

News Review

107

THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE
WATERWORKS COMPANY

AUGUST 1977



DECISIONS !

On July 14th the Government at last published its White Paper on the re-organisation of the Water Industry.

The Government's view is still that the Water Companies, who supply some 22% of the total water supply, do not fit into the image of a modern water industry. However, they state that "at this time (they) will not gain sufficient Parliamentary support" for integration of the Companies into the R.W.A.'s.

The major changes therefore are at national level, for the Government want the minimum disturbance at local level. The proposed National Water Authority will replace several smaller bodies concerned with national water policies and planning and one of their first jobs will be to work out a national water strategy to which the Companies and R.W.A.'s will have to conform. The British Waterways Board is to be included, and the Water Space Amenity Commission and Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council will be replaced by a single water amenity advisory body.

This means that our jobs will remain much the same, certainly during the life of this Government. Not that **that** is a very definite period of time. It is certain that the Conservative Party would not nationalise the Companies if it came to power, and it is the Liberal influence that has helped maintain our independence at this time. The moral of all this, I suppose, is to vote Conservative or Liberal if you want the Company to remain independent. If not, then I suppose you must be patient and hope for a Labour majority in Parliament.

There is another possible solution raised by the White Paper. The R.W.A.'s and the Companies are to be urged to promote the free interchange of employees by equating conditions of service, etc., to assist in the career development of those concerned. This interchanging already works well, certainly in our area, the Company having welcomed several ex-R.W.A. people in recent years and bid farewell to as many. All those who have come to us admit, however, that they prefer working for the Company than the R.W.A. However the full meaning of this section of the White Paper has not yet been made clear.

COVER

Alf Riley, and his Jubilee Medal —

See centre page feature.

SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

September is a busy month for the Social Club, so be prepared with your pitchfork, your prize cucumber, your rucksack and your map and make a note in your diary of the following events:—

Saturday, 3rd September: Barn Dance in Head Office Dining Room (8.00 - 11.30).

This will be an informal occasion so please wear casual clothes, and the less you know about barn dancing the more you will enjoy it. The caller will be Ken Bonner and there will be a bar and supper provided, at approx. £1.50 per head. Alan Evers is the man to contact if you are interested — (tel. 251 int., 288 ext.).

Friday, 9th September — Sunday, 11th September

Weekend Cottage near Dinas Mawddwy in North Wales. Margaret Harris, the centre of attraction in the cash office, has, with the assistance of the Solihull Y.H.A. group, built a rather fine cottage which has 17 bunks in 2 bedrooms on the hillside above Dinas Mawddwy. Anyone with interests in outdoor activities should contact either Margaret (tel 257 int., 238 ext.), or Alan Evers (tel. 251 int., 288 ext.). Unfortunately it will not be possible to accommodate children on this occasion.

Saturday, 10th September: Horticultural Show in the Head Office Dining Room.

Now is the time for our new allotment holders to display the fruits of their endeavours together with any other Company employees with green fingers. Please contact Peter Thomas (tel. 230 int.), or his secretary Doreen Nash (tel. 295 int., 220 ext.) for further information.

Sunday, 18th September

Car Treasure Hunt in the Bewdley area. Please contact Brian Greenwood or John Parish (tel. 205 int., 298 ext.) for further information.

The Social Club are also endeavouring to organise a bonfire on Saturday 5th November and a Christmas Dance in the Head Office Dining Room in December.

ALAN EVERS

SUPERANNUATION FUND

At the Annual General Meeting of members held on 30th June 1977 Mr. D. M. Coldicott was re-elected for a further term and Mr. G. J. Ford was elected to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of Mr. P. F. Thomas who completed six consecutive years and was, therefore, not eligible for re-election.

Mr. J. P. N. Dunne, who was elected in 1975, continues in office.

News Review

August 1977

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

Everyone in the Company has been told of the need for economy, whatever their job, and everyone has responded. We all, as a reflex action, think twice before spending money. Do I need so many photocopies? Shall we leave that job until tomorrow to avoid overtime? Shall we install a smaller connection? — and so on. The result is that our charges are 17½% below the national average. So far so good.

