

Contact

October 1980

A Winning Smile
(see page 201)



'ATOMS FOR ENERGY' EXHIBITION

The nuclear power exhibition, already seen by thousands of people in other parts of Britain, is coming to Chester. The exhibition will open at the Northgate Arena from 27th November to 10th December. Admission is free.

"*Atoms for Energy*" aims to take some of the myths and mystery out of nuclear power, explaining the subject in clear, everyday terms, with the help of pictures, models and films.

Scientists and engineers working in the nuclear industry will be on hand to answer visitors' questions and to guide parties of schoolchildren around the exhibition.

One of the highlights will be a simulated nuclear reactor, which members of the public can operate. They can sit at the controls of a model based on the AGR type in use at Hunterston 'B' and Hinkley 'B'.

"*Atoms for Energy*" is jointly sponsored by the electricity supply industry, British Nuclear Fuels Limited, the Nuclear Power Company Limited and the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority.



Schoolchildren visiting the "Atoms for Energy" exhibition show keen interest in the model of a Fast Reactor.

THE U.K. ENERGY BALANCE

IT WOULD be unwise to count on rises in real energy prices being sufficient to modify the balance between energy supply and demand, warned Sir Francis Tombs, Chairman of the Electricity Council, speaking in Glasgow recently.

"Since the Second World War," Sir Francis said, "not a decade has passed without some traumatic event affecting the national energy balance. For example, the first commercial deposits of North Sea oil were not discovered until November 1970, but they have dominated the British economic scene ever since. During the next ten years, the energy scene might be transformed again in some other way, and it goes without saying that the warning signals will be difficult to read.

"There is no doubt that the supply and price of energy in the 1980's will be determined by the price of oil which, according to the UK Department of Energy, could well increase in real terms by two

and a half times by the year 2000 compared with 1977 prices.

"We in the electricity supply industry believe that, because of the

uncertainties in the price and supply of oil, only nuclear power and coal can be developed on a scale large enough to meet the anticipated growth in energy demand during the remainder of the century."

NUCLEAR POWER

JUST under two out of every three people (60 per cent.) questioned in a recent survey agree that nuclear power is going to be needed to keep factories, homes and transport running. Only about one in five (22 per cent.) of those interviewed disagreed and the remaining 18 per cent. don't know.

The question was posed during a regular survey in August into people's attitudes to the electricity supply industry, carried out by National Opinion Polls for the Electricity Council. Some 2,000 adults (16 and over) were interviewed at 178 sampling points throughout Great Britain in a form that was representative of all adults in Great Britain.

This was the fourth time the

question has been asked and the response on each occasion has been of a similar level.

There has been consistency in all four polls among the various age groups, as well as among the different social classes. Agreement has been very similar among the AB (upper middle) and C1 groups (61 per cent. and 65 per cent.) as well as the C2 and D2 (unskilled working) groups (59 per cent. and 57 per cent.). Among those over 65 years of age there has been a higher proportion of 'Don't Knows' (28 per cent.), but even this group had 55 per cent. supporting and only 17 per cent. disagreeing with the necessity of nuclear power to maintain the UK economy.

Contact

THE STAFF MAGAZINE
OF THE
MERSEYSIDE AND
NORTH WALES
ELECTRICITY BOARD

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Editorial

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☆ **NOTE**
Change of internal
telephone numbers to
2106, 2107, 2108

FABLES AND FACTS

DESPITE the dramatic headlines sometimes achieved by those who campaign against the nuclear generation of electricity, the great majority of our fellow-citizens remain unimpressed.

A recent public opinion survey (reported opposite in this number of 'Contact') shows that nearly two-thirds of those interviewed regard nuclear power as necessary for our future energy needs. Only 22 per cent are "anti-nuclear", while the remainder are "Don't Knows".

Anti-nuclear headlines are ten-a-penny, and a fair amount of hair-raising material has appeared on television. It is not difficult for the "antis" to attract the attention of the media. The wildest scare stories can be bandied about without any need to prove foundation in fact, while those who extol the virtues of nuclear energy are always called upon to prove their case to the hilt.

No-one can deny that nuclear power is an important social issue today, and it is right and proper in a democratic society that all such issues should be the subject of full public debate.

The positive side of the argument can be examined at the "Atoms for Energy" exhibition, currently touring the country and on display to the public in Chester for two weeks beginning on 27th November.

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.

Guest speaker Mr. John Biffin, M.P., holds the attention of his audience at our Oswestry District Employees' Meeting.

OSWESTRY LAC —

CABINET MINISTER GUEST SPEAKER



HENRY'S WELCOME

*The cost of living, I fear, shoots up every year,
So to make ends meet is a task.
Of our guest here tonight I thought that I might
Be permitted one question to ask.*

*For these prices that rise have ceased to surprise
All the people who live in these lands.
High rate of interest takes toll—over two million
‘dole’—
So no shortage of those begging hands.*

*Who the heck can we blame—transport's risen
again—
At the cost of petrol we shout.
If we fill up the car, we will not drive it far
Unless a mortgage they let us take out.*

*I doubt if Right Honourable here can find
answer, I fear,
To this question that's void of all catches—
“If we smoke ten fags a day, what on earth will
we pay
When they're asking five quid for the matches?”*

*Our guest speaker right now may have wrinkled
his brow
And a moment for thought he might take.
But I see on this ticket there's a way we could
lick it
Because suggestions you ask us to make!*

*If the problems involved can't be quickly
resolved
(He's only human, like all other men)
My suggestion is clear—for the Conference
next year,
Would he please ask the 'Iron Lady' from 'Ten'?*

THE idea that nationalised industries existed to provide a cheap service—a widespread assumption in this country—was “profoundly misconceived,” declared Mr. John Biffin, Chief Secretary to the Treasury and MP for Oswestry, speaking at this year's staff conference organised by Oswestry District's LAC.

“You can't talk about energy conservation in one breath, and in the next say that the energy industries should be providing social services,” he added.

The guest speaker, who was accompanied by his wife, steered well clear of any contentious party political arguments, devoting the mainstream of his talk to the economic problems and decisions which he described as confronting all British governments, regardless of their complexion.

