

# CONTACT

*Christmas* 1969





A  
Christmas  
Message  
from  
The Chairman



*Christmas 1969 sees us in the early stages of our programme of reorganisation. This process of streamlining and change is already being carried out, stage by stage according to plan, as far as our new Head Office is concerned and our Love Lane staff are settling into their new surroundings here at Sealand Road.*

*Early in 1970 the senior officers of our new Districts will take up their responsibilities and local reorganisation will proceed gradually thereafter in parallel with the integration of Head Office and Area work in the new building at Chester.*

*The outcome of these changes will be a more efficient and flexible MANWEB, re-shaped from the more complex structure which was set up to cope with the many problems which followed nationalisation in 1948. The new organisation will bring us into line with up-to-date methods of work, and will also enable us, in due course, to play an even more effective role in the economic life of the Area we serve.*

*It is customary, in a message of this kind, to offer the thanks of the Board to the staff for the work they have done during the past year. On this occasion I would like to add a special word of appreciation to the many people who have pulled out something extra to help us solve the problems inherent in the transitional stages of our reorganisation.*

*This response is fully in accord with our tradition of maintaining supply, regardless of circumstances. I am sure that this spirit will continue to prevail.*

*Finally, on behalf of the Board, I would like to extend to you and to your families sincere Greetings for Christmas, and for the coming year.*

*Denis Jones.*





THE STAFF MAGAZINE OF THE MERSEYSIDE  
AND NORTH WALES ELECTRICITY BOARD

# CONTACT

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**"Due to our move to the new Head Office at Chester, we have had to produce this smaller-than-usual Christmas issue. There is still plenty in it however and we hope you enjoy reading it."**



*A Happy Christmas to  
all our readers from*

The Editorial Staff  
Keith Baldwin  
John F. Perry  
Sam Doughty

## EDITORIAL

### *End of a Chapter*

FOR MORE than 21 years the fortunes of electricity distribution in Merseyside and North Wales have been guided from Love Lane in Liverpool. MANWEB's Head Office was, perhaps, a somewhat modest affair for the nerve-centre of one of the biggest businesses in the Area. Visitors from far afield, piloting their cars, or sitting in taxis, or even foot-slogging through the jungle of warehouses and enormous sugar wagons surrounding Love Lane have often been known to express their feelings over the location of the building in the most forceful terms!

Today the great trek to Sealand Road is well under way, and this is the first number of *Contact* to be published from our striking new Administrative Centre. The lines of communication to our outlying formations already radiate from our new home at Chester.

For many long-serving members of Head Office staff, who have seen MANWEB grow from comparatively modest beginnings to the commercial and industrial giant which it is today, the move will be met with mixed feelings and nostalgia. Love Lane has been MANWEB's Headquarters through many a crisis, many a time of difficulty, and many a peak of triumph and achievement.

These mixed feelings will doubtless be shared by many colleagues from Area offices who, in their turn, have known trials and triumphs of their own.

As we move our sphere of operation to Chester, those of us involved in this first major move in the MANWEB re-organisation can do so in high spirits, fortified by the knowledge that our new Administrative Centre represents the very last word in office design and construction and is most admirably suited to help us fulfil our role as the most essential industry in our Area. Despite the temporary difficulties and upheavals inevitably associated with the re-organisation of a major undertaking, we can face the future in the knowledge that the prospects for electricity supply were never brighter, and that our role in the commercial, industrial, agricultural and domestic life of Merseyside and North Wales has never been more vital and challenging!

# BRIGHTEN YOUR HOME WITH CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

BY MRS. SHIELA PIMBLETT

**C**HRISTMAS is traditionally a time for decorating the home, and though it is a simple matter these days to buy your decorations "ready made", there is not the same satisfaction in bought decorations as there is in those you have made yourself. By employing various materials, both natural and artificial, Christmas decorations can range from a fairly simple arrangement to something much more elaborate.

Although some knowledge of floristry is helpful in making Christmas decorations, very pleasing effects can be obtained with quite simple materials. Plain green leaves can be given a sparkle by brushing them lightly with clear varnish, and then shaking them in glitter. It is a good idea to put the glitter in a paper bag, drop the leaves in one at a time, and shake them gently so that the glitter will adhere to the varnish. Surplus glitter can be shaken off into the bag when removing the leaves, thus saving spillage and waste.

Twigs, leaves and fir cones can also be given a frosty look, by brushing them with a very thin

solution of Polyfilla, and then sprinkling them with glitter. Mix the Polyfilla to a "milky" consistency, brush it on lightly, and while it is still wet, sprinkle on the glitter which will set as the Polyfilla dries. Have a jam jar handy to stand the twigs in as you paint them, and then they can be left undisturbed to dry.

Red and green are, of course, the traditional Christmas-colours, but many lovely effects can be obtained using other colour schemes. However, consideration should be given to the background against which your decoration has to stand. A white and silver arrangement can look most effective against a background of dark wood or rich coloured curtains, but would be lost if placed against a pale coloured wall.

