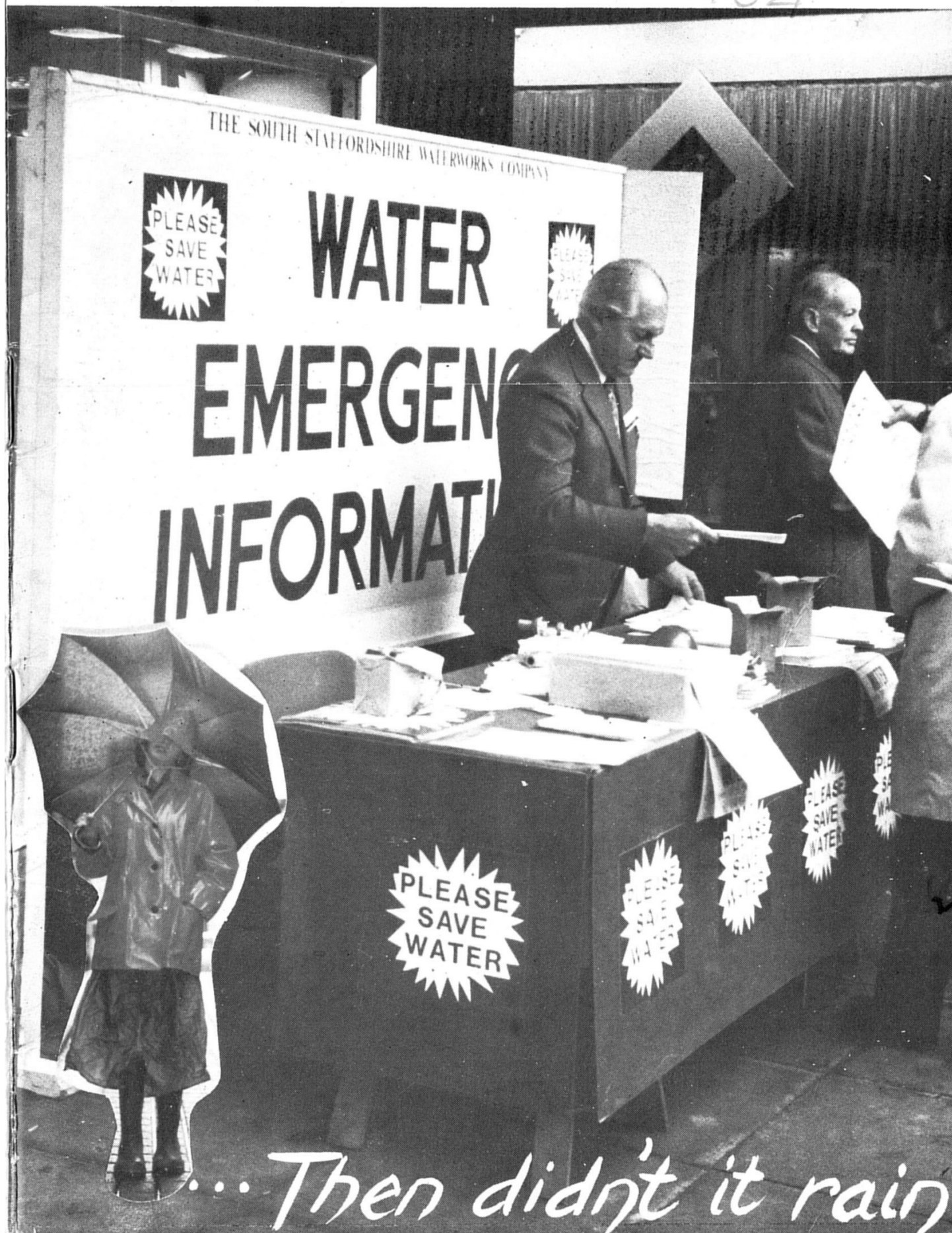


NEWS REVIEW

OCTOBER
1976

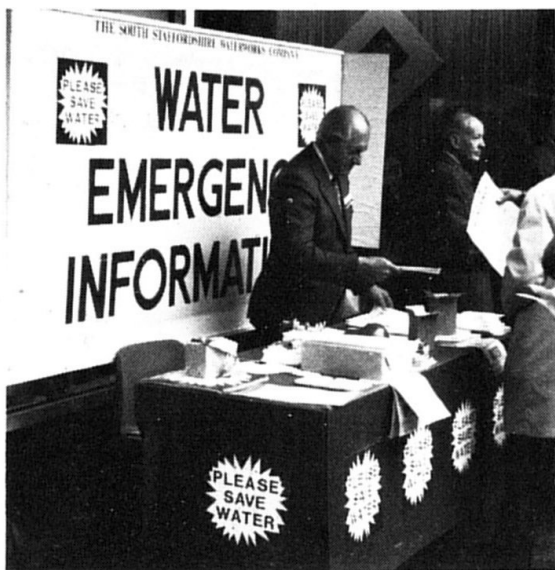
THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE WATERWORKS COMPANY

104



...Then didn't it rain

OUR COVER



SELLING WATER SAVINGS

Deputy Area Superintendent
Ted Robinson at Burton on Saturday,
September 18th.

