to our road
Nerves on edge we made a pledge
To stay in our abode

Men with shovels reappeared
The beginning of September
Seemed the most atrocious waste
That we could yet remember

Yes! Men with shovels dug out holes
Five months, outside our house
Drills like thunder, can you wonder
Why we should wish to grouse

So Manweb pick your feet up
Take heed of our abode
For we're the weary residents
Who live in Caughall Road

THINGS just couldn't be 'verse' for Chester customer Olive Cason after Manweb's 5th visit to dig up the road outside her house.

She could see neither rhyme nor reason for the continuous interruptions — so she penned a poetic protest.

Cliff James, Section Manager at New Crane Street, entered into the spirit of things after receiving Olive's eight verses of complaint and asked 3rd Engineer Geoffrey Howarth — the Bard of the Depot — to compose a suitable reply.

As for Cliff, he decided to say it with flowers and sent a huge bouquet to Olive's home in Caughall Road, Upton.



Flower power! Clerical Assistant Sandra Parker (right) delivers the bouquet to Olive Cason.

The time had come to name the day
For starting Caughall Road in May
So off we set about our holes
Eventually to recover all the poles.

Refurbishment is the name of the game
Your electricity supply would not be the same
From overhead to underground
Your new electricity wires would be found.

We took our time so you say
But there was lots of things to do
New cables in and old ones out
Plus all the jointing too.

We worked through rain and in the sun
Our motto here, 'Get the job done'
Through May and June we toiled and sweat
It's a big job and it's not finished yet.

For all too soon July had come
And yet more cables we had to run
Long trenches were dug to lay the main
Ready for our jointers to return again.

Now through August to September
A period you say you'll always remember
Was when our work came together
But alas you were at the end of your tether.

You say to you it seemed quite a year
We didn't mean to upset you here
I am sorry that you were upset
But a much better supply you did get.

Olive's poetic protest.

Manweb's verse-atile response!

Project lays it on the line — from page 5

members come from Power Marketing, Network Services and Information Services — and they are supported by colleagues from throughout the rest of the Company.

There are two main areas being targeted:

Firstly, a strong emphasis will be placed on encouraging calls to come directly to the place of expertise, by reviewing what telephone numbers we publish on letters, leaflets, receipts, business cards etc. A series of 'expert' help desks will be set up throughout the company to deal with specific types of calls — for example each district will have an 'expert' help desk for Network Services calls, and in Trading there will be help desks for sales, delivery, repairs and credit finance. "Direct dial" numbers (DDI) have recently been introduced into many sites across the company, and these will be encouraged in preference to the old switchboard numbers that used to exist at each site.

By far the largest proportion of calls into the company relate to account queries, and a substantial investment of the latest available computer and telephone technology has been made at the regional centres. The second main effort concentrates on exploiting this infrastructure. Regions will be provided with the support they need to deal effectively with accounting calls, 'no supply' queries, and any 'cold' calls that come in for other parts of the company.

Similar facilities will be made available in the district reception areas, and eventually in the shops.

To equip staff to deal with the changes, a series of seminars will run from May onwards for those directly involved in staffing the 'help desks' — each session will mix staff from Power Marketing, Network Services, Trading and Corporate.

Additionally, training workstations on use of phones in general will be made available for all staff.

The current schedule looks like this:

Spring

- 0345 112211 to be introduced as the number for all accounting calls from April
- DDI will be heavily promoted, and 'expert' help desks established

- training sessions for key staff commence

Summer

- first pilot trials of software start in August
- telephony support for districts and Queensferry installed

Autumn

- implementation of software in the regions
- 'old' phone numbers will be routed into the regional centres

Winter

- district reception areas equipped and trained
- publicity campaign starts to roll out

The project team will be heavily involved in monitoring the progress along the way. During 1994 the performance of the company as a whole on handling telephone calls will be monitored to target areas for further improvement, and to ensure that the aims of the project continue to be met.

TIM TAKES STOCK



MANWEB is committed to providing the best possible customer service... lock, stock and barrel.

And staff at the Company's North Mersey District offices in Bootle are no exception. When one of his meter fixers missed a promised appointment, District Manager Terry Keenan decided tough new measures were needed to deter other members of staff from letting customers down!

He gave Manweb Joiner Tim Power his most unusual commission yet — to make a special set of stocks in which to punish 'offenders'.

