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THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE
WATERWORKS COMPANY

NEWS REVIEW



HEAD OFFICES,
SHEEPCOTE STREET.

DECEMBER, 1951.

VOL. 1.

No. 4.





EDITORIAL

Our first duty in this issue is to wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year. To me, as Editor, it is indeed a very pleasant task since it is the last opportunity I shall have of expressing these sentiments to you through the medium of this Journal. As reported elsewhere in this issue, I am about to leave the Company's service for an appointment in Devonshire and shall be obliged to resign from the Editorial chair.

My short term as Editor of the News Review has, I hope, set the new venture on a long and successful career. There have been many difficulties to overcome in producing the journal and no doubt there will be more for my successor. Nevertheless, I am sure that provided he or she has the same support that has been so generously accorded me, the News Review cannot help but flourish.

In a previous editorial we announced the proposal to run an indoor games competition this winter. We think it a great pity that through lack of support the proposal has not yet materialised. This unfortunate incident gives little encouragement to those who without thought of reward give up much of their leisure time in an endeavour to promote the welfare of the Company's employees as a whole. We shall not have a happy and contented undertaking unless all concerned give unstinted support to the principles and endeavours of both the Staff Association and the Benevolent Fund.

Since our last edition Miss D. Wakefield has found it necessary to resign from her position as editor of the Ladies Page. In expressing our regret we wish to place on record our appreciation of the services she has rendered. Mrs. Dayes, whose previous contribution has entailed cutting the stencils and assisting in the printing and binding, has been good enough to take over Miss Wakefield's duties. We are deeply grateful to her and wish her every success.

C A N N O C K.

Around and About

The News is Good! Our Depot has come to life again! Strangely enough, the last move in the winding-up of the Cricket Club coincided with a strong effort to begin a social movement among the workmen.

A Sports and Social Club has now been formed with an enthusiastic Committee; Mr. Cherrett, our Superintendent, has kindly consented to become "President".

Our very efficient Secretary, Tom Potts, plumber, has 'wiped away' many difficulties and has already enrolled 42 members, all of whom have agreed to contribute 6d. per week each in a sincere effort to keep the Club on a firm financial basis.

We have been successful in obtaining the use of St. Luke's Institute, situated in the town centre of Cannock for our use on Thursday evenings. We are more than fortunate in this respect as this Clubroom contains two first class billiards tables and provision for Darts, Dominoes and Card Games etc., together with excellent facilities for 'Light Refreshments'.

A football team has been organised and took the field for the first time on Saturday, 27th October, against the team of Cannock Area Midlands Electricity Board Suggestions were that our colours should be 'Green and Concrete', but we turned out in borrowed plumes of 'Dark Green' despite the cheers of our supporters and the exhortation of our team manager, our limbs failed to keep up with the tempo of the game but we heroically held out until the closing stages of the game when the 'Sparks' turned on their 'Full Power' coupled with their 'High Tension', resulting in our defeat by 3 goals to nil.

As we all turned wearily homewards, the strains of 'Oh weary band of Pilgrims' fell upon our ears from the ancient tower of St. Luke's Church, where Ted. Borley, our Mains Ganger, was at practice with his fellow bellringers.

In conclusion, we must admit we still require many such articles as a football, packs of cards, darts etc. but we hope in the near future to invite our neighbouring Depots to visit us for a pleasant evening together and a special invitation is extended to our old friends and cricket rivals, Head Office May we quote from our 'Constitution' the

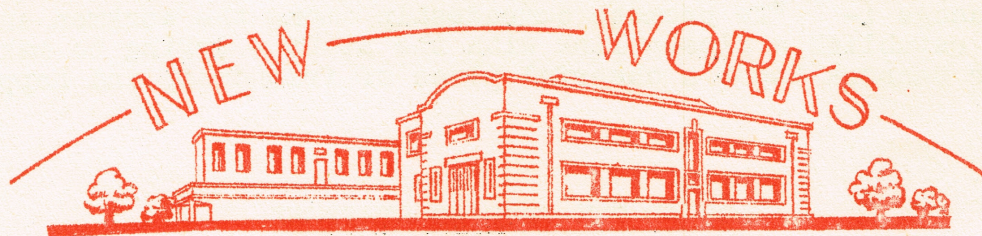
passage :- "To promote comradeship among the workmen and to establish a closer link with the Staff - trying to make our Cannock Depot a cheerful place of friendship and happiness.

