

# Contact

December 1980



*"Frost-Bound"*

*(See centre pages)*

# MONEY RAISERS

## Cash for Charities

EFFORTS made by members of our Head Office staff, and very often their families too, have resulted in quite a lot of money being raised for a number of worthy charities.

For example, a 'Sponsored Swim' held at the Liverpool University pool a few weeks ago brought a cheque for £630.45 for donation to The British Heart Foundation. This was 40 per cent up on last year's effort, which then raised the princely sum of £450.

The gallant swimmers who took part in the event were **Mark and Susanne Bradbury, Richard Bromley, Mark Hollowood, Betty McCormack, Alison Pugh, John Rowland, Brian and Jane Sheppard, Harry Shone, Chris Simm and Joyce Walker.**

\* \* \*

The 'Sponsored Slim' in aid of Handicapped Children, gained £'s for lbs. lost, and "fattened" the fund by £600.

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The ladies of Head Office typing section are again holding their Christmas Fayre to help provide food parcels for distribution through the Mayor of Chester's Appeal Fund for Old Age Pensioners.

## Seasonal Greetings

from the

### 'Contact' Editorial Staff

Keith Baldwin John F. Perry Sam Doughty

and Best Wishes for the New Year



Mrs Gill Rowlett draws the winning numbers from the sack held by Mr. Jim Wilcock while Mr. Jack Pilkington checks his list for the prizewinners' names.

## '200 CLUB'

THE big prize in the EEIBA "200 Club" annual draw went to Mr. Wilf B. Davies, retired 1st engineer in the Transport section at Head Office. This lucky man collected £480.87!

Committee members in the West Lanes., Merseyside and North Wales Area Branch of the EEIBA, were delighted with the continued support given by "200 Club" members, particularly following the decision to increase the monthly voluntary contributions.

During the past year, ended on 30th September, donations from the "200 Club" to the EEIBA Fund amounted to £940.98. This brought the total raised by members since the Club's formation, eight years ago, to £6,270.

Prizewinners over the past twelve-month period were as follows: October (283)—Mr. K. E. Jones (*DAO, Gwynedd*); November (43)—Mr. G. H. Dodd (*Group Manager*); December (3)—Mr. R. Fallowfield (*Accounts*); January (154)—Mr. D. G. Gwyn (*retired*); February (40)—Mr. J. D. Kenney (*retired*); March (255)—Mr. J. F. Perry (*Information*); April (48)—Mr. M. A. Garrett (*retired*); May (81)—Mr. F. Hannah (*retired*); June (171)—Mr. H. C. Trent (*Accounts*); July (111)—Mr. R. H. Woodall (*Mid-Cheshire District*); August (47)—Mr. G. B. Williams (*retired*); September (297)—Miss C. Powell (*Accounts*).

Now, with the increased subscriptions—and the corresponding lift in prize money—the Committee has decided to give two monthly prizes. Winners of the first two draws to be held under the new set-up were: October, 1st (150)—Mr. J. E. Peel (*Management Services*) and 2nd (256)—Mr. W. Saunders (*Assistant CCO*); November, 1st (311)—Miss N. Downey (*Revenue*) and 2nd (18)—Mr. F. Wilding (*Stores Accounts*).

Another successful fund-raising activity was the Annual Ball—and its attendant Tombola—which helped raise about £1,000 for the EEIBA Fund.

# Contact

THE STAFF MAGAZINE  
OF THE  
MERSEYSIDE AND  
NORTH WALES  
ELECTRICITY BOARD

Vol. 32 No. 12

December 1980

## A Message from the Chairman



*THE FIRST year of the 80s is coming to an end and you don't need me to tell you that it has hardly been an auspicious start to the decade. In our area the sales of electricity are strongly geared to the level of industrial production and the problems of industry have led to a very significant slump in unit sales. Although there will surely be a recovery, this may be slow and prolonged.*

*In the Board's last annual report performance indicators were published for the first time and these showed, throughout the 70s, a continuing improvement in our productivity. This is a performance for which Manweb staff are to be congratulated, and demonstrates their willingness to change with the times.*

*So long as we can continue to demonstrate such improvement in the 80s, through better methods and organisation, and increasing use of new technology including computers, we can hold up our heads with pride and a clear conscience. Throughout the 80s, every part of our organisation will need to respond to changing circumstances, but we shall continue to manage such changes, as we did in the 70s, as smoothly as possible. In a world of rapid change and instability, we shall continue to try and maintain, in Manweb, our reputation for reliability and stability, both to our customers and to our staff.*

*During the next year, the new consultative bodies, the District Joint Co-ordinating Council and the Local Joint Co-ordinating Councils will be established. These will have an important role to play in discussing the changing environment for our activities, and the responses we need to*

*make. The Board's management will be working hard to make these a successful example of staff participation of the most modern kind. We will also be seeking further ways of extending staff participation in dealing with necessary changes in organisation and methods of work.*

*I hope that you and your families will have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

*Ben Hastings*



Guest speaker Mr. Colin Leonard chats with Mrs. Myra Jacobson, a retired member of the Liverpool District staff.



