



**MANAGEMENT
CHANGES
—SQUEEZE
AT THE
TOP**

THE number of MANWEB chief officers will be reduced from five to four, when Board Secretary John Scudamore retires in October.

The present Management Services Controller, Colin Leonard, will take over as Secretary, and the functions of the Management Services and Secretarial Departments will be merged under his leadership. These will consist of computer services; general administration; legal, estates and way-leaves; and management services. It is not expected that there will be any changes in the organisation of those sections. The post of Management Services Controller will go.

One other result of this top-level reorganisation, is that Head Office



Board Secretary designate Colin Leonard.

personnel section, at present Secretarial, will form a smaller separate department, under the control of Personnel Manager Jim McLennan, who will report directly to the Deputy Chairman of the Board.

Next month, Group Managers Jim Barraclough and Glyn Dodd will take on between them the responsibilities of the Board's third Group Manager, Norman Maden, who retires in May. Mr. Barraclough will have responsibility for local staff and customer relations affairs in North Mersey, Liverpool, Mid-Mersey, North Wirral and Mid-Cheshire Districts, while Mr. Dodd will deal with Dee Valley, Clwyd, Gwynedd, Oswestry and Aberystwyth.

Following Oswestry and Aberystwyth, another MANWEB District—Gwynedd—will have single-headed management, when District Engineering Manager Russell Shaw retires at the end of April, and a Gwynedd District Manager will be appointed.

MP at Queensferry

—New look stores

EAST FLINTS M.P. Barry Jones, and retired trade union officer Tom Jones (a former member of the MANWEB Board) recently paid a visit to our Central Appliance Stores at Queensferry to see the effect of improvements which will help provide better working conditions for our staff and more efficient appliance delivery service to our customers.

At an increasing pace the Financial department is improving and modernising a varied collection of buildings (which once housed a wartime ammunition factory) to the standards demanded by the appliance delivery nerve-centre of an Area Electricity Board.

The latest stage has been the re-furbishment of a 900-square-metre annexe to the main bulk appliance store, to create a well-lit and well-heated working area where containers can be marshalled and loaded before they are transported to Districts with their cargoes of appliances for delivery to customers.

Prior to the face-lifting and improvement process, carried out by civil engineer Harry Foreman and his staff, the old annexe was being seriously considered as a candidate for demolition.

A decaying corrugated iron roof has been ripped off and replaced with a new, well-insulated cover. Ancient rusting doors were removed, and crumbling sections of brickwork replaced and modified.

The re-furbishing process has provided the old building with an entire new lease of life. It includes a new lowered ceiling incorporating a high level of lighting, and a circulating warm air heating system from the two biggest storage heaters in the MANWEB area. A new doors-and-access system enables our staff to off-load the containers from the lorries, roll them into the building on rails, and load them in comfort and safety with appliances brought out through newly-constructed doors from the adjacent main store.

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NEW VEHICLES

THE February Board meeting authorised the expenditure of £1.3 million on new MANWEB fleet vehicles to replace those which are coming to the end of their useful lives. A total of more than 200 vehicles—mainly light and medium, but including a few lorries, trailers and items of mobile plant—will be replaced during the next financial year.

Total Board fleet amounts to more than 1,700 vehicles.



The Member for East Flint at Queensferry, from left to right, Messrs Tom Jones, former Board member, Peter Falcon, Assistant Chief Accountant, Geoff Jones, T.G.W.U. shop steward, Bob McMahon, Senior Executive Officer, Barry Jones MP, Steve Manning, principal assistant and Colin Jones, LJCC representative.

George and his Liverpool team are only happy holdin' Trophy!

IN ONLY their second competitive event the Liverpool District First Aid team has won the Regional Final of the Electricity Supply Ambulance Centre of the St. John Ambulance Association's annual competition.

Another fab four from Liverpool, and they even have a George and a Paul, with their trophy. Left to right our picture shows Nurse Dorothy Davis, Head Office, with Rob Hilton, George Deakin, Paul Wharmby and Alec Eden.



They beat the team that has regularly won the trophy over the past few years, the highly experienced Capenhurst team from the Electricity Council, into second place by six clear points. The depleted MANWEB Head Office team were third.

The Liverpool lads came top in the total for the individual tests on their four members and were first in the team test. Captain George Deakin told CONTACT "We took a chance and tried out a different method for the team test and it paid off. It meant I had to leave most of the work to the lads. I knew I could rely on them and they did just great."

The team test was to attend to two drink and drugs overdose victims and their hysterical daughter. Usually the team captain takes the most difficult case and delegates colleagues to other victims. George, a craftsman jointing, decided to let his three colleagues, Rob Hilton, Alec Eden and Paul Wharmby, all craftsmen electricians, attend to the casualties. He then stood by and watched their performance lending a hand and advising what to do and so helped guide the team through the test.

It was a remarkable achievement by a team which had only been training together for twelve months. A Liverpool team did compete for the first time, two years ago, but it was not the same members, although George Deakin was the captain.

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Youth training scheme proposals

THE electricity supply industry's Joint Co-ordinating Committee (England and Wales) have supported electricity industry involvement in the Youth Training Scheme, proposed by the Manpower Services Commission, and due to be launched in September.

Guidelines adopted by the Committee are being circulated for consideration throughout the industry by the joint secretaries. The guidelines estimate that between 1,000 and 1,200 young people could be taken on by the industry under the YTS Programme.

It is suggested that the main condition of ESI participation in previous employment and training initiatives—"no additional costs to fall on the customer"—should apply to YTS involvement. Grant provisions supporting YTS training amount to £1,850 per trainee per year, from which must be deducted the trainee's allowance of £25 a week. If, however, a participating employer can recruit two

trainees of his own for every three training under the YTS Programme, then grants are paid for all five. The central guidelines suggest that if ESI participation is managed at national level, the industry's own anticipated recruitment of about 750 young people would justify providing 1,000-1,200 YTS places.

The guidelines suggest that our industry could provide train-

ing of three main types—craft and design; administrative and office services; and operative work in other fields.

