

COUNTY OF AVON FIRE BRIGADE

MAGAZINE

JULY/AUGUST 1982



Editorial

We are now into the fifth issue of the new-style Brigade magazine which is sponsored purely by advertisements at no cost to the Brigade.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank Mike Gardener and all members of Avon and London Publishing Ltd for their help and guidance in the production of the magazine which I think you will agree is produced to a very high standard.

Remember, the content to a great extent is up to you, the readers. Submit any articles or photographs which may be of interest and they will be considered for inclusion; also please remember to inform me well in advance of events taking place on your stations or where members are competing in outside events.

The production time for our magazine is between four and six weeks, so plenty of advance warning, please.

The article in the June issue of this magazine about Terry Parry was written by Sub. O. Alan Totterdell, Regional Executive Council Member for the Fire Brigade's Union. We apologise for the omission of this credit from the article.

Copy for the magazine should be forwarded to Stn.O. D. Hutchings at Headquarters (Tel. Bristol 22061, ext. 272) by 30 July for inclusion in the September issue.

Opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or Publishers and may not represent the official opinion of the County of Avon Fire Brigade.

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The main feature in *Call Out* this month reports on the recent exercise before Her Majesty's Inspector of Fire Brigades, Mr A. Winning. Such an exercise relies very heavily on the co-operation of many organisations (and, from looking at the illustrations, a good supply of redundant vehicles). There also appears to be some very good make-up artists around if some of the pictures are anything to go by.

In reality, the report presents a frightening scene and makes you realise the responsibility carried by the emergency services. Fortunately, disasters of such magnitude do not happen very frequently but even when reading of a major train or air crash few people appreciate just how serious the consequences can be or how dedicated are the crews who attend the incident.

In the report on this exercise, it is very reassuring to an outsider to read the favourable comments of both Mr Winning and the Chief Fire Officer, Mr Ponsford, and to know that such an operation can be mounted very quickly when necessary.

Lessons can always be learnt from any situation but it must be satisfying to have discovered a problem or a new idea knowing that nobody has been hurt in the process.

P. A. Heard
Director, Avon & London Publishing Ltd.

Faces and Places

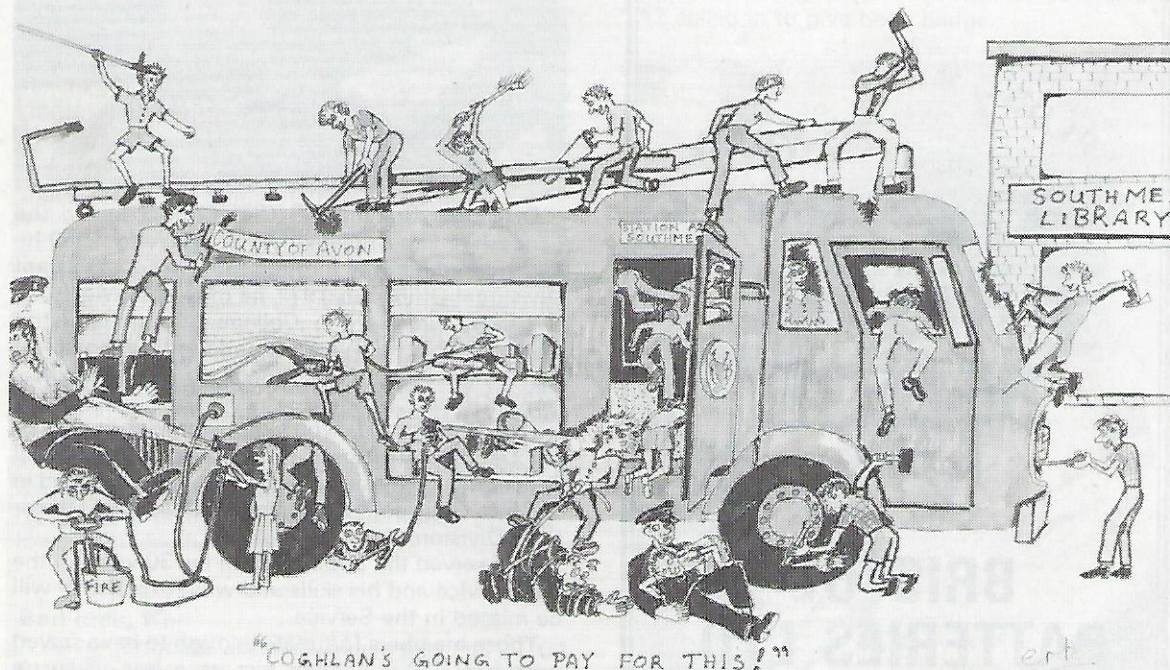
PROJECT FIRE FIGHTER

This very successful project was organised by Station Officer Ernie Coghlan of A Division FP and Margaret Hewlett of Avon Libraries, Bristol District, and ran from February until April, involving some 52 schools and 10,000 children. The aims and objectives of the exercise were to make children aware of the dangers from fire that they face in everyday life, and also the work of the Fire Brigade.

The projects were held at their local libraries, where they saw the slide programme 'Project Fire' and received lectures from members of the Brigade. The nearest station to the library attended with a pumping appliance. The children met and talked to their local firemen and had a chance to look at the equipment carried and, in some cases, use some of it, giving them a greater understanding of what hazards they could face during their lives, and also of the role in the community which the Fire Brigade plays in other than fire situations.



Everyone concerned, from the schools, the libraries and the Brigade, remarked on the success of the project and felt that much of this was due to the personal approach with the children as opposed to just informative lectures. Certainly much credit is



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FACES AND PLACES

due to Station Officer Coghlan and Margaret Hewlett, and also to all members of the Brigade who assisted, and to the crews from the stations attending the libraries.

Her Majesty's Inspector of Fire Brigades, Mr A. Winning, was present at the poster competition which followed the project, and was amazed to see in excess of 2000 posters sent in for judging, even after the schools had eliminated many of the posters painted. He said that, whilst poster competitions were not new, linked with the project this was quite unique, and he felt that its success, which was shown in the response to the painting competition, reflected much credit on the Brigade, the Chief Officer and especially on the organisers. He welcomed this type of project in the Fire Service and said that if you educate the child you go some way towards educating the parents as well, and it was good to see the Brigade getting out and about, involving itself with other organisations such as the libraries and schools on their ground.

Cliff Cooper retires



Divisional Commander Cliff Cooper joined the Lancashire Fire Brigade in 1952 where by 1969 he had worked his way through the ranks to Assistant Divisional Officer. In 1971 he moved to Moreton-in-Marsh Fire Service College as an instructor. Following his two-year secondment he moved to the former Bristol Fire Brigade as Assistant Divisional Officer.

On the advent of Avon County he was promoted to Deputy Divisional Commander (Divisional Officer III), C Division, Weston-Super-Mare, and in 1975 to Divisional Commander (Divisional Officer I), B Division, Bath.

Cliff served the public well in his 30 years in the Fire Service and his skills and wide experience will be missed in the Service.

Those members fortunate enough to have served with him will remember him as a bon-viveur, a raconteur of unparalleled excellence and as an officer who was greatly respected.

