

# COUNTY OF AVON FIRE BRIGADE MAGAZINE



• SUMMER 1987 •





# COUNTY OF AVON

## FIRE BRIGADE MAGAZINE



### COUNTY of AVON

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#### FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Mr John Roberts, Regional Director of Tesco Stores Ltd. who sponsored the recruits pass out parade, with the prize winners.

# FOREWORD

IT is with pride and pleasure that The Bristol Exhibition Centre pays host to the National Fire Exhibition in a long line of prestigious events which have taken place in the venue over the past 10 years since the exhibition centre was first opened.

The story of the life of the exhibition centre is indeed a fascinating one.

It was founded in a former Customs and Excise warehouse which used to receive brandy and other spirits until the City Docks trade gradually disappeared.

The property stood empty and neglected for many years in a run-down derelict area even though it was adjacent to the City Centre itself and close to Bristol's commercial heart.

The premises were taken over by Bristolian Ray Purnell who privately funded the conversion works to create the exhibition venue by selling land and property in the ownership of the family business.

The premises were taken on a short lease basis with the promise of a normal long-commercial lease should the project succeed. At that time the exhibition industry was in serious decline and long-established venues were closing throughout the country.

The exhibition centre thrived and prospered under its Director Raymond Purnell until it became recognised in the exhibition industry as being the leading provincial exhibition centre in the United Kingdom at that time.

The programme of events is exceptionally varied and superbly balanced between trade and public events and a multiplicity of titles. The exhibition centre management itself organises a number of highly successful events and finances others with the balance of events undertaken by a large number of independent Organisers.

Tens of millions of pounds worth of business annually is stimulated for the region and upwards of 650,000 visitors attend the events throughout each year. Hundreds of new jobs have also been created with the establishment of the exhibition industry in Bristol. The venue has become one of the few viable and self-financing ones in the country and with its superb dockside and city centre location, it makes an ideal venue for prestigious events and generates a convivial atmosphere upon which events great and small thrive.

Without a doubt the members of the Fire Service will come to view their Bristol event as a successful and memorable one and the staff of The Bristol Exhibition Centre will be pulling out all their stops to ensure it.

# ***BRITISH TELECOM***

## ***999***

A FIRE in a London doctor's home which claimed five women's lives led to the formation of Britain's world-leading 999 emergency telephone service 50 years ago this year.

The inquiry into the Wimpole Street blaze followed a complaint from a neighbour who had dialled the operator but had to wait so long that the Fire Brigade arrived before the call was answered.

It was discovered that the operators on duty had been answering calls about the fire from other people but there was no way of distinguishing priority calls from non-urgent ones.

As a result, the 999 service — the first of its type in the world — was born. Even today few other countries operate such a system — a single, easily remembered number available nationally.

The first reported success of the service came after only five days when a burglar was caught within five minutes of a 999 call.

The number 999 was chosen for several technical reasons. One was the button A and B coin boxes in the public kiosks of the time which needed money inserted except when dialling 0. With a simple modification the free facility was extended to the 9.

All other three-digit numbers were insuitable. 0 connected to the operator in the normal way, 111 could be triggered accidentally by telephone lines touching in the wind, and numbers from 222 to 888 were in use by customers.

During 1938, the service was extended to Glasgow and by 1948 all large towns with automatic exchange equipment had the facility while kiosks in manual areas were fitted with alarm buttons.

Today, there are 14,000 specially trained operators at 200 centres around the country who provide the link between the public and the emergency services — police, fire, ambulance, coastguard and cave and mountain rescue.

Last year more than 17 million calls were made and British Telecom now operates the service for the cellular radio networks Cellnet and Racal Vodafone. It even provides it for customers of Mercury's rival telephone network.



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# FROM THE CFO'S DESK

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IT would seem most appropriate on this occasion to offer words of welcome — firstly to our recent batch of Wholtime Firefighters and Control Operators who have now joined their shifts after passing-out on the 18th June, 1987, and secondly to the delegates and exhibitors to the Fire '87 Conference to be held here from 20th September. I am sure that our visitors will find us "Ship-shape and Bristol Fashion" and we relish the task of proving to the organisers that they were very wise in choosing such a splendid venue and that it would be sensible to consider a return to Avon in the not-too-distant future.

With regard to the Passing-Out Parade, may I take this opportunity of thanking Councillor Michael Moore, JP, for his genuine interest and dedication to our Service by performing his duty as "Inspecting Officer" in such a creditable manner and also congratulate my Training Department and the passing-out Recruits on their skills and professionalism at this important function. I am most grateful also to the local Management of Tesco's who not only sponsored the day's proceedings thus enabling wives, girlfriends and families to enjoy an unforgettable day, but also provided a perpetual trophy to be awarded to the most improved Recruit of the Course.

Congratulations are yet again due to our First Aid Team who, under the captaincy of Station Officer Mike, have won several trophies so far this year and will be representing the British Fire Service at the Grand Prior's Trophy Competition in Croydon on the 1st December next.

The Brigade generally appears in good heart and continues to respond to the increasing commitment to the public at large. Whilst we have escaped severe curtailment of service and modest development, we must never be too complacent in our outlook and be ready to defend ourselves in the areas of "value for money" which have tended to become paramount, particularly within Local Government.

Our fleet of appliances continues to improve and, with the delivery of three further Saxon pumping appliances in the autumn, the standard and reliability of reserves should improve considerably — besides making our quest for "standard stowage" a little easier to achieve. The fact that we have now entered into a three-year contract with Saxon's (fifteen over that period) will enable the Brigade in general, and workshops in particular, to enter a phase of stability with added confidence.

May I thank all staff, both uniformed and non-uniformed, for their continued dedication and support — and may you all return from the annual leave periods with increased energy and fulfilment to enjoy what I am sure will be a highly successful Conference in September.

**F. G. WILTON**  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

# BOB BAIRD

## NEW MANAGER OF BRITISH FIRE SERVICE FOOTBALL TEAM

Bob, on getting married to Von in 1971, decided to make a clean break and move away from the London area and start a new life in the West country.

The area he chose was Melksham, Wilts and immediately signed to play professional football for Frome Town in the Western League.

In 1975 he decided to join the Fire Brigade and on completion of his training was posted to Station B1 Bath where he still serves as a member of White Watch. He continued playing for Frome Town but as a non-contract player and whilst there, was selected to represent the Rothmans Western League.

In 1977 Bob moved on to play his football with Yeovil Town in the Southern Premier League, staying with them until 1981 at which time they were playing in the newly formed Alliance League.

From Yeovil he moved to Trowbridge Town who were playing in the Southern League, where he played until he finally gave up playing at senior level.

During the time Bob played as a 'Pro' he also represented both the Brigade and the South West and in 1977 was selected to represent the English Fire Service and became their regular goal-keeper until 1985. On two occasions that Bob played at international level, he was chosen as 'English Player of the Match'. Firstly, against Scotland in 1978 by the great Liverpool manager, Bill Shankly and then again, versus Scotland in 1980 by the former Eire and Man. Utd. player, Tony Dunne.

In 1979 Bob was selected for the British Fire Service Team which travelled to Holland to play in the first ever European Fire Services Championship, where they were successful in winning the tournament and was again, a member of the side that successfully defended the Championship in London in 1983.

Bob has not only been contented with being a very successful player of the South West side taking them to the district finals twice, being runners up in 1982 and winning the competition in 1983.

Now to cap a very successful career in football, on 14th April, 1987, Bob was appointed Manager of the British Fire Service Team on a three year contract.

We all wish him every success in his new post.

P. CAUSON

## MARLWOOD SCHOOL EGG RACE

On Saturday 6th June three recruits from the Brigade Training School, Louise Griffiths, John Brown and Gary Thompson, competed in the Marlwood School Egg Race.

The objective was to design, make and operate a vehicle to carry one person, (to be the sole power source), and must incorporate a device to pick up an egg, carry it, and deposit it at the end of a flat course that included turns and a short reversing section.

Although the weather was particularly windy, our entry stood up well to the elements and we managed to come a very respectable second place, just being beaten by the Army Apprentices. (Not bad going considering we only had a few days' notice). Commiserations to the Methodist Church's team whose vehicle fell apart after completing half the course (so much for heavenly guidance!).

The presentation was carried out by the school's headmaster and we each received a plaque and certificate.

An enjoyable day was had by all and there is no truth (not much anyway) in the rumour that the pupils at Marlwood School have got scrambled eggs on the menu all next week!

