



CONTACT

September 1976

Singing Star
(see page 195)

Taking the Chill out of Bala

Folk in Clwyd, North Wales have a saying about Bala in the neighbouring county of Gwynedd: "If you're going to Bala take your overcoat with you."

General feeling in Clwyd is that Bala, which lies in the heart of the Cambrian mountains, is always several degrees colder. But as Bala is less than ten miles from the Clwyd boundary only the weathermen can confirm how truthful this is.

However, when Merioneth District Council built a housing estate at Blaen Ddol, Bala recently it took no chances with comfort and commissioned Electricaire units to heat 64 houses and old people's flats.

The contract was picked up thanks to the efforts of Mike Potts, then supply engineer at Dee Valley District and now at Mid-Cheshire District. He put the architect, Mr. Robert Davies, on to Don Hinsley and Doug Barnes of Dee Valley District.

The contract also involved water heating, ventilation, emergency and street lighting and fire alarms—a total load of 700 kW for the Board.

Dee Valley District has carried out Electricaire installations at several estates recently, among them the Carlines Farm Estate at Ewloe near Chester.

The Board obtained the complete contract for Electricaire heating, wiring and street-lighting. Appliances supplied were 28 cookers and 28 refrigerators for

the old peoples' dwellings, with a focal wall mounted fire in each unit.

Energy sales engineer, Trevor Edwards, who handled the project said the fires provide "psychological warmth" in addition to being the focal point of the rooms.

Once again the installation was carried out for the local authority, this time Alyn and Deeside District Council who chose MANWEB as their prices are competitive.

Said Trevor: "We find that the majority of elderly people are happier with electrical heating and cooking, which they find clean, flexible in operation and completely safe."

So no matter how passionately counties argue over differing temperatures MANWEB is making sure that North Wales stays snug.

MICROWAVES IN THE HOME

Domestic sales of microwave ovens have increased rapidly in the last two years and some manufacturers envisage that by 1984 one home in six will have one. Mrs. Jenny Webb, Head of the Household Section of the Electricity Council Appliance Testing Laboratories believes that it will never replace the conventional cooker but its speed and its economic use of electricity will find it a place in the kitchen of the eighties.

Speaking at a microwave power symposium in Leuven, Belgium recently, Mrs. Webb said that the microwave oven was one of the few appliances which could be used throughout the world without the need to alter the basic construction, and it could be employed to suit the individual eating habits in whichever country it was being used.

"Running cost," Mrs. Webb explained, "is of particular importance at a time when energy conservation is one of the prime objectives throughout the world. The energy consumption of a microwave oven is low, the speed of preparation and cooking is high, and as a result the electricity consumption is greatly reduced when compared to conventional methods.

"In an oven of 600 Watt output poultry needs about five minutes to the 0.5 kg (1 lb.), lamb nine

minutes, and beef eight minutes. Ovens with a higher output could reduce these times even further. However, if the output is higher the timing can become critical and over cooked food could result. A 1.5 kg (3 lb.) roast will use under half a unit of electricity which, at an average price in Great Britain of just over 2p a unit, means it costs only about 1p for the roast compared with between 3p and 5p in a more conventional oven.

"A difficulty for the manufacturer," Mrs. Webb said, "is to make the housewife understand the principle which savours of witchcraft or a culinary conjuring trick. She has to understand that the oven works on a principle something like the energy picked up by the TV and radio set which is changed into picture and sound. But the 'energy waves' for a microwave oven are at a different frequency and are directed into, and contained within, a small box—the oven—with the result that they shake up the moisture molecules in the food. The molecules then vibrate at an enormous speed and this creates friction which, in turn, creates heat which cooks the food.

"Almost any non-metallic container may be used in the oven including glass, wood, china, paper, basketry, linen and some plastics—for the container does not immediately get hot but gradually warm as heat is transferred to it from the food. The simple reason for this is that most of the materials of which containers are made do not absorb the microwaves but allows them to pass straight through into the food," she added.



CONTACT

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Editorial

Earning a Good Name

IN BUSINESS, as in life, a good reputation must be hard-earned, often over a long period of time. A bad name, on the other hand, can be acquired very quickly and with no effort whatsoever.

It is an unhappy fact that there are always a few people ready to sling mud at public services of every kind. Local authorities and nationalised industries are prime targets for such people, who usually manage to make much more noise than their numbers warrant. Sometimes complaints are justified, but many turn out to be a kind of public substitute for kicking the cat!

We at MANWEB come in for our share of this kind of thing. While there are obviously occasions when we are in the wrong and mistakes are made, there is no doubt that the overwhelming majority of those we serve have every reason to give credit for efficient and speedy service and no reason at all for complaint.

This number of *Contact* includes several accounts of impeccable service and outstanding workmanship which have given a high level of satisfaction to customers in widely diverse fields, including sport and the manufacturing and holiday industries. By service such as this, and indeed by the service provided to hundreds of thousands of homes and business premises, day in, day out, our good reputation is built and reinforced. While the vast majority receive satisfaction, so long will crabbed and unjustified criticism fall on stony ground.

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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.

New Look Holiday Centre in North Wales

THE LONG hot summers we have all enjoyed in this country over the past couple of years—and the promise of more to come—will no doubt encourage many more people to plan for their holidays at home in the future.

One of the places which will be chosen by thousands of holidaymakers will be the new Pontin's Tower Beach Holiday Centre, situated alongside Prestatyn's sandy beach. Here, some months ago, the owners decided on a face-lift operation to change the Centre from 'all-in' to the more popular 'self-catering' style for full family holidays.

This project has meant a huge contracting job for our Clwyd District installation staff. Their first task was to completely rewire 200 converted chalets and a couple of existing blocks of holiday flats. Then, as this job progressed, more teams of electricians moved in to install lighting circuits, socket

A holidaymaker in one of the flats at the new Centre makes a 'cuppa' in the all-electric kitchen.



Pontin's Director, Mr. Bill Armistead, left, chats with his friends from MANWEB, Messrs. Walter Jones and Harry Sines.

outlets, shaver outlets, cooker, 'fridge and wall heater circuits in the 15 new blocks of flats being erected on site.

When the Centre is fully completed, it will house 6,000 holidaymakers in spacious, clean and highly comfortable all-electric flats and chalets.

