



CONTACT

March
1973

EMERGENCY!
(see page 59)



The crashed car, showing the impression made by our concrete pole.

EASY COME — EASY GO!

“THIS IS better than a pools win,” thought Michael Williams, a chargehand linesman based at Chester in the Dee Valley District when it appeared that he had struck his own private

A reconstructed picture showing Mike Williams, *extreme right*, with a spadeful of muck and money. His colleagues are, *from left to right*: Messrs. Terrance Shone (*chargehand linesman*), Fred Huxley (*linesman*) and Albert Cooper (*linesman's mate*).



Klondike. Or maybe this was a new way of getting the ‘golden handshake’ for when he was engaged on a digging operation recently, among the spade-fulls of muddy earth he found hand-fuls of lovely lolly in £5 and £1 notes.

The ready-made money-mine came to light after Mike and his gang were called out late one Saturday night to replace a damaged pole carrying medium voltage overhead line at Willington Lane, Oscroft.

A private car had written itself off when it crashed into and became wrapped round the concrete pole, snapping it a few feet from its base.

Before the car could be moved, the broken pole had to be carefully lifted away and eventually, when the vehicle was clear, work started on replacing the concrete pole with a wooden one.

The pole was positioned on the edge of a shallow ditch and Mike set to work digging out the old stump and making the hole ready for the new pole. This was when the ‘fivers’ and ‘oncers’ turned up. Talk about “*where there’s muck there’s money!*”

Then it was discovered that the cash came from the driver’s wallet, which had fallen into the ditch after the crash. The police, who were on the scene, quickly gathered the notes together and placed them on the warm bonnet of their car to dry them out.

A short time later, when the P.C.’s. returned to collect the cash—there it was . . . gone!

The notes had dried out and the slight breeze had blown them off the car and into the roadway. The men from MANWEB stopped work and set about recovering the notes. They are like that you know!

Despite the terrific impact which caused a strong concrete pole to break and the passenger side of the car to concertina, the driver escaped with only minor injuries.



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EDITORIAL

The Right Models!

IT HAS long been the practice for various industries to hold some kind of annual jamboree, where the latest models and developments have their wraps removed for the benefit of the trade, the press, and the public.

For many years probably, the best-known of these events was the motor show, when the unveiling of new models (cars) always attracted plenty of attention. But with the growing tendency among manufacturers to produce nothing really new in the car line especially for the show, recent events have been largely dependent for publicity on the unwrapping of models of a somewhat different kind!

Our own industry's Electric Living Trade Fair, which has increasingly established itself as a firm favourite with Britain's women journalists, has so far shown no sign of having to resort to stripped-down cookers and washers (human)—though there was once a young lady in bed extolling the comforts of her electric blanket! In any case, the thought of bare flesh, hot fat and boiling water somehow strikes the wrong note!

Each year the appliance manufacturers make serious efforts to come up with something new in the way of labour-saving aids. These novelties would not always be regarded as really practical by the average housewife, but a number of real breakthroughs, such as self-cleaning ovens, have first 'seen the light' at the Fair.

This year's event—described from a woman's-eye-view by a local journalist in this number of *Contact*—was noteworthy for a clear signpost marked 'Europe.' Manufacturers from many countries, including France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Finland, Holland and even Yugoslavia took stand space, and there is no doubt that British products will be increasingly moving into the Continent in a similar way.

If all this means continued concentration on more attractive and efficient appliances, and protects us from the prospect of nude models (human) sitting on last year's models (electric), then so much the better for the housewife and for our industry.

Press Button Age in Modern Homes

TRADE FAIR REPORT

by JENNIFER GRIFFITHS
(Wrexham Leader)

FOR THE woman who can't be bothered to go to a lot of trouble in cooking, and for those who don't know how to, anyway, the ultimate in making the simplest of jobs as easy as pressing a button was on show at the Electric Living Trade Fair at Harrogate.

Most housewives have heard the joke (*usually made by their husbands*) about how, when they were first married, her culinary expertise was limited to burning the water when boiling an egg! But, no more!

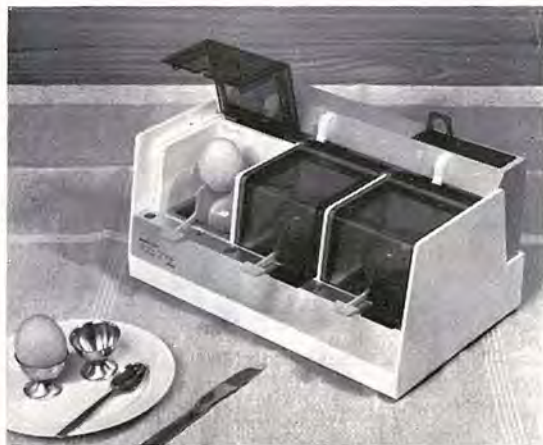
For Magna Dove have designed an automatic egg cooker, and wise brides will be including this on their pre-wedding gift list.

The cooker—aptly named the Eggchef—though pricey (*standard model* £15, and *de luxe*, £23),

created a lot of interest.

It has simple set-and-forget controls—just press a button, shut the lid and when your egg is cooked, it will automatically open the lid and a bell rings.

The choice is yours—poached



For the woman who doesn't know how to boil an egg, or for the woman who just can't be bothered—Magna Dove have devised this Eggchef.

or boiled, soft, medium or hard. Any combination can be chosen with its three independent compartments. There is no waiting. It's just like a toaster. If a compartment is free, you can make your choice regardless of what other eggs are cooking.

The number of exhibition stands at the Fair increases every year. The only problem one could envisage—if it were possible to be let loose there with a blank cheque and an indulgent husband—would be one of choice.

For the Fair is the showplace for hundreds of revolutionary ideas interpreted from the drawing board stage to culminate in demonstration models for all to see.



“THE FLOWER KITCHEN”

In model form, this mobile 'Flower Kitchen' was on view at the Industry's Trade Fair at Harrogate. The plan is arranged around a central core that holds all the services—electricity, water, drainage and fume extraction. The ovens are also mounted on this stack. A complete circle of worktops surround it, and these hold sinks, hob units and storage units. So that the kitchen is just as effective when it is indoors, a special docking area is being planned for the house. When docked, the kitchen becomes another room.

Without a doubt, the show-stealer this year was a model of the mobile "Flower Kitchen," designed for Mrs. Angela Hodge by architect, John Prizeman.

Mrs. Hodge has a home in a million—her Elizabethan mansion at Sudbury, Suffolk, was moved half a mile uphill a year ago to escape from new buildings that were spoiling the view. The 'move' on rollers cost thousands of pounds.

She then had a long think about her kitchen as she didn't like the idea of "my cooking indoors while everybody was enjoying themselves outside at the swimming pool."

She decided that she would like to be able to press a button and take the whole kitchen out into the sun.

Her 'Flower Kitchen' must now rate her impact on domesticity the same as that on Ascot by Mrs. Gertrude Schilling and her fantastic hats.

Onion-Shaped

The kitchen is onion-shaped, circular and able to revolve. It is mounted on a track, which will take it right out of the house into the grounds. The whole kitchen dome of clear acrylic material arranged in segments like the petals of a gigantic flower.

When moved into the garden, these can be lifted by electric motors, so that air and sunlight fills the working space.

The ultimate cost? No-one was prepared to say at Harrogate.

And to what will Mrs. Hodge turn her inventive mind? Probably a bathroom. Maybe next year a model of that will be on show at Harrogate. If it is, like the kitchen, it will be ultra-modern.

"THE POCKET KITCHEN"

The last word in compactness—this 'Pocket Kitchen' in which all the equipment, including two ovens, fits into a space only eight feet wide and two feet deep.

For Mrs. Hodge likes a carpeted bathroom—and her solicitor husband, John, doesn't.

"It's been a bone of contention between us, and the answer is to have two bathrooms, one carpeted and the other not.

"I want a super-duper bathroom, but there is a space problem. So I think I'll have one that 'disappears' so that when it's not in use, I can use the space as a bedroom."

If John Prizeman is to be particularly remembered for his 'Flower Kitchen,' he won't be forgotten for his 'Pocket Kitchen,' either which provided a complete contrast at Harrogate.