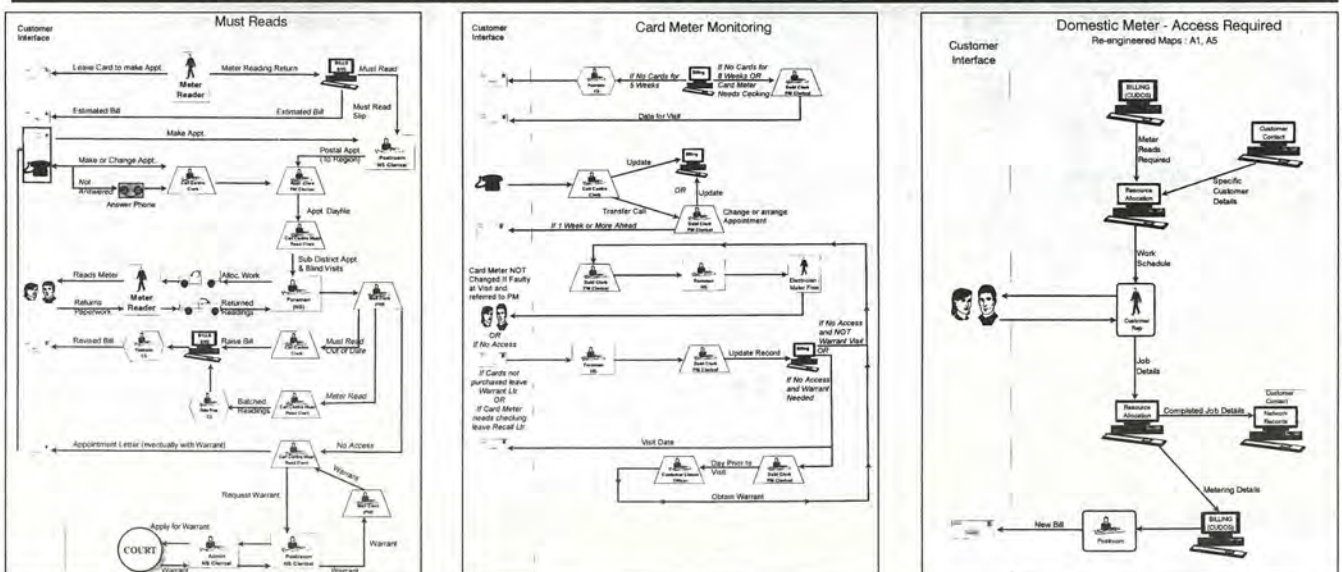
"Maybe it's the thought of spending a day being pelted by rotten cabbages and squashed tomatoes, but so far there have been no further missed appointments and we haven't needed to dole out this sort of punishment," said Terry.

Excellent

"Seriously, though, although the stocks were made in fun, our staff really are dedicated to providing excellent service for customers and if we don't turn up when we say we will, we fully deserve to be pilloried!"

Joiner Tim Power is pictured trying out the stocks.

BUSINESS PROCESS RE-ENGINEERING — from page 6



Two into one DOES GO! The two complicated processes (left) used when dealing with customers were 're-engineered' into the simple process (right).

LONG SERVICE



CELEBRATING long service with Manweb are staff from Liverpool District, pictured during a get-together at the Devonshire House Hotel in Edge Lane.

District Manager Bill Tubey presented framed certificates to staff who have achieved 20 or 30 years' service.

Pictured (l-r) are Robert Walker, Craftsman

Electrical Fitting (20 years), Chris Tigwell, 2nd Engineer (20 years), David Brady, Chargehand Enhanced Craftsman Electrician (20 years), Reg Owens, Craftsman Electrician Shift (30 years), Chris Edwards, Admin Assistant (20 years), Colin Oldfield, 2nd Engineer (30 years), District Manager Bill Tubey, Peter Howard, Craftsman Jointing (30 years) and John McEvoy (30 years).



LONG-serving Dee Valley staff gathered at Crabwall Manor, Chester, to celebrate a special milestone in their careers.

District Manager John Macdonald is pictured (front row, 3rd from left) presenting staff who have clocked up 20 or 30 years' service in the Electricity Supply Industry with framed certificates.

The recipients were:

20 Years: Arwel Lloyd, Regional Contracting Manager; Phil Jeffs, Network Foreman; Alan Peters, Contracting Foreman; John Milne, Senior Contracts Manager; Christine Jones, Power Marketing; Diane Griffiths, Power Marketing; John Evans, DRC; Peter Baron, Wayleave Officer.

30 Years: Nigel Ralphs, Meter Reading, New Crane Street; Phil Jones, Engineer, New Crane

Street; Hilton Roberts, Engineer, New Crane Street; Dave Molloy, Engineer, Rhostyllen; Bill Hatton, Area Energy Sales Manager; Terry Mole Network Foreman, New Crane Street.

Other recipients, who did not attend the long service presentations at Crabwall Manor, were as follows:

20 Years: Gwilym Edwards, Courier; Ted Dutton, Network Foreman; Steve Jones, Contracting Electrician; Chris Smith, Linesman, Corwen; Mike Troughton, Transport, New Crane Street; Malcolm Griffiths, Driver; John Kennedy, Account Control Manager; Malcolm Fowles, Transport, Legacy.

