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THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE
WATERWORKS COMPANY

NEWS REVIEW



APRIL 1963

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No. 1



EDITORIAL

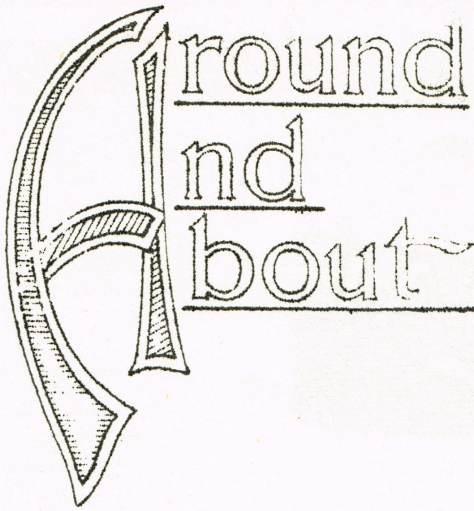
After the severe Winter of 1962/63 and the general assumption that it would be followed by a wonderful summer, the weather seems to be the biggest topic of conversation lately, particularly when we are warned that England is likely to become colder, that we may have more arctic winters, and that records show this so-called summer is no worse than last year or the year before. What ever has happened to our English weather!

Do you remember the days when we had four separate seasons? Remember the lovely spring days, not really cold but inviting one for a long walk. Remember those scorching summers when coats and macs were forgotten from early June until October, and we were just plain unfortunate if we had one wet day during our annual holiday. And Autumn - my favourite season. Winter seems to be just a period to 'get through' as comfortably as possible if you've passed the age of snowballing. But Autumn - that lovely season - I do wish we could have it back again.

September and October. Is there anything to equal these mornings, when a timid sun breaks through the early mists and everything is washed with dew. On walking round the garden in the early morning we find spiders have left a glittering thread and the butterflies lazily come to life on the michaelmas daisies. Surely a Fairyland.

Foreigners talk of the beauty of England in the Springtime but I think they must have missed England in the Autumn. Some people say we only enjoy what we have paid for, but surely nobody can take the delights of Autumn for granted.

NORAH DAYES
EDITOR.



SUTTON AND DISTRICT SOCIAL CLUB

The advent of Winter and its long dreary nights is the spur that sets the Social Club on its round of activities and in this respect the winter of 1962/3 proved no exception.

The first eagerly awaited event was a trip to the Coventry Theatre to see the "Arthur Haynes Show". However, judging by the chorus of grunts and frantic adjusting of opera glasses by the male members of the expedition, the luscious "Yana" seemed to be the most appreciated item. Well, she was certainly a warming sight for aged bones on a very cold night.

The next event in order was the Annual Bonfire Barbecue and Display of Pyrotechnics celebrating the only occasion a gentleman entered Parliament with good intentions. As usual, the Bonfire etc. was held at Shenstone Pumping Station by kind permission of the Engineer-in-Chief. We anticipated the day a little by holding it on the 3rd November and had the reward of a really fine evening. The Bonfire blazed magnificently and the Fireworks Display was, by general agreement, very satisfactory. Additionally, everyone being filled to repletion with Hot Dogs and Baked Potatoes, washed down with cups of tea, the evening was voted a huge success.

The last, but by no means the least important event in our social calendar was, of course, the Children's Christmas Party. This, as usual, included a 'proper laid-out' tea for the kiddies, with a substantial Buffet Meal for all the attending adults. Tea was followed by a Film Show and various games, which were obviously enjoyed by all.

It should be mentioned in passing that the Club also enjoys a very strong Darts Team; it needs to be strong, it had to hold up all the rest of the League Teams.

In conclusion, many thanks to all who have worked so unstintedly on these occasions, especially the Ladies - "Bless 'Em".

BURTON DEPOT

A SATIRICAL REPORT ON "THAT WAS THE WINTER THAT WAS"
(with apologies to the B.B.C.)

It is generally acknowledged that when we speak of the heroes of the severe winter we must include Plumbers and Watermen, not the least being the latter, as they were usually the first on the scene, apart from the householder, and therefore had to bear the brunt of the disaster.

Monetary reward was of secondary consideration when compared with the service they were performing for mankind. On the other hand, however, the tireless efforts and sacrifices of our watermen were rewarded in other ways, not the least being in the smile of gratitude lighting up the face of the occupant, though I must admit that it soon disappeared as hammers and hack-knives were put to work with zest and enthusiasm, (according to the time of day), this latter act being highly recommended by psychiatrists who consider the relief of frustration and abandonment to pent-up desires a necessity in this present day of high speed living.

A burst pipe has no conscience, neither is it a respecter of persons, be they of high or low estate. The more inaccessible the pipe, the more likely it is to burst, and when it does, the City Gent, (minus pin-stripes, bowler hat and false teeth) is indistinguishable from the labourer when adorned in soggy sodden pyjamas.

