

CONTACT

Manweb's monthly newspaper for staff, family and retired staff

DECEMBER 1990

Manweb

Share offer in Manweb is an outstanding success

WE'RE FLOATED

WITH share offers in Manweb subscribed more than 15 times over, the flotation of the company has been hailed as an outstanding success by Chairman Bryan Weston.

by Jackie Unsworth

And as the champagne corks popped on December 11 - Flotation Day - there was all the more reason to celebrate. As dealings on the Stock Exchange got underway at 2.30pm, the price of Manweb shares opened at a fantastic 177p, the closest rivals being East Midlands and Yorkshire at 169p.

"The flotation has been enormously successful, particularly for Manweb," said Mr Weston. "We received applications for Manweb shares 15.4 times more than the shares available. This was the second highest level of over-subscription and is a clear indication of how favourably the City and the public regard Manweb."

A total 12.75 million applications were received for shares in the 12 companies - in aggregate 10.7 times subscribed. South Wales Electricity was just ahead of Manweb in terms of over-subscription.

Priority

Mr Weston said: "With this level of over-subscription it is inevitable that there will be scaling down. But the good news is that staff will be given top priority and will all receive the free and matching shares and the priority shares up to the limit of 6,771 shares.

"Customers will be given the next preference in terms of scaling down, with non-customers receiving virtually nothing."

Mr Weston said this tremendous vote of confidence in the company had also been reflected in the Sharesave Scheme. More than half of the staff had applied to join the scheme, which, consequently, was 76 per cent over-subscribed.

"Because the scheme has been so successful, it will sadly mean we won't have as much as we applied for," he said. "The scaling down figures will take some time to calculate, but we will let



Two helium-filled Frankenstein balloons ensured staff at North Wirral District had a monster flotation party! The 4ft high balloons were acquired from a local firm to add extra sparkle to the champagne celebration. Guest of honour for the special occasion was Director Trading Peter Hopkins, who is pictured (front centre) with staff drinking a toast to the success of Manweb plc. (Picture by Mike Hall).

everyone know how they will be affected as soon as possible.

"However, I'm sure all the staff will share my delight in being associated with one of the most successful and sought-after companies, and I am absolutely delighted that so many employees have taken up the share offers and now have a direct stake in our company."

Mr Weston paid tribute to the hard work and dedication of Manweb employees in preparing the company for flotation.

"The past few years have been extremely busy for us all in the run-up to flotation and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their commit-

ment and professionalism in this time of great change.

"I know it hasn't been an easy time and it has been made worse by the constraints we have had to follow, which have meant we have not been able to talk openly and tell staff what has been happening. But we are now floated, free to run the business and free to communicate.

"I am extremely optimistic about the future. We have a good, solid business and all the makings of a successful company. Every one of us has contributed to that success and will benefit from it in the future.

"We are indebted to our

employees for their contribution and loyal support," he added.

Champagne celebrations were held throughout Manweb on December 11, 12 and 13, each attended by Directors of the company. At each gathering, commemorative gifts of silver picture frames were presented to employees on behalf of the Manweb Board.

The response to the share offers in the 12 Regional Electricity Companies is the highest ever for a Government privatisation.

David Clementi, a director of Kleinwort Benson Limited, financial

advisers to the Government for the electricity privatisation, said: "We are delighted by the overwhelming response to the offers. Although we have had to scale down applications, we can confirm that, in the case of each company, all valid applications from customers for 1,000 shares or less will receive an allocation. Overall, around 97 per cent of customer applicants will receive an allocation."

Applications from Manweb pensioners under the Pensioner Priority Offers are being met in full up to the priority limit of 6,250 shares.

Superstores
switch on

Page 3

Looking to the
future

Pages 6 and 7

Children in Need
report

Page 9

Flotation picture
special

Page 4

Animal Magic

Page 12

In next month's issue:

Contact Photograph
Competition
results and picture
special

Merry Christmas and happy New Year to all our readers

CHANGING FACES



Retirement gets off to a sunny start

WORD Processor Operator Meg Gatrell has taken early retirement from Head Office after 11 years with Manweb.

Based in Typing Services, Meg specialised in Network Services word processing as well as general typing.

Her interests include swimming, and she is a keen 'splash-dance' water exercise swimmer.

Married with two daughters,

Meg lives in Connah's Quay and in retirement plans to spend more time with her grandchildren.

She is pictured receiving numerous gifts - including an antique brooch - by Support

Services Manager Hugh Baker watched by friends and colleagues.

Immediately following her retirement Meg headed off for the sun with a two week break in Rhodes.



Long server Bill calls it a day

ONE of Gerry Haughan's final duties before retiring as Liverpool District Manager was to make a retirement presentation to long-serving colleague Bill Allen.

Bill, who had clocked up 33 years' service, was an Administrative Assistant in General Services at Lister Drive. He joined Manweb in the old Area 1 days at Hatton Garden, working on Consumer Accounts.

In 1972 he was appointed to a higher clerical post in General Services at Lister Drive,

where he progressed to Admin Assistant a few years later.

Liverpool District Office Manager Frank Threadgold said: "Bill was a very conscientious worker and was willing to help his colleagues. His popularity was proved by the large number of gifts he received on his retirement."

Amongst Bill's many gifts was a large bench drill from his friends in General Services, to enable him to pursue his main hobby of metalwork. He also received a lawnmower and other gardening items from the

District staff, plus many individual gifts.

Bill and his wife Joan, who recently retired from Manweb's North Wirral District, where she worked as a Principal Assistant in Network Services, are both keen on travelling and enjoy camping holidays in Europe.

Gerry Haughan is pictured making a presentation to Bill and Joan, surrounded by their many friends at Lister Drive.

34 years on the clock

IT was the end of the road for Manweb Transport Engineer Jim Davies when he retired with 34 years 'on the clock'.

Jim, who was based at Head Office, came to Manweb in 1956 from Armstrong Sidley in Coventry.

He had been living in digs in Coventry and was flicking through the local newspaper to

see what films were showing at the cinema when he spotted the Manweb job advert.

In his final post as 1st Engineer, Jim was responsible for vehicle specifications, and consequently was well known throughout the Transport Industry.

Jim, who as a young man served in the Fleet Air Arm, held two retirement celebra-



tions. The first was for his friends outside Manweb, and those who attended travelled from all over the country. The second celebration was for his

many Manweb colleagues, including a number of retired employees.

In his spare time Jim enjoys caravanning and clay-

pigeon shooting. He is pictured receiving a framed caricature from Special Projects and Transport Manager Dave Stevenson, who also pre-

sented a bouquet to Jim's wife Ennis, also pictured. Jim's main gift from colleagues was a camera.

CONTACT

The newspaper for staff and retired employees of Manweb plc, Sealand Road, Chester, CH1 4LR, telephone 0244 377111.

If you've an idea for a story or photograph, write, phone or come and talk to Editor Jackie Unsworth in Public Relations, Room 5E1, Head Office, ext. 2090, or Graeme Cooper on ext. 2099.

At the following locations you can talk directly to one of Contact's District correspondents:

North Mersey: Edna Courtney, ext. 2167

Liverpool: Teresa Kelly, ext. 2117

Mid-Mersey: Ena Harding, ext. 2231

Dee Valley: Kath Sadowski, ext. 2183

North Wirral: Mike Townson, ext. 2202

Mid-Cheshire: Pat O'Neill, ext. 2111

Clwyd: Rod Taylor, ext. 2118

Gwynedd: Hefyn Thomas, ext. 2250

Oswestry: Ian Moulton, ext. 2230

Aberystwyth: Keith Jones, ext. 2202

Hoylake Training Centre: Pauline Lewis, ext. 251.

Model employee is 'framed'

AN issue of Contact dating back to April 1973 brought back memories for Head Office Clerical Assistant Doreen Bellis.

At her recent retirement celebration, Doreen was presented with a framed photograph of the front

page of Contact, in which she was featured modelling the new shop uniform.

Doreen is pictured receiving the special photo and other gifts, including a gold chain and clock, from Contracting Manager Guy Wilcox, surrounded by her many colleagues.

She joined Manweb in 1971 as a Clerical Assistant in the Commercial Department and the following year she was appointed Senior Clerical Assistant in the Purchasing Section. In 1977 she moved to Contracting and Servicing, where she remained until retirement.

Also in the picture below are Doreen's two daughters, who both work for Manweb - Diane Bellis (front left), who is Head of Regulator Relations Mike Metcalfe's Secretary, and, holding the bouquet, Julie Williams, a Clerical Assistant in the Pensions Section.



Switching on to seven-day trading

by Sam Doughty

WITH a giant splash Manweb plc plunged into a new venture in electrical retailing when two new superstores were launched within three weeks of each other, one on the outskirts of Chester, and the second close to Warrington. Both stores give the Trading Division an opportunity to display a bigger and better range of goods than ever before. They are both open for seven day trading with late shopping Monday to Friday until 8 pm. for the convenience of the shopper.



Above: Director Trading Peter Hopkins, cuts the ribbon to open the Chester Superstore, watched by staff.

Below: Members of the "Anonymous Strings" quartet entertain guests at the champagne buffet preview of the new Chester Superstore.

Front row (l-r) Samantha Jones, Lewis Jones, Lynette Ketchell and Damion Brown. Back row (l-r) Chester's Deputy Mayor Coun. Sue Proctor, Sheriff of Chester, Coun. Lillian Price, Director Trading Peter Hopkins, the Mayor, Coun. John Bramall, Manweb Shop Operations Manager Paul Sharkey, Mayoress Mrs Elvira Bramall and Superstore Manager Ian Johnston.



Winter help for old folk

MANWEB has once again distributed thousands of free thermometers to local Age Concern branches to help guard elderly people from hypothermia.

The strip thermometers, marked in the fahrenheit scale and contained on a printed card, show clearly when a room is too cold or too hot, enabling the occupants to manage their heating more efficiently.

Often on limited budgets, elderly people are most at risk from the cold and are less able to detect changes in the temperature around them.

The temperature gauge ranges from 50

degrees fahrenheit, when there is danger of hypothermia, to 80 degrees fahrenheit, which is energy wasting. The cards also carry tips on conserving energy while still keeping warm.

Local Age Concern branches have welcomed the initiative and will be distributing the cards throughout the Manweb region to those most in need.

Newly built on the expanding Greyhound Park off Sealand Road, the Chester store is 12,000 sq ft in size, with 9,000 sq ft sales area. It is managed by Ian Johnston who has run out of town stores for Comet. The superstore will compete with existing electrical retailers already established on the estate.

Manweb Trading Director Peter Hopkins welcomes this competition. He said: "Having several large electrical retailers in close proximity is good for the customer. They can compare price and service.

"As part of our added value service we offer free delivery and free connection to existing circuits for large appliances. It is the sort of hidden cost to bear in mind when making buying decisions."

