



Contact

May 1980

"Working up an appetite"
(see page 90)



A magnificent folly—the impressive and imposing Gwrych Castle.

A feast in store at Gwrych Castle

ORIGINALLY built as a folly by Lloyd Bamford Hesketh, the magnificent Gwrych Castle stands majestically on the hillside just off the A55 road near Abergele, North Wales. It has survived a chequered and interesting history since its construction in the early 1800's.

After the Heskeths, the Dundonald family took up residence and added another wing and the impressively wide and grand staircase. In recent years the Castle became, at one time, the training headquarters for the former British middleweight boxing champion, Randolph Turpin.

Now, the all-electric Castle, complete with its own substation, has been taken over by Mr. Keith Lomas, a Cheshire architect, and his wife Vivienne, a former bank clerk. They are making their first venture into the hotel and catering business in partnership with Mr. Richard Timpson, a professional jousting who will be organising tournaments and entertainment in the Castle's spacious grounds—commencing 25th May.

When they moved into the Castle a few months ago, Keith's immediate plan was to set up The Hunting Lodge restaurant. He got in touch with MANWEB's Clwyd District demonstrator, Christine Hughes, who helped him select the catering equipment for the compact, clean and efficient kitchen.

The tastefully decorated dining room, furnished with oak tables and wheel-backed chairs, catering for up to 60 guests, looks on to a stone-fronted bar—especially designed by Mr. Lomas—which separates the all-electric kitchen area.

Here, a variety of catering equipment includes a microwave cooker, convection oven, speed fryers,

supergrill, bain-marie, an array of hotplates and a coffee-making machine. Recently a new 'fridge-freezer was delivered and fitted neatly into position.

"We aim to make our name by establishing and maintaining a first-class cuisine, prepared and cooked to perfection, served with efficiency and courtesy and at a reasonable price," commented Mrs. Lomas.

In addition to preparing the dishes on the a-la-carte menu served in The Hunting Lodge restaurant, the chef also caters for a wide range of bar meals in the spacious bar lounge—originally the Castle library. Here, the stone-mullioned windows present a breathtaking panoramic view of a large area of the North Wales coastline. Inside, a log fire glows in the huge grate and shields, halberds and large eye-catching paintings decorate the walls to welcome visitors to the splendours of a bygone age.

Rather than let this beautiful folly drift into decay through neglect, the Lomas's are planning well into the future. They intend to redecorate and refurbish the massive hallway and staircase and, as soon as practicable, open the spacious and high-ceilinged main dining hall for presentations of medieval banquets. And what better setting to enjoy good food and wine?

When this work commences, another larger kitchen will be established. No doubt Mr. and Mrs. Lomas will again call in MANWEB's experts in the field of commercial catering.

Demonstrator Christine Hughes in the all-electric kitchen with the Gwrych Castle chef.



OUR COVER PICTURE shows jousting in battle.

Picture by Doug, Mortimer, Rhyl

Contact

THE STAFF MAGAZINE
OF THE
MERSEYSIDE AND
NORTH WALES
ELECTRICITY BOARD

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BITTER MEDICINE

THE Electricity Council's recent press announcement of impending electricity price increases, averaging about ten per cent. nation-wide, will bring no joy to employees of the electricity supply industry. We are only too well aware of the way in which economic forces beyond our control have forced this increase upon us—following as it does on a 17 per cent. rise in April.

The main reasons for this second increase in the course of a few months are spelled out very simply by the Council:—

"The industry very much regrets the need for these increases, the main reason for which is the continuing rise in the cost of fuel used to generate electricity, which accounts for about half of the industry's total costs. During the last financial year, oil doubled in price and coal prices increased by 35 per cent. This means that substantial increases in electricity prices are required in 1980/81.

"As well as the increased fuel costs, other costs such as capital charges, salaries, goods and services have risen in spite of very real economy efforts. The industry also has to have regard to the financial target agreed with the Government and to the need to keep within its borrowing limit for 1980/81."

There is no escaping the inevitable consequences of such a situation—unwelcome as they will certainly be to all of our customers. We have the difficult task of living with them, and of doing our best to explain matters to a bewildered and resentful public.

Please let the Editorial staff know of any large-scale or unusual engineering schemes or commercial projects going on in your department. We are interested in people too! Contact us about your interesting personalities with a story to tell.

North Wirral District Employees' Meeting

STAFF HEAR MAN FROM GRANADA



Pictured at the meeting, from left to right: Mr. Jack Bradley, Mrs. Eve Townley (Our 'Girl from MANWEB'), Mr. Gordon Burns (TV Presenter) and Mr. Jim Barraclough.

PRESENTER Mr. Gordon Burns, of Granada TV, recently made a lightning dash from the studios in Manchester to the Coach and Horses hotel in Moreton to fulfill an engagement as guest speaker at our North Wirral District Employees' Annual Meeting.

He made good time and was able to enjoy a meal in company with the staff and a number of other guests from Head Office and the North Mersey and Liverpool Districts. Also in attendance, in a dual capacity as a member of the District staff and as our 'Girl from MANWEB', was Mrs. Eve Townley.

As a last-minute substitute speaker, Mr. Burns gave an interesting insight into his work as a 'communicator' through the medium of television. He spoke of sophisticated new lightweight equipment which allowed 'news stories' to be injected into live TV programmes from almost anywhere in the world.

His talk was interjected with entertaining anecdotes—especially of his early days when he worked

for a newspaper in Northern Ireland. He had his audience hanging on to his every word as he recounted incidents concerning a number of people in the public eye—which, of course, made the stories much more interesting.

The speech was exactly right for the occasion. Mr. Burns thanked the Board for their invitation and said that he felt somewhat guilty as he had been made so welcome by people who, for the past 20 years or so, he had cursed regularly four times a year . . . when he received his electricity account! However, he brought his remarks to a close by inferring that he would remember MANWEB and the North Wirral District staff with warmth and would no doubt think kindly of our industry in the future!

