

MOLE DIGS US OUT OF A HOLE!

by Cheryl Stevenson

The profile of trenchless technology and its use within Manweb was heightened recently when the Distribution business's Liverpool-based Trenchless Installations section undertook a large scale education programme aimed at giving Manweb staff the opportunity to learn first hand about the capabilities, range of equipment and possible limitations of this type of work.

Trenchless installation is a method of laying cable and ducting without the need to dig out and reinstate open trenches.

Using a machine to channel underground between two points, an underground bore is created. Once the bore has reached its destination, cable or ducting is pulled back along the length of the bore in an exercise called backreaming.

This technique is less expensive than open trenchwork - 70 per cent cheaper in some cases. In addition, there is less disruption, as the need for temporary traffic control is minimised or omitted.

A field adjacent to the Beaufort Palace Hotel in Mold was the location for a series of half day seminars over three days promoting the use of trenchless technology in Manweb.

More than 150 people passed through the six sessions - Manweb project managers, resource engineers and team leaders, plus staff from Transport, Procurement and Manweb Contracting Services. There were also guests from Welsh Water, who were interested in the technology deployed by Manweb.

After a short presentation, there was a demonstration of the range of machinery, including the RS 860 Rock Boring System, a recent investment with the capability of laying cables and ducting through rock.

Manweb has used trenchless techniques for a number of projects over the last three years, including at Old Mold Road in Gweryllt village, North Wales, which was the site of a rural refurbishment scheme to replace overhead services to 28 properties with new, underground supplies.

A recent 33kV fault located under the A561 road into Liverpool called for the use of a mole machine. Use of trenchless machinery not only saved the time and expense of digging up a newly refurbished stretch of the



carriageway, but also prevented what the police estimated would be a five-mile traffic jam, as it would otherwise have been necessary to close the road and excavate an open trench.

In both cases, trenchless techniques proved successful not only in the laying of cables, but in minimising disruption to local residents.

Top: Manweb staff watch the Jet Trac 1820 Pedestrian Trencher in action. Centre: The smaller Jet Trac 540 Guided Boring Machine is put through its paces. Above: The Jet Trac 820 Guided Boring Machine.

Pictures by Mike Hall

CONTACT

NEWSLETTER FOR MANWEB PEOPLE

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1996



Picture by Mike Hall

Joe Roach, Transport Supervisor at Chester Depot, with one of Manweb's vans sporting our new livery. The new-look logo will be introduced over a period of time into a whole range of company applications, including stationery, uniforms, signage, vehicles and advertisements.

SAFETY SCHEME LAUNCHED

Manweb has launched a new safety scheme aimed at cutting the company's unsatisfactory accident rate.

'Safety First' was launched on 5 February, initially for staff in Distribution Operations - where most accidents happen.

The initiative will be extended so that all employees can play a part from April 1996.

Chief Executive Mike Kinski, who has written to all staff to enlist their support for the scheme, said: "The initiative is something everyone at Manweb can contribute to and benefit from, as it will make a real difference to the way in which we operate.

"We're currently 14th out of 14 in the regional electricity companies' 'injuries per 100 employees' statistics, so things couldn't be much worse! It means that more of our staff are injured at work than

at any other electricity company."

To launch the scheme, the most successful Distribution Operations depot or department during February and March 1996 will be awarded £5,000 to fund a prize draw amongst the staff based there.

The money will be divided into lots so that 20 employees will each win £250.

In addition, their depot or department will go on to compete for the ScottishPower Chief Executive's Shield, an annual award given to the Division within the Group with the best annual safety performance. The judging of this is scheduled for April 1996.

All staff should by now have received a



leaflet giving details of the scheme, and a poster campaign - featuring Manweb employees - has also been launched to heighten awareness of the initiative and its importance.

Details of the next phase of the scheme, when all staff can participate, will be announced in due course.

For further information about the 'Safety First' initiative, contact the Quality, Safety and Environment Department at Head Office, on 700 2367.