FACES AND PLACES



All members of the Brigade take this opportunity to wish him and his wife Mary a long and happy retirement together.

To mark this very special occasion a social function was held at Bath Fire Station.

A farewell picture for the album

Photo: Wessex Newspapers

Seabrook Award

Her Majesty's Inspector of Fire Brigades, Mr A. Winning, presented the Seabrook Award to Station Officer Trevor Osbourne from C1 Weston-super-Mare. Trevor won this award at the Fire Service Technical College last year for his outstanding work and technical and practical abilities. This is a remarkable achievement when you consider over 3000 students attend the college each year, and Trevor was one of three to win the award. Trevor has been in the Fire Service for 20 years and is a much respected Station Officer at C1.

January floods award

Whilst on his visit to C1 Weston-super-Mare Mr Winning took the opportunity of congratulating Fireman Keith Loveridge on receiving a Chief Fire Officer Commendation for his work in the January floods at Weston. Keith was featured in a previous magazine and earned this commendation for swimming in treacherous flood waters towing a rowing boat with three people on board, and also rendering a distressed occupier's house safe following an electrical fire.

Bad luck, Ken

An unfortunate accident befell Ken Hill of C2 Clevedon. He was responding to a fire call when he was involved in a motor vehicle accident in Kenn Road and ended up in the Bristol Royal Infirmary

with a broken arm, an ankle injury and superficial cuts and bruising. Following the call, which was to rubbish on fire near the Sailing Club at Clevedon, a call for assistance was received from Ambulance Control for a person trapped in a vehicle following a road traffic accident. The second machine from Clevedon responded and came upon their colleague, Ken Hill, who, fortunately, had already been released from his car by ambulancemen before the arrival of the Brigade appliance. To make matters worse, Ken and his wife, Joyce, were due to depart for a holiday in Majorca the following day. This obviously was cancelled, and to rub salt in the wound, it was Joyce's birthday, most of which she spent in the BRI awaiting X-ray results. We all wish Ken a full and speedy recovery, and I am sure he will make it up to Joyce later in the year with a surprise or a special treat.

Fan Club for A2

Leanne Vickery, aged 4½ years, had her dreams come true when members of Green Watch A2 paid a surprise visit to Leanne's home in Horfield while out on hydrant patrol.

Leanne's father had written to the Chief telling him how his daughter had an undaunting fascination for fire engines and firemen. So as a surprise A2 called in to give her a badge.



RSPCA Certificate of Merit

Pictured below are members of Blue Watch, Station C5 Bedminster, outside 160, Lynton Road, Bedminster, where these three animals were rescued from a fire; the dog and one of the kittens had stopped breathing. Fireman Kevin Lawlor worked on the animals for over 30 minutes with oxygen, and eventually all fully recovered. C5 have been awarded the Certificate of Merit by the RSPCA for the rescue. This was presented by the Lord Mayor of Bristol on 30 June.



Left to right: Fm. Dave Puddy, Paul Coombes and Kevin Lawlor with rescued animals

Where are they now?

RON MARCHANT, Hydrant Inspector for A and B Divisions

Ron served in the former Bath Fire Brigade for 30 years, retiring in 1974. His trade, prior to joining the Fire Service, was an Artistic Floor Layer, laying such things as ballroom floors and artistic foyers, etc.

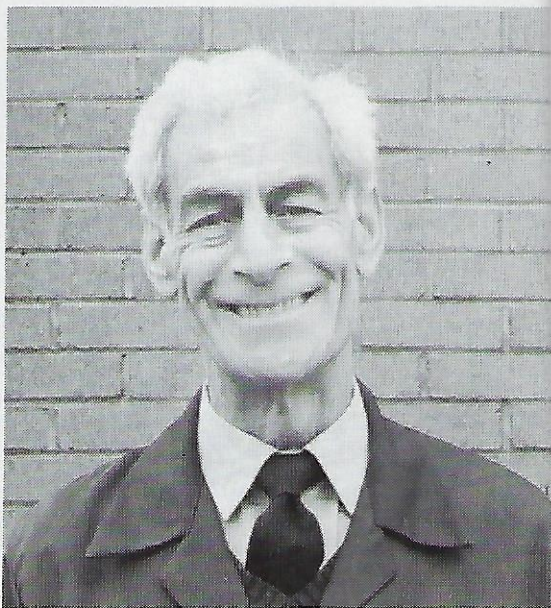
Just prior to the war Ron joined the Somerset Light Infantry (Saturday night soldiers) and at the outbreak of hostilities he was posted to DEMS (Defensively Equipped Maritime Shipping) and went off to sea. This was initiated by the Ministry of Defence because of attacks on shipping around the coasts and Ron started on a trawler equipped with one Bren Gun and 500 rounds of ammunition.

During the war he served in many areas and during his service did five trips to Dunkirk on the SS *Canterbury*, which is still in service despite the fact that she was bombed and generally knocked about. Ron also served in the Northwest Europe campaign and was wounded on D-Day plus six.

On returning to his Battalion he was wounded on Hill 112 in Normandy—on that particular day half the Battalion being either killed or wounded. Following his recovery he returned to his unit in Belgium and took part in the Rhine Crossing into Bremen in Germany, where he remained until well after the end of the war.

Following his discharge he joined the Brigade and served in Bath, always on Red Watch. Now he is A and B Divisions' Hydrant Inspector which gives him total unbroken service since joining.

He lives in Bath with his wife, Ann, and has four children (one son and three daughters), all married. His son serves with the Royal Engineers in Northern Ireland. He has many hobbies (the first and foremost being his seven grandchildren) including do-it-yourself, cricket and gardening. One thing Ron forgot to mention was the fact that he was always heavily involved with the Benevolent Fund and even now gives up a tremendous amount of his time for the Pensioners' Association.



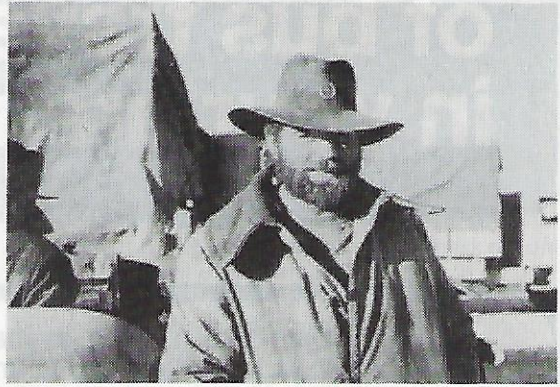
Ron Marchant

After talking to Ron I found out that on one of the occasions during the war when he was injured his cigarette case, which he always carried with him, saved his life. I have seen the cigarette case which is obviously one of Ron's most treasured possessions. Every good tale has an element of sadness and there is no exception in this case. Ron had just

received his daily ration of 'seven' cigarettes that July morning in 1944 when he was showered by shrapnel which went through his hand and hit him in the chest. His cigarette case prevented the shrapnel penetrating his chest—but it shattered his cigarettes. Whilst he is grateful that the cigarette case saved his life he was rather peeved at the time that he did not get any replacements for his lost cigarettes.