With the advent of electrical de-freezing we were faced with various problems and possibilities. Namely, that of convincing the long-suffering householder that rubber gloves would not be necessary when filling the kettle. That we were using approved equipment powered by batteries etc., externally applied, and not stuffing electric eels up the main, (or dropping them in the reservoir).

Rumour has it that during a technical hitch caused by a fault in the apparatus, the 'technician' in charge diagnosed the trouble as being caused by a 'short', whereby his waterman assistant advised him to lengthen it. A further brilliant suggestion was made at the height of the chaos that huge immersion heaters could be fitted to the reservoirs thus sending forth warm water through the Company's mains as a deterrent against the frost. (Anyone requiring a glass of cold water could stick it in the 'fridge).

Incidentally, reports came in from far and near that Stevenson's Rocket was in action once again; it was, of course, the steam de-froster. There was also the instance whereby a teetotal gentleman suffered agonising thirst rather than drink water out of a container labelled Double Diamond.

We also heard the story that a load of straw was required for meter boxes in a country district attached to Burton and this was duly despatched, the driver's instructions being to dump it in a derelict house near to the district waterman's residence. On arrival he found the door locked but the kitchen window was open and so he proceeded to push the load of straw through.

The next morning a telephone call to York Street went like this - "Will you please come and remove your +?*&X straw as I can't get to the gas stove to fry my breakfast".

SUPERANNUATED MEMBERS' OUTING.

Wednesday, 19th June, was the occasion of the Superannuated Members' Outing and when the four coaches converged outside the Head Offices in Sheepcote Street, the weather was overcast. The 120 superannuated members and their ladies were not downcast, however, because they were meeting old colleagues once again and there was a lot to talk about.

The coaches left Sheepcote Street at 1.45 p.m. en route for Ragley Hall, Alcester, where, in the unavoidable absence of the Chairman, Sir Charles Burman, Mr. & Mrs. R.H. Taylor, and Mr. & Mrs. A.W. Tibbenham were waiting to greet everyone. Again we had a little rain, but it did not dampen the spirits of the gathering and we were able to see the Marquess of Hertford's delightful residence with its wonderful furniture, the fabulous glass and silver-gilt in the dining room, the beautiful baroque decoration of the Hall and the Prince Regent's bedroom, (the bed always looks so very, very small), and last, but by no means least, the Marquess's Mastiff.

Unfortunately we were not able to brave the rain and stroll round the gardens and down to the lake, but the peacocks displayed themselves and we like to think their raucous cry was one of greeting.

The tour of the Cotswolds which followed was most enjoyable, with scenery which is always admired.

For many of us it was our first visit to the Ettington Park Hotel, where we had a most welcome and enjoyable tea. I am sure most of us were charmed by the historic beauty of the Hotel, standing in 38 acres of wooded parkland and certainly would like to visit it again.

These Visits are essentially a 'get together' of old colleagues, who like to remember the years that have gone, and it was evident that in spite of the rather disappointing weather, everyone enjoyed the day.

STAFF ASSOCIATION EVENTS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

THURSDAY, 28th FEBRUARY, 1963.

The Annual General Meeting of the Staff Association Club was held in the Canteen, Sheepcote Street, on Thursday, 28th February, under the Chairmanship of J. Lamont, Esq. There were 15 members present.

Prior to the commencement of the Meeting the Chairman invited those present to observe a moment's silence for Messrs. Cranage, Boneham, Wheelley and Fellows, former members of the staff who had passed away since the last Meeting.

In his report, the Chairman spoke of the three main social events during the year, namely, the Annual Dinner, the combined Visit to Works and Annual Outing, and the Christmas Dance, and pointed out that at both the Dinner and the Outing attendances were all time records. The Chairman said he felt sure that members would wish to record their appreciation of the generosity of the Board of Directors in these matters.

Other events referred to by the Chairman were the Dances, Theatre Visits and the Children's Party which had been arranged by our small but enthusiastic and hardworking Entertainments Committee, to whom our warmest thanks were due for their efforts in making these occasions so successful and pleasurable.

Mr. Lamont also reported that due to lack of support, it had unfortunately been found necessary to disband the Magazine Club so that this now meant we were without either a Library or a Magazine Club.

Reporting on the Canteen, Mr. Lamont thanked many of the members of the staff for the voluntary work carried out, particularly in the early months of the year when we were short-staffed, and told us that the Board of Directors had given authority for the appointment of a full time Manageress. Mrs. Moulton came to us in June and brought about many improvements, particularly in the control of ordering,

stock and sales. Unfortunately she left us at the end of January but the Chairman said he was glad to report that we had engaged a successor who would be commencing her duties in the near future. We were also informed that the Canteen had engaged another Assistant on a part-time basis.

