

Merseyside and  
North Wales  
Electricity Board  
staff newspaper

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# CONTACT

Vol. 37. No 1 January 1985



## MANWEB 'PEP' AWARDS PRESENTED

### SAVING A LIFE

A MANWEB-trained first aider saved a colleague's life just before Christmas.

Chester Sport Club members were enjoying a swim at Chester College pool when accounts assistant Margaret Williams felt faint and 'blacked out'.

Other swimmers pulled Margaret out, and technical engineer Harry Longdon finally brought her round with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, even though she



Harry and Margaret

had stopped breathing and her lips were blue.

Said Harry, "It was wonderful to see the colour return to her face".

Margaret recovered quickly in hospital, and was soon back at work. She thanks everyone who helped her, especially Harry, and his training, for her life.

### Fuel-efficient firms

THE BOARD'S first two 'PEP' — Power for Efficiency and Productivity — Awards were presented to the winning firms by William Macintyre, Director General of the Energy Efficiency Office of the Department of Energy. The special ceremony took place at Head Office last month.

The two top firms, IMI Yorkshire Imperial Limited of Kirkby in Liverpool and Tennant Radiant Heat Limited from Warrington, each received a handsome trophy in the form of the Greek letter 'eta' — the adopted symbol for efficiency — and a cheque for £500.

After welcoming the guests, MANWEB Chairman Ben Hastings informed them that the Board supplied electricity to more than a million customers with over half the units used by industrial companies.

"We are particularly concerned that industry in Merseyside



At the 'PEP' presentation ceremony we picture, from left to right: Peter Hopkins, Eric Herbert (Tennant Radiant Heat Ltd.), William Macintyre, Ben Hastings and John Ozelton (IMI Yorkshire Imperial Ltd.).

and North Wales should survive and flourish. The idea of promoting the use of power to aid efficiency and productivity has given the 'PEP' Award its name. MANWEB's effort is part of a national campaign which can only help the process of industrial recovery and growth which we all want to see."

He went on to say that examples set by the firms entering for the 'PEP' trophy illustrated the success of the close working relationships between the Board and its customers.

Our Chairman then introduced the guest speaker, William Macintyre, to say a few words prior to making the presentations.

Mr. Macintyre congratulated MANWEB on its energy-efficient initiatives in pursuing the

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'CONTACT'  
editorial staff  
wish you all  
A HAPPY AND  
PROSPEROUS  
1985

### Message from our Chairman



THE beginning of 1985 finds MANWEB in a phase of healthy, if undramatic, expansion on the business front and of gradual — and again undramatic — change in our internal organisation.

Because of the vital central role of the electricity industry in the structure of society, we are to some extent sheltered from the cold winds of change and upheaval which sometimes shake the remainder of the British economy. The current financial year is continuing to show a modest but encouraging increase in sales of electricity in the MANWEB area and our sales staff will be doing their best to see that this continues in the future.

The very real problems faced by those of our customers, who have been hardest hit by the recession, have meant that we have had to make extra special efforts to help those facing difficulties. The fact that

overdue debt and disconnections for non-payment have fallen, despite the adverse economic climate, speaks for itself but this, of course, never hits the headlines.

Inside the MANWEB organisation, the gradual process of change, aimed at improving our efficiency within the framework of our existing Head Office and District structure, continues. Like all other industrial and commercial organisations, we must move with the times and the continuous development of new technology is bound to have some impact on the working lives of most of us.

We can take heart from the fact that the electricity supply industry as an efficient caring service, is becoming steadily more favourable in various opinion surveys — a trend which is due to the continuing efforts of a competent and conscientious staff.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to express thanks to you all for everything you have done in the past year and my confidence that you will bring the same qualities to bear during 1985, regardless of the ups-and-downs that the New Year may bring. I hope that you and your families will have a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

*Ben Hastings*

### STAFF ON THE MOVE

LIVERPOOL District Administration Manager Alan Wadcock has moved to Head Office as Assistant Chief Accountant (*Income*), taking over the main duties formerly carried out by recently promoted Chief Accountant John Roberts.

Alan thus completes the trio of Assistant Chief Accountants, together with Peter Falcon (*Expenditure and Stores*) and Bob Evans (*Audit and Accountancy*).

Assistant Personnel Manager Bob Hodson takes over as Clwyd District Manager on February 1st, and will be succeeded at Head Office by Mike Metcalfe Administration Manager at Mid-Cheshire. Present Clwyd District Customer Services Manager David Mellor is to take on special duties with the "Business in the Community" organisation.

### DOUBLE TAKE!

The Bromilow twins, Andrew and Steven, from Wallasey. Aged 18, both started work with the Board on the YTS in 1983. Now they have permanent appointments with us, Steven, below left, is a salesman at Moreton shop and Andrew is an apprentice joiner on this year's course at Hoylake. The rest of the apprentice intake is featured on page 4.





# MANWEB 'PEP' AWARDS

## ● From page 1

'PEP' Award Scheme. He said that this fitted into the Government's energy efficient strategy stating "The overall policy is to create situations where individual choice is based on its own economic factors — and this applies to energy use."

Referring to the functions of the Energy Efficient Office, set up just over two years ago, he said, "Our task is to identify and tackle barriers which impede achievement of efficiencies."

He spoke of the publicity drives and the mass of verbal and printed information and advice available on energy usage. He mentioned the 'Breakfast Specials', a series of 29 early-morning conferences attended by 11,500 industrialists responsible for energy management. "These 'Specials' are to continue in 1985," he said.

In commenting on the development of energy-efficient industries Mr. Macintyre congratulated the electricity supply industry for its help in promoting efficient productivity in a variety of industrial organisations.

"We are promoting good energy management which simply means that energy efficiency and productivity equals profitability," he concluded. "The 'PEP' competition encourages a constructive relationship between the Board and its customers aimed at maximising efficient energy use. Long may this continue."



Then followed an audio-visual presentation detailing the work carried out by the winning companies and the two firms who received commendations. The narrative was spoken by Chief Commercial Officer Peter Hopkins.

He opened by stating that a competitive and successful company will use increasing amounts of energy efficiently and, with the help of the Electricity Board, should develop a thriving partnership.

Then he briefly outlined the purpose and aims of the 'PEP' Award Scheme now being run by Boards throughout the country.

"One of the most difficult tasks faced in operating such a scheme is the selection of a winner," he went on. "Fortunately in our case we were able to call on a number of specialists from outside the electricity industry to maintain a balance of opinion and arrive at a fair and true result."

