

CONTACT

Manweb's monthly newspaper
for staff and their families.

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ABERYSTWYTH

Vol. 41. No. 7

July 1989

Death of former Manweb Chairman

STAFF throughout the electricity supply industry were saddened to learn of the death last month of former Manweb Chairman Ben Hastings.

Mr Hastings, 59, who was Manweb's Chairman from 1978 to 1985, when he became Chairman of Norweb, died on June 20 after a long illness, leaving a widow, daughter and son.

The church at Farndon, near Chester, was packed out for the funeral of Mr Hastings on June 27. Manweb Chairman Bryan Weston, Deputy Chairman Richard Gales, Director — Trading, Peter Hopkins and a number of managers and retired colleagues were among those who attended the service.

There were also represen-



Ben Hastings

tatives from other area boards, the Consultative Council, Department of Energy and Electricity Council.

Mr Hastings' appointment as Chairman of Manweb at the age of 47 made him, at that time, the youngest area board chairman in the country. He had previously served as Deputy Chairman.

Continued on page 3

Accident rate falls but we're still...

BOTTOM OF THE LEAGUE

by Jackie Unsworth

THE number of accidents at work have fallen dramatically over the last 12 months — but despite the good news Manweb is at the bottom of the electricity supply industry's 'safety league table'.

Since last year, when reportable accidents reached an all-time high, Manweb has been campaigning for safer working practices and the result has been a 10.5 per cent reduction. But the latest national statistics show that Manweb still has a long way to go.

Manweb's Safety Adviser Colin Herbert said: "While it is pleasing to see this reduction, it appears from the national statistics that some Area Boards have done considerably better than ourselves.

"The CEGB, for example,

has managed to reduce its accident rate by 30 per cent.

"Back in 1984 we had our lowest ever accident rate and every year since then the number has grown, until last year when it peaked. Let's hope we have managed to reverse the

trend and from now on we will see further reductions."

During 1988/89 there were a total 168 accidents resulting in more than three days' absence from Manweb, plus one fatality. In the previous 12 months there were 188 accidents and one fatality.

The latest figures represent 3.15 reportable accidents per 100 Manweb employees, totting up to an alarming 44,728 man hours lost.

The largest number of injuries — a total of 42 — were as a result of people falling, mainly from ladders or into trenches. The way employees handle goods, by lifting and carrying, is also a major cause for concern, and during the year there were 39 such accidents.

Unusually, nine employees had to take time off work because of dog attacks.

Colin Herbert said: "If you add up the cost of all the time off work through injury, it's an awful lot of money.

"Many accidents could have been avoided by the use of protective clothing and equipment and, on the other hand, many accidents could have been much more serious had protective gear not been used.

"I hope this will bring home to employees how important it is to adhere to the safety rules and not take short cuts in the procedures. It's up to all of us to take care and prevent accidents to ourselves and to others."

Launch of new award scheme

by Gaynor Kenyon

THE search is on for outstanding members of the community and Manweb is joining in the hunt with the launch of a major new awards scheme. The Manweb/Chronicle Community Awards of 1989 will recognise the efforts of people and groups who have made significant contributions to the Cheshire and North Wales community during the year.

Manweb Chairman Bryan Weston said: "The awards will recognise the selfless efforts of those very special people who do so much to help their local community and who often go unnoticed or are taken for granted.

"Our support of this scheme demonstrates Manweb's concern and commitment for the community in which we live and work."

There are nine categories for which nominations will be sought from the Chronicle newspapers' geographical area which covers Manweb's Mid Mersey, Dee Valley, Mid Cheshire, Clwyd and Oswestry Districts.

They are: TEAM — any group which has made outstanding progress or achieved distinction; YOUNG PERSON — someone under 18 who has achieved something possibly against the odds; CHARITY — one which is registered and has done something special; NEW BUSINESS — one which has made significant progress since it was formed after January 1987; MAN OF THE YEAR AND WOMAN OF THE YEAR — for the most significant contribution to industry or the community; SPECIAL ENDEAVOUR — for achievement against all the odds; ENVIRONMENTAL — for the in-



dividual or group who have done the most to protect the environment; BUSINESS PERSON — for the businessman or woman who has contributed most to the community.

Nominations for the awards should be sent to Chester Chronicle, Commonhall Street, Chester. These will then be considered by local area judging panels consisting of a Chronicle editor, a local personality and a Manweb representative.

The scheme will culminate in a prestigious awards ceremony at the Chester International Hotel in February at which it is hoped a major figure will attend.

Pictured at the launch of the scheme are Manweb Chairman Bryan Weston (right) and Ernest Petrie, Managing Director of the Chronicle and Associated Newspapers group.



Shops get new look

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Flying squad

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Army's new recruits

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Dylan lands top prize

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Changing faces

Leading Light. .

MORE expertise from the private sector has been brought in to Manweb as the Board prepares to operate as a plc.

David Light (pictured right) has been appointed Corporate Financial Manager, reporting to the Financial Director and responsible for providing the Board with business performance analysis, comparing achievements with plans, and seeking opportunities to develop new businesses and expand upon profitability.

Originating from Northop Hall, Clwyd, and now living in Caldy, on the Wirral, David, 33, a qualified accountant, was previously Group Financial Director with the Manchester-based construction company Multi Construction (UK) Ltd.

Prior to that he worked overseas for eight years — first in Norway as Site Accounting Supervisor with Mobil Oil Corporation, in the USA as International Accounting Co-ordinator with Baker Oil Tools, and in Monaco as Finance Administration Manager and then Nigeria as General Manager for Single Buoy Moorings.

A former pupil of Deeside Senior High School, David, who is married with a baby



daughter, will work closely with Graham Morris, who has been appointed Corporate Business Unit Accountant. Graham, who previously worked in Financial Accounts, is responsible for developing the use of financial models and for providing support to the Corporate Services Managers. Other managerial appointments in the Corporate Finance Department include: Arthur Ellinson (Corporate Strategy Adviser), Kevin Healy (Chief Internal Auditor), Denis Hughes (Treasury Manager), Eifion Jenkins (Accountancy Manager), and Bob McMahon (Project Manager).

Bill joins Safety Section

MANWEB'S Safety Section has a new member of staff. Bill Bates, 34, has been given particular responsibility for the new COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) legislation, due to come into effect on October 1, 1989.

Bill, who currently lives in Port Dinorwic, has worked for Manweb since 1972, when he joined as a Student Engineer based at Head Office, becoming a fully fledged Engineer in 1978. He has also worked at Gwynedd District as a Mains Engineer and, before joining the Safety Section, spent a year on secondment with the Cen-

tral Field Unit at Prenton, to gain experience of the 132kV network.

A former student at Liverpool University, Bill, who originates from Greasby on the Wirral, said: "Manweb uses all sorts of chemical substances, from the garage staff who handle oil and lubricants, to the office cleaners, so this new COSHH legislation will have far reaching effects. Every chemical we use may have a hazard, and this is what I will be looking at."



Personnel boss retires

MANWEB'S Head of Human Resources Jim Barraclough retired at the end of June after more than 30 years' service. Based at Head Office, 58-year-old Mr Barraclough, a qualified accountant, had been in charge of Manweb's Personnel function since 1985. Married with three children, he joined the Board in 1958 as a Cost Accountant and over the years held various accounting posts, including Assistant Chief Accountant responsible for District Administration and Stores.

Prior to his appointment as Personnel Manager in 1985, Mr Barraclough was Group Manager responsible for Manweb's Merseyside Districts, having previously held the post of Group Manager for Mid Mersey, Mid Cheshire and Oswestry, and then North Wales.

He was re-titled Head of Human Resources earlier this year following a restructuring at Head Office.

Mr Barraclough, who was

born in Wrexham and still lives in the area, is a former Chairman of the Chester branch of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants. He is also a past President and Chairman of the Institute's Merseyside and North Wales Co-ordinating Committees.

A keen golfer, Mr Barraclough said: "I have been fortunate to have had a varied and interesting career with Manweb, with plenty of challenges. My next chal-

lenge is retirement which I intend to enjoy just as much!" His successor is 45-year-old Mr David Vernon-Smith, from Wilmslow, who is cur-

rently Group Personnel Director with the Stockport packaging company Sonoco Europe. He will be joining Manweb on September 1.

Dear all,

Retirements are always something special, and I've been present at enough of them to realise that. When my own came along I was surprised that I enjoyed it so much. I never expected to receive so many cards and kind messages from friends all over the Board. These, and the marvellous gifts my wife and I received, and the thought and effort which went into the arrangements for the presentation made it a memorable occasion for both of us. Thank you all so much, and best wishes for the future.

Jim Barraclough

'Bobby C' steps down

NORTH Mersey District Manager David Price shakes hands with Customer Accounts Manager Bob Charnock, on his retirement after 40 years' service with Manweb.

Bob, who was presented with a video recorder and various other gifts from his colleagues, joined Manweb as a Customer Records Clerk and worked his way up the promotion ladder.

Married to Dorothy, father-of-two Bob had been in charge of Bridle Road's Customer Accounting Section for the past 24 years, where he was affectionately known to staff as "Bobby C".

Bob, who lives in Woolton, Liverpool, started work after leaving Alsop School in 1943 as a Clerk with the Canadian Pacific Steam Company. While there, he pestered his boss for a



job which would take him on board a ship, but this wasn't possible.

However his boss pulled strings with the Royal Navy, and Bob joined up as a volunteer in 1945, although he was actually three months under the legal age limit, and served as a Writer dealing with records

and pay.

In the Navy, Bob served on three aircraft carriers — HMS Begum, HMS Protoria Castle and HMS Vindey — mostly in home waters. He had several promotions and was demobbed as a Petty Officer.

He then rejoined Canadian Pacific as a Clerk, and two

years later was taken on by Manweb.

His replacement at Bridle Road is Kevin Mawdesley, who has recently been on secondment to Head Office Management Services. Kevin was previously Customer Accounts Manager (Debt) at North Mersey District.

