

**Avon Fire Brigade**



**AFB**  
AVON FIRE BRIGADE  
PREVENTION PROTECTION RESPONSE

# Magazine

Issue 1 | April 2004



**Graduation Day**



**Kilo passes his exams**

**Also:**  
**Brigade Control**  
**Focus on Paulton Fire Station**  
**Then & Now: Probationers**



## Contents

- 3 Incidents**
- 4 Equipment News**  
Temple crews just hanging around  
Command Support Unit  
The Trailer
- 5 & 6 Our People**  
Fire Service National Benevolent Fund  
Avon Fire Brigade Pensioners Association  
Avon & Somerset Brigades Old Comrades Assoc.  
Brigade Cleaners Scoop Top Award  
New trainee Kilo joins the Brigade  
Graduation Day – 12 February 2004
- 7 Focus on...**  
Control
- 8 & 9 Rogues Gallery**
- 10 Comment**  
The way I see it...  
Then and Now... probationers
- 11 Retained News**  
Refurbished and redecorated – retained gets revitalised
- 11 Anonimouse**  
How do I add the Fire Brigade Word Templates?
- 12 Sports and Social**  
Avon Fire Brigade Sports Association  
The 1000 Club  
Carry on boarding...  
Women on top  
Forthcoming events
- 13 Health and Welfare**  
Beef Orlando  
Red Hot Pork  
Jim Press' diet tips
- 14 A bit of a relief...**  
Caption Competition  
Dear Dippy  
Tales from the Brigade...
- 15 Tea time quiz**
- Back page A peek at the past... 1972**



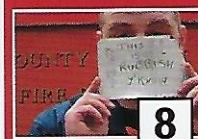
4  
Temple crews just hanging around



5  
Our award winning cleaners



6  
Graduation day



8  
Rogues Gallery



13  
Red hot pork

## From the Chief:



Welcome to the first edition of our resurrected magazine. We've had the magazine before and it's always been informative and interesting to read – I hope that you think the same about this one.

When the Internal Communications Survey was done, many of you were asked what you would want to see in our own magazine: you all wanted it to be focused on the people and events that happen in our Brigade and for it to be light hearted. The team that pulled the magazine together took this into account – they spent a lot of time round our Brigade collecting articles and ideas for it.

This magazine shows off some of the talented people we have in our Brigade, informs you about some of the things that are happening and also provides a lighter glance at life in Avon Fire Brigade.

*W. Pearson*

I hope you enjoy it.  
Kevin Pearson, CFO



Following Andy Goode's claims that he frequently gives CPR to animals:  
"You can get the mouth and snout in one go."

## Editor's note:



This magazine aims to be a light hearted and informative look at life round Avon Fire Brigade. Nothing in it is meant to cause offence or upset people.

I'm very grateful to all the people who have written articles and come up with ideas and inspiration for this magazine. I was told "if you want good ideas, get out there and talk to our people" and they were right.

If you would like to contribute to the next edition or have some ideas for it (July 2004 with a deadline date of May 3rd 2004) please contact me on ext 338. Please also write in / phone and tell me what you think of the magazine. This magazine is for Fire Brigade staff – but unless we know what you want and enjoy, we can't include it!

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**Many thanks to:**  
Pete Hamblin, Jon Mayo, Bob Smith, Natalie Venn, Ken Bennett, Martin Burnell, Nick Carlier, Paulton Fire Station, Nikki Sparks of Imagine IT, Tony Jackson, Red Watch Southmead, and Blue Watch Southmead and everyone who gave us ideas, input and "constructive criticism"!

**Designed and produced in-house by Avon Fire Brigade's Creative Services Team**



## Difficult rescue from road traffic accident

18.09 | 12th January 2004, St. Phillips Marsh

Fire crews took more than an hour to free an injured driver from the wreckage of his BMW car after it was involved in a head-on smash with another BMW.



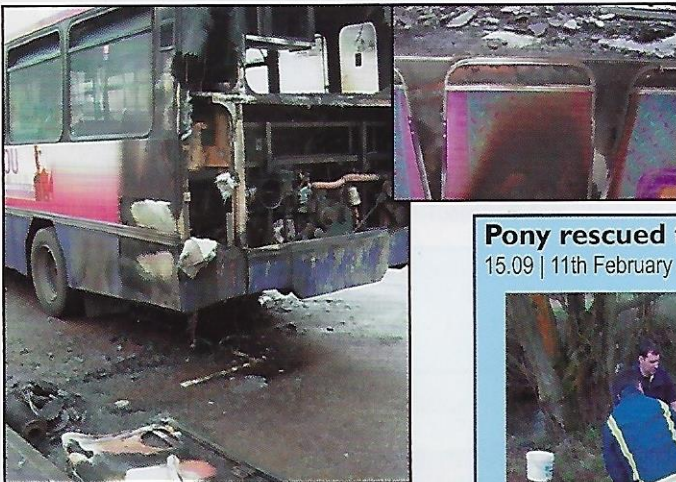
8th March 2004 - Rescue at the Gorge, Clifton, Bristol



8th March 2004 - Fire at Jamaica St. Kingsdown, Bristol



24th February 2004 - Fire in Ashcroft Rd. Sea Mills



5th March 2004 - Bus Fire, Filton Ave. Horfield, Bristol

## Pony rescued from river

15.09 | 11th February 2004, Combe Hay, near Bath



photo: Sam Farr, The Bath Chronicle



13th March 2004 - Fatal RTA, M4



7th March 2004 - Dog rescue, Hartcliffe, Bristol



19th December 2003 - House Fire, St. Pauls, Bristol

## Deleicate rescue of a trapped pony

12.45 | 5th February 2004, Severn Road, Hallen

A pony which had become trapped under a fallen tree had to be rescued by firefighters. Crews took 45 minutes to free the animal which was later checked over by a vet.





## Temple crews just hanging around

By Andy Gee

Crews from all four watches at 09 Temple took part in a series of rope rescue training exercises on a tower crane in Stokes Croft during November and December 2003.

The exercises had two objectives: first to test some new fall arrest devices that had recently come on the run and second to enable rope rescue operators to practice descending in "free air" rather than the usual "walk" down a cliff face or building.

The fall arrest devices consist of two lanyards that are attached to a full body harness. Large scaffold clips on the lanyards are used to attach the wearer to the structure whilst climbing, descending or working on it. For brigade rope rescue operators this gives greater safety and flexibility when working on metal structures such as cranes, masts and aerials.

The descent into free air (from the middle of the crane's jib) certainly tested a few nerves!

No matter how safe you know your equipment is, you still feel funny as you leave the relative comfort of the crane and put all your weight onto an 11mm rope!