The Warrington store is on



Shop Operations Manager Paul Sharkey (2nd from the right) and Director Trading Peter Hopkins (far right) provide a guided tour of the Chester Superstore for members of the Manweb Board (l-r) Non-Executive Director Richard Morgan, Director Power Marketing Colin Leonard, Managing Director Richard Gales, Director Network Services Denis Farquhar, Non-Executive Director Sheila Garston, Finance Director John Roberts and Chairman Bryan Weston.

the Alban Retail Park off Winwick Road leading into the town, and is managed by Helen Russell, who joined Manweb from Toys 'R' Us. She and her team have taken over an existing location which is 8,000 sq ft in space.

In both new stores Manweb has expanded its range of home entertainment, TV and video, including Nicam stereo and satellite TV. There is a range of fitted kitchens, and the largest ever display of appliances ever seen in a Manweb shop.

The 'green' customer should be pleased to see that new models of refrigerator with reduced 'cfc' content in the insulation are being sold in the stores.

The Trading Division hope to attract customers from Cheshire, North Wales and Wirral to the Chester store, and from Merseyside, South Lancashire, Greater Manchester and Cheshire to Warrington.

Manweb Shop Operations Manager Paul Sharkey said: "Market research shows that superstores appeal to car owners living in a wide catchment area. We expect our superstore customers to be those who prefer to shop in a relaxed and leisurely environment. We aim to provide them with a complete range of goods with the emphasis on quality and good service."

The first results of trading at Chester have delighted Peter Hopkins, who said: "We've shattered all previous Manweb records in a magnificent first week's business. The evidence is that our gains were at the expense of our competitors and not our Chester city centre shop.

"We have received many favourable comments from customers, not only about the superstore itself, but



Above: Preparing for opening day at the Warrington Superstore, Manager Helen Russell with Assistant Manager Rob Smith.

Below: Director Trading Peter Hopkins greets one of the first customers at the Chester Superstore, Mr Dennis Chiltern, Secretary of Vicars Cross Golf Club.



also about the attitude and high standards of Ian Johnston and his staff.

"I hope as many Manweb staff as possible will visit the superstores at Chester

and Warrington, which are both ideal venues for a relaxed family shopping trip, to see our new venture into out of town shopping," added Mr Hopkins.

Picture Power



Above: Manweb Chairman Bryan Weston chats with Clwyd Overhead Linesman Ian Smith and District Manager Doug Willacy.

Below: Mr Weston addresses staff at Clwyd District Office.



Treat in store for local pensioners

THERE was a treat in store for local pensioners following North Wirral District's flotation celebration.

Office Manager Mike Townson is pictured presenting a Manweb cake to Jackie Beech, Senior Care Assistant at the Vincent Harkin Day Care Centre, Birkenhead, watched by some of the old folk who attend.

Made by the District's caterers Gardner Merchant Ltd, the fruit cake, measuring 3ft by 6ins, was one of two baked for the flotation party at Prenton. Mike Townson said: "In true Blue Peter fashion we had one cake, iced with the Manweb logo, on display and another, which had been prepared earlier, sliced up for the staff!"

"There was plenty to go around, so we decided to give some of the local pensioners a Christmas treat."



More photos next month

Flotation celebration special



NORTH Mersey District's celebrations were a real scream...thanks to surprise guests Frankenstein and his bride! Staff almost split their sides laughing when the couple clomped into the canteen at Bridle road to play their monster practical joke.

Frankenstein was really Winnie Haskayne, a Clerical Assistant in Registry, and Joan Rugen, an Admin Assistant in General Services, played the part of Morticia.

What a scream!

Joan said: "Winnie borrowed a Frankenstein mask from a friend and a Manweb anorak and toe-tector shoes, built up with blocks of wood, from her son Andrew, who is a Jointer's Mate at Bridle Road. I raided the attic and found an

old dress from when maxi skirts were all the rage, and used lots of make-up. It was hilarious.

"For Morticia's pet dog Cuddles, the pair used an old toy on wheels, donated by Office Manager Len Cornah, and for authentic-

ity they gave Cuddles a set of fangs!

Managing Director Richard Gales, who joined the festivities at Bootle, is pictured cutting the celebration cake, which carried an icing sugar portrait of Frankenstein, as staff drink a toast to Manweb.

Here's to Success

Director Power Marketing Colin Leonard was the guest of honour at Liverpool District's flotation celebration.

In the photo on the right, he is pictured (front left) with District Manager Bob McMahon, surrounded by Lister Drive staff who raised their glasses and drank a champagne toast to the success of the company before tucking into a specially-made celebration cake.



Crewe's Christmas cracker

MID-Cheshire District's flotation celebration turned into a real Christmas cracker! The District decided to donate one of five specially-baked cakes to a charity appeal to help children in the third world.

As part of the nationwide 'Christmas Cracker' Appeal, churches in the Crewe area have set up a charity shop in the town selling food which has been donated by local companies and stores. It was the idea of the District's Mains Manager Paul Wilkinson, who is a member of West Street Baptist Church, to donate the cake.

Manweb Managing Director Richard Gales is pictured with District Manager Ken Crabtree, surrounded by staff, with one of the celebration cakes.

Blizzards give us a battering

BLIZZARDS that battered Britain earlier this month left more than 85,000 Manweb customers without electricity as wind and snow combined to wreck parts of the network.



Snowdrifts several feet high at Cerrig, near Corwen, made it hard going even for the eight-wheel Argocat rough terrain vehicle.

The trouble started when snow began to fall on December 7, whipped up by gale force winds. By the following morning 40,000 homes were without power and the numbers grew during the day.

Dee Valley, Clwyd, Gwynedd, Mid Cheshire and Oswestry were the worst hit districts and a call went out for staff to turn in. The response was magnificent and by nightfall 70,000 customers were back on supply. However a further 18,000 remained without power overnight.

Emergency teams struggled in the dark and in bitterly cold conditions until after midnight to carry out repairs. Then, after a few hours sleep, they returned to work before dawn.

Telephone lines were jammed as customers tried to report faults and find out what was happening, and local radio stations helped keep the public updated on the latest information.

Wet snow falling and sticking to overhead lines, poles and equipment caused the problems. Lines normally as thick as your little fin-



Dee Valley Apprentice Linesman Gary Clarke, at the top of the pole, and his colleagues work in darkness to repair an overhead line brought down in the heavy snow-fall at Cerrig.

ger had a build-up of ice, making them two to three inches in diameter. The weight and size made them a target for the gale force winds.

Lines sagged or broke, poles snapped or were pulled down at crazy angles. One farm at Rhyd Ddu at the foot of Snowdon needed five broken poles replaced and five new spans of line restrung before they could be reconnected to the supply.

Around 7,000 customers spent two nights without electricity, with more than 600 spending a third night in the dark. Less than 100 were off supply for a fourth night.

Staff from North and Mid Mersey Districts were drafted in to help out in the worst hit areas, and Aberystwyth teams also lent a hand after they had sorted out their own supply problems.

Some other parts of the country were more seriously affected by the blizzards. East Midlands Electricity had about 750,000 customers off supply at the height of the storm, and even the robust 250kV and 400kV National Grid and Supergrid had dozens of faults. Manweb teams were sent to East Midlands to help out when power was restored to our own customers.

SAFETY + SCENE

Stay happy . . . and healthy

BY the time you read this article, the Christmas festivities will be well underway. Christmas trees will be erected and lit up.

Unlike Christmas tree lights, however, safety cannot be switched on and off. So many accidents happen in the home, many caused by slipping, tripping and falling. Accidents with electricity are rare, but even one accident is too many.

Protecting yourself, your family and your home is easy if you use care and commonsense.

One particular area which needs special attention at Christmas is, of course, the Christmas tree lights. Every year we tend to take them out of the cupboard, put them on the tree, plug them in and, hey presto, hope they will light up!

It really is important to examine them thoroughly before wrapping them around the tree to ensure they are in good condition, that all the bulb holders are sound, that the insulation on the somewhat delicate wire is in good condition and, of course, that the plug top is wired properly and the correct size fuse inserted.

Remember also that when changing a bulb, switch the supply off and remove the plug top - it may be a tedious job finding out which lamp has blown, but it's the only safe way to do it.

So many Christmas presents, especially for children, seem to

need plugging in to the electricity supply - computers, audio systems, televisions etc. Here it is important to keep the flex supplying the appliance as short as possible. The shorter the safer, as there's less to trip over!

Never staple the flex to the wall or skirting or run it under the carpet or lino. Always use a continuous length from plug to appliance without joins, and if it needs to be extended use a proper extension lead.

As far as general electrical safety is concerned, there are a couple of things to remember. As with the Christmas tree lights, always use the correct size fuse for the job and, of course, it is imperative that all plugs are wired correctly. Use adaptors as little as possible as overloading can lead to danger.

Finally, from the three of us in Corporate Health and Safety - Derek Jackson, Phil Hughes and myself, Colin Herbert - we hope you all have a very happy, safe and healthy Christmas. And remember, plug in safely what you buy into!

MANWEB'S Environmental Services Manager Doug Gregg is currently on a 12-month secondment to the Nimtech organisation, providing a vital service to industry and commerce in the Greater Manchester area. As a Technology Transfer Manager with Nimtech, Doug has found himself offering a helping hand to such companies as GEC Alstom, Ferranti, Simon Engineering, Cabot Plastics, CIBA GEIGY and, surprisingly, Norweb and Yorkshire Electricity.

Doug says that industry in the North West is experiencing its share of the current recession, but the chance to meet senior management in such a diverse range of industry, considering an even wider range of problems and requirements, is an opportunity he would not have missed. He has been involved with the technology of chemical etching in medical operations, software for process and manufacturing control, pressure transducer technology for diesel engine castings, to name but a few. Doug has written this special report for Contact . . .

A helping hand to industry

THE Chairman of a manufacturing company, fighting hard against cheaper imports, called on Nimtech for help. Nimtech identified six technology requirements which would reduce engineering and manufacturing costs significantly.

An engineering company had a contract with the Ministry of Defence to research and develop a product in the defence field. It was aware of similar work being done in two other European countries but through Nimtech discovered that development work was at an advanced stage in a British university.

A major energy authority was faced with the task of turning a group of engineers into an effective marketing and sales team. The company was taking a more pro-active approach to selling and marketing its internal expertise and facilities, but had a staff resource which was predominantly engineering and technically based. Nimtech organised in-house staff training modules which have helped them in their new role.

A subsidiary of a national group was having difficulty recruiting temporary labour for peak production in the summer. Following a factory visit Nimtech advised on a short-term and a longer term strategy both of which would take advantage of modern manufacturing technology.

The output of a particular product from a textile mill was constrained because it took two years to train competent operators for each of six machines. Nimtech proposed a simple computer programme which would automatically adjust thread tensions, thus reducing operator training time by more than 50 per cent and allowing an operator to use more than one machine at a time.

These five examples are typical of Nimtech's activities in the diverse subjects of Technology Transfer and how it can be used to improve and make more efficient industry in the North West.

So what is Nimtech? Based in Skelmersdale, it is the region's technology centre, set up in 1986 at the instigation of some of the North West corporate giants, such as Manweb, ICI, Unilever, Pilkington and BNFL, who felt the need for a network of industrial, commercial and academic organisations to play a collating role in the economic developments of the region through the introduction and trading of innovative technology or often technology that is new to the company.