30 Years: Bob McClusky, Statutory; Terry Shone, Chargehand, New Crane Street.

40 Years: Cliff James, Section Manager, New Crane Street.

BILLS GO GREEN

RESPONDING to suggestions from customers, Manweb is sending out electricity bills in white, reusable envelopes. They will continue to be made from recycled paper but can be used again by customers wanting to return payments by post. And Manweb is allowing

local charities to make good use of the six million bills it sends out each year, by advertising their services free of charge on the envelopes.

The first charity to take advantage of the scheme is the Mersey Region Epilepsy Association, which has a short message printed on the outside of the envelopes advising people of the research, advisory, education and counselling service it provides.

In a further environmental-

ly-friendly move, Manweb's electricity bills are also now printed on chlorine-free paper.

Bob McMahon, Manweb's Head of Income, said: "We are always looking for ways to improve the service we provide to our customers and responding to their requests is one way of doing this. In addition, we felt that the six million bills we send out each year would be of great use to local charities wanting to put messages on the envelopes."

POST BAG

Shoes not made for walking?

Dear Editor
We recently took possession of our new boots and shoes and noticed we have changed names from Tootector to Arco.

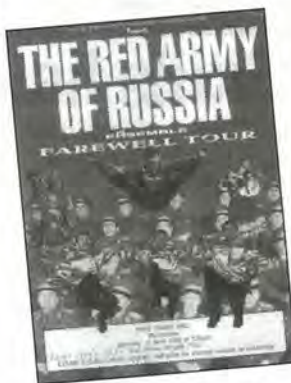
I just wondered what other people thought about the new footwear, which is free by the way. Well done Manweb!

What first caught my eye was that there seems to be an awful lot of deformed people about, or suddenly people are finding it difficult to walk! When asking what had brought on this outbreak of unusual behaviour, the comments I got were thus: one chap said one boot seemed

to be bigger than the other, and another person said he had hit the backs of the shoes several times with a hammer but they were still hurting.

Then I spoke to a passing cyclist who also works for the Company and he said the shoes were fine for cycling, but he couldn't walk in them. Are the shoes really that bad? What do you think?

Or is it a subtle ploy by management to get early retirement en masse through bad feet?
Brian Emberton
Building Section
North Wirral.



AIR YOUR VIEWS

DO you have a view you'd like to share or an opinion you'd like to air? Then why not drop us a line? Write to: The Editor, Contact, Room 5E1, Manweb plc, Sealand Road, Chester CH1 4LR. Please make sure you include your name and address or work location, as letters sent anonymously will not

be used. All letters are dealt with in strict confidence and your name can, upon request, be withheld.

There's a free Parker Rollerball pen for every letter published (offer applies to staff, retired employees and their families only).

SAFETY



NORTH Mersey is the latest Manweb District to achieve a star safety rating from the International Loss Control Institute in America.

The District has achieved a four-star award — the third within Manweb — following an audit using the International Safety Rating System.

Derek Jackson, 1st Engineer in Corporate Health and Safety, said: "The system audits the management of safety and, as well as giving a star award, provides helpful advice for the advancement of safety control within the District."

"All of our Districts are working towards achieving a five-star advanced award, which is the top accolade awarded by the Institute. In fact, this very high level of safety control may not be achievable in Manweb when we consider that much of our industrial work is undertaken in the great outdoors and on a variety of work sites."

He added: "In the meantime, however, there is much to be gained from pursuing the principles of the International Safety Rating System."

North Mersey District achieved the award for having effective inspection systems, accident investigation systems, a good standard of health control

Star rating for North Mersey



and for holding regular group meetings, as well as having systems for ensuring the availability of personal protective equipment. Organisational rules and general promotion of health and safety also helped in achieving the award.

Derek Jackson is pictured (right) presenting the four-star award to North Mersey District Manager Terry Keenan.

SEARCH WINNER

THE winner of Contact's recent Safety Search competition, retired employee Ken Jones, called in at Gwynedd District office to collect his prize from Corporate Health and Safety Manager Colin Herbert.

Ken, of Bangor, won a bottle of champagne and a personal stereo with his catchy safety slogan — Look and plan, be safe with the Man.



Ken Jones (left) receives his prize from Colin Herbert (right), watched by Gwynedd District Manager Steve Wood.

Step out in safety

THINK before we step was the theme of last month's safety article by Colin Herbert, Corporate Health and Safety Manager.

He called for more common sense in helping to cut the unnecessary toll of injury and time off work.

Here are his reminders about what we need to do to cut down the toll these accidents are causing.

- 1 Check the stairs and steps before you go up or down them, if the lighting is poor get a torch and use it.

