

The South Staffordshire Waterworks Company

JULY '82



# REVIEW

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



### INTRODUCTION

*A number of employees and the Trade Unions have suggested that a monthly up-date of what is going on in the Company would be a good idea. It is proposed that there will be a monthly issue of the News Review in this new form and each third month it will be in the usual, fuller format. The success of the venture will be monitored so please do not hesitate to give your comments to your Head of Department.*

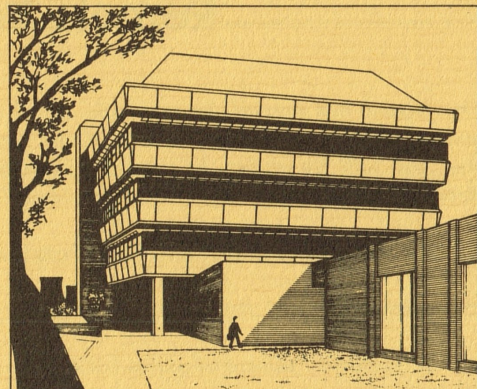
### CENTRAL OFFICE DEVELOPMENT – PHASE II (TOTAL PROJECT COST £3.7m)

*Our consultants headed by the Harry Bloomer Partnership in conjunction with the Company's design staff are working apace to complete the design of the further development at Central Office, enabling the existing Head Office to be closed and staff transferred to Walsall to create an integrated and compact work place for some 420 Company manual and non-manual employees.*

*A preliminary staff move will take place on Friday 25th June when the Civil and Trunk Mains Section will join their colleagues in the Technical Services Department in the open plan office at Green Lane.*

*Construction activity will commence on site this month with the construction of temporary offices for senior engineering staff on the front car park. This will be followed by the taking down of the Chief Engineer's suite of offices and reception area, followed by the grouting and piling of the foundations for the new building. The above work should be completed by the end of this year, enabling the main contract for construction of the four storey building to commence, taking approximately 15 months to complete.*

*Throughout the development there will be some disruption to the usual car parking arrangements although adequate temporary space will be provided. Employees are asked to be flexible and tolerant during this period and the project, including increased permanent car parking facilities, should be completed by early summer 1984.*



### **THE GREEN LANE OF THE FUTURE**

**This artist impression shows the proposed new block of offices that will be built onto Green Lane Central Office, Walsall. Work will begin in September 1982 and hopefully occupation will take place in January 1984.**

### SELF-CERTIFICATION

*As part of the Government's proposals to switch the burden for sickness payments from the State to employers, from 14th June the issue of 'sick notes' by doctors for periods of less than seven days' sickness, was discontinued.*

*As a result of the decision, the Company needed to make new arrangements to deal with absences of up to seven calendar days. Thus, for the purposes of the sick pay scheme, and as the basis of notification of such short term absences, the Company will be introducing a nationally agreed Self-Certification Scheme for absences of up to seven days.*

*The matter has been the subject of National Negotiations and agreement has been reached for NJIC staff, including craftsmen. The Company has been holding seminars for those involved in the working of the new scheme and it is hoped to follow the same pattern as soon as agreement is reached on NJC staff.*

## Contracts

### *(a) Holly Grange Service Reservoir, near Uttoxeter (400,000)*

*The new 5 Ml reinforced concrete service reservoir being constructed on highground south west of Uttoxeter is well advanced and will improve the supply and security arrangements in that area. Tarmac Construction Limited have worked well on this project and hope to hand over both compartments of the reservoir ahead of programme in August of this year.*

### *(b) 1000mm. dia main from Sedgley to Walsall (Phase I 1.7m)*

*The first phase of this project consists of approximately 4850 metres of 1000mm. dia. welded steel main and 1000 metres of 600mm. dia. ductile iron main. The route passes through a heavily congested urban area and includes two canal crossings, one main line railway crossing and a canal towpath. Mainlaying work commenced in mid February and is about 40% complete. When the project is finished it will provide increased security overall and help meet the increasing demands for water.*

## Remote Reading of Meters

*The Board has agreed, in principle, to the Company participating in a trial with the MEB of the remote reading of meters. The trial will last twelve months, involving 100 houses in the Kingswinford area and will be under the general auspices of the Water Research Centre. It involves the use of an electronic unit containing a micro-processor and will aim at giving the following benefits:-*