Mr. Lamont said he felt it only right to warn members that whilst the Executive Committee would do everything in its power to maintain charges at a fair level it should be emphasised that no guarantee could be given that charges for canteen services would remain on their present basis.

The following Officers and Executive Committee were appointed :-

Chairman	J.Lamont, Esq.
Vice-Chairman	J.W.Whitworth, Esq.
Honorary Secretary	C.H.F.Gilbert, Esq.
Honorary Treasurer	R.G.Clarke, Esq.
Honorary Auditors	Messrs. E.Burgess and K.Hand
Tobacco Club Secretary	Miss C.S.Parry

Executive Committee

<u>Secretary's Dept.</u>	Miss M.Jones, Messrs. D. Carlow, F.R.Smith, J.E.Stock
<u>Engineer's Dept.</u>	Messrs. C.E.Packwood, B.Webster, R.J.Wright, Miss P. German.
<u>Burton, Cannock & Sutton Depots.</u>	W.J.Flatt, Esq.
<u>Tipton Depot</u>	C.B.Brennan, Esq.
<u>Walsall Depot</u>	R.R.Pearsall, Esq.
<u>Lichfield Area & Outside Staff on Construction Work.</u>	G.W.Anderson, Esq.

ANNUAL DINNER & DANCE

The Thirty-Third Annual Dinner & Dance of the Staff Association was held in the Pavilion Suite, The County Ground, Edgbaston, on Friday, 22nd March, 1963, our President, Sir Charles Burman, again presiding, and we were delighted that some of our Vice-Presidents and their Wives had been able to accept the invitation to join us.

Sir Charles and Lady Burman, accompanied by Mr. & Mrs. J. Lamont, received the guests, and Miss Susan McNaughton presented a bouquet to Lady Burman.

Greetings and drinks - not water - were soon enjoyed by old friends from the Districts and Head Office until Dinner was announced. We know we can always rely on an excellent meal at the Pavilion Suite and this was no exception, with a varied menu and efficient service. Then followed the Loyal Toast, cigarettes were lighted and we waited for what might be considered the serious part of the evening. This is not the case at our Annual Dinners because both our President and the Chairman of the Staff Association always seem to be in a relaxed mood and we are never allowed to become bored with a lengthy or too weighty speech.

The President said it gave him very great pleasure to propose the Toast to the Staff Association and reminded us that last year he was unable to be with us in time for the Dinner - which was a pity - but it did absolve him from making a speech. We were pleased to hear that he thought the standard of our Annual Dinners seemed to rise, which I am sure gave great pleasure to all those who were responsible for the organisation of a very delightful evening.

Sir Charles spoke of the severe winter just experienced and said he thought we might be interested in a few of the frost figures. The frost which lasted from just before Christmas until the 4th of March had had an extraordinary effect upon the Company. We had 624 fractured mains, 32,000 defective fittings and burst pipes, 88 frozen mains and the number of frozen service pipes was 8,345 but the actual number was not known and it may have been in the region of 20,000 to 30,000. The President said that much of the work fell upon the Company's shoulders and had to be put right, so much so that the Company found themselves about £41,000 out of pocket.

Sir Charles said he mentioned these figures because it gave him the opportunity to thank everyone for their loyalty to the Company during a very difficult period. "I might add", he continued, "that we rather expect the people of South Staffs to shoulder additional responsibility. Although virtually a monopoly we owe a tremendous service to the consumer; he can't go anywhere else and for that very reason we must give a service which is out of all proportion to any commercial service which you can buy in the open market".

The President then spoke of the need to raise money to help us to maintain supplies which we have to build up in various ways to meet the ever growing demand - reservoirs, pumping stations, mains, and, of course, in the background, the tremendous Severn Scheme. He also mentioned that within the last 14 days the Company had raised two million pounds Preference Shares redeemable somewhere between 1983-88 and told us that this issue was very heavily subscribed - $3\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds to two million pounds asked for, which he considered very interesting because it had not happened for some time and it showed that the investors must have come to trust us and what we were going to do.

Referring to the Staff Association, he said how much he welcomed the new rule which enabled Superannuated Members to become Life Members and thought it a splendid thing that members who had grown up and lived with the Association for so long could continue after they left the service of the Company.

Sir Charles said he wished to couple his Toast with the name of our Chairman, Mr. J. Lamont, whose last year of office this was. He said he knew he was a popular Chairman who had worked hard and that he was sure we were delighted with the service he had given us.

The Chairman of the Staff Association then thanked the President for proposing the Toast and said how delighted we were that Sir Charles and Lady Burman were able to join us that evening.

He extended a welcome to the Vice-Presidents and all our Visitors and although apologies had been received from some Vice-Presidents we looked forward to having them with us on some future occasion.

