



# **BRIMS** **NEWS SHEET**

**JUNE 1968**

**VOL 1 NUMBER 1**

## **Introduction** by **J. M. Whitaker**

One of the messages relayed by the staff who attended our recent management course at Otterburn was that communication within the Company on its successes, failures, workload and problems was ineffective. This Newsheet is an attempt to put right this state of affairs.

It does of course give me pleasure to write the foreword to this first edition. I wish the Newsheet well and hope for its success. The editions are dependent upon you all making a contribution with news of interest. Everyone within the Company can take space and become part of it, and I hope you all do just that.

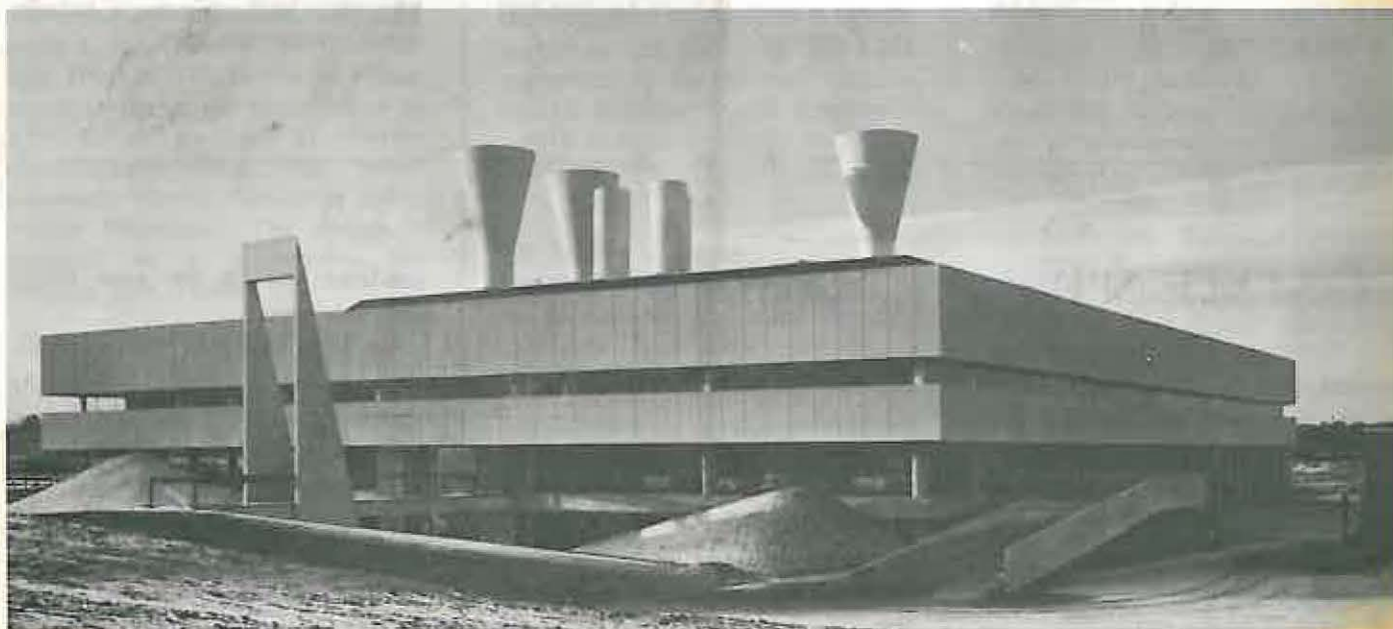
Our intention is to try and publish every two months. If sufficient interest can be maintained this plan can be changed and publication could be more frequent.

As most of you are aware we have been through a difficult period during 1966 and 1967. The majority of our contracting activities have been "on beam", but unfortunately we have suffered on three or four contracts which overall has meant we have been struggling to "break even". I have every confidence we have a bright future ahead and 1968 should see us taking further strides towards our first objective, which is to show our ability to trade successfully in both the commercial and technical competitive areas.

I would like to take this opportunity of wishing all those on our payroll, their wives and families, a successful and progressive year.

