

Contact

September 1980

"Worth Calling a Cup!"

(See page 174)





AWARDED CERTIFICATES

At an informal ceremony held a short time ago at our Mid-Cheshire District Offices, Mr. Mike Metcalfe (*DAO*) presented First-Aid Certificates to five members of the staff.

Our picture shows, *from left to right: Dave Sinclair (meter reader), Mike Metcalfe, Liz Grover (admin. asst.), Brian Flint (electrician, Debt Control), Helen Ashton and Stephanie Porter (clerks).*

An unfortunate accident at work prevented **Chris Allott** (*linesman*) from being at the ceremony to receive his award.

Certificates Presented and Examinations Passed

"This is the best first-aid class I have ever examined," was the comment made by Dr. John Lloyd, a local St. John's Ambulance Brigade examiner. The class he was praising so highly was the MANWEB group from Aberystwyth District—the first class in ten years!

Nurse Dorothy Davis from Head Office, who took the volunteers through their training, said, *"They were much noisier than the North Mersey class, but they achieved the same excellent results by all passing their final examinations. They are a smashing bunch of lads—all NJIC staff, with the exception of the lone NJC man."*

We join with their District colleagues in congratulating each member of the class. Aberystwyth is now assured of plenty of 'ministering angels' for any emergency which may arise!

DISTRICT FIRST-AID COMPETITIONS

will be held on

SATURDAY,
14th FEBRUARY, 1981
at the CEGB North Western
Region Headquarters,
Stockport.

Volunteer stewards are needed to assist in various ways. If you can help, please contact Nurse Dorothy Davis at MANWEB Head Office ('phone 2145) for further details.

EXAM SUCCESS

Members of our Aberystwyth District staff who passed their final examinations in first-aid. They are, *from left to right, back row: Eric Roberts (admin. asst.), Bob Lovell (labourer), Dilwyn Thomas (linesman), Cliff Thomas (joiner's mate), John Parrott (engineering foreman), Jeff Bates (linesman) and Joe Braddock (joiner's mate). Front row: John Reed (linesman), Ron Davies (electrician), Nurse Davis, John McTavish (linesman) and Adrian Davies (electrician).*



Contact

THE STAFF MAGAZINE
OF THE
MERSEYSIDE AND
NORTH WALES
ELECTRICITY BOARD

Vol. 32 No. 9

September 1980

*On other
pages...*

Summer Shows	172
Talking Notes	174
Retirements	180
No Change in ESI Structure	183
International Philately Awards	184
Letters	186
Big Lift at Liverpool	187
Spring and Summer Schools	188
Photographic Competition	188

LEAVING WELL ALONE

TO the man-in-the-street, the electricity supply industry is his area Electricity Board—in our case MANWEB. The Electricity Board supplies his power, sells him appliances in the High Street—and sends him his bills! Despite those bills, he trusts his Electricity Board.

Occasionally he may read or hear something about the rising cost of power station fuel. It may also have come to his notice that there is something of an argument going on about the merits and demerits of nuclear power. Apart from that, he is unlikely to be very conscious of the workings of the Central Electricity Generating Board. These are likely to be the limits of his understanding of our work.

From time to time in recent years, there have been suggestions that the organisation of the industry may be less than perfect. Such suggestions will not have improved our public image.

The recent Parliamentary statement by the Secretary of State for Energy (reported elsewhere in this number of 'Contact') can be summed up as meaning that, although there may be room for better co-operation, the system works pretty well as it is, and that there is no need to tinker about with the legislation which governs our activities.

The electricity supply industry is lucky enough to have a loyal and committed workforce, many of whom derive no little satisfaction from doing a job which is vital to the welfare of their fellows. This spirit will do much to guarantee the effectiveness of the industry's promise to the Secretary of State, as it already guarantees our service to the whole nation.

Editorial

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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.



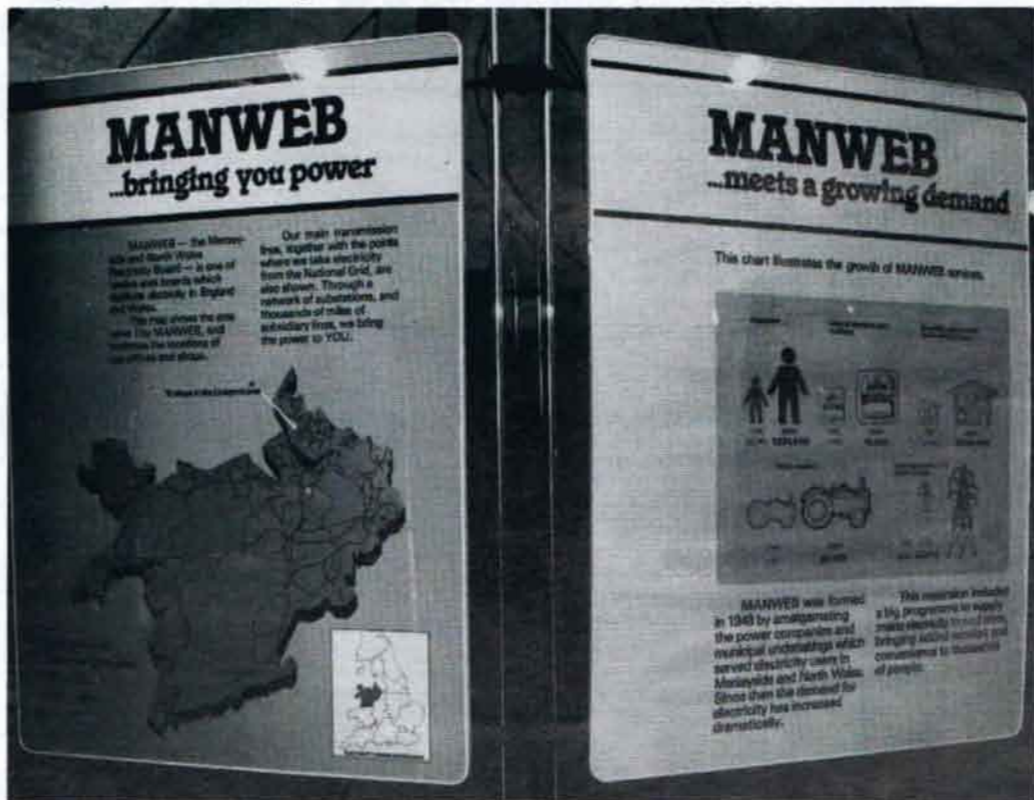
A popular attraction for the youngsters—a 'pedal power' generator (maximum output 300 watts!).