A few weeks ago, even though late in the season, there was a terrific rush to get a section of the Centre ready for the first thousand visitors. Builders, plasterers, painters, furniture men, carpet fitters and of course, our men from MANWEB, swarmed all over the place. Pontin's Director in charge of the whole project, Mr. Bill Armistead, was always in command of the situation. Out of the apparent chaos, he miraculously managed to have all the accommodation sparkling like a new pin as the first holidaymakers were welcomed to the new-look Centre.

"MANWEB did a grand job for us," commented Mr. Armistead, "Every man on site worked quickly and efficiently and were always ready to give that little bit extra. Installation engineers Walter Jones and Harry Sines, always on top of the job, kept things moving and me free from worries on the electrical side."

In addition to the contracting work, MANWEB provided a high voltage supply to the site and have established one brick-built and four 500-kVA ground-mounted compound substations at the Centre. The Board's network will benefit to the tune of an extra two megawatts and there is work for our installation staff for many months ahead. The whole contract is worth over £125,000!

Given the sunny summers we are promised by the experts over the next few years, many thousands of holidaymakers from all over Britain will be heading for this new holiday centre. It may also be, because of their favourable prices in comparison to holidays abroad, that we could see some foreign visitors coming to our shores to spend a 'self-catering' and economical holiday at Pontin's Prestatyn!





Left: Working on the converted chalets we found, from left to right: Messrs. Brian Thomas (electrician), Steve Bagnall (apprentice electrician) and Peter Aspin (electrician).

Right: Busy working in one of the new flats we see, from left to right: Messrs. Eddie Garrett and Dave Tomkinson (electricians) and Ray Walley (installation inspector).



Preparing all-electric homes for holiday-makers at Prestatyn

Wiring up the washing machines in the Centre's laundry room is Mr. Raymond Evans (chargehand electrician)



Left: Looking very happy in his work is Mr. Ray Williams (electrician).

Right: Electrician Mr. Charlie Williams 'snapped' while on a 'boring' job!



A few more members of the team putting in some excellent work at Pontin's new Centre. From left to right: Messrs. Phil Williams (electrician), Peter Svillis (trainee), Paul Howell (apprentice electrician), Harry Sines (3rd engineer in charge of the job on site), Eryl Moxon (electrician) and Ron Bennett (apprentice electrician).



Chairman visits North Mersey District



Mr. Denis Dodds (*Chairman*), left, meets Mr. Bob Carter (*driver*) at Bridle Road. Also in the picture are, Messrs. Dennis Noad (*District Commercial Engineer*) and Cam Shimmin (*Systems Engineer*.)

The Board's northernmost District taking in the north end of Liverpool city, Bootle, Kirkby and along the north-west coast up to Southport. The District is administered from Bridle Road, Bootle and shops are at Ainsdale, Bootle, Formby, Kirkby, Maghull, Norris Green, Southport, Walton and Waterloo. There are 182,109 consumers in the District's 107 square miles.



A handshake from the Chairman to Mr. George Unsworth from Work Control.



Mr. Gordon Hughes (*charge-hand inst. insp.*) shows the Chairman a damaged meter.



Pleasantries as Mr. Dodds chats with Miss Helen Porter from Material Control section.

Going from the office block to the workshops, Mr. Dodds was introduced to Messrs. Eric White (*transport supervisor*) left, and Jimmy Johnson (*foreman*), second left, by Mr. Shimmin.

Mr. Billy Gibbs (*Depot foreman*) has a word with the Chairman.





Mr. Phil Starkey talks to the Chairman and Mr. Shoesmith while Mr. Dave Evans is engaged with a consumer on the phone.



In the Accounts section, our Chairman has a word with Mrs. Pat Walker. In the background, from left to right, are, Mr. Richard Dean, Mrs. Carol Birch and Miss Millie Williams.



Above: Mr. Dodds meets Mrs. Pat Hampson in the consumer accounts section. Right: In the Drawing Office, from left to right: Miss Ann Oakes (draughtswoman), Messrs. Eric Pownall (draughtsman), Dennis Noad, Denis Dodds and Cam Shimmin.



The Chairman and Group Manager with members of the North Mersey Local Advisory, Works, Staff and Technical Committees. From left to right: Messrs. Ted Smith, Len Morris, Sid Owen, Stan Gordon and Bob Lewis, Mrs. Jean Corrin, Messrs. James Graham-Glover (LAC Secretary), Denis Dodds (Chairman), Sid Fairclough (Group Manager), George Shoesmith (District Administrative Officer), Eric Lee, Dennis Noad (District Commercial Engineer), Cam Shimmin (System Engineer) and Colin Arnold.





Satisfied smiles from all concerned with a job well done. From left to right: Messrs. Alec Sinclair, Alan Sandells and Gerry Cain.

TAKING the BISCUIT

ALWAYS READY to meet the requirements of our customers, and to keep them satisfied with MANWEB service, our Liverpool District engineering staff recently completed a job in record time. In just under two weeks—give or take a few hours overtime—our men from MANWEB did the job which under normal circumstances would have taken many weeks to finish. They also saved the customer from losing a considerable amount of production time.

This terrific task was undertaken at the Huntley and Palmer biscuit factory at Huyton. The firm, in the process of modernising some of their production plant, increased their potential load requirements.

Our Liverpool District gained a contract, worth £30,000, to supply transformers, switchgear and associated cable works to meet this extra load, on the understanding that it would be installed during the two-week annual holiday break for the firm's staff.

Work started on the Friday evening as the last worker left and the last machine was switched off.

In went our fitters to strip down the obsolete eight-panel switchboard and its associated equipment. On the following day, our builders were on the job to get the substation ready for the new nine-panel Reyrolle HV board which arrived on site on the Sunday.

Again the fitters got to work, taking a few days to erect and install the switchgear. Engineers then conducted tests before the jointers moved in to do their part of the work. The first transformer was switched on just six days from the start of the conversion.

As the time drew near for the biscuit workers to come back from their holiday, our men from MANWEB worked on to make sure that they had jobs to return to.

