

Manweb-sponsored scheme spawns a second rugby international

# Prop Griffiths makes Welsh youth debut



Austin Thomas, North Wales District Director of Rugby, right, presents Cai Griffiths with his Welsh shirt, watched by Brian Davies of PowerSystems.

A YOUNG rugby player from Caernarfon has become the second from North Wales to make his full youth international debut, after benefiting from the unique development scheme sponsored by Manweb.

Cai Griffiths, who is a loose head prop, has represented Wales Under-18s this season against New Zealand, Australia and Scotland following his involvement in the North Wales Rugby Union's Youth Development scheme.

Cai enjoyed his international experience of playing against two of the leading rugby-playing countries in the world and is now hoping to be picked for Wales Under-19s to compete in

next year's FIRA cup competition.

The teenager, who also plays rugby for Caernarfon and Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen, and who last year won five caps for Wales Youth, is keen to eventually go on to play professional rugby union. He is also hopeful his success will motivate more players from North Wales to gain international recognition.

The Youth Development Scheme assists the development of youth rugby in the counties of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flint, Wrexham and Powys. Coaches visit all rugby clubs and schools in the area to increase participation and enhance performance amongst youngsters between

the ages of seven and 19.

Last year Mark Jones, who is also from Caernarfon, made his international debut for Wales Under-18s.

Brian Davies, PowerSystems Customer Relations Officer, said: "The company is very pleased to continue with the sponsorship of the development of youth rugby in North Wales.

"Cai's success shows the benefit of the development scheme, and I'm sure many more youngsters from North

Wales will go on to represent Wales in the next few years."

Austin Thomas, North Wales District Director of Rugby, said: "We are delighted with Cai's success and are very pleased that Manweb continues to be involved in the development of youth rugby in North Wales. The number of young players in North Wales continues to increase and our youth squads are now very competitive with similar squads from other areas of the country.

## Help in making tree-planting initiative grow

THREE tree-planting schemes in Wirral have come to fruition thanks to support from ScottishPower's RuralCare scheme.

The company linked up with the environmental charity Groundwork Wirral to enhance the landscape at three sites.

Under its compensatory replanting scheme, RuralCare undertakes to plant two new trees on a new site whenever one is cut down to free overhead power lines from the threat of storm damage.

Saplings were provided to Groundwork Wirral for schemes at neighbouring primary and infant schools in Ellesmere Port, elderly people's bungalows in Ellesmere Port and Stanney Fields Park in Neston.

"At Pooltown Primary School and the neighbouring Atherton Infants School we planted trees to soften the line of an ugly fence," said Dan Ellis, Senior Project Officer of Groundwork Wirral.

"Schoolchildren from Sutton High School helped us plant a hedge at the bungalows, and at Stanney Fields Park local people



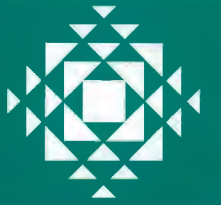
Laura Symcox, from Neston, aged five, plants a tree at Stanney Fields Park, helped by Dan Ellis of Groundwork Wirral (fourth from left) and Lee Southern (third from right,) commanding officer of 2375 Neston ATC squadron which helped with the project. Laura was accompanied by her friends and mother.

helped plant 1,000 new native trees such as oak, alder and willow which would have cost us £4,000.

"The children especially enjoy the planting - I always ask them: What else

have you done that will be around in 100 years time? We are grateful to the support from ScottishPower in these environmental projects and we hope their donation of trees will continue."

# Contact



NEWSLETTER FOR THE MANWEB AREA

February 2002

# Underground work to stop birds cutting power

A £250,000 project is underway to save major firms on Wrexham Industrial Estate from power dips caused by birds flying into overhead power lines.

Overhead lines on Bryn Estyn Lane, which runs down on to the Industrial Estate, are being taken down and the cables are being undergrounded to prevent damage from seagulls and other birds.

The winged marauders have been flying in from filter beds on a nearby sewage farm and colliding with the lines, causing the protection system to be activated. As a result a number of companies on the industrial estate have been experiencing dips in their supply which has caused their machinery to stop.

