



NEWS REVIEW

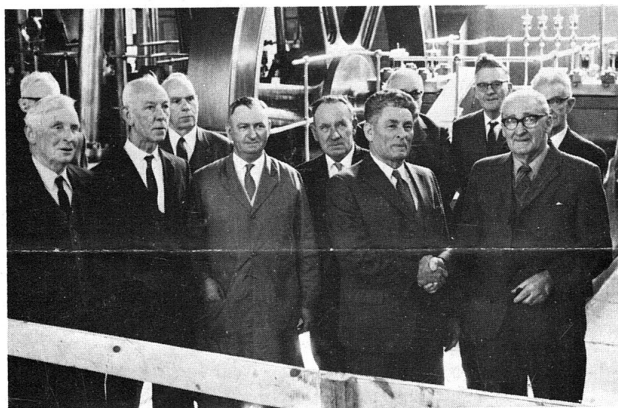
THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE WATERWORKS COMPANY NEWS SHEET

LETTING OFF STEAM

The South Staffs' Steam era has finally ended.

The last chapter in its history was written on Wednesday, 5th April, as the massive steel wheels of the Company's last steam engine were halted at Maple Brook Pumping Station by Mr. C. T. Langdon, the Electrical/Mechanical Engineer.

There to bid a fond farewell to the triple expansion engine were Company employees who had worked for many years with steam.



It was an occasion for reminiscences and 62-year-old Mr. Tom Hood, the last foreman at Maple Brook, explained that the engine had become a part of his life. "There's something about steam", he said, "that you don't get with electricity. It is life-like and reliable; all you need is a thunderstorm to put electric equipment out of action."



The engine, which was built by Galloways Ltd. of Manchester and installed in 1915, was designed to pump 2 million gallons of water a day from the 600 ft. borehole at Maple Brook to Gentle-shaw Reservoir, which serves the Cannock and Rugeley Area. It consumed coal at the rate of 6½ tons a day.

Now that its working life is over it will be preserved at the Station as a permanent link with the age of steam.

GEOFF EVANS

Future of the Water Industry

As foreshadowed in the last issue, water companies will continue in existence, acting as agents to the Regional Water Authority in whose area they are located. Although all proposals are, at this stage, tentative, it is not expected that consumers or employees of the Company will notice any change on account of re-organisation for a number of years.

The Company will still run its own affairs but may be called on by the Regional Water Authority (No. 3 in our case) to carry out such activities as the collection of sewerage rates and the domestic metering of water. There could be extended use of our major sources for other R.W.A. purposes, although this is unlikely, and it is probable that overall financial budgets will be discussed with the R.W.A. However, many important features that distinguish us from other water undertakings, such as the Company's powers to raise money will remain unchanged.

It is intended that the necessary legislation will be prepared, taking into account the views of all interested parties, in time to pass through Parliament and receive Royal Assent by the autumn of 1973. Accordingly a series of Consultative Papers entitled:

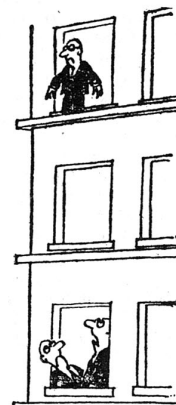
- The Place of Water Companies in the New System
- Safeguards for Staff
- Welsh National Water Development Authority
- Practical Arrangements for Implementation
- Constitution of Regional Water Authority
- Economics and Finance
- Public Participation in Water Management

is in the process of being circulated for comment by all interested associations.

Copies of all these Papers may be borrowed by any employee, either by direct request to Miss E. Knowles or through local supervisors.

Employees will be notified of additions to the list and important stages of the re-organisation will be discussed at the consultative committee meetings.

It should be remembered that implementation of re-organisation is a vast administrative operation and will take many years to complete.



"Of all the nerve— he's jumping from the executive wash-room!"

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT 1971

No other legislation has been conceived in such political acrimony as the Industrial Relations Act 1971, and it is unlikely that any other new legislation has so continuously hit the headlines. Indeed, it may seem superfluous to draw attention to it in News Review!

During March a series of meetings were held at Head Office. The main provisions of the act and its general effects on employees were explained to employee representatives, supervisors and managers. Their opinions were sought on draft documents such as that concerning grievance procedures. These, together with revised contracts of employment, will shortly be issued to all as fore-runners of a number of minor but important administrative changes.

The Act attempts to set limits to the economic and social impacts of strikes and to provide rules within which the ordinary comings and goings of matters affecting industrial relations can be conducted. Responsibilities and safeguards are provided for employers, employees and unions. A Code of Practice, available for perusal in all offices, embodies what is considered by the authors of the Act to be good practice in modern industrial relations.

