

# CONTACT

The monthly newspaper for Manweb people around the Region

March 1994

## NOW DOWN TO

Scheme will benefit  
Manweb as well  
as its customers

## BUSINESS

By Jon Tracey

**MANWEB is launching a major energy efficiency initiative in Crewe. While the nationally acclaimed Holyhead Power Save project targeted domestic customers, the Crewe scheme is aimed at local business customers who use over 100 kilowatts of electricity at peak times. These include well-known industrial customers, as well as large shops, offices, and schools.**

Manweb Energy Consultants Ltd will be advising businesses on a wide range of energy efficiency measures and assisting with their implementation. The programme will seek to reduce maximum peak demand in Crewe by a total of two megawatts — enough electricity to power 2,000 homes.

"The reduction in energy usage will be achieved in a step-by-step programme," said Manweb Energy Consultants' General Manager Keith Nord. "We will be approaching businesses at first to put in advance metering which will log their electricity consumption on a half hourly basis. This will then be followed by an energy audit where we will identify potential areas where they can make savings.

"We will then hold discussions with them about how they would like to go about achieving those savings and hopefully be able to put those measures into place in the late summer."

Manweb will be investing over £600,000 in the scheme. Like Holyhead, the Crewe project has also attracted interest and funding from the European Community, with a grant under their SAVE (Specific Action for Vigorous Energy Efficiency) initiative. In the last few years Crewe's industry has been moving from one side of the town to the other. Manweb is promoting energy efficiency as an environmentally-friendly alternative to reinforcing the power network supplying these new industrial areas. Energy efficiency will therefore benefit Manweb as well as its customers.

Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council will be one of the customers eligible for the Power Save scheme. Chief Executive Alan Wenham said: "It's an opportunity to get some free advice, and if Manweb comes up with a series of measures that will save us money we could possibly get some help towards putting in new equipment to help achieve those savings."

The study will also be gathering valuable information on how Manweb's larger business customers actually use the electricity supplied to them, which, according to Account Manager Neil Forber, will help build up understanding of the market. "There are benefits to Manweb, working very closely with our customers, looking at how they use their energy, and reducing their energy needs," he said.



Keith Nord, Manweb Energy Consultants' General Manager.

SEVERAL regional electricity companies were criticised in a recent BBC Watchdog programme for using unqualified salesmen to carry out free visual inspections for installation work.

The programme also alleged that some RECs were using 'cowboy sub-contractors' for repair work.

None of these criticisms apply to Manweb. All electrical inspections and repair work is carried out through our subsidiary company, Manweb Contracting Services Limited (MCSL), and is fully guaranteed on both materials used and quality of workmanship.

Around 70 per cent of electricians working for MCSL are direct employees, and the remainder are also fully qualified electricians who have been vetted and approved.

Electricians working for MCSL are either:

### NO COWBOYS — ONLY QUALITY

Manweb-trained craftsmen whose records are known personally by the Company's supervisors.

Temporary staff provided through specialist electrical engineering agencies and who have been individually interviewed by MCSL's supervisors.

Sub-contractors who are Trade Electric, National Inspection Council for Electrical

Installation Contracting (NICE-IC), or Electrical Contractors Association (ECA) members, and who are subject to independent appraisal.

MCSL's Managing Director Allan Littler said: "The Watchdog programme quite rightly raised concern about the practice of using salesmen, employed by a separate and specialist company, posing as electrical experts to undertake electrical inspections.

"This practice has not been used by Manweb, nor will it be in the future, since our aim is to provide our customers with a high quality service and good value for money.

"Indeed, we aim to achieve Quality Assurance Accreditation to BS 5750 within the next year for all electrical contracting activities and have already attained this standard for security systems."

## SO SAD SUKI COMES HOME

NOREEN PORTER reflects ruefully on what remains of her once healthy, virile koosh ball.

This is how Suki, as the koosh was named, was returned to Noreen a Principal Assistant in Customer Accounts, Region 3, after a saga of kidnapping, ransom notes and mystery messages from across the sea, where she had been held captive by piratical abductors. The story unfolds ... page 3.



## STRUCTURE REVIEW IN RETAIL BUSINESS

**FOLLOWING** a period of secondment, Terry Keenan is confirmed as Retail Manager within the Trading Division.

He will have overall responsibility for the Customer Service and Appliance Retailing operations within Manweb shops and will report directly to Trading Director P. D. Hopkins on these matters.

As a consequence of this new position the senior management structure has been reviewed within the retail business with the following implications, which took effect from 1 February.

- Andy Critchley became Marketing Manager.
- Simon Melville as Financial Manager takes on additional responsibility as well as remaining Divisional Accountant.
- Harry Jones takes on the wider role as Retail Services Manager and will have overall responsibility for the Trading Division operations at Queensferry. All three will report directly to Terry Keenan.
- Stan Hawtin wishes to retire at the end of the year and until then he will act in a consultancy capacity and take on special projects reporting directly to Terry Keenan.
- Bill Gaywood has left the Company to pursue a career outside Manweb.



At the inaugural professorial lecture (l to r): Charles Myers, Trustee of Liverpool John Moores University, also Chairman of the local Electricity Consumers' Committee; Manweb Chairman Bryan Weston and Professor Roger Morgan.

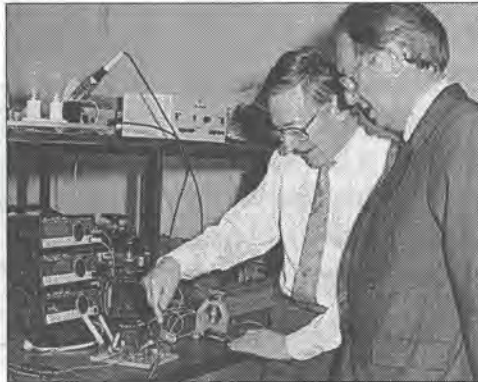
# WHEN GREEN MEANS GOLD

LINKS between a university and industry have been further strengthened by students who are co-operating in two research projects for Manweb.

As a Charter Patron of Liverpool John Moores University Trust, which was formed to develop and strengthen links between the University and the local business community, the Company is keen to assist in the pursuit of these aims.

Manweb Development Engineer Roger Glover, who is co-ordinating this work with Professor Roger Morgan, Director of School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering said: "The co-operation between the University and Manweb will be of benefit, not only to these two bodies, but ultimately to Manweb domestic customers."

Manweb Chairman Bryan Weston, Director of Power Marketing Colin Leanord and Roger Glover were present when Professor Morgan gave the inaugural professorial lecture at the University in which his subject was "The future of electricity supply in Britain". The wide-ranging lecture emphasised 'green engineering' in relation to electricity generation, distribution and utilisation. He looked at some of the possible alternative sources of electricity and some of the possible technolo-



Roger Glover (right) and Professor Roger Morgan inspect one of the research projects.

gies involved which were likely to be acceptable to what he called, the 'green lobby'. He advanced the concept of 'green engineering' as a way forward. He said that by technical skills and ingenuity, ways could be found of being kind to the natural environment, while at the same time, meeting the real needs of real people. "Green engineering provides a rainbow at the end of which there is a pot of gold for all of us and for the natural environment as well."



## PETER MERITS A WIN

PETER JONES' MERITS have proved to be worth £200. Peter of Retail Operations found a way with words and came up with a winner in Retail Marketing's competition to name a new computer system. The system, a partnership between Manweb and Softright, will be introduced into the stores during August this year and will process cash

receiving, appliance sales and customer services. With only that scant information available, Peter came up with the winning entry by suggesting MERITS.

Manweb Energy and Retail Integrated Total System

His prize was £200 worth of Marks & Spencer shopping vouchers, which he is seen here receiving from Shop Services Manager John Brown (left).

Customer FOCUS

## Top prize tele.

CUSTOMER Gwynfor Williams tuned in to a top prize when he took part in a draw run by Manweb in special editions of Chronicle newspapers.

His grand prize was a Toshiba Pro Logic 25-inch colour TV with



Nicom stereo, worth £900.

Mr Williams, of Hoole, Chester, is pictured (left) receiving his prize from Manweb's Marketing Manager Andy Critchley, and Ann Wait, Assistant Manageress at Chester Superstore.

## TAKING STOCK

By Geoff Standing

### Eastern Electricity buys back some of its shares

EASTERN Electricity became the first regional electricity company to buy back some of its shares. It spent about £7.7m buying back 1.2 million (0.4 per cent) of its shares.

The company actually has shareholder approval to buy-back five per cent of its shares. The only other REC with this authority at present is Swalec.

Eastern Electricity described the move as good use of its financial resources, with the prospective EPS (Earnings Per Share) being enhanced because the future reduction in 'Earnings', through loss of interest receivable (because of the cash spent) is assumed to be more than offset by the reduction in 'Shares'.

An enhanced EPS means enhanced shareholder value, and this was reflected in an improved price.

The company was also indicating to its shareholders that it thought the shares represented good value.

### Seaboard announces a 1 for 1 scrip issue

SEABOARD announced a 1 for 1 scrip (bonus) issue. This gave every shareholder one additional share for every one share held and therefore doubled the number of shares in issue, which resulted in the share price halving.

In fact, the share price did not fall by as much as a half, which left SEABOARD with the highest (adjusted) share price out of the RECs. The theory behind their move was therefore immediately proved, that being, that a lower share price and improved marketability (greater number of available shares) attracts more buyers.

JANUARY saw further improvement in the share price with a new high of 808 pence being reached on the last day of the month.

The upward and downward trends followed the market generally, except towards the end of the month.

Referring to the graph the trends in price movement were:

#### (a) Downward

At the start of the year upbeat reports of consumer spending in the run-up to Christmas were convincing investors that an economic recovery was underway. This, however, dampened hopes for a short-term reduction in interest rates, which resulted in share prices falling generally.

#### (b) Upward

Excellent news on US employment soothed fears that interest rates might be forced higher in the US. The London stock market gave a convincing display of confidence, as international investment cash continued to flood into UK stocks, attracted by prospects of low inflation and steady growth.

#### (c) Downward

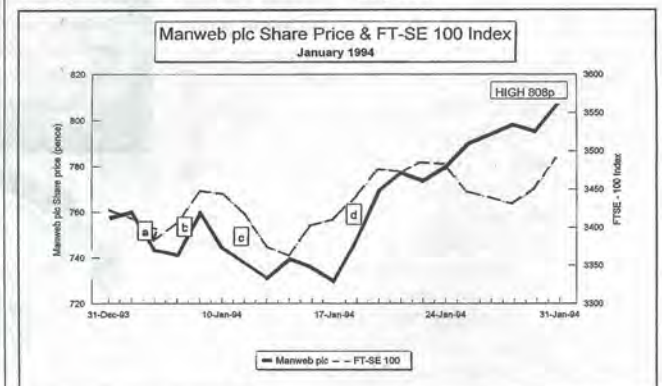
A postponement of hopes for the next long predicted reduction in interest rates cut into stock market confidence. The fall indicated that good economic news can be bad news for investors after it was revealed that domestic unemployment had fallen sharply in December. The fall in unemployment, considerably greater than predicted, was seen as reducing the chances for an early cut in UK base rates, and thus weakened one of the props supporting the level of share prices. The share price went ex-dividend on 17 January.

#### (d) Upward

There were strong gains in the Electricity sector due to the high yielding appeal of the Utilities amid speculation of a cut in interest rates.

There was an article in the Financial Times that suggested that the RECs' share prices currently looked cheap.

With the FTSE falling, fuelled by the market strategists who were suggesting that a downward correction was overdue, there was evidence of a shift from cyclical stocks to the perceived safer RECs.



IF you have any further queries on these matters, your professional advisor, bank, tax office or building society will probably be best placed to help you.

