

CONTACT



The monthly newspaper for Manweb people around the region

JULY 1994



All aboard!

ALL aboard! Staff from Dee Valley District are pictured with youngsters from local special schools during an outing to Llangollen Railway.

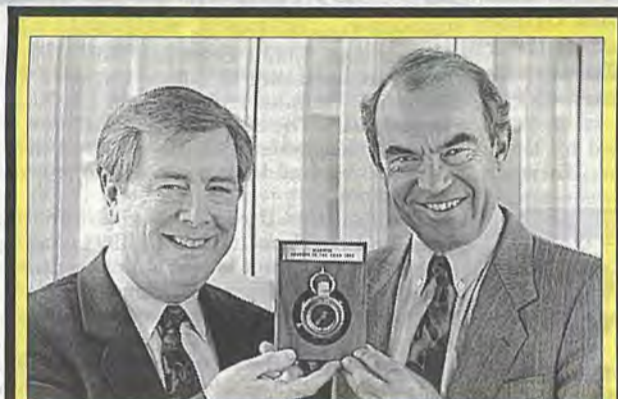
The youngsters, aged seven to 12, were treated to two return train trips between Llangollen and Glyndyfrdwy, accompanied by a group of Manweb 'helpers'.

The afternoon out was the idea of Electrician Dewi Davies, who said: "I thought it would be a good idea to let

people know what sort of work the Llangollen Railway Society is doing to preserve the railway and at the same time provide a day out for these youngsters."

After the trip Dee Valley Customer Service Manager Bob Douglas received a thank you note from delighted mum Sue Cadman, of Chester, who said: "Our son Andrew is autistic and one of his obsessions is trains. The whole family had a lovely day."

PROFITS RISE



Most efficient

MANWEB operates the most efficient data centre in the United Kingdom, according to a nationwide survey.

More than 100 UK data centres and over 300 worldwide were studied by Surrey-based Compass, the company that measures the performance and efficiency of Information Technology (IT) installations.

Compass found that between 1990 and 1993 Manweb had seen IT demand increase by 140 per cent, but during the same period had reduced absolute costs by 20 per cent and overall unit costs by 67 per cent.

Compass has carried out data centre studies for Manweb every year since 1990 and during that time the regional electricity company has achieved improvements faster than comparable organisations within Compass's global reference group, and has consistently been one of the top performing companies on the Compass database.

Manweb's Service Delivery Manager Peter Goulding said:

"As a data centre our objectives are to deliver a high quality service to customers at low cost. Compass has helped us to achieve this by providing a benchmark against which we can measure our performance. The conclusions of the study are completely in tune with our corporate aim to be a high quality, low cost utility, delivering the highest level of customer service."

Presenting Manweb with the 'Compass of the Year' award, Theo Sahlsberg, Managing Director of Compass, said: "Manweb has achieved these exceptional improvements by adhering to the fundamentals of good management. The organisation has systematically set objectives, planned how to achieve them, monitored progress and has achieved outstanding results."

Pictured with the Compass Award are Manweb's Head of Information Services John Peaker (left) and Service Delivery Manager Peter Goulding.

MANWEB has announced pre-tax profits for 1993/94 of £126.3 million, an increase of 13.6 per cent on the last financial year.

This past year has also seen an investment in the business of £103 million – up to 20 per cent from 1992/93, and improvements in the standards of service leading to a dramatic reduction in the level of complaints to the electricity regulator and the lowest number of disconnections in the industry.

Investment has been split between work on refurbishing the existing distribution network to increase the reliability of electricity to customers and a whole range of other customer service initiatives.

The past year has also seen price reductions for domestic customers of one per cent in July 1993 and a further one per cent in March 1994, and a £10 rebate for all customers. This represents a 10 per cent fall in price in real terms since 1991.

Customer Service Investment

Manweb's objective to improve the quality of customer service has been driving the investment in the business over the past year.

£75 million has been spent updating the electricity network, including refurbishment of nine per cent of all the Company's overhead lines – 1,964 kilometres in total. £14 million has been invested in new technology to make life easier for customers, including the introduction of the single telephone number – which replaced more than 100 different Manweb numbers throughout the Region, and a further £6 million has gone towards the re-design of shops and district offices to provide distinct customer service areas. Manweb's programme of customer service training continued, with 3,700 staff attending special courses.

Customer Services Improvements

This continuing programme of investments has resulted in a number of new service initiatives being introduced over the past year in response to mer feedback:

- Meter readings have been intro-

duced in the evenings and at weekends to eliminate unwanted estimated bills.

- The call centres are now open on the new single telephone number from 8am until 8pm from Monday to Friday, and from 9am to 5pm on Saturdays.
- Manweb meter cards are now available at 1,200 retail outlets, 500 of which are open late and at weekends.
- Payment facilities have been introduced at selected shops for North West Cable TV and Welsh Water bills.

The Company's efforts to improve customer service have resulted in a number of measurable improvements. Faults on the network overall have reduced by 20 per cent, the number of bills based on actual readings rather

than estimates has increased by 94 per cent – and we have recorded the lowest number of disconnections in the industry and the second lowest number of complaints to the electricity regulator, Offer.

Chief Executive John Roberts said: "From our research amongst our customers we know that they want a high quality, low cost service from us. This year we have begun to see clear results coming through from the investments we have made in order to achieve this. In October, Manweb was awarded the Government Charter Mark and this April we were named as the top North Western company in the Arthur Andersen/Management Today Awards for Service Excellence. This is most encouraging, and we are delighted to see that our customers are now benefiting directly from our hard work over the last few years."

IN LINE WITH CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

PRELIMINARY RESULTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH, 1994

| | 1993/94 | 1992/93 | Change |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Turnover | £929.6m | £919.9m | +1.1% |
| Profit before tax | £126.3m | £111.2m | +13.6% |
| Profit after tax | £99.3m | £82.3m | +20.7% |
| Capital invested | £103.0m | £85.5m | +20.5% |
| Earnings per share | 83.6p | 69.3p | +20.6% |
| Final dividend per share | 17.35p | 14.90p | +16.44% |
| Total dividend per share | 24.35p | 21.00p | +15.95% |



Some of North Wirral's overhead lines which have now been undergrounded.

NOW GOING UNDER IN N. WIRRAL

EVEN in a predominantly urban district such as North Wirral, the long term maintenance of our low voltage line network has always received a high priority.

In our quest for increased efficiency, cost reduction and provision of customer care we fully appreciate that each customer is as important as the next. Therefore a percentage of our refurbishment budget has regularly been allowed to this particular area of our network.

It was decided that where possible, we would strive to replace the low voltage overhead lines with underground cables, especially in built-up areas. The traditional open wire construction of low voltage lines makes them unsightly and undergrounding dramatically reduces their environmental impact. We also gain the additional benefits of reducing the long term maintenance costs, minimising fault occurrences and providing a more reliable supply to our customers.

New cable laying techniques have been applied wherever possible. For instance, thrust-bores have been used to underground approx 250 domestic services, minimising disruption and ensuring the job was quicker, cleaner and far more cost effective. The Jet-Trac team have also been employed laying low voltage cable where other recognised cable laying methods would have been impractical. In this way over 18 per cent of our low voltage overhead network has been successfully undergrounded.

Where the undergrounding of low voltage lines has not been practical then the open wire has been replaced with Aerial Bundled Conductors (ABC). This new cable construction is insulated and when viewed from the

**By
Duncan
Jones
Service and
Refurbishment
Project Engineer**

ground appears as a single cable rather than several. Hence its visual impact is less than the open wire it is replacing.

Individual services to properties have also been replaced using modern cables and poles and supports have been renewed where necessary, in order to bring the network up to standard.

Over 50 per cent of the low voltage overhead network in North Wirral has been refurbished in this manner in less than two years, including 142 services. Areas to benefit include 1.4km at Lower Heswall and the complete refurbishment of Storeton Village using both ABC and underground cables.

We have also co-ordinated our work with other utilities to the benefit of our customers. Wirral Borough Council has taken the opportunity to upgrade many street lighting installations and British Telecom has followed our example by removing equipment from our poles, replacing lines and in some cases completely undergrounding the systems.



OLD poles removed as part of North Wirral's undergrounding programme have been recycled as car park bollards at Eastham Country Park.

Service and Refurbishment Project Engineer Duncan Jones organised the donation of the poles to Wirral Borough Council's Park Rangers. He said: "The poles are treated with preservatives, so they can have a long life after Manweb has finished with them. They are a top quality wood product, and we're very pleased that they're being put to such a good use."

The poles are cut into shorter lengths and positioned to prevent vehicles accidentally driving off Eastham's Country Park's river bank car park into the Mersey. South Wirral Ranger Peter Miller is pictured sizing up one of the poles.

WORKING TOGETHER ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY

'PLANNING for the future - what future?' was the theme for the Chartered Institute of Housing's (CIOH) North West Branch Annual Conference and Exhibition sponsored by Manweb and Norweb.

It featured a joint presentation on energy efficiency by Peter Benstead, Manweb Demand Side Management Manager and Norweb's Domestic Market Development Engineer Ian Whatton.

Peter told the delegates how Manweb has promoted energy efficiency throughout all market sectors. He said that over the last two years Manweb had concentrated on developing its knowledge of energy efficient measures and their applications. "Energy efficiency is no longer an add-on product alongside building and refurbishment projects; it is becoming the reason for such projects."

He went on to say how the Company had been talking to local authorities and housing associations (many of whom were at the conference), to establish how they can all work together on the installation of energy efficient measures and to see that those in greatest need, for example, those on income support, the disabled and the elderly, receive our help directly.

He continued to detail projects which are currently being submitted to the Energy Saving Trust for their comments.

When completed, these projects will provide savings in the region of 9.5 million kwh over the lifetime of the measures and 1.8 million kg of CO2.

Asked what Demand Side Management is, Peter went on to explain that it is the control of the use of the product you supply and an attempt to influence not only the amount of the product used, but how and when the product is used.

To explain this further he gave a full account of the Holyhead Power Save Project which aimed to reduce an entire island's electricity consumption from a maximum demand of 9 MVA down to 8 MVA.

He concluded by commenting on the research required and the measures carried out in the interests of energy efficiency. He told delegates that Manweb, like Norweb, is keen to help with the implementation of energy efficient measures and he said he looked forward to talking with them over the coming months.



Partners at the CIOH Conference (l to r), Peter Benstead, Ian Whatton, John Roe, Branch Chairman CIOH and John Bennett, President CIOH.

ward to talking with them over the coming months.

In a foreword to the conference programme, David Tinsley, Manweb's Head of Marketing, said: "We welcome this opportunity to

jointly sponsor the North West Conference as part of our continued commitment to both the Chartered Institute of Housing, local housing authorities and housing associations."

EC PROCUREMENT DIRECTIVES Guide to Staff

By Neil Mullock

A SERIES of half-day presentations were recently held at Head Office and Districts to inform staff of their obligations under the European Community (EC) Procurement Directives.

The sessions were organised by Doug Bridson, Purchasing Manager, Network

Services Division and his Procurement compliance staff, Elaine Scott and Neil Mullock with the assistance of Debbie Catterall and Richard Thomas from Corporate Legal Department. The sessions were attended by over 200 people across all Manweb businesses who are involved in any part of the procurement process.

The Utilities Directive 90/531/EEC has been in force since 1 January, 1993 covering the purchase of works and supply contracts affecting the way in which Manweb buys its works and goods from contractors and suppliers.

