

WaterWhat?



South Staffordshire Water PLC

Issue No. 5

Winter 1995



Blithfield Reservoir at 40% Full in August this year . . . Full Story pages Ten & Eleven



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WATERWHAT COMMENT

"Nothing's perfect is it my Poppet?" said Pa to Ma Larkin.

That's just about how I feel about this latest edition of WaterWhat! It also makes me realise how quickly time passes. It really doesn't seem 12 months since I was in this panicky situation. Will I make enough copy - why didn't I take that photograph at the time?

My requests for information, useful fillers, little anecdotes, in the main failed miserably. So I

have had to scavenge around, threaten and cajole. The suggestion of an empty page with just a name at the bottom really did the trick. Thank you everyone for your contributions - honest!

Kicking The Habit

I know I wasn't what you would call a hardened smoker and I still haven't really given up! But I have managed to not smoke a cigarette at all at work and sometimes I don't

smoke when I am out of the Office environment. I forget - until I smell it!!!. I understand now what folk mean when they talk about smelling like an ashtray - it really does. And do you know even though I have the odd one or two in the evening, I really do feel better - why don't you try it sometime?

Angi Robson
Editor

DRIVING DOWN THE COSTS

South Staffs Water is able to increase efficiency and reduce maintenance costs after replacing an obsolescent borehole pump and motor drive at Somerford pumping station.

The water which is chlorinated and fluoridated as it is pumped, is ultimately destined for the new Hendesford Hills reservoir eight miles away which supplies water for mainly domestic use.

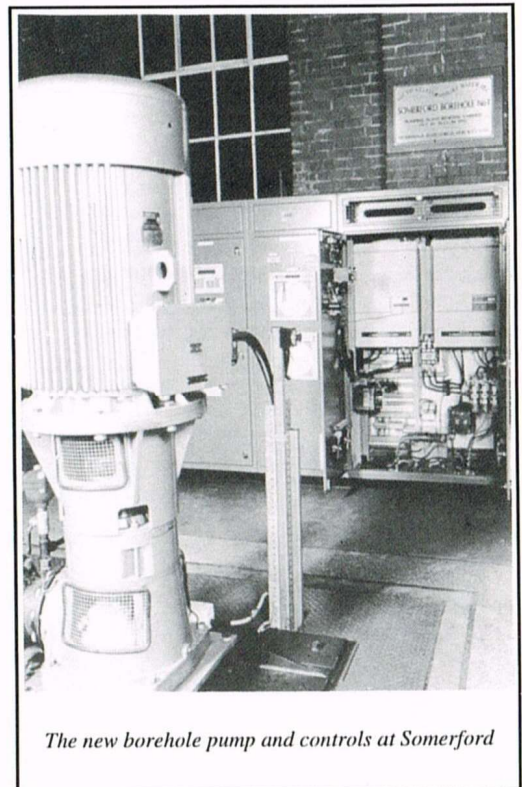
The new pump lifts water from the borehole at a rate of 35 litres per second and delivers it into the distribution system at a head of 100m above the floor level of the Pumping Station's engine house.

Project Engineer, Matthew Bates, said: "One of the justifications for doing refurbishment work on the Somerford borehole was to save money as the old pump was heavily throttled. The new equipment is definitely far cheaper to run.

We are also able to monitor and control the refurbished plant far better than before."

As demand changes, a programmable logic controller adjusts the pump speed accordingly.

The success of Somerford Pump House refurbishment has prompted consideration for a similar approach at some of the Company's other Pumping Stations.



The new borehole pump and controls at Somerford

THEFT OF EQUIPMENT

Southern and Northern Area Offices have been plagued by several break-ins over the last few months - resulting in the loss of some expensive items of plant and equipment. These have varied from saws, to compressors and on one occasion the thieves stole a pick-up truck to transport their loot!

The thefts have taken up a great deal of Police time and we are happy to report that they are having a degree of success in recovering some of our equipment. However, we would ask that anyone in the

vicinity of either Office, or anywhere in the locality for that matter, to keep their eyes open and report any dubious activity. No matter how foolish you think it may be - do report it. This action may save us time, money and substantial inconvenience.

Both Area Offices are having their security equipment substantially upgraded.

Roy Jones
Northern Area Manager

BROADWAY BURST

In the early hours of Friday 6th January 1995 the Company suffered a burst 24" diameter main at Broadway West, Walsall. The escape of many thousands of gallons of water caused substantial damage to the carriageway and flooded some 20 properties.

Quick action by the Control Assistant and both Central Office and Area Office Duty Officers enabled watermen to isolate the burst within 90 minutes of notification. Further valve operations restored all supplies within another 3 hours. Although some 20 - 30,000 people were initially affected, this prompt action kept the number of complaints down.

Customer Contact Staff, who came in early, still had to deal with some 500 calls within a short space of time.

The main itself was very quickly repaired, tested, sampled and returned to supply.

The rapid response to this emergency situation once again highlights the excellent service provided by our personnel.



The Shattered Main was quickly repaired, tested, sampled and returned to supply.

This true team effort involved the following Departments:
Supply & Energy:
Pressure monitoring and communication
Walsall Area Office:
Isolating and repairing the burst, maintaining daily duties for those involved, restoring supplies, liaison with Fire Brigade and Walsall MBC, assisting flooded householders with cleaning up operations and answering and investigating complaints

Customer Contact:
Extended telephone coverage
Central Laboratory:
Hygiene control, sampling requirements and sample processing
Water Treatment:
Chlorination of repaired main
Public Relations:
Press statements
Financial Accounts:
Insurance queries

Tony Woodward
David Coldicott

COMPANY PROGRESS FACTS

Fact No. 1:

During the 5 years since privatisation, the Company has invested over £100m in major capital works to improve water quality.

These improvements include:

- 1) Major improvements to the distribution system achieved by updating booster stations and renovating mains.
- 2) Development of further resources: Whetmore Wood, St. George's Barracks, Hulme Springs and, more recently, Hampton Loade and Nethertown.
- 3) Upgrading nitrate plants and various treatment works.

Fact No. 2:

Over the 5 year period we have progressively improved the service levels to Customers and in 1993/94 achieved the highest rating for service. The service levels used for the comparator were responses to billing enquiries and complaints, the availability of supplies and pressure of water at Customers' tap.

We have also maintained prices for 1995/96 at last year's level and continue to be the second lowest water only charge in England and Wales.

Fact No. 3:

During the hottest weather, we've had the highest ever consumption by the

Company consumers. 471 Ml/d (103.5m gallons/day) - Equivalent to 1,200 tankers. Placed end to end they would stretch 10 miles.

700 Ml/d peak (150m gallons/day).

Fact No. 4:

Financially Customers, Staff and Shareholders have benefited from the success of the Company. Shareholders have seen the price of the Company's shares rise from £4 in 1991 to over £22 at current prices. Customers over the 5 year period have had rebates totalling approximately £6m. Staff have recently received a further 22 shares and have the option to purchase more in a share save scheme.

INTERIM RESULTS

For South Staffordshire Water Holdings plc

In the six months ended 30th September 1995 the Group's profit before tax increased by 8.7% to £7.71m (1994: £7.09m) on turnover of £30.4m (1994: £30.0m). Earnings per share have increased by 10.5% to 95p (1994: 86p). Your Directors have approved an interim dividend of 23p per share net (1994: 19p).

This interim ordinary dividend of 23p will be paid on 2nd January 1996 to ordinary shareholders on the register as at 5th December 1995.

The Company is one of only two companies in the industry in 1994/95 to be awarded OFWAT's highest accolade of four

Gold Stars for service to its customers. Furthermore the Company has wherever possible reduced the number of domestic customer disconnections with 1994/95 showing a 56% decline over the previous year.

Organic growth of the non-regulated businesses has continued during the period with turnover increasing by 27% to £3m.

The Group continues to achieve satisfactory profit margins and strong operating cash flows and expects this to be maintained during the second half of the year.

John Harris - Chairman

MY FIRST EXHIBITION

That Goddam IWEX

It all started one Tuesday afternoon, after a Team brief, when I was told that the Enterprise Company was going to have a stand at the IWEX '95 Exhibition. (International Water and Effluent Treatment). The stand position had already been chosen and paid for, so all that was left to be done was the hardest part - to design the stand. Not only was it a first for the Company to have a stand at IWEX, it was also the first time that I had organised such an event.

The Company had three areas of interest which it wanted to officially launch at the Exhibition; SSW Pump Services, the new Quick Shot directional boring machine and Uni-Jet, the unique pipe clearance equipment.

SSW Pump Services is the new Company name for the workshops. After several years of operating under the Enterprise umbrella, it was decided to run it as a separate Company, thus giving a more professional image, when trying to compete for contracts from external companies. The Company now provides a range of services including maintenance, overhauls, repairs and installations for large motors, valves and pumps.

For several years the Company has been European Agents for directional drilling machinery and their associated spare parts. **The Quick Shot**, manufactured in the U.S.A. by Melfred Borzell, is a unique machine that is very powerful, yet it is small enough to fit on an average footpath. Now for those of you who are like me, not of a technical background, directional drilling can save the public utilities thousands of pounds as it removes the need to dig long trenches when laying new water mains, or cables, etc.

The Uni-Jet is a product that was developed several years ago within the Company. It is a unique tool that clears a Customers' service and improves low pressure problems without the need to evacuate the service pipe and can therefore reduce operating costs. It consists of a set of components that are connected to the branch stop tap, usually found beneath the kitchen sink. Once connected, Uni-jet directs a high pressure jet of water to clear most blockages. Uni-Jet is unique in the marketplace and exhibiting at IWEX could be an excellent way to establish the product within the Water Industry.

We had decided that the main feature, to attract attention to the stand would be a pump; one half being refurbished and the other

half left in its original condition. The pump was from Smethwick Booster Station and was installed in 1955. It was refurbished through various techniques, including shot blasting and the application of Belzonna super efficiency coating. This acted as a visible example of some of the skills SSW Pump Services possess.

Also on the stand, making a guest appearance, was an actual Quick Shot and the various reamers and drilling tools or "knobbly things" as Sarah from P.R. describes them. These are used to drill a long hole just wide enough to pull through a length of main.

Armed with these three areas of interest, I need help - **BIG HELP!** I found it in the form of the dynamic duo of Angi and Sarah in Public Relations. After several discussions with Angi, she suggested that we employ the services of Display Makers, a Company that specialises in erections! Of stands that is!

This local firm were able to advise on how to design the stand and present a complete corporate image rather than a mish-mash of ideas and a few tacky pictures.

Angi, Sarah and myself spent the run up to the Exhibition deciding on colours, what pictures and text should be used, how many pictures to display and where to put the pump and the other bits of machinery. Along with this daunting task, new brochures had to be designed and printed with letterheads and business cards for SSW Pump Services.

The results were incredible. It was a complete success!

Everyone who visited the stand was impressed with the way the Company had presented itself. A lot of these people were unaware of the products and services that we supply to the Water Industry and have shown a positive interest in these three areas.

I would like to thank everyone for their help, including workshops for refurbishing the pump and changing its colour at the last minute. Thanks too must go to Donna Morgan, Lisa Pritchard and Lisa Brentnall for their valuable contribution over the three days of the Exhibition.