This was a new experience for most of the rope rescue operators, but having done it once some wanted to go up for a second go.



"Wise" Paul Fear: I can remember when this was all fields...

Despite having to endure some typically cold and wet winter weather the training was completed successfully. Unfortunately, some of the techniques learned on the crane had to be used by Blue Watch two weeks later to recover a body from underneath the Clifton Suspension Bridge.

## The Trailer

Last year the Community Team took delivery of an Interactive Display Unit. (More commonly known as the trailer). It's taken to various events and can be themed to send out any current messages.

A lot of you will have seen the unit at various events during the summer season. These include St. Pauls Carnival, The Harbour Regatta and The Bristol Balloon Festival.

The majority of events take place at the weekend, so volunteers staff the unit – please contact Alan Middleton if you'd like to help. Also, if you're having an open day at your station this year, why not consider having this and the Kitchen Fire Display Trailer there? But please book early to avoid disappointment!



The Interactive Display Unit in action at Sandford School

## Command Support Unit

The Command Support Unit at Kingswood is due for replacement, at the grand old age of 17 years.

18 months ago a working group, led by ADO Pete Hamblin, began looking at a replacement vehicle. The group consisted of SubO Martin (10, Red) Lf Saunders (10, Red), Ff Cole (10, Blue), SubO Noble (10, White), Ff Hopkins (10, Green) Ff Taylor (10, FBU rep), representatives from Communications at Lansdown, Paul Beard (Fleet Engineer) and a Senior Management representative from Service Delivery.

The group visited Brigades in Dorset, Devon, London and Hertfordshire to look at their systems. These Brigades were chosen because they're similar to ours or had dealt with recent major incidents. The group also contacted other Brigades to discuss the technology they use.

A consultation was done with stations and all flexible officers to find out what they thought we needed.

As Pete Hamblin said, "We had lots of meetings. We did a lot of risk assessing and projecting what we wanted from it. We finally came up with a system that suits the needs of our fire brigade."

The working group settled on doing a similar thing to Dorset Fire and Rescue. The new Command Support Unit will be based on a Mercedes Vario Van. It will utilise IT and ruggedised laptops. There will be touch screens that you can 'write' on and



Bye bye old CSU...

we're hoping to include satellite technology.

The vehicle is at Saxons, in Cheshire, who are building the bodywork and putting it through the early stages of conversation. Bob Smith and his team are looking after the communications technology.

So when will it arrive? As Pete said, "We're hoping to get it in the next 6 months. There'll be training for crews at Kingswood and Brislington, who'll be sharing it on a 6 month rotation. This way there'll be two stations trained up to use it and who'll be up-to-date with the IT used in it."

Let's watch this space and hope that the hard work of Pete and the working group pays off soon...



## Fire Service National Benevolent Fund

Based in West Sussex, the fund provides practical and financial support to all brigade personnel - control, wholetime, retained and support staff, serving or retired, and their families. Help varies, from advice to sheltered accommodation, recuperative care, rehabilitation and therapy, in addition to its financial support.



The FSNBF has sheltered accommodation units in Littlehampton and retirement homes at Eamont Park in Penrith, Cumbria. To support the upkeep of these facilities, unused accommodation can be rented from the fund.

Littlehampton is a small seaside town, where the fund's Marine Court is situated, which offers facilities for rest and leisure. Alongside the sheltered apartments is a Recuperative Care centre.

Jubilee Therapy Centre is the FSNBF's Rehabilitation Centre. Based in Penrith the facility provides specialist therapy care to help people recover from injury, illness, surgery or stress. The therapy centre is run by a dedicated team of professionals and offers a wide range of treatments including exercise therapy, physiotherapy, and aromatherapy massage. The centre also has a jacuzzi, sauna, hydrotherapy pool and gymnasium.

The FSNBF provides practical help for firefighters and their families at its Rest and Recuperation Centre in Chudleigh, South Devon. At Harcombe House those with long-term illness, injury or disabilities can recover from the strain this places on family life, the stress of coping with shift work and the day-to-day dangers of the job. People can help out here in return for board and lodgings. Volunteers do a variety of jobs, from gardening and painting to laying patios and building footpaths. If you're interested, please call 01626 853641.

The FSNBF's helpline is the Fire Service's own advice service. It provides advice and information for all members ranging from state benefits, health and social care, finance and debt advice, to relationship, housing and employment guidance.

The helpline is free. Call 0800 389 8820 on Tuesday 2-4pm, Wednesday and Thursday 10am-12pm.

For more information on the services provided by the FSNBF contact your station representative or one of the area secretaries: Ian Satherley (Bristol), Mike Dodd (Bath - Red Watch 8120) or retained Ray Petty or Fred Bateman (W-s-M). Website: [www.fsnbf.org.uk](http://www.fsnbf.org.uk)

If you're interested in becoming a Station Rep please contact Ian or Mike.

## Avon and Somerset Fire Brigades Old Comrades Association

The association was formed in 1972 to bring together retired retained Fire Brigade personnel. This was extended in 1988 to include wives/partners as honorary members and more recently, currently serving personnel (with ages ranging from middle 20s upwards!)

The association usually organise two outings, two skittle evenings and an annual dinner each year. Forthcoming events include a trip to Blenheim Palace, Oxford, on 8 May and a day trip to Totness, Devon, including a boat trip to Dartmouth on 11 September.

With a membership fee of £2 per year, there are currently around 60 members. Although initially set up to keep Retained Firefighters in contact, anyone is welcome to join. For more information please call Honorary Secretary, Mary Willcocks 01275 794318 or President Mervyn Osbourne on Ext 234.

## Brigade Cleaners Scoop Top Award

The team of cleaners who make sure all the desks and offices are spotless at brigade headquarters every day have beaten off stiff competition from hundreds of other contract cleaners to clinch an award for their work. Mike Sweet, Val Dicks, Jean Hutchinson, Ron Bennett and Mary Bennett have received Bristol City Council's annual award for the best team of contract cleaners.

The group's supervisor, Jenny Johnson, says, 'I nominated them for the award because their work is always of such a high standard and even if the team is down in numbers, due to holiday or sickness, they always pull together and get the job done without complaining'. Many of you probably won't have seen the team as it's a 4.30am start for them in the week and they're often gone by the time we arrive at work but well done to you all for managing to scoop the Cleaning Awards Winning Team title for 2003.



Our award winning cleaners and their prize

## Avon Fire Brigade Pensioners Association

The Avon Fire Brigade Pensioners Association maintains a social contact for retired brigade personnel. A continuation of the brigade 'family', it also provides support for members in times of illness.

