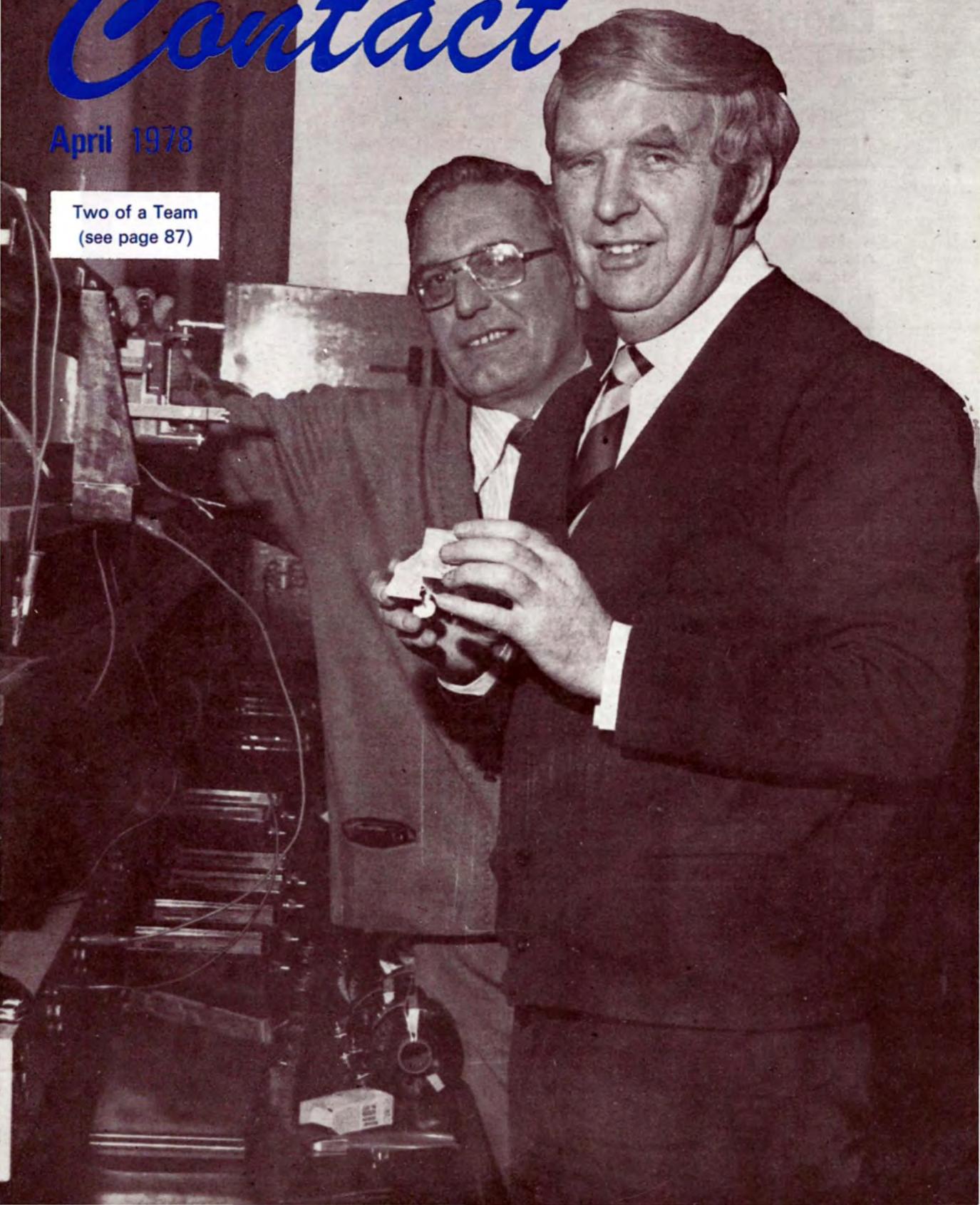


Contact

April 1978

Two of a Team
(see page 87)



People

OUR NEW CHIEF ACCOUNTANT

Mr. Geoffrey Barnes, at present Assistant Chief Accountant (Revenue), has been appointed Chief Accountant to the Board with effect from 1st June in succession to Mr. A. P. Whyte who is retiring.

Mr. Barnes entered the electri-



Mr. G. G. Barnes
Chief Accountant

city supply industry in 1949 and held accountancy posts with the North Western Electricity Board in Kendal and with the CEBG in Manchester before joining MANWEB in 1955 as Assistant Area Accountant in Chester.

Appointments as Area Accountant and Chief Internal Auditor followed and, since the Board's re-organisation in 1969, he has been responsible for Consumer Accounting.

Born in Preston and educated at the local grammar school, he was Articled and qualified as a

Chartered Accountant with a Preston firm of accountants. During the war he served in the Army in North Africa, Italy and France.

Mr. Barnes is married and lives in Christleton, Chester. His interests include music and golf.

KNIGHTED

Chairman of the Electricity Council, Sir Francis Tombs, who



Sir Francis and Lady Tombs
after their visit to 'The Palace'

GOOD LORD!

Board member Councillor W. H. Sefton, who received a Life Peerage in the Prime Minister's first list of political honours, will be known as "Lord Sefton of Garston".

Writing to congratulate him on behalf of the Board, Chairman Ben Hastings said that the honour was a "well-earned token of appreciation of all the selfless effort you have devoted to Merseyside for so many years".

Replying, the new Peer said that the honour "should, and really does, belong to all those fine people who have helped me."

was knighted in the New Year Honours, was present at an investiture held by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, at Buckingham Palace recently.

He was accompanied by his wife, Lady Tombs, and two of their daughters.

E.E.I.B.A. BALL

Mr. Richard Belling, right, the National President of the EEIBA, receives a cheque—for nearly £1,500—from Mr. Denis Dodds (Chairman of the West Lancs, Merseyside and North Wales Branch), the proceeds of the recent Annual Ball held in Liverpool. The ladies in the picture are, Mrs. Belling, left, and Mrs. Dodds.



Contact

THE STAFF MAGAZINE
OF THE
MERSEYSIDE AND
NORTH WALES
ELECTRICITY BOARD

Vol. 30 No. 4

April 1978

On other
pages . . .