NEWS REVIEWED

On Friday, 1st October, another of our long serving well known colleagues retired after 47 years' service. He is Duncan Parker, Area Manager of Burton Office. A profile of Duncan's career with the Company appeared in our October, 1973 News Review. We wish him a long and happy retirement.



Experiments were carried out successfully at the end of September to extract water from the Trent Gravels near Nethertown and pump it at the rate of 3 million gallons a day into Blithfield Reservoir. Although at this rate, it would take some years to fill, it is still an important contribution in the overall scheme to fill Blithfield. (see feature).

As a result of very heavy rainfall over the weekend, 25th-26th September, Blithfield reservoir rose almost 18 inches. This represents about 5% of the total storage — a useful gain, but obviously there is still a long way to go.

After the driest summer since 1783, we had the wettest September since the Second World War. After the highest daily consumption ever on June 30th, we have had record low consumptions as a result of economies by consumers.

The Company obtained an order under the Drought Act 1976 on September 24th. From that day all non-essential uses of water were prohibited.

An abandoned railway will come briefly to life again this winter, as Distribution Department and Tipton Area Office lay a 1.6 km length of 1000 mm diameter main between the 45" main from the River Severn to Sedgley Reservoir and the main from Kinver Pumping Station to Shavers End Reservoir. This will enable River Severn water to be more widely distributed than ever, and during the water emergency, will be used when the river is in flood and the underground sources can be rested. The work is expected to be completed in January. The route of the main lies chiefly along the bed of the old Kingswinford Branch Railway, near Himley.

IN THIS ISSUE

WATER EMERGENCY — Company activities

GIANTS OF BOURNE VALE — growing large vegetables

CORN DOLLIES — folklore from wheat

ROAD HOV's — Brum's buses

AND letters, our usual competition, cartoons, etc.

News Review

October 1976

The Magazine of the South Staffordshire Waterworks Company

Editor: PETER DODDS; **Assistant Editor:** BRON THURSTON; **Secretary:** YVONNE ELSDON
Photography: GRAHAM WATKINS; **Sport and Social Events:** JOHN MORRALL
Secretary's Department: JACK BILLINGHAM; **Illustrator and Cartoonist:** PETE BOSLEY

The Editor is always pleased to receive articles on any subjects, etc. However, the right is reserved to adjust material received to fit the space available.

EDITORIAL

I refuse to discuss the Water Emergency in my comments in this issue. This is because firstly, it is my prime concern at work and, secondly, because my favourite rhododendron died from detergent poisoning — I suspect — as a result of its daily deluge of washing-up water.

If you are interested in the Water Emergency and the Company's actions to cope with its difficulties, then please turn over. Much of this issue is devoted to Water Emergency topics, some serious, some light-hearted.

No! I wish to sing the praises of News Review readers in this, our first anniversary of the magazine in its new format. In one year there have been a number of milestones. The first issue was largely written by us, the editorial team, and there was verbal criticism. Accusations of bias towards certain departments were made, which were probably accurate; no one in the other departments had bothered to write anything!

In our spring number we were thrilled to receive our first 'Letter to the Editor' from Control Assistant Dennis Drew. Fortunately, it was printable, for it was complimentary. By the last issue, our old photograph series was well established as a firm favourite and this time we have received contributions from all quarters. Even the competition has this time been compiled by Alan Lander (who probably found the Editor's paltry efforts too easy).

So a warm thank you to all who have helped re-establish News Review as something people bother to read before consigning it to the wastepaper basket. Being fundamentally lazy, I shall strongly encourage more contributions from readers, it's less work for me! So, how about it Secretary's, New Works, Accounts, Tipton, Cannock, Burton? the silence from you has been deafening! In our Spring 1977 issue I shall announce the winner of our

competition for the best article submitted since October, 1975, so come on you lot!

By the way, we desperately need the services of someone, preferably with a lighter work load than myself or Bron, who can help four times a year to put the News Review together. This involves simple setting out of pages, deciding on photograph sizes and possibly some writing.

Finally, thank you all for the reaction to my editorial in the last issue. It certainly stirred up some thoughts. Let me leave you with this one. I get the impression that the Water Companies generally are having fewer problems beating the Drought than the R.W.A's. Perhaps they have planned their resources better in the past. I know . . . I said I wasn't going to talk about the Water Emergency!!!

P. W. DODDS, Editor

OTHER DAYS, OTHER WAYS

J. F. O. (Walsall) tells us about "another octopus dividend-snatching concern," as he calls the South Staffordshire Water Works Co. "A man has just been thrown on the scrap-heap after nearly 30 years' faithful service, and, according to information, there are other veterans to follow. This man was discharged without a stain on his character simply because they are cutting down expenses." We really do not see why this unfortunate Company should be blamed for not keeping up a larger staff than it requires. But, at the same time, we think they should have already made provision for pensions to their old servants. If the Insurance Act were not a very bad joke, the veterans of industry would have no cause to regret their dismissal. As it is, men drive engines for 24 hours at a stretch at the week end. 7 a.m. Sunday till 7 a.m. Monday, at scandalously sweated wages.

