

# Contact

February 1981

"Highlighting the job"  
(see page 25)



INTERNATIONAL DOMESTIC  
ELECTRICAL APPLIANCE  
EXHIBITION

## Buoyant Mood

### BRIGHT AND COLOURFUL

A REASONABLY fine day slotted between a windy, wet and ice-cold spell earlier this year, encouraged a very large party of press representatives from all over the country to travel to the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham. Here they previewed the magnificent shop window, set out by nearly 200 exhibitors, to show the very latest in international domestic electrical appliances.

Joining our contingent of female friends from the media in the MANWEB area was a team of newsmen from HTV Wales.

The outlook presented by all the manufacturers at the show was bright and colourful—obviously regardless of the current economic recession and the country-wide unemployment situation. No doubt they were out to prove their potential and the importance of the UK domestic electrical appliance market on the national economy.

A special briefing for the media representatives was given, in her usual inimitable way, by Miss Gwen Conacher, the Electricity Council's Home Economist.

She said there was a buoyant atmosphere on the stands and most manufacturers of what we call "white goods" had put on a very good show. Gwen noted that last year's feeling towards energy-consciousness was continued in this year's presentation, with increased involvement of micro-processors in domestic appliances.

Another notable trend was the increased use of colour—"symptomatic of the mood of the exhibition". Electrolux told the story of their "white goods showing their true colours" by introducing matching cookers, fridges and washing-machines in three tasteful colours.

The British manufacturers of cookers reported encouraging sales of ceramic hobs and quoted from a recent survey to prove over 90 per cent satisfaction among owners. Thorn displayed their excellent interchangeable door-hinging now available on all their major appliances.

There was good news on the microwave cooker front, too, with target sales of 120,000 achieved last year. The Microwave Oven Association now predict that domestic ownership should reach an impressive 2.45 per cent in 1981. The growth figure in recent years reflects the market confidence and strength. Again, there was a mood of optimism, with some

manufacturers producing new models.

She went on to say that the trend in home-laundry equipment was towards more compact models, with electronic controls and economy programmes. She instanced the TI Creda "1000", which has all its own functions, including diagnosing its own faults, controlled by the micro-chip.

To combat the problem of condensation arising from tumble-dryers, some models now turned the moist air back into water and channelled it down the drain-hose. Others offered a choice of two spin-speeds, which, it was claimed, reduced creasing.

Also of particular interest this year was the emphasis on steam-irons designed to beat the hard-water bogey.

Warm colours on the cold front heralded new features in freezers, with smokey-brown interiors and outer casings blossoming in bright colours. Tricity introduced a novel facility on their new refrigerator, whereby cold drinks could be obtained *without* opening the fridge door. The same manufacturer had simplified the problem of defrosting.

Bringing her summary to a close, Miss Conacher referred to the many new compact shower-units now available—and reasonably-priced. She spoke of the continued trend towards small cooking-appliances, "*more varied than ever before*", with, once again, the use of colour adding to their attractions.

She mentioned the Philips and Sona can-openers as just two of the many appliances suitable for use by disabled people—a pertinent point in this "International Year of Disabled People".

Gwen finally selected as her show-stoppers a super little chunky hair-dryer by FCF and a pasta-maker displayed by Shirbourne Associates.

#### The All-Electric Future

Commenting that 1981 was an historic landmark for the electricity supply industry, Mr. Jim Eddyshaw, Associate Marketing Adviser of the Electricity Council, reminded us that it was exactly 100 years since the first public supply of electricity was made available at Godalming in Surrey.

He suggested that today's large range of labour-saving electrical appliances on view at the exhibition could be taken as the start of our celebrations.

He pointed to some of the things our industry had achieved in the past 100 years. From providing simple lighting, the electricity industry had developed and was now able to bring a host of willing and reliable servants into the home.

"As much of this invention began here in Britain, we have a great deal to be proud of and a greater deal to look forward to in living electrically," he said. "The lead at this exhibition is toward appliances which are progressively more efficient in the use of electricity.

"After all, whether the power of the future comes from wind, coal, waves, or nuclear—it is going to be electric," he concluded.

# Contact

THE STAFF MAGAZINE  
OF THE  
MERSEYSIDE AND  
NORTH WALES  
ELECTRICITY BOARD

Vol. 33 No. 2

February 1981

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## Editorial

Information Office, 5S1,  
Head Office,  
Sealand Road,  
Chester CH1 4LR

Internal  
telephone numbers  
2106, 2107, 2108

## DIFFICULT TIMES

AS Merseyside and Deeside reel under a seemingly endless succession of factory closures and mass redundancies, it is inevitable that this unhappy situation should be reflected in much-reduced sales of electricity to industry.

MANWEB is very much an "industrial" Board. Well over half of our unit sales normally go to industrial customers, and Merseyside and Deeside are the developed heartland of the MANWEB area.

From the earliest days of MANWEB's existence right up to 1979/80, the demand for electricity from industry followed a steady and predictable upward trend—with only one or two minor hiccups along the way. The current year tells a contrasting and depressing story. There has been closure and contraction in many fields of activity, involving household names in the steel, motor manufacturing, paper, rubber, textiles and food industries—to mention but a few. Every such development means falling demand on the electricity network.

Naturally enough, everyone hopes that better times are around the corner, that the trends of the recent past will be reversed and that health and vigour will return to the economy. If and when that time comes, the electricity supply industry will be expected to meet whatever demands may be placed upon it. We must ensure that our house and our distribution network remain in good order, despite the present gloomy climate.

At the same time, we are increasingly expected to do everything possible to help our customers of every category to get the most efficient and economic benefits from the electricity they use. The efforts of our commercial colleagues on the industrial front (reported elsewhere in this number of 'Contact') represents a very real contribution during a difficult period.

Please let the Editorial staff know of any large-scale or unusual engineering schemes or commercial projects going on in your department. We are interested in people too! Contact us about your interesting personalities with a story to tell.