I am sure that anyone who has met Ron and talked to him will have found he has a wealth of knowledge stored away and is a most interesting man to converse with.

We all wish Ron and Ann the best for the future, and hope they enjoy a long and happy retirement.



**Do you know the
people in these pictures
and when they were
taken?**



Skin care

Sunshine is very good for most skins, activating Vitamin D and promoting feelings of wellbeing and energy. Even so, most fair skins should always use a good skin-block cream with a very high Sun Protection Factor. As the skin gradually tans creams with a lower SPF can be used. Be very careful about use of drugs or perfume in the sun, both can cause chloasma (pigmentation) even on a dull day, whilst the perfume can also cause rashes in the sun. It is also advisable to check on any drugs or medication with your doctor before using a sunbed.

Water is good for the skin, but ordinary soap is not such a good idea. Look out for the new soapless cleansers and cleansing bars which suit all types of skin. If you must use ordinary soap make

sure you rinse two or three times. A teaspoonful of lemon juice added to the final rinse will quickly help restore the skin's protective film which is broken down by the alkaline in soap.

Natural skin products are a good idea. Milk can be used for cleansing the skin and buttermilk as a moisturiser. Cucumber makes a very good toner, crushed strawberries can be used as a mask to tone down freckles and the white of an egg can be used as a face mask. As natural products contain no preservatives it is safer to make only a small amount at a time. Commercially-produced natural products have the same basis as other creams but contain natural rather than synthetic additives. Many doctors advise Vitamin E creams to be used on blemished skin, or to encourage healing after an injury.

BOILED BACON & PEASE PUDDING

Serves 4-6

INGREDIENTS

1 knuckle bacon
1 lb split peas
1 bayleaf
6 peppercorns or black ground pepper
Demerara sugar
1 oz butter
2 small egg yolks, beaten
Salt and pepper

METHOD

Place bacon joint in a saucepan and cover with water overnight to remove excess salt. In a separate bowl, cover the split peas with water and leave overnight.

Next day drain off water from bacon. Cover the joint with fresh water. Add bayleaf and peppercorns, or ground pepper. Bring to the boil. Simmer, allowing 25 minutes per pound. Strain off liquid. Remove skin from bacon joint. Rub the fat all over lightly with demerara sugar.

Meanwhile, drain the split peas and transfer to the other saucepan. Cover with fresh water and simmer for 1½ hours, stirring occasionally. When soft, sieve peas. Add butter and beaten egg yolk. Season to taste. Serve with the boiled bacon.

TROPICAL CHEESECAKE

INGREDIENTS

12 wholemeal digestive biscuits
8 oz creamed cheese
1 pkt Dream Topping
1 cup of icing sugar
2 oz butter
Small tin of mandarin orange segments

METHOD

Crush biscuits. Melt butter in saucepan and add crushed biscuits; coat thoroughly and line flan dish with mixture. Mix creamed cheese with icing sugar and make up Dream Topping. Add to creamed cheese. Add chopped mandarin oranges. Fill flan case with mixture and decorate with few whole segments. Chill.

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FALCK

Falck is the name of the only known private corps in the world covering an entire country regarding rescue services. It is also the name of the man who founded the concern. Sophus Falck was born in Copenhagen in 1864. On 3 October, 1884, at the age of 19, he saw the big fire at the Christiansborg Palace in Copenhagen. Many articles of great value were destroyed on that occasion, and having seen that, the young Sophus Falck conceived the idea of a rescue corps in Denmark. It was not until 22 years later, however, after several years of exile, that Sophus Falck had gathered enough experience and capital to realise his idea. The first Falck station was opened on 3 October, 1906. It was the anniversary of the conflagration at the Christiansborg Palace.

Originally rescue work at fires was the only job handled by Falck but soon other jobs turned up. It was obvious that Sophus Falck was serious, and that the rescue organisation could actually do a decent job. Furthermore, the Press constantly encouraged the work. This in turn gave him encouragement to expand into new services, namely rendering assistance to horse-carriage owners on the road.

In 1908 Falck purchased the first motorised ambulance in Scandinavia and concluded a contract concerning the conveyance of patients to hospitals.

After some years of moderate activity during the First World War, Falck expanded in 1918 with his first sub-station in Odense on the island of Funen. Soon after, other stations were opened all over the country. The need for the service increased, and so did the number of cars. The financial situation, however, could have been better. Though services were paid for, it was not enough to keep personnel in readiness 24 hours a day. It was at this time that the subscription system for car owners was created. Falck undertook a contract to assist at any kind of motor breakdown for only ten crowns a year. A similar system had already been introduced in factories, workshops, offices, etc., offering assistance during fires and for water, storm and elevator accidents.

In 1926 Denmark passed a new law regulating

the activities of fire departments, but the first Falck station had already been established four years earlier. As a result a provision was added to the law that the municipalities were to establish and keep a fire brigade but they would be allowed to hand over the duty to Falck. Thus in Denmark a private fire brigade had arisen in conjunction with the municipal fire brigades of the cities. A certain yearly contribution per inhabitant was agreed upon as payment. At the outbreak of the Second World War in 1940 Falck was used as the fire brigade in half the country, particularly in the provincial areas, but there were also a number of cities that were handing over the operation of their fire brigades to Falck.

Concurrently with the establishment of fire stations, a system of ambulances and ordinary conveyances for sick people was developed. Municipalities and hospitals were responsible for the conveyance of patients, so it was natural in this situation to hand over this duty to Falck, who already cared for cars, equipment and personnel. Out of Denmark's 279 municipalities today, 271 have contracts with Falck for ambulance and ordinary conveyance of sick people.

From the very beginning Falck was interested in emergency road assistance to cars. There was little need in 1906, but as motorisation increased rapidly the need for assistance rose proportionately. The fact that Falck started this service in the infancy of the motoring age and developed together with it is the reason why in Denmark there are only few garages that have a towing truck at their disposal.

In an agricultural country like Denmark it was also natural to develop a service concerning assistance to animals. Animal rescue is part of the subscription system which is offered by Falck to farmers for a certain amount per year. There just is not space enough here to describe all the other Falck activities, from coastal rescues with high-speed launches to diving operations, contract works, haulage operations, etc.

The above historical development is also an explanation of how a private concern in Denmark could come into being, a concern which has to fulfil duties which in other countries are taken care of by the public. This applies first and foremost to fire fighting and ambulance and ordinary conveyance of sick people. The explanation is a simple one: from the beginning Falck has been a part of the development of these services and has adapted itself as needs arose, but has not at any time taken economic advantage of the situation. Today Falck is almost a non-profit-making concern, any profit being invested in the purchase of new material and in increasing personnel.

The maximum distance between Falck's 134 stations is 30km so the country has adequate coverage. There are 4046 rescue men—all highly trained and capable of rendering assistance in all situations.

The trained men have a further 1258 part-time fire staff at their disposal and a total of 484 non-uniformed staff are employed in administration throughout the country. They claim this to be a very low figure, especially considering each call requires invoices, payment and receipts, and the collection of subscriptions.

