



'CODE' UPDATED

—more care for customers

THE NEW COUNCILS' TEACH -IN

THE role and constitution of the new Local Joint Co-ordinating Councils which have now replaced the old Local Advisory Committees was the subject of a briefing meeting held at Head Office for 44 prospective chairmen, vice-chairmen and secretaries of the new bodies. Chairman for the day was Norman Barr of the EETPTU, vice-chairman of the MANWEB Joint Co-ordinating Council.

A report on the Meeting by Joint Secretaries Keith Mann of Nalco, who represents the Trade Union side of the Council, and Arthur Priest, the North Western Area Industrial Relations Officer, who represent the Board Management side, is featured on page five.

PROPOSALS for improvements in the "Code of Practice on Payment of Gas and Electricity Bills", operated by the two industries, have been agreed and will come into operation soon. The main changes are as follows:—

- * If customers fail to respond to invitations to get in touch, Boards will make all reasonable efforts to make personal contact.
- * Where contact can be made, Boards will take the initiative and make an explicit offer of a reasonable repayment arrangement.
- * Customers with large accumulated debts will be offered arrangements for repayment over a reasonable period and Boards will visit or write to customers who have been without a supply for a month or more, to see whether arrangements can be agreed for reconnection.
- * Prepayment meters will be installed on request, where safe and practical. There will be no arbitrary refusal of such requests.
- * The industries will agree proposals for amendments to the "fuel direct" scheme, designed to relate the amount of weekly deductions more closely to current consumption levels.
- * Boards will inform Local Authorities when they become aware that tenants are at risk of disconnection because of landlords' debts. Disconnection action will be suspended for 14 days to enable the Local Authority to use its statutory power to intervene.
- * Boards will review the format of their disconnection notices, etc., to ensure that they can be easily understood (which means being geared to the reading ability of an average eight-year-old).
- * A new leaflet presenting the Code as revised in popular terms will be produced shortly.

All MANWEB staff will be aware that the Code of Practice was first adopted to help people experiencing difficulty in paying their fuel bills, and to cut hardship to the minimum.

In an article published on page three of this number of CONTACT, the Board's Chief Accountant, Geoffrey Barnes, outlines the history and development of the operation of the Code, and explains how its implementation has helped to reduce disconnections and to ease hardship among some of MANWEB's customers.



London Marathon Men

In the final stages of their training for the London Marathon are two Men from MANWEB—both from Head Office. On the left is senior project leader Brian Sheppard, from Computers, who hopes to raise cash for the Clatterbridge Hospital Cyclotron Appeal. Pat Doyle, stationery stores supervisor, on the right, is being sponsored to aid the St. John's Cadets. Watch for the MANWEB marathon men on TV on 9th May.

PRENTON PROGRESS

PROGRESS towards moving-in day at the new North Wirral District office at Prenton (estimated for September) continues apace.

The April meeting of the

Board approved the purchase of office furniture, including desks, storage units and chairs; staff restaurant and kitchen furniture; specialised filing units, and other essential items. Four separate firms of suppliers are involved, after consideration of competitive tenders. Total expenditure authorised was just over £62,000.



"Watt's all this—electricity in tins?"

... asks a surprised Helen Gocher. "Just the thing for the ohm," she giggled. Registry clerk Helen, aged 19, soon got the message—from the back of the can!

An Electricity Council advertising campaign aimed at industry uses two novelty items—a tin of white gloss paint and a carton of orange juice, with the respective messages "A Fresh Look for Industry" and "Pure Juice for Industry". The cans and cartons will be given away at exhibitions.

Still Recovering

THE recent swing towards more hopeful results in electricity sales to industry continued during February, when total sales were 6.2 per cent up on last year's figure.

Most sectors showed some measure of improvement, with iron and steel the star performer. Sales to the oil-refining, textiles and building industries were the black spots for the month.

NEW BOARD MEMBER

THE Secretary of State for Energy has appointed Gareth Raw-Rees, of Bow Street, near Aberystwyth, a well-known livestock farmer, as the latest Board Member of MANWEB.

MANWEB Chairman Ben Hastings welcomes new Board member Gareth Raw-Rees.



Mr. Raw-Rees is a former High Sheriff of Cardiganshire.

He is vice-chairman of the governing body and joint committee of the Welsh Agricultural College and chairman of the Joint Advisory Committee on Agricultural Education (to advise the Welsh Joint Education Committee); a governor of the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society, active in the development and insurance affairs of the NFU and a former director of the Fatstock Marketing Corporation.

Mr. Raw-Rees also has a long record of service to local government, including six years as a member of the former Cardiganshire County Council, and as a member and past chairman of his local community council.

SAFE COOKING

THE 1982 "Approved for Safety" list of electric catering equipment for use in commercial kitchens has been issued by the Electricity Council. It includes 178 items—57 more than in the previous list issued in 1979.

The approved list includes general purpose, forced convection, microwave and steaming ovens; ranges, boiling tables, fryers and bratt pans; griddles, griddles and toasters; hot cupboards, bains marie, beverage

Bankers' Orders

THE number of Bankers' Orders taken out by our quarterly account customers increased by 4,077 during the 12 months ending on 31st March last.

This system of spreading evenly the cost of electricity over a 12-month period is becoming increasingly popular with our customers.

equipment, dish and glass washers. Hand wash-dry units and insect destroyers are included in an ancillary list.

The approval scheme has the support of the Catering Equipment Manufacturers' Association and will eventually embrace all types of catering equipment.

Copies of the 1982 edition of "Electric Equipment Approved for Safety by the Electricity Council" may be obtained from The Electricity Council, Marketing Department, 30 Millbank London SW1P 4RD.



Engineering Schemes

PLANS to extend, reinforce and modernise the MANWEB distribution network approved at last month's Board meeting included the following:—

A new sub-station and network extensions to meet growing demand resulting from new housing development at Crox-

teth Park, Liverpool; similar work at Mancot, near Chester; diversions of 33-kV overhead lines at Wrexham Industrial Estate; the refurbishing of 29 kilometres of overhead line in the locality of Sarn, near Newtown; increased transformer capacity at Shawbury 33-kV sub-station and reinforcement of the 11-kV network between

Shawbury and Wem.

A proposal to refurbish the derelict annexe to the central appliance store at Queensfery also received the go-ahead. This work, which will be completed by the autumn, will make it possible to introduce more efficient methods of handling and loading containers by concentrating appliance storage in one building. This in turn will open the way for the improved housing of engineering equipment in a building currently used as an appliance back-up store.

Film Catalogue

A NEW catalogue of 1,400 16mm films, video cassettes and tape/filmstrip programmes—including 500 new titles—is available from the Central Film Library, which is part of the Central Office of Information.

There are three sections, Industrial & Management Training, Education & Careers Subjects and General Interest titles. Over 300 titles are available on free loan.

The catalogue—which costs £2.50 and which includes a free up-dating service—is available from the Central Film Library, Chalfont Grove, Gerrards Cross, Bucks. SL9 8TN.

