

Review



HOLLY GRANGE



SPATH



BLITHFIELD RESERVOIR



YOXALL

FRADLEY



CENTRAL OFFICE

South Staffordshire Waterworks Co.
THE ROUTE MAP OF THE DIRECTORS'
VISIT TO WORKS JULY 28th 1983

DIRECTORS VISIT TO WORKS

On 28th July, the Company's Directors held their annual visit to certain of the Company's works.

The visit started at Central Office, where they had the opportunity to see for themselves, the progress being made on the new Head Office building and the construction of the new car parking area. Construction work was explained to the party by Mr. R.A. Jowle, the Project Manager, and Mr. E. Horobin, the Clerk of Works.

At the Northern Area Office at Lichfield, Mr. R.C. Lawrence, the Area Manager, met the party, explained the activities undertaken by his staff and escorted the party around the offices. Mr. R.B. Bloodworth, the Superintendent for the Northern Area Treatment Works then continued the tour around the Treatment Works and Pumping Station on the same site.

At the Fradley Pumping Station site, the party inspected the Pumping Station and the Home Defence Store with Mr. W. Hood, the Station Foreman and Mr. C.W. Jones, the Water Treatment Superintendent, described the work of his section by reference to a display of equipment set up in the new Water Treatment Depot.

The party then visited Yoxall and Spath Booster Stations which by comparison, demonstrated the advances in technology which have occurred over the last few years.

The Company's newest Service Reservoir at Holly Grange, Uttoxeter, was visited prior to lunch and Blithfield Reservoir in the afternoon, where the main accent was on the Water Recreation Activities, which were explained by Mr. D.V. Shuker, the Superintendent and Mr. A.B. McKenzie, the Fishery Bailiff.



THE COMPANY'S OWN PENSION FUND

Our Pension is one of the great benefits to which we can all look forward to at the close of our working lives and ours will be "index linked", i.e. increased annually in line with inflation. The contributions which we pay during our employment, together with the related employer's contribution are calculated to be sufficient to "fund" our pension at retirement date. However, the index linked element is met wholly by the employer from year to year after retirement.

Employees of the Company who in 1974 were contributing to The South Staffordshire Waterworks Pension Fund were at that time given the option to stay with the Company's Fund or move to join the Water Companies Association Pension Fund (WCAPS). Although most chose to make no change, with the passage of time there are now 301 employees contributing to the Company Scheme and 416 contributing to WCAPS.

In view of the rapidly diminishing membership of the Company's Pension Fund and in order to be sure that the Company's cost of maintaining benefits is kept to a minimum, the Directors have asked that a costing exercise be carried out next year by consulting actuaries to compare the costs of continuing the independence of the Company's Fund with the costs if the Fund is merged with WCAPS. The exercise will be based on the situation as at 31st March 1984 and will not be complete until early 1985 at the earliest.

It is emphasised that:

- (a) No decision about a merger will be taken until the investigation is complete and the results have been discussed with the Company Fund contributors.
- (b) There will be no detriment to benefits or employee contribution rates if a merger does take place.

The national scheme of the Water Companies' Association is administered by Noble Lowndes Pension Administrators and is managed by a body of Trustees. At the recent annual meeting of the Scheme Trustees this Company's Financial Controller, Mr. K.T. Gomme, was appointed a Trustee. The investment advisory panel also contains two trade union representatives one from the N.J.C. and the other from the N.J.I.C. Only one other water company, i.e. Portsmouth, continues to manage its own fund in parallel with the WCAPS.

COMPANY PARTICIPATION AND R&D

Management does listen albeit occasionally! Criticisms have been accepted that the Company's R&D track record in recent years falls well short of the Company's traditional high repute. Greater vigour in Company Research and Development is essential to arrest this decline and the objective is to reverse the pattern and recover the Company's former eminence as an R&D leader in the water industry. Despite the larger resources available to the R.W.A.'s the Company can compete effectively.