It is made clear that YTS young people will be regarded as Manpower Services Commission trainees and not as electricity industry employees, but the guidelines express the hope that our unions and staff would be sympathetic to the possibility of offering the young trainees jobs or further training whenever possible.

MANWEB's possible place in the proposed nationwide scheme will be under active consideration by the MANWEB Joint Co-ordinating Council in the near future.



Left to right, David Swindells, David Fisher, Arthur Elson and Robert Cook, from Mid-Cheshire, all having completed 20 years service, and all of whom started on the same training course at Hoylake in 1962.

Long Service

CONGRATULATIONS to the members of the Board staff who have completed, 40, 30 or 20 years' service in the Electricity Supply Industry during the month of February.

40 YEARS—Mid-Mersey District: **J. Glyn Norbury** (Commercial Manager).

30 YEARS—Liverpool District: **Brenda Millington** (typist). Dee Valley District: **B. Wyn Hughes** (drawing office assistant), **Arthur Morris** (craftsman, overhead lines) and **Stanley H. Robinson** (craft attendant). North Wirral (Transmission District): **J. Ernest Chambers** (craftsman, electrical fitting). Gwynedd District: **Ernest Jones** (craftsman, electrician).

20 YEARS—Liverpool District: **John C. Lee** (general duties assistant), **John P. O'Meara** (engineering foreman) and **John J. McKenna** (chargehand painter). Mid-Cheshire District: **Wilfred Walker** (craft attendant). Clwyd District: **John B. Jones** (craftsman, mechanical fitting). Head Office: **Terence G. Fleetwood** (senior engineer—Plant and Construction) and **David G. Laverick** (1st engineer—System Management).

Last month we credited Mr. Donald Ross, a senior salesman at Birkenhead, with 30 years' service. The credit should have gone to David Ross, a driver in the North Wirral District.

MANWEB TO DRIVE—ELECTRIC

THREE electric vans should be operating in the MANWEB Merseyside Districts in 1984. Improvements in electric batteries have led to several manufacturers going into production of electric vehicles. A BL subsidiary, Freight Rover Sherpa Electric Trucks, will be launching their models shortly, and three of the first off the assembly line have been reserved for MANWEB.

Board Transport Officer Jack Hill told CONTACT: "We have examined vehicles from several manufacturers, and the Sherpa vans seem best suited to our requirements in MANWEB. They will be producing a van with a similar capacity to the 15-cwt. we operate at present. The Sherpa's range is greater than the average daily mileage of our commercial fleet, which is the function for which they will be used. We have reserved three for delivery in early 1984."

The Sherpa's range is between 45 and 55 miles for each overnight charge. With no diesel or petrol, the running costs on electricity should show a considerable saving over the conventional vehicles. Fuel is not the only consideration for saving time and money in their operation.

With the engine replaced by a battery-operated electric motor and with no conventional gearbox, topping-up oil and replacing oil and air filters will not be required. Plugs and points, injection systems, ignition, coolant and anti-freeze are just some of the things these vans do without.

Driving is simple. Select forward or reverse, and the accelerator pedal controls the speed. The ride is smoother and much quieter than conventional vans, and there are no problems starting up from cold in the mornings.

Considerable experience will be gained from the operation of these three vans. In the end, it will probably be the battery life and replacement costs which will determine whether a more widespread use of this type of vehicle can be made in the MANWEB transport fleet.

The Sizewell Inquiry

Spotlight on Safety

As the Sizewell 'B' Public Inquiry moved on through the second month of the hearing, the bulk of the evidence given by experts from the CEBG and other bodies has been concerned with the key question of safety.

Witnesses from the CEBG's Berkeley Nuclear Laboratories and Central Research Laboratories, the National Nuclear Corporation, the French manufacturer likely to supply the pressure vessel (Framatome), and the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, have been among those anxious to give re-assurance.

The safety aspects covered have ranged from the design and integrity of the pressure vessel to the possible consequences of malfunctions of various kinds, and the comprehensive precautions designed to cope with such highly unlikely events.

The Inquiry is expected to last up to nine months.

Mild weather slows sales

MOST people, remembering the Arctic conditions we endured last winter, may think that this winter is exceptionally mild.

The Commercial Department report to the February Board meeting reveals that, although the mean December temperature of 4.1 degrees Centigrade was indeed a lot warmer than the previous year's figure (1.9 degrees!), it was in fact only an average sort of December. The 30-year average for the same period was 4.3 degrees.

The upshot of the milder weather, however, has meant quite a marked fall in electricity use by our domestic customers, and total purchases by the Board for the month were more than three per cent down on the previous December.

Sales to industry during the month were four per cent up, but this was due almost entirely to a big extra demand from the chemicals industry. Demand from many important industrial sectors was markedly down, presenting a gloomy overall picture for the month.

Total industrial sales for the nine months April to December, however, are still up on the comparable figure for 1981.

System improvement in Wallasey

THE long haul to modernise the out-dated underground cable system which serves thousands of homes in Wallasey (Wirral) made further progress at the February meeting of the MANWEB Board, when authority was given to deal with another 800 premises.

The old system, installed during the 1920s, contains single-phase distribution mains and small-capacity service cables. Of a total of 24,000 properties, 9,000 have been brought up-to-date so far.

The latest batch involves spending £59,000 on 1,100 metres of new mains, and £80,000 on the property services.

Other work on the distribution system approved includes provision of supply to 46 new industrial units at Meadow Lane, Ellesmere Port and to a total of nearly 400 new homes at Birkenhead, Hartford, Northwich and GJan Conwy.

MIRAS—THE NEW WAY TO PAY YOUR MORTGAGE

NO!—not a visitor from Outer Space. Just the initialised jargon for the new way in which mortgage-payers will get income tax relief on the interest they pay to building societies from 1st April.

"Mortgage Interest Relief At Source" is what MIRAS stands for—a new arrangement where the tax relief will be allowed by the building society in the form of reduced payments, rather than by being reflected in the borrower's income tax coding as a result of relief on the interest.