- (a) the remote reading of electricity, gas and water meters;*
- (b) calculation and display on the premises of meter readings and charges;*
- (c) detection of failure of alarm conditions, viz. loss of supply or water leakage;*
- (d) Remote control of valves or switches to provide for the routine and emergency management of energy or water demand.*

## New Maximum Day Supply

*On Monday 7th June a new maximum day supply of 419.85 Ml was taken by consumers. The short period of high consumption was associated with a short spell of hot weather following a period of dry weather. The new works completed in the last two years enabled all supplies to be met except for two complaints in Kinver and Tutbury which were already under investigation. A rash of broken mains, which may be associated with the drier subsoil, unfortunately coincided with the high weather.*

## House of Lords Investigates the Water Industry

Once again the Water Industry is under the microscope. This time a Select Committee of the House of Lords is taking evidence from various bodies including the National Water Council and the Water Companies' Association to discover whether the Water Industry is taking full advantage of scientific and technological knowledge in the discharge of its functions and to investigate certain matters of public concern in this area, including:-

- (a) alternative methods of water storage, both above and below ground;
- (b) safety of reservoirs;
- (c) the engineering of water distribution;
- (d) detection and control of leakage from and into water supply pipes;
- (e) renovation of sewers, including Agency Arrangements, for sewerage.

## Superannuated Members' Annual Outing

Visit to Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire  
followed by tea in the Prestbury Suite at  
Cheltenham Racecourse on Wednesday, 7th July 1982

The first Retired Members' Annual Outing was to Blithfield Reservoir in 1956, when 100 guests attended. The 1982 event will be the highest ever attendance, when a total of 440 guests is expected. The party will include the Chairman and Mrs. Thompson, Principal Officers with their wives, Senior Officers, Representatives of the J.I.C.C., Social Club, Superannuation Committee, Benevolent Fund and Area Engineers.

Eight coaches have been hired to transport the Retired Members from the various pick-up points in the SSWW Co. area and we hope to arrive at Bourton-on-the-Water at 2.15p.m. The guests will be free to visit places of their choice until 4.15p.m., when they will be taken to Cheltenham Racecourse for tea at 5.15p.m. After tea bar drinks will be available in the Foxhunter Room, where the whole party will be able to socialise until 7.45p.m.

Coaches will arrive back at their original pick-up points between 9.00 and 9.30p.m.

## Employees Annual Outing

### EMPLOYEES ANNUAL OUTINGS 1982

The Company invites you to attend one of the Annual Outings to be held during 1982. Attendance is subject to the operational requirements of the Company being met. In order that this is achieved, please confirm attendance with your Supervisor/Head of Section.

Adult outing 2nd July, 1982,  
to Portmeirion, Wales.

Family Outing 13th August, 1982,  
to Rhyl, Wales.

Portmeirion, the inspiration of Clough William-Willis, offers a wide range of interests for all ages - the now world famous village (where the T.V. programme, *The Prisoner*, was filmed) white sands bay, woodland walks, well appointed gardens, picnic sites and much more. If time permits the Coaches will also stop in the picturesque Snowdonia Park for sight-seeing. Finally, a return journey stop will be made at Llangollen for an Evening Buffet Meal and Drinks!

The family outing is a day at the seaside, to the North Wales resort of Rhyl. Included in the cost of the trip is entrance to the new Sun Centre, which has many attractions for all ages (but mostly for the kids!!) This is in addition to all the other facilities offered by one of Britain's main holiday resorts. Also in the cost is the usual light refreshments for all.

CONTACT: J. MORRALL HEAD OFFICE FOR FORM, EXT. No 257

## Water Rebates Law Probe

Severn-Trent Water Authority officials are investigating whether hard up West Midlands families can qualify for rebates on their water bills under new Government legislation designed to reform state aid for the poor.

The new Bill has been presented at a time when the Birmingham-based water authority is under mounting pressure from its own members to press Whitehall for permission to offer rebates - already given to cover council rent and rates.

Water supplies to about 730 of the three million Midlands homes served by the Severn Trent authority are cut off every year because of non-payment of bills.

The figure compares with 6,500 disconnections a year by Britain's largest water authority - Thames.

