



Cub scouts on right trail for poster prize

CUB scouts from the Overchurch Upton pack emerged winners in the Manweb Powerlearning West Wirral District Cub Scouts Safety Competition.

The final was held at Hoylake House, with District Commissioner Malcolm MacLeod assisting in the judging the posters produced by the cubs on this year's theme of road safety.

Presenting the prizes on behalf of Powerlearning was Customer Services Officer Anna Noble, pictured left with the cubs and their winning poster.

All competitors received a badge and the finalists were presented with an Easter Egg.

All for the love of Britney Spears...

PAUL Rice will travel to the ends of the earth to see pop superstar Britney Spears – or at least across the Atlantic.

His desk in Manweb's Warrington office is surrounded by posters of the singer, and together with three colleagues he's just travelled over to New York to see her perform.

The dedicated followers of Britney took a four-hour coach journey out of New York to Albany, where she gave an ecstatic audience of 25,000 a first hearing of her newest hit.

Paul crossed to the U.S. with fellow Customer Service Representative Paul Casson, Gary Bridges, Assistant Administrator in Performance Management, and John Kilduff, who is seconded to Scotland.

Paul said: "We had a great



Britney Spears fans Paul Rice, centre, Paul Casson, left, and Gary Bridges poses with photographs of the pop superstar.

time and Britney was better than I expected – now I'm an even bigger fan!

"Afterwards we managed to get into a question and answer session backstage, and she told

us she liked our accents – even if she did think we were Irish at first. I told her the concert was boss - and then I had to explain that the word means great in England."



Breakfast date with radio stars

CUSTOMER Service Representative Peter Tubey is pictured alongside new Radio One Breakfast Show DJ Sara Cox. He met Sara when he won a competition to visit the last show of her predecessor, Zoe Ball.

Expert advice for farmers

MANWEB works in partnership with the Farm Energy Centre (FEC) which offers free advice on energy efficiency to farmers and growers. Under an arrangement with the Centre, which is based at Kenilworth, Warwickshire, farmers who are seeking advice on tariffs and electricity supply are referred to the company when action is needed.

Similarly, anyone in Manweb who needs clarification on farmers' problems is able to contact the Centre. The FEC itself works primarily by phone and through the issue of more than one hundred publications of use to farmers and horticulturalists. It is backed up by various experts in the two specialist fields.

Areas in which the FEC can help include energy auditing, highlighting areas of inefficiency; technical information, giving the latest news on energy efficient techniques and products; providing a database of manufacturers and suppliers for easy access to essential equipment; advice on safety with electrical equipment; and tariff and supply advice.

"We take energy efficiency very seriously," said Adam Taylor, Manweb's Business Marketing Manager. "The service we provide through the FEC is free to our farmer and grower customers and is designed to make sure our messages are put into practice. FEC engineers have practical on-farm experience of energy problems and work closely with manufacturers to provide sensible solutions."

Have you got news for us?

If you have a story for *Contact* please get in touch with editor Anne Benson on 800 2098 (internal) or 01244-652098, or Ron Quenby on 01244-678575 or fax 01244-678749.



Making a splash in Llandudno

The Beach Boys had better watch out... Members of the Welsh National Opera were out to make sweet music on the sea shore when they posed for pictures on Llandudno beach. It was all part of the build up to this summer's Manweb-backed Llandudno residence for the WNO.

Driver rescue drama

AN operations team leader at Manweb dashed to offer his help when he saw a lorry leave the road and career 80 feet down an embankment and into a ditch in Chester.

Paul Newbrook witnessed the accident involving the driver of an empty skip lorry on Countess Way. He said: "I saw the lorry suddenly career across the road and up the kerb. It mounted the grass verge, went through a fence and into a ditch."

Paul and another motorist ran across the field to help the driver, who is believed to have fainted at the wheel. "The wagon was wedged across a ditch and half of it was submerged under the water. Luckily the driver had managed to escape but appeared very dazed," he said.

The man, who has not been named, was taken to the Countess of Chester Hospital.

OPERA BOOST FOR CHARITY

THIS year's Manweb-sponsored appearances of the Welsh National Opera at Llandudno will provide ground-breaking opportunities to raise funds for PowerPartners.

In addition, for the first time, an interpreter will sign a pre-performance talk for a group from the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) – one of the PowerPartners charities.