- 2 Make sure the ladder is safe to use. Make sure it is positioned correctly. If it can't be tied in place get someone to foot it.
- 3 Keep vehicles tidy so that the possibility of tripping as you get in or out is reduced. When you open the door to get out — check ground conditions outside.
- 4 If you see any hazards like greasy patches in the yard tell a supervisor.
- 5 If you're working in trees make sure you're positioned correctly — use your belt or harness to anchor yourself.

RED ALERT TIME

Dear Editor

In April a very special treat is in store for us. The Red Army of Russia, who captured the hearts of the British public in 1988 when they toured throughout the U.K. for the first time in twenty years, are returning to thrill audiences nationwide.

This troupe of around 100 talented singers, dancers and musicians is the most spectacular and colourful ensemble to ever come

out of Russia. Once more they are coming to Britain to entertain audiences with their display of Russian culture.

Early booking is recommended as ticket demand will be heavy, particularly as the tour schedule only allows one performance at The Free Trade Hall, Manchester, Saturday 17 April.

Guest singers from Russia's greatest opera houses and some of the country's exciting Caucasian drum dancers have now joined the company. Their show is riding high at the peak of its fame and once again, they look forward to providing the very best Russian entertainment to the British public.

Special concessions for Manweb personnel have been arranged as follows: £11.50 to £10.00, £13.50 to £11.50, £15.50 to £13.50, £17.50 to £15.00.

Ted Heathcote
Heathcote Associates

JUMP TO IT

Dear Editor

We would like to give you readers the opportunity to try Bungy jumping.

We are A J Hackett Bungy, a worldwide organisation that innovated commercial bungy jumping five years ago. We have permanent sites in New Zealand, Australia, France, United States and we have recently developed a presence in the U.K.

We are now embarking on a national "U.K. tour in a different region each weekend to allow safe Bungy jumping with a leading company.

You can raise sponsorship for your local charity/social fund, or you can do it for yourself. For more information please phone or fax the following numbers: Tel: 0273 747832/732464 Fax: 0273 775890.

Hugh Preece
A J Hackett Bungy

Together again for romantic re-union

ALL roads led to Chester when chauffeurs from all the regional electricity companies, National Grid and PowerGen headed for the Abbotswell Hotel for their annual weekend get-together.

This year's event was hosted by Manweb plc with Chairman's Chauffeur Gordon Phillips, who has now retired, in the 'driving seat'. It was the third annual gathering of the chauffeurs, accompanied by their wives, the first having been introduced in 1991 following privatisation.

Gordon said: "During the two years running up to privatisation the chauffeurs were together week after week in London. We all realised that after privatisation we would not be seeing each other as much, so the idea of a long weekend together came about."

Welcoming the visitors to Chester, Gordon, on behalf of Manweb, presented each couple with a silver key ring, Manweb T-shirt and pen and pencil set. Later Gordon was on the receiv-

ing end, when he was presented with an Olympus camera to mark his retirement after 27 years' service.

The get-together coincided with St Valentine's Day, and the couples enjoyed a romantic dinner dance, with flowers and chocolates provided for the wives. The dinner tables were beautifully set up by Gordon's wife Bea, with heart-shaped balloons and 'goody bags'.

During the weekend there was also a chance for everyone to explore the historic city of Chester and surrounding areas.

Gordon said: "It was most enjoyable, with excellent accommodation and sumptuous meals. While the wives complained that their respective husbands were never at home, the chauffeurs swapped often told tales of speeding and escaping the 'law' and longest distances covered in the shortest times!"



The chauffeurs and their wives during their annual get-together, hosted this year by Manweb.

DONATION TO HELP THE DEAF

A NEW regional organisation for deaf and hard of hearing people in North Wales has come a step closer to being launched, with the help of Manweb.

The Company has donated £1,000 to Clwyd Deaf Society, which is co-ordinating the setting up of the new organisation.



Manweb's donation will provide sign language interpreters at a public meeting about the project at the Aberconwy Centre, Llandudno, on April 24.

John Hampson, Manweb's

Clwyd District Manager, is pictured (left) presenting the cheque to Clwyd Deaf Society Director Ken Butterfield and Emily Bush, a member of the Society's Executive Committee.



SNAP TO IT!

A SNAPPY reminder to all those budding photographers! The 1993 Contact Photographic Competition is now underway and we are looking for your favourite photos once again.

The closing date for the competition, sponsored by Ascott's of Chester, is Monday, May 3 and the lucky winners will be announced shortly after in the

June edition of Contact, once the judging has taken place.

Send your entries to, or for further information contact: Rob Skinner, Contact, Room 5E1, Manweb, Sealand Road, Chester, CH1 4LR, with your envelope marked "Photographic Competition".

Each entry must be titled, and the class of entry clearly stated. A full set of rules is printed in the March edition of Contact.