AROUND THE PUMPING STATIONS

With the approach of the Christmas season and the on-coming winter months it is good for us to reflect upon the blessings of the past summer. Let us hope that those who were fortunate enough to seek an early holiday benefited greatly from the change and the sunshine. True enough, the latter part of the summer was a "waterworks season" and our Chief Officials had a rather less worrying time.

We have noted with great pleasure the pride which is now being taken by the employees in the upkeep of some of the pumping station grounds. Of course, not all are fortunate enough to work in rural surroundings, but those who do, have made valiant efforts to bring joy and beauty to their grounds and are to be heartily congratulated. We should be very bold indeed to single out any one for special mention, but the writer has been particularly impressed by the appearance of Brindley Bank, Chilcote, Fradley, Prestwood, Kinver, Slitting Mill, Shenstone, Little Hay and Pipe Hill. There are others, less fortunate, whose windows look out on stacks of coal or pipes but, who knows, they may yet live to see these white-washed!!!

Sandfields, with its 20 yds. x 2 yds. of garden space, struggles amidst difficulty, but it is well that we should not forget the magnificent efforts from this area which have meant considerable reduction in the running costs of the canteen, much of our greengrocery having been cultivated around this delightful district. There was also a pleasing display of flowering bulbs at the Lichfield Pools during the early part of the year. Unfortunately the feathered world took a fiendish liking to the crocus bulbs and wrought complete havoc amongst them. At the same time, Mr. & Mrs. Swan, becoming so attracted to the beautiful surroundings of Minster Pool brought their family from Maple Hayes, much to the enjoyment of the public. Had they taken a fancy to the gay coloured lights which illuminated the pools and gardens at night, I wonder?



CHURCHILL

The site chosen for Churchill Pumping Station is in delightful open country mid-way between Stourbridge and Kidderminster, and about two miles east of Kinver.

Permission to start work on the site was finally received in June of this year, since when an access road has been put in by our old friend George Rawdon of Messrs. R.M. Douglas & Co. Limited, who have also laid a drain for half a mile from the site to dispose of the water from the pumping tests. Messrs. George Law Limited have also been on the site and have laid a 6" diameter asbestos main for a mile from the site to Axborough Reservoir. This is a small reservoir belonging to Kidderminster Rural District Council, to whom a permanent supply will be afforded when the station is completed. These two contracts have been supervised by Ernie Pierce and Ben Street of Tipton Depot.

By now, the best known vehicle in the Churchill district is the 'ex-Company's' car GJO.985, and wherever it was found, one would also find Bob Plant busy digging up a backyard in search of a long lost well. He has now carried out a complete survey of all the wells and streams in the district and has unearthed an interesting local custom of running the sewers into disused wells! Fortunately, this does not happen near to Churchill itself, as they have no sewers at all there as yet.

The well-boring at Churchill is being carried out by Messrs. George Stow Limited, who are represented on site by Mr. Rowland Hill. Since they arrived at the end of June, they have sunk a small diameter trial borehole to a depth of 795 ft., have erected their derrick over the first of the two main boreholes and have sunk this to a depth of 25 ft.

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The rock encountered at Churchill is sandstone, similar to that met at Ashwood, Prestwood and Kinver, and promises to yield an excellent supply of reasonably soft water. The yield is at present being tested by pumping from the trial borehole at a rate of 10,000 g.p.h. for 14 days --- and nights. This operation is being watched in turn by Messrs. Groves, Jones, Morton and Runyard, and the site is so brightly lit at night that the locals call it the Festival of Churchill. R.C.Plant, meanwhile, is carrying out a daily search of his wells for depletion.

The boring Contract requires that the two main boreholes shall be completed within a year from the test on the trial borehole. It will then be possible to erect the station which the County Planning Officer requires to be rural in character and will be something of a departure from traditional S.S.W.Co. stations. When completed the station will pump up new 18" dia. and 24" dia. mains through Hagley to Hayley Green Reservoir, whence it will supply Halesowen and later Blackheath.

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THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE WATERWORKS COMPANY

EMPLOYEES' MUTUAL THRIFT FUND.

