

Review



APPOINTMENT OF MANAGING DIRECTOR



We extend a warm welcome to Mr. James Carter who has been appointed Managing Director with effect from 19th May 1984. He will join the Company on 12th March 1984, before my retirement on 18th May.

Mr. Carter is presently the Divisional Manager of the Soar Division of the Severn-Trent Water Authority. Before joining the Authority in 1975, he held financial and administrative posts with the North West and Eastern Electricity Boards (where he gained extensive experience in the field of computers), having previously been employed in local government with Lancashire County Council.

Mr. Carter lives in Leamington with his wife and two children. He is an enthusiastic member of the Speakers Club and assists with his local Church Youth Group. He also enjoys playing badminton and tennis.

Mr. Carter looks forward to supporting the social activities of the Company and to encouraging our activities in raising funds for Water Aid.

W.A.M.

A NEW DIRECTOR JOINS THE BOARD

At the Board Meeting on 27th October, Mr. J.M. Carpenter was appointed a Director of the Company.

After war service in the Royal Navy, Mr. Carpenter joined the Carpet Manufacturing Co. in Kidderminster in 1946. He became a member of the Board of Carpets International in 1969 and was Chairman from 1979 until his retirement in 1982. He also served on the Boards of subsidiary companies in Australia, New Zealand, U.S.A., Canada and South Africa.

Mr. Carpenter was High Sheriff of Worcestershire in 1965 and is at present Chairman of the Hereford and Worcestershire County Committee of the Council for Small Industries in Rural Areas. Mr. Carpenter is also a farmer and owns a Friesian dairy herd.

Mr. Carpenter will bring to the Board his long and varied experience in business in the United Kingdom and overseas.



J.R.H.

HALF-YEAR REVENUE ACCOUNTS NO INDICATION OF ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT

When the Water Charges were set in January, the Board were anxious to ensure that our price rises were as low as possible so that hard-pressed local businesses and domestic rate payers alike would not be faced with excessive demands.

The budgets were drawn up on the basis of no surplus/no deficit for the year, but many outside influences have had a bearing on the Company's performance since the budgets were prepared last December. However, in spite of the many problems, the Half-Yearly Accounts circulated in October show that we are within one half of one percent of the original target. A detailed forecast for the second half of the Financial Year (ending 31st March 1984) prepared by the Management Accountant's Department, suggests that this minor variation from budget will result in a loss of £53,000 for the year.

Although this overall figure is close to the original budget, there are some larger deviations from the original planned income and expenditure pattern which, fortunately, almost balance one another. For example, income from metered supplies is well below budget (by a forecast £½ million at the year end), but income from bulk supplies to Severn-Trent Water Authority and from domestic consumers is likely to be £410,000 above budget. The decline in trade consumption has

been even worse than the pessimistic budget. Whilst the high level of house building locally has improved the domestic income, it is not expected to continue at this rate during the winter.

On the expenditure side, a temporary increase in numbers of employees (associated with the installation of labour-saving computer projects), together with higher than budget wage awards and the release of "frozen" holiday pay, will lead to an overspending of £170,000 on manpower. The situation would have been worse, but for the reduction in the rate of National Insurance Surcharges paid by the Company.

The main area of overspending is in the category of "Materials and Services" where a forecast loss against budget of £495,000 is expected. This is partly explained by the high level of communication pipe laying, and partly by the need to catch up with a backlog of work that built up in the last financial year.

There is clearly a need to continue our efforts to hold down operating costs and to improve efficiency wherever possible. The outlook for the coming financial year, although slightly better for the economy as a whole, remains depressed for the West Midlands. Therefore, our responsibility remains for containing our charges so that any increase necessary is below the rate of inflation.

K.T.G.