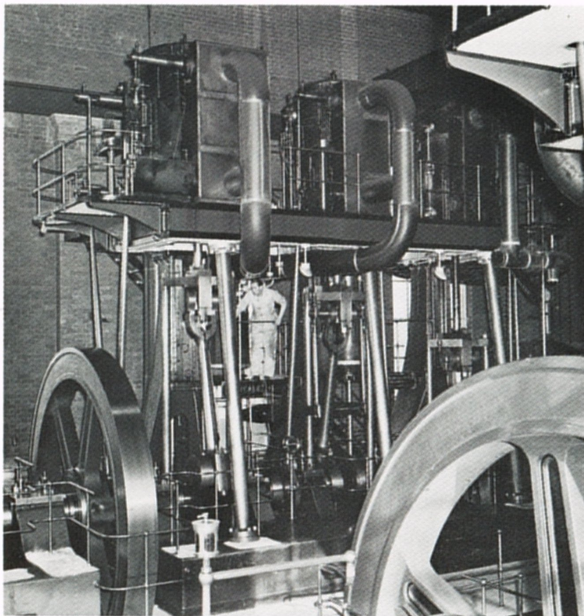
Management has listened a second time, to the tune of employee participation and involvement. R&D is an ideal vehicle for employee

participation as any R&D programme cannot rise beyond the level of enthusiasm of individual employees. Areas of finance and efficiency of administration are included as well as engineering and science, so everyone has an opportunity. It is true an R&D Committee has been formed but do not view this as an obituary to individual participation. The Committee sees itself as a catalyst to ideas and action. You want action? Get it by suggesting ideas and making known your desire to become involved in specific programmes. The future is exciting only if we, the individual Company employee, makes it so.

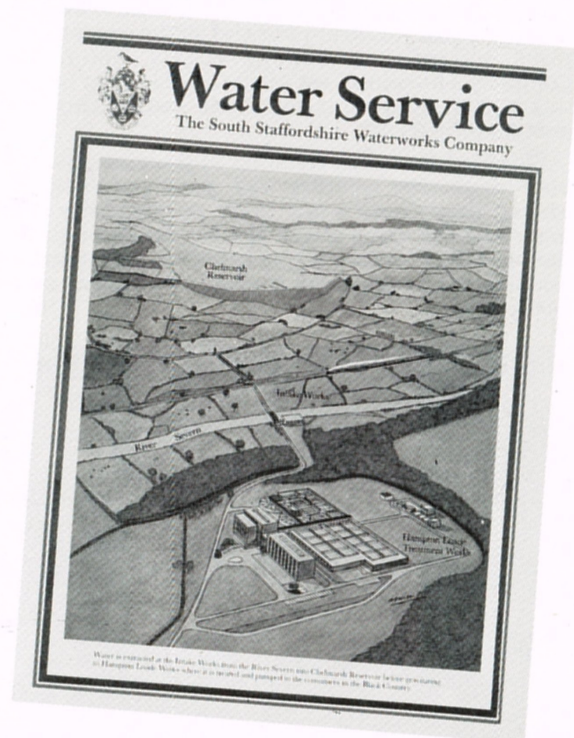
OPEN DAY AT MAPLE BROOK

558 people attended the Open Day at Maple Brook Pumping Station on a bright Sunday afternoon in September. The old triple expansion steam pump was on display and it was turned over periodically by means of an electric motor driving the barring engine. Visitors could also see the modern electric pumping plant and the associated control desk. Display boards featured the Water Aid decade, scraping and relining operations and

the laying of the new 1000mm main. Mr. A. Crutchley from the Staffordshire Vintage Traction Engine Club brought two Lister water pumps and operated them in the station grounds. One was driven by a Jap engine and the other by a 1950 Lister "D" engine, both being fuelled by petrol. Visitors were handed copies of the new "Water Service" leaflets and pamphlets giving information on Maple Brook and the old system pumps.



The No. 2 engine shown in the foreground has subsequently been removed



AUTHORISATION OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

At its meeting in September, the Board reviewed the present method by which individual Capital Projects are authorised, and considered ways to strengthen the link between the Corporate Plan, the Capital Expenditure Estimates and the Revenue Budget.

A new procedure was accepted, based upon the following key steps:—

- 1 The Corporate Plan, considered by the Board in November each year, will set a ceiling on the Capital Expenditure Budget for each of the following five years.
- 2 All Capital Projects will be subjected to a preliminary feasibility study and financial appraisal, before detailed design work is commenced, and will be given a priority rating.

- 3 Based upon the priority ratings, Major Projects will be identified for inclusion in the 5 year Capital Plan, to be submitted for Board consideration each December.

- 4 The 5 year Capital Plan will also include block allocations of funds for minor projects (less than £50,000). These projects will, in future, be authorised by the Managing Director without the need for specific Board approval.