TEMPTING AND TASTY

NOT all that many years ago the subject of British catering was almost a compulsory part of the stock-in-trade of any comedian worth the name. Seaside landladies, soggy cabbage, curly sandwiches, concrete pastry, bullet peas and dishwater tea were all grist to the mill (along with mother-in-law).

More recently, however, there has been something of a revolution in this particular field. The British tourist industry, faced with the sharp-edged competition of the Continental packaged holiday on the one hand and an invading horde of discriminating foreign visitors on the other, has smartly pulled up its socks.

To a large extent the culinary offerings of our hotels, boarding houses and pubs are no longer suitable material for the attentions of the comics, while serious critics tend to devote their reports to the problems which beset hapless travellers by road and rail.

A good deal of the credit for this change can be attributed to the ever-increasing influence of electricity in the commercial kitchen, and to the wide and versatile range of electric catering appliances which our industry has placed at the service of the chef. The deep-freeze and the microwave oven, to name but two, have made it possible for even the most modest establishment to provide hot, appetising meals virtually on demand.

The vigorous approach of our own catering specialists to the hotel and tourist industry in the MANWEB area—reported last month and again in this number of *Contact*—helps to ensure that poor catering standards will soon become a faint and fading memory as far as Merseyside and North Wales is concerned.

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Please let the Editorial staff know of any large-scale or unusual engineering schemes or commercial projects going on in your department. We are interested in people too! Contact us about your interesting personalities with a story to tell.

FIVE-STAR COMMERCIAL CATERING CAMPAIGN

On the Food Front

Rhyl...

Enjoying a tasty morsel on the Board's stand at the "Food Fair '78" exhibition at Rhyl. From left to right: Christine Hughes (demonstrator), Geraldine Leake ('Girl from MANWEB'), Mrs. and Councillor Ron Davies (Mayoress and Mayor of Rhyl) and Mrs. Gwyneth Hespley (Mayoress of Rhuddlan).



Staffing the MANWEB stand, from left to right: Bill Anthony (sales representative), Graham Monks (energy sales engineer) and Arthur Thompson (senior sales representative).

... and Southport



Senior sales representative Arthur Thompson chats with a couple of visitors to the Southport presentation.



On the opening day of the exhibition staged at the Royal Clifton hotel in Southport, our cameraman was able to picture members of the North Mersey District staff and a visitor. We see, from left to right: Ron Harper (energy sales), Lesley Ratcliffe (demonstrator), Gordon Thompson (senior sales representative), Betty Jackson (in charge of the Marshside Centre for the Elderly—and a former MANWEB employee at Southport) and Jane Redman (a student in training).

Approved for Safety

The third list of electric catering equipment approved for safety by the Electricity Council contains 94 items, an increase of more than a third over the previous issue.

The 'Approved for Safety' scheme was started by the Electricity Council in response to the rapidly increasing use of electric catering equipment in commercial premises. It provides an authoritative approval which is recognised as a valuable guide to the wise purchase of electric catering equipment.

Every item of equipment used in catering—even those not exclusive to the catering industry, such as hand driers and water heaters—are thoroughly tested to the relevant British Standards.

A copy of the publication, "Electric Catering Equipment Approved for Safety by the Electricity Council" is available free from Electricity Boards or direct from the Council at 30 Millbank, London SW1P 4RD.



Above: Mrs. Winifred Ward, left manageress of the Queens hotel in Oswestry, tries out micro-wave cooking watched by E. V. Jones (demonstrator) and Geraldine Leake (our 'Girl from MANWEB').

Oswestry and Aberystwyth

Right: Joan Dittrich, our Commercial Catering expert, talks about MANWEB's Five Star Service for Caterers Below: Top people at the opening of the Aberystwyth exhibition, from left to right: Geraldine Leake ('Girl from MANWEB'), Councillor Mona Morris (Deputy Mayor of Aberystwyth), Councillor and Mrs Roy Clues (Mayor and Mayoress of Aberystwyth), Mrs. Davies, Councillor Bryn Davies (Chairman of Ceridigion District Council), Allen Carr (energy sales engineer), Joan Dittrich (2nd engineer-Commercial) and Lyn Price (District Commercial Engineer).



Talking Notes

OLD SCHOOL TIE-UP

IT IS an odd co-incidence that four out of the ten MANWEB District Administrative Officers should be old boys of the same Wallasey School. The four, **Bob Evans**, North Wirral, **Peter Falcon**, Liverpool, **Arthur Ellinson**, Dee Valley, and **John Roberts** of Mid-Cheshire, all attended the Oldershaw Grammar School.

The more senior of the quartet, in years that is, Bob Evans was a member of Red House from 1941-47. He played rugby and cricket for the school and once ran the 100 yards sprint against ITV's Dicky Davies, who beat him to first place—well, he did go on to become the 'front' man for 'World of Sport.'

On leaving school Bob trained and qualified as an accountant, joining MANWEB in 1958. He held posts in Internal Audit and Revenue, and was 'loaned' to the Ghanaian Government in 1963 for three years, to help them set up their electricity undertaking.

After being seconded to

Mid-Cheshire as D.A.O. he was appointed to his North Wirral Post last year.

Another accountant who joined the Board in the same year as Bob, and qualified the following year was Peter Falcon. He was at Oldershaw in their Blue House from 1946-49, and he remembers Bob bowling his left arm tweakers. Peter too, was a cricketer and rugby player, but also liked football and later golf.

It is wrong to refer to Peter Falcon just as an accountant for he is also a qualified member of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries. Much of his working life in MANWEB has been in the personnel section and he

A quartette of 'Old Boys' from the former Oldershaw Grammar School, from left to right: Bob Evans, Arthur Ellinson, Peter Falcon and John Roberts. You may possibly make out that in our picture they are all wearing similar ties—not the old school but the Electricity Industry ties!



was the Senior Executive Officer at Head Office before he went to Mid-Cheshire and then Liverpool as D.A.O.

Arthur Ellinson was a Golden Boy (a member of Gold House) from 1956 to 63. He also played rugby and cricket. After leaving school he obtained an electricity supply industry scholarship and studied for and gained a degree in engineering at Liverpool University.

He became a chartered engineer and Member of the Institute of Electrical Engineers. He was in the Management Services Unit at Head Office before becoming the Corporate Development Officer in the same Department. He became D.A.O. at Dee Valley last year following a short period at Oswestry in a similar post.