He made the point that the two MANWEB winners would now go forward to the National Finals on 13 March 1985 to compete, in their respective categories, for another trophy and an extra £1,000 prize money.



The audio-visual presentation then featured the commendation award winners in category one, Wallers Limited, a family bakery business in Liverpool.

Started in 1883 and developed during the two world wars, it was bought by its present owners in 1962. They now have nine retail outlets and a thriving wholesale trade.

To maintain their position against pressure from large national bakers, cost efficiency was foremost in their minds when they had to replace a gas-fired oven. At this stage in came the MANWEB Load Development Engineer. He was able to obtain an electric oven on immediate delivery. The supply network was modified to take the new load and the oven installed and operating within three weeks.

Prior to the conversion, the average weekly fuel costs for gas and electricity had been £233. After the installation of the electric oven, these costs were down to £171 a week.

The overall costs of the installation of the

electric shelf oven was just over £10,000. The estimated annual savings in running costs and increased production is close to £5,000. This gives a 'pay-back' period of just over two years.

In the words of their Company Chairman,—"the best investment for many years!"

Then Mr. Hopkins announced the winner of the 'PEP' Award in the category for companies employing up to 200 staff. I am pleased to call on Mr. Eric Herbert, the Technical Manager for Tennant Radiant Heat Limited of Warrington, to collect the prize," he said.

This company has manufactured gas radiants for nearly 80 years. Production is exported to all parts of the world.

Their entry for the 'PEP' Award concerned two drying chambers. The original gas-fired oven, rated at an equivalent 293 kW, had to operate at a reduced performance to avoid surface cracking and warping of the product. The thermal efficiency of the gas oven was calculated at only ten per cent.

Following experiments, the first Westair 28-kW heat pump drying chamber was installed in 1982. It immediately proved itself by reducing drying costs and reject rates.

As the market increased it was decided to build a second drying chamber. This was established last April.

Energy savings have been dramatic! The cost of energy for drying each unit has been reduced by 95 per cent. It is projected that for 1985 more than 58,000 therms of energy will have been saved.

The cost of installation was £19,500 and, with an anticipated production during 1985 of 1½-million items, the 'pay-back' period from the date of commissioning, will be eleven months.

"Tennant of Warrington, producing components for the gas industry have found, with the help of MANWEB, that the most cost-effective way is to 'Dry Electric'," concluded Mr. Hopkins.



In category two, for firms employing more than 200 people, Adams Foods of Broadhurst, Northwich were commended for their entry.

Mr. Hopkins said this was yet another old-established family business producing a wide range of cakes and biscuits.

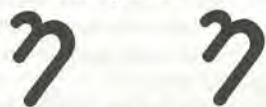
"For some of these a dough with low moisture content is required to help improve shelf-life," he commented. This process however, restricts output."

Men from MANWEB suggested that by installing a radio-frequency dryer after the oven baking operation, the ideal moisture content could be achieved and production line speed doubled.

As a result, energy -savings of 342 therms a day have been achieved. The performance has been so good that the dryer is now being used for other dough and pastry mixes.

The projected costs were £110,000 and the annual savings are estimated at £61,000. This gives a 'pay-back' period of under two years.

Product quality is improved. The co-operation between Adams Foods and MANWEB staff has prompted the Company to launch a new biscuit called 'Barley Bran'.



The final presentation was the category two 'PEP' Award which was won by IMI Yorkshire Imperial Limited of Kirkby in Liverpool.

Originating in Yorkshire and now developing in Lancashire, the Company make copper tubes. This is an energy-intensive operation and, in recent years, the Company has introduced more energy-efficient heating processes demanding increased use of electricity.

Up to a couple of years ago, one of the manufacturing processes — annealing — used both electricity and natural gas in a roller-hearth furnace. This proved to be high in energy costs and several operations were required for loading and unloading. Yield losses were high due to tube damage in handling and cutting.

Then the Company decided to instal an ASEA electric medium-frequency induction

## Well said!



Malcolm with his trophy.

A SHINING silver cup was the prize awarded to Malcolm Arthur for successfully holding the interest of an audience for 15 minutes in a public speaking competition organised by the Merseyside Branch of the Institute of Purchasing and Supply.

Malcolm, a clerical assistant in Plant Supplies section at Head Office, took first place when he spoke on "Effective Communications" to a group of Branch members, students and

officials of a local college.

This was not the first time that Malcolm had mounted the winner's rostrum. He had previous success in 1974 and

again in 1976 in winning the MANWEB Regional Finals of the Electricity Supply Industry's Public Speaking Competition.

Readers may remember that Malcolm has also appeared on TV. No! not as a public speaker but as a finalist in the BBC "Film Buff of the Year" programme.

He tells us that he still enjoys a night at the movies or catching up with the 'oldies' on Channel Four. He keeps up with many of the latest releases on video.

Malcolm has been with the Board since 1973 when he joined us as an Administrative Trainee. He worked in the North Wirral District prior to joining the Head Office staff. He is now studying at Carlett Park for the Institute of Purchasing and Supply professional examination.

## EAW PRESENTATION TO MANWEB

THE Merseyside and North Wales Federation of the Electrical Association for Women in celebrating their Diamond Jubilee anniversary, presented a filled plant stand to MANWEB in recognition of the Board's help and advice, freely given over the years.

The Federation's retiring chairman, Ivy Bailey said that the ties between the two organisations were stronger than ever. She spoke of the endeavours to educate EAW members in the intricacies of today's technology.

Pictured at the ceremony we see, from left to right: Peggy Ramsden-Williams (National



Vice-Chairman), Ben Hastings (MANWEB Chairman), Brenda Williams Ivy Bailey, Peter Hopkins (MANWEB CCO), Doris Protheroe (1985 Federation Chairman) and Dorothy Francis (Federation Treasurer).

### FARADAY LECTURE

the 1984/85  
IEE Faraday Lecture

"YOUR GENERATION"

at the Philharmonic Hall  
Liverpool

on Thursday, 28th February  
at 6.45 p.m.

Admission is free

First come, first served  
MANWEB staff wishing to  
attend should contact

E. W. Runciman,  
The Plessey Co. Ltd.,  
Edge Lane, Liverpool.

## A day at Kirkby shop

A customer in our shop at Kirkby in Liverpool put her handbag on the counter in order to sort out her payment books. Three young men ran into the shop, grabbed the bag and left . . . quickly.