LOUISE GRIFFITHS



# DIVISIONAL OFFICER J.T. BARNES

**John Terrence Barnes retired as Divisional Commander, 'C' Division on the 30th April 1987 having completed almost 31 years' service with this Brigade and the former Bristol Fire Authority.**

He first joined the Service on the 28th May 1956 when he was 25. Previously he had been engaged as a panel beater and tinsmith, (the latter when he helped to produce the famous "Bristol" car at B.A.C.) He had already completed two years' National Service with the R.A.F. on joining the Brigade. He served under J.Y. ("Joe") Kirkup initially until Ken Holland assumed command of the Bristol Fire Brigade in September 1960. His early probation reports identify him as a man destined for promotion.

Like all good Firemen John rapidly got himself on the injury list, fortunately for only minor injuries, put down at that time to his "natural keenness and enthusiasm". By 1958 he was already trying to further his career and was studying for his I.F.E. qualifications. He had his first association with Fire Prevention when he was promoted to the rank of Leading Fireman in 1962 and transferred to the Brigade's Fire Prevention Department, where he gained promotion to Sub Officer in 1964. He remained in Fire Prevention until he was promoted to Station Officer in June 1965. At about this time John was applying for vacancies across the country but luckily for the Brigade these proved to be unsuccessful. In March 1972 he was transferred to Station No. 5 Bedminster and on the advent



of Avon in April 1974 was promoted to Assistant Divisional Officer and transferred to 'C' Division Headquarters at Weston-Super-Mare. In November 1977 he was appointed as Deputy Divisional Commander in the rank of Divisional Officer III and he and his wife settled at Redcliffe Bay in March 1978.

In 1979 John took passage on the M.V. "Albright Pioneer" to Newfoundland and back to familiarise himself with the handling and storage arrangements for bulk phosphorous, then being imported in quantity through Portishead. Whilst the trip was very definitely educational, it slotted in very well with John's love of the sea.

John's next milestone was his involvement with the notorious Redcatch Road affair, a potentially very high

*The photograph shows John giving a radio interview to Claire Gribben of GWR Radio on his last day whilst handing in his kit at Brigade stores.*

risk incident with which many of us became increasingly committed to over a long period of time and when his expertise and previous fire prevention training were invaluable to the Brigade. In January 1986 he was promoted to Divisional Commander, 'C' Division (Divisional Officer Grade I), a post which he held with distinction until his retirement earlier this year.

John proved himself to be an excellent officer, well liked and respected by those under his command including both wholtime and retained personnel, as borne out by the apparently endless round of farewell "do's" on his retirement. We wish him and Kathleen good health and happiness in the future.

**BARRY HOOK**



Friday the 10th April was a black day on the M5 motorway. Five people died in two horrific road traffic accidents. The first at 0859 was at Avonmouth adjacent to Junction 18 when an Allegro car travelling north crossed the central reservation and collided with a Volvo Estate travelling in the opposite direction on the southbound carriageway. A young man and his girl friend in the Allegro and the front passenger, an elderly man, in the Volvo, died instantly. Crews from A1, A3 and A5 released the trapped driver from the Volvo and cleared the motorway of the debris.

Later the same day at 1431 crews from C1 and from Somerset Fire Brigade, Burnham-on-Sea, were called to another road traffic accident just south of Junction 21 Weston-Super-Mare, in which two young ladies died when the Fiesta car in which they were travelling was crushed between two other vehicles and burst into flames. The driver of a passing tanker containing bulk CO<sub>2</sub> tried desperately to extinguish the blaze using the load from his lorry but was unable to get close enough because of the intense heat and smoke. The crews released the dead from the wreckage using the Hurst equipment.

Photographs by courtesy of South West News



# ROY KEATES RETIRES

Although the 1st January marks the start of a new year for all of us, for the majority it brings little alteration to our normal working lives and daily routines.

For Roy Keates however it marked the start of a completely new way of life, this being his first day of retirement after 23 years' service in the Brigade.

I transferred to Red Watch some 10 years ago and following the retirement of Bert Jennings and transfer of Bill Robson to C1 Weston-Super-Mare in exchange for Ian Beachgood (we got the worst of the deal), Roy was left the "old man" of the Watch. Roy's retirement now means I have had this "honour" bestowed on me, being the old man at a young 39 years.

Having known Roy for so long, Martin Cottrell and myself thought it a good idea to take the "retired couple" and family together with Red Watch past and present, to a local restaurant for a celebration meal.



With Roy's immediate family 34 people showed interest, but by the time of booking, numbers had diminished to a disappointing 25.

The celebration meal was held at Heathcourt Restaurant on 31st January, one calendar month after his retirement, and a good time was had by all.

To mark his retirement Roy was presented with a snooker cue. An obvious choice I supposed with his current interest in the game and one I've no doubt he will make good use of.

Wishing Roy all the best for a long and happy retirement.

D. MOORE

## 500 CLUB

As most of you are aware, the '500 Club', until his retirement, was organised and run by John Barnes (Divisional Commander, 'C' Division), assisted by Carol Parker ('C' Headquarters).

As his successor I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for all his efforts during the past eight years; he really did some sterling work and he and Carol are to be complimented. I am sure he would like me to thank all the members and particularly the collectors on his behalf for their support, for without them there would be no Club.

The Sports Association benefits greatly from the '500 Club', whether it is a volley ball for the Watch, or goal posts for the sports ground, so we really do rely on your 10p's coming in.

New members wishing to join should contact me, Pat Causon, 'B' Division Headquarters, or my able assistant, Marion Muir (Registry, Brigade Headquarters).

PAT CAUSON

# FIRST AID TEAM

The First Aid Year has just started again and for us it was the organising and the running of the 11th "Jimmy White" competition. The whole team and trainers start working on writing the competition sheets and arranging judges and scenery at our A.G.M. and first training night on the second Monday of January each year. This competition is run at Brigade Headquarters for the Bristol Centre of the St. John Ambulance Competitions Committee and is open to invited teams to compete.

This year is the first year of running competitions at the new format i.e. pairs test and individuals, and as we always try to run the "Jimmy White" to "Grand Prior's" standard, we still had a team test of 4 members plus reserve, a 2 pairs test, a 4 individual test, plus a reserve test. At the "Grand Prior's" it will be 1 pairs test and 2 individuals plus reserve individual.

It was a very successful competition and all competitors and judges complimented the interpretation of the new rules.

The "Jimmy White" Trophy was presented to the winning team by Jimmy's widow, Irene, the other trophies, by the Chief Fire Officer, Mr F. Wilton.

The full result was:—

1st overall — South Wales Police 387 marks  
2nd overall — Torveau St. John 384½ marks  
3rd overall — Redruth St. John 362½ marks  
4th overall — Rawdon Colliery . 362 marks

The winners of pairs test (A) Torveau St. John

The winners of pairs test (B) Rawdon Colliery

The highest individual No. (1) Torveau St. John

The highest individual No. (2) South Crofty Tin Mine

The highest individual No. (3) British Gas South Western

The highest individual No. (4) South Wales Police

The highest reserve came from Rawdon Colliery

I would like to thank all of the Training Department for their help, with special thanks to

the 15 new recruits who were a credit to the Training Department and the Brigade on the day of the competition, also the Divisional Commander of 'B' Division for releases, as with 8 of the 10 team members being in 'B' Division and 6 being on the same Watch, it does cause problems in keeping manning up to strength.

The week after, on Sunday 3rd May 1987, the Brigade team comprising Station Officer M.B. Smith (Captain), Fireman J.M. Day, myself and Leading Fireman G. Bowden, with Temporary Leading Fireman A.J. Southard as Reserve, were placed 3rd in the South Crofty Tin Mines Open Competition at Camborne. This was quite a good result for us as it is the first time this team have worked together. In fact since 1985 when Mike Smith became Captain, he has not had a consistent team year after year due to promotions and other reasons.

The full result of the above competition was:—

1st: Grimthorpe Colliery . . . . 598 marks

2nd: Redruth St. John . . . . 562 marks

3rd: County of Avon Fire Brigade 537 marks

Leading Fireman Bowden also won the highest No. 4 individual.

On Saturday 9th May 1987 the same team as above were successful in winning the No. 6 Region, Fire Brigade Competition held at the St. John Headquarters, Bristol.

Full result:

County of Avon Fire Brigade . 403½ marks

Devon Fire & Rescue Service . . 308 marks

Hereford & Worcester Fire Brigade . 288½ marks

Leading Fireman Bowden also won the highest overall individual.

On Thursday, 18th June, the team competed in the Brigade Nationals at Moreton-in-Marsh and won the competition. They will now represent the British Fire Service at the "Grand Prior's" competition on 1st December at the Fairfield Hall, Croydon.

The opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors and publishers and may not represent the official opinion of the Fire Brigade.



## Extract from telex on National News Network:—

Fearless firemen carried out their highest-ever tree rescue yesterday (Mon) to pluck a ten-month-old kitten to safety.

Tibby the tear-away tabby lost her nerve more than 80 feet up a giant North American Redwood.

