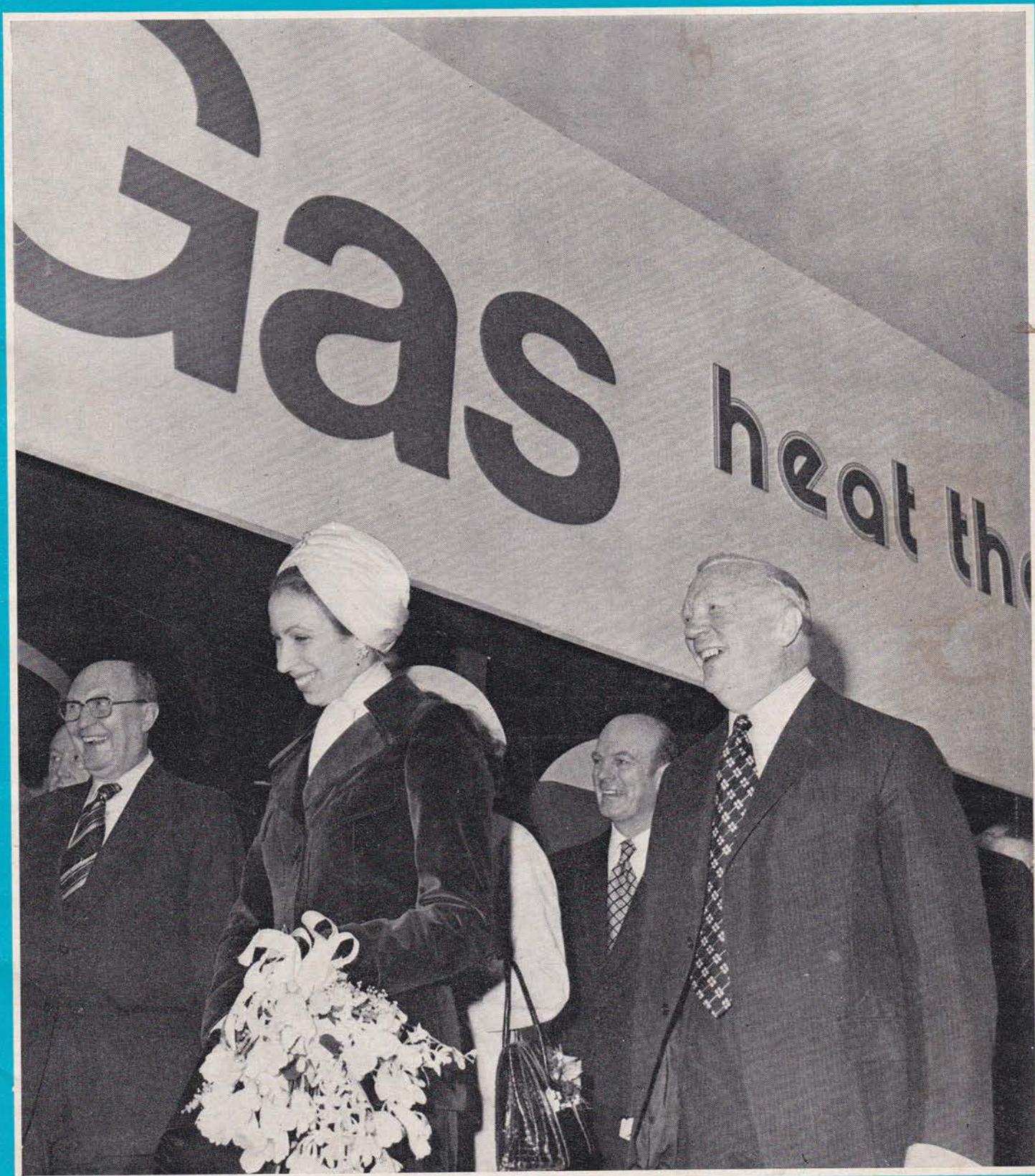


BRITISH GAS

REVIEW

SPRING 1975



BRITISH GAS REVIEW

Vol. 1. No. 3

SPRING 1975

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Editor: Sandra Oliver, MIPR, MAIE
Editorial Assistant: Susan Johnstone, B.Sc.

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Public Relations Department,
British Gas Corporation,
59 Bryanston Street,
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Tel: 01-723 7030 Ext: 2568/71.

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COAL INDUSTRY SOCIETY LUNCHEON



The British Gas site at Westfield, Fife – once a coal gasification plant – is today a research centre aimed at developing substitute natural gas from coal

WHEN British Gas Chairman, Sir Arthur Hetherington spoke at the Coal Industry Society luncheon in January, the Press were quick to report those sections of his speech dealing with prices, as well as producing headlines such as 'Gas May Turn Back to Coal'.

The theme of Sir Arthur's talk was the future of gas and, 'It seems' he said 'more a time for prophets than for forecasts'. But he was encouraged, he went on, by the way the gas industry forecasts, which were embodied in the 1967 Fuel Policy's White Paper, 'have stood the test of time'.

The White Paper began by stating that the discovery of North Sea gas was a major event in the evolution of Britain's energy supplies. It estimated that gas sales would reach 13.3 thousand million therms a year in 1975 as against 3.5 thousand million in 1966.

'I am glad to tell you,' said Sir Arthur, 'that we are almost exactly on that target and that our procurement, transmission and marketing of gas have followed closely the pattern which we planned at the time of the early discoveries. If the gas industry had not pursued its conversion policies so hard and I will say, without qualification, so efficiently, this country would be in a very much worse position today than it now is.'

He pointed out that British Gas was now supplying about 30% of the nation's useful heat and that by the early 1980s, natural gas could well supply about 40% of Britain's heat; as big a proportion as any other single fuel.

Of course, any reserves of gas around our shores, whatever their size, cannot last for ever and so the Chairman indicated that towards the end of this century 'The clock will have come full circle and the gas industry will again be looking to coal, if at the right price, to provide some of the raw material for manufacturing gas'.

If the Gas industry had not pursued its conversion policies so hard . . . so efficiently, this country would be in a very much worse position'

**Sir Arthur Hetherington
Chairman**

Coal gasification

Sir Arthur referred to the programme of tests on the gasification of a variety of coals which is being worked on with the co-operation of the American Gas Association at British Gas's Westfield site in Scotland. (*Review looked at the Westfield project in some detail last summer and, in particular, at the high-pressure slagging gasifier which has been produced with the aim of developing a new commercial process for coal gasification.*) 'And which was based,' said the Chairman, 'on successful pilot work carried out by the Corporation's research staff over the past 10 years.'

Cheap hydrogen

Sir Arthur suggested that it could be possible that cheap hydrogen would become available by the end of this century and as hydrogen could very readily be converted to methane the gas industry might turn that way.

After discussing the present situation regarding our current supplies of natural gas, Sir Arthur looked at the energy sector as a whole. He felt that, although over the longer term the demand for energy seemed likely to

continue to grow, there was probably a good deal of fat in the present system which the era of subsidised energy supplies encouraged. He felt that if energy demand could be reduced eventually by 10% then the Government measures introduced in December (aimed at reducing overall demand by 2%), must be seen as an 'interim measure to be augmented by other measures.'

Finally, the Chairman made it clear that he saw natural gas continuing to be used as a premium fuel, mainly in the domestic and commercial markets and that coal's primary role would be as a bulk fuel. He doubted, however, that nuclear energy would play a major role before the 1990s and suspected that electricity's share of final energy consumption would be likely to rise only gradually from its present level. He, of course, accepted that if towards the end of the century there should be a major breakthrough in nuclear technology, this would have wide repercussions on the existing pattern of fuel usage, with some contraction in petroleum's share of the market likely.

'In short,' Sir Arthur said, 'gas will continue to be an important source of energy indefinitely into the future and over the next 10 to 15 years it will have a growing but particular role. I think that other fuels may and should concentrate much more on doing the job for which they are best suited with a resultant net saving in energy rather than trying to get into markets for which they are not suited.'

'I think that I had better end by saying that the only forecast about which I am completely confident is that just as today's energy problems look very different from those of 10 years ago, the problems of 10 years ahead will be just as different from those of today—and I do not expect they will be any easier than today's.'

Central Control

Few people outside the industry know how North Sea gas is kept flowing 24 hours a day from the gas fields to the consumer. In this article, ex-Central Controller, Ron Hildrew — who recently retired after nearly 45 years in the Gas industry — writes about the work of Central Control.

THE FIRST national control room of the industry saw the light of day in 1964 when a central controller was appointed to administer and operate the importation of liquefied natural gas from Algeria and its regasification and transmission to site Area Boards through 225 miles of pipeline. The physical operation of the system was exercised from a control room at the reception terminal at Canvey Island.

Since then the tremendous changes arising from the discovery and development of North Sea gas have resulted in a high pressure gas transmission system, probably the most sophisticated in the world, extending over 2,200 miles and supplying natural gas to all Regions of British Gas and to a substantial number of large industrial users. From 100 million cu. ft. per day in 1964, the system has already supplied well over 5,000 million cu. ft. on many days during this winter.

Compressor stations have been installed at selected locations to ensure, by restoring falling pressure, the maximum required pipeline capacity at all times according to gas demand. L.N.G. (liquefied natural gas) stations have been installed, at the extremities of the system, to provide for natural gas to be injected to meet demand during very cold weather ('peak shaving') and also to give a security of supply to cover an unforeseen, or in some cases a planned, interruption of flow from the pipeline. Together with remotely controlled block valves and volumetric controllers, this equipment has required a parallel in growth of the control and communications system.

Central Control now consists of two control rooms, one in London, responsible for policy, planning and programming and overall control; the other at Hinckley in Leicestershire, is responsible for continuous monitoring and operational control of the grid system. Both control rooms are manned day and night and monitoring facilities are available in London but without remote control functions.

To provide a high degree of security, a two-tier system of telemetry and control has been adopted. Information, flow rates, pressures, alarm states etc, is telemetered to the local Region control room and then passed by data link to Hinckley. It is possible for the Region to monitor the data being trans-

mitted from the outstations within its area. In the event of a failure in the equipment or data links, control can be taken by either the Region or by Central Control at Hinckley. High reliability Post Office lines are used for telemetry of data and equipment has been duplicated where necessary.

That is a brief and general description of what we have—how does it all work?

There are many factors affecting natural gas demand which can be planned for in advance, irrespective of weather conditions on any particular day. The differences in seasonal demand, holiday periods, weekends, day of the week, day and night levels and industrial use all have an effect. Add the 'peaks' at breakfast, lunch, and evening loads and a demand curve throughout the 24 hours can be prepared by each Region, showing variations (*diurnal swing*) that can only be met within a Region by taking gas from stock, i.e. *conventional gas holders, high pressure storage and line pack and, in some Regions and to a limited extent, by changing feedstock on manufacturing plant*. This latter facility will soon disappear when conversion is completed.

Industrial use of gas, largely non-seasonal and non-temperature sensitive, helps to flatten the daily demand curve provided it is on a steady three-shift basis but national, economic and other problems can and do influence gas demand and add further difficulty.

Due to the rapid growth in gas demand it has not been possible to construct sufficient storage to enable Regions to contain fully the variations in demand during the day and a large proportion of fluctuation is therefore placed on the national system.

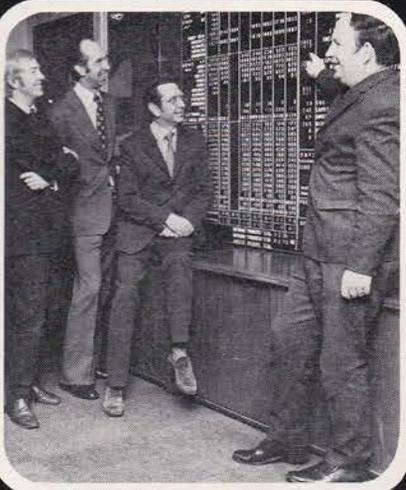
British Gas contracts with North Sea Producers allow variations in flow rates subject to certain periods of notice and the extent to which these supplies can be used to cover diurnal swing is somewhat limited. However, by careful planning of the use of *line pack (taking gas out of the pipeline at the peaks and replacing during off peak periods)* and changing the rate of supply to our large 'sellers' option industrial consumers, the demand throughout the day can be contained. It all sounds so easy but one rarely has normal weather—and temperature changes have the greatest effect on gas demand.