The remedial action by PowerSystems is being taken because the problem, ongoing for a number of years, has suddenly increased over the past year.

"Birds have been flying in to the 33 kv lines and activating the protection," said Network Operations Section Head Gary Evans.

"The dip has been affecting units on the Industrial Estate where sensitive equipment has been dropping off.

"The effects have been felt by our high-voltage customers on the Rhosesni to Marchwiel circuit. To prevent a recurrence we are undergrounding all the lines and expect the project to be completed by the end of March."

## Manweb Chairman is set to say a fond farewell



KEN Vowles, Chairman of Manweb and an Executive Director at ScottishPower for almost eight years, is to retire.

Ken, pictured left, joined ScottishPower in 1990 from National Power and is currently Executive Director, International. His 40-year career in the power generation industry was recognised in June 2001 when he was awarded an OBE.

ScottishPower Chairman Charles Miller Smith said: "Ken has played a key role in ScottishPower's transformation from a regional electricity company into an international energy group. We wish him well in the future and in his retirement."



## Foreign cash boosts charity

COINING it in... Project Manager Graham Morris and PowerPartners Co-ordinator Wendy Ellison pictured with some of the foreign change handed in by staff for conversion by the Royal Bank of Scotland into cash for the PowerPartners charities. Staff responded enthusiastically to the appeal, and the Bank has offered to count the coins free of charge - see next month's edition for the group grand total.

FREE EASTER TREAT FOR YOUNGSTERS - SEE PAGE THREE



# Battle of the bands

**H**OT on the heels of Pop Idol comes – ScottishPower's Battle of the Bands. Prenton office, home of singer-guitarist Mark Barry, is throwing down the gauntlet to singers throughout the group to form bands to take part in a grand play-off before a jury based on the massively successful TV talent hunt.

PowerSystems Restoration Engineer Mark himself, who plays in a Liverpool-based tribute group called Crowded Scouse, is preparing to appear as a member of one of the in-house bands. Invitations are going out to two bands in

ScottishPower, Sirius and Toffeehammer, while contestants are being sought in the North Wales and Merseyside areas for the event on June 21.

Jane Langdon, of Customer Relations PowerSystems at Prenton, the organiser of the Pop Idol-style competition, said: "The TV programme gripped everybody. The call centre and the PowerSystems staff at Warrington office even had rival posters up for the different finalists.

"Our Battle of the Bands will be run on the same basis with a judging panel and the bands required to sing a number of songs including self-penned material. We would hope to sell tickets to the general public, to create a wider interest in what is happening in the company."

Anyone interested should contact Jane on 0151-609 2036.



**FORMER Manweb Managing Director Bill Landels holds aloft the Olympic flame in the run-up to the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City.**

As senior executive Vice President with Utah Power, a subsidiary of ScottishPower, which is sponsoring the Games, Bill was asked to carry the flame for a quarter of a

mile through the streets of the city on the final leg before the opening ceremony. What is Bill saying as he celebrates this momentous occasion?

Write in with your entry to Anne Benson, Corporate Communications, Manweb House, Chester Business Park, Wrexham Road, Chester CH4 9RF.

## Olympic caption competition

# Tireless voluntary worker awarded the MBE

**FORMER Manweb employee Willow Williams has been honoured with an MBE.**

Willow, who was a part-time sales assistant at the Wrexham Retail Centre for four years, has been recognised for a lifetime of tireless service for the voluntary sector in the Wrexham area.

Aged 57, her work started at the young age of 14 as a voluntary worker for the Red Cross.

At the beginning of the 1980s, she worked as a Citizens Advice Bureau advisor and has acted as chair and vice-chair of the Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham.

Willow, who was a county councillor for Gwersyllt West for 16 years until 1998, is still a board member of Shelter Cymru and has been chair and vice-chair of the Wrexham Foyer charity, which is supported by ScottishPower Learning.

She acted as chairman of Wrexham's housing and

health committee for many years.

She said: "I am very surprised but of course delighted to be awarded an MBE. It really came out of the blue and I feel very honoured. I feel that there are a lot of people more worthy than me. It makes me very proud, but humble too."

