



## Shop sales pick-up

### RADIO CONTROL DEVICES

A NEW internal communications system for Head Office has been ordered and will be installed in about three months' time. The system is primarily for security and maintenance personnel.

The radio-controlled unit will replace the present "bleepers" held by selected staff. The AEG-Telefunken system, whilst still using the "bleep", will have a digital read-out on the individual receiver, and the carrier can see by the numerical code what type of call it is and where he is needed.

In addition, there will be six radio transceivers, which will

enable the holder to be contacted by the internal telephone network, and hold a conversation with the caller.

The new devices will operate within the confines of the Head Office complex, and out of office hours key personnel on duty will be able to respond to doorbells and other security equipment wherever they are in the building.

## Staff cash in as TV ads pay off

**A** COMBINATION of competitive pricing policies and MANWEB's return to the use of TV advertising for domestic appliances led to a boom in business at Board shops during the last quarter of 1981.

In comparison with the same months of last year, our sales figures for October and November showed big increases, while the December blizzards, which hit many traders very hard indeed, had less impact on MANWEB shop business.

Appliance Marketing Manager Warwick Saunders told CONTACT that it was obvious that the TV advertising campaign had played a big part in bringing people into the shops. Once they were through the door, our keen prices and the enthusiasm and hard work of our shop staffs had done the rest.

"During a period when money is tight for many people, we are delighted to find our sales results booming like this," said Warwick. "I think that our competitive

trading policies and the trust that most people feel for MANWEB means that more and more customers are turning to us for their needs. I would like to express my appreciation of the way in which our sales people have made the most of the opportunity, turning inquiries into hard sales. This has done much to correct the shortfall experienced in July and August."

October saw the start of the big upsurge in sales, with a heartening 35 per cent increase on last year's figure.

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### PRIZEWINNING PICTURE

The very effective black and white print entitled "Winter Sun", reproduced below, was selected by our judges as the best picture in its section in the annual photographic competition. It was submitted by **Rudy Lewis**, husband of Jackie Lewis from Aberystwyth District.



### Chairman's Thanks . . .

**APPRECIATION** and admiration for the way in which MANWEB staff responded to the challenge of the big December blizzard comes from Board Chairman Ben Hastings.

Mr. Hastings told CONTACT:—

"Our customers have every reason to be grateful to all our MANWEB colleagues who were involved in this tremendous piece of work. There have been many messages of thanks from people who saw our men struggling to restore supplies under the most appalling weather conditions.

"On behalf of the Board, I would like to endorse those messages—not forgetting the back-up staff, who turned in to man switchboards and do other essential jobs.

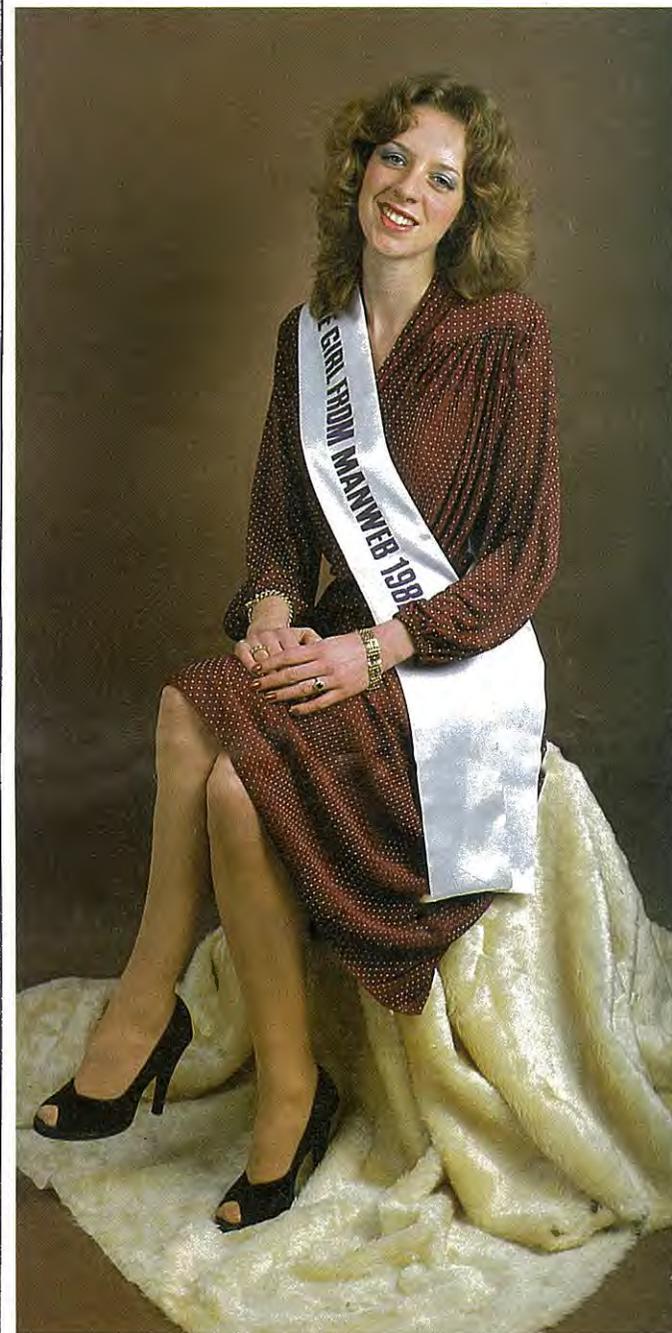
"I also thank every member of the staff who struggled into work, despite the atrocious weather conditions.

"It is at testing times such as these that the outstanding calibre of the MANWEB workforce becomes apparent to all."



● BLIZZARD BATTLE—PAGE 3

### ANOTHER WINNER FROM CLWYD DISTRICT



Picture by Ian Davies Photography

**I**N THE face of some excellent opposition from ten attractive young ladies, chosen from all over the Board's area, Janet Lynne Abbott, a charming 23-year-old from the Clwyd District at Rhyl, has carried off the title as "The Girl from MANWEB—1982".

Janet, who was the runner-up in last year's finals, is the fifth "Girl" from the Clwyd District to wear the coveted sash since the competition started in 1968. The District had three winners in succession in 1974, 1975 and 1976 and, last year, the duties were ably carried out by the personable Rosemary Tomlinson.

A former pupil at Prestatyn High School, Janet joined MANWEB exactly five years ago. She now works as a delivery clerk, scheduling movement of appliances and materials throughout the District.

