



Above, ballboys drawn from the Mold and Wrexham areas, who have been through the Manweb-sponsored youth rugby development scheme, are pictured with Manweb Managing Director Stewart Saunders before officiating at the Wales A versus England A rugby match at the Wrexham football ground.

Below, Mark Jones (centre) shows his international cap and shirt to Brian Davies, Manweb Customer Relations Officer and Austin Thomas, North Wales District Director of Rugby.



Youth rugby star makes his debut for Wales under-18s

A YOUNG rugby player from Caernarfon has become the first from North Wales to make his international debut, after benefiting from the Rugby Union's Youth Development Scheme sponsored by Manweb.

Mark Jones, who plays second row for Caernarfon Rugby Club, made his debut for Wales Under 18s against Italy in Battipaglia.

He scored a try in the 32-14 victory and was also named man of the match.

The Youth Development Scheme, which Manweb is backing for the third year, assists youth rugby in Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flint, Wrexham and for the first time this year Powys.

The ballboys at the recent Wales A versus England A match at Wrexham football ground had been through the Scheme.

Manweb is also sponsoring the North Wales Rugby Union Cup.

Siobhan makes a big splash

WATER polo star Siobhan Winter, pictured right, has been named Liverpool and District Player of the Year – and now she's off to France to compete in the European Cup.

The agency worker at Manweb's Prenton office has played for Liverpool City since she was 16, and shared their triumph in the latest national championships. As a member of the Great Britain side, she is now competing against France, Belarus, Slovakia and Greece in the first round of the European tournament.

"It's an exciting time," said Siobhan. "I'm just back from going to South Africa with the national team. It was a practice for the forthcoming Commonwealth Games, and we beat them 8-3. I even scored myself."



Ten pin bowling nights

SEVENTEEN teams from across the Manweb region took part in two ten pin bowling nights organised at Chester Megabowl by Jacqui Hughes in Personnel at Pentre Bychan.

Vouchers were up for grabs by the winners at the Chester Sports and Social Club competitions which were open to members and non-members.

Contact



Manweb
A ScottishPower Company

NEWSLETTER FOR MANWEB PEOPLE

February 2001

Employees respond to **POWERPartners** challenge

BRAILLE CARD BRAINWAVE

A BRAINWAVE by six employees responding to a PowerPartners Team Challenge is set to make life easier for people who are visually impaired.

The staff from Credit Management at Pentre Bychan are being praised for their original approach to a challenge to focus on the services being offered to disabled customers.

Their idea for a braille identity card, which has been accepted for use by Manweb's customer liaison officers, has been hailed as a breakthrough in ensuring customers' peace of mind by the Royal National Institute for the Blind.

Self-adhesive labels devised by the team, following a suggestion by team member Louise Young, will be fitted on to existing identity cards with the ScottishPower name and a contact telephone number in braille.

The braille stickers will be used primarily by customer service staff who are visiting visually impaired customers in their homes, enabling the householders to make a phone call to the call centre if they want to check that the caller is genuine.

Peace of mind

John Stanworth, north Wales area fundraising manager of the RNIB, said: "These braille identity cards will help with customers' peace of mind when the ScottishPower representative calls."

"Congratulations to the team for their inventive idea. Security and the knowledge that a call is genuine is one of the greatest gifts you can present to a person who is visually impaired."

An initial print-run of the braille stickers is underway with more to follow. The team also came up with the idea for a Staff Information Handout which is currently being distributed.

● See page three for a report on the open day at which the members of the winning team publicised their innovations.



SINGING a couple of memorable numbers in the rain... Skillseeker Ted Jones, front right, is the 1,000th unemployed person helped by ScottishPower Learning and Perrie Owen is their 500th Prince's Trust Volunteer. They are celebrating the milestone figures outside the Wrexham Foyer with Kevin Hancox, back left, customer service team manager at Warrington, and Guy Shapland, jointer from Warrington and current PTV team leader at Wrexham. SEE REPORT PAGE 2.

COMIC RELIEF NEEDS YOUR HELP – SEE CENTRE PAGES

News from ScottishPower Learning

Milestone recruits enter record book

A MAJOR milestone was reached when Manweb and ScottishPower Learning helped its 1,000th unemployed person.

Ted Jones, 17, was the Millennium star when he joined the customer service programme in Warrington as Skillseeker.