Continued on Page 6

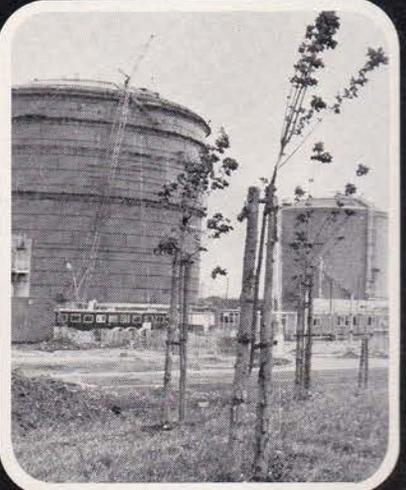
Canvey Terminal in Essex where the first liquid natural gas was received



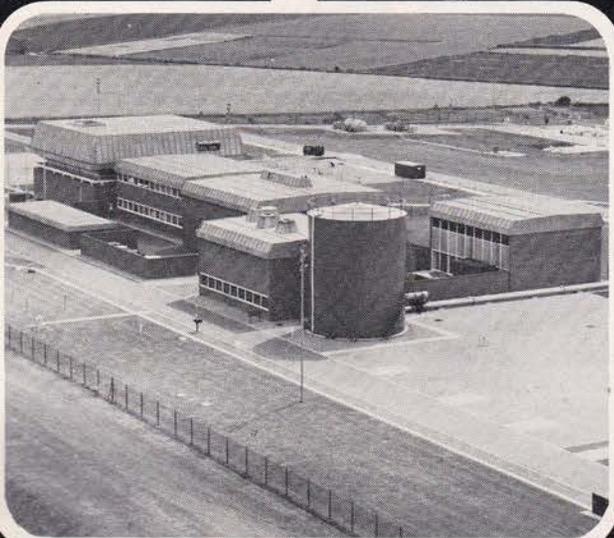
Senior Control Officer Peter Knight (right) discusses daily operations



Partington LNG Facility in Lancashire where liquid gas is to be stored



Central control room—British Gas HQ, Marble Arch



Bacton in Norfolk, a typical coast reception terminal



200 telexes pass through the Marble Arch control room every day

Dorset Oil Search



A programme of round-the-clock drilling has been resumed in south-east Dorset.

Further drilling is currently taking place to establish the likely potential of the oil find at Wytch Farm, near Corfe Castle, which was announced early last year.

The British Gas subsidiary, Gas Council (Exploration) Ltd., working in partnership with BP Petroleum Development Ltd., has been granted planning consent for exploratory drilling on three sites, all within a mile of the original discovery. The first well, half-a-mile to the east, was completed in February.

New Programme Proposed

Meanwhile, permission is being sought for three exploration wells about two miles to the north-west, near to the village of Arne.

Since the evaluation programme for Wytch Farm was announced last July, further survey work has been carried out and it now seems likely that the Arne wells would be penetrating a separate structure. It is considered important that the area be explored thoroughly before submitting proposals for the commercial exploitation of oil.

The proposed wells would be approximately one mile, two-thirds of a mile and 400 yards from the village. Work would commence on the site farthest from Arne and would be progressive, the drilling of each well depending on the results of the previous one. The last and least likely site to be drilled is the one nearest to Arne. Here, the precise location for drilling was chosen in consultation with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, which leases the land.

Drilling would be to a depth of around 4,000 feet and each well should not take more than about a month to complete.

Central Control

Continued from Page 4

Every week, completed by Friday, a programme is prepared for each day of the following week, matching supply with demand under three weather conditions, normal, mild and cold. The demand levels are the summations of the Regions' estimates to which are added H.Q. industrial consumers and the estimated requirements for compressors, L.N.G. Stations etc. The supplies are programmed, taking into consideration contract limitations at the time of year on North Sea gas, base load L.N.G. from Canvey Terminal and any special operations or compressor outage that may affect gas transmission. Computer simulations are carried out to ensure that all potential situations can be met and that grid security and maximum economy are maintained at all times. Notifications are sent to the Producers giving estimated daily requirements for the following week and Hinckley Control, Compressor Groups and Terminals are also notified of the programmed operations.

This preliminary work, planning and programming, lead on to actual daily operations in Control Rooms throughout British Gas.

In Central Control in London a programme is prepared each afternoon for the following day using the most up-to-date weather forecasts. A procedure, similar to that completed on a weekly basis, is then carried out with computer simulations and the necessary notifications made to the Producers and the Operational Departments.

However, there is no start or end of a daily operation—a continuous re-appraisal of the demand/supply situation is a critical part of hour by hour control. Weather forecasts for selected locations throughout the country are received every two hours and, together with actual temperatures and gas send-out experienced up to any hour of the day, a reassessment of the daily demand is made in conjunction with the Regions with corrective action being taken as required.

Computer simulations are used extensively to assist the control officer in anticipating any future action required, such as changes in input rates at the Terminals or compressor working. Compressors are required to speed up the response of the national system to changes of input but they cannot be put to work instantaneously and it is essential to notify requirements as far ahead as possible.

During periods of peak gas demand there may be a need to limit supply to 'sellers option' or 'interruptible' industrial consumers, both within Regions and on the national system and to augment the input by calling upon regasified L.N.G. or substitute natural gas. All these actions, however, require notice to be given as early as possible thus, once again illustrating that a con-

tinuous watch through the 'crystal ball' is vital. Throughout the whole operation security and economy have to be given the utmost consideration.

Continuous monitoring carried out by the Hinckley Control staff and the design of the telemetry and communications equipment ensure that any unusual circumstances or emergencies are quickly noticed and shift staff in both the London and Hinckley Controls will use their experience and expertise to diagnose the reasons for an unusual condition and take corrective action. Some incidents could be minor but others of an emergency type require rapid diagnosis and action to prevent a failure of gas supplies, injury to personnel or damage to plant.

An important function of Central Control is the preparation, often up to two years in advance, of the annual maintenance and special operations programme. These could involve offshore platforms, terminal plant, feeder mains and compressor stations being out of action for longer than the normal periods. Meticulous planning, involving the Producers, the Plant Engineers, Pipelines and Communication and Instrumentation Departments, and in some cases the Regions, is absolutely essential to ensure that gas demand throughout the year, under all weather conditions, can be met.

Terminal staff check gas quality continuously, calorific value, specific gravity, water and hydrocarbon dew-points, hydrogen sulphide and odour. The basic composition of North Sea gas is fairly constant but there are rare occasions, when plant breakdowns at the Producers' installations result in 'off-specification' gas being proffered. The ultimate decision to reject or accept lies with Central Control. In fact, such gas would only be accepted where it is vital for supply.

Apart from the planning and supervision of the Control Room operations, day staff play an important part in the business of the Corporation. The operation of numerous contracts including North Sea gas purchases, sales to Regions and industrial consumers and the administration of the national contracts for the purchase of liquid feedstocks, L.N.G. shipments for Algeria, and sales of L.N.G. by road tanker—the responsibility for the actual performance of all these activities lies mainly with Central Control.

Central Control is part of a team, a controlling link between gas producer and consumer, a team which includes many men 'in the field', at Terminals, Compressor Stations, L.N.G. installations and the travelling maintenance teams who ensure that the systems operate efficiently at all times. **BCR**

The work of the Plant, Transmission and Grid Control groups will feature in the next issue of Review

Commercial Catering plan gets the go-ahead for 1976



Mr. Laurence J. Furneaux, Managing Director of Heatrae Catering Equipment (left), and Mr. D. F. Cooper, Director of Purchasing and Supplies, British Gas (right), Mr. R. J. Crafter, Manager Commercial Operations, British Gas (top left) and Mr. A. G. Davis, Marketing Supplies Purchasing, British Gas (top right).

AGREEMENT has been reached with Heatrae Ltd., Loughborough, for the joint development of a new range of British Gas designed, commercial catering equipment, comprising a cooker, deep-fat fryer and grill.

Based on a detailed market appraisal and technical research carried out by Watson House and the London Research Station, the new equipment incorporates all the best features of existing appliances, and is purpose-designed for the special requirements of restaurants, pubs, clubs, hotels, hostels and small caterers generally.

Catering is an important part of the commercial gas market, representing some 25% to 30% of sales, and an even larger proportion of revenue because it is very much a premium market. Gas holds about 80% of the commercial catering market, but electricity has been making inroads, particularly in cafes, snack bars and pubs.

Market surveys indicated that whilst gas was rated highly for speed and quality of cooking, appliances compared unfavourably with their electrical equivalents in design, ease of cleaning, and cleanliness in use. In many cases these convenience factors were rated as more important than running costs. Electrical equipment had also been designed for particular market sectors and offered a wide range of appliances and applications.

Following the results of these surveys, a Working Party consisting of Marketing Division representatives, supported by Watson House, Purchasing (Value Analysis Section), Finance and Service. Market research

had identified that 85% of the catering gas load came from three appliances—the cooker, fryer and grill—so it was decided to concentrate on these three, with the snack bar, pub and club particularly in mind.

The resulting specification called for appliances that were modern, easy to clean and move, of modular design, easily serviceable and which incorporated the latest types of burner and control equipment. These requirements were confirmed by further 'user attitude' research. At the same time the range of existing catering appliances was surveyed to identify bad points and to ensure that as many good points as possible could be incorporated in the new specifications.

Presentation

In May, 1974 Watson House held a presentation for all interested catering manufacturers, entitled 'Catering Appliances—The British Gas Approach' and details of market research and model equipment specifications were made available. They were then invited to tender to join British Gas in the development of basic design concepts. Manufacturers all had the same opportunity to quote for the project, and this approach also ensured that British Gas kept control of the time-scale of the development programme.

The eight manufacturers who subsequently submitted tenders were visited in turn by the Watson House project team and two of them were shortlisted.

Heatrae Catering Equipment Company Ltd. were eventually awarded the contract. First working drawings

have already been produced and styling considerations are being decided with production planned for 1976.

As about 50% of the market for commercial catering equipment lies within the public sector—educational establishments, Ministries, hospitals and large hotels, and is subject to bulk purchase procedures, the new range of equipment has to meet many different applications.

The new British Gas range is eminently suitable for many of these and will doubtless make considerable inroads into this market. It is also hoped that manufacturers who produce medium and heavy-duty equipment will be encouraged by British Gas to improve their own designs for this sector.

The remainder of the market consists of restaurants, cafes, snack bars, pubs, clubs and boarding houses, and it is here that the new British Gas range will make its most immediate impact.

One of the problems with much of the existing equipment is the difficulty in lighting and manual ignition is still very much the order of the day.

Poor design and location of controls, leading to untidy layout of wiring, is another problem. The location of burners and flash tubes is often such that any spillage will extinguish the pilot. Lack of cost-and-value engineering is often evident in the design of existing equipment. Another important point is the difficulty in cleaning many types of appliances. There are some good points too, such as an easy-to-clean oven with rack runners, a pressed fry-pan hob which is both

Continued overleaf

easy-to-clean and safer, and the use of legs so that the floor under and around the appliance can be kept clean. This is an important point as a survey of several types of commercial kitchens showed just how difficult it is to keep floors and equipment clean with most existing appliances. It is clear that flexible connections and legs will allow much easier cleaning and all these 'plus' features will be incorporated in the new range.

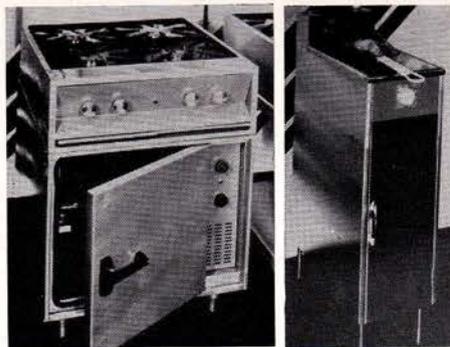
Delivery and installation is another problem area and the modular design of the new equipment will mean that it is much easier to store, handle, transport, and fix—so that commercial sales representatives will not be put off from selling catering equipment even to the notorious cellar and basement kitchens, where problems often arise.

As the final design details of the new range are still being worked out, the photographs shown here serve only to illustrate some of the principles on which the new equipment is based. They will bear little resemblance to the finished product.

The aim is to supply appliances to Regions for technical appreciation and training purposes before the end of 1975, and to launch the new British Gas range at Hotelympia in January 1976.

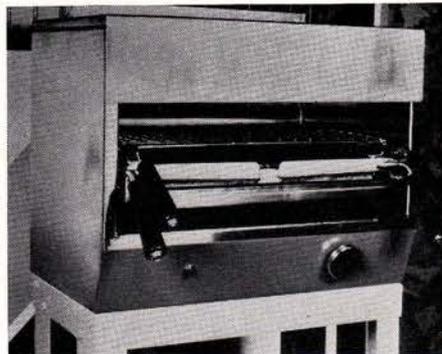
To achieve this, development, tooling and production is being co-ordinated by a Steering Committee consisting of representatives of Heatrae Catering, Watson House, Purchasing (Cost/Value Engineering), Quality Control, H.Q., Service Department and other specialists.

At the same time a Working Party of Regional and Headquarters staff are investigating all aspects of marketing the new range and will consider and make recommendations to the Commercial Sales Committee on purchasing, stores, transport, selling/promotional activities and installation (including spare parts policy).



1

2



3

1. This 4-burner cooker is capable of turning out 50/60 meals a day (there is great competition at this end of the market). It incorporates flexible connections, automatic ignition (Watson House burner) and is modular in design.

2. Also designed to meet electrical competition, this fryer can handle, say, 70 lb. of blanched chips in 4 oz. portions i.e. 280 portions per hour, a performance more than adequate for our target market.

3. An updated and restyled grill

GAS &

BRITAIN is facing one of the most difficult economic periods in its history and the energy crisis will inevitably be a critical factor.

Although world natural energy resources are being depleted at an accelerating pace and oil prices still rise, we have indigenous coal and natural gas, with the prospect of further oil and gas from the North Sea.

Meantime, imported oil is costing Britain £10 million a day. The Government is determined to reduce the bill, and its energy conservation measures have already saved us some £150 million.

The immediate and urgent aim is to reduce energy consumption by 10% as quickly as possible.

The fuel industries have a vital role to play. In British Gas, we have acted quickly to ensure that customers are aware of the need for energy conservation, that gas is too valuable to waste and that they know exactly how to achieve the necessary economies.