Mr. Lamont said he appreciated the remarks made by the President regarding his work for the Association but that he accepted those thanks not for himself alone but on behalf of the Staff Association Committee who had done most of the work and the smooth running and success of the Association depended on their yeoman service. "In fact", said Mr. Lamont, "were it not for 'that programme' I would say They're doing a grand job!"

Our Chairman then spoke of the very generous action of the Chairman and Board of Directors in replacing the outdated equipment in the Canteen and in authorising the engaging of a Canteen Manageress. This had been very much appreciated and had contributed greatly to the efficient running of the Canteen.

He thanked the Entertainments Committee who had been very active, the main functions being a Fancy Dress Dance, a Christmas Dance, a Children's Party, and several theatre visits.

Mr. Lamont reminded us that at the last Annual Dinner he told us that we required a "Minister's Blessing and about 25 meggabucks to complete the Severn Scheme". The Minister's blessing had been received

in the shape of the Abstraction and Work Orders which were made recently and we had just heard from the President that the money had been subscribed.

The Chairman advised us that the River Severn Scheme is by far the biggest ever embarked upon by the Company. A considerable amount of design and preliminary work had been done and the stage was now set for the great adventure to begin. Soon the sound of feverish constructional activity would be heard both on and off the site.

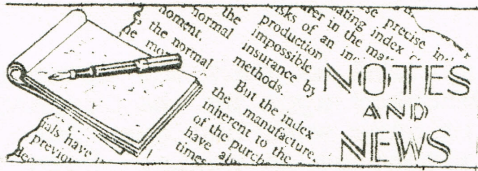
"England's on the anvil - hear the hammers ring,
Clanging from the Severn to the Tyne!
Never was a blacksmith like our Norman King -
England being hammered, hammered, hammered into line!"

Mr. Lamont said that his suggestion about the possibility of a big television advertising campaign was not now necessary as consumption this year was about 7% above average. "What better send off could we have given to National Productivity Year?".

The Chairman concluded by thanking everyone for the help and encouragement given to him during his term of office as Chairman of the Staff Association, which had been an illuminating experience.

Soon the room was cleared for Dancing to the music of Allan Ayres and his Band. The cares of the winter forgotten, everyone in a 'dancing mood', a happy evening was enjoyed by all those present. Limbs which had seized up a little during the winter months were tested tenderly for a few strides, then Hey Ho! the Twist was fairly simple - if not exactly professional. The lucky ones received prizes but even if we didn't win a prize, the Ladies had their posies, and once again we were sorry when our Annual Dinner and Dance came to a close.

We should like to congratulate Mr. A.J. Myers, Walsall, who has been notified of his success in the Final Examinations of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries and is eligible for election to Associateship.



MR. F.A. LANGFORD

A very pleasing ceremony took place on Wednesday, 16th January, when the Secretary, Assistant Secretary and members of the Secretary's Staff, together with other representatives of the Staff Association, assembled in Mr. Tibbenham's office for the purpose of making a presentation to Mr. F.A. Langford, formerly Collector at Smethwick and Oldbury on his retirement from the Company after 42 years' service.

The presentation took the form of a cheque which had been subscribed by his colleagues in the Staff Association and in handing this to Mr. Langford, Mr. Tibbenham spoke of Mr. Langford's evident popularity among his colleagues by virtue of the fact that contributions had been received from members of the Engineer's Department as well as the Secretary's Department.

On behalf of the Chairman, Board of Directors, Stockholders and on his own behalf, Mr. Tibbenham expressed his warmest appreciation of the loyal and faithful service which Mr. Langford had rendered to the Company.

The Secretary expressed the hope that Mr. Langford would purchase something to remind him of these pleasant associations and said that he hoped Mr. Langford would have a long and happy period of retirement.

Mr. Langford said he was somewhat overcome by the generous comments which had been made by the Secretary and said that despite certain ups and downs he had really enjoyed working for the Company and hoped to come in occasionally to see his former colleagues.

CHRISTMAS DANCE

The Christmas Dance was held on the 18th December 1962 with Music provided by Allan Ayres and his Band. Mr. R.G. Clarke officiated as Master of Ceremonies.

The Christmas Hamper went once again outside Head Office and Mrs. J.R. Deakin of Sandfields was the lucky winner.

Our Christmas Dance, usually the beginning of the festivities, is always an enjoyable occasion, due in no small measure to the help given by a number of people. Our special thanks are extended to the efficient "Barmen" and "Doorman", also to Mary and Marjorie of the Canteen Staff for the help given in the kitchen.

CHILDREN'S PARTY

Another very successful Children's Party was held in the Head Office Canteen on Saturday, 5th January 1963, and despite the rather bad weather at the beginning of the week thirtytwo children came along to enjoy themselves. Father Christmas (Mr. S. Wimbush) also came and the children were given a variety of presents. Games were organised by Messrs. Packwood and Wright and all the children were very co-operative which made the time pass very quickly indeed.