And it was a double celebration as Perrie Owen, 18, who is on placement under New Deal, became the 500th Prince's Trust Volunteer to be taken on by SPL since they started running the scheme in north Wales.

The landmark numbers are further proof of the success of the programmes which are being offered under the aegis of ScottishPower Learning.

SPL has been designated as being in the top one-third of all training providers in the North-West by the Training Standards Council, and it

also boasts several areas of best practice.

"A total of 1,000 people have now been through our programmes since 1996," said Neil Hunter, ScottishPower Learning Regional Manager. "The success rate of those who have been through our hands has been very high.

"We have received two awards for New Deal, and as an added benefit to the business 60 of these now work for ScottishPower. Skillseekers has also proved an effective scheme.

"In addition we support unemployed people through the PTV, in which the prime objective is to raise motivation and self-esteem."

● The latest award for New Deal has come from the North Wales Coastal District of the Employment Service, who presented SPL with a glass bowl in recognition of their sterling work.

Work takes Pat back to her old school

PAT LEWIS has been paying visits to her old school as part of ScottishPower Learning's delivery of the Young Manager's Programme with Speke Garston Education Action Zone.

Pat, SPL Educational Adviser based at Manweb House, was amazed to learn that New Heys Community Comprehensive in Speke, Merseyside, was taking part in the programme. "It was a total coincidence," she said. "It has been great to go back in the role of co-ordinator."

During the six-month programme, a group of 20 pupils has visited Manweb offices for a series of one-day workshops, learning key management skills such as communication and problem-solving. Two workshops have already taken place with the support of Power Systems at Lister Drive and Energy Supply at Warrington.

Multi-media poetry show in underpass

A CREATIVE initiative to project primary school children's poems on to the walls of an underpass in Speke, Merseyside, was made possible by the support of ScottishPower Learning.

The youngsters worked with a community development group called Arts in Regeneration to produce words and pictures expressing their views about city life, education,

crime, environment, the Mersey etc.. More than 300 people turned out to witness the multi-media show in which the lighting was supplied by nightclub Cream.

The project is one of many innovative schemes developed to help raise literacy standards within the Speke Garston Education Action Zone.



Children from Speke and Garston watching the new multi-media show.

Backing for classroom storyteller



Manweb Corporate Communications Executive Jan Cahill revisits her old school Wood Memorial County Primary in Saltney to sit in on a story telling session given by Michael Harvey.

UNUSUAL tales about animals are captivating young pupils in north Wales thanks to a theatre project backed by Manweb.

The education department at Clwyd Theatr Cymru is taking storyteller Michael Harvey into schools with his stories.

He spends half a day in each school telling his spellbinding Animal Tales under the scheme which links in with Key Stage 1 of the national curriculum.

Manweb Managing Director Stewart Saunders said: "We are keen to support bi-lingual activities which help bring language alive for children in such a vivid and entertaining way."

Jointers nominated for award

MERSEYSIDE Jointers Ian Blakemore and Paul Letts have been recommended for a Living Values award.

Connections Business Manager Bill McClymont carried out a safety audit on the pair while on a Manager's Tour, and was highly impressed by their attitude to safe working.

"I was struck by their attitude to getting the job done and exceeding customer expectations which is vital for New Connections," said Bill.

POWERPartners

Raising profile of special services

THE winning PowerPartners Team Challenge entrants at Pentre Bychan held an open day to familiarise staff with their ideas and suggestions for raising the profile of Manweb's services to customers with special needs.

On show was the Staff Information Handout which they have devised to update everybody in customer sales and services about the facilities such as large print bills, audio cassettes, minicom systems and typetalk which are available.

The handout is already up-and-running, with 200 copies of the laminated sheets printed and distributed.

Team members Donna Griffiths (team leader), Diane Thomas, Jean Higginbottom, Dawn Rogers, Richard Jones and Louise Young were on hand throughout the day in the restaurant at Pentre Bychan to inform staff about the leaflet, and talk about their responses to the Team Challenge including their idea for braille stickers (see Page 1).

Excellent

Also present was John Stanworth, North Wales area fund raising manager for the RNIB, who said: "The team's suggestions are excellent and they are doing a valuable job in raising awareness."