Broadly speaking, this will mean reduced mortgage payments—and more income tax paid. It will also save a lot of work for the Inland Revenue.

The main advantage for the borrower is that changes in the amount of tax relief due will be put into effect immediately, without the need to wait for a change in the tax code. But there are some complications. The

new system will only apply to basic tax relief, and those paying at higher rates will continue to receive relief above the basic through PAYE coding. Some building societies will not be applying the new system to loans over £25,000, as tax relief is limited to the first £25,000 of the loan.

MIRAS will mainly affect people who are buying their homes on a straightforward repayment mortgage. Other categories of mortgage will be affected in varying degrees—but all mortgage-payers will be receiving advice from their building societies, explaining exactly how they are affected by the new arrangements.



NORTH MERSEY DISTRICT SEMINAR

Advice for HV Users

"ELECTRICITY is an essential service throughout our society today. It is a safe and reliable form of energy—it is also economic in use," commented Ken Appleton, North Mersey District Commercial Manager, when chairing the special seminar held recently at Bridle Road, Bootle, for a group of selected customers who take supply at high voltage.

Making good use of the excellent facilities offered by the District's Sports and Social Club, the meeting attracted over 60 guests. Four speakers, all experts in their particular field,

presented a packed and interesting programme.

The first to address the audience was Roy Osborne (System Engineer), who is responsible for the safe operation of the Board's network within the District's boundaries. He spoke of the procedures adopted and legislation adhered to regarding the safe use of our systems.

Then Brian Nield—a Senior Technical Engineer based at Head Office and acknowledged as an expert on power system measurement and analysis—explained some of the problems brought about through the rapid rate of technological progress.

Cost Savings

The third speaker was Ron Woodage, a Consultant Director with Findlay, Durham and Brodie Limited. He was informative in his talk on the application of residual current devices, manufactured by his company, to various systems of supply experienced in industry and the methods of tripping employed.

Finally came Frank Holland, Area Manager for Jel Energy Conservation Systems Limited, a company specialising in design and manufacture of energy control equipment. He described the applications of equipment



Commercial Manager Ken Appleton watches as senior engineer Brian Nield, right, discusses voltage harmonics with Frank Holland.

available and dealt with the cost-saving aspect of conservation measures.

Delegates to the seminar were given the opportunity to pose questions to the speakers and take the opportunity to examine some of the equipment displayed around the room.

It was agreed that the safety aspects of electricity supplies are of paramount importance to all responsible engineers both from statute and practical positions. The procedures adopted by industry for the safe use of electrical equipment and systems need to be constantly reviewed in the light of changing regulations, advances in technology and its associated system problems.

This morning seminar was a departure from the usual type of meeting held regularly in the District. For some time now, our Commercial and Engineering colleagues at North Mersey—sometimes helped by Head Office—have participated in the monthly evening seminars held for top engineers and management from local industrial and large commercial concerns.

Usually, a specialist member of the Board's staff is teamed with a guest from an outside organisation as speakers on a particular topic. These meetings have proved very successful and the recent "one-off" change of format for the morning seminar helped to bring a wider range of customers together.

At the North Mersey Specialist Seminar, from left to right: Frank Holland, Brian Nield and Ron Woodage, Roy Osborne, John Walker (Load Development Engineer) and Ken Appleton.



Cooking up business in Clwyd

Catering for Caterers

MANWEB'S participation in three important catering exhibitions—all in the Clwyd District—started with the "Welsh Catering Trades Exhibition" held in Llandudno last month.

A change of venue from previous years saw the show housed in the new Aberconwy conference centre on the promenade. The Board's exhibit was sited in one of the rooms just off the main entrance. Members of our sales staff were able to talk to prospective customers in comparative peace and quiet, away from the clamour of other exhibitors.

Very neat and self-explanatory displays lined the walls of

the room. On opening day, the Mayor and Mayoress of Aberconwy, Councillor and Mrs. Harold Rhys Hughes, visited our exhibit and spent some time asking questions about various appliances on display.

Visitors over the four days of the exhibition showed a great interest in the heat-pump display, and a number of calls were booked for follow-up by our staff.

The Board was also represented at the Greenall Whitley "Taste of Wales" exhibition, held at the Westminster Hotel in Rhyl, towards the end of the month.

The final show was at the "North Wales Catering and Licensed Trades Fair", staged at Pontins Camp, Prestatyn, from 3rd to 6th March. Here, as well as the main stand featuring commercial catering equipment, we also had an exhibit promoting our Installation and Service sections.



"It must be nice having an outdoor job, eh?"

"Harry—Can we give a hamster a decent burial?"

Christine Monks at work with visitors to one of the exhibitions.

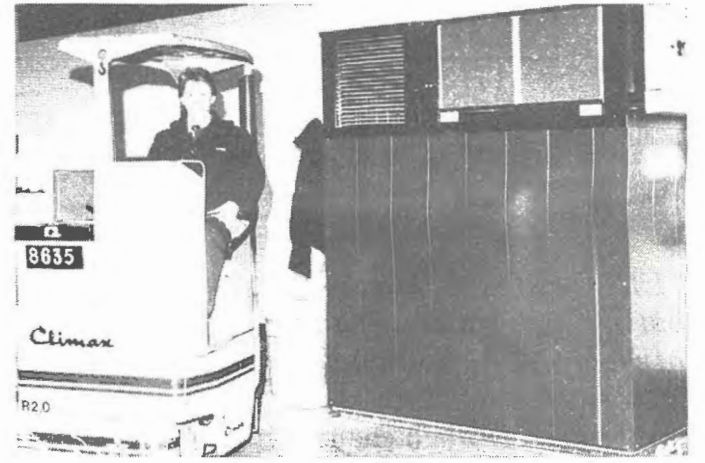


Arthur Thompson hard at it too, selling to caterers at the exhibition.



The Mayor and Mayoress of Aberconwy, Councillor Harold and Mrs. Alys Rhys Hughes, chat with our sales staff on duty at the Llandudno exhibition, Christine Monks and Arthur Thompson.





