

# Contact

October 1979



The Board at Liverpool  
(See Back Cover)

# Customers cared for!

## —GOOD RESULTS FOR MANWEB

Opinion surveys carried out during the past year show that the overwhelming majority of customers are more than satisfied with the work done for them by MANWEB—and that well over 90% would ask us to do work for them again!

The surveys covered work in the appliance repair, electrical wiring, and appliance delivery fields. Five hundred people for whom we had done work—chosen at random—were asked to complete the survey questionnaires. Questions dealt with such topics as reliability of commencement dates, standard of workmanship and helpfulness of MANWEB staff, and promptness in carrying out jobs.

Many people made particular reference to receiving service which they considered to be exceptional. A substantial number said that staff involved

in the initial enquiry stage were more helpful than they had expected. And between 93% (appliance repair) and 97% (appliance delivery) said that they would ask MANWEB to do work for them again.

Commented Don Higgs, our installation and service manager:

"We are naturally encouraged and pleased by these results. We have always been sure that most people trust MANWEB, and are more than satisfied with the service they received. But we shall not sit on our laurels. The minor points of dissatisfaction which emerged from the surveys will be the subject of close examination, and we shall do everything possible to ensure that MANWEB service moves even closer to perfection in the future."

### Survey results summarised

	Appliance Repair	Electrical Wiring	Appliance Delivery
Customers satisfied with attention from staff dealing with the initial inquiry—	92%	95%	97%
Customers given advance notice of job commencement or appliance delivery date, etc—	90%	89%	99%
Customer satisfied that arrangements to start the work were honoured—	89%	89%	91%
Customer satisfied with standard of workmanship and attitudes of staff involved—	95%	93%	98%

### ... and they appreciate it!

From a Crosby gent, to North Mersey District—

"May I on behalf of my wife and myself thank the two workmen who installed our MANWEB shower unit . . . they were extremely hardworking, polite, and very efficient. The installation is exactly as we wanted it and we are very pleased with its efficiency."

The bouquet goes to electrician John Kirwin and the apprentice who was with him (whose name we haven't been able to track down!)

\* \* \*

And from a grateful lady from the same locality—

"Late this morning I reported a fault on my cooker. . . by 1.45 p.m. a pleasant helpful MANWEB employee had arrived, made the cooker safe but could not finish the job because it required a special part.

"As he was going he said that if his colleague who took over at 4 p.m. could help he would get him to call. . . sure enough by 4.30 p.m. an equally friendly efficient MANWEB employee arrived, repaired the cooker, and off he went, both having been most polite and wasting no time.

"As you no doubt get more complaints than praise from the public I think it only fair to give all these people—including the gentleman who took the original phone call—my grateful thanks."

The friendly and efficient gentlemen were shift electricians Don Burleigh and George Matthews.

\* \* \*

A note to Phil Youell, Mid-Cheshire District energy sales rep:

"Thank you very much for the quick and efficient way the re-wire was carried out at Middlewich Rd., Sandbach. I am very pleased with it.

\* \* \*

Nice note from a Southport gent. . .

"The nationalised industries have been severely criticised in the past for their inefficiency, but I would like to compliment you on your service in ensuring that the meter was read at my previous residence before 9 a.m. Such action was greatly appreciated and assisted greatly in the removal."

# Contact

THE STAFF MAGAZINE  
OF THE  
MERSEYSIDE AND  
NORTH WALES  
ELECTRICITY BOARD

Vol. 31 No. 10

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On other  
pages . . .

Talking Notes	184
Oswestry Staff Conference	189
Electric Living	192
Retirements	194
Discount Holidays	195
The Board at Liverpool District	196

## Editorial

Keith Baldwin	2164
John F. Perry	2167
Sam Doughty	2166

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## LONELY FURROWS

**S**ERVING the public as an elected representative—in almost any capacity—can be an uphill task. Those who are brave enough to put their names on ballot papers, whether as potential Members of Parliament, local councillors, or in work situations—looking after the interests of their colleagues—often find that success at the poll brings in its train more kicks than ha'pence.

They are often expected to work miracles, if not the impossible by those who may, or may not, have honoured them with their votes.

This number of *Contact* reports the first of our annual series of staff conferences organised by Local Advisory Committees. These meetings represent the high spots in a year when our elected representatives grapple on our behalf with all kinds of issues, affecting health, safety, efficiency, welfare, and education and training. The potholes in the yard, the adequacy (or otherwise) of protective clothing and boots, the coffee machine that steals your money or pours boiling water over your feet—all these are grist to the mill for those who represent us.

**Subjects such as these may seem, at first glance, to be trivial in nature. But a harmonious working environment does not depend only on pay packets and holidays.**

The electricity supply industry has a well-deserved reputation as a trailblazer in the field of staff consultation. Those of us who do not offer our services as representatives of our colleagues (the vast majority) have an inescapable obligation to support the efforts of those who do!