Once again our very many thanks to the parents who came along to help, and also to the members of the Committee for preparation of the Tea.

We look forward very much to seeing the photographs that our Chairman, Mr. J. Lamont, took of the children having their tea, the "Twist" Competition and when Father Christmas arrived - I am sure they will delight all parents.

Note from a Consumer -

Two weeks ago a man from the Water Board knocked on my door and asked me to turn on my cold water tap and leave it running. He never came back, and I'm wondering if I should turn it off now.

MISS C.J.LOWRY

On Friday, 24th May, we said au revoir to Miss C.J.Lowry on her retirement after completing 41½ years' service. "Cis", as she was usually called by her colleagues, had been Receptionist since the Company moved to their new offices in Sheepcote Street and her cheerful and willing manner will be missed by everyone. The office seemed 'normal' when she was sitting at her usual desk in the reception office and we knew we could always refer to her for information as to when Mr. So-and-So came in, or ask if she remembered the report on such and such a subject in the paper. Yes, she always knew.

During the war years Cis was a willing worker for comforts for the employees of the Company serving in the Forces and organised knitting parties - how long ago that seems now - and when those precious sweets and chocolates were available, we always knew that her allocation would be strictly fair.

Always prepared to help, her talent as an accompanist was very much in demand, particularly during the Revue days and at the Smoking Concerts and Dinners which were held in the Canteen.

We know that some years ago she unfortunately suffered a period of ill health, which curtailed one of her hobbies, walking, but we are very pleased to see that she has recovered to such an extent that she can once again join her friends in rambles, particularly in Wales where she spends a holiday every year.

Miss Lowry's wishes were respected and only a representative gathering of the staff met in Mr. Fewtrell's office to witness the presentation, when Mr. Fewtrell spoke of her loyal and conscientious years of service, remembering the time in 1925 when he first came to the office for interview and was soon put at ease. He also spoke of her help to him so far as 'unwanted' Clients were concerned when he was Chief Buyer for the Company.

Mr. Lamont presented the cheque which had been subscribed by her colleagues at Head Office and at the District Offices, with every good wish for her future happiness.

In reply, Miss Lowry thanked everyone for their kindness and said she had enjoyed working at the South Staffs and that everyone had always been very helpful. She concluded by saying that she usually found that if a person was prepared to go halfway, the other person was always ready to go the other half.

Evidence of Cis's popularity was shown in the number of gifts she received, and she retires knowing she can look back on a job well done and that she will be greatly missed.

(We have since heard that Miss Lowry has bought a lawnmower)



HISTORY OF WEDNESBURY

BY J.F.EDE, M.A.

Pages 226 & 227.

The second report of the commissioners on the Inquiry into Health of Towns (1845) wrote of Wednesbury in the following terms:

"Wednesbury consists of one long street along the turnpike road with many lateral ones branching into courts and alleys, inhabited by the working classes. There is no drainage worth the name, no scavengers or system of cleansing and the supply of water is very scarce and indifferent. There are no pipes (though there is, it is said, a good supply near it, at a high level above the town), few pumps and the wells are often bad. The people complain much and have to carry water near a mile or to buy at a halfpenny for three cans.

"The Workhouse of the town has very bad water in the well and they are obliged to fetch it for washing or drinking several times a day.

"The courts, alleys and small streets are unpaved or ill-paved, full of stagnant puddles, privies with open vaults, pigsties, etc. There is in fact no care taken on these points and the greatest neglect appears. It is stated 'There is a dreadful stinking tank or ditch at the back of the Turk's Head, where the magistrates always meet, and the public enter by this filthy place'".

Five years later, in 1851, T.W.Rammell, Inspector of the Central Board of Health, endorsed these findings:

"The natural sources of water have mostly failed and been diminished by reason of the mining operations carried on in the parish and neighbourhood. Consequently the inhabitants suffer a want almost amounting to destitution in regard to this important element, having to send in many instances, a great distance to procure it and at a very considerable expense. The poorer people are generally obliged to use water lying in stagnant pools, filthy and unwholesome in the extreme for most domestic purposes, being unable to procure a better supply. The consequence of this scarcity of water is that the dwellings of the poor are unavoidably dirty, and as they are generally small and badly constructed closely packed together, without drainage of any sort and ill-ventilated, epidemics, endemics and contagious diseases prevail at all times in Wednesbury".

Among many public wells in Wednesbury at this time may be mentioned Castle Well at the back of the Church, Boniface's Well on Little Hill, the Tacker's Well at the bottom of Church Street, the Market Well near the Shambles, the well, known as the Talbot Tavern Well, (near the present Brunswick Terrace) which was the actual Spring Head, as well at the bottom of Hollies Drive, and a well on the opposite side of the road - Oakes Well - in the garden of Oakeswell House, where it is still to be seen.