'Our policy is to cut the water off as a last resort', a Severn Trent spokesman explained.

'The households that have been cut off were in arrears with their bill for more than a year - and supplies to the vast majority of them were reconnected within a few hours.'

BIRMINGHAM MAIL JUNE 1982

## Water Rebates

Employees will have read recent Press Reports of pressure on the STWA from a number of sources to offer rebates on water charges - in a similar way to Council rent and rates rebate schemes.

Assistance is available by way of supplementary benefit from the DHSS and consumers in difficulty are advised of this by Revenue staff. Further,

apart from the formal instalment scheme, many ad hoc arrangements are made to meet special needs. Cut-off notices carry a note asking for cases of hardship to make themselves known.

Accordingly, the Company's policy has always been against a rebate scheme since its present cut-off policy, which takes into account genuine hardship, has been seen to work equitably and fairly for a number of years. In 1981/82 there were 190 cut-offs by the Company.

## National Pay Negotiations (NJC)

Employers have now made a response to the Staff Side claim for improved pay and conditions of service. The Employers have offered a 7% increase in existing salaries and one additional day's holiday to staff below the overtime limit with 10 years' service. That part of the claim dealing with the reduction of hours and security of employment has been rejected.

On 14th June the Nalgo Water Industry Committee rejected the Employers' response and at the time of going to press, further clarification is awaited from a meeting of the full NJC scheduled for Tuesday 22nd June.

# Obituary

## Death of Mr. R.A. Robertson - Formerly Engineer-in-Chief



Mr. R.A. Robertson, who was Engineer-in-Chief from 1944 until he retired in 1959, died on 9th May aged 89 years. His funeral was held at St. Keyne Church, near Liskeard in Cornwall, on 13th May.

Mr. Robertson joined the Company in 1921, and was Distribution Engineer-in-Chief in 1944. In the latter position he was concerned with many notable developments in the Company, including the construction of Blithfield Reservoir, and its official opening by the Queen Mother in 1953, and the associated development of the Seedy Mill Treatment Works and raw water and delivery mains. He was also responsible for the modernisation and construction of many works, the latter including Churchill and Hagley pumping stations, Seedy Mill (Blythe) and Hayley Green treatment works, Barr Beacon No.2 and Hayley Green service reservoirs and Marchington Tank, and Anslow, Findern, Langley, Saxon Street and Smethwich re-pumping stations.

Mr. Markham attended the funeral in Cornwall, on behalf of the Board of Directors and the staff, and Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Tibbenham were also present. As an appreciation of the valuable contribution made by Mr. Robertson, the Chairman and Directors sent a donation to the Church St. Keyne in accordance with the family wishes. Other donations have been sent from past and present staff who worked with Mr. Robertson.

### WELCOME TO:-

Carl Wright	Head Office	Audit Manager
	Departmental Head	
	Audit Dept.	
	Financial Controller	
	Division	
M.D. Watkins,	Head Office	Budgetary
	Management A/C	Control Officer
S. McCue,	Operations,	Clerical
	Walsall	Assistant
M. Parker,	Computer,	Data Preparation
(1/5/82)	Head Office	Operative
T.L. Rea,	Central Office,	Temporary
(7/6/82)	Safety	Clerical Assistant

### GOODBYE TO:-

F. Burrell,	Central Office	Mech. Engineer
(19/5/82)	(EMD)	Assistant
A. Riley,	Central Office	Mainlayer
(9/4/82)	(Operations)	
A. Bentley,	Head Office	Section Leader
(30/6/82)	(Revenue)	
R. White,	D.D.	Waterman
(30/6/82)		
Mrs. M. Kennedy,	Computer	Punch Operator
(30/4/82)	Head Office	
T. Kinder,	Tech. Services	Pumping Station
(9/4/82)	(Seedy Mill)	Attendant
V. Stoye,	Operations	Yardman
(19/5/82)		
J. Stevens,	Operations	Assistant
(31/5/82)		Superintendent
J. Scott,	Tech. Services	Fitter
(31/5/82)	Workshops	

## STOP PRESS.....

# WATER STAFF TURN DOWN 7% OFFER

Water staffs have rejected the employers' latest offer, and called for a programme of action if no improvement is forthcoming.



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