

STOP MESSAGE

The magazine of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Past Members Association



www.xhfrs.org.uk



**Make Pumps 6, Hydraulic Platform and Foam Tanker
required, Royal Naval Stores, Woolston, 26 June 1986**

INSIDE



**SEARCH AND
RESCUE DOGS**

And the Fire Service.

WW1 FIREMEN DEATHS

Your help needed.

PAST TIMES

*Focus on
Hamble Fire Station.*

Interesting Facts

**The Longest
Traffic Jam in History
12 Days, 62 Miles Long**



#!###

Give us
a kiss



**Otters sleep
holding hands**

Nope

Yummy

**20% of office coffee mugs
contain fecal matter**



I'm
starving!



**A hummingbird weighs
less than a penny**

Are you reading this magazine and are not a member? Why not join the Past Members Association and receive your own copy? Membership costs just £10 per year.

Magazine contributions sought and gratefully received.

Editor: magazine@xhfrs.org.uk
43 Lucerne Gardens, Hedge End,
Southampton, SO30 4SD.
(Tel 01489 699242)
Webmaster: webmaster@xhfrs.org.uk
Secretary: alan.house@xhfrs.org.uk
Designer: Clare Murphy

Be a regular visitor to our website at
www.xhfrs.org.uk

Follow us on  



Make Pumps 6 plus HP and FoT on 26 June 1986. A large storage tank containing 3000 gallons of light heating oil caught fire at 1237hrs at the Royal Naval Stores, Archery Road, Woolston and was tackled by crews using 5 jets.

STOP MESSAGE



Welcome from the Editor



SFB Bedford Emergency Tender 'No8', 'Central' (St Mary's)

Yup, late again! Sorry. My life has been somewhat swallowed into the work to establish the new Fire and Police Museum within the Solent Sky Museum, in Southampton. But, another larger edition this time to try and keep up with the normal annual page-count for the magazine.

My thanks to those who have sent in contributions. I am now however very low which means the content for the next edition as it stands will have to come almost entirely out my head and archive. You have been warned!

A reminder to you that there are always updates on our webpage and for those who have Facebook and Twitter accounts we have a following here too.

Yet another review of the Fire and rescue Service has been published – The Thomas Review looks at five main themes: The Working Environment, Conditions of Service, Industrial Relations, Retained Duty System and Management. The report follows on from a previous report by Sir Ken Knight and the findings are quite far reaching. One interesting finding states that 'each FRS should maintain an active register of firefighters with second jobs and that any refusal or failure to declare a second job should be treated as a serious disciplinary matter'. Good luck with that one! Kinda turning the clock back to the original Grey Book Conditions of Service.

Available to read on the Govt website www.gov.uk. Just search on Fire and Rescue Service Independent review.

Congratulations to Watch Manager Chas McGill, officer in charge at Hardley on being made a MBE following 50 years service. Chas is also temporarily the liaison officer for the Marchwood Military Port and the handing over of operational fire protection there following the removal of the Defence Fire Service.

Until the next time ...



A Chance Encounter

Another tale (and some facts about Gas from 'Uncle Albert'.

We are now in the year 2014, one hundred years since the outbreak of the Great War, the year in which my parents were born. Sadly my mother died in the 1960's and my Father in the 1970's.

In 1998, my local fire station at which I served was threatened with closure so I was deeply involved in the fight for it's survival. Sadly, it was not to be the case. After Drill one night, I visited one of our local pubs which was later to be closed for four years, another fight, but one which we eventually won. Inside the pub I met a man of 85 years who's wife was in a nursing home and he was in need of some solace.

His name was Raymond Hutchinson a retired Engineer of great esteem. As I was an Engineer, we struck up a close friendship, which was to last until his death.

Raymond was born in 1912 at Ripley in Derbyshire. The son of the Managing Director of Worksop Gas and Light Company. On Armistice Day in November 1918 at the age of six Ray vividly remembered the celebrations and flag waving, soon to be replaced by grief and sadness for those that did not return. This in conjunction with the Spanish Flu epidemic, which his father only just survived, depleted the population of the sixteen to thirty year olds by 50%. Indeed the epidemic claimed fifty million worldwide, with only a small island off the Australian coast having no cases due to complete isolation. Ray attended school at Worksop, Nottinghamshire where he excelled at chemistry. In 1930 he joined his father in the gas

company and enrolled at Sheffield University for a degree in chemistry and fuels, which he only achieved by attending night school. He graduated in 1935 and left his father's employment to join Woodhall Duckham, suppliers to the gas industry of personnel and equipment for a salary of £300 per year.

We were now into the depression with great hardship in families. Electricity was a new thing in most households with gas lighting or candles being the norm. Ray well remembered the occasion of the meter reader being dispatched to a house which had a zero meter reading and was suspected of foul play, only to be told that the family in question only switched the light on for a second to light the match to light the gas lamp. Also at that time mothers had a hard time having any money for themselves as the male breadwinners had complete control of all household expenditure. Their only way to have any money of their own was to deposit a two shilling piece in the gas meter and retrieve it at the end of the month when the gas man emptied the meter without the husband's knowledge.

The man who was the meter reader was Mr Bass who had returned to the gas company where he was employed before WW1. He had been gassed in the trenches so was given the outdoor job of emptying meters.

The gas produced in those days was coal gas made up mainly of carbon monoxide and a small amount of hydrogen giving a calorific value of less than half the value of North

Sea gas. Suicides in those days were common with many people opting to use the gas oven as a way out.

Now the clouds of WW2 were looming and Ray was dispatched to many gas works throughout the country, to increase gas production in areas where the population was to rise due to evacuation of The Channel Islands and children from major towns and cities. Also, there was a requirement for more Toluene, required for the production of TNT, (Tri-Nitro Toluene), a by-product of coal gas. At this time there was a big push to introduce works fire brigades to take the load off town and city brigades for the duration of the war.

investigation into the Flixborough disaster.

In 1958 Ray was head-hunted by Bryan Donkin Co Ltd, suppliers of extremely high quality gas equipment. They had been in existence since the early 1800's. Ray was responsible for design and production of their products. As he said to me many times he was always concerned about keeping 800 employees, their wives and children fed. In 1968 he designed a gas cut off valve to be installed on the branch lines feeding domestic properties so that easy repairs could be made when accidentally dug up by contractors. He and his aide travelled to the USA to sell the patent to Rockwell a company Donkin had traded with for many years. As we all know 1968 was the year the pound was under

“ *Suicides in those days were common with many people opting to use the gas oven as a way out.* ”

In 1939 Ray was persuaded by his father to return to Worksop to help in his gas company but this was to be short lived. In September 1939 he was seconded to The Air Ministry to supervise the production of hydrogen to fill barrage balloons, which he did until early 1942. He was then given the task of producing dry air with a dew-point of -50 centigrade, which the guns on bombers floated on.

Ray met Marjorie his wife to be in 1941 and was married in 1942. His younger brother Maurice was best man at the wedding and was killed that evening in action over the North Sea by friendly fire, curtailing their honeymoon and wedding anniversary celebrations for many years.

It was now the build up to D Day, so the emphasis was on the distribution of dry air cylinders for ports supplying the invasion.

On VE Day, Ray was released and became the boss of Reading Gas Works with a house, a driver and gardener supplied. He had made it!

From there he moved on to run Nottingham Gas Company just before the gas industry was nationalised in 1949. The company had five miles of railway track and their own wagon builders. A large operation, by any means. In those days very few people had central heating. In summer gas production was greatly reduced and therefore revenue was lost. Coal at that time was 18 shillings a ton and coke was sold for 24 shillings a ton so Ray turned the plant over to coke production making £34,000 in a year, not an insignificant sum in those days.

He then moved on to Leicester as boss of the gas company and was appointed a divisional engineer to the East Midlands Gas Board. He was also appointed as Chairman and a Fellow of The Institute of Gas Engineers, which he served on for many years, heading up in later years the

pressure from other currencies with Dennis Healey putting a £50 limit on taking British money abroad. (I well remember being searched when boarding the ferry to Bilbao at the start of my holiday). As far as Ray was concerned he had to go cap in hand to Rockwell to put his hotel bill on the invoice for the gas valve, which he sold for a quarter of a million pounds. As he said, very embarrassing.

1968 was also the year that North Sea Gas came ashore at Easington on the east coast. North Sea Gas is Methane and twice the calorific value of coal gas, hence the conversion of the jets in all gas appliances. Two 36 inch pipes at 1350 psi were reduced to 1000 psi by the gas regulators Ray designed and to my knowledge are still in use today. Ray retired in 1975 but was not to remain idle. His daughter Janet who lived in Melbourne Australia was taken ill so Ray and Marge went out to nurse her back to health. In a short time he was recruited as a consulting engineer for Hawker Sidley building a new sewerage works for Perth Western Australia. He designed and used equipment supplied by his old firm Bryan Donkin. It is still in service today and running like a sewing machine.

Marge sadly died a week after I met Ray. We were firm friends for twelve years. I would sit for hours listening to his recollections and learned a lot about gas production and chemistry. Britain owes a huge debt to Raymond Hutchinson, he passed away suddenly two weeks short of his 98th birthday.

**Uncle Albert.
(Twyford)**

Letters



An opportunity for members to express their views, share news, seek assistance or simply tell us what is going on in their life. So, if you have something to say, make the page come alive for all to see. We would like to hear from you.

Hello Alan,

Guest what turned up at an Open day at Rochester (Kent) Fire Station recently?

Regards
Alan Wells

(Ed – thanks Alan. Nice to see the old appliances being preserved. Ex-Hampshire vehicles generally are popular with preservationists due to their build and maintenance quality when in service. A credit to both the 'Workshops staff and station personnel of their era. EHO 913 was issued new to Aldershot in February 1972 and subsequently served at Alresford, C Div reserve and Training centre until sold in January 1994. Originally having a Jaguar petrol engine, this was one of the appliances converted to a Perkins Diesel engine in 1982. OOW 55S was issued to Woolston in September 1977, before going to Bordon, Wickham and Training Centre and being sold in December 1996)



Hey all!