Here we see, from left to right; Messrs. Stan Roberts (*Assistant Chief Engineer*), Dave Crangle (*Senior Engineer, Meter Test*), Jim Barraclough (*Group Manager*) and Charlie Donovan (*District Engineer*).

## No. 2 LAC EMPLOYEES' MEETING

# The Micro-chip and MANWEB

SEVERAL manufacturers of microtechnological products staged a demonstration of some of their equipment to support the main speaker in his talk to the Liverpool District employees' meeting. Management Services Controller, Mr. Colin Leonard, from Head Office, explained how the micro-chip would affect the working lives of MANWEB staff.

Delegates gathered at Dovedale Towers in Liverpool's Penny Lane, and enjoyed an excellent meal before the meeting opened. Group Manager Mr. Jim Barraclough chaired the proceedings and welcomed the 250 present—with a special word of welcome for the 45-strong contingent of retired employees.

LAC Secretary Norman Mitchell reported to the meeting on the activities of the Committee. He emphasised the advantages of attending the summer schools

organised by the industry and urged delegates to apply for one of the places this coming year.

The success of one member of the District staff in gaining several cash awards for a suggestion made to the Suggestion Scheme should encourage more employees to provide their ideas. Mr. Mitchell asked for staff to come forward and act as visitors to their sick colleagues and pointed out that the pre-retirement course was proving popular with those who had attended. He would welcome any enquiries for such courses.

"The microtechnology revolution would shortly change the way of life in the MANWEB offices," Mr. Colin Leonard told delegates. "A quarter-inch square of silicon could contain 64,000 complete circuits, and it was this silicon chip which was the basis for the new technology."

The pictures below and on the facing page show delegates, guests and retired staff at the annual meeting for Liverpool District staff.





Mr. Leonard's talk was similar in content to that given to the Dee Valley District staff conference (fully reported in last month's 'Contact'). He emphasised that there was plenty of time to control the introduction of new technology in a gradual way, and that there would be no redundancies as a result.

Mr. Geoff Ravenscroft, on behalf of the Local Advisory Committee, proposed a vote of thanks to the speaker. Mr. Barraclough then opened the meeting for questions.



The NALGO District Officer, Mr. Keith Mann, a guest at the meeting, was invited to comment. He told delegates that there had been long discussions with the Board about the introduction of the new technology. The union were greatly concerned about the effect on jobs, how they would change or disappear, the manning levels and the overall effect on all jobs.

There was an agreement which meant that there had to be a joint acceptance of each new piece of equipment, and he pleaded for patience and understanding on the part of the Board and to inform the staff what effect the new technology will have on their jobs.



## Territorial Army Service Honoured

**A**FTER completing 22 years service in the Territorial Army, Mr. Arthur Malam, a substation attendant with our Transmission Section at Prenton, recently received an award for outstanding service. Making the official presentation at Liverpool Town Hall was the Lord-Lieutenant of Merseyside, Wing Commander Kenneth Stoddart.

Arthur first joined the regular army in 1948 and served mostly as an infantryman in Hong Kong, Malaya, Japan, Korea and at camps throughout the UK.

In 1953 he had completed his five-year stint and was transferred to the Reserve for a further seven years.

"I missed the close comradeship and good fellowship of the men in the services," he told us. "So, in 1958 I decided to join the T.A."

Like all other T.A. personnel, every year Arthur spends a few weeks at camp and this, together with some week-end training takes up much of his spare time. It also helps to keep him remarkably fit.

After his long spell in the Territorial Army, Arthur reached the

rank of Warrant Officer of the 234 Squadron based at Chetwynd, Birkenhead.

He lives at Upton on the Wirral and is married to Jean. They have four children.

After working for the former Birkenhead Corporation, Arthur joined the CEGB staff 14 years ago and recently transferred to MANWEB.

### SILLY SIGNS

We have had quite a good entry for this competition and some of the winning pictures will be published in our next issue.

**Warrant Officer Arthur Malam, right, receives his special award for long service in the Territorial Army from the Lord-Lieutenant of Merseyside, Wing Commander Kenneth Stoddart.**



## REPORTS AVAILABLE

Booklets containing Statements of Accounts and the Annual Reports of the Committees of the Electricity Supply (Staff) and (Industrial Staff) Superannuation Schemes have now been published.

They are available on request from any District Administrative Officer or from Mr. Stan Gordon in the Personnel section at Head Office.

### STORK VISIT

Congratulations to Eric and Kathy Abley on the birth of their son, Michael Thomas, a short time ago. Kathy worked as a sales clerk in the Material Control section at Liverpool District Offices.

### FOR SALE

Bargain. Matched set of almost new gent's golf clubs. Three woods, eight irons. £70 o.n.o. 'Phone: Chester 383537.

Great Dane pups, born 27 Aug 80, K.C. pedigree registered, from champion stock. Two dogs and a bitch. From £100 each. 'Phone; M. Fowles, Wrexham 750071.

### WRONG JOB

We offer our apologies to Mr. George Deakin, a high-voltage joiner in our Liverpool District, for wrongly describing him as a labourer in a previous story in our magazine.

### OBITUARY

We regret to record the deaths of these former employees:

**Mrs Beryl Peterson**, a senior sales assistant at Garston shop prior to her retirement.

**Mr John Howarth**, aged 79, a labourer at St. Helens depot before he retired some time ago.

**Mr John Reilly**, aged 52, who worked in the Customer Accounts section in Liverpool District. He had been with the Board for 22 years.