Long Service

WE offer congratulations to the following members of our staff who have completed, during the month of April, 50, 40, 30 and 20 years' service in the electricity supply industry:—

50 YEARS—Head Office: **Arthur O'Donovan** (foreman—Engineering Technical).

40 YEARS—Head Office: **J. Stanley Burgess** (1st engineer—Load Development), **Noel Gardner** (2nd engineer—System Management) and **Kenneth Woodward** (principal assistant—Financial).

30 YEARS—Liverpool District: **David J. Sharpe** (sub-station attendant) and **John L. Cogan** (craft attendant). Dee Valley District: **Robert Harrison** (craftsman—electrician). North Wirral District: **Norman J. Johnson** (timekeeper). Clwyd District: **Ivor Hayes** (craftsman—overhead lines), **Kenneth T. Povah** (craft attendant) and **Emyr Roberts** (chargehand—overhead lines). Head Office: **John A. Burt** (clerical assistant—Financial) and **E. Glyn Whalley** (principal assistant—Financial).

20 YEARS—North Mersey District: **John D. Neil** (1st engineer). Liverpool District: **Edward R. Bostock** (2nd engineer), **Robert H. Matthews** (chargehand—installation inspection) and **William G. Mottram** (craft attendant). North Wirral District: **Frank L. Kay** (Installation and Service Engineer) and **Geoffrey W. Roylance** (craftsman—electrician). Mid-Cheshire District: **Dennis Hughes** (chargehand—general duties), **Frank J. Limb** (general duties assistant), **George K. Morrey** (storekeeper) and **Gerald W. Purcell** (meter operative). Clwyd District: **Doris E. Hall** (part-time saleswoman) and **Eira Hughes** (principal assistant—Accounts). Gwynedd District: **David J. Jones** (craftsman—overhead lines). Head Office: **Thomas Blundell** (2nd engineer—Civil), **Vincent O'Toole** (1st engineer—Civil) and **David C. Williams** (2nd engineer—Plant and Construction).

OFF TO SCHOOL

EIGHT members of the Board staff have already attended Spring Schools, and more are scheduled to attend others in the summer.

In the last week of March, two Mid-Cheshire staff, Paul Daniels, a meter attendant from Northwich, and craftsman—electrical fitter Keith Shaw, from Crewe, went to Loughborough University of Technology. There they were joined by Carol Booth, a Head Office trainee computer programmer, and Iori Edwards, a craftsman—electrician from Aberystwyth.

The following week at the same venue, two Liverpool District staff, David Stockley, a craftsman—electrician, and Neil Whamond, a clerical supervisor, joined Karen Lloyd-Jones, a supervisor at Aberystwyth, and Robin Griffin from Dee Valley, who is a storekeeper at New Crane Street, Chester, for the second course.

During the last week of sunny June, attending the University of North Wales at Bangor, will be Karen Crew, a clerk from North Mersey District, Joseph Kevlin, a craftsman—electrician from Mid-Mersey District's St. Helens depot, and Joseph Shone from Liverpool, where he is a meter operative.

Off to County Durham in September are three more staff from MANWEB. During the first week of the month, Oswestry District 2nd engineer Geoffrey Purslow, Clwyd accounts clerk Denise Bailey and Patrick Nugent, Southport shop supervisor from North Mersey, will attend Grey College in Durham.

Tapton Hall, Sheffield, is the final venue of this year's Spring & Summer Schools Programme and, during the week 15th to 22nd September, Gwynedd District's Michael Lambert-Jones, who does general duties at Llangefni, will attend the course with Edward Dutton, a craftsman—overhead lines from Mid-Cheshire, David Ferguson, a 1st engineer at Head Office, and David Clifton, a clerk at the Mid-Mersey District office in Warrington.

Wedding Album

DODD-WORTHINGTON

THE atmosphere became electric when 23-year-old Karen Dodd, a British Telecom sales lady, married Garry Worthington at St. Mary's Parish Church, Upton, Chester—due no doubt in part to the presence of a large MANWEB contingent.

Garry, who is 24, is a general assistant engineer in Liverpool District. Gerry Worthington, the MANWEB lighting specialist at Sealand Road is Garry's dad. Mum—Emily—is an accounts clerk, and so too was the chief bridesmaid, Karen's sister, Janice—both from Head Office. Best man, Steve Bus-



Photo call, from the left: Gerry and Emily Worthington, Janice Dodd, Garry and his bride Karen, and Steve Buswell.

well, is an engineering clerk at Head Office.

After the ceremony, the reception was held at the

County Stand of Chester Racecourse, and "honey-moon stakes" were held in sunny Tunisia.

EVANS-HANCOCK

SHARON EVANS, a clerk in the General Services section at our Oswestry District, made a beautiful bride when she married Andrew Hancock recently.



Andrew and Sharon Hancock.

(Picture—Norman Mason, Oswestry District)

The ceremony took place at St. Martin's Moor Chapel, near Oswestry, and the happy couple honeymooned in Plymouth—Ho! Ho!!

Andrew is a motor engineer in his own business near Whitchurch.

BRIDE BAKES THE CAKE

We picture the five-tier wedding cake baked and decorated by Alison Letman from our Gwynedd District, on the occasion of her marriage to Geraint Williams. Alison's mother, switchboard operator Jean Letman, completes the picture.



Clwyd presentations

STAFF from our Clwyd District completing 30 and 20 years of service in our industry were presented with their Certificates by Glyn Dodd (Group Manager) at a ceremony held at a St. Asaph hotel recently.

Les Griffiths (District Engineer) gave a brief biography of each member of the staff from the Commercial and Engineering sections and Denis Atkinson (principal assistant—Admin.), standing in for David Mellor (Customer Services Manager) who was ill, spoke of the service given by the Secretarial and Financial staff.

After thanking all those receiving awards for their long and loyal service, Mr. Dodd then presented the Certificates as follows:—

30 YEARS—Frank Brown (meter operative), Stan Davies (craft attendant—overhead lines), Colin Edwards (3rd engineer—

Energy Sales), Dick Evans (3rd engineer—Systems), Harry Hambley (craftsman—electrician), Pat Quinn (1st engineer), Bill Simon (craft attendant), Wally Shreeve (2nd engineer) and Stan Taylor (craftsman—electrician).

20 YEARS—Reg Collinson (meter operative), Gwel Cunnah (craftsman—jointing), Bill Edwards (craftsman—jointing), Vic Hooson (foreman—jointing), Gwen Jones (saleswoman), Jim Jones (foreman—meter reading), Al Jones (courier/storekeeper), Bill Owen (administrative assistant), Brian Parry (foreman—overhead lines) and John Woolley (craftsman—electrician).

AMONGST the many "Codes of Practice" which have been adopted in recent years, the one most familiar to staff dealing with our customers and their bills is the Code of Practice on the Payment of Gas and Electricity Bills, which was issued in 1976. You will probably have heard that the Code has been changed recently. The changes are detailed on page one, and this article explains how the "Code" came into being and describes the events leading up to the new developments.

