

# CONTACT

NEWSLETTER FOR MANWEB PEOPLE

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL 1997

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to all our readers

## KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK

“**N**ow is a good time to take stock of our achievements during the year, as we look ahead to 1998 and all the challenges it will bring.

We are two-thirds of the way through our first year as a fully-integrated part of the ScottishPower group.

Through integration, we've seen significant benefits for the business in terms of cutting out costs and improving customer service. This has got to continue to be at the heart of all our operations as we move forward.

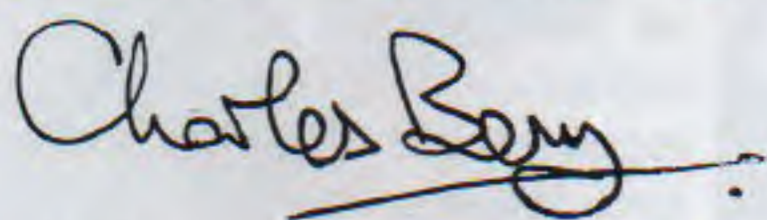
It's probably well known throughout the company that I take a healthy interest in performance indicators, particularly OFFER complaints.

I'd like to extend my thanks to you all for making such a concerted effort to ensure we continue to improve our performance in these areas.

We should also remember Manweb's retired staff and other people who have left the company, but who still retain a keen interest in our affairs.

Finally, 1998 is a very big year for us. We're doing well but there's no room for letting up on our achievements to date.

Let's keep up the good work. ”



### DAL ATI GYDA'R GWAITH DA

“**N**awr yw'r amser i fwrw golwg dros yr hyn yr ydym wedi ei gyflawni yn ystod y flwyddyn, a hynny ar adeg pan yr ydym yn edrych ymlaen at 1998 a'r sialensau a ddaw yn ei sgîl.

Parhad ar dudalen 2



### Boxing clever for Bosnia

**O**rphans in eastern Europe have something to look forward to this Christmas - thanks to Merseyside Region.

Staff filled 61 decorated shoe-boxes with toys and sweets, and a £200 donation from their Local Forum for 'accident free' working provided another 20 boxes of goodies. The parcels were donated to the charity Operation Christmas Child, which each year sends thousands of shoe-box gifts to countries like Bosnia, Croatia and Armenia.

The Merseyside collection was organised by Power Systems staff

Moira Renwick, Yvonne Lucy and Val Higham. Moira said: "These children, many of whom are orphans, have nothing to look forward to this Christmas. When they receive a shoebox this year they will know they have not been forgotten."

Helping to put together the boxes are, back row (l-r) Dave Winter and Moira Renwick, and front (l-r) Jenny O'Brien, Val Higham and 16-year-old work experience students Anton Oye and Stacey Henderson (daughter of Operations Manager Jim Henderson) from Calderstones School, Liverpool.

## DAL ATI GYDA'R GWAITH DA

(Parhad o dudalen 1)

Erbyn hyn, rydym yn bell dros hanner ffordd trwy ein blwyddyn gyntaf fel rhan integredig o grŵp ScottishPower.

Yn sgîl yr integreiddio, mae'r busnes wedi elwa'n sylweddol o ran gostwng y costau a gwella'r gwasanaethau i gwsmeriaid. Mae'n rhaid i hyn barhau i fod wrth wraidd ein holl weithrediadau wrth i ni symud ymlaen.

Mae'n debyg fod pawb o fewn y cwmni yn gwybod, erbyn hyn, fy mod yn ymddiddori'n fawr mewn mynegyddion perfformiad, yn enwedig cwynion OFFER.

Carwn ddiolch i chi i gyd am ymdrechu mor dda i sicrhau ein bod yn parhau i wella ein perfformiad yn y meysydd hyn.

Dylem hefyd gofio am y staff sydd wedi ymddeol o Manweb ynghyd ag eraill sydd wedi gadael y cwmni, ond yn parhau i ddangos diddordeb yn ein gwaith.

Yn olaf, mae 1998 yn flwyddyn bwysig i ni. Rydym yn gwneud yn dda ond does dim lle i orffwys ar ein bri gyda'r hyn yr ydym eisoes wedi ei gyflawni.

Rhaid dal ati gyda'r gwaith da. 55

*Charles Bay*



## Ted's a model employee

**V**illage life has been scaled down and encapsulated to table-top size by an enterprising employee to demonstrate Manweb's power supply management.

Rhyl-based Ted Watson, Team Leader for Wales Region's 132/33kV Substation Section, used his model-making skills when his manager, John Heathman, was asked to put Manweb on display for the 90th anniversary of the Power Station and Aluminium Company at Dolgarrog.

Ted (pictured) decided on a model village complete with houses, pub, factory and, of course, electricity supply from a substation complete with 33/11kV transformer. "I just

made it up as I went along," he said.

The model kept on growing until it reached 1300mm x 720mm, in a 260mm Perspex container. The height is dictated by a section of mountain depicting the terrain around Dolgarrog, which also hides the relays that make it tick.

It has an 11kV three-phase overhead line running from the substation, with the houses and pub each having their own single phase pole-mounted transformer. The buildings all have lights supplied by the line on a 50 volt DC supply.

During the Dolgarrog Open Days the model was connected to a temporary 11kV switchboard, and with the help of a 'Gad' relay, the auto-reclose operation of a circuit breaker could be demonstrated.

### Realistic

The realistic mini-village features a tree which can be 'blown down' by winds, to simulate one of the causes of power failure.

"It enables us to demonstrate how electricity can be cut off and be put back on so quickly," Ted explained. "The model was received with great enthusiasm and interest during the Open Days."