(John Bull, 1912)

NOTHING'S IMPOSSIBLE

This Company has possibly the most complex distribution system in Britain. Whilst this takes some time to get used to, and the Distribution Department sometimes wishes it were simpler, nevertheless it has the great advantage of flexibility.

It became apparent in July that the River Severn, the mainstay of the Company's resources, was dropping to all-time low levels and there was a real threat to our continued ability to abstract the large quantities that we are used to from the River, at our Hampton Loade Works. In August, we stopped drawing water from the seriously depleted Blithfield Reservoir, then only a third full (now rising). This put a bigger strain on the River Severn from whence the shortfall had to come.

As predicted, the cry changed from 'Save the Blithe' to 'Save the Severn', so Distribution Department's boffins put their heads together and gradually, over a period of days, the borehole outputs were increased to the absolute maximum, valves were opened and others closed. Water was again drawn from Blithfield until the abstraction of water from the River Severn was reduced to less than a quarter of normal summer demand.

By the August Bank Holiday, when demand is low anyway, the economies were aided by the mounting national publicity campaign, and it was possible once again to stop drawing water from Blithfield.

This economy, however, was not enough to safeguard supplies if the rains didn't come. August Bank Holiday Monday was the wettest for many years and the level of the River Severn rose to its highest level for some months. Desperate not to waste a drop of this mini-flood to the sea, the distribution system was turned inside out. Valves were again operated, borehole outputs were reduced to a minimum, boosters, normally only used fully in the summer, were increased to maximum to push the Severn water as far into the system as possible.

A few dry days later the river had fallen to its low levels again, so the system was once more turned round; this time, to minimise the use of the river water. Now, however, a new idea was brought in. Chelmarsh Reservoir, which acts as a bank-



side storage between the river intake and the Hampton Loade Treatment Works, was lowered somewhat by taking more water out than was pumped in, in order to 'catch' more of the next spate in the river. This was, in fact, done when the river rose again by pumping more into Chelmarsh than was drawn out, until the reservoir was full again.

Since then the weather has been quite unsettled and the Distribution Duty Engineers and the Hampton Loade Superintendent have juggled with pumps and reservoirs to take surplus water in the river when it rains and as little as possible when it doesn't. Much of the juggling has been made possible by the efforts of our consumers, who have acted so well on the national and Company's publicity campaign to save water. By their savings, it has been made possible to transfer sources from one zone to another where, with normal consumptions it would be impossible. Therefore, all our customers are able to share equally the rather meagre resources currently available. (Since this feature was prepared it has rained fairly steadily most days. Flows in the River Severn have risen and have been sustained, so that the overall situation is more encouraging.)

THE GIANTS OF BOURNE VALE

If Bourne Vale ever appears in the Guinness book of Records, it will not be because of its Pumping Station, for that is quite small as Pumping Stations go. Built in 1894 with two vertical compound steam pumping engines, the station was electrified as early as 1935. The original vertical spindle pumps and the original switchgear and controls are still giving stalwart service.

No, the Pumping Station will never rise to fame. Not so the present station foreman Peter Swain. He will undoubtedly rise to fame, for he grows giants! Giant marrows, pumpkins, leeks, onions, celery to name a few. Peter, who comes from a farming background started work for the Company in 1954 at Sandhills Pumping Station, but soon transferred to Bourne Vale.

He claims, modestly that his aim in life is to grow perfect vegetables. Perfect of shape, colour, texture and flavour. They also happen to be large. He showed me onions 6 inches across, leeks 3 feet long, but obvious even to a layman like myself, that they were perfect of form, colour and texture.. That evening, I found that they were also perfect of flavour.

Growing large specimen vegetables is not a special hobby Peter says, but just part of the fun of gardening. However, when he tells you how he does it, it is obviously a skill which requires patience and constant attention. I asked if he had any photographs which I could look at. He opened his trophy book. There, on page after page were certificates and citations, from both local and national amateur gardening shows. Did he not have pages for second and third place certificates, I asked. For the first time, he boasted just a little . . . he hadn't got room to keep all those, he said.

When I visited him, his pride and joys of the moment were a giant marrow and a giant pumpkin, growing at the back of the station. The two plants are related and so the technique for growing them is much the same, Peter explained. Early in the year, he digs a hole about a yard square and 2 feet deep. He then fills it with alternate 4 inch layers of well rotted manure (preferably horse variety) trodden firmly down, with a sprinkling of fish meal or bone meal. By June this has rotted down well enough for planting, that is the food that the plant will eat, decomposed to a liquid. (Plants can only 'eat' liquids).



Just some of the prize specimens.

The marrow or pumpkin seeds are planted in small peat pots and germinated under glass. The strongest seedling is then planted in the prepared bed in June. As the plant grows (it is a ground creeper) one runner is developed by pinching out side runners at the fourth leaf. When the plant flowers (there are both male and female flowers on the same plant) the pollen on the male flowers is carefully dusted onto the stamens of the female flowers. The strongest and largest fruits are obtained by self pollination in this way. Leaving it to the bees is too unreliable, I'm told. As more flowers appear, they are removed, so as not to divert strength from the main fruit it is wished to develop. Peter applies his own bit of plant psychology here, though. He leaves the last flower on, "to keep the plant interested in growing" he says. If the plant doesn't keep growing new leaves to replace the ones that die, the fruit will not develop. Like children, he says, small plants only have small appetites, so feeding is only gradually increased as the plant grows.