We are doing this in several ways. One is by mounting a major advertising and public relations campaign to make all customers aware of the need for fuel conservation and to ensure that they know how to achieve the necessary savings.

The message is being put across by special advertisements in newspapers and by incorporating information about the need for conservation in our television advertising. We are producing booklets about fuel saving measures for customers and are supplying articles and general information for newspapers, trade publications and other media.

One of our most important energy conservation promotions is a new, eight-page booklet, 'Save Gas, Save Money' produced by Public Relations, which gives domestic customers comprehensive advice on how to avoid wasting gas and invites them to send in their own suggestions.

All these measures are intended to reinforce the Government's campaign, and Mr. Eric Varley, Secretary of State for Energy, has paid tribute to our efforts and the way in which we are co-operating with his Department in promoting fuel economy. He said recently:

'I believe that the Gas Corporation's current approach in telling people that gas is too good to waste is not merely

£500 Challenge'74 Cooker Awards

THE 'CHALLENGE '74' Cooker Sales Competition winners were presented with their awards by Sir Arthur Hetherington at London's Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington, in December. There were 24 winners in all; one winning salesman or saleswoman and one sales supervisor represented each Region. Each received £500 plus an opportunity to choose items from the Incentive Company Catalogue, who organised the Competition on behalf

of British Gas.

British Gas Corporation personnel who attended the presentation included Mr. J. A. Buckley (Member for Marketing), Mr. B. G. H. Clegg (Director of Marketing) and Mr. G. F. Claxton (Sales Director). Members of the Society of British Gas Industries, Regional Domestic Marketing Committee members and representatives of the Incentive Company were also present.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

useful but highly effective. The British Gas Corporation has blazed the trail in many ways.'

NEDO Report

Gas also attracts favourable comment in the recent NEDO report on Energy Conservation which examines energy supplies to the domestic sector between 1960 and 1972.

In this period the net energy supply remained almost constant, although the number of households increased by about 18% with a substantial increase in the number of houses with central heating. Improvements in the efficiency of use in net energy supplied to households more than compensated for the energy required for additional appliances and for the improved standard of heating, and the greater efficiency is due partly to improvement in appliances and partly to fuel substitution.

The report comments: 'The substitution of natural gas for coal is thought to have been an important factor, since gas heaters would usually be much more efficient than the older types of open coal fires which they often replaced.'

Obviously these facts do not support the opinion that competitive advertising by the energy industries (particularly gas) encourages the wasteful use of energy.

NEDO says the improvement in overall efficiency may continue to 1980 by which time 'gas should provide nearly half the energy used in households'.

It states: 'The high efficiency of gas for domestic use has been noted. It has almost as much flexibility as electricity but does not involve the high overheads of electricity generation, so that gas used in households involves only about one third of the demand on primary energy resources as electricity.'

The report states that the effective efficiency of electricity is 27%, excluding the energy needed to produce the coal, oil and gas for the power stations, and the energy required to build them.

Because of the high cost of electric space heating, in the short to medium term, direct use of fossil fuels for central heating can be expected to give a significant saving of primary energy.

For some uses, the report makes a direct comparison between the primary energy demands of different heat sources—'For electric cooking appliances and for electric hot water heaters, the primary energy consump-



Mr. Eric Varley, Secretary of State for Energy, opens the British Gas School of Fuel Management (See Page 26)

tion will normally be more than twice that of natural gas, and this conclusion cannot be changed by improvements in efficiency using conventional appliances.'

It points out that the annual net energy consumption of an electric cooker averages about 4.5 giga joules (1250 kWh), while an electric water heater in a kitchen would use about 5.4 GJ (1500 kWh)—'It is unlikely that the efficiencies of these appliances can be significantly improved, so that the only way to save energy would be to switch to gas.'

A gas cooker would use about 4.8 GJ and a gas water heater about 7.6 GJ under similar conditions, but for the two appliances the demand on primary energy resources for gas would total only about 14 GJ, while the demand on electricity would be about 35 GJ.

It is also pointed out that washing machines which use a cold water supply followed by electric heating

would be more efficient if they were adapted to take a hot water supply. The installation of a gas water heater could prove economic.

The need for oil-burning domestic central heating systems will remain in areas where natural gas is not available, but while their efficiencies have improved in recent years they probably fall below those of natural gas.

The 'system's thermal efficiency' of the gas industry, states NEDO, was 71.9% for the year 1968, when the supply of natural gas was very small whilst, with all energy overheads included, the 'systems energy efficiency' for electricity was about 25.0%. In 1972 natural gas supplied about 70.0% of the output of the industry and is likely to exceed 90.0% in the next decade. In the same period, the 'system's thermal efficiency' for the gas industry is also expected to better 90.0%.

If all the domestic electric heating

Continued overleaf

↳ ... while the Government will give a lead, success will depend on ... individual businesses ↴

demands, including cooking, forecast for the next few years were supplied by power stations, they would require about 30 million tons of coal a year. If they were supplied by natural gas, about three thousand million therms would be needed.

This is equivalent to about 12 million tons of coal a year—a fuel saving of 18 million tons of coal equivalent, with substantial savings on the capital cost of power stations compared with gas installations, possibly as much as £1,000 million.

Throughout British Gas, urgent action is being taken to cut out the wasteful use of energy. Measures at Headquarters include economies in lighting, heating, use of cars, and advertising and display lighting, and similar steps have been taken throughout the Regions.

The business sector

Our industrial and commercial customers are particularly concerned to avoid wasteful use of energy, since fuel costs are now a very significant part of their operating costs. The Government intends to make loans available to enable industry to invest in energy-saving equipment, and urgent discussions on fuel-saving are under way with local authorities.

Companies have been asked to state the amount spent on fuel and steps taken to save energy, and to appoint a member of staff with specific responsibility for energy-saving.

But Mr. Varley has emphasised that while the Government will give a lead, success will depend primarily on the efforts of individual businesses.

School of Fuel Management

The gas industry is taking every step to help the business sector to respond to that lead. We are concentrating on ensuring that industrial and commercial customers are fully informed about our technical services, now geared more closely than ever to fuel efficiency, and that they have every opportunity to take advantage of them.

By taking advantage of the advice and expertise available to them through the gas utilisation and fuel efficiency services run by our Regions, many industrial and commercial customers are already reducing the amount of gas they use, often with substantial savings. We have now set up the British Gas School of Fuel Management to develop this service still further.

Its objective is to promote fuel conservation principally by showing management how it can introduce immediate short-term fuel economies without involving plant re-design or

major expenditure.

The School, which absorbs the School of Industrial Gas Engineering, at the Midlands Research Station, Solihull, helps customers to examine and evaluate all aspects of fuel management, and advise them on the action required to put the right techniques into effect.

Initially, the School is running courses for works managers, plant engineers and supervisors as well as for senior executives in the business community and public administration.

One of the most revealing areas of fuel conservation the School explores

is the energy audit. All organisations have both financial and physical audits of various types. Energy audits are relatively rare but they can be just as useful. By balancing energy purchased against requirements, losses and waste they can highlight areas for improvement and show simple straightforward steps that can be taken to achieve effective fuel economies.

The School of Fuel Management points out the importance of this and all the ground that must be covered by a customer wanting to ensure that he gets the best possible value out of his gas (see page 26).

Photonews



On the University of London's Celebration of Foundation day, Sir Arthur Hetherington was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Science by H.M. The Queen Mother.



The Secretariat

THE ROLE of Company or Corporation Secretary is a very important one, particularly in a large enterprise like British Gas . . . Sandra Oliver interviews Wilfred Burnstone, Secretary of British Gas, about his work.

S.O. Mr. Burnstone, you are a lawyer. You came to British Gas H.Q. from the East Midlands Region where you were Secretary and Member of the Board. Could we perhaps begin by looking at the role the Secretariat plays today, and indeed since your appointment at the time British Gas was reorganised in January, 1973?

W.B. The Secretariat of the Corporation is similar to the Secretariat of a company except that we operate under the Gas Act rather than the Companies Act. The Secretary is regarded as the official link with the outside world rather in the way that a Town Clerk might be regarded as the link within a local authority. My overall responsibility is to see that the Corporation acts within its statutory powers and carries out its statutory duties. I advise the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman and the Members accordingly.

How does this fit in with the Corporation's activities?

As with many other large bodies, particularly those which operate on a national scale, the Corporation devises its policies through the exchange of views between the representatives of the various disciplines and their opposite numbers in the Regions. One way of achieving this is through the formal committee structure which has been adopted. The Secretariat is responsible for all aspects of servicing the meetings of the Corporation, the Executive Committee, the Regional Chairmen and, at slightly less frequent intervals, the Corporation subsidiary companies. You will appreciate that this is quite a heavy work-load in itself.

That gives us some idea of the overall involvement of the Secretariat on policy-making internally and I should like to come back to that a little later. But could you now indicate to what extent you have dealings outside the Corporation, say with Government departments?

Our main day to day link is with the Department of Energy because the Secretary of State for Energy has overall responsibility for all the nationalised fuel industries. We are in touch with officials of the Department at all levels on a day to day basis and it is very important for the industry that we have a good working relationship.

I think I can claim that this is the case. Obviously a nationalised industry must take account of the advice it is given by the Government, even if we do not always agree with it, but I think it fair to say that the Department is equally ready to listen to our advice. Apart from the Department of Energy, there are other important bodies of a governmental nature with whom we have to deal and where the Secretariat plays a crucial role.

Before we move on to them, could we talk about something which is of topical interest. That is, your recent liaison with the Department of Energy in connection with the modification of obligations to supply? Perhaps you might tell us what this means in simple terms?

Well, the background to this is that when the public became aware of the problems of other fuel industries and the high cost of their products, the demand for gas increased far in advance of the rate at which it was

possible to afford new or increased supplies. The position was exacerbated during the three day week but, quite apart from the particular circumstances of last year, our dependence on natural gas means that increases in supply are not regular because supply depends on the speed with which new gas fields can be developed and additional gas be made available. When we looked at the position it became obvious that our obligation to supply gas under the terms of existing legislation could not be met in all cases.

So we sought—and were granted—a limited relief from our obligation to provide new or increased supplies to the larger of our commercial and industrial customers. Domestic customers are not affected. So far this relief, although it has been extended once, will only take us to the end of November this year but we are trying to persuade the Department that it would make sense to revise our statute on a permanent basis. This does not mean that we shall not be doing our utmost to continue to obtain and sell as much gas as we can.

One hears about industrial consumers who may be situated really close to a gas main but cannot have a supply. Is this so?

In some cases this can happen. At the moment the statute says that we have to supply a customer if he is within 25 yards of the main, and it is from this obligation that we have been given relief in the industrial and commercial sectors. In the case of customers more than 25 yards from a main, our obligation has not been absolute but has been subject to our agreeing satisfactory economic terms for putting in a supply. The fact re-

mains that, in present circumstances, there is just not enough gas to go round. We see no merit in supplying gas for a crude use to, say, an industrialist who owns premises within 25 yards of a main and having to deny it for a premium use to one not within that 'magic' distance.

Many of us are, of course, aware of the close interest that M.P.s take in our affairs. Of course, this is another area of activity which falls heavily on the Secretariat.

That's true! M.P.s quite rightly take a particular interest in the affairs of nationalised industries especially when, like ourselves, their activities affect virtually every household in the country. We provide information to M.P.s in several ways.

We provide information to assist the Department in answering questions in the House which have been put to Ministers. Then there are those questions which M.P.s put directly to our Chairman which may relate to matters they have either raised personally or to points which have been made to them by constituents. These could range from why consumer Betty Bloggs of Barnstaple could not get a replacement part for the central heating system in her home or could refer to the Corporation's whole pricing policy.

On a more formal basis, we do a great deal of work in connection with the House of Commons Select Committees, in particular the Select Committee on Nationalised Industries.

Could you explain what a Select Committee is and what it does?

The Select Committees are standing committees of the House of Commons which are re-established each year and consist of members of all the political parties. Members are selected roughly in proportion to the strength of the relevant parties in the House. The Committees are given terms of reference and subjects to consider and, as you will appreciate, in the case of the Select Committee on Nationalised

Industries, the topics are almost invariably ones which concern us.

Such as what? Could you give an example with which we are all familiar?

Yes. During 1974 we dealt with two topics. The first was the broad subject of energy resources which was handled by the Select Committee on Science and Technology and the second was on our involvement in North Sea activities which was handled by the Select Committee on Nationalised Industries. We are asked to produce written papers and subsequently representatives of the Corporation go to the House of Commons to give oral evidence in response to questions from the Committees. The Chairman of the Corporation usually leads the team on these occasions. The Secretariat deals with the preparation of the briefing material and maintains a close liaison with Committees' Clerks. Select Committees are bodies which influence Government policy and can take an independent line from the Government of the day. This 'backroom diplomacy' on behalf of the industry is another area of our activity of which most people know very little.

How does all this fit in with our dealings with consumers through Customer Service?

Our involvement here is this. On the formal level, I personally act as a link between the Corporation and the National Gas Consumers' Council which was established at the same time as the industry was re-organised in January, 1973.