Later it was featured in the Manweb-sponsored 'Engineering Challenge' for sixth form students at Bangor University, Deeside College and Coleg Powys.

Ted, who has worked in the industry for 40 years, says the next job is to make an electronic package to plug into the model village. "This will make it easier to transport and will enable us to use it effectively in many more locations."



*A group of Caernarfon staff enjoyed a trip to Ireland after winning a prize draw organised by Caernarfon Sports and Social Club.*

*Sailing from Holyhead, the 22 Sports and Social Club members spent the day in Dublin and also visited 'Ballykissangel', the setting of the popular television series. They are pictured sampling the local brew at Fitzgerald's pub.*

**CONTACT 2**



## Celebrating long service

**L**ong-serving Customer Service staff at Warrington have been presented with framed certificates.

Regional Customer Service Manager Ray Hall is pictured (2nd from the right) presenting the awards to (l-r) Credit Control Technician Jimmy Johnston (30 years); High Street Customer Service Manager Peter Jones (20); Credit Control Technician Chris Hasson (20) and Call Centre Administrator Chris Wright (20).

Customer Service Representative Alison Barber (20 years) was unavailable for the photograph.

# Calling the Power Wardens...

**M**anweb is joining forces with local community and parish councils in north Shropshire in a bid to improve communications and customer service.

The company is recruiting local Power Wardens, working closely with Shropshire County Council's Emergency Planning Officer Ian Sawers in this pilot scheme.

The Power Warden, ideally a local councillor who is at home most of the day, will become a focal point in their community if there is a widespread loss of supply during severe weather,

when they will contact Manweb's emergency team via a special telephone number.

They will provide feedback to Manweb about local conditions, including customers with a special need for power. The emergency team will give up-to-the-minute news about restoration of the electricity supply, and the wardens will, in turn, pass this information on to their neighbours.

The scheme also means that Manweb has a local person to consult about initiatives, such as setting up hot food centres,

during an emergency. Joining forces with local councils means that the Power Warden is likely to be a well-known and well-respected member of the community.

Charles Berry, Manweb's Chief Executive, said: "We recognise that it is not always easy for communities to obtain accurate information about their electricity supply during severe weather conditions.

### Closer

"This scheme, which we are running on a trial basis with Shropshire County Council, will allow us to provide a high level of customer service, be closer to the communities we serve, and to get the supply back on as quickly as possible."

Ian Sawers said: "We believe this scheme will be extremely useful for Shropshire people in ensuring that they receive a high quality of electricity supply.

"In addition, if only one person makes a call to the electricity company, and then passes that information on to others, it means that the lines are open for people like myself, who obviously need to keep in close contact with Manweb during such situations."



## Pairing award for 'innovative' Manweb

**M**anweb has received an award for its innovative sponsorship of the International Eisteddfod's Choir of the World Competition.

Win Griffiths, MP, Under Secretary of State for Wales, is pictured (centre) with Selwyn Evans, Treasurer of the

International Eisteddfod, presenting the ABSA (Association of Business Sponsorship for the Arts) Pairing Scheme Award to Manweb's Head of Communications Gaynor Kenyon.

# Careers get a kick start at Anfield

Anfield, home of Liverpool Football Club, is well used to celebrating success.

So it was chosen as a fitting venue to celebrate the achievements of five apprentices from Merseyside Region who recently proved they were winners by scoring their training 'goal'.

Having recently completed their four-year training programme to NVQ level 3, all five have now been appointed Jointers in the Construction section.



The apprentices celebrated their success by joining Regional Manager Bill Tubey for a meal in the Manweb Box at Anfield.

Bill is pictured (front left) presenting a framed certificate to Stephen Rhodes. The other apprentices,

holding their certificates, are (l-r) James Wright, Paul Smith, Dave Sumner and Ian Henderson. Behind them are (l-r) Construction Manager John Marsh, their mentor Tommy Lane, Team Leader Frank Taylor and Personnel Manager Dave Winter.



# Safety pays dividends for charities

Safe working by Merseyside Region staff has paid dividends for 19 local charities.

As winners of the 1996 'Safety First' initiative, the Region's staff were awarded £3,000 to donate to a worthy cause of their choice.

The local Health and Safety Committee (HESAC) decided that rather than give the money to just one charity, it should be split between all the good causes nominated by staff over the last 12 months.

The charities to benefit were: Freshfield Animal Rescue; Baggs & Saggs; Longmoor Special School; Handicapped

Children's Pilgrimage Trust; 30th Crosby Scout Group Hut Fund; Claire House; Pat-a-Cake Day Nursery; Mayfield Court; Kelton Day Nursery; Animals in Need; RSPCA; Lord Mayor's Charity Appeal; St Helens & Knowsley Hospice; Walton Neurology; Merefield School; Woolton Youth Football; Basic for Life; Prince's Trust Volunteers, and the Salvation Army.

Representatives from all the charities were invited to Manweb's office in Lister Drive, Liverpool, to collect their cheques and meet the staff. Presenting one of the cheques, Regional Manager Bill Tubey is pictured (right) with staff, HESAC members and representatives of the charities.

# Leading the way in energy efficiency

**A pioneering energy efficiency scheme which will reduce air pollution, equivalent to taking 10,000 cars off the road by the turn of the century, has been unveiled on Merseyside by ScottishPower.**

More than 100 business leaders and representatives from local authorities gathered at Aintree Racecourse for the launch of PowerSave, which will help small and medium-sized companies save on energy costs, thanks to European funding.