Earlier in the evening, Mr. Jim Barraclough (Group Manager) had taken the chair and opened the business of the meeting by welcoming everyone, including the group of former employees who had

Good health and beaming happiness is clearly shown with these retired members of the District staff who were at the meeting.



And District staff still working their way towards retirement!



rejoined their District colleagues for this occasion.

Then, in his inimitable and entertaining manner, Mr. Jack Bradley (*principal assistant—Admin.*) as Secretary of No. 5 Local Advisory Committee, presented his report.

He began amid noisy Parliamentary-type interruptions—*good humoured, we hasten to add*—but soon held the full attention of his audience. His resonant voice—*he would have made an excellent debater in the House of Commons*—took control as he presented a resumé of the work carried out by the LAC members during the year just closed.

He spent a little time on the Health and Safety aspects, expressing concern over the number of accidents to staff in the Board as a whole and in North Wirral District in particular. He took the opportunity to praise members of the first-aid team who had competed in the District Finals in Chester and he paid tribute to Mr. Bob Meacock, the lay instructor, who had worked so hard in preparing and training them.

Spring and Summer Schools, the Suggestion Scheme and the survey indicating our customers' regard for the Board's service were items covered by Mr. Bradley.

The very successful meeting concluded with a short 'Open Forum' which was followed by a new film produced for our staff which featured actor Hywel

No. 5 LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr. Jim Barraclough.

Vice-Chairman: Mr. Harry Stanley.

Board Representatives: Messrs. George Bowers, *Brian Mather, John Powell and John Roberts.

Industrial Staff: Messrs. *Bob Atkinson, Tony Button, Eric Clarke, *Fred Deakin, Jimmy Egan, *Alun Jones, Graham Leeming, David Robinson, Alan Waring and Brian Williams.

Building Trades: Mr. Ronald Farrell.

Admin., Sales and Clerical Staff: Mrs. Pauline Lewis, Mr. Bob Meacock and Mrs. Shirley Robinson.

Technical Staff: Mr. Graham Houghton.

Foreman: Mr. Joe Waring.

Secretary to the Committee: Mr. Jack Bradley.

*132 kV representatives.

Bennett telling us of the plans for future Commercial and Public Relations promotions by the Electricity Council. The bar and disco then provided the attractions for the rest of the evening.

**Enjoying
a drink
and
a chat
after the
Meeting**



GWYNEDD DISTRICT COMM. CONFERENCE

Preparing to Meet Future Challenges

AN excellent attendance of staff from various sections and locations throughout the Gwynedd District assured the success of their Commercial Conference held recently at a Caernarfon hotel.

Following dinner, Mr. Doug. Willacy (*District Commercial Engineer*) said that he wanted this conference to achieve staff confidence in the future and that by teamwork we would continue to give our customers a good overall standard of service.

"In the next ten years we should see more changes in our industry than we have experienced in the last 20 years," he commented. *"It's an exciting prospect!"*

Mr. Willacy spoke of the competition coming from other fuels and from the High Street retailers and superstores as well as from electrical contractors. *"In the main, these are all good organisations with competitive prices,"* he went on. *"We must be prepared to meet the challenges in these markets. It will require the total commitment of everyone in MANWEB... it will require teamwork."*

Next on the programme came two more members of the District Commercial staff, Messrs. John Jones (*Installation*) and Frank Ellis (*Supply*).

Mr. Jones talked enthusiastically of recent large-scale installation contracts completed by the District staff—*"achieved with the excellent co-operation of a number of sections in the District working together."*

He went on to say that the key word for his department in 1980/81 was 'Survival' as, in the absence of any very large contracts, they would have to depend on more and more smaller jobs in order to keep on the right side of the balance sheet.

Mr. Ellis spoke on new supplies and tariffs, stating that although he had no work force of his own, the wholehearted co-operation from other departments in the District had enabled him to carry out his job most successfully. He mentioned a couple of future projects which were in the pipeline.

Then Mr. Willacy introduced the special guest speaker for the evening, Mr. Alan Kirkpatrick, Manager of the Wylfa power station.

In an excellent speech with a perfect balance of interest and humour, Mr. Kirkpatrick soon proved



'Girl from MANWEB' Eve Townley with Messrs. Alan Kirkpatrick, Doug. Willacy and Frank Ellis.

his wide knowledge of his subject as he talked confidently on nuclear power.

He said that many aspects of the nuclear debate were very complicated with facts and figures flowing freely and much rubbish talked on both sides. *"For many people,"* he quipped, *"there is too much to think about and not enough to think with!"*

He stated that energy was important to us all, with about 25 per cent. of our income being spent on one form of energy or another. He went on to plot the use of indigenous fuels over a wide—past, present and future—time-scale, projecting curves of energy supply and demand. He proved that we would experience an energy gap in the very near future and expressed his belief that nuclear power was the only real option open to fill that gap. *"The burden of the cost which would be put on each of us now would provide an investment for the future,"* he said.

He suggested that the plutonium reactor should be utilised, emphasising that this could only be used to produce electricity and for no other more sinister purposes.

Mr. Kirkpatrick then informed his audience that France had ten times more nuclear power stations than we in Britain and they intended building ten times more in the future. *"Can 40 million Frenchmen be wrong?"* he asked.

Turning to the safety argument for nuclear power, he simply pointed to the track record in this country, saying that in the past 25 years, no one had died through using nuclear power for peaceful purposes.

He urged that people should take a balanced view based on economics and not to respond to *"hairy, scary stories about nuclear holocausts."* He expressed his honest opinion that a Harrisburgh could not happen at his own Wylfa power station.

