

CONTACT

December 1974



Our Chairman's Christmas Message

IN THE events of the past year I am most proud of and grateful for, the exemplary work of our staff in all branches and at all levels in carrying out their emergency duties during the traumatic days of the three-day week last winter. Upon our ability to maintain supplies (albeit at a reduced level) depended millions of jobs in British industries.

Nevertheless, we leave 1974 behind us without undue regret—a year marked by the miners' strike, the 3-day week and in the backwash of all this, the highest rate of inflation the country has yet experienced. This has resulted, for example, in a staggering increase in this year alone of about £47 million in MANWEB's bill for the coal and oil used to produce electricity in power stations.

A further increase in the price of electricity is the unhappy but inescapable outcome of this melancholy business. Let us hope that 1975 will bring with it a realisation that the continuance of this self-defeating process cannot fail to reduce our overall standard of living and our viability as a nation.

In our own affairs—special thanks are due to Mr. Glan Gwyn who retired this year as Deputy Chairman after many years' distinguished service to the Supply Industry and to MANWEB. We have a most worthy successor to him in Mr. Ben Hastings. To both, we extend our sincere good wishes for the future.

You will no doubt have seen that the Secretary of State for Energy has set up an Advisory Committee to review the structure of the Electricity Supply Industry. This review is simply part of the normal process of ensuring that our present organisation is well adapted to the needs of the present day. In my opinion the work of Area Boards is unlikely to be affected to a material extent by any changes that might emerge from this review. Speculation about future long-term possibilities would accordingly be unproductive. Trade Unions and other representatives of employees would, in any event, be fully consulted before any significant changes are made.

The coming year will undoubtedly bring with it new challenges and new opportunities. We will be judged collectively and individually on our response to both.

To you all, and to your families, I give my most sincere wishes for a Happy Christmas and for a productive New Year.

Denis Jones.



THE STAFF MAGAZINE OF THE MERSEYSIDE
AND NORTH WALES ELECTRICITY BOARD

CONTACT

Vol. 26 No. 12

December 1974

EDITORIAL

On other pages

Sales Conferences '74	236
The Window Test	242
The "Girl from MANWEB"	243
'Find the Ball' Competition	244
Calling North Wirral	245
Visitors for Christmas	246
Talking Notes	247
Poet's Page	253
Photographic Competition Prizewinners	254
Weddings	257
North Wirral Safe Drivers	258
The Portrait	259
Home Economist Conference	263
Watchdogs Gather	264
Make Way for Oil	265
Planning for People	266
All Aboard!	269
Prize Crossword	270
Montagu's Harrier	272
Retirements	273
Nude study	276

Behind the Scenes

FOR MOST people, no doubt, "MANWEB" means the convenience which electricity brings to their homes, the inconvenience of the bill which results, and perhaps a visit to the nearest MANWEB shop when they are thinking of buying a new domestic appliance. The only break in this orderly relationship is that which happens when the lights go out!

We who are involved know, of course, that this is only the tip of the iceberg—if we may use a comparison which might not endear itself to our energy sales colleagues! By far the greater part of the work carried out by MANWEB employees is unknown to the customer, and only merits any kind of spotlight when something goes wrong.

An unpleasant start to what has been widely forecast as a hard winter has already resulted in "something going wrong" on quite a few occasions. Exceptional winds and early blizzards have produced problems in many parts, with our engineering friends in Dee Valley District among the hardest hit.

Let us hope that over the Christmas break our colleagues on any form of "stand-by" are allowed to relax in the same way as the vast majority of people, and that only the 'tip of the iceberg' shows in the homes of Merseyside and North Wales!

Seasonal Greetings from The Editorial Staff

Keith Baldwin, John F. Perry and Sam Doughty

'74 Sales Conferences

MANWEB's main annual Sales Conference, usually held in Chester in the Spring but axed during 1974 by the winter's fuel crisis and its aftermath, was replaced to a certain extent by local Sales Conferences held in each MANWEB District. These events, combined as they were with an enjoyable social evening for our hard-working sales staff, were somewhat less formal than a full-blown MANWEB area sales conference would have been, but the problems and opportunities before us were carefully examined. The Chief Commercial Officer's message, put over in some cases by Mr. M. R. Cowan himself, in others by senior members of his staff, is summarised on this page.

The Gospel according to Matthew

The first rule of selling is to make love, not war. You have to convince the customer that you love him, and as everybody is a customer of ours we are the original hippies!

Here is a potted history of an eventful year:

March 1973. On holiday, sun shining, everybody in love, customers rushing to our shops to buy everything in sight in the pre-VAT spending spree.

March to December. Despite VAT—honeymoon weather. Sales of electricity growing well.

December. Miners' dispute—State of Emergency declared—shop staff working in the dark with the heat off—advertising stopped—H.P. restrictions imposed.

January—March. 3-day week—sales of 700 million units lost—storage radiator sales fall nearly 50% below target—industrial customers start buying private generating plant—Arab/Israeli war—petrol shortages—price of crude oil quadrupled—massive Government advertising SWITCH OFF SOMETHING—no advertising of electricity.

Miners' strike settled at cost of huge increase in the price of coal.

Application made to increase tariffs to off-set all these financial calamities.

Application passed by the Price Commission but not accepted by the Government who only allowed the introduction of a fuel clause into quarterly tariffs.

May. Fuel clause introduced.

July. Government changed its mind on off-peak tariffs and announcement made halving the fuel clause on these tariffs.

Accounts for 1973/4 published—a loss to MANWEB of nearly £8 million—£180 million over the country. Because of tariff restraint, we expect to lose even more this year.

Did I say the salesman's job is to love everybody—all the time?

I did—but you must admit it's hard at times.

It is very important to say to you that the Industry's policy is to press to be allowed to price electricity correctly as soon as possible.

The consequences of selling below cost are, in my opinion, far more serious than those that would arise from an increase in price.

It is relevant to point out that had we charged each consumer only 15p extra per week last year we would have wiped out our loss of £8 million. But the longer a return to correct pricing is delayed the greater the increase that may be necessary. I hope I have said enough to show why even the Commercial Department should want the difficulty of selling at higher prices.

In the shops

Customer spending is down and our sales are down. We must try to keep them as high as we can. We must look for areas where we can obtain new sales.

What we are doing is diversifying—looking for business, looking for ways of keeping up our turnover in a period of poor sales. We need turnover to pay the rent and the salaries and we are going out to try to get it.

Advertising

Much of the sales success of all of you in Districts depends on the public's point of view of electricity, and MANWEB in particular.

It is with this in mind that we have embarked on our advertising "confidence" campaign, designed to stress the tremendous value for money that electricity represents.

The idea of the campaign is to face up squarely to our greatest sales obstacle—the publicity given to our price increases and our stated intention to increase prices further.

Electricity is ludicrously cheap, but because the customer gets 13 weeks credit before getting a bill he forgets how often he has used his appliances and wrongly thinks electricity expensive.

We have to show him that MANWEB's electricity

is good value for money—not by slick kidology—but by telling the customer the facts.

The campaign is centred round a cartoon character—whom I accidentally christened “Little Willie” when I saw the first drawing.

But it's quite an appropriate name for him—because we have put Little Willie in the ring to fight Big Bill. To show the customer that his bill is not big in relation to what electricity has done for him over the past 13 weeks.

When you think how little the average customer spends on electricity and how much he gets for it—it is obvious that MANWEB gives him a tremendous bargain.

Unfortunately the customer does not know what a bargain he gets so it's Little Willie's job to teach him.

I am sure you will agree he does a good job. But he needs help—your help.

First—you must believe him, because Willie is a professor of facts. He is not a slick advertiser. He only tells the truth.

Secondly, you and I, and our colleagues in other departments, must stand up for MANWEB when-

ever we hear anyone suggesting that electricity is expensive.

It's cheap, and you can all think of your own ways of demolishing the knockers—I will just give you two examples.

The average customer uses 4,500 units a year—present cost a little over £60 a year—say £1.20 a week (under 1.4p per unit).

That's less than the cost of renting a colour TV—and electricity does much more for you than TV.

Suppose you went into a big, super pub—suppose it has lots of rooms, good lighting, cool beer, fruit machines—the lot.

At its busiest time, when everything is switched on—the cost of running that pub electrically for one hour is less than the cost of a pint of beer.

Little Willie must beat Big Bill—and if you and I—his cornermen—help him, he won't need 15 rounds to do it. Remember—Little Willie is a MANWEB product—I think he's someone to be proud of.

He's a lovable character, and as salesmen, telephone operators, electricians, programmers, storekeepers, or managers, we need the public to love us all.

District Round-up

Liverpool . . .

Dovedale Towers, Allerton, was the venue for this gathering, and 130 commercial staff, together with some invited engineering and administrative colleagues attended.

After a “Highland Supper” the C.C.O.'s. paper was presented by Mr. Derek Holman (*Asst. C.C.O., Economics, Tariffs and Statistics*). This was followed by “Talk-in '74,” and the whole of the remainder of the conference was devoted to an open-ended discussion at which the staff were invited to say what they thought about anything to do with the department, the fuel crisis, the industry, the economic climate, etc. There was no doubt that it was a huge success, with enthusiastic participation by all levels of staff.

North Mersey . . .

Their “Con-Com” attracted about 120 people, who heard the C.C.O. present his paper. Then Mr. Reg Schollick (*sales supervisor*), spoke on how Marketing faced up to the task of increasing sales by extending their activities and product lines.

Next came Mr. Les Appleton (*installation engineer*), who thanked engineering department colleagues for bringing in enquiries and business from

their contacts, and appealed to other members of the District staff to recommend MANWEB's installation and service sections on every possible occasion.

Finally Mr. Denis Barrie pointed to ‘*The Task Ahead*’ for the energy sales staff as they endeavoured to defend existing loads, improve insulation standards and balance load development.

The meeting closed with questions to a panel of speakers under the chairmanship of Mr. D. E. Noad (*D.C.E.*), followed by an enjoyable Disco dance to the “*RJ Sound*.”

South Lancashire . . .

(See pages 238 and 239)

Dee Valley . . .

More than 100 people—including an encouraging proportion of engineering and administrative colleagues, attended Dee Valley's conference, held at the Deeside Leisure Centre. On this occasion the C.C.O.'s. paper was presented by his deputy (Mr. W. N. Shires), and he was followed by Mr. J. A. Winchester (*D.C.E.*), who amplified some of the points in the paper, and outlined interesting information relating to the District situation.



Above: Chairman of the successful 'Talk-in' panel Mr. H. V. Collard, (District sales supervisor).



Above right: Chatting informally after the Conference are, from left to right: Messrs. F. J. Kelly (senior energy salesman), H. G. Threadgold (Material Control), H. Stubbs (Stores) and M. R. Cowan (Chief Commercial Officer)

South Lancashire District Sales Conference

An excellent buffet meal preceded this very professional Conference at Warrington. The main feature, following the C.C.O's. paper, was a 'Talk-in' panel who discussed points raised from his talk. Conference Chairman was Mr. Roger Monk, Manager was Mr. Ken Appleton, and, in charge of production, Mr. John Drewe.

One side of the 'Talk-in' panel. From left to right: Mr. F. J. Kelly (senior energy salesman), Miss S. Hodgson (demonstrator—Marketing), Mr. J. Goode (supervisor, Service section), Mr. J. Arstall (supervisor, St. Helens), Mr. M. Linden (electrician, Runcorn), Mrs. M. Atherton (senior saleswoman, Widnes shop) and Mr. W. Berry (electrician, Warrington).





Above: Seven of the ten members of the staff who received Salesmanship Certificates making South Lincs the top District for 1973/74. From left to right: Mr. D. Voss and Mrs. D. Wilson (Warrington shop), Mrs. D. Hanrahan (Widnes shop), Mr. M. R. Cowan, who made the presentations, Mrs. J. Higgins, Mrs. J. Bradley, Mrs. A. Waldcock (Warrington shop and Mrs. A. Balmer (Widnes shop).



Mr. B. R. Hastings (Deputy Chairman) chats with some of the ladies of the District staff, from left to right: Mrs. E. Harding, Mrs. N. Kirkham, Mrs. J. Seddon and Miss J. Ballard.

The other side of the 'Talk-in' panel. From left to right: Mr. D. Critchley (engineer, Supply Section), Mrs. Lesley Taylor ("The Girl from MANWEB" and demonstrator, Energy Sales, Clwyd), Mr. J. Rae (shift service electrician), Mrs. B. Molyneux (saleswoman, Runcorn shop), Mr. R. J. Williams (principal assistant, Consumer Accounting Section), Mrs. I. Cheshire (clerical, Work Control) and Mr. I. Basford (engineer, Installation Section).



A vigorous open discussion followed, and the official business was succeeded by a lively 'Disco' session until midnight, when some danced while others carried on with impromptu discussions on the subject matter of the evening's business.

North Wirral . . .

About 180 members of the District staff attended, and Mr. Cowan's talk was presented by Mr. Sid Fairclough (*Installation and Service Manager*). Following this a "plant" in the audience (Mr. John Evans, former District clerk) challenged some of the points made in the speech.

