



NEWS REVIEW

THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE WATERWORKS COMPANY NEWS SHEET

Appointment of Mr. James Lamont as Engineer-in-Chief

MR. Lamont was appointed Engineer-in-Chief in succession to Mr. Randal H. Taylor on 1st April, 1971.

Prior to joining the Company Mr. Lamont successively worked as a site engineer for a firm of civil engineering contractors, in various engineering capacities at the Metropolitan Water Board and Nottingham Water Department and as Deputy Engineer at Oldham and the Colne Valley Water Company. Whilst working with the Metropolitan Water Board he endured many hectic times during the 'blitz' on London. Later he volunteered for flying duties in the Royal Air Force and received his wings in 1945.



He joined the Company in November, 1959 as Deputy Engineer-in-Chief and has been closely involved with all the principal engineering works carried out since that date including the River Severn Scheme and associated trunk mains, Cookley Pumping Station, the electrification of Brindley Bank, Slade Heath, Pipe Hill and Maple Brook, the reconstruction of Moors Gorse, the construction of Outwoods Reservoir No. 2 and many minor works. In 1970 Mr. Lamont gave evidence at the Dulas Reservoir Inquiry on behalf of the Company.

Mr. Lamont was Chairman of the Staff Association from 1961 to 1964 and a member of the Superannuation Committee from June, 1968 to June, 1971.

His extra-mural activities have included the chairmanship of the Institution of Water Engineers Midland Section, 1965/1966, during which time he inaugurated with the Committee a series of successful management courses for water engineers at the Graduate Centre for Management Studies, Moseley and, presently, he is a member of the Severn River Authority and serves on the Committee of the Midlands Association of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

We look forward to the application within the Company, over many years, of the fruits of his wide engineering and managerial experience and his active and far-ranging mind.

The future of the Water Industry

On Thursday, 2nd December, the Secretary of State for the Environment, Mr. Peter Walker, announced in the House of Commons that the Government proposes to create 10 Regional Water Authorities to regulate water services in England and Wales. The proposed reorganisation should be operative in the spring of 1974.

The Authorities will be responsible for water from source to tap, including the prevention and control of river pollution, augmentation of river flows by storage schemes, treatment and supply of water to the public

and the treatment and disposal of sewage.

It is satisfactory to note that within the proposals there is a provision for statutory water companies to carry on. The Government state that they see them as having a continuing role to play as agents of the Regional Water Authorities in the field of water supply.

The proposals have yet to pass through Parliament and might be amended before coming into force.

Further information will be given to the staff as and when it becomes available.

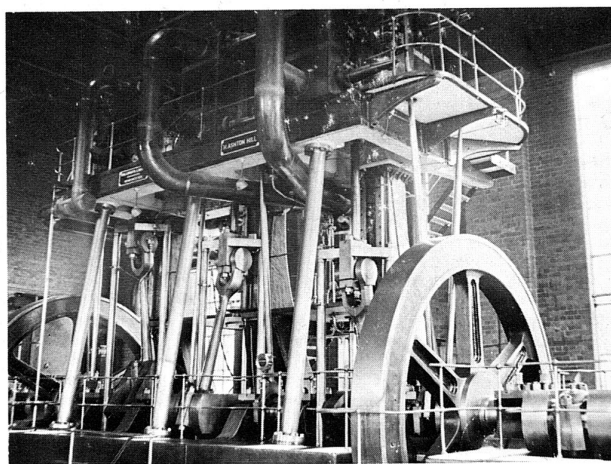
and so we say good-bye...

Smoke no longer curls leisurely up into the sky from the dip in the hills behind Burntwood. The tall, disused chimney towering above Maple Brook pumping station signifies the end of an era. Steam, that strong servant of the South Staffordshire Waterworks Company has pushed its last drop of water into the main.

Maple Brook is the last of the steam driven pumping stations to yield to the march of progress and electrification. Though one of the large, triple expansion steam engines is being retained, as a silent monument to this era, along with engines at Brindley Bank and Sandfields, nothing can replace the smell of steam and warm oil or the rhythmic clank of these two Goliaths.