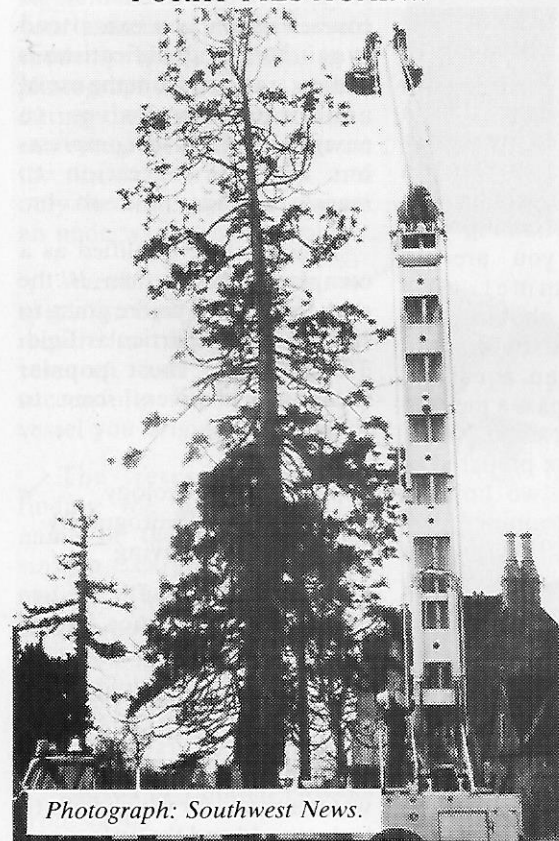
And she stayed petrified on her precarious perch for more than 48 hours until she was spotted by passers-by at Northwick Road, Pilning, near Bristol.

But yesterday (Mon) more than 50 school children watched on as firemen using a hydraulic lifting platform reached the stricken pet and returned her to tearful owner David North, aged ten.

Said RSPCA officer Brian Bicknell: "There's always a joke about firemen rescuing cats from trees.

"But this is one of the most spectacular rescues I have come across in 29 years experience".

*Editors Note: BOB HATHERLY TELLING PORKY PIES AGAIN!!*



Photograph: Southwest News.

## SPORTING CHANCE

1. Glasgow Rangers and Celtic Goalkeepers have both played for their countries but not Scotland. Who are they and which country do they represent?

2. Who was the first British boxer to win three Lonsdale Belts outright?

3. What three field events do women athletes not compete in?

4. Who won the 1986 World Indoor Bowls Championship?

5. Which British boxer defeated Don Curry to win the WBA, WBC and TBF welterweight titles?

6. Bruce Penhall was a world champion in which sport?

7. Which West Indian bowler took 14 wickets against England in the 1976 Test?

8. Which club did Stanley Matthews manage after retiring as a player?

9. Edinburgh staged the 1986 Commonwealth Games. Where and when were they last staged in the U.K.?

10. Who in 1966 became the first player to be transferred for £100,000 in British football between two League sides?

## POINTS TO PONDER

A woman's answer to eternal life is to keep forgetting her age!

Of the 6 rabbits who escaped from a pet shop in the city, only 122 have been found.

Overheard on the mess deck:—

"The pendulum has gone a full circle!"

Overheard on the top floor:—

"We're not going to stand for this sitting down!"

Overheard in the Social Security Office:—

"I never had a mother, we were too poor!"

A woman out window shopping longingly looked at an evening gown displayed in a leading fashion house. Whilst viewing the gown in the fitting room, her conscience got the better of her and she uttered: "Get thee behind me, Satan!", whereupon a voice was heard to say: "It looks o.k. from here too".

The wedding of Retained Fireman Adam Lew of B3 Paulton took place at Clutton Parish Church on Saturday March 21st.

A guard of honour was formed by the lads at B3.

Adam and Dee knew nothing of the arrangements that the lads had made.

Dee had told her parents that she would like to go to her wedding in a Rolls Royce, but she had not banked on a Rolls/Dennis Fire Engine.

After the ceremony Adam and Dee were driven to the reception at Farrington Village Hall in the fire engine.

At the evening reception/



party, all the lads and their wives joined the happy couple and a good time was had by all.

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## THE SILENT WORLD

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Silent World is the most suited definition of life beneath the sea. As a diver, the only sound is that of the bubbles from the exhaust on your breathing apparatus.

Diving is one of the few sports where you can literally get away from it all, leave the world we all know and enter an alien world, where you are the intruder and where one error in judgement or equipment failure could cost you dearly, but with the right training behind you, the amount of enjoyment and knowledge to be gained is endless. Even now, after more than 15 years of active diving, my interest and the enjoyment I get from it, are the same as when I first started. Every dive is different and there's always the chance of finding something unexpected.

As an amateur diver there are many fields to specialise in, but the only way to start is to get properly trained. The way

to go about this is to join a club affiliated to the British Sub Aqua Club. Nearly all of these clubs have their own supply of equipment which you can borrow for training, and a nucleus of qualified instructors to teach you. Before you can begin training you will have to take a basic swimming test. Provided that you are an average swimmer and reasonably fit, it should cause you no problems. Before you can start using an aqualung, you will have to pass a medical which includes a chest X-ray. Providing you are prepared to put aside about two hours a week for pool training, then after about 16—18 weeks, if you have successfully completed the pool work, you should be qualified enough to try an open water dive accompanied by an experienced diver. One of the prime rules in diving is that you never dive alone.

The training within the

British Sub Aqua Club is progressive and the number of courses which you can attend to gain further qualifications is endless, ranging from the use of underwater explosives to navigation, from decompression chamber operation to marine salvage, and so on.

Once you've qualified as a competent diver, then is the time to decide if you're going to specialise in a particular field. Three of the most popular fields which divers seem to follow are:—

Marine Biology  
Underwater Photography  
Wreck Diving

Marine biology is a very specialist subject, it requires no specialist equipment but does involve a lot of study and reading to know your subject. Some of the divers who follow this subject have their own salt water aquariums which have to be kept cold and the water must



contain the correct amount of salt. To ensure the ratio of salt to water is correct, I know of one person who once a month makes a trip to the south coast to collect about 20 gallons of sea water in jerry cans.

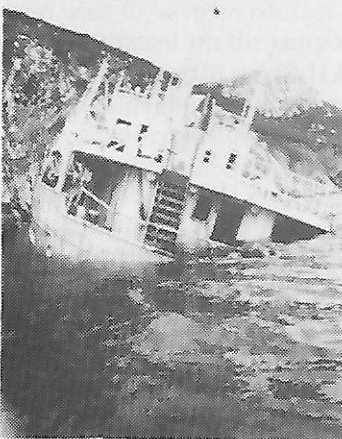
Photography, on the other hand, requires lots of expensive equipment, if it is done properly, cameras, flash guns, lenses and waterproof housing to keep them all in. Underwater photography is definitely a skill which comes with experience because, not only is the subject usually moving, but so is the photographer. Some of the other problems which make it difficult are the limited amount of light, sediment suspended in the water, the refraction of water makes things appear to be nearer than they really are and makes them look one third bigger. Add to these that any of your camera equipment could suddenly spring a leak, your photographs are not ruined during the developing and you can recognise what appears on the finished print, then and only then can you call yourself an underwater photographer.

Wreck diving needs no specialist equipment but does require a fair amount of research and planning to successfully finish up on the vessel you originally intended.

The research involves finding the location or the name of the vessel, date of sinking, cargo, the list is endless. Thankfully there are several sources of information which can be put to good use:—

The Hydrographic Department, Taunton (wrecks from 1913)

Lloyds of London (wrecks from 1890)



National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (wrecks from 1741).

There are several other

sources but these are usually the best for maximum information.

With the Hydrographic Department and Lloyds, all you need do is supply them with the name or the supposed position and for a small fee they will supply you with a computer print out of everything known about the vessel.

The planning involves actually finding the wreck, diving it, and hopefully bringing up something from it. Other factors to consider when planning a dive such as this, especiall if the wreck is in deep

water, are: the experience of the dive group, method of getting to the dive site. Many deep water wrecks are beyond the range of inflatable boats so consideration must be given to the chartering of a large boat such as a trawler, depth and tides around the wreck, weather conditions and safety requirements.

These are two categories of wreck which require permission before diving them:—

1. A designated war

grave—this is a vessel or aircraft which, at the time of its sinking, was either a merchant vessel under contract to the Ministry of Defence, or a warship, where bodies are known to be inside. The Ministry of Defence must be contacted for permission.

2. A wreck which has been designated under the Historic Wrecks Bill, which means it is considered to be of archaeological interest and licences will be required to dive and work on the wreck. These wrecks are

nearly always ships constructed of timber and dated between the 16th and 19th centuries.

Finally, it does not matter which avenue of interest you follow, once you are under water you are in a different world—a silent world.

