

Merseyside and North Wales
Electricity Board
Editorial Office: Room GE26
Head Office, Sealand Road,
Chester CH1 4LR
Tel: Chester (0244) 377111
Internal: 2933/4/5

Half a
century's
service

THIS month of May marks the anniversary of 50 years' service to the electricity supply industry of John Francis Perry, principal assistant Press and Public Relations, and next month he will officially retire from MANWEB—he is currently enjoying retirement leave.

Since 1959, John has been the driving-force behind 'CONTACT'—this paper and formerly the magazine—which was first issued in December 1948. It is his proud boast to have maintained a continuous publication of 334 issues.

He was well known in every District of MANWEB and he has visited every shop, office and depot in his search



John Perry

for stories, with his camera and notebook. Often referred to as the "official photographer"—sometimes by people who ought to know better—John knew how to take a press picture to the standards required by newspapers, but he also wrote the stories, edited them and designed the page layout of 'CONTACT', in addition to carrying out press and other media promotions publicising MANWEB activities. As an official spokesman to the media, he represented the MANWEB view, commenting on news stories, and was available around the clock to the press.

It was in 1937 that he joined the Lancashire Electric Power Company and, two years later, war broke out; when he was old enough, he joined the R.A.F. He became a wireless operator on bombers, where he had to double up as a gunner. His aircraft was shot down on a mission over enemy territory. He baled out and was captured, and shipped to Germany to a prisoner-of-war camp. Inevitably he was involved in running the camp newspaper until the end of the war, when the camp was liberated by the Allies.

He returned to the Lancashire Electric Power Company, which became

TURN TO PAGE TWO

CHARTING THE MANWEB ROUTE

Operating and Development Plan published this month

THE key issues facing MANWEB in the current year, together with the objectives and the results which it is planned to achieve during 1988, are set out in the MANWEB Operating and Development Plan to be published this month.

In his introduction to the plan, MANWEB Chairman Bryan Weston comments: "We face immense challenges in all areas of our business, but not least in the market-place, where our main competitor, gas, is now operating in the private sector . . .

"... in operating and refurbishing our electricity distribution network, which, in future years, will require increasing investment to modernise and replace old equipment . . .

"... in seeking to collect our income, using effective and socially-acceptable methods which will require the application of new technology, as we strive to improve our performance."

The plan has been framed and published by the Management Services

Manager, Mr. Arthur Ellinson, and his staff, under the direction of the Executive Committee. It is an appraisal of how MANWEB intends to pursue its business over the next 12 months, and lays the foundation for the next few years.

Extracts and major points of the plan are printed in the centre pages of this issue of 'CONTACT'. Copies of the full document will be available later this month, and anyone interested in seeing the full plan should contact their LJCC representative or the head of their section.

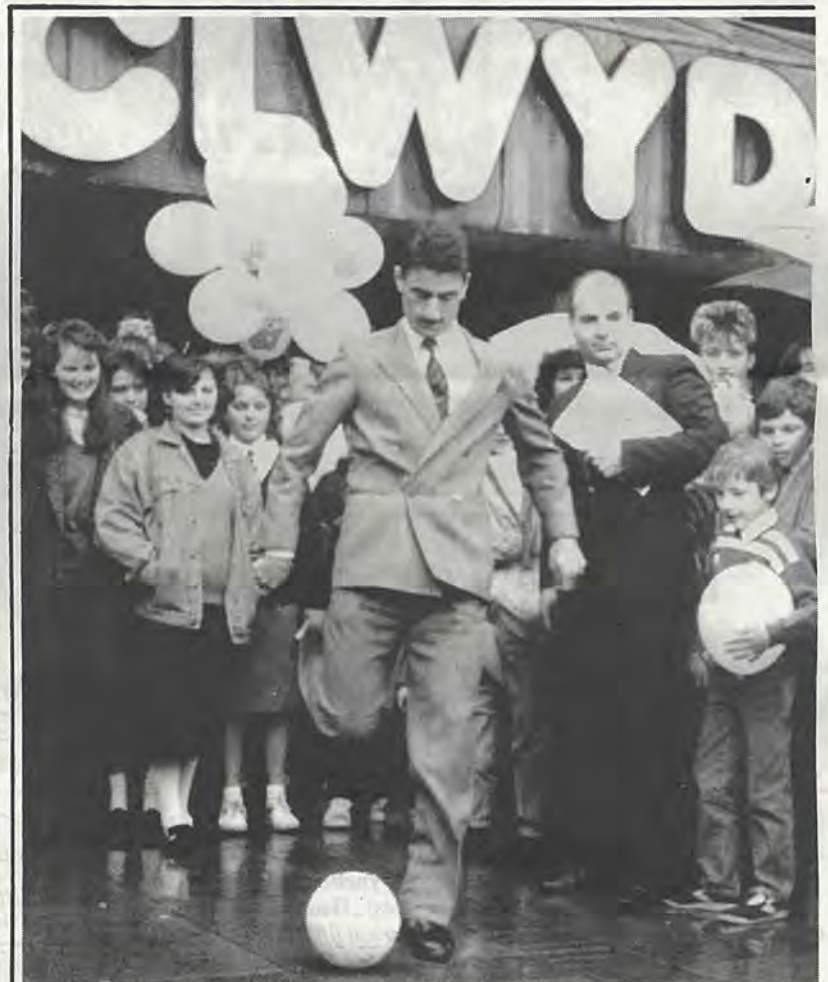
New Computer Centre planned for Chester

PLANNING permission has been sought for the erection of a new building adjacent to the south wing of the Head Office building at Sealand Road.

A new Computer Centre will be housed in the extension, which will be on two storeys, insignificant in relation to the present building, and unobtrusive from Sealand Road.

