

## **RGN 57 AUTUMN 2007**

Founded in 1980 by Arthur Williamson - 27 Years of continuous publication

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### **EDITORIAL**

Greetings to all our readers from Port St Mary in the Isle of Man. Despite being a little off the beaten track it is amazing how many people with Prison Service connections I see and hear about on the Island. From a retired officer who sails his boat into Port St Mary every summer to serving governors who decide to take a holiday somewhere different.

We still have a container of possessions in store – but our house and way of life is settling down. I am involved in both on and off Island activities but there is still time enough to edit the Newsletter.

Our column “Inside Out” brings news of current events in the service.

The recent one-day industrial action by the Prison Officers Association in England and Wales may have caused many of us to be particularly pleased that we are retired!

The news that the prison population is over 80,000 - while not unexpected - may make many of us to reflect on lower prisoner numbers that we found very difficult to manage in years gone by. But then we didn't have the number of places

available that the current generation of Governors can use. And to think there were only around 13,000 in the system in the nineteen thirties.

Although we remain Prison Service and Home Office Pensioners, presumably our serving colleagues are to be – when they retire - Ministry of Justice Pensioners. The move of the Prison Service from the Home Office to the new Ministry of Justice may be the largest organisation change to the Prison Service since the abolition of the Prison Commission in 1963.

Details of pensions' developments will be found in the Reports from the Public Service Pensioners Council – of which the RPGA is an active member.

The RGN carries information both about the social events that took place in 2007 and about those planned for 2008 which we hope will be well supported by members.

My thanks to all those who contribute to the Retired Governors Newsletter. Without those contributions, the Newsletter would be a poorer publication. Any reader – new or old – who wishes to contribute is very welcome – letters, articles or just news of people are all welcome and will find a place in a future edition. A special thanks to Mick Roebuck who kindly edits alternate editions with me, making the task much less onerous.

This edition features an article by John Ramwell as well as our usual columns of “Your Letters”; “Inside Out”; Clickers Corner and many more. “Your Letters” includes pictures – Bob Duncan’s abilities with his computer improve with every edition! And Rod Jacques’ cartoons add a unique flavour to the RGN.

## **INSIDE OUT**

**A brief look at a selection of items, which have appeared in the Prison Service News and other publications since the last issue of the Newsletter.**

**by Mick Roebuck**

### **Windlesham Trophy Winner 2007 – 23 Aug 07**

The Windlesham Trophy for best-kept prison gardens has been awarded to last year's runner up HMP Sudbury. HMP Wymott came runner up this year with HMPs Leyhill and Parkhurst the other finalists.

The competition is run annually by the Prison Service, in conjunction with the gardening charity, the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), for the best-kept prison garden in England and Wales.

## **Super-prison plan is confirmed**

Justice Secretary Kenny MacAskill has confirmed the building of a new “super-prison” for northeast Scotland. The new publicly run unit will replace ageing Victorian jails in both Aberdeen and Peterhead. Peterhead houses about 300 prisoners, mostly sex offenders, while Aberdeen's Craiginches jail has about 250 inmates. The new 700-capacity jail will be built in the Peterhead area, leading to the eventual closure of the current two prisons.

## **Hand-held heart monitor reduces risks**

Prisoners at HMP Wakefield who have cardiology needs now have the option of being monitored within the prison, thanks to a hand-held ECG (electrocardiogram) machine. Clinical Manager Brian Almond told PSN: “By eliminating unnecessary hospital visits for ECG examination, we've not only improved public safety, but also achieved significant cost savings, by reducing the need for prisoner transport and prison officer escorting costs – especially on nighttime call outs which used a lot of resources.”

## **New healthcare centre opens at HMP Liverpool**

A new healthcare centre designed to meet the specific needs of its prisoners, was opened recently at HMP Liverpool in Merseyside.

The newly built centre represents a huge step forward by the Prison Service and Liverpool Primary Care Trust to deliver the necessary improvements required in the quality of healthcare for the prison population at HMP Liverpool.

The centre contains a 28-bed inpatient service for prisoners with mental and physical health needs, led by a team of GPs and specialist mental health professionals. Other facilities include a dental suite and health promotion clinics such as smoking cessation.

## **New Merseyside prison now open**

HMP Kennet, the first public sector prison to open since HMP The Weare in 1997, has received its first prisoners.

The new Category C establishment in Maghull, Merseyside, will house 350 offenders who will arrive in phases.

The new prison is part of the ongoing expansion programme that will see the prison capacity in England and Wales rise to over 81,000 in 2007.

A total of 24 prisons are currently affected by the building programme, including 300 plus spaces being added at both Rochester and Wayland, a new public sector prison on land within the perimeter of Belmarsh and a further 11 prisons having around 60 additional places built.

## **Isle of Wight prisons clustering project**

A new clustering project has been set up by the Prison Service to consider opportunities for improving performance.

By clustering operations across the three Isle of Wight prisons: Albany, Camp Hill and Parkhurst, the project will aim to identify how the strengths of these establishments can

be developed further and how the available resources can be used as effectively as possible.

The project is expected to provide recommendations for implementation in April 2008.

### **Change of function for HMP & YOI Cookham Wood**

The Ministry of Justice announced today that HMP & YOI Cookham Wood near Rochester is to change its function from a women's prison to a male Young Offenders Institution (15-18 year olds), commissioned by the Youth Justice Board.

This is in response to capacity pressures in London and the South East.

It will allow male young people on remand or sentenced in London and the South East to be managed closer to home, freeing up space in the Midlands and North for young adult prisoners.

### **Prisons trial body orifice scanner**

A new chair, which detects metal objects hidden inside the body, is being piloted in prisons to help maintain a secure environment for staff and prisoners.

The 'BOSS III' chair, or Body Orifice Security Scanner, is a non-intrusive scanning system designed to detect small metallic objects such as mobile phones and weapons, concealed within abdominal cavities and the shin area. The chair is able to detect many items, from large knives to small gun components, which may be hidden by prisoners with the intention of smuggling them into establishments.

For the last 3 months, the chair has been in operation at Category A prison HMP Woodhill in Buckinghamshire, proving to be successful in preventing two mobile phones and a knife from entering the prison.

The scanner, which has now been extended to the remaining seven high-security prisons, is intended to be used in Reception as prisoners arrive but can also be used around the establishment if required.

### **High Performing and Most Improved prisons named**

Director General of the Prison Service, Phil Wheatley has today recognised six public sector prisons for their exceptional work in 2006/07.

HMP/YOIs Askham Grange, Castington and Swinfen Hall, and HMPs Manchester, Sudbury and Wayland have all been recognised as High Performing Prisons for their exceptional work in 2006/07.

