

Manweb's anglers reel in the top prizes

Manweb anglers netted the two top trophies in the first inter-company Fly Fishing Competition, held at Llyn Brenig, north Wales.

The event was staged to foster sporting and social relationships between Manweb, ScottishPower and Southern Water.

Around 60 anglers took part, representing the three companies.

Manweb's Chief Executive Charles Berry, himself a keen fly fisherman, took part and later presented the prizes during an evening meal at the Bryn Morfydd Hotel.

For Manweb's Rob Dolben, it was a winning double. First, along with colleague Huw Phillips, he took the ScottishPower group Angling Cup, presented by Manweb. Then, going solo, he scooped the ScottishPower Heaviest Basket Cup with his 5lb 1oz haul.

This cup was presented by the ScottishPower Metering Business. The winners also received fishing rods and reels.

Feedback indicates that the event was a great success, much enjoyed by most competitors, including Charles Berry, who came close to being a winner by landing three fish for a 3lb 2oz basket.

The event was organised by Seamus Cronin, of Crewe Depot, who handed over on the day to ScottishPower's Brian Stark, who also arranged the ScottishPower team as well as purchasing the cups and prizes.



Manweb's Robert Dolben (left) and Huw Phillips with their trophies after winning the Fly Fishing Competition at Llyn Brenig.

It looks as though this popular competition will now become an annual attraction for the three companies.

ScottishPower has offered to host the 1998 event, claiming the company's determination to triumph on their home water.

Brian said: "I've already applied for a reservation on Loch Leven for a Saturday in September next year!"

He also expressed his thanks to Manweb for hosting this year's event and for the assistance afforded by Charles Berry, Sue Linton, Sports and Social Club Administrator, and Seamus Cronin.

PEDAL POWER

Manweb staff, their families and friends got on their bikes to launch a cycling scheme for disabled people.

A cavalcade of cyclists pedalled around Liverpool's Sefton Park to celebrate the opening of the Cycling Project for the North West's new 'Wheels for All' centre. Amongst them were many disabled people, who tried out some of the special cycles that have been purchased for the Centre by Manweb with matched funding from the Government's Sportsmatch scheme.

A number of staff volunteered their services to act as marshalls along the route and generally help out.

While many people were riding for fun, others were fund-raising to help disabled cyclists - amongst them Merseyside Regional Manager Bill Tubey, who personally raised £80.



The Lord Mayor of Liverpool, Councillor Margaret Clarke, cuts the ribbon to launch the cycling day.

Thanks for everything

Dear Editor

Brian Fitton, who was employed by Manweb for 37 years, retired in 1991. He enjoyed his retirement to the full, but sadly he lost the fight against cancer and died in August.

I hope you do not mind me writing to you, but I would like, through Contact, to thank his colleagues for being present at his funeral and for donations which will be going to Clatterbridge Cancer Research. There were many of his work colleagues there, but I was not able to thank them personally.

Yours sincerely
Pat Ellam (Brian's Partner)
(full address supplied)

CONTACT

NEWSLETTER FOR MANWEB PEOPLE

SEPTEMBER 1997

GEARING UP FOR GAS LAUNCH

Manweb is gearing up for a full scale launch into the domestic gas market. Sales and marketing activity will start early in November in preparation for deregulation during 1998.

As well as targeting customers in the existing Manweb area, marketing activity will also be extended in regions such as Greater Manchester and some parts of the Lancashire coast, offering great savings on British Gas prices - particularly for those customers choosing to pay by monthly direct debit.

The first phase of Manweb's marketing activity begins on 3 November with the doorstep sales team targeting potential 'switchers' in selected areas. This will be supported by television advertising on Granada Television, which starts on 10 November for three weeks.

This is the launchpad for a multi-media marketing campaign which will extend right through to deregulation and beyond.

Airtime

A second burst of television airtime on Granada will start on Boxing Day with further TV advertising planned for the New Year.

