

SPRING ISSUE  
MARCH 86

Mr J. Carter

# REVIEW

South Staffs  
Presents a  
new face for  
1986



**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE WATERWORKS COMPANY MAGAZINE**



**NATIONAL GARDEN  
FESTIVAL**  
STOKE-ON-TRENT · STAFFORDSHIRE  
1st MAY – 26th OCTOBER 1986



- |                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Etruria Hall         | 9. Labyrinth        |
| 2. Formal Gardens       | 10. Arena           |
| 3. Marina               | 11. Festival Market |
| 4. Trent & Mersey Canal | 12. Car Park        |
| 5. Stations & Railway   | 13. Coach Park      |
| 6. Festival Hall        | 14. A53             |
| 7. Greenhouse 2000      | 15. To M6           |
| 8. Footbridge           |                     |

## OUR FIRST WATER GARDEN

The National Garden Festival will take place at Etruria, Stoke-on-Trent, every day from May to October 1986, and will attract up to five million visitors.

There will be more than seventy Theme Gardens. These range from formal gardens, such as the Elizabethan Way, to conservation areas. There will be an extravaganza of flower shows, gardening exhibitions and displays throughout the Festival, centring on the Festival Hall and Greenhouse 2000, a £1 million project which will become in 1987 the Stoke City Nursery, the most advanced in Europe.

The Events programme will include Medieval Jousting, hot air balloon rallies, music, theatre, dance sport — and much more; over 20,000 events in all.

The Events will be staged at many locations at the Festival, including the Festival Arena, the Theatre and the Bandstand. Strolling Players and small groups will move around the Festival visiting the Marina, the Pub, the Lakeside and the Festival Restaurants.

The Company's garden is taking the theme "Use Water Wisely." The plot is in the prestigious Pebble Mill area which is sponsored by the BBC television programme and is likely to be high on visitors' lists.

The garden will consist of a central 'gazebo' which will hold a display on the disadvantages of over watering. This will be partially surrounded by a water feature, the volume of water being expressed in every day facts and figures, e.g. leak from a tap in twenty four hours, etc. The perimeter of the gardens will contrast plants that have been sensibly watered and overwatered.

At the moment the plot is in the centre of a builders compound and the Company is expected to have all the Construction and Horticultural work complete within 6 weeks.

This article is meant only to "wet" the appetite and a full write up will appear in the next issue.

*T. McAllister*

## Talking Turkish

South Staffs triumphed again by being the only Water Company in England to be invited to present a paper at a World Bank Seminar, on water supply and sewerage service, held in Cesme near Izmir in Turkey.

Jim Carter, our Managing Director personally presented the paper which focused on water management and how the Company in terms of management, technical and operational skills supplies water to its 1¼ million customers.

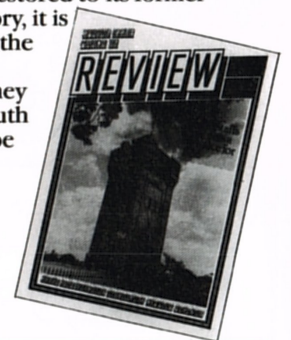
Mr. Carter was proud to present the paper to such a distinguished array of internationally renowned organisations which included London Regional Transport and many major foreign utilities. It shows South Staffs has developed such world wide recognition that our knowledge and expertise is now sought on a consultancy basis.

A seminar such as this will promote our Company even further and enhance our future expansion into the international market.

### Front cover photograph

The water tower at Winhill which has been refurbished by The South Staffordshire Water Company at a cost of £20,000.

The tower was built at the beginning of the century to serve local areas, including Winhill, Bretby and surrounding districts. Thousands of bricks were used in its construction and rumour has it that a bricklayer committed suicide at the time as the laying of so many bricks drove him insane. Now restored to its former Edwardian glory, it is so pleasing to the local civic Society that they have asked South Staffs if it can be floodlit on special occasions.



# from the editor's desk . . .

1986 will be a milestone in the Company's history. It is the beginning of a new Era, The Central Office Era, in which we will witness the creating of, by the reorganisation of Departmental structures and new technology, a new working formula which will keep South Staffordshire Water Works in the forefront of Water Technology, with increased demand from Overseas for our expert Knowledge and Advice.

This Knowledge will not only be a lucrative source of Revenue, it will indirectly improve the quality of life in many Third World countries and combined with efforts of Water Aid, we may save many lives.

Privatisation is also on the horizon and although it may be thought, that as we are a Limited Company we would not be affected by this, this may not be so and possible pressures and high abstraction charges from privatised Water Authorities could cause concern, however the Company is monitoring the situation closely so that any necessary action can be taken.

Let us hope that the personal contact with the Company that this magazine gives you all, will not be lost in these coming changes.

It leaves me with only one more thing to say, HAVE A GOOD YEAR AND GOOD HEALTH IN 1986.

*Cecilia Turner*



## £12,000,000 READY FOR THE FUTURE . . .

### THE SIGNING CEREMONY

The Government granted permission to South Staffs Water to increase its borrowing power from £40 million to £65 million and this allowed the Company to

negotiate terms to acquire a large loan. The granting of 12 million pounds over a seven year period was the successful conclusion of these negotiations and it is the

first such loan by a Water Company. In the past we have raised capital on the Stock Market.

The loan involved four Banks, The Samuel Montagu & Co. Ltd., Allied Irish Investment Bank Plc., Central Trustees Savings Bank Ltd., and Standard Chartered Bank.

Mr. Jim Carter stated that:- "The nature of our business is very capital intensive and statutory provisions limit our profits and reserves. Periodically, therefore, we need to raise additional capital and the £12 million loan forms part of this exercise."

John Evangelides (Director of Samuel Montagu & Company Ltd) expressed the view that the successful conclusion of these negotiations showed the professional approach by South Staffs Water to financial management.



*Mr. John Harris, our Company Secretary. Mr. John Evangelides, Director Samuel Montagu and Mr. Jim Carter, our Managing Director sign for the £12,000,000 syndicated loan for South Staffordshire Waterworks Company. Standing is Mr. Gerald Howarth, M.P. for Cannock and Burntwood.*

# ACCOLADES FOR ANTHONY

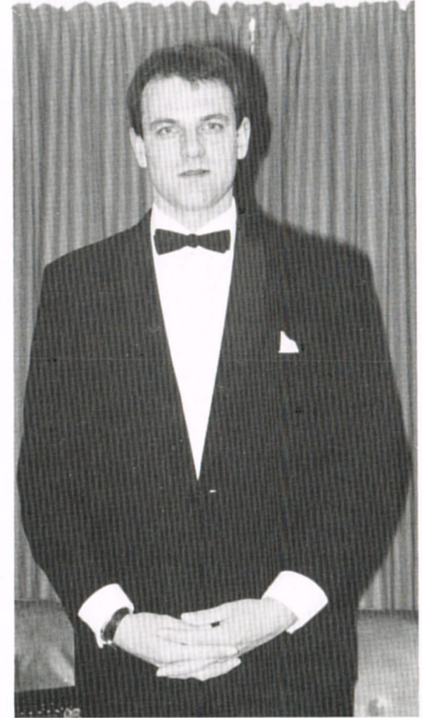
Project Engineer Anthony Carpenter has won first prize for a paper he recently presented to The Midlands Branch of The Pipeline Industries Guild.

At the Guild's 'Short Paper Competition Evening' held in Coventry, the panel judged the paper as the best of the evening. Anthony was presented with a £25 prize by former England and Liverpool football captain Emlyn Hughes at the P.I.G. annual dinner.

The paper described two practical methods developed by our company for assessing conditions of existing mains.

The first is the use of an instrument called a fibrescope by which an operator on the surface can view the inside of a main. Instruments similar to this are used by doctors to see inside people. The other is by the use of magnetic and ultrasonic instruments which can measure the thickness of mains with a good degree of accuracy to assess the effects of corrosion.

These methods of advanced technology used by The Company reduce costs and improve the quality of supply, with minimal capital and revenue cost.



## VISITOR TO CENTRAL OFFICE

Mr. Patrick Cormack M.P. for Staffordshire South visited the Central Office to see for himself the steps the Company had taken to embrace modern technology. Here he is seen on the right of the picture viewing the method used to keep track of Consumer complaints. Also in the picture are Mr. Jim Carter (centre) Managing Director, and Mr. Ron Lawrence, management support and development. The V.D.U. operator is Lynn Hutchinson.



## DIAL FOR DATA

The internal telephone system has a new number Nr.202, an information line on which topics of interest concerning the staff and the Company can be heard on a recorded message lasting approximately two to three minutes.

Some of the topics covered so far have been the Company's Pension Scheme, Health and Safety, Overseas Contracts and Fluoridation.

The messages can be listened to and extra tape space allows the listener to add on any queries he or she may have.

The scheme has proved successful with some 50 queries per week. The taped messages are changed weekly.

Mr. Carter's Christmas message was relayed in this way for the first time and proved most popular.

# The Christmas Dance



*Diane Paddock and husband — Computer Department.*



*Alan Bellamy and friends from Hampton Loade.*

By popular request, the Christmas Dance is becoming more informal every year and 1985 saw a real breakthrough in the form of a Disco to replace the usual band! Some 224 guests attended and by the end of the evening, having consumed roast chicken, salad, chips, apple pie and cream, glasses of wine and numerous bar drinks, most were "discoing" in true Top of the Pops fashion.

A speech of welcome by Mr. Carter mentioned the good name of South Staffs Water throughout the Industry, due to the efforts of all the employees and a special word of thanks was given to their long suffering families.

Roger Goodall (Hayley Green) replied on behalf of those attending, thanking the Board of Directors and Management for another most enjoyable evening.

John Bryan acted as MC, finally

*Marion and Ron Wigley (retired after 46 year's service) with Jim Carter (Managing Director).*



introducing Ron Perks who made an appeal on behalf of Water Aid. £184.00 was raised and I would like to thank everyone who gave so generously both as participants in the raffle and also those who donated the splendid prizes. (UNWANTED GIFTS ALWAYS WELCOME FOR SIMILAR APPEALS — end of commercial.

We were all pleased to see Ron Wigley who was invited as a special guest, having retired earlier in 1985 on completion of 46 years of service. Both he and wife Marion are looking healthy and happy and they tell me, working harder than ever to catch up with neglected hobbies and interests.