His questions were answered in novel form, including a sketch in "The George" (a public house), with Mr. Doug Willacey (*energy sales engineer*), answering questions from the 'locals.'

Then another voice from the audience (Mr. Frank Kaye, installation engineer) asked why the Con-



Not the Sheik of Araby, not a new oil tycoon surveying his wells off the New Brighton coast, not even Eric Morecambe but it is our own genial District Commercial Engineer from North Wirral, Mr. George Bowers posing for a photograph which was used at the District Sales Conference.

tracting section was not being covered. His answer came in another short sketch featuring Mr. Graham Houghton and colleagues, getting out quotations and keeping the electricians busy.

Words of encouragement from Mr. George Bowers (*D.C.E.*), brought the conference to a close.

Mid Cheshire . . .

About 100 members of the staff attended, and the chairman for the evening was Mr. Norman Walsh (*D.C.E.*), who kicked off with a short talk on the changing conditions, and the need to adapt to them.

He then introduced energy sales demonstrator Mrs. M. R. Corlett, who spoke about "A Woman's Work," and illustrated her talk with slides showing the various aspects of her everyday work.

Mr. Cowan presented his paper in person at this conference, and a short "Open Forum" session completed the formal part of the evening. Then it was time to push back the chairs and join in the dancing to the "Intercity Disco," in the capable hands of Mr. John Boxtock, of Crewe shop.

Clwyd . . .

"Nowadays, in every sphere of our commercial activities, we are competing with other business enterprises, both public and private, for a much smaller buying demand" said Mr. Dave Mellor (*District Commercial Engineer*). He added that the conference would have the main task of discussing and explaining future objectives, and looking ahead.

"Situation reports" were presented by Messrs. B. G. Baxter (*energy sales engineer*), L. Price (*installation engineer*) and R. Hewitt (*District sales supervisor*), while the C.C.O.'s paper was presented by Mr. Tom Dean (*Appliance Marketing Manager*).

Gwynedd . . .

A lively conference was held in a Caernarfon hotel when, after Mr. Cowan's talk, those present split into discussion groups. Each of three groups was visited by the C.C.O., who dealt with points raised in his talk, and by Messrs. T. J. Jones (*installation engineer*), R. J. Hughes (*service engineer*), O. F. Ellis (*supply engineer*), G. Pierce (*2nd assistant engineer*), W. G. Wakelin (*sales supervisor*), and F. Littler (*energy sales engineer*).

They answered questions from the staff on what their particular sections would be doing next year to make the most of electricity in Gwynedd. An "Open Forum" session chaired by Mr. Norman Maden (*D.C.E.*) brought another successful, down-to-earth, sales conference to a close.

Some interesting 'bargain points' from Gwynedd's programme, (in cost comparisons):

A cool pint of beer—runs a freezer for a week.

20 cigarettes—would cover a 1 kW fire for four every night for a week.

A half-pound box of chocolates—would cook for a family of four for a week.

A bar of soap—would iron the weekly wash for two months.

Mailing a letter—would run an electric clock or razor (daily) for nine months.

A box of matches—would light a 100-watt lamp for 24 hours.

Renting a colour TV—would run five storage radiators.

A cinema seat—would pay for watching 'Coronation Street' twice a week for three years.

A double whisky—would give a hot bath every night for a week.

A shampoo and set—would run a hairdryer for 140 hours.

A cup of cafe coffee—would boil a three-pint kettle 48 times.

Oswestry . . .

D.C.E. Ron Williams welcomed the staff, and in his introduction highlighted the District's achievements in the period he referred to as the "Winter of Discontent." Notwithstanding the Three Day Week, the unit sales were an all-time record, with an increase of 9.7% over the previous year.

Mr. Roy Stewart (*Energy Sales Manager*), stood in for the C.C.O. on this occasion, and energy sales engineer John Walker went on to prove that electricity is cheaper today than it was 45 years ago.

John said that a fortnight's holiday in Italy would buy two years' use of electricity for the average customer. He took a look towards the stars and predicted an all-electric future by the year 2000!

A lively "Open Forum," followed by a very pleasurable social evening, rounded off the occasion.

Aberystwyth . . .

A film in colour depicting many aspects of MANWEB life in the Aberystwyth District was a highlight of their gathering, held at a Machynlleth hotel. The film—keenly appreciated—was mainly the work of Messrs. Selwyn Evans and Ray Hughes, with contributions from Messrs. Howell Evans and Chris Jones.

More than 50 people heard the C.C.O.'s, paper given by Mr. Sid Fairclough, and a stimulating programme followed by an enjoyable dinner provided ample justification for those who made the journey from the various corners of the far flung District.

"LITTLE WILLIE"

Mrs. Muriel E. Jones,
Retired Demonstrator
Mid-Cheshire District

"LITTLE WILLIE" is no miser
Rather leaves consumers wiser
See him on the "Telly" daily
Spending pence both blithe and gaily
"LITTLE WILLIE" sows the seeds
How to fill all household needs
Instant servant for your wishes
Wash the clothes and wash the dishes
Run the vac and heat the water
(*enough to bathe both son and daughter*)
Heat your home and light the light
Switch on the blanket for tonight
Dry your hair and have a shave
Follow WILLIE learn to save
Brew the tea and mix a cake
Use the oven—bread to bake
Cook the dinner—use the grill
Make the toast, Oh what you will
Freeze the meat and cool the milk
Use the iron, sew the silk
Cut the hedge and mow the lawn
Hatch the chick and dry the corn
Shear the sheep and milk the cow
LITTLE WILLIE shows you how
And when costs of fuels rise
follow WILLIE and be wise.



Window Survey at Connah's Quay



Mr. John Edwards, left, and Mr. Rod Evans from Capenhurst, check their survey sheets.

“WHY HAVE you opened the window?” is the question being put to the housewives of the Broadoak Estate and Mount Royal housing areas at Connah's Quay. And asking the questions are scientists from the Electricity Council's Research Centre at Capenhurst, who have chosen these localities to carry out a survey on our window-opening habits.

With today's emphasis on 'warmth without waste,' and the most efficient and economic use of fuel, the extent to which we open our windows has assumed new significance. The experts from Capenhurst estimate that window-opening could account for up to 30% of our fuel bills during the heating season.

Are those windows opened to let out excess warmth from rooms facing South? ... To cool off a hot-and-bothered housewife who has been rushing through the chores? ... To get rid of the steam from the washing, or the smell of breakfast from the kitchen? ... Or just to dispel the smell of stale cigarette smoke and blow the cobwebs away?

When all the questions have been answered, and the results evaluated, the Electricity Council hopes to be well on the way to finding ways of improving the home environment while avoiding the wasteful and expensive heat losses involved when the windows are thrown open.

Every home in the two areas involved received a letter from our Capenhurst colleagues, explaining the reasons for the survey

and asking for co-operation.

The areas concerned were chosen because they contain a large number of houses of similar design, and are located conveniently close to the Research Centre and also to the local weather station which monitors sun-

shine, temperature, wind and rainfall—all features which must be related to the results of the survey.

Every day an easily-identified Electricity Council Landrover manned by Mr. John Edwards, and an observer, is touring the area, and the number of open windows will be noted. At the same time, interviews are being conducted with housewives, whose help and co-operation is sought.

District Commercial Notes

GWYNEDD

An all-electric development of 24 flats by the Abertawe Housing Society, a non-profit-making organisation operating throughout Wales, is to go up at Eithiniog, near Bangor. Our energy sales team has been involved from the outset, and the total load is expected to be about 600 kW.

CLWYD

Ceiling heating is to go into 46 properties on a private development at Henllan, near Denbigh. Our colleagues gave advice on insulation, and won the order in strong competition with oil. A site load of 1,100 kilowatts is expected.

A Delyn Council project, consisting of 13 houses and 4 bungalows at Ysceiflog, will be electri-

cally-heated by Electricaire schemes designed and installed by MANWEB.

MID-CESHIRE

Electricaire systems will be installed in ten bungalows being built at Holmes Chapel by Congleton District Council, and six bungalows at Brindley, near Nantwich (Crewe and Nantwich Council). Water-heating will also be electric.

NORTH MERSEY

Since April of this year our colleagues have won five orders for heating and water-heating schemes, part of Sefton District Council's home modernisation programme. These follow expert advice, at all stages, from our colleagues at Bridle Road.

“The Girl from MANWEB — 1975”

Preliminary Round

The Judges . . .

Our Group Managers, from left to right: Messrs. K. Helliwell, J. W. Trimble and H. Telfer.



the contestants . . .

The happy group photographed after their interviews at Head Office. From top to bottom, starting from the left, 1st row: Gill Adams (North Wirral), Carol Swinton (Head Office), Jean Ann Foxley (Mid-Cheshire) and Glenda Lloyd (Oswestry). 2nd row: Edna Jacobs (North Wirral), Ann Mallinson (Head Office), Stephanie Wickham (North Wirral), Sheila Hockenhill (Head

Office) and Christine Carroll (Mid-Cheshire). 3rd row: Elizabeth Cullen (North Wirral), Norma Crick (Mid-Cheshire), Louise Murthwaite (North Wirral), Pat Jones (Mid-Cheshire) and Ann Roberts (Oswestry). 4th row: Debbie Winzar (Head Office), Enid Sherratt (Head Office), Lynette Kemp (Clwyd), Debra Soden (Oswestry), Gabrielle Hill (Oswestry) and Linda Morris (Oswestry).

and the finalists.

alphabetically—

Norma Crick

Jean Ann Foxley

Edna Jacobs
(withdrawn)

Lynette Kemp

Ann Mallinson

Louise Murthwaite

Stephanie Wickham

Debbie Winzar





Win a 4-door ALLEGRO 1100

The illustration above is an extract from a Queens Park Rangers v Norwich football match. At this particularly exciting point of the match the ball was in play but has been erased from the illustration.

Use your skill and judgement to decide from the photograph where you think the centre of the ball should be and then place a cross there with a ball point pen. You may have a maximum of six attempts on one form for 50p or individual attempts at 10p each.

The person, who, in the opinion of the judges, places his or her cross on or nearest the spot where the centre of the ball was located, will win the motor car. In the event of a tie a simple tie-breaker will be arranged. The finalist suggesting the best idea to raise funds for the EEIBA—in the opinion of the judges—will win the motor car.

All proceeds will be donated to the EEIBA. Prize donated by the Colston Educational Trust.

FIND THE BALL

RULES

All entries must be made in ball point pen accompanied with your name and address and correct remittance. Any entries received without any of these requirements shall be deemed to be invalid.

No correspondence will be entered into concerning this competition.

By entering this competition you agree to abide by all the rules and conditions and to accept as final and legally binding the judges' decision in all matters appertaining to the competition. The judges will be Mr. J. D. Callaway, Miss M. George, Mr. R. F. Masters, Mr. K. Pounds and Mr. A. Plumpton.

No entries will be accepted from either a Colston or EEIBA employee or their Advertising/Public Relations consultants or their families. No entries will be accepted from outside the United Kingdom.

All entries must be sent to Mr. J. Pilkington, Welfare Officer, MANWEB Head Office, Sealand Road, Chester, CH1 4LR, and payment should be made by cash or by cheque or postal order made out to EEIBA.

Closing date 1st February 1975. Organised by the EEIBA, 8 Station Parade, Balham High Road, London SW12 9BH.

1 Entry 10p

6 Entries 50p

Name

Address

..... Post Code.....

Calling - - North Wirral

When you call Birkenhead 7040 on the telephone, the chances are that the first person you speak to will be either Mrs. Evelyn Godkin or Miss Susan Bell. We now put faces to their voices and give pen portraits of these operators.

Evelyn has had a most interesting life. She trained as a telephone operator with the G.P.O. and for a while worked in the Cotton Exchange in Liverpool. From there she joined MANWEB at Craven Street where she has worked for the past 17 years.

When she started at North Wirral District she sat in solitary state in a poky little office. Now she has Sue, her companion and a relief operator and a spacious office with a three-position switchboard and 20 lines and she is busier than ever.

During the war, Evelyn was a telephone operator instructor with the Royal Signals and travelled all over Great Britain.

She married and became Mum to Christine and two years later to Valerie. She now has five grandchildren. A fine musician—she played the piano when she was eight years old and in her teens sang coloratura soprano—Evelyn now has a Lowry organ in her home and makes tapes from Pop to Classical for use as background music for various charity functions. She has been a church organist for the past four years.

She told us that she was never tempted to turn to



Evelyn and Sue on the North Wirral switchboard.

professional playing or singing, but may do so when she retires from the Board!