Designers rarely pay attention to the problem of tiny kitchens to high standards, yet many luxury flats are very small indeed. All the equipment, which includes two ovens, fits into a space that is only eight feet wide and two feet deep. With a built-in table and comfortable seating

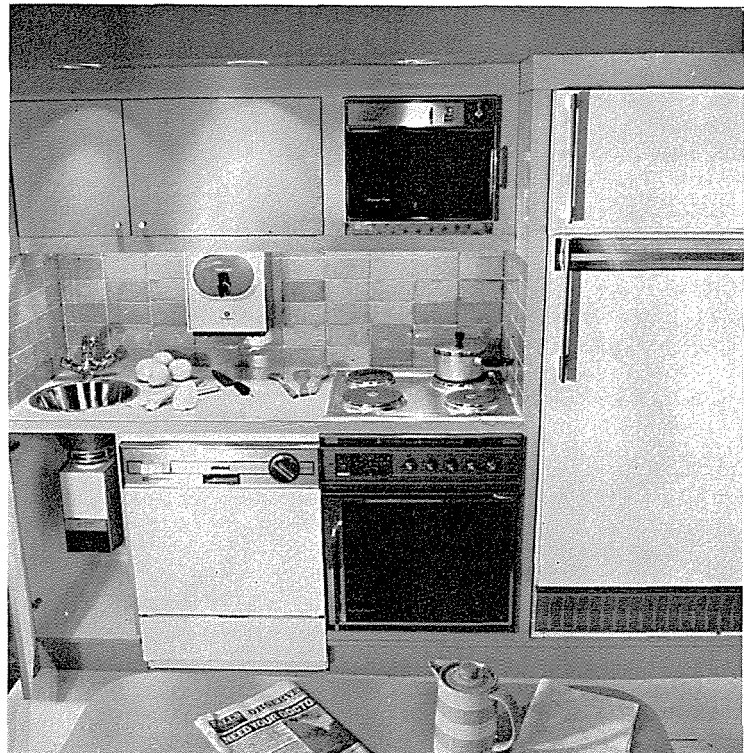
for four, the total area is only eight feet by ten feet.

The 'Pocket Kitchen' has a two-door 'Jupiter' auto-defrosting Thomson Frigeco refrigerator, and the new Thomson SH1221 dishwasher is built-in under the worktop. A new hob and oven from Scholtes of France takes care of most of the cooking, but there is also a Westinghouse microwave oven for quick meals.

The 12-inch stainless steel sink is fitted with a new Westinghouse waste disposer, an efficient and well-engineered design.

Kettle Elements

There must be many homes where the electric kettle has been relegated to the bottom of the cupboard because it has been impossible to find the right replacement element. But now Backer Electric have come up with the solution—a reduced range of replacement parts that are made to fit any of the older models as well as those on sale.



The real problem in the past has been that practically every manufacturer has used an element that has been specially designed for their own models.

This has meant that apart from the difference in size and shape of the elements, fixtures and fittings have varied as well. In fact, when Backer analysed this some years ago, between 30 and 40 different styles were on the market, and they were able to condense these to a stock range of 16, which included the two basically standard head sizes of $1\frac{9}{16}$ and $1\frac{11}{16}$ in.

Now Backer have been able to combine these two head sizes using a special washer which allows the same stock element to fit both diameters. It is called the Backerdaptor and is available in four standard loadings—1500W, 2000W, 2750W and 3000W.

Water Purifier

Another new device at Harrogate was a water purifier that



The reverse osmosis ecologiser, the device that converts tap water into as honest a liquid as you could hope to drink.

converts tap water into as honest a liquid as you could hope to drink, taking out almost all the minerals and other impurities.

It is known as a 'reverse osmosis ecologiser' and the pure water is produced from what looks like a simple box. There's a tap on the front and a connection at the back to attach to

the mains water supply. You can feed it direct from a tap on the kitchen sink, or plumb it in if you wish. It costs £69.93.

Have you ever considered making your own natural cosmetics?

Down through the ages famous beauties such as Madam DuBarry, Marie Antoinette and Cleopatra had their secret beauty recipes. After all there was no local chemist they could go to. So, they had to develop and create their own cosmetics at home.

Now all women can do the same with the Sunbeam Power Blender. Utilising ingredients you can buy in the supermarket you can blend pure, fresh ingredients to create natural cosmetics.

To help you, a number of recipes have been devised with such intriguing names as avocado dry skin mask, cucumber freshener mask, tomato tingle mask and minty meal cleanser.

SALES AND SERVICE

Another excellent example of quality salesmanship coupled with customer service was achieved, this time by Mr. Allan E. Hill of our South Lancashire District energy sales team.

Allan was faced by a very irate customer who considered that the Board, after recommending the White Meter Tariff, were now overcharging him. He had, by using the Board's published tariffs, calculated for himself to prove conclusively that the Board had advised him wrongly.

This customer was important as he was one of 250 on an estate which had recently been modernised with electric central heating and water heating, designed by the Board.

After Allan visited him and carefully explained the tariff structures, the customer soon realised that he was being

charged on the tariff which was most beneficial to him.

The story closed with a very nice letter from the customer thanking Mr. Hill for the clear and concise manner in which the tariffs had been clarified.

Liverpool Pensioners

At the recent Annual General Meeting of pensioners in the Liverpool area, the following officers were appointed:

Chairman: Mr. H. Turner, 30 Kirkmaiden Road, Liverpool L19 9DB.

Secretary: Mr. H. Robertson, 136 Lisburn Lane, Liverpool L13 9DE.

Committee: Messrs. B. Carmen, J. McLaglan, C. Murdock, W. Perkins, W. Pickett, H. Voss and H. Walker.

Electric Blankets

An exclusive feature on the new Monogram all-night electric over-blanket is the safety system designed to prevent the blanket from over-heating.

When the blanket is switched-on there is a slight delay of a minute or so before the neon pilot light on the control panel comes on. This time lag allows for Monogram's world-patented continuous wire sensor safety system to come into operation before the heating circuit is fully energised. Once in use, the system provides unrivalled protection for the blanket and the rest of the bedclothes against overheating.

The delay at the start is a fool-proof indication that the safety check system is operating correctly. If after switching on, a fault develops in the blanket, the automatic sensor operates to switch off the supply.

CHAMPIONS AGAIN!

Chester Ladies Win First-Aid Competition

THE RENOWNED MANWEB Chester Ladies First Aid team triumphed once again—for the fourth year in succession—when they beat all-comers in this year's District First-Aid competition held at Head Office recently. The Ladies have now won the District Rose Bowl seven times in the last eight years—they didn't compete in 1969!

The competition, run by the Merseyside and North Wales Branch of the Electricity Supply Ambulance Centre attracted ten teams this year. The District Shield was won by one of the two mens' teams from the Electricity Council Research Centre at Capenhurst.

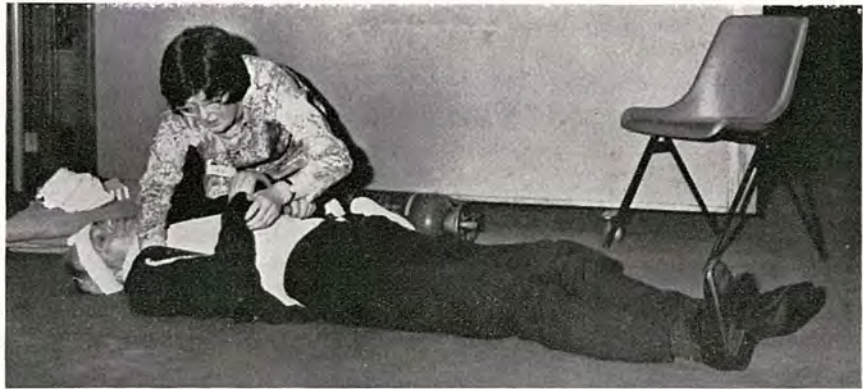
They, as comparative newcomers to competition work, did very well



Team captain, Mrs. Sybil Cooper rendering first-aid to a casualty.

Individuals in action

Miss Elizabeth Jones making the patient comfortable.



testing their skills

Reassuring the injured man, is Miss Elizabeth Jackson.



**OUR COVER
PICTURE**
shows Miss
Sybil Timmins
taking
command in
giving first-aid
to a badly
injured
workman.

to have two teams, but Fiddler's Ferry power station went one better with three teams, mens, mixed and ladies competing.

It was disappointing that we in the Electricity Board could only muster one team. Taking into account the number of staff employed at Sealand Road plus the facilities available for first-aid training, we should have at least a couple of teams from the male staff and an extra team from the ladies. The Districts too, we feel sure, could get teams together, especially now that there is provision in competition work for mixed teams.

But to this year's competition. In the team test, the setting, once again, was first class with the scenery and backgrounds provided by our Display Section. The story was that the team, returning by car from a visit, come across an accident in a quiet country lane. A mini car has crashed through a stone wall, flinging the passenger out, badly injured, on to the road. The driver, a woman, and obviously intoxicated, has managed to scramble out of the vehicle, leaving the engine running and adding to the noise by shouting.

The 'casualties' made the situation seem so authentic as each team took their turn and scurried round doing their first-aid work. All made a good

job of it, but there was comment, later, that some teams did not arrange to have the car engine switched off.

This brought forward the suggestion that in future competitions sound effects could be incorporated as this would no doubt help the first-aiders.