On a lovely sunny Septmber day, 53 PMA members and partners boarded the coach at Winchester and Basingstoke and went on another day out to London. The first stop was the Rubens Hotel opposite the Royal Mews. A two course carvery lunch was served in the newly refurbished Old Masters restaurant and included roast rib of Scottish beef, roast pork or Scottish salmon with all the trimmings. The wine was most enjoyable but needed to be "carefully guarded" at the price being charged!

After lunch the group crossed the road into Buckingham Palace to enjoy an audio tour of Buckingham Palace. This included the magnificent Staterooms, Royal galleries, fine collection of porcelain and furnishings. The visit also coincided with the exhibition of The Queens clothing and hats worn throughout her reign, many famous costumes were on displays including her wedding and coronation gowns together with pictures or movie clips of ceremonial events and Royal visits. Some 2 hours later afternoon tea or ice cream was being enjoyed on the terrace of the Palace overlooking the beautiful gardens and lake.

It was a grand day out!

Next years travel plans include a possible visit to Windsor Castle or Tower of London plus a suitable lunch or tea venue.

Andy Anderson





Jo - Bladerunner

Con-Op to Trucker - An update

Jo, (featured in Stop Message 19), has become 'Blade Runner' carrying 200 ft blades for wind turbines, to a large wind farm project at Tumbler Ridge in British Columbia, Canada. She is also driving her new truck.

The blades are collected from Stewart, the northern most ice-free port on the Canada/US border and taken to Tumbler Ridge where the wind farm is being built. A round trip of about a week.

Being told the rear trailer was steerable; I asked how the system operated. In the picture attached is it not clear until you zoom in, but the trailer wheels are shown turned.

This is an automatic system. There is a wedge in the turntable of the tractor that tells the trailer ECU the angle the tractor

is to the trailer and steers the trailer accordingly.

To over-ride this there is a control box & wireless link so the rear pilot can steer if needed. For this to work the donkey engine on the trailer has to be running. So some planning is required!!!!

The blade loads run in a team of 3 trucks, each carrying one blade, which is of a matched set of three blades for each wind tower turbine.

Regards
Alan Wells



200ft Wind Turbine Blade



City of Antigua, Guatemala – Elaine Howells

Ed: Some images of fire engines/ fire stations taken by PMA members on their travels around the world. Come on, admit it, many of you will have taken such images on your travels. How about sending them in to share in the magazine – they make great ‘fillers for me!



Locks Fire Station, Panama Canal – Elaine Howells



Mandalay, Myanmar – Elaine Howells



Rather than the Editor constructing letters or simply making it up, let's be hearing from you. "As detailed, get to work".



Another week in Paradise

Life since we moved to Brisbane Australia, now over eleven years ago, is pretty laid back. The Fire Service Pension, supported by the warm climate, a fair exchange rate and few bills, enables us to have a few foreign holidays a year, plus a regular visit back home. Although this is a big country with many contrasts on offer for a holiday, there is still too much of South East Asia to explore, which is very close and a lot better value for money.

When a neighbour asked if I would like a 'boys weekend away' up in Rocky, (as Rockhampton is locally called), for a spot of Barramundi fishing, I had the guilty thought that most holidays we'd spent whilst being in this country were on foreign soil.

No time whatsoever though was wasted thinking about the image of sitting down on a riverbank, line in one hand and a beer in the other waiting for a bite! So grudgingly I told Debbie that getting 'out bush' and joining the other 'outdoor Aussies' for a bit of 'international bonding' would be good for me. She agreed too quickly, I thought, but assured me there was plenty to occupy her here, most of which were the jobs I'd promised but not yet started!

Now, Rockhampton is about 650k north of Brisbane, about 7 hours drive if you don't stop at all. The main reason for the slow progress is the Bruce Highway, as about 150k north of Brisbane it reverts to a single carriageway for most of the way. There was really no other option but to fly. Australia like anywhere else offers some very competitive airfares and we were able to book the 60 minute flight for about \$150 return (80 pounds sterling).

The 'weekend away,' after booking the flight, became a long one, Tuesday until Tuesday! Well, the guy we were staying with wanted to show me Rocky and around, didn't he! My neighbour Roy and his friend Alan who lived in Rockhampton, also wanted to introduce me to friends with whom they had worked for some 20 plus years in the coal mines west of Rockhampton. Then there were supplies to buy, camp essentials to organise (hang on nobody mentioned camping) and bait to catch.

Barramundi is a Southeast Asian fish of the Asian Sea Bass family; Australians call them Barramundi from the Aboriginal, meaning 'large scaled river fish'. They can grow up to 6 feet long and weigh up to 60kgs, growing typically from 2 to 4 feet. They are found in coastal waters, lagoons and rivers with temperatures of between 26 and 30 degrees centigrade. They head down river to lay eggs in brackish water and their hermaphroditic lifestyle enables them to change sex at least once in their life time, apparently ideal for when they want to lay eggs!



Waiting with Roy at Brisbane Domestic Airport, I was treated to stories of fishing adventures past and warned that once we left Alan's place for the fishing spots, life changed from comfortable, to more of maybe an early settlers life, only tempered by plenty of cold beer to numb the senses a little. Fifty-five minutes later we landed at an airstrip with a few outbuildings, as the hostess welcomed us to Rocky, the beef capital of Australia.

Greeted at the baggage carousel by Alan's wife Raylene, we found Alan trying to avoid airport car park charges by cruising around in the new Toyota hatchback. The car was very conservative by Rockhampton standards, where most drove around in the large fourwheel drives with 'Roo Bars' and large whip type antennas the norm, but at least up here they could boast a practical use for this type of vehicle.

We drove in the general direction of their house, taking in the city centre and the numerous Queensland style houses, which were old and plentiful and a real bonus in this type of climate. Mention was made of the Tropical Low forming in the Coral Sea and that we should hopefully be OK for our trip. After all, these depressions have a knack of blowing themselves out or veering back out to sea.

The afternoon was spent looking around the expanse of Rocky, touring the town centre, (which locals refer to as the city) and viewing the grand old Queenslanders down by the Fitzroy River that runs through the town.

Queenslanders are a type of house synonymous with this part of Australia and in fact distinguish Brisbane from other Australian capital cities. They were first developed in the 1840s and are still built in the style today. They are primarily timber, high or low set houses on underfloor stumps. They usually have one or two verandas, sometimes converted to a sleep out for hot nights. The underfloor area is used for storage and adds to the general cooling of the house. Roofs are large with a steep pitch and made of iron to ensure they can withstand torrential rain and be easily repaired following cyclonic winds. They suit the sub-tropical climate of Queensland, which averages from 23 to 36 degrees Centigrade. There is usually a central passageway through the house with rooms off on both sides, this enables a breeze to permeate and cool the building.

We awoke on Wednesday and plans were afoot to take me for a drive out to the coal mining country and in particular the town of Blackwater. This would be the mine that Roy and Alan had worked for some 25 and 35 years respectively. So it was an educational trip for me, and one full of nostalgia for them. We set out early along the Capricorn Highway, so called because of its latitude following the Tropic of Capricorn westward deep into beef and mining country. Blackwater is a mining community 250 kilometres west of Rockhampton, here there are no mines, and there are acres of beef properties.



Dingo Trap Throwers!

After about 150k we pulled in to a truck stop at a place called Dingo, apparently famous in these parts for the annual Dingo Trap throwing competition. Now perhaps more famous for the large service station that provides the necessary fuel and rest for the huge trucks that carry tons of beef livestock to the abattoirs of Rocky. This is not the area of the world to visit if you are a vegetarian. Looking at the cattle crushed on to the huge double decker road trains in the searing heat, I once or twice questioned my own need for meat!

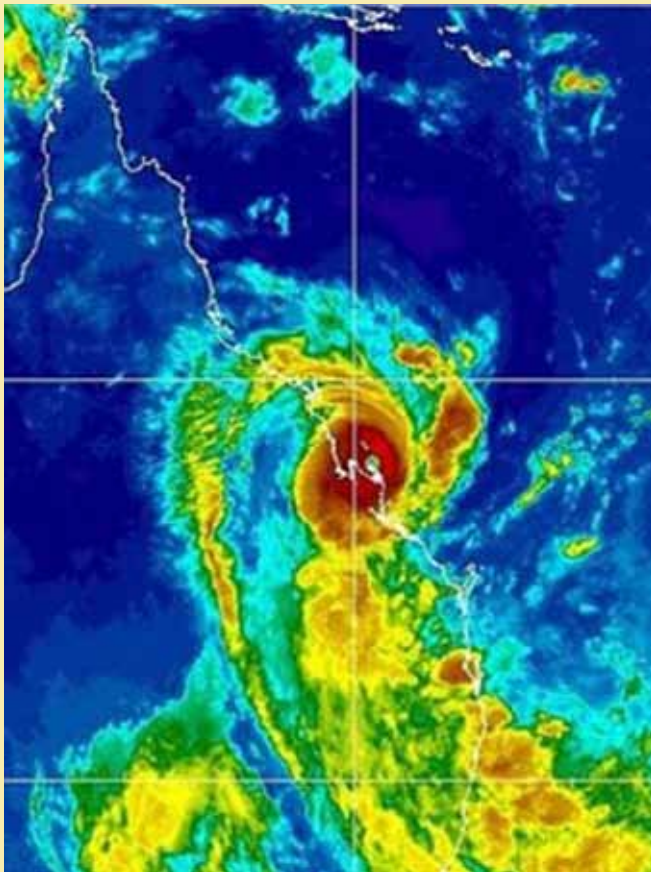
The truck stop was really place for people watching, massive trucks and massive drivers eating massive meals. A place where 'Truckies' met and discussed past trips, from where they had journeyed and the problems they had encountered along the way. Some would have been on the road for days, heading for the coast and the end of the line for them and more definitely, their cargo. I looked at these guys (and some gals) and realised what a hard and lonely life it was and how reliant they were on the trucks they often owned and serviced themselves.

Onwards towards Blackwater and another 100k. They were keen to show me the size of the operation, but like everywhere else in the world, Health & Safety prevented any chance of viewing the site from anywhere but the road. Blackwater is an average open cast mine by Australian standards, the size of which only brought home to me by being pointed out the length and size of the 'spoil'. These heaps looked like ranges of hills some 20 to 30 k's in length, but were in fact the top layers of earth that was removed to mine the coal. This will be used as backfill as further coal is removed.