# Ancient Church and Modern Lighting

## INSTALLED BY MANWEB CRAFTSMEN

NEW light has been thrown on the ancient fabric of St. Mary's, the 14th Century Nantwich Parish Church, with the installation of a £25,000 lighting scheme.

At the formal switching-on ceremony a few weeks ago, church architect Mr. James Edleston praised Thorn Lighting for their original design work. He then went on to pay a special tribute to Mr. Ken McDean and Mr. Graham Atkins, two men from MANWEB, who had shown the highest standards of skilled craftsmanship in carrying out the installation.

Mr. Edleston said that the new lighting, based on the system installed at Lichfield Cathedral, provided St. Mary's with a standard of illumination far above that recognised by normal codes of practice.

*"With its woodwork and its proportions, St. Mary's is one of the medieval churches in England."*

—Sir John Betjeman.

Some 3,200 metres of PVC mineral-insulated cable, specially manufactured by BICC in sand-brown sheath to blend into the background of the ancient stone walls, replaces the lead-covered wiring which was installed nearly 50 years ago.

Strategically-placed 300-watt and 500-watt tungsten halogen lamps can be controlled to bring a subdued lighting effect to a brilliance which can illuminate the whole interior of the church.

The system has been designed to show to advantage interesting features of the church, such as the choir stalls, the massive stone pulpit and the decorative chancel ceiling. There is also provision for the lighting of special events like readings and recitals.

High-pressure sodium lamps bring out the architectural beauty and the majestic features of the timbered beams supporting the high roof. It is interesting to record that, when installing these fittings, our electricians came across some carvings on the beams

*"St. Mary's Church is one of the great architectural treasures of Cheshire."*

—Raymond Richards.

which have probably never been seen since the day they were repaired in 1699!

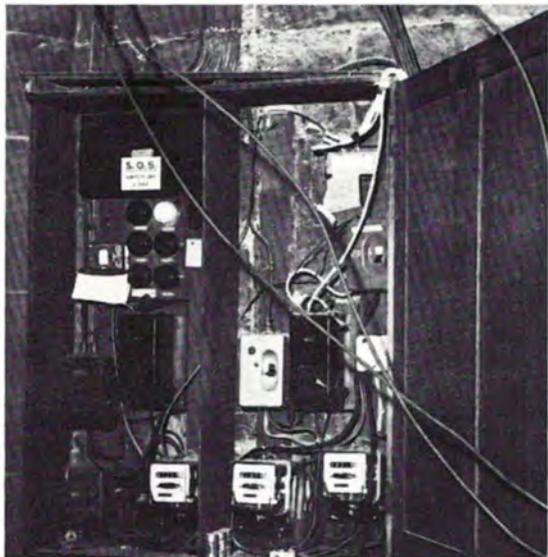
Lighting has also been renewed up to the bell-tower and a new system of warning lights, operated from the West Door, allow for signals to be given to the organist, bell-ringers and in the two vestries. Everything seems to have been thought of!

A total of 140 fittings have been expertly installed and the electricity load amounts to 27 kilowatts. Working from designs by Thorn Lighting, Mr. Derek Johnson (2nd engineer—Installation), prepared our successful quote to gain the contract.

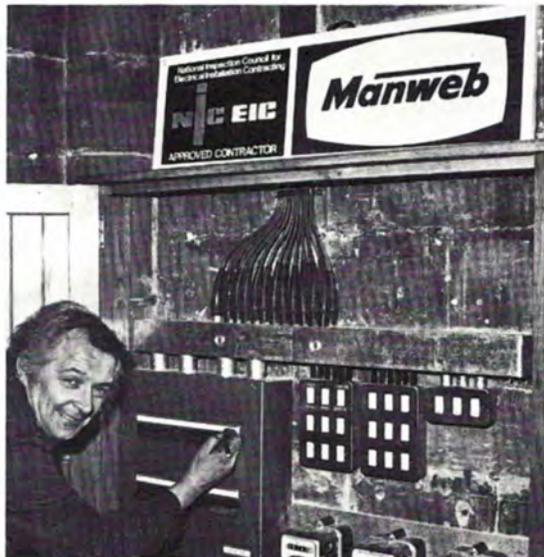
At the ceremony held to switch on and dedicate the lighting, members of our Mid-Cheshire District staff who had worked on the lighting installation were among the specially-invited guests.

With St. Mary's forming the backdrop, we see, from left to right: Messrs. Jim Bird (Installation Engineer), Derek Johnson and James Edleston.





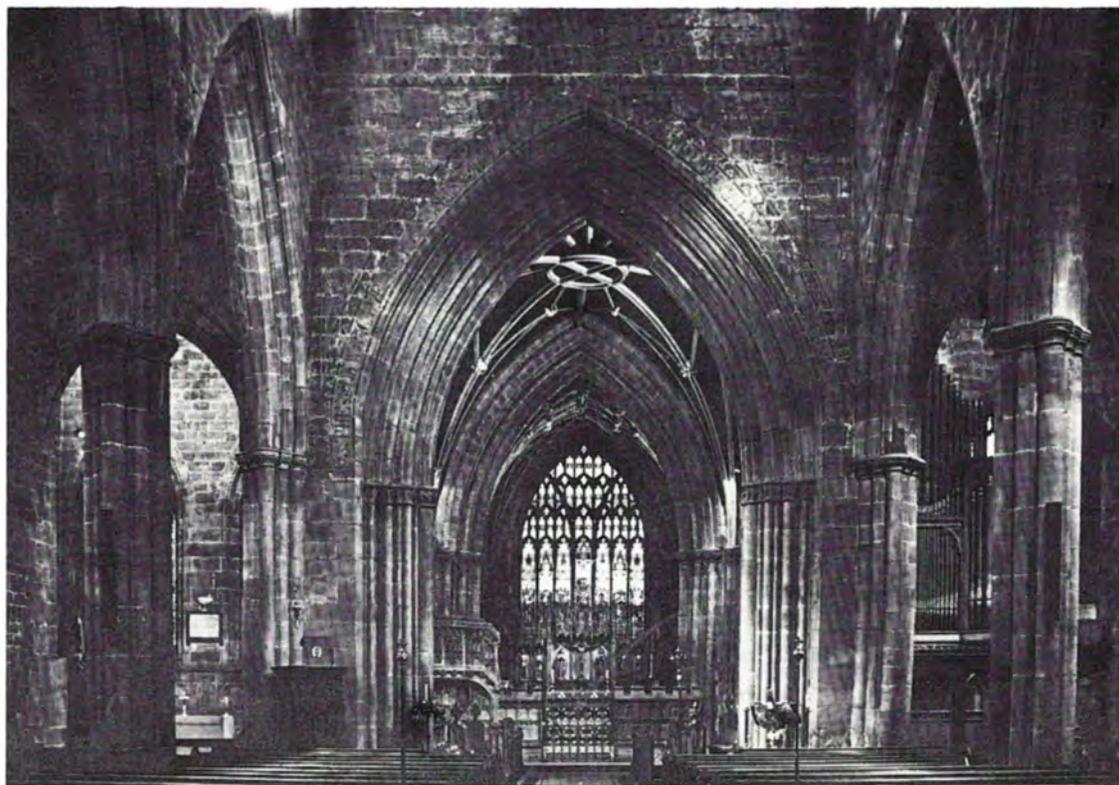
The main switchboard—before . . .