The timing of the recent seminars was set to coincide with the forthcoming inclusion of Services Directive within the Utilities Directives 93/38/EEC. This means that service contracts both physical and intellectual with effect from 1 July, 1994 will be subject to the same rules governing works and supply contracts.

Each attendee received a copy of Manweb's revised Guide to the Procurement Directives. Manweb is one of the first companies within the Electricity industry to undertake this type of training programme.

There is likely to be a follow up course sometime in July, to show the new Electricity Association video on Service Contracts and to give staff who attended the earlier seminars an opportunity to ask questions or clarify points about the Procurement Directives.

The Directives have to be encapsulated into the UK legislative system, by means of ratification through Parliament. It is envisaged that the Directives will not be part of UK law until the Autumn, by such time the revised Utilities Directives 93/38/EEC will have already come into force and take precedent of the UK regulations when they are adopted into our legislative system.

If anyone has any questions about the Procurement Directives, and their effects on Manweb please contact any of the following staff at Central Purchasing.

Mr Doug Bridson, Purchasing Manager (BRIDDJ). Tel: 700-2125 Internal. 0244-652255 External. Miss Elaine Scott, Senior Buyer (SCOTTEA). Tel: 700-2129 Internal. 0244-652129 External. Mr Neil Mullock, Compliance Adviser (ECADMIN). Tel: 700-2125 Internal. 0244-652125 External.

SIX of the BEST

SIX Manweb Districts and one Region ended the financial year in fine style by making no guaranteed standards of service payments during March.

In addition, three more Districts and the two other Regions made just one payment during the month, earning them a letter of congratulations from Chief Executive John Roberts.

The Districts with a 'clean sheet' at the year end were North Mersey, Liverpool, Dee Valley, Clwyd, Gwynedd and Aberystwyth, plus Region 1 Customer Accounts. Those making just one pay-

ment were Mid Mersey, Mid Cheshire and Oswestry, along with Regions 2 and 3.

In his letter of congratulations, Mr Roberts said: "With customer expectations rising, achieving good results requires concentrated effort every day and I am well aware of the extra demand this puts on our staff.

"Please pass on my appreciation to everyone at the District/Region for their continuing commitment in achieving such an excellent year end result. Well done."

Further congratulations are in order for Region 2 Customer Accounts who had no OFFER complaints during December.

Manweb does not receive statistics for OFFER complaints on a monthly basis, and the news about the Prenton-based Region has only just filtered through.

In a letter to Regional Customer Accounts Manager Kevin Mawdsley, Chief Executive John Roberts said: "This is a great credit to Brian Carman and Ian Timlin, whom I know make tremendous efforts in the area of both OFFER and complaints to myself.

"OFFER complaints, in particular, require handling with great tact and diplomacy, skills at which Brian and Ian have worked hard to develop . . . and succeeded. I am well aware of the pressures involved when dealing with customer complaints."

AGM

COMPLEMENTED BY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S
ANNUAL ROADSHOWS

CHIEF Executive John Roberts' 'Roadshow' briefing sessions are being held for all staff prior to this year's Annual General Meeting to give them an opportunity for open discussion in an atmosphere more informal than that possible at the meeting itself.

This year, Mr Roberts has set aside three weeks, ending on 15 July at Oswestry District, to visit staff at their work locations or at a nearby venue. This has enabled extra sessions to be built into the programme.

These include three evening roadshows - one at Head Office, another in Criccieth and the third in Liverpool - for shop staff who in previous years have all had to travel to Chester for their review of the year.

There are also sessions for Manweb Contracting Services staff at their offices in Wrexham, Birchwood and Abergele.

Meanwhile, as plans for the AGM on 2 August, get underway Project Manager Don Kilgallon said: "I know that almost all of us are shareholders, but obviously it would not be operationally practicable for staff and visiting shareholders all to attend the AGM."

He explained that the pattern for staging the AGM would be similar to last year which was a great success. "This was due in no small part to the co-operation of staff and the arrangements we put in place before and on the day of the meeting," said Don.

Once again the AGM will be held in the restaurant at Head Office which provides seating for up to 800 people. Disruption will be kept to a minimum.

The rear car park will be reserved for shareholders with the two side car parks available for employees. However, staff will also be asked to park their vehicles in the cattle market off Bumpers Lane. A shuttle bus service will operate throughout the day

between Head Office and the Cattle Market.

A full range of catering services will be maintained with as little interruption as possible.

On AGM day, the restaurant facilities and the shop will be closed but employees will be able to pre-order a free lunch which will be delivered to a nominated collection point. Vending machines will be kept stocked up.

Due to the special car parking arrangements on AGM day, an automatic flexi-time credit of 30 minutes will be made to all Head Office staff who work on that day.

Almost 100 of Manweb's own staff will again play an important part in ensuring the smooth running of the event by taking on many varied roles.

"I am sure that this year's arrangements will work equally as well as those of last year, and I should like to thank all staff for their help and co-operation," said Don.



Pictured at the signing of the agreement are, (l to r), back row, Boyd McLeary, British Economic Councillor; Diane Durnford, Special Assistant Policy to John Manley, Canadian Minister of Industry; and Sir Nicholas Bayne, British High Commissioner. Front row: Glynn Bull, IMechE; Stuart Baxter, President CCTT; and Roy Haley, IEEIE, (Manweb Corporate Business Development).

CANADIAN LINK UP

ROY HALEY, Divisional Contracting Manager (seconded to Corporate Business Development), travelled to Canada recently to sign an important agreement for the world of engineering.

Roy, in his role as Chairman of Council of the Institution of Electronic and Electrical Incorporated Engineers (IEEIE), signed a reciprocal agreement with the Canadian Council of Technologists and Technicians (CCTT) on behalf of the IEEIE together with the Institution of Incorporated Mechanical Engineers (IMechE).

The agreement mutually accepts the two UK Institutions and the membership requirements.

Signed in Ottawa, the agreement recognises the important professional contribution made by individual members of the three bodies to the Engineering Profession world wide. It acknowledges that with an increasing global economy, workforce mobility is of prime importance.

In signing the agreement Roy said: "I am pleased to confirm that with the coming together of our two countries in this way we are strengthening international recognition for Incorporated Engineers, Technologists and Engineering Technicians.

CCTT is a federation of 10 professional associations representing the interests of engineering and applied science technologies and technicians in Canada. With high standards and criteria for membership comparable to those of the IEEIE and

IMechE, suitably qualified members of the three organisations will be eligible to reap the benefits available on each side of the Atlantic through reciprocal membership.

Sir Nicholas Bayne, British High Commissioner, said: "This agreement opens doors on both sides of the Atlantic for British Incorporated Engineers and Canadian Technologists and Engineering Technicians.

"It underscores the significant economic and professional ties between Canada and the UK."

The Canadian Council, through its constituent organisations, represents more than 37,000 certified technicians and technologists in the applied science and Engineering technologies across Canada.

Earlier this year the IEEIE and the IMechE - who have enjoyed a close and useful working relationship for many years - signed a Memorandum of Understanding confirming their growing commitment to collaboration on matters of mutual interests. The IEEIE and IMechE represent more than 50,000 Incorporated Engineers in the UK.

The North Western Region of the IEEIE is a very active region and holds lectures and events throughout the region. The regional committee is pleased that Manweb supports its activities by providing meeting facilities at the Warrington District Office and the use of the Head Office facilities to hold lectures.

REVIEW FOR CUDOS

IN order to stay ahead of the field and build on the skills already 'in-house' to provide an integrated database for all customers, the Company has reviewed its current quarterly billing computer system - CUDOS.

Although CUDOS provides a competitive advantage compared to other Regional Electricity Companies (RECs) - reviews carried out by IBM & IS in the Business Appraisal of Manweb Customer Systems Report (BACS) confirmed by the Gartner Group in an independent study - resulted in Colin Leonard, Power Marketing Director, forming and becoming Project Director of the Multi-Service Project (MSP), which started in January this year.

The project was explained to Divisional and IS Staff in special presentations. Staff were reminded of strategy from the leaflet 'Your Strategy Explained' issued in 1993.

- Get most out of Manweb's business - for customers, employees and shareholders.
- Concentrate on providing best possible service so that customers will wish to remain after 1996.
- Secure new business where we have advantage, eg assets, skills and Manweb's name.

At the start-up phase, requirements were discussed with all areas of the business and a detailed requirements report was produced. The requirements were assessed in terms of hard and soft cost benefit. For example, would the costs be outweighed by short/long term benefits? Requirements were prioritised and a risk analysis carried out to identify what affect it would have on the business.

The project was then split into phases and detailed plans outlined for the work to be carried out. The Manweb Project Management (MPM) System has been adopted to ensure that changes and risks are handled carefully.

A presentation to the Executive in March this year received the agreement to start work, although not all the phases will be tackled right away.

Work has now started and is concentrated on the changes necessary for the electricity market. We will review progress in the coming months.

Further information from Kate Walker - 'WALKEK'



PEDAL PUSHERS RAISE £800

INTREPID cyclists from North Wirral District braved atrocious weather and pedalled 102 miles to Aberystwyth to raise money for colleague Peter Owen who was injured in a freak road accident.

The team - Ken Vypond, Mike Gaskell, John Moore, Tommy Masterson, Mark Caulfield and Ian Parry, who drove the back-up minibus - set off from their depot at 6.45am and the first cyclist arrived at Aberystwyth District Office at 4.45pm, having battled through rain, sleet, snow, hail and high winds en route.

The £800 collected is for the Peter Owen Benevolent Fund, set up to buy a specially-adapted motor caravan for Peter, who was left paralysed after a cycling accident on his way to work.

Aberystwyth Customer Service Manager Keith Jones is pictured (centre) welcoming the cyclists to the District Office.

See letter, page 9.

OBITUARIES

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

John Osmond Spencer, who died on May 5, was an Electrician in Dee Valley before retiring in 1991.

Geoffrey Warburton worked as an Admin Assistant in Oswestry before retiring in 1972. He died on 7 May.

Arthur Ernest Jones, who died on 13 May, was a Sales Representative in Gwynedd before retiring in 1980.

Thomas John Evans died on 14 May. He worked in Gwynedd as a Shift Switchboard Attendant before retiring in 1979.

Stanley Baldwin, who was a 2nd Engineer in Mid Mersey before retiring in 1983, died on 18 May.

George Brett, who died on 22 May, was a General Duties Assistant at Clwyd before retiring in 1983.

John James Thornton, who was a Public Lighting Attendant in Mid Mersey before retirement in 1975, died on 23 May.

Joseph Halewood, who died on 23 May, retired in 1962 from Area 1, where he was a Substation Attendant.

Albert Gregory, a Higher Chargehand Electrician at North Mersey until retirement in 1987, died on 25 May.

Arnold Ormerod, who died on 26 May, was an Admin Assistant in North Mersey before retiring in 1976.

Neville William Tushingham, who started out in Lamp Lighting at the age of 14 and retired from Dee Valley District as a Work Study Assistant in 1974, died on 26 May.

Oliver Davies, a General Duties Assistant at Gwynedd until retirement in 1991, died on 27 May.

Netta Heath, a Storekeeper in Area 2 before retiring in 1963, died on 28 May.

Edward Traverse, who died on 30 May, worked at St Helens before retirement in 1973.

Colin Stephen Turner, who retired in 1989 from Mid Mersey where he was a Craft Operative, died in June.

Edward Birchall, a Chargehand Meter Reader-Collector at St Helens until retirement in 1989, died on 5 June.

Charles James Jones, who died on 8 June, was a Jointsman at North Wirral before retiring in 1972.

George Deed, who retired in 1969 at Rhyl, where he was a Chargehand, died on 11 June.

