

County Of **AVON** Fire Brigade Magazine



Spring 1986

Foreword

by C. B. Abbott, Chief Ambulance Officer, Avon Ambulance Service

I am very pleased to be given the opportunity to write in your Brigade Magazine and have pleasure in briefly outlining the development and role of the ambulance service in today's modern society.

The history of the ambulance service is spread over the last 40 years, therefore is the youngest of the three emergency services. Its conception was part of the National Health Services Act in 1946 which placed a statutory duty on local Health Authorities primarily to provide an emergency service. It is true to say that prior to this date various voluntary aid societies and some local authorities did have limited services.

In 1948 when the Act was brought to fruition a variety of services developed throughout the Country. Some authorities provided "direct service" whereby it administrated and directly controlled the service, in some instances it was under the control of the local authority fire service, even one authority's omnibus company. Few authorities, however, took the option of providing a service on "an agency basis" namely the St. John Ambulance Brigade or the British Red Cross Society. These voluntary aids societies provided all the resources and administered the service which was funded by the appropriate local Health Authority.

The development in individual ambulance services in the early years was dependent upon the efficiency and resourcefulness of the local authority thus resulting in a variety of standards. When this statutory duty came into operation in 1948, there was a rapid increase in the work. This was largely due to out-patient transport, and new forms of health care which led to a considerable increase in the use of Ambulance Services. As a consequence of this in 1966 the "Miller Report" was produced giving mandatory requirements on training and equipment. This was the beginning of rationalisation of the ambulance services.



With the National Health Service Reorganisation Act 1973 came the integration of the Local Health Authority services with the hospital and community services and the Ambulance Service became the responsibility of the new Health Authorities which took over their duties on the 1st April 1974. This reduced the number of previous ambulance services from 154 to 45, seven metropolitan and thirty eight "shire" services.

Provision of the service in the newly formed County of Avon was the responsibility of the Avon Area Health Authority. The Avon Ambulance Service was formed from the amalgamation of four former local authority services, namely Bristol City, City of Bath which were both County Borough Services and parts of the Gloucestershire and Somerset County Council Ambulance Services. A further reorganisation has since taken place in the National Health Service on the 1st April 1982 when Area Health Authorities were devolved. Provision for health care was taken down to District level and as a consequence new District Health Authorities were formed. The effect of this on the Avon Ambulance Service was one of accountability only, the Bristol and Weston Health Authority is responsible for the provision of ambulance services on behalf of the three local health authorities, in the County of Avon.

The role of the modern ambulance service in very broad terms is to provide an efficient medical transport service with the highest degree of patient care. To achieve this overall objective the Avon Ambulance Service provides a professional service with a total of 358 staff, 153 ambulance vehicles operating from 11 stations throughout the County.

Requirements of demand can be categorised into three:—

Emergencies (999), 24,000 calls were activated last year, accounting for 10% of the total demand.

Urgent/Acute cases covering aspects such as Maternity and Acute admissions, urgent transfers from hospital to a specialised unit throughout the County and the Country.

Routine work of a non emergency type (Outpatients — Day Units — Discharges) reflects 80% of the demand. This is constantly increasing with the development of health care, in particular day units for the elderly.

As the Chief Ambulance Officer I am responsible to the Bristol and Weston Health Authority to provide a cost effective emergency and non-emergency service to meet the mandatory standards laid down by the Department of Health and Social Security. Advise the Authority on national recommendations, formulate strategic and service policy, vehicle procurement, and capital programmes. Operational policy to provide for the day to day management of the service to include recruitment, training staff development and discipline.

The conception of the Service in the "public eye" in responding to emergencies is one of speed, to the incident, load the casualty quickly and drive as fast as possible to hospital. In the case of non-emergency work the service is viewed as a taxi service. These myths are far from true of today's modern ambulance service. In Avon the service is an integral part of the Health Authority providing an extension of its medical services to the community.

The role of the service in response to emergencies is paramount to the recovery of the patients. Quick response to the incident is important, upon arrival the emergency crew will assess the situation and diagnose the patient's condition. Treatment for the patient's recovery commences on the arrival of the ambulance service. Many advanced life saving skills are taught to the emergency ambulance staff. These include Intubation (passing of tubes into the lung for resuscitation), Infusion (the erection of drips), Defibrillation (passing of electric current into the heart), and the most recent, administration of certain drugs. The result of these standards saves lives and reduces time in hospital.

At the other end of the spectrum an example of the importance placed upon non-emergency transport is the provision for the elderly in day care units. The ambulance staff are part of the overall medical team

for the unit, trained to deal with the specialities of the old, both in practical and psychological terms. The service provides the important link between the unit and the home.

During recent months Ambulance Services have played their part alongside colleagues from the Fire and Police Services in incidents such as public disorder, miners' disputes, riots in the inner cities, Brighton Bombing, air disaster at Manchester Airport, the Bradford Football fire and several others. Irrespective of the incident the ambulance service has only one priority to maintain life and provide the highest degree of patient care.

Training is ongoing in the service and devised to meet all the various range of duties which are undertaken by ambulance staff from the routine to the extended trained ambulanceman with the same care and attention to detail demonstrated at

every level.

Over recent years the expertise obtained by the ambulance service has allowed the Service to provide training to other disciplines, including the Police and Fire Services.

It has been noticeable that in Avon our two services have met through training and socially on many occasions. This has achieved a better understanding of each others role and when called upon to respond to incidents allows each service to carry out their duties with an appreciation of each others responsibilities.

I look forward to the continuing good relationships between our respective services in the future.

C. B. Abbott, G.A.S.I.
Chief Ambulance Officer,
Avon Ambulance Service.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Here it is at last I hear everybody say, and I hope that I have included everything that was sent to me. I never realised what a difficult job it is to produce a small magazine which I know stimulates a lot of interest and I would like to thank Clare McCarthy from Control who has typed most of the copy and corrected one or two spelling mistakes, and will, I hope, type the next lot provided you, as the readers, will send your articles and reports to me as I have now nothing more for the next one.

Thanks for being patient.

Bob Hatherly
Editor

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DEALER



Camera Capers

The magazine cover tells it all,
Brigade photographers on the ball,
The machine is pink, the background
blurred.

What a picture, it's absurd.

As onward into the mag, we pore
Photos ghastly what a bore.
Is it fair that we should pick on
Avon's snapman and his Nikon.

I must admit I'm not a townie,
Could I have done better with my Brownie?
Camera loaded and out almost daily,
Eat your heart out David Bailey

P. Pen. A.7.

'Watch this space!'

Children's thoughts

Police Sergeant Mike Peglar passed to us
the following poem written by his young
daughter, which was inspired by the
Bradford Football Stadium Disaster.

The Fire

The small and tiny flame,
Tried with all its might,
To get to the paper packet,
and hold on tight.

It's small blue flame,
caught hold of some shreds,
It started getting bigger,
and moved on straight ahead.

It got hold of some newspaper,
It went up like a rocket,
It was reaching to the curtain
and nothing could stop it

Now the flames were out of hand,
It's grabbing for things to eat,
Oh no! Its eaten the settee,
and its starting on the seats.

The room is now full of blaze,
It holds its blinding light,
If you are inflammable,
you'd best be out of sight.

It wafts around the room,
Carry's on fast on sure,
Oh look there's some lovely paint,
I think I'll eat the door.

The whole house is now full of blaze,
It will all be a ruin,
just because of one match,
and someone's stupid doing.

Mishelle Pegler, 12 years.

What is a Fireman?

He's the man next door.

He's a man's man with the sharp memory
of a little boy who never got over the
excitement of fire engines and sirens and
smoke and danger.

He's a man like you and me with cares
and worries, mortgages and unfulfilled
dreams.

He stands taller than most men.

He's a fireman.

When the alarm bell rings, he puts it all
on the line.

A fireman is at once the most fortunate
and the least fortunate of men.

He's a man who savours life because he
has seen too much death.

He's a gentle man because he has seen too
much of the awesome power of violent forces
out of control.

He's a man responsive to a child's laughter
because his arms have held too many small
bodies that will never laugh again.

He's a man who appreciates the simple
pleasures of life . . . hot coffee held in
numbed, unbending fingers . . . the flush
of fresh air pumping through smoke and
fire convulsed lungs . . . a warm bed for
bone and muscle compelled beyond feeling
. . . the divine peace of selfless service and
a job well done in the name of all men.
The fireman doesn't preach the brotherhood
of man. He lives it.

A Fireman's Lament

From half past five, to half past ten
We sought the elusive reserve engine.
We sought it here,
We sought it there,
We sought it every bloody where.
Is it in Radstock, Keynsham, Pill,
Someone knows but will not tell.
At last in Weston, a reserve is found,
We thought that they had gone to ground.
But when we get it, it won't work,
Makes us feel a proper jerk.
At last, at last, we hear the cry,
We're on the run, let's do or die.
And so to a fire we turn out,
'Cos that's what the job's all about.
But can we return, no sir'ee,
Our machine won't go again you see.
So once again up goes the shout,
Will you send a mechanic out.
He comes at last, and says with glee,
The batteries are flat lads, don't you see.
So new batteries I will get,
We'll have you home safely yet.
The batteries come, are they the same?
Oh! no they're not, ain't it a shame.
And so a reserve from Bris it comes,
At midnight again, on the run.
Brakes won't work, batteries are flat,
How are we to cope with that?
ADO he do shout,
Of fire engines, I know now!
But books on lockers, that won't do.
Lock your lockers, you and you.
I've got the rosters for you to see,
Into the office come with me.

Steps that are made of wood,
 Outside in the weather 'till they're good.
 What's most important you will see,
 Is not to have a rusty "T" key.
 The oven's broken, our plaintive cry,
 We can no longer bake a pie.
 It's chips with eggs, and all that too,
 And all spoilt meals will be subjected to
 A report by schh, you know who.
 After all, he has nowt to do,
 'Cept annoy me and you.
 Which he doth do with great zest,
 Oh will he never ever rest.
 Walls to wash and helmets paint,
 Enough to try a bloody saint.
 He seems to forget too soon you see,
 That he was once like you and me.
 But now he's on management,
 To break us down he is bent.
 But I've got news for the likes of him,
 Go find a lake, and jump in.

F. M. Rodda
 White Watch
 B7 Kingswood.



September 1985 saw 'A' Division Fire Prevention Department saying a sad farewell to A.D.O. Underhay. His leadership, well established over the last couple of days, will be greatly missed by us all, as will the pungent little cloud of cigarette smoke rising from the far corner of the office.

A spontaneous collection and presentation was made by his grieving men although they agree that it is a wise move to put a man with such vast experience of seamen (at Avonmouth and Royal Portbury) in charge of their Regulations.

Bon voyage Ray . . .

Management Systems

The most common management system in use in Fire Brigades is often, cynically, thought to be what is termed "Crisis management". However, on closer examination it is apparent that this is a mistaken view, since it only indicates one aspect of the system.

In fact, most Fire Brigades operate a variation of the "Line Management" system which on analysis seems best called "Dotted Line Management".