Another customer gave chase and caught up with one of the

thieves in another shop but was unable to get any assistance in holding him.

Meanwhile, the lady with the handbag was bemoaning the loss of nearly £200.

Later that same day, a storage heater case was stolen from the window display while a queue of customers stood and watched. Nobody said a word to shop supervisor Brian Kaye as they reached the cash counter.

The 'wise' monkeys are alive and well!

heater rated at 600 kilowatts. This was capable of continuously annealing tube at a rate of 150 metres a minute.

"As an example of modern technology in action, this 'in-line' annealer reflects most clearly the 'PEP' objectives", stated Mr. Hopkins.

The total annual savings are estimated at £159,000 on a capital investment of £523,000. This produces a simple 'pay-back' period of just over three years.

"The success of this project results from the co-operation between the Company and MANWEB," concluded Mr. Hopkins. "Load Development Engineers have maintained close contact over many years in both the provision and utilisation of electricity in all aspects to support the Company's continued investment in electro-production technology."



After the presentations, Mr. Hastings brought the ceremony to a close by thanking Mr. Macintyre for his contribution and all the companies who had submitted entries for the 'PEP' Award competition.

He added his congratulations to the winners and the firms who received commendations for

their impressive achievements.

"But really, this is a competition where everyone is a winner," he continued. "Every entrant has a story to tell about improved productivity and energy efficiency. These are the stories we all like to hear. These are the stories we need to hear if industry is to sustain its recovery and become competitive and profitable."

"We in MANWEB have a role to play in that recovery," he went on. "The award winners have used the services that we offer to all our industrial customers. As a result, we have all benefitted in some tangible way."

"This service is available to all industrialists in the Board's area through our team of Industrial Load Development Engineers. I am delighted that today has provided a certain amount of limelight for those engineers who are usually 'unsung heroes'."

"In the presentations today, we have seen good examples of the wide use of electricity in cutting production costs. In the future we look forward to demonstrating many more examples of efficient electricity in action — action which translates into productivity and competitive industry, and hopefully, a prosperous future for us all."

"As our advertising campaign states — 'We have the Power to help you!'"



## MID-MERSEY DISTRICT EMPLOYEES MEETING

# Sales help with job security

THE MID-MERSEY District LJCC 'Road Show' rolled around the District with five stops during October and November. The staff had elected for this format for their annual conference in place of the single central meeting.

There were three meetings for industrial staff, one at Warrington, one at Runcorn and the third at St. Helens. The two others were for clerical, administrative and engineering staff, half of them attending each meeting.

Each meeting followed the same pattern and was chaired by Customer Services Manager Glyn Norbury or Engineering Manager, Albert Cooper. Staff

downed tools at 3.00 p.m., with management blessing, to attend. They heard first the joint secretaries report on the activities of the Committee, which was given in the form of a double act by Glyn Threadgold and Tony Swift.

Glyn read out the report and Tony interjected comments to emphasise various points, and at one point he complained about the lack of facilities at the District Offices.

Glyn explained the change in

Guest speaker, Dave Tinsley with a group of engineering staff at Warrington.

the presentations for Long Service Awards and Tony urged his colleagues to give whole-hearted support to the ceremonies. There had been a fair amount of storm damage to the network and customers installations during the last winter. Letters of appreciation and thanks were received from customers and Head Office.

In the hope that next year would prove a safe year, both secretaries asked for the full support of the District staff for a 'Safetywise 85' campaign to keep it accident free. Finally Tony Swift appealed to his colleagues to produce suggestions to improve the efficiency in the District.

'Selling electricity is vital to our future' was the view and title of a talk by the District Load Development Engineer, Dave Tinsley. He started by showing a video film, which explained the need for the introduction of the Economy 7 tariff and the advantages it gave to the customer.

In his talk he explained that thanks to the Economy 7 tariff electricity was gaining the upper

hand and in the heating market Evidence from the Government Energy Efficiency Office shows electricity to be the cheapest form of heating for the majority of insulated homes.

As far as the public was concerned MANWEB staff were experts on all aspects of electricity, and it was important that in private conversations that staff helped sell electricity. All jobs within the Board were interdependent. He pointed out that the sale of storage heaters last year had totalled 1024. This had provided work for six electricians for two months, all the District Inspec-

Opening the meetings, left to right, Glyn Threadgold, Tony Swift, Glyn Norbury and Albert Cooper.



tors for two weeks, two weeks work for two jointers, four months work for the work control staff. In addition there had been work created for fitters and labourers due to re-inforcement and renewal work, as well as the shop and load development staff who had been responsible for the selling.

The meeting was then open for questions, it was then subdivided again for a meeting of individual sections for the staff to raise points about their particular section of work.

Principal assistant, Bob Martin, top left, conducts a side meeting of Runcorn meter reading staff.



## COMPUTER KEEPS TRACK OF BRITISH RAIL OPERATION

INVESTIGATIONS to determine the effect of reducing the number of transformers which supply the British Rail electrified lines, are under way at Crewe Grid sub-station.

A re-organisation and refurbishment of the 25,000 volt network which powers the electric locomotives, including the new Advanced Passenger Train, is being undertaken by BR with the assistance of MANWEB engineers. The exercise is aimed at improving efficiency in operating the network and making it more cost effective.

Many of the sub-stations supplying the network have not been working at full capacity. With some rationalisation it is possible to remove one on the stretch of line that runs through the MANWEB area. Normally it is a

fairly simple operation to remove a transformer and spread the load over the remaining ones in the network. In the case of British Rail, however, they have what engineers term a 'dirty' load. Equipment on the train disturbs



Dave Ferguson checks the wave form distortion as a train passes through the network.



Phil Swift, (electrician), makes a final adjustment, left, as Dave Ferguson waits at the computer keyboard.

the voltage patterns and creates frequency harmonics, or ripples in the wave form, which can back feed causing distortion on the MANWEB network.

The Board's Crewe sub-station houses two transformers which supply the rail network. The 132,000 volt supply into the grid is split between customers in the Crewe area and British Rail.

With several transformers operating and supplying the railway, voltage distortion is reduced to an acceptable level. Should one be taken out for maintenance, an emergency, or by design, it is essential to know exactly what effect it will have on the rest of the MANWEB network.