## NEW ROLE ENSURES MAXIMUM SUPPORT

MANWEB has strengthened its team of Executive Directors with the appointment of David Vernon-Smith (pictured) as Director, Corporate Affairs.

Mr Vernon-Smith, 49, formerly Manweb's Head of Human Resources, joined the Board of Directors at the end of February, taking over responsibility for the Company Secretariat and Public Relations in addition to retaining the personnel function.

Married with two children, Mr Vernon-Smith, who lives in Wilmslow, Cheshire, came to Manweb four-and-a-half years ago from the Stockport-based international packaging group Sonoco Europe, where he was Group Personnel Director.

He previously worked for Anglesey Aluminium Metal Ltd, at Holyhead, initially as Personnel Manager but later as Production General Manager responsible for operational matters.



Before that he worked for British Nuclear Fuels Ltd, starting as Assistant Personnel Officer and eventually being appointed Company Industrial Relations Officer.

Born in Warrington, Mr Vernon-Smith is a former pupil of the town's Boteler Grammar School. He also attended University College of St David's, University of Wales, where he gained an Honours Degree in Theology and Philosophy.

Mr Vernon-Smith, who last year oversaw Manweb's transition from national to local pay bargaining, said: "This is a new role on the Board of Directors, and I am looking forward to the challenge the job will bring."

"I shall be working to ensure Manweb's Corporate Services continue to give maximum support to the Company's business divisions, particularly in terms of our objective to provide first class customer service."

Manweb has announced further changes to the Board of Directors. Deputy Chairman Richard Morgan is to retire on 31 March 1994 and will be succeeded by Non-Executive Director Bill Goodall.



Handing over of new canteen at Queensferry, Depot Manager Bob Wright (left) receives the keys for the new canteen from MCSL Managing Director Allan Littler.

# Bob has the key to super new service

By  
Cheryl Stevenson

**QUEENSFERRY Depot Manager Bob Wright was delighted to receive the key for the site's new staff canteen, along with the future opportunity to sample an extended range of food on offer.**

Manweb Contracting Services Ltd Managing Director Allan Littler handed over the key to the canteen which is located near to the recently refurbished old appliance store. It offers staff a greatly improved environment, including seating for 150 people, a rest area and new cloakroom facilities. The new building replaced the old canteen block which had reached the end of its useful life.

The 'opening' ceremony on 2 February was observed by Harry

Jones, Appliance Services Manager and his team, representatives from Manweb Contracting Services, who undertook the project management and refurbishment work, and Architectural and Building Services Principle Engineer Ben Foster, whose section co-ordinated the project.

Allan Littler said: "It has always been a pleasure to do work at Queensferry. The staff are great to MCSL lads. Since Bob Wright was the first customer of MCSL, in August 1992, both he and Queensferry will always be special to MCSL."

The canteen's completion marked the end of Phase 2 of the project to fully refurbish the old Queensferry Appliance Services site, which started life as a muni-

tions factory and later a Ministry of Defence building before being acquired by Manweb on nationalisation of the Electricity Industry in 1948.

Phase 1, completed shortly before Christmas, involved the conversion of part of the old Appliance Store into offices to house the Appliance Servicing and Delivery Administration Operation.

The refurbishment work for both of the building phases including the total electrical installation package and structural work, totalling approximately £700,000, was carried out by an MCSL team led by Contracts Manager Richard Williams. MCSL, working directly for and with guidance from Ben Foster and his team from

Architectural and Building Services, also had the opportunity to develop their management skills, by managing the structural as well as electrical work involved, which included cladding to the canteen building.

Bob Wright has congratulated the MCSL team who undertook the project management and installation work for "their professional approach, workmanship and the positive attitude they maintained throughout the project".

In addition to the Queensferry staff, who are extremely pleased with the new facilities, the Compass catering staff are also delighted with their new kitchen facilities and the scope this gives them to expand the menu and provide specialities such as cock-a-leekie soup, haggis and tatties!

## Mystery of the missing Koosh ball



**THIS was Noreen's first indication that something was amiss. Having 'acquired' her Koosh ball from an Achieving Extraordinary Customer Relations (AECR) course Noreen had kept it safely on her desk for several weeks. Then one day it went missing and the first note arrived. What should she do now? See right.**

**MORE TRIPS PLANNED**

MANWEB (Chester and Head Office) Retired Staff Association started its programme of excursions in January with a luncheon party at the Leasowe Castle Hotel, Moreton, followed by a visit to the Lady Lever Art Gallery at Port Sunlight. The February visit was a tour of Granada Studios. Both occasions were enjoyed by the 50 members who took part. Future visits will include: 23 March, Bridgemere Garden Centre, Nantwich; 20 April, Ffestiniog Power Station; 22/28 May, 7-Day Coach Tour of Trier (Germany). A small number of vacancies exist. Interested parties, please contact Carmel and Bert Austin on 0244-347762.



**A CLUE to the whereabouts of the missing Koosh came with a postcard from Greece — but it was a cry for help. "Please help — I'm being held by Zorro the Greek in Paleokastrisa." But by whom? Turn to page 8.**

# Customer FOCUS

CONTINUING our series of articles on the progress of Manweb's Customer Service programme, this month we focus on our shops and the vital role they play.

# IT'S IN

**MANWEB's Retail staff have more face-to-face contact with customers than any other Division.**

Without doubt, perceptions about Manweb are formed each time a customer has a good, bad or indifferent experience with a member of staff.

Customers who regularly deal with Manweb through the shops have a more positive opinion of the Company than those who have dealings with us in other ways.

Retail Manager Terry Keenan said: "Customer service is nothing new to the shop scene, and those of us who have been around a few years will remember the Manweb Service Centres of the past. In the early days they provided an account collection and advice facility, advice on all electrical matters as well as being an automatic choice for most customers wanting to buy electrical appliances.

"In recent years, though, Retail has been passed to concentrate on pure sales of appliances and has been starved of the necessary training and equipment to be able to do anything more than pay lip service to giving a high standard of customer service for main business enquiries."

These projects will boost customer service

Last year, when the Customer Focus Group looked at the shop scene, there were a number of barriers preventing shop staff from offering extraordinary customer service.

Staff had no detailed knowledge about account and Network Services matters and there was a lack of energy efficiency training.

Three different and incompatible computer systems made the training of new staff difficult, wasted space in the shops and

# Quality on call

AS reported in last month's 'Contact', Service Quality Calls are being made to customers who have bought something, paid a bill or had an account amended in St John's, Bootle, Edge Lane, Northwich, Llandudno or Aberystwyth Customer Service Centres.

Customers like the new levels of service and the facilities, and they speak highly about the competent, courteous and friendly service given by staff.

Out of 415 service quality calls made, 88 per cent received exceptional, good or as expected service, two per cent gave a poor or terrible rating and 10 per cent of the sample gave no rating. Customers commented on the attitude of staff, speed of service, skill, knowledge and shop layouts.

Retail Manager Terry Keenan said: "Service Quality Calls serve three

purposes. They show customers that we care enough to ask for their opinion about the service they have received, they provide us with management feedback on customers' views, and feedback to the staff who have provided the service. Staff are then encouraged to use this information in their group discussions to further improve customer service."

## MARKET

**APPLIANCE retailing and the improved customer service being offered through Manweb's customer service centres go hand-in-hand.**

These new centres will not be moving away from selling appliances. On the contrary, they will sell appliances, take accounts and offer excellent customer service for main business enquiries.



The Mayor and Mayoress of Warrington, Councillor and Mrs John Taylor, cut the ribbon at Mid Mersey District Office, watched by (l-r) MPs Doug Hoyle and Mike Hall, District Manager Barry Judd, Chief Executive John Roberts and Chairman Bryan Weston.

# MID MERSEY LEADS THE INDUSTRY

A WARMER welcome is awaiting visitors to Mid-Mersey following a facelift of the District Office's reception area.

That's what specially invited guests discovered when District Manager Barry Judd and his staff rolled out the red carpet for the official opening of the new-look office.

Gone are the impersonal glass screens and, along with them, the inevitable 'us and them' approach, to be replaced by a simple counter to give customers friendly face-to-face contact with the receptionist.

Comfortable seating, carpeted floors and free drinks give the reception area a more homely atmosphere, and electric sliding doors make it easier for disabled people to get in and out of the building.

Guest of honour at the official opening was the Mayor of Warrington, Councillor John Taylor, who cut the ribbon before

By JACKIE UNSWORTH

joining the other guests for a buffet lunch.

Also present were Warrington's two MPs, Doug Hoyle and Mike Hall, who were full of praise for

the new-look local office.

Mr Hoyle said: "You are making things more customer friendly by removing the barriers and caring for people with disabilities.

You are providing training for staff, who are now better able to relate to the customers coming in.

"Not only is Manweb giving a lead to other industries, but you are giving a lead within your own industry."

## Staging a course



The first course underway, Facilitators Bryan McDonald, left, and Colin Moston, watch theatre staff working on their flip charts.

A MANWEB initiative is helping a theatre group to get its act together in the field of customer care.

Due to the friendly relationship the Company has with the Gateway Theatre, Chester, Roy Jones, Customer Service Co-ordinator was asked if members of staff from the Theatre could attend an Achieving Extraordinary Customer Relations course.

Ready to oblige, Roy arranged two courses which attracted theatre employees from on stage, back stage, box office and administration.

Facilitators were Colin Moston and Bryan McDonald. In a letter to Roy from Gateway Theatre, Marketing Manager Piers Norbury, Colin and Bryan were praised for their relaxed presentation and for their tolerance and patience.

Piers said he was impressed that at the end of the course, so much was so easily recalled to mind by all in the room.

"Morale has definitely been boosted and that fact alone must help us achieve better relations with our customers," he said.

## Did you know that . . .

- 63 per cent of our customers used Manweb's shops in the last six months.
- Six million transactions take place in our shops each year.
- 70 per cent of customers visiting our shops did so for utility services.

Manweb's shops collected £174 million from 5.4 million customer transactions on behalf of Power Marketing. In a recent survey of 10 shops, 10 per cent of these transactions involved a customer query in addition to a payment being made — that's 540,000 queries each year!

In addition, Retail staff visit 165,000 customers to either deliver or repair an appliance.

### In brief, customer service in the shops means:

- Having a speedy account collection payment service.
- Answering queries to customers' satisfaction.
- Having a range of electrical appliances on display.
- Being able to advise customers on energy efficiency and electrical matters.
- Being able to offer these services with knowledgeable, friendly and courteous staff.

# THE SHOPS



One of the customer service desks at Northwich shop

meant a customer could be asked to pay an account at one position, query a bill at another and buy an appliance at a third point.

And since the shops had been developed as retail outlets, there were no quiet, confidential areas where account queries could be dealt with.

Some queries could take up to 30 minutes to fully resolve, and it was felt that the offer of a cup of coffee or tea and toys to keep young children occupied would be well received by customers.

As a result the Shop Refurbishment and Shop Systems Projects were launched.

The Shop Refurbishment Project comprised:

- Shop staff being trained on an eight-week customer accounting course.
- Shops being refurbished

with additional till positions fitted and customer service desks installed. In some shops around 40 per cent of the available space was given over to account collection and customer service. In St John's, for example, the whole of the first floor is used for this.

● Personal computers being installed in the customer service areas.

The first 22 shops have been refurbished and have been operating with the existing computer technology: MERAS appliance sales system, FT80 account collection equipment, and a personal computer using the existing customer accounting systems for customer enquiries.

The Shop Systems Project, which is being managed by John Brown, is now well underway and is due to be completed by

the end of this year. It will produce new sales and account collection systems, which will be combined with the Graphical User Interface (GUI) system being developed by the Single Telephone Number Project.

These systems will operate on the same personal computer, giving maximum flexibility of operation, easier staff training and better customer service.

Terry Keenan said: "When completed, the new Customer Service Centres will contain highly skilled staff, working in an excellent environment and using the best equipment and systems available. Our customers will see us as a progressive, forward looking 'utility' business, giving extraordinary customer service."