“The control of public spending is a major task facing every government,” said Mr. Biffin. “The will to spend money always rises more rapidly than the will to provide the necessary taxation. That is true of every country in the Western world.

“In some countries there have been ‘taxpayer revolts’. This kind of confrontation is best avoided. We have to find ways of bringing about economies in public spending to match what we are prepared to pay in taxes.”

He emphasised that central government did not control all public spending. Local government was a big public spender, and the control of local expenditure by central government was bound to be contentious, involving restrictions on the independence and sovereignty of local government.

The Nationalised Industries

Turning to the funding of nationalised industries, Mr. Biffin said that this area presented the most serious difficulties involving genuine technical problems.

“This year, the electricity supply industry requires about £300 million from the Government as a contribution to its borrowing requirements—mainly for

(continued on page 194)



.....
Around the Conference Tables
.....





Administrative assistant Mr. Sid Warburton, in his capacity as Secretary of the Mid-Cheshire District LAC, presents his report.

Oswestry Conference—continued.

funding its investment programme.

"The Treasury must be as hawk-eyed as any merchant bank would be, but £300 million is peanuts in comparison with the expenditure and income of a great public industry. Such a calculation can be thrown wildly awry by completely natural factors, such as the state of the economy, the state of demand, or even the state of the weather," he added. "We hope to improve predictability, but it is a very difficult problem."

Mr. Biffen concluded his talk on a personal note, thanking our Oswestry District colleagues for the high standard of service which they provided to his constituents.

Other elements in the evening's programme included a report on the activities of the LAC from secretary Sid Warburton, comments on the Report and Accounts (and a warm welcome to everyone) from Group Manager Norman Maden, and a welcome in verse to Mr. Biffen from the Bard of Oswestry (Henry Blackwell).

Sid's report dealt with the safety (20 per cent. fewer accidents than last year), first-aid training, customer satisfaction surveys (99 per cent. satisfaction with MANWEB service) and other relevant topics.

The meeting ended with some thoughtful questions in the 'Open Forum' session, and a convivial get-together, which was much enjoyed by the 100 or so staff and pensioners present.

Electricity Council Chairman Relinquishes Appointment

By agreement with the Secretary of State for Energy Mr. David Howell, Sir Francis Tombs, Chairman of the Electricity Council, will relinquish his appointment on 31st December, 1980, instead of completing his present period of appointment which would extend to 31st March, 1982.

This follows the Government's decision, announced by the Secretary of State for Energy to the House of Commons on 14th July, that legislation would not be introduced to change the organisation of the electricity supply industry in England and Wales.

Sir Francis was invited to become Chairman of the Electricity Council from 1st April, 1977, on the understanding that the organisational framework of the industry would be changed by legislation following the report of the Plowden Committee of Inquiry in January, 1976. He made it clear at the time that he accepted the appointment on that basis, and had no wish to become Chairman of the Electricity Council under the 1957 Act which, he agreed with the Plowden Committee, was unsatisfactory.

The previous Administration

announced its intention to legislate for a changed organisation of the electricity supply industry in England and Wales and published a draft Bill in April, 1978, but did not proceed with it.

Change Unnecessary

The present Government examined the problem during its first year of office and concluded that legislative change was unnecessary and that more co-operative working under the 1957 Act, with a more positive role being taken by the Electricity Council, offered a satisfactory solution to the problems identified by Plowden and others.

Sir Francis has advised the Secretary of State against this course and feels strongly that the essential structural problems of organisation will remain. As a result, he asked to be allowed to leave early.

DISTRICT JOINT ADVISORY COUNCIL

— Conference 1980 —

The Importance of Electricity Supply

A NUCLEAR FUTURE

“WE have to realise that in the fabric of the economy of this country, the electricity supply industry is very, very important. Without electricity the country would stop dead in about ten minutes,” commented Mr. Austin W. Bunch, Deputy Chairman to The Electricity Council when he addressed delegates to the DJAC Conference held at our Head Office last month.

He developed a few thoughts on the fuel situation in the rapidly-changing scene in the world today, and of our industry's standing with politicians in general and Governments in particular, before turning to the Council's Annual Report.

He quoted figures running into billions of pounds, resulting in a minute margin of profit, and went on to say that it was pure luck whether we finished up plus or minus when taking into account the variations which can occur during the year.

“By any measure,” he continued, *“these are very large figures and we do have an effect on the economy. But we have to realise that the energy industries cannot lead the economy—they must reflect and serve it.”*

He said that planning ahead was very difficult and accepted that our estimates could have been better if, nine or ten years ago, we could have foreseen the oil crisis, the reduction in demand for fuel and today's recession.

Referring to generation and distribution costs, Mr. Bunch said that, compared with total cost, controllable costs, i.e. excluding fuel, rates and depreciation, was only 20 per cent in CEGB Regions and ten per cent for an Area Board. Losses on the system and thefts were known as items affecting units purchased and units sold. *“These aspects are being tidied up,”* he stated.

On fuel debts, he said that the vast majority of our customers—about 98 per cent—paid their bills promptly and only used what they could afford. Of the remaining two per cent, some were real hardship cases. *“National clamour from the consumerist organi-*

Guest Speaker:
Mr. Austin W. Bunch
Deputy Chairman
The Electricity Council



sations, well-meaning though they may be, don't take account of the real rogues,” he went on. *“The inability of some people to meet high fuel bills is a social problem and must be dealt with by the Government, either national or local.”*

Commenting on the present economic situation which faces our industry with stagnating demand, he said that we must not expect to be cushioned or insulated. *“We have shown by our history that we are prepared to match our manpower to the work-load,”* he stated.

Mr. Bunch then urged all staff to remember that there was still a market for electricity, with energy being used wisely and efficiently. He said that we should always be able to defend our selling efforts exemplifying Medallion Homes and metal melting among other “wise uses”.

Covering a few points briefly, our speaker said that electricity prices should include enough to provide for future replacement of assets now being used up. He explained some of the difficulties brought about by Government requirements regarding borrowing and forward planning.

He feared that if we should have to finance major expansion in the nuclear field out of our revenue, then present costs to our customers could be very high indeed.