The new centre is needed to cope with the ever-increasing range of MANWEB activities which have become subject to computer application and control.

The proposals will go before the MANWEB Board for their consideration at their July meeting. If approved, it is expected that work will start towards the end of the summer, and should be complete by the end of 1988. The cost is anticipated to be around £3.25-million.



Ian Rush kicks off the BIROK '87 Exhibition

RUSH SCORES AT BIROK '87

WELSH goal-scoring ace Ian Rush was at the Theatre Clwyd in Mold to kick-off the BIROK '87 Exhibition. The Italy-bound star shot at a target bag, which burst and released balloons, to launch the opening of the four-day event.

"Building Industry Rules O.K." is the meaning of the title, which was aimed at creating an interest in the development of their environment by schoolchildren. They were asked to participate in a number of projects to bring out their ideas of the sort of society in which they lived.

There were 70 stands at the exhibition, with the MANWEB show cara-

van manned over the whole of the period. In addition, the film theatre had repeated showings of the *All-Electric Picture Show*.

A torrential downpour on the opening day kept the crowds down, but numbers of visitors increased on the remaining days, which were reasonably fine.

The event was organised by Chester and North Wales Chamber of Commerce, and was supported by their President, His Grace The Duke of Westminster, who presented the prizes for the winning projects on the last day of the event.

More pictures on page two.

MANWEB AT BIROK '87

Right: MANWEB Chairman Bryan Weston visited the BIROK Exhibition and is pictured with international soccer star Ian Rush and, on the right, Chris Powell of the BIROK Committee and the Chester and North Wales Chamber of Commerce.

Below: On MANWEB's caravan which rolled into the exhibition area are Barry Griffiths, left, from Dee Valley District, and Chris Williams, of North Wirral District. The caravan was situated at the entrance to the exhibition marquees, opposite Theatr Clwyd, where the opening ceremony took place



NUCLEAR ENERGY IS A NECESSITY FOR GROWTH

BRITAIN cannot afford to forgo the benefits of nuclear energy, Sir Philip Jones, Chairman of the Electricity Council, told leading industrialists recently. At a conference in London, he called on British industrialists to speak out in favour of the building of more nuclear power stations—in their own best interests. Said Sir Philip: "We need your support and encouragement."

"We need more nuclear energy to keep down our prices and to guarantee a continuous supply of electricity. We need this to maintain and hopefully improve our competitive position. It is in your interests as industrialists and in the interests of the nation."

Sir Philip accepted that it would be possible to phase out nuclear energy without the lights going out, but added: "The question that has to be faced is—at what cost?"

"It is quite clear that our industrial competitors do not intend to give up nuclear power. If we do so, it would put up costs of electricity and put our industry at a competitive disadvantage. Can we as a nation afford to forgo the benefits? I do not believe that we can."

Sir Philip, speaking at a conference organised by the Nuclear Electricity Information Group, welcomed the Government's



Sir Philip Jones

decision to authorise the construction of the first British pressurised water reactor at Sizewell in Suffolk.

He went on: "This is the beginning of a carefully-planned programme of nuclear capacity expansion. We need it in your interests; in the interests of a competitive British industrial

base. For you, who create the nation's wealth, have the right to secure, safe supplies of electricity generated at the lowest cost."

Sir Philip argued that Britain needed the diversity of fuel supply offered by further investment in nuclear energy. Power generation was at present too dependent on coal.

He stressed that greater investment in nuclear energy was a better option for Britain than either importing large tonnages of cheaper foreign coal, burning more oil or natural gas, or, at the present time, harnessing renewable energy sources.

He pointed out that the consumption of electricity in England and Wales was forecast to rise steadily in the medium-term, despite the contribution made by energy-efficiency measures to restraining growth in demand.

"Add to this modest growth, which we see carrying on into the next century, the need to replace existing ageing plant, and you will see that we cannot avoid building power stations. I believe that the answer must lie in more nuclear output," Sir Philip concluded.

Long Service

CONGRATULATIONS to the following members of the MANWEB staff who have completed 40, 30 and 20 years' service during the month of April.

40 YEARS—Mid-Cheshire District: Arthur Kettle (craftsman electrician). **Head Office:** Norman Maguire (executive office—Insurance) and Tony Smith (1st engineer—Network Control).

30 YEARS—Dee Valley District: Raymond Lee (general duties attendant). **North Wirral District:** John Swift (storekeeper) and Frank Nolan (craftsman electrician). **Gwynedd District:** Ieuan Merion Hughes (craftsman, overhead lines). **Head Office Transmission:** Edward Watson (craftsman, electrical fitting).

20 YEARS—North Mersey District: George Billington (general duties assistant). **Liverpool District:** John Greenhalgh (craftsman, jointing). **North Wirral District:** Norman Griffiths (meter operative). **Clwyd District:** Arthur Evans (switchboard attendant). **Gwynedd District:** Hugh Price Jones (craftsman, jointing). **Head Office:** Raymond Hughes (storekeeper) and Arthur Perrett (craftsman electrician).



"Don't you think that you are taking this emergency service duty a little too seriously, Dennis?"



Medallions presented at Southport and Wirral

Two Districts have recently presented Medallion Awards to warden-assisted flats for elderly people. Above, our picture shows District Manager Des Lock from North Wirral presenting McCarthy and Stone Regional Manager Graham Hallsworth with an award, watched by the Mayor and Mayoress of Wirral, Councillor and Mrs. David Williams. All 39 of the flats on the Homespray House Development have been sold

Left: North Wirral District Manager Jim McLennan presents the Construction Director of Wain Homes, John Hardy, with an award certificate for 52 flats in Park Road, Southport

Half a century's service

* From page one

part of Norweb in the nationalised electricity industry in 1948, moving to MANWEB in 1959.