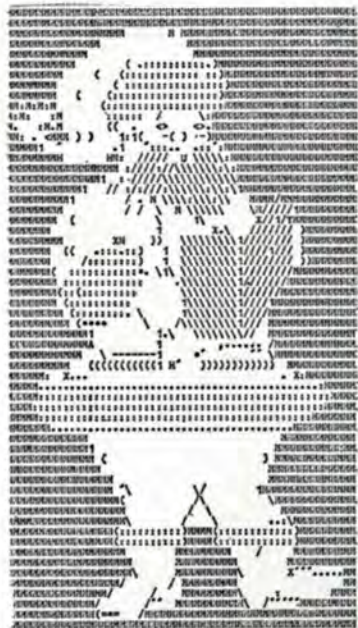
Susan Bell—an appropriate name for a telephone operator—joined us in August 1973 after working 'over the water' with a mail order firm. She came to Craven Street as a trainee operator and has become 100 per cent proficient under the expert guidance of Evelyn.

Sue is courting and her boy friend Robert works at Cammell Lairds. She enjoys sewing and cooking—good prospects for Robert—and she is just testing the results of her wine-making efforts. Sue says she has been most successful with her elderberry, raisin, rose hip, fig and orange! No doubt they are in for a very merry Christmas!

RINGING OFF!

One-and-a-quarter centuries of service by our four switchboard operators at the St. Helens Depot ended recently when they all took early retirement following the centralisation of the communications facilities on District Office.

Our best wishes for the future go to Messrs. J. J. Balmer (46 years), E. Shawcross (37 years), S. Woodward (21½ years) and H. A. Robinson (20½ years).



Another picture made up from characters on a teleprinter keyboard and executed by Mrs. Pat Hunt from Head Office, brings Seasonal Greetings from our Telex Operators.

Visitors for Christmas

A SHORT STORY BY

MR. W. E. BOYLIN (Admin. Asst. — Revenue)

NOW LETS get things right, the building is new, give or take three or four years. All concrete, steel and carpet. Very modern, oh yes, and full of light. In fact a veritable beacon for miles around and a real advert for the 'Leckie Board.'

Certainly not the setting for a ghost story *but*, the funniest things can happen at Christmas, even in the most modern of places.

It was Christmas party night for the staff and what better place to have the party than the restaurant at the office.

Alive, swinging, going great guns, it was all that and, as it turned out, more besides. All the girls were there in their party dresses and the fellas in their interview suits, the D.J. running the Disco was pouring out the sounds of the 70's without pausing for breath and the bar was doing great business even with its prices of the 70's.

The whole room was a Picasso blaze of disco-coloured light, changing and swinging electronically to the beat of Slade, the

Wombles and other psychedelic coloured, music making, voice bending groups of the 70's when suddenly, silence . . . and through the large double doors joining the restaurant to the main office building appeared a caravan of carts.

From here on I will just give you an eye-witness account of what happened and let you draw your own conclusions.

The carts were drawn by oxen and the people in them were dressed biblical fashion. The leaders were three imposing characters who could only be described as, dressed like kings. The others, nine of them, were clearly peasant shepherds.

The disco lights faded out as the countless coloured lights in the ceiling changed to stars, all twinkling in what now looked like, and was, a cloudless black sky.

Without exception the multitude of revellers sat down, where they were on the grass. Yes, the room was no longer maple wood dance floor and carpet surround. Gentle, plaintive music broke the

silence accompanied by the forlorn bleating of sheep and the lowing of cattle and the meadow was warm with gentleness.

The three Kings moved amongst the people and spread contentment and gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The shepherds gave unleavened bread and wine, and peace was known and felt by the children of the 70's and there was singing and rejoicing beneath the stars.

And it came to pass that as the stars began to fade a new large star rose afar off and cast its brilliance over the gathered multitude and the caravan moved away as it had come and the star faded away as the disco lights began to pierce the darkness. Slade took up where they had left off and the party continued as if it had never been interrupted and no-one even mentioned what had happened.

But, despite the return to the 70's type revelry and "smile you are in Greenall Whitley land" type drinking, the smell of incense lingered and the girls looked even more beautiful in their make-up and the golden glow of the real meaning of Christmas was evident without seeking.

And the party was good . . .



Talking Notes

TALENTED ARTIST

THE SKETCH reproduced below, and the painting reproduced on the back cover of this magazine, are just two random examples of the brilliant work by **Mrs. Shirley Robinson**, a part-time saleswoman at our New Ferry shop.

On leaving school Shirley won a scholarship to the School of Art in Liverpool, but home circumstances prevented her from taking it up. Instead, she started work for the Board at



Artist—Shirley Robinson



Derby House, making up accounts by hand (*are you listening computer?*). Although she missed a great opportunity for full-time art training, she still managed to keep her talent alive by going to special art classes every Saturday.

Then Shirley married Michael, who works for P. & O. Lines and they had a daughter Christine and then a son, Jeremy.

After a while she returned to the Board working as a clerk at District Office in Craven Street. Just over three years ago she moved over to the sales side and went to the Birkenhead shop on a part-time basis. Recently, she was transferred to New Ferry.

Shirley, in addition to being a gifted artist, likes a round of golf, sailing on Lake Bala and taking French lessons. Her burning ambition is to go on an "Outward Bound" course—just to prove she can do it!

She has always sketched and painted for pleasure, working

in all materials and at times, experimenting. She told us that she finds working in water colour the hardest to do. She does not like to copy things, but when she sees something worth painting, she immediately makes a rough sketch and then it may take up to twelve months before she gets round to painting it.

Shirley has a genuine feel for painting and is one of those fortunate people who can see things around her and is able to capture it on canvas or on paper.

"Getting away from it all!"

On his return from a 15-day holiday at the fishing village of Benitses on the Island of Corfu, **Mr. Jack Richards** (*principal assistant—Costs*) at Head Office, told us that his main intention was to "get away from it all" and try to find some sun which was in short supply in Britain.

Although he succeeded in the latter objective, on his second day on the island Mr. Richards was talking to a fellow holiday-maker and suddenly found himself listening to problems re-

lating to the purchase of a cooker by a MANWEB consumer! Advice was given as to the best contact to be made when the consumer returned home, and hopefully we think relationships for our industry were improved by a sympathetic hearing.

Having been brought back to the realities of electricity supply, Mr. Richards still couldn't "get away from it all!" On the following day he chanced to see a local meter reader at work. The photograph illustrates Doorstep Billing (under the watchful eye of the consumer), immediately following the reading of the meter, which can be clearly seen in the picture. All domestic supply metering on the island is located externally, supplemented by "check meters" at each distribution point.

Says Mr. Richards: "In spite of what might appear to us to be a somewhat primitive wiring layout, could it be that we still have something to learn in terms of simplification of admin?"

Doorstep billing—the Greeks have a way with it! (see story above)



Hostess Supreme

Cooking a complete meal before an audience of over 900 people—mainly women—was the ordeal faced by our Dee Valley District marketing demonstrator **Mrs. Anne Reney-Smith** at the "Hostess Evening" sponsored by the *Liverpool Echo* and staged at the Adelphi hotel a few weeks ago.

The mouth-watering dishes on the menu ranged through



Katie Boyle, right, adjusts the mike for Anne Reney-Smith.

prawns Newburg, partridge and veal pie served with Duchesse potatoes and broccoli, followed by Strawberry Charlotte, a delicious concoction.

Comper for the evening was TV personality Katie Boyle whose pet Yorkshire terrier nearly had the game pie to itself at one stage.

Assisting Anne in her presentation was **Miss Florence Sweeney**, (*energy sales demonstrator, North Wirral*).

Anne has been with us for the past five years and has just been appointed as energy sales demonstrator attached to Head Office.

Champion Chessmen

In the 1974 Head Office Chess tournament, the eventual winners were in a class of their own never losing a game on their way to becoming the champions.

The tournament, organised by **Messrs. John McInerny**

and **Bob Blair**, took the form of a league with teams playing each other twice. Four players made up each team, but the



Checkmates, Neil Thomas, Dave Lucas and Frank Reynolds.

winner could only muster three players after the first match.

This makes the victory of the Audit team, **Neil Thomas, captain, Dave Lucas and Frank Reynolds**, all the more remarkable as they had to default on one game in each match.

Storm in Liverpool

Whenever we have a story on storm damage it has usually happened in some rural area of North Wales. However, our latest report comes from Liverpool where gales and driving rain caused a great deal of damage to what little overhead line we have in this densely populated urban area.

At the height of the storm, **Mr. Haydn Evans** (section engineer) who was on standby, went out to check on damage to a 33kV substation at Child-wall where he found that a tree had fallen on to the roof of the sub. damaging the structure. Fortunately the switchgear inside was not damaged.

Mr. Albert Ayres (system engineer) nipped round with his camera and managed to take a picture—as evidence—before a gang from Parks and Gardens arrived to saw the tree into manageable sections and cart it away.

"Smells Good!"

The appetising smell of freshly-baked bread tempts the taste buds of customers at the recently-opened "Baker Save" shop in the Kwik Save Supermarket on the Sealand Road estate in Chester.

From the open counter front they can watch the dough being mixed before it is placed in the five-deck electric oven. In a very short time the customers are taking away hot, crusty loaves, baked to perfection.

The 39 kilowatt oven has a fast warm-up time, and can be moved quite easily to suit any change in bakery layout. The five decks are independent of each other, and are separately controlled to allow for different temperatures and bake times to be set on individual decks. Any number of decks, or any combination, can be used at any one time. The complete oven will take up to 210 small loaves or 60 of the 2lb size at one bake.

"Our turnover has been in the region of 1,000 large and

1,800 small loaves each week since we opened," said Mr. Ian Jackson, the General Manager "as demand increases we will be introducing a variety of bread."

Other equipment in this space-and-time-saving, all-electric bakery, includes a dough divider, final moulder, three "provers," a 2½ horse-power mixer, and a three-kilowatt wall-mounted water heater.

Our Man at Caernarfon!

Introducing our *Contact* correspondent for Gwynedd District—**Mr. Richard Wyn Parry**. He was appointed Principal Assistant—Administration at Caernarfon, in January this year, having been Chief Clerk for the Eryri Water Board for the previous four years.

He is a member of Caernarfon Round Table, an ex-member of a well-known Welsh entertainment group (which has frequently appeared on TV and made several records), and he is also keen on sport and gardening.

Mr. Trevor Edwards, right, of our Dee Valley energy sales team, watches bakery manager **Mr. Glyn Jones** pop some more bread in the oven.





Contact-man, Mr. Richard Wyn Parry.

Married, with two daughters and a son, Richard has already sent some very welcome material through to Contact at Head Office, and we look forward to further contributions in the future! So, for the benefit of all our Gwynedd colleagues, please feed your Contact material through to Richard (internal 'phone 233), and he will see to it that it reaches us.

The Non-electric Past!

While changing a meter board at an address at Wybunbury, near Crewe, one of our installation inspectors came across a meter record card, covered in the dust of ages and bearing the masthead of the *Electricity Distribution of North Wales and District Ltd.*

It was enough to break the heart of any dedicated Energy Sales engineer! Covering the period from 1935 to 1940, the readings showed that the consumption of the cautious householder concerned averaged **sixteen units a quarter** over the five-year period! Top usage was 32 units for a winter quarter in 1936/37 (must have been a hard winter!), while the con-

sumer managed to "switch off everything" during the summer of 1936, when no less than four units were clocked up.

Sending us this relic from the past, **Mr. Harold Allman**, (principal assistant—Admin.) at Mid-Cheshire District, comments: "What price today's Fuel Clause on this consumption!"

Study Prize Awards

Senior Awards (value £40), have been made under the Study Prize Scheme to three members of Head Office staff in connection with studies during 1972/73.

Award winners are **Messrs. I. Baird** (principal assistant, Financial), **C. J. Kilfoyle** (CWM analyst), and **J. C. MacDonald** (3rd engineer, Technical).

Lighting for Security

The vital role which good lighting can play in protecting premises and property during the hours of darkness was the message of two seminars held recently at the Queen Hotel, Chester, and at Allerton Hall, Liverpool.

"Lighting for Security" was the theme of these gatherings and the programmes included talks entitled "Darkness—a security risk," by **Detective Sergeants D. Finnegan** (at Chester) and **J. Croft** (at Liverpool). Our own lighting expert, **Mr. Gerry Worthington**, spoke on "Lighting for the security of industrial premises," and **Mr. J. S. Buck**, of

Osram—GEC Ltd., went into detail on suitable equipment.

Both conferences were well attended by representatives of large companies and professional "security" organisations. The lessons to be drawn were that security lighting is a great deterrent to night-time crime and vandalism; makes the work of security guards more efficient and safer; aids fire protection and control; is good value for money; uses electricity wisely and efficiently, and reduces insurance claims.

University Scholarships

The Electricity Supply Industry is again offering this year a number of university scholarships to school-leavers who wish to read for an honours degree in electrical or mechanical engineering.

The scholarships—which are in addition to the industry's engineering studentships—are awarded to help ensure that the industry maintains its share of the country's best electrical and mechanical engineers, and thus its position in the forefront of technological progress.

Scholarships in both mechanical and electrical engineering are offered by the Central Electricity Generating Board, which generates and transmits power at high voltage over the national grid, while the 12 Area Electricity Boards, which distribute and sell electricity to a total of more than 18 million customers, offer scholarships

At the Chester lighting seminar, from left to right: Mr. G. Worthington, Detective Sergeant D. Finnegan, Messrs. E. Redman (principal engineer—Industrial), J. S. Buck and J. G. Norbury (1st engineer—Industrial).



in electrical engineering only.