That's about all there is to it he says, though I'm sure there must be something else. Oh Yes! he says, you have to start off with the right seed. You can't get big marrows from small-type seed. Obvious really. Talk to the plants . . . ? Of course, and give them slightly warmed rainwater (up to 6 gallons a day for a big marrow) not cold tap water.

Finally, if you would like to go to the Prince's Ball, Peter will give callers to the station a few pumpkin or marrow seeds so they can have a go.

COMMENTS ON A RESERVOIR ATTENDANT

"LORDELPUS" "He's won by 2 minutes . . . fancy using a Spinnaker . . . "I protest" . . . "Upheld" . . . "Put an extra 2 minutes on his starting time . . ."

"LORDELPUS". "He's won again . . . and lapped me . . . Holyhead Sailing Regatta will never be the same again . . ."

"Who's that rough looking workman who told me to wash my boat?"

"And what will you do if I don't get off your ? ? ? dam? Well if you put it like that I'll go . . . but I'll talk to someone about you".

"You sing? " "Folk" I suppose . . . Oh, Classical . . . Who'd have thought it".

"You should join a choir. Oh, you're in two? One of the original carefully chosen hundred for the newly formed Chorus for the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra? Nobody told me you were that good".

"A Conductor? The Premier Male voice choir of Shropshire . . . the Hadley Orpheus? The one which has won their last seven Music Festivals?"

"A College of Further Education tutor? A Ladies Choir?"

AND WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME

DONALD MORRIS



Don in characteristic pose.

SUNSET

The god of ancient man is nearing journey's end; a leisurely approach, jauntily oozing bright beams of confidence.

Horizon clouds enhance his beauty, their somnolent wait designed to play a part in nature's tribute.

Pushing gently through, he uses them to aid his last displays. Assuming first the guise of his less awesome orbitors; a dust-ringed Saturn, mysterious cloud-veiled Venus, Jupiter of the giant spot and a blushing, deep red Mars.

Now aware of his awaiting mistress, he gains pace and flaming prominences plunge into the eager belly of the sea. She feels his warm embrace, her dancing waves sparkle out a welcome. He glows with pleasure, swelling and distorting. Like a great green praying mantis, the heaving sea consumes the body of her dying lover.

In ecstatic final moments, his greatest glory is exposed. His playground sky transformed to majesty by an orgasmic effusion of kaleidoscopic chromatism. Delicate colours, bold colours, now harsh, now soft. Colours struggling, clashing, fighting; then finally combining and blending into a melange of blissful brilliance. Bewildered backcloth clouds remain transfixed, enmeshed in a happening of light. A heavenly scene the brush cannot recapture, word can scarce describe.

It is his farewell to the day. His strength has all but waned, rays so short ago strong and vibrant, reduced to cold feeble fingers, powerless and faint.

As he settles out of sight, a frightening chill descends, all life seems loathe to let him go.

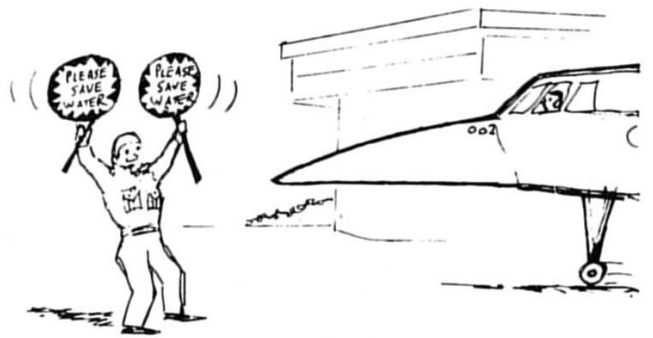
ALAN LANDER



" HOLD ON THEN ! I'LL GO FOR THE FIRE BRIGADE ! "



" WELL ! THAT'S THE LAST OF THE BATH WATER VICAR "



PIET BOSLEY

" OK ! DROP THAT HOSEPIPE ! YOU'RE SURROUNDED ! "



" DONT JUST STAND THERE ... THROW A BUCKET OF WATER OVER HIM. "

Superannuated

On a refreshingly cool but sunny 14th July, the superannuated members went to Chiswick House, the home of Sir Charles and Lady Burman, and later to the garden.



- 1 — Mr. and Mrs. O. Round and Mrs. E. Round
- 2 — Mr. and Mrs. A. Pinson, Mr. and Mrs. E. Norton
- 3 — Mr. and Mrs. A. Worthington, Mrs. J. Lappage and Mrs. H. Harvey
- 4 — Mr. C. Bradbury, Mr. Chuch and Mr. Marsh
- 5 — Mr. H. Harvey, Mr. R. Chatfield
- 6 — Mr. and Mrs. A. Chadwick and Mr. W. E. Smith

Photographs of the occasion were taken by Mr. H. A. Walters (photo No. 7) at 85 years of age was the oldest member present.

Members' Outing

arlecote Park, near Wellesbourne in Warwickshire, where they were welcomed by high tea at The Guy Nelson Hall, Warwick.