The engines, one manufactured by Galloways and installed in 1913 and the other by Glenfield and Kennedy and installed in 1917 were named after Company Chairmen of the day, Mr. H. Ashton Hill and Mr. H. K. Beale. If the engines inherited their strong, dependable and soothing characteristics from their name sakes, the Company was twice fortunate. Electric motors, the modern replacement for steam engines, with their high speed whine and squat disposition, do not lend themselves to the continuance of this naming custom.

During their lifetime the engines have known four masters. Mr. W. Parker was the first foreman to put the monsters to work, after which he moved to Slade Heath to carry out a similar task. The then foreman at Brindley Bank, Mr. W. J. Wilson took over until his retirement. He is remembered affectionately by some of the staff as Mr. "Understand Me" Wilson. He was present during a boiler house explosion which nearly blew the rear wall down in 1944. Mr. W. A. Paterson, who had earlier been employed by Glenfield and Kennedy installing the No. 2 engine, was his successor.



Tom Hood, who became the present Foreman in 1967, joined the Company in 1934, working on shift at Maple Brook. He recalls that his pay was then 10¼d. per hour and that on a three cycle shift system the longest period off duty was from 2.0 p.m. Sunday till 10.0 p.m. Monday. Other people's holidays and sickness meant working 12 hours a day, seven days a week. Were these the "Good Old Days"? "Every bit of it," retorted Tom, "We knew no different and were very happy and contented with our lot."

The loss of the steam engines will be missed by all who have had the pleasure of seeing them.

Alan Jones

DEATHS

Mr. T. Didlock, formerly a service layer at Tipton, till his retirement on 1st March 1968, died on 12th August 1971, aged 67.

Mr. D. Evans, a waste inspector at Burton, died on 28th August 1971, aged 62.

Mr. G. V. Hall, former Chief Chemist at Sandfields until his retirement on 1st May 1968, died on 28th August 1971, aged 68.

Mr. W. J. Flatt, former Burton Area Superintendent till his retirement on 31st January 1971, died on 27th October 1971, aged 61.

Mr. B. Hawkey, a technical assistant in Distribution Department, died on 3rd November 1971, aged 43.

Mr. J. Bradbury, former Senior Engineering Assistant in Distribution Department, till his retirement in October 1963, died on 12th November, aged 73.

Bernard Hawkey

WHAT can one write about Bernard? If any man was universally known and liked, it was him. When he is thought of, as time passes, the recollection must produce a smile, for whenever one dealt with Bernard, such was his sense of fun, that it was virtually impossible not to end up laughing.

Whether the recollection is a wild tale of a visit to works, an Al Jolson-type rendition of "Sonny Boy" or that strange collection of pipes, dials and plumber's bric-a-brac amongst which he sat, in what he referred to as his "Think Tank" at Head Office, the picture before you must be a happy one. For here was a man who, in spite of ill health, managed to radiate humour and convey a well-founded confidence in his pronouncements on plumbing and by-laws matters, which were always technically sound and rooted in common sense.

While writing this description of a friend and colleague one can imagine him standing (possibly on a stool) looking over one's shoulder chuckling at the clichés with which it could be filled. On many occasions he was referred to as the BI--- Plumber, by the BI--- clerks who surrounded him, but it was his initial training "with the tools" on which he based subsequent technical learning that enabled him to become a well known voice on plumbing in this country. He was planning for the day when his ideas on modern plumbing would become everyone's. Perhaps they may yet become his permanent memorial.

Before getting morbid he would wish us to sign off, so "Cheerio Bernard."

Jim Bradbury

MR. James Bradbury died on 12th November 1971, at the age of 73. The funeral service at Sutton Coldfield Crematorium on 17th November 1971, was attended by many former friends from the Company. He retired in October 1963 after 33 years service with the Company. Prior to this he had worked 15 years with a pump manufacturer, in Ashton-under-Lyne, both in the drawing office and in the field, and as a young man, he served in the trenches during the latter part of World War I.

On joining the Company Jim was appointed to the Civil Engineering D.O. and later, on re-organisation, became senior engineering assistant in Distribution Department.

He was associated principally with the day to day running of the undertaking and control of emergency situations arising from fractured mains or other causes. In addition, he was concerned in the laying of the 24in. Kinver and other trunk mains, many rural schemes and a host of minor works.