In addition, HMP Gloucester has been named Most Improved Prison. High Performing Prison status is awarded to establishments that have performed at Level 4 in the performance ratings throughout the year and who have demonstrated a commitment to even further improvement.

## Large scale Wind Turbines

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) is taking forward a proposal for harnessing wind power by investigating the construction of large-scale wind turbines on prison land.

Twenty prison sites have been so far identified for feasibility studies, which will be carried out by the Carbon Trust. The studies will establish the suitability of each site for the development of a wind turbine, an outline design of the infrastructure and equipment likely to be needed, an estimate of the energy likely to be generated along with the likely costs and revenues.

These studies will be carried out within the next twelve months. If any of these sites prove suitable, the next step is for NOMS to enter into a partnership with an operator to whom it will lease an area of land. The operator will provide finance and construct, maintain and operate the turbine.

Each turbine will be capable of generating enough to supply 400 to 500 homes, and will be 60 to 80 metres high. The Prison Service will have the option to buy the electricity generated with any surplus going to the national grid.

	March	April	May	June	July	August
<b>In prison</b>	<b>79919</b>	<b>80126</b>	<b>80448</b>	<b>80699</b>	<b>80194</b>	<b>80537</b>
<b>In police cells</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>225</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>80316</b>	<b>80345</b>	<b>80803</b>	<b>81040</b>	<b>80229</b>	<b>80762</b>

The above figures are taken on the last Friday of each month and subsequently may not reflect the highest or lowest figure for the period in question.

## RPGA Benevolent Fund

Readers wishing to support the Benevolent Fund should send contributions to Treasurer Jim Blakey either directly or via the Editor or Membership Secretary.



## Clickers' Corner

Mick Roebuck

### Digital cameras

The main feature of Clickers Corner in the last edition of this the Newsletter explained the basics of digital cameras. Here now is a tip for all digital camera users new or experienced.

Whenever you erase a photograph from your cameras memory card a small section of the data from that photograph will remain on the memory card. Over, time these

pieces of data build up causing loss of quality to those new photographs you are taking.

Re-formatting memory cards will clean them completely, so whenever the opportunity arises reformat the card rather than using the delete function.

It is important to remember that re-formatting will clean off all images on the card so only use this option when you are sure there is nothing on the card you wish to save.

## **Spam**

Many of you will no doubt have a spam guard on your mailbox, but for those of you who are using Outlook Express, and who do not have a spam guard installed on your system why not try Spamfighter.

It is free to download simple to use and extremely effective. Once installed you will see the toolbar on your mailbox gives you full control over you emails.

The initial download only takes a few minutes and full instructions along with “Tip of the day” will appear on your screen.

Although, free you will be asked, after 30 days of use, if you want to upgrade to the professional version for which there is a fee to pay. Simply click no and you can continue to use the basic free version for as long as you wish.

To locate this free download, simply type Spamfighter into any search engine then follow the links to the download button

The company makes the following guarantees.

- Spamfighter Standard is 100% free for private use
- Award winning spam blocking technology
- Protects against "phishing", identity theft, and other email fraud
- Used by more than 3 million happy users around the World
- Protects all the email accounts on your PC
- Unique language filtering tool that empowers you to stop emails written in specific languages
- Unique picture filter that can recognize spam which is sent as a picture
- Automatic "real mail" protection - means no lost business mails!
- Blacklist domains and emails
- Spam Abuse Reporting with one click
- Automatic Whitelist management
- Privacy Guaranteed

## **Shortcuts with Word**

There are numerous keyboard short cuts available when using Microsoft Word, not all of which are worthy of remembering.

Some, on the other hand are well worthwhile and easier to use than laboriously going into the various location menus on your toolbar. I list some of the ones I find more useful and regularly use....

F12 takes you to Save As

Alt + Shift + F7 loads your dictionary

Shift +F7 will load your thesaurus

F7 loads the spell checker

Shift +F3 will change the case.

### **Give your computer a spring clean.**

You would not dream of leaving your car for years without giving it a clean every now and again, nor your central heating boiler so why do you not bother to give you computer a bit of a clean up?

For those who are unsure what to do just follow the simple steps below.

Perhaps the first thing we should look at is the two facilities found in your System Tools. To locate this click onto your Start button, then onto All programs. From the list that is generated you should see the link Accessories. Click onto that and from the sub menu click onto Disc clean up. You computer will now calculated how much disc space it can free up on you C drive. After a short while, it will show you the amount of memory saving which can be made, and then asks if you want the disc cleaned. Press the OK tab and the computer will do the rest for you.

Next is for you to de-fragment. To do this simply carry out those steps explained above but this time chose the option Disc Defragmenter. With Windows XP you have the option to analyze before you de – fragment, but why bother, just go straight ahead and defrag your system. If you haven't done either of these tasks before they make take several minutes to complete, but now you now how to do it make a habit of performing each operation about once every two weeks. You should find that you computer operates better and faster.

Let us now clear out some of those temporary internet files, which could also be slowing down your system as well as taking up some of your memory.

Load Internet Explorer. Then on your toolbar click onto Tools then onto Internet Options. From the box, which is now on your screen, click onto the tab marked General. You will see a section marked delete temporary files, history, cookies etc click onto the Delete tab. From the box, which now

appears click onto Delete files, then delete cookies and finally Delete history.

Yet again, another task done something, which again you should perform on your computer, about once every two weeks.

### **Automatic Windows updates.**

I hope that your computer is set to receive Windows updates automatically. If not carry out the following procedures

Type microsoft updates into your search engine; download the website click onto the appropriate links on the screen. i.e check for priority updates and once this task has been performed, set your system to receive updates automatically. On the left hand -side of the screen you will see a box, which asks you to select a time to automatically receive updates. Once set to automatic you should not have to bother with this function again.

### **Solicitors for the elderly**

Received too late for the last newsletter Jim Blakey sent this rather interesting url which some readers may find useful [www.solicitorsfortheelderly.com](http://www.solicitorsfortheelderly.com) I have not used them myself so cannot make any recommendation regarding their services. Perhaps if any reader has or does use them they might drop us a line letting us know how good or otherwise the company is.

## **E-mail Directory**

Arthur Williamson proposed at a recent AGM that the RPGA Committee should compile a confidential list of email addresses of all RPGA members who wished their email address to be available to other RPGA members. This is now quite well established and provides a fast means of communications for those who like to be kept up to date with news. Over 70 email addresses are on our list.

Mick Roebuck is the list compiler on behalf of Association members.

Persons wishing their e-mail addresses to held on such a list should forward them to Mick at [localinfo@harboroughonline.co.uk](mailto:localinfo@harboroughonline.co.uk) . Your full name should also be included. Home addresses telephone numbers or any other information is not required

A full list of addresses is forwarded to each of those members who have submitted their details.