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BONUS FOR CUSTOMERS

Manweb is providing a £61 million New Year bonus for domestic customers in the shape of a discount off their next electricity bill of £50.56 (plus VAT).

The bonus is part of the benefits of the sell-off of the National Grid, which Manweb is passing back to its 1.2 million customers. No action needs to be taken as customers automatically receive the one-off discount on their first bill received after 1 January 1996.

Chief Executive Mike Kinski said: "We are delighted that the stock market flotation of the National Grid, which was formerly owned by Manweb and the 11 other regional electricity companies, has enabled us to share the benefits with our customers

"I am especially pleased Manweb is passing such a substantial amount of money back into the region and that it plays a part in our commitment to deliver the best possible service to all our customers and the community as a whole."

Mike Kinski is pictured with the first round of bills showing the discount to customers.

Committed to health and safety

A new Health and Safety Policy statement has been introduced by Manweb, underlining Chief Executive Mike Kinski's commitment to achieving the highest possible standards.

The policy, which is a legal requirement, calls for further statements of commitment from each of the major business units within Manweb to show how they intend to organise and arrange health and safety within their own areas.

Additional statements are required to show how each department intends to plan, organise, control, monitor and review their safety performance.

Effort

Safety Engineer Derek Jackson said: "A great deal of effort has been applied over the past few years to improve our health and safety organisation and systems. This was absolutely necessary if we were to comply with the vast amount of legislation that has hit the statute books during this period.

"The new policy statement shows commitment at the highest level in the Company to continue to support this effort, and determination to improve Manweb's safety performance to be up amongst the best in the land."

References to the safe operation of the



Launching the new Health and Safety Policy, l-r, Steve Williams, Manweb Joint Council (MJC) Staff Side Secretary, Safety Engineer Derek Jackson, Dr Peter Burke, David Bellamy, MJC Staff Side Vice Chairman, Head of Human Resources John Illidge, Chief Executive Mike Kinski, and Michael Barr, Staff Side Chairman.

distribution system are also included in the policy statement.

Derek said: "This is necessary to ensure to the best of our ability the safety of the public."

An Executive Committee led by Mike Kinski will meet regularly to review Manweb's health and safety performance and to determine future policy.

In addition, an employee health

scheme, is to be launched in the near future by the Occupational Health Department, under Dr Peter Burke.

This service will be voluntary, offering every employee the opportunity to receive a range of regular health checks.

An important feature of the service is analysis of the results of the tests, which will show individuals how to improve their health by adjusting their lifestyle and diet.