Within the last twelve months, thanks to the efforts of the Corporation's marketing and finance staff, the industry has been able to make great strides in moving toward realistic prices and a much simpler and more rational tariff structure. We have put the case to the Consumers' Council that these changes have been desirable and in the long-term interests of all consumers and I think that they



◀The Secretary is regarded as the official link with the outside world▶

have appreciated and accepted our arguments.

In parallel with these changes, I have been in charge of a small working group which has produced a much simpler tariff notice for the information of the consumer. Every Region now produces a virtually identical document and, though by training I am a lawyer, I hope we have succeeded in producing something which is not quite as legalistic as some of the earlier examples! We feel strongly that a customer should not have to be a lawyer or a mathematical wizard to work out what he or she should pay for his or her gas.

On the personal level, my Department is responsible for handling letters of enquiry or complaint from individual members of the public which may have been received by the Chairman or have been forwarded to us by the Department of Energy.

We liaise with other Headquarters

Divisions and with the Regions in an endeavour to solve problems as quickly as possible, and I think we generally succeed.

I can see that good communications and good personal relationships are essential if your Department is to do that sort of job quickly and efficiently.

Oh, yes! But I don't want to give you the impression that all these tasks are handled solely by my staff. We flatter ourselves that we have a fair amount of expertise between us. In most cases we will be collecting the basic material for our answers from specialists in other divisions. It is then our job to produce the final version of whatever document is required. This may be for the Chairman's or my signature.

Perhaps the best example of such team work is the production of the Corporation's Annual Report. The accounts of course are produced by the Finance Division and in the last edition of *Review* you described how this process has been streamlined.

We are responsible for producing the Annual Report; we draft the review of the year and edit the contributions of the Divisions and the Regions to produce a coherent narrative.

It is also our job to agree an overall timetable with all Divisions and Regions, to choose a printer in conjunction with the Purchasing Department, to arrange for photographs and special art work, and generally to control the whole exercise from initial concept to final proof reading. We work closely with other Departments, including Public Relations, particularly over the preparation of the 'popular' version of the Report. Once publication date is reached, PR takes over the presentation of the Report to the Press and other media.

Could we perhaps turn to the management of our own resources, which of course are considerable. In particular, might we look at the areas in which we have to keep our own house in order?

Certainly. One of the areas in which I am anxious to extend our interest is that of estates. Land is one of the most valuable assets the Corporation possesses and with the closing of nearly all conventional gas works up and down the country, many valuable sites are becoming available for disposal. Some of the Regions do not have surveyors on their own staff and so I have recently appointed a professional surveyor at Headquarters to assist in advising the Corporation and the Regions on this most important matter. At local level here at Headquarters we do of course have a whole range of activities which come under the label of 'housekeeping'.

This is the area with which employees will be most familiar because they affect their personal welfare, such as accommodation, canteens, transport, etc.

With the increase in staff which has taken place over the last few years, it has not been an easy matter to provide all the facilities which one might have wished for. This is a good opportunity to assure everyone, however, that we give these matters high priority in the Secretariat. As Chairman of the Joint Consultative Committee at H.Q. I am grateful for the two-way exchange of views on all matters affecting employees' environment, and in this way can continually try to improve conditions for everyone.

One other matter of topical interest right now is the need to conserve energy. What are we doing in this respect?

The Chairman has made me responsible for co-ordinating the Corporation's efforts in this field and I have already been encouraged by the positive response of the Regions and of J.C.C. members here at H.Q. to our plans for making contributions that will help to reduce the Corporation's expenditure on all kinds of energy.

Some steps can be taken immediately, others will require further thought and can only have an effect in the longer term. **ECR**

LIBRARY CORNER

New films

'**Kitchen Think**'. A cartoon which takes a light-hearted look at kitchen planning. Designed for students of home economics, organisations and clubs.

'**Ideal Cooks**'. A film made at last year's Ideal Home Exhibition recording the efforts of well-known personalities to display their cooking expertise.

'**We're Pleased to Have you with Us**'.* This film is intended for newcomers to the industry. It is used for induction in Headquarters and the Regions and gives new recruits a rapid resumé of the history of gas. It covers gas production and distribution and shows the possibilities of promotion in a dynamic and progressive industry.

'**Designed for Energy**'.* This film is available to gas Regions only and explains how British Gas approaches the siting and design of natural gas plant and installation with respect to conservation.

'**Super Natural Gas**'. A 10-minute cartoon on natural gas, designed for school audiences in the 11-14 age range and featuring Kenneth Williams as 'Will o' the Wisp'.

*Available for internal showing only.

Some recent papers

(available through Library, Marble Arch)

'**The Methods and Morality of Control of Petroleum Resources**' by J. Southam, Legal Adviser, British Gas H.Q.

'**Marketing Implications of Recent North Sea Discoveries**' by G. F. Claxton, C.Eng., M.I. Gas E., Sales Director, British Gas.

'**Hotlines**' by P. G. Cottles & R. W. Eagles, Industrial Sales Department, North Thames Gas. A paper highlighting the importance of gas in the U.K. fuel market.

'**The Development of the Commercial Load in Central Bradford**' by J. C. Wilson, C.Eng., A.M.I. Mech. E., M.I. Gas E., Regional Commercial Sales Manager, Negas.

'**Marketing Mix—Commercial Gas**' by M. F. Ford, C.Eng., M.I. Gas E., Commercial Sales Officer, H.Q.

'**Weldability Trials on Pipeline Fitting**' by M. A. W. Blake.

'**Ad-Hoc Conversion—Seven Years On**' by J. C. Bates, Senior Technical Assistant, Conversion Department, North Eastern Gas.

'**Corporate Planning and the Computer**' by G. P. Cross, B.A., Economic Planning Officer.

Behind the scenes at the biggest home-interest

BRITISH GAS AT THE IDEAL HOME EXHIBITION

SOME PEOPLE may wonder why, in view of the energy situation, we were promoting gas and gas appliances at the Ideal Home Exhibition. The answer is simple. Using gas instead of other fuels in the home can result in substantial savings in the total amount of energy required by the domestic sector as a whole, because gas is a highly efficient primary fuel. This point emerges clearly from the recent National Economic Development Office report on energy conservation and in the official energy statistics. The theme of the Gas Pavilion was 'Controllability—heat that obeys you'. As in our advertising, special emphasis was placed on the wide range of control equipment which is available to help the householder get the best value for money out of gas, reducing fuel bills to a minimum and at the same time saving the nation's fuel.

The British Gas Pavilion was situated in the National Hall at Olympia and although the total area it occupied this year had been reduced, the stand was completely redesigned to devote almost as much space to a fully comprehensive range of the latest gas appliances as in 1974. Central heating systems, fires, cookers, unit heaters, refrigerators and water heaters were all on show and, among other attractions, were a kitchen planning feature and kitchen settings showing the advantages of gas split-level cookers. Apart from the whole up-to-the-minute range and display of what gas had to offer, advice and information was also available on all aspects of gas in the home.

What goes on behind the scenes to present the British Gas exhibit at the biggest home-interest shop window in Great Britain?

The Domestic Marketing Department and the Exhibitions Department got together in June of last year to agree the basic principles for this year's stand. From then on well-oiled wheels went into motion. Meetings were held to

discuss the overall theme of the exhibition and how this would fit in with the anticipated domestic marketing policy and activity during 1974/75. Forward planning was the keyword as all the strategy and plans adopted had to relate to the domestic sales effort.

Whilst these meetings were taking place, the Exhibitions Department was negotiating with the Daily Mail Ideal Home organisers regarding the total space required, and agreeing the costings and contract. At the same time informal meetings were held between British Gas and the Society of British Gas Industries to discuss the numbers and variety of appliances which would be on show. Simultaneously the Exhibitions Department designers were working on basic ideas for the design of the stand as the agreed points were fed through to them. Another major responsibility of the Exhibitions Department in the early planning stages, was to assess accurately the costings and balance the budget; this required a flexible assessment of the numbers of different types of appliances that would be on display which in turn governed, to an extent, the final design of the Pavilion.

In November of last year the Domestic Marketing Department and the Exhibitions Department had a formal meeting with the Society of British Gas Industries to finalise the points relating to appliances. Until this time all detail had had to remain flexible in order to adapt to the changing overall energy climate. Once the principles and participation of the members of the S.B.G.I. had been confirmed, the Exhibitions Department got down to the



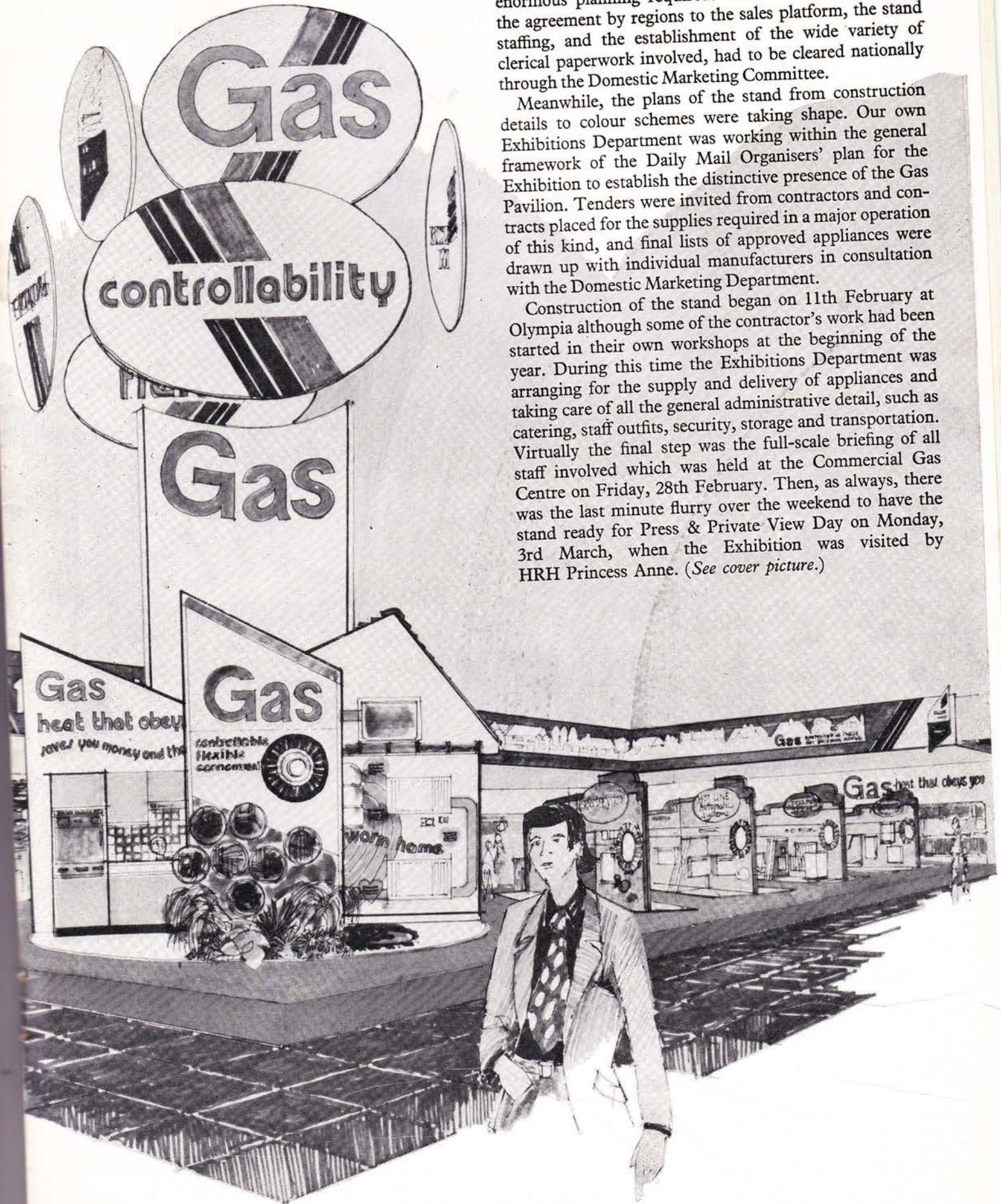
- *The British Gas Pavilion devoted space to a fully comprehensive range of the latest gas appliances—central heating systems, fires, cookers, unit heaters, refrigerators and water heaters.*