The youngest of the four, followed Arthur through the School a year in his wake. John Roberts was in Green House from 1957-63. He made his mark in the school sporting records by holding the swimming championship for his last two years there. He was also a keen cross country runner and represented the school in this and other athletic events.

Like Arthur before him he too gained a supply industry scholarship, attended Liverpool University, gained an engineering degree and qualified as an engineer. He worked in the Commercial Department, before studying and qualifying as an accountant. He is the

third of the four to be the District Administrative Officer for Mid-Cheshire.

Snapped-up!

We offer our congratulations to **Mr. Mike Hall**, photographer at Head Office, on the occasion of his recent marriage to Miss Jane Roberts, a school-teacher from West Kirby.



(Photo: Adrian Chesworth)

On the other side of the lens for a change Mike Hall with Jane, his bride.

The ceremony took place at the West Kirby Methodist Church. Later, the happy couple went off to spend a few days honeymooning in Anglesey before returning to continue work on their new home in West Kirby.

Mike's colleagues subscribed to present him with a barometer as a wedding present.

Mid-Cheshire Pensioners

The annual lunch for members of the Mid-Cheshire Retired Employees Association, held at Wistaston Manor Inn, Crewe a few weeks ago, was very well attended.

Joining former colleagues to enjoy an excellent meal were District Officers, Messrs; **John Roberts** (District Administrative Officer), **Norman Walsh** (District Commercial Engineer)

and **Graham Zeiher** (District Engineer).

Members of the Association will hold the first of their Summer outings on May 18th when they take a full-day tour to the Vale of Evesham, starting off at the Civic Hall, Nantwich.

All Say "Ah"

We've heard some hard luck stories in our time, but surely everyone will shed a tear for **George Shoesmith**, District Administrative Officer at North Mersey.

George achieved a punter's dream with 24 points on his Treble Chance football coupons two weeks on the run. That might tempt most of us to make plans to buy our own private island in the West Indies—but we're sorry to tell you that George is still toiling away bothering his head about the problems of our consumers in North Mersey.

The snag was that on the first occasion there were 17 score draws on the coupon, and 18 the following week—resulting in George receiving cheques for £13.75p and £3.30p respectively.



The proof of the winning! George's bumper cheques.

tively (with a special bonus of 25 pence for a 23-point line!).

Undeterred, George will keep on pegging away for a brighter smile from Lady Luck!.

Intelligent too!

A 22nd birthday, just over a month ago, proved rewarding

and happy for our "Girl from MANWEB," **Geraldine Leake**.

It was on this very special day that she returned to the Salford College of Technology



Our charming 'Girl from MANWEB' Geraldine Leake with her awards.

to receive her Diploma following her successful completion last September of a three-year course in Home Economics.

At the ceremony it was revealed that of the nine people taking the course, six passed—four at Ordinary level, one with a Credit and one gaining a Distinction. Guess who?

Geraldine also received the Silver Rose Bowl awarded by the Milk Marketing Board for the best thesis to be presented. She keeps the Rose Bowl for a year but can spend the £5 prize money which went with it!

And she still wasn't finished. Our 'Girl' also collected a £5 book token from the North West Branch of the Association for Home Economists for her all-round achievement during the three years of the course.

Not only a pretty face... not only packed with personality—our "Girl from MANWEB" is also very talented.

University Student

A Sussex University student has completed three months training with MANWEB as part



Student in training Caroline Knight.

of her university science degree course.

Caroline Knight, who hails from Weymouth, is studying

for her B.Sc. in Home Economics. One year of the four-year course is spent working in the industry of the students choice. Caroline chose the electricity supply industry.

She is 21 and is one of six children, four boys and two girls. Her father Tony works for the Ministry of Defence, and Mum, Stella, used to be a teacher.

Caroline's training included three months at the Electricity Council, London under the wing of Home Economist Gwen Conacher followed by three months at the Council's Appliance Testing Centre at Leatherhead.

January to March this year she has spent with MANWEB learning about the organisation and function of an Area Board. At Head Office she has spent her time with catering specialist **Joan Dittrich** and her assistant **Anne Reney-Smith**.

She visited two Districts, Dee Valley and Mid-Cheshire, where Don Hinsley and Malcolm Cooper respectively assisted her in her training.

What were her impressions of the electricity industry?

"The sheer size impressed me" she said, "my only previous dealings with an electricity board had been through the shops. I didn't realise how vast was the organisation behind them."

Away from her books she enjoys cooking, patchwork, and walking. And what of the future?

Caroline says she would like to make her career in the Electricity Supply Industry, preferring to work on the marketing side of the organisation.

Wedding

At a ceremony held at the Holy Trinity Church, Esclusham near Wrexham a short time ago, **Rosemary Ann Deary** was married to John Bartley.



Bride and groom, Mr. and Mrs. Bartley.

Following the reception, the couple set off for their honeymoon in the Lake District where it snowed and snowed... and snowed!

Our best wishes for a happy future go to Rosemary who works as an engineering clerk in our Dee Valley District and to her husband John, who is an electrician with the Firestone Company.



"Play Safe" Film

A film which seeks to bring home to children, in a dramatic manner, the dangers of playing near overhead electric lines and substations, is currently being made by the Electricity Council for the electricity supply industry. Entitled "Play Safe", it will be ready shortly.

This was announced by the Chairman of the Electricity Council, **Sir Francis Tombs**, in London recently at a reception held by the *Understanding Electricity* educational service of the supply industry.

Aim of the service, which covers the whole of the United Kingdom, is to improve the knowledge of young people about basic electrical principles and their practical applications, and to provide background information on the electricity supply industry and on the use of electricity in industry, the home, commerce, agriculture and horticulture.

"It is the basic function of our industry to serve the public," said Sir Francis. "As part of this it is necessary that the public understands our product—what it is as well as the benefits it brings and its importance to the nation.

"If *Understanding Electricity* enables the rising generation to do just that it will be a success indeed."

Clwyd Retired Group

A busy programme for the months ahead is being planned by the Clwyd District Retired Staff Association's committee. Coming attractions include a visit to the Colwyn Bay Opera Company's performance of 'Pink Champagne', a visit to the Theatr Clwyd, Mold, for a show and supper, a day's outing to Caernarfon in July, and a trip to Erddig Hall, Wrexham, in September.