## Support from Retail

THE appliance retailing market within Manweb's Region has been severely hit by recession in recent years. This, coupled with increasing competition from the likes of Norweb and Colorvision, has resulted in very difficult trading conditions.

But despite this, Manweb's retail business has increased its regional market share to 23 per cent for white goods and has maintained its profit margins.

The three superstores are becoming increasingly important, accounting for

over 25 per cent of total sales, compared with 15 per cent last year. This trend will continue with our plans to further expand.

## WILL BE EXPANDED

Retail Manager Terry Keenan said: "Once high levels of customer service are being offered to Manweb customers, this service can be sold to other utilities such as Welsh Water, North West Cable and Communications (Cable TV) and others.

"Currently accounts are collected for the Cable TV company covering Liverpool,

and Welsh Water accounts can be paid in the Welsh shops.

Retail staff are working closely with these utilities and others looking at areas of joint marketing, customer service and allowing them some promotional space in selected customer service centres. Clearly this is a market that will expand."

Retail Manager Terry Keenan said: "Our aim is to drive costs down, keep improving profit performance, set ever higher standards of customer service and to develop the range of 'utility' services being offered in the high street. In this way, Retail can support the main business."

# THEY SAID IT

TO: Linesmen Gareth Williams and Lee Bishop from Aberystwyth.

FROM: Brenda Parry.

"Thank you so much for turning out after 10pm to reconnect our power which had been cut off for the second time.

"In high winds and rain your chaps cut huge branches from a tree which had insisted on entangling itself in our supply cables.

"It was an excellent service and we much appreciated it. Please pass on our thanks to the Machynlleth control and the engineers."

TO: Malcolm Bebbington of Mid-Mersey District Office.

FROM: Mr. L. D. Lawrence, Widnes.

"In your leaflet 'A Quality Service Backed By Guarantees' you invite your customers to let you know if they have any suggestions how you might improve your services.

"I have been concerned as to whether I am getting the full power for the units recorded and have been in touch with Mr. Malcolm Bebbington, who is dealing with my query in a most business-like way.

"On his calling to see me, introducing himself, greeted me, saying, 'I am here to help you', I was impressed and I shall be in touch with him again when I have carried out some of the points we discussed.

"I think his manner increases confidence in your undertaking and I look forward to getting my problem solved to my satisfaction and yours.

"I thought you might like to have these unsolicited remarks which enable me to sign myself, Sincerely Yours."

TO: Manweb, Chester.

FROM: Mrs. C. Scott, Stoke-on-Trent.

"Can I say how excellent your payments are. You have always been fair with your dealing of payments over the years. Thank you Manweb."

TO: Miss Marie Nolan, Mid-Mersey District.

FROM: Linda Hankey, Groby Road, Crewe.

"Just a note to say thank you for finally managing to tackle the ever lengthening saga of our electricity bill.

"After two years of trying to find somebody/anybody at Manweb to provide us with a true amount outstanding - I was at my wits end!

"Then out of the blue I was put through to you on the telephone, at last a light shone at the end of the tunnel.

"I just wanted to say thank you to you for actually sorting out our account, providing a correct balance outstanding and a suitable agreement to clear the arrears.

"Keep up the good work, if there are many more accounts like ours just think of the difference it could make to Manweb profits if they were all dealt with by you."

TO: Mid-Mersey District.

FROM: S. Moffat, Warrington.

"When one of your meter readers was carrying out his duty in this area I found myself faced with a temporary crisis.

"Unfortunately, my mother (who, incidentally is 91-years-old), had a fall.

"Your colleague was the only person around at the time and he immediately came to my rescue with a helping hand to get her back to bed.

"I did not want this act of such kindness and helpfulness to slip by unmentioned and would be extremely pleased if you could convey my sincerest thanks to the gentleman concerned."

TO: J. Brown, Delivery Services manager.

FROM: Kirkby Shop.

"On Thursday, 16/12/1993, we were very busy in Kirkby Shop and two of your team (Van 23) came in to collect an ex-shop automatic washing machine. They noted how busy we were and were as helpful as possible with the customers in the shop.

"An elderly customer came and asked how long she would have to wait for a cooker to be installed if she paid cash. Her own had just blown up.

"The delivery team immediately said if she bought one from the floor they would delivery it right away.

"To say she was overwhelmed would be an understatement.

"We all were 'gobsmacked' and I was absolutely delighted to have other customers listening to such good customer care. Not only did we sell a closing line cooker without losing any money, the customer had received a true P.M.C.E.

"Those concerned were L. A. Johnson and J. Roughly.

TO: Cliff James, New Crane Street.

FROM: Mr. Russell, Liverpool Road, Chester.

"I would like to convey my thanks and appreciat-

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

tion for the prompt way in which my low voltage complaint was dealt with on Monday, 24/1/94."

TO: Bob Douglas, Dee Valley.

FROM: Margaret Heaton, Pant Lane, Gresford.

"A big thank you for sponsoring work done by the Groundwork Trust, i.e. the planting of trees along Chester Road, Gresford.

"Already I get a feeling of immense pleasure when I pass by and in a few years time they are going to look splendid. A very worthwhile enhancement of a rather bleak area.

"Your sponsorship is much appreciated. Continue the good work. Thank you.

"The engineer involved was Jason Morgan."

TO: Mike Rowley, Corporate Business Development.

FROM: Gruffudd Roberts, Dysersyth.

"I am writing to you to thank you for the way Manweb by all accounts are continuing to develop a language policy which gives equal status to both Welsh and English.

"I believe that the small leaflet 'Let The Man Make Your Life Easier', is a splendid example even allowing for the restricted amount of space available to fit all the information in.

"I would like to sincerely congratulate your Company for your foresight in this connection."

TO: North Mersey District.

FROM: Maddison, Cross Street, Southport.

"I have been away since my meter was checked on 11/1/94.

"As you suspected, my meter was in order. However, my mind is more at rest especially after speaking to the meter tester (Mr. David or John Cartwright), I think. If you need a PR job doing for Manweb, this tester is your man.

"If he had told me that black was white I would have believed him!

"Thank you for your interest and courtesy."

TO: Dee Valley District (via the Chairman's office).

FROM: Reg Thomas, Dinas Drive, Llangollen.

"I am writing to draw your attention to, and express my appreciation for some exemplary service I received over the Christmas period.

"I reported a power failure in my home at about 7.45am on Tuesday, 28 December - we had a house full of Christmas visitors, including my daughter-in-law (a Norweb Management Accountant!) - It was also a very snowy

"Your emergency duty engineer appeared within 30 minutes and diagnosed an 'old age and infirmity' cable failure near the meter. He carried out some initial safety work and called up the appropriate duty engineers, from the snows of Coed Poeth. The re-installment works were completed in time for us to finish our breakfast - late but thankful.

"I would hope that the sentiments in this letter are made known not only to you but also to your engineers who, in 'Commercial Union' terms, avoided turning a crisis into a disaster!

"My Norweb daughter-in-law was impressed!"

TO: C. Robinson, Power Marketing.

FROM: R. M. Palmer, M.D. Phoenix Chemicals Ltd.

"Just a brief letter to thank you for the efficient and courteous service that you have provided to us with regard to our new HV installation. The 'new Manweb' is a pleasure to deal with!"

TO: Mrs. Gloria Griffiths, Aberystwyth District.

FROM: Hil and Ken Clarke, Machynlleth.

"You will be pleased to know that the Claims Department at Chester have settled our claim for the damaged satellite receiver referred to in our letters. I am sure that this is due in no small degree to your efficient and courteous way in which you dealt with our claim, for which our thanks are given."

TO: Jeff Hunt, District Manager, Mid-Cheshire District.

FROM: Ian Hunter, Bostock Road, Nr. Middlewich.

"Just a quick line to thank Ken (sorry forgot his surname) and the engineers who came out in very quick time on Christmas Eve to repair a broken power line, it was very much appreciated.

"Thanks again to all concerned".

Those concerned were: D. Williams, K. Brassington (DRC), J. Harrison, P. Cooke and A. Curzon.



All the winners, proud parents and guests with Matthew Kelly.

# WHO CARES - WINS

## Prizes for those special people who love to help others

By Jon Tracey

**JANUARY 26** was a night when people of many different backgrounds were brought together in one common purpose - to celebrate the achievements of the vast army of unsung community volunteers, at the 1993 Manweb-Community Awards Gala night.

Top TV personality Matthew Kelly was on hand to help present the awards to the 36 winners who were deemed to have made an outstanding contribution to helping the needy in our community. The judges had previously had the thankless task of selecting 36 winners from the many hundreds of nominations in the six award categories; The Environmental Award, as well as the Man, Woman, Young Person, Team and Charity of the Year.

TV presenter Carl Hawkins, who acted as compere, detailed the exploits of the winners as they came on stage to receive their awards from Matthew and event co-host, Manweb Chairman Bryan Weston.

The selfless achievements of many of these people, some disabled themselves, inspired many people on the night, yet could also put many of us to shame. People like Ellesmere Port Man of the Year Ian Philpotts, who despite being crippled by a rare muscle wasting disease, thinks nothing of cycling 70 miles to raise money for charity. Eleven-year-old Leah Jones who represented the North West in last year's special Olympics, does not let Downs Syndrome stop her from enjoying a full life. Leah became the Runcorn and Widnes Young Person of the Year on the night.

Chairman Bryan Weston applauded the achievements of all the winners: "This is the fifth year that Manweb has hosted the event, but we are continually surprised by the quantity and quality of those nominated." Matthew Kelly also paid tribute to the award winners before describing the passion he feels for his own charity, the Neuromuscular Centre in Winsford.

Even as the awards presentations ended, it was clear that the celebrations were not yet over. One glittering sculpture stood on the stage - to be awarded for an outstanding contribution to the community. The recipient of that award was the Daniel Owen Community Centre, Mold. An entire community was mobilised to fight to keep the centre open in the face of almost certain closure. This, the judges felt, embodied the spirit of the community awards, people pulling together to help themselves and to benefit others.



Leah Jones, Young Person of the Year — Widnes and Runcorn, with Bryan Weston and Matthew Kelly.

## EVERYONE A WINNER

THE six awards and winners in each category are as follows:

### MAN OF THE YEAR

South Cheshire — Mr Charles Lowe, of Sandbach.  
Mid-Cheshire — Mr Tommy Jenkins, of Wincham.  
Chester — Mr Tim Healey, of Great Barrow.  
Ellesmere Port — Mr Ian Philpotts, of Bromborough.  
Deeside — Mr George Brookin, of Shotton.  
Runcorn and Widnes — Mr Joe Darlington, of Runcorn.

### WOMAN OF THE YEAR

South Cheshire — Mrs Irene Edwards.  
Mid-Cheshire — Sally Fox, of Onston.  
Chester — Nina Estelle Chennells, of Saughall.  
Ellesmere Port — Marion Samuel.  
Deeside — Sally Wilde, of Connah's Quay.  
Runcorn and Widnes — Sue Ahmad, of Runcorn.

### ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

South Cheshire — Sound Primary School, near Nantwich.  
Mid-Cheshire — St Wilfred's RC Primary School, Northwich.  
Chester — The Friends of Caldly Nature Park.  
Ellesmere Port — The Rivacre Valley Countryside Rangers.  
Deeside — Iceland Frozen Foods plc.  
Runcorn and Widnes — The Chesnut Lodge Special School.

### TEAM OF THE YEAR

South Cheshire — Friends of Hope House Children's Respite Hospice.  
Mid-Cheshire — The Mid-Cheshire Olympic Squad.  
Chester — The Chester Civic Trust.  
Ellesmere Port — Contact Color.  
Deeside — The David Owen Community Association.  
Runcorn and Widnes — Brookfield Special Needs Gymnastic Club.

