

# COUNTY OF AVON FIRE BRIGADE

MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1982





# Editorial



By the time this copy of the Magazine is printed, twenty-one recruit firemen, having completed their training course, will be about to join their respective operational stations.

The next few months can be a testing time for them and, despite the intensive training which all of them have undergone, the baptism of fire, in the literal sense, is still an experience never to be forgotten. It is at such times that the wise counsel of his officers; the knowing tip from the old hand when making initial entry on his first working job; the amiable greeting when joining the Watch; the ready response and pride of his new colleagues in showing him the ropes; can all contribute to the warmth of welcome and friendship which forms the basis of mutual confidence between men who face danger as part of their everyday working life. I know that all members will join with me in wishing them well in their new career.

It is at this time of year that our thoughts are very much taken up with Christmas festivities. Each of us has our own way of enjoying the occasion, and whether it is helping the kids open parcels, a drink with the neighbours, or perhaps a family party, we all endeavour to enter the spirit of Christmas. Unfortunately there are some, particularly the old, whose finances impose severe limitations. If you know of any folk living near you who may be in this position, why not make them up a small food parcel, just to let them know that someone was thinking of them. You'd be surprised how happier it would make your Christmas too.

The season's greetings to you all, and a successful 1983.

*F. C. Ponsford C.F.O.*

This is the last issue of our magazine for 1982. We will be back again in January 1983, so I thank all those who have made contributions and have supported the new magazine, and wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year—also to our colleagues in the Police and Ambulance Services.

The Service, in particular our own Brigade, is entering an interesting period with many technical advancements. Work on the new Brigade Control is underway with a completely new station turnout system. Medium expansion foam, now being carried on certain appliances, is proving to be a tremendous success. Shortly it is anticipated that we will be seeing experimental fire appliances undergoing trials, so we certainly have much to look forward to.

Enormous interest has been shown by all members of the Brigade with regard to 'Rocks Rescue'. We have some problems to overcome. Perhaps we should show the way!

Relationships with the Police and Ambulance Services are of paramount importance, giving mutual trust and confidence between the emergency services. In this each one of us has a major part to play and can only be of benefit to all.

Good luck to one and all for 1983.

*Dave Hutchings*

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## Cover

Stn.O. Mike Hughes and L.Fm. Mel Rogers dive in vain in their effort to reach the victim (see page eighteen).

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Copy for the magazine should be forwarded to Stn.O. D. Hutchings at Headquarters (Tel. Bristol 22061, ext. 214)

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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# Faces and Places

## Tragic death

As all Brigade members are aware, Fireman Ian Chalmers died recently in a tragic accident at Bath Fire Station, aged 24.

Ian joined the Brigade in 1979, and after successfully completing his basic training was posted to Green Watch, B1 Bath. He originally came from the Portsmouth area, and moved to Bath in 1974, taking up residence at Grore House, Weston. Shortly after arriving in Bath he began working at the Royal United Hospital as a general porter. Whilst working there he met Melinda (Mindy), a nurse, and in June 1979 they married at Frampton Cotterell. Following the wedding they settled into married life at Cleveland Terrace, Bath, and in June 1981 moved into their new house at Stoneable Road, Radstock.

During his short time with the Brigade Ian showed great enthusiasm for all aspects of Fire Brigade work, his ambition being reflected by his determination in sitting statutory examinations. He was also a great lover of station sport, especially volleyball, in which he participated whenever possible. He was continually pressurising the less enthusiastic members of the Watch to join him in endless games, in all winds and weathers. His other sporting love at the station was snooker, and he quickly became a member of the station snooker team.



As Ian was a keen sportsman, both participating and spectating, a memorial in the form of a sporting trophy will be made available. Members of the Brigade will then have the opportunity to compete for it.

Ian was a popular member of the station and will be greatly missed, especially by his friends on Green Watch.

*Fm. Paul Warren, B1*

## MOVES AT THE TOP

Following the retirements of D.O. Cooper and D.C. Parnham the following changes have taken place.

Divisional Officer Graham Iles, MIFireE, has been promoted from Brigade Training Officer and is now Divisional Commander of B Division based at Bath.

Divisional Officer Iles has been in the Fire Service for 26 years, starting his career in the former Bristol Fire Brigade in 1956. He moved to the Gloucestershire Fire Service in 1966 and on the reorganisation of county boundaries, came back in the embraces of Avon. He has served as a Senior Officer in all three of the Brigade's Divisions.

Divisional Officer Ray Southard, MIFireE has now been promoted to Brigade Training Officer. Divisional Officer Southard has 22 years' service with the Brigade and has served in most departments. For a number of years he has been involved in all aspects of Brigade Training, which included a two-year secondment to the Home Office Fire College at Moreton-in-Marsh.

Assistant Divisional Officer Tony O'Driscoll has

now been promoted to Divisional Officer and is the Divisional Fire Prevention Officer covering the central area of Bristol and A Division. Divisional Officer O'Driscoll has served for 26 years in the Fire Service, starting his career in Halifax in 1956 and has also worked in Yorkshire and then in Bristol in 1965. He has a wide and varied service and is ideally qualified to take up this very demanding position.

Assistant Divisional Officer Andy Walters, MIFireE, has now become the Deputy Divisional Commander at B Division based at Bath, and has been promoted to the rank of Divisional Officer. Divisional Officer Walters joined the County of Avon Fire Brigade in 1978, formerly serving with the Hereford and Worcester Fire Brigade. Since joining Avon he has been the Brigade's Communications Officer and has been instrumental in the installation of the Mobilisation Computer in the Brigade Control, and has also been deeply involved in the design of the new call-out system which is to be fitted throughout the Brigade. He has served for 14 years in the Fire Service.



## CHIEF OFFICER'S COMMENDATIONS

Fireman Keith Loveridge, of Station C1 Weston-super-Mare, received a framed certificate for his actions as previously featured.

Sub-Officer Roger Hacker, of Station A1 Temple, is highly commended for his actions in rescuing a man from the cables of the Clifton Suspension Bridge in the early hours of 28th August, 1982.

The circumstances were that, despite the precarious position of the man and his obviously unbalanced mental state, Sub-Officer Hacker crawled up the cable to his location and persuaded and assisted him to climb down a ladder provided by the remainder of the crew.

At all times during the rescue operation, Sub-Officer Hacker was exposed to a most hazardous situation which required coolness, determination and great courage.

There is no doubt that, in drawing the incident to such a satisfactory conclusion, he displayed outstanding dedication to duty in the highest traditions of the Fire Service.



*The C.F.O. presenting Sub. O. Roger Hacker with personal commendation.*

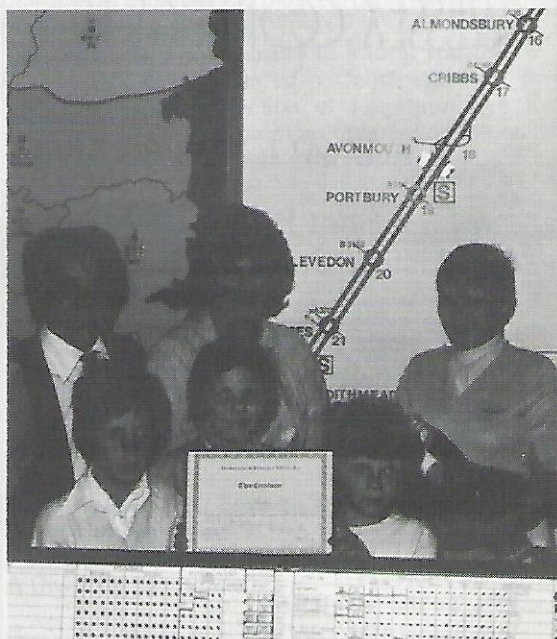
## BRAVERY AWARDS

**Mr Peter Victor Barnes, aged 36**  
**39 Westleigh Road, Southmead, Bristol**

A fire at 41 Westleigh Road, Southmead, Bristol on Monday, 12th April, 1982 at 2326 hours.