Background

In 1969/70, the average annual bill for domestic customers was £33, but it had risen to £80 in 1975/76, and is in the region of £190 in the year just ended. The average bill has therefore increased by 5.8 times in the whole period, compared with a 4.4 times increase in the retail Price Index.

In response to concern over these rising prices, the Government set up a Committee in 1976 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Gordon Oakes (then an Under Secretary of State and Member of Parliament for Widnes) to consider the problems of fuel debts and hardship. The Committee made two main recommendations—that the Gas and Electricity Industries' right to disconnect should be abolished, and that they should adopt a Code governing fuel debts and hardship. The first recommendation was rejected by both the Government and the Industries, but a Code of Practice was agreed and published in the autumn of 1976. It was re-issued in a more readable "popular" style in December 1978 and, in December 1980, a special reference to blind, severely sick or disabled customers was added to the earlier version.

Details of the Code

The existing Code explains that fuel has to be paid for, but offers help to customers in real hardship, by outlining methods of payment alternative to the normal quarterly bill, such as annual budget plans, savings stamps, payments on account (in advance) or the installation of slot meters where the other methods do not help and the installation is safe and practical.

The Code specifies rules governing disconnection. Supplies are not to be cut off if the customer enters into, and keeps, an arrangement for regular payments which will clear the debt in a reasonable period and cover continuing charges (by meter if appropriate). Supplies will not be cut off between October and March if all the people living in the house who have an income are old age pensioners. There are other safeguards for customers, covering debts in the name of previous occupiers, the obtaining of Magistrates' Warrants for Entry, and the need for deposits or guarantors.

The Fuel Direct Scheme

A very important clause in the Code provides for deferment of disconnection for at least 14 days, to enable cases involving defined categories of Social Security recipients to be referred to the DHSS, and of families with young children to be referred to Local Authority Social Services offices. Whilst the Authorities may not be able to help with money in all cases, customers on supplementary benefit can join the "fuel direct" scheme, under which weekly sums are deducted from benefit at source and

The Code of Practice Story

— *background and details*

By GEOFFREY BARNES (Chief Accountant)



passed over to the Board periodically. The deductions are calculated in two elements—an estimate of the weekly average expenditure on gas and electricity, plus a fixed sum (now £1.20 per week) to set against arrears.

Where a fuel direct arrangement is agreed, the customer is protected from disconnection as long as the deductions continue at the agreed rate, which can be adjusted to take account of changes in the rate of consumption of fuel.

The PSI Report

In 1978, the two industries, together with their Consumers' Councils, commissioned a Review of the operation of the Code of Practice by the Policy Studies Institute (PSI), at the request of a Review Group chaired by the then Under Secretary

of hardship. They found no evidence that breaches of the Code's specific promises occur more than occasionally and accidentally (with one or two exceptions, not involving MANWEB), but say that it is difficult to provide an objective assessment of the industries' implementation of the spirit of the Code. They say that the deficiencies found by the Review appear to lie not so much in the industries' operation of the Code, as in the Code itself, and the recommendations are based on the view that, with the exception of continued co-operation of the industries in the "fuel direct" scheme, the industries should cease to expect the Welfare Agencies to assume the responsibility for hardship. They should treat all debtors the same, using a system which takes debtors' characteristics into account. All debtors should be offered instalment plans and those who do not agree to, or keep, such arrangements should have a prepayment meter installed compulsorily. The recommendations are broken down into 28 specific items, covering repayment arrangements, prepayment meters, the role of the Welfare Agencies, monitoring and arbitration, and immediate changes.

Electricity Consumers' Council

The Electricity Consumers' Council published a response to the Review in February, supporting the recommendation that Boards should offer prepayment meters as an alternative to disconnection in all cases, and that before the disconnection stage is reached, Boards should automatically make offers of repayment plans based on a fixed formula.

The Industries' Response

In its initial response to the Review in October last, the electricity industry confirmed that Boards have generally adhered to the Code and that breaches occur rarely, and then only by accident. It pointed out its regret that little attempt was made in the Review to assess the beneficial results that had come from the operation of the Code, or how positively Boards had responded to the difficulties customers faced as economic conditions steadily deteriorated.

The number of disconnections might have been expected to rise considerably, due to the economic climate—the number in fact fell by about 15 per cent since the introduction of the Code. During the same period, 496,000 prepayment meters were installed; over 802,000 referrals were made to and from the Welfare Agencies and, of those referred, 242,000 customers obtained financial help; the number of credit customers using easy payment schemes increased from 1,900,000 at March 1977 to 3,200,000 at June 1981; and, in a typical year, Boards enter into well over 500,000

arrangements with customers to meet specific payment problems.

The final response of the electricity and gas industries was announced by Mr. David Mellor in Parliament on 29th March. This, together with a letter from the Deputy Chairman of the Electricity Council about certain additional measures being taken by Electricity Boards to assist with problems applying particularly to electricity customers, has been placed in the House of Commons Library. The response and the letter contain the proposals for improvements which are now to be implemented.

Policy for the Future

The industry accepts that the Review indicated aspects of Board's debt collection procedures which needed further consideration, and the final response promises changes in procedure which should ensure that any customer who is prepared to take advantage of the help available and not use electricity that he cannot pay for in the long run, will not be cut off. There are people who can pay but will not—or at least are determined to put off the agony as long as they can.

The Code can be abused by these people to "beat the system", and some of them will have to be cut off. It also has to be pointed out that some customers may stay cut off where they have persistently reconnected the supply improperly or obtained electricity by fraudulent means. In these cases, the supply will not be reconnected unless the customer provides security or a deposit of an amount to cover the estimated cost of further default and make good any damage to the industry's equipment.

The Code & MANWEB

The result of introducing the Code in MANWEB can be seen from the reduction in numbers of disconnections—from 10,500 in 1976/77 to an average of about 8,300 in the four years ended March 1981. In the same period, over 20,000 cases were assisted by the Welfare Authorities and nearly 15,000 prepayment meters were installed. In March 1981, 7,000 customers were paying their bills by direct deduction from benefit, 16,000 had made weekly payment arrangements to avoid disconnection, and the number of customers using the budget payment system by Banker's Order had doubled (to 48,000). The value of savings stamps sold increased from £1.2 million in the year to March 1977, to £3.4 million in the year to March 1981.

of State, Dr. John Cunningham. The sponsorship of the Review was supported by the National and Local Government Officers' Association. The Report was finally presented in November 1981 to the Review Group, now chaired by the current Under Secretary of State, Mr. David Mellor. Although commissioned by the industries, the conclusions of the Review are entirely the responsibility of the PSI and do not necessarily represent the views of any of the sponsoring or associated organisations.

The Report is lengthy—274 pages—and it goes into great detail, demonstrating that the vast majority of customers who are disconnected fall into the various hardship categories. The overall conclusion is that the Code of Practice has not been adequate to achieve any radical minimisa-





Head Office

Our team at Sealand Road, from left to right: Irene Matthewson (supervisor), Barbara Vickers, Susan Thomas, Guy Atherton, Merelyn Griffiths and Margaret Davies.