And finally, my thanks to both Angi and Sarah who not only helped with the stand design and production, they also put up with my constant moaning and groaning.

Jason Vigrass



SERVICES

"LE QUICK SHOT" TRIUMPHS! IN THE END

After completing a sale in France for a Melfred Borzall Quick Shot directional drilling machine, arrangements were made to transport the package on a purpose built trailer to Chambéry in the French Alps, a distance of 650 miles from Calais.

Our party comprised Bob Frost, Ian Devine and yours truly and we had decided to share the driving.

After an uneventful trip to Dover and a ferry crossing to Calais we set out on Sunday evening bound for the Alps.

One hour later - disaster struck as the trailer slid gracefully sideways, rolling the Range Rover and writing it off! Fortunately nobody was seriously injured although Bob and I went to the local hospital where we were checked over and discharged - after being interviewed by the local "Gendarmes".

Deprived of our trusty Range Rover, the following day we arranged for the trailer and Quick Shot machine (fortunately undamaged in the accident) to be transported to Chambéry by lorry. We followed by hire car!

"All's well that ends well" they say and we are pleased to report a most successful completion (albeit a little later than planned) to our training and drilling project for the Client.

My conclusion is a cautionary one, however, and must be this:

If ever you find yourself in France in a small town on a Sunday night and hungry - take a Red Cross food parcel!

A Country renowned for its food? We couldn't even find a restaurant open! We did find a small hotel - no food of course and finished in our hotel room with the gastronomic fare of takeaway pizza and French fries washed down with a "subtle" 1995 Coca Cola.

Vive Le Takeaway!

Eh Bien! - or words to that effect!

John Walter



A rather sad looking Range Rover

HOME SERVICE SCHEME SUCCESS

Peace of Mind for 87p Per Week

Most of us have home insurance policies that, in the event of a burst pipe, cover against water damage to furnishings, fixtures and fittings, etc. But very few of these policies cover the cost of repairs to the pipes themselves which, if they are positioned your side of the external stopcock are your responsibility. In the case of a burst pipe in the garden, for example, repairs could be expensive.

Fastfix identified this deficiency in home owners' existing insurance policies and developed and launched "Home Service Scheme". Cover is provided for labour and materials costs up to £550 for underground pipe repairs (and repairing or unblocking drains and sewers) and also internal plumbing repairs up to £150. Fastfix provides a plumber day or night and the cost of the scheme works out at just 87p a week.

Home Service Scheme has proved extremely successful. From a standing start just over a year ago Home Service Scheme now has 40,000 members and new members are currently being taken on at the rate of 2,000 per week.

The scheme is now not only available to Customers of South Staffs Water but is also supported by Anglian Water, Bournemouth & West Hampshire Water, Three Valleys Water, Mid Kent Water and Folkestone & Dover Water and from January, Northumbrian Water plan to offer Home Service Scheme to their Customers.

Most encouragingly, the majority of members are renewing their policy for a second year, helped in part by the launch of a Members' Newsletter.

Home Service Scheme is marketed through direct mail, inserts in local newspapers and in water bills.

Home Service Scheme now has 7 Staff who are doing a great job taking Customer enquiries, processing application forms, banking payments and issuing policy certificates.

As for the future; we hope to be able to offer Home Service Scheme to the Customers of more and more Water Companies as well as continuing to market the scheme to our own Customers.

Richard Harpin

**THEY
THOUGHT
THEY WERE
COVERED...**



 South Staffordshire Water Services

INSTITUTION OF WATER OFFICERS

The Institution of Water Officers was formed in 1945; the purpose being to promote the advancement of knowledge in its widest terms, as it applies to the Water Industry.

To this end, Area and National Committees organise meetings, seminars, technical visits and conferences, as well as a variety of social events. Areas also run week-end schools at which relevant topics are studied in greater depth. All of these activities provide a shop window for the latest technological developments in the Industry, together with a forum for the discussion of major topics.

Why You Should Join The IWO

- » Personal development by meeting influential people from other Companies.
- » Meeting and sharing ideas with people of similar skills and experiences.
- » Opportunity to visit other Water Companies.
- » Opportunity to build new relationships from:-
Different Countries
Different Companies
Different Backgrounds
- » Opportunity to lead and organise people and events.
- » Opportunity to help charities, communities, industry and society.
- » Family awareness and involvement.

Midland Area Events

Within the Midland Area of IWO we arrange a variety of events across many spheres. Here are just a few examples of past and proposed events:-

- » JCB Tour.
- » WRC Testing Centre, South Wales and Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Ponthir Sewage Treatment Works.
- » Laporte Absorbents, Widnes.
- » Carsington Reservoir.
- » West Midlands Travel, Site Tour and Bus Driving Competition.
- » Technical Papers on sites throughout the Midlands.
- » Planned trip to Toyota in Burnaston.
- » Bass Museum, Burton.
- » Derby Pottery Factory Tour.

As you can see, we try to give our Members the opportunity to see how other Industries operate as well as concentrating on technological advancements within our own Industry. If all this appeals to you, then why not come and join us - you will be more than welcome.

COME ON IN - THE WATER'S FINE !!!

Gary Hazlehurst

DRILLING & TAPPING

Water Industry National Competition

Compared with last year's third place, this year we were brought back to earth with a vengeance!

The results were as follows:

SSW "A" Team	20th	2.55 + 1.00 Min. Penalty	= 3.55
SSW "B" Team	36th	3.56 + 2.70 Min. Penalty	= 6.26

The field was larger than ever, with fifty teams competing but all of us who were involved at South Staffs were bitterly disappointed that we didn't at least maintain last year's achievements.

I suppose looking on the bright side you could say our "A" Team minus the penalty would have finished 5th and our "B" Team would have come in the top half of the table.

Certainly last year we had longer to practise. Then, sessions began in July but due to the long hot Summer of '95 training didn't commence until the beginning of September. Some of the competing teams had practised all year.

Still, morale remains high and the view of the lads is that what we have achieved in the past we can better in the future!

And of course none of the competitive runs are without their moments of humour. One that sticks in my memory is the "A" Team's Paul Morgan scrambling desperately on the floor looking for the plug to place in the ferrule - only to be told by Pete "it's in your mouth bozo". Obviously one of our well practised routines.

The Winning Teams:	1st	Thames Water "B"	2.32
	2nd	Anglian	2.38
	3rd	Thames Water "A"	2.41

SSW Teams:	"A" Team	Pete Baggley & Paul Morgan
	"B" Team	Mick Clarke & Steve Broughton

Roy Jones

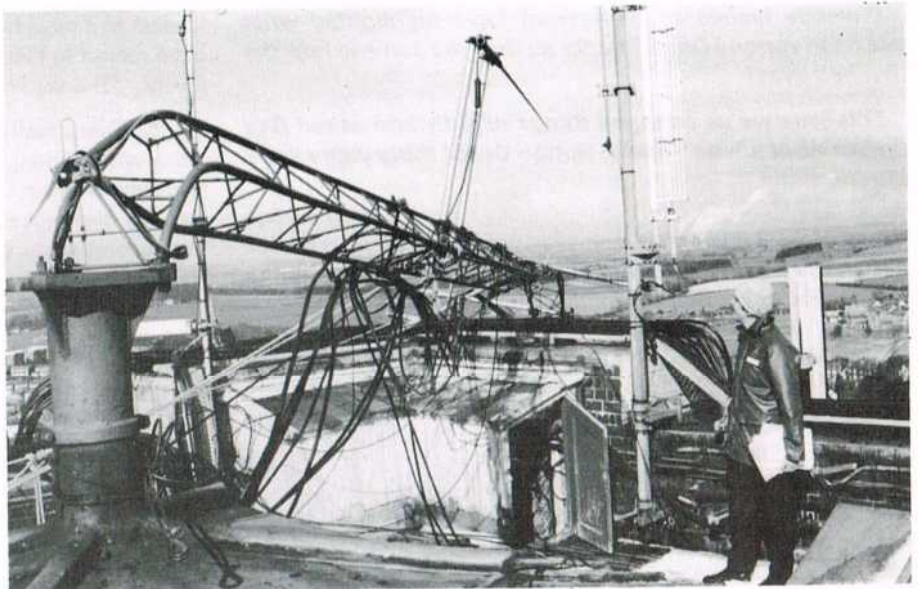
Northern Area Manager



"What a shower! Whoops - I mean better luck next year lads!"

WINDY WINSHILL CAUSES RADIO CALAMITY

The first we knew of the night's calamity was when we received a 'phone call from a local resident who told us that an aerial was hanging over the side of Winshill Tower. We thought it was just one of the many aerials that had fallen off the mast in the strong winds, but after several more 'phone calls we realised it was much more than this. Fortunately we were meeting a mast rigging team from a Company called Jaybeam at Holly Grange so we diverted them to Winshill. On arrival we found a 70ft. mass of tangled twisted ironwork hanging down the side of the tower - swinging around uncontrollably in the stormy winds. The Jaybeam team got to work lashing down the mast as best they could to ensure it did not drop some 100ft. into the Vodafone and Cellnet buildings below. Fortunately the twisted base of the mast was still connected to the tower. Without this the whole lot would have gone crashing



Nigel Lubke surveys the storm's aftermath - or should it be "aftermast"?

into the buildings below with devastating consequences. Several free standing aerials around the edge of the parapet had been damaged including one of our V.H.F. mobile radio base station antennas but fortunately none of the expensive dishes bolted to the outside of the parapet were damaged.

Even though the mast had been up for 20 years - it was found that the bolts anchoring down the guying stanchions caused the mast to fail. Unfortunately the lack of length of these bolts could not have been foreseen during the annual inspections that are carried out at all our mast sites.

Radio Customers were contacted immediately and even though most aerials were upside down, miraculously none were off the air.

From this we decided to leave the old mast hanging where it was. We then erected a new mast and decided to transfer the old antennas and feeders later which reduced the inconvenience to Customers as they would only be off the air for a short period. This was of particular importance to the police and ambulance services that use the mast.

The new mast was erected on the ground then hoisted into position with a crane. Antennas were unbolted and transferred across. The damaged antennas and feeders were then replaced to complete the exercise.

Nigel Lubke

WATER WORKS FOR WALSALL'S FIRST ACCELERATED APPRENTICE

Making a big splash in the world of water is the aim of Walsall's very first Accelerated Apprentice.

Ashley Cooper, aged 18 of Orchard Hills, is undertaking the apprenticeship at one of the Borough's biggest employers - South Staffordshire Water of Green Lane.

The Accelerated Apprenticeship is the initiative of Walsall Training and Enterprise Council and is designed to take the apprenticeship concept into the 21st century.

Accelerated Apprentices at South Staffordshire Water will be trained for 2 - 3 years in their chosen subject - Ashley will become a Mechanical Engineer - to degree level or above. Accelerated Apprenticeships at some other companies which do not lead to higher education can be completed in 18 months, with apprentices recruited upon completing their A levels.