Last month the Association

entertained colleagues from Dee Valley with a buffet tea provided by members' wives and entertainment by the 'Silver Threads' Concert Party Rhyd.

Unfortunately the event was somewhat overshadowed by the illness of the Group's founder-Chairman, **Mr. A. Garman**, to whom they send their best wishes for a speedy recovery after an operation.



PRESENTATION AT OSWESTRY

Prior to a recent meeting of the No.9 Local Advisory Committee, Group Manager Mr. Joe Winchester took time out in order to make some special presentations to members of the District's staff. Our picture, above, shows a trio of ladies who received Certificates after qualifying as First-Aiders. From left to right, we have, Dot Lorenzo (general services), Joe Winchester (committee Chairman), Jean Hall (liaison) and Elaine Feeney (consumer accounts). Below, another threesome, this time award winners in the Board's Suggestion Scheme. Mr. Winchester is seen making a presentation to Ann Pugh (consumers accounts) watched by Geoff Purslow (2nd engineer-System) and 'J. J.' Pritchard (substation attendant).



FOR SALE

Reproduction copper and brass ship's lantern. 18 inch high, 33 inch diameter. Perfect condition. £25. Lloyd lamp, black £2.50. 'Phone: Gresford 2612 (evenings).

Suffolk 16 inch motor mower in good working order. £30 o.n.o. 'Phone: Wrexham 840932.

The trio of long service technical engineers heading the Board's three-phase metering team. From left to right: Messrs. Joe Metcalfe (42 years), Harry Chowan (46 years) and John W. Jump (44 years).

Three-phase Metering—Test and Service



In a neat and tidy workshop at our New Crane Street depot, seven members of our staff work on the testing and servicing of all three-phase metering used in the premises of MANWEB's industrial and large commercial customers. Three technical engineers, based at Head Office, complete the team.

Up to six years ago, this type of work was carried out at Board locations in Birkenhead, Warrington, St. Helens, Liverpool and Legacy. It was then decided to centralise on New Crane Street and all useful equipment was transferred there.

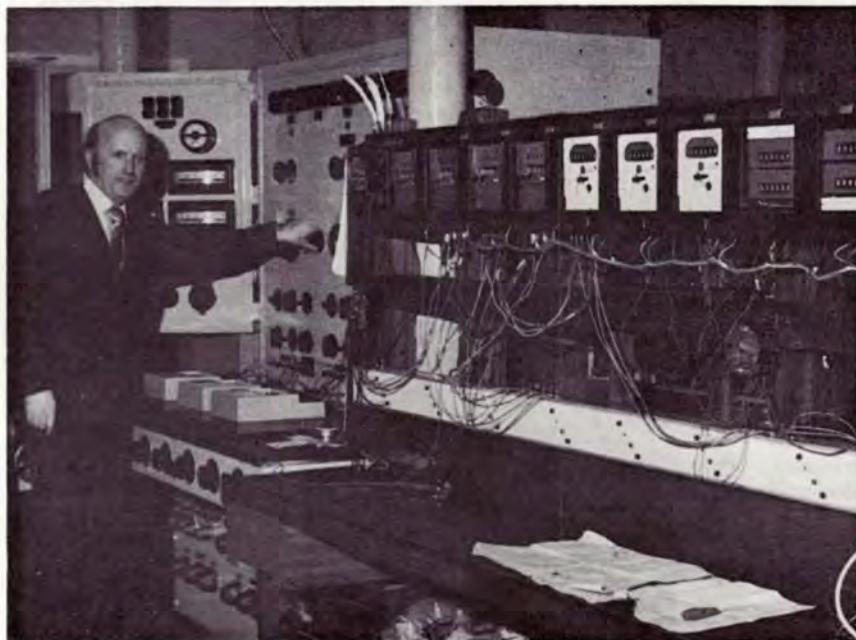
Then, a short time ago, a programme for replacing essential equipment was put into operation. As a result, two new 1000-amp test sets are installed and two more are budgeted for next year. In addition to the new equipment, air conditioning has

recently been installed in the section providing ideal working conditions for the staff.

Some 1300 metering equipments are tested every year at the test station ranging from 50-amp three-phase whole current meters to pulse-operated electronic high voltage multifeder metering.

Annual revenue amounting to around £130,000,000 accrues to the Board from energy supplied through three-phase metering in our industrial and commercial customer premises.

To comply with the Electricity Meters Act, certified three-phase metering is monitored by a Government meter examiner from the Department of Energy. He makes regular visits to our testing station to carry out checks on MANWEB tested meters and measuring equipment.



Gerry Davies, chargehand instrument inspector, starting up the equipment for a dial test. Gerry joined the Board as an apprentice fitter at Legacy over 29 years ago. He likes gardening and is an ardent fan of the Rhos Male Voice Choir.

Geoff Postle,
foreground, an
instrument inspector
and another former
Legacy man, has been
with us for the past 20
years. His main
outside interest is
football, supporting
Wrexham A.F.C. and
helping to run Gresford
Athletic football club.

Stephen (Harry)
Wragg, has been an
apprentice meter
mechanician for just
over three years. He is
a keen motor cyclist.

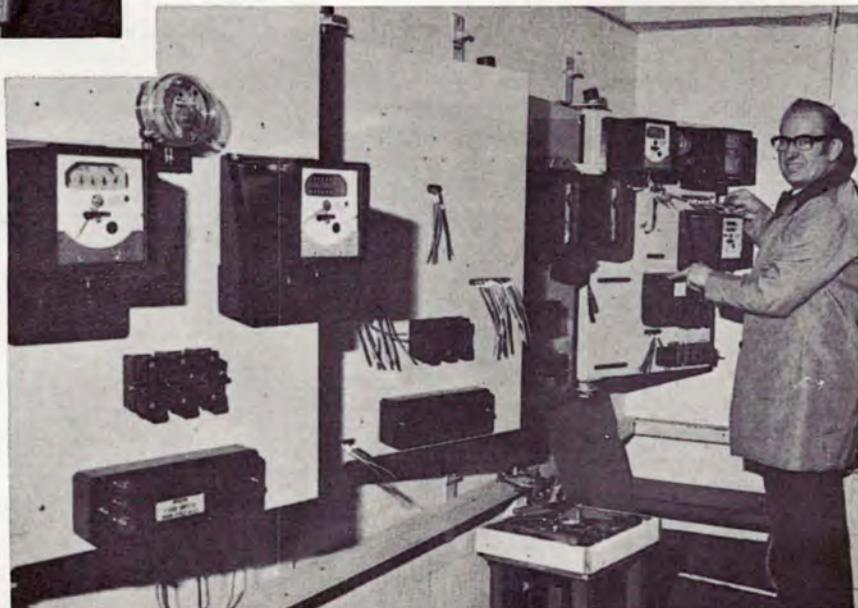


Bert Hall, instrument
inspector, started work
in our industry with
the former Birkenhead
Corporation
Electricity
Department 32 years
ago. After a spell at
Craven Street, he
moved over the water
to Lister Drive before
eventually joining the
New Crane Street
team. Bert likes to
read and is a keen
walker and swimmer.