## Welcome to Visitors

Decorations need not be confined to the inside of the house, and if your front door is protected by a porch, a Christmas star decorated with evergreens, plus the addition of some glittering baubles and brightly coloured ribbon will provide a welcome to your visitors over the festive season.

**Candles are, of course, another traditional part of Christmas, but care should be taken in using them, particularly if they are to be lit. Evergreens dry out very quickly in a warm atmosphere and the flame from a lighted candle will soon set them ablaze.**

Christmas decorations are usually required to last for about a week or two, so it is a good idea to make them stable enough to be moved easily, when dusting furniture. Polystyrene tiles make a good base for Christmas arrangements. They can be bought very cheaply at most decorators'

**SHIELA**—a former *Contact* Correspondent, the author of this article, Mrs. Shiela Pimblett works as a clerk in the Registry Department in our Southport District Office. She has been with the Board for the past 13 years.

Shiela is married and has a daughter Bridget who is studying at Exeter University.

*Our picture here shows the decoration described in the article.* ▶

**OUR COVER PICTURE** shows one of Shiela's colourful set pieces. Opposite are some more examples of the beautiful arrangements which can be made up.



merchants and can be easily cut (with a sharp knife or scissors) into many different shapes. Another attractive type of base can be made by covering a piece of hardboard or plywood with kitchen foil.

#### Using a log base

If you are able to obtain a small log, this can be made to look most effective, when decorated with a candle and some evergreen. These logs make a useful decoration for a mantelpiece, as they are narrow, and do not take up a lot of room. Polyfilla is a good fixative for holding the arrangement together, but needs to be mixed to a very stiff consistency. Do not be tempted to buy the tubes of ready-mixed Polyfilla, as this is far too soft, and your arrangement will collapse on you before the Polyfilla sets.

Although it is a good idea to plan your decorations well in advance, and collect material, such as fir cones and suitably shaped twigs, whenever you can, it is possible to make quite an attractive arrangement with a small amount of material which is readily available at this time of the year. (See illustration on page 272.)

You will need a polystyrene tile for a base. (One foot square is a good size, but it can be cut to whatever size or shape you require.) Three or four twigs; a few sprigs of holly and evergreen, and some fir cones or glass baubles. Begin by "frosting" the twigs with thin Polyfilla and glitter as mentioned previously, and put them on one side to dry. Now mix a very stiff solution of Polyfilla and water, to hold your arrangement firmly. You will need a piece about the size of a large egg. Place it in position on the tile and then push in the twigs to form the background. (You will need to work fairly quickly, so that the Polyfilla does not set before you have finished.) Insert some pieces of evergreen (holly or fir) in front of the twigs to give shape to your design, and then fill in the centre with fir cones, which have been "frosted" like the twigs. Additional sparkle can be given by adding some glass baubles, and a little figure, such as a robin, at the side, will add interest to the arrangement.

These suggestions will perhaps give you some ideas for Christmas decorations, and although this is a season for fantasy, we should perhaps try and retain something of the traditional idea of Christmas in our decorations.

**If this feature has come a little too late for you to do anything spectacular this year, then may we suggest that you keep it until next year so that you will be well prepared.**



# The Merger

by 'BYSTANDER'

"Young men's dreams are sleep-clouded  
Visions come later in life"

It's probably something to do with the lunch-time cheese, but whether it was a dream or a vision there he was, leaning on the gate, a foot on the bottom slat and puffing away at his pipe. His head moved slowly up and down in an odd sort of way and he was obviously contemplating very deeply.

It happened that a member of the staff strolled past, as he often did at that time of day. He was a bright and happy chap without a care in the world and he whistled softly as he kicked an old tin, which bore a striking resemblance to his boss's head. Something interrupted him and he looked around apprehensively; it was then that he saw this fellow leaning on the gate looking at him and pointing with the stem of his pipe in the opposite direction.

The subsequent conversation was not easy to follow and may have lost or gained a little in the telling, but it went something like this (*the sorrowful man with the pipe first*):

"What are we looking at, guv'nor?"

"Well you see that pile over there?"

It's a building, that's what it is, sir,  
That's why the people stare.

"It's built to house a thousand,  
They're coming from far and wide;  
But little we'll care for the squeezing  
As long as we all get inside."

The topmost brick the dark clouds meet,  
The field where hare was stalked  
Groans with paper full knee-deep,  
So that man waded as they walked.

The Thing in the temple is not afraid,  
But man, counting on his fingers, cries.  
Thus mechanical gods are made  
And who fails to make them, dies.

"What are we looking at guv'nor?"

"You see that group over there?"

They're District that's what they are, sir,  
Note the ageing lines of care.

"There are good ones and bad ones among them,  
But two things in common they know;  
The critical path to the cost code,  
The way to the great cash flow.

"We can't keep pace with the postings,  
The next group is really elite;  
They're definitely Head Office material,  
You'll notice two hands and two feet.