General comments seem to indicate that everyone enjoyed the evening better than ever before, but new ideas are always welcome! We hope to repeat this success on 12th December 1986.

*Pat Rea*

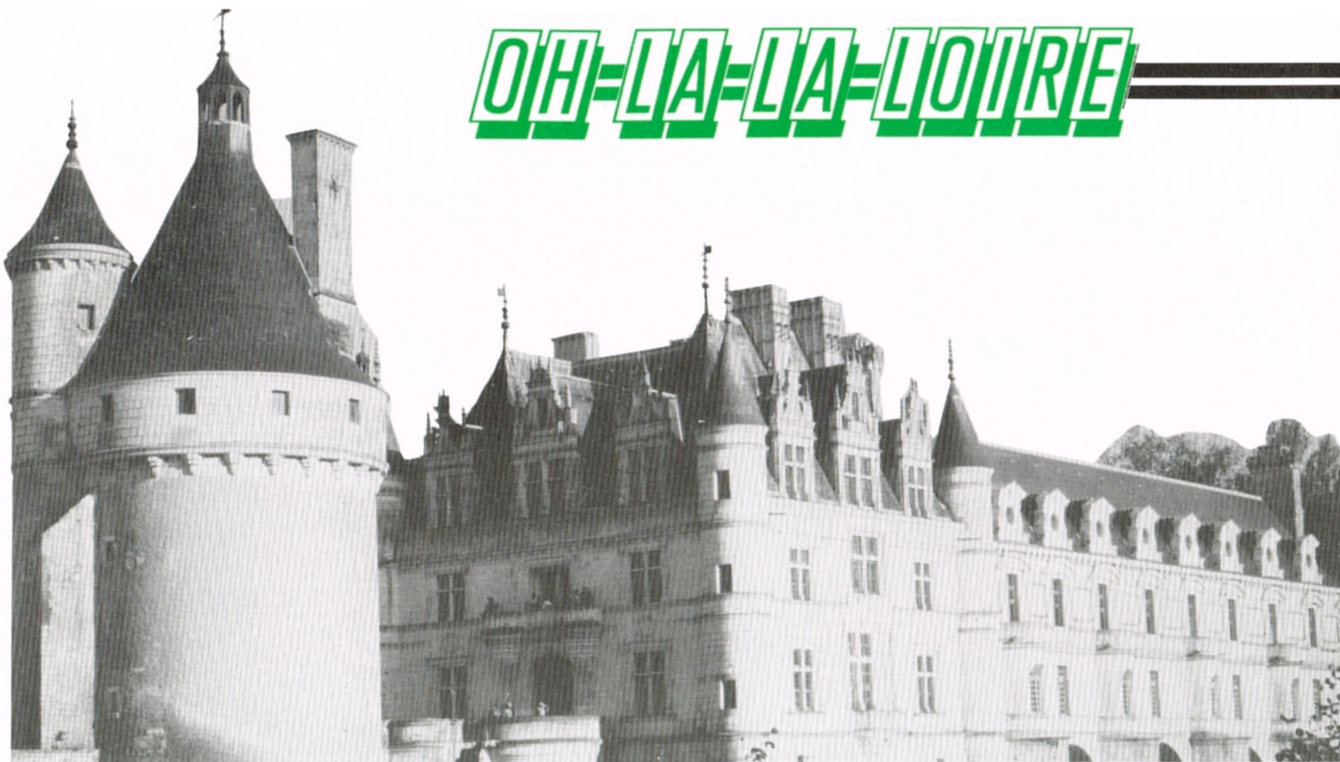


*The wife of Ted Shaw (worksops) — winner of one of Water Aid's raffle prizes.*

*Jim Winnel, Alan Chetter and Jean Wheeler — Northern Area.*



# OH-LA-LA-LOIRE



Here we go again, a definite feeling of *deja vous*, which may be appropriate as these are my impressions of the recent Social Club trip to the Loire Valley (for the less geographically minded, the Loire is a river which flows across central France into the Atlantic).

The trip was absolutely chock full of incidents, so there is no way justice can be done to it in such a short article. Additionally, my memory may be somewhat blurred by a mixture of inebriation, fatigue and general senility, so 100% accuracy cannot be guaranteed, or even 10% come to that.

Much of the enjoyment was, of course, provided by the queer assortment of characters who accompanied us, and if it is not possible to give them all an insulting mention in the course of my rambling gibberish, I hope they will not be too disappointed. Some of those present, like the Alan Atkinson mob, got their fair share of invective in the last report so I shall give them a miss this time. Besides which Alan behaved himself tolerably well, certainly as well as one could expect from a man of such dubious reputation (sorry Al, only joking!)

The weekend got off to a disastrous start. Having set off at 6.15 p.m. and safely navigated our way onto the motorway, it was found that the windscreen wipers were u/s and we diverted to Digbeth Coach Station for a ten minute repair.

Five hours later we were still cooling our heels on the tarmac, and still no sign of a replacement for the now u/s coach. In the meantime we had occupied ourselves by taking in the scenic delights of Digbeth, and some of us were entertained by the music of Julie Andrews, Frank Sinatra and the Sex Pistols in a punk pub called the Barrel Organ. To get into this establishment you had to submit to a 'frisking' from a large West Indian chap, this was the highlight of the weekend for Andy Poulton, who was in and out like a jack-in-the-box. By 11.30 p.m. all of the humour had gone out of the situation, British phlegm had given way to frustration and the coach company were given an ultimatum to get us back to a new coach at Green Lane or the trip would be aborted. Fortunately, when we arrived at Green Lane at 12.30 a.m., the replacement coach was waiting. Only Simon Rouse decided to opt for his money back, but I must admit I was sorely tempted to join him.

It was a very tired and disgruntled party which eventually re-embarked on the adventure at 1.00 a.m. On the journey to Dover we had the opportunity to watch 'An Officer and a Gentleman', but I only awoke for the sexy bits. The crossing on the 5.00 a.m. ferry to Boulogne was uneventful, but it was upon arrival there at about 6.45 that another unfortunate incident

occurred. Dave Walcott is the holder of a St. Kitts passport, which did not satisfy the requirements of the French Customs Officials. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the issue (and I don't have enough facts to comment), everyone on the coach felt terribly sorry for Dave as his luggage was taken from the coach. John Morrall ensured that he had sufficient resources to get him back home, but I must admit that I felt almost guilty about going on and leaving him behind. In the course of these events, a great number of Customs Officials were attracted to the scene. They were obviously pleased with their success, as if they had apprehended some much sought after international smuggler, and demonstrating their delight by standing around in a circle and performing a peculiar hand shaking ceremony — a bit like barn dancing without the music.

After an uneventful trip across France, generally accompanied by the whistling of Roger Whittaker and the warbling of Cliff Richard, we arrived at the hotel Ibis in Orleans. This was to be our base for the next three days, but we spent very little time in the hotel as we were fully occupied visiting the towns and chateaux on the Loire and Cher rivers. To give a sequential description of the itinerary would be very time consuming, so you will have to be satisfied with a kind of condensed melange, inadequate though that may be.

The three main towns we visited were Orleans, Blois and Tours, and we also passed through Ambois, with a short stop for some quick snaps of the chateau. These are all medium/large provincial towns, and if they are typical, I am very impressed. Orleans and Tours are commercially very busy and successful, and yet have managed to introduce the modern amenities and facilities this necessitates without spoiling their inherited beauty and elegance. They have wide straight stylish avenues, magnificent cathedrals and narrow meandering side streets that wander off into the past. Blois is a smaller market type town with skyline dominated by the chateau and two large churches. We spent an extremely pleasant Sunday lunchtime in Blois sitting outside in a sun drenched square partaking of the excellent French cooking and some equally excellent *vin blanc* (very sec of course). On reflection, although there are similarities, perhaps I am doing these towns an injustice because it was their individual characters which stimulated the interest and made them all so charming.

In the course of a very hectic weekend, we also managed to take in the chateaux at Blois, Chenonceau and Chambord, and the palace at



Versailles. Again, even if space was available, there is insufficient talent to do justice to these magnificent buildings and their artistic contents. You have to see Chenanceau with its 197 foot arch-supported gallery straddling the Cher, which throws up an equally appealing fairy tale reflection. You have to try to photograph the awesome majesty and monumental proportions of Chambord with its 365 chimneys, set in a parkland estate of 13,600 acres and a surrounding wall 20 miles long. You have to crane and crick your neck to gaze in wonder at the splendour of the paintings on the ceilings at Versailles, and imagine how its formal glory must have contrasted with the lifestyle of your ordinary French peasant — it's no surprise they revolted. When it comes to art and architecture, I am a real Philistine, but I must admit that I found these chateaux fascinating. Their appeal is obviously universal, because wherever we went there were hundreds of little yellow men standing in front of some object of historic or artistic significance, smiling their inscrutable smiles which were duly recorded on still or movie film, to be taken back and proudly displayed to their workmates on the Nissan assembly line.

Believe it or not, in amongst all these other activities we also managed to arrange a wine tasting visit to the caves at Vouvray. Clive Kent had really been looking forward in anticipation to this visit, but in the event he seemed a bit over-awed and disappointed by the fact that in the midst of two million bottles, most of it vin sec, he was only able to consume about half a dozen glasses. Despite being unable to speak in English, our guide managed to convey the differences in the samples he gave us, although I must confess they all tasted pretty much the same to me. In the midst of the tasting and merriment the uncouth J.S.M. emitted a tremendous belch, the echoes of which will probably for ever hauntingly rumble around the caves at Vouvray.

Just to ensure we did not get bored and inactive, a shopping trip was arranged to a local hypermarket. The obvious attraction here was the wine section, with a very wide selection to choose from at extremely attractive prices. Other bargains were less obvious to those unfamiliar with the price of comparable English goods, but you know how mean and miserable those Tipton types are, and they all came out of the store in danger of being charged with overloading their trollies. In confirmation of this, the coach driver reckoned his suspension was a foot lower when all the goodies had been stowed on board.