The man in charge of the investigation, Senior Engineer Brian Nield from the Head Office Technical Section, explained, "The harmonics created on the British Rail network could cause voltage distortion on the other side of the transformer. This in turn could feed back into the 132 kV line and affect supply to customers in the Crewe area. We need to know how much distortion there will be, as some of our customers could not tolerate even a small fluctuation."

Many businesses rely on a constant supply of electricity at a stable voltage, particularly those using computer controlled processes. Variation in the voltage can cause the computer control to malfunction and in extreme

cases to fail completely, bringing a process or a factory to a halt.

At Crewe Grid, 1st engineer, Dave Ferguson, from the Head Office Technical Section, had two transformers 'taken out' of service, one of the two at Crewe and the other at Speke Grid. He then handed over the control of the measuring to the micro-computer, and the investigation began.

The computer is programmed to control the measuring equipment automatically, and makes a record of the network's performance for analysis later.

This computer controlled technique has been developed in MANWEB, and was the subject of a lecture to the Royal Institution last year, by Head Office Technical engineers Brian Nield and George Evans.

The investigation at Crewe is the first time that such a method of computer controlled measuring has been used on a network in this country. It co-incided with another first, this time by the Advanced Passenger Train. As the test was carried out the 'tilting train' was making its record breaking run from Scotland to London, the first sub four-hour journey.

When the investigation is complete MANWEB engineers will have helped British Rail provide a more efficient rail service, which should result in a saving in capital and operating costs for them. Just one more way the Board is promoting the wise use of electricity.





Pictured at the Dairy Farmers Conference, left to right, Peter Hopkins, Tony Sutton and Dan Mitchell.

## DAIRY FARMERS HEAR ABOUT COST CONTROL

ONE of the best-attended specialist conferences, organised by the Board, was for dairy farmers and held recently at Theatr Clwyd in Mold.

An attractive programme/invitation helped to bring along 134 farmers interested in cost control with their milk production.

The conference was chaired by Chief Commercial Officer Peter Hopkins who introduced an impressive line-up of guest speakers.

The Milk Marketing Board's Regional Member for North Wales, Tony Sutton, who is also a Council Member on the NFU, spoke on quotas and what lay ahead.

Among the other speakers was Dr. Dan Mitchell, Manager of The Electricity Council's Farm Electric Centre.

The conference closed following a talk given by David Mellor (*Clwyd District Customer Service Manager*) who spoke on low-cost tariffs and help offered

by MANWEB staff on the farm and in the farmhouse.

Immediate feedback from the farming community proved that the cost-saving ideas voiced at the conference were beneficial. Indeed, on the day following, a number of enquiries came from farmers wishing to change their tariffs.

Thanks are due to all the District Commercial staffs for their help in attracting so many farming customers to the conference. The Clwyd District staff had the extra task of preparing the displays, leaflets and appliances laid-out in a very professional manner on site.

## FRODSHAM ANTIQUITIES

WHO says that electricity is dear?

While carrying out structural investigations at our Frodsham shop — part of preparatory work prior to putting in a new shop front — staff from Head Office Civil Engineering section found a veritable treasure trove of old documents under some floorboards.

One was a bill to a Mr. Catherall, of Frodsham, from the old Mersey Power Company, dated August 1932, for electricity. It included seven units for lights, at FIVE PENCE each (admittedly old pence), and 26 units for power and heat at tuppence each. Meter rents, at two shillings a time, brought Mr. Catherall's bill to eleven shillings and threepence.

A discount of 2½% was offered for rapid payment, and the small print on the back of the bill was taken from the Electric Lighting Act of 1909!

Other bills from local tradesmen included one from a garage for removing and re-fitting car wheels (two shillings and sixpence!), and one for three shillings for cycle repairs involving fitting a new three-speed cable and mending two punctures, replacing spokes and truing the wheels.



Speaker, Assistant Secretary Nick Williams, left session chairman Stan Roberts, centre and delegate engineer Ken Wynne chat during a break in the conference.

## Board engineers keep in touch with change

AS THE pace of new technology developments speeds up so it becomes necessary to make sure that those whose work is affected are able to keep abreast of change.

It was for this reason that four two-day seminars for MANWEB engineers were held at Head Office a short

time ago, attended by all our NJB staff — around 350, all told.

Each seminar was split into four half-day sessions, chaired on a rotating basis by Gerry Haughan (*Deputy Chief Engineer*) and Dennis Farquhar, John Powell and Stan Roberts, assistant chief engineers responsible respectively for the Technical, System Management and Plant-and-Construction sec-



### MANWEB 1985 CALENDAR

FOR the first time in many years, the Board has produced a calendar promoting our services to commercial and industrial customers. It suggests that for the following 365 days, MANWEB could be a local business partner.

Each page carries a clever cartoon drawn by free-lance artist Geoff Waterhouse. These depict aspects of the Board's service from commercial catering to air-conditioning and process heating to infra-red drying.

The calendar is a joint effort of our own publicity section and the Board's advertising agents, Brunnings.

from Head Office engineering staff backed by others dealing with subjects not strictly confined to engineering work.

Gerry Haughan commented: "It is now some years since we had comparable seminars, and they are necessary from time to time to keep us all up to date with new developments and new equipment. We also try to look into the future to prepare ourselves for more changes and developments which are likely to be on the way."

"Developments in telecommunications and microprocessors are particularly important at the present time. The reports coming back from Districts make it clear that the staff involved found these seminars most helpful".

## Electricity industry reputation grows

THE reputation of the Electricity Supply Industry is improving in the opinion of the British public. Over the past seven years our customers have grown to see us through kindlier and more appreciative eyes, according to a national opinion survey carried out by MORI during the Spring of 1984.

The survey, based on a sample of more than 2,000 people aged 15 and over, spread over 180 Parliamentary constituencies, set out to identify the public perception of several large industries and organisations — including ours.

Fields covered included "company familiarity", "company favourability" and comparisons between electricity and gas.

The questions "How well do you know each company?" revealed that Electricity Boards showed up well—second only to a well-known chain store much favoured by political leaders, and well ahead of the Gas and Coal Boards. A large majority of those questioned said they had "very favourable opinions" of Electricity Boards. There was an apparent con-

tradition in the public view of the gas and electricity industries, with a higher public regard for the "gas industry" as such, but a more favourable view of "Electricity Boards" than "British Gas." The survey draws the conclusion that this discrepancy may be accounted for by respondents "tending to think of the full range of services and prices when considering the industry, and to think more of personal service and contact when considering Electricity Boards and British Gas specifically."