Her spare-time activities include swimming, walking, dancing and playing tennis, and she is keen on travel. Janet tells us that she hates terrorism and physical violence in all its forms.

She is engaged to Stephen, an electrician, and she lives with her mother, Margaret, at North Road, Prestatyn. Janet's brother, Geoffrey, is in the R.A.F., based at Valley, and serves with the Mountain Rescue section.

THE FINALISTS AND JUDGES

See page 3

# D-I-Y SUCCESS IN DEE VALLEY



A PACKED Dee Valley Employees' Meeting saw the guest spot taken over by members of the District for their own presentation—a move which contributed to one of the best meetings seen in the District.

Four speakers, introduced by DCE Ron Williams, took the theme "The Customer Is Always Right" and gave their opinions of its validity. Each made a serious point, but added a variety of light relief.

Left: Star speakers, from left to right: Lew Crosby, Noel Morris, Flo Porter and Haydn Hughes. Below: Ron Williams, right, chatting with Keith Griffiths, left, and Glyn Dodd.

Last to speak—which was fortunate, for no one could have followed him—was the star turn, transport storekeeper Noel Morris, whose mischievous humour brought the house down—even the butts of his scathing wit saw the funny side.

Starting with Head Office senior management, he said: "The 'Lazy Y' hierarchy have their own special lift. Press the button—whoosh—straight up to Cloud 5—and that's only two below the main man!"

He complained: "The District has gone all posh. We used to have a mail delivery driver—now we've got a lady courier—Jessie Jones and her Welsh Fargo!"

The customer is sometimes right, in the eyes of 1st engineer Lew Crosby. But, when it came to safety, he and his engineering colleagues had to insist they were right. The customer had the right to expect a safe, reliable electricity service, 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. Lew and his colleagues were determined they should have it, and they would continue to try to improve what he termed "the best electricity undertaking in the world".

To Chester saleswoman Flo Porter, the most important person in her working life was the customer. Without customers she would have no job. Tact and understanding were needed by shop staff, and most errors and misunderstandings could

be put right by an apology, a smile and a promise to give the computer a kick.

She, like Lew, had reservations about the word *always*, and preferred to qualify it by adding *nearly*. She went on to prove her point by a number of anecdotes. One lady she recalled had demanded a Russell Harty toaster and, when shown a Russell Hobbs, declined the offer, and left the shop to search Chester for the genuine article!

Haydn Hughes, of the District's Debt Control Section, advised customers who could not meet their bills to seek help from the D.H.S.S. and other welfare agencies. Electricity had to be paid for, and Haydn had a duty to the vast majority of MANWEB customers who paid promptly to ensure that the tardy few met their commitments.

The "Code of Practice" protected those in real need, and allowed the D.H.S.S. and other welfare agencies to examine personal circumstances and offer help. If these agencies were unable to help and the customer refused to come to some arrangement with the Board, then he was left with no alternative but to stop supplying electricity until there was some prospect of it being paid for.

With the meeting over-running—which no one seemed to mind—Group Manager Glyn Dodd dealt swiftly with questions in the brief *Open Forum*, and closed an entertaining meeting. Credit must go to the LAC for the format, and to secretary Keith Griffiths, ably assisted by Stan Colley, for the organisation.

## Electricity on stage

LAST month, Thespians from The Mermaid Theatre's Molecule Club, in association with the Understanding Electricity Educational Service, presented their latest production, "Sparks", at the Arts Centre in Southport.

Taking a scientific subject from the confines of the classroom and presenting it in the form of visual excitement provided by the live theatre, "Sparks", naturally, deals with the subject of electricity.

A Victorian melodrama shows the villain trying to use the devilish "magic" of electricity to gain his wicked ways. He is thwarted by the heroine, who discovers, by experiments with circuits, conductors and insulators, what the "magic" is. She finally outwits him with some dramatic electrical tricks of her own.

In support of the production, John Rigby, (2nd engineer—Commercial) in North Mersey District, arranged for a special display in the foyer of the Arts Centre. This featured many treasured pictures and records of electrical work carried out in Southport many decades ago. Also on display were many items of "ancient" electrical equipment and electrical domestic appliances from a bygone age.

The presentation was certainly well worth the sustained effort which John must have put into it. Some 3,000 Sefton school-children had the opportunity to see the show—and our display.

## Appointments

Alan Wadcock, senior executive officer (financial and management accounts) at Head Office, has been appointed District Administrative Officer at Liverpool, and Dick Owen (District Engineer, Oswestry) takes over as District Engineer at North Wirral.



## "Startrek" in perspective

### Keen interest at Gwynedd Meeting

THE spontaneous flow of pertinent questions, which followed the talk given by Colin Leonard (Management Services Controller) at the Gwynedd District Employees' Meeting, held at a Caernarfon hotel, proved the measure of keen interest he had aroused among the staff assembled.

Mr. Leonard spoke of people's fears associated with the advent of new technology, commenting that it was so easy to get into the "Startrek" visions, but very difficult to see how we get there from where we are today.

Putting the situation into perspective, he touched on what we in MANWEB were doing—and on the probable developments that would result from these applications of computer technology.

He remarked on its involvement in modern office work, with word processing as a genuine productivity aid and electronic filing replacing costly and bulky paper methods. "Communication without paper may be years ahead," he said, "but we are already moving along that road."

He spoke of new developments in our shops to eliminate form-filling, with point-of-sale terminals and computerised tills, utilising optical scanners feeding information and data to and from the central computer at Head Office.

Mr. Leonard commented on the computer-aided draughting and engineering load control as just a couple of the many experimental projects now in hand. Looking further into the future, he said that colour VDUs would open up even wider and more interesting fields.

"New technology will not be introduced overnight," he concluded. "Years will pass from the idea stage to a project being put into practice. No matter how fast technology moves, human

beings need time to adjust."

The eloquence of the speaker convinced us that the computer technology is here to stay, and it will increasingly affect all our lives in various ways. This fact leads to the truth that an extensive programme of education in acknowledgement and in acceptance of the capabilities of computer technology is urgently required for all levels of staff.

A vote of thanks to a "capable and commanding speaker, with a full knowledge of his subject" was voiced by Pauline Jones (clerk, Engineering).