The whole operation went as precision-planned by the engineer-in-charge, Mr. Gerry Cain, who was ably assisted by Mr. Alan Sandells. Foremen Messrs. Jack Fitzpatrick, Jim Giblin and Arthur Johnson helped keep all the jobs up to schedule.

Everyone connected with the job, fitters and their mates, jointers and their mates and building staff pulled out all the stops to make this a MANWEB success as they finished the job well ahead of the time allowed.

Assistant Chief Engineer for Huntley and Palmers, Mr. Alec Sinclair said, "The final commissioning of the new substation was on the Tuesday, just eleven days from the start of the work!

"An excellent job, well done by one and all! And fully appreciated by a very satisfied consumer!"



After the test runs. From left to right: Messrs. **Teddy Tierney** (fitter), **Jim Giblin** (foreman), **Arthur Johnson** (foreman) and **Sid Caswell** (driver).

Left: Messrs. **Alan Kane** (jointer) and **John Greenhalgh** (jointer's mate).

The builders, from left to right: Messrs. **Jack Fitzpatrick**, **Eric Mallinson**, **Lou Oxer** and **Ted Wright**.



The men who did the job — in record time



Working on the cables. From left to right: Messrs. **David McCann** (apprentice electrical fitter), **George Johnson** (jointer) and **Jock Kerr** (jointer's mate).



Installing the new switchgear. From left to right: Messrs. **Jack Higham** (fitter), **Dave Harvey** (fitter)—holding the board up!—**Larry Marr** (fitter's mate) and **Bill Harris** (fitter).

Within our Boundary

A feature by Mr. Derek Lang (Head Office)

SOME TIME ago an appeal was made by Prince Philip for funds to preserve historic ships. He was referring in that instance to "The Unicorn," the fourth oldest British-built warship afloat.

You may well be wondering what connection that appeal, together with a photograph of a schooner moored in Plymouth's

'Sutton Pool,' has with a report on items of interest within the MANWEB boundary. Let me explain!

The schooner *Kathleen and May* moored at Plymouth.



The schooner is the '*Kathleen and May*,' built and launched in April 1900 by Messrs. Ferguson and Baird at Connah's Quay, for another Connah's Quay firm still operating today. The Coppack family was then extensively engaged, among other things, in shipping Ruabon and Buckley bricks. The '*Lizzie May*,' as she was then called (and as her original ship's bell still records), proved too small for this purpose, and so she was sold in 1908 and renamed the '*Kathleen and May*.'

This sturdy little ship sailed through a varied life to become the last wooden schooner to trade in home waters. Furthermore, she was just about the only remaining example to represent the hundreds of such ships which were at one time to be found in every port in the British Isles. She was rescued from destruction by the generosity of Mr. G. K. Pao, governing director of a Hong Kong shipping company, and presented to the Maritime Trust to join such historic vessels as the '*Cutty Sark*' and '*Gypsy Moth IV*.' The '*Kathleen and May*' was opened to the public at Plymouth in September 1971 by Mr. Pao, in the presence of the Duke of Westminster, who spoke as Chairman of the Maritime Trust. There is much of local interest to be read in a booklet published by the Trust, at 53 Davies Street, London N1Y 1FH, and entitled '*The Story of the Kathleen and May*.'

The booklet also tells something of the work of the Trust in preserving ships for us, and for future generations. Of course, should you visit the West Country next summer the '*Kathleen and May*' is well worth a visit—even if only to wonder what men were made of in the latter part of the 19th Century and the beginning of this Century, to sail from Porthmadog to Newfoundland in such ships for £3.50 a month (even though it was then worth three pounds ten shillings!).



Talking Notes

SINGING STAR

H EADING TO complete his hat-trick of singing successes at the National Eisteddfod of Wales to be held in Wrexham next year is **Mr. Robert Wyn Roberts**, who works for the Board as a clerk in our Gwynedd District Office at St. Helen's Road, Caernarfon.

Robert's first win was in 1975 when he took the bass-baritone solo prize for the under 25's at Criccieth. This year, he won again—at Cardigan—where he was a clear 22 marks ahead of his nearest rival. In the Opera Solo class, open to all ages, Robert came in a creditable third place out of 44 contestants.

Success brings recognition and this fact has been proved by

OUR COVER PICTURE shows our man with the golden voice ... Robert Wyn Roberts from Gwynedd District.

the number of engagements he has filled this year.

He has appeared in concert with nearly all the North Wales Male Voice Choirs—Maelgwyn, Brythoniaid, Cor Meibion y Traeth and Cor Meibion Caernarfon (Ferodo).

In June, Robert sang at the Gwynedd Theatre with Elizabeth Vaughan, the celebrated Welsh soprano.

His two Eisteddfoddic appearances, other than the National, also brought successes. At Pontrhydfendigaid he was awarded the scholarship of £100 for being the most promising young singer.

At the LLangollen International Eisteddfod, Robert won the solo prize for singers under 25 and came third in the open

baritone-bass solo competition.

This month he will be joining the British Youth Choir and Chamber Orchestra in two performances of Handel's 'Messiah' as the bass soloist in presentations at the Southport Arts Theatre and in Manchester's Cathedral.

Some of the credit for his most recent successes should go to his teacher, Mr. Brian Hughes, a lecturer on opera at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. Mr. Hughes has always encouraged his star pupil to take up singing as a full-time career.

With Robert's phenomenal record over the past couple of years, and with youth on his side, we too again advise him to 'take the plunge'.

Short and Sweet

Our prepayment revenue section at Head Office recently received the following two line request "Would you please send it as I cannot come for it."

The customer's name was 'Love'!

Looking Back

Perhaps those who complain that postal services aren't what they used to be have got a point. We have just been examining a post-card, sent by one Gloucester lady to another

and postmarked 7.45 p.m. on December 13th, 1905, making arrangements to meet on the following morning.

The card shows a view of Llyn Crafnant, a popular spot with walkers just off the Conwy Valley above Trefriw, and it was picked up in an antique shop recently by **Mr. George Cooksley** (D.A.O., Clwyd) while he was on holiday at Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk.

Another card from the same pile shows a shot of Station Road, Colwyn Bay—the one which attracted George's attention in the first place. Post-marked August 14th, 1905, the card carries the message that the writer thinks "we shall like this place. It is very nice and a splendid bay!" Station Road's total traffic amounted to a couple of horse-drawn carriages, while the ladies on the footpaths wear pavement-sweeping skirts (but no platform soles!)