# Special Easter treat for children



Storyteller Michael Harvey with youngsters at last year's Easter Extravaganza.

**C**HILDREN of employees are in for an Easter treat when storyteller Michael Harvey repeats his Easter Tales extravaganza.

Professional fabulist Michael will visit Wrexham, Prenton, Liverpool and Warrington offices to weave his web of enchanting narratives about stories of the sea.

It's the second time Cardiff-based Michael has agreed to set the offices buzzing with the sound of happy children's voices in the sessions provided through the company's partnership with Clwyd Theatr Cymru.

Last year the youngsters showed their appreciation with gasps of excitement at each twist and turn, and some even donned bunny ears to enter into the spirit of the occasion.

This time around they will again receive free Easter Eggs and a story book. A tape of

the stories they create with the help of the tale-teller will be sent on to them.

Jan Cahill, Corporate Communications Executive said: "The sessions were very popular last year. During evaluation of the scheme, staff were crying out for more similar events during the school holidays.

"Michael is a wonderful storyteller and his sessions are highly educational. The presentations are in line with the National Curriculum and they encourage reading and writing. Parents were even influenced to tell more stories to the children in their home environment."

The company sponsors Clwyd Theatr Cymru to send Michael Harvey into 56 primary schools in Cheshire and North Wales, where he delivers the same mix of tale-telling and story creation.

**ITINERARY FOR SESSIONS:**

**Thursday, April 4:**  
Wrexham 9.45am-12.30pm  
Warrington 2.30pm-4.30pm

**Friday, April 5**  
Liverpool 9.45am-12.30pm  
Prenton 2.30pm-4.30pm

For more details please contact Jan Cahill on 800 2091.

# Major overhead lines refurbishment ensures safe and secure supplies

A £200,000 refurbishment of overhead lines in Shropshire is helping to ensure safe and secure supplies to the Shawbury area.

As part of an ongoing investment in the region, staff from PowerSystems are updating and replacing 52 km of overhead lines around Muckleton, Edgebolton and Stanton.

Part of the scheme will see some low voltage overhead lines replaced with state-of the art cables which will not only improve the reliability of the supply but will be less intrusive on the environment. Where there are now up to five

cables they will be replaced with just one Aerial Bundled Conductor.

"The ABC cables are also much more resilient to the elements, so they will be less vulnerable to snow and high winds which cause the majority of faults on overhead lines," said Gary Evans, Network Operations Section Head for PowerSystems.

"The work will also include the use of specialist High Voltage Live Line teams, which will reduce the area of disruption to supplies while the refurbishment is being carried out."

# Club secure cut-price theatre tickets

THE Chester Sports and Social Club has organised discounted tickets on a variety of shows at two theatres in the region.

Coming up at Chester Gateway Theatre are *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding (March 12-16), *Monkey* by Mick Gordon (March 19-23) and *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett (April 16-20).

Half price tickets are avail-

able on a first come first served basis from the Gateway Box office in person or by phoning 01244-340392.

Please quote "Corporate Membership - Chester Sports and Social Club." Limited to two tickets per member, offer excludes any Saturday evening performance.

At Liverpool Empire, forth-

coming one night show offers are *Chicago* (March 22, application closing date March 5) *Sunset Boulevard* (June 21, application closing date March 12) and *The King and I* (November 26, application closing date March 12).

Ticket prices for members are for the first two shows £8, and for the third £5. For information and tickets contact Jacqui Hughes on 804-2378.

## POWERPartners

### Cycle relay for charity

AN appeal is going out for teams to take part in a PowerPartners charity cycle relay on Sunday, April 14. The challenge is to link the Wrexham and Warrington offices by teams which will each complete part of the country route in the form of a relay.

Friends and family can be part of a team, with any number in the team and any distance covered. Cyclists of all ages and ability can take part. For more information contact Melanie Jones, Caernarfon Super Centre Manager, on 840 800, external 01978-832800 or mobile 07753-623500.

### Have you got news for us?

IF you have a story for Contact please get in touch with editor Anne Benson on 800 2098 (internal) or 01244-652098, or Ron Quenby on 01244-678575 or fax 01244-678749.