Discussions have taken place regarding specialisation of the Falck personnel. Ambulance staff could be split into emergency and ordinary conveyancing, then some men used only for rescue, fire and chemical fighting but they are to remain trained in all aspects. As you will see by the training syllabus, a very comprehensive system operates, each section being continually monitored by refresher courses.

A typical small town such as Hammel in Jutland, with a population of 9000, has 11 full-time men, backed up by 12 part-time, running two ambulances, two fire appliances, a rescue tender and a wrecker.

The Falck fleet consists of 902 Ambulances, 718 Wreckers (MrTs), 353 Fire Appliances, 100 Turntable Ladders, 142 Rescue Tenders, 512 Pumps.

Listed are some of the services rendered by Falck: Ambulance, including helicopters and planes, doctor paging, firefighting, chemical incidents, salvage, all mines, caves, cliff and diving, wrecker breakdown service, heavy plant and driving instruction, industrial training from first aid to fire and safety training.

These are but a few, which we will look at in more detail in further issues.

RESCUE EDUCATION IN DENMARK

1 Levels

Step I	Basic education at local rescue stations and hospitals
Step II	Central, basic education in Copenhagen; rescue school in Avedøre; state fire school in Gentofte Advanced education at same institutions as in Step I
Special training	Diving course (marine school), Copenhagen; course at Danish Red Cross; corrosion, disinfection, and civil defence courses.
Leader functions	Corps courses for alarm central personnel corps; courses for tactic chiefs; normal central courses

(District medical advisers currently teach control and refresher courses especially for ambulance crews.)

2 Contents

Step I	Daily station procedures; cars, tools, radio; elementary first aid, resuscitation, external cardiac massage; fire, water damage; towing cars, animal rescue, pumps, corrosion fighting
Step II	Rescue service: 2 courses of 80 hours each containing laws, radio and alarm central service, electricity and searchlight services, assistance to persons trapped in debris Ambulance service: 1 course of 80 hours containing laws, radio and alarm central service, resuscitation, first aid, hospital service, sudden illness Fire service: 1 course of 160 hours
Step III	Rescue service: 1 course of 80 hours containing chemistry (transport of dangerous liquids), assistance to smashed and flipped cars (with physical and mathematic fundamentals and use of wires, cranes and other machinery) Ambulance service: 1 course of 80 hours containing hospital service, advanced first aid, mass casualties, advanced tactics in groups, practical ambulance service, police cooperation, safety in industries, sudden illness, aircraft accidents, alarm central principles, anatomy and physiology Commander course of 240 hours and other special courses at state fire school

Steps II and III end with written examinations

3 Prerequisites

Admission to II: 3-15 months service in local rescue station

Admission to III: 3-5 years service in local rescue station

Specialist courses are 1-5 weeks each

Fire Services National Benevolent Fund

The Benevolent Fund had its origins in 1940 when, with assets of £12.10s (£12.50), the London Fire Service Benevolent Fund was launched. About the same time many other similar local funds were started up and down the country. Some were very small, but all were assisting in the alleviation of hardship and distress of fireman and their families, each individual fund according to its means.

The present fund was inaugurated in 1943 when the National Fire Service came into being and was a spontaneous amalgamation of almost all the local funds throughout England, Scotland and Wales. With its resultant comparatively substantial capital it was at once able to render help to firemen and their dependants, wherever they might be, on a much more generous scale than most funds had been able to do.

The Fund is now the official Benevolent Fund for all Fire Brigade personnel in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It exists to help serving and former members of the Fire Brigade and their dependants, and civilian personnel employed by the Chief Fire Officer, when in hardship or distress.

We are an entirely voluntary organisation in every way. There are no entrance fees, membership subscriptions, or any forms of fixed payment to join. We help any person or persons falling within the categories mentioned, without qualification, and the whole of the work carried out by the fund is voluntary. It is run by serving and former fire service personnel, none of who receive any remuneration whatsoever for their work. The only persons the fund employs are a very small permanent staff at Marine Court, Littlehampton and Harcombe House at Chudleigh in Devon.

In 1981 a total of £383,127 was paid out in the form of grants to cases throughout the country. During the same period we in Avon authorised total grants of £7074 which were paid to cases in need as follows: Hardship £1114, Orphans £1894, Widows £1200, Handicapped children £300, Apprenticeships £50, Death £200, Prolonged sickness £458, Christmas hampers £1704, and Hospital parcels £154.

In addition to these grants nine cases were provided with free convalescent accommodation at Marine Court, Littlehampton or Harcombe House at Chudleigh in Devon.

Between 1 January and 30 April this year we have already paid out a total of £1963 in assisting our colleagues and families in Avon and a further nine cases have accepted convalescent accommodation for a period of two weeks. These figures are increasing daily and represent a real need for the continued support of all personnel.

We are now an established organisation and it is the responsibility of all former and serving members of the Brigade to give every support possible to their elected representative in order to maintain our excellent fund. You may never need the Benevolent Fund's help, but there are many who do. Don't turn a blind eye to giving a helping hand to assist those of our colleagues and their dependants in their time of need. Please contact your representative should you know of any person who may qualify for assistance from the Fire Services National Benevolent Fund.

C. A. Deverill

Hon. Secretary, Brigade Council, County of Avon

God's chosen

When the signal goes off and he's needed to fight,
He responds without fear, knowing danger's in sight.

Whatever the order his despatcher cries out,
As he turns on his flasher, I can hear him shout.

"Gotta run, Doll, no time for good-bye":

O, I pray, Dear God, please watch over my guy.

He's gentle and loving, he's strong and he's brave,
And forever in training, for that life he might save.

Men, women, children, and animals, too,
Know he will help them, or it could even be you!

There are times I complain, as most gals will do,
But soon feel guilty, knowing all he's been through.

I respect him, I need him, but will share him with all,
Cause he knows that I love him, when duty does call.

I'll always stand by him, even help where I can,
For he's one of GOD'S CHOSEN—he's MY FIREMAN.

The Dave Fennell trust Fund has a target of £10,000, so please do all you can to assist.

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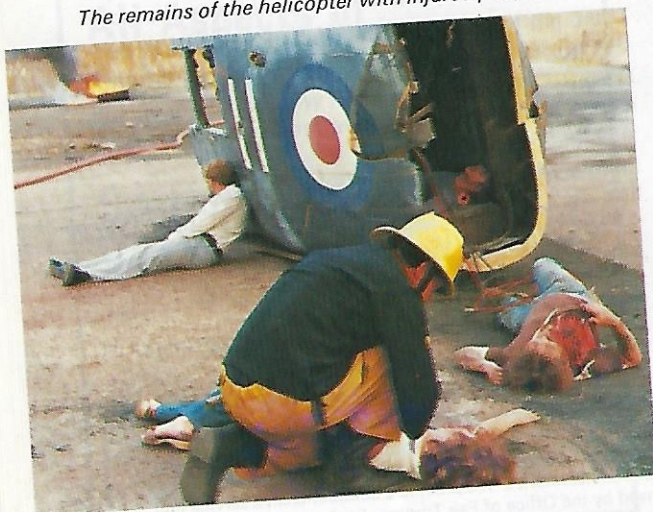
Major exercise successful

A helicopter flown by Squadron Leader Smith, DFC, crashed with a crew of five, whilst attempting a forced landing. It crashed into the Portishead power station, leaving a trail of carnage over 300 metres long in its path. Two buses, a lorry, many cars and buildings were damaged. Severe fire situations evolved, including a very severe fire in the power station itself. There was an unknown number of casualties strewn across the area, the painful silence after the crash broken only by the moans of the victims.