And the stamps? . . . the old-fashioned ha'penny (from the days when you got 480 to the £).

MANWEB Couple Married

Best wishes for the future go from friends and colleagues in Clwyd and Dee Valley Districts to a MANWEB couple who were married at St. Melyn Church, Meliden, a short time ago.

Bride and groom were **Miss Margaret Roberts**, a clerk in the material control section at Rhyl, and **Mr. Michael Stuart Roberts**, an instrument inspector at Crane Bank, Chester.



The happy couple,
Mr. and Mrs. Roberts.

On behalf of her many friends at Cefndy Road, Llandudno Junction and Mold, Margaret was presented with a Kenwood mixer/liquidiser by Mr. George Cooksley (D.A.O., Clwyd).

The happy couple honeymooned in the Lake District, and have made their home at Northop Hall in a house which they have modernised themselves. Stuart is captain of the village's 2nd XI cricket team.

Heat Recovery

Practical approaches to heat recovery and energy management will be demonstrated on the Electricity stand at PEMEC, the Plant Engineering and Maintenance Exhibition (National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, 27th September to 1st October 1976).

One exhibit will show how energy management can be applied to the provision of compressed air. Air from a compressor is dried in a refrigerant-type air-dryer which, in practical installations, avoids the accumulation of moisture and corrosive materials in the compressed air pipeline, and prevents damage to air operated tools, process plant and product finishes. In this system heat is

recovered directly from the compressor, and this would typically be used for space heating.

A thermal wheel will also be demonstrated, and visitors will be able to feel the temperature of both cold and warm air streams through the wheel and note the heat transfer which is achieved.

Thermal wheels are basically rotary heat-exchangers rotating at less than twenty revolutions per minute. In a practical installation the wheel is located with one half of its diameter in an exhaust duct and the other in an air supply duct.

The performance of a thermal wheel system depends largely on the conditions in which it is used; e.g., whether inlet and outlet flows are equal or not, and whether process temperatures and throughputs vary. In optimum conditions, heat recovery efficiencies of up to 90% have been achieved, although a more realistic day-to-day figure would be in the region of 75%. Thermal wheels are already being used to recover heat from metal melting furnaces, printing machines, ovens, ventilation systems and spray dryers.

Other equipment on view includes an electrode boiler for steam raising, and metal sheathed heating elements which can be used efficiently and economically for a wide range of heating applications throughout industry.

DON'T FORGET
the closing date for
'Contact'

**PHOTOGRAPHIC
COMPETITION**

is Friday,
1st October 1976

Reds and Blues

An ardent Liverpool supporter in our North Wirral District told us that the only thing in his house coloured blue was the toilet seat!

Dexterous Drivers.

A "Car Trials" which didn't use up much expensive petrol was organised a few weeks ago by Dee Valley District's Sports and Social Club.

The District office car park at Rhosyllen was the setting for a series of 12 manoeuvres designed to test the driver's ability to assess the height, width and turning circle of the car, ability to park correctly, and so on.

The award for the best lady contestant was won by Mrs. D. Hinsley, wife of the energy sales engineer, and the runner up was Mrs. Dave Molloy.

Most skilful gent was Mr. Tim King, of Legacy contracting department, who also succeeded in establishing overall male supremacy by winning the Cup for the best individual performance. Runner-up was Mr. Paul Forrest, also of Legacy depot.

Mr. Tudor Jones, commercial foreman, Legacy, announced the winners, and the awards were presented by Mr. Arthur Jones, Production department, who organised the event. Judges were Miss G. Browne and Messrs. D. Molloy, W. Thomas, D. Foulkes, B. Doyle, R. Potts, T. Williams, R. Parry, P. Fossett, K. Buckley, C. Evans, T. O. Jones and J. Jones. Refreshments were well organised by Miss Lyn Joyce and Miss Sue Bowen.

New Food Film

A new Electricity Council film "Catering Now" has now been released. It is all about the most modern systems of volume catering from luxury hotel

banqueting to subsidised staff catering.

It emphasises that in all cases, the meal must look attractive and be appetising to the diner as well as being cost effective to the producer.

Copies of the film are available on request to the Marketing Department at the Electricity Council, 30 Millbank, London, SW1P 4RD.

Understanding Storemen

A notice, prominently displayed in our Cleveland Street stores in the North Wirral District reads . . .

Your story touched my heart. Never before have I met anyone with more troubles than you have. Please accept this expression of my sincere sympathy. Now . . . if you have not got an issue note . . . then get out of here and stop bothering me!

The last few words we have had to alter slightly!!

Electricity is Cost Effective

"Electricity has made, and continues to make, a vitally important contribution to farming," said Mr. G. J. Hughes, Deputy Marketing Adviser of the Electricity Council, speaking on the eve of the 1976 Royal Show. "Yet the cost of electricity accounted for only one per cent of the wholesale price of eggs and $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the milk cheque," added Mr. Hughes. These figures were derived from analyses of electricity consumption monitored in the National Agricultural Centre's demonstration areas.

"In 1948, less than 30 years ago, only one third of farms were connected to the mains," said Mr. Hughes. "Now, virtually all are connected—in total, over a quarter of a million farms—and their average consumption of electricity has quadrupled. We can say, with every justification, that electricity has made, and con-

tinues to make, a vitally important contribution to an industry that has increased its gross output, in real terms, by 20 per cent in the last ten years.

Persil Tops Appeal.

There can't be much dirty linen hiding in the baskets in the homes of MANWEB people by now! In the June *Contact* we publicised an appeal for the tops of 'Persil' packets, in exchange for which Persil manufacturers Lever Brothers were offering a donation to the Fund For Handicapped Children to buy a wheelchair for a handicapped child.

Nurse Dorothy Davis, of Head Office, who organised the appeal, tells us that the target of 5,000 packet tops has been 'topped', and the appeal closed. She asks us to say a big 'Thank You' to all concerned.

Appointments.