The association was formed 35 years ago and currently has around 450 members of all ages. Its oldest members are Ted Howard from Somerset, who is 93 years old and Mrs Kircup (from Canada), who is 100 this year! Membership is open to retired support staff and retained firefighters - including personnel who have been invalided out of service.

The association organises trips throughout the year.

Future trips include:

- A five day trip to the Lake District in April
- A day at Wilton House, Salisbury, June
- A day at Morwellham Quay, Devon, in September
- A weekend in Ostend, Belgium, to stock up on Christmas goodies in early December.

The association also join a marching squad at St Paul's, taking part in a wreath presentation on Remembrance Day and St Giles, Cripplegate, to remember those firefighters who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Meetings are held throughout the year and the association is always looking for new members. If you'd like further information on events taking place and how to become a member please call **Welfare Secretary / Chairman, Monty Briton, on 0117 9755 351.**

*In the next magazine we'd like to do a feature on pensioners: Where are they now?*

*If you're a pensioner, please call Helen Shrimpton ext 218 with your details.*

*Alternatively write to us at: Fire Brigade Headquarters, Temple Back, Bristol, BS1 6EU and tell us your name, age (optional!), where you worked, what you do now and include a recent photo if possible.*



## New trainee Kilo joins the Brigade

Kilo, a two and a half year-old male English Springer Spaniel, passed his exams in January this year, to join the brigade's current investigation dog Cracker on duty with trainer, Community Fire Safety Officer, StnO Ken Bennett.

Kilo's initial training was interrupted by the industrial action in 2002. After that Kilo wasn't responding to training with Ken because of their time apart so he took Kilo home as a pet, and began working with Cracker. Having built up a rapport away from the training ground, Kilo has now graduated with flying colours – thanks to Ken's time and patience.

Like Cracker, Kilo will help establish the cause of suspicious fires involving flammable substances. The dogs can be called in up to seven days after an incident.

Both Kilo and Cracker can detect up to 12 different accelerants such as petrol, white spirit or diesel. The dogs take a 'prone position' (body to ground on both front paws) when they find a suspicious substance, placing their nose where it's at its most concentrated. The crime investigation team then take the best possible sample for lab examination.



Ken is extremely pleased with Kilo's progress, "As Kilo is a smaller, more agile dog than Cracker, he's better suited to jobs in tighter spaces, making the team more flexible. He's a fantastic dog and we've already carried out a number of successful fire investigation jobs."

There are ten other Brigades with specially trained dogs like Kilo and Cracker.

## Graduation Day – 12 February 2004

After 15 weeks of intensive training 38 new firefighters graduated, with over 250 family and friends, Councillors and Chief Fire Officers from Avon, Gloucestershire and Somerset attending the ceremony.

Director of Training Bob Manners said: "Graduation Day was a great success giving guests the opportunity to see for themselves the wide range of activities the new firefighters were involved with during the course, all of which reflect the real challenges ahead of them."



Demonstrating to guests



Red Watch received "Best Watch"



Ff Mercer receiving the Silver Axe. Ff Palmer was awarded Best BA wearer



In each edition of the magazine, we'll be looking at a different part of our Brigade and finding out what they do and who they are.

## Control

Control room staff often find that people in the Brigade don't even know the basics about their work environment and working life. Natalie Venn and Bob Smith started at the beginning for us.

Natalie explained, "A Fire Control Operator (under development) has a 2 year training period – much like the firefighters' 2 year probationary period. The training starts with a 12-14 week course, which runs parallel to the firefighters' training. Here we learn about basic firefighting - which puts us at the same level as trainee firefighters. I don't think firefighters realise we've had some basic training in what they do."

After the initial course we go and work on a shift but aren't counted as "riders" until after 4 months. During the two development years we also have quarterly exams we have to pass."

There are no national standards for training Fire Control Operators. Avon is unique because our Control staff have one of the most comprehensive training periods. As Bob said, "We decided that our Control staff should be brought up to the same basic standard as a firefighter so that we can do our job more efficiently."

And what about their work environment? How does it compare to station life? "Some people don't even know we work the same watch hours and structure as stations," Natalie said. "However, we can't go to bed like they can on station! We're allowed breaks during the night shift but that's it. We've got 24 stations to look after - so we're sat at our desks for most of the night."

What about that dormitory and those beds up at Lansdown then? "They're in

case staff get stuck up at Lansdown because of bad weather and they also double up as a sick room."

As we all know, there are changes in the air for Control rooms, with the Government wanting a South West regional control room to be set up before the end of the year. We asked Bob the effect it's having on Control.

"Regional Control rooms were part of the Modernisation agenda that was agreed to end the strike. Many of us wonder if we'll have jobs next year and where they'll be if we do. All of the watch officers have been planning for the last few months so hopefully we're in a strong position to be chosen as the centre for the region. But we just don't know yet."

### Current ranks in Control



OiC: Fire Control Officer (FCO) equivalent of Station Officer



Senior Fire Control Operator (SFCOp) equivalent of Sub Officer



Leading Fire Control Operator (LFCOp) equivalent of LfF



Fire Control Operator (FCOp) equivalent of Ff.

## A day with Control... what they really do

By FF Colin Gardner – Portishead.

Colin Gardner and Nigel Gollege (Station 7) spent a day shadowing White Watch Control to see what they really do.

"We reported to OIC Phil Green at 08.00, who'd been in since 7.30 arranging training and ensuring all trucks that had to be there were. Phil showed us how he could monitor all the consoles from his, giving him an overall picture of what was going on – which pumps were available, committed to fire calls or off the run on courses etc.

"He also showed us the new Vision Mobilising System (live date May) which automatically shows the nearest pump and its running time to the incident.

"Steve Harris then sorted out Mob 15s for the day, sending firefighters from one station to another to cover any shortages – which seemed pretty much a nightmare!

"First call of the shift was from a mobile phone which cut out before the caller, a visitor to the area, could give any details. Jo rang the number back and helped the caller identify the location before passing it over to Wiltshire Fire Brigade.

"A few minutes later there was a call about smoke issuing from a house in Keynsham - Steve turned out station 13 with glee, knowing he'd be getting his son out of bed after working nights!

"Control then had breakfast at their consoles, taking a number of minor calls from round the Brigade area.

"Next was full turnout to a fire at a hostel in Bristol. Due to persons reported, deliberate ignition and a quantity of drugs found, it was necessary for Control to notify Ambulance and Police control, and Supervisory officers. With a number of other calls during this time, cover for the city was low, so standby pumps were mobilised. Overall there were 45 emergency calls on this "quiet" day.

"Cover was maintained in all brigade areas throughout the day without any prompting or panic - the professional way all incidents were dealt with is a credit to the brigade. The day with Control was a real eye opener."