## Shopping in North Wirral

Mr. Clifford S. Evans, *left*, sales supervisor for Dee Valley District, took over additional responsibility for the North Wirral District shops a few months ago. He told us, "I feel very fortunate to have such a good staff to work with. They all give a hundred per-cent-plus to their jobs. With the mixture of youth and experience there is a good feeling in all our shops despite the depressing economic situation. All sections at District Office too are most co-operative."

Our roving reporter/photographer was made very welcome in these very busy shops and had to patiently wait for the right moment amid the steady flow of customers buying appliances, making enquiries or paying accounts, in order to get his pictures.

### *Birkenhead Shop was first on our list*



A hurriedly-taken picture shows, from left to right, Dot Kent, Barbara Grant, Donald Ross (a good right-hand man), Ken Williams and, the efficient and organised shop supervisor, Julian Jenkins.

In the Stores section we found Doreen Rushton.



Caught by the camera at the cash point are Stephan Neale and Sheila Hughes.



Keeping the staff supplied with 'cuppas' is Brenda Frost.



More pictures overleaf

## ... still at the busy Birkenhead Shop

◀ Another trio caught during a break in business. From left to right; Dot Birchall, Paul Barber and Marie Kane.

Some of the lovely ladies who serve in our Precinct shop. From left to right; Rita Richards, Peggy Martin, Sheila Pickering, Kay Davies and Shirley Robinson.



Shop staff who, because of holiday, sickness or day-off, missed our photographer were; Dot Monks, Betty McCrae, Rita Smith and Ruth Walton.



Also on the shop floor are manufacturers representatives, from left to right; Eve Pears (Toshiba), June Kier (Focus TV), Maureen Butler (Hoover) and Kitty Owens (Servis). Maureen Davies (Electrolux) unfortunately missed our picture on the day.

## ... at our Moreton Shop ...

The youngest shop supervisor in the District, Patrick Nugent, is seen here with Jean Minnis.

In the newly-decorated premises at 267 Hoylake Road we see, from left to right; Lillian Blakemore, Tom Mason (sales rep.) and Edna Hardcastle.





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*Above; In yet another very busy shop in a bustling business area we managed to get the pictures of, from left to right; Allison Walton, Doug Thomas (sales representative), Kathleen Physick and Jean Stoves.*

*Right; Shop supervisor Bob Buckingham is seen here with two members of his staff, Sue Davies, left, and Blanche Barrow. when our cameraman called, Jackie Semple was on holiday and Joan Cooley was ill.*



... **West Kirby - and Heswall**

Our shop supervisor who seems to know every customer personally, Phil Rigby seals another sale.

Our final call was at Pensly Road where we saw the ever attractive Louise Murthwaite with shop supervisor Peter Hunt. The other member of the shop staff, Sandra Gainey, was on a day's leave.

Still at 9 Banks Road, we picture sales staff Ann Jones, left and Gill Shepherd. Their colleague Irene Jones was on holiday.



## "Dawn of a New Era"



Board Secretary Mr. John Scudamore addresses the Head Office Meeting, flanked by guest speaker Mr. Bill Shires, left, and LAC Secretary, Mr. Stan Gordon, right.

THE Head Office employees' annual meeting saw the "final performance" from the Chief Commercial Officer and the comments of the Board Chairman on the dawn of a new era for consultative machinery in the electricity industry.

Chairman of the proceedings and of the No. 11 LAC, Mr. John Scudamore (*Board Secretary*), brought the meeting to order after delegates had enjoyed an excellent meal.

Reviewing the year's activities of the LAC, Mr. Scudamore pointed out that this was the last such meeting of the employees under the present local advisory machinery, as new Area and Local Joint Co-ordinating Councils were about to be constituted.

The Board had continued with and extended the 'Customer Care' campaign, and a new type of identity card had been introduced.

Mr. Scudamore expressed concern over the lack of support for two LAC-initiated or supported activities—health screening and visits to the summer schools. The health and safety sub-committee had looked at accidents and safety sampling, and the Head Office mixed first-aid team had won the District Rose Bowl once again, to be narrowly defeated in the national finals.

The main speaker for the evening was the retiring

Chief Commercial Officer, Mr. Bill Shires, who was giving the final performance of his sales presentation—"The Commercial Scene"—to the Head Office staff. It had been given to summer schools and other industry gatherings.

He used film slides, music, old newsreels, comic TV footage, a microwave cooking demonstration and the latest in electric singing kettles—which burst into song when the lid was raised. These and other stage effects were co-ordinated by the backstage team of Messrs Ron Carter and John Drew.

Mr. Shires stressed the importance of the 'Customer Care' campaign and of all staff helping in the sales effort to ensure a wiser and wider use of electricity. With oil and gas becoming scarce, it was up to the electricity industry to meet the nation's needs. For the electricity industry the future was the brightest in the world.

Board Chairman Mr. Ben Hastings then commented on the impending change in the structure of the electricity industry consultative machinery.