Bringing his inspiring remarks to a close, Mr. Bunch—a commanding figure with a powerful approach—pronounced: *“The future clearly will be electric.”* He stated that although coal would last for a long time, the only efficient way to spread it around the country was by wire.

“There is not going to be enough oil,” he went on. *“Coal may well be required for conversion into oil and/or gas.”* He concluded that this would leave us with our nuclear power—*“the most obvious truism in the world today!”*

“The future of world energy is down the nuclear

route," he forecast, going on to say that we had to educate the public at large that nuclear power is for the future and that nuclear power is safe. "If we are to go nuclear, and I believe we must," he said, "then we have got to get a determined policy. What we have had for years is vacillation, argument and no decisions."

Apparently we now had a long-term decision from the present Government. "But what worries me is—where is the money coming from?" was his parting shot.

* * *

A question-time period followed, in which Mr. Bunch dealt with the changes in our organisation over many years, through various committees and Governments and the problem of how to strike a balance between the unification and decentralisation of such an enormous industry.

He spoke of load-forecasting, commenting that predicting almost anything is always wrong—"it is only the degree of error which can be criticised".

In answer to another question, he said that there should be a staff commitment to nuclear power, as our opponents were very active. "We have to prove that there can be a safe nuclear future."

A vote of thanks was voiced for Mr. Bunch's stimulating and direct talk and for his ready answers to the questions.

MANWEB PROGRESS REPORT

from

Mr. Ben Hastings

Chairman



ASKING his audience to look at MANWEB as customers rather than employees of the electricity supply industry, our Chairman proceeded to deal with some of the questions our customers are entitled to ask.

"Why the double price rise again this year?" "Are MANWEB's costs passed directly on to the customer?" "What evidence is there that the Board are offsetting rising costs through improvements in efficiency?"

To answer these and many other questions, Mr. Hastings referred to MANWEB's performance indicators published in the Annual Report.

The figures showed how last year and over the past ten years we managed to keep the increase in our added costs below the rate of inflation. Last year, the cost of material and services rose by only five per cent. Staff had decreased by one per cent as customers increased by one per cent.

There had been a significant increase in sales volume.



Members of the open forum panel answering questions from delegates. From left to right: Messrs. Keith Mann (Nalco), Bob Blackburn (EPEA), Norman Barr (EETPU), Richard Gales (Deputy Chairman), Geoff Barnes (Chief Accountant) and John Scudamore (Secretary).

Responding to questions, the panel and some delegates explained that, should the ideas being developed at Capenhurst be taken up by industry, it would add to its efficiency, make more saleable goods and help reduce unemployment. Meanwhile, the electricity industry was assisting with advice on energy saving and tariff selection to ensure industrial customers had the best use from their energy.

Cutting MANWEB costs—particularly transport costs—meant electricity would remain competitive with other fuels. The introduction of new technology

would add to the Board's efficiency and any loss in numbers of jobs would be accounted for by natural wastage, and MANWEB had no intention of making staff redundant.

It was explained that the function of some M.S.U. staff in District had changed. It was now needed to monitor efficiency in place of operating bonus and clerical work measurement schemes. The number of secondments was necessary to widen senior staff experience and would be limited to short periods and not repeated in one post.

particularly in contracting—"a welcome step in the right direction."

Units unaccounted for and theft showed a decrease—"we seem to have turned the corner . . ." and our working capital hardly rose at all . . . "despite inflation." We seem to have persuaded our customers to pay more promptly and the number of disconnections had dropped.

"In these and many other ways, we have managed to hold down our added costs," he stated. "I think we have a pretty good answer to customers who want to know what we in MANWEB are doing to keep our prices down."

He went on to say that our increase in unit sales, with an overall growth of 3.2 per cent, was the highest in the country, but then sounded a warning note when he informed us that the first three months of this financial year had been disastrous for MANWEB with so much industry closing down. "But the picture is slowly improving," he added.

With the air of depression and high unemployment in our area and with firms failing daily—some even blaming electricity prices—another question was often posed: "Is MANWEB being run for the benefit of its staff or the benefit of its customers?"

Mr. Hastings gave the assurance that the Board will go on matching manpower to work-load, improving methods and organisation and increasingly making use of computers and other forms of modern technology.

"At the end of the day, we will be doing our share to improve the wealth of the country through the more productive use of resources," he commented.

Turning to the concern over job security, he said that the Board was unanimous in seeking continual improvements in productivity and gradually reducing the number of staff in existing jobs without pain and without redundancy. He spoke of the efforts to create viable jobs, pointing to the setting-up of our theft-detection teams.

He went on to state that MANWEB had a very large number of trainees and apprentices and these, together with our work experience programme, showed that the Board was anxious to play its part in tackling the problem of youth unemployment.

"I am quite sure that staff throughout the industry will continue to make a first-class contribution to this process of improvement and will be willing to change with the times and so avoid painful situations of the kind that British Steel and British Leyland have had to face. MANWEB have a good record of innovation, improvement and efficiency. Its staff have been entirely responsible for that good record.

"We shall continue to be able to hold up our heads with some pride and with a clear conscience when confronted by awkward questions from our customers," he concluded.

* * *

Progress reports were also made by Dr. Trevor Churchman, Director, The Electricity Council Research Centre, Capenhurst, and by Mr. Jim Craig, Director-General, CEGB North Western Region and DJAC Chairman.



MANWEB delegates at the open forum session.



Council Film Mid-Cheshire Medallion Homes

RESIDENTS of the peaceful town of Winsford in Cheshire were surprised one morning recently, when a helicopter, flying low over the area, circled and then hovered for a while before landing on the Barratt housing development site at Moors Park on the outskirts of the town.

However, it was not the intrepid actor Patrick Allen who stepped from the aircraft, but two other gentlemen, Messrs. Robert Troop (*Property Correspondent, 'Sunday Times'*) and Tom Jones (*Managing Director, Barratt Developments (Chester) Ltd.*).

Camera and sound crews recorded the event, from the air and on the ground, as part of an Electricity Council film featuring our industry's Medallion Home



Above: The Barratt helicopter coming in to land on the Moors Park housing development site at Winsford—with Men from MANWEB in attendance!