IMPROVED EFFICIENCY AT ASHWOOD

In the unceasing quest to reduce the Company's annual electricity bill of £3.5M advantage has been taken of a recent development in the design of electric motors. The company has in service approximately 250 pumps which are driven by electric motors. An electric motor is basically a device for converting electrical energy into mechanical energy, however, in the conversion some energy is lost, mainly as heat, these losses are typically 7-10% of the total electrical energy input to the motor. The ratio of the mechanical energy output to the electrical energy input is referred to as the efficiency of the motor and is usually expressed as a percentage. Therefore higher losses in the motor will result in a lower efficiency and vice-versa. Standard electric motors have efficiencies between 83% and 93% depending on size.

In designing an electric motor the manufacturer is faced with a compromise between maximising efficiency (i.e.

minimising losses) and minimising production costs. With energy costs increasing at a rate greater than general inflation, some manufacturers have found that it makes economic sense to produce a motor that has a higher efficiency than a standard unit. The additional cost to produce a high efficiency motor is soon recovered by the user through reduced electricity costs.

The Company has a good past record for choosing motors with high operating efficiencies, however a situation has been identified at Ashwood Pumping Station where the substitution of a high efficiency motor on one of the booster pumps will result in significant energy savings.

The replacement motor has a power rating of 250 kilowatts (equivalent to 250 single bar electric fires) and when commissioned will save 17 kilowatts of electric power. In financial terms this represents a saving of £5,200 per annum based on continuous operation.

CHRIS PATTERSON

SEEING INSIDE OUR MAINS

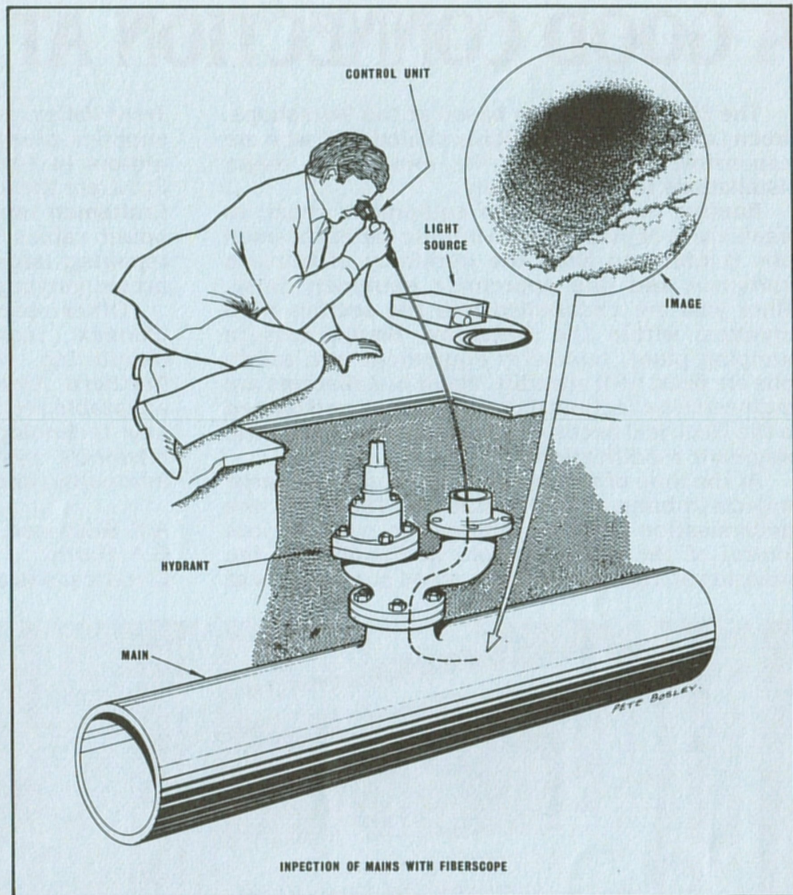
It is important, for the Company, to know the internal condition of its 3,000 miles of mains so that an assessment can be made of the renovation and maintenance requirements necessary to maintain the distribution system in good order.