The ScottishPower-wide scheme to raise cash for five key charities, which has just achieved its first year fund raising target of £360,000, will be boosted significantly by the high profile of the concerts between June 20-24.

Manweb has been looking at opportunities to broaden the drive to support PowerPartners, and building on the existing sponsorship of the WNO's residence in North Wales was one of the ideas discussed at a special workshop at the Lord Daresbury Hotel, Warrington.

The signed talk will take place before the performance of Bizet's Carmen on June 20, part of

the Manweb North Wales season, after which the group, made up of local members of the RNID, will then watch the opera, with the WNO offering them a special price reduction on 50 tickets.

If the response is positive and demand is sufficient this year, the WNO will work towards carrying out signed performances of opera at the North Wales Theatre in 2001.

An appeal to donate funds to the RNID will go out to the audience at Carmen, and there will be a collection in aid of PowerPartners while the WNO's Brass Ensemble gives a public concert in one of the nearby North Wales resorts. Similarly, an appeal to donate funds will be made at a special Carmen evening which will feature local choirs working with the WNO.

The WNO's community education projects during the Manweb-backed Llandudno residence will be held for the first time at both primary and special schools, where music and drama based workshops will be held.

See centre pages for free WNO tickets competition

Manweb-sponsored bird has flight of fancy at RAF Burtonwood

A EUROPEAN Eagle Owl called Jaffa – sponsored by Manweb – was the star on one of the exhibition stands at a premier business occasion in Cheshire.

The two-day Business Connections 2000 event, held at RAF Burtonwood in Warrington on April 11 and 12, featured a stand belonging to Manweb where the bird of prey caused considerable public interest.

Jaffa the Owl was on loan from Cheshire Falconers, who supply a Harris Hawk to the company whenever roosting birds on power lines are causing a headache to householders. The hawk scares away starlings because it is their natural enemy.

Business Connections, organised by Warrington Borough Council and attended by hundreds of business people from all over the world, is the north of England's major international business event.

The Duke of Westminster, who was present this year as last, described the occasion as "synonymous with our region's success" in his welcome message.

The exhibition area was ScottishPowered, with the

Eagle Owl Jaffa is a hoot at show



Manweb's Managing Director Stewart Saunders visits the Manweb stand at the Business Connections 2000 event in Warrington. The European Eagle Owl was representing Manweb's links with Cheshire Falconers who help out with bird nuisance on power lines.

company's Power Systems division providing four generators to meet its energy needs. Peter Gleave, Barry Green, Paul Hughes and Andy Jones at Warrington Depot made sure

that the installation went smoothly.

Alongside the Manweb Power Systems stand was a stand to publicise the ScottishPower group's initiative, PowerPartners, to raise money for five leading national charities – the Royal National Institute for the Blind, the Royal National Institute for Deaf People, Disability Wales (RADAR in England), the National Children's Homes' Action for Children and Age Concern. The partnership aims to raise £2 million over the next three years.

Nantwich-based falconer Tom McNally, who supplies the Harris Hawk to Manweb, said: "I am happy to work with Manweb in this way. We are providing an environmentally-friendly solution to a dirty problem."

Computers gift helps church with projects

A GIFT of 10 computers has been welcomed by a church in Scotland. The Cumbernauld Community Church will use the surplus Manweb equipment obtained for them by Barry Judd, Power Systems Year 2000 Programme Manager, in their training programmes and in their overseas ministries in Rwanda, Albania and India.

Barry was approached for help by a member of the Church who works for ScottishPower, while he was in Scotland on Year 2000 business.

He said: "I was pleased to gain support for a worthwhile project which could provide so much assistance with personal development in overseas countries."



Pupils from Pendalar School at Chester Zoo with Prince's Trust Volunteers.

A GROUP of youngsters from a special school had a special day out, thanks to the efforts of a group of Prince's Trust Volunteers in Caernarfon.

The team members took 15 children from Pendalar School, which caters for children aged four to 18 who have learning difficulties, to Chester Zoo for the day.

The PTV team was nearing the end of its 12-week programme having already undertaken a variety of challenges including decorating Caernarfon Youth and Community Centre.

PTV team leader Stuart Hogg said: "The participants have learnt a lot over the last few

Fun at zoo with trust volunteers

months. The project at the Youth Centre is something they can contribute to the community, but the trip to the Zoo gave the team a chance to help build their personal skills and for the children to have fun.