Eifion Williams, an
instrument inspector
came to the Board as
a telecommunications
apprentice at Hoylake
eight years ago. He
enjoys cycling—touring
fashion. One man
missing from the team
when our
photographer was at
New Crane Street was
Michael Price, an
apprentice who was on
a three month course at
Derby at the time.

OUR COVER PICTURE shows
the Williams duo—Len, the foreman,
on the left, and Bazil, an electrician.
Len has been with the Board for
30 years, serving his apprenticeship
under 'Meter' Jones at Legacy. He
is a keen 'do-it-yourself' man, likes
gardening and supports Wrexham
A.F.C.

Bazil (the spelling is correct),
recently returned to the Board after a
spell as a salesman. He first joined
MANWEB in 1952, staying for
twelve years. His pastimes include
geology, golf, swimming and hiking.



PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

Speakers' Standards Greatly Improved

AN ACCOUNTS clerk at Head Office, Pat Dando, has won the Ladies section in this year's Area Final of the Electricity Supply Industry Public Speaking Competition. This was her first entry into the field of public speaking and she told us that her only regret was that she had not made the decision years ago.

Winner of the Men's section was Alan Edwards, North Wirral District's commercial supply engineer, who, at present, is seconded to Head Office staff.

Pat, whose only previous experience of public speaking was limited to teaching children in Sunday School, entitled her talk "*Big Bill!*" She explained to her audience that it was not to be a chat on marriage guidance but advice on how to cope with paying electricity bills.

She said that all forms of fuel had rapidly risen in price and meeting the three-monthly account was becoming a problem for some of MANWEB's consumers. Pat drew from her own working knowledge gained in Head Office Revenue section to give her listeners an insight into the human side of the MANWEB accounting 'machine.'

She explained how the Board tried to help its customers meet their bills by offering a variety of methods of payment. She mentioned how we were often prepared to come to some special arrangement with people who had real problems in paying their accounts.

For her excellent talk, Pat received a prize of £25 and the opportunity of representing MANWEB in the National Finals to be held in London in May. Here she will come up against Area winners from all the other Electricity Boards.

Alan, who will be joining Pat on the trip to London, will be there to represent the Men from MANWEB. His winning talk was all about a pump—a very special pump. This was the one used



Two of the judges, Mr. R. E. Halliwell and Miss R. V. Mooney, with Chairman of the panel, Mr. T. R. Smith, right.

to ensure that water from the River Mersey was used to top-up the level of the Manchester Ship Canal to compensate for the water used to produce the steam to drive the generating sets in the new 1000-megawatt Ince "B" oil-fired power station.

It sounds a trifle complicated, but Alan managed to put into very simple language—enough to convince the judges.

Runner-up in the Ladies section was our Mid-Cheshire District demonstrator Judith McIntyre, who just pipped Linda Harris, a clerical assistant in Head Office Commercial department, by one point.

In the Men's section, John Mayes, a 3rd engineer in Liverpool District's energy sales section took second place with another Liverpool District man, David Edge, a 2nd engineer industrial development taking third place.

The panel of judges was chaired by former Assistant Chief Commercial Officer Mr. T. R. Smith. A remarkably fit-looking 'T.R.', who retired nearly nine years ago, introduced each of the speakers to the audience, in the main, members of the Chester Branch of the Electrical Association for Women.

Comment from the Judges

After the final competitor had sat down and the judges had deliberated to come to a decision, Mr. Ron Halliwell from the Electricity Council and Miss Rhonda Mooney, a former Head Office typing pool supervisor with the Board and an experienced speech tutor, both gave their observations on the fine efforts put in by each of the competitors. Their constructive criticism was no doubt given to help the speakers in the future.

Another of the judges, Mr. Stewart Griffiths, a principal engineer in Head Office Marketing section, said that the quality of the speeches was very much

higher this year with the speakers finding new and interesting angles to their subjects. "I only wish that more young people, no matter what job they are doing with the Board, would enter for the competition," he concluded.

This annual competition for employees of the electricity supply industry, is open to anyone under 35 years of age. The subject of the talk is wide open provided it has some association with electricity or the industry.

Everyone at some time or another is called upon to address a gathering of people. It may be at a wedding, a dinner or a union meeting. It may even be a simple face to face meeting with one or two people when you have to speak for a few moments in order to make a claim or a point. The training you will receive on entering the public speaking competition will help you on these occasions for you will have learned to marshall your thoughts and ideas and to present them with good effect.

Men's Section

The five talented young men right, who spoke in this year's competition. From left to right, standing, David Edge (2nd engineer, Liverpool District), Alan Edwards (1st engineer, Head Office) and Neil Taylor (senior salesman, North Mersey District). Seated, John Mayes (3rd engineer, Liverpool District) and Alan Fox (3rd engineer, Mid-Mersey District).



Ladies' Section

Five attractive ladies, pictured below, who each charmed the judges with words of wisdom. From left to right: Linda Harris (Marketing assistant, Head Office), Ceri Wyn Jones (trainee demonstrator, Gwynedd District), Pat Dando (Revenue clerk, Head Office), Jane Fairclough (demonstrator, Mid-Mersey District) and Judith McIntyre (demonstrator, Mid-Cheshire District).



On site discussion with, from left to right: Pat Quinn (contracting engineer, Dee Valley), Mike Davies (Managing Director, Quicks of Chester Ltd.), Joe Forrester (installation engineer, Dee Valley) and John Wolfendale (electrician, Dee Valley).



Quick Service from MANWEB Installation Team

When leading North-west motor traders Quicks of Chester decided to expand their business and extend their service to the motoring public by setting up a brand-new £320,000 Parts and Service complex it was natural that they should turn to MANWEB for electrical expertise.