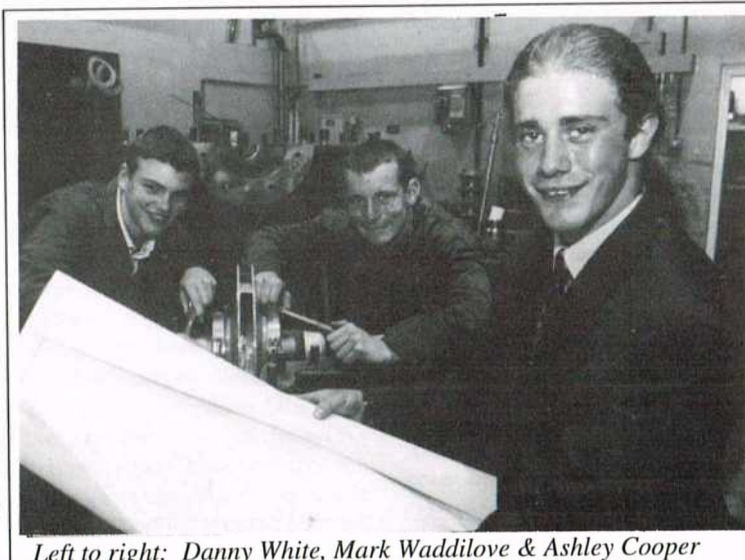
Other Modern Apprentices train for a minimum of three years starting after their GCSE's. South Staffordshire Water has also taken on two of these regular Modern Apprentices: Danny White

from Sheffield and Mark Waddilove from Pelsall - both of whom are 16 years old.

As Keith Hodson, Training and Development Manager comments: "We have run apprenticeships for many years. It is still one

of the best ways to train people who will be the foundation of the business in the future. Being involved with Modern Apprenticeships is excellent. It brings the idea of apprenticeships right up-to-date. Both the Company and the apprentices benefit".

Comment from Ashley: "When I completed my A levels I looked at going to University but the idea was unappealing. The attraction of the apprenticeship was that I could train, gain work experience, continue with my education and be self-sufficient".



Left to right: Danny White, Mark Waddilove & Ashley Cooper

What more could any mother ask?

Our best wishes to Ashley, Danny and Mark.

Part of a Press Release from Walsall TEC - Angi

ALL IN A DAYS WORK - 30 YEARS AGO!

Previous issues of WaterWhat have highlighted what goes on in various Departments so that you can see how the other half lives!

This time we've changed things slightly and asked Gail Winfield what life was like in Sutton Depot thirty years ago?

Ed.

Sutton Depot closed in February last year after 105 years service which means it must have opened in 1889 - long before the advent of computers, calculators, aeroplanes or even cars!

How times have changed - even in my working life at the Company!

I actually started work at Sutton Depot on the 5th October 1964. I had been appointed some months earlier but as I was the only female member of staff, I had to wait for a Ladies' Toilet to be built.

The Depot's Head was Superintendent, Stan Wimbush (a godlike figure) who ruled the place with a rod of iron. Mr. Wimbush (and woe betide anyone who dared address him in any other way) deemed that I could use first names for the staff but I would henceforth be addressed as Mrs. Winfield. And so it was!

Interview over, exit the Superintendent's Office and meet the Chief Clerk, Ron Rickets. Now Ron hadn't been told of my appointment and he objected to working with females, which didn't make for a very good relationship. Enough said but suffice it to say that we weathered the storm and Ron eventually turned out to be the



Sutton Depot Staff before last year's closure.

kindest and most helpful man you could ever wish to meet. He's been retired to Hereford these past 14 years and we still keep in touch!. "Thanks Ron - hope you get to read this!"

The Office itself at Sutton was positively Spartan compared with today environment. The floor was bare brick covered with lino in the Administration Office and the only form of heating was an open fire. My desk was nearest to the fire and every morning in Winter my working shoes were placed in front of the fire to warm before I arrived for work. And, believe it or not, everyone was expected to bring a piece of coal into work for the fire!

Once at work I used a secondhand typewriter (manual of course) - a "hand-me-down" from H.Q. No such things as photocopiers of course - just the good old carbon paper!

But I look back with a great deal of nostalgia. The lads were great - nothing was too much trouble and to a man they possessed a great sense of humour. Maybe it was traditional - I dunno - but the Water Industry at that time was still very much a family concern with generation after generation following in their father's footsteps.

Have things changed for the better? I suppose they have over the last twenty years. The "local information" was memorised and not shared willingly with anyone from outside "the patch"! Now it's satellite links and GIS - amongst other things!

There's progress for you!

Gail Winfield

ARTHUR'S ANECDOTES

No. 1

In my early days with the Company as a Waste Inspector, a colleague called Horace Grimley and myself were sent out to Blake Street, Little Aston to check main stop taps. As I approached a bungalow to check the M.S.T., Horace rushed up and told me to be very careful as the owner of the bungalow was a bad tempered old soldier who had a grudge against the SSWW. As I had heard water running, we decided to approach the front door together - wondering how we would be welcomed.

Well we soon found out!

The front door opened and there stood the occupant with shot gun in hand. He went mad and chased us up the path - cursing us to high heaven - but he knew that once we were on the public footpath he couldn't touch us. So to let us know he had won, he went inside the bungalow and came out with a bugle which he commenced to blow - presumably signifying that the enemy had been routed. We agreed we would be safer testing the stop taps of the neighbouring houses than have a stern full of shot gun pellets!

No. 2

Years ago when I was a Fittings Inspector, an exam form from Head Office came to Sutton Depot saying that a farm at Allan End, Wishaw was being split into separate units which would require the service and its branches to be located so that independent meters could be fixed. As this required two Inspectors, Arthur Hollowood and myself were detailed to carry out the work.

Once on site, Arthur opted to go into the farm house to check the services whilst I checked all the out buildings and cattle troughs. After a few minutes my colleague came rushing out saying there was a lion in the house! Convinced he was pulling my leg, I went

into the farm house with him. He said that the front door was open but nobody had answered his call. In we went, down a passageway with rooms on either side. We stopped at the second door on the left and I was told that this was the room where the lion was! Arthur proceeded to open the door and I, thinking it was still a joke, stepped into the room. Jesus!!! there in front of me stood a fully grown lion with eyes like saucers! Out of that room I shot and banged the door tightly behind me.

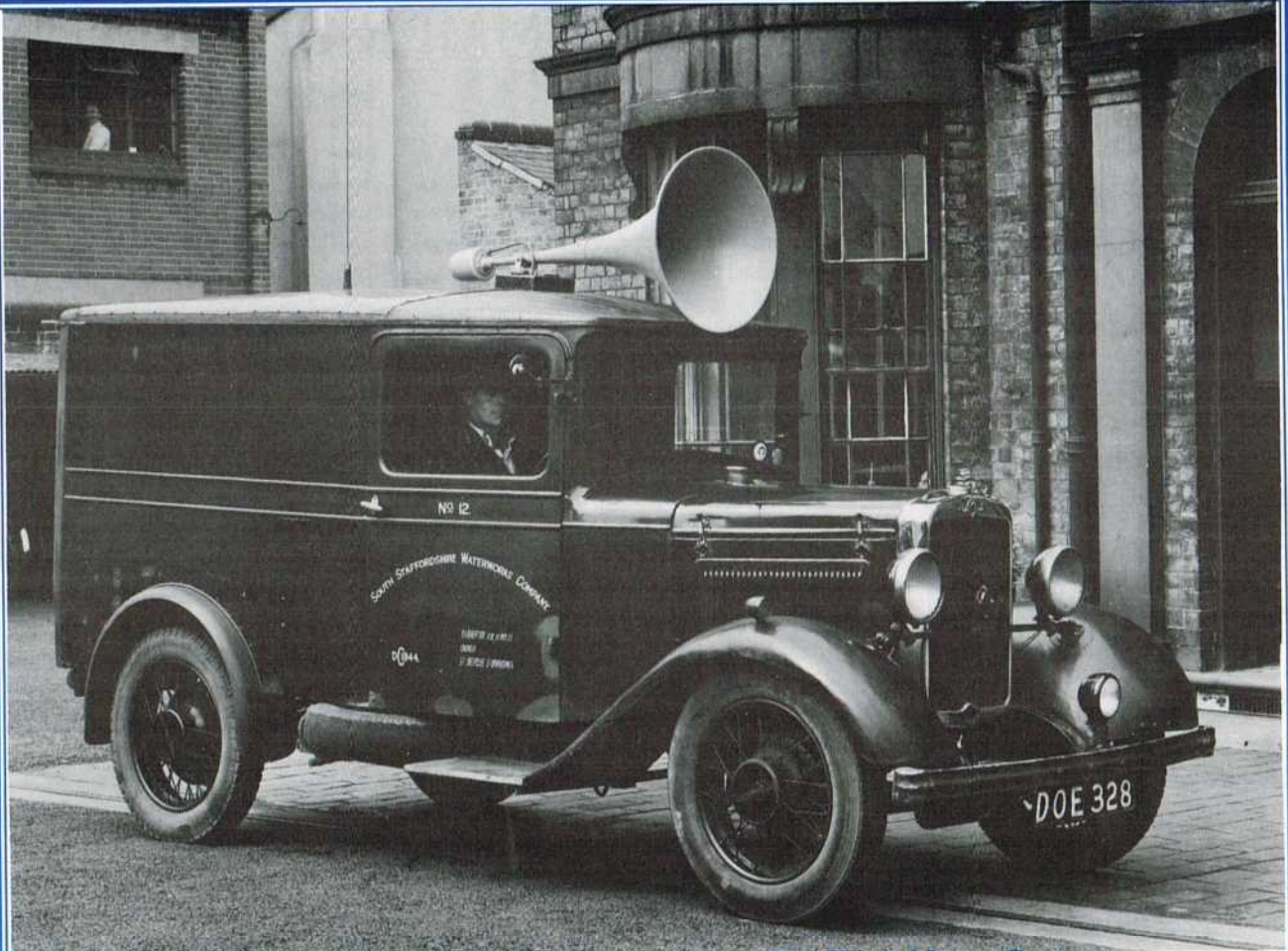
Just then the farmer came out of another room wanting to know what we wanted. Arthur told him why we were there. All I could say was "there's a bloody lion in there". With a smile on his face the farmer said it was his wife's pet.

With that we went into the Kitchen where I proceeded to fix the clips of the locator onto the cold tap. Suddenly I started to rise up in the air and (still holding onto the tap), I looked down to find there between my legs was the lion's head. He had come behind me. Unknown to us, the farmer's wife had come into the room with her pet. Thankfully the farmer heard my plea to get the beast out of there and promptly booted him out into the passage. His wife protested, saying that her pet was very gentle! Trying to gain my composure, I said "I bet he keeps your feet warm at night". "Oh yes" she said. "He always sleeps at the bottom of the bed". With that I gave up and went outside.

I saw the lion later again but this time it was on the telly doing an advert.

"Phew" - talk about life in the Roar!!