Away from the office, John has a keen interest in the theatre, music and opera. His wife, Alma, is an accomplished singer, and has appeared in local stage productions both in opera and in musicals. Daughter Debbie treads the boards, although she works as a clerical assistant for the police in Chester. Son Peter is established in the advertising

profession in London.

John and Alma enjoy travel and this was reflected in their choice of retirement gift from friends and colleagues—some luggage. In a letter, John expressed his thanks to all his former colleagues at Head Office and in the Districts who contributed to his gift. May we wish him and Alma a long and happy retirement, and hope that he pursues it with the same vigour and energy that he contributed to MANWEB.



Modernising the telephone network

by Tony Timmins (2nd engineer Technical—Head Office)

THE modernisation of MANWEB's internal telephone network which began in Gwynedd District with the installation of our first digital Private Automatic Branch Exchange (PABX) in 1985, is going forward at an accelerating pace and is expected to be completed during 1988.

When the whole programme is complete, each member of the staff will have just one telephone at his or her elbow, instead of internal and external network instruments. This will make it possible to make direct contact with every other internal location throughout the Board's area, and will also give direct access to British Telecom's national network. The level of "outside access" will be governed by the kind of work normally carried out by the individuals concerned.

As part of the overall exercise, our customers are being "educated" to use dedicated numbers when calling our District offices, which will route them straight through to the work sections concerned with the specific problems involved. This is expected to cut down drastically on wrongly-directed and transferred calls—the cause of a great deal of customer frustration. Ideally, an incoming caller can expect to be answered in no

more than 15 seconds—by the right person!

By 1990, it is expected that there will be more than 4,500 telephone extensions in use on the MANWEB network. The introduction of a standardised system is expected to speed up and simplify the whole business of telephone communication, allowing the quick and easy transfer of calls to other locations and individuals at the same time.

Each District, and Head Office, will have its own Private Automatic Branch Exchange, with simplified codes containing a maximum of seven digits and no need to pause to wait for a "dialling tone".

In addition to the 11 main workplaces within MANWEB, there are a further 22 locations—depots and main sub-stations—which are to have their telephone systems upgraded with systems which are compatible with the PABX network.

During the next ten years, the introduction of telephone exchanges operating purely by light-beams and lasers through fibre-optic cables may see even more dramatic developments in telecommunications, with the possibility that each Electricity Board will have only one telephone exchange running all its telecommunications activities, with fibre-optics linking all Area Boards and electricity supply industry establishments.

The new-type telephone console which replaces the old cord and plug style exchange. The District Manager's secretary, Norma Davies, does a stint of relief duty



PABX INSTALLATIONS

THE first PABX exchange at Gwynedd's new office in Caernarfon was followed by comparable installations at Mid-Mersey, Dee Valley and Liverpool Districts. The most recent to be installed, completed only in April, is at North Mersey District.

Next in line is Clwyd District, in June, followed by Head Office between August and September, while the systems of the three other Districts of Mid-Cheshire, Oswestry and Aberystwyth will be replaced during 1988.



Author Tony Timmins checks the telephone system at North Wirral, using the computerised maintenance equipment, which can programme changes in the system

The automatic call distribution system in operation in North Wirral, where accounts queries come direct to operators at V.D.U.s with direct access to customer accounts records. Rachael O'Connell and David Higgett can be seen at two of the terminals



TOP OF THE CLASS

—school cook winner

The lucky youngsters at Ashurst County Primary School, St. Helens, have a prize-winning cook to make them sweets. Christine Woodward is seen, below, receiving her certificate from Mid-Mersey Energy Marketing Engineer John Ellis for winning the School Cooks Competition MANWEB final, which gave her the opportunity to compete at Hotel Olympia. The contest is to find the cook who creates the best sweet



Merseysport receive a van from MANWEB

Gerry Haughan, Liverpool District Manager, is seen handing over a Ford Transit van to Des Roper and Ben Harrison, of Merseysport. Merseysport is a registered charity which is run by Merseyside Council for Voluntary Service. Their basic aim is to act as a catalyst to encourage the setting-up of sporting groups on Merseyside which will become self-sustaining. In order to help these groups, Merseysport provide sports equipment at very low rental, and the MANWEB gift of a van will assist the charity to transport the equipment and visit groups to provide encouragement.



MANWEB OPERATING A

Corporate Objectives

THE overall MANWEB corporate objective is to develop and maintain electricity supplies to meet customers' needs on a continuing basis and as economically as possible.

The medium-term aim is to achieve a reduction in the real price per unit of electricity sold, maintain high standards of service and an acceptable rate of return.

The objectives in the main areas of business are:—

Finance—To achieve the agreed financial targets and performance aim.

Tariffs—To reflect and recover costs and to promote the growth of load.

Electricity Marketing—To increase electricity's market share by encour-

aging its cost-effective use by all customers.

Distribution—To ensure that electricity is distributed at minimum cost consistent with maintaining adequate standards of security and safety.

Meter Reading, Billing and Collection—To develop and maintain cost-effective systems and procedures for meter reading, billing and collection which will reduce MANWEB's costs whilst balancing the needs of the individual against the interests of the customers at large.

Retail Trading—To operate the contracting and appliance marketing activities in support of the main business, and to achieve a specified level of financial return.

Manpower and Productivity — To have an effectively-motivated, high-productivity workforce of the right size and mix of skills.

Key Issues for 1987/88

Towards the end of 1986, the MANWEB Board and the Joint Co-ordinating Council identified a number of key issues which it was decided should receive special attention during 1987/88. The key issues selected are:—

- Refurbishment and replacement of assets
- Income collection
- Customer Service

In addition, two key issues from last year's plan were considered to be sufficiently important to be included in this year's plan as "Areas of Continuing Emphasis":—

- Anti-theft activities/meter modernisation
- Corporate marketing.

