

THAT CUP GOES NORTH AGAIN

For the second time since the Peter Yarwood Challenge Cup Competition was first introduced four years ago, the trophy has gone to Lancashire! In the most nail-biting contest yet, Manchester snatched the trophy by a single point from the other finalists, Basildon and Head Office.

When the Tug-of-War event began on the second day of the final, Head Office and Manchester were both in with a chance. And so they were when the very last pull was announced — between Basildon (by that time the 'underdogs' of the final) and Head Office.

But if they were 'underdogs', the Basildon tail wagged like a champion's, and Head Office were pulled almost out of Southampton Common to give the Northerners their one-point triumph.

FULL REPORT AND PICTURES on pages 10 and 11 — the start of three Sports Pages in this issue of 'Contacts'. Another Cup picture on Page 12.



CHEERED ON BY AN ANXIOUS MANCHESTER TEAM, Basildon tug Head Office out of the reckoning in this year's Peter Yarwood Cup Final at Southampton. This was the tug that gave Manchester their one point victory!

It's Europe calling...

Phone tucked typically under chin, ACTS Continental Manager Guy Ashby (right) contacts one of the agents helping to sustain the company's European network. Full story on Pages 6 and 7.

PLUS

SHARK CAME BACK | HOW TO CHOOSE
FROM DEAD! PAGE 2 | XMAS BOOZE PAGE 4



Basildon leaps

Basildon office leapt into action when Thames Television staged a tele-marathon to raise £1,000,000 for children's charities.

On the morning after the appeal was launched, a spontaneous collection in Northgate House produced £50 in half an hour.

Happy Xmas and
New Year to all

There's an old maxim that if you want to teach a man to swim, the best thing is to throw him in at the deep end. So when Brian Dove, Section Leader in Exports at Leeds, decided while on holiday in Cornwall that he'd like to find out "whether this angling lark is all it's cracked up to be," his brother-in-law naturally took him shark fishing!

At the time, of course, Brian didn't know the thick end of a rod from the thin (if fishermen will pardon the technicalities), but at least he was game. This is his own account of what happened . . .

JAWS!

By BRIAN DOVE

When I was told we were going looking for sharks, I wasn't too keen at first, but on the promise that I would be harnessed to a fixed chair while afloat, I decided to have a go.

The boat was booked for 09.30 on a Tuesday morning, but on arrival I discovered, to my horror, that there was no chair, no harness — and the boat itself looked more like Noah's ark than anything else. My immediate reaction was that we'd be lucky to catch mackerel from it, let alone sharks.

Being a true Yorkshireman, however — and having parted with my money in advance — I told the skipper a splendid Cornishman called Ted and the living spit of Captain Birdseye, that I would carry on.

Rough Seas

Having given us our tackle, Ted told us to be prepared for rough seas on the seven mile trip to the fishing grounds. He wasn't kidding! I felt he was only asking for further trouble when, on arrival, he offered us each a bottle of beer and a cold sausage sandwich!

To make matters worse, he did so while placing a squelch bag — a plastic affair containing the rotting innards of various fish and designed to attract the sharks — over the side of the boat.

Twenty minutes later, just when I was wondering what the hell I was doing being tossed about in a small boat in the middle of the ocean when I *could* have been comfortably asleep in a deck-chair on the beach, I felt my line starting to spin out. I've never been so frightened in my life. I just loo'ed up to the skies and prayed I hadn't nobbled a 20-ft Great White.

After letting the line spin out briefly, I applied the reel brake. Nothing — but NOTHING — happened. I was beginning to relax and thank heavens the lucky shark had escaped when the rod began to jerk and then bend.



Pain shot up my right arm as the battle began, the shark beginning to tug hard and me lowering the rod, then jerking it back and trying to reel in.

This went on for what seemed a never-ending half hour until finally I had the enemy against the side of the

'Imagine my astonishment when plants shot in the air and the shark's head came out!' (sketch by Rodger Bowman of Grays).

How a shark popped up a second time

boat. 'How are you going to get him aboard?' I asked Ted. 'I'm not', he replied. 'You're paying for the trip — YOU do it'.

Now the art of getting a shark — and this one was a good 6ft long and weighed around 105lb — on to the boat deck is to raise its head out of the water, grab its tail, and when you have it safely aboard clobber it over the head, literally, with a blunt instrument. I finally managed the first part, then Ted completed the

exercise by clubbing the victim with what looked like a glorified baseball bat.

By now fired with the enthusiasm of beginner's luck, and having placed my first catch out of the way in a box-like 'hold' — an 8ft by 4ft by 2ft affair on the deck and covered with planks — I sat down on the planks to hunt my second prey.

Imagine my astonishment — and utter terror — when, about 15 minutes later, the planks shot into the air, me with them, and the shark's head came out, jaws gnashing and six rows of teeth glistening.

I would like to tell you that at this point I gave the creature one petrifying stare, clobbered it over the head again and pushed it back safely into the hold. I would like to — but I can't. In fact I ran like hell to the far end of the boat, leaving poor Ted to cope.



Brian Dove

I can reveal, however, that in the next six hours we caught four more sharks and eventually returned to harbour, and to a heroes' welcome, with five pennants flying — one for each of our victims.

Tony puts his Sandra under 'close arrest'



You could, we suppose, call this an arresting picture for it shows Birmingham ACTS girl Sandra Kidner being 'taken away for questioning' by policeman Tony Adkins — on the day they were married.

All at Perry Barr wish their 'new' colleague, Sandra ADKINS, extremely well.

★ ★ ★

Another Midlands newlywed is Carol Lerwill, who has given up the 'Box' business (she was Carol Box!) but continues to give a good account of herself in the container field . . .

★ ★ ★

Congratulations to Margaret Jones, who left Birmingham office at the end of September to await her second baby. Margaret's 'deadline' is almost the same as that for this issue of 'Contacts', but we hope to report further next time.

WHAT DO THE SCOTS DO WITH PORRIDGE IN SUMMER?

See next issue

THE EYES HAVE IT — AGAIN

When you've caught up with the news and are ready to relax, turn to Pages 8 and 9, where Carter Leonard presents his usual miscellany of gossip and fun — including another competition featuring 'The Eyes of the Stars' and a prize crossword competition with a strong ACTS flavour.

THIS INTREPID BAND

As if to prove a widely-held suspicion that you don't have to be mad to work at Richmond House but it helps, ten members of Head Office staff quit their warm, comfortable beds at crack of dawn on a recent wet and windy Saturday to transform a half-height container into a hot air balloon!

Having decided to enter a float in Southampton's annual Carnival, the intrepid band apparently felt that such a balloon would fit in ideally with the carnival's theme — "Around The World in 80 Days."

The theory — perhaps not as mad as it sounds — was that with several yards of material, hundreds of party balloons inflated with Helium and large squares of garden netting the transformation could be achieved.

