

The Retired Prison Governors

In co-operation with: The Prison Governors Association

NEWSLETTER

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Editor: Brendan O'Friel
Letters: Arthur Williamson
Treasurer: Bill Martin
Organisation: Sid Powell
Editorial Office: The Governor's Office, H M Prison, Manchester M60 9AH
Telephone: 061 834 8626



EDITORIAL

THIS IS a celebration issue. Not only is the Newsletter 10 years old, but this is also the 21st Edition. To celebrate, we have attempted to produce a bumper Edition using the Magazine format of the Prison Governors' Association - complete with photos courtesy of Keith Gibson, Editor of the PGA's own Magazine. This issue is subsidised by the PGA as a special Edition should be.



Terry Bone - First Chairman of the PGA

New Readers

Among new subscribers we welcome George Shaw and Derrick Dean who have been retired a little while; Gerry Walker (G5 Buckley Hall), Ron Wilkinson (G4 Manchester), Bill Driscoll (RD North), Muriel Allan (G3 Kingston) and Alex Cruickshank (G2 Stoke Heath), all recently retired.

New Years Honours 1990

Readers will be interested to know that the Monsignor Richard Atherton was awarded the OBE, Mike Murphy (P8) the ISO and John Wheeler MP - former Assistant Governor - is now Sir John Wheeler.

Perrle Lectures 1990

Mike Jenkins writes:

"You kindly advertised last year's Lectures for us in your March Newsletter and we would appreciate a similar 'spot'. Our advertising will begin in the March PSJ but this may not appear early enough for you to copy. This year's subject is 'Mentally Disordered Offenders in Prison' and the speakers are Dr B D Cooper, Principal Medical Officer at Parkhurst Prison and Dr Adrian Grounds of the Institute of Criminology, Cambridge. The event will again be at the Prison Service College, Newbold Revel, RUGBY; the date is 18 October and the cost £20 (including coffee, lunch and tea). Further details from Trevor Williams, Head of Custody, Rudgegate Prison, WETHERBY, West Yorkshire, LS23 7AZ."

Strangeways and other Disturbances

Many thanks for the very many letters I received during the Strangeways Incident. I think almost every Governor who had had a riot since 1968 kindly dropped me a supporting letter. The damage is heavy in the six Wings of the Main Prison but we have every intention of seeing a renewed Strangeways emerging from the experience. In the meantime we are still open and operational and intend to stay so. Arthur Coomes will be interested to know I am back in the Governor's Office he used; F Wing needs to dry out for

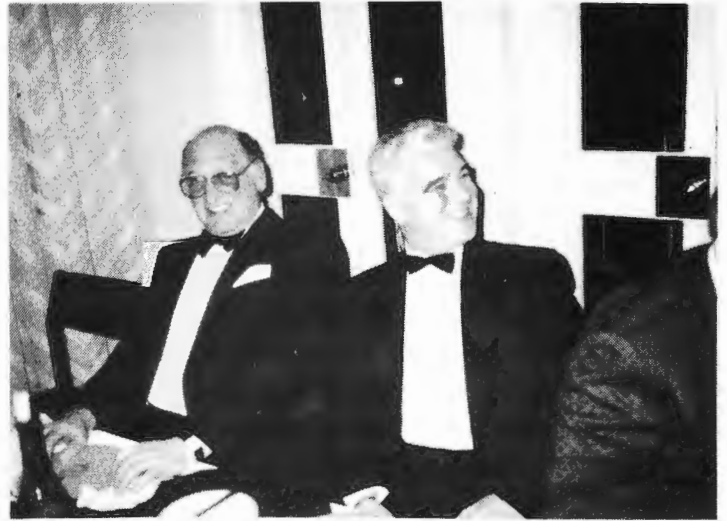
a while! A number of our readers will be pleased to know we held the ground floor of F Wing throughout - so the list of former Governors and Deputies is still intact. As for what happened, you will have to wait for the Report of Lord Justice Woolf.

The PGA

Continues to flourish. Membership is over 890 and of course over 130 of you are Associate Members. Annual Conference at Newbold Revel in March 1990 was the occasion for the PGA to make a presentation to Arthur Williamson to mark his ten years work for the Newsletter. Retired members present included Sid Powell, Gordon Lakes, Bill Martin and Keith Gibson.

Letters to the Editor

As the Newsletter starts on its second decade, keep those letters coming in. Make sure retired colleagues know of the existence of the Newsletter. If you want to get in touch with a retired colleague you can write via the Newsletter and we will forward your letter if we have the person's address.



Sid Powell and David Simons

10 Years of the Retired Governors' Newsletter

To mark this important milestone, a number of people were asked to contribute to this edition.

First, Arthur Williamson reflects on the first Edition . . .

"WITH REGARDS No 1 Edition I can confirm that this was sent out in May 1980. Page 1 tells me we had 48 names on the mailing list, so it would be safe to assume this would be the number of copies sent out at the time.

The idea came to my mind quite simply. At the time HO issued some directive relating to a change in the pensionable value of quarters. This was to be back-dated, which of course meant we all had a little to come back. It appeared to me that HO would not have communicated with any Governor who had retired just previously and that they should be told in order to 'cash in'. I wrote first to Lionel Steinhausen and confirmed he had not heard anything, so I photostated the instruction and sent a copy off to those Governors I knew outside the Service. Their replies made me realise there was a need to keep all retired Governors in touch with each other and with current events. Another matter of serious concern to them at the time was that of 'Index-linked pensions'. Several MPs were intent on doing away with these and had they succeeded many, if not all, retired Governors would have 'felt the pinch'. Consequently I kept them in touch with events and the later 'Clegg Report' (I believe that was the Chairman's name) made it clear that such pensions should continue - I sent out a copy of the report at a later stage. From then, like Topsy, 'it just

grewed' and I found many of my colleagues were keen to get regular news of the Service. From then it is now history.

The names in the No 1 Issue will show those who took the trouble to get in touch. My mind tells me that amongst the first to offer encouragement were: Lionel Steinhausen, Mark Winston, Peter James, Dermot Grubb, Arnie Stapleton, Jack Smith, Jim Blakey, Doug Tacey (who was then Senior Principal at North Regional Office), Peter Marshall, Arthur Kearns, Sam Millar (now no longer with us) and finally, but perhaps the most important of all, was Norman Brown who, as my Governor at Manchester, could not have been more helpful. As I have stated in my letter to you of yesterday, the Newsletter would not have got off the ground at all without the help of Norman, and in particular our Secretary of the time Mrs. Eileen Fox (I think she lived Bolton way)."

Terry Weiler takes up the story:

"YOUR EDITORIAL COMMENT that the Newsletter is about to attain its tenth anniversary and twenty-first issue, reminded me how much its readers, past and present, owe to Arthur Williamson, its 'onlie begetter'. Not only did he conceive the idea, but he overcame all the difficulties of getting it launched and was responsible for all the early issues - and all this in such spare time as his duties as Deputy

Governor of Manchester allowed. (Any comment from the present Governor?) Since the revival of the Newsletter under your auspices, Arthur has continued to edit the personal correspondence - will any of this letter survive? - and to delight us with his personal comments at the end of our letters, very much reinforcing the 'family' atmosphere of the Newsletter.