### CHARITY OF THE YEAR

South Cheshire — The Alcohol Services Organisation, Crewe.  
Mid-Cheshire — The Mid-Cheshire Sheltered Workshop Trust.  
Chester — The Chester Crossroads Care Attendant Scheme.  
Ellesmere Port — The Ellesmere Port and District Association for Children with Special Needs.  
Deeside — The Lache Christian Community Trust.  
Runcorn and Widnes — The Mission to Eastern Europe.

### YOUNG PERSON OF THE YEAR

South Cheshire — Barry Gittins, of Nantwich.  
Mid-Cheshire — Hannah Bebbington.  
Chester — Kate Law, of Oscroft.  
Ellesmere Port — Jenny Gore.  
Deeside — Mark Williams, of Mancot.  
Runcorn and Widnes — Leah Jones.



Councillor Ray Dodd with the special additional award.



Man of the Year — Ellesmere Port. That's Ian Philpotts, pictured with Chairman Bryan Weston and Matthew Kelly.

# EI

## No firm to link health

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## SPECIAL BY PHIL HU

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EMFs induce small e conducting objects includi the highest voltage trans in the UK (400Kv), the e strong enough to cause har ly and it can cause a har person touches another the familiar tingle one g electric shock given by st magnetic fields near ele normally induce smaller electric field and are not by the human senses.

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# EMFS

## No firm evidence to link them to health problems

**ELECTRIC and Magnetic Fields — EMFs — have over recent months, become a topic for much media attention and speculation. Probably the most widespread was the BBC Panorama programme which was transmitted on 31 January.**

This majored on claims that electric and magnetic fields may be linked to a variety of health problems but, in particular, to childhood leukaemia.

Before discussing EMFs in detail, I must stress that these claims have been looked at in great detail by many of the top experts in the UK, Europe and the United States. They have concluded that there is no firm evidence to support claims which link EMFs to health.

### Are EMFs something new?

No. They have been known to man for thousands of years. In 1833 Michael Faraday demonstrated how an electric current flowing in a wire produces a magnetic field and how this principle could be used to make an electric motor. If you look at the back of the current £20 note you will see Michael Faraday lecturing on the subject in 1826.

### How are EMFs produced?

Anything which carries or uses electricity produces EMFs. EMFs also occur naturally. The earth itself produces a relatively steady magnetic field. This field has been used for centuries to navigate using a compass on sea

### SPECIAL REPORT by PHIL HUGHES

and the land. There is also a natural electric field present in the open air because the upper layers of the Earth's atmosphere are electrically charged. This natural charge increases many times over when there is an electrical storm.

Electricity involves the presence of both voltage and current. Voltage — the pressure behind the flow of electricity — produces the electric field. The higher the voltage — the stronger the field. Current — the rate at which the electricity flows — produces the electric field. The higher the current, the stronger the field. Electric field strength is dependent on voltage; magnetic field strength is not.

Distribution equipment — overhead lines, underground cables, substations and meters — produce EMFs but so does most electrical equipment which uses a mains supply. This includes home appliances such as washing machines, electric blankets, TVs, toasters, hair dryers, shavers as well as industrial and commercial equipment.

### How do these fields generated by electricity affect people?

EMFs induce small electric currents in conducting objects including people. Beneath the highest voltage transmission lines used in the UK (400Kv), the electric field can be strong enough to cause hair to vibrate slightly and it can cause a harmless spark as the person touches another object — very like the familiar tingle one gets from the small electric shock given by static electricity. The magnetic fields near electrical equipment normally induce smaller currents than the electric field and are not normally detected by the human senses.

Our bodies produce their own changing electric and magnetic fields. Any action which involves muscle and nerve activity — breathing, moving, even thinking — produces electrical activity which generates fields.

### Why is so much attention now focused on the magnetic field?

Electric and magnetic fields possess different characteristics, one of which is that electric fields can easily be stopped by shielding measures whereas magnetic fields are not easily stopped. This is why the research is concentrated these days on magnetic fields rather than electric.

### Why is there so much research into EMFs these days?

It was in what was until a few years ago



the Soviet Union that reports of ill health allegedly caused by EMFs first surfaced. A report linked exposure to electric fields with a wide range of symptoms of ill health, including tiredness, headaches and depression. No direct link was ever proven — further investigation showed factors such as working long hours, boredom and poor diet to be the more likely cause of the symptoms. Considerable interest was, however, created and resulted in a great deal of further research investigating possible links between EMFs and ill health. In the earlier stages, these focused on electric fields, but, in recent times, the emphasis moved to magnetic fields.

### The Use of Electricity

Since 1930 the consumption of electricity in the UK has increased from 10,000 Gwh to 290,000 Gwh in 1990 — a more than 25 fold increase.

About one-third of electricity consumed is used in the home. More than another third is used in industry. A quarter is used in shops, offices, hospitals and schools and the remainder in transport and other services.

In the same period — 1930 to 1990 — average life expectancy for males has increased from 59 to 72 years whilst that for females has risen from 63 to 78.

It is significant that increased usage of electricity does not appear to have been matched by an increase in one of the most serious illnesses alleged to be caused by EMFs, childhood leukaemia. Indeed, if there was a correlation, we would by now be faced with an epidemic of childhood cancers.

### Thankfully this is not so.

### What is the scientists' current position?

Over 10,000 scientific papers have been written on the subject from all over the developed world. Some have shown a weak association between EMFs and childhood cancer, particularly leukaemia.

In this country, the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) advises on EMF issues. Their panel of experts is led by Sir Richard Doll, the world famous cancer expert

who discovered that cigarette smoking can cause cancer.

In their most recent review of available studies the panel concluded that a cause and effect link between magnetic fields and cancer has not been proven but they provide weak evidence to suggest the possibility exists. As a result of this there is a need for more research to be done.

### What more is being done?

To resolve the doubts, experts such as those in the NRPB have called for more studies involving larger number of cases. The UK Children's Cancer Study is one such piece of research. This study, which has already started, is due to finish in 1997.

It will examine every case of childhood cancer in children under 15 and will be matched with information on healthy children selected at random according to age, sex and area of residence.

The electricity companies, through the Electricity Association, requested that EMFs and their alleged health effects were included in this study. The companies are contributing more than £1.5m each year to EMF-related research.

### Policy

All the electricity companies, including Manweb, have as their policy on EMF-related issues, strict compliance with the guidelines produced by the National Radiation Protection Board for exposures to electric and magnetic fields both for their staff and members of the public.

### To finish

The NRPB has stated that there is no firm evidence of a cancer hazard from EMFs caused by living near sources of electricity supply, the use of electrical appliances or working in electrical industries.

As regards general health, the NRPB has stated that below the levels they advise (and all our operations are carried out within this guidance) the bulk of the evidence suggests that there are no long-term health effects from exposure to electric and magnetic fields.



# WINS

Special  
to help others



Councillor Ray Dodd with the special additional award.



— Ellesmere Port. That's Ian Philpotts, pictured with Weston and Matthew Kelly.



THE period 1 September 1993, saw a continuing our accident performance Hughes of the Occ Section.

There was a drop of alm time accidents, compare last year. Reportable acc significant reduction from tion in days lost due to ac was reflected in the cost d dents falling from £89,762

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Although we have alre get of 46 reportable accide seven over the top, so let's quarter something to be reportable accidents!

The chart gives the br accidents by causation "Falling" represents mor

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Persons f

# EMFs

## Scientific evidence links them to health problems

Electric Fields — EMFs — have over recent months, become a topic of great attention and speculation. Probably the most widespread concern is that electric and magnetic fields may be linked to a variety of health problems, particularly, to childhood leukaemia.

In detail, I must have been looked at by the top experts in the United States. They have no firm evidence linking EMFs to health.

How? It is known to man for centuries that a current flowing through a wire produces a magnetic field and how to make an electric field back of the current. Michael Faraday discovered this in 1826.

Why? It is known that we use electricity and that it occurs naturally. It is relatively steady and has been used for centuries as a compass on sea.

### REPORT PHES

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EMF Liaison Officers have been appointed in each district to handle enquiries from the public locally. They visit customers' homes, if requested, to carry out magnetic field measurements using special equipment.

Safety Engineer Phil Hughes is pictured (front centre) with some of the District Liaison Officers, front row (l to r) Martin Benson (Oswestry), Graham Cooke (North Wirral), Julie Burgess (Mid Mersey), Mark Rogers (Mid Cheshire), Jim Henderson (Liverpool), Gloria Griffiths (Aberystwyth) and Keith Hornby (North Mersey).

The full list of Liaison Officers, to whom local enquiries about EMFs should be forwarded, is as follows:-

North Mersey, 710 2128, Keith Hornby; Liverpool, 720 2169, Jim Henderson; Mid Mersey, 730 2415, Julie Burgess; Dee Valley, 744 4510, Mike Evans, Chester/E.Port; Dee Valley, 744 4518, Mark Davies, Wrexham/Corwen; North Wirral, 750 2364, Graham Cooke; Mid Cheshire, 760 2111, Angela Coulton; Clwyd, 770 2220, Tony Bainbridge; Gwynedd, 780 2130, Brian Davies; Oswestry, 790 2173, Martin Benson; Aberystwyth, 799 2261, Gloria Griffiths; Head Office, 700 2239, Phil Hughes; Central Field Unit, 750 2333, John Iveson.



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# IMPROVED

THE period 1 September to 31 December, 1993, saw a continuing improvement in our accident performance, writes Phil Hughes of the Occupational Safety Section.

There was a drop of almost 50 per cent in lost time accidents, compared to the same period last year. Reportable accidents also showed a significant reduction from 20 to 15. The reduction in days lost due to accidents of 46 per cent was reflected in the cost of time off due to accidents falling from £89,762 to £50,244.

Several of this year's accidents have resulted in long periods off work; with a lesser number of accidents, this has meant that the average time off for a lost time accident has remained unchanged at 19 days. Readers will recall that last quarter it stood at 13 days.

The reportable accident rate (accidents per 100 employees) has continued to fall. This time it stands at 0.33 as against 0.44 last year. Similarly, the lost time accident rate fell to 0.70 from 0.35.

No lost time accidents were recorded in Oswestry, Central Field Unit, All Head Office activities, the three Regional Centres and the Northern Region of Manweb Contracting Services Ltd.

There were no reportable accidents in North Mersey, North Wirral, Central Field Unit, all three Regional Centres, both regions of Manweb Contracting Services Ltd and all Head Office activities.

Although we have already exceeded our target of 46 reportable accidents, at 53 we are only seven over the top, so let's try and make the last quarter something to be really proud of — nil reportable accidents!

The chart gives the breakdown of reportable accidents by causation. At eight, "Persons Falling" represents more than half the total.

## But we must aim to be top of the league

Many of these accidents can be avoided by more personal care. Supervisors and Safety Representatives when investigating accidents should pay particular attention to the actions of the injured person when investigating this type of accident.

It is particularly gratifying to see a nil return for "Electrical Accidents" for this quarter. It is the first time for many quarters that this has happened. A lot of hard work has been put in, particularly by Network Services, in trying to eliminate this potentially always serious source of injury. Is it bearing fruit at last? Let's hope so.