TELEPHONE TECHNIQUE

It could happen to you . . .

B-r-r... B-r-r... B-r-r... B-r-r...
 (Your comment—"Come on now, answer the 'phone.")

B-r-r... B-r-r... B-r-r... B-r-r...
 (You again—"There must be someone there. It is a very large office . . .")

B-r-r... B-r-r... B-r-r... B-
 ("Oh! Forget it!")

. . . and then again . . . our customer . . .

B-r-r... B-r-r... B-r "Hello!"

(Customer—"Oh! Hello there. I would like to query my . . . Hello! Hello!! Are you there? Hello! Where has he/she gone to? This is a trunk call and is costing a fortune . . . Hello! (whistle) H-e-l-l-o . . . Hell . . . Oh! Bother! (or words to that effect). Slams 'phone down.)

* * * * *

The above incidents serve to illustrate that everyone has something to learn—or re-learn—about telephone techniques.

Last year, all of the Board's regular and relief switchboard operators attended a special intensive course organised by our Education and Training staff at Head Office. The course was designed to improve the communications link between MANWEB and its customers.

Emphasis was placed on the fact that the switchboard operator is the first person the caller deals with and therefore she, or he, has to promote the initial image of the Board as a pleasant, efficient organisation.

No matter how good an impression our switchboard operators create, this can be quickly destroyed by the next person who speaks to and deals with the caller—or who is simply not there to answer the telephone ringing away in the office or workshop.

A review of the training course was compiled

by Lesley Smith (adviser) our Education and Training staff at Head Office. The course was designed to improve the communications link between MANWEB and its customers.

Always inform the close colleague—

- (1) of holidays/where possible
- (2) of prolonged absence, so that someone else can take over leaving the extension
- (3) quote your telephone number on all correspondence so that operators are expected to answer the one's extension



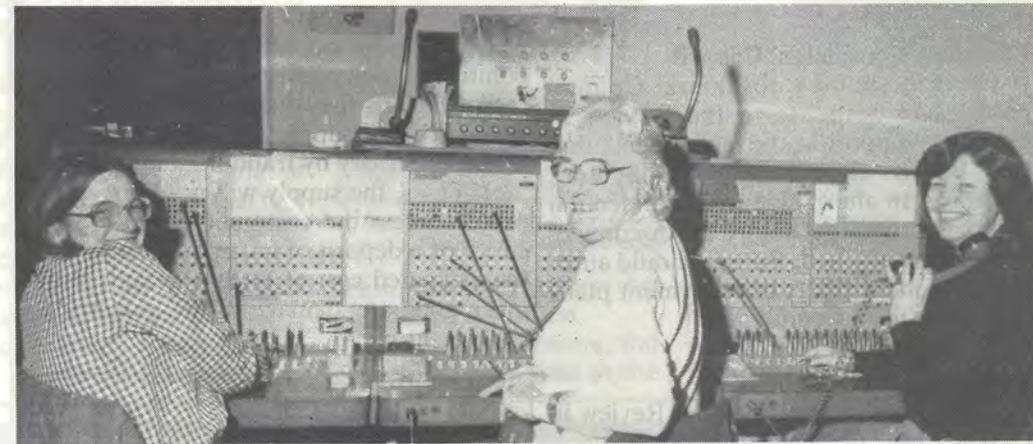
Dee Valley

Smiles from Rhostyllen, from left to right: Carole Jones, Joyce Robinson and Jane Evans.



North Wirral

Soon to be "signing off" from Craven Street, we see, from left to right: Phyllis Holmes, Sheila Dodd and Valerie Fell.



North Mersey

Our trio at Bridle Road, from left to right: Diane Sealey, Norma Craven and Gloria Purchase.

OUR switchboard operators, pictured round this page, handle thousands of calls—incoming and outgoing—every week of the year. The switchboards are buzzing non-stop for most of the working day.



Mid-Mersey

From left to right: Carol Wilcox, Jean Carson and Christine Archer on the Wilderspool Causeway exchange.

Clwyd

Jean Porteous, left, and Liz Evans at Cefndy Road.



Aberystwyth

Way down South we are, representing all our operators, by Lesley Smith (adviser) our Education and Training staff at Head Office. The course was designed to improve the communications link between MANWEB and its customers.



E
ES

Swestry
Rodger at Maesbury Road.



Leensferry
Mosford at Queensferry depot.

trative assistant), from
ining section. She in-
mmendations to help
extension users.
chboard operator or a
ess, before the event

nce from the office or
alls may be taken by
mediately, rather than
tor to keep on ringing

one extension number
nce—our switchboard
d, but they cannot be
w immediately every-
umber.

, from left to right: Iona Stubbs
relief operators, Judith Lloyd
and Sue Passmore.



Mid-Cheshire

At Macon Way—Toni Boyer, left, and Margaret Reid.

Liverpool

At Lister Drive—Joan Jones, left, and Anne McGrail.



Gwynedd

At St. Helens Road—Gwenda Owen, left, and Jean Letman.



INCOMING CALLS

- 1—Answer promptly.
- 2—Identify yourself and your section.
- 3—Ask the caller's name.
- 4—If the call is likely to take some time, ask if the caller is in a telephone box. If so, get the telephone number, so that you can ring back if he is cut off.
- 5—Listen attentively . . . and get the facts.
- 6—Help by asking relevant questions.
- 7—If you have to leave the telephone to check something, tell the caller what you are doing and how long you expect to be.
- 8—Give the caller all relevant information.
- 9—If you take a call, make a note and pass on.
- 10—If you have to transfer a call, make sure it goes to the right person/section.

OUTGOING CALLS

- 1—Get clear in your mind (or on paper) exactly what you want to say before making the call.
- 2—Whenever possible, ask the switchboard operator for a specific number, rather than the name of the firm or person.
- 3—Try to make your telephone calls after 1.00 p.m. if possible.

PERSONAL ASPECTS

BE POLITE and helpful at all times.
APOLOGISE for any delay.
REMEMBER your tone of voice is important.
USE the caller's name, it helps to personalise MANWEB.
CALLS cost money—to the customer or the Board.
TRY, TRY, TRY to keep cool with angry customers.

GENERAL

- Don't deviate—stick to the point—it saves time.
- Don't give information of which you are unsure.
- Don't make promises we can't keep.
- Don't criticise other sections or departments.
- Don't use "jargon".

NOT FORGETTING TO THANK ALL THE STAND-BY SWITCHBOARD OPERATORS WHO COVER FOR THE "AFTER-HOURS" STAFF

'Teach-in' for new LJCC Officers



by KEITH MANN (left) and ARTHUR PRIEST (Joint Secretaries, MANWEB JCC)

MANWEB's Secretary John Scudamore, who is also a member of the MANWEB JCC, set the ball rolling by saying that the introduction of the new Co-ordinating Councils marked the closing of one chapter of joint consultation and the opening of a new one. We must all recognise

changing attitudes, with regard to employee participation and move forward accordingly if we were to remain amongst the leading organisations in this field. In introducing the programme, he wished the new Councils every success for the future, adding that MANWEB's Chairman and management were totally committed to giving full support to the new Co-ordinating Councils.