The 120-member organisation, which includes the leading business and academic names in the area, pay subscriptions according to their turnover and use Nimtech as a broker to transfer technological ideas and innovation between companies, between university and company and vice versa.

At the helm as the new Chairman is David Hills, who, at 65, has just completed an Open University degree in Mathematics to complement his previous Oxford degrees in Physics and Electronics. He brings experience as a Research Physicist with British Nylon Spinners, Production Manager with Proctor and Gamble, and Chairman of a number of subsidiary companies of Turner and Newall, including Ferodo and British Industrial Plastics. He was also a member of the main Board of T&L and has also been a non-Executive Director of Whitecroft, the Wilmslow-based conglomerate. David is also Chairman of the Council of Salford University, itself renowned for technological developments and links

with industry.

In support of the Chairman is Chief Executive Robin McEwen King, who has been seconded from the Pilkington Group, where he was Director of Electro Optics and MD of Pilkington Communication Systems.

Mr King heads a small but highly skilled team of Technology Transfer Managers, some of whom are employees and others seconded from member companies. Other Technology Transfer Managers include Chemists, Material Scientists, Engineers, Data and Computer Specialists, Physicists and Operational and System Managers. All offer a fresh flow of ideas and knowledge and a constant injection of enthusiasm.

Although primarily a regional organisation, Nimtech has developed strong links with Europe. One advanced link is with the "Centre Regional d'innovation et de Transfert de Technologie" in Northern France. Known as CRITT, this regional technology centre has similar aims to those of Nimtech.

Several companies have already made cross-channel contacts through the centre. A number of technology exchange or licensing options and even possible company acquisitions are underway. There have also been exchange visits between French and British companies and academic institutions. In some instances, this has led to an exchange of staff, which is an ideal way to learn at first hand what business conditions are really like in other countries. As well as the French connection, links are being established with Spain, Portugal and elsewhere. As a member of BC-Net, an EEC-sponsored initiative, Nimtech is able to link into a variety of other European organisations.

Manweb is a large and valued member of Nimtech and played an important role during its conception. It is Nimtech's desire and strategy to expand its involvement with Manweb throughout its organisation.

Previously linked closely through Andrew Jones, of Manweb's Utilisation and Technology Transfer Unit under the control of Head of Energy Marketing Brian Ogden, Nimtech feels that other Sections could benefit equally from its services. Often problems or defective and outdated systems need to be solved, new materials and methods need to be adopted, new concepts or ideas need to be investigated or specific internal skills need to be exploited. All desirable courses of action with often too little time or limited resources to investigate their viability is often the situation.

It is Nimtech's role to assist in all these areas if it is aware of them. Manweb pays a membership subscription and its services are there to be used by all. If you would like to know more about Nimtech or you would like to discuss a problem, contact can be made through Andrew Jones at Manweb or you can ring myself, Doug Gregg, direct on 0695 50032. I will be only too pleased to help or direct you further.

the future

Manweb staff, made even more difficult by restrictions, as the Chairman says in the page one report, "we communicate". The Directors of Manweb's three hectic schedules to talk to Contact reporter a taboo subject - the future! This month we look at report on Power Marketing in the January issue.

Services

is responsible for operating economically.

suppliers vetted for quality standards to improve efficiency.

But in the face of pressure to reduce costs safety has not been neglected. Safety is, as ever, of paramount importance, and procedures are laid down in the Distribution Safety Rules, associated Codes of Practice and district working practices. Regular training is given in the implementation of these procedures and safety audits are carried out to ensure safe operating practices are applied.

System operation and performance standards are also closely monitored, and like the other regional electricity companies, Manweb follows the requirements of the PES Licence the Distribution Code and the Electricity Supply Regulations. In addition OFFER is monitoring performance standards and each REC will have its own Regulator-approved customer standards code.

Security of supply will still be of crucial importance, and Denis Farquhar is confident of Manweb's ability to maintain a reliable service.

"In an area which is largely rural, with low customer density, some extremely difficult terrain and exposure to very bad weather it is significant that our reliability of supply compares favourably with other companies," he says.

Outages need to be kept to a minimum and tightly scheduled to avoid loss of supply during critical periods and keep system loading even.

Relationships between other RECs and generators which had previously been on an informal basis have now had to be formalised, which has meant an increase in the metering and recording of network information. OFFER too require a great deal of data to ensure Manweb is meeting its supply standards and obligations.

Manweb's SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) system is proving invaluable, allowing the system to be monitored very closely and any necessary adjustments made to improve utilisation or efficiency.

Costs incurred in extending this system control and monitoring will



Denis Farquhar

'Security of supply is still crucial'

be recouped by savings in efficiency - a return will need to be shown for all expenditure.

To ensure standards of service are met a Quality Manager has been appointed, and Network Services is committed to improved quality performance in all its tasks and activities. The success of Lister Drive's Meter Test Station in achieving Quality Approval to British Standard 5750 is only the start of a much wider operation. All staff are becoming involved in quality improvement operations aiming at greater customer satisfaction, improved reliability and reduced costs to the company.

Denis Farquhar is enthusiastic about the challenges and opportunities facing his division. He says: "The distribution business is our core business and the main generator of the company's profits. In order to maximise our return to shareholders we will continue to make the assets work harder, exercise keen cost control and introduce operational efficiencies. At the same time we will fully exploit our innovative engineering expertise to create more cost-effective networks and to capitalise on the commercial opportunities that this may present."

Strategy for our survival

MANWEB can and will survive in this new era . . . That was the message to senior managers who attended a series of conferences at Head Office in the run-up to flotation.

Managing Director Richard Gales spelled out the company's strategy for the new challenge, which would be the key to Manweb's success.

He reminded managers of the key goals for 1990/91, namely flotation, improving our performance and the development of a marketing and business strategy.

"In this new environment we are going into, it is important we do not overspend and that we have strict financial disciplines. Budgets must not be overspent so that we can achieve our profit forecasts."

One of the areas to be addressed, said Mr Gales, is customer service standards.

"We did establish our own standards in 1988, primarily to improve the level of service and the attitudes of staff, and we are sure it has had an impact, with public relations benefits."

However, new standards are now being discussed with OFFER (Office of Electricity Regulation). The establishment of such standards is a condition of our Public Electricity Supply Licence.

"Clearly customer service is of increasing concern to us. We've got to meet this challenge. I think we can improve our performance substantially, especially if we ensure we all adopt a "right first time" approach to our work for the customer," he added.

Of particular concern is the way we answer telephones. In July only 74 per cent of calls were answered within 20 seconds. By September they had risen to 78.6 per cent, but we need to achieve even better results in future.

Corporate Strategy Adviser Arthur Ellinson and Head of Strategic Studies Tony Smith also addressed the conferences.

Arthur said: "We've entered a new world and we've got to understand the new aspects of our business - the City and shareholders, representing the people who are investors; the Regulator and the licensed regime; emerging environmental issues; heightened media interest, and threats to the survival of companies in the utility, energy and retail sector."

"However, many of these things have always been with us, for example competition in energy supply, competition in retailing and contracting, the political dimension and, of course, meeting customers' requirements."

"We can prosper provided we ensure the core business is given priority attention and we manage the new risks inherent in our business."

Tony Smith said: "The way to address some of these new challenges is to develop a sound business strategy. A sound strategy and excellence in the day to day performance of our work are the best defence against would-be raiders from the world outside. In this way the company can prosper."

Summing up, Mr Gales said the company's overall objectives were to survive and develop the business, and perform strongly. Managers were encouraged to examine opportunities for improved cost and customer service performance, to ensure our plans and budgets for next year are challenging, and to deliver a service which will help secure the future of Manweb plc.

John joins the jet set

IF it's Tuesday it must be Geneva! That was certainly the case for Manweb's globe-trotting Finance Director John Roberts during a whirlwind roadshow tour of Europe last month.

As a member of a small team representing the 12 Regional Electricity Companies, Mr Roberts jetted out to Frankfurt, Geneva and Amsterdam to speak to the leading European financial institutions about the flotation.

Manweb's Chairman Bryan Weston formed part of a second team, whose itinerary took in Milan, Zurich, Paris and Brussels.

Mr Roberts said: "Because the flotation was taking place in Europe, Japan and North America as well as the UK, two teams, each comprising two Chairmen, one Managing Director and one Finance Director, were sent to Europe to talk to the leading financial institutions."

With Mr Roberts were Jim Porteus, Chairman of Yorkshire Electricity, Ken Harvey, Norway's Chairman, and Richard Young, Managing Director of Midlands Electricity, while on Mr Weston's team were George Squair, Chairman of Seaboard, Roger Urwin, Managing Director of London Electricity, and Peter Chapman, MEB's Finance Director.

Mr Roberts' team flew out to Frankfurt on November 4 to meet up with Joan Beck, European Head of Corporate Finance for Credit Suisse First Boston, the bank acting as lead managers for the European flotation.

That evening Deutsche Bank, who were leading the flotation in Germany, held a reception for the group and the following morning the team gave a presentation to 100 representatives of the leading German investment institutions.

"Deutsche Bank's headquarters were like something out of Dallas, with glass twin towers, each 30 storeys high," said Mr Roberts.

Ken Harvey introduced the team and gave an overview of the industry, Richard Young dealt with operational matters, Mr Roberts talked about the financial set up of the industry, and, summing up, Jim Porteus also spoke about future prospects.

After lunch the team then flew to Geneva to meet up with representative of Credit Suisse First Boston, who were managing the Swiss flotation. The presentation to 100 Swiss the following day was at the Hilton Hotel, and also in the audience were four British journalists from The Times, Financial Times, Guardian and Sunday Telegraph.

Then on to Amsterdam for a presentation at the headquarters of ABN-Amro, the leading Dutch bank, to 80 representatives of Holland's financial institutions.

Mr Roberts said: "It was an exhausting schedule, but wherever we went we were extremely well received and everyone was enthusiastic about the flotation, particularly now that Britain is in the European Monetary System and the pound isn't fluctuating against the German mark."

"Their only complaint was that they wouldn't be able to buy as many shares as they would like!"

"There was, naturally, a degree of nervous tension before every presentation, after all, we were addressing the leading European bankers, and there was always the fear that the autocue would jam or they would ask awkward questions. But everything went without a hitch thanks to the very professional stage management."

If the autocue had jammed, it is likely Mr Roberts would in any case have remembered his lines, having given the speech so many times. The previous week he had represented the 12 RECs at the launch of the Pathfinder Prospectus in London, speaking about financial matters to three separate audiences of analysts, underwriters and the media.

At the presentation to the media, he found himself sharing the platform with Energy Secretary John Wakeham, who said Mr Roberts had been "prominent" in the financial discussions between the Government and the 12 RECs.

"It was a very exacting schedule over a period of a week and a half, including a further two roadshow presentations at Llandudno and Liverpool. But it all went extremely well, and the fact that Manweb people were picked to represent the 12 RECs shows how well we are thought of."

What the papers said

WHEN Manweb's shares opened trading at the highest price of any REC it owed something to the favourable coverage Manweb had received in the press.

Financial Times journalist Juliet Sychrava visited Manweb's headquarters to research her series on the distribution companies, and, says Director Power Marketing Colin Leonard, was impressed.