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## **Building for the Future**



**A view of the recently completed Gas Research Station for the Gas Council at Killingworth.**

*Architects and Engineers Ryder and Yates and Partners*



# PROFILE 1—

## A. T. DUNCAN

The first of a series of profiles this article looks at and introduces to some Andy Duncan, one of our Agents in Department 2.

Born a Scot 36 years ago, he has spent most of his working life with this Company, interrupted only by National Service and some years with an Earthmoving Contractor.

He joined Brims in 1948 after leaving school and was a junior Site Engineer on various shipyard sites on the Wear and Tyne before going to Egypt as a Gunner Surveyor in 1950.

Demobilisation, two years later, saw him rejoining the Company and picking up the threads of civilian life. There followed five years of site works, mostly of the medium engineering type, deepwater quays, shipyard reconstruction, dry dock repairs, piling and factory construction. This was followed by a spell as personal assistant to Mr. D. V. Brims, who was Managing Director at that time.

Feeling the need for a change, Andy joined Fewsters Limited, a local firm who, among other activities, specialised in earthmoving contracting. He says about this period, "At this time there was no encouraged expansion policy in the North-East and the roads development programme had not yet started." "Although work was plentiful, it was by the nature of small contracts and being very repetitive tended to become extremely boring."



He rejoined Brims in 1961 at about the same time that the Company became a subsidiary of Swans and has been with us since working for two years as an estimator for Civil Engineering contracts and subsequently as an Agent on both Building and Civil Engineering jobs.

He is currently Agent on the Castle Leazes contract constructing three new Halls of Residence for Newcastle University. The job is valued at about £1.8 m. and consists of sixteen residential blocks, of heights varying from four to nine storeys. In addition, there is a large two-storey building which contains dining halls, common rooms, kitchens, recreational rooms and administration offices. Three libraries, seven porters' lodges, a batch of garages and a seven hundred feet long retaining wall complete the layout. Andy is a keen student of Modern Management techniques and he has attended several courses in both his own and the Company's time.

He and his wife Evelyn have two children, a boy Alasdair aged 10 and a girl Deborah aged 8, and live in Monkseaton. He is keenly interested in mountain walking and rock climbing and, when time permits, heads for the hills. He assists regularly on the Brims Venture Club outings and will be in North-West Scotland with them this year. Currently training at various field study centres for a Mountain Leadership Certificate, he holds a Leader Permit for the local Venture Scout Unit in Monkseaton. His second interest is music, but he blushes to admit that his instrument is the cello for which, after a lapse of several years, he is again taking lessons.

The normal duties and social obligations of family life take up most of his time away from work, but the family hobbies, which range from Hand Bell Ringing, Antiques, Geology and Piano lessons, keep him busy and maintain a balance to his outdoor activities.

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## COMMENT

This Newsheet is the result of suggestions for a House Magazine which have been put forward for some time and which culminated during the recent Otterburn Course.

It aims at providing a regular flow of news and views of the Company's achievements, of its policies and of its employees.

The success of this Newsheet depends upon the attitude of its readers for it is you who will provide the major contribution to its success.

Any contributions which you can make will be welcomed and it is hoped that all of the articles, cartoons, photographs or puzzles, etc., submitted will be published. We also hope to provide a corres-

pondence column for your letters and comments.

We hope that this Newsheet will, through its columns, reflect the views, the interests and the aspirations of its readers and that it will go some way to providing the missing link which has existed between the Office and Sites, both here in the North-East and in the regions



# NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

## SOUTHAMPTON:-

### Portsdown Hill Road Bridge

This small prestressed, post tensioned concrete bridge is our most recently completed contract in the South. It forms part of a semi-clover leaf junction built to relieve traffic congestion at the junction of Portsdown Hill Road and the A3 from Portsmouth to London. The general scheme was designed by Portsmouth City Engineer's department and the roadworks were built by their own direct labour. E. W. H. Gifford, our old sparring partners, were appointed to design the actual structure.

The deck is 115' long, 38' 6" wide and about 20' high. It is supported at each end by Bank seats and at approx. 1/5th span position by two piers. The whole structure is founded directly on chalk.