This will be boosted by a heavyweight poster campaign on 450 bus sites and radio adverts on Red Rose, Signal Cheshire and City.

"We will also capitalise on the opportunity to promote the Manweb gas offer through our local Customer Service Centres," said David Clarke, Marketing Director, Energy Supply Division.

"When domestic gas customers sign up for a new gas supply they won't need new meters or pipes. The only difference they will notice is that they will receive a bill from Manweb instead of their existing supplier. New gas customers will also benefit from excellent customer service from our experienced team based at Warrington," he added.



Boy, oh boy, oh boy!

Oh boy! Dad's the word at Warrington Depot just now following a mini baby boom. Staff are delighted with the 'nappy' news that three of their Power Systems colleagues have become proud

fathers - all within a matter of weeks.

Pictured (l-r) are Projects Manager Ian Povey with Nicholas, Jointer's Mate Mike Fox with Lewiss, and Cable Jointer Mark Brocklehurst with Dylan.

If you want to take advantage of the Manweb gas offer, look out for details of staff incentives, to be announced during November.

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Manweb first in industry trials

Monday, 20 October, saw Manweb as the first public electricity supplier in the UK to enter industry trialling for England and Wales, in the run up to the opening of the competitive electricity market in April 1998.

Next year the UK's 25 million households will be able to choose their electricity supplier and these trials are essential to test operations such as billing and connections.

As a member of the core project for industry trialling, Manweb, as part of the ScottishPower group, will be able to participate fully in the launch of the free market and maximise its competitive advantages throughout the UK.

Chief Executive Charles Berry said: "Being first in the core to be ready for industry testing is a major success for us, and recognises the hard work and effort by all staff working on and with the 1998 Programme at Chester and East Kilbride.

"By accepting us into the core project, Offer has given a vote of confidence in our capabilities to have our systems ready."

A number of Manweb staff will be involved intermittently in the trials until March 1998. Those involved will be contacted by the 1998 Programme.

Media attention is expected and all enquiries should be directed to the Corporate Communications Department on 700 2093.

Code of conduct

Manweb has pledged its sales team will use a Code of Conduct when the electricity market opens up competition.

The company supports the newly-formed Association of Energy Suppliers, and will follow its marketing code.

This also applies to Manweb's gas marketing activities.

Chief Executive Charles Berry said: "We are concerned about the methods used by some companies during trials in southern England for the opening up of the gas market. We took part in those trials in the area covered by our sister company, Southern Water, and at all times we operated to our Code of Conduct.

"We were able to gain 12 per cent of the gas market during those trials and I believe that the ethical manner in which our marketing team operated was partly responsible for our success there.

"We intend to draw upon our experiences in Southern Water in our approach to retaining our customers in the Manweb area."



Willie Gallagher.

Responsible for group programme

Manweb's former Director, Distribution Operations, Willie Gallagher, is the Power Systems 1998 Programme Director, responsible for the group's overall 1998 programme.

His principal task is to ensure achievement of the operating licences for both ScottishPower and Manweb, and that our market entry is secured on time and within costs.

action for 1998

A selection of your questions answered

Q I've noticed a lot of marketing activity amongst some of the other RECs. How and when will I know what 'deals' ScottishPower and Manweb will offer?

You may have noticed television adverts recently. This is the start of our gas and electricity campaigns, marketing packages and offers on both electricity and gas will be available before competition starts. ScottishPower and Manweb will advertise using a wide variety of media such as television, radio, posters, press advertising and by post.

Q How can suppliers offer different prices?

Your bill is currently made up of different charges, including a generation cost for the power stations, a distribution cost for maintaining the network of cables which gets the electricity to your home, and a small portion for the cost of sending out your bill and collecting your money. The most competitive companies will be looking for the cheapest sources of electricity and efficient ways to administer your customer account. All suppliers will be charged the same cost for transporting the electricity through the existing wires and cables network.