Blue Watch



Margaret O'Connor



White Watch



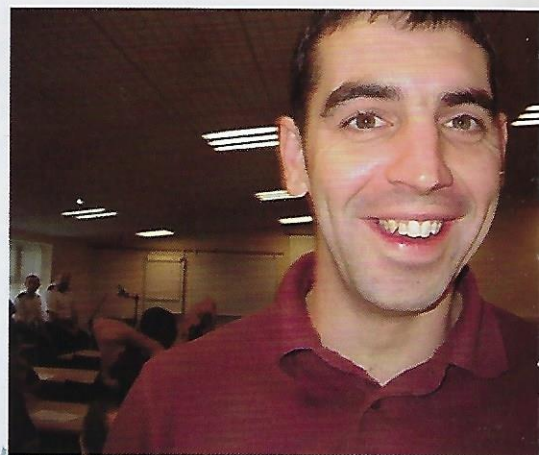
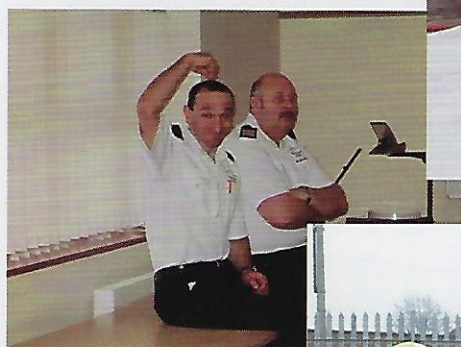
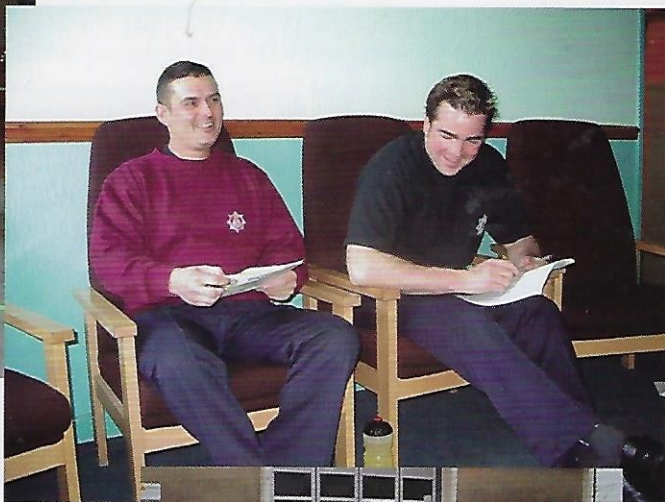
Green Watch (the non-camera shy ones!)



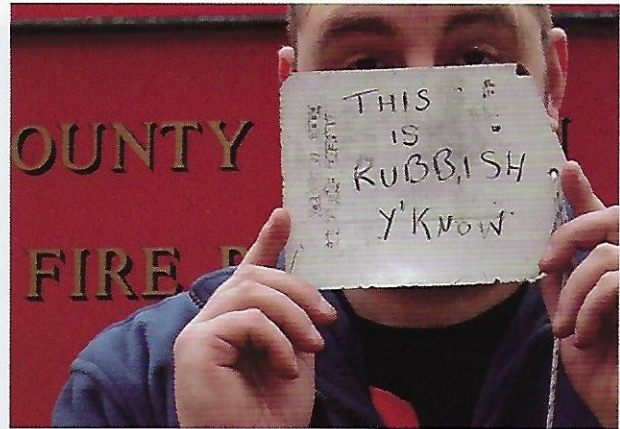
Red Watch



# Rogues Gallery







Shock sign seen at Brigade HQ

Do you have a recent photo for the next magazine? Contact Kara Simpson on ext 338



## The way I see it...

We all have an opinion on what's happening in Avon Fire Brigade at the moment and all the changes that are taking place. Here's one person's view on it...

### Where is the sharp end?

“The majority of people that work in the Fire Service are the operational crews, that ride fire engines, put fires out, rescue people from RTAs and generally help people when something goes wrong.

This is what most of us joined to do and what is usually referred to as “the sharp end”.

But in the new, modernised, post Bain/White paper era has the sharp end moved?

For years Inspecting Fire Safety Officers have said that whilst 3 crews may go out and save 1 life, they can save hundreds of lives with the stroke of a pen (either through changes in building design or enforcement of fire precautions regs).

There can be little argument that changes in the law have resulted in safer building designs and much wider use of automatic detection systems that have led to fewer fire deaths.

The government have obviously noted this and now require us to take this forward with a greatly expanded role in community fire safety.

You cannot have failed to notice our new corporate logo---

### Prevention, Protection, Response.

This would appear to be a complete reversal of our previous ethos which was all about the response, getting the required number of crews to the incident inside the statutory time, then dealing with the situation.

We did do a little bit of “prevention” but that was only a necessary evil for officers on the promotion ladder, with little involvement at station level other than routine inspections.

The Japanese Fire Brigade regards attending fires as a failure! They have failed to take the necessary measure to ensure that fires do not happen and as a result have been called out to a fire. Could this be our philosophy in years to come?

Avon Fire Brigade has a stated aim to reduce fire deaths and fire losses and we have already heard some of the ideas for getting crews more involved in CFS.

Home fire risk inspections, targeting areas after a fire to prevent similar fires as well as closer links to schools and community groups. But why stop there? If we are setting up as community safety advisors how long will it be until we are giving advice on non fire matters such as fitting child car seats?

This brings us back to the original question. Will the operational response still be the sharp end? We will always have a rescue role (this may well grow particularly regarding new dimension and other specialities such as water rescue, confined space teams etc) but will the thrust of our work change so that the response becomes less important with far more emphasis on prevention (through knowledge, public awareness and community involvement) and protection through better design of buildings and products such as furniture and electrical goods.

Nothing ever stays the same and change is the price of progress. Has CFS become the new “sharp end” or is responding to a 999 call in a red engine the real sharp end, the one piece of our fire service heritage that will remain unchangeable?”

*Do you have a view you'd like to express? Wanting to play devil's advocate? If so, please send your article in to the editors, with your name and contact number. Articles will be printed anonymously and names aren't passed on. We need items by Mid May 2004 for them to be printed in the June edition of the Magazine.*

## Then and Now... probationers

**Martin Burnell, White Watch, Bedminster**  
**Joined Avon Fire Brigade 2003**



“I look forward to coming to work. The watch I'm on is great – everyone on this station's really good. There's lots of banter; it's all light-hearted and everyone takes it well.

