

Contact

January 1981

New Year Rose
(see page 2)



The Girl from MANWEB 1981

It was a "Clean sweep" for Clwyd District in the 1981 competition, with Clwyd girls taking first, second and third places. Our COVER PICTURE shows the winner, 22-years-old Rosemary Tomlinson, a new supplies clerk at District office. On the right she is pictured with the four judges—Deputy CCO Derek Holman, Peggy Woodcock (Women's Page Editor, 'Chester Chronicle'), Deputy Chairman Richard Gales, and Mrs. Freda Brassey, principal of the *Elle* model agency of Birkenhead and Chester.



The other finalists were . . .

Seated: Third prize-winner Karen Snape (Clwyd) and runner-up Janet Abbott (Clwyd).

Standing (Left to right): Elizabeth Brett (North Mersey), Jeanette Shaklady (North Mersey), Carole Feast (Liverpool), Janis Newman (North Wirral), Susan Jean Edwards (North Wirral) and Kay Davies (North Wirral).
All this year's finalists were single young ladies!



Contact

THE STAFF MAGAZINE
OF THE
MERSEYSIDE AND
NORTH WALES
ELECTRICITY BOARD

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MAKING IT WORK

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PREJUDICE based on dislike for the colour of someone's skin, or religious opinions, or the fact that he or she speaks a different language, is as old as mankind itself. Very few people—even those who regard themselves as enlightened and tolerant—are totally devoid of such weakness.

Most societies include minority groups whose race, colour or religion sets them apart from the majority. Across the years many such groups have been the subject of a greater or lesser degree of persecution. The thin end of the wedge is usually represented by unfair discrimination over such things as jobs, housing and participation in social life. The thick end—at its evil worst—is the extermination camp.

An even bigger section of society—the female sex—can complain with some justification that they also are often discriminated against, simply because they are women. While not many would regard themselves as militant “women's-libbers”, many would agree that for a woman to succeed in a man's world demands a level of ability far in excess of that expected of a man filling the same role.

Legislation outlawing discrimination against our fellow-citizens on grounds of race, colour, nationality and sex has been in force in Britain for some years, but no-one would suggest that legislation alone can ever abolish prejudice.

MANWEB's policy of equal opportunity for all employees—outlined by Personnel Manager Jim McLennan in this number of 'Contact'—sets out the Board's determination to implement the letter and spirit of the law. “*The Responsibilities of Employees*”—reprinted in detail—lays down the moral and legal duty of every member of the staff to make sure that the Board's policy really works!

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.

“EQUAL OPPORTUNITY”

The Board's Policy

Two pieces of legislation—the *Sex Discrimination Act* of 1975 and the *Race Relations Act* of 1976—set out to outlaw discrimination based on prejudices connected with race, colour, nationality, ethnic origins, sex or marital status.

MANWEB's “Equal Opportunity Policy”—to which we are committed—aims to ensure that we follow the letter and spirit of the law, by ensuring that there is no discrimination in our employment practices as a result of these factors.

The Board's Management Committee recently approved this policy in detail. Copies of the full statement are available from the Personnel section at Head Office. The main points can be summarised as follows:—

- ★ *Employment practices will be continually reviewed to ensure that there is no unfair discrimination in the job-selection process. Those engaged in selection procedures will receive guidelines on the Acts.*
- ★ *The responsibilities of the Board and of employees under the Acts will be widely publicised. (While the Board is responsible for discrimination by an employee, proceedings may also be taken against the employee.)*

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES

The following principles are extracted from a Code of Practice issued by the Commission for Racial Equality, but comparable responsibilities also apply under the Sex Discrimination Act.

While the overall responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination in an establishment rests with the employer, individual employees at all levels and of all racial origins have responsibilities too.

Good race relations depend on them perhaps even more than on management, and so their attitudes and activities are of crucial importance. They have duties to their employer, to their trade union (where appropriate) and to their fellow-employees. In particular, individual employees:—

- ☆ *should co-operate with measures introduced by management to ensure equal opportunity and non-discrimination;*
- ☆ *must not themselves discriminate, e.g. as supervisors or as persons responsible for selection decisions in recruitment, promotion, transfer or training;*
- ☆ *must not induce or attempt to induce other employees or unions or management to practise*

by
Jim McLennan
(Personnel
Manager)



The **Race Relations Act** makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against an employee in the terms of employment, access to promotion, training, transfer and other benefits, or by dismissal or other detrimental treatment on the grounds of race or nationality.