Because the Company supplies principally highly developed and concentrated urban areas, the capital cost of mains, reservoirs, etc., is relatively low and can be spread among a large number of consumers. In many authorities with a larger number of widely dispersed rural consumers, the opposite is true and the capital cost per consumer is high. The Water Charges Equalisation Act recently passed in Parliament seeks to even out this imbalance by paying to the rural authorities money raised from the domestic consumers of the urban authorities.

This sounds like a good idea in principle, but it is a severe blow to the Company which after its efficient provision of capital works and a stringent economy campaign by all employees, is faced with paying out an annual levy of about £1.1 million. So our measures to increase efficiency in order to keep charges down will not benefit our own domestic consumers who will see in their bills a 17½% increase from this levy — and probably the now almost inevitable inflation element as well.

The amateur weatherman who is never wrong (even consulted by the B.B.C.) forecast a similar summer in 1977 to last year. You've guessed — he was wrong. However, as far as our supplies are concerned, it might be no bad thing. Since the removal of hosepipe charges last year, the

increased use of hosepipes and more insidiously — sprinklers, has been tremendous. We had a foretaste of the shape of things to come at the end of May and early June when evening hosepipe and sprinkler use were markedly greater than in previous summers. The pattern did not develop more positively due to the effect of the poorer weather later on but our maximum consumption so far this year was more than 15% above an equivalent day when the sun didn't shine. I remember that in Western Australia, where I spent some years, garden watering was a nightly ritual during the long rainless summers. There, summer consumption was **three times** the winter consumption from 60 million to 180 million gallons per day. We have been warned!

HONOURS FOR ASHWOOD

Horace Greenway, station attendant at Ashwood Pumping Station, has reason to be proud of his son Andrew, who has just obtained an Honours degree in Zoology at Sheffield University. After having a breather from study by taking a job locally, Andrew hopes to go on to take his Doctorate.

The success of Company staff in the recent examinations will be published in October's News Review.

IT GOT THERE !

A letter was received at our laboratories addressed to

The Self Staff Woodworks,
Sunsfields,
Chester Road,
Lichfield.

It was sent from Uxbridge, which happens to be Muddlesex.

A FROGGIE WOULD A PLUMBING GO

On a Wednesday afternoon there was a telephone complaint received at Cannock Depot from a consumer at Hammerwich.

The local waterman was sent and found that the main stop tap to the adjacent dwelling had been freshly attacked by 'gremlins' and the crutch was broken off. It was repaired next day.

On the following Saturday morning, Control Office at Walsall received a complaint from the same house at Hammerwich having a defective main stop tap; the local plumber waiting to carry out repairs. Cannock's duty officer was notified and having full facts and knowledge of the case, declined to take any action, the situation being fully explained to Control.

Numerous telephone calls were made by this consumer to Control and at approximately 4.00 p.m. the consumer finally agreed to sign a Company order to cover the cost of the repair.

Meanwhile the local plumber had excavated a hole around the stop tap approximately 3 ft deep. Then, with tools in hand like a hero, he had jumped into the excavation. On removing the head of the stop tap in order to re-washer it, to his amazement, a column of water shot into the air and in seconds he was soaked to the skin. He had promptly gone home in disgust.

On arriving at the house, to shut off the main, the waterman beheld a strange and hilarious sight. Standing in the driveway of the house was a person complete with frogman's outfit, flippers, oxygen bottles, etc., and displayed across his chest was a Union Jack.

The frogman or frogwoman, we do not know which, torch in one hand and head

of main stop tap in the other, headed into the depths of this excavation to repair the damage caused by the local plumber.

After what appeared to be hours, the strange figure of the frogperson emerged from the depths, indicated that the head of the main stop tap had been repaired and the supply could be restored. Then, looking like a cross between a seal and a duck, he disappeared into the house.

The supply was restored and the incident closed, except for many aching ribs when retold to colleagues.

L.J.F.