Quicks, as main Ford dealers, supply MANWEB with new Ford vehicles of various types, and cordial business relationships have long existed between the firm and the Board.

Established since 1957 in spacious premises in the Newgate, in the heart of Chester, where car sales and parts and service departments were all housed under one roof, Quicks found that growing business throughout Cheshire and North Wales dictated the need to seek room for expansion.

Just around the corner, in Chester's historic Bridgegate, a 56,000-square-foot building on three floors which had been vacant for three years seemed to provide the ideal location.

Much needed to be done, and as part of an overall plan to create a "Parts and Service" capacity second to none, Quicks called on MANWEB's Dee Valley District to tackle the electrical side of the job.

The first task was to test all existing circuits and to rectify faults. The firm's highly-trained service mechanics needed the maximum "power to their elbows," and first-class lighting conditions.

The low voltage power system was restored and extended, 3-phase supplies were laid on to two compressors, 11 car lifts, a service lift and five

(continued on page 92)



A fleet of new vehicles for MANWEB being prepared for the road in Quicks transformed premises.

Touring Through Thailand

Problems with travel documents caused Bill and Margaret Wallwork a little trouble entering Thailand. But thanks to a kindly and cheerful Chief Customs Officer, they not only had their necessary papers provided but were invited to breakfast whilst the documents were being prepared. Bill Wallwork recalls this first Thai meal.

What a breakfast—steamed rice with beef, pork, prawns, vegetables and omelette with water, coffee and china tea to drink! By 8.30 a.m. we had eaten an enormous breakfast, signed the necessary documents and received a parting instruction—it was more than an invitation—to have dinner with them on the day of our return to the border. The southern part of Thailand is hilly jungle interspersed with rubber plantations, bananas, bamboo and with frequent splashes of scarlet from the poincianas—flame trees. From the Thai frontier to Bangkok is 850 miles and we took four days comfortable motoring to do it. **10x10 03=01**

On the way north we were not doing too well in the search for a stopping place for the night when we saw an advertisement for the USA restaurant. Slightly puzzled but hopeful, off we went down the side road to get some advice in our own language. Arriving there, we found a Thai restaurant run by a man and his wife Usa!

However, our luck was in and she spoke excellent English and invited us to stay the night in the restaurant garden. We dined well on fish soup—rather hot—and fresh baked fish.

Arriving in Bangkok in late afternoon peak traffic, we drove through the gateway of what we believed to be the Malaysian Hotel only to find that it wasn't. We were one gateway out. A youngish man came out of the building and I apologised for our presence, explained the situation and said we would be gone within the next few minutes. His reply was to invite me into his office for a cup of coffee and he insisted that we stayed in the garden for as long as we wished. He was quite adamant and we stayed. This was the

beginning of a series of kindnesses which became overwhelming.

Bangkok is a stimulating city, perhaps because it is relatively young and very westernised. Thailand boasts 20,000 temples/monasteries, of which there are 300 in Bangkok. We contented ourselves with seeing seven or eight of the better known ones, all quite different.

For many generations the family of our host, Subit, have owned property in a small village about thirty miles west of Bangkok, and he said he would like to take us there at the weekend. His land is unbelievably fertile. He grows coconuts, bananas and orchids in great profusion without ever using fertiliser.

His native village is a small one situated on the bank of a river. Like so many others it is without sanitation or good water supply. Perhaps as a kind of noisy compensation it was full to overflowing with transistors, televisions and motor bikes. Subit told us that he was the only person from the village who had attended university.

We travelled in a long-tailed boat to visit his relatives in the surrounding countryside, which is criss-crossed with waterways. The boat is shaped like a punt but with a pointed prow. The draught is about 8" and freeboard when loaded about 4". A 20 HP car engine is fixed at the stern and this drives the propellor via a 10ft. shaft inclined at an angle of 30° to the water surface. It looks an odd craft but cruising speed is about 30 knots—a hard ride, especially when we hit the wash of a boat travelling at the same speed in the opposite direction.

From the river we turned into a series of canals which got narrower and narrower and shallower. Several times we touched bottom. We called on several families, all relatives of Subit, and all living as their forebears had done for centuries.

Home and Family

The houses were all of wood, some on stilts. Those not on stilts had an earth floor with a raised platform covering half the area. Furniture was simple—table, a few chairs, cupboard or shelves for crockery and kitchen utensils, bed and kerosene lamp.

Families are self-contained. They grow rice, oranges, coconuts, mangoes, bananas and vegetables, raise chickens and pigs, and catch fish in the canals. Rainwater is collected and stored for use as drinking water. The canal supplies water for other purposes. Maybe they distil their own fire-water—Mekong Whiskey—but we did not enquire into such a delicate matter.

Many people said to us that we could not say that we had seen Thailand until we had seen Chiang Mai, 800 kms north of Bangkok. We arranged to make the journey by overnight train. Our compartment for two was comfortable enough, and we slept well on

our polystyrene mattresses. We stayed in a charming little guest house by the river, recommended in the guide book. Most of the first day was spent doing the round of temples, each one different. Lunch at 'The Pub' near the University, owned and run by a Britisher and his Thai wife.

We decided to visit one of the hill tribe villages north of Chiang Mai, and we took a package tour. In our hearts we found it sad that these primitive people had been turned into a tourist attraction. They are making the best of it and have learned all the tricks—and why not? It is a means of survival.

Having solved our joint conscience by handing over a few coins for the privilege of taking photographs, we enjoyed wandering round the village, watching the tribespeople at work and play, inside and outside their homes, as well as seeing their colourful costumes and their handicrafts. Tourist village notwithstanding, life is still primitive, with a minimum of amenities and work performed the hard way.

We were sorry when the time came to say farewell to Subit. He had been an entertaining and knowledgeable companion and a generous host, this latter being completely in character as he is a devout Buddhist, having lived, like many other Thai men, in a monastery during his youth. In his private quarters on the first floor, he has his personal shrine at which he worships daily.

Our first visit on the return journey was to Kanchanaburi, eighty miles north west of Bangkok where is situated the cemetery containing the graves of just under 7,000 Allied prisoners who died during the construction of the 'death railway' between Thailand and Burma.