It was Clive Kent's forty-third birthday during the weekend. Yes, he does look older, but as he says, it's a hard life working with Dennis Chapman! On the night of his birthday, he consumed large quantities of grape juice, and then walked around Orleans trying to force his way into any sleazy joint he could find, because he wanted to sample the authentic atmosphere of a French bar. Fortunately they were all closing and wouldn't let us in, so they did not have the pleasure of throwing us out. Clive was somewhat piqued by

his lack of success, so he went back to the coach and tried to cajole the driver into leaving with half of our party missing. During the remainder of the weekend, he spent a lot of money on drink and food (in that order), but I must admit he was quite generous in doling out lumps of goat's milk cheese to some of his less affluent colleagues who were having to survive on the much less fattening 43F menus. One of our regular eating companions was Andy Poulton, the "Audit Kid." Being a fervent fan of Karl Marx (I hope Carl Wright is noting this), he had a very interesting political debate with Clive, who has a kind of love-hate relationship with Maggie Thatcher. Andy can be quite aggressive when fortified by a couple of litres of wine, and with the help of my number one son and myself, gave Clive quite a verbal pasting (Clive's befuddled state possibly contributed to his downfall). Much to Andy's annoyance, the name of Edith Piaf was introduced into the argument. Why he was annoyed and why she was introduced we shall never know, but it serves to illustrate the intellectual level of our conversation!

There was good representation from Tipton Area Office, with Peter Shaw, Jeff Wilde, Len Jackson, Roy Jones and their respective spouses, and Martin Mooney who had brought a mate along. Len Jackson has always appeared to be somewhat absent minded by dint of the fact that he has known me for thirty years and still calls me Jim. He really proved it on this trip, for after snapping away artistically for three days, we found he had no film in his camera. Never mind Len, you can leave some blank spaces in your album, and in years to come you can look back and try to remember where you didn't take them.

We also had three delightful ladies with their partners, Sue Cox, Margaret Pointon and Dianne Paddock, Dianne's gang of four were a very jovial group, with a light hearted good humour which was infectious. Margaret was as always, calm and collected, walking around with a slightly quizzical expression, but a definite glint of devilment in her eye. She was at times quite off hand and disparaging about her husband, calling him a 'big head' and a 'know all'. He seemed quite a nice bloke to me, but then I don't have to sleep with him. Which leads me to Sue and her boyfriend who seemed anxious to get in as many early nights as possible. Someone ungallantly suggested that the reason they were so tired was because they spent so much time in bed — and she looks such a 'proper' girl.

The rest of the party consisted of John's intended, Liane, and two of his friends who own an Indian restaurant in Walsall. They were keen to sample the local fare but the frog legs and snails and whatever else John talked them into having, proved to be quite a mouthful or stomach-ful, and they ended up swigging Alka-Seltzer.

One of the less memorable moments of the trip was the sight of J.S.M. trying forlornly to imitate a human being at the breakfast table. His piggy little eyes desperately searching the room for a bread roll, with flabby muscles straining to control the



Clive Kent, Alan Lander's son Paul and Alan Lander (our author).

D.T.'s in an attempt to get at least some of the coffee in the cup. At that time of day his over-fleshed jowls look even darker than usual and the witty repartee for which he has some repute, comes out as a Neanderthal type mumble. Out of politeness, people pretended not to notice and went on dunking their croissants.

Inevitably in a party of this size, we did have a couple of rowdy trouble makers. Typical Britons abroad — demanding tea and fish and chips, and spreading alarm and despondency wherever we went. Yes, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Smith, you have a lot to answer for.

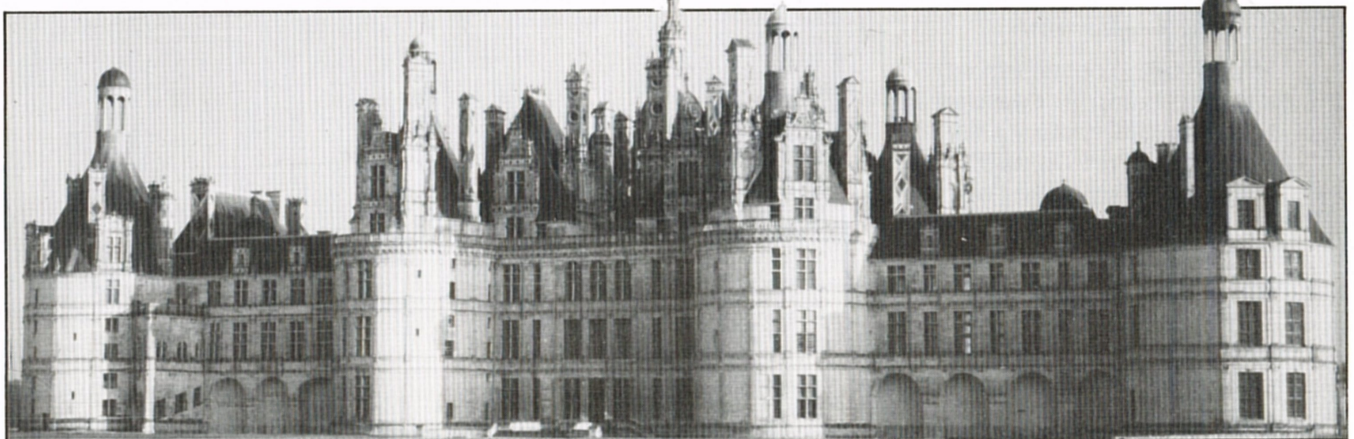
The journey home was reasonably uneventful, apart from Clive creating panic by misplacing his passport, and our ferry becoming stranded across Dover harbour. A tug came to our rescue and got us docked, leading to the next problem which was getting Clive's duty free through customs. Having passed his excess to anyone capable of carrying a bottle, he strolled nonchalantly through, while everyone else was sweating cobs. Luckily we were not stopped, so Clive can remain a free man, at least until he next feels the desire to beat the system.

On the final stages, we saw two more films. One was a space adventure, and the other was a video nasty called 'Incubus' about a monster rapist with red sperm! The mind boggles at the kind of brain which can think up such rubbish. Unfortunately, we had problems with the sound, and every scream, grunt and groan was magnified tenfold. Come to think of it, it wasn't all that different to Roger Whittaker.

Finally, a word of thanks to J.S.M. for organising such an enjoyable weekend. He may appear to be an uncouth lout with disgusting manners and habits, but deep down he's quite a nice bloke with disgusting manners and habits.

Cheers John!

Alan Lander



Note: The views expressed in this article are the author's and not the Editorial staff.

# TATE'S CHALLENGE



Mary Grace, wife of the Chairman of Tate's.

It was a cold frosty morning that brought our friendly rivals, Tate Pipe Lining Ltd from Manchester to challenge our Company to a special Sports Evening.

The first such meeting was held way back in March 1985 at Manchester, when the Company narrowly won the combined events, winning the trophy. Tate were therefore anxious to have a return match and so on Friday 29th November we arrived at the Windley Leisure Centre at Sutton Coldfield. The venue was ideal although not as convenient for the organisers as the previous meeting in Manchester. After the ball games had been competed for, we all returned to Central Office where the remainder of the events were held. A buffet was provided by the Company for all the participants and the bar pumps were working overtime. The evening was yet again a tremendous success and we must thank all those present on the evening for making such a memorable occasion.

Unfortunately our visitors again just failed to meet the quality of the play provided by the Company employees, so we retained the trophy so kindly provided by Tate Ltd.

We look forward to further evenings of this kind and recommend to anyone who has not yet joined us to watch the Notice Board for future events.

John Bryan



John Morrall - a drinking challenge?

## Décor Profiles Marathon Quiz

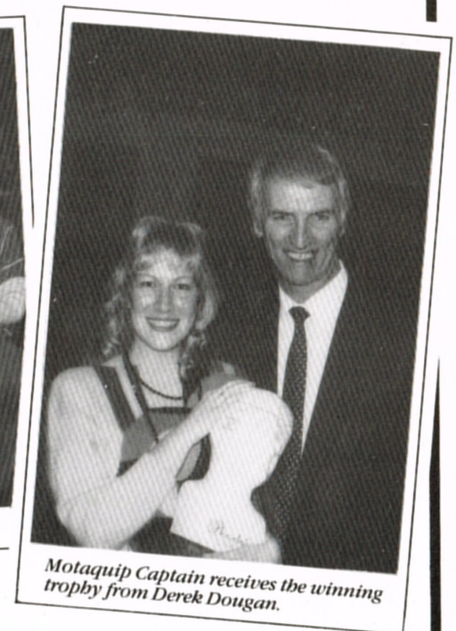


When Decor Profiles (the printers of this worthy magazine) decided to hold a Xmas Quiz and entertain their customers in style at the Holiday Inn, naturally South Staffs were invited to enter a team. The team we entered had Joan Hatfield, Robin Comley, Jim Crocock and Nich Curtis in it and the Quiz was extremely hard and gruelling lasting some three and a half hours.

Naturally our team did not let us down, being in forefront of the contest all evening and only being pipped into second place in the final lap. The winners were Motaquip and Derek Dougan (soccer personality) was Quiz Master for the evening, and presented the prizes. This Quiz is planned to be an annual event.



South Staffs team in contemplation.

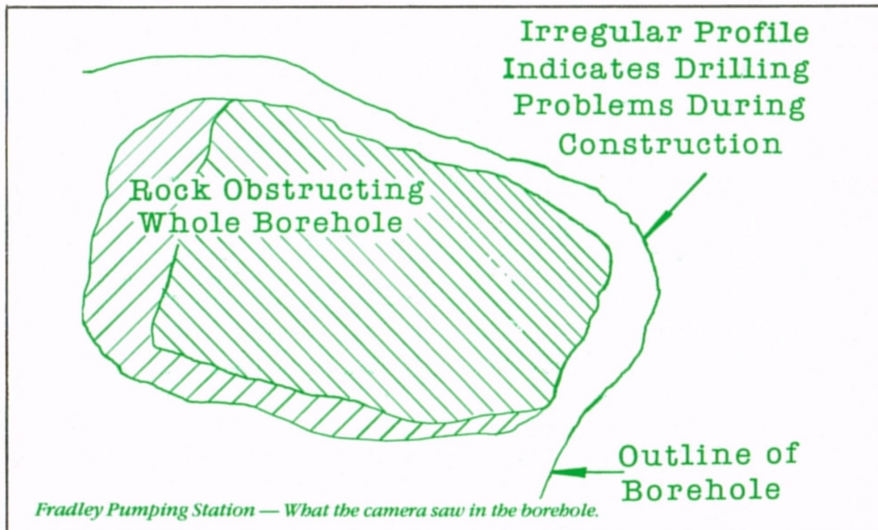


Motaquip Captain receives the winning trophy from Derek Dougan.