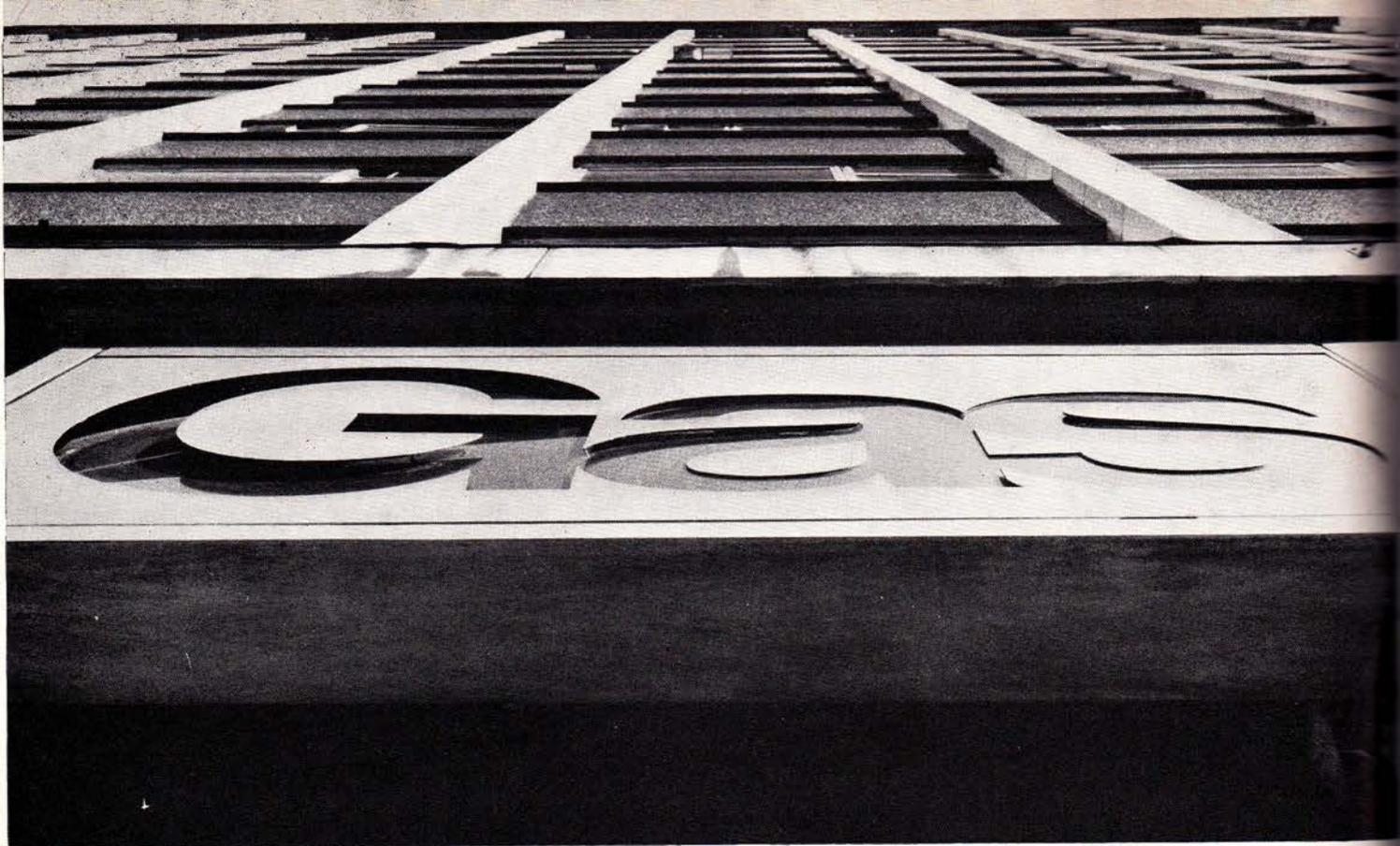
shop window in Great Britain

enormous planning required. The administrative detail, the agreement by regions to the sales platform, the stand staffing, and the establishment of the wide variety of clerical paperwork involved, had to be cleared nationally through the Domestic Marketing Committee.

Meanwhile, the plans of the stand from construction details to colour schemes were taking shape. Our own Exhibitions Department was working within the general framework of the Daily Mail Organisers' plan for the Exhibition to establish the distinctive presence of the Gas Pavilion. Tenders were invited from contractors and contracts placed for the supplies required in a major operation of this kind, and final lists of approved appliances were drawn up with individual manufacturers in consultation with the Domestic Marketing Department.

Construction of the stand began on 11th February at Olympia although some of the contractor's work had been started in their own workshops at the beginning of the year. During this time the Exhibitions Department was arranging for the supply and delivery of appliances and taking care of all the general administrative detail, such as catering, staff outfits, security, storage and transportation. Virtually the final step was the full-scale briefing of all staff involved which was held at the Commercial Gas Centre on Friday, 28th February. Then, as always, there was the last minute flurry over the weekend to have the stand ready for Press & Private View Day on Monday, 3rd March, when the Exhibition was visited by HRH Princess Anne. (See cover picture.)





THE NEW COMMERCIAL GAS CENTRE

THE PAST year has seen further reorganisation at the Commercial Gas Centre, completing the work which began five years ago to bring the Centre into line with the new marketing strategy within the industry.

Established in 1966 to support the sale of gas in the commercial market, it was first known as the Commercial Catering and Heating Centre; a shop window for the commercial gas equipment on permanent display. Today, the Centre also provides kitchen planning data for designers and architects and has recently started a Newsletter which is sent to commercial sales people in the Regions. This summarises the Centre's activities, lists forthcoming events and helps to improve communications with the regional sales departments.

A Working Party was established on behalf of the Commercial Marketing Committee early in 1974, to consider the future role of the Centre in the changing supply situation and to reassess the support the Centre provides in the marketing effort with Headquarters and the Regions. In fact, the Committee has been a major innovator in the present reorganisation which includes the reallocation of staff and permanent displays, the creation of an exhibition area on the second floor, and

the stepping up of educational and promotional programmes.

All these proposals have now been implemented. The staff have been moved from the second floor to the ground floor to receive visitors more easily. The displays are now on the first floor with the new Gas Trade Centre on the second floor. Manufacturers can now be offered space to stage presentations, exhibitions, conferences and seminars with a catering service available.

In the educational field the Centre has established close liaison with training and technical colleges. Students and lecturers also come to the Centre to see displays and audio visual demonstrations.

Monthly meetings are held between the Centre staff and Mr. Ron Crafter, Manager, Commercial Operations at Holborn. These meetings serve as a forum to discuss current marketing requirements, proposals and suggestions.

Indeed the changes made during the last year have ensured greater utilisation of the Centre and it has become more closely integrated with both Headquarters and Regions in the overall marketing function.

The aim is to continue to update the Centre's activities to keep pace with developments in marketing trends.



Three of the many types of commercial gas equipment on permanent display at the Commercial Gas Centre.

BCR

GEOFFREY BATTISON, Editor-in-Chief, Gas World Group of publications, recently attended one of the television training courses which British Gas runs in conjunction with television personality Barry Westwood. He wrote about his experience in 'Space', the house journal for the Benn Publishing Group. We thought that others who have been on the same course would enjoy reading it and are grateful for permission to reprint the article.*

**Illustrations by the Author.*

IT gave me a funny feeling to pick up the phone and hear a voice say, 'Mr Battison, the way things are going I think it very possible that you may get the call'.

I mean, I had not been feeling all that bright lately. Could this be some hot line from the great editor in the sky? I swallowed. 'What sort of call?' I asked.

'Television, Mr Battison,' said the voice, rather impatiently. 'Lots of interesting things happening in gas these days. We might be looking for an expert to comment on a news item or take part in a chat show. Ever appeared on the box?'

I hadn't. The thought terrified me. I had nearly died over a couple of sound broadcasts. Rapid evasion was called for. 'I don't think . . .', I began.

As though anticipating my objections the voice pressed on. 'Thought you might like to take part in a little training exercise next week. Come and spend a day with Terry Eastward.' (Which isn't quite the real name of a well-known TV anchor man.)

And that is how I came to be in a studio along with five other victims all eyeing each other furtively and making embarrassed jokes about the ridiculousness of the whole thing.

As usual on such occasions my hands were like ice and I seemed to want to go to the loo rather a lot. However, as soon as Mr Eastward bounced in it became obvious that he was a very nice man indeed. He shook hands all round like a presidential candidate, exuding both energy and—if you can understand the contradiction—an almost indecent relaxation. I warmed towards him. Clearly he was the sort of man who would see you right. A flicker of circulation even started in my fingertips.

It seemed each of us would take part in three interviews during the day. After each session there would be a playback for group appraisal. The first interview would be on some general subject, the second on an agreed aspect of a subject about which one was supposed to know something, and the third was to be on an unspecified aspect of one's own speciality.

HOW I LOOKED INTO THE BOX AND DISCOVERED THE REAL, GHASTLY, EVASIVE, SULKY ME!



It sounded awful, the more so as the victims were to meet their fate in alphabetical order. That meant that I had to go first.

For a while operations were delayed by a series of technical problems which did nothing to relax the nervous tension. A glimmer of hope that the whole thing would be called off was extinguished when a very dishy young lady appeared and indicated that 'they' were ready for me. She patted my face with a puff.

'Most men don't like this,' she confided. 'Just mind you don't become addicted.'

She laughed kindly at my feeble

riposte. Terry Eastward sat in one of a pair of impressive swivel chairs bathed in brilliant light. When I sat down I thought the dishy young lady was giving me a hug for good luck. Actually she was fixing a mike round my neck. As she melted away the nice Mr Eastward looked up, there was an incomprehensible exchange with unseen technicians and we were off.

'Mr Battison,' said Eastward, 'how do you think the British Government will react to last night's surprising events in Brussels?'

What was he talking about? What events? I couldn't ask him because I was supposed to be playing it for real. I could feel the perspiration seeping through my peach powdered brow. Desperately I groped for memories of how wily politicians deflected awkward questions. 'I think what you are trying to ask me is whether I feel these events have a special significance,' I said with attempted smoothness. (After all, if Harold Wilson can burble on about the significance of things for minutes on end without saying anything . . .)

'No, I'm not,' said Eastward who somehow seemed to have changed from an amiable Jekyll into a fiendish Hyde. 'I want to know how you think the British Government will react.'

I don't know what I said after that. A kindly fate has blotted out the memory. I can't even remember from the playback. I was too shattered by what I looked like. There I was, looking rather crumpled, my eyeballs roaming round like maverick dice and my features set in a suspicious scowl. Apart from which I seemed to be spinning my chair back and forth like the action of one of those complicated clocks in glass domes.

So this was the Battison seen by the outside world. Would I buy a second-hand car from this man? Frankly, I wouldn't accept a free roller skate.

Of course, the other victims were not exactly brilliant. One of them had been persuaded to contradict himself three times in the space of five minutes, another had been provoked into losing his temper, while a third had dried up entirely. But I did not

care about them. It was this ghastly, evasive, sulky, dithering me that filled my horizon.

When I went back for the second interview I tried to bear in mind the physical characteristics I wanted to project: a pleasant upturn of the mouth to counteract the scowl, a gentle crinkling of the eyes to suggest good humour, a consistent focusing on the area of the interviewer, a relaxed clasping of the hands to prevent fidgeting, one leg hooked back to discourage chair swinging.

'I should be cautious with that smile,' said Eastward when I sat down, 'it could come over as asinine. Do you find the lights too bright? Your eyes are screwed up. And you have a sort of glazed look. Don't clench your hands like that, old boy, because it suggests nervousness. Oh, and your leg—have you got cramp?'

'Yes,' I lied, apologetically, 'an old war wound.'

'Hm', said Eastward doubtfully. 'Try and hide it; viewers hate any kind of deformity.'

By the time I had allowed my mouth to sag, my eyes to widen, my hands to separate and my legs to untangle (to hell with swivelling). I realised that



↳... who seemed to have changed from an amiable Jekyll into a fiendish Hyde

Eastward was looking at me expectantly. 'Right,' I said, rallying the tattered threads of composure, 'do your worst.'

'Did you hear the question?' he asked.

What question? I hadn't heard a word. I shook my head dumbly.

'Cut it, Jack' said Eastward wearily to an unseen cameraman. 'Let's try again. But remember, this might have been live.'

How could it be live when the

interviewee was dead? However, Eastward's genial smile was back and at least the questions were supposed to be about things I understood.

I dealt smartly with something about the effect on marketing of future gas supplies from the North Sea. This was more like it. I began to expand the theme.

'Of course,' said Eastward, cutting in, 'you realise that what you are



↳How could it be live when the interviewee was dead?

suggesting is diametrically opposed to the published views of the Chairman of the British Gas Corporation?'

I began to bluster, 'Very possibly,' I said, 'I never claimed that my opinions were those of the establishment.'

Eastward leaned forward. 'So you as an editor of what purports to be a responsible journal deliberately flaunt the views of acknowledged experts? Perhaps you could tell us on what authority?'

And so it went on, getting nastier and nastier. I felt myself being pushed further out on a limb.

Well, I'll say this for myself—I went down with all guns firing. In the playback I came across as a bigot sinking in his own fantasies.

Afterwards Eastward, now re-established as Jekyll, proffered a gin and tonic and murmured words of solace and encouragement. But it was no good. Any hopes I might have had of the Geoffrey Battison Show crumpled quietly into dust. Indeed, I had serious doubts about my status as a human being.

So when next you watch some reluctant tele-visitor fidgeting, sweating and floundering on the box, spare a thought for what he is going through. But rest assured on one point—you won't see me.

ECR

FIRST

R&D's role in energy trends

FIFTY MANAGERS and directors from the four research stations and R & D Headquarters at Holborn attended the first R & D Division conference, earlier this year.

Although the conference's major theme for discussion was R & D's role in energy trends, it was also a chance to discuss such issues as policies and developments in other divisions and their effects on R & D.

Aim of the conference

In an interview with Sandra Oliver after the conference, the Director of Research Dr. J. A. Gray said, 'Much is happening in British Gas, not least the effect of the energy situation and I hope we would want to ensure that R & D plays an active role in the way British Gas tackles its opportunities and problems. This type of conference goes some way to help us to play this role. We heard about energy trends, their impact on R & D

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE



The Research Directors (l to r) Dr. W. A. Simmonds, MRS; Mr. T. Dick, LRS; Dr. J. A. Gray, Director of Research HQ; Mr. J. Van der Post, ERS, and Mr. C. Purkis, Watson House.



