

AVON FIRE BRIGADE NEWS

SPRING/SUMMER 1997

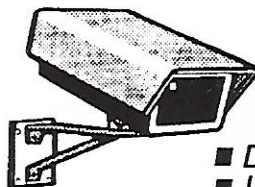


THE OFFICIAL
JOURNAL OF
THE AVON
FIRE BRIGADE



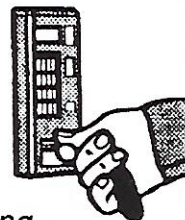
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AVON FIRE BRIGADE NEWS

SPRING/SUMMER 1997

EDITORIAL

Summer is nearly here and as the last snow of winter slowly melts away from the tops of the Lansdown mountains, the Press Office has packed all its belongings and, having said all its farewells to the mountain people - a kindly and warm hearted bunch, always ready with a thick jumper and bowl of broth, we have made the slow and perilous trek down the winding, stony path back to Headquarters.

Yes - as from now, well sometime ago actually, the Press Office has moved back to Headquarters. So any articles, however scandalous, for the magazine, please send them to our new address:- Press Office, Penthouse Suite, Brigade Headquarters.

Once again, we would like to thank all our regular contributors, as well as those of you who send us the "odd" article. It is all gratefully received and appreciated.

Geoff Cater and John Dando
Editors

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*COVER PHOTO: Explosion and Fire at Albright & Wilson Chemical Complex, Avonmouth, Bristol
(See article on Page 17)*

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

The Avon Fire Brigade would like to thank all who have advertised within this journal, as it is due to the purchasing of space herein that this journal can be produced and distributed. It must be clearly understood however, that advertising space is purchased from the publishers and not the Avon Fire Brigade.

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FOREWORD



It is with tremendous pride that I take up the role of Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

In over 26 years I have had the privilege to serve in most areas of the Brigade's operation each presenting its own challenge and reward.

My commitment to this Brigade and its members is absolute, and having gained so much throughout my service I believe I need to give something back.

At these times there are many frustrations of which I am aware, many of these are due to the monumental changes that have taken place over the last year, and the inordinate demands upon a limited resource. Due to the events of 4th February 1996 and our new status, coupled with the fact that financial resources are limited, change will continue.

There is a backlog of work, particularly relating to premises, fixtures and fittings, but I make no apology for the fact that these will take a lower priority than our service provision.

I have no doubt that with your patience and commitment we will continue to progress and perhaps reflect on what we have achieved in the first years as a Combined Fire Authority.

Over one million pounds worth of new appliances on the run, 1 Turntable Ladder, four Water Tenders, EFADS Driver Trainer Unit and the refurbishment of B6's Hydraulic Platform. New Rescue Equipment and limited life protective clothing, valued at over £250,000 and perhaps the most notable of all replacement Breathing Apparatus.

Hopefully never again will we be looking to replace the most vital element of personal protection at eighteen plus years old with the new lease arrangements. Also later in the magazine you will read of the new generation appliance working group which has been supported by our political leaders.

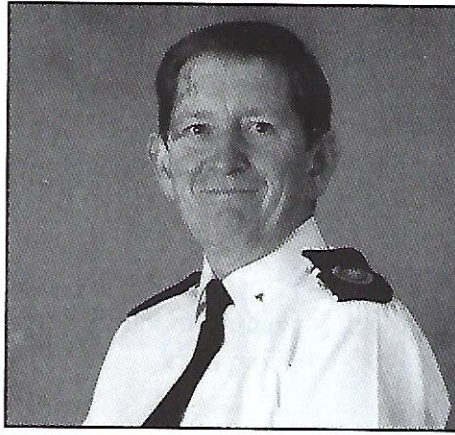
In respect of training, we are in constant discussion with the Health & Safety Executives and in the short term we will set the provision of improved breathing apparatus training facilities, which again all political leaders have supported.

My own belief is that in the first year of our new status we have achieved considerable progress. We will prioritise and with your co-operation we will continue to develop and progress.

The absolute priority will always be the service that we are here to provide and the protection of crews and the equipment needed to provide that service safely and effectively.

Dave Hutchings
Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Focus on "A" Division



Spring is upon us and already a quarter of 1997 is already spent. It is a good time of the year to reflect on our past activities and look forward to the future.

The past year has been an extremely active one on all fronts.

We have bid farewell to members retiring and leaving on ill health - amongst them some of the Brigade's renowned characters.

Divisionally, Pete Taylor, Bob Fraser A1 Blue, Roger McKeown, Barry Cook and Paul McGuinness all A3 Red, Geoff Wilkins A5, Martin Clutterbuck A6 and Bob Pulham A7 Yate and Tony Condon (A HQ) have all bid farewell. May I again reiterate our best wishes for a long, wealthy and prosperous future for them all.

Sadly, we bid John Cambridge a final goodbye after a long illness. His positive and dignified fight will remain a constant inspiration to us all and our thoughts and best wishes go out to Irene, Neil and Ian as they plan for the future.

Thanks go out to everyone for keeping the Divisions and Brigade wheels turning - the Division Admin Support Staff, our Station Cooks and Cleaners, Mess and Social Club Reps, Benevolent and Sports Reps, Representative Body Officials and all those involved in the multitude of self help schemes on stations.

1996/97 saw the arrival and operational introduction of the new Metz Turntable and Rescue Tender at A1 Temple.