Fortified by endless sandwiches, packets of crisps and the occasional tipple, the Gallant Ten tackled

Here's lookin' at yer, Cobber!

By JOHN WILSON

You could have forgiven anybody for wondering just what the heck was going on. It seemed that every other person in sight was making paper flowers. There was a man, believe it or not, with three legs, another walking around with a box on his head, and yet another rushing about, demanding: "Where's my bra?"

But the light soon dawned. Basildon Sports and Social Club was getting ready to take its float into the annual Bank Holiday Carnival procession through the streets of the town.

Preparations began in the normal way — with two different designs, ten chiefs and very few Indians. Despite all initial problems, however, a design was eventually selected, and work started to adapt office equipment to the theme of 'Characters from Down Under'.

Outlines of Australia and New Zealand were meticulously drawn on large sheets of card, precisely cut out — and then found to be too big!

Lights hitherto hidden under a score of bushels suddenly came ablaze, and artistic skills, sign-writing talents and costume adaptation all came out into the open.

Wot, no Kangaroo!

Cans of spray paint, cunningly mixed in dark corners of the Sports and Social room, were plastered everywhere, and the eyes of a cardboard kangaroo began to follow people wherever they went. (All attempts to get a real kangaroo — or even a kangaroo costume — failed, even when renowned London costumiers were approached, and there wasn't a koala bear to be had for love or money).

The office bookies who had offered 10 to one against things being ready in time, lost money and at 8 a.m. on the great day the lorry and most of the cast were assembled.

Among those represented on the float were Dame Edna Everidge (Janet Roast), Rolf Harris (Martin Fry), Ned Kelly (Mike Mackay), two mighty Maori ladies (Chris Bell and Eddie Wells), a South Sea Island Maiden (Sue Shields), an all-Black (Lynn Pywell), a cricketer (Carol Szczypka), a dubious lady tennis-player (John Wilson) and a can of Foster's lager (Simon Wilson).

All of them got on top of the lorry somehow, and off it went to the assembly point — with Vernon Pearce and Elaine Kitchen as escorts in two courier vans.

The overall procession covered some five miles — with the ACTS float getting second prize in the Commercial Section.

Meanwhile in Soton BECAME INVOLVED IN A LOT OF HOT AIR

By a Special Correspondent

their Herculean task. First, the container itself was trimmed with blue and white material and festooned with balloons. The several packets of garden netting were sewn together with fishing line — and filled with more than five hundred party balloons.

Finally, and wearing T-shirts proclaiming ACT DO IT WORLDWIDE (but not proclaiming what!), the party itself jboarded the float ready to join the procession. There could be no doubt that they had the party spirit — but whether it came from the carnival or the bottle is debatable.

Suffice it to say that the weather eventually relented, the people of Soton watched nearly ninety floats pass them by, and though the ACTS entry won no awards, a splendid time was had by all



WHAT THE WELL-DRESSED male and female was wearing at Basildon Carnival. South Sea Island Maiden Sue Shields with the two mighty Maori ladies — Chris Bell and Eddie Wells.



DAME EDNA, Ned Kelly and the rest of the Down Under gang on the float at Basildon Carnival.

The BRIAN SWIFT guide to your 1980 Christmas cheer

NEVER MIND THE BOTTLE—

By the time this issue of 'Contacts' goes to Press, I suspect that quite a few of you will be doing the rounds of the wine shops, the supermarkets — and even the off licence sections of your local hostelrys — looking for wines to grace your Christmas tables (writes Brian Swift, Container Controller at Head Office).

If you are anything like me, you will be looking for the best possible wines AT A PRICE YOU CAN AFFORD.

But how can you pick out the bargains when the range of choice is wider than in almost any other country in the world? Today our wine shelves are packed with offerings from 'conventional' sources like France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Spain, Portugal and Yugoslavia, but as some of these wines become more and more expensive, an increasing number of bottles are being imported from countries like Australia, Argentina, Bulgaria, Hungary, South Africa — and the United States, particularly California.

When faced with such an ever-enlarging selection one obvious factor that must influence your Christmas choice is price — but which wine should you go for within the price range you have fixed for yourself?

The answer, of course, is to compare the basic quality of the wines on offer — and to do this it is vital that you learn to 'read' the labels and assess every clue they yield. And, believe me, they yield plenty.

Spotting the bargain

You much understand, for instance, that wines from different countries are not directly comparable because grapes, soils, climates and methods of viniculture vary greatly, as do the wines from different regions within the same country.

The labels, however, will enable you to determine, on the basis of quality, which is likely to be the better bargain. An Italian Red DOC Classico Reserve on offer at the same price as a Red Cotes du Rhone V.D.Q.S. is more than likely to be a superior wine and therefore the better value.

And though superb marketing over a number of years has quite deservedly made household names of wines like the German Blue Nun, a Liebfraumilch, and Green Label, a Riesling, both of Q.b.A. classification, others of a similar classification (Q.b.A.) and type can be bought for 50p and even £1 less if you scout around. The difference, if any, is likely to be slight as all are subject to the same quality standards.

And if you are canner still, you may even find an Auslese or Spatlese wine, both of Q.M.P. classification, for the same price.

LOOK AT THE LABEL



The purpose of this article, however, is not to make up your mind for you — but to help you make it up for yourself. So that you will no longer be confused by references like Q.b.A., Q.M.P., V.D.Q.S. and the like — all of which appear on labels — here in simple (I hope) form are the basics of the classification systems used by major producers. And good hunting to you!

FRANCE

Vins de Pays

The lowest classification — your vin ordinaire! With a supervising body to maintain standard.

V.D.Q.S.

Vins Delimites de Qualite Superiore. Second ranked.

A.O.C.

Appellation d'origine Controlee — the superior classification. Within this category are further degrees of excellence as follows (best first) — Grand Premier Cru/Chateau/Premier Grands Cru; Premier Crus/Grands Cru/Troisiemes Crus; Deuxieme Crus; Quatrieme Crus; Cinquiemes Crus.

GERMANY

Deutcher Tafelwein Lowest category — vin ordinaire. Does not pass a test.

Qualitatswein Bestimator Anbaugebiete (QbA)

Second ranked wine — and carries a test number (Profungsnummer).

Qualitatswein mit Pradikat (QmP)

Top grade, passing an analytical and tasting test. As with QbA test number must appear on bottle. Rankings in this category are (best first) Trocken-Beerauslese; Beeren-Auslese; Auslese; Spatlese; Kabinett.

NOTE: The first two rankings are rare and very expensive. £8 a bottle for Beeren-Auslese — if you're lucky!

ITALY

Denominazione Semplica

Vin ordinaire. No set standards or tests.

Denominazione die Origine Controllata (D.O.C.)