Diane Thomas, whose idea it was to respond to the Challenge in the first place, said: "We made a number of proposals in our final submission.

"The laminated Staff Information Handouts entitled Services for People with Special Needs will be of special use to call centre staff who will be able to position them by the telephone for ready reference."

The team also produced a booklet



Above, Team member Dawn Rogers shows Naomi McNay of customer sales and services the Staff Information Handout.

Left, Diane Thomas, team member who holds the idea of responding to the Team Challenge, holds a copy of the Staff Information Handout.



Members of the PowerPartners Team Challenge team, at Pentre Bychan holding copies of the Staff information Handouts, on either side of John Stanworth, North Wales area fund raising manager of the RNIB.

setting out their ideas and costings of their various suggestions. Their research included approaching other organisations to gauge the extent of their disabled facilities.

Staff lottery win buys a new bike

EIGHT-YEAR-OLD Nathan Bohana received a mountain bike for Christmas - thanks to his mum Karen's win on the PowerPartners staff lottery.

Karen, a customer services representative in the Call Centre at Caernarfon who been entering the lottery since it started, won £172.26. She said: "Nathan was absolutely delighted by the bike, and totally surprised.

"If it hadn't been for my win he wouldn't have received it. He hasn't been off it since."

£100 ride at Hoylake

A HOYLAKE employee has raised £100 for PowerPartners by completing a sponsored bike ride with his local club.

Meanwhile, a promotional campaign is underway at ScottishPower to inform staff about the schemes which have received money from PowerPartners.

Charity bonanza on expressway

AN appeal is going out for volunteers to take part in a PowerPartners charity event during March along the unopened section of the new A55 expressway on Anglesey.

The local authority has given permission for a day-long charity "bonanza" on the road, and Melanie Jones, SuperCentre Manager for Wales and Mid Cheshire, is keen to assemble a group. Those interested should contact her on 01978-832800 or 07880-502028.



Tree planting at school with help from Manweb

CHILDREN at the primary school in Glyn Ceiriog are transforming their surroundings with the help of Manweb's RuralCare team.

The team, which has been taking down trees near the picturesque village as part of their multi-million pound project to improve the security of supplies, donated trees which the youngsters have planted in their school grounds.

For every tree which RuralCare removes, at least two are replaced away from lines, and Wrexham Borough Council suggested donating some to the school.

Dave Grady, Permissions Manager for RuralCare, said: "We are always on the look out for interesting community projects to be involved in. This one is especially nice as we have been able to contribute so much to improve the children's environment."

● Pictured above is Glyn Ceiriog pupil Alex helping to stake out newly-planted trees.

Raising awareness of safety issues for elderly

A SERIES of conferences across north Wales aimed at raising awareness of safety issues for older people and their carers is being sponsored by Manweb.

The days, held in conjunction with the Police and Community Trust, are geared towards raising awareness of personal safety, home security and safety in the community.

Steve Gauller, of ScottishPower Learning, will talk on electrical safety and personal security. PC Alan Bevan will be talking on home security. One-to-one consultations will also be available during the lunch hour with Manweb staff, to discuss consumer issues.

Unknown to outsiders the creative juices have been flowing at Manweb's call centres, with ingenious wall displays adding colour and boosting morale in the working environment. *Contact* puts a spotlight on the "secret" murals of Warrington and Pentre Bychan.



Warrington call centre staff working on the ocean and rainforest murals. Left, Customer Services Representatives Jonathan Astley and Lisa Dewhurst; above Team Manager Shelly Batho; Right, Customer Services Representatives Mark Connolly and Hayley Thomas.



LIKE'S a beach for people in the Gas call centre at Warrington – while upstairs in Electricity and Dual Fuel it's the law of the jungle.

Artistically gifted staff have themed the walls on both ground and first floors to liven up their working atmosphere with murals of ocean and rainforest scenes.

The idea came after various animal pictures were posted up with motivational messages such as "see the tusk through to the end" and "don't take complaints lion down", based on a successful themed advertising campaign run by marketing in the north west recently.

Customer Services Representative Charlotte Reynolds on the first floor thought the nature theme should be taken further, and with the help of Sally Burgess and the evening operations team an overhead projector was used to provide an outline for a sketch of a jungle vine which was then painted in. They also used paints to convert the drinks area into a "native hut."