As the first issue of the Newsletter coincided with my own retirement, I have always felt a close personal interest in it. And while I think Arthur was absolutely right that personal news - even when this was sad - would always be the heart of the Newsletter, I have been impressed with the way its scope has been broadened to wider issues, and the very professional format it has been possible to develop, which must have required considerable effort. Arthur has made the point that maintaining this standard would be expensive but I feel most of us would accept that as a fact of (even retired) life and would feel we were getting value for any contribution required.

For me 1990 has so far been marked by three developments. First, three days in hospital - my first ever in this country - following what has been diagnosed as an attack of angina. So, under close uxorial surveillance, I have now joined what I am finding is quite a large army of those taking two aspirins every morning and carrying a sub-lingual spray (shades of the Prison Medical Service).

Second, the Civil Service Commission have belatedly discovered that I passed their absolute age limit last October and I chaired my last Board at the beginning of March, so no more chin-wags in Manchester. I expect now to be selling matches outside the more reputable London prisons.

Third, my research into the introduction of three and two in a cell has been completed and is now with the Prison Department. I should like to repeat my thanks to Alan Packham, Charlie Pratt, Stan Mitchell and Ken Watson for their help. What will happen to the literary and historical masterpiece has not yet been decided. I will hope to report on this in due course".

Bill Martin adds the Treasurer's story . . .

"I AM NOT SURE why exactly Arthur asked me in August 1981 to look after the Newsletter funds; it could not have been because of my accountancy skills! Of course we had already known each other for many years and had become friends. He had been a member of the 12th Staff Course in 1955



Bill Martin and Gordon Lakes

and I was on the 13th the following year in the course of which a joint meeting to share views and experiences - today no doubt we would call it a seminar - was held, and staff courses then were quite different from those of recent years and indeed the two courses together only numbered twelve souls. I got to know Arthur then but I also have an earlier recollection of a rather crusty Works Engineer, but being in those days a fairly junior prison officer I would have steered clear of him. Over the following years we had many encounters and have become firm friends although, apart from a brief spell at Wormwood Scrubs when Arthur did a period of detached duty there, we never actually served together at the same establishment. I suppose we have much in common though in terms of origin and experience, both having come up through the ranks and both having been deputy governors of Strangeways for example, but I do have one abiding recollection which is that of Arthur getting to his feet conference after conference to argue for some means - such as a 'newsletter' - for keeping our retired colleagues in touch, but with little result. In the long run he concluded that the only thing for it was to do it himself, and he did and did it well. The Retired Governors' Newsletter is his creation and we owe its existence to him.

In the earliest days the Newsletter was a quite small scale affair, the first edition was issued in May 1980 - can it really be ten years ago - in the form of ten cyclostyléd sheets. The fund which floated the enterprise came largely out of Arthur's own pocket. Despite its fairly humble beginnings the Newsletter did take off and maintained a steady flight. It obviously gave much pleasure to those who received it and Arthur's personal enthusiasm for the project was fully vindicated. It was of course

10 Years of the Retired Governors' Newsletter

insufficiently funded and resourced to be able to develop to any great degree, but the money available which came from sporadic donations, occasional windfalls and other mysterious sources was adequate to keep the operation going since costs were kept to a minimum and the issue of an edition in that period only cost around £20.

I think the second and current stage of development is due almost entirely to the inception and inauguration of the Prison Governors' Association, whose officers saw it as their duty to support and encourage the Newsletter and logically in the end to take it into the organisation, still as a separate entity but clearly and unequivocally soundly based and reinforced. This has allowed it to improve the image considerably with a contemporary format of professional appearance which in turn has encouraged circulation and response, so that the majority of recipients have committed themselves to ongoing financial support so as to provide an annual income, presently at some £800 per annum, sufficient to maintain the level of activities.

What the future holds will be interesting to see and

it is possible that arising from as it were the retrospective effects of Fresh Start there may well be senior staff who, although they retired while in the chief officer or senior works officer grades might still be motivated to join the readership. There is obviously potential for further growth. One of Arthur's hopes in the early days was that the enterprise might lead to opportunities for more social contacts between retired governor grades, and in regard to informal contacts this has I believe been realised to some extent and the interest in keeping in touch has been rekindled for quite a number of us. It would be pleasant if this trend could continue to develop and eventually perhaps formalise, but like most families the most usual event to bring about a reunion is sadly a bereavement. However, the PGA Annual Conference is able to provide at least one albeit limited opportunity in this respect and there are also establishment based reunions. One thing is sure though, and it is that the personal initiative of Arthur Williamson has served to provide this most welcome means to fill the gap that existed within our professional circle and our thanks must go to him for this service. **WELL DONE ARTHUR!**

JOHN CHILDS REFLECTS ON THE OPPORTUNITIES OF RETIREMENT

"CONGRATULATIONS on the success of the Retired Governors' Newsletter. Arthur Williamson worked so hard for this success and I know that we greatly appreciate his efforts, not forgetting your efforts as his worthy successor.

Arthur was so right when he wrote in May 1980 that 'Governors do not hibernate behind closed doors when they retire from the Service..... the skills you learned whilst 'with the firm' are now proving to be advantageous to both you and your local communities'. The retired Governors with whom I am in contact are extremely busy in a wide variety of activities and are clearly an asset in a paid or

voluntary capacity.

I set up a consultancy practice when I retired - mainly management consultancy, management training and career change. I have Associates who work with me when the need arises. About one third of my working time concerns career change - redundancies, career plateau or new careers. Essentially this means an examination of personal values, transferable skills and opportunity awareness. I work with all age groups and I am encouraged to find that the 'older' ones are now obtaining employment commensurate with their skills/interests or are finding suitable outlets for their talents on a voluntary basis. I work on a part-

time basis so that I have time for family, friends and voluntary service - vice chairman of the League of Friends of our local hospitals.

I know that retired Governors have so many skills/talents, some indeed have skills and talents which perhaps did not fully flourish within the Service but which are now blossoming in retirement. At the same time, I realise that ill health dogs some retired Governors but I hope that it does not daunt them.

I have found that 'THE BEST IS YET TO COME'. Why not have this as our motto for colleagues about to retire?

Best wishes to all ex colleagues".

JOHN POWLS, EDITOR FOR 2 YEARS, GIVES A SERVING GOVERNOR'S PERSPECTIVE

"10 years and 21 editions; how time flies!

I remember well those early days of my service when I was an Assistant Governor working to Arthur Williamson at Manchester and watching the sterling

efforts he put into getting the Newsletter off the ground. On reflection I suppose it was those efforts and the response of retired colleagues to them that convinced me that something worthwhile was going

10 Years of the Retired Governors' Newsletter

on and made me curious to see what had inspired Arthur to make the effort.

I was pleased later to be able to help Arthur with the Newsletter in small ways and to be able to 'hold the fort' as temporary editor between Arthur's retirement and your taking over.

Looking back over those early days and the intervening years I feel that what the Newsletter represented to me, and perhaps what inspired Arthur, can be summed up in three words: continuity, perspective and fellowship.

Continuity is the sense that I have gained of the history of the people who have managed the service before me and in becoming part of that train of stewardship myself. To be part of a group of people who had made, were making and will continue to make a very personal, individual, significant and particular contribution to delivering our public service. Those of us who aspire to and attain the duty of leadership in the Service cannot be reminded of this too often, particularly when we sometimes feel powerless and overwhelmed by the bureaucratic elements of our work. We can make a difference.