In a similar way to Line Management, responsibility is delegated down through the rank structure. The difference is that instead of a continuous line, the dotted line represents the actual communication permitted between levels.

In the normal day to day running the communication line remains broken. Neither ideas nor problems can jump from dot to dot up the line, the "Buck" cannot be passed up the line.

Other types of communication (e.g. Policy Decisions) can gently — due to gravity — drip from dot to dot from the top downwards. Unfortunately, like water, the information sometimes evaporates before it reaches the lower levels. Other types of information (e.g. Brigade orders) falls in a downpour, floods the floors and runs off into the drains.

There is, of course, an upward communication system available ("Prayer" is NOT the one referred to!).

In a crisis, sufficient energy is developed in the individual dot in the line to cause sparks, jumping the gaps and passing from areas of high potential (low rank with a future potential) to areas of low potential (high rank, potential already achieving).

Thus the "Dotted Line Management" system typifies the arrangements commonly in existence in the Fire Brigade. Downward communications comes as drought or a deluge and cannot be allowed to mix with the occasional sparks moving upwards since electricity and water should always be kept separate.

Brian Bowden.

Obituary

The Brigade received the following short note from Mrs. Margaret Vickers following the very tragic death of 'Jock' following a road accident.

He was well known in the Brigade and will be very sadly missed by his colleagues at A5 Patchway.

Mrs. Margaret Vickers
32 Thirlmere Road
Patchway
Bristol

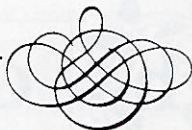
Dear Friends,

From Joanne, Karen, John and myself, I would like to thank each and everyone of you for your kind thoughts and contributions which you all so generously gave.

It's a sad time for me and my family and I want you all to know that your kindness is much appreciated.

Thank you all.

Margaret Vickers



Devotion to Duty

During 1982, a retained fireman, Peter Brener, from Williton in Somerset with 15 years service, was taken ill with cancer and had to report regularly to the radiotherapy centre at the BRI here in Bristol and consequently had to leave the service with the Brigade.

He was visited at the radiotherapy centre many times by members of Blue Watch at A1, who took in drinks and books for his use.

It was during one of these visits that he indicated to Stn. O. Hughes that he would dearly love to keep in touch with the Brigade. Following that request, Stn. O. Hughes pestered the life out of the communications officer, at that time ADO Walters, and we eventually persuaded the Home Office to come up with a receiver and switch unit, complete with indoor aerial, cable and plug.

As a surprise, Stn. O. Hughes contacted Somerset Brigade and members of Taunton and Williton Fire Stations and hitching a lift with the Brigade Driving Instructor, 'Dogger Denning', drove to Pete Brener's home where we had a little presentation ceremony, "and a drink afterwards". Peter had that set switched on from that date until he died a few weeks ago.

Peter who was 36, left a son aged 14 and wife Ann, who live at The Croft in Williton. The funeral was attended by a great many of his colleagues, both full and retained, at the crematorium. Mike Hughes and Dogger Denning attended from Bristol. Stn. O. Hughes, A1.



County Of
AVON
Fire Brigade

LETTERS

This letter was received from one of our grateful customers. Well done to all concerned at A1 and A2.

Excuse of the Month

Extract from an A42 report form.

"I am unable to recall if I had actually read it in the past and subsequently forgotten it, or had never seen it in the first place, which is unlikely, so I believe that I had seen it before, furthermore, I was somewhat confused with exactly what information is required and when . . . thank you for bringing my error to my attention."

Brigade orders do confuse!!!

ED.

Dear Sir,

On Thursday of last week my husband and I were in the sad position as to call 999. We had a small fire in one of the hotel water heaters, which of course at the time, caused us great concern, after what seemed only a few seconds, three or four fire engines arrived with swift and easy confidence all these firemen put out our fire, talked to our guests and put every one at their ease.

I know there are times when everyone who has to comply with the fire regulations moan, but now oh how pleased I am we have an excellent fire service that care not only about themselves but about us and in turn the people we care for, if every time your men turn out they give the same time and trouble and help as we received our city can rest easy.

With our grateful thanks.

Judith Bush.

Time of call-out 1900 Thursday.

Farewell to 'Tots'

On the evening of Saturday 13th April, 1985, almost 300 people, both serving and retired members of the Brigade, gathered at A.1 (Temple) to pay tribute and say farewell to Alan Totterdell, who was leaving the Brigade after being appointed a full-time official of the Fire Brigades Union.

During his 22 years service with the Bristol and County of Avon Fire Brigades, Alan served at Bridewell, Southmead and Temple Back fire stations, rising to the rank of Sub Officer and also progressing through the Union ranks from Brigade Committee member to Executive Council member for the South West region.

When the time came for presentations to be made, Station Officer Chris Liberty, on behalf of White Watch (A1), paid tribute to the work that Alan had done over the years on behalf of all members of the Brigade, saying that many of the conditions enjoyed by Avon members today were as a result of the skilled negotiating by the FBU committee led by Alan during the county re-organisation in 1974. He then went on to present Alan with an anniversary clock, a chrome plated axe from the first pump (correction — Brigade

stores!) on an engraved plinth, and a glass engraved with the Avon Fire Brigade and Fire Brigade Union badges, together with the signatures of all members of White Watch, A1.

Further gifts of a cut glass decanter and brandy glasses (plus the brandy to go in them), and a pair of binoculars, were presented by Fm. Tim Lovell and Pete Noble, both of whom paid their own tributes to Alan on behalf of the FBU committee and Station A1.

In reply, Alan thanked everyone for attending the evening and went on to pay his own tributes to the Union Committee and the Brigade, but especially to his wife, Carol, and their two sons, without whose help and understanding, he said, he would never have been able to reach his present position.

Following this, there was an unexpected presentation made to Alan by Mrs. Eddie Barratt, late of the Cornubia Public House, to thank him for his help, support and friendship over the years. The gift consisted of two cut glass brandy glasses and the necessary liquid to fill them, from which you may be able to guess the identity of Alan's favourite tippie!

At this point, Pete Noble asked Alan if he would perform one of his first duties as a visiting National Official, and present FBU badges to Eric Cummings (C5), Richard 'Dick' Barton (A1) and Tom Brinkman (A3). This, said Alan, was a task he would undertake with great pleasure, paying tribute to men who had remained loyal members of the Fire Brigades' Union over such a long time. In conclusion, may I thank the following for making the evening such a resounding success:

White Watch (A1) for the arrangements and buffet, Blue Watch (A1) who were on duty and cheerfully accepted another late night, Staves Disco for the music, and last but not least, Pete and Julie Shilton who ran the Headquarters Bar, and thus ensured that all present had sufficient (or occasionally more than enough) liquid refreshment during the evening.

Chris Liberty



Fire Services National Benevolent Fund get a General Manager

On 2nd December, Mr. R. A. Spackman took up the post of General Manager of the Fire Services National Benevolent Fund at the Fund's Head Office in Littlehampton, West Sussex. This is a newly created post which replaces the previous post of Honorary Secretary by a senior permanent member of staff with responsibility for the implementation of policy decisions, initiation of policy proposals, administration of grants, overall financial control, personnel management and secretarial duties for the Council and National Executive Committee.

Tony Spackman, aged 54, joins the Fund after a career in the Army during which he gained extensive experience in management and financial planning. He is a Fellow of the British Institute of Management, and he also holds the Certified Diploma in Accounting and Finance and the Diploma in Safety Management. He is married with a son and daughter, both at University, and has recently moved to live at Watersfield, near Pulborough.

The Benevolent Fund supports widows and orphans of firefighters killed on duty, or who died during their service, injured or disabled firefighters, firefighters who cannot work again because of illness and handicapped children of firefighters. The Fund has 63 units of accommodation at Marine Court, Littlehampton and at Harcombe House near Chudleigh in Devon, a proportion of which are particularly designed for occupation by handicapped or convalescent persons.

C5 Open Day



On Saturday, September 14th, C5 held an open day, the first for several years. Despite the rain in the morning, the afternoon turned out dry and the attendance was good.

There were many games and stalls including a very efficient catering arrangement provided by Green watch mess club.

The addition of a 'candy floss' machine borrowed from Dave Miller proved a successful money spinner.

The Avon Battalion of the Boys Brigade Band started the day off with a musical marching display.

Later in the afternoon, three displays were put on by C5 crews, one from Blue watch, who came in from going off duty to do a carry down rescue. This was an interesting sight as a Station Officer and a Sub Officer made up part of the crew. Green watch then carried out two further drills, a TL rescue (TL borrowed from A1 down to C5 off the run) and a RTA/fire rescue.

The crowd appeared to appreciate the demonstrations and everyone returned inside for the raffle. Many very generous prizes were donated from local businesses and shops and the raffle was a huge success.

The Chief Fire Officer arrived to look around and was persuaded to part with some money. The raffle tickets he bought turned out to be lucky as he won two packets of cigars donated by W. D. and H. O. Wills Ltd.

While this was going on, the wife of one

of C5's Sub Officers (who shall remain nameless) was driving slowly past, trying to work out where to park. She saw the turning, slowed and went in. The van behind her put the brakes on and the other two cars behind, who were greatly interested in the open day, smacked one into the other, bang, bang, bang. The car in the middle, a brand new silver Datsun sports car, came out the worst.

The Brigade, helped by the local St. John Ambulance took care of the minor injuries produced and the day continued.

All in all the open day was great fun, gave the public a view to our work and gave the Benevolent Fund over £100 to help with their work.

Thanks to everyone who helped and everyone who came.

Bob Manners

Open Day — Station A5 Patchway

A most successful open day was held on Saturday, July 6th at Station A5 Patchway. The event was opened by the Chief Fire Officer, Mr. F. G. Wilton, and was well supported by the general public, there were many stalls for them to visit including: tombola, candy floss, benevolent stall, bric-a-brac, to mention but a few. During the afternoon brigade personnel from A5 put on two displays, the first being an R.T.A. and the second a fire station

involving the use of the turntable ladder from Stn. A1 Temple.

Patchway Judo Club also put on a demonstration of their skills which was much appreciated by the crowd.

We were also very pleased to have a motorway police car and bike from Almondsbury and an ambulance also from Almondsbury. An airport tender from BAE was also on view to the public as was

a vintage pump escape provided by a preservation society, and we thank them all for their co-operation and attendance. The sum of £333.78p was raised of which £100 went to the Canoe '85 Patchway team, and the remainder to the Fire Services National Benevolent Fund.

Many thanks to all who assisted with the running of this event.

J. S. Dowse

Benevolent

Blue watch at station A5 Patchway were looking for a project to carry out for the winter of 1984/85 when P.C. Ian Morissey from Almondsbury Motorway Police station informed us of an old Dennis Trailer Pump which he had seen travelling on the back of a lorry to Norsk Hydro of Avonmouth. After consultation, Norsk Hydro donated the pump for restoration.