On the night of 12th April Mr Barnes was made aware of a fire at No. 41 Westleigh Road. He immediately went to the premises and found that the ground-floor front room of the house was involved in fire. Knowing that an elderly man lived in the house, Mr Barnes broke in through the front door into the hallway, and then went into the ground-floor front room. Mr Barnes had instructed other members of his family to alert the Fire Brigade. He then, following several attempts, managed to get into the room and rescue his neighbour from the fire, but tragically the man died even though there were numerous attempts to resuscitate him.

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that Mr Barnes is to receive a Certificate from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire to denote his brave actions at this fire. In entering the premises and rescuing the elderly man in smoke-logged and intense heat conditions, Mr Barnes showed a high degree of courage and tenacity with complete disregard for his own personal safety.



*Peter Barnes and his family at Brigade Control.*



**Mr Scott-Drew, aged 30****14 Telford House, Moorfields, Bath**

A fire at 6 Dorset House on Saturday, 24th April, 1982 at 0810 hours.

The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire Award goes to Mr. Scott-Drew who, whilst passing the above house on the morning of 24th April on his way to the newsagents, was told of the existing fire situation. He went to the assistance of Mr Hackett who had climbed onto the balcony of the flat that was involved in the fire. Mr Scott-Drew broke a pane of glass in the balcony door, and crawled into the room which was in what can only be described as a severe fire situation. He heard a child crying and spent a considerable time in trying to locate the child. On finding her he brought her to the safety of the balcony, where he passed her to Mr Hackett who was waiting there.

Mr Scott-Drew sustained severe cuts to his left hand and leg whilst carrying out the rescue. He refused hospital treatment.

In my opinion Mr Scott-Drew's actions showed great presence of mind and courage. He acted without any thought or regard for his own safety and certainly displayed determination and personal courage in rescuing 6-year-old Emma Abbott.



*Young Emma Abbott with her rescuers.*

**Mr Arthur Hackett, aged 61****7 Dorset House, Bath**

Mr Hackett, who is the caretaker of the flats at Dorset House, was woken up on the morning of 24th April by Mrs Abbott banging on his door. She informed him that, whilst she and her baby had escaped the fire in her flat, her daughter Emma was still inside. Mr Hackett made several attempts to enter the flat by the front door but, due to the severe heat

and smoke, he was unable to make an entry. He then went to the outside of the building, set a ladder to the balcony and climbed up, where he was later joined by Mr Scott-Drew.

Mr Hackett showed tremendous personal courage and determination without any thought for his own safety, and played a vital part in the rescue of Emma. It gives me great pleasure to inform you that Mr Hackett is to be presented with my own personal commendation.

**Mr Patrick O'Kelly****17 Camrose Court, Gibbons Down, Barry, South Wales**

A road traffic accident between Junctions 18 and 19 on the M4 westbound.

Mr Patrick O'Kelly was travelling in a lorry on the motorway eastbound when he noticed a car which had overturned and had a severe fire in the engine compartment. Mr O'Kelly stopped his lorry, crossed the motorway, and found an unconscious young lady trapped in the wreckage of the car. Seeing that the situation was deteriorating rapidly, Mr O'Kelly physically tore the driver's door from the car and dragged Miss Smith, the victim, to a place of safety on the hard shoulder. Within minutes of his action, the car had become totally involved in uncontrollable fire. Had it not been for Mr O'Kelly's quick action, Miss Julie Dawn Smith would most certainly have perished in the vehicle.

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that Mr O'Kelly has been awarded a Certificate from the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire for displaying courage, prompt and correct action, with total disregard for his own personal safety.

**Institution of Fire Engineers Diplomas Awarded**  
Fireman Martin Palmer, Graduate.

Station B6 Speedwell

Fireman Stephen J. Spearey, Graduate.  
Station B6 Speedwell

Station Officer Jerry J. Cox, Member.  
A Division Fire Prevention

**Fire Brigade Long Service and Good Conduct Medal**

Divisional Officer Roy Kennedy,  
A Division Headquarters.

Group Fire Control Officer Mike Potheary,  
Brigade Headquarters.



Fireman Ted Street,  
Station A2 Southmead.

Fireman Ron Thomas,  
Station C5 Bedminster.

Sub-Officer Alan R. Totterdell,  
Station A1 Temple.

Sub-Officer Peter Addie,  
Station C1 Weston-super-Mare.

Fireman Roger Hoskin,  
Station C1 Weston-super-Mare.

Assistant Divisional Officer Brian Townley,  
Brigade Headquarters.

### Proud parents

Jim and Anita Rex are proud to announce the arrival of Samuel James, 9lb 3oz (5kg metric), 20th October, at BMH. Mum, Baby and Dad doing well.

### Unexpected guard of honour

On 11th September Green Watch C1 attended the marriage of Fireman Phil Mannings to Penny Glover at Backwell Church and formed a guard of honour. The guard was a complete surprise to the bride, who

*The happy couple, with their guard of honour*



was very thrilled by the honour. A reception and disco was held at the Mendip Hotel, Blagdon, after which the couple retired to the bridal suite at the Cliff Hotel, Cheddar (we have since been informed of the advantages and disadvantages of the four-poster). They later left for honeymoon in Majorca.

The axes, some war-time, were renovated to a very high standard and returned to Stores with blades slightly oiled and shafts scrubbed to whiter than white.

PS. Supplies please note: The tin of Cherry Blossom boot polish used by the Watch on Fireman Mannings' equipment has now been replaced.



*Another guard of honour, this time for Sue and Pat O'Brien.*

### Obituary

Our deepest sympathies go to the family of John Scott. John was a Leading Fireman in the former Bath Fire Brigade before he retired in 1962 after 30 years' service.



# Miscellany

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## Fire at 99 Stoke Lane, Westbury-on-Trym

I am circulating for the information of the personnel concerned the contents of a letter received from Mr & Mrs Harris of 99 Stoke Lane, Westbury-on-Trym.

Dear Sir,

We would like to express our thanks to all the firemen who attended the roof fire at the above address on Friday, 10th September. The prompt arrival of the appliances and the speed of the crews in fighting the fire contained it to our roof space, with minimal damage to our neighbour's house and the remainder of ours. We and the local community were very impressed with the thoroughness of clearance of the damaged roof and the good job done in covering the roof with tarpaulin. Thanks also for the cheerful reassurance at a really distressing time.

We hope we will never have occasion to call on your services again!!

Yours faithfully,  
George and Hilary Harris.