The **Sex Discrimination Act** makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone (male or female!) on the grounds of sex or marital status. Employers are responsible under both Acts for discrimination by employees in the course of their employment, whether or not it was done with the employer's knowledge or approval. It would, however, be a defence for the employer to prove that he operated a clear policy of non-discrimination.

unlawful discrimination, for example, by refusing to accept employees from particular racial groups, by refusing to work with an ethnic minority supervisor, or by seeking company agreements which would adversely affect members of ethnic minority groups on racial grounds;

- ☆ *should draw the attention of management to suspected discriminatory acts or practices;*
- ☆ *must not victimise or attempt to victimise individuals on the grounds that they have made complaints or provided information about racial discrimination;*
- ☆ *should not harass, abuse or intimidate other employees on racial grounds, for example, in attempts to discourage them from continuing employment—where such action is taken by employees in positions of authority in the course of their employment, it is unlawful.*

Talking Notes

DIGGING FOR VICTOR(Y)

A MAN from North Wirral District who likes his work so much that he has made it his hobby is **Mr. Victor Seston**. No, he doesn't read meters, wire houses, mend cookers or dig trenches—although digging is very much a part of his hobby. For Victor is the man responsible for maintaining the neat appearance of our North Wirral sub-station sites.

In his own time he tends his own garden and allotment, and has twice won the Wirral Allotment Competition for his Birkenhead vegetable patch.

There are 1,835 allotment holders and Victor has beaten the lot. One unusual feature of his plot is that he grows bamboo. These plants make excellent wind-breaks and the canes can be cut when mature for decorative use.

Victor with some of his prize onions



Victor has worked for the Board for 30 years and has had his hobby for just a little longer. He entered the contest for the first time two years ago—he won last year at his second attempt and again this year. He is hoping for a hat-trick by winning again in the next contest.

The title carries with it the Silver Odyssey Trophy, which he holds for one year, a miniature cup for him to keep and a cash prize of £30, which he says will be "ploughed" back into his allotment, to help him raise another prize crop of flowers and vegetables.

Honour for Bill

The many friends of Mr. Bill Shires, our former Chief Commercial Officer, who retired a month or two ago, were delighted to hear of his award of the O.B.E. in the New Year's Honours List.

Mr. Shires, who began his working life as an errand-boy, served the electricity supply industry for 41 years with the Lancashire Electric Power Company, Norweb and MANWEB. He joined us as Area 4 Commercial Officer in 1963 at Rhostyllen, and was finally appointed C.C.O. in 1978.

Congratulations to a man who worked his way from the bottom of the tree to the top—but who



Bill Shires, O.B.E.

never lost the knack of making everyone with whom he came in contact feel completely at ease.

Active Electrons

The *Electron Players*—the Liverpool-based amateur theatrical group—remain very much alive and active. After their last successful production at the Neptune Theatre in May, they took a well-earned break from rehearsals, but latterly they have been 'en tour' with a short play—*"The Lovelies"*.

Supported by a presentation of the TV game *"Give Us A Clue!"* and song-and-dance items by the Kensington School of Dance, their programme has been well-received at St. Paul's Church Hall, Litherland, and Oakvale Church Hall, Broadgreen.

Rehearsals start this month for the next major presentation—a thriller called *"The House on the Cliff"*, by George Bateson—at the Neptune on 26th and 27th March.

Tickets (£1) will be available soon, and full houses are hoped for.

Committee-men

The following were successful in the recent elections for members' committee-men in the staff superannuation scheme: Messrs. **H. Bickerdike** (Midlands Region—retired); **F. Bonner** (Yorkshire Board—retired); **S. P. Easton** (Eastern Board); **W. D. Fryer** (Eastern Board—retired); **W. A. Guyler** (S.W.B.); **C. D. Lewis** (S.E.B.); **J. Magness** (S.W. Region); **E. J. C. Sharratt** (Midlands Board—retired); **P. S. Thompson** (S.W. Region) and **G. W. N. Warrington** (Midlands Board).

Moelwyn Singers

There's a busy time ahead for **Bob Jones**, a meter-reader/collector based at Blaenau Ffestiniog, who is secretary and publicity officer for the Moelwyn Male Voice Choir.

He recently organised two concerts at Lytham St. Annes to raise cash and to buy a guide dog for the blind. More than £1,000 was the result—and the dog has been named "Moelwyn" in recognition of the choir's efforts.

Guide Dog Moelwyn—an invaluable friend for someone!



PRESENTED TO
Moelwyn Male Voice Choir,
8th November, 1980.
IN GRATITUDE FROM
THE GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND ASSOCIATION.

Bob has also organised a tour of Iceland for the choir, while a tour of Brittany is planned for March. There will also be a visit to Germany in August, when the singers will be Britain's representatives in a European competition.

Aberystwyth Wedding

Best wishes for the future to **David Grady**, of the general services section, Aberystwyth District, who recently married **Miss Olga Jones**. Bath towels, a frying-pan(!) and a cheque were among the gifts from his colleagues.

Dancing Bowlers

After an inter-departmental bowls tournament at Liverpool, the contestants and their friends enjoyed a very successful dance at the Thingwall Road sports and social club.