Work was immediately started on restoring the pump to its original condition and was completed in time to go on display for station A5's Open Day on July 6th 1985.

It was decided by the members of Blue watch to donate the pump to the Avon area of the Fire Services National Benevolent Fund. The Chief Officer, Mr. Frank Wilton, accepted the pump on behalf of the Benevolent Fund and now its new home is in the foyer of Brigade Headquarters, Temple Back.

Fm. John Dowse, A5



County Of AVON Fire Brigade Magazine

By Firemen — For Fireman



A.D.O. Jack Roe

A.D.O. Jack Roe has retired from the Brigade after 36 years, and a very enjoyable evening was held at Brigade Headquarters on Friday 2nd August to mark the occasion. As can be imagined, Jack has met a lot of people over the years he has served in the Brigade, and the attendance at the function represented a range of ages reflecting their opinion of Jack as a person. I believe that anyone who attended could sense the feelings that were present of respect, comradeship and reliability that are associated with Jack Roe.

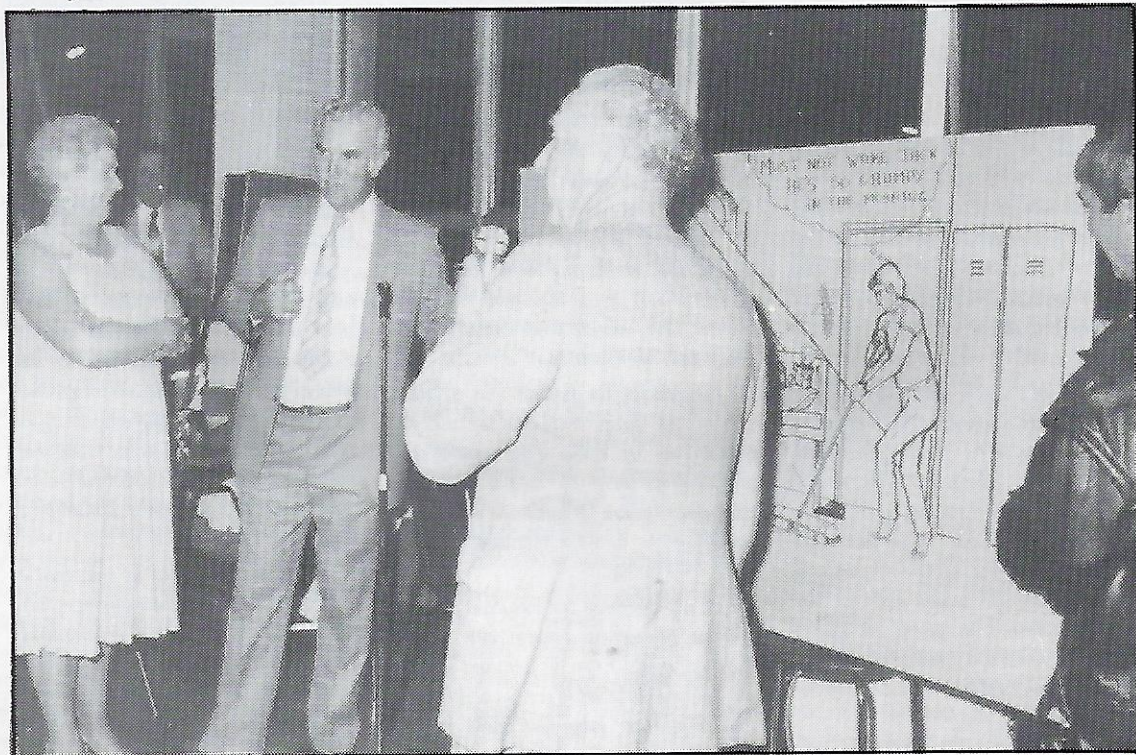
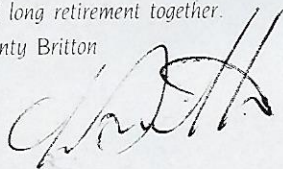
Jack joined the Brigade in 1949 after trying other jobs as pipe fitter and coppersmith, but was happy to accept £5.50 per week, as a fireman, on a 60 hour week. He had previously been a member of the Coldstream Guards, from 1944 to 1948, and served in Norway and Palestine.

On entering the Brigade, he was trained at Stoke Hill and was then posted to the station at Stoke Hill where he served for a considerable time, including a period at A3 Avonmouth whilst the new station was being built at Southmead. He was promoted to Leading Fireman in October 1960, Sub-Officer in 1961 and Station Officer in 1964, all while he served at Bridewell. He continued to serve at Bridewell until 1973 when he was transferred to Bedminster. In April 1974 he was promoted to Assistant Divisional Officer as Officer-in-Charge of Station A1 Temple, County of Avon Fire Brigade. In April 1979 he was transferred to 'C' Division where he carried out supervisory duties.

On his retirement evening, there were displayed a number of very well portrayed posters, depicting certain aspects of Jack that had been noted over the years, and it fell to me to explain some of the posters to a few unenlightened members of the people attending. I must say that I enjoyed the response from Jack and Doreen, and the audience, whilst this was going on.

I am sure that all members of the Brigade, both past and present, will join me in wishing Jack and Doreen a very happy, healthy and long retirement together.

Monty Britton



FEATURES

Visit to Borden Camp, West Sussex Friday 13 December 1985

With kind permission of the Chief Fire Officer, Blue Watch A.5 Patchway visited the British Army Heavy Recovery Unit, situated at Borden Camp, West Sussex. The visit had previously been negotiated and arranged by Sub Officer J. Gamlin, and his military contact was A.S.M. Bevan (Artificier Sergeant Major). This rank, prefixed by the A. (Artificier) is one of only two such ranks held in the British Army.

On arrival at Borden Camp we were stunned by the size of the township that was approximately the same size as Yate, with all the necessary amenities associated with such a large civilian and military establishment.

We were numbered seven in party and travelled in a brigade P.C.V. arriving at our destination by 1030 hours. The guard on the gate received us cordially and we were passed on to A.S.M. Bevan who greeted us with his lilting Welsh accent and made us feel extremely welcome. In less than five minutes the ice was broken and we were treated with professionalism and cordiality, throughout the whole of the visit the professionalism was always to the fore.

The reason for the visit was to try and learn something that would be of advantage to A.5. Patchway in our capacity as Major Rescue Tender operators. Within ten minutes of our arrival we were in a classroom being flooded with facts and figures appertaining to the recovery of vehicles of such size, weight and cost that we were astonished. In spite of this we fire brigade personnel could talk the same sort of language and did not feel totally in the dark.

From the classroom we moved on to one



of the many vast hangars and introduced to some of the equipment the army has at its disposal. Enough to say that it was all big, capable and expensive with the cheapest low mobile recovery vehicle, costing £173,000. We did not bother to enquire about the cost of the high mobile vehicle (was it John Wayne who said, "If you gott'a ask, then you can't afford it").

At the rear of the hangar was a large amount of trucks available for use as casualty vehicles. It was at this stage of our visit that we were informed it might be advisable to break for lunch, as what they had in store for us in the afternoon, required some fortification.

Lunch was taken in the Sergeant's Mess and was of excellent quality, with several choices of meals. From the Sergeant's Mess we removed ourselves to the Sergeant's bar and a pleasant hour was spent in the company of equally pleasant company.

The afternoon of our visit consisted of a short drive to a rough country area where we were instructed in the military method of working in adverse weather and terrain conditions, using single and multiple ground anchors. Under the watchful eye of A.S.M. Bevan, his immediate assistant Sergeant Smith, and two recently arrived recruits, we carried gear, swung sledge hammers and operated switch gear. The technicalities of this part of our visit would only be of use to M.R.T. operators, but suffice to say that, we gathered a lot of useful information and established a link with an organisation of professional excellence.

A.S.M. Bevan informed us that courses in the use of heavy rescue equipment were often held for the benefit of organisations such as our own. Any member of Avon Fire Brigade would be assured of a convivial reception and the experience of a lifetime. Gordon Pratten

The Iron Man Appeal



It is I suppose, the usual custom to leave acknowledgements and words of gratitude until the end. As I feel so indebted to those who made this whole event possible, may I take the liberty of breaking with this tradition.

This year, once again, I have received many warm compliments and words of congratulations for my particular part in the proceedings. Although these are very much appreciated, I am nevertheless aware, that without the kind assistance and generosity shown by so many other people the event would not have been the success it has. To thank them all would be difficult, even for an Iron Man, especially as it involved people throughout the whole country. Therefore, may I please ask those who gave their time, energy and money to help this appeal, that when they next meet a victim of this dreadful disease multiple sclerosis, or hear of a fireman who requires

help from the Benevolent Fund, they should realise then what a worthwhile cause they made their contribution to. Certainly I feel privileged and fortunate to use my strength and fitness to aid such causes. On behalf of them, may I express my grateful thanks.

It was Sunday 16th June when I was to begin the journey from Lands End, and to tell the truth it very nearly didn't get started. The blame for this rests squarely on the shoulders of Stan Tingle, after all it was him that made the ominous suggestion that "before you begin your ride, let's have a last meal together." An excellent lunch and a couple of pints later, St. Ives looked even more attractive than usual, thoughts of the cycle ride ahead became increasingly ludicrous. Unfortunately, there to see me off was a party from the Cornwall Multiple Sclerosis group. "Good Luck" they called. Very reluctantly I thought that at least a couple

of miles were called for — just a few turns of the pedals. So it continued throughout the trip northwards. Whenever I'd decided that it was time to throw in the sponge, then out would leap some person or persons to shout words of encouragement. Just to save my fragile ego I felt compelled to travel on.

Out of Cornwall, where the hills definitely go more up than down, then the final dash through Devon and Somerset to my hometown of Weston-super-Mare. On the outskirts of the town I was met by a mini-convoy of fire appliances and cars whose job it was to escort me to a civic reception with the Mayor. As so often stated — "The best laid plans of mice and men often go astray". This now was never more obvious, because the Mayor was held up by a traffic jam caused by my escorting convoy, and so was not there to greet me. After completing a hard ride of over a hundred miles, I was ordered to ride around the block a couple of times. "What price glory now?"

Next morning the BBC Points West crew arrived at my home. The acting talents for which I am famous, were now stretched to the limit. Just for the cameras, I leapt in and out of bed a dozen times, and must have consumed at least five breakfasts. Later I departed from C1 Weston, where members of my own Watch gave me a much too enthusiastic fond farewell, then on to A1 Temple. Appliances from A5 and A2 provided me with an escort north and out of the County. I felt like the villain in a western movie.

Through Cheltenham and the Midlands with little trouble, everything was going fine and I began to look forward to the journey ahead. Then it began to rain — as the deluge continued my cycle ride was beginning to resemble a long distance swim. During the early part of my trip I'd rather regarded the arrangements made on my behalf at the various fire stations as something of a nuisance, kindness that merely served to delay me. Now I began to appreciate their kind and generous hospitality.