MANWEB AT THE SUMMER SHOWS

MANWEB returned to the world of summer shows this year, taking part in a series of joint exhibitions with the North Western Region of the CEBG.

A public relations display, explaining the electricity story from the national grid to the customer, was

exhibited alongside a variety of Generating Board displays at the Liverpool Centenary Celebrations, the Cheshire Show at Tatton Park, the Anglesey Show at Mona Airfield, and the world-famous Southport Flower Show.



Two of our display panels.

Trainee demonstrator Cerys Jones in action at Southport.



As part of the same programme, MANWEB displays have been installed on a permanent basis at the public information centres at Cwm Rheidol, near Aberystwyth, and the Ffestiniog pumped storage power stations. These centres are visited by tens of thousands of people every year, mainly holiday-makers from all parts of Britain, and also by thousands of keen anglers attracted by the fishing facilities provided at the CEGB reservoirs.

Big crowds visited the electricity exhibitions at most of the shows, finding fascination in the demonstrations of microwave cookery by our girls from Liverpool, North Mersey and Gwynedd Districts. More than 12,500 people passed through the doors at Southport alone.

Our informative display will be visiting a number of District offices during the winter, and has already been booked by North Mersey, Dee Valley and Clwyd.



Centre: Plenty of interest in our leaflets.

Right: The joint stand at Southport.



Talking Notes

BOWLING ALONG NICELY

MAKING a name for himself on the crown green bowls circuit is MANWEB computer project leader **Dewi Jones**. He has recently won one of the game's most prestigious competitions—the "George Davies Cup"—in an open contest in Colwyn Bay. He holds the cup—valued at £1,700—for a year, but keeps the £110 he picked up in prize money.

With the cup and prize money goes automatic entry into the leading bowls contest—the Bass Charrington Finals. Four bowlers from Wales and four representing England compete for the £400 first prize. The George Davies Cup winner and the Welsh champion are the two automatic entrants and the other places have to be competed for.

Dewi is 27 and single, and is one of the new breed of bowler—young and fit.

"You need to be fit," he says. "During this last match, I walked—or rather I ran—about ten miles. I have a tendency to run after each wood. So the days of being just a game for older people have gone. Probably the prize money offered by breweries has encouraged younger people to take up the sport."

He started playing bowls in his home town of Colwyn Bay at the age of ten. There was a bowling-green on his doorstep and he joined a local team. Now he plays in several leagues and, even in winter, he competes on an indoor crown bowling-green at the rear of Tranmere Rovers Football Club.

To win the George Davies Cup, Dewi beat 130 bowlers. For



Idris Mackin and Phil Watts

the recent MANWEB (Chester) Sports and Social Club annual crown green bowls contest he beat 15 competitors. Runner-up on that occasion was **Idris Mackin**, from Crane Street meter reading section. In a secondary contest for the first-round losers, the plate for first place was won by **Phil Watts** of Mid-Cheshire District material control section.

The Chester contest was organised by **Don Andrews** from Head Office Estates and Wayleaves.

OUR COVER PICTURE shows Dewi with the massive "George Davies Cup".

Research and Innovation at Capenhurst

Research and innovation are vital to the future well-being and prosperity of Britain, so it is imperative to look ahead and

consider how research can be used to improve competitiveness and profitability and to conserve valuable resources. The concern to improve the input from industry and find how industry can be persuaded to take the risks associated with innovation and its technology transfer was emphasised by **Mr. Matt Cowan** at a press open day at the Electricity Council Research Centre in Capenhurst recently.

Mr. Cowan, Centre Director at Capenhurst (and former MANWEB C.C.O.) said:

"Distribution research can be described as our 'in-house' activity, because our work is aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of our distribution networks," he said. "In contrast, utilisation research is our 'external' activity, because its objective is to improve existing electrical processes and to develop new ones. Our work is intended to be used by our customers."

Historic Degree

Twenty-two-year-old **Suzanne Vyse**, sponsored by the Board under the University Scholarship Scheme, has made history by becoming the first female MANWEB employee to obtain a degree in electrical engineering.

Suzanne, whose home town is Rasford, Newcastle-under-Lyme, gained an upper second-class B.Sc. degree in electrical and electronic engineering at the University of Nottingham,



Suzanne, B.Sc.

after four years' study under Board sponsorship.

Now a graduate trainee, she is based at present at Dee Valley District "learning the ropes" in a variety of different jobs.

Trapped!

A customer called at Holyhead shop requesting that 'A Mouser' be sent to her home, as she suspected that a mouse had been trapped behind the back panel of her cooker. It had been there since the cooker had been delivered two months ago! She commented that it could be damaging the wiring!!

As we cannot trace a stores issue note for an aggressive cat, we do not know who, among our multi-talented and fearless electricians, did the job.