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

# Talking Notes

## GEORGE GOES—AGAIN!

Nine years ago this month we reported the retirement, after 39 years' service, of **Mr. George Wheeler**, then District Senior Clerk at St. Helens. Some people, however, just can't keep away from work and four years later George made a comeback as depot clerk at St. Helens.

Now, with another five years service under his belt he has retired for the second time. Only Muhammed Ali made two successful comebacks, but with a man like George Wheeler you never know!

He still won't be losing touch, however, and intends to continue as the energetic and capable secretary of the Mid-Mersey Pensioners' Association—a group famous for their country-wide forays. The 1980 programme includes a trip to Buckingham Palace, while the Braemar Games are already on the agenda for 1981.

George's main interest is in amateur dramatics, and he has met many stars of stage and screen. Now he plans to see more of the Continent, with a trip to Oberammergau next year.

### Whisky Galore?

The President of Malawi—Doctor Hastings Banda—was at the Edinburgh Festival on the evening of the 4th September, 1979 and so were the Mid-Mersey Pensioners—Dr. Banda to take the salute, and the pensioners in the audience to enjoy the Tattoo.

They were from St. Helens, Frodsham, Runcorn and Warrington and had been up to

Perth for a tour of Dewar's distillery, enjoying a picnic lunch on the way. A very interesting tour of this famous distillery followed with a short stay in the hospitality cottage where free samples were enjoyed. The pensioners had tea in Perth before going on to Edinburgh.

An early breakfast and the official guide came to take them for a tour of the historical parts of the City before their return.

### His Worship!

Congratulations to a very popular member of the North Mersey District staff in the person of installation inspector **Roy Fallows** who was sworn in as a Justice of the Peace for the Sefton South area on September 13th.

The ceremony was carried out by Judge Frank D. Paterson who sits at the Crown Court in Liverpool and is the liaison judge for the Sefton Petty Divisions.

Roy will have to complete a minimum of 26 sittings at the Bootle Court, and is likely to complete up to 32 sittings. After gaining two years' experience at the Magistrates Court he can be called upon to sit with the judges in the Crown Court.

Roy Fallows



Roy, who has been with MANWEB for 26 years, is chairman of the Manual Worker's Benevolent Society and has for many years been active in trade union circles and as a representative of his colleagues through the advisory machinery. He serves on the Works Committee and the Local Advisory Committee, and also as a safety rep. He is an EPTU shop steward and is vice-chairman of his local branch. He also serves on local statutory appeals tribunals.

Away from the working scene Roy who is married with one son, keeps up his public service in the scouting movement, being District Executive member and Chairman of his local group. During Jubilee year he received the Silver Jubilee Medal from the Queen.

### Double Winner

When **Mr. James Vermeulen**, a Dutch-born baker who runs a thriving all-electric business in the Shropshire town of Ellesmere, decided to enter a

float in the colourful annual Ellesmere Carnival, it was natural that he should seek the advice of our sales demonstrator **Miss E. V. Jones**, who had been involved in helping to equip his bakehouse.

"E.V." got in touch with a leading manufacturer of electric bakery ovens, and a combined effort led to the production of an entry which carried off second prize in the "best decorated float" and also in the "trade entry" sections.

Our black-and-white reproduction does not really do justice to the colourful entry, pictured here from the rear, in Ellesmere's main street.



The prize-winning Ellesmere Carnival float.

#### Head Office Cricket

The MANWEB Head Office team again competed in the Chester and District Mid-Week League, in the second of the four divisions. Success was somewhat limited, with only two wins from the 13 matches—obviously the pre-season nets didn't work any miracles.

In addition to the league matches a match was held against the North Western Gas Board at Eaton Hall. Against a very strong side the MANWEB team gave a good account of themselves, and even though the match was lost the superb weather and beautiful setting made it the highlight of the season.

The side was led by **Mike Boxall**, who was also the main run-scorer, although other valuable contributions came from **John Gorman**, **Tony Murphy** and **Stuart Roberts**. On paper the strength of the team was in the batting, but unfortunately on the occasions when the bowlers did well the batting failed. The players are convinced, however, that it will all come right next season.

Due to a change in the rules

at least four bowlers had to be used, and the brunt was borne by **Amyln ab Iorwerth**, **John Gorman**, **Tony Murphy**, and **Ian 'Billy' Jones**.

Other regular players who all made valuable contributions were **Dave Spencer**, **Chris Morrey**, **Steve Needham**, **Steve Dodd** and **Don Roxburgh**. **Dave Spencer** particularly showed his usefulness by batting, bowling and keeping wicket on many occasions.