The first months of 1997 have seen the successful introduction of the Dragar B.A. Set throughout the Brigade - no mean feat and congratulations go to all those involved in making it such a smooth changeover.

Major Rescue Tender Watch Instructors are now in place for in-house new operator and operator refresher training at A5 Patchway.

The Severn Tunnel Project is now in full flow - with Personal Track Safety Training completed across the Division and now going Brigade Wide. The Road/Rail concepts are certainly the subject of much national interest and acclaim, with its recent coverage on BBC's Tomorrows World. Many of the good ideas have come from station personnel and as the Severn Tunnel plan develops we need to keep the exchange of views and observations for improving the proposals for its successful introduction.

New plans were introduced for operations with the Police Helicopter, the Second Severn Crossing, the M48 and M49 Motorways, the Avonmouth Motorway Junctions, plans to deal with incidents during the three year programme of Major refurbishment to the Avonmouth Bridge of the M5 Motorway.

Station and Divisional Exercises paid high dividends when the Brigade were called upon to deal with the Major Chemical Fire, at Albright and Wilsons, Avonmouth Plant. Inter-Service liaisons gave rise to a successful firefighting operation led by the Deputy Chief Officer.

Whilst it is nice to look back at our achievements it is important to maintain the operational planning momentum. Many new plans especially in the Avonmouth area need revisiting and updating. Operational plans for sites such as the M.O.D. Abbey Wood, Sunlife, the Regional Shopping Centre at Cribbs Causeway all need to be finalised in the months ahead.

The support of the firefighting operation remains the primary objective of the Divisional Management Team and as we look forward to the future we welcome the new recruits and transferees to the Brigade. The months ahead will be full of challenges but together we can look forward to achieving common goals.

Divisional Commander Ernie Coghlan

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Model Exam Answer

We continue our series of model answers to recent Station Officer Examination questions with this answer for Paper 2 1996, Question 3 - "Calculate the loss of pressure, due to friction and height combines, in any branchline whatsoever." (25 marks).

This is an easy question to answer; first prove that pump pressure is always equal to nozzle pressure; then it necessarily follows that the total loss of pressure (friction, plus loss of head due to height) must always be zero.

1. State formula

$$P = N + L \text{ bars}$$

where

$$\text{Pump pressure} = P \text{ bars}$$

$$\text{Nozzle pressure} = N \text{ bars}$$

$$\text{Losses (ie. frictional loss + loss due to height above pump)} = L \text{ bars}$$

2. Subtract N from both sides

$$P - N = L \text{ bars}$$

3. Multiply both sides by (P - N)

$$(P - N) \times (P - N) = L \times (P - N)$$

4. Expand

$$P^2 - 2PN + N^2 = PL = NL$$

5. Add (PN - N²) to both sides

$$P^2 - PN - PL = PN - N^2 - NL$$

6. This is the same as

$$P \times (P - N - L) = N \times (P - N - L)$$

7. Divide both sides by (P - N - L)

$$P = N \text{ bars}$$

8. State sub-answer

The nozzle pressure is equal to the pump pressure

9. State original formula

$$P = N + L \text{ bars}$$

10. But N = P, so

$$P = P + L \text{ bars}$$

11. Subtract P from both sides

$$L = 0 \text{ bars}$$

12. State final answer

The combined losses due to friction, and height above the branch, together equal zero.

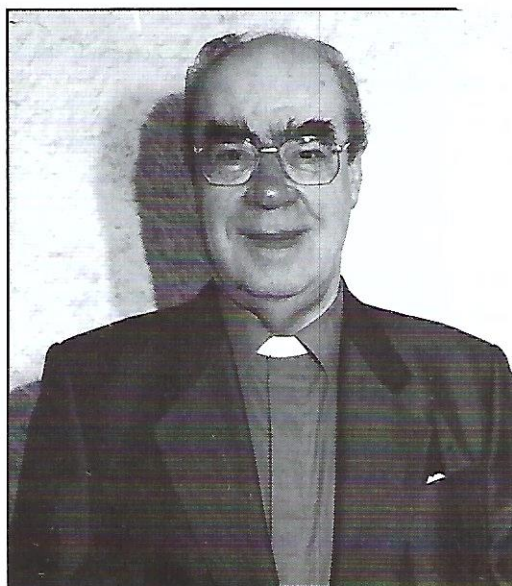
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Quiz No.1 - Mathematics

*Sir, I know a rhyme excelling
By mystic force and magic spelling
Celestial sprites elucidate
All my own striving can't relate*

What well known constant is this verse a mnemonic for?
(Answer is on Page 20)

From the CHAPLAIN



There is a song which runs:

*Three o'clock on Sunday afternoon -
All the week to wait for it!
Wash and wipe each plate for it!
Frightened I'll be late for it!
Three o'clock! He'll turn that corner soon! -*

A girl is to meet her boy by the pillar-box in the corner of Berkeley Square at three in the afternoon. She is singing as she takes her place. After each verse, the clock chimes another quarter, but there is still no young man. At the end of the hour, she has given up and is marching off, pretending that she does not care, when a passing policeman asks her if she is waiting for anybody, because, he says, "There's a young man by a pillar-box at the corner of Grosvenor Square".