Perspective, both in terms of the work and experience of what being a Governor is about, but

also in terms of keeping that role in perspective with one's other roles in life as part of a family and community.

Lastly, fellowship. I, like many members of the service, have benefited from the fellowship of colleagues in the good times of which, thankfully, there have been many, and in the less good. To be reminded that that quality of caring can endure beyond employment can only be healthy and met an obvious need which the Prison Service as an organisation persists in failing to meet.

This is necessarily a personal view, but as I wish the Newsletter well for the 1990's, whatever developments take place in its style and content, those values which engaged me ought to remain the cornerstone. They represent some of the values which underpin the best management of people who manage people and we who presently have responsibility for the service and delivering its purpose will need all of these in facing the challenges, opportunities and problems of the next decade and in leaving a fitting legacy for those who follow.

I look forward to contributing to the 20th anniversary edition in the year 2000 and anticipate receiving my copy when I join the readership in 2013.

Best wishes".

Finally, a reflection from Gordon Fowler . . .

"I LOOK FORWARD to receiving my copy and would congratulate the compilers (Arthur Williamson I suspect, mainly) on the professional and readable end product. Arthur always was and will be a person of total commitment and this shows through the Newsletter.

I am mindful of the request for '*Reflections from Retired Governors*', but am equally mindful that the refractive index gets to work pretty quickly after leaving the Service, and some image aberration occurs!

To paraphrase the Nun's Prayer:

'Lord, I am getting older and soon I will be old. I am aware of my infinite wisdom and my capacity to influence others with sound and propitious advice.

Please therefore, I beseech you, keep my lips sealed for some time to come, as I wish to have a few friends at the end!

Even so, I am sure I will not be able to resist the challenge of 'What Katie did next' before 'Fresh Start'.

My greetings to all my old colleagues".

In Memoriam

I regret to have to report a large number of deaths over the last six months. Two serving Governors died in January 1990 - David Thompson, Governor I at Lindholme and David Hayes Governor II at Magilligan. Other names we know of:

TOM HAYES
LESLIE WHEELER
REG DALTON

ALAN ROBERTON
MISS JOAN MARTYN
LESLIE MATTHEWS

FRED RICHARDSON
DENNIS WARD
CLIFF SHOEMAKE

EXTRACTS FROM PRISON SERVICE NEWS

We again include a selection of items which have appeared in Prison Service News since the last issue of the Newsletter.

It will be appreciated that they all appeared before the Strangeways riot and the appointment of Lord Justice Woolf to conduct his wide-ranging inquiry.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Home Secretary has approved the prison service reorganisation plans (which include the abolition of regions in favour of smaller area groups, and the relocation of headquarters in the Midlands).

The prison service has been allocated £1,303m for 1990/91. This will be allocated as £700m for the regions, £463m for the building programme and £140m for services provided by headquarters.

The prison building programme includes 28 new prisons. Eight have already been opened and 14 are at various stages of planning and construction. Two further starts are planned for 1991/2 and 1992/3.

A pilot scheme to test the provision of qualified clerks (from the magistrates courts service) for Boards of Visitors' adjudications is to be launched at twelve establishments.

Form 1150, of hallowed memory with its generous space for national service details, is on its way out. It will be replaced - wait for it - by Form 2050, a much researched and field-tested new prisoner's record. This will be introduced with a pocket guide!

Guernsey's new purpose-built £6.5m prison, with a CNA of 90, opened in December. It replaced the gaol built in 1811 and condemned by Elizabeth Fry in 1836.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The Princess Royal remains indefatigable in her prison commitments. She officially opened Swaleside, the second

Isle of Sheppey establishment, in November; she visited Wymott in December, seeing the visitors' centre, the community project for mentally handicapped young people, the education block and staff and inmates in one of the wings; and Aylesbury YOI in March.

Mr. Waddington's first prison visit since becoming Home Secretary was to Wakefield. He has since visited Hewell Grange YOI - where he also saw HMP Blakenhurst under construction - and Winchester.

Sir Clive Whitmove, Permanent Under Secretary of State, visited Winchester in November to see the operation of the LIDS 2 multi-user computer system due to be installed in every prison service establishment. The system replaces most of the manual methods of recording and receiving inmate information.

The new purpose built block at Ford prison was officially opened by the Duke of Norfolk.

Justin Fashanu of West Ham United ran sports sessions for trainees at Portland YOI as well as addressing them in the chapel.

ROUND THE ESTABLISHMENTS

Grendon has been closed for up

to six months to permit a complete overhaul of the electric wiring.

A new mother and baby unit is to be built at New Hall.

The Elton trophy for the best prison service workshop was won by the footwear industry at Ashwell.

Dartmoor farm staff received eight awards - including two firsts in the cattle class - at the Royal Smithfield show.

The Mackman Cup and Horspool Trophy awards for breadbaking were won by Kirkham and for confectionery by Wandsworth.

PRISONS INTERNATIONAL

Four members of the Onley staff spent a week working in the State Penitentiary at Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Thirty-five prison staff from Amsterdam visited Brixton and Latchmere House.

GENUINE FREE OFFER

The Editor of the Prison Service News (Room 607, Cleland House, Page Street, London SW1) will be happy to arrange for this monthly journal to be sent to any retired governor or member of the service who lets him know that he or she would like to receive it.

JOHN DOVELL
First Secretary of the
PGA



Your Letters

Lewes, Sussex.

I have appreciated receiving and enjoyed reading the RGN from No. 1 onwards and along with a number of others owe a lot to Arthur Williamson who started it off.

Over the years I have corresponded with Arthur on and off (Peggy and Arthur are old pals of Stella and me) and once had the pleasure of responding to an appeal from Terry Weiler for information from those who had experienced "three in a cell" at its earliest days.

Now, just having clocked up my "three score years and ten" and almost 10 years of retirement, I can look back and feel the years have been kind to me and my family. Living in Lewes, not far from the prison, I have the good fortune of a pleasant, small country town where I have contact with people I have known for some time and receive the occasional "all correct" from the older members of the staff. I worked for seven years as a messenger for a local jeweller and silversmith and this gave me an introduction to the High Street traders and so on.

My eldest son (Arthur was a referee of character for his enlistment) is a Major in the Coldstream Guards with twenty-eight years service; the next eldest, a personnel controller for a clothing manufacturer, is married to the daughter of Ray Rollinson, ex Chief Officer 1 at Manchester; the youngest after some years on the Admin. side up to SEO is now a Gov.4 at Lincoln Prison and a member of the PGA. So along with the Newsletter, Associate Membership of the PGA and the family I have a feeling of belonging still. As a bonus, a fellow Rotarian had the Director General, Christopher Train, as a teacher/housemaster at school some years back (the lads called him Jack, it would appear - not very original for those who recall ITMA).

As to the future of the Newsletter. Well, it must continue to give pleasure to many former colleagues and friends and, really, apart from Associate Membership of the PGA, it is all we have to link us and keep us in touch. The items of news culled from letters, the extracts from publications and news of present day service are much appreciated. An occasional article along the "Those Were The Days" lines by a venerable ex Governor Grade would, I feel sure, go down well. Without more frequent issues, and I can see the problems of moving in that direction, it is not going to be possible to include news of immediate events, or notice of things for the close future, unless they coincide with an issue.