Left: Film camera and sound crews recording the sequence when Messrs. Robert Troop and Tom Jones arrive on site.

Mr. Bob Jowett
*(Energy Sales
 Manager)* right,
**hands a Medallion
 Home Award to Mr.
 Tom Jones**
*(Managing Director,
 Barratt
 Developments
 (Chester) Ltd.).
 Completing the
 picture is Mr.
 Malcolm Cooper
*(energy sales
 engineer, Mid-
 Cheshire), who, with
 Mr. Dave Fisher*
*(2nd engineer,
 energy sales), put in a
 lot of hard work
 behind the scenes to
 secure the contract.**



Award Scheme.

On this Winsford site, the three- and four-bedroom detached houses and bungalows being erected by Barratt Developments are the first Medallion Homes in England to be constructed by a recognised national builder.

Private developers of all-electric energy-saving homes are presented with a Medallion Award, which represents a guarantee that the dwellings meet the high standards of insulation, comfort and economy set by the electricity supply industry.

Designed to conserve energy, the Medallion Home offers buyers the luxury and convenience of an all-electric home with realistic running-costs.

INSTALLATION AND RUNNING COST

A typical three-bedroom detached house or bungalow on the site has a storage radiator and a radiant coal-effect fire in the lounge, storage radiator in the hall or dining-area, panel heaters in the bedrooms and wall-mounted fan-heaters in the bathroom and kitchen.

The outer cavity walls are filled with urea-formaldehyde insulating foam and the roof area is covered with extra fibreglass insulation. The lounge windows are double-glazed.

The estimated average running-cost for heating these homes and supplying plenty of hot water is approximately £5.00 a week on our present Economy 7 tariff.

A slim, neat, compact and very efficient wall-heater in one of the bedrooms of a bungalow built by Barratt Developments at Winsford.





Norman Rawsthorne (Mid-Mersey)—“Nowt doin’.”



Dave Lewis (Head Office)—“Not a bite!”

SOUTH-WEST ANGLERS NET PRIZES

Pete Baron (Head Office)—“I had this eel on, about 18 inches long, but . . .”



THE annual coarse angling championships for the Electricity Supply Industry were held on the River Dee at Farndon and Holt, near Chester. As 1979 winners, it was MANWEB who were invited to choose the match water, organise and sponsor the contest. However, the slightly swollen river provided a poor day's fishing, with over 60 of the 180 anglers returning a nil score.

The winners were the South Western Electricity Sports Association, who received the E.S.I. Cup, and each team member was presented with an etching of Chester. The Individual Champion was South Western's captain, Tom Coulson, who won the Individual Rose Bowl, a carriage clock and a cash prize from the sweepstake.

Runners-up in the team contest were the East Midlands Electricity Area, with the North Eastern Region of the CEBG placed third. The MANWEB team, competing on 'home' water and with two local champions fishing for them—captain John Tyreman and the 1979 Individual Champion Dave Lewis—could only manage fifth place.

In the individual contest, the top MANWEB angler was a late substitute, Dee Valley jointer Peter Ankers. He finished fifth over-all.

Each team consisted of 15 anglers, of whom the top twelve weights counted towards the team result. The anglers also competed for the individual title and section prizes. The 180 were divided into five sections of 36. The winner of each section won a pint tankard, and the second a half-pint one, plus cash prizes from the sweepstake and optional pools.

The Farndon Sports and Social Club was the match headquarters and the club made the anglers most welcome, providing breakfast and an evening meal. It was here the presentation of prizes was made by the Deputy Chairman of the Electricity Council, Mr. Austin Bunch, who himself had a day's fishing off the Dee, and did what many of the competitors did not—he caught a fish!



Talking Notes

APPOINTMENTS

THE new Assistant Chief Commercial Officer—Tariffs and Statistics is **John E. Roberts**, the North Wirral District Administrative Officer. He succeeds **John Thompson**, who died so tragically in April of this year.

John Roberts is 34, married and has a baby son. He joined MANWEB in 1967 as a graduate trainee, after having gained an honours degree in engineering at Liverpool University. He completed his technical training two years later and opted for the Commercial Department to continue his engineering career. He held posts at Head Office and Dee Valley District before moving to the Management Services Department in the Corporate Development section.

In 1975, he was seconded to the Financial Department, where he studied for and gained qualifications as an Associate of the Certified Accountants. A year later, he was seconded to Mid-Cheshire as District Administrative Officer and was appoint-

ed to the position at the end of six months' secondment. He was appointed to North Wirral in 1978.

Moving to North Wirral District on a secondment is **David Nicholas Williams**, the Assistant Secretary—Legal. Nick Williams, who is 37 and married, joined the Board in 1972 as an assistant solicitor, from Chester Town Hall, having gained an honours degree in Law at Liverpool University and having served his articles with a private firm of solicitors. He was appointed Assistant Secretary in 1977.

North Mersey District are to have a new District Commercial Engineer, **Ken Appleton**, Mid-Mersey District Energy Sales Engineer. He succeeds **Denis Noad**, who is on the point of retirement from the Board.

Ken Appleton is 51, married with three sons. He served his apprenticeship as an electrician with a private company before working for the Admiralty at Risley, where he was a fitter and, later, a draughtsman. He joined MANWEB at Runcorn in 1957 as an assistant consumers' engineer.

He recently completed a period of secondment as District Commercial Engineer to Clwyd District.

Golfing Success

Some years ago, the prospect of becoming a golf widow loomed large for **Shiela Moseley**, who works as a clerical assistant in our Revenue section at Head Office.

So she decided to take up the game herself, and soon found that she was pretty good at it.

A member of the Vicars Cross Golf Club, Shiela recently won their coveted 'Coronation Cup', after a six-round match-play competition.

This she now adds to her other trophies, which include the Club President's Day First Prize, a Rover Car Company sponsored contest, two monthly medal competitions and runner-up in the Club Professional's Prize.

A 16-handicap golfer, she

John Roberts



Nick Williams



Ken Appleton



OUR COVER PICTURE shows Shiela proudly holding high her latest golf trophy—the 'Coronation Cup'.

won the Upton-by-Chester Mixed Open Day Competition, partnered by husband Stan, who, at one time, was a three-handicap golfer.