The individual tests were quite frightening both for the audience and possibly for some of the first-aiders. In one of the tests, two men have been handling a heavy girder (*another excellent display prop.*), which has slipped and hit one man a glancing blow on the forehead causing a cut eyebrow and knocking him out. He was crushed against the wall and suffered from asphyxia and blood was pouring from his wound.

In the other individual test, the first-aiders are called to attend to a man who has had a fit while at work. He has fallen and cut his scalp which is bleeding and he has also fractured his wrist.

In the Reserves Test, the first aiders had to deal with an accident to a friend in his home. He has tripped and fractured some ribs in his right side and has a bleeding varicose vein in his right calf.

Capable People

In all the tests, the large audience of supporters were well and truly entertained as the teams and the

At the scene of the accident with the first-aiders busy with the casualties. Marking points for performance is Dr. B. Jones, *left*, and Dr. J. R. Bowker, *extreme right*. The man in the middle is our own Mr. H. Wilson, who played the part of a police officer arriving on the scene.





A familiar picture which shows the MANWEB Chester Ladies team receiving the District Rose Bowl from Mrs. Dodds. The team, from left to right: Miss Anne Jones (reserve), Miss Sybil Timmins, Miss Elizabeth Jones, Miss Elizabeth Jackson and Mrs. Sybil Cooper (captain).

individuals showed that they knew what they were about. They proved that they were able to take command of tricky situations and were well worthy of taking care of things until professional help arrived. Their dedication to this wonderful and worthwhile work was impressively shown in the competition.

Before the winners were announced and the prizes presented, Mr. D. G. Dodds (*Chairman*) thanked the judges and the doctors for the strenuous day they had put in and for the great care they had taken in doing their job. He also had a special word of appreciation for the members of the "Casualties Union" who performed a very taxing and skilled job. He then went on to thank the Cheshire County Constabulary Ladies team for helping the judges in the run through of the tests—the catering staff, the stewards and the many supporters who had come along from a very wide area to back up their teams. Finally, to the teams themselves, Mr. Dodds thanked them for the vast amount of preparation work they has undertaken and for the practical use of what they were doing in their day-to-day work.

Praise for Casualties

As spokesman for the judges, Dr. I. MacIntyre (*CIBA-GEIGY*) added his thanks to the 'casualties.' "They all deserve Oscars," he said, "for one has only to see the real concern on the faces of the first-aiders to realise that the casualties really know their job."

He complimented the members of all the teams saying that on this day of competition, the general standard had been very high. He gave some practical hints to the first-aiders saying that they should always try to reassure the patients and if there was any bleeding, they should stop it immediately. He said that if faced with a problem of not knowing whether

there was a fracture or a sprain, don't hesitate, but treat for a fracture.

Dr. MacIntyre said that a first-aiders should be firm but very careful, pointing out that in one of the individual tests where the patient simulated a wrist fracture, one competitor made sure by standing on it!

He was also in humourous mood when he advised team members to ask questions of the patient or bystanders and cited the case, again in the individual test, where the workman had had a fit. If the first-aiders asked what his job was he may have received the answer, "I'm a fitter." This would have given him a good clue as to what was wrong. The punch line followed when the first-aiders reasoned, "What do fitters have?"—and the answer was "Mates!"

The quote of the afternoon however came from the competitor who, although he had the right approach, made the situation sound most amusing. He pressed a suspect area on the patient and said "Does this hurt you?" the patient winced as he replied, "Yes." "Good," said the first-aiders.

Following Dr. MacIntyre's lively, instructive and amusing summing up, the results were given and the prizes presented by Mrs. D. G. Dodds.

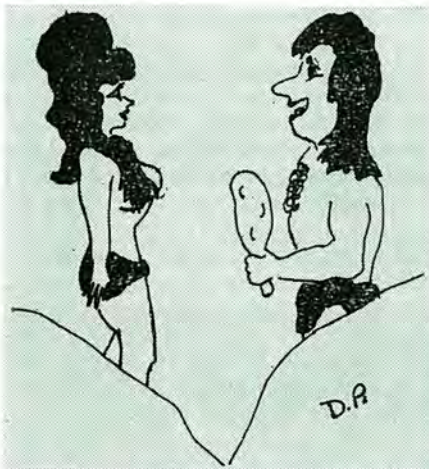
Bringing the proceedings to a close, Mr. K. W. F. Steward, Chairman of the Ambulance Committee, thanked Mrs. Dodds for graciously making the presentations and then went on to endorse the remarks made previously by Mr. Dodds and Dr. MacIntyre. He said that it was most encouraging to see ten teams entered this year and congratulated them all on their fine performances. He wished the winners good luck in the Nationals Finals to be held in London and concluded by appealing for still more teams to enter for next year's competition.



He fires his arrow in the air
It falls to earth we know not where—



I believe Welfare are campaigning for more
people to use these machines.



How about clubbing it tonight?

LAUGH
WITH



I assure you there are no side effects from the flu jab!

DAVID PASSMORE, Head Office Registry &
VIC HOOSON, Mold Depot, Clwyd District

Perhaps a black wing nut for more formal evening wear.



Swinging Conference in North Wirral

Guest Speaker clears the air!

THE IMPRESSIVE and spacious Hulme Hall on the Leverhulme Estate, Port Sunlight, was the venue for the recent Employees' Meeting for members of our North Wirral staff covered by the No. 5 Local Advisory Committee.

Although the night was damp and miserable with more than a hint of fog, inside Hulme Hall was bright lights, piping hot food and lots of lovely ladies in colourful dresses, obviously prepared for the dance which was to follow the meeting.

First however, was the dinner, a meal which everyone thoroughly enjoyed before moving into the large hall to hear Mr. H. Telfer (*Group Manager*) as Chairman of the No. 5 L.A.C. offer an official welcome to everyone and comment on the excellent turnout—with a record attendance around the 160 mark—and with many of the younger generation present.

Mr. Telfer had a special word of welcome for the visitors from Head Office led by Mr. D. G. Dodds (*Chairman*) and from 'over the water' from our Liverpool and North Mersey Districts.

After thanking the caterers—chefs, cooks and serving staff—for the good food, well cooked and served with speed and efficiency, Mr. Telfer went on to give a brief report on the activities undertaken by the L.A.C.

He paid tribute to members of the District Office staff at Craven Street for the way in which they carried on with their work under very difficult circumstances during the period of reconstruction at the offices.

We offer our humble apologies for the absence of photographs with this feature. Pictures were taken, but unfortunately the flash synchronisation mechanism was at fault and the film taken was a complete failure.

Then he dwelt for a while on the Manual Workers' Benevolent Fund which he said had an 80 per cent membership in the District. "But," he went on, "there are still quite a number of people who are not yet taking advantage of the scheme. Our aim is for 100 per cent membership."

He quickly recapped on the objectives of the scheme saying that for only two pence per week, help was always available, in cash or in kind, in times of need. He said that grants were discussed in confidence by a sub-committee and that during the past year, twelve applications for help had been received and in each case grants had been given.

At Christmas, some 76 parcels had been sent from the Fund and many letters of thanks had been received.

Encouraging eligible members of the District who were not already in the scheme to join as soon as possible he said, "It's only two pence a week and one never knows when hard times will hit."

He then went on to talk about the new type of first-aid courses to be started for small groups, and on safety matters he said that the sub-committee had dealt with and examined 45 accidents reports and following investigations, recommendations had been made to the main committee.

After commenting on the lifting and handling courses held at Wallasey he turned to the field of education and training, saying that the committee had only received eight applications for places at the Spring and Summer Schools, and none of these were from manual staff, which in his view was a great pity.

He concluded by saying that the Committee had also examined three suggestions put forward by members of the staff who had gone to some trouble to think of ways to improve efficiency at work. He then assured all present that their Local Advisory Committee representatives were doing a first class job.

Then Mr. Telfer introduced the first of the guest speakers, Mr. C. Cillow, who spoke for a few minutes about National Savings. He talked of the various ways in which everyone could save, and on the principle of "What you've never had, you'll never miss"—savings could be deducted from pay by the Board. He mentioned the scheme for buying Premium Savings Bonds on the installment plan, through the Board, so that by the time the final payment is made, the Bonds are in the 'draw' and you do not have to wait the customary three months.

Mr. Cillow said that it was a wise move to save for the time when a lump sum in cash would come in very handy and he advised everyone to take advantage of the various schemes offered through the Board.

The main speaker for the evening, Mr. C. D. Darley, Chief Public Health Inspector for the County Borough of Birkenhead, was billed to talk on "*Man's Control of Environmental Pollution.*"

He spoke of oil on beaches and cyanide on rubbish tips as being only minor pollution problems compared to what is happening in other areas of our environment. "*The miracle of walking upon the waters could happen on today's heavily polluted River Mersey,*" he said, "*Very soon you will have great difficulty to sink in it!*"

He said that we pollute and we have the powers to overcome and control it. Then he had a pat on the back for the way in which electricity as a fuel generated from power stations helped to counteract the mass air pollution from the many other forms of heating used in homes and factories.