At present, it is necessary to dig down to the main and cut out a short length of pipe to find out what it is like inside. This is very expensive work costing in each case about £300 for a 150mm (6 inch) main, up to £1,000 for a 500mm (20 inch) main, including the costs of highway reinstatement. In addition to the financial considerations, it is very disruptive to supplies to have to shut off sections of mains and very often the Company would also be inconveniencing the road users.

Equipment is now available in the form of an industrial fibroscope that will allow the user to see inside the main without any need to excavate down to or cut sections out of the pipe.

The instrument is a heavy duty, industrial version of the well established fibre optics currently used so successfully in the medical field.

The method of operation relies upon an image of the internal mains condition being transmitted to a hand held viewer and control unit by a 3 metre long 11mm diameter flexible fibre optic bundle. Judicious feeding and steering of the fibroscope tip, operated remotely from the control unit, will allow the instrument to be introduced into the main through apparatus such as hydrants and air valves. Once inside, the pipe's condition or "state" can very quickly be established, i.e. if there is no obvious corrosion through to being completely blocked.



INSPECTION OF MAINS WITH FIBROSCOPE

Having found the main's internal condition, the most suitable solution can be selected. This would normally be scraping and relining with a sprayed concrete, but in particularly severe cases, or where the pipe material has become graphitic, then complete replacement may be the only answer.

Board approval has been obtained to the purchase of the necessary equipment from Inspection Instruments of Slough, making the

undertakings to use a fibroscope for its mains inspections. It will be an invaluable aid in the long term programme to reduce the effects of deterioration and maximise the life of the Company's underground assets.

The illustration shows a fibroscope inserted into a main via a fire hydrant and a representation of the resultant image as seen by the operator.

Anthony Capener

CONSULTATION WITH OUR CONSUMERS

The 1985 Water Act has made provision for the formation of Consumer Consultative Committees to act as a bridge between Water Authorities and their consumers.

The Company will have its own Committee, which will be divided into two parts for the northern and southern parts of the Company's area. The division will be along the Upper Trent/Tame Divisions' boundary. Severn-Trent Water Authority is setting up Committees based upon its divisional boundaries.

Each part of the Company's Committee will have a total of 14 members representing local authorities, industry, commerce, farming and house-holders. The Committee will select its own Chairman, who may be a nominee of the Company but if not, then the Company may appoint its

nominee as Deputy Chairman.

The overall objective of the Committee is to advise the Company on the interests of consumers about the provision of services having regard to the costs, the effects upon the environmental and governmental or other constraints. General charging and financial policies, water quality and standards of service are highlighted in the terms of reference.

The Company will provide the secretariat and accommodation for its Committee which it is expected will meet three times in the first year and twice a year thereafter.

The Company considers this a very welcome opportunity for gaining the informed advice of its consumers and to be more clearly identified with the water supply in its area.

J.R.H.

A GOOD CONNECTION AT GREEN LANE

The Electrical Section based at the Workshops, Green Lane, is a mobile highly skilled unit who are responsible for most of the minor and major installations for the Company.