. . . and after—MANWEB's installation.

**OUR COVER PICTURE** shows MANWEB craftsmen, from left to right: Messrs. Robert Cooke (apprentice), Graham Atkins and Ken McDean (electricians), who did a magnificent job on the church lighting installation.

Photographer Mike Hall's picture of the striking and majestic interior of Nantwich Parish Church, tastefully illuminated by Men from MANWEB to Thorn Lighting's design.



# 25 YEARS OF CRAFT TRAINING

## *Female Duo as Apprentices*

**T**WENTY-FIVE years ago, our training centre at Hoylake opened its doors to the first intake of 26 craft apprentices. Since then, well over 2,000 young men have passed through the initial training on their way to becoming successful electricians, meter mechanics, electrical fitters and motor vehicle mechanics.

Many former Hoylake apprentices who qualified in their trade now hold top jobs in MANWEB and with other Boards throughout the country.

For the current intake of 62 apprentices, over 2,000 youngsters applied for selection—with six applications coming from females! Two of these reached the final stage and so, for the very first time, we have young girls as craft apprentices at our Hoylake centre.

When the period of curiosity and wise-cracks had passed, both girls settled down to work in harmony alongside their male counterparts.

Man in charge at Hoylake, Mr. Ron Slack, who retired this month, commented: *"I didn't have any misgivings about the integration of the two young girls into our normal, all-male community. We were obviously breaking new ground and I was very pleased to see it happen before I retired."*

The girls concerned, who are being trained as meter mechanics, are Julie Jones from Liverpool and Jane Wightman from Ellesmere Port. They reached their 17th birthday last November and December respectively.

Julie left Holly Lodge Upper School with seven CSE's, including maths, electronics and physics.

*"I never fancied typing or office work, as I was always interested in the more manual type of work,"* she told us. *"So I applied for this apprenticeship and am very pleased to have been accepted."*

She likes to ski and enjoys ice-skating, paying a regular weekly visit to the rink in Liverpool.

Jane was a pupil at Stanney Comprehensive School in Ellesmere Port prior to taking up an apprenticeship with the Board. While still at school, her rather unusual hobby for a girl was servicing cars for her friends. She, too, felt that a technical job, where she could use her hands as well as her head, was preferable to shop or office work.

Unlike Julie, who travels to and from her home each day, Jane is in lodgings at West Kirby from Monday to Friday each week—an experience she enjoys very much.

Both girls admit that some of the work is a little hard and they have realised that the need for concentration, especially with the theory, is of paramount importance if they are to make the grade.

When they complete their initial training at Hoylake later this year, they will spend three months on further specialised instruction and study at Derby Technical College. After this, Julie will continue her apprenticeship at our Lister Drive meter section in Liverpool and Jane will be based at the New Crane Street meter section in Chester.

We wish both girls—and the 60 young men—every success in their futures as craftspersons.

Smiles for our cameraman as Hoylake's first female apprentices pose for their pictures. *On the left we see Julie Jones and, on the right, Jane Wightman.*





**Above:** Apprentice Lloyd A. Haughton from Mid-Cheshire District.  
**Left:** A contingent from Aberystwyth District, from left to right: Anthony W. Holt, Aled P. Hughes, Geraint Williams and Kenneth Dewhurst.



**Above:** from left to right: Gary Edwards (North Wirral) and Robin Davies (Clwyd).  
**Right:** From left to right: Robert Rudge (Mid-Mersey), Robert Wallace (Liverpool), Simon Vernon (Mid-Mersey) and Stephen Simcott (Dee Valley).



**A daily scene in the apprentices' canteen. From left to right: Kenneth Dewhurst (Aberystwyth)—he seems to get everywhere—Daphne Yoxall, Barbara Ross, Pamela Wootton and Timothy Mason (Oswestry).**





The Duke of Westminster (fourth from left) with civic leaders from several local authorities at the opening of the Nuclear Power Exhibition.

## Nuclear Power Exhibition

More than 4,000 people visited the ten-day Nuclear Power Exhibition, organised by the Nuclear Power Information Group, which was staged at Chester recently. The exhibition was held at the city's Northgate Arena, and explained the nuclear power story in easy-to-understand terms for the benefit of the non-technical visitor—including many parties of local schoolchildren.

It was formally opened by the Duke of Westminster, who expressed his support for the theme, by saying that it was the duty of the present generation to look after the future of their children by providing economic stability which would not be shaken by warring Middle Eastern countries or spiralling oil prices.

The Duke—together with representatives of local authorities—was welcomed by Mr. Tom Marsham, managing director of the Northern Division of the UKAEA. Mr. Marsham urged teachers to encourage pupils to see the exhibition—"and bring their questions, doubts and fears with them!"