Downstairs two walls were given a creative makeover, one as a beach and the other as an ocean scene featuring an underwater treasure chest.

"The painted walls really brighten things up," said Electricity and Dual Fuel Operation Manager Sue Reece. "They help to improve morale and they're part of an ongoing process of livening up the environment."

Pentre Bychan staff turned "movie stars" for the day to produce a series of

Artistic call centre staff brighten up office walls

action photographs for the walls of their call centre.

A photographer tracked them round the offices and immediate surroundings of the Wrexham site, taking a series of shots which could be used to illustrate customer service Best Practice.

The 10 photographs have been on the walls of the call centre for four months, inspiring – and amusing – the employees with their catchy slogans.

Boxing gloves

Melanie Owen is pictured in the back of a car reading an A to Z, with the words: "When it comes to complaints don't be a back seat driver."

Sharon Jones was photographed in the gym wearing boxing gloves to illustrate the slogan: "When it comes to complaints it's all about boxing them off."

Marcus Lewis languishes in the boot of a car while Heather Wicking threatens him with a shovel and Jarad Tillyer holds a gun to his head. The slogan reads: "Doing Away with the Cause of Complaints."

Flaxen-haired Katherine Roberts



Admiring the in-house photography decorating the walls of the Pentre Bychan call centre are Customer Services Representatives Sharon Jones, left, and Kim James.

agreed to pose for a controversial phrase: "When it comes to complaints don't be a dumb blonde."

Staff have also recently posted up pictures of birds and animals originated

on their computers. One slogan reads: "Swan and Done" – a reference to the aim of dealing fully with each complaint so that it can be designated "One and Done."



United Y-front for comic relief

● SAY 'Pants to Poverty' and join us at this year's Comic Relief for a night of fun and entertainment.

● This year's fundraising efforts are set to be even wackier as the slogan is "Pants to Poverty" and Manweb ScottishPower will be in the thick of things as we have volunteered the services of our call centres.

● But now we need you! We are looking for volunteers to staff the telephones, take pledges, and also to tally the forms on a running basis throughout the night.

● Don't worry if you are not a trained call centre member of staff. No training is necessary, as call centre staff will be on hand to help and run through things on the night. We want volunteers from all the businesses to take part.

● If you or any of your friends or family fancy helping out on Friday, March 16, then let us know.

● The phones are open from 6.30pm to 3am but don't worry you don't have to spend the whole night, though you might be tempted as there will be competitions, raffles, food and fun throughout the evening.

● If you want to volunteer or know more, then contact your Team Manager or your PowerPartners co-ordinator before February 20th and join in the fun.

Manweb sponsors innovative teaching resource pack for schools

LOCAL schoolchildren are benefiting from a new teaching aid for maths and social skills lessons, researched and provided by Age Concern and sponsored by Manweb.

Schools working with the charity are receiving free copies of the innovative resource pack containing lesson plans and materials based on the weekly challenge faced by their retired relatives to make ends meet on the basic state pension.

The pupils are set a weekly budget and also work out how to cope with emergencies added randomly during the lesson by the use of colourful "crisis cards."

Manweb gave £4,000 towards the printing and publication of the teaching pack, which promotes understanding across the generations and gives youngsters an insight into the realities of life for their older relatives and neighbours.

"The pack has been extremely well received," said John Kennedy, Manweb Customer Relations Manager. "The teaching materials fit well with the National Curriculum and educate pupils to understand and care about the costs facing elderly people."

● Manweb has donated the £1,000 first prize for an Age Concern regional draw in the North West which will raise £38,000 for the charity.

Learning to cope on basic pension



John Kennedy, Manweb's Customer Relations Manager, and Alex Major, Advice and Information Manager of Age Concern, Cheshire, with pupils of St Wilfred's RC Primary School in Weaverham, at the official launch of the teaching pack in Cheshire.

We're all going to the zoo...

A FAMILY day at Chester Zoo is being organised by the Chester Sports and Social Club for Sunday June 24. The event will be open to all Contact readers and entry will be at substantially reduced prices. Look out for more details and a coupon in forthcoming editions of *Contact*.