The end of an era



RETIRING from Manweb at the end of this month is Dee Valley Office Manager Keith Griffiths. During more than 40 years' service, Mr Griffiths has held senior administrative posts in Aberystwyth, Rhyl and Rhostyllen.

As Dee Valley Office Manager, Mr Griffiths, a

Governor of Rhostyllen Junior and Infants Schools, has arranged work experience for more than 400 pupils from schools in the Wrexham area and has monitored the training of 150 apprentices and 20 YTS trainees.

Chairman of Wrexham and District Education Forum, he is also a member of the North East Wales Institute Business Studies Consultative Committee, and serves on the Industrial Committee of Wrexham Chamber of Trade and Industry.

For more than 10 years he

served on the Executive Council of the Welsh Hospitals and Health Service Association, which has its headquarters in Cardiff.

Married with one son, Mr Griffiths lives at Pentrebychan.

His replacement at Dee Valley is former Clwyd Office Manager John Griffith.

He is pictured (centre) receiving a carriage clock and other gifts from former Dee Valley District Manager Bob Hodson, who is now Head of the Customer Marketing Department at.



'Nappy' news

STAFF in the Computer Centre at Head Office are waiting for some "nappy news" from their former colleague Ann-Marie Stewart, pictured (centre) being presented with flowers and other gifts before leaving Manweb to have her first baby. Data Prep Operator Ann-Marie, who had worked for Manweb for 13 years, is due to have her baby early next month.

Model secretary...

MANWEB Chairman Bryan Weston has a new 'right hand woman' in the shape of Secretary Maureen Griffiths (pictured).

Born in Liverpool but raised in Wrexham, 44-year-old Maureen was previously Secretary to the Finance Director and Company Secretary of the Wrexham Lager Beer Company, part of the Allied Lyons Group, where she had worked for 14 years. She had previously been Secretary to the Director and Head Brewer of the company.

Piano

Maureen, who is married with one daughter and lives in Marford, started her career working for her mother's hotel business. She later joined Eric Electronics, now part of the Thorn EMI group, where she set up a Cost and Wages Analysis Section and was responsible for providing statistical information to management.

She switched careers after taking a secretarial course.



In her spare time Maureen is keen on keep fit and is learning to play the piano and read music. She also models occasionally at her friend's fashion shop.

She said: "I'm enjoying my new job very much. I like the general 'feel' of Manweb and the staff here look so happy."



Back to her roots

Returning to her Northern roots is Manweb Computer Operator, Melanie Davies. Melanie, 21, hails originally from the Wirral, but has spent the last four years in London, working in computers with the John Lewis Partnership.

Manweb Computer Operations Manager, Mike Gibbs, pictured above with Melanie, is delighted she is adding her expertise to the computer team. "We seem to have been dominated by men for the past few years," said Mike, "But it was purely a case of no suitably qualified female applicants coming forward."

Pupils on top form

LESSONS in first aid have been on the timetable at a Birkenhead school... courtesy of Manweb.

North Wirral District First Aid Instructor Steve Holmes was invited to run special classes for 6th formers at St Benedicts RC High School on



the Woodchurch Estate.

And Steve's six half hour lessons were so successful that they resulted in nine pupils qualifying to receive first aid

certificates.

The 6th formers are pictured being presented with their certificates by former North Wirral District Manager Des

Lock (centre), who has since moved to Mid Mersey. Standing next to Mr Lock are (left) teacher Michael Liddell and (right) Steve Holmes.



Slimline tonic

SHEDDING pounds to gain a few pounds is Manweb Industrial Relations Adviser George Harrison. George, 44, who is based at Head Office, recently completed a sponsored slim to raise money for the Hospice of the Good Shepherd, Chester and Ellesmere Port.

Setting himself a target to lose 20lbs, George cut out most dairy products and red meat and at the end of the five week 'fast' weighed in at 14st 3lbs, having lost 23lbs.

Father-of-two George, who managed to raise over £160, said: "I'm delighted to have done so well and I feel fantastic. I've since lost even more weight, but the only problem is, it's going to cost me a fortune to replace my clothes, which no longer fit me!"

The new slimline George is pictured being weighed-in by Welfare Assistant Cath Williams.

Hi-tech display

STAFF, students and pupils of local schools had the chance to see the latest developments in engineering when they visited Wirral Metropolitan College's "Industrial Fayre".

Manweb joined Marconi Underwater Systems, British Nuclear Fuels plc, Cammell Laird Shipbuilders and other major employers who exhibited a range of hi-tech equipment.

Manweb's display included cables, joints, circuit breakers, system diagrams, a 16kV single phase pole top transformer, and an oil test unit. There was also a jointing demonstration, and an engineer was on hand to

Praise for staff 'storm troops'

WELSH Secretary Peter Walker, has congratulated Manweb for the round-the-clock efforts of staff to restore power to thousands of customers during the ferocious electrical storms earlier this month.

Writing to Chairman Bryan Weston on behalf of Mr Walker, his Private Secretary said: "The Secretary of State has asked me to write to say how impressed he has been by the efforts of all concerned at Manweb to deal with the damage caused by the thunderstorms in North Wales."

"He understands that, not only have the Board's technical people worked all night to repair supply, but administrative and commercial staff also turned out to help by manning telephones and reassuring customers."

"He has asked me to pass on his congratulations and thanks to all your staff for a splendid job."

Oswestry District was first to be hit by the storm, which proved wrong the old saying "lightning never strikes twice in the same place". Lightning lashed at the overhead network, blowing thousands of line fuses and smashing scores of transformers. And just as soon as the supply was restored, the lightning struck again.

Disruption

The storm then crossed North Wales, blacking out areas around Corwen and Bala, before moving over to the Clwyd and Gwynedd coast, and Anglesey.

It is estimated around 100,000 customers had varying degrees of disruption to their power supply.

Staff responded magnificently, and more than 200 worked through the night. Engineers carried out switching operations, linesmen crossed flooded fields in atrocious weather conditions to replace fuses on overhead lines, and office staff manned the telephones.



explain the mysteries of the microprocessor protection relay.

The display was organised by Santo Nardo, 2nd Engineer, Mains, at North Wirral District, who said: "The purpose of the Fayre was to make the staff and pupils of local schools and colleges aware of the new

and ever-expanding dimensions of engineering and hi-technology.

"The exhibition proved to be successful and benefited all who attended and took part," he added. Santo, who is pictured demonstrating how a high voltage vacuum circuit breaker works.

Ben Hastings

(Cont'd from page 1).

Brought up in Scotland, he completed his education at Glasgow University, where he gained an honours degree in physics.

He joined the electricity supply industry in 1967 when he was appointed management services controller for the South of Scotland Electricity Board, a post he held until moving to Manweb.

•Mr David Glanville Gwyn, Manweb's Deputy Chairman from 1962 to his retirement in 1974, died on July 6 aged 79. He had been ill for a long time.

Mr Gwyn worked in the electricity supply industry for 41 years, and his distinguished service was recognised when he was awarded an OBE in the 1972 New Year Honours.

Before joining Manweb he worked in South Wales, initially with the Neath Electricity Undertaking. In 1937 he became Deputy Chief Engineer and in 1945 was appointed Borough Electrical Engineer and Manager at Barry, Glamorgan.

On nationalisation he joined South Wales Board, serving successively as Assistant Chief Commercial Officer, Area Manager (West Wales), Area Manager (Monmouth and Mid Wales), and Chief Commercial Engineer. He was also a member of the Board.



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Congratulations

Long service

CONGRATULATIONS to the following Manweb staff who have recently clocked up 20, 30 or 40 years' service in the electricity supply industry.

40 YEARS: Head Office — Ivan Maddocks, Admin Assistant. Dee Valley — Eric Ellis, Mains Foreman; Emyr Gilpin, Shift Electrician; Dennis Jones, Material Controller. North Wirral — John Bagnall, General Duties Assistant; Kenneth Hardcastle, 1st Engineer. Mid Cheshire — Tom Johnson, Customer Accounts Manager; Eric Smith, 1st Engineer, Supplies. Gwynedd — Richard Hughes, Overhead Linesman; John Owen, Foreman, Engineering (now retired); Idris Roberts, Electrician. Oswestry — Eric Field, Electrician; Sid Warburton, Office Manager.

30 YEARS: Head Office — Roland Sands, Meter Testing; Ron Rose, Principal Assistant, Wayleaves; Bill Sleddon, Electrician. North Mersey — Peter Guppy, Jointer; John Williams, Electrical Inspection. Liverpool — David Allen, Meter Operative; Ken Roberts, Shift Electrician. Mid Mersey — John Brassington, Foreman, Service Deliveries; Raymond Joseph Cartwright, Jointer; Leonard Dennett, General Duties Assistant; Harry Jones, Stores Foreman; Edward Keogh, Craft Attendant. Dee Valley — Brian Carter, Craftsman Painter; Cyril Griffiths, Craft Attendant; George Jones, Jointer; John Spencer, Craftsman, Electrical Fitting; John Parry, Jointer. Mid Cheshire — Fred Broadhurst, Meter Fixer. Clwyd — William Foster, Jointer.

20 YEARS: Head Office — James Harty, Storekeeper, Meter Test; Ann Briffa, Data Prep Supervisor; Roy Cooper, Security Guard; Eurwen Dutton, Admin Assistant; Mike Gibbs, Computer Operations Manager; Irene Graham, Clerical Assistant; Jean Hollis, Admin Assistant; Pat Hunt, Word Processing Supervisor; Iona Perrin, Clerical Assistant; Cora Roberts, Clerical Assistant; Ron Sand, Admin Assistant; Marlene Winn, Clerical Assistant; Selwyn Jones, Mechanical Fitter, North Mersey — David Cowhig, Meter Operative; Beryl Hodgson, Sales Assistant, Southport Shop. Liverpool — Tommy Sefton, DRC Attendant. Dee Valley — Ken Bartley, Meter Operative; Anne Evans, Clerical Assistant; Frank Gerrard, Meter Operative; Gerald Green, Meter Fixer; David Williams, Meter Operative. North Wirral — Graham Leeming, Meter Reader/Collector. Clwyd — Prudence Buckley, Clerical Assistant.



