



FIREFLASH

AUGUST, 1965

No. 8



Junior Fireman/Police Cadet Relay Race



IMMEDIATE FIRE PROTECTION

with the
ANGUS
Automatic
HOSE REEL

The ANGUS Automatic hose reel brings water to a fire in any direction within seconds! A new all purpose guide arm and *automatic* control valve cuts out the need for swinging the reel from wall or recess, ensures water supply as soon as four or five feet of hose is drawn off. So easy to operate — so simple to maintain and *one type* is readily adaptable to 3 separate mountings—wall, recess or floor. A built-in micro-switch (optional) can also switch on booster pumps, alarm systems etc.

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EDITORIAL

Time progressively marches on — This, the No. 8 edition of the "Fireflash" is at last in your hands, but it seems only a few months ago that No. 1 was in the course of preparation. This edition by the way, brings to a conclusion the second phase of the advertising obligations of the "Fireflash", and it is opportune to express thanks to the organisations which have supported the venture in a tangible way. In addition, appreciation is due to the Fire Brigade Committee in authorising a grant towards the cost of the publication. Such grant appreciably precludes the complete saturation of the publication with advertisements.

With regard to the questionnaire which was circulated to all serving members early this year, I would emphasise that this has been given careful study, and a graph highlighting the various suggestions made has been compiled. This will be implemented in future editions, and it is hoped to enhance the lay-out, appearance, and general characteristics of future publications, commencing with No. 9. This has not been possible before, because the whole series (No's 5, 6, 7, and 8) have already been printed as far as the covers and advertisements are concerned. ◀

I hope the assortment of articles in this issue appeals to most of you, and would thank the various members, organisations, etc., who have been good enough to forward "copy" for their interest.

ROY GAPPER, Editor.

24.5.1965.

JUNIOR FIREMEN v. POLICE CADETS ROAD RELAY RACE

A road relay race between teams representing the Police Cadets and the Bristol Fire Brigade Junior Firemen took place on Saturday, 27th March, 1965, and was run over a course of 21 miles from the Grand Pier, Weston-super-Mare to the Bristol Police Training School, Victoria Square, Clifton. Each runner covered an average distance of 3 miles.

The determined and sustained effort throughout the race was truly magnificent, and an atmosphere of keen rivalry and sportsmanship was vividly manifested.

The official times for the race were:— Police Cadets—2 hrs. 20 secs.

Junior Firemen—2hrs. 3 mins. 21 secs.

Bearing in mind that the Police Cadets were very much more experienced and mature, the result was extremely gratifying, and without any doubt whatsoever underlines the determination of our Junior Firemen to "have a go".

Congratulations on a race well run.

Front cover picture shows the Chief Fire Officer presenting the Road Relay Race Trophy to the captain of the Bristol Police Cadet team, at the Police Training School, Victoria Square, Clifton.

AS THE MOTORIST SAID . . .

(Continued from previous edition)

Here are a few more extracts from Motor Claim Forms received by a large Insurance Office in the City.

Coming home I drove into the wrong house and collided with a tree haven't got.

Three women were all talking to each other, and when she stepped back and one stepped forward I had to have an accident.

I can't give details of the accident as I was somewhat concussed at the time.

Wilful damage to the upholstery was done by rats.

A pedestrian hit and went underneath my car.

I blew my horn but it would not work as it was stolen.

A lamp post bumped into my car, damaging it in two places.

My car was stolen and I set up a human cry, but it has not been recovered.

The car in front stopped suddenly and I crashed gently into his luggage grid.

I left my car unattended for a minute, and whether by accident or design it ran away.

Boots Pure Drug Co. Ltd.

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THE HISTORIC FIRE ENGINE CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN

The formation of the above club has recently been brought to the notice of the "Fireflash" committee, and the secretary, Mr. Bryan Haynes, 34 West Park Road, Downend, Bristol has kindly forwarded a copy of the club's Newsletter.

As the name implies, the club is keenly interested in old fire engines, and many of its members are in the enviable position of being the actual owners of such appliances. In addition, a comprehensive list of serving and retired appliances is maintained.

Should any of our readers be interested in joining this organisation, they may contact Mr. Haynes (Tel. Bristol 652668) and he will be only too pleased to supply the answers to any questions.

STILL GOING STRONG !

(ROY GAPPER, Headquarters)

"Reg Curtis, Silverthorne Lane will have one ! " How often is this well worn phrase used nowadays. For that matter, many will not realise it, but it has been used now for almost thirty years.

It was during 1936 that Reg decided to commence a scrap-car business on an extensive area bounded by the main London railway line, Silverthorne Lane, and the Feeder.

I was talking to him recently, and he informs me that for many years his average intake of condemned cars was within the region of one per day. Nowadays, with the advent of the vehicle testing scheme, his intake has increased to "one and a half". This makes a total of nearly 470 condemned, worn-out, and smashed vehicles per year, making provision for early closing on Saturdays, and no Sunday working.

It is safe to say that Reg is familiar with every component of almost any type of vehicle. Moreover, he is acutely aware of the location of a vehicle in his yard which has just the "bit" one requires. He is also completely conversant with the progressive deterioration of each and every vehicle which lays within his yard, and, bearing in mind that he sometimes accommodates up to 150 such "derelicts", this is no mean feat of memory !

There are many within the Brigade who may be fortunate enough to own vehicles which are so new that a visit to Silverthorne Lane is unnecessary. Others however, who have owned old models will have found the knowledge that Reggy's resources are behind them to assist in keeping their vehicles "economically mobile" as it were, to be of great consolation.