*Dr. L. Mercer,
Engineering Research Station*



*Mr. J. Licence,
Director of Corporate Planning*

and what R & D is doing about them. The position is never static and actions that the Division takes are based on a diversity of views and wide discussion before final decisions are made. And so there was adequate discussion time during the conference for managers to take the opportunity to make their views known'.

The aim of the conference was not only to help improve contact generally by bringing together the management of R & D Division, but also to help improve understanding of specific opportunities and problems, within the context of R & D policies, arising out

of the energy trends likely to occur in future years. It was important, too, to present, discuss and develop the responsibility of R & D Division in relation to these opportunities and problems, and more urgently, to provide a forum for presenting and discussing issues of current and immediate concern to the Division.

Changes in R & D

Tremendous changes have been made in the organisation and operations of R & D Division over the last 3 years. The aim of the changes has been to increase the integration of R & D

within the business of British Gas and to show, through a formal mechanism of planning and review, that R & D is itself conducted in a businesslike fashion. The effects of these changes have been seen in the increasing involvement in R & D planning of those who use the results of the work and in the favourable reception of the resulting plans by the top management of the Corporation.

Where in fact can changes be detected? For a start, they can be seen in the regular dialogue and close integration with the end users of research results.

The R & D programme is openly discussed and R & D staff are fully integrated in corporate policy making. The corporate plan and the assumptions on which it is based now form a vital input to R & D planning. As Dr. Gray said in a paper last year 'too many industries used to think of R & D as a cross between a luxury, a gamble and an insurance premium—certainly something that could scarcely

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

be planned for and even less, controlled. Now however managements understand R & D much better and see how it can be made as vital a function as any other part of the business'.

The attitude of the entire British Gas organisation to the proper role of R & D has changed. Without the changes R & D could scarcely have survived at its present level in today's extremely stringent climate. The rules of the game have changed, R & D has changed to meet them and the conference succeeded in communicating some of those changes to representative managers from all four research stations (see special feature on MRS page 26) and R & D Headquarters at Holborn.

First evening—Personnel developments

In the current climate R & D's problems are those of stability rather than growth. A continuing problem is that of a career development structure for R & D staff.

There is a need to see more people moving—both ways—between R & D and the rest of the Industry; this includes technical, administrative and managerial staff, graduates and non graduates. So on the first evening Mr. N. C. Henderson, Personnel Manager (H.Q.), and Mr. P. G. Bloom, Management Development & Training Manager (H.Q.), discussed with their audience matters such as management development, human resources and

succession planning. The discussions were chaired by Mr. Clifford Purkis, Director of the Watson House Research Station in Fulham.

R & D policies

A statutory responsibility of the corporation is to settle from time to time in consultation with the Minister, a programme for research on matters affecting gas supply and other relevant matters'. Indeed, it is R & D policy to submit the Division's plans and programme of work annually to the Ministry and it is considered together with the previous year's report, by the Minister's Advisory Council on Research & Development (ACORD). Within British Gas, the Research Committee is an important focus for discussion of R & D policy. It is advisory in character under the chairmanship of the Deputy Chairman, Mr. D. E. Rooke, and is constituted so as to secure advice of independent scientists of distinction in relevant fields of science and technology. It does, in fact, comprise the full time Members for Marketing and Production & Supply, four Regional Chairmen and up to six independent scientists. (*Representatives from R & D Division and other H.Q. divisions also attend.*)

Second day—energy trends and R & D

It was within such policies, that on the second day, the R & D directors and managers got down to hearing about

and discussing current energy trends, their implications for R & D, and what the Division is doing about them.

Dr. W. A. Simmonds, Director of Midlands Research Station in Solihull, chaired the morning session which was designed to look at opportunities and problems, rather than solutions. This was the aim of the sessions after lunch. Dr. Gray introduced the day by relating the main theme of the conference to R & D policies.

This was followed by Mr. J. V. Licence, the Director of Corporate Planning, Economic Planning Division, outlining the current energy trends and the impact of related British Gas Corporation's policies and corporate planning procedures on planning and operations.

Dr. C. G. James, Assistant Director at the London Research Station, and Mr. G. D. Madely, Assistant R & D Planning Manager at H.Q., developed this theme by taking a look at the opportunities and problems facing the Corporation and the contribution R & D can and is making.

A number of R & D Programme Managers, who are responsible for co-ordinating across the Division, broad areas of work such as transmission systems, storage, and the domestic market, then went on to give prepared statements about the influence of energy trends on these areas.

At the end of the morning, Dr. Simmonds linked what had been said with the previous evening's activities, by summing up the effect of trends on human and other resource needs, within R & D as a whole.

After lunch, in a session chaired by Dr. Gray, Midland Research Station Assistant Director, Mr. W. E. Francis, who is currently seconded to R & D (H.Q.) as Head of Co-ordination & Planning, spoke of the relationship between long term strategies and the R & D five year assumptions and planning, and the one year programme of work.

Finally, all four research station directors explained individually how their particular station is responding to energy trends in such areas as technical effort, human resources, expertise, capital, organisation and programme planning.

As part of his concluding comments, Dr. Gray made particular reference to the involvement of John Licence, Neville Henderson and Peter Bloom. Their presence, as representatives of the Economic Planning and Personnel Divisions did much to ensure the success of this first R & D Conference. Based on this success, it is now hoped to make it an annual event around a different theme each year, and Mr. B. G. Smith, the organiser of this year's conference, is busy sifting through the comments, both good and bad, for suitable themes which might act as a base for next year.

BCR



Mr. E. Francis, Assistant Director



Dr. G. James, Assistant Director, London Research Station



Mr. C. Purkis, Director, Watson House



Mr. P. Patrick, Assistant Director, Watson House



Mrs. Margaret Wigley (right), is greeted by Mrs. D. Beavis at a Regional Co-ordinating Committee meeting in Solihull.

Women's Gas Federation — a link between community and industry

Although many people in the gas industry are aware of the W.G.F., they may not know much about its activities. So we invited Mrs. Wigley, the Chairman, to write about the W.G.F. and its role.

MY ASSOCIATION with the W.G.F. started in 1955 when the Exeter branch was formed and I was invited by the late Joan Langley, Chief Home Service Adviser, South West Region, with whom I had trained at the Gloucester College of Domestic Science, to become a member. Despite having at that time, two very small sons, I

was able to attend monthly meetings, and after six months to join the Committee and take an active share in the running of the branch, thanks to the cooperation of my family.

Subsequently, I became Chairman of the branch. In the meantime I had also been elected to represent the South West Region on the Council

of the Federation. After six years on the Council I followed Mrs. Nell Haffner, the first Treasurer of the Federation, and was then invited by the Council to become its Chairman.

The Federation has obviously played a major part in my married life during

Continued overleaf

Women's Gas Federation

Continued from previous page

which time I have brought up three sons.

The youngest was born after I joined the Women's Gas Federation and attended his first committee meeting at the advanced age of three weeks!

I would like first of all to describe the Federation briefly as I think many people in British Gas may not quite know how and why we work. We have some 13,000 members who belong to 200 branches in eleven of the twelve Regions and hope to extend to the twelfth Region very shortly.

Communication

The aim of the Federation is to provide two-way communication between the gas industry, its members and women in the community, and to this end the branch programmes and activities are designed to provide information about British Gas not only to members of the Federation but also to other women's organisations – and to express their views to the industry and manufacturers.

Members pay an annual subscription of £1.00; 60p of which is sent to W.G.F. Headquarters as a capitation fee. The 40p is retained by the branch, together with any money which they may raise by other means, to finance ten or eleven monthly meetings and social events. The cost of the room in which the meetings are held is financed by the relevant Region of British Gas.

The Federation is strictly non-party political and non-sectarian. Through its own membership and through contacts with other women's organisations, it covers every shade of opinion and religious belief.

The Council consists of twenty-six elected voluntary members, the Home Service Adviser and Home Economist to British Gas and the Chief Home Service Advisers in the Regions, as ex-officio members. It meets every other month and the voluntary members attend a residential training course in public speaking, chairmanship, and the work of the

Federation once in every three years of their term of office.

Council members visit branches in their own Regions regularly to put over Council policy and to help with the running of branches. They also take the Chair at twice yearly Regional Co-ordinating Meetings when three officers from each branch in the Region attended a one-day meeting.

I have always felt very strongly that a National Chairman should be known to as many members as possible. To achieve this I have tried to attend each of these meetings (thereby having personal contact throughout the U.K. twice a year) as well as visiting some one hundred of the branches for special occasions such as Annual General Meetings.

We are backed up in our work as a voluntary organisation by a professional staff of twelve who though employed by British Gas H.Q. are seconded to the Federation. Celia Gimpel, who was a Principal at the Treasury before starting work with women's organisations, came to us as General Secretary from the Women's Advisory Committee on Solid Fuel. She has four liaison officers to help her, three of whom work from our regional offices in Reading, Bromsgrove and Rochdale.

Each is a qualified home economist, two with teaching diplomas and all of them trained both in fuels and administration. May Jinks (who works from Bromsgrove) covers Wales and the Midlands and Vivien Carter (based in Rochdale) covers Scotland and the North and came to us from the Women's Advisory Committee on Solid Fuel. Janet Gill came from the Electricity industry and works from Reading in the Southern part of the country while Margaret Rodgers, who was with British Gas Eastern Region, now works for us, dividing her time between Headquarters and the Home Counties branches.

The liaison officers spend much time working to improve and increase branch membership and in organising open meetings with branches to which other organisations are invited and at which Home Service and the Marketing Departments give presentations.

The liaison officers work in the closest cooperation with the voluntary members so that they are on occasions confused with each other. They, of course, attend Council meetings and



Peterborough Young Homemakers win the 'Young Homemaker' trophy in the 1974 'Gas in our Lives' competition.

give valuable advice and information on the Federation branches throughout the country.

You may be asking how voluntary organisations can be of use to a nationalised industry. In fact all three fuel industries support a voluntary organisation and we are in friendly, but nonetheless keen, competition with each other.

Co-operation

At Headquarters, we are under the aegis of Marketing Division and report to the Member for Marketing and Marketing Policy Committee. The General Secretary and I are also in constant touch with the Home Service Adviser.

At regional level, the Council members and our branch liaison officers meet with the Chief Home Service Advisers twice a year to review the Federation's work in the Regions in the coming six months.

We also have another link through liaison officers appointed by the gas Regions. These are usually marketing people, or in one instance, the Public Relations Officer.

We aim at all levels to know our contacts in Marketing from the Home Service Adviser and the manager of the local gas showroom through the Regions and Headquarters. We are also kept informed of current gas policies, and sometimes problems, by our industry contacts and receive from Public Relations material which we distribute to our members.

If all this effort went into informing only our own membership, you might well question its value. However, the unique worth of the Women's Gas Federation to the industry is that we are independent, have our own constitution and our branches pay subscriptions to cover their own costs.

This gives us our standing with other women's organisations. As such we can take part in their activities and



WGF President, the Dowager Viscountess Davidson, at the Annual Conference.



Mrs. Wigley in her capacity as a member of the National Gas Consumers' Council with Mr. W. R. Probert when the NGCC visited Leicester as guests of Emgas.

are able to invite them to ours. This provides an additional platform for the industry to put over the gas point of view in an informal way where a direct or commercial approach would not be accepted.

Since there are very many women's organisations in this country the Federation has to compete for membership. It must therefore be seen to be a lively, well organised body, working to achieve its aims and objects of promoting gas, and interesting and educating its members in all aspects of home making.

Affiliations

The Federation is affiliated to the National Council of Women and Women's Forum, standing conferences of women's organisations in many towns, Home Safety Committees, RoSPA, and recently the Fawcett Society which is very much concerned with Women's Lobby—the fight for equality. Mrs. Gimpel serves on the National Executive of the National Society for Clean Air, the National Council of Women and the Fawcett Society Public Affairs Committee.

Integration

With the Fawcett Society we are pressing for greater efforts to be made to integrate immigrant women into the life of our community.

We recently entertained two delegates from the Transkei who were in England on a study tour of our social and welfare services.

Through the National Council of Women, we have direct contact with the Women's National Commission and we have worked with the U.K. Federation for Education in Home Economics to produce information for the Commission.

In eleven of the twelve gas Regions,

members of the Women's Gas Federation staff have been appointed to the Regional Consumers' Council and I am a member of the Council of 'Keep Britain Tidy', and serve on the General Purposes Committee of the National Gas Consumers' Council.

In addition many of our members are on District Committees (as I am in the Southwest), and I know from the Regional Consumer Council Chairmen how much they value our members' knowledge of the industry.

However, we always stress that though our members are nominated by the Women's Gas Federation, they in no way represent the W.G.F. in such cases—unlike other appointments.

It is well known that many problems are solved before they reach the District Committees if the right person in the industry is approached—and our members know these people.

We are concerned with consumer affairs and three years ago, in conjunction with the N.C.W. and Mrs. Joan Robins, we helped to arrange a one day Conference on Consumer Affairs.

As a result I was invited to join a deputation to meet the Minister of Trade and Industry, where we were able to put our points on consumer affairs and consumer protection education. Our ideas have certainly been put into practice, perhaps further than we envisaged, but I feel that this was an excellent example of how women's organisations usefully function as a pressure group.