This, in turn, will help to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 25,000 tonnes by the year 2000, across the country.

Bill Landels, Managing Director, Energy Supply Division, said: "The

scale of this project places us at the leading edge, both in the UK and Europe, in the energy services sector. It will reap benefits for hundreds of companies in this country, and in turn help the UK economy and improve the quality of the air that we breathe. This really is a win win situation for businesses, ScottishPower and the environment."

The launch follows the success of a pilot scheme in Knowsley, Merseyside, by Manweb. That scheme has already achieved more than £800,000 energy cost savings, plus a reduction of 10,000 tonnes per year in carbon dioxide emissions.

Local authorities and the Merseyside

Energy Advice Centre have been given the go-ahead to bid for EC funding to offer the scheme, worth millions of pounds, to other companies in Merseyside, with ScottishPower as the sole supplier. ScottishPower is also able to offer similar services to other companies throughout the UK.

On Merseyside, ScottishPower incurs the cost of providing energy efficient new equipment to small and medium-sized enterprises and, through local authority partners, receives a European Regional Development Fund grant to make the project viable. Electrical equipment replaced has included compressed air generators, variable speed drives, lighting and process plant.

## News-girl Nina 'plugs in' at Prenton

**Prenton Depot is the unlikely training ground for a local youngster bent on a career in journalism.**

Nina Boardman, 16, a pupil at Woodchurch High School, Wirral, visits the depot once a week, where she assists Community Liaison Officer Jane Hall in preparing Cheshire Region's newsletter.

The teenager now intends to include examples of her work for 'Plug-in' in her portfolio when she takes up media studies at sixth form college.

Nina hadn't thought of such a career path until she came to Manweb for work experience. "When I saw the list of companies, I chose Manweb because it was a big company that I'd heard good reports about," she said.

"I thought it would just be routine office work, but when I mentioned to Jane that I was interested in media, she invited me back, saying 'I can make use of you'. So I began work on writing and producing 'Plug-in'."

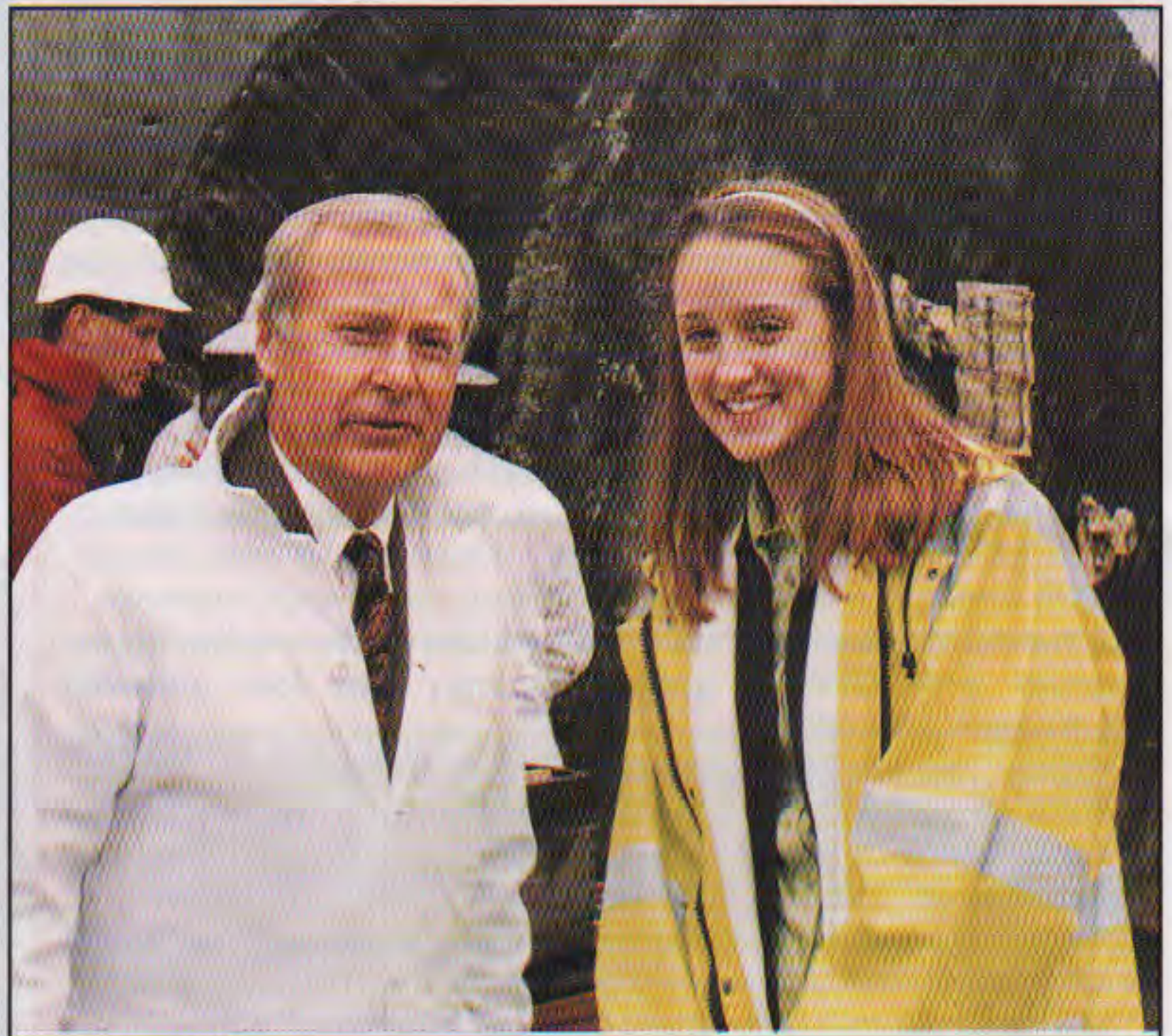
Nina's first assignment was to report on a giant hive of bees discovered in an electrical cable drum at a Manweb substation near Crewe.