Q In 1998, if I'm worried about the safety of the supply to my meter, or if I have a power failure, who will come out to restore my electricity supply?

If you have any concerns at all about the safety of your supply, or if there is an emergency, you should call us on 0845 272 2424. A member of our staff will come out to investigate the fault and restore your supply as soon as possible. Your supplier will have an agreement with us to this effect. As is the case today, if there is a problem with any of the wiring in your home beyond the meter, or any of your electrical equipment, you should contact a qualified electrician.

Q What's a Supply or Metering Point Administration Number (MPAN) and why do I need it?

An MPAN number is a unique number particular to your premises and you must quote it if you want to change supplier. Your new electricity supplier will then use it to prepare your contract. This is a legally binding document and will show the terms and conditions of supply, including the price you have to pay. Once you have signed, it can take 28 days or more to terminate it and change to another supplier. You should only sign one contract for electricity supply. Signing with two or more may involve you in additional expense.

Familiar face re-appears

A familiar face will soon re-appear at Head Office, whilst the man who has spearheaded the company's entry into the competitive market is taking on a new role.



Matthew Wright

Matthew Wright, who joined Manweb 10 years ago, is making the move back to Chester from Southern Water, where he has been involved in the divestment group, disposing of the water company's non-core businesses. At Manweb he will become our first multi-utility development manager. And Mike Boxall, presently Market Development Adviser concentrating on deregulation of the electricity market, has been appointed Commercial Manager for Manweb, reporting directly to Chief Executive Charles Berry. He will continue his national role as sponsor of ElectraLink, a new company set up by the country's 14 Public Electricity Suppliers, designed to transmit energy data - such as metering information - between companies, following the opening up of the competitive market in 1998.

Matthew, 32, will also report directly to Charles Berry. Matthew said: "I am delighted to be making the move back to Chester. This will be a strategic role, examining the potential for growing all aspects of ScottishPower's business in the Manweb area, under the multi-utility banner. I will be building on some of the ideas which have begun to be put in place at Southern Water and my experience to date throughout the group should also prove extremely useful."

Degree

Matthew grew up in Penmaenmawr, north Wales, and went on to complete a degree in geography at Portsmouth University. After joining Manweb as a commercial graduate trainee, he worked in a number of areas, including with Mike Boxall on tariffs in the lead up to privatisation. He was then involved in commercial issues affecting Manweb on the InterGen CHP project at ICI, Runcorn. A year ago he joined Manweb's former Chief Executive Mike Kinski at Southern Water as part of the transition team.

Matthew, who recently married Amanda Nelson, Manager of Manweb's Business Centre, has an MBA from Hull University and also holds a diploma in Marketing.

Mike Boxall, 45, joined Manweb 20 years ago in the tariffs and economics department, having previously worked for British Gas in Manchester on commercial projects. As Market Development Adviser, Mike concentrated on commercial and regulatory policy for the group arising from the market changes scheduled for 1998. This involved working closely with the industry regulator, Offer, to help define the new competitive market arrangements. His new role will be to co-ordinate commercial activity within Manweb.



Manweb's 1998 team (l-r) Steve Griffin, Paula Webster, Jeremy Blackford, Tony McEntee, Paul Morrison, Mike Boxall and Jo Ainsworth.

Leading role for Manweb staff in 1998

There might be 500 people involved in the 1998 Programme in East Kilbride, but south of the border, Manweb staff are also playing their part.

The Market Development Group, led by Mike Boxall, has been leading ScottishPower's input to national discussions on the shape of the post 1998 electricity market.

"We have been working to ensure that all suppliers are given a fair chance to compete for customers in 1998. Customers will benefit most from competition if they have a good choice of suppliers," said Mike.

The licences which set out minimum service standards for suppliers also place particular obligations on Manweb and the other regional electricity companies to provide administration and metering services for other suppliers.