The piers have an elliptical cross section. We were required to construct them in one pour and were not allowed to use through bolts or internal ties. The shape was obtained by shop-sawn plywood formers and because of the high concrete pressure involved (10' 0" wide and 20' 0" high) it was necessary to use R.S.J. wallings tied across the ends to cramp the two sides together.

The prestressing cables were 12 strand, 0.6" Dyform and ran both longitudinally and transversely. The assembly sequence had to be strictly observed to ensure that adjacent strands did not wrap around each other.

Reinforcement in the deck, whilst appearing fairly straightforward on the drawings, led to endless fixing problems. After a couple of false starts, we managed to begin what amounted to a jigsaw puzzle with the right piece, and apart from a few minor snags, the rest followed on.

The weight of the deck was reduced by the introduction of 11 No. x 20" void formers. These

metal tubes were light and delicate and had to be handled carefully. Despite our efforts two of them assumed shapes other than the specified "circular" and had to be rejected. They were held down during concreting by acrow ties bent to a "U" shape fixed to acrow bolts fed up through the deck soffit.

With 12 prestressing cables, 11 metal tubes and a mass of reinforcement, there was scarcely any room to insert a poker, but we eventually managed to feed in 190 CY of concrete. A few glasses of beer mixed with the odd drop of grout went down well at the end of the day's pour.

The 30 week contract was completed in 24 weeks. Brims sign-boards strategically placed in every conceivable position, along with the tremendous local interest that the job attracted, ensured that if nothing else we gained some prestige from advertising. In any event, it gave us a foretaste of what was to come on a much larger scale 45 miles down the road at Bournemouth.

M. R. SHIPMAN

## TEESSIDE:-

### FROM PROSAIC TO ARTISTIC

Construction companies don't often get an opportunity to make even a small contribution to the arts. BRIMS TEESSIDE has been asked to tender for the erection of a monolithic sculpture at Peterlee commissioned from the internationally famous Newcastle artist, Victor Passmore. The design is intended as a centre-piece for Peterlee New Town.

### ARISE SIR SO-AND-SO

Long service in the Territorial Army has been recognised by the award of the 14 year Long Service Medal to the Teesside area's building Agent, Derrick Horner — to whom warmest congratulations.

### GOING UP ?

BRIMS'S apprentices on Teesside be warned! Prize distribution at technical colleges in the district might be graced by our ebullient Regional Manager, Mr. J. H. Walters, who has now thrown his weight in the scales of the local committee of the National Federation of Building Trades Employers — with a special interest in educational matters.

### BUNDLES FOR (BACKING) BRITAIN ?

We wish a "happy issue out of all their afflictions" to Mrs. Valerie Low, awaiting the birth of her second child in a Shields Nursing home; and,

Mrs. Teresa Bell, wife of John Bell, Works Manager at our McGregor contract, also awaiting their fourth child at a Consett Hospital.

Quite a lot of the Teesside staff are NOT expecting babies this year.



A hearty welcome and best wishes for a long and enjoyable stay to newcomers to the Teesside region:—

To Peterlee contract: Quantity Surveyors Barry Knox and Peter Robertson.

Works Manager, Robert ("Sexy") O'Neil and deputy agent Don Thirlwall.

Keith Moore, at our Eston bath contract, has taken the plunge and acquired a wife—from one of BRIMS'S old contracts.

And—the return of the natives—rejoining us two well known long-time Teesside gangsters, Charlie Kempthorne and Ron Tupman. Welcome back aboard, men.



# CYGNET CLUB

## Venture Club in action...

A detailed account of Venture Club activities will follow in the near future.



## Swimming Club...

The Swimming Club has been in operation for over a year now and has proved to be popular with many staff, their families and friends.

The Club hires Kenton Baths for its exclusive use on Wednesday evenings from 6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. and all are welcome.

There is a special shallow end for children. Many interesting activities take place, particularly under water where a derivation of water polo has proved popular.

The water is warm, the chlorine not too strong and shapely figures (and others) can be seen parading along the water's edge.

Mrs. G. REDHEAD.