Celebrations at Clwyd

CLWYD District staff got together at the Oriol House Hotel, St Asaph, recently to celebrate an extra-special occasion. District Manager Doug Willacy presented long service certificates to employees who had clocked up 20, 30 or 40 years' service with the electricity supply industry.

Pictured above are the staff celebrating 40 years' service, from left right, Alan Hubert Spargo, Principal Assistant, Commercial Work Control, with Mrs Spargo; John Llewellyn Lunt, Senior Salesman, Llandudno Shop, with Mrs Lunt; Doug Willacy; Stuart Leslie Jackson, Craftsman Overhead Lines, Llandudno Junction; Mrs Green and her husband James, 1st Engineer, Systems.

Pictured below are, from left to right, Gwylfa Rees Jones, Clerk (30 years); John Oliver Twist, Sub Station Attendant (30 years);

Mrs Blundell and her husband Colin, 2nd Engineer, Mains (20 years); Evadne Ann Jones, Shop Supervisor, Prestatyn (30 years), with Mr Jones; Doug Willacy; Ivor William Humphries, Sub Station Attendant, Rhyl (30 years); Betty Williams, Chargehand Cleaner, Rhyl (30 years), with her daughter Miss Williams, and Roy Ernest Robinson, Craftsman Electrician, Llandudno (30 years).



A special occasion

CERTIFICATES were presented to long-serving Mid Cheshire staff when they recently gathered at the Saxon Cross Motor Hotel, Sandbach, to celebrate the special occasion.

The long-serving staff (pictured above) are as follows:

40 YEARS: Eddie Hollinshead, 1st Engineer, Supplies; Tom Johnson, Customer Accounts Manager; Ben Jones, Fitters Mate (now retired); Bernard Kimpton, 2nd Engineer, Supplies; Ken Sandlands, Debt Recovery (now retired); Eric Smith, 1st Engineer, Supplies; Eddie Spruce, Shift Electrician; Alan Worth, Engineering Foreman.

30 YEARS: Tony Dean, Linesman; Peter Edwardson, Commercial Foreman; Ted Jones, Meter Operative; Pat O'Neill, Office Manager; Mike Potts, Energy Sales Manager.

20 YEARS: Colin Barrow, Chargehand Storekeeper.

Four other long-serving staff, who were unable to attend, were: Arthur Dickens, Jointer (40 years); John Harvey, Linesman (40 years); Walter Walker, Clerical Assistant, Commercial Work Control (30 years), and John Mayes, 2nd Engineer, Energy Marketing (20 years).



MANWEB photographer Adrian Chesworth found himself facing the camera for a change when he recently married Amanda Lawton. The wedding took place on June 3 at St Andrew's Church, Maghull, and afterwards the couple flew to Yugoslavia for their honeymoon. Adrian is based at Head Office and his bride works as an Orthoptist with St Helen's and Knowsley Health Authority.

Dylan lands trip of a lifetime

MANWEB'S Flint Shop Manager Dylan Parry is about to join the jet set after landing the top prize in a nationwide competition.

Dylan, 27, scooped an all expenses paid three-day trip to New York for himself and his wife Anita by correctly answering a questionnaire about Vax machines in the Trader magazine, the national publication for electrical retailers.

The exciting news arrived just as Dylan was preparing for his first ever holiday abroad, to France. He said: "I could hardly believe it. I had never before set foot out of the country, but now I'll be having two foreign holidays this year!"

Passport

Father-of-three Dylan, who lives in Buckley, hopes to take his lucky break in September... providing he can arrange a passport in time.

For although he had arranged a temporary passport from the Post Office for his holiday to France, these are not valid in the United States. Fortunately, though, the dispute which has recently hit passport offices is now over!

Dylan, who has worked for Manweb for seven years, said: "I've never won anything in my life, so it was fantastic to be offered such a great prize. We're really looking forward to going."



AT the end of last year the Department of Employment announced that Manweb was to receive a Fit for Work award for outstanding efforts to employ disabled people. Contact has been finding out about some of the success stories behind those efforts.



Scheme brings new lease of life

by Jackie Unsworth

DAVID Hurst wondered if he would ever work again after he became disabled through arthritis. The condition affected his spine and destroyed both hip joints, leaving him in constant pain and with no option but to leave his job as a Technical Assistant with British Gas.

But thanks to a Sheltered Placement Scheme arrangement between the Spastic Society and Manweb, David (pictured above) has been given a new lease of life working as a Clerk at North Mersey District.

And after just five months in what was intended to be a temporary job with Manweb, 36-year-old David was taken on as a full-time employee at Bridle Road when he proved he was just as good as his able-bodied workmates.

Bachelor David, who lives in Skelmersdale, had to give up his job with the Gas Board in 1981 and his treatment during the subsequent years included two hip replacement operations. He said: "During that time I felt really useless. All I did was sit at home or in hospital, wondering what was the point of anything."

"I really wanted to get back to work, but I didn't have any idea if I could, and how to go about it. Then I heard about the Sheltered Placement Scheme, under which you have to be sponsored by a company or local authority."

David started work at Bridle Road in May 1988, operating a VDU in the Debt Control

Tracing Section. "I had never used a VDU before, except for playing computer games, but I was given some training by Manweb."

He quickly adapted to working in an office and was soon transferred to Commercial Work Control, where his technical knowledge came in useful, and is now working as a Clerk in Energy Marketing, still operating a VDU and providing back-up to the sales force.

"At one time I wondered if I was going to be a professional patient for the rest of my life, but now, although I am still in constant pain, the fact that I've got something to do and my mind is occupied really helps. There's something worthwhile for me to do, and it makes all the difference in the world," said David, who walks with the aid of a stick.

North Mersey Office Manager Len Cornah, who interviewed David for his "temporary" placing with Manweb last year, said: "It was obvious when we first met David that he was keen to work, and he had a good technical background. Although we had never been involved with the Sheltered Placement Scheme before, we

decided to give him a try — and it worked out really well.

"His output, once he was given a bit of training, was as good as most of the other staff, so after five months we offered him a full-time job."

Special computer is key to David's career

by Graeme Cooper

DAVID Williams lives in Chester, is addicted to motor racing and is currently working on Manweb's computer databases. He also suffers from cerebral palsy, which deprives him of speech and muscle control and confines him to a wheelchair.

But set 23-year-old David in front of his foot-operated computer, and he's on equal terms with anyone. His disability becomes irrelevant, as he manipulates the eight keys, communicating through the screen of his personal computer.

With disarming frankness, David (pictured right) admits that without hi-tech help his employment prospects would be virtually zero.

The foot controls supply the necessary link between David's mind and the computer, allowing him to go beyond his disability and fulfil his personal potential.

"It's early days yet, but I hope I can develop my career and progress on to even more interesting work," says David.

Persistent

But in spite of holding six 'O' levels, two 'A' levels and an HNC in computers, it took the former Student of the Year at Wirral's Carlett Park College three years of persistent letter writing before landing a job.

Even when David applied to Manweb — achieving high marks in the standard aptitude test — his requirement to work from home looked like ruling him out.

But by combining the Remote Site Working and Sheltered Placement schemes, run by the Disablement Advisory Service and the Spastics Society, Manweb found a way around the problem — and in the process achieved a first in the North West.

While David is employed by the Spastics Society, he is actually doing computer database projects for Manweb. The combination of the two schemes allows him to work



from home, doing the work at which he excels.

David said: "I am enjoying my new job with Manweb... it gives me a strong sense of achievement and the feeling of being part of the outside world."

For the moment, David's work is limited — not by his ability, but while a special foot control is developed which will allow him direct access to Manweb's central mainframe computer.

And although David owes much to the innovations of new technology, it's his own deter-

mination and commitment which have enabled him to succeed in the competitive world of computers.

If David ever gets bored with databases, there's always motor racing. He writes a regular column for the Chester Standard, and David's is a familiar face at the Oulton Park race track, as the photographs lining his walls testify.

Among the pictures is one of him crossing the finishing line in a sleek Lamborghini. David Williams isn't the sort of man to let disability stop him getting into the fast lane.

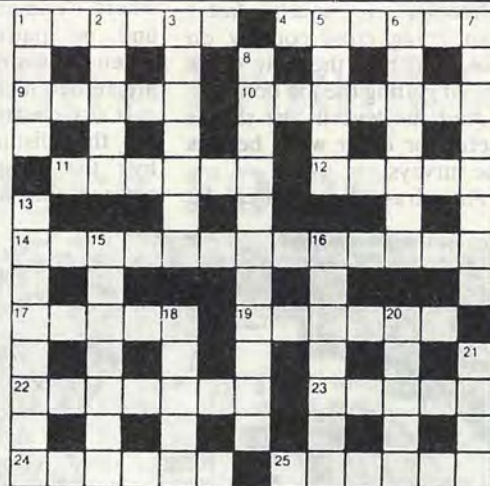
Crossword No. 12

ACROSS

1. Learning a measure of intelligence when it's our turn to supply drink. (6), 4. Ground we all have for open-air enjoyment. (6), 9. One's a fool to take one girl back. (5), 10. Intend to appear in torn dress. (7), 11. Time for a politician to do a bunk. (6), 12. Something to be said for not starting a low-level return. (5), 14. Likely to be unlucky if you take disaster lying down. (6-5), 17. It often comes under the hammer. (5), 19. High-class, supreme, first-class backing — the perfect place! (6), 22. Wild bear finding a way to get level. (7), 23. Wood found on shore, it's said. (5), 24. Customer losing her head and perhaps dropping everything. (6), 25. One drink after another. (6).

DOWN

1. Put down face upwards. (4), 2. Leave to finish life completely. (5), 3. Bound to be leaving port. (7), 5. Nothing but dirt thrown up about one getting the blame. (5), 6. Girl with the wrong sort of genius. (7), 7. Fool — might be a goner if there's gas. (8), 8. Support



wickedness without one achieving closeness. (11), 13. It might hold water as a place for experiments in money. (8), 15. Concealment finished in drink. (5-2), 16. Ring up and have contempt expressed by one with many jobs. (4-3), 18. Charter for a pound — no difficulty! (5), 20. Results of thinking to turn aside. (5), 21. Divine character of some of the best horses. (4).