Roughly equal to lower/middle ranked AOC (French) wines. Rankings within this classification are Classico Riserva; Classico; and Riserva.

Denominazione di Origine Controllata Garantita (DOCG)

Top ranked wines. Roughly equivalent to Grand Premier Cru and Premier Cru. Rankings in this category as for DOC.

AUSTRIA

Parallel system to German Q.b.A. and Q.M.P.

SPAIN/PORTUGAL

Both countries have a region control system similar to Appellation Controlee (A.O.C.)

Denominacao de origen

Reserva — one of the better mature wines.

SOUTH AFRICA

Seal of Origin is carried on bottle tops controlled by the Government. Three classifications are identified by coloured bands or labels.

Blue Band

Origin certified.

Blue and Red Band

Origin and vintage certified

Blue, red and green band

Origin, vintage and grape variety. (80%) guaranteed.

Superior

Addition of word Superior means grape variety. 100% of named type.

NOW IT'S BABY TALK TIME

Chris Summerfield, a lively part of the Southampton ACTS scene for some years — she was in the Finance Department, Cashiers section, and captained Soton to victory in the first Peter Yarwood Cup competition — was showered with gifts from friends and colleagues when she left in August to await a baby.

The presents included a baby bouncer, flowers, a bottle of champagne and the inevitable cuddly toys.

Our bet is that mother and dad would drink the champagne (if it lasts that long) on September 21 to celebrate the arrival of young Lucy Sian, who weighed 4lb 12oz at birth.

* * *

And more news on the mother care front. When Maureen Moore, of Basildon Central Services, left recently to await her baby, her colleagues devised a special 'pram' to carry the



Southampton's Chris Summerfield (left) and Basildon's Maureen Moore photographed at the office parties given when they left to await their babies.

many gifts that had been organised for her. All her colleagues wish her well — and hope to meet the new arrival around Christmas time.

* * *

Basildon Imports gave a party on the same day for Sue Sanderson, this time to congratulate her on her marriage.

Like the mother-to-be, the bride-to-be received many gifts from her Basildon friends.

Basildon takes a roof-top delivery



Releasing the new air-conditioning equipment from its harness

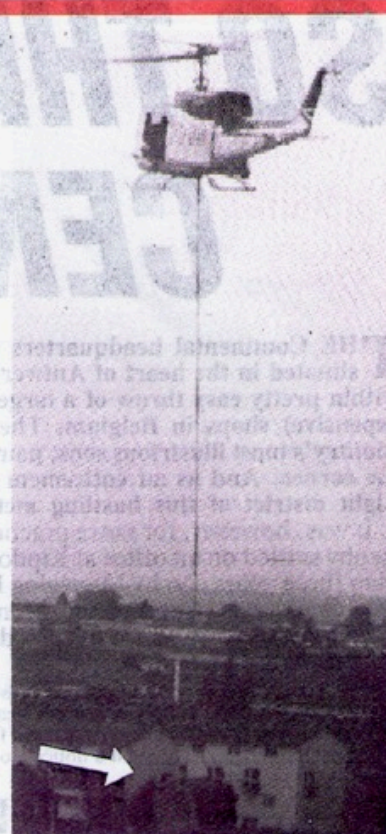
There's more ways than one of delivering bulky new equipment to its destination. You can do it by rail, of course, you can even do it by road—with a convoy of police cars.

Or you can do it by helicopter (if you've got the right place to deposit your load), as was done recently when new air-conditioning equipment was delivered to Northgate House, Basildon.

Our two pictures — which make up, we hope, in dramatic content for a little deficiency in quality — demonstrate just how it was done.

The picture on the right shows the equipment dangling a few hundred feet below the 'copter as it nears its destination. The second picture (on left) shows the equipment being released as the 'copter hovers above the Northgate House rooftop car park.

(Editor's Note. We are most grateful to Basildon Corporation's Mr J. R. Clements for lending us these pictures for reproduction).



The white arrow points to the boxed equipment below the helicopter

Out and about with the Contacts' reporting team

WEDDING BOOM AT BARKING

It's boom year for weddings at Barking! By the end of 1980, no fewer than eight members of ACTS staff will have taken the plunge.

Jane Cooke, of Container Control, set the pace way back in February when she married Mark Headly at St Margaret's, Barking, and this wedding was followed a couple of months later by the 'in office' marriage of CAMEL's Pat Alcorn and assistant Cargo Superintendent Bob Newton.

Come Mid-summer (July, to be exact) Commercial typist Sharon Anderson made a pact with the opposition when she married OCL's Jeff Troke. (To 'balance the books', it's only fair to add that Jeff's uncle is one of our Assistant Cargo Superintendents). Sharon and Jeff honeymooned in Tenerife.

Fifth of the year's ACTS weddings was that of Val Whyte, who recently transferred to Container Control. She married Mike Barnett at Grays Parish Church, and the happy couple left later for a honeymoon in Australia.

Bringing the year's wedding total to eight (so far!) were those of Peter Tapson (Imports), Graham Crouch (Cargo) and Diane Ashworth (Imports).

It goes without saying, of course, that all at Barking — and in the rest of ACTS — wish the couples well.

Take the cake

Barking's cooks are currently searching high and low for exotic cake recipes! The region's third annual cake-making competition is under way, and quite a few entrants are bent on beating last



Sharon Anderson



Val Whyte

year's entry by Sharon Anderson (now, of course, Mrs Troke!).

★ ★ ★

Pauline McGeorge, of Transport Costing, gave birth to a daughter in March. Congratulations, Pauline.

★ ★ ★

Barking's annual Darts, Table Tennis and Chess competitions are now in swing, with prizes due to be presented at the region's annual dinner and dance in January.

★ ★ ★

"A great success" was the general verdict on an ACTS evening outing to the Circus Tavern, Purfleet, to see Jimmy Jones.

From Leeds to see the Queen

Leeds Booking Clerk Sheila Walker and husband Brian, a local councillor, will always remember their 'Royal Day Out' in July this year, when they were guests of the Queen at a Buckingham Palace Garden Party. Members of the Royal family at the party, in addition to Her Majesty, included the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Charles and the Duchess of Gloucester.

After walking round the Palace gardens, Sheila said: "They are absolutely beautiful. It is hard to credit that there could be so much beauty in the very heart of London."



Councillor Walker and Sheila

SONJA THE SUMMER BRIDE

Twenty-four-year-old Malcolm Wade, a transport assistant at Southampton Terminal, was married at Fareham, Hants, during the Summer to Sonja Lorraine Coker, a pharmaceutical assistant.

Sonja wore a full-length, white lace-trimmed dress, and had three attendants.

Malcom, who lists football, literature and community work as his main interests away from the office, was for a time membership secretary of his local Liberal party.