RETIREMENT 60 65 NEWS

Active and lively

RETIRED we are — stagnating we most certainly are not.

The North Mersey Retired Staff Association is in fact very active and lively, providing all year round entertainment for our members as the following programme will clearly indicate.

In addition other events and visits to places of interest are envisaged including hopefully a summer visit to Blackpool. The Committee are also constantly looking for suggestions and ideas on how to entertain our members prior to the com-

mencement of each monthly general meeting. Over the last few years we have made contact with other retired staff. Our visits to Trawsfynydd and their return visits to us have now become firm annual events in both calendars. Last year, for the first time, we met our colleagues and friends ("The Crinklies") from Rhyl when they called to visit us after their day out in Blackpool. We all had a very delightful evening and enjoyed each others company — not surprising as they are mainly "exiled Scousers". They will certainly be made welcome

again when next they decide to visit us.

Commencing in the spring we intend to continue the series of "City Walks" begun last year. These are short walks involving places of historic interest in the Liverpool city centre. They are organised by a City guide, our ex-Manweb colleague from Bridle Road, Brian King.

Retired members wishing to participate in this active friendly group on request will be forwarded a membership form.

Roy Roughly
Honorary Secretary
Telephone no. 051-521 4111.

NOTICE TO PENSIONERS

FROM February 1, 1993, Medicash introduced an improved multi-rate scheme offering a wider choice to members depending on their personal circumstances. Information on the new scheme can be obtained by contacting Medicash, along with full details of a "Special Offer" for all Manweb pensioners where the waiting period will be waived for all registrations on the new benefit levels received before April 30, 1993.

Contact Medicash on 051-236 7051, Marketing Department or write to 7 Sir Thomas Street, Liverpool L1 6HE.

NORTH WIRRAL (ELECTRICITY) RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATION

AGM

North Wirral (Electricity) Retired Staff Association Annual General Meeting at 2.30pm on May 5 at District Office, Prenton Way, Birkenhead.

All retired members of Manweb, CEEB and CFU residing in the district are invited to join us. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 2.30pm.

GWYNEDD FLOURISHES

THE Gwynedd District Retired Staff Association is continuing to flourish. It holds monthly meetings with speakers at the District Office, Caernarfon, in the winter. This summer the association has arranged monthly visits including trips to Llechwedd Slate Caverns, Bridgemere Gardens, the International Eisteddfod, Llangollen, Aberystwyth and York.

Any retired staff wishing to join should contact Keith Jones on

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Skills helped set high standards

MANWEB director Mrs Sheila Garston (pictured) retired at the end of March after twelve years with the Company.



Mrs Garston became a board member of Manweb in 1981, and has been a non-executive director of Manweb plc since privatisation in 1990.

Prior to joining Manweb she was a member of the Electricity Consultative Council.

Commenting on Mrs Garston's retirement Manweb Chief Executive John Roberts said: "Mrs Garston's skill and experience were invaluable in helping us deliver the high standard of service our customers expect. On behalf of the Company I'd like to express our thanks for her hard work, and wish her well for the future."

A former Mayor of the City

of Chester, Mrs Garston has wide experience of local government. In April 1991 the City Council conferred upon her the title of Honorary Alderman.

Mrs Garston is a governor of Upton High School, Dorin Park Special School and Mill View School, Upton, having also served as Chairman of their governing bodies.

She is also highly involved in numerous other local organisations and activities.

Originally from South Wales Mrs Garston moved to Chester as a child. She is married with a grown up son, and lives in Upton. Her interests include golf and amateur dramatics.



BOOST FOR BUSINESSES

BUDDING businesses have been given a cash injection from Manweb to help them set up in the Borough of Knowsley.

The company has donated £1,000 to Knowsley Business Advice Agency, which provides practical assistance for new and existing small firms.

Set up in 1984, the Agency's aim is to increase employment opportunities and boost the local economy. It provides free and confidential advice on most aspects of setting up and running a small business.

Manweb's Area Energy Sales Manager Cliff Haviland is pictured (left) presenting the cheque to Lyndon Symonds, the Agency's Director

FREE ADS

Holidays

Llandudno - Branstone Hotel. Privately owned and licensed, central, level position closes to shops and promenade. Complimentary beverages served on request to guests, welcoming pot of tea or coffee and slice of Bara Brith served on arrival. Standard rooms £14 per person b&b, en suite £16 per person. Optional 5-course evening meal £8 per person. Children under 12 half price when sharing parents' room. Reduced rates for week's stay. Bookings now being taken for the Llandudno Victorian Extravaganza, May 1-3 1993. Book early to avoid disappointment. To make your reservation tel. Jan or Geoff Cole on 0492 876448 and don't forget to mention 'Contact'.