*It is particularly pleasing to receive this kind of letter from members of the community, as it indicates that a good standard is being maintained where it counts most. Well done.*

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## Brigade Technical Committee

At the September meeting of the Brigade Technical Committee the members had the pleasure of making an award of £25.00 to Fm. D. Maslen of Station B6 Speedwell. Dave, with skill and ingenuity, had made a machine for the binding of hose couplings to hose. A machine for this purpose is produced by a well-known fire engineering company, but Dave, with his inventive skill, managed to produce a machine which had many clear advantages in use over the manufactured item and cost considerably less to produce. Well done, Dave.

The Committee also considered an idea submitted by Fm. Green of Station A3 Avonmouth. Mike produced an appliance for hydrant pit cleaning. The Committee thought his idea had considerable merit and was worthy of pursuing further. They will be in contact with Mike in the near future, and hopefully his idea will come to a satisfactory conclusion.

Many of the suggestions put forward to the Committee by members of the Brigade are, unfortunately, ideas relating to the purchase of manufactured goods. The purpose of the Technical Committee is for members of the Brigade to be able to submit original ideas for the improvement and efficiency of

Brigade operations. Any suggestions coming before the Committee receive the closest attention, and they will endeavour to communicate with any member to ensure that he understands why his idea is accepted or rejected. There is always room for improvement, so put your thinking caps on and keep those ideas coming forward.

## The Brigade Safety Committee

The Brigade Safety Committee first met in October 1978, following discussion and negotiation within the Brigade as a result of the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act. The name of the Committee should not mislead, as its functions extend beyond safety to include all matters relative to the health and welfare of all employees of the Brigade. Duties include investigation and prevention of accidents, safety training, inspection of equipment and premises, and a focal point for discussion of all items concerning the health, safety and welfare of Brigade staff at the request of safety representatives or management.

The Committee meets on a three-monthly basis and minutes of the meetings are published throughout the Brigade for all to read. The secretary of the Committee and co-ordinator of safety matters within the Brigade is the Deputy Senior Staff Officer, currently Ivor Tasker. The chairman is elected annually from members of the Committee and is currently Alan Totterdell of the Fire Brigades Union. Members of the Committee are the Assistant Chief Officer, Transport Officer, Accommodations Officer, and the Assistant Principal Administrative Officer representing management, together with representatives of various Trades Unions covering both uniformed and civilian employees.

A quick survey of the minutes of meetings does not do justice to the progress and contribution made by this committee to the work of the Brigade. We have to accept that finance is not readily available in these crisis-torn days for local government, resulting in many proposals and requests failing on economic grounds, yet progress can be made.

The Brigade has published its own statement of safety policy within an operational and training note which is monitored and updated by the Committee. A task recently completed was the issue of an appendix covering first aid, together with a major review in conjunction with County Medical Staff of all first aid equipment used in the Brigade.

It would be impossible to list all the items that the Committee has concerned itself with, but a few that can serve as examples are the review and repair of all Drill Towers in the Brigade; the use of Escape Ladders from Hydraulic Platforms; cleaning/testing pro-



cedure for Breathing Apparatus; exclusion of vehicle fumes from station areas; eyesight test and provision of glasses for Control Room staff using Visual Display Units; noise levels and provision of ventilation in the Control Room. Other projects have recently been agreed for the current year, and safety representatives will, I am sure, be pleased to receive suggestions or observations from staff for future consideration.

*Sub.O. A. R. Totterdell*



*Cllr. Skeates at the P.P.C. presenting the shield to Fm. S. Williams.*

### 1982 technical lecturette competitions

The finals were held at Brigade Headquarters in October and the Chief Officer remarked on the high standard and quality of the lectures. He commented on the fact that the time given by the participants to prepare and perfect their own particular subjects did them great personal credit.

Fm. S. A. Williams of C1 Weston-super-Mare won the competition, with Fm. I. Thomson of B4 Brislington, Fm. R. Poolman of A1 Temple and Fm. G. Kurvers of C1 Weston-super-Mare runners-up in the final.

The lecture subjects were as follows:

Fm. Williams: Aircraft ejector seats.

Fm. Thomson: Firefighting aboard Royal Navy ships.

Fm. Poolman: Firefighting problems associated with high-rise buildings with automatic ventilation.

Fm. Kurvers: Fires in places of entertainment with large loss of life.

All participants throughout the competitions are to be congratulated on their efforts. It is no mean task to lecture on a technical matter to your own colleagues

and senior officers of the Brigade, although I am sure that all members listening to the lectures will have learnt a great deal.

### The Brigade Display Unit

With the kind permission of the Chief Fire Officer, we now have a Brigade Display Unit. It is based at A1 Temple and is available to attend any event to which the Brigade is invited. It may also be used as a Public Relations Unit or utilised on Fire Safety campaigns, school visits or careers information. It is flexible in so far as the lockers can be utilised for any type of Brigade display. Fitted with a generator, lighting is provided in all lockers which have perspex covers. The facility to run tape slide programmes in the pump bay has also been provided.

Where its attendance is required and would be of benefit to the Brigade, an A42 should be submitted to the Brigade's Public Relations Officer through your Officer in Charge and Division in the normal way to ensure its availability. Members utilising the appliance would be responsible for its return in a clean and tidy condition.

### B.F.S.A. Annual Drill Competition

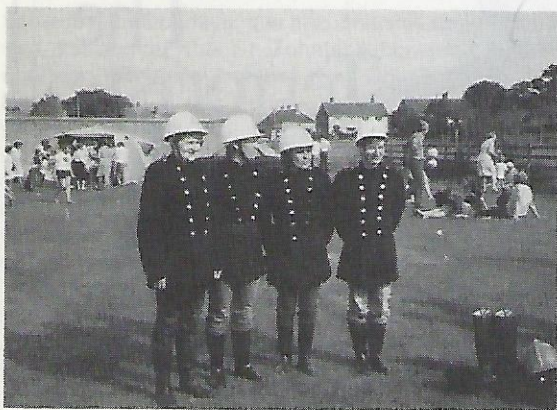
The British Fire Services Association Annual Drill Competitions were held this year at the Nailsea Fire Station. It was also their Centenary year. The day was hosted by Station Officer Ray Wyatt and his men at Nailsea and it incorporated an open day with the kind permission of the Chief Fire Officer.

Seven teams competed, including two ladies' teams. Competition was very keen. The drills included pump drills, hydrant drills, open water drills,



*The trophies to be won—some are over 100 years old.*





*Clevedon Ladies team.*

ladder drills and first aid. Great enthusiasm by all competitors and keen rivalry went towards making an exciting and close running competition.

The overall winners on aggregate were Topsham, Devon. Clevedon A team came second and Clevedon B team came third. Clevedon Ladies came first in the hydrant drills and the Nailsea Ladies came first in the open water drills.

Many local organisations had stalls at the open day, donating money raised to the BFSA and the

*Fm. John Clark of C2 receiving the trophy for the four-man ladder drill.*



Benevolent Fund. Wives of the Nailsea Firemen laid on a superb buffet tea and refreshments. A really first-class day organised by C9.

Unfortunately, the attendance and the fund raising were marred by the failure to get programmes which had been promised for the event. Apologies must go to the local Scout Group and the Air Training Cadets who, on several nights, attended the station to canvas the area with the programmes which did not arrive at all.

