

Merseyside and North Wales
Electricity Board

Editorial Office: Room 5S1
Head Office, Sealand Road,
Chester CH1 4LR
Tel: Chester (0244) 377111
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A TRIP TO GAY PAREE!



TWO nights in Paris for two people is the top prize in a new promotion scheme, unique in MANWEB, with points awarded to Load Development staff for their efforts in gaining extra sales of storage heaters, water heating controllers and Quartzray radiant heaters.

Chief Commercial Officer Peter Hopkins, introducing "The Challenge", writes: "The last three years have seen a noticeable increase in the sales of storage heaters—a fine achievement, because it was attained in spite of difficult economic conditions."

He urges greater sales concentrated on the first three months of 1986—"with rewards for success in a way never before considered by MANWEB".

The campaign, involving all Load Development staff, has two main objectives. The first is to increase heating sales during the coldest months of the year and the second is to reward members of the staff who achieve the best results.

The target figure for the whole Board is 6,600 storage heater sales during the three-month period.

At the conclusion of the campaign, the District having most points through the greatest increase in sales over their target figure will be awarded the Paris mini-break prize. The District in runner-up spot will get a London mini-break, with two nights for two people.

All Districts achieving their target figure will qualify for an English mini-break—again two nights for two people.

Every week, prize vouchers will be awarded to the three individuals totting-up most points. The first three groups of winners are as follows:—

Week One—

- Phil Mather (Commercial assistant, Rhyl);
- Bob Isherwood (2nd engineer, Oswestry);
- John Howard Hughes (senior Commercial assistant, Gwynedd).

Week Two—

- Trevor Edwards (1st engineer, Dee Valley);
- Bryn Williams (Commercial assistant, Gwynedd);
- Norman Southern (Commercial assistant, Liverpool).

Week Three—

- Geoff Willcock (Commercial assistant, Mid-Cheshire);
- Bob Isherwood (2nd engineer, Oswestry);
- Irene Morris (Commercial assistant, Aberystwyth).

LOOK FORWARD FOR LIVERPOOL

Launch of Industry Year 1986

THE NEED for the people of Liverpool to create a new future, using the same energy and vision as their Victorian forefathers brought to bear when developing a great port, was emphasised by Dr. John Ritchie, Chief Executive of the Merseyside Development Corporation, guest speaker at a luncheon hosted by MANWEB to mark the beginning of *Industry Year 1986*.

The setting was the Albert Dock complex, converted under the guidance of the Corporation from a decaying memento of Liverpool's greatness as an international port to a modern recreational and amenity facility.

Urging Merseysiders to "stop looking over their shoulders" Dr. Ritchie spoke of the amazing achievements of Jesse Hartley, one of the great pioneers who made a huge contribution to the development of Liverpool's docklands. Now that the original reason

for the existence of the docks had passed into history the whole waterfront area was being developed for industrial and recreational use.

The Albert Dock project was an outstanding example of this change, and the potential for making the most of a fast-growing tourist industry had been proved by the great success of the International Garden Festival. He emphasised that these developments were "not a palliative, but a new part of the industrial and commercial fabric of Merseyside."

Naturally enough, electricity would be the main source of energy which would be utilised in these ambitious redevelopment plans.



Peter Hopkins, second from right, with guests at the *Industry Year 1986* meeting. They are, from left to right: Cliff Darley (Chief Executive, Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council), Dr. John Ritchie and Gerry Corless (Chief Executive, Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council).

The lunch was attended by leading figures from industry and commerce from all parts of Merseyside, who also heard words of optimism from our Chief Commercial Officer, Peter Hopkins.

"As a nation we are resourceful and innovative," he declared. "However, since the turn of the century we have fallen from the top four of the industrial league to a position near the bottom, and sadly Merseyside has painfully felt the reverberation of this decline."

Industry Year 1986 aimed to reverse this trend with three main objectives—to increase public awareness of industry's role, to accelerate change

in the relationship between education and industry, and to encourage industry itself to explain the part it played in society and demonstrate its contribution to the life of the community.

He added that electricity sales were progressing in all sectors, and that he was much encouraged by the increasing utilisation of electricity on Merseyside—the Albert Dock complex itself being an example of this trend.

Turning to plans for *Industry Year*, Peter spoke of the *Energy Factor* competition to be run for schoolchildren, together with seminars and conferences and visits by industrialists to the Electricity Council's Research Centre at Capenhurst. Enthusiasm and commitment could shape a new future for Merseyside, and he assured his listeners that MANWEB's advice and expertise would be at their command at all times.

He saw 1986 as a year of change. One year could not be expected to transform old, entrenched attitudes, but *Industry Year 1986* could be a springboard for economic resurgence in the future.

New appointment



TAKING up his appointment this month as the Board's Load Development Manager is Bryan Ogden, who leaves his post as Customer Services Manager in our Liverpool District.

Bryan began his career in the electricity supply industry in 1955 as a craft apprentice with the Yorkshire Electricity Board. After qualifying, he went on to hold commercial engineering posts in Halifax and Barnsley.

In the mid-'60s, he joined the East Midlands Electricity Board at Mansfield as a second engineer, Load Development.

He later moved around, taking up a variety of commercial appointments, until he became a senior engineer at the EMEB Head Office in Nottingham.

He made his move to MANWEB in 1976, when he took over the job as principal engineer in our Load Development section at Head Office.

Five years later, he took up the post as Liverpool District Commercial Engineer, later Customer Services Manager, the job he has now relinquished.

He is married to Margaret and they have a daughter, Jane, who is studying at Leeds Polytechnic, and a son, Mark, still at school.

Bryan is a keen caravanner, and also enjoys a spot of cycling in an endeavour to keep fit.

ENERGY BILL'S
THE NAME, AND GOBBLING FUEL'S MY GAME...
● TURN TO PAGE 3



With the latest model Berry Magicoal electric fire as a house-warming feature in the spacious lounge of a new Wimpey Home at Knowsley in Liverpool, we see, from left to right: Don Jones (Senior Home Buying Adviser, Wimpey Homes), Roy Roughley (2nd engineer), Ray Robertson (Area Sales Manager, Berry Magicoal), George Evans (Field Sales Manager, Wimpey Homes) and Jim Duddle (sales representative, Builder's liaison).

Warm welcome contract for Wimpey Homes

THE contract between the Board and building contractors George Wimpey and Sons Limited for the supply of focal-point electric fires for their new homes has been renewed with the introduction of the latest model from Berry Magicoal.

Over the past three years over 3,600 attractive coal-effect electric fires from Berry's have been installed in Wimpey homes throughout the MANWEB area and parts of Norweb. The value of the on-going order, in the MANWEB area alone, was in the region of £250,000 and an accumulated total load of 10,000 kilowatts.

The new contract was completed on a neighbourly basis with our North Mersey District and Wimpey both being based in Bridle Road, Bootle. Acting for the Board was Ron Roughley (2nd engineer, Domestic Development) and for the Wimpey

Company, their Regional Buyer, Roy Mills.