The two guys I was with reminisced. They mentioned how miners no longer respected the job, how they no longer looked after their mates and how they had let the town deteriorate without a lack of belonging. I pondered perhaps mining and firefighting weren't so different! We both worked in teams and relied on each other. I realise that once you retire from whatever job, nothing stays the same. Whether that's a good or bad thing, is best left for others to consider.

We called in and met Ian Huxley, the guy who would make up the quartet for the up and coming fishing trip. He still worked in and around the mining industry and is a little younger than me. Ian ran his own business, servicing and replacing the huge moving parts of the draglines and equipment that scrapped the coal from the mines. He was the first person to actually question the wisdom of the trip, but only because of the forecasted amount of rain.

We awoke on Thursday to the news that a cyclone had actually formed into a Category 1 system (the lowest rating), but it was still unsure where it would make landfall. We discussed the situation and made the decision it would be silly to get the bait for what could be a washout. The other problem was the amount of rain forecast, which would cause the rivers and creeks to become both flooding and unpredictable. Maybe it will change course, cyclones have a habit for that. A committee decision was made to head off to the Leagues Football (Rugby League) Club for a couple of beers and lunch; probably things would look different when we left!



Well, they certainly did! On return to the house we heard the weather update, there were two factors that gave some grave concern. One, the ferocity of what was now named Cyclone Marcia (for some reason pronounced Marsha) had been upgraded within hours to a category 5.

For those who don't know, a Cyclone is graded from 1 to 5 dependent on the wind severity in sustained gusts. To get a

handle on the way Marcia had intensified, the wind speed had increased from predicted 49 - 97 knot gusts to 151 - 279 knot gusts. A comparison that may help is to compare it to the Beaufort Scale. If measured in the way the weather is in the UK, it would rate a Gale Force 12+ four notches or a category 5 hurricane.

The other, and perhaps more worrying feature was that the 'eye' of Marcia was now predicted to pass over or near to a place called Yeppoon, a seaside town about 25 k to the northeast of Rockhampton. Missing the fishing trip had just become the least of our problems.

Now Rockhampton is the kind of Australian City that had seen most things before, floods, droughts, storms and cyclones. The people of such cities were stoic in all these circumstances and Alan and Raylene were no different, just a shrug of the shoulders and a 'lets wait and see' view of the threat to come.

The one thing that was common throughout the community was the need to ensure basics like water, bread and beer were in stock, and the trip to the local supermarket did open my eyes a little to the gravity of how some viewed the situation. It didn't take long for bread and other basics to disappear from the shelves, but it did appear more like a shop for the Christmas holidays than a serious bunker down for a few weeks. As a lady pushing a trolley through the store said to me "I don't really need anything, but this seems to be the thing to do in the circumstances".

We all spent the evening tying things down, moving things that could be moved and watching the Cyclone warning updates on the television. If anyone was getting nervous it certainly didn't show as we got stuck into the fishing supplies, well the liquid part anyway. When we went to bed (most people in Queensland are early to bed and early to rise because of the climate) the cyclone was forecast to hit about 8am tomorrow. Sadly, the direction and ferocity had not changed.

Everyone was awake before dawn, there was no wind to talk about, perhaps the course had changed and Marcia was going to harass some other part of the coast. The television bulletins contradicted any thought of a reprieve, it was predicting the eye of the storm would hit a place called Ogmoo, some 2hours drive north of us. I knew the name from somewhere and was reminded it was indeed the place we were going to fish! The distance 150k was of not too much consequence to a cyclone whose eye can be easily be 100k across. Worryingly it became a bigger concern because the high winds and torrential rain are always to the South.

I feel I should explain that for those who don't know, the Highs and Lows of the weather variety are opposite from the Northern Hemisphere, hence a Low Depression turns in a clockwise motion. With us being on the East coast and the eye of the storm north of us, it will be able to draw the

moisture from the Coral Sea and dump it on us and further south as it makes landfall.

What is interesting to note is, when I rang Debbie back home she was quick to tell me the rain 650k to the South, and in our backyard, was so intense that it had delivered nearly two feet in 48 hours, so there was plenty for her to worry about as well!

I don't think I have the ability grammatically, to justify the events of the next few hours as Marcia approached. The winds dramatically picked up and Raylene watched the huge bunch of bananas try and cling to one of the trees she had nurtured throughout the summer. We had no clue of the wind speed, we saw no one up or down the street, our only clue as to how close the storm was, would only come when the winds abated and the eye passed over us!



In the front garden, large Golden Cane Palms bent over sideways, the Banana Trees became striped of all foliage and fruit. The rain became horizontal. I watched the eyes of Raylene and Alan, two people that were born and bred in these parts, that had lived through flood and drought and realised they were scared, not for them selves, but for their property and their possessions. I looked to the ceiling and noticed the ceiling fans shaking with the vibration of the winds against the house, my eyes met theirs, no words were needed to be said and no expression was detected. The house shuddered and vibrated with the buffeting gusts, the sun awnings swept past our vision as and narrowly missed embedding themselves in the car next door. The power suddenly was lost, it was expected sooner or later. No words were ever said to one another during what seemed a 10 to 15 minute period, all communication was by our demeanor and body language and yet we all knew what each other was thinking. Then it stopped, not immediately, but like someone turning down the volume on a loud radio to a more comfortable sound.

As we ventured outside, birds started to sing (I wonder where they had been!). Everyone's eyes darted to try and detect damage, wanting to get all the bad news at

once. Not wanting to believe things were OK when they weren't. Apart from a few palms, the banana trees and the sun awnings, the important things such as the roof and house seemed to have survived. There was debris all over backyards, there was flooding in the streets, but they were minor issues.

Most power lines in Queensland are above ground and supported on wooden (telephone type) poles. The one on the corner of the street was sitting at a precarious angle, further along a large gum tree was resting on the power lines. Whether this was the cause of our power cut we didn't know, but obviously there would be similar problems throughout the Greater Rockhampton area and beyond.

The street began to fill with neighbours, all looking at, and for, any damage. The house opposite had a tree resting on its roof but everyone seemed to be safe. Once the boughs of trees and general debris were removed from the drains, the flooding began to subside.

It was hard to believe this now lovely quiet and calm day was the eye of the storm. Sooner or later the winds would return from the opposite direction as Marcia continued her rampage down the coast and the 'eye' moved on.

The winds that followed, although strong, were not as fierce as before and the greyness soon turned to sunshine with a stiff breeze. People returned to the streets giving help where they could, roofs were inspected to ensure solar panels; aerals and dishes were still in place. Unfortunately, the normal 'rubber necks' were out in force cruising the neighbourhoods. I think I must qualify that by saying, some were probably looking for whom to help, and some were definitely not!

The rest of the day was spent clearing up the yard and Alan made a trip to his 84 year old mother, who lived local, to ensure she had come through it all safely. These 'Old Dears' are so resilient and she was pretty 'nonplussed' by the whole event. Unfortunately she would have to be moved to a family members home because of the power situation.

Although there wasn't any electricity, thankfully the fridges were full of the beer supplies for the up and coming and now abandoned trip. So the beer was cold for the first night 'Post Marcia' and the BBQ didn't need anything but the gas bottle, things were not too bad.

The next morning was spent clearing up Alan's mothers yard. We took the utility, armed with brushes, rakes and saws, arrived and got to work. This was our first outing since the storm and the magnitude of the destruction was now becoming real. Roofs were missing, trees were down, power lines laid on roads and debris



was strewn where flood waters had swamped houses in all low lying parts. Most of you reading this will be familiar with such damage and the human toll it takes. The thing that struck me about this was the lack of emergency services in attendance. The work was being attended to by the residents; power lines were still on the ground, the screech of chain saws filled the air and an army of men, women and children dressed in singlets and board shorts were putting their neighbour hoods back together.

The area of devastation was so large that the local fire station personnel were obviously employed elsewhere as the towns beyond Rocky had their own problems, where their local and probably volunteer crews were working flat out. Emergency crews would have to be brought in from near and far. Most would have to be flown in from major cities and those that could come by road were also hours or days away. Queensland has an SES force (State Emergency Service), which is all volunteer. This service is made up of men and women of all age groups and come together without pay to do the sort of work the old Salvage Corp would have. They truly are remarkable in their enthusiasm, building knowledge and general professionalism. Of course these people and their vehicles also have

to come from great distances. There is certainly not a Fire Station on every corner here.

On a lighter note, after completing the yard cleanup, I was stood on the back of the utility brush in hand and noticed a Channel 7 car, and a television news reporter crossing the road with her cameraman. I looked up and my two 'FRIENDS' were disappearing around the back.

This will be so easy to get away with! "Hi, I see your cleaning up following the cyclone, could we have some footage of you sweeping the back of the truck? Would you mind giving a short interview?"

Cue, my get out line, "Surely you don't want a Pom's views on the disaster, as you can tell I don't come from these parts!"

The interviewer was not deterred and made it plain the perspective of an outsider was just what was needed. The rest is now history and Channel 7 obviously got their scoop! Pity there was no power to enable us to watch the news that night, the story of my life! I was even perspiring for the camera!

Things were now getting a little desperate on the cold beer front. Food was in abundance, we had stocked up

for the trip and now we also had our hosts defrosting freezer to supply us. Luckily Alan had filled two very large Esky's (cool boxes) with ice for the trip. These proved life saving for keeping and cooling the cartons of beer we had piled under the house. Australians are very funny about keeping their beer very cold, they refuse to drink it any other way. My theory is, the lack of taste is wonderfully masked by the cold and makes it a bearable drink. They would not agree, but they are not writing this piece, are they?

The weather was now turning exceptionally hot. The temperature on the verandah in the shade this particular afternoon was spot on 100 degrees. There was not a wisp of breeze and more importantly, still no power to turn the ceiling fans in the house or the bedrooms. The verandas were definitely cooler than the house, one hundred or not. We were certainly not looking forward to bed that night, the beer became medicinal indeed, the more numb we become, the better the comfort in the bedroom.