A brief question-time followed, and then everyone retired to the bar, where further discussions took place. And so, a most congenial, informative and inspiring evening conference came to an end.

Talking Notes

TAKES THE TITLE

A COUPLE of months ago, we published a picture of attractive **Rhian Williams** of Barmouth and stated that she was our youngest shop supervisor.

Her title has now been taken over by **Tim Brown**, who became the new supervisor of the Flint shop on his 18th birthday, a few weeks ago.

Tim left the Mold Alun School two years ago and joined MAN-WEB as a part-time trainee salesman at the Mold shop. It was from here that he took up his new appointment.

In his spare time he runs the 'Apple Discotheque' with his older brother Philip. They are available for bookings—distance no object!

Tim is also keenly interested in photography and, of course,

Youngest shop supervisor **Tim Brown** with his Flint shop partner, **Helen Singleton**.



after such a good start, of furthering his career.

His partner at the Flint shop is **Helen Singleton**, who has worked for the Board for the past 11 years.

NOTE — Just to keep the record straight, Rhian too was only 18 when she was put in charge of the Barmouth shop.

Nuclear Capacity

Speaking in Germany recently, **Sir Francis Tombs** (Chairman of The Electricity Council) said:

"In the UK there is now a total of some 12,000 megawatts of nuclear capacity in operation or under construction. The three gas-cooled reactor stations nearing completion should all be in operation by 1982, at which time nuclear power should be producing about six per cent of our primary energy requirements, or an annual equivalent of about 22 million tons of coal".

New C.C. Chairman

The Secretary of State for Trade has recently appointed **Mr. Joseph Alexander Duncan** as the new Chairman of the Merseyside and North Wales Electricity Consultative Council as a successor to **Mr. Michael John Moore**, whose appointment expired at the end of March.

Mr. Duncan, who was a member of our Board for 18 years until 1965, farms 400 acres at Landican, Birkenhead. He is a past Chairman of the Cheshire Branch of the NFU and was Agricultural Correspondent for the Liverpool Daily Post for a number of years. He is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Farmers; a member of the Wirral Family Practitioners Committee and Chairman of its Medical Services Committee. He is a former High Sheriff of Merseyside and a Deputy Lieutenant of the County. He has been a Justice of the Peace since 1957.

He has been appointed to serve as Chairman of the Consultative Council until April, 1983.

Badminton at Chester

There were 24 members of the Chester Sports and Social Club competing in the annual Badminton Tournament, held this year at the Northgate Arena Leisure Centre in the City.

The contest took the form of a mixed doubles competition, with players changing partners after each game. Adding to the fairly complex nature of the matches, each player was handicapped according to his or her ability.

The top four men and top four ladies according to their points total, played off semi-final matches, the winners competing in the final. Contest



Badminton mixed doubles champions, Sally Baker and Phil Russell.

winners were **Phil Russell**, formerly of the drawing office, and **Sally Baker**, a systems analyst from Computers. Losing finalists were associate member **John Mallinson** and typist **Eve Partridge**. The tournament was organised by **David Booth**, section secretary.

Want to Swop?

The industry has been approached by representatives of staff working for the electricity industry at **Evreux**, Normandy, France, with a view to arranging exchange visits for children of employees (aged 14 to 17) during summer holidays.

Such exchanges would be on a "guest" basis, with only travelling expenses to be found.

While time may not permit practical arrangements to be made in time for this summer, anyone interested in taking part in future years should get in touch with **Oscar Lloyd**, Education and Training Department, Head Office, Chester.

Make Yourself a Home

A booklet packed full of useful information and advice on electrical aids in the home has just been published by the Electricity Council.

Entitled "*Make Yourself a*

Home", it deals with keeping warm — with helpful hints on insulation; energy saving domestic electric appliances; lighting and entertainment and the use of electricity by the handyman and the gardener. There is a section on kitchen planning and tips on saving electricity—and money.

In these energy-conscious times, it is imperative to make the most efficient use of available energy and this new 36-page booklet gives effective advice on the role electricity plays when home-planning.

"*Make Yourself a Home*" is available, free of charge, from Electricity Boards.

Young People on Course

Following a series of selective interviews, a number of our younger members of staff have been awarded places on various courses during the summer months.

They are as follows:—

Brathay Hall for Boys—25th July to 12th August: **Michael Foster** (draughtsman), North Wirral District and **Martin Lewis** (clerk—Revenue), Head Office. 18th August to 5th September: **Peter Griffiths** (clerk), Gwynedd District and **Paul Williams** (clerk—Revenue), Head Office.

Outward Bound School for Girls at Rhowinar—19th July to 9th August: **Kathy Thomas** (clerk—Revenue), Head Office, and **Stephanie Howard** (clerk), Mid-Mersey District. 16th August to 6th September: **Debbie Smith** (clerk), Liverpool District, and **Karen Dunning** (punch operator), Head Office.

Lindley Lodge for Third Year Apprentices—11th to 22nd August: **Philip Bridgewater**, Mid-Cheshire District, **John Crawford** and **John Orme**, Liverpool District, and **Nigel Eardley**, Clwyd District.

Loughborough Summer School for Young People—16th to 23rd July: **David Barratt** (clerk 3) and **Carol Bowyer** (clerk), Mid-Mersey District, **David Cutting** (clerk), Clwyd District, **Ian Jones** (clerk—Revenue), Head Office, and **Jeanette Stirrett** (clerk), North Wirral District.

New Nuke Book

The vital contribution made by nuclear power to Britain's energy needs—now and in the future—is described in a new booklet, "*The Need for Nuclear Energy*", available free from "*Understanding Electricity*", 30 Millbank, London SW1P 4RD.

Reserves of fossil fuels are limited and supplies of oil and gas may well run down before the end of the century. This 20-page booklet explains nuclear energy in a straightforward and understandable way.