Left, the new light and heating provides excellent working conditions for our staff at Queensferry in the Central Appliance Store, which has been completely refurbished. The size of the heater can be compared with the fork lift truck, above.

Following the visit to Queensferry by M.P. Barry Jones, he wrote to Assistant Chief Accountant, Peter Falcon, to thank him for his time and added in his own hand on 'House of Commons' letter heading was the comment "Thank you, I enjoyed meeting a team".

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MP at Queensferry



This has resulted in a big increase in efficiency in our container-loading operations, and the elimination of wasteful double-handling. Previously the appliances, after being delivered to the main store by the manufacturers, had to be transported, as required, to another store 100 yards away before they could be loaded into the containers and sent on their way.

As part of the re-furbishment operation the two offices in the annexe have been spruced up to house supervisory staff and an IBM computer intelligence terminal. The information provided by the computer allocates stores location points when appliances arrive from manufacturers, and also tells the storekeeper where the appliances can be found for loading and despatch.

Other recent developments at Queensferry include the installation by the Commercial Department of a mini-computer to control van stocks of spares, and the transfer of the commercial workshop to the old Test House building.

In turn the appliance spares store

has been transferred into the old workshop building, and the storekeepers now label and put most individual spares into plastic bags for issue to service electricians. This gives a better service to the customer and proves the efficiency of material control.

This unit also deals with the Board's 'mail order' service, and special orders for customers are gradually being centralised there.

During the next few months the 'musical stores' process will be carried a stage further, when the engineering stores will move into the building formerly used for loading appliances into containers. This will provide more space and a much more efficient layout for engineering materials, making it possible to keep most engineering commodities indoors.

The whole re-organisation, which should be completed by the end of June, has received enthusiastic support from our staff at Queensferry and close liaison between the Board's financial commercial, computer services and civil engineering staffs.

HEAT N' LIGHT

The lighting and heating arrangements in the loading annexe are the work of our colleagues in Dee Valley District contracting section.

The two Chidlow industrial Electricaire heaters provide a total of 120 kilowatts of load, working entirely during the low-rate night period. This is the first time that MANWEB staff have installed these heaters, and industrialists with similar types of premises can be invited to Queensferry to see how they work.

The heaters discharge their stored warmth through grills at the top. In order to spread the heat round the building and stop it hanging around near the five-metre-high ceiling, four big fans are used, thus saving on heating costs and creating air circulation without draughts.



The Member for East Flint meets some of his constituents at Queensferry Stores. Top left with Tom Owen and Arthur Hollins. Centre lady storekeeper Joyce Cummings meets former Board member Tom Jones watched by the MP. A handshake for John Hulmston, watched by Colin Jones, Geoff Jones, Mike Greenslade and Roy Cookson. Bottom Right with the Commercial staff from the left Peter Frost, Diane Lomas, Amanda Hunt, Maureen Yudor, Pat Kavanagh and Jill Davies.



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LIVERPOOL'S FIRST AID VICTORY

In a separate contest on the same day a team of ladies from Mid-Cheshire District won the first prize in a novices competition, in their first ever competitive event. Two of the team, captain Angela Johnson and fellow engineering clerk, Susan Broadhurst have only been doing first aid for 12 months. The experience in the team is from draughtswoman

Helen Heycocks who has been a first aider for 10 years.

The trio were trembling with nerves after the contest and left before the presentation of prizes—"It seemed a good idea at the time" said one of the ladies. Nursing Sister Dorothy Davies from Head Office accepted the trophy on their behalf.

The victorious Liverpool foursome were given a shield to hold for twelve months and personal prize of an electric carving knife each. They also earned a place in the national final and travel to London in May to compete.



Above, an action shot of the Liverpool team during their team test. Below left, three smart girls from Mid-Cheshire, from the left, Helen Haycocks, Angela Johnson (capt) and Susan Broadhurst. The Head Office team are pictured below right, with Mrs. Mina Bell, wife of NORWEB Chairman who presented the prizes. To the left of her on the picture are John Shallcross and Sybil Cooper, with Liz Jones and Aaron Heywood to the right. Aaron is a member of the Electricity Council Research Centre on loan for the contest.

DOTTY DIRECTIONS

WE wish to scotch a rumour that George Deakin, captain of the winning Liverpool first-aiders, has been taking map-reading lessons from Mark Thatcher. The fact that he and a fellow team member ended up in Skelmersdale instead of Stockport, where the competition was to be held, was due to the directions he was given.

It was a well-travelled member of the Head Office staff who gave George the directions. Stroking her pet haggis, she told CONTACT: "Och! I told him to tak' Exit 11 on the motorway!"

The trouble was that she did not tell him which motorway. She meant the M63, and George was on the M6. To spare her blushes, we refuse to name the lady, who is a member of the one-woman nursing staff at Chester.

IT'S A BOY—AT LAST!

CONGRATULATIONS to craftsman electrician Rob Hilton—the Liverpool first-aidier—and his wife, Denise, on the birth of a bonny 8 lb. 10 oz. son, Robert.

During the first-aid competition, Rob was worried about the impending arrival, as the baby was five days late, and he kept ringing to see if Denise was alright.

George Deakin tells us that Rob had to use the telephone during the team test to call a fictitious hospital, and nearly asked them how Denise was. Robert arrived three days later, and he and his mum are doing fine—and dad is over the moon.



Tax-free bonus for meter men

THE Meter Test Section at Lister Drive is beginning to monopolise the Suggestion Scheme. Over the past couple of years, eight suggestions have netted nearly £1,000 between them, all of it tax-free.

The star man of the section is Evan Nelson, who has a bank account that is better off to the tune of nearly £650, thanks to his suggestions, with the prospect of a lot more to come when other Boards assess them. It is possible for him to more than double the cash already received when reports are returned to The Electricity Council.