ABOVE Produce from the Bourne Vale Ash. Employees who have taken allotments from the company are now reaping their first harvest. Brussel Sprouts above are grown by Bob Wright and John Wilson.



Cartoon by
Dave Pearson (Control).



WHO ARE THEY ?

The Samaritans are ordinary people of all ages from all walks of life who choose to devote part of their spare time to helping other ordinary people who are in distress and despair, who are often lonely and who may contemplate suicide.

Is there really a need for the Samaritans?

Suicide kills at least 1,000 people every day world wide or one every 80 seconds and is still the fifth commonest cause of death in this country and the second commonest cause of death in the 16-25 year age group. Records show that in 1975 in Britain, over 3,600 people deliberately killed themselves and that is not the complete picture — other deaths may be recorded as accidents and others as open verdicts.

Suicide **attempts** in Britain are probably running at 100,000 per year or one every five minutes, and overdoses are the principal cause for admission to hospitals. 'Putting an end to it all' may be caused by depression which may need medical treatment, by misfortunes such as bereavement, broken marriages, sexual problems, addiction to alcohol, drugs or gambling, feelings of intolerable guilt and degradation, or many other problems. Though not always apparent, the one common factor in all cases of suicidal despair is loneliness, both in those who are socially isolated and in those whose troubles seem (to them) too personal or too shameful to be disclosed to their friends or relatives, their family doctor or their priest.

An attempt at suicide is often a cry for help.

The Samaritans have over 170 branches in the United Kingdom and about 18,000 carefully selected volunteers who last year received over 200,000 calls from people

who had never before contacted them. Of these calls some 60,000 were from people under 25 and 3,000 from children under 15.

Samaritans in Brierley Hill

The Samaritans in Brierley Hill opened in April 1973 and in four years has been contacted by over 4,000 people, many of whom have made frequent repeat contacts.

During 1976 over 1,100 callers contacted the Centre for the first time and a total of over 11,000 contacts by phone or in person by callers old and new were received.

The Centre in Brierley Hill, which is sited under St. Michael's Church Hall, contains telephone rooms and several small rooms where callers can sit and talk to one Samaritan face to face in absolute privacy.

No appointment is needed and no one is kept waiting long. The door is always open every day, including Christmas Day. The telephone is always answered — literally always — even in the small hours and the operator will put callers through if they do not know the number.

The Samaritans listen in confidence

When a caller shares his problem with a Samaritan he can be assured that **NO-ONE ELSE NEED KNOW** — his family, his friends, his priest, his doctor and anyone else he can think of will learn nothing of his contact **UNLESS HE IS ASKING THE SAMARITANS TO TELL THEM.**

How could you help the Samaritans — they need help too !!

Please encourage friends, neighbours, acquaintances who seem to be distressed to ring or visit at the Centre, or you could just let the world in general know what we offer. There may be people in your neighbourhood or where you work who may like to contact the Samaritans.

Perhaps you feel you could take an active part in the work yourself. New volunteers are always needed by most Centres and at Brierley Hill at least 50 extra volunteers are needed. Please ring the Centre for further details if you are interested.

If you feel that you want to help but not as a volunteer why not consider joining the Friends of the Samaritans who help to raise funds.

David Brown

(We make no apology for the advertising nature of the final paragraphs of this article. Anyone interested in volunteering their services could contact David Brown in the first instance.)

ALF RILEY, Jubilee Medallist, THIS IS YOUR LIFE

"How far do you want me to go back?" asked Alf. My Uncle Tom who would be 90 this year was born in a cottage which stood on the site of the Company offices at Wood Green. My Grandfather worked for the Company in those days as a ganger for a guinea a week, the rest of the gang getting a pound!