Boys and girls aged between 16 and 21, with at least three 'A' level passes, including mathematics and physics, are eligible to apply for one of the scholarships.

The awards provide for the payment of a maintenance grant and of all approved fees. The grant is now £735—£795 p.a. according to the university chosen. No reduction is made to the maintenance grant on account of parents' income.

Successful MANWEB area candidates from previous years, now attending university, are **Mr. M. Jacks**, of Wrexham (1st year, Manchester University); and second year students **Messrs. A. P. Battisti** (Liverpool) and **R. Bradshaw** (Wallsay), both at Liverpool University; **Mr. S. Chantler** (Wallsay), at Nottingham University, and **Mr. D. W. Shimmin** (Crosby), at Cambridge University.

CHRISTmas

at Head Office

The "Christian Fellowship" at Head Office have once more invited the Bishop of Chester, Dr. Whitsey, to speak at their Christmas lunch-time meeting on Tuesday, December 17th. The Fellowship is an informal gathering of Christians of all denominations, who hold lunch-time meetings once or twice a month, usually on Tuesdays.

The Fellowship's programme of meetings has included devotional and evangelistic topics, and also subjects covering the Christian ministry of social concern. Recent speakers have included Dr. I. D. Thomas, of Los Angeles, who gave a bible address, and the Rev. David Owen, youth warden at the Bala Conference Centre, who spoke of the work of the Centre and showed a film demonstrating how churches can work

alongside local authority social service departments, helping those in need in the community.

Anyone who would like further information should contact **Arthur Ellinson** (Corporate Development Officer) or **Ken Wynn** (Drawing Office).

Newtown's Future

The Mid-Wales Corporation anticipates spending a total of £20 million on the development of Newtown.

Chief executive of the corporation, Mr. Peter Garbett-Edwards told a press conference that so far £5½ million had been spent and annual spending was about £2½ million.

The money is put up by the Government but eventually the Corporation should run along the lines of a business relying on the income from housing, factory and commercial lettings.

Mr. Edwards outlined the scheme for Newtown which includes a by-pass and a new bridge north of the town, costing about £1 million.

First-Aiders

Two members of our Head Office staff, **Mrs. Sybil Cooper**, an administrative assistant in Financial, and **Mr. Les Smith**, a Regional Sales Controller, became honorary members of the St. John's Ambulance Association recently. They were congratulated by our Chairman, Mr. Denis Dodds, at a luncheon given in their honour.

Both have given long and loyal service to the Electricity Ambulance Centre, serving on the Branch Committee and instructing First-Aid Classes over many years.

Sybil is captain of the very successful Chester Ladies team, and Les has been associated with and trained MANWEB teams in many competitions.



Honorary members,
Les Smith and Sybil Cooper.

As a celebration for receiving her award, Sybil led her team to victory in the recent Mid-Cheshire First-Aid Competition beating strong teams from the Gas Board, Police and British Rail.

In the Chester Open Competition, the Ladies failed to qualify by one point. Hard luck girls, you can't win 'em all!

Mr. John Shallcross, who helps to train Head Office teams, male and female, tells us that he is looking for first-aiders interested in team work. He knows that we can get more winning teams from Head Office so why not join them? Get in touch with John in the Engineering Drawing Office.

Mike's Move

A very popular member of the Board's staff, **Mr. Mike Caird**, recently working in our Mid-Mersey District, has now left us to take up an appointment as Station Administrative Assistant with the CEGB at Fiddler's Ferry power station.

Starting his career with MANWEB 26 years ago as a junior clerk at Hatton Garden in Liverpool, Mike did his two year's service with the R.A.F. before returning to work in the Liverpool North District.

At this time—although one

may find it hard to believe now—he was a keen athlete and enthusiastic sportsman, playing soccer and cricket—often at the same time—for the Electric Supply teams. At the end of his playing days, he took up refereeing, always carrying his birth certificate with him!

He has been a regular 'Kopite' since his schooldays. With former District Engineer Mr. Alf Sweeney, Mike travelled the country following the fortunes of Liverpool F.C.

In 1963 on his appointment as assistant District Senior Clerk, he formed a one-man missionary force to venture 'up river' to convert the natives of Warrington to the Scouse brand of humour. He feels that his efforts were successful as everyone laughed when he left!

However, District Office will be just that bit quieter without Mike.

At a farewell gathering at a local hostelry, friends wished him well in his new job and **Mr. J. Sherwen** (principal assistant—Admin.) on their behalf, presented Mike with a gold-plated pen set.

We are fortunate that we still have some Caird connections within the Board for his wife

Elain and sister Geraldine both work in the Consumer Accounts section at Lister Drive in Liverpool.

Quality Canteen

The canteen at our Mid-Cheshire District Offices in Macon Way, Crewe, is rapidly gaining a reputation for the friendliness of its staff and the excellent quality of the food they prepare and serve.

Operated by Taylor's Northern Ltd. on behalf of the Board, it is supervised by Manageress **Mrs. Margaret Watson** who is assisted by **Mrs. Barbara Allman**, **Mrs. Sheila Jackson** and **Mrs. Barbara Shawcross**.

The canteen began operations in April 1967 when the present District Offices were opened.

Pretty Pictures

Cut out the pictures on pages 272 and 276. Take a piece of stiff cardboard, the same size, to back them, and a piece of glass, again the same size for the front.

Bind the card, picture and glass together with strips of passepartout and you will have two nice pictures for your home or office.

FOR SALE

Eko Ranger 12-string acoustic guitar, as new, with built-in pick-up, volume and tone control. £40.

Decca 613 stereo system. Teak with smoked perspex top to deck. Two years old, excellent condition. £45. 'Phone Prestatyn 5240 (Between 6-7 p.m.).

Two Everest and Jennings invalid folding chairs in very good condition. Price £30 and £20 o.n.o. 'Phone Hawarden 531565.

18 ft. sea going cabin cruiser, the 'St. Melyd' built in Gourock six years ago. Still in first class condition. Perkins 16 h.p. out-board engine—as new, five-gallon fuel tank, double action hand-operated bilge pump, four-wheel trailer with tail board, etc., etc. Bargain at £380. 'Phone Chester 40030.

Four delightful little puppies, All dogs, no bitches. Mother, a Jack Russell, was surprised by a small mongrel. Pups take after Mum for their looks. Only £1 each to good homes. 'Phone Connah's Quay 2834 (Miss D. Pickford).

1967 M.G.B. Roadster. Blue, In good condition. Wire wheels. Mileage 57,000. £350 o.n.o. 'Phone Llanidloes 2154 (after 6 p.m.).

Leica F2 50 mm. lens camera £30. Stainless steel developing tank 35 mm. two spirals, never used £3.00. Ingersol gents watch—digital, new strap, worth £12 will accept £5. In good condition. Mr. P. D. Williams, 32 Rhosgwyn, 493 Abergele Road, Old Colwyn, Clwyd.

WANTED urgently. Pre-1953 VW motor horn, Editorial Offices, "Contact," Head Office, Chester.

A.M.E.E. DINNER

MANWEB's Chairman and Deputy Chairman (Messrs. D. G. Dodds, centre, and B. R. Hastings, left) chatting with Mr. D. M. Millis of the Electricity Council at the recent dinner of the Association of Managerial Electrical Executives in Chester.



Poet's Corner

BEST RESPECTS

by George Wells

(Supervisor, Runcorn Shop)

At Christmas time the Festive Board is loaded high
with goods,
With turkey, wine and things like that, and dear old
Christmas Pud.
But while the mirth and crackers fly and lips go
yum-yum-yum,
Spare a thought for the bloke down there; the one
we all call TUM!
First of all he gets the soup, the bird he gets for
free—
He hasn't time to sort it out, when down comes
helping three.
Port, cigars and chocolate are some of those that
follow—
So TUM just rumbles furiously—'Does he think I'm
hollow!'
He just don't care that bloke up there, he doesn't
think of me—
For while he's lying on his back, I'm as busy as can
be;
I'll let him have a twinge or two, just to show what's
what,
Then maybe he'll respect poor me and not be such
a clot!
So to you all at Christmas—this I'd like to say—
Remember TUM and don't go mad,
And enjoy your Christmas Day!

... and another from George

ACROSS THE WATER

*Beside the mighty Mersey
In verdant fields of green
There sprawls the loveliest vision
That man has ever seen.*

*With the magic of the sunlight
Dancing through its spires
One can know the charm of Widnes
With a thrill that never tires.*

*Those lovely coloured gardens
That crown its ageless ways
And the heritage of history
From long-forgotten days.*

*One stands in awe and wonder
While the mind just quietly drinks
The sights of modern commerce
And those ruddy awful stinks!*

* * *
I like you in blue,
I like you in red,
But best of all,
I like you in green!

Anon.

* * *

TYPIST'S LITANY

by Mary Darlington

Tapping our way through this Vale of Woe,
We feel there are things *you* ought to know
Our days are beset with Dictators, so
Good Lord, Deliver Us

From people who English grammar spurn
And are obviously much too old to learn
And people who, basically wishing us well,
Know that no typist is able to spell
From people who utter their yards of tripe
Through teeth clenched tight on a favourite pipe
From people who think it fun to risk it
While crunching the while an elevenses biscuit
Or munch their way through a jaw-sticking toffee
Or do noises-off through great slurpings of coffee
From folks who dictate in a thoughtless dream
Changing whole sentences in midstream
From the sound track to any new TV adventure
Caused by a much-too-old, ill-fitting denture
From people who whisper, from people who bellow
Give them all voices, Lord, composed and mellow
From people who simply cannot keep their cool
And enjoy finding fault with this hard-working pool
From naggers and fretters, from those in a hurry
Or whose working-day motto is

"Come on, let's worry"

Keep them awake to the terrible onus
On all of us here to prove we earn our bonus
In case you think we're awfully rude
Forgive our Un-Christian attitude—
We cannot do both—this daily hard labour
And spare very much time for loving our neighbour
So grant us a sense of humour, Lord
Grant that we're never so badly bored
That one day our repressed intolerance wins
And we run amok, kicking them all on the shins.

OH! HAPPY MAN

* * *
Happy the man whose
conscience is clear
Whose slate is so clean
He has nothing to fear
His heart is gay, his eye is bright
He walks with a swing
and his step is light.
Happy the man who can
claim to be

By trouble untroubled
And anxiety free.

by Mrs. Nancy D. Evans,
widow of a former Oswestry
pensioner.



**Colour
Transparency
Section**

2nd PRIZE

"Winter"

submitted by
Mr. T. H. OWEN,
2nd Engineer,
H.O. Test House,
Queensferry.

OUR COVER PICTURE

**Colour Transparency
Section**

1st PRIZE

"The Marble Church"

submitted by
Mr. R. C. STOBART,
Electrical Fitter,
Clwyd District.

CONTACT

**Photographic
Competition
Prizewinners**



**Colour
Transparency
Section**

3rd PRIZE

"Autumn Window"

submitted by
Mr. N. R. EVANS,
Public Ltg. Att.,
Dee Valley
District.

**Best
Colour
Print**

"Waking Lily"

submitted by
Mr. D. LANG,
Principle Asst.,
Financial,
Head Office.



Best Human Portrait
(Colour or Black and White)

"Rhiannon"

submitted by
Mr. S. JONES, Storekeeper, Dee Valley District.



Best Humorous Picture
(Colour or Black and White)

"This is a trunk call!"

submitted by
Mr. P. SLATER, Work Study Asst., Clwyd District



CONTACT

Photographic Competition Prizewinners

Black and White Section

Best Picture

"Man of Steam"

submitted by
Mr. Ron. Cattell,
formerly of
Credit Amendments,
Liverpool District.



Best Animal Picture

(Colour or Black and White)

"The Watcher"

submitted by
Mr. Ron. Cattell,
formerly of
Credit Amendments,
Liverpool District.

WEDDINGS

BOARDMAN—COLLIER

All good wishes for a happy future go to Mr. Don Boardman, a clerk on Material Control in



ou, Liverpool District Office and to his new bride, Miss Shelagh Collier.

Their marriage took place at St. Margaret Mary's Church in Huyton and following the reception at the Sefton Hotel, the happy couple spent their honeymoon at Llandudno.

Don's mother Philomina also works for the Board, she is a saleswoman at our Huyton shop.

TOMLINSON—ASTLE

We offer our congratulations to Miss Lynne Astle, a clerk in our Mid-Cheshire District Office, on



her marriage a short time ago to Mr. Robert Tomlinson, who is employed by H.M. Inspector of Taxes.

The ceremony took place at the Church of Saint Mary Immaculate and the honeymoon was spent in Scotland.

Lynne, a finalist in the 1974 "Girl from MANWEB" competition, was given the traditional 'send-off' by her colleagues at Macon Way.