I must have slept a little because I was awoken the following morning at about 4am to the sound of a large diesel vehicle. In my waking dreams, I imagined it to be the Electricity workers and their trucks arriving to connect the power.

"Mum, Dad, it's only us! "

Alan and Raylene's daughter and family, including dog had just arrived from Dingo, the little township out west. The dog started barking and ran up and down ensuring the neighbourhood had an early start to the day. We forgave them pretty quickly when we learnt they had set off early that morning with a generator to keep our beer, sorry, food cold and safe.

Obviously the generator had to be started and tested and I am sure until this day, the neighbours were so pleased for us. They even celebrated our fortune by recounting the early awakening for days to come.



Our next logistical nightmare was to ensure that as many appliances as possible could be used without overloading the generator. The two fridges and one freezer won. Food and beer had to be the priority. We hadn't the knowledge or ability to wire the house fans or any lights into the system, so beer and food had to be the reward for the luxury of the few volts the generator delivered.

Over the next couple of days, we tried to bring our homeward flight forward to try and alleviate some of the stress that our hosts must have been under with our presence. The airport had been closed for the first few days and rumours abounded as to its likelihood to become flooded again, preventing us leaving. It must be said that rumours became a real 'tug down' on an already depressing situation.

Besides the lack of power and its obvious downside in a very hot climate, there was a rumour that it would not be restored for some weeks. Obviously fuel was at a premium and the fear of flooded roads added to the shortage. There was also a problem with the Water Pumping Station. If the power could not be restored, there would be no water within days. Even after we heard on the radio that power had been restored, a neighbour called one of us over to let us know he had heard that it couldn't be mended!

We learnt we could have got an earlier flight but it would cost three times as much again as the original. Yes, they explained the small print surrounding such flight changes and the consequent costs. I still however walked away wondering how in the face of personal tragedy for some, others knew exactly how to make their 'fast buck'. A few days would make little difference to us anyway.

The next few days were spent cutting the grass to keep occupied, trying to sleep in a sauna and managing to consume the remaining beer. Alan and Raylene tried to get back to some sort of normality, but with the power still out and the radio saying there would be nothing until after the weekend at least, it was hard. There was nowhere to go, there was nothing to do but wait.

Sitting at the airport under a large blower running on generator power, I thought about the week we had just had. About the further hardships the folk from the Rockhampton area would still face, with no end in sight. Alan and Raylene

would cope, they would wait like tens of thousands for the power to return, to hear from the Insurance Companies and make their claims. Others that had been devastated by the storm would wait a good while longer to get back to normal and some never would. As we know, that is the truth about events like these, some never recover, for some life will never be the same.

I often think that in the UK we should never complain about such things as infrastructure. Sitting at the airport I realised that Australians living in a large city by their standards, don't expect, nor do they get a response that we are used to. It took at least 10 days for power to return to Rocky, goodness knows how long to more remote areas. Although the Army was called in almost straight after the storm, we saw none on the streets before we left.

This takes nothing away from the State Emergency Service (SES), that is made up of volunteers from all walks of life, who regularly give up their time and risk their lives to fill the gap until the professional services arrive. It certainly doesn't detract from the public, who think nothing of taking on tasks Health and Safety at Work would shudder over. I guess it is the Australian way, and quite frankly it has to be, or nothing would get done fast.

Although Rockhampton is a large rural city, it is miles from the next one and that one miles from the next. Power will always be a problem whilst the vast majority of power lines are carried above ground.

Although Rockhampton is a large rural city, it is miles from the next one and that one miles from the next. Power will always be a problem whilst the vast majority of power lines are carried above ground.

As we boarded the Virgin Australia A320, walking out on the hot tarmac with the sun beating down, I wondered, is there any such place as paradise?

Steve Paine





Fred Gardiner

a personal experience

We are often reminded of the experiences of those who served the nation during World War Two, but it is always interesting and good to highlight a relatively unknown story. Fred Gardiner, father of PMA member Lin Malt, was one of those who flew with the RAF and who experienced the trauma of not only being shot down and then having to parachute into the unknown, but then lived the ordeal of evasion and escape. Here we read the story of Fred, included in this November edition of Stop Message, the month of Remembrance when we pay tribute to all those who lost their lives, but also all those who served and survived their personal experiences and ordeals.

Just before midnight on August 9th 1943, Lancaster W4236 'K' for King and dubbed 'King of the Air', was on course from base at Syerston near Newark, Nottinghamshire, to Beachy Head and climbing to 18,000 feet on its last flight. The all-sergeant crew, captained by pilot John Whitley and of which I was the wireless operator was on its fifth mission, a raid on Mannheim in Southern Germany.

Earlier that evening there occurred one or two incidents which would prove very thought-provoking after this night. Back at base we had been through the usual briefing procedures. My parachute was due for repacking and I had been given a temporary replacement. Having handed in a nearly new 'chute this one looked positively decrepit but one hoped it was not likely to be needed tonight (indeed any night), and before the next operational flight my own new 'chute would be available again.

After briefing we had time for a meal and a short rest. We shared a barrack room with another crew. They were very new, in fact had arrived on 61 Squadron only the day before. I was particularly pleased that the wireless operator was an old

friend, Stanley Banting from training course days (killed on a raid on Leverkusen 22/23 August 1943).

His crew was not listed for this operation. They would have to make one or two squadron training flights before going on the 'real thing' and so Stanley was very interested as we prepared to leave. As my position in the aircraft was served with warm air it was not necessary to wear special clothing unlike the two airgunners. But I did prefer to wear my P.T. vest, which was longer and of better quality than the standard issue of singlet. My shirt for the night I noticed at the last minute had been badly torn by the laundry. In a weak attempt at bravado I joked to Stanley that he could send a clean and newer garment out to the P.O.W camp should we not return and even removed one from my locker and hung it over the bed. It would be handy for tomorrow.

It was a warm and pleasant evening so the crews assembled at the appropriate time on the grass in front of the flight offices. A local Home Guard platoon had been invited to witness our departure and they mingled with us chatting and sharing cigarettes.



Our crew of seven awaited the bus, which would take us to our aircraft parked on a dispersal point some distance away. In addition to pilot John Whitley who lived with his parents and sister in a flat near Marble Arch, London, the crew comprised Jack Kendall, tail gunner from Edmonton Canada, at twenty four the oldest member; Peter Smith, navigator, from Woking, Surrey; Walter (Whiz) Walker, bomb aimer who came from Leeds; George Spriggs, whose home was in Braunstone, Leicester, and myself from Banbury, Oxfordshire, all aged twenty or twenty-one. Finally, at nineteen, Nevil Holmes from Whitstable, Kent, was the mid-upper gunner. Also to go on board was a small cage containing a carrier pigeon. If we had to ditch in the sea then at least here was another method of getting a message to base. Last but not least, was Jack's mascot - a doll in the image of Adolf Hitler, which would be hung by a string somewhere in the aircraft. Whilst we were waiting Nevil insisted on checking and adjusting my parachute harness. Previously I had been lax about this. I returned the favour.

The crew transports arrived and soon some dozen crews of 61 Squadron 5 Group, Bomber Command were on their way to their aircraft. Syerston was shared by two squadrons, No's 61 and 106, and in half an hour's time Lancasters of both units would be thundering into the air at intervals of a minute or less. Our aircraft was a veteran of seventy-six operational flights. Not yet having been allotted a machine of our own we were 'borrowing' this one, its current regular crew being on leave. On arrival at dispersal we were surprised to find two of these crewmen out there awaiting us. This was the last day of their leave and they were just a little concerned that another crew was being allowed to fly their beloved 'K' for King. It had seen them safely through more than half of the thirty 'ops' which would complete a 'tour' after which would follow a posting for a rest on less hazardous duties. But concerned or not they wished us well, their comment being "Bring it back please!"

At eleven forty-five we were airborne, carrying a four thousand pound high explosive bomb or 'cookie' as they were popularly known, plus several thousand incendiary bombs of various types and sizes. The route was out and back via southern England to avoid the heavier defences of a shorter, direct one. At ten thousand feet we switched on the oxygen supply.

From Beachy Head we turned on to a more easterly heading keeping a lookout to avoid getting too close to others of the four hundred and fifty-seven Lancasters and Halifaxes we were with. We were carrying (the first time for us) a device code-named 'Monica'. This would detect another aircraft in the area up to a few hundred yards behind us and set off a 'bleep' on our intercom. Half an hour out from the English coast, at 18,000 feet and now over enemy-held territory the bleep came on. Our tail gunner quickly reported that it was just another Lancaster so we relaxed a little and eventually the signal ceased as the two aircraft drifted further apart.

My job at this point was to tune my receiver to German fighter control frequencies. On hearing German voices I was to jam them by transmitting the noise picked up by a microphone in one of our engines. This technique was called 'tinselling'. At regular intervals George Spriggs was pushing bundles of metallised strips (code-named 'window') out of the aircraft through a special chute in order to confuse the enemy radar operators.

At about this time, German Messerschmitt 110 nightfighters took off from their base at Florennes, Southern Belgium. These aircraft, armed with four machine guns and two cannon and were responsible for bringing down many allied aircraft.





The attack on our 'Lanc' came from astern and slightly below. Suddenly in a few horrific seconds with no warning from 'Monica', the aircraft was filled with flashes, bangs and the smell of cordite as the enemy gunfire ripped through from end to end. Holes and torn metal appeared and I distinctly remember our navigator still poring over his charts with tracer bullets passing under his seat. John put the aircraft into a violent evasive turn, at the same time Whiz Walker called on the intercom. to Jack. Neither gunner had opened fire and there was an ominous silence from the rear gun turret. Someone reported an engine on fire. The fighter was difficult to shake off and the attack continued. John called for the 'cookie' to be jettisoned, not only to lighten the aircraft and improve maneuverability but to remove the risk of the aircraft being blown to pieces should it explode.