*Here's a change of air for you,
A walk to Grosvenor Square for you -
You'll find him standing there for you -
At four o'clock on Sunday afternoon!*

I am writing this during the Easter season with all its celebration (not forgetting the huge consumption of chocolate eggs), and the holiday atmosphere, and the renewal of colour and growth as nature reasserts itself in garden and field after the dead days of winter. To me Easter is very special. It is the most important festival in the Church calendar. Without Easter, with its resurrection theme, there would be no Christian faith. Easter is the pillar-box where we can meet up with the deeper meanings of life and death, and become aware of the ultimate realities. So many people miss all this because they are waiting at the wrong pillar-box.

All of us are subjected to so many demands, and Fire Brigade life has plenty of that. At the centre of our living some how we have to be sure we have discovered for ourselves some place where answers, and strength and inner peace are to be found. Make sure you wait at, for you, the right pillar-box. For me its the Resurrected Christ. If it's not too late after the Easter season, I wish you warm Easter greetings. Anyhow, the Easter message is for all the year round.

Bill Cobley

Pill Fire Station



Pill Fire Station was formed during the 1938-45 war years. The original station was situated between Pill Memorial Club and Lodway Brewery which was used as a store for aircraft spares for British Aerospace at Filton. The rear of the fire station was formerly a mortuary.

The call out system was a primitive affair compared to present day standards. A telephone call from the G.P.O. to the security guard at Lodway Brewery was the first step. He then alerted the local firemen to the shout by operating the call bells and siren systems. The first fireman to arrive would collect the incident details from the brewery security officer.

The appliance was a J type Bedford, Reg. No. 776 RYD, which had to be specifically built for the station, as there was a height restriction. This appliance is now in the Museum of Fire Appliances.

On the 4th October 1969 the new Westward Drive station was opened at the bottom of Ham Green Hill. As this was built on the site of an old reservoir there were more than a few problems during construction.

The present retained crew numbers 10 men, three of whom amass 97 years fire brigade service between them. They joined when Pill was in the county of Somerset, but although the village is now back in North Somerset, the station still retains the name Avon Fire Brigade.

They have also witnessed many other changes in the Pill area - not least the closure of 5 pubs (but there are still 9 left!) and Ham Green Hospital. The area now covered includes the Royal Portbury Dock, sections of the M5 and M49, including the Avon Bridge and certain PDA's in Avonmouth.

The number of call outs have increased in recent years to an average of about 140 a year, and have included attendance at the 'Albright and Wilson' and 'Merrywood School' incidents. Regrettably, an increasing number of shouts have been to stolen cars, which have been dumped and 'fired' in isolated areas - notably around Abbots Pool.

Pill Fire Station has a proud record of its contributions to raising funds for the Firemans Benevolent Fund. For the past 15 years the carol float has toured the villages in the week preceding Christmas, delighting the local children and raising thousands of pounds for the Fund. More recently though the annual highlight has become the sponsored bike ride, with Fire Brigade personnel and their families and friends cycling 31 miles from Pill calling at Portishead, Clevedon and Yatton Fire Stations before returning to Pill.



They're Off! - Pill Cycle Race 1996

Unfortunately the route passes a number of public houses and not all starters make it back to base! Also, some Divisional Commanders find 31 miles rather a long way! This years event is still in the planning stages. Anybody interested in taking part should contact the Benevolent Representative at Pill Fire Station.

Station Officer Colin Shilton

New Generation of Appliances

Over the recent months 2 working groups have been set up to look into the different aspects of new appliances that will be purchased over the next 5 years in a 20 vehicle contract. Group references included assessing suitable replacement chassis's, locker design and layouts, new rescue pump philosophy, along with its core equipment stowage. The groups' also were tasked with addressing the disposition of light portable pumps, along with a suitable replacement.

The Brigade invited all suitable chassis manufacturers to give a presentation and demonstration to aid the groups' assessment. The group also attended a number of other Brigades as well as various manufacturers and suppliers of Brigade equipment.



As you are probably aware the likes of Dennis, Volvo, Scania and Mercedes have been supplying Fire Brigades with chassis's over many years. Last year saw the introduction of M.A.N. into the Fire Brigade main stream market, with the introduction of 18 ten tonne units to Devon Fire Brigade, which has proved very successful. This year M.A.N. have introduced the M2000 chassis into their range. The M2000 chassis is rated at 14 tonne g.v.w. and is fitted with a 264 b.h.p. engine.

M.A.N.'s reputation is well renowned in the transport industry for its reliability and quality of product. Given this pedigree the group felt that although this is a totally new product it is well worth a closer evaluation.

Following discussions with M.A.N. they agreed to provide the Brigade with an evaluation chassis with a realistic bodywork mock up so the Brigade could continue their appraisals. The mock up unit was carefully designed to replicate a completed appliance. Stowage included full breathing apparatus sets, water tank, ladders and equipment. Sand ballast was used in areas to simulate personnel and body weight.



Upon completion the evaluation unit was subjected to a full J.C.D.D. test to establish its true potential. This test was very successful in all areas, especially in terms of its handling and stability. Following those successful trials the Brigade put forward a proposal to the elected members that an actual appliance be purchased so further evaluations in operational use can be undertaken. The proposal was approved on the 21st of March and it is the intention that the fully finished appliance will be in operational use in October this year.