Financial Targets

Return on Capital—For 1987/88, MANWEB is forecasting a return on capital of 1.2 per cent as part of a target of 2.4 per cent for the three years 1985/88, which has been agreed with the Government.

Repayment of Borrowings—Instead of being able to make repayments of borrowings, MANWEB will have to borrow an additional £15-million during 1987/88, mainly due to:—

- Increased capital expenditure
- A decrease in net profit
- An increase in debtors.

Performance Aim—The electricity supply industry has agreed a performance aim to reduce controllable costs per unit sold by 6.1 per cent between 1983/84 and 1987/88.

Operating Profit—During 1987/88, we are aiming for an operating profit from our electricity sales of approximately £5.3-million (before monetary working capital adjustment).

Customer Service

Several initiatives are planned to help improve the quality of service which MANWEB gives to its customers. These include:—

- The introduction of customer enquiry units into Districts to connect customers directly with staff trained and equipped to handle enquiries.
- The extension of the concept of Services Sections for handling enquiries from customers who require new or modified supplies.
- Commencing studies to develop plans for the introduction of V.D.U.s in shops to provide customers with instant responses when answering account queries, checking stock availability, credit-checking and providing appliance delivery dates.
- Improved computer back-up facilities in most customer contact areas, including installation inspection and meter-changing work.

Information Technology

During 1987/88, Computer Services staff will be working on the development of over 100 new systems, including the introduction of computer equipment in District stores, foremen's offices and shops.

Automatic call distribution telephone enquiries in operation at North Wirral District, part of the computer-based development



Developments in computer software and personal computing are changing the management of information technology within MANWEB.

There will be a growing emphasis on user support facilities and training of non-computer staff in personal computing, mainframe systems appreciation and in the skills required to operate equipment associated with computing systems.

Anti-Theft Activities/Meter Modernisation

In a major drive to combat the growing problem of electricity theft and in order to improve the safety and security of service positions, the meter modernisation programme will be operating in North Mersey, Liverpool, Mid-Mersey, Dee Valley and North Wirral Districts.

Forty thousand of the new all-over polycarbonate covers will be fitted during 1987 to protect MANWEB equipment at customers' supply positions. Computer back-up systems will also be improved to help clerical staff working in this important area.

Below: The polycarbonate plastic cover—or the "bubble", as it has been dubbed



Card-operated meters similar to the one pictured will be introduced to more MANWEB customers in 1987/88

Income Collection

MANWEB's aim is to continue the steady reduction in the number of disconnections, contain the level of debt and operate the income-collecting function in a cost-effective manner. To achieve this, it is intended to:—

- Replace coin-operated meters with card-operated meters, initially as an alternative to disconnection and eventually as the standard arrangement for customers who need a pay-as-you-go facility.
- Continue to develop, in conjunction with other Boards, card dispensers for card-operated meters.

- Develop a debt counselling service to improve customer awareness of facilities offered by MANWEB to those with payment problems.
- Vigorously promote planned payment schemes, such as direct debit payments.
- Extend the use of new technology to improve our performance in areas such as cash input, quarterly and monthly billing, legal action, meter reading input and standard letter production.
- Consider the further extension of the annual reading system.
- Examine the possible benefits from varying the meter-reading cycle and introduce revised arrangements where suitable.
- Review and revise the allocation of work associated with income collection between Head Office and District-based staff.

AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Corporate Marketing

In view of the increased competitive pressure expected from the privatised Gas industry, we shall continue to attach major importance to increasing our share in the energy market.

- Using improved computer systems and strengthened by increased resources, we shall aim to achieve a new sales target of at least 319-million units sold—our 1986/87 target was 249-million units.
- Following the success of last year's *Economy 7* promotion, we shall boost our efforts to increase staff awareness of the importance of corporate marketing.
- The "Heatcare" initiative, which was introduced in 1986/87, will be promoted actively.
- New metering equipment will be introduced to enable commercial and industrial users to adjust their pattern of electricity consumption in response to a wider range of tariffs with time-differentiated unit rates.

Public Relations

The aim will be to increase public and staff knowledge of the electricity supply industry's policies and activities.

Achievements and successes will be publicised, and MANWEB will demonstrate an awareness of such issues as energy efficiency and the environmental, social and economic factors within MANWEB's area of supply.

The image of MANWEB as an efficient, caring organisation, capable of meeting customer needs, will be promoted.

Briefing sessions will be provided at District Offices for M.P.s, local councillors and journalists to explain MANWEB's policies and our role in providing an efficient and convenient source of energy.

The introduction of debt counsellors will also help to enhance MANWEB's public image.

For Welsh-speaking customers, there will be an additional use of the language, where appropriate.

More shops will receive revised fascias depicting MANWEB's new colour scheme and logo.

Organisation

During 1987/88, efforts will continue to consolidate the organisational changes associated with the establishment of District Manager posts at District. It is anticipated that the consultative process associated with the development of organisational structures below District Managers will soon be completed.

Whilst continuing changes in workload patterns and the economic environment will require regular review of organisational structures, it is not envisaged at this stage that any major changes in the overall MANWEB organisational structure will take place.

Main contract works for the new Mid-Mersey District office and depot are programmed for commencement during 1987/88 and the project, costing over £6-million, is scheduled for completion in 1991/92.

Work is continuing on the refurbishment and modernisation of the Head Office complex and, during 1987/88, work will commence on the development of new conference facilities at Head Office.

The programme of upgrading the commercial image of the MANWEB shop premises will continue during 1987/88. This is part of the three-year programme which, in total, will cost some £0.7-million.