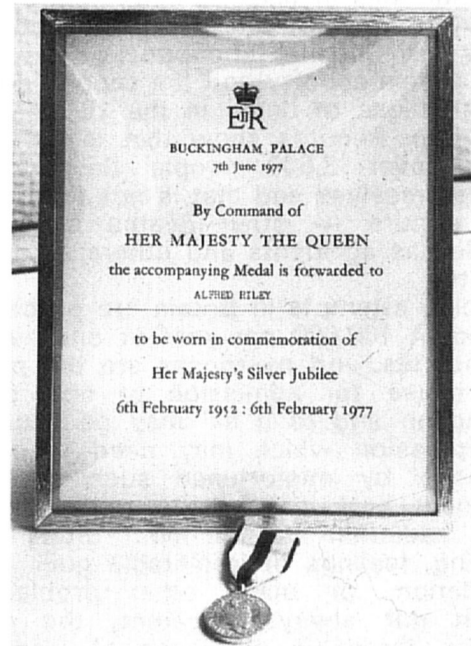
Alf's father Joe followed the family occupation of pipe laying when he joined E. E. Jeavons of Tipton as a sub-contract ganger when that Company was first established in 1919. Under the sub-contract system, Alf's father had to pay any assistants he had from the money received from Jeavons. It was all oxy-acetylene welding then and the acetylene was made on site by adding water to calcium carbide in large gas generators. Jeavons work was mainly laying gas mains and Alf Riley started working for his Dad at the age of 14, on a 6" high pressure gas main from Cannock to Brownhills. With two gangs of 12 to 14 men, 6 miles were laid in 7 weeks. In 1933 twin 48" gas mains were installed overhead, at Nechells Power Station — Joe Riley and son were there. The pipes were lifted into position with a pole derrick — a very crude but effective crane. Working 20 feet in the air, they cut the bolt holes in the flanges with hand chisels. Before the days of British Standards, to be sure of being able to join flanges together, they were delivered plain and mated together before putting the bolt holes in.



Alf as a young Grenadier

By 1938 Alf's skills had been recognised and he was travelling all over the land. He lived out of a suitcase for years at a time, laying mains in Devon, the Isle of Man, Wallasey and many other far flung places. For a while he was attached to the Mond Gas Company who supplied producer gas as an industrial fuel through their own mains system in the Tipton area. They used special steel pipe, imported from Australia, which Alf became expert at dealing with.

As the War broke out Alf was attracted to the idea of joining the Grenadier Guards, although he knew that he would be exempt from service if he chose, because of the strategic importance of his work. As a young Guardsman he found himself in such places as Chelsea, Hounslow, Purbright and Windsor Castle. Then his battalion was mechanised and he became a gunner in Valentine tanks. He was just settling down to enjoying himself in the army when the blitz started on Birmingham.



Alf's certificate and Medal.

SAY THAT AGAIN ?

Ten years ago Albert was eight years older than his brother Joe will be when he is one third the age his mother will be when she is three years younger than Albert will be in 21 years time. How old is Albert?

The cry went up "Get Alf Riley" and he found himself in the thick of it. Chiselling inspection holes in damaged gas mains to pump the water out which had flooded in when the water mains were also damaged in gas-filled trenches with bombs falling around wasn't as much fun as the army, Alf decided, and as soon as possible he went back to the army. His unit had gone abroad then and were in the front at Monte Casino and Naples. (Maybe gas mains in Brum **was** better). He wasn't left to ponder too long for he was recalled to repair the bomb blasted Mond gas mains in the Black Country; then off to Cheltenham to install valves in the gas mains in case of a blitz there.



Obverse

Reverse

Closes up of the Jubilee Medal.

Mr. R. A. Robertson, then South Staffs.' Engineer-in-Chief, did not let Alf's activities go unnoticed either. Alf had done work for the Company in his years at Jeavons' and it had been remembered. After turning down many approaches from the Company, Alf eventually put his suitcase away for good and joined the South Staffs. in July 1946. However, he was still going to travel, for as Len Stokes' leading ganger at Walsall Depot, he attended all the major connections and bursts on trunk mains, travelling to Cannock and Burton too on his Company Norton motorbike and sidecar. "No-one", he said, "in this Company has been out on more trunk mains jobs, all weathers, all hours, than me!"

He often went years without a holiday, wanting to be involved in important mains work which could only be done at holiday times. Yet Alf was no slave to his job, for he has a stubborn streak. On one difficult job, only the personal intervention of the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Robertson, prevented Alf from walking of the job in disgust!