An Extraordinary General Meeting of the above Fund was held at the Head Offices, Birmingham, on Thursday, 18th October 1951, at 6 p.m. and the following recommendation of the Committee was considered and approved.

"That an interim dividend of 2% per annum tax free in respect of Class 2 Shares for the half year ending 31st March 1952, be credited to members accounts, and calculated on the amounts standing to their credit at 30th September 1951."

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FOR THE CHILDREN.

The Winner of the Competition for discovering surnames deriving their origin from trades or occupations is

BRENDA LANE. Age 13 years.
(Ward of Turncock A.Shaw, Great Barr)

CONGRATULATIONS!

Personalia

MR. C.F.HODGSON

In October, we said "Good-bye" to Mr. Frederic Hodgson L.R.A.M. after six years service with the Company. Mr. Hodgson was a Vicar Choral at Lichfield Cathedral, and on returning to his duties at Lichfield, after being invalided out of the Civil Defence Service, took up an appointment at the Laboratories. His journeys between the Cathedral and Sandfields doubtless imparted an ecclesiastic air to Sandfields and probably a waterworks atmosphere to the Cathedral and we hope both these influences assisted him to rise to more royal circles by his appointment to St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

Many will recall his speaking voice on the telephone at Sandfields. Music lovers will remember his singing in Lichfield Cathedral or with the Lichfield Cathedral Quartette, or again in special alto parts on the Third Programme or even as Choirmaster of Massed Choirs in their renderings of the more popular Oratorios.

We, who have enjoyed his company in the more mundane associations, wish him Good Luck and Happiness in his new venture.

STAFF CHANGES.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

The following have recently entered the Company's service. We welcome them and hope we may long enjoy their association:-

J.Poxon	-	Architectural Department
W.N.Bett	-	Distribution Department
J.Fradgley	-	Accounts Department
H.J.Irish	-	Revenue Department
F.E.Cory	-	Distribution Department
Miss H.M.Rafferty	-	Typists (Engineer's)
Miss J.Lowe	-	Service Department
Miss S.Green	-	Order Department

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RESIGNATIONS

L.Dodgson	-	Blithfield Reservoir R.E.'s Staff
D.Hallett	-	Civil Engineering Department
J.A.Smith	-	Architectural Department
R.C.Stringer	-	Architectural Department
Miss B.Wallace	-	Distribution Department
B.Dawkins	-	Walsall
Miss S.Lees	-	Service Department
Miss P.Lees	-	Typists (Engineers)

We wish the above every success in their new work.

TRANSFERS

H.Hendley	-	Inspector, Sutton to Staff.
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RETURNED FROM ACTIVE SERVICE

H.Astley	-	Tipton
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SICK

The following have been absent from work due to prolonged sickness. We wish them a speedy recovery.

Mr. D.E.Sanders	-	Meter Department
Miss J.Froggatt	-	Service Department
Mr. S.Mills	-	Turncock, Smethwick
Mr. F.Smith	-	Inspector, Smethwick.

RETURNED FROM SICKNESS

Mrs. M.Stanton	-	Canteen
Mr. W.Arms	-	Cannock
Mr. R.Apted	-	Mechanical Department
Mr. S.Chapman	-	Walsall

BIRTHS

We wish to congratulate Mrs. Lyndon, wife of F.R.Lyndon, Accountancy Department, on the birth of a son, Andrew David, on 1st July 1951.

MARRIAGES

Congratulations to Mr. J.E.Billingham (Old Hill Collector's Office) on his marriage to Miss Olive Allen, on 24th November 1951.

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DEATHS

We deeply regret to record the deaths of the following:-

Mr. W.Gould, formerly Waste Inspector, Burton, who retired in August 1949, on the 18th Nov.1951, age 67 years.

Mr. W.Rowley, formerly Trenchman, Walsall, who retired in 1936, on the 20th October 1951, age 80 years.

Mrs. Moulton, wife of S.Moulton, formerly Inspector, Sutton.
Mrs.Owen, wife of Mr. J.Owen, Turncock Netherton District.

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CONGRATULATIONS

To Mr. A.B.Groves, B.Sc., (C.E.D.) , who recently passed the Part 'C' examination of the Institution of Civil Engineers and is now eligible for election as Associate Member of the Institution.

Notification has just been received that Mr. A.A.Smith, B.Sc., A.M.I.C.E., A.M.I.W.E., of the Civil Engineering Department, has been appointed Resident Engineer to the East Devon Water Board.