Earlier in the meeting, Glyn Dodd (Group Manager) commented on the excellent work carried out by Gwynedd District staff in providing a service to



Pictured at the Conference, from left to right: Rosemary Tomlinson ("Girl from MANWEB"), Glyn Dodd and Colin Leonard.

their 73,500 customers. He spoke of the £900,000 spent on strengthening and extending the network and increasing security of supply.

He concluded by informing his audience that, of those caught stealing electricity, 50 per cent were now sent for prosecution—"But losses still cost the honest customers around £4-million a year!"

Secretary to Gwynedd District LAC, Mal Donaldson, left, with a happy group of retired staff surrounding "Girl from MANWEB" Rosemary Tomlinson, at the recent District Meeting.



## Spreading the word

IN MANY villages in the rugged countryside around Snowdon, Welsh is the natural and predominant language of the people. Small thriving community newspapers, keeping people in touch with events and happenings in the area, are printed in the Welsh language.

One of these is "Eco'r Wyddfa"—loosely translated as "The Snowdon Echo"—a bright and professional publication, which has recently published an article on the centenary of the electricity supply to Godalming. The piece is entirely in Welsh, and was translated from The Electricity Council booklet by Gwynedd District transport supervisor Thomas Vaughan Jones.

Tommy Vaughan—as he is best known—lives in Caernar-

fon, but was born in Cwm-y-Glo, a village at the foot of the Llanberis Pass, near to the Llyn (Lake) Padarn. He still has relatives in the village, and he showed them a centenary plate and the booklet. They suggested he wrote a feature for the newspaper. He did, and it was accepted.

It is not surprising that there should be such an interest in electricity in the area, as the giant Dinorwig(c) pumped-storage scheme is just up the valley, and many local people are



"Tommy Vaughan" Jones.

working on the project. Tommy and his wife, Betty, have a teenage daughter—also called Betty—and he has worked for MANWEB for over 20 years.

Our thanks for spreading the electric story a little bit further or, as they say in those Welsh villages, "Dio'ch yn fawr, Tommy bach!"

## NEW FILM

A NEW film, produced specifically for schools, "Cookin Time", uses a science fiction approach to introduce students to cooking with electricity.

Made for teaching in home economics classes, the film is aimed at the 11- to 15-year-old age group.

## FOR SALE

1970 Volvo 144. Taxed to May '82, MOT to Feb. Excellent condition. Low mileage. Clock and radio. £600 o.n.o. Tel 051 480-9575.

## Long Service

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

30 YEARS—Mid-Cheshire District: Arthur Bell (linesman). Gwynedd District: Cyril Roberts (joiner).

20 YEARS—North Mersey District: Allan Hurst (meter attendant). Dee Valley District: Ena Hughes (clerical assistant) and Robert L. Lewis (2nd engineer—System).



#### "THE GIRL FROM MANWEB—1982"

Finalists and judges in our competition to find "The Girl from MANWEB—1982". From left to right: the retiring title-holder, "Girl from MANWEB—1981" Rosemary Tomlinson, with judges Peter Hopkins (Chief Commercial Officer), Richard Gales (Deputy Chairman), Sheila Garston (Board Member) and Peggy Woodcock (Women's Page Editor, "Chester Chronicle"). Then comes our winner, "Girl from MANWEB—1982" Janet Lynne Abbott (Clwyd), Lesley Roberts (Clwyd) and Lesley Davies (Head Office) in joint second place. Other finalists were Joanne Evans (Head Office), Paula Baker (Clwyd), Christina Wiggett (North Wirral), Joyce Cochran (North Mersey), Charlotte Shaw (Head Office), Christina McCready (North Mersey), Clare Cullen (North Wirral) and Sandra Lee (North Mersey).

#### \* FROM PAGE ONE

The big rise did much to push the value of sales since the beginning of April to 10.8 per cent above the total for the same seven months during 1980 (two per cent in real terms).

There were big increases in sales of cookers of all types, and fridge-freezers, washing-machines and storage radiators. The month saw a net increase of 218 customers taking advantage of our night-and-day Off-Peak tariffs, including some who switched from White Meter to Economy 7.

The trend was continued during November, with results which were not quite so dramatic, but still about 20 per cent better than those of the previous year. The same categories of appliance were again buoyant and, during the period, there was a keen demand for our ever-improving range of audio equipment under the obvious impact of seasonal pre-Christmas buying.

And our future plans for TV advertising? "Hopefully, yes," said Board advertising officer Bill Gaywood. "We are promoting the January Sale on television, and we will be firming up our plans for 1982 in the next few weeks."

#### INDUSTRIAL SET-UP

FOR the third month in succession, October saw an increase in sales of electricity to industry, compared with the same month last year.

The main gains were in chemicals, oil refining and iron and steel, but big falls were again recorded in the paper, textiles and building industries.

The net result was an overall increase of 4.4 per cent, making

## National Advertising

THE Electricity Council's huge advertising campaign under the "HEATELECTRIC" banner is now well under way. It tells the story of the new slimline storage radiators—compact, elegant and running on electricity at less than half-price on the Economy 7 tariff.

MANWEB's supporting campaign emphasises the low installation cost and the estimated annual running costs of the new heaters. A slimline wall-fixed storage heater can be bought for as little as £85.

Of the two new leaflets being distributed, one gives a detailed guide to customers on choosing the correct storage heater to economically and efficiently heat different-sized rooms in the home. The other is especially designed for direct mailing to people moving into new property or simply changing houses.

Written in a very down-to-earth and chatty style, it explains how a customer can save money on his fuel bills by using the cheapest electricity possible, to heat his home and take care of all his hot water requirements.

Recent survey showed that

the general industrial picture a little less gloomy. For the seven months April to October, the records now show a fall in sales to industry of 5.5 per cent compared with last year.

49 per cent of people did not know about the Economy 7—less than half-price—electricity rate.

## CCO AT TWO MEETINGS

CHIEF Commercial Officer Peter Hopkins was guest speaker at two of the recent series of staff conferences—organised by Clwyd District at Rhyl and by Mid-Cheshire District at Winsford.

"Mind Your Own Business" was the CCO's theme—meaning our business of selling electricity in general, and especially our business of making sure that our involvement in High Street trading and electrical contracting was profitable and beyond reproach.

He pointed out that only 950 of the 14,000 retail electrical outlets in Britain were run by the Electricity Boards, adding that our competitors would do all they could to take our business from us. During 1980/81, appliance retailing in MANWEB was carried out at a loss and, if we were able to justify our involvement in this form of

trading, it was vital that we should be able to turn it into a viable activity in the face of stiff High Street competition.