They both agreed that the up-dated version of the Berry Magicoal had an improved appearance and would blend nicely into the modern Wimpey home.

The Company is constructing dwellings on at least 45 sites around the MANWEB area and parts of the adjoining Norweb area. They average just under two dwellings completed on each site every week. It is confidently expected that an annual turnover of about 4,000 electric fires will be installed with a total value of around £1/2-million with a resulting load of 12,000 kilowatts.

Builders at Clwyd

THE concept of the Civic Shield Home should appeal to all discerning housing authorities, because it represents a logical approach to providing major domestic services at affordable prices. This message was given the ring of unbiased conviction recently, when it was delivered by a council architect to a gathering of builders.

Alyn and Deeside District Architect Paul Kent was the guest speaker at a MANWEB seminar attended by 100 North Wales builders and organised by Clwyd District at the District offices. His Authority has adopted a Civic Shield policy for all its sheltered housing.

Chairing the meeting, District Manager Bob Hodson introduced the first two speakers, both engineers in Clwyd District. System engineer Rod Taylor, using visual aids, took the delegates on a tour of the electricity supply network, from the power station through to the building site. To help his audience through the technicalities of voltage transmission and transformation, he laid on a five-minute maths tutorial, which created tremendous interest—and some amusement.

Having arrived at the building site, it was the turn of production engineer John Hesketh to take up the story. John described the installation of final services, including the use of plastic ducting and external meter cupboards. He outlined the more common factors likely to cause delay in providing electricity supply and how, with mutual co-operation, there could be an overall improvement in efficiency in site electrification.

John welcomed the opportunity the meeting gave to put faces to names, which would help to improve communication in future. This was reiterated by Clwyd District Load Development

Engineer Ron Carter, when he came to the rostrum. He illustrated the most effective way to approach the Board for help, advice and information on all electrical matters related to housing development. He took the opportunity to introduce the new procedure for rising and lateral mains in multi-occupied domestic premises.

He went on to describe the benefits of Medallion and Civic Shield Awards to the builder and their customers. Recently, one Medallion site was completely sold out half-way through the development programme. Medallion publicity had created this interest, and Ron Carter commented: "Hang on to the coat-tails of our promotional advertising and case history proof—it will sell your houses!"

The "all-electric" theme was continued by the guest speaker, Paul Kent, who gave a "user's view". Using slides, he took his audience on a guided tour of all the electrical developments on the various Civic Shield sites built by the Alyn and Deeside Council.

The Council were so impressed by the Economy 7 package, space and water heating installations were considered at the property design stage to ensure that they were an integral part of the building. All the sites Mr. Kent illustrated in his talk had Civic Shield Awards, and all had achieved a high level of tenant satisfaction.

Summing up the main points raised during the seminar by the speakers, Bob Hodson emphasised the complete service available to builders and architects from his MANWEB team. Representatives from all his District's departments were available to answer any queries during the rest of the evening. An Economy 7 computer program unit, manned by Load Development staff, provided delegates with print-outs of their own home accounts, demonstrating the benefits of the Economy 7 tariff.

Delegates and Board staff mingled and continued their discussions over an excellent buffet provided by the canteen staff, and with drinks served by Sports and Social Club members.

SEMINAR SUCCESS

Compliments have flowed in from delegates since the meeting, congratulating Bob Hodson and his team on the subject matter and format of the seminar. One delegate has since signed up to provide a 76-unit "Medallion Homes" site.



Above: Seminar speakers, from left to right: Paul Kent, Ron Carter, John Hesketh, Rod Taylor and Bob Hodson.

Below: Guests watch as their individual accounts are brought on to the screens by Commercial assistants Julie Holland, left, and Christine Monks.





At the seminar were, from left to right: John Walker, Albert Eyres, Michael Forte, Eric Sunderland and John Ellis.

Initiative to help North Wales business

WITH the dawn of the national "Industry Year 1986" campaign, MANWEB and the University College of North Wales at Bangor have launched a joint initiative to help North Wales businesses.

Gwynedd District Load Development Engineer John Ellis is the chairman of a joint committee formed to ensure that ideas and technology developed in the laboratory are transferred to the marketplace. To publicise the range of facilities and assistance available from both organisations, they jointly sponsored a seminar at the University College in Bangor recently.

North Wales Business Club President Michael Forte chaired the seminar, which was opened by the University College Principal, Professor Sunderland, who welcomed the 50 North Wales businessmen.

John Walker, MANWEB Principal Industrial Engineer, from Head Office, and Professor Geoffrey Ratcliff, the Research Manager at the Electricity Council Research Centre, Capenhurst, dove-tailed their talks to explain what the electricity industry could offer to the businessmen.

MANWEB were interested in promoting the wise and efficient use of energy. John Walker explained. This could be achieved simply by a change of tariff, or adapting processes to shift peak demand, or to take advantage of time-of-day tariffs. All aspects of business could benefit from electricity's energy-saving applications. Low-cost infra-red heaters saved on capital, induction heating saved on space, low thermal mass furnaces cut labour costs. Savings on raw materials had been achieved by using electro-heat in foundry castings, and by the plastics industry. Heat pumps had saved on cooling water and the heat recovery techniques had supplied factory space heating.

Many of the innovations used by MANWEB to save energy had been developed by, or with the assistance of, the Electricity Council

Research Centre at Capenhurst. Geoff Ratcliff took up the story and explained with slides just how many wide-ranging ideas had come out of the Centre. They had developed aluminium annealing processes, metal recovery systems, and high-voltage liquid separation techniques, resulting in savings in money terms and solving pollution and environmental problems. The Centre had undertaken a great deal of work into insulation and had helped to develop energy-saving factories.

Professor Ian Stephenson, from the College's School of Electronic Science, outlined the work of the College and gave examples of how the University had helped outside companies. The department would welcome contractual or consultancy work for North Wales firms. He



offered the assistance of his department to business, wishing to bring the working environment nearer to the College.

The University's "open door" policy was explained further by Dr. Neil Rymer, the College's Industrial Liaison Officer. He illustrated his talk with slides of the range of facilities in the College, other than the School of Electronic Science, which were available for outside organisations.

The Welsh Development Agency would lend investment and business support to industry in North Wales, and their Regional Manager, Michael Henry, explained how the agency could help with advice and, on occasions, grants. Further financial advice came from prominent local bank manager Howel Roberts, from the Midland Bank.

The seminar ended with an open forum conducted by Albert Eyres, from the Institution of Electrical Engineers, and our North Mersey District Engineering Manager.

Four of the seminar speakers pictured below are, left to right, Howel Roberts, Neil Rymer, Michael Henry and Geoffrey Ratcliff.



Electricity link-up across the Channel

LAST month, electric power flowed for the first time through cables buried beneath the sea-bed between Britain and France, with the switch-on of the new 45-kilometre cross-Channel link connecting the CEBG and Electricité de France distribution systems.

France already exchanges electricity with all its neighbouring countries, so now the United Kingdom is linked into the European electricity network.