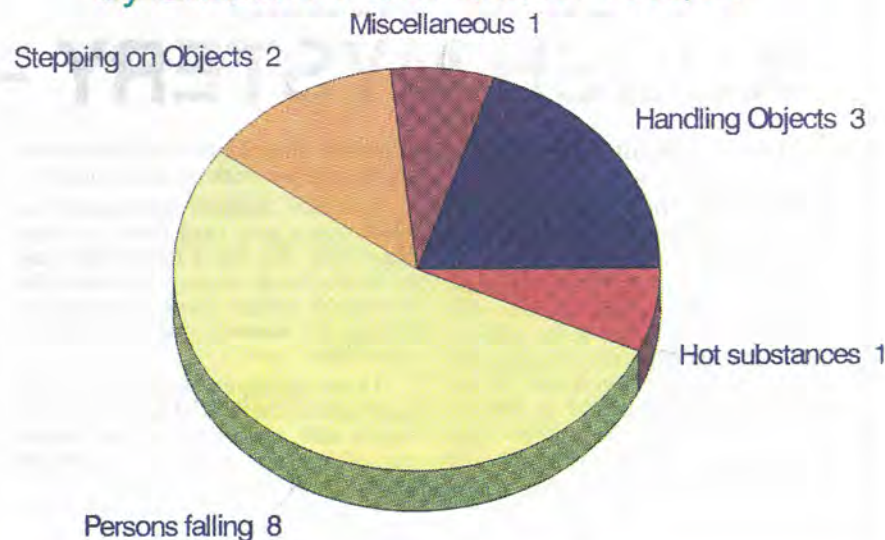
"Sprains and Strains" are still the largest category in types of injury but, this quarter, they are being run a close second by five fractures to various parts of the body resulting from some of the falls.

Summing up, although many aspects of this quarter's performance are satisfactory, we all need to maintain the efforts. Attention needs to be focused on falling-type accidents, particularly where these occur at or near ground level.

Although it has not been possible to achieve our own target, our objective must still be to see how close we can get to the top of the REC Safety Performance "League" as quickly as possible.

### MANWEB REPORTABLE ACCIDENTS

by Causation - 3rd Quarter 1993/94







# WITH A LITTLE

THIS month we are continuing the series 'With A Little Help From Our Friends' relating to how Manweb Contracting Services is working together with, and receiving support from, their colleagues within Manweb plc. Here we look at how MCSL is becoming a strong force in the field of Utilities work by working closely with, and gaining valuable experience from, their colleagues in Network Services.

By  
**CHERYL  
STEVENSON**

MAINTAINING the distribution network as effectively as possible is part of Manweb's commitment to achieving excellence in customer service. With a spend on network refurbishments of around £36m for 1992/1993, keeping customers happy amounts to an enormous task.

To assist in this task MCSL currently has approximately 100 skilled jointers, fitters and linesmen working in the field alongside their Network Services team mates across the Manweb region. They are helping to achieve standards of excellence in areas such as street lighting, meter

changes and service refurbishments to customers' properties. In turn MCSL is grateful for the opportunity to practice and extend vital skills which may enable the company to capitalise on the vast and rapidly growing Utilities sector, working for potential customers such as: British Telecom, British Rail, British Gas and other RECs. The work presently undertaken by MCSL amounts to over £5 million and is in addition to the £19 million worth of work undertaken for domestic, commercial and industrial customers, in the traditional electrical contracting activity.

# AROUND THE REGION

DISTRICT MCSL jointing teams are busy in North Mersey carrying out service refurbishments on behalf of District Manager Mike Jones and his team, in the Norris Green area.

MCSL has a target of 2,000 properties which require electrical service refurbishment and is currently on target to complete these ahead of schedule. Additionally, MCSL teams have been involved in lateral mains, working closely with Technical Services Manager Martin Davies and his staff, as well as having opportunities to expand routine skills by carrying out emergency jointing jobs and routine meter repositioning.

In sister District Liverpool, base for District Manager Bill Tubey and his team, MCSL Senior Contracts Manager John Ashton and foreman Russell Whalley, are working with Construction Manager George Range and his team on a number of service refurbishments to properties in the Liverpool 8 area. Two MCSL teams are also engaged on lateral mains work, supporting the operations of Planning Manager Geoff Ryan and Engineer Harry Robertson. MCSL also has street lighting teams involved in major refurbishment projects in Bootle and Liverpool.

Moving east to Mid Mersey District, a different approach to liaison has been seen with MCSL and Network Services working together at Coal Clough, England's first and largest wind farm, near Burnley. The project, including installation of 24 wind turbines with a generation capacity of 9.6 mega watts of electricity, was initially a project managed by MCSL in close liaison with Manweb, while District Manager Barry Judd's team, led by Bill Peet, undertook fitting and commissioning. On a more routine note a team of MCSL jointers has, since August, completed service refurbishments to approximately 450 properties in the Warrington and St Helens area, and has a target of 2,000+ at the end of the first year.

Across the region the south provides a greener note. In Dee Valley, replacement of overhead lines to underground services has been a project for MCSL, including services to 500 properties in Connah's Quay. Additionally over 810 properties at Queens Park, have had new services completed. MCSL is grateful to District Manager John Macdonald and his team for providing the opportunity to develop skills in this area, even though initially staff were learning their trade and needed to practice in order to gain competitive speed.

The MCSL liaison is continuing in North Wirral District, where LV service and refurbishment work and cut out changes totalling £20K for District Manager Phil Ramsey and his team are being carried out.

In Mid Cheshire District, Jeff Hunt's team, including Refurbishment Engineer Gary Collins and Section Manager Arthur Elson, have approximately three MCSL teams in their area refurbishing services to properties in Knutsford and Plumley areas.

MCSL's Abergele office has been working with Network Services on routine and emergency work, large or small, for many years. Early last year they carried out a major project lasting four months involving refurbishment of old overhead lines to new underground services at Llanasa, restoring the picturesque nature to the village. This success has now been rewarded with several other similar projects.

Both speed and responsiveness were required in December, as MCSL answered an emergency call on behalf of Network Services, at Safeway in Colwyn Bay. The store, which had been flooded as a result of a burst water pipe, had 98 per cent of its service reconnected in just three hours 45 minutes, after an MCSL team of staff was assembled to test and inspect electrics, before supply could be reconnected.

On a daily basis, MCSL is delighted to maintain a happy working relationship with Clwyd District Manager John Hanson and his staff in areas such as installation of emergency generation, sub-station painting, cut out changes and the ESMA meter change programme.

In Gwynedd, Oswestry and Aberystwyth, the MCSL Network Services allegiance is steadily growing. In Gwynedd MCSL Senior Contracts Manager Dave Miller has been discussing utilities work with District Manager Ian Basford and Production Section Manager David Jones. A team of MCSL linesmen is already active on overhead line patrol within the District and, on a unique note, two MCSL personnel are currently offering a helping hand within the

District drawing office. MCSL is looking forward to the possibility of offering further assistance to the District this year.

In Oswestry District, base for District Manager Don McRae and staff, MCSL currently has a team of linesmen working on a six monthly basis dealing with day to day maintenance of overhead lines. An Oswestry based MCSL team of jointers is also occupied on new service work in Whitchurch and Ellesmere.

Last but not least, MCSL is pleased to be maintaining its traditional working relationship in Aberystwyth — District Manager Alison 'Eakins' patch. Geographical constraints means it is not feasible to have a full Network Service standby team. So MCSL, which has two linesmen and jointers in the area, also provides 24 hour emergency standby electricians to customers in the area.

Head Office Network Services liaise with MCSL's Dave Parry, currently working closely with Network Services Project Manager Steve Challinor and Plant Interference Engineer Mike Cahill on a project to introduce Telecontrols to over 500 primary 33kv sub-stations throughout the Manweb region. The network management system would enable remote control and integration of sub-station operations from 10 District Office based reporting centres.

The liaison with the CFU at Prenton is also growing daily. Manager Dennis Davies and his team are helping MCSL's Bryn Morris to develop a quick response to building sub-stations, and MCSL's Phil Jones to become more competitive on customer HV activities.

## OBITUARIES

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

Arnold Williams, 77, died on 21 December. He was an Administrative Assistant in Dee Valley before retiring in 1980.

Richard Williams worked as an Electrician in Gwynedd before retiring in 1975. He died on 27 December aged 70.

William Williams, 88, who died on 28 December, was a Labourer in Holyhead before retiring in 1970.

Owen John Thomas died on 28 December aged 77. He was a Linesman in Anglesey before retiring in 1970.

John William Wells, 70, who was a Driver in Mid-Mersey before retiring in 1986, died on 6 January.

Arthur Norman Smith, 71, who died on 7 January, was a Labourer in Clwyd before retiring in 1975.

William Arthur Pritchard, 77, who was a Meter Attendant in Gwynedd before retiring in 1981, died on 8 January.

Frank Gerard, who died on 10 January, aged 65, retired in 1991 at Dee Valley, where he was a Chargehand Meter Reader.

Norah Frances Healey, 72, a Machine Operator at Head Office until retirement in 1981, died on 16

January.

Clarice Wilson, who died on 18 January, was a Typing Supervisor in Sub Area 4 before retiring in 1958.

Nancy Ellen Gardner, 71, a Clerical Assistant in Clwyd until retirement in 1981, died on 18 January.

Henry Breckell, who died on 20 January, was the Area Commercial Officer in Area 2 until retiring in 1965.

Gerald Gatley, 70, who retired in 1985 at Mid-Mersey, where he was a Chargehand General Duties Assistant, died on 22 January.

William Edward Davies, a Foreman at North Wirral until retiring in 1978, died on 23 January aged 81.

Ivor Rees Roberts, 85, who died on 25 January, was a Jointer's Mate in Oswestry before retirement in 1973.

Ronald Slack, who died on 27 January, aged 77, was an Executive Officer at Hoylelake Training Centre before retiring in 1981.

Patrick Bartley, who retired in 1991 at North Mersey, where he was a Driver, died on 27 January, aged 65.

Kenneth Helliwell, who died on 6 February, aged 82, was Group Manager at Head Office until his retirement in 1976.

## REACHING OUT TO THE LAW

MANWEB'S pride in being an environmentally minded company was explained and shown to a key audience at a meeting of the UK Environmental Law Association recently.

David Walker, Research and Technical Support Manager took this opportunity whilst welcoming members to the meeting hosted by Manweb.

Arranged by Bob Hodson, Head of Business Marketing and Sales, and Mike Rowley of Corporate Business Development, the meeting attracted over 60 from the Association — the foremost Association in the country for those interested in environmental law.

Consisting mainly of lawyers, the membership is widespread and also includes chartered surveyors, civil engineers and environmental scientists.

The main speaker on the evening was Mr Jose Martinez, a member of DGXI of the European Commission, the Directorate General which deals with Environmental affairs.

He talked on the direct enforcement of EC environmental directives and regulations in the UK.

The UK Environmental Law Association is regularly consulted on matters relating to environmental legislation from the UK and EEC and has given evidence to several Royal Commissions and House of Lords Select Committees.

Pictured at the meeting, viewing the Manweb stand are (l to r) David Walker, Jose Martinez and Bob Hodson.

## KOOSH MYSTERY — A PLEA!

SUSPECTING one of the AECR course facilitators, Noreen wrote to the then course organiser Gary Williams, pleading for a reunion with Suki.

She said: "Gary, I feel the time has come to bring this to your official attention. I have had a 'HELP ME' post card from my missing and MUCH NEEDED Koosh ball. It appears she is being held in Greece against her will. Can I stress how much agony this kidnapping has caused me, after all the tender and concerning training I have been through with your facilitators not to

mention the comfort of the Koosh balls I played with on each course.

"You can imagine my anguish at receiving a post card from my dear Suki (yes, she has a name) obviously in the hands of some renegade facilitators whom have deserted to Greece for reasons you may wish to question.

"I have notified Interpol who have sent one of their TOP agents (who I might add, specialises in the recovery of missing persons), to Greece with the help post card — handwriting experts have also been called in.

"I have given them your name and telephone number and assured them you would allow your files on your facilitators to be faxed so they can bring this matter to a conclusion soon."

PS: Should any 'accident' befall me I have placed all relevant documents in the hands of my solicitor with instructions to sell this story to the highest bidder and the proceeds to go to 'KOOSH AID' a well known charity.