Email addresses will not be given to any other source without permission from the person to who submitted the details.

## YOUR LETTERS

Bob Duncan 4 THE CAUSEWAY MARCH CAMBS PE15 9NT  
bobduncan@ hotmail.co.uk

As vandals smashing the stained glass panels in my front door woke me, I cannot generate much enthusiasm for the Government's current policy of letting prisoners out 18 days early just to create room in an overcrowded prison service. We should not though be surprised, for when has there not been overcrowding in the Service. I can recall the late 60's when the Borstals where full, and we were instructed to release each borstal trainee a month earlier than the agreed date. There is then little new in Government planning, thinking or policy, just an innovative ability to recycle previous panic measures and re-brand it as a new and innovative policy.

The weather has been the other great topic of the year with severe flooding in many areas. Betty Dennis has written of her experience in Badsey (near Evesham). Apparently the rain was relentless and non-stop for 24 hours and everyone was literally marooned in what Betty calls the 'island of Badsey'. Badsey brook, with its many tiny tributaries became a roaring stream, and the 'little old bridge' was already taking a pounding from extra traffic diverted from other roads. Betty warned the Highways Department that the bridge could not cope with the extra heavy traffic and the pounding of the extra water, which was already spilling over the road. The road was eventually closed right outside Betty's cottage, but drivers still kept trying to get through. A neighbour's car that had to be abandoned only had its roof visible until the waters receded. Some neighbours were flooded out of their property, and Betty spent an anxious night watching the water levels and was just spared flooding. Once the water eventually receded it was possible to see the damage to fences, sheds and greenhouses, which was almost unbelievable. On the other hand Betty recalls, this shared crises brought people in the village closer together and showing more concern for each other. 'The High Street has been full of people standing about in little groups chatting and sharing their troubles. I now know far more about my neighbours and their families than ever before.'

She mentions that land set aside in the village for development was completely flooded, and if they go ahead families there will always be at risk. A neighbour had sold her cottage and was planning to move to a 'sheltered bungalow' in Evesham, which was completely flooded, she is now re-thinking! Betty makes the point that it is daft to build OAP in such vulnerable areas.

Earlier in the year Jim Blakey attended the farewell bash at the Reform Club for Joan McNaughton. It described it as 'very nice indeed.' Other Governor grades present were Sir Richard Tilt, Martin Narey, Bill Abbott and Alan Rawson. Also there were Syd Norris, Hugh Taylor (now Permanent Secretary at the Dept of Health) Tony Butler, Brian Caffery, Angela Smith, Liz Grimsey, and Bill Jeffrey her husband currently Permanent Under Secretary at the MOD and at the time having a rough time over the Royal Naval sailors being held captive in Iran.

I remember Bill well from his time in P7 Personnel, having waited for 9 months to come up with a posting, I went to see him; he told me how difficult it all was as no one could predict which Governor might be knocked down next by the No 8 bus. I quickly deduced that his planning was severely limited, so told him where I would go and he agreed. I understand John Rumball had a very similar experience except that the number on the bus involved had changed. Clearly some Governors lived on a different route.

Good to hear from Dr John Topp who has sent me a short but fascinating obituary on Dr Brian David Cooper who will be remembered by many colleagues. John himself retired some 22 years ago, and he and his wife are now well into their 80's but remain in good health and have moved to Tewksbury some 18 months ago to be nearer relatives. He mentions that the Pickering Society (for retired hospital staff) is meeting in Worcester this October, organised as usual by the inimitable Peter Barker, and any one interested would be welcome. It might in fact be their last meeting.



### **Brian David Cooper C.B.E**

Former Principal Medical Officer to the Isle of Wight Prisons (born 1933, died of Cryptogenic Fibrosing Alveolitis 5.2.07).

David, as he was commonly known, was born and attended Grammar School on the Island. After qualifying at Charing Cross in 1958 he went on to obtain, through various assignments, the DPH 1965, DPM 1970 & FRCPSych 1979 (M1971). One of his early ventures was of several years as Senior Surgeon upon the cruise liner Canberra. Later in the Prison Service he held a Winston Churchill Travel Fellowship studying the American Penal

System. Also at one time he was sent, together with a High Court Judge, to St Helena in the South Atlantic, for there to assess & have judged a serious problem offender. Further, at home, he gained valued experience as an adviser and negotiator in varieties of siege and riot situations, having to deal with many notorious criminals of his time. Unluckily he had to retire prematurely following a coronary by-pass, subsequently then to develop protracted lung disease.

David was an extremely well liked and respected doctor. Kind, very pleasant and a pleasure to be in his company. Wise and unassuming, and of much knowledge and common sense. A greatly missed Gentleman. Although himself unmarried nevertheless a man devoted to his relatives and his work

D.O.Topp - friend & colleague

Surprised and delighted to receive an email from Liza Grenfell, who is Hugh Kenyon's daughter. She says her father's mother was from the Manx, but not his father. She understands that her father virtually on his own stopped a riot at Portland when it was a Borstal. It happened soon after he was posted there from Lowdham, and no one would go in with him, not even the D.G., except for a brand new officer called Norman Bishop. She reminds us she was only 8 at the time so may have remembered it incorrectly. Having mentioned it to Bill Brister (who sends his regards and remembers the time at Lowdham) he believes it could well be as stated. Well we would love to hear from any of our older colleagues who might remember it.

After Portland they went to Winson Green, which was a complete contrast, and lived in the right hand tower beside the gate. The whole family had such wonderful memories of Lowdham with David Gould (who was so tall he could walk from one end of the swimming pool to the other with his head above water) and so many other characters such as Alan Robertson.

Liza is married to Francis Grenfell who became a member of the BOV at NSC when Mike Selby was the Governor and Peter Paine the Chaplain. Liza is on the IMB at Stocken, so the family connection to the prison service continues.

Talking of the BOV (now called IMB) I saw Katie and Brian Lomax (Warburton) earlier this year, Katie is on the Board at Onley. They are both well, though Brian had heart surgery awhile back, but is now very active as the Chairman of the Football Supporters Association. As he is a Liberal and supports Northampton Town he is clearly happy with 'lost causes'.

To complete the picture I ought to mention that my arm was twisted and I have been appointed to the IMB at Peterborough prison. It is quite time consuming but on the other hand quite fun to have no management responsibility, free reign to roam the prison and talk to prisoners and monitor what others are doing.