The formation of the new Area and Local Joint Co-ordinating Councils, replacing the existing District and Local Advisory Committees, would herald a new era in industrial democracy. It would require a change in attitude for some managers, to allow staff members to participate in decision-making.

The staff side, too, would have to ensure that they accepted some agreement which did not please everyone, if the new councils were to work. Both sides had to reach joint agreements. There was no provision for the Local Council to refer problems up to the Area Council. The LJCC's would have to solve their own problems.

The new councils would have fewer members than the present advisory bodies and, though they would have no limit on the subjects they could discuss (other than negotiating matters), they would have to be highly selective to cope.

With goodwill on both sides, the new councils could work to the benefit of the Board, the staff and the customer.

A section of the audience at Head Office.



# Photographic Competition 1980

*Numbers up . . . .*

*. . . . Quality down!*

ALTHOUGH entries for the 'Contact' 1980 Photographic Competition were again up in numbers, they were down in quality. This was the verdict of the judges, who searched in vain for a picture worthy of the prize for the best shot of any category in the whole competition.

No fewer than 65 competitors submitted a total of 486 entries in six classes. "Scenes", with 166 colour transparencies and prints, was the best supported, followed by "Nature" (107), "Action" (78), "Portraits" (58) and "Humour" (48). The Black and White section drew 29 entries.

Despite the big entry, the judges were disappointed by the shortage of outstanding pictures—in contrast to previous years, when they were often "spoiled for choice". The reasons for the fall-off are not easy to pin-point, but it may be that the arrival on the market of so many "automatic" cameras, which work every detail of exposure, aperture and range, may have lulled many of our enthusiasts into a sense of false complacency.

These cameras do, of course, take nearly all the guess-work—and judgment—out of picture-taking, but they do not have an "eye for the picture" and they cannot automatically work out the details of angle and composition.

**When all other details have been worked out by the camera, the choice and composition of the subject is still a matter for the eye behind the viewfinder—and that is what distinguishes the outstanding picture from the hundreds of run-of-the-mill snapshots!**

## **Best Black and White Print: "Reflections"**

**Harry Sharples, Test Laboratory, Queensferry**





# Photographic Competition 1980

## Prizewinners

...

### *Action*

**Best Transparency:**

▷ *"Wind, Surf and Away"*  
D. Gareth Owen,  
Wayleaves Section, Head Office

**Best Print:**

*"Odds-on Winner"*  
John W. Roach,  
Power Accounts, Head Office



### Our Cover Picture

### *Scenes*

**Best Print:**

*"Frost Bound"*  
Ted Leighton,  
Retired from  
Mid-Cheshire District  
*(More winners  
on back cover)*



## *Nature*

**Best Print:** *"Long-eared Owl"*

**Lesley Broadhurst,**  
daughter of Stan Broadhurst,  
Technical Section, Head Office



**Best Transparency:** *"The Hunter"*

**Max Cooksey,** Test Laboratory, Queensferry

## *Humour*

**Best Transparency:**  
*"Tyred of Delivering"*

**Ray C. Stobbart,** Clwyd District



**Best Print:**  
*"Chimpion"*

**Ted Elcock,** Meter Test, Lister Drive





Mr. John Scudamore (Secretary) answers a question. Also in the picture is Mr. George Shoosmith (DAO).

## TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE

### Head Office and District involvement



Guest speaker Mr Eric Richardson, left, seen here with Mr. Jim Barraclough.

THE original prodigal son could not have had a warmer welcome than the one offered to Mr. Eric Richardson when he returned to his North Mersey District colleagues as guest speaker at their annual meeting held recently at the Mons hotel in Bootle.

A principal assistant in our Education and Training section at Head Office, Mr. Richardson was seconded for a time as the sales supervisor at the Bridle Road offices.

In his opening remarks, he said that he had been tempted to draw on 'family' gossip for a topic on which to speak. Items which had come to mind included bacon butties; corridors of power; our customers — "and North Mersey has them all!"; life in Kirkby shop and erotica in Formby.

However—"to avoid embarrassing friends"—he said that he hoped his chosen subject, the Board's training programme, would interest his audience.

For his younger listeners, he explained that, prior to 1970, MANWEB employed 10,000 staff in a three-tier organisation covering 18 Districts.

"In those days," he continued, "District staff had a clear responsibility for a particular zone. They had an abundance of local knowledge and seemed to know

every customer's life-style. Training was limited and, with the exceptions of the sales staff and craft apprentices, there were very few courses for other members of our staff."

He said that, in the last few years, our organisation had changed considerably and was under completely new top-management. Staff now numbered around 6,000. Districts were down to ten. Departments had become functionalised, with much staff movement.

"Training became very important, with many new ideas evolved in teaching methods. Discussion groups, seminars, staff participation, the wide use of modern video and sound equipment all took the place of former classroom-type lectures."

He said that the new training centre at Head office, with its team of tutors and a seemingly endless list of courses, had the full support of management. He then publicised some of the many training manuals with cleverly-recorded extracts from the texts.

He went on to say that we were now in an era of new technology, and more staff training was essential. Also, with the advent of the new Local Joint Coordinating Councils, staff would have further opportunities to air their views and contribute with comment on the Board's training schemes.



Mr. Jim Glover, extreme left, Secretary of No. 1 LAC, seen here with some of the District staff at their annual meeting.