Arriving dripping wet and sniffing with cold at Newcastle-under-Lyne station, the lads proceeded to drag off my clothes — something I might add, that rarely happens

at my age — they then dried me, fed me, washed my clothes and saw me on my way with a £27 donation from their social club. A smashing lot of lads! By the way, in case you're wondering, they had dried my clothes in the kitchen oven!

Similar hospitality to this was received wherever I stopped. At times we dismiss rather too quickly the bond that exists between firemen, from my experience that bond is as strong as ever. Also we must not forget the tremendous part played by the multiple sclerosis members themselves. It was mostly them who provided my accommodation en route, and despite my hosts being often victims of the disease themselves, nevertheless did everything to make me comfortable. Never once did they complain about the inconvenience I was obviously causing, instead only offering words of praise for my efforts.

On now to the beautiful Lake District and the swim of Lake Windermere. Once again I have to extend my gratitude to personnel of another Brigade. Thanks to Station Officer Steve Wilkes and the local retained lads, all had been previously arranged for my efforts in the Lake. Owing to the numbers of people who experience difficulties while swimming there are strict procedures which have to be adhered to, with a lifeguard in each of the two accompanying boats, and the lake police also providing an escort in case of trouble. Despite my rather weak attempts to bring some humour to the situation, the whole matter was taken very seriously. This was very much appreciated when halfway through the swim the extreme cold of the water begins to be felt. Certainly not a time then for comic japes.

The swim was a complete success, absolutely no difficulties being encountered. Immediately afterwards I was transferred to the police launch where I was sustained by cups of scalding hot coffee and covered with a survival blanket. The launch drew alongside the jetty of a superb luxury hotel. To my utter astonishment, standing there was a man dressed in a green frock coat and wearing a top hat of a similar colour. Without a word being spoken I was ushered through the corridors of the hotel, still dripping wet and clutching about myself

the remains of the survival blanket. What a sight for those American and German tourists.

The local fishermen had arranged with the hotel for a bedroom to be placed at my disposal, and following a shower and change of clothes I was given a hearty English breakfast. This was consumed while I gazed over the lake from which I had just come. Thank you lads, a truly magnificent gesture.

Over Shap Fell now towards Scotland.

While unsuccessfully attempting to photograph myself at the border, I spotted coming towards me a fire brigade pick-up truck. In the back of the truck was a bicycle, which the lads from Dumfries used in turns to escort me into Scotland. Although I had reached this important stage in my travels, it was still only halfway.

Possibly the most dangerous of the event came next — I hit Glasgow in the rush hour. I fortunately escaped from that heaving mass with only a collision with a three-wheeler car to my credit.

The scenery now became quite breathtaking as I journeyed by the shores of Loch Lomond and to the lonely hotel at the Bridge of Orchy. That evening, instead of settling myself before the television, I visited the nearby railway station. It was a fairly large and manned station but who it served apart from the hotel is anyone's guess. The station master invited me to sit with him in front of his log fire while he told stories about the station's history. In a lost property book dated 1942 it listed "hand grenade — with pin intact". Later next morning as I rode on my way, I suddenly realised that, it would not have been found as lost property, if the pin hadn't been intact!

Now to Fort William and certainly the most dramatic part of the trip. Next day I was to swim Loch Ness in the morning, and run up and down Ben Nevis in the afternoon. What was that I said earlier about the plans of mice and men?

Weighing myself that evening I discovered my weight to be only 11½ stone, half-a-stone lighter than I wanted to be for the intended swim at the Loch. A bad omen, which bothered me. Next day, owing to

some confusion I was unable to have a proper breakfast, something vital to ensure a sufficiently high sugar level. I entered the Loch at 8.30 a.m. feeling hungry.

The water is famous for its great depth, this causing it to be the coldest lake in Britain. It certainly lived up to its reputation as I slid from the boat into the water. Undeterred by the extreme temperature, after all I was the Iron Man, I struck out for the opposite shore which was about a mile away. Everything was fine, except for the cold I felt comfortable and confident. This was helped by the knowledge that my escorts in the boat were a former marine commando and a trained nurse. Mind you it didn't help when the commando stated that 'I wouldn't go in that water for anything'.

All was going well and I soon reached the vicinity of the landing place, about 200 yards to go — then I remember nothing more because at this point I became unconscious. The next thing I saw was a doctor leaning over me giving an injection then out again! Finally, I came to being driven to Fort William hospital. Louise the nurse was massaging my thighs, it was my shoulders that ached, but as she was such a delightful creature, I let her carry on attending to that part of my anatomy. Always a fireman at heart!

I was ordered to return immediately to Weston, something of course that was completely unacceptable. All I insisted on doing was to run Ben Nevis that same afternoon, unfortunately it was the words of a 'drunken' man, something that became obvious when I attempted to stand. Seeing that I was crazy enough to go ahead with my plans anyway, a compromise was reached and a mountain runner was found to accompany me on the run next day.

The depression I now felt was not helped by a machine at Fort William Railway Station which registered 'TRY A LITTLE EXERCISE'.

Next morning I greeted my mountain companion with as cheery a message as possible. He remained unconvinced that I was fit enough to undertake the ascent of the mountain, agreeing to take me only if I did exactly as he ordered. For me that was going to be the difficult part.

Well he soon realised that I was fit enough, as stated, I'm a good actor. At the summit it was decided that we should race down the mountain, and together, like two escapees from a lunatic asylum, we ran our suicidal race to the bottom. It was a certainty that a fall would occur, and whilst following my companion over a low cliff, I fell and injured my knee and hand. The adrenalin in my body was high, therefore unconscious of any pain we raced on. Fortunately for my pride, his laughter at my ineptitude ended when he too took a fall. Although his leg resembled the results of a machine gun attack, he picked himself up and continued to race. A tough lot these Highlanders.

Rather sadly, and certainly painfully, I continued my ride to John O'Groats. As my leg was beginning to stiffen and cause me some distress, I decided to press on without stopping, certainly a most painful experience. Because of this I arrived at my destination one day earlier than planned. This of course rather upset the arrangement



made by the reception committee. They instead had to come to Thurso where I rested for a day before returning home.

Next morning I began my journey home by the courtesy of British Rail. It took approximately two days and included a

first-class sleeper, a trip that I'd always wanted to do — but what a way to have to earn it!

P.S. Thanks to your help the Appeal Fund has reached £4,000 — a wonderful achievement by those involved.

Trans Pennine Canal Marathon

A team of four paddlers, J. Gamlin, J. Rex, P. Jones, S. Smith, two back-ups, B. Russell, J. Dando and two support crew, R. Stinchcombe and A. Boyce from Patchway fire station and A1 Temple, took part in the Trans Pennine canal marathon. 127 miles of canoeing and portage in preparation for Fire Services Canoe Race (Fire Canoe 85) from Bristol to Windsor.

After a month of training and organisation, we set off from Patchway Fire Station on Friday 24th May at 1030, travelling up to Leeds. On arrival at Leeds Fire Station, we were greeted by Bluedwatch and their Divisional Commander. We all then decided to go down to see the start of the race, on the way back sampling the local beer, which was to be the start of a very enjoyable evening with the on-coming duty crew and two other teams from Cumbria and Hampshire. (Don't ask who got caught by the three man lift).

After a disturbed sleep, we were treated



to a cooked breakfast by the duty crew and then it was off to the start 0800. We checked in and were away by 0824 towards Shipley. No real problems over this section. Shipley to Skipton, where the canal starts to rise at Bingley to cross the Pennines. Skipton to Burnley, plenty of locks and the Foulridge Tunnel, one mile long. Burnley to Blackburn, half way, approx. time 1800, Gannow Tunnel and more locks. Blackburn to Wigan, 2400, swing bridges and more locks, 0200. Wigan to Aintree 0500, two more sets of locks. Aintree to Liverpool, 0710.

As you can see, it's not just paddling, the two back up runners, who incidentally cycled the whole course as well as running for us, were more than help in gaining the team first place in the fire brigade section and ninth position overall. Also the support crew, who managed to put up with our moans and groans and kept us well fed and got us to our check over points.

We completed the course in 22 hours 42 minutes, 50 minutes ahead of the next fire brigade team, Devon. Weather conditions could have been better, strong winds in our

faces, heavy rain but fairly mild temperatures.

We were then treated, at Liverpool's Bankhall station, to a full breakfast and plenty of tea. All credit to both Leeds Central and Liverpool Bankhall fire stations for their hospitality.

The journey home was uneventful with everybody dropping off to sleep!

Steve Smith, A5

Avon Army Cadet Force

On August the 11th 1985, Avon Army Cadet Force were off to annual camp, this year to Penally, nr. Tenby, South Wales. All cadets and adults were on the move from Bristol early Sunday morning arriving at different times at camp. The advance party was in residence to accept approx. 800 young soldiers and men.

On arrival, there were cadets carrying all sorts of odd things: suitcases, webbing equipment, even rifles and last but not least small radios and the odd getto blaster, which I may add were silenced each night at 2230 hours one way or another.

After the travelling, the first night in camp was a settling in night. First parade on Monday morning was 0630 hours. Reveille, wash, make beds, clean up, then breakfast. Each day started the same unless you were unfortunate enough to be on guard all night. Camp routine included all different types of training with another mass move on August 23rd and return to Bristol.

The cadets' training had plenty of scope on all subjects. The county itself was already split into four companies which were again split into individual detachments and four training star levels. Training was always well supervised with our one-stars being put through their paces at reduced rate, building up to our four-stars doing regular training and their heels being



stepped on by our regular army contingent at camp.

Training of all aspects were done at this particular camp under very bad weather conditions, i.e. rain every day and night with wind. However, training continued with cadets on map-reading, fieldcraft, weapon training, parades and even sleeping out under canvas and having meals in the field. Added to this were days of adventurous training including canoeing (sea), abseiling (approx. 200ft.), physical training (army style), power dinghies (under supervision) and our old friend and favourite, Basic Survival (looking after yourself in the field, finding food from plants, etc.). I must add that after this it was a pleasure to have a shower and change. I am proud of all the lads for their enthusiasm and true grit. They're all great

lads, motto being — never beaten only tired.

After all this, there were the inter-company sports and trophies and the inter-company and detachmen. competitions includes; smartest dressed cadet, company and detachment drill competition, best kept lines, best hut, best kept bed space and bed.

It was already known that R. Yandell — Blue A1, S. Cook — Green A1 and R. Pearson — B6, were Army cadet force instructors but unknown to us were how many firemen's sons or close relations were cadets on camp. (See photograph).

We're now looking forward to next year up on the moors in the middle of wild country, yes, it's Oakhampton followed by Holywell Bay, nr. Newquay in 1987.

Colour Sgt. Yandell R.

First Aid

Here we are at the end of another competition year and in my opinion not a very good one at that.

The team, plus trainers, started off the same as last year — eight in number, the ideal number is ten.

The number of competitions entered this year, including Fire Brigade SW and National, are 11, four less than last year. The results are: COMPS 11 — 1st three, 2nd two, 3rd 0, 4th four, UNPLACED two.