### **First-aid competition**

#### **Redruth Open Sunday, 3rd October**

The Brigade first-aid team were successful in retaining the 'Rowe Cup' and four other trophies at the above-mentioned competition. The team comprising Stn.O. R. Underhay (Captain), Sub-O. Smith MB, Fm. Causon, Fm. Bowden and Fm. Couzins (reserve) gained 471 marks. Newton Abbot St John were runners-up with 420 ½ marks.

★ ★ ★

The Brigade First Aid Team has won the William Searle Rose Bowl and the Bath Charity Cup at the St John's Association's competitions held at the Wills Recreation Hall at Bedminster.

★ ★ ★

With the Fire Brigades' First Aid Nationals over it is nice to know that for the fourth year running Avon will have represented the Fire Brigades of Great Britain in the Grand Priors Competition at Buxton, Derbyshire, on 30th November this year.

The Brigade team, with Station Officer R. L. Underhay as Captain, myself, No. 2, Sub-Officer M. B. Smith, No. 3, Fireman G. J. Bowden, No. 4, and Fireman J. Couzins, reserve, with Station Officer C. J. Williams, Sub-Officer P. J. Haydon and Mr. L. Webber as trainers, are a force to be reckoned with in First Aid circles.

We are called from time to time 'Medal Hunters', 'Professionals', and 'First Aid Freaks', as well as some unprintables at many of the twelve or so competitions we enter each year, including this year's Nationals, but any team can come up to our standard if they like to put themselves out.

We train every Monday night at B6 Speedwell from 5.30 to 7.30 pm, and also one Tuesday night per month at GPO Headquarters, Temple Mead, from January to June and September to November inclusive, as well as the competitions which are held on



Saturdays or Sundays. We also do three days' intensive training at the St John's Ambulance Headquarters, Bristol, before the South Western, Nationals and Grand Priors. At least 50% of these times are when members are on leave. On one occasion I left my holiday home at Gravesend in Kent at 4.00 am and drove to Redruth, Cornwall for a competition starting at 1.00 pm and getting back to Gravesend at 5.30 am the next morning, a round trip of 690 miles!

I have been a member of the team for ten years with some 40-odd trophies to show for it, and held a First Aid Certificate for 27 years. This year will be my 7th Grand Priors, and in previous years we have been 1st once, 3rd once, 4th twice, and 5th twice, which is a good record.

After the Grand Priors last year and the Nationals this year, it was mentioned by certain people that it would be nice to let someone else win, so they could go forward to the Grand Priors, but I see no sense in lowering the standard of competition. There was a carve-up in 1970 when the team who beat us in the South Western came last in the Nationals.

We are also reminded that Staffordshire Brigade, who have been second to us for the last three years, are all retained members. This may be so, but what people don't realise is that they are also in a St John's Ambulance Division and four of them are in Lea Hall Coal Mine's team which gives them four chances of getting through to the Grand Priors as representatives of either the Fire Brigade, The Coal Board, The St John's Ambulance or The Nationalised Industries. This practice should not be allowed.

I have fond memories of Jimmy White, who used to come in with his workmate, Mark Perrott, from work to train us for about seven years. He left a lasting impression on Colin Williams with the occasional cuff under the ear or bang on the head with a clip board for doing something wrong in training. Now I seem to get one every week off Colin—but if it helps win the Grand Priors this year, who cares.

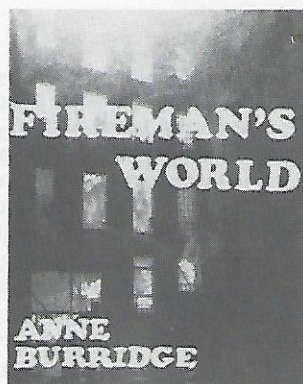
*Dave Causon, B6 Speedwell*

### 'The Squires' Cup first-aid competition

I have much pleasure in informing you that the Brigade First Aid Team were successful in retaining the above-mentioned trophy on 16th October, at a competition held at Bristol Head Post Office.

The team comprising myself (Capt.), Sub.O. Smith, MB, Fm. Causon, Fm. Bowden, and Fm. Couzens (res.) beat the runners-up by a margin of 48½ marks.

*R. L. Underhay*



Mrs Anne Burrige has written the above book, which should be available for Christmas at £5 per copy, part of which will be donated to the Benevolent Fund.

### Harcombe House

This delightful new acquisition, Harcombe House, has 16 three-bedroomed bungalows in 303 acres of superb Devon countryside, bordered by the Forestry Commission. In addition to the many walks available we also offer three fishing lakes: a dry-fly lake for the keen trout fisherman, a coarse lake for carp and tench, and a picturesque lake containing small brown trout. If you don't fancy walking or fishing we also offer a tennis court, outdoor swimming pool, paddling pool, and a putting green. For the smaller members of the family we have a children's play area. If all this sounds too energetic you can stroll into Harcombe House and indulge in a light exercise for your right arm against the bar. Alternatively, wander into the snooker room—if that is in use, try your hand at darts or pool. Hungry? No problem—enjoy one of our bar snacks and then retire to the lounge area for a well-deserved rest.

On the technical side, Harcombe House has nine bedrooms, all with bathroom en-suite and teasmade. For our house guests, breakfast and evening meal are provided at £2.50 a day. A television lounge is also available. If you are booked into a self-catering bungalow you will be pleasantly surprised. These are superb residences, fully equipped for your convenience, and a colour television plus radio cassette are provided for your enjoyment. In fact, all you need to bring is yourself.

If you are unfortunate enough to have had an accident or illness we look forward to welcoming you to

*Continued on page nineteen.*



# Call out

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## Dockside tragedy

Total frustration and sadness were experienced by members of Blue Watch A1 and A.D.O. J. Robbins when they attended an incident at Hotwells Road, where a car plunged into the docks with a woman still trapped inside. Station Officer M. Hughes and Leading Fireman Mel Rogers worked to the point of exhaustion in attempts to dive to the car. Mike Hughes made several attempts, wearing a firefighter BA set, but tragically was unsuccessful.

Police Constable Mike Stenner of C Division Task Force was in attendance as a grappling hook was located on the car. Mike, who is 28, is an experienced diver and a member of the Avon and Somerset Constabulary Search and Rescue Diving Team. As there was to be some delay in the arrival of this unit from Bath, Mike donned one of our BA sets, and with the aid of the line to the car he managed to reach the car and bring the woman to the surface, but unfortunately she was dead.

All those members concerned in the rescue deserve praise, especially PC Stenner, who had no idea as to the performance of the set in those conditions. As he said, if the woman had been physically trapped, or he had encountered difficulties, it would probably have been impossible using this type of equipment as it is not designed for this kind of work. He added that it was a frightening experience because there is a constant flow of air, and when the pressure of the water overcame the escape of air from the mask it gave the

feeling of being blown up. Mike praised the courage of Mike Hughes for his brave attempts, as even for himself, being a very experienced sub-aqua diver, it was an ordeal, and he would not recommend the use of this type of set in underwater work as the pitfalls could be disastrous for the wearer. All members of the Brigade present felt that PC Stenner did a magnificent job.

## Early morning rescue

Green Watch A1, led by Station Officer Barry Smith, rescued a man in his twenties from a smoke-filled office block in St Pauls. He was brought to safety by ladder in the early hours of the morning, having fallen asleep in the office after working late on a computer. The fire was caused by careless disposal of a cigarette in a lobby off the staircase which was being used as a store for files.