**Pictured at the Meeting, from left to right: Messrs. Ken Appleton (DCE), Bob Jowett (Energy Sales Manager), Arthur Ellinson (Management Services Officer) partially hidden, Keith Mann (Nalco), Bob Blackburn (EPEA), Adrian Walmersley (No. 9 DJAC), Ted Kelly (No. 2 LAC) and Norman Barr (EETPU).**

Mr. Richardson spoke of Districts and departments coming more into the picture, with supervisors already receiving instruction on how to continue training and teaching their own staff.

"Any course is only a starter," he emphasised. "Its success depends on the support and encouragement given to the trainees and students on their return to their jobs."

Mr. Jim Barraclough (Group Manager), who chaired the meeting, had earlier welcomed the District staff, former employees and guests. He congratulated Mr. Jim Glover (principal assistant—Admin.) and his team of helpers, on the excellent arrangements for the meeting and had further praise for him, as Secretary of No. 1 LAC, for his presentation of a very fine report. He commented that it was most appropriate

that this should contain a long list of District staff who had benefited from our industry's training courses during the past year.

The meeting concluded with the usual, quite lively, open forum session. The written questions covered a variety of subjects, including flexitime, new meters and more inspectors, waterproof clothing, laundry service for overalls, portable arc-welding equipment, grading, sex discrimination(!), superannuation, contracting vans, etc. Many of the answers to these and other questions prompted follow-ups from the floor.

The very successful meeting closed when a vote of thanks to the guest speaker—and to the officers who had answered the wide range of questions—was voiced by Mr. Jimmy Baldwin (Secretary to the NJIC staff side of the Works Committee).

## **Around the tables at The Mons**



COOKELECTRIC  
FOR CHRISTMAS



"It's his nose — have you got a 60-watt bulb?"

# SMILE WITH SANTA

Cartoons by Mitch  
and  
Ernie Silcock (painter)  
Mid-Mersey District



"That's the trouble with electric storage heaters — no flippin' chimneys!"



"I blame the television. Years ago he would have been just as happy with a train set!"



"Well actually, I don't have a present in mind, I came in to read the meter!"

## WHAT IS IT?



Our keen-eyed cameraman from Clwyd District, Mr Ray Stobbart (*electrician*) who started our 'Silly Signs' competition poses a problem for our readers.

He sent in a coloured transparency, reproduced left in black and white, and challenges anyone to explain the 'UFO' in the sky. He swears the picture has not been doctored, and even we don't know the answer ... yet!

If you think you know what it is, then drop a line to; *The Editor, 'Contact' MANWEB Head Office, Chester.* We will give £5 to the sender (staff, present and past only) of the first correct answer opened on 9th January 1981.



# SPEAKING OUT

SECOND TIME  
AROUND

TWO Oswestry District colleagues—both members of the Oswestry Town Council—have received letters of thanks from Group Manager **Norman Maden** after speaking up in the Council chamber on behalf of the electricity industry.

The two concerned are Messrs. **Owen Jones**, a meter-reader/collector, and **John Pritchard**, a sub-station inspector, and the occasion was consideration by the Town Council of a report by the Shropshire Association of Parish and Town Councils. The report contained a resolution condemning "electricity boards' failure to recognise the predicament of the elderly, infirm disabled and blind people living in rural and urban areas in trying to pay their accounts".

This was too much for Councilors Jones and Pritchard, who both made the point that their MANWEB colleagues did care very much about the problems confronting such people, and did everything possible to help them.

After seeing a report of the debate in a local newspaper, Mr. Maden wrote to them in the following terms:

*"It is my pleasure on behalf of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman to say how pleased they are that you, as MANWEB employees and also as elected representatives on the Town Council, should speak out in such a way both on behalf of*

*the Board and, indirectly, on behalf of all of us who work for the Board.*

*"I am sure your attitude will be much appreciated by all MANWEB employees who have had the opportunity of reading this report."*

## EMPLOYEES' MEETING

The annual meeting for all our employees in the Aberystwyth District will be held on the evening of Friday, 6th February, 1981, at the Marine Hotel, Aberystwyth.

MANWEB Chairman Mr. Ben Hastings will be the guest speaker. His subject will be *"The Present and Future Prospects for the Electricity Industry"*.

## RETIREMENTS

After 19 years' service with the Board, Mr. Lawrence (*Lol*) Orme has now retired from his job as labourer with our North Mersey District Engineering Section.

Very popular with his colleagues, he also has an impressive war record. During his six years in the Royal Navy he served with the Defence Equipment Merchant Ships Branch and was demobilised with the rank of Petty-Officer Gun Layer.

He saw action in many theatres of

war. In the icy cold of Russian and Atlantic convoys and in the warmer climes of the Mediterranean during the desert campaigns. Later, he took part in the invasions of Sicily, Italy and Normandy.

Mr. Orme is married, keen on all sports, loves reading and a spot of gardening.

At an informal presentation ceremony held at District Office recently, Mr. Orme received retirement gifts for himself and his wife.

**Mr. Lawrence Orme (3rd from right), gets a farewell handshake from Mr. Bert Eyres (District Engineer), who presented retirement gifts.**



## TRUE STORY

From our Aberystwyth District comes this story — certified to be true.