★ ★ ★

'All forms of horse-riding', including show jumping and cross-country events, are among the hobbies of 19-year-old Lynne Hughes, who has joined the Terminal staff as receptionist-telephonist - typist. She is also an avid reader.

★ ★ ★

Jill Rogers, who was a Transport Costing Clerk at the Terminal, has had her first baby — 6lb 8oz baby girl, Amy Elizabeth, born in July.



Malcolm Wade and bride Sonja



Lynne Hughes

SO THIS IS ANTWERP — CENTRE OF ACTS IN EUROPE

THE Continental headquarters of ACTS is happily — and most conveniently — situated in the heart of Antwerp. The banks and banking houses of the world are within pretty easy throw of a large-size stone. So are some of the smartest (and most expensive) shops in Belgium. The Cathedral and the Church in which one of the country's most illustrious sons, painter Pietro Paolo Rubens, is buried are just around the corner. And as an enticement for those with less inhibited inclinations, the Red Light district of this bustling metropolis on the Scheld is within easy reach.

It was, however, for more practical and businesslike reasons that Guy Ashby settled on an office at Kipdorp 57 in Antwerp, when invited more than three years ago by Managing Director Peter Bainbridge to become the company's Continental Manager and to set up a European headquarters from which to co-ordinate the £13m a year plus Continental business handled by ACTS.

The priority consideration, of course, was to find a centre with immediate access to every kind of swift and infallible communication — by telephone and Telex for the written and spoken word, and by air, road and rail for the convenient transport of the Continental Manager himself, at a moment's notice, to something like fourteen countries in Europe and the Near East.

By LESTER CARROLL

And here, I suspect, lies the answer to those who might have thought that co-ordinating the activities of some 41 agents — six of them 'main control centres' — could quite easily be done from the warmth and comfort of an office in Southampton.

When you are trying to cope with 14 countries, each with its individual economy (and individual problems!), a man in the European hand, with practical, day-to-day experience of the Continental tempo, temperament and way of thinking, ready to leap into plane or car and be on the client's or agent's doorstep within hours, is worth two in the home base bush any time.

"I suppose that over the year, I spend something like 50 per cent of my time away from home and office," says Guy Ashby. "Which isn't really surprising when you remember that our agents cover an area from Finland in the North to Egypt in the South, from Bordeaux in the West to Istanbul in the East."

What is surprising, perhaps, is that Guy reckons he does some 50 per cent of his travelling by car, rather than by air. "From my home in Brussels — just 30 minutes by car from his Antwerp office — I can be in the heart of Hamburg within six hours," he says. "It would take at least four by air — and imagine the difference it makes having your car available for business when you get there."

Inevitably, a pretty clear definition of the Ashby role as ACTS Continental Manager is given in his job specification which, after refer-

ring to the vital need for constant liaison with agents 'to maintain the effectiveness and efficiency of documentary, financial and equipment control', goes on to say that the Manager 'must co-ordinate all the company's European export-import activity and ensure that the agency network on the Continent operates as a cohesive group'.

In other words, he must be planner, guide, philosopher, friend and trouble-shooter all in one to the 40-odd agents handling ACTS affairs and ACTA business in Europe.

And if the job is to be done to maximum effect, he must be available also for regular meetings with members of the ACTS Board in Southampton and maintain constant liaison with Section heads to avoid work duplication.

£13m cargoes.

How big, then, is the Continental activity that makes the opening of a European office worthwhile? To start with, the total container throughput for all ACT's widespread operations in Europe is 54 per cent of the total UK throughput — which isn't a bad start! It is larger, by several thousand container loads, than that handled by Basildon, the biggest UK region.

In 1979, for instance, some 10,800 South-bound containers and 10,500 Northbound containers (including 2,000 reefers) were handled by ACTS agents on the Continent, against Basildon figures in the same period of 7,400 and 9,300.

Up to the end of July this year, the two-way traffic of Continental containers totalled 12,818 (just above target), and the projected total for next year is 23,437.

It is not easy to be specific about the goods that make up the £13m-a-year cargoes carried to and from ports like Zeebrugge, Antwerp and Genoa, but Volvos from Sweden, Opels from Germany, cars from other European countries,

EUROPE



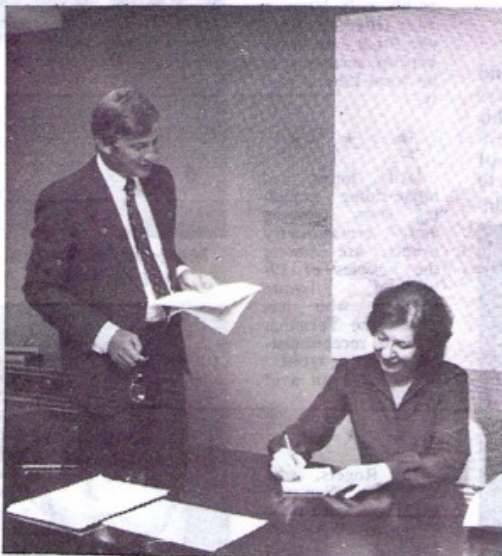
WALLMAP showing the Ashby European territory provides a background as he talks with one of ACTS' main agents, John Bartels (left), a director of Conship.

tiles from Italy and even, believe it or not, 12 containerloads of potato chips exported every month from Spain to Australia are all on the list.

If I have, so far, made the ACTS Continental activity sound a bit too much like a one-man band, let me put the record straight. Guy Ashby would be the first to emphasise the non-stop support, encouragement and advice he gets from senior management like Peter Bainbridge and his (Guy's) immediate boss, Operations Director Bill Campbell, along with other members of



Angela Ashby with daughters Fenella and Sar of their home in Brussels.



DICTATION TIME for secretary and music-lover Lucienne Dockier.

NERVE

CITY PANORAMA

The River Scheldt, which flows deep into the hinterland, has made Antwerp a world-famous seaport. In the foreground is the Gothic Church of Our Lady, building of which began in the 14th century.



the Board and Section heads at Soton headquarters.

He would tell you that without day-to-day co-operation with Traffic Manager Hugh Townsend, Maritime Manager John Farrar, Equipment Control Manager Ian Massie and Cargo Handling Manager Mel Grainger in Southampton and ACTA's own Continental Manager, Bob Philips, who operates from Dunkirk and with whom Guy spends a great many of his working hours, his job would be doubly difficult, if not impossible.

As Chairman of the Maritime Container Rail Association, a body set up to represent the interests of fourteen major shipping companies, including OCL and ACL, Hugh Townsend has enabled ACT to take the lead in negotiating the best possible charges and conditions for container transport by rail all across the Continent. (I shall hope to write in more detail about MCRA later.