But it is in a comparison of the public image of Electricity Boards as revealed during the recent survey and in a similar survey in 1977 that the main significant and encouraging shift in public opinion is apparent.

In 1984, 77% of people questioned thought that Electricity Boards "try hard to keep a good reputation", compared with only 64% in 1977, while 71% thought we were "efficient"—a big improvement on the 1977 figure of 53%.

Similar shifts in opinion — favourable to Electricity Boards — were apparent from the answers to questions on quality of service, helpfulness, dealing with customers, and staffing levels.

The feeling that Electricity Boards do not pay attention to suggestions from the public was still prevalent, however. Only 27% thought we were "ready to listen" — a marginal improvement of only 3% on the 1977 result.

## Head Examiner

OUR congratulations to Mike Whiteburg from Head Office, on gaining his Diploma in Hypnotherapy and Psychology (DHP) and becoming a member of the Association for Ethical Hypnosis (MAEH).

These qualifications, which have taken nine years to obtain, qualify him to practice professionally as a psychoanalyst using hypnotherapy and psychotherapy. He is also an accredited member of the Association of Psychotherapy and Psychology, in the Department of Human Studies at Loughborough University.

Mike, who is 33, is an administrative assistant in the Personnel Department at Sealand Road. As part of his career advancement in personnel work he studied for membership of the Institute of Personnel Management, which he passed. One of the subjects on the course was

Psychology, which was dealt with in a very basic way, but the subject fascinated Mike. In particular he was interested in the reading ability of adults, and just what it affected and why.

He talked with his tutor for Psychology on the IPM course, lecturer Mo Pirani from Liverpool Polytechnic. Together they embarked on research into improving reading speed and increasing the retention in the mind of what had been read.

For this Mike needed to know more about the workings of the brain and mind, which led him into studying psychology analysis and therapy, and on into using hypnosis.

Nine years on he has his quali-



Mike Whitenburg.

fications and with Mo Pirani has devised a course to teach people to increase their reading speed and the perception of what they have read.

Mike and his wife Maureen have two young sons. Looking into the future they plan to enter private practice with Maureen looking after the secretarial side of the business. Meanwhile Mike is planning to get some practical experience and training in a Chester practice on a part-time basis.



# Costly shut-down averted

## Obsolete equipment replaced

FROST damage to the flat roof of the substation established at the Cadbury/Typhoo works at Moreton on the Wirral caused subsequent flooding on to the switchgear housed below. Electricity supply was cut-off and the factory came to a standstill. The situation was serious.

During the initial period without power supplies the Company lost £100,000-worth of production.

Men from MANWEB were quickly called in to supervise repair work carried out by the firm's maintenance staff. In six hours they miraculously managed to salvage a partial supply and full load was restored three days later.

North Wirral Load Development Engineer Ron Jones, after careful examination of the damage, commented, "Most of the equipment in the substation was installed when the factory was established in 1957. Much of it, including the Ferguson Palin switchboard, is now obsolete and can be written-off because spare parts are unobtainable."

As a result of the damage, a £120,000 contract to install a new GEC switchboard system and replace one of the four 1,000-kV transformers feeding the board, was won by MANWEB.

One of the problems which arose was the jointing of the old

**Right:** The Company's Electrical Services Manager George Matthews looks on as Colin Hough (foreman, Contracting), makes a slight adjustment to the equipment.

**Below:** Checking over the plans are, from left to right: Trevor Parry (2nd engineer, Systems), and Ron Jones.



**Above:** Joe Robinson (craftsman electrician), working on the new switchgear. **Right:** Sorting out the cables from the mud we see, Norman Bird (craftsman joiner), right, with Charlie Scully (craft attendant).



**Below:** Noel Youds (craftsman electrician) busy on the new installation.



Imperial size cables to those with metric measure now being used on our system. This necessitated using special techniques — probably a once in a lifetime job for our jointers.

All the refurbishment work has been carried out in planned stages so that costly production in the factory would not be interrupted.

"I have been very pleased with the urgent and efficient manner in which the work has been carried out by the men from MANWEB," was the parting comment from Arthur Armstrong, the Senior Electrical Projects Manager for the Cadbury/Typhoo works at Moreton.

## Long Service



50-year-man, Les Griffiths.

WE offer our congratulations to the following members of the Board's staff who, during the month of December, have completed 50, 30 or 20 years in the electricity supply industry.

50 YEARS — Clwyd District: **Leslie Griffiths** (Engineering Manager).

30 YEARS — North Mersey District: **George H. Richardson** (general duties assistant). Mid-Mersey District: **Brian J. Travis** (craftsman, joiner). Dee Valley District: **Arthur Roberts** (HGV driver). North Wirral District: **W. Geoffrey Reyner** (craftsman, electrician). Clwyd District: **Hugh P. Roberts** (craftsman joiner). Head Office: **E. Leslie Roberts** (principal assistant, Technical Drawing Office). and **Thomas Simm** (2nd engineer, Plant and Construction).

20 YEARS — Liverpool District: **William S. Harris**, (craftsman, electrical fitter). Dee Valley District: **Gerald F. Jones** (craftsman, joiner). Clwyd District: **Norman S. Davies** (driver). and **T. Peter Espin** (craftsman, electrician). Head Office: **Harry B. Parsons** (2nd engineer, Plant and Construction).

Our apologies go to **Barbara A. Owens**, an assistant typing supervisor at Head Office who completed her 20 year's service last November, for missing the 's' off her name and describing her as a clerical assistant—Word Processing Unit. Sorry!

### HEAD OFFICE STAFF CONFERENCE

## Through the ages of MAN and MANWEB



**Above:** From left to right: Kevan Dufty (Industrial Relations Officer), Jim McLennan (Personnel Manager), Norman Barr (EETPU), Colin Leonard (Board Secretary) and John Beard (T & GWU).

**Below:** From left to right: Keith Mann (Nalgo), John Griffiths (Personnel), Bob Blackburn (EPEA) and Keith Beech (Acting Joint Secretary LJCC).



**THE Chairman of the Head Office LJCC and Board Secretary, Colin Leonard, welcomed delegates, retired staff and trade union officials to the Council employees' open meeting.**

He announced a change of guest speaker and subject, and read out a letter of explanation from Mr. Keith Mann, one of the original speakers, who felt unable to participate in a debate which he considered would be counter-productive.

At short notice, the Council had approached the Assistant Personnel Manager, Bob Hodson, who will shortly be taking up his new position as District Manager, Clwyd. He was asked to present the talk which he had given to the North Mersey meeting earlier in the month.