The scene ... a large swish residence somewhere in the District. Enter a MANWEB meter reader. He is confronted in the garden by a large, snarling dog.

**Elegant lady of the house:** "Do not be afraid. He will quite all right if you kick his ●●●●●."

**Meter reader:** "I can't do that madam, he's facing the wrong way!"

**Lady:** "Oh not those. I mean the rubber ones on the lawn!"



◀ The guest speaker makes a point at Gwynedd.

## Gwynedd Staff Conference

# "A BULWARK OF OUR LIBERTY"

— Gwynedd County  
Coroner

THE work carried out by the Coroners' Courts of England and Wales is "a bulwark of our liberty, involving the holding of public enquiries aimed at the public good," declared Mr. J. Pritchard Jones, County Coroner for Gwynedd, who was guest speaker at Gwynedd District's staff conference organised by the Local Advisory Committee.

A well-attended gathering heard Mr. Pritchard Jones achieve the almost-impossible—by transforming the sombre and somewhat depressing business of his office into an interesting and enlightening subject for an after-dinner talk, with the aid of a very human approach and the occasional touch of humour.

"The Coroner, as we know him in this country, is a unique institution," he declared. He was the direct representative of the Crown in the County, charged with the task of getting at the truth in all cases of death under doubtful circumstances. He contrasted the doubt

and speculation which surrounded such cases as that of Mary Jo Kopechne in the USA with the searching investigations made into deaths like that of Blair Peach in this country.

On the subject of treasure trove, Mr. Pritchard Jones said that metal-detector enthusiasts could often destroy sites of archaeological value before experts could examine them properly. The instruments were "a curse".

### Safety at Work

Turning to accidents—especially industrial accidents—he referred to the several hundred fatal cases referred to him every year.

He asked his audience: "You have your own rules in your work. Do you know those rules? Do you keep to them? Do you try to short-circuit them to finish the job quicker, to get home earlier?"

"An accident may take place. Somebody may lose

**Some of the Gwynedd pensioners attending the District conference. From left to right; Will Evans (foreman), Gwilym Pierce (3rd assistant engineer, Supply), Griff Orritt (meter reader), Dennis Jones (shift electrician), Griff Hughes (labourer), George Lamonby (storekeeper), Arthur Jones (Marketing representative), Ted Williams (meter reader) and Roy Jones (Admin. assistant, Personnel).**





Some of our Gwynedd District colleagues at their annual conference.



his life. We can all help to prevent that kind of thing by making sure that the rules are observed!"

And the humour? Well, there was the story of the undertaker who assured the Coroner solemnly—*"Don't forget—I'll be the last person to let you down!"*

The meeting began with a warm welcome from Group Manager Glyn Dodd—together with comments on the year's work—followed by a report on LAC activities by secretary Mal Donaldson.

The *Open Forum* session was mainly concerned with complaints about ventilation, lighting and smells—from the nearby sewage works—at District office, the Board's sickness review procedure and the testing of heavy goods vehicles.

A vote of thanks offered to the guest speaker (in Welsh) by Eric Roberts drew enthusiastic applause, and an enjoyable social evening and disco rounded off the evening.