There was no time for the bomb doors to be opened and the bombs dropped by the bomb aimer from his instrument panel in the normal way. Also the complicated release mechanism could well have been damaged. It was therefore my job to pull the emergency handle situated in the floor a few feet behind my seat. This would release the big bomb, which would crash its way out through the closed bomb doors. Every second counted. There was no time to disconnect the oxygen line and intercom cord to my helmet so I discarded the lot, leapt over the main spar which formed a back to my seat and gave a big heave on the handle.

The fuselage was now on fire, the flames appeared to be coming from the floor on both sides of the aircraft. Could it be that our incendiary bombs, aligned on each side of the four

thousand pounder in the bomb bay below, had ignited? I was horrified to see flames surrounding the cases containing ten thousand rounds of ammunition which was fed on tracks to the rear turret.

The inside of the aircraft was well lit by the flames and I saw that Nevil was now leaving his turret amidships and making for the rear door which was our emergency exit. The navigator had left his position and was going forward to his exit down three steps to the front hatch. The captain must have given orders to abandon ship but without a helmet and earphones I could not acknowledge. To go back to my station and recover them was out of the question. The enemy fighter was still firing on us from directly astern and tracer bullets, making small points of light like glowing cigarette ends, were flashing through the fuselage.

I started to make my way aft to the rear exit, grabbing my parachute from the rest bed. It had always seemed to me a better location, protected there by a headrest of steel plate than in its official stowage - a plywood box at floor level. I quickly snapped it on to the two hooks on the harness and continued towards the rear door, which was on the starboard side.

Nevil must have had some difficulty extricating himself from the mid turret; one needed to be a contortionist to do so at the best of times, now with the aircraft making violent manoeuvres it must have been particularly awkward, and so I reached the door first. At that moment the aircraft performed such gyrations that I was thrown from floor to roof and back

to floor where it was impossible to move. If at any time the thought "this is the end" entered my head then this was the moment.

At the side of the door was a rack carrying thin metal dipsticks to measure the fuel in the aircraft's tanks. I managed to grab these and despite their sharp edges was able to pull myself upright and grasp the door handle. At the first attempt to open the door it reclosed on my thumb then suddenly it was wide open.

We had made no parachute drops during training but had received instructions on what to do should it be necessary. This advice now came sharply to mind; kneel on the door sill and roll out head first to avoid being struck by the tailplane; wait until clear, not necessarily to the legendary count of ten, then pull the ripcord.

Looking astern I put my head out into the slipstream. Perhaps a vacuum occurs across the face by doing this, in the event it was impossible to breathe. Turning to face forward into air moving at over two hundred miles an hour was also a startling experience, but this was no time to hesitate and I rolled out, aware that Nevil was about to follow.

It took no courage to leave the inferno of 'K for King', which roared away into the darkness. In a second or two it had gone.

Completely disorientated I pulled the ripcord - a metal handle on the 'chute; there was a violent jolt then utter silence as I hung under the canopy in a clear sky. There was very little moon but the sky above had the usual starlit glow. In one direction the horizon was particularly bright, Mannheim under attack perhaps.

I was now aware of having bare feet. The jolt of the opening 'chute had removed my wool-lined flying boots which had taken socks with them. How fortunate this was a summer's night.

Where would I land? Looking down there was nothing but inky blackness contrasting with the pale light of the night sky above. With eyes focused to see anything that might be discernible several thousand feet below I struck the ground hands and feet together with a thud, which knocked me breathless. I had seen nothing in the darkness and was quite unprepared for such a landing.

There was no wind and the 'chute collapsed gently over me. Extricating myself I realised how fortunate I was to have landed on soft grass, in fact the ground was rather soggy. But it had been a close thing, almost directly above were power lines. The edge of the parachute may even have touched them causing my landing on 'all fours'. A loud buzz denoted that the lines were certainly 'live'.

There was nothing to do now except wait for daylight. Rolled up in the parachute I lay contemplating my good - or bad - fortune and wondering the fate of my crewmates. I felt a great feeling of thankfulness at still being alive. The gunfire had missed me. The big bomb had not exploded before it could be released. The aircraft had not blown up in the air. I had successfully jumped clear. The elderly parachute had opened. The ground was soft to land upon. Fate had been very kind to me, so far.

To be Continued...



Scrapbook Memories

Something to remind you of how things were in the past



Fareham crew
with HP,
July 1974

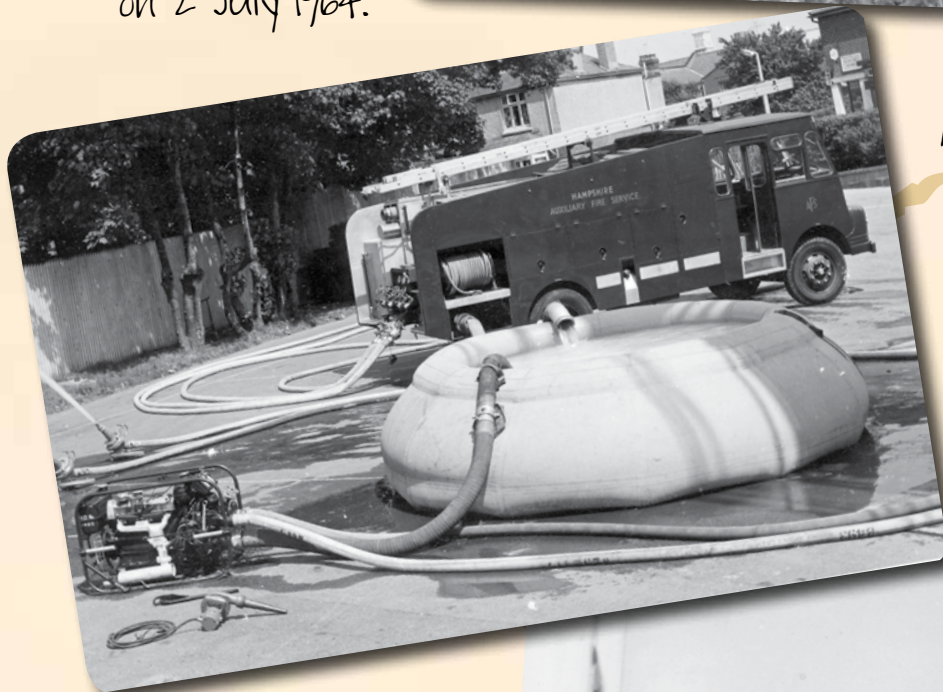


Fareham crew with
WRL, July 1976



Fordingbridge Crew
engaged at a barn fire
circa 1949 to 1952.
Note the soft caps
and the Sub Officer
with a 'fag' hanging
out of his mouth.

Romsey Commer and
Eastleigh Bedford
Watertenders set
into an AFS dam at
Sway Railway Station
as part of the water
relay to fight the
20 pump fire at
Levy Auto Parts
government surplus
5 acre site, in
Station Road, Sway
on 2 July 1964.



AFS 'Green Goddess' showing its
capability with 6" delivery feeding
into air inflated dam (air pump
in front) and 'Featherweight'
portable pump lifting water to
feed the very effective ground
monitors. Dam carried on the
'Ramps, Dam and Hose Carrier'

A nice shot of one of
Hampshire's Commers.
Lymington Pump Escape,
which saw front-line
service from December
1953 until June 1972
before moving into the
Training Centre and final
disposal in June 1974.





Overturned tanker attended by Romsey crews on 21 April 1966. Basic tools, an officer who (as they often did in those days) not in fire kit and what appears to be a Junior Fireman attending for experience, dressed in yellow waterproof and yellow helmet.



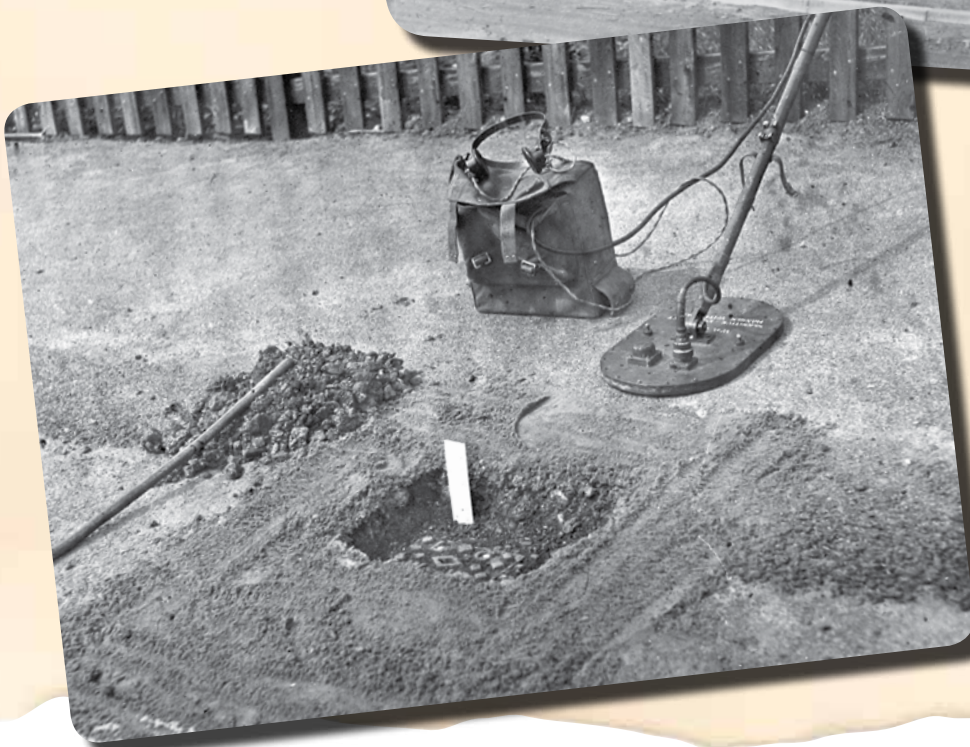
Woolston Bedford CSV (Crew Safety Vehicle) WRT showing what went on under the aluminium skin. Steel and Alloy combination never good. Or, no doubt the guys would say, the result of too much washing to keep clean!!





John Davenport ever on the lookout for a photo opportunity. Fire at Beechwood Road, Holbury on 10 October 1996. This was the first fire attended by the newly established Red Cross 'Fire Victim Support' Unit.