The signs are looking good for one of Evan's ideas—a modified spacer washer for the coin cups of prepayment meters. David Crangle, senior engineer in the Meter Test section, told CONTACT: "I have had one or two 'phone calls from other

Boards, asking where they can get Evan's washers. It is a very simple idea and, if adopted, will save the industry thousands of pounds."

Evan has already had £295 for that suggestion alone. An idea that he and colleague Andy Palin have entered jointly has already brought £105 between them, and the partnership have another suggestion in the pipeline awaiting an assessor's report.

Another member of the section, Harry Kirkwood, picked up a tax-free £170 for one of his ideas, and is hoping for more when the suggestion is to be considered at national level.



Assistant Chief Accountant Stan Roberts, above left, presents cheques to meter men, left to right, Evan Nelson, Andy Palin and Harry Kirkwood. Below, Engineering Manager Graham Zeiher, right, congratulates David Swindells and hands him his cheque.

... and Mid-Cheshire get in on the act

ELECTRICAL fitter craftsman David Swindells, from the Mid-Cheshire District, was recently presented with a Suggestion Scheme cheque for £65 by Engineering Manager Graham Zeiher, at a meeting of the LJCC. The amount was made up from two awards of £15 and £50.

Like all good ideas, David's was very simple. It was a modification to the operating handle on the oil switch of a ring main unit in sub-stations, resulting in a greater degree of safety in

operation.

David was delighted with the award, and now hopes that other Area Boards may adopt his suggestion and possibly bring him further cash awards.



"That little washer has earned me £295 tax free," says Meter Test's Evan Nelson

Personality Parade

Clive Garner



Cinema historian Clive Garner, seated in his own "Pleasure Palace" built on to his home at Wallasey Village. Some of his 30,000 records are stacked on either side, usually discreetly hidden behind the grey velour drapes.

P L E A S U R E

P A L A C E S

Manweb Man of the Movies

FEATURED among the credits for a recent Channel Four TV series "Pleasure Palaces" was the name Clive Garner who is a senior assistant in the Board's North Wirral District Commercial Department.

The interesting three-part documentary dealt with the history of the cinema from the Mack Sennett silents to the million-dollar musicals of the 40s.

For the one-hour programmes, Clive loaned the producers some of his trade literature together with a film trailer

In the vestibule leading to the cinema, a programme-board tells you what's on and at what time. Above: a frame of old prints of some of the former local picture palaces.



featuring Gordon Harker in the thriller, "The Return of The Frog." He also provided a special film of the once-famous cinema and theatre organist, Reginald Foort, with his 'Sing-a-long'.

Clive is well-known to the historians in the cinema and television industries and has loaned material and co-operated on a number of specialised programmes.

His passionate interest in the cinema was aroused when, as a child, he would pop-off to the Winter Gardens in New Brighton and persuade some kindly old lady to 'accompany him' into the cinema. When he was a little older—and could get in without an adult—he travelled to the Abbey in Liverpool and the Regal and Ritz in Birkenhead.

"It was a real thrill to visit the cinema in the 30s and 40s," commented Clive. "Sitting in a huge auditorium listening to the hits of the day on recorded music, then watching slide advertisements followed by interesting, and sometimes amusing one-or-two reel shorts. Then comes the exciting trailer for the following week's presentation and finally—the big picture! The atmosphere in those magnificent palaces was pure magic!"

In the 1950s, Clive was appalled at seeing history being destroyed with cinemas torn down or stripped of their ornate decor to become bingo halls or stores.

During this period, Clive was able to add more memorabilia—playbills, photographs of the stars and of cinemas, films, books, etc.—to his unique collection.

He decided to revive the magic of the cinema by having his own 'Pleasure Palace' built on to his semi-detached home in Wallasey Village.

From the lounge, you enter a vestibule decked out with framed pictures of the stars appearing in the current film and a display board listing the times and titles of the programme 'Now showing.' There is also a gallery of sepia-tinted photographs

depicting the majesty of former local cinemas in their heyday.

The cinema itself—the size of a normal garage—has a sloping floor and twelve, very comfortable, grey-plush, tip-up seats matching perfectly with the grey velour curtains draped along the side walls and the thick grey carpets on the floor.

The cosy opulent atmosphere of the pre-war cinema is faithfully re-created with an auto-cycle, three-colour lighting system which is dimmed as the 'tabs' part to reveal festooned curtains rising gently to special stage lighting.

In the projection box, minute though it is, he has a mass of equipment for slide and film projection, for record and tape reproduction and for his special lighting effects.

The cinema is kept comfortably warm by a three kilowatt electric storage heater. The intricate lighting load amounts to six kilowatts which, together with other equipment brings the total electrical load for this mini-pleasure palace to ten kilowatts.

FORTHCOMING PROGRAMMES

- 6th March—
"MUSIC FOR MADAME" (1937 musical)
With Nino Martini, Joan Fontaine
and Alan Mowbray.
- 20th March—
"FLYING DEUCES" (1939 comedy)
Starring Laurel and Hardy.
- 3rd April—
"STRANGE JUSTICE" (1932 drama)
With Reginald Denny and Marian Marsh.
- 17th April—
"FIDDLERS THREE" (1944 comedy)
Starring Tommy Trinder and Frances Day.
Plus—"OUR COUNTRY"
- 1st May—
"SMASHING THE RACKETS"
(1938 crime drama)
With Chester Morris and Bruce Cabot
Plus "DANGER ON THE AIR"
- All performances commence at 7.00 p.m.

If you would like to see one of his shows, then please contact Clive on 051-638 4711. There is no admission charge.

Clive puts on a full programme twice a month, usually on Sundays. It normally includes an organ interlude, some advertisements of yesteryear, several 'shorts' and a forthcoming feature trailer. Every programme shows a nostalgic newsreel made at the time when the main feature film was released. As you sit in the darkness in one of those so comfortable seats, you are magically transported back almost half-a-century in time.

"I was inspired in the design of my own cinema by my memories of the Regal in Birkenhead where I spent so many happy hours," Clive told us.

In addition to his tremendous interest in the world of vintage cinema, Clive is also a collector of music dating from the 1930 to 1940 period.