In last month's *Contact* we reported on the recent shuffle of District Administrative Officers and said that **Mr. Dennis Hodgetts** was returning to his old office at Macon Way, Crewe. To set the record straight Mr. Hodgetts has been appointed as D.A.O. Mid-Mersey, at Warrington, with effect from July 1st. Taking over from **Mr. Peter Falcon** as D.A.O. Mid-Cheshire is **Mr. John Roberts**, on secondment from Head Office.

Another recent appointment is that of **Mr. John Peaker** as Assistant Chief Accountant (Computer Services) at Head Office.

Golden Trains!

Many old friends and former colleagues in the MANWEB organisation will want us to extend their good wishes to a retired Llandudno gentleman and his wife who have just celebrated their Golden Wedding.

We refer to **Mr. Arthur**

Reuben Train, our District Commercial Engineer at Conway Valley until his retirement in 1967, and his wife **Edith**, who were married just over 50 years ago at Emmanuel Church, Fazackerley, near Liverpool.

Mr. Train was born in Walsley, joined the North Wales Power Company in 1936, and served our industry in North Wales and Cheshire for 41 years.

An active Rotarian for more than 40 years, he is a one-time president of both the Nantwich and Llandudno clubs. Only recently he resigned as chairman of the Llandudno Citizens' Advice Bureau but still leads an active and energetic life, with interests in golf, oil painting and wood carving. Mrs. Train's great hobbies are knitting and crocheting. Both are very keen travellers.

Their many friends will wish Mr. and Mrs. Train, who are both now 74, many more years of happy marriage and retirement.

Mr. and Mrs. Train looking through their golden wedding cards.



Mr. Dodds on tour round Gwynedd District

Our Gwynedd District embraces an area famous for its natural beauty, including much of the rugged mountain area of Snowdonia and many miles of lovely coastline, popular with holidaymakers from many parts of Britain. A large proportion of the population are Welsh-speaking, and the area is rich in history and culture.

District office is at St. Helens Road, Caernarfon, and there are MANWEB shops at Bangor, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Caernarfon, Holyhead, Llangefni, Porthmadog and Pwllheli.



First stop at Llangefni yard where Mr. Dodds met, *l. to r.*, Messrs. Alun Rowlands, Len Parry and Arwel Humphreys.

... at Llangefni ...

Enjoying a joke with Mr. Matthew Jones (chargehand garage mechanic).

Below: In Llangefni shop Mr. Dodds talks with, *from left to right*: Messrs. Owen Ifor Jones, Norman Maden and Reg Smith.



... and at St. Helens Road



Left: In the District's General Services section, the Chairman talks with Mr. Roy Jones, while busily working in the background we see Miss Sandra Whiting and Mrs. Menna Rowlands of the Bonus section.

Below: Mr. Dodds meets Miss Susan Mary Jones in the Work Control section.





Mr. Gwilym Morris, left, introduces Miss Ann Jones to the Chairman. In the background Mr. Jim Barraclough (Group Manager) chats to Mr. Dick Owen.



Above: Mrs. Dodds, who accompanied her husband on his visit to Gwynedd District met many members of the staff. Here she is introduced to Mr. Dennis Williams in the consumer liaison and debt control section. Also in the picture we see Mr. Jim Barraclough and our Chairman.



Left: All smiles in Material Control where we have, from left to right: Messrs. Graham Davies, Denis Dodds, Dennis Hughes (District Administrative Officer) and David Evans.

Below: Our Chairman pauses to have a word with Mr. 'R. T.' Jones, in the Engineering—Production section.



A pose for our cameraman after an informal meeting with Gwynedd District Officers and staff representatives. From left to right: Messrs. Richard Wyn Parry (LAC Secretary), Arthur Buntun and Dennis Hughes (District Administrative Officer), Mrs. Dodds and Mr. Denis Dodds (Chairman), Messrs. Jim Barraclough (Group Manager), Norman Maden (District Commercial Engineer), Ariel Thomas (Production Engineer), Dave Williams, Gwynedd Roberts, Dick Owen, Lewis Morris and Miss Paula Jones.





A typical street scene taken in the town of Herat in Afghanistan.

(Popperfoto picture)

Afghanistan Adventure

Bill and Margaret Wallwork, travelling in their Mercedes caravan, enter one of the world's more mysterious countries, Afghanistan. They tell of their journey to the legendary Kyber Pass and into Pakistan.

OUR first contact with Afghanistan did not exactly reassure us. The customs post was the most inefficient we had encountered so far on our travels. The various sections were housed in a number of tumbledown buildings spread over a wide area on either side of a road and the sequence of visits seemed to be designed to involve us in the maximum amount of walking.

Fortunately our vaccination certificates were accepted without question, removing our biggest worry as we had been warned about a racket in this connection. We thought that the official concerned with our third party insurance seemed a trifle disappointed when he found our certificates in order and therefore could not sell us one of his!

Leaving the post, we gave a customs officer a lift

into Herat where he directed us to a 'very good hotel'. The first thing we saw on entering was a notice which read—"Do not smoke hashish in the rooms". We moved on and found another hotel.

At this time we both had severe colds, probably picked up in Mashad from an English lass we had met. She was suffering from the prevalent 'Herat Flu'. During our six days of enforced inactivity we were both completely de-energised.

Later, we found the 2,500-year-old city of Herat to be most pleasant with its wide, tree-lined boulevards and shopping streets as well as open and covered bazaars. Its principal tourist attraction is the Blue Mosque, an enormous building covered with mosaics of quite different designs from the Persian ones, but equally attractive.

Off the fine boulevards are innumerable grubby side streets most of which have a small stream (joubé) running down one side. It was more than a little off-putting to see all the uses to which the joubé was being put by men, women, children and animals.

A visit to the 1,000-year-old Gazargah monastery on the bare upland about five kilometers from Herat was very interesting. Despite the unexpectedly large number of people in the grounds, there was an atmosphere of peace and tranquility permeating the semi ruins which were gradually fading into the hillside from which it came.

Its best known attraction is a carved black marble

tombstone made for the Timurid king, Hussein Bargora. Leaves, vines and flowers are carved on three separate levels, yet all intermingle so cleverly that they become part of the whole design. It is an extraordinary work of art which took craftsmen eleven years to complete, wearing out a number of chisels in the process.