Outside the door of the exhibition hall, the "Friends of the Earth" set up their stall to put their anti-nuclear arguments, but a democratic "freedom of speech" atmosphere prevailed throughout.

The exhibition, which has now been "on tour" for about a year, will shortly visit Wetmouth, Plymouth and Leicester, later moving on to East Anglia, Liverpool and Birmingham.

### Contact Competitions

#### Crossword (December 'Contact')

Our bumper crossword published in the December issue of 'Contact' attracted only 43 entries, with about half of these from Head Office staff and eight from our retired friends and their families.

The first three all-correct solutions opened, and winners of our £5 prizes, are:

**Mrs. Joan Owen (retired)**, Bron Heulyn, Smithy Lane, Rhostyllen.

**Mr. Keith Morris, e.h.v.** jointer at Southport, in our North Mersey District.

**Mr. J. Stead**, Revenue, Head Office.

#### CROSSWORD SOLUTION

##### Across

1 Come to the cookhouse door boys. 15 Scalene. 16 Oxygenation. 17 Largo. 18 Ducks. 19 Introit. 20 Alibi. 21 Rio. 22 Ash. 23 Orchestra. 24 Penge. 25 Heathen. 26 Elk. 27 Labour Party. 30 Campari. 32 Pot shot. 35 Vocalists. 37 Aspirin. 38 Nescience. 40 Topicalities. 42 Five. 44 Soap opera. 45 Fen. 46 Exculpate. 48 Mole. 49 Bohemian Girl. 52 Dreamland. 54 Upgrade. 55 In the open. 57 Aureola. 59 Naphtha. 60 Angling club. 62 Sam. 64 Pasteur. 65 Peace. 66 Benighted. 67 Man. 68 Ram. 69 Drift. 70 Sistine. 72 Marco. 74 Cargo. 75 Soft centres. 76 Impedes. 77 Where there's a will there's a way.

##### Down

1 Could not love thee dear so much. 2 Music. 3 Transsexual. 4 The big top. 5 Electra. 6 Ovolve. 7 Keystone cops. 8 Operate. 9 Spanish Main. 10 Deification. 11 Ownership. 12 Balloon. 13 Yardage. 14 Do shake the darling buds of May. 24 Prytaneum. 28 Bacup. 29 Rosette. 31 Merlin. 33 Tricorn. 34 Hinge. 36 Sultana. 39 Sea mist. 41 Colombo. 42 Fee. 43 Exonerate. 44 Seeking. 45 Flight. 47 Clear. 50 Impel. 51 Caravanserai. 53 Daniel Defoe. 54 Upper circle. 56 Engagements. 58 Assumpsit. 61 Innkeeper. 63 Monarch. 64 Parlour. 65 Petunia. 66 British. 71 Sisal. 73 Resew.

#### What is it? (December 'Contact')

Ray Stobart's picture was not a UFO but a picture taken from inside a house through a window. The 'UFO' was the centre light fitting's reflection in the window. First correct answer was **Mr. E. Mackintosh**, a vehicle mechanic at Pumpfields, Liverpool. A cheque for £5 is on its way.

Looking at an infra-red emitter used in drying car bodies are, left to right: Bob Conliffe (B.I.C.C. Prescott), Glyn Norbury (Mid-Mersey D.C.E.), Mike Potts (Mid-Cheshire District), Alistair McDonald (Dept. of Industry Regional Director) and Rod Pierce (Works Elec. Eng., Ford, Halewood).



## Industrial Drying Seminars

Every year industry spends about £500 million on energy used in drying processes—five times as much as is spent on installing plant to do the job.

The plant itself will probably last for 15 to 20 years and, in view of the ever-changing relativity of fuel prices, it pays industrialists to think carefully about the various energy options open to them before choosing plant.

While the bulk-drying field still depends largely on fossil fuels for energy, electricity will play an increasing role in the years ahead.

This was the message for about 150 of our industrial customers at two seminars held recently, with the support of the North West Region of the Department of Energy.

The programme embraced energy management, and specific electrical techniques in industrial drying.

Mr. Alistair McDonald, the Regional Director of the Department of Industry, chaired the first meeting, while our Deputy C.C.O., Derek Holman, chaired the second.

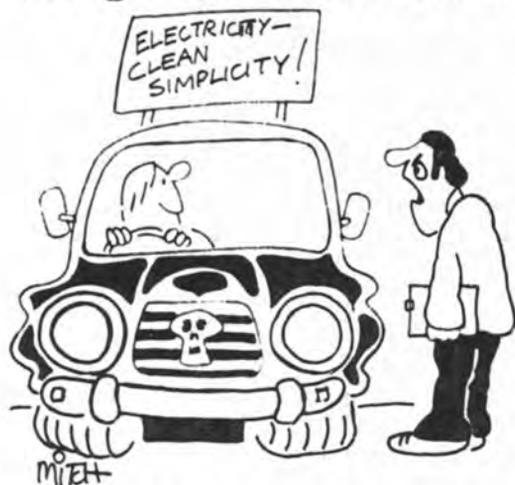
Welcoming the delegates, Mr. McDonald drew attention to the need to cut costs and improve production in the present difficult economic climate. Saying that the seminars were timely and topical, he thanked the Ford Motor Company, I.C.I. and the Electricity Council Research Centre for making visit facilities available to the delegates.

At Ford's Halewood factory they saw electrical appliances for drying car-bodies, and at I.C.I. the first commercial-scale plant for the production of Saffil

alumina fibre. A high temperature heat-pump, used in various drying processes and a 'hybrid oven'—incorporating several different electrical heating techniques—were explained at Capenhurst.

As a result of the meetings, individual discussions on the way in which electricity can help are being held with the industrialists who attended.

## Laugh with Mitch ..



"I don't care if it is all the rage, you can't customise our vans!"

# Talking Notes

## UNION MAN JOINS BOARD

**Mr. John Griffiths**, Chairman of the Wales TUC and North Wales officer of the Transport and General Workers' Union, has been appointed a member of the MANWEB Board by Secretary of State for Energy Mr. David Howell.