"The Board in their wisdom know best, sir,  
The customers cannot be moved yet;  
Ideally they'd all be in Chester,  
(*With the Head Office, say, in Tibet?*)"

"What are we looking at guv'nor?"

Why do you so enthuse?

Is it right that your new computer

Can't change a simple fuse?

"The changing wind from the north blows keen;  
It nips men to the bone:  
No warm relief from the judgement seat, e'en  
The law is written on stone."

"Old man, we're weary of your dole;  
The wind you fear will winnow  
The proper worth from every soul,  
The big man from the minnow.

"Tell me the story of the merger  
And in not so many years  
The architect's name will be buried"  
"With the people's present fears?"

"Old man! don't be so downhearted;  
Things could be very much worse;  
Cheer up! and always remember  
The lines of the next frightful verse.

"Reject the sorrowful pessimist!  
Away with temerity!  
Scorn the smooth tongued alchemist!  
Have done with sciamachy!"

The chap at the gate straightened his back and threw his pipe towards the building, "Don't use those big words at me, young man", he shouted.

\* \* \*

The happy chap on the Staff, whose grandfather could remember the day when the merger was first mentioned, was very cold. The first snow of Christmas had fallen and the lights, twinkling through hundreds of windows, gave the building a warmth which the young man did not feel. He had walked round and round the building but could not find an entrance and was becoming tired but not dispirited, for that was against his nature, when . . . "Oi!" He peered into the darkness made by the light shining in his eyes. "Hello!" he said to the shadow in front of him. "What are you going to do with that wand?"

"I am the spirit of evolution" replied the shadow.  
"With this wand I can open or close all doors.  
Where do you want to go?"

The young man's knees shook and the pallor of his cheeks was not due entirely to the artificial light.

"I would make a good Chairman" he said, quite humbly. "But nobody seems to have twigged it yet".

"You're too old" said the shadow, "what next?"

"You are very kind" said the young man, wincing, "I'd like to be a little Chief".

"You're too young" smiled the shadow, "keep asking".

The young man was now so happy and contented that he had torn out his hair by the handful but before he could speak the shadow hit him smartly on the head with his wand. "You've not answered the questions properly" he said. "Go to the end of the queue".

The young man peered into the darkness made darker by his unseeing eyes. He heard the raucous shouts of those inside the building and listened to the mournful pleading of the long lines of people seeking news of their destinations. He heard a politician raise a plaintive voice on behalf of his Constituents and caught the echo of the great negotiating machinery as it whirled and

flailed the mellifluous words tossed into it.

He reached the gate and found the old man still there.

"A Merry Christmas!" said the old one.

"Thank you, sir. Thank you very much" and the young man smiled for he saw that the old man looked happy and had stopped grumbling. "A Merry Christmas to you!"

And the people standing by smiled and some started to laugh and, quite suddenly, it did not seem so cold.

Cries of "Merry Christmas!" rang out from every side and the chap with the wand shouted "10% rise for everyone!"

*Some claim that this is a true story but others say it was but a dream—especially the bit about 10% for everyone.*



## CARTOONS

by Vic Hooson

(Mold Office)

and F. Illingworth

(Southport District)

"Or . . . a hundredweight of bricks in the oven converts it into a storage radiator!"

A telephone operator was asked to get a call to Ulverston.

"Ulverston?" she queried, "is that with a 'U' for onion?"

Then there was the dolly who thought that Polyfilla was used for stuffing parrots.

A driving instructor said that the turn of the century was made by a woman driver.

Then there was the dog who played poker, but wasn't very good because every time he got a good hand his tail started to wag.



# Seasonal Ideas

from some members  
of our sales demonstration  
staff

This year, Christmas gives us a four-day feasting period and to help the ladies "ring-the-changes" from the traditional turkey and plum pudding, our Mrs. Muriel Edwina Jones, sales demonstrator at Northwich District offers this change of menu.

## **Appetisers:**

Two-inch portions of well cleaned celery sticks filled with cream cheese. Garnish with paprika or finely chopped parsley.

## **Carrot Vichyssoise Soup: (using liquidiser)**

**Ingredients:** 3 potatoes sliced; 4 carrots sliced; 2 leeks sliced; 1 ham bone; 2 pts. chicken stock (*cubes can be used*); 1 teaspoon sugar; salt and pepper; A little cream (*top of milk will do*) and a raw carrot cut into fine curls (*with potato peeler*).

**Method:** Cook vegetables and ham bone in stock until tender. Pour into liquidiser to make puree. Season to taste with sugar, salt and pepper. Heat through. Do not boil. Blend in cream or top of milk. Garnish with curls of raw carrot.

## **Lamb Curry and Pilaff:**

**Ingredients:** 1 lb. lamb cut into 2-in. cubes (*can be left-over cold meat*); 2 tablespoons corn or olive oil; 2 spanish onions, chopped; 2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped; 1 carton plain yogourt; 1 tablespoon curry powder; 1 level tablespoon ginger and turmeric;  $\frac{1}{4}$  level teaspoon paprika and cayenne pepper; 1 tablespoon flour; salt and freshly ground black pepper.