Solution on Page 9



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HOW do you tell a sometimes hostile public that a noisy helicopter, buzzing around a wet Welsh hillside, is helping to keep the power flowing into their homes and businesses?

One way is to invite the press to join the chopper patrol. Manweb took a group of reporters along on an airborne line inspection to show them how this essential job is done and why it is so necessary. Contact reporter GRAEME COOPER went along for the ride. . . (Pictures by Mike Hall).

Helicopter patrol powers up for line inspections



MORE THAN 14,000 km of power lines to check? "No problem," says Manweb's Network Services Division — "but it's quicker by air!" "The rain's not too big a problem, but no, the helicopter doesn't have windscreen wipers!" laughed Captain Jerry McGrath of Dollar Helicopters. Jerry was about to fly Manweb's inspection team along some of the 14,810 km of overhead line which keep the power flowing for over a million customers, and the weather couldn't have been much worse!

Dee Valley's scenic splendours, over which we'd be flying, were hidden behind sheets of grey drizzle as we emerged from Bala's Pale Hall Hotel. The back lawn had been converted into an impromptu helicopter pad, and the helicopter was 'parked' neatly in its centre.

"Jerry's flying is amazing," commented Network Services Engineer, Peter Roper. "You can point to a power line on the map and the next thing you're hovering right over it!"

Peter, along with linesman, Gareth Davies, from Legacy, made up the helicopter's three-man crew, leaving Jerry free to concentrate on the demanding task of low-level flying. And with a 33,000 volt power line only feet away, it's a job which takes a lot of concentration.

We strapped ourselves in to the Bell Jetranger helicopter, and waited for Jerry to run through his pre-flight checks. The sequence complete, he increased the power and the helicopter lifted us gently into the grey, rain streaked sky.

We climbed quickly, before Jerry's voice came over the headset. "We'll go down to have a look at a line."

Outside the rain streamed across the chopper's glass nose. I slid open a window for a clearer view, and was rewarded with a faceful of cold wet rain. Nearer the

ground the wind buffeted us, and helicopter flying began to lose some of its glamour.

Sources

"This is about as close as we get," said Jerry, as we cruised slowly along a 33,000 volt line.

To my untrained eye, all appeared well, but experts like Peter and Gareth can spot damage caused by high winds, frost and lightning strikes. Sadly, vandalism, too, can be a problem in the countryside as well as in towns.

As well as existing damage, potential sources of trouble can be seen before problems occur. Trees, new buildings, TV aerials and even haystacks must all be checked to make sure they are not too close to the lines.

It's something of an epic task, and cruising along at 30 kilometres per hour, the helicopter is much faster than going cross country on foot, which is the only other way of getting the job done.

And the 'eye in the sky' is useful for other work besides line surveys.

An infra-red camera can be

mounted to the helicopter for checking 'hot spots' on sub stations, and in emergencies the airborne troubleshooter can fly repair crews and materials out to remote locations.

It's vital work, but even so the helicopter draws flack from some of the very customers whose electricity supply depends on its work — particularly among the agricultural community.

Every year, claims are received from farmers, demanding compensation for livestock frightened by the low flying-aircraft.

It's understandable when you hear Jerry warming up the helicopter's engine. Even sitting inside the chopper, wearing a headset the din of the rotors is inescapable.

But measures are taken to avoid disturbance. Jerry — a country boy at heart — tries to avoid flying low over livestock, skirting fields where animals are grazing, and no patrols are undertaken in spring, when births are at their highest.

It's a question of weighing up the disturbances caused by the inspection flights against the consequences of

a power cut. And for the modern farmer, as dependent on electricity as any industrialist, loss of electricity supply can be disastrous.

Keeping National Farmers Union branches and Chief Constables posted as to when their area is scheduled for flying helps avoid trouble, and the Civil Aviation Authority's strict rules about where and when the helicopter can fly are stringently followed.

Chances

Even so, a peppering of complaints is almost guaranteed.

"Last year someone claimed we'd flown under an 11kv line" said Jerry, incredulously. "You just don't do things like that!"

Where helicopters are concerned nobody takes chances — and the pilot has the biggest interest of all in making sure everything's safe.

Jerry reckons that in spite of skimming over treetops, often just feet above 33,000 volts of raw power, flying helicopters is generally a safe occupation. With 15 years' experience he's well qualified to judge.

"The most dangerous part in a helicopter is the pilot!" he joked, lowering the helicopter down over a wooded hillside to make a perfect landing.

We made our way back to the hotel through the worsening rain, but after a quick cup of coffee, Jerry was ready to get back in the air, escorting the line team on Manweb's own version of painting the Forth Bridge.

It's easy to take this ongoing work for granted, but if it wasn't done, lines couldn't be maintained and power supplies would be lost. Then the public really would have something to complain about.

Camera for filming second v

Report by Sam Doug
Pictures by Max Cook

THE sun shone brightly for the two days of filming of the Manweb video 'New Perspectives No 2', much to the delight of the director Simon Normington. Day one started at Gwynedd District Office, Caernarfon, at 8 am. The film crew were ready taking background shots of the staff leaving for work.

Linesmen Jonathan Shaw and Iwan Huw Roberts had prepared questions on the use of outside contractors for Network Services Director, Denis Farquhar. Time for the interview, Michael Rodd, the presenter, questioned Mr Farquhar and then introduced Jonathan and Iwan Huw.

In another part of the yard at the District Office a group of eight new craft attendants for lines teams were being given a vertigo test. They climbed a pole and lifted a weighted bag up to the top.

"Get the language", director Simon Normington told the sound man as he heard the conversation in Welsh, the natural tongue of the recruits.

The crew packed up and moved to Caernarfon Castle, in front of which Michael Rodd did his introduction. Then on to the shop, just around the corner for some exterior shots.

"We may not use them in this video but they are in the can for any future needs," explained Simon.

After lunch on the road the crew visited the Deeside In-

dustrial Estate for background shots for the introduction of the Power Marketing Division.

On to Head Office and Colin Leonard, Director Power Marketing was pulled out of a meeting to face the cameras and respond to Michael Rodd's questions. Bob Hodson, Head of Customer Marketing, joined the session.

The last sequence for the day was to be the video's closing piece, at the front of the Sealand Road building. The time was approaching 5.30 pm and the late leavers were held up while Michael did two or three 'takes'.

Servicing

"It's a rap", shouted director Simon, calling a close to the day's filming.

Liverpool District was the



Pilot Jerry McGrath consults his map before taking off on the overhead line inspection.



Facing the camera at Lister Drive, from the left, Ver Michael Rodd, Video Director Simon Normington and the crew

Rolling of video



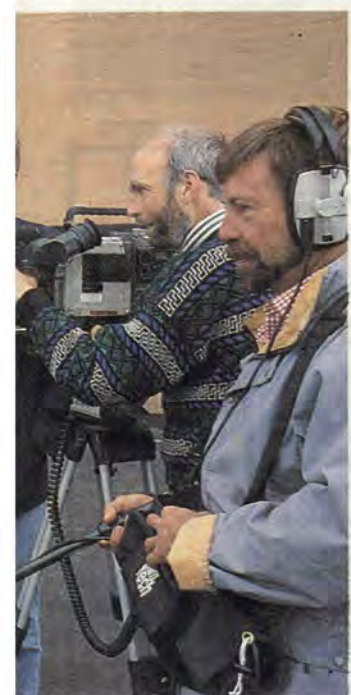
Above: Michael Rodd (left) interviews Liverpool Contracting Foreman Maurice Lock.

Below: The camera is trained on North Wirral trio (left to right) Ken Mitchell, Ann Woods and Tim Broad.



starting point for day two. Once again it was an 8 am start. Again the film crew set up to take shots of vehicles leaving Lister Drive for the day's work.

The day was bright but it was windy and quite chilling. Clerical supervisors Vera Banks and Kate Jack shivered as they waited for their chance to have their say about the loss of appliance servicing from Liverpool District.



Banks and Kate Jack, with

The camera rolled, Michael Rodd asked the questions and Vera and Kate made their points. The Contracting Foreman Maurice Lock spoke of his fears about contracting going to Bridle Road.

Electricians were given the chance to put their questions but declined, so the film crew moved on to the newly refurbished St Johns Shop. The crew filmed the interior and exterior of the shop, much of the footage doomed to be cut out of the finished video because of time limitations, but the shots may be suitable for future use.

A quick dash through the Mersey Tunnel to North Wirral District Office followed to put Director Trading Division, Peter Hopkins on the spot.

Assurances

In a frank response to questions from Ken Mitchell, Contracting Engineer, Ann Williams, Clerical Supervisor, Appliance Service, and Tim Broad, Electrician, Mr Hopkins outlined his plans for contracting and appliance servicing, and gave assurances of employment security.

The appliance servicing and contracting work had been moved to North Wirral and North Mersey, respectively, in order to gain from the economies of scale. Whilst the individual districts were efficient

they were not profitable, but it was no reflection on the staff who had been forced to change jobs.

Criticism

The final stop was down the M53 to Chester and Head Office after lunch. The opening scene in the video features some of the Computer staff who shared some of the criticism of the first video. Then, in the topsy-turvy world of film makers, the first sequence in the video was the last shot outside the Manweb Head Office building.

The tapes shot by the video cameraman were handed to Michael Rodd and he and Simon had the task of selecting the best takes. There was too much material and the difficult task of editing followed. This was done in London and the finished product finally completed at Stockport.

Michael Rodd, director of Blackrod, who produced the film, planned the video with Manweb's Public Relations team. He said, "I think we are getting there. This second one is much more direct than the first, and I am proud of what we have achieved. In the next video I hope we can seek out answers to more pressing issues concerning Manweb staff."