Prize draw winners

THE following are the winners of the EEIBA prize Draw for November 2000:

£300 E.Nelson, retd; £200 B.Dawson, retd; £100 J.H. Leach, retd; £75 B.Haigh, retd; £50 J.McLauchlan, retd, L. Ridgway, retd; £30 S.Airey, retd, A.R.Hughes, retd, J.M. Davies, retd, B.Roberts, Caernarfon, A.J.Favager, retd, A. Spencer, retd, E.M. Brent, retd, L.Ellis, retd; £25 P.S. Webster, Manweb House, W.G.Hughes, Porthmadog, M.Kane, First Hydro, H.M.Cartwright, retd, T.J. Pritchard, First Hydro, J.P. Morland, retd.



Name on Kenyan clinic

A CLINIC in Kenya, to be built with funds raised by a Cheshire-based charitable trust, will feature Manweb's name on a plaque when it is opened. The promise was made by fundraiser Shirley Johnson on receiving a donation from Power Systems staff at Prenton out of their reward for safe working. She is determined to improve the lot of the inhabitants in an area of Africa which she first visited on holiday.

A former Cheshire Woman of the Year in the Manweb/Chronicle Your Champions awards, the 60-year-old from Runcorn has set up the Paperchase Trust charity with her husband Eddy. The Trust has already built two schools and is collecting thousands of bandages and equipment to distribute to hospitals in the vicinity of Mombasa.

Another ambition is to build a £25,000 clinic - and the staff at Prenton donated a cheque for £200.

● Pictured above is Phil Currie, Manweb Network Manager Mersey Region, presenting a cheque to Shirley.

Survey shows network is the most reliable

MERSEYSIDE has one of the most reliable networks among regional electricity distribution systems, according to a recently published industry survey.

The annual report summarising the performance of the distribution and transmissions systems of the electricity companies in England, Wales and Scotland, published by industry regulator OFGEM, shows that during 1999-2000 the region had the lowest number of interruptions to its supply in the country.

Phil Currie, Network Manager, Mersey Region, said: "Manweb's fundamental role is to provide businesses and domestic customers with power. The number of interruptions is a key measure of our performance and these survey results show that we are performing strongly, with Merseyside Region again one of the clear industry leaders."

PENSIONERS NEWS

Blooming success

GREENFINGERED John Parrott has scooped the top prize at his local Gardening Society in Llanbadarn for the sixth year running.

Well known in the village for his skills in growing vegetables and fruit, 78-year-old John is already planning his 2001 campaign while his wife Muriel is still using runner beans, peas, raspberries and tayberries stored in the freezer from last year's crop.

John, a linesman and foreman at Manweb for 32 years and a member of the Aberystwyth retirees association, believes in good preparation to get the best out of his one-third acre plot. "Plants are like humans - they need a good start in life," he said.

Tributes to Keith Jones

TRIBUTES are being paid to Keith Jones, Secretary of the Gwynedd retirees association, who died after a short illness aged 69.

Keith, who was a Manager at Caernarfon for Manweb and gave 30 years' service, lived for many years at Hoylake before moving to Caernarfon 20 years ago.