**Method:** Heat butter and oil in a heatproof casserole, add chopped onions and garlic and saute until vegetables are transparent. Remove vegetables and reserve.

Add meat to casserole and brown on all sides, return the vegetables (*onion and garlic*). Add yogourt, stir in spices and flour and season to taste. Simmer until tender—about 40 minutes. If desired, thin with a little stock before serving. Pile in centre of rice.

## **Basic Pilaff:**

**Ingredients:**  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb. long grain rice;  $\frac{1}{2}$  spanish onion, finely chopped; 2 oz. butter;  $\frac{3}{4}$  pt. well flavoured stock, preferably white; thyme, salt and freshly ground black pepper.

**Method:** Wash rice, drain and dry with a cloth. Saute finely chopped onion in butter until a light golden colour. Add rice and continue to



Mrs. Jones hard at work trying out a tasty dish.

cook stirring continuously until it begins to take on colour, then pour in hot stock and season to taste with thyme, salt and pepper. Put into casserole dish and cover. Cook at 350° until the liquid has been absorbed and rice is cooked but is not mushy. (Serves 4 to 6.)

(Saute—To cook lightly in butter or oil).

## **Cream Cheese Pears: (using electric mixer and liquidiser)**

**Ingredients:** Cream cheese; pears either fresh or tinned; cucumber; lettuce leaves, small; pinch powdered ginger; pieces of preserved ginger; cherries, angelica; shredded almonds or crystallised violets; if fresh ripe pears, use a few green grapes; lemon juice, colouring.

To make Cream Cheese—**Ingredients:**  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. cheshire cheese; 1 yolk of egg; 2 oz. melted butter; seasoning; cayenne pepper and a pinch of mustard.

**Method:** Finely grate cheese into bowl, add all seasonings and other ingredients. Cream with beater until fine and smooth. Taste to get right flavour.

Poach pears or drain juice from tinned or prepare ripe pear halves and leave in slightly salted water to preserve colour. Blend finely chopped preserved ginger into cream cheese. It may be *delicately* coloured green. Pile into prepared pears, decorate with pieces of cherry and angelica or crystallised violets. Serve in shallow dishes lined with fine slices of cucumber or lettuce leaves.

Following the Christmas dinner, there may be some of the pudding left over. It is well to have this idea in mind to use up, in a tasty way, any left-overs. We thank Mrs Joan Mary Dittrich, our sales demonstrator in the Conway Valley District for this suggestion.

To re-serve Christmas Pudding is an uninteresting task, but you may like to try the following method that I have used successfully for a number of years.

When making the Brandy Sauce on Christmas Day, make an extra half pint and store in a covered container in the refrigerator. This will keep safely for two days.

Remove sauce from refrigerator, reduce thickness by adding half a cup of milk and whisk with an electric hand whisk. Put half into a suitable dish (*I use a souffle dish*). Place sliced pieces of cold Christmas Pudding in the sauce and cover with remaining sauce. Cover dish with aluminium



Mrs. Dittrich stirring things up!

foil, stand in a tin with an inch of water and place on the floor of oven to reheat— $\frac{3}{4}$  hour to 1 hour. This is a very "good tempered" dish, the oven can be slow or hot depending on what else may be cooking.

To serve, remove from oven, remove foil and all is ready. For real extravagance two or three teaspoons of brandy may be poured over and left for two minutes before serving.

The great advantage with this method is the ease and simplicity plus the fact that not too many dishes are used and best of all no pan to wash—what a treat on Boxing Day!

And finally, our trainee sales demonstrator from the Liverpool South District Miss Alma Fleming, comes up with a very good thought . . . for the ladies as well as the gentlemen who wish to please.

*"Christmas comes but once a year, but when it does it brings good cheer."*



Miss Alma Fleming.

**Ladies!** You may be pleased that Christmas only comes but once a year, for I know that many of you spend hours in preparation and cooking to make sure that your family is kept happy and well fed. As Christmas Day arrives you may realise that you haven't been able to spend much time on yourself.

How nice it would be to have a break for a good hairdo.

Well **Gentlemen**—this is where you come in. This year, why not surprise her with a gift of a set of electrically-heated hair curlers?

These can be bought for under £6 (*retail*) and are extremely easy to use. They are very quick and efficient too!

Dry or damp hair is simply wound round the heated rollers and left for about eight minutes, then they can be removed and the hair combed into a really professional style. For the husbands—these curlers mean a great reduction in the little lady's hairdressing bills and for the bachelors—no more broken dates because of home hairdressing!

So, don't forget chaps—hair curlers for the girls this Christmas . . . as an *extra* present of course!

# alley of the Shadows

by Charles Utley  
(HEAD OFFICE COMMERCIAL DEPT.)