Mr. Griffiths, the son of a miner, was brought up at Coedpoeth, near Wrexham. His early working life was with the Crosville Motor Company, but he moved into full-time trade union work in 1958.

During the Second World War, he served in the Royal Navy, making four Arctic convoy trips to Russia on the destroyer *Echo*

and also serving on the battleship *Ramillies* in support of the Allied landings in the South of France and Normandy.

Mr. Griffiths is a magistrate, sitting on the Mold bench. He is married, with two grown-up children, and now lives in Shotton, Deeside.

His hobbies include bowls, music—and looking after his grandchildren.

Mr. John Griffiths.



### Golf Captain

A top man from MANWEB has been chosen as the captain of Vicars Cross Golf Club.

**Mr. Geoff Barnes**, the Chief Accountant, has been elected to skipper the Chester club in 1981. He has been a member for the last 17 years.

A Lancastrian who started his career in the electricity industry with Norweb in 1949, he joined MANWEB 25 years ago as Area Accountant in the former Area 2 at Eversley.

He is naturally right-handed until it comes to golf, when he favours his left. He plays off a handicap of 16. He hopes during his captaincy the club will take the lead in inter-club contests.

There are a sprinkling of MANWEB staff who are fellow-members of the Vicars Cross Golf Club, but it is something of a coincidence that the club's ladies'

vice-captain is a member of Geoff Barnes' Haed Office Accounts staff. Mrs. Sheila Moseley, whom we featured on the cover of our October 'Contact', also plays off a 16 handicap.

### Progress Report

From friends in the Oswestry District comes encouraging news on the progress of little **Sarah Jane Williams**, the eight-year-old daughter of **Terry Williams**, our shop supervisor at Oswestry.

Sarah Jane, who suffered severe brain damage following a mastoid operation in May 1978, will be remembered by the many members of our staff who put in great efforts to raise over £2,000 towards the £20,000 required for her treatment by specialists.

It was just 12 months ago that the therapy programme was started. This entails continuous daily treatments from 7.00 a.m. until 8.00 p.m. Sarah Jane has been effectively taken back to babyhood and has had to re-learn all that had been taught to her. She was taught to crawl, move her hands, arms and feet in co-ordinated motion, and has exercised her breathing for at least two hours each day.

Her education is also taken care of with words, sentences, pictures and simple sums repeatedly fed into her brain.

Soon, the family will return to the clinic at Bridgewater, where doctors will re-assess her progress.

Terry and his wife, Joyce, are delighted with the significant

improvement being made and they enthuse over their daughter's ability to answer many questions.

They both wish to say how much they really appreciate the assistance given by friends and MANWEB staff in continuing the daily programme. There is lots of hope for little Sarah Jane's future, but the re-training will be a very long job. More people are urgently required to help with the therapy treatment and Terry would be pleased to hear from volunteers willing to devote a few hours of their time to help towards the recovery of his darling Sarah Jane.

**Sarah Jane and her Mum, Joyce, make a new friend, Father Christmas.**



### Stork Visit

We offer our congratulations to **Pauline Wharton**, formerly of our Registry section at Liverpool District, who gave birth to a lovely daughter, Natalie, last month.

Proud Pop Adrian works in Sayers Research Laboratory in Liverpool.

### Liverpool Link-Up

Our very best wishes for a happy future go to **Tommy Salkeld**, a meter mechanic at Lister Drive, and to **Janette Hancock**, a clerk in the Meter Test section, who were married

to each other just before Christmas.

Numerous gifts, which no doubt will come in very handy, were presented to the happy couple from friends in the office and section.

### Fair Trading

A busy time was had by all at a recent Trade Fair held in Wrexham. Dee Valley District energy sales staff sold a number of commercial catering appliances.

The fair was organised by the Wrexham-based Border Brewery, who were keen to stem a down-

ward trend in sales of their products. A large number of caterers, hoteliers and publicans attended the two-day event, to the delight of the brewery and the MANWEB team who had participated.

### New Man in Charge

Taking over from **Ron Slack** as head of our Hoylake Training Centre is **Alexander Edward Smitton**, who leaves his job as 2nd engineer with the System section in North Mersey District.

Born and educated in Crosby,

**Mr. A. W. Gaade, extreme right, the Managing Director of Border Breweries, with MANWEB staff at Wrexham. Left to right: Alison Jones, trainee demonstrator, Trevor Edwards, Energy Sales, Maureen Edwards, demonstrator, Don Hinsley, Energy Sales Engineer.**





Hoylake Training Centre's new head, Alex Smitton, with Sheila Hughes, his clerical assistant.

Alex served his craft and student apprenticeship with the former English Electric Company in Liverpool. He spent some time as a draughtsman before joining MANWEB as a general assistant engineer in our former Southport District.

He then moved into Systems and has worked in the Mid-Cheshire and Liverpool Districts.

Alex is married to Barbara and they have a four-year-old son, Richard.

### Design Award

We are fortunate in MANWEB to have a number of talented artists. One such man is display assistant **Jeff Baker**, who has just won a prize for designing the sleeve of a long-playing record album.

The contest was organised by the group 'Genesis', through their information bulletin, for the design of a fictitious record album sleeve. Jeff's entry was called 'Montage'.

Jeff is 38, married with one son, and has worked for the Board's Display section for 18 years. He is well-known in the Head Office building for his distinctive and humorous notices,

many publicising Sports and Social Club events. We have reproduced many of his cartoons over the years in 'Contact'—and still do, when we can persuade him to do us one!

He combines his skill with the felt-tipped pen—his favourite medium—with his other pursuits. He is a keen motor-racing fan and has produced a number of superb sketches of racing cars. Some were used by the Elf-Tyrrell

racing team, and Jeff sports the team's anorak given to him for the work.

Music, too, as you might have guessed, is one of his interests, and he is an accomplished drummer, having played with several local outfits. He did tour Germany a few years back with one group. He is currently 'resting'.

Jeff much admires the Genesis group and, in particular, their drummer, Phil Collins. Phil's record, 'Face Value', was the prize for the group's contest. However, Jeff's idea of a dream prize would be to 'sit in' on one of the group's sessions.