Mr. Smith, who joined the Company in December 1947, takes up his new appointment on the 1st February 1952.

We feel sure that readers of the News Review (of which he is Editor) will wish to extend their congratulations and best wishes to Mr. Smith on this appointment.

LADIES' PAGE



In spite of all the pleasant things said about Christmas, it is a time of hard work for most of us, and we very rarely enjoy "picture-postcard weather". We get mud, slush and fog, bills and chills, but Christmas comes and laughs at them all, and sets us laughing too. We feel happier when we turn off the November sheet of the calendar and know that December is here -- at last. It may be dark and drab outside, but the shops gayly throw a sheet of light on the pavement, shining on the faces of children gazing with longing eyes at the toys in the windows. Christmas! Yes, we're glad it's here again.

I wonder how many of you make New Year Resolutions each year and keep them for a couple of weeks. I decided against that practice some years ago but as Christmas approaches, I invariably make up my mind regarding two things. Firstly, to economise on Christmas presents for my evergrowing list of relations and friends, and secondly, to keep to a time-table on Christmas morning. You know the thing I mean -- 8.30 a.m. breakfast; 9.30 a.m. prepare vegetables, 9.45 a.m. light oven in readiness for turkey etc. etc. I've never managed to keep within my budget and don't expect to do so this year, but I should like advice on keeping to a time-table and still coping with 17 visitors between 10 o'clock and 1.30 p.m. on Christmas morning. Was your last Christmas Day something like mine?

Breakfast was rather a peaceful affair, only five of us and almost on time. After we'd opened our gifts, which are usually piled on the breakfast table, no one was particularly interested in anything but a cup of tea. For the remainder of the day we numbered eleven, including two children. Immediately after breakfast, the first four visitors arrived, the children bubbling over with excitement and laden with parcels from Father Christmas etc. and a separate package containing parcels to all Aunties, Uncles, Grandma etc. When the telephone rang, someone waded through a sea of wrapping paper and string and everyone joined in the conversation in

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turn. At the same time the post arrived, also the lady from "next door" 'just to see how you are this morning' - that took over half an hour. Time - 10.30 a.m., scrambled to fit the turkey in the oven, decided it was too big and the only way to manage was to wrap the bird in greaseproof paper and tie it to the top tray of the oven. Then someone had the brilliant idea that a drink was called for and Mother brought out the glasses which are not used regularly, but are packed in a box with straw packing from one Christmas to the next. No matter how carefully we remove the glasses and wash them, we always manage to drop bits of straw all over the floor, table and tray, but the drink was good and nobody bothered about the litter. The next three visitors, very old friends and neighbours, stayed twenty minutes, having a drink and a mincepie (more glasses to wash). For the remainder of the morning, friends and neighbours popped in, the vegetables were miraculously prepared, the pudding put on to boil, the turkey basted, and in spite of the repeated knocks on the back door, rings on the front door bell, and the telephone calls, the lunch was ready by 1.30 p.m. but it was a complete surprise to everyone. We all agreed it had been a delightful morning.

This year I hope to be able to prepare as much as possible on the Monday, including baking (which I enjoy) and here are some of the recipes I have used for a number of years. When I ask what I shall bake, I invariably get the reply - "Oh, the things you usually make."

Golden Almond Twirls. 2 ozs. margarine, Little milk,
 3 ozs. sugar, 1 egg,
 4 ozs. Self R.Flour, 1 oz. blanched
 and roughly chopped
 almonds.

Cream the margarine with 2 ozs. sugar, add beaten egg and flour. Mix well, stir in the rest of the sugar and add sufficient milk to mix to the consistency of a stiff batter. Pour in spoonfuls on a greased tin, allowing room to spread. Sprinkle with the almonds and bake in quick oven. Lift each one from the tin with a knife and place over a rolling pin or handle of a wooden spoon until cold. This must be done while the biscuits are still hot or they will not bend.

Brandy Snaps. 6 ozs. plain flour, 3 ozs. castor sugar, tea-
 4 ozs. margarine, spoon ground ginger,
 4 ozs. golden syrup, grated rind of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon.