"We need to ensure the new arrangements work smoothly and do not confuse customers. At the same time, they must not cost so much to operate that the benefits of competition

disappear," said Mike.

Over the past year, several members of the team have spent one or two days each week in London debating rules for dealing with customers and changes in the Pool trading arrangements with generators. Now that the new market design is falling into place, it is necessary to build systems to support new business processes and explain the consequences to our staff and customers.

Projects

Many of the projects to provide new systems are based in East Kilbride, but others such as MSP, and changes to our own settlement systems use mainly Chester based staff.

When the electricity market finally opens up to full competition in 1998, it will have a profound impact on all Manweb staff. For some, however, it will be seen as the end of a long and challenging period designing and building the greatest change to any electricity market anywhere in the world.

DOUBLE CELEBRATION FOR CONTRACTING



Paul Wolfendale (dad John is Contracting's Systems Manager) and James Lawrence (son of Safety Adviser Nigel Lawrence) have a roaring good time.

Manweb Contracting Services celebrated their fifth anniversary and their successful integration into ScottishPower's Contracting Division by holding an Open Day at their Wrexham headquarters.

Employees, their families and friends were invited along, and on arrival were greeted by Administration staff who handed out drinks, ice cream vouchers and a goody bag - plus a plan of the building!

Guy Wilcox, Regional Manager, Major Contracts, together with Marketing Manager Malcolm Harding and Contracts Manager Richard Williams ensured everyone was well fed by showing off their cooking skills on the barbie, while Manweb Contracting Director Allan Littler spent the day entertaining guests and ensuring all the visitors were enjoying themselves.

The Street Lighting section provided lifts in the 40ft tower wagon for those with a head for heights, and commemorative photos were taken to mark their bravery!

Utilities provided a realistic working demonstration of an LV cable joint, and the Utilities Overhead Lines

Interesting

section demonstrated pole top live line working.

Power Engineering had many interesting pieces of equipment on display, including transformers, switchgear, ring main units and test apparatus.

A working model of the Van der Graph Generator, which caused static electricity, literally had Power Engineering's Jo Brassey's hair standing on end.

Open Learning Co-ordinator Roy Jones provided information on the courses available and encouraged active participation.

Meanwhile, the Systems section took over the training rooms and entertained the youngsters with a wide variety of computer games.

A colouring competition was held with the pictures the children produced.

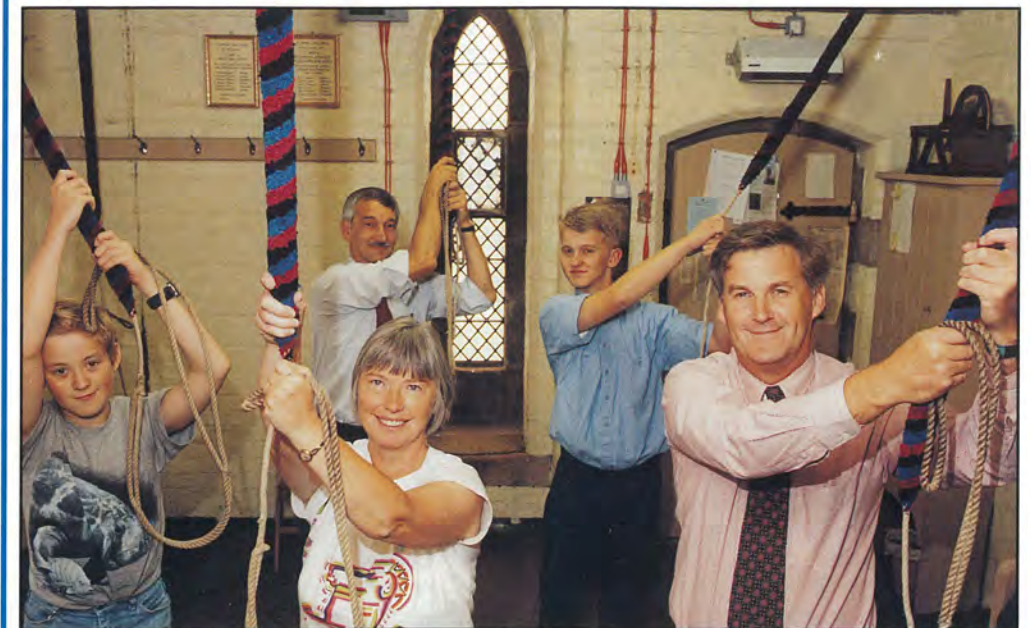
Cheshire Region's Community Relations Co-ordinator Jane Hall came along with the Manweb safety caravan to promote the 'Play Safe' campaign, aimed at educating children about the dangers of electricity.