Customer FOCUS

CONTINUING our series of articles on the progress of Manweb's Customer Service programme, this month we focus on two of our subsidiary companies - Manweb Contracting Services Limited and Manweb Gas.

TALKING TO CUSTOMERS DOES PAY

By Tony Harper
Market Research Manager

JUST in case anyone has been wondering if customers really do care about our efforts, recent market research has thrown up more evidence that we are getting our message through.

SATISFACTION INCREASED BY CUSTOMER CONTACT

The domestic customer research programme shows that 60 per cent of those who have contacted us in the last year are very satisfied with both the staff and the procedures we used, that's 14 percentage points ahead of the 46 per cent of customers in general who rate Manweb service as very satisfactory. It really does appear that improvements in service are increasing customer satisfaction levels - and advertising our service improvements also makes an

impact. Over half our customers learned something new from our service quality advertising and nearly 40 per cent found it interesting and relevant. Considering all the other options on their TVs, and the fact that competitors such as Norweb and British Gas outspend us regularly by a factor of 6 or more, this is remarkable and shows rapid progress in building the Manweb brand in consumers' minds.

WE ARE GETTING THE BASICS RIGHT FOR BUSINESS CUSTOMERS

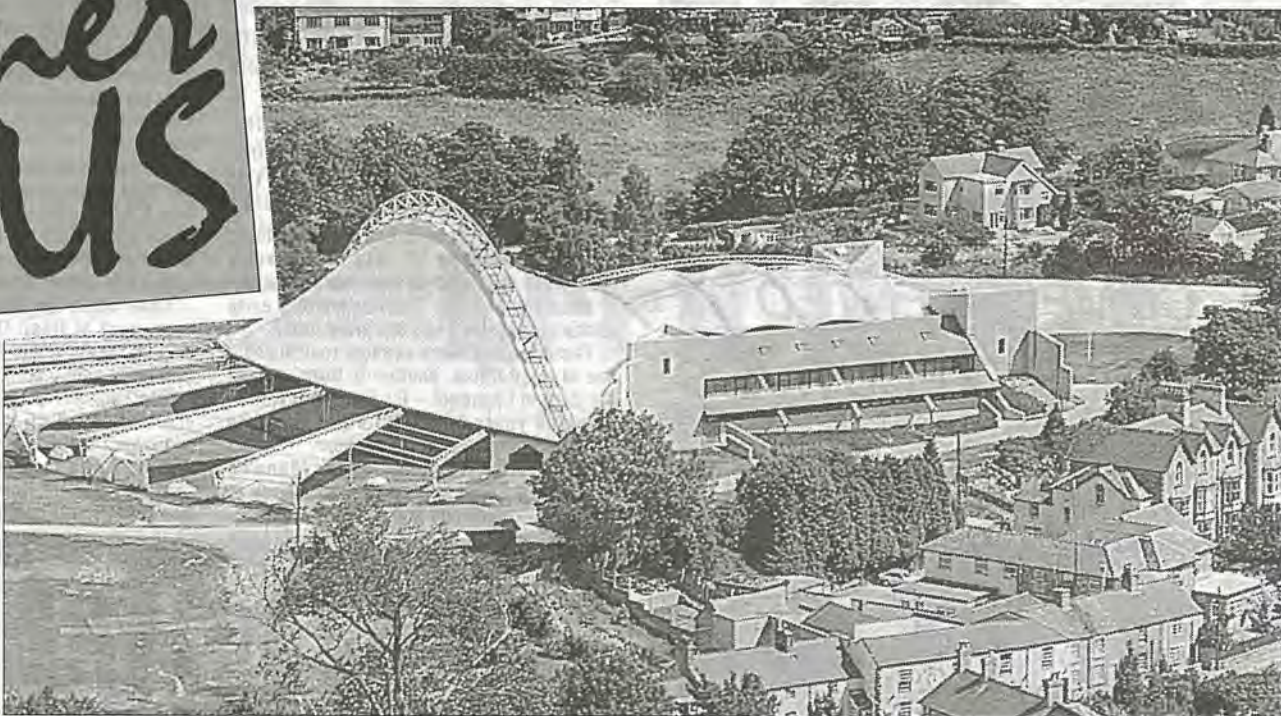
A survey of the smaller business users also suggests that, for the great majority, we are getting the service right. For seven out of ten of these customers, power cuts are down to an acceptable once a year or less. The odd scheduled interruption is contained to a short period (or scheduled to suit their requirements) and local access to Manweb through phone,

shop or office is convenient and available within reasonable hours. As with so much of what we do, there is room for improvement and the survey will allow us to focus on the key issues - but, contrary to the impression we often gain from dealing with those who are dissatisfied, most small business customers acknowledge that our service meets, and often exceeds, their needs.

SETTING OUT OUR STALL FOR THE LARGER CUSTOMERS

Another study, this time of energy buyers and consultants operating in the competitive sector of the business market, shows Manweb amongst the 'winners' in the recently concluded contract round. The general consensus was that Manweb, Northern, Yorkshire and Midlands were notable winners with Eastern, SEEboard, Southern and Norweb losing out. This is a complex market still in its early days and the need

to communicate the Company's strategy and approach clearly to some pretty sophisticated buyers is crucial to distinguishing one supplier positively from the others. This the 'winners' appear to be doing, with Manweb gaining a reputation for its Pool related deals and informed customer service - in clear contrast to Midland's telephone sales and Northern's fixed price contract approaches.



The International Eisteddfod site at Llangollen.

They're working for a brighter future

MANWEB Contracting Services Ltd (MCSL), which started to trade in January 1993, was set up as a subsidiary company with separate offices in Wrexham, Birchwood and Abergele.

Although MCSL has fewer face-to-face customer contacts than, for example, retail or meter reading staff, the contact is for a longer period. When rewiring an installation, the electrician is in the customer's home for a week or two. So it's important that we give a favourable impression of Manweb and show our sincerity and integrity to do a good job.

As its name suggests, MCSL is about Manweb, Contracting, Services and Limited.

MANWEB

Customers do not differentiate between the offices, divisions and sections of Manweb. If one part fails to give good customer service or value for money, it reflects on the whole of Manweb. MCSL is an integral part of Manweb striving for:

Installation Work.

- Some of the larger jobs have included:
- International Eisteddfod site at Llangollen
- Sefton Borough Council Flats at Bootle
- Aberystwyth University Halls of Residence
- Walkden Shopping Centre, Manchester
- Mottram Towers, Stockport

*Enhancing the Image of the Company

- Quality assurance accreditation to BS5750 for security systems
- Active member of the Electrical Contractors Association
- The region's leading electrical contractor

*Providing Good Customer Service

- Quality workmanship at competitive prices
- Assist and complement the core business in emergency situations (eg Llandudno floods, major outage in Liverpool, storms in Wales)

*A Profitable Contribution

- 1991/92 loss £1,800,000 (excluding exceptional costs)



Halls of residence, Aberystwyth University.

- 1992/93 loss £1,100,000
- 1993/94 profit £100,000
- 1994/95 profit £600,000 (target)

*Making a Return on Capital Employed

Once Contracting is making a profitable contribution, then with a low capital base, a good return on capital employed is predicted for the future, ranging from 15 per cent this year to 30 per cent in three years' time.

CONTRACTING

MCSL is an unregulated business operating in the contracting industry. MCSL has changed from being a support activity to a company that is now the leading electrical contractor in the region and is now amongst the top 25 largest electrical contractors in the United Kingdom.

Recently the business has focused on four market sectors:-

- £6 million in Manweb utilities (building and property services, street lighting, substations, underground cables, overhead lines)
- £4 million with external utilities (other RECs, Gas, Water, Telecoms, Cable TV, Customer High Voltage)
- £3 million with domestic customers (Choice range, including heating, showers, insulation, home wiring, security)
- £13 million with major contracts (construction industry, retail parks, factories, public buildings)

= £26 million total

SERVICES

A provider of good customer services, which is essential when you visit 65,000 premises each year, and only around 1,000 are outside the traditional Manweb area.

This includes:-

- 20,000 calls to network activities such as meters, cut-out changes,



Mottram Towers, Stockport.

lateral mains, fitting, jointing, cable laying and overheads.

- 10,000 calls to external utilities, including electrical installations, telephone exchanges, water and sewage stations.
- 30,000 calls to domestic customers. Packages range from one day for a shower installation to a month for a large rewire.
- 5,000 calls to major customers, including lighting, power circuits, heating, fire alarms, call systems, electric motors and control.

LIMITED

MCSL is only limited by the rate that its 400 staff can overcome the business problems and learn new skills. Provided the company can get it right and build on a firm foundation, it can flourish even in a recession and is not affected by regulatory pressure. The emphasis is to control costs and continually improve.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

The main initiatives undertaken in Contracting as part of the customer service programme are:-

- An integrated computer system to improve the control of the activity.
- A quality system to improve documentation procedures and ensure customer focus.
- Training to help staff understand the customer's point of view.

MCSL Managing Director Allan Littler said: "The combined effect is to delight the customer, causing fewer complaints and help to provide repeat business for any of Manweb's services."

"MCSL aims to work for a brighter future, opening up new business opportunities in construction and working in support of the main business of Manweb plc. It is essential that all Manweb staff support the contracting business as it operates in a highly competitive market and is part of the Manweb family."

MANWEB GAS

ESTABLISHED in 1992, Manweb gas is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Manweb plc.

Its initial objective was to: "Generate a low risk, unregulated profit stream through marketing of natural gas utilising our existing energy marketing skills and activities. To exploit current opportunities and build a foundation from which to exploit future opportunities."

Manweb Gas has a number of unique advantages over its competitors:

- Knowledge of customers in the region
- Established Manweb brand name
- Existing infrastructure of energy marketing, sales, billing, customer service and purchasing skills

So how does it all work?

The company identifies customers using more than 73,000kWh (2,500 therms) per annum and approaches them with an offer to supply. This usually means price savings of at least 10 per cent compared with British Gas.

Arranged

Distribution is arranged through British Gas Transportation, one of the new offshoots of British Gas.

Gas is bought from a number of sources, including British Gas themselves, although the bulk comes from Alliance Gas - which is 50 per cent owned by BP.

The company's performance to date has been one of rapid growth, and well over 1,000 customers now buy gas from Manweb.

Calum Kennedy, Sales and Marketing Manager of Manweb Gas, said: "The future, however, will be one of increasing competition, as

- a number of unique advantages over its competitors

over 50 other gas companies have gained authorisation from Ofgas to compete in the deregulated market."

The gas industry will continue to be one of rapid change, with the domestic market due to open in April 1996, enabling a million domestic gas consumers to choose their supplier.

In 1998 all domestic gas customers will have the ability to shop around for the best prices.

Some of the notable successes to date include well-known names such as Marks and Spencer Financial Services, NWS Bank, Castrol UK, IKEA, plus a multitude of local authorities and small commercial customers. These include nursing homes, hotels, restaurants and shops.

Along with significant local success, 20 per cent of Manweb Gas business is based on national contracts and sites supplied are as far afield as Glasgow and Guildford.

Calum said: "We've had an excellent start and are confident that despite growing pressure from larger competitors our current sales and marketing activity will continue to expand our share of the market in line with the company's aspirations. It is our main aim to become the natural alternative to British Gas in the North West and we are well on course to achieve this."