Lucienne

There are others, of course, without whom the ACTS European operation would undoubtedly grind into second gear, if not to a halt. It is sheer coincidence that the Ashby Antwerp office is in a building that has been occupied for many years by Conship, one of ACTS' principal agents. But the arrangement has one splendid advantage. It means that Guy (and ACTS) have the loyal, albeit part-time

services of an attractive English-speaking Belgian secretary, Lucienne Dockier, who admits, though I find it hard to believe, to some 33 years' service with Gallatly Hankey (Belgium), Conship's managing agents. A lover of 'all kinds of music — even beat!', Lucienne is herself an accomplished pianist.

And there is always, of course, the indefatigable 'Mr Fix It' himself — 36-year-old Henri Boland, the reefer engineer Guy took over from Conship when the ACTS Antwerp office was opened three years ago.

Today, Henri watches over, keeps 'in good nick' and reports on the utilisation of some 750,000 dollars worth of ACTA refrigeration equipment on the Continent — at Hamburg, Zeebrugge, Genoa and elsewhere.

Like Guy, he travels round Europe as an when necessary to supervise not only the static installations at major ports, but also a float of mobile equipment to be deployed as required.

Guy Ashby's eyes twinkle every time he mentions Henri. "To describe him as a 'character' is an understatement and doesn't do him justice," he says. "When we were setting up a reefer operation in Greece, he taught the Greeks how to use the equipment with tremendous panache.

"Since Henri doesn't speak a word of Greek and the Greeks themselves hardly understood any English, it was no mean achievement. They

got on famously!"

After schooling at Liege, in Belgium, Henri, now 36, spent three years at a Radio Engineering School before going to sea as a radio officer in 1965. Ten years later, when he left to join Conship, he had become a Chief Engineer on refrigeration ships of the Belgian Fruit Line.

Married with one daughter, Henri has five medals — one presented to him by Queen Fabiola in 1976 for rescuing three people from the sea off the Spanish coast. This is really not altogether surprising since he is a deep-sea diving instructor in his spare time. He builds model trains — and has just earned a flying certificate.

Wedding hustle

Which brings me to Guy Ashby himself. This is not, of course, his first Continental assignment for ACTS. Twelve years ago, at the age of 32, he joined the company as Traffic Controller at Tilbury — but never got there! With problems at the docks bedevilling the opening of the company's new Australia/New Zealand service, Guy, who already had contacts on the Continent and knew many of the agents from earlier days as a Cargo Superintendent with Blue Star Port Line, was sent as Executive Officer to Rotterdam to help get the ships moving from there. His original posting was for two weeks. It was 18 months before he got back to Britain ...

Like many of his colleagues, he began his working life at sea and obtained his Master's Certificate while serving with Port Line. He was later stevedoring manager at London Docks before becoming a cargo superintendent, working with another ACT stalwart, Wally Walshaw. For a time he was Assistant Operations Manager with ACTS, and immediately before taking up

(continued on page 9)



antha in the garden



Henri Boland
5-medal man

to entertain, to puzzle - and inform



THE WALTONS — IN DUTCH!

(Continued from opposite page)

watching English or American programmes dubbed or sub-titled. "If you haven't seen The Waltons in Dutch, you haven't seen anything," he says.

He was also impressed by the behaviour of Belgian pedestrians. "I shudder to count the times I have seen pedestrians in England, young and old alike, ignore the Little Green Man warnings at crossings," he says. "It's a wonder half of 'em don't get killed. But in Antwerp, I watched them waiting patiently, sometimes in their twenties and thirties, until they got the Green Man all clear.

Mind you, with Belgian drivers the way they are, it's a good job they do!

Pension howlers

MANY thanks to those readers who sent extra howlers following my paragraph last time about some of the strange things said in letters to the pensions people. Here are a few of them:

- ★ Sir, I am forwarding my marriage certificate and two children, one of which is a mistake, as you will see.
- ★ In answer to your letter, I have given birth to a boy weighing 10lb; is this satisfactory?
- ★ Mrs. B. has no clothes and has not had any for over a year; she has been visited by the clergy.
- ★ I want my money as quick as possible. I have been in bed with the doctor for a week and he doesn't seem to be doing me much good, and if things don't improve, I shall have to try another doctor.

CROSSWORD GUIDE TO ACTS

If you know anything about ACTS, containerisation and shipping, you should be half way home in this Crossword, specially devised for 'Contacts' by John Brooks, Management Accountant at Soton. There's a prize of £3 for the first correct solution opened, and one of £2 for the second. All entries to reach Lynne Lisney, Personnel Dept. at Head Office, by Friday, January 16, 1981. Remember to send her your name and your region as well. And here are the clues:

ACROSS

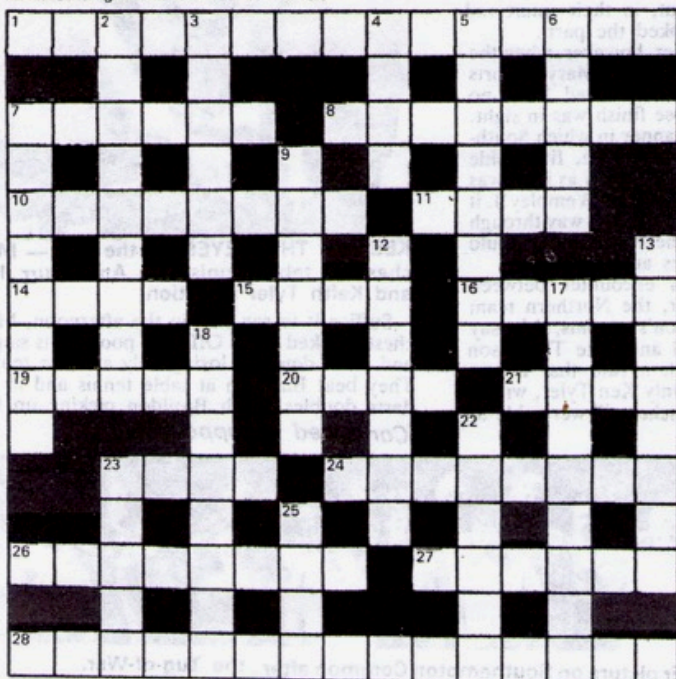
1. The yachtsman who reigns over us all (5, 10)
7. Get the cargo on the lorry — or in the ship (4, 2)
8. Irish 10 supervising operations (8)
10. Rugby player you can't sit on (5, 3)
11. Side shows March caution in a way (4)
14. Another gain for a Swedish miss (4)

15. You could call it a personnel bay! (4)
16. Roof repairer who came back to light the fire again (5)
19. Popular cartoon character (5)
20. Gloucester and York, singly, are good examples (4)
21. Against part of Ian tipping over (4)
23. Pulls — quite the reverse of a keen student! (4)
24. Skill of a striker on film? (8)

26. Just the right Scottish town for a financial boss (8)
27. The faculty of sight from dreams? (6)
28. Has noted reefers? Only when Continental ports are involved (5, 3, 7)

DOWN

2. This house's battle didn't sink any container ships! (9)
3. The circles in which a milkman moves (6)
4. Quite close, in one area or another (4)
5. Swiftiness (8)
6. Worms is a famous one! These will keep pounds away (5)
7. Punishments used to keep containers steady (8)
9. Bears the expense — and gets change for fads (7)
12. Jack without bill plus nines strangely runs computer (7)
13. Responsible for the technicalities, or I'm tons out! (8)
17. The break when you can do this crossword while eating (9)
18. 12 is one of them, so are Gareth, Phil, Barry and J.P.R.I (3, 5)
22. What a wasp, lice, beetles, etc. might do to the mainbrace? (6)
23. Remit back to help you boil eggs. (5)
25. If you answer all these clues correctly, there is this for you! (4)



ACTS in EUROPE

(continued from page 7)

his present post was Operations Manager for three years with ACTA.