NICK BAKER

N.B. Nick Baker is a member of the British Sub Aqua Club, and an instructor for the Bristol Sub Aqua Club at Bristol Polytechnic. Well done, Nick.



**FIRE SERVICES  
NATIONAL BENEVOLENT FUND**

## A Division

### Christmas Carol Float 1987

Fri 11th Dec	
Sat 12th Dec	Toys R US
Mon 14th Dec	
Tue 15th Dec	Leos Filton
Wed 16th Dec	Broadmead o/s B.H.S.
Thu 17th Dec	Broadmead
Fri 18th Dec	Thornbury
Fri 18th Dec	Southmead (eve only)
Sat 19th Dec	Broadmead
Mon 21st Dec	Avonmouth
Tue 22nd Dec	Avonmouth
Wed 3rd Dec	Carrefour
Thu 24th Dec	Carrefour

### Stn Grd Duty Watch

	Red
A5	Blue
	White
A5	White
A1	Green
A1	Green
A6	
A2	Green
A1	Red
A3	Blue
A3	White
A5	White
A5	Green

Support from all members of the County of Avon Fire Brigade, at any venue, would be very helpful and appreciated, and extra effort in Broadmead *will* collect a lot of money.

Please see your station rep, as to times and other arrangements.

IAN SATHERLEY,  
Carol Floats Organiser.  
262061 ext 282



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# THE LOSS ADJUSTER AND THE FIRE BRIGADE

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Have you thought about what happens when the Brigade pack up to leave a fire?

The site is devastated. The problems include an anxious Chairman who had not planned for this eventuality. The business books have been lost in the fire. Head Office are demanding details. The Company Secretary is suddenly concerned about the adequacy of the sums insured. The Managing Director is demanding how quickly the insurance claim (which he has not made yet) is going to get paid. The Works Manager is being badgered by the Building Inspector who is talking about serving a Dangerous Structures Notice. Stock is deteriorating, the machinery is wet and rusting, the computer has been destroyed. The Company want instant confirmation that they can throw everything away and have a brand new factory, fully equipped to a totally new design. The Unions are concerned about redundancies; the Sales Director points out that there is no longer any production capacity and sales are being lost by the hour.

There is, however, a doubt about the cause.

Who is that shadowy figure in the flash boiler suit taking photographs and pestering the Senior Brigade Officer for details of the make-up, stop, how the structure reacted, were there any corrosive fumes and most of all, his opinion on the supposed cause?

The Chartered Loss Adjuster is an independent claims specialist normally taking instructions from an Insurer. Adjusting a claim is the work of ascertaining the proper liability of an Insurer for a loss within the terms and conditions of the policy of insurance.

It is the Loss Adjuster's duty to investigate the cause, confirm the policy conditions have been observed and make preliminary enquiries into the nature and probable extent of the claim which the policy holder will be submitting. Advice will be given to the claimant on measures which will help to mitigate the loss. He may need to consider whether someone else may be responsible and if so, obtain statements and physical evidence to use later when recovery of the Insurer's outlay from a third party will be sought.

When the claim is presented, the Loss Adjuster will check it for quantity, description and pricing during final negotiations before reporting to Insurers recommending payment.

The Brigade's skill in tackling and extinguishing fires, protection of lives and property, as well as advice on causes and future preventative measures are widely appreciated by the Insurance industry.

The Loss Adjusters in Avon have good relations with Avon Fire Brigade but outside the area, however, there are some Brigades who wish to have no contact on site whatsoever and following a fire they are not prepared to make any comment on the supposed cause.

In October 1977 I understand that the Home Office issued notes for guidance regarding Form FDR 1. They advised that some Authorities might want to blank out or omit any comment on the supposed cause when sending copies to anyone outside the Service.

Avon Fire Brigade take what I think is an enlightened view. They continue to record and issue comments on the supposed cause. My view is that you are ordinary professional men. You are first at the scene and with your experience and commonsense, you are often likely to spot something or to make a logical conclusion as to the cause. If so, then why hide it? No one is suggesting you are forensic specialists and we all know that the supposed cause is only your opinion. However, that opinion is often based on experience, knowledge, observation and commonsense.

I am not a specialist at Court procedure, but my overriding impression is that judges are impressed by commonsense people telling the story honestly as they see it, in a simple way.

There are some three reasons why we rely on your opinion of the cause:—

1. If there is something suspicious, to start the ball rolling;
2. If the fire is due to a trade risk, to avoid or reduce the possibility of a similar occurrence in the future;
3. If caused by someone's negligence, to pursue a recovery from that person or his Insurers.

If you feel that you have been let down by a Chartered Loss Adjuster who may have been indiscreet or dragged you into something which you feel is not your affair, then the Chartered Insitute of Loss Adjusters would like to hear about it, via the Chief Fire Officer.

M.L. Dunderdale  
Chartered Loss Adjuster  
2 Berkeley Square,  
Clifton, Bristol BS8 1HL

## MEANS ESCAPE??

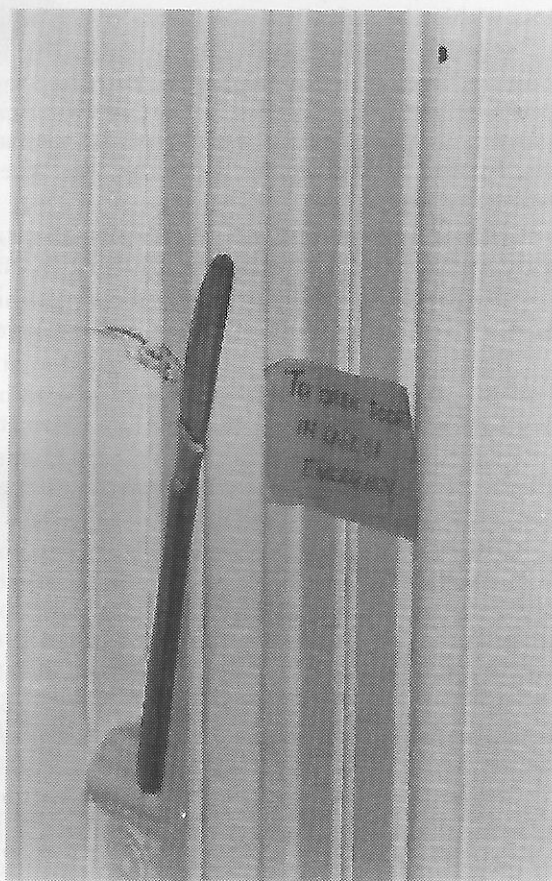
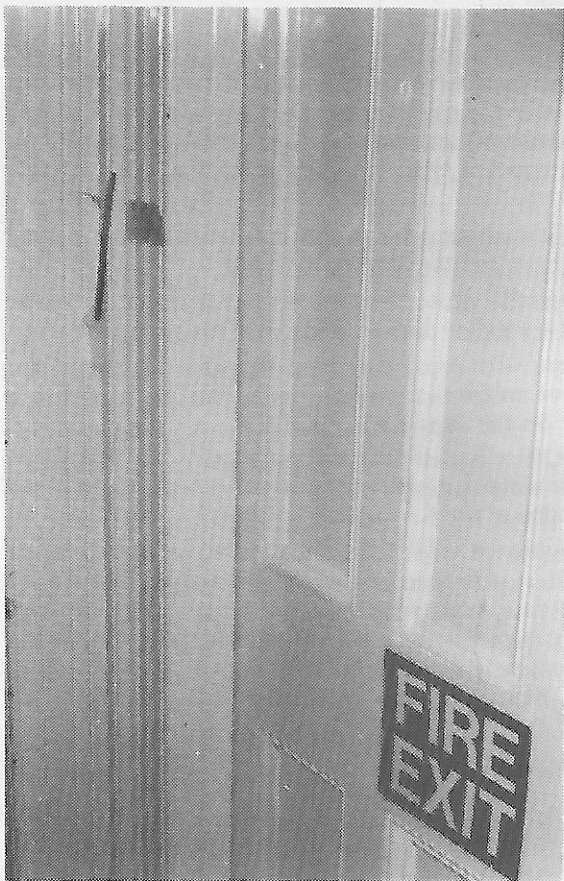
Spotted by an eagle-eyed Fire Prevention Officer during an inspection of a premises in Bristol, he became concerned that it might take some considerable time to hack a way through the locked "Fire Exit Door"; he was duly informed that the staff were well trained and versed in the procedure for using the knife to release the offending lock.

Having resolved not to make a meal of things, he decided to test the method for himself

and using the provided implement released the lock, only to find a startled lady sat in the bath!!

Not wishing to cause any further embarrassment to the staff or lady concerned, he retired gracefully (some 20 minutes later) and refused to reveal the whereabouts of this enlightening method of escape but assures us that he personally conducts regular spot checks of the arrangements and has asked to be included in the pre-determined attendance for this premises.