This year's Re-union at Bromsgrove was another success and good to see some new faces including Peter and Jenny Kitteridge and Harold and Anne Prior, all of who had long journeys to be there. Many of the 'old stalwarts' were there

including Lionel Steinhausen now 90 and still enjoying a tippie, and Geoff and Grace Lister, Arthur and Peggy Williamson, Bill and Mary Brister and Rowland Adams all of whom are in their 80's. One notable and much missed absentee was Terry Weiler, whose daughter has moved from Ashford to a new job near Peterborough, so she was not available to transport him. If there is anyone who could transport Terry to next year's event please let myself or Terry know. He sends his regards and best wishes to everyone.

The news at the re-union was that Roger Dauncy was seriously ill and might not survive. Well the stubborn old codger has made a remarkable recovery. We all wish him well and continued progress. Alan Tee has been undergoing both chemotherapy and radiotherapy in early August. He was due to have both a CT and MRI scan and then a consultation with his surgeon this month. He will then know what the next steps are. He is bearing up well in all this and we all wish him a successful outcome.

Roger Outram had a very successful hip operation earlier this year, but then found he was lop-sided, as the other hip had deteriorated. Of course you have to go back on the waiting list, but has now had the second operation and is slowly recovering. It will not be long before he is skipping along the sea front at Cromer.

Alan Rawson has been to visit Margaret Adamson who is well and did point out that we stated Ernie age as 73, when in fact he was 83, its Ernie's fault for always looking so young and full of energy. Alan and I went to Budva in Montenegro in April, a delightful miniature walled city. On the last morning early, we were waiting for the coach to transport us all to the airport. If Alan does not finish a cigarette he places it back in the packet and into his trouser pocket. One of the members of the group suddenly shrieked 'there is smoke coming out of the leg of your trousers Alan.' He had not put it out properly and it had set alight a paper tissue in his pocket. At least it kept the group amused for some time.



Muriel Allen has sent me a photo of herself and 2 colleagues who are in touch and meet up, can anyone (other than the three involved) identify the other two, (answer in the next Newsletter. Suggestions to Bob Duncan, who might persuade the Editor to award a prize! Muriel suggests others might wish to send in current photos to remind us all how we now look with the passing of time. She is also in contact with Olwen Parry, Molly Morgan, and Judy Gibbons. She also asks after Lionel. Do come to the re-union Muriel and Lionel is sure to be there. News of any of the above would always be welcome and of interest to colleagues.

In good biblical tradition I have kept some of the best wine until last. Colin Honey has modestly written a short thanking everyone on the Newsletter for keeping everyone informed, but also enclosing a newspaper cutting announcing his award of the MBE. Well done, long overdue, and congratulations from all of us. Penelope Keith appears on the same page of the Farnham Herald, and despite Colin' handsome, rugged smiling features, I think Penelope wins the beauty contest!

From the Farnham Herald 4/1/07.

NEW YEAR, NEW HONOURS.





Colin Honey MBE



Penelope Keith CBE

Aside from Rod Stewart and Steven Gerrard, plenty of deserving folk across the nation have been rewarded for a plethora of dutiful activities in the New Year Honours' list.

And residents of Surrey are no exception, with awards set to be handed out at Buckingham Palace in February.

One of them was Farnham resident Colin Honey, who became a MBE for his continued contribution to both local and national charities.

For more than 30 years, Mr Honey has been involved as a trustee, chairman and patron of Langley House Trust, a national Christian-based charity providing accommodation for the marginalised and disadvantaged.

He has also been a trustee of The Butler Trust and chairman of its award scheme for those working in penal institutions. Closer to home Mr Honey has been connected with the Bells Piece Cheshire Home in Farnham since his retirement in 1989.

Mr Honey called for recognition of all those who help others less fortunate than themselves.

He said: "I feel very privileged indeed to get this award because there are a lot of people involved in selfless work and it's those people who help to keep these charities working".

As trustee of The Butler Trust, Mr Honey has been fortunate enough to brush with royalty in the past, meeting Princess Anne, the trust's active patron, on a number of occasions.

"She's a wonderful woman and an excellent patron," he said. "She visits penal institutions across the country and is very informed about what's currently going on. There is much adverse comment about prisons and young-offender

institutions and this trust, with the help of Princess Anne. sets out to redress the balance."

Talking about his other long-standing charity, Langley House Trust, he outlined the important work that is carried out on a daily basis.

"Langley House provides accommodation for homeless people coming out of prison and protects the general public by supporting ex-prisoners who would be at risk of re-offending. Men and women live in group-type homes under the care of dedicated staff, where in a family environment they tackle problems of resettlement in society before moving on.

It helps them to feel able to cope with the demands of life on the outside"

In retirement, Mr Honey has dedicated a lot of his time to helping Bells Piece, adding: "Since 1989 I have been closely connected locally with the Cheshire home in Farnham in a variety of ways, as chairman, member of the support group and organiser of a small social club for those living independently in the community under the Bells Piece umbrella".

"I have enjoyed my work with each of these charities over the years and I'm so happy to have been chosen for this award"

Meanwhile, the High Sheriff of Surrey, Penelope Keith, was "upgraded" to a CBE for her work in the field of "charitable services".

Famed for her portrayal of Margo Leadbetter in *The Good Life*, Penelope was awarded an OBE in 1989, and the Milford resident is also the chairman of the Actors' Benevolent Fund."

Do keep writing in. Your letters are always welcome and appreciated by your colleagues.

Bob Duncan  
September 2007

**PUBLIC SERVICES PENSIONERS COUCIL AGM, HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY 30TH MAY 2007 at HAMILTON HOUSE,  
MABLEDON PLACE, LONDON WC1H 9BD.**

It was attended by Gerry Ross and Charles Smith on behalf of the RPGA.

- 1 The major task in the past year was responding to the Department of Work and Pensions White Paper 'Security in Retirement: Towards a New Pension System'.
- 2 The White Paper had been the outcome of the work of the Pensions Commission, to which the Council had previously submitted evidence. In general, the White Paper had crystallised and embodied the consensus

which emerged from the consideration of the reports of the Pensions Commission.