Norman Barr then traced the growth of joint consultation in the electricity supply industry since the advent of nationalisation, explaining how the Joint Co-ordinating Councils had developed from the work of the Advisory machinery. He stressed that although the new co-ordinating machinery has no executive powers, it has the means of being in on the decision-making process in the industry. The emphasis is on settling matters at the locality and reaching agreement, no matter how difficult the problem.

With the aid of an overhead projector, Arthur Priest, Board's side secretary of the MANWEB JCC, outlined the structure of the new machinery. Mr. Priest explained how the constitution of LJCCs differs from that of the old LACs, and dealt in detail with the various clauses of the constitution. He went on to outline the function and constitution of the future Local Health and Safety Committees. In answer to questions, Mr. Priest dealt with the role of LJCC Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Joint Secretaries, and with the preparation of the agenda and minutes.

The afternoon session was opened by Keith Mann, of Nalco, the Trade Unions' side secretary of the MANWEB JCC. Mr. Mann made it clear that the new advance in joint consultation, and the hoped-for increased participation, not only afforded rights but also imposed obligations on both sides. The process of seeking to secure agreement in order to make progress meant, for example, that Board's members would need to understand the relevance of "status quo" provisions, whilst Trade Unions' members would have to accept that it was not possible to act retrospectively and deal with issues from the past.

He recognised that many of the people involved in LJCCs had considerable experience of Committee work, but nevertheless the responsi-

bility for the effective working of the new machinery was jointly that of management and representatives. So far as the Trade Unions on the AJCC were concerned, it was not their job to advise what Local Joint Co-ordinating Councils should do, but they could offer advice on how to deal with the business before them.

Mr. Mann then gave a list of "do's" and "don'ts" which he considered would help elected representatives on LJCCs:—

- Do not be in the position of only responding to Management items on the Agenda;
- Do take the initiative on issues which are of concern to employees and their representatives;
- Do attempt to establish priorities from the issues which the elected representatives wish to discuss, possibly on annual basis;
- Do your homework;
- Do not be afraid of seeking further advice;
- Do plan your discussions;
- Do not feel inhibited from having side discussions where you feel it is necessary.

Bob Blackburn, Area Secretary of the EPEA and a member of the MANWEB JCC, emphasised that the new machinery was not to be considered by management as an extension of the old consultative machinery, neither was it to be considered by the trade unions as an extension of the negotiating machinery. It was designed to enable agreements to be made—in fact agreements were a specific requirement. There would be no automatic reference to a higher Committee. He stressed the importance of the local HESAC. Safety was of paramount importance and although the electricity supply industry had an excellent record in this field, there was no room for complacency. Mr. Blackburn expressed the hope that the trade unions' members would be prepared to place constructive items on agendas at the same time submitting supporting evidence in writing. We all had a duty to make the new machinery work efficiently.

The afternoon sessions concluded with an Open Forum, during which all the speakers contributed to the answering of many questions raised by the prospective Local JCC Officers. At the end of the day it seemed to be the unanimous opinion that the exercise had been well worthwhile and that all who had taken part would go back to their respective working units better equipped to take on their important responsibilities.

TELEPHONE TECHNIQUES

It could happen to you . . .

B-r-r... B-r-r... B-r-r... B-r-r...
(Your comment—"Come on now, answer the 'phone.")

B-r-r... B-r-r... B-r-r... B-r-r...
(You again—"There must be someone there. It is a very large office . . .")

B-r-r... B-r-r... B-r-r... B-
(*"Oh! Forget it!"*)

. . . and then again . . . our customer . . .

B-r-r... B-r-r... B-r "Hello!"

(Customer—"Oh! Hello there. I would like to query my . . . Hello! Hello!! Are you there? Hello! Where has he/she gone to? This is a trunk call and is costing a fortune . . . Hello! (whistle) H-e-l-l-o . . . Hell . . . Oh! Bother! (or words to that effect). Slams 'phone down.)

* * * * *

The above incidents serve to illustrate that everyone has something to learn—or re-learn—about telephone techniques.

Last year, all of the Board's regular and relief switchboard operators attended a special intensive course organised by our Education and Training staff at Head Office. The course was designed to improve the communications link between MANWEB and its customers.

Emphasis was placed on the fact that the switchboard operator is the first person the caller deals with and therefore she, or he, has to promote the initial image of the Board as a pleasant, efficient organisation.

No matter how good an impression our switchboard operators create, this can be quickly destroyed by the next person who speaks to and deals with the caller—or who is simply not there to answer the telephone ringing away in the office or workshop.

A review of the training course was compiled

by Lesley Smith (*administrative assistant*), from our Education and Training section. She included the following recommendations to help in the re-education of all extension users.

Always inform the switchboard operator or a close colleague—

- (1) of holidays/sickness, before the event where possible;
- (2) of prolonged absence from the office or depot, so that calls may be taken by someone else immediately, rather than leaving the operator to keep on ringing the extension;
- (3) quote your telephone extension number on all correspondence—our switchboard operators are good, but they cannot be expected to know immediately everyone's extension number.

Way down South we have, from left to right: Iona Stubbs and, representing all our relief operators, Judith Lloyd Jones, centre, and Sue Passmore.

Aberystwyth



round this page,
1 outgoing—every
buzzing non-stop for

left, and Liz Evans
dy Road.



Oswestry
Mina Rodger at Maesbury Road.



Queensferry
Jenny Mosford at Queensferry depot.



Mid-Cheshire
At Macon Way—Toni Boyer, left, and Margaret Reid.



Liverpool
At Lister Drive—Joan Jones, left, and Anne McGrail.

INCOMING CALLS

- 1—Answer promptly.
- 2—Identify yourself and your section.
- 3—Ask the caller's name.
- 4—If the call is likely to take some time, ask if the caller is in a telephone box. If so, get the telephone number, so that you can ring back if he is cut off.
- 5—Listen attentively . . . and get the facts.
- 6—Help by asking relevant questions.
- 7—If you have to leave the telephone to check something, tell the caller what you are doing and how long you expect to be.
- 8—Give the caller all relevant information.
- 9—If you take a call, make a note and pass on.
- 10—If you have to transfer a call, make sure it goes to the right person/section.

OUTGOING CALLS

- 1—Get clear in your mind (or on paper) exactly what you want to say before making the call.
- 2—Whenever possible, ask the switchboard operator for a specific number, rather than the name of the firm or person.
- 3—Try to make your telephone calls after 1.00 p.m. if possible.

PERSONAL ASPECTS

BE POLITE and helpful at all times.
APOLOGISE for any delay.
REMEMBER your tone of voice is important.
USE the caller's name, it helps to personalise MANWEB.
CALLS cost money—to the customer or the Board.
TRY, TRY, TRY to keep cool with angry customers.

GENERAL

- Don't deviate—stick to the point—it saves time.
- Don't give information of which you are unsure.
 - Don't make promises we can't keep.
 - Don't criticise other sections or departments.
 - Don't use "jargon".