Not in Hampshire, but a great use of ex-military mine detector to find hydrants covered over by surface repairs. Sometime in the 50's perhaps? That is buried to quite a depth!





Overland (made by Willys) Fire tender and Trailer Pump in front of station 1926

Past Times

Focus on Hartley Wintney Fire Station

A manually-operated 'Parish Pump' for tackling fires within the village, existed in the mid 1800s , pulled to a fire and operated by willing Parishioners.

The origins of an organised Volunteer Fire Brigade, Formed and operated by the Parish Council in Hartley Wintney can be traced back to 1891. The Fire Station was a shed on 'The Green'. By the early 1900s a steam-powered 'Merryweather' fire engine had been purchased for the Volunteer Fire Brigade to better perform their role, pulled by two horses, often loaned by the local brewery.

In 1926, the brigade purchased a Motor Tender with a towed trailer pump and during the same year the fire station was refurbished including the build of a wooden hose-drying tower.

The Fire Brigade Act 1938 changed the way that the whole of the British fire service was structured, resulting in the Hartley Wintney Urban District Council Fire Brigade being established, with fire stations in Hartley Wintney, Odiham and Crondall.

Also, in 1938, a new fire engine was purchased for the station.

With the outbreak of World War Two, Auxiliary Fire Service, (AFS) units, funded and equipped by the Home Office' but

under local control were also established to support the existing fire stations and also at Hawley and at Yateley.

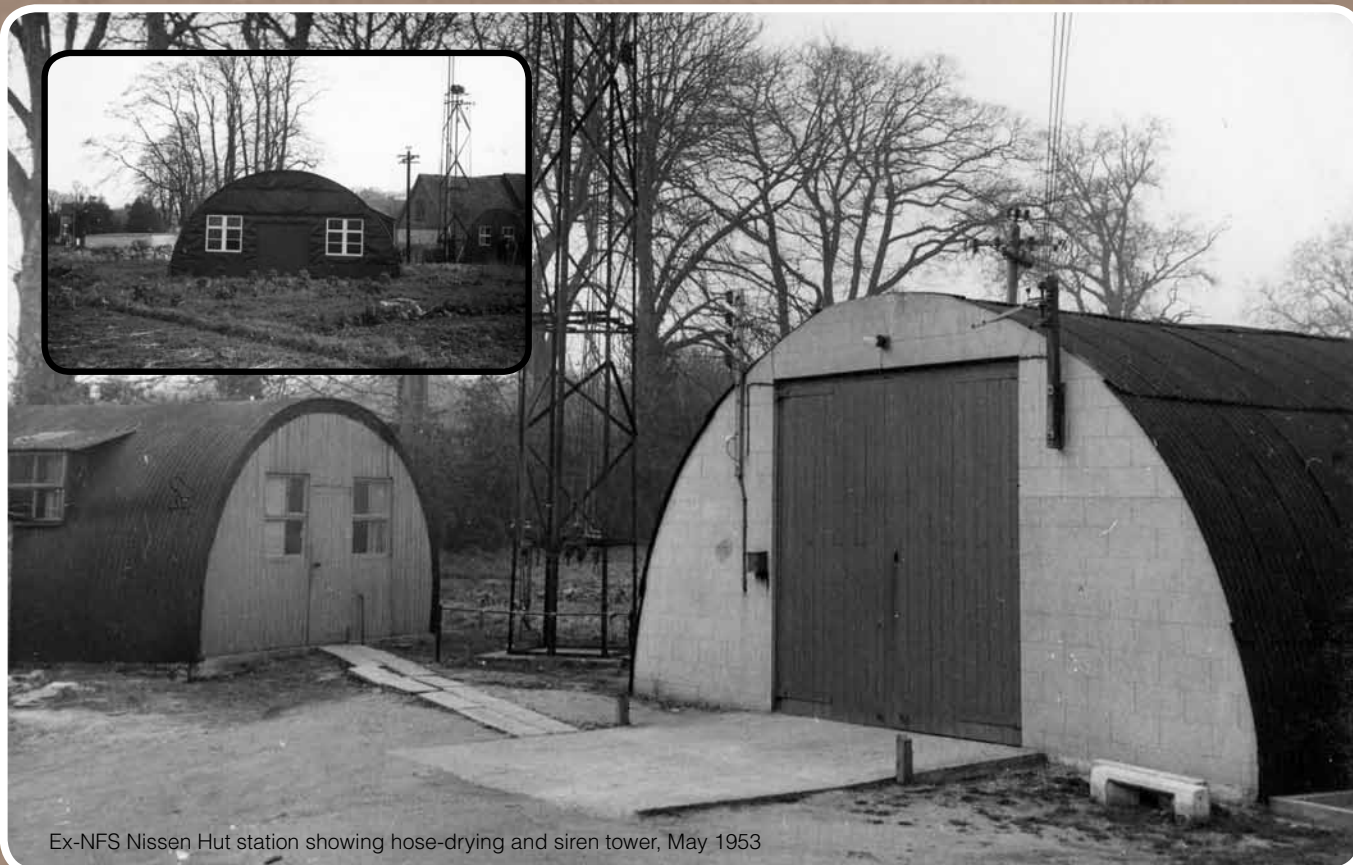
Firemen from Hartley Wintney were amongst those sent from all over the country to fight fire and relieve exhausted fire crews at the scenes of devastation and widespread fires seen at some of the nation's major cities and towns. It is known that this included London, Gosport, Southampton and Portsmouth.

On 18 August 1941, on the formation of the National Fire Service, (NFS) and Hartley Wintney became a station within A Division of Fire Force 14.

On April 1 1948, control of the fire service was handed back to Local Authorities, Hartley Wintney became Station 08 and part of A District, (later changed to Division), within the 'Hampshire Fire Service'.

The 'Nissen Hut' fire station that had been inherited from the NFS was replaced by the current station in April 1965, built at the cost of £13,994, on the purchased site of Nos 1 and 2 Brewery Lane Cottages, The old station was then used as an ambulance station until December 1969. The planned Drill Tower, which was the first of a new clad design was not completed until July 1966, with a temporary scaffold tower serving to as a combined hose-drying and siren tower in the meantime.

Crew with Dodge Wrt, when issued in 1955



Ex-NFS Nissen Hut station showing hose-drying and siren tower, May 1953



Competition crew, NFS era, circa 1946/47



Station personnel 1995



Competition crew and trophies 1961



Circa mid 1970s



Circa 1966



A tight fit of the Dodge Wrt 1956

HFRS Happenings



First Response Vehicle



Intermediate Response Vehicle

Fleet

A number of appliance moves have taken place since the last update. Lyndhurst's WrC has been reallocated to Fleet, Fleet's L4T has been withdrawn from service, as has the H4T from Brockenhurst. The new 'Wildfire Vehicle' (H4T) has been allocated to Rushmoor and their current 'Wildfire Vehicle' has been reallocated to Lyndhurst.

By the end of the year, Fordingbridge's WrC will be reallocated to Ringwood replacing their current WrT which is being withdrawn, Ringwood will then be a Rescue Pump, Water Carrier and L4T station. Petersfield will also lose its L4T at a date yet to be determined.

Tenders will shortly be invited for four replacement water carriers on three-axle rear steer chassis.

The five 'Light Rescue Pumps' or 'Intermediate Capability Appliances', arrived in August and have started to enter

service. St Marys was first, followed by Southsea, then Whitchurch, Rushmoor and Basingstoke. These appliances are based on 12 ton 3.8m wheelbase Volvo chassis and are of similar size to the very first Volvo pumping appliances purchased in 1988. They are equipped with battery powered dedicated cutters, spreaders and ram, 1300 litres of water, 9m triple extension ladder, single hose reel mounted in the pump bay and they have 'Cobra Cold Cut' fitted. So far they have been very well received by the crews and they will now be evaluated before any further purchase is made.

Another new breed of appliance that has just been delivered is the first Iveco 'First Response Vehicle'. This example is a standard 4x2 however a second 4x4 is due in early 2017. The appliance is fitted with Cobra Cold Cut, a single hose reel fed from a LPP mounted in the pump bay, 1000 litres of water, 7m ladder, battery powered combi tool and a variety of fire fighting and rescue equipment. These appliances will be crewed with a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 4 personnel.



Lockers of Intermediate Response Vehicle

Incidents

1 May - Make Pumps 8, Thatched Roof Fire, Home Farm, East Meon Road, Langrish, Near Petersfield. Attendance: RP Petersfield, WrT Horndean, WrT Bordon, WrL Liphook, RP Havant, WrL Waterloooville, WrL Alresford, WrL, WrT and RSV Cosham, WrC Bordon, WrC Eastleigh, WrC Fareham, CSV Portchester, CSV Eastleigh, FoU Eastleigh, ICU Headquarters, EPU Alton. Relief Crews: RP Alton, WrL Petersfield, WrL Basingstoke, RP Winchester, WrT Grayshott, WrC Lyndhurst and Fordingbridge.

13 May - Make Pumps 10, Fireworks Shop, Bitterne Road West, Southampton. Fire involving industrial premises used as fireworks shop and florist. Attendance: RP and WrT Hightown, WrL, WrT and ALP St Marys, RP and RSV Redbridge, WrT Hamble, Totton and Botley, RP, WrT FoU and CSV Eastleigh, ALP Basingstoke, CSV Portchester, ICU Headquarters, WrT Cosham (RSV Support), EPU Romsey, DIM Winchester.

17 May - Make Pumps 6, Catholic Church of St Thomas Moore, Hartley Wintney. Severe damage to roof of church after bonfire spread to shed and then to church. Attendance: WrL Hartley Wintney, WrL Odiham, WrT Yateley, WrT Fleet, RP and WrL Rushmoor, CSV Basingstoke, ICU Headquarters, ALP Basingstoke.

13 June - Make Pumps 6, Force Four Chandlery, Lower Swanick. Fire involving yacht chandlers. Attendance: RP and WrT Hightown, RP Fareham, WrT Botley, WrL WrT and ALP St Marys, ICU Headquarters, CSV Eastleigh, RSV Redbridge. Relief crews: WrT Cosham, WrT Droxford.