By coming second in the Fire Brigade National, this is the first year since 1979 that we have not represented the Fire Brigade of Great Britain in the Grand Priors Competition. Staffordshire is the representative this year who have been 2nd to us since 1979. More about this later.

The team this year shows one change and that is Mike Smith coming in as captain for Ray Underhay, the rest of the team is No. 2 Gary Bowden, No. 3 myself, No. 4 Barry Taylor and Reserve Dave Saunders. Trainers are Colin Williams, Ray Underhay and Pete Haydon who I would like to say a big thank you as without these three you may just as well pack up.

During August a Brigade memo was put out asking for any fireman with over two years service to join us at the re-start of training on September 2nd and Tony Miller of B7 Kingswood, who had already telephoned Colin Williams and talked to Colin and myself came along to start a two month trial period with us.

On September 30th I was walking across the station yard at B6 Speedwell going in for training when I heard someone say "Excuse me, could you tell me where the first aid team train?" and I said "Come on with me, I am one of them." This person is John Day of A3 Avonmouth who will come with us until the end of November.

The reason we need firemen is because in Fire Brigade Competitions the rule is no more than two officers of any rank and at this year's Nationals we had one Stn. O,

one L/Fm., one Temp. L/Fm. and two Fm. of which Manchester, probably fired up by Staffordshire, complained to the competition secretary. Not very good when they had known what our team was for at least a month. It was through Manchester that this rule came about as at one time they had a team of five officers, but it doesn't matter how many officers are in a team you have all got to click right on the day. I say that last part with tongue in cheek.

What a team we could still have if it wasn't for this rule: No. 1 Colin Williams, No. 2 myself, No. 3 Ray Underhay, No. 4 Mike Smith and Reserve Pete Haydon. The reason I say Pete as reserve instead of me is because if we came 2nd he would say never mind there is always next year, but with me I do everything to win, as would the other members.

The reason for frustration in our team this year, probably in me more than the rest and this is not sour grapes or excuses, is the amount of cheating that is creeping into competitions over the last four years.

This is done by trainers or reserves sitting or standing where a team member can see them, touching certain parts of the body to pass on where injuries are and signalling the position to put casualties in, this is what we call 'tip-tap' men.

The teams who carry large padded splints around and leave them out in their transport so that a person can go and see the test and slip a note in between them with all the injuries on and then they go out with a steward and bring them back into the waiting room where the whole team can look at it.

The teams who run a competition each year like we do, who have told me we are bringing down a certain team to beat you and that person ends up as one of the judges and that team beats us into second place each year, the only time they can beat us.

Unfortunately, the above I have witnessed myself and again it is unfortunate that 60% are St. John Ambulance Teams or have St. John Ambulance Association people attached to them.

Lastly, this year's fire service nationals. The captain of Staffordshire Sub. O. V. Perrin said to me we will be packing in after this year if we come second to you again, also he told me that he had heard that a rule change could be in for next year which was either that the winning team changes one member or drops out altogether for the following year.

If they want to lower the standard, this is bad.

The nationals are put on by Staffordshire, Staffordshire Police did the run through, Staffordshire personnel were the stewards and I was told by a St. John person from London that this year was the first that he had not written the sheets for this competition and that a fire service team had written them. No prize for guessing which one and Staffordshire won.

We have also not heard any more about the rule changes for this competition.

Good luck Staffs in the Grand Priors and if you win it will be fair and square, although the standard of stewarding at this competition is going down.

Dave Causon

Dave Causon, Secretary



PHOTO CALL



Sub-officer Pete Addie and Fireman Dick Pruett, doing something to a cow!!



A1's Temple's first attendance at the Bristol Carnival.



Leading Fireman Dave Lukin won trophy after the Brigade L and all the contestants.



Leading Fireman John Radcliffe is presented with a tankard to mark his retirement from C1 Weston by the Chief Officer. Pictured with his wife and family.

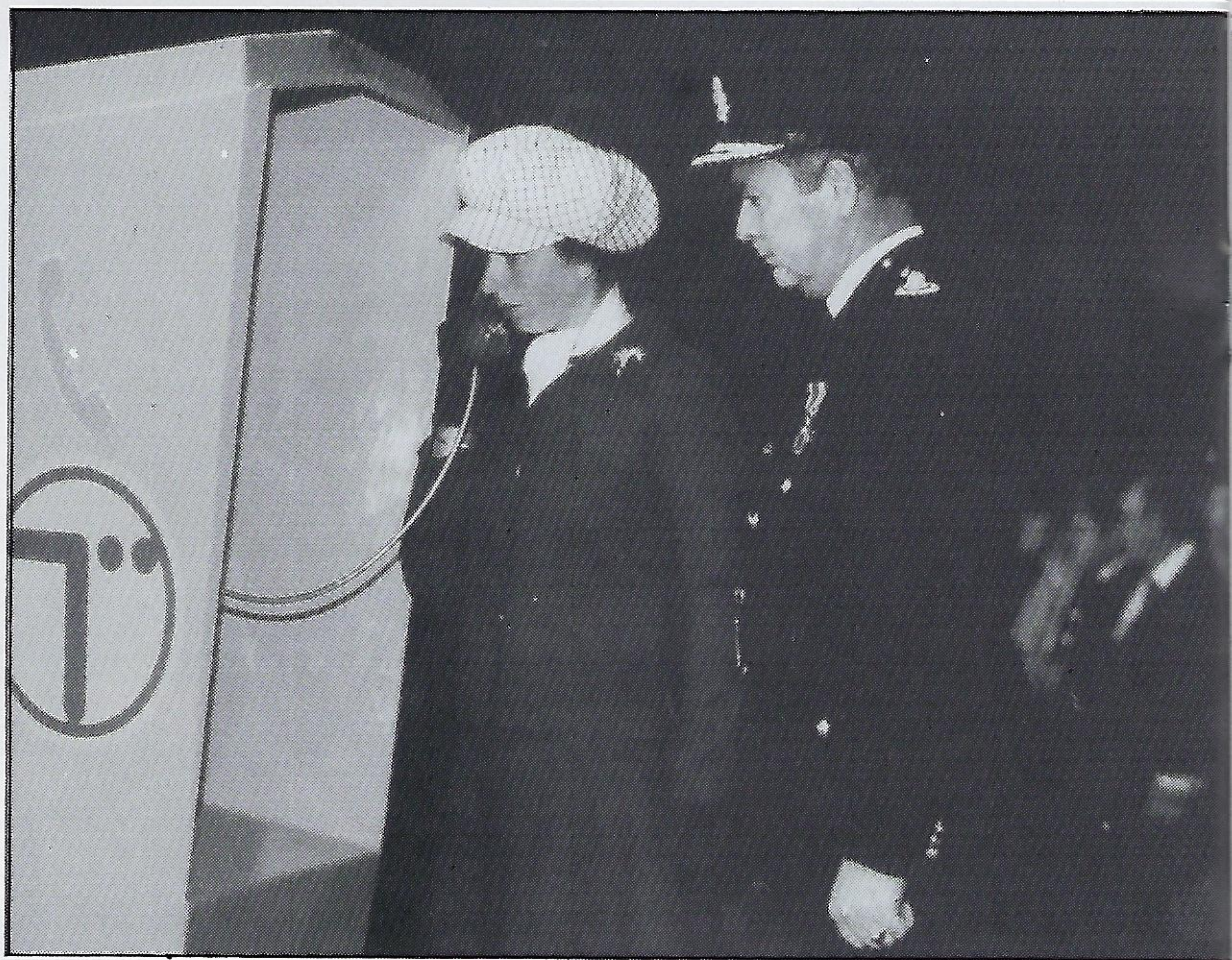


from C1 Weston proudly displays the hard picture Competition. Congratulations to him



This was a "one off" group when the Officers Club held a dinner at the Crest Motel to mark the retirement of four senior officers all together. Pictured with the Chief Officer and his wife are, of course, Tony Townsend, Monty Britton, Graham Isles, George Hacker and their wives together with the managers of the Crest Motel.

Royal visit July 1985



1. HRH Princess Anne makes the first 999 call to the new Control Room.

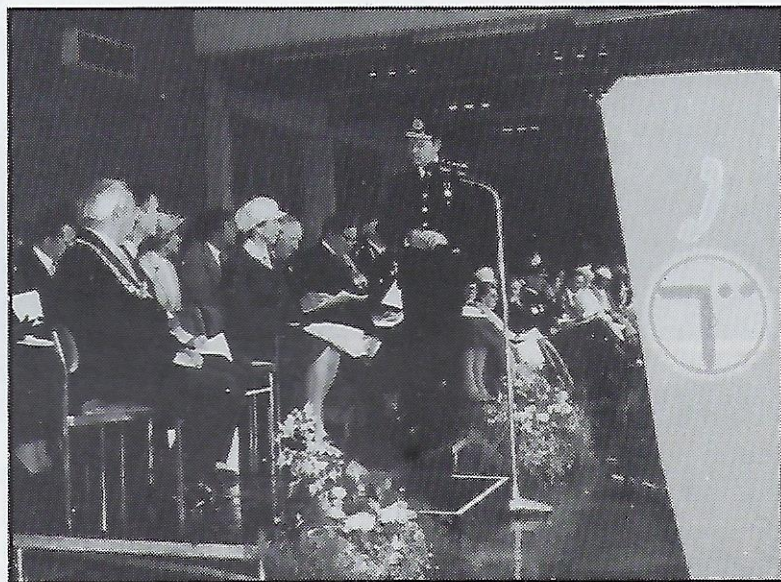


2. Inspecting the officers and men who took part in the demonstration drill.

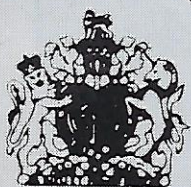




3. A scene from the drill. A serious RTA with multiple casualties and rescues.



4. The Chief Officer's address and thanks to Her Royal Highness.



Avon Tops Again

Avon's First Aid team won a sound victory on Saturday, 20th April 1985 in the South Western Area Fire Brigades, beating Hereford & Worcester into second and Devon into third position. All competitors put up a very competent struggle for the laurels and all deserve praise. Devon Fire Brigade were making a welcome return to competition First Aid. Let us hope that their example will be followed by other Brigades and even more will compete next year.

Lady Wills, the county's St. John Ambulance President, gave her support to the proceedings and then graciously presented the awards. As a token of thanks Lady Wills was presented with a bust of a Fireman by Chief Officer Frank Wilton.

Thanks should go to all who made the event such a success, with special mention of Mrs. Webber and the St. John Ambulance for their assistance.

Andy Capp.