Each of the four pairs of cables, two British and two French, is capable of carrying 500 megawatts of direct current electricity. At each end of the link, running from Folkestone in Kent to Sangatte near Calais, the direct current is converted into alternating current for use on each country's supergrid system.

Work began on the £760-million project 4½ years ago.

Under the trading arrangements between the two utilities for the first 1,000 megawatts, EdeF will provide a supply of electricity on a commercial basis to the CEBG for two years at a cost of up to 25 per cent cheaper than could be generated on average in the UK. The supply will be subject to interruptions on an agreed basis.

CEBG Board Member Gil Blackman commented: "The link will not only bring significant cost savings for electricity users in England and Wales, but will also increase the security of electricity supplies in Britain and France."

He added that the construction of the link was a major tribute to the engineers, both British and French. Pioneering technology was used to bury the cables under the sea-bed to avoid possible damage from ships' anchors in one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world. It was an exceptionally difficult engineering task carried out in what was often appalling weather conditions.

The costs—about half those of building a new power station—have been shared between the CEBG and Electricité de France.

A second pair of cables will be brought into use later this month, and commissioning trials are expected to be completed in about two months. During this period, electricity flow will be 1,000 megawatts.

A MAJOR step in the CEBG's multi-million pound research programme into the problems of acid rain was taken when the Board's Chairman, Lord Marshall, "switched on" a £2.5-million modification to a coal-fired boiler at the Fiddler's Ferry power station, near Warrington.

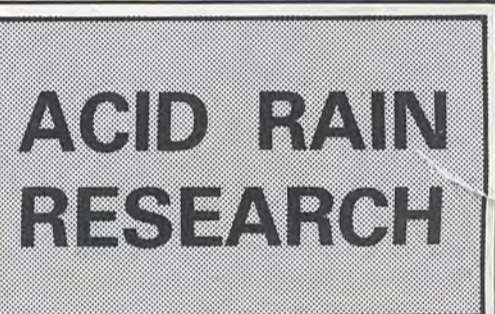
He said that this was the first in a series of trials on the development of technology and was expected to reduce nitrogen oxide emission by some 30 per cent. He intimated that it would be two or three years before it would be known whether the modification caused corrosion problems or a loss of efficiency.

"We are taking our environmental responsibilities very seriously indeed," continued Lord Marshall. "We are spending about £3.5-million a year on in-house research into the whole acid rain issue. In addition, our contribution to various research projects over the next few years will be more than £32-million."

Further trials are planned at other power stations later this year.

"By the early 1990s we should have a pretty good idea of the practical reductions we could achieve without running into severe problems," commented Lord Marshall. "The total cost of modifying all our stations would be about £250-million."

The CEBG believes that insufficient research has been done to understand the nature and causes of acid rain damage to trees in Germany. Lord Marshall disclosed that the Board was to go ahead with a £1-million ozone chemistry programme to measure the concentrations of ozone-forming chemicals, including nitrogen oxides, and to follow the reactions actually in the air. For the experiment the Board would be using an aircraft which will be equipped with



specialty-developed instruments to help scientists from several universities who were co-operating in the tests.

Lord Marshall said that there were those who responded to the uncertainties surrounding the highly complex issue of acid rain by advocating an "insurance" policy approach, in which they demanded reductions in emissions, regardless of cost, in case this should prove to be the culprit.

For that approach, it would be for the Government of the day, he said, to decide whether or not emissions of sulphur and/or nitrogen oxides should be reduced, and the CEBG would, of course, comply with any controls decided upon by Parliament.

"But if we conclude that our emissions are responsible for the significant damage to the environment and reducing them would be a cost-effective solution, we would ourselves initiate action," he went on. "However, to meet the proposed EEC Directive on sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide reductions by 1995 would cost some £2,500-million of electricity customers' money."

Lord Marshall concluded by stating that he had an open mind on what should be done to cure the problems. "But if the electricity customer was to pay for part of the cure, I must be satisfied that it would be effective."

ENERGY BILL

by MITCH





Members of the Dee Valley Load Development team with Commercial Manager Lyn Price. Left to right: Judith Williams (Commercial assistant), Trevor Edwards (1st assistant engineer), Keith Hibbert (Load Development Engineer), Lyn Price, David Walker (research officer, Electricity Council, Capenhurst—attached to the District) and Cerys Hughes (Commercial assistant).

Civic Shield Awards in Dee Valley District

AT a special ceremony held at the Bryn Howel hotel in Llangollen, Councillor John Banks, Chairman of the Alyn and Deeside District Council, was presented with three Civic Shield Awards by Lyn Price, our Dee Valley District Commercial Manager.

Joining the Board's Load Development staff on the occasion were Councillors Irene Fellows (Chairman of the Planning Committee), Jim Jones (Chairman of the Housing Committee) and Vernon Kindlin (Chairman of the Policy Committee). Also present were Council officials David Smith (Chief Housing Officer) and Donald Box (Building Services Officer).

Bungalows on the three sites qualifying for the awards were at Hope (13), Penyffordd (6) and Cymau (5). All these dwellings, housing the older members of the community, were originally heated by Electricaire units. These have now been replaced with Credastorage heaters utilising the Economy 7 tariff, and water heating programmers have been installed. The District Council has also

improved the insulation standards to meet the Civic Shield specifications.

Operating costs for the home heating and hot water services has been averaged at an estimated £4.80 per week over the whole year.

Councillors and officials in

Councillor John Banks receives the Civic Shield Award certificate from Lyn Price, right.



Alyn and Deeside are convinced that refurbishing or building their properties to the Civic Shield standard is beneficial in bringing comfortable living conditions for their tenants at a cost they can afford.

The Council is now in the process of refurbishing 13 more properties on two developments and building 28 new flats in the Shotton area—all to the Civic Shield Award standard.

Crawling to the top

THIS genuine up-grading appeal was sent to the 'CONTACT' office by an engineer who spent some time in Saudi Arabia on a BEI secondment. He wishes to remain anonymous, in case colleagues think the appeal was his! After all, he had been out there for three years!!
Sub:—Utmost Request for the consideration of up-grading at par to my qualification & experience for the post of Inspection Engineer.

Sir,

With utmost regard and humble submission I take this opportunity to append the followings for your favourable and sympathetic consideration at your earliest convenience.

That Sir, I am working under your dynamic control as a Group Supervisor in the grade VI Since 1st Feb 1979 (23rd Safar 1398).

That, I joined your esteemed and renowned organisation with zeal and enthusiasm having keen desire to put my all ceaseless efforts to elevate its prestige, to strengthen its foundation and to multiply its financial gain.

That, My last Thirteen years exhaustive and

responsible assignment in diversified capacities having empowered me with so much potentialities that I find myself confident enough to withstand any type of challenge whatsoever comes on my way.

It is not exaggerated that my performance have had in all the respective field is not only satisfactory but commendable.