"She did a really good job and eventually the story was taken up by local and regional papers, as well as TV," said Jane.

Nina's next big story was on the Mersey Basin Campaign, reporting on how a team of Manweb volunteers had helped improve the environment near Winsford by cutting and moving trees to help establish some rare heather moorland.

This too will be added to her media studies portfolio along with her own school project - preparation of a campaign on the dangers of drugs, consisting of a two-minute video, a magazine and a radio slot.

So, Nina, from Upton, may one day be a familiar face on our



**On the trail of the Manweb 'bees' story, Nina with Granada TV reporter Trevor Green.**

television screens. She's aiming to be a presenter and says: "Thank you Manweb for helping me on the way."

**\* Another aspiring writer, learning a little from Manweb, is 22-year-old law student Ian Sykes (pictured below).**

Ian, who graduated from Humberside University, has taken a temporary post at Prenton until Christmas. He is also helping out on the newsletter, along with many other duties.

He claims the experience, especially the writing and production of 'Plug-in', is helping provide a second string to his bow.

Having taken a course in photo journalism, he plans to take a year off to travel the world and write about his experiences.

"I've already written to a number of magazines to see if they might require such articles. If I enjoy this journalistic experience, I might change tack and stick to it," he said.



# 'First' for Manweb

**T**eam work involving three areas of the business has earned Manweb a top quality award. ISO 9002 accreditation has been granted for our OFFER standards reporting systems following a year of hard work by dedicated teams from Power Systems, Energy Supply and Metering.

It is believed that Manweb is the first regional electricity company to gain this recognition across the whole company - not just for a particular division. The award is for the reporting of guaranteed, overall and network performance standards to OFFER. Although there is an OFFER requirement for all RECs to commission external audits by 1997, there is no requirement to obtain full quality accreditation.

"Having done so much work and knowing we more than met the standards, we decided to go for full accreditation," said Community Relations Manager John Kennedy, who has also taken on the role of Performance Standards Representative.

The divisional teams were led by Rhostyllen-based Quality Manager John Barker, who retired just before accreditation was granted. The team representing Power Systems was Debbie Birch (Merseyside), Janet Ford (Cheshire) and Karen Bloor and Dave Grady (Wales). Val Ward and Ian Tonks were responsible for network performance standards.

From Energy Supply were Jill Dodd, Jon Pritchard and Beverley Barlow, while Metering was represented by Hilary Ryan, Barbara Kelly and George Vose.

In addition, Pete Simester from Community Relations was responsible for developing and writing the quality reporting systems and procedures in accordance with OFFER's best practice guidelines.

The ISO 9002 standard applies to all parts of the company. There are 10 guaranteed standards set by OFFER which require payment to customers if any of these standards are not met.

## Targets

A further eight overall standards include performance targets agreed with OFFER, and there are also four network performance standards.

Throughout the year's programme, processes, some of which had to be written from scratch, were subject to three separate internal audits and a final external audit by EAQA (Electricity Association Quality Assurance). The findings and recommendations were adopted, and processes were amended and re-submitted to achieve the accreditation.

The accreditation is for three years, during which internal and external audits are carried out to ensure that standards are being maintained.

"It's been a magnificent team effort by everyone concerned," said John Kennedy. "Although Energy Supply and Metering have gained individual accreditations, this is the first time it has been granted across the company."

"This is an internationally-recognised award and represents the highest measure of our systems in reporting customer service standards. It is recognition of our continued commitment to customer service and shows just how well we are doing."

*\* Just 10 complaints about Manweb were received by OFFER during November. This is the lowest ever number of complaints received in a calendar month, and compares with 27 in the same month last year.*

*So far this year there have been 154 OFFER complaints, a reduction of 30 per cent on last year's figure of 220.*

*Two guaranteed standard payments were made in November, three less than last year. This year, to date, there has been a reduction of 13 payments. In 1996/97 there were 52, and so far this year there have been 39. Chief Executive Charles Berry said: "A great job is being done by the teams. Keep it going!"*



Top, Punk is style for staff Customer Centre while, Rhostyllen staff dress occasion.

Left, Rhostyllen Centre Manager Reece shaves beard her colleague Howard Worsfold sported for 15



Above, Regional Customer Service Manager Brian Carman and Denice Owens from Credit Management as Mrs Merton la la, as Vicky Goodwin adopts the French look, and it's 1970s for Bethan Jones.



Cheshire Regional Manager Steve Wood (right) and Operations Manager Jim Henderson helped raise more than £125 by volunteering to wash pots and pans in the canteen kitchen.

## Fancy that!

The Children in Need Appeal was given a massive boost thanks to big-hearted Manweb staff, who came up with a host of wacky fundraising ideas.

Rhyl Customer Service Centre staff dressed up as punk rockers and raised a staggering £781, while at the Regional Customer Service Centres at Warrington and Rhostyllen, even an emergency planning operation (see page nine) didn't deter the staff, who between them raised over £900.

Fund-raising initiatives at Rhostyllen included sponsoring Customer Liaison Manager Steve Jones to give up egg and chips for a month, shaving off the beard Customer Service Representative Howard Worsnip has sported for 15 years, raffling a teddy bear, and charging people 2p per visit to the loo, and 10p to receive their payslips. Those who didn't turn up in fancy dress were fined.