Training

A major review of a range of education and training policies will include:—

- Improving supervisory training for existing and potential supervisors.
- Examining the possibility of providing a craft trainee route for suitable non-craftsmen.
- Reviewing the financial assistance arrangements for obtaining educational and professional qualifications.
- Re-examining training in customer and public relations.
- Providing training programmes to maintain and develop the skills of existing staff engaged in craft, administrative, marketing and engineering activities.
- Developing plans to extend the facilities of the Hoylake Training Centre.

Other developments include the consolidation of work associated with the establishment of the following new training schemes:—

- Two years' training under the Y.T.S. for clerical, sales, maintenance and repair programmes.
- Clerical training programme.
- Accountancy trainees programme.

Spending for the Future

MANWEB's capital expenditure between 1987 and 1988 is expected to be £42.7-million.

The bulk of this money (£32.2-million) will be spent on the expansion and development of the electricity distribution network. The rest (£10.5-million) will be spent on non-system items such as land and buildings, vehicles and mobile plant, computer equipment, etc.

Of the £32-million system expenditure, most (around £22.1-million) will go to providing new supplies, with about £10.1-million being set aside for the reinforcement of the existing network.

Amongst major schemes planned for the year ahead are the building of four

33/11-kV sub-stations—at Kelloggs on the Wrexham Industrial Estate, at the Westbrook Commercial Centre in Warrington, at an engineering park at Sandycroft, and at King's Meadow Business Park in Chester.

There will be increased expenditure to replace and refurbish ageing distribution equipment. Examples of this work include:—

- Replacing steel-conductored 11-kV overhead lines
- Rebuilding and refurbishment of 33-kV overhead lines
- Rationalisation of 132-kV circuits at Connahs Quay sub-station
- The change-over of existing 6.6-kV networks to 11-kV, including major change-over work within Chester City Centre (part of a five-year programme).

Manpower

The main developments for the year ahead include:—

- Stepping-up planned recruitment of trainees, with the aim of taking on 95 trainees, compared with 70 last year.
- Implementing MANWEB's revised Equal Opportunities Policy to ensure that there is no discrimination on the grounds of sex, religion, ethnic origin or disablement.
- Continuing efforts through local safety committees to reduce the level of accidents at work.
- Introducing an alcohol and drug abuse policy.

Treasure Hunt

NOW that you have had the opportunity of reading the Operating and Development Plan for this coming year, turn to the back page and have a go at the Treasure Hunt set by 'Fred's Puzzle Corner'. You could win a fiver for your efforts.

Refurbishment and Replacement of Assets

As the network has aged, it has been necessary to commence the task of refurbishing and replacing this asset. Whilst overhead line refurbishment has been an ongoing programme for a number of years, it has sometimes taken second place to other work. It is now necessary to reassess the rate at which refurbishment programmes are progressed and to consider the major financial and staffing implications of such programmes.

During 1987, a new strategy will be developed to smooth the expected work peaks over the next two decades and establish a reasonably constant workload.

A key consideration in future schemes will be the visual impact of overhead mains and services in rural villages. A further feature will be the continued change-over programme from 6-kV to 11-kV, which will encompass approximately 25 per cent of MANWEB underground kV network and will take some 20 years to complete.



◀ Before . . .
... and after ▶
As part of the refurbishment of the MANWEB network, a single-strand of multi-core line has been introduced. Here you can see the aerial bundle conductor, on the right, in Ruthin



RETIREMENTS



Above: Farewell to Gerry Worthington, right, from Bryan Ogden, watched by Gerry's wife, Emily, and colleagues



Above: John Gillett, right, with engineering colleagues



Teg Williams, right, shakes hands with Thomas Emyr Jones



Goodbye and good fishing to John Blackburn from Des Lock

Mr. G. D. WORTHINGTON TAKING early retirement from Head Office due to ill-health is lighting specialist Gerry Worthington, after 18 years' service with MANWEB.

Gerry was in the Royal Navy during the war, and worked for Hoover, Norweb and Osram before he joined MANWEB, where he was the 2nd engineer in the Head Office Energy Marketing section.

Gerry's wife, Emily, worked for MANWEB until her retirement last year and, at one time, his son Garry also worked for the Board. Energy Marketing Manager Bryan Ogden gave Gerry an electric typewriter from friends and colleagues.

Mr. W. S. GILLET AS a Londoner, Walter Sydney Gillett wore a kilt extremely well. Better known as "John" Gillett—something he picked up in the RAF—he is a very agile Scottish dancer.

John was an administrative assistant at Head Office in the Engineering Clerical section, until he retired after 20 years' service to MANWEB.

Widowed, he has two sons and a daughter—all married, with four grandchildren between them. One of the sons, Steve, works in Dee Valley District.

Engineering Manager John Young handed John some cash, which went to buy a skean-dhu—the knife the Scots wear in their stocking.

Mr. T. E. JONES DEE Valley District staff said farewell to Thomas Emyr Jones, a chargehand storekeeper at Legacy Depot. He retires, due to ill-health, after 30 years' service with MANWEB.

He served with the Royal Engineers in the latter stages of the war, becoming a platoon sergeant. He was employed at a brickworks and a foundry before joining MANWEB in 1956, initially as a clerk, and eventually becoming a storekeeper. On behalf of his colleagues, he was presented with a telescope by Administrative Manager Teg Williams.

Mr. J. BLACKBURN IT was a farewell after 40 years' service to North Wirral HV jointer John Blackburn, who retired early due to ill-health.

He served in the Merchant Navy during World War II, joining the Birkenhead Corporation just prior to nationalisation of the electricity industry in 1948.

In his younger days he was a keen footballer, playing in goal for West Kirby. Now he enjoys a game of bowls and is a do-it-yourself expert. He also likes gardening.

John is also a keen fisherman, and District Manager Des Lock presented him with a new reel on behalf of his colleagues.