In all 24 players were used through the season, confirming the need for a large pool of players. Thanks are due to secretary **Cliff Houlbrook** whose enthusiasm never wanes whatever the fortunes of the team.

#### Warm Work!

The announcement that NORWEB has secured a second £5 million contract to continue to develop the electricity system in Riyadh, the capital city of oil-rich Saudi Arabia confirms the success of the 50 British Electricity supply industry staff who have been working there since early 1978. Details of the new contract have been finalised with British Electricity

International Ltd., our industry's overseas consultancy service.

NORWEB took the prime responsibility for the initial two-year contract under the direction of their Chief Engineer **Richard Gales**, now our own Deputy Chairman. Staff were recruited from several electricity boards, including MANWEB.

Their first task was to help to modernise the electricity system in Riyadh, then seriously overloaded due to a load growth rate of more than 50% a year and a big backlog of new consumer applications.

Riyadh has an ambient temperature of 50°C, creating a summer peak demand for power to meet air conditioning needs. Generation is almost entirely by gas turbine, and a 132kV distribution system is being developed.

Three MANWEB colleagues are involved in the project—**John Case**, of Holmes Chapel, **Arthur Elson**, of Crewe, and **Alan Sandells** of Liverpool.

#### Penance!

Occasionally a customer with a sense of humour brightens the

days for some of us. Writing to colleague **Steve Williams** at North Wirral District a New Brighton gent agreed that he had got mixed up over his account and promised to pay up. He concluded his letter:

*"I shall now retire to my cell and don the sack-cloth and ashes, and then I intend to make sacrifice and sing songs of appeasement to the small, square, bedialled black altar 'neath the stairs, which bears the name of the Great One."*

In the words of one of our "Customer Care" cartoons—"a bit flowery, perhaps"—but he's got the right idea!

### Time to Freeze

A new film—*Time to Freeze*—was premiered at the Bijou Theatre, London, on 13th September.

"*Time to Freeze*" shows the benefits of owning a freezer, demonstrates food freezing techniques and shows a whole range of food suitable for freezing. As the film points out, by having a food freezer in the home we can enjoy eating delicious home grown courgettes at Christmas or juicy red raspberries in March. The different types of freezers available, and their suitability for various users, are also shown.

A second version, suitable for showing to schools and colleges, has also been produced, and this includes a short animated sequence outlining the more technical aspects of food freezing.

### Gwynedd Golf

Fifteen competitors took part in a very enjoyable event at the St. Deiniol Golf Club, Bangor, recently, fighting it out in the annual battle for the "Trydan Cup".

The very tight course of 18 holes called for accurate stroke play among gorse, valleys, and elevated greens.



Gwilym Jones receives the 'Trydan Cup' from the hands of Len Roberts

Eventual winner was **Gwilym Jones**, contracting foreman at Cearnarfon, who returned 85-15-69. Second was **Robin Jones** storekeeper at Pwellheli 81-10-71 and third **Eric Phillips** (last year's winner) with 92-20-72.

The event was organised by commercial engineer **Emyr Rowlands** and the trophy was presented by section engineer **Len Roberts**, a member of the Bangor Club.

### Work Safe!

The 25th edition of the **Electricity Council Safety Review**, recently published, alerts us all to the tragic accidents which are always lurking in wait when vigilance slackens or when safety regulations are not scrupulously followed.

Linesmen electrocuted . . . an engineer and a fitter burned . . . a canteen assistant badly hurt by a slicing machine . . . falls from ladders . . . injuries caused by explosions and poisonous substances—these are just some of the case histories recorded in the Review, tragedies which have brought death, pain and deep distress to our colleagues and their families.

Injuries sustained by children

at play—some in the MANWEB area—are referred to, and the *Play Safe* publicity campaign is highlighted.

Every year 20 people in every million lose their lives in accidents at work. Many more suffer injuries and disabilities of varying degree. All these accidents are painful and expensive—and nearly all could have been avoided. During the year under review MANWEB employees were involved in 190 accidents, mainly involving falls, knocks, handling objects and the use of hand tools.

All LAC representatives have a copy of the Review and will be

**How not to do it!—A cartoon from the Safety Review.**



pleased to let interested colleagues see it.

### Superann A.G.M.

The 30th Annual General Meeting of members of the Staff Scheme will be held at the offices of the Electricity Council, 30 Millbank, London, at 2.30 p.m. on Thursday, 13th December.

Copies of the minutes of the 29th A.G.M. are available on request from the Personnel Manager, MANWEB, Sealand Road, Chester CH1 4LR.

### Wedding Bells

Our congratulations to **Susan Cowie** and **Alan Veitch** on the occasion of their wedding at the Holy Trinity Church in Blacon, Chester. Susan is an assistant in the Head Office Restaurant and Alan is a Lance-corporal serving with the 1st Battalion of the Green Howards.