# Caring for our sources of Water

Most of the Company's efforts over the last 20 years in providing increased quantities of water to meet rising demand have gone into developing our River Severn source at Hampton Load. Despite this today over 50% of our daily demand for water is still met from the Company's traditional sources — the borehole pumping stations. These sources of which the Company has 26, therefore form an essential part of our operations. Without them the Company would be unable to meet the demands of the customers for water and what value is a Water Company without water?



Borehole pumping stations obtain their water from porous water bearing sandstone rocks. Water is constantly flowing through these rocks and forms a huge underground reservoir which is constantly being added to by rainfall.

The stations require a means of obtaining the underground water and this is normally achieved by the construction of a well — a large diameter hole with a brick or iron lining extending down into the water bearing rocks — known as aquifers. The wells can be anything from about 2 metres to 4 metres in diameter. Alternatively a borehole — a smaller diameter hole drilled deep into the rock can be used. These are much smaller than the wells — the largest Company ones are only about 1 metre in diameter and the smallest a mere 100mm! The boreholes can be very deep, these at Hagley for instance, where there are four separate boreholes, are each over 300 metres deep. Many of the Company's borehole stations are now quite old, the oldest operational site (Moors Gorse) was brought into use in 1879 and a further five were constructed before 1900. The age and importance of these sources gives rise to concern over their condition.

Until recently little work has been done on the condition of the existing wells and boreholes due to difficulties of access, the need for sites to remain operational and the problems of inspection below water level. The development of underwater remotely operated television cameras in recent years — a spin off from the oil exploration industry — has at last made inspection and monitoring of these vital underground assets possible. Even now, however, except in some of the larger wells, inspection is only possible when the pumping plant is removed for repair or replacement.

Television surveys are not the only techniques used to check on well and borehole condition. From time to time pumping tests are carried out at specific sources. This involves starting pumping after a period of rest and then pumping at a fixed, known, rate for a period of time. Frequent measurements of the water levels in the wells and boreholes are made from the information

obtained measures of performance can be calculated and these can then be used to determine specifications for new pumping plant. The test results will also be used to assess the possibilities of finding more efficient ways of using that source in the future.

Over the last couple of years Planning Unit has been taking the opportunity to make television surveys of boreholes when pumps are removed. This enables the condition of the holes to be monitored and problems to be identified. Like all structures, boreholes deteriorate and can develop defects. Indeed, they can become blocked completely by some object falling down them or by a collapse — most are unlined and any rock which becomes loose will fall into the hole. In each case the pictures obtained are recorded on video tape and retained for future reference.

Over the years it is hoped to build up a library of these tapes. Eventually they will form a basis for comparison with future surveys so that changes in condition over the years can be identified and hopefully potential problems can then be dealt with before they become serious.

While the majority of the boreholes are in surprising good condition, considering their age, on occasion problems can be found. At Pipe Hill one borehole, constructed in 1905, was surveyed last year. A partial collapse of the borehole was found to have occurred! — fortunately quite low down and well below the pump — and a large piece of rock had fallen out of the borehole wall and was partially blocking the borehole itself. Despite the fact that the boulder was only restricting about a third of the total diameter, samples of water taken above and below it indicated that it was effectively acting as a complete barrier to the passage of water up the borehole to the pump. At Seedy Mill, investigation of a disused borehole which is earmarked for a new pumping installation to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the source — revealed a complete blockage of the bore at about the half way point. Attempts will be made later this year to remove this obstruction.



Jay Mistry and Bev Lomas taking water level readings at Somerford Pumping Station during a pumping test. At certain times these measurements had to be repeated several times each minute.

By far the most serious problems so far encountered have been at Fradley Pumping Station. A Planning Unit investigation in 1984 revealed a slow but steady decline in the quantity of water that was being obtained from the well. This indicated that something was amiss. Attempts to inspect the huge 4 metre diameter brick lined well — constructed way back in 1891 — were hampered by old ironwork, pipes and timber platforms left over from the days of steam pumping engines. A special project had to be raised to remove all of the old materials in order to clear a path for access without the pumps working — which would be a safety hazard — the well stands full of water. Divers therefore had to be used to do the work. Not only this but the well is so deep that deep sea diving techniques had to be used, involving decompression chambers and other safety provisions, something hard to imagine in rural Staffordshire! This work was supervised by Technical Services Department. Once the well was clear the divers were able to inspect the brick lining of the well and our worst fears were confirmed. Large areas of the brickwork at about 40 metres below the surface were found to have collapsed, leaving the brickwork above effectively suspended above a void!

But that was not all. It was now possible to get the television camera into the tiny 300mm borehole which had been drilled downwards from the base of the well. This was found to be blocked completely at about half its depth by a lump of rock, which had fallen into the borehole and become wedged. Here at last was the cause of the reduced amount of water that was being obtained. It could not get past the obstruction.

In the circumstances it was clearly unsafe to allow the divers to continue work with the well in such a dangerous state and they were withdrawn. Unfortunately it was also impossible to restore the station to supply for fear of causing further collapses as the water levels changed. The station has therefore had to remain out of use. Work is to be carried out later this year to determine what action should be taken and whether the station should be repaired, replaced or abandoned. One sometimes wonders if it would be best not to look for problems in cases like this!

Richard Foster

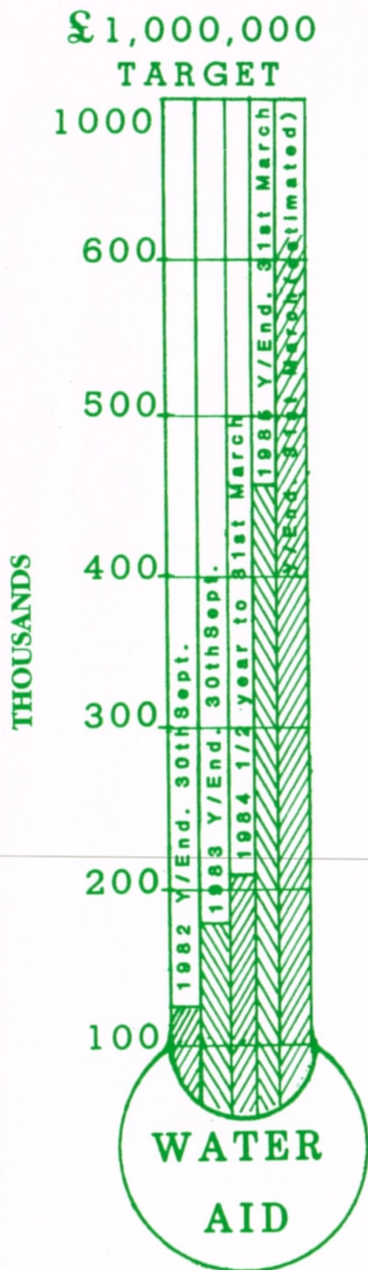
# WATER AID

## The Fund Raising Goes on...

In 1986 Water Aid will have its half a decade birthday and has made £1,000,000 its target for the next financial year starting April 1986.

The income of Water Aid in successive years is shown on the scale diagram.

Assuming that rather more than £500,000 is indeed raised in 1985-86, Water Aid will have become one of the 200 largest charities among the 150,000 registered charities in England. (Trivial Pursuits!! commentators please note).



### HOW IS THE MONEY SPENT?

#### ASIA — Mini Projects

Among projects recently approved for assistance in Asia are:

**India . . .** Pahadi school, £280 for pump and pipes, to allow irrigation of school farm.

**Sri Lanka . . .** Prithipura home for handicapped children, £1,850 for construction of well, including protecting wall, pump and tank.

**Nepal . . .** Warchowk village committee, £2,200 for pipes and cement, to complete a small gravity-fed scheme.

#### AFRICA — Tools to do the Job

**Ghana . . .** 1986 will see Water Aid working with different groups within the church - Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist - in different parts of the country.

Collaboration with the Anglican church will be in the Bolgatanga area of the Diocese of Sunyani and Tamale. There the Sisters of the Order of the Holy Paraclete have long experience of community development work in the villages. They now wish to concentrate particular attention on self-help water and sanitation improvements.

In a programme budgeted altogether at £39,000 Water Aid will first provide the necessary tools and equipment to help village after village construct hand-dug wells and small earth dams. Then, as work gets under way, support will be given towards the costs of hand-pumps and cement; and an engineer, principally engaged on other work in Northern Ghana, will visit the Sisters from time to time and give any necessary technical advice.

**Angola . . .** Hospitals in Zaire. The Baptist Church of the River Zaire has been in touch with the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) in London, concerning the water problems of four regional hospitals which the church has run for many years.

BMS thinks it may be able to pay for improvements, but first a proper assessment is needed. It has asked Water Aid to do this, and David Horn (ex-South West Water, and until late last year Water Aid's resident engineer in Kenya) will visit Zaire in February and March. He will examine the situation at each hospital, and draw up detailed and costed proposals.

**Uganda . . .** We at South Staffs have contributed £1,250 to a project in the province of BUSOGA. The total cost was £2,800 and provided cement and other materials for two seepage wells to overcome the use of polluted waterholes. All together 1,200 people, which includes 500 school children have now got a better supply of water thanks to our donation.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

At South Staffs we aim to raise £2,000 before the end of March and so far we have raised half that amount. Future fund raising events which need your support are, a RACE NIGHT on Saturday 22nd March. Those of you who attended the last RACE NIGHT will need no encouragement to come again. It was great fun and this year food will be available and will be included in the price.

John Lindley and Mike Lewis will again be looking for sponsors to back them on their LONDON MARATHON run. If you want to sponsor them for this good cause contact Mike Lewis.

Our monthly lottery which gives you a chance to win £25, £10 or £5 is for a mere 44p per month for 1 share although you may have as many shares as you like. It can be deducted by the Salaries Department so you hardly know its gone but to those who receive its benefits is worth its weight in gold.

### BE BETTER — BE BOUNTIFUL

Have you any good ideas for fund raising? If you have, contact Pat Rea. Ron Perks or Mike Lewis at Central Office.

Have a WATER AID tie, only £3.00.

For any queries to do with Water Aid ring Central Office, Walsall 38282, ext. 551.

# BLACK COUNTRY HUMOUR

## THE TOMMY MUNDON STAGE SHOW



Photograph by kind permission of Val Mundon.



The Chairman and Secretary of the Social Club looking as if they are enjoying the evening.

This year the Social Club Committee embarked upon a very ambitious programme and chose to include a live stage show.