SUPERSTORE NOW OPEN

MANWEB customers in Southport can now look forward to a wide range of electrical products, excellent service and out-of-town convenience with the opening of the Company's new superstore. Located on Meols Cop Retail Park, the store will stock a full range of products, including television, video and audio goods, as well as cookers, fridges and washing machines. It has brought 25 jobs to the town. As well as being able to purchase goods, customers can obtain advice on energy efficiency, easy ways to pay bills, or any Manweb service from fully-trained staff. Superstore Manager Mike Rowbottom said: "We will be providing an excellent level of customer service in our new store, as well as making some very attractive offers." Southport's superstore staff are pictured with with Retail Manager Terry Keenan.

THEY SAID IT

Extracts from letters
TO Manweb about Manweb people
and the services they provide
FROM satisfied customers around the region.

TO: Dee Valley District.

FROM: D & J Chicholm, Ellesmere, Shropshire.

"Recently two of your fitters came into our home to install a panel heater and a storage heater.

"We just want to say that this work was carried out with the utmost efficiency and with minimum disruption.

"They were helpful, courteous and it was a pleasure to have them in my home.

"We do not know their names but trust you can trace them from your records and thank them again from us."

They are electrician L. Pritchard and Apprentice M. Jones.

TO: Mid Cheshire District.

FROM: Mr E. Swan, Wistaston, Crewe (via Sandra Mairs).

"I have been asked by Mr Swan to pass on his thanks for a job well done.

"We recently installed a meter and connected supply at above new property. Mr Swan states the gentleman that called was prompt, and did the job quickly and efficiently.

"Unfortunately, Mr Swan was so busy he did not have the opportunity to thank the man personally or to enquire his name.

"Could you please find out which fixer or inspector it was and pass on the customer's thanks."

The man involved was Mr H. Snape.

TO: Gwynedd District.

FROM: B. H. Simpson, Harlech, Gwynedd.

"All too readily these days people rush into print, or to the telephone, in order to complain. My letter has quite the opposite purpose.

"Very recently your department has completed the provision of an electricity supply to the garage at my house.

"Throughout the whole job I have encountered nothing but helpfulness and courtesy from every member of your staff that I came into contact with.

"In particular I was very impressed with the two linesmen, based I believe at your Blaenau Festiniog depot, who carried out the work. They worked quickly and courteously, and left behind an entirely satisfactory completed project.

The two linesmen are Dylan Richards and Malcolm Tucker.

TO: North Mersey District.

FROM: Barbara Houghton, Sunnyside Hotel, Southport.

"May I ask you to pass on our many thanks to the crew who helped us in our hour of need when all our electric went off.

"With our hotel full of people and a christening buffet to do on the Sunday we were in a great mess. I rang the emergency electric service and the response I got was truly great.

"From the man on the phone down to the men who dug the holes to fix us up with a temporary supply overnight was wonderful.

"They could not have been more helpful. We cannot speak too highly of any of them.

"Please pass on our thanks to them all."

TO: Bill Tubey, Liverpool District.

FROM: Ms S. M. Pate, Halewood, Liverpool.

"I have asked for your name in order to express my gratitude for a job extremely well done.

"I awoke this morning to find I had no electricity. I contacted your department immediately who sent a team round within the hour.

"The job turned out to be quite a major one but your team worked relentlessly to rectify the fault. A fault I might add which had not been previously dealt with properly.

"Your foreman, Paul Fitzgerald, kept me constantly informed and showed a great deal of concern throughout. The other gentlemen, Geoff Bent, Mark Giblin and Chris Jones provided a cheerful service and worked tirelessly from 11am through to beyond 6.30pm.

"I would therefore like to take this op-

portunity to thank all concerned for taking the edge off a very distressing situation. I'm sure you must feel very pleased to have these gentlemen working for you and hope their records will be noted accordingly."

TO: Neil Goulden, Section Manager, Rhosyllen.

FROM: C. B. Roberts, Foto Wales Distributors.

"I wish to congratulate you upon your excellent service in correcting a defective supply cable at Penny-Graig Sun Bank, Trefor, Llangollen. In particular I would like to give a special thank you to your Mr Joe Smith, who did the correction work.

"I would be especially pleased if you would confirm that Mr Smith's record is to be amended with my thanks for a job well done."

TO: Trading Division.

FROM: Eileen Coppack, Ruthin.

"After paying her electric bill, (quite a hefty one) my daughter remarked 'the manager of your Ruthin branch (Dave Stevens) almost makes paying the electric bill a pleasure'. He is so polite and helpful. Having always found this to be the case, I decided to let you know how his courtesy is appreciated. Sadly it is not the normal manner of most business people now otherwise I would not be writing to you."

TO: Trading Division.

FROM: Bob Williams, Town Hall, Wallasey.

"My Personnel Officer dealing with staff welfare, Jack Blakemore, visited your Wallasey Road outlet at lunch-time today to purchase a fridge as a priority item for one of our retired employees, Robert Humphreys, who unfortunately has had to be rehoused this week into a sheltered housing flatlet at the Foxleigh Grange complex in Birkenhead.

"In view of the urgency of the matter, a next-day delivery was the most that could have been expected but Mr Blakemore tells me that the fridge was delivered to Mr Humphreys at his new address within two hours of the sale!

"I feel you should be made aware of this example of first class customer care and service, no doubt expedited by a Sue Fitzsimmons at the Wallasey showroom who dealt sympathetically with the request for early delivery by personally telephoning the order through to your Deeside warehouse.

"As a local authority, we have published our own Citizens Charter but any promises we make about service response times would be severely tested in order to compete with Manweb's performance in this instance!"

TO: Region 1 Customer Info Centre.

FROM: Peter R. Neary, Nantwich.

"Just a few words to convey my appreciation over how you finalised my mother's account. It is indeed heartening in these days of very often bad press for public utilities that you have approached this matter in this way.

"On behalf of myself and my family, thanks once again."

TO: Region 1 Customer Info Centre.

FROM: Mary E. Murray, Walton.

"I would like to thank Mr Terry Brunt for his kindness in helping me with my problem with my meter. He was very understanding to me. Thank you once again from an old pensioner. We could do with a few more kind gentlemen like you.

"Thank you so much."

TO: Region 1 Customer Info Centre.

FROM: T. B. Riley, Southport.

"We discussed by phone a.m. today. As promised I enclose a cheque for £20.87 together with payment slip.

"Many thanks for your help and courtesy over the matter for which I am very grateful. You should tell your reporting office that I have said that you are a credit to Manweb.

"With thanks again."

TO: Jeff Hunt, Mid Cheshire District Manager.

FROM: E.R. & E.M. Johnson, Nantwich.

"I am expressing my thanks to you and the firm for your understanding, consideration re the above, it is most appreciated.

"May I also report to you how efficient and hard-working M. R. Vickers and the young man Kieron were, they are very nice people to have around.

"Again, many thanks to all concerned.

"Please convey our thanks to both workmen."

Those concerned were R. S. Vickers and C. O. Baldwin.



ROUND & ABOUT

This month our Round and About feature comes from North Wirral District

Winning ways at N. Wirral

THE way to WIN features prominently at North Wirral District.

This is natural enough when you realise that WIN means Wirral Investment Network - a partnership of local authority and private enterprise.

District Manager Phil Ramsey is a member of the Environmental Sub-Group, currently involved in coordination of environmental issues. The District has joined the Adopt A School campaign and is backing Bidston Avenue Junior and Primary School with donations of furniture and help with decorating projects.

But one of WIN's biggest fans and hardest workers is North Wirral District Customer Service Manager Jane Sheppard.

Through her WIN connections, Jane is a member of the committee for PADA - Parents Against Drugs Abuse - and is keen to let parents in Manweb know of the problems they may have to face and how PADA could help.

Jane joined the committee shortly after the District became involved with PADA in September last year.

She was at a fund-raising evening at which North Wirral District staff had collected, de-

livered and set up furniture for the organisation. She also pointed out that Kevin Healey of Internal Audit kindly audits the books for the committee each year, so it's little wonder that her business involvement soon became a personal commitment. "I felt it was a very worthwhile committee and although I am not a parent myself, I think it is invaluable to those who may come across drug abuse problems in their family."

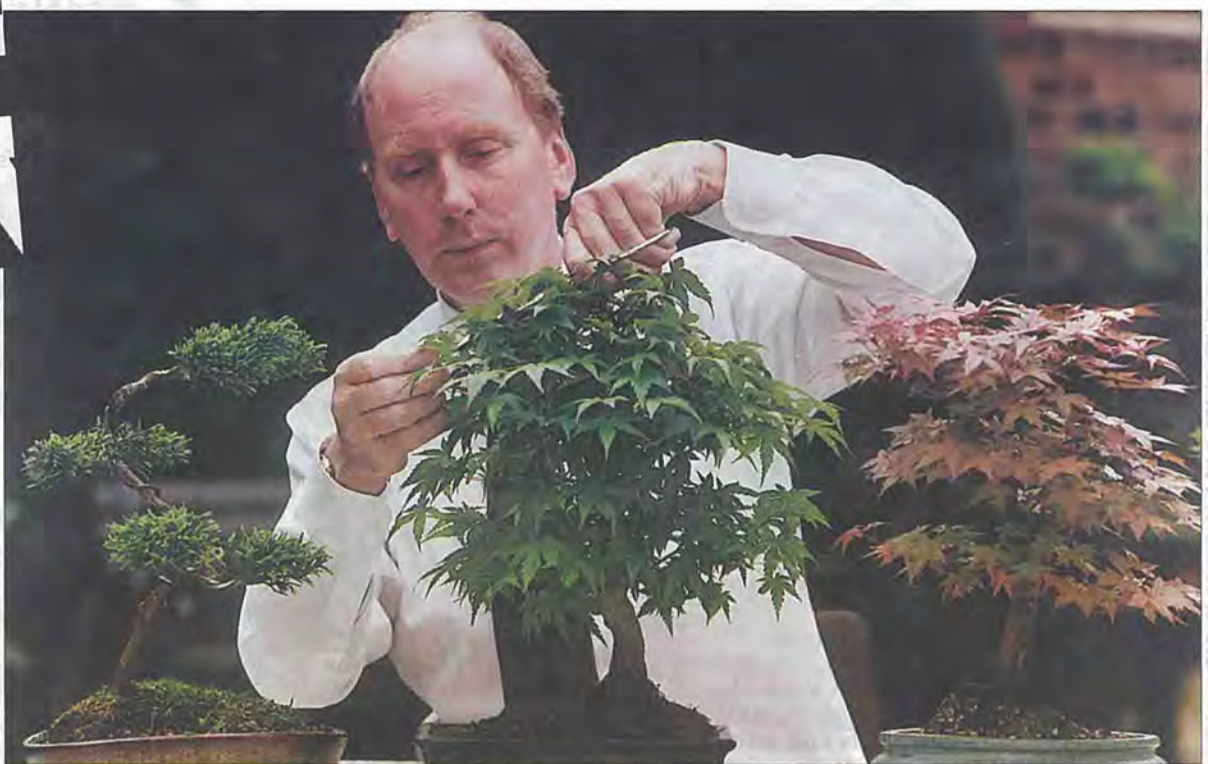
PADA was formed 10 years ago by parents in Woodchurch, Birkenhead, whose children were involved with drugs. They were helped by the local newspaper, The Wirral Globe, to persuade the powers that be, to act on the problems.

Their success means that PADA now has a permanent base on the Wirral at the Roundabout Centre, Birkenhead - probably the best equipped area outside London to help drug users kick the habit.

This year their efforts have been recognised by the Duke of Westminster, who has become PADA's patron.

The organisation's main function is to act as support for parents and relatives who find they have a member of their family using drugs.