NOT FORGETTING TO THANK ALL THE STAND-BY SWITCHBOARD OPERATORS WHO COVER FOR THE "AFTER-HOURS" STAFF

Gwynedd

At St. Helens Road—Gwenda Owen, left, and Jean Letman.



IN THE SHOPS

ALTHOUGH appliance sales were down by 14.6 per cent in February compared with the same month last year, total sales for the 11 months from April 1981 to February 1982 are still better, in real terms, than those of the previous year. Micro-

wave and split-level cookers continue to increase in popularity, while traditional cookers are just about holding their own.

Our new shops at Warrington and Rhyl continue to do well, with marked increases in the level of business during the first months of operation.

The undramatic but steady increase in the popularity of storage radiators continued during February, with a net gain of 200 off-peak customers.

Helping hands...

... from Oswestry Samaritans

A NICE note of thanks was received by Oswestry District manager Ron Williams from the Rev. Tom Boulcott, vicar of Loppington, near Shrewsbury, after supply to the church was lost, just before Easter.

Worried about the possible consequences over this busy period in the Christian calendar, the vicar asked for urgent help. It quickly arrived in the persons of Whitchurch linesmen Terry Edge and Brian Speakes, who quickly made sure that Easter at the parish church would be handicap-free.



Above, left to right, are Tomos Davies, Phyllis Mort, Linda Stein, Dewi Parry and David Grady.

... for Aberystwyth children

THE historic blizzard which threatened to wipe Aberystwyth District from the face of the map in January was an ill wind which blew some good to the children of the nearby Plas Llest Children's Home. A grateful customer, in an expression of appreciation for the work the staff did during the winter, sent along a nice fat turkey to the District Office—which promptly found its way into the oven at the children's home!

More recently, District Manager Dewi Parry had the pleasure of presenting a cheque for £191 to Mrs. Phyllis Mort, wife of the administrator of the home. The cash was raised by sponsorship

support for three members of the staff—Linda Stein, who did a parachute jump, and Tomos Davies and David Grady, both of whom are reported to have "suffered" a sponsored slim!

OBITUARY

WE regret to record the deaths of the following colleagues:—

Mr. John Leslie Caffrey, aged 65, a former Transmission District Administrative Officer prior to his retirement a few months ago.

Mr. Harry Cooper, aged 56, a chargehand craftsman electrician based at our Southport depot in North Mersey District, died suddenly at his home. He had worked for the Board for the past 19 years.

Mr. Jack Naylor, aged 74, a former Revenue Superintendent at Rhosyllen prior to his retirement in 1971.

Mr. Frank Smith, aged 78, a former Commercial engineer at New Crane Street, Chester, before his retirement.

Mr. Peter Burns Henderson, aged 66, a former Secretary to the Board prior to his retirement in 1978, after 45 years' service in our industry.

Mr. Alfred Lomax, aged 85, a former sub-station attendant in Liverpool, prior to his retirement in 1961.

We extend our sincere sympathy to their families and friends.

PENSIONERS' OUTINGS

—Wrexham going

WARWICK and Stratford-on-Avon are the destinations of the Wrexham Retired Association on their coach outing on 26th May 1982, and members are reminded to contact secretary Bill Thomas to book seats. There may be one or two vacancies on the trip, so anyone interested in a lovely day out should contact Bill on Wrexham 59169.

Canteen, and new members are always welcome. Any retired employees living in the area who would like to join should contact Bill Thomas or just pop along on the days of the meeting.

—Mid-Mersey have been

MID-MERSEY Pensioners Association secretary Nan Kirkham tells us that the retired folk have just enjoyed a mini-holiday in Bournemouth. Good weather, a nice hotel with entertainment, plus trips to Dorset, Poole and Christchurch, gave them a welcome early spring break.

THERE has long been enthusiasm for harnessing power from the strength of the wind, the energy of the sun and the restless force of the waves and water.

Over the centuries, that zeal has been reflected in the many different designs of windmills, waterwheels and early forms of solar panels. "Capturing" such capricious resources has not proved easy.

Yet today—as we approach the 21st Century—the search for an economic power supply from the so-called renewable energy resources is being pursued with more vigour than ever before.

It is spurred on by the rapidly rising price of fossil fuels, and the knowledge that their supply will be diminishing as the end of the century approaches. There is also a growing support for the use of natural resources by those who see them as an attractive and limitless supply of energy.

But unfortunately, the saying "as free as the wind" does not apply to its application as a source of power. If it were easy to capture low-cost energy from the wind, there would be now be as many wind generators as greenhouses in the nation's back gardens, for there is nothing to stop people building them. The economic exploitation of other renewable energy resources for electricity production is also fraught with difficulty.

For many years the Central Electricity Generating Board has explored the potential of renewable resources, in addition to the development of its fossil and nuclear powered stations. For it recognises that undue dependence on any one source of energy would be undesirable, and it must examine all possible methods of generating electricity.

Currently, it is carrying out research and studies on wind, wave, tidal and geothermal energy. This contribution to research by CEGB scientists and engineers is acknowledged by others working in the renewable energy field.

Of the renewable options, wind energy at present looks the most promising in the medium-term, and the Board is exploring the potential of advanced designs of wind generators which can operate at lower wind speeds than in the past.

It plans to buy its first medium-sized wind machine, to be installed at Carmarthen Bay, and subsequently will buy a large-scale wind generator of several megawatts—enough to supply power to several thousand people—for operation around 1985. This would be a proven machine, which could be over 300 feet high to the tip of its blade. If it were successful and environmentally acceptable, a cluster of perhaps

SEARCH FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES

This is the fifth in a series of articles written by Sam Goddard
(Central Electricity Generating Board)

ten would be built, spaced about half a mile apart.

Although land-based wind power may be able to help preserve expensive fossil fuels, its contribution to electricity generation is likely to be limited. Among the problems with wind energy is that there are periods in winter when demand for electricity is high and there is virtually no wind; and to produce the output from one nuclear power station would require wind generators spread over at least 50,000 acres, although this would not stop the land from being used for its normal purpose.

The siting of wind generators offshore involves a much more expensive technology, and a lot more work needs to be done to see whether costs can be reduced. Offshore siting is regarded as an important long-term "insurance" technology.

Until recently, the CEGB favoured wave power among the renewables. The UK is particularly well situated, due to the large amount of wave energy approaching its shores from across the Atlantic, and the Government has been spending £4 million annually on establishing the potential of this energy source. Studies are being carried out on a range of devices with such quaint names as the Salter Duck, the Oscillating Water Column, the Flounder and the Flexible Bag.

But it is now becoming clear that harnessing wave power in the near future is going to be much more difficult and expensive than most

people thought. Some idea of the problems involved can be drawn from the fact that to produce the same electricity as a 2,000-megawatt power station, a series of devices up to 60 miles long would be needed. The Board is nevertheless continuing research and development on wave power, because it still hopes that, in the long-term, it might prove economic.