ANON, FOXTROT DIVISION





# BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE COURSE ROYAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE DEAF

BY JOHN PATRICK

In 1986, a certain amount of amusement was expressed when I was nominated for the British Sign Language Course at the Bristol Deaf Centre in Kings Square.

A number of people who know me well did not believe that I could stay silent for more than two minutes at a time!

Attending the same course with me was Keith Smith from the Fire Prevention Officer at Temple. For ten weeks, one afternoon per week, we had to stay *totally silent* for two hours.

The first session started with a short talk from a member of the staff . . .

"I am the only person you will hear speaking during the whole of the course—these two gentlemen are your instructors and they will introduce themselves. You are not permitted to speak to each other, and since your instructors are deaf, you can only talk to them with signs. Good bye, and Good Luck!"

With a minimal amount of writing on the blackboard, Dave and Melvin managed to introduce themselves and we then saw a silent video, which made no sense at all.

The signs for the letters of the alphabet were then shown to us, four at a time abcd, abcd, abcd, efgh, efgh, . . . etc.

By the end of the first session Keith and I had worked out the names of the other six members of the Class.

However, except for the alphabet, the signs still made no sense at all—some even appeared extremely rude!

Over the ten weeks, one member of the class dropped out. The other seven of us persevered! (It was, however, necessary for threats to be made during week 5 that if Keith chickened out and left me on my own something nasty would 'happen' to him.)

At the end of the course we could all understand a reasonable percentage of the signs we saw if they were made slowly and deliberately. We could also tell others in 'sign' our names, where we live, what our job is and with time to think, quite a range of vocabulary.

Dave and Melvin invited us to their Club for the Deaf one evening for a drink and a chat! Everyone on the course agreed to go.

We had a very enjoyable evening (those of us who turned up) since Dave and Melvin had made sure we knew how to sign 'Pint, Beer, Whiskey,' etc., and also a sign which turned out to mean 'my round'!

That was in July, 1986. Since then neither Keith nor I have had occasion to use BSL, so it was with some trepidation that I responded to a request to give a talk on Fire Safety to the Bath Deaf Club in March, this year.

After some banter as I sat at

my desk practising, (my hands waving around and my face and lips silently moving in the exaggerated fashion we had been taught) I gave up and went home to practise in the bedroom in front of the mirror.

Arrangements had been made for the Chaplain from 'Bath and Wells Diocesan Mission for the Deaf' to be there to sign for me if necessary, in a similar way to the newsreaders and interpreters on the HTV West News Programmes. However, I decided to 'have a go' at signing for myself throughout the talk.

As taught at the F.S. College, I arrived early (7.30 for 8.00pm) to assess the room and introduce myself to the Chaplain. In this case the accoustics were hardly a problem of course, but in the cellar bar under the roadway I was made welcome, and I had the opportunity to observe the members signing to each other (at great speed) and telling me about their club (much more slowly).

This acclimatisation period proved invaluable, and with a small amount of help to remind me of some signs not in my 'Dictionary' I was able to 'talk' to the members for about 20 minutes.

The Chaplain then interpreted some questions from the audience and with his help I was able to answer fairly well.

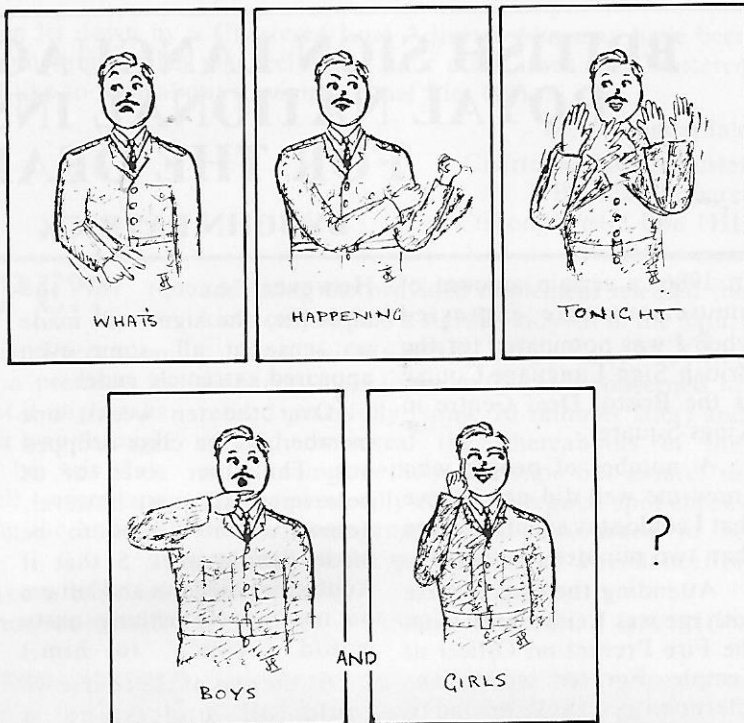
I was both surprised and pleased that after 7 months I was able to make myself understood, and to understand the signing from other people.

I have decided to take up the Club's offer and visit them from time to time to practise and, I hope, to improve my signing and vocabulary.

In conclusion I would like to acknowledge that although the 10 afternoons of the course were confusing, and very hard work, the value of the BSL course has been proved to me after 7 months of disuse.

So come on Keith, (and all the others who have attended the course):—

'Pull your fingers out and start a programme of Fire Safety education for the Deaf, in your part of the County.'



4½ Tog! 9 Tog!! 12 Tog!!! 13½Tog!!!!

## WHAT TOG!

It all started when my wife (God bless her) asked me to make the bed as she was rather busy at the moment. Now I haven't made a bed at home for longer than I can remember, but what could I do when she asked me in such a sweet way, so like the trooper that I am I said, 'Certainly my love' and off I went. Well to cut a long story short, and much wandering from one side of the bed to another, I completed the task, hospital corners and all, but I vowed that it would be the last time.

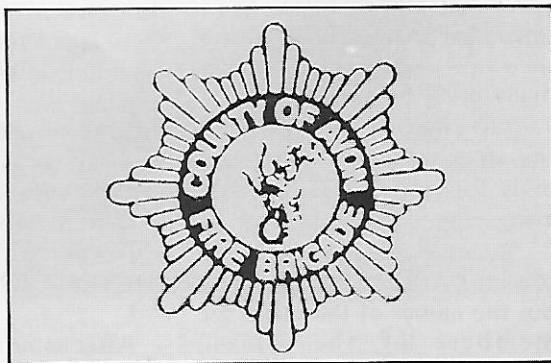
We had previously discussed the possibility of buying a Continental Quilt but there had always been an excuse for not bothering, with a niggling back ache these previous excuses seemed to disappear like chaff before a wind. With a delicate little smile playing around the corners of her mouth my wife dragged out the, ARGOS catalogue and the LITTLEWOODS catalogue.

I soon became fed up to the back teeth with Togs and for those of you out there who don't know that a Tog is, let me explain. Tog is the British Standards way of expressing the amount of heat that a body can hope to achieve when it is covered by a Duvet, or Continental Quilt.

Eventually we decided to play safe and buy a combination Duvet which consists of a 4½ Tog and a 9 Tog that can be fastened together to make a 13½ Tog or they can be separated for summer and autumn comfort.

For those of you out there who might be thinking of travelling down the same road let me just say that a 9 Tog on its own, is more than warm enough for a couple of warm blooded creatures, and I suspect that a 4½ Tog will serve us well in the summer months.

Gordon Pratten





# FIRE SERVICES NATIONAL BENEVOLENT FUND — 'B' DIVISION CAROL FLOATS

The 'B' Division Carol Float is at present our greatest money raiser annually and represents a great deal of hard work by members of 'B' Division Council of the Benevolent Fund and because of its seasonal nature, it means that all of our efforts with the Float are concentrated into roughly an 8-week period each year from November to December.

The history of the 'B' Division Carol Floats goes back to 1974 when Avon was formed. In those days, the Float took the form of a caravan chassis displaying a nativity scene using full size dummies appropriated from various department stores! These were complemented by spotlights, coloured bulbs and taped christmas carols—all this being powered by a small portable generator. The whole ensemble was then towed around 'B' Division by Workshops Land Rover which was borrowed for the month of December.

This Float soldiered on until 1978, surviving several attacks on dummies and light bulbs whilst in store in the A.F.S. garage behind B6 Speedwell during the months of the year when not in use. It was during 1978 that 'Barney' Pugh, the 'B' Division Council Secretary, discovered that the Brigade still had a Dennis F12 Pump Escape which had recently retired as a reserve appliance and was due for disposal. The 'B' Division Council put in a bid for the F12 and were successful in purchasing it and a steel Escape ladder (for cosmetic purposes only).