"What made an impression on her was that we'd thought things through. We knew what the impact of each aspect of privatisation would be on us, and we weren't just muddling through!"

Juliet Sychrava also found Manweb's view of the supply business and generation of interest. The fact that the company was not blindly pursuing these areas just because others were showed Manweb's reasoned business strategy.

The Manweb approach to apparent problems also proved a plus point in dealings with opinion formers,

who saw the company was not trying to divert attention from anything, but was actively pursuing solutions and improvements.

The weight of opinion in the Sunday papers also favoured Manweb, aided by a report from 'green' investment company, the Merlin Ecology Fund, who rated Manweb as the top environmentally friendly distribution company.

The influential Investors Chronicle too spoke favourably of Manweb.

One factor which seems to have impressed analysts and financial journalists alike is the strength of Manweb's management team. With its adaptability and willingness to take on board new ideas in a rapidly changing world Juliet Sychrava likened the company's approach to that of an American Business school.

This approach paid off in negotiations with the Department of Energy.

"The Chairman and Finance Director John Roberts were actively involved in every stage of the discussions, and from Power Marketing we had Terry Brookshaw, Sharon Rodriguez and Dr Andrew Wright, which gave us an inside track into the issues," says Colin Leonard.

In addition John Roberts and the Chairman were also doing everything possible under the vetting rules to ensure influential analysts and fund managers in the city gained a true impression of Manweb.

It all had the desired effect, with investors giving Manweb a massive vote of confidence. The challenge now for Manweb is to prove this confidence is well placed.

End of the road

THE successful flotation of Manweb plc has spelt journey's end for two sections set up to take care of privatisation.

The Prospectus Group and the Privatisation Office have now both been disbanded releasing their staff to their original sections or to other duties.

The Privatisation Office was established within Corporate Strategy to handle the immense amount of paperwork associated with privatisation and to ensure a strict timetable was followed.

The office dealt with a huge number of central privatisation advisers, ensuring messages were received and action taken on time.

Corporate Strategy Adviser Arthur Ellinson said: "The Office's role was to provide a well oiled administrative machine to keep an enormous amount of correspondence flowing. The operation was almost totally fax driven, with documents of various thicknesses arriving at all hours of the day and night!"

Meanwhile the Prospectus Group, headed by Company Secretary Nick Williams and Company Solicitor David Linton has also been wound up after a job well done.



The amount of verification necessary for Manweb's section of the prospectus was phenomenal, filling an entire book case, leaving out the various drafts and material which was not included in the final published version.

David Linton said: "The prospectus was a mammoth but essential task and I'd like to express thanks to everyone - and there were many of them! - who helped by providing verification material. Every single fact in the prospectus had to be proved but we managed it!"

Pictured are Prospectus Group members: (L-R) Mains Development Manager Stan Roberts (seated), Business Planning Adviser Jeff Morgan, Administrative Assistant Barbara Harris, Head of Customer Intelligence Bill Bartlett (standing), Company Secretary Nick Williams, Corporate Affairs Solicitor Joan Lunn, Trevor Williams of Plc Compliance and Administration, and Company Solicitor David Linton. Wendy Favager, who joined the Group from North Wirral Customer Accounts, was away when this photo was taken.

RESPONSIBLE for the non-regulated retailing and contracting areas of Manweb activity, the Trading Division under Director Peter Hopkins has been completely restructured to operate as a separately accountable business. But restructuring was not undertaken purely to control costs. It also presented the opportunity to rethink some of the basics, as Mr Hopkins explains.

"I wanted to improve management accountability for the business and shorten lines of communication between myself and the regional managers. Now there are only four Regional Shop Managers and four Regional Contracting Managers, and with this structure they're able to influence upwards to change things as necessary."

Restructuring is sometimes seen as synonymous with cost cutting, and Mr Hopkins doesn't deny the need to achieve savings throughout the business. By creating just four regions rather than ten districts he has cut out duplication.

"But restructuring wasn't just about cutting costs. We needed to increase the size of our contracting units to go for larger contracts wherever the work is - in our area or out of it," he said.

By treating the staff as one unit, a pool of skills which can be deployed to meet workload and compete for larger contracting jobs than previously possible has been created. Specialisation too has been improved.

"In the past 25 per cent of our contracting work was domestic. Now we're building our strength to offer quality and expertise at the larger commercial and industrial end of the market," said Mr Hopkins.

Niche

"We've also moved into areas like telecommunications and security. A new Technical Services section has been established at Dee Valley with an engineer from Network Services - Brian Nield - to develop this business."

With niche markets like these, Mr Hopkins sees a lucrative future for Manweb Contracting.

The second part of his strategy is to continue squeezing costs out of the division, helped by the 'upward influence' from his management team. Northern Regional Contracting Manager Ray Appleton has developed an efficiency-enhancing job control and accountancy system, which again wouldn't have been practicable working from ten districts.

Improving cash flow and accounting is vital to running the business effectively, but just as important is a change of approach which privatisation and the realities of competition are bringing about within Trading.

This new found keenness and strength is being tested by the current recession which has affected Trading's business. In the financial year to August the division was not making any contribution to Manweb's prof-

Trading

its. However, Peter Hopkins is confident of the business's ability to ride out the storm and maintains that Manweb is far from the worst affected.

Making each of Manweb's three main business divisions separately accountable has brought into sharp focus the need to identify and allocate costs to the appropriate area. Mr Hopkins referred to the five million customer account transactions handled weekly by shops, which represent a cost for Trading but a valuable service to Manweb as a whole. Shaking out costs will mean reducing Trading's share of Manweb Corporate bills.

This is already underway in some areas. "One thing we've done is develop our own mid-frame computer system, aiming eventually for a stand alone system. We already have an IBM AS 400 for the Appliance Repair business," he said.

Concentrating on purely Trading activities has also allowed greater specialisation, particularly in Appliance Repair, where two dedicated centres have been created to cover the whole Manweb area.

"We should be able to save £1/4 million in this area, and we're making the business more slick and more efficient at the same time," he said. "Our standards need to be excellent, with the best delivery and best after sales service."

Duplication will be eliminated by handling all deliveries from Queensferry, helped by a new computer scheduling package with the aim of having 60 per cent of deliveries direct from Queensferry and a two to three day delivery target.

The introduction of the MERAS system in shops allows for sales information to be fed back to the Queensferry store for restocking and delivery.

Again savings will be made. "In this area we can realistically expect to save up to £1/2 million. Not by cutting back, but by running the business harder and at the same time giving a better customer service."

It is this extra customer service which he feels will give Manweb the edge over other retailers.

"At the moment we offer free delivery of appliances. Currys and Comet charge, but at Manweb the price you see is the price you pay. This added value is important, and customers do make these comparisons between us and other retailers," he said.

"Dixons and Comet have missed out by thinking price was all that mattered, and opened the flood gates to poor quality appliances. Customers weren't getting a good deal. Our business is all about differentiating the Manweb product from the competition, ensuring we have the best products and the best deal.

"In recent years our competi-

tors' retail businesses have got into trouble, while Manweb's has grown by 80 per cent over the last five years."

"I've no intention of dropping free delivery, which is one of our major selling points. However, we'll be evaluating whether to charge for actual installation and commissioning, offering this to the customer as a paid for service. I'd welcome thoughts on this from people in Trading," he adds.

By tightening up Trading's operations and offering added value services Mr Hopkins is confident of his division's ability to weather the storm and be well placed to take advantage of an upturn. But he does not foresee any improvement for another year.

In spite of lean times on the high street, Manweb's move out of town is necessary to maintain market share.

"Twenty per cent of white goods are now sold on out of town sites, and if we're Manweb is to compete we must be there. Our first aim is to maintain our 25 per cent share of the white goods market and widen our customer base."

The superstores are targeting a different type of customer to Manweb's town centre locations, which will allow both town centre shops and superstores to exploit separate market segments.

Expanding

"Our brown goods market is currently modest but we are expanding. In the coming year we'll be carrying names like Mitsubishi, Panasonic, Toshiba and Hitachi," said Mr Hopkins.

He praised the efforts shop staff have made over the last year to take on board new product knowledge, and added: "I'm very excited by the way we've been able to move from six day opening in towns to include out-of-town seven day opening with late nights."

As well as the out-of-town ventures ten existing Manweb shops have undergone major refurbishments, with new display cabinets designed to support growth in the small appliance sector. Manweb's share of this has grown even in a depressed market.

Again, staff have been instrumental in this success, recognising the need for training - particularly impressive considering the proportion of part-time staff.

Mr Hopkins is confident the Manweb trade name will travel well - particularly in Manchester, where the acknowledged confusion between Manweb and Manchester could possibly work to our advantage!

Contracting is already operating beyond Manweb's traditional area. Around Telford New Town in MEB country, major installation work is being carried out for the local authority, and Contracting is also active



Peter Hopkins.

'We are confident we can ride out the storm'

across the Norweb borders. Altogether, out of the area contracting is accounting for about £300 thousand worth of business.

As for diversifying into other areas, Mr Hopkins is reluctant to over extend the division's activities. "The market place is littered with companies who went into unrelated fields, often borrowing to do this, and who are now desperately trying to get back to their original businesses," he says.

"There are still many things we can do to improve our core businesses and we'll be concentrating on getting this right before considering any other new business areas."

Further cost saving options are being explored. In January Trading's retailing business will undergo a user requirement study, looking at making the operation completely integrated. If adopted, the package would unify ordering, sales and control of creditors, gathering customer and transaction information on-line.

Sales per square foot of sales floor could be readily calculated to give instant profitability analyses and exploit successful practices.

The package's £1 million price would be recouped over a two year payback period with significant savings thereafter.

Trading is undeniably faced with a tough year ahead. But with investment in cost squeezing technology and a business mindedness which extends from director level through to the sales floor and contracting teams Mr Hopkins is confident about his division's ability to prosper.

"We've got to run the business harder, and shake out as many costs as possible to survive," he said. "People are coming to realise that profit is not a dirty word, and when the current recession ends Trading will be lean and fit enough to take immediate advantage of the improved conditions."

Looking t

THE run-up to flotation has been a busy period on the information that could be given out are now floated, free to run the business and business divisions have taken time out from GRAEME COOPER about what has hitherto been the Trading and Network Services Divisions, wi

Network

THE Network Services Division under Director Denis Farquhar and maintaining Manweb's distribution network efficient

In the privatised environment each area of Manweb's regulated business needs to pay its own way, and the distribution business generates its income from the use of system tariff.

On the basis of profit forecasts in the Prospectus distribution will bring in the greatest part of Manweb's overall profit in the future, and in 1990/91 will contribute almost all of the company's operating profit.

The distribution business levies use of system charges on any supplier of electricity who uses Manweb's network, including any Second Tier suppliers. The charges are designed to reflect the cost of distributing electricity and depend on the characteristics of the consumer's supply and the number of units distributed. Use of system charges represent over 90 per cent of Manweb's distribution revenue. Under the regulatory price cap these charges can be increased by 2.5 per cent above the change in the Retail Price Index.