## STORYTELLING RESERVATION COUPON

Employee name: .....

Location: .....

Contact number: ..... Number of places required: .....

Children's name/s and age/s (nb: not suitable for children aged under four): .....

Name of accompanying adult: .....

Preferred session location. Please circle: Liverpool / Wrexham / Warrington / Prenton

Please return coupon to Jan Cahill at Manweb House, Chester.





Manweb ScottishPower sponsor a Welsh National Opera innovative workshop for performing arts sixth formers at Cheshire school



Lymm High School sixth formers Paul Spencer and Holly Copeland act out a dramatic moment from the opera.



WNO staff producer Ben Davis, kneeling left, gives directions to the students watched by Manweb Corporate Communications Executive Jan Cahill, standing left, and Diane Thornton-Garratt, Head of Performing Arts at Lymm High.



Manweb's Jan Cahill gets in on the action surrounded by the performing arts students.



WNO music leader Tim Rhys-Evans gets the students warming up with singing exercises.

# Professionals help students get a head with their studies

**T**HE challenge of serving up John the Baptist's head on a plate has presented directors with problems ever since Richard Strauss wrote the stage direction for his controversial opera Salome.

Sixth form music students taking part in a Manweb ScottishPower-sponsored opera workshop at a school near Warrington were given the chance to experience first-hand the difficulties of staging such a challenging and risqué work.

The 30 A-level performing arts students at Lymm High School, working with singers Elizabeth Brice and Russell Hibberd, were delighted to be working with professionals from Welsh National Opera in the exciting and innovative project designed to help young people develop their theatrical skills.

Under the guidance of WNO staff producer Ben Davies and youth opera music leader Tim Rhys Evans, the students directed the professionals in scenes from the opera.

In the process they explored the themes running through the passionate and dramatic work which is

based on Oscar Wilde's play of the same name about Salome's obsession with John the Baptist.

After performing the dance of the seven veils for her lecherous step-father Herod, Salome obtains from him the promise of receiving anything she desires. She opts for the head of John the Baptist, on a plate.

### Characters

The Lymm High School project, held over two days, explored the themes of lust, passion and immorality that run through the opera and in particular the relationship between the main characters.

The pupils went into groups to work on the formulation of character, the finding of biomechanics and sounds for each character, and the creation of image sequences to chart moments of change in the opera.

WNO Head of Production, Berwyn Davies, said: "The Salome project is designed to support the curriculum, focusing particularly on creativity and the language of theatre."

"Salome is a great story to be working with and it allows the

students to really get their teeth into some of the challenges of staging an opera production of this kind.

"We hope that the young people who take part in this project will develop both their personal and professional skills as a result.

"It is vitally important that creative young people get the opportunity to work with professionals to enrich their experience and support their academic studies.

"Welsh National Opera is committed to working with young people and communities around the country and we are grateful for Manweb ScottishPower's support in this area of our work."

After developing their Salome-based work, the Lymm students went on to attend a technical workshop and will visit a production in Birmingham of the opera, which is part of WNO's Spring Season.

Corporate Regional Director Stewart Saunders said: "Manweb ScottishPower is committed to the communities it works in. One of our aims is to give young people the opportunity to experience and parti-

cipate in different art forms."

Diane Thomas-Garratt, Head of Performing Arts at Lymm High School, was delighted with the outcome of the Manweb ScottishPower-sponsored sessions at Lymm High School.

She said: "It has been an absolutely fantastic experience. The pupils have really enjoyed it and been totally engaged for the two days. They have had a new experience of a genre they are not familiar



WNO cover singer Elizabeth Brice teaching breathing exercises to students Katie Hall and David Bradshaw.

with. The WNO linked the work into their exam syllabus and course. The sessions were worth two months in the classroom.

"They encouraged and helped motivate the students to further

their studies and broadened their outlook in how to develop performing arts. The participants were exhausted at the end of the experience and are now looking forward to seeing opera on stage."



Acting out a scene from the opera are student Carmel Clowes and David Owen.



Elizabeth Brice in a question and answer session with the students.