The F12 was used initially for fund raising at Fetes and was also used for providing water in two television film series, the first being the shipwreck scene in the I.T.V. series 'Kidnapped' and the second, a rain scene in the B.B.C. series 'The Strange Affair of Adelaide Harris'. Towards the end of the year work began on fitting the appliance up with coloured light bulbs on the roof. These illuminated the outline of the vehicle making it particularly attractive at night. Speakers were fixed to the head of the ladder and the trusty generator fitted into the transverse locker.

The F12 was a great success as a Carol Float being self-contained and less susceptible to the weather as the old trailer float had been. There were some problems—the main one being the

excessive fuel consumption as the 8 cylinder Rolls Royce petrol engine gulped petrol at an enormous rate although it gave the F12 a very good performance!

We used the F12 for 2 years until mechanical problems and rising fuel costs made us look for a cheaper to run appliance as a replacement. Fortunately, such an appliance was available in the form of a Dennis F28 Water Tender which at the time, was still on the run at B3 Paulton. In fact it was the last of its type in service with Avon Fire Brigade and had spent the whole of its life at Paulton, entering service with Somerset Fire Brigade in 1961. During its 17 years at Paulton it had amassed only 10,000 miles on the clock and this was the main factor in our interest in it as the F12 had considerably higher mileage and was much older.

In 1979 we managed to obtain the F28 when it was replaced. The F12 was sold to a private buyer in Box, Wiltshire and once again, we had a new appliance to work on.

With this appliance we decided to fit coloured light bulbs in the lockers as well as on the roof. The lockers were then covered with sheets of frosted perspex which enhanced the light from the bulbs. The locker shutters could still be closed to protect the perspex when the appliance was in motion. However, the piece de resistance was a full sized sleigh and reindeer made out of plywood, mounted on top of the Bayley ladder and capable of holding one unfortunate Fireman posing as Santa complete with sack!

The speakers were fitted to the ladder as before and the tape recorder and amplifier were fitted onto a custom built table top which fitted over the engine covers in the cab, enabling the driver to operate everything whilst out touring the streets. Spotlights were fitted to illuminate the sleigh, reindeer and Santa at night making the whole unit very eye catching—everything being powered by a Briggs and Stratton generator mounted on the rear of the appliance adjacent to the pump. Mention should be made here of Graham Smith of B2 Radstock who cut out and constructed the sleigh from Barney Pugh's design.

Over the last 7 years the appliance has been

improved and updated. The coloured bulbs in the lockers have been replaced by disco type coloured spotlights controlled by an auto-sequencer which flashes the lights at varying speeds and intensity. All of the 15w coloured bulbs on the roof of the Float have been replaced by strings of coloured 'chaser' lights in plastic tubing. These are secured to the appliance along the top, bottom, front and rear of the Float to outline the shape, particularly at night.

Changes on the top of the Float have not been so numerous. During 1984 the sleigh was replaced by a roof and chimney stack which Santa perched in. However, we reverted to the sleigh the following year. At the moment, a rocket or flying saucer is among possibilities for the future, so if anyone knows of one going cheap, please let us know!

The old generator blew up, literally, in 1983 and was replaced by a Honda 4KVA generator. This is now at its maximum output following the purchase of more chaser lights during 1986 but it is unlikely that we will need to add any more lighting in the future.

The present appliance is also used for Fetes as the older F12 was and has also provided water for the film industry, this time on two occasions as Castle Combe race circuit. The first being the B.M.W. United Kingdom presentation of the

then new B.M.W. anti-lock braking system. Very wet road conditions were required for the test so we obliged with 1,000 gallons or so! The second occasion was again to provide a wet road surface for a 'Total Oils' road safety film. Finally, several members of the Brigade have been carried in the F28 on their Wedding days, and they can still say they travelled in a Rolls as she is powered by a Rolls Royce 6-cylinder engine!

Since 1974 the 'B' Division Carol Floats have raised in the region of £35,000 with December, 1985 being the record breaking year with £6,500 being raised. The Float depends entirely on the support of members of the Brigade as without collectors, the Float is totally useless. In recent years support in 'B' Division has improved considerably and this makes the work of organising dates and building the float all the more worthwhile.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of 'B' Division, their friends and families who have supported 'B' Division Carol Floats over the last 13 years, either by shaking a collecting box or in other ways and look forward to your continued support.

MIKE DODD  
B1 Red Watch,  
'B' Division Secretary

**On reading our mag. for the spring,  
we spotted a "funny" old thing,  
the poems and odes it contained,  
were juvenile, weak and mundane,  
Not only were words sacrificed,  
but rhymes were used, even thrice,  
and in order to get it to fit,  
they altered and bent for to knit, get it!**

**So if on it, your wanting our views,  
we suggest in future don't use  
anything pathetic, boring or bad,  
just to fill up the space between ad's,  
or fill it with innuendoes,  
or in-jokes about senior F.P.O.'s,  
cause this mag. is supposed to be,  
for ordinary blokes just like me,  
not solely concerned with a few,  
who spend all their time at H.Q.  
WHAT ABOUT US AT A.2.**

**It did at least make someone at A2 put pen  
to paper for the first time in ages!!**

**Editor**

## **"THE JOYS OF TRAINING"**

Following the input on 'Smallgear', the recruits were being asked to explain the use of various items of equipment.

On being asked the use of an "Aircraft Sear Pin", the recruit questioned looked blankly at the Sub Officer and replied "Don't know Sub".

In the usual 'delicate' manner, the recruit had the full use of this item explained to him.

RESULT—Blank look—"But Sub, I don't understand that. We haven't got any aeroplanes"!

**BRIGADE TRAINING DEPARTMENT  
BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS**

P.S. Following this, I hear that the Brigade are looking into the possibilities of putting two F1 11's on the run at Station A1—Temple!

# FIRE BRIGADE SKITTLES KNOCKOUT

Red Watch, A1 Temple, were the winners of the first ever Brigade Skittles Knockout championship, held last year at "The Beehive", Henleaze, Bristol.

The runners up were Red Watch, A3 Avonmouth, who were literally outclassed, to the extent that Arthur Haines (A1) on the last "up" of the match scored the highest individual score of the competition (49). Now this was positively a choker for Mac Aston who attended the final, obviously expecting this trophy for an extremely high score (48). I must say I never realised before just how much Mac mutters!!

The competition was spread over two months before the relevant matches could be played off with the shifts to contend with.

The noisiest nights notably were C7 Blagdon against the ACO's Angels, not to mention B3 Paulton against the Dep's hooligans.

Cups and spanners (Stores and Workshops) and B6 Red Watch didn't raise a team and B1 Green didn't turn up—(lack of communication here, Moreton-in-Marsh has been blamed).

The only walkover results were therefore B6

White, A1 Red and A3 Red, all of whom, together with the Training Department team, were in the semi final after two rounds played.

The winner's shield was donated by Franco, the landlord, and the presentation of the trophies were made by the Deputy Chief Officer, who was touting for players for this year.

It is hoped the weather will be more conducive to taking advantage of the excellent garden facilities at "The Beehive" this year when the competition will be held again, and the children can play outside in the adventure playground.

A total of £175.00 was raised for the newly acquired Sports Ground commitment. I hope that we will beat this sum in the summer, and once again see the truly exceptional spirit in which the competition was played.

Who will remove the trophy shields from A1 and A3—we'll see.

Thank you all for providing the fiercely competitive spirit, especially Watches on Stations, not to mention retained stations in their own right.

Details of this year's event will be circulated in the summer.

STOP PRESS: Having now assumed my new role in the Brigade staff department I realise 1987's Knockout will be well underway by the time you get to read this article. Best of luck!!!

"KNOCKER" WHITE



*The Winners. Red Watch A1.*



# SKITTLES TEAM

The Fire Brigade Skittles Team pictured here with the trophies for league champions and runners up in the league knockout shield, prior to their last evening presentation night.

The event was at Beese's Tea Gardens, Brislington, after a leisurely trip down the river with a bar on board to stimulate conversation.

This year's presentation night was held at Bristol St. Andrews Bowling Club, with a disco and exceptional buffet. The cup for the highest average score was won by Bill Lewis—Ex A2, narrowly beating Steve Hill, A2 Red.

The highest individual score trophy was awarded to Paul Drake, Green A5, narrowly beating Chris Deverill, Red A5.

Mel Cummings (Knocker's mate) received the trophy for the most 9's scored. This achievement narrowly beat Dave Hutchings and Mac Aston, yet both these players received an award for the most ducks scored.

We played a total of 38 league games and won—well, not too many last season!! However, our captain, Pete Dobson and vice captain, Dave Coles, A2, are attempting to put this right.

Nevertheless, we are notorious for providing plenty of barracking and in general have no time for the mundane serious category of opposition.

This year's achievements, being limited, will therefore be presented in the Summer 1987, when our presentation evening will be coupled with a weekend trip.