General scene of the incident

The remains of the helicopter with injured people close by



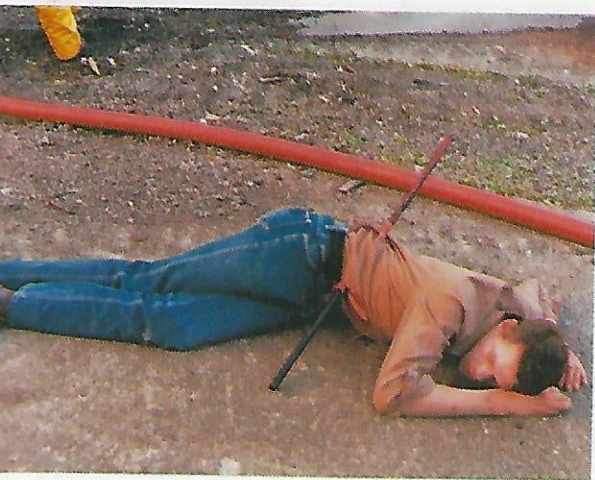
The fire and ambulance services had been alerted. Two fire appliances and two ambulances arrived after what seemed like hours but was, in fact, only two minutes. The Officer-in-Charge, Station Officer Vowles, quickly surveyed the situation and increased the number of pumps. He made a request for two Rescue Tenders and a Decontamination Unit. The number of ambulances was also increased and a request for the immediate attendance of medical teams was sent. The assistance of the St John's Ambulance Service was also required. The Divisional Commander of the area, Brian Hellin, took command of the incident. Main controls for the Emergency Services were set up.

By this time, some 10 minutes after the arrival of the first crews, the gravity of the situation was becoming clearer. Heavy black smoke hung in the air, also the stench of burning rubber and diesel fuel. Some other noxious smell was also present bringing tears to the eyes and making it difficult to breathe. By now the moans were screams as some victims became hysterical in their various trapped positions.

Fire crews initially fought to bring some of the more serious fires under control where people were trapped. Five people were in a bus which was well alight. The screams from the victims could be heard. Access was hampered for appliances and ambulances and water supplies were a problem. The only water available was some considerable distance away in the dock, and had to be relayed.

Medical teams on their arrival fought to save the lives of the seriously injured; casualty handling areas were set up. Rescue Tender crews fought alongside their colleagues in the Ambulance Service to release victims trapped by debris and in wreckage which had been strewn around.

To aggravate this appalling disaster, it was found that a lorry carrying toxic chemicals had also been struck and the substance was leaking explosive and



A man impaled by a metal rod

toxic fumes, putting rescuers and victims at further risk. Firemen struggled into protective clothing to get amongst the leaking chemicals and attempt to stop this hazard.

There never seemed to be enough assistance; sweat was running from the rescuers as they went from one situation to another. No end was in sight; a fireman collapsed from sheer exhaustion—he was one of the first on the scene, fighting for over an hour to control fires and dragging people clear, much of the time at some considerable risk to himself. Slowly the situation was coming under

More realistic injury effects



control and the true extent of the disaster became very clear. Twenty people died and 40 people had severe injuries; buildings had collapsed; the tangled wreckage of vehicles and that of the helicopter lay smouldering.

The WRVS arrived, serving well-earned refreshments to the rescuers, and now, having time to think, each rescuer was asking if there was something more he could have done. A question, perhaps, that we are all too familiar with when there is such tragic loss of life.



Expensive realism?

This was an exercise held by Her Majesty's Inspector of Fire Brigades, Mr A. Winning. He praised the organisation at the scene and the enthusiasm shown by all members. He paid special tribute to the Casualty Union for its realistic injuries and behaviour. He thought it was an excellent exercise, with many valuable lessons to be learned by all. He felt it was essential that situations such as this should, and must, be practised. None of us know when it will affect our own area. "You in the Emergency Services," he said, "must always be prepared." He said the efficiency of the Brigade reflected credit upon Mr Ponsford and all members of his Brigade, and was delighted to see the co-operation between the Fire and Ambulance Services and thanked their Chief Officer, Mr Ernest Joy.

In what areas is there room for greater efficiency?

First, in the opinion of Mr Joy, Avon's Chief Ambulance Officer, the large area posed problems,



(Photo. J. Brand, Portishead)

Crews cut away the roof of a car to release occupants

also the sheer number of severely injured casualties. Maybe because it was an exercise, crews could get preconceived ideas. Generally there were good communications. The area which requires greater scrutiny is that of co-ordination between control points and overall command. He added that it was a very useful exercise and praised the work of his men and the co-operation and team work between the Services.

The medical team from the BRI was Pete Salt and Di Lock. They found the exercise extremely valuable and were impressed with the way the Emergency Services worked, but initially they were not used to their best advantage (a) because there was no initial information on arrival and (b) for some time they were used as first-aiders. Their duties are not really to be ordered around by officers of any Service to treat casualties as they are found; they

are there in an advisory and treatment role for the seriously injured and to set up life-support systems, otherwise there would be no real advantage in medical teams from hospitals attending. Their skills should have been put to better use. All casualties ought to have been taken to one area where the team could then sort out priority for hospital and, with the assistance of advance-trained ambulance-men, set up life-support systems and allow volunteer first-aiders to dress wounds, etc. They added that this was only constructive criticism, and without the exercise these points possibly would not have arisen. The CFO Mr Ponsford said the purpose of any exercise is to create a situation which will test a number of aspects of the Brigade's operations. In presenting practical problems it will also provide an opportunity for assessing and updating our procedures. Realism needs to be created in order that those taking part can have as full an understanding as possible of the problems they face. The exercise for Her Majesty's Inspector provided a very realistic and wide-reaching exercise. It gave us the opportunity to work alongside colleagues from other Services and to understand their problems. There were, of course, points which need to be examined, but the main objectives were achieved as a result of the enthusiasm and effort of those taking part.

A comforting word for the injured



(Photo. J. Brand, Portishead)

The County of Avon Fire Brigade wish to acknowledge the valuable help and assistance given by the following:

- Avon and Somerset Police
- Bristol Omnibus Company
- Bristol Royal Infirmary (Casualty Dept.)
- Central Electricity Generating Board
- County of Avon Ambulance Service
- St John's Ambulance Service
- The Casualty Union
- Westland Helicopters Ltd.
- WRVS

A1 lose fight to save fire victim

Well done members of Red Watch, A1. Firemen Ian Blackwell and Ian Simpson made a tremendous effort to revive a 40-year old male casualty after he had been rescued from a fire in Milsom Street, Bristol.