Quick Thinkers

While working on a link-box in Chester Road, Whitchurch, **Martin Benson** (3rd engineer—System), of Oswestry District, was accompanied by **Terry Edge** (linesman) and **Brian Johnson** (linesman's mate) from our Whitchurch depot.

While inserting the links,

Martin was distracted by warning shouts from his colleagues, as a car, with flames billowing from under the bonnet, came to a halt barely six feet from where he was working.

Brian quickly assisted the driver, his wife and three children from their vehicle as Terry hurtled across to the land-rover to pick up the fire-extinguisher. Martin, still straddling the link-box, wondered what to do—run, in case the car exploded, or stay put and ensure that the escaping passengers did not stumble into the link-box. He chose the latter course.

Terry was back in a flash—if you'll excuse the expression—using the fire-extinguisher to quell the flames.

It transpired that the plastic air-filter had come away from its housing and had fallen on to the extremely hot exhaust manifold. The plastic had burst into flame and could have caused much more serious consequences but for the quick thinking and fast action of our men.

Terry and Brian have been at our Whitchurch depot for the past 15 and 17 years respectively.

Quick thinkers Terry Edge (left) and Brian Johnson.





Mike Hall, MANWEB photographer, captures his fellow camera-men Frank Astbury and Adrian Chesworth shooting Vilai Anuvareepong during a Photographic Society session. Mike managed to get in on the act—his image can be seen in the reflection on the flood-lamp.

Visitor from Thailand

After spending 18 months in Britain—the last eight weeks with MANWEB at Head Office—Thai student **Vilai Anuvareepong** is off back home to Bangkok, where her parents have a farm on the outskirts of the city.

She came to this country to improve her English and for secretarial training. Supported by her parents through the Thai Government, this attractive 21-year-old has studied initially in Exeter and more recently at the Sight and Sound College in Liverpool.

While she studied in Liverpool, she stayed with the mother of Head Office wages clerk **Christine Haresnape**.

Finishing off her studies with some work experience, she has

visited our Commercial Department at Chester. Her excellent English will be an asset in her native city, where much of the business is conducted in the English tongue.

Before Vilai returned to her parents and four brothers in Bangkok, the Photographic Society—forever on the lookout for models—persuaded her to sit for them in one of the evening sessions at Sealand Road.

Police Chairman

Congratulations to **Mr. W. R. Thomas**, ex-storekeeper at Legacy, who has been elected Chairman of the North Wales Police Authority. Bill, who retired due to ill-health some two years ago, has been a Clwyd

County Councillor for the last ten years, a Governor of eight schools in the Wrexham area, the National Library of Wales, and University College of Wales at Bangor and the Agricultural College at Llysfasi.

Bill still takes an active interest in trade union affairs and is a member of the Wrexham Trades Council, the Clwyd Association of Trades Councils, North East Wales Disablement Committee and Clwyd South Health Committee.

Let Sue Know!

Welcome to the 'Contact' "correspondents corps" to **Sue Passmore**, a typist at Aberystwyth District office.

Sue, who joined the Board last year, was born in Newquay—not all that many miles away from the District office—on the shores of Cardigan Bay.

She is quite well-known as a freelance writer and broadcaster, mainly on topics of local historical interest, with a book on the history of local sailing ships—*Welsh Sail*—published in 1976 under her maiden name of Campbell-Jones.

She has contributed to local radio programmes on a number of occasions, and has a range of articles and short stories, published in various magazines, to her credit.

Aberystwyth District colleagues are asked to let Sue know about everything of interest going on in the District.

M.P. Calls

At the invitation of Group Manager **Glyn Dodd**, Anglesey's M.P. **Mr. Keith Best** visited key points in our Gwynedd District recently to find out for himself how MANWEB looks after our customers. During the course of his visit, he met the three District officers and many other members of the staff.

Unfortunately, late the same night, Mr. Best was involved in a



Left to right: Miss Sioned Roberts (clerk), Messrs. Keith Best, M.P., Doug. Willacy (District Commercial Engineer), Glyn Dodd (Group Manager) and Miss Sandra Whiting (clerk), pictured at St. Helens Road.

serious road accident, but is now reported to be out of hospital and making progress.

New "Chemelec" Cell

A process for recovering valuable metals from solutions used in the plating industry was shown for the first time on the Electricity Stand at a recent specialist exhibition held in Birmingham.

Developed by the Electricity Council, the "Chemelec" cell has been proven in practical applications and results show a very short pay-back period.

One company is already successfully using a "Chemelec" cell for recovering cadmium from solutions employed in plating many of its products. Another firm uses a "Chemelec" cell to recover nickel-iron from rinse water in the electroplating process of the company's decorative tableware.

In addition to the cost benefit and conservation of valuable metals such as copper, nickel, nickel-iron, zinc, cadmium, cobalt, silver and gold, the cell reduces or even eliminates the possibility of penalties imposed by water authorities due to the level of contamination in dis-

charged effluent from plating plants.

Passing Their Tests

Two of our mechanical fitters based at Legacy, **Bernard Clarke** (chargehand) and **Phillip Lee**, have taken advantage of further study to become members of the Institute of the Motor Industry and the Institute of Road Transport Engineers.

Bernard joined the Board's staff in January, 1973, and, in

order to qualify for consideration in the MANWEB Incentive Scheme, successfully took his 'O' Level Examinations in Maths, English and Physics.

On 'day-release' at Chester College, he then sat examinations to become an Associate Member of the Institute of the Motor Industry. He has also been to evening classes to gain his Assistant Membership of the Institute of Road Transport Engineers.

Living in Johnstown, Bernard is married and has two children. He enjoys a game of tennis and is a keen swimmer.