Mr. and Mrs. Veitch

Picture by Ray Rowland

After the ceremony the reception was held at the Weston Hotel, Hoole. The happy couple left for a honeymoon in Blackpool.

### New EAW Chairman

**Mrs. Jean Butcher** was appointed Chairman of the Electrical Association for Women at the Annual Conference in Cardiff held in September.

She has been a member of the EAW National Executive Committee since 1973. A founder member of the London (West End) Branch when it was for-

med in 1978, Mrs. Butcher has been Branch Chairman since the inauguration.

Lord Citrine, first Chairman of the British Electricity Authority and our industry's elder statesmen, paid a visit to MANWEB recently. He is pictured here (seated centre), with senior management personalities.



The new Chairman initiated the Romford Branch project to raise funds for a Lord Snowdon 'Chairmobile' to be given to Lady Nelson Home (EEIBA). She represents the EAW on the British Standards Institution Committee for Radio Receivers Safety Requirements and is a Director of EAW (Publications) Limited. She is also a Director of an Electrical Contracting Company.

Mrs. Butcher leads a busy life working as a consultant to a large domestic appliance manufacturer. She acts as Vice-Chairman to the Essex Committee of the EEIBA and is a member of the Anglia South Committee of the Eastern Electricity Consultative Council. She has just been made an appointee representative to the Management Committee of the Electrical and Electronic Industries Benevolent Association.

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### Gongs Galore!

Early last year we featured **Wally Harvey**, a meter tester at Lister Drive, and his imposing collection of medals gained during 13 years with the Royal Artillery including action in various theatres during World War Two.

Now Wally tells us that he

has received the *Bronze Medaille du Merit*, from France, and the *Croix d'Honneur* from the Franco-Britannique (Entente Cordiale) Association, for service in 1940 with the 10th French Army.

Last of all, out of the blue, has come the *Cross of Freedom and Independence, with Swords*, from Mr. J. N. Sokilnicki, "President of the Republic of Poland (in exile)" in London.

Comments Wally: "This can only be for assistance in the three-day battle for Monte Cassino and the Gothic Line when supporting the 2nd Polish Corps. They serve to remind me of all the good soldiers I served with, British and Allied, who fell in battle. To be able to write this letter shows the good fortune I was blessed with."

### Crashed Hopes!

When two massive Birkenhead multi-storey blocks of flats—Oak and Eldon Gardens—crashed to the earth in 18,000 tons of rubble on Sunday, 30th September, the wheel turned full circle for North Wirral District Engineer **John Powell** and some of his colleagues.

Way back in 1956 John, who was then assistant section engineer at Birkenhead, was involved in the electricity supply to the two giant blocks, which

were then the pride and joy of the local authority. Supply was 'jointed in' during an all-night session by jointers **Cyril Baker** (still with us), the late **Matt Kearney**, and **Joe Waring** (now mains foreman). In charge was **Cam Shimmin** (now system engineer at North Mersey).

After leaving the District John moved to jobs of increasing responsibility at Wrexham, Sandiway and Head Office, before returning to Birkenhead as District Engineer just in time to see the end of an era. Colleagues **Harry Sharrock** (1st engineer) and **Ken Maddock** (2nd engineer) have been involved in negotiations to safeguard MANWEB's 33,000 volt cables buried in the vicinity.

The flats were among the first in the country to be constructed by a continuous system of shuttering and concrete-pouring, the outer shells of ten floors being erected in about 14 days of continuous operation. They were equipped with electric under-floor heating.

Despite high hopes, it was soon apparent that the flats were a major mistake from the social point of view. Arson and vandalism soon made them uninhabitable, and four years ago Wirral Council decided to evacuate them and re-house the residents.

The demolition job, carried out by a Yorkshire firm, went off without mishap, although

families living nearby were evacuated as a precaution. Our high voltage cables were undamaged.

And John? He wasn't there to see the final chapter written, as a previous commitment took him away from Birkenhead for the day.

### Reduced Heating Bills

Ways in which 900,000 tenants of housing associations and local authorities can have their electric heating systems improved and made to cost less to operate were demonstrated by the electricity supply industry at the **National Federation of Housing Associations Exhibition**, staged at Manchester recently.

Most of these heating systems were installed to insulation standards that, although in accord with the Building Regulations then in force, are now well below acceptable requirements.

A number of Government grant-aided options are now available for remedial work that will increase insulation to acceptable standards and reduce the cost of home heating by enabling tenants to get the maximum benefit of the Economy 7 electricity tariff.

Housing associations and local authorities seeking grants are advised to liaise closely with their local Electricity Boards at all stages of remedial work.

All Electricity Boards now have liaison engineers to ensure that remedial proposals are prepared and submitted on a standard basis.