In the marquee, Robbie the Clown provided entertainment, and there were also many sightings of tigers, butterflies and spiders thanks to the children's face-painter, who was kept very busy.

Allan Littler said: "Altogether it was a very successful and enjoyable day. Here's to the next five years!"



Above: Donna Jackson, Jennifer Jones and Mari Davies hand out goody bags to the visitors on arrival. Below: Max Harding (8) and Jonathan Hall (12) build a brick wall with a little help from Contracting's Dave Thomas and Director Allan Littler.



David Booth (right) with fellow bell-ringers at Stretton (l-r) Matthew Booth, Jen Darling, Alan Flude and Christopher Booth.

David's hobby has plenty of appeal!

If all the church bells in England were rung at the same time, there wouldn't be a place in the country where they could not be heard.

That's a fact supplied by campanologist David Booth - and it's something he hopes will be proven beyond belief in the year 2000.

Dave, Planning and Scheme Engineer in Power Systems at Prenton will be joining thousands of fellow bell-ringers to mark the Millennium, but is concerned there won't be enough ringers to sound all the bells throughout the country.

More than 35 per cent of the UK's churches which have ringable bells, do not have sufficient trained ringers. Now there's a move to train as many as possible before the year 2000 and David is part of this initiative. "It takes about six months to become proficient," he said.

The technique of bell-ringing within England and its borders is unique in the world and dates back to the Reformation. Apart from a small number of places in ex-colonial territories such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and America, this method of ringing takes place nowhere else but in the UK.

David is also fund-raising to help replace the oak frame which supports the 147-year-old bells at his church in Stretton, Warrington, where he is Tower Captain.

Along with fellow-ringers from the church, he recently undertook a sponsored walk of the Sandstone Trail from Frodsham in Cheshire to Whitchurch in Shropshire.

The 22-mile walk was completed over two days, with sponsorship from friends, colleagues and from Manweb's Charity Chest scheme, which matches up to a maximum £300 the fund-raising efforts of staff. This is part of an application for funding from the Millennium Fund for the £12,000 needed for the new frame.

David confesses that bell-ringing is the closest he can get to playing music. "I've always loved music, although I'm not musical. I got interested in the mechanics of bell ringing and find that it's a way of helping the local community as well as being a great social activity."