District Engineer **Mr. Charles Donovan** presented trophies to the winning team—Commercial "B"—consisting of **Ted Potter** (captain), **Bob Hodson**, **Ted Whitaker** (retired), **Vin Danks**, **Harry Robertson**, **Joe Bailey** (retired) and **John Mays**.

After the presentation and refreshments—courtesy of **Cathy, Teresa and Jill**—dancing continued to the music of **Ted Potter's Space Odyssey Disco Sound**.

New District Engineer

The new District Engineer in Liverpool District will be **Mr. Ken Crabtree**. He succeeds **Mr. Charles Donovan**, who retired at the end of December.

Ken Crabtree, who is 50, is married and he and his wife have three grown-up sons. He was born in Burnley and started his career with the electricity department of one of the small local authorities which were taken over with the formation of the North Western Electricity Board in 1948.

He completed his student app-



Ken Crabtree

renticeship with Norweb, qualifying as an engineer, holding engineering appointments with that Board and the Yorkshire Board before joining MANWEB in 1963. He has worked in both Liverpool and North Mersey Districts, having experience as both System and Production Engineers. Until his new appointment he was the Principal Engineer in the System Management section of the Chief Engineer's Department at Head Office.

Holiday Accommodation

Llandudno. Three-bedroomed house. Sleeps five. Lounge, dining-room, kitchen, bathroom. Quiet position facing park (tennis and bowls). Near beach, shops, theatres, swimming-pool. Convenient for Snowdonia. Reduced prices for electricity industry employees (past and present).
Tel: Llandudno 49329.

New Liverpool Time

Mr. G. H. Barr, hon. sec. of the Liverpool retired employees group, asks us to inform members that the monthly meeting (held on the second Wednesday of each month) will in future begin at 2 p.m., replacing the former starting-time of 3 p.m.



What a shower! No—not the people, the presents. They were gifts for our 1980 'Girl from MANWEB', Eve Townley (in the centre of our picture), who left the Board at Christmas. Eve and husband Graham are expecting their first child in 1981. To the many good wishes of her friends and colleagues, we in the 'Contact' office add ours to a special 'Mum from MANWEB'.

Humorist

Sending a note about his account to Dee Valley District, a Bryn Teg (Wrexham) gent livened it up with this little cartoon!



Squash Partner Wanted

Mike Crangle, an administrative trainee at Lister Drive, is looking for a partner (preferably a beginner) to play squash at Heswall Squash Racquets Club. He can be contacted on 051-334 4876 after 6 p.m.

EEIBA "200" Club December Draw

1st: Mr. P. B. Henderson
2nd: Mr. R. G. Monk
(Both retired)

RETIRED STAFF ACTIVITIES

Mid-Cheshire

Mid-Cheshire Retired Employees Association held their second pre-Christmas social on 26th November, at the Jubilee Hall, Crewe. Some 56 members took part, plus three guests, and the music was again provided by Mr. Norman Walsh. This very successful event closed their programme for 1980.

The Association's busiest year yet has included coach trips to Bodnant Gardens, Attingham Park, Belvoir Castle, the craft village at Llanbedr, near Harlech, and Holker Hall, Cumbria.

Mid-Mersey

Mid-Mersey Pensioners' Association finished a very lively season with a mini-holiday to Skegness and a visit to St. Helens Theatre.

The Skegness trip was at the end of October. Visits included trips to Lincoln Cathedral, Boston Market and Boston Hump and a run-out to Tennyson country, which included Tennyson's house and some of the tiny villages thereabouts, ending up at a local pottery. The hotel was first-class, with splendid entertainment.

The final theatre outing was to a performance by the Un-named Players of "Witness for the Prosecu-

tion", by Agatha Christie. Before the show, the pensioners had tea, prepared by members Elsie Birchall, Mary Coulshed and Elsie Kenwright.

Dee Valley Dinner

The annual dinner for the Dee Valley Retired Staff Association held at the District Office restaurant on 9th December was well-supported with over 90 retired members and guests in attendance. In his report, the Chairman (Mr. Stan Griffiths) outlined the work of the Association in the past year and thanked the Board for their support. Main speaker for the evening was Board Secretary Mr. L. J. Scudamore.

Following an excellent meal of soup, roast turkey and Christmas pudding prepared by the kitchen staff and served by volunteers from the District Office, Mr. Tom Kirby proposed the vote of thanks to Mr. Scudamore, the kitchen staff and all those who helped with the organisation—particularly Mr. Keith Griffiths.

The evening was completed with a concert by the Girls' Choir from St. David's Comprehensive School, Wrexham, and some much-enjoyed carol-singing.



Champion First-Aider Sybil (holding card) surrounded by a big gathering of well-wishers.

RETIREMENTS

Miss S. TIMMINS

Friends and colleagues gathered at Sealand Road to bid a fond farewell to Miss Sybil Timmins, an administrative assistant in the Head Office Superannuation section, who was retiring after 32 years' service with the Board.