Post Bag



DO YOU have a view you'd like to share or an opinion you'd like to air? Write to The Editor, Contact, Room 5E1, Manweb, Sealand Road, Chester, CH1 4LR, including your name and address or work location. All letters are dealt with in strict confidence and your name can, upon request, be withheld.

Coin machines are a let down

Dear Editor,

We as a Board have had card meters for about two years. We are now installing them as fast as possible and there are around 9,230 in North Mersey already.

The only way customers can get cards is from our shops or post offices in working hours, or from two prototype card machines which only accept £1 coins at Kirkby and Huyton Shops. These machines regularly break down, leaving customers with no way of purchasing cards for up to 16 hours in a day, and all day Sunday.

In other Boards, modern machines which take £10 and £5 notes and £1 coins are fitted in most of their shops. I am told that a new machine will soon be available, which can be installed in all-night garages etc., and MEB has a machine fitted at a police station.

We as a Board must improve our service if we want customers to accept card meters. We have been told many times by customers that they will not have these meters because they cannot get cards easily. After all, we do owe our customers a service as they pay our wages and keep us in work. Don't ever let us forget this fact.

B. H. Kaye,
Kirkby Shop

Alan Wadcock, Head of Income and Accounting, says: "Through our arrangements with the Post Office, we have over 1200 outlets in the Board selling meter cards six days a week. We are discussing with the Post Office the possibility of some offices selling cards every day and until late in the evening.

"If a customer runs out of cards and cannot buy more, the meter has an emergency facility which provides £5 worth of electricity — enough to last most customers several days.

"Not all Boards have installed card dispensing machines. Our machines do break down and they are also vandalised — the Huyton machine was recently attacked with a crow bar and set on fire.

"The new machine Mr Kaye refers to is one which is installed indoors ie, in the shop, in a petrol station or in a police station. We are again leading the way and will be installing one of these machines on trial.

"I believe that we are providing a very good service to our card meter customers and that is why they are so readily accepted."

Picture brought back some happy memories

Dear Editor,

I am writing in connection with the item which appeared in the June issue of Contact. The photograph under the heading "Where are they now" was, in fact, taken on or about August 15/16 1942.

I remember the occasion very well, it being my birthday while we were at camp. The front and back rows are cadets — all apprentice electricians — And the two middle rows are officers and NCOs of the 89th battalion. I am 8th from the right back row, my brother Gordon is 11th from the right on the back row.

I remember many of the names and faces in the photo.

Although both of us are now retired we still look forward to our copy of Contact.

If you are in touch with Frank Woan again please give him our best wishes from the Littler twins, as we were always known as.

Ken & Gordon Littler,
172 Booker Avenue, Liverpool, L18 9TB

Will our trade be hit?

Dear Editor,

I work on Appliance Delivery, based at Crewe. Recently, at my home address, a leaflet was delivered featuring a new MEB "Power House" opening at Festival Park, Hanley. Talking to friends locally, it seems that most houses in the area in which I live (Crewe South) have received it.

It poses a number of questions to be considered:

1) Should MEB deliver leaflets in a Manweb area?

2) Will MEB deliver goods in our area?

3) How will it affect trade in our two local shops at Sandbach and Crewe?

4) Does Manweb have any plans for a "Power House" style warehouse and, if so, where?

My own feelings are that it will affect sales and deliveries in local areas as it seems that most appliances will be available to take away at this superstore with "free delivery and connection" in MEB's area.

And I think delivering leaflets so close to our District headquarters in Crewe was very wrong of MEB's distributors.

This new store opened on June 24 and I, for one, will be going to look around to see what "the competition" are doing to increase their share of the appliance delivery market, perhaps at Manweb's expense.

What do our friends in marketing think?

K. Owen,
Delivery Electrician,
Mid Cheshire District.

Warwick Saunders, Appliance Marketing Manager, says: "There is nothing to stop Midlands Electricity Board from delivering leaflets in our area, particularly when they are opening a new type of retail operation, no doubt designed to attract customers within a 10-mile radius. We would do precisely the same thing ourselves if and when it became necessary.

We have our own plans to enter into a similar type of venture but at the moment the location of this is confidential.

I do not expect Midlands Electricity Board is delivering appliances within our Board Area at present, but if you have any evidence to the contrary please let me know.

We will, of course, be watching closely whether or not the sales of Crewe and Sandbach shops are affected, but I have today asked our Advertising and Purchasing Departments to try to give them some additional help within the next week or two."

Manweb shops get a new look

MANWEB has moved ahead with a £600,000 refurbishment at the Liverpool St John's shop. The totally redesigned store is the Board's most ambitious shop investment to date, emphasising its commitment to customer service.

The shop features bright, modern lighting and a friendly, inviting colour scheme with natural wood finishes and numerous potted plants, all helping to provide a relaxed atmosphere for customers.



Above: Modern look, super service at the refurbished St John's Shop.

Below: Fun at the refurbished Pwllheli store with (L-R) Chris Griffiths (Focus), Julie Griffiths, Manager Adrian Phylip Jones and Angela Elliott.



The range of goods features the top brand names you'd expect in Manweb's prestige 'flagship' store, and a new idea is a direct link telephone system, connecting customers at St John's direct to Liverpool District Office.

The Board's Civil Engineering Department took only four months to complete the refurbishment work, but it was business as usual for Manager, Jim Brown and his staff, who carried on trading from temporary premises.

And it's not just design which has been upgraded. A state-of-the-art security system links cameras around the store with a bank of monitors in the manager's office, and the threat from shoplifters has been reduced by lockable security display cabinets.



Above: "There's no disguising top class service," say St John's staff (L-R) Terry Dowker, Evelyn Glover, Assistant Manager Paul Hepplestall and Iris Sage, during the re-opening celebrations.

Below: Junior Shoppers Ffion Wyn Roberts and Alwyn Roberts have a look at Llanrwst shop with Sales Assistant Marian Scott.



urity display cabinets.

The refurbishment has had the thumbs up from Jim, who made sure the finishing touches, like chairs for tired or elderly shoppers, were installed in time for the big re-opening.

"Our customers deserve nothing but the best," said Jim, adding: "With St John's shop we are setting the standard for electrical retailing in the high street."

Investment

And stores across the Manweb area are also benefiting from the Board's on-going investment programme. Llanrwst shop has been refurbished, providing easier access and better service.

"The new design is already bringing in more customers!" said Manager, Stuart Jones.

And it's the same story in Pwllheli, where the shop has been made bigger and brighter,

with new windows, doors and lighting.

"We're delighted," said Manager Adrian Phylip Jones. "One regular customer is in a

wheelchair, and the new doors have made things much easier for her."

Heswall and West Kirby shops have also been refurbished, underlining Manweb's commitment to high quality customer service.

All the shops marked their re-launches with crowd-pulling competitions, featuring superb electrical goods as prizes.

Report by Graeme Cooper
Pictures by Max Cooksey
and Adrian Chesworth

Obituary

IT is with sadness that Contact reports the deaths of the following Manweb employees:

RONALD PENISTONE, 64, a HGV Driver at Mid Cheshire, died on February 6 after a short illness. He had clocked up 40 years' service and left a widow, son and daughter.

MARGARET OLLIER, a Clerical Assistant in Customer Accounting, Mid Cheshire, died on May 29 aged 54. Married with two children, she had been ill for some time. She had worked for Manweb since 1973.

RONALD WILLIAM PILKINGTON, an Electrician in Meter Modernisation at Liverpool, died on July 6 after a short illness. Employed by Manweb since 1979, he has left a widow.

The following retired staff have also died in recent months!

WILLIAM GEORGE D'EATH, a Sub Station Attendant in the Transmission Section, North Wirral, died on April 10 aged 74. He retired in 1980.

THOMAS WHITEHEAD, a Joiner at North Mersey up to his retirement in 1975, died on April 12 aged 78.

WILLIAM FOXLEY, an Assistant Storekeeper at Crewe, who retired in 1971, died on April 12 aged 73.

JOSEPH JOHN DOYLE, a Meter Attendant at North Mersey, died on April 21 aged 69. He retired in 1982.

LEWIS WILLIAM JONES, a Principal Assistant at Head Office until his retirement in 1985, died on April 24 aged 68.

ERNEST DAVIES, a Meter Reader/Collector at Dee Valley, who retired in 1977, died on April 25 aged 76.

ARNOLD HESKETH, a Meter Attendant at Dee Valley, died on April 26 aged 65. He retired in 1985.

BERNARD HARROP, a Principal Assistant in Personnel, Head Office, up to his retirement in 1975, died on April 27. He was 76.

THOMAS TIMSON, a Meter Fixer at North Mersey, who retired in 1971, died on April 29 aged 79.

JOHN WILLIAMS, a Driver at Gwynedd up to his retirement in 1974, died on April 29. He was 58.

HAROLD THORNDYKE, a Senior Clerical Assistant at Mid Cheshire, died on May 2 aged 80. He retired in 1973.

ERNEST OSBORNE, a Clerk at Dee Valley, who retired in 1973, died on May 4 aged 79.

JAMES CREWE, a Chargehand Labourer at Mid Cheshire up to his retirement in 1971, died on May 10, aged 82.

THOMAS MARCHANT, a Driver at Dee Valley, died on May 14 aged 86. He retired in 1967.

HENRY BOOTH, a Foreman Storekeeper at Mid Mersey up to his retirement in 1971, died on May 17 aged 82.

THOMAS JOSEPH SHAW, a Meter Operative at North Mersey, who retired in 1979, died on May 18 aged 74.

FRANK RIGBY, a 2nd Assistant Engineer at Head Office, died on May 21 aged 76. He retired in 1971.

ARTHUR HOLLINS, a Foreman at Queensferry up to his retirement in 1984 on May 26 aged 66.

ALFRED GWILYM GRAY, a Labourer and Joiner at Newtown who retired in 1975, died on June 2 aged 77.

WILLIAM HENRY BUTTERFIELD, a Shift Electrician at Liverpool, died on June 3 aged 67. He retired in 1982.