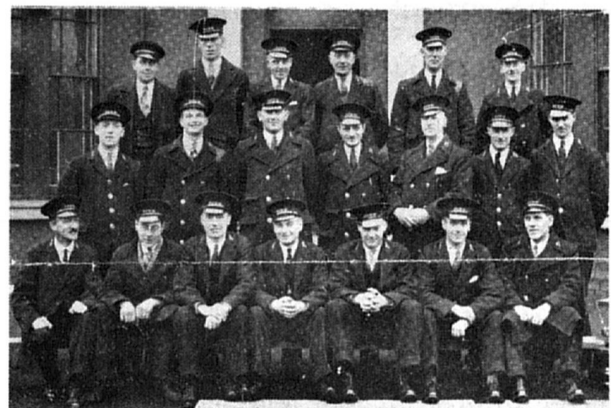
His experience became so valuable that it was inevitable that he became involved in mainlaying quality control. Isaiah Forks looked after this side of things in the 60's, assisted by Frank Duffield, but the team was strengthened by the addition of Alf, followed later by Teddy Borley and Jack Joyce.

Now Alf leads the Company's mainlaying inspectorate which today includes Frank Duffield and Ronnie Groom. No textbook on waterworks practice can replace their combined experience and for Alf, his award of a Jubilee Medal is the zenith of his crowded career. "If you could go back, Alf" I asked him, "would you do the same again?" "Yes", he said without hesitation, "I would, but I'd do a bit of schoolin' first, next time."

P.W.D.

WASTE NOT, 1935

The photograph below includes some well known Walsall depot names from 1935. It's strange, but I can see marked similarities to some of the present day Walsall uniformed staff:— Ken Gray, Charlie Peat, Geoff Green, Jim Martin, Brian Peach. Maybe water men are all cast in the same moulds — or is it the uniform?



Back Row: C. BARLOW, W.HAYNES, H.D. OLDNALL, G. KIRKMAN, C. BEDWORTH, E. HOWL.

Second Row: C. MAYO, W.G. TAPPER, E. NEWPORT, J. FIELDHOUSE, P.J. BURNELL, W. ROWLEY, H. ETHERINGTON.

Front Row: E.W. HILL, W. WINWOOD, T. COLLINS, E.J. VASS, H. BURGESS, A.V. MOTTERAM, C.W. JENNINGS.

A HOP, SKIP and JUMP from WOOD GREEN

On the wall chart in Transport Office the date 8th March is revered! No, it wasn't the day that the Transport Manager took us all out to lunch, neither was it the day we all did something right for once, but it was a special day for all that — on that day in 1976 a young fellow called Matthew Cannavan arrived to take up his appointment as a Clerk in the section. Why so special you may think. Only that Matthew has the distinction of being the second sporting celebrity to arrive at Wood Green.

Coming from the same stable as Trevor Wright (Wolverhampton and Bilston Athletic Club) Matthew is the current Midlands triple jump champion, a title that he hopes to successfully defend later this year. Added to this he recently won the Staffordshire County triple jump title.

It was nine years ago that Matthew joined the Wolverhampton and Bilston Athletic Club and began an amateur sporting career by twice becoming the National Indoor Triple Jump Champion while still in the junior section. Although the triple jump is Matthew's particular event, he has occasionally competed in the long jump and such totally different events as the steeplechase, the 5,000 metres and once represented his club in the National Cross Country Championships.

A dedication to training is, of course, the key for any athlete and Matthew's training routine consists of:—

Winter — Road runs, hill runs, hopping and bounding to generally build up leg strength.

Summer — Fast sprinting and lots of work on jumping technique.