Best wishes to all serving and past colleagues.

'Charlie' Pratt.

Glad to hear from you Charlie. I have of course kept up to date with John's miraculous career and am now delighted to learn he has gone a step higher up the promotion ladder in the Coldstreams. Please give him our congratulations. Also wish Martin all possible success at Lincoln. I hope also some 'venerable ex Governor will read your letter and let us have the first episode of 'Those Were The Days'. Arthur W.

Paulton, Bristol.

Thanks for the notes regarding Reg. Dalton and Dia. Thompson. I am very sorry to learn of their deaths.

Sorry it has taken so long for me to acknowledge, but this retirement lark is a full time occupation and one I can strongly recommend. I very much appreciated the PGA diary, and think it is well presented, please thank the committee for me. I see the uniform promotions now get thin - 2 for 1 over 20 years. Am I to assume the department are trying to work out how much they owe me for seven lost years?

Hope Barbara and the family are all well. Please give them my regards.

Is Maxwell House still haunted by the spirit of you know who?
Best wishes.
George Iles.

Vancouver, B.C. Canada.

Many thanks for the Newsletter which arrived last week. I didn't see any familiar names this time round, but perhaps people of my vintage are beginning to thin out on the ground a bit.

Some of your older readers may be amused to hear I ran across a copy of C.A. Joyce's book "By Courtesy of the Criminal" published in 1955 whilst browsing through the books section at a church jumble sale of all places, in downtown Vancouver. The 'Glasgow Observer' describes it on the dust cover, as "The story of one man's efforts to reclaim young offenders in Prison, Borstal Institutions and Approved Schools. It is a stirring and convincing story, well told and well worth reading and pondering". It is certainly all of that.

Joyce who served at Portland (1921), Wakefield, W/Scrubs, Camp Hill and Hollesley Bay, then went to the Cotswold Approved School. He certainly left his mark on the service. I wonder if any of your readers know what happened to him after he left the Cotswold School?

Kind regards.
S. Rocksborough-Smith

Retford, Notts.

Would you kindly forward the enclosed to Betty Dennis, (this has been done by Brendan). She and Doug. were our neighbours at Feltham when we first joined the Prison Service at the end of the fifties. I remember happy parties at their house, particularly on bonfire night when all the neighbours gathered there.

It is just seventeen years since Gerry died so few will remember us (I wouldn't bet on that Mrs. Feather), but for those who do - Tim is working in London and has a daughter almost two, and Kate is nursing in nearby Worksop. I enjoy a few classes and have made several friends by belonging to the National Womens Register. At the week-end I organise the helpers at Ranby visitors canteen and still visit a few old friends, so I am still in touch.

Probably quite a few of your readers live alone or cannot find the right companion for a holiday, so may I suggest 'Countryside Holidays'? Couples and singles go - everyone is friendly and one is free to do one's "own thing" or join in. I have had three super holidays in Italy and a few in this country.

I thank you so much for sending the Newsletter. It gives me great pleasure.

Sincerely, **Mary Feather.**

Taverham, Norwich.

I have just put down the Autumn Edition (No. 20) of the Retired Governors Newsletter which I invariably enjoy - not so the dreadful "Prison Service News" which seems to contain little or nothing save advertisements for loans; (I thought Prison Officers were well paid these days). Of course, half the people mentioned in the Newsletter, I have never met or heard of, which goes for the rather patronising pen pictures of Governors of the day I saw recently in a Sunday newspaper magazine.

What you so nicely wrote about the late Ted Russel was so true. Quite one of the nicest men I have ever met. When I returned from Singapore in 1964 after a long sojourn in the tropics, Ted was one of the few who made contact to welcome us back, inviting Beryl and I to dine with him at the East India Club.

There are some names one never sees in the Newsletter who were great characters of my vintage - what has happened to Norman Honey, he founded the Phoenix Dining Club for Governors - active in the 60s and 70s before it folded.

'Chalky' White, never afraid to call a spade a spade. I can still see the faces of the establishment when 'Chalky' was elected Chairman of the following years Assistant Governors Conference and threatened to invite the hangman as the after dinner speaker.

Ben Lyte, always ready to twist the tail of officialdom, and Frank Moon who had forgotten more about handling men than most of today's incumbents will ever know. One joker who is still going strong is Lynn Davis. Whilst in Newport (Gwent) the other day, I saw Lynn's name advertised as the guest speaker at some church organisations' dinner. Good on yer "Taff", they will have enjoyed what you said.

Speaking of churches Peter I have omitted your comments about a certain cleric - although I personally agree with everything you said. WAW

I cannot say anything about pre-retirement courses within the service as they did not exist at the time of my exit - but if they want to know how to make money after 60, look no further than.....(Yes, still a regular at Newmarket, Sandown and Romford dogs).

Once more Arthur, congratulations on the Newsletters 10th anniversary coming up and all due to you.

Personally I agree with you that two editions per year are probably enough. Its main interest to old codgers like me is to

read and learn about old friends, than of what is currently happening in the Service.

Yours, **Peter L. James.**

Many thanks Peter for once again giving us your latest news and comments. They are always interesting and worth reading. Now when this is read by our old friends Norman Honey, Ben Lyte and Lynne Davis I do hope it spurs them on to do likewise - or any other old pal of Peters - and I know he has many.

The mention of dear old 'Chalky' brings to mind an Asst. Govs., Conference when we were addressed by a well known politician of the day - and one 'Chalky' had no time at all for. I happened to be sitting at the back next to Chalky and throughout the speech he was muttering obscenities into my ear about the speaker. To everyone's surprise - more so to Chalky - the Chairman called upon Chalky to propose the vote of thanks. Knowing Chalky I settled as far down in my seat as it was possible, to hear C.W. say "I am asked to thank the speaker for his address. Thank You". He then sat down to a very hushed assembly. WAW

Watton, Thetford.

For some time now I have been trying to get in touch with George Iles but have unfortunately lost his address. I know he receives the Newsletter as I recall a letter he had written being published in it. I realise you would hesitate to supply me with his address but hope you will be kind enough to pass on the enclosed. He can then decide for himself whether to reply.

My own retirement proceeds quite tranquilly and I enjoy receiving the Newsletter and learning how others are faring. To judge by the flow of correspondence, the publication fulfils a very useful and welcome function, and is a further reason for your erstwhile colleagues to be grateful to you.

Best wishes, **Colin Brown.**

When I started Newsletter I decided not to issue private addresses to readers and we continue to follow this policy. However, we will always be glad to forward any correspondence on to colleagues should you wish to get in touch. It would then be up to the recipient to decide if he, or she, wanted to pass on their address. All we ask is you send your correspondence to the editors and enclose a stamped and addressed (e.g. named) envelope.

Barrow upon Soar, Leicestershire.

I very much appreciate the efforts you made in informing me of the very sad news of Reg. Dalton passing. Unfortunately the letter was not delivered until today and therefore I was unable to take steps to attend his funeral, but I extend my deepest sympathy to Reg's family.

May I take the opportunity to thank you and all the 'team' of the R.G.N. for the work you do in producing the Newsletter. Although I sometimes get delayed in my reading of same because of extended travel abroad in the last year or two, my enjoyment of the reading is in no way diminished.