That, It is my sheer bad luck and misfortune that inspite of all efforts I could not prove myself capable and worth here due to frequent change of immediate boss.

This aspect of circumstances put me in an utmost despair and compelled to believe that honest, capable and sincere work deserves no appreciation. My enthusiasm and initiative is adversely affected.

However, still I am not fully disheartened as I have always found you a most affectionate and just a master.

Therefore, I fervently hope from your gracious honour will honour my deserving claim and I shall ever grateful to you for this favourable gesture.

Thanking you in anticipation, Yours faithfully,
(Signed)

Unfortunately, we could not follow up the story to find out if the appeal was granted, but... here goes... it's worth a try...

Chairman, Sir,

With utmost regard and humble submission

Coal price too high

—Electricity Council Chairman

"THE electricity supply industry pays too much for the coal it burns in its powers stations," commented Chairman of the Electricity Council, Philip Jones, when speaking at a Coal Industry Society luncheon recently.

He said that the supply industry's hopes of widening electricity usage, as cheaply as possible, depended chiefly on its ability to buy coal at world-competitive prices. Mr. Jones acknowledged that the Joint Understanding between the two industries whereby the electricity supply obtained the balance of its coal termed as "second tranche coal"—at a significantly lower cost than the bulk of its supplies, did help hold down the cost of producing electricity.

"But," continued Mr. Jones, "although this is an improvement on the position that prevailed previously, it is only a start. We still pay too much for our coal supplies and they are effectively being subsidised by the electricity consumer. The cheaper the NCB can sell us coal, the cheaper we can produce electricity and the more the demand for electricity will increase. This, in turn, will increase the demand for coal."

"Our target should be to increase the amount of this second tranche coal, related to world prices, until it represents the bulk of our supplies," he said. "The importance of this is illustrated by the high-intensive users of electricity."

"Generally, our prices for electricity to industry are in line with those in Europe. Some of our high-intensive users—those whose energy bills dominate their costs—do pay more for their electricity than their competitors, and this is why the electricity industry is examining with the NCB ways of easing their position. Our ability to do so will depend on the coal industry making cheaper coal available."

Mr. Jones emphasised that, as the National Coal Board's biggest customer, the electricity supply industry would depend on British coal for the bulk of power generation well into the 21st Century. But electricity's competitive position could be seriously jeopardised if that coal was too expensive.

"We believe electricity has a great future," he said. "Over the next few years we should steadily increase sales of electricity and improve our competitive position as declining reserves force the price of oil and gas to rise."

"It is obviously in the interests of both the coal and electricity supply industries to welcome the wider use of electrical equipment and electrically-driven production techniques. But it is equally obvious that such growth could fail to materialise and that our competitive position could be seriously jeopardised if our fuel—and raw material—costs go up too far and too fast."

Mr. Jones pointed out that NCB coal accounted for over one-third of the cost of a unit of electricity delivered to the customer and that coal prices to the Central Electricity Generating Board were today 55 times higher than they were 50 years ago. Over the same period, electricity prices had increased only nine times, while the cost of living had risen 21 times.

He said that the costs of electricity production and distribution had been held down over the years by increased productivity, a general attack on costs, the increasing contribution of nuclear generation and large improvements in the thermal efficiency of fossil-fuelled power stations. The gains in thermal efficiency were now, however, approaching a limit and there was very little scope left for further improvements.

"We need therefore to concentrate on getting the cost of our fuel supplies down. In this context, we are heartened by the reports of the NCB's new Strategy for Coal, with its dual aim of phasing out dependence on subsidy and supplying the market at world-competitive prices."

"To do this, it is very important that the NCB should concentrate production at efficient pits with a long-term future... a course the electricity supply industry has long advocated."

Mr. Jones said that the 1984/85 dispute in the coal mining industry proved it was essential for the electricity supply industry to seek diversity in its fuel supplies.

"If we had not had the operational flexibility given to us by our nuclear and oil facilities, then the costs of the strike, both financial and social, would have been many times those that were actually experienced," he said.

"The cost of the fuel we consume must be even more fundamental to our plans for the future. At present, we would expect to continue burning over 70 million tonnes of coal annually well into the next century. But that largely depends both on the security of our coal supplies and on our buying that coal at acceptable—and that means world-competitive—prices."

Long Service

WE offer our congratulations to the following members of the Board's staff who have completed, during the month of January, 40, 30 or 20 years' service in the electricity supply industry.

40 YEARS—Dee Valley District: **Joe Astbury** (street lighting attendant).

30 YEARS—North Mersey District: **Jimmy Johnson** (foreman, Engineering), **Jim Lennon** (foreman meter operative) and **John Robinson** (chargehand meter operative). Liverpool District: **Ronald O'Grady** (craft attendant). Dee Valley District: **Idris Mackin** (meter operative). Clwyd District: **Ray Evans** (chargehand craftsman electrician). Head Office: **Don Andrews** (principal assistant, Estates and Wayleaves) and **William Williams** (craftsman electrical fitter, Queensferry).

20 YEARS—Liverpool District: **George Burke** (general duties assistant) and **Anthony Murray** (craftsman joiner). Dee Valley District: **Tom Morris** (craftsman mechanical fitter, Legacy) and **Robbie Richards** (chargehand meter operative). Mid-Cheshire District: **Margaret Fisher** (part-time sales assistant, Crewe shop) and **Alec Wakefield** (craftsman electrical inspection). Clwyd District: **Bryniog Jones** (craftsman joiner). Head Office: **Brenda Pays** (clerical assistant, Financial) and **Gordon Phillips** (chauffeur).



"You were right—you had left your storage heaters on..."

JIM HELPS OUT IN ZIMBABWE



LOOKING forward to a final business trip to the emerging South African country of Zimbabwe—combined with a holiday—is Personnel Manager Jim Barraclough, who was busy during the autumn helping with the preparatory work needed to get the new Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority off the ground.

Although Jim is now Personnel Manager, and was formerly a Group Manager, his original training and experience was in accountancy work. His chance to undertake an unusual assignment came when the industry's overseas consultancy service—British Electricity International—were looking for a senior person with experience of designing and operating accountancy systems to help in Zimbabwe.

Behind it all stood the World Bank, which had been asked to supply funds as part of its programme of assisting developing countries and which was naturally anxious to ensure that the new Zimbabwe electricity authority was set up in an efficient and businesslike way.

The Bank eventually recruited three accountancy consultants to help—one from the USA, one from Canada, and Jim.

"I have been with MANWEB now for almost 30 years, and I regarded this as a chance to do something novel and challenging outside the Board," he explained.

After visiting Washington for talks with World Bank officials during the summer, Jim

to see something of the country at weekends, with trips to Hwange National Park, where there is plenty of big game, to the Victoria Falls, and to the Kariba Dam and power station."

His sightseeing included a crocodile farm at the Falls, a launch trip on the Zambesi River, and a long walk in the bush with members of the Zimbabwe Tree Society!

"It was a fascinating experience, going round and meeting so many people," added Jim. "Zimbabwe is a fabulous country, and everyone I met was tremendously friendly and helpful."