I'm not treated that differently to other firefighters. At first some people did pussy foot round me as they didn't know how I'd take things but I get to do everything as far as jobs are concerned – I'm generally either on the branch or BA. I've ridden in the BAECO position but only used

it once on a job. There's nothing much that the Lff or SubO or StnO wouldn't let me go in to. I think I'm pushed more towards stuff than anyone else as I need to get the experience.

In the class room at training school it was quite relaxed because they realise that people learn the theory better when they're not so stressed. But when you're out in the yard, it's a lot stricter and they put you under pressure as that's the conditions you'll be working under.

I'm really glad I joined. I'm helping people... it's the look on people's faces when you turn up, get off a truck wearing BA and you're going one way and they're all going the other...”

**Nick Carlier, Red Watch, Temple**  
**Joined Avon Fire Brigade in 1986**



Training school was designed so that you were the lowest of the low – you were told you didn't know anything. They used to absolutely beast you! At the end of training school we cleaned the toilets three times – but I didn't consider it to be a particularly bad thing. Training school was hell – 6 am til 8pm.

It made you better at listening though as you were meant to listen to everything and learn. Now you get some probationers come in thinking they know it all-it's a shame that some of the structure we had has been lost.

As a probationer then it was very much a case of “seen and not heard”. I didn't go in the bar – not in the first year. You didn't say boo to a goose for the first 6 months. You were very wary when you came on station – kept your head down, got wet a lot and got put in small, dark places a lot!

You were expected to be last for breakfast, and downstairs waiting for a shout or the dirtiest job going.

Probationers were treated differently to other firefighters. You just had to, rightly or wrongly, not pass any particular opinion. You were the bottom of the pecking order. Every job you were given involved a mop – I did a heck of a lot of cleaning! On jobs you were expected to do the mundane dirty work. If it was a fire, you had to shovel it all out – yes, you were there, front of the line with your shovel in hand!

It's better now, as I do think that probationers shouldn't be treated like idiots as you never learn anything pushing a mop about! These days probationers get more input and feel more at ease than we ever did.

It wasn't all that terrible – just the way it was. You had the mickey taken out of you a lot but not maliciously. There were also lots more social events – although you had to sit on the edges and feel your way in.”

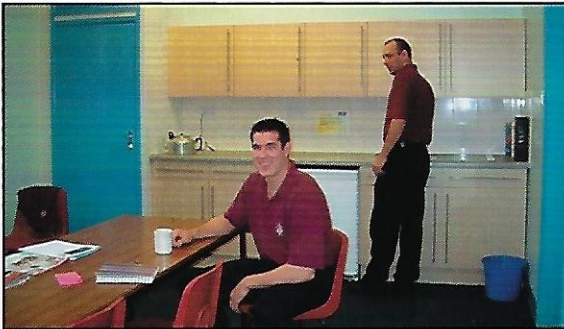


## Refurbished and redecorated – retained gets revitalised

Paulton Fire Station has been the focus of a lot of attention in the last 18 months, with builders, painters and decorators carrying out a refurbishment both inside and out. The original 1952 building had been looking a bit tatty around the edges but since the contractors got to work, it's been completely revitalised.

The brigade has sometimes been criticised for neglecting our vital retained crews, but the work carried out at Paulton has changed some views. Firefighters at the station say the changes have made a big difference, making them feel more part of the brigade, as well as improving their workplace.

One firefighter said: "Visually the station has improved and it's made us feel better too. Instead of coming into an old building, it feels like a proper fire station. We're really pleased with it."



Matt & Gary in the new kitchen

**So what makes people want to be retained? We got their view on it:**

**Q. Why did you join the brigade?**

**Matt:** I thought it would be a foot in the door to becoming a wholetime firefighter; I realise now that's not the case. But I've stayed in and I really enjoy the job. I work as a postman and when I'm not doing that I'm on call for the brigade.

**Paul:** I didn't know there was a retained part of the service. When I moved to Paulton I met Matt and got involved with the social side. I was losing at cards to Matt one night and he said if I joined the station he'd call it quits. I've been in five years now. I used to be self-employed but now work as a rep and so do retained two or three days per week.



Dave, Matt, Paul & Gary

**Dave:** I lived in Frome originally and always fancied being a retained firefighter, but wasn't sure if I could cope with some elements of the job – car crashes in particular. However, when I moved to Paulton I decided to join. I work as a computer operator in a local print company and am retained when I'm not there. When we're short at the station, my company will sometimes let me leave the job to go on shouts – as long as it's been approved beforehand.

**Gary:** It's a family tradition. My Dad, uncle, brother and cousin have all joined. And it's something I really enjoy as well.

**Q. What do you like about the job?**

**Paul:** You get to use all the skills you've been taught. I was in the TA for ten years and never got a chance to put training into practice there.

As all four said, "There's lots of job satisfaction, lots of variety, and we like the rush of adrenalin. We're putting something back into the community as well - we're helping people we know."

## Anonimouse

We asked Imagine IT (who provide IT support to our Brigade) what the most common IT questions they get asked are and the answers to them:

### How can I access the Fire Brigade Word Templates?

In Word go to: 'Tools - Options - File Locations'.

From the list high-light 'Workgroup Templates' & Click on the 'Modify' button.

Look in: "Avonfiredfs on Avonfirebrigade (G:)" & browse to the G:\Users\Templates - click OK, twice.

Now 'File - New' will reveal the templates.

If you have any other IT related problems give Imagine IT a call on 01635 248 148





# Sports and Social

## Avon Fire Brigade Sports Association

Avon Fire Brigade employees take part in wide range of activities from badminton and rugby to weight training and sailing. The Avon Fire Brigade Sports Association is a small committee which administers funds for all sporting activities within our Brigade.

The committee meets two to three times a year and is made up of representatives from the Brigade's sporting sections, currently: fishing, golf, squash, sailing, volleyball and walking, as well as a world firefighter games representative. Alongside the sporting representatives are a treasurer, secretary, regional representative and chairperson.

Funded by the 1000 club profits, we've provided sports equipment or grants to Bath, Keynsham, Kingswood, Landsdown, Patchway, Southmead, Speedwell, W-S-M and Yate. Those involved in brigade sports can apply for money from the association at any time, whether for a new football or main sail, or transport to a national sporting event.



The current 3 Peaks Champions

Events we've provided funding for include:

- Ian Chalmers race – Memorial run covering 4.2 miles of scenic Bath, open to brigade members, their family and friends, in October / November each year.
- '3 peaks challenge' – An endurance race where teams hike Ben Nevis, Scafell and Snowdon in the quickest time possible. Current titleholders - Avon Fire Brigade.
- National fishing, golf & volleyball tournaments.