Arthur Howes

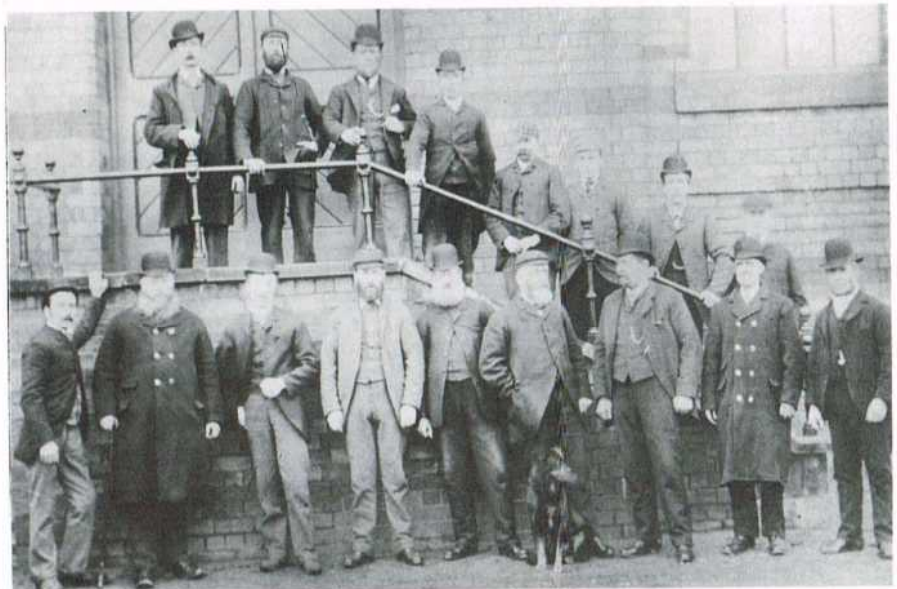


*A Morris Commercial Van sporting a Public Address System.
I wonder what the message was? No prize for this one but clean answers to Angi please!*

SANDFIELDS PUMPING STATION

*17 Men & A Dog!
Sandfields Complement In 1883!*

*Answers to Angi as to what the dog was
called please.*



THE GARRET STEAM LORRY (CONTINUED)

Many thanks to Jack Parsons, Tom Potts, Frank Barlow & Derrick Vernon.

Remember the Garrett Steam Lorry in last issue of WaterWhat? Joe Bowers was the driver. He worked at Cannock after serving an apprenticeship with Rugeley Agricultural Engineers. Joe drove the wagon to deliver slack to Moors Gorse Pumping Station, unlike Slade Heath and Brindley Bank who had deliveries by canal barge. Jack Parsons who joined the Company at Cannock Depot in 1948 remembers Joe who was then in his 60's - still driving! Eventually, Joe became Storekeeper.

Joe Bowers born in 1898 commenced at work at South Staffs on 25th August 1920.

We know that during 1926 he worked 47 hours a week for - £3.0s.9d. per week.

When Joe retired in September 1961 he was earning a fixed weekly wage of £12.3s.10d.

ED.

THE GLORIOUS SUMMER OF '95

As far as I was concerned, at the start of the Summer there was not going to be a problem. Terry Tapper told me so!

On Monday 26th June we supplied 424 Ml of water. Not quite the Company record but near enough to be interesting. "Don't worry Jeff, Monday is always the worst - demand tails off again by Friday". Tuesday: 445 Ml, Wednesday: 461 Ml, Thursday: 472 Ml, Friday: 456 Ml. So it was tailing off Terry - but not as we know it!

Through June and July, the peak time for demand, the people who are South Staffs showed their mettle. Fleets of tankers took water to Hanbury and Mayfield. Temporary boosters appeared

overnight at Clifton Campville, Clent, Anslow and Wylde Green. New sources appeared from Hulme Springs. New terms entered the language: the Chilcote Choke and the Croxden Crack! And we pumped water from Nethertown back into Blithfield. Throughout the period there were people working around the clock to ensure that Customers continued to receive the best service possible.

Just when we thought nothing more could happen - it did. At 8.00 p.m. on the day all records were broken there was a power failure across the region. As the screens in the Control office turned red with alarms, the faces of the people there turned white for the same reason. We thought the world was about to end. The people responded again and the world continued. But what do the numbers all mean? To put them into perspective is not easy but to give an

idea; 472 Ml would fill Villa Park three times over. At the time of peak demand 1,200 road tankers would have been needed each hour to deliver the water we required - forming a queue over 10 miles long!

What about next year? The prolonged high demand has depleted Blithfield to the same levels as in 1976. Seedy Mill has effectively been shut down to conserve water. We are pumping river water from Nethertown into Blithfield to raise levels as far as possible. What we really need is some rain!

By the way, Mike Bowen offered me some reassurance the other day; "don't worry, Blithfield always fills in the Winter".

I wonder if he has a pact with Terry?
Jeff Bishop

I would be interested in receiving any information or anecdotes you may have on the Drought - Ed.



“THE DROUGHT”

(OFFICIAL COMPANY VIEWPOINT)

Unlike many Water Companies, at SSW we did not impose a hose pipe or sprinkler ban during the Summer. We continued to supply our Customers their usual high level of service - often in very difficult circumstances.

To say that on some occasions it came close to “white knuckles” time for the Operations Team is undoubtedly true. Their dedication and commitment behind the scenes finally won the day in what was a great Team effort. However, we must not forget that many people at South Staffs played a considerable part over a lengthy period of time in contributing to this notable success and we couldn't have achieved what we did without the co-operation of our Customers.

Management foresight and planning has had a considerable influence in enabling us to cope with crises such as the recent drought and the case of using advanced

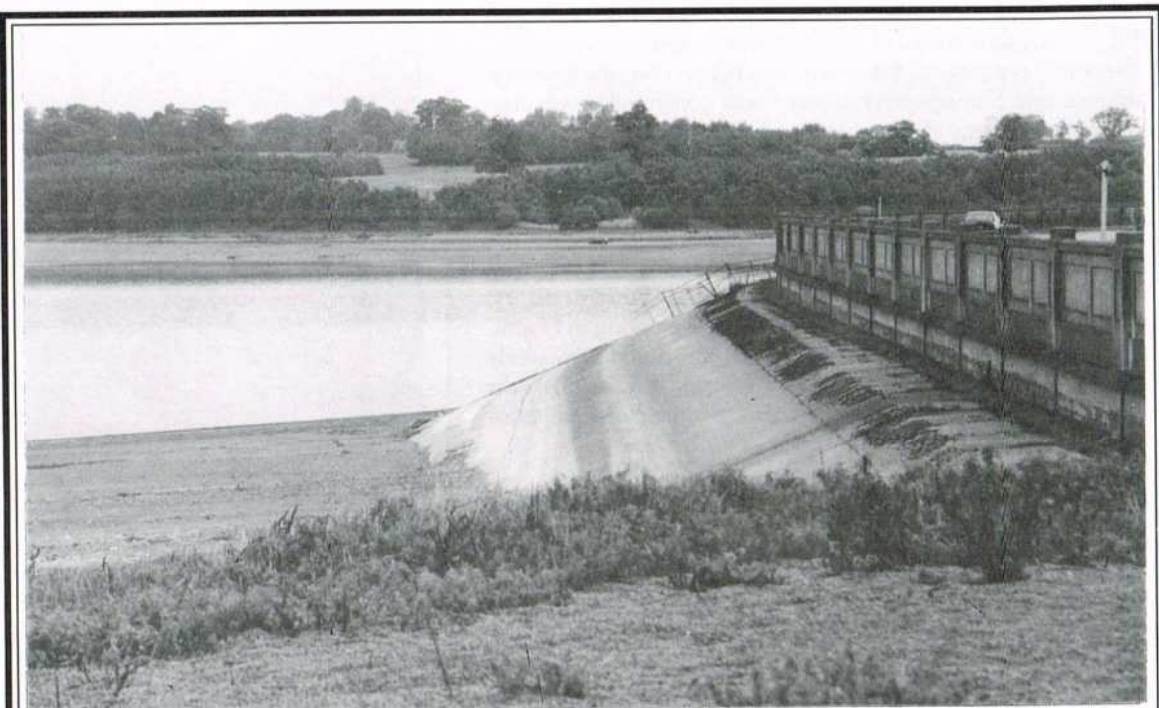
technology as part of our demand management strategy is a good example of this.

Then there is one of the media's favourite topics - water leakage. At 19.6% the Company leakage rate is one of the lowest. Not only are all reported leaks investigated that day, our Water Pressure Management System reduces leakage by using pressure regulating valves. Developed and pioneered by ourselves, this system saves over 500 million litres of water a year. It saves power

too and in many instances has less than a one year payback when installed.

However, whilst we deserve a hearty “pat on the back” for a job well done, we are far from complacent and will continue to investigate all avenues to maintain and improve our service.

T J McAllister
Managing Director



Blithfield Reservoir at 40% full in August this year. It finally went down to 36% in September before starting to recover.



The Old Mill

KATHMANDU - HEAVEN OR HELL?

Andrew Scudamore reflects on Life in Nepal. He comments: "It's difficult to be even-handed about the place since trekkers say it's a paradise, but those who work there say the opposite - - - and we work there".

In the last issue of WaterWhat we mentioned having won the consultancy project in Nepal to supply management expertise to the Nepal Water Supply Corporation (NWSC) in Kathmandu.

The main objective of this project was to ensure the provision of safe and adequate drinking water supplies and sanitation services on a sustainable basis to all urban areas of Nepal under the jurisdiction of the NWSC.

Accordingly, the Company commenced the project in May 1993, with a resident team of four, backed by short term specialists. As the project progressed, the best means of providing the technical assistance and management support was continually evaluated and a revised strategy of using higher inputs of short term specialists and local consultants, rather than resident staff was devised. This approach worked well and has enable ten Company employees to gain experience in working overseas on one of the most difficult projects the Company has had to undertake to date.

This is because traditionally over the last 20 years or so, all donors have experienced various difficulties in working in Nepal. There are a number of reasons for this, not associated particularly with Nepal itself, but with the problems of working in South East Asia where the culture, customs and practices are very different to those adopted in the West.

One of the failings in the past has been the attempt to apply western techniques and philosophies without understanding the "Nepali way". The Company has tried very hard to ensure that its proposals are viable and practical so that NWSC can implement them. Additional difficulties have been experienced with the actual structure of the project itself particularly with regard to the areas of responsibility. This was compounded by physical communication difficulties, associated with poor infrastructure such as telephones, power and transport generally.

On a lighter note, working in Kathmandu is a fascinating experience. There is the old "Shangri La" view associated with the hippies and flower power from the sixties. It can be like this outside Kathmandu Valley in the Himalayas where the air and water are clean and meditation can be an art form.

But in Kathmandu itself there is dreadful environmental pollution and a lack of basic infrastructure. This is because over the years the population of Kathmandu has risen without commensurate improvements to the roads, water, sewerage, waste disposal, power and telephone systems. This is not without considerable aid from international donors; but an observable fact is that there is little concept of maintenance. In water and sewerage terms this means that, for example,



A busy street scene in Kathmandu

pumping stations and sewerage works are left to deteriorate to the point of abandonment, leakage is extremely high and the sewerage system is very poor. Massive international aid is being provided to assist with this, but progress is slow.

In power terms, there are scheduled and random power outages, since the system cannot cope with the demand on it. This, coupled with the fact that water is only provided to many people on a twice-daily basis, makes life difficult. Many people have roof



Scene depicting the lack of Infrastructure in Nepal.

tanks for their water storage and after pumping up when water is available, leave the tank to overflow because there are no ball-cocks on the inlet. Simple enough changes to implement - but again progress is oh so slow.