The secret of the low-price range which one enjoys at this "establishment" is primarily that when one wants anything, one puts on one's overalls; takes a bag of tools; and "gets it oneself". By this means, the labour charge of dismantling is by-passed.

No doubt, many of our pensioners now living out of town, will be interested to know that Reggy Curtis is still going strong. Many, many more years may he continue to do so.

BRISTOL AND DISTRICT DISABLED SWIMMING CLUB

A letter has been sent to the Chief Officer from Mr. E. T. Finnegan, the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the above Club, expressing deep appreciation on behalf of the Committee, of the valuable services rendered by Fireman Stan Hatsell of Stn. No. 1 Central, in his painstaking swimming instruction to a number of disabled persons.

But for Stan's invaluable services, many disabled persons would be unable to enjoy the pleasures of swimming.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

TO ALL FIRE BRIGADE PERSONNEL
THE JEWEL BOX (BRISTOL) LTD.
67 FAIRFAX STREET, BRISTOL, 1

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15 per cent (3/- in the £) Discount

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We can make any kind of design on request.

We have our own workshop, but regret that we cannot give discounts on repairs or on goods purchased on Clothing Cheques, however we take Bristol, Practical, Premier and Provident Cheques.

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TABLE WATERS

FRUIT JUICES AND SQUASHES

CIDER AND PERRY IN CASK AND BOTTLE

BOTTLERS OF BASS AND GUINNESS

AUXILIARY FIRE SERVICE

Great surprise to everyone at the Bristol A.F.S. Annual Night Out, was the marionette show put on by new recruit Aux/Fm. Norman Castle.

He has been in the A.F.S. for six months and is a fire extinguisher sales representative.

Norman's marionettes were originally built in Manchester circa 1908, and were owned by his father until his decease in 1950. Also included is a ventriloquist doll, Joey, and a mobile stage.

Shows were given during First and Second World Wars to wounded servicemen and various children's parties.

Norman took over the dolls from his father, but they were not used for quite a while, until one of his children was ill, when he started to fool around with the dolls to try to amuse the child.

Subsequently he was asked to put on a show, and since then has given many shows in all parts of the West country and obtains great satisfaction from seeing the pleasure on people's faces.



"Joey" partaking of a "pint" at the A.F.S. Annual Night Out

NEW FIRE CONTROL CONSOLE

The new console was brought into operation in Brigade Control during the past few months. This is the result of extensive liaison between A.D.O. W. Rapley, the Brigade Communications Officer, and Control personnel, coupled with the ever-increasing telephone traffic requirements.

The console embodies the Automatic Fire Alarm Annunciator Panel and was installed by A.F.A. engineers. Three positions are possible for the reception of any type of emergency call. Each call into Fire Control, and subsequent despatch to Sub-Stations is monitored on one of three tape recorders related to the position being used.

Wireless equipment is also built into the console, in order to minimise the unnecessary movement of Control personnel.

A new Disposition Board giving a clear picture of any situation, complete with magnetised tallies has been provided, and this incorporates red warning lamps denoting those vehicles or appliances which are "on the air".

Finger-tip control of all fire bells, fire lights, and traffic warning beacons is possible by the strategic positioning of appropriate panels of switches for this purpose.

FOR ALL YOUR MOTORING REQUIREMENTS CONSULT

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FOR NEW CARS

See the wonderful range of 4 cyl Vauxhall Cars — the Victor, Super, De Luxe, and Estate, also the sparkling VX 4/90. In the 6 cyl range the wonderful Velox and elegant Cresta.

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A comprehensive range of Quality Tested used cars is always in stock at all our Branches.

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Bristol, 1, Phone 2-6211

ST. PHILIPS

Avon Street, Phone 7-9581

BRISTOL'S VAUXHALL/BEDFORD MAIN DEALER

DEFENSIVE DRIVING — YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO A REDUCTION IN ACCIDENTS

(Sgt. W. VINEY, Bristol Constabulary Road Safety Dept.)

Last year, in the City and County of Bristol, approximately 10,000 accidents occurred on our roads, resulting in a total number of 2,813 persons killed and injured.

On average, a person was killed on our roads in Bristol every week of the year!

Whilst it is appreciated that all road users have a personal responsibility in the matter of general road conduct, it is true to say that drivers have a SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY, as they are — or should be — in control of something which can KILL and MAIM.

No matter how long a person has been driving, or what standard of ability he has attained, good driving calls for constant concentration and utmost skill.

The volume of traffic has increased almost three-fold since the beginning of the last war, and therefore our crowded roads leave progressively less and less margin for error.

In an endeavour to assist drivers to maintain or perhaps in some cases improve upon their driving ability, the following Ten Commandments of Motoring are produced in this article for careful thought and consideration.

These Commandments form the basis of the Driving System taught at all Home Office Driving Schools in this country, and have been tried and proven over a long period of time, dating back to the introduction of the Road Traffic Acts in the 1930's.

TEN COMMANDMENTS OF MOTORING

1. Know the Highway Code by heart and put it into practice.

The Highway Code is the road users Bible and by adhering to its precepts you will do much to make our highways safe and more pleasant for all.

Issued under the authority of Parliament, the Highway Code sets forth rules by which all classes of road users are encouraged to govern their road behaviour. This fact must be borne in mind when giving advice to any member of the public on the proper use of the highway.