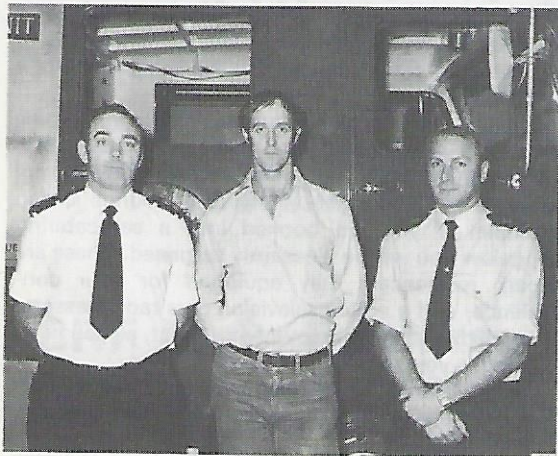
## Fire at nightclub

Blue Watch A1 were called to Viki's Night Club in Park Street and found smoke issuing from the front of the club. One appliance went to the rear of the club, in a car park off Park Row, where they found a large single-storey extension well alight. A search was made of the premises, and in a restaurant above two customers were enjoying a meal over a bottle of wine, and a woman was working in the kitchen. The owner of the restaurant was ill in his flat on the third floor; he raised the alarm but did not evacuate. Station Officer Hughes cleared the building, and the seat of the fire was found under the main staircase; as this was of doubtful origin, the Police Scenes of Crime were requested. Assistant Divisional Officer Bowden, who took charge of the incident, praised the work of Station Officer Hughes and Blue Watch. He said they did well, as it was a particularly difficult fire to fight in view of the layout and access to the building.

## Fatal crash at Horton

On 22nd September, at 1902 hours, a call was received to an RTA at Hall Lane, Horton, near Chipping Sodbury. One appliance from Station A7 Yate, and the Major Rescue Tender from A5 Patchway attended. Upon arrival the crews were confronted with a very serious incident where there had been a head-on collision between a fore-loading tractor unit and a mini station wagon. Two occupants in the mini vehicle were discovered to be trapped and seriously injured. The task was further complicated in

*Left to right: Stn.O. Mike Hughes, PC Mike Stenner, L.Fm. Mel Rogers*





that the vehicle was partially embedded in a hedge bordering a field. The crew from Yate, under the direction of Assistant Divisional Officer Townley, immediately set about the rescue operation. Resuscitation equipment was used on the occupants during the whole operation, which entailed cutting away a large proportion of the vehicle bodywork before removal of those trapped could begin. The two occupants were removed under the direction of the responding ambulance crew, who then carried out extensive first-aid treatment prior to conveying them to hospital. Unfortunately one of the persons concerned later died from injuries received in the incident, but the other person is now making a recovery in hospital. The incident was typical of many attended by the Brigade; nevertheless, congratulations to the crews of A7 for the skilful manner in which they dealt with a difficult situation.

#### **Warehouse fire at Avonmouth**

White Watch A3, led by Station Officer Roy Spear, dealt with a fire at Hesflo in Avonmouth. They arrived in the early hours of the morning to find the warehouse heavily smoke-logged, with the fire just beginning to vent itself through the roof. The layout of the building and the dense smoke proved a hazard for the fire crews, and four appliances attended and dealt with the incident. The cost of the damage was estimated at over a quarter of a million pounds, and

during the course of firefighting operations acetylene cylinders were removed because they were being subjected to tremendous heat and were becoming very unstable. Well done, White Watch.

#### **A3 Blue Watch**

Led by Station Officer Keith Rogers, A3 Blue Watch attended a serious house fire in Failand Crescent, Sea Mills. On arrival the ground and first floors were well alight and there was some doubt as to the occupancy. Two BA crews fought their way into the house under extremely hot and hazardous conditions but, fortunately, no-one was inside. It was quickly ascertained by the Officer in Charge that the fire was of deliberate ignition and the police were informed.

Over 14 homes and about 20 cars were damaged in a space of a few minutes when, what can only be described as a mini tornado swept through Alma Road, Clifton. The Brigade received the first call for assistance just after 2000 hours that night and then spent the next four hours sheeting down roofs and removing dangerous masonry, all in torrential rain.

A Bristol City supporter was rescued from the river under Bedminster Bridge after he fell 40 feet into the river. He was rescued by a crew from C5 and the Police Rocks Rescue Unit. He suffered cuts and a broken hip. (City lost that day 2-0 against Scunthorpe!)

*£250,000 fire at Hesflo, Avonmouth*



#### **Miscellany—continued from page seventeen.**

Harcombe to benefit from a rest in beautiful surroundings. When you are in the area please drop in and visit us, as all members of the Fire Service are welcome. It will also give you the opportunity to see, first hand, some of the results of your much-appreciated fund-raising on behalf of the National Benevolent Fund.

*Clive and Heather Lawrence*

#### **FOR SALE**

DOLLS Silver Cross twin pram—navy & chrome. Immaculate condition.

Enquiries Mrs. Clark. Brigade HQ. Tel. Bristol 22061, Ext. 260





## 1933 TO 1980 REMEMBERED

I read with interest an account of the old Bridewell days written by the late Jock Humphries about conditions which existed after the First World War. Jock was Deputy of Somerset when he retired and became Registrar of B & D at Wellington in Somerset. I can only write about the new Bridewell which was rebuilt on the original site and commenced operation in 1926.

I was only 17, and working for the then Bristol Corporation Electricity Department at the Sub-Station which is still alongside the Fire Station at Avonmouth, when, while on shift one afternoon in July 1933 I watched a fire appliance, which had come from Bristol as make-up to a fire at the smelting works, pass at speed down St Andrew's Road and crash into a private car. The appliance was the well-known Leyland Pump HY.4979 which, after rolling over several times, finished upside down in the ditch alongside the road, facing the way it had come. One Fireman (Insp. Crossman) and a lady in the car were killed. All the other Firemen were scattered round, some badly injured. Later I was called as a witness at the inquest held at the Bristol Coroner's Court.

The following year, in September 1934, I joined the Bristol Police Fire Brigade which was G Division of the Bristol Police comprising at that time 74 Officers and Firemen. I joined the Police Training School with

eight police recruits and four firemen recruits (Stan Maycock, 'Bonny' Taylor, Stan Hall and myself). After three months' Police Training we joined the Brigade for the princely sum of £3.2s.0d, working a 72 hour week, 14-day shifts changing to 14-night shifts (with every eighth day a leave day). At Bridewell, in addition to fire duties, Firemen drove prison vans and police cars, did duties for the CID, relief boiler work at weekends, collected stolen cars, collected hay and fodder for police horses in the City Police Force and did repairs and repainting to all Police and Fire vehicles.

We had only the minimum of uniform. No issue of shirts, ties or socks. Boot allowance was 1/- a week. No leggings were issued or raincoats.

Many of the older men had attended the well-known Charfield Railway smash. Being wooden coaches, the fire was extensive, as was the loss of life. Two children whose parents were never traced are buried, unknown, in Charfield churchyard.