- 7 — Mr. and Mrs. R. Robertson and Mr. H. A. Walters
- 8 — Mr. W. Hunter
- 9 — Mr. S. Whitehouse and Mr. W. Hunter
- 10 — Mr. A. Young
- 11 — Mr. L. Morrall and Mr. D. Parker
- 12 — Mr. W. Tranter and Mr. and Mrs. J. Handley

taken by Cliff Bateman and include :

member there. A water man at Cannock, he retired in January 1956.

CORN DOLLIES

In recent weeks, some of you in Head Office may have seen Ron Reed running around with a brown box under his arm, full of funny shapes made from straw, these are corn dollies, the product of his wife's hobby. Many of you have bought them, but, do you know their history or what they signify?

Well, they are a survival of pagan rites that originated in the Middle East over 7,000 years ago, it was believed that Ceres, Mother Earth or Goddess of all that grows would hide in the last sheaf of wheat and if that sheaf were felled, the spirit would escape and there would be a poor harvest the following year.

In some places, it was a custom to leave a row of corn standing in the field, the straws from this wheat would be plaited into a corn dolly and then felled with the reapers' thrown sickles, this dolly was then garlanded with colourful ribbons, usually red, green or blue, and displayed in the church during the harvest festivities then it would be kept until the following spring in a safe place to ensure that the seeds sewn would bring a good harvest.



THE FAVOR

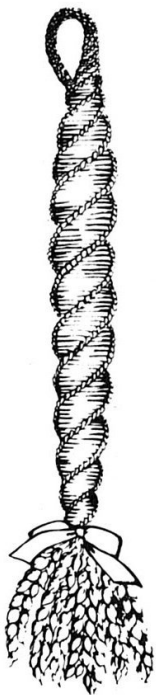
THE DOUBLE FAVOR

These dollies, have, through the ages been made into new shapes all of which are traditional, but all of which have a meaning. For instance, the Nek — this symbolises a Phrygian custom of capturing any unfortunate stranger that just happened to be passing by when the last sheaf was being cut and putting him onto the ground in the last sheaf, the straw strewn about him. He was then beheaded and dismembered and ploughed back into the ground, therefore replacing the spirit, and ensuring a good harvest the next year; all for taking a stroll in the country!

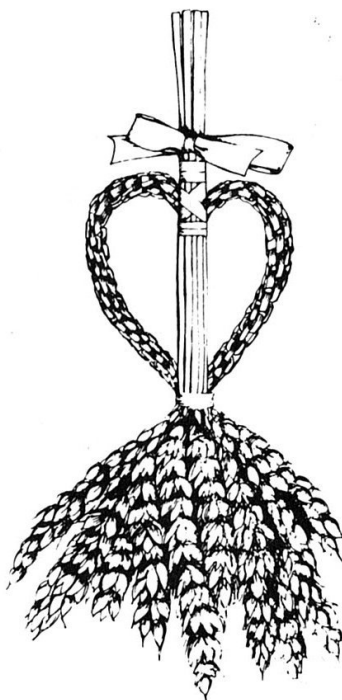
But in complete contrast there is the favor and double favor. Both mean the same thing, but are made differently in different parts of the country. These tiny dollies were made by the lads for the lasses as a sign of affection. They were worn by the lasses as a kind of engagement ring, a sign that they were spoken for.

There are of course, many, many more kinds of dollies, far more than I could ever describe. But here is just an insight to them and a few drawings so those of you who have never seen a corn dolly can see what I have been talking about.

My thanks go to Mr. Pete Bosley for the drawings.



THE NEK



THE HEREFORDSHIRE KNOT

SUE WARREN

COMPETITION

Winner of last edition's poem competition was Ron Reed, Admin. Department, whose entry of 'The South Staffordshire Waterworks Company' was the first correct solution opened.

For all those who groaned at how easy it was, Alan Lander at Wood Green Work Shops, has had his thinking cap on and produced the following crossword. So convinced is he that this will tax you, that he has very kindly offered to add £1 of his own money to the usual £5 prize offered by the Review. So do your best and send your entry to the Editor, News Review, to be opened on November 1st.