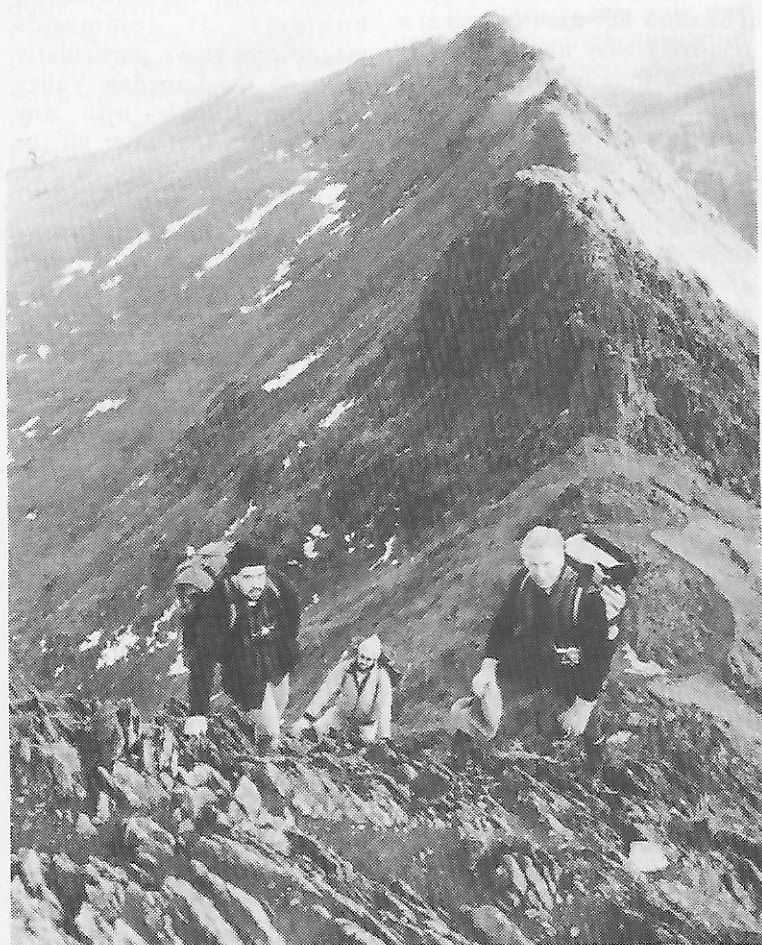
**"KNOCKER" WHITE**  
Secretary/Treasurer



County Of **AVON** Fire Brigade

# WINTER SPORTS

The British Isles are known worldwide for the variety of Public Houses and, certainly over at least the last 15 years, for the variety of beers sold in those establishments. Some, in addition, serve a large number of different whiskies. These establishments are situated virtually everywhere that human foot has trod, from the most sophisticated areas of large cities to remote centres of civilization consisting of virtually one church, one 'pub' and one man and his dog! A fascinating and enjoyable hobby can be built around the British 'pub' and as I am not known for my ability to blend in with genteel society, my study is confined to those less sophisticated areas where a spade is more often referred to as some kind of shovel. This means that I spend a number of periods away from civilization during the year and in order to allay suspicious wives, the four of us who make up the party go to hill walking and climbing areas.



When thinking back to previous trips, the photographs show places like Sgurr Alisdair on the Cuillin ridge on Skye, the Aonach Eagachridge, Glencoe, Helvellyn at sunset in the Lake District, Tryfan and the Amphitheatre Buttress in Snowdonia, Pen-y-fan in South Wales and many pure rock climbs which have proved very enjoyable. Other memories however revolve around names like Sligachan Hotel on Skye, Clachaig Arms, Glencoe, Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel, Langdale, the Golden Rule, Ambleside, Tyn-y-Coed, Capel Curig and many other names which are not mentioned, to avoid confirming the thoughts of our suspicious wives.

There is a serious side to this hobby in view of the need to produce photographs from the many remote spots we visit at all times of the year and in all weathers. A great deal has to be spent on the right gear. The essential items are related to the time of the year the trip is undertaken and as we, as a group (all male) prefer the winter, apart from good boots, warm clothing and good waterproofs, crampons and ice axes are needed.

The first trip of the year has, over the last 7 years, been during the first week in February. This year was no exception but it was to the Lake District for the first time in 3 years rather than Snowdonia. In January the snows came and fell heavily nationwide giving the prospect of good snow climbing. As the 31st January approached, the day of our departure, the weather became milder reducing our prospects and on arriving at our cottage our worst fears were

confirmed, the snow has disappeared from all but the tops and some gullies.

The first day was spent settling in to the cottage and refining the planned walks and climbs. The day also included a visit to the nearest pub. The Old Dungeon Ghyll, to sample the local brew which happens to be Theakstons, a cheeky little number! During the course of partaking of a few pints of this excellent ale, we decided to do a relatively short walk the next day at the head of the Langdale Valley going up Green Tongue to Bowfell into Ore Gap, Argyle Tarn and down Rossett Gill. This would enable us to divert if a good snow line was available.

Sunday morning dawned, for us, at about 9.30am, bright and sunny. After a hearty breakfast we departed with loaded rucksacks to walk off the excess of the previous night on easy ground before actually taking to steeper ground.

The first three miles of this route takes the valley floor before reaching rising ground which when reached seems to go up for ever. Conservation initially ranges from the weather to the way the walk will proceed, that which we intend to do for the rest of the week, past walks and climbs what we would like to do in the future (Everest K2, etc) to photography and many other subjects. As the ground steepens conversation lags as more effort is required to maintain forward momentum, and the group separates as each finds his own pace.

A short stop for a drink (lemon squash!), to survey the ground and to take a photograph or two, revealed an interesting snow line to the left



of our path. A traverse across the hill brought us to the start of the snow gully which was marked by a massive ice flow. The snow line itself started at a relatively easy angle, but this was the time to draw ice axes and don crampons in anger. The snow was in perfect condition being firm and taking ice axe and crampons with no hint of slip or slide. The slope gradually steepened to about 65–70° of the last 50ft and we came over the top into brilliant sunshine, virtually at the summit of Bowfell. Although it was 1st February, a Sunday morning, there were about 30 people gathered on the summit. Striking up a conversation with two of this crowd who had climbed the gully in front of us, revealed them to be members of the Ambleside Mountain Rescue Team. They told us that the previous day they had performed a rescue from the bottom of the gully we had just climbed. The cause of the accident was failure to use crampons early enough and the result was a slip and a cracked skull, necessitating intensive care treatment!

Bowfell top is strewn with rocks, and its highest point, 2960 ft, is a pyramid shape consisting of shattered boulders. It commands magnificent views, particularly down to the Langdale Valley but the trouble with any highpoint is that after all the effort of getting there, you go straight down again.

The glorious weather continued as we went through Ore Gap to Angle Tarn to descend to the valley floor by way of Rossett Gill. The hard work was completed and all that was left was a steady walk on the flat. Conversation started up again, mainly extolling the virtues of the day and the walk, only occasionally interrupted by the sound of low flying RAF training jets.

Our arrival at the Old Dungeon Ghyll was prior to its ability to serve us with a foaming libation, but after a couple of cups of coffee that problem was soon resolved. After a few pints and 'phone calls to the wives, we returned to the cottage at about 9.30pm. Night caps, arguments and snacks filled the gap until we went to bed.



Monday morning dawned, at about 10.00am as far as we were concerned, wet and horrible. It did not bode well for a good walk and a visit to Ambleside was felt to be more appropriate. The "Golden Rule" serves Hartleys beers, a precocious brew which helped to restore the body liquid levels. Whilst there we again met the members of the A.M.R. Team and we were invited to their headquarters on Wednesday to see and hear about their activities. A relatively uneventful day on the whole!

Food is a required fuel, as well as drink, and our main source of food was prepared by our Welsh wizard, Steve. Not quite Cordon Bleu, more Cordon Green, but nevertheless at the end of a hard day it was a welcome sight for the rest of us to see him set to his kitchen duties. The menus ranged from a delightful mixed grill of bacon, cumberland sausage, eggs, black pudding, fried bread, to beef and vegetable curries, and pork chops with a tossed salad, all washed down with the occasional whisky and odd bottle fo wine. Luxury!!

Helvellyn is the third highest peak in England at 3,118' and has many approach paths. The most interesting is the one from Patterdale on the easter side up Striding Edge across the summit plateau and to descend by Swirral Edge. Tuesday was as good as Monday was bad, clear blue skies not only in existence but forecast to last the whole day.

The route starts by rising steeply over grassy slopes, a hard slog, before the Edge is reached giving a much more interesting form of ascent.

Striding Edge is a sharp edged ride of rock which rises and falls along its length until a steep climb at the end reaches the summit. Although virtually all snow had disappeared, a broad band still remained on this last 100 feet or so. Luckily kick steps had previously been made and with care we were able to climb the band without too much difficulty.