The PTV is run in North Wales by ScottishPower Learning, Manweb's sister company.

● Prince's Trust Volunteers team leader is a Detective Constable – see page four.

Secret of wine success



THE secret of success for home wine maker extraordinaire Agnes Taylor is knowing where to find the choicest fruit.

She and her husband Fred are among only a handful of people who know the location of the best damson tree in Cronton, near Widnes, where she lives.

Agnes, Customer Services Representative at Warrington, has just scooped a cup for making the best elderberry wine in the annual competition run by the Widnes Wine Circle, of which she is secretary.

"I started making wine 15 years ago

when I went on a course at nightschool," said Agnes. "Elderberry wine is my own personal favourite but I won certificates for damson wine this year as well.

"The key is finding the elderberries at the right time – they must be at exactly the right stage of ripeness."

Agnes enjoys the social side of her hobby, and organises wine tastings, beetle drives and hot pot nights at her group.

● Agnes is pictured with bottles of her prize-winning elderberry wine and her trophy and certificates.

Power to help preserve unique historic cottage

IN the 1600s the cottage by the coast was named Swtan after the whiting which the inhabitants fished from the sea.

Over the years the thatched structure was repaired with driftwood plucked from the beach. Generations swept the earth floor with a besom until it shone, and simple meals were garnished with sea kale harvested from the cove below.

Now, in recognition of its unique historical value, the National Trust-owned Swtan in Church Bay near Holyhead on Anglesey has been turned into a Folk Museum and Heritage Centre. Volunteer trustees, leasing the cottage from the Trust, have rebuilt it and are now maintaining it as a showpiece – with help from Manweb.

The company has installed free of charge an external supply point and connections which are vital for maintenance work and general cleaning. One hundred metres of cabling was provided into a trench leading to the point of supply in an outside wall between the garden and the footpath.

The restoration of the cottage was financed by local and European funding through the Island agency Menter Mon, with trainees and craftsmen working together on the project.

The Museum has been stocked with fixtures, farming



Pictured in front of the historic Swtan Cottage are, left to right, Brian Davies, Manweb Community Relations Officer, Gwyn Owen, Chairman of Cyfeillion Swtan (Friends of Swten) and Stephen Rhydwen-Jones, Secretary of Cyfeillion Swtan.

equipment and ornaments given by local people, to represent the period 1900-1918. The main room, focus of the dwelling, has been dedicated as a shop and exhibition featuring rural items of interest such as seed drills.

"Swtan is the only Welsh labourer's cottage of its kind, with a croloft which children slept in, which remains out of 800 that were once on Anglesey," said Stephen Rhydwen-Jones, secretary of the Friends of Swtan.

"I would like to thank Manweb for its generosity in

providing our Heritage Centre with an electric supply. Thanks to them we will be able to use humidifiers to fight off the damp inside the cottage in winter."

Brian Davies, Manweb Community Liaison Officer who co-ordinated the supply, said: "We are very pleased to have been able to assist the community in this project which will be of great value to historians and the general public alike."

The cottage will be open to the public on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from May 29, until September.

Let us know your ideas for your Contact

CONTACT welcomes readers' ideas for the newsletter. If you have any suggestions for features, articles or items such as taste tests round the Depot canteens, quizzes or special contents, please get in touch with Anne Benson on 800 2098 (internal) or 01244-652098.



The Great Orme's alive with the sound of music – members of the Welsh National Opera pose for a photograph on board the Great Orme Tramway in Llandudno.

WIN tickets to see the Welsh National Opera in concert

A SPECIAL offer of free opera tickets is being made to Contact readers thanks to Manweb's sponsorship of the Welsh National Opera's residence in Llandudno in June.

The offer is in addition to a reduction of £5 on all tickets for all performances at the Llandudno 2000 concerts for those booking normally and quoting the "Manweb Staff Ticket Offer." The Box Office number at the North Wales Theatre is 01492-872000.

There are seven pairs of free tickets to be won, covering the concerts that take place on June 20, 21, 22 and 24.

CARMEN (Tuesday June 20) Probably the most loved opera ever written. A story of love, treachery, passion and betrayal, the opera is the tale of a gypsy girl who inspires a love which eventually destroys her. This acclaimed production features Imelda Drumm in the title role.