Back home he put the ice-bag on his head to prepare a detailed Report on the accountancy work needed to be done to amalgamate all the utilities before crossing the Atlantic again in late November to see World Bank officials again.

The Bank is now producing a document summarising the work of the consultants for the Zimbabwe Department of Energy, and this will be the blueprint which will enable the new top management to get the Authority under way.

The long arm of coincidence reached out while he was in Zimbabwe. Jim hails from Wrexham, and was surprised to be told that the retired Chief Accountant of the Bulawayo utility, brought out of retirement to help him, also came from Wrexham!

The stranger turned out to be none other than Ken Daniel, who used to work for us at Rhostyllen before leaving for pastures new way back in 1957. He asked Jim to convey his good wishes to any old colleagues who might remember him!

He also met up with Peter Ellis, who was formerly Group Manager with the North West Region of the CEGB and is now Generation Engineer for the Central African Power Corporation. Small world!

The last chapter in his adventures will be written this spring or early summer, when Jim goes back to Zimbabwe for a couple of weeks to work on the implementation of the plan to which he has contributed, but this time he hopes to enjoy a holiday when the work is finished.

Statue of David Livingstone... we presume!



A colony of captured crocodiles.

flew to Zimbabwe on 9th September, staying until 18th October. He found that the problems facing the electricity supply industry in Zimbabwe were something like those in the UK when the industry was nationalised in 1948, with municipal electricity undertakings serving the four main cities and an Electricity Supply Commission responsible for other areas—but without any privately-owned enterprises.

The task confronting him was to make recommendations for the setting up of an accountancy system which would serve the new Authority—no easy problem because the municipal electricity departments had no accountancy staffs of their own due to the fact that the City Treasurers handled all their financial affairs. The Supply Commission, on the other hand, had its own "manual" system, and what was needed was a plan to set up a system which would serve the whole country.

Setting up his base in Harare, the capital, Jim began with consultations with senior officials of the United Nations and of the Zimbabwe Energy Department, before going to meet the City Treasurers and Electrical Engineers of Harare and the other three cities—Bulawayo, Gwero and Mutare—and their staffs.

There were discussions also with the Finance Manager of the Electricity Supply Commission, all leading to the production of an Interim Report before leaving Zimbabwe for home.

A lot of work was involved—but it wasn't all graft. "I had never been to Africa before," Jim told us, "so I was determined that this trip wasn't just going to be a matter of hotel rooms, conferences and air flights. I worked very hard indeed during the week, but managed to get out



A dramatic view of Victoria Falls from Jim's photographic record of his visit to Zimbabwe.

Cheshire Life

AN interesting and informative book, "Cheshire In The Twentieth Century", has recently been published as one of 12 volumes on "A History of Cheshire".

Its author is Rosalind E. Tigwell, the wife of Chris, who is a second engineer in the Engineering section of our Liverpool District.

Rosalind is a graduate of Liverpool University and for several years has held the post as Senior Lecturer in Social and Economic History at the Bolton Institute of Higher Education.

Twentieth-century history is not easy to write. So much has happened and many changes have taken place since Queen Victoria died and a writer of this period cannot stand back and view events from sufficient distance in time, having lived through and experienced many of the changes she is describing.

Rosalind has taken six aspects of Cheshire life—town and country, agriculture, industry, transport, education and leisure—and devoted a chapter to each of them.

"Cheshire In The Twentieth Century" also contains a number of well-drawn maps by Barbara Pendrey, and Vivienne Llewellyn has produced some delightful illustrations.

If you live or work in Cheshire, or are simply interested in history, this book at £6.95 will certainly provide you with some very interesting reading.

Public Speaking Competition 1986

ENTRIES are invited from members of the Board's staff—under 35 years of age on 30th April 1986—for the Electricity Council Public Speaking Competition 1986.

A MANWEB area competition, with separate sections for men and for women, will produce winners who will go forward to compete in the National Finals.

For reaching the MANWEB area finals, each entrant will receive £10. The eventual winners will be awarded £50.

Each winner of the National Finals will receive £150 and a trophy.

Look out for further announcements on your noticeboards. Names of entrants will be required by the end of February. Locally, further information may be obtained from:—

North Mersey	Bill Tubey (Tel. 104)
Liverpool	Graeme Houghton (Tel. 470)
Mid-Mersey	Dave Tinsley (Tel. 362)
Dee Valley	Keith Griffiths (Tel. 245)
North Wirral	Paul Rosenberg (Tel. 270)
Mid-Cheshire	Julian Jenkins (Tel. 190)
Clwyd	Denis Atkinson (Tel. 582)
Gwynedd	Malcolm Donaldson (Tel. 2250)
Oswestry	Sid Warburton (Tel. 329)
Aberystwyth	Dewi Parry (Tel. 80)
Head Office	Les Baron (Tel. 2341)
	Bill Bartlett (Tel. 2063)

Last year MANWEB produced a worthy winner, when Tomos Llewelfryn Davies, a clerical assistant in our Aberystwyth District, walked off with the Faraday Shield and the top prize money. Let's see if we can do it again! But this time take both prizes!!

ASDA PRIZE

WHEN Harry Finch had to push-start his clapped-out banger, he was worried how it would get him to work. Then he bought some raffle tickets at the Asda Superstore in Ellesmere Port, in aid of Cancer Research.

He scraped off the silver coating from the symbols to reveal four jokers: his prize—a Vauxhall Nova!

Harry is a driver delivering appliances from Queensferry and, helping him with his deliveries, is his son Mark. His win was popular with his Queensferry pals.

One commented: "It couldn't have happened to a nicer guy—we're happy for him. Besides," he added with a grin, "we won't have to push-start his old heap any more!"

Cheered by drivers from Queensferry, Harry Finch holds up the keys to his new car, watched by son Mark.



IN MEMORY

TWO five-foot-high candleholders in wrought iron have been placed in Chester Cathedral and dedicated to the memory of Private Neil Williams, who was killed in the bombing at the Dropping Well Inn at Ballykelly, Northern Ireland, three years ago.

Neil's mother, Doreen Bellis, and his sisters, Diane and Julie, are all members of our Head Office staff. At the time of the tragedy, friends and colleagues of the family made subscriptions which have now resulted in the candleholders bearing Neil's name.

On the third anniversary of his death, a short service was held and conducted by the Dean of Chester, the Very Reverend T. W. Ingram Cleasby, for members of the family and comrades from the Cheshire Regiment.

The candleholders are positioned near the Book of Remembrance, close to The Cheshire's own chapel.