BENSON—CROASDALE

Best wishes for a happy future go to Miss Irene E. Croasdale, an audio typist in the Liverpool



District, and to Mr. Robert Benson, a car maintenance engineer, who were married at St. David's Church, Childwall a few weeks ago.

Irene wore a gown of Nottingham lace and was attended by four bridesmaids. Among the wedding guests were Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Millington and Miss Margaret Nelis.

Friends at Lister Drive bought Irene and Bob a food mixer which we hear, is in constant use!

CLARK—KING

Congratulations to Mr. Gordon Charles Clark, an electrician at our Northwich depot in the Mid-Cheshire District, on the occasion of his recent marriage to Miss Susan King, a secretary with ICI Ltd.

The ceremony took place at the Weaverham Parish Church.

* * *

If your wife wants to learn to drive, don't stand in her way!



.....by ALBERT

"CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR....."



"... AND WHEN IT DOES....."



"...NOBODY TELLS ME!"



NORTH WIRRAL SAFE DRIVERS

ONE HUNDRED drivers—99 men and one woman—from our North Wirral District staff were recently presented with awards under the scheme sponsored by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.

Before making the presentations, Chief Superintendent R. E. Hughes, Head of Traffic, Wirral Division of the Merseyside Constabulary, said how pleased he was to see so many people qualified to receive awards.

"I respect and admire you MANWEB drivers," he continued, "for you invariably travel about each day in vehicles marked with the MANWEB sign. This, in a way, makes you targets, for if you do something silly or behave badly then some people will be only too ready to say—'Oh! that's a MANWEB van'—then report you to the police or write to a newspaper."

The Chief Superintendent believed that many people did not fully realise that road accidents, whether they be minor or fatal, caused so much misery and grief in the lives of others.

In closing, he said that it might make the job of the police much easier if awards for safe driving were made to the general public, but he was afraid that not many would be earned.

Then Mr. Ron Morley (*District Engineer*), who chaired the Meeting, invited questions from the drivers to be answered by Chief Superintendent Hughes and his companion Chief Inspector W. Sefton of the Wirral Traffic Section.

During this session, emphasis was placed on the use of acceleration lanes on motorways with the advice that they should be used for the full length and not drive straight across them directly onto the lanes of fast-moving traffic.

Mr. George Bowers (*District Commercial Engineer*) proposed a vote of thanks to the guests and then the awards were presented as follows:

Bar to 15-Year Brooch: Messrs. G. Holland (19 years), C. L. White (18 years), R. H. Chapman and J. L. Taylor (17 years), W. A. Perry (16 years).

Bar to Ten-Year Medal: Messrs. T. H. Hardy, E. Hough, H. N. Jones, C. McCavish, D. R. Neil, J. E. Prescott, C. R. Sutherland and J. K. Waring.

Ten-Year Medal: Mr. A. E. Nicholas.

Bar to Five-Year Medal: Messrs. S. Bown, J. V. Butterworth, E. Charnock, E. Coley, W. E. Davies, C. R. Garner, R. C. Harrison, J. B. Jones, D. A. Lawson, K. G. Lea, E. Marshall, W. G. Reyner, W. G. Roylance, V. Sestan, C. Shorthill and R. Smith.

Five-Year Medal: Messrs. C. A. Bansor, K. Bull, R. J. Cook, F. L. Griffin, G. Harris, J. G. Watson and C. P. Weating.

Diploma: 4th Year—Mr. K. W. Murray. 3rd Year—Messrs. D. Blackburn, H. D. Boyce, A. N. Button, G. Clarke, T. M. L. Ellwood, V. P. Henri, G. L. Jones, R. Lloyd, L. Murphy, R. A. Stevens and R. Withers. 2nd Year—Messrs. R. G. Bell, J. Crosby, J. Devon, P. J. Doheny, R. J. Duncan, J. Eastwood, J. D. Fitch, N. Griffiths, R. Holden, E. James, C. P. Jones, J. P. Kelly, J. McAdam, G. Smethurst, D. Virgin, R. Vyskocil and S. Wilson. 1st Year—Messrs. D. T. Barton, N. Bird, D. T. Burnett, F. E. Canner, F. Clynch, B. M. Connolly, D. Cooley, B. D. Cotgrave, R. Cotgrave, J. P. Duffy, G. Elliott, D. N. Grave, S. Hawkesworth, W. J. Keegan, G. D. Lamont, W. Lee, B. Meadows, F. Nolan, K. M. Palmer, I. Pembroke, A. F. Potts, W. E. Povall, A. Robinson, D. Ross, J. Shaughnessy, F. Smith, A. T. Taylor, E. Upton, P. A. Upton, D. W. Wharton, G. W. Willan and P. Wycherley.

Exemption Certificates: Mrs. E. J. Olivares and Mr. W. O. Cox.



Some of the North Wirral Safe Drivers with Chief Superintendent Hughes, centre, and Chief Inspector Sefton (with moustache) and District Officers, from right to left, front row, Messrs. D. G. Tomsett, R. H. Morley and G. Bowers.

The Portrait...

A story by
Mr. T. E. Matthews
(3rd engineer
Commercial Supply)
North Mersey District

IT ONLY seems like yesterday since we had the Revelation at Bridle Road—and yet it's over twelve months now, and the dust of forgetfulness is gradually settling down over what was a ten day wonder. For some it will remain an evergreen memory that will last a lifetime. For what happened was more—much more—than a run-of-the-mill morsel of exciting gossip.

It all started quite innocently with young Bill Maloney, who has been working in the Stores these last three years. Like all such establishments it has its fair share of pin-ups, some well worth looking at. For some of the young apprentices the luscious beauties with their frank, bold "come-hither" look are enough to start the sap rising. For the older there is the uninhibited appraisal and the yearning look of what might have been.

Bill Maloney and his pals were busy one day chewing their sandwiches and having a heated argument concerning art. "Youse lot don't know the first thing about real art" says Bill, who spoke with a delightful Bootle-Irish brogue.

"Get on with you, man" says Taff Williams "What better art can you get than one of our beauties over there?" Bill wrinkled his nose in disgust "Call that art?" he says. "I see one of those at me Club every

Sunday." Amid howls and snorts of disbelief, he continued "Tell you what. I'll bring in a pitcher to show you lot the real meaning of art." At this point the argument broke up. The foreman walked in and their break was over.

True to his word, Bill marched into the stores the following day hefting a three feet by two feet flat parcel. After the first hectic hour of issuing stores the room assumed a quiet air and Bill ambled over to his parcel. He carefully undid the string fastenings and unwrapped the layers of brown paper coverings to reveal the portrait of a man. At least it looked like a man at a quick cursory glance, but when Bill placed it directly underneath a light fitting and you examined it carefully it could look like anything.

It was a full length oil painting of a person, but it was different from any picture I had ever seen. When you examined it connoisseur-like from one side to the other, you discovered some remarkable features.

The head was flat and feathery like that of an owl. There was a slight hint of a pair of horns rising above two pointed ears. The face was long and saturnine but divided into two parts. One part was adorned with a pointed moustache and a goatee beard. Its blue eye protruded large like a gob-stopper. The other part was smooth shaven, effeminate with the full green eye and long lashes of a woman. The male mouth was thin and cruel with a perpetual sneer. The female lips were full, pouting, inviting, smiling a "Mona Lisa" smile.

The body was similarly divided, but strangely, the male body was on the female face and vice versa. It was starkers. Little was left to the imagination. From the neck to the knees one side was All Woman; the other side was All Man. As my eyes travelled down the picture I was reminded of Epstein's sculpture of Adam, only more so if you know what I mean?

The female side had the leg and cloven hoof of a goat. The male side had a wooden leg. The arms



were another oddity, the male side being beautifully moulded female arm worthy of a Venus de Milo ending at long tapering fingers, and the female side being the knotted muscled arm of a gorilla.

Billy stood back and eyed the portrait appreciatively, a huge grin on his face. Taff Williams and Jock O'Flanagan came across to investigate.

"Roll-me-over-in-the-Clover" gasped Taff "What in Heaven's name is that?" Jock just opened his mouth like a codfish and stared. "Me Grandad painted that" says Billy proudly "an' that, me fine fellows, is what they calls Art."

He turned round to observe the effect on their faces. When he saw the glassy-eyed stare of Jock an anxious look flitted across his face. "One thing fellows" he said "don't stare too hard at the eyes, me Grandad reckons they have a queer effect on some people." Jock just carried on staring but by now his eyes had the glassy look of a hypnotised rabbit.



"Jock" shouts Billy "Snap out of it."

For another moment Jock kept on staring, then suddenly, without warning he lets out a screech, spins on his heels and laughing like a demented hyena rushes to some waste paper and empty cardboard boxes that were stacked in the corner awaiting refuse collection. He pulled a box of matches from his smock and before anyone could stop him, started striking them furiously, throwing the flaming matches into the waste. All the while he kept muttering to himself "I know I can do it, I know I can do it."

It took six strong men to drag him away and force the matchbox from his clenched hand. They managed to douse the fire before it got too much of a hold, and to turn out the staff on what most people thought was a practice alarm call.

Jock recovered his senses about an hour later, fortified with five cups of what passes for coffee in the vending machine. He couldn't, or wouldn't, explain his actions to any of his mates. A few days later, however, I got him in a corner and over a cuppa in the canteen he told me, in strict secrecy, what had happened. "I kept looking at the eyes" he said "and suddenly I had the queerest feeling that I could do anything I really wanted. There was this thing that got inside my head that kept on repeating 'Go on Jock—you can do it' over and over again. Well, there's times I get really browned off at work—times I feel I'd be happy to burn the whole place down. I knew then this was the time and place. No-one could stop me. Next thing I remember is someone slapping me in the face and pouring coffee

down my throat."

For the next few days nothing untoward happened. Billy kept the portrait covered up and whenever anyone wanted to see it, would warn that person to look at it as a whole, and not, under any circumstances to stare at the eyes. There is always one person to whom the edict "Thou shalt not" is regarded as a direct challenge. It started with Eve, and from that time women have been especially partial to apples.

Miss Dorothy Lovequick works in the Stores Accounts Section. From time to time she has the duty of checking various discrepancies with the stores wallahs. Dorothy will never see 20 again or 30 or even 40. She is a well preserved example of what modern corsetry plus the living bra will do for a woman who is still young in mind. She had heard rumours of a painting and wanted to see it. She gave Billy the condescending look of the Art Expert when he told her not to look too closely at the eyes.

Whipping away the cloth covering he stood back awaiting the praise of someone who obviously appreciated art. She looked, she gasped, she stared, then it happened again. Before he could stop her she let out a screech and in front of his shocked gaze, began to strip. Hardly had he got the words "Now look here Miss Lovequick" out of his mouth than she was down to her bra. Before he could take the couple of steps towards her to—as he thought—slap her face and bring her to her senses, she was down to the bare essentials.



With a look of ecstasy on her face and muttering "I can do it. I can do it" she wheeled around and bolted through the door, Billy in hot pursuit. She streaked along the corridor, in and around the ground floor office, up the stairs, around the first floor office, down the stairs and out into the yard. Imagine, if you can, the effect it had on the staff. Three girls fainted, one had a fit of uncontrollable giggles, four men fell over their shoelaces and one swallowed his pipe.

They finally caught up with poor Dorothy as she was trying to climb the perimeter fence. She was off work for three months before she had the temerity to face her colleagues once again.

After this, word quickly got around about the freak painting. People wandered into the stores on all kinds of pretexts just for a quick glance at the portrait. At first Billy kept it covered up and was on the point of taking it home when Taff Williams

had a brainwave. "Look Billy-boy," he said "You say it's only the eyes that does the damage. Well, then cover them up and Bob's your Uncle." Very carefully they taped a bandage across the eyes and uncovered the painting. There were no more incidents for the next few days, although dozens of people viewed the oddity. We did hear that the Securicor night guard could not induce his dog—a savage alsatian—anywhere near the stores during his nightly tour of inspection, but dogs are queer creatures, and nobody thought anything of it.

Then it happened again. Jack Dailey one of the Energy Sales staff was in the stores on some routine enquiry. He glanced idly at the picture when suddenly and before anyone could interfere, nipped across and removed the bandage. Jack was by nature very quiet but a born salesman. He was also very curious. Although Billy had shouted "Don't look at the eyes Jack" it was too late. By the time they got to him Jack's eyes were glazed.



Three of the fellows had a tight hold of him, waiting for the first screech, but strangely nothing came. Instead Jack turned to Billy and said quietly "Why all the fuss lad, there's nothing to it." They let him go and Billy heaved a sigh of relief as he quickly re-taped the eyes. But a worried frown creased his brow as he heard Jack going through the door repeating quietly to himself "*nothing to it, I can do it; nothing to it, I can do it . . .*"

The Energy Sales Engineer was in conference with other senior officers in the D.C.E.'s office. The door was suddenly flung open and Jack marched in his face beaming from ear to ear. Quickly he strode to the Energy Sales Engineer and in the stunned silence placed his hand on the other's shoulder and said with a chuckle "Not to worry Sir, I can do it." Without another word he spun on his heels and strode purposefully out of the door. He was not seen again for the next two weeks, but the results of his labours were.