It contains an appraisal of the progress made in harnessing the natural, or 'renewable', sources of energy such as water, wind and sun, and the possible contribution they may make to our future energy supplies.

The booklet sets out to make it clear that Britain will increasingly need nuclear power.

Rising Stars

A newly-formed amateur soccer team based on our shop at

St. John's Precinct, Liverpool, made a sound start to what is hoped to be an expanding programme with a 2-1 win over a much more experienced team from a neighbouring gent's outfitters shop, also in the Precinct.

The game was played at the Oval Sports Centre, Bebington, and the MANWEB team consisted of St. John's colleagues **Mark Astbury, John Bell, Stuart Clenahan, Carl Jones, David Melling and Kevin Taylor**, with **Reg Owen and John Crawford** (electrician and apprentice carrying out the re-wiring at the shop).

Three 'outsiders' roped in to complete the team were **Graham Townley** (husband of Eve, our 'Girl from MANWEB'), his brother **Derek** and a friend, **Ian Jones**.

Goal-scorers were **Kevin and Mark** with 'Man of the Match' goalkeeper **Reg** who saved the MANWEB bacon on many occasions.

Matches against teams from a local bank, a hospital and the Gas Board(!) have been planned for the future.

Cricketers Wanted

The Liverpool Electric Supply Cricket Club, who play in the Merseyside Cricket Association, are looking for recruits.

They field two teams who play on Saturdays and one team on Sundays. If you would like a game, you will be very welcome at the net practices which are held every Monday evening at 6.30 p.m. at the Thingwall Road sports ground.

Golf

The second annual match played between golfers from our Clwyd and Gwynedd Districts took place over 18 holes at the Rhos-on-Sea Golf Club a short time ago.

Clwyd District retained the trophy and, although the final

result of six matches won and one lost indicated a runaway victory, this was far from true. Each game was hard fought with no quarter given.

Apprentice electrician from Clwyd, **Stephen Davies**, returned a five-under-par score. Playing off a 10 handicap, Stephen was first out, playing against an unfortunate opponent from Gwynedd!

The golfers enjoyed perfect conditions, with appropriate celebrations at the 19th hole. The two teams of 13 players each were captained by **Denis Atkinson** (Clwyd) and **Emyr Rowlands** (Gwynedd), who next year will be on his home course.

For Sale

Two-bedroomed det. bungalow, Llanddulas, near Abergele. Nicely situated, five minutes walk from beach. 22 ft. lounge. Bathroom. Garage. Garden. £21,500 (to include all carpets). Tel. Llanddulas 345.

Wedding at Penmaenmawr

Our best wishes for a happy and successful future go to a young couple, **Keith Jones**, an electrician working from Llandudno Junction depot in our Clwyd District and his bride, **Gwen Williams**, who were

married a short time ago at Penmaenmawr.

After the wedding reception, the couple left for a honeymoon in the Lake District.

Holiday Accommodation

Llanrwst—Bed and breakfast. Old market town in the Conway Valley. Ideal centre for touring, climbing, riding, seaside, historic castles, beautiful scenery—all within easy reach. Write or 'phone: Mrs. Beth Williams, Llys-Cerdd, Watling Street, Llanrwst. Tel. (0492) 640636. Open May to Sept.

Squirrel Surprise

A delivery of goods from our Queensferry Stores arrived at our Llangefni shop a few weeks ago. One of the packages, containing a Flymower, was torn at the side.

Shop supervisor **Owen Ifor Jones** and his staff **Reg Smith** (salesman) and **Heather Thomas** (part-time sales) got the surprise of their lives when they opened the box and found a squirrel's nest. They also found among the leaves and some down, over 100 acorns—but no squirrel.

He had obviously opted-out of the long journey to Anglesey!

The evidence in the base of the flymower with the leaves, the down and—of course—the nuts! Picture by Kermia Studios, Llangefni





Mr. Glyn Dodd, left, presents Mr. Frank Jones with his 40-year Certificate.

DEE VALLEY DISTRICT

Long Service Staff



Another 40-year man, Mr. Eddie Pound seen here with his wife Dorothy

NEARLY one thousand years of service to the electricity supply industry was recognised recently when 37 members of our staff from Dee Valley District received their 40-30 and 20-year long service Certificates at a special ceremony held at Llangollen.

After welcoming everyone to the proceedings, Mr. Glyn Dodd (*Group Manager*), on behalf of the Board, thanked the recipients personally for their long and loyal service. He spoke particularly of the 40-year men when he said that they had worked through many changes in the MANWEB organisation leading up to the formation of "the very special" Dee Valley District.

He said that the electricity industry, built on a firm foundation, had a very sound future.

Mr. Dodd then called on the respective District Officers to introduce each member of his staff who had qualified for Certificates. They were as follows:

40-years' service: Messrs. F. Jones (*Commercial foreman*) and E. Pound (*electrician*).

30-years' service: Miss J. Mackie (*cashier*), Mrs. D. Williams (*clerical assistant*), and Messrs. G. Bennett (*linesman*), W. H. Clegg (*chargehand meter reader/collector*), G. H. Davies (*instrument inspector*), J. O. Devaney (*joiner*), E. G. Ellis (*foreman fitter*), E. Gilpin (*electrician*), I. Green (*chargehand linesman*), H. R. Hughes (*administrative assistant*), W. D. Jones (*clerical assistant*), P. C. Keddie (*Work Study assistant*), J. Parry (*District Engineer*), H. B. Powell and D. A. Roberts (*installation inspectors*) W. A. Roberts (*fitter*), A. O. Simpson (*electrician*), H. Thomas (*cashier*), W. E. Thomas (*work controller*), and E. H. L. Webb (*electrician*).