DER ROSENKAVALIER (Wednesday June 21 and Saturday June 24) WNO's sumptuous production of Richard Strauss' opera has delighted audiences

since it was first seen in 1994. A story of love in youth and middle age in which an aristocrat woman takes a lover who is half her age. Carlo Rizzi conducts a star cast.

THE TURN OF THE SCREW (Thursday June 22) Benjamin Britten's chilling opera based on a ghost story by novelist Henry James. A governess is appointed to take charge of two orphans who appear to be under the influence of malevolent forces. Carlo Rizzi conducts Mary Lloyd-Davies, Janice Watson and Paul Nilon.

For a chance to receive one of the pairs of free tickets simply answer the following question:

Who wrote Carmen?

Answers on a postcard please with your address and day-time telephone number by June 9 to: Anne Benson, Corporate Communications, Manweb, Manweb House, Kingsfield Court, Chester Business Park, Chester CH4 9RF.

Winners will be drawn on a "first out of the hat" basis. Please specify which event and date you would prefer.

COMMUNITY CHAMPION IS HONOURED AT THE PRIDE OF BRITAIN AWARDS

Michelle receives national accolade

MICHELLE Lewis, honoured for her extraordinary fund raising two years at the Manweb-Chronicle Community Champions evening at the Chester Grosvenor Hotel, has gone on to collect a national award – this time at the Hilton Hotel in London.

Michelle, the 17-year-old from

Rainhill, Liverpool, who has raised £1 million for charity despite having undergone 28 operations, was named National Fundraiser of the Year in The Mirror's Pride of Britain Awards.

Carol Vorderman, who presented the televised awards, urged the celebrity guests to boost Michelle's funds – and a few days later a cheque

personally signed by Diana Ross landed on the mat at her home.

Michelle, who is currently working at Manweb's Mersey Region based at Lister Drive, on a Skillseeker course, told *Contact*: "To go down to the ceremony in London was out of this world. It was a dream come true to be there with so many celebrities. A lot of them said that if I needed anything I should give them a ring."

Michelle, who has arthrogryposis which causes loss of use of the lower part of the body, travelled down to the awards with her grandmother Sylvia Lewis and her grandfather.

Marathon

She has reached her £1 million charity fund raising target three months ahead of schedule, in advance of her 18th birthday in July.

Amazingly, she was back down in London three days later to compete in the special wheelchair section of the London Marathon. She came first to win gold in the under-17 mini marathon – the second year running she has triumphed.



Michelle Lewis with her Manweb-Chronicle Community Champion trophy which she won two years ago.

One of Michelle's ambitions is to compete in the Paralympics, and follow in the footsteps of her idol Tanni Grey who has received an OBE for her services to sport. "I am not as good as her but I am working up to her level," said Michelle, who trains twice a week. "I love the sport of wheelchair racing - I started on my aunt's suggestion a few years ago."

Her recent spate of triumphs will not cause Michelle to ease up on her fund raising, however.

Her trademark positive attitude is even more evident. "I am going to go forward and I have always had a positive attitude to life," she said.

"When I was at primary school most of my friends were in wheelchairs and they used to

say to me they could not be bothered to do this and that. But I used to say – look at me, I am a prime example of what can be achieved.

"You must have a positive attitude or you end up rotting. Now that I have got this placement with Manweb I am learning to drive and I am hoping to go to college or get a job."

Michelle is currently working at the Lister Drive office as a clerical administrator in the personnel department at Merseyside Region, under ScottishPower Learning's youth development programme. As well as gaining valuable work experience she is working towards an NVQ Level 2 in Business Administration.



After winning her Pride of Britain award, Michelle's colleagues at Mersey Region welcomed her back with a bouquet. Presenting the flowers is Asset Manager Jim Henderson with, left to right, Helen Bramwell, Sue McNally, Dawn Hart and Sue Miles.



Bill Tubey

Bill is new Chamber Chairman

MANWEB Project Manager Bill Tubey is to be the new chairman of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce.

Bill, who joined Manweb in 1966, will see the Chamber of Commerce through some significant business changes in the next year.

"It is a time of tremendous change in the local commercial environment, not the least of which will be the creation of the Small Business Service and the Learning and Skills Councils which will replace Business Link and the TECs.

"It is also the 150th anniversary of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, which is one of the oldest in the country, so it is a time for celebration as well.

"I am looking forward to the challenges this year will bring," he said.