From Herat to Kandahar is a little over 500 kilometers. We had been expressly warned not to stop at night en-route and it seemed sensible to make a very early start to avoid as much of the hottest sun as possible. This had its compensations for dawn over the desert was beautiful with delicate shades of green, yellow, orange and pink followed by sunrise in brilliant red and gold.

The desert was empty except for the nomad caravans with their sheep, goats and camels. The nomad women had their faces uncovered and wore lots of bright jewellery and gaily-coloured clothes, but frustratingly, it was not possible to photograph them.

Another welcome splash of colour in the drab desert surroundings was a brilliant reddish-blue shrub—rather like heather—which grew for several kilometers on both sides of the rough road.

In Kandahar, we were surprised to be able to walk the streets unnoticed and we did not hear a single greeting. The road between Kandahar and Ganzi was more alive with nomadic encampments and caravans.

We journeyed on to Kabul, the capital city. An

extraordinary mixture with twentieth century official and commercial buildings standing cheek by jowl with tumbledown dwellings and shops—and of course, the inevitable bazaar.

Kabul is a fascinating city to wander around in daylight, but not after dark. Then it becomes most hazardous as we found for ourselves. Because our caravan was too high for the gateway at our chosen hotel, we had to drive around the city—in the dark—looking for another hotel. With streets crammed with bicycles, ox carts, and hand carts—all without lights, with pedestrians and animals roaming around in the blackness all quite oblivious to anyone else on the roads, it became almost a nightmare journey.

We had received warnings about eating out in Afghanistan and after seeing conditions for ourselves we heeded the warnings. However, some fellow travellers recommended a couple of restaurants—both German owned—where we were able to enjoy excellent meals in very clean surroundings.

While in Kabul, reputed to be the largest money-market in Asia after Hong Kong, we were approached many times to buy Indian and Pakistani currency. This, by the way, is strictly prohibited by both countries. However, I finally succumbed to the blandishments of the Sikh proprietor of an hotel where we parked. He calculated how much I would gain and how little he would make out of the transaction. Needless to say—it worked the other way around!

One of the few tourist attractions in Kabul is

The entrance to the Kyber Pass.

(Popperfoto picture)



TALL STORIES

In the May number of *Contact* we described the construction of a line across Llyn Peris, Gwynedd—and made the mistake of saying that two 60-foot poles involved were the tallest ever erected in the MANWEB area. And that really set the cat among the pigeons!

First indignant message came from Mid-Mersey District, to tell us of a 60-footer commissioned in February 1973 to lift a 33kV line clear of an electrified railway track in the Runcorn area.



A trio from the team who worked on the Mid-Mersey pole—from left to right: Messrs. Fred Miller (*linesman's mate*), Norman Rawsthorne (*linesman*) and Harry Blythe (*foreman*).

Some of the North Mersey team. From left to right: Messrs. Andy James and Tommy Kelly (*linesman's mates*), Jimmy Johnson (*foreman*), Jackie Brown and Billy Jones (*linesmen*).



Next came North Mersey District. MANWEB's biggest pole, they were quick to point out, was a 65-footer incorporated in a 33kV line running from Formby Grid to Pinfold, erected during construction of the line in 1971. And a couple of 60-foot midgets were thrown in for good measure!

Any advance on 65 feet? . . . and can we please be tipped off in advance when someone is going to pop in a 70-footer?

Afghanistan Adventure—continued

the museum, situated some seven kilometers outside the city. The ethnological section illustrates how the present Afghan nation evolved from a wide variety of tribes and races. In the archaeological section there are fragments of sculpture, pottery and tools dating back some 5,000 years.

From more recent times—the last two millennia—there is a wonderful collection of jewellery, bronzes, ornaments, coins, paintings, beautifully carved ivory figures and a few more mundane household objects. Everything in the museum is from excavations in Afghanistan.

It was a little chastening that on our last fill up with petrol before leaving the capital we were diddled by the very trick against which we had been on our guard since entering the country—the substitution of the money note I handed over for one of the same colour but of lower denomination. I relaxed my guard for a second and paid the penalty!

Approaching the Pakistan customs post, the road gradually descends through a series of valleys in which streams have been dammed to form small lakes. Once through customs, the road begins its steep climb to the Kyber Pass.

After less than ten kilometers along this road, one of my boyhood's cherished dreams had been shattered. I had always visualised the Kyber Pass as being wild, rugged and romantic with forts dotted about. Native troops, led of course by British officers, dashing up and down the mountains keeping the savage enemy at bay.

Rugged it is and some of the forts are still there—but romantic and remote—no! On the contrary, a number of obviously very poor villages are spaced along the road and there isn't a sign of a handsome Gurkha or Sikh soldier.

The only Sikhs we came across were middle-aged and driving even older trucks along the twisting and badly surfaced road bent on eliminating all other traffic. They drove fast—very fast—and cut all corners. They had me and the Vandewal completely off the road more times than I could count.

Comparing notes with other 'Overlanders' we met later, they too had encountered exactly the same driving conditions and found it as hair raising as we did. We talked to a young English couple in Lahore who had started their journey over the Kyber by bus, but became so frightened that they left the bus and finished the journey by train.



Olympic gold-medalist Don Haldeman takes aim, watched by another champion, Jackie Stewart and other competitors in the British Grand Prix International Trap Shooting Championships.

SHOOT-OUT AT SEALAND

TOTING 12-bore shotguns, competitors from all over the world gathered recently at the North Wales Shooting School at Sealand Manor—just across the river from our Queensferry Stores for the 19th British Grand Prix International Olympic Trap Shooting Championships for 1976.

Famous shooters like Barbara Lynch, British Ladies champion, Bob Braithwaite, Britain's Olympic champion in 1968, Don Haldeman from Atlanta, USA, the current Olympic gold-medalist and Jackie Stewart, former world motor-racing champion, who twice previously has won this trap shooting award, were among the 162 competitors for this year's trophy and prizes.

The competition was founded at Sealand Manor in 1958 by the North Wales Gun Club and was organ-

ised by Glynne Jones, the first winner of the championship.

Glynne has known the Dee Valley District of MANWEB in the person of Albert Roberts (foreman-Contracting) for very many years. In preparation for this year's competition, Glynne installed some additional layouts fitted with a new type of 'clay' trap machine. The Boars were called in to supply the traps, pavilions and other outbuildings with light and power.