20-years' service: Messrs. A. Bower (*principal assistant*), B. R. Carter (*painter*), G. Davies (*storekeeper*), W. Dixon (*fitter's mate*), M. Evans (*electrical fitter*), C. Griffiths (*joiner's mate*), B. Griffiths (*energy sales representative*), T. Hayden (*driver*), G. P. Jones (*joiner*), J. A. Lloyd (*electrical fitter*) W. A. Morris (*3rd engineer*), J. E. Parry (*joiner*), L. Ridgeway (*meter reader/collector*), J. O. Spencer (*electrical fitter*) and E. Thomas (*driver*).

At Chester depot, from left to right: Messrs. John Spencer, Barry Griffiths, Gerald Davies, Glyn Dodd (*Group Manager*), Len Ridgway, Bill Clegg, G. P. Jones, Tommy Hayden, Des. Lock (*Acting D.A.O.*) and Keith Griffiths (*p.a. Admin.*).



District Officers with 20-year staff at Dee Valley.
From left to right: Messrs. Alan Bower, Ron Williams (District Commercial Engineer), John Lloyd, Cyril Griffiths, John Parry, Mike Evans and Arthur Elinson (District Administrative Officer).



Some of the Dee Valley District 30-year staff. *From left to right: Messrs. Phil Keddie, Eric Ellis, John Parry, Dennis Jones, Hayden Hughes, Jack Devaney, Ioan Green, Mrs. Doris Williams and Mr. Bill Thomas.*



Snakes Alive!

From retired chargehand meter reader **Arthur Boast**, of Ruabon, come these verses. Arthur swears that this is a true story and actually happened.

They were talking together—as old pals do—
 Of times that had fast gone by;
 Some of the mem'ries they couldn't recall
(Though each had a jolly good try).
 When John met these friends of years ago,
 A meeting that gave such a thrill,
 His pleasure increased a hundred-fold
 When he found they remembered him still.

They quickly decided the thing to be done
 Was to have an old pals' night out;
 So they gathered next night at the '*Old
 Brown Cow*',

And drank to their health in stout.
 They laughed and joked about earlier days,
 Until the whole evening was spent;
 They wished each other a happy '*Good night!*',
 Then the old pals were homeward bent.

When John wobbled home it was
 growing late,
 Quite dark and still was the night.
 He wended his way up the garden path,
 To check that the place was alright.
 When lo, he saw quite near the path
 Curled up, a venomous thing!
 He armed himself with a very sharp axe
 To chop out the creature's sting.

Having slaughtered the thing that
 was venomous
 He retired, content, for the night;
 Intending to go in the morning
 Where he'd left such a horrible sight.
 Next morning he went up the path again,
 To see that old snake lying dead;
 But oh!—what a nasty shock he had
 Which left him as limp as lead.

And now, ashamed of his conduct,
 The truth he must disclose!
 'Twas not a viper he killed that night—
 He'd chopped up the garden hose!

MORE MAIL .. about ..

... Donna ...

Nice note from the lady secretary of a Kirkdale (Liverpool) church to Liverpool District:—

"Because of the difficult circumstances with regard to the reading of the meters at our church, I have had to speak to your Mrs. Whiteside on various occasions. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that I have really appreciated her courtesy, efficiency and helpfulness. She is really a very good advertisement for MANWEB."

The 'good advertisement' is Donna Whiteside, of customer enquiries.

... transport ...

Head Office transport were sorry that they could not help the seven-year-old secretary of a "Mice and Hamster" Club at Chorley, who wrote in the following optimistic terms—

"Please can you help our Club. We need a van to go on outings to farms and places ... what do you do with your old vans? Please can you help. My Dad has wrote this for me. I am only seven years old. The Club is run by the children."

Writing to explain that our old vehicles have to be disposed of through the motor auctions, Herbert Morgan expressed our good wishes for the future of the mice-and-hamster enthusiasts!

... a new pan ...

A letter from a Bangor customer to Gwynedd service engineer Emyr Rowlands

"I would like to express my gratitude for your kindness over the matter of the two Berry mini-cook grills which both blew up, showering my wife with hot apples.

"I returned both to your retail shop in Bangor, who repaid my money but that is not all!

"Today at 9 a.m. a young electrician arrived from Caernarvon, checked the wiring and the points, which is incidentally wired for a cooker, examined my damaged pan and went off with same. Ten minutes after he was back with a brand new teflon lined pan and lid, plus an extremely nice letter from Mr. Roy Jones, the shop supervisor.

"I would like to express my entire satisfaction in the way you, the young electrician and Mr. Jones have handled what might have been a tricky situation—please convey my thanks to all concerned and you are at liberty to send this letter onto your 'top brass'."

The 'top brass' were pleased to note that Messrs Emyr Rowlands, Roy Jones and electrician Gareth Jones are working in harmony and are in tune with *Customer Care*. Well done, chaps!

... a fire ...

A MANWEB team from Oswestry District moved into action a short time ago and brought the following letter of thanks from the customer.

"We were unfortunate to have a fire at our home at 1.10 a.m. on the morning of Thursday last.

"Your engineer arrived at 2 a.m. and proceeded to make the house safe electrically. He and two other engineers stayed until about 6 a.m. and even managed to provide us with temporary lighting.

"Two men of the day shift arrived before 9 a.m. and both worked non-stop until after 4.30 p.m. By the time they had finished a new meter and fuse board had been installed and full power restored.

"We would like to pay tribute to both the night and day shifts. I am sure you get complaints quickly enough when things go wrong, and think it only right that when men work as well as these did, you should also know.

"Please convey our thanks to all concerned for an excellent job of work."

And 'all concerned' were Martin Benson (2nd engineer), Gwilym Jones (joiner), David Richards and Rod Reville (installation inspectors) and Russell Humphries (apprentice electrician).

... another fire ...