There is real pressure to reduce distribution costs to keep prices competitive. But Denis Farquhar believes Manweb's network design and the company's approach to the distribution business puts the company in a favourable position.

"The structure of our distribution system is different from that of most other electricity companies. We are benefiting from a decision made in the 50s to adopt a network configuration that consists of a uniform lattice system, easily changed and reinforced," he says.

He acknowledges that as Manweb's major asset the network needs continual investment, but points to measures to control expenditure. "New management information systems have been introduced that will allow tighter project control and ways of improving productivity are being identified and implemented.

"We are also looking for innovative engineering solutions to achieve benefits for our customers and our shareholders by developing more cost-effective equipment and applications to replace existing plant and possibly to bring in revenue from potential sales."

A range of technical developments are in use along with

improved working techniques, which will force down distribution costs and help keep Manweb prices competitive.

Work within the Network Development Department include Manweb's innovative microprocessor protection relay and the GFIS information system which allows network usage to be planned more efficiently.

A new computer-based design package is also in use which lets district engineers design substations to meet their own exact requirements speedily and cost effectively.

Cost saving fibreglass substation buildings are now in use, and new designs of overhead line are being developed to withstand severe weather in exposed locations improving security of supply and reducing maintenance costs.

Mains development is continuing with system refurbishment on basis of greatest need first, a where plant requires replacing, it is not necessarily replaced with like. More cost effective options are explored before decisions are made.

Live line techniques are being extended and refined with the aim of making this method as cost effective as working on dead lines, and particular to reduce customer outages.

Innovative 33kV cable and jointing methods are reducing costs, and new work programming system being developed.

Substation maintenance cycles have also been reviewed, and new oil handling techniques at improved building maintenance have increased both performance and life of oil in switchgear.

Line maintenance programmes have been reviewed to make the most effective use of staff, and a balance of foot and helicopter patrols ensure pole and tower lines are effectively checked.

Manweb's network purchasing will be open to European competition in 1992. European Commission specifications are being assessed to ensure they meet strict UK and E standards. Continental manufacturers have already expressed interest in supplying Manweb, and there is the potential for this increased competition to bring down costs with

COOKING



Mouthwatering meals

by
Marj Scregg

THE "Close Encounters with Food" demonstration Manweb and Sainsbury recently organised for charity (see story right) produced some mouthwatering meal ideas, ranging from the delicious Salmon in an Overcoat to Ravishing Roulade, and, ideal for your New Year celebrations, Wassail Cup.

Salmon in an Overcoat

(serves 4-6)

From "Fish & Shellfish" by Mary Cadogan

1kg (2lb) salmon tail or salmon trout, filleted and skinned, 50g (2oz) butter, 1tsp grated lemon rind, 2tsp chopped tarragon, 1tbsp chopped parsley, 500g (1lb) ready-made puff pastry, salt and pepper to taste, beaten egg to glaze, dill sprigs to garnish.

Season the salmon with salt and pepper. Beat together the butter, lemon rind and herbs. Roll out half of the pastry on a lightly floured board to 2.5cm (1") larger all round than the fish. Place on a dampened baking sheet and put one fish fillet in the centre. Spread with the herb butter and place the second fish fillet on top. Brush the pastry edges with beaten egg.

Roll out the remaining pastry and use to cover the fish. Press the edges to seal, trim off excess pastry, then flute. Mark 'fish scales' with a teaspoon. Use pastry trimmings to make the eye and fins, and brush with beaten egg. Bake in a preheated oven at 220c 425f mark 7 for 20 minutes, then lower the temperature to 160c 325f mark 3 and cook for 15-20 minutes until the pastry is golden and the fish tender. Transfer to a warmed serving platter and serve hot, garnished with dill.

Ravishing Roulade

(serves 5-6)

From "The Josceline Dimbleby Christmas Book" by Sainsbury's

375g (12oz) pork fillet, 300-375g (10-12oz) turkey or chicken breast fillets, skinned, a large handful of chopped parsley, 1-2 garlic cloves, 1 rounded tsp bottled green peppercorns, 50g (2oz) can of anchovy fillets, 125g (4oz) sliced ham, lemon juice, olive oil, salt and black pepper.

Lay the pork fillet on a sheet of greaseproof paper and slice into the meat lengthways to open it out,

but don't cut right through. Lay another piece of greaseproof paper on top and beat the meat out forcefully with a rolling pin so it becomes as thin as possible. Then, in the same way, beat out the turkey or chicken fillets. Chop the parsley, garlic, green peppercorns and anchovies finely and mix together, including the anchovy oil.

Spread a third of the parsley mixture on the flattened pork fillet and season to taste. Cover with the turkey or chicken breasts and spread on more parsley. Finally cover with the slices of ham and spread them with the rest of the parsley mixture. Now roll up, starting from the short side, like a swiss roll.

Carefully place the roll joint-side down in a roasting pan and smear it all over with lemon juice and olive oil. Heat the oven to 150c 300f mark 2. Lay a piece of foil loosely over the meat and roast in the centre of the oven for 1¼ to 2 hours, basting occasionally. Remove the foil about half way through the cooking time. Move the meat carefully to a carving board, cut in fairly thin slices and serve.

Fennel with Red Pepper Sauce

(serves 4-8)

From "Delicious Vegetables" by Lyn Rutherford

2 bulbs fennel, 15g (1½oz) butter (optional), 2 red peppers, cored, seeded and thinly sliced, 1 tsp lemon juice, salt and pepper to taste.

Place the red peppers and 150ml (¼ pint) water into a pan, cover tightly and bring to the boil. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring once. Drain, then place in a food processor or blender. Add the lemon juice and work to a puree. Return to the pan and add salt and pepper.

Trim the fennel bulbs, reserving any fronds for garnish, and cut lengthways into quarters. Place in a metal colander or steamer, cover tightly and steam over boiling water for 12-14 minutes



Close encounters

IT was a close encounter of the edible kind when Manweb joined forces with Sainsbury for a fund-raising cookery demonstration in aid of Dee Banks Special School, Chester.

The demonstration, entitled "Close Encounters with Food", raised £900, which will go towards the school's swimming pool appeal.

Organised by Dee Valley District and held at Chester's Gateway Theatre, the demonstration attracted 300 visitors. Sainsbury Home Economist Jill Joynson served up a variety of delicious dishes, while Manweb Energy Marketing Representative Marj Scregg, on loan from North Wirral District, gave a talk on cooking with electricity.

A raffle was also held for a range of prizes, such as cooking equipment, coffee flasks, microwave sets and cook books, donated by Manweb and manufacturers Belling.

Pictured during their "close encounter" are (l - r) Judith Harris, Chairperson of Dee Banks Charity Association, Jill Joynson, from Sainsbury, and Manweb's Marj Scregg.

until just tender. Gently reheat the sauce and serve with the fennel, dotted with the butter if you wish. Garnish with the reserved fennel fronds.

Pinky Pears

(serves 4)

From "Microwave Cooking" by Carol Bowen.

4 firm William pears, 3 tbsp lemon juice, 2 tbsp clear honey, 150ml (¼ pint) rose wine, 1 tsp arrowroot powder, mint sprigs to decorate.

Carefully peel the pears, leaving the stems intact. Remove the core from the base only and cut a slice from the base of each pear so that it can stand upright in a shallow heatproof dish. Mix the honey with all but 2 tbsp of the wine. Pour over and around the pears. Cover the pears loosely with greaseproof paper or microwave clingfilm. Microwave on full power for 5-7 minutes, rearranging the pears halfway through the cooking time. Remove the cooked pears with a slotted spoon and

place on a serving dish.

Mix the arrowroot with the remaining wine and stir into the wine and pear juices, blending well. Microwave on full power for ½ to 1 minute, stirring twice, until the glaze is clear and lightly thickened. Pour over the pears and serve hot, or leave to cool then chill and serve cold decorated with mint sprigs.

Wassail Cup

(serves approx. 10)

From "The Josceline Dimbleby Christmas Book" by Sainsbury's

125g (4oz) sugar, 3 cinnamon sticks or 2 tsp ground cinnamon, 300ml (½ pint) pineapple juice, 300ml (½ pint) orange juice, juice of 2-3 lemons, 150ml (¼ pint) dry sherry, 1.5 - 1.7ml litres (2 ½ - 3 pints) ale, slices of lemon.

Boil up the sugar, cinnamon and fruit juices together for 5 minutes. Pour the sherry and ale into a large pan and strain the fruit juice mixture into it. Heat but don't allow to boil. Garnish with slices of lemon and serve.

Special offer Scandinavian Seaways THREE DAY MINI-CRUISES TO SWEDEN

The offer is valid on the following dates:

January: 18th & 25th

February: 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd

This special offer is unique to Manweb and is available to all staff, friends, relations and pensioners. Priced from £25, this has to be one of the best priced special offer short break holidays on the market. There is even a half price offer for children whose ages fall between 4 and 15 inclusive.

	Adult £	Child £
4 Berth inside cabin with shower & wc:	25.00	12.50
4 Berth outside cabin with shower & wc:	31.00	15.50
3 Berth inside cabin with shower & wc:	31.00	15.50
3 Berth outside cabin with shower & wc:	36.00	18.00
2 Berth inside cabin with shower & wc:	36.00	18.00
2 Berth outside cabin with shower & wc:	44.00	22.00

Also included in the offer is a short sightseeing tour, on arrival at your destination. Part of the experience of this superb holiday break is the enjoyment of the cruise atmosphere and the variety of entertainment on board ship. You have the choice of nightlife with cabaret and disco. There are the restaurants, serving food that has to be seen (and tasted), to be believed. Sample the Smorgasbord, a traditional Scandinavian spread, or perhaps celebrate with a more formal meal of international cuisine, a-la-carte. Lounges and bars provide the focal point. There are cinemas on board, showing the latest film releases or why not try a sauna! All the ships are air conditioned and stabilised, and have a friendly crew to look after you.

All you have to do is sit back, relax and enjoy the superb amenities on board your ship, from the moment you step aboard! So what are you waiting for, with a fantastic bargain to take advantage of?

BON VOYAGE

Pick up the phone and dial: 0255 241234, quoting reference X25. All bookings are subject to availability. This offer closes on 31 January, 1991.

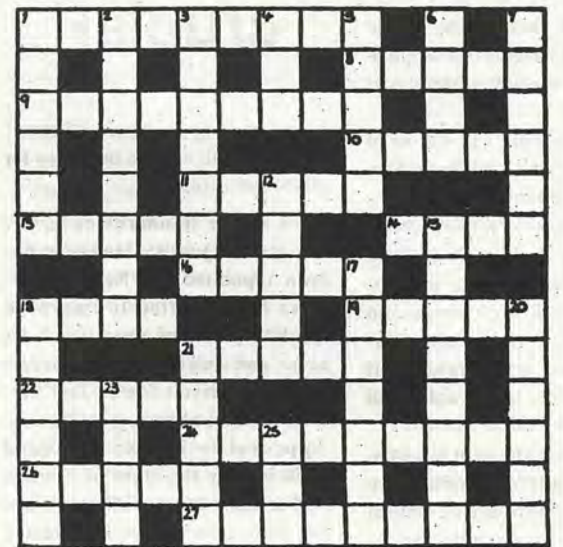
STEP ABOARD FOR YOUR MINI-CRUISE TO SWEDEN - sailing to Gothenburg.