The open forum preceded Mr. Hodson's talk. There were only two written questions. One questioner was concerned about the Board's provision of employment for disabled people. After a response from Personnel Manager Jim McLennan, there was criticism that the Board did not meet the target that three per cent of the work force should be recruited from the disabled.

Dr. McLennan explained that

there was a wide range of disabilities; not all were confined to a wheelchair, and it was often found difficult to recruit disabled people to fit positions within the Board. He also pointed out that many disabled people did not register as disabled, and some were employed on the same basis as any other employee.

Answering a question about the content of YTS training, Education and Training Officer Denis Kernan stated that much of the schedule of the scheme had to be approved by the Manpower Commission, who specified a general training which the trainee might find of use outside the sponsoring organisation.

The guest speaker, Bob Hodson, traced the progress of Man

through the ages, extending his North Mersey talk to take in the progress of MANWEB. He pointed out that the Board's reorganisation, which started in 1970, had been a model which other Area Boards had followed. The future was going to be electric—and a high technology electric one.

The computer had played an increasing part in the operations of the Board since the first £1,000,000-model installed in 1963. Such was development of computer technology that the capability of that machine could be compared to the Sinclair ZX81 of today, costing around £139.

The present computer at Sealand Road, linked to all Districts, operated at 200 times the speed, and had a storage

capacity of tens of thousands of millions of characters.

Ten years ago there were six visual display units linked to the computer; today there were 350 VDUs; and, in ten years' time, Mr. Hodson anticipated that there would be 1,500.

He had intended to end his talk with an archive film poking fun at the introduction of North Sea gas. Unfortunately, the gremlins from the Gas Board had crept in and sabotaged his all-electric projector.

However, a final event rounded off the evening nicely. It was an excellent meal prepared by Graham Morris and his Head Office Taylorplan restaurant team. The well-cooked meal was hot, tasty, and presented with first-class service.



Harold Wilson  
Charlotte Shaw  
and Bob Hodson



# TRADESMEN IN TRAINING

## Craftsmen of the future

**HEALTHY sounds of men at work emanate from our Hoylake Training Centre as 40 young men labour on their initial schooling as craft apprentices.**

On this year's course we have 17 training as contracting electricians, six as electrical fitters

and one as a telecommunications fitter. Eight more are undergoing instruction as linesmen, six as jointers and two as meter mechanicians.

Two of the group were on the Board's Youth Training Scheme programme last year.

Their initial six-month period at Hoylake will be followed by a four-week 'on-job' spell under instruction from tradesmen in their home Districts. They will then go for further planned tuition in their respective trades.

We take this opportunity to wish all these young men success in their endeavours.



Feeding time — from left to right: David Lyons, David Swift, Neil Smith, David Kelly, Ian Kearsley, Peter Morris, Paul Lacy and Paul MacCormick.

### APPRENTICE INTAKE 1984/85

North Mersey: **Brian Holmes** (electrician), **Paul Lacey** (electrician).

Liverpool: **Michael Byrne** (fitter), **Mark Jones** (electrician), **Stephen MacDonald** (meter mechanician), **Andrew Rutherford** (electrician), **Andrew Skarratts** (joiner), **David Swift** (fitter).

Mid-Mersey: **Graham Appleton** (electrician), **Stephen Jerram** (joiner), **Neil Walsh** (electrician).

Dee Valley: **Gareth Davies** (overhead linesman), **Stuart Henry** (joiner), **Harry Henshall** (telecommunications), **Philip Hughes** (electrician), **Mark Gittins** (fitter), **Paul MacCormick** (electrician), **Ian Parker** (electrician).

North Wirral: **Paul Bradley** (electrician), **Andrew Bromilow** (joiner), **David Lyon** (electrician).

Mid-Cheshire: **Steven Allcock** (overhead linesman), **Stephen Collier** (joiner), **Paul Hill** (electrician), **Craig Bailey** (electrician).

Clwyd: **Robert Dick** (overhead linesman), **David Dodd** (overhead linesman), **Ian Hogg** (electrician), **David Jones** (fitter), **Ian Kearsley** (electrician), **David Kelly** (joiner).

Gwynedd: **Rhys Edwards** (electrician), **Iwan Roberts** (overhead linesman), **Alan Williams** (fitter).

Oswestry: **Heath Griffiths** (fitter), **Peter Morris** (overhead linesman), **John Penhale** (overhead linesman), **Neil Smith** (electrician).

Aberystwyth: **John Williams** (electrician), **Graham Lewis** (overhead linesman).

Two apprentices with extra talents, John Williams, left, who plays the



French horn with the Aberystwyth Silver Band and lately, with Lyceum Brass at Port Sunlight. On the right we see Stephen Collier who plays tennis and table tennis for the Rolls Royce Club in Crewe and, while in Hoylake for the Alderley Club.



Above: Formerly with the YTS — Andrew Skarratts.

Right: In the background is Andrew Rutherford and filing is Stephen MacDonald.



Left: In the Electrical section, from left to right, back row: Alan Williams, Mark Jones, Ian Parker and John Penhale. Front row: Graham Lewis, Iwan Roberts, Neil Walsh and Craig Bailey.

Right: On the lathes, from left to right: Robert Dick, Graham Appleton, Rhys Edwards, Steven Allcock, Michael Byrne, Paul Bradley and David Dodd.

Below: Practising first-aid, from left to right: David Jones, Mark Gittins, Garry Henshall, Paul Hill, Brian Holmes, Stuart Henry, Philip Hughes, Heath Griffiths, Stephen Jerram, instructor George Smythe and Ian Hogg.

On the final count of our pictured apprentices we found that our cameraman had missed one — Gareth Davies. Sorry young man!



## SAFETY SCENE

THE first day of January heralded the start of the electricity supply industry's "Safetywise '85" campaign.

As reported in the December issue of 'CONTACT', the overall objectives of the year-long campaign is to encourage a more positive attitude to safety and safe working practice throughout the industry.

To gain some measure of success MANWEB's campaign

will require the assistance of all safety committee members, supervisors, union representatives and staff in offices, shops and depots. "Safetywise '85" should involve every person employed by the Board.

Over the past few years, the number of accidents per hundred employees has, generally,

shown a slight decrease. The "Safetywise '85" campaign promotes a determined drive for further dramatic reductions in the level of accidents and injury during the next twelve months.