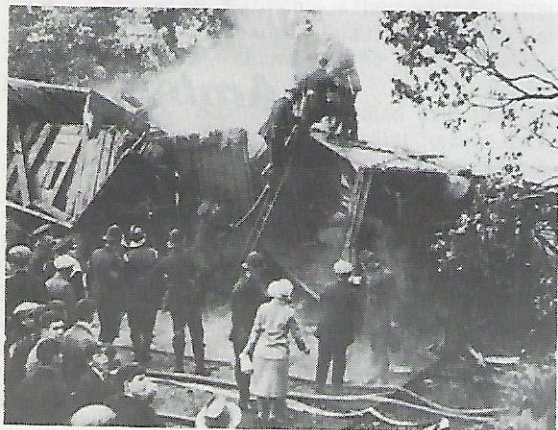
In 1938 the AFS was formed. Many hundreds came from members of the Brigade. (Brian Bowden's father was AF No. 1 in the new Service.) In August 1940 I was transferred to Avonmouth Station in Green Lane (Firemen's Quarters No. 9). The Luftwaffe became very busy during the following months—air raids almost every night. One afternoon



at about 4.30 pm, in the Control Room at Avonmouth, there was a knock at the door which I opened and there stood a fire crew complete with appliance. "Book us in please," the L.F. said. "Where from?" I asked. "Wolverhampton," he said, "you're for it tonight". And he was right! This happened frequently, crews turning up before air raids started.

In 1943 I was sent on a Coxswain's Course on Landing Craft at Lambeth and Greenhithe in Kent. These were fitted with two Dennis Pumps and were placed at ports in the Channel where supplies were concentrated for the Second Front. Later in the year I went to Brixham to collect our Landing Craft Vehicle (LCV) which was fitted with pumps. The craft was taken to Exmouth where we (the crew of six) were stationed to cover the hundreds of craft moored in the River Exe awaiting D-Day. We did several salvage jobs for the Navy; one to repair and refloat a Coaster which had gone aground with a cargo of coal en-route to Exeter. This LCV later caught fire off Star-cross while on engine trials (they were fitted with two Hall Scott 156 HP Grey Marine Diesels). Joe Gore, as OIC that day, gave the order 'Abandon Ship' which burned to the waterline and was beached. The crew was moved to Teignmouth to man another LCV which was berthed in the River Teign. Whilst here the crew did some duties at the Town Fire Station which is now the County Garage near Shaldon Bridge. During this time a brand new TT ladder was delivered. The town thought the NFS was a marvellous organisation—big write up in the local paper. It was several days before it was discovered that the TTL should have gone to **Tynemouth** not Teignmouth.

*A scene from the past—the Charfield railway disaster, 2 October, 1928.*



*The Endres Same.*

In the latter end of 1944 I returned to Bristol and was stationed at Stoke Hill, a Station built for a contingent of Canadian firemen who were drafted to Bristol and were billeted in the nearby Theological College, which had been vacated for the duration. While at Stoke Hill the Station must have had one of the biggest 55 calls. In the spring of 1946 after a severe winter with very deep snow, a thaw set in. The call was from Tytherington Quarry which is off the A38 on the north side of Bristol. This quarry is a vast hole cut in the countryside. Melting snow had caused flooding and the quarry pumps could not cope. Many trailer pumps were used and hundreds of lengths of hose and over many days the floodwater was pumped out and through a nearby railway tunnel.

The NFS, which had been nationalised in 1941, was returned to local Government in 1948 and we now, once again, became Bristol Fire Brigade with Joe Kirkup as C.O. (a Corporation Department—not, as before, under Police control).

Once more I returned to Avonmouth and became a coxswain on the fireboat *Endres Same*, a large vessel of some 19 tons, 66 ft long, 15 ft beam. Pumps were two Ruston Hornsby 120 HP diesels, the after engine geared to drive a single screw.



One job I remember the *Endres Same* doing was salvaging the tug *Dave Garth* which got stranded on sandbanks out in the Bristol Channel. The last time I saw the *Endres* was at Portishead Docks. She looked a very sorry sight.

The oil fire at Avonmouth in 1952 was probably the biggest peacetime fire in modern times. It started in the afternoon and the sheer size and the glow in the sky at night brought thousands of sightseers to the district. As I lived in quarters in Green Lane I was sent to the City Docks to bring the *Pyronaut* down the river to the fire. At Avonmouth we moored to the *Endres* which was already pumping flat out supplying water to the fireground. This fire was such that fire crews were at Avonmouth from as far away as London, Bath, Gloucester, Plymouth, Wiltshire, Somerset and Devon. A pump from Southampton was left outside my home in Green Lane for three days.

In May 1961 I applied for a job in the Brigade Uniform Stores with the late Frank Goodland who was Brigade Storekeeper at Bridewell. At this time I had 26 years' service. I retired from Avonmouth Station, which had been rebuilt in St Andrew's Road (alongside the electricity sub-station which was mentioned in the fire engine smash). Later I became Brigade Storekeeper with Bristol Fire Brigade. In 1972 the new HQ for Bristol was finished in Temple Back, and with Les Baile's valuable help we moved the entire store's stock to Temple without closing for a day.

In 1974 the County of Avon Fire Brigade was formed and we gained Ray Burgess from Bath Fire Brigade Stores, who was a great asset to Stores on the changeover. Ray retired from ill health in 1978, Les having retired, also from ill health, in 1976. When the County of Avon came into being we joined colleagues from Bath, South Gloucester and North Somerset with whom I like to think we had a very happy relationship even though we were never always on time with annual issues. I only ever had one thank you letter for an issue and that was from Randolph Sutton.

I have now retired after nearly 45 years, a period of fire service which will take a lot of beating. I also had a good working relationship with the Brigade Band who, under Mr John Lewis, do a really good job bringing much pleasure to the many hospitals where they play in their own time for the patients.

In closing a lot has been left unwritten. To try and cover 45 years is quite a task, but I must at least mention the old ex-regs of the Bristol Fire Brigade. Good luck to you and everyone else who followed in the NFS and Avon County Fire Brigade.

*Walrus*



*The crew: Philip Organ (right) and Gilbert Iles*

## ***The Avon Ambulance Service***



The sight and sound of an ambulance responding to an emergency call is all too familiar to most people. But unless they are on the 'receiving end' as a patient, few pause to consider the organisation, training, equipment and experience necessary to enable the modern professional ambulanceman to deal with the infinite variety of situations that are his, or her, daily work.

With 359 men and 151 vehicles in Avon, some 2,475,500 miles are travelled and 389,000 patients are carried each year, ranging from emergency and maternity cases to renal dialysis, radiotherapy, physiotherapy, geriatric and out-patient cases. Much of the work is routine and not at all glamorous, but is vital to the steady treatment and recovery of patients from operations, illnesses and accidents.

The county is divided geographically into four Divisions, each dealing, in the main, with the patients from its own area. The Divisions are based at Bath, Weston-super-Mare, Almondsbury and Bristol, each with a Divisional Officer and a Control. Bristol Control, however, assumes a countywide responsibility between 1800 hours and 0800 hours, and at weekends and Bank Holidays.

Although accounting for only 8.9% of cases, emergency 999 calls naturally attract the most attention, and it is to this level of the Service that all training and equipment is directed. To this one can also add a percentage of admission cases of a particularly serious nature, e.g. a coronary or stroke (CVA) case, which require as much, if not more, skill and attention as the average emergency call.