I am a qualified home economist, and with Mrs. Jinks I represent the W.G.F. on the U.K. Federation for Education in Home Economics. Mrs. Jinks has attended their Conferences on our behalf in Helsinki and Israel.

In addition to the field of home economics, we run a Student Award Scheme for girls who have taken the National Council Certificate in Home

Economics or the Home Management and Family Care Course.

I am also a member of the Consumer Standards Advisory Committee of British Standards Institution and serve on some of their technical committees concerned with the drawing up of draft standards.

Relationships

We hope that with other women's organisations we may be able to extend the relationship between this country and organisations in Europe and beyond, and are very much aware of the ideals of International Women's Year.

In 1973 I was invited to join a party travelling to Bad Homburg—the twin city of Exeter—on a visit arranged through the *Deutscher Frauenring* and filled with activities designed to show us all aspects of life in Germany today. One of the highlights was a day spent with *Maingaswerke Frankfurt*, at the gas showrooms, arranged by the German Home Service Department. I was shown many appliances including a gas washing machine and was told about the work done in schools and colleges.

Despite the time and energy involved in pursuing all these interests of the Women's Gas Federation and Young Homemakers—and for a great deal of the time coping with a part-time job in Exeter as well—I have found it a most rewarding experience and shall always be grateful to British Gas and my fellow members in the Federation for making it possible. **EGF**



Barry Reynolds, Financial Systems Manager, directs computer staff involved in the 'GASMAN' accounting system.

'GASMAN'—A new accounting

AN IMPORTANT NEW development in the Corporation's accounting procedures is to be introduced in April.

For some time now the preparation of management information on a national basis has been hampered by the lack of a common accounts code. Now a standard accounting system for management—GASMAN—is to be introduced throughout British Gas.

Regional accounts departments provide their own management with the financial information they need, and not surprisingly, considerable variations have arisen over the years. Although a number of management accounting systems have been developed which purport to compare costs region by region, no-one has been completely sure, in the past, that all regions put the same costs under the same headings.

Efforts to overcome this problem have caused a great deal of extra work which, together with the growth of the Corporation-wide reporting requirements, has meant that most regions' existing accounting systems have been outstripped, leaving much work to be

carried out manually by staff. In many cases, this has probably meant that other important aspects of financial work—especially of an analytical and investigatory nature—have suffered.

National Accounts Code

Many of the difficulties in changing from existing arrangements are similar to those which face, say, anyone trying to learn a new language. The first step therefore is to compile a 'dictionary' for the Corporation's new accounting language, called the National Accounts Code.

This code has developed out of considerable dialogue between headquarters and regional finance staff under the direction of Barry Reynolds, Headquarters Financial Systems Manager. The keynote is simplicity. It consists of the fewest possible digits (just seven in total) both to reduce the amount of coding work and to minimise transcription errors. Its structure is as follows:

| <u>Location Code</u> | <u>Activity Code</u> |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 2 3 | 4 5 6 7 |

The location code indicates which

department or area the cost is to be charged to and the activity code describes the cost. There is also a job costing code of seven digits which, when fed into the computer, is automatically converted into appropriate location and activity codes so that no longer will one have to write both a code and a job number as is common at present.

Although a radical change in many Regions, this is, in fact, very simple.

But what then happens to all the data, assuming it has been correctly coded? Well, firstly it enters the computer from a number of different sources—including details of salaries and wages, invoice payments, stores requisitions—but all of them lead to 'Gasman'. 'Gasman' is, in effect, providing a multiple translation service—something on the lines of the simultaneous interpretation facilities at the United Nations. With the assistance of the Computer Co-ordination Department at Holborn, an ingenious computer system has been devised, incorporating many of the best ideas currently in use, and adding to them.



REGIONAL STORES SITE DIRECT COSTS

Page No. 01 Rounding £00

| 01 02 04 Salaries and Wages 06 Social Security Superan. 08 Holiday Sick Accid. Pay 10 Travel Subsistence etc. 12 Agency Staff 14 Telephones etc. 16 Printing & Stat. Postage 18 Carriage Costs 20 Rent and Rates 22 Repairs & Maint. Buildings 24 Repairs to Equipment 26 Power Heat Light etc. 28 Cleaning 30 Other Expenses 32 Stocktaking Differences 34 Breakages & Refurbishing 36 Sales of Scrap 38 | Northern Area | | | Period 75/13 Location | | |
|--|------------------|------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|-----------|
| | Blanktown Stores | | | Northern Centre Store | | |
| | To Date | Budget | Variance | To Date | Budget | Variance |
| | 76 | 78 | 2 | 112 | 120 | 8 |
| | 7 | 8 | 1 | 11 | 13 | 2 |
| | 8 | 9 | 1 | 20 | 19 | (1) |
| | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | (1) |
| | 10 | 7 | (3) | 7 | 12 | 5 |
| | 2 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 2 | (1) |
| | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| | 20 | 20 | 0 | 23 | 24 | 1 |
| | 52 | 36 | (16) | 35 | 42 | 7 |
| | 3 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 1 |
| | 11 | 12 | 1 | 13 | 14 | 1 |
| | 7 | 7 | 0 | 10 | 11 | 1 |
| | 3 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 4 | (1) |
| | 2 | 1 | (1) | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| | 8 | 10 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| | (3) | (1) | 2 | (2) | (1) | 1 |
| NET COST | 210 | 206 | (4) | 250 | 278 | 28 |

A sample cost statement using the new code



Our pictures show a section of the tape library, checks being carried out on the computer log and information being fed into the computers on magnetic tape.

system for management

This system translates the basic data into information which is appropriate to the manager to whom it is addressed. By a series of translations within the computer, the Corporation's Annual Accounts will be produced. From that same information, the detail required in the Corporation-wide management accounting systems will be derived—from MAC (Marketing) through MAT and MAD (Transmission and Distribution) to MARC (Customer Accounting).

And, perhaps most important in the immediate sense, the detail contained should be adequate to present to the showroom manager or the project engineer cost statements for his area of responsibility. He or she can then use the statements to attempt to correct any deviations from an expected course. A sample of the type of output which will be possible is shown above.

What does the new system offer?

The system will be introduced on 1st April, 1975 and Finance staff in all regions are very busy making sure it will work. Once the system is running,

it is expected that there will be considerable savings in effort within Finance itself in the production of management information. This will relieve staff of much routine and often monotonous work, leaving more time for critical examination of the basic data being fed into the system. The system should be very much quicker in producing results than most existing systems—and therefore more effective in encouraging management cost control. A great deal of attention is being given to the form of presentation and as far as possible, the customary stacks of computer print-out will be avoided. In fact, the main output will be in the form of cost control statements which can be distributed direct to managers. It will also be possible to interrogate the computer to obtain details of virtually any element of cost.

Budget information will be stored in the computer in a similar way to the national accounts code and this will enable statements to be produced setting out variations from budget. Further developments of the computer system over the next year or so will

enable appropriate statistical data and performance target to be incorporated in the statements produced, as well as giving even more flexibility to the lay-out of computer output.

Does it affect you?

Many employees in British Gas will never come into direct contact with 'Gasman' or the accounts code or anything associated with it. But many others will be affected. People involved in coding documents, such as invoices, timecards and stores tickets, will need time to become familiar with the new code and, in some cases new forms—which may look quite unlike existing ones. It may be some consolation to them to know that the greatest effort by far is within the Finance Division itself, where a major effort is necessary to change over to the new system as the new statements are being set up for the computers.

The ultimate aim is to improve the information service for management as this in turn will lead to an all-round increase in efficiency, which will benefit everyone in British Gas. **BCG**

School of Fuel Management opened by the Energy Secretary

THE BRITISH GAS School of Fuel Management is an example both of the initiative that has made the gas industry one of the most successful organisations in the country and of our highly effective, trail-blazing contribution to the energy conservation problem.

This is the opinion of Mr. Eric Varley, Secretary of State for Energy.

Speaking at the inaugural course of the School, which was attended by some of the country's leading executives in industry, commerce and local government, Mr. Varley congratulated British Gas on setting up the School and said its courses were a valuable means of helping the nation to save fuel.

He stressed that there were no simple solutions, or magic wands which at a stroke would make the nation's energy problems go away. The results would come from self-help rather than Government direction—although the Government could see that the economic signals were properly set, so that all forms of fuel were properly priced.

We were engaged in a joint national enterprise whose potential rewards were great but whose carrying through involved conscious action by each and every one of us. Energy consumption, in its myriad forms, was woven into the fabric of our national life. The inter-relationships were complex and the consequences of particular steps had to be properly thought through if we were to avoid unacceptable damage.

Mr. Varley hoped that everybody in industry and commerce would re-

examine all practices which they take for granted to see whether there was scope for fuel saving—and that applied particularly to the nationally owned fuel industries.

He added: 'I would like to pay tribute to the fuel industries for the way they are co-operating with my department in trying to secure a new, and more careful, approach by the public to the use of fuel and power.'

'I believe that the Gas Corporation's current approach in telling people that gas is too good to waste is not merely useful but highly effective. The British Gas Corporation has blazed the trail in many ways. I am delighted to help mark your latest enterprise.'



Mr. Varley (left) interviewed by the Press at the School's opening

Welcoming the visitors, the Chairman, Sir Arthur Hetherington, said the gas industry believes that provided gas were used efficiently, it was right that it should be used in preference to other fuels in situations where it could make the greatest contribution to meeting the country's energy needs.

He went on to say that although natural gas at present supplied about 14



per cent of the country's gross energy needs, in terms of useful heat, it was already contributing some 30 per cent of total requirements, and was expected to grow to around 40 per cent in the 1980s.

The more efficiently gas was used, the greater its contribution to the country's useful heat requirements.

He pointed out that the Government's advertising campaign dealing with industrial uses of energy had coincided with the opening of the School, which would increase the impact of the project.

Our own advertising, said Sir Arthur, complemented and reinforced the Government's energy conservation campaign. But advertising was only one of the ways in which we were promoting conservation. Fuel management had never been more important than it was today, and British Gas was acutely aware of the anxiety of its customers to minimise fuel wastage.

Sir Arthur then outlined the aims of the School of Fuel Management (see page 10).

Mr. J. A. Buckley, Member for Marketing, said the inaugural course was very much a two-way communication and a preliminary to further courses for senior management and shorter courses on the practical aspects of fuel saving. These we intended to mount at Solihull and at regional centres throughout the country convenient for shop floor managers and supervisors—the vital link in the conservation campaign.

He thanked the course members for

Caterer's Guide

RECENT SURVEYS show that over 80% of commercial cooking is on gas, thus making gas the most important fuel in the catering market.

A new booklet, available to caterers, lists all the services available from the gas industry. Called 'The British Gas Caterer's Guide', it follows the general pattern of the 'Gas Guide' which lists services available to domestic gas customers.

THE BRITISH GAS CATERER'S GUIDE

A guide to the help and services offered to caterers by British Gas



The new booklet includes advice on choosing the right catering equipment, kitchen planning, where to buy equipment, British Gas guarantees on equipment, installation, service and advice, maintenance, hot water and space heating and gives information about the Commercial Gas Centre in London.

Addresses and telephone numbers of the commercial sales offices in the twelve British Gas Regions are also listed. As the booklet points out, "Our advice costs you nothing, yet it could help you run your business even more efficiently and profitably."

New aid on air pollution for schools

THE STUDY KIT for schools on air pollution produced by British Gas in collaboration with Educational Productions Ltd. has now been up-dated.

Some 3,000 kits have already been bought by schools and education departments throughout the country at a cost of 50p per unit, and a revised edition has become necessary.

The kit comprises background in-



● The Rt. Hon. Eric Varley, Secretary of State for Energy, examines a catalyst used in the manufacture of substitute natural gas. (From l to r), Dr. J. Lacey, Assistant Director, Substitute Natural Gas, Sir Arthur Hetherington, Chairman of British Gas, Mr. Varley and Dr. W. A. Simmonds, Director of Midlands Research Station.

taking part and helping to shape the future programme.

On the first day of the course they heard talks by Mr. E. White, Director, Petroleum Economics Ltd., on the world energy situation; Mr. J. K. L. Thompson, Regional Director, Department of Energy, West Midlands Region, who dealt with the U.K. situation; and Mr. S. R. Kirk, Market Planning Manager, British Gas H.Q., on gas availability and marketing.

After lunch on the second day, Dr. J. Cheshire, a leading consultant, discussed fuel management in relation to proper use, conservation in industry and specific fuels for specific applications; Mr. E. Hampshire, Treasurer, British Gas H.Q., explained the financial implications of a fuel change or modification, investment plans and operating costs, the importance of phasing estimates, and sources of finance; and Mr. D. Beavis, Chairman, West Midlands Gas, covered the technical services available to industrial customers.

Throughout the course and particularly during an open forum chaired by Mr. B. G. H. Clegg, Director of Marketing, British Gas H.Q., members took a keen interest and question-times generated valuable discussion of general and individual problems.

At the close of the course, Mr. Varley toured the Midlands Research Station with course members and guests, where they saw some of the work the station is engaged in on new types of industrial and commercial burners and controls, and gas production plants. BCR

formation and notes for teachers; with a data sheet of basic facts and figures, a set of at-a-glance study prints illustrating many aspects of the air pollution story, and a set of six work cards. These are perhaps the most important element of the package in that they encourage children to work on their own initiative. Also, some of the questions are deliberately framed to make pupils more aware of their local surroundings. They will gain much of their knowledge about the causes and effects of air pollution from their own observations, and discover the contribution which natural gas is making to the environment in which they live by helping to eliminate smoke, grit, dust, dirt and sulphur from the atmosphere.