They were fortunate in securing the services of Tommy Mundon and his very talented group of entertainers.

The function, attended by 230 members and friends was, of course, an absolute sell-out and a complete success. The traditional fare of faggots and peas was provided by that roving purveyor of gastronomic delights "Geoff the Chef," and which was enjoyed by all and all, and all again.

Many of you will recall that Tommy, a founder member of the "Black Country Night Out" team was a frequent visitor to our Tipton Area Office. He is a very funny local comedian, an absolute master of the "one liner" and his patter and infectious laugh delighted his audience. The supporting artists were also very enjoyable and the evening ended with a nostalgic rendering of wartime and other patriotic songs in which the younger generation joined, much to the surprise of the organisers.

We congratulate the Committee and promise our full support for any similar function in the future, and in particular to the return visit of Tommy Mundon with his new show in the autumn.

Bob Wright





# MENCAP

## PARTY & I



*Our friendly Police arrest a helper for working too hard.*

After an absence of two years, the annual Christmas party for the mentally and physically handicapped children of Walsall Mencap came back to Green Lane on Sunday, 12th January.

Over 80 mentally handicapped children, along with their parents or foster parents, descended on Green Lane to enjoy the party. With all the food, jelly and ice cream and gallons of drinks donated by Bromwich Catering and all the staff of Bromwich's working in the restaurant giving up their Sunday afternoon without charge to prepare and serve the food and drinks.

Every child attending received a balloon, party hat, drum and blower, all of which had been supplied and paid for by the regulars from the Buccaneer pub at Streetly.

After the eats, a disco was held for a short while before Father Christmas arrived, accompanied by his Elves carrying 8 bags of presents.

Father Christmas was, in fact, the Mayor of Walsall, who came with the Mayoress for an hour and stayed to the end. The elves carrying the presents were Dave Winders, John Wallett, Arthur Worthington, Steve Brown, myself and Jim Carter, who also came along with his wife Kath for an hour, but they said that they enjoyed themselves so much they stayed helping out to the end.

The handing out of presents took nearly 1¼ hours, with Father Christmas and the rest of the helpers fighting back tears when one after the other children with severe handicaps struggled to walk even a few steps to receive their presents. Every child, despite their handicap, seemed to realise that this was something different and Father Christmas to many of them was real.

A disco until 6.00 p.m. kept everyone dancing, with the Downs Syndrome children showing the way, knowing the latest dances and the songs that are currently Top of the Pops.

Then the party was over, another afternoon — gone, but not the memories. I can't end without thanking everyone who helped for all their hard work and a special thanks to 94-year-old Flo Stevens (Min's mom) and 84-years-old Rose Metcalf (Sylvia's mom) who helped prepare the food and shamed all members of the Social Club who don't have the nerve, the verve or the inclination to help on these occasions, these two grand ladies showed that age is no bar to helping children less fortunate than yourselves.

So, next year join us and help out at this party. You will work hard, but you will have a great time.

*Ron Perks*



*From left to right Debbie Kinsey and Ron Perks, Kath and Jim Carter, The Mayor and Mayoress of Walsall, Anne Webb and Mary Fulford of Mencap.*



*Ron Perks  
Committee  
Danny La*

# EXCLUSIVE GOURMET EVENING...

How better to raise funds for a worthwhile cause than enjoy a gourmet Indian meal with international entertainment in pleasant surroundings. Well that's just what happened on a Sunday night in November last year. The Social Club and Walsall Mencap were shown true Indian hospitality by the management and staff of the Raj Mahal Restaurant, Walsall.

The idea of having a gourmet meal for Mencap fund raising germinated (strange as it may seem) one Monday night in the Raj Restaurant. The Manager Mark, Bob Runham (Decor Profiles the printers of this most humble rag) and John (oh he who eats many curries) Morrall were thinking of ways for the restaurant to sponsor a local worthy cause. With our previous connections with Mencap it wasn't difficult to piece together this rather novel idea. The only hurdle left to jump was the question of Mencap agreeing. I asked Ron Perks for his opinion while prompting him to place a call, pose the question, and receive the answer — which was YES.

A steering committee of myself and Ron from SSW, Anne Webb from Mencap and Mark from the Raj set about detailing the basis for the gourmet night. It was agreed the restaurant would supply all food and staff services free of charge. With a price of £10.00 per head for each meal we were set to raise, with a raffle, £750 for Mencap. Not only did this happen but with donations, raffle prizes, and free menu printing, a grand total of £765 was raised.

It took mere micro seconds to sell all the tickets for the evening (by now the meal included entertainment from a Magician and Indian Dance Troup).

The night itself consisted of a gourmet meal followed by a well known international Magician (whose name I forget), the Dance Troup and a raffle.

The magician held the attention of all the audience, who being very close to him were eager to spot the mistakes (none were spotted, though his "pigeons" were nearly barbecued by the chef). Once the well known Magician had finished, the Dance Troup proceeded to deafen everyone in the audience with two traditional dances (accompanied by a man bashing a dust bin with a stag antler, another man playing a flat accordin with a cat inside and a stone deaf yodeller from Handsworth). I jest everyone, they were very good — honestly.

Whilst the audience downed a few "amber nectares" and swilled the "Ruby Murry" down with some Chateau Neu de Bilston, Messr's Morrall and Runham attempted to part everyone from their money for the raffle.

The evening culminated with the Mayor of Walsall (and his good lady, the Mayoress) thanking everyone for their efforts in raising such a fantastic amount of money. Indeed, such was the Mayor's admiration that he invited the organisers and the Mencap Committee members to his Chambers at the Town Hall, where he presented the cheque from the Raj Restaurant.

A much deserved thank you to everyone at the Raj for arranging this magnificent gesture and for donating so much money to Mencap.

P.S. If anyone wishes to try Indian food at its best just go to the Raj Mahal in Bradford Street, and mention my name or that you are from South Staffs. I guarantee you will be made most welcome — no I am not on commission.

*John Morrall*



*es, Debbie Kinsey, Arthur Wortbington (Social Club ttee), with Kath and Jim Carter (Managing Director), meet La Rue at the Walsall Mencap Decade Celebrations.*

*Mark (manager), Bob (Decor Profiles) and John (Mad Curry Eater).*



THE **RAJ**  
**MAHAL**  
RESTAURANT

## MENU

### ASSORTMENT OF EXOTIC ROASTED NUTS

A favourite beginnings of the Moghul Emperors

### MASSALLA PAPADS

with accompaniments

### PRAWN BUTTERFLY

Prawns delicately fried with onion, tomatoes and coriander, served on a traditional shallow fried bread

### MUGLAI KEBAB

delicately spiced spring chicken cooked on the skewer in a traditional Tandoor clay oven and served with salad

### LAMB KOHINOOR

The Chef's pride and joy!  
Tender lamb cooked in cream, Moghlai style, served on a bed of saffron pillau rice

### MUGGHE PAKEEZA

Tender spring chicken simmered in selected garam massalla and herb juice and cooked with tomatoes in butter, served with Raj Nan

### FRESH FRUIT COCKTAIL

### COFFEE WITH PETITE DE FOURS

## TIDY OFFICE COMPETITION



The first successful group to be judged and who set the standard was David Coldicott's Electrical Mechanical Section.

The second judgement produced two joint winners, the Consumer Response Centre and the Typing Pool.

## SAFETY COMPETITION GANG OF THE MONTH . . .



From left to right Wilf Scouler, Bill Greenwell, Gerald Cresswell, Jim Winnell, Basil Plant, John Taylor (Trade Union Judge), Barry Hopkins (Management Judge).

This is aimed to ensure that roadside maintenance work is carried out by our men with safety to themselves and the public as a prime factor.

The men will receive a cash award of £15 each and the men who receive the highest aggregate mark over a three month period will each receive £30 and the best area will be awarded a safety trophy.

The panel of judges will be the Area Manager, a Union Representative and Ron Perks, the Company's Safety Officer.

Site conditions, protective clothing, access, condition of equipment and cleanliness of vehicles will be part of the judgement.

Ron Perks says this will not only improve the safety of our men but it will ensure we maintain a high level of safety for the public.

Mr. Gordon Chapman of the Royal Society of the Prevention of Accidents applauded the initiative shown by the Company.

The winners to date are the groups shown above, also one who is missing, A. Wilson.



David Coldicott and his merry men enjoy the spoils of victory, a meal with wine in the Company's restaurant.

# GARDEN OUTINGS

The 1985 Garden Trips saw another 'end of an era' with the retirement of Betty Greenhall in May.

Betty, long time co-organiser of the trips, first with Harold Hatfield and then yours truly, assisted in the selection of the 1985 venues, but unfortunately due to work commitments was unable to attend any of the Saturday outings. I would like to thank Betty for her hard work and the invaluable contributions she made towards the success of these well supported trips. Our schedule for last year saw a revisit to an old favourite and two new 'scalps' to add to the long list of previous ventures.

## STOURHEAD

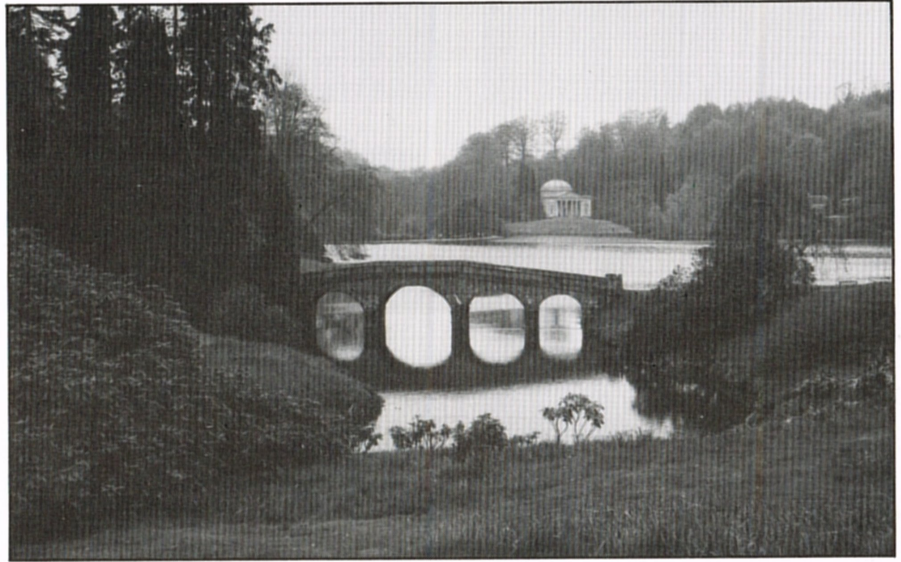
The old favourite, Stourhead, was the first trip of the year. For those who haven't had the pleasure of visiting Stourhead, it is far beyond my literary capabilities to describe the beautiful setting.