We must endeavour at all times to seek even higher safety standards.

During the year, "Safety Scene" will be featured in the pages of 'CONTACT'. We will look at the various types of accident which occur — some all too often. Next month we hope to deal with the 'Handling of objects' category.

We plan to report on activities happening throughout the Board's area concerning the "Safetywise '85" campaign. These will be published along with other matters relevant to health and safety at work.

Since the scheme for first-aid training started at Hoylake a couple of years ago, every apprentice, bar one, and all YTS staff, have gained their Certificates for First-Aid at Work.







Cyril Chapman, *centre right*, receives a farewell handshake from senior engineer, Denis Hughes, watched by engineering colleagues.  
Mr. C. CHAPMAN

HAVING completed over 30 years' service with MANWEB, Head Office engineering draughtsman, Cyril Chapman is retiring.

He started his working life by following his father's footsteps into the building trade and became a bricklayer. It was in this capacity that he joined

MANWEB in 1954. In 1959 he went on the Manual Workers Training Scheme and a year later joined the Drawing Office staff.

Cyril served in the Army during the Second World War, and saw action with the Royal Welch Fusiliers in France shortly after the 'D'-Day landings.

He is married and he and his wife Sally have a son, Alan, who is working in the Mid-Mersey District. It was with the help of Sally and Alan that his Head Office colleagues were able to spring a surprise buffet lunch on Cyril at the home of fellow engineering draughtsman, Cliff Cave.

He likes gardening and photography, and enjoys tinkering around with car engines. With Sally he likes to 'trip the light fantastic' on the dance floor, and is keen on brass band music. To make his gardening a little easier, colleagues contributed to a farewell gift of a hedge-trimmer.



Tegwyn Williams, *centre right*, makes a presentation to Frank Bailey, watched by his friends and colleagues at Crane Street, Chester.

#### Mr. F. BAILEY

THE meter reader with the heaviest bicycle in the Dee Valley District, Frank Bailey from the New Crane Street depot in Chester, has now retired. He gladly passes the bike on to one of his colleagues!

Frank, from Burton near Wrexham, started his working life in a local quarry. During the last war he served in a number of regiments and, for a time, was a Military Policeman. He finished in the right place however—the Army Pay Office.

Much of his service time was spent overseas in India, South Africa and Gibraltar.

He returned home to work in an agricultural mill before joining MANWEB in 1960 as a meter reader.

A bachelor, Frank enjoys his garden and is interested in all sport. While a young man he played football for local clubs and, during his army life in India, played in the hockey team.

At the farewell ceremony

Tegwyn Williams (*Administration Manager*) was on hand to present Frank with a cheque from his colleagues with which he intends to buy a spin dryer. He also chose a book on boxing from the LJCC.

Frank thanked everyone for their contributions and good wishes and said, "From time to time we all have some harsh words to say about the Board but I can now tell you that when it comes to retirement, they certainly look after you!"

Some years ago, she was made an Honorary Member of the Order of St. John and, in 1977, Sybil was awarded the Queen's Jubilee Medal.

Her first job of work was with the former Chester Corporation transport department. Later she transferred to the District Valuer's section.

In 1948 she married Neville, now a lecturer at the North East Wales Institute in Wrexham, and two years later, Dave was born. They now have three grandchildren.

Sybil joined MANWEB at the New Crane Street depot in 1954. Shortly after this she transferred to the original office block in Sealand Road.

Still keenly interested in all aspects of first-aid, Sybil is a committee member of the Chester Centre of the St. John Association. She also trains the Capenhurst first-aid team. Now, with more free time on her hands, she offers her wealth of experience and knowledge to other first-aiders. Just call her.

At an 'informal' farewell ceremony attended by scores of friends, Sybil received a ring, a chain and other personal gifts from her colleagues.

Holding a bouquet of flowers, Sybil Cooper says goodbye to colleagues at Sealand Road.



## RETIREMENTS

### Farewells to friends and colleagues

#### Mr. J. A. BLEASE

TURNING his back on the huge diagram of the MANWEB 33,000 volt network, in the Head Office Reporting Centre for the last time, duty engineer James A. Blease looked forward to a retirement after 37 years in the electricity supply industry.

He started his career in his native Bollington, near Macclesfield with a vehicle bulb manufacturer. During the war he served with the Army, mainly on coastal batteries in the Orkneys and on the East Coast.

In 1947 he joined Wallasey Corporation, initially as an electrician and later an installation inspector. He moved to the British Electricity Authority, in 1950, at Wallasey Power Station, as a control engineer and from there to MANWEB two years later to a similar position at Legacy, Wrexham.

He became a member of the

Head Office Reporting Centre staff in 1972.

Jim and his wife Eileen have a married daughter, Ann, and one grandchild. He leads an active life away from work, he has been a member of Esclusham Below Parish Council for the past 13 years, having served a term as chairman. He is a keen gardener and a long standing member of his local gardening club and has been their club and show secretary. Scouting is another of his interests and for 15 years he has been a Group Scout Leader.

He is also a member of the church choir and has twice been chairman of the men's society. In retirement he plans to play bowls, watch Wrexham Football Club and continue gardening. To help in the latter occupation his colleagues contributed towards the cost of a rotavator.

In the centre of our picture, Jim Blease and colleagues, past and present, with their backs to the Board network diagram.



#### Mr. G. BREEZE

AFTER 46 years' service in the industry, George Breeze, a chargehand electrician at Mid-Cheshire District, has retired.

George, who began his working life as an apprentice with the former Mid-Cheshire Electric Supply Company, served in the RAF during the Second World War, spending much of his service in South Africa.

Returning to Northwich District of MANWEB, he became a chargemand in 1964, and following re-organisation stayed on at Lock Street depot until 1977, when he was transferred to Crewe.

On behalf of his many friends he was presented with a cash gift.

AFTER making the decision to take early retirement Don Hinsley, our Dee Valley District Load Development Engineer said farewell to his friends a short time ago.

A very popular colleague, Don started his career in 1942 with a private electrical contractor in Ashton-under-Lyne. One of his first jobs was putting electricity supply into air-raid shelters!

Later he worked as an electrical fitter with a firm in Manchester before returning to contracting.

In 1947 he was called up for service in the RAF and was with the 'Dam Buster' Squadron—"many years after the big event"—he hastens to add.