Phillip joined us in September, 1970, as an apprentice at Hoylake. From there he went to Legacy, where he has been ever since. He too went to Chester College and is now a Graduate of the Institute of the Motor Industry and an Associate Member of the Institute of Road Transport Engineers.

He is still single and is an avid supporter of Wrexham Football Club. On the odd occasion, he has been known to 'bend his elbow' too!

Successful students Bernard Clarke (left) and Phillip Lee.



Lady Golfer Wins and Wins . . .

Rapidly filling her home with golfing trophies and prizes won this year is **Mrs. Cynthia Scott**, a clerical assistant in the Management Services Unit at Sealand Road.

She took up the sport only three years ago and she has reduced her 36 handicap to 25. Her latest and most prestigious achievement has been to qualify for the Regional Finals of the Dunhill Ladies Competition.



Cynthia Scott with some of her trophies.

Cynthia and husband **Don**, a principal assistant in the Secretarial Department at Chester, are members of the Hawarden Golf Club, and Cynthia has successfully represented the club on several occasions.

She and her partner won the Laird Foursome at Holywell and, in another contest, the Laird Shield—she rewarded her captain for selecting her by sinking the winning putt in a 20th-hole play-off, winning the shield for the club.

She has won three major club

competitions and was placed third in a fourth, having the best last nine holes. She has also won the monthly medal and a medal for a ladies open weekend against all-comers.

When she is not chasing a little white ball over the countryside, Cynthia is a busy Mum to two teenage daughters, Karen and Pamela. She also finds time to help in fund-raising efforts for the local Guides and Brownies Association.

Bridge Contest

The fifth Electricity Supply Industry Bridge Championship will be held at the Electricity Council Headquarters in London. The event will be a joint venture of the Bridge Sections of the Council's Millbank and Leatherhead sports and social clubs.

MANWEB will be entering two teams, led by **John Rogers**, senior executive officer in the computer section. Making up his team in the Swiss teams of four will be **Dave Croston**, **Keith Prowse** and **Dave Griffin**. The other quartet are **Dave Crawley**, **Joe Caldwell**, **Eric Pickering** and **Lynne Williams**. All the members of both teams are from the computer section, and play together fairly regularly.

Nearly 60 teams are expected to compete on 11th October, and we wish the seven men and one lady from MANWEB good luck.

Cook-Chill

A new handbook for caterers, published by the Electricity Council, "*Planning for Cook-Chill*", defines the system as being based on normal preparation and cooking followed by fast chilling, storage in controlled low temperature conditions and subsequent reheating immediately before consumption.

The food technology behind the cook-chill production methods and equipment is dealt with in detail by the Council's catering project planning group, headed by David Taylor of the Central Research Laboratory.

"*Planning for Cook-Chill*", a 60-page handbook, is available free of charge from Electricity Boards.

Time and Temperature

The new 16mm film of 27-minute duration, available free on loan from The Electricity Council, "*Time and Temperature*", is all about cook-chill catering.

It takes its title from the importance of both time and temperature to a catering system in



which food is cooked in central kitchens, refrigerated and held between 0 deg. C. and 3 deg. C. for distribution end-cooking and consumption within five days.

This method has many applications in catering, where the number of meals is known in advance.

Odd Job

Electricity Boards receive some odd requests over the years . . . but when our Dee Valley District received an urgent call asking if they could move a street-lamp to let a train get into a station, that just about took the biscuit!

But the call turned out to be not so silly as it sounded. The **Llangollen Railway Society**—one of the multiplying groups of volunteer railway enthusiasts who are at work up and down the country—were taking delivery of a new "pride and joy" in the shape of former Great Western Railway 0—6-0 locomotive No. 7754, which had been brought by road to the town's station on the banks of the River Dee.

Unfortunately, the "way in" from the roadway proved to be too narrow for the new arrival, due to the presence of a street-lamp—but it proved to be a relatively simple job for our Dee Valley District colleagues to move the lamp temporarily so that the loco could get into the station.

No. 7754—a pannier-tank locomotive—was built in 1930 and spent most of its working life in the Wrexham area, before being transferred to South Wales. There it was sold to the National Coal Board for colliery use until withdrawn from service and shunted into retirement five years ago. Now the Board has given it to the Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum, who, in turn, have loaned it to the Llangollen Railway Society.



George Harrison with the handsome John Greenhalgh Memorial Golf Trophy.

Golf Trophy Winner

Abergele and Pensarn Golf Club was the venue for the 1980 competition for the John Greenhalgh Memorial Trophy. The winner was **George Harrison**, from Head Office Legal Section, who beat his nearest rival by five clear points.

The trophy is played for annually by golfers who are members of the Merseyside and North Wales Electricity Branch of NALGO, and was donated by the branch in memory of former branch chairman John Greenhalgh.

His widow, Mrs. Betty Greenhalgh, presented the prize of a bottle of malt whisky to the winner. There was also a set of club covers and a commemora-

tive statuette for the first prize.

George Harrison, who is 35, first took up golf two years ago, after injury prevented him from playing soccer. He had played for the successful Electricity Supply team in Liverpool, for which he collected several trophies. Now it is golfing pots he is hunting!

He is a member of Padeswood and Buckley Golf Club and, until the NALGO competition, had a handicap of 23. Winning the John Greenhalgh Trophy cut his handicap to 19.

Two more members of George's club finished second and third—**Bobby Wright**, of M.S.U., and **Amyln ab Iorwerth**, secretarial. The organiser was **Ted Kelly**, of Liverpool District.



Board Secretary John Scudamore presents farewell gifts to a beaming Reg. Keen (right).