For a variety of very good business and personal reasons, he and his wife Angela live in Brussels (which is mighty handy for one of Europe's busiest airports), although his office is in Antwerp. They were married 17 years ago after what could be called a pretty close shave. Guy was at sea when they became engaged and set off soon afterwards on what was to be a four-month trip. He got back 15 months and 22 days later — just 42 hours before the wedding!

Today, while Guy bustles around Europe, Angela works as a systems analyst with an American firm in Brussels, and their two daughters, Fenella Kay and Samantha Jane, go to a European school where languages are a priority.

And there's a story behind 13-year-old Fenella's name. On the day Angela received doctor's confirmation that she was having a baby, Guy took her to see a show in London called — of all things! — "Let's Get a Divorce". The star? Fenella Fielding. "We made up our minds on the name right away," says Guy.

Decisions, decisions!

That worked out well — as, I imagine, do most of the decisions Guy makes. His job now is one that demands decisions with alarming regularity. Indeed, if I were asked to name the qualities most essential for a Continental Manager, the ability to make the right decisions quickly would come high on the list. So would a wealth of shipping experience. A swift grasp of what will make the difference between profit and loss. A clear head and abounding energy.

And, when you're dealing with some 40 agents who will not, inevitably, have quite the same approach to every problem, a *superabundance of tact*.

When I visited Guy, he had returned at 11 p.m. the night before from a fortnight's camping holiday in Italy and the South of France with Angela and the girls.

He picked me up at my hotel at 8.30 a.m. on his first day back. When we got to his office ten minutes later, Lucienne greeted him with a pile of correspondence, memos, inter-office instructions and tentative appointments, all in a file literally an inch and a half thick. All to be read and acted upon before day's end. Over the next four hours he had eight visitors and 17 phone calls — all, apparently, about urgent matters that had cropped up in his holiday absence. All, it seemed, needed brisk attention.

And yet, when he had taken me to an excellent, albeit hurriedly-eaten (35-minute) lunch, and had to return swiftly at 2 p.m. to take a call from a top European port official, with trouble obviously on his mind, he shook my hand and said: "How kind of you to come over and visit us. It's been lovely to see you again."

That's what I call tact . . .

THE Carter Leonard

COLUMN

Who and what do B and G, of ACTA Container Control in London, think I am? A man who can be bought with fine words or filthy lucre? A weak little nobody who will yield to threats?

Never, B and G. I am a man who stands firm by his principles — at least in the face of a bribe as small as 15p!

My faithful readers should know that a dastardly effort was made to sway my judgement over the 'Eyes of the Famous' competition published in our last issue. Never have there been so many entries for a competition in the history of 'Contacts'. They literally poured in from all over the country. And clipped to one of them (sent, of course, by those rascals B and G) was a 15p luncheon voucher and a note, saying: "Please accept bribe. We better win — or else."

Away with you, varlets. Try your luncheon vouchers on the man who runs the Times Crossword. Or Blankety Blank. And the best of British luck . . .

Seriously, readers' enthusiasm for the competition was most flattering — and of course B and G's entry went into the hat with all the other correct entries. First correct solution opened came from Miss A. Hunter, of Glasgow office reception, who gets the bottle of champagne promised, and the second from Pauline Hudson, Credit Control, Manchester, who gets a bottle of wine. Good health to both of you.

A CLEAN SWEEP

Watches and clocks, yes. Even radios and coffee blenders. But this is the first time I've ever seen a portable vacuum cleaner presented as a retirement gift! It was given to Head Courier Harry Scammell (centre) by his Soton colleagues, and handed over by Office Services Manager Dudley Kirk (right). Harry says he's going to use the cleaner to make light of the 'housework' in his caravan.



Administration Director Bob Howland (left in my picture) presented Harry with a crystal cut glass bowl from the ACTS Board.

And because you seemed to enjoy it so much, I'm giving you eight more pairs of eyes (at the top of the opposite page) to try and recognise. It's just for fun this time. No prizes — but I will give you the correct solutions in March. I will also tell you ALL the eyes belong to famous radio and television personalities and promise you that each of the following clues applies to one of them:

You could call HER a tweedy singer!; his House was always Open; you could call George one of the Spuds!; maybe the good life suits her; a stewpot for the housewives now; liable to make your mind go blankety blank; she sounds quite like a gale force!; and, Quite Contrarily, this Katie sounds as if she has the kettle on.

MD's please note!

EVERYONE agrees that Robin Galloway, Commercial Manager at Head Office, deserved the warm reception they gave him when he spoke at a World Courier Seminar at the Baltic Exchange.

Inevitably (and quite rightly) he compared what some call the 'good old days' of liner shipping with the present era in which computerisation, especially in documentation, has brought benefits to shipowners and shippers alike.

At one stage he pointed out that for the purpose of data transfer, experience had thrown up three alternatives — data transmission, air freight and couriers.

He then went on, "Of course, both the shippers and the shipowner can use the managing director as a courier if he's going on business or holiday — but it does play havoc with his baggage allowance!" I wonder who and what he had in mind?

I like his closing quip. After pointing out that the conference brochure depicted a courier as a man with a bowler hat and wings, carrying a brief case, he said, "One can only hope that if it's meant to be Icarus, he is now better informed; if it's meant to be Mercury, he'll be less of a liar; and if it's neither of them, but one of us, he will at least be on time."

Doing it Yourself

MALCOLM Pritchard, our very able 'Contacts' man in Liverpool, is also a pretty useful man about the house. Suspecting that quite a few of my readers are as ham-fisted as I am, I asked him for a few tips that could be useful when tackling jobs around the home. For starters, he gave me these:

A CRACKER

If you find that getting plaster or Polyfilla into cracks and holes in wall corners is time-consuming, try mixing

Two pages designed



Colleague Lester Carroll was puzzled not only by Belgian television and pedestrians, as he told Carter Leonard (see below), but also by the signs he found outside an autobahn service area on the way from Antwerp to Zeebrugge. How many of these would YOU recognise? (Lester's full report on his Antwerp trip begins on Page Six).

filler as usual — and then apply it with your wife's icing bag or syringe. Then finish off with a knife in the normal way.