Application forms for a grant or equipment are available from Tony Jackson at Patchway, Telephone Ext: 8043 / email: [tony.jackson@avonfirebrigade.gov.uk](mailto:tony.jackson@avonfirebrigade.gov.uk).

If your sport is not represented and you'd like to start a new sporting section all you need to do is go along to the next sports association meeting. Please contact Tony for details.

## The 1000 Club

The 1000 Club is the Brigade's monthly cash draw, run exclusively for all employees of Avon Fire Brigade. Members can choose between one and five numbers each month, costing £1 per number, and have the chance to win prizes of £100, £50, £25. Special draws are run at Christmas with the prize totalling £1000.

1000 Club payment is taken directly from each member's wage – which means there's no hunting around for spare change! There are presently 100 numbers left. If you'd like to become a 1000 Club member please contact Adrian Mantle on Ext 216.



## Carry on boarding...

By Lee Hobbs

Bemi's best are back!!! We've returned from Val D'Isere or should I say the best boarding holiday ever. 15 firefighters hit the resort in January for eight days of hardcore boarding and partying into the night.

On arrival we were very pleased to be told that the all-girl Swedish volleyball team had recently checked in and would be attending the ski school.

Led by the vastly experienced Jason (Bath's best) Edwards, we attempted some seriously crazy and awesome off piste stunts. Although his dynamic risk assessments may have to be reviewed on duty, 'cos boy is that man dangerous.

After boarding hard all day, we would often wait for the ski school to return and we would then all relax together over tea and cakes, followed by riveting conversation about the day's activities.



Ff Lee Hobbs

Money was tight, but thankfully on the third evening, Ff Lane won the local mini lottery, through a ticket purchased at our hotel. Ff Lane decided to share his good fortune with all his colleagues and the volleyball team and for the rest of the adventure, drinks were on him. The volleyball team were more than grateful for his kind ways and loving heart.

That's it for now but this is an annual trip and we go twice a year, so anyone who'd like to come please contact Lee Hobbs or Jason Edwards at Bedminster, Red Watch.

## Women on top event

On Sun 29th Feb, Alan Middleton, Phil James, Jane Brown, and Paul Coombs took a fire engine and the community trailer to the Bath and West Showground. There were over 18 other vehicles there, including a tank, milk float, and police car. Women had to raise a minimum of £50 sponsorship to be able to drive the vehicles – the event raised over £11,000 for Dorothy House Cancer Care.

Approx 45 women drove our fire engine for 2 circuits, using blues and twos, with their family and friends in the back.



"You could get a tank through that gap love..."

## Forthcoming event:

**2004 South West Golf Championships**  
**Clevedon Golf Club, Friday 14 May 2004.**

The championship will consist of 36 holes individual medal play, with a team stableford competition running alongside. There will be a two-tee time start. The cost of entering is £35 per person – which includes green fees, lunch, evening meal and prizes. There's also a chance for competitors to play a practise round on Thursday 13 May 2004 at a discount rate of £15.00.

As entries are limited to 72 players, there's a maximum of twelve players per brigade. The stableford event will consist of three team members' scores counting towards the team competition.

Please call Graeme Watson, Avon Fire Brigade Golf Secretary, on Ext 213 for more details.



We all know that this Brigade runs on good scoff... and some are better at making it than others! Each issue we'll bring you two of the best recipes from round the Brigade. This month we kick off with two very different main courses....

## Beef Orlando

Chris Elsbury, Blue 06

It was spring 1986. Bananarama were riding high in the charts, Sarah Ferguson and Prince Andrew had just announced their engagement and I had just become Mess Manager on Blue watch at A2 (06 to our younger readers.) Funnily enough they've all moved on and I'm still stuck here in the kitchen serving up grael.

Having been mess manager for over 18 years (surely there's a tabard for that somewhere in the Brigade) I've cooked more than my fair share of recipes. Some have been outstanding, some mediocre and some even British Rail wouldn't have touched with a barge pole.

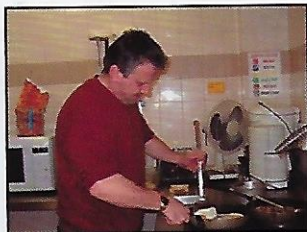
The following I've cooked loads of times and it comes in the 'bung it and chuck it' group of recipes (bung it together, chuck it in the oven and forget about it.) Although the list of ingredients might at first seem bizarre (cooking with jam and pepper!!) this dish is really worth having a go at. And trust me – it works well.

- 4lb stewing steak (cubed)
- 2lb onions
- 14oz tin of chopped tomatoes
- 1 level teaspoon of curry powder
- 2 level tablespoons of tomato puree
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 2 tablespoons of apricot jam
- 1 red oxo cube
- 1 bay leaf
- half a pint of water
- 1 level teaspoon of salt
- 2 level teaspoons ground black pepper (do not use white pepper)

### METHOD

Fry the onions and beef until the meat is sealed and the onions have softened slightly.  
Combine all the ingredients together in a saucepan and simmer for 5 minutes.  
Transfer to a casserole dish and cook in a pre-heated oven at 180 C (350 F or gas mark 4) for 2.5 hours.  
Serve with rice or buttery mash.

Feeds 6 hungry firefighters  
Due to the slightly spicy nature of this casserole it may not be appreciated by children.



## Red Hot Pork

Kevin Rodda and Dippy, Red 11

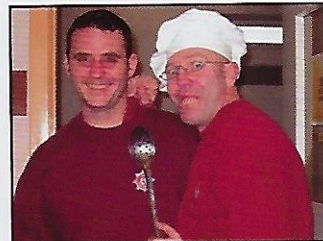
- 12 oz French or Runner Beans
- 4 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- 20 oz Pork fillet thinly sliced
- 4 Tablespoons Thai red curry paste
- 2 Tablespoons Thai fish sauce or Soy Sauce
- 2 Tablespoon Demerara sugar

### METHOD

Cook beans 5–7 mins Al-dente  
Drain and set aside  
Heat oil  
Cook pork in wok 6-8 mins  
Remove with slotted spoon  
Add curry paste to remaining oil in wok  
Stir fry 2-3 mins  
Return pork to wok with sugar, fish sauce and beans  
Stir fry 10-12 mins  
Serve with boiled rice

Feeds 6 hungry firefighters

*Editor's note: as we didn't trust Red Watch Speedwell, one of the team took the recipe home and tried it out. And yes, it does work and is nice! Sorry Dippy and Kevin for our lack of faith in your culinary skills.*



Dippy and Kevin

## Jim Press' diet tips

In today's society, with people becoming more sedentary and obesity levels rising, it is important that we look after our bodies. This means eating the right food and keeping fit.