- 3 The view of all constituent organisations on the White Paper were sought by The General Purposes Committee which met on 5 July 2006 to formulate its proposals to put to the meeting of the Executive Committee held that afternoon.
- 4 Key issues included the restoration of the earnings link for the basic state retirement pension. The White Paper had proposed that the link be restored from 2012 subject to affordability. Whilst both the GPC and the Executive Committee had no doubt as to the desirability of an earlier date for the restoration of the earnings link, it was recognised that simply calling for its immediate restoration would have very little prospect of success.
- 5 The GPC at its meeting concluded that phasing in the earnings link was a modest practical proposal that should be supported and proposed to the Executive Committee. This approach was endorsed by the Executive Committee and the Council's response therefore called upon the Government to restore the earnings link from April 2007 for those aged 70 and over, preparatory to the restoration in full of the link to all no later than 2012. It was also agreed to campaign to raise the level of the Basic State Pension to the Guarantee Credit level by 2012.
- 6 A further key issue was the White Paper's proposal to raise the state retirement age to 68 from 2045. The GPC recognised that merely arguing for the retention of a state pension retirement age of 65 as at present had serious limitations.
- 7 It therefore agreed to recommend to the Executive Committee that the Council's response should propose that the government should include measures to protect those in heavy manual work or high stress occupations from a higher state retirement age. This was endorsed by the Executive Committee.
- 8 Consideration was also given to the issue of the current arrangements for tax relief on contributions to occupational pension schemes. After careful consideration it was agreed not to seek any changes in the existing arrangements which had recently changed to limit the disproportionate benefit previously enjoyed by very high earners.
- 9 The AGM accepted that during the year there had been battles won and lost in the matter of Public Service Pensions, but we must continue to be vigilant against other battles and that a Strategy must be developed before the next General Election.

#### WIDOWS'/WIDOWERS PENSIONS FOR LIFE

- 1 Another key issue in the past year was equal opportunities issues



surrounding Widows' pensions ceasing upon remarriage or cohabitation - a common feature amongst public sector schemes.

2 Legal advice received indicated that there was no apparent legal route to win an equal opportunities case as the provision applied to widows, widowers and civil partners, and so no unlawful discrimination could be identified. As a result, continuing political pressure remained the best option for effecting change. It was also noted that from 2007, most or all public sector schemes would provide pensions for life for all retirees from that year onwards.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

1 It was agreed that the subscriptions for 2007/2008, from constituent organisations, would be raised in line with the pensions increase, this brings our contribution to £63 per annum.

## MOTIONS

1 The following motion was proposed by the Civil Service Pensioners Alliance.

### Age Related Personal Allowance

While this AGM welcomes the significant increase in Age Related Personal Allowances, which will take effect from April 2008, it is nevertheless seriously concerned about the adverse effect the abolition of the 10% tax band will have on pensioners between the age of 60 and 64.

These pensioners will be mainly from the public sector, who often had no choice in having to retire at 60 and a significant proportion of them will be women.

This AGM therefore agrees to instruct the PSPC to campaign to persuade the Government to take steps to offset the effects of the tax changes in order that pensioners in the age group 60-64 will not be disadvantaged.

The motion was passed and the secretary undertook to write to the Chancellor, to say that this is not right and that appropriate measures should be taken to correct this situation.

## **SATALITE NAVIGATION WARNING**

Leicestershire police are warning car owners of a recent criminal activity in which thieves are targeting cars parked in long term car parks, theme parks, seaside resorts etc. where they suspect the car owners will be away from their home for some considerable time.

Many Sat Nav owners pre programme their home address into their Sat Navs to enable them to plot routes direct from that home address.

Breaking into cars at long term car parking venues, thieves steal the navigation systems, connect them to their own vehicles and drive off using the pre programmed address, back to the owners' property where they are reasonably confident that the occupants of the property will not be back for some time. This gives them the opportunity to burgle the premises without the fear of being discovered by the owners.

It is recommended that a street name, post code, or adjacent area is programmed into Sat Navs by their owners rather than a specific address.

## **STATE PENSIONS AND PUBLIC SERVICE PENSIONS**

The winter fuel payment of £200 per household – paid to everyone over 60 – is to continue for the rest of this Parliament, but an additional £50 is to be paid to those over 70.

### Pensions Act 2004

One of the changes under this act is for people approaching State Pension Age. It has always been possible to defer drawing your state pension and earning additional state pension known as “increments” by this means. The Pensions Act 2004, however, increases the amount of additional state pension you can earn by deferral. Previously you could earn 1% addition for every 7 weeks you deferred; this is now improved to 1% for every 5 weeks that you defer drawing your state pension. Or to put it another way this is worth an additional 10.4% increase in your state pension for every year that you defer. There is also provision for accumulating a lump sum by deferring your state pension. These changes came into effect from April 2005. A good source of information is the Department for Work and Pensions web site - [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk).

State Retirement Pension Forecasts

Can be obtained by writing to: -

Retirement Pensions Forecasting Team  
The Pensions Service  
Whitley Road  
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE98 1BA  
Tel 0845 3000168

They also provide a booklet entitled “Understanding your State Pension Forecast”

The Pension Service also provide a new Booklet “A Guide to your Pension Options” – you can obtain a copy by phoning 0845 7 31 32 33.

#### **Free Guide**

There is a free Guide available on the range of Government Services for people aged 60 and over. This is titled “Pensioners’ Guide (PG1)” For your copy phone 0845 6065 065.

The Pension Service website is [www.thepensionservice.gov.uk](http://www.thepensionservice.gov.uk)

#### **Rates from April 2007**

The basic State Retirement Pension was increased by 3.6% from £84.25 per week to £87.30 for a single person and from £134.75 to £139.60 a week for couples.

Additional pension was also increased by 3.6%.

#### **State and Public Service Pension Increases**

Both State and Public Service Pension Increases are linked to the Retail Prices Index (RPI) published each month. Increases are paid in April each year but the calculation of the increase is based on the previous September’s RPI increase – published in mid October. The RGN has published the increases in the Spring Edition for many years.

#### **Free Travel**

Free local bus travel for pensioners is now widely available but the rules vary considerably in different parts of the country. Trains and trams are also free in some city areas.

Further improvements are promised for 2008 when pensioners may be able to travel across the country free by bus. Further comment on this will be found in the Membership Report.

#### **Concessionary Travel**

Readers should all be aware that a Senior Citizens’ Rail Card - £20 – is a valuable purchase for anyone who travels much by rail as most tickets can be purchased with a third reduction. There are also advantages when traveling on Virgin services with Saver Tickets – there are no time restrictions on the use of these tickets if you have a rail card.

## **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

Membership currently stands at 440 members. A warm welcome to new members Edward Hewitt, Alex Patterson, Tom McNaughton, John May and Mel Dickinson who have joined us since February. Also honorary membership has been granted to Mrs K McNaughton, Mrs J Whitehead, Mrs Patricia Blake and Val Halward.

We are sorry to report the deaths of Ernie Adamson, Danny McNaughton, David Blake, Robin Halward, George Arthur Lamb and Edward Bannell. Our deepest condolences go out to friends and relatives.

We have also lost trace (i.e. newsletter returned undelivered) with Mrs I. Henderson-Smith, Mr P.C. Elvey, Mrs J. Kelly and L.C. Davies. Anyone who is in touch with them could you please inform me by calling me on 016 980 8127 and I will put them back on the membership list.