The electricity supply industry is already advising housing associations and local authorities responsible for 12,000 dwellings on the most cost-effective methods of achieving these economies.

### FOR SALE

Lady's tan leather coat. Length 40 inches. Size 12-14. Perfect condition. Cost £72, will accept £35 or near offer. 'Phone: 051-645 8741.

J.B.C. MF-45DL Stereo Music Centre with Dolby system. 18 months old. Excellent condition £210. Tel: 051-489-4943

### Mum from MANWEB

Friends and colleagues gathered at the Rhostyllen office of Dee Valley District for a farewell presentation to **Mrs. Jackie Pemberton** who is expecting her first child. Jackie a bonus clerk, is married to meter reader John Pemberton, and was our 'Girl from MANWEB' in 1977.

To the tributes paid to Jackie by D.A.O. Arthur Ellinson for her work in the District and her representation of her colleagues on the LAC, may we add good wishes from the Contact staff to a very special 'Girl from MANWEB'.

A smiling Jackie, with husband John, surrounded by well-wishers at Rhostyllen.





The 'Girl from MANWEB' Lynne Joyce, pictured at the Oswestry Meeting with, left to right, Messrs Norman Maden, Jim McLennan, Norman Barr and Sid Warburton.



## No. 9 L.A.C. CONFERENCE

# 'Industrial Relations in the 80's'

## — Personnel Manager Guest Speaker

Dr. Jim McLennan was the guest speaker at the Oswestry District annual employees meeting held in the Pedigree Hotel, near Oswestry. Over 120 members of staff from the District, together with a sprinkling of retired employees and senior members of Head Office staff, sat down to an excellent and piping hot meal before the start of the business part of the meeting.

Group Manager Norman Maden welcomed delegates and introduced the guests. He then paid a tribute to LAC secretary Sid Warburton who was mainly responsible for the organisation of the evening, and whose turn it was to speak and present a report on the work of the District. As he had prepared a written report which was available to all delegates and as the meeting was already behind schedule, Mr. Warburton cut his talk completely and handed back to the Group Manager, to a round of loud applause.

Mr. Maden, too, cut short his talk on the MANWEB report and accounts. He pointed out that the £11.8 million profit only represented 3.2% of the Board's £348 million turnover. The cost of power station fuel accounted for 82% of MANWEB income. Should the miners be given a 20% increase in wages this would take all that £11.8 million profit, and if they succeeded in getting their claim of 65% then this would cause a £25 million loss. Hence the need for the two successive price rises to ensure that the Board maintained its buoyant financial position.

Meter fiddlers accounted for the theft of considerable sums of money, and while the prosecution of offenders continued at a growing rate, Mr. Maden was concerned that some magistrates were imposing minimal sentences and fines. He hoped they could be persuaded to bring these into line with the size of the crime.

Oswestry had the best records of attendance for the employees meetings, Dr. Jim McLennan told his audience, and the local golf club was the scene of his first golf club prize, so he was doubly pleased to speak at their meeting.

Turning to his theme of Industrial Relations in the '80's, the Personnel Manager, expressing his own opinions throughout his talk, thought that in general the employment situation would not improve much in the immediate future and he anticipated large firms employing the same numbers or less. There was a need for change now, or the decline would continue.

The Electricity Supply Industry was fortunate in the national and local leaders of the trade unions for all sections of the industry. Too many other trade union negotiations were too inflexible, and a great deal more support was needed for change in industry. He suggested there should be a greater involvement with smaller firms, that trade union leaders should restrict their activities to deals for their members and avoid political involvement. Changes which led to increased productivity would in turn increase the number of jobs throughout the Country.

The current conditions in the electricity supply were well ahead of the national average, the pay, holidays and industrial relations had been achieved without 'aggro'.

As MANWEB growth depended very much on the growth of industry he did not foresee many changes within the Board in the next 10 to 15 years. He speculated on whether there might be longer holidays, a shorter week, provided it was genuine and not an excuse for a wage rise—he thought most people would rather have the money.



Early retirement was difficult to achieve on the grounds of expense. It almost doubled the cost to bring down the retirement age by only one year.

Dr. McLennan wondered whether there would be acceptance of other changes. He suggested employees might reach a peak in their careers when they were still quite young and gradually accept lesser responsibility and a more lowly position as they got older. He also wondered what reaction there would be to salaries related to individuals instead of the present structures, and whether the employer should provide extra benefits such as holiday homes.

He was often asked why women did not hold senior positions in the industry. He said it was evident that women were taking more senior jobs and a wider range of posts. It took time to acquire the knowledge to reach the higher positions, and he saw more opportunities for the ladies in the future.

Concluding Dr. McLennan claimed that pay and conditions in the Electricity Industry were above the average and he hoped that this would be reflected by an above-average increase in productivity and the acceptance of change.