His early visits to the movies helped turn him to the music of the day which was always played before the start of every performance. Over the years he has amassed a collection of well over 30,000 records—all 78s. This in itself is possibly worthy of an entry in "The Guinness Book of Records"!

This individually-owned record library is carefully indexed and stored in racks hidden behind the grey velour curtains in his personal pleasure palace.

Some right, some wrong!

IN the year when MANWEB celebrates the 100th anniversary of the coming of a public electricity supply to Liverpool, the predictions of the editor of *The Electrician*, printed way back in 1885, make fascinating reading.

Looking into his crystal ball, he commented:—

"It is not long since a terrible outcry was made about the exhaustion of our coal. People wondered, and wonder to this day, what on earth we are going to do when that familiar and exceedingly dirty mineral sings its death song and resolves its last substance into air. The answer is easily found—we shall burn something else! What? Oh, anything. Petroleum; electricity, hydrogen and oxygen from water. There is plenty of water in the ocean, and we are equally unrestricted as to air. For purposes of locomotion, compressed air is getting itself into notice. The loss of coal need not disturb us; when the time comes, we shall be surprised at our own folly, not only for grieving at the thought of its decease, but for ever having used it.

"Many strange discoveries, however, will probably greet humanity ages before the collier betakes himself to a more cleanly occupation. It will not be many years, we imagine, before we have a complete and efficient domestic electrical system, lighting and warming our houses, driving the sewing machine, and all other homely appliances; connecting us up with the butcher, the baker, though, for obvious reasons, not with the candlestick maker; making the coffee and toast in the morning, rocking the cradle at night, and, in fine, doing a thousand and one things that will not only render the demon domestic a creature of the past, but confer upon us a period of rest that will be a foretaste for some and a consolation for all. At intervals along the streets of our great cities we shall have "call boxes", by means of which conversation, by telephone, may be carried on with any desired person without trouble or formality; the postman will no longer collect and deliver the letters, a network of pneumatic tubes providing for that. All you then need do will be to drop the epistle into your domestic letter-box and manipulate a knob. When a letter arrives, a bell will ring, and the impact of the missive will immediately cause it to be placed in full view upon the hall table.

"These are only one or two of the things which will happen. Outbreaks of fire will be

This interesting glimpse into the past was dug out of the archives somewhere at Lister Drive, by Alan Wadcock, Liverpool District's Administration Manager.

rendered impossible or harmless. Robbery and violence will be minimised by a thorough employment of the electric light and an excellent system of electrical police calls, placed anywhere and everywhere within reach. A policeman guaranteed on the spot within five seconds. Impossible! Well, perhaps, this is the one thing we are doubtful about. Balloons, electrically navigated, will run regularly between this country and other parts of the world, at reasonable charges; but intending defaulters will notice that in consequence of the recently improved method of telegraphic communication between us and these aerial *voyageurs* there is no additional safety from the clutches of the future cosmopolitan detectives offered by this mode of flight.

"This last reflection is saddening. Everything mundane has its drawbacks. Perhaps a general increase of honesty will negative this one. We say perhaps, because recent experience seems to indicate that there is just as much right down solid fraud connected with the electrical as with any other industry—and a little more. Dreams, idle dreams. However pleasant a contemplation of the possible future may be found, the stern records of failure which, with the brief chronicles of success, have to be written down on the pages of the world's history."

Over 100 safe drivers in Oswestry

OVER 100 members of Oswestry District staff have earned safe driving awards. Two were awarded badges for 27 years' accident-free driving—Harry Huxley, based at Whitchurch, and Cyril Wilkinson, from Oswestry. Dennis Neaves (Oswestry), Arthur Boyling (Whitchurch) and Walter Jones (Newtown) have all completed 26 years free from accidents, with another Newtown man, Cecil Lewis, having 23 under his seat-belt. Our congratulations—plus the grateful thanks of the motor insurance companies—for the safe driving records of the following members of Oswestry District:—

Silver Badge—27 Years: Messrs. H. J. Huxley and C. H. O. Wilkinson. **26 Years:** Messrs. R. A. Boyling, W. H. Jones and D. M. Neaves. **23 Years:** Mr. C. C. Lewis. **17 Years:** Messrs. W. H. Blackwell, C. W. Parry and L. Purcell. **16 Years:** Mr. H. E. Large. **15 Years:** Messrs. I. Jones and N. C. Mason.

Bronze Badge—14 Years: Messrs. J. H. Leach and E. Field. **13 Years:** Mr. G. M. Joseph. **12 Years:** Messrs. T. H. Ellis, W. Ellis, J. R. K. Morris, L. Lovell and C. H. Taylor. **11 Years:** Mr. J. R. F. T. Owen. **10 Years:** Mr. R. T. Hughes. **9 Years:** Messrs. L. J. Brookfield, W. S. Holloway, W. Wainwright and H. J. Williams. **8 Years:** Messrs. H. M. Cartwright, R. A. Conde, T. B. Edge, B. E. Johnson, D. L. Jones, F. D. Jones, H. E. Morris, T. A. Owen, J. J. Pritchard and R. A. Revill. **7 Years:** Messrs. D. Ashton, W. T. Astley, E. Barrow, R. Entwistle, H. Higgins and G. Roberts. **6 Years:** Messrs. J. Austin, G. Jones, G. E. Roberts and K. Tomlinson. **5 Years:** Messrs. J. N. Butler, D. W. Ellis, E. M. Gittens, J. G. Green, T. G.

Hawkins, A. Jones and W. O. Jones.

Diplomas—4 Years: Messrs. J. E. Evans, W. E. George, D. W. Morgan, B. E. Morris, R. E. Morris and C. H. Pritchard. **3 Years:** A. J. Bainbridge, R. J. Bainbridge, J. I. Bosyj, R. Clubbe, P. E. Davies, I. J. Edwards, J. D. Furber, J. M. Holloway, J. E. Humphreys, D. Jones, D. T. Jones, G. W. Jones, M. J. Lawrence, G. E. Lewis, L. P. Manhire, D. H. Meredith, P. D. Morris, C. I. Powell, N. W. Pugh, D. R. Ruscoe and B. Speakes.