Jim gained an encyclopaedic knowledge of the works and distribution system of the Company and was always happy to pass advice to other members of the staff and recruits; many drawings bear witness to his outstanding skill on the drawing board.

As a fellow worker Jim will be remembered not only for his dedication to work, technical ability and resourcefulness but, also, for his genial and utterly unselfish approach to life.

He is survived by his wife and married daughter.

Jack Flatt

IT was with regret that I learned of the death of our former Superintendent, Mr. W. J. Flatt at the comparatively early age of 61 years.

My earliest recollections of Jack are from the mid 1930's. I well remember the large Company cycle he rode around the town on his inspections. He was quite a familiar figure in his blue uniform suit and bowler hat.

During the war years Jack suffered his first serious illness and this eventually led to his wearing dark glasses, a feature by which he has since been readily identified.

Jack became our Superintendent in 1958, but even then he was beginning to suffer more and more from stomach troubles and arthritis. In spite of these discomforts Jack remained quite cheerful and was always ready to help when the occasion arose.

Eventually his ailments compelled him to accept premature retirement in 1970. We shall miss Jack and his wide knowledge of the Burton area, and deeply commiserate with his wife and family.

C. E. J. ROBINSON

George V. Hall

G.V., as he was always known, was the Company's Chief Chemist for 39 years.

He graduated from Leeds University and came to the Company in 1928 with a B.Sc. and M.Sc. in Chemistry.

Despite the poor accommodation at Sandfields those who visited the Lab. to discuss a treatment or water quality problem were greeted with a ready welcome. Helpful advice was usually accompanied by a down to earth chat and a cup of tea.

Nevertheless, G.V. had a highly developed sense of duty towards the Company and consumers and it was clear that the responsibilities of Chief Chemist taxed him heavily.

On his retirement in May 1968, he returned to settle in his home town of Bridlington, Yorkshire. Unfortunately he suffered a long series of illness. Sadly he died on 28 August 1971.

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

43 YEARS

Mr. J. W. Bedworth, Charge-hand Electrician at Wood Green.

25 YEARS

Mr. A. H. Bentley, Clerk in the Secretary's Department.

Mr. H. Brookes, Assistant Superintendent, Walsall Transport.

Mr. W. E. Glasse, Fittings Inspector at Walsall.

Mr. C. A. Maddocks, Mechanic at Walsall Transport.

Mr. L. A. Riches, Station Attendant at Sandfields.

Mr. J. E. Sugg, Clerk in Electrical/Mechanical Department.

Mr. C. R. Trueman, Head of Architectural Section.

Eric Hendley

FOR 35 years Eric has worked on waste, fittings and district inspection duties, only taking a lighter job as yard foreman and storekeeper in the last 5 years before his retirement.

Eric is now as happy in the kitchen as he was on the sportsfield when he was a keen athlete and footballer. His speciality is baking and icing wedding cakes.

Good luck Eric, we wish you and your wife many happy years of retirement.

THANK YOU

MAY I please say Thank You to everyone for their kindness to me after my accident.

This is a wonderful Company to work for especially in times of trouble. The age of chivalry is not dead here anyway.

CLARE PARRY

Retirements

Mr. J. W. Bedworth, charge-hand electrician at Wood Green, retired on 30th August, 1971.

Mr. E. Hendley, yard foreman at Sutton Coldfield, retired on 15th October, 1971.

Mr. P. J. Beal, leading waterman at Tipton, retired on 1st December, 1971.

Thank you for your service and every good wish for your future.

Superannuation Fund

THE Annual General Meeting of contributing members was held at Head Office on 29th June 1971 under the Chairmanship of Mr. A. W. Tibbenham, there were 34 members present.

The Report and Accounts were presented by Mr. R. G. Clarke who commented upon the change in investment policy, the implication of the Finance Act 1970 and Actuarial Reports.

The Chairman told members that it was the intention of the Committee to review the Fund in the light of recent and proposed legislation and to re-write the rules. In doing so, consideration will be given to the Actuarial Report and also the numerous suggestions that have been discussed in recent times for varying some of the benefits.

Members displayed a lively interest in a number of subjects including widows' pensions, post-retirement, inflation etc. The Chairman gave an assurance that consideration would be given to members' views.