BUT remember to empty the bag or syringe, clean it thoroughly — and put it back in the right cupboard or drawer before the wife finds out . . .

UP TO SCRATCH

Plastic watch covers and worktops have more in common than the plastic — they both scratch. These can be removed by first rubbing with brass polish. Use plenty of polish and rub hard. Then finish off with silver polish.

PIPE DREAM

If your kitchen waste pipe gets blocked with tea leaves or food particles, attach a length of plastic tubing (using an old tyre valve) to a foot pump. Push the tubing as far as possible into the waste pipe and pump. Hey Presto — blockage gone.

THE NECK

Do you have problems decanting your home brew? Try this. Having filled your bottles, stand one or two upside down for the usual two or three weeks. The deposit will now be in the bottle neck. If you open the bottle with the stopper under water, the built-up pressure of the CO₂ will 'blow' the deposit out. Now tighten the stopper, reverse the bottles and consume in the usual way.

Thanks, Malcolm. And cheers!

Jobs by television!

YOU'D be surprised, wouldn't you, if your television suddenly went blank and the following words appeared:

PLUMBER WANTED. Prepared to work in the Isle of Man. Must have own tools. Ring Puddlewick 2937543.

However, according to colleague Lester Carroll, just back from a trip to see Guy Ashby in Antwerp (why does Lester get the trips abroad and not me?), it's the kind of thing you can expect in Belgium.

One day he found it was 'jobs vacant' time, with one vacancy after another being flashed on the screen. (If anybody genuinely knows a Cuisinier, Chef de Cuisine, with three to five years' experience, ready to go to the Dominican Republic, tell him — or her — to get in touch with Belgian TV at once. Honestly).

His hotel set, Lester adds, offered five different choices of programme — three from Belgian stations, two from Dutch. He got a little tired, however, of

(Continued on opposite page)

Things worth thinking about

Many homes are unionised. They have an eight-hour-a-day husband and a sixteen-hour-a-day wife. *He who laughs last is probably the one who meant to tell the same joke later on.*

A tabloid is a newspaper with a permanent crimewave.

Many a man in love with a dimple makes the mistake of marrying the whole girl.

Home to a small boy is merely a filling station.

A husband is simply a lover with a two days' growth of beard, his collar off and a bad cold in the head.

Four gems from Herbert Prochnow's Handbook of Epigrams and Witticisms for Speakers.

The Final that had just about everything —

1980

Had Hemingway written the script and Hitchcock directed the film they couldn't have produced a cliff-hanger to compare with the one engineered by Basildon, Head Office and Manchester in this year's final of the Peter Yarwood Cup Competition.

The stage was superbly set, of course, when the three teams met on Southampton Common at 11 a.m. on a brilliantly sunny October Sunday for a tug-of-war battle that was to decide the fate of the 1980 trophy. At the end of



Soton's Gill Creed, watched by partner Pete Thompson, goes for Double One!

a six-hour struggle the day before, when 5-a-side soccer, table tennis, darts and pool were all disposed of, the scores stood at Head Office 14, Basildon 9 and Manchester 11.

With each team then left to tug in turn against the other two — and two points available to the winners of each encounter — Head Office needed only one victory to be sure of the Cup. It looked a cinch. Poor Manchester, if they were to pull off a shock win, needed not only two outright wins of their own making (against Basildon and Soton), but also a Basildon victory over Head Office. And that, frankly, looked like asking a bit too much.

By 11.20 a.m., however, an inspired Manchester sextet — egged on by the indefatigable Family Tyler (adjudicator Ann and her three children — Andrew, 12, Stephen, 8, and Christopher 2) had tugged both the opposing teams out of sight. With 15 points against Southampton's 14, the Peter Yarwood Cup was their's if only Basildon, by now the very sporting underdogs, could keep Soton at bay in the last battle of the final.



Conversation Piece between Sue Robson and Eddie Higgins as Gill Creed gets on with the game.

By the
SPORTS EDITOR



Mike Mackay takes aim — watched by his opponent, Manchester's Karen Whiting.



It's not ALL fun being officials! Peter Hughes and Lynne Lisney, who gamely shouldered the burden of organising the 1980 Cup Final, discuss a tricky point with 'general factotum' Kevin Hymas, of Tilbury.

Four minutes later they'd done it! Head Office, game to the last, dug in their heels — but in the final analysis, heels were not enough. Gill Creed plus five good men and true (including husband Mick) slipped and slithered irrevocably to defeat.

MANCHESTER, the Little 'Uns who had won their way through to meet the two Big 'Uns in the final, were home and exceedingly dry.

As John Cove, head of the ACTS Personnel team, said at the prize presentation, Manchester not only played well, but, in their smart red team colours, really 'looked the part'.

Twenty-four hours earlier, however, when the Cup Final got under way at the St Mary's Sports Centre in Southampton, there had been no indication that such a close finish was in sight. Indeed, judging by the manner in which Southampton set about the first course, five-a-side football (refereed by Kevin Hymas as if he was just awaiting a call to take over at Wembley!), it looked as if they might gobble their way through the entire meal before the other guests could even pick up their knives and forks!

After an opening 4-4 encounter between Basildon and Manchester, the Northern team became the first of Soton's victims. Lindsay Baldwin, Richard Coxall and Pete Thompson slapping in goals at such a rate that it was difficult to keep count. Only Ken Tyler, with a penalty kick, and Dave Pickersgill were able to reply for Manchester.



Basildon's table tennis pair, playing under the eagle eye of their boss, Regional Manager Norman Cooper, trying to put their team on the right road in the early stages of the final.

Basildon fared just as badly against the speed and skill of the Richmond House five. Pete Thompson, Lindsay Baldwin (2) and Richard Coxall again doing the damage for the home team.

When spectators and competitors went into lunch, it looked as if it was all over bar the shouting — Southampton 6, Basildon 1, Manchester 1. But then something happened. It may have been the beer. Or the pork pies. Or the Scotch eggs. Or the soup. Or the sandwiches. Or the cheese. Or simply the fact that early success went to Southampton heads!



KEEPING THEIR EYES on the ball — Manchester's table tennis duo, Andy Burr (left) and Keith Tyler in action.

Suffice it to say that in the afternoon, Manchester licked Head Office at pool, darts singles and darts doubles, losing only at table tennis. They beat Basildon at table tennis and in the darts doubles. With Basildon picking up two

(Continued on opposite page)



COMPETITORS AND SPECTATORS get together for a souvenir picture on Southampton Common after the Tug-of-War.