Drive according to the Highway Code and you will drive safely and well.

2. Concentrate all the time and you will avoid accidents.

Concentration is the keystone of all good driving. It is a primary duty but often a neglected one. Complete concentration will enable you to see and take notice of every detail. It is often the smallest detail that gives the clue to what will probably happen. If you miss such a detail, an accident, or at least an unpleasant experience, may result.

Concentration assists anticipation.

3. Think before acting.

The theory that a good driver drives automatically is a fallacy. To the uninitiated he may appear to. but the truth is that by continually concentrating and thinking, he has raised driving to an art.

Every corner, bend, gear change, in fact, every driving operation, is a problem which, like every other problem, can only be solved by thinking.

A thoughtful driver carries out every operation or manoeuvre in plenty of time and consequently is in the happy position of being able to accelerate from danger or stop to avoid it.

Think and avoid accidents.

4. Exercise restraint and 'hang back' when necessary.

To 'hang back' is to follow at a safe distance a preceding vehicle which you eventually intend to overtake, until you see the road ahead is clear for a sufficient distance to allow you to overtake with safety. This will call for the utmost restraint, especially when driving a fast car, but never be tempted to overtake or carry out any other manoeuvre unless it can be accomplished with 100% safety.

By exercising restraint you automatically eliminate any tendency to impede other drivers by pulling in too quickly after overtaking, an action often referred to as "cutting in".

A good maxim is "Whenever in doubt, hang back".

5. Drive with deliberation and overtake as quickly as possible.

Good driving continually calls for the making of quick and correct decisions, all of which must be carried out with deliberation.

Overtaking must always be accomplished in the minimum of time, so as to leave the road clear for others who may be travelling in the opposite direction, or behind you.

For the "Don'ts" often advocated in the text books, substitute "Deliberation". A driver with a negative complex will sooner or later hesitate at the crucial moment, possibly with fatal results.

Deliberation eliminates uncertainty.

6. Use speed intelligently and drive fast only in the right places.

It is not always safe to drive at the maximum permitted speed in restricted areas, despite the fact that the law permits you to do so. In some circumstances such a speed is definitely dangerous.

Where conditions permit it is best to drive at an even speed, as it assists in keeping traffic moving in an orderly and constant stream.

High speeds are safe only when a clear view of the road ahead is possible for a considerable distance. The speed in all cases must be governed by the amount of road that can be seen to be clear. Remember that at 60 miles per hour, a car travels a distance of 88 feet in one second. With many drivers, a second elapses between the seeing of an emergency and the applying of the brakes. Concentration and alertness are, therefore, absolutely imperative.

Any fool can drive fast enough to be dangerous.

7. Develop your car sense and reduce wear and tear to a minimum.

Car sense is the ability to get the best out of your car with an entire absence of jerks and vibration.

It entails smooth and thoughtful operation of the controls with hands and feet. This can only be achieved if the operations are carried out in plenty of time. Car sense adds to your safety factor as you will be in the right gear at the right time.

Good car sense increases the life of your car.

8. Use your horn thoughtfully; give proper signals; never black out headlights.

Many motorists do not use their horn at all, some use it aggressively, others automatically and often unnecessarily. It is every bit as important that a person in front should be acquainted with your intentions as a person behind, yet many motorists who never omit to give 'hand signals' consistently fail to give audible warning of their presence.

Use the signals given in the Highway Code. An ambiguous signal is misleading and dangerous.

Flicking headlights at night is a very efficient form of signalling. Dip them, but never black out (to black out is to switch the headlights off entirely, causing you to drive into a field of extreme darkness because the eye cannot readjust itself quickly enough after the glare of the headlights).

Give good signals and earn the praise of fellow road users.

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SPECIAL RATES FOR FIRE BRIGADE PERSONNEL

9. Be sure your car is roadworthy and know its capabilities.

A defective car or motor cycle must never be taken out. To prevent this, check your vehicle.

Before attempting to drive a strange car fast, get accustomed to its controls, acceleration, braking capabilities and characteristics.

Car and driver must blend harmoniously to ensure good driving.

10. Perfect your roadcraft and acknowledge courtesies extended to you by other road users.

Roadcraft includes every phase of driving. It is something more than road sense. Many people possess the latter, but do not make the best use of it owing to lack of control, inability to use the road and position their car to the best advantage. A driver with good roadcraft knows how to avoid awkward and possibly dangerous situations. Good roadcraft not only prevents accidents, but makes driving less arduous.

The Highway Code urges all to be courteous, but a good driver goes further and acknowledges the courtesies extended to him by every class of road user. By doing this, he sets a splendid example and does much to engender the spirit of chivalry so badly needed on our roads.

Courtesy is a great factor in road safety.

Much can be done by personal example, and it is hoped that this constructive approach to accident prevention will be taken up by every member of the Bristol Fire Brigade in an endeavour further to enhance their good record in this direction and to assist in effecting a reduction in the present dreadful and appalling waste of life and limb on our roads today.

The "Fireflash" desires to acknowledge with thanks the above article, which was authorised by the Chief Constable, Mr. George Twist, and written by Sergeant W. Viney, of the Bristol Police Road Safety Department.

It is perhaps opportune to state however, that whilst the advice is primarily intended for private motorists, the principles of "safe driving" are applicable at all times even to drivers of fire appliances who enjoy legal privileges when responding to an emergency call—"To get there safely" must be the aim.

(Ed.)