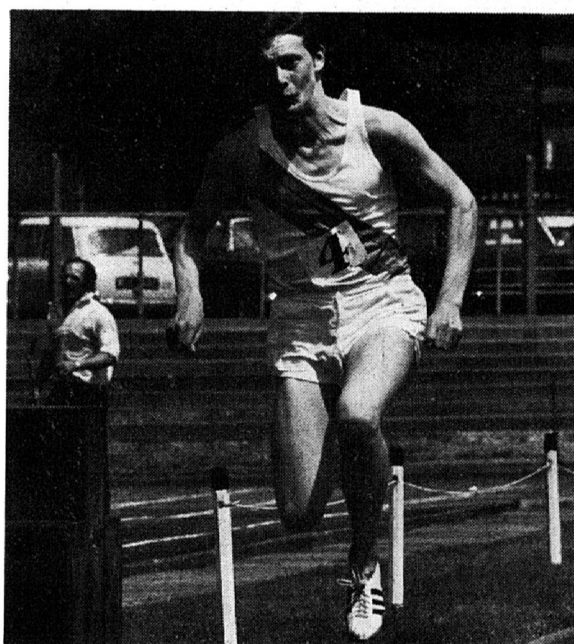
Most nights at around ten-to-five you are likely to encounter a black track-suited figure hurtling through the door of Transport Office beginning his evening stint. Incredibly, with all the time he spends in training and competing, Matthew still finds time for interests in music and is a mine of information on cameras.

Rewards are not only in medals and cups, but also in the satisfaction of competing, both as an individual and as a team, to bring honour and achievement to his club. Matthew has not as yet been as fortunate as some of his illustrious colleagues (Trevor Wright, Sonia Llannaman, Glen Cohen, Verona Bernard, to name but four) in having the opportunity to travel abroad with the club, but he has

frequently taken part in matches in the British Isles and in July of this year, the European Club Championships are to be held at the Aldesley Stadium, Wolverhampton. The Wolverhampton and Bilston Athletic Club are Britain's top club and so have the honour to represent Great Britain against the top clubs in Europe. Matthew hopes to be competing in this match and naturally will do his best to help his club and Great Britain to victory.

It goes without saying really that we wish him well for the coming events of this year and especially the one on Saturday, 20th August, the date of his wedding to Lynda. Good luck to you both!

D. J. HARRISON
Transport Section



TIME FOR EVERYTHING

Take time for work
It is the price of success.
Take time to think
It is the source of power.
Take time to play
It is the secret of youth.
Take time to read
It is the foundation of wisdom.
Take time to be friendly
It is the road to happiness.
Take time to dream
It is hitching your wagon to a star.
Take time to love and be loved
It is the privilege of the gods.
Take time to laugh
It is the music of the soul.

SARA STEVENS

NEWCOMERS

We extend a warm welcome to the following who have joined us since April.

- P. GRIFFITH, Deputy Area Engineer — Tipton.
Mrs. R. RUSSELL, Telephonist — Walsall
N. R. BENTLEY, Apprentice Electrical Fitter — Wood Green
R. I. ROBERTSON, Labourer — Blithfield
N. J. CURTIS, Assistant Engineer, Distribution Department
R. BURTON, Trenchman — Cannock
I. R. WOODWARD, Trenchman — Burton
I. ROBERTSON, Graduate, Distribution Department
M. J. HORAN, Mechanic—Wood Green
J. R. GREENHOUGH, Water Treatment Maintenance Operative
A. J. D. ATKINSON, Chief Accountancy Assistant
M. J. BRYCE, Junior Clerk — Revenue
C. Y. LEACH, Clerical Assistant — Revenue
S. K. WILKES, Clerical Assistant — Revenue

RETIREMENTS

Our best wishes for many years of happy retirement go to:—

- B. WILLIS, Yardman — Tipton. Retired 1.4.77.
Mrs. McALISTER, Canteen Assistant — Head Office. Retired 25.4.77.
Mrs. G. JACKSON, Canteen Assistant — Head Office. Retired 29.4.77.
W. A. THOMASON, Pumping Station Attendant — Moors Gorge. Retired 31.5.77.
Mrs. B. COLEMAN, Telephonist — Head Office. Retired 30.6.77.
F. T. LANGSTON, Area Superintendent —Cannock. Retired 13.6.77.

In October's News Review there will be a feature on Fred Langston.

COLLEAGUES DECEASED

It is with regret and deep sympathy to their families that we have to report the death of two members of staff.