Stn. O. Capp



County Of AVON
Fire Brigade Magazine

By Firemen — For Fireman



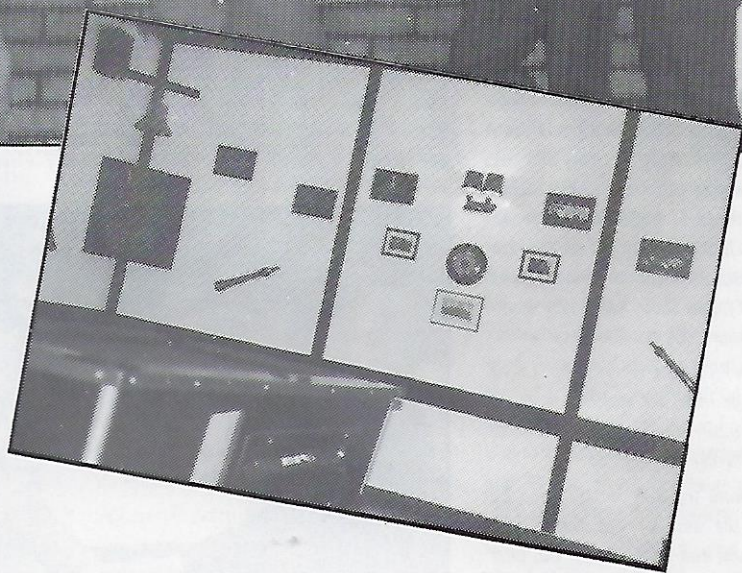
The early Tudor builders have nothing on the personnel at A7.

Following a great deal of hard work, the bar and pool room have been transformed into an early Tudor setting.

Amongst the many wall decorations are a hay knife, hay saw, miners axe, rat trap and numerous other bric-a-brac.

The two rooms are a credit to all those concerned and if you are in the vicinity of A7, please call in and have a look.

Stn. O Gardner, A7.



200 mile — 10 seater bike ride in aid of Muscular Dystrophy

£3,050 raised



On the 3rd, 4th and 5th October 1985, a team which included 9 local firemen took part in a sponsored 10 seater bike ride in aid of Muscular Dystrophy.

We left Yate Fire Station at 0900 on 3rd October, after a great send off from a large crowd. Unfortunately, the weather was against us all day, but we made good time and after a great effort by everyone we reached Newbury at 1630 hours (about 2½ hours ahead of schedule), where we suffered our first setback, one of the rear wheels collapsed, but after ½ hour we found a motorcycle repair shop, had a new wheel fitted and were back on the road.

We made Whitchurch (Hants) by 1830 and found the local fire station where we parked for night and retired to a local hostelry for a beer or six.

Friday morning we were on the road by 0700 and the weather was worse than Thursday (rain and very windy). But once again after a great effort from everyone we had another great day and we passed through Romsey and onto Salisbury just

after noon, and by 1700 we were parked in Warminster fire station where we were well looked after by the Stn. O. who gave us the use of all their facilities (including bar).

Saturday we left Warminster at 0900 and made Bath by 1130 where we toured the city centre and collected over £130 in less than an hour. We went onto Keynsham and Bristol city centre and collected over

£160 in about 1½ hours, which helped to boost our final total considerably.

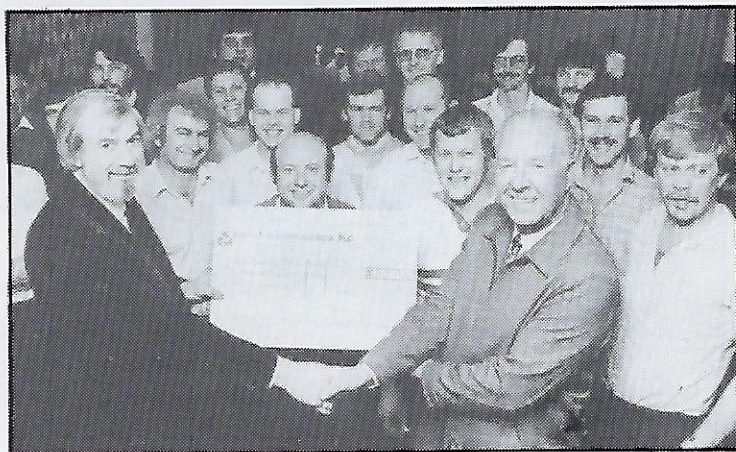
We arrived back at Yate Fire Station to another great reception from family and friends for a celebration disco. Presentations was made by Mr. Britton to all riders on behalf on Muscular Dystrophy for their effort.

The best part of the evening for myself was a surprise presentation by the team of a new outdoor electric wheelchair to my son David who suffers from Muscular Dystrophy.

A presentation of the cheque was held on the 23rd November 1985, when Mr. Britton kindly presented the cheque to Mr. Barnet, Muscular Dystrophy (Bristol). The total raised was the fantastic sum of £3,050. The overall effort and enthusiasm by the team was all made worthwhile by such a large amount.

The nine firemen were Pete Liddington, Rod Fry, Pete Owers, Andy Gunningham (all B7 Kingswood), Bill Pratt, Les Gathercole, Harry Davis, Tin Cattle (all A7 Yate) and Brian Russel (A5).

Pete Liddington
B7 Green Watch



Visit to Hanover



Horst Kaesebier of the Hanover Fire Brigade visited Avon in 1983. Following his visit Avon Fire Brigade was invited to visit Hanover and participate in an international football competition. Unfortunately, there was not enough support so Tyne & Wear took our place. Since then I have tried several times to organise a visit for about 12 members of the Brigade and their wives, but again there was not enough interest. So this year I went with my wife to Hanover as guests of Horst and his wife Brigitte.

Knowing that I come from one of the premier Brigades in this country, I wondered what they could show me. Well, where do I start?

Hanover is a city of comparable size and risk to Bristol. It has 6 whole-time and 3 retained Fire Stations. The 'Berufsfeuerwehr' — the professional Fireman — provides a complete fire and rescue service, and is magnificently equipped to deal with all emergencies which are referred to as "major catastrophics". The range of special appliances includes JCB's, cranes, water rescue units, special rescue units and contamination units.

Every Fireman, initially qualifies following a three year training programme. He will then normally specialise in at least one other

field. The retained contingent has a three month basic course and spends a statutory number of days each year working on a whole time station. Any losses in their pay is made up and they are paid an hourly rate for any excess time. This service can be rendered in lieu of National Service. After 7 years in the service a fireman is appointed for life.

The professional Fireman works a 56 hour week on a 24 on - 48 basis, and once in every duty cycle he works a week of days. Self-discipline is very apparent with regard to duties, dress, and such things as accidents with appliance. Once the crew has taken over an appliance, following a full inspection, it almost becomes their own machine, and woe betide anyone else driving it or taking any kit from it. They ride the same appliance for a month. Station routines are almost identical to ours — they cook, clean and maintain their stations. Amongst the Berufsfeuerwehr alcohol is banned completely — there are no bars on the stations.

A two-tier entry exists for Officers. With the right qualifications they attend a regional fire college for two years and, upon successful completion of the course, will be posted. If they fail they are sacked. Any member of the Service who has joined as

a fireman can take the exams and apply for a place at the regional school. Should he fail he returns to his Brigade and previous post.

There is no such thing as uncertificated sick leave. The Brigade has its own doctor and if anyone feels unwell they must report to him.

The Berufsfeuerwehr is a much respected member of the community. All the Firemen have a tremendous professionalism and pride in their job. The stations and equipment are maintained to an extremely high standard.

The pumping appliances appear very similar to ours, with the exception of additional salvage gear which includes aquavacs, humidifier, etc., and when dealing with a fire a complete salvage and damage control service is provided, including the securing of premises. All front line appliances have four wheel drive capability and carry lighting generators and winches.

The term 'Fire Losses' is never used within the Service, only 'Loss Prevented' or 'Amount Salvaged'. Rescue Tenders are kitted with every conceivable aid for a rescue, and these are laid out with the utmost efficiency, as you can see from the photograph.

I spoke to many members of the Hanover Brigade who are very interested to learn more about the British Fire Service. Although they receive all our British Fire Service publications, none of them can really understand why such jobs as total emergency service, rock and water rescues, were not grasped with open arms by the Fireman of Britain.

It is very difficult to make comparisons between our respective Services, but it must be remembered that the professional Firemen in Germany provides his expertise in all rescue and salvage situations. His first loyalty is to the Service and the community. Since the end of the Second World War, when the Brigades were re-established, they have taken on all the rescue and salvage roles throughout the country.

With all my prejudices, and being very proud of the fact that I am a member of the British Fire Service, I must admit I was very impressed with the German Fire Service in many areas, particularly that of

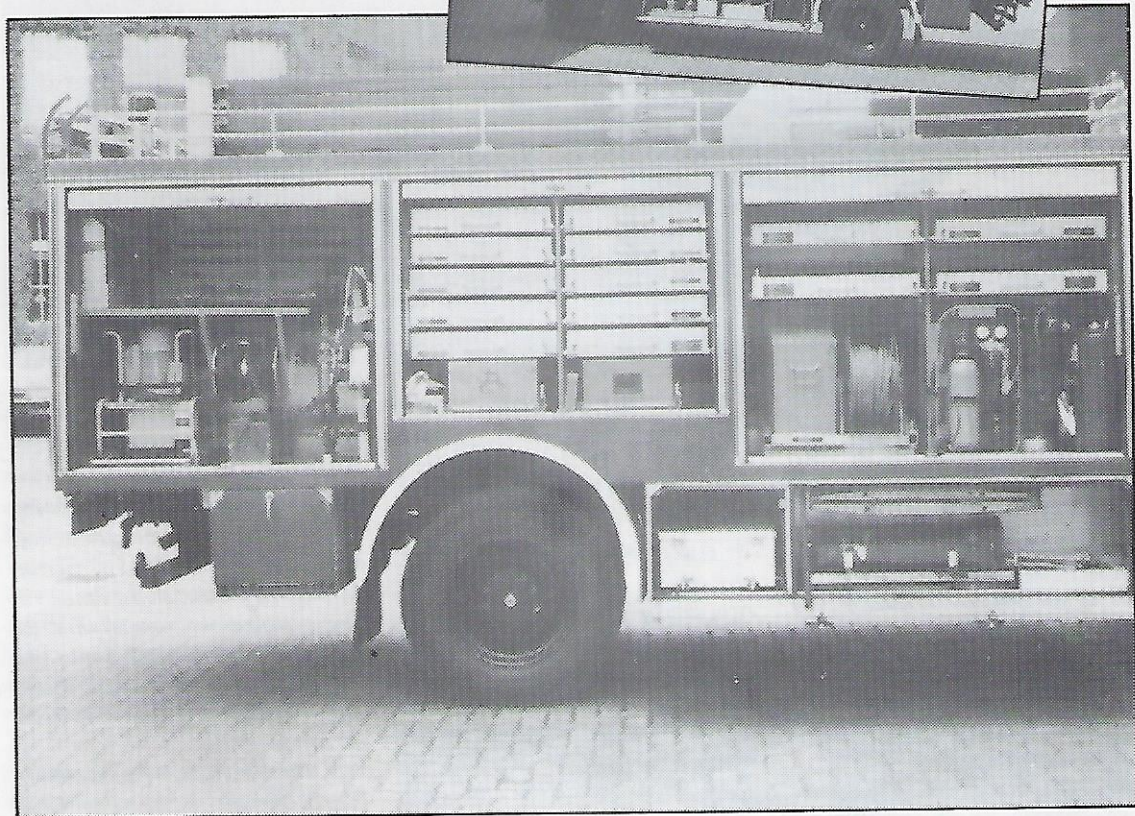
the total national rescue and damage control service.