Mr. Hopkins said that what he called the "three times five" solution could guarantee that our appliance trading was placed firmly in profit—a five per cent increase in sales in real terms, a five per cent reduction in salary costs, and a five per cent reduc-

tion in indirect costs.

The CCO said that there was a potential growth market in sales of fridge-freezers, audio equipment and small appliances, while sales of storage radiators were on the increase, with off-peak Economy 7 electricity costing less than two pence a unit. He forecast the arrival of *Electra* brand cookers and TVs, and a general increase in *Electra* label sales.

By the year 2025, it was expected that electricity's share of the total energy market would have risen to around 20 per cent. It was in our interests to put forward the "CoCoNuke" policy (Coal, Conservation, Nuclear)—and in the national interest as well.

At both meetings Mr. Hopkins' talk was followed by lively *Open Forum* sessions, with his own commercial department colleagues well to the fore, anxious to take advantage of the opportunity to put their problems to the boss face to face.

## Co-ordinating staff and management

WELL-QUALIFIED to talk on the subject of joint consultation, Arthur Priest (*Secretary of No. 9 DJAC*) dealt with the functions of the Local and District Joint Co-ordinating Councils—new bodies set up to replace LACs and DJACs.

He was addressing about 150 present and former members of our North Mersey District at their annual conference held a short time ago at a Bootle hotel.

"A great step forward," were the words he used in referring to the new machinery. "It is not a revolution, but a change of emphasis, with staff taking part in the process of decision-making."

He made the point that management decisions shall, wherever possible, be taken AFTER representatives of employees concerned with a particular policy decision have been consulted.

"However, this does not mean that the LJCC will take over management duties," he continued. "The job of managing the Board will still be in their hands."

He explained that the main purpose of the Local Joint Co-ordinating Council was to give staff, through their representatives, a better opportunity to contribute to local policy formation at an early stage.

Mr. Priest went on to describe the structure and representation on the new Councils, drawing particular attention to the innovation of joint secretaries—staff and management. He also pointed out that, each year, the chairmanship of each Council

consultation was a serious challenge to us all, he said: "Management should make a serious attempt to take into consideration views from all our staff. On the employees' side, input has to be increased from the experience of staff representatives."

Mr. Priest concluded his most informative talk by commenting that there was an urgent need for all members of the Councils to learn more and understand the different functions and associated problems in the various sections and departments of the Board.

An "Open Forum" session concentrated on criticisms of CONTACT and Welfare, with one or two side-issues relative to the District organisation thrown in for good measure.

This brought the formal proceedings of another lively North Mersey Employees' Meeting to a close.

Stating that the future of joint

## Charity Walk

HEAD Office administrative assistant Peter Coupe walked ten miles for charity. He was sponsored by many of his Chester colleagues and was able to hand a cheque for £153.65 to the *Wrexham Leader* newspaper, who organised the event. The proceeds were to equip a baby unit at the Wrexham Maelor Hospital.

Peter raised the most cash and the newspaper gave a portable TV to him, which he immediately raffled at Sealand Road. The proceeds—£131—also went to the hospital fund. Winner of the TV was accounts clerk Dave Garrett.

## Blizzard Battle

WHEN the Great Blizzard struck Britain on Sunday, 13th December, around 65,000 customers in the MANWEB area lost their electricity supplies.

Worst-hit were Gwynedd and Aberystwyth Districts, although all rural parts suffered to some extent.

Some people spent four nights with no power, despite the best efforts of our engineers and linesmen—and the use of two helicopters to pinpoint faults. Problems included roads blocked by drifts and abandoned cars, broken lines and smashed poles, and fallen trees.

After dealing with their own problems, staff from Dee Valley, Oswestry and Mid-Cheshire Districts moved in to help their hard-pressed colleagues in West Wales.

The arrival of the helicopters aroused the interest of the TV cameramen, and special thanks are due to Gwynedd stars-of-the-box Norman Phillips, Ivor Nottingham and Ariel Thomas, who faced the cameras like hardened professionals as they explained the problems confronting our staff.



Members of North Mersey District Conference organising committee with two of their guests. From left to right: George Shoesmith, Ted Smith, Alice Hughes, Roy Fallows, Arthur Priest (guest speaker), Edna Courtney and Rosemary Tomlinson ("Girl from MANWEB—1981").



**A** NY organisation which strives to improve its efficiency—with the co-operation of an interested and committed workforce—puts a good deal of emphasis on providing facilities for the education and training of its employees.

When people are given the opportunity to realise their full potential, they improve their own career prospects, earn more money, and are better fitted to do a more effective job in the interests of the organisation and the customer. Recognition of these principles ensures that the electricity supply industry in general, and MANWEB in particular, put education and training high on their list of priorities. It is good for the staff, good for industrial relations and good for business.

"To train or not to train" has never really been the question. It is pretty obvious that if you need to know (and don't), then you must be told. Likewise, if you need to do (and can't), then you must be shown how!

The principle is simple enough, but decisions as to whether the "need" is real, or whether it is just one person's opinion, can leave room for argument. If the need is real, the next decisions are about the best ways to impart the required knowledge and skills.

**Craft Training**

The importance of proper training for craftsmen has been recognised for many hundreds of years. Legislation has frequently been enacted to strengthen the powers of those institutions responsible for setting and maintaining craft standards.

The last major training enactment was in 1964, when the Industrial Training Act was introduced. As a result, Industrial Training Boards were set up, to devise craft and non-craft training schemes, and to monitor standards for each industry. The current electricity supply industry equivalent of those Boards is the Electrical Supply Industry Training Committee, which is responsible to the NJCC.

For some years, the trend has been towards

# Helping staff to help themselves

by DENIS KERNAN

(Education and Training Officer)



more formal "off-job" training, as it was in 1956 that MANWEB's craft apprentice training was centralised at Hoylake, in a former generating station. Training for jointers had commenced there in 1954, and they were subsequently joined by 67 craft apprentices—the first of hundreds of boys (and one or two girls) to pass through the much sought-after MANWEB apprentice training scheme.

In 1963, the *Liverpool Echo* published a long article about Hoylake, describing it as "Wirral's most unusual boarding school, for 70 of the 110 boys at present at the centre are too far from home to travel every day, and stay in lodgings approved by the Board."