### Parr for the Course

Retirement brings time to relax, take up pastimes like golf, fishing, music and reading—a spot of gardening, maybe—nice leisurely pursuits to exercise the body and the mind.

However, one of our pensioners has completed years of onerous study with the Open University and gained an arts degree. That pensioner is a lady, **Mrs. Ethel Parr**, whose job was a clerical assistant in the Mid-Mersey District until her retirement in 1975.

Jeff Baker with his prize-winning record album sleeve.



During her studies, she had one very busy year as Mayoress of Halton in 1978, when her husband, **Arthur**, a Halton Councillor, was elected Mayor. He, too, is a MANWEB pensioner, retiring after his wife, from the meter-reading section of Mid-Mersey.

For her brain-power, her will-power in staying the course, and her academic success, we congratulate Mrs. Ethel Parr, B.A.

#### ... Another, by George!

Another degree of success at the Open University has been chalked up by 1st engineer **George Evans**, from the Head Office Engineering Technical section. He has just been awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree in mathematics and science.

George started his studies about five years ago and the gaining of his degree will not be the end of efforts, for he is attempting to achieve an Honours. He is 47 and married, and he and his wife, Beryl, a nurse, have twin sons and two daughters.

Our congratulations on your success, George, and good luck for your future studies.

#### House for Sale

Nocturnum, Birkenhead — Unusually large semi-detached house built in 1973. Not on estate. Hall, 18ft. lounge, dining room/study, 16ft. x 8ft. kitchen, 3 beds, bath and sep. w.c. Gas-fired central heating, part double-glazing. Gardens to front and rear (not overlooked), aluminium greenhouse and brick-built garage. **£23,500.** Tel.: D. I. Buchanan, 051-678 8971.

#### Holiday Accommodation — Wrong Number

We transposed two figures in the January 'Contact' advertisement for a Llandudno holiday home. If you have rung and not got through, try again. The correct number should be **Llandudno 49239.**

### FOCUS ON OFFER

Is your TV 'on the blink' or is it rental?  
*Do you have a video recorder on rental?*

If so, then check your monthly payments against the staff terms offered by FOCUS TV in many of the MANWEB shops.

If you already own a TV set, then how about a portable as a second set—on reserve, so to speak, for "Match of the Day" or maybe for the bedroom! Again, FOCUS have a selection of good sets on offer at privilege terms to all MANWEB staff and pensioners.

See the full range of colour or black and white TV's—with remote control—video recorders and Teletext.

**Now is the right time to buy or rent—remember, it's budget-time next month!**



#### SILLY SIGNS CONTEST

"Slow Coach" is the title of the picture above, one of the successful entries in our Silly Signs Contest. A £5 cheque goes to the winner, Warrington pensioner John Spilsbury, who took the photograph in Western Australia. Tortoise leave the Indian Ocean to breed in the nearby Serpentine River. They cross the highway on their way and return with their young. "Why divorce—take her to Conway" is the advice offered by Head Office construction engineer Geoff Price, after seeing the sign pictured below on a toilet in the town. He receives £5, and so does student engineer Ian Barraclough, who observed the sign on the right near our Legacy Depot, at an oil dump.



# St. John's Shop Back on Target

## *After the blaze*

On 17th December 1979, a fire swept through the prestigious St. John's Precinct in Liverpool. The flames engulfed market stalls and shops, destroying the Christmas stocks of traders and property worth several million pounds.

The MANWEB shop in the precinct escaped the blaze, but water from the fire-fighters caused structural damage to ceiling and walls, making it unsafe to carry on trading. On 18th December, the day after the blaze, and with firemen still damping down, MANWEB shop supervisor Mr. Jim Brown met his staff as they turned up for work and directed them to other MANWEB shops.

After four weeks, the shop was made sound enough for the cashiers to move back in and start taking bills. Trading started the following week—on 31st December—amidst a mass of scaffolding and plastic sheeting. Throughout the spring and summer, building tradesmen worked around the sales staff, rebuilding and decorating walls and ceilings. The autumn leaves were starting to fall by the time the restoration work was completed at the end of September.



A query for Supervisor Jim Brown from saleswoman Thelma Kitchen.

The shop layout had been redesigned with a 'shop-within-a-shop' for small appliances and minor items, such as plugs, lamps and accessories. The TV rental company, 'Focus', have a smart new display area, electric cookers have their own home—so, too, do other major appliances.

The smiling face of Jim Brown reflects his pleasure at the sales figures. St. John's has met the modified target imposed on it since the fire, despite the depressed state of the Merseyside economy, which seems to be taking its toll on most of our other MANWEB shops.

The "shop within a shop" at St. John's.





However, to make Jim's smile a broad grin, the shop staff will have to top their target before the end of the financial year, and they could be on their way. January sales were up on the year—the last week of the month saw them reach their highest total ever, apart from freak pre-Budget weeks.

A splendid performance recognised by Sales Controller Mr. Bill Wakelin, who said: "The staff have had to work under some terrible conditions and they have managed to gradually build sales up to this excellent level—they've done a great job."

He had praise, too, for all the other departments within the Board, who had co-operated magnificently to get St. John's back into operation, with a special word of thanks for the Engineering Department—the Civil and Drawing Office staff.

**Some of our busy St. John's staff pictured during the January Sale. Top: cashiers Stuart Clanahan and Kay Fullerton. Top right: Lil Evans and, centre right, Pat Loughead with customers. Right is Carl Jones**

**and, far right, floor supervisor Terry Dowker. Bottom left are Ann Sarsfield with Chris Redman, below is Gloria Perkins and, bottom left, are Carol Dolman, Electrolux demonstrator Anita Kenny and floor supervisor Iris Sage.**





Messrs. Malcolm Cooper (*energy sales engineer*), left, and David Fisher, right, with some of the attractive visitors to their presentation. From left to right: Rosemary Tomlinson (*"Girl from MANWEB"*), Jacqueline Yarwood, Nancy Bly and Jean Williams, all representatives from Broseley Homes.