THEY WERE singing in harmony, well, not exactly singing, but humming a confident and cheeky theme which they couldn't get out of their heads. His old car grumbled and heaved heavily on the sleek, cambered tarmac, her whole body still tingled from the cold swim they had taken that afternoon. She glanced casually at his bare arms, brown and goose-pimpled. "Sun-tanned in March . . . !" said her sub-conscious, ". . . but then he is dark-skinned".

Overhead the clear sky was darkening by the mysterious process of twilight. She stopped humming and thought about twilight. It was a texture more than anything, like an incredibly fine colour print consisting of billions and billions of tiny specks of light, all shifting around, while gradually, and at random, they flicked off, one-by-one into darkness . . . until . . .

She noticed the bare trees, now black details against the sky. Already the brightest stars were out, even as the last rays of sun flamed over the Welsh mountains.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Oh, nothing, it's just a perfect moment, that's all". she replied, casually.

"Oh . . ." he nodded, pretending to understand. "Look, it's too early to go home yet, what if we pull off the road for a while, and talk?"

". . . or something".

About a mile further on he turned the car into a narrow, twisting lane. When they had gone far enough he parked in the gateway of a field and switched the engine off. They sat for a moment, listening to the movement of water in the bores, and the click of hot metal. He moved closer to her, she was a picture of love.

"I do love you, my darling, you do know that, don't you?"

"Mmmm." She assured, pulling him to her.

\* \* \* \*

Eventually they noticed that it had gone cold and damp. He wiped the misted windscreen with the back of his fingers, she straightened herself and hummed their little tune, very softly.

"Shall we go now?" he asked.

"Yes, we better had".

"Well, we might as well carry on down this lane, it's bound to come back on the main road before long".

It was quite dark now, he turned the headlamps on and pressed the starter. The engine turned sluggishly, fired, and he reminded himself yet again to see to the battery . . . tomorrow. The lane twisted and turned between high hedges for about a mile, and gradually began to descend. They had not gone much farther when there was a sharp crack under the bonnet and the ignition light flickered on.

"Oh no!" he said.

"What's that?"

"Fanbelt's gone."

"What does that mean?"

"We'll have to get another or the battery goes dead and the radiator boils".

"Oh, I hope we find a garage soon then, how far can we go?"

"Don't know, but it can't be too long because the battery's almost on its last legs, and I've got to use the headlamps or we'll be in a ditch".

"Can we turn back?"

"I don't think so, I can't turn her round because the road's too narrow and I couldn't see to reverse—we'll have to press on. Don't worry, it's all right yet.

The road went down and down. Again and again they swallowed to clear the pressure from their ears, and the road twisted down and down.

"How much further can we keep going down?" she asked five minutes later, "we must be going to the centre of the Earth. Can you turn the engine off?"

"I can't, the brakes aren't very good on these steep twists. It's all right, look out for a light . . . a house".

"I've not seen one all the way".

The headlamps became dim and yellow, the engine ran weakly, and the road went down and down, between the tall, narrow hedges.

"Oh God, where is this place!" he cried in panic, chill shivers playing up and down his spine. "The end of the world it is!"

She felt sick and cold without his assurances. Suddenly they

were nearly thrown through the windscreen as the car lurched into a deep, unseen pothole. The engine faltered, picked up, then stopped dead. The headlamps were as dim as candles. He tried the starter, but it would not turn the engine, clicking helplessly.

"Well, that's it," he said. "Look, you stay here in the warm, and I'll walk on 'till I find a house".

"Oh no, I'm not staying here alone, I'm coming with you," she said firmly.

"Have you got a torch or anything?" he asked.

"No, have you?"

"Not even a box of matches!"

"Come on then," she said, "we can't stay here all night".

They stepped out of the car. Directly the air took their breath away, being icy cold and dank. All around unseen water trickled and plopped. They met in front of the glowing headlamps, and spontaneously gripped each other's hand. Outside the dim circle of light it was unnaturally dark. She looked up but there were no familiar stars. It was as if a cold, black blanket had been drawn above them. He held his free hand out before him, feeling for obstacles, and led the way, like a blind man.

"We haven't gone . . . blind . . . have we?" she asked, looking over her shoulder, and relieved to see the car's headlights still glimmering in the distance. "It's just this awful darkness, I've never known it so black!"

Neither had he. Oh, perhaps in the safety of his bed in the depth of a long winter's night—but this was something else.

"We must be in a deep valley, with steep sides covered in trees. Don't worry, our eyes will get used to it in a minute, I think I can just make you out".

*The road went down, still down, their faltering footsteps leading them into the unknown, their eyes straining for the hope*

*of light. Suddenly something caught him full in the stomach. The world seemed to light up for a split second before demoralising pain and blackness swept over him, and he slumped, gasping over the protruding rock.*

"Oh my God . . . are you all right?" she cried, holding him as he fought for his breath.

"Just a minute . . . oooh . . . that's better . . . yes. This is ridiculous!"

"Let's go back, someone might come along", she suggested.

"All right, if we don't find anything in the next five minutes, we'll turn back and wait in the car".