— or how Manchester Won on the Last Pull!

CLIFF-HANGER FOR P.Y. CUP

(Continued from opposite page)

points from Soton in the darts doubles and another four (two at pool and two in the darts singles) from Manchester, the first day ended with Soton poised for a victory that was to elude them, as I have already described, in the exciting Sunday tug-of-war.

In all respects, the Cup Final week-end was, I believe, a huge success. It left a host of memories. For instance . . .

*Basildon's Regional Manager Norman Cooper and wife Doreen, having motored silently from home at crack of dawn, arriving just in time to give both moral and vocal support to the region's team on the first day. Of Norman telling me: "We must get a clear lead to-day because I can't be here to watch over them tomorrow." Of the sporting, statesmanlike advice he shouted to his deputy at one stage of the five-a-side: "Get your elbow in there, Mike!". And, when Basildon were losing their table tennis match with Manchester, of his implied criticism of umpire Peter Hughes: "You have seen table tennis played before, haven't you?"

*Of Southampton's Gill Creed, after what seemed like hours of struggle,

All pictures by PETE SMITH

throwing a double one to win a game for her and her partner in the darts doubles — and finally losing sets to both Basildon and Manchester.

*Of Peter Hughes — despite Norman Cooper — doing a splendid job as table tennis umpire, and making one major technical decision which all the players accepted but nobody but him appeared to understand!

*Of the deservedly warm tributes paid by John Cove to all involved in organising such a successful competition — particularly to Pete Smith for his work as 'official photographer' (all the pictures here were taken by him).

*Of Basildon's Deputy Regional Manager Mike MacKay becoming, to my



THE FINAL PULL that gave victory to Manchester — Southampton's Gill Creed, plus husband Mick and Messrs Kirk, Thompson and Baldwin, slipping and slithering irrevocably to defeat.

knowledge, the first person in the history of the competition to play for two teams. (He was in the original Southampton side four years ago before moving to Basildon).

*Of the irrepressible trio of 'coloured' cheer-leaders (Doreen Holmes, Margaret Bogle and Christine Cohen) who must have done much for Basildon's morale in an hour of considerable need, and by no means least, of the never-tiring Kevin Hymas — out of the final as a competitor for the first time since the competition started — doing a yeoman job as the two-day general factotum.

The team lists were:
MANCHESTER: David Kirk, Dave Pickersgill, Keith Tyler, Ann Tyler, Brian Allison, Karen Whiting and Andy Burr.

BASILDON: Mike Mackay, Neil Eldred, Owen Eldred, Deborah Haslett, Martin Fry, Janet Roast and David Swan.

HEAD OFFICE: Gill Creed, Mick Creed, Lindsay Baldwin, Peter Thompson, Richard Coxall, Barry Kirk and Kay Savage.



John Cove (seated, second from left), was among those who watched the early stages of the pool tournament on the opening day of the final.



Studies in concentration during the darts and table tennis finals — Basildon's Deborah Haslett (right) and Southampton's Lindsay Baldwin (above).

BRUM BEAT A 5-YEAR JINX....

The lads pictured below are as likely looking a lot as you could wish to see — and a couple of months ago (or thereabouts) they achieved their first cricket win for five years over OCL.

They are, of course, the men of Birmingham and their victory brought the overall tally in these annual encounters to three wins to two, in OCL'S favour.

In the most recent game, OCL batted first and were all out for 64, their final wicket falling in the last of 20 overs. The standard of ACTS fielding was high, and Roy Burton gave them a good start by taking two wickets in the first over. The two ACTA players in the 'home' team, Derek Eastcourt and Eric Davis, both bowled well, and Graham Plimmer was in great form behind the stumps. (Incidentally, Graham's father John took two wickets — and so did brother Neil).



The ACTS innings got off to a fine start, with half the OCL total coming in the first three overs. Victory was achieved, for the loss of two wickets, with more than half the available overs left.

'Contacts' (like everybody else) nominates Eric Davis as man of the match for his effective bowling and an innings of 49.

Thanks also to two most impartial umpires (chosen by ACTS) — Doug Smith, of BRS, and Les Green, of Dart Line — and to Mrs Plimmer and the ladies of ACTS who kindly prepared the buffet.

Left to right in our picture: (standing) Neil Plimmer, Keith Roberts, John Hodgson, Graham Plimmer, Ian Taylor and Roy Burton (sitting) John Plimmer, Bernard Glynn, David Clark (captain), Derek Eastcourt and Eric Davis.

FOOTNOTE: OCL claim they won the liquid refreshment competition after the game, but ACTS say that at least they kept their end up!

60 see Jim defeat son in final

Some 60 staff and guests from ACTS Northern Regions — Manchester, Birmingham, Aintree and Seaforth — saw an exciting father versus son final provide a fitting climax to the regions' annual bowls tournament. Because of holiday commitments; Leeds were unable to be represented.

Competitors and spectators had gathered at the Good Companions Hotel, Holmes Chapel, in brilliant sunshine ('specially ordered for the day', said Manchester Regional Manager Ian Jarrett), and found the green in excellent condition.

At the semi-final stage, Aintree were well represented, with Jim Henry and his son Paul drawn to meet



SIX OF THE BEST — the winning Manchester team after their exciting win in the Peter Yarwood Cup Final. Full report and many more pictures on Pages 10 and 11.

ACTS netball girls wallop a league side—

Manchester's success in the Peter Yarwood Cup competition was by no means a flash in the pan. Earlier in the season — at the Abraham Moss Sports Centre in Manchester — the ACTS girls' netball team took on a challenge from the Trident International League side, and put them convincingly in their place!



Rain-sodden but jubilant Manchester netballers.

Showing all their League experience, Trident had the best of the early exchanges, but with true fighting spirit, Manchester brushed the cobwebs away, fought back into the game — and ran out winners by 8 goals to 5.

Any offers?

The victorious, jubilant but rain-sodden victors (pictured left) later retired to their more usual 'residence' The bar...

Flush with success, Manchester now challenge any region. Sheila Reeves, at Manchester Office, will arrange fixtures.

Rose bowl for Brunei

Brunei Simmonds, who joined the company when Head Office opened up at Richmond House, Southampton, and was a filing clerk in Credit Control, received a cut-glass rose bowl from her colleagues as a retirement gift. It was handed over to her by John Cove, head of the company's personnel department.

IDLE THOUGHTS

The philosopher who said that 'Work well done never needs doing over again' had obviously never tried weeding his garden.

We have been told that most of the food provided on stage during a play is eatable. It's a pity some restaurants don't copy this bright idea.

A small town is a place where there's no place to go that you shouldn't.



Victory skipper Sheila Reeves

FINAL WORD

There are two days about which you should never worry — yesterday and tomorrow!