The ground for the cemetery is a gift from the Thai people and the Thai workers still carry on the

maintenance with the framework on the Imperial War Graves Commission. All grass paths were cut and there was a perennial plant or flowering shrub beside each grave. Wandering round the identical and beautifully tended graves and reading the names and inscriptions from the parents, wives and children we were very moved, and the memory of them lived with us for days afterwards.

"The" Bridge

A few miles from the cemetery is the Kwae Yai, otherwise the River Kwai across which is the famous or infamous bridge brought from Java by the Japanese, erected by allied prisoners and subsequently bombed. After the war, the Thai Government bought the bridge from the allies and the bombed sections were replaced by the Japanese as part of the war indemnity.

The bridge is still in use and we were fortunate enough to be there when a train crossed. Between the rails is boarded and this acts as a footway for pedestrians and a roadway for cycles and motor cycles.

The two best known floating markets still in existence are in Bangkok and Damnoen Saduak about 70 miles away, the latter being the one we visited. This market is a branch of the main canal, the whole surface being covered with boats, displaying between them every imaginable kind of food and day to day commodity. How they manage to move about is a mystery but they do. All the boats are 'manned' by women and girls wearing the traditional Thai straw hat perched high on the head. It is an animated, cheerful and colourful scene, with the boats constantly on the move and customers happily haggling with the girls in the boats. We could not help reflecting how such a scene would liven up the Mersey!

Arriving back at Sadeo, we did as promised and asked that our presence should be made known to the Chief Customs Officer. He immediately invited us to dinner, although we tried to suggest that it was too late in the day to impose ourselves on them. Not a bit of it.

An hour and a half later we sat down to a sumptuous meal of steamed rice and seven or eight side dishes of meat, fish and vegetables followed by fruit, coffee and china tea. Before the meal was over, he and his wife insisted, and that really is the word, that we joined them for breakfast the following morning. On leaving them, we thanked our host as sincerely as we could, not only for his overwhelming hospitality, but also for giving us the opportunity of spending almost a month in his lovely country.

* * *

The Wallworks' continue their mammoth round-the-world trip. When we next join them they will be bidding farewell to the continent of Asia.

Top Transport Cafes

for good food

The Egon Ronay organisation are well known for their 'Good Food' guide for top hotels and restaurants, but did you know that they also published a guide for transport cafes?

When the fourth edition of the guide was published a short time ago no less than eight cafes in Merseyside and Cheshire and six in North and Mid Wales received recommendations from the team of inspectors who had visited over 450 transport cafes.

In the northern part of our Board's area, Arthur's Cafe on the East Lancashire Road is very highly praised. Also named in the guide are Carr Mill Cafe, St. Helens, Dunkirk Cafe, Mollington, Poplars Transport Cafe, Lymm, Roger's Rendezvous, Liverpool, Valley Cafe, Acton Bridge and Windy Ridge Cafe, Kelsall.

Top transport cafe in North Wales is the Star Motel at Gerwen, Anglesey. Following close behind are the Clettwr Cafe at Tre'r Ddol, near Machynlleth, Gwynedd Cafe at Capel Currig, the Little Chef at Gresford, the Peartree at Newtown and the Tea Caddy at Bodelwyddan.

Most of these cafes are very well equipped with modern electrical aids which contribute to kitchen hygiene and food cooked to perfection at low cost. Electric catering equipment also helps to speed up service and reduces labour costs.



Good value for money with home made pies and cakes often on the menu at the Little Chef Cafe, Gresford. Pictured above are some drivers enjoying a cuppa watched, from behind the counter, by, from left to right: Menna Roberts (MANWEB demonstrator), Florence Ellis, manageress, her partner Thyrza and Christine Hughes (MANWEB demonstrator).

Electricity Helps

A beautifully clean cafe, adjacent to a filling station at Tre'r Ddol, just south of Machynlleth, is the Clettwr Cafe. The fully equipped all-electric kitchen includes a microwave oven. In the cafe itself—heated by electricity—we see the lady who does it all, Mair Warren, left, and her local MANWEB demonstrator, Irene Morris.





Colleagues of Mr. John Richards, centre, gather round to say their farewells on the occasion of his recent retirement. (We apologise for the quality of the picture but we had to make the block from a colour print. Ed.)

RETIREMENTS

Mr. J. G. RICHARDS

After 21 years' service to the industry Mr. John Gerrard Richards, a chargehand at Aberystwyth, retired recently. Prior to joining MANWEB Mr. Richards served in the Merchant Navy for 15 years, retiring from his last ship with the rank of Chief Officer. He came to the Board as a labourer in 1957, being appointed chargehand in 1964.

On behalf of his colleagues he was presented with a sum of money by Mr. R. Lewis (*District Administrative Officer*), to enable him to buy a fishing rod to further his chief leisure pursuit.

DOUBLE DEPARTURE FROM CLWYD

Friends at Cefndy Road depot subscribed to present Mr. Joe Davies with a farewell gift on the occasion of his retirement a short time ago.

Joe joined the Board in 1958 and has worked as a

Secretaries of Manweb's Retired Association

- Mr. H. Robertson, (*Liverpool*)
139 Lisburn Lane, Liverpool L13 9DE.
- Mr. G. E. Wheeler, (*Mid-Mersey*)
60 Lester Drive, Eccleston, Warrington.
- Mr. F. Jeffries, (*North Wirral*)
3 Rowland Avenue, Bebington, Wirral.
- Mr. H. Abel, (*Dee Valley*)
74 Smithy Lane, Acton, Wrexham, Clwyd.
- Mr. A. T. K. Knott, (*Mid-Cheshire*)
391, West Street, Crewe, Cheshire.
- Mr. F. L. Evans, (*Clwyd*),
'Richmond', Earl Road, Mold, Clwyd.

joiner's mate and a labourer.

Colleagues at the Narrow Lane depot in Llandudno Junction got together recently to present Mr. Clifford Rogers with retirement gifts. Mr. I. Morris (*Production Engineer*) made the presentation.

Cliff, who started with the Board as a labourer in a labourer in 1955, progressed to become a joiner's mate and eventually an m.v. joiner. His retirement has come a little early following a serious illness.

We wish both of these colleagues from Clwyd District many years of happy retirement.