Members will remember an article we ran last year regarding the widening of the free bus service to a national level. The latest information is that on July 19<sup>th</sup> the Concessionary Bus Travel Bill was given Royal Assent, paving the way for the introduction in April 2008 of free, off-peak bus travel in England. But number of areas still remains on which legislation is unclear. For example the government has so far refused to extend the free travel concession to trams, metros and community transport schemes such as dial-a-ride and taxi tokens. Confusion also surrounds whether pensioners from Scotland, Wales and N Ireland will have free travel and vice versa.

The National Pensioner's Council (NPC) has already requested a meeting with the new transport minister, Rose Winterton, to raise concerns and afterwards will issue a detailed briefing note to affiliates explaining how the new legislation will work.

Peter Raynor NPC transport advisor said "We are making progress towards securing free travel on all forms of public transport and we must ensure that all pensioners, wherever they live, get the best concessions available.

I have been informed by James at PGA Office that it is anticipated that diaries will be available in October. You can be assured that as soon as I get them I will put them in the post to you. Also there has been a falling out with the Editor of 'The Key', which is why those who subscribe have not had a copy since spring 2007 edition. Again as soon as they reprint then I will put them in the post to those who are on the list.

Remember you can contact me with any changes of address etc either by calling 0161 980 8127 or by Email at [harry.brett@tesco.net](mailto:harry.brett@tesco.net).

## **HOW THE WORLD HAS CHANGED.**

John Ramwell writes:-

Yes, indeed, just how it has changed in our life time.

I am not going to dwell on such as crowded roads, mind blowing advances in technology and global warming. Instead I thought I would focus on the changes in demographics over our life time and the affects these changes have apparently had on all of us, young and old.

First I must come clean. I am no expert -not even that well read on the subject. My inspiration and information comes from an article in my recent Sunday paper which I found most interesting as well as alarming and shall now use as the basis for this contribution to our Newsletter. Reading this article in my paper for the first time made me appreciate just what the changing demographics in this country means to us and the generations coming up behind us. Allow me to share a very much revamped version of the newspaper item with you.

Demographics, as you will know, is the study of the characteristics of human population in terms of size, growth, density and distribution. What interested me in reading the original article is just what practical and social implications arise from the changes over the past few generations.

I have often thought that the 'gravy train' left the station not long after World War Two and it went merrily on its' way for twenty or thirty years before grinding to its' final siding. I was born in 1941 and can vaguely remember food rationing but cannot remember any hardship associated with it. I guess what you never had you never missed. The world was picking itself up and dusting itself off; things were going to improve. They had to as there was only one way to go and that was upwards. And they did of course. Year on year, starting from a low base I have seen life get better socially and materially. Expectations were not that high so any improvement was, by and large, well received. Motorways were built, slums were cleared; there were plenty of jobs and most were secure, free health service, our own homes and our own car and foreign holidays; technology taking the drudgery out of housework, machinery taking the hard labour out of construction and agriculture. And there was spare cash in our pockets. OK, the basic pay for Prison Officers was not enormous but still it compared well with many other jobs. My first pay slip was £7.10.8p (I still have it) and I considered myself well paid but what really put the jam on the bread was the 'over-time'. It was rarely in short supply and by putting in the long hours many of my colleagues could take more home than the Governor, and often did so. Of course there was a price to pay as many failed to really enjoy and appreciate family life. It was either work or the club. Home was for sleeping at and not much else. I digress.

So we had plenty of money. And the Service was run with a similar attitude. As a Hospital Officer at a singleton post (Gaynes Hall) responsible for my own medicines grant I made every effort to use the grant up by September and would go cap in hand for a supplementary to see me though 'till April. This was expected. Accountability...forget it. As long as I had sufficient evidence to show that all money was correctly spent no-one ever questioned the over spending. This was universal. Prisons were run on a bottomless pit of money.

I have not mentioned pensions. I never worried about one, secure in the knowledge one was waiting for me at the age of 55, together with a 'lump sum', all of it non-contributory. As quarters went up for sale and we were allowed to buy our own houses most of us found it easy enough to jump on the housing ladder and then use the lump sum to pay off the mortgage on retirement and so spend retirement debt free. We were among the very first able to invest in the best stock ever, bricks and mortar. Talk about being in the right place at the right time.

It is worth remembering that we were really the lucky generation. Previously and for some time after I first joined the Service colleagues would retire with very little and have to give up their quarter. I recall a Chief Officer from Rochester who had no choice on his retirement but to take up an occupation with another tied house. Many staff, because of the war, had not the full qualifying years to make up their pension. Many really struggled.

Then everything seemed to change over night. I recall a meeting I attended when someone stood up and warned us that the days of plenty were ending. We were about to enter an age of much greater accountability, he said, when every penny would be hard fought for and carefully spent and woe him or her who failed to stay within budget. Budgets,- what were these? I thought, "Such doom and such nonsense". How wrong I was! Our recent history tells you just how wrong I was. The 'gravy train' had suddenly lurched to a halt.

So our generation was adept at spending without too much accountability, later to change our habits as qualified accountants came in to show us the new way. The cry was for more and more to be done, monitored by target setting and league tables, and less and less to do it with. I left the Service ten years ago and remember there being a huge pressure to stay within budget. It has become no easier since I retired.

What was happening in the Prison Service was being repeated nation wide in every sphere. I need to bring this article back to demographics. Our generation, the 'baby boomers' have managed to slip in-between the post war and the present generation. If I sound smug I don't mean to be. Again I say we were just lucky..... good timing. But what of those generations coming up behind us, our children and grand kids. For them times are a-changing. University fees to repay, jobs not that plentiful nor that well paid (look at the national average wage

against our pension) and certainly not that secure and driven by pressures we can only imagine. No more jobs for life. And what chance do youngsters have of getting their foot, even toe, on the housing ladder.

The boomer generation is suddenly waking up to the truth that their legacy to their children is a nastier, tougher and more anxious world than the one we knew. The young are realising that this is the case and that it is down to the unthinking greed of their parents. Battle lines are being drawn; an inter-generational war is brewing. We used to believe that we could use our voice and influence whether it was to ban the bomb, agitate the government or campaign to save the environment. Most young people no longer believe that what ever they do will have any impact on how the world is run.

Take a closer look at just how the world is run. Massive poverty at home and abroad, global warming, terrorism, possible return to the cold war, crazy and unjustified wars, the failures of capitalism and the advent of an Orwellian and intrusive society, mass migration, India and China demanding and getting a much greater share of the global economic cake. The list goes on.

Money offers little hope of salvation. Pensions can't be trusted and property prices have put homes in the realms of dreams for many.