From a Porthmadog customer: "We bought an electric fire at your shop last Saturday and I wish to congratulate you on the service we received.

"The assistant at the shop was courteous and most helpful in assisting us choose the most suitable model.

"The fire was delivered as promised, today, the two delivery men were most efficient. We appreciate very much the manner in which the appliance was connected up and checked before the men left.

"Please convey my thanks to all the staff concerned."

The helpful staff in Gwynedd District were, Liz Lelliott from the shop, and the delivery team of John Ifor Hughes and Oliver Edwards.

... and ...

helpful people

From an Ormskirk lady, on the move to Clwyd, to North Mersey District—

"Please arrange for someone to come and read the meter ... I should like to thank the several people from your District who have been so helpful during the past 16 years."



Inspector Roy Aldington, *centre right*, congratulates Mr. Roy Vickerstaff on his medal award. Also in the picture with the safe drivers we see Mr. Dennis Hodgetts (*District Administrative Officer*), *left*, and Mr. Glyn Norbury, *right*.

Counting the Cost of Road Accidents

Presentation of Medals to Mid-Mersey Drivers

THE average cost of a fatal accident on the roads today is in the region of £99,500. The accidental death on the road of a man in his early 30's, married and with a couple of young children, could cost up to £200,000."

These startling statistics were revealed recently by Inspector Roy Aldington, Accident Prevention Officer, Cheshire Constabulary, when he spoke to a group of our safe drivers in the Mid-Mersey District.

He said that the burden of the tremendous cost of road accidents fell on every taxpayer. "For anyone today who drives regularly for even one year accident-free, it is money in the bank for us all."

Stressing that, in addition to the cash cost of fatal road accidents, he pointed to the very real pain suffered by families and relatives of the victims.

He then had a brief word concerning road accidents in the Cheshire area, commenting that a high rate of these were caused by drivers injudiciously turning right.

Mr. Jackson, a representative of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, echoed the Inspector's remarks regarding the astronomical cost of road accidents.

Addressing the drivers as "gentlemen of the road", he congratulated all the recipients of medal awards and went on to offer a vote of thanks to the mechanics at the depots who kept the vehicles in roadworthy condition.

Bringing the proceedings to a close, Mr. Glyn

Norbury (*District Commercial Engineer*) expressed the Board's thanks to the special guests at the ceremony. He said that it was very responsible of Cheshire Constabulary to have an officer assigned to the specific job of accident prevention. He also endorsed Mr. Jackson's comments regarding the Board's mechanics, saying that their work was recognised by the number of awards being made.

The following Mid-Mersey District staff who had qualified for safe-driving medals during the past two years were presented with their awards by Inspector Aldington:—

MEDAL AWARDS

20-Year Medal: Mr. Thomas Topping (*electrician retired*)

15-Year Medals: Messrs. J. Edgar Moore (*courier/driver*), Trevor Whitney (*electrician*) and Roy Vickerstaff (*foreman*).

Ten-Year Medals: Messrs. Arthur Dearden, (*engineering foreman*), Bob Hope (*debt collector*), Eric Hough (*mains foreman*) and John Rae (*electrician*).

Five-Year Medals: Messrs. Roy Briscoe (*jointer*), Leslie Butterworth, (*draughtsman*), Fred Clague (*jointer*), Michael Craven (*linesman*), Norman Dennett (*electrician*), Norman Gamble (*substation attendant*), Ronald Garvey (*jointer*), Derek Goff (*electrician*), Barry Hayes (*fitter*), Barry Howarth (*jointer*), Jack Jones (*electrician*), Norman Rawsthorne (*overhead line foreman*), Joseph Robinson (*labourer*), Charles Siebert (*labourer*), Albert Titchard (*installation inspector*), Anthony Webster and Thomas Yorke (*jointers*).

Other District drivers who had earned diplomas and bars to their existing medals received notification of their awards by post.

A STORY OF SURVIVAL

Escape from a Watery Grave

THE story of a Welsh miner's remarkable survival and rescue back in 1819 was published in a recent edition of "Country Quest", a magazine circulating in Wales and the Border Counties.

The miner was Mr. John Evans, whose great-great-great-grandson, Mr. George G. Evans, is a 1st engineer in the Technical section at Head Office.

The story, written by a great-uncle, Mr. Thomas John Whitley, recounts the tragic accident and the miraculous escape.

It happened in the days when callous mine owners were only interested in profit and safety standards were abysmal.

Despite repeated warnings of the possibility of severe flooding in the Minera pit at Wrexham, miners were continually sent down to hew the coal.

On the fateful day in 1819, water began seeping through from some nearby working which had previously flooded. Without any warning the trickle became a torrent and twelve miners were swept away.

They struggled to higher ground and, with only one candle to light their way, they luckily came upon a worked-out shaft and were hauled to safety.

Back at the scene of the flooding, with water up to their necks, four more men were rescued.

Of the original 19 men who were on shift, three were still missing. Pumps were brought in but it took seven days to reduce the water level and allow the rescuers into the pit to search for the lost miners. Two bodies were then found, leaving one man still unaccounted for—Mr. John Evans.

All hope of finding him alive was abandoned and a coffin inscribed with his name was brought to the pit head. John's wife begged the rescuers to continue their search for the body so that he could have a Christian burial.

After twelve days, the voice of the 'dead' miner was heard greeting the rescuers. John had survived by eating candles and drinking the dripping water.

He kept his coffin and used it as a cupboard for many years after the event. From cheating death when he was 26 years old, Mr. Evans lived on to reach the ripe old age of 73!

For three more generations the Evans family continued in mining before Mr. Hywel Evans, the father of George, moved to 'coal by wire' when he joined the North Wales Power Company.

Carrying on a proud family name, and following in father's footsteps in the new industry, George has worked for MANWEB for the past 30 years.