Commenting that the smoke pall above Merseyside could be seen three miles out in the Irish Sea, he further emphasised how costly smoke pollution was, saying that twenty years ago, the damage it caused cost the country about £250 million a year, and today it was about double that amount even though we had taken great steps to overcome many of the problems.

He reminded his audience of the saying "Where there's muck, there's money," which he said in the past, meant that if the factory chimney was belching out thick black smoke, then the men were in work and getting wages. Today, however, where there is muck or smoke there is pollution and this in turn causes great damage to our health.

Mr. Darley said that the life expectancy of a man living in Birkenhead was three years less than that of a man who had spent all his life in a place like Bath. This was simply because of the polluted air he was breathing.

Polluted Homes

He then gave some interesting facts about the polluted homes in Birkenhead which were classed as unfit for human beings to live in. He said that the slum clearance programme in the Borough was for 4,000 houses and they were concerned with a further 12,000 homes which were suitable for improvement. The slum clearance programme in itself would cost £26 million to complete and the Council were spending about half-a-million pounds a month in modernising homes, bringing them up to present-day standards. "This saves pulling the houses down and having to build new ones at £7,000 a time," he said.

As Chief Public Health Inspector, Mr. Darley was also responsible for food and drugs. This again, he informed his listeners, presented him with many problems but problems which could be lessened by the public's co-operation in the fight against pollution, especially in food shops.

He said that he and his team kept a close check on all animals which were slaughtered for food to make sure that they did not have any diseases. They also had to make sure that horse was not being sold as beef, or cat as rabbit.

Speaking of the general lack of appreciation of hygiene among shop staffs, he said that some organisms in human hair were exactly the same as that found on the feet of flies and caused the same type of food poisoning. "You can draw our attention to dirty shopkeepers and their assistants. The remedy is in your hands," he went on.

He talked of some food shop assistants who were nose pickers and pimple scratchers and said that many times people wet their fingers before picking up wrapping paper or blew into a bag before putting food inside. This, he said, was as bad as deliberately spitting on the food being sold and served.

He said that Public Health Authorities relied almost entirely on the general public to send in reports on unscrupulous and unclean traders. Only then could they be prosecuted.

Dirty Streets

He then spoke of litter in the streets and of dogs fouling the pavements and of the moves to combat these things in Birkenhead, even to the extent of bringing in new bye-laws. He talked of the problems brought about with the advent of plastic packaging and nylon wrappings which did not decay like the old-fashioned cardboard and paper. He said that Birkenhead Council were spending some £2½ million on a new type of incinerator which would burn all types of rubbish and refuse and reduce it to ash.

Another thing, he informed us, which affected our environment was noise, and one of the major disturbers was the pneumatic drill. He said that if a workman operated such a drill regularly, in 20 years he would be stone deaf. Various methods had been tried to muffle the drills, but now at last it seemed that a solution had been found in France where they claim to have a silent drill. He mentioned however, that from personal experience, he found that the noise level from a 'switched-on discoteque' was much higher than that of a pneumatic drill.

He concluded his most informative and entertaining talk by saying that pollution of our environment was something which adversely affected us and does us harm, but the remedy and cure is in our own hands. We can control it, only it will cost money.

Mr. Darley, a very powerful and forthright speaker, is obviously dedicated to his work of helping us all to live longer, healthier lives.

Then followed an open forum session with a variety of questions answered by a team led by Mr. Dodds, after which Mr. Norman Kenyon took over to organise dancing to recorded music.

FIRST AID IN NORTH MERSEY

Cartoon Caption Competition Winner

First in the field with Safety Sampling, our North Mersey District have been complimented by the District Joint Advisory Council on the initiative shown by the No. 1 Local Advisory Committee, Safety Sub-Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. A. W. Hawley (*Dist. Engineer*), in encouraging interest in safety by means of a cartoon caption competition for members of the District staff.

The winning caption, submitted by Mrs. Sheila T. Pimblett, a senior clerical assistant in General Services, was as follows:

“He wasn’t ‘Keyed Up’
to Safety—ARE YOU?”

Sheila, formerly of our Southport Office, but now working at District Office, won a book of her choice as a prize.

The Safety Sub-Committee are indebted to Mr. Frank Illingworth, a joiner based at Southport, for his services as the cartoonist.



Mrs. Sheila Pimblett receives her prize from Mr. H. Telfer (*Group Manager*).



CERTIFICATES FOR DISTRICT STAFF

At a recent meeting of the North Mersey Local Advisory Committee, First Aid Certificates were presented to newly-qualified and re-qualified first-aiders. Certificates were handed over by Mr. A. W. Hawley (*District Engineer*), who is also the Chairman of the Safety Sub-Committee. *From left to right: Mr. H. Reynolds (Vice Chairman, No. 1 L.A.C.), Mrs. B. Aspinall, Mr. W. Thomas, Miss P. Turner, Mr. A. Skupski, Mrs. H. Volynchook, Miss B. Cooper, Mr. Hawley, Mrs. J. C. Knowles, Miss M. Weekes and Miss I. Bond.*





Keeping his audience amused, guest speaker Mr. Garbett-Edwards. On his right is Mr. K. Helliwell, and Mr. Thomas on his left.

Aberystwyth District Employees' Meeting

“DEPOPULATION —SCOURGE OF MID-WALES” —*Guest Speaker*

In an hotel on the windswept promenade at Aberystwyth Nos. 10 & 28 L.A.C.'s. held a joint employees meeting early in February. Group Manager Mr. K. Helliwell welcomed the delegates and introduced the visitors from Head Office.

Mr. Gareth Thomas presented the report of the No. 10 committee which serves MANWEB in Aberystwyth. He called for members of the staff to place suggestions before the committee particularly on safety.

Mr. Baxter of the C.E.G.B. then followed with the report of the years activities of No. 28 L.A.C. for the Generating Board staff present.

The guest speaker for the morning meeting was Mr. D. P. Garbett-Edwards, Secretary of the Mid Wales Industrial Development Association. Depopulation was the great scourge of Mid-Wales, he told his audience. There were only 174,000 people in the 8,000 square miles area, about 22 to the square mile.

Young people leaving in relatively large numbers, left the area with a decreasing population as more people were dying than there were births.

It was the decay of the rural way of life and the migration to industrial areas which was mainly responsible. Mid-Wales would lose about 2,000 more people by 1980.

There was a need to repopulate the area, and to do this communications had to be improved. New roads were planned and it was proposed to link the area North to South and East to West. Mr. Garbett-Edwards criticised the Government for not setting targets for his organisation.

There would be 8 million more people in Britain by the end of the century and there was overpopulation in many areas of the country. New jobs were

Part of the audience at the meeting.



needed to attract some of them to Mid-Wales, and the Development Association had already brought 75 new industries to the area and 3,500 new jobs. There were another 2,000 in the pipeline, and 12 new factories being built.

Already the depopulation problem was on the decline and the Development Association were aiming to provide services for people as at present there were insufficient people to support new industry.

Major Centres

Seven towns had been designated major centres for development on the main lines of communication. These were planned so at least one was within 30 minutes travel of most people in Mid-Wales.

Summing up Mr. Garbett-Edwards said his organisation hope to help revive towns, and Newtown provided evidence that growth town strategy worked.

Following the guest speaker Mr. Helliwell spoke on the Board's progress during the year. He emphasised the fact that the Board had now completed it's rural electrification scheme, which was the biggest undertaken in Europe.



Listening intently, another section of the Aberystwyth delegates.

The meeting was then opened to questions from the floor, which were varied in nature and were answered by the panel or by several of the senior members of Head Office staff present.

This concluded the conference and delegates were invited to the luncheon.

HAY DRYING CHAMPIONSHIPS

"Is your hay worth £100 a bale?" is a question several thousand farmers using electric hay drying techniques are being asked. It is the price offered for the best bale of electrically dried hay of the 1973 season in a new Farm-electric Hay Drying Championship sponsored by the electricity supply industry.

The Championship starts with regional competitions in Electricity Board areas where prizes for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd best entries are £25, £15, and £10. Each bale entered will be submitted to an ADAS laboratory for analysis.

Area first prize winners go forward to the national final which will be held at the National Agricultural Centre, Kenilworth, at the beginning of October, 1973. All the bales in the final will be reanalysed at one ADAS laboratory to preclude any possibility of regional discrepancies.

National prize winners will be presented with cheques for £100, £50 and £25 at a conference on Farm-electric Quality Hay at the National Agricultural Centre on October 26th.

Entry forms will be available from Electricity Board Farm-electric specialists.

VISITOR FROM ABROAD



Mr. Emmanuel Larbi, an electrical engineer from Ghana, recently spent eight weeks at Head Office studying MANWEB policies and procedures. Most of his time was spent in the Technical Section of the Engineering Department and in the Commercial Department.