She joined MANWEB shortly after the electricity industry had been nationalised in 1948 as a computer operator, becoming a senior operator, then assistant supervisor after five years. She later worked as a section leader in the computer section before moving to the salaries section in 1971. Five years later she became an administrative assistant.

A native of the Midlands, she is an ardent supporter of Wolves football team, and in retirement has gone to live roughly between Chester and the Midlands, in Derbyshire.

Sybil has served on the staff and advisory committees, and for a time was a union representative. However, her main interest has been first-aid. She was a founder member of the constant contest-winning 'Chester Ladies' team, which was formed in 1959. The team won the national electricity industry finals six times, and competed against the country's best first-aiders in the Grand Prior Competition. She was in the team that came second in one of those finals.

Recently she was made an honorary member of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade for her services to first-aid. We join with her colleagues in wishing Sybil a long and happy retirement.

Mr. J. W. JUMP

After a lifetime of service in the electricity supply industry, Mr. John W. Jump has now retired from his post as 1st engineer in the Technical section at Head Office.

He started work with the former Liverpool Corporation Electricity Supply Department in 1934 and, six years later, joined H.M. Forces. He served throughout the war years, particularly in the desert campaigns. On his return to Liverpool in 1946, he went to work at the Lister Drive depot as his former workplace at

Highfield Street had been 'blitzed'.

In 1956 he crossed the water on his appointment to an engineering post in the North Wirral District Meter section. With the amalgamation of the Board's various meter departments, Mr. Jump held the fort at Birkenhead during the transition period prior to taking up a post in the Technical section at Head Office.

This summary of his career was outlined by Mr. Frederick Brooker (*Assistant Chief Engineer—Technical*) when he made a farewell presentation to Mr.

Fred Brooker (centre, right) wishes a long and happy retirement to John Jump.



Jump in the presence of many friends and colleagues. After a few reminiscences, particularly of their first meeting, Mr. Brooker praised John for his fine work in the meter section and for his sterling qualities as a colleague.

In retirement Mr. Jump intends taking up the game of golf and will also devote still more time to his prize vegetables. Among the retirement gifts chosen by John was a present for his wife. We join with their friends in wishing them both many happy years in retirement.

Mr. G. D. STEELE

After 29 years with MANWEB, Mr. Geoffrey Dyas Steele ('Joe' to his friends), an electrician with Mid-Cheshire District until his transfer to the meter reading team following an illness, has retired.



A farewell handshake and presentation for Joe Steele (left) from Mike Metcalfe.

Joe began work in 1930, served in the RASC during the Second World War, and joined the Board in 1951. His transfer to the meter reading team came in 1974.

On behalf of his many friends, he was presented with a clock-radio by Mike Metcalfe (D.A.O.).

Mr. R. ZIMMERMAN

After 47 years' service to the industry, Mr. Reg Zimmerman, 2nd engineer (Systems) at Mid-Mersey District, retired recently.

Mr. Zimmerman began work at Surbiton as an installation inspector's mate way back in 1933, when his pay was 17s. 6d. (87½p to the younger generation!) a week. He joined the RAF in 1939, serving until 1947, when he returned to the industry after a course of study as a graduate trainee.

After working as Assistant District Engineer with the East Sussex sub-area, he came to MANWEB in 1955 as a section engineer, and has remained with us until his retirement.

On behalf of his friends, he was presented with a watch, while Mrs. Zimmerman received a bouquet.



Aberystwyth stalwart Mr. D. G. Thomas (right) with Bob Lewis.

Mr. D. G. THOMAS

After almost 24 years' service, Mr. David Gareth Thomas, principal assistant (consumer accounts) at Aberystwyth District, retired recently.

After serving in the Royal Navy from 1934 to 1946—when he saw service in the Far East and the Mediterranean—he joined the Portsmouth-Gosport Water Company. In 1957 he came to MANWEB as a clerk in Aberystwyth District office, becoming District Senior Clerk in 1967 and principal assistant (consumer accounts) on reorganisation.

On behalf of his many friends, he was presented with a Hostess Carousel and a food-mixer by Mr. Bob Lewis (D.A.O.).

Mr. R. JOHNSON

A carriage-clock was the gift of colleagues to Mr. Bob Johnson, a sub-station attendant at St. Helens, who retired recently prematurely on health grounds.

Bob enjoys holidays abroad and walking with his dog. He takes with him the best wishes of his friends for happiness and improved health.

Production engineer Bill Evans (left) wishes happiness and improved health to Bob Johnson.





It's Bill Evans again—this time extending good wishes to Jim Smith—in the presence of a crowd of smiling colleagues.