Put the margarine and syrup into a saucepan and warm gently until melted, but do not allow it to get hot. Then stir in the flour, ground ginger and lemon rind, blending thoroughly. Well grease a baking tin and put the mixture on to the tin in spoonfuls, allowing plenty of space for the brandy snaps to run. Bake in

a quick oven for about 10 to 15 mins. Remove from the oven when they are evenly brown and completely cooked, and roll each one while still hot.

The following two recipes take a little longer but are well worth the effort. Both recipes have the same basic ingredients.

3 ozs. margarine, 5ozs. S.R. flour, pinch salt,
3 ozs. castor sugar, 4 tablesp. milk, 1 egg.
almond paste. $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. ground almonds, 1 egg, pinch
salt, $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. icing sugar.

Battenburg.

Cream the margarine and sugar, gradually add the well whisked egg and milk alternately, add the flour and salt. Line a sandwich tin with greaseproof paper and wedge a long piece of cardboard wrapped in greaseproof paper down the middle of the tin, lengthwise. Put half the mixture into one half of the tin and add a little cochineal to the other portion of the mixture and fill the second half. Bake 15 mins. in moderate oven. Turn out and leave until cool. Cut each half lengthwise into two, trim neatly and stick alternate coloured sections together with jam to form a square.

Mix together almonds, sugar and salt to a stiff paste with whisked egg. Spread sheet of greaseproof paper on board and roll out the mixture to oblong. Brush with white of egg (there is usually sufficient left in the egg shell for this purpose) and put the cake in the centre and press the almond paste on to the sides of the cake with the aid of the greaseproof paper. Press well together over the top. When firmly joined remove the paper, turn top of cake to the bottom and decorate with cherries, blanched almonds, angelica etc.

Mushroom Cake.

Mix the ingredients for the cake as in the previous recipe. Well grease a round fireproof dish, (one with curved sides) and bake the cake in a moderate oven until firm - about half an hour. Leave a few minutes before turning out carefully. Brush the outside of the cake with white of egg (or apricot jam if no egg available) and stand in the centre of the almond paste, rolled to a round shape to fit right up to the top edge of the cake. Press firmly, turning the cake upside down to do so. Make a butter icing with 2 ozs. icing sugar, 1 oz. cocoa, 2 ozs. margarine and vanilla flavouring. Spread on top of the cake and make lines with a fork from the outer edge to the centre, or use an icing syringe. Roll the trimmings of the almond paste to form a stalk and place in centre of the cake.



SPORTS NEWS

The Birmingham Table Tennis Association's League Season for 1951/2 commenced on the 1st October, and this year we have two teams, the 'A' in Div. 4 Birmingham League, and 'B' in the Harborne and Edgbaston League.

Both teams are showing fine form and hold 3rd place in their respective Leagues, resulting from fine team spirit and enthusiasm. There was great doubt at the commencement of the Season as to whether we could raise two teams continuously for there seemed to be so few players of League standard upon whom we could call, but our decision to try has been well rewarded.

The 'A' team, ably led by veteran Roger Waddington have shown good form and have collected 8 points from their first 6 matches, their record being P.6.W.3 D.2 L.1. Bob Stringer (A.D.) has shown most consistent form, winning 8 out of a possible 10 sets, with Bob Stamps (S.D.) of half volley fame, not far behind, winning 8 out of 12. John Stock (R.D.) H.Kirk and F.J.Dixon Cup holder, will unfortunately be out of the side for about 6 weeks, with a back muscle injury.

The 'B' Team, enthusiastically captained by Graham Robinson (M.D.) has an even better record to date, having gained 10 points from 6 matches, only having lost one. Brian Gastinger, formerly Revenue Department, but not now in the Company's employ, heard of our dearth of League players, and sportingly offered to help out, and has not yet lost a set, leading the Individual Records of the League - well done Brian! We have also been strengthened by a newcomer to our Head Office Staff, namely Harry Irish (Rev.Dept.) who also has only dropped one set out of a possible 10. Incidentally Harry is also a keen footballer, and plays regularly for Moor Green Amateurs. Mention must also be made of Fred Richards (R.D.) who as first reserve for the 'A' team is a very busy man, and also has a 100% record after 5 matches.