On arrival the casualty was found lying in the kitchen doorway having been dragged from his burning bed by other members of the household and both Ians immediately got to work on the casualty. When it was realised that he had stopped breathing, and there appeared to be a chance of reviving him, Ian Simpson inserted a Brooks Airway and then started cardiac massage while Ian Blackwell started mouth-to-mouth.



Fm. Ian Blackwell (left) and Fm. Ian Simpson.

They kept this up for some time and, because of some body function and signs, felt they were getting somewhere. On arrival of the ambulance it was decided by ambulanceman Chris Griffen to defibrillate (that's passing very high voltage across the heart momentarily) in an attempt to stimulate a pulse. Chris and his colleague spent some time working on the casualty before conveying him to hospital, unfortunately to no avail, as he was pronounced dead on arrival.

So very tragic for such a minor fire situation. It is believed the victim set fire to his bed when he fell asleep while smoking. Tragically no ambulance was called until A1 arrived because when Control received the call they were told no persons were involved, only a bed.

Simple but useful

The mud walkways were used for the first time in anger, when they came into their own in recovering the body of a young man who fell from

the Suspension Bridge. Since their tests late last year the Brigade has recovered five bodies from the Avon, but on each of these occasions the use of the walkway was not required.

A1 Green Watch led by Stn.O. Barry Smith remarked on how successful this basically simple piece of equipment was an how much easier it makes this task.

Hot chocolate

B5 crews responding to a call to Frys Chocolate Factory, Keynsham found themselves confronted with a classic situation.

A single-storey section of the 200 by 400 metre building was well alight, with flames issuing through the roof, threatening the five-storey sections which very closely enclosed it on three sides.

The works fire brigade, who were in attendance with B4 Brislington, informed the Officer-in-Charge that the mains supply had been cut off for maintenance and the nearest water supply was a quarter of a mile away.

Severe damage to contents of the store



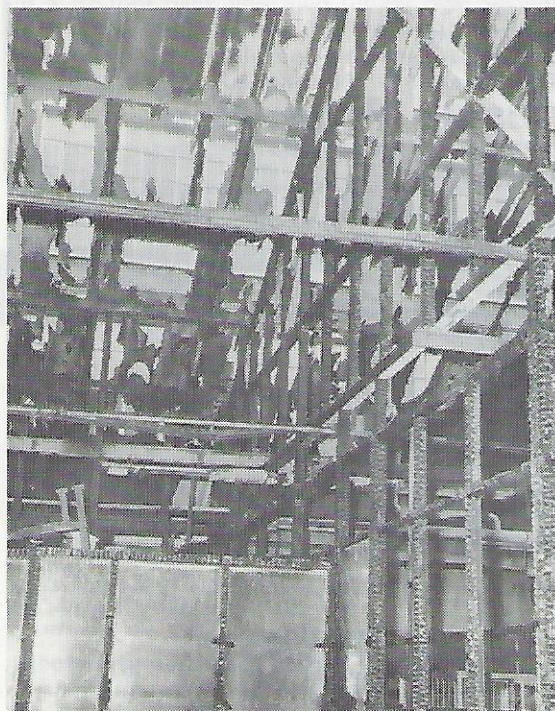
Having ascertained that the threatened wings of the factory had been evacuated a jet was set to work from one side and BA teams commenced to work in a 'Stopper' jet on the other side of the block. Because of the poor water situation pumps were made 4.

Penetration of the building brought a quick knock-down of the fire.

The cause of the fire is still unknown, but suspicious, as this section has been locked up for some time. There is no doubt that had it not been for the determined efforts of the crews attending the fire may have penetrated the five-storey sections resulting in a potentially disastrous fire situation.

Crews attending were B4, B5, B7, and A1.

The burnt out roof of the building



All at sea?

C2 took to the open sea when a fire was spotted on the island section of Clevedon pier.

It seemed that nothing was to go right this grand summer evening as following a request by C2 for a boat the entire force of Clevedon Coastguards arrived, ready for action, but with no boat! It was 'off the run' or should we say 'water'—defective. By this time a reputed mariner, Stn. O. Roger 'Horatio' Strickland, from the shipping resort of

Weston-super-Mare, arrived—just as members of C2 were asking the Clevedon Sailing Club for their rescue boat which was testing its engines off shore in the bay.

Roger quickly took a dose of sea-leg pills, just in case the weather changed during the trip, and accompanied by four brave volunteers from C2 the voyage began. On berthing at the pier the long climb and the search for the fire began. Within minutes of arrival buckets were being hauled aloft by the landing party and victory was theirs. With the fire dealt with, and the old pier preserved, it was now time to depart and to return to the mainland and face the cheering crowds. The men found Roger a little tiresome on the return journey constantly rehearsing his speech and pestering them about how he looked for the TV cameras.

He attributed his success to being the son of a farmer from Blagdon who was raised in his tender years on the banks of the lake.

On a more serious note—well done Clevedon for dealing with a tricky, and what could have been very serious, situation.

Bristol General Hospital fire

Assistant Divisional Officer Graham Watkins praised the night nurse on Fry Ward when she discovered a fire in a linen cupboard which was emitting heavy smoke. She immediately closed all the doors, raised the alarm and commenced evacuation. The first appliance was in attendance in exactly one minute from the time of the call. Firemen assisted with the remainder of the evacuation and quickly dealt with the fire, which was confined to the linen store. The cause of the fire is of suspicious origin, and ADO Watkins requested the attendance of the police to carry out further investigations.

A1 on call

Station Officer Chris Liberty and his crews were called to York Place, Clifton. On arrival they found the second floor and roof well alight and a fire in the basement. It was reported by neighbours that the fire followed an explosion in the house. The premises were being converted to flats and extensive alterations were in progress, with scaffolding erected, which certainly assisted firefighting operations. On arrival two BA teams entered the building to search, as there appeared to be a possibility of workmen inside, and pumps were made 4. The roof and second floor started to collapse, so once it was ascertained that no one

was inside, crews were withdrawn. Fireman Chris Jackson was conveyed to hospital after a piece of falling debris had gone through his hand.

Crews from A1 had dealt with a fire in the same premises the previous weekend, when petrol had been poured on to woodwork, then a burning rag thrown in. That fire failed to gain a hold, only burning a small area of floorboards. On this latest occasion there were a further two seats of fire and again petrol cans were found. These facts obviously led to Divisional Officer Britton requesting the police to investigate.

C3 Portishead RTA rescue

C3 Portishead rescued a man in his twenties from the wreckage of his car following a RTA in the early hours of the morning. The car went out of control, up a 12-foot bank and then turned over several times trapping the driver. His passenger, a lady friend, was fortunately not trapped. The picture shows C3 cleaning up following the release of the driver.



C3 Portishead cleaning up following the release of the driver from the wreckage of his car.

Electricity overload

A difficult task faced the crew of C5 Bedminster when they arrived at the Kebab House in East Street, Bedminster, to find the ground floor well alight and the first and second floors heavily smoke logged, with the fire rapidly spreading up the central staircase.