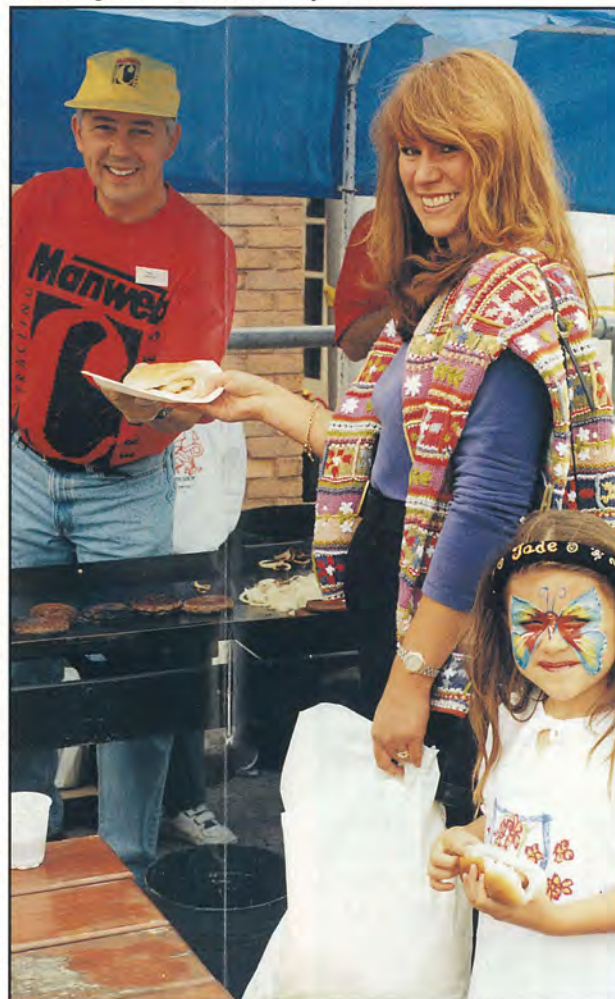
Guest

Whenever he is on holiday or away from home and he hears church bells, David will head for the church and introduce himself. This often results in an invitation to become a guest ringer.

Campanology is kept in the Booth family through David's three sons who are all trained bell-ringers. Although Andrew, 20, is now at University, 18-year-old Christopher, and Matthew, 15, still ring with their father on a regular basis.

One of David's most recent tasks was to ring the Stretton bells half-muffled on the Sunday after the funeral of Princess Diana.

Anyone wishing to help David's project or would like further information about campanology can contact him at Prenton on 750 2498 (internal) or 0151 609 2498.



Gaynor Harding (wife of Marketing Manager Malcolm Harding) and daughter Jade sample a burger courtesy of Regional Manager Guy Wilcox.

Sales push has plenty of fizz

A chance remark during Manweb's recent 'It's a Knockout' competition led to an opportunity to promote Manweb Contracting Services within the company.

After watching MCS's own team winning the afternoon session of the knockout competition, spectator Chris Littler, wife of Contracting Director Allan Littler, commented: "Surely with such a fit team, there must be a way of using them to promote MCS?"

Looking at the 'hunks' on view, Chris joked: "Any of those lads could deliver me a Diet Coke Break any day of the week!"

Her comments were taken on board by Allan and his team of managers, who decided on a promotional plan of action.

Surprise

"Within a week, the plot was hatched and executed with lightning precision so that the element of surprise would light up Manweb staff and literally have the name of MCS on people's lips," explained Allan.

The logistics exercise was to deliver 1,200 cans of ice-cold Coke to seven locations within one hour.

The lads - Craig Jones, Andy Heywood, Pete Harrison, Ian Downey, Steve Saddler, Mark Pritchard, Dave Salem and Keith Brawls - were selected for

their rugged good looks.

"The Coke was purchased at a rock bottom price, thanks to Home Improvements Manager Steve Gore's powers of persuasion and the fact that the Diet Coke rep liked the idea," said Allan.

So, between 10.30am and 11.30am one morning, Manweb's offices at Chester, Queensferry, Liverpool, Warrington, Wrexham, Rhostyllen and Prenton were visited by the MCS lads who, just like in the TV advert, encouraged the staff to 'take five and enjoy a Diet Coke break' - at Contracting's expense.

Allan said: "The reception for the lads, who arrived complete with hard hats, safety boots and tee shirts, was fantastic. All the chanting from the girls in the offices could not persuade them to remove their shirts, since they were under instruction to tease, set the desire and leave in one piece!"

"The promotion provided a good laugh all round and raised motivation, morale and team spirit for little expense."

The result was an increase in enquiries about domestic contracting work, telephone lines were exhausted, messages of appreciation flooded in and Manweb staff appreciated MCS just that little bit more."