Despite its controversial start there are many good aspects of the Act which we hope will become familiar through practice and prove of benefit to all employees.

OBITUARY NOTICE

Arthur Pyne

FEW of the Company's engineers will be so widely remembered as Arthur Pyne; he made numerous friends both within the Company and through his extra mural activities.

Arthur was born at Harrogate, Yorkshire in 1894, and received his early training with Messrs. Hathorn Davey of Leeds.

After serving as an engine room artificer on board H.M.S. Courageous in the 1st World War he returned to Hathorn Davey and then in 1926 moved to Messrs. Kitson & Co. of Leeds.

He joined the Company in 1930 as an assistant mechanical engineer, and was involved with the installation, maintenance and operation of its steam and diesel pumps. He became Senior Mechanical Engineer from 1946 till his retirement in 1959.

After his retirement he devoted himself to various projects associated with the Newcomen Society and other organisations concerned with the preservation of important relics of the Industrial Revolution.

He was last in the public eye in a documentary film, made by ITV showing the restoration of the Boulton and Watt beam engines at Crofton pumping station on the Kennett and Avon Canal.

A copy of the film has been purchased by the Newcomen Society and lodged at the

Deaths

Mr. A. Pyne, senior mechanical engineer till his retirement in 1959, died on 7th December, 1971.

Mr. R. Rowlands, foreman at Shenstone till his retirement in 1959, died on 24th December, 1971.

Mrs. E. Perkins, widow of Mr. W. V. Perkins, who worked in the Secretary's department, died on 28th December, 1971.

Mr. D. Price, foreman at Prestwood, died on 9th January, 1972.

Mr. S. R. Nixon, former head of Service department till his retirement in 1954, died on 23rd January, 1972.

Mr. J. Burns, former stoker at Brindley Bank, died on 29th January, 1972.

Mrs. E. Smith, widow of Mr. W. H. Smith, who worked in the Service department, died on 1st February, 1972.

Mr. A. H. Birch, former engine tender at Maple Brook, died on 2nd February, 1972.

Mr. F. L. Brown, a driver at Walsall, died on 22nd March, 1972.

Mr. G. Wiggin, former bricklayer at Lichfield, died on 4th April, 1972.

Mr. J. Thorpe, former stoker at Fradley, died on 8th April, 1972.

Museum of Science and Industry in Birmingham. It will provide a lasting memorial to this enthusiastic engineer.

Our deepest sympathies are extended to his widow and Keith his son, who works in the Secretary's Department.

H. G. Sims

SWITCH ROUND IN E.M.D.

A RE-ORGANISATION of functions and responsibilities within the department came into effect from the 1st March, this year.

The department's functions were defined and grouped under three headings and three sections were formed to carry them out.

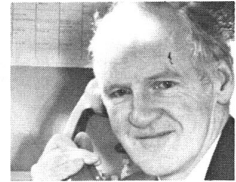
The three sections are known as:

1. Operations and Planning
2. Technical Design
3. Mechanical Engineering.

Overall departmental responsibility continues to be held by Mr. C. T. Langdon and his deputy Mr. H. G. Sims.



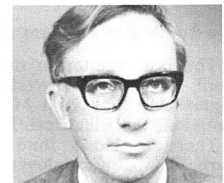
Mr. C. T. Langdon



Mr. H. G. Sims



Mr. W. E. Winter



Mr. G. E. Woodhead



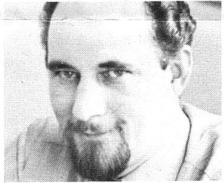
Mr. M. A. Yates



Mr. E. J. Morris



Mr. A. D. Jones



Mr. G. R. Evans

Mr. W. E. Winter, assisted by Mr. G. E. Woodhead (who has recently joined us), is in charge of the Operations and Planning section, which is primarily responsible for the operation and maintenance of pumping stations. Mr. Winter also has overall responsibility for Wood Green workshops, where Mr. D. M. Coldicott is the Superintendent.

The Technical Design section is the responsibility of Mr. M. A. Yates and his assistant Mr. E. J. Morris and deals primarily with the design of electrical systems and the purchase and installation of electrical equipment including radio and telemetry. His staff includes the old drawing and clerical sections.

The third section, Mechanical Engineering, is the responsibility of Mr. A. D. Jones, assisted by Mr. G. R. Evans and deals with the design of mechanical plant systems and the purchase and installation of that plant. Mr. Jones also has overall responsibility for the Transport Section, where Mr. F. C. Barlow is the Manager.