Firefighters on my watch often tell me how great I look. I say 'Hey guys it's not easy to look this good' and it's not, but with a little dedication, well the world's your lobster.

To start with, the food we eat is of real importance. The balance of carbohydrates and protein must be correct. Carbohydrates are needed to give the energy required to undertake the arduous day's work ahead. I think that fried chips are a perfect source of these carbohydrates and sausages, bacon and fried eggs give the necessary protein that your muscles require to cope with all the back breaking and strength sapping work that is carried out in an average day on station.

As well as eating correctly we should all participate in exercise so we can retain the high levels of fitness that this job demands. With each station having a gym we should all take advantage and hone our bodies to perfection. For those who do not like gyms, or get intimidated by the muscle bound monsters that use them, there are other ways to exercise. Perhaps try for a day or even a tour not using the remote control. Think of all the extra calories that will be burnt whilst getting up and changing channel manually (especially at Station 18.)

And remember you are what you eat (so Phil cut down on the lard).

Jim Press, Green 15

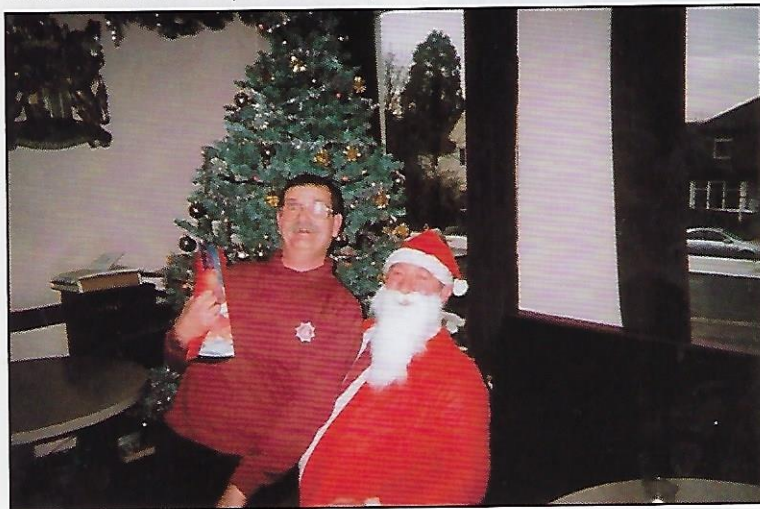




# A bit of a relief...

## Caption Competition

What's Father Christmas (aka Ben Hollier) doing to Martin here? Answers on a postcard to Caption Competition, Creative Services, Brigade HQ.



The winner will be published in the next edition and will get a year's free subscription to one of these magazines:



Please let us know if you have a recent photo you'd like to enter into the caption competition in the next edition.

## Dear Dippy

Each edition the sympathetic and insightful Dippy, will be on hand to answer your questions about life, love and all that.



Dear Dippy,

I am in love with my Station Officer. I have been on the watch for 6 months now and I am finding it harder and harder to control my feelings for him. He has no idea that I exist. Since joining the watch I have completed a hose course and a moffett course in an effort to be noticed, but it doesn't seem to have worked. What can I do?

Dippy says...

*You are approaching it the wrong way. If you want him to notice you then you should skive more, lay on your bed during routines, fall asleep wherever you can and I promise you will get his attention.*

Do you have a (printable) problem that you think Dippy can help you with? Send it in to us and we'll pass it on to him. If it can be re-inacted we might even do a photo case book version.

## Tales from the brigade...

### "Why don't you get a new teapot?"

On my many and varied travels around Avon Fire Brigade, I've come across many sad tales (and people) but none touched my heart as much as this tale of desperation from a lesser known outpost in our fine Brigade. They offered me a light beverage, then told me their tale...

"This is a tale from life at the blunt end and something that's been occupying the band so blue's minds for weeks; no months.

We knew our pot was poor quality and that we deserved better. In true Brigade fashion, we formed a working group to look at the options. We went world wide in our quest – we went to the Arab states where they seemed to produce a thick, tar like substance: not good to take back to the station because of customs.

Others went to Turkey, where they do use the leaves but drain it out through water rather than infuse, as the band so blue prefer.

Yet more went to Amsterdam to see how it's done in Europe but here the search took a whole new twist and they were left dazed and confused.

So back to Avon they came and asked their normal supplier for the perfect pot – with no wastage or nasty side effects. They were given the same pot as before – the standard issue, which leaks hot water down your hand no matter what you do and wastes copious amounts of invaluable beverage.

And the moral of the story – if you want the perfect pot, buy your own."

"It's great!" enthused a spokesofficeworker, "Most lunchtimes I pull out two or three chairs to make a makeshift couch in the corridor, and I just lie there and bask in all that lovely light and warmth. And I'm even getting a decent tan."

The older lights have been retained in fire stations generally, and in Bristol Community Safety Office in particular, in order to force them to get out on visits at every opportunity.

### Terracotta Army

The Lansdowner's intrepid reporters are currently investigating the arrival and stockpiling in Avon Fire Brigade of a further eight "Firefighter AVI" interactive touch-screen faced computerised firefighters.

One theory being investigated is that they will form the nucleus of a modern version of the famous "Terracotta Army". "Yesterday's ways are no longer acceptable" said DCFO Jerry O'Brien.

## NOT THE NEWS IN BRIEF

### Ol' Smoky

Rumours that the replacement Community Fire Safety car kindly sponsored by ADT Fire and Security plc will trial the country's first experimental in-car sprinkler system have not been denied. And it will be fitted with smoked-glass windows from new instead of having a last-minute retro-fit like its predecessor.

### Sad Cases at Brigade HQ

Following the discovery by Health & Safety maestro Clive DuMont that many persons, especially the ones who don't get out enough, are badly affected by seasonal affective disorder, powerful new lights have been installed in the Brigade HQ corridors, and also in the offices of the worst SAD cases.



## Tea time quiz

## Tea Time Teasers

...to you by a brainy blue

The following ten general knowledge questions come with 3 possible answers – but how many can you score. You may be surprised!

1) What was the name of the singing group formed by four Detroit friends named Betty McGlown, Florence Ballard, Mary Wilson and Diana Ross ?

- a) The Rooftop Singers
- b) The Primettes
- c) The Supremes

2) Models named Sportage and Elan are currently sold under which one same marque of motor car manufacturer ?

- a) Ford
- b) Kia
- c) Lotus

3) When Captain James Cook arrived in Australia in April 1770, what two word name did he first give to the inlet of the Tasman Sea, now part of the city of Sydney, in which he landed ?

- a) Stingray Harbour
- b) Botany Bay
- c) Cooks Creek

4) One of the founder members of the english football league, this premier league club became, during the 1830's the tenants of what is now Anfield stadium. What is the modern name of this football club ?