It's obvious that PADA is proving to be a vital weapon in the fight against drugs abuse. However, it is a weapon which needs constant attention to help keep it firing. That's where Jane comes in again. "If anyone in the Company would like to help with a donation to this important cause, I would be pleased to present it to the committee."



DEAF and hard-of-hearing customers are sure of a caring and understanding response when they deal with North Wirral District staff.

For personnel who come into contact with customers have undergone a deaf awareness training course.

Organised by Training Co-ordinator Tony Clayton, the day-long course has also been attended by staff from Mid Mersey, North Mersey and Liverpool.

The day-long session involved discussions, videos and hands-on practical exercises. The aim was to enable staff to:

- Effectively communicate with the deaf and hard-of-hearing.
- Identify various types of deafness.
- Finger-spell their own name.
- Select appropriate technical equipment for the workplace.

Course participants were given instructions on how to use the Minicom, how to use an interpreter, and were given information on what it is like to be deaf.

Said Tony: "Feedback from participants has been encouraging. They have all thought the exercise worthwhile. I hope it will generate interest from other Districts who I will be pleased to help in any way I can. It's yet another example of customer service."

Road to success

A VAN customised to further progress the Company's commitment to customer care has taken to the road with great success.

The new Fault Repair Van is a direct result of ideas discussed at team briefings and has been designed by jointing team Paul Wycherley and Dave Doughty together with Foreman Phil Wearing and Engineer Clive Wilkinson.

Based on a 5.5 tonne Renault van, the self-contained unit incorporates an on-board compressor and generator for powering tools and lighting as well as an electric hoist for lifting and handling in safety. It is equipped with its own fax machine and has a capacity to carry stock necessary to combat all faults as well as carrying the additional plant needed to comply with the new Road and Street Works Act. All are neatly stored in an easily-accessible layout.

"It means we are a self-con-



The customised van and jointing team Dave Doughty and Phil Wearing.

tained unit able to respond quickly to most emergencies says Clive. Although the van being hailed as a success, the team is not getting complacent. "We are constantly looking for improvements which will be i

HAVE FUN AND HELP A FUND

A FUND-RAISING committee of WIN members is hoping for a knockout response to its latest venture.

Member of the committee of a novel fun day on 4 September Jane Sheppard is appealing for staff around the Region to form teams of eight to join in the 'It's A Knockout' style event.

The aim is to raise money towards a total of £85,000 to buy the services of a Macmillan Nurse for Clatterbridge Hospital which serves the whole of Wirral, and most of the North West.

Each team that enters must have raised £1,000 to donate to the fund. "We already have £450," says Jane. "But we'll be glad of any support, not only from our own District, but from anyone who would care to contribute."

Anyone wishing to help, donate or seek further information, should contact Steve Holmes on 750 2388.



Jane Sheppard

DONATIONS WANTED

NORTH Wirral District's 'Give As You Earn' scheme to aid charities is seeking further donations.

Staff can have any amount deducted from their salary, they only have to say how much and can state the charity they would prefer the money to go to. Alternatively, they can let the charity decide which charity will receive the donation.

The scheme also includes staff from the Central Field Unit, North Wirral District and Region 2.

Only Merseyside charities will benefit. Anyone wishing to participate should contact Rachel O'Connell in Personnel, who will arrange to send the appropriate form.

'Powercut'



'Crimewatch' characters after their...

NORTH Wirral District's initiative (Merseyside Industry and Community) with considerable success.

Various schools in the Manweb area have been asked to participate in a set project specified by Manweb. Teams will be invited to their local town council suggesting measures the council could take to encourage the efficient use of electricity and indicate areas where energy is being wasted.

West Kirby school won the competition for their project based on the popular 'Professor Powercut' was a success. The school's project was based on the topic of wasting energy.

WHY PHIL'S HAPPY TO GO TO POT

MANWEB's concern with planting trees is well-known.

What perhaps is not so well-known is North Wirral District Manager Phil Ramsey's pursuit of tree growing as a means of relaxation.

A keen gardener, Phil (pictured left) has, for the past 10 years been patiently tending up to 30 special trees which form his bonsai collection.

He's now well versed in the subject and after a spell at night classes two years ago, he has become a member of the Wirral Bonsai Society.

He has just entered examples of his art in the club's annual show. Unfortunately, he didn't take a trophy as his trees are still too young - it takes 10 to 15 years to obtain the correct shape. But Phil's pleased with his progress and claims he is always willing to learn.

Access



(l to r) Paul Wycherley, Clive Wilkinson,

incorporated as we go along." The van has also met with approval from Director Network Services Howard Kirkham who saw the team in operation during a recent visit to the District.

t' warning



award winning performance.

involvement with the Mica Awards (Merit Awards) was recently concluded

area were 'challenged' to complete the job. This year's task was entitled 'A team challenged to prepare a presentation promoting an energy efficient future, could introduce to increase the efficiency of the results they could expect. The team was awarded best presentation award with a national TV programme 'Crimewatch' in busy committing his dastardly crime

"The secret is knowing how to keep them growing and healthy as well as pruning leaves, branches and roots to groom them for shape, size and format," said Phil.

"There are kits on the market from which anyone can grow a tree, but these tend to end up as a stick in a pot." A tree taken from stock ie garden centre material, can be redesigned into a bonsai style shape within one hour, but, he emphasised "the real art is growing them from stock and cultivating your own artistic style."

Phil's collection of bonsai - trees in a pot - are miniature versions of real trees and include: ash, juniper, maple and pine (which is a hard variety to grow) and flowering specimens like azalea and hawthorn.

Some bonsai can fetch up to £5,000 but Phil was quick to point out that his had not reached that value as yet. A lot of his trees are still in their training and will acquire value through continued attention and care.

- The Japanese characters which form the word 'bonsai', are identical to the Chinese although they are pronounced differently. (The Chinese pronunciation is 'punsai'). The characters translate literally as 'potted plant' or 'tree', but the true definition is more dignified. To qualify as a bonsai, the plant must possess all the qualities of a full sized tree in nature and together with its pot must form an aesthetic entity.



The new reception area.



View of the open plan office.

ROLE MODEL UNVEILED

MANWEB's new Aberystwyth District Office is a role model demonstrating the Company's commitment to the customer, the environment and the community.

Unveiling a plaque to mark the opening of the new office, Cynog Dafis, MP for Ceredigion and Pembroke North referred to energy efficiency and environmental improvements. He said he was pleased that although Manweb was keen to sell energy, it was good to see the Company regarded saving energy as very important.

He also referred to the close relationship between Manweb and its staff and Plas Lluest training centre and its residents.

A special opening ceremony on Friday, 17 June, 1994 was attended by 35 guests, including Manweb Chief Executive Mr John Roberts, who were welcomed by District Manager Alison Eakins.

Guests included representatives of local county and district councils and Aberystwyth Town Council, Aberystwyth University, the local weekly newspaper, the main contractor Mowlem South Wales, the sub-contractor, and a representative from Plas Lluest. Guests saw how the project managed by Dave Wallace of the Manweb Architectural and Building Section had transformed the old industrial building and stores into a modern office building encompassing Company-led initiatives and up-to-date technological improvements.

The old timber-framed district office has been vacated ready for transfer to Plas Lluest, the nearby Christian Centre for people with special needs and disabilities. Manweb Architectural and Building Section has been working closely with the Aberystwyth Community Service Committee and Plas Lluest to give guidance and advice on the dismantling and relocation of the building.

Among the environmental improvements and initiatives in the new building are:

- Provision of Building Energy Management System to incorporate the control of the lighting, ventilation, heating and cooling within the building

Pictures by Mike Hall and Karen Abel

linked to a parallel system in the new Network Services Building.

- The facility for the system to be remotely interrogated at Manweb Head Office or directly on site to respond to and schedule precisely the correct amount of heating or cooling required to each zone within the building.

- Installation of energy efficient lighting within the building complying with the latest EEC legislation and specifically designed for VDU usage.

- Overcladding of the existing composite roof with a single metal skin roof with an interlayer of insulation to reduce heat loss and noise transmission.

- Replacement of the single glazed aluminium windows with thermally broken double glazed frames with integral blinds to reduce heat loss and solar gain.

- Filling of external cavity walls with blown mineral wool fibre to enhance thermal insulation. The floor to the extension has also been insulated.

- Reduction of water usage by installation of presence detectors fitted to urinals to limit flushing.



Cynog Dafis MP hands over the keys of Aberystwyth District Office to District Manager Alison Eakins, watched by Manweb Chief Executive John Roberts.

use by disabled people. A new toilet for customers is also available for use by disabled visitors.

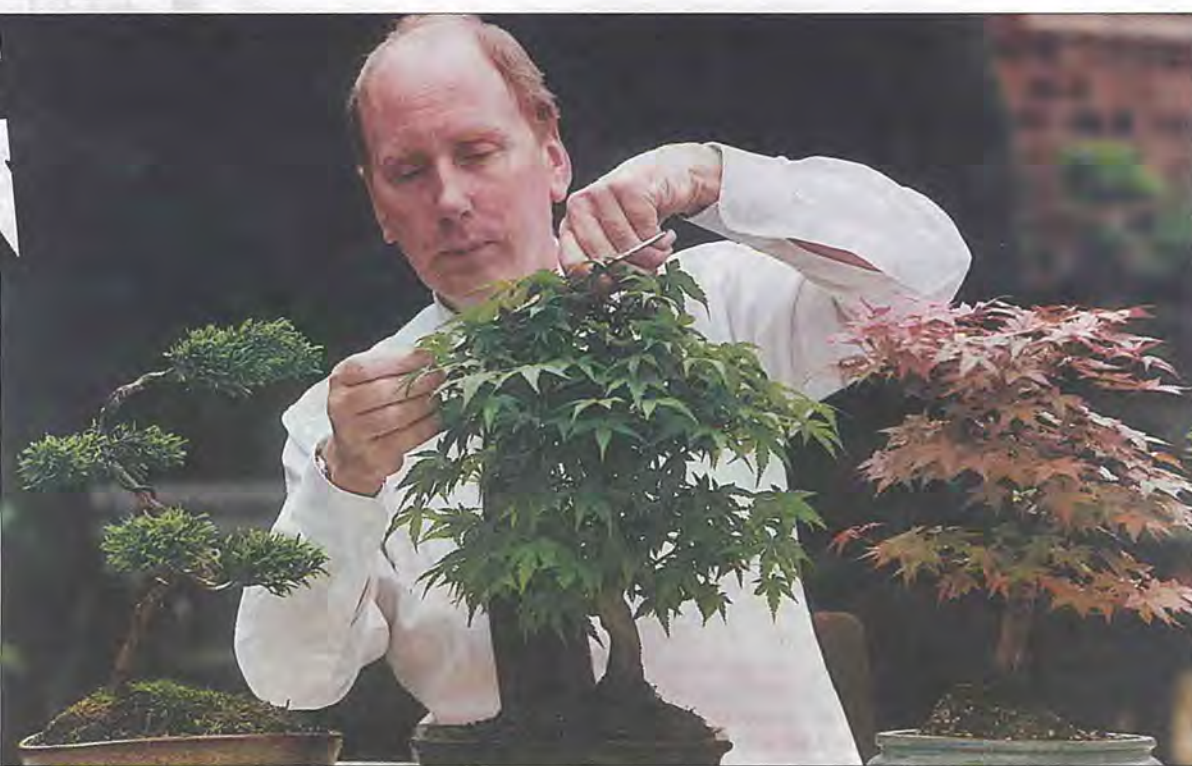
Special attention has been paid to parking with improved facilities for customers and space for disabled people in close proximity to reception. A magnetic induction loop installed at the reception desk and within interview rooms will amplify transmission of sound for people with hearing difficulties.