## Medallion Home presentation in Mid - Cheshire

CONTINUING their programme of specialised seminars, our Commercial colleagues in Mid-Cheshire District opened 1981 with a successful meeting with representatives of a number of national and local builders.

A new film, produced by The Electricity Council and featuring Medallion Homes on the Barratt housing development at Winsford, was screened. It illustrated how builders, large and small all over the country, are accepting the concept of energy-saving all-electric homes. House agents comment on the enthusiasm of prospective purchasers for the comfort and economy of running costs afforded by Medallion Homes.

Mr. David Fisher (*2nd engineer—Energy Sales*) backed-up the film presentation and emphasised that electricity for these new homes was not expensive when utilising the special Economy 7 tariff.

He said that building to Medallion standards certainly helped to sell properties—"even in these days of recession".

Bringing the brief but most informative meeting to a close, Mr. Ken Rutland (*Creda Field Sales Manager*) gave an illustrated talk on the very latest electrical appliances now available for the modern home.



From left to right: Messrs. Ken Rutland (*Creda Ltd.*), Terry Heuston and Harry Bamford (*Wimpy Homes*), Vic Godley and Ian Douglas (*Price Homes*).



Mr. Robin Sharvin (*2nd engineer—Energy Sales*), left, with guests Mr. and Mrs. Derek Halliwell and Mrs. Lloyd-Jones (*D. Halliwell and Sons Ltd.*), Michael Bailey and Roy Alcock (*Alcock and Bailey Builders*). Both companies have Medallion Home sites in the course of erection.



## LATEST AND HIGHEST

The latest—and almost certainly the highest—MANWEB customer in Clwyd District was recently connected to the mains network.

The *Sportsman's Arms* inn—situated on the road which crosses the moors from Denbigh to Pentrefoelas—is about 1,500 feet above sea-level and is reputed to be the highest inn in Wales. Some years ago, during the course of the MANWEB rural electrification programme, mains power was offered, but was declined.

Now a five-mile-long 11,000-volt line, constructed during the course of 1979, has finally put the inn's private generator into storage, and, at the same time, has taken mains electricity to a handful of remote farms in the vicinity of Llyn Alwen, the source of Birkenhead's water supply. The line crosses very open and windswept countryside, and the poles are fitted with wind-stays.

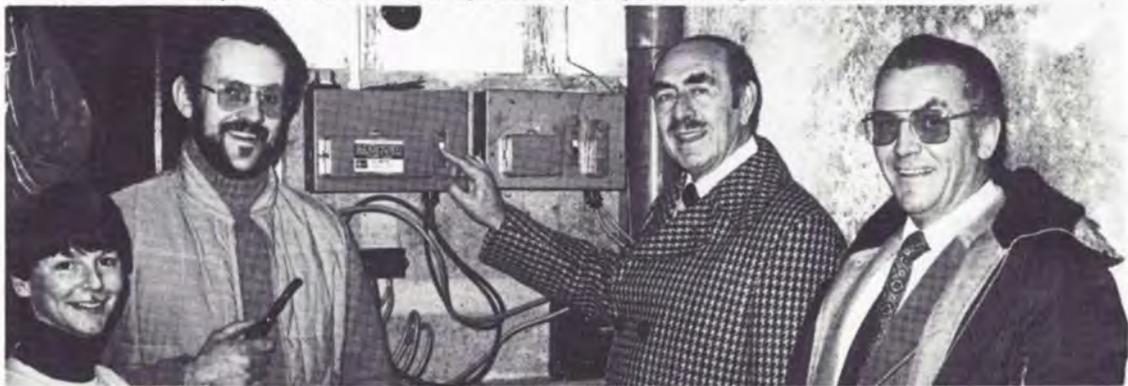
The *Sportsman's Arms* is a well-known landmark on the route for the country and seaside holiday resorts of North Wales, and has a hard-core of Welsh-speaking "regulars" from the farms and hamlets in the locality.

New landlord of the pub—who only arrived a few weeks ago—is Mr. Ioan Evans (with his wife, Joyce). During the first week after their arrival they were serving pints by candle-light, when their generator broke down, so they were glad to see the men from MANWEB and the arrival of their mains supply.

Although the surroundings of the inn are pleasant enough in summer, they are harsh and forbidding in winter, and more than once snowed-up motorists have been grateful for the protection offered by the pub.

It was just such a day when Group Manager Glyn Dodd called in to wish the new occupants 'Good Luck' and a reliable supply of mains electricity.

Joyce and Ioan Evans with Glyn Dodd and Clwyd section engineer Richard Evans.





North Wirral D.C.E. George Bowers wishes Fred Letts (*dark suit*) a happy retirement, watched by friends and colleagues.

## RETIREMENTS

### Mr. F. LETTS

Friends and colleagues packed into the canteen at Craven Street, Birkenhead, to bid a fond farewell to a well-known North Wirral character, Mr. Fred Letts. He was retiring after 33 years' service to the electricity industry.

He started as a labourer in 1947, a year before nationalisation; became an assembler two years later; and officially transferred to clerical assistant in the Works Control section in 1973.

Fred is married and he and his wife, Vi, have three sons, one of whom is a jointer with MANWEB. Fred and Vi have five grandchildren—all girls. We understand from his colleagues that Fred is a red-hot darts player, although no doubt he will be spending much of his time in the near future settling into his new home—a bungalow—in which we hope he and his wife spend many happy years in retirement.

### Mrs. D. LORENZO

A beautiful carriage-clock, bought with subscriptions from colleagues, was presented to Mrs. Dorothy (Dot)

Lorenzo, to mark her retirement from her work in our Oswestry District.

In the presence of Local Advisory Committee members, Mr. Teg Williams (*District Administrative Officer*) paid tribute to Mrs. Lorenzo's 17 valuable years of service as the able supervisor of the District's General Services section, where she set a very high standard of efficiency.

We join with her host of friends in wishing Dot many years of happy and healthy retirement with her husband, Bob, and—of course—with their grandchildren.