- a) Accrington Stanley
- b) Liverpool
- c) Everton

5) Give the respective names of the male and female artists who, in 1978 had a hit in the UK singles chart on the 'Pye' label with the song from the film musical 'Grease' entitled 'You're the one that I want' ?

- a) Roberta Flack and Barry White
- b) Olivia Newton John and John Travolta
- c) Hylda Baker and Arthur Mullard

6) In which one same US state do professional football teams called the Giants and the Jets both play their home matches ?

- a) New York
- b) New Jersey
- c) New Hampshire

7) What was the five letter surname of the man who coined the famous phrase 'you too can have a body like mine' to advertise the 'dynamic tension' body-building courses devised by the 'worlds most perfectly developed man' during the 1920's?

- a) (Charles) Roman
- b) (Charles) Atlas
- c) (Charles ) Greek

8) From which marsupial animal is the nickname of the Australian senior national rugby league team derived ?

- a) Kangaroos
- b) Wallabies
- c) Koalas

9) She was the first ship to be propelled by a three-crank compound engine and the first passenger liner to be nicknamed the 'Atlantic Greyhound' but that did not prevent her from colliding with an iceberg in dense fog off Newfoundland over a hundred years ago. What was the seven letter name of this ship ?

- a) Yelland
- b) Arizona
- c) Titanic

10) And finally on a topical subject within the brigade, the capital city of the African country 'The Gambia' was founded in 1816 when the British colonial officer Alexander Grant chose an area for a settlement that he called:

- a) Bathurst
- b) Banjul
- c) Britonsland

Please see below for the answers

- 1) B. The Primettes.  
This group was a forerunner of the Supremes but Betty McGlown left before the Supremes were named.
- 2) B. Kia  
Previously built and sold under the Lotus marque, Kia bought the tools and rights to make and sell the Elan model and they also make their own Sportage off-roader.
- 3) A. Stingray harbour.  
The name was later changed to Botany Bay in recognition of the vast number of new plants found there by botanist Joseph Banks.
- 4) C. Everton.  
Everton were the original tenants of Anfield stadium from 1884 until 1892 when they fell out with their landlord, the local MP John Houlding over a rent increase.
- 5) C. Hylda Baker and Arthur Mullard.  
A comedy send up of the more successful version by John Travolta and Olivia Newton John, although their version was not recorded on the Pye label.
- 6) B. New Jersey.  
Although both teams have New York in their names, they both play their home games at East Rutherford stadium in New Jersey.
- 7) A. Roman.  
Although the 'worlds most perfectly developed man' was Angelo Siciliano, better known as Charles Atlas, the advertising phrase 'you too can have a body like mine' was coined by his business partner Charles F. Roman.
- 8) B. The Kangaroos.  
The Kangaroos are the national rugby league team unlike the Wallabies that are the national rugby union team.
- 9) B. Arizona.  
The Arizona collided with an iceberg off Newfoundland in 1879 but unlike the Titanic she did not sink.
- 10) B. Bathurst.  
The city was renamed Banjul in 1973 but when Grant named it he called it Bathurst.

Answer:



# A peek at the past...



A look at the fire brigade of yesteryear

## 1972

### In this year...

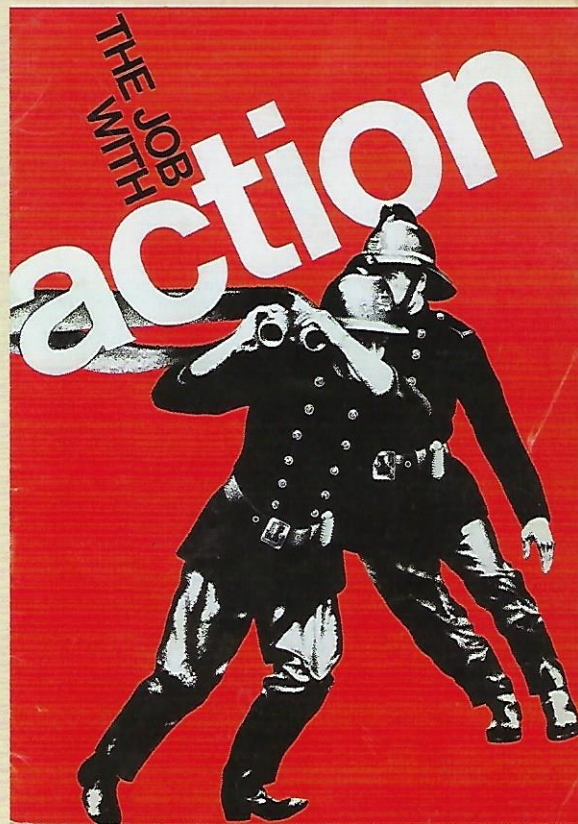
- President of the United States Richard Nixon orders the development of a space shuttle program.
- Bloody Sunday: United Kingdom forces kill thirteen Roman Catholic civil rights marchers in Northern Ireland.
- Sales of the Volkswagen Beetle model exceed those of Ford Model-T (15 million)
- Watergate break-in, Washington, D.C.
- The first of 'The Godfather' films is released.

### Born this year...

Zinedine Zidane | Cameron Diaz | Shaquille O'Neal | Eminem



Control



Rope rescue training



'Fireman's lift' training on a Wheeled Escape Ladder

### SALARIES

Here are the salaries (for a 56-hour week) at present in force in the Fire Service (higher salary scales with effect from 1 October 1972 are shown in brackets where applicable).

#### Firemen

Age 18	£1340 rising by 4 annual increments	to a maximum of £1658 a year
Age 19-21	£1370 rising by 3 annual increments	
Age 22-23	£1466 rising by 2 annual increments	
Age 24	£1562 rising by 1 annual increment	

Additional amounts are payable to firemen for (a) long service (15 years) and (b) acquisition of certain qualifications.

Leading Fireman	£2010 per year
Sub-Officer	£2074 - £2170
Station Officer	£2418 - £2556 (£2484 - £2622)
Assistant Divisional Officer	£2556 - £2715 (£2652 - £2850)
Divisional Officer Grade III	£2730 - £2865 (£2859 - £3000)
Divisional Officer Grade II	£2946 - £3201 (£3102 - £3309)
Divisional Officer Grade I	£3237 - £3519 (£3402 - £3699)

Assistant Chief Officer	receive varying rates of pay according to the size of the Brigade
Chief Officers/Firemasters	

All ranks in the London area receive an additional cost of living allowance of £160. Station Officers and above may in some cases be provided with free housing, light and fuel. Uniform and personal equipment are provided free.