**A hopeful Noreen Porter.**

*Did the plea succeed? See page 10.*

### Bright sparks!

MANWEB Contracting Services Ltd wish to remind readers that the Bright Sparks Competition is still running.

You are invited to send in any bright ideas you may have for developing the electrical contracting business.

In return those ideas thought to provide a particular spark will enable the sender to a choice of free meal or theatre tickets.

To date there have been no entrants but we are anxious to receive your brilliant ideas.

Please send your ideas to: Cheryl Stevenson, MCSL, Marketing Office, Birchwood.

# HELP FROM NETWORK SERVICES



Swaeysgor — before.



Swaeysgor — after.

## Keeping the lamplights burning

AS part of the active partnership with Network Services, MCSL is keeping the Manweb region glowing by working on street lighting based projects throughout the region.

Maintenance of services to street columns has been a traditional responsibility of Manweb plc, with the street columns and lights themselves often being the responsibility of local or parish councils. With a modern day increase in roads and estates, and a growing responsibility of local authorities to maintain lighting for pedestrian and road safety as well as crime prevention, maintaining excellent service standards and a speedy response to problems has become imperative.

The north of the region is presently the base for at least two large street lighting refurbishment projects. In Liverpool District, MCSL is currently working on approximately 716 column refurbishments around the area. An MCSL team is working with Lister Drive staff such as Harry Robertson (Construction Section) and Brian Williams (Street Lighting Section).

Bridle Road is the location for one of the largest street lighting projects. Here Bernie Robinson (Construction) and John Scott (Street Lighting Section) have provided MCSL with the opportunity of approximately 1,000 service refurbishments throughout the area. Teams are working a six-day rota covering columns owned by Sefton MBC, Knowsley MBC and Liverpool City Council.

At Redwither Road, MCSL's

Wrexham office, Engineer Geoff Edwards heads up the MCSL, maintenance and construction street lighting team. Geoff's team has already established a lucrative customer base with contracts to maintain street lighting for 72 local and parish councils across Wales and North Shropshire including: Wrexham MBC, Glyn Dwr DC, Colwyn BC, Alyn Deeside DC, Dyfed County Council and Ceredigion DC.

They also enjoy good relationships with their local Network Services colleagues, such as Bobby Ledsham (New Services Estimator, Dee Valley), Jan Williams (Administration), Andy Brown (Foreman) and Oswestry's Beverley Rogers (Administration) and Clwyd's Jill Hill (Administration).

MCSL is kept busy in Dee Valley and Oswestry where the company has negotiated with

Network Services to carry out maintenance of street lighting fed from overhead supplies. This type of lighting is commonly found in rural areas, where street lighting is mounted on wooden poles carrying Manweb overhead lines.

It is not possible to have street lighting columns running parallel in these areas. Discussions are also taking place with Network Services Engineer Jason Morgan, as to the possibility of a future project in Rhos to replace such pole mounted lighting with street lighting columns fed underground.

MCSL has already used its well practised skills in public lighting projects for industry and commerce, undertaking work such as car park lighting at National Rivers Authority offices in Sale and similar work at The Cadbury Plant, Chirk.

## PARTNERS IN TRAINING

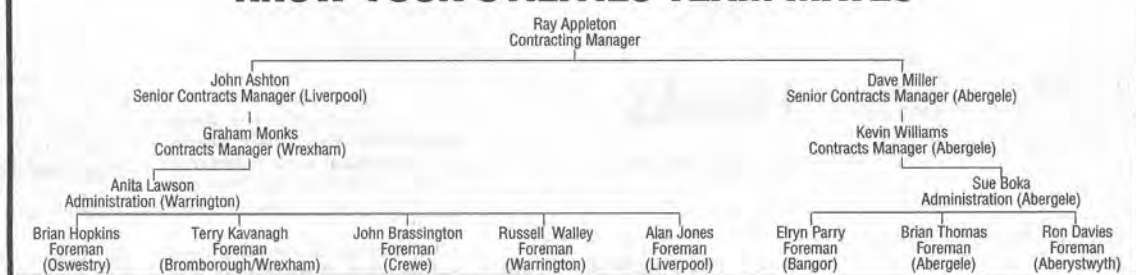
TRAINING is another sphere in which close relationships have developed between MCSL and Network Services to cater for the new company's hungry demand for new skills.

In March last year a temporary training school for LV jointing was established at Lister Drive. It was a combined venture in which Network Services, under the direction of the then Hoylake Skill Centre Manager Don McRae, provided the building facilities and training and MCSL carried out the design and refitting of the premises.

During March-December 1993 approximately 14 MCSL LV jointers passed through the training programme on courses ranging from three to six weeks. Since the project is complete, MCSL now relies on Don's replacement new Skill Centre Manager David Winter and his team to provide excellence in training standards, a task they fulfil with excellence.

Additionally MCSL continues to enjoy the use of the Hoylake Skill Centre to provide both high voltage basic and refresher courses to its own high voltage customers throughout the year.

## KNOW YOUR UTILITIES TEAM MATES



## PENSION SCHEME ELECTIONS

THE responsibility for the management of the Manweb section of the Electricity Supply Pension Scheme is in the hands of nine Group Trustees, six of whom are elected by the members. Four of these Elected Group Trustees are employee members and two are pensioner members. Every 18 months the term of office of two of the employee Group Trustees and one of the Pensioner Group Trustees expires and elections are held to fill the vacancies.

### Electoral Classes

In the past there have been separate electoral classes for candidates in different negotiating bodies and in the case of pensioner candidates for industrial and non-industrial members. Industrial members were only permitted to vote in the industrial classes and non-industrial members in the non-industrial classes.

In view of the fact that there is now only one Company Agreement for pay and conditions of employment, the Group Trustees have decided that in future there should no

longer be separate electoral classes, except for the distinction between employees and pensioners. This means that there will still be four employee Group Trustees and two pensioner Group Trustees but these posts may be held by any employee or pensioner member, as appropriate, regardless of former negotiating body. The Group Trustees have also decided that all members, whether employees or pensioners should be permitted to vote in both employee and pensioner categories. In reaching these decisions they were mindful of the fact that in law all trustees are required to consider the interests of all members and beneficiaries and are not just representative of a section of the membership.

### 1994 Election

The term of office of John Macdonald (employee), Jim Wilcock (employee), and Peter Falcon (pensioner)

will expire on 30 June, 1994, and an election will be necessary. Nominations are therefore sought from both employee and pensioner members as candidates in this election. Nomination forms and copies of the rules of the election may be obtained from the Pension Section, Manweb plc, Sealand Road, Chester, CH1 4LR. (Telephone 0244-652582 (external) or Head Office extension 2582 (internal)).

Each nomination form must be signed by ten members (employees and/or pensioners) and be sent or handed to the Group Administrator at the above address to reach him no later than 5 April, 1994. If there are more nominations than vacancies in either category, elections will be held in late May/early June with the results being announced before the end of June. The candidates elected will hold office until 30 June, 1997.



Pictured at the award presentation in Holyhead's Ucheldre Centre are (l to r): Islwyn Humphreys, Agricultural Business Manager for award sponsor National Westminster Bank, Manweb's Gwynedd District Manager Ian Basford, CPRW Vice Chairman Dei Tomos and Manweb's Head of Energy Resources Ian Sharpe.

## POWER SAVE'S TOP AWARD

MANWEB's pioneering Holyhead Power Save project has won a prestigious environmental award from the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales.

The Rural Wales Award has been made in recognition of Manweb's scheme to reduce power demand in Holyhead by 1 megawatt — the equivalent amount of power for 1,000 homes. Manweb is helping its customers cut their electricity bills by subsidising the installation of energy efficiency measures.

By reducing the consumption within the area Manweb will avoid the immediate need to install a third substation to cope with the rising demand for electricity in

the Holyhead area.

As customers' demand for electricity is reduced, demand for the generation of electricity is also affected, helping stem the emission of greenhouse gases.

CPRW's Assistant Director, Development, Tony Walker, said: "CPRW has for some time been placing emphasis on the real need to conserve energy for the benefit of the environment and local communities. We are pleased therefore to give some small recognition to Manweb's pioneering Power Save project in the form of a CPRW Award."

Manweb's Head of Energy Resources Ian Sharpe said: "Our Holyhead project has been a success on a number of fronts, not least of all in helping our customers save energy and reducing carbon dioxide emissions. We try to take account of environmental issues in all our activities, and we're delighted to receive this award from CPRW."

## Holiday help is needed

Dear Editor,  
I have just filled in a questionnaire which purports to be an attempt to determine the requirements for childcare within Manweb.

The questions which it blatantly fails to ask relate to the far more widespread problem of childcare DURING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS.

Most working couples manage to juggle their lives to cope up to the age of five, and in term-time thereafter, but occa-

sional help, in the direct provision of facilities during school holidays, is likely to be of wider appeal amongst staff.

Can we be assured that this aspect is to be given equal attention in the near future?

Chris Tigwell,  
EPEA TR,  
Liverpool District.

*Editor's note: There will be full details of the Childcare Support Policy in a forthcoming issue of 'Contact'.*

## Paper chase

Dear Editor,  
Let's see if I've got this right. First the road shows; then the courses; then the meetings and briefings. Now we have the endless letters, pamphlets, magazines and information sent to our homes and through the office. What's the point in switching the lights off; using less petrol; trying to save energy; thinking of the environment, when somebody at Head Office seems to be trying to wipe out the world's rain forest as soon as possible.

I do like being kept informed; but what's wrong with recycled paper?

I thought with the coming of the computer and DOJM, there would be less paper. The way things are going we won't be able to get out of the office or the house for paper. So come

on, let's try a bit harder.

PS: After all it says on the side of the van, "Make Life Easier, See the Man" — It doesn't say "Send Him a Letter".

B. Emberton,  
Building Section  
North Wirral.

## Thanks

Dear Manweb staff,  
Thank you very much for the used stamps received recently for Guide Dogs for the Blind. I raised £750 last year from stamps and I do hope you will continue to save them for us.

Mr J. McDowell,  
28 Oakhouse Drive,  
Chorlton,  
Manchester M21 8EN.

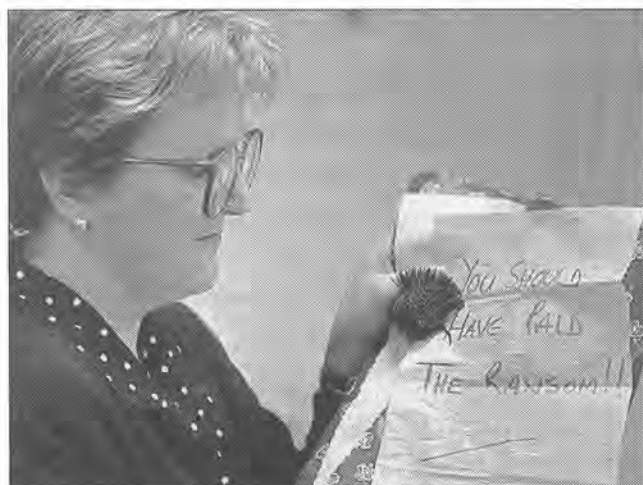
## SHARE YOUR VIEWS

DO you have a view you'd like to share or an opinion you'd like air? Then why not drop us a line?

Write to: The Editor, Contact, Room 5E1, Manweb plc, Sealand Road, Chester CH1 4LR. Please make sure you include your name and address or work location, as letters sent anonymously will not be used. All letters are dealt with in strict confidence and your name can, upon request, be withheld.

There's a free Parker Rollerball pen for every letter published (offer applies to staff, retired employees and their families only).

## KOOSH MYSTERY



NOREEN thought her plea had paid off when she received a gift-wrapped parcel containing what felt like a koosh ball. Alas, on opening it there was Suki — but with her once long tresses reduced to short back and sides. Noreen's latest move is a plan to 'sell' her story to Contact with a request for a 'minder' for Suki. "That means I want another Koosh ball," she says.