Having had the pleasure in touring the prison at Montserrat at this time last year, I cannot but reflect on the great progress

made in British Prisons in the past thirty years, and the contrast was one of extremes - and that was before 'Hurricane Hugo'.

Sincerely, **Olwen Parry.**

H.M. Prison, Gartree, Market Harborough.

I promised to drop you a line for the Retired Governors Newsletter re Majorie Taylor. Mrs. Taylor has been in hospital for some time, after a fall, and has had a further hip operation. She is bright and alert and very well in herself, despite being in her eighties. She is not able to get about though and is in a wheelchair. She has had to give up her house and has moved into the local Cheshire Home (Llanenock, Caerlean, Gwent NP6 1LT).

Capt. Davies is on the Management Committee and has done a lot to help her. In fact, he helped to clear furniture from her home with myself. He is very fit and well. He has recently been to stay with L. Lewin (Ex Swansea), who is also fit and well and keeping very busy breeding dogs.

Majorie is hoping, in the future, to purchase an electric wheelchair to give her more mobility. If you want any more details please let me know.

Sincerely, **Bob Duncan, Governor.**

Minsterworth, Gloucester.

When your 'chase up' letter arrived this a.m., the enclosed Bankers Order all looked quite new to me and on checking my files I find I have no copy of the 18th edition. Of course, if I didn't receive my copy I should have realised the omission either when I read your editorial in the 19th edition, or when I filed it. The fact that I didn't on either occasion I'm putting down to advancing years and trying not to think about the complications.

Both Rosamond and I enjoy reading the Newsletter and without hesitation wish to support its continued publication and distribution. It is well worth the £5 per year, so herewith my completed S.O. for this and following years, also my cheque for £5 for last year.

If you have spare copies of the 18th edition available we would appreciate receiving one; I expect more details of associate membership of the PGA. contained in that issue.

Every good wish.

Yours, **Roger Dauncey.**

Sorry you did not receive the 18th edition Roger and I hope Brendan has been able to let you have a spare copy before now - we must do better in the future. Glad to hear you are still fit and well - how are the property conversions going? WAW

Somerton, Somerset.

As I haven't had any correspondence from you for some while I suddenly realised I had not sent you my new address when I moved in May 1988. Will you note this please and send future papers to my new home.

I got the last Newsletter from Herbert Harrison and saw in it that Ron. Parfitts wife had died. We had lost touch with Ron since he left Buckley Hall but as my wife was very friendly

with them we would like to send our condolences.

Sincerely, **Harry Barlow.**

Glad to have you with us again Harry and you can be certain you will get your future copies now we have your address. You are correct about Mrs. Parfitt and Ron has written to us from his home in Spain. His letter is in this edition. Should you wish to send him a line we will be glad to forward it on for you. WAW

Diss, Norfolk.

I have been intending to write to you for months, but one is so busy in retirement and I never seem to get down to it. I am writing now to ask you to cancel my name from receiving the Newsletter in future.

I have now been retired 20 years and will be 80 in Jan. 1990. Whilst I have kept in touch with a few old colleagues, most of the names in the Newsletter, and a great number of the prisons mean nothing to me, and indeed I have no idea where they are situated.

Best wishes - and kindest regards to your 'staff' for organising the Newsletter.

We are always sad when any old colleague feels the need to cancel his name on our mailing list, but Keith's reasons are understood. If however any of his old pals who correspond with him can change his mind we will be happy to keep his name on the list. WAW

Radstock, Bath.

Thank you for your letter inviting me to attend the PGA dinner at their Annual Conference at Newbold Revel.

I'm afraid I will not be able to attend as my wife and I are both committed over four days of that particular week, though that was not the case when we spoke on the telephone.

The news of Reg. Dalton's death came as something of a surprise as I met up with him about eighteen months ago when we both attended the funeral of Mick Price at Norwich. Mick Price had been the Chief at Dartmoor when I was Deputy Governor there, in Norman Goldings day and he was my Chief when I was Governor of Norwich. Reg. then seemed in excellent health and the letter I had from him some two weeks before his death, would, if anything, have confirmed that.

I very much regret having to decline your invitation to the dinner and conference but wish you well in your deliberations and send my regards to those who may still remember me.

Sincerely, **Malcom Brown.**

1.

Cefn Mengoed, Mid Glamorgan.

I was recently talking to Ray Campbell who mentioned to me the retired Governors Newsletter and Association, an association I was not aware of but of which I am possibly entitled to be a member.

I joined the Prison Service as an Assistant Governor in 1975 at

the age of 49 having had a previous career in the Royal Navy. I served at Winchester, Wormwood Scrubs and Brixton, eventually retiring as Gov. IV. having spent all the last nine months doing liaison work with the Metropolitan Police. Along with Ray Campbell and Norman Honey I am at present doing some part-time work training for overseas students under the auspices of the Crown Agents.

Please find my cheque for £10 which should cover an annual subscription.

Sincerely, **Derrick C. Dean.**

You are certainly entitled to join us Derrick and we are delighted to 'have you on board'. Your contribution will cover you for at least two years and we hope you will keep in touch and let us have your news. WAW

2.

Thank you for your letter of 29th January and I return herewith duly completed a Bankers Order and application for Associate Membership of the PGA.

Along with Ray Campbell I am going to Singapore this month to run a series of training courses for the middle-management in the Singapore Prison Service. It should prove to be an interesting way in which to spend part of one's retirement.

Sincerely, **Derrick Dean.**

Carisbrooke, I. of W.

Thank you for your circular letter and I enclose herewith my B.O. for the Newsletter.

This letter is in response to your invitation to contribute to the next edition, but if you are overwhelmed with responses so that my modest contribution is not published, then I fully understand.

We down here on the Isle of Wight are still reeling from this weeks grievous news about the tragic death of our friend Les. Wheeler. He has been a much loved member of our small group of Vectensian retired Governors and we shall sorely miss him from our occasional get-togethers. By the time you receive this many of us will have met at Les' funeral at Wooton. I shall make no further reference to this mind blowing occurrence leaving it to others more qualified than I.

You might be interested to learn I received very interesting responses to the letter I wrote to you regarding potential plumbing problems in those of riper years. That near redundant prostrate appears to be a general nuisance and I am glad that some of my ex-colleagues found the advice based on my own experience useful. My consultant on a recent very encouraging check-up said to me "If I have to have a cancer then I shall opt for a CA prostrate because it is very treatable and the prognosis is usually very favourable". He described me as in 'tip-top' condition - a diagnosis with which I enthusiastically concurred. I report this for the benefit of those more reticent fellow prostatics who have so far been reluctant to seek professional help and relief. If there is an air of euphoria in what I have written you will understand why. Let me now assure my fellow readers that I shall not be sending periodic progress reports on the current condition of my piping. I mention it now only to

inform you that my last (and first) letter which you kindly published was at least, by some, found to be helpful.