CORRECTION

On page 7 of the previous edition of "Fireflash" it was reported that Sub Officer J. Barnes of the Fire Prevention Department was about to transfer on a secondment basis to an Army Training Depot at Devizes (Wilts.).

This transfer did not in fact take place, and Sub Officer Barnes' decision not to accept the post was made almost as No. 7 edition was being printed, with the result that wrong information was promulgated. (Sorry about that (Ed.)).

INSTITUTION OF FIRE ENGINEERS — EXAMINATION SUCCESSES, 1965

Sub Officers R. C. Dring and John Barnes of the Fire Prevention Department were successful in the Graduateship examination of the Institution of Fire Engineers. Sub Officers J. G. Horton and J. Iles, both of whom serve at the Brislington Station, were also successful.

Within the framework of the examination rules, all four now automatically become eligible as having passed the Station Officers' examination.

In addition to passing the I.F.E. (Grad.) examination as reported above, Sub Officer Dring was also successful in the qualifying examination for promotion to the rank of Station Officer.

Such achievements as these are the culmination of many years' intensive study, and represent the achievement necessary for promotion to the higher ranks.

THE BOMBAY EXPLOSION

(Fm. C. McGahey, Speedwell)

It was indeed a startling experience to me whilst in Bombay on April 14th, 1944. I had recently returned to that city from a Jungle Survival Course, and having some spare time, decided to visit a friend living near the dock area.

Whilst we were more or less nonchalantly lazing, talking, and having a quiet drink, it seemed that the whole of Bombay had erupted into a vast cloud of yellow, sickening, acrid smoke, as the result of one of the worst explosion disasters ever known. Tall buildings crumbled and fell; nearly a thousand civilians and servicemen were literally blown out of existence on that indeed very grim day.

I made my way to the main gate of the dock area, to be met by hundreds of Indians fleeing in panic from the heart of the affected area.

Let me at this stage tell you some of the facts of the situation — facts which were not known at the actual time of the incident but which have come to light in recent years.

During 1944, as was the case of course during the other war years, ships would gather in Bombay harbour awaiting escort for convoy duties all over the world. The 7,000 ton British freighter "*Fort Stikene*" was in fact just another of the many ships which had arrived in convoy. She, together with her other "sisters" arrived on 13th April, 1944 with a cargo which included a large quantity of dried fish from Hull, an appreciable amount of cotton, 155 gold ingots, and 1,700 tons of ammunition and high-explosives.

As firemen, let us consider this cargo, because every item played a part in the indescribable disaster which need really never have happened but for the fact that the dried fish had such an overbearing odour that it upset the seamen and dockers. In an attempt to take effective steps to remove the offending source, the ship was unloaded of the dried fish cargo almost immediately she had docked. This portion of the cargo was given precedence to the high-risk content of explosives, the latter being temporarily left in abeyance in certain of the holds, packed sandwich-fashion between the packages of cotton, in order to afford a measure of protection during transit.

Early in the afternoon of April 14th, an Indian docker noticed a small wisp of smoke climbing skywards from the cotton stowed in No. 2 hold. He raised the alarm, and in accordance with procedure, the red flag signifying that an ammunition ship was alight was hoisted to the mast of the "*Fort Stikene*". Within minutes, the appliances of the Bombay Fire Brigade had sped to the scene, and were pumping thousands of gallons of water into the holds. Despite the prompt action taken by the Brigade however, the fire raged and grew in intensity. It was patently obvious that the actual seat of the fire was deep down. Despite this however, there was the general feeling present that the ship could, in fact, be saved. One might perhaps remember that during this stage of the war effort, shipping played an immense part in the survival of the free nations of the world, and the saving of the "*Fort Stikene*" at all costs, was by no means an exception.

At this stage, the Port Superintendent had to make a very difficult decision. If he ordered the ship to sea to be scuttled the situation would almost certainly have been saved. No doubt he thought the circumstances were not so serious and consequently decided not to have the ship scuttled despite the danger of the explosives aboard. He was fully aware of the cargo of gold worth within the region of two million pounds, and was determined to save it. He consequently ordered the ship to remain in situ and for the Fire Brigade to continue with their mammoth task. At this stage, the fish, the cotton, and the gold had now in their Satanic ways each played their respective parts in the prelude to the holocaust which was shortly to follow.

By now, the ship was a raging inferno. Smoke, thick and black, poured from the holds and vents, and progressively the fire-fighters were gradually forced back by the ever-increasing heat. The hull of the ship was glowing red.

Then it happened. At 1600 hours with a roar which I shall personally never forget, the ammunition exploded. A few minutes later a second explosion even more powerful and devastating than the first took place, which rocked the City of Bombay to its very foundations.

Altogether 18 fire appliances and their crews had been engaged on the incident throughout the afternoon. These had now been completely obliterated, no trace of them remaining!

I counted 13 ships which had been partially sunk. Within a radius of a quarter of a mile no buildings remained. Fifty warehouses had been wiped out, and every person within half a mile of the ship was dead. I joined a small band of Servicemen and we generally assisted in rescue operations from remaining warehouses which were well alight; and some of these contained high-explosives.

In the harbour itself the conflagration had spread a deadly mantle of fire over everything, and the violence of the explosion and resulting upheaval caused a tidal wave to sweep a destructive course. I can well remember a large coastal vessel of roughly 5,000 tons lifted from its mooring and resting on one of the quay-side buildings.

For three days and nights survivors fought tirelessly to rescue less fortunate persons who miraculously were still alive. Many, many brave deeds were truly done without thought of any personal risk or recognition.