Christmas show contest captures schoolchildren's imagination

# Masks reveal young talent

**T**HE winners of the Manweb ScottishPower Make a Mask competition organised by Chester Gateway Theatre have been announced.

Children of primary school age were asked to create a mask showing their favourite character from the Christmas show, *The Snow Queen*.

Emma Wigglesworth, aged 10, from Alderley Edge School for Girls, came top with her mask of the Cobweb Spider, the Snow Queen's evil sidekick. She won a Waterstones book voucher, a goodie bag courtesy of the Grosvenor Shopping

Centre and a trip for her whole class to Chester Zoo.

The four runners-up, who each received a pair of tickets for one of the Gateway's Playtime shows for children, were Abigail Barnes from Alderley Edge School for Girls, Amy Louise Holland from Cherry Grove Primary School, Boughton, Bobbie Wood-Brignall and Lauren Monks, both from Woodside Primary School.

Corporate Regional Director Stewart Saunders judged the competition together with Chester MP Christine Russell. Both were impressed by the



Regional Director Stewart Saunders and Chester MP Christine Russell with the winning entry by Emma Wigglesworth.

quality of the masks, which were brightly coloured and created from paper, card and papier mâché.

Stewart said: "We offer our congratulations to Emma and

the runners-up. We were really pleased with the quality and number of entries received for the competition - judging them was very difficult as all the masks received were excellent."

## Sports and social club organise special play day at Dai's Den

A CHILDREN'S Play Day with party games and food has been arranged for children of members of the Chester Sports and Social Club.

Two two-hour sessions are to be held in Dai's Den, a soft play area at St David's Park Hotel, Ewloe on Sunday April 14. Parents can leave their children for a two-hour session with Dai's Den qualified staff or stay and join in the fun.

The sessions, from 12 noon to 2 pm and 3 pm

to 5 pm, have limited places available. The first is for children aged 2-4, the second for children aged 5-7. Preference will be given to Chester Sports and Social Club members' own children with a limit of two children per member.

The offer, costing £2 per child, is subject to availability on a first come first served basis. Contact Wendy Ellison on 800 2079 internal, 01244-652079 external.

## Prize draw cash winners

THE following were the winners of the EEIBA Prize Draw in October 2001: £350 G.J.Parry, retd; £250 K.Goodlass, Prenton; £125 W.Pinder, retd; £100 M.Boyd, retd; £75 P.McLean, Boultings, P.A.Piercy, retd; £50 P.C.Davies, Rhostyllen, T.P.Jones, retd, L.Ridgway, retd; £30 A.Bent, retd, D.G.Griffiths, First Hydro; £25 E.B.Boswell, retd, R.Brown, Fiddlers Ferry, A.J.Williams, Warrington, J.E.Young, retd, J.C.Illidge, retd, M.W.Owen, Porthmadog, M.Okaj, retd, D.Wade, retd, G.Bowers, retd.

The November 2001 winners were: £350 D.I.Sage, retd; £250 B.H.Weston, retd; £125 N.E.Harrison, Queensferry; £100 R.D.Evans, retd; £75 J.Cowley, retd, M.Patterson, retd; £50 G.W.Pittman, retd, C.Thomas, retd; £30 W.S.Holloway, retd, G.W.Burgess, retd, J.B.Poole, retd, G.W.B.Pryce, retd, K.Y.Davies, Rhostyllen, F.Griffiths, retd; £25 H.J.Finch, retd, M.D.S. Jones, EME, B.W.Flint, Lister Drive, P.M.Simcock, Queensferry, J.A.Harper, Lister Drive, P.M.Madren, Lister Drive.

CHESTER SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB

### Dinner Dance

Friday April 26, 2002

at Craxton Wood Hotel, Ledsham, Wirral  
Arrive from 7 pm for 7.45 pm

Fabulous four-course dinner with wine

**BAND AND DISCO**  
(DJ will play your favourite disco tracks)

**PRIZE RAFFLE**  
(in aid of PowerPartners)  
Smart dress (black tie optional)  
Tables of 10 (limit of 22 tables)

Tickets are priced at £15 and are available from Jacqui Hughes, Personnel, Wrexham.  
Tel **01978 832378** or **804 2378**.  
First come, first served.  
All current members of *Chester Sports and Social Club* will receive a free £15 drinks voucher on arrival.