STAFF ASSOCIATION EVENTS

THE ANNUAL VISIT TO WORKS

September 29th, 1951. 9.30 a.m. Three coaches left Head Office, Sheepcote Street, with a party of about eighty on yet another Visit to Works - the third in succession to the Blithe. After a short period of fog the sun broke through and promised what proved to be a delightful Autumn day. Sandfields, our first port of call, was reached according to schedule. On arrival, the party split up into three sections and were then conducted around the Works by Guides who thoroughly explained the Hows, the Whys and the Wherefores of Filtration which, judging from the number of questions asked and the deep interest taken by the party - particularly some of the members' friends - were very enlightening. We were also given some revealing and interesting information by the "Back-Room Boys" of the Company - the Chemists - on the extreme care taken to ensure that the Company's consumers shall receive "a pure and wholesome supply of water" from their taps. Owing to the time factor, the "quick-fire" lecture given in the Laboratory was all too short and I feel that a little more time allowed for this purpose on some future occasion would be welcomed.

After a brief inspection of the Pumping Station and the James Watt Beam Engine, which excited considerable interest, it was time to re-embark and shortly afterwards we were unloading at Seedy Mill. Here again, the party was split up and conducted round the New Works - now in an advanced stage of construction - and thanks to the Guides we were treated to an extremely comprehensive and interesting description of the collection, purification and distribution of the water which will eventually come from the Blithe, and how it will be fed to the various areas to be supplied.

The design of the new building impressed me very much and on completion I am sure the station will in no way detract from the beauty of the surrounding countryside; it really is a credit to those who have been, and still are, engaged on

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the job. By the time the last section of the party had done the rounds the luncheon hour was near and once again we climbed into the coaches and made our way back to Lichfield and the Minster Cafe, where a good meal in convivial company was thoroughly enjoyed.

Our Engineer-in-Chief, in a few words of welcome expressed his great pleasure at seeing such a goodly attendance (which by now had reached the 94 mark) but deplored the absence of so many of the younger members of the staff. It certainly was most noticeable; maybe Saturday is not the right day for them as I fancy Soccer, Rugger, Motor Cycling and other kindred sports are stronger attractions.

Luncheon over and our hunger and thirst adequately satisfied, we rejoined the coaches after a quiet saunter alongside Minster Pool. A pleasant run of about thirty minutes brought us to the Reservoir Site on the Blithe and what a scene of industry, coupled with apparent desolation, met our eyes. This was my first visit to the Blithe and I was greatly surprised by the magnitude of the job on hand. At this point we were joined by the Resident Engineer and his staff, who conducted us firstly over the rapidly developing embankment up to the Dam and The Tailbay Control House and gave us a very instructive and enlightening running commentary on the progress, difficulties and necessities of an engineering work of this nature. We also observed the activities of the compression roller and a couple of levelling tractors, which appeared to be treating us to a display of "tractorbatics", judging by the way they travelled up and down the embankments. From here we were transported to the Admaston Road Diversion, where we saw the new bridge - now nearing completion - which is to carry the new road to replace the existing road which will be submerged as the reservoir is filled. The construction of this bridge proved of considerable interest; I was particularly surprised at the enormous amount of reinforcement wiring being used for consolidating the roadway and thought what a fine road the users would have in exchange for the old one. Standing on the bridge, I looked up and down the valley and endeavoured to visualise what it will look like when the job is complete and the whole of the area is one vast sheet of water. I sincerely hope it will be my good fortune to be one of the party on that day, and I venture to suggest it should be made the occasion of a "gradely do".

For those who have been closely and actively connected with the job since its beginning and watched it throughout its progress, I have no doubt it will be a great thrill, and they may be quite justifiably proud of such an achievement.

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Having taken in the whole of the scene and with a feeling of pride in belonging to a Company which can undertake a scheme of such extensive dimensions, we returned to the coaches and were soon seated for tea at The Crown Hotel, Abbots Bromley. The service was admirable and everyone did ample justice to the fare provided, to the accompaniment of many observations and expressions of satisfaction with the day's outing. Members' friends, who had spent the day with us, were particularly delighted and thrilled with all they had seen.

Tea over, no time was lost in starting the return journey and after a pleasant and uneventful run, we landed back in Sheepcote Street well on time.

I would like, on behalf of my party, several of whom were members' friends, to express their full appreciation of the efforts of all who helped to make the visit a success and tender their thanks for a most enjoyable day.

FOLK LORE --- ABBOTS BROMLEY.