DOUG MORGAN, a Telephonist and later District Reporting Centre Attendant at Liverpool, died on June 18 aged 67.

NORMAN MITCHELL, Office Manager at Liverpool District, who retired last year, died on June 22 aged 64.

ALFRED HOUGHTON, former Installation Inspector at Mid Mersey, died at the end of June aged 73. He retired in 1981 after 30 years service.

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Setting the scene for privatisation

CONTINUING the 'getting to know you' theme, Manweb's energy marketing staff gathered at Chester Racecourse last month for their first-ever departmental conference as part of the Power Marketing Division. Colin Leonard, Director, Power Marketing, welcomed his new team who, before the recent reorganisation of Manweb into three separate divisions, had worked for the Commercial Department, and he set the scene for the months leading up to privatisation and beyond. "Manweb plc will be very different from the old area board," he said. "The new organisation has three divisions which we could just as easily call companies, each with their own management and published accounts.

"In the past we contributed to national marketing plans, but in the new world we will not be part of that national organisation, and the boards we previously worked with will be our competitors.

"The face of the electricity supply industry is changing rapidly. We're facing new threats and opportunities, and we've competition on our own patch.

"Of course it has become necessary to reorganise to meet these new challenges."

Prospects

Mr Leonard reassured staff that no-one need fear for their jobs and that there were still excellent career prospects for them, even though there was a major recruitment drive to bring expertise in from the private sector.

"It's true we want to attract new blood into the organisation, but we don't discount or ignore that experience exists in our own staff."

He added: "I know we're going through a period of change at the moment, but I think we are very fortunate to be working in the electricity supply industry at this time.

"The future of the Division is in your hands. I'm very confident and I'm impressed by the quality of the team. We've nothing to fear from privatisation and we can make Power Marketing secure as a business," he said.

Energy Marketing Manager Bryan Ogden had some good news to report. "Once again we have more or less achieved all our objectives, with total sales for last year being some 385 GWh — 11 per cent higher than the previous year. A very 'well done' to all of you and my appreciation for the hard work you have put into securing this success."

Mr Ogden said that whilst Manweb should never lose sight of the competitors in other fuel industries, there would now be new competition from within the ESI. "Our customers can go elsewhere for their supplies of electricity. We will no longer be franchised to supply them."

The Power Marketing Division had been created to respond to these changes, said Mr Ogden, who added: "Two things are certain — sales

success will only be brought about by face-to-face contact with our customers and the vast majority of customers we serve at the present time are likely to remain with us.

"Above all, Manweb must be marketed in such a manner that our customers do not have to look elsewhere for their supplies, but automatically turn to Manweb for answers to all their energy-related problems."

Bob Hodson, Head of Customer Marketing, spoke of the need to provide a "five star service".

Selling

"Marketing means a lot more than just selling the product. Marketing permeates the whole of the business enterprise, and in the business world, successful companies are marketing orientated," he said.

"To grow profitably, Manweb must exploit new markets both inside and outside the area. If we don't take the initiative, our major customers could be tempted to go to the predators. Manweb can't afford to lose any ground."

Trade Liaison Officer Peter Benstead spoke about Manweb's Trade Electric venture — an indirect marketing initiative involving "trade partners" from outside.

Over the next few months Manweb will be recruiting around 200 trade partners, such as electricians and plumbers who, in order to join the scheme, must first meet a stringent set of conditions.

"I've heard it said that we will be giving business away and that surely the Trades involvement will mean an increase in competition and perhaps a reduction in Manweb's own sales."

This could not be further from the truth, he said. Other boards operating similar schemes had doubled their water heating and slimline heater sales.

Still looking at the domestic market, Sales Development Manager Malcolm Cooper said there had been 1500 Medallion Award homes built last year and almost 7,000 all-electric homes — the highest ever totals recorded by Manweb.

But there was no room for



Revealing all about a new award for sales staff... Electricity Sales Manager Dave Tinsley.

complacency, he said. "The simple truth is that we must move up a gear."

Other speakers were Head of Power Procurement Terry Brookshaw who talked about "the new era in electricity supply", and how Manweb will in future buy and sell power.

Stripped

Energy Marketing Engineers Terry Dunne and John Shead took to the platform for a double act to discuss the ways Manweb serves its business customers.

But the highlight of the conference was when Electricity Sales Manager Dave Tinsley stripped off to reveal... an exciting new award scheme for 1990!

To be judged in April, the Manweb Sales Person of the Year Award will reward "excellence in selling" in the form of three fantastic holidays, each worth £1,000, to the top three sales staff.

Speakers at the conference, from left to right, John Shead, Malcolm Cooper, David Tinsley, Colin Leonard, Bryan Ogden, Bob Hodson, Terry Brookshaw, Terry Dunne and Peter Benstead.



TA's 'new recruits' are put through their paces

A TRIO of Manweb staff swapped their offices for the great outdoors when they accepted a challenge from the Army. Chester Shop Manager Ian Traynor and 2nd Engineers Tony McEntee and Lorraine Houghton, both based in Development Engineering, Head Office, joined more than 50 executives from all over the North West on a tough three-day Territorial Army exercise to test their mental agility and physical stamina.

The "Executive Stretch" exercise was organised by the TA's 5th/8th Battalion, The King's Regiment, not as a recruitment drive but to demonstrate the value of the Territorials in providing training and leadership skills.

Ian, Tony and Lorraine were put through their paces in Lancashire's Gisburn Forest and at Holcombe Moor, home of the famous Krypton Factor assault course.

The slept rough, competed in a live firing

exercise and trekked nearly 10 miles while completing a series of challenging command tasks. "Now Get Out of That" style problems kept them all on their toes as they had to overcome such exercises as fording a river with the aid of just two logs and a rope!

"I enjoyed the exercise very much. I tried to make the most of it, to see how I would cope under pressure," said Tony, who had just successfully crossed the river.



Manweb's Lorraine Houghton and Tony McEntee during the Territorial Army's "Executive Stretch" exercise.

Anfield kick-off for LJCC meeting

AROUND 200 past and present members of North Mersey District enjoyed an excellent evening's entertainment at their Employees Meeting on June 16.

In the sumptuous surroundings of the Trophy Room at Liverpool Football Club, Ian Ledson, Chairman of the District LJCC, kicked off the evening with a review of the year and the changes at North Mersey.

He was followed by a tremendous performance from Brian Jacques, of Radio Merseyside, whose Liverpool humour was well received by the locals and foreigners alike.

David Price, the new District Manager, had only been in post a matter of days and thanked everyone for the warm welcome he had been given. He said he was delighted to be joining the team and was looking forward to working with them in the future.

Competition closing date draws near

CHILDREN and grandchildren of Manweb staff and retired employees planning to enter this year's Young Environmentalist of the Year Competition are reminded that the closing date is August 31.

Organised by the Electricity Council and the Young People's Trust for Endangered Species, the competition is open to children aged eight to 16 and some super prizes are at stake.

Further details and application forms are available from Public Relations, Room SE1, Head Office, tel: ext. 2091.

Crossword Number 12 solution

ACROSS: 1 Liquor, 4 Common, 9 Idiot, 10 Raiment, 11 Decamp, 12 Motto, 14 Accident-prone, 17, Anvil, 19 Utopia, 22 Abreast, 23 Beech, 24 Hopper, 25 Chaser.

DOWN: 1 Laid, 2 Quite, 3 Outward, 5 Odium, 6 Maestro, 7 Nitrogen, 8 Propinquity, 13 Calabash, 15 Cover-up, 16 Pooh-Bah, 18 Lease, 20 Ideals, 21 Thor.



Summer's here — so light up your barbie

THERE'S nothing more enjoyable than eating out of doors, especially when the weather is right. So make the most of the summer months remaining and light up your barbie! First, though, on a safety note, make sure portable barbecue legs are stable and will not move once the coals are lit. Lining the fire bowl with foil will speed up cooking, and you should allow 40 minutes for the coals to get hot before starting to cook. Remember to allow extra food for those outdoor appetites, and crusty herb or garlic bread plus lots of mixed salads to make a tasty side dish.

Barbecued vegetables make a great treat. **POTATOES:** Thickly slice some large unpeeled potatoes and brush with oil. Season lightly and place on a hot oiled rack for about 10 minutes, turning once. **MUSHROOMS:** Whole, large mushrooms cook very well with butter or stuffed with a mixture that needn't be cooked beforehand. Try ready prepared stuffing mix. Oil the underside of the mushrooms and pack the stuffing into the mushroom caps. Add a little oil or butter and cook for 10 to 15 minutes. **PEPPERS:** Quarter and seed peppers and brush with oil. Cook for five to 15 minutes, turning once.

CHICKEN TIKKA

(If you haven't time to marinade overnight, leave for at least one hour for the spices to impart a subtle flavour).

4oz (125ml) natural low fat yoghurt; 1 tbsp (15ml) fresh ginger, grated; 2 garlic cloves, crushed; 1 tsp chilli powder; 1 tsp ground coriander; ½ tsp salt; juice of one lemon; 2 tsp oil; 4 chicken breasts, skinned and cubed; 1 onion, peeled and sliced; lettuce, washed.

In a glass bowl mix all the ingredients together except the chicken, lettuce and onion. Place the chicken into the marinade, coating well, cover with cling film and leave to stand overnight in the fridge. When ready to cook, remove chicken from the fridge and thread the cubes onto six to eight skewers. Brush the remaining marinade over the meat, make sure the coals are very hot, and cook for eight to 10 minutes, turning frequently. Serve the chicken on a platter scattered with lettuce leaves and slices of onion.

CATHERINE WHEEL SAUSAGES WITH BARBECUE SAUCE

1lb chipolata sausages; 2 tsp Bovril beef stock granules; 2oz (50g) soft brown sugar; ¼ pint (140ml) boiling water; 1 tsp chilli powder; 1 tsp celery salt; 2 tsp white wine vinegar; 3 tsp tomato ketchup.

Untwist the links between the chipolatas to make a long

sausage and cut into four equal lengths (if the sausage breaks, mould it together as neatly as possible). Wind each length into a coil and secure with a skewer.