# Special offer on luxury mini cruise

**R**EADERS are being offered the chance to sail away on a Mini Cruise Break to sample the delights of Scandinavia or Northern Europe.

DFDS are offering a special discount on their popular two- or three-night breaks which feature a choice of attractive destinations such as Amsterdam, Denmark, Germany and Sweden.

Prices are from £53 for a discounted package which includes two nights' private ensuite cabin accommodation on board ship for a return voyage, plus either a complimentary sightseeing tour or return city transfers on arrival at the chosen destination.

On board ship live entertainment, restaurants and bars are available as you cruise in style.

Sailing from Newcastle the Mini-Cruise Breaks are to Amsterdam, with its museums, galleries, famous canals and bustling street cafes or Gothenburg with its jazz bars. Germany and Denmark are reached by sailings from Harwich.

For the two-night break, with standard inside cabin with shower and wc, the cost is £53



Sail away on the Princess of Scandinavia.

in February, March, October, November and December 1-20; £65 in April, May, June and September; and £77 in July and August.

The offer is subject to a minimum of two persons travelling together and sharing the same cabin.

There are a series of three-night Mini-Cruise Breaks operating throughout the year. The Swedish Mini-Cruise Break is on Fridays, the Danish is on Saturdays during May and September, and the German is on Sundays from September to

December only. These departures carry a £25 supplement for the extra night, but also include breakfast each morning.

The offer is subject to availability and valid on selected departure dates only. The offer is subject to a minimum of two persons travelling together and sharing the same cabin.

For further information and to make a booking phone 08705-333-222, making sure you quote the exclusive discount booking code: Two-night Mini Cruise V6812; Three-night Mini Cruise V6813.

## Tom's book makes Anne Robinson's the weakest link in their home town of Crosby

FORMER Manweb meter reader Tom Heath, whose first book featuring postcards of Crosby, Seaforth and Waterloo was featured in the last edition of *Contact*, has undoubtedly hit on a winning formula.

Both the first collection and a second which publishers Tempus released as a follow-up have sold out, and reprints have been ordered in both cases.

Sales of the second of Tom's Images of England books even trounced *Memoirs Of An Unfit Mother* by Anne Robinson in a bookshop in Crosby, the home

town of TV's "Queen of Mean."

Tom said: "It has sold amazingly well and I would like to thank everyone who bought a copy. I am delighted that Tempus is now doing a reprint."

The enterprising archivist is now planning another book. He said: "I would like to compile another collection based on the Crosby, Waterloo, Seaforth and Litherland area.

There are still a lot of postcards and old photographs left over but I am very interested in anyone with images dating from 1900 to the 1930s of



Tom Heath

streets, buildings or social groups."

To contact Tom phone 0151-931 2033 or visit his stand at the United Reformed Church Hall, Eshe Road, Crosby on February 9, March 9, April 13 or May 11 between 9 am and 4 pm.



## MBE award for Peter

MEMBERS of the North Wirral retirees association are celebrating the award of the MBE to one of their members in the Queen's New Year Honours. Peter Doran, husband of Kath Doran who worked in general services at Manweb's Craven Street office on North Wirral, received the accolade for his services to the Sea Scouts.

## Meeting in a storm

ATTENDANCE at the Annual General Meeting and annual dinner was perilous for members of the Aberystwyth retirees association. The meeting took place on the stormy night of February 1, and members had to negotiate flood waters in Machynlleth on the route to and from the Penmaendyfi Restaurant at Pennal.

## Torquay bound

MEMBERS of the Mid Mersey retirees are taking an early-in-the-year break at their favourite hotel in Torquay - for the fourth time running. They like the resort for its setting and climate, and they find the people who run the hotel especially homely and welcoming.

## Tales of a traveller

LOCAL personality Emyr James, who used to work in the Manweb drawing office, entertained the Dee Valley retirees with a fascinating geographical talk. Emyr regaled members with the latest in his series of "traveller's tales", based on his extensive forays abroad to countries such as India.