Staff dug deep into their pockets at Manweb House, where a cash collection raised nearly £80, and Cheshire Region staff sponsored Regional Manager Steve Wood and Operations Manager Jim Henderson to roll-up their sleeves and do the washing up in the canteen kitchen. They raised over £125.



# Lighting up Gas Street

It's a long time since gas lights were used in Newtown, but thanks to Manweb the town's appropriately named Gas Street now has a festive glow.

The company, which has recently entered the gas market and is currently signing-up customers at the rate of 1,000 per day, took the opportunity to promote its new service by sponsoring the Christmas lights in the mid-Wales town.

Consumer Marketing Director David Clarke said: "Manweb is offering savings of £100, on an average gas bill of £400, and people have been quick to take up the offer."

Newtown Overhead Linesman Paul Clapton is pictured fitting a 'Gas from Manweb' sign to the Christmas lights in Gas Street.

## Employment opportunities for friends and family

Are any members of your family and/or friends looking for an employment opportunity?

Agencies employed to sell gas direct to homes on behalf of Manweb are now actively seeking to recruit enthusiastic people to act as sales representatives throughout the north west, and particularly in the Liverpool, Cheshire, Warrington, Manchester and north Wales areas.

If anyone is interested and feels they are

- a good communicator who is used to dealing with the public
- flexible and available to work between 30-40 hours per week including evenings and weekends.

Then why not give one of the following agencies a call NOW!

GSD Field Marketing  
1 Enfield Road  
Ellesmere Port  
South Wirral

Cooke Natural Gas  
Petro Point House  
Wyre Street  
Padiham  
Burnley

The Sales Team  
Suite 4  
George House  
30 Dudley Road  
Whalley Range  
Manchester

Tel. 0151 355 3030

01282 777123

0161 839 6170

In return they can be assured of receiving high quality training, full support and quick payment in a secure market.

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# Aiming to stay in first place

by Mike Boxall

**A**t last, some of the fruits of the 1998 programme can be seen by Manweb staff and customers.

For two years or more, work has been going on to design the systems that will support competition in the domestic electricity market.

This has involved lengthy discussions between electricity companies, the regulator (OFFER) and customer representatives. The blueprint has now been largely agreed and companies are working hard to turn that design into reality.

Customers have begun to see advertising campaigns and promotions run by suppliers keen to win their business (including ScottishPower's partnerships with the AA and Union Energy).

The exact timetable for competition will be decided by OFFER early next year, but already Manweb has allocated a 'Supply Number' to each customer. This now appears on all bills which we send out, and contains information that will allow other suppliers

*action for 1998*

to work out prices to quote to each customer (see example below).

Manweb was the first company to be ready to test all the new computer systems that will be needed to keep track of which company is supplying which customer, and to make sure meter reading information is provided to everyone that needs to see it.

Testing began at the end of October and is likely to last for some time yet. It is important to pass these tests and be ready for competition in our own area. Until we have done that, the ScottishPower group will not be allowed to sign up customers elsewhere in the UK, and the push to become the country's largest multi-utility service provider will be delayed. At present we expect to finish testing as we started - in first place!

**Powerful  
union**

**S**cottishPower has signed a partnership agreement with Union Energy, the TUC's energy company, to market and supply competitively priced gas and electricity to the UK's seven million trade union members.

The new alliance, the largest of its kind to be announced in the run-up to full domestic gas and electricity liberalisation, builds on the success of a similar partnership deal signed between ScottishPower and the AA in June.

ScottishPower was chosen as sole supply partner from a wide field of major energy suppliers on the basis of price, quality of service, marketing effectiveness, environmental track record and employee, social and community relations.

A joint marketing campaign will get under way during December and gas-only contracts will be offered from January 1998, with electricity expected to be available from April onwards. Details of prices and the range of benefits on offer will be revealed when the campaign begins and a Union Energy call centre is opened.

A marketing study carried out during the annual TUC Congress in September indicated that at least one million TUC members would switch to its affiliated energy supplier.

**Manweb** **ELECTRICITY ACCOUNT**

ScottishPower Company

TELEPHONE NUMBER 0845 2721212 DATE 25/1

CUSTOMER INFORMATION CENTRE,  
WILDERSPOOL CAUSEWAY,  
WARRINGTON, WA4 6QD  
RING 8.00AM - 8.00PM WEEKDAYS, 9.00AM TO 5.00PM SATUR

CALLS ARE CHARGED AT LOCAL RATE

ACCOUNT NUMBER [REDACTED]

Please quote your account in any letters or telephone

METER READINGS	UNITS USED	TARIFF	UNITS CHARGED	PENCE PER UNIT	AMOUNT
LAST TIME	THIS TIME	see over			
3726	5293	DS	1567	6.8650	107.57
SERVICE CHARGE 83 DAYS AT 12.6600					10.50
PREVIOUS BILL PAID SINCE LAST BILL				7.47CR	
BALANCE B/FWD				137.00CR	144.47
CARD OPERATED METER RENTAL 83 DAYS AT 5.8100					4.82
TOTAL EXCLUDING VAT					21.58
VAT 5.00P7C ON					6.14
SUPPLY NUMBERS S 01 801 101					
13 0000 6407 839					

## A new look for your bill

**C**ustomers receiving bills from Manweb may notice a change in the format, with the inclusion of their supply number. This is a unique reference number for the meter point.

If a customer wishes to change to another electricity supplier following deregulation, this information will provide all the information needed for them to provide a supply quote and for settlement purposes. The supply number is a licence requirement.