At present, unfortunately, numbers are down, due to the recession, and today there are 27 apprentices, of whom 12 are in lodgings. As previously reported in CONTACT, these are really more than we expect to need. Everyone would welcome the return of economic conditions which would enable us to use Hoylake's facilities at full capacity, but there is little sign of that at present.

**A "Revolution" on the Way**

For several years, a number of working parties in our industry have been examining present training practices, and their relevance to future needs. As a result, next September will see the introduction of something of a revolution in the way we recruit and train our craftsmen.

The new scheme has three main characteristics:—

- \* It is "modular"—which simply means that it is divided into self-contained packages which can be put together in various combinations.
- \* Craft status will be achieved by **skill attainment**, and not (as at present) by "time-serving". It is expected that the average trainee will complete the course in about three years.
- \* There is provision for adult entry to all crafts.

The way the scheme is worked is outlined opposite.

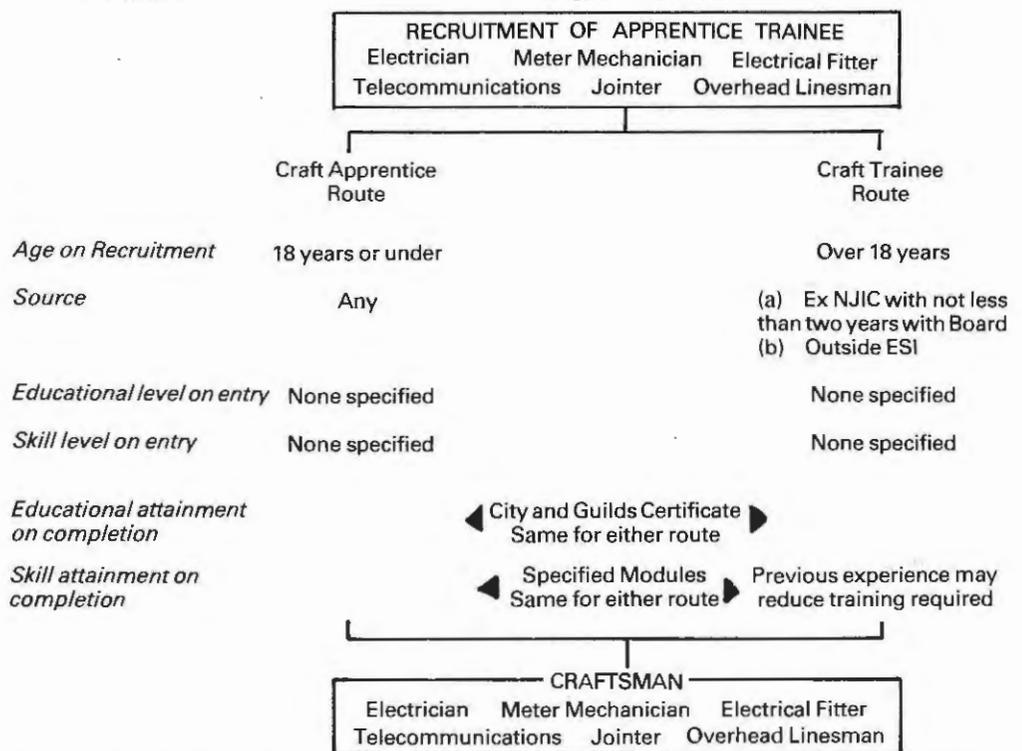
The full implications of the scheme are not yet clear, but it seems certain that:—

- \* *Craft further education will be by "block release" rather than "day release".*
- \* *Formal training at Hoylake will be longer, and spread out over the three years.*
- \* *"On-job" training will need to be specified in some detail, and appropriate "skill attainment tests" devised.*
- \* *Recruitment of apprentices and adult trainees will have to be synchronised into a common entry date each year, as certain training modules are common to all crafts.*

Other changes are also being introduced into the craft training syllabus, as a result of the publication of the long-awaited 15th edition of the IEE regulations. Although there is a period of grace during which both 14th and 15th editions are valid, the 1981 intake of craft apprentices will be questioned on the new edition when taking their City and Guilds Electrical Installation Certificate examinations. Consequently the changes had to be introduced immediately into both academic studies and practical training.

**Other Training Programmes**

With all this emphasis on the plethora of changes in craft training, other staff may feel



## THE NUCLEAR ... told in simple terms

OVER the next few months, we shall publish a series of articles setting out to explain nuclear power in lay language. The author is Sam Goddard, who is Systems Strategy Engineer with the CEGB, working as the PWR Co-ordinating Engineer for the proposed Sizewell 'B' nuclear power station—the first in Britain with a pressurised water reactor.

The articles will explain the working of a nuclear power station and discuss the safety aspects. Other features will describe what radiation is, and will look at the development of nuclear power and renewable energy resources for future generations of electricity.



Sam Goddard

somewhat neglected. Fear not—you have not been forgotten!

A project team is currently engaged in devising courses for Computer Based Training (CBT). This is a method of using the computer to present training material on visual display screens.

This approach has a number of advantages:—

- \* Training is of a more uniform standard.
- \* Updating and modification is simplified.
- \* The material can be used in the absence of a tutor.
- \* Work dislocation—which occurs when staff are absent on courses—can be avoided.
- \* Training can be provided when and where required.
- \* Trainees can proceed at their own pace.

Although the initial courses will be for customer-accounting activities, engineering and commercial applications are being considered.

The increased availability of video-tape recorders has made the video-cassette a convenient medium for providing training at decentralised locations. The Electricity Council and some manufacturers are providing cassettes for the "product knowledge" aspects of sales training, and the Board's training staff are experimenting with the local production of such material.

*How will it all work out?*

Ask me that in another year's time!

## Sealand Road Staff

E & T staff at Head Office—from left to right: John Bostock, Eric Richardson, Lesley Smith, Dick Storer, Grace Littler and Oscar Lloyd.



## Hoylake Training Centre Staff

*Left:* Head of the Hoylake Training Centre, Alex Smitton, front, with Sheila Hughes (clerical assistant), and member of the apprentice training team. From left to right: John Seymour, Doug Jones, John Bailey, Maurice Grisenthwaite, Peter Smith, Colin Roberts and Joe Naisbitt (storekeeper), whose colleague Ted Parkes unfortunately missed our picture.

*Right:* Next door, in the engineering section, we see, from left to right: Bill Jones (overhead line instructor), Roy Holden and Geoff Parry (jointing instructors).