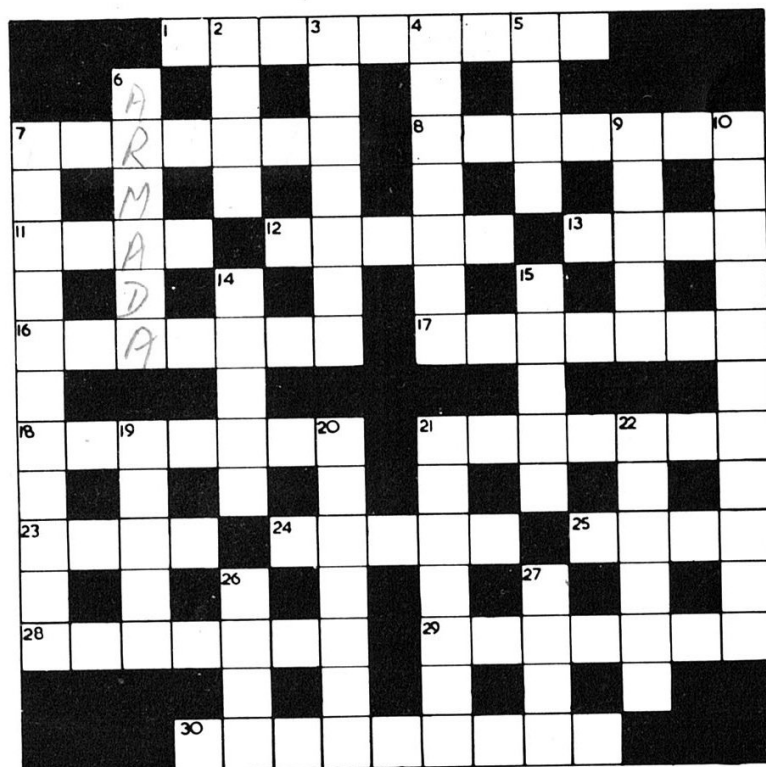
Across

1. Bet 5p he never sounds incorrect (3, 6)
7. Something like the Company blue jackets — and the jerks in them (7)
8. Fitting made by a backward umpire with a measuring device (7)
11. A miserable average.
12. He's from a well known family of wheel testers (5)
13. One man and his pipe (4)
16. No finish to this station (7)
17. Not the time for that Monday morning feeling (7)
18. Station tree and what it's made of (7)
21. Not necessarily three (4, 3)

23. A turned-on valve (4)
24. Join and almost become a Manchester fan (5)
25. Yankee game dried up by the drought (4)
28. More yummy (7)
29. Mostly replaced by motors (7)
30. Engineer who goes round singing love songs to animals (4, 5)

Down

2. Short deaths column (4)
3. Ray Selvey keeps his eyes open for these (7)
4. Is this where the Romans went for daily grog? (2, 5)
5. Not an easy answer (4)
6. Ada and a mixed up ram sailing on the main (6)
7. Big Daddy (5, 6)
9. Involved employment e.g. U.S.A. (5)
10. Strangely slow, and keen — but she's very efficient (4, 7)
14. At first brave, but 500 turns him into a mass murderer (5)
15. Calculator with a hiss (5)
19. Welly bottoms and some of the people who wear them (5)
20. Childish instruction — was it given to our athletes in Montreal? (4, 3)
21. Hard at it (2, 3, 2)
22. A close score (3, 3)
26. Deputy, to his friends (4)
27. Quite terrifying in a monster so green (4)



WELCOME

to those who joined us since June,

Burton :

DONALD CAMP, trenchman
PAUL LYNSKEY, trenchman
GEORGE WILDMAN, waste inspector

Cannock :

BARBARA CADDY, telephonist
JOHN FURNISS, trenchman
VIC WITHERS, trenchman

Hampton Loade :

KEN DAVIES, labourer/handyman

Head Office :

ANDREW BRYCE, computer operator
STEVEN COLELLA, junior clerk, revenue
DENNIS COLLEY, junior clerk, revenue
RON PERKS, safety officer
JANE PETTITT, junior clerk, personnel
CELIA TENNANT, clerk, costing

Tipton :

RON CLEWS, waterman
GEOFFREY JONES, trenchman
GRAHAM MONNES, waste inspector
MICHAEL NEATH, trenchman
JOHN ROWLEY, waste inspector
GLENN WATKINS, trenchman
STEPHEN WILKES, waste inspector

Walsall :

MALCOLM MILLS, trenchman

MAY BLITHELY FLOW THE SEVERN

In January 1976, anyone who suggested it would have been laughed at. In May it seemed insane, in July extravagant, in August expensive, in September . . . a good idea. What ?

"Let us pump the winter flood waters from the River Severn into the nearly empty Blithfield Reservoir". As the drought wears on, the need to conserve water has changed a number of strange dream schemes into reality. The River Ouse in Cambridgeshire is being pumped and made to flow backwards! The River Severn is filling Blithfield.

Mr. Lamont foresaw the possibility and the necessity long before anyone else thought it a practical proposition. The main disadvantage being that water which has had to be treated to deliver into supply is delivered into Blithfield where it will need retreatment when it is once again drawn into supply after the reservoir has filled. The reason for this is that there are no mains from Hampton Loade to Blithfield



The last link from Severn to Blithe . . .
a 450 mm bypass

other than the normal supply mains, which can only carry treated, purified water. In addition, treated water, containing chlorine dioxide, may adversely affect the fish at the hatchery.

In order to make this scheme possible, a number of small but vital additions have been made to the trunk main from Barr Beacon Reservoir to Seedy Mill treatment works. This main contained a number of non-return valves which only permitted water to flow from Seedy Mill to Barr Beacon. Flow was required to be reversed, so the 'flaps' or doors on these valves have been removed, except for one, which has had a large diameter bypass built round it.

The water is pumped from Hampton Loade to Sedgley reservoir. It then flows by gravity to West Bromwich Booster, where it is repumped to Barr Beacon Reservoir. From Barr Beacon the water can now flow by gravity via a new connection made at Seedy Mill, through the works and into the raw water mains and back up to Blithfield Reservoir. The flow from Barr Beacon to Blithfield is a complete reversal of the normal direction of flow. Up to 10 million gallons a day could be put back into Blithfield, when the River Severn is flowing at a high rate.