The occupier and his son, both Greeks, were outside the premises when the fire crew arrived, and the first officer attending, Sub-Officer Brian Counsell, had great difficulty in ascertaining from the occupier whether all persons had escaped from the fire. Because of the occupier's excitement and

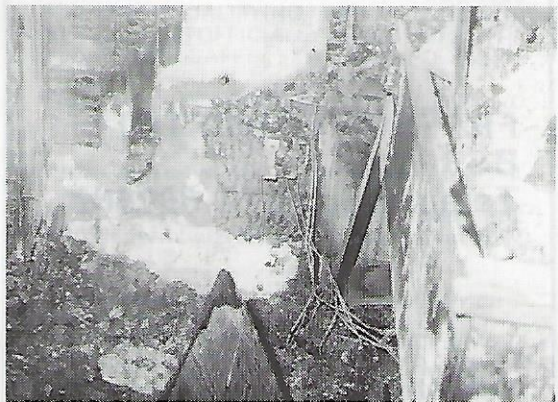


Scene of the fire

language difficulties, Brian decided to make pumps three and commit eight men in breathing apparatus to search the premises as no certain information could be gained with regards to the whereabouts of the wife.

The fire was quickly brought under control, with extensive fire damage to the ground floor and severe heat and smoke damage to the remainder of

The cause—all appliances off one point



the building. The cause was an overloaded electrical circuit with eight types of electrical amusement machines coming from one 13-amp plug! Do people ever read or take any notice of instructions which are designed for their own safety?

A3 Avonmouth

Two-hour ordeal at No. 2 Granary, Avonmouth Dock

The Brigade received a call for assistance when a man became buried in grain in a hopper. On arrival Station Officer Bill Plenty found that three men were inside the hopper: the victim and two safety men attempting to locate and rescue their colleague. Immediately the two men were brought to safety and Fireman Arthur Taylor of A3, wearing breathing apparatus, was lowered into the hopper by line. Arthur quickly located the buried man and made an effort to check his condition but due to the very heavy dust and both their precarious positions, the victim had to be brought to safety quickly.

In addition to the docks ambulance and a nurse, a county ambulance was in attendance with ambulancemen Simon Crow and Barry Richardson, who immediately tried to revive the victim. Many attempts were made to ventilate and defibrillate over a period of some 45 minutes, and these two ambulancemen, together with Station Officer Plenty, who was applying cardiac massage, worked to the point of exhaustion trying to revive the victim, but, tragically, to no avail. The rescue operation was led by Assistant Divisional Officer John Robbins, who praised the tremendous efforts of all the personnel involved. The ironic part of a situation such as this is that when superhuman efforts are made to rescue and revive someone, but to no avail, it deeply saddens those members of both the fire and ambulance services. It brought home to me, and to the crews attending from A3 and the Rescue Tender from A5, the skills and the dedication of the ambulancemen, whose job so very often goes unrecognised and is taken for granted by all of us at times.

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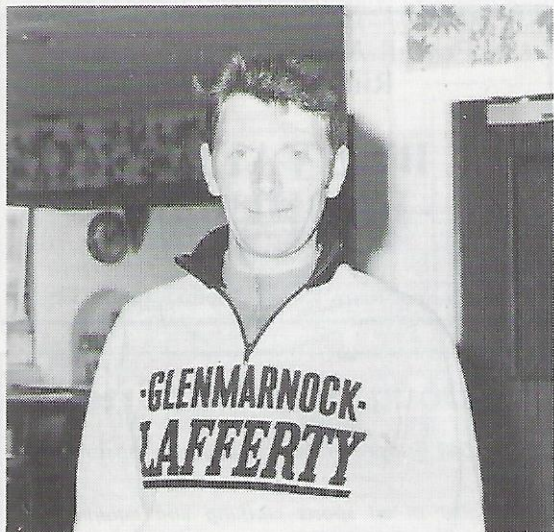
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SPORTS AND SOCIAL



Sponsored cycle ride

Peter Struthers of the Strathclyde Fire Brigade spent a night at A1 Temple on his sponsored cycle ride from John o'Groats to Land's End. Peter hopes to raise in excess of £1000 for the Benevolent Fund on a trip that will take 11 days in all. He said his legs were playing him up a little but other than that he enjoyed every mile and as his hobby is photography he was taking advantage of the opportunity to get some good shots of each place he visited.

Athletics

In May Dave Hayward completed the 141½-mile Long Distance Walkers Association challenge event from Winchester to Canterbury. It took him 42 hours and 51 minutes, and involved running and walking between check points for the best part of two extremely hot, sun-scorched days and two whole nights, with no sleep and only two proper meals. The route was mainly cross-country on tracks and paths, joined up by short stretches of road, and included hills totalling 9000 feet each of ascent and descent, much of it steep. Route-finding involved following a rather intricate route

description in unfamiliar country and was a challenge in itself, in addition to the challenge of surviving unharmed (one smallish blister) conditions very conducive to heat-stroke and exhaustion, and the challenge of covering such a great distance.

Swimming

Margaret O'Connor, Brigade Control, is competing in the National Fire Brigades one-mile swimming race in the River Thames, Caversham Reach, Reading. She hopes to raise some money for ARMS—Action for Research Against Multiple Sclerosis—a very worthy cause. We all wish her luck in this gruelling event.

Kingswood Marathon

Kingswood Marathon, 23 May, attracted many members of the Brigade, with Alan Lawson finishing 17th overall. Pictures which have come into our possession show Pat Pewsey, from Brigade Workshops, in fine fettle just over half way, and proudly just managing to hold up his medallion at the finish. Pat came 130th out of 1200; this was tremendous, as this was his first marathon—26 miles in 3 hours 22 minutes.

Pat going well—only another 14 miles to go, and (right) just strong enough to hold medallion



Football

The Wednesday League team played in the Tom Jones Cup Final at Keynsham, against D.R.G.

A two-all draw at full time, with goals scored by Richard Gurney and Roger McKeown, after extra time unfortunately became a 2-3 loss.

The Wednesday League team have enjoyed a very good season and played some excellent football. The club's President D.O. Monty Britton commiserated with the team after losing the final and bought them all a pint.



Left: Fm. Phil Deane. Right: Sub.O. Roger Hacker

anticipated that this will be completed in 36 hours. Fifteen Fire Brigades are competing and it is hoped to raise a considerable sum of money. The participants from Avon Fire Brigade and Sub-Officer Roger Hacker, Sub-Officer Bob Poots, Fireman Phil Deane and Fireman Martin Shergold, all stationed at the Central Fire Station, Temple Back.