Mr. J. SMITH

Well worthy of an entry in the *Guinness Book of Records* is the achievement of Mr. James Smith, a heavy goods vehicle driver in our Mid-Mersey District, who has never been late for work or had a day off sick in nearly 35 years' service in our industry.

"This is a marvellous record," commented Mr. Bill Evans (*Production Engineer*) at the farewell ceremony held at Warrington a short time ago. He went on to say that it was incredible that someone so mentally and physically young should be joining the ranks of the retired.

"No-one is indispensable," he continued, "but some people are missed more than others, and Jim is such a person".

He paid tribute to Mr. Smith's practical knowledge and his ability to get things done, and spoke of his willingness to help others at work and, with his wife, Ethel, in aiding many people less fortunate than themselves in their private lives.

Mr. Smith's early years were given to active service for his country. He spent the entire 1939-45 war, mostly abroad, on active service with the Royal Horse Artillery. For a time, he was one of the famous 'Desert Rats' with the 8th Army. He fought in many war zones in the Middle East, Italy and, finally, in Greece. For his bravery and excellent service, Mr. Smith was awarded the Military Medal.

On his retirement from his job with MANWEB, many friends turned up at the presentation ceremony to pay their tributes to his friendship and offer their best wishes for the future. On their behalf, Mr. Evans presented Jim with a ship's clock, a perfect match for

the barometer already in Jim's possession.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith now plan to spend some time with their married daughter, who is a teacher in Italy. Jim's other pride and joy is the vintage Brough Superior Combination motor-cycle which he regularly enters in shows and cycle rallies up and down the country.

Mr. J. FOSTER

Mr. Jim Foster, engineering foreman at Northwich depot, retired recently on health grounds. He joined the Mid-Cheshire Power Company in 1935 and was promoted foreman in 1965.

Jim, who was awarded the B.E.M. in the New Year's Honours List, has recently suffered from impaired vision, but this has improved considerably following two operations.

On behalf of his many friends, he was presented with a carriage-clock by Mr. Graham Zeiher (*District Engineer*), at a retirement party held at Knutsford Bowling Club, while Mrs. Foster received a bouquet.

Mr. C. CAULFIELD

Popular Whitchurch colleague Charlie Caulfield said "farewell" to his friends at the depot recently—for the second time!

Charlie joined the industry in 1935 as a linesman and retired early in 1971 on re-organisation—but was back within a couple of months as a part-time yardman. Now he has resigned for family reasons.

On behalf of his colleagues, he was presented with a cheque by Mr. Teg Williams (*D.A.O.*). The money will help to buy a new salmon-rod—to help him

"Good luck and good fishing"
from Teg Williams (right) to
Charlie Caulfield.



maintain his reputation as the top angler of the Whitchurch club!

His friends wish Charlie and his wife (who has not been too well lately) a very happy retirement together.

Mr. C. DONOVAN

As the year of 1980 made way for the new 1981, the Liverpool District Engineer, Mr. Charles Donovan, allowed his management reins to pass into new hands for the coming year, and retired from MANWEB after 42½ years in the electricity industry.

Charlie, Chas, Don or "The Don", as he was variously known, started his working life with Bolton Corporation in 1938, served in the Royal Engineers during the war, returning to the Corporation in 1945. He held engineering appointments with Norweb and Y.E.B. before joining MANWEB in 1952.

He has held positions in Liverpool and Head Office before being appointed as District Engineer in 1973.

"Charlie Donovan is a character (and thank goodness for such people) who has managed to make life 'interesting' for those of us who have worked with him since he joined MANWEB 28 years ago," commented Mr. Jim Barraclough, Group Manager, when addressing the friends and colleagues who had gathered at Lister Drive to witness the departure of "The Don".

All the colleagues who spoke expressed their feelings of Don with an intriguing mixture of adjectives—"argumentative, abrasive, obstinate" coupled with "honest, straightforward, likeable". He bore no malice towards anyone after doing battle, and those present had a great affection for this great MANWEB character.

The only other interest that equals his concern for the good of MANWEB and the customer was his passion for golf. We understand that he and his wife

Marion enjoy touring with their caravan, and no doubt Charlie will enjoy more time for his daughter's children, playing his part as grandad.

One final note about Don gleaned from his former Head Office colleagues was his murdering rather than mixing of metaphors—these became known as "Donisms" and engineers wrote them down, and now have a collection of them.

We have selected a few for your amusement in a panel on this page.

Donisms — The sayings of Charles Donovan

"Are you trying to stir up a nest of red herrings?"

"I've got it written down in black and blue."

"We'll have to cut our cloth to suit the tailor."

"I don't care if I do get blackwashed."

"He's thrown a spanner in the woodpile."

"He came fuming at the bit."

"Give him enough rope and he'll drown himself."

"One daffodil doesn't make a lot."

"You're getting your pound of blood!"

"I know this road like the back of my heart."

"We are not the most important office, but we are the heart-throbs!"