When not driving or putting the little white ball, Shiela likes reading, dabbling with oil paints and playing the guitar.

Engaged

Two members of our Dee Valley District staff have started on the road which leads to matrimony.

We wish future happiness to **Helen Parry**, a clerk working in the Engineering section, and to **Andrew Sutton**, a junior administrative trainee, who recently announced their engagement... to each other!

Bowls Champion

The brewers Greenall Whitley sponsored an open bowls tournament at British Steel's Shotton Sports and Social Club over three weekends recently. The winner was a man from MAN-WEB and the runner-up was his brother.

Wilf Jones, a clerical assistant

in the Revenue section at Head Office, picked up the £100 first prize and a trophy, and his brother, Bob, a laboratory technician, won the £50 second prize.

This was Wilf's fourth major local competition win this year. He bowls for the Bailey Hill (Mold) Club, where he is club secretary, and for Garmon (East Flint) in the Welsh inter-county championships.

He has been bowling since he was ten and, at 25, is the youngest of three bowling brothers—Bob (30) and John (28). They learned their bowling from their father and grandfather, and all three are about the same standard.

Wilf has worked for MAN-WEB for seven years and his wife, **Margaret**, is also a member of Head Office staff, working in the Cash Office.

Calling All Hams

There is a number of people within our industry who are amateur radio enthusiasts—"Hams". They have Home Office



"I've found the trouble—I'd run out of 50p's!"

licences to transmit and receive on their own radio equipment.

It has now been suggested that an Electricity Supply Industry Radio Amateurs' Club be formed. Enthusiasts would be put in touch with one another and perhaps, if desired, hold annual meetings.

The Radio Society of Great Britain is willing to offer affiliation to an ESI Club.

If you are interested, send your name and address, place of work and call-sign to Mr. C. E. Dadson, Telecommunications Engineer, Distribution Engineering Branch, The Electricity Council, 30 Millbank, London SW1P 4RD.

Snail Mail

A letter posted from our Head Office in Chester to a customer in Anglesey was returned to us by the Head Postmaster at Bangor.

In his letter of explanation, he regretted that our letter had been eaten by snails in a posting box!

We wonder whether they were first- or second-class snails!!

Wedding

Our best wishes for a happy future go to **Gillian Cooke**, a draughtswoman in our Liverpool District office, on the occasion of her marriage to Keith Hay-



Greenall Whitley Brewery representative Peter Gatrell, left, presents the £100 first prize and winner's trophy to Wilf Jones, right, watched by brother Bob, centre.



Mr. and Mrs. Hayhurst.

hurst, who works for a security group.

The ceremony took place at St. Peter's Church, Woolton, and the happy couple spent their honeymoon in the beautiful city of Paris.

Gillian, as attractive as ever, joined the Board in 1973. She was a former entrant in our "Girl from MANWEB" competition.

Wirral Way Walkers

Early one wet Sunday morning recently, a handful of members of our North Wirral District customer accounts section were joined by their friends in a sponsored ten-mile walk along the Wirral Way.

Plasters and stretchers were provided en route, and the more energetic members of the party completed the last half of the journey at a very brisk pace.

The proceeds from the sponsorship went to the Cambodian Relief Fund.

Our Candidate

Executive Officer in the Salaries and Superannuation section at Head Office, **Mike Davies** is one of the candidates up for election as a representative of

the Management Committee of our industry's superannuation scheme.

The elections are held every three years and it makes sense to have people in office who know quite a lot about superannuation. So, when the voting papers come around, don't forget—Mike is *our* man.

Prize Blooms

For the past few years, one of our electricians in the Mid-Cheshire District, **Ken McDean**, has grown chrysanthemums with the object of winning the North West Championship.

His ambition was achieved at the Northwich and District Chrysanthemum Society Open Show a few weeks ago, when he won the Butler Trophy—and £25 in cash—with his six vases

of five perfect large-flowered blooms.

Three different varieties of chrysanthemum made up his entry.

With these six vases judged as the best exhibit in the show, Ken also took the Shard Trophy and the National Chrysanthemum Society Silver Medal.

Ken collected another award at the show by winning the Challenge Trophy in the Members' Section, for his entry of five vases of three blooms of different varieties.

Ken took up chrysanthemum-growing as a hobby about six years ago. Since then he has collected 19 trophies at various shows.

We hope that Ken will now go on to enter for next year's big show at Southport, and we wish him continued success.

An ambition achieved produces a happy smile from Ken McDean—the new North West champion grower of chrysanthemums.

Picture: Acknowledgments to Cheshire County Newspapers Ltd.



Charity Football

The annual game of—*some people would call it*—football, between two teams from our Clwyd District was played a short time ago.

The 'gentle sex' arrived for the kick-off, dressed to kill—they wore Hell's Angels' gear—and called themselves "The Cefndy Chapter".

The 'boys'—complete with handbags—were announced as "The Dandy Dollies". The match was firmly and impressively refereed by J. L. 'Rommel' Hughes (System Engineer).

As he blew the whistle to open the game, "The Dandy Dollies" immediately produced eggs, flour and water, with the idea of intimidating their opponents. Soon, with all their ammunition exhausted—to say nothing of themselves—"The Dandy Dollies" were overwhelmed by "The Cefndy Chapter", who declared at 13 goals to two.

Proceeds from the sale of an excellent programme—*sorry we cannot give you any extracts!*—plus an admission charge for spectators to this amazing game,

raised £52 for Jimmy Savile's appeal fund for the National Spine Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville.

Tales from the Road

More extracts taken from road safety records:

"If a lorry is thundering up behind you in the outside lane of a motorway at 80 m.p.h., the courts will be on your side if you slam on your brakes and force the lorry driver to do the same."

"In Birmingham (or Cardiff or wherever), you are actually allowed by a local by-law to overtake on the left, or the right, or in the middle."

"Be wary of all drivers who wear hats. Statistics show they cannot be trusted and they have more accidents. So do red-headed Scotsmen."

Pensioner's Gift

A recent article in 'Contact' told of a visit to the Dee Banks School for mentally and physically handicapped children by members of the Chester Sports and Social Club. They had been



"Can we do an emergency repair on a hearing-aid battery?"

invited to see the toys and furniture that had been bought with the £600 the Club had raised by a sponsored slim.