Mr. R. TURNER METER fixer Ron Turner retired from North Wirral District, leaving behind his wife Hilda, who works for the General Services Section in the District.

Ron is a keen photographer and gardener, and District Manager Des Lock made a presentation to him on behalf of his colleagues.

Clwyd LJCC Open Meeting

LESSONS OF CHERNOBYL

THE lessons to be learned from the nuclear disaster at the Chernobyl power plant in the Soviet Union—and reassurance for the people of Britain—was the theme of a talk by Mr. Donald Doo, manager of Trawsfynydd power station, guest speaker at Clwyd District's annual employees' conference.

The occasion, staged at a Rhyl hotel, drew a good attendance from staff and retired colleagues, and Mr. Doo heroically stepped in as guest speaker at the last minute, in place of Mr. Vic Brown, the CEBG's Regional Director of Generation, called away on urgent business.

After words of welcome from District Manager Doug Willacy, Mr. Doo said that Chernobyl had focussed much attention on the nuclear power industry. It had been the worst accident in the history of the industry, leading to 31 immediate deaths and the release of a great deal of radioactivity into the environment. In

turn, there had been prohibitions on the consumption of certain types of foodstuffs throughout Europe, and some of these were still in force. North Wales farmers had lost no opportunity of letting the industry know what they thought about nuclear power!

Emphasising the "it-couldn't-happen-here" message, Mr. Doo said that the way in which the Russians had conducted their nuclear power industry was in no way comparable with our methods. Gross malpractices by the Chernobyl power station operators, in which rules had been flouted and safety functions deliberately over-ridden, had created a situation in which the reactor became unstable. The Russians were taking urgent measures to remedy these weaknesses.

But there were lessons from Chernobyl even for our own nuclear industry. The design of our reactors had been reviewed again, and another look had been taken at accidents previously considered to be incredible.

"The awesome potential power of a nuclear reactor had been demonstrated at Chernobyl," added the speaker. "In the last tenth of a second of its life, the Chernobyl reactor was generating more power than all the nuclear reactors in the Western world," he added.

Mr. Doo went on to emphasise the importance of pressing forward with an expanding UK nuclear power industry. Britain was still very dependent on coal as a primary energy source, and Sizewell B alone would supply energy equivalent to that of 2½-million tonnes of coal every year. Only further expansion in nuclear generating capacity would ensure that the country's future electricity needs would be met.

MARCH 1987 CROSSWORD

Solution

Across—1, Inimical; 9, Anecdote; 10, Oman; 11, Kick-starters; 13, Magyar; 14, Internee; 15, Gearbox; 16, Orchard; 20, Shanghai; 22, Lahore; 23, Rightfulness; 25, Trio; 26, Parousia; 27, Misleads; 30, Despatch; 34, All clear; 36, Mugs; 37, Tittle-tattle; 39, Virgil; 40, Tarragon; 41, Persist; 42, Offends; 46, Unharmful; 48, Accuse; 49, Dispensation; 51, Tote; 52, Football; 53, Yeomanry.

Down—2, Numerate; 3, Monkey wrench; 4, Concerto; 5, Lawsuit; 6, Besant; 7, Love; 8, Bedstead; 12, Torch thistle; 15, Gastropods; 17, Relieves; 18, Rarified; 19, William Hazlitt; 21, Huffs; 24, Gurus; 28, Adept; 29, Sergeants; 31, Equalise; 32, Postage stamp; 33, Tantalus; 35, Later; 38, Trade-scantia; 41, Plum duff; 43, Flamingo; 44, Deserter; 45, Ideally; 47, Monday; 50, Snow.



EEIBA GRAND NATIONAL WINNER

Stewart Cook, the draw organiser and Manager of Edmonsons Electrical in Wrexham, presents Myfanwy Davies, administrative assistant in Dee Valley, with a cheque for £250, first prize in the Grand National Draw for the EEIBA

WARRINGTON BUSINESS PROMOTION BUREAU

Mid-Mersey Manager Glyn Norbury presents a cheque for £1,000 to Brian Rick, Manager of the Warrington Business Promotion Bureau. This is the second year that MANWEB has helped fund the work of the Bureau, which helps local business in the Warrington area



OBITUARY

IT is with deep regret that we report the deaths of the following former colleagues:—

Mr. "Willie" Gilchrist, our first Chief Commercial Officer, aged 92, who was a wee bundle of Scottish energy, and who came along to MANWEB from London when the industry became nationalised, and remained very active in retirement until after his 90th birthday. He contributed a regular column to early numbers of 'CONTACT', under the title *Commercial Commentary*.

Mr. William Blackburn, aged 75, was an engineer in the Meter Test section at Head Office and in the former are 2/3 before his retirement in 1971.

Mr. William Hugh Williams, aged 76, was a consumers engineer at Llangefni, Anglesey, until his retirement in 1971.

Football and a Ceilidh

THERE was a right old ceilidh in the Thingwall Road club a few weeks ago, thanks to visitors from the Emerald Isle who were guests of MANWEB and the Sports and Welfare Club in Liverpool.

George Barr tells us that, after a visit to Lister Drive, the employees from Honey Point power station in County Clare played a game of soccer against a team from the District. Showing their Irish generosity, they allowed their hosts to score five goals, to win the sporting and enjoyable game.

It was off to the clubhouse for a buffet, organised by District Manager Gerry Haughan, who is president of the club. Then came out the guitars, and the visitors provided some impromptu entertainment, music, singing and real Irish wit—all the ingredients of an enjoyable evening.

An invitation has been extended to members of the MANWEB team and their supporters to visit County Clare in September. It is hoped that the exchange visits can be made an annual event.