Stumbling gingerly on, heading left, measuring each step, and not really expecting to find help now. The road went down, down into the deepest shadows of all.

\* \* \* \*

It was all over in a flash. She felt something cold and wet slap her face. She screamed in absolute terror, again and again as she lost the grip of his hand. Amidst her screams there was another noise, a slithering slapping sound and his call of terror, then silence but for the tumbling of pebbles somewhere nearby. She called and called his name, but only her voice came back, echoing through the empty blackness. She cradled her head in anguish. One hand was icily

cold, the other still warm from his grasp. Then she turned and ran, ran madly through the darkness, colliding with rocks and hedgerows, stumbling, not caring, until the road began to climb, until she saw the light, the cottage. She fell bodily against the door, and hammered her fists on the gnarled wood, until a wrinkled old woman came to open it, her eyes wide with terror. She fell inside, bleeding, bruised, and tattered. What was wrong with the woman, couldn't she understand, she shook her head at each frantic plea for help as if she were a mute. The old woman sat in a chair and wound up a clockwork thrush which warbled a tune . . . it was the same tune . . . their tune. She wept her soul out, and the old woman sat rocking in her chair, shaking her head, pointing to her toy. And the bird sang on.

They found him next morning, brought his body up from the bottom of the lake in the disused quarry. The Sergeant turned his back from the sheer, hewn precipice and gestured to a tree with a broken, hanging branch.

"Must've been this the girl felt—most probably saved her life".

"Aye", replied the farmer, "but what in God's Name was they doin' down here anyways?"

"They were lost, the girl says, wandered off the road . . . could happen to anyone!"



# 'CONTACT' PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION \* PRIZEWINNERS

**T**HIS YEAR'S entry for our Photographic Competition was a little lower than those received last year, but the overall standard was much higher. In the colour section, as was to be expected, most of the entries were transparencies with only a handful of colour prints being submitted. Scenes took the major portion and they were so good that the judges awarded a consolation prize in this section to Mr. N. R. Evans, a street lighting attendant from our Wrexham District.

The section devoted to humour only attracted 13 entries and in view of this the judges only awarded a First Prize.

The Black and White prints showed an entry equal to last year's but again the general standard had improved. The judges had a difficult job to find the winning pictures and again they felt obliged to award a consolation prize.

Mr. J. D. Ashworth, an electrician from our Southport District, swept the board this year to win two prizes . . . First in the Humour Section and Second in the Scenes.

The judges were Mr. A. S. Day, a Liverpool photographer and Mr. W. Griffiths, an assistant in the Head Office photographic section.



**1st  
Prize**  
||  
**Colour  
Section  
(Scenes)**

**"Rock  
Pool  
Scene"**

Submitted by  
Mr. W. Chirgwin  
(assistant  
storekeeper)  
Head Office  
Warehouse,  
Queensferry.



**COLOUR SECTION**

**2nd Prize (Scenes) ▲**  
**“Fell Country”**

**1st Prize (Humour) ▼**  
**“We can't find the soap!”**

Both pictures submitted by Mr. J. D. Ashworth (electrician), Southport District.





**BLACK and WHITE PRINTS (Portrait)**

**1st PRIZE**

**"Copper"**

Submitted by Mr. W. G. D. Hood (Senior Assistant Engineer), Head Office

**BLACK and WHITE  
PRINTS (General)**

**1st PRIZE**



**“ Built to last ”**

Submitted by  
Mr. D. B. Armstrong  
(apprentice electrician)  
North Wirral District.



**BLACK and WHITE  
PRINTS (General)**

**← Consolation Prize**

Awarded to  
Mr. T. E. Williams  
(former labourer)  
Caernarvon District

for his picture

**“ I love the snow ”**



## Thoughts on a Stable

by

Muriel Edwina Jones

To lofty minded people here,  
A smile perhaps or just a sneer,  
At thoughts becoming so profound  
To make a stable, Holy Ground.  
No mitred Bishop with jewelled crook  
Would on this humble shelter look  
Or modern wife be satisfied  
That this should for her babe provide.  
Yet every time I look within  
I think again of that small Inn  
Where Joseph took his honoured Bride  
Above all women sanctified  
The stable only offered them  
For bringing forth the 'Light of Men'.  
With cattle lowing in the hay  
'Tis here He saw the light of day.  
With Shepherds reverent about  
And Joseph loving and devout.  
The Infant wrapped in warm lambskin  
The star looked down to 'Peace' within.  
The soiled earth was covered o'er  
With virgin snow, her mantle pure  
The stable cannot be despised  
For once it was deified.  
Upon this night of happiness,  
Sweet Mary drank the cup of bliss.

## WHO'S WHO AMONG THE MANWEB PERSONALITIES

### The Engineer . . .

He stands with legs set firm his beery gaze  
Fixed on the plan where something's gone  
astray,  
And in a strident voice he bellows forth,  
"What stupid \*\*\*\*\* did the job this way?"