Our story touched the heart of one of our retired meter readers, who sent a cheque for £50 to the Club secretary to be sent on to the school. He also wishes to remain anonymous and, as we in 'Contact' do not know his identity, we are using our columns to confirm that the Dee Banks School have received his donation and to convey their thanks.

All action at the Clwyd District charity football match. We see, from left to right: Referee 'Rommel' Hughes, Sue Heyward, Steve Jones, Lesley Hitchcock, Rosemary Tomlinson (praying for full-time), Maria Howes, 'Bertie' Wooster and Brian Williams—in football gear?





Pals from Personnel, and many other sections, gather to say their farewells to Connie Jones, centre, as she receives their parting gift from Jim McLennan (Personnel Manager).

Farewell to Connie

Many friends and colleagues gathered at Sealand Road to bid a fond farewell to Personnel administrative assistant **Constance M. Jones**, or *Connie* as she was best known.

She was a very popular lady at Chester and had many more friends at Wrexham in the Rhostyllen office.

She started her career in 1945 with the North Wales Power Company in Wrexham, as a clerk and typist. She became a clerical assistant in the Establishments Section of the former Area 4 in 1955, moving to Chester and the Personnel Section ten years ago.

After 35 years in the industry, she has decided to leave the Board so that she has more time to meet her domestic commitments.

Connie is a keen football fan and supports Wrexham; she also likes the theatre and the cinema, and enjoys a spot of gardening.

Gwynedd Golf

The annual golf competition for the Gwynedd District Sports and Social Club's 'Trydan Cup' took place a few weeks ago at Caernarfon Golf Club.

In glorious autumn sunshine, 18 competitors drove off from the first tee with the intention of burning up the course.

Golfers from Caernarfon, Llangefni and Pwllheli sacrificed their holidays and relief days to perfect their swing and their putting and to plan a strategy for winning the competition.

One who had put in a lot of practice was **David 'Roc' Evans** (meter reader/collector), for he had a runaway victory with a 12-point margin to take the trophy.

In second place, with 32 points, was **Emyr Rowlands** (1st assistant engineer—Installation) and, in third place, scoring 30 points, was **Eric Phillips** (installation inspector).

The prize presentation ceremony was conducted by 'O.J.' **Hughes**, who was assisted by **Len Roberts**. Thanks were expressed to **Gordon Barlow** and local members for the excellent catering arrangements.

Tower Lift

In a recent issue of the electricity supply industry publication "Distribution Developments", an article written by **Geoff Price**, senior engineer in the Plant and Construction section at Head Office, explains the work involved in the lifting and repositioning of a 132-kV tower.

Wedding

We offer our congratulations to a clerical assistant in the Work Control section in Liverpool District, **Julie Brooks**, on

the occasion of her recent marriage to Arthur De Silva, a coach-builder.

The couple were married at St. Paul's Church, Old Swan. After the reception, they left for a honeymoon in Paris.

For Sale

12-foot fibreglass dinghy and trailer. £180 o.n.o. Telephone 051-489 9533.

Lifeboat (ex-ship) converted for fishing parties. Aluminium rivetted hull; 70 h.p. marine diesel engine; ship-to-shore radio; depth-sounder and many extras. £2,600. Tel: Waunfawr 028685 525.

Hillman Avenger G.T. Super —'L' Reg. Excellent condition. Twelve-month M-o-T. £550 o.n.o. Tel: Waunfawr 028685 525.



"All right! Who locked the electricity man in the meter cupboard?"

Chester Darts Night



Mr. Geoff Barnes (*Chief Accountant*) presents trophies to this year's Darts Champions, Irene Graham and Albert Cooper.

Over 200 members of the MAN-WEB (Chester) Sports and Social Club competed in the annual darts tournament.

Ladies' champion for the second consecutive year was Irene Graham, a Revenue clerical assistant. Crane Street's Albert Cooper won the men's title and joined three of his workmates to sweep away the men's team championship for the fifth time in six years, under their team name of 'Shovels and Ladders'.

'Cunning Ladies', a quartet of computer lovelies, won the ladies' title, and two lads and lasses from Computers made up a mixed team calling themselves 'Shy Talk', to win the mixed contest.



Winning teams, pictured with their trophies presented by Mr. Barnes. Top left: "Shovels and Ladders"—Bill Griffiths, Albert Cooper, Ronnie Groves and Brian Dodd. Centre: "Shy Talk"—Roger Youds, Eileen Jones, Maureen Donaldson and Neville Hughes. Bottom left: "Cunning Females"—Lesley Bennett, Barbara Jones, Wendy Callcott and Ann Briffa. Below: Runners-up—Andrew Funnell and Mary Matthews-Bellis.



MID-CHESHIRE DISTRICT EMPLOYEES' MEETING

Staff hear of our nuclear future



Guest speaker, Mr. Harry Whetton.

FEMALE members of our Mid-Cheshire District staff made up about a third of the audience at this year's Employees' Meeting held at Hunters Lodge Hotel in Crewe last month. This excellent representation from the ladies was most gratifying and the absence of a disco or social proved that the conference was the main attraction.

Together with their male colleagues from the District and guests from Head Office, they were treated to a most timely and interesting talk from Mr. Harry Whetton, an electrical development engineer with the North Western Region of the CEGB.

Illustrating the main points of his talk with the use of projected slides, Mr. Whetton began by clearly defining the terms 'energy' and 'power'.

He informed us that a million tons of coal used in a conventional power station could produce up to 2,000 million units of electricity. *"If all the energy used annually in the U.K. was produced from coal, the amount required would fill the Wembley Stadium 400 times over,"* he said.

Mr Whetton went on to say that predictions for our future energy requirements were fraught with problems and that at the turn of the century there would be an energy gap when our own indigenous fuel sources would not meet the demand. *"Fossil fuels are like capital reserves,"* he continued. *"Once used, you can-*

not use them again."