Each fully qualified ambulanceman on full duties undergoes a six-week residential Ambulance Aid course at Regional Training School in Hampshire, which is now supplemented by a two-week Advanced Driver Training course. The DHSS 'Millar' Proficiency Certificate is then awarded after one year's experience on full duties, and regular refresher training follows at the local training school in Avon.

Further advanced training is also available for selected staff at Frenchay Hospital, where ambulancemen, under the guidance of anaesthetists, doctors and nursing staff, learn advanced resuscitation and cardiac care. After a total of four months in-hospital training they are able to secure a patient's airway by intubation, to defibrillate the heart in cardiac arrest, and to prepare and insert an intravenous infusion so vital in severe blood loss and shock, as can be found at a road traffic accident, with a person trapped or with multiple injuries. The advanced trained ambulanceman

carries extra equipment for these skills at all times and is regularly re-examined on his knowledge and expertise.

Crewed by two men equally capable of driving or attending to the patient, each 'front line' emergency ambulance is equipped with a wide variety of resuscitation and ambulance aid equipment. This includes the pain-relieving gas Entonox, oxygen, suction apparatus, light rescue tools, splints, the orthopaedic 'Scoop' stretcher, maternity delivery packs, Minuteman or Sabre/Saturn resuscitators, cervical collars, sterile burn and wound dressings, etc.

Thus equipped and trained, an ambulance crew can expect to respond to a wide variety of incidents, as well as dealing with the more routine side

*Gilbert Iles with paramedic kit*





of the work during the course of the day. Road traffic accidents, falls, heart attacks, sudden illnesses, maternity cases, fire calls, major incidents with multiple casualties, suicides and drunks all form a part of what that crew may expect to have to deal with. Only recently a crew responding to a call to a 'distressed person' in the street discovered in a nearby house the reason for her distress—a particularly bloody murder. On a much happier note, there are few ambulancemen who have escaped the dubious honour of being 'acting midwife' to a new arrival who was a little early.

To illustrate a little further the variety of skills required, another crew's morning work consisted of the following: first, an early call to a warehouse for an arm injury resulting from a lorry door hitting a man as he walked past. A sterile dressing, elevation of the limb and rest on the trolley stretcher considerably improved his condition before arrival at hospital. On completion, our crew then went to the assistance of an elderly lady who, having fallen downstairs, had several abrasions, shock, and a suspected fractured thigh. Dressings, splints, the 'Scoop' stretcher and plenty of reassurance were

brought into action here. An added complication was the lady's diabetes, which could have been aggravated by the fall, resulting in confusion and possible loss of consciousness—all to be borne in mind when handing over to Accident Centre staff.

After taking a gentleman home from the physiotherapy unit, our crew responded to their third emergency that morning—a lady with a suspected miscarriage at the railway station. Reassurance, gentle handling and physical elevation of the foot of the trolley stretcher to contain the blood loss and reduce its effects all helped to calm the patient, who arrived at the hospital actually smiling! On this last case, and on many others, Ambulance Control assisted by contacting the receiving hospital and alerting them to the imminent arrival of an urgent case. Telephone and radio links exist between the Control and Hospital Accident Centres, and using radio 'talk-through' facilities, crews can be put in direct contact with hospital doctors and nursing sisters when particular difficulty is being experienced with a patient.

The modern Ambulance Service is not only concerned with transporting patients. It is increasingly an Immediate Care Service, taking skills and equipment that were previously found only in hospitals out onto the streets or into the home so that treatment can begin immediately with an improved chance of a speedy recovery. The aims of an ambulanceman's treatment are to preserve life, to prevent deterioration, and to promote recovery. With advances in equipment, technology and expertise, these aims stand an even greater chance of realisation.

*Philip Organ with 'Scoop' stretcher*



*The following are actual statements found on insurance forms where car drivers attempted to summarise the details of an accident in the fewest possible words. The instances of faulty writing serve to confirm that even incompetent writing may be highly entertaining.*

Coming home I drove into the wrong house and collioded with a tree I don't have.

The other car collioded with mine without giving warning of its intention.

I thought my window was down, but I found it was up when I put my head through it.

I collioded with a stationary truck coming the other way.

A truck backed through my windshield into my wife's face.



## The 4th 'Joe' and Lindsey Cocker Memorial Relay Race, Blaise Castle, Henbury

The wet weather which preceded this event cleared up on the morning of 10th October, giving a pleasant, mild afternoon with classic cross-country conditions. This undoubtedly helped ensure the record turnout of competitors and spectators, all of whom seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves. Twenty-eight first-leg runners lined up for the start and were sent off along the course by the Chief Fire Officer. Eighteen of the teams were from our own Brigade, and ten from other Brigades from as far afield as Devon and Northumberland. London and Northumberland were quickly to the fore, and for most of the race were engaged in a close fight to decide the first and second places, with only a few seconds between them until London opened up a gap in the final lap to win. Our own lads ran very competitively, with much inter-station and Watch rivalry. This, and improved fitness, are probably why the standard has improved so much this year. Seventeen finished the course of precisely 2¾ miles in under 20 minutes—as many as the combined total for the previous three years; a further 16 were inside 21 minutes. In fact, the first Avon team's time in 1979 (83.29) would have been worth only ninth Avon place in this year's race. It is

*Training School A team. Left to right: Duncan Cooper, John Davies, C.F.O. Mark Burton, Andrew Davis*



nice to see so many individual runners improving, but especially nice to see so many individuals and teams taking part who have no hope of a prize or a fast time, but turn up anyway and run for the challenge. The Training School lads added sponsorship to prizes and the challenge, and expect to raise about £285 for the Benevolent Fund and the Dave Fennell Appeal.

At the post-race reception at Brigade Headquarters Mr Ponsford presented the 'Joe' and Lindsey Cocker Memorial Trophies to London, who won the inter-Brigade competition, and to the Training School A team, who won the Avon championship. Plaques were also presented to the first three in the inter-Brigade race and the Avon championship; to the fastest individuals; and to the runner who had most improved upon his previous personal best. The results are:

### Inter-Brigade Race

Fastest individual	N. Speed	
	Northumberland	— 15.15
First team	London	— 63.00
Second team	Northumberland	— 64.04
Third team	Cleveland	— 66.19

### Avon Championship

Fastest individual	Alan Lawson,	
	B1 Bath	— 17.15
Fastest over 40	Pat Jones,	
	A3 Avonmouth	— 18.55
Fastest over 50	Trevor Evans,	
	C5 Bedminster	— 20.25
Most improved runner	Andy Eddy,	
	C1 Weston-super-Mare	
	(by) 2.33	
First team	Training School A	77.26
Second team	B4 Brislington	80.45
Third team	B7 Kingswood	80.53

The Athletics section would like to thank the Chief Fire Officer for his and the Brigade's support, and all those who helped on the day as marshals, the Control Unit crew, the duty watches, and cleaner-uppers.

Details of next year's race will be announced in this magazine in due course.



### Sea Angling

The area angling section has been fairly active recently. Several boat and beach trips have been arranged and the section has met up with Hampshire and Devon Brigades when friendly competitions were held.