## Student Training

Board Chairman and Chief Engineer with student engineers, l. to r.: Chris Pace (H.N.D.), Richard Barratt (B.A.), Mr. Fisher, Gareth Boyes (H.N.D.), Richard Lumb (H.N.D.), Suzanne Vyse (B.Sc.), Mr. Hastings, Neil Hart (B.Sc.) and Terry Dunne (B.Sc.).

Deputy Chairman and Chief Commercial Officer with, l. to r.: Alex Battista (M.Sc.), Mr. Hopkins, standing, George Evans (B.Sc.Tech.), Fred Houghton (B.A.Tech.), Jeff Scott (M.Sc.), standing, Jeff Morgan (Ph.D.), Mr. Gales and Graham Haslett (I.C.M.A.).



# STORY...

ONE WOULD have to be a hermit, eking out a Stone Age existence in the wilds of the Pennine Moors, to be blissfully unaware that Britain, in company with most other nations in the world, is facing a growing energy problem.

For the rest of us, the events that have followed the Middle East disturbances of the 70s have rudely demonstrated the precarious state of world energy supplies.

The steep increases in the price of those supplies have also served to remind us that the resources of both oil and gas—which currently supply nearly three-quarters of the world's energy requirements—are finite. Their production is likely to be falling as the end of the century approaches, just at a time when total demand for energy, in spite of rigorous conservancy measures, is likely to be rising, particularly from the Third World.

It is against this background that the Central Electricity Generating Board, with its considerable flexibility in the use of primary fuels—and

with electricity's benefits in efficiency, cleanliness and convenience—is planning for the future.

The turbulent events that have surrounded the supply and price of oil have provided a stark reminder, too, of the urgent need to invest in new energy resources.

Whichever scenario on future energy demand proves correct, the CEBB must continue to replace old and worn out plant with modern, efficient power stations. And the crucial question still remains: how is this country to bridge the gap as oil supplies become more difficult to obtain and as gas supplies start to dwindle?

Coal, with an estimated 300 years of reserves, will inevitably continue to make a major contribution as a fuel for electricity generation for as long as can be foreseen. But even the National Coal Board's own production targets fall far short of the primary fuels that the UK will require, to say nothing of other pressing demands that will be made on coal for other uses in the future, such as the production of synthetic gas and liquid fuel and feedstock for the chemical industry.

There is rightly today an increasing interest in the so-called renewable energy resources—the sun, winds, waves, tides and vegetation—and they represent a potentially prolific supply of energy. The Board is investigating the poten-

tial and improving the technology for harnessing these renewable resources of energy which it regards as most promising for electricity generation, and it recently announced plans for its first wind-powered generator.

But, on current figures based on the technology available today, none of the renewable resources is likely to produce low-cost energy and, because their continuing development will be a lengthy process, they could not make an appreciable contribution to electricity supply by the end of the century.

**That leaves nuclear power: it is the only established technology—together with coal—capable of meeting the demand for energy that will flow from the falling reserves of oil and gas. There is no credible alternative at present.**

**For 19 years, the CEBB has been producing electricity from nuclear generation, and it currently accounts for about 11 per cent of the Board's generating capacity. When the nuclear stations now under construction are completed, the proportion will rise to about 20 per cent.**

It is the cheapest electricity produced by the Board.

Nuclear power has a first-class safety record. It is not surprising, since the nuclear station is one of the most thoroughly engineered devices yet produced. And the activities of the British

nuclear power industry add less than one per cent to the country's natural average annual radiation level from the earth's crust and outer space—that is less than the radiation from a single chest X-ray and many times less than the additional radiation resulting from moving house from chalk downs to granite hills.

Nuclear generation has many environmental advantages, too. Nuclear stations are clean in operation; they do not require large areas for storage and frequent deliveries of fuel; nor do they produce large quantities of waste products to be disposed of. Just one tonne of uranium in a nuclear power station produces as much energy as about 20,000 tonnes of coal.

The Board has a statutory responsibility to meet the demand for electricity in England and Wales as economically as possible. If it is to ensure that the appetite for energy is satisfied in the future, the Board firmly believes that it must go forward with the development of nuclear power. But, in so doing, it must—and it will—pay great and continuing attention to safety.

**The need for and development of nuclear power will not, of course, interest our Pennine hermit. But for modern man and woman it will play an increasingly vital role in ensuring that electricity will be the one form of energy which will always be at their right hand.**



Ken Crabtree, left, congratulates Liverpool District's Bowls Tournament winners.

## Bowls Dance

LIVERPOOL District's annual bowls dance—held at the Thing-wall Road club—was an “all tickets sold” success, as usual.

### Travelling Turkey!

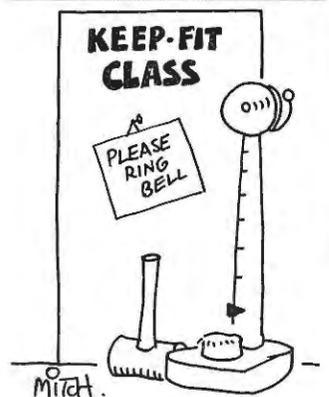
WHILE waiting for a “special order” ceramic-hob cooker, a Hoylake lady got by with a “loan” cooker from our Birkenhead shop.

In due course, the new model was delivered, and the loan cooker collected.

It hadn't been there very long, however, when the 'phone rang. *Please can I have my turkey back?* came the plaintive voice of the customer.

A quick oven-check revealed the presence of a half-eaten cooked turkey—which duly found its way back home without losing even the odd drumstick in the process!

SPORT  
by MITCH



## AIRBORNE AT ABERYSTWYTH

THE pleasurable pastime practised by Bill Gough, a storekeeper at our Aberystwyth District Office, is constructing and flying radio-controlled aircraft—particularly gliders.

The clear runs from the local cliff-tops provide ideal launching sites and flying areas for the pursuit of his sport.

Bill's early interest in radio-controlled models started with yachts, which he used to sail on the lakes around Aberystwyth. Then he turned to power-planes, which proved to be a natural step to the graceful gliders he now flies.

The most ambitious—and largest—model he has completed is a Slingsby T31 air-cadet glider, scaled down to a fifth of its true size. It is designed to fly at speeds from five to 35 miles an hour.