The coach arrived at Stourhead in time for everyone to enjoy either a picnic lunch or a restaurant meal. The weather, though not inclement, proved a little dull (which for the 'happy snappers' was disappointing). Even with dull weather, Stourhead had sufficient grandeur to hold all visitors spellbound. The scale of the landscaping is enormous, with temples, a grotto, cottages, statues, a lake, summerhouse and picturesque village.

The garden is like a huge amphitheatre with wooded walks leading down to the lakeside and up to the house (which by comparison to the garden is a miserable specimen!).

After several hours of wandering and wonderment it was time to depart for tea in the Pump Rooms, Bath. The rooms were much larger than the tea, which after a long daytime jaunt was hardly sufficient to stave off Diane Paddock's hunger.

The return from Bath via the M5 saw all the trippers safely back by 8.30 p.m.



## HAMPTON COURT

The second trip of the year to Hampton Court, was perhaps one of the most well supported trips since the first, way back in 1975. Hampton Court must have conjured up thoughts of Henry VIII, Cardinal Woolsley and Merry England, as the coach was quickly filled and a waiting list started.

The trip included three rather bewildered Malawians who, having been to Windsor on the annual outing not two weeks before, found themselves back there for lunch on the way to Hampton Court!! (An added bonus for all those attending was the sight of Mr. Gome, the head Malawian, suitably dressed in a plastic policeman's helmet stamped with Windsor Constabulary, how patriotic!).

The coach arrived at the Palace about 2.30 p.m., along with 6 million American and Japanese tourists. The organiser (that's me again) did his impersonation of Steve Cram and ran the 400 yards or so to the entrance and purchased 52 'all inclusive' tickets. Completely shattered, he (that is to say, me)

arrived back to the party in time to issue the said tickets for entrance to the Palace, grounds and gardens.

Hampton Court is a magnificent Tudor building comprising of 1,000 rooms and what seems like 1,000 miles of corridor. Yet none of the rooms sported any furniture to speak of, perhaps it's all stashed away in Buckingham Palace for a rainy day, or maybe the Tudors stood up a lot?

Anyway, the Palace with its maze, grand canal, real tennis court, flower gardens, Yew trees, etc., etc., etc., made the ideal setting for a much rewarding trip. All who attended were taken aback by the sheer scale of things, with the three hour stay hardly giving time to see all (especially as the heavens opened up for the last 45 minutes) and many people had to shelter to avoid a soaking. (All except Peter Robson who seemed to enjoy running around in the rain).

The journey back entailed a pre-arranged tea stop at a hotel just off the M1. This time a wonderous nosh was had by all. The return time was again about 8.30 p.m.



## SUDLEY CASTLE

The final trip of the year was to yet another Tudor venue, that of Sudley Castle. The weather this time was in our favour, in fact I think, that Saturday was the 1985 summer.

The Castle (it's not really a castle now, though the old perimeter walls are still visible in places) is compact and well maintained.

The garden boasts a true Elizabethan knot garden, a chapel where one of Henry's wives is buried (choose any one from six as I can't

remember her name) and a canal full of swans and ducks. The grounds contained a venture playground for mom and dad (or was it the kids?) Inside the Castle is a wealth of history and heritage in the form of furniture, paintings and a magnificent collection of old toys.

Tea this time was arranged at the Castle and proved to be very substantial.

My thanks to all attending the trips last year and a few words to anyone who hasn't

been on one of our outings — you don't have to be a gardener, historian or royalty to enjoy these trips! They are a good day out for all and give you the opportunity to relax in some of England's most pleasant and spectacular settings — so why not try one (or more) in 1986.

Venues to include Hever Castle, Stoke National Garden Exhibition and others yet to be decided. Actual dates will be issued in due course.

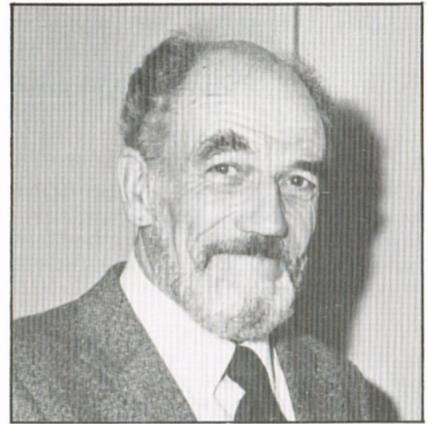
John Morrall



TED GADSBY



DON ROUND



TED ROSE



LES BRYAN

# 200 YEARS SERVICE



ERNIE SMITH



JOHN BRYAN

On Monday, 23rd September, 1985, eight employees received their 25 years service watch which was presented on behalf of the Company by Mr. E. J. Thompson, Chairman of the Board.



JACK SWANWICK



Mr. E. J. Thompson synchronises watches with, from left to right, Les Bryan, Ernie Smith, John Bryan, Ted Gadsby, Alf Phipps, Don Round, Ted Rose and Jack Swanwick.



# SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

## Central Office Club Our Children's Party



Once again a good time was had by all, of course we had a few hiccups, the jellies didn't set, the D.J. arrived late and for the first time ever we lost Father Christmas for at least 15 minutes.

However all were easily overcome, we substituted jelly with ice cream, re-scheduled the DISCO and good old John Bryan sang his little head off whilst the remainder of us set out on a search (How on earth does he remember the words to ALL the christmas songs after all these years?).

Entertaining 100 children between the ages of 3 and 14 years is a little difficult to say the least but with the help of Magician Tony Shelly, his white rabbit and his assistant for the afternoon, Louise Billingham (age 10) we had peace and quiet for almost an hour. A few tears were shed by only one three year old who missed her mum but even that turned out to be nothing a christmas cracker and a chocolate cake couldn't put right.

When we did find him, Father Christmas (alias Len Jackson) was most certainly the most popular man of the afternoon, not just a present but a friendly chat to every child. I would like to thank Len for his annual performance and for creating a little magic for at least the younger children, though obviously without the children somehow the magic would seem less real.

*Debbie Kinsey*



*Santa and Louise Billingham*

### 1986 CALENDAR

21st February

BAVARIAN NIGHT

27th February

A.G.M. & QUIZ NIGHT

14th March

WREXHAM

11th April

BARN DANCE

9th May

WEEKEND GARDEN TRIP TO

CORNWALL

10th May

REG KEARLE SHOW

4th July

INDEPENDENCE DAY AMERICAN

THEME DISCO/B.B.Q

14th November

TOMMY MUNDON SHOW

### TREASURE HUNT

A small band of explorers met on an afternoon at Prestwood Pumping Station to pit their wits against the combined skills of the joint organisers, Andrew Willmott and Brian Greenwood.

With a set of instructions, some information sheets and a map, we studied clues to find where we should go.

Twelve cars with able crews combined efforts to plot the course. My crew demonstrated their skills by taking a left instead of right turn out of the gates, however we soon corrected that minor error and quickly settled down to the job in hand.

The route took us through what seemed to be enchanted countryside, ending up on the banks of the River Severn at Hampton Loade for a picnic and a well earned rest.

Then with new instructions we set out again making the correct exit this time.

Recognising other competitors cars passing and going in different directions was very perturbing and obviously mistakes were being made in interpreting the instructions and the map.

All too soon it was over and it ended at a pub in the heart of Kinver.

Our thanks go to the organisers and helpers for such a well organised event and although not all made it to the pub, I believe all eventually managed to get home.

Oh, by the way, Alan Lander took first prize yet again, closely followed by Janet Wilkes and your's trully John Bryan third.

Sandra Adams collected a prize for trying but not the most points.

*John Bryan*



## BURTON SOCIAL CLUB

Burton Social Club held its Christmas Dinner and Disco Dance once again at the Stanhope Arms Hotel on Friday, 20th December.

The proceedings commenced with a complimentary glass of wine followed by the christmas fare which was as always, of a high standard.

After the meal, music was provided by the 'Local Disco' and the evening was enjoyed by all.

### Future Events . . .

Visit to R.A.F. Cottesmore

Stoke Flower Show

Bavarian Evening



# mainly people

**MARRIAGES**



**28th SEPTEMBER 1985**

*Helen Bunn (Central Office Typist) to Ian Savigar at St. Michael & All Angels Church, Pelsball at 2.00 p.m.*



**9th NOVEMBER 1985**

*John Morrall (Central Office Payroll) to Liane Rogers at the Walsall Registry Office at 11.00 a.m.*



**28th SEPTEMBER 1985**

*Tracey Walle to Peter Jackson at St. Margaret's Church, Great Barr at 3.00 p.m.*



**1st MAY 1985**

*Stephen Perks (Walsall Depot) to Michele Strange at All Saints Church, Streetly.*

CENTRAL OFFICE Dining and Bar facilities is available for HIRE outside working hours for recreational, social, weddings and other uses to employees who are full members of the Social Club.

## TOP COLLEGE BECKONS PUPIL

An Oxford place awaits a High School Sixth Former after her success in the entrance examination.

Denise Brown, daughter of Mick Brown (pool driver based at Burton Depot), has won a place at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford University. Denise hopes to follow her Science 'A' Levels with a degree in Natural Sciences. Denise, an Upper Sixth Former at the Horninglow School, Burton has 9 'O' Levels, 7 of which were 'A' and she is sitting 5 'A' Levels this year.



# mainly people

## Bamboozled Bob's Birthday



Bob's wife Doris whose birthday was also celebrated.

On January 11th 1986 at 8.30p.m. Bob Wright's grape vine was chopped down.

He and his wife Doris walked into the restaurant at Green Lane thinking they were going to my surprise birthday party but, surprise, surprise, for once Bob had been well and truly conned by the combined efforts of his daughter Viv and son Adam and many of Operations staff.

The idea of a surprise party had been planned since October for Bob and Doris to celebrate their 60th birthdays, which fell within weeks of each other, Bob on 17th December and Doris on 8th January.

The decision was complete when a bogus invitation designed by Angi Robson was sent to Bob and Doris, inviting them to Green Lane to my surprise birthday party — Bob even asked members of his own section in a whisper if they had been invited to Ron Perks' party — not knowing who had been invited.