During October the Brigade was represented by two teams in the Fire Service National Sea Angling Competitions. The venue at Blackpool was well supported by Brigades from every part of the British Isles. Unfortunately, the bright lights of Blackpool, the friendly rivalry of the competitors and the excellent and warm hospitality of the hotel proprietors, Sue and Stuart Riley, were not matched by the weather. Nearly gale force winds, driving rain, and very rough seas.

The boat competition had to be called in early due to worsening weather. Two boats lost their anchors and had to return to port after a very short time fishing.

In the beach competition competitors had the additional nuisance of the sea breaking over the promenade—and them. However with good 'wet gear', and lots of enthusiasm, these were only minor inconveniences.

The Brigade carried off three trophies in the competitions. Bob Pegden, B6, took the trophy for the best specimen flat fish. Dave Jenkins (retired) late of A3, took the 'Old Crocks' (retired members) individual trophy and, with Bob Taylor, took the retired members team trophy in the boat section.

On behalf of the team, thanks go to the Brigade Sports & Athletic Association for their financial help;

Competition trophies.



To Dick Jones, A1, for organising fund raising activities, and Dave Jenkins for arranging the hire of a minibus at low cost.

For interested members or ex-members of the Brigade, the Sea Angling Section, under the chairmanship of Pat Causon, B6, and Secretary Dick Jones, A1, meet on the first Wednesday of the month in the bar at A1 Temple at 7.00 pm.

### Annual Christmas jog

Monday, 27th December, 1982, 1000 hrs. H.Q.

Funds in aid of Bristol Children's Hospital.

Two camels from Longleat will start the race, hopefully with Paul Shane and Ruth Maddocks from *Hi-De-Hi*. After the jog, children will have free rides, so all the family can jog in aid of a worthy cause and have a fun day.

### B Division's Paris Sojourn

On Friday 17th September 42 passengers were picked up at the Bath Fire Station by luxury coach and whisked off to Southampton to catch the ferry to Le Havre. The sea was like a mill pond as we 'slept' our way across the Channel. After a smooth journey south we arrived in Paris, bathed in glorious sunshine, and were taken on a conducted tour of the City, stopping off at all the tourist spots, with time for shopping and lunch. The boat trip on the Seine was superb in the blistering heat of 90 degrees (True) and in the evening, at our first-class hotel, several found the outdoor pool very inviting.

After breakfast, we visited the Palace of Versailles where the gardens were fantastic in the glorious sunshine, and then on to Bayeux where we viewed the famous tapestries and cathedral.

To round off a fabulous day we dined at a farmhouse restaurant in the heart of the countryside where François' apéritif made the eyes shine! The picture shows us outside the restaurant after our meal.

A super time was had by all.

### Diary Events

**Avon Ambulance Service, Tower Hill**  
**1983 Dance Dates**

18th February, 1983, Jack Francis and his Band.

15th April, 1983, Ken Scott and his Band.

30th September, 1983, The Chevrons.

9th December, 1983, Ken Scott and his Band.

Tickets £1.50 from Ron Walker, Central Ambulance Station.



## A hobby and a half!

More than a hobby in the case of Arthur Kent from B7.

A luxury three-bedroom split-level bungalow at Winterbourne Down was the result of sixteen months' work by Arthur. Even now, six years on, he is still working on the grounds.

Originally, after he bought the ground and had an architect draw up the plans, he intended to have the bungalow built for him, but with inflation this became impossible. Now he had no alternative but to build himself, so with the help of Tim Lovell from Blue Watch he started. I think at this point I should mention that Arthur is a bricklayer by trade.

While he started clearing the site and digging out the foundations, his wife Joan had the formidable task of buying all the materials at the best possible prices and ensuring that they were delivered when required, and to arrange visits with the building inspector. At this time the working week for firemen was 56 hours and Joan was working as a nurse at Frenchay Hospital. Both said at times they wondered

what they had taken on, and whether in fact they would succeed, as the only non-working time in both their lives for the sixteen months was when they were suffering from complete exhaustion.

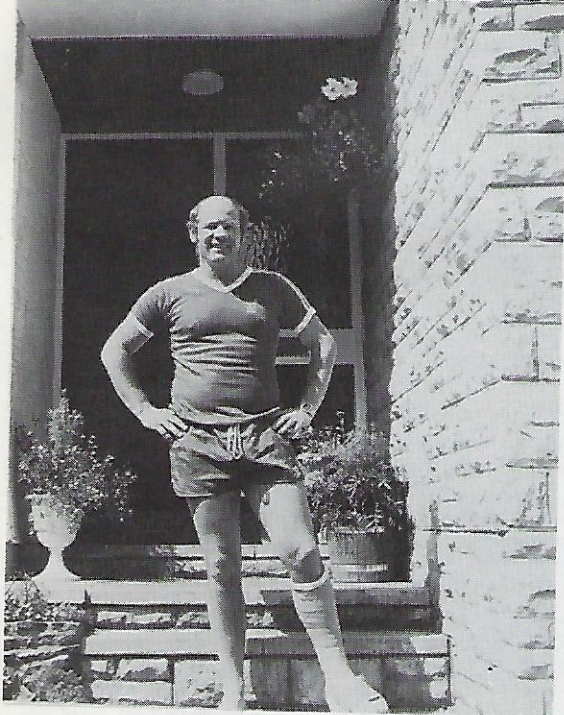
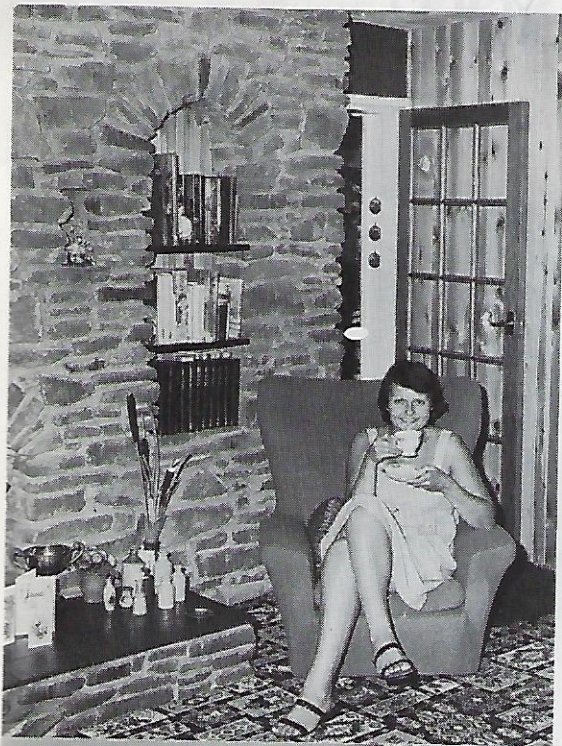
The only things that Arthur did not do himself were the electric wiring and door hanging. He said that without the help of Tim, and endless jugs of Lovell special brew, it possibly would never have been completed.

Arthur is very modest about his achievement and says anyone could do it but Joan is very proud of her husband and the home which they have built.

From the lounge balcony it overlooks the river Frome in a glen with the trees rising up the other side of the river. No passing traffic, only the occasional car and some horses. Wildlife is prolific. They have an owl which visits some evenings and woodpeckers pay visits to the bird box on the balcony. They very often sit and watch the squirrels playing in the trees. Certainly a beautiful setting for their magnificent home with their two children, Richard 9 and Lizzy 6.







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