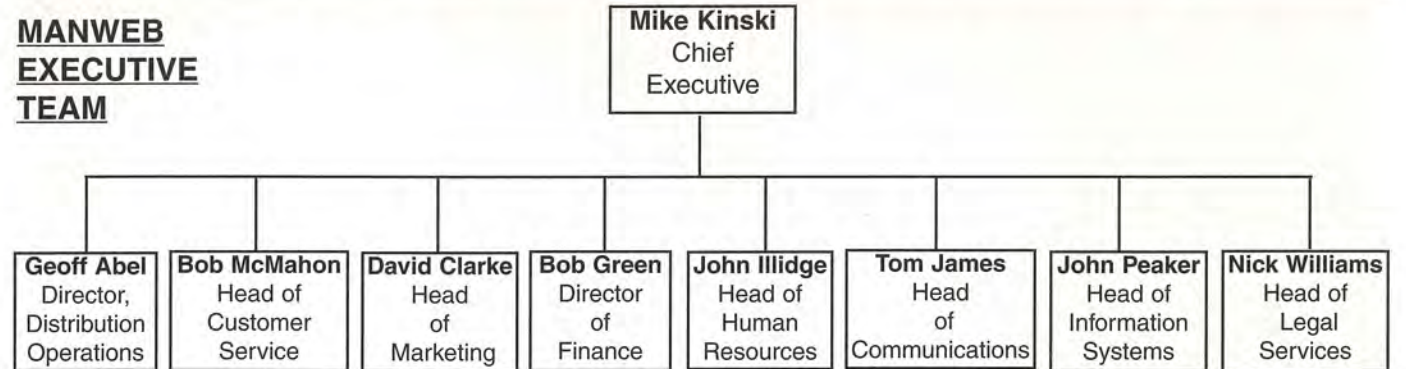
TOP TEAM NOW IN PLACE

With the appointments of Geoff Abel as Director, Distribution Operations, and Tom James as Head of Communications (see story, below), the new Executive Management Team at Manweb is now complete.

Chief Executive Mike Kinski said: "This is a challenging time for Manweb so I am delighted to be supported by a

team with such a breadth of experience. I have been impressed by the people I have met and worked with at Manweb and believe that together we have developed a way forward that will ensure we not only continue to provide a quality service for customers but also lay down strong foundations for the business as a whole."

MANWEB EXECUTIVE TEAM



New look for Distribution Operations

Geoff Abel, former General Manager of Business Support Services, has been appointed Director, Distribution Operations, replacing Willie Gallagher, who is unable to return to work for some time as a result of a short illness.

Stewart Saunders, General Manager of ScottishPower's Forth Region, is appointed General Manager, Regional Operations, in place of Geoff.

Chief Executive Mike Kinski said: "Stewart's appointment mirrors the appointment of Mike Jones, former General

Manager of Manweb Power Engineering, as Manager of ScottishPower's Western Region and is part of the process of facilitating the integration of the distribution function and the transfer of best practices from both organisations.

"Stewart's background in the industry is in the distribution business and, like Geoff, I am sure he will bring a wealth of practical experience to the Manweb role."

On his return to work, Willie will take up a new role within ScottishPower.

Other key appointments in Distribution Operations are the three regional managers - Bill Tubey (Merseyside), John Hampson (Cheshire) and Alan Laird (Wales).

They report to Stewart Saunders and are responsible for the distribution network in their areas.

Bill was previously Manweb Power Engineering's Resources Manager and, before that, Liverpool District Manager. John was Strategy Manager for PowerNet and, prior to that, Clwyd District Manager. Alan's previous role was Operations Manager for PowerNet. Before that he was Operations and Planning Manager.



Geoff Abel



Stewart Saunders

Tom heads up communications

Tom James has been appointed Manweb's Head of Communications, replacing Lesley Thomson, who has completed her role as a member of the Transition Team.

Tom, who was formerly ScottishPower's Head of Strategic Affairs, specialising in managing corporate issues and Government affairs, reports to Chief Executive Mike Kinski as a member of the Manweb Executive Team.

Lesley left the company on 9 February to run her own strategic communications business in Glasgow, but will continue to have links with Manweb on a consultancy basis.



Bill Tubey



John Hampson



Alan Laird

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

THE OVERALL WINNERS

Man of the Year: Bob Gordon of Crewe for his work in improving the lot of people in the town's West End, an area of stress.

Woman of the Year: Margaret Robinson, of Buckley, Clwyd. Aged 79, she devotes her time to running clubs for old folk in the town and to various organisations and good causes.

Young Person of the Year: Claire-Louise Rees, of Great Sutton, South Wirral. Despite recovering from painful surgery on her legs, this nine-year-old youngster completed the Great Hip and Knee Walk at the Countess of Chester Hospital, raising more than £500 for patients there.

Group of the Year: Roger Smith, Chairman of the Shop Stewards Committee, Raytheon Corporate Jets, Broughton, Clwyd. A campaign against factory closure when production switches to the USA in 1997 has resulted in 300 jobs being saved. The campaign was praised by Raytheon and MPs of all political persuasions.

Environmental Award: Astmoor Day Services, Runcorn/Wirral. This group of special needs people have restored an old orchard over an 18 month period. The work included clearing the site, landscaping and replanting, fencing and paving.