RETIREMENTS

Mr. R. J. W. KEEN

A Head Office conference room was jammed full of well-wishers at the recent retirement presentation to Mr. Reg. Keen, a senior executive officer in the Personnel section.

Reg., who is renowned for his Liverpool sense of humour and ability to make a mess of jokes, joined the industry in 1937 as a clerk with the Liverpool Corporation. He served with the armed forces during World War II, after which he returned to the Corporation, transferring to MANWEB with nationalisation in 1948.

In 1965, he moved from his native Liverpool to Rhostyllen, Wrexham, as a senior assistant in the former Area 4 Establishments Section. He was appointed principal assistant at Head Office with the 1970 re-organisation, became executive officer in 1975 and gained his final promotion two years ago.

A married man, Reg. met his wife, Sylvia, when they both joined a cycling club. They have a daughter, Gillian, who is a university student. They enjoy caravanning and Reg. is fairly handy with a camera and is also interested in aircraft. He is an amiable and tolerant man, for he hates cats and the Keens have two in their household.

We understand from a colleague who has visited Reg.'s home that it is full of excellently-completed 'do-it-yourself' projects, such as cupboards, shelving and crazy-paving, all supervised by Reg. and executed by Sylvia!

Mr. GWILYM PIERCE

After 23 years with MANWEB, Mr. Gwilym Pierce, an engineer in the Supply section at Gwynedd District, retired recently.

Gwilym is a man with a richly-varied career behind him. After graduating from University College, Bangor, he worked for some time for the former North Wales Power Company building transmission

Gwilym Pierce (centre, wearing spectacles) surrounded by his colleagues.



lines, for an aircraft firm at Llanberis, and farmed a 250-acre mixed farm for ten years until 1957, when he joined MANWEB.

Initially, he worked on the rural electrification programme, but also spent a lot of time on relief work at sub-Districts and shops, eventually becoming responsible for all contracting work at Caernarfon sub-District. On re-organisation, he was appointed design engineer in energy sales, and was later promoted to the Supply section—from which he retired. He was also Civil Defence instructor for the District.

Outside the job he is keenly interested in gardening, bridge and walking the mountains of North Wales.

On behalf of his many friends, he was presented with farewell gifts by D.C.E. Doug. Willacy.

Mrs. D. WYATT

A portable television set was the gift presented by Mr. Keith Sowden, senior executive officer at Head Office, on behalf of her colleagues to Mrs. Dorothy Wyatt, a clerk in the Queensferry stores, to mark the occasion of her retirement from the Board.

She started work at Queensferry in 1970 and since then has made an impact on staff and local advisory committees, where she has represented the cause of her colleagues to great effect.

Working in the same building in a nearby office is her husband, Milden. He, too, is a clerical assistant, and has been employed at Queensferry since 1947. He must be looking forward to having nice hot meals ready when he arrives home.

However, Dorothy will not be idle in her retirement. We understand she plans to take up some voluntary work, possible with the Citizens' Advice Bureau.



Edna Jones receives her gifts from Keith Griffiths.

Mrs. EDNA JONES

Friends and colleagues said farewell to Mrs. Edna Jones at a birthday and retirement party held at the Community Centre, Ruabon, on Saturday, 16th August.

Edna, one of the senior telephonists at Dee Valley District, completed 14 years' service with the Board, dealing with a vital part of our service to customers—communications.

After tributes to her helpfulness and loyalty were paid by Mr. Tony Shell, Mr. Ron Williams and Mr. Arthur Ellinson, a carriage-clock was presented to Edna by Mr. Keith Griffiths (*principal assistant—Administration*) on behalf of her colleagues. An indication of Edna's popularity was the number of gifts and cards she had received to mark her retirement.

Queensferry colleagues gather round to wish 'happy days' to Mrs. Dorothy Wyatt.





**“Good Health!”
to Bob Jones.**

Left to right: Messrs. J. L. Hughes, J. I. Green, W. Silvey, R. Valentine, Bob Jones, R. T. Jones, E. I. Roberts, L. C. Edwards, H. O. Hughes and J. S. Evans.

Mr. R. B. JONES

His many friends throughout North Wales—from Chester to Aberystwyth—will be interested to hear that Mr. Bob (*‘Tape’*) Jones, latterly a senior records draughtsman at Clwyd District, was the centre of attention at a gathering at the District office recently.

The occasion was Bob’s retirement—after 30 years with the Board—and the presentation of a number of gifts connected with his hobbies of woodworking, antiques and water-painting by Mr. J. L. Hughes (*system engineer*).

Bob, who lives in Rhyl, joined the MANWEB construction team in a general capacity after serving during the war as an engineer on ships of the R.A.S.C. W.D fleet. Wherever the North Wales rural development programme was being pushed forward, he became a familiar figure, recording details of the programme in the counties of Flint, Denbigh, Caernarfon, Anglesey and Merioneth.

ABERYSTWYTH RETIREMENTS

The good wishes of their friends and colleagues go with three members of the Aberystwyth District staff who retired recently: **Mr. John Powell**, a foreman at Machynlleth (after 14 years’ service); **Mr. Walter Robert French King**, a fitter’s mate at Aberystwyth (after nearly 20 years); and **Mr. G. E. Frazer**, a jointer at Machynlleth, who retired prematurely on health grounds.

Mr. T. ROBERTS

A popular figure at Clwyd District, in the person of storekeeper Tommy Roberts, retired recently after 30 years’ service with the Board.

Before coming to MANWEB, Tommy was with the Crosville Motor Company. During the Second World War, he saw service with three different regiments, and was twice wounded.

On behalf of his many friends at Rhyl depot, he was presented with a digital watch by DAO Alan Wadcock.