The refurbished building comprises an open-plan office and small cellular offices all on a raised access floor. A 66 square metre extension provides accommodation for the District Manager and a conference/training room.

Part of the Stores area, which was converted to a two-storey building, provides staff training and meeting rooms.



Spacious conference/training room.



WHY PHIL'S HAPPY TO GO TO POT

MANWEB's concern with planting trees is well-known.

What perhaps is not so well-known is North Wirral District Manager Phil Ramsey's pursuit of tree growing as a means of relaxation.

A keen gardener, Phil (pictured left) has, for the past 10 years been patiently tending up to 30 special trees which form his bonsai collection.

He's now well versed in the subject and after a spell at night classes two years ago, he has become a member of the Wirral Bonsai Society.

He has just entered examples of his art in the club's annual show. Unfortunately, he didn't take a trophy as his trees are still too young - it takes 10 to 15 years to obtain the correct shape. But Phil's pleased with his progress and claims he is always willing to learn.

"The secret is knowing how to keep them growing and healthy as well as pruning leaves, branches and roots to groom them for shape, size and format," said Phil.

"There are kits on the market from which anyone can grow a tree, but these tend to end up as a stick in a pot." A tree taken from stock ie garden centre material, can be redesigned into a bonsai style shape within one hour, but, he emphasised "the real art is growing them from stock and cultivating your own artistic style."

Phil's collection of bonsai - trees in a pot - are miniature versions of real trees and include: ash, juniper, maple and pine (which is a hard variety to grow) and flowering specimens like azalea and hawthorn.

Some bonsai can fetch up to £5,000 but Phil was quick to point out that his had not reached that value as yet. A lot of his trees are still in their training and will acquire value through continued attention and care.

● The Japanese characters which form the word 'bonsai', are identical to the Chinese although they are pronounced differently. (The Chinese pronunciation is 'punsai'). The characters translate literally as 'potted plant' or 'tree', but the true definition is more dignified. To qualify as a bonsai, the plant must possess all the qualities of a full sized tree in nature and together with its pot must form an aesthetic entity.

Road to success

A VAN customised to further progress the Company's commitment to customer care has taken to the road with great success.

The new Fault Repair Van is a direct result of ideas discussed at team briefings and has been designed by jointing team Paul Wycherley and Dave Doughty together with Foreman Phil Wearing and Engineer Clive Wilkinson.

Based on a 5.5 tonne Renault van, the self-contained unit incorporates an on-board compressor and generator for powering tools and lighting as well as an electric hoist for lifting and handling in safety. It is equipped with its own fax machine and has a capacity to carry stock necessary to combat all faults as well as carrying the additional plant needed to comply with the new Road and Street Works Act. All are neatly stored in an easily-accessible layout.

"It means we are a self-con-



The customised van and jointing team; (l to r) Paul Wycherley, Clive Wilkinson, Dave Doughty and Phil Wearing.

tained unit able to respond quickly to most emergencies," says Clive. Although the van is being hailed as a success, the team is not getting complacent. "We are constantly looking for improvements which will be in-

corporated as we go along."

The van has also met with approval from Director Network Services Howard Kirkham who saw the team in operation during a recent visit to the District.

DEAF and hard-of-hearing customers are sure of a caring and understanding response when they deal with North Wirral District staff.

For personnel who come into contact with customers have undergone a deaf awareness training course.

Organised by Training Co-ordinator Tony Clayton, the day-long course has also been attended by staff from Mid Mersey, North Mersey and Liverpool.

The day-long session involved discussions, videos and hands-on practical exercises. The aim was to enable staff to:

- Effectively communicate with the deaf and hard-of-hearing.
- Identify various types of deafness.
- Finger-spell their own name.
- Select appropriate technical equipment for the workplace.

Course participants were given instructions on how to use the Minicom, how to use an interpreter, and were given information on what it is like to be deaf.

Said Tony: "Feedback from participants has been encouraging. They have all thought the exercise worthwhile. I hope it will generate interest from other Districts who I will be pleased to help in any way I can. It's yet another example of customer service."

and set up furniture for organisation. She also found out that Kevin Healey of al Audit kindly audits the for the committee each so it's little wonder that siness involvement soon a personal commitment. it was a very worthwhile ttee and although I am arent myself, I think it is able to those who may across drug abuse probl their family."

A was formed 10 years parents in Woodchurch, head, whose children involved with drugs. They elped by the local newspa he Wirral Globe, to per the powers that be, to act problems.

r success means that now has a permanent on the Wirral at the about Centre, Birkenhead ably the best equipped outside London to help sers kick the habit.

year their ef- ave been recog- by the Duke ofinster, who has e PADA's patron. organisation's unction is to act port for parents latives who find ave a member of family using

obvious that is proving a vital n in fight t drugs s e. ver, it eapon needs unt at- n to keep it. That's

Jane e in the ny would like with a donation is important I would be d to present it to mmittee."



Jane Sheppard

HAVE FUN AND HELP A FUND

A FUND-RAISING committee of WIN members is hoping for a knockout response to its latest venture.

Member of the committee of a novel fun day on 4 September Jane Sheppard is appealing for staff around the Region to form teams of eight to join in the 'It's A Knockout' style event.

The aim is to raise money towards a total of £85,000 to buy the services of a Macmillan Nurse for Clatterbridge Hospital which serves the whole of Wirral, and most of the North West.

Each team that enters must have raised £1,000 to donate to the fund. "We already have £450," says Jane. "But we'll be glad of any support, not only from our own District, but from anyone who would care to contribute."

Anyone wishing to help, donate or seek further information, should contact Steve Holmes on 750 2388.

'Powercut' warning



'Crimewatch' characters after their award winning performance.

NORTH Wirral District's involvement with the Mica Awards (Merseyside Industry and Commerce Awards) was recently concluded with considerable success.

Various schools in the Manweb area were 'challenged' to complete a set project specified by Manweb. This year's task was entitled 'A Town Like Wattville'. Teams were challenged to prepare a presentation to their local town council promoting an energy efficient future, suggesting measures the council could introduce to increase the efficient use of electricity and indicate the results they could expect.

West Kirby school won the coveted best presentation award with their project based on the popular TV programme 'Crimewatch' in which 'Professor Powercut' was busy committing his dastardly crime of wasting energy.

GREEN ISSUES



How deserving groups benefit

VISITORS to a Bangor community centre celebrated the completion of a Manweb scheme which has helped make community buildings in North Wales and Merseyside more energy efficient and more affordable for voluntary organisations using them.

Raising their cups of tea at the Hafan Centre for Elderly and Disabled People in Garth Road, Bangor, are (l to r) Beryl Griffiths, of Deiniolen, Dr David Walker, Manweb Research and Technology Manager, Glenda Wyn-Jones, Chairperson, Trish Brady, NEA Head of Development, Mayor of Bangor Councillor Arwyn Evans and Claudia Lowrie, of Caerhun.

The project, a joint initiative between national charity Neighbourhood Energy Action and Manweb, was launched in Liverpool last year. Since then eleven buildings, such as church halls and community centres, have received energy efficiency improvements. Work carried out at the Hafan Centre included the provision of low energy lighting, time clocks for the existing heating and draught proofing.

Dr Walker said: "The promotion of energy efficiency is a key priority for Manweb and this project has helped ensure that some of the most deserving groups in the community benefit from these measures."



OSWESTRY Boys' Club can now play their soccer in much more attractive surroundings thanks to Manweb. The Company has donated approximately 150 trees for their boundary, which were planted by Oswestry Borough Park Department.

The Club which was reformed around late 1970s has now grown with the

help of local businesses and Oswestry people. They run eleven football sides which includes two girls' teams.

Oswestry Boys' Club now has 200 members.

Seen planting a tree is Carole Walker, Customer Services Manager, Oswestry District, with Mo Battams, Club President and Tony Dart (centre) General Secretary.

Good news for landlords

SAVING energy is good for landlords as well as tenants - that was Manweb's message during a recent seminar at St David's Park Hotel, Ewloe.

The event was aimed at landlords and other housing providers such as local authorities and housing associations, and demonstrated the potential returns of investing in energy efficiency.

Manweb's Event Organiser, Bob Buckingham, said: "It is generally accepted that energy efficiency measures give tenants reduced fuel bills and better home heating, but new research shows how it can also give benefits to landlords."

ACCIDENTS DOWN

But need to maintain effort and initiative



Safety Engineer Phil Hughes looks at the accident performance in Manweb plc and its associated companies for the year 1993/94.

OVERALL, there has been a steady improvement in performance with a reduction of 26 per cent in accidents resulting in lost time. A 13 per cent only reduction in reportable accidents over the same period signals a need to maintain the effort and initiatives for accident investigation and prevention currently in place.

Very significant is the 29 per cent reduction in the cost of lost time due to accidents. Last year lost time accidents cost the company almost £312,000 - this year that figure was down to just over £222,000. Each lost time accident lasted an average of 15.1 days as against 18.1 last year.

There was one fatality during the year when one of our meter reading staff tragically lost his life in a road traffic accident whilst returning to base.

After some creditable performances in the first three quarters of the year, Network Services had a disappointing fourth quarter with 48 lost time accidents of which 31 were reportable.

Overall for the year our reportable accidents fell from 99 to 86 leading to a reportable accident rate of 1.85 as against 2.19 last year.

At the start of the year a reportable accident tar-

get was set for each management unit based on an overall company figure of 1.00. How the various units performed is shown on the chart. Better than target performance was achieved by Power Marketing Regional Centres (which were accident free for the whole year); Trading Shops and Head Office. Central Field Unit and outbased Energy Marketing were on target. Worthy of special mention is Dee Valley who, despite ending up just one over target, managed to slash reportable accidents from 13 to 4 in the space of one year.

Last year 'Persons Falling' was the major cause of reportable accidents (35 per cent). This year that has been slashed to 23 per cent of the total. Our major concern, being in the electrical business, is always electrical accidents. During the first

half of the year this problem seemed to be eliminated but we ended the year with a total of nine so there is no room for complacency there. Two injuries occurred in the switchgear explosion at Llanfairfechan Substation on 29 March. It is fair to say that most of the remainder can be put down to failure to adhere to safe working practices.

Sprain and strain injuries at 50 per cent continue to be the major results of reportable accidents. There were 12 fractures during the year - an unusually high number - resulting mainly from falls and miscellaneous causes such as doors slamming in the wind, slipping on ice, falling in and out of vehicles.

Steady progress is being made in reducing acci-

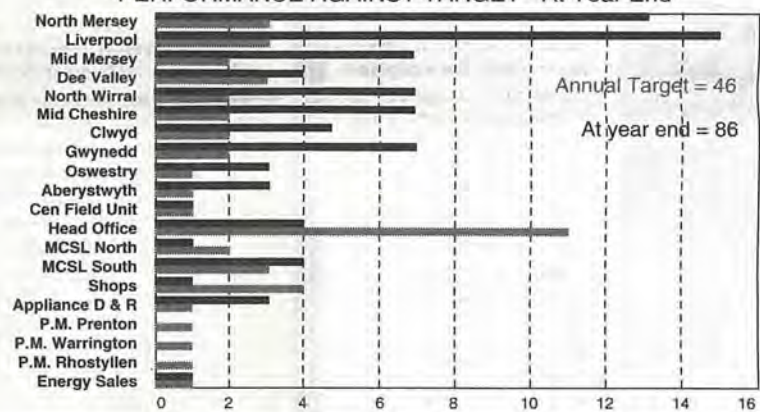
dents throughout the Company. Progress is not as fast as we would like but accident prevention is a complex science and requires continuing commitment over a long period to achieve all we want.