Retirement of Percy Beal



PERCY Beal joined the Company in the immediate post-war years, and has since worked as a Waterman on the Smethwick District. His conscientious approach to his job earned him the respect and admiration of consumers and colleagues alike.

He enjoyed quite an eventful final week of his working career. He was presented with a gold watch by the Company and, at an informal gathering at Tipton Area Office, the Area Superintendent Mr. E. Jones presented Percy with a transistor radio subscribed for by his colleagues.

Mr. Jones, on behalf of everyone present, wished Percy a long and happy retirement and expressed his appreciation for Percy's loyal service.

Dennis Jones

Walsall Social Club

HOPEFUL that better weather is on the way, Ronnie Groom has arranged for the annual Breakfast Trip to be held on Sunday 21st May. This is an all male "do" which includes breakfast at a West Bromwich Club followed by a trip into the country to Yarningale Common, near Stratford for a game of football and a visit to a pub.

Another fairly recent event was a meeting in March with Burton Social Club Members for a Sportsnight. This was an enjoyable evening during which the men competed at darts and dominoes and the like, over a pint or two.

The Club's Annual General Meeting was held on 1st May. A report was given of the club's achievements over the past year and particular reference was made to the hard work put into organising activities by Sarah Chambers, the Treasurer and Susan Howels, the Secretary. Mr. Arthur Astbury was appointed as the first president of the Club.

SAFETY

INJURY at work is often caused through lack of thought, care or attention.

GENERAL RULES

Be sure you do a job the safe, correct way—if in doubt ask your supervisor.

Report any unsafe conditions immediately.

Tidy up after a job—remember, you could be the next person to trip over that shovel!

FIRST AID

If you injure yourself, even slightly, have it treated and report the incident without delay.

EXCAVATIONS

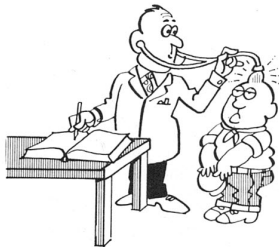
Always use the proper access.

Never work in an untimbered trench unless it is very shallow or sufficiently wide to avoid danger from falling material.

Always keep spoil clear from the edge of the trench.

Always erect a barrier around the excavation.

Where rock or other material could fall, wear a helmet at all times.



'Got Off' boarding a tram

FRANK Nicholls, who worked for 12 years as a trenchman at Walsall till his retirement in 1957, celebrated his golden wedding anniversary in March.

It was love at first sight when Frank and Florence met, more than 50 years ago. Frank boarded a tram at Rushall and saw a young girl, whom he liked the look of. It just so happened that they got off at the same stop in Walsall Wood and so Frank had a chance to speak to her.

They were married at St. John's Church, Walsall Wood. All their married lives they have lived at Rushall, where they brought up their three daughters. They also have seven grandchildren and two great grand daughters.

Sam Stanley

Retirements

Mr. A. Pennell, Yard Foreman at Walsall, retired on 24th December, 1971.

Mrs. R. M. Jones, Cleaner at Cannock, retired on 31st January, 1972.

Mr. W. Hodgkiss, Pumping Station Attendant at Slade Heath, retired on 10th March, 1972.

Thank you for your service—Best Wishes for a happy retirement!

Staff Association Dinner and Dance

THE 1972 annual dinner and dance was held in the Pavillion Suite at the County Ground on Friday, March 19th.

A splendid turn-out made all the hard work of the committee and their helpers worthwhile.

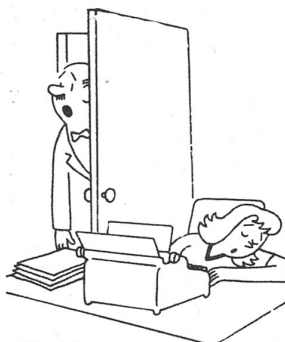
Association members and their guests were welcomed by Sir Charles and Lady Burman, following the presentation of a bouquet by Miss Kaye Gooding, who looked particularly feminine in red silk and a broad smile.

One couldn't help noticing this year that 'penguin' attire was almost universal amongst the gentlemen. It was evident too that the ladies had, as usual, sought and succeeded in obtaining individuality. They gave charm and colour to the scene.

During the meal the wine flowed as the diners built up an aura of bonhomie in anticipation of the expected oral onslaught to come. In fact, they need not have been concerned; the speeches were light and informative.

Sir Charles Burman opened the proceedings with the toast to the Queen. Mr. G. H. N. Thompson proposed a toast to the Staff Association, mentioning the Company's major works programme and the formation of the Regional Water Authorities. He expressed the Board's satisfaction that Companies were to be allowed to continue, albeit as agents.