Sporting Award: Roger Davenport, of Middlewich, Cheshire, was injured by a terrorist bomb while serving with the Army in East Belfast. He has fought back to found an archery club and this year achieved fourth place in the National Field Archery Championship, competing against able bodied people.

Star Award: James Hudson, aged nine, of Aston, Nantwich, whose plight has helped bring together hundreds of people throughout south Cheshire to have fun, consequently enriching community spirit.

The number seven proved to be a lucky one for the unsung heroes and heroines of the community who gathered at Chester's Grosvenor Hotel for a glittering gala awards ceremony to honour their achievements.

This was the seventh year that Manweb had teamed up with Chronicle Newspapers to pay tribute to the 'Community Champions'.

For all the award winners who attended the event, it was a chance to receive a rare pat on the back for their tireless efforts on behalf of their communities.

Held in the presence of civic dignitaries from Cheshire and Clwyd, the ceremony was hosted by Manweb's Chief Executive Mike Kinski and David Faulkner, Managing Director of Chronicle Newspapers.

They were introduced to the audience by the master of ceremonies for the night, Granada Television presenter Trevor Green, who took on the role for the second year running.

In his welcoming address, Mr Faulkner paid tribute to the winners and said that while Chronicle Newspapers often had to cover bad news, it was a pleasure to be able to highlight the unselfish acts typical of this year's Community Champions.

Mike Kinski echoed this sentiment, saying:

Manweb helps to honour the community's unsung heroes

"As far as I am concerned, everyone involved in these awards is a winner whether they are here tonight or not.

"I very much hope Manweb will be able to continue its support of community activities such as this in the future."

The categories in this year's re-christened Community Champions - formerly Community Awards - were Man of the Year, Woman of the Year, Young Person of the Year, Group of the Year, Environmental Award and Sporting Award.

Winners in each category were honoured from the newspaper group's circulation area of Chester, Wales, Mid Cheshire, South Cheshire, Runcorn and Widnes, and Ellesmere Port.

The overall winners in each of the sections were then invited to go up to the stage to receive their special awards from Mike



Overall Community Champion James Hudson, aged nine, whose rare medical condition has touched the hearts of local people, receives his special award from David Faulkner (left) and Mike Kinski. Also pictured is James's mum, Mrs Jane Hudson.

Kinski and David Faulkner.

The competition judges are able to make a special award to an individual or group whose story has touched their hearts and deserves a special mention.

So it was an emotional high point of the evening when little James Hudson of Nantwich was presented with the magnificent overall Community Champion award, designed by Liverpool Sculptor Stephen Broadbent.

Nine-year-old James was born with McCarthy's Syndrome, an extremely rare condition which has left him partially sighted and without ears, eyelids or lips and

missing a layer of fat under his skin.

Since The Chronicle learned of his plight and stepped in to launch an appeal to help James, hundreds of organisations and individuals in the region have organised or supported fund-raising efforts for him.

All money raised will help pay for an operation to rebuild his features, to be carried out by USA-based craniofacial surgeon Professor Ian Jackson, who takes on few cases in the United Kingdom but was moved by James's plight.

The citation for his award read: "This is awarded to James for his personal courage and for his inspiration to the community."



Chief Executive Mike Kinski (right) and Chronicle Managing Director David Faulkner (3rd from left) with the Mid Cheshire category winners (l-r) Wendy Cooper, Harry Mooney, Sue Lawler, Roger Davenport (overall sporting award winner) and Joyce James.



Picture above: Chief Executive Mike Kinski (left) and Chronicle Managing Director David Faulkner with Margaret Robinson, overall winner of the 'Woman of the Year' category.

Picture right: Joint winners in the Clwyd 'Young Person of the Year' category, Leanne Tarran (left) and Leanne Brookina, who were both nominated for tireless fundraising during 1995 for children less fortunate than themselves.