Seeing that Abbots Bromley is likely to be the venue of many more Visits to Works in the future, it may be of interest to readers to learn that there is an old custom which is known as the "Horn Dance" and is still held. The performers, "Deermen", dance through the streets of the village with huge reindeer horns held aloft. The official date of holding this dance is determined by the date on which Abbots Bromley "Wakes Sunday" falls - always the first Sunday after the 4th September - the dance taking place on the following Monday. Its origin is uncertain but it is thought that it is held in commemoration of the granting of hunting rights in the Forest of Needwood in the reign of Henry 111. The reindeer horns, which are kept in the Parish Church from year to year, are of great antiquity and are supposed to have been left in the district by Norse huntsmen.

THE ANNUAL DINNER

The twenty-second Annual Dinner of the Staff Association Club was held in the Head Office Canteen, Sheepcote Street, on Friday, 23rd November 1951.

The Chairman of the Company, Mr. A.H.S.Waters, presided and was supported by Mr. H.K.Beale (Past President) and Messrs. A.W.M.Boneham, H.Kirk and R.A.Robertson (Vice-Presidents).

In accordance with custom the Reception was held in the Board Room.

After the Loyal Toast, the President in proposing the Toast to the Staff Association, said that this was to be coupled with the name of Mr. R.H.Taylor who, unfortunately, was indisposed and prevented from being present. In commenting upon the large attendance, Mr. Waters mentioned that it had been suggested that we should hold our Annual Dinners at a Hotel but there were two reasons why this should not be. Firstly, we appeared to be quite happy on our own ground, and secondly, the question of the expense if the dinner were to be held in a Hotel. He therefore thought that we should not care to change our present arrangement. He then went on to express his regret at the absence of Mrs. Stanton, who was convalescing from a serious operation and proposed that we should send her a message saying that we were thinking of her.

Welcoming Mr. W.H.B.Fellows, who had retired from the Chairmanship of the Association since the last Annual Dinner which was held in February 1949, Mr. Waters expressed the hope that we should have the pleasure of his company for many years to come. A cordial welcome was also extended to Messrs. E.S.Field and A.E.Reed, Chairman and Secretary of the Benevolent Fund.

Saying that it was a pleasure to see such a fine crowd, the President asked us to rise and drink a Toast to the Staff Association, coupled with the name of Mr. R.H.Taylor.

In responding to the Toast, Mr. A.A.Chapman thanked the President for the generous manner in which he had proposed the Toast of the Association. In a review of the activities of the Association since the last dinner, Mr. Chapman said that we had had the usual round of activities which, judging from the increased attendance and enthusiasm, were becoming much more popular. In particular, Whist Drives had been held regularly over the past two years and had been an encouraging success.

Referring to the Annual Outings and Visits to Works, Mr. Chapman expressed our gratitude to the President and his fellow Directors for their generosity on these and similar occasions. He commented upon the Sports Activities of the Association and mentioned the revival this year of Cricket, also the continued enthusiasm for Table Tennis.

With regard to the future, he said it was hoped that it would soon be possible to re-introduce a general Sports Section to combine the sports activities of the Staff Association and the Benevolent Fund, and said that a meeting was to be held in the near future at which it was proposed to formulate a scheme with a view to bringing this into operation. He also suggested that the River Blithe Scheme offered interesting possibilities as regards shooting, fishing and sailing.

Turning to finances he said that he thought the Association was in a reasonably good position, but the Canteen presented considerable difficulties and its future gives rise to apprehension.

In conclusion, Mr. Chapman thanked the Chairman, Directors and Chief Officials of the Company for their continued support and encouragement to the Association.

The toast to the President, Vice Presidents and Guests was proposed by Mr. A.W. Tibbenham, who explained that he had been given very short notice and was in fact taking Mr. Chapman's place. He felt, however, that he was making history as it was surely the first time that an Engineer had given way to an Accountant!! He then extended a welcome to Messrs. E.G. Davies and R.L. Ekin whom he hoped would become Vice Presidents in the near future. He also placed on record the fine achievements of Mr. H.K. Beale, who had attended every Annual Dinner of the Association since its inauguration thirty-one years ago.

Mr. Ekin replied to the toast on behalf of the President, Vice-Presidents and Guests; his speech was followed with considerable interest and amusement.