So what does all this mean in practical terms? More children living at home long after they would normally have a place and perhaps even family of their own. Stress levels rising as work/home balance suffers and becomes even more demanding. Job security, promotional opportunities, pay levels (with the exception of the city boys) and very uncertain pensions and the possibility of having to work 'till 70 before claiming one.

OK, so what are we to do, me and you all out there reading this (given you've persevered this far!). Are we to feel guilty and responsible? Have we really been that greedy and selfish? Are our kids and grand kids picking up the tabs? We cannot become detached. We fret and fuss over our kids as if unaware we are simultaneously bleeding them dry. The problem with us boomers is that there are too many of us and we simply haven't the good manners to die. The rise in birth rates that ran from the late 1940s to early 1960s was followed by an equally sharp fall as boomers either put off having children or had fewer. This means that our demographics have become an up-turned pyramid with aging boomers squatting on top of the much sparser population of their children. Life expectancy continues to rise which means the boomer bulge will continue on for some considerable time yet whilst we carry on exerting political power over the young.

My parents were probably like yours. They were savers. We boomers are spenders but steer clear of debt whilst our kids, thanks to a changing culture, are shopaholics convinced if they want it they can have it. Personal debt among this

generation is almost the norm and we can expect some real misery as the recent hike in interest rates makes itself felt.

Today we are on the opposite side to the situation prevailing many years ago. Then we had few expectations and were pleasantly surprised when any were realised. The fun we had with a wooden box to which my Dad had fixed some pram wheels. There was even time for childhood. I digress again! Now those coming up behind us have huge expectations but little chance of many of them ever being realised. It is easier to climb up than it is to climb down.

So now is the time for the boomers to ask themselves a very awkward question: have they wrecked the joint with their freedom and fun and left their impoverished and anxious children to make what they can of the wasteland that remains? Economists, sociologists, philosophers, environmentalists and politicians are deep in debate about this. How we value the future, what we are prepared to sacrifice for our children, is one of the most intriguing and urgent debates of our time. But what are we prepared to do NOW?

It is said that there is no quality in human nature which causes more fatal errors in our conduct than that which leads us to prefer whatever is present to the distant and remote future. We are historically bad at planning for and making sacrifices on behalf of the future. It has always been thus and so I, for one, am feeling a little less guilty and responsible. But then, am I?

## **PEOPLE**

**( including events and places)**

Sheila Atkinson: - Geoff Lister writes "Just to let you know that I have tonight been informed of the death of Sheila Atkinson, David's wife. I understand that she died at home yesterday, 20 June 07 and that the cremation will take place at 2.0 p.m. at the Gloucester Crematorium on Friday, 29 June 07".

Bishop Gus Harris, who earlier in his pastoral career was RC Chaplain at Liverpool Prison, died at the end of August. Gus became the first full time RC senior chaplain decades ago before going on to being Auxiliary Bishop in Liverpool Archdiocese and then Bishop of Middlesborough Diocese. Although long retired, he continued to do pastoral work until shortly before his death. Those of us who knew him will recall a man with a great interest in and commitment to prison issues.



Good to hear from Margaret Carnegie, Tom's widow, who lives in south west London.

Keen eyed readers of the situations vacant may have seen adverts for the Senior Management Training programme for the Prison Service. It may bring back memories of the Staff Courses based at Love Lane Wakefield that many of us experienced all those years ago.

Bob Perry is retiring. A farewell dinner for Bob was held at Newbold Revel on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

Colleagues will recall the closure of Oxford Prison and may also have heard that it has been converted into a hotel. The Malmaison Oxford opened in 2005. John Sandy reports that he has stayed in the hotel which he found an interesting experience...

Margaret Carnegie – Tom Carnegie's widow – has been in touch. She lives in South West London.

The death of Robin Halward in April 2007 marks the conclusion of his very long battle with cancer for some 20 years. Those of us who worked with Robin were constantly amazed at his resilience and his very positive attitude when faced with the many setbacks and treatments he had to endure. To achieve what he did in the face of constant medical problems was truly remarkable. A Times Obit on Robin was published in April.

The death of Chris Train, long serving Director General of Prisons, on May 7<sup>th</sup> was followed by an extensive Times Obituary marking his life and work. Chris had retired to Shropshire, a county for which he had great affection.

The Times earlier this year featured former Director General Martin Narey – and his PA – in his new role as Chief Executive of Barnado's. The Charity works with over 100,000 children with some 6000 staff and over 10,000 volunteers. Martin lives in North Yorkshire but commutes to Barnado's HQ in Essex. He is quoted as saying "I felt liberated when I was appointed to run Barnado's."

Martin Narey also hit the headlines a year ago when commenting on David Blunkett's recently published diary. The controversy was over the handling of the riot at Lincoln prison in October 2002 and whether the Home Secretary had wanted to use the army and lethal force to end the riot.

Andy Barclay is grateful for the help in locating Bill Duff – and your editor is delighted to hear that both Andy and Bill are thriving.

The Annual Golf Tournament was held this year on Thursday, 16 August 2007 at Ullesthorpe Golf Club near Lutterworth Leicestershire. The competition was open

to PGA Members and Retired Members and their guests on a first come first served basis.

Keen eyed readers of the RGN spotted Ray Mitchell featured in an article in a national newspaper about Britons retiring abroad. Ray and Pat live in Spain.

Allan Radford writes:

**“Greetings**, at long last, from Fabulous Fish Hoek, one of the prettiest seaside towns on the Cape peninsula in South Africa. Having visited our daughter and son-in-law in South Africa three times prior to my retirement in '95 and twice more during the latter half of the decade, my wife and I decided to make the break from UK permanent. In February 2001, having applied successfully for Permanent Residence, we touched down in sunny Cape Town for the start of a truly happy existence in this oft derided, but beautiful country. At the time house prices were roughly half the cost of those in the UK, with the cost of wheels probably 50% more. However, the exchange rate affords us a more affluent style of living allowing us to take many breaks from home exploring the stunning countryside. Contrary to the horror stories in the UK press, South Africa remains a popular holiday destination. As with everywhere in the world, one just needs to remain vigilant and not stray into any areas in which you may feel uncomfortable. Driving on long empty country roads, amidst stunning scenery is an absolute pleasure. So relaxing after the hustle and bustle of life in the fast lane. In 2005, we returned to England to visit friends and relations. Enjoyable though the visit was, it was with a sense of relief, that we felt no regret over our decision to emigrate. On the social front we have our country club where golf and bowls occupy a great deal of my time, interspersed with day trips out into the winelands for wine-tasting lunches, and to restock our ever increasing wine racks. With the 2010 World Cup on the horizon, I would advise anyone planning a visit to book early, and to perhaps seek advice from someone who knows”.