New openings for learners

The 'education for all' initiative at Manweb is expanding rapidly with the launch of three more Open Learning Centres in Liverpool, Warrington and Caernarfon.

Three more centres are due to be launched in Oswestry, Aberystwyth and Crewe, giving even more staff the opportunity to participate in a range of courses.

The centres are equipped with computers, CD Rom systems and audio visual facilities, enabling staff to study at their own pace.

Around 150 employees have so far signed up for courses, the most popular being computer skills. There is also keen interest in the Welsh, French and German language courses which have tutorial support from local colleges.

Building on the Open Learning concept, a development programme for junior and middle managers is also to be launched.

A Manweb MBA Programme will start in April, giving participants the chance to develop their business skills and gain a Master's Degree in Business Administration.



Chief Executive Mike Kinski cuts the ribbon to launch Open Learning at Rhostyllen - one of the first Centres to open. Also pictured is Regional Training Manager Sue Reece (left) and Open Learning Co-ordinator Karen Lloyd-Jones.

Changes in Information Systems

Tom Forrest (below) has joined Manweb as Manager of Information Systems, on a 12 month secondment from ScottishPower, where he was Client Server Manager.

Based at Chester, 40-year-old Tom will work for a transition period alongside Head of Information Systems John Peaker, who is leaving the company later in the year. Tom reports to David Jones, ScottishPower's Managing Director, Information Systems Division, who said: "I believe this move will help us to integrate our Information Systems activities in the interests of our customers and the Group as a whole."



In addition to Tom's appointment, a new senior management team has been announced within Information Systems at Manweb as follows:

Project Managers: Dewi Jones is responsible for Production Support and Supply Business Projects, Mark Harrison is to head up Distribution Business Projects, and Barry Johnson is to manage Mainframe Migration Projects.

Brian Sheppard will continue as Product Development Manager for the Multi Service Project (see story, page 7), supported by Colin Brocklebank for phase one of the project, and Brian Jones for the second phase. Steve Allport is responsible for the overall design, and Dave

Croston for implementing the system.

Technical Services Team Leaders: Dave Stephens is responsible for Operational Services, and Ken Roberts for Networks. Brian Jones is appointed Client Server Team Leader, but to enable him to complete the vital phase of the Multi Service Project he is currently working on, Joe Caldwell is seconded into this role until 31 December 1996.

Mark Bellman will continue as Finance Manager, and Application Development Manager Nick Balderson, who has decided to leave Manweb, will be involved in one of the major strategic projects until 30 June 1996.

Sports news in brief

The 1996 ESI National Angling competition will be held on 20 August on the New Junction Canal near Selby in Yorkshire.

Manweb's Dave Rawsthorne is the defending individual champion.

Anyone interested in taking part should contact Dave Lewis on internal tel. 700 3620. Entry is open to all Manweb employees, their spouses and children aged under 16. Also eligible are retired employees and ex-Manweb staff who are members of the Sports and Social Club and who worked for the company for at least two years.

At the annual general meeting of the Manweb North Wirral Golfing Society, it was agreed there would be three 'Away' days and four 'Home' days in 1996, at which past and present Manweb members would be welcome.

April - Brackenwood; May - Easton; June - Ellesmere Port; July - Pryor Heys; August - Arrowe Park; September - Mold; October - Hoylake.

Anyone interested in joining should contact Paul Kelly on 0151 609 2408 or 0151 648 3719 (home), or John Foster on 0151 678 8453 (home).



MSP is adopted as 'best practice'

Manweb's Multi Service Project (MSP) has been adopted by ScottishPower as the 'best practice' billing solution for the whole of the Group.

The project has been running for two years at Manweb and is due to be completed by the end of 1996, with all ScottishPower Group customers on the new system by the end of 1997.