The appliance will incorporate a new style reinforced crew safety cage as well as some other additional creature comforts. Other features include such items as a 5 speed world series automatic gearbox and telmar retarder. The appliance will have a 4 metre wheel base and will be approximately 1/2 a metre shorter in its overall length.

A new design of water tank will be included in the specification and will have a capacity of 1800 litres. The now standard Godiva 2700 series of main pump will be fitted, which also incorporates a foam proportioning system. The inclusion of Hanney air operated hose reels will be a worthy addition along with a ladder gantry system and scene lighting. The now standard Brigade high visibility conspicuity markings will also be included, as will an audible warning whilst reversing.

Upon its arrival it is envisaged that the appliance will be trialled and assessed at 2 whole-time stations for a given period to establish its credentials against other known appliances. After the completion of those trials the Brigade should then be in a position to go to full tender for the main "B" Type Appliance contract.

LIGHT PORTABLE PUMPS

Many of you are aware alternative pump trials have been undertaken by various stations. The pumps are smaller than the Brigade are currently operating, but still have the large output capacity. Their size and weight make it an ideal unit to be carried on every appliance as the replacement for the Godiva GP574 unit.

RESCUE PUMP

Although no final decision has been made yet for the equipment to be carried on this type of appliance, personnel can expect better lighting, rescue equipment and better mobile power sources.

Paul Beard, AMIRTE
Fleet Engineer

.....

THE RESTING PLACE OF FLEUR LOMBARD



On 3rd July 1996 members of Blue Watch, Speedwell travelled to Trebetherick in North Cornwall to St. Enedoc Church where the ashes of their colleague, Fleur Lombard are laid to rest.

The Church is set in a picturesque location amongst the sand dunes overlooking the Camel Estuary on the opposite side of the river from Padstow and was a favourite holiday destination for Fleur as a young girl.

The Church, with its curious bent spire, is still used for services regularly and can only be reached by foot from the National Trust Car Park half a mile away.

Other Brigade members wishing to visit the site should take the A39 to Wadebridge and then the B3314 for Trebetherick and Polzeath. Trebetherick is some 3.5 miles from Wadebridge and leaving the village up the hill towards Polzeath, a signpost on the left by the Post Office indicates a lane which leads down to the Car Park. Fleur's memorial is to be found in the top right hand corner of the Cemetery.

THE NEW YEAR

2000 Man

The Millennium celebrations are to be ignored by the Brigade, following the discovery that no-one can actually pronounce "millennium."

Red Cross Success

The Red Cross Fire Victim Support Unit was again successfully used, this time at 'S' Division HQ after a recent major conflagration there.

The Unit served tea to the severely shocked survivors - so badly shocked that to a man they refused the coffee offered them - and gave comfort and temporary accommodation until suitable replacement accommodation could be found.

New Officer Position Announced

Following increased awareness of the increasing role of horticulture in the Brigade, the new post of StnO, Gardens has been created.

The post was initially proposed as an ADO post, but it was realised that ADO's never get their hands dirty, and that a more junior rank was appropriate.

Station A2 Southmead boasts a superb outside garden, designed by a leading Japanese rock gardener according to the best Zen Buddhist principles, incorporating rocks, patio, and a pool and bridge.

Station C5 Bedminster has long had a courtyard rock garden and a pool filled with several fish and a baby whale which attempts to suckle any fingers dangled therein.

Station B1 Bath has its lovely hanging flower baskets.

And Station A6 Thornbury deny they never turn out, claiming the helmet and boots hanging up with

flowers in them are meant to be that way.

Budget Restrictions

Avon Fire Brigade's Technical Committee has been in contact with Reliant Robin engineers in an attempt to cut the capital cost of buying turntable ladders by 25%.

"The present four-wheeled chassis seems unnecessarily expensive, so we have been looking closely at the merits of cheaper alternatives.

"We got the manufacturer of one of our existing four-wheeled chassis' to drop one wheel as an experiment, and this configuration was recently trialled on the M5 after one of the manufacturer's services; but for various reasons it was clearly unsatisfactory.

"Since then, we have experimented with keeping only the front two wheels, with the rear supported on bricks, but this severely limits its speed and range.

"We then looked at a motorcycle chassis, using stabilising wheels instead of jacks, but it is impossible to get a motorbike with a reverse gear, so after some discussion that idea was thrown out.

"We are now reverting to the idea of a three-wheeled chassis, but purpose-built by a company with extensive experience of them.

New Courses

The Training Section has recently announced a series of ten one-week courses on Horticulture.

And a short course on 'Safety while coffee-making' will be offered to selected officers in the New Year.

Success For Trauma Counsellors

The Staff Support team, of specially trained stress counsellors, went into action recently after a fire at Brigade HQ left several Staff Officers with an uncontrollable fear of coffee.

Results have been so good that all officers should be off tranquillisers sometime around Summer 97.

Books Reviewed Next Issue

"The Rise of the Epic Novel"

by Warren Peece.

"How To Live With Persecution"

by Barry Noya.

"How To Live With Piles"

by R Send

Great Balls Of Fire

During Fire Safety Week, a small cast of seasoned entertainers did sterling work in Broadmead Shopping Centre, using the Chip Pan Unit to demonstrate how to put out chip pan fires using a damp tea towel, a fire blanket, and several types of extinguisher in succession in the same demonstration.