On the environmental side, few vehicles are maintained adequately and air-borne pollution is severe. It includes diesel and petrol fumes, dust (a great deal) and, in certain areas, severe industrial emissions. There is naturally great concern at this, as the health problems associated with living and working in Kathmandu are now well known and are being addressed by various agencies and donors with the support of the Nepali Government.

Andrew Scudamore

The Editor comments:

Our thanks to Andrew and his team for giving us a "warts and all" factual report as he sees it.

With three different Nepali Governments in the last 18 months, it is proving very difficult to get the decisions needed to enable NWSC to operate efficiently.

BLITHFIELD EDUCATION CENTRE

The Company is involved with education in various ways. We send employees into Schools to help with reading practice. We take youngsters to Reservoirs, Pumping Stations and Treatment Works and give teenagers the opportunity to gain work experience in our Offices, Laboratories and other Departments. And shortly we will be able to deliver a full programme of environmental education to all ages at a new Centre at Blithfield Reservoir.

Exploring the possibility of providing such a facility, it was found to be impossible to make a complete list of all the topics and courses that Blithfield could offer. We simply didn't have enough paper! The Reservoir is teeming with a variety of wildlife - especially birds - and there are 200 acres of woodlands. There is a whole host of water habitats to study, from the Reservoir itself to ponds, streams, ditches and muddy shallows.

Then there are the buildings themselves. The centre has been created from redundant premises which were constructed in Victorian times and they still retain many original features. What's more, there are many other buildings yet to be developed

which provide opportunities to study architecture, history and countryside culture.

When the Education Centre opens next Spring, it is planned to run courses tailored to individual School's needs. We will be providing a package which includes transportation to and from the school and a

(in their own time) and anyone interested should contact him at Green Lane.

The importance of education cannot be over emphasised. Today's children are tomorrow's Customers. Also children need as many life experiences as they can get at an early age - there are too many who think



whole day's tuition on site. Steve Blower will be running the centre and he is already booking for next Easter to July Term.

One class per day will be allowed to take advantage of the facilities in order to minimise the impact on the wildlife and on the existing recreational users of the Reservoir. Steve is looking for volunteers to help him to deliver his education programmes

that milk comes from cartons and water comes from taps.

If you can help, or know anyone who is retired, perhaps, and has spare time, please come forward. You will find it very rewarding and, of course, you will gain great benefits from visiting one of the loveliest areas of Staffordshire.

Patrick Waldron



Patrick Waldron with students at Blithfield Fish Farm

YOUNG ENTERPRISE

Young Enterprise is a national Educational Charity which delivers an exciting, practical, hands-on business experience to young people. Locally, the organisation is run by volunteers from Industry and Education who form Young Enterprise Area Boards.

Y.E. is not a business game but a real business experience over a full academic year. It is supported by over 1,000 U.K. based businesses who volunteer resources, funds and people to support students in the running of a real business. Over 5,000 volunteer advisers from business act in partnership with educationalists to provide this unique opportunity.

Y.E. students (Achievers) discover for themselves how a Company functions. They will develop new skills such as: working as a team, leadership, making presentations, planning financial control, taking responsibility and the need for commitment to quality.

All Achievers are Shareholders in their own Company and may sell shares to others to raise the capital to start their Company. Each Company produces a final report and presents their Company results to a meeting of Shareholders. This is not a game but real business with real profits or real losses. The Companies succeed or fail by their own efforts and with the help of their business advisers.

For the past four years, Chris Wilkes and myself have been Business Advisors to Young Enterprise Companies based at Sneyd School. We were first approached by the Training Department back in 1992 to "get together" with Sneyd School on a business/community project. At the time we were unaware of Young Enterprise and completely in the dark regarding our role in the project. This was soon to change.

Our initial meeting with the Achievers begins on a formal basis. These young people range from 15 to 18 years of age and they are not used to treating adults as equals. We quickly establish an atmosphere of equality which enables the Achievers to begin to work well within the Company framework. Each Company has nominated Directors and the choosing of the right people for the role is vital (no difference there!!) A poor, uncommunicative M.D. results in a poor, uncommunicative Company who struggle from one crisis to the next.

Over the four years we have seen varying degrees of success.

Year 1

Absolute Publishing produced a Review Magazine. The Company was financially viable due to an M.D. who controlled all the Company output. We even received shareholder dividends (not that common a practice). There were a number of problems throughout the year which we struggled to overcome but at the end of the year we felt a certain sense of achievement.

Year 2

Artistic Impressions distributed cosmetics. This was an absolute disaster. The Company lurched from crisis to apathy and back - resulting in an end of term loss. The M.D. had no idea how to control the Company and was unable to generate any enthusiasm (especially in the advisors.) We lost two Financial Directors through the year and the Company Secretary left in a rather pregnant state.

Year 3

Goldrush produced business cards, distributed stationery and re-packaged colouring items for children. At last a truly successful Company. Throughout the year the Achievers within Goldrush worked exceptionally hard to make their Company a success, all due to their persistence and ability. At the start of the school year, the Company had seven members - one month into the school year we were up to thirteen. This created problems for the Company which were eventually solved by forming two divisions: Business Cards and Stationery. This proved to be the making of the Company. The Y.E. year climaxes with a presentation evening where the successful Companies get to present their report in front

of 75 - 100 people. Unfortunately, the Goldrush presentation lacked a little spark. We found later that this resulted in the Company finishing in 2nd place in the area. However, this was not seen as a failure as, to delight of everyone at Sneyd School, Goldrush scooped the prize for best marketing. I was particularly pleased as I also made a killing on my shares!!



Gary Hazelhurst with Enterprising Youngsters!

Year 4

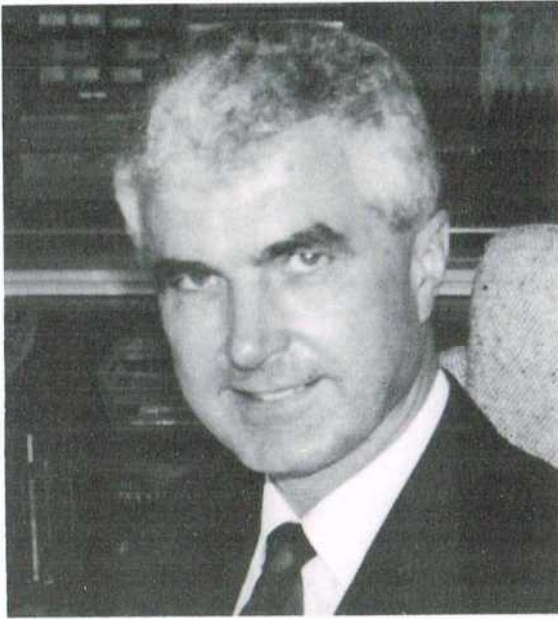
Aspirations producing "Nuthouses", "Fat Stores" and distributing cards and paper. This year promises to be the best year yet. All the Achievers are keen and eager to make their Company a success. For the first time, we are actually producing some items from scratch which adds another dimension to the Young Enterprise experience. Look on the notice boards as adverts for the products will be appearing soon.

All in all, our experience of Young Enterprise has been a rewarding one. South Staffs are very generous in their sponsorship of the Companies and this has led to an excellent relationship with Sneyd School. I personally have benefited from my involvement with these young people as the Y.E. scheme enables better understanding of their development processes.

Should you ever have the opportunity of becoming involved with Young Enterprise, grasp it with both hands. It is hard work and can sometimes be extremely frustrating but it is a great opportunity to put something back into the community. If you happen across a Young Enterprise Trade Fair - give these Companies a chance. I can assure you, you will be pleasantly surprised.

Gary Hazelhurst

SAFETY ADVISER RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS SAFETY AWARD



Dennis Walley, Safety Adviser to the South Staffordshire Water Group, was presented during September with the Zurich Municipal Safety Trophy, awarded for an outstanding contribution to safety and health within the public services.

The award of a trophy shield, an engraved silver goblet, a certificate and a personal cheque, was sponsored by Zurich Municipal Insurance in association with the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health, of which Dennis is an active member. It was presented to him in recognition of the quality and effectiveness of a series of presentations on the management of safety and the practical implementation of safety awareness training. These were based upon the model Safety Briefing Session Programme recently initiated within the South Staffordshire Water Group.

It is refreshing to know that the high profile given to health and safety within South Staffordshire Water sets a lead in the industry and receives such recognition by the U.K.'s leading external professional body in the health and safety field.

Well done Dennis.

SEEDY MILL

BORE HOLE PUMPS

The two bore hole pumps installed at Seedy Mill draw water from 100 meters below ground at 77 litres per second and transfer the water to the Treatment Works. Water from this level is excellent quality, free from nitrates and insecticides and the Company in recent years has been tapping this source and delivering the water to various bottling plants around the country.

The pumps were manufactured in 1938 and from our records this is only the second time they have been overhauled. They should now be capable of a further 25 years service - which is just as well when you consider that each pump's cost to overhaul, including spares and labour, is in the region of £35,000.

The photograph shows our Fitters lowering the pump section into the bore hole prior to assembling the drive shafts and rising main.



SEEDY MILL GETS D.A.F.

An insight into some of the activities involved in improving water treatment at Seedy Mill.

Seedy Mill Treatment Works, near Lichfield, started its life in 1946 and today it performs the vital function of treating water from Blithfield Reservoir, near Abbots Bromley, before supplying Customers primarily in the Burton and Cannock areas.

Looking to the future, the Company needs to guarantee the amount of water that Seedy Mill can treat in one day to balance both ground water abstraction and river water use. On average 45 MI per day is treated at the Works but future demands are such that this amount needs to be increased to somewhere near 70 MI.

This is where it all gets tricky. Depending on the weather, time of day, what phase of the moon we're in, etc - the actual raw water quality from Blithfield Reservoir determines the present amount of water that Seedy Mill can treat in 24 hours.

The main problem is that raw water can be subject to algal bloom - a microbiological phenomenon. This clogs the filters and

can reduce the output to between 15 and 20 MI per day. This is where D.A.F. comes in (if you are still with me that is!) D.A.F. - and no it's not those little yellow jobs on four wheels which came from Holland and had gearing called variomatic (I remember them on the road - don't you?) It stands for Dissolved Air Flotation which injects compressed air and chemicals into a tank containing the raw water. The bubbles formed in the water attach themselves to the algae and chemicals and together they float to the surface. Once there, they are scooped off - thereby allowing clean water to be piped from a lower level of the tank.

Simple, but clever - ain't it?

This process will allow the Works to guarantee higher outputs and add a further dimension to our capability of ensuring supplies to Customers throughout the year.

Steve Cockbill

Edited by Angi who made it less technical. Adjusted by Tony Woodward who couldn't help but interfere.



WATER AID



This Summer's drought in Britain caused difficulties and yet for most people it was only an inconvenience. In many parts of the world - drought is a catastrophe! Nobody dies from a hose-pipe ban but in Africa and Asia many people die for want of that most vital resource - water.

In many of these countries, women and children walk miles to fetch water, a journey that can take several hours each way. They step out from homes not on to a brown lawn but into a dust bowl amid rock that is hard and cracked. The amount of water used is very low, often below 10 litres per person a day.