21 June - Make Pumps 6, detached house fire, Hangersley near Ringwood. Severe fire in large detached property. Attendance: RP and WrT Ringwood, WrL Burley, WrL Fordingbridge, WrL/R Ferndown and Verwood (Dorset and Wiltshire FRS), CSV Beaulieu, ICU Headquarters, WrC Lyndhurst. Relief crews: WrT St Marys and Brockenhurst.

26 July - Make Pumps 8, ALP required. Highview, High Street, Bordon. Fire involving units 1 to 4, two storey commercial building, 25m x 15m with loft, brick construction with tiled roof consisting of 4 individual units. All 4 units affected by fire. 8 BA, 3 jets, 1 hose reel, ALP monitor in use. Attendance: WrL Farnham (Surrey FRS), WrT Bordon, RP Alton, RP, WrL and CSV Rushmoor, WrL and ALP Basingstoke, RP and WrL Petersfield, CSV Portchester, ICU Headquarters, Foam Support Unit Eastleigh, RSV and WrL Cosham. Stand by moves WrL Wickham to Petersfield and WrT Hightown to Alton.

27 July - St Josephs Church, St Michaels Road, Basingstoke. Fire involving roof of building used as a church, 20m x 40m, 6 BA, 2 jets, 2 hose reels. Attendance: RP, WrL, WrT and ALP Basingstoke, WrL Odiham, WrL Kingsclere, WrL Hartley Wintney, CSV Rushmoor, ICU Headquarters.

31 July - 'Relay', Unit 2a Shawcross Industrial Park, Ackworth Road, Hilsea, Portsmouth. Fire involving large amount of confidential waste paper and outdoor structure of corrugated steel construction. Heat damage to surrounding premises. Manitou fork lift in use spreading paper for damping down purposes. 4 jets, 2 CAFS jets, 8 BA. Attendance: WrL and RSV Cosham, RP Havant, RP, WrL and WrC Fareham, WrL Wickham, WrT Portchester, RP Redbridge (RSV support), CSV Beaulieu, ICU Headquarters, WrC Eastleigh, Manitou fork lift USAR. Relief crews: RP's Redbridge, Basingstoke, Hightown, WrL Southsea and CSV Basingstoke.

8 August - Biffa Waste Services Ltd, North Road, Marchwood. Make pumps 10, ALP 2, WrC 2, HVP required. Fire involving building 77m x 80m of brick and steel construction containing approximately 400 tonnes of household waste. Approximately 93 tones involved in fire. Attendance: WrT Totton, RP and RSV Redbridge, WrL and L4T Hythe, WrL and WrT St Marys, WrL Basingstoke, WrT and CSV Beaulieu, WrL Headquarters, RP and WrT Hightown, WrL Fareham, ALP Basingstoke and Southsea, WrC's Eastleigh and Lyndhurst, HVP and L4P Hardley, EPU Alton, ICU Headquarters, FoU and CSV Eastleigh. Relief crews included CSV's from Basingstoke and Portchester, WrT Brockenhurst, WrL Bishops Waltham, WrT New Milton and WrL Burley.

12t August - Boomtown Festival at Matterley Bowl, Alresford Road, Winchester. This is the site of an annual music festival attracting 1000's of festival goers. Make Pumps 6, WrC's 2, HVP required. Fire involving 60 parked vehicles spreading to camp site. Attendance RP Winchester, RP Eastleigh, WrL Bishops Waltham, RP Redbridge, WrT St Marys, WrL Alresford, WrC Fareham, WrC Andover, ICU Headquarters, L4T Alton, HVP Hardley, L4T Hythe, L4P Hardley, CSV Beaulieu. Reliefs RP Hightown and WrL St Marys. Stand by moves WrT Botley to St Marys, WrL Romsey to Redbridge, WrL Basingstoke to Winchester.

29 September - 'Handsworth House', Quinton Close, Somers Town, Portsmouth. Make Pumps 12. Fire involving high rise building, 25 x 42m, fire in flat 112 on floor 13, flat severely by fire, floors above fire searched, a number of residents evacuated to local rest centre and a number of residents remain in property following fire and rescue advice. One fire fighter overcome by heat exhaustion and removed to hospital by ambulance. Two further fire fighters to hospital after feeling unwell on return to station. All persons accounted for. 40 BA, 3 jets and PPV in use. Attendance - RP, WrL and WrT Southsea, WrL, WrT and RSV Cosham, RP and WrL Fareham, RP Redbridge (RSV support), WrL and WrT Waterloooville, RP and WrL Havant, WrT Emsworth, ALP St Marys, WrT and CSV Portchester, CSV and FoU Eastleigh, ICU Headquarters, EPU Alton. Reliefs WrL Bishops Waltham and WrT Hornd

Merryweather catalogue

Some nice illustrations from a Merryweather catalogue from the late 1800s.

Merryweather, established in 1774 became famous and widely acclaimed for the supply of all things Fire Brigade, from helmets, uniforms and 'accoutrements' to a whole range of firefighting equipment, including ladders, extinguishers, fireboat fittings, trailer pumps, manual pumps, steam pumps, motor pumps, right through to the state of the fire engines of the post-WW2 years. The last appliances being built for Local Authority FBs in 1984. By 1990 the company had ceased trading. At the height of its fame it produced firefighting equipment and vehicles not only for use in the UK but all over the world, particularly in the old 'British Empire' countries. Their Turntable ladders were very popular and saw service in many Brigades around the world. They also produced a vast range of fixed firefighting installations, alarm systems etc and outside of FB use they manufactured a whole range of equipment with pumps for fruit spraying, road cleaners and cesspool emptiers. The range of manufacturing was massive. They even placed turntable ladders on DUKW amphibious military craft for trials to scale cliffs as part of the D-Day operations.

They were without doubt, a company that did much to develop the technology for firefighting and in the days that this catalogue was produced they were probably the largest supplier of uniform and it was to them that Fire brigades of all sizes, purchased uniform, medals, helmets etc for their Firemen.



THE USES AND VALUE OF UNIFORM FOR FIRE BRIGADES.

(Extract from leading article, "Fire and Water.")



A WELL-MADE and complete uniform is what every efficient fireman deserves, and is certainly entitled to claim at the hands of his employers. In several ways Fire Brigade uniform has advantages over ordinary civilian clothing, which must more than compensate for a suggested disadvantage—the time lost occasionally in donning the uniform—which, after all, is not serious.

* * *

In the first place, a properly-made uniform is specially designed to protect the fireman, which it does effectually, from some of the risks attendant upon his work. **Many a life, for example, has been saved, thanks to the resistance offered by a brass or leather helmet** to the falling debris; and still more often the **discomfort and risk of a severe cold, with all its possible**

developments, have been avoided by the fireman's waterproof clothing and long water-tight boots.

* * *

But further than this, the uniform **enables the officer in charge of the Brigade at a fire to recognise his men, and the police to distinguish between the fire men and the obtrusive spectator,** and one can readily imagine the difficulty of doing this where all the men are in their working clothes and the night is a dark one.

* * *

Again, a neat uniform is **an encouragement to a fireman,** whether at fires, on parade, or at drill. He cannot be expected to throw his heart into his work if he has continually before him the fear of damaging perhaps his best suit of clothes, which will in all probability be spoilt at the first fire attended.

* * *

Uniform, too, is **conducive to discipline.** It increases a man's self-respect when on parade or on the drill ground, giving him as it were an official standing. So long as he is wearing the uniform he feels that the credit of the Brigade depends upon his personal conduct, and accordingly he does his best to uphold it. With so much to be said in favour of Fire Brigade uniform, and so little that can be said against, local authorities will surely deem the subject worthy of consideration.

SHAND, MASON & CO., 75, UPPER GROUND STREET, BLACKFRIARS ROAD, LONDON.

Snippets

Fire and Police Museum

The project continues at a good pace and by the end of the year, Hampshire will have its first Fire and Police Museum.

As most will know, having been asked to remove the museum collection from its home of over 35 years, I was faced with a wall of difficulties to get over. I had actually reached the point when the probable outcome was the dispersal of items to other museum collections, when a chance discussion with the Museum Director at the Solent Sky Museum in Albert Road, Southampton opened an opportunity. I had known Alan Jones for a number of years due to my being a committee member for the Southampton Heritage Federation for over 10 years.

The Museum, when originally built also housed a large contingent of the Air Training Corps and they had moved out to another location leaving part of the first and second floors empty. Alan offered me the whole of the second floor area in order to save the collection. It then occurred to me, that with the Hampshire Constabulary undergoing massive organizational change and adopting a policy to reduce its building ownership, the Police historical collection may also be affected. An enquiry and a meeting with my Police counterpart revealed that they too were indeed seeking a home and so we decided to form a joint Trust with the aim of preserving and promoting the proud heritage of both services within the county. And so it began.

There was some urgency for me to remove the collection from headquarters due to the massive building alterations then about to commence. So in the early weeks of this year a small band of retired volunteers help me move the collection into Solent Sky. From there we had to embark on a large work project to turn the empty room we had been given into a fit for purpose display room. This involved many various 'build' projects, the removal of old wood paneling, the creation of a new large walk-in costume display cabinet, the creation of a Police cell, a station watchroom, various electrical jobs, painting, new carpeting, the securing of display cabinets etc etc. Not forgetting of course that whatever we wanted in the room had to be taken up to the second floor. Some might be surprised by what we did actually manage to move up there. Virtually all achieved by volunteer retired persons of a certain age!

But, as you may imagine, that can-do will-do 'shit or bust' attitude that we have all known and nurtured throughout our respective careers prevailed, along with the humour and

banter when you put colleagues from the past together. That Fire Service humour is still an artform I am pleased to say.