He gained his B.Sc. (Eng.) degree at Kumasi University of Science, and back home, he is responsible for the supervision of engineering activities in the Supply Division and Sub-Division of his organisation.

Sponsored by the British Council, he has previously visited this country and studied with other Electricity Boards and electrical firms.

GOLF

The first Meeting of the season for the MANWEB Chester Golfing Society will be held at the Upton-by-Chester Golf Club on Monday, April 9th.

Anyone wishing to join the Society should contact Mr. W. A. Jones in the Estates and Wayleaves Section at Head Office, Room 4S1, internal tel. 2195.

Northop Girl Wins Cookery Competition

MRS. JOAN Dittrich, our commercial catering engineer, was one of the three experts judging the eight schoolgirls from the Merseyside and North Wales area taking part in a Regional Final round of the United Kingdom Fish Cookery Competition held at the Board's Industrial Development Centre in Liverpool a short time ago.

The winner was Miss Maureen Fazackerley, a 16-year-old student studying for her "A" level in cookery at the Mold Alun Senior School in North Wales. Maureen lives at Groes Farm, Northop and works on a part-time basis at the Springfield Hotel just off the A55.

In second place was another MANWEB area girl, Miss Shirley Strettle from Whiston County Secondary School. Shirley lives at Prescot.



Top Cook—
Miss Maureen Fazackerley

To reach this stage of the competition, the girls had already been judged as 'tops' in their respective schools in local education areas.

In the Regional competition, each girl had to prepare and cook a dish for two in 40 minutes, and not spend more than 60 pence. With food prices as they are today, this in itself was quite a feat. All the food was cooked

electrically on cookers supplied by the Board.

Mrs. Dittrich said "All the girls set about their task in an experienced and professional manner. The presentation of the finished dishes was a joy to the eye and set the gastric juices flowing."

Maureen's winning dish, "Sea Shore Platter," was quickly prepared and beautifully cooked and presented. She now goes forward to compete in the National finals to be held in London in May. There she stands an excellent chance of winning, among other things, a holiday in Norway for herself and her parents.

We wish her the very best of good luck.

THE COOL CHAIN

FLOWERS, soft fruit and vegetables are seldom retailed in perfect condition even when produce is sold at the farm gate. Flowers deteriorate rapidly after cutting and by the time they are sold are probably half way to dying. Strawberries and raspberries are sometimes hardly worth selling, particularly if they have travelled very long distances by the time they reach the retailer. Vegetables lose moisture and look limp and unattractive on shelves. Retailers are forced to take this wastage into consideration and retail prices are higher than if the produce remained harvest fresh to the point of sale.

The Cool Chain, an answer to the problem of deteriorating horticultural produce, was featured by the Electricity Council on their stand at the British Growers Look Ahead Exhibition staged at Brighton recently.

The Cool Chain starts with the removal of the field heat from the produce immediately after harvesting so that the temperature is brought down to 1°—3°C and continues maintaining the cool state to point of sale. Ideally the system should be continued until the fruit or vegetables are removed from the domestic refrigerator by the housewife. Once the temperature is down to

1°—3°C it should never be allowed to rise above 4°C as further cooling will have no effect.

This system will benefit the grower because he is also able to hold the produce in a cool store to await a favourable market or to carry over the weekend, in terms of higher prices for better quality produce. It will also enable produce to be sent, in refrigerated transport to other European markets at times of the year when there is demand there for British flowers, vegetables and soft fruit. Wholesalers will be able to hold produce longer and still be able to get premium prices.

The Cool Chain will help the retailer to reduce wastage dramatically and maintain existing prices to customers, or possibly even reduce them. Housewives will be able to purchase better quality produce with a longer after sale life—an important point for people who only shop once a week.



A group of Safe Drivers from our Liverpool District with Mr. Piper and Board senior officers.

SAFE DRIVERS AT LIVERPOOL

Two separate ceremonies were held recently at Lister Drive for the 49 members of our Liverpool District staff who had qualified for their Safe Driving Awards. Medals, bars and Diplomas were presented to the men by Mr. L. W. Piper, the Road Safety Officer for the City of Liverpool.

The awards were as follows:

Bar to 15-Year Brooch: Mr. Charles W. Whitefield.

Oak Leaf Bar to 10-Year Medal: Messrs. Eric Bush, William H. Butterfield, Philip Horan, Percival Rivers and Charles F. Walmsley.

10-Year Medal: Messrs. Frederick Cato and David Ward.

Bar to 5-Year Medal: Messrs. Robert A. Aindow, James G. Bather, James A. Bell, Sidney Cain,

Richard L. Cardus, Vincent Danks, Herbert A. Hall, Geoffrey C. Hope, David Hughes, George H. Jones, Harry M. Kaye, James A. Liggett, Arthur Rainford, Bernard J. Rice, Gordon Thompson, Albert Tuck, Dennis Underhill and Stanley N. Wappett.

5-Year Medal: Messrs. Roy Atkinson, Arthur Bissell and Edward Dolan.

Diploma: Messrs. Thomas Ball, William Beare, Leslie Blackburn, Thomas Bradley, Geoffrey Butter, John R. Clarke, Alexander Cormack, Terence Gordon, Gordon Harris, Edward Johnson, Charles Jones, Frank Matthews, Thomas H. Mullin, Ernest Neary, Edgar R. Potter, Harold Robertson, Maurice J. Rowe, George Smith, James Walsh and Albert Whitehead.

Another party of Safe Drivers pictured after they had received their awards from Mr. Piper, seated centre. District Officers, seated, from left to right, are: Mr. G. Haughan (District Engineer), Mr. T. D. Hamilton (District Administrative Officer) and Mr. R. I. Jowett (District Commercial Engineer). Mr. H. Telfer (Group Manager) is seated second from the right.



POET'S PAGE

The Cookery Demonstration

by Mrs. Muriel E. Jones

(the former District demonstrator at
Northwich in our Mid-Cheshire District)

The Demonstrator, calm and cool
Surveys the erstwhile Sunday School,
Ensures her Trainee's spruce and neat
And waits, her audience to greet,
With mental note that all is well,
Resolved today, that she will sell
The cooker, mixer, 'fridge and kettle,
And soon is put upon her mettle.

For Mrs. Brown now takes her seat,
She lives y'know at "Hunters' Meet"
And in a voice as cold as ice
Announces—"Everything's quite nice."
Mrs. Young—with such an air
Condescends to take a chair.
Agnes Merry—farmer's wife
Who's cooked for plenty all her life,
Sits foursquare, and looks about
With practised eye, prepared to doubt
And Mrs. George and Mrs. Keating
Arrive, as usual, late for meeting.

The dedication song's begun
Right reverently by everyone,
And when the Minutes have been read
And all that must be done and said,
The Demonstration now begins
The Demonstrator, for her sins,
Now proceeds with ease and skill
To use the cooker, hotplate, grill,
Boil the kettle, mix a cake,
Answer questions—give and take—
(A query? There from Mrs. Rowe
"Please—er—What number—Regulo?")
Puree soup and mix a drink
With hardly time to stop and think
And produce the perfect meal
On which the method sets the seal,
Then she knows the seed is sown
She's made her audience want to own,
The appliances in bright array,
Which she has "Demmed" for them today.

The demonstration now is done
Except for queries, one by one,
"How do I order? How do I pay?"
(You've sold me one of those today")
"Is the cooker made in cream?"
I think that 'fridge is quite a dream"
"Is it true, what we've been told,
One can really cook from cold?"

A vote of thanks, now, if you please,
Will be given by Mrs. Breeze,
And are you now prepared to judge
The entries for the finest fudge.
And then, when ready, and quite free,
"Perhaps you'll take a cup of tea"
The Trainee sighs, Oh—how she wishes
There weren't so many dirty dishes.

"God Save the Queen" is now begun
Right heartily by everyone,
And as the audience moves away,
The skip is packed without delay,
And all is quiet, hushed, and cool,
And once again a Sunday School.

Man Advances Not Without Electrical Benefit

*A little word of thanks from
Mrs. Mavis Blackburne, whose husband Richard
is a former member of our Lister Drive staff.*

MANWEB work is so worth while,
And helps us over many a stile,
In fact you've such a magic touch,
There's nothing else we'd miss so much.

You warm our rooms and cook our meals,
You cut the grass and turn the wheels.
You wash our clothes and boil our brew
And clean our homes and light them too.

You mix our cakes and bake our bread,
You turn cool fans and warm our bed.
Supply our music, sport and views
And keep us up to date with news.

You sew and knit and heat the tank,
Work the computer at the bank.
Turn the machinery at the mill
You saw and rivet, cut and drill.

You clean and polish, wash and dry
Without you we could not get by.
You seem to be our greatest friend
So, grateful thanks to you we send.