"It usually seemed more like a kitchen fire than a mere chip pan fire", commented one impressed shopper. "And I absolutely loved their routine of 'And now I've put it out... Oh no you haven't... Oh yes I have...' and so on."

New Hydrant Post

The Lansdowner says a sad goodbye to Draughtsperson Tony Miller, who after getting water on his brain has taken up the wandering life as a Brigade Hydrant Inspector.

New Anti-Theft Measures at Brigade HQ

Following the recent spate of thefts from Brigade HQ, Avon Chief Fire Officer John Terry has arranged for

the Avon and Somerset Police's crack Armed Response Unit to provide an armed guard during the daytime.

In addition, all persons resorting to the Headquarters building may be challenged at any time by the Armed Response Unit and required to give the correct password, with dire consequences for those who don't.

In order to counter accusations that the thefts are being taken too seriously, John has introduced a touch of levity by making the password "Gigabequerels" - a word which every lecturer on Radiation knows will reduce the toughest firefighter to hysterical laughter.

The original password, "Millennium", was abandoned after several deaths.

Budget Restrictions

The Brigade has announced that in order to bring in more income, fire appliances and firefighter uniforms are to carry advertising slogans.

All pumps will carry the fire safety message, "Smoke Alarms Save Lives", and Firefighter uniforms will carry the prominent advertisement, "Dry Cleaned By Sunlight."

Plans are afoot for a specially re-designed helmet, sponsored by Durex.

Animal Magic

Following the discovery that London and other Brigades are using sniffer dogs to assist in fire investigation, 'C' Division HQ at Weston-Super-Mare are trialling the use of a specially trained cat.

"It's been lousy at smelling out accelerant fumes and the like, but it's been great for locating bullseyes because it will always curl up in the warmest spot.

"We're thinking of issuing one to each First Pump."

Global Warming Problem Denied

Lansdown's scientists have refuted claims that the Earth is getting steadily warmer. "It's always ***** cold up here," said one, "and it's definitely not getting any warmer.

Nutty Slack Prevention

Avon's fire appliances are to be the first in the South West to be fitted with special secure wheel nuts, it was announced today.

Said a spokesmechanic, "There are far too many nuts loose in the present-day Fire Service".

New BA Set's Problems

Firefighters are asked to cease the practice of bungee-jumping using the new set's retractable personal line. - It is anyway not a personal line but a special lead to which to attach the sniffer/bullseye cat being issued to each First Pump.

The set's Electronic Monitoring Unit (EMU) at last brings to fruition Bill Gates' vision of Windows-For-BA-Sets. The EMU itself doubles as a mouse, and is rolled on a special pad on the wearer's leg.

2000 Man

The Millennium celebrations are to be ignored by the Brigade, following the realisation that most Firefighters still can't cope with the 1990's.

Budget Restrictions

Due to severe cuts, Lansdown is to be reduced to 600' a drop of 200' from its original height.

Further cuts may be necessary in future years.

Fire Services National Benevolent Fund

Back in July of last year a daughter of a colleague in Devon was transferred to Frenchay Hospital. The only information we were given was that she had been attacked and would probably be admitted to the Intensive Care Unit.

Beverley was already on the Unit by the time Chris arrived and had been transferred to the Burns Unit before her parents arrived from Seaton.

Whilst baby sitting for a family near her home, 19 year old Beverley had answered a knock on the door. She was sprayed with some liquid (later found to be a cocktail of concentrated nitric acid) and her assailant disappeared into the night, leaving her with burns to her face, hands and arms.

Although in great pain, Beverley had managed to calm her young charge enough to get him to send for an ambulance and contact her father Robin, who arrived to find the front hall covered in "foul, fuming goo that made him cough and stung his eyes." The liquid had already begun eating its way through her dungarees, and Beverley was trying to wash the acid off her face and arms which were a "bubbling green and yellow mass". Robin has since said it did not take him long to realise that Beverley had "terrible terrible injuries".

Within minutes the ambulance arrived, but in that short time her condition had deteriorated so much the crew decided Beverley should be flown to the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital by Air Ambulance and the local Station were asked to provide an appliance on standby as the helicopter landed and took off. Imagine how the Seaton Crew must have felt as the Air Ambulance sped away with the daughter of their friend and close colleague on board.

Beverley drifted in and out of consciousness all night and her pain was so severe Doctors had to administer a general anaesthetic and connect her to a respirator simply to enable the nurses to wash her. The next day she was transferred to Frenchay which is where my friendship with Beverley and her family began.

Beverley's mother was unable to stay at Frenchay for any length of time as there were 2 younger brothers at home who needed her, so in the beginning it was Robin who was travelling up and back to Seaton on a daily basis. However, when Beverley was due to have the first of her many skin graft operations, he asked if there was anyway somewhere could be found for him to stay overnight so he could be with her longer and "be near" should she need him. A bed was made available at A5 Patchway for whenever and however long he wished to stay. Robin says that after talks over the mess table long into many nights he now looks on all the personnel on every Watch at A5 as amongst his dearest friends.

After a few weeks Beverley was transferred to the Bristol Eye Hospital and her skin graft treatment was put on hold whilst they sorted out a serious eye problem.

Beverley is now home regaining her strength in readiness for further skin grafts she knows she will need over the coming months, she still visits The Eye Hospital for regular outpatient appointments and when she is re-admitted to Frenchay, around July, Robin will once again be invited to take up his nocturnal residence at Patchway.