(Retirements continued on page 185)

Alan Wadcock (holding papers) wishes a happy retirement to Tommy Roberts.



NO CHANGE IN E.S.I. STRUCTURE

—Minister

Mr. David Howell, Secretary of State for Energy, announced that he did not propose new legislation to change the organisation of the electricity supply industry but would seek improved working relationships within the industry under existing statutes.

Mr. Howell, who was informing Parliament of the outcome of his review of the structure of the industry, said that he had not been persuaded that any benefits from bringing electricity generation and distribution together in a unified corporate structure would outweigh the risk of over-centralisation. He had therefore concluded that improved working arrangements could be developed within the existing statutory framework and the industry had given assurances that it would co-operate in a six-point plan designed to improve working relationships.

Mr. Howell's announcement on the organisation of the industry, which comprises the Electricity Council, the Central Electricity Generating Board and 12 Area Boards, was made in a reply to a Parliamentary Question from Mr. David Mudd, M.P. (Falmouth and Cambourne), asking the Secretary of State whether he had considered the organisation of the electricity supply industry in England and Wales and what his proposals were.

Replying, Mr. Howell said: "I have been impressed by the extent of co-ordination and co-operative working that already exists in the industry. I propose to build on the progress that has been achieved and, within the terms of the existing legislation, to develop relationships between the Council and the Boards, strengthening the co-ordinating and advisory role of the Council and of its Chairman, whom I regard as my main policy adviser within the industry, in the development of industry-wide policies. I also look to closer links between the Boards, particularly at local levels.

"The statutory responsibilities of the Council and the Board will, of course, remain as defined by the relevant statutes. I have been assured by the Council and the individual Boards of their commitment to my

An Electricity Council spokesman commented: "The Electricity Council and all the Electricity Boards in England and Wales have promised their support for the Secretary of State's proposals for more effective co-operation within the existing statutory framework. This will be a continuation and extension of efforts made during the past three years and can be expected to result in further improvements."

policy. In particular, there is agreement to develop co-operative working in the following ways:

- When consulting the Electricity Council on capital programmes and tariff proposals, the Generating and Area Boards will provide full information on the underlying assumptions and costs relating to those programmes and tariff proposals, bearing in mind the Council's duty of advising me on the maintenance and development of efficient supply by the industry. I will seek specific comments from the Council before approving capital programmes.
- The Boards will co-operate with the Council in the development of an improved financial reporting system.
- The Council will advise me on the further development of physical, technical and financial measures of performance by the Boards.
- The Council will review with the Generating Board and the Area Boards the structure of Bulk Supply Tariff with a view to considering whether changes are desirable and will report its conclusions to me.
- The Boards will co-operate with the Council in developing arrangements to encourage transfers of managerial staff between the two sides of industry.
- The Chairman of the Generating Board and the Chairmen of the Area Boards will promote closer contacts between CEGB Regions and the relevant Area Boards."

"Silly Sign"

—ON CAMERA
COMPETITION

In our July number, we invited the many camera enthusiasts among our readers to keep their eyes open for examples of public notices with a humorous twist to them.

We have had a few entries—but not as many as we expected to receive. Let us have your picture—in colour or black and white.

Give it a caption of a few appropriate words and send it to *The Editor, 'Contact', MANWEB Head Office, Sealand Road, Chester CH1 4LR*. £5 prizes for the most amusing pictures.

Competition open to all employees, past and present, and their immediate families. Closing date extended to 13th October.

MANWEB Man Wins

International Philatelic Awards

A MANWEB man has won three international awards for two unique philatelic volumes and has established himself as a world authority on a specialised section of philately.

Derek Lang, a principal assistant in the Head Office Finance Department, has had two volumes published on the subject of postal stationery in India. For his first volume he received a bronze award at the British Philatelic Exhibition at Wembley. His silver was for his second volume, exhibited at the 'India 80 Exhibition' in Delhi this year—the Far East's largest exhibition. His most treasured award is the bronze he won this year at 'London 80', a truly international exhibition which changes its venue annually—and this was again for his second volume.

So far he has written three volumes. Two have been published, a third is complete and about to be published, and two more are in the process of being written.

The volumes cover the period 1857-1977 and catalogue the postal stationery of India—not stamps, but pre-paid stationery items such as post-cards, letter-cards, airmail, etc. But they are more than simple catalogues: they cover the subject in depth, giving the history and development of postal stationery in the sub-continent in greater detail than had been available previously.



Award winner Derek Lang.

Volume One is an introduction to the subject with catalogues of the specialised sections, while Volume Two concentrates on post-cards of the Imperial and more recent independent Indian Government. Volume Three will deal with envelopes, while Volume Four will specialise on airmail and inland letters. The fifth (and, at the moment, final) volume in the series will give a price guide to the market value of collectors' pieces of postal stationery, plus any additions or alterations to the previous volumes.

So how does an affable English accountant become an authority on such a fairly obscure subject?

Derek, who is 59, was born in Plymouth, Devon, and for several years was a camp follower, his father being an officer in the British Army. He travelled to various parts of the world before being boarded at Portsmouth Public School.

At 15 he travelled out to Singapore, where his father was serving, to join his parents. Alone aboard a troopship, he rubbed shoulders with officers of famous Indian regiments, such as the Bengal Lancers. This, and the two years he spent in Singapore, sowed the seeds of interest in the Orient and



Left, the medals, and below, the first 'Pigeon Post' frank.



India. His schoolboy stamp collection had a high proportion of Far Eastern stamps.