The fire was now spreading to the remainder of the city. Troops were brought in from over a wide area to attempt to cut off the advance of the fire. They fought destruction with destruction in that they blasted whole blocks of valuable buildings in order to create a fire-break. Soon, the broad path which separated blocks of buildings was made and the flames brought under control. Not before a large section of Bombay had been destroyed however, and a billion dollars' worth of property destroyed; over a thousand people lost their lives and hundreds were seriously injured.

A Commission of Inquiry which was subsequently set up, ruled out the possibility of the incident being caused by sabotage. It was decided, on the basis of information obtained, that the cause was — A CARELESSLY DISCARDED CIGARETTE END OR MATCH!!

FIRE SERVICES' NATIONAL BENEVOLENT FUND

In accordance with the arrangements made early this year to hold social events on all Stations on a progressive basis to assist in the financial support of this very worthy cause, two further functions have been held since the last issue of "Fireflash".

Station No. 4 Brislington held a Social and Dance on Saturday, 20th March, and realised approximately £14 0s. 0d.

Station No. 6 Speedwell held a "Tramps' Dance" on Saturday, April 10th, the proceeds in this instance being £35 10s. 6d.

On each occasion an enjoyable evening was had by all present, and the primary object of the "Tramps" at the Speedwell Station was to fight that dreaded enemy — thirst!

Readers will recall that in No. 5 edition of this magazine, Mr. G. W. Bennett, the hon. secretary of the Group Council, kindly supplied an article on the Fire Services National Benevolent Fund. He promised too, in the final paragraph of his article, that he would "in a future issue of "Fireflash" "include an account of the day-to-day working of the Fund, and in particular, its application to every fireman and firewoman, regular or A.F.S., and former members of the Bristol Brigade".

This has not been forthcoming despite repeated reminders. How about being *shamed* into letting us have this article then Geoff?

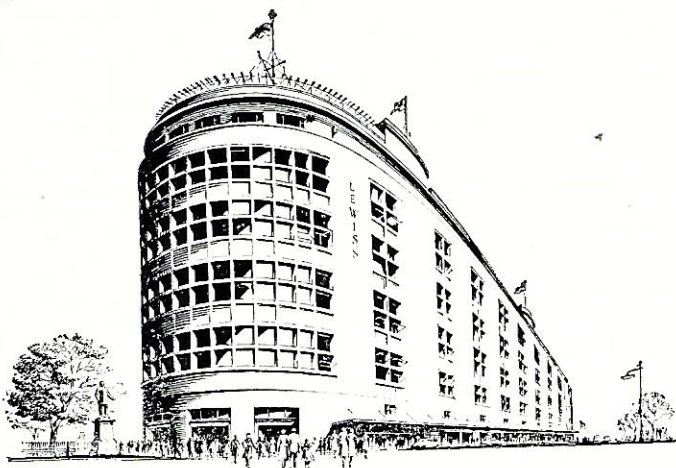
PLEASURE DERIVED FROM BRIGADE BAND

A letter from the University Settlement, Bristol, has been received at headquarters, expressing the pleasure derived by 200 elderly people on the occasion of a Band Concert given to them on Tuesday, April 6th, 1965. Great appreciation of the high standard was indicated in the communication, which should be a source of great encouragement to the Band.

A letter has also been received from the Chief Constable expressing his appreciation of the services rendered by the Brigade Band at Broadbury Road (Knowle) Police Station, on the occasion of an Open Day, on May 8th last.

The engagement book for the band continues to be kept fairly full, and this is surely indicative of the keen interest of the Bandmaster, Mr. John Foster, who is more than ably supported by Mr. Tom Miller, and last (but of course by no means least) — the musicians themselves.

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N.F.S. 17 AREA "A" DIVISION PICTORIAL RECORD

Many past and present members of the Brigade who served in the N.F.S. era will doubtless recall that to mark his retirement as Assistant Fire Force Commander of No. 17 Area, Mr. J. H. Farmer was presented with a pictorial record of the war-time activities of the Bristol Division of No. 17 Area.

Mr. Farmer has recently made the extremely kind gesture of handing the pictorial record to this Brigade for permanent preservation, and any member of the Brigade who is desirous of perusing this may do so upon application to Mr. S. P. Thomson, the chief clerk, at Brigade Headquarters.

It is felt that the circulation of the work throughout all Stations and Departments would possibly cause damage; hence its retention at Headquarters.

SILVER WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Hearty congratulations to Fireman Henry Ford (Southmead Station) and Mrs. Ford, on the occasion of the celebration of their silver wedding anniversary on 16th March, 1965.

It is with very deep regret that the death of Fm. Peter Shermur of the Avonmouth Station is announced. Peter, who passed away on March 22nd, 1965, had joined the Brigade only a matter of two years ago.

The death of Mr. Reginald Farrant, on 30th March, 1965, is also announced. Members of the Brigade who served during that time will doubtless recall Mr. Farrant's activities as Brigade Storekeeper from January 1950 until his enforced retirement through ill-health in January 1958.

PROPOSED FEDERATION OF FIRE BRIGADE PENSIONER ASSOCIATIONS

Further to the suggestion made by the Chief Fire Officer of Kent in the Autumn of 1963 to initiate the formation of a Federation of Fire Brigade Pensioners' Association, the Chief Fire Officer of Manchester has recently communicated with those Brigades which showed an interest in bringing this Association into being, of which Bristol is one.