Bill joined MANWEB 30 years ago and worked with the engineering construction gangs. Later, he was the general handyman at the Board's shop in Pier Street, before transferring to become the driver of the delivery vehicle. About eight years ago, he moved into the Stores section.

Born in Aberdare, Bill is married to Ena, and they have twin sons, John and Michael, the latter once working for the Board as a mechanical fitter.



High-flyer Bill Gough, with his largest model glider.

## Badminton Championships

WANTED—Brilliant badminton players who may have been hiding their talents—to help MANWEB break the iron grip of the East Midlands Electricity Board on the ESI National Badminton Championships.

The 13th tournament will be held from 16th–18th April at St. Albans, sponsored by the South Eastern Region of the CEGB. As usual, MANWEB will be entering two teams of up to four ladies and four men in each team.

Over the years, MANWEB players have won the tournament on three occasions, and our organisers are anxious to see us return to our former glories. If you think you may be good enough to oust any of the existing players, get in touch with Paul Wilkinson (1st engineer, Liverpool—internal 'phone 575) for details of practice sessions to be arranged from January onwards.

A word of warning—the tournament standard is high, involving several County and League players!

## Pension Increases 1981

THE Industry's Pensions (Increase) Scheme empowers The Electricity Council to determine the rates of increases to be granted to those who receive pensions from the Industry's Schemes. The Council have carried out a review of pensions increases and have decided that pensions will be increased, with effect from 1 December 1981, as follows:—

For those who received an increase on 1 December 1980:—

9.06 per cent of the basic pension as increased.

For those who retired after 1 November 1980:—

Date pension increased	Percentage increase
After 1/11/80 but before 2/12/80	9.06
After 1/12/80 but before 2/1/81	8.31
After 1/1/81 but before 2/2/81	7.55
After 1/2/81 but before 2/3/81	6.80
After 1/3/81 but before 2/4/81	6.04
After 1/4/81 but before 2/5/81	5.29
After 1/5/81 but before 2/6/81	4.53
After 1/6/81 but before 2/7/81	3.78
After 1/7/81 but before 2/8/81	3.02
After 1/8/81 but before 2/9/81	2.27
After 1/9/81 but before 2/10/81	1.51
After 1/10/81 but before 2/11/81	0.76

In principle, the above scale follows the current Annual Review Order applicable to retired Government servants.

Some pensions which commenced after 5 April 1978 include a guaranteed minimum

pension element comprising the amount of pension the Scheme is required to provide in respect of contracted-out employment. As the State will provide pensions increases on those guaranteed minimum pensions, the increases in such cases will be based on the Scheme pension less the guaranteed minimum pension.

Broadly, pensions increases apply to pensioners aged 55 years and over and to all widows, but, in addition, children's allowances will, from 1 December 1981, be increased to:—

- £487.44 a year in cases where the person responsible for the child is in receipt of a widow/widower's pension from the Scheme in respect of the deceased member;
- £731.16 a year in cases where the person responsible for the child is not in receipt of a widow/widower's pension from the Scheme in respect of the deceased member.

In their review of pensions increases, Council were concerned about the very high costs of maintaining the purchasing power of pensions. Despite a reduction this year in the level of inflation, these costs continue to make serious inroads into the resources of the Industry's Superannuation Schemes and, although everything possible will be done to provide pensioners with full protection against inflation, there can be no guarantee that the purchasing power of pensions can be maintained indefinitely. If it becomes necessary to consider changes, there will be full prior discussions with the Management Committees of the Industry's Schemes and with Trades Unions.

### MID-CHESHIRE PENSIONERS

ASSOCIATION members held their pre-Christmas social in November, with singing, dancing, bingo—and organ music by Norman Walsh. It was a good night out.

Other activities during the year have included an annual lunch and trips to Ragley Hall (Alcester), Aberystwyth, Birmingham Show, the Brontë Country and the Wedgwood Pottery Works.

Retired colleagues not yet

involved in this busy round are invited to get in touch with secretary Ken Mason, 1 Clydesdale Avenue, Crewe (Tel. 60477).

### NORTHWICH RETIREMENTS

THREE long-serving Northwich colleagues retired recently. They are Albam Clifford, *jointer's mate* (30 years), Albert Daniels, *jointer's mate* (35 years) and George Robinson, *ganger* (30 years—on health grounds).

At a recent LAC meeting, Graham Zeiher (*District Engineer*) thanked them all for their loyal service. Mr. Clifford re-

ceived a token for a book of his choice, while Messrs. Daniels and Robinson were presented with books on fishing and cricket respectively.

### EASTBOURNE OUTING

A FIVE-DAY mini-holiday at Eastbourne was the latest away trip for the adventurous members of the Mid-Mersey Pensioners' Association. Trips to Rye and Brighton were included in the programme, while a few enterprising spirits spent a day shopping across the Channel at Dunkirk.



## FIVE-A-SIDE CHAMPS

Six lovely computer ladies from Head Office, titled *The Missfits*, proved themselves fit misses to win the Chester Sports five-a-side football championship. They beat mailing-room's *First Class Femails* by four to nil in the final. Above, our picture shows the winners, with captain Jane Gaskell holding the trophy, and clockwise from her are Pam Shirvington, Ann-Marie Lewis, Teresa Hamczyk, Gina Featherstone and Pat Wilkes.

The men's contest was won by *Monty Pylon's Flying Circus*, from Prenton Transmission Depot, who beat *They Shall Not Pass* by two goals to nil, in an exciting and uncompromising final. The magnificent goalkeeping of Les Meesom throughout the competition played a major part in the *Pylons* success. Pictured below are the winners, standing, Ted Walters, Robert Wales (captain) and William Geary. In front are: Phil Curry, Alan Harris and Les Meesom.

There were 75 games played in the two contests, with 16 men's and six ladies' teams. The masterpiece of organisation was by Gren Roberts, with Club Chairman Harry Foreman presenting the prizes. The contest was held at the Deeside Leisure Centre and three League referees took turns to control each match.



# RETIREMENTS

## Farewells to friends and colleagues

### Mr. R. NORBURY

A MAN who has been responsible for collecting millions of pounds each month for MANWEB has retired, after 35 years' service. Principal assistant Ron Norbury has been responsible for the processing of the large monthly commercial, industrial and street-lighting accounts at Head Office.

In the late '30s, he worked as a journalist, and joined the R.A.F. at the outbreak of war, serving some of his time in India. Returning to "Civvy Street", he became an accounts clerk in the Mersey Power Company. This company and its staff were one of the undertakings which went to make up MANWEB in 1948.