Shortly after his return to England as a young man, the Germans invaded Poland and World War II began. Derek joined the Royal Artillery, serving with the 4th Indian Division in Egypt, Eritrea, Syria and Tunisia, which again stimulated his interest in India. Before embarking for Egypt, he had bequeathed his stamp collection to his younger brother, who promptly swapped it for a boat!

After the war, his son—like most schoolboys—collected stamps and, when the fad wore off, Derek took the collection and continued, concentrating on India and the Orient. He started to collect stationery, as it was cheaper than buying the stamps. However, he had great difficulty in obtaining information on the subject, so he started digging around himself. Eight years ago he started compiling facts, visiting museums, obtaining catalogues and pamphlets from various sources, and has received help from the National Postal Museum, the Royal Mint, De La Rue Printers (who originally printed much of the stationery) and John Dickinson and Company.

This searching has culminated in his five volumes which cross-reference existing literature on the subject. It has also led him to learn about some unusual

postal practices. Rocket Post was introduced in India in 1934 and operated until 1944. Mail was literally rocketed over short distances, across unbridged sections of rivers, gorges, over otherwise impassable mountains and from ship to shore. Pigeon Post was inaugurated in 1941 in India, but the former British colony had already seen the world's first conventional airmail service established in 1911, between Allahabad and Naini.

Derek acknowledges the tolerance and help of his wife Madge, who has taken notes for him at various museums and in the archives of various organisations. His son, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren refer to his painstaking research as 'playing at stamps'.

Will being an international author of philatelic reference books make Derek rich from royalties?

"No," he says, "the whole thing costs me money. I pay for all the correspondence, do all my own photography and, as it is the Indian Philatelic Study Circle, for which I act as research co-ordinator, which paid for the publication—any small profit will go to them."

If there is no financial recognition, Derek does have the respect of the international philatelic community, and an academic professor in India frequently writes to consult him on the subject, referring to Derek as his 'Guru'.

RETIREMENT

Mrs. F. A. COUPE

After 18 years' service with MANWEB, Mrs. Freda Coupe retired from her post as administrative assistant in the Finance and Management Accounts section.

Freda, a native Cockney born within the sound of Bow Bells, married Welshman Peter Coupe and moved to Wrexham. Peter is also a long-serving member of Head Office staff.

She joined the Board at Rhostyllen, Wrexham, and worked in the scrutiny section of the former Area 4 Accounts Department, moving to Chester in 1970 with the Board re-organisation.

Freda and Peter have two daughters, both of whom are married, one living in South Wales and who has made them grandparents twice over. Their other daughter is expecting her first child, and Freda's third grandchild. Whether the new arrival influenced Freda's choice of book from the L.A.C., we are not sure—but she chose one on needlework!

Assistant chief accountant Reg. Huyton presents farewell gifts to Mrs. Coupe, while husband Peter (centre) looks happy as well.



LETTERS

Lucky!

Nice note from an Aughton (Lancs.) gent to **George Shoemsmith**, D.A.O., North Mersey District:

"I am a 76-year-old man, living alone. Since living here, I have often had to turn to your meter department for help. I have always been shown the greatest of kindness and understanding. May I say you are a very lucky gent, being in charge of such a grand bunch of people—the young ladies who answer the phone, the collectors and repair men, and indeed everyone employed by MANWEB.

"You are to me the salt of the earth.

"God bless and best wishes."

Note.—We understand there is no truth in the rumour that the District's managerial staff are to pay the Board in future for the privilege of working at Bridle Road!

Efficient

From a firm of consulting engineers in Liverpool:

"We wish to express the appreciation of our clients and ourselves for the assistance rendered to the electrical contractor and also for the efficient change-over of supply from the existing to the new sub-station at the Childwall Hall College site."

Our man at District office was **Steve Wood** (2nd engineer — System) who organised the whole thing.

Old Friends

A note from a former colleague who left MANWEB many years ago—but still thinks of us!

"I am an ex-member of the electricity supply Hatton Garden and MANWEB staff, and left Liverpool in 1954. I still have 'Contact'

sent to me, and find it most interesting.

"I wonder if there are any of my old colleagues still about who would like to contact me, please? I would like to hear from them—it would bring back old times.

"With all good wishes—**John McClean**, 34 Myperion Avenue, Polegate, Sussex."

Help!

... and a heart-cry from **Peter Meadows**, of Head Office Registry (Room 4C20):

"In the garden, vegetable plot, greenhouse—and now a few being found in the house, hopefully only carried in unknowingly after walking in the garden.

"I've also noticed some (with wings) emerging from the mortar between the house-bricks—perhaps they find the cavity-wall insulation a blessing!

"Perhaps someone can tell me how to destroy them, and their nests, permanently.

"In ANTicipation of a solution to my problem . . ."

On the Ball!

Sending us the following letter, received from a lady living in Emery Street, Walton, Liverpool, our Liverpool District Engineer, **Charles Donovan**, comments that there are lots of young people around today who are illiterate compared with this 95-years-old example of sturdy independence:

"Dear Sir,

"Does the Manager know we are being upset with our lights in Emery Street? Four times in the last couple of months we have been put in the dark—twice in the last week.

"I am 95 and on Saturday I had just lifted a kettle of boiling water off my cooker to make a pot of tea when out went the lights. I could have had a nasty accident.

"I have been told it is the electric box in the wall that is at fault. If that is the case, don't you think it is time it was seen to?"

Speedy Service

A potentially dangerous situation was avoided when men from MANWEB in our Liverpool District responded to a call from a customer who writes:

"May we take this opportunity of thanking you for isolating the electricians at the above property within two hours of our telephone conversation. Your prompt action greatly helped us in this particular instance."

Quick off the mark were **Ken Rigby** (2nd engineer—Production), **Roy Atkinson** (foreman), **Peter Howard** and **Graham Curley** (jointers).