Mr. J. HATTON

After 29 years' service with MANWEB, Senior Engineer (Civil) Mr. John Hatton retired recently. In his earlier years as the Board's architect and he played a substantial part in the plans for the new MANWEB Head Office at Chester. The initial (pardon the pun) concept was a 'T' shape before the finished design of the 'Lazy Y' was conceived by the contract winners.

During the war John was the Garrison Engineer at Warrington and at one time had 600 prisoners of war working for him. On one occasion he was busy giving one of his charges an explicit description of how he wanted a certain former stately home painted. He learnt shortly after the man was more than well qualified not to need his advice—he had been the scenery painter at the Berlin Opera House!

A smart dresser, he always wore a bow tie and waistcoat, John and his wife Alice have two grown up children, a married daughter, who is a solicitor and a son who gets married shortly, is a chemistry Ph.D.

A native of Manchester, John plans to return to his adopted hometown of Southport. He will spend



Drawing office and engineering staff at Head Office are seen here watching Mr. Harry Foreman (*Assistant Chief Engineer-Civil*), left, hand over their farewell gifts to Mr. John Hatton.

his time meandering in the Lake District, gardening and rolling woods over his local bowling green, an occupation at which he is quite adept.

Mr. S. GREEN

After spending the whole of his working life in his native city of Liverpool—including 37 years with the Corporation Electric Supply Department and then with MANWEB, Mr. Sidney Green retired from his job on the last day of March.

An administrative assistant in the Material Control section at Lister Drive, Sid worked for the Cotton Exchange prior to joining the electricity supply industry in 1940.

He has been a very active sportsman all his life. In his younger days he played cricket and football,

but is now quite content to play table tennis and bowls. He is President of the Electric Supply Cricket Club, Chairman of the Table Tennis section, and Secretary of the Bowls section.

In making a farewell presentation from colleagues, Mr. Peter Falcon (*District Administrative Officer*) recalled his own experience with Sid on the cricket field. Batting, the ball struck Peter's padded leg and Sid's finger of power pointed skywards to signify dismissal. Peter still claims that it was never l.b.w.—but now all is forgiven.

Sports, particularly bowls, in an administrative capacity, will take up much of Sid's retirement time. As a member of the Isle of Man Bowls Committee he will be crossing the sea to officiate there this summer.

We join with our friends in Liverpool District in wishing lots of happy days to Sid and his wife May.

A happy scene at Lister Drive on the occasion of the retirement presentation to Mr. Sid Green, seen here, left, receiving his 'Scroll of Honour' from Mr. Peter Falcon.



Fingerpost Covert

by

"Clwydian"

"Tis a Saturday—Late October
I am here—in a wood of
Silver Birch.
I sit among the trees,
basking in the
sunshine—the source of which all
too soon will drop lower
in the sky
for Winter—shining through
the trees,
The Birch leaves ranging from,
some still green, through yellow
to Brown.

The floor of the covert slowly
carpeting
with the leaves newly succumbed
to the night's mild frost—Soon
thousands more to follow to the
ground—A magpie flying right
how soon it is that he's out
of sight.

The sky is mainly blue, thinly
textured cloud flowing
on its silent
journey overhead—A fly
alights upon my paper-no-two,
one now only half an inch above
my pencil as I write. They are
both minute, one but an eighth
of an inch long the other a
quarter—yet, they live and
breathe, have legs and wings—
how wonderful!

I listen to the silence—broken
at intervals by automatic
shot—The
reason it fires I know not—
I know but that it disturbs me—
A noisy, loathsome, frightening
sound.

In an hour I will to Ruthin
to bring my boy from school, and
take him home to where
his Mother
and Sister are.

This surely is how life should be—
yet, it is right and proper that I
should think of people who have
it not like this through Political,
physical, climatic disorder or
other manner of disruption to
Human dignity and Life.

I look up from my writing,
and see
below me in the valley—
Denbigh Town—Therein
an Asylum
lies—Why this deranging of
human minds?—There is no
necessity that I can see.
Why cannot the inmates be
as free as you and I, with
minds as clear?
I must go now, I have
a way to walk to where
my car is waiting—
How lucky I am.

Help in a Crisis

Yet another letter from a
grateful consumer, this time from
Winsford in Cheshire.

"Dear Sir,

Few pleasures are as real as
recommending the good works of
other men. The efforts and practical
help given by Mr. Shaw, manager
of the MANWEB shop at Winsford
in dealing with my freezer crisis
earlier this year, deserves the
highest recommendation. He was
splendid.

His service admirable. His
advice generous.

Our crisis was averted and
saved hundreds of pounds worth of
food. My wife and I were extremely
grateful and felt that Mr. Shaw's
conduct should be given attention at
the highest level. Hence our real
appreciation and commendation.

Obituary

We deeply regret to record the
deaths of the following colleagues:

Mr. Charles A. Formstone,
aged 66, formerly with the meter
test department at Legacy.

Mr. Alyn Jones, aged 70,
formerly a storekeeper at Shotton.
He was the father-in-law of Mr.
Dave Jones, of our Shotton shop
staff.

Mr. John Llewelyn Jones, an
electrician at Johnstown prior to
his retirement in 1971. He joined
the Board in 1950, and in addition
to appliance repair work also
carried out meter changes in the
Rhôs, Ponciau, Johnstown and
Pentre Bychan areas, where he
was a familiar figure.

Mr. Billy McCabe, of Cart-
wright Street, Warrington, Mid-
Mersey District's oldest pen-
sioner, at the age of 91.

Billy, who joined the industry
in 1924 and retired as a cable-
layer in 1951, took a keen interest
in the industry's affairs during his
long retirement, and until last

year never missed attending the
annual staff conference organised
by the District's Local Advisory
Committee.

Mr. Hugh Pugh, of Aberyst-
wyth Drawing Office, after a
short illness, in hospital, at the
age of 48. Mr. Pugh had been
with the Board for 25 years,
having previously worked on the
overhead line staff in the District.

He was a keen fisherman and
sportsman.

Mr. Albert Henry Quinn, a
depot labourer at North Mersey
District. Mr. Quinn, who was
62, recently completed 30 years'
service with the industry. He was a
member of the Catholic Men's
Society and gave much time and
effort in the interests of various
good causes.

Mr. Arthur Henry 'Archie'
Williams, a labourer with Clwyd
District from 1950 until his re-
irement in 1972.

We extend our sincere sym-
pathy to the families of our for-
mer colleagues.