The East/West wall is something I found to be a moving experience. Just a few kilometers away from Hanover, there was a concrete wall, barracades and a perimeter on the Eastern side with guard towers. In the East the people lead a totally different way of life. Horst's family were split up at the end of the war and visiting the East is strictly controlled. Any application for people to return to the West is only considered when that person has retired or is seriously ill.

In these few words it is impossible to give a complete picture of our holiday. It was truly fantastic due to the hospitality of our hosts Horst and Brigitte, and the Berufsfuerwehr of Hanover.

Any member of the Avon Fire Brigade who wishes to visit Hanover would be made very welcome.

Dave Hutchings,
Brigade Headquarters



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Sports Quiz 1985

As many of you are aware a sports quiz was again run this year following its great success in 1984. After what was considered by all who competed last year to be a successful new venture it was hoped more teams would enter this year, particularly from the retained members to support Station A6 Thornbury, the only retained entry last year. By January 25 teams had entered (including a H.Q. side captained by the Deputy Chief) which allowed 5 heats comprising of 5 teams to be held at various stations during March and April.

Starting immediately after last year's final **Ernie Coghlan** and myself set out to complete a new set of questions and also hoping to include a video round in each heat. This we did achieve with great effort when it must be remembered some 600 plus questions are required.

The first heat held at Station A1 Temple on 8th March saw B4, A Div. F.P., B7 Red, A3 Blue with C5 Blue not able to make it on the night, contest an even contest with everyone knowing each other's questions but B4 eventually emerging as winners and going forward to the final.

The second heat held at A2 again saw a team fail to turn up but we were able to persuade Chris Tudor's wife to captain a second A5 Red side who surprised everybody by her knowledge of sport, however the team captained by her husband Chris finally running out winners.

Heat three at A3 found A5 White all struck down with 'flu and unable to compete but the good old rugby players on their way back from playing in Wales sat in and made up the numbers at the last moment and appearing to thoroughly enjoy themselves. This heat proved to be a close run affair between A5 Red, Football Team and a team from A6 who because their captain could not attend had only two players, but in the end C5 Red just proving

the best on the night.

White watch B7 Kingswood hosted heat 4 and to fight it out we had last year's winners A2 Blue, B7 Green, A2 Red, A1 Green and another Football team side. This heat proved to be the best and closest contest that has been seen since the quiz first started, the result being in doubt until the last but one question when B7 Green emerged as winners because A2 Blue could only gain one point. The final score saw behind B7 Green two teams tie for second place and two teams tie for fourth place.

The fifth and final heat took us to A5 Patchway to be hosted by Red Watch where teams from Brigade Control, A7 Yate, A3 Blue, B6 White and A5 Green sat down to a contest that turned out even closer than the previous heat as A3 Blue and A5 Green tied for first place.

This being the first time a tie had occurred the two teams chose a question from a selection when A3 could only name four out of five current football league sides with 'x' in their name, so only gaining 1pt, but A5 Green giving a full answer so gaining the extra point and to give them a place in the final to be held at Headquarters on the 30th April 1985.

For the final nine rounds were included being made up of four on video and five of card questions this proving very popular with the teams. After 90 minutes of pressure the team from A5 Red (who had to bring in their sub for the night as Chris Tudor was away on holiday) just proved too good for the rest and ran out narrow winners with B7 Green as runners up.

On this occasion we were fortunate to be able to call on the services of Mark O'Connor of Bristol Rovers and Bob Hesford, the Bristol and England rugby international, to present the trophies to the winners and runners-up respectively. The

Chief Officer was then asked if he would then make the last presentation of the evening, this being a County of Avon Fire Brigade shield and crest to Mark and Bob to show our appreciation for the service they gave.

P. Causon

Volleyball

On Saturday 20th July, 1985, a station volleyball competition was held at B1 Bath. All four watches were well represented with each watch entering one team with at least two reserves. Each watch was to play two sets against each other and the two teams with the best overall results were to play a three set final.

With the adrenaline pumping and pre-match nerves well in evidence all was in readiness for a good day's battle.

After enthusiastic play from both White watch and Red watch, it was soon clear that the final would be contested between Green watch and Blue watch, with both teams just losing one set.

In the final, Blue watch won the first set 14-16, Green watch the second 15-12, so we were all ready for a nail-biting final set. Despite tremendous encouragement from Ron Davis, Blue watch were eventually beaten, losing the set to Green 15-10.

The winning Green watch squad comprising of Dave Samson, Trevor Tate, Tony Chapman, John Billingham, Jamie Hacker, Tim Bolland and Chris Palmer, held the trophy high and did a lap of honour in front of the applauding spectators (six of them including one dog).

A very enjoyable day was had by all concerned and it is hoped that the competition will be a regular event.

C. Palmer

Fire Brigade Skittles Club

The skittles team completed their last season 1984/85 in May. The team won first place at the top of the league with R.A.F. 'B' team and Coldstream Guards close behind.

We also came runners-up in the league knockout being narrowly beaten by the Grenadier Guards in the final.

To celebrate the season's achievements we had our presentation evening in August, comprising a pleasant boat trip along the River Avon to 'Beeses Tea Gardens' where we enjoyed a barbeque, followed by the presentation of awards and dancing till gone midnight before returning by boat to Netham lock.

The award recipients were as follows:— (from 27 matches)

Highest average score: Mac Aston — T/S (31.75)

Club person of the year: Paul Drake — A5

Highest individual score: George Jenkins — A1 (45)

Most 9's scored: Paul Drake — A5 (5)

Lowest score: Mel Cummins (Knocker's mate) (15)

Most ducks scored: Chris Eylsbury — A2 (7) narrowly beating Dave Hutchings — HQ, who got two in one game on two occasions.

The awards were presented by the league secretary, Mrs Ezme Pitman, who has put so much effort into the job in past years.

We also acknowledged the departure of Alan Totterdell with a special trophy and presented flowers to his wife Carol — we shall miss them both very much for both their company and Alan's 'Barnes Wallace' specials.

Following this presentation evening, we attended the league dance at HMS Flying Fox and received the South African War Veterans Cup (only previously won by the brigade in 1978) and the Artillery Cup, never before awarded to the team.

Both cups duly filled with liquid refreshment were shared by the team and their ladies and our friends we met along the way to victory.

We have a reputation as a team of both ability and humour, which I think speaks for itself. Well done everyone.

Knocker White, A3 — Club Secretary



It's a Knockout

Sunday 11th August 1985. It was cold, wet and extremely windy. Thirteen 'mad, impetuous fools' plus a few spectators met in Al's mess room at 0900 for 'briefing'(?). By this time we had already lost two team members, one could not come at the last moment and the other did not turn up (sensible chap!) hence the two unlucky reserves were drafted from the beginning. Number fourteen, mentioning no names (Red watch — A1, initials P.C.), forgot to wake up and just caught us as we were leaving. **Look out Gloucestershire . . . here we come!**

The car park attendant narrowly escaped with his life as we arrived, driven by Steve "What car park attendant" Dyas, at about 11.30. Steve's friend Ann, kindly volunteered to be our team's marshal for the event little knowing what lay in store. Ann and I, as marshal and captain, traipsed off through the weather to the field, carrying a huge golfing umbrella which was determined to go in the opposite direction (taking us with it), whilst Ann waddled about in a pair of borrowed wellies at least three sizes too large! We were shown around the games getting soaked through to the skin whilst everyone else stayed warm and dry propping up the bar and eating hotdogs — needless to say, the rain stopped before **they** came out.

We got off to a flying start in the first game when a knight in shining wheelbarrow (Paul K. — reserve) pushed by Andy (Red — B1), rescued the medieval damsel in distress (yours truly) from the 'burning' stake. During the rescue, Paul had to tip over a bucket of water onto the cardboard flames below. Guess who was sitting amongst the flames! It was then my turn for a ride in the barrow and a mad dash to the finish line. We won our heat with ease but were pipped at the post by Leicestershire in the second heat. However, Avon were in the lead as we played our loker to double our points for this game. The next event was rather unpleasant for the two female team members involved. Louise (Red — Brigade Control) had to

wedge herself inside a tractor tyre to be wheeled up a course over some car tyres and through a slalom by Richard (reserve) and Steve (Green — Brigade Control). It wasn't long before a green looking Louise fell out of the wheel but she bravely got back in and completed the course, handing over to Sue (HQ receptin), Dave (Green — A1) and Bernie (White — A1) for the return journey. This return was fairly uneventful despite the wails of "**OOh my God, OOh my God,**" issuing from the tyre every time it went over the top, although, a difficulty did arise after the finish when it came to prising an extremely well stuck young lady out of her predicament!

At this point we were still in the lead but were not included in the next game as it was our turn for the marathon which was fairly straight forward. Girls had to drag or carry water filled foam cans, one at a time, to the start line where the lid was removed to reveal a number relating to a piece of equipment, i.e. a pair of bolt croppers, two pieces of short extension ladder, a cardboard axe and a fire extinguisher. These objects were then fetched by the men and used to aid the team through an obstacle course. Remind me not to let Paul C. loose with a pair of bolt croppers again!

The fourth game involved six pairs of players (man and girl) with the object of piecing together a poster on a board with wallpaper paste, each pair placing one section of poster. The first three pairs carefully brushed paste onto the back before sticking it to the board only to find that by the time they returned to the start line, it had fallen off again leaving the next pair to replace it. Bernie had other ideas, however. Forget the paste brush — it's much more fun to plunge both hands with poster, into the bucket of paste covering everything and everyone else (especially myself and the marshal judging our team!) in the process. The poster stuck better too! Richard and Jane (Richard's wife) were the last pair up and so were responsible for

making sure everything was in the correct position. Having carefully stuck everything sideways, they eventually got it right and we still managed to finish third.

The interval came next, during which the CFO of Gloucestershire Brigade was heard loudly to proclaim that their "Southern Division" did not stand a chance. I'm sure all can guess who this referred to and needless to say we rose to the challenge and thrashed his team with ease!

After the interval, another damsel was rescued from her distress. (Actually Jane looked quite content waiting for her 'hero' to arrive!) Sarah (Finance), Linda (Treasury) and Louise dressed our rescuer up in a sacking tunic, an enormous helmet made from a foam can and a lance. He then had to run across a ramp, whilst being bombarded with wet sponges, releasing his damsel at the end!! Then everyone ran back beside the course to the finish line. Speedygonlaneez was comfortably waiting for the next game to begin long before anyone else in the heat completed the course, including our team.