Many old workmates from Bob's "past" came. To mention but a few: Alf Riley, Jim Bridgwood, Fred Langstone, Tony Leach, Harold Hatfield, Peter Dodds and Paul Symons, all of whom were accompanied by their wives.

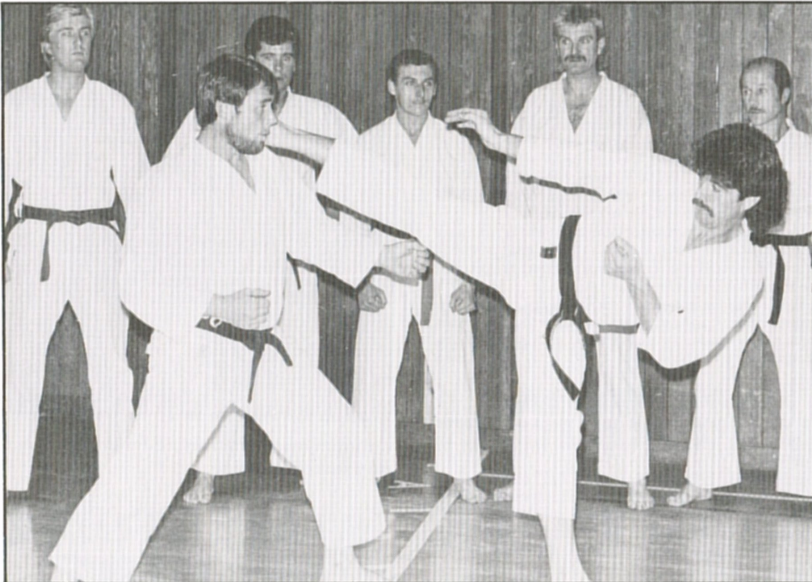
The families of Bob and Doris, together with friends from Streetly, commonly known as the Streetly Mafia, past and present workmates filled the restaurant, all of whom had been instructed to be there before 8.15p.m. Adam had been instructed to delay (them) and to not get them to Green Lane before 8.30p.m.

When they arrived, with Bob cursing Adam for being late, the curtains to the games room were pulled back and everyone began singing happy birthday — Bob stepped aside and looked back, saying "it's not me, but Perky" — then he saw me standing in front of him and in this family magazine I can't state what he said, but it's suffice to say that he intimated that I was born the other side of the blanket.

The party really got going with an excellent disco and buffet and a speech from Bob's brother to toast Bob and Doris. A collection among Bob's workmates and ex-workmates who attended the party raised enough money to enable Doris to be presented with a bouquet of flowers and Bob with a Stuart crystal decanter and bottle of scotch.

The bemused look on Bob's face was well worth all the efforts put in by his family and friends to keep this party a secret. You can tell how he was deceived, he even brought me a birthday present of two theatre tickets, after all it was my birthday, honest.

Thanks Bob, I will enjoy them. *Ron Perks*



Karate instructor Paul Barret (left) receives a kick from Pete Simnett in a demonstration of his Martial Art at the Asbi Club. (Photograph from Burton Mail, Saturday, October 12th, 1985).

### PETE'S PATIENT PRACTICE PROVIDES A PRIZE

Peter Simnett is a water service operator based in the Burton Area of the South Staffs. Pete, a Karate expert has won one of the sport's most coveted prizes — a second dan black belt rating. Pete is a member of the Burton Kuroi Ashi Club and has waited two years to make the grade, such is the discipline of martial art.

The prize was bestowed on Pete, at a special week's course held in The Crystal Palace, by leading Japanese Karate exponent Master Keinosuke Enoda an eighth dan.

Karate is more of a discipline than a sport and takes a great deal of hard work and it will be another three years before Pete can take his next dan.

A second dan will be a rare achievement and the fact that Pete has been practising Karate for some 11 years shows the dedication needed to participate successfully in this sport.

The Club he attends belongs to the Karate Union of Great Britain and has been established for 15 years and several of its instructors have successfully competed in top competitions throughout the Country. Pete has won several competitions in Kata, a form of fighting against an imaginary opponent and some club members have just started to team up to compete in fighting events nationally.

I read in the D.W.R., the Welsh Water's employees newspaper that one of their waste supervisors Ted Woolley is now a Karate Black Belt. He also achieved this at the course in Crystal Palace. He studies at the Abergavenry Karate Club.

Perhaps when we have our sport challenges with other Water Industries we may find we have other Karate enthusiasts and we could have a new sport to add to our challenges.

*C. Turner*



Bob for once perhaps, lost for words.

Dear Ed,

My sixtieth birthday has now passed and my family marked the occasion by renting for me, a grape vine which will be used to replace the one which has withered following last Saturday's surprise party. Doris and I wish to express our sincere thanks to all our family and friends for their gifts and a wonderful evening which proved the old adage that you can always "con a conner"

*Bob Wright*



# mainly people

## CECIL CARPENTER

*Electrical Superintendent -  
Central Workshops*

At the end of last October, Cecil joined the ranks of the young retired league of the company. After 17 years service he had decided to call it a day and leave the Company under the voluntary severance scheme.



Having spent most of the 17 years dealing with electrical installation and maintenance at all times of the Company's works and offices, Cecil was well known by many employees. This was reflected by the large gathering of his fellow workers at Central Office on the afternoon of his departure. We were very pleased to see so many people, including retired colleagues who continue to show us the healthy benefits of retirement. There were plenty of refreshments under the management of the Workshops electricians scheme, and, judging from the quantities consumed to toast Cecil's health, he is going to have a healthy retirement - well into the next century.

Cecil and his wife Nell were guests of honour at an evening dinner party organised by his friends in the Central Workshops. This proved to be a very enjoyable way of thanking Cecil for his friendship and help over the many years.

*D.M. Coldicott*

### Deaths in Retirement

Our sincere sympathy goes to all the families of our ex-employees in their grief. We endeavour to publish all known bereavements and regret any notification that has been or will be omitted owing to ignorance.

|                     | <i>Died<br/>1985</i> |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| A. M. Stevens       |                      |
| Bourn Vale          | 4th July             |
| J. W. Tilley        |                      |
| Tipton              | 14th July            |
| W. Walker           |                      |
| Woodgreen           | 28th Sept.           |
| C. G. Evans         |                      |
| Tipton              | 6th Oct.             |
| S. G. Davies        |                      |
| Fradley             | 8th Oct.             |
|                     | <i>1986</i>          |
| G. Dee              |                      |
| Shenstone           | 2nd Jan.             |
| W. O. Freeman       |                      |
| Cannock             | 12th Jan.            |
| N. S. Bannister     |                      |
| Burton              | 13th Jan.            |
| Mrs. O. H. Jennings | 16th Jan.            |
| W. Stanford         |                      |
| Tipton              | 21st Jan.            |

## LEN DEVALL

*Waterman — Northern Area  
Office*

Len Devall, one of the "Characters," of the Company, left on 31st October, 1985, having accepted early retirement.

"The Devil" as he was known, enjoyed a personality which enabled him to speak his mind if he felt necessary, and was never afraid to tell the "Gaffer" what to do if he disagreed with him, indeed after 35 years service, the "Gaffer" would often revise his views to comply with Len's.

Having been asked to contribute in this issue, a brief resume on Len, and giving it much thought, I realise that I could fill many issues with anecdotes on Len's experiences, and so will just mention a couple, I am sure everyone who knows Len has their own stories, equally as enjoyable.

As I said, Len was with the Company 35 years, the last 20 years as Waterman for the Hedgesford Area, and after much lobbying of anyone who might listen, he was offered early retirement under the V.S. Scheme.

Len has always gone out of his way to help anyone at anytime indeed, since his retirement he is still available to advise anyone with a problem, and his knowledge is still being made use of now.

One of my own memories of Len, is the time when he, myself and our wives were out for a drink, and during the evening we had been watched and listened to by a chap at the next table, later, whilst I answered a call of nature, Len told him to be very careful, as I was a convicted murderer, out for the day in his care. It was only later when I learned this, that I realised why the bar emptied so fast!

But the laughs also continued during working hours, as Ron Lawrence found, when, after a disagreement over a phone bill Len made him a present of his home telephone! Cut off and delivered personally!

As I said, there are many, many stories of Len, but for all his humour, he was a loyal employee to the Company and his like is a fast vanishing breed. Have a long and happy retirement Len, you earned it.

*G. Clarke*

## HAROLD COOPER

Harold Cooper retired from the Company on 30th November 1985 after 34 years continuous service at Cannock Depot.

Harold left the Forces in December 1947 after serving his country through the war years. After a short spell away from the Company, he rejoined the South Staffs in June 1950 and soon established himself as a proficient Mains Joiner and of course then lead joints were the order of the day.

In May 1976 Harold left the gangs to join the Waste Department, where he remained until his retirement.

Our best wishes go to Harold and his wife with the hope that his poor health will improve to allow many happy years of retirement.

*John Bryan*

## ERIC BAILEY

Eric Bailey spent the whole of his working life with the Company. He commenced his employment at Cannock Office as a Junior Clerk at an Annual Salary of £47.50 and his only break of service being when he undertook National Service in the Royal Navy as an Engine Room Mechanic.

During the 1950's in order to improve his knowledge of Engineering matters he undertook further education for three nights a week, and as a result was appointed Assistant Superintendent (1959) and Deputy Superintendent (1965) at the Cannock Area Office.

In recent years he has not enjoyed good health and has had major operations on both his hips and unfortunately his illness was prolonged by an infection but he is happily now in much better health.

He is married with two daughters and one granddaughter and he hopes now to have more time to spend on DIY projects and gardening, and obviously will not be idle as humour has it his wife has drawn up a five year plan of jobs to be done.