Itinerary.

Day 1 Depart Harwich - overnight on board ship.

Day 2 Arrive Gothenburg, but before arrival be sure to be up on deck as the ship plies its way through the many isles and inlets of the scenic Bohuslan coast. At the terminal your guide and coach will be waiting to take you on a sightseeing tour of the city. Laid out by the Dutch in the 17th Century and criss-crossed with canals, Gothenburg has many delightful houses, craft shops and an excellent museum. Your coach returns you to the terminal to board your ship bound for Harwich - with another memorable evening in store.

Day 3 Arrive back in Harwich.



Crossword No. 28

ACROSS

1. Not seeing double when drunk (9), 8. Last letter from Greece (5), 9. Scraggy and sticky if you know what I mean! (9), 10. It happens to be quite an occasion (5), 11. The Spanish drink in Scotland (5), 13. Takes in what's been set down (5), 14. It might just occur to you (4), 16. Cancel a clean-up (5), 18. Get in a mess feeding the Irish maybe (4), 19. Cancel a book with a character missing (5), 21. Looking grim at the rear (5), 22. Film character who'll break an arm with little bother (5), 24. Must income be cut and redistributed if you're a Party member? (9), 26. Yank showing courage (5), 27. Storm of abuse held in by bridge player (9).

DOWN

1. One takes a chance on getting improved maybe (6), 2. Start to knot a tie in it (8), 3. Soldier turning up in what one might wear to ramble (7), 4. Resistance unit given a ring by the Queen (3), 5. Senior member craving to join the party (5), 6. Only a stretch of water? (4), 7. There's skill in chopping ham, she's found (6), 12. Eat too much Cheddar maybe? (5), 15. Sid's taken a lot in and come up with a thousand more for the force (8), 17. Don't allow one to leave the modest celebration (7), 18. Pickle when there's not much butter (6), 20. Get the message in silent agony (6), 21. Behaviour may improve when they're pulled up (5), 23. She's crazy about the conclusion you've come to (4), 25. Make a low sound (3).

Solution on page 12

Obituary

Sudden death of Board member

NON-Executive Director of Manweb, Dr Robert Henry Cummings, OBE, died on November 22 - less than three weeks before the company's flotation.

Chairman and Managing Director of Robertson Research Group of Llandudno from 1961 to 1987, Dr Cummings, who was 67, left a widow and two children. He lived in Deganwy, North Wales.

Dr Cummings was appointed a part-time Board member of The Merseyside and North Wales Electricity Board by the Secretary of State for Energy in 1980, and was invited to become a Non-Executive Director of Manweb plc in 1989.

Educated at Glasgow University, where he gained his doctorate in Science, he held academic posts at Glasgow and London Universities. He was widely respected in the international scientific community,

with Fellowships from Swiss, Soviet Union and United States scientific academies.

A member of the CBI, he served as Chairman of the North Wales CBI, and was awarded the OBE in 1979 for his distinguished service to industrial science and technology, particularly in the Principality of Wales.

Manweb Chairman Bryan Weston said: "Bob Cummings was a valued member of our Board, and in the run-up to privatisation contributed greatly with his knowledge and experience of private industry, together with his nine years' service as a part-time member of the old Manweb Board."

Pair played vital roles in Manweb

IT is with sadness that we report the deaths of two senior retired employees, Mr Edward Lollar, former Chief Accountant, who died aged 84 and Mr Frank Brown, former Manweb Chief Engineer.

Mr Lollar joined Manweb on vesting in 1948 from the Mid Mersey Electricity Supply Company, bringing vital knowledge of the industry's accounting practices.

Based at the old Head Office in Love Lane, Liverpool, Mr Lollar was responsible for consolidating the varying practices of Manweb's constituent companies into one unified system and established the newly-created board's accountancy arrangements.

As part of this he made each sub district a separate billing centre, ensuring an efficient, locally based system.

Through his career Mr Lollar continued to develop Manweb's accountancy operation, drawing on his substantial experience in the industry and natural flair for organisation.

He came to Chester with the Head Office move in 1969, working on the transfer of Manweb's accountancy operations to a computerised system before his retirement in 1972.

To assist with Manweb's reorganisation in the early seventies Mr Lollar was retained for a year as Management Adviser following his retirement.

After leaving Manweb he and his family moved from Chester to Hawarden, where he was active in his local church, St Deiniol's, and regularly sang in the choir.

He lived in Hawarden until his death, and leaves his wife, Eileen and two daughters.

The funeral at Hawarden Parish Church was followed by interment at Frodsham Parish Church. Arrangements were for no flowers, but donations in Mr Lollar's memory were invited in favour of the Bible Society.

Former Chief Engineer Frank Brown was 77. Chief Engineer was the most senior engineering position in Manweb, and Mr Brown was one of only four people ever to hold the post. He retired in 1977 after 40 years with the electricity supply industry.

He began his career as an engineering apprentice before obtaining a degree in engineering from London University, and held various appointments in the ESI before becoming Mains Engineer with the former Warrington Corporation Electricity Department.

Joining Manweb in 1948, he held posts as Assistant Chief Engineer in Construction and Planning under Manweb's first Chief Engineer, Peter d'E Stowell, becoming Chief Engineer in 1964.

Network Services Director Denis Farquhar - then an Engineer in Planning at Love Lane - worked under Mr Brown.

He said: "All those who knew Frank Brown will be saddened by his death. He was involved in Manweb from the beginning and played a leading role in policy development and implementation. His work on rural electrification was vital in establishing the network.

"On a personal level he was both pleasant and supportive and was liked and respected by all who knew and worked with him."

Mr Brown was for many years a well-known figure in Warrington, living in nearby Appleton, and was a past captain of Warrington Golf Club.

He was devoted to wife Elsie who suffered from Parkinson's disease, and cared for her up to her death in 1986. Following this he moved to Chester.

Mr Brown died in hospital in Chester, and the funeral was held at Walton Lea Crematorium near Warrington.

Arrangements were for family flowers only with donations in Mr Brown's memory invited to the Parkinson's Disease Society.

Tributes to two meter readers

IT is with regret that we report the sudden deaths of two Manweb meter readers, Reg Hanks, from Mid-Cheshire, and Bernie Butler, who worked at North Mersey District.

Bernie, 53, was rushed to hospital after being taken ill at work on November 13 but died shortly afterwards. He leaves a widow Doreen and a daughter.

A keen Liverpool FC supporter, Bernie joined Manweb in 1958 as a Labourer, later becoming a Messenger and then a Meter Reader.

North Mersey Office Manager Len Cornah said: "His death has come as a terrible shock to everyone. Bernie was a smashing lad, a real grafter, one of the best."

Reg Hanks, 47, died on December 2 after a brief illness. He leaves a widow and 13-year-old son. He came to Manweb as a Labourer 17 years ago from Congleton Rural District Council, for whom he worked as a Driver. After 12 months he became a Meter Reader.

Mid-Cheshire Customer Accounts Manager Martin Jones said: "Reg will be missed by all his colleagues. His death at so young an age has been a shock to us all."

Retired

We are also sorry to report the deaths of the following retired Manweb employees:

James William Lowes, a Jointer (EHT) at Mid-Mersey who retired in 1973, died on October 5 aged 82.

Kenneth Nicholas Millington, 73, who died on October 14, was a Meter Attendant at Mid-Cheshire until retiring in 1982.

Eastall Mills, who died on October 19 aged 79, was a Systems Engineer at Oswestry before retiring in 1975.

Wesley Roberts, 68, an Electrician at Dee Valley before retiring in 1977, died on October 27.

William Gerrard Fielding, who died on October 27 aged 73, retired in 1967 as an Area 1 Fitter.

Alice Wilcock, 82, died on November 1. She was a Salesperson at Mid-Mersey until retiring in 1968.

Robert Grenville Roberts, 70, retired as a Commercial Foreman at Clwyd in 1982. He died on November 10.

Arthur Ellis Hughes, who died on November 23 aged 68, was a Linesman at Dee Valley until his retirement in 1972.

Reginald Bates, 90, a Jointer at Mid-Cheshire before retiring in 1965, died on November 27.

Robin Jones, who retired from Dee Valley as a Chargehand Painter in 1988, died on December 2 aged 59.

Gilbert Blundell, 72, a Clerical Assistant at Mid-Cheshire until retiring in 1983, died on December 5.



Manweb staff and Crewe footballers outside Manweb's Crewe Shop. (L-R front) Clerical Assistants Karen Stabb and Angela Meredith and Consumer Accounts Clerk Michelle Matthews with 3rd Engineer Ian Davies as Father Christmas.

Fleeced . . . but all in good fun

by Graeme Cooper

MANWEB rallied round to swell the coffers of the 1990 Children In Need Appeal with a range of fun events across the region. Mid Cheshire District held a three-legged race around Nantwich, a raffle, and a collection at Crewe Shop to raise an amazing £1,862, with Radio Stoke and Crewe Alexander Football team helping with the fundraising.



Above: Mains Development Manager Stan Roberts says goodbye to all that with a draft Prospectus!

Below: Customer Jane Jones (centre) draws a ticket in the teddy raffle at Pwllheli shop watched by (l-r) Sales Assistant Myfanwy Lewis Edwards, Shop Manager Adrian Phylip Jones and Focus representative Chris Griffiths (photograph courtesy of Peter Westley, Pwllheli).



At Head Office the appeal was led by the Security staff, with a guess-the-coins-in-the-bottle contest, a raffle and a pay-in charge for anyone who forgot their security pass!

Security thank staff and visitors who gave way to demands with menaces, were coerced, fleeced or simply made a donation to the appeal! They're also grateful to Link Catering, Dave Savell and Myra Davies who donated the prizes, and Bill Swann who produced the notices!

The total so far is £283 and still rising.

Also at Head Office, the Prospectus Group saw verification out in style with a special Frank N Stein challenge to tear up early drafts of the Electricity Prospectus! At £1 a try they raised £32 for Children in Need.

In addition, Manweb got together with Radio Clwyd and British Gas to produce a cook book for Children in Need. Copies ("for at least £2 each!") were sold through Manweb shops and offices, with the cash still coming in.

Pwllheli Shop collected £102.50 by raffling a teddy and allowing entrants to have a free cuddle of the bear!

Meanwhile Aberystwyth lived up to its reputation as a big hearted district with a range of fund raising events to boost the appeal.

FREE ADS

HOLIDAYS

Caravan - Towyn, near Rhyl, six-berth, two bedrooms, shower, fridge, fully fitted. From £75 per week. Tel: 0978 362615/352653.

Costa Del Sol - Benalmadena studio apartment, suitable for two or three people. Excellent pool and facilities. Shops and bars with entertainment nearby, 10 minute walk to beach. As advertised in Global and Sol holiday brochures. Tel: Joe Flanagan on 0244 41097.

Criccieth - North Wales, house overlooking village green. Sleeps six, CTV. Beach and shops two mins. Tel: 0766 522 614 (Ann Tudor).