Whilst his daughter was in Frenchay, Robin asked the staff if there was any way he could repay them for their care. A shopping list was drawn up and in September 1996, the Beverley Hammett Burns Appeal



was set up and fund raising began. The first event was a Sponsored 65 mile Cycle Ride across East Devon by personnel of Seaton Fire Station and the Hammett Family. This was followed by Open Days and Fun Days. They had originally hoped to raise £2,000 for an ECG monitor and if they could double that amount then they would look to buying a special air controlled bed.

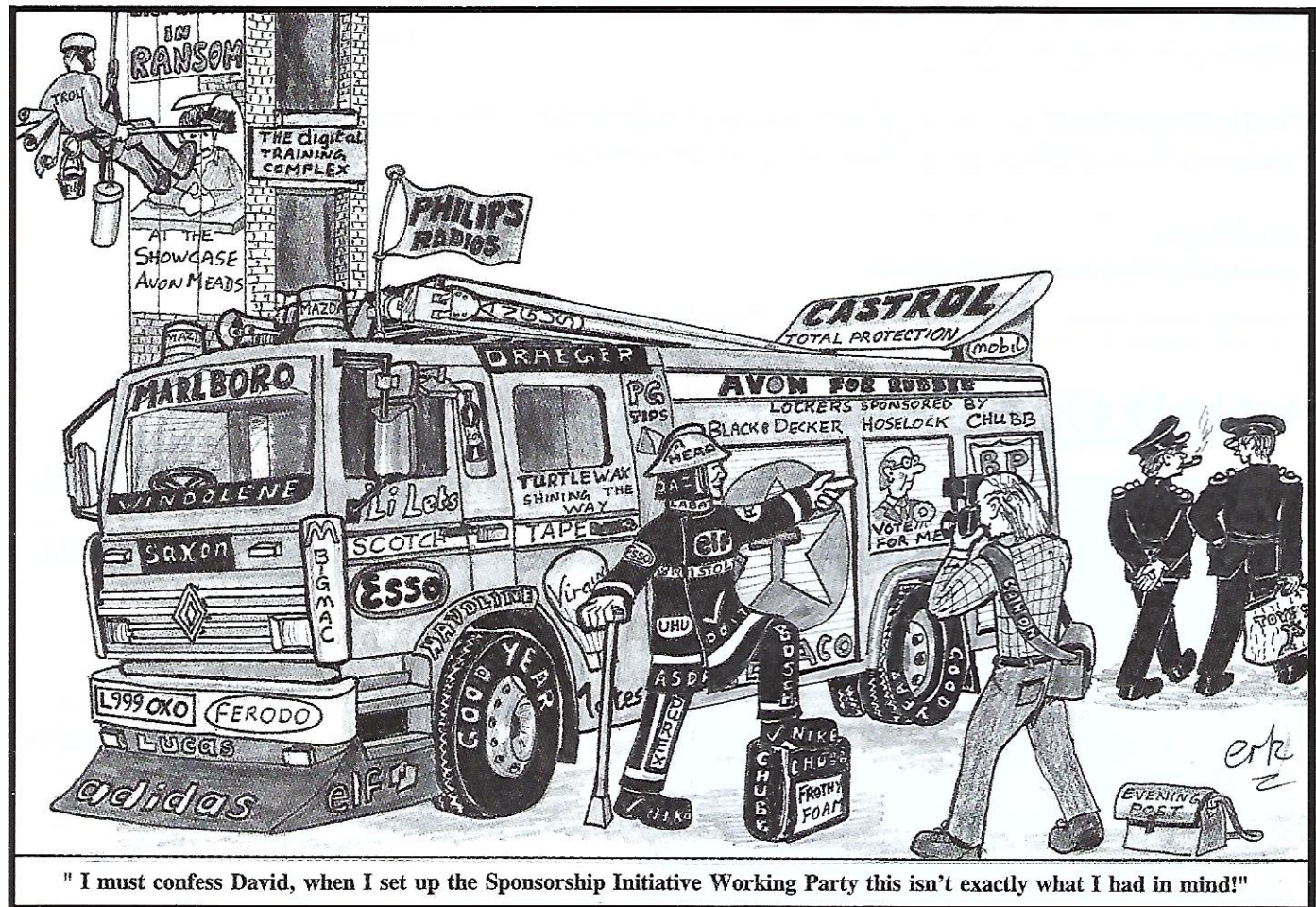
On 28th February, Robin, Valerie and Beverley Hammett presented Sister Ruth Jahans-Price and Ward 104 with monitoring equipment worth £6,400 and a cheque for £3,500. It was an extremely personal thank you from the Hammetts to the staff who had worked so hard on their daughter's behalf and I was very honoured to be invited by them to share in it.

My mind went back over the past seven months to the first time I met Beverley when, not knowing what to expect, I have walked onto Ward 104 and asked to see her. Although I have worked at Frenchay for over 20 years, The Burns Unit is not and never will be at the top of my visiting list, but the bravery of Beverley and her family shown during my visits is something I shall never forget.

The lives of the whole family was affected in some way on that eventful July evening and Beverley faces many more operations before she can return to her studies to become a Nursery Nurse.

Coming from a small community, everybody is aware of her story, that was how her family and friends were able to raise the £10,000 they presented to Frenchay. However, despite national and local newspaper coverage neither they, the people of Seaton nor the Police have been able to track down her attacker... he still remains at large.