2 Years: Messrs. G. W. Bellis, J. E. Breeze, E. Davies, J. I. Davies, S. R. Davies, W. A. Davies, R. W. Dyke, K. J. Evans, A. R. Foskett, J. R. Griffiths, D. B. Hopkins, P. D. C. Hopton, D. R. Hughes, G. D. Jones, R. G. Jones, C. A. Lewis, M. G. Marshall, B. Morris, T. O. Moxon, A. C. Parsons, M. G. Pierce, D. Seliaerts, H. S. Simpson, C. C. Thomas and M. J. Watson.

1 Year: Messrs. B. J. Davies, E. G. J. Edwards, R. E. Watkin and D. E. Williams.

Exemption Certificates were awarded to Messrs. J. A. Matthews and H. A. Morris.



Congratulating safe drivers at Oswestry, above, and Whitchurch, centre, is Police Superintendent Mike Lane. Below, Inspector R. G. Thorogood makes the Welshpool and Newtown presentations.



BROOKS LAUGH LINE

"... and yesterday you left your bedroom light on!"

"He said I didn't know my place—so I told him I'd just dug his!"

"Reading the meter twice a day for 3 months—you must know what's wrong by now?"

LIGHTING AND LOW VISION

THERE are a quarter-of-a-million people in this country who suffer from substantially-limited vision, and many more who have some difficulty in reading. The Electricity Council, in co-operation with the Partially Sighted Society, has just published a booklet 'Lighting and Low Vision' to help these people.

Many people of limited vision lead a normal life with the help of conventional optical aids, such as spectacles. However, there is a large group of people who cannot be helped adequately in this way, but who would benefit from high-powered optical aids, clear print, strong colour contrasts and, most of all, efficient lighting.

Most of the people in this group are elderly, and may have additional problems such as arthritis. This makes it particularly important that they are helped to make the maximum use of sight to work and to move about in more dangerous areas, like kitchens and on staircases. Many aids to vision have been investigated and developed, but the particular benefits that efficient lighting give need to be widely appreciated by field workers in the Health and Social Services, and by people them-

selves who have limited vision. One reason for this is the misconception about 'sight-saving', which discourages them from making full use of the vision they have. Within the same broad limits that apply to normal sight, using impaired vision can do no harm whatsoever.

Bob Greenhalgh, Honorary Chairman of the Partially Sighted Society, has welcomed the publication. "There has long been a need for an easily available

source of information about the benefits of good lighting and the problems of poor sight", he said. "This leaflet fulfils both needs very adequately. It is well designed and well thought out. Most important of all, it is printed in a way which is readable by most people with poor sight.

"It is surprising how good lighting, and an understanding of how to design one's home,

can help someone with poor sight to live a much more independent and safe life. One major source of light—daylight—is free, and we should use it as much as possible. Electric light is still very cheap and should be used as much as is necessary to provide good light, either as an alternative or as a supplement to daylight. Neither daylight nor electric light can do any harm at all to the eyes of people with normal sight, or to those with poor sight."

"Lighting and Low Vision", (A4, 20 pages) is available free of charge from Electricity Boards, or direct from the Electricity Council, 30 Millbank, London SW1P 4RD.

French Connection

A "Swop-the-children" arrangement between families of people working for the British and French electricity industries resulted in the "pairing" of 23 families on each side of the Channel during 1982. Man in charge of the arrangements at our end is Kurt Strauss, the Electricity Council's assistant overseas relations adviser, and he is hoping to see a further expansion of the scheme during 1983.

One problem which arose this year was caused by the differing school holiday arrangements in

the two countries, but those involved found ways and means of overcoming this difficulty. Although most visits were arranged during the summer months, some took place at Easter while other return visits were at Christmas.

MANWEB employees who are interested in the possibility of return-hospitality arrangements involving their children and those of colleagues working for Electricité de France should contact Kurt at the Electricity Council, 30 Millbank, London SW1P4RD (01-8342333).

THE SPORTING CHANCES

by MITCH

Youth training scheme proposals

THE electricity supply industry's Joint Co-ordinating Committee (England and Wales) have supported electricity industry involvement in the Youth Training Scheme, proposed by the Manpower Services Commission, and due to be launched in September.

Guidelines adopted by the Committee are being circulated for consideration throughout the industry by the joint secretaries. The guidelines estimate that between 1,000 and 1,200 young people could be taken on by the industry under the YTS Programme.

It is suggested that the main condition of ESI participation in previous employment and training initiatives—"no additional costs to fall on the customer"—should apply to YTS involvement. Grant provisions supporting YTS training amount to £1,850 per trainee per year, from which must be deducted the trainee's allowance of £25 a week. If, however, a participating employer can recruit two

trainees of his own for every three training under the YTS Programme, then grants are paid for all five. The central guidelines suggest that if ESI participation is managed at national level, the industry's own anticipated recruitment of about 750 young people would justify providing 1,000—1,200 YTS places.

The guidelines suggest that our industry could provide train-

ing of three main types—craft and design; administrative and office services; and operative work in other fields.

It is made clear that YTS young people will be regarded as Manpower Services Commission trainees and not as electricity industry employees, but the guidelines express the hope that our unions and staff would be sympathetic to the possibility of offering the young trainees jobs or further training whenever possible.

MANWEB's possible place in the proposed nationwide scheme will be under active consideration by the MANWEB Joint Co-ordinating Council in the near future.



Left to right, David Swindells, David Fisher, Arthur Elson and Robert Cook, from Mid-Cheshire, all having completed 20 years service, and all of whom started on the same training course at Hoylake in 1962.

Long Service

CONGRATULATIONS to the members of the Board staff who have completed, 40, 30 or 20 years' service in the Electricity Supply Industry during the month of February.