# Christmas Crossword

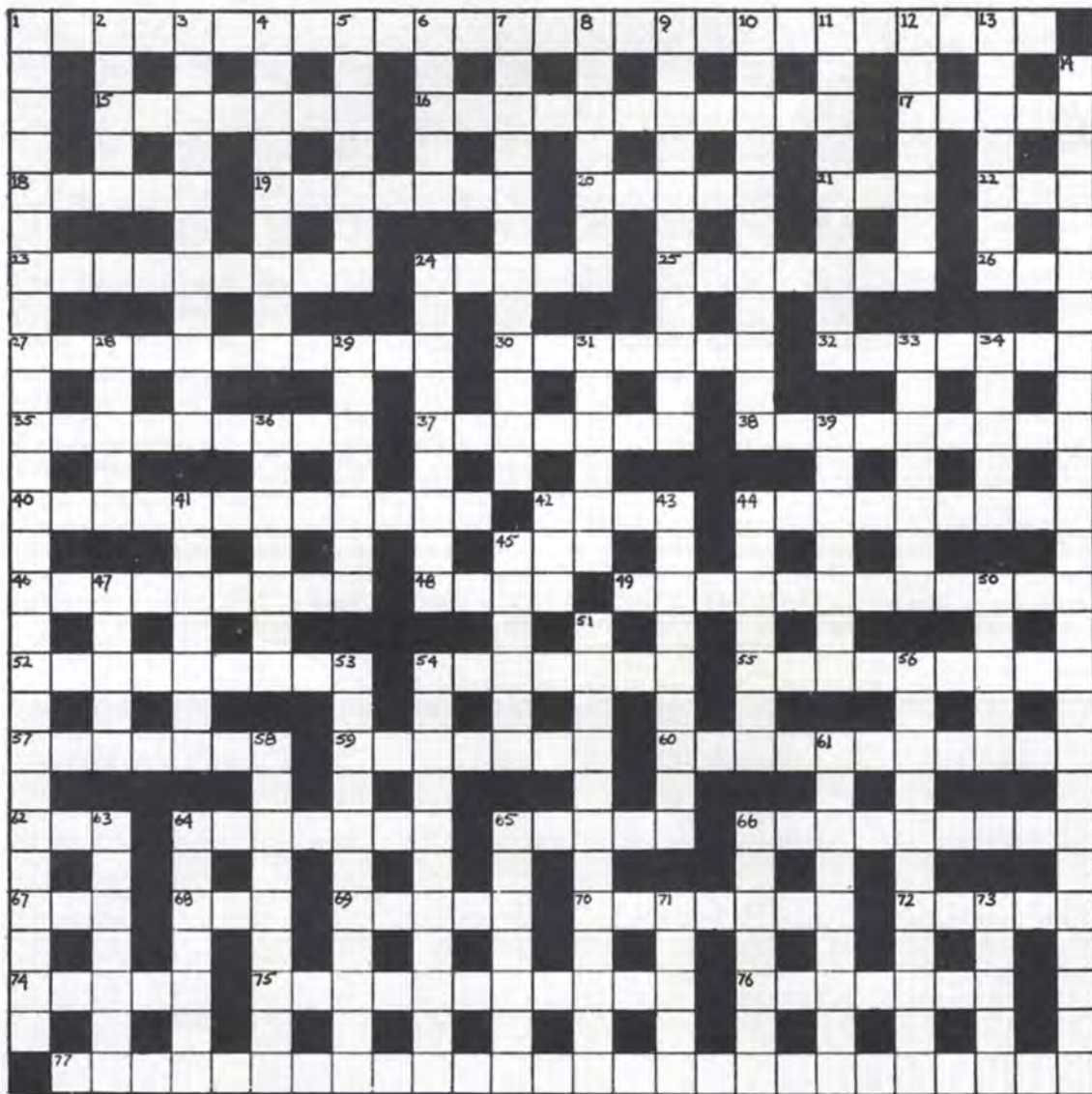
OUR monster Christmas crossword always attracts a good response, offering a spot of exercise for the brain to clear away the effects of sherry and brandy.

Once more our crossword-setting genius Mr F. G. Lott has achieved the impossible by coming up with a fresh set of clues and answers tailored to fit the same 'blank' which has now been used for six years on the run! Prizes of £5 will go to the senders of the first three all-correct solutions opened. Closing date 14th January

Competition open to staff, pensioners, and their families. Entries to *The Editor, Contact, MANWEB, Sealand Road, Chester, CH1 4LR.* Plain paper entries will be accepted—but only one entry per person please. Please mark your entry "Crossword".

## CLUES ACROSS

- Call for dining room service? On the contrary (4, 2, 3, 9, 4, 4)
- Cleaners with no right to create such a triangle (7)
- I annoy ox, get worried, need this for revival (11)
- As slow as Handel's Ombre mai fu (5)
- Swimmers' clothing (5)
- A short introduction to it is sung in church (7)
- In my defence I break bail (5)



21. Where reading the riot act is tactless (3)
22. The first Wednesday in Lent has changed (3)
23. Cart horse stumbles doing the post horn gallop, perhaps (9)
24. Writer meets some Germans in SE London (5)
25. Kipling decried wasting Christian kisses on this idol's foot (7)
26. Mongrel kangaroo's offspring (3)
27. Work harder, Father, sort of try to be political (6, 5)
30. A drink for the Republicans when they get back to Camp (7)
32. Have a go at the PT shoot-out (3-4)
35. Vast coils musically entwined (9)
37. Headache cure's squashed raisin in piano (7)
38. Church incense sprayed in ignorance (9)
40. Cities' oil taps produce current items of interest (12)
42. Bennett's towns (4)
44. Entertainment approved by Mary Whitehouse? (4, 5)
45. Hereward the Wake country (3)
46. Free from blame with some excuse for broken plate (9)
48. Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy? (4)
49. Balfe's unconventional young lady from Czechoslovakia (8, 4)
52. No real estate here (9)
54. Is a rude GP worthy of promotion? (7)
55. Regent's Park productions of Shakespeare are (2, 3, 4)
57. Gold crown (7)
59. The stuff of mothballs (7)
60. Trout-clouter? (7, 4)
62. Mr. Weller Jnr. (3)
64. He was super at metamorphosis in the lab (7)
65. "Gentleness in hearts at . . . under an English heaven" (Rupert Brooke) (5)
66. Not very clever to get behind an anagram (9)
67. Roughly assert yourself with this handle (3)
68. Butter (3)
69. Do start with what a lute sometimes has, if you get my meaning (5)
70. Michelangelo's ceiling (7)
72. One of the Polo brothers (5)
74. Some of Masefield's was firewood, iron-ware and cheap tin trays (5)
75. They are not hard-hearted (4, 7)
76. Hangs like a sword (7)
77. Say not the struggle nought availeth, particularly if you have a good road map (5, 6, 1, 4, 6, 1, 3)