The reply was made by Mr. R. G. Clarke, who listed the activities of the Association over the past year and hinted at ventures to come.



"Finished typing my speech?"

Following the conclusion of the meal, Alan Ayres was prized from his seat at the piano to lead his band into the dance music. The 'hair letting down' session was left in the capable hands of Albert Charles and his skilled quartet. A memorable evening was rounded off by a Burns bending rendition of 'Auld Lang Syne'.

David Parsons

Births

CONGRATULATIONS to:

Val and John Lewis on the arrival of baby Anne on 19th November, 1971.

Margaret and John Dixon on the birth of baby David John on 4th January, 1972.

PIKE DREAM

ON warm, lazy days don't you, just sometimes, wish you had an outdoor job? If you have already, then you'll know that it's not such fun when the weather is miserable, but imagine rowing gently on sun glinting water, your dog relaxed at your feet, whilst you go methodically about your work.

Most of us I think wouldn't mind swapping jobs with Alistair Mackenzie, at least on the sunny days. Alistair is a dour and healthy looking Scot, who for the past seven years has been doing what is probably one of the most unusual jobs on the Company.



Alistair at the helm

He is the man who looks after the fish rearing programme at Blithfield. A programme which aims to put about 16,000 rainbow trout a year, into the reservoir; having reared them from two to three inches long fry to 13-15 inches at two years old. At one time brown trout were also reared but, crowded together in rearing tanks, brown trout are particularly susceptible to a fearsome-sounding killer disease. The Company also buys 2,000 two year old, brown trout and another 6,000 or so rainbow trout, each year ready to go straight into the reservoir.

The idea of rearing the fish, is that the tiny fry can be bought very cheaply, and the cost of getting them to the required size, to fend for themselves in the reservoir, by regular and frequent feeding in well aerated and constantly changing water, for two years, is less expensive than buying from commercial suppliers.

Less expensive, that is, provided not too many young fish are lost, either to over anxious anglers like herons and poachers, or through disease or cannibalism.

Cannibalism? Yes, these trout have such voracious appetites that, within seconds of Alistair throwing them a handful of concentrated meat and fish food pellets the still surface of the tank erupts as though it were boiling, with wildly thrashing bodies and woe betide any fish that gets in the way of another's pellet.



Thrashing bodies

Once in the reservoir, the trout need this 'get there or bust' instinct for finding their own food amongst the resident water life, such as cray fish, snails, fly larvae and young coarse fish such as perch, chub, dace and roach.

If you fancy your chance at teasing trout with feather decorated hooks, for a season, and have a friendly bank manager, all you need to do is ask to be put on the waiting list. Those who get permits say there's no trout fishing anywhere in the Midlands to beat Blithfield—thanks in great part to Alistair!

SOCCER ROUND-UP

Birmingham Burton

Since December our progress has been steady in both league and cup performances. For the second season running we reached the semi-final of the Observer Cup.

Perhaps our most exciting match, though a disappointing result, was against the premier division side Bloxwich Strollers. All of our team members exerted maximum effort and yet we were beaten 3-0.

Two trophies were presented at the end of the season, one to Mike Crowe as top goal scorer and the other to Malcolm Hall as player of the year.

Our players over the past season have included: M. Astbury, B. Bayliss, J. Bryers, J. Coles, M. Crowe, J. Earl, J. Hackett, M. Hall, A. Porter, A. Pratt, M. Shillock, T. Smith, T. Tapper, G. Watkins. Anyone interested in playing next season should contact Malcolm Hall, E/M.D.

JOHN MORRALL

Cannock

As the fixtures come to a close, "Cannock Waterworks" find themselves, after a run of 13 wins and 1 draw, including cup and league games, in the final of the Division VI Cup and certain of third place in the League.

Cannock have now beaten every team in the Division; their most successful games being 6-2 against Walnut Rovers, and then league leaders, and 5-1 against Huntington, the present leaders.

They also had the most difficult draw in the Division Cup, against Huntington, but after a replay won 2-1. Going on to the semi-final, they beat Lea Hall Colliery 1-0 and so faced Westfields United in the final, which unfortunately they lost 5-4, after extra time.

Hopes for next season are entry into the 4th Division and more success in outside cup competitions.

VIC STEADMAN



"I'm from the waterworks Madam. Are you happy with our service?"

Well, they did it! With 4 wins and 2 draws in their last 6 games, Waterworks United took the runners-up spot in the Sunday League 3rd Division, and on April 22nd at the Club's first Dinner and Dance, over 60 guests saw the League Secretary, Terry Whyman, present the team with its first trophy.