The first was an order from the N.C.B. for ten thousand Night Storage Radiators. Hardly had the hands stopped rubbing in glee when the order was cancelled. It seems some colliery manager had been talked into placing an order for the heaters to be used down the pits to keep the night shift workers warm. Jack was a born salesman. Then an order was received for five thousand washing machines from the Homes for the Aged Association. Once again this was cancelled. A fast talking salesman, they said, had conned one of their matrons. She has

since been dismissed. When, following this, came an order for two thousand immersion heaters ordered by the local swimming bath manager to keep the baths warm during possible power cuts, it was the end of Jack Dailey. He was summoned to appear at the Offices forthwith.

Next day Jack appeared, marched straight to the Energy Sales Engineer and before that worthy could utter a word said "Told you Sir, there's nothing to it, nothing to it, I'll be leaving you now—off to pastures new. Sold the car, sold the house—off to the States." "Keep up the good work Sir—" and off he went, beaming all over his face.

Well, things had come to a head. Word had finally reached the higher echelons of the work of Art that exercised some horrible influence on its viewers and Billy Maloney was given the order—"*Get rid, quick!*" This Billy was more than anxious to do. He had been wanting to take the picture home ever since the second incident but had been persuaded by the Art lovers to leave it up on show. Now he would delay no longer.

He got back to the stores and told the lads to take their last look. "It'll be gone by tonight" he said "so make the most of it." His invitation was wasted. Nobody, especially Jock wanted even to glance at the thing. But Willie Wallie of the Work Study Department who was there doing some exercise took Billy at his word. He was wandering around the stores and no-one was taking much notice of him. So that when he stopped in front of the portrait not a soul was there to prevent him whipping the bandage from the eyes. He had heard so much of those eyes, he felt he must see for himself. A Doubting Thomas, he had never believed the stories anyway.



The effect this time was dynamic. Hardly had he looked at the eyes than with a wild scream he pulled a sheath knife from his pocket and lurched towards the picture and plunged the knife into it time and again. But even more horrible was the tortured scream that came from the portrait. For a few seconds it seemed that all the souls of Hades had invaded the place. Before the horrified eyes of everyone there, the painting dissolved, but what made it worse, it dissolved into a pool of blood.

They had to forcibly hold back Bill Maloney or I'm sure the knife would have been used a second time. He was in tears and kept on repeating "Me Grandad's pitcher, me Grandad's pitcher."

I knew Billy's Grandfather, Old Joe Maloney from the old days, He had been a spark with Bootle

Corporation and as I remember him, was quite a character.

"Listen Bill," I said, "Let me break the news to your Grandad, I think I can explain how things were and what happened."

I visited Old Joe the following day. Tactfully I started to break the news of the catastrophe, but he cut me short. "E's dead isn't 'e?"

"You've got it wrong Joe," I said "there's nobody dead, but I'm afraid that painting of yours . . ." He interrupted once more. "That was no painting Harry. Listen, I'll tell you a few facts. I took forty years to paint that one. I travelled all over the world. I had this idea in me head to get something on canvas that would portray all the evils and goodness in this world. So whenever I heard of any deed, really good or really bad, I went along and painted a part of that object. Sometimes it was a man, sometimes a

woman . . . sometimes an animal. Forty years it took me to finish and then I was sorry I ever started."

He explained how the eyes affected people of strong emotions, and how it instilled an iron will into whoever gazed too deeply into their depths. "I've seen some tragic things happening to the wrong people who looked too hard" he said. "I'm glad, and relieved that someone had the guts to destroy it. Send Billy to see me and I'll give him another picture—one that's full of Love." He chuckled "Love's the only thing ain't it?"

I was glad for Billy's sake that the old man took such a philosophical view of the whole mess. I could see that Joe had been genuinely relieved and happy that events had turned out as they had. One thing kept going around in my head, though. I wonder who Willie Wallie was really knifing, and has he finally got it out of his system!



ELECTRICITY and the HOME ECONOMIST CONFERENCE

This year's get-together attracted 500 Home Economists to Head Office a few weeks ago. Our Commercial staff from all over the area helped ferry the ladies in, while others came by coach and in their own transport.

The Directors of Education in the many Authorities throughout the Board's area wholeheartedly supported the venture and were keen to have as many as possible attend. Unfortunately, numbers had to be limited.

The Conference was opened by Chief Commercial Officer, Mr. M. R. Cowan welcoming the delegates before handing over to Mr. T. Dean (*Appliance Marketing Manager*) who spoke on "Kitchen Lib." Then Mrs. Joan Dittrich (*Assistant Development Engineer*) talked about the microwave oven in today's kitchen and just before lunch, Mrs. Jenny Salmon, nutritionist from the Birds Eye Food Company, spoke on "Freezing — Present and Future."

The afternoon session opened with Mrs. Jenny M. Webb, the Senior Home Economist with the Electricity Council telling the audience how domestic electrical appliances were tested for safety, durability and performance at the Council's Laboratories in Surrey.

The final speaker was Mr. R. Stewart (*Energy Sales Manager*) who explained how electricity could be used wisely and not wastefully.

An Open Forum session concluded the Conference which again proved to be a huge success.



Above: Mrs. Joan Dittrich demonstrates microwave oven techniques watched by Mrs. Margaret Corlett (energy sales demonstrator, Mid-Cheshire), left, and some of our guests.

Right: Mrs. Jenny Webb and Mr. Matt Cowan.

Below: Alison James (energy sales demonstrator, Dee Valley), 2nd from left, with some of her guests, Megan Kelly (Bryn Offa School), left, and Norma Evans and Gwyneth Hughes (Castell Alyn School, Hope).



Below: Anne Barker (energy sales demonstrator, Liverpool), 2nd from right, with Margaret Guering, left, and Sister Mary Carmel (St. Agnes' School) and Kathleen Nolan (St. Swithen's School, Croxteth).





Our friend "Little Willie" gazes benignly down on the gathering of Consultative Council local committee members.

THE WATCHDOGS GATHER

About eighty members of local Consultative Council committees gathered at Sealand Road on November 11th for the first-ever conference of MANWEB area Local Committee members. All parts of the Merseyside and North Wales area were represented.

These men and women, many of whom are active in public life in their own localities, form an important link between MANWEB and the communities they represent, and no doubt many of them left the conferences feeling that they had acquired a much deeper insight into the service which we provide, the work we do, and the problems we face.

After being welcomed by the Chairman of MANWEB (Mr. Denis Dodds), the delegates listened attentively to illustrated talks by Messrs. A. P. Whyte (*Chief Accountant*), F. J. Brown (*Chief Engineer*) and M. R. Cowan (*Chief Commercial Officer*), on different aspects of MANWEB's work. Many would be gratified to discover that in a considerable variety of fields of activity and operation, MANWEB's record of efficiency and cost-effectiveness places us at the 'top of the league' of area electricity boards, and our three Chief Officers succeeded in putting across what they had to say in a most effective manner, easily understood by non-technical people.

The delegates showed their appreciation by bombarding the speakers with pertinent questions,

covering a wide range of topics—with which the speakers coped very effectively.

Chairman for the day was Mr. C. S. McKenzie, Consultative Council Chairman.

EMPLOYEES' MEETINGS

Reports on Local Advisory Committee Employees' Annual Meetings held at North Mersey, Liverpool, Dee Valley, Mid-Cheshire, Clwyd, Gwynedd and Oswestry District and Head Office will be covered—with pictures—in our January issue.

Rumour has it . . .

that Personnel are taking on an Executive Officer, two principle assistants and four senior assistants to deal with the staff economy drive.

that the Inland Revenue have caught up with our Admin. Section staff who now have all their salary taxed as unearned income.

Men from MANWEB make way for oil

MANWEB engineers worked in atrocious weather conditions when re-siting an 11,000-volt overhead line to make way for the Amlwch to Ellesmere Port Shell oil pipeline at Elton a short time ago.

Following torrential rains, mountains of mud built up and to add to the hazards, water hid deep and treacherous potholes.

At the end of one day, our men had great difficulty in getting their land rover off the site when a nearby brook overflowed its banks and completely flooded the narrow road. On another occasion, they saw a cow stuck in a drain and in danger of drowning. They



Amid the mud and the water, the Chester gang, from left to right: Messrs. Fred Uxley, Bill Griffiths and Bob Davies (linesmen), Mike Williams and Terry Shone (chargehands). The two other members of the team, Messrs. Dennis Randalls (linesman) and Henry Cooper (mate) had gone for their diving gear!

put on a cowboy act as they lassooed the animal before man-handling it to the safety of the

river bank.

Just part of the job for these tough Men from MANWEB.

Cartoons

by JEFF BAKER
(H.O. Display Section)



"No, just a sore head!"



"He's got a very responsible job. Whenever anything goes wrong, he's responsible!"

If and when a new Welsh Electricity Board is set-up, the Chairman designate, Mr. Ivor Maddocks (at present our Oswestry District Sales Supervisor), has decided to call it "DAIWEB."

Shall I send the paper economy memo out in duplicate or triplicate?

* * *

These lavatory brushes are O.K. but please can we get back to paper?

* * *



"The LAC told the canteen manager that the staff want turkey and stuffing and he said that he might have difficulty with the turkey."

PLANNING FOR PEOPLE

Plas Madoc Leisure Centre

THE Wrexham Maelor Borough Council inherited a legacy from the former Wrexham Rural District Council with their policy of planning for the people in their work, their homes and for their leisure time.

In order to attract new industry to the area to provide new jobs following the run-down of the collieries, the Rural District Council set about providing new homes for the people as an inducement for families to stay put.

At the same time, to satisfy the social problems, they planned for a number of multi-purpose community centres as part of an overall plan to improve leisure facilities in the area. Former engineer and surveyor to the Wrexham R.D.C., Eric Myers said, "The Council did its best to ensure that the people had good homes, decent job opportunities and to provide facilities for their leisure hours."

The men from MANWEB were called in to advise on the heating and catering arrangements for the first three community centres to be built. These well-insulated buildings are warmed by direct-acting heaters and electric cookers in the kitchens are used to provide hot snacks when required. Three more such centres are now nearing completion.

Following the success of the community centres, the Council embarked on the construction of a huge leisure centre on the Plas Madoc housing estate at Acrefair. On this site the Council have over the past few years, built 983 new homes at a cost of £2,210,000 bringing the population within a three mile radius of the Plas Madoc Leisure Centre to over 25,000 people.

It was at one of the Board's highly successful Catering Exhibitions at Wrexham in the latter part of 1972 that Mr. Terry Bates, the newly-appointed Chief Leisure and Recreation Officer to the Council,



Mr. Don Hinsley (Energy Sales Engineer, Dee Valley District), left, with Mr. Eric Myers (Director of Public Works, Wrexham Maelor Borough Council).

asked our Dee Valley District energy sales staff to submit plans for an all-electric kitchen in the new Centre.

Mr. Trevor Edwards (2nd assistant energy sales engineer) contacted commercial catering expert, Mrs. Joan Dittich at Head Office and between them they came up with a scheme to make full use of the long narrow space allocated for the kitchen. The electrical equipment includes a micro-wave oven, a full-size griddle and oven unit, two fryer units, hotcupboards, Bain Maries, two radiant plates, a deep freezer, refrigerator, hot water cylinder, water steam injector, coffee machine and the inevitable dishwasher. The total load is over 50 kW and the cost was around the £1,500 mark.

The system of cafeteria-style self-service was adopted by Mr. Bates after he had seen the efficient way in which the Board's own restaurant was run at Head Office.

Mr. Vince Clapton, the Social Amenities Officer at the Centre said, "The efficiency of the kitchen has been put to the test time and time again since the Centre was opened. We have had quite a few functions where we have catered for up to 550 three-course meals. I am particularly impressed by the cleanliness throughout the kitchen".

The new Leisure Centre is certainly proving to be a most successful venture with more and more people making use of the facilities offered.

The sports hall can be used for a wide variety of activities as well as being used as an auditorium for



Every inch of space is utilised in this long and narrow all-electric kitchen at the Leisure Centre. Well over 500 three-course meals can be prepared and served at any one time, and in spotlessly clean conditions.

Below: Mr. Trevor Edwards, left, chats with Mr. Terry Bates, centre, and Mr. Vince Clapton.

stage productions, concerts and dances. For special occasions—dances and dinners—the problem of the barn effect of the high ceiling is overcome by the special pendant light fittings. These were designed by our own lighting expert Mr. Gerry Worthington and made to his specifications by Lighting Design Ltd., of Preston at a cost of £35 for each fitting.

At a recent dinner dance, only four of the planned eight fittings were used but the idea was still proved successful. With the ceiling lighting switched off, the pendant fittings at staggered heights created the desired effect of a low ceiling.

The Plas Madoc Leisure Centre will stand comparison with any of its like in this country. A special feature is the three squash courts with their own
(continued overleaf)



The spacious sports hall set out here in readiness for one of the many dinner dances held at the Centre. With the main hall lighting switched off, the specially-designed pendant fittings give the intimate effect of a low ceiling. The large stage, complete with full theatrical lighting, completes the picture.