For those of my colleagues who have not visited the Isle of Wight for some time, but who may be contemplating doing so as a pedestrian, TAKE HEED. The Sealink passenger ferry service from Portsmouth to Ryde is now performed by vessels described as 'Catamarans'. These highspeed craft came from Australia - I am authoritatively informed under their own steam as it were - yet, when we have rough weather in the Solent they are withdrawn from service and frustrated passengers are referred to the car ferry operating from Southsea to Fishbourne. Even in choppy seas the unfortunate passengers on board these catamarans are sometimes thrown about to an alarming degree and the vessels are so bouyant that berthing at the end of Ryde Pier in these conditions can be truly a frightening experience which many natives have sworn never to repeat. So, IF you are planning a trip to this beautiful isle as a foot passenger and the weather is suspect, may I advise using either the Southsea/Fishbourne route, the crossing from Southampton to Cowes by Red Funnel, or the alternative route of Sealink from Lymington to Yarmouth; all three of which are the established car ferries and almost stormproof. Needless to say in stormy weather both the hydrofoil service from Southampton to Cowes and the Hovercraft from Southsea to Ryde are hos de combat too. The plea from we long-in-the-tooth natives for the return of the ever-reliable paddleboat service falls on deaf ears. This information by the way is NOT a deliberate attempt to dissuade "grockles" (native term for 'overners') from bringing their valuable spending money to our beleaguered local community.

I wish the Newsletter a most joyous 10th Anniversary and a flourishing future and send you Arthur and all my fellow Ex-es my warmest regards.

Roland Attrill.

Many thanks 'Rolie' for your very valuable contribution. It does seem if we require advice on either internal or 'under keel' water problems, you are the man to approach. I endorse all you have said about the former having had a similar 'do' myself. On a personal note my brother George (he was your Chief at Huntercombe) sends his regards and asks, "How are your P--- -- these days?". WAW

Oswestry, Shropshire.

Having 'filed' the Newsletter containing the Bankers Order form and failed to send it in.... however I have deposited it with my bank and enclose the Associate Membership form herewith. I hope it is 'better late than never'.

I wonder if you have heard that Miss Joan Martyn, O.B.E. passed away on 30th December '89. She was the Governor of the girls borstal at Aylesbury for many years and the first Governor of Bullwood Hall. Unfortunately she had not enjoyed good health for several years, but she had wonderful faith and I'm sure she now rests in peace.

My good wishes to you and all who work to produce the Newsletter.

Sincerely, **Ethel Maybury.**

Ledbury, Hereford.

Hugh and Jeanie join me in thanking you for your warm letter written after Alan's death, and for letting so many people know. We were overwhelmed by the number at his funeral, the phone calls and the letters. I had no idea that so long after his retirement, his influence was so widely felt. It made us feel very humble.

I think that what was written in that 'Observer' article, that you and he would have got on very well together and had a lot in common.

Many thanks for the wreath if you were responsible, if not perhaps you would be kind enough to pass on my thanks.

With sincere thanks, **Dilla Robertson.**

Shipham Winscombe, Avon.

Congratulations on the 21st number and 10th year.

I write shortly after the death of Alan Robertson. In 1946 I arrived at Lowdham Grange on 4th May to take over Stansfield House. The Governor was H.J. Taylor. Bob and Olive made us welcome and introduced us to the ways of the service; made us feel we had joined a caring family organisation. After about a year Bob moved and was replaced by Hugh Kenyon. I had been appointed Housemaster, so I had been told by the Board. The Steward, Arthur Morris, told me that I was in fact appointed as a Housemaster Class III, there had been a hold up in regrading. We emerged eventually as Governors Class 5. The Deputy Governor was Rundle Harris. He also moved and was replaced by Major McNoy who left the service and was replaced by Alan. In 1950 I was posted to North Sea Camp under Peter Burnett. My arrival there was a little delayed by a bout of laryngitis, which was dubbed by colleague Ian Riddick to be an attack of North Sea Cramp; I later found why everyone thought the crack was amusing. Both Lowdham and North Sea had been founded by Bill Llewellyn, the pioneering Governor, who took the March from Feltham to Lodham of the first contingent of young offenders. When Peter left for Rochester he was followed at North Sea by Alan Robertson. I was lucky in my first Governor and colleagues; Bob's wisdom and great team spirit; Hugh's experimental inventiveness; Alan's honesty, impatience with cant, and patience with individuals, gave me ideals to aim at and concepts on which to base my own work. Alan eventually went to Leyhill. When I moved to S.W. Region of course I was fortunate to serve with him again. Since we both retired we have met once or twice. I now sadly realise not often enough.

Sincerely, **David Gould.**

Pilar de la Horadada,
Alicante
Spain

I enclose a standing order so that I can receive future editions of the newsletter. As I live abroad I have increased the amount to cover the additional postage. Hope this doesn't complicate the book-keeping.

I retired in June '85 and the following October Barbara and I

went to live in Spain. It was a big step to take, but one we never regretted, as we were very happy there and made many friends. We had an active and enjoyable life. About a thousand square yards of garden to look after, playing tennis and table tennis regularly, and of course tennis is all the year round and rarely rained off.

Our place is in an urbanisation about eight miles from the coast, has only one cafeteria and one supermarket, no hotels or high rise apartments, but a very good community spirit. Although it contains many holiday homes there are many permanent residents, mainly retired, and the social life is very good.

Unfortunately, Barbara became ill in July '88 and had a brain tumour removed, but sadly it turned out that it was a Grade 3 cancer. She lived for a further ten months, although she gradually became less mobile. For the last five months she was confined to a wheelchair, but she bore her illness very bravely and, up until the last week, I was able to get her out and about.

I cannot speak too highly of the medical treatment she received in Spain. We took Barbara to the hospital in Murcia at about half past four on a Saturday afternoon thinking she had had a stroke. There she was given a brain scan, the tumour diagnosed and, by eleven o'clock on the Sunday morning she had had a five and a half hour operation, been through intensive care, was in a two bedded ward and I was able to visit her. Incidentally all on the Spanish National Health ...

Neither can I speak too highly of the help and support that I received from my friends. When they found out Barbara had to receive radio therapy daily for six weeks I was told that I would not have to drive her to Murcia and back, a round trip of about 60 miles, and was given a rota of people who would pick us up and take us. They were mainly British but also included Spanish, German, Belgian and Swiss - and no-one was on the list twice.

I have decided to stay in Spain as I have many friends there and the quality of life is good. I have been in England since 6th December '89 staying with my children in Rochdale and Bradford. Originally I booked a flight for a fortnight, but two days before the flight I had a fall and broke a kneecap, so arrived with my left leg in plaster and certainly not mobile enough to live on my own in Spain.

Fortunately, the knee cap has now mended and I am returning to Spain on 3rd March ('90). All being well I am looking forward to being on the tennis court later in the week. Incidentally one of the players will be my ex-Deputy at Buckley Hall, Peter Edwards. He lives about ten miles away and comes up every Wednesday to have a game. Unfortunately, he and Doreen have decided to sell up and return to the UK. I shall miss their friendship.

All good wishes to you and Arthur and indeed to all my former colleagues.

Sincerely,
Ron Parfitt

So glad to hear from you Ron, but we are very sorry to learn of

your sad loss. It sounds as though you have many supportive friends out in Spain and we send you our best wishes for a happier and indeed healthy future. Your surroundings sound somewhat different from those around Rochdale - I only hope everyone is just as friendly as the Lancastrians, and coming from a Yorkshireman that is a complement indeed. Please keep in touch and let us have your news from time to time. We shall certainly let you know what is happening here through the newsletter.