Don came back to civilian life in electrical contracting for a while before joining Norweb in 1951. He made a number of moves, first to Oldham on electrical inspection and then to Area Office on power sales. On reorganisation within the

#### Mr. D. HINSLEY

Board, loss of opportunity for promotion forced Don to leave and join the former Manchester Corporation City Architect's Department as a consultant. He worked on the air terminal at Manchester Airport and on the Courts of Law in Deansgate.

A few years later he became the electrical and mechanical engineer for the Housing Department in charge of heating requirement in the multi-storey flats being built in the Inner City. At that time the Corporation was building 4,000 properties a year and, with Don's influence, 70 per cent were all-electric.

In 1965 he made his wisest move when he joined the MANWEB staff at Rhostyllen to work on industrial development and heating.

Later he took in contracting and, on reorganisation in 1970, he was appointed as Energy

Sales — later Load Development Engineer for the Dee Valley District.

While on holiday in Jersey just over two years ago, Don suffered a severe heart attack. He was away from work for four months.

"Since then I have had to take things easy and it has brought me, reluctantly, to the decision to retire," Don told us. "However it will give me more time with my wife Barbara and our two offsprings, Beverley and Stephen. I am also looking forward to doing some of the things I have waited almost 40 years to do."

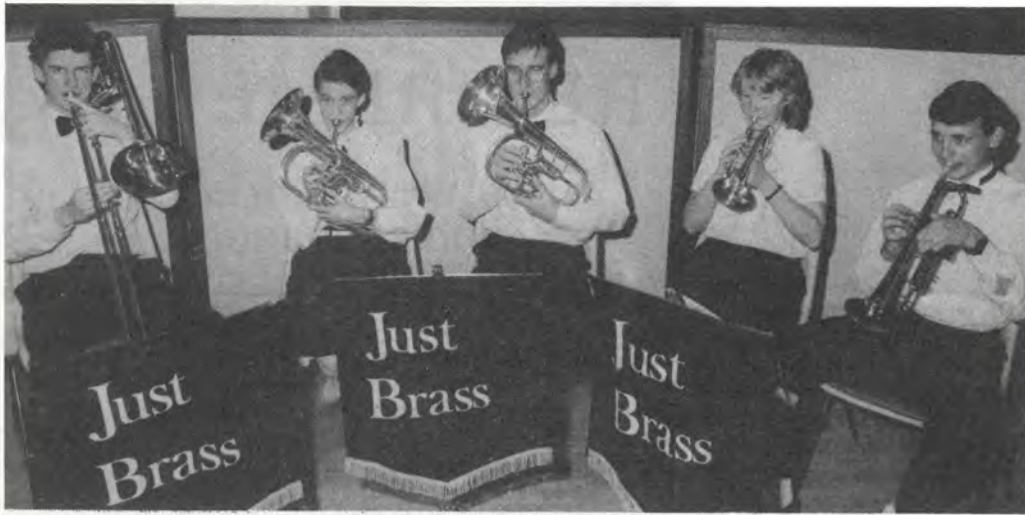
Don will be kept busy as a member of the Methodist Church and the local Rotary Club.

Colleagues subscribed to present him with a portable stereo radio cassette player, an electric knife, a gift voucher and half-a-dopzen 'Crown' plates depicting scenes by Constable.

A shirt sleeved Don Hinsley in the centre of our picture, relaxes with friends and colleagues who gathered to give him a good send off into retirement.







### JUST BRASS ENTERTAIN

Pictured are five members of the 'Just Brass' who entertained an audience of Head Office staff at a lunch-time concert recently. They are all teenagers, with four still at school, and are either members of the Cheshire Youth Orchestra or the City of Chester Junior Brass Band. *Left to right* are Stephen Burns, Lindsay Mulroy, Andrew Mulroy, Helen Feakins and Wojceich Zalewski. Lindsay and Andrew are the children of Ted and Joan Mulroy. Ted is an engineering draughtsman at Sealand Road.

### Aberystwyth Fancy Dress

Pictures from Aberystwyth party, *left*, the Invisible Man and Prince Charming, alias Dave and Olga Grady, with another couple, Andy and Iona Stubbs, in their 'Fallen Angel' and 'Pirate' costumes—our best wishes to them for their forthcoming happy event. *Below* is Tomos Davies the Welsh version of Bruce Lee — Dai Lee — delivering a knock-out blow — to himself.



### Chester Parties

Look what we've got...

Three young lads who were very happy with their gifts from Santa at the Chester Christmas party.



### STUDENTS LUNCH WITH CHAIRMAN

Our picture shows students who have successfully completed their studies during 1984 in what has become a traditional Christmas lunch with the Board Chairman at Sealand Road. *Left to right* are the host, Board Chairman Ben Hastings, Len Dorr, *B.Sc.*, Mike Tomkins, *B.S.*, Education and Training Officer, Denis Kernan, Ian Birch, *HND*, Personnel Manager Jim McLennan, Brian Rogers, *HND* and Ian Moul, *MAAT*.

### Cabaret stars take a bow

Compere Gren Roberts, *extreme right*, introduces the galaxy of stars in the finale of the Christmas Cabaret at the Chester Staff Party.



### Five-a-side Competition

The Deeside Leisure Centre was the setting for the annual Five-a-side competitions of the Chester Sports and Social Club. Sixteen teams competed in the men's contest and six in the ladies.

F.A. referees, more used to professional soccer, controlled the games, 'Femmes Fatales' were the ladies winners. After an exciting final, decided on a second round of sudden death penalties, the men's contest was won by MANWEB FC, who beat 'The Assassins' from North Wirral District.



'Femmes Fatales' the winners of the Ladies Five-a-side competition receive their trophies from MANWEB Chester FC captain Mike Thomas. *From the left*, Jenny Tomann, *capt.*, Kath Hughes, Jayne Pearson, Pauline Rowlands, Diane Unwin and Lynn Williams.

The winners of the Five-a-side cup, MANWEB FC. Pictured *left to right* are, *standing*, John Gorman, Emyr Jones and Nigel Crossley. *Kneeling* John Rowlands and captain Ian Jones.

Runners-up 'The Assassins' from North Wirral are *left to right, standing*, Alan Cameron, George Hogarth and Chris Hasson. *Below* are Tommy Hill, Glyn Jones and Geoff Ainslea.



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#### HOLIDAYS

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE** — Large self-contained flat with private garden overlooking the sea. Two bedrooms, separate kitchen, dining area and lounge, bathroom. Sleeps up to six people. Tel. (0934) 412397 (Mr. T. L. Pettitt).

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