Only two questions were placed in writing for open forum, one on the size of restaurant food portions and the apparent unfairness of quantities served to apprentices! Mr. Teg Williams, the District Administrative Officer, countered the criticism with a very full reply. To which one wit commented 'He made a meal of that!'

Mr. Maden underlined Dr. McLennan's comments on the high standard of trade union leaders in the Electricity Industry, and in particular praised the EPTU leader Frank Chapple.

Local EPTU representative Mr. Norman Barr was present and commented that he was a little concerned by the praise lavished on the trade unions in the industry by management. He agreed that there was a reasonable working relationship but denied that everything in the garden was rosy, and said that there were areas of discontent where the Unions would press the Boards.

*Our pictures on this and the facing page show delegates at the Oswestry Conference.*



# electric living

## New in the Shops

With Christmas just around the corner one idea for a seasonal gift is an electric kettle. Nothing new in that idea but the kettle to which I am referring is.

The new Russell-Hobbs' *Futura* kettle has a number of special features. It is fully automatic, it switches off as soon as it boils, and will not switch on empty.

As you can see by the photograph below it is a very modern shape and it is made out of a very modern material.

It is made from 'Kematal' an acetal copolymer—a sort of plastic substance. The advantages of this material are that it has impact strength—it will not dent—it is heat resistant, so that the outside of the kettle only reaches 60°C

The Futura Kettle



### HANDY HINT

To clean the enamel interiors of stained pans and oven dishes, fill them with cold water add a tablespoon full of biological washing powder such as Ariel or Bold, bring to the boil on the cooker hob. Allow to cool and the stains will just float away.

when the kettle starts to boil, so preventing touch burning.

The use of Kematal has allowed the designers a lot more freedom. Switches have been moulded into the body. The top is stainless steel and has no separate lid, filling is through the spout.

The Futura is white with a black handle, easy to keep clean and the Kematal resists scale

build up in hard water areas. The capacity is 3½ pints. You might think that all these new features would be reflected in the price and you would be right!

The Futura is recommended for sale at £27.55, MANWEB selling price is £22.95, with extra discount for Electricity Supply Industry staff and pensioners living in the MANWEB Area.



Gwen Conacher looks at

## Microwave cooking

Microwave cooking is the latest technology to be used in our kitchens. How exactly does it work?

A microwave cooker works by using very high frequency electromagnetic waves which heat food by agitating the molecules in it.

### Meals in minutes

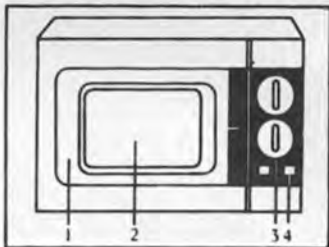
All the microwave energy is used to heat the food, so most food cooks in a fraction of the usual time - a jacket potato, for example, takes about 5 minutes. And microwaves can also thaw frozen food quickly, so that meals can be ready from freezer to table in a matter of minutes.

### Safety

Choose a microwave cooker which is BEAB approved or one which has the 'Electricity Council Approved for Safety' label. Such models have been tested and comply with British Standards, which include requirements for a positive series of door interlocks and other devices incorporated within the cooker. These ensure that the cooker can be operated only when the door is firmly closed. All models which carry this approval are well within the stated safety limits and careful

use according to the manufacturers' instructions and an annual service check should ensure that the equipment remains in good order and safe for use as intended.

### A Basic Microwave Cooker



1. **Cooking Cavity.** Food containers are placed on the shelf or turntable provided.
2. **Cooker Door.** A very important precision-made part of the cooker, which incorporates special seals to prevent the escape of microwave energy when the cooker is being used.
3. **Controls.** Usually of the push-button type which activate the microwaves only after the door is firmly closed. Most new models have a defrost control for thawing frozen food.
4. **Timer.** The time control usually has settings up to 30 minutes, with the first few minutes graduated in seconds.

## Economical

Marrows are plentiful at the moment, so why not try stuffed marrow rings?

**Ingredients (enough for four people)**

**Marrow**—approx 2lbs.

**3 oz. butter**

**2 oz. mushrooms**

**4 oz. lean cooked ham**

**1 level dessertspoon chopped parsley**

**2-3 desertspoons of fresh white bread crumbs, salt and pepper.**

Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C) while preparing the marrow. Wash and dry it and cut into rings about 2 inches thick. Remove the skin unless the marrow is a very young and tender one, and spoon out the seeds.

Arrange the rings on a well buttered oven dish.

Roughly chop up the mushrooms, dice ham, and fry for 2-3 minutes in 1oz of butter. Add the parsley, and season. Add enough bread crumbs to bind the mixture together.

Sprinkle the marrow rings with salt and pepper and fill with stuffing. Dot with remaining butter and seal the dish with foil.