In the last edition of WaterWhat we asked you to join our campaign to help the Social Club to raise **£5,000** for Water Aid. This is to fund a project in Nepal to bring a clean water supply to local people in Chokhane, a village located high in the mountains in the eastern part of the country.

The total cost of the project is **£20,000**. If we can raise the **£5,000** - it will automatically be matched by Water Aid. The Overseas Development Agency will then match the **£10,000** and the project can go ahead.

So how is the fund raising going?

The Social Club has been very active and organised a lot of events.

Tim Fletcher cajoled his friends at Winterton, the Estate Agency in Lichfield, to forfeit one of their Saturday mornings and raise funds for Water Aid by holding an Antiques Road Show style valuation day here at Green Lane. I am sure many members of the public were pleasantly surprised by the valuations given by the experts. Tim told me later that he'd been told the suit he was wearing was very valuable indeed, probably Edwardian and worth in the region of **£50.00**. He was quite prepared, so he said, to sell it to anybody in the room there and then for that sort of price. He clearly failed! I saw him wearing it the following Monday . . . Tuesday . . . Wednesday . . . Thursday . . . Friday - and even down the pub on Saturday!

We took the opportunity to capture our punters and wash their cars in exchange for a minimum fee of **£1.00**. In the three hours, **£300** was raised, which is about the same hourly rate that it costs when you get a round of drinks which includes Mike Bowen.

On one of those lovely hot summer's days more funds were raised at Blithfield during the Company's Family Day. The **£500** proceeds from the events went into the coffers of Water Aid - once more a sterling effort. Many

thanks to the army of people who gave their time, not only on the day but also spending time and effort preparing and organising their activities. The highlight for me was the "It's A Knockout Competition". John Morrall obviously expected something completely different from what was on offer. He turned up wearing a boxing vest, shorts and a bright red pair of **boxing gloves**. Talking about this later, I was reminded that Karen, John's wife, was six or seven months pregnant and that, perhaps he was wearing the gloves for a very different reason!

Finally, in September, John Morrall organised one of his infamous Quiz Nights, only this time he changed the start time from 7.30 p.m. to midday. This was because he was still wearing those boxing gloves and he realised that it would take him longer to handle the question papers and his beer glass. Each visit to the gent's took about 20 minutes! Anyway, a record **31 teams**, many of them from outside the Company, drained their brain fluid - only to replace it with Kilkenny beer on offer at **£1.00** a pint. The eventual winners were Walsall Police who, I think, were treated (for whatever reason) very favourably by John. For example, the last two rounds were on the Highway Code and the Police Complaints Procedures; this being the round when they played their Joker. Still, apparently, it's the taking part that counts and not the winning. A lot of people here at South Staffs used the influence they have with local firms and invited them to enter a quiz team in return for a hefty entrance fee. The evening was successful in many ways - not least because **£1,000** was raised for Water Aid.

At the time of writing we have raised about £3,500 towards the £5,000 target. We need your support to raise this final £1,500. The Social Club have plans which include a Christmas Lottery Card and providing a large Christmas Card where you can, if you prefer, send a single Christmas message to your colleagues rather than individual cards. Those that use the Water Aid card are asked, in return, to make a donation to the Charity.

One of the best ways we can raise funds for Water Aid is for employees to join the South Staffs Water Aid Lottery. Each number only costs 44 pence and each month deductions are made directly by Payroll. If you would like to join, please ask me for an application form.

Many thanks and please keep up the good work!

Mike Lewis - Customer Services - Green Lane

SOUTH STAFFS WATERAID LOTTERY

To WaterAid Representative Mike Lewis

I authorise the Company to deduct from my pay the sum of £_____ being _____ units

This deduction to commence in _____ or as soon as possible after this date

Please print your name _____

Cost per unit

	Monthly	4 Weekly
1 unit	44p	40p
2 units	88p	80p
3 units	£1.32	£1.20p
4 units	£1.76p	£1.60p

and multiples thereof

Payroll number _____

Company Location _____

I am paid Monthly / 4 weekly

Signed _____

SEVERN TRENT MOUNTAIN CHALLENGE

A mountain challenge - who could resist? Quite a few people, it seems, especially when it became apparent that the event involved a 30 mile run with a 5,500 foot ascent!

However, we did manage to assemble four teams who set off in fine spirits on a murky morning last July to scale some of the hills in the Peak District.

Due to unforeseen circumstances - two of our team could not find the start! We left civilisation with only five minutes to spare before the control closed and reached the top of the hill in thick cloud and somehow found the Marshall to have our card stamped.

From then on the cloud cleared, the weather improved (good tactics starting late!) and we began to move fairly quickly. Soon we came across another South Staffs Team taking an altogether different approach to the event. They seemed to be enjoying themselves, especially when Rob Sawle tried to persuade us to follow the wrong track.



The Team looking remarkably fresh after the event.

By the first rest half, we had overtaken several teams who seemed to think that it was totally unfair to run all the way! After tea and cakes at the village hall in Edale, we headed West towards Kinder Reservoir. One of the South Staffs Teams headed North and, of course, found the reservoir an hour and a half later than scheduled. None of the team members are available for comment!

From Kinder Reservoir, heading due North is one of the worst climbs I have attempted in a long time. Our own schedule was revised several times during the ascent and the remainder of the event became a walk rather than a run as the climb, had taken so much out of us.

The second rest halt was situated in the forest near the Snake Inn where the midges were waiting for us in great numbers. Needless to say no one rested for very long and we set off for Ladybower Reservoir where drinking water was available from a Severn Trent

bowser. The man in charge said "only a few miles now". Exactly the same words as used by all the Marshalls from there to the finish!

After what seemed like hours we emerged onto the main road and vainly tried to run to the finish. When we clocked 9 hours 31 minutes 55 seconds we felt fairly pleased with ourselves but knew we could have gone faster (next year?!). At tenth overall and third in class (out of 51 Teams) we were the fastest Water Only Company Team.

When we heard that the team coming first had completed the whole course in just over 7 hours, our egos were deflated some-

what! It is possible that Ian Mitchell could have got near that time but he had to wait for the rest of us. Bankie Williams might well have been able to stay with him if he hadn't been carrying a 40 lb. pack on his back (we only needed to take food for one day Bankie - not a month!).

Jack Carnell and I just kept going at an even pace - we were a

steadying influence on the team. The other team to complete the whole course - Andy Meadows, Chris Wilkes, Mike Morris and Barry Jones - were happy to have made it unscathed. However, the other two teams were prevented from proceeding past the Snake Inn by the organisers due to the gathering darkness.

Tim Fletcher, Mike Lewis, Alan Lander and John Lindley were very disappointed to have missed out due to their earlier navigational error. Rob Sawle, Shelley Walker, Bruce Collins, Wayne Powell and John Corbett were also sad to have to stop but realised that safety was of paramount importance. Both teams had completed the "A" Course - over 20 miles - which is an achievement in itself.

Next year - maybe we'll all do better - or maybe we'll stop at home!

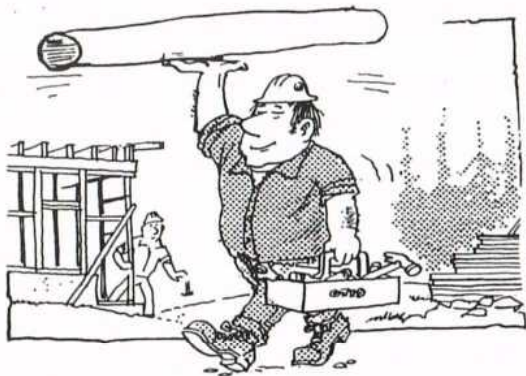
Patrick Waldon

FITNESS WITHOUT TEARS

The Pumping Station Gymnasium has been open for ten months and it has been great to see people still training during the long hot Summer. The gym has dozens of Members but with plenty of room for more.

Fitness training has many advantages so I thought I would enlighten you and hopefully tempt more of you to join.

Training Burns Calories: This allows you to have those little treats in the Canteen without worrying too much about putting on those extra kilograms.



Exercise Increases Overall Physical Work Capacity & Mechanical Efficiency:

For those of you who have tough manual jobs and sometimes find the work too exhausting - don't despair! A well rounded fitness programme will help you undertake your work with greater ease and limit the chances of injury.



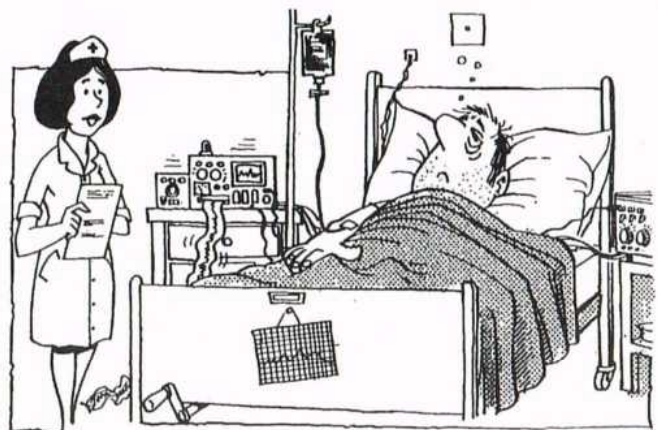
Exercise Can Relieve Many Cases of Lower Back Pain:

Inactivity, like sitting at a desk all day can cause back pain. Strengthening those abdominal muscles and improving your posture through weight training will help prevent this.



Exercise Can Relieve Tension - Both Muscular & Emotional:

Occasionally at work we all incur those hectic days when targets have to be met yesterday! Exercise will not cure this problem but it will help you to cope with it more efficiently and with less stress. Many people at work have commented to me that they find it difficult getting into a fitness training programme. However, once they have established a routine - they notice the difference both physically and mentally and have a sense of "well being".



Exercise Certainly Plays An Integral Role In The Prevention Or Lessening The Severity Of Cardiovascular & Other Degenerative Diseases:

I don't think anyone enjoys being ill - so why not do something about it and reduce your chances?

Remember if any of you would like a training schedule, I am more than happy to oblige and tailor a fitness programme to your needs.

If there are any new recruits out there you can contact me on Ex. 6731, Rob Sawle Ex. 4569 or Yvonne McDermott on Ex. 4630. Any one of us will arrange an induction course.

Michelle McClellan

TRIATHLON TREATISE

I have been doing Triathlons for the past three years and at last I think I have educated the employees of South Staffordshire Water as to what a "Triathlon" involves. Now instead of people asking me what a Triathlon is (swim, bike and run for the new recruits out there), I am asked "how are you racing", "where are you racing" or "did I see a glimpse of you on T.V.?"



Michelle In Mexico

1995 has been another great year for me. I have made considerable improvements and can now complete a 1500 metre open swim, 40 Km. cycle and 10 Km. run in 2 hours 13 minutes. This is still five minutes down on the fastest British lady and ten minutes from being World champion. I still have my work cut out but with four years before the Sport is in the Olympics and six years in the Commonwealth (Manchester) I have plenty to aim for.