From the beginning we have aimed at creating a professional, interesting and detailed exhibition and as always, the 'good ideas club' has been busy suggesting another project (as if we did not have enough anyway when we started!). We have found ourselves spilling out of the room and onto the entrance landing where we have created a 'street scene' converting externally a museum office to look like a Police Station complete with brick effect, original brass lettering and a police lamp. Whilst in the corner of the newly laid street paving we have a Fireman about to ship a standpost into a hydrant set into the paving. The 'good ideas club' has been active again and the latest wheeze is to try and get a WW2 trailer pump and a Police motorcycle up to the second floor. That will be fun! The Police cell we have created has original cell doors enclosing it, an original wooden cell bed and various fittings. Our watchroom has the 1938 pole from St Marys fire station – the chrome one that went into the 'New Appliance Room'. I had this saved when the new fire station was built and the brass one from the 'old appliance room' placed into the new build station. A clunky HFS teleprinter will no doubt amuse visitors, but to many of us who experienced them, that very identifiable noise as it whirled and clanked into action will never be forgotten.; station on 'Three Jays'. 'The Quick brown Fox Jumps Over The Lazy Dog' – effective and reliable though, despite all of the noise.

Anyway, the project is now fast approaching the end of the build stage and over the coming weeks will be moving to the detail stage of setting up the displays, dressing mannequins, cleaning and polishing ready for a formal opening. After that we will be seeking volunteers to give a day or half a day when it suits to keep the exhibition in order, talk to visitors etc. The visitors will of course be those who pay an entrance fee into the main museum and then come and experience the Fire and Police collection as part of the general admission fee. It has been a great experience to date and those volunteers from the PMA who have given their time, each bringing their own range of skills and support have been great really are appreciated. There is more to be done and I will be putting out fresh pleas for help as we enter the next stage. If you miss polishing axes and 'small gear' or assembling BA sets, the opportunity will be there!

Alan House

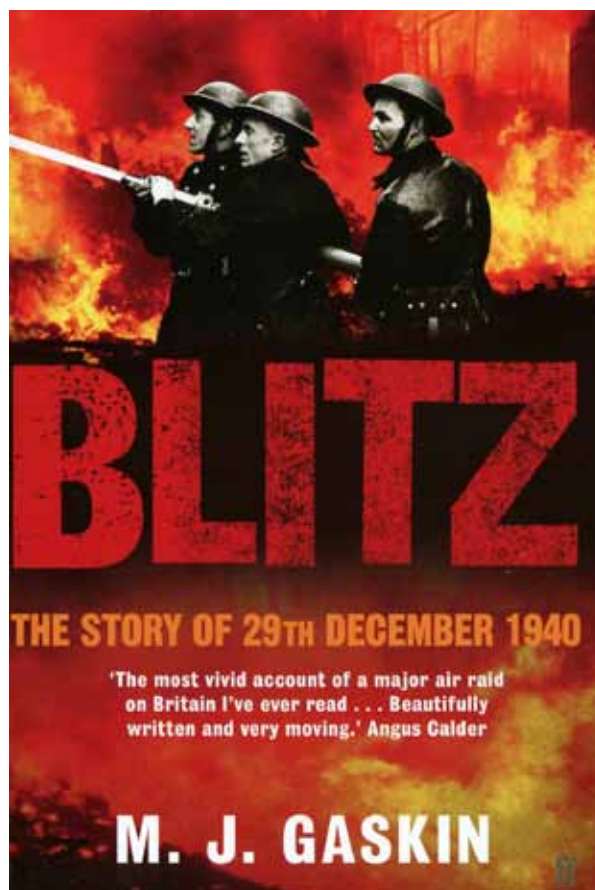


Kent Firefighting Museum

PMA Members might like to be aware of the Kent Firefighting Museum, now located at the Woodlands Garden Centre, Ash Lane, Ash, Nr Sevenoaks, TN15 7EG, after moving from its previous home at the Kent Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters. Visitors welcomed from 10.00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m. for most of the year, whenever the garden centre is open.

A unique partnership that has brought Kent's firefighting heritage and the pleasure of the garden together in the heart of Kent, and which has been shared by more than 16,000 visitors since the museum opened in August 2014.

Travel Insurance Suggestions
Further to suggestions in previous editions of *Stop Message*, Alan Hudspeth (ex-B23), has written and advises that he has had good experience with *Leisure Guard*. leisureguardinsurance.com



Book Review

Blitz
The Story of 29th December 1940

Author M J Gaskin
ISBN 0-571-21795-8
Publisher Faber and Faber Ltd.

I have read many books about the Fire Service and the other Civil Defence Services during WW2 but nothing as detailed and descriptive as this excellent factual account. Taking the novel approach of detailing the events leading up to, during and in the aftermath of 29th December 1940, when London suffered one of its most serious and concentrated Blitz raids, the author goes to great length to include a variety of experiences by those affected by the raid. Firefighters in particular will relate to some of his vivid descriptions. He also records the events leading up to the good fortune for the Daily Mail photographer who captured what was to be the iconic image of St Pauls Cathedral standing defiant when all around was on fire. Whether you are a nit-wit Fire Service historian like myself or just someone who is interested to know more about the experience of many of those living in London on this fateful and destructive night during the main Blitz period, I can highly recommend the book as an excellent read 410 pages.

Moving on to Pastures New

Steve Quinn
29/02/2016
Group Manager,
New Forest group
21 years 4 months

Anthony Cockram
02/03/16
Retained Firefighter
Gosport
23 years 3 months

Aaron Bryant
29/03/16
Firefighter
Cosham
25 years 9 months

Peter Byrne
01/04/16
Firefighter
Southsea
30 years 0 months

Allan Sherman
01/04/16
Vehicle Fitter
Fleet Maintenance
41 years 3 months

Brian Verrall
01/04/16
Vehicle Fitter
Fleet Maintenance
30 years 3 months

Gethyn Reynolds
01/04/16
Vehicle Fitter
Fleet Maintenance
18 years 7 months

Mark Budden
01/04/16
Station Manager
St Marys
30 years 0 Months

Paul Allen
01/04/16
Support Staff and
Firefighter
Headquarters Logistics
Team and Overton
40 years 6 months

Lynda Austin
01/04/16
Administrator
Headquarters
18 years 11 months

Chris George
02/04/16
Station Manager
Community safety
30 years 0 months

Barry Smith
08/04/16
Firefighter
Southsea
30 years 9 months

Martin Hicks
15/04/16
Firefighter
Liphook
25 years 5 months

Phillip Brooks
16/04/16
Firefighter
Alton
35 years 1 month

Alan Murray
18/04/16
Group Manager
Portsmouth
30 years 0 months

Robert McCrudden
18/04/16
Retained Crew Manager
Rushmoor
25 years 0 months

Victor Whitfield
09/05/16
Firefighter
New Milton
20 years 11 months

Stephen Jeffrey
21/05/16
Crew Manager
Schools Unit
27 years 4 months

Trevor Griffin
31/05/16
Watch Manager
Training
36 years 4 months

Laurena House
01/06/16
Secretary
Headquarters
22 years 6 months

Kevin Montgomery
07/06/16
Firefighter
Waterlooville
15 years 6 months

Paul Cambell
27/06/16
Crew manager
Fareham
26 years 8 months

Kevin Macaulay
29/06/16
Retained Firefighter
Gosport
21 years 8 months

David Northern
30/06/16
Firefighter
Cosham
30 years 0 months

Adrian Butt
30/06/16
Station Manager
Headquarters
30 years 0 months

Simon Molyneaux
30/06/16
Watch Manager
Hightown
30 years 0 months

Byron Williams
01/07/16
Firefighter
Rushmoor
16 years 5 months

Ken Guy
03/07/16
Crew Manager
Community Safety
25 years 5 months

Stephen Turp
01/07/16
Firefighter
Portchester
40 years 0 months

Anthony Hall
02/07/17
Firefighter
Alton
22 years 5 months

Charlie Harris
11/07/16
Station Manager
Community Safety
35 years 0 months

Steve Trevethick
12/07/16
Area Manager
Headquarters
30 years 0 Months

Nyron Coppini
16/07/16
Firefighter
Fareham
30 years 0 months

Stephanie Savill
16/07/16
Retained Firefighter
Gosport
19 years 0 months

Alec Martin
18/07/16
Station Manager
Urban Search and
Rescue
30 years 0 months

Barry Goddard
19/07/16
Firefighter
Whitchurch
15 years 9 months

Mark Ryder
25/07/16
Crew Manager
Fareham
24 years 6 months

Deborah Martin
08/08/16
Administrator
Headquarters
20 years 11 months

Carl Smith
29/08/16
Firefighter
Bordon
17 years 6 months

Phil Southcott
01/09/16
Station Manager
Andover
27 years 1 month

Gavin Williams
01/09/16
Firefighter
Southsea
17 years 2 months

Mark Lewis
09/09/16
Firefighter
Winchester
16 years 6 months

Clifford Tarrant
10/09/16
Crew Manager
Yateley
23 years 9 months

Glen Willie
12/09/16
Firefighter
Headquarters and
Emsworth
24 years 2 months

Graham Libby
19/09/16
Firefighter
Urban Search and
Rescue
36 years 5 months

Mick Johns
04/10/16
Group Manager
Headquarters
40 years 9 months

Mark Norton
07/10/16
Watch Manager
29 years 3 months

Tony Edwards
09/10/16
Watch Manager
Gosport
30 years 9 months

**We wish everyone listed
every success for the future**

Final Salute



It is with regret that we record the death of the following past members of the Service:

Terry Conway

On 1 May 2016
Aged 76

Terry served as a Fireman at Romsey until October 1994

Keith Betteridge

On 22 June 2015
Aged 76

Keith served as a Fireman at Beaulieu until January 1989

Stanley Holdaway

On 5 June 2016
Aged 89

Stanley served as a Leading Fireman at Stockbridge until November 1991

David Ray

On 3 July 2016
Aged 82

Dave retired as Station Officer at Andover in October 1988

John Rowe

On 14 July 2016
Aged 67

John served as a Fireman at Alresford until October 1986

David Mountford

On 16 July 2016
Aged 76

David served as a Fireman at Hythe until August 1990

Kevin Wykes

July 2015
Aged 66

Kevin was serving as a Crew Manager at Lymington when he retired in January 2007

Phil Orchard

Aged 86
On 4 September 2015

Phil was serving as the Sub Officer in charge at Emsworth when he retired in January 1985



Lest we forget



**Peter Cowmeadow, the PMA
Skittles Champion for 2016,
being presented with his
winnings by organiser Eddie
Winter at the Wellow Golf
Club on 19 October.**