These arrangements will be introduced gradually during the forthcoming two years, starting with the approval mechanism for smaller projects from April 1984. In the meantime this year's Capital Estimates will be prepared as in previous years, but any future new major projects will follow the revised procedure before inclusion in the Estimates. Queries concerning this important new concept of capital budgeting should be raised with D. Penna.

STAFF VISIT TO WORKS

On 20th July, 50 office staff from Head Office and Central Office had a chance to see some of the Company's outside work places. A second visit was also arranged for 14th September, when a further party of 50, this time including Area Office staff, went on the same route.

In each case, the coach collected its Head Office passengers first and picked up the others from Central Office at Walsall. This provided the first opportunity for some Head Office staff to see the outside of the Central Office buildings to which they will be moving in due course.

The first point of call was to Brindley Bank Pumping Station, where the visitors were shown the old horizontal steam engine and all the new electric plant currently in use to supply water. The Company's museum, set up in the old boiler house, was a great attraction and some people enquired about a return visit.

Blithfield Reservoir lived up to its reputation for both visits. The weather was good and everyone wished they could work there permanently. The party saw the valve tower, the tunnel through the dam and the Fish Rearing Installation, and then had lunch at the Sailing Club House before going on to Seedy Mill.

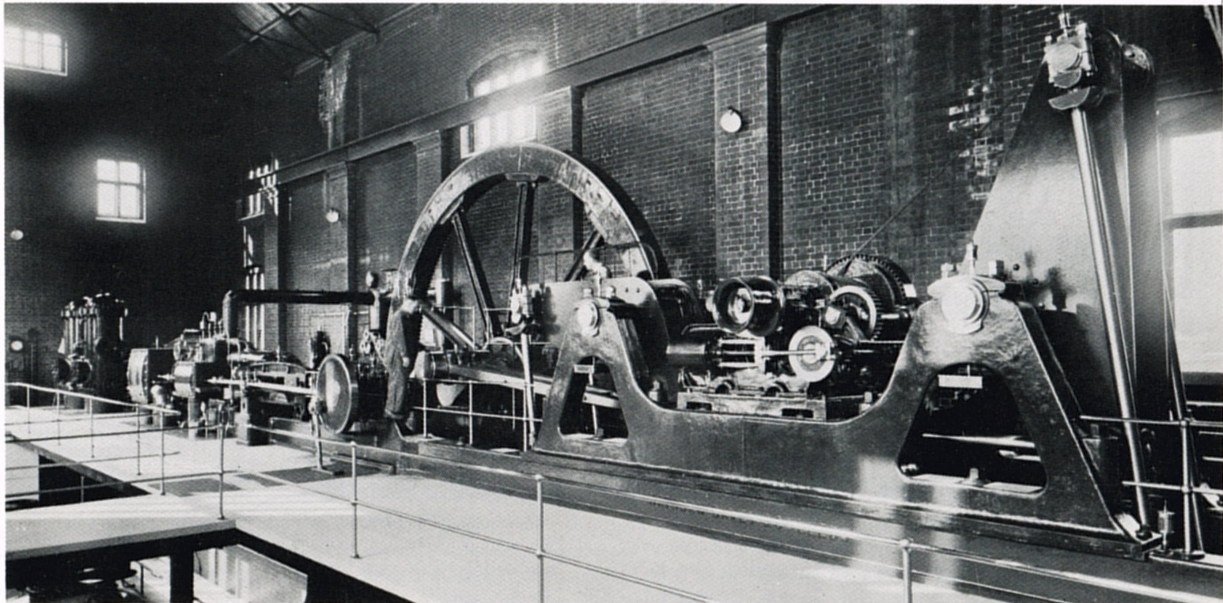


The coach party at Brindley Bank.

At Seedy Mill, the resident staff were able to show off their treatment works laboratory and pumping station to very good effect, especially the modern improvements which are being made.

On the return journey to Central Office, the party passed several of the Company's other sites.

Both visits were designed to give staff who permanently work in the Company's offices a chance to appreciate the size of the Company's undertaking and also a chance to meet a few of the people they may have spoken to by telephone.



An old picture showing the Brindley Bank engine when it was in use.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING TRIP TO LONDON – NOVEMBER 18th

Anyone interested please contact C. Turner,
Central Office. Approximate price, £4 each.