As noted many times before most accidents continue to relate to the personal responsibility of the individual. Causes such as lack of personal care, errors in judgment, untidy work sites and failure to comply with established rules and work procedures are still the major contributors to accidents.

We've topped the 'league' in many aspects of our customer service activities - surely we can do the same in our accident performance. It may take a while but, with everyone's commitment, I'm sure we'll get there.

REPORTABLE ACCIDENTS 1993/94

PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGET - At Year End



PLAY SAFE

'PLAY SAFE!' was the message for schoolchildren at a Manweb safety exhibition in Goddard Hall, Bootle.

The display was part of the Crucial Crew initiative, which aims to help children avoid accidents, and Manweb was on hand to warn of the dangers electricity can pose if not treated with care.

Children from St Elizabeth's Primary School, Bootle, were among the exhibition's first visitors.

Pictured above, are (l to r): Katie Fletcher, Mayoress of Sefton Mary Fanning, Stephanie Carey, Anthony Ryan, Mayor Nicholas Fanning, Pat Shaw (Manweb), Catherine Dolan and Michelle Flinn.

Safety aids charities



TWO more months of safe working at Dee Valley District has resulted in a donation being made to local charities.

After completing 30 accident-free days at work, Dee Valley staff presented a £100 cheque to Wrexham Maelor Hospital for kidney research. They then went on to achieve a further 30 'safe' days, resulting in a donation of £100 to Wrexham-based Guide Dogs for the Blind. In the picture (left)

Manweb's Director Network Services, Howard Kirkham (second left), presents a cheque to Joyce Dudley, of Guide Dogs for the Blind, watched by Safety Representative Peter Newbrook (left) and Safety Co-ordinator Arthur Hughes.

Above: Diabetic Nurse Heather Jones (second left) and Dr John Harvey (right) are pictured receiving a cheque on behalf of Wrexham Maelor Hospital from (l to r) Dee Valley Safety Representative Nigel Evans, Customer Service Manager Bob Douglas, Health and Safety Committee Secretary Liz Rogers and Safety Co-ordinator Arthur Hughes.



Centre needs your support

THE Nightingale Appeal, a registered charity, operating in many Manweb areas is appealing to employees for support.

The Nightingale Appeal, established by the Wrexham Hospice and Cancer Support Centre Foundation, is working to provide a combined Hospice and Cancer Support Centre under one roof, taking the philosophy of caring for, treating and supporting cancer patients and their relatives to a new level.

With an estimated one in three families affected at some time and in some way by cancer, the need for enhanced care and treatment for patients and their families becomes ever more pressing.

This project amplifies the work already carried out at Nightingale House, based within the Wrexham Maelor Hospital, where since 1986 patients and their families have been coming for care, treatment, counselling, support and relaxation.

The new Centre, which will be purpose-built, will be based in Wrexham, close to the public transport network for ease of access, and will serve nearly a quarter of a million people within its catchment area of Wrexham Maelor, Alyn and Deeside, South Delyn, South Glyndwr, the border villages of Cheshire and Shropshire, a large area of North Powys and parts of Meirionnydd stretching down to Bala, Dolgellau and Barmouth.

Building work on the project began on 9 May on the 1.5 acre site, on Chester Road, Wrexham (opposite The Groves High School).

The Hospice Centre, Wrexham, will offer: 16-19 beds (some designated as family accommodation); Daycare facility; Outpatient treatment centre; Education and resource facility; Information and advice; Counselling; Range of complementary therapies and Spiritual support.

Julie Hinchcliffe of the Appeal office says: "We are most grateful to Manweb for allowing us this space to tell about our project and if anyone would like more information on The Nightingale Appeal and how you can help, please call me at the Appeal Office on Wrexham (0978) 310333."



UP, UP & AWAY

MANWEB turned to air power when the company needed a lift with a scheme to modernise its radio station at Cemmaes Road, near Machynlleth.

A helicopter was used to transport building materials to the site high on a hill, over a mile away from the nearest road.

Manweb's Civil Project

Engineer, Clive Manchester, said: "We are currently modernising our radio communications, to help us provide a more efficient service for our customers."

"At Cemmaes Road we decided to use a helicopter to transport materials because access to the site would otherwise have been difficult. Moving fluid concrete to the top of the hill by lorry would have seriously affected its quality, and a helicopter was the obvious solution."

The helicopter, an AS 350B Squirrel, was hired from PLM Helicopters in Glasgow.

NETWORK SERVICES DIVISION CHANGES MADE

THE organisation of the Engineering Department in Network Services Division has changed (from 1 July).

GENERATION CONNECTION

Brian Mather and Malcolm Whalley have decided to take early retirement and will leave the Company on 31 August 1994.

Brian started work in the industry in 1960 after leaving AEI (GEC) to join the former CEGB. He was appointed to Manweb in 1979 in a post now known as Central Field Unit Manager. In 1984 he commenced a spell as Engineering Manager, North Wirral District and he was appointed to his current post as Generation Connection Manager in 1992.

Malcolm joined Manweb as an Assistant Consumers' Engineer, Northwich, in 1960. After holding a number of appointments in District he was appointed as Senior Engineer (Industrial Sales) at Head Office in 1975, becoming Supply Manager in Power Marketing Division before

transfer to Network Services in 1993.

Brian and Malcolm have a wealth of complimentary experience which has served the Company well over the years, most latterly in providing excellent customer service to the growing number of generators wishing to connect to our network." Said Chief Engineer John Turner: "I am sure that their many friends and colleagues will join me in expressing thanks for their help and support together with best wishes for the future."

NETWORK PLANNING AND OPERATION

Alan Laird, Planning and Operation Manager, will assume responsibility for the generation connection activities in addition to his current responsibilities. Peter Thomas and Peter Roper will join him from Brian's unit with effect from 1 July, 1994. In the period to 31 August, Brian and Malcolm will help Alan to ensure a smooth transfer while completing their personal obligations to the business.

STRATEGY MERGER

ANDREW WRIGHT, Corporate Business Development Manager, has left Manweb to become an equity analyst with stockbrokers Smith New Court in London.

Following his departure it has been decided that Corporate New Business Development will join the Corporate Strategy Department.

The department will be called Corporate Strategy and New Business Development.

Its merged responsibilities will continue to be the development of the Company's

strategy, and, within the overall strategy, identifying and developing value added new business opportunities.

It will also help implementation by our business divisions.

Andrew Wright will not be replaced. The existing Corporate New Business Development Team, Mike Rowley and Roy Haley, who is on secondment from MCSL, will continue with their existing responsibilities and will report directly to Tony Smith.



THANKS FOR YOUR HELP

Dear Editor,

My wife, Diana, and I would like to say thank you to everyone who has helped raise funds for me to provide the special equipment which will help make my life easier following my accident. Words just seem inadequate to express how grateful we are. We really do appreciate how much effort has gone into all the events you have organised on my behalf, and we do realise it cannot have been very easy. Thank you so much for caring.

Life is at last starting to get easier, because al-

though no further movement will return, I am starting to adapt to using the movement I still have.

So far, I have purchased a lighter (and brighter coloured) wheelchair, moved to a bungalow which enables me to move round anywhere I wish unaided, and had a suitable shower installed so that I can now have a decent wash!

Next on the agenda is setting up a weights system which will help build upper arm and shoulder strength. After that, hopefully, we will start to look for an adapted motor home so that we can travel a bit and perhaps have a holiday visiting some of the mountain retreats we have frequented for a great part of our lives.

Thanks to you all; you have made our ambitions so much easier to achieve.

Peter Owen,
Retired North Wirral.

Discount for readers

Dear Editor,

Harris Imports uses the Harris Tiles trade name. The company is privately owned by the Harris family, who have been involved in importing and distributing tiles since 1953.

Our premises are situated at Rossmore Industrial Estate, Ellesmere Port and Boaler Street, Liverpool.

We import from countries in Europe, ie Holland, Spain, Italy, Czech Republic, Turkey and Portugal.

Our products cover wall and floor tiles of various sizes, including mosaics. We stock domestic products as well as commercial tiles for industry. We also have in stock a full range of ancillary products for tiling. Our delivery is free of charge within a 20-mile radius of our depots.

Our company is very pleased to offer our employees, past and present, 15 per cent off our retail prices on an ongoing basis.

Directions to our Showrooms:-

Ellesmere Port - M53 Junction 8, 100yds past Lookers Garage turn left. We are 80yds on the left. Tel. 051 355 3094.

Boaler Street, Liverpool - The Derby Arms pub (near the Grafton), turn into Farnworth Street. Next left is Boaler Street. We are 200yds on the left. Tel. 051 261 1640.

Yours sincerely,
Harris Imports.

Editor's Note: Anyone wishing to take up this offer should produce some form of Manweb identification - an ID card, payslip or pension advice slip will do.

Prize for pictures

Dear Editor,

In late September 1993 Merseyside Improved Houses won £1,000 in the Manweb Business Energy Awards. The Association has decided to use this prize money to sponsor a photographic competition amongst its own tenants. The competition 'People and their Housing' is intended to stimulate people's interest in the places where they live and further details are included on the enclosed leaflet.

I thought that you and members of your staff may be interested to know how the prize money was being used.

Hugh Evans,
Deputy Chief Executive.



SPECIAL OFFER!

CAMELOT THEME PARK AND PARK HALL HOTEL

The Park Hall Hotel at Charnock Richard, near Chorley, is offering fantastic value for money with leisure breaks throughout the year, where children under 14 can go FREE if they share their parents room, with only their meals to pay for!

For just £39.95 per person per night, dinner, bed and full English breakfast, (based on two adults staying a minimum of two nights in a twin, double or family room) you can stay at the three star Park Hall Hotel, which is set amongst 137 acres of landscaped countryside beside a beautiful lake.

This remarkable special offer price also includes:-

- FREE admission to the adjacent Camelot Theme Park for all the family which represents a possible saving of up to £39.96 for a family of four!
- FREE use of the hotel's gymnasium.
- FREE use of the heated indoor lagoon pool and whirlpool spa bath.
- Family rooms.

Other facilities at the hotel include squash courts, a sauna, solarium, steam rooms and a nightclub, which offers reduced admission for all residents.

This offer is available throughout the year, subject to opening days of the theme park.

To book, or for further details, please contact Teri Harrison at Park Hall - Reservations, 0257 452090, quoting Manweb Contact.

Abergele lead in first leg

IT was an exciting and keenly-fought contest when Abergele met Bangor in the Manweb Contracting Services inter-depot match at Llandudno Junction, reports Brian Thomas, who was also the match referee.

Bangor were on top in the first half and should have been three up by half time with better finishing by their forwards.

But Abergele, who turned around 1-0 up, took control in the second half and were 3-1 up after 66 minutes. Bangor scored from the penalty spot on 83 minutes. Bob Dolan and Arthur Salusbury proved to be first class linesmen.

An after match buffet was held at the County Vale, Glan Conwy, where Ian Kersley of Abergele was voted man of the match. The second leg is to be played at Bangor and we all look forward to this game.

Scorers: Bangor: Bryn Williams (penalty); Darrel Griffiths. Abergele: Dave 'Fozzy' Foster (2), Dave IPM Evans.

Society's swinging

The Manweb Golf Society's season is now well underway with three events having been played. The society expressed its gratitude to Bob McMahon (Head of Income) for sponsoring the Rhuddlan event; the Geoffrey Barnes Trophy.