### Mr. S. M. HARDING and Mr. A. WILLIAMS

The Gresford Colliery Club was the venue for a retirement party for two members of the Dee Valley District Accounts staff, Stanley M. Harding, who has completed 32 years' service, and Arnold Williams, who has been with MANWEB for almost 30 years.

Both men were administrative assistants in the Rhostyllen office. Stan Harding served with the R.A.F. during the war and joined the electricity supply

Dot Lorenzo receives a bouquet from her colleagues.



industry as a clerk with the Crewe Corporation Electricity Department in 1946.

He has held various positions with the Board at Crewe, Wrexham and Head Office. Stan is married, and he and his wife, Dorothy, have two daughters, one of whom is married. He is keen on 'do-it-yourself', enjoys walking, listening to music and reading. He is still a member of the Observer Corps.

Arnold Williams was a regular soldier and was a Captain in the Royal Ordnance Corps. He was at Dunkirk and later served in West Africa. After the war, he was invalided out of the Army, joining MANWEB in 1948. He has spent his service with the Board in Wrexham.

Arnold and his wife, Dorothy, have one grandchild, thanks to their married son, Michael. Now he has retired, Arnold will spend much of his time on, in or near the river, for he is a keen fly-fisherman. He also enjoys a spot of reading.

#### Mr. R. SLACK

An executive officer in our Education and Training section, Mr. Ronald Slack, better known under his more popular title as Headmaster at our Hoylake Training Centre, has now retired after a lifetime of service in local government and the electricity supply industry.

He began his working life with the former Wallasey Corporation in 1935, doing a variety of jobs. Shortly after nationalisation, he came over to MANWEB and, in 1951, he worked on a Training Within Industry programme for our Education and Training section. A couple of years later, he was appointed as senior assistant and, in 1955, was put "in charge" when the Board opened the Hoylake Training Centre.

Since then, over 2,000 apprentices have passed

**Board Secretary John Scudamore, left, gives Ron Slack a farewell handshake.**



**Pictured, on the left, Stan and Dorothy Harding, on the right, Arnold and Dorothy Williams, with D.A.O. Des Lock, centre.**

through the Centre and—believe it or not—Mr. Slack can remember most of them. He has always encouraged the youngsters to study hard and take further educational courses and, as a result of his efforts, many former apprentices at Hoylake now hold senior positions in our Board and throughout the industry.

He has always been interested in sport and was an active member, as an umpire for 30 years, of the New Brighton Cricket Club. He was also a staunch supporter of Everton F.C. for 54 years, but stopped going to matches a couple of years ago.

Now his two great loves are reading and music and, when he is not deeply engrossed in a book, he will be listening to the music of Mahler on his hi-fi.

We join with the many hundreds of apprentices who "made it" in wishing Mr. and Mrs. Slack many years of happy retirement.

#### Mr. A. HOUGHTON

A large gathering of friends and colleagues assembled in the Mid-Mersey canteen recently to say their farewells and pay tribute to the service given and friendship offered by Mr. Alfred Houghton, an installation inspector, who was retiring after 30 years with the Board.

After serving his apprenticeship as an electrician with a private company in Warrington, Mr. Houghton joined the Royal Signals Corps in 1940. He served in Malaya and, at the fall of Singapore, was captured and spent 3½ years in various Japanese prisoner-of-war camps. On his return to this country, he spent two

years in hospital recovering from his ordeal.

When completely resettled to civilian life, he joined MANWEB in 1950 and proceeded to make many friends in the Mid-Mersey District.

As farewell gifts, Mr. Fred Crossley (*Installation Engineer*) presented Mr. Houghton with a magnificent fishing-rod and tackle.

In retirement, Mr. Houghton will make good use of these gifts and will also spend more of his time with Bessie, his wife, touring this country and abroad in their caravan.



Fred Crossley, left, says farewell to Alfred Houghton, watched by Mid-Mersey colleagues.

#### Mrs. B. I. DAVIES

Head Office clerical assistant, Mrs. Bronwyn Davies, from the Revenue section, retired from the Board recently with a fond farewell from friends and colleagues.

Bronwyn joined MANWEB in 1966 as a machine operator at the Rhostyllen office and came to Head Office just over seven years ago.

She and husband, Cliff, who is employed by the Wrexham Council, have two children—a son and a daughter, who is married with two children of her own.

Bronwyn has been interested in classical music and, in particular, singing, which seems to run in the family. Her niece is Helen Field, the internationally-known soprano.

Holding a carriage clock, Bronwen Davies with colleagues on the day of her retirement.



#### OBITUARY

*We deeply regret to record the deaths of the following colleagues:*

**Mr. Arthur Adey**, aged 66, a former meter engineer based at Warrington.

**Mr. C. Graham Blackwell**, aged 49, an administrative assistant in the Revenue section at Head Office.

**Mr. Jack Edwards**, aged 87, who worked in the Meter section in Liverpool District prior to his retirement.

**Mr. Jack O. Evans**, aged 80, a former wages clerk at Vauxhall Construction depot prior to his retirement in 1966.

**Mr. Stanley Evans**, aged 60, an instructor at our Hoylake Training Centre.

**Mr. Albert Finch**, aged 86, a former meter reader in our Mid-Mersey District.

**Mr. Albert S. Jones**, aged 91, a former meter reader at Rhostyllen prior to his retirement.

**Mr. Malcolm McClinton**, aged 26, a jointer's mate in our Liverpool District, who died in hospital after an accident. In addition to their floral tribute, over £300 was subscribed by friends and colleagues and this was handed to Malcolm's parents:

**Mr. Joseph Sidwell**, a former labourer at the Runcorn depot prior to his ill-health retirement in 1970.

**Mr. Trevor Whitney**, aged 49, a service electrician in our Mid-Mersey District.

**Mr. Tom Williams**, a former senior wayleave officer based at Rhostyllen prior to his retirement some years ago.

**Mr. Sidney Brown**, aged 78, who was a Section Engineer in the former Warrington District until his retirement.

*We extend our sincere sympathy to their families and friends.*