A Credit!

From a Moss Bank (St. Helens) lady, a note of gratitude:

"May I ask you to pass on my deep appreciation to the men who worked here yesterday after an explosion in the meter cupboard.

"For their help and concern please convey to them my deep gratitude, not only for the work they did, but for leaving things raelly tidy, inside and out, when through shock I was too distressed to have coped.

"One hears so much today of 'work-shy people'—all I can say is that these men were a credit to the Electricity Board."

Colleagues involved were Messrs. **J. Tart** (shift electrician), **A. Tucker** (engineering foreman), **M. Joyce** (jointer) and **R. A. Garvey** (jointer's mate).

OBITUARY

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

Mr. Phillip Imrie, a meter reader at St. Helens since 1977. Prior to that date he was with North Wirral District, having joined the Board in 1971. He was 63.

Mr. Ron Bilton, transport supervisor at Mid-Mersey District. He was 63.

We extend our sincere sympathy to the families and friends of our former colleagues.



Above: Starting the lift through the hole being dug, top right, and clear, below, on to the low-loader, right. Bottom right: The Liverpool team. Back row: Chris Tigwell, Eddy Quinn, Jack Frost, Dave Harvey, Martin Davies. In front: Eric Pritherch, Steve Pitts, Mike Pearson, Bob Walker, John Ingham and Gordon Littler.



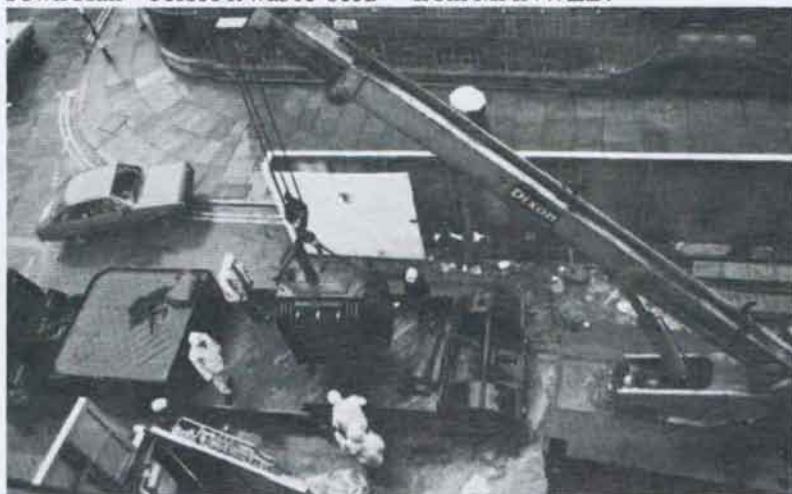
Just Routine for Liverpool

Removing two six-ton transformers from a basement substation was just routine for Liverpool District production engineering.

Two outdated transformers were being replaced by one new one in the refurbished Globe Insurance building—next to Liverpool's Town Hall—before it was re-occu-

piated. Manhandled into position under a hole made in the pavement, the old were lifted out by a hired crane on to a waiting low-loader, and the new lowered gently in.

No problems, no fuss—just another efficient job by the men from MANWEB.



SPRING AND SUMMER SCHOOLS

University of Technology, Loughborough
25th March—1st April & 1st April—8th April

University of North Wales, Bangor
1st April—8th April

Grey College, Durham
2nd September—9th September

Tapton Hall, Sheffield
16th September—23rd September

EVERYONE who has ever attended one of these schools returns to say that the experience was rewarding, instructive and thoroughly enjoyable.

POSTERS publicising next year's programme will be displayed soon. They will tell you how to obtain informative leaflets and how to apply for consideration.

ALL MANWEB EMPLOYEES—regardless of the jobs they do—are eligible to apply.

CONTACT PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 1980

The closing date for the 'Contact' Photographic Contest is the **3rd October, 1980**. If you have not sent your entries, do so immediately.

FIVE CLASSES

- 1.—Best Scene
- 2.—Best Action Picture
- 3.—Best Portrait
- 4.—Best Humour
- 5.—Best Nature Study (*animals, birds, etc.*)

£10 for the **best colour transparency** and £10 for the **best colour print** in each section; £10 for the **best black and white print**, plus an overall "**best picture**" prize of £15.

The competition is for MANWEB employees past and present, and/or their immediate family. Remember—only five entries per section, with the title, class and name and address of the entrant clearly marked.

Entries to:

Editor, 'Contact', MANWEB Head Office,
Sealand Road, Chester CH1 4LR.

A SUPERVISOR'S PRAYER (*Origin unknown*)

Dear Lord, help me to become the kind of supervisor my management would like to have me be.

Give me the mysterious something which will enable me at all times satisfactorily to explain policies, rules, regulations and procedures to my workers, even when they have never been explained to me.

Help me to teach and to train the uninterested and dim-witted without ever losing my patience and my temper.

Give me that love of my fellowmen which passeth all understanding, so that I may lead the recalcitrant, obstinate, no-good worker into the path of righteousness by my own example and my soft persuading remonstrance, instead of busting him on the nose.

Instil into my inner being tranquillity and peace of mind, that no longer will I wake from my restless sleep in the middle of the night, crying out: "What has the boss got that I haven't got, and how did he get it?"

Teach me to smile, if it kills me.

Make me a better leader of persons, by helping develop larger and greater qualities of understanding, tolerance, sympathy, wisdom, perspective, equanimity, mind-reading and second-sight.

And when, dear Lord, Thou hast helped me to achieve the high pinnacle my management has prescribed for me and when I shall have become the paragon of all supervisory virtues in this mortal world—dear Lord, move over!