After a fast game of squash or a quick turn on the cycle machine you can have a soothing sauna and then relax in luxurious comfort in the sauna suite.

individual viewing balconies. This fast-growing indoor sport is already proving most popular.

Under the 60 feet by 40 feet stage, with its full theatrical lighting and fixtures, is another activity area accommodating table tennis and minor games and can be used for discoteque dances.

Special recreation sessions are held for mothers and housewives and shift workers during the day in mid-week. Afternoon sessions are now being organised for senior citizens and at specific times, special sessions will be held for the physically handicapped.

A mini-club (5 to 11 years) and a junior club

(12 to 16 years) are held three times a week.

This is the way all sections of the population are catered for.

After taking part in some sporting activity there are ample changing room facilities with plenty of hot and cold showers, and the last word in recreational luxury—again proving very popular—are the two Sauna Suites, each with a 12kW heating unit.

Then off for a snack in the cafeteria or into the attractively furnished lounge bar. What else could anyone ask for in their leisure time!

Obituary

Mr. N. H. BARKER

Old friends and colleagues of Mr. N. H. Barker, who retired as District Engineer at St. Helens in 1952, will be sorry to hear of his death at the age of 87.

Sending us the news, Mr. Barker's son, Mr. Theo Barker, who is Professor of Economic and Social History at Canterbury University, informed us of the circumstances—perhaps not too unfitting a passing for an old electrical engineer.

Mr. Barker, senior, had been helping his son and a colleague, who had been writing the second volume of the *History of London Transport*, by reading through old files and giving technical assistance over chronicling the electrification of the tramways and steam underground system.

A party was held at the Festival Hall to launch the book, and Mr. Barker senior was one of the guests.

Writes Mr. Barker: "*He thoroughly enjoyed himself, but the general excitement proved too much for him. He collapsed immediately afterwards, and was dead by the time the ambulance reached hospital.*"

Mr. Barker began as an apprentice with Salford Corporation in 1904, and after study became a technical assistant at Stoke. He served throughout the first World War, and later worked at Manchester and Stretford before moving to St. Helens in 1928. He continued to take a great interest in the industry, maintaining contact with some of his old friends from MANWEB.

Mr. S. MORRIS

We regret to announce the death of Mr. Stanley Morris, a meter-reader/collector at Warrington until his retirement in April of this year. On behalf of his colleagues we extend our sincere sympathy to Mrs. Morris.

Mr. C. SHORTHILL

Many colleagues gathered at the Landican Crematorium to pay their last respects to Mr. Charles Shorthill (aged 61) who passed away recently.

Mr. Shorthill joined the supply industry over 40 years ago. He was a fitter with the Birkenhead Corporation Electricity Department and MANWEB before changing his job to a cut-off inspector in our North Wirral District.

Our sympathies go to his widow, son and daughter.



The longboat "Nevin" holds many happy memories for Roger Monk and his staff.

All aboard with Jolly Roger

TO THE land-lubber, an evening on board a 40-foot longboat chugging along the Bridgewater Canal at a steady four knots—whatever that may be—could well have all the makings of a long drawn-out yawn.

It could, unless the longboat happened to be the motor vessel "Nevin," with captain Jolly Roger (*alias Mr. Roger Monk, South Lancashire District Commercial Engineer*) acting as host to some of his friends and colleagues.

After tea on board, thanks to Mrs. Monk, the lines were cast-off and at 18.30 they headed west along the oldest canal in the country.

It was strange how even familiar landmarks looked so different from the canal viewpoint and soon a new peaceful experience dawned as they cruised further and further away from the noise and bustle of the traffic-filled roads.

The flora and fauna was less spoiled and at the leisurely pace of the boat, more time was allowed to admire the natural beauty along the banks.

CHANGE OF NAME

Following local government reorganisation, as from 1st December our South Lancashire District based at Warrington will be renamed Mid-Mersey District

The trip took the party through the 200-year-old Preston Brook tunnel where they were told by their host (*not we may add from personal experience*) of the days when the bargees propelled their boats through the tunnel by lying sideways on planks fixed across the boat and walking along the walls of the tunnel.

A quick turn round at Dutton Stop Lock and back through the tunnel before the "Nevin" was tied up at a point close to the "Red Lion." Here everyone enjoyed a most welcome meal and a glass of ale.

Then, homeward bound and through Daresbury where, from

Roger's new boat, "Arma Mia," for cruising in coastal waters. Obviously he is planning for retirement!

an elevated position on the canal, one can take a panoramic view across the Mersey Valley and see Fiddlers Ferry power station stark against the skyline and rows of sodium street lights twinkling like stars in the heavens. A family of wild ducks scattered in all directions as the "Nevin" nosed her way among the reeds at the water's edge.

In the still night air, laughter rang out from the 'sharp end' of the boat with the voyagers enjoying a joke as the lines were made fast.

It was a most memorable evening because the four-berth motor vessel "Nevin" with all her mod cons., powerful diesel engine, h and c laid on, spacious lounge, fluorescent lighting, gas-leak detector, coal fire, spot lights, etc., etc., has been put up for sale.

We carried the advertisement in "Contact" and lo! and behold! Roger got a buyer—*subject to contract!*



Prize Crossword

Once again we are grateful to our old friend Mr. F. G. Lott for providing us with this bumper crossword especially for our puzzle fans.

Please do not be put off by the number of blank squares or the mass of clues, just plough your way through and after a day or so you should finish it!

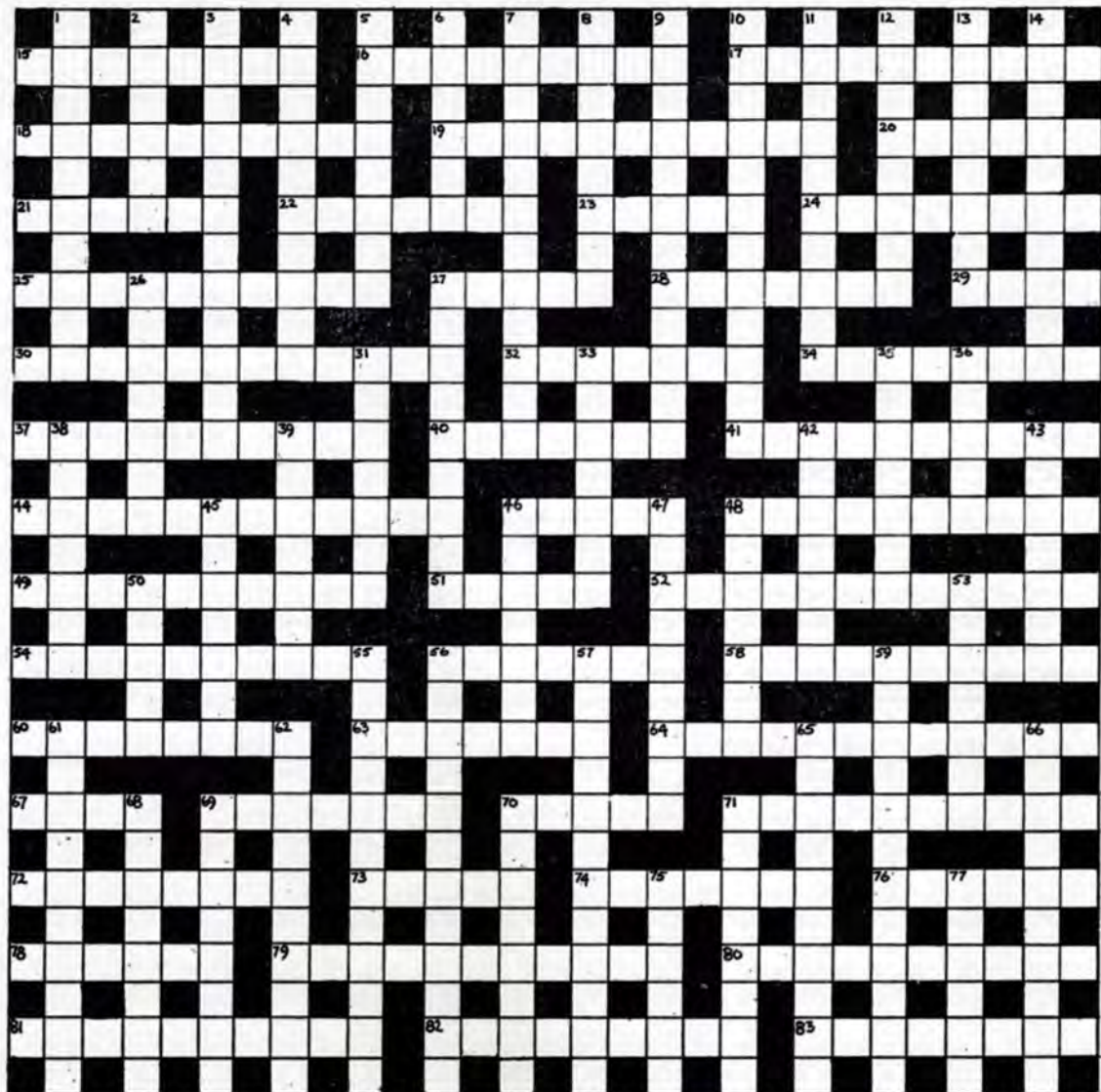
Seeing as most of our readers will be broke after the festive season, we are offering prizes of £5 to the senders of the first three all-correct solutions received by January 6th 1975.

The competition is open to all MANWEB employees, pensioners and their families, but please, only one entry per person.

Entries should be addressed to The Editor, 'Contact,' MANWEB Head Office, Sealand Road, Chester CH1 4LR, and envelopes should be marked "Crossword." Plain paper entries will be accepted, but don't forget to add your own name and address.

Clues across

- 15 Not a bad legacy for Christmas (8)
- 16 Largely characteristic of Tweedle-Dum and -Dee (9)
- 17 Beyond one's legal power to put true rivals in order (5, 5)
- 18 Northern states in the American civil war (10)
- 19 With the old boy quiet, apply perfume and say nothing (11)
- 20 Try to be all geared up in the end (6)
- 21 Girl in the garden (6)