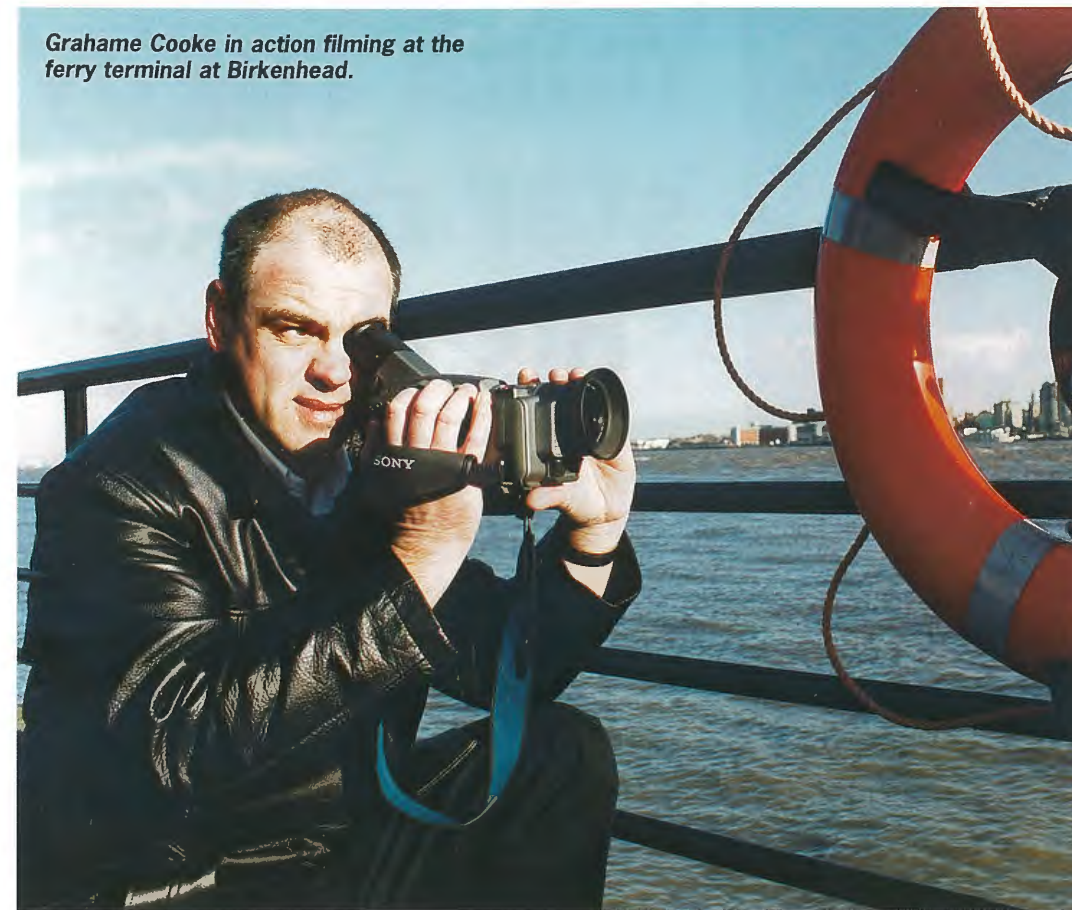
He was a keen local historian and spent many hours researching the history of Wales in the archives.

Happy hols guaranteed

THE MEMBERS of the Mid Cheshire retirees association are guaranteed a good holiday in Tenby - their chairman and secretary have already "reccied" the hotel and given it their seal of approval.

"My wife Thelma and I went on a fact-finding tour and were shown round the Park Hotel," said Walter Walker, chairman. "We were impressed and I am sure our members will enjoy their stay."

Grahame Cooke in action filming at the ferry terminal at Birkenhead.



Grahame's filming across the Mersey

GRAHAME Cooke once dreamed about spending his life at sea - but he has settled for making videos about the time when the big ships came into the Mersey.

The former Manweb employee who worked at Prenton has found his vocation after taking voluntary severance in 1995 after 17 years as an electrician, fitter and tariff surveyor.

Grahame, aged 38, of Prenton, whose wife Lynn works in Manweb Wayleaves, produces his videos as a hi-tech cottage industry in the garage of his semi-detached house, supported by Business Link Wirral. Using the latest digital equipment he has compiled a series entitled *Maritime Britain* which began with *Liners Past and Present on the Mersey* and of which the latest is *The Liners Return to the Mersey*. Each of the 2,500 copies retails at £12.99.

Grahame said: "I was on holiday in the New Forest and I bought a video about the ships at Southampton. I thought it was amateurish and I felt sure I could do better."

"I had a good job with Manweb but I hadn't been anywhere and I hadn't known anything. My bitter, bitter regret was that I hadn't been away to sea. It was an ambition which I formed when my dad took me on a ferry trip as a youngster, and I was seized by the magnificence of a big ocean liner."

"I now feel as if I am making up for lost time. The video business has made the ships a big part of my life again."

Anyone interested in more information on the hour-long videos, which include a commentary about the port and ships, and interviews with ex-seafarers, should phone 0151-609 0751.

Winter campaign on the airwaves

"THE "Keep Warm Keep Well" week ran on Marcher Coast, Gold and Champion radio stations during February.

Staff from Manweb were interviewed about the services and advice the company offers

to older people and dieticians and gym instructors gave advice on looking after yourself.

Two cold alarms were given away each day in competitions and people were also able to get free thermometers.

This is one of four themed weeks run throughout the year on the Marcher radio stations providing a valuable platform to keep people informed about the many services the company offers.