France - B&B, H/B, caravans and camping. Tarnet Garrone region. Close to junction 8 and 9 on Autoroute between Bordeaux and Toulouse. Excellent catering, including French, Indian and vegetarian cooking. Much to see and do, or just relax in sunshine. Ex-SEB employee. Tel: David Boniface, 010-33 (63-95-95-20).

Pony Trekking - and farm holidays. Accompanied one hour to full-day treks for novices or experienced riders. Holiday cottages available. Self-catering, bed and breakfast or half board. Licenced restaurant open to non-residents. Lunch, afternoon tea, dinner. Private parties catered for. Further details: Hwylfa Ddafydd Country Farm Holidays, tel. Colwyn Bay 516965.

Port Grimaud - Six miles St Tropez. Four/six berth caravans with electricity, hot and cold water, shower, on three star hotel site. Luxury coach travel from most areas. Tel: 0670 712399.

Porthmadog - Holiday bungalow, sleeps six. Black Rock Sands five minutes' drive. Convenient Ffestiniog Railway, Snowdonia National Park. Contact

C. Jones, 2 Meadow Drive, Porthmadog, tel. 0766 2519.

Algarve - Privately-owned villa set in large gardens in the Monchique Hills. Split level dining room, good kitchen facilities, utility room, two good-sized bedrooms, terraces with garden furniture. Panoramic views of the west coast 24 kms away. Swimming pool, maid service, food hamper provided. Flights arranged, tel: 0352 55090 or 074570 474.

Anglesey - Self catering and coarse fishing holidays. Two lakes on 15-acre site overlooking Snowdonia. Touring caravans and tents welcome. Brochure available, tel: 0248 713410.

Weston-super-Mare - Static caravan on farm. Six berth, separate double bedroom, shower, toilet, tv etc. All season price £70 per week. Tel: 0934 750 292.

Newquay - Cornwall, luxury caravans with shower, and economy vans. Colour tv, flush toilet etc. Pleasant site near town and beaches. Cleaned and maintained by owners. From £50 per week. Tel: 0637 876589 (Gill).

Spain - Luxury villa, three double bedrooms and two bathrooms. Private swimming pool. Quiet area "Calpe" Costa Blanca. Walled gardens, terraces etc. Five minutes from uncrowded beaches. Available from £150 per week. Tel: 0736 664177.

Dolgellau - Traditional farmhouse cottage set in a seven acre smallholding in Snowdonia National Park. Sleeps seven plus cot. Tastefully modernised, fully fitted kitchen inc. dishwasher and microwave. Storage heaters and large inglenook fireplace. Ample parking and grounds. Kennel for pet by arrangement. Easy access to mountains and sea. Beautiful scenery and walks.

Prices from £100 to £220 per week/ Tel: 0341 423912.

French Riviera - Six berth caravan, all amenities on site, within easy reach of Monaco, St Tropez etc. Golf and riding close by. SAE to M. Williams, The Lodge, Lingen, Bucknell, Shropshire, or tel: 0544 267579.

Newquay - Cornwall. Guest house, sea views, two minutes from beaches. Quiet area close to town, good food, comfort, parking. BB/EM £65 - £80 per week. ESI staff. Tel: 063787 4291 (Mr Pleasants).

Anglesey - Tal-y-Bont Cottages, Dwyran. Luxury cottages set in a 17-acre smallholding, 1 1/2 miles from shingle beach of Menai Straits and four miles from sandy beaches of Llandudwyn. Nature reserve, bird sanctuary, sea zoo, shops and restaurant nearby. Weekly prices - July/August £220, September 1 to 15 £180, September 16 to 30 £160, October £130. Tel: Deeside 819768.

Llandudno - Rosaire Private Hotel, family-run and situated in lovely garden area of town, yet close to all entertainment and shops with no hills to climb. Free car park. Tea/coffee facilities, some en-suite rooms available, excellent home cooking, served at separate tables. Tel: 0492 77677 or write for brochure to Mr and Mrs G. Evans, 2 St Seiriols Road, Llandudno, Gwynedd L130 2YY.

Anglesey - B&B/Self-catering summer let. Secluded farmhouse with panoramic views of the Snowdonia range. Within 10 minutes of the main town Llangefni and sandy beaches. Idyllic for bird watchers. Tel: Bodogan (0407) 840038.

Presthaven Sands - North Wales, caravan to let. Colour tv, shower, fully fitted. Good site facilities. Tel: 061 366 8789.

Snowdon - Quiet valley, modern flat with all facilities. Sleeps four. Beautiful views, free fishing. Contact Mrs A. Bohannon on 0286 85537.

South of France - Six-berth caravan to let on site with all amenities. Easy reach of Monaco, Monte Carlo, St Tropez etc. Some dates July and August. Tel: 0544 267579 after 6pm. ESI staff only.

Snowdonia - National Park, comfortable modern flat, all facilities. Sleeps four. Beautiful quiet valley six miles from Caernarfon. Close to shop and pub. Free fishing. Tel: 0286 85537.

Caravan - New 31', 6/7-berth, all mains services. Gas, electricity and colour tv included. Sited on Haven's Ty Mawr Holiday Park near Abergele (Dragon Award). Free entertainments, heated indoor swimming pool, family club, disco, children's Tiger Club etc. Near all major resorts. Tel: Chester 372860 for details. Families only, sorry no pets. Discount for Manweb employees and families.

Toomargoed, Rhyl - Take that break you've been promising yourself. Relax in a family hotel and enjoy good home cooking and fully licensed bar. Weekly rates for B&B and evening meal from £50, weekend or mid-week breaks from £30 per person. Ring Len or Sandy on 0745 334103 or 677 3003.

Sailing Holidays - Artemis. Comet's 850 (28ft) bareboat charter. Moody 37, bareboat or skippered charter. Corfu-based. Tuition available. Full inventory. Contact H.J. Hargrove on 0270 67556.

South West France - Countryside guest house D'Astros le Pin, Auvillar, English hosts. Family, double or single rooms, B&B, half or full board. Water sports, swimming, golf, tennis and wine tasting nearby, open all year including Christmas. Special rates for ESI staff: 1. B&B prices for low season £11 per person (until March 31, 1991). 2. All confirmed bookings received before January 31, 1991 will benefit by the accommodation costs in peak season remaining at the 1989/90 price. Telephone David or Jenny Boniface on 010 33 63 95 95 20 or, for brochure only, 0428 723207.

Lanzarote - Playa Blanca, 1 Bed villa on small development with pool, bar, tennis court, luxury kitchen, lounge, private garden with BBQ. Available May and November. Tel: 051 647 8678.

FOR SALE

Sideboard - Melamine with 2 small drawers, 2 sliding cupboards and drop-down writing desk. Also pink tiled coffee table, £23 each or £48 the lot. Contact Mrs M James on 051 647 4821.

CARS FOR SALE

Jaguar XJ6 - 4.2 V - reg 1980, 62,000 miles only, long MOT, taxed. Excellent condition and bodywork. Tel: 097085 281.

DRIVING TUITION

Robin Jones School of Motoring

Department of Transport approved driving instructor. Member of the Institute of Advanced Motorists. ROSPA Advanced Driving Certificate. Member of the Motor Schools of Great Britain

SPECIAL DISCOUNT FOR MANWEB STAFF

- * Beginners to Advanced
- * Motorway Courses
- * Dual Controlled Metro
- * Free Pick Up Service

For details telephone 0836 259896 (daytime) or 051 339 8135 (evenings).

PROPERTY

Halkyn - Detached stone cottage with outbuildings. Partly modernised. Three bedrooms, double garage, workshop. Quiet rural setting but within easy reach of A55 Expressway. £90,000 ono. Telephone 0352 781362.

PERSONAL

Green Gesture - I will not be sending Christmas cards, but wish to extend Season's Greetings to my many friends at Head Office and especially District. G.B. Dean, Stationery Stores, Ext. 2963

AGM - Of the Retired Members Group of Liverpool Electric Power and Lighting Sports and Welfare Club, will be held at Thingwall Road, Liverpool, on Wednesday, February 13 1991, starting at 2.00 p.m. with a buffet to follow.

Wedding Photography - Capture the informal pictures of bride, groom, guests, etc. that the official photographer misses. Let me be your 'back-up' photographer on the special day. 80 7.5" x 5" photos chosen from 100, £70. Contact Ken Smyth on HO int. ext. 3207 for details.

LEISURE

Fishing Trips - and pleasure cruises aboard the DTI vessel 'Cerismar' out of Beaumaris, Anglesey. Wreck, reef and general fishing. Pleasure cruises to Puffin Island. Competitive prices from £35. Full time skipper/owner Dave Jones, 2nd Coxswain Beaumaris Lifeboat and member of the National Federation of Charter Skippers. Contact D. A. Jones on 0248 810746.

Sea Fishing - On board Miranda out of Holyhead, Anglesey. Deep sea, reef or wreck fishing. Trips arranged for 4 to 12 hours, licensed and insured for parties of 12. Boat hire from £50. Rods, tackle and bait available. Contact Kevin Wright, Miranda Sea Angling, Mon Elan, Moelfre, Anglesey, Gwynedd, tel. 0248 88459.

Fly Fishery - Gweryd Lodge, Llanarmon-yn-Ial, Mold. Superb fly fishing on a great 122-acre lake. Boats for hire. Contact John Stowell on 08243 230.

Tennis - Liverpool Electric Supply Tennis Club welcomes new members, established or beginners. Club sessions Sunday am/pm and Wednesday evenings. League matches played midweek evenings. Contact Ken Rigby at Lister Drive, int. ext. 2170 or 051-254 1900.

TUITION

Driving Lessons - Arnold Hughes, D.O.T., A.D.I., School of Motoring. Expert Tuition. Door to door service. Refresher and motorway lessons if requested. Discount for Manweb employees. Telephone Warrington 50178 or 39421.

Well done



PRINCIPAL Assistant Teresa Safina (above) from Head Office Pricing has passed her Chartered Institute of Management Accounting finals.

Teresa (26), who is married and lives in Chester, was sponsored on her course by Manweb, and studied at Liverpool Polytechnic for four years on day release.

She said: "Passing my finals was quite an achievement for me, with working full time during a period of intensive activity in the Pricing Section and looking after my family too. It was hard work and for the most part enjoyable, but I'm glad it's over and that my efforts paid off!"

Pricing Manager Pat McLafferty said: "This is a substantial achievement both for Teresa personally and for the department. We're delighted she has gained this highly relevant qualification, and I'd like to congratulate her on her success."

* * *

CONGRATULATIONS to Oswestry Office Manager Ian Moul and his bride Jane Lloyd, the District's Canteen Manageress.

The couple recently married at St Philip and St James' Church, Morton, near Oswestry. Following a reception at Pant Village Hall, the newlyweds set off on a touring honeymoon in North Wales.

* * *

CONGRATULATIONS to the following long serving employees who have clocked up 20 or 30 years' service during November.