Just below the triangulation point is a stone built wind break and when we arrived, there was another group of four who were intending to spend the night there. They were fully equipped to spend a cold night on the mountain and included in their essential items a flask of whisky each.

Our start on this walk was delayed by an unscheduled stop at a hostelry which opened at 11.00am and closed at 6.00pm, and was occupied by a small group of American tourists who wanted to talk to us, and it would have been rude to leave after only one drink! Because of this our arrival at the top of Helvellyn was later than expected, to the extend that only a short wait would enable us to see the sunset.

The views on the way up Striding Edge and from the top revealed dramatic rock and tops in all directions to completely repay the initial slogging walk. A number of photographs were taken of the sunset with and without special effect filters before starting on the descent. Another useful piece of equipment for night time walking in the hills is a head torch which leaves both hands free. Swirral Edge is similar to Striding Edge but much shorter.

A beautiful day was finished except for the daily

ritual of 'phoning our wives. The first two "phone boxes" were closed but the third showed lights, served a good draught Guinness and possessed a three legged dog. After a few "wets" we returned to the cottage for a substantial meal and a good night's rest.

Wednesday and Thursday have fallen into a blur of inactivity or a blur of something. Apart from the visit to the Ambleside Mountain Rescue Team on Wednesday evening followed by the "Golden Rule" and a vague recollection of a pub called "The Dun Horse" in Kendal (on Thursday) which served awful beer, very little to stir the loins happened.

The Ambleside Mountain Rescue Team operates from premises on the outskirts of Ambleside and consist of garage accommodation for two long wheel based Land Rovers and a lecture hall above. Within this area is contained all the radio equipment for emergency communications. The Team is involved with rescue work all the year round and may be called to other areas to assist other rescue teams, and can also call on the services of R.A.F. rescue helicopters.

The services of the Team are twofold, either to carry out rescues from a known area or to provide search and rescue teams over wide areas of the fells. Many of the rescues are related to slippery conditions causing falls related to poor footwear.

The visit was both interesting and enlightening in that it gave an insight into the problems experienced by a dedicated group of people working purely on a voluntary basis in this and other

mountainous areas of Britain.

Crinkle Crags are described in many guide books as forming a lofty serrated ridge comprising steep buttresses and gullies, providing scenes of desolation and grandeur. This was our destination on the last full day of our week. A semi-circular route from the Three Shires stone in the Wrynose Pass over Crinkle Crags and back to our cottage in Chapel Stile, meant using two cars, one to the Wrynose Pass and the second to collect the first!

As with most of the week, the day started with low cloud and drizzle but the fresh coldness of the atmosphere had its own enjoyment and after two miles or so the ground steepened in its approach to the Crags to provide some interesting scrambling. At this point the wind was increasing in strength and providing some difficulties. Walking is making forward motion by placing one foot in front of the other. The wind was giving the lie to that definition. The lifting of the

foot was relatively easy, but placing it where you intended was a different matter entirely, the wind tended to blow it sideways.

On reaching the ridge, the guide books previously mentioned state that the walker is faced with constantly changing and dramatic scenery. They forget to mention that in some weathers and conditions it is not possible to see further than the next few steps. Despite the lack of views this is an interesting route because of scrambling up and down craggy rock covered ground all above 2,400'.

After stopping for a bite to eat and coffee towards the end of the ridge, the wind brought a reward which repaid the effort of reaching the height, it cleared away the cloud cover revealing views straight down the Langdale Valley in one direction and towards Scafell Pikes in the other. Apart from a small amount of cloud around the highest "Crinkle", we were able to descend without

again being enveloped in cloud or "drizzled" on.

Friday is the day that weekend walkers and climbers arrive for their Saturday and Sunday activities. During winter weeks the pubs are not usually too crowded, but this was Friday! To the "Golden Rule" for a few glasses of forming Hartleys, to talk to people you could well meet again in a different area, before stumbling out at closing time to have a night cap and supper in the cottage in front of a glowing log fire.

The lamp was swinging and the beer was flowing, the talk became more and more blurred, and the evening ended with loud farewells and see you again on some other hills in some other place.

Saturday is hardly worth mentioning apart from the plans for February 1988 and the destination being Glencoe. Roll on 1988!!

COLIN C. PHILLIPS

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## METRICATION MUDDLE

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Twenty years completed, I am two-thirds  
of the way,

But, Boy, I have seen some changes  
since my joining day.

All this new language, it's all foreign to me,  
It's since we joined that "What's it", E.E.C.

It all started on the drill yard  
When I was on the branch,  
I shouted to the rookie, "Give us  
Ten pounds if you get the chance."

He stood there at the pump and  
Shouted back at me,

"The only money I have got  
Is for my toast and tea".

I shouted, "Water, Water,  
That is what I want."

He said, "Tell how many bar and  
I will give it right out".

"What's all this bar business,  
We ain't gone for a pint"

Then the young Sub shouted,  
"Get out some forty five  
And take aloft on the 135"

Is this a coded message?

What am I to do?

Look at that rookie,

He is getting out the hose,

Do they speak a language nobody else knows?

Drill is over and question time begins,

"How much in the tank" the Sub says to me  
400 gallons that I can see.

He says, "What's that in litres?"

I have not got a clue.

What with bars, litres and metres,

What am I to do, and not to

Mention them kilograms too!

## THINKER'S CORNER

"We trained hard—but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form up into teams, we would be reorganised. I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet any new situation by reorganising, and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress by producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralization."

Gaius Petronius  
(1st Century A.D.)

The objective of all dedicated employees should

be to analyse thoroughly all situations, anticipate all problems prior to their occurrence, have answers for these problems, and move swiftly to solve these problems when called upon . . .

However, when you are up to your backside in crocodiles, it is difficult to remind yourself that your initial objective was to drain the swamp.

Anon

Pass me another can of 'Fosters', Cobber!

Ed





# ENGLAND FIRE SERVICE

V

## WALES FIRE SERVICE

Wednesday 11th February 1987

On Wednesday 11th February I took to the road and made the short journey to Stroud in Gloucestershire to watch England play Wales in this year's Fire Brigade international. On obtaining a programme I at once realised just what a formidable side the Welsh were fielding, apart from the locks and one flanker, the other twelve players all turn out for a Welsh first class side, three of which were on the bench as substitutes at the recent international against France in Paris.

Wales won the toss and elected to play against the wind and rain in the first half. England kicked off and play was contested in the Welsh half of the field for the first 15 minutes when at last Wales, through a long kick, at last managed to cross the halfway line. This however turned out only to be a short incursion as the English forwards who were having a tremendous time, soon forced their team back into the Welsh territory. The remainder of the first half was fought in the Welsh half apart from three brief moments when Wales were able to enter England's half. Unfortunately for England, on each of these occasions Wales scored tries, one of which they converted but England for all their pressure could only muster one penalty goal,

although missing four other fairly easy kicks, so half time arrived with the England forwards having dominated the play only to see their backs throw away good possession and having to trail 14 pts—3.

During half time one wonders what Wales had in their oranges because they had the vast amount of the play and kept England penned in their own half for long periods of the second half, but full marks to the English forwards who although on the retreat restricted Wales to only two tries, both of which were converted, leaving Wales to run out winners 26 pts—3.

One bright note for England was the jumping and two-headed catching by the No.5, a very late replacement, who was not even named in the programme, but undoubtedly the man of the match was the Welsh captain, Anthony Griffiths, their No. 6, who plays first class rugby for Llanelli, a big hard running player who seemed to act as a magnet to the ball.

The match was unfortunately marred when the English right win had to leave the field with what appeared to be a broken collar bone and had to be taken to hospital, the only mode of transport available, yes, you guessed it, a fire appliance.

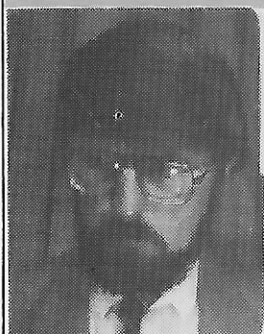
### Application for a British Visitor's Passport

What documents are needed?

#### Photographs

Two recent, identical photographs of yourself!!

B . . . . Y MACHINES!!





**Trust you with my dog? I wouldn't trust you with my daughter!!**

## **ANSWERS TO SPORTING CHANCE**

1. Rangers—Chris Woods, England.  
Celtic—Pat Bonner—Republic of Ireland.
2. Henry Cooper.
3. Hammer, Pole Vault, Triple Jump

4. Tony Allcock
5. Lloyd Honeyghan.
6. Speedway.
7. Michael Holding.
8. Port Vale.
9. Edinburgh 1970.
10. Alan Ball. Blackpool to Everton.