Bake in the oven for 30 to 45 minutes at 375°F (190°C) or until the marrow is tender. Serve with hot cheese sauce or tomato sauce.

## Auto Cooker Menu

For busy cooks who are out of the home all day the automatic oven-cooked meal makes a welcome alternative to the frantic preparation of the evening repast.

A working wife who is a constant user of the auto-cooker is MANWEB senior demonstrator Anne Reney-Smith. One of her favourite menus, which she prepares the night before, stores in the refrigerator overnight and places in the oven before leaving for Head Office in the morning is:-

**Roast chicken joints**

**Anna potatoes**

**Carrots and peas**

**Apple pie.**

Wrap a slice of bacon around each chicken portion, season with

salt and pepper and place in a roasting pan.

Arrange very thinly sliced potatoes, in a well-greased oven-proof dish, in five or six layers, seasoning between each with salt and pepper and a few knobs of butter. Press down firmly and cover with lightly buttered foil.

Slice the carrots and place in an oven dish with salted water and a knob of butter, seal with foil.

Place frozen peas in an oven proof dish with salted water and a little sugar.

Cover with foil and seal well.

Place the apple pie on an oven tray.

Cooking time is 1 hour plus an extra quarter for heating the oven to a temperature of 375°F—or 190°C if you have gone metric. Set your timer to switch off ten minutes or so after you expect to be home, and to switch on 1½ hours previously. Just time to get the kettle on, make a cuppa, and lay the table.

You should not need a gravy as the Anna potatoes are quite moist, and a portion of ice cream with the hot apple pie makes a nice finish to the meal.



## A COOK'S TOUR — BELGIUM

One of the attractions of foreign travel to many of us is the sampling of different types of food. Our cook's tour aims to bring back some of the recipes you may have sampled and, we hope, some that you have not. Our first recipe comes from Belgium, just a short sea ferry journey away with a dish that will be fairly consistent with the English palate. The Belgians call it *Carbonade Flamande* but it is simply beef stew with beer.

**CARBONADE FLAMANDE (Beef stew in beer)**

**Ingredients**

**1 lb. stewing steak**

**8 oz. onions**

**2 oz. flour**

**½ pint of hot stock**

**½ pint of beer (brown ale)**

**1 teaspoon of mustard**

**salt and pepper**

**4 oz. approx. of frying fat**

**Method**

Dice the meat and slice the onions. Melt the fat, add the meat and seal. Fry the onions until turning brown. Place the meat and the onions in alternate layers in a casserole dish.

To the fat stir in the flour, add the stock and beer. Season with the salt, pepper and mustard, bring to the boil, stirring continuously. Pour the mixture over the meat and onions. Cover the casserole dish and place in an oven 335°F and cook for 3½ hours.

Serve on a bed of rice or with boiled potatoes and carrots.

*Recipe from Dave Ollier, Taylor Plan Catering*



Frank Billam (holding clock) and Ron McShane, surrounded by Frank's friends at Pumpfields.

## RETIREMENTS

### Mr. F. BILLAM

After keeping a large part of MANWEB's vehicle fleet rolling for 27 years Mr. Frank Billam, foreman at our Pumpfields garage in Vauxhall Road, Liverpool, retired recently.

A vehicle fitter by trade, Frank had been in the motor business all his working life before joining us at Pumpfields. He served in the REME during the second world war, was taken prisoner at the fall of Singapore, and spent three-and-a-half years in Japanese hands. For part of that time he was working on the infamous "Railway of Death" in Burma.

Pumpfields garage has always been noted for its friendly atmosphere and for the good humour of the men who slog away among the spanners and grease keeping our vehicles on the road. This spirit was much in evidence when Mr. Ron McShane (*2nd engineer, transport*) presented Frank with a

handsome carriage clock and other gifts on behalf of the many friends he has made over the years. Expressing his thanks Frank paid tribute to the grand team spirit which had always been there to lighten the workload.

Frank, who is married with two grown-up children, hopes to find more time in retirement for his hobbies of gardening, carpentry, and his caravan at Southport. He makes no mention of socket sets!

### Mr. SID OWEN

The Editor is in the stocks this month after last month's blunder in the retirement section. Apologies are due to Mr. Joe Pritchard and Mr. Sid Owen, whose retirements were mixed up. We now do our best to repair the damage by repeating last month's picture—but by making it clear that it is Sid and not Joe who is gracing the centre of the stage.

After serving his apprenticeship with a private company Sid joined Liverpool Corporation in 1939, returning as a shift service electrician after his war service.

We'll get it right this time! DCE Dennis Noad (centre, left) wishes a happy retirement to Sid Owen on behalf of his many friends at Bridle Road.



Over the course of many years his colleagues found him to be a helpful friend, always active in their interests. He served for many years on LAC and Works Committees, occupying the chair at times, and was EEPTU shop steward for the service electricians.