With the merger of the two MANWEB areas in the '60s, he was transferred to Chester, and became a member of the Head Office staff, with Board reorganisation in 1971.

Away from the office, he enjoys photography, and we understand that he was quite a tennis player some years ago. Ron is interested in the theatre and keeps up his journalistic ability by writing reviews of theatrical productions for local papers. He is married, and his wife Dorothy was there to see Chief Accountant Geoff Barnes make a farewell presentation on behalf of his many friends and colleagues.

Ron Norbury, left, and his wife Dorothy, seen here with Geoff Barnes.



Colleagues at Chester look on, as Bernie Shields, right, receives a farewell handshake from Arthur Vidler (Principal Engineer—Technical).

### Mr. B. SHIELDS

CRAFTSMAN Bernie Shields retired from MANWEB after 29 years' service. He worked in the testing station in Crane Street, Chester.

He joined the Board in 1952 at Birkenhead, as a meter-tester and repairer, moving to Chester in 1971. He served in the Royal Navy during the war, as a telegraphist on cruisers and mine-

sweepers. His wartime occupation has continued into peacetime as a hobby, for he is now a radio "ham" and has an interest in mobile radio.

Bernie is married, and he and his wife, Anne, have a grown-up family. We join with his many friends and colleagues in wishing him a long and happy retirement.

### SAFETY OFFICER RETIRES



Vic Heard, the Board Safety Officer, has retired. He suffered a heart attack three days later, but we are pleased to say that he is now on the mend at home. Our picture shows Vic, left, receiving farewell gifts from Dennis Farquhar (Assistant Chief Engineer), watched by colleagues Bernard Scott and Ron Pierce.

Mr. A. JOHNSON ENGINEERING foreman in our Liverpool District, Arthur Johnson, who started work 43 years ago as an apprentice electrician with the former Liverpool Corporation, retired recently.

During the war years, Arthur served with the Royal Navy, returning afterwards to North Mersey District. In 1956, he was made chargehand electrician, later moving up to foreman electrical fitter. Five years ago, he was transferred to Lister Drive as an engineering foreman.

His many friends, made during a lifetime in the business, wish him a happy retirement.

Mr. E. P. MORRIS ADMINISTRATIVE assistant in charge of meter-reading and collecting in our North Mersey District, long-service man Eric P. Morris has now retired. He started his working life with the former Southport Corporation in 1938.

For six war years he was with the R.A.F., much of his service spent in French North Africa, where, strolling through the *casbah* one day, he met Sue, a member of the W.R.A.F., who was later to become his wife.

Returning to MANWEB, Eric went to Derby House in Liverpool, where his time was spent on legal work in the courts. Later, he went back to Southport, in charge of stores and meter-reading.

In retirement, he hopes to devote more time to his hobby of transport—trains and buses. When presenting him with farewell gifts from colleagues, George Shoesmith (District Administrative Officer) expressed everyone's wish for a long and happy retirement for Eric and Sue.

Mr. L. CAFFREY AFTER 35 years in the electricity supply industry—all of it spent at Prenton—transmission section admin. officer Les Caffrey has retired. Les joined MANWEB with many of his colleagues from the CEGB a couple of



Clwyd colleagues at the retirement ceremony held for "H.O." Hughes, seen here, centre right, with his wife.



Eric Morris, centre, receives a parting gift from George Shoesmith.



Brian Mather, left, wishes a happy retirement to Les Caffrey.

years ago, when we became responsible for the 132-kV system.

His many friends gathered to see transmission engineer Brian Mather present Les with a wide range of gifts.

### OFF TO GLOUCESTER

Members of the MANWEB (Chester) Retired Group climb aboard their coach for yet another wonderful day out—this time to see the beauty of Gloucester. Our picture, right, shows Carmel Austin, Del Hall and Mrs. and Mr. Cyril Gibson. Incidentally, Del tells us that new members are always welcome.



### Life begins at . . .

by MITCH



# PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION PRIZEWINNERS



## Best Picture

Transparency  
"WASDALE HEAD"  
by Alan Reid  
Mid-Mersey District

OUR popular competition attracted entries from 92 present and past members of the staff and their families. This was nearly 50 per cent up on the previous year, but the actual number of pictures submitted (414) was down on the 1980 record number of 486 entries in all classes.

## Scenes

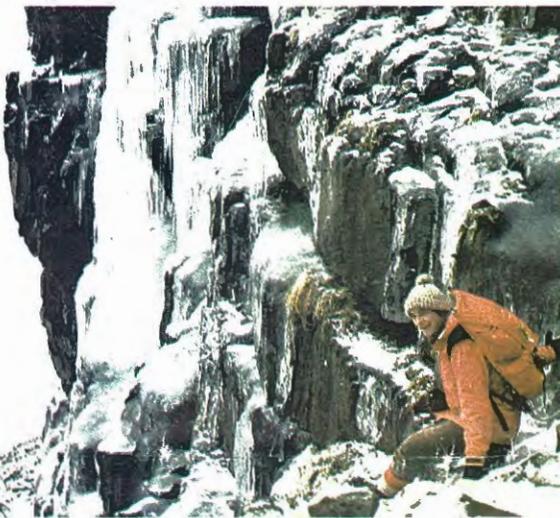
Transparency  
"GRAND CANYON"

by Harold Wilson Technical H.O.



Print  
"ICE FALL"

by Philip Currie Transmission, Prenton



Transparency  
"THE CHASE"  
by Alan Reid Mid-Mersey District

## Action

Print  
"PENTTI AIRIKKALA IN ACTION"  
by Meirion W. Jones Machynlleth Depot



## Portrait

Print  
"JUDITH'S BIG DAY"  
by David Roberts  
nephew of Mary Burdis, Mold shop



Transparency  
"MRS. PUGH"  
by Rudy Lewis  
husband of Jackie, Aberystwyth



Print  
"HOVER-FLY IN FLIGHT"  
by Max Cooksey, Test Laboratory, Queensferry

## Nature

Transparency  
"CAMOUFLAGE"  
by Peter Minshull son of John Minshull, retired H.O.



## Humour

Transparency  
"STEADY GIRL"  
by Phil Swift Test Laboratory, Queensferry



Print  
"WHO PULLED  
THE PLUG OUT?"  
by Pauline Wharton  
Liverpool District