- ERIC HALL, Treatment Works Superintendent — Seedy Mill. Died 7.5.77.
F. A. REANEY, Computer Systems Analyst. Died 2.5.77.

A 12,000 MILE REUNION

Sir,

I would like to write to you about my father-in-law, Mr. Arthur Duffield, who has been living with us out here in Elizabeth Downs, South Australia, for more than seven years.

He retired from S.S.W.W. in 1966 after many years employed in the Tipton area and came out here after the death of his wife, Hannah. He has recently been ill and when I gave him his copy of News Review, which you kindly sent him, he cheered up no end, becoming nostalgic about old mates and old jobs.

Whilst talking he ranged from Netherton to Blithfield Reservoir, from Rowley Hills to Hampton Loade. I don't think there can be many places in the West Midlands where he didn't work. He also talked of old mates: Joe Jeavons, Jack Wise, Benny Bucket, Jeff Guy and a host of others and through your columns would like to be remembered to them all.



Arthur Duffield in Adelaide

On looking back, he had happy memories of the 'Waerter Werkes', even to being called out to 'Bosts' in the middle of the night. He is always very critical of our water here in Adelaide, which comes from the River Murray with no filtration whatsoever. Only chlorine and fluoride are added. He always maintains "We had clainer waerter lying in the bottom of the hole after a bost than comes out of the tap here".

I would like to thank you for keeping in touch with Arthur during his stay with us in Australia and enclose a photo of Arthur taken last year.

CLIFF WHITMORE

I shall be writing to Mr. Whitmore shortly so anyone who would like to send a greeting to Arthur Duffield, please contact me as soon as possible.

Ed.

TWICE TRIED

The manufacture of base coinage and the printing of forged bank notes was at one time carried on extensively in the Birmingham area.

It is also on record that four Birmingham forgers were hung at Washwood Heath in 1802. This, it seems, did not put an end to it. People travelled considerable distances to collect Birmingham counterfeit money.

Many cases were published in the local newspapers, such as on January 5th, 1818, when a coach from Birmingham arrived in Bristol and two passengers were arrested; one had thirty pounds in base sixpences and shillings and the other had clothing lined with similar coinage. Also on the same day a passenger on a coach from Birmingham to Worcester dropped a parcel which broke open and spilt fifty pounds worth of bad shillings.

But the man most remembered about this time was William Booth, a very clever workman who took up his residence in a farm house at Perry Barr.

This isolated building with its thick walls was already very old and had possibly in the past been part of an old monastic institution. It was here he supposedly settled as a farmer, but instead he set up various presses for making counterfeit silver coins and notes on a larger scale.

He had no time for his neighbours, of course, and discouraged all visitors. Eventually Booth, who in 1808 had already been tried at Warwick Assizes for the murder of his brother John and acquitted through lack of evidence, became over confident. He would openly take his base metal into Birmingham for rolling and it is said that on one occasion when asked

TWICE HUNG

what thickness he required, he produced a silver coin from his pocket and gave that as the gauge.

Soon, this man drew upon himself the attentions of the local authorities who decided to investigate. On the morning of the 28th March, 1812, a party of dragoons set out in the direction of Booth's farm giving the impression the object was to exercise the horses. As it was a market day, they thought Booth would be absent and they would have a chance to quietly search his premises. To their surprise as they approached the farm they found all the gates barred and numerous obstacles set up to impede them. On arrival at the house, they found it all locked and barred up with no way in at all except for a small window in the roof. An officer quickly set off to a nearby house and borrowed a ladder and on returning was able to go up and could see Booth burning bundles of notes and refusing to give himself up until all the evidence was burnt.

Unfortunately for Booth, among the charred remains, sufficient evidence was found to convict him and he was publicly hung at Stafford on the 15th August, 1812.

The hangman made a mistake at his first attempt so Booth was revived and hanged again two hours later. His body was taken and buried in the old churchyard at Handsworth but shortly afterwards it had to be removed.

Later it was said that Booth was twice tried, twice hanged and twice buried.