### The Office Boy . . .

He sits amid the mail almost asleep,  
He only wakes to eat and drink his tea,  
And in his sleepy droning voice exclaims,  
"Why do they always put the blame on me?"

### The Typist . . .

She sits with hands upraised, her pencilled eyes  
Fixed on the letter she's about to type,  
And says in mournful voice with anxious mien,  
"I wonder who thought up all *this* tripe?"

### Guess Who . . .

He sits in splendid isolation in his room,  
His features now with worry are quite tense,  
He murmurs as he reads the pile of mail,  
"Are *all* my staff bereft of common-sense?"

*We would like to thank Mr. Alec. Cassie of Area 1 engineering clerical section for these lines sent expressly for our Christmas issue. We know he doesn't mean a word of what he writes! He loves all engineers, typists, office boys and 'you know who'—Ed.*

## EUROPEAN EXPERTS SEE MANWEB'S NEW BUILDING

Space-heating experts from leading European electricity authorities visited our new Head Office at Chester recently to examine the unique "heat-reclaim" system of air-conditioning and heating which is incorporated in the new building. The visitors were members of an International Electricity Space Heating Working Party.

Pictured on the roof of the new offices are, from left to right: Messrs. Jean Dubois (France), L. Shepherd (Britain), L. J. J. Boer (Holland), W. Locher (Switzerland), Leon Gillain (Belgium), G. Calvi (Italy), Roland Wolf (France), Rolf Gradin (Sweden), Fernando Lamas (Portugal), S. Falk-Jorgensen (Norway), K. Strauss (interpreter), with Messrs. F. Morgan, A. Addison and D. St. C. Barrie of MANWEB.



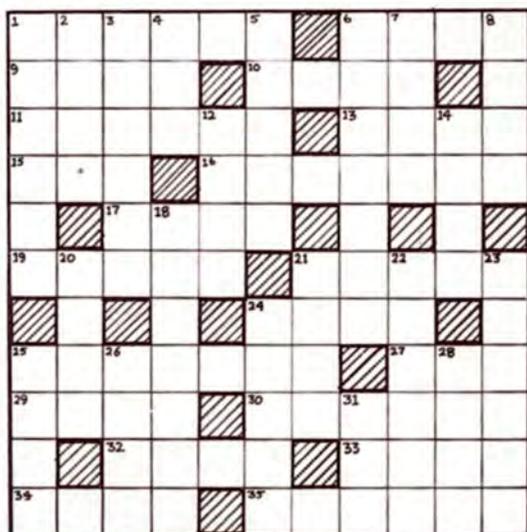
# Christmas Prize Crossword

Once again we are indebted to our old friend **Mr. William (Bill) Pickett**, a retired member of our Pumpfields (Area 1) staff, for this Christmas Crossword puzzle.

We offer prizes of a guinea each to the senders of the first three all-correct solutions opened on January 10th, 1970.

Send your entries, on plain paper if your wish, to *The Editor, Contact, MANWEB Head Office, Sealand Road, Chester, CHI 4LR*. Don't forget to add your own name and address (office or home).

The competition is restricted to MANWEB employees, pensioners and their families.



## Clues Across

1. Graduation of colour (6).
6. — of Man (4).
- 9 and 10. Romantic thoroughfare? (4, 4).
11. A locality we hear for a quiet stroll (6).
13. Vascular cryptogram (4).
15. He might understand (3).
16. American herbaceous plant (7).
17. Billy? (4).
19. If steep they could be pests (5).
21. Step on it (5).
24. I across often do (4).
25. They were reputed to contain fun in the last war (7).
27. There is a strong feeling to bring it back (3).
29. Hatton Garden is in one (4).
30. View (6).
32. Women cannot join this party (4).
33. She is not a sleeping princess (4).
34. A small item (4).
35. A kind of Post Office worker (6).

## Clues Down

1. Abates (6).
2. Sussex town (4).
3. Vindicate (6).
4. Every garden has one (3).
5. The French inset (5).
6. Introduced (7).
7. It's observed with ease in two directions (4).
8. A neat mountain (4).
12. A Java tree (4).
14. Rio . . . Heyworth! (4).
18. Perform in the theatre (7).
20. Weep for the rent (4).
21. You can if you are a friend of the sentry (4).
22. Modest, but a pointless decline (6).
23. Opposed to former (6).
24. Standards (5).
25. It will sooth a crazy lamb! (4).
26. You could have one on a billiard table (4).
28. Pimples (4).
31. Equal (3).

Convert "A" to "B"  
by moving 3 dots only.  
(Solution next month)

"A"

"B"

## AN APPEAL

A letter from Mr. R. N. Pegg, former Manager of Area 4, writes to tell us that he is enjoying a most active retirement. Mr. Pegg, a well-known and respected figure in our industry, asks to be remembered to his many friends and former colleagues.

One of his main interests at the moment is the Leonard Cheshire Home at Dolywern, not far from Mr. Pegg's home at Glynceiriog, near Llangollen.