Penny Deverill
Fire Services National Benevolent Fund



" I must confess David, when I set up the Sponsorship Initiative Working Party this isn't exactly what I had in mind!"

VOLUNTEERS WANTED NOW!!

SMOKE ALARMS FOR OLDER PEOPLE

It has long been recognised that older people are the most vulnerable sector of the population to injury and death from fire occurring in their own homes. Indeed, 45% of these people who die from fire in the home are over the age of 60, in 1994 this totalled 258, with nearly 3,400 injured.

The Brigade will on Thursday 17th April 1997 mount the most ambitious community project ever. It is aiming to achieve the following:-

1. To supply and fit (free of charge) at least one smoke alarm in the homes of all those people over the age of 65 who currently do not have one in the Brigade area.
2. To increase the awareness of Fire Safety among older people and also those agencies/organisations who deal with the care of older people.

It is estimated that there are approximately 160,000 older people (ie, over the age of 65) living in their own homes in the Brigade area which after considering single persons, couples and current smoke alarm ownership this will leave around 40,000 homes requiring at least one smoke alarm.

Sponsorship is currently being sought and to date we have raised £12,000 from the Bristol Area Specialist Health Promotion Service, GWR Radio and the Dolphin Society, and with a "stock" of 800 smoke alarms in our store at Lansdown, we are well on our way!

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Please can you help us. We are urgently seeking volunteers to help us in this most ambitious campaign, and fit alarms in older peoples homes.

If you can spare some time to support us please contact Assistant Divisional Officer John Sleight, Senior Community Liaison Officer on extension 623 for further details.

John Sleight
Community Fire Safety Education

A CAD Operator's Nightmare!

The instructions below were found neatly written on the reverse of Form F186 Plan Drawing Requisition.

Note the nurses home comprises a basement, ground and three upper floors, the upper levels are identical except:

Adjacent to stair L on the 2nd floor is as CAD plan regarding kitchen position.

On the 3rd floor that room is a lounge and the next door room is not a bedroom but a kitchen with B and DP.

The ironic thing is the above precise instructions do not match up with the plans!

Confused of Lansdown

Gambia Update



A Simon Major Airfield Foam Tender leaves A2 Southmead for The Gambia, courtesy of British Aerospace and Serco.

This much needed vehicle will serve at Yun Dum, The Gambia's Airport.

Goldings of Dursley kindly transported the unit to Purfleet in Essex, free of charge. This most valuable gesture saved over £250 of petrol as on a good day 2 miles to the gallon is the best you might expect.

Pump size: 4,500 per litre per minute; **Foam:** 3,100 per litre per minute; **Water:** 3,000 per litre per minute.

Instruction in Case of Fire (as detailed in a hotel in France!)

In case of fire in your room and if you can't get the fire over:

- close carefully the door of your room, follow the markings towards the exit.
- inform the reception desk.

In case of fire alarm:

- if the corridor and stairs are practicable, close carefully the door of your room, and follow the markings towards the exit.
- if the smoke makes the corridor and stairs impracticable; keep in your room; close the doors and the windows (without locking them); show you at the window up to the arrival of the firemen.
- a door closed, if it is wet and tight, for example with damp linen, protects a long time.

I'M ON A COMMITTEE

Oh give me your Pity, I'm on a committee
Which means that from morning to night
We attend and amend and contend and defend
Without a conclusion in sight.
We confer and concur, we defer and demur
And reiterate all of our thoughts.
We revise the agenda with frequent addenda
And consider a load of reports
We compose and propose, we suppose and oppose
And points of procedure are fun.
But though various notions are brought up as motions
There's terribly little gets done.
We resolve and absolve, but we never dissolve
Since it's out of the question for us.
What shattering pity to end our committee
Where else could we make such a fuss.

Phil Sarplin

Once again, after a hard night in the Control Room, personnel enjoy a bit of car maintenance.

Here they can be seen attempting to start a car with a flat battery - all under the watchful eye of mechanic supremo Ian Morgan.



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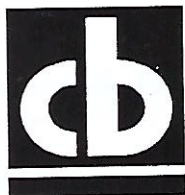
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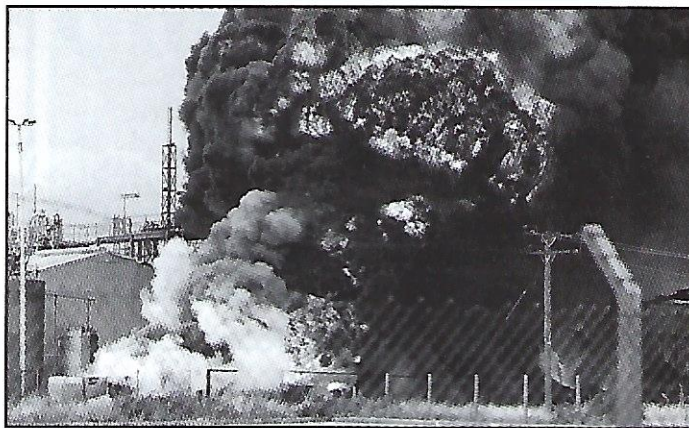
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Explosion and Fire at Albright & Wilson Chemical Complex, Avonmouth, Bristol

On the morning of Thursday 3rd October 1996, a "tank container" arrived at the Albright & Wilson Chemical Complex, the container was purported to be loaded with 20 tonnes of Epichlorhydrin, loading of the chemical into a vessel commenced when an urgent telephone call was made from the harbour in Belgium to state that the tank in fact contained Sodium Chlorite solution, personnel immediately began to close down the loading process which up to this point had transferred about 80% of the contents into the storage vessel.