#### CLUES DOWN

1. "I . . . loved I Not honour more," said Lovelace to Lucasta (5, 3, 4, 4, 4, 2, 4)
2. Accompanied Banbury Cross lady wherever she went (5)
3. Jack wishes he were Jill as latex runs away (11)
4. Circus spinner? (3, 3, 3)
5. Her matricidal brother seen in the forest, escaped (7)
6. Nothing at either end of the little book in the decorative moulding (5)
7. Bioscopic arm of the law (8, 4)
8. Musical drama before half rate in the theatre (7)
9. Mans a ship in the Caribbean (7, 4)
10. CIA notified (in code) of minor gods' ambition on Olympus (11)
11. Rep who's in possession (9)
12. Niven's moon (7)
13. As long as the Metropolitan Police have been in existence (7)
14. "Rough winds . . . and summer's lease hath all too short a date" (Shakespeare) (2, 5, 3, 7, 4, 2, 3)
24. Wild puma entry in old Greek town hall (9)
28. Reverse a vehicle up in Lancs (5)
29. Worn as a favour (7)
31. Magical bird (6)
33. Not a 1642 anti-Royalist hat (7)
34. Bracketed on the box! (5)
36. Cake lady (7)
39. It could blur one's view as times change (3, 4)

41. Capital of a country where only one man is vile (7)
42. Simple if it's legal (3)
43. Acquit Nero? Execat in disorder (9)
44. What those Frenchies were doing for Sir Percy (7)
45. "Swept with confused alarms of struggle and . . . Where ignorant armies clash by night" (Matthew Arnold) (6)
47. Blake made a rural pen and stained the water . . . (5)
50. One redcap joins the Spanish force (5)
51. Battered in the Rubaiyat, its doorways are alternate Night and Day (12)
53. His character alone defied change after shipwreck (6, 5)
54. Purple cleric loses a pound when mixing with the elite (5, 6)
56. Battles before marriage . . . (11)
58. . . . result in breach of promise (9)
61. He was mine host (9)
63. Cowper's royal surveyor of undisputed right (7)
64. Room at the inn (7)
65. Creeper-trumpet uniaxially grafted produces a different flower (7)
66. Legion of Grenadiers perhaps or both (7)
71. Rope fibre for making sails (5)
73. Go in stitches up the German river (5)

(Dictionary: Chambers Twentieth Century)



## Our Nuclear Future



Above: Messrs. Jim Sylvester and Dennis Atkinson watch as Mr. Glyn Dodd addresses delegates, who are shown in our other pictures.



**T**HE World Energy Conference forecast a world-wide energy shortage by the early 1990's. With oil and gas reserves petering out, coal could not fill the gap, and the only realistic alternative was nuclear energy.

This conclusion was expressed by Mr. James Sylvester, Deputy Superintendent of Trawsfynydd Nuclear Power Station, when addressing the Clwyd District employees' annual meeting, at the Derbyshire Miners' holiday home in Rhyl. The apparent irony of venue and subject was noted by the speaker. He said that coal was far too valuable a commodity to burn, and thought it should be used to replace oil as it ran out during the next decade.

Unlike coal, uranium had only one use—to create heat by nuclear fission to generate electricity. It produced electricity cheaper than coal or oil and had a safety record second to none, with more stringent safety standards than any other industry.

After nine years in a reactor, the spent rod was sent to Windscale, where uranium and plutonium were recovered and the minute quantity of waste material was stored safely.

What were the alternatives to nuclear power?

Geothermal energy—from hot underground rocks—was fine in New Zealand, where hot springs and rocks abound near the surface, but Britain's geothermal energy was confined to an area around Hampshire, where rocks of only 80 deg. Centigrade were 3½ miles deep.

Lack of round-the-year sunshine meant that solar energy was unreliable in this part of the world. It needed about four square miles to collect about 175 megawatts on a cloudless summer day—a fraction of just one of the generating sets in a modern power station.

Wind-power was very erratic and Mr. Sylvester wondered whether the environmentalists would accept lots of 150-foot towers, with windmills sounding like noisy helicopters. The CEGB had already been refused planning permission to erect a windmill on Anglesey on environmental grounds.

Cockrel's rafts used wave motion to generate electricity, but it would require 15 miles of them to produce 500 megawatts—the equivalent of a single modern generating set in a power station—and, like Salter's



bobbing ducks, they had problems over the transmission and distribution of the power produced.

Nuclear fusion would be the source of energy for the next century from about 2050. A concerted effort was being made in a joint European project in Britain but, until that was available, nuclear fission would be needed to meet the energy demands.

Group Manager Mr. Glyn Dodd thanked Mr. Sylvester and threw the meeting open for questions. He had earlier opened proceedings by welcoming delegates, retired staff and Head Office personnel to the meeting. He had reviewed the work of the District for that year, congratulating them on reducing the debt to below the Board average, regretted the reduced sales and looked forward to a better electricity service to the customer.

The Secretary of the Local Advisory Committee, Mr. Denis Atkinson, who had been responsible for organising the meeting, had presented members with a written report of the work of the committee.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks proposed to the guest speaker by committee member Mr. John Ellis.





*Portrait*

**Best Transparency:**

*"Cocktail Time"* Max Cooksey, Test Laboratory

**Best Print:**

*"Vikki"* John E. Langley, Meter Test, Lister Drive

*Scenes*

**Best Transparency:** *"Peace"*

Peter J. Edwardson, Commercial foreman, Mid-Cheshire District