The old farm house still stood in Booth's Lane until 1974 when it was attacked by vandals and finally had to be demolished.

All that can be seen today are the remains of the foundations.

J. HILL



William Booth's farm, photographed in the 1920's

SPORTS REPORT

In May of this year a competition for a new Sports Trophy was held between teams from the Company and Tame division. The competition was organised by the Social Club and the venue was the Walsall Sports Centre where facilities were hired for the five events — darts, table tennis, badminton, football and netball.

The five-a-side football, on hard pitches, was the only awkward event as Tame's 'Minworth' team failed to show up (I wonder if they arrived in London?), but Tame C (Edgbaston) came out as the winners with two wins and two goal-less draws.

The Ladies played well in the netball and gained an 18-4 victory over the Tame side.

In the darts event, the South Staffs. team took the team title with a 6-3 score in matches and the individual title went to Gary Porter who beat Jim Saddington in the final.

The badminton was a further victory for South Staffs. when our three doubles pairs won 6-3 once again. The individual title went to Tame's Peter Blake.

The table tennis was a hard fought match; the teams were 12 all after 24 matches and the twenty-fifth was played between Eric Kaine of Tame and Geoff Thomason. Eric Kaine won the team event for Tame and the individual award went to Eddie Buck of Tame division.

The presentation of the trophies was performed by Mr. Lamont and all the players were complimented on the spirit of competition which was shown throughout the afternoon.

It is hoped to hold the event annually in the future and next year Tame will be the hosts.

Winning Teams:—

Darts — South Staffs: Gary Porter, Jim Cooper, Horace Haynes, Brian Morrall, Terry Tapper and Jim Saddington.

Table Tennis — Tame: Eric Kaine, Eddie Buck, Peter Smith, Pat Gosnell and Alan Greaves.

Badminton — South Staffs: John Wilson and Terry McAlister, Greg Lloyd and Alan Lander, Dave Turner and Alan Chetter.

Football — Tame C (Edgbaston): Jack Jackman, David Adkins, Ernie Adkins, Charlie Eade, John Griffin.

Netball — South Staffs: Ruth Wyke, Carol Leechmere, Jill Tunnicliffe, Sue (we got your name right) Raby, Karen Milan, Anne Davis and Bridie Dunne.

BRIAN GREENWOOD

AQUAVITA RULES OK ?

Since our last report the netball team have nearly completed a summer season in the Dudley Netball League. This the second year we have competed in this particular league and by far the most successful. All was going well this year until just recently when through the team being hit by illness and holidays our winning spell came to an end by our first defeat in a return match against Quarry Bank. Until that point in time we had led the division on goal average, our close rivals being a team called Leasowes who we drew with in the first game earlier in the season, and needed to beat to achieve the championship.

As you can imagine the atmosphere was tense during this game and although the girls played one of the best games they have all year the final result was a win for Leasowes of 16 goals to 13, giving them the top position in our division.

Most of the games have brought a lot of enjoyment and even comedy but there have been times when tempers have frayed and in one particular instance a match was abandoned due to our opponents' bad sportsmanship when they left the court five minutes before the whistle for the end of the game. The score at that time was 29-8 in our favour and although we think it is a very unfair decision the Committee of the League have requested us to play the game again. So although there will be no cups as a result of this year's attempt in the summer league we have finished second in our division and will be promoted next year to a higher division.

At the end of the Winter Season the team competed in the Birmingham League Tournament. After 6 hard fought games we reached the final. However once again our team was hit by injury and for most of the first half of the final one of our defence players suffered from cramp and this left us with a side of only six. The result of the final was very close with Aquavita losing by one goal and yet again we lost out on the cups and honours, but not through lack of trying.

So it seems the Canteen shelf will have to remain bare for a little while longer but if this year is anything to go by we can assure you that it may not be too long before the Netball Team hold prime place on the Trophy Shelf.

May I take this opportunity to thank all the girls in the team for their enthusiasm and support during the last year and hope that during the next Winter Season we may see a few supporters turning up at matches to encourage the girls along.

RUTH WKYE Captain