Up to then, a generator had supplied all the required power to the existing traps, but now more was needed and the 'genny' was not quite up to it. A plan was drawn up by John Robinson (3rd engineer-Installation) and Albert. Mains supply was brought right up to the range with a run of 1200 metres of high tension line.

Then, through 15-kVA transformer, supply was reduced to 250 volts. Switchgear was neatly installed in the old generator house and a changeover switch was incorporated to enable the generator to be brought in—just in cases of emergency.

A trial run of the installation brought a problem of motors overheating. However, it was soon found that the new American machines—used to throw the clays—were only rated at 230 volts. A step-down transformer was installed and the trouble disappeared.

Mr. Jones was particularly pleased with the work done by MANWEB staff. "Whenever I want anything doing electrically," he commented, "my

thoughts immediately turn to MANWEB. They have done all kinds of jobs for me—large and small—over many, many years. I have always been fully satisfied with the service and workmanship. The job just completed at the range has been terrific. Bringing in the mains supply and the wiring to the traps and other buildings has been done by experts—and all in good time for the championships.”

The two-day shoot went very well. The eventual winner of the Grand Prix of Great Britain Perpetual Trophy Gold Medal was John Tennison from Yorkshire. The silver medal went to Esteban Azkve and the bronze to Juan Alonzo, both from Spain.

We award our own medal to colleagues John Robinson and Albert Roberts from Dee Valley District for keeping another good customer satisfied with MANWEB service and workmanship.

The Jones family who run the North Wales Shooting School at Sealand Manor and who helped organise the recent British Grand Prix International Trap Shooting Championships, Allan, left, Glynn, centre and Noel right, pictured here with Men from MANWEB, Albert Roberts, second left, and John Robinson second right.



EMPLOYEES' MEETINGS

New Dates

No. 1 LAC (North Mersey) at the Mons Hotel, Bootle, on October 28th.

No. 6 LAC (Mid-Cheshire) at the Crewe Arms Hotel, Crewe, on October 28th. (Not October 22nd as previously arranged).

Obituary

It is with deep regret that we record the following deaths:—

Mr. Jack Edwards, who served the electricity industry with Liverpool Corporation and MANWEB for 42 years until his retirement in 1968, at which time he was contracting engineer at Lister Drive, Liverpool.

Mr. Edwards had enjoyed every minute of his retirement, travelling with his wife each year in search of winter sunshine abroad. Last winter they visited their married daughter, who lives in South Africa.

Mr. Arthur Williams, principal assistant-audit, at Head Office, who died on July 5th from injuries sustained in a car accident in the Mersey Tunnel in February.

For some years prior to the accident Mr. Williams had suffered from a disabling illness, which caused him increasing physical hardship. Despite this handicap he never complained and will be remembered by his colleagues for his cheerful and pleasant disposition.

We extend our sincere sympathy to the bereaved families.

Clay pigeon shooting is simply shooting at moving targets with a shotgun. Trap shooting is a specialised post-war development of this 70-year-old sport.

The 'clays' or targets, are saucer-shaped fragile materials which are hand-loaded on to machines in traps below ground level. When the shooter calls 'pull' into a microphone placed in front of him, the 'clay' is electrically released from the machine, being thrown out at 100 miles an hour at varying angles and heights. The shooter then has to smash the 'clay'.

The guns used are double-barrelled 12-bores, and they cost from £150 to £3,500. The cartridges are highly developed versions of game cartridges.



'Put me among the Girls,' seems to be an apt caption to this picture taken on the occasion of the retirement of Mr. Harold Abel, centre left, seen here with Mr. Colin Leonard who presented him with parting gifts from his friends at Queensferry and Head Office.

RETIREMENTS

Mr. H. ABEL

After 43 years' service to the electricity supply industry Mr. Harold Abel, material controller at Queensferry Stores, retired recently.

Mr. Abel joined the North Wales Power Company in 1933, working on costs and stores, and joined the army in 1939. He went to France with the BEF, was evacuated from St. Nazaire in 1940, and was demobilised with the rank of Staff Sergeant.

He rejoined North Wales Power in charge of the stores accounts section, and remained in charge of Area 4 stores accounts until re-organisation, when he was transferred to the stores operations section at Head Office. In 1972 he became material controller at Dee Valley District, moving to Queensferry later in the same year.

Friends from many parts of the MANWEB area attended a farewell ceremony at Queensferry,

when Mr. Abel was presented with an electric lawn mower and a tea trolley by Mr. Colin Leonard, Assistant Chief Accountant (Admin.).

Mr. J. E. BROWN

A cheque subscribed to by his many friends in Mid-Mersey District will be used by Mr. Jackie Brown, engineering foreman at St. Helens, to help buy a greenhouse. The cheque was presented by Mr. Albert Cooper (*District Engineer*), to Mr. Brown, who retired recently after 22 years with MANWEB at St. Helens.

Mr. Brown began work as a joiner at St. Helens in 1954, and before coming to MANWEB he worked for BICC on cathodic protection for the Iraq Petroleum Company in the Middle East. During the war he served in the RAF in Britain and Germany.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown have a son and a daughter and seven grandchildren. They both enjoy dancing and trips to Torquay, where their daughter is a deputy headmistress.

Staff at our Carlton Street depot in St. Helens, gather round as Mr. Albert Cooper, *light suit*, presents their retirement gifts to Mr. Jackie Brown.





At our New Crane Street depot in Chester, Mr. E. T. Peters (*Dee Valley District Engineer*), centre left, has a farewell handshake for Mr. Geoff Martin after presenting him with retirement gifts from his friends and colleagues. Mrs. Martin, who also attended the ceremony, is in the centre of our picture.

Mr. G. MARTIN

A man who earned the reputation of being one of the fastest jointers with the Mersey Power Company—and later with MANWEB—retired a short time ago after 43 year's service with the industry.

He is Mr. Geoff Martin, a chargehand jointer based at New Crane Street in our Dee Valley District. He began his career as a cable layer with the Mersey Power Company and turned to jointing later on. Nearly 30 years ago he worked on a large housing estate in Ellesmere Port, completing joints at his usual phenomenal rate. Today, those joints are still good and there is no record of any failing. Speed coupled with durability!