GOLD WATCHES

Gold watches were presented by the Chairman, Sir Charles Burman, in commemoration of 25 years service, to:

BILL BAKER, leading plant attendant, Sandfields

NORMAN BEEBEE, foreman fitter, Wood Green

LES HICKMAN, foreman, Cookley

LES HUNT, district inspector, Burton

BOB PHILIP, deputy foreman, Chilcote

REG STACKHOUSE, assistant superintendent, Walsall

RETIREMENTS

MAURICE HACKETT, centre lathe turner at Wood Green on 19th July.

JOHN STOCK, deputy section leader in Revenue Department on 31st October.

TED DIXON

Ted Dixon, retired civil engineer from New Works Department, now living at Hayling Island, Portsmouth, sends his best wishes to former colleagues at South Staffs.

Ed.: Nice to hear from you, Ted.

LETTERS

Sir,

The Editor's view on amalgamation has to my certain knowledge one other supporter.

The Company was formed 123 years ago and has gone from strength to strength. It is well worth bearing in mind that unlike other, much larger, companies South Staffs. has never asked a government for financial support.

I quote from 'A Record of Achievement', printed in 1964, "Water Companies consider that they serve the public well and there is no case for believing that they have outlived their usefulness. Parliament has acted wisely in preserving them and in the Company's view any attempt to make major changes in the existing pattern of the industry cannot fail to have an adverse effect in terms of service, efficiency and economy". Who next for the roundabout?

I say; enough of these large uneconomic organisations, where the workers are just numbers on a piece of paper and let us get on with a job of work that has been done well by our forefathers and can be done well by us now.

MERVYN PENNY

Sir,

I don't want to appear pompous but I do think that your editorial has things a bit out of proportion.

Surely the criteria for deciding the future of the Water Industry will not be 'the Company's friendly atmosphere and other benefits'. On the other hand I agree with you that facts relating to the Company's record of getting on with the job of supplying water should be considered before a decision regarding nationalisation is made.

JOHN SUGG

Sir,

My late father W. Wallington is on the cricket group photograph in the last News Review, he is sitting on the left at the front.

I think it must be the 'All Saints' church team from Four Oaks and was probably taken in the 1930's. The ground was in Edgehill Road on the opposite side to where the school is now built. I look forward to the next 'Review' and more information.

I am enclosing a photograph I took of the A.R.P. squad at Sutton depot shortly after it was formed, and thought it may be of interest to some of your readers.



L to R:

W. Wallington (my dad), S. Wimbush,
R. Robinson, P. Salt, A. Humpherson,
A. Roberts (my better half).

Yours sincerely,

PEGGY ROBERTS

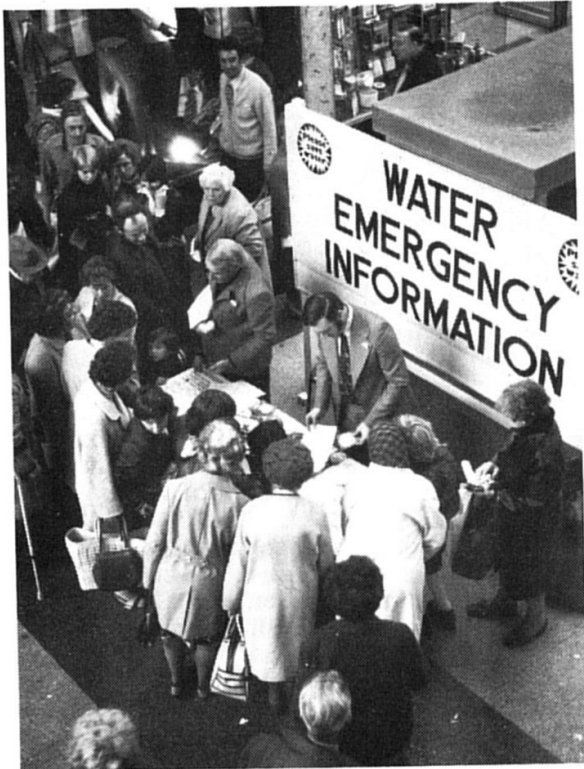
TO MARKET TO MARKET

On two occasions recently, as part of the Company's intensive publicity campaign, we have set up our stalls in the markets of the Midlands to sell . . . WATER SAVINGS.

Leaflets and car stickers have been distributed, advice given, complaints received and demonstrations given on how to save water, other than bathing with a friend.

The result of this and other publicity, notices on lamp posts, advertisements in the local press, etc., plus the considerable national publicity has resulted in considerable savings in water consumption. Although it has rained a lot recently, we are by no means out of the wood. Blithfield Reservoir is rising, but has a long way to go. The River Severn is still our principal source and if the rain doesn't persist, and the level falls again, we shall still be in trouble. Our borehole sources have borne the brunt of the demand recently and need a rest to re-charge the aquifers.

So even when it's raining, our consumers must still economise, 'though it might seem a bit silly. They are continuing to respond well, the savings being still about 20%. But this must be maintained, and we will continue to sell savings, until the emergency is over.



DON'T QUIT

When things go wrong as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all up hill.

When the funds are low and the debts are high
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,

When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest, if you must, but don't you quit.

Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As everyone of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about
When he might have won had he stuck it out:

Don't give up though, the pace seems slow—

You may succeed with another blow.

Success is failure turned inside out—
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,

And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far;

So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit—

It's when things seem worst that you must not quit.

DOUBLE DEPARTURE

Two well known faces missing from the corridors of Head Office since the end of October are those of Mrs. Maisey and John Stock.

Both had been employed for over 16 years in Revenue Department and have witnessed many changes, from the days of manual accounting, through to the present computerized system.

Their similarity extends to their shared enthusiasm for sport, in particular table tennis. John was both player and secretary for many years of the Company's table tennis team and Mrs. Maisey represented England at international level and was British ladies champion. She toured Europe with Fred Perry who is now Jimmy Connors' tennis coach.

In retirement John hopes to devote more time to his love of rose growing and Mrs. Maisey will have more time to visit and entertain her many friends.

We wish them both a long and very happy retirement.

PETER DARBY

ROAD HOVS

(or there GOE the JOJ's)

Very soon we shall bid farewell to the last of the former Birmingham City Transport open rear platform buses that have been part of the local scene for almost 50 years.

Before the war, Birmingham had hundreds of these buses constructed to their design, but in 1947 it was decided to replace the existing fleets of tramcars, trolleybuses and motorbuses. In the following seven years, no fewer than 1,748 new buses were built to achieve this, mostly built to Birmingham's own specification with the characteristic two blue bands around the upper deck. Because of the great demand for buses in this period, chassis manufactured by AEC, Leyland, Crossley and Guy were obtained, in addition to Daimlers, which had been the mainstay of the pre-war fleet.

The new buses, affectionately recognised by their registrations as the GOE's, HOV's, JOJ's and MOF's, were all immaculately maintained by the Transport Department and it is a great pity to see the remainder of these sturdy veterans in a shabby state, as they finish their days on the busy Outer Circle (11) and Hamstead (16) routes — not, incidentally just as peak hour extras but as full day service vehicles, albeit rested at weekends. Indeed it seems typical of these reliable servants of the road that they should 'insist' on working the Outer Circle, one of the busiest routes in the country.

At the Commercial Motor Show in 1950 and at the Festival of Britain in 1951, a Crossley nr. 2516, was exhibited, displaying what became known as a Birmingham type, new look, front end, this became the prototype for over 800 similar buses. No longer would the shining Daimler 'fluted' radiator of former years be seen. These buses numbered from 2426 to 3227, consisted of 100 Crossleys, 300 Guys and 400 Daimlers, along with two lightweights, and although the Crossleys have long since gone, the Guys and Daimlers are the survivors we now see, some nearly 26 years old — yes 26! Although they are mostly identical, try to spot the odd ones, like nr. 2847 which sports a heater and platform doors.

So, as more and more of the new one-man operated front-entrance Fleetlines pour onto the roads, the old faithfuls, many of which have travelled nearly a million miles, disappear one by one. After a quarter of a century of their carrying



**Nr. 3212 (MOF 212) at Selly Oak
in June of this year.**

passengers around this City, I can't help being sentimental and saying, Thank you — that really was service!

TED GADSBY

NEW WORKS SUCCESSES

The last year has been a busy one for members of the New Works Department, several of whom have gained examination successes :- Congratulations are due to

BILL ADNITT and RICHARD FOSTER, both of whom passed their Professional Examinations to become Chartered Civil Engineers.

MIKE BOWEN who gained an Honours Degree in Civil Engineering at the University of Aston.

JOHN BRYAN has been awarded a Diploma in Management Studies after attending a two year part-time course at Wolverhampton.

In addition, The Institution of Civil Engineers has awarded RICHARD FOSTER a Miller Prize (an annual award) for the paper he prepared and presented to the Institution on the subject of the design and construction of Glascoate Service Reservoir.

RICHARD FOSTER

WASTE NOT

A large number of volunteers have rallied to the call to carry out increased waste detection duties, in an effort to save water. To the uninformed passer by, it might look like this . . .



Reminiscent of the Home Guard, the little band of men, resplendent in yellow arm bands, weapons glistening in the moonlight, tramp out of the Area Office yard every evening. What they lack in discipline, they make up in enthusiasm as they stride in ragged file to their chosen target. Last night Station Street, tonight the High Street — they conquer . . . WASTE.

The routine is carried out with military precision. First take a sighting on a stop tap box, that little steel square in the footpath by the front gate. Next, lift the lid and insert the bident (a sort of two-pronged trident !!) Twist three times and remove! Then the long pole with half a telephone attached is pushed down the

hole. (This is a Palatine stick . . . as used, no doubt, by the Palatine Liberation Army!) The ear is firmly clapped to the telephone bit. Hark . . . forsooth it doth hiss! At this the erstwhile bystander will observe over the vinegar fumes arising from his fish and chip paper, the Palatinian leap about in glee shouting "a leak . . . a leak".

No doubt Peter Swain, Bourne Vale's Champion gardener could oblige as could the gas-lit dirty green cast iron Victorian edifice on the corner of Spon Lane, but our hero instead stops shouting, writes momentarily in a little blue book, and takes a sighting on the next little steel square in the footpath . . .