The massed squads of the four competing nations and the Head Office building form a backdrop as the four skippers shake hands at the start of an international friendship soccer tournament

INTERNATIONAL SOCCER WEEKEND

A FOUR-NATION soccer contest was held at Chester over the Easter holiday, with teams from Germany, Belgium, Wales and England.

The tournament was organised by the football section of the MANWEB (Chester) Sports and Social Club. They invited teams from Antwerp in the Flemish-speaking part of Bel-

gium, and from Hamburg in West Germany. Both teams and their supporters were from the local electricity authorities.

The Chester club divided into two teams—those who lived in Wales represented the principality and those who lived across the English side of the border played as England's team.

The Germans, who arrived

on Good Friday, were taken on a tour of Chester in the afternoon, followed by another one in the evening—this time to the local hostelrys. On Saturday, the Belgian team arrived, and they played the English team in the afternoon, losing six goals to nil. Meanwhile the Germans beat the Welsh by two goals to one.

That evening, a barbecue at the *Bickerton Poacher*, in the middle of the Cheshire countryside, was enjoyed by all the teams. Sunday saw the visitors on a ferry across the Mersey to Liverpool's Albert Dock, followed by a quick look at The Cavern, Anfield Road and Goodison Park, before returning to Chester to play their

second match.

The team from Hamburg beat England by five goals to one, with the Welsh and Belgian teams sharing four goals. The relaxing evening which followed brought a successful visit to a close. The credit for organisation goes to Hugh Farrow, Nigel Crossley and John Gorman.

COME FISHING

MANWEB Coarse Fishing team are to compete in the Electricity Supply Industry Championships on the River Trent. The competition will be held on 16th September at Long Higgen, near Nottingham.

MANWEB team have won the competition in the past, but, in recent years, they have only managed to finish in the second half of the field. Nearly 200 anglers will be contesting the prizes and the pool money. Fifteen of them will be from MANWEB, 12 top weights counting towards the team prize.

If you fancy your chance with a rod and line and would like to be considered for the team, get in touch with John Tyreman or Dave Garratt at Head Office, internal telephone 2072.



It's a try for Lymm Under-9s

RUGBY ECONOMY 7s SWITCH ON CLUBS

HOYLAKE and Mold were the venues of two MANWEB-sponsored Rugby 7s contests for junior and mini players. Linked to the *Economy 7* tariff, the competition is a sort of Rugby equivalent to five-a-side soccer.

There were five competitions at Hoylake, each for a different age-group, starting with the under-nines to the under-13s. It was Lymm Rugby Club which

dominated the competition, with strength in depth. They won three of the finals, with the hosts, Hoylake, winning the under-13 trophy, and the Vale of Lune the under-11 trophy.

The Mayor and Mayoress of Wirral, Councillor and Mrs. David Williams, were on hand to present the prizes, assisted by North Wirral Energy Marketing Engineer, Ron Jones.

At Mold, it was the host club who took the under-16s title from local rivals, Chester. The trophy was presented by Ron Carter, Clwyd Energy Marketing Engineer.

Two enjoyable days of Rugby saw hundreds of active youngsters attending, whose impeccable behaviour on and off the pitch was a credit to the game and also to the self-discipline engendered by the clubs.



Above: Clwyd District Energy Marketing Engineer Ron Carter presents the winning captain of the Mold Under-16s with the Economy 7 trophy

Below: The five winning skippers of the Mini Rugby 7s, with, from the left: Mayoress Eileen Williams, Ron Williams (Energy Marketing Engineer, North Wirral), the Mayor of Wirral, Councillor David Williams, and Hoylake Club Chairman Jack Curton





FRED'S PUZZLE CORNER

Treasure Hunt

SUMMER is almost upon us, and most sports and social clubs will be organising some form of treasure hunt as part of their programme of events. To get you in the mood, we have a special competition this month, with a Treasure Hunt consisting of eight clues taken from MANWEB's Operating Plan. Before you groan at the prospect of reading the plan, remember that it is an important document relevant to the future of the industry—YOUR industry.

After you have found all the answers, jot them on a piece of paper, add your name and workplace (or home address if you are a pensioner) and send your entry to 'CONTACT', MANWEB, Sealand Road, Chester CH1 4LR, marking your envelope 'Treasure Hunt'. Closing date for the receipt of entries is 1st June, when the first three all-correct solutions opened will be rewarded with £5-worth of 'treasure'. Good hunting!

Here are the clues to the treasure

1. How much of MANWEB's expected capital expenditure for 1987/88 will be spent on non-system items?
2. Cornflakes may be produced at this estate, the location for a planned major scheme for expanding the network.
3. Six to 11, we mean to uprate ...
How long to complete? Please state!
4. Mint tea or pork, Grace? Involved with a key issue for the last two years (*anag.*).
5. Nice to meter, but this number will take cover for protection in the next 12 months.
6. Can you reach tea blended for an initiative introduced last year (*anag.*).
7. How much will the new works cost, do you know For the Mid-Mersey District Office and Depot?
8. If MANWEB meets its target in 1987, how many trainees will have joined the workforce in the last two years?

MARCH PRIZE CROSSWORD WINNERS

THE March crossword must have been fairly easy—or maybe we were lucky that the first three entries drawn out of the hat were all-correct!

The usual £5 prizes go to Messrs. T. G. Coates (2nd engineer, Gwynedd District), J. F. Byles (Head Office security) and H. McCormick, a pensioner, of Huyton, Liverpool.

Solution page six

GOOD SPORTS WANTED IN LIVERPOOL

WHATEVER your sport—indoor or outdoor—there is a welcome for you as a member of Liverpool Electric Power and Lighting Sports and Welfare Club in Thingwall Road, Liverpool.

The club has a number of very active sections and are looking for more members to participate in bowls, cricket, tennis, darts, table-tennis and football. If you would like to take part in any of these sports in congenial surroundings in a very friendly atmosphere, write, call or contact the section representatives or the club staff.