Accordingly, at the time of writing, meetings of representatives of the Bristol N.F.S. Old Comrades Association, the Association of Members of the Former Bristol Police Fire Brigade, and the Bristol Fire Brigade Social and Welfare Association have been convened for informal discussion on the matter. Further meetings will be held as necessary in the light of additional information becoming available from Manchester.

NO POLITICAL DISCRIMINATION HERE !

It is reported by a Sub-Officer of the Central Station, that whilst he was engaged at an incident at the Conservative Party Headquarters, Orchard Street, Bristol, on the 20th May last, Fireman George Staples "literally worked like a . . . Trojan".

Ironically, George is a very active Labour Councillor, and serves on the Kingswood Urban District Council!

MARRIAGE

Fireman Leslie Watts, of Station No. 4 Brislington, was married to Miss Marlene Hunt at St. Leonard's Church, Redfield, on Saturday, March 20th last.

Fireman Watts' father, Jack, served in the A.F.S. and N.F.S. during the war years and was stationed at the then Victoria Street Station, Bristol. Jack was awarded the George Medal for his part in the Pembroke Dock incident during 1941.

The very best of good luck to Les and Marlene for the future.

SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL INDUSTRY (2)

POWER GENERATION

(Continued from No. 7 edition)

The steam and feed water cycle

The turbine which rotates the alternator has design steam inlet conditions of 900 lbs. per sq. in. and 900 degrees Fahrenheit and the steam after passing through the high pressure cylinders of the turbine exhausts to a condenser under a vacuum of 28.9 inches of mercury.

The high degree of vacuum maintained in the condensers is necessary in order that the heat loss in the condenser should be as low as possible. Using the basic cycle of Fig. 1 the heat rejected to the condenser and via the condenser cooling water to the river would amount to about 65 per cent of the total heat input to the station. This loss can be reduced by using feed heaters and at Portishead five stages of feed heating are employed. Feed heaters utilize steam bled from various stages of the turbine to heat the condensate during its return passage to the boilers. The condensate, on extraction from the condenser, is at a temperature of 80 degrees Fahrenheit and at the outlet of No. 5 feed heater has increased to 385 degrees Fahrenheit. By this means, the condenser loss is reduced to about 55 per cent of the total heat input. Fig. 3 shows in block diagram form the cycle employed at Portishead.

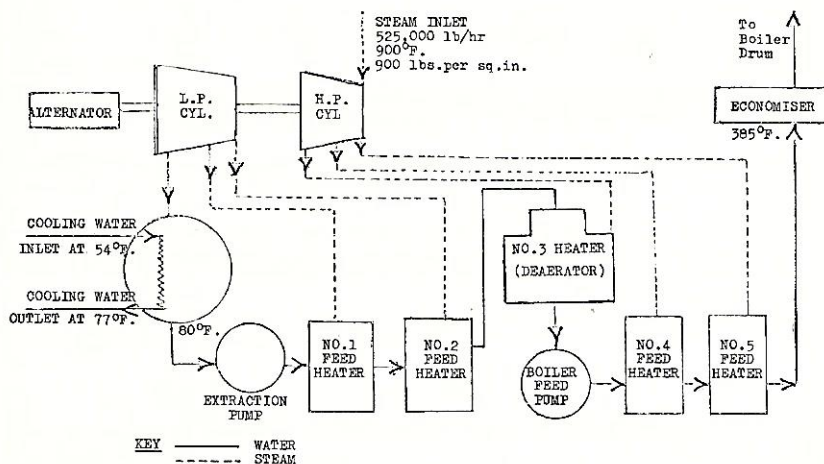


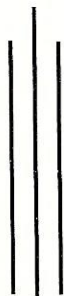
FIG. 3.

The third feed heater performs a very important function besides that of feed heating; it serves as a de-aerator and storage tank to accommodate fluctuations in feed water flow. A de-aerator is necessary in modern boiler installations to remove oxygen from the feed water, oxygen being detrimental in that it can cause very serious corrosion of the boiler drum.

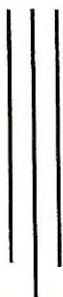
The make-up water which has to be added as a result of losses from the system is drawn from town water mains, but before this water can be used in the boiler it has to be chemically treated and evaporated. This is to avoid scaling of the boiler which could cause overheating and eventually burst tubes.

FIRE PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

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The Control Room

A photograph of the station control room is shown as Fig. 4. The control of the six turbines with regard to voltage and load can be carried out from the Control Engineer's desk but all switching of both turbo-alternators and grid transmission lines (which feed Churchill, Oldbury, Lockleaze, Bridgwater, Radstock, Wapley and Frome) must be carried out on the main panel. On the main panel there is a mimic diagram of the system with illuminated indications showing the positions of all switches and isolators.

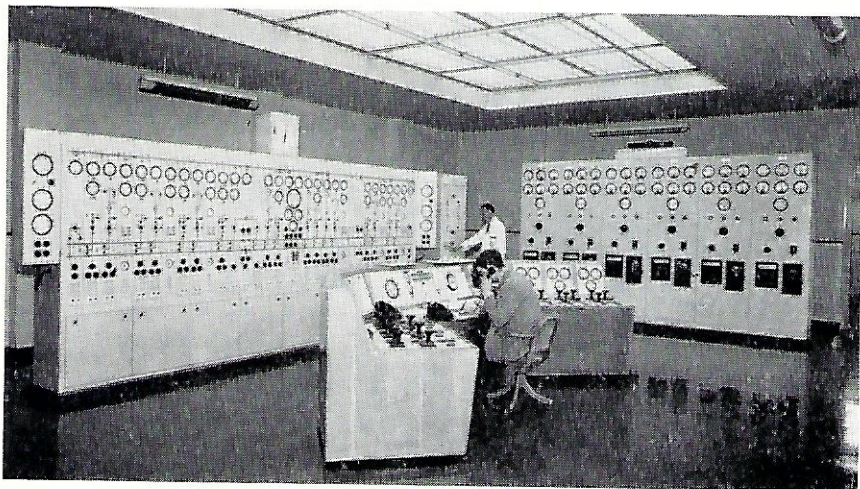


Fig. 4.