"That fell on stony ears!"

"Hanging on with grim teeth."

Group Manager Jim Barraclough (wearing spectacles) expresses the goodwill of a big gathering of friends, including many retired colleagues, who turned up at Lister Drive to wish farewell to a great Liverpool character.





There was a good turn-out of Gwynedd colleagues for the retirement presentation to Arthur Williams (*seated, holding book*). District Engineer Mr. A. R. Shaw is on his right, and production engineer Mr. Ariel Thomas on his left.

Mr. A. L. WILLIAMS

After nearly 35 years with the Board, Mr. Arthur Williams, a Gwynedd District jointer based at Llangefni, retired recently.

Arthur is a keen gardener, and the stainless-steel spade and a voucher for £30-worth of seeds, presented

by District Engineer Mr. A. R. Shaw, will be put to good use in his garden and five allotments! They should also keep him fit!

His choice of a book from the LAC was—surprise!—on gardening!

Mr. W. E. GRIFFITHS

Construction engineer Mr. William Elwyn Griffiths from Head Office retired from the Board after 45 years' service.

Elwyn Griffiths, who served an apprenticeship as an electrician with the North Wales Power Company in Wrexham, served as a sapper in the Royal Engineers during the Second World War, becoming a jointer on return to civilian life.

Two years after nationalisation, he became a draughtsman and, shortly after, an engineer at the

former Area 4 office in Wrexham, working on the vast rural electrification programme in North Wales. With the reorganisation of the Board in the early '70s, he came to Head Office, remaining in the construction section.

Playing organ-music, brewing beer and gardening are his main pastimes, although he says that relaxing is his favourite.

Elwyn is married and he and his wife, Nancy, have two sons, one of whom is married and has a son—making Elwyn a proud grandad.

Colleagues from Head Office gather to hear Assistant Chief Engineer Stan Roberts wish a happy retirement to Elwyn Griffiths (*right*).



FIVE-A-SIDE SOCCER

Some mind-boggling titles were chosen by the 22 teams (18 gents and four ladies) which took part in a marathon five-a-side football competition, organised by Head Office Sports and Social Club and staged at Deeside Leisure Centre.

"The Chapel Hatpegs", *The Entire Population of China*, "Byte Yer Legs" and "We'll Lick Anybody" were just a few of the more imaginative team-names chosen by the participants. It seems that a good time was had by all, with not too much blood on the floor of the arena!

Our pictures show: *Top right:* The winning men ("Chapel Hatpegs")—*left to right*—Richard Lumb, Paul Burlison, Steve Lloyd, Keith Dyer (captain) and George Pye, with Hugh Farrow (chairman of the Football section).

Centre right: The winning ladies ("Five Pairs of Legs")—*left to right*—Kath McHugh, Jenny Tomann, Lizette Walker, Jane Pearson, Angela Ashton (captain) and Sybil Williams, with John Gorman (Football section treasurer).

Below, right: Losing men's finalists ("The Black Shadows")—*left to right (standing)*—Brian Sheppard, Gren Roberts (Sports club secretary), Colin Lawson and Martin Jones. *Kneeling:* Brian Carman, Richard Bromley and John Kennedy.

Below: Losing lady finalists ("Dunn and Co.")—*left to right (back row)*—Karen Dunning, Jennifer Jones, Pat Wilkes and Pat Shirvington (captain). In front are Gill Lloyd and Jane Gaskell.





Children's Partytime

Christmas is the time for children and many of our districts held parties for the children of the staff.

. . . at Mid-Cheshire

At **Mid-Cheshire**, Sue Brereton and Mervyn Bellis, with friends and colleagues, entertained 68 youngsters. There was tea, games, carols,

magic and puppets and, of course, Santa—thanks to Doug Tilley. Our picture above shows the Oswestry party in full swing.

. . . at Dee Valley

At **Dee Valley**, the children under nine were treated to a party, while the nine to 12-year-olds went to a

pantomime. The Rhostyllen party, too, had a magician—former MANWEB man and Magic Circle member, Arthur Evans. Father Christmas had a busy time, for he managed to get to Wrexham and give presents to the young folk, thanks to Noel Morris from the Legacy Depot. The Dee Valley children are seen enjoying their party in the picture below.





... at North Mersey

At North Mersey, they had two parties: one for the six to 11-year-olds and a disco for the older children in the 12 to 15 age group. Our picture above shows the younger ones at the Bootle party, where that man Santa was there with presents, thanks to Sid Owen, retired electrician.

... and Head Office

At Head Office, there was the result of a colouring contest, with five super prizes. They had tea, games, music, a Christmas sing-song to welcome that man again—Santa Claus—a special friend of Hugh Hughes. The bottom four pictures show some of the children at the Chester party.





Committee members and wives, left to right: Mr. and Mrs. Frank Mealing, Mr. Del Hall, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Dawson, Mr. John Scudamore (Board Secretary) and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Smith.