An evacuation was initiated, staff recount hearing the sound of a pressure valve operating and as they made their escape they recall witnessing a "massive explosion" followed by a severe fire behind them.

At 10:33 hours the pre-determined attendance of seven pumping appliances, an aerial platform and the operational support unit were despatched to the scene along with the Divisional Commander of 'A' Division and two Supervisory ADO's.

Upon the arrival of A3 the firefighters were confronted with a severe chemical fire, an area of approximately 80m x 30m was well alight emitting white chemical vapours and heavy black smoke. Further explosions were occurring within the fire area creating airborne fire columns 50 metres in height and numerous 200 litre metal drums were exploding and propelled into the air.

The incident was designated a "Confirmed Major Incident" and initial priorities were:-

- i) Boundary cooling operations from stand off positions using Jetmaster Monitors.
- ii) Major foam attack into the seat of the fire from stand off positions, using Slim Jet Foam Monitors.
- iii) Removal or protection of unaffected road tankers.

At 11:15 hours Deputy Chief Fire Officer Hutchings assumed command and sent the message "Make Pumps 20".

At this time, the Police Helicopter offered the Brigade the facility of flying a Senior Fire Brigade Officer above the incident for reconnaissance purposes. Divisional Officer Ernie Coghlan boarded the helicopter and for the following hour and a half was able to view the scene from above, directing the Fireground Commanders below.

At 12:34 hours DCFO Hutchings sent the stop message "2 x Slim Jets, 1 x Jetmaster, 4 x F135's, 12 Water Jets, 40 Breathing Apparatus, cooling jets being sustained for some considerable time".

At 20:10 hours the site was secured and handed over to HSE Control with fire crews returning every two hours for safety inspections.

John Waft
Assistant D. Officer

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Date: 17th October, 1996
Time: 08:49 hours
Address: A431 Swineford
Appliances: B72, B12, B16, A11, A16

A serious RTA involving 4 cars confronted Kingswood firefighters. 5 persons were trapped and a second Rescue Tender was requested.

6 persons were ultimately conveyed to hospital by ambulance and police helicopter. 1 female was pronounced dead at the scene, a male subsequently died of his injuries..



Date: 21st December, 1996
Time: 17:17 hours
Address: Haliwell Road, Portishead
Appliances: C31, C32

A fire is never welcome at any time, this family were devastated when fire swept through their timber framed home, destroying all the contents and family Christmas presents.

Portishead firefighters discovered the house well alight on arrival.

Date: 24th February, 1997
Time: 14:45 hours
Address: M5 Southbound, Junction 17-18
Appliances: A31, A52, A56, A32, A22, A13

3 people were killed in this RTA involving 4 vehicles.

Weather conditions were poor, and a particularly harrowing scene was confronted by firefighters and indeed members of the public who came to assist.



Date: Sunday 2nd March, 1997
Time: 06:02 hours
Address: Brentry Avenue, Lawrence Hill
Appliances: A11, A12, A13

A severe house fire was in progress when crews arrived, access to the premises proved difficult due to the large number of security devices in place.

A man was discovered collapsed on the ground floor and firefighters carried him from the house, despite all efforts to resuscitate him, he tragically died.



BRIGADE GOLF SOCIETY

Captain:- Bob Smith, 'S' Division, ext 615

Secretary:- Clive Leech, A2 G, ext 282

Turkey Trot, Monday 9th December, 1996

A slightly misty, but pleasantly mild day greeted the Society as we gathered at Dewstow for the annual Turkey Trot. A total of 43 golfers, including 10 guests, made the short journey over the Severn, showing how the level of interest in the game within the Brigade is growing.

The Valley course is a forgiving and mainly friendly parkland course and, with the exception of a couple of greens, was in very good condition.

The short length of the day, and the large number of players, meant the last group out finished in twilight, which was a shame for guest Keith Davey, who could not see the ball when it entered the hole for his first ever hole-in-one on the 18th.

The event was won by Dave Dunster (A1), with 38pts, followed by Mike Bartlett (B7), and Colin Curtis (B3), both with 36pts. Keith Davey's ace helped him to be best guest, also with 36pts.

We shall be arranging several social golf days this year, and hope to see you there.

DIARY OF EVENTS 1997

Date	Watch	Venue	Event	Green Fee
15th May	W/B	Shirehampton Park	Society Day	£13.50
23rd June	B/R	Worlebury Golf Club	Society Day	£15
24th September	R/G	Tracy Park Golf Club	Brigade Championships	£17
15th October	W/B	Tall Pines Golf Club	Society Day	£10
TBA			Turkey Trot	

The Society Days will all be played as a Stableford competition. There will be a small entry fee to each event (£2-£3) and, if numbers allow, prizes will be awarded in 2 divisions, for lower and higher handicaps.

.....

Quiz No.1 - Mathematics (Answer)

Pi (3.1459265358979323846...)

Count the lengths of the words.

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