Nearer home, for those of you considering a visit to the Isle of Man, your Editor has been involved in setting up TravelWatch Isle of Man to represent the interests of Isle of Man passengers. We have a useful website including contact details for the relevant travel operators – <http://www.travelwatch-isleofman.org>.

For anyone visiting Ireland, there are a number of interesting old prisons now turned into museums and related use. Lifford in County Donegal is one such and another recently opened is at Carrick-on-Shannon as an art gallery. Pictures hang where offenders were hung.....

## NETWORK

One of the objectives of this column is to encourage exchange of information about work opportunities post retirement with a special emphasis on keeping in touch via email. Contributions to this column from readers with information about post retirement work activities would be very welcome.

Please note my email address which is: -

Email: [brendan@ofriel.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:brendan@ofriel.fsnet.co.uk)

### PGA OFFICE

The PGA Office address is 405 Horseferry House London SW1P 2AW. Their email address is

[office@prisongovernors.org.uk](mailto:office@prisongovernors.org.uk)

The PGA website is <http://www.prisongovernors.org.uk>

Telephone 020 7217 8591

Fax 020 7217 8923

Voice bank 0762 695 2576

### Web Site Information

We welcome exchange of helpful website information from readers so let us know if you have an interesting site

The International Centre for Prison Studies can be found at -

The International Centre for Prison Studies

King's College London

School of Law

26-29 Drury Lane

London WC2B 5RL

020 7848 1922

Website \_ <http://www.prisonstudies.org>

Email : [icps@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:icps@kcl.ac.uk)

### Public Service work opportunities

Readers may find it worth consulting the public appointments website –

[www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/pau](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/pau)

### Part time work opportunities

The work is with the Office for National Statistics - Social Survey Interviews. They are currently offering part time contracts of 21-28 hours per week with retirement at 65. The full time salary is £14k for Inner London - £11k outside London - pro rata.

The job gives 30.5 days paid holiday - pro rata - sick pay - pays 38.5p per mile, paid travel time and a daily meal allowance.  
The contact number is 020 7533 6368.

As part of the re-organisation of Police Complaints, Police Authorities have been seeking applications for lay people to sit as Independent Members of Staff Misconduct panels. While many of these recruitment exercises may have been complete, it may be worth asking for details of the positions from your local Police Authorities. The time commitment is small and the positions carry a daily fee.

The Ministry of Justice advertises from time to time for Members of "Courts Boards". The time commitment is around 9 days a year, 11 for Chairs. A small fee is payable.

Lay Members of the 42 Area Probation Boards are required from time to time. The time commitment varies but averages 2/3 days a month. The posts are remunerated. Probation Areas may be turned into "Probation Trusts" in future years and this may offer further opportunities for interested readers to apply for Board positions in these new Trusts.

Lay members of the Employment Tribunals are sought every 3 years. The time commitment has been 15 days a year minimum and a fee is payable. However, a major review of all Tribunals is currently in progress as the Ministry of Justice is taking responsibility for the many Tribunals that exist.

The Home Office advertises for members of the Parole Board from time to time – recent advert in February 2007.

Even if there are no vacancies at present in any of the above positions, anyone interested should consider exploring what the work entails in order to decide whether to apply. Most public Boards sit in public so it is reasonably easy to observe the work of the Boards.

## **Traveling within the UK?**

There is an advice/information service including all rail services; buses and road information on [www.traveldirect.info](http://www.traveldirect.info)

Complaints about Rail travel – try Passenger Focus [www.passengerfocus.org.uk](http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk) or 08453022022

Complaints about Air Travel – try the Air Transport Users Council  
Tel 0207240 6061.

## **WEEKEND BREAK 2007**

Once again the event was held at The Hinton Firs Hotel at Bournemouth, from Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> of April until Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> of April.

The standards of catering and service were excellent, the rooms very comfortable and those attending made full use of the bar and lounges.

Each evening there was entertainment available in the ballroom and the Saturday Dance was much enjoyed by those who felt the need to display their skills, in this sometimes energetic activity.

Over the four days the weather remained sunny and warm, which was ideal for strolling on the beach, taking the 15 minute walk into Bournemouth or go in the opposite direction to visit the Saturday Market at Boscombe. Some went by car or public transport to places further afield, others used the opportunity to cross over on the ferry to Swanage.

The temperatures were such that those of us from the North were able to cautiously remove our vests, which is a thing not lightly done in April and both the indoor and outdoor swimming pools were in use.

Some of those attending chose to extend the event by booking in a few days earlier and others staying on for a few days afterwards and despite one of our number having to visit Bournemouth General Hospital on the Saturday evening, the event was deemed to be a pleasant few days break.

Those attending were  
Margaret and Brenda Brooks  
Harry and Janet Walsh  
John and Liz Towers  
Joe and Mary Whitty  
Barbara Longstaff  
Pat and Ann Lynch  
John and Shirley Northway  
John and Barbara Yates  
Maurice and Molly Eccles  
Keith and Sheila French  
Colin and Dorothy Heald  
Malcom and Ivy Brown  
Charles and Kath Smith  
Joe and Betty Greenhalgh

## **WEEKEND BREAK 2008**

TORTWORTH COURT, WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE,  
GLOUCESTER.

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April to Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2008. 3 Nights.

Tortworth Court will be remembered by many as H M Prison Officers Training School, Leyhill. The alternative to Wakefield Training School and there are no doubt, many group photographs still in existence, of training classes with parts of the building in the background. For those who received training there, it could be of interest to see how much remains the same or how much has changed. Certainly the sleeping arrangements are expected to be different, from being six to a room without en suite facilities.

The building itself is a Grade II listed Victorian mansion off junction 14 of the M5. It is set in 30 acres of parkland with an Arboretum of over 300 rare and protected trees. There are 189 bedrooms. The 3 restaurants are housed in some of the original rooms, one being the library. There are 2 bars and 2 lounges

The facilities in the leisure centre include an indoor swimming pool, spa bath, gym, sauna and steam room.

It is located on the edge of the Cotswolds and among the many places of interest which may be visited; there are Bristol, Gloucester, Bath, Berkley Castle, The Cotswold Water Park and Westonbirt Arboretum.

The cost for 3 nights bed, breakfast and dinner is £165. A single room supplement of £20 per night applies.

There are only a set number of places available so it would be prudent to book early. To do so send the completed booking form, as included in this publication, with cheques for deposits of £25 per person made payable to TORTWORTH COURT HOTEL To Charles Smith, telephone 0151 525 9188.

10 Dewey Avenue,  
Liverpool.  
L9 0LU

## **RETIRED PRISON GOVERNORS REUNION 2007**

Held at the Hilton Hotel Bromsgrove on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2