The Ladies Darts Team wish to extend their activities, so George Barr tells us, and they want more members. May Owen is the lady to contact at the club, or telephone Dot Davies on 051-722 7301.

CONTACT FREE ADS

FOR SALE

FORD GRANADA—2.1 diesel. X reg. Genuine 23,000 miles. Taxed and MOT to Nov. Immaculate. Black. £4,000 (no offers). Tel: 051-256 8873 (G. McGuinness).

OPEL MANTA—Berlinetta. 1983 Y reg. 53,000 miles. Dark grey, sunroof, spoilers, radio-cassette. Immaculate. £3,600 o.n.o. Ray Williams, Chester shop.

TENNIS RACQUETS—Head AMF Final S/L. Cost £65, sell £25. Wilson T2000. Cost £60, sell £20 (never used). Both 4-5/8 grip, with covers. Also squash racquets. Sunbatta carbo de luxe. Cost £63, sell £20. Ascot Opium. Cost £30, sell £10.

LADY'S CYCLE—Unused. Lightweight. Mixte frame, five-speed. Metallic gold. £85 o.n.o. Tel: 069 175 3369 (Ron Johnson).

YAESU A.T.U.—FC 902 Antenna Coupler. 160-10 metres. Transmitter power 25w to 500w. £130. Tel: 051-639 3294 (Ray Smith).

CARAVAN AWNING—Space-maker for 14 ft. van, v.g.c. Zip-out front and sides with four-door option, auto-tension to roof—no drilling of van side required. £185. Internal phone Mid-Cheshire 166 or 0270 841676 after 6 p.m.

DANCE BAND

'MAYFAIR'—Ballroom dance band. Now booking for '87/'88. Dinner dances, weddings, social engagements. Modern, pop, old tyme. Christmas bookings. Tel: Chester 336227 (Bob Griffin).

WANTED

COMPUTER—48k Spectrum. Tel: 051-639 3294 (Ray Smith).

HOLIDAYS

ABERYSTWYTH—Six-berth caravans to let from £35 a week (less 10 per cent discount for electricity supply staff and their families). Mains electricity, cooker, 'fridge and private toilet. Site facilities include a clubhouse, swimming pool, sauna, shop/restaurant and children's play area. Within easy walking distance from beach and town centre. Tel 0970 3596 after 5.00 p.m. (Tomos Davies).

SOMERSET—Mod. spacious ground-floor flat in Berrow village on Somerset coast. Tel: 0278 786899.

S.W. FRANCE—Touring caravans to let. Mains water/electricity. Four-star site, swimming pools, restaurant, all facilities. Tel: 0270 766675 (Ian Linford).

LLANDUDNO—'April Court' small private hotel. Good food, friendly atmosphere. Quiet position, yet close to town, beaches, etc. Children welcome. Parking. Discount 15 per cent for electricity industry staff and pensioners. Tel: 0492 77898.

CRICCIETH—House overlooking village green. Sleeps six. Colour TV. Beach and shops two minutes away. Tel 076671 2614 (Ann Tudor).

PORHADMADOG—Holiday bungalow, sleeps six. Black Rock Sands five minutes' drive; convenient Ffestiniog Rly, Snowdonia National Pk. For information: C. Jones, 2 Meadow Drive, Porthmadog. Tel: 0766 2519.

NEWQUAY, Cornwall—Guest house specialising in good food, comfort and friendliness. Sea views, two minutes from beautiful beaches. Quiet area close to town. Own car park. Terms from £62 to £75 per week for BB & EM. MANWEB staff, past and present, most welcome. Send s.a.e. for brochure. Mike Pleasants, Fulmar, 43 Pentire Avenue, Newquay, Cornwall TR7 1PB, or telephone 06378 74291.

TO LET—New luxury six-berth caravan on West Wales site, with a variety of amenities. 30 miles from Aberystwyth. Fitted kitchen and shower room. Families only. Tel: 0492 68 253 (evenings only).

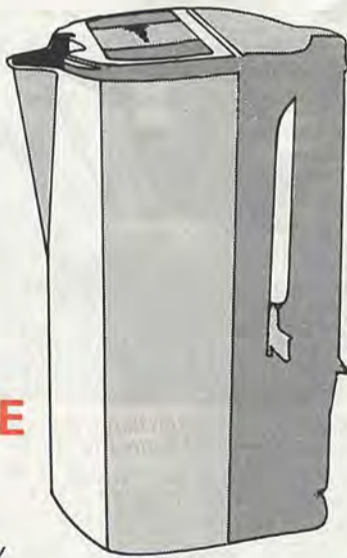
"KATERAMA" cats boarding home. Licensed by Halton Council. Vet approved. Halegate Farm, Halegate Road, Halebank, Widnes. Tel: 051-425 3930 (A. Berrington).

CONTACT EXCLUSIVE OFFER! FOR MANWEB PRESENT AND RETIRED STAFF

Sunbeam Automatic Kettle

ELITE 700

This smart jug kettle boils as little as one cup. It is filled through the spout and is effortless to pour.



CONTACT STAFF PRICE £10.35

Send in the coupon below and call into your chosen shop after seven days

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

(BLOCK CAPS PLEASE)

Name:

Work place (or retired)

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

To: Jim Kehoe, MANWEB Purchasing Department, 2W1 Head Office, Sealand Road, Chester CH1 4LR

Please reserve Elite Automatic Kettles at £10.35 each. I will pay for and collect from the MANWEB shop at:—

NAME

WORKPLACE (former if retired)

Internal Tel. (home if retired)

N.B. — OFFER CLOSES 31st MAY, 1987

THE SPORTING CHANCES

by Mitch