Old and New Boys Dine at Chester



Members and guests of the MANWEB Retired Employees' Association had their Christmas dinner at the Sealand Road restaurant just before the start of the seasonal festivities.

At a separate gathering from the MANWEB 'Old Boys', the newcomers to the industry, who have this year qualified in their respective professions within the industry, were invited to lunch by the Deputy Chairman of the Board to receive their certificates or qualifications.

Mr. Richard Gales congratulated the young men on the start they had made to their careers, and welcomed them to the industry.



Four young men who have gained professional qualifications in the centre of the above picture. Left to right are Messrs. Oscar Lloyd (Education and Training), John Scudamore (Board Secretary), Graham Morris and John Gorman (accountants), Dave Brayshaw (solicitor), Dave Lucas (accountant), Geoffrey Barnes (Chief Accountant) and Denis Kernan (Education and Training Officer). Below with the Deputy Chairman, Mr. Richard Gales, are engineering students, now engineers, who have completed their training. Left to right: Messrs. Jeremy Lowe, Fred Wooder, Andrew Smith, Keith Dyer, John Winters, Nigel Mills, Stephen Lloyd, Peter Mylchreest, George Pye, Mike Casson, Stephen Matson, Gary Worthington, Alan Smith and John Crabtree.





Chester Celebrations

The members of the Chester Sports and Social Club started the festive season with a marathon party, at which they had an excellent meal, party games, dancing and a live (*well some of the artists were*) show. They staged some talented acts, showing off the singing, acting and musical abilities of the Chester staff, and a hilarious (*it says here*) mickey-take on the "Girl from MANWEB" contest, by a motley crew of drag artists. (*Don't call us, chaps—we'll call you.*) A great time was had by all, as you can see from Ray Rowland's pictures.





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Party-Time at Liverpool District

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Liverpool District's annual Christmas party/dance was held at Thingwall Road sports and social club on 19th December, and, once again, Ted Potter provided the "Disco Sound" to which the happy revellers danced away the evening.

Thanks go to the District staff who once more supported raffles held during the year in aid of the Alder Hey Hospital Kidney Fund, and made it possible for District Engineer Charles Donovan to present Bill France (hon. sec. of the fund) with a substantial cheque.



POETS' PAGE

Plain Speaking

Since we conferred the title of "The Bard of Oswestry" on Henry Blackwell, there's been no stopping the man (not that anyone wants to!). His latest topical offering will ring a few bells with most people.!

It's December the thirty-first, and you'd swear to goodness that we're dying of thirst.

With glasses filled and with plates of food, every year we get in festive mood.

Perhaps anxious to see the old year out, not knowing what the new is all about.

Will it be better or will it be worse? Afraid I can't tell you that in verse.

The last twelve months have gone so fast, the dying year has all but passed.

Summer, autumn, winter, soon spring—we've barely done a single thing.

Our holidays over, it's Christmas here: we stuff ourselves—it's all too clear—

With turkey, pudding, trifle and cake. Then wonder why we've stomach-ache!

Up to the brim with food and drink—if we were fish, we'd damn-well sink!

Beer and whisky we drink too quick, then show surprise if we feel sick.

The atmosphere with cigar it reeks—that turkey seems to last for weeks.

Must be the biggest bird we've had. Why every Christmas we all go mad?

Our poor insides we stuff and fill—no wonder we are feeling ill.

This annual ritual seems insane—why can't we be satisfied with something plain?

Do we spare a thought, when that bird we carve, for those less fortunate who may just starve?

I'm sure we do, but I ask you please, "Have you ever tried to celebrate on mere bread and cheese?"

"Closing Down"

Awareness of the many factories, large and small, closing down because of the business recession prompted **Mr. John Hall**, a painter at our Seaview Road depot in Walasey, to write the following lines:

Of politics and football pools,
And news of everyday,
They used to talk of many things
But now they've gone away.

They left me full of smoke and fumes,
A paper-littered floor,
And never even stopped to close
My big and draughty door.

Just once a week, on Saturday morn,
They used to clean me out.
And then a rest till Monday,
With naught but rats about.

Now redundancy and closure
Are the order of the day,
They used to talk of many things,
But now they've gone away.

John is a member of the North Wirral and MANWEB (Chester) Sports and Social Clubs. He is very interested in local arts associations.

The following verses were taken from our industry's "Safety Review" publication:

TEN LITTLE WORKERS

Ten little workers
Feeling fit and fine
One smoked in the solvent room
Then there were nine.

Nine little workers
Thought they'd be late
One cut through the railroad yard
Then there were eight.

Eight little workers
Looking up to heaven
One fell off a loading ramp
Then there were seven.

Seven little workers
Putting in hard licks
One mixed booze with gas
Then there were six.