The Dolywern Cheshire Home, which cares for invalid and incapacitated people, is at present undergoing extension, with the object of getting all the residents on the ground floor to give them greater freedom of movement and reduce fire hazards. Total cost of this work is about £25,000, of which about £18,000 has already been raised, leaving £7,000 to be raised in the coming year.

Mr. Pegg, who is Chairman of the Management Committee of the Dolywern Home, would be pleased to hear from well-wishers. His address is Lantern Cottage, Glynceiriog, near Llangollen.

## Back to Work

A disastrous fire on Liverpool's Kirkby Trading estate a few weeks ago gutted half a factory and the electricity supply had to be disconnected.

Men from our Contracting Department at Marsh Lane went out to help and they were able to restore supply to the machine shop within 48 hours.

## OBITUARY

### Mr. H. G. LLOYD

We regret to report the death of Mr. Hugh Granville Lloyd, aged 72. Mr. Lloyd, a former cashier in our Area 3 Accounts, retired in 1962. For many years he worked in our Chester Shop.

He was actively interested in Parish Council and Church affairs in Farndon. He leaves a widow and a son.

### Mr. H. T. McBRIDE

It was a shock to many members of the staff to hear of the death of Mr. Hector T. McBride, the former District Senior Clerk at Crewe.

Mr. McBride joined the Crewe Corporation in 1926 after a few years with the railway company. During the last war he served as a sergeant with the R.A.S.C.

During his time with MANWEB, Mr. McBride was Secretary to the L.A.C. and Works Committees. He retired in May last year.

### Mr. H. A. McLEAN

Many members of the MANWEB staff will mourn the passing of Mr. Hector A. McLean (Mac) the former Area 3 Welfare Officer.

Mac who was 69, retired in 1965 after a very active career. He was a member of the National Joint Council and on many occasions was Chairman of the District Joint Council.

### Mr. I. P. WILLIAMS

It is with deep regret that we record the death of Mr. Ifan Pierce Williams, aged 42, following an illness which had incapacitated him since early June.

Formerly the Senior Assistant Engineer—Operation, for Area

4, and recently designated as the District Engineer for the new Clwyd District, "I.P.", was very well-known and a most popular member of the staff.

He was a Graduate of the University College of North Wales where he obtained a B.Sc. Degree in Electrical Engineering. He joined the Board in 1950 and has worked at Warrington, Wrexham, Head Office, Sandiway and Rhosyllen.

He also spent a short time with the South Wales Electricity Board.

We offer our sincere condolences to his wife Margaret and his two sons, Osian and Gethin.

## From Contact's Mailbag

Telephone Office,  
Hatton Garden,  
Liverpool

Dear Editor,

With reference to an article in the October '69 *Contact*, under the heading "Bread and Milk" (page 230) . . .

We read with surprise that the substation attendant at Kirkby Grid contacts the Engineer. This statement is wrong.

On receiving the alarm message from Kirkby Grid, it is the Hatton Garden telephone operator's job to inform the Engineer in question by 'phone . . . the VHF radio is at Hatton Garden, and is solely controlled from here by the telephone operators. There is no VHF at Kirkby Grid substation.

L. J. Murphy (on behalf of the telephone staff).

## STORK VISIT

Congratulations to Mr. Charles Utley, a marketing assistant in the Head Office Commercial Department, and Mrs. Utley on the birth of a son.



## Two Great New Offers from MANWEB

### ★ Full house central heating package deals

4 Heater Installation – 2 Mexico Superheat and 2 Florida Starheat heaters plus a timeswitch for the customers own immersion heater. Usual price £153, **Manweb price £143.**

6 Heater Installation – 4 Mexico Superheat and 2 Florida Starheat heaters plus a timeswitch for the customers own immersion heater. Usual price £227, **Manweb price £212.**

### ★ No deposit, 5-years-to-pay terms

An 'easy payment plan' offers a personal loan for one to five years with no deposit and an interest rate of 7½%, probably the lowest in the Board's area.

Aiming to expand the sales of storage heaters to the younger customer, the upper and middle class home and in the larger capacity installation market, MANWEB have now launched two great packaged deals plus a personal loan scheme for our customers.

Both the package deals include a timeswitch for the customers own immersion heater so that they can take advantage of the cheap night rate electricity offered with the new White Meter Tariff – most homes in the MANWEB area already have immersion heaters.



The two heater package deals, which are still available, of the past years have led to electricity dominating the smaller installation market – less than 28,000 B.T.U.'s capacity. With these new offers backed up by press advertising, direct mailing, point of sale displays in all our shops, a splendid colour leaflet and an offers leaflet, we anticipate an upsurge in our share of the larger installation market.

**THE LOW-COST, HIGH EFFICIENCY CENTRAL HEATING SYSTEM**  
**Cheapest to buy and really cheap to run.**



## **"Nocturnal Linesman"**

An original scraperboard drawing submitted by Mr. S. Jones of our Legacy Stores

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