There were five candidates for the three vacancies on the Committee and after a ballot the following were elected:

Mr. K. Hand
Mr. W. A. Markham
Mr. P. F. Thomas

In thanking the retiring members for their services to the Fund the Chairman paid special tribute to Mr. J. W. Whitworth who had served since 1947 and who was retiring from the Company at the end of June, 1971.



"My Careers' Master certainly knew his stuff!"

Safety First

BE safe not sorry. Safety should be your concern at home, on the roads and at work.

The Company has recently strengthened its safety organisation in order to encourage a greater and continuing awareness of safe working. The Deputy Engineer-in-Chief is now at the summit of a structure embracing heads of departments, departmental safety officers and sectional safety officers, the latter being found in every depot or independent group of workmen.

We are endeavouring to stimulate this continuous awareness of safe working at all levels by means of posters, talks, demonstrations, off-site training and the issue of operational instructions containing appropriate reference to safety where required.

Beyond this, we are taking greater care to see that all equipment which might be unsafe to use or in poor condition is tested at the appropriate statutory intervals of time and not used unless it has received its safe load working certificate.

To be effective in avoiding accidents these changes depend on the continuous utilisation of safe working methods by everyone—most of all by the man on the job.

If you can see a safer way of doing a job tell your supervisor or sectional safety officer about it. You may get a prize for your suggestion or, more rewarding, your idea may save someone from accidental injury or death.



EDITORIAL

Hard work this! trying to play detective and writer.

Please send more news, more humour, more quickly.

Happy New Year!

BRONWYN THURSTON,
Acting Editor.

Fit for the job

ENCOURAGED to think of specific job training by the advent of the Industrial Training Act 1964 and the subsequent setting up of training boards, E.M.D. suggested that the Company should introduce an apprentice training scheme, in the hope of filling future requirements for skilled technicians.

Mr. Taylor gave his approval and the scheme was announced in 1967.

Keith Hodson, who had been working as a junior clerk with John Sugg at Head Office, was chosen as the first apprentice.



On the 24th September this year he qualified as a fitter, having had a first class practical training.

Congratulations Keith; South Staffs. first fully-fledged apprentice.

H. G. SIMS

Area Office Joint Committees

FOLLOWING introductory meetings in September, at all the area offices, independent joint committees have been set up at Cannock, Tipton and Walsall, with a combined committee for Burton and Sutton.

Management is represented on each committee by the Distribution Engineer, acting as chairman, the respective Area Superintendents and the Personnel Officer and the employees by elected representatives from manual and staff grades.

Meetings which are to be held quarterly, began in November. They are intended to provide an opportunity for employees to express their opinions, and for management to explain its aims on general matters affecting their interests.

Crossword Winner

THE crossword in the August review was won by Alan Lander from Wood Green.

He donated the £2 prize to the N.S.P.C.C.

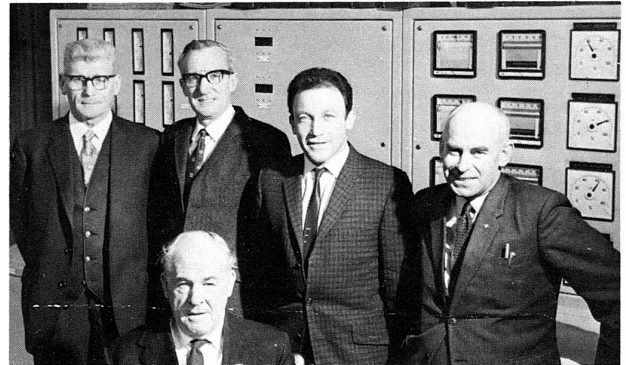
WALSALL CONTROL (Automation, Telemetry and Bits)

CHANGES are taking place at Walsall Control Office. Money is being spent on new equipment, including telemetry display units, automatic press button sluice valves, high level alarms, control panels and a scanner unit, which we've christened Betty because of its sometimes fickle behaviour.

The most useful piece of equipment we have at present is the automatic valve at Grange Farm. This is operated from the Control Office and regulates the flow of water from Barr Beacon reservoirs. It works on compressed air but future automatic valves will be operated electrically.