Leisure

Canal Restaurant Boat - 'Judith Mary' welcomes parties of up to 35. Cruise for 2 1/2 to 3 hours on the Shropshire Union Canal from Chester Basin (by Telford's Warehouse). Good food at reasonable prices, with fully-stocked bar, central heating, taped music etc. Enjoy a relaxing break in different surroundings. Why not arrange a party outing? Ring Keith or Pat Sowden for details on 9244 383887.

For sale

Caravan - Swift Corniche, 16ft, 6-berth, fridge, full cooker, fitted radio cassette, 12 volt/mains. Excellent condition, £2,750. Tel. 0244 682710 (evenings) or contact Ann Wait on 0244 381817 (daytime only).

Stunning Designer Wedding Gown - by Catherine Raynor, as seen in

top bridal magazines. Ivory Thai Silk, size 12, cost £1,200, price £500 o.n.o. Must be seen to appreciate. Tel Hazel at St John's Shop 700 2372 or (home) 051 546 4816.

Three Piece Suite - 3 seater, mink brown, very good condition, £125. Tel 0745 730783.

Tow Bar - for 1989 Ford Sierra, £25 o.n.o. Tel. Paul Dewar on HO int ext 3243.

Hoovermatic Deluxe - Twin tub washing machine, 18 months old, used four times only, £170 o.n.o. Tel. 0244 372753.

Clearance sale - Rods, reels, lines and much more (fly and spinning) including Hardy, Bruce and Walker, Greys of Alnwick, Partridge, D.A.M., Mitchell etc. Mostly new, some second hand. SAE for lists. Tel. 076676 2451 until 9pm. Gareth Price, Ffestiniog Tackle, 'Hafan', Ffordd Peniel, Ffestiniog, Gwynedd LL41 4LP.

Belling - Formula 3 turbo fan oven with double grill. Excellent condition. Move forces sale, £200 o.n.o. Tel. HO int. ext. 2233 or 0244 371489.

Golf Clubs - Gary Player anvil Senior Tour Irons (3 to S.W.). Aluminium bronze heads, Boron Graphite shafts. Cost new (SEA 1992) over £800, price £520, genuine bargain. Tel. H V Jones, 0970 615812.

Master System - Good condition, 3 games, 1 light phaser, 1 control pad, £60 o.n.o. Contact Christopher Brown on 0970 623345.

Bargain - Luxury 2-berth Abbey GT213 caravan, 1986

LOAN SERVICE

We are delighted to announce the launch of a new service for employees of Manweb - a preferential loan service designed exclusively for you.

The scheme is operated by NWS BANK plc, part of the Bank of Scotland Group. The preferential rates are designed to reflect your professional status.

The preferential loan offers you:-

- Preferential interest rate of 19.9 APR
- Up to £10,000 available
- Unsecured finance - no security is required
- Optional repayment protection available
- Loans considered for any purpose.

If you need finance you can apply for your preferential loan by calling NWS FREE on 0800 616505

You must quote Response Code GSMANW to ensure you obtain your preferential rate.

The lines are open:-

Weekdays 8.30am to 8.30pm
Saturdays 9.00am to 6.00pm
Sundays 9.30am to 5.30pm

Please have your personal and banking details at hand when you call as you will be asked for these when making your application.

Credit facilities are provided by NWS Trust Ltd, NWS House, City Road, Chester, CH99 3AN. Written quotations are available on request.

vgc. H/c shower, oven, fridge, mains charger and cable, Trio awning, spare wheel etc, £3,500. Tel. 0978 364677.

Kimbara - Acoustic guitar, mint condition, good reason for sale. £100 o.n.o. Tel. Brian on 0691 654157.

Caravan - Elddis Mistral, 1980, 2-berth, in excellent condition, £1,150 o.n.o. Tel. 0270 255487 after 2pm.

Tandum Pram/Buggy - Full-sized shopping tray underneath. Comes complete with rain cover and sun canopy, plus many extras including baby change bag, blankets, pram toy etc. Cost £240, not used more than half a dozen times. Will sell for £150 o.n.o. First person to see will buy. Tel. Runcorn (0928) 563159.

Rocking Horse - Full scale, traditional, hand-carved in mahogany on ash stand, lacquered, leather saddle, harness and reins, horse hair mane and tail. Height to saddle 36" x 60" length, £850. Tel. 0244 532463.

Hotpoint De-Luxe - Front-loading washing machine - timer for sale, 95490 series, £25 (£75 new). Tel. 0766 830 349.

Invalid Single Bed - Electrically operated, complete with headboard, as new condition. Cost £1,200, will accept £650. Tel. 0928 577898.

Property

Detached bungalow - Two bedroom in quiet residential park in St Asaph. Living room, morning room, kitchen and bathroom, gas central heating. Attached garage. Room for loft extension. Easily manageable gardens to front and rear. £51,750, including fitted carpets. No chain. Vacant possession. Tel. Gordon on 0244 660859.