40 YEARS—Mid-Mersey District: **J. Glyn Norbury** (Commercial Manager).

30 YEARS—Liverpool District: **Brenda Millington** (typist). Dee Valley District: **B. Wyn Hughes** (drawing office assistant), **Arthur Morris** (craftsman, overhead lines) and **Stanley H. Robinson** (craft attendant). North Wirral (Transmission District): **J. Ernest Chambers** (craftsman, electrical fitting). Gwynedd District: **Ernest Jones** (craftsman, electrician).

20 YEARS—Liverpool District: **John C. Lee** (general duties assistant), **John P. O'Meara** (engineering foreman) and **John J. McKenna** (chargehand painter). Mid-Cheshire District: **Wilfred Walker** (craft attendant). Clwyd District: **John B. Jones** (craftsman, mechanical fitting). Head Office: **Terence G. Fleetwood** (senior engineer—Plant and Construction) and **David G. Laverick** (1st engineer—System Management).

Last month we credited Mr. Donald Ross, a senior salesman at Birkenhead, with 30 years' service. The credit should have gone to David Ross, a driver in the North Wirral District.

MANWEB TO DRIVE—ELECTRIC

THREE electric vans should be operating in the MANWEB Merseyside Districts in 1984. Improvements in electric batteries have led to several manufacturers going into production of electric vehicles. A BL subsidiary, Freight Rover Sherpa Electric Trucks, will be launching their models shortly, and three of the first off the assembly line have been reserved for MANWEB.

Board Transport Officer Jack Hill told CONTACT: "We have examined vehicles from several manufacturers, and the Sherpa vans seem best suited to our requirements in MANWEB. They will be producing a van with a similar capacity to the 15-cwt. we operate at present. The Sherpa's range is greater than the average daily mileage of our commercial fleet, which is the function for which they will be used. We have reserved three for delivery in early 1984."

The Sherpa's range is between 45 and 55 miles for each overnight charge. With no diesel or petrol, the running costs on electricity should show a considerable saving over the conventional vehicles. Fuel is not the only consideration for saving time and money in their operation.

With the engine replaced by a battery-operated electric motor and with no conventional gearbox, topping-up oil and replacing oil and air filters will not be required. Plugs and points, injection systems, ignition, coolant and anti-freeze are just some of the things these vans do without.

Driving is simple. Select forward or reverse, and the accelerator pedal controls the speed. The ride is smoother and much quieter than conventional vans, and there are no problems starting up from cold in the mornings.

Considerable experience will be gained from the operation of these three vans. In the end, it will probably be the battery life and replacement costs which will determine whether a more widespread use of this type of vehicle can be made in the MANWEB transport fleet.

System improvement in Wallasey

THE long haul to modernise the out-dated underground cable system which serves thousands of homes in Wallasey (Wirral) made further progress at the February meeting of the MANWEB Board, when authority was given to deal with another 800 premises.

The old system, installed during the 1920s, contains single-phase distribution mains and small-capacity service cables. Of a total of 24,000 properties, 9,000 have been brought up-to-date so far.

The latest batch involves spending £59,000 on 1,100 metres of new mains, and £80,000 on the property services.

Other work on the distribution system approved includes provision of supply to 46 new industrial units at Meadow Lane, Ellesmere Port and to a total of nearly 400 new homes at Birkenhead, Hartford, Northwich and Glan Conwy.

MIRAS—THE NEW WAY TO PAY YOUR MORTGAGE

NO!—not a visitor from Outer Space. Just the initialised jargon for the new way in which mortgage-payers will get income tax relief on the interest they pay to building societies from 1st April.

"Mortgage Interest Relief At Source" is what MIRAS stands for—a new arrangement where the tax relief will be allowed by the building society in the form of reduced payments, rather than by being reflected in the borrower's income tax coding as a result of relief on the interest

Broadly speaking, this will mean reduced mortgage payments—and more income tax paid. It will also save a lot of work for the Inland Revenue.

The main advantage for the borrower is that changes in the amount of tax relief due will be put into effect immediately, without the need to wait for a change in the tax code. But there are some complications. The

new system will only apply to basic tax relief, and those paying at higher rates will continue to receive relief above the basic through PAYE coding. Some building societies will not be applying the new system to loans over £25,000, as tax relief is limited to the first £25,000 of the loan.

MIRAS will mainly affect people who are buying their homes on a straightforward repayment mortgage. Other categories of mortgage will be affected in varying degrees—but all mortgage-payers will be receiving advice from their building societies, explaining exactly how they are affected by the new arrangements.

ON THE BALL THE SAFETY KNOW-ALL



The Sizewell Inquiry

Spotlight on Safety

As the Sizewell 'B' Public Inquiry moved on through the second month of the hearing, the bulk of the evidence given by experts from the CEBG and other bodies has been concerned with the key question of safety.

Witnesses from the CEBG's Berkeley Nuclear Laboratories and Central Research Laboratories, the National Nuclear Corporation, the French manufacturer likely to supply the pressure vessel (Framatome), and the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, have been among those anxious to give re-assurance.

The safety aspects covered have ranged from the design and integrity of the pressure vessel to the possible consequences of malfunctions of various kinds, and the comprehensive precautions designed to cope with such highly unlikely events.

The Inquiry is expected to last up to nine months.

Mild weather slows sales

MOST people, remembering the Arctic conditions we endured last winter, may think that this winter is exceptionally mild.

The Commercial Department report to the February Board meeting reveals that, although the mean December temperature of 4.1 degrees Centigrade was indeed a lot warmer than the previous year's figure (1.9 degrees!), it was in fact only an average sort of December. The 30-year average for the same period was 4.3 degrees.

The upshot of the milder weather, however, has meant quite a marked fall in electricity use by our domestic customers, and total purchases by the Board for the month were more than three per cent down on the previous December.

Sales to industry during the month were four per cent up, but this was due almost entirely to a big extra demand from the chemicals industry. Demand from many important industrial sectors was markedly down, presenting a gloomy overall picture for the month.

Total industrial sales for the nine months April to December, however, are still up on the comparable figure for 1981.