## Golf...

Soon after the Cygnet Club was formed, a group of about a dozen joined the class at John Jacobs Golf Centre and learned how to swing a bat (oops! sorry, a club).

Shortly after the first outing was held at Hexham where we had discovered they had not learned to swing the club. Following the Hexham outing, which was by way of putting the interest of the members to the test, a further outing was held at Embleton. From the golf point of view the day was a complete success, but the Secretary

made his biggest boob to date when he discovered that the Club House was "dry".

After Embleton followed Brancepeth (where many members discovered that golf balls were both expendable and expensive).

There was another trip to Hexham and the season ended at Foxton where we competed for the Whitaker Tankard. This was won by Liam McCarry in a close finish.

Up to now this year we have had two outings both at Bamburgh Castle where, even if the golf is bad, the scenery is superb. A series of other fixtures have been arranged for Hexham, Seaton Carew and Brampton.

Among the winners to date have been Ray Kirby, Mike Hall, Grant Purvis, Geoff Barron and myself, after a thorough audit of the cards by Ken Hill. Jack Hedley's main claim to fame last year was to bring along a "bandit" who managed to carry off at least two of the sweeps.

Altogether it has been a most encouraging start for this section, but we are always on the look out for new members.

BRIAN E. YOUNGS.

## Football Club...

The 1967/68 football season has finally come to an end and, after quite a mixed season, Brims United F.C. could only sustain a mid-table position in the N.E. Sunday League. The season started off well with a friendly against the Leicester City Supporters at Leicester. Brims, the underdogs, took the field and, with a crowd of just under a thousand, were subject to some barracking from them.

The early pressure of the blues of Leicester was well weathered by Brims and with the daring and dynamic black octopus in goal (that man Marr), Brims began to worry the home defence. The lead was taken after Nichols completed a solo run with a fine goal. Two more goals were added from Maughan and Redhead without reply.

In the second half the pattern of the game did not change with goals again from Nichols and Redhead. The home team scored a consolation goal near the end, but could not ruffle the Brims defence, with the final result being 5 goals to 1 goal in Brims favour.

The season kicked off with Brims in high hopes, but the standard of their game could not be maintained.

The team ended the season with the following results:—

P.	W.	D.	L.	F.	A.	Pts.
26	10	3	13	55	68	23

The following players represented Brims United F.C. during the season:—

	Goals Scored
M. Redhead .....	22
E. J. Bradley .....	3
T. Nichol .....	5
C. Brown .....	—
R. Dixon .....	4
W. Maughan .....	—
D. Crosby .....	1
R. Hazon .....	1
A. M. Marr .....	—
F. Slipper .....	—
P. K. Dryden .....	—
B. Lowery .....	1
T. Jordan .....	—
P. Hall .....	4
D. Clarke .....	—
J. Marshall .....	7
H. Tarn .....	—
R. Moore .....	6
J. Carr .....	—
S. Orkney .....	1
S. Batey .....	—

MALCOLM REDHEAD.

## PETTY CASH

	£.	s.	d.
Sep. 24 Advt. for Typist ... ..	7.	6	
Oct. 2 Violets for Typist's Desk ...	7.	0	
Oct. 8 Weeks salary for Typist ...	5.	0.	0
Oct. 9 Roses for Typist ... ..	1.	5.	0
Oct. 11 Sweets for Wife ... ..	9		
Oct. 13 Lunch - Typist & Self ... ..	2.15.	0	
Oct. 15 Typist's Salary ... ..	6.	0.	0
Oct. 17 Pictures - Wife & Self ... ..	7.	0	
Oct. 18 Theatre - Typist & Self ... ..	2.	0.	0
Oct. 19 Sweets for Wife ... ..	9		
Oct. 20 Lilian's Salary ... ..	7.10.	0	
Oct. 21 Theatre, Dinner - Lilian & Self	8.	0.	0
Dec. 2 Doctor's Bill - Lilian ... ..	105.	0.	0
Dec. 3 Fur for Wife (Mink) ... ..	1,500.	0.	0
Dec. 4 Advt. for Male Typist ... ..	7.	0	

ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO THE EDITOR - A. M. MARR