He is happily married to Beryl and they have twin sons aged 19 and two daughters aged thirteen and eleven.



Above: An artist's impression of miner Mr. John Evans and, below, Mr. George G. Evans, MANWEB engineer.



Obituary

It is with deep regret that we record the deaths of our former colleagues.

Mr. Robert Burns, who worked with our illegal abstraction team in the Liverpool District prior to his retirement in November 1979.

Mr. John Henry Chowen, a former 1st engineer in the Technical section at Head Office prior to his retirement last year. Harry and his wife Margaret were tragically killed in the 'plane crash over Tenerife a few weeks ago.

Miss Olive Davies, aged 66, who retired four years ago from her job as a machine operator in our Head Office Accounts section.

Mr. James Duvall, aged 61, a storekeeper in the Meter section at Lister Drive, Liverpool. He had worked for the past 34 years with the Board.

Mr. Edward P. Littlewood, aged 77, who retired in 1965 from his job as chargehand cablelayer at our Pumpfields depot, Liverpool.

We extend our sincere sympathy to their families and friends.

A cash collection amounting to £200 in the memory of **Mr. George Whitlow** has been donated to the British Heart Foundation. George, a chargehand installation inspector in our Mid-Mersey District, died suddenly on the day following his recent retirement.

OTHER PEOPLE'S HOBBIES

Train Artist

WITH his paternal grandfather being an engine driver and his maternal grandfather Chester's stationmaster, it is understandable that Stephen Dunning should show an interest in trains. In fact many members of his family worked on the railway, although his father broke the family tradition and manages a photographic shop.

Steve, aged 23, is a draughtsman at Head Office in Chester. He is single, and "eligible" - his quote. His interest in trains shows in his very talented paintings and drawings. He is a stickler for accuracy. When he draws or paints a locomotive he insists that every detail is correct, if a plate has ten rivets, then he draws ten rivets.

Similarly with the backgrounds in which he sets his trains. They must be authentic, a station which that locomotive worked from in it's working life, the right type of lamps, signals and other detail.

Before starting a painting he researches it carefully. He gathers as many photographs and as much information as he can about the engine and where it worked before starting a picture. His paintings are usually in powder paints or occasionally water colours and his monochromes are in pencil or pen and ink.

Although his lovingly drawn loco's are produced as a hobby, he has accepted commissions for his work and can sell pictures through a local art shop in Chester. But he has no intention of taking painting up full time, he enjoys it too much, and the pressure of painting to order would take the fun out of it.



Stephen Dunning at his drawing-board.

His interest started as a toddler when he was taken to see trains, and his first drawings were of trains, "Right through school, when we had to draw something I always tried to get a train in the picture," he recalls.

His younger brother is a chef and there is no other artistic talent in his immediate family, so where does his talent come from? The only member of the family he knows is an aunt and uncle who manage the 'Ship Inn' at Chester and run the Cheshire Cat Pottery. Their products are sold through the pub. Perhaps they will move the Railway Inn and sell pictures of trains by their talented nephew.

One of Stephen's detailed drawings. An example of his earlier work can be seen on the back cover.



STAFF RETIREMENTS

Mr. G. COOKSLEY

Many members of our Clwyd District staff gathered in the conference room at Cefndy Road offices recently to honour the occasion of the retirement of their District Administrative Officer, Mr. George Cooksley.

His well-earned farewell came after nearly 50 years' service in our industry. He began his working life in 1931 with electricity undertakings at Hereford and Cardiff. During the war years he was commissioned in the Army and, on his return to civilian life, he continued his studies for his accountancy degree, taking time off from his annual holiday to sit for his final examinations.

In 1956 he joined MANWEB at Head Office—then in Liverpool—and in 1970, he took over as Administrative Officer for the Clwyd District.

At that time he teamed up with Mr. Leslie Griffiths (*District Engineer*) and Mr. David Mellor (*District Commercial Engineer*), who both paid their personal tributes to George's work and to his fine friendship.

Mr. Griffiths outlined George's career and said that he was always ready with help and advice. He then recited a poem which was most appropriate to the occasion. Mr. Mellor commented that George had a great concern for people and had the respect of many. Other tributes were expressed by other friends

and colleagues, including Mr. Bob Evans (*Assistant Chief Accountant*) representing Head Office, who said that George "never got ruffled, was meticulous in all that he did and always set a fine example."

In his reply, Mr. Cooksley said that Clwyd was a great District, with a pleasant atmosphere among staff not too bothered about different sections. He was happy to have worked with so many people who showed themselves willing and adaptable to change. He revived memories of days gone by with the help of some old Llandudno Council Minutes.

Retirement gifts from friends were a beautiful concrete bird-bath, complete with a neatly engraved plate as a reminder of the occasion, a cassette recorder and, not forgetting his wife Rita, a food mixer. She was also presented with a bouquet of flowers by former 'Girl from MANWEB', Liz Frame.

In retirement Mr. Cooksley will be kept fully occupied with his variety of interests, many of these being shared by his wife. He enjoys walking and rambling and is a member of three choirs—the Gogarth Singers, the Colwyn Bay Choral Society and Cor Meibion Maelgwn. He is also a member of the North Wales Naturalist Trust and the Cambrian Naturalist Trust. And—the bird-bath giving us a clue—he is a keen member of the Ornithological Society.

Just a few of the many friends and colleagues attending the retirement presentation to Mr. George Cooksley, seen here receiving a farewell handshake from Mr. Les. Griffiths, fourth from right, front row, Mrs. Cooksley, centre right, receives a bouquet from Miss Liz Frame.





At a special presentation ceremony at Head Office, Mr. Ron Andrews, holding card, is presented with farewell gifts and wished happiness in retirement by Mr. Bob Jowett (*Energy Sales Manager*) on behalf of all his Commercial colleagues.