Former Executive PA Jan Blake enjoys a Diet Coke break with Contracting's Craig Jones, before her move to Southern Water.

Call of the south beckons Jan

A familiar face is missing from Manweb's corridors of power these days.

Executive Personal Assistant Jan Blake has moved on after serving six years with three of the company's top executives.

Joining Manweb after 18 years in Customer Service with the John Lewis Partnership, Jan spent her first four years in the company with former Chief Executive John Roberts. She then worked for a year with Mike Kinski, followed by a further year with current Chief Executive Charles Berry. "Very different years - very different personalities," said Jan.

Now the call of the south (Jan's a southerner) has taken her back to Surrey. "When ScottishPower acquired Southern Water I was hopeful that a post would arise to suit me," she confessed.

Her wish came true and she has now joined Southern Water's Communications Department, working for Manweb's former Head of Communications Tom James.

"It's a busy, interesting department with a diverse workload, offering the chance to meet many new people," she said.

Manweb staff may not, however, have seen the last of Jan. She plans to visit as often as she can, admitting that she loves the area and its people.

"I was fortunate to meet so many lovely people and I regard the last six years as a very happy period in my life.

"I will be letting my Southern colleagues know that there is something worthwhile north of Watford!"

A special milestone

Information Systems Manager Brian Sheppard was amongst a group of ISD staff celebrating long service with the company. Pictured with their framed certificates are (l-r) Mike Edwards (30 years), Keith Spencer, who has now left Manweb (30 years), Brian Sheppard, Sally Banks and Sue Cavanagh, who have each clocked up 20 years' service.



Honoured to be there

Former Manweb employee Rose Robinson had a closer-than-most experience of the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Among those at Westminster Abbey on that emotional day was Rose, along with six other representing the Hillsborough Family Support Group, who had been invited to attend.

Rose worked for the company in a customer service role in Liverpool for a short while at the time of the Hillsborough soccer stadium disaster, in which she lost her son Steven, who was then 17.

Her husband Bernie had worked for Manweb for 30 years, starting as a jointer and later becoming an engineer based at Bridle Road.

Overwhelmed

Rose says she was overwhelmed and honoured to have been invited to the funeral.

"I don't think there's been another service quite like that. The crowning moment was Earl Spencer's speech, which was just incredible. You don't often get people clapping at a funeral, but when it was followed by such loud applause, it was everyone's way of telling him that we agreed with every word he said."

During the service Rose's group sat in Poet's Corner, in sight of Diana's coffin.

Recalling her most memorable day, Rose said the whole thing - the atmosphere, the singing - was amazing. "The public loved Diana, they cared for her and they felt they had to be there for her."

Poignantly, she added: "It's such a tragedy to lose a young life, but to lose one who was so bright and who helped so many other people leaves a huge gap in the world."



Rose Robinson with her invitation to attend the funeral at Westminster Abbey. Picture courtesy of the Crosby Herald.

Ringing the changes for our customers

Manweb is ringing the changes from early November by introducing new single telephone numbers for domestic and business customers.

ScottishTelecom will replace British Telecom as our service provider, which means that the 0345 112211 (domestic) and 0345 250250 (business) numbers will disappear. The new telephone numbers are as follows:

- 0845 272 1212 - for all domestic customers
- 0845 272 2424 - for all emergency calls and faults
- 0845 272 3636 - for all business customers
- 0845 272 9696 - for Minicom users

The new telephone numbers will be displayed on bills from November and will be incorporated in the new

telephone directories as they are reprinted.

Customers telephoning old telephone numbers after November will be automatically diverted to the new number without charge. After six months the auto-direct will change to a message advising customers of the new telephone number.

Martyn Jones, Head of Customer Service Operations, said: "It is necessary for all documentation, leaflets and letters affected by these changes to be reviewed and reprinted."

For further information about the new telephone numbers, contact Carolyn Yates at Rhostyllen, on 84 601.