John Griffith (above), of Manweb, is appointed Project Director, reporting to Bill Landels, Managing Director of the Supply Division of ScottishPower. John will be supported by Hugh Mitchell, ScottishPower's Business Manager, Andy Pooley, Manweb's Business Project Manager, and, from Information Systems at Manweb, Brian Sheppard, as MSP Product Development Manager.

The project is based in Chester and a steering committee, Chaired by Bill Landels, is made up of business managers from ScottishPower and Manweb.

Editor's note: Following Manweb's closure of its retail business in April this year, all staff discount sales ceased for both employees and pensioners. ScottishPower, which now owns Manweb, does, however, have a Retail Division with a number of superstores in the region. As part of the integration process of the two companies, current Manweb staff are now able to obtain the same discount arrangements as other employees in the group. Several Manweb employees and pensioners have contacted the company to ask if similar terms will be made available to Manweb pensioners, but regrettably this is not possible. Manweb will not be re-entering the retail market and will have no involvement in the sale of electrical appliances.

FREE ADS

PHOTOGRAPHY: Wedding and portrait, competitive prices. Ken Smythe, 0151 609 2032, or 01244 544771.

COSTA DEL SOL: Benalmadena studio apartment to let - £100pw. Bette Flanagan, 01244 341097.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Bookings being taken for weddings, and sittings for portraits in well equipped studio. Peter David Studio, Wrexham, 01978 263448.

ORNAMENTAL METALWORK: Hand made curtain poles, static caravan steps, gates & garden furniture (flower basket stands, foot scrapers, penny farthings, wishing wells). Also oak

flower tubs. Colin Wait, 01244 682710.

FRENCH POLISHING: And furniture restoration. Traditional and modern techniques. Colours matched. Free quotations. Gavin Pye, 01978 846539 or 0378 262513.

CARAVAN: 2-berth 1991 Ace Diplomat, hardly used. For quick sale £3,250 ono, inclusive of wheel and hitch locks, 01352 700284.

CROFT PAVING: Block paving specialists, complete landscaping service available. Used flags supplied and laid, 3'x2' £1.50, 2'x2' £1.00. Cheap turf and topsoil supplied. Phone any time for free quote, 01925 763820.

FRANCE: Near La Rochelle, luxury gites furnished to a high standard. Tel. Mrs Oliver, 01565 733464 for brochure, or Trevor Fox, tel/fax 0033 51 28 65 75.

POSTBAG

We have received a number of letters, mainly from retired employees, about staff discount from ScottishPower shops. Shortage of space means we are unable to reproduce all but a selection

Dear Editor

I look forward to the monthly Contact. Reading some of the articles brings back memories of the characters I have worked with or played sport with. On the other hand, there are some sad memories, especially when reading the obituary column.

However, the item on page 5 of the December issue relating to staff discount is certainly an eye-opener.

What I would like to know is why the offer only applies to existing staff?

There are many pensioners on the payroll who put a lot of years' service in the Industry. I myself put in 36 years and eight months.

Until Manweb decided to sell off the sales centres, all staff and pensioners enjoyed the facility of a staff discount as a reward for their services.

So I would like the Scrooge who excluded the pensioners from the list of staff discounts to pick up the gauntlet I have thrown down and answer the points in question. I hope my letter causes a change of heart by the powers that be.

Incidentally, another point to be considered is that if the pensioner ban were to be lifted, it would surely increase sales.

Looking forward to seeing this letter and the answering letter side-by-side in the next Contact.

George Hogarth
Retired Foreman
Dee Valley

Dear Editor

I was pleased to read in the November/December Contact magazine that staff discount

from ScottishPower shops and superstores was now available to current Manweb employees - good luck to them!

It would be appreciated if consideration was given to extending this discount to retired staff.

I joined Manweb in 1948 on its conception and served the organisation for over 40 years. There are many other retired personnel like myself with over 40 years' service. Our contribution has helped to establish Manweb, far greater than many current employees who have only been employed for a very short period.

R F Threadgold
Trelill, Northwich Road
Dutton, Warrington