On tidal power, the Board is a major contributor to the work of the Bondi Committee in the £2½ million pre-feasibility study into the possibility of tidal power from a Severn Barrage scheme.

Research is also being undertaken with geothermal resources—using heat from the earth. The simplest method is to bore a hole until hot water is reached. The UK's first geothermal bore hole was drilled at Marchwood Power Station, near Southampton, and the results of the experiment are being assessed.

Work is also being carried out in the UK on the so-called "hot dry rocks" method, in which water is pumped into a deep bore hole in granite, heated by the temperature of the rock and recovered as hot water. This looks encouraging but is in the very early stages of research and development.

Britain is one of the last places in the world in which solar energy could be applied for central electricity generation. To produce the same electricity as a large power station, solar cells covering up to 60 square miles—nearly the size of our North Wirral District—would be required. And



A 200-kW aerogenerator being built at the power station at Carmarthen Bay.

only when the sun shines.

There are those who argue that insufficient money is being spent in the UK on research into renewable energy resources.

In the UK, the prime responsibility for research and development into ways of exploiting the new sources of energy rests with the Department of Energy. The Board's role is to work closely with the Department to ensure that what is developing will be compatible with the electricity network, and that the Board fully understands its potential.

Looking to the future production of electricity, the CEGB expects that it will continue to be based mainly on coal-fired stations and the development of nuclear power—certainly until any of these new sources can be regarded as proven—technically, economically and environmentally.

But it is hopeful that during the decade it will also be able to add wind power to its generating capacity as a tiny "brother" to its coal and nuclear plant.



A proud Bobby Wright, with talented daughter, Evelyn.

TRIPLE TITLE

A VERY proud MANWEB dad at the moment is Scotsman Bob Wright, a principal assistant in the Management Services Department, whose 13-year-old daughter Evelyn looks like becoming one of the hottest table-tennis prospects that Britain has ever produced.

All the records went into the dustbin at the recent Welsh Table Tennis Championships held at Cardiff, when Evelyn scored an incredible treble victory.

First the Under-14s title gave her no difficulty (21-9, 21-18). She had rather more of a fight on her hands with the Under-17, which went to 21-17, 21-16, but the most amazing result of all for Evelyn was a resounding victory in the Senior Ladies' competition, when her luckless opponent in the final was demolished 21-9, 21-9. All three titles—all in straight sets—by a girl who only celebrated her

13th birthday in January of this year! Evelyn is by far the youngest competitor ever to win the Senior Ladies' title, and the only player in the history of Welsh table tennis to win all three in the same year.

This talented lass has already played for Wales at international level twice this year, her unhappy opponents in the Scottish and Irish teams receiving the same kind of short shrift as that which Evelyn handed out at Cardiff.

Evelyn's "good eye for the ball" is probably inherited from Bob, a professional soccer player in his younger days; when he kept goal for Queen of the South in the Scottish and Premier League during the early 1960s.

After giving up professional soccer, Bob came into the electricity industry, joining MANWEB in 1964 and working at Rhyl, Birkenhead and Aberystwyth before coming to Head Office six years ago. His main sporting interest these days consists of beating little balls about on Padeswood and Buckley golf course, not far from home at Mynydd Isa, near Mold.

Who would doubt that his dynamic young daughter has what it takes to make the best in the world look to their laurels in the years to come, provided that the enthusiasm and hard work are maintained? Hard work there is, of course, with training sessions on at least five days a week!



Terry Evans with some souvenirs of his distinguished Territorial Army career.

Welsh Champion Athlete

THE fastest woman in Wales—on the running track we hasten to add—is Head Office Accounts clerk Liz Pendry. She won the Welsh AAA title for the 60 metres at the championships held this year at RAF St. Athan, Cardiff, recently and was third in the 300-metre event.

This is her second success in this annual indoor contest; last year she won the 300-metre title in her first competitive race over the distance. She was third in the 60 metres final. The December and January snow interrupted her distance and stamina training and probably cost her the 300 metres title, and she attributes her success in the 60 metres to the forced concentra-

tion on starting and short sprints indoors, again due to weather.

At 30 she is probably one of the oldest athletes still competing—certainly she is the Deeside Athletic Club's senior competitive athlete and is now assisting in the coaching of other members. She sees coaching as her main interest in the coming seasons—when someone can catch her on the track, that is.



Quiz League Winners

A RUNAWAY victory in Division Three of the Chester Quiz League was the very satisfactory result achieved by a team of MANWEB brain-boxes from Head Office at the end of their very first season of competitive play. Eleven wins and only one defeat during the course of the 12-match winter season ensured them immediate promotion to Division Two of the three-division league next year.

Involvement in this knowledge-testing recreational activity began with an advert on the notice-board in the Head Office restaurant, and in no time at all six enthusiasts had got together and thrown their collective hat into the ring. Those involved were Viv Pitcher (Computers), Malcolm Arthur (Plant Supplies), Dave Sheppard (Creditors) and Paul Dobson, Hywel Watson and captain John Bruce (all of the Computers section).

Choosing the White Horse pub at Handbridge as their home ground, they very quickly estab-

lished an iron grip on the leadership of their Division. Although each team consists of only four players, all six have seen their share of the action both as competitors and as Question Masters or scorers—officials which all participating teams must supply.

In addition, each team must compile a list of 100 questions at the beginning of the season, which are then used in the battles being fought out in the other Leagues.

With such a convincing first-year performance behind them, the players are eagerly looking forward to proving their mettle against the more formidable opposition they are likely to meet in Division Two.

Quiz team, left to right: Viv Pitcher, Malcolm Arthur, Paul Dolan, Dave Sheppard, Hywel Watson and John Bruce.



Calling All Coarse Fishermen

THE annual Electricity Supply Industry Coarse Fishing Championship will be held this year at Evesham on the River Avon, on 29th September 1982. MANWEB will be entering a team for the contest and the captain will be John Tyreman of the Head Office Internal Audit Section.

As the contest is on a Wed-

nesday, all competitors will need to take a day's holiday to compete. It is anticipated that the team will travel by coach.

The selection of the team will be made by the captain and anyone interested in being considered should contact John Tyreman at Sealand Road, Internal Telephone Head Office 2075.

THE SPORTING CHANCES

by MITCH



RETIREMENTS

Farewells to friends and colleagues



Jimmy O'Brien, left, with his wife Mollie and daughter Ronnie, as he receives a parting handshake from Norman Mitchell.

Mr. J. O'BRIEN

A FAMILY connection with our Liverpool District Office came to an end recently, when James O'Brien retired from his job as a general duties assistant.

In the past, his wife, Mollie, and daughter, Ronnie, both worked at Lister Drive.

After serving in the Army for six years, Jimmy went to work at Dunlop's in Liverpool for 12 years, before joining MANWEB as a labourer in 1960.

At the retirement ceremony, Norman Mitchell (*principal assistant—Administration*) presented Jimmy with a miscellany of gifts from friends and colleagues throughout the District. On their behalf, he wished Jimmy and Mollie many happy years in retirement.