Wallasey - 4 bedroom house in Rice Lane. 2 entertaining, large kitchen, £29,950. Tel. Graeme Cooper, Head Office 2089.

House to Rent - Rhos, near Wrexham, newly-built, 2-bedrooms, fully furnished, £340 per calendar month. Will consider renting out one bedroom, £38 per week, inclusive of bills. Tel. Nicola Barnes on HO int ext 2918 or 0978 356910.

Mynydd Isa - 3-bedroom semi-detached, gas central heating, part double-glazed, large garage, gardens front and rear, £53,500 o.n.o. Tel. M Haslehurst 0244 654219 (day) or 035286 332 (evening/week-end).

Personal

Marcher Caravans - For all your caravan requirements. Large stock of accessories, leisure wear, plus repairs and servicing. Run by retired Manweb employee. Discount to staff and retired personnel. Rear of Imperial Garage, Rhostyllen, Wrexham, tel. 0978 362704.

Leadcharm - Artists in Lead. Leadlights, bevel clusters and sandblasted designs for windows, transoms, doors and conservatories. Free estimates, tel. 051 548 3733 or (evenings) 051 931 4325.

Vehicles

Golf GTI - J-reg, 3-door, 18,000 miles, 1800cc, Royal Blue metallic, BBS alloys, s/roof, trip computer, pull-out radio/cassette, f.s.h. One owner, VW Recovery immaculate, fully-alarmed, £8,650 o.n.o. Tel. Brian on 051 339 1689.

MG 1300 - Saloon, 1969, fawn brown, taxed to Dec. 1993, 46,000 miles, immaculate condition, £3,000. Tel. 0978 364580.

Vauxhall Astra - 1.6L Estate, J-reg, 11,500 miles. 16 months' warranty, f.f. sunroof, white, 1 owner, radio/cassette, excellent condition, £6,400 o.n.o. Tel. 0244 531665.

Wanted

Dead or Alive - East European motorcycles, scooters and mopeds, and any spare parts, eg Jawa, CZ, MZ, DKW, Mustang, Neval and Cossack, for North Wales Club activities. Age and rust not a problem. Or if you run one of these machines and would like to know more about the club or come to a rally, just give us a ring. James for Jawa, CZ and Mustang on 0352 752049, Steve for MZ, Cossack, Neval and Simpson etc on 0352 758351.

HOTEL SPECIAL OFFER



The Granada owned Victoria and Albert Hotel, in Manchester, is offering a specially discounted rate for Contact readers to enjoy a luxurious weekend in this elegant television themed hotel.

Throughout your stay you will be treated with 4 star service and enjoy the sumptuous surroundings of this unique international standard hotel.

Guests arrive on Friday afternoon and check in at reception. Each bedroom is not only numbered but also named after a Granada Television programme.

There is a choice of two restaurants, the Sherlock Holmes, and for a more informal dining experience, the Cafe Maigret.

On Saturday morning, after a full English breakfast, readers will be able to visit Europe's only television themed attraction, Granada Studios Tour, situated across the road from the hotel.

They will be given a full guided backstage tour, followed by a nostalgic walk down Victorian Baker Street, home of the legendary Sherlock Holmes, finishing with a stroll down the hallowed cobbles of Coronation Street. There are a further seven, half-hour attractions for guests to enjoy providing a full day's entertainment.

Once again, dining in the hotel in the evening is optional. Readers may wish to take advantage of Manchester's nightlife including its theatres (the Opera House is just a five minute walk), Chinatown or the many international restaurants catering for all tastes.

After a hearty breakfast on Sunday morning, guests are free to depart at their leisure.

The date for this offer is Friday April 16 until Sunday April 18 1993.

The two night package is £65,000 per person per night including breakfast and admission to Granada Studios Tour.

This price is based on two persons sharing a room. The single supplement is £15.00 and children who share their parents' room are free and pay for all meals as taken.

To make a reservation please contact the Weekend Co-ordinator on 061 832 1188.

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SEALAND ROAD, CHESTER CH1 4LR

SPLAT'S THE WAY TO DO IT

IT seemed as though Whacko Jacko had made a guest appearance to Revenue Protection for Red Nose Day, but it actually turned out to be Martyn Jones, Revenue Protection Manager, providing a 'thriller' for his colleagues.

Other members of the team donned outfits of extreme bad taste as they did the rounds, collecting for charitable projects in Britain and Africa. In total, they hope to have raised up to £50.

In Dee Valley, the 'splat' of the squashed tomato could be heard throughout the district with their activities for Comic Relief.

All staff at Rhostyllen were charged one pound to come into work unless they were already wearing their red nose, and even then they were asked for a donation.