Save it— save gas

'SAVE IT', say the television personalities in the current commercials—and a new booklet called 'Save Gas Save Money', is now available free through gas showrooms. It draws together hints to help domestic users reduce gas consumption and so help energy conservation.

Natural gas is a highly efficient fuel which already supplies some 30% of Britain's useful heat—in the domestic sector this may rise to about 50%. And as the slogan says, 'Natural gas is too good to waste'. Every therm saved reduces the oil import bill by making more gas available for other uses. The tips in this booklet show how to avoid waste as well as reducing domestic gas bills.

The booklet, divided into two parts, shows how to make immediate savings by the wiser use of gas and advises where spending a little can produce long term savings.

Readers are invited to send in tips of their own which they think would help 'save it'. And that means gas employees too. The address is: Savings, British Gas, London W1A 2AZ.



GOING FOR GOLD



Resolution:

To win the
**Gold Flame Service
Award 1975**

starting today

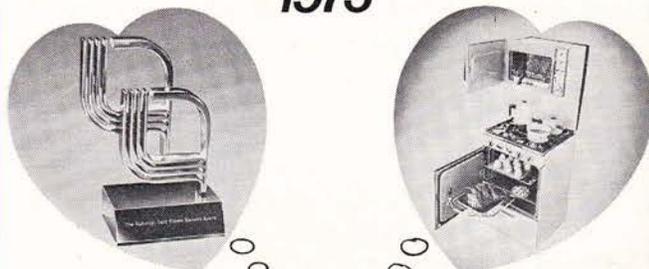


75



be true to your resolution:

win the **Gold
Flame Service Award
1975**



75

Our service units are Going for Gold

Their ambition is to win the 1975
Gold Flame Trophy and to share the prize money

Quite apart from the reward of a good job well done, there's a more tangible reward for the unit giving the best service to gas customers. Presented each year by British Gas, it's called the **Gold Flame Trophy**.

But that's not all! There are generous cash prizes for every person in the winning unit, as well as a special tie or, for the ladies in the team, a scarf and brooch, so that other people can see who the winners were! And there's cash prizes for the runners-up. A special trophy is also presented to the unit whose performance is most improved over last year—and there are cash prizes for this unit, too!

How It Works

Each month, between January and June, a proportion of customers who have had a service job done will be asked to tick a postcard to show what they think of the job and of our service generally. The answers can be from 'Excellent' to 'Very Bad'—of course, they're normally nearer the former! Thus, the unit giving best service will get best ratings and, using what customers think, we shall discover the top unit in our Region. That unit will be



judged beside the top teams from the other eleven Regions to find the 1975 Gold Flame winners. Members of our top team will go to London in October for the presentation ceremony when the winners will be announced.

If one of our teams scoops a national award, they scoop prize money, too. For each person who works in the winning unit the prize is £30. Those in second place receive £15 and in third place, £10. The winners of the "most improved" trophy will receive £20 each.

What You Can Do

If you're on the service side, you can go all out to make sure your team wins. It's good for the industry good for our customers and good for you. If you're not directly involved in service, you can still help. You can tell people who criticise us that though things do go wrong sometimes because we're only human, the vast majority of our service jobs go very well and that, as the Consumers' Association "Which?" report said, most of our customers are satisfied with our service. You can also help by making the people in the field feel there's plenty of support behind them in their efforts to "Go For Gold."



75



The Gold Flame Trophy

1975 GOLD FLAME SERVICE AWARD

THE 1975 contest has some variations over previous years. First, the prizemoney for each member of the service units which take the national award or are runners-up has been increased. It was also recognised that a unit could produce great improvement over its performance last year, but still not make a place in the first three. Thus, there is increased emphasis on the special award for the unit showing most improvement.

A further change was to bring the contest forward, so it runs January-June. This allows extra time to complete the difficult job of deciding the final national placing of the top Regional unit.

To heighten interest and explain these changes to people working in customer service, as well as telling people in other functions about the contest and its objectives, HQ Public Relations and Customer Service Departments have produced a number of items to promote Gold Flame '75. The first was a brochure, sent directly to some 30,000 people in customer service, explaining this year's contest and emphasising the importance attached to the analysis of customers' opinions on the service they receive.

To help maintain interest during the six months of the contest, a series of 'theme' posters has been started. The first have already appeared—one at New Year, the other on St. Valentine's Day! A third will follow soon.

As a further reminder, but more particularly to keep the rest of the industry informed about the contest, a special 'advertisement' was designed for Regional house journals and they are also carrying features on the contest.

The opinions customers give, over a range from 'very bad' to 'excellent', are being processed by HQ Marketing Research Department. The results over the first months of the contest will be published in April so units can see the progress they are making and what they still have to do to get among the prizes. The presentation to the winners will be in London in October. 



At the rostrum: Mr. K. A. Ramsey, National Secretary of CORGI. (From far side to nearside:) Mr. P. Rogers, CORGI Secretary Scottish Region; Mr. G. Harding, CORGI Secretary Northern Region; Mr. M. Marshall, CORGI Secretary North Eastern Region; Mr. E. Rowbottom, CORGI Secretary North Western Region; and backs to the camera, Mr. V. R. Edmiston, CORGI Secretary Eastern Region and Mr. N. Mann, CORGI Secretary North Thames Region.

CORGI: Establishing closer links between the Regions

A CONFERENCE for the Regional Secretaries of CORGI ('Confederation for the Registration of Gas Installers'), was held last month at London's new Tower Hotel. The aims of the conference were to provide Regional Secretaries with an understanding of CORGI's corporate structure, particularly relating to their Regions, to give them the opportunity to contribute to the development of CORGI and to establish closer links between the Regions.

CORGI was founded in 1970 with the aim of ensuring that all gas pipe systems, flues and gas appliances were installed safely and professionally.

The conference was addressed by Mr. J. A. Buckley, Member for Marketing, and was introduced by Mr. G. E. Banks, Director of CORGI. Guest speakers included; Mr. J. Evans, Director, National Gas Consumers' Council, who spoke on the new organisation of the Council under the Department of Energy and Ms. V. Dewhurst of the Treasury Solicitor's Department who spoke about gas safety regulations and their enforcement.

Mr. B. Bateman of the Institute of Plumbing talked about how promotional activities could benefit CORGI.



From left to right: Mr. T. Sapsford, Vice Chairman of the CORGI Council; Mr. G. E. Banks, Director of CORGI; Mr. J. A. Buckley, Member for Marketing; and Mr. B. Bateman of the Institute of Plumbing.

Obituary

Professor Archibald Duncan Campbell, CBE, a part-time Member of British Gas, died suddenly on January 6, at the age of 55.

He was well known for his appreciation of the industrial and commercial life of Scotland, through a lifetime of personal experience, and by his association with the developing needs of his country.

Professor Campbell was educated at Allan Glenn's School and Glasgow University. After graduating, he served with the Royal Engineers during the war, attaining the rank of major. He then lectured at Glasgow University in political economy for 10 years.

He was Professor of Applied Economics at St Andrews University from 1955 to 1967, and later had close contact with many aspects of Scottish affairs through his appointment to the Chair of Applied Economics at Dundee University in 1967.

The value of this contribution was recognized by the Scottish Office when Professor Campbell was invited to become economic consultant to the Secretary of State for Scotland in 1962. From 1971 he sat on the Scottish Economic Council.

His abilities and experience were not, however, confined to the academic and administrative spheres. The gas industry, in particular, benefited greatly from his advice and experience during the period of tremendous change brought about by North Sea gas.

In 1966, he joined the Scottish Gas Board as a part-time Member and served until the reorganization of the British gas industry on January 1, 1973, when he was appointed a part-time Member of the British Gas Corporation. In that capacity he played an important part in ensuring a smooth transition to the new organization set up under the 1972 Gas Act. His wide experience, humanity and knowledge were much valued by his colleagues in the Corporation.

He was joint director of the Tayside Study, and also made his talents available in the field of industrial relations where he acquired a considerable reputation as an arbiter and assessor in inquiries concerning industrial relations.

He was a member of the Boundary Commission, a member of the Fleck Committee on the Fishing Industry in 1959, and the Hunter Committee on Scottish Salmon and Trout Fisheries for three years from 1962. Other notable Government appointments included the chairmanship of the Commission on the Sugar Industry (St Kitts) in 1965. He was awarded a C.B.E. in 1972.

In October, 1974, he severed his connection with Dundee University and took to direct management by becoming chief executive of Sidlaw Industries Limited, Dundee, a holding company of which he had been a director since 1969. Sidlaw Industries has direct interests in the jute industry in Dundee but is now extending its field of activity into North Sea oil developments, both in Dundee and Peterhead.

Appointments

Mr. R. Paul Rhodes, Deputy Chairman of the North Thames Region of British Gas, is to become Chairman of Southern Gas. He will succeed Mr. Wilfrid Bailey who retires on 31 March, 1975 after more than 25 years service in the gas industry.

Mr. Rhodes, who is 57, was educated at Merchant Taylors' School. He joined the Gas Light & Coke Company as a Supply Pupil in 1937, and served in the Army during the war, and has been a Member of the Honourable Artillery Company since 1937.

After the war, Mr. Rhodes rejoined the Gas Light & Coke Company (subsequently North Thames Gas Board) as Assistant Service Supervisor on the Eastern Division, becoming Warehouse Manager at Brentwood in 1953. He was appointed Divisional Manager of the Eastern Division in 1958, and transferred to Chief Office as Chief Service Manager in 1961. It was in this capacity that he was responsible in 1966 for the conversion of Canvey Island to natural gas, the pilot scheme which paved the way for the whole natural gas conversion operation. Mr. Rhodes received the Gold Medal of the Institution of Gas Engineers in 1967 for a paper which he presented on the subject of natural gas conversion.

Mr. Rhodes was appointed Commercial Manager of North Thames Gas in May 1966 and Marketing Director in March 1970. He became a Board Member later that year. In 1971 he became Chief Executive, responsible for carrying out planning and co-ordination of the reorganisation of North Thames Gas and was appointed Deputy Chairman of the North Thames Region of British Gas on 1st January, 1973.

Mr. R. B. Sharman was appointed Director of the British Gas Corporation's International Consultancy Service with effect from March 1, 1975. Mr. Sharman has had a long career in the gas industry and for the past three years has been Senior Consultant Engineer for I.C.S.

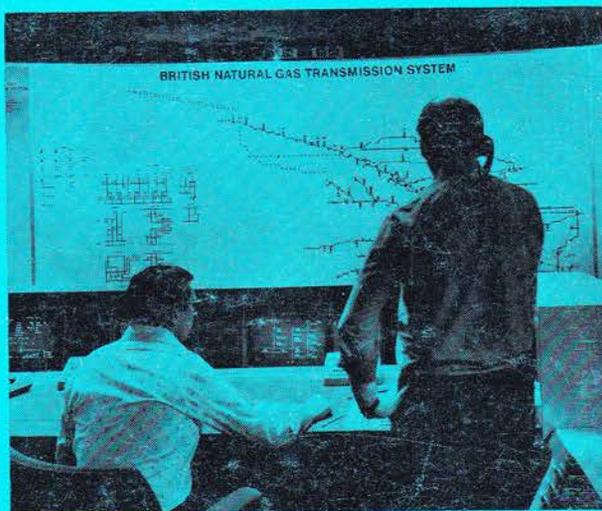
People in the news



Mr. James Buckley, Member for Marketing, received a CBE recently from the Queen. Mr. Buckley has worked in the gas industry since 1934, and was formerly Chairman, East Midlands Gas Board.



Mr. D. G. Badham outside Buckingham Palace after receiving a CBE from the Queen. Mr. Badham became a part-time Member of the British Gas Corporation in December.



WE'VE BROUGHT A FUEL TO YOU WITHOUT WASTE



SO PLEASE DON'T WASTE IT

One of the major advantages of natural gas is that it doesn't have to be converted into any other form of energy, so it gets to you with the minimum waste, through an efficient, unseen, underground network of pipelines. In fact, it is so efficient that British Gas is now supplying 30 per cent of the nation's useful heat. And saving hundreds of millions of pounds on Britain's balance of payments.

Because natural gas is so vital to Britain, it's much too good to waste. Particularly at a time when the whole world needs to conserve energy.

So please try to use less gas in your home, factory, shop, offices or wherever you use it. If everyone with gas used a little less, it would make a big difference. Not only in making more available for other purposes, but in saving you money!

Here are some practical ways to save gas in the home, by making full use of its controllability.

1. Set your central heating time clock to provide heat only when you need it.
2. Turn your central heating down a degree or two by adjusting the thermostats. It is normal to keep halls and bedrooms at a lower temperature than living rooms. Use radiator controls to make sure that they are. And if you use gas fires, turn them down whenever possible.
3. Insulation is well worthwhile. Make sure that your roof space has at least two inches of insulating material and that your hot water tank has a heat-saving jacket.
4. See that your gas equipment is properly maintained and serviced.

NATURAL GAS-TOO GOOD TO WASTE



BRITISH GAS
Our Vital Industry