A crossword addict and avid reader, Jimmy is looking forward to taking Mollie to Majorca on their first holiday abroad.

Miss J. MACKIE

AFTER 32 years' service with MANWEB, June Mackie, a cashier in the general administration section at Dee Valley District, has retired.

June began as a Revenue clerk in 1949 with the former Area 4, switching over to the Secretarial side in 1963, and moving to Dee Valley District at Willow Road, Wrexham, on re-organisation in 1970. Subsequently she returned to Rhostyllen on the new supplies side of the Commercial department before moving very recently to her job as a cashier.

On behalf of her many friends made during her long years of service at Wrexham, she was presented with a radio-cassette by DAO Teg Williams.

Mrs. E. HURST

AFTER 17 years with MANWEB in the Meter Test department at Lister Drive, Liverpool, Edna Hurst has now retired. At a farewell gathering she was presented with a Royal Doulton figurine on behalf of her colleagues, together with many more individual gifts.

In retirement, Edna expects to be helping her husband out with some decorating work in the home, and to find more time for her hobbies of gardening and reading. Some voluntary hospital work also figures in her plans.

Later this year, she hopes to holiday in Scotland, and is also planning a trip to visit friends in the USA.

Miss S. JONES

A POPULAR member of the Oswestry District staff, Stella Jones, has now retired from her job as a typist after more than 28 years' service.

Born and bred in Chirk Bank, Stella worked in the offices of the NCB before coming to MANWEB. She fondly remembers the days when she worked for Tom Farmer in the old offices situated at the rear of our shop

in Salop Road.

In retirement Stella tells us that she intends devoting much more time to her very large garden—an acre—and will no doubt be entering, and winning, yet more prizes in local shows.

On behalf of her many friends, Ron Williams (*District Manager*) presented Stella with a number of farewell gifts, which included a set of sherry glasses and a vase.

Stella Jones, right, seen here with close colleagues at Oswestry, from left to right: Hazel Rogers, Gwen Evans, Mina Rodger and Sid Warburton.



Mr. H. M. KAYE

STARTING work in our industry as an apprentice electrician in 1936, Harry Kaye has now retired from his post as 3rd engineer in the Load Development section in Liverpool District.

For over five years during the last war, he served in the RAF and became a sergeant in the Signals Branch.

On his return to civilian life in 1946, he worked on a succession of jobs in the contracting, sales, service and inspection sections, prior to becoming an engineer on Commercial development.

Harry's hobbies include electronics, wine-making and decorating. As a member of the National Trust, he is also very keen on "discovering Britain" with his wife, Jean, and a couple of their grandchildren. In the immediate future, they are looking forward to a holiday in Snowdonia.

At a farewell gathering, Brian Ogden (*District Commercial Engineer*) presented Harry with a carriage-clock and other gifts from friends and colleagues.

Posing with some of the lovely ladies from his section, Harry Kaye is joined by his wife Jean, right, for this farewell picture.



A sprightly Bob Lewis, sixth from left, still smiling and surrounded by just a few of the many friends he has made while administering our Aberystwyth District.

Mr. R. LEWIS

A LIFETIME of service to the electricity industry came to an end with the recent retirement of Bob Lewis, Aberystwyth District's popular District Administrative Officer.

Bob began his working life with the Monmouth Electric Company was back in 1938, moving north to the South East Yorkshire Light and Power Company in 1946 in a supervisory role. In those far-off pre-nationalisation days, both those companies were owned by GEC.

but it was not long before the SE Yorkshire outfit became part of the Yorkshire Electricity Board. In 1952 he crossed the Pennines to join Norweb at Kendal, coming to MANWEB three years later as District Senior Clerk in our former Conwy Valley District, based at Llandudno. Later he moved over to Clwyd District, again as DSC, and was appointed DAO at Aberystwyth on re-organisation in 1970.

Noted for the friendly smile

which never seemed to leave his face, Bob will be much missed by all those who turned to him for help and advice over the years. His many friends will wish Bob and Mrs. Lewis a long and happy retirement, during which he will doubtless devote much energy to his great interest in botany.

At a small evening gathering during his last week at work, Bob was presented with a wide variety of parting gifts on behalf of his colleagues.

Mr. J. M. DAVIES

MERFYN Davies, clerical assistant—engineering work control, at Dee Valley District office, has retired on health grounds, after 31 years with the Board.

Beginning his career with MANWEB in the former Area 4 accounts department, Merfyn moved to Chester in 1970 and returned to Rhostyllen in 1974.



Colleagues gather round Reg Newcombe, centre, as Board Secretary John Scudamore makes the farewell presentation.

Mr. R. W. NEWCOMBE

THE man responsible for the general administration and insurance sections at Head Office, Senior Executive Officer Reginald W. Newcombe, has retired after over 32 years with MANWEB.

The Board Secretary, John Scudamore, made the presentation on behalf of Reg's colleagues, and thanked him for his service to the Board. He commented that the information Reg had provided had always been meticulous and he had an excellent eye for detail.

A man of distinct military bearing, Reg had been a member of the Territorial Army prior to the Second World War, and had been called up a week before the conflict started. He joined up as a private and worked his way up through the

ranks, to be commissioned in 1943, eventually reaching the rank of major in the staff office of the East African Command.

He is an acknowledged expert on insurance and had started work in a solicitor's office, dealing with insurance and common law. Since joining MANWEB in 1949, he has been involved in insurance and administration, initially at the former Area 4 at Wrexham, and, since 1970, at Head Office. He took charge of the administrative section in 1975.

He is keen on amateur dramatics, but his main interest is his six grandchildren. He and his wife, Peggy, have two children—a son who is married and who is a lieutenant-colonel in the Army, and a daughter, who is also married.

Mr. G. M. WYATT

A SHEPHERD'S crook was an unusual retirement gift chosen by Mildon Wyatt when he recently retired from his job as a clerical assistant in the Engineering section at our Queensferry stores.

In making the farewell presentation, Peter Falcon (*Assistant Chief Accountant*) gave a brief account of Mildon's career, starting with the former Hawarden UDC. Wartime service in the Army, where he became a Warrant Officer, took him to the beaches at Dunkirk and through the Western Desert campaigns.

"During his time at Queensferry," continued Mr. Falcon, "Mildon has become part of the pattern of life, and knows what is going on in every corner of the depot."

"He has many good qualities."

He is brave and courageous and has shown a great deal of will-power and determination in overcoming illness. He is conscientious and his personal popularity is proved by the many colleagues, both past and present, attending the farewell ceremony."

Mildon's wife, Dorothy, was also present, returning to Queensferry after her own retirement in August 1980 from her job as a clerk in the Stores section.

Mr. Falcon voiced everyone's wish for a long, happy and healthy retirement for Mildon and Dorothy.

A countryman at heart, Mildon is an acknowledged expert on the training and upkeep of racing pigeons and no doubt will be devoting much more time to this fascinating hobby.

The shepherd's crook retirement gift being handed over to Mildon Wyatt, right, by Peter Falcon, with Mildon's wife, Dorothy, completing the picture.