My schedule this season has been fairly hectic; racing nearly every fortnight. However, it has enabled me to visit some great places. At the Scottish Championships in Loch Lomond I came a disappointing fifth. I learnt that walking to the top of Ben Nevis was not good race preparation!

However, the following week I had my revenge when I represented Scotland in the Home International in Cambridge and came second.

Travelling can also be very educational. Did you know that Loch Ness in Scotland holds more fresh water than England and Wales put together? Quite amazing - eh!

Other racing venues this year have included Haverfordwest, Southend-On-Sea, Windsor, Market Bosworth, Ellesmere and Bath.

These races resulted in my being placed third in the Grand Prix Ranking System and once again selected to represent Great Britain in the World Championships which will be held in Mexico in November of this year. Thankfully the race will not be at altitude as we are swimming in the sea. I will just have to contend with the 86% humidity.

Thanks to my Sponsors which include Spires Estate Agents, A & M Cycles in Tamworth and the support of South Staffordshire Water Company, I can go out two weeks before my big race to acclimatize.

If anyone is interested in tackling a Triathlon - let me know. There are plenty of races out there for beginners. Wayne Powell had a go at our local Chase Triathlon and gave a very creditable performance.

TRIATHLON STOP PRESS

The World Triathlon Championships held in Cancun, Mexico was certainly the hardest race I have competed in so far. Racing in a heat of 37 degrees and 86% humidity was unbearable and athletes were dropping like flies as they became dehydrated.

My theory of training during the hottest part of the day to enable my body to adapt to these conditions two weeks prior to the race, obviously paid off. I completed the race in 2 hours 21 minutes - finished 31st overall and was the third Britain to finish in our Team. I was quite pleased with this especially as I had a slight bronchial infection and was taking antibiotics on the day.

It was a wonderful experience though. The atmosphere was electric - with the cheers of thousands of Mexicans and tourists on the sideline adding to the occasion.

Michelle McClellan

ENJOYING A CREPE

*When is a crêpe not a crêpe?
(When it's a stodgy gooey mess).*

A guide to cooking and enjoying an Anglais crêpe.

Crêpes on the whole are best eaten in France - mainly found in Brittany and the South West. There are cafés totally devoted to the consumption of crêpes and most markets, large or small sport a van kitted out with a mini kitchen, with large cast iron discs, heated on gas rings. The smell of butter fills the air. No matter what - you've just got to have one! M'sieur, Dame, votre choix?

Well there is jam, cheese, ham and egg, just butter, butter and sugar, sugar, lemon and alcoholically a good sprinkle of Grand Marnier, wrapped up in a hot, light, crisp crêpe. It's street food par excellence. So here are a couple of recipes.

Apart from the ingredients, the other essential item is a heavy-based frying pan. You should heat this to a high temperature - vital to the success of see-through crêpes.

First the batter:

Savoury Batter: 4 oz. plain flour, 2 eggs - size 3, scant half-pint of milk, tablespoon of oil and salt.

Sift the flour, add salt, make a hollow in the middle, add the beaten eggs and milk, mix and beat well, last add oil. Let it stand for half-an-hour.

Sweet Batter: As above for savoury - adding 1 tablespoon of icing sugar and 1 tablespoon of Grand Marnier, Brandy or Cointreau.

Both the batters can be made in a food processor - whizzing it all together.

The idea is to cook a thin, lacey crêpe - so don't be too heavy handed with the mixture! Pour about a third of a soup ladle into a hot pan that is greased with butter. Do not use any other kind of fat. Tilt the pan to coat with the batter, cook on a medium heat. When it bubbles, turn over with a spatula, cook the other side. You may have to throw away the first one or two, or give them to the dog! But you will get it right after that. Now for the fillings.

Smoked Haddock Crêpes (Savoury Batter)

Poach 6 oz. smoked haddock in half-a-pint of milk - simmering for approximately 6 minutes. Drain the milk into a saucepan and make a white sauce (or use a packet mix - Crosse & Blackwell Bonne Cuisine range, Bechamel). Season with pepper, taste for salt. Add 1 oz. grated cheese and when melted, the haddock, share between 6 pancakes. Roll up, place in a fireproof dish, sprinkle with more cheese and a few breadcrumbs, dot with butter and cook in a moderate oven (180 degrees) until bubbling hot.

Crêpes Suzette The Easy Way (Sweet Batter)

Cream 2/3 ozs. of butter with 2/3 ozs. of icing sugar. Add grated rind of an orange, its juice and 2 tablespoons Grand Marnier - making a soft paste. Share between the pancakes, fold in half, then half again. A good teaspoon is about right. Place the triangles in a fireproof dish, overlapping points underneath. Any filling left - dot over the top with about 2 tablespoons of squeezed orange juice. Place in a moderately hot oven for 8/10 minutes. Warm the Grand Marnier or Brandy to flambé at the table.

You can make these ahead of time. They will also freeze.

Bon Appetite Mes Amis!

(With Apologies To The Grammatical French)

Delilah

SOCIAL CLUB REVIEW 1995

The Social Club is still alive and kicking - and it is there for the benefit of all employees both young and old.

The Club owes its existence to a small Committee who give up much of their own time to organise things. Any suggestions from employees for different trips and events would be very welcome. So if you do have any ideas please contact one of the Committee Members listed below and we will be able to offer help, advice and support for the event.

1995 has been a very busy and successful year for the Social Club and highlights included:

The Test Match

This Summer we took a party of 20 people to watch the Test Match at Old Trafford. Everyone who went reported that they had a most relaxing and enjoyable day and were looking forward to next year's trip. This event has been run annually for the past few years and if the support is forthcoming we will be only too happy to continue to organise it.

Go Karting

Not for the faint hearted this one! Grand Prix Karting in Bloxwich was the venue for the South Staffs Grand Prix which took part in April. Forty employees and guests raced in heats and finals to see the winner, Paul Drury, take the chequered flag. Paul had been in third place but the two leaders collided just before the finish. Paul kept his head and ended up a worthy winner. Well done Paul.

We are hoping to run a similar event in 1996. The more people that take part, the better the atmosphere. So come on folks - there's thrills and spills galore!

Antique Valuation Day

Wintertons Estate Agents and Valuers kindly offered their services for an "Antiques Road Show" type event which was held in the Restaurant at Green Lane. The event was advertised locally and quite a number of people turned up for items to be valued. Coupled with a compulsory car wash at a pound a time whilst the antiques were being valued, the day raised over £300 for Water Aid.

Fun Day



This year's Annual Fun Day was held at Blithfield Reservoir and attended by over 400 people. Commended for being the best yet and helped by the wonderful sunshine, the day ran smoothly from start to finish.

Many employees get involved in the organising and contribute much of their own time both before and during the day. Tasks include cutting the grass, cooking burgers and hot dogs (thanks Brenda, Tony and Calor Gas), marking out the arena and clearing up afterwards. So very many thanks to all of you for your support - we could not manage without you..

Although the Committee plan and organise this event, we always welcome your comments, both positive and negative. This helps to make it even better next year.

So let's hear from you people!

Dublin Trip

The less said about this the better! The Dublin Trip has now become an Annual South Staffs Holiday. This year saw a full coach load of 48 employees and guests sailing across the Irish sea to enjoy the delights of Dublin. Look out for details of next year's trip but book early to avoid disappointment. More about this on page 23.

Quiz Night



Always a very well supported event this one! This year's quiz was no exception - in fact it was the best so far with more teams than ever taking part. Quiz Master, John Morall, was on form to add a touch of humour in his own inimitable way and announce at the end of the night that over £1,000 had been raised for WaterAid - a really great and worthwhile effort.

Bonfire Night

This year Tipton Depot hosted the event which was very well organised with many employees and guests attending. The firework display was excellent and I hope that we will be able to do the same again next year.

Many thanks for all your efforts Tipton!

Without your support these events would not have taken place. A big "thank you" to the Committee Members for all their hard work and an equally big, large - no - huge "thank you" from us to all the people who attended these functions. YOU - your family and friends make it all worthwhile!

Social Club Committee Members

John Morrall	Ex. 8034	Gary Hazelhurst	Ex. 5090
Rob Sawle	Ex. 4560	Tim Fletcher	Ex. 5460
Mike Watkins	Ex. 3430	Jason Vigrass	Ex. 6223
Joan Hewitt	Ex. 2250	Shelley Walker	Ex. 2840
Nick Smith	Ex. 5530	Roy Arnold	Ex. 5780
John Webb	Ex. **03	John Corbett	Ex. **03

Rob Sawle



**SSW plc in the forefront of leakage control?
Picture kindly sent in by Chris Pattison.
All dogs applying to Angi please!**

SSW GOLF SOCIETY

The Society is now into its third year and is continuing to organise social and competitive events for both serving and retired employees.



During 1995 we received an invitation to the National Water Golf Championships, which unfortunately could not be taken up due to a clash of dates but we shall be competing in 1996 - so watch this space.

Throughout the Season there were three outings - open to all Members. These were very well supported. In addition, two Teams were entered in Charity Competitions and internal doubles and singles knockouts were also run. A busy season indeed.

The aim of the Society is to provide a social outlet for colleagues at all levels within the Company and during 1995 this was certainly achieved. We now look forward to more successes next year.

Competition Results Singles Matchplay

Winner

D. Glen (Water Treatment)

Runner-Up

I. Salmon (Burton Area Office)

Doubles Matchplay

Winners

M. Ryan (Northern Area Office)
B. Robinson (Leakage Control)

Runners-Up

K. Edwards (Laboratory)
P. Hodgson (Hampton Loade)

Spring Outing Uttoxeter Golf Club

A good day's golf was enjoyed by all on a very challenging course. Possibly the greatest challenge of the day was what to do when the electricity supply was lost and the beer pumps went off (a real dilemma)!

Competition Results

1st I. Salmon (Burton Area Office)
2nd W. Reid (Burton Area Office)
3rd P. Aspley (Water Treatment)

Nearest The Pin

P. Hodgson (Hampton Loade)

Summer Outing President's Day Hill Valley Golf & Country Club

This was our second visit to Hill Valley and both course and facilities were excellent. The weather if anything was too good with some people suffering from sunburn. In spite of the heat, some very good scores were returned. We were delighted to welcome T. McAllister (Society President) and T. Fletcher (Social Club Liaison) for the evening meal and presentations.

Competition Results

1st P. Aspley (Water Treatment)
2nd M. Sharpe (Seedy Mill)
3rd J. McGuckin (Water Treatment)

Nearest The Pin

P. Hodgson (Hampton Loade)

Autumn Outing Worfield Golf Club

This was the Society's first visit to Worfield and the course and facilities were found to be very good. It must be said that great things were expected of Joyce Piper who is a member at the Club. However, the weather left a lot to be desired with some of the greens starting to flood by the end of the afternoon but despite this some excellent scores were returned and needless to say new handicap cards were promptly issued.

Competition Results

1st P. Aspley (Water Treatment)
2nd D. Glen (Water Treatment)
3rd S. Garbett (Mail Room)

Nearest The Pin

P. Hodgson (Hampton Loade)
YET AGAIN

Programme of Events for 1996

T.B.A.