Remember when the day is long,
When work seems hard and things go wrong.
Your job's worth while, it means so much.
We all admire your magic touch.

COURSE 260

From left to right: Mrs. M. Corlett (energy sales demonstrator, Mid-Cheshire), Mr. S. Hough (energy sales representative, Mid-Cheshire), Mrs. E. Devine (saleswoman, Walton Vale), Mr. A. Lambert (salesman, Speke) and Mrs. H. Jones (saleswoman, Llandudno Junction).



Wallasey Sales Training School

From left to right: Mr. K. Taylor (marketing representative, North Mersey), and saleswomen Mrs. R. Moore (Bootle), Mrs. S. Jones (Oswestry), Mrs. C. Smith (Ellesmere Port) and Mrs. J. Antrobus (Runcorn).



AND COURSE 261

From left to right: Mr. W. Guile (energy sales representative, North Mersey), Mrs. M. Woods (saleswoman, Bootle), Miss E. V. Jones (marketing demonstrator at Wallasey) and Mr. J. Duddle (energy sales representative, North Mersey).



From left to right: Mrs. J. Kearney (saleswoman, Old Swan), Mr. W. Anthony (energy sales representative, Clwyd), Mr. P. Turnhill (energy sales representative, North Wirral) and Mr. F. Pickles (sales training instructor, Wallasey).



DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF C.C.

The new Deputy Chairman of the Merseyside and North Wales Electricity Consultative Council is Mr. H. Neil Batkin, of Bank Farm, Prees, Whitchurch.

A farmer by profession, he served as a member of one of the first Electricity Users committees in 1948, and then became a member of the Consultative Council in 1953.

Mr. Batkin is also a Councillor and has been a member of the Salop County Council since 1967 and serves on the North Shropshire Rural District Council where he was a former Chairman.

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Mr. Peter Walker, has authorised the appointment of Councillor Batkin for the period until February 1976.

CONGRATULATIONS

Our congratulations go to Mr. Derek Young (*higher clerical assistant*) at our Clwyd District, who was recently elected as Secretary to the Rhyd Golf Club.

Dance Time

The Clwyd District Sports and Social Club are to hold their Easter Dance at the Prestatyn Lido on Saturday, April 7th. The tickets will cost £1 for members and £1.75 for non-members.

Following a run of very successful dances at Head Office there is to be a Board Staff Dinner Dance on Friday, May 4th in the Head Office Restaurant, Sealand Road, Chester.

There is a champagne reception at 8.0 p.m. followed by dinner at 8.30 p.m. Dancing will go on until 1.0 a.m.

Tickets at £1.50 each can be obtained from Mr. R. D. Thomas or Mr. T. H. Dutton at Head Office or from the District Administrative Officer in your own District. Table reservations may be made by ringing 2146 on the Head Office internal circuit.

MANWEB FOR VALUE

In the advertisement columns of one of our local newspapers was an item offering a MANWEB immersion heater—12 months old, hardly used, for £5.

We don't know if this ad. attracted any buyers, but if you know of anyone who wants a brand-new MANWEB immersion heater—unused—it will only cost £3 at any MANWEB shop—where you get value, first and always!

SUPERANNUATION

Copies of the Minutes of the Twenty-Third Annual General Meeting of the members of the Electricity Supply (Staff) Superannuation Scheme, held at the offices of the Electricity Council, 30 Millbank, London on Tuesday, 12th December 1972, are available to retired members upon request.

If you are interested, please contact the Assistant Secretary (Personnel), MANWEB, Head Office, Sealand Road, Chester CH1 4LR.

BIRTHDAY GIRL

Her 60th birthday was a very happy day for Miss Olive Davies, one of our operators in the machine room at Head Office. As her very many friends arrived at work they presented her with gifts and soon there was a table-full, leaving just enough room for the beautiful cake from Mrs. Margery Whitlow, the supervisor. Olive has worked for the Board for the past 24 years, and although she is now 60, she won't be retiring for a while. She is fond of needlework and knitting and likes art and music. She also does her own decorating at her 'Fairy House' in Hawarden.





A long line of blunt nosed gleaming Lightning jet aircraft faced me as I stepped from the crew room onto the tarmac of the RAF station at Coltishall, Norfolk. I was about to have my first flight in this 1500 m.p.h. RAF fighter—a rare privilege for a civilian.

Having already undergone a stringent medical, decompression test, lectures on safety and survival, and a fully-clothed dip in a swimming pool to see how I coped with survival equipment, I was passed fit to fly.

Fully briefed, I was to accompany Liverpool-born Flight Lieutenant Christopher Coville on a routine patrol. Chris is married with three children and comes from West Derby, where his father still lives. At 27 he is an Instructor on No. 2 (Training) Squadron at RAF Coltishall, having had experience of flying other types of jet fighters.

We reach our aircraft, I climb up the ten-foot ladder, slide down into the tiny cockpit. Outside there is feverish activity as our ground crew prepare for “firing up” the two mighty Avon jets which can catapult the Lightning up to an altitude of 9 miles in 60 seconds.

In the cockpit I fumble with the countless straps which anchor every part of my body to the seat . . . on with the helmet, clamp on the oxygen mask, remove pins 1, 2, 3 and 4—ejector seat primed.

Beside me Chris is already working hard—No. 1 engine running . . . No. 2 engine running . . . The cockpit canopy clicks shut. We begin to taxi.

Line up on runway 22. A final methodical check of the masses of instruments and dials.

“Clear for take-off,” rasps a voice in our earphones.

Engines run to 85%.

“Rolling . . . Rolling . . . GO!” calls Chris.

Brakes off. Re-heat on. A terrific thump in the kidneys as the 33,000 lbs of thrust blast us along the runway. Airborne at 200 m.p.h. The undercarriage slams home. The Lightning shudders. We streak over the perimeter at 350 m.p.h., bank left, and bore up into the clear blue sky. My arms and legs are pinned down by the force. I can just about move my head . . .

We level out at 36,000 feet. The speed reaches 700 m.p.h., the acceleration gradually decreases and I am able to move my limbs again. Below, the North Sea, and to the right the Dutch coast. We are cruising “on station.”

The headphones crackle, “O.K. you fly it, Brian.” I take the controls.

Scared Stiff!

Still shaken by the rapid take off and climb, I am content to fly a straight and level course, enough for me to feel, however, just how responsive the Lightning is.

Suddenly, a new voice breaks through the routine chatter. It’s from the Ground Control Interception station, part of the radar stations networked over the U.K., warning us of an unidentified aircraft approaching from the North East, about to penetrate British airspace.

Chris grabs back the controls. Am I about to witness an “international incident?” With data provided from the ground, Chris pushes buttons, flicks switches. The aircraft, with its two air to air missiles slung beneath the wings, is ready to strike.

Again the phenomenal thrust as the re-heat

cuts in. MACH 1—smoothly through the sound barrier. Guided by a voice from the GCI station, we swing North West. I'm riveted into my seat, barely able to open my eyes, head forced between my shoulders . . . MACH 1.4, 1.5, 1.6—that's 1200 m.p.h. (Liverpool to London in 10 minutes!)

"Tally Ho!" yells Chris as the target appears on our radar. Fifty miles away and closing at a combined speed of 2000 m.p.h. Another numbing turn as we climb onto an attack vector. Chris makes a split second speed and fuel calculation (at these speeds the engines consume 50 gallons a minute),

Missiles gone!—well that could have been the situation had this been a genuine interception, but not on this routine training exercise. Re-heat off, throttle back, and there's our target, a sister aircraft from Coltishall still 4 miles away.

We turn for base. The nose dips toward the North Sea. We lose height gradually. An air traffic control Station remote from Coltishall, guides our initial approach. Ten miles out, the home station's own precision radar controller takes over and talks us down until we sight the runway. Panel lights indicate wheels down and locked. A slight jolt as we touch down at 200 m.p.h. Out comes the brake 'chute, and we are home.

We had been airborne 35 minutes and this 18 ton metal beast had devoured enough fuel to drive a mini around the equator. The aircraft had reached a top speed of 1200 m.p.h., considerably less than it's maximum, and I had been initiated into the "Ten Ton Club," exclusive to those who have handled the controls of a Lightning at speeds in excess of 1000 m.p.h.

The operational Lightning is a single-seater, all-weather interceptor, costing in the region of £1m. The RAF have five operational squadrons in the United Kingdom.

Fully armed Lightnings are on stand-by alert, day and night, ready to scramble in one minute and streak off to intercept an intruder. There are many such interceptions each week, and the prospective target may turn out to be an innocent airliner slightly off-course, or a long range reconnaissance aircraft from the USSR, attempting to probe our defences.