WAW

Ramsbury
Wiltshire

I have spent my twenty years of retirement most pleasantly in this Wiltshire village in the Kennet valley, where Elspeth and I have found plenty of action, both sober and frivolous, to fill our days.

For the first two years I worked as field officer for the Prison Chaplaincies Council, after which I turned my attention to Local Government as elected representative on both Parish and District Councils. I also found that I had more time for church affairs so, as well as supporting the local church, I ventured out further into deanery and diocese, and eventually mastered the complexities of synodical government.

I retained by career-long interest in the Howard League and continued to serve on the Council until the evening meetings in London became beyond my waning powers. We also had a small branch of the League in Salisbury, more social than serious, which endeavoured to spread the gospel of prison reform in darkest Wiltshire.

As far as voluntary work is concerned I have now hung up my boots and retired to the sidelines. (I have passed my 'best before' date in fact.) We can no longer sing with the Marlborough Choral Society, though we can still go to concerts. Our much enjoyed downland walks are reduced to totters around the village. Golf is out. Holidays are no longer abroad. Our participation in the Devizes Archaeological Society has shrunk from visiting field sites to the occasional coach trip. We have left our much loved riverside garden and withdrawn to a 'retirement' cottage in the centre of the village. Life now is much diminished but we can hardly complain as we are now both in our 80th year, and have children and grandchildren within reach.

D G Waddilove

I know all our older readers will be delighted to read this letter from Mr Waddilove. Whilst I never met him personally, his name was a legend within the Service. I hope that both you and your wife continue to 'get about' the village for many years to come and we look forward to hearing from you again before very long.

WAW

Correctional Service, Prairie Region
Saskatoon, Canada

I have been meaning to write for some time and finally placed pen to paper. There are a number of things I would like to

comment upon, but firstly, in case you have not heard, I thought I should share with you the tragic news of the loss of Reg Barrett who died suddenly in a diving accident on Lake Superior last summer. I enclose a news clipping. His untimely loss has left a large gap in many lives and he is sorely missed.

Turning to other issues, I must congratulate you on the newsletter and its new format and, in response to Arthur Williamson's letter, I would like to see it published more often than twice a year if at all possible, but I also understand the problems of cost and input of sufficient material.

I would also like to enter a plea to hear directly from, or have news of, former colleagues with whom I served in the '60's and '70's. One often wonders how they are doing, where they are living, etc., and I would welcome the opportunity to renew some old acquaintances. If I may list a few I would be grateful: any members of the 18th Staff Course; Capt. Davies; David Gould; John Watson; Alan Bainton; Roly Adams; Bob Lawson - to name but a few. I would also like to extend an offer of hospitality to any old colleagues who might find themselves in this neck of the woods and assure them that they would always find a warm welcome at the Duggan household. Of course, that assumes that they know where SASKATOON is.

Once again, best wishes for the continued success of the newsletter, and I enclose an update of my subscription.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Sincerely,
M J Duggan
Deputy Commissioner

It is great hearing from you John and also to learn all is well with you. It is 'many moons' since we last met (I think it was at Wakefield) and who knows, I might take you up on your offer one of these days. The Prairies are an area I have always fancied visiting. Meanwhile be certain your letter will be seen by many of your old colleagues and I hope that they write. To set the ball rolling I will drop you a line and let you have as much news as possible.

Arthur W

John sent a cutting from the *Brampton Times* newspaper about Reg Barrett. The following is an extract:

The president of the Brampton Residents Association, an avid diver, has been drowned whilst exploring a wreck in Lake Superior.

Reg Barrett, 53, of Airport Road was diving with two friends near Cooper Island, which is near Thunder Bay, early Saturday. Barrett never re-surfaced after going underwater to explore the sunken yacht Gunilda.

He was the Regional Manager for the Correctional Services Metro Office, and had more than 36 years diving experience. He was also an expert carpenter who once built a four-bedroomed cottage on Christian Island in Georgian Bay in three weeks. His wife Doreen said, 'When the fourth corner was put together it was a quarter of an inch out. He was so furious as he was always so precise. It became a big joke in the area.'

Mr Barrett, who was born in London and emigrated to Canada in

1974, was recruited by the Ontario Ministry of Correctional Services after working with the British Prison Service for 15 years. He became Deputy Superintendent of the Brampton Adult Training Centre in 1974 and was quickly promoted to be Superintendent the following year.

In the last ten years he was: Superintendent of the Vanier Centre for Women, Superintendent of the Toronto Detention Centre, acting Director of Staff Training for the Ministry of Correctional Services, Vice Chairman of the Ontario Board of Parole, and Superintendent of the Mimica Correctional Centre. He was known as a man who was dedicated to assisting inmates and he took a personal interest in his staff. He was never afraid to speak his mind and would often speak out of turn on contentious issues, and people respected him for this.

Mr Barrett leaves a wife, Doreen, and five children: Carole (29), Damian (26), Helen (25), Steven (23) and a two and a half month old grand-daughter. He is also survived by his 85 year old father Harry, and his brother Peter who both live in England."

I have no idea if his wife and family will ever see this copy of the newsletter, but in any case I know all our readers will join me in expressing our sincere condolences to them all. Whilst he had been in Canada a number of years he was of course still a member of our fraternity here in the UK.

WAW

Wakefield
West Yorkshire

It is some years since I wrote to the newsletter but I was so sorry to read of Clifford Shoemake's death in today's *Daily Telegraph*. (22nd April 1990)

I first met *Shooks* in 1935 when he and his wife lived at Hill Syke, Lowdham Grange. He was one of the original Lowdham Grange officers. During the war years I had no contact with him, but since 1946 we have been very close friends and I was speaking to him a few days before his death.

As a Prison Governor he was respected by all -scrupulously honest and fair, and a real ambassador for the Service. As a man he had all the qualities that make a man - a loyal and loving husband - a very proud family man - a man with a great sense of humour, and intensely loyal to his friends. Although my judgement may be a little biased, I considered him to be *one of God's gifts to the world*'. I shall miss his cheerful and appreciative response whenever I telephone him.

John R Watson

Orpington
Kent

It is with much sadness that I write to you with the news of my father's death on Tuesday 17th April 1990.

It is also with regret that there has been a considerable delay in notifying you, a situation caused entirely by a succession of domestic illnesses all occurring before, or immediately after, my father passing away so quickly.

I should explain that I am Cliff Shoemake's youngest son and am currently serving in the Metropolitan Police Force as a Detective Chief Superintendent. The only significance of that fact is that I have indirectly had a long association with the Prison Service, insomuch as having provided them with quite a few *customers* over my 31 years' service. I intend to retire myself this year.

Whilst I appreciate that Dad retired as Governor (Class 1) at HMP Brixton in 1967, I realise that there will still be some colleagues of all ranks and grades who will remember him. In that respect I have enclosed the obituary from the *Daily Telegraph* of which all his family are extremely proud. Hopefully so is the Prison Service for he was quite unique in terms of achievement throughout his 36 years service - a fact vindicated in no small way by his being awarded the OBE in the year of his retirement - 1967.

Once again my apologies for not notifying you sooner. I do believe John Watson may have already written to you and, following his advice, I do so now. I fully appreciate that Brendan O'Friel is the Editor of the Prison Governors' newsletter, but we all appreciate how preoccupied he must be at the present.