The Station Control Engineer receives telephone instructions regarding the times machines are required on load, the load required from the Station and any grid line switching from the Grid Control Room in Keynsham. The engineers at Keynsham receive from National Control (London) instructions as to the amount of power to be imported or exported by this area. These requirements are based on weather forecasts and the estimated load requirement of this and other areas. Bearing in mind these quotas, load is allocated to each Station in strict accordance with a merit order list which gives the running cost of all machines in this area. The cheapest machines to run are loaded first and when de-loading the most expensive machines to run are the first to be taken off load.

Some Statistics

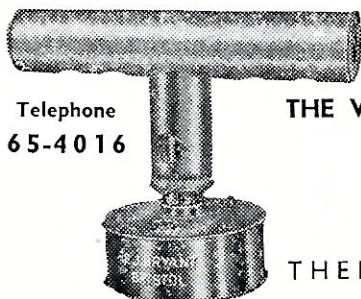
At Portishead we generate about 45 million units each week and in the process burn 15,000 tons of coal and 4,000 tons of oil. The overall thermal efficiency of the station is about 30 per cent, whilst the average for all stations of the C.E.G.B. is 27.44 per cent.

Of the units generated, about 4.5 per cent are used within the station itself to run the auxiliary plant, the main consumers of this works power being the cooling water pumps which pump 15 million gallons of water per hour through the condensers and the boiler feed pumps which each pump 50,000 gallons of water per hour to the boilers at a pressure of 1,200 per square inch.

Fire Fighting Installation

The station is well protected against fire risk, the main installation being the Mulsifyre equipment (an atomised water spray system), which covers all the major items of plant including transformers and cable tunnels. The oil storage tanks are covered by "Phomene" equipment.

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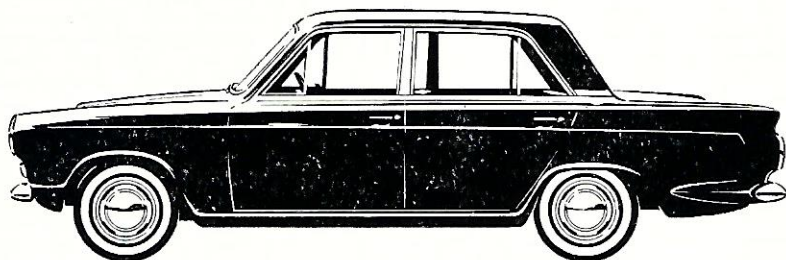
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In addition to these main installations, there are ample portable phomene extinguishers situated at strategic points for use in the event of small local fires.

In the switch rooms and the control room there are portable appliances of the CO₂ and dry powder type for use in the event of fires on electrical apparatus.

It is pleasing to record that there have been no major outbreaks of fire at Portishead since commissioning in 1955 and it is fortunate for the consumers of electricity that the supply industry as a whole has a very good record in this respect and is thus enabled to ensure continuity of supply.

It is also noteworthy that the accident rate is very low at Portishead, because a high regard is paid towards safety precautions and all safety matters are thoroughly discussed and investigated by a Safety Sub-Committee comprising management and employee representatives

CLIMBING ACCIDENT

(R. LEWIS, Southmead)

It is only on the rarest of occasions that one succeeds in anticipating a climbing accident. The risk is there — it arises from the moment you get on to the face, until such time as you and the remainder of your party are well clear of the lip of whatever precipice may be the object of your ascent. The danger is so ever-present however, that one tends to be in a continual state of expectation and tension. The risks, though obvious, are anticipated and visualised automatically before they become in effect a true source of danger. In this capacity they can be dealt with, or avoided, as the case may be. On a route of high standard, on a route not well protected, on a route exposed and airy, one can feel the tension in one's body, the pressure of real fear; and it is this fear that, whilst it may induce a weakness to the knees, an unconquerable trembling throughout the lower limbs or any other part of the body which is supporting weight, also provides one with the strength to deal with and conquer the situation.

It is common knowledge that once the tension, the fear, is removed whilst working on a cliff face, accidents take place. The second one stops being afraid is the second that one takes a careless step; that one makes the fatal, the irrevocable move. It is rare, very rare, to hear of a serious accident on a difficult route. It is only too often however, that persons lose their lives on the easiest of ascents.

Some time during the hot summer of 1964 a young man lost his life on the Avon Gorge, Bristol. He was a member of the London Tuesday Climbing Group; and was one of the most accomplished rock-climbers in the country; or at least, so we are told. He died on a route, the papers say, of extremely high standard, an overhanging, flat-roofed projection some twenty feet out from the rest of the cliff. It was, and is indeed, one of the great "classics" of the Avon Gorge; unclimbed until 1963, when the obstacles either side of it had then all been forced, and routes put up above and below. The man who died was making an attempt on this route or so it has been written down for posterity — but whilst he and his party did in effect set out to make the ascent in question, it was not upon this fierce jutting bastion that the life was lost.