There were also numerous private wells but most houses were without any water supply of their own. Water carts were a common sight, selling water from Stone Cross Well, which was considered the purest source, or from the brook at a penny or halfpenny a bucket. The weekly washday was expensive for working-class households and the privilege of fetching buckets of condensed steam water from the engines at the large works was highly prized.

HISTORY OF WEDNESBURY

BY J.F.EDE, M.A.

Page 331.

When the Board* began to exercise its function in 1852 nothing was more urgent than the provision of an adequate supply of uncontaminated water, the lack of which had been a chief cause of the cholera epidemics. This was a need which most local authorities were not able to meet individually and the result was the formation in 1853 of the South Staffordshire Waterworks Company for the supply of an area extending from Lichfield to Dudley and Rowley Regis. One of the promoters and a member of the original Board of Directors of the new Company was Thomas Walker, manager of the Patent Shaft Works at Wednesbury, who is stated to have advanced £40,000 to the Company in its early difficult days. The reservoir on Church Hill, where one of the windmills had formerly stood, was one of the Company's first projects but it did not actually commence water supply in Wednesbury until 1860. In 1875 the Inspector of the Local Government Board, who found little to commend in the efforts of the Wednesbury Board to improve public health, was able to report that Wednesbury was among the best supplied with water of all the towns in the Black Country, adding that of 5,000 houses there were fewer than 600 which were not supplied by the Company. There was, however, at this very time frequent complaint in Wednesbury itself concerning the amount and purity of the water supplied by the Company. What is certain is that some families in the town were still drinking water from cellars and from contaminated wells. A very long time was to elapse before a proper water supply was laid on to every separate house.

* Wednesbury Board of Health.

The Editor wishes to acknowledge with thanks permission from the Wednesbury Corporation to publish these extracts.

THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE WATERWORKS COMPANY'S
EMPLOYEES' MUTUAL THRIFT FUND.

COMMITTEE

A.W. Tibbenham (Chairman) P.J. Burton, W. Chatfield, E. Jones, C.T. Langdon,
W. Paterson, W.J. Sale, L. Severn, A. Spink, L.B. Stokes, I.E. Wallis,
F.C.S. Ward, J.W. Whitworth

Honorary Secretary:
A.E. Fewtrell

Honorary Treasurer:
E. Burgess

The thirtysixth Annual General Meeting of the Fund was held at the "Belle Vue" Hotel on the 20th June, 1963.

The Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March, 1963, was adopted and the Committee's recommendation that an interest payment of 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ % tax free be credited to members' accounts was carried unanimously. The Chairman, in his remarks, referred to the satisfactory position and the steady growth of the Fund but pointed out that there was still room for more new members.

All employees of the Company are eligible to join and the advantages as a medium for saving are :-

Regular saving effected by deductions from salaries or wages.

Amounts up to £30 may be withdrawn on demand in any period of one month. (For amounts over £30 three months' notice to be given in writing).

Lump sums without limit may be deposited.

Mortgages and Loans granted to employees in approved cases subject to the Funds being available.

Members, upon retirement, cease to be contributors but may leave their balances on deposit with the Fund.

The following rates of interest credited to members' accounts during the last 8 years indicate the steady progress of the Fund.

Year ended 31st March	1956	3%	Free	of	Tax
" " " "	1957	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ %	"	"	"
" " " "	1958	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ %	"	"	"
" " " "	1959	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ %	"	"	"
" " " "	1960	4%	"	"	"
" " " "	1961	4%	"	"	"
" " " "	1962	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ %	"	"	"
" " " "	1963	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ %	"	"	"

The total membership to date is 336 and employees of the Company wishing to join should apply to a member of the Committee or the undersigned. There is no entrance fee and no limit to the amount that may be deposited.

A. E. FEWTRELL
HONORARY SECRETARY

MR. A. A. CHAPMAN.

It is with great sadness we record the untimely death of Mr. A. Chapman who was recently killed in a road accident near his home in Kent. Remembered with great affection by the older members of the Staff, Alec Chapman commenced with the Company as an Articled Pupil to Mr. Fred J. Dixon, Engineer-in-Chief, in November 1931. He continued to gain experience in civil engineering work until the outbreak of war in 1939.

Already an Officer in the R.N.V.R., he left to join his unit in October 1939 and soon saw action. He was on the cruiser Ajax when it chased the German pocket battleship Graf Spee to its doom in the River Plate. Later he was aboard H.M.S. Opportune when it took part in operations in the Mediterranean and on convoy protection to Russian ports. He was mentioned in despatches in 1944 and rose to the rank of Lieut. Commander.