# IS restructured for challenge

MANWEB'S Information Services Department, and the services it delivers, is currently undergoing a major transformation.

John Peaker, Head of Information Services, explains: "The systems required by today's users are very different to those of old. There are unprecedented changes in business needs, tremendous advances in information technology and a need to introduce new systems quickly."

To meet this challenge the Department has recently been restructured (see chart below). This includes the appointment of Nick Balderson as Applications Development Manager. Nick was born in Chester and studied for his degree at Liverpool University before moving to the Midlands. He has held a number of senior IT posts and comes to Manweb from ITNET Ltd, a subsidiary of Cadbury Schweppes, where he had responsibility for Systems Development and Technical Planning.

Nick said: "The business is demanding new systems to replace the traditional mainframe-based systems developed for individual departments. The Single Telephone Number and Shop projects are amongst the first to incorporate these new style systems.

These are accessed from the PC and use downloaded mainframe data and newly developed graphical user interfaces (GUIs), which make working on-line much easier for the user."

To improve the development and delivery of these new systems IS has had to re-examine its operations and skills base.

Interviews with key Manweb business staff and managers provided a picture of the changes required to deliver the services that they need. An external agency assisted in the redesign of the department.



Nick Balderson

They examined the current processes within the department and identified those requiring improvement. These included problem management where identification and elimination of root causes is essential to delivering high quality service. Other areas included the systems development process, personal computing support, management system and quality improvement.

"The resulting organisation has been shaped by these processes, which are required to plan, develop and deliver the systems and services necessary to support the Company's business objectives," said John Peaker.

The Strategy and Architecture group, headed by Joe Caldwell, provides technical leadership and direction. Key new roles include those of Account Managers Dewi Jones and Mark Harrison. Their responsibilities involve contact with sponsoring managers, and include building proposals for the new systems developments. "This means matching users' requirements to available technology, both existing

## OPERATIONS AND SKILLS BASE RE-EXAMINED

and new, and providing a feed from this feasibility stage into the planning and development of IT solutions," says Dewi, IS Account Manager to Power Marketing.

Another key appointment was that of Brian Sheppard as Customer Focus Implementation Manager.

Ideally qualified for this post, Brian previously headed up the Customer Focus Working Group and will now help IS to implement the various elements of the Customer Focus Change Plan Projects. He also has responsibility for all local computing.

"IS has a huge task in this area — there is increasing demand for local PC-based systems, which are quicker to set-up, easier for people to use and more flexible," he explained.

However, as well as establishing these systems, we must improve the level of support. People are increasingly reliant on these local systems for everyday business operations."

Peter Goulding's Service Delivery Group is responsible for the quality and cost effectiveness of operational systems. The main contact for the user with problems is through

Peter's Help Desk (Tel: 182). Their task is to make sure that every problem is effectively and speedily resolved.

Finally, the Plans and Controls Section, headed by Mark Bellman, manages the financial planning, accounting and control of management processes on behalf of the IS Department.

Information Services is being transformed to meet unprecedented change and John Peaker says: "Our mission is to assist Manweb achieve its business goals by providing first-class information systems and services. The work we are doing now will help establish the partnership with our customers that we need to do this."

He added: "A big thank you must go to all the staff in and out of IS who have been affected in one way or another by the recent changes. Their enthusiasm and co-operation has helped smooth the transition to the new organisation. This is an essential ingredient in delivering the IS contribution to Manweb's vision of becoming a high quality, low cost utility, delivering extraordinary customer service."

## PRESENTATIONS



LONG service awards were presented to Liverpool District staff by District Manager Bill Tubey recently. Seen with their certificates are (l to r) Ronnie Fitzsimmons, 20 years; Tommy Mullins, 30 years; Sue Rowlands, 20 years; Colin Robertson, 30 years; Bill Tubey; John Woods, 20 years and Bob Connor, 20 years.

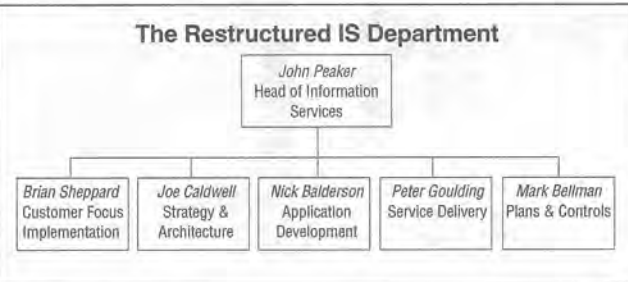


CON NOLAN represented the Liverpool Forum when Bill Tubey presented long service awards to Liverpool District staff. Pictured (l to r) are Con Nolan, Keith Morris, 30 years; Jim Henderson, 20 years; Harry Robertson, 30 years; Eric Boileau, 20 years; Geoff Ryan, 20 years; Bill Tubey, District Manager; John Boyer, Customer Services Manager and Ted Bostock, 30 years.

COLWYN BAY Shop staff said cheerio to Assistant Manager Beryl Jones on Christmas Eve, when she retired after 29 years' service. Beryl, who said she'll miss her colleagues and the friendly customers, plans to do more reading, cooking and travelling.

TAKING early retirement at the end of March, when he will have clocked up 31 years' service in the electricity supply industry, is Dee Valley Meter Operative Nigel Ralphs. Nigel, 56, is based at New Crane Street.

MANWEB helped Chester Talking Newspaper for the Blind raise £600 by donating a microwave oven for the charity's recent prize draw.



## Big push for Peter's fund

FOUR North Wirral District men are getting on their bikes in a 120-mile fund-raising pedal push.

They are Mike Gaskell, Fitting Department; Ken Vipond, CFU; John Moore, Garage and Mark Caulfield, Drawing Office.

The fearless four will set off from Birkenhead Depot bound for Aberystwyth Depot on Friday, 8 April.

They are riding to raise funds for the Peter Owen Benevolent Fund — the fund set up to help Peter of

the Building Section, North Wirral, who was injured in a freak road accident. Target for the fund is £35,000 to help buy a specially adapted motor caravan for Peter.

The only thing the Prenton pedal pushers need is sponsorship.

They are appealing to all Manweb employees to back them with cash on this worthwhile cycling stint.

Anyone who can help, please contact Mike Gaskell on int. Ext. 750 2380.

# IMPORTANT LIAISON



MANWEB recently hosted the prestigious meeting of the National Housing Town Planning Council (NHTPC) (North Wales Region) at Chester.

It was attended by delegates from the major local authorities in North Wales, including: Alyn & Deeside District Council, Aberconwy Borough Council, Colwyn Borough Council, Cyngor Dosbarth Dwyfor, Delyn Borough Council, Rhuddlan Borough Council, Gwynedd County Council, Meirionnydd District Council, Wrexham Maelor District Council, and Isle of Anglesey Borough Council.

The meeting, arranged by Development Engineer Roger Glover, was addressed by Anne Holmes, the National Director of NHTPC on the subject of the New Policy and Organisation of the Council.

With Roger's interest in energy efficiency, he included a presentation on Demand Side Management by Peter Benstead, Demand Side Management Manager. This was particularly relevant to the North Wales region as the presentation featured the Power Save Project at Holyhead.

"It is very important for us to liaise with the major decision-makers in the social housing market — particularly in relation to energy efficiency," said Roger.

Mike Edwards, Secretary of NHTPC said: "We are very pleased with this co-operation with Manweb and that they were able to host such a well attended and important meeting."

Pictured at the NHTPC meeting are (l to r) Roger Glover, Mike Edwards, John Chorlton, Chairman NHTPC (NW) and Ann Holmes.



# POLISHED PRESENTATION

AS the final part of their formal training with Network Services, a group of graduate trainees made polished and professional presentations on different and very topical tasks.

Each of them had completed a project on a technical or business-related subject, which was presented to Director Network Services Howard Kirkham and senior staff early in January.

Mr Kirkham congratulated

them on their comprehensive coverage of wide-ranging topics and, in particular, the way they managed to answer some difficult questions from a knowledgeable audience.

Network Training Manager Rodger Hemington is pictured (2nd from left) with Howard Kirkham (2nd from right) and graduate trainees (l-r) Mark Everett, Mike Murphy, Andrew Wainwright, Stuart Jones, Mike Whiteman and Amanda Rawstron.

# CONTACT

The newspaper for staff and retired employees of Manweb plc, Sealand Road, Chester CH1 4LR, telephone 0244 652090.

If you've an idea for a story or photograph, write, phone or come and talk to Editor Jackie Unsworth in Public Relations, Room 5E1, Head Office, ext. 2090. At the following locations, you can talk directly to one of Contact's District correspondents.

North Mersey: Pat Shaw .....ext. 2204  
 Liverpool: Harry Robertson ... .ext. 2160  
 Mid-Mersey: Mike Townson ..... ext. 2231  
 Dee Valley: Kath Sadowski ..... ext. 2202  
 North Wirral: Janet Ford ..... ext. 2360  
 Mid-Cheshire: Diana Wood ..... ext. 2117  
 Clwyd: Min Williams ..... ext. 2340  
 Gwynedd: Hefyn Thomas ..... ext. 2250  
 Oswestry: Sandra Goode ..... ext. 2206  
 Aberystwyth: Gloria Griffith ..... ext. 2261  
 Region 2: Liz Newman ..... ext. 85504

# FREE ADS

## FOR SALE

**Ace Rallyman Tourer**, 12ft, 1981, 12/240v, portapotti, Salou. Awning, 3-way fridge, tinted windows, excellent condition, £1,500. Contact Mr. J. H. Pomeroy, Tel. 0492 584275.

**Kenwood Major Food Mixer**, bargain, £45. Contact Mr. A. J. Thompson, Tel. 0745 826059.

**Hotpoint Fridge**, deluxe, excellent condition, only 2 years old, £100. Contact Linda Hinton, Tel. H/O ext. 2846.

**Electric lawnmower**, Qualcast Astronaut, full working order, £30. Contact Martin Davies, Tel. 051-710 2115.

**Dandy trailer tent**, six berth, including cooker etc. Full trailer electrics, ready to use. Only £575 ono. Please contact Craig Lewis, Head Office extension 2931, or 0850 875175.

**Personalised children's books** — your child becomes the star of the book. A wide selection of titles from A Teddy Bear Adventure to The Flintstones. Quality hard back books. Professionally written, £6.95 each. Tel. 051-487 5698 for samples/orders.

## VEHICLES

**Ford Fiesta 1.1LX**, 1990, H reg, white, 5-door, immaculate condition. Tax and MOT till Oct 94. 1 elderly owner, genuine reason for sale. Under 15,000 miles, £4,650 ono. Contact Chris Liddicoat, HQ ext. 2833 or 051-336 8678.

**1989 (F) Vauxhall Belmont 1300 Merit**. Carmine red, 50,000 miles, 12 months (Feb 95) MOT, £2,495 ono. Tel. 0244 660951 or 051-350 2607.

**VOLVO 340 DL**, E reg 1988, white, 68,000 miles, sunroof, radio, 3-doors, taxed until March, MOT June, good condition, £2,200 ono. Tel. 0925 756613.

**Kawasaki AR80 motorcycle**, G reg (1990), low mileage, all reasonable offers considered. Contact John Scott, N Mersey, Tel. 051 530 2139.

**Citroen BX**, H reg, 1600cc Meteor, ex-condition, all electrics, p/steering, 25,000 miles, one owner, full service, £4,195 ono. Tel. Home 0352 780938. Chester 700 3460.

**MGB GT V8**, 1973, original Abingdon car, gas flowed and balanced engine, lowered suspension, stainless exhaust, four new tyres, £5,995. Tel. (0606) 889110.