In the penultimate game, Andy took charge of his wheelbarrow again and with Sue and a full bucket of water inside, set off at a vast rate of knots towards an empty tub some distance away. On the way, Sue was dragged backwards over a plank laid on some tyres and a four inch drop (hence a puddle to sit in) at the other end. A racing turn involving a slip in the mud, caused half of the water to drench Andy's passenger and they were off through the slalom. The little remaining water was put in the tub, then it was back to the start and a change-over to the next pair. Richard, being the gentleman he is, emptied the barrow for Louise to sit in and then started off with a jerk which sent water all over her. Steve and Linda just made it to the tub before the whistle blew to finish the game. The water levels of the first four teams, including Avon, in this game were within ¼ inch so the points were equally shared out.

By this time it was beginning to get colder, just right for the wettest event of the day. One at a time, the team members had to run up some steps to a dam, then over a plank, through different sized inner tubes

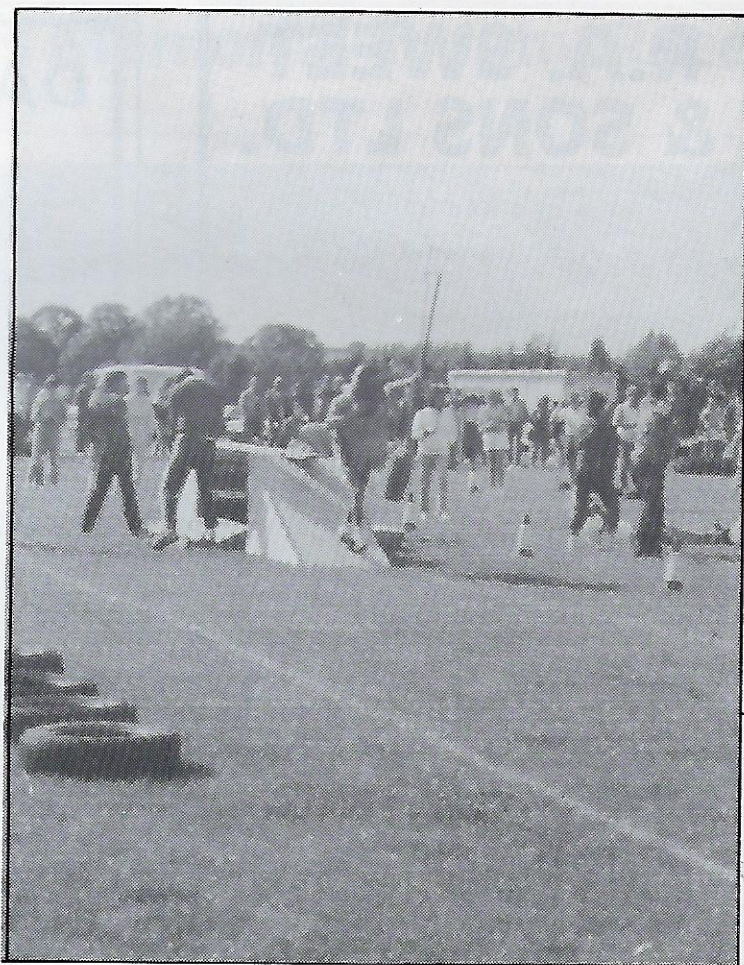
hung at different heights. At the end a tennis ball, which was carried up to this point (I won't mention where some of them were retrieved from!), was thrown at a hole in a target to win points. During the traverse of the dam, sadistic members of other teams were attempting to knock people off the plant soaked with sponges. It's funny how the female victims drew more ammunition than the men!

There was now a pause whilst the results were worked out and then the presentation was made. Avon and West Mids. were equal second in points but we were pronounced third as we had less game wins.

Thanks to all who took part at such short notice and did so well. Thank you to Andy for giving me a cold bath in the dam even though there were hot showers waiting in the changing rooms! Thanks Ann for being our marshal and our reserves who joined in at the last minute. Good luck Sarah, I hope all goes well in married life and a special thank you to the few people who braved the weather to come and watch.

An enjoyable time was had by all even though we only had one week's notice to make a team and I'm counting on you all to help make us first next year.

Clare McCarthy
White Watch
Brigade Control



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Ian Chalmers Memorial Trophy Race



For the third year running, the Ian Chalmers Memorial Trophy Race was held over a 4¾ mile course from B1 Bath, through town, to the Royal United Hospital, where Mrs Chalmers works as a nurse.

Unlike the previous two, this year's race (held on Sunday 22nd October) was started by the Chief Fire Officer and with the words "on your marks, get set, go" and the downward sweep of his hand the runners were off. With an excellent time of 26 minutes 43 seconds, Fireman D. Cooper had stormed home, whilst the last returned within a very respectable 45 minutes.

The only mishap of the day was the collapse from exhaustion of one of the leading runners, however, he was quickly conveyed to hospital by two marshals in a mini bus and shortly after released.

Once all 26 other competitors, representing all three divisions, both wholtime and retained, had returned, the prizes were presented after a substantial buffet by Mindy Chalmers.

Most improved runner was Fireman Rice of A5, the over-40's trophy going to Station Officer Linehan of A6, the team trophy was won by Green watch B1 Bath, which included Firemen Bryan, Escott and Chapman. The first, second and third individual trophies went to Fireman Cooper, Fireman Tingle and Fireman Bryan respectively.

The organiser Fireman M. Burton would like to take this opportunity to thank all those that gave their assistance in making this a very successful day.

County of Avon Fire Brigade Joe & Lindey Cocker Memorial Race

F.S.S.A.A. Cross County League Race

S.W. District Cross Country Championship

Blaise Castle, Sunday 10th November, 1985

The day of the race was fine, but muddy underfoot which meant hard going, generally giving slower than usual times.

The race started promptly at 1400 hours, and the runners started on the 6 mile 3 lap course. Avon runners who wanted to compete in the Brigade Championships only had to complete one lap but all had the option of carrying on if they so desired.

Position	Name	Station (etc.)	Time
1	Dave Hayward	A3	11 mins 56 secs
2	Dave Tovey o/40	A5	12 mins 12 secs
3	Rick Hanratty	B4	13 mins 11 secs
4	Stuart Brown	A3	13 mins 12 secs
5	Rod Fry	B7	13 mins 26 secs
6	Mike Mullany	C5	13 mins 27 secs
7	John Rice	A5	13 mins 36 secs
8	Andy Coe	B4	13 mins 43 secs
	Pat Jones	A3	13 mins 43 secs
10	Phil Hale	A3	14 mins 44 secs
	Tim Lewin	A3	15 mins 45 secs
11	Bob Shapcott	A3	15 mins 45 secs
13	Anne Shapcott	A3 lady	23 mins 31 secs
	Liz Madden	A3 lady	25 mins 42 secs
14	Monica Fairly	A3 lady	25 mins 42 secs

The team results were First: A2 White watch 'A' team

Second: 'B' Div, comprising B4 and B7 Personnel

Third: A3 White watch 'B' team

The most improved runner award went to Pat Jones, A3.

The First Lady prize went to Anne Shapcott.

The over 40 award was won by Dave Tovey, A5, having a good run after a period of illness from a chest infection.

A special mention here must be made for the ladies. This is the first year we have had this kind of commitment from the ladies, making a very determined run over what is normally a hard course, made even harder by the mud and slippery conditions.

After the first lap, the national event progressed made interesting by the larger than usual entry from other Brigades.

The first three positions went to:

1st: P. Ormrod G.M.C. 31 mins 16 secs

2nd: M. Jones G.M.C. 31 mins 42 secs

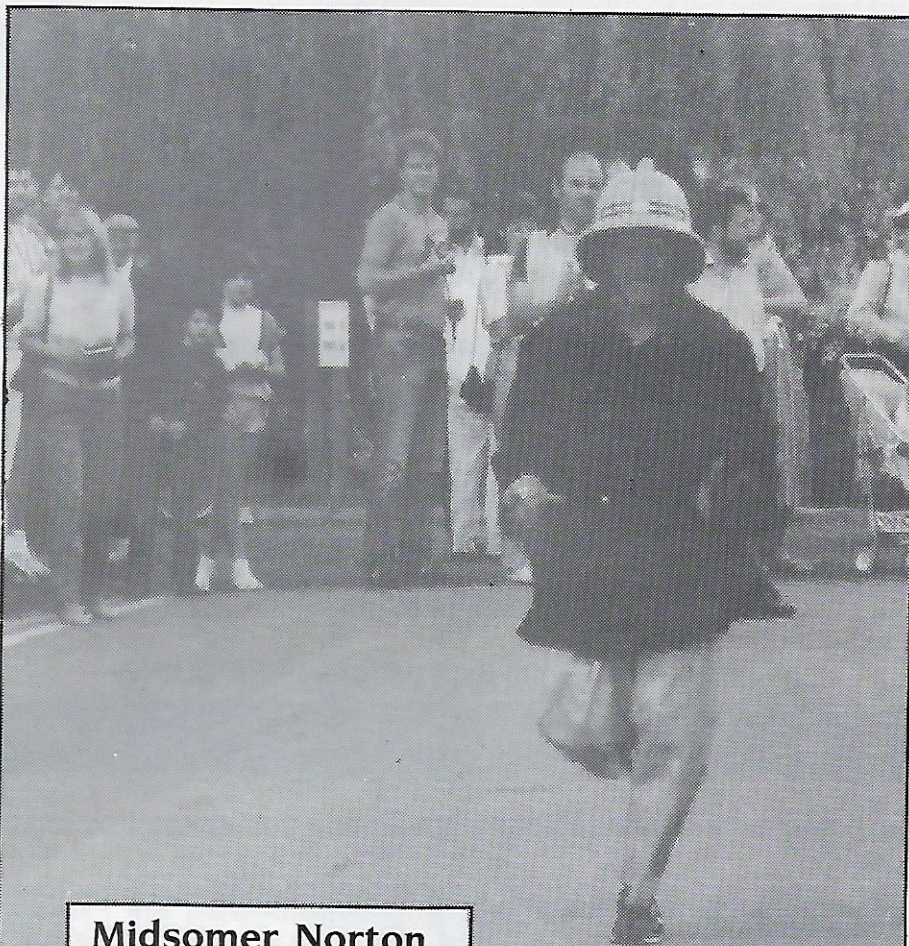
3rd: T. Boss W/Mids 32 mins 31 secs

Team positions were as follows:

1, G.M.C.; 2, Hereford and Worcester; 3, West Midlands; 4, South Yorkshire; 5, Leicestershire; 6, Buckinghamshire; 7, Merseyside; 8, Hertfordshire; 9, Avon.

K. Martin won the National o/40 award while Chris Pillar (Devon) won the S.W. District Cross Country Championship.

After the event, competitors and their families returned to Headquarters for the presentation of awards and buffet, the presentations being made by the Chief Officer.



Midsomer Norton Half Marathon

On the 30th June 1985, Sub-officer Pete Stobart of Station A2 Southmead, took part in the Midsomer Norton Half Marathon. He completed the course in a very commendable time, 1hr 55m, but as usual with Pete, he did it the hard way wearing full fire fighting kit. Congratulations Pete on a great effort.