Engineer

Bill has recently taken on the role of Works and Asset Management Project Manager. He joined Manweb as a student apprentice in 1966 and studied electrical engineering at Salford University on a sandwich course.

After graduating in 1971 he went to work for Pay and Productions Incentives for two years before being appointed operational engineer for the North Mersey District in Bootle.

In 1989 he went to the commercial department to help tackle many of the issues surrounding privatisation. Then in 1991, he was appointed district manager for Liverpool.

Following the acquisition of Manweb by ScottishPower in 1995 he was appointed Regional Manager for Merseyside, later moving to take up the same role in Wales. His new position as project manager commenced in April 2000.

Detective Constable is leading volunteers

THE Prince's Trust Volunteer group on Deeside, which is run by ScottishPower Learning, has close contact with the law – its leader is Detective Constable Lynne Harvey. It is only the second time that a police officer has been seconded to run a PTV team in the region.

Lynne, aged 44, who has been with the North Wales police at Colwyn Bay for 16 years, has taken the four-month placement under a scheme originated by Chief Constable Michael Argent.

She recruited her team herself, contacting Job Clubs, the probation service and centres for the unemployed aged between 16 and 25.

After a week team building in the Lake District, and three days doing a First Aid course, the volunteers spent three weeks painting a cloakroom-cum-TV room inside the

Bryn Deva school in Connah's Quay. The team's community project continued with creating a nature reserve for the same school.

"Organising the team is a real challenge for me," said DC Harvey. "The effort the team members are making is so encouraging.

"I hope that by the end of my secondment I will have learned a lot that I can take back into my job, such as tolerance, understanding and people skills."

Meanwhile, an appeal put out by the Colwyn Bay PTV group for a suitable community project has been answered. They have renovated the gardens and created a hopscotch area at the Community House on the Peulwys Estate in Llysfaen.

● DC Harvey is pictured right with Prince's Trust volunteers at the Bryn Deva school.





Dawn's wise works earn her Eisteddfod chair

DAWN Muckley, Customer Service Representative at Caernarfon CallCentre, won an Eisteddfod chair bearing the ScottishPower logo in a competition to express in no more than 30 words how one of the "living values" applies to staff in Caernarfon.

Dawn's entry under the Teamwork and Leadership heading reads: "We have a very

positive attitude towards teamwork, which is helped by outstanding leadership. We help and support each other to achieve the common goals and objectives of the business."

The chair was handcrafted by Cemlyn Jones of Rhos Isaf.

• Team Manager Jason Procter is pictured presenting the Eisteddfod chair to Dawn Muckley.

Events boost RNIB funds

A Royal National Institute for the Blind event supported by Manweb raised more than £3,200.

The second annual charity ball at the St David's Park Hotel in Ewloe donated the cash to the Sunshine Fund for Blind Children to help provide vital school support for North Wales and Chester youngsters with sight problems. Manweb donated a wide-screen TV for a charity auction during the evening.

Backing for bike ride

THE North Wales Sports Association has received sponsorship of £242 from Manweb for a round-Anglesey bike ride carried out by members of the Menai Bridge Rugby Club. The Association organises and promotes new opportunities to people with special needs.

We're going to the Zoo

A FINAL reminder for Contact readers about the special Chester Zoo Day on Sunday June 25. Cut-price tickets are available at £6.50 per adult or child but applications need to be made before June 9 to Wendy Ellison, Corporate Communications, Manweb House, Chester Business Park, Wrexham Road, Chester CH4 9RF.

School wins award for second year

ASCHOOL in Wrexham has scooped an Engineering Education Scheme in Wales award for the second year running – with a project which the pupils carried out for Manweb.

Ysgol Morgan Llwyd won the BaE Systems-Airbus award for the best design, within a partnership commitment, for their ingenious solution to technical problems with small mobile generators.

The EESW competition, which was staged at BaE Systems in Broughton, attracted more than 400 students from throughout Wales, each with the brief of helping to solve engineering problems for industry.

Manweb's Caernarfon engineer Jonathan Hughes liaised with the sixth form pupils from Ysgol Morgan Llwyd as they tackled the problem which the company had set.

He said: "The problem which we supplied to the school concerned the mobile generators which our engineers loan and install. There have been a number of problems associated with such generators, such as people tampering with the connections, refuelling the generators or overloading them.