*Cliff Bateman*



*Eric receiving a certificate for 40 years service from the Chairman of the Board.*

**TO ALL OTHERS  
WHO HAVE  
RETIRED  
Best Wishes**

## PERSONNEL WHO HAVE LEFT THE COMPANY

| <i>NAME</i>       | <i>WORK PLACE</i> | <i>STARTED WITH<br/>COMPANY</i> | <i>LEFT</i> |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| MR. G. T. FOREMAN | Tipton            | 1961-77—1978                    | 31.10.85    |
| MR. A. DEVALL     | Northern          | 18.9.50                         | 31.10.85    |
| MR. A. HOWES      | Walsall           | 16.9.53                         | 31.10.85    |
| MR. C. CARPENTER  | Central Office    | 18.3.68                         | 31.10.85    |
| MR. H. COOPER     | Northern          | 17.6.50                         | 30.11.85    |
| MR. S. DOWEN      | Walsall           | 10.10.77                        | 30.11.85    |
| MR. S. POWELL     | Central Office    | 10.3.69                         | 30.11.85    |
| MRS. P. TAYLOR    | Walsall           | 20.3.78                         | 30.11.85    |
| MR. D. DANN       | Tipton            | 10.12.79                        | 19.12.85    |
| MR. A. ASTBURY    | Tipton            | 3.2.69                          | 31.12.85    |
| MR. E. BAILEY     | Northern          | 19.3.45                         | 31.12.85    |
| MR. E. J. ESCOMBE | Transport         | 1974                            | 31.1.86     |
| MRS. ANNE FORD    | Tipton            | 28.8.61                         | 31.1.86     |

# Widower's Lament

## and Women's Wrath



### NALGO — SEX DISCRIMINATION IN PENSION SCHEME

Some months ago NALGO circulated a form to enable their members to sign a petition in support of NALGO's efforts to bring sexual equality into the Pension Schemes.

Sadly I would be surprised if they received support from all our female employees and even less from their male counterparts even though this issue affects each sex almost equally in its discrimination.

Matters relating to death and retirement — that is, pensions, life insurance and annuities — were specifically excluded from the anti-discrimination legislation.

But according to the Equal Opportunities Commission a woman taking the same sum out of an occupational scheme as a man of the same age faces the choice of settling for a pension a third of the size of the man's or doubling her contribution to get an equal pension.

The 1983 survey of members of the National Association of Pension Funds showed that 93 per cent of schemes paid a widow's pension on death-in-service and 97 per cent on death in retirement. But only 33 per cent paid an automatic widower's pension on death-in-service or death in retirement, while 55 per cent did so only if the widower was dependent on his wife.

It has been argued that denying widower's a pension compensates for allowing women to retire earlier.

As men have a lower life expectancy than women, providing for widower's benefits would not be as costly as providing for widows.

### Can a woman make provision for her children in the event of her death?

There are differences in the pension schemes in the different Utilities and Government Offices for example:-

- **Local government:** Married women are unable to make any provision for their children unless they can make a successful nomination in respect of a husband who is permanently incapacitated. Women who are single parents are treated in the same way as married men.
- **Health:** There is no sex discrimination in this aspect of the health service scheme, so women can provide for children.
- **Water:** Normally as for local government.
- **Electricity:** Both married women and single parents can provide for their dependent children.
- **Gas:** Married women and single parents can provide for their children, but only at the discretion of the trustees of the scheme.
- **Most universities:** As for local government.

### Does the scheme provide for a woman to leave her husband a widower's pension if she dies?

- **Local Government:** Only if her husband is dependant because he is permanently incapacitated by reason of ill-health or infirmity of mind or body.
- **Gas:** Yes, the gas scheme has adopted the principle of spouse's pension (available alike to widows and widowers and not removed on subsequent remarriage or cohabitation).
- **Most universities:** As for local government.
- **Electricity:** Yes, as in the gas scheme, there is a spouse's pension which is available to widows and widowers and is not removed if he/she subsequently remarries or cohabits.
- **Health:** As for local government.
- **British Transport Docks Board:** No.
- **Water:** Normally as for local government.
- **Bus Employees Superannuation Trust:** No.
- **National Bus Staff:** No.
- **Port of London Authority:** Yes.

It is about time that it was realised that the majority of working wives and women are working out of necessity and not for 'pin money' and that the loss of the wife's earnings by death or other means puts a tremendous financial strain on the family. The widower, left with young children faces an even more difficult situation than a widow. He must work to maintain finance but may have to employ childminders and perhaps Home helps.

However, regardless of this point I feel strongly that being now classed as a single woman with married daughters I can only rely on a committee decision as to whether they benefit or not from my death. I feel if I pay the same into a scheme as a man I should be able to provide for those I love in equally the same way.

I have heard all the arguments that women live longer than men and therefore are expected to receive more overall but I am not talking about women living I am questioning the right's of women dying.

Cecilia Turner

## THE MERGER OF PENSIONS SCHEMES

### South Staffs Pension with Water Companies

This merger is inevitable even though when the Company scheme was closed in 1974, members were given guarantees of its continued viability.

However subsequent legislation in 1978 requiring that at anytime there should be sufficient funds in to meet liabilities, proved that because of its closed nature this requirement could not be met unless the Company was prepared to inject into the scheme a capital sum of approximately five million pounds.

As representatives of the members Cliff Bateman, Alan Lander and Dave Winders discussed all aspects of the merger in detail to ensure the best deal for their members and a meeting to explain and discuss any questions was arranged, but it was stressed that no matter what the outcome of the meeting it would be the Trustees of the Company's Fund who would make the final decision.

The basic form of transfer that our representatives have insisted be included are, that contributions will remain the same, that any benefit betterments would apply to the Company members that transferred and finally that the full pensionable value in our fund would be accepted by the Water Companies.

# ANNOUNCING . . . PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

## **TITLE: YOUR COMPANY IN WINTER**



Name and Department on each entry. Colour or Black and White prints only. Judges decision is final.

*All entries addressed*

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*Mr. J. Carter,  
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Central Office*

*No later than  
31st March, '86*

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3rd - £10

Note: Copyright of the entries shall remain with the entrants but South Staffs Water Co. reserve the right to reproduce all entries.

## **FLUORIDATION FINALLY**

With the introduction of the Water Fluoridation Act, South Staffs started to prepare for the infiltration of fluoride into the water. Funded by grants from the DHSS, the work necessary to build and operate some twenty five plants was set in motion and there will be a gradual process of plant installation over the next two years.

Although the introduction of fluoride into the system means a mere one milligram per litre increase on the natural level of fluoridation, there is still great apprehension by some members of the general public as to the long term effects.

There will be many complaints and arguments against and for this enforced legislation into such an essential service and I am sure many future physical ailments may be attributed, by those that are totally opposed to this step, to fluoridation.

However the scientists, who have already completed stringent tests and have now certified the fluoride in such a small dosage totally safe to the individual, will not rest on their laurels and will continue on-going tests to keep strict observations on all water supplies for they as well as the rest of the population are dependent on water, in no matter what form it comes to us, to survive.

*Cecilia Turner*

THE SUNDAY TIMES, MARCH 17, 1977

## **COULD THIS PRODUCT KILL MILLIONS?**

Is every industrial product a danger to life and limb? Should every new development be fought against tooth and nail? One industrialist is fed up with being always on the receiving end of outcries and shocking allegations. Last week Norman Mischler, chairman of the British end of the German chemical giant Hoechst hit back with this horrifying account of the sinister goings-on in his rival ICI:

'ICI has announced the discovery of a new fire-fighting agent to add to their existing range. Known as WATER (Wonderful And Total Extinguishing Resource), it augments, rather than replaces, existing agents such as dry powder and BCF (bromine-chlorine-fluorine) which have been in use from time immemorial. It is particularly suitable for dealing with fires in buildings, timber yards and warehouses. Though required in large quantities, it is fairly cheap to produce and it is intended that quantities of about a million gallons should be stored in urban areas and near other installations of high risk ready for immediate use. BCF and dry powder are usually stored under pressure, but WATER will be stored in open ponds or reservoirs and conveyed to the scene of the fire by hoses and portable pumps.

ICI's new proposals are already encountering strong opposition from safety and environmental groups. Professor Connie Barrinner has pointed out that, if anyone immersed their head in a bucket of WATER, it would prove fatal in as little as three minutes. Each of ICI's proposed reservoirs will contain enough WATER to fill 500,000 two-gallon buckets. Each bucket-full could be used 100 times so there is enough WATER in one reservoir to kill the entire population of the UK. Risks of this size, said Professor Barrinner, should not be allowed, whatever the gain. If the WATER were to get out of control, the results of Flixborough or Seveco would pale into insignificance by comparison. What use was a fire-fighting agent that could kill men as well as fire?

A local authority spokesman said that he would strongly oppose planning permission for construction of a WATER reservoir in this area unless the most stringent precautions were followed. Open ponds were certainly not acceptable. What would prevent people falling in them? What would prevent the contents from leaking out? At the very least the WATER would need to be contained in a steel pressure vessel surrounded by a leak-proof concrete wall.

A spokesman from the fire brigades said he did not see the need for the new agent. Dry powder and BCF could cope with most fires. The new agent would bring with it risks, particularly to firemen, greater than any possible gain. Did we know what would happen to this new medium when it was exposed to intense heat? It had been reported that WATER was a constituent of beer. Did this mean that firemen would be intoxicated by the fumes?

The Friends of the World said that they had obtained a sample of WATER and found it caused clothes to shrink. If it did this to cotton, what would it do to men?

In the House of Commons yesterday, the Home Secretary was asked if he would prohibit the manufacture and storage of this lethal new material? The Home Secretary replied that, as it was clearly a major hazard, local authorities would have to take advice from the Health and Safety Executive before giving planning permission. A full investigation was needed and the Major Hazards Group would be asked to report.

## **A SPRINKLING OF SPARE CASH**

The Anglian Water Authority spent £170,000 last year warning its one million customers against illegal sprinklers. Some 28,000 householders forked out £18 each for sprinkler permits giving an income of £334,000.

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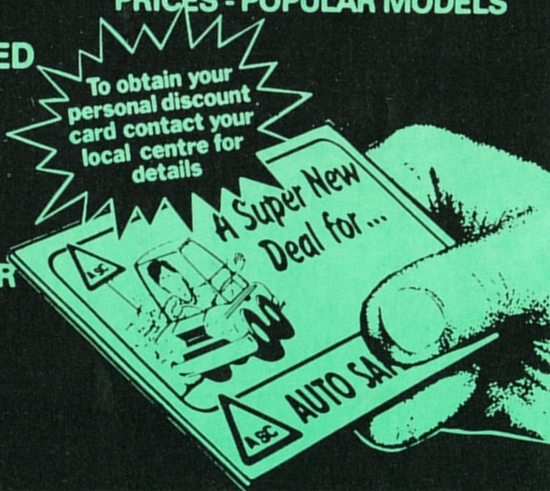


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