Mr. R. G. ANDREWS

To the horticulturists and farmers in the Board's area, the man from MANWEB meant agricultural expert Mr. Ronald Andrews. After over 42 years' service to the industry, he takes early retirement at the age of 63.

He started his career with the Ramsgate District electricity supply authority, which was incorporated into the South Eastern Electricity Board with nationalisation. His wartime occupation involved fitting out, commissioning and taking part in sea trials of Royal Navy vessels, which involved one or two hairy encounters with German ships in the English Channel.

He joined MANWEB in 1966 as a 3rd assistant engineer in the former Area 4. With reorganisation in 1970, he was appointed as one of the specialist Head Office team based in Chester—his brief being the development of electricity in horticulture and agriculture.

He has become widely respected in the electricity, horticulture and agriculture industries. He was for many years a lecturer at the Welsh College of Horti-

culture at Northop, and has written articles for newspapers.

Ron is married and he and his wife Vera have two married daughters and four grandchildren. We understand he is planning to move house to be nearer his family who live in Kent. Fast cars and photography have been his main interests, with a bit of do-it-yourself. He returned to Sealand Road after a period of ill-health to say farewell to his many friends and colleagues, who in turn wished him a long and happy retirement.

Mr. G. CLARKE

A man with a multitude of interests and nearly 44 years' service in the electricity supply industry, Mr. Gerald Clarke has now retired from his job as administrative assistant in our Mid-Cheshire District accounts department.

Mr. Clarke began his working life with the former Crewe Corporation in April 1936 as a draughtsman in the electrical engineer's department. Four years later he joined the RAF and served in the Far East and Europe before returning to his job in Crewe.

Before making the presentation of a gardening

Mr. Mike Metcalfe, in dark suit, presents one of the staff's retirement gifts to friend and colleague Mr. Gerald Clarke at a ceremony held at Mid-Cheshire District offices.





Representative members of our Gwynedd District shop staff seen here with Mr. Arthur E. Jones, centre, their 'King' who recently abdicated after 30 years' service.

propagator from his colleagues at Macon Way, Mr. Mike Metcalfe (*District Administrative Officer*) paid tribute to Mr. Clarke's active contribution to the industry. He spoke of his representing colleagues on Local Advisory and Staff Committees for many years; of his services as treasurer of the District Sports and Social Club; of his membership of Nalگو for over 40 years and his periods as Chairman and President of the Branch; of his years as Secretary of the First-Aid Committee and his responsibility for the running of first-aid and artificial resuscitation classes in the District. He was also a safety representative and chief fire warden.

An additional presentation gift of a cut-glass rose bowl from staff in his section was made by Mrs. Christine Foster.

Mr. Clarke's activities extended outside his working hours. He managed to fit in time for his interests in the Auxiliary Fire Service and the St. John Ambulance Brigade. He has also been a churchwarden, a Sunday School superintendent and a Scoutmaster.

In retirement, Mr. Clarke hopes to devote more time to his garden—and new greenhouse—with a spot of caravanning in North Wales and plenty of his 'do-it-yourself' activities!

KING ARTHUR RETIRES

Mr. Arthur Ernest Jones, of our Gwynedd District Marketing section, retired last month after 30 years' service with MANWEB.

He served in the Army throughout the last war and then worked for the Control Commission in Germany for three years. He joined us in 1950 as a meter reader/collector then transferred to the Caernarfon shop in 1955. He was promoted to Marketing representative, based at Pwllheli, three years later, and rapidly became well-known throughout the area to customers and staff alike as 'King Arthur'.

In retirement, he intends to spend as much time as possible on the golf course. At a presentation supper at a Dinas Dinlle hotel, King Arthur told his many friends and colleagues that he would be buying golfing equipment with the cheque they had subscribed to and which was presented by Mr. Doug Willacy (*District Commercial Engineer*).

Pwllheli shop staff, thinking of their King's advancing years (*their words not ours!*) also presented him with a 'pink' golfing umbrella and a golfing glove.

We join with King Arthur's many friends in the Gwynedd District in wishing him every happiness in retirement.

MID-MERSEY PENSIONERS

The Association started their season early this year, with a two-day visit to London. An excellent packed lunch, provided by Mrs. Baines, one of their own members, was eaten on the coach journey, and the afternoon was spent at the Ideal Home Exhibition. After dinner it was "The King and I" at the London Palladium, followed next morning with a drive through Dickensian London and a tour round St. Paul's.

The next outing was a theatre visit to see "Move Over Mrs Markham".

A Spring Mini-Holiday at Paignton followed, including a visit to Buckfast Abbey, anyone going to Paignton for a holiday is invited to get in touch with **Mr. George Wheeler**, the Mid-Mersey Pensioners' secretary, who will give them the address of the Torbay Electricity Social Club (which he thoroughly recommends!).

A.G.M.

About fifty members attended the Annual General Meeting of the Chester and Head Office Retired Staff Association.

The subscription for 1980/81 was fixed at £1 and those who have not renewed their membership are invited to do so as soon as possible in order to take advantage of the coming programme of activities.

Wife's Affidavit

I hereby authorize my husband to work without wearing goggles, safety shoes, hard hat or any other safety equipment and hereby promise that I will, without complaint, perform the following duties if he is blinded or crippled :

- * Lead him wherever he wants to go
- * Help him dress and eat
- * Describe the scenery to him on our holidays
- * Read to him instead of watching television
- * Describe the way the children's eyes light up at Christmas time and what their weddings are like
- * Teach him to do housework so I can get a job and support our family
- * Do all the garage and home repair that he used to do
- * Teach our little boy to play football, cricket, build model aeroplanes, fish and enjoy himself

SIGNED BY WIFE : _____

DATE : _____



BRITISH SAFETY COUNCIL