30 years: Head Office - Jack Acklam, Senior Engineer; Liverpool - Bill Banks, Shift DRC Attendant; Geoff Gray, GDA; Dee Valley - George Brown, Linesman; North Wirral - Ron Curtis, DRC Attendant; Rita Aird, Word Processor Operator. 20 years: Head Office - Joyce Cummings, Clerical Assistant; Huw Hughes, Display Assistant; Philip Dean, Operating System Software; Joe Pugh, Software Services Manager; Valerie Baker, Clerical Assistant; David Savell, Security Officer; Barry Hart-Davies, Administrative Assistant; Dee Valley - David Birchall, Mechanical Fitter, New Crane St Garage; Val Jones, Principal Assistant, Consumer Accounts; North Wirral - Brian Davies, Joiner; Shirley Robinson, Sales Assistant (part time), Birkenhead Shop; Joan Allen, Principal Assistant; Mid Cheshire - Pat Benoy, Sales Assistant (part time) Crewe Shop.

PLEASE PRINT YOUR FREE AD. ON THIS COUPON OR ON PLAIN PAPER

(BLOCK CAPS PLEASE)

Name:

Work place (or retired)

Tel:

Send to: 'CONTACT' FREE ADS, MANWEB, SEALAND ROAD, CHESTER CH1 4LR.

SPORT



End of a super season

THE 1990 season for Manweb's North Wirral Golfing Society ended on a high note in October with the Captain's Prize Competition at Hoylake, won by Associate Member Harold Taylor with 35 points.

He is pictured (left) receiving his prize of a crystal bowl from Captain Paul Kelly, a Foreman in the Central Field Unit, following the end-of-season dinner at the Railway Inn, Meols.

During the year the Society visited Padeswood and Buckley, Denbigh, Old Padeswood and Abergele on "away" days, and the home venue was Arrowe Park.

The Society Championship held at Abergele in August was

season

won for the second year running by Paul Kelly, who was presented with the Championship Cup and prize by retired Manweb Timekeeper Norman Johnson, Captain elect for 1990.

Other competition winners during the season were: April - Peter Clarke, Electrical Fitter; May - Stan Parry, Electrician, Contracting; June - Alan Fox, Customer Account Executive; July - Alan Jones, Engineer, CFU; September - Harold Taylor, who had the season's highest stableford score of 45 points.

A dynamic duo in Liverpool organised an unusual football match to help handicapped people get to Lourdes.

Jointer Tommy King runs a charity football team and Bricklayer Mick Mathews is on a committee which takes handicapped people from the North West to Hosanna House in Lourdes. The sporting pair organised a match between Tommy's 11 and the Ladies Of Hosanna House.

Mick said: "The result was a 6-0 win for the Ladies, but only after water pistols and buckets of ice water broke the men's resistance!"

"On behalf of Hosanna House I'd like to thank Tommy and his team for a great day out at the Manweb club. The total raised was £582 through sponsorship and raffles - thank you to everyone at Lister Drive."

Tee time at Helsby

MID-Mersey District Manager Des Lock gets into the swing of things as he tees off at the District's recent Golf Day for industrial and commercial customers. Held at Helsby Golf Club, the event was attended by 45 senior managers from various companies, including Pilkingtons, of St Helens, and PEP winner Crossfield Chemicals, of Warrington.



Thrilling end to soccer tournament

MID-Cheshire District swept to a 2-0 victory in the final of the Manweb Sports and Social Club 5-a-side football tournament.

It was a thrilling end to the knockout contest for the team - captain Peter Bulmer, Austin Salmon, Steven Collier, Peter Tasker and goalkeeper Martin Jones - who faced keen competition from their North Wirral rivals.

Several District and Head Office teams took part in the Sunday afternoon tournament at Christleton Sports Centre. The initial games were played on a two-group basis, with two enthralling semi-finals.

Peter Bulmer, a Customer Accounts Officer at Macon Way (right) and Customer Accounts Manager Martin Jones (centre) show off their individual trophies and the winners' cup to Mid-Cheshire District Manager Ken Crabtree.



Hole in one for Cynthia

CYNTHIA Scott from Head Office Support Services achieved a golfing rarity with a hole in one from a 142 yard drive.

The out-of-the-ordinary shot was during Manweb Golf Society's Captain's Day at the Hill Valley course, Whitechurch.

"I was quite shell shocked by it!" said Clerical Assistant Cynthia. "It was the sixth hole, which is on a slope and it was a very windy day. When I couldn't find the ball I looked everywhere - actually in the hole was the last place I

thought of looking!"

Cynthia's partners on the round, Paul Clare and Doug Grice from North Mersey and Reg Bramhall, Mid Mersey retired, were quick to congratulate her on her rare achievement.

Manweb Golf Society Captain Wyn Thomas from North Mersey is pictured presenting Cynthia with a set of balls to celebrate the hole in one. (Photograph by Bill Swann, Display Department).



Raising the rafters...

RAISING the rafters has taken on a new meaning for UTT Development Engineer Andrew Spiers since he took to the water with the Macclesfield Rafters.

In September they won the prestigious British Championships over a 27 mile stretch of the river Severn in just 3 hours 25 minutes, and after this taste of success Andrew confesses he's hooked on his new sport.

"I became involved in raft racing through my sister, Janet and her boyfriend, who are in the Macclesfield team and since then it's become like a drug!" says Andrew.

Macclesfield also chalked up a win last May in the 100 mile marathon from Hay-on-Wye to Chepstow.

A keen all round sportsman Andrew, who lives in Chester, puts in many hours' training, in addition to his other sports, judo, javelin, sub aqua, swimming, cycling and weight training.

"Raft racing takes a lot of endurance for all the team, but it's paid off for us," he says. "Also, our trainer Colin Goodwin is ex-RAF so he knows his stuff!"

As well as shore based workouts the team also train on the Dee at Sandy Lane, courtesy of the Duke of Westminster!

Competition is fierce, and Andy confesses that there's nothing quite like speeding past rivals' rafts.

But it's all good natured, with races raising funds for causes including Oxfam, and Children in Need.

Now the Macclesfield Rafters are training for next year's events, with the main one again being the 100 mile endurance race on the Wye. (Photograph courtesy of Hereford Times).



Animal Magic!

by Jackie Unsworth



Above: "Call me Billy the kid..." Gloria meets one of the goats at Dan's farm.

Below: Polo mints are a real treat for the horses, recovering from cruelty or neglect at the animal sanctuary.



Further information about the sanctuary and the adoption scheme is available from: Shetland Rescue Horse and Pony Sanctuary, Dan's Farm, Ramsbrook Lane, Hale, Merseyside, L24 5RP, telephone 051 425 4627, or from Gloria Perkins on 051 428 5424.

SNOWY, a grey gelding starved by his owner and beaten when he couldn't do the work asked of him. Puff, a strawberry roan left without bedding, food or water and less than half the weight he should have been. Poppy, a black and white mare, blind in one eye and bound for the slaughterhouse. Misty, a 20-year-old Shetland Pony with deformed hoofs due to neglect by his owners.

Just a few of the tragic cases that melted the heart of Manweb shop assistant Gloria Perkins and led to her involvement with a Merseyside animal rescue centre.

Gloria, who is based at St John's shop, became a volunteer helper at Dan's Farm, the Shetland Rescue horse and pony sanctuary in Ramsbrook Lane, Hale, after she read a newspaper article about the work carried out there and the farm's "adopt an animal" scheme.

"I've always been an animal lover and decided to visit Dan's Farm to see how they care for

the rescued animals. That was my downfall," she said.

Not only did Gloria "adopt" little Misty, who is only 33 inches high, she decided to set about raising funds for the sanctuary, mainly by persuading colleagues at Manweb to part with their money!

To date, St John's Shop has adopted a horse and a donkey, while staff at Heswall and Old Swan shops are funding at least two other ponies.

Under the scheme, an annual subscription of just £10 for adults and £5 for children aged under 16 goes towards the upkeep of the adopted animal. In return, members receive information about the animal and a photograph, copies of the sanctuary's newsletter, and invitations to visit Dan's Farm.

Cruelty

The sanctuary currently has 32 horses, ponies and donkeys contentedly grazing in fields at the five acre site as they recover from appalling cases of cruelty and neglect.

Also being cared for are 20 cats, 12 goats, two sheep, four turkeys and a variety of other feathered friends.

Gloria, who has organised a variety of fund-raising events for Dan's Farm and recently received a £150 donation from Manweb under the Charity Chest scheme, said: "I do this for the love of the animals. They



Gloria with Misty, the Shetland Pony she decided to adopt.

weren't put on this earth to be abused, but some of the stories behind their rescue are sickening.

"Everyone who helps out at Dan's Farm gives their time voluntarily, but even so, it costs a small fortune to keep the sanctuary going and we rely on donations. Vets' fees can be very expensive, for example it cost £86 to treat a cat with a broken leg recently."

With pockets bulging with treats for the animals - Polo mints and carrots for the horses and ponies, and cream crackers for the goats, sheep and turkeys - Gloria, 45, who has worked for Manweb for 11 years, is a regular visitor to Dan's Farm. She hopes other Manweb staff will join the adoption scheme or even volunteer to help out at the sanctuary.

The story of the Shetland Rescue centre began back in 1981 when animal lover Diane Strongman saved a black gelding called "Dan" from being bought by a butcher at a local horse sale.

Soon afterwards Dan was joined by two other horses, "Tim" and "Ozzie", and by 1984 Shetland Rescue, then operating from a stable, had gained charitable status. The following year Diane and her husband Bill sold their home in Whiston, Merseyside, to buy the sanctuary's present site.

Since then there has been a steady increase in the number of horses, ponies and other animals taken in by Dan's Farm.

Policy

The charity's policy is to provide a home for sick, neglected or unwanted horses and, in some cases, for those the owners are no longer able to look after. All horses and ponies taken into care remain the property of Shetland Rescue for life, and under no circumstances are sold.

Sadly, founder Diane Strongman died of cancer in July last year but her husband Bill still lives at Dan's Farm and a team of volunteers carry on the good work.

Crossword solution

Across: 1. Blindfold, 8. Omega, 9. Thingummy, 10. Event, 11. Elgin, 13. Reads, 14. Idea, 16. Scrub, 18. Stew, 19. Annul, 21. Stern, 22. Rambo, 24. Communist, 26. Pluck, 27. Sportsman.

Down: 1. Better, 2. Initiate, 3. Digress, 4. Ohm, 5. Doyen, 6. Mere, 7. Martha, 12. Gorge, 15. Dynamism, 17. Banquet, 18. Scrape, 20. Listen, 21. Socks, 23. Moo.

Sreading their wings

FLEDGLING firms in the Chester area are being given a helping hand to spread their wings thanks to Manweb plc.

Manweb's Ellesmere Port and Chester Section Engineer Mike Jones is pictured (left)

presenting a £500 cheque to John Stark, Director of Chester Enterprise Agency.

It is the fourth year running that Manweb has provided financial backing for the Agency, which provides free training and counselling services to people planning to start up in business.

The Agency also manages 100 all-electric starter workshops and offices for Cheshire County Council, housed in the huge converted railway warehouse at Hoole Bridge, Chester.



HAMBONE by Mike Flanagan