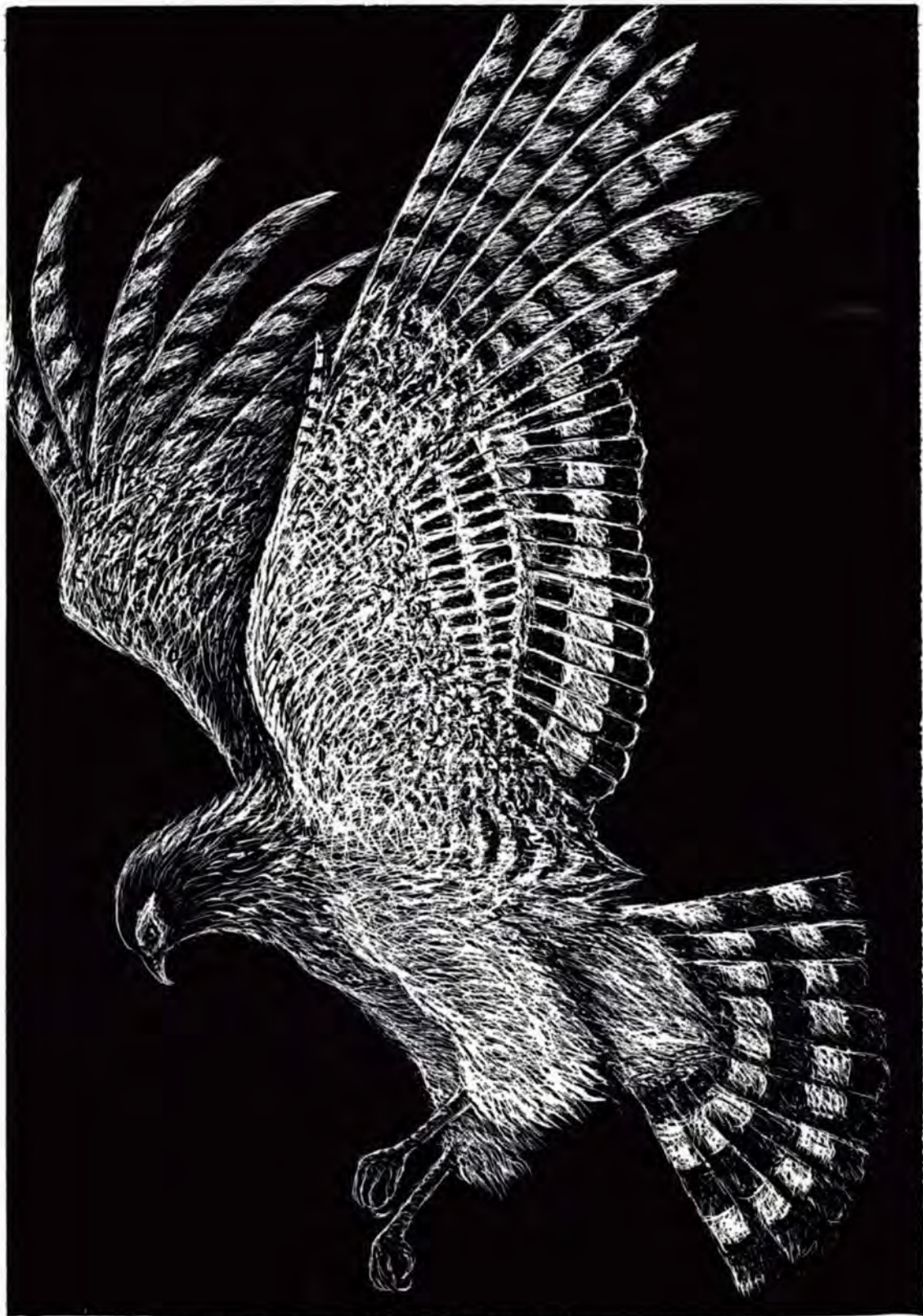
- 22 Inside information about the way out is very urgent (7)
- 23 I believe in a dead language (5)
- 24 The Merry Widow changed to repeat her performance in it (8)
- 25 For the empty part of my stomach I had a meal to satisfy (10)
- 27 Of marriage, St. Augustine said such abstinence is easier than moderation (5)
- 28 "Their coats were brushed, their faces washed, their shoes were clean and neat" (7)
- 29 Invested by horsemen (4)
- 30 Over-mean? (5, 7)
- 32 Beaten, but it seems not to have been an inside job (7)
- 34 Gum up the works with a wooden shoe before long (8)
- 37 Measure of an ecclesiastical area (10)
- 40 Repairs to places (7)
- 41 Maintain no different way to keep the law (10)
- 44 But it doesn't wage war on wages (4, 3, 5)
- 46 What ho! Uriah Heep has a dancing girl (5)
- 48 Not a transparently obvious solution to this clue (10)
- 49 A strange sauna trail thousands of miles away (10)
- 51 Advantage follows (5)
- 52 Endless circle (8, 4)
- 54 Look not so much at a large dress (10)
- 56 He was as mean as they came (7)
- 58 Designed for ladies with two right feet? (4-6)
- 60 Cardinal feature (8)
- 63 and 64 Uncle Tom's champion (7, 7, 5)
- 67 Man from the north follows (on horseback of course) a place in Berks (4)
- 69 The sun god and I carry the flags (7)
- 70 "And hearts that once beat high for praise, now feel that . . . no more" (The Minstrel Boy) (5)
- 71 Beautiful woman in Italy can be deadly! (10)
- 72 Last rest is disturbed by surprises (8)
- 73 Copy Puccini's girl with cold hands now reaching a hundred (5)
- 74 Don't count this (7)
- 76 Like a son of the soil (6)
- 78 Robinson's off course (6)
- 79 Keeping on touching the ground like the tip of a bird's back toe (11)
- 80 Classify a domestic pet to begin with (10)
- 81 Darling, what big feet you have! (10)
- 82 He puts his beer to a real test (9)
- 83 But queens are feminine (8)

Clues down

- 1 Christmas spread? (6, 4)
- 2 Commercial opening before Christmas (6)
- 3 Both literally and anagrammatically it could (and often does) create a sight (9, 3)
- 4 He doesn't dot his i's or cross his t's, or watch his p's and q's (10)
- 5 One doesn't go up to town on it (4, 4)
- 6 When one may find it in a wardrobe, for example (6)
- 7 Use important varied combinations (12)
- 8 Very nearly an old Siamese coin, straight up! (8)
- 9 This is botanical, so use motions to get as many stamens as petals (12)
- 10 One beef quash for her (5, 2, 5)
- 11 Platform shop-keepers? (10)
- 12 Best year for growing them (3, 5)
- 13 Prevents that sinking feeling (8)
- 14 No doubt it would have to be to carry a ten-gallon hat! (10)
- 26 Love's window flier (7)
- 27 Speculated the alternative is editorially abbreviated (9)
- 31 Some Andalusian metal in the fireplace (7)
- 33 Civil injury initiates a painful process (7)
- 35 36 gave one at which only warm water was on the menu (7)
- 36 Referred to above in verbatim only (5)
- 38 Descriptive of Esau (7)
- 39 Attribute to a writer (7)
- 42 Like a qualified member of the NUR? (7)
- 43 Trains its big guns on the goal, presumably (7)
- 45 Christmas pantomime character (7)
- 46 There was no holding him (7)
- 47 Unusually fine fairy tale is beyond description (9)
- 48 Supervise a bird's eye view (7)
- 50 "A . . . band captain eke was he of famous London town" (John Gilpin) (5)
- 53 This for Christmas dinner would lead to riots! (7)
- 55 Wackford Squeers lost more cash (upset at having to spend it on food, perhaps) (12)
- 56 It is in the workhouse! (9, 3)
- 57 One with an I.Q. of 30? (12)
- 59 Paged leaders heraldically displayed (6-6)
- 61 Choked with sobs, he sang "Beautiful, beautiful soup!" (Carroll) (4, 6)
- 62 Denizen of virile pits (4, 6)
- 65 The lieutenant and I, surrounded with spare cash, take up the art of fishing (10)
- 66 School rifle (10)
- 68 Tedious to be in attire so mean (8)
- 69 Vessels holding at least sixteen pints in the east (8)
- 70 Wrapped it up and sent it by Channel steamer (8)
- 71 They chuck you out, after too many high-balls, perhaps (8)
- 75 It's that doggone prairie wolf! (6)
- 77 Unusual quality of being found on camera rests or tripods (6)

THE END

One of our pensioners retired to live in Bala. We asked him if there was any special reason for selecting Bala and he said, "Yes, to end my days there will mean that transition to death will be imperceptable."



"Montagu's Harrier"

drawn by Mr. Stan. Jones, assitant storekeeper, Legacy.

Two of MANWEB's long-serving Group Managers, Mr. H. Telfer and Mr. J. W. Trimble, retired recently, after "farewell" get-togethers at Head Office.

Speaking at a lunch in Mr. Trimble's honour, Mr. A. P. Whyte (*Chief Accountant*), in the course of a humorous speech, paid tribute to Mr. Trimble's important contribution to the development and success of the Board. Mr. Whyte referred in particular to the valuable part played by Mr. Trimble as accountant of the former Area 4, especially during the difficult period of consolidation following the nationalisation of the industry.



Our Chairman is highly amused at the comments made by Mr. Telfer at his farewell luncheon. On the left is Mrs. Telfer.

Group Managers Retire

At a similar function for Mr. Telfer, our Chief Engineer (Mr. F. J. Brown), traced Mr. Telfer's career in engineering and managerial capacities. He said that as well as being a first-class engineer and administrator, Mr. Telfer had won the respect and affection of all his colleagues at every level by his understanding and humane personality, and his happy knack of being able to get on with everyone with whom he came into contact.

Both were also guests of honour at gatherings attended by old colleagues from all parts of the MANWEB area.

On behalf of management and staff Mr. Trimble was presented with a portable TV, radio, and a mixer, while Mr. Telfer received a gold watch, a fishing rod and a mixer.

Mr. H. TELFER

Mr. Telfer was educated at the Liverpool Technical College and served an engineering apprenticeship with the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board before joining the staff of the Liverpool Corporation Electricity Supply Department in 1933.

On the nationalisation of the industry he joined MANWEB,

and served successively as Senior Assistant Engineer (Planning), at the former Area 1 office in Liverpool, and as Assistant Chief Engineer at Board Head Office, before returning to Area 1 as Area Engineer.

In 1968 he was appointed Area 1 Manager, and on re-organisation became Group Manager, based at the new Head Office at Chester.

Mr. J. W. TRIMBLE

Mr. Trimble was educated at the Methodist College and Queens University, Belfast, served his

articles with a Belfast firm of accountants, and in 1933 joined the Electricity Board for Northern Ireland as Chief Internal Auditor. In 1938 he was appointed Assistant Accountant with that Board, and in 1948 joined the MANWEB staff as Accountant for the Board's Area 4, based at Rhosyllen. Mr. Trimble became Chief Internal Auditor at Head Office, Liverpool, in 1963, and in 1964 was appointed Manager of the old Area 2/3, successfully completing the merger of the two Areas.

On re-organisation Mr. Trimble became Group Manager, based at Head Office.

Mr. Trimble thanks colleagues at his retirement presentation. Completing the picture is Mr. D. G. Dodds (*Chairman*) and Mrs. Trimble.





Friends at Rhostyllen say their goodbyes to Mr. Sewell, *centre right*, as he receives their parting gift from Mr. Shell.

Retirements

Mr. LES SEWELL

Mr. L. W. Sewell, a higher clerical assistant in the Material Control section at Dee Valley District Office said farewell to his friends and colleagues recently on the occasion of his retirement after 38 years' service in the industry.

He began his career in 1937 with the Chester Corporation electricity department, and after serving six years in H.M. Forces at home and abroad, he returned to the engineering department. On Vesting Day he moved over to MANWEB, and subsequently carried out duties in the commercial section of the

Chester District and latterly as assistant to the Material Controller at Dee Valley, Rhostyllen. For many years he served as Chairman and member of the Staff Committee.

At a presentation by Mr. T. P. Shell (*District Administrative Officer*), he was given a silver salver and vase as a parting gift from his friends.

Mr. W. TAYLOR

An early retirement, after 40 years' service in the electricity supply industry, was taken recently by Mr. Wilfred Taylor, a foreman fitter based at our Mold depot in the Clwyd District.

A large gathering of friends and colleagues heard

The lads from Mold depot give a retirement send off to Mr. Taylor, *seated centre*. On this occasion our local correspondent Mr. Idris Griffiths managed to get into the picture—*seated second from the left*.



Mr. L. Griffiths (*District Engineer*) thank Wilf for his excellent work with the Board and praise his fine quality as a person and his great ability as a foreman.

Others, including Mr. I. Morris (*production engineer*), added their tributes to Wilf's service and friendship.

Starting his career in 1934, Wilf joined the Electricity Distribution of North Wales Company as an apprentice at their Johnstown depot, moving to Flint a few years later. In 1948 he transferred to MANWEB and worked on the development of electricity supplies in North Wales. He was made foreman in 1952.

During the war years, he served with R.E.M.E. at Dunkirk and in the Middle East.

A keen sportsman, Wilf once played football for a MANWEB team. Today, he is a keen golfer and is a member of the Holywell Golf Club. His wife too is a golfer and was the first lady captain of the Flint Golf Club. Wilf was the winner of the Gravett Cup in 1973 and was a runner-up in this year's Bernie Green Memorial Shield competition.

We join with his host of friends in wishing Wilf and his wife many happy years of retirement at their new home at Bangor-on-Dee, and many happy days on the golf course.

Old Colleague at Head Office

Head Office at Chester recently received a visit from a man who will be remembered by many long-serving MANWEB people, and doubtless by a large number of our former colleagues now on the retired list.

Our visitor was Mr. George Roper, formerly with the North Wales Power Company, and MANWEB's Assistant Chief Commercial Officer from 1948 to 1953, when he moved to the Southern Electricity Board as Manager, Uxbridge District.

Now retired since 1966, Mr. Roper is as fit as a fiddle and obviously enjoying an active retirement, after 50 years in the electrical industry.

Since his retirement Mr. Roper has done a lot of globe-trotting, including a visit to Berlin (1966) as guest of the United States Air Force. In 1967 he fulfilled a long-cherished ambition to visit South America by taking a ticket for a round trip to Chile

in a passenger-cargo boat, sailing from Liverpool. This trip covered more than three months, with the ship calling at ports in the Caribbean, Panama, Columbia, Equador, Peru, and Chile, and as she was often in port for a week or more at a time, he was able to make many trips inland to places of interest.

He has also made a number of visits to Norway, where he has friends in the electricity industry. Points of interest visited included Rjukan (site of Hitler's Heavy Water plant, destroyed by the heroism of Norwegian guerillas, and the base for the film '*The Heroes of Telemark*'), and several hydro stations.

Apart from short trips abroad to the sun, Mr. and Mrs. Roper now spend most of their leisure time nearer home, using their touring caravan a good deal during the better parts of the year.

In our picture taken following a lunch at Head Office in honour of Mr. Roper and other retired colleagues, we see, from left to right: Messrs. M. M. Parker (*Secretary and Solicitor*), F. J. Brown (*Chief Engineer*), J. W. Trimble (*former Group Manager*), B. R. Campbell-Kelly (*former Commercial Economist—just back from South Africa and a Caribbean cruise!*), D. G. Dodds (*Chairman*), R. M. Broadfoot (*former Area 4 Secretary*), M. R. Cowan (*Chief Commercial Officer*), H. Strange (*former Deputy Chief Accountant*), G. Roper, A. P. Whyte (*Chief Accountant*) and R. M. Gravett (*former Assistant Chief Commercial Officer*).





"NUDE" drawn by Mrs. Shirley Robinson