Returning to civilian life, Mr. Chapman recommenced work with the Company in December 1945 and was promoted to Constructional Engineer the following year. Until he left in May 1952 he was in charge of work in connection with the River Blithe Scheme, Seedy Mill Treatment Works, Hayley Green Pumping Station, the sinking of boreholes and construction of Churchill Pumping Station etc.

He was held in high esteem in all quarters and on the social side became Vice-Chairman of the Staff Association and endeared himself to all and sundry. His particular fondness was for the cricket eleven and those of us who were his contemporaries will never forget that long lanky form with the cheery smile.

Mr. Chapman left the Company in 1952 on being appointed Deputy Engineer with Leicester Corporation and three years later was appointed as the first Engineer Manager of the newly created Medway Water Board.

THE RATES

Recently, the uncertainties of how Rating Revaluation would affect us and how much more our local government services would cost us have been sufficient to keep headlines in the press for several weeks. Now that revaluation has come; the rates demands have come; and the local government elections have gone, perhaps it is opportune to see why periodic revaluation is necessary, what it means to the rate payer and what happens to our money.

WHY HAVE REVALUATION FOR RATING

Revaluations are the means of taking into account changes in property values in different parts of the country, thus ensuring fairness between one occupier and another and between different local authorities.

The recent revaluation was designed to ensure that industry, commercial properties and houses are rated in full on the basis of up-to-date values. Prior to this, houses were rated on 1939 values, industry of 50% of 1956 values and commercial properties (shops and offices) on 80% of 1956 values.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO THE HOUSEHOLDER?

Taking the Country as a whole, we will pay about the same proportion of total rates after revaluation as we did before it, shops and offices' share goes down and industry's goes up.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO TO?

Firstly, perhaps we should see how much is spent and get it into perspective.

In 1961 (the last year for which detailed figures are available)

Education cost	£853	million
Roads & Bridges	£125	"
Personal Health Services	£101	"
Sewerage & Refuse Collection	£90	"
Police Services	£140	"
Fire Services	£ 32	"
Welfare for Old & Young	£ 54	"
Street Lighting	£ 22	"
Libraries & Museums	£ 23	"

The taxpayer pays about 55% of the total amount spent on local government services and the rate payer pays the balance.

What does this mean to the individual householder? If, for example, he pays £45 a year in rates the contribution from Central Government sources, i.e. the taxpayer, is £55 -- so for £100 a year - £2 per week - a household gets Education, Roads, Street Lighting, Personal and Public Health Services, Sewerage and Refuse Collection, Police & Fire Service, Welfare when needed and a library to muse in.

Local Government Services therefore appear to give good value for money and though it is right that we should always be taking the appropriate steps to ensure that we get good value for our money we must also recognise that when we demand the improved Social Services we have to be prepared to foot the bill!

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS' SERVICE

GOLD WATCH AWARDS

Paris, A.E.	Main Jointer,	Sutton Depot
Delo, W.J.	Jointer,	Walsall Depot
Hemmings, W.J.	Carpenter,	Wood Green
Langdon, C.T.	Electrical/Mechanical	Engineer
Williams, F.	Clerk,	Lichfield
Tapper, H.	Waterman,	Walsall
Challinor, A.B.	Superintendent,	Cannock
Smith, T.A.	Foreman,	Slade Heath
Chadwick, A.	Driver,	Walsall
Sansom, C.G.	Clerk,	Service Dept.
Thomas, P.F.	Admin. Officer,	Head Office
Billingham, J.E.	Clerk,	Secretary's Dept. Head Office
Drew, J.	Plumber,	Walsall
Horobin, E.	Waterman,	Walsall

When Mr. Crowe of Sandfields was at Bournemouth earlier in the year he saw Mr. C.H. Taylor (formerly at Wood Green). Mr. Taylor, who wishes to be remembered to everyone, says he is enjoying life and recently won the Snooker Competition at his local Club.

Obituary

Mr. Howard Beardsmore

We record with deep regret the death on the 29th April last of Mr. Howard Beardsmore, after a retirement lasting only nine months.

It is a great pity that after serving the Company for almost fifty years, (more than half that time as Revenue Officer, he was not spared to enjoy at least a few happy years of leisure.

He was a great personality with a fine sense of humour. This was probably founded on his experience in the Great War, when he joined the army at an early age and proved himself a good soldier.

Howard will most certainly be missed here, and we extend our deepest sympathy to his Widow and Daughter Suzanne.

Mr. F. T. PICKETT - WALSALL DEPOT

The sudden death of Mr. Frank Pickett on the 18th March, at the early age of 46, came as a very great shock. He died at home shortly after returning from his normal day's work at Walsall Depot. A post-mortem was held and this confirmed that the cause of death was coronary thrombosis.

Mr. Pickett entered the Company's service in June 1934 and after serving in the Army for the duration of the War he left his employment with the Company to work at York, but after a few months he returned to his old job on the clerical staff at Walsall.