On behalf of his friends he was presented with a teasmade and a portable workbench by DCE Denis Noad. But his friends have by no means seen the last of him, as he has taken on a part-time job as steward at the District's Sports and Social Club.

There to see him retire was the foreman who took him on after the War—Mr. Alec Cannon, who is now 80—and another former colleague in the person of Ernie Cox, now aged 77.

#### Miss W. PRICE

Dee Valley District's material control section is never expected to be the same again now that visitors will not be greeted by Miss Winnie Price's disarming smile, because Winnie retired recently after 24 years' service with the Board.

Her popularity was evident from the number of colleagues who attended a final get-together and from the number of gifts she received.

Before DAO Arthur Ellinson presented Winnie

with a table lamp, a gift from her colleagues, Messrs. Keith Griffiths, Alan Mason and T. Kirby (who made a special visit from retirement) paid glowing tributes to her pleasant efficient service to her immediate colleagues and those in other departments.

#### Mr. G. UNSWORTH

After 48 years' service with the electricity industry in Liverpool Mr. George Unsworth retired recently from the work control section of North Mersey District.

George began with Liverpool Corporation in the meter department way back in 1931. He was a member of the Territorial Army and was mobilised with the King's Regiment before war began, later transferring to the Royal Corps of Signals. Service in the Western Desert, the Sudan, Tripoli and Eritrea followed.

He returned to the meter department after the war, and after MANWEB was formed held various posts in customer records, mains engineering, and work control.

A keen sportsman, he was an original member of the Electric Supply Football Club. In retirement he hopes to spend more time gardening and walking in the Yorkshire Dales. He is also looking forward to becoming a grand-dad for the first time.

## **Holiday Discounts for MANWEB employees**

We remind our readers that Grand Metropolitan Hotels are offering a 10% discount to MANWEB staff and pensioners on Stardust Mini Holidays to London, Brussels, Amsterdam and Paris, and on their Camelot Country Mini Holidays.

A Stardust Mini Holiday to Paris, from any station in the Merseyside area, would cost £45. For this you would get your

second class return rail fare, cross channel ferry, and two nights at the Paris Penta hotel with continental breakfast (sharing a twin bedded room with private bathroom). All services charges and taxes are covered.

Between December 13th and January 8th all members of the public are offered 20% off Stardust Mini Holidays to London. Contact readers would qualify

for a further 10% reduction. These holidays offer second class return rail fare, two night's accommodation sharing a twin-bedded room with private bathroom, full English breakfast, service charges and VAT.

To find out more send off the coupon.

### =====**Obituary**=====

We deeply regret to report the deaths of the following colleagues:

**Mr. J. Birch**, retired foreman electrician at St. Helens. He was 79, and had served the industry for 32 years.

**Mr. Trevor McDonald**, a bricklayer at Clwyd District prior to his retirement some years ago.

**Mr. Frank Ward** aged 67, who retired two years ago from his post as Assistant Secretary (Legal) after 43 years' service.

**Mr. Harold Greaves** aged 78 who retired in 1966. He was a Commercial Engineer at Rhostyllen in the former Area 4.

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# BOARD MEMBERS VISIT OUR LIVERPOOL DISTRICT

Prior to last month's Board Meeting, members visited Lister Drive in Liverpool to see for themselves the recently completed NJIC block, District store, canteen, storage compound and new fueling facilities. They took the opportunity to look over the site for the next phase in the building programme, an area devoted to a repair workshop for the maintenance of all Board vehicles operating in the northern section of our area. The Board Members then toured the existing offices and the single-phase meter test section and talked with many members of the staff



**MANWEB Chairman, Mr. Ben Hastings, left, with Board Member Mr. J. G. Parkes.**



**Mr. Dave Crangle (1st engineer-Meter Test), left, with Messrs. Bob Hodson (DCE) and J. G. Parkes (Member).**

**Mr. Tom Jones (Board Member) stops to chat with Miss Rosalie Andrews (clerk).**



**OUR COVER PICTURE** shows Liverpool District Engineer Mr. Charles Donovan, right, explaining the recently installed fuel storage system to Board Members, Lord Sefton of Garston, left, and Mr. Tom Jones, centre.

**Mr. Stanley Robinson, centre at work in the Meter Test section watched by Mr. Hastings left, and Mr. M. J. Moore (Board Member and Chairman of the E.C.C.)**

**Mr. Ronald Brookes (chargehand storekeeper) right, presents Mr. M. J. Moore (Member) with a small fuse as a memento of his visit to the stores. In the background, amused by the incident, are Mr. Tom Jones (Member) and Mr. Jim Barraclough (Group Manager)**



**Board Secretary, Mr. John Scudamore, right, with Mr. Austin Kennedy (meter tester).**