At the ceremony held to mark his retirement, Geoff was joined by his wife Florence at the depot. They have a married daughter and three grandchildren whose growing up days will no doubt be recorded by Geoff on film as one of his hobbies is cine photography.

Mr. S. COSTIN

An active retirement in the amateur theatrical world awaits Mr. Sid Costin, a principal assistant in the work control section, Liverpool District, who retired recently.

For the past 30 years Sid had been closely connected with the amateur stage, both as actor and producer. He was a founder member of the "*Electron Players*" in 1944, appearing in many successful productions in Liverpool, and had several offers to turn professional after studying at the Crane Theatre in 1951. He decided to stay with MANWEB, however, but is particularly pleased with the success of the "*New Electron Players*," formed last September. This group, after only three productions, has established a considerable reputation, and in retirement Sid is looking forward to continuing to present productions at the Neptune Theatre.

Sid began with Liverpool Corporation as a junior clerk in 1936, served in the Home Guard and was

A happy group at Lister Drive, Liverpool, give a great 'send-off' to Mr. Sid Costin, centre, wearing suit, at his retirement presentation ceremony when their gifts were handed over by Mr. Bob Jowett, centre right. Sid's mother, holding bouquet, was a special guest of honour.





After nearly 50 years' service in the industry, Mr. Len Young and his wife, seen here centre, were guests of honour at many parties held to mark his retirement. The couple are pictured here with a few friends and colleagues at District Office.

deeply involved in the War Savings Movement during the war, and joined Liverpool South District at Lister Drive following nationalisation. In the intervening years he has held several senior clerical posts in the cooker repair and consumer accounts sections.

On behalf of his many friends Sid was presented with numerous gifts by Mr. Bob Jowett (D.C.E.).

Mr. L. YOUNG

Many past and present colleagues of Mr. Len Young, 2nd engineer at Mid-Cheshire District, Crewe, gathered at a Shavington hotel recently to wish him a long and happy retirement after more than 48 years in the electricity industry. He was also entertained to dinner on an earlier occasion by his energy sales colleagues, and on the day of his retirement was presented with a food mixer and a writing set on behalf of the many friends he has made through the years. The presentation was made by Mr. Norman Walsh (D.C.E.).

Mr. Young began as an apprentice electrician with the Electricity Distribution Company of North Wales in 1928, later gaining promotion to staff

electrician and installation inspector. After nationalisation he became chargehand installation inspector, and in 1953 was appointed assistant consumers' engineer at Crewe District, where he specialised in agriculture and horticulture. Other tasks Len undertook included the development of the off-peak load and running a construction gang concerned with standardising earthing throughout the District.

Following re-organisation he was appointed 3rd engineer in the Mid-Cheshire energy sales department later becoming 2nd engineer.

His many friends wish him a long and happy retirement, with much pleasure from his main hobby—gardening.

Mr. W. J. McLACHLAN

After 47 years' service in the industry Mr. William John McLachlan (*Billy Mac*), material controller at North Wirral District, has retired.

Mr. McLachlan began with Birkenhead Corporation in 1929 as an apprentice storekeeper, later becoming successively assistant storekeeper and storekeeper. He served in the RASC during the war, returning to Birkenhead afterwards.

In 1952 he was promoted to senior storekeeper,

A parting gift from colleagues at North Wirral District is presented to Mr. Bill McLaughlan, centre right, by Mr. Bob Evans. (District Administration Officer)



at St. Helens, moving in a similar capacity to Dee Valley District after re-organisation. He returned to North Wirral District in 1971, being promoted to material controller in the following year.

In his younger days he was a keen tennis and badminton player, but his main interest has been the Scouting movement, to which he has given much time and energy since 1928. He is currently Deputy District Commissioner for Birkenhead, and was previously District Commissioner for several years for the former Birkenhead South District. He holds the Long Service Medal in recognition of his work in the movement, together with the Medal of Merit, with Bar.

Mr. W. J. S. LEYLAND

After 42 years' service to the industry, Mr. Stan Leyland, assistant consumers' engineer with Mid-Mersey District, has retired.

Mr. Leyland began his career as an apprentice with St. Helens Corporation in 1934, and saw service with the Royal Corps of Signals from 1940 to 1946 in North Africa and Germany.

His friends and colleagues wish Stan and his wife a long and happy retirement.

Mr. I. W. GRIFFITHS

After a working life spanning more than 40 years, with over half of this time with MANWEB, Mr. Idris W. Griffiths, a chargehand service electrician based at Mold Depot in our Clwyd District, has now retired.

For most of his life he worked as a contracting electrician in North Wales until he joined the Army

shortly after the outbreak of war. He was just beginning to enjoy himself when he was transferred to the National Fire Service in Liverpool where he served throughout the 'blitz' without collecting a scratch. He has many happy memories of a 'simple' Welshman serving with so many 'Scousers'—"especially with the language problem!"

He was just beginning to enjoy himself when he was transferred back to the Army as an electrician with the RASC. He took part in the Normandy landings with the 8th Armoured Brigade and went on through France and Germany up to Hanover—without collecting a scratch.

Back home after the war, he tried his hand as a salesman for a bakery firm. This only lasted for a few years until he took up his trade again and joined MANWEB at Mold.

His run of good luck came to an end unfortunately when late one night, last November, he was out with his dog when a car mounted the pavement and crashed into Idris. He woke up in hospital with cracked ribs and a badly injured right shoulder. This injury was most serious to him—a keen golfer for over 40 years. Since the accident he has been unable to work or to play golf. And for a man who once won the Gravett Cup (with Mr. Derek Jones) and was captain of his Club (Padeswood and Buckley) this was a most serious blow.

However, he is due for another visit to hospital where, all his friends hope, that the doctors and surgeons will be able to give Idris his 'swing' back again.

We, with 'Contact' offer Idris—our Mold correspondent for many years—our best wishes for a brighter and healthier future.

At our Mold Depot in the Clwyd District, friends and colleagues gather to pay tributes to Mr. Idris Griffiths, centre, on the occasion of his retirement. After handing over their parting gifts, Mr. Dave Mellor, centre right, wished Idris improved health in retirement.