Fire Canoe '82

Starting at 0200 hrs on 2 July from the Cumberland Basin, adjacent to the Nova Scotia public house, Fire Canoe '82 sets off on a 200-mile two-man canoe race from Bristol to Tilbury to raise funds for the Fire Service Widows & Orphans Fund, with a donation to a nominated local charity. It is

Left: Fm. Martin Shergold. Right Sub.O. Bob Poots



Sea angling

The sea angling section had its first interbrigade match against Hampshire on 19 April. We got off to our usual good start with one of our team sick in the van—and still some 30 miles from the sea. However, we managed to get out to the fishing grounds, south of the Isle of Wight, without further trouble. The first two hours saw plenty of action with Avon gaining a substantial lead. Full marks for amusement went to a Southampton member who accidentally dropped his wallet (with £15 and credit cards) overboard—and catch of the day went to Brian Carter from Temple who managed to catch it in the landing net after the skipper set us adrift. Incidentally, top weights were shared between Brian Carter and Dave Jenkins. Without doubt a good day was had by all with Avon emerging clear winners and a total catch in excess of 120 lb. Should any other members of the Brigade wish to join us please contact Station Officer Causon B6, Leading Fireman Wilkins A2 or Fireman Jones A1.

Caravanners

West Midland Fire Service annual caravan rally 27-31 August, £9.50 rally fee. Contact Ernie Thomas 0203 404 746.

Musically minded?

Are you interested in music? Would you like to be part of a choir, male voice or mixed?

Tom Clark of Connaught College, Westgate Buildings, Bath is interested in forming a choir, has full rehearsal rooms in the centre of Bath, and is prepared to train a choir.

Anyone at all interested contact Tom Clark on Bath 63492 (daytime) or 66333 (evenings).

Ski club

Is there anyone interested in forming a ski club (snow type) with a view to a ski holiday in 1983?

Tuition with equipment hire is available at the Gloucester Ski Centre for £3.00 per hour. Group tuition is cheaper. Interested? Then contact Sandy Stewart, Brigade Control, or Bob Poots, Blue Watch, A1, Temple.

The Old Comrades' Association

The Association was formed by the late Joe Kirkup, a former Chief Officer of the Bristol Fire Brigade and, during the war, the Regional Fire Force Commander. At the end of hostilities it was obvious that many men serving with the wartime service would have to return to their previous occupations, so it was decided to try and maintain the links and comradeship built up through the war by forming the Association. Mrs Kirkup is now the chairman of the Association and Mrs Stallard is the secretary. They regularly meet at Headquarters and have social evenings. It is a unique organisation which obviously will never increase in membership. We look forward to receiving an article from the Association with a good tale attached.

Newspaper collection

Old newspapers are still being collected and sold by A2 Southmead for the Benevolent Fund. Please take your papers, neatly bundled, to A2. No magazines please.

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Canal trip round the docks

It has been said that 'if you live in a town you don't really see it as a visitor would, and tend to overlook the more obvious points'. Having sampled the canals of Amsterdam (the cruise, not the water), I jumped at the chance of seeing the Bristol City Docks from the same vantage point. A trip on a boat, somewhat like the boats of Amsterdam, had been arranged by Stuart Edwards. He is an employee of Bristol Waterworks, so I dismissed the tales of floating 'unspeakables', as surely Bristol Waterworks would know, and booked two tickets on this slow boat to Feeder.

The motley passengers met at the Redcliffe Wharf, close by the old City of Bristol Fire Brigade Fireboat Station, after many of us had visited the Ostrich, much beloved of seafarers and the fireboat crew of yore. The vessel was the *Flower of Bristol*, built in 1980 at the Albion Dockyard, and with all necessary 'conveniences' to make the journey comfortable. There was a bar on board, the beer was good, and keeping to about 35 to 40 passengers there was ample room to stretch your legs. We sailed towards Courages—did you know you can still see the old moat that surrounded Bristol Castle?—under Temple Meads Station, where the Brunel Bridge in brick can still be seen—ever tried whisky and Feeder water? Then we went along the Feeder, where we turned to head back. At this stage a meal was served, a nautical ploughman's, and to my surprise the meal afloat didn't make anyone ill. We headed into the docks proper, passed the Locheil, the beer aboard was still good, and made towards the Cumberland basin, passing sights old and new. We turned at the Nova Scotia and the captain drank sherry, which surprised me as I thought all captains were marinated in rum. We arrived back at the Redcliffe Wharf at about 2230. Last orders at 2300—mind the gangplank. This trip was so enjoyable that I would like to organise one if enough people show interest. Cost depends on the meal—we paid £5 per head. So if you feel like joining a trip let me know.

Dave Williams, Brigade Headquarters.

Wotton Photographics

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Three Men in a Boat

We came from the far reaches of the Avon Fire Brigade, three men with that small amount of salt in their veins that marks the true Englishman. We set course for Yarmouth (Isle of Wight) in our four-berth cabin cruiser under a cloudless sky, with more sun forecast for the three days that we had allowed for our cruise.

It was late August, and with only a slight swell from the west the boat carved her way out to sea. After a 2½-hour voyage in a shimmering heat haze we slipped gracefully into the crowded harbour of Yarmouth and were directed to our berth by the harbour master's cutter.

After eating, we ventured ashore in our two-man rowing boat, quickly deciding that we would need all our wits about us for the return trip and would have to curtail our drinking habits accordingly. A suitable hostelry was soon located and we proceeded to dilute some of that salt in our veins until the time came to wend our weary way back to our vessel, which seemed to have shrunk to half its previous size. Somehow we managed to make the short trip back to the cruiser and then to our bunks.

Awoken at 0500 hours on the following morning by unnatural moaning noises coming from one member of the crew, combined with a dawn chorus of seagulls, two of us, looking rather unkempt and unshaven, decided to go ashore for the morning papers in that stupid little rowing boat, laughing at the thought of how we must have looked through a porthole of one of the many luxury yachts that surrounded us. Once back on the cruiser we cooked up a massive breakfast, despite complaints from one member of the crew who had designs on retaining his slender figure (although he still managed to consume his share).

By 1000 hours we up-anchored, arriving three hours later at Shell Beach, just outside the entrance to Poole Harbour, where we slid gracefully over the side and joined the throngs of holidaymakers cavorting in the water. Snorkel masks and spearguns were the order of the day, but we saw only small flat fish and crabs, none of which were worth bagging. Eventually, after another enormous meal

(usual protests from usual member), we headed into Poole Harbour, with its vast area of inland waterways, reputed to be the second largest of its kind in the world. It really is a breathtaking natural phenomenon.

From the harbour we made our way into the river Frome, arriving at Wareham at 1700 hours and anchoring in mid-stream. A meal of fish and chips was eaten on the quayside, from which it was just ten paces to the door of one of the local pubs. When we returned to the cruiser we suffered an invasion by thousands of midges and mosquitoes, and it was as involuntary blood donors that we drifted off to sleep.

The following morning we cast off for our return trip through Poole Harbour and out to the open sea. Back at Shell Beach we needed no urging to slip over the side into the water, away from the scorching sun. We had several hours to while away at this idyllic spot before the tide was right, during which one of our number managed to stumble across a nudist beach just around the headland.

All around us, as far as the eye could see, were amazing spectacles of all shapes and sizes (page three will never be the same again), and after 15 minutes or so we had to return to the cooling embrace of the sea. A leisurely swim around the headland brought us back to our boat, and after another mountainous meal it was time to up anchor and head for our home port, reluctantly ending three glorious days of exploits which we hope we can share again some time.

Editor's Note—The above saga floated into the office in a rather large unmarked bottle, and had to be shrunk a bit before it would fit into the Magazine.

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