The men who fly these complex monsters are all trained at Coltishall on a two-seater version of the Lightning, with dual controls. They will have previously flown other jets such as Gnats and

BRIAN E. STIFF

At 31 Brian has always had a keen interest in aircraft and flying, although he has only flown piston-engined trainers. Two years ago we reported on his visit to RAF Coltishall where he looked around the base and tried out the simulator for the Lightning Jet.

He has now been able to obtain the privilege of an actual flight in the real thing, the RAF's fastest operational aircraft, the Lightning.

As a guest of Strike Command he visited RAF Coltishall in Norfolk, where he saw how our front line pilots are trained and how speedily the RAF can strike at a potential enemy.

Hunters. To train a Lightning pilot costs in the region of £250,000. Manchester United's price tag on George Best was a little higher than that, but in comparison the country pays a bargain price for its' strikers in the sky.

These front line pilots to whom I spoke were agreed that the Lightning is one of the finest interceptors in the world today, and I was certainly impressed by the speed, manoeuvreability and smooth acceleration of the machine. However, it takes the skill of cool dedicated men like Flt. Lieut. Chris Coville to tame these powerful birds, and while such men exist we can sleep easy in our beds.



Here we see Brian, *right*, with his wife Susan, who works in our Plant Supplies Section at Head Office. Sue, is the reigning Chester "Queen of Commerce." They are joined for the picture by Flight Lieutenant Chris Colville.

Queens of the Netball Court at Head Office

Having just played their final game of their first season in the Deeside Leisure Centre Netball League, our young team from Head Office have done reasonably well against some strong and experienced opposition. Here they are in their very smart strips, from left to right, back row: Jean Whittle (*Commercial*), Joan Cunnah (*mail room*), Linda Mayers (*Revenue*). Front row: Cora Roberts (*Personnel*) captain, Jeanette Arrow-smith (*Revenue*), Ann Parry (*mail room*) and Sue Parry (*mail room*).



and at Rhyll

Formed twelve months ago, the Clwyd District Netball team joined the Prestatyn Sports Centre League and have played in some excellent matches, going from strength to strength.

The team, shown here, are, from left to right, back row: Margaret Roberts, Kaz Adcock, captain, Stephanie Peel, Lyn Williams and Dianne Morgan. Front row: Anne Evans, Susan Munro, Margaret Saunders and Penny Goodall.





Here we feature our six girls who entered for this year's Chester Queen of Commerce competition. The lucky one chosen to go to the final round was red-haired Janet Ann Stokes.

Janet Ann Stokes

A sweet 16-year-old who will attempt to bring the title to MANWEB for the third year in succession. Janet lives in Saltney and works as a clerk in the Revenue Section. She likes dancing, music and films and she would like to go to America.



Hazel Mary Jones another 16-year-old, also comes from Saltney and works in the Revenue Section. Hazel likes reading, sewing, dancing and yoga.



Sandra May Shakeshaft is 24 and works as a clerk in the Estates and Wayleaves Section. She enjoys dancing, gardening and driving. She would like to own a pub.



Megan Blaney works as an accounts clerk at Head Office. She is 18 and would like to become a teacher. Hobbies—dancing, theatre, cinema, swimming.



Sheila Mary Hockenhill is 23 and works as a higher clerical assistant in the Revenue Section. She likes ballroom dancing, music and jigsaw.



Jean Lander is 21 and works as an accounts clerk in the cash office. Jean likes animals and is interested in antiques. She would like her own cattery

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE

Thermal Insulation

Mr. David Steel asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will, in the interests of energy conservation, recommend higher levels of insulation in new dwellings and commercial premises and in addition seek to apply these higher levels to home improvements authorised under the grants scheme.

Mr. Channon: I have been asked to reply.

The Government's review of thermal insulation standards for new buildings is almost complete. Before the issue of advice to local authorities is considered, it will be desirable to consult the local authority associations, and this will be the next step. Local authorities have discretion to decide in individual cases whether this type of work should qualify for a house improvement grant.

National Industries (Price Restraint)

Mr. Skeet asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what compensation the State industries of transport, electricity, gas and coal are asking for to offset their restraint in raising prices during phase I and phase II of the standstill in wages, salaries and prices.

Mr. Higgins: The effects of the continued price restraint will be taken into account along with other factors in considering financial arrangements between the Government and the nationalised industries in the coming financial year. Discussions are still in progress with the gas and electricity industries on assistance up to the end of this financial year.

Legislation on the National Coal Board is before Parliament; support for the British Railways Board is being provided through Votes.

Nationalised Industries Counter Inflation Policy

Mr. Bruce-Gardyne asked the Prime Minister if he will invite the heads of the nationalised industries to join his discussions with the CBI and the TUC about counter-inflation policy.

Mr. Barber: I have been asked to reply. A representative of the nationalised industries took part in the talks leading up to the decisions on the second stage of the programme for controlling inflation set out in the recent White Paper, and we will obviously want to discuss the implementation of the policies with the nationalised industries.

Mr. Bruce-Gardyne: I thank my right hon. Friend for that reply. No doubt he read the profoundly worrying remarks by the Chairman of the Electricity Council on Tuesday. As the state of the finances and boardroom morale of the nationalised industries are in a somewhat parlous state, may I ask why it was decided that the pricing restraint imposed on the nationalised industries under phase 2 should be more severe and restrictive than that imposed on other loss-making concerns?

Mr. Barber: That was obviously one of the factors to which we gave the most serious attention. As my hon. Friend knows—because we have discussed the matter on a number of occasions—I have never sought to deny the disadvantages of holding down prices in nationalised industries which are in deficit. But, bearing in mind the overriding importance of controlling inflation, we came to the conclusion that in present circumstances this was the right policy, and I have no doubt that it is.

Mr. Palmer: Does not the right hon. Gentleman agree that the Government have treated the nationalised industries very badly in this respect?

Mr. Barber: No, Sir.

Electricity Generating Capacity

Mr. Hardy asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what is the present total generating capacity of the Central Electricity Generating Board and the South of Scotland Electricity Board, respectively; and what is his estimate of the average annual increase in capacity which will be required to 1980.

Mr. Tom Boardman: I am advised by the generating boards that the present output capacity of the CEGB is 56,055 MW and that of the SSEB, for which my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland has responsibility, is 5,920 MW. Forecasts of future capacity requirements depend on many assumptions, of which the most important is estimated future demand for electricity, but the uncertainties are such that no firm estimate can be made at present of the increase in capacity which may be required by 1980.

Hypothermia

Mr. Tope asked the Secretary of State for Social Services if he will inform local authorities of the names of the manufacturers of the low wattage electric under-blankets he considers suitable for the use of pensioners which are commercially available; and how many types of such blanket there are.

Sir K. Joseph: I would refer the hon. Member to my reply to him on 1st February. I understand that under-blankets which meet the requirements of British Standard BS3456 are satisfactory in normal domestic use provided proper attention is paid to the manufacturer's instructions, but

none of these could be regarded as suitable for unsupervised use by elderly people in cases of senility, mental disorder or incontinence. The National Research Development Corporation has filed patent applications for the development of an improved type of safety blanket to meet the needs of very frail elderly people living alone and hope to be able to arrange for limited production and trials in the fairly near future.

Nationalised Industries (Price Restraint)

Mr. Bruce-Gardyne asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a further statement about the progress of his discussions with the managements of the nationalised industries regarding Exchequer compensation for their participation in price restraint; and what is now his estimate of the cost of such compensation in the current financial year.

Mr. Patrick Jenkin: I have nothing to add to the information in the Answers given on 13th December to my hon. Friend the Member for Cirencester and Tewkesbury (Mr. Ridley)—and on 29th January to my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford (Mr. Skeet).

Mr. Bruce-Gardyne: Will my hon. Friend confirm that not one nationalised industry is now running at a surplus on current operations, let alone approaching its required financial returns? What will be the impact of this on next year's borrowing requirement? Will it be over £4,000 million, over £4,500 million, or what?

Mr. Jenkin: My hon. Friend will not expect me to answer the last part of his question at this time. We have always made it clear that there are dangers in subsidising the nationalised industries, but the dangers of

inflation are even greater. It is for that reason that we have sought to ask them to restrain their prices, and they have done so—and it has been greatly in the national interest that they have done so.

Mr. Stonehouse: Does the Minister not agree that the artificial holding down of prices in publicly-owned industries amounts to a subsidy to private business? If these publicly-owned undertakings are to be able to finance the developments that they must have in the next few years is not a realistic pricing policy called for?

Mr. Jenkin: The right hon. Member is right to say that a pricing structure which allows nationalised industries to earn a reasonable return on their assets, assists them to find the finance for investment. In the interests of counter-inflationary action, however, we have asked them—and they have agreed—to restrain their prices. But their investment programmes are not held back, because they have access to lending from the National Loans Fund.