Doreen expressed her gratitude both to her MANWEB colleagues and to the Cheshire Regiment for their kindness and donations.

tee, 11 Filament, 12 Eta, 14 Peacock, 16 Praline, 18 Roi, 19 Col, 20 Goo, 21 Sap, 22 Cat, 23 Leo, 27 Hours, 28 Obey, 30 Ahoy, 31 Niobe, 33 Spa, 34 Cos, 35 Laden, 37 Breed, 38 Roc, 39 Nip, 42 Extreme, 43 Animate, 45 Maine, 46 Epee, 48 Xray, 49 Toady, 51 Not, 52 Mil, 53 Deem, 54 Scrape, 55 Tree, 57 Sing, 58 Claret, 59 Tsar, 62 Roam, 63 Ilka, 69 Hen, 70 Nod, 73 Diner, 74 Mensa, 75 Viva, 76 Seen

ANOTHER LIFE SAVED

SAM (*Samantha*), the famous feline employed in North Mersey District to keep the four-legged furry friends out of the Stores complex, was under the weather a short time ago. She was "jinxed", and the mice began to have the run of the place.

Poor Sam didn't respond to

the tit-bits offered by those who ventured near her—so it was off to the veterinary surgeon.

He said that an operation on Sam's mouth was essential and the cost would be in the region of £28. A quick collection round the District Office depot resulted in the necessary cash being raised. Money came in from everywhere.

Sam's operation was successful and she is back on patrol.

Those who know her well estimate that she must be at least 19 years old. Sam is looking forward to her 20-year long service award!

Crossword winners

FOUR ladies are the winners of the £5 prizes in our bumper Christmas Crossword Competition. It must have been a most difficult puzzle to solve, judging from the very few entries received.

Many who submitted solutions made the mistake of answering clue No. 4 across—"His was a feast of warm water" with SIMON, when the correct answer was TIMON.

The four lucky ladies are:—

Gladys M. Williams, the widow of Harold Williams, a former installation inspector with Dee Valley District.

Frances Isaacs, Financial section, Head Office.

Jessie E. Jones, former sales assistant in our North Mersey District.

Pauline Rowlands, Security section, Head Office.

The fivers are on their way.

SOLUTION

Across

2 Sac, 4 Timon, 5 Ebb, 6 Inverts, 8 Era, 9 Air, 10 Fie, 13 Guest list, 14 Pomp, 15 Leap, 17 Areca, 20 Gastronomical, 24 Oca, 25 Title, 26 Ale, 27 Hoopoe, 29 Nation, 32 Beneath, 33 Suckle, 36 Oberon, 40 Pro, 41 Aye, 43 Ayr, 44 Obi, 45 Mased, 47 Except, 50 Penthemimer, 53 Dis, 55 Tenor, 56 Midas, 58 Cat, 60 Encore, 61 Tertial, 64 Yields, 65 Beer, 66 Mould, 67 Ayah, 68 Aden, 69 Hearken, 71 Igor, 72 Mya, 73 Dom, 75 Vines, 77 Inane, 78 Verse, 79 Aryan

Down

1 Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary, 2 Sieve, 3 Cobra, 6 Ilium, 7 Seise, 9 Ago, 10 Repar-



A MODEL MAN

SHOULD you be invited into the home of 67-year-old Bobi Morris at Penygroes, near Caernarfon, you will find yourself in a wonderland of models, ranging from a 16th Century coach, a working windmill, powered boats, gypsy caravans and an electrically-lit St. Paul's Cathedral.

"I took up the fascinating hobby about six years ago," Bobi told us. "I work from scale drawings most of the time but, on occasions, I have to be a little inventive. Parts which I cannot obtain from model-making shops I have to make in wood, glass or metal in my little workshop at home."

Bobi also transforms empty bottles as he cuts, shapes and glues them to create novel candle-holders and decorative pieces.

He started his working life in the electricity supply industry over 50 years ago, when he joined the former North Wales Power Company at Llangefni. His family still lived in Penygroes so, as an apprentice electrician, Bobi lived in "digs". His weekly wage was just half the cost of his lodgings, so his parents had to subsidise him.

He had completed 46 years' service when he retired from Gwynedd District about four years ago.

Earlier in his life, Bobi was a very active treasurer and raised a lot of money for the Nantlle Football Club. "That was in the good old days, when Freddie Pye was their manager," he commented.

A widower—his wife Ethel May died suddenly about four years ago—Bobi has two sons and two daughters and a clutch of grandchildren.

Bobi Morris, with just a few of his variety of models. On the window-ledge is some of his decorative glassware.



Victor Sestan, left, with his trophies presented by Councillor Gordon Lindsay, Mayor of Wirral.

Picture by Bob Bird

Seven times a champion

A MAN who certainly knows his onions is Victor Sestan, a general duties assistant who keeps the land and gardens tidy round our North Wirral District sub-stations.

Victor has become the champion allotment holder in the Wirral area for a record-breaking seventh time. His prize-winning allotment garden was chosen as the best from the 1,894 pieces of cultivated land in the area.

Over the years, Victor has won an array of gardening tools, and this time he chose a garden spray as a prize to go along with the large silver trophy.

RETIREMENTS

Farewells to friends
and colleagues

Mr. D. H. MURPHY

EARLY retirement came for Des Murphy, a principal assistant in the Superannuation section, after a lifetime of service in the electricity supply industry.

Des joined what was formerly the Liverpool Corporation Electric Supply Department in 1939 as a clerk. Shortly afterwards he joined the RAF and served throughout the war years. He returned to the Corporation and, in 1948 when our industry was nationalised, he joined the

staff of the Central Electricity Authority.

He came over to MANWEB in 1955 to work as a senior assistant in the Superannuation section at the former Head Office in Liverpool.

A bachelor, Des is a keen supporter of Liverpool F.C. In retirement he intends to become involved in voluntary work.

Colleagues subscribed to present Des with parting gifts of a radio/cassette player and a coffee-maker.

Des Murphy, *third from the right*, with colleagues from Head Office at his retirement farewell.



At a happy farewell presentation, in the centre of the picture, *left to right*, are Peter Hopkins, with Jo and Bob Jowett.

Mr. R. W. JOWETT

AFTER completing 31 years' service with MANWEB, Load Development Manager Bob Jowett has now retired because of ill-health.

Bob started his career as an apprentice electrician with a Liverpool firm in 1940 and went on to work as a journeyman electrician until he joined our

Board in 1954 as a junior assistant in the Commercial section of the former Liverpool Central District.

He later became the Commercial Engineer for the former Southport District and then held a similar post in the Liverpool South District. With the 1970 reorganisation within the Board, Bob was appointed as

Commercial Engineer for the new Liverpool District.

He became an Assistant Chief Commercial Officer in 1978.

At a sometimes hilarious farewell presentation conducted by Chief Commercial Officer Peter Hopkins—Bob's wife, Jo, ably assisting and prompting—a cheque was handed to Bob with which he intends to buy a band-

saw.

His major hobby is carpentry and he specialises in restoring antique furniture. He also enjoys walking and loves to spend holidays in Austria, his wife's native land.

Bob and Jo have a married daughter who is in the antique business, which ties in nicely with her father's interest.



Mr. E. BEAUCHAMP COLLEAGUES at our Northwich depot gathered round as Mid-Cheshire District Manager Ken Crabtree presented their farewell gift to Eddie Beauchamp marking his retirement on completion of 38 years' service in the electricity supply industry.