Mix the stock and sugar together in a saucepan and pour the boiling water over. Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes until the sauce has reduced and thickened. Barbecue the sausages for four minutes on each side, brushing with the sauce while cooking.

MACKEREL PARCELS

2oz (50g) fresh brown breadcrumbs; 2 tsp fresh, finely chopped parsley; 2 size 3 egg yolks; 2 lemons, grated rind and juice; 2 tsp Bovril chicken stock granules; 3oz (75g) butter, melted; 4 mackerel, thawed if frozen; 4 sprigs fresh dill.

Mix the breadcrumbs, parsley, egg yolks, rind, lemon juice, stock and 2oz butter together. Stuff the filling into the fish cavities. Dot with the rest of the butter, and top each fish with sprig of fresh dill. Wrap in foil and barbecue for 20 minutes, turning once.

RED AND WHITE SALAD

Fruit and cheese make a clever combination for a salad. Use red leaves such as lollo rosso and radicchio, with strawberries and a firm white cheese, diced. Mix together and toss in a vinaigrette dressing flavoured with either raspberry or red wine vinegar.

Manweb pair put their best feet forward..

IT was a real killer. . . but Manweb's Jeff Hunt and John Boyer suffered nothing more than blisters on their feet after successfully completing the 40-mile "Lyke Wake" walk, otherwise known as the Coffin Trail!

The dynamic duo had set themselves a target of 17 hours for their sponsored trek across the Northern Yorkshire Moors but incredibly managed to cross the "finishing line" in just 14 hours 50 minutes.

And for their efforts Jeff, a 1st Engineer in System Development, Head Office, and John, a Mains Engineer currently on secondment to Liverpool District, together raised £800 for Whiston Hospital's CAT Scanner Appeal to provide a cancer screening machine.

The long distance walk stretched from Osmotherley, in West Yorkshire, to Ravenscar on the east coast, following the line of several Bronze Age burial mounds — hence the gruesome nickname "The Coffin Trail".

Jeff and John tackled the same gruelling walk last year, but it took them 18 hours to complete the course.

Said Jeff, 29: "We did the walk pretty fast this year, but we had decided to really go for it. There were bonuses at stake from some of our sponsors!"

John, who lives in St Helen's, had a particular reason to raise funds for the CAT Scan-

ner Appeal. Earlier this year he was successfully treated for cancer of the lymph system. But because his local hospital, Whiston, as yet doesn't have its own screening machine, John had to travel to another hospital in Liverpool.

Jeff and John regularly go walking together and put in plenty of practice before tackling the Lyke Wake Walk. On the day they were joined by 13 other walkers, who together raised a total of £1,500 towards Whiston Hospital's £500,000 Appeal.

Next year the Manweb two-some plan to conquer the famous Lake District four peak walk, which covers 26 mountainous miles and a total climb of 11,000 ft.

Jeff, who lives in Pensby, Wirral, said: "I'd like to thank all those Manweb staff who supported us. I know there are so many other fund-raising events going on, but not one person refused to sponsor us."



Jeff Hunt and John Boyer (both standing) with some of the other long distance walkers.



FRED'S PUZZLE CORNER

In a muddle...

HOW good are you at solving anagrams? Below are six anagrams which each combine the name of a country and its capital. Unscramble the letters to find all six pairs.

- ROYAL TIME
- SAY WOOL RON
- DAD IS IN PRAM
- COPY A TIGER
- AN OLD WASP WAR
- RUB GALLON POTS

Win a fiver

FIVE could be your lucky number in this tricky word teaser. Rearrange the letters below to make five 5-letter words reading across. The last two letters of the first word are also the first two letters of the second word, and so on.

To help you, the middle letters of the five words make another word reading downwards and the clue to that word is: FEARLESS.

A A B B B
C C C E E
E E E H H
I I R R R
R S S T V

Send your answers to BOTH puzzles to: Fred's Puzzle Corner, Contact, Room 5E1, Manweb, Sealand Road, Chester, CH1 4LR. The sender of the first correct entry opened will receive £5.

Prize on the way

THE winner of Contact's 'X Marks the Spot' competition is retired Oswestry Electrician Eddie Edwards, of Llanfechain, Powys, who gave the following correct answers:

A=7, B=4, C=9, D=2, E=1, F=6, G=3, H=8, J=5, X=D.

His prize of £5 is now on its way.



Top award for luxury homes

CALUM Kennedy (centre), Liverpool District Commercial Energy Marketing Engineer, presents prestigious Medallion Awards following the completion of the luxury Seymour Court apartment complex at Huyton.

The energy efficient development comprises 12 two bedroom apartments and is Rodney Housing Association's first all-electric venture. Built by Krol Corlett and Co., the apartments benefit from space heating designed around Dimplex XTE storage heaters to provide 90 per cent of the heating requirements on Economy 7 off-peak electricity. Manweb

also installed direct acting panel heaters and fan units in the bedrooms, kitchens and bathrooms.

Receiving their Awards are (left to right) Sarah Jamieson, Chairman of Rodney Housing Association's Development Committee, Mark Powell-Davies, the Association's Development Manager, and builders Eddie Krol and Roy Corlett.

Manweb joins crackdown on bogus callers

MANWEB has joined forces with Dyfed-Powys Police in a campaign to guard elderly people from bogus callers.

Free door chains will be given to pensioners in the Llanidloes, Churchstoke, Montgomery and Newtown areas during the campaign, and will be fitted free by members of Newtown and Montgomery Round Tables.

"We are delighted to be helping the local community in such a practical way and hope these door chains will enable pensioners to feel more secure in their own

homes," said Manweb's Oswestry District Manager Lyn Price.

Community Affairs Officer, Sergeant John Rodrick, of Newtown Police Station, who is organising the distribution said: "Security chains are one of the most effective crime prevention measures to prevent walk-in thefts and this campaign should highlight their importance."

AGM minutes

COPIES of the minutes of the 6th Annual General Meeting of the Electricity Supply Pension Scheme, held on December 14, 1988, are now available from Manweb's Pension Section, Room 1S1, Head Office, telephone ext. 2582.

HOLIDAYS

Brittany/SW France — Caravans and mobile homes. Self-drive pack. Tel: Crewe internal 178 or 0270 766675 (Ian Linford).

Caravan — Towyn, Near Rhyd. Six-berth, two bedrooms, shower, fridge, fully fitted. From £75 per week. Tel: 0978-362615/352653 (Mrs Jones).

Carmel — Caernarfon. 19th Century stone cottage in own grounds. Excellent views. Three bedrooms, bathroom, lounge and parlour. Large kitchen with cooker, fridge and freezer. Tel: 0286 880 749. Alwyn Pritchard, 16 Maes Hyfryd, Carmel, Caernarfon, Gwynedd.

Criccieth — North Wales. House overlooking village green. Sleeps six. CTV. Beach and shops two mins. Tel: 076671 2614 (Ann Tudor).

France — B & B, H/B, caravans and camping. Tarn et Garrone Region. Close to Junctions 8 and 9 on Autoroute between Bordeaux and Toulouse. Excellent catering, including French, Indian and vegetarian cooking. Much to see and do, or just relax in sunshine. Ex-SEB employee. Tel: David Boniface, 010-33 (63-95-95-20).

Pony-Trekking — And farm holidays. Accompanied one-hour to full-day treks for novices or experienced riders. Holiday cottages available. Self-ctrng. or bed and breakfast, full or half-board. Lic. restaurant open to non-residents. Lunch, afternoon tea, dinner. Private parties catered for. Further details: Hwylfa Ddafydd Country Farm Holidays. Tel: Colwyn Bay 516965.

Port Grimaud — Six miles St Tropez. Four/six-bth. caravans, with electricity, h. and c. water, shower. On three-star hotel site. Luxury coach travel from most areas. Tel: 0670 712399.

Porthmadog — Holiday bungalow, sleeps six. Black Rock Sands five minutes' drive. Convenient Ffestiniog Railway, Snowdonia National Park. For infmtn.: C. Jones, 2 Meadow Drive, Porthmadog. Tel: 0766 2519.

Tenerife — Get away to the sun. From £30 per week. Apts in Los Christianos. Access to two large pools, tennis crts., two restaurants, maid service. Only 50 yards from a golden beach. Flights arranged. Tel: 061-483 8314.

Weston-sup'r-Mare — Static caravan on farm. Six-berth, sep. dbl. bedroom, shower, toilet, TV, etc. All-season price £70 per week. Tel: 093472 292 (Mrs Huett).

Newquay — Cornwall. Luxury caravans with shower, and economy vans. Colour TV, flush toilet, etc. Pleasant site near town and beaches. Cleaned and maintained by owner. From £50 per week. Tel: 0637 876589 (Gill).

Spain — Luxury villa, three dbl bedrooms and two bathrooms. Private swimming pool. Quiet area "Calpe" Costa Blanca. Walled gdns, terraces etc. Five minutes from uncrowded beaches. Available now from £150 per week. Telephone 0736 66417.

Dolgellau — Traditional farmhouse cottage set in a seven-acre smallholding in Snowdonia National Park. Sleeps seven plus cot. Tastefully modernised. Fully-fitted kitchen, inc dishwasher and microwave. Storage heaters and large inglenook fireplace. Ample parking and grounds. Kennel for pet by arrngmt. Easy access to mountains and sea. Beautiful scenery and lovely walks. Prices from £100 to £220 per week. Tel: 0341 423912.

Cardigan — 12 miles. Lux. six-berth static caravan, near beaches. Families only. Tel: 0492 580 253 (evenings).

French Riviera — Six-berth caravan, all amenities on site, within easy reach of Monaco, St Tropez, etc. Golf, riding close by. SAE to M. Williams, The Lodge, Lingen, Bucknell, Shropshire, or tel. 0544 267579.

Newquay — Cornwall. Guest house, sea views, two minutes from beaches. Quiet area close to town, good food, comfort, prkng. BB/EM £65-£80 per week. Discount for ESI staff. Tel: 063787 4291 (Mr Pleasants).