Failsafe

"The school came up with some constructive answers and found a failsafe way to solve these problems."

The winning design was of a cage to house the generator which would prevent refuelling and reinforce security. The pupils also designed a visual display for the end of the extension lead and an earth fault protection device.

"Their solution was very practical and constructed of easily obtained materials," said Jonathan, who visited the school once a week during the project. The pupils also spent three days on a residential course at Bangor, and visited Hoylake on a field trip.

Huw Hall Williams, head of design and



Manweb engineer Jonathan Hughes, third from the left, with pupils from Ysgol Morgan Llwyd, left to right, Ceri Owens, Kevin Jones, Niki Evans, David Jones and Gethin Williams. Also pictured is the generator cage they designed.

technology at the school, said: "The team work and problem solving involved were extremely valuable to the six pupils who took part."

Manweb's Standards section at Prenton is to consider the potential of the device for use within the company.

Castle action plan

MANWEB Rural Care has drafted an action plan to restore parkland trees and create a wildlife garden in the grounds of Hawarden Castle. After consultation with Hawarden and Mancot residents and the Hawarden Estate, rowans and field maples are also being planted to provide cover along nearby Cross Tree Lane.

Exclusive holiday offer for Contact readers

Take bargain bite of the Big Apple



THE Big Apple is one of the most exciting and memorable of all city-break destinations.

Contact readers can take advantage of a superb offer from South Quay Travel and Leisure which gives three nights accommodation in New York and includes scheduled flights from Heathrow or Manchester.

Departures are on Thursdays between November 9 and December 7, using one of three airlines – United Airlines, American Airlines or Delta

Airlines. There's a choice of six Manhattan hotels, each with its own unique character and location.

The three nights' accommodation is in a twin/double room. Continental breakfast is included at some hotels. Prices are from £369 to £469.

Bus transfers from Newark/Kennedy airport to the hotel, and from hotel to airport, are included.

To book or obtain more details please phone 020-7515-6577, quoting Manweb Contact offer.

Accord sets out future practices

A SPECIAL Accord has been signed by Snowdonia Park Authority and Manweb, detailing the way the two organisations will work together in the Park's 213,000 hectares in North Wales.

The agreement on working practices was signed at the Authority's study centre at Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog, by Manweb Managing Director Stewart Saunders and Iwan Huws, Chief Executive of the Snowdonia National Park Authority.

The Accord, which sets out clear principles of co-operation, will be supported by more detailed working practices providing both organisations with guidance on the practical aspects of enhancing the environment, supporting the social well being of local communities and helping sustain the economy within Snowdonia.



The special Accord document signed by Snowdonia Park and Manweb.

New joint venture will help the disadvantaged

THE Eaga Partnership and ScottishPower have formed a joint venture company, N.E.S.T.MAKERS Limited (Neighbourhood Energy Services Team), to provide disadvantaged households with budgeted fuel supplies and help with home energy efficiency measures and grants.

Date and venue are set for It's A Knockout

THE first PowerPartners' It's A Knockout event is to be held at Widnes Cricket Club on Sunday August 27. Look out for more details in next month's issue of Contact or, meanwhile, phone Jane Hall (internal tel. 805 2036).

Stay beautiful with a discount

A HAIR and beauty salon already caters for a number of Manweb employees – so it has decided to offer anyone from the company a special discount.

The Hair and Beauty Connection in Tenters Square, Pen Y Bryn, Wrexham, is offering a 15 per cent reduction on all hair and beauty treatments, including facials and skin care, waxing, tinting, pedicure, perms and extensions.

"All our colours are by Wella, and we offer excellent service," said senior stylist Lynsey McMahon. "We would love to see more Manweb staff at our salon."

To book please phone 01978-350584.



Winnie is a winner

GRAND National Day was a cause for celebration for Winnie Haskayne, secretary of the North Mersey retirees association, who lives only four miles from Aintree.

Winnie watched excitedly on TV as her two choices came in first and second in the race, netting her £29.

"I always have a one-off bet on the National," she said. "I study the runners and their form in the newspaper before the race – and I have been known to win before."

Canaries in cheep talk

A COLLECTION of cage birds including canaries formed the unusual accompaniment to a talk given to the Dee Valley retirees association.

Ted Edwards, Life President of the Wrexham Cage Bird Society, gave his talk free of charge and also presented generous prizes.