He began his working life on the railways prior to joining the Board as a labourer. He soon became a shift attendant at Knutsford Grid before moving to Northwich.

He enjoys his garden and

also plays a good game of bowls, captaining and picking up a few trophies at the Knutsford Private Bowling Club. Eddie told us that he has now taken a keen interest in indoor bowls which has started at the club. He plays golf and is working hard to reduce his handicap.

Married to Dot, they have a married daughter, Jane, and a couple of grandchildren.

Mrs. S. PALIN DEPARTING on the same day as Eddie Beauchamp was the

very popular lady, Sheila Palin, a cleaner at the Northwich depot.

Her late husband, Alf, was a linesman at the depot for over 30 years.

In making the presentation from friends and colleagues—of a portable TV set, some vouchers and a bouquet of flowers—Ken Crabtree (*District Manager*) said that Sheila was a most willing worker and, in addition to looking after the depot, had often helped out at the shop in town.

Pictured, *below*, Ken Crabtree says farewell to Eddie Beauchamp, *centre*, and Sheila Palin.



Mrs. J. KERR FRIENDS at our Winsford shop regretfully said goodbye as they presented a parting gift of a pearl necklace to their part-time cleaner Josie Kerr, who recently retired on ill-health grounds.

Josie had been with them since 1978.

Mr. J. WILLIAMS

A CRAFTSMAN joiner in our Liverpool District, Jimmy Williams was recently retired on the grounds of ill-health after 38 years' service in the electricity supply industry.

He spent 12 years at the Paradise Street premises before moving to Lister Drive.

During the war years, Jimmy served in the Royal Navy and was engaged on Combined Operations in the Far East.

AND THERE'S MORE . . .

ANOTHER four members of the Mid-Mersey District staff have now joined the ranks of the retired. They are:—

Raymond Burgoyne, a craft attendant who first worked for

the CEGB in 1954 and then transferred to MANWEB two years later. Ill-health brought about Ray's early retirement.

Gerald Gately, a general duties assistant with the Engineering section had completed 32 years' service with the Board.

Thomas Hoxworth, a craftsman joiner, came to work for the Board 26 years ago and retired recently on ill-health grounds.

John Lippitt, a meter operative, had only been with us for the past seven years when he retired through ill-health.

Mr. T. N. DUTTON

CHRISTMAS Day 1985 brought the 65th birthday and retirement for Thomas Noel Dutton, a switchboard attendant in the Mid-Mersey District Reporting Centre.

His first job of work was as an apprentice hairdresser. This didn't last very long, and Tommy joined the Royal Navy in 1938 and went on to serve throughout the last war.

He had his "ups and downs", first on board an aircraft carrier and, later, in submarines. For a time, he was among the crew of *HMS Courageous*, and was fortunately posted to another ship before she was sunk.

He returned to civilian life in 1946 to work for the former Warrington Corporation Electricity Department at the Howley Power Station. He

transferred to MANWEB in the early 1950s and became an electrician working on appliance deliveries for many years.

Colleagues subscribed to present him with a parting gift of a propagator, Tommy being a keen gardener. He is also an accomplished bowls player with the British Aluminium Club.

In retirement, Tommy will be in his garden or on the greens.

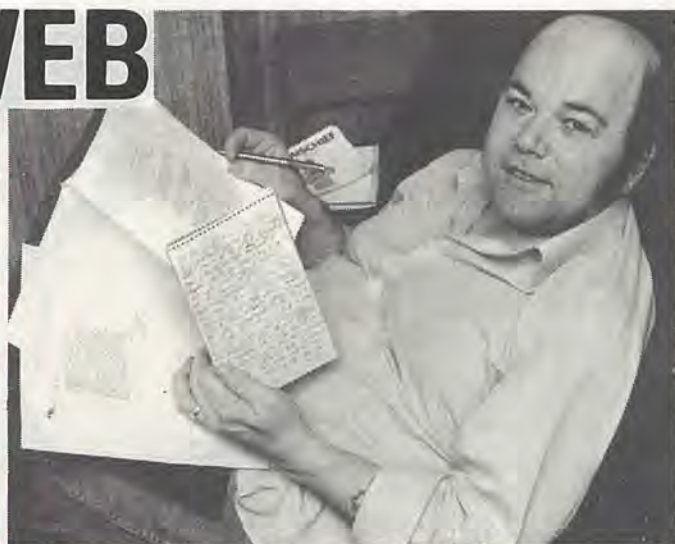
In the hot-seat for the last time, Tommy Dutton, *seated*, with colleagues in Mid-Mersey District Reporting Centre.



MANWEB

POETS

PAGE



Picture—"Cambrian News"
Aberystwyth telephonist Kelvin Jones pens another masterpiece.

BEGINNING his poetic ventures by writing humorous verses about his colleagues and their activities around the Aberystwyth District Office, telephonist Kelvin Jones soon realised that he had a talent.

Poetry never really interested me until I started to compose verses myself," he told us. "Now I thoroughly enjoy writing and putting my thoughts down on paper. I find that words come easily if I keep to everyday language."

Kelvin has penned some thought-provoking poems concerning Ethiopia, the troubles in Ireland and on the drug scene. Recently he wrote two lovely poems on the Christmas theme, and these were published in the *Cambrian News*.

We asked Kelvin to let us have a couple of his poems for 'CONTACT', and here they are . . .

SCHOOL FEES

"May I be excused?" a little voice said.
"Permission granted." So out he sped,
For hearing what Teacher had to say,
He'd made his mind up not to pay.
To pay attention and not fall asleep
Would be too difficult for him to keep.
As money for sweets was bad enough,
Now to pay attention would be too tough.
Reaching home, he was even more confused,
For Mum and Dad were actually amused,
But, upon hearing his sudden cries,
They soothed his fears with a rise.
And making sure he wouldn't be ill,
They promised to pay attentions bill.

HARMONY

Offspring are an extra joy
Be it a girl or be it a boy.
Dawn to dusk you hear the sounds
Of houses becoming battlegrounds.

Bedrooms becoming no-man's-land
Especially for Mums, with Hoover in hand.
Never putting the furniture back
Lucky to survive another attack.

Climbing chairs, writing on walls
Blaming each other for sudden falls.
Mum in kitchen, it's hard to tell
Whether it's pain or a rebel yell!

Even at meal-times there's no respite
Charging you plenty for every bite.
You threaten, bribe and even implore
Though most of it ends on the kitchen floor.

Attentions are turned to the family pet
Determined to give it a shampoo and set,
And, if unlucky enough to be found,
It's in the drier going round and round.

Husband not knowing what goes on,
As they don't start till after he's gone.
Home from work, you hear him say:
"Hello, Darling! Had a nice day?"

CONTACT FREE ADS

FOR SALE

PUBLIC ADDRESS EQUIPMENT—Sound City 200 Plus valve amplifier, two-channel, normal and bright, suit any instrument, even bass. £120 o.n.o.