# New system up and running

by Robin Bradshaw

**T**he first of the new 1998 systems is now up and running.

The Metering Point Administration Service (MPAS) came into operation on 3 November and is an industry 'first'.

This system registers information about the supply number associated with a metering point (see example on page eight).

Call Centre staff at Cathcart operate a supply number enquiry service on behalf of Power Systems. For customers in Wales, there is a Welsh-speaking service at Rhostyllen.

The supply number comprises two parts - core data provided by the distributor and supplementary data from the supplier.

For new connections onto Manweb's network, supply numbers are allocated on acceptance of the connection quotation.

These numbers are allocated by a computer-based Supply Number Generator, based at each of the regions, linked to the Meter Point Registration System (MPRS).

Once the number is allocated, the customer can choose who will be the supplier.

The supplier then registers with MPRS as the final link in the chain, which allows distribution use-of-system charges to be allocated for the customer's supply point.

## On course for 1998

**F**irst to enter 1998 industry trialling, Manweb has maintained its prominent position and has successfully executed more tests than any other Public Electricity Supplier or new market entrant.

The 1998 industry trialling consists of a large number of tests to prove that each company and its computer systems can participate in the deregulated electricity market, scheduled to open in 1998.

Testing and Trialling Manager Jim McEwan said: "The success of our trialling activity, to date, demonstrates the quality of our computer systems and provides confidence that we can actively participate in the deregulated market."

The trialling activity is scheduled to be completed in March 1998.

For further information on the 1998 programme, a Lotus Notes Bulletin Board is available to Manweb staff, on the News & Articles page. This includes a weekly update on 1998 trialling and background to the 1998 programme.



*At the hub of the emergency operation, in the NMC at Prenton, (l-r) Linda Lewis, Ian Tonks, Phil Currie, Tony Hignett (seated), Val Ward and Barry Judd.*

## Operation 'Wise Owl'

**W**hen it comes to emergency response, none are better trained and equipped than Manweb staff.

Company history is sprinkled with incidents that have called for the efforts of hundreds of staff to work round-the-clock to restore damaged electricity supplies.

Manweb experts have responded to emergencies such as the ice storm in the Corwen area in 1979, in which a 400kV tower collapsed, 200 poles were broken and a helicopter was first used for surveying the damage.

In last year's crippling blizzards in England, Scotland and Wales, a reciprocal arrangement allowed teams of linesmen and engineers from Manweb and ScottishPower to cross borders to repair damage done by the severe snow and gales.

Today, even though many lessons have been learned and practices and performances have been sharpened up so that everyone is ready to act at top speed, there is still room for improvement.

That's why the alert was sounded last month and 'Wise Owl', a mock emergency exercise, was declared to test the reaction of employees in coping with such a crisis.

Planned by Performance Improvement Manager Barry Judd, the exercise was, in his own words, 'a fiendish plot' to test the company's emergency procedures and ensure that communications routes worked successfully.

Staff from the three Power Systems regions, the call centres, Prenton-based Central Operations, Information Systems, Contracting and Corporate Communications

participated in the operation.

The Merseyside part of the exercise centred on the Rainhill and Rainford areas, where the effects of a lightning storm had to be dealt with. Regional Manager Bill Tubey had to handle a mock TV interview based around the possibility of PCBs being in a transformer that had gone on fire.

In Warrington, part of the Cheshire region, the battle was against a 'once-in-a-hundred-years' flood. In the simulation, 3,000 properties were flooded, requiring new electricity supply equipment. Ten substations were 'lost' in the incident.

### Whammy

Wales was hit by a double whammy. First, the entire town of Caernarfon lost its electricity supply. Then, no sooner was this rectified than the whole of the Isle of Anglesey lost its supply.

"In the simulation it was impossible to restore all customers simultaneously and we had to operate a rota-load (rationing of supply) for three hours at a time," Barry explained.

The three exercises were organised and co-ordinated by Linda Lewis, Phil Currie and Ian Tonks, of Central Operations.

"The response to all three emergencies proved our efficiency and how well drilled we are," said Barry.

"It showed that we are more prepared this year than last for a storm and that we have the capability to handle all emergencies. The few minor anomalies we uncovered are being addressed and will be remedied before Christmas."



## Diploma success for Moira

**A** Manweb employee who co-founded an organisation which aims to stamp out gobbledegook has herself earned a diploma in Plain English.

Moira Renwick, Merseyside Region's Community Liaison Adviser, achieved her success after taking "the hardest course I have ever done."

Plain English Campaign is an independent consultancy agency which writes and designs leaflets, brochures, forms, contracts, insurance policies and letters. Set up in 1971, it has many of the country's top companies - including Manweb - as its clients.

In the early days, Moira, along with co-founder Chrissie Maher, published a community newspaper, the Tuebrook Bugle, the first community newspaper in the UK. She also helped start up The Liverpool News, the first-ever newspaper for people with learning difficulties.

"These projects formed the roots of the Campaign," said Moira, whose diploma course was funded jointly by Merseyside Region and ScottishPower Learning.

Moira is the third person in the UK electricity industry to gain the diploma. ScottishPower's Sybil Law was the first.

Since Moira's success, four more ScottishPower staff in Scotland have also qualified.

# CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD



### CLUES ACROSS

2. Naughty boy in a fairy tale.
5. Frozen.
7. It's comfortable on the tea-pot!
9. See 32 across.
11. A slow vessel holding up a Christmas tree?
13. Top of the tree in this forest district.
14. Tree of Christmas
15. Bestow a present.
19. Bequeath a good word to all men.
20. Make merry.
21. Try a quiz.
22. Santa's cave.
23. Jolly.
26. Bed-time picture stories.
28. Such tidings of joy.
30. Celebrant of Hogmanay.
- 32 and 9 across. The Virgin Mary had one (4,3).
34. Crackers for fruitcakes.
36. Hardly Scrooge's saving grace.
38. Who's a big girl in panto? It's Peter...!
40. Fruit of red and yellow.
44. Angel-like.
46. Good wishes.
47. Cuddly dolls (4,4).
49. Christmas savings card?
51. The shape of a Christmas tree.
54. Kingly gift.
57. See 10 down.
59. Just the fruit for a wally!
63. Go away for a period off work.
64. To command a rank of angels.
65. Could its candles char stem tiers (anagram 9,4).
66. See 66 down.
68. Those whose work is never done - especially at Christmas!

### CLUES DOWN

1. In short, it's Christmas.
3. First lady of Christmas?
4. Low sound in the stable?
6. Prepare food for the chef.
8. Cosy room in the inn.
9. Inflated windbags.
- 10 and 57 across. Tinfoil (6,5).
12. A special one is celebrated on 25th December.
13. Depicted in colour.
16. Oriental.
17. Musical instrument for a little boy?
18. Childish amusement put on in a theatre?
22. Render speechless with a joke.
24. Polish the food off! (3,2).
25. Cheeky Christmas singer.
27. Stuff Our Stomachs? Help!
29. Illuminated.
31. Reduced for sale (3-5).
33. Novel place for bargains (4,4).
35. Worn around the neck or knot?
37. Horsey pastime?
39. Christmas carol (4,2,1,6).
41. Easy-to-come-by presents?
42. No \_\_\_ for a bed.
43. An all-male party for Rudolf.
44. The chocolate-coloured clown?
45. A soft drink to pep you up?
47. Alone in Oslo.
48. Bubbly drink.
50. Pantomime sister.
52. Round baubles.
53. Winter snow time to ski down these!
55. Pantomime giant.
56. Room in the inn for a dance?
57. A little kiss for Gregory?
58. Sweet dark-red wine.
60. Mother of Christmas?
61. A Christmas boy.
62. A song about a female deer?
- 66 and 66 across. A white Christmas is on the cards! (4,5).
67. The last word in how the snow lay round about.

**SOLUTION IN NEXT MONTH'S CONTACT**

# Six steps to a healthy New Year

**A**round of parties, with a surfeit of puddings, pies and pints, is often the prelude to those well-intentioned New Year resolutions.

It won't be long before many of us will be declaring an intention to lose weight, stop drinking, get fit, or simply watch our diets.

But armed with a few sensible tips from the experts, we should be able to enjoy the festive fun without the ensuing guilt and promises to improve.

One such expert is Andrea Snagg, Manweb's Occupational Health Advisor, based at Rhostyllen.

Having previously worked in a hospital's coronary care unit and, later, for three-and-a-half years, in occupational health with Lever Brothers, Andrea joined Manweb 18 months ago to administer the company's pro-active health care programme.

Here's Andrea's advice in the run-up to the Christmas festivities.



Occupational Health Adviser Andrea Snagg.

**DIET** The general rule that applies to diet, no matter what time of the year, is to take everything in moderation.

Christmas is often the time of over-indulgence with chocolates, heavy meals, sweets, puddings, excess alcohol and various tit-bits piling up to tempt our palates.

We should aim to enjoy ourselves, but not at the expense of our health. Where possible, at the many Christmas parties, go for one healthy option which may mean having soup, main course and, instead of a stodgy Christmas pudding, fresh fruit salad.

Although we should not get hung up about our weight, we should be aiming to keep it constant. If, over the Christmas period, we find that, despite our efforts, we are a couple of pounds heavier, that is the time to do something about it - not when we have to go up to the next clothes size.

**EXERCISE** Exercise is beneficial in many ways. It keeps us fit and healthy, helps us to lose weight or keep our body weight steady. It also helps to lower cholesterol. When cholesterol is high, it can be associated with heart disease.

Manweb now has seven fitness centres to encourage employees to get or keep employees fit. Exercise need not mean pumping iron. Physical activity such as housework, gardening or brisk walking - in fact, anything that increases the heart or breathing rate - is beneficial to our health.

*\* If you have a heart condition or are severely overweight, contact your doctor before beginning a fitness programme.*

*\* If you are starting a fitness programme, remember to start slowly and gradually increase activity in a comfortable way.*

**ALCOHOL** The Christmas period usually brings lots of parties and celebrations, often tempting us to increase our alcohol intake. Alcohol in moderation should do us no harm. However, there are three general rules we should aim to maintain.

1. Stay below the safe upper limit which, according to the British Medical Association, remains at 14 units per week for women and 21 units per week for men (one unit equals one

glass of wine or spirits or half a pint of lager or cider).

2. Try and have at least two alcohol-free days a week to give the body a chance to purge.

3. Avoid binge drinking.

A fourth rule, which is particularly important over Christmas, is not to mix drinking and driving at any time or the consequences can be fatal.

**SMOKING** Smoking is the biggest cause of heart and lung disease. The social atmosphere associated with Christmas often encourages people to smoke more.

However, if you have ever thought about giving up, now is probably not the best time to do it. But it is a good time to mentally prepare yourself if, like thousands of other people, your New Year resolution is likely to be to quit.

**STRESS** For most people, Christmas is a time of joy and happiness, but for some it can be a time of intense sadness, sometimes heightened by a feeling of loneliness and/or isolation.