Domestic Meters and Fuse Boxes (Accessibility)

Mr. Lomas asked the Secretary of State for the Environment (1) if he will recommend that in new housing development, and in houses where improvement grants are given, gas and electricity meters and fuse boxes are placed in an accessible position;

(2) if he will recommend that in new housing development, and in houses where improvement grants are given, gas and electricity meters are placed in such a position that external reading facilities are available.

Mr. Channon: Housebuilders are well aware of the advantages of external meter reading and the accessibility of services equipment.

The Electricity Council has recently reported an increasing popularity of outdoor electricity meter cupboards and that a significant number of new houses are now being equipped with them.

External meter facilities are not always appropriate. There would, for instance, be problems of vandalism where pre-payment meters are used. I have commissioned design research to see whether this problem can be solved.

In the case of older housing, external meter facilities can be provided as part of grant-aided improvement work. It will, however, be for the local authority and householder concerned to assess whether the advantages of external meter facilities outweigh the cost of providing them in older housing.

Night Storage Central Heating (Rates)

Mr. Crouch asked the Secretary of State for the Environment why houses with electric night storage central heating are rated lower than identical houses with other systems of central heating.

Mr. Eldon Griffiths: Rateable values are based solely on rental values. These are not affected by appliances like night storage heaters which the tenant can take away with him. Other systems of central heating form part of the structure of the property and thus increase the rental value.

Domestic Electrical Plugs and Sockets (Standards)

Mr. Harold Walker asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will take steps to establish standards for domestic electrical plugs and sockets.

Mr. Emery: No. The preparation and publication of national standards in the United Kingdom is the task of the British Standards Institution.

The Long Arm of Justice

AN INTERESTING and unusual case has arisen in the South Lancs District, concerning the illegal use of electricity by a small engineering firm. The case is of interest not so much from the fact that a company, and not a domestic consumer was involved in such activities, although this of itself is, fortunately a very rare occurrence, but rather because of the lengths to which the company, with the exercise of a considerable degree of skill and ingenuity, had gone in order to undertake the theft.

The company were supplied on a three-phase metering system, and had been consumers for some eighteen months at the time that the offence came to light, in the following circumstances.

On the usual quarterly reading being obtained, it was discovered that all three meters were registering less than at the end of the previous quarter. The premises were then visited, when the meter inspector found all three meters and the cut-out were unsealed, and the meters were running backwards.

The last phenomena had been accomplished by unsealing the meters and re-arranging the wiring. It was, of course, impossible to prove over what period of time this practice had been operative, but, by totalling up the negative readings, an absolute minimum of current, illegally used was arrived at. Not, however, content with tampering with the meters, the cut-out had also been unsealed. On the first visit to the premises, nothing untoward was discovered with regard to the cut-out, and it was resealed.

In view of the discovery of the state of the meters, a further visit was paid to the premises, when it was found that the seal on the meter had again been broken, the wire having been pushed back into the seal in an effort to conceal this.

A system of wiring was discovered behind the meter board,

with three wires disappearing through holes drilled in the board. The wiring was warm and obviously in use at that time. Two additional switches had been introduced to this wiring system, in such a manner that either all, or none, or a percentage of the current would pass through the meters.

Thus the company could, if it so desired, consume completely unmetered electricity, but if, for the purposes of running the meters backwards to erase an existing reading they wished current to pass through the meters,

this could be achieved by merely flicking two switches.

A further visit was paid on the same day and it was found that the wires, although still passing through the meter board, had been detached from the cut-out, presumably again in an effort to make proof of the theft more difficult.

It is significant that, had the company not "overdone" the reversal of the meters resulting in a negative reading on the usual quarterly meter reading being taken, the offence might not have come to light, although obviously a very much reduced consumption would have resulted in inspection of the meters and the discovery of the theft.

Crime does not, however, pay, and the company was fined £300, and ordered to pay compensation to the Board on an estimate of current illegally used.

Obituary

Miss E. E. BLACK

It is with deep regret that we record the death after a long illness of Miss Elizabeth Evelyn (Betty) Black. A service was held at Landican Crematorium at which many of her friends attended, and a collection was made from her colleagues in the Board amounting to £25 which was donated to the Cancer Research Fund.

Betty joined Birkenhead Corporation in 1947, vesting to the Board on nationalisation in 1948. She was on the staff of the Revenue Department until she transferred to the Finance Section in 1970.

A keen member of the Sports and Social Club, Betty served on the Committee when the Club was first formed in 1949. She was also a Nalco representative.

She will be sadly missed by all her former colleagues.

Mr. E. W. SIMPSON

We regret to report the death a short time ago of Mr. Edward William Simpson. Ted, as he was popularly known, was employed for many years as a substation attendant before transferring to the clerical staff at Hatton Garden a few years ago. We extend our sincerest sympathy to his widow Lilian.

Mr. E. MORRIS

A well-known and very popular former member of our staff at Llanberis, Mr. Ernest Morris, M.B.E., died at his home a short time ago. Prior to his retirement two years ago from his job as foreman, Mr. Morris had worked for the electricity supply industry for over 45 years, and was awarded the M.B.E. for this long and loyal service.

His wife Margaret, predeceased him two years ago.

Garden Hedges

(By Gardening Correspondent)

AFTER the motor mower the hedge trimmer is the most popular piece of powered equipment to be found in British gardens. This is scarcely surprising. Nobody seems to have tried to estimate the total length of hedges in our gardens, let alone those on farms and elsewhere. But it must run into many thousands of miles, and more are being planted in gardens every year.

The Englishman's "castle" and its domaine is becoming smaller as land prices soar, and it is not surprising that the more you live on top of your neighbours, the more you wish to screen part of your garden to secure some shelter and privacy.

The demand for hedge plants is enormous and increasing, especially for Cupressocyparis leylandii, the fastest growing evergreen conifer. Plants about 18 inches high do not grow much in their first summer. But if watered as necessary, and fed regularly with a general fertilizer, they may easily reach six feet at the end of their third summer. This conifer may be close trimmed and kept to any desired height.

There are, of course, many desirable hedge plants. Choosing a hedge is a matter worthy of careful consideration. If it is required as a winter and summer screen, choose an evergreen—a conifer, laurel, or that much underestimated shrub Portugal

laurel or *Prunus lusitanica*. This last produces long spikes of creamy flowers in June if it can be allowed space to develop without hard clipping every year.

Incidentally, do not take shears or hedge trimmer to the laurel family. If one of their large leaves is cut in half the lower half will turn brown and it will look very unsightly. Always prune laurels with secateurs. This is another reason why they should be planted where they can have plenty of room to spread—up to about eight feet wide.

Like many hedges, including privet, laurels can become very bare for up to half their height with age and, of course, they can if neglected grow too tall for their lodgings. But they may be cut down to within a foot or two of the ground, and will make new growth freely. Give them some quick acting nitrogenous fertilizer, such as dried blood, at the rate of about six to eight ounces per yard run, in the spring.

Then we often want hedges for protection against animals and children. To deter animals one can put, say, two to three feet high wire netting alongside the hedge and let the hedge grow through and hide it. To keep out the children, prickly hedges like holly or berberis are useful deterrents.

But the great majority of hedges have to be trimmed, and here the motorized—mainly electric—hedge trimmers have proved a boon.

The amateur has the choice of mains voltage single or double sided trimmers, attachments for electric drills, and trimmers working at 110 volts. All these trimmers, of course, need a cable long enough to reach the farthest point of the hedges.

The latest developments are in battery operated trimmers. These are available in various sizes up to 30 inches long, with single or double sided blades. They have 12 volt motors, and may be powered by a car battery, a battery fitted to an electric lawn mower, or by a small portable rechargeable battery which you can sling over your shoulder. Thus, varying degrees of mobility are available. Obviously the type of trimmer powered by the portable battery is very mobile, and will achieve one to two hours actual trimming on one charge of the battery.

Even more easily portable are the trimmers with two small, almost infinitely rechargeable cadmium cell batteries concealed in the handles. They only weigh around three and a half pounds, and will give at least 45 minutes continuous trimming. They may be recharged overnight by means of a small charger.

These cadmium cell trimmers are really the shape of things to come, both as regards safety, and complete mobility. They will trim all annual growth with ease.

So no matter how you plan to trim your hedges, prepare to do it in late Autumn. Then you can admire your neat hedge until summer next year.

'Caption' Competition

We are indebted to a couple of our colleagues from the Display Department at Head Office, Messrs. G. A. S. Lewer and W. Swann, for this idea for a 'Contact' competition.

All you have to do is to look at the pictures in this magazine and take any one then write your own caption to it.

The two people who submit the most apt and funniest captions, in the opinion of the editor—and he is easily amused—will receive £2 each for their efforts.

The competition is open to all MANWEB employees, pensioners and their families.

Send your entries to *The Editor, 'Contact,' MANWEB Head Office, Sealand Road, Chester CH1 4LR*, to arrive not later than April 9th.

We think this competition is a great idea—let's see what you think of it!