18-inch Reflex bass bin, with one × Celestion GL, 100 watts, eight ohms. Excellent for any bass. £96 o.n.o.
Two × 18-inch speaker cabinet with two × Celestion GL18S, 100 watts, 16 ohms. £85 o.n.o. Tel. North Mersey internal 272 (Terry Brunt).

STEREO KEYBOARD—With stool and in-built speakers. Yamaha F.M. 61 full-size keys (five octaves), 18 solo voices, 18 orchestral voices, 32 × 2 rhythms, auto-bass chords, tape interface, pitch control. Little used. Cost £1,049. Will sell for £649. Te. Head Office internal 2079 (John Peel).

CARS

METRO CITY—Y Reg. Taxed to July. Very low mileage. £2,200. Tel. North Wirral internal 291 (Sharon Kennedy).

VAUXHALL NOVA—1.2 two-door saloon. B Reg. 15,000 miles. £3,000 o.n.o. Tel. Head Office internal 2510 or Runcorn 716161.

TYRES—Two 185 × 14 HR, part worn, to fit Scimitar. £12 each. Tel. Dee Valley internal 258 (John Goulding).

HOLIDAYS AT HOME

ABERYSTWYTH—Six-berth caravans from £35 per week (ten per cent discount for e.s.i. staff). Mains electricity, cooker, fridge and private toilet. Site facilities include a clubhouse, swimming pool, shop, restaurant, sauna, children's play area. Within easy walking distance of beach and town centre. Tel. 0970 3596 (Tomos Davies) after 5.00 p.m.

CHWILOG—Near Pwllheli, self-catering modernised country house to let, in peaceful, quiet position. Near to beaches. Apply to Mrs. A. Roberts, "Derlwyn", Chwilog, Pwllheli, Gwynedd. Tel. Chwilog 558.

LLANDUDNO—Guest house in town centre. B & B and evening meal. Tel. Llandudno 77898 (David Williams).

TALACRE BEACH—Luxury eight-berth caravan. All mod. cons. Electricity and gas, colour TV, flush w.c. and shower. On site with clubhouse, with swimming pool, tennis, bowls, etc. Tel. North Mersey internal 172/174 (Sue Wilson).

HOLIDAYS ABROAD

COSTA BRAVA—Privately-owned two-bedroom apartment, with swimming pool, at Estartit, a delightful fishing village only 300 metres from the sea. Flights arranged. Tel: H.O. internal 2140 (Denise Barlow) or Chester (0244) 28506.

COSTA DEL SOL—Fuengirola/Marbella. Studio apartment, sleeps three. Magnificent views. Shared pool. Near beach. Also available two-bedroom apartment. Flights arranged. Tel: Runcorn 76294 (Tom Johnson).

PLEASE PRINT YOUR FREE AD ON PLAIN PAPER AND SEND TO:
'CONTACT FREE ADS, MANWEB, SEALAND ROAD, CHESTER CH1 4LR

Money! Money!! Money!!!

AFTER the Christmas spending spree, for many people the time has now come for payments due . . . Access, Barclaycard and the thousand-and-one other plastic perils . . . have to be cleared with hard cash. With this in mind, we publish the following poem from our Oswestry colleague, Henry Blackwell, on the subject of . . .

"MONEY"

The main subject of conversation is the weather,
rain or sunny.
That subject is usually changed, to one we know
as "Money".
I suppose we owe it to the Romans, for coins first
used by Man;
Before that we just bartered, ever since the world
began.

So, looking back through the ages, it is our firm
belief
Our forebears in the Garden of Eden had no
need for tax relief;
No need for weekend shopping—Adam and
Eve were quite astute.
The had no Economy 7—just an orchard full of
fruit.

Now consider that Robin Hood, when in days of
yore
He went and robbed the idle rich, and gave it to
the poor.

In that famous Nottingham Forest, his game
paid well enough
Because they made him flippin' manager—long
before that Brian Clough!

Then that enterprising tyrant, you remember
Dick Turpin of course?
His income was a "doddle", using pistols and a
horse.
The money he took left all the folks just dancing
in a rage
Shouting "Stand and deliver, you horrible lot!",
as he held up every stage.

What of those oil-rich orientals in London we
have seen?
Each with a liveried chauffeur, and big black
limousine.
But back in those Eastern countries there's a
more pathetic side,
Half the people starving, taking a slightly
rougher ride.

Perhaps there's an unfair distribution—I know
mine is quickly spent
On everyday essentials, like bread, milk, rates
and rent.
But let's spare a thought for others, whose
outlook may be rough
And hope by the stars above us that at least
they'll get enough.

Are they here?

WITH Halley's Comet flying round the heavens, searching the skies may bring other things into view. Alan Foster, a meter operative in our North Wirral District, told us that two of his colleagues, "on their way to work at Prentonville", saw a cylinder-shaped object flying over Bidston Moss.

Alan goes on to say that he has never seen a U.F.O., but was prompted to write the following poem.

CONTACT. ALIEN?

Flying saucers and flying cigars.
From galaxies distant or, maybe, from Mars,
Alien beings in alien craft
Making our earth their terrestrial raft.
Are they real, or illusions of mind?
If real, are they friendly to human-kind?

Some of us see them, most of us don't.
Some admit seeing them, others won't!
Are they our past, or future maybe?
Do they belong to the humanoid tree?
If they're of earth, are they trying to come back,
But keep a low profile, for fear of attack?
Do they exist in the fourth dimension,
Safe from the earthling's aggressive intention?
Are they the "ghosts" of milleniums past,
Or of pre-Ice Age chaos, of atom war blast?
We need to find out if they truly exist,
Or are they of legend, like Avalon's mist?
But if they're amongst us, let's make a peace bid,
Before they take over—OUR NATIONAL GRID!

(Editor.—I wonder whether Alan's aliens are from outer space or from the privatisation lobby?)

In sombre mood

BY ACCIDENT

She cried for her mother,
begged for her to come,
held out her free arm,
hand, palm upwards, fingers spread,
tried to move and froze in pain,
cried out again for her mother.
She didn't seem to be aware
that she was upside-down,
suspended by the seat-belt,
her legs broken and trapped
in the tangle of twisted metal
that, seconds before, had been her car,
shining and cared for,
good on the road, easy to handle
and she had handled it easily.
A voice in the group of watchers
said that she wasn't going fast,
another said that fast was relative.
And the cries for her mother
were again the only sound,
but quieter now
as we waited, helplessly,
for the official help to arrive.
Odd how the book on keeping-fit
and the track-suit lay in the roof
of the upside-down car,
as I wondered when she had last cried
for her mother before this time,
which was the last time,
as she stopped crying,
and became an ultimate statistic . . .

Wrong Date

Last month we printed the wrong date for the Aberystwyth District LJCC Conference. Sorry! The correct date is **FRIDAY, 21st FEBRUARY**, and the meeting is in the **Wynnstay Hotel, Machynlleth**.