Would you be so kind as to notify those currently in post who may be interested in this rather sad news - although at nearly 85 years he would not have complained.

Sincerely yours,
John Shoemake

I know we will all be sad to learn the news of yet another old friend who has passed on and we express our sincere condolences to all his family. John Watson had in fact written to me, and I have printed his letter above.

Personally I did not serve with Clifford Shoemake but of course was fully aware of the contribution he had made to our Service. However, I met him once when he was Governor of Northallerton Prison. Ron Spencer will recall that when the two of us were sitting the Staff Course at Wakefield, together with other members of the course, and with our tutor, Ted Cowper-Johnson, we paid an official visit to Northallerton. After having coffee in the Governor's office we were taken on a tour of the prison and then, to our pleasant surprise, were told that lunch had been arranged for us at the large hotel in the main street. At his own cost Mr Shoemake entertained six of us to a lovely meal and, after feeding so long in the Staff College, it was very much appreciated. This to me was the measure of the man - kind, generous and always thinking of others. I did not know he had come up from the officer ranks, but now I am not at all surprised as he had so much character.

As his son has emulated him in the Police Force I feel certain Clifford was very proud of him. Now that he himself is due to retire later this year may I wish him very good health and many years drawing his pension.

WAW

AN EXPLOSION OF EVIL

1st APRIL 1990 will be written into the history books of the Prison Service, as it was on that day that 'all hell was let loose' at HMP Manchester, and we all witnessed the scenes on our television screens. For days the rioting inmates sat on the roof of the wing after having destroyed much of the external fabric. What they had accomplished inside the prison we are not to know, but we can only assume that it is in a terrible state. The Press and Media of course had a 'field day' and one feels certain they enjoyed it all. It enabled them to print rumour after rumour, without any facts at all and, whilst a large section of the Public no doubt believed what they were told, those of us who have dealt with journalists would have recognised much of their efforts as simple *muck stirring* - the art of which they are masters.

Eventually the truth will be found by the enquiry due to be carried out by Lord Justice Woolf, but it remains to be seen if the Public will be given all the facts. It will I suppose depend upon who is found to be at fault. Should it be political misjudgement it is doubtful indeed if all the facts will be made public.

However, whatever the findings are, we can be certain that the Governor and his staff will come out blameless. I watched almost every news report throughout the terrible ordeal and felt nothing but admiration for Brendan O'Friel and his entire staff. His own personal 'performance' on the screen showed him to be a man of courage, intelligence and patience. His ability to control the situation and, at the same time, 'tame' the Media was in the best traditions of the Service and he must have been admired throughout the land as a professional who knows what prisons and prisoners are all about. He was, of course, backed up by a first class team of assistants and uniformed staff and, whilst I am in no position to judge, I know from my own time at Manchester that the Strangeways staff would have backed him 'to the hilt' and would have carried out their duties with courage and, yes, a certain amount of humour.

We must await his lordship's report, but I know you will all wish to join me in congratulating Brendan and his entire staff on the way they handled their terrifying experience. I only hope this will be appreciated by those in 'seats of power' when they deliberate upon the future administration of our penal establishments. All I can say on this point is that it will be 'God help us' should they ever be sold off to private enterprise and administered from afar by people with no practical experience. AND THIS COULD HAPPEN.

Congratulations Brendan and our thanks to you and all the lads at Strangeways for the way you all dealt with the troubles. I ask your forgiveness for using your own description of the riot as the title of this article.

Arthur Williamson

PRISON GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

Annual Conference 1990

In March I was honoured when invited to be a dinner guest at the PGA conference held at the new Staff College at Newbold Revel. I was not however prepared for what was to follow. At the end of the excellent dinner I was introduced to the delegates by Brendan O'Friel who then presented me with a magnificent cut glass decanter, suitably inscribed to commemorate my contribution to the newsletter during its first decade. Having left the Service eight years ago one can imagine the pleasure this gave me and I shall treasure it very much indeed.

However, I must make it perfectly clear that the newsletter could not have been started - nor would it have gone on for ten years - without the generous assistance that I have received from many colleagues. These include Norman Brown and his secretary, the late Mrs Eileen Fox, for their advice and practical help in the initial stages; the first recipients of our early editions for their contributions, both written and financial; the

young John Powls for carrying on publication when I retired; to my old pal Ted Cowper-Johnson and later Syd Powell for helping with the distribution, and, last but certainly not least, to Bill Martin for looking after our somewhat limited cash and ensuring that we did not land up 'in the red'. This has never been a 'one man show' and to each and every one all I can say is 'Thank you'.

*Prison Governors Association Conference
working session March 1990*



Prison Governors Association Conference Dinner 1990: Arthur Williamson, Brendan O'Friel and John Jones

Returning to the PGA conference I must say how very impressed I was by, and how much I enjoyed being, a member of the Service again. There were approximately 100 delegates there - out of a total of around 900 Governor grades with the Service, and I was astounded at the professionalism and standard of debate within the conference hall. It made our old Domestic Sessions look somewhat pathetic.

To most of those present I was a stranger - and an old one at that - yet without exception I was made to feel welcome and I was regarded as an old friend and colleague. I felt that I still belonged to the Prison Service (I have never felt otherwise), and the conference proved what an excellent set of young men are carrying on where we left off. I wish them well in the future.

Speaking of the future, it seems clear that 'storm clouds' are ahead. In the first place plans are already in being for the Home Office to scrap the four regions and the regional directors, and to replace them with ten area committees headed and run by either 'Whitehall Warriors' or civilian administrators from outside. Thus the scene would be set for hiving the prisons off to the private sector - for no other reason than private profit. This in itself in my opinion is immoral, and which idiots will invest money into penal establishments I cannot imagine. The Manchester Prison riot was a tragedy of the highest order, but we can all imagine what it would do to dividends. I mention all this quite deliberately because I know that a certain Member of Parliament (and a very powerful one

as well) is on our mailing list. As an ex-member of the Governor grade we do of course cherish his membership, but I do hope that when the time comes he will help the Government to come to its senses and stop the rot. For our part I feel certain you will all do your part in keeping the traditions and loyal service of Her Majesty's Prison Service before the Public as much as possible. We have protected the State since the year 1878 and I make no apology for stating that it is still the finest Service in the world. Should this be doubted I would simply ask, '**Why do other countries still send their senior staff here for us to educate, and why are they continually asking us to send members abroad to teach them how penal establishments should be run.**' Even in this current issue you will note some of our colleagues are now in Singapore and I know of others serving further afield. In addition, several ex-members of our Service were recruited by overseas governments and are now at the head of their services. Would this be the case if we were run by private investors - I will leave you and the Public to judge. One thing I am certain about - they would not get the loyalty of the POA, and without them they may just as well 'shut up shop'.

At the commencement of our newsletter I decided it should be just that - an exchange of news amongst retired colleagues, but events compel me to do all I can for the Service for which I still have a very strong affection.

Arthur Williamson

STOP PRESS

- **Strangeways is to be extensively refurbished at a cost of £60m**
 - **The PGA plan to produce a special tie for Retired members - a variation on our present tie with a modified PGA Crest. This should be available in September 1990. It will be the same price as the standard PGA tie - see your PGA diary.**
- Advice on preferred colours, please, to the editor ASAP.**
-