Costa Del Sol — La Cala De Mijas Costa. Luxury villa, sleeps six. Month of September in group share for sale. Phone: 051-427 6247 for more details.

Abersoch — Luxury eight-berth caravan situated on pleasant farm site, close to beach and shops. Shower, TV, flush toilet, 240 V, H & C, cooker, fridge, sink, gas fire, etc. Vacancies March to November. Families only. £100 per week. Tel: Buckley 549248.

Anglesey — Tal-y-Bont Cottages, Dwyran. Luxury cottages set in a 17-acre smallholding, 1½ miles from shingle beach of Menai Straits and four miles from long sandy beaches of Llanddwyn. Nature reserve, bird sanctuary, sea zoo, shops and restaurant nearby. Weekly prices — July/August £220, September 1 to 15 £180, September 16 to 30 £160, October £130. Telephone Deeside 819768 for further details.

Llandudno — Rosaire Private Hotel. Family run and situated in lovely garden area of town, yet close to all entertainment and shops with no hills to climb. Free car park. Tea/coffee facilities. Some en suite rooms available. Excellent home cooking, served at separate tables. Telephone 0492 77677 or write for brochure to Mr and Mrs W. G. Evans, 2 St Seiriols Road, Llandudno, Gwynedd LL30 2YY.

Free Ads

Newquay — Cornwall. Family-run guest house with good home cooking. Family rooms. Friendly atmosphere. Sea views. 200 yards from town centre. Dinner, bed and breakfast from £70 per week. Former Merseyside family will make you welcome. Disc. for Manweb empls. Apply Avondale, 28 Georges Road, Newquay, Cornwall. Tel: 0637 872234.

Llandudno — April Court. Small family-run private hote (Welsh Tourist Board—two crown). Close to local amenities, beaches, town centre, theatres, golf courses, etc. New Alpine Ski Complex in beautiful natural setting. Ideal base for exploring beauty-spots of Snowdonia. Good home cooking and comfortable, friendly atmosphere. Children welc. Tea-making facilities. Car park. Bed and breakfast, with or without evening meal. Enquiries to April Court, St David's Place, Llandudno, Gwynedd LL30 2UG. Tel: 0492 77898. Disc. for Elec. Board employees and families (both past and present).

Algarve — Privately-owned villa set in large gardens in the Monchique Hills. Split level lounge/dining room, good kitchen facilities, utility room, two good-sized bedrooms, bathroom, terraces with garden furniture. Panoramic views of the West Coast, 24 kms away. Swimming pool. Maid service. Food hamper provided. Flights arranged. Tel: 0352 741552 or 0352 88762 for brochure.

Anglesey — Self catering and coarse fishing holidays. Two lakes on 15-acre site overlooking Snowdonia. Touring caravans and tents welcome. Brochure available. Tel: 0248 713410.

Anglesey — Bed and breakfast/self catering summer let. Secluded farmhouse with panoramic views of the Snowdonia range. Within 10 minutes of the main town Llangefni and sandy beaches. Idyllic for bird watchers. Tel: Bodorgan (0407) 840038.

Presthaven Sands — North Wales. Caravan to let. Colour TV. Shower. Fully fitted. Good site facilities. Tel: 061 366 8789.

City of Chester — Self catering flat. Centrally heated. TV, fridge, linen provided. Parking, all inclusive. Tel: 0244 42538.

FOR SALE

Cassette — Car stereo. Sony XR-412. Digital synthesiser tuning. Anti-theft chassis. As new, unwanted prize. Worth £200 but will accept £120. Tel: 0244 660114.

Frame Tent — Seven berth. Relum Super De Luxe. 3'x5' trailer. Kitchen equipment and accessories. £375 ono. Tel: 051 327 3021.

Amplifier — Sugden A2-III, £80. Graphic equaliser, 28 band, £100. Echoplex/mixer, £50. Electric guitar, £100. Tel: 051-653 3416.

Day Boat — GRP 14ft. Cabin, GHP Evinrude engine with road trailer. £975 ono. Tel: Caersys 725.

Remember to include your name and telephone number when submitting your free ad.

PLEASE PRINT YOUR FREE AD. ON THIS COUPON OR ON PLAIN PAPER

(BLOCK CAPS PLEASE)

Name:

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Send to: 'CONTACT' FREE ADS, MANWEB, SEALAND ROAD, CHESTER CH1 4LR.

CONTACT Sport



Tournament ends with an action-packed final

A WARM sunny evening in June provided ideal conditions for the third annual Head Office Rounders Tournament.

The competition began with the 12 teams being split into two equal groups to play on a round robin basis. The winners of each group formed the final.

The group games provided some great action, with the final contested by 'Whose Round Is It' and 'Peppermint Pate', two strong teams. The

final was a credit to both teams with 'Whose Round Is It' narrowly winning by just one point, scoring a total of 17 points.

Eifion Jenkins, Chairman of the Sports and Social Club presented the trophies to 'Whose Round Is It', captained by Brian Carman with Richard

Special report by Mark Dale

Bromley, Vince Murry, Gill Reeve, Sue Downing, Janette Croft, Meriel Jones and Andy Hughes making up the rest of the team. 'Peppermint Pate' received consolation prizes, along with the two group runners-up 'Hot Chris Bums' and 'Dead Eyed Dix'.

Tournament organiser Damian Hyland said: "The event has been a great success with a good time had by all."



Messing about on the river

HAVING a splashing time. . . Waterlogged Manweb staff are pictured battling their way down the River Dee during the Chester Fun Raft Race. Aboard their home-made vessel "Dee Light", built from oil drums, the soggy crew were pelted with a variety of missiles and drenched by their competitors' water cannons as they ran the gauntlet to raise funds for the Hospice of the Good Shepherd.

The team comprised Skipper Selwyn Jones, 3rd Engineer, Property Services, Chris Wood, Ian Smith and Richard Coles, all 3rd Engineers in Application Standards, Clive

Manchester, 2nd Engineer, Civil Drawing Office, Central Field Unit, and Bob Campbell, 1st Engineer, Property Services.

Selwyn said: "I'm not sure

where we finished in the race — but we weren't last! We did hit one or two problems, like going down the weir backwards, and a couple of our team members took unscheduled baths! But it was all in good fun, and although we were all very wet, we really enjoyed ourselves.

The sponsorship money is still coming in, but we hope to have raised around £100."

Home and dry after Irish Sea crossing

by Jackie Unsworth



Water, water everywhere. . . The crew of the Draig y Môr during their charity row across the Irish Sea.

Rowing squad really warms to Manweb sponsorship deal

The Lifeboat crew kept warm and dry during their sea crossing thanks to a joint sponsorship deal between Manweb and protective clothing manufacturers Matthews (Wrexham) Ltd.

The two companies joined forces to provide each member of the rowing team with a Dartex waterproof suit. The jackets and trousers, each suit worth £80, were specially designed for the crew members and manufactured at Matthews' factory in Pentrefelin.

Managing Director David Matthews said: "The suits have been made in a breathable fabric which is totally waterproof, and designed to meet the special requirements of the lifeboatmen."

Dai and his team are now a familiar sight in Wales. Wearing their distinctive red waterproof suits, which bear the Manweb logo, they now regularly compete in the Pembrokeshire and newly-formed Ceredigion skiff racing leagues.

Dai Davies is pictured (right) taking delivery of the waterproof suits from David Matthews (left) and former Aberystwyth District Manager David Price, who has since moved to North Mersey District. Also pictured are other crew members.



CROWDS lined the quay and rocket flares lit up the night sky. . . but for once the distress signal brought good news. Manweb Joiner Dai Davies and other members of the Aberystwyth Lifeboat crew had spent 22 hours rowing across the Irish Sea for charity, and when the flares went off, the exhausted team knew they were almost home and dry and had been spotted by the watchers on the shore.

the 97-mile sponsored row from Arklow in Ireland to Aberystwyth raised a total £3,000 for the Mid Wales Scanner Appeal. Dai personally brought in almost £400, and that figure was boosted to £550 by a donation from Manweb's Charity Chest, which matches £ for £ up to a maximum £150 the fund-raising efforts of staff.

Father-of-two Dai and the

crew had been in strict training during the months leading up to the epic sea journey aboard the 22ft long rowing skiff Draig y Môr (Dragon of the Sea).

Knowing they would have to contend with strong tides, headwinds and freezing temperatures, the oarsmen had kept a wary eye on the weather, delaying their attempt until conditions were reasonably calm.

"Even so, it was a bit hairy at times, and it was a relief when we sighted land again," said Dai, 32, who has worked for Manweb at Aberystwyth for three years.

"Half way across, the sea became quite rough and we almost called the whole thing off. But suddenly the waves flattened off and the sea became calm again."

The Draig y Môr was tailed at all times by a support vessel, in case there was an emergency, and two teams of five took turns to man the oars.

Dai said: "The rocket flares went off when we were spotted three or four miles from the coast, and although it was 2.30 am when we arrived back at Aberystwyth, there were around 300 people, including the Mayor, waiting on the quay with champagne for us. It was fantastic."

Team on top form

A TEAM representing Manweb's Oswestry District has won Division One of the Oswestry Skittle League for 1988/89.

Members of the skittle squad, who received their trophies at a Prize-Giving Evening at Gobowen Orthopaedic Hospital recently, have had a remarkable rise to the top since joining the League in 1980.

In that first year they were promoted and won the League Knockout, in 1983 they won Division Four, in 1986 they were runners up in Division Three, and last year they won Division Two.

Their success this year was helped by a timely thrashing of their old foes — the "Gasmen".

Challenge to anglers

THE annual ESI National Coarse Angling Championships will be held on Wednesday, September 13, on the River Trent at Nottingham, and once again Manweb is planning to enter a team.

Present and past employees, and the wives, husbands or children (aged under 18) of Manweb staff are eligible to enter, and anyone interested should contact either John Tyreman on H.Q. ext. 3245 or Dave Garratt on H.Q. ext. 3246 for further details.