The control office is manned 24 hours each day including weekends and Bank Holidays. It is the only means of contact with the Company available to the public outside normal working hours, except for Tipton Area Office which is manned until 10 p.m. each evening. We always try to be helpful even when consumers have problems which are nothing to do with the Company, such as blocked drains or sewers. We can usually put them in touch with the right local authority emergency service.

Our main job however, is to control the output from pumping stations and to regulate the levels in reservoirs, following the instructions of the distribution duty officers. Usually our quietest though most important moments are between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. at night, when we have to prevent the reservoirs, which are filling ready for the following day's demand, from overflowing.



Alf Young, Sid Cooper, Pete Mitchell, Dennis Drew, Cyril Wilkinson.

There are five of us who work a shift system in the Control Office, Alf Young, Cyril Wilkinson, Sid Cooper, Peter Mitchell and myself Dennis Drew. Alf is getting near retirement but has been in the Control Office for 34 years and with the Company for 42 years.

If you are wondering what "bits" means, in my heading, it refers to information received in the scanner unit. XOY1 bit 5 means that at Bourne Vale pumping station No. 2 booster pump is running, or X4YO bit 7 tells us that the Hayley Green high level alarm is functional. A bit then, is a message, or part message, which is passed to the display units. All the pumping stations, reservoir levels, meter readings and alarms in the telemetry system operate on this principle; reservoir levels being illustrated as percentages of the total depth of each reservoir.

Though we don't actually see many people we regularly speak to a large number of the Company's employees whilst doing our job. We have made friends with all the telephonists, with the pumping station and treatment work attendants, the district inspectors and watermen, the lads in the statistical section at Birmingham and the boffins in E/M.D. and D.D.

Co-operation is a key word in the Control Office and is particularly important in our dealings with the Area Superintendents, their deputies and assistants, when work in their areas involves adjusting pumping, reservoir levels and trunk mains operations.

DENNIS DREW

Which?

THE STAFF ASSOCIATION subscribes to the Consumers' Association and every month receives an issue of the association's magazine Which?, plus copies of Money Which?, Motoring Which? and the new Handy-Man Which?, issued every third month. Anyone interested in reading any of these may borrow them from the Secretary, Mr. John Dixon.

SPORTSVIEW

Cannock Football team

FORMED in June of this year "Cannock Waterworks" team entered the Cannock Chase League's 6th division.

The team has several 'stalwarts' of old. Melvin Morgan, John Mayer and Mel. Walklate are all players with Chase League experience who will be able to guide younger players.

A target of £100 was set by the committee to start the team for this season, only a small proportion has so far been achieved, through the running of a depot pontoon.

At the beginning of the season Cannock entertained Head Office in two friendly games, the scores were 8-3 and 8-1 in favour of Cannock. This was quite an achievement as our players had not played together before. I understand Head Office are now under new management.

Finally thanks to Head Office for the use of part of their strip and the return of our goal nets.

NICK HARVEY

Head office Football news

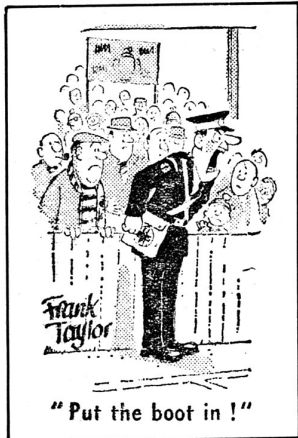
UNDER new management! That's the sign that went up over the team's H.Q., the Three Crowns, Walsall at the start of this season.

Brian Walker became the 333rd top class manager to resign since the war and after an approach had been made to Don Revie and Tommy Docherty the board finally decided to appoint Terry Tapper's father-in-law as the new supremo.

With our new, ex Royal Marine trainer/manager, and after exhausting training sessions we faced the new season with confidence. A confidence partially justified by our record to date, 4 wins, 2 defeats and 1 draw.

Our income and expenditure account which was presented at the Annual General Meeting in July showed a credit balance of £97. No doubt, however, our running expenses will increase this year so your continued generous support of the tote will be really appreciated.

JOHN EARL



"Put the boot in!"

Could you be a better Ref?

WHAT makes a referee turn out in all sorts of winter weather to suffer abuse from everybody in the ground, players and crowd and be made the scapegoat for the losing team?