Six little workers
Glad to be alive
One forgot his goggles
Then there were five.

Five little workers
Standing near the door
One thought a wire was dead
Then there were four.

Four little workers
One scratched his knee
Didn't go to first-aid
Then there were three.

Three little workers
With nothing much to do
One indulged in horse-play
Then there were two.

Two little workers
Took stairways on the run
One mised his footing
Then there was one.

One little worker
Thought of the other nine
Began to practise safety
Now he's doing fine.

With acknowledgments to the State Electricity Commission of Victoria, Australia.

LETTERS

From a customer in Deeside in our Dee Valley District:

"Please accept my small note of appreciation for MANWEB services.

"My home is entirely 'electric' and so, at present, I'm having it re-wired by Mr. Nigel Morris, a MANWEB electrician who lives at Pentre Halkyn.

"From my observation, he is a very skilled young gentleman, a master of his craft, and works to full capacity during his working-time.

"At home-time, he makes sure everything is safe; is considerate about surface decorations and furnishings, etc.; and has kept inconvenience to a minimum.

"My home belongs to the 1920's, with quite an angled sloping roof, as it's a semi-bungalow. I know the working conditions for such a task are not easy; however, Mr. Morris surmounts them all with determination and confidence.

"At the initial stages, Mr. Basil Jones, Mr. Bob Connor and Mr. David Jones were very helpful with their advice.

"Must confess I'm absolutely ignorant about electricity and therefore absolutely dependent upon the skill and workmanship of Mr. Morris—he works very hard.

"Thank you."

Taking their bows with Nigel, our electrician, are Basil (*installation inspector*), Bob (*engineering assistant*) and the one and only Dave (*supervisor at Shotton shop*).

No More Torchlight

A grateful customer in our Gwynedd District writes:

"After our telephone call and my letter to you last week, when we asked if we could please have the electricity connected up in our farm buildings by mid-morning last Thursday, this is just to express our deepest thanks to your department. Thank you very much indeed that the connecting was

done by then. Your staff were so kind and helpful.

"It will make all the difference having electric light in our farm-buildings after struggling by torch-light in previous years—in the winter too!"

The customer's thanks go to Mr. John Howard Hughes and Mrs. Sharon Pritchard of the District Supply Engineer's clerical section.

I Will Return

Broadway shop in North Mersey District was the object of praise from a Norris Green customer:

"I visited your shop in Broadway, Liverpool 11, to buy a washing-machine.

"The manager was so very helpful and understanding that I will return again. It is not often that anyone gets the attention in a store these days. I wish there were more shops like MANWEB in Broadway. (Signed)."

There are more—57 to be precise throughout the MANWEB area—but well done, Pete Jones, a customer has written to prove that you give good service in Broadway.

Patient and Helpful

During recent years, Electricity Board staffs have become more and more drawn into co-operation with Social Services personnel in administering Code of Practice matters. The following nice note was received recently by Anne Swanson of the Liverpool District from one of the city's probation officers:

"Dear Miss Swanson,

"This is just a line to express my sincere appreciation of the assistance and co-operation I have received, not only from yourself but also from Mrs. McGibbon and Miss Donough.

"I know you must be inundated with requests for assistance, but you have all been unfailingly patient and helpful."

Nice to know that the work of Anne, Joan and Ann, who get a lot of hot chestnuts to handle, merits tribute from such a professional source!

Gentlemen,

In a letter to Dee Valley District, an Elton, Cheshire, customer writes:—

"I would like to take this opportunity to state that the gentlemen who did the repair were courteous and efficient.

"Yours faithfully, (Signed)."

The efficient gents were service electricians Geoff Swindley and Gary Jones.

OBITUARY

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

Mr. W. Roberts, of Johnstown, Wrexham, who worked at our Legacy depot prior to his retirement in 1969. He was 75.

Mr. John Edward Johnstone, a cashier at Warrington shop until he retired in 1965. He was 73.

Mr. Jimmy King, of Orford, Warrington, a meter-reader at Warrington prior to his retirement in 1971. He was 71.

Mr. E. T. L. Jones, District Engineer at the former MANWEB Crewe District, until his retirement in 1959. Mr. Jones, who was 86, served as a pilot with the Royal Flying Corps during the First World War.

Mr. George Grundy, a jointer at St. Helens until his retirement. He was 71.

Mr. Joe Garner, aged 67, a store-keeper at St. Helens prior to his retirement.

Mr. Peter ("Pop") Caton, North Wirral's oldest pensioner, aged 97. He began work in 1905 and was a jointer prior to his retirement in 1946.

Mr. Samuel Edward James, a former North Wirral linesman's mate, who retired in 1965, after 38 years' service.

Mr. Thomas Phillip Jones, an engineer with the production section at Dee Valley District, prior to his premature retirement in 1975. He was 57.

We extend our sincere sympathies to the families of our former colleagues.