In the course of a short speech, Mr. Beale mentioned that he had recently met Mr. Broadley - Secretary to the Company in 1918 - who had started the whole idea of the Association. He added that Mr. Broadley was living in Yorkshire and was delighted to hear that the Association was still going strong.

The evening continued with a programme of entertainment, during which the Artistes, although greatly handicapped by the smoke laden atmosphere, put up a valliant show which was well received.

BENEVOLENT FUND

Our foremost desire in this Christmas Number of the News Review is to convey to all our members and their families, and to all employees of the Depots and Stations of the Company, the sincere and cordial greetings of the Fund and of the Executive Committee. We hope that all will enjoy a Very Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

Readers will be interested to know that the Fund has now been in existence just over 25 years, disbursing sickness benefits and financial assistance generally in cases of need. It is regretted that this Silver Jubilee Year should be marred by a deficit of £41.1.4d on the year's working. This was due to the heavy demands made on the Fund through sickness during the influenza epidemic.

Sickness benefits in varying amounts have been paid to 208 members during the year, amounting to £437.10.0d or an average of £8.8.3d per week throughout the period. Financial Assistance has been afforded six members, totalling £32.0.0d. Sickness benefits disbursed during the 25 years of the Fund's existence has amounted to £5,759.13.7d. and Financial Assistance grants to £632.14.3d during the same period.

The Fund's assets now stand at £946.5.5d.

The 25th Annual General Meeting of the Fund was held at The Harden, Coalpool, Walsall, on Friday the 9th November 1951. Our President, Mr. R.A. Robertson, B.Sc., M.I.C.E., M.I.W.E., was in the Chair. We were pleased to welcome and note the continued interest shown in the Fund by many of our Vice-Presidents who were present.

A printed report of the meeting is to be circulated to all interested parties as is customary.

LAYS OF AN OLD JOINTER1.

Here is the sorry story,
Here the tale I relate,
Of the pipe they lost at Tipton
Way back in "38".

Lads from the Order Department
Checked all the stock with care,
Found when they reached the 12 inch pipes
One of 'em wasn't there.

Word went forth to the City
The Hounds were soon on the scent
While the Locals formed a Committee
To find where the pipe had went.

There came Len Eades to the parley,
Vernon Guest and Jack Wise.
Palmer from far off Warley,
Forks and some Walsall Guys.

Harold and Geoff at the portals,
Welcomed in fear and gloom
Experts, Nobs, and mere mortals,
Into the Conference Room.

2.

From Maple Brook came Bill,
And George from Slitting Mill,
And Harry Dunn, along with Harry Bate,
While even old Joe Riley,
Whose opinion ranked so highly,
Was brought along by Cyril Cooke - in state.

They sent an invitation
To the lads at Kinver Station
To help 'em to investigate the crime.
So Jim Handley and Vic Hubble
Came to Tipton at the double -
And left Bill Bayliss working double time.

NEWS REVIEW

2. (contin)

The Chairman looked around
And he fidgeted and frowned
For two good men were missing from his crew.
Then gazing through the pane
He saw toiling up the lane,
Sam Taylor, Joby Jones - and handcart too.

For three long hours and more
They united to deplore,
That Tipton Stores had never known the like,
Since that day in 'Thirtythree,
On the banks of Coneygre
When Trammer stuck his pitchfork in the Pike.

Then the noble Boss at last
Nailed his colours to the mast
And swore by all the Saints he claimed to know
That if they'd form a quorum,
He would lay the pipe before 'em -
At a meeting two days after Enville Show.

There came a certain day
When the Squire drove away
And very soon he reached that pleasant place
Where standing proud and straight
Beyond the Prestwood Gate
Was Tranter, with a smile upon his face.

It was then the wise old Boss,
Left his car and walked across,
To where there lay a carrot on the ground
It was rosy, straight and strong,
Very nearly twelve feet long,
And weighed a hundred weight-and half a pound.

Poor Billy looked contrite
And wept (as well he might)
Said he "I never dreamed you'd get to know
That I had been the pincher
Of that missing dozen-incher,
But thought you'd put the blame on Harborne Joe."

In a twelve inch pipe he'd grown it
Then at Enville Fair he'd shown it
Where he won a medal eighteen carat gold.
And in Tipton District still
They recall the time when Bill
Grew a carrot in a pipe in days of old.



...AND A
HAPPY
NEW
YEAR