If you are feeling down around the Christmas period and would like someone to talk to, you can contact a member of the Occupational Health team by calling 01978 832122 (internal 740 2122). They can help or advise you and, if need be put you in touch with a counsellor.

The Samaritans also lend a good listening ear and are open 24 hours over the Christmas period. They can be contacted on 0345 909090.

**COLD** Christmas often brings with it intense cold. Fortunately, most of us who are fit and healthy are able to deal with this without it affecting our health.

However, elderly and infirm people are not quite so lucky and become more susceptible to hypothermia, which can kill.

If you know of someone - maybe a neighbour or friend who is elderly or living alone, spare a thought for them by keeping an eye open for any problems or signs of distress.

**If you would like any further help or advice on any of these topics (maybe help with a New Year resolution), or any other health concern, call Occupational Health on 01978 832122 (internal 740 2122).**

# TERRY IS TRIPLE TOPS

**A** Manweb North Wirral Golfing Society member turned on the style in memory of a former colleague.

Playing at Brackenwood, Bebington, in the Society's Captain's Day, Terry Kavanagh, a service co-ordinator at Prenton Depot, came out triple tops.

He not only won the Captain's prize and became the Society's champion with the highest year's average, but, more poignantly, won the Chris Wharton Trophy.

This trophy is in memory of Chris Wharton, a former Service Engineer at Prenton and, latterly, Service Co-ordinator in Liverpool, who died in January this year.

Chris was a former Captain of North Wirral Golfing Society. His death came as a great shock to all the members, many of whom suggested that a trophy be played for as a mark of respect.



*Terry Kavanagh is pictured (left) with the Chris Wharton Trophy and the Captain's Prize Cup, presented by Society Captain Alan James (right), watched by Society member John Foster and Paul Kelly, Treasurer.*

Winner Terry said: "I was thrilled to win this cup, especially with it being the first time it was played for. I used to work with Chris and he was a very good friend of mine."

Terry won the Stableford competition with 39 points. He notched up an annual average of 37 points.

The competition for the Chris Wharton Trophy will now become an annual event in the Society's golfing calendar, and next year will be played at Eaton, near Chester.

## Cruise to Amsterdam From only £49

**N**o other short break or travel experience captures the relaxation of cruising at sea.

On board your Scandinavian Seaways sleek white 'holidayliner' you will find comfort and a wide range of facilities.

There are bars and lounges with entertainment, the cinemas all show the latest blockbuster movies, and there's a choice of restaurants to dine in. You'll even find a duty free shop on board.

This offer includes two nights based on cabin accommodation. When you arrive in Holland, there's also a complimentary sightseeing tour of Amsterdam organised for you. There's a full day to enjoy in Amsterdam and you'll have plenty of time to explore and enjoy the sights on your own.

If you choose to go from 28 March through to 9 May 1998, you can combine a tour to see Holland's famous flower gardens. You can visit the Fransz Roozen nursery and the world famous Keukenhof Gardens. This option is available for a £10 supplement and still gives you the afternoon free to explore the sights in Amsterdam (**please specify your request to join the Bulbfields excursion at the time of booking by quoting reference V1484**).

Bon voyage for a great short break offer brought to you by Contact in association with Scandinavian Seaways.

**What's included:** The offer for the two-night cruisebreak is based on cabin accommodation and is based on the best available cabin at the time of booking. This is not valid for

DEPARTURE	OFFER PRICE FROM
January	£49
February	£59
March	£59
April	£79
May	£79
June	£79



single cabins or Commodore Class cabins. Also included in the price are two buffet breakfasts and a complimentary sightseeing tour on your arrival at Ijmuiden, which takes you into Amsterdam. Child discount (4-15 years) - £20.

Your cruisebreak departs from Newcastle (North Shields) to Amsterdam (Ijmuiden) in Holland on Tuesdays and Thursdays for 2 nights, and Saturdays for 3 nights until 17 May 1998. For further details on departures during the remainder of May and June, please contact Scandinavian Seaways (3 night cruisebreaks are not available during this period. Departure both ways is at 1800, arriving the next morning at 0900.

**Half Board 2 Night Cruisebreak Option - £25** (available for each night at sea on your cruisebreak). Sample the Smorgasbord experience - a superb array of hot and cold traditionally prepared dishes and eat as much as you wish.

**3 Night Cruisebreaks - £20 Supplement.** Travel out on the Saturday departure and make the most of your cruisebreak with two full days in Amsterdam and an extra night aboard ship in port (no facilities or entertainment is provided in port). Includes three breakfasts and complimentary sightseeing route. On Monday there is a special bus service to transfer you to/from Amsterdam city centre (18 Miles), costing approximately £3 per person each way, payable to the driver.

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND TO MAKE YOUR BOOKING, Tel. 0990-333-222, quoting the relevant booking code for your cruisebreak - 2 nights: V1462, 3 nights: V1463.**

Travel to/from Newcastle (North Shields) is not included. Scandinavian Seaways offer special rates on standard class return rail fares. Car parking is available at the quayside, payable locally. Ask for details when booking.

This offer is valid on selected departure dates only, all departures and cabins subject to availability. Cabin accommodation is based on the best available cabin at the time of booking (excluding single and Commodore class cabins). Couchette accommodation is not available on the 3 night cruisebreaks. This offer is not combinable with any other offer or discount published in the brochure or elsewhere and is only applicable on new bookings. The offer is subject to Scandinavian Seaways terms and conditions as printed in the 1997/98 Short Breaks brochure.