In addition, Arthur Hughes, Health & Safety Coordinator, headed a team of collectors who sold a further 288 red noses around the district.

Both Rhostyllen and New Crane Street displayed their large building noses with pride, hoisted and wired up by linesmen Martin Jolley and Nigel Roberts, with the help of Manweb Contracting Services.

At New Crane Street, a buffet was provide for staff, who were charged £2 before tucking in. In addition, 80

By
Rob Skinner

red noses were sold to staff who joined in the fund-raising.

All in all Dee Valley will have raised a grand total of up to £1,200 for comic relief.



'Raising' money at Dee Valley District Office, (l-r) Fay Thomas, Beverly Price and Arthur Hughes.



Left to right, Michael Jackson, alias Martyn Jones, Revenue Protection Manger joins Joanne Nightingale, Victoria Cooney, Peter Stenton, Kathleen Cooney and Kevin McGinley at the Revenue Protection Unit at Bromborough.



A leg up for Comic Relief at New Crane Street! Left to right, Kristine Stehn, Hilton Roberts, Collette Sarveswaran, Martin Washington, Phil Jones, Sarah Lloyd, John Burns, Sandra Parker, Linda Schneider.

BRAINS BRING IN THE CASH

CHESTER Sports and Social Club ran their ever popular 'Brains, Skill and Chance' competition at Head Office to raise money for Comic Relief. Over a hundred people entered in teams of four and competed in 27 rounds of brain teasing trivia, games requiring skill and games that boiled down to pure luck.

Around £130 was raised from the sale of raffle tickets, which

was generously boosted to £200 by the Sports and Social Club Chairman and Treasurer Eifion Jenkins and Chris Shepherd.

Pictured right with the cheque for £200 are (l-r) Sue Linton Secretary Sports and Social Club, Andrea Gardner, Eifion Jenkins Sports and Social Club Chairman & Treasurer, Eugene Gallagher, Anne-Marie Gardner and Chris Shepherd.



ROCK'S RETURN

GWYNEDD's meter reading Foreman Dave "Rock" Evans, recently received a bonus of two bottles of bubbly, presented for being the top district when it came to monthly meter reading returns.

"Rock" is pictured receiving his prize from District Liaison Officer, Leo Moylan.

Society sets dates

THE Head Office Sports and Social Club Golf Society held its AGM in the senior managers dining room. Sixteen members were present at the meeting at which the captain for 1993, Emyr Rowlands, took office. Fixtures for the season were announced as follows:

- Leasowe GC April 23
- Warrington GC May 5 (Murphy event)
- Rhuddlan GC June 7 (Geoffrey Barnes Trophy)
- Wrexham GC June 25 (Bernie Green Trophy)
- Padeswood & Buckley GC July 6 (Gravett Cup)
- Denbigh GC July 26 (Inter District Trophy)
- Oswestry GC Sept. 3 (Captains Day)
- Llangollen GC Sept. 27

Any member of the Head Office Sports and Social Club is eligible to play golf with the Society. Anyone who wishes to play and does not receive the Society mailshots should contact either the secretary, Mark Pearson (office id PEARSM) or the assistant secretary Ian Stockdale (office id STOCKID) for details.

Ambassador
2000

UP, UP AND AWAY WITH MANWEB

THIS is your chance to experience life on Cloud 9 with the Ambassador 2000 prize draw for leads submitted during April. All valid leads will be entered for a prize that will take your breath away — quite literally — as you become one of those magnificent men (or women) in their flying machines!

That's right! This is your chance to win a flying lesson where YOU will be allowed to take over the controls and fly the plane (under expert supervision, of course!). Whether you want to fly purely for fun, or as the first step towards training for a private Pilot's Licence, this will be an excellent way to start.

Your prize will commence on a more down to earth level — with both feet firmly on the ground in fact as you'll receive a full briefing session with your instructor before you take to the skies in a dual controlled two seater training plane. And after that, what can we say, but "the sky's the limit!" It's over to you to take up the up the joystick, check the controls and enjoy the flight and the aerial views.

You can take advantage of your flying lesson at a number of regional airports, and in no time we'll have you flying high with Ambassador 2000. So it's chocks away, and make sure you take the lead in sending in those claims! After all, you don't want to find yourself grounded!

The qualifying period for Up, Up and Away is April 5 - April 30 and there are two prizes available.

With Ambassador 2000, you can guarantee it will be plane sailing!



Parcing ticket for Pat

A WEEKEND break at one of Center Parcs' holiday resorts was just the ticket for Pat Murphy, of Clwyd District.

Pat was the winner of Ambassador 2000's Center Parcs prize draw, and in addition to the family weekend away she was presented with £200 worth of vouchers to spend at the resort.

Clwyd District Manager John Hampson is pictured presenting Pat, who works in the Administration Section, with her vouchers.