For some two hours the leader fought his way out and away from the right-angle formed by the overhang where it met the steeply-tilted wall. He progressed outwards towards the damp, dripping rim of the ceiling of rock, out and away to the belt of blue; dangling, unstable and swinging, yet comparatively safe, suspended in étriers by means of the expansion bolts fitted in the drill-holes left by the original party. The face was grey-white, faintly yellowed by the strong sun; the man, in deep shadow cast by the roof lying almost horizontal above, struggled for two hours, from bolt to bolt, until he reached the outer lip. He had made his way outward until his feet dangled from the étriers above a hundred and fifty foot void — and, so spectacular was the climb that cars had stopped on the Portway, from which people emerged and stared in awe. It would have suited them to see something untoward take place as the climber inched his way over the outer rim of the black bulge and contemplated the face above. The latter, however, presented few problems, and within half an hour he had gained a band of easy rock, leading down on the right-hand side to a large terrace. It was at this point that the rope which was being paid out from below either jammed or ran out completely, and the leader was forced to remove the solitary link which still remained between himself and the rest of his party. The sole link that might just possibly have saved him.

The crowd had long since dispersed, the spectators gone save a few climbers on the ground, packing up their gear for the night. The man on the cliff was still warmed by the rays of the setting sun. The men on the ground, and the remainder of the party below the overhang, were now in shadow. The leader chose this moment, unroped, on easy rock, the type of rock one might scramble up even without the protection of a lifeline, for his final act. Whether the strain of the difficult section below had taken its toll; whether there was mud or water on the limestone; whether some handhold betrayed the body's trust, no one can be sure. The man fell. He was precipitated suddenly and without warning, in a sweeping, curved descent. He hit nothing on the way down — the ground swelled up and welcomed him. He made no sound — and as a result, the thud of his falling body was the only indication that the man had hit the ground. He writhed and groaned for a moment, and was still. Then there was the sound of running feet . . .

PRE-WAR APPLIANCES

Leyland Fire Appliance HY 4979, and Merryweather Turntable Ladder FHT 674 have recently been disposed of. HY 4979 has been purchased by Leylands for preservation, and the latter appliance has been purchased by Avonmouth Engineers, to be used in conjunction with constructional operations undertaken by that organisation.

Very shortly, Leyland "Cub" Appliance CHW 353 will be taken to a Children's Playground in the Hartcliffe area.

It is sincerely hoped that the old stalwarts will be carefully preserved and cherished. There is now only one of the "Braidwood" type appliances remaining in service (Leyland, DHY 496).

One wonders whether it would perhaps be a good idea to earmark one of these for eventual display in the proposed Transport Museum. The cost would not compare with the renovation of a steam locomotive by any manner or means, and would at least preserve a faithful servant to the city for future generations to see. When one remembers how these appliances nonchalantly performed hour after hour of pumping time during the war — apart from their peace-time roles of outstanding service, one comes to the conclusion that they should be given a place of honour in the city which they have protected for over 30 years.

THE BEGINNING OF THE (POP) WORLD

This incident occurred during a bath-night conversation between the son (aged 8) of a Fire Prevention Officer, and his mother.

The little boy made the inevitable enquiry as to how the world began. His mother gave the usual vague answer, during which she asked the boy "Who were the first two people in the world?"

The little boy thought for a moment or so, then smiling as the answer came to him in a flash, he replied "ADAM and FAITH".

SMALL DEPOSIT — PAY LATER

A recently appointed member of the Fire Prevention Department who often travels to duty by train, arrived at Temple Meads Station one day, and decided that before presenting himself at Fire Prevention Headquarters, he really ought to clean his shoes.

Now a fairly recent addition to the miscellaneous types of slot-machines at Temple Meads Station is an automatic boot or shoe cleaner — coin operated!

Our friend decided to avail himself of the facilities offered by the machine and after inserting his coin, operated the lever which deposits a measured "blob" of polish on to each shoe. Then his real troubles began.

In order to make the machine complete the operation of blacking and polishing, it is necessary to insert a further coin. This he did, but unfortunately, no doubt due to his using a counterfeit coin, or perhaps not having changed his currency to that required by the machine upon his arrival at Temple Meads, from the "sticks" the machine resolutely refused to carry out its requirements, despite a violent assault by our hero. His threats to "get" the machine under the Offices, Shops, & Railway Premises Act were of no avail and he was obliged to beg nearby stall-holders to supply him with a change of currency so that he could try the machine again. Again to no degree of success.

He eventually arrived on duty in a very weary state through having walked on his heels in an effort to avoid getting the "blobs" of shoe polish on his trousers.

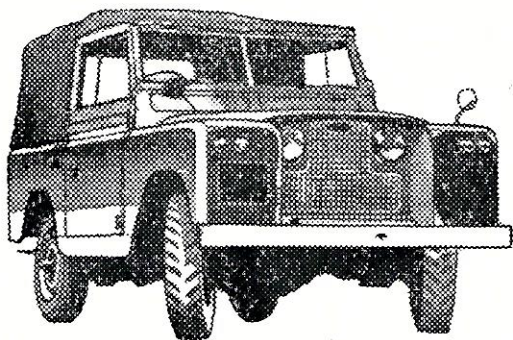
Could this possibly be the first of the revolts of the machines? Be warned!

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