## HOLIDAYS

**Too Good To Be True!** How would you like your own apartment on the Costa Del Sol for life from £450 to £1,050 (per week). One off payment or £50 deposit and from £2.00 per

week for 7 years? I have had a timeshare with this company for 8 years and can fully recommend them for value for money and reliability. For further details contact Brian Thomas, M.C.S. Ltd Abergele 0745 822333 or Home 0492 580604. It will cost nothing to look and no salesman will call on you.

**French Alps/Annecy**. A traditional Savoyade farmhouse in beautiful Alpine valley, 30 mins to Annecy, 25 mins to La Clusaz. Sleeps 9, all modern facilities. Summer activities: walking, sailing, swimming, skating and luge. Winter: all winter sports. Contact P. Moray, internal H.O. 2311 or 051-336 6230.

**Costa Del Sol**. Why not get away for a few weeks in the sun? Studio apartment available from March 19 onwards. Suitable two persons. Help with flights and insurance if needed. Beautiful site, close to beach, bars and all amenities but not noisy. Cable TV, 24 hours reception, pool and gardens. For further details contact Bette Flanagan on 0244 341097.

**Disney - Florida**. Large 3 and 4 bedroom luxury villas on Loma Vista/Linda. All with own private pools. Only 15 mins from Disney. For brochure Tel. 0691 650123.

**Sattilo Alto, Costa Del Sol**. Studio apartments to let from £50 per week. The studio apartments are fully equipped, ensuite bath and shower, and the balconies overlook the extensive private gardens with two large pools, kiddies pool, pool bar, football table, pool table, tennis court and sunbeds. Also a lounge bar with entertainment most nights. For further details contact Brian Thomas, Home 0492-580604, Office 0745-822333 or internal Clwyd 2018

**Caravan To Let**. Seaview position. Sunnysands Caravan Park, Talybont, Barmouth. Static caravan (21ft), two bedrooms, one with double bed and one with two bunks, shower/hand basin and toilet. Full size cooker, mains electricity and water. This compact caravan will sleep 4 comfortably but does have the facility for 6 people with the main caravan area having sleeping facilities for 2 people. There are all amenities on site including a licensed social club. Reasonable rates. For further information please contact Mrs McCormick on Wrexham (0978) 750041.

**Carmarthen Bay**. Beautiful turnpike cottage in small village. Sleeps 6 + cot. Heating, TV, ideally situated for walking, touring, fishing. Tel. 075 885 272.

**North Wales, Colwyn Bay**. Swiss style chalet, sleeps up to five. Electric heating and cooking, bathroom and flush toilet, fridge, colour TV, garden and parking, situated in wooded dell near Eirias Park and beach. Weekly rates or weekends or midweek, pets welcome. Tel. 051-678 9854 for details.

**Borders of Cumbria and Scotland**. Spend your winter

breaks in a cosy cottage retreat on a Kirklington smallholding. Sleep 4, fully inclusive, open all year, lots to do locally, excellent touring base, no pets. For brochure Tel. 0228 75650.

**Caravan (modern)**, 31ft 6/7 berth, sited on Haven's award-winning park at Towyn, North Wales. All mains services, gas and electric, free. Fully equipped, including TV. Free family entertainment, heated indoor swimming pool, children's Tiger Club. All amenities on site. Sorry, no pets. Big savings on Haven's brochure price for Manweb employees and their families. Tel. 0244 372860.

**Seychelles** for a holiday which is unhurried, uncrowded, unspoilt and unique, staying in a new guesthouse standing in a 5-acre garden with its own beach. Details when you ring 0928 732530.

**Llandudno Branstone Hotel**. Privately owned Licensed Hotel. Special Easter 3-night break £59 per person half board. To make your reservation telephone Jan or Geoff Cole on 0492 876448 and don't forget to mention Contact.

## ACCOMMODATION

**Person** required to share house in Ellesmere Port less than half-mile from town centre. Full central heating, large bathroom, fitted kitchen. Only £150 pcm ALL bills included, excluding telephone. Contact Craig Lewis, Head Office extension 2931, or 0850 875175

**Rhyl** spacious first floor purpose-built flat, safe, secure, low heating and maintenance cost. Lounge, 2 bedrooms, newly fitted bathroom and kitchen, sun porch, entry, phone system, with or without furniture, £41,000 ono. Tel. 0745 351350.

**Chester**: A ground floor self-contained flat convenient for city centre. Purpose-built approximately 10 years ago. The flat has a reception hall, living room, kitchen, bedroom and

bathroom. There is car parking space within a walled area and communal garden area. £41,000. Contact Janet Wait on Head Office ext. 2091 or Allan Homes 0244 836286.

**For sale**: Two bedroomed mid-terraced cottage located in the Caego area just outside Wrexham town centre and the property has internal accommodation to include: Entrance porch, lounge/dining room, kitchen with fitted wall and base units and to the first floor there are two bedrooms, one of which has fitted wardrobes and a combined bathroom/wc. Externally there are gardens to the front and rear and to the rear of the property there is a detached garage and parking facilities for two cars. The property has a gas radiator heating system installed and double glazing throughout. Contact Clive Roberts, 0978 758246.

**Three** bedroom, detached house with garden to front and very large garden to rear. Fully gas central heated, fitted kitchen with Candy appliances, fully alarmed, garage. Three-and-a-half years old, fully carpeted and vertical blinds in every room. Part of new housing estate overlooking River Mersey, in New Ferry/Bebington border, Wirral. £55,500 ono, part exchange considered. Contact Craig Lewis Head Office extension 2931, or 0850 875175.

**B&B accommodation** near to A55 at Halkyn, ideal for walking, horse-riding, good pubs nearby, open all year. Tel. 0352 781146

**Four** bed semi Wallasey Village, UPVC double glazing, gch, garden to rear, close to M53 motorway. £49,950. Tel. 051-638 8397.

## PERSONAL

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# THE CENTRE OF ACTION

HOYLAKE Skills Centre showed its skills in action recently at a special day designed to demonstrate the value of NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications) to industry.

Direct trainer/Assessor Frank Hayman, with qualified Skills Assessors Steve Collier, Tony Parsons and Apprentice Kieron Kyte were on hand to advise visitors to the Skills In Action Day at Chester's Northgate Arena.

Organised by CEWTEC (Chester, Ellesmere Port and Wirral training Enterprise Council) the event attracted hundreds of visitors to see training and assessing demonstrations from a wide variety of companies.

The Manweb contribution was a demonstration of competence by second year apprentice Kieron Kyte showing the procedure for installing and testing domestic terminations.

## Attractive

The display stand featured examples of various sizes and types of cable, as well as providing background on Manweb and outlining the Company's training philosophy. All this was backed up by attractive informative literature.

"We had many interested visitors throughout the day of all age groups; male and female," said Frank.

Hoylelake Skill Centre, which is now officially an approved centre for City and Guilds in Development and Training, is fully committed to helping Manweb employees achieve NVQs, said



Angela Cook of Vicars Cross was one of the many interested visitors to the Manweb stand at the Skills Action Day. She is pictured here with Skills Assessor Tony Parsons and second year apprentice Kieron Kyte.

Frank. NVQs open up a route for people of all ages, to progress at all times. Adults with basic skills can be taken on in

the scheme.

The centre's association with CEWTEC, which provides a comprehensive information and



Apprentice Kieron Kyte putting his skills into action watched by (l to r) Richard Rose of Great Sutton, Fran Hayman, Direct/Trainer Assessor and Steve Collier, Assessor.

guidance service to local businesses, and helps employers develop training for their own staff, began just over two years ago. The Organisation is particularly interested in supporting the level of training which leads to NVQs.

Manweb's craft trainees now receive training towards NVQ Level three awards, based on the units laid out by the ETA Standards of Competency for Electrical Distribution and Transmission. To introduce this programme, Hoylelake Skills Centre has gained accreditation in City and Guilds 7281 series (TDLB) as an approved centre for issuing relevant qualifications.

## Qualified

The Centre has appointed internal verifiers to maintain training standards, and all staff are working towards NVQ level three qualifications in development and training.

Steve and Tony have recently gained the Skills Assessor Award and are

now qualified to carry out on site assessment of trainees to the City and Guilds requirements.

Assessments take place in actual work situations when the trainee has completed a number of on site tasks whilst working under the direct supervision of a competent craftsman.

"NVQs are about raising the standards of people's competence based on standards developed by industry and commerce," said Frank. "They are designed to give people better access to the opportunities offered by training, and the gaining of qualifications — as I have already said, it opens up a route of progress for everyone."

The Skills in Action Day gave us the opportunity to show the public and those interested in a career in the industry, just what Manweb does to train and develop its staff in these areas of competence. We also let them know that we provide specialist training for external customers on certain Engineering and Street Works courses

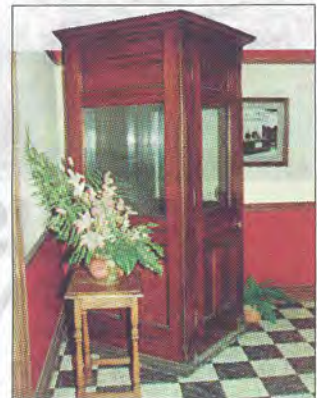
## TARDIS ON SITE

THE 'Tardis' has landed in a new location.

The old telephone box formerly used at Lavrock Bank is now in the National Tramway Museum at Crich, Derbyshire, resplendent in a new coat of varnish and displaying a brass plaque declaring its Liverpool origins.

It forms part of an exhibition of trams and tramways and the electricity generation and distribution systems associated with them.

When the 'Tardis' left his area, Chris Tigwell, 2nd Engineer, Liverpool District said: "By sending our 'Tardis' to the museum another bit of Liverpool's history is being preserved for posterity." And he added that, the museum, situated just off the A6 south of Matlock is well worth a visit.



## Customer FOCUS

# ON COURSE TO HELP CUSTOMERS

AN energy efficiency training initiative designed to help staff explain and justify energy consumption, particularly when a customer disputes it, is underway through Region 1 Customer Information Centre.

It has been developed between Marketing, Training and Development and Income Training, as an open learning package for district, regional and retail staff.

The open learning package has also been developed as a full day training course run by Frank Neill and Janet Shute. Training which will be given to all regional staff began



Presentation of City and Guilds Energy Efficiency Awards at Region 1 — Warrington. Pictured (l to r) are: Dave Clifton, Beverley Barlow, Ken Jones, Edna Lambert, Frank Neill, Janet Shute, Terry Brent and Chris Wright.

on 6 January and places the emphasis on areas known to be useful in practice, for example, in depth calculation of energy consumption.

The whole initiative has been set up following a report in Which? magazine which said electricity customers were dissatisfied with the way complaints were handled by electricity companies.

Manweb can point to research showing that 80 per cent of customers are satisfied with the Company's services. However, the Company

acknowledges that there is room for improvement.

The new training initiative can lead to City and Guilds qualifications. So far eight Manweb staff — four customer liaison officers and four office staff — have completed the City and Guilds course and exam. These courses are run by Jean Shaw, a qualified City and Guilds instructor from Manweb Training and Development.

Kate Walker Training and Projects Manager explained: "I felt there should be some higher level of expertise within the regional centre for customer liaison officers who visit customers' houses and for office staff to discuss problems in greater depth. This is important when they are called on to talk to

customers who may dispute the amount of electricity used: cannot afford to pay: have increased usage and cannot appreciate the cause: are not using appliances efficiently: need tariff advice or need advice on grants and insulation.

"Having this knowledge

provided by the course gives people a wide range of information to bring into use to help in many of these cases. The results of the course have proved very encouraging. Apart from enjoying the course, all staff now have more confidence in this area."



On an Energy Efficiency Course at Region 1 — Warrington. (l to r) Janet Shute, Frank Neill, Wendy Brown, Linda Gordon, Amanda Tisbury, Anita Williams, Sarah Pressage, Mike McKay and Simon Verdon.