Presentation & Race Night (Green Lane)

Friday 10th May:
Spring Outing

Friday 28th June:
National Water Golf Championships

Friday (Date T.B.A.):
Summer Outing (President's Day -
Hawkstone Park)

Friday 13th September: Autumn Outing
(Druids Heath)

Anyone interested in joining the Society please contact:-

W. Reid, I. Salmon, P. Baggley (Burton Area Office) R. Smith (Transport - Green Lane) P. Aspley (Water Treatment - Fradley)

You'll be made very welcome. Remember there will be even more events next year - we're already booking the places!

Look forward to seeing you all!!

Bill Reid - Chairman



❖ ANNOUNCEMENTS ❖ ANNOUNCEMENTS ❖ ANNOUNCEMENTS ❖



Congratulations to the following proud parents:

Diane Lee - now the proud mother of daughter Jenny who was born on 29th January this year.

Just a day later came Daniel James to make Myra May a very happy mum. Daniel arrived on 30th January 1995.

Lisa Thompson's son, Sam James, decided to wait for the better weather and arrived on 2nd March 1995.

Louise Parker is now the proud parent of James John who came into the world on the 8th May this year.

Debbie Loynes decided there were enough boys around so produced a daughter, Jennifer Louise on the 19th May 1995.

Carol Watts thought little Jennifer might need a bit of "back-up" so along came Jessica Megan on the 16th June 1995.

To tip the scales in favour of the lads, Sue Pedley produced twin boys - Andrew and Christopher, on the 4th August this year.

Karen Morrall tried to even things up by giving birth to her daughter Grace Frances on 28th September this year.

Think this now makes it 5 - 4 TO THE BOYS!

A Birth is Imminent

To Terry & Julie Goodier (Northern Office)



Engagements

Paula Large (N.A.O. Office) to Bob Smith (Transport)

Weddings



Cupid's been at it again and the following couples have tied the knot:

Karen Blizzard and John Morrall made their big day the 23rd March this year.

On the 9th September Julie Wiley and Chris Wittiker signed on the dotted line.

Sue Swaine and Wayne Powell chose 30th September for their celebration.

October 14th was the date when Catherine Murphy and Anthony Hughes sealed their fate.

*Have we got our dates wrong?
John & Karen tie the knot in
March, Karen produces
daughter Grace in September?*

*Perhaps it's called Personnel
Productivity or Something?*



**Our Sincere Congratulations To You All
Good Luck, Good Health & Happiness**

OBITUARIES

Peter Graham

It is with great sadness that we report the sudden death of Peter Graham on 6th January this year, aged 43.

Peter joined SSW in March 1982 as a Computer Operations Supervisor in Birmingham and figured prominently in the relocation to our present Headquarters at Green Lane in 1985. Indeed it would not be untrue to say that SSW's current computing facilities owes quite a lot to Pete Graham.

Peter will long be remembered for his kindness and generosity of spirit and it was no surprise that the service was so well attended when he was finally laid to rest.

Always there for his family, company colleagues and friends, Peter leaves a wife and an 8 year old daughter, Sarah.

Farewell Peter Graham - you will be long remembered.

Ed.

Joe Clark

Joe Clark died suddenly on 31st October 1995.

Joe latterly was known to all throughout the Company as "The Voice of South Staffs". Although Joe was an electrician by trade, he quickly adapted to the job of receptionist come telephonist after an illness in 1988, when he needed lighter duties. Joe fitted in right from the start and quickly became "friend and confidant" to many of us.

I for one have many fond memories.

Cheerio Joe....

Thanks for all those extension leads!

Ed.

Bert Newport

It was with a great sense of loss that I attended Bert's funeral service on Friday, 22nd September 1995. Bert died on 13th September 1995 - aged 87

He joined the Waterworks as a Waste Inspector in 1929 and completed a total of 43

years continuous service before retiring in 1973 at the age of 65.

Bert was a friend and colleague over many years during our service with the Company.

His value to the Company was recognised over the years and eventually he transferred to a Staff appointment as Assistant District Superintendent.

For many years Bert was Secretary of the Employees' Benevolent Fund, working with his old friend and colleague, Arthur Reed who was Chairman.

His contribution to the efficiency of the Company helped to lay the foundation of today's modern establishment.

There are not too many of us left who remember Bert and it would need a very long list to praise everything he did.

God Bless You Bert. Many thanks for your friendship and co-operation over many years.

Bob Pearsall

THE DUBLIN EXPERIENCE

3rd-6th November 1995

Forty-eight hardy annuals dutifully appeared at Green Lane for the 9 o'clock departure by coach to Dublin on Friday 3rd November 95.

After an uneventful journey, we arrived at Holyhead and boarded the ferry for the Emerald Isle; the vast majority, relieved of driving for a few days, made straight for the bar. When it eventually opened Mike and I decided that it was probably quicker to buy two rounds at once - what we didn't realise was that by buying two rounds - you got a third round FREE!

That First Pint Of Guinness!

It's true what they say - Guinness is definitely different in Ireland! Mike, Irene (Mrs. Bowen) and I, along with several other fellow travellers, left the hotel and made our way to the first bar. We were not disappointed - the atmosphere and friendliness hit us as soon as we entered and the Guinness was divine. Food beckoned and we found a very pleasant restaurant serving Cajun food with Rioja as its house wine. With a big day ahead on the morrow, we decided it was time for bed.

Saturday

Irene wanted to go shopping! We wanted to watch Rugby! So on arrival at Landowne Road after a pleasant walk through Dublin, the Landowne bar beckoned, where again Mike and I were regally welcomed. As there was no game on we decided to make our way to Blackrock Rugby Club situated on the far side of Dublin. Now you would think that Blackrock Rugby Club would be near Blackrock Railway Station - wouldn't you - but no - it's two-and-a-half miles away! We were in Ireland after all! Still the weather was fine and we thought the walk would do us good so off we set - only to find the Blackrock Team were away. However, once again we were regally welcomed at the Rugby Club and spent a very pleasant afternoon (in the bar) as their guests.



We returned to the hotel to prepare for the evening. Under Irene's leadership the three of us found a very pleasant pub, followed by an excellent restaurant where we spent a very happy two-and-a-half hours eating some wonderful food and drinking some very pleasant French red wine. Then it was back to the hotel to prepare for Sunday.

Sunday

Twenty-two SSW stalwarts turned up early in the hotel dining room for a wonderful Irish breakfast prior to our departure on a coach tour of Dublin and a visit to the Whiskey Corner. The tour was magnificent with a lovely Irish guide who took us everywhere before arriving at Whiskey Corner.



"Drink as much whiskey as you want", said the guide! Because Irene was the only Scot to own up to being one, she was chosen to represent the ladies along with Mrs. Paul Mitchell. Mike and I represented the men and the four of us accepted the challenge of becoming official Irish whiskey tasters. And so we gained our diplomas! And - yes we had more than a wee dram!

After the Whiskey Corner, we arrived at Phoenix Park to see where the Pope visited when he came to Dublin. The guide then told us this lovely story of how, anticipating a huge gathering, they dismantled the gates and pillars - putting them in a safe place until later. Unfortunately the "safe place" proved to be so secure that to this day nobody remembers where it is. There are now new pillars and gates at Phoenix Park.

And so the tour ended. We were dropped off in the middle of Dublin and made our way back to Christchurch Cathedral where we spent a very pleasant afternoon going round the "Dublina" Exhibition and the Cathedral. In the evening we explored the Temple Bar area. Mike returned to the hotel and I ended up in a group celebrating the last night in Dublin!

Monday

Another superb Irish breakfast, early onto the coach and off to the ferry before 8 o'clock. And everyone made it! The crossing was a little more exciting with certain of the party - A. Mack and J. Warrilow spending most of the journey on deck by the railings.

We arrived at Holyhead, boarded the coach, fell asleep and arrived back at Green Lane for 5.00 p.m.

Conclusion

A very successful trip. Our thanks to the Parrys, to John Morrall for the organising, to the Irish for having us and to everyone who went and made it such a enjoyable outing.

Tim Fletcher

EDITOR'S JOTTINGS

THIS NOVEMBER SAW US ONCE AGAIN IN THE HIGHEST CATEGORY (FOR THE SECOND TIME) FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE LEVELS- ACCORDING TO OFWAT'S REPORT. SO WELL DONE TO OPERATIONS/AREA OFFICES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES. KEEP UP THE EXCELLENT WORK.

WELL DONE EVERYONE.

TALKING OF WORK, I THINK THAT JULIE MARGRAVE AND HER STAFF HAVE PRODUCED SOME VERY INTERESTING THEME DAY LUNCHES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AND PARTICULARLY EXCELLED THEMSELVES THIS YULETIDE WITH A FABULOUS THREE DAY CHRISTMAS FOUR COURSE FEAST, INCLUDING WINE. THANKS TEAM - WE REALLY DO APPRECIATE YOUR HARD WORK.

WELL DONE JOHN, WHO AGAIN SPRUCED UP THE GARDENS AND WON US THE "WALSALL IN BLOOM BEST INDUSTRIAL AWARD" FOR THE SEVENTH TIME.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE, JIM ALLEN, A FRIEND WHO USED TO COME ROUND TWICE A YEAR AND POT UP THE TROUGHS, SADLY DIED IN OCTOBER.

YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED A GROUP OF YOUNGSTERS DOING LOTS OF TIDYING UP AROUND THE SITE. THEY ARE A COMMUNITY GARDENING SERVICE WHICH ENABLES PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES TO WORK UNDER SUPERVISION. I HOPE NEXT SPRING WE SHALL SEE THE BENEFIT OF ALL THEIR HARD WORK.

HERE'S TO A SUCCESSFUL 1996.

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE

I WILL ACCEPT CONTRIBUTIONS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR - OF ALL SORTS!

ED.

A VISITOR'S VIEW

by Ted Cavalli

One of the privileges of being shareholders is that you get invited to the Company's A.G.M. Although normally a formal legal affair usually over very quickly (six-and-a-half minutes is rumoured to be the South Staffs record!) it is also a chance for my wife Jean and myself to meet members of the Company and have lunch in your very good restaurant.

Twice we have availed ourselves of this treat - visiting you in 1994 and again this year during the very hot dry period coinciding with the A.G.M.

This year Angi kindly took us on a small tour of some of the works on the day before the meeting.

We saw Chelmarsh and the Fish Farm, Pumping Stations and filter beds and all sorts of workings that go to make up the complex world of clean water.

"Us" the public do not always realise or appreciate the effort and expertise that goes on behind the "water on tap" we take for granted.

During this tour we were privileged to meet so many interesting people going



Ted and Jean Cavalli

about their business under the pressures of the drought - all found time to be pleasant and considerate and we thank them for this.

At the A.G.M. there were other shareholders who are also personal friends of ours. Over lunch we all agreed that yours is a fine Company and it was nice to have an investment where everyone gains, i.e. the public gets clean water, the employees get wages, the shareholders get dividends and the Directors get the blame!

Those very nice people in the P.R. Department have supplied us with various things to read like "WaterWhat", Annual Reports and Good Health to the Customer, etc. so that even in darkest Surrey we know something of what's going on up here. We look forward to the news.

I (with Jean) also look forward to our visits and meeting with you again at future A.G.M.'s

*Merry
Christmas
Everyone*

*And
A Happy New
Year*