An interesting day was had by all, especially when a bull got loose on the course! Never a dull moment with the golf society. Next meetings are Denbigh (25 July) and Wrexham (5 August).

Warrington Results (25 May). AM (Greensome Stableford): 1st Austin Heathwood and Frank Parkinson with 19.9 pts. 2nd Emyr Rowlands and John Mayers with 15.4 pts. 3rd Frank Adamson and Alan James with 15.2 pts.

PM (Individual Medal): 1st Howell Watson, 84-11=7. 2nd, Les Butterworth, 82-8=7. 3rd John Mayers, 90-16=7.

Murphys sponsored the event. Frank Dal attended the evening meal and performed the prize giving.

Rhuddlan (10 June): AM - Greensome Medal; 1st Rob MacKenzie (Legacy Depot) and Trevor Edwards (Retired) with 40-6.4=33.6. 2nd Howell Watson (Head Office) and Ian Stockdale (Head Office) with 41-5.9=35.1.

PM - Geoffrey Barnes Trophy; 1st Steve MacKenzie (Oswestry), 39 pts. 2nd Dennis Atkinson (Retired), 37 pts. 3rd Ian Stockdale (Head Office), 32 pts. The card draw for a bottle of whisky was won by the captain.



SHERIFF'S MEN GUN OILERS

MANWEB (Chester) Sports & Social Club annual 5-a-side competition this year took place at Christleton Sports Centre.

Nineteen teams from various areas of the Company fought out a fiercely competitive competition.

The eventual winners were Sheriff's Badgers who beat The Crane Street Oilers in the final on penalty kicks. In the initial stages of the competition the teams were divided into four leagues with the top two teams from each league moving through to a knockout competition.

Although the competition was generally a success the event co-ordinator Simon Melville and organiser Ken Sudlow anticipate that more extensive facilities will be required in the future to accommodate the increasing number of teams.

Pictured (left to right) front, are the players of the triumphant Sheriff's Badgers squad namely Matthew Harman, John McMahon, Paul Cormack, John Hughes, Jason Neil and Darren Gilmore, together with the runners-up, The Crane Street Oilers.

District helps French visitors

OSWESTRY District was host to a group of French visitors when they were given a demonstration of Manweb's new Geographic Information System (GIS).

The party of visitors included representatives of Electricité de France and the French company that markets the same computer system in France.

During their visit to Manweb the party saw the recently established Data Capture Unit in Wrexham and then went on to a meeting with Director Network Services, Howard Kirkham, before arriving at Oswestry District.

Drawing Office Manager Peter Corfield was assisted by Steve McKenna, a Planning Assistant from Oswestry District and between them they gave a comprehensive demonstration of the way GIS is used within Manweb.

Information

All Manweb staff have recently been told about the advantages the geographical information system will offer, providing improved levels of customer service, as this has been one of the recent topics covered in Customer Service Briefings.

The demonstration of the systems in action in Oswestry District led on to a very useful open forum discussion about the advantages offered to Manweb which will assist our French colleagues in their decision about the system they should adopt.



Peter Corfield, seated left, and District Manager Don McRae, centre back, with the French visitors.



EAT FOR ENERGY

CHESHIRE County Council's Catering Division and Manweb have organised an Eat for Energy promotion at all Cheshire primary schools.

The campaign was designed to increase children's awareness of the importance of a lunch time meal and to emphasise energy giving foods.

For every meal taken during the week, each pupil was awarded a sticker to be attached to cards which were entered into prize draws.

The winner of a main prize was Jimmy Kay aged seven, of Whitby, a pupil of Woodlands County Infants School, Ellesmere Port, who is pictured receiving his prize from Cllr Peter Walker, Chairman of the County Council (left) and Mr David Tinsley, Head of Domestic Sales and Marketing at Manweb.

ON SONG FOR BRYAN

WHY would a choir from North Wales venture into the heartland of Welsh choirs in Cwm Tawe, Swansea and what is the relevance of this to Manweb?

Read on and all should be revealed.

Dr Bryan Powell came from South Wales to Caernarfon, via Dublin, to take up a post as an Assistant Director of Education. He became a prominent and popular member of 'Cor Meibion y Traeth' on Anglesey for several years but eventually moved back to South Wales as Head of the Open University for Wales.

Unfortunately for Bryan he was struck with the debilitating Motor Neurone Disease which has no known cure. Bryan died just before Christmas in 1992.

This news ignited a feeling amongst choir members that they were honour bound to commemorate Bryan's death. This is where Manweb came in.

It was decided to hold a memorial concert for Bryan, but, in order that the occasion be remembered by both congregation and those participating, the concert was held at Alltwen, Cwm Tawe near Swansea where Bryan was born and bred. Ian Basford, then Gwynedd District Manager, willingly agreed to sponsor the choir.

Not surprisingly, the welcome that Cor y Traeth received from the local congregation at Alltwen and Cor Rhos Cwm Tawe was overwhelming. The concert was a resounding success with quite a few tears and plenty of smiles. Bryan's wife was in attendance and witness to a worthy tribute to her husband.

Well in excess of £600 was raised towards the Motor Neurone Disease Fund. The choir conveyed their heartfelt gratitude to Manweb and in particular to Ian Basford for giving support to this worthwhile cause.



Two members of Cor y Traeth are Manweb employees Richard Wynne Williams, Meter Reader, right, and Arthur Wyn Rowlands, Supply Engineer-Ynys Mon, who is also the Secretary of the choir.

Will you say yes

SEVERAL Manweb staff have put their names forward to take part in Challenge '94, a nationwide event in which employees carry out voluntary work in the local community... and have fun at the same time. The aim of Challenge '94 is to establish long-term partnerships between community groups and businesses, and the organisers hope to involve as many Manweb staff as possible throughout the Region.

Organised by the Volunteer Centre UK, Challenge '94 will run from 9 to 25 September 1994.

Here's how it works:

1. A community or voluntary organisation comes up with a challenge.
2. Via the Challenge '94 office they offer the challenge to companies in their area.
3. Employees of one or more companies volunteer their time and resources to meet the challenge.
4. Employees complete the challenge, have a good time in the process and achieve something worthwhile in their community.
5. A partnership is created between local businesses and the community.

Employees have the chance to do something completely different from the normal day-to-day routine, something that really matters to them outside work. They can either work with colleagues or join forces with people from other departments or companies. Friends and family can also be invited to help out. The projects undertaken may be hard work, but they are guaranteed to be fun and to produce something worthwhile for the community - an achievement to be proud of.

For further details contact Jackie Unsworth in Public Relations, tel. 700 2090, Office ID: UNSWOJM.



Gill, (second from left) with other 'Mum's the Word' contestants and Chef Kevin Woodford, who judged the cooking skills.

MUM GETS THE RIGHT WORD

'MUM'S the Word' is the name of a popular TV programme - but the words mum Gill Thompson used on the show proved even more popular - they won her the top prize.

Having won through the heats in which 36 other mums competed and which included cooking skills and participation from members of her family, Gill, a Sales Assistant at Southport Superstore, won a weekend in the Trough of Bowland. But all this paled into insignificance when she realised she had won the star prize - a two-week holiday for all the family in Palm Beach, Florida.

Up against two other mums in the final, Gill was supported by her daughters Heather, 9, and Lisa, 8, who watched as mum pitted her wits against her fellow finalists. Gill was trailing in second place in the final round which had reached the buzzer questions. But she answered these correctly to take her into the solo round and a chance to win the big prize.

Here she had not only to answer questions against the clock, but one of her correct answers had to reveal a hidden key to the top prize.

She had answered all her questions correctly when the 'key' question came up - which device regulates temperature on a central heating system?

Gill answered; "a thermostat. . . Sorry a thermostat," she corrected herself, and immediately leapt into the air with excitement as presenter Andrew O'Connor told her she'd won the holiday.

"If I had got that answer wrong, I would really have taken some stick from my Manweb colleagues," said a delighted Gill, who now can't wait to share her super holiday prize with the family.

CENTRE SETS THE CHALLENGE

FIVE Manweb managers are in a race against time to build a play resource centre in Kirkby, Liverpool.

They have nine months to complete the task set by Granada Community Challenge.

Manweb is one of five leading north west companies, each with a 'Challenge Anneka' type project. The aim is to create a facility

which will have lasting benefit for the local community.

The five managers - Mike Jones, Alison Eakins, Len Cornah, George Range and Bob Steventon - will get the project off the ground so that, once completed, the play resource centre can be run by the local community.

Granada TV will film their progress, culminating in a documentary later this year.

Mike Jones, North Mersey District Manager and Team Leader, said: "The task facing us is enormous. We have a tremendous number of obstacles to overcome before we even think about laying the first brick."

The four other companies involved are Norweb, BNFL, British Aerospace and Greenalls, with projects in Manchester, Warrington and Chester.

Progress report next month.



Manweb's Community Challenge team (l-r) George Range, Len Cornah, Mike Jones, Alison Eakins and Bob Steventon.

Customer FOCUS

Whose job is it?

THIS is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realised that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done!

LUCKY FOR SOME

THE winner of the EEIBA's April draw was M. Davies, of Liverpool, who picked up a £300 prize with the lucky number 2466. The £200 prize went to retired employee J. C. Welsby with the number 2026. The other prizewinners were:

£150 - R. M. Gravett, retired (1436); £100 - K. Shone, Head Office (2377); £75 - W. G. Jones, retired (1610); £50 - J. S. Burgess, retired (104), H. O. Evans, Head Office (328) and R. Holland, retired (1205); £30 - A. A. Hawley, retired (2035) and M. E. Taylor, retired (465); £25 - M. H. Cooper, retired (1116), E. Parry, retired (1803), D. J. Hayes, Liverpool (893), S. Martin-Paton, retired (2192), B. Roberts, Gwynedd (1756), T. C. Jones, retired (280), G. Smith, retired (2731), K. Williamson, Head Office (168), G. Roberts, retired (2102) and R. Wiseman, North Mersey (173).

YOUNGSTERS RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

MANWEB sponsorship has provided young people with a challenge to help the development of a local town.

It comes in the form of the First Class Challenge Awards which aims to recognise the contribution of young people to the development of St Helens and identify young ambassadors in four categories. The categories are: Community - sponsored by United Glass; Culture - sponsored by English Estates; Enterprise - sponsored by Pilkington and Environment-sponsored by Manweb.

The Manweb-sponsored awards were for projects in three age groups - five-11, 11-16 and 16-21.

In the first category youngsters from Penkford School worked with local rangers, police and other groups to clear the pond in Sankey Valley. This included dredging, rubbish removal and conservation of wild life. The rangers were so impressed that they allowed the school to adopt the pond.

In the next age group Grange Park Youth Club

tackled a graffiti-strewn boathouse at Taylor Park making it an impressive and attractive feature. In their own time, they designed and painted a mural on the boathouse, turning it from an eyesore into a colourful, cheerful building.

The 16-21 group was represented by Rainhill High Sixth Form conservation group. Working with local rangers, students created a field study area to benefit local schools who can now see wild flowers close at hand and study the activity in a new frog pond.

Professor Graham Ashworth, Chairman of St Helens First said: "We have been aware for some time that young people in the area are involved in all kinds of exciting and innovative projects, many of them with a real value to the community."

"The First Class Challenge Awards were designed to recognise their skills and talents."

TV personality David Bellamy presented each winning group with a £500 prize at a special awards ceremony at St Helens Town Hall.



Mid Mersey District Customer Service Manager Mike Townson joins David Bellamy in presenting a Manweb-sponsored environmental award to members of Grange Park Youth Club.