Well, it's certainly not the money, for the payment he receives is a pittance compared with that of a professional footballer. In my opinion he turns out because he loves the game and he feels that when his playing days are over he can still offer something to the game.

Recently referees have been going through a 'clean-up' campaign but, as I've argued many times this season, they are only aiming at stricter enforcement of existing rules. Good discipline of players on the field makes the game better to play, watch and referee.

MICK SHELLEY

Congratulations to



Pat and Roy Billingham on the birth of baby Paul on 24th September.

Ted Morris and 'The Wife' on the arrival of baby Rebecca Louise on Wednesday, 27th October.

Margaret and Tony Safe on the birth of baby Julian on 4 July.

Good Relations

Congratulations to Jackie Stait of the Computer Department and John Earl of E.M.D. who were married at St. Gabriel's Church, Weoley Castle on November 20th 1971.

Sailing

IN response to the growing demand for recreational facilities by the public at large and, in common with many other water undertakers, the Board have authorised the establishment of a sailing club at Blithfield Reservoir. As a result, Blithfield Sailing Club, which is affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association, was constituted in September 1969. The Club leases from the Company a sailing area of 100 acres of water surface on the south side of the reservoir together with a recently completed clubhouse and car park site.

Sailing is expected to begin in March 1972 and will take place on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays from 9 a.m. till one hour before sunset.

Boat owners and non-boat owners may apply for membership; non-boat owners may act as crew for the boat owners if required.

Mirror Dinghy (as a junior class only), OK, GP14, Merlin Rocket and Fireball are the adopted classes of boat.

Scale of Fees:

Entry Fee £15

Family Membership (husband, wife, children under 16) £10 p.a.

Single Membership (applicants over 21) £7 p.a.

Cadet Membership (applicants between 16-20) £2 p.a.

Boat Fee £5 p.a.

The Club aims at a boat owning membership of 200 which is rapidly being approached. So, if you fancy yourself as a nautical type, seize your chance!

Applications for membership, open to all, whether you wish to take to the water or not, should be made to:

Mr. K. J. Rogers,
Honorary Secretary,
Blithfield Sailing Club,
"Gateways",
163 Lichfield Road,
Stone,
Staffs.
ST15 8QB

N.S.P.C.C. dance

A LETTER has been received from the Regional Secretary of the N.S.P.C.C. thanking everyone who made possible the dance held in the Birmingham canteen in aid of the N.S.P.C.C., for their donation of £60.

WALSALL SOCIAL CLUB

WALSALL Social Club, which began in 1969, has had another successful year. Enthusiastic membership has been built up and kept going by a keen and active organising committee, encouraged by Mr. Astbury and Mr. Coldicott.

This year we expect over 160 members to come to our Christmas dinner and dance at the Elms Hotel, Aldridge and we are planning to entertain about 90 children at the Christmas party in the Caldmore Liberal Club.

Our large membership includes several of our retired work mates who still attend the club's social functions. We also have a retired committee member Walter Bott or 'Botty' as he is affectionately known, who attends committee meetings in an advisory capacity and organises the catering for the children's Christmas party. (Don't let on, but he's also Father Christmas!)

Apart from arranging the actual 'get-togethers' the club's committee also see that members who retire from Walsall and Wood Green receive a present. A sum of £10 from club funds, is added to a voluntary collection from colleagues. Members who are away sick for some time are sent a 'get well' card and a basket of fruit.

We are proud of our Social Club at Walsall and have adopted as our emblem 'Aquarius'—The Water Carrier. This can be seen on the lapel badges worn by our members.

DENNIS DREW

Industrial Relations Act 1971

THE Industrial Relations Act, 1971 which is to be implemented progressively during the next twelve months, aims at establishing harmonious relations between Trade Unions and Employers whilst protecting the Individual and safeguarding the Community.

Individuals are to be given more information about employment, improved terms of notice, new rights in relation to Trade Union membership and protection against unfair dismissal.

These rights are to be maintained by new methods of settling disputes, a revised system of Trade Unions and Employers' Association registration together with new Industrial Courts and Tribunals.

Whilst there will be some changes in practice to comply with the new law the Company does not expect the application of the letter of the law to alter materially the good spirit in which industrial relations have been conducted within the Company in the past.