Mr. Pickett was a fine musician and had been the official accompanist of The South Staffordshire Operatic Society for some years. Music was his main hobby but he was also one of the most regular supporters of the Walsall Football Club and had occupied the same seat in the main stand at Fellows Park, Walsall, for many years.

At the funeral service at Walsall Parish Church, on the 22nd March, before a large congregation, the Vicar of Walsall, the Reverend Vernon S. Nicholls, spoke movingly of Mr. Pickett's fine character and of his notable work for the Parish Church, of his musical abilities (at one time he was relief organist) and the value of the work he had done for the Church.

Mr. Pickett was very much esteemed by all his colleagues at Walsall Depot and he is sadly missed.

Personalia

NEW EMPLOYEES

Miss D.E.Brummitt
Miss M.I.Cooper
Mr. M.C.Walker
Mrs. R. Pritchard
Mr. A.B.Bromley
Mr. R.G.Newns
Mr. E.A.Cutler
Mr. H. Morris
Miss M.D.Jeavons

Canteen Manageress
Mechanical Department
Revenue Department
Cash Office
Distribution Department
Wood Green
Civil Engineering Department
Reception & Postal Department.
Engineer's Typists Department

RESIGNATIONS

Miss D.I.Collett
Mr. T.J.Gurney
Miss B.Whitworth
Mrs. N. Banner

Cash Office
Wood Green
Mechanical Department
Head Office.

RETIREMENTS

Mr. H. Felton, Foreman Lichfield Pumping Station, retired 1st December, aged 65 years, after 47 years' service.
Mr. W. Rippin, Waste Inspector, Cannock, retired 21st January, aged 65 years, after nearly 41 years' service.
Mr. W.H.Hill, Stoker, Ashwood Pumping Station, retired on the 8th March, after 12 years' service.
Mr. A.Gill, Trenchman, Walsall Depot, retired on 4th March, due to ill health, aged 63 years, after 22 years' service.
Mr. F. Wilson, Waste Inspector, Walsall Depot, retired 18th April aged 61 years, due to ill health, after 18 years' service.
Mr. R.G.Lloyd, Foreman, Slitting Mill, Retired 5th May, aged 65 years, after 36 years' service.
Miss C.J.Lowry, Receptionist, Head Office, retired 24th May, aged 60 years, after 41½ years' service.

DEATHS

We regret to record the following deaths :-

- Mr. A. Rowlands, Pumping Station Attendant, died suddenly on the 19th November, aged 48 years, after 5 years' service.(Coneygre)
- Mr. G.Bowers, Formerly Foreman, Moors Gorse, died 23rd November, aged 63 years. Mr. Bowers retired in March 1961.
- Mr. C. Cresswell, Formerly Bourne Vale Pumping Station, died on the 12th November aged 95 years. Mr. Cresswell retired in March 1933.
- Mr.A.Fabis, Trenchman, Cannock Depot, died 24th December aged 59 years, after 12 years' service.
- Mr. H. Brown, Formerly Foreman, Fradley Pumping Station, died 6th March, aged 77 years. Mr. Brown retired in May 1953.
- Mr. W.T.Stewart, Formerly Foreman at Pipe Hill Pumping Station, died 9th February, aged 97 years. Mr. Stewart retired in February 1932.
- Mr. W.C.Whitehouse, Formerly Wood Green Pumping Station, died on 13th April. Mr. Whitehouse retired in December 1950.
- Mr. E.W.Wheelley, Formerly Collector, died 5th February. Mr. Wheelley retired in December 1946.
- Mr. H. Beardsmore, Formerly Revenue Officer, died 29th April aged 65 years. Mr. Beardsmore retired on the 31st July 1963.
- Mr. G.H.Richards, Formerly Foreman, Coneygre Pumping Station, died 15th July, aged 70 years. Mr. Richards retired in 1958.
- Mrs. A. Taylor, Cleaner at Head Office, died on the 18th July, aged 48 years.
- Mrs. E.C.Boneham, Widow of the late Mr. A.W.M.Boneham, died on the 19th May, aged 87 years.

MARRIAGES

We offer heartiest congratulations and best wishes to -

- Mr. & Mrs. P.Hudson (Miss C.Edge) on the occasion of their marriage on the 30th March.
- To Mr. & Mrs. K.Wallace (Miss P.A.Brown) on the occasion of their marriage on the 22nd June.
- And to Mr. & Mrs. M. Crump (Miss A.Waters) who were married on the 20th July.

BIRTHS.

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. H. Hatfield on the birth of a second son (David Laurence) on the 12th May.

Also to Mr. & Mrs. R.R.Pearsall (Walsall) on the birth of their first grandchild, a boy, born 19th July.

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. E.H.Rose (Somerford Pumping Station) on the birth of a Son on the 3rd August.