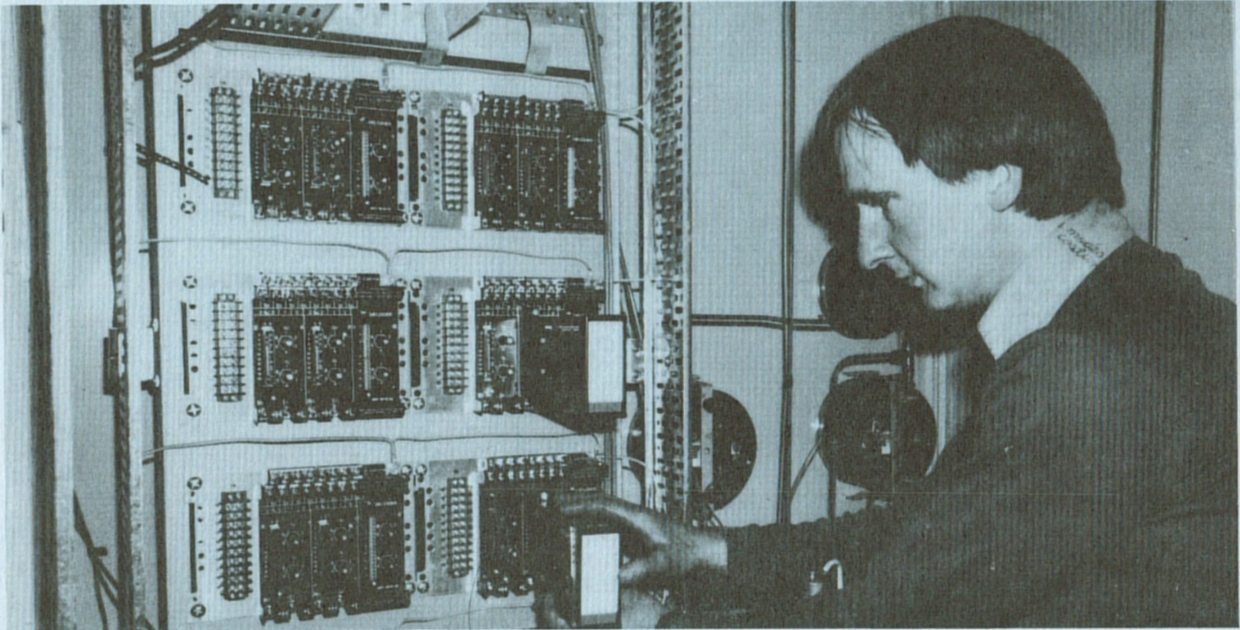
Routine maintenance of equipment, repair to breakdowns of plant plus an infinite variety of small jobs combine to keep the workforce of thirteen craftsmen and one apprentice extremely busy. Minor jobs are channelled into the section from anywhere within the Company. Breakdowns to pumping plant, telemetry equipment and safety jobs are dealt with speedily. Major installations are engineered by Technical Design Section and passed to the Electrical Section for installation (and a little pragmatic modification).

At the time of writing we have three fairly large projects in hand at source stations. These are, the modernisation of the automation and remote control of the pump motors at Sandfields, the provision of a second variable speed pump motor at

Trent Valley, and the change over from D.C. to A.C. supplies, plus micro-processed control of the pump motors in Seedy Mill borehole station. The jobs illustrate the wide range of skills used by Electrical Craftsmen ranging from handling large diameter power cables to micro-computer technology and repairing large electrical motors as we hope the accompanying photograph will show.

Other recent jobs you may have noticed are 'Permex' controlled fuel pumps, chlorine monitoring, Mr. Cliff Jones' headquarters, and Northern Area Offices. We are a versatile and adaptable section and with the development of the new technology, improved communications and telemetry systems, we look forward to many interesting and challenging tasks in the future.

A.F. Westwood,
G.A. Harris
Electrical Assistant Superintendents.



OBITUARY

MR. P.F. THOMAS

It was with very deep regret that we learned of the death of Mr. P.F. Thomas on 7th December, as a result of injuries he sustained in a road accident on 30th November. He was 61 years old.

Mr. Thomas's long and distinguished career with the Company spanned more than 41 years. He joined the Company in May 1938 and was promoted to the position of Head of the Meter Department in 1957. He also became Personal Assistant to the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. R.H. Taylor, and was appointed Administration Officer in 1965, the post he held until his retirement in

1980. He played a very active part in politics, having been a member of Warwickshire County Council, Chairman of its Education Committee and, at the time of his death, Chairman of the North Warwickshire Health Authority.

He will be greatly missed and will be remembered by all his friends and colleagues in the Company, not only for the valuable contribution he made to its work, but also for his unfailing kindness and thoughtfulness for others.

We convey our deepest sympathy to Peggy Thomas and her daughter Judith.