Speaking of the many other alternative energy sources, he concluded that these together could only contribute a minimal amount of our total needs. He also commented on the extra demand for energy coming from the developing countries in the Third World. *"Fossil fuels are going to run out,"* he warned, *"or become more and more costly to obtain."*

Mr. Whetton devoted the final part of his talk to nuclear power. *"The only significant difference between a conventional power station and a nuclear power station is the source of heat,"* he said.

Pointing out that a vast amount of electrical energy could be produced by nuclear power stations, he said that *"built-in safety measures"* were the order of the day in the construction and the operation of the stations. *"There is regular monitoring of the station itself, the staff working there and of the countryside around the station,"* he went on.

He stated that when viewed in the spectrum of other industries, statistics proved that nuclear power was really very safe. He mentioned that in the much-publicised and dramatised Harrisburgh incident where *"everything which could go wrong went wrong,"* no-one was injured and there was no explosion.

Bringing his remarks to a close, Mr. Whetton said

Mr. Pat O'Neill seems quite happy to be outnumbered by the ladies at his table!



Right: Gentlemen guests from Head Office, Mr. Bill Shires, standing, and Mr. John Peaker, foreground, with some of the attractive ladies from Mid-Cheshire District.
Below: Two more lovely ladies.



that the CEGB had over 35,000 visitors around their nuclear power stations last year. "We had an 'open door' to everyone. Nuclear power is not a secret. Nuclear power is controlled, it is clean and, for the future, it's the best option to meet the certain demand."

The tremendous interest created by Mr. Whetton's remarks was proved by the dozens of questions put to him during the 'Open Forum'.

A vote of thanks was voiced by Mr. Graham Zeiher (District Engineer), who congratulated the Committee on their excellent choice of speaker and subject. He said that the level of the talk most certainly got the nuclear power message over to a very attentive audience.

Earlier in the evening, Mr. Norman Maden (Group Manager), who chaired the Meeting, thanked the organisers, led by Mr. Harold Allman (principal assis-

tant—Admin.), for a good job well done. In referring to one or two items in the well-prepared and neatly-presented Report, he said that Mid-Cheshire District appeared to have made the least number of investigations yet brought in the maximum number of villains who were stealing electricity. He encouraged members of the staff to keep their eyes and ears open at all times in order to catch even more of the electricity thieves.

Mr. Maden paid tribute to the tolerance, good humour, experience and gift for getting on with people shown by Mr. Bill Shires (Chief Commercial Officer), who was nearing his retirement.

Mr. Shires took a few moments to reminisce on his lifetime of work in our industry. Typically, he had quite a few humorous stories to tell and this brought a very successful Employees' Meeting to a close.



Some of the Mid-Cheshire District retired employees who made a welcome appearance at the Conference. They are, from left to right, standing: Messrs. Alec. Knott, Jack Thomas and Tom Jones. Seated: Messrs. Les Merrill, Ted Leighton and Jack Burgess.

More Ladies at the



Mid-Cheshire Conference . . .



. . . and some of the guests

Mr. Graham Zeiher (District Engineer), left, with Mr. Dennis Farquhar (Asst. Chief Engineer—System Management).



From left to right: Messrs. Tom Hamilton (Asst. Sec.—Admin.), Harold Allman (p.a. Admin., Mid-Cheshire) and Jack Pilkington (Welfare Officer).



OBITUARY

It is with deep regret that we record the deaths of the following former colleagues:

Mr. Albert V. Faulkner, aged 81, who worked in the former Sub-Area 1, and retired in 1953.

Mr. John Ikin, aged 70, who was an engineering foreman in the Mid-Cheshire District before he retired in 1972.

Mr. Jack 'J.T.' Jones, a mains foreman at Blaenau Ffestiniog until his retirement after 35 years' service in 1972.

Miss Kathleen F. Jones, aged 47, a former secretary at Head Office, who died after a long illness.

Mr. George Ernest Lowe, aged 73, who was a member of the Head Office Marketing section until his retirement in 1970.

Mr. L. Reginald McNelly, aged 76, was a building foreman until he retired from St. Helens Depot in 1969. Reg. died while visiting Canada.

Mr. Leslie Marriott, aged 54, was a joiner's mate at New Crane

Street, Chester. Les. died in hospital after collapsing at work.

Mr. Charles A. R. Ryder, aged 72, retired from Dee Valley District in 1973. He was an electrician at Shotton.

Mr. Frank Stringer, aged 65, who retired in April of this year from his job as a driver in Mid-Cheshire District.

Mr. Harold Williams, aged 68, a former installation inspector with Dee Valley District until his retirement in 1976 after 42 years' service.



Mr. Tony Shell, *extreme left*, receives a commemorative card to go with a cheque from friends and colleagues. The presentation was made by Mr. Ken Leach (*Deputy Chief Accountant*).

RETIREMENTS

Mr. T. P. SHELL

After 32 years with MANWEB, the Administrative Officer (*Audit*), Mr. T. P. 'Tony' Shell has retired. For the last two years he has been concerned with investigating and devising methods of combatting the illegal abstraction, or theft, of electricity. His efforts have been rewarded by some promising results.

He joined MANWEB shortly after vesting day, 1948, from the Birkenhead Borough Treasurer's Office. He was a captain in the R.A.O.C. during World War II, in West Africa., serving as an ammunition officer—with a name like 'Shell', what else?

He was articled and qualified as a chartered accountant before the war and, during his working life from 1932 until his retirement, had never had a single day off sick.

He started his career with MANWEB as an assistant auditor at Head Office in Liverpool, moving six years later to Rhostyllen as an assistant accountant in the

former Area 4. He became the District Administrative Officer for the newly-formed Dee Valley District, following the Board re-organisation in 1970.

Tony Shell is married with two grown-up daughters, one of whom is married and lives in the Bahamas and is about to make Tony a grandfather for the first time. He and his wife enjoy motoring—particularly on the continent—and they also share an interest in camping. This and other outdoor interests no doubt contribute to his good health, which we trust will continue in a long and happy retirement.

Mr. J. R. CLARKE

Ill-health brought about the early retirement at the age of 55 of Mr. John R. Clarke—"Nobby" to his many friends in our Liverpool District.

He started work with the former Liverpool Corporation Electric Supply Department in 1941 and served most of his apprenticeship as an electrician at Speke Airport. Later, as a fully-qualified tradesman, he worked at Lister Drive and then, for a short time, at Pumpfields. He returned to District Office in the meter section and from there he was drafted into the illegal abstraction team—"The Fraud Squad".

Friends from Liverpool District NJIC block gather round as Mr. John Clarke (*striped shirt*) receives their farewell gifts from Mr. Dennis Hughes (*District Administrative Officer*). Mrs. Brenda Clarke is in the centre.



His foreman, Mr. Walter Kelly, who helped organise the retirement presentation, commented: "After years of being abused, kicked, sworn at, attacked by dogs—and on occasions by human beings—Nobby has now decided to retire."

Farewell gifts were presented to Mr. Clarke on behalf of his workmates by Mr. Dennis Hughes (District Administrative Officer). A bouquet of flowers was also presented to Mrs. Brenda Clarke.

In retirement, Mr. Clarke, who has a caravan sited in North Wales, intends to follow his hobbies of shootin' and fishin'. We join with his colleagues in Liverpool and wish Mr. and Mrs. Clarke many happy years ahead.

Mrs. B. CHAPMAN

Friends and colleagues gathered at the Cefndy Road offices, Rhyl, to say farewell and to see District Administrative Officer Mr. Alan Wadcock make a presentation on their behalf to Mrs. Beryl Chapman, to mark the occasion of her retirement from MANWEB.

Beryl started work in 1962 as an audio typist in the Clwyd District office. She became a senior clerical assistant in 1971, and has super-



Mrs. Beryl Chapman with Mr. Alan Wadcock.

vised the typing, telephone and cleaning service in the District Office.

She and her husband, Sid, have a married son living in New Zealand, a married daughter and a total of three grandchildren—one 'Down Under' and two locally.

In addition to her job with the Board, Beryl ran—with Sid—a sweets and tobacconists, but had to give it up a few years ago when Sid's health deteriorated. We add our good wishes to those of her colleagues and wish her a long and happy retirement.

Miss E. W. JONES

A silver carriage clock and a huge bouquet of gladioli were presented to Miss Ellen Wyn Jones on the occasion of her recent retirement from her post in the typing pool at our Gwynedd District offices at Caernarfon.

During her 30 years' service, Miss Wyn Jones has seen many changes in our organisation and, on the way, she made many good friends who, no doubt, will miss her very much.

We join with them in wishing Wyn a long and happy retirement.

Mr. Keith Jones presents Miss Wyn Jones with a parting gift.



OUTING FOR PENSIONERS

The initial outing, in July 1979, for members of the Chester and Head Office Retired Staff Association was a visit to Erdig Hall, near Wrexham. Last month, they repeated the trip when, on a lovely day, Association members left Sealand Road. After a couple of hours at the Hall, they went to our Dee Valley District offices at Rhosyllen to enjoy a most welcome afternoon tea—hospitality very much appreciated. The Association has a warm welcome to all retired members of the Board living in the area.



WIND-POWER SITE

THE CENTRAL Electricity Generating Board is looking for an inland site for its first large wind-power generator, which could be operating in about five years' time.

Speaking to staff at Trawsfynydd nuclear power station recently, the CEGB Chairman, Mr. Glyn England said that, as a result of technical developments in several countries in the field of wind-power, the Board was about to take a big step forward.

"We are proposing to introduce a wind-machine of significant size into this country. It could be the fore-runner of many more.

"Until recently, land-based wind-power has only shown promise of being economic on a relatively small number of exposed hilltops, where wind machines might well be regarded as an unacceptable intrusion. Indeed, this was the case here in Wales nearly 30 years ago. When the CEGB's predecessor, the Central Electricity Authority, proposed in the early 1950's to erect a small prototype wind generator in the Llyn Peninsula—one of the windiest sites in Britain—the project had to be

dropped because of local opposition.

"In view of these problems, our main interest in recent years has been in exploring the possibility of siting wind generators off-shore—for example, in the North Sea shallows off the East Coast. There they would be much less obtrusive.

"The results of investigations we have been carrying out by ourselves and with others, including the Government, suggest that off-shore siting may be technically feasible in the long-term, when further development work has been done. Although construction and maintenance costs would be higher than those of land-based machines, off-shore wind energy offers a bigger resource. This is because larger areas are available and wind speeds are higher. Therefore, in addition to our continued involvement with the Department of Energy programme, we intend to explore the possibility of closer

international co-operation in this field, and we hope that this will result in the building of a demonstration wind machine off-shore when the technology has been established.

"However, an essential part of our development programme has been to keep in touch with work elsewhere. We consider that the prospects for the early introduction of land-based wind generators have now become much brighter as a result of recent progress in various parts of the world in developing machines for operation on sites with lower wind speeds.

"We intend to buy a proven commercial design when such machines are available and show promise of low cost in series production.

"I should like to make it plain that, depending on their size, between 1,000 and 2,000 wind machines would be needed to match the annual output of a single large power station. It is also worth noting that, since the wind does not always blow, they would not replace to any significant extent the existing types of power stations. These would be needed to provide back-up supplies during less windy periods."

FIRST-AID

A special course designed to help lay instructors to learn how to teach the practical aspects of first-aid took place at Head Office a few weeks ago. All those taking part on the course had passed at least

three first-aid examinations.

Mr. Bob Swetenham, a lecturer at Chester College, came along to explain the rudiments of teaching others. As members of the course put into practice what they had been taught, their efforts were recorded on video cassettes by Mr.

Eric Richardson (*Education and Training*) who later commented on their various techniques.

Everyone enjoyed being on the course, especially being on the 'tele'. Before they went their separate ways, we managed to get a picture showing, *from left to right:*

Kevin Owen and Barry Harding (*electricians, Mid-Cheshire*), Heather Limb (*clerk, North Wirral*), Phil Keddie (*work study officer, Dee Valley*), George Deakin (*labourer, Liverpool*), Tony Conde (*linesman, Oswestry*), Chris Pritchard (*clerk, Oswestry*), Frank Ellis (*Commercial Supply Engineer, Gwynedd*), Jim Baldwin (*electrician, North Mersey*), Nurse Dorothy Davis and Dr. Ken Turner.