Now we must look to next season, and like any other team, large or small, with any ambition we hope to improve still further. A higher division means a higher class of football, so to that end we have decided to form a reserve team so that we can have a larger pool of players to draw from.

The teething troubles we had at the start, two seasons ago, are now behind the team, thanks to a wonderful team spirit. Bobby Collins, once said of Leeds United: "When one man gets kicked, we all limp", this could equally apply to the United—a grand bunch of lads.

Finally, just a word of commiseration to our counterparts at Cannock Depot on losing their Divisional Cup Final after extra time—better luck next season!

ROY FELTHOUSE

Superannuation Fund

At the time of the Annual Report in June, 1971 it was hoped that the Fund rules would have been re-written for operation in 1972.

During 1971 however the announcement of the re-organisation of the Water Industry and the Government's issue of the white paper on the future of State and occupational funds delayed, matters pending a detailed study of the documents in each case.

Draft proposals for the new rules are at present in the hands of your Committee Members, The Actuary and the Solicitor. The final draft will require to be approved by the Board and the Inland Revenue before being submitted to members for their consideration.

The Bill setting out the Government's proposals for State and occupational pension funds is expected to be published in the autumn when it is envisaged that certain benefit improvements will be necessary in order that the Fund may obtain exemption from participating in the State Reserve Scheme.

The Annual General Meeting of Members has provisionally been arranged for Thursday, 29th June, 1972, formal notice will be given to each member in due course.

Rugby special



Mike Bowen, who works in C.E.D., spends part of his spare time playing rugby, both for the Lichfield 1st XV and Staffordshire Under-23 teams.

This season he was Lichfield 1st XV's second top scorer with 144 points. He helped them create a new club record by scoring their 700th point of the season.

Table Tennis

Table Tennis is in the doldrums at South Staffs. The Birmingham Office team, playing in Division 1 of the West Birmingham League finished the season with only 7 points from 18 games.

This sad tale results from the loss of Roy Sewell to Upper Tame Drainage and Tony Robinson who thoughtlessly emigrated to South Africa.

The decision now facing us is whether to reform in a lower Division or to go moribund for a season.

Anyone (sex irrelevant!) who would be willing to play regularly, once a week in Birmingham during the winter months, should contact Geoff Thomason or Barrie Hopkins.



'How come everyone was crying but your mother and father?'

WEDDINGS

Belated, but sincere, congratulations to Susan and Geoffrey Howels, who were married on the 19th February. Sue is a clerk/typist at Walsall Office.

Congratulations to Joyce and Eric Burgess, who were married on the 22nd April. Eric works in the Secretary's department.

We wish you every happiness together.

IS IT A RECORD?

During their working lives, steam driven pumps, which have now retired to the museums, were dependent on the stokers who fed the furnaces with coal.

At South Staffs. alone, these few valiant men shifted an enormous quantity of coal. At Maple Brook, for instance, an average of 3½ tons of coal was consumed in a single 8 hour shift.

Having carried out some research, we have produced a league table, related to the performance of those who stoked for the Company's last four steam stations.

TOP TEN STOKERS

	Tons of Coal Stoked	Over No. of years
S. J. Wright	15,740	16
E. Lees	15,120	15
J. Burns	13,500	20
D. Tombs	11,970	15
J. T. Griffiths	11,500	16
T. W. Davies	11,150	9
W. Hodgkiss	8,100	9
W. Shenton	6,080	7
G. F. Cartwright	3,950	5
W. H. Church	3,770	5

We should be interested to hear from any pensioner or employee who feels he qualified for a place in this table.

Strangely, stokers were often not the burly giants you would expect but tough, wiry individuals, who had to be really fit, to stand the extremes of temperature under which they worked—blistering heat in the front and cold draught at the back.

Though stokers no longer feed the fires, their efforts will not be forgotten.

DON HILLMAN

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

51 YEARS

Mrs. R. M. Jones, cleaner at Cannock.

25 YEARS

Mr. G. W. Anderson, superintendent at Sandfields.

Mr. P. T. Beal, waterman at Tipton.

Mr. J. H. Beech, waste inspector at Walsall.

Mr. E. C. Cartwright, pumping station attendant at Trent Valley.

Mr. E. Crisp, data processing manager at Birmingham.

Mr. G. Dee, pumping station attendant at Sandfields.

Mr. C. G. Felton, deputy foreman at Seedy Mill purification works.

Mr. C. Guy, stores clerk at Wood Green.

Miss D. Lees, central file clerk at Birmingham.

Mr. B. R. Pitt, yard foreman at Cannock.

Mr. T. A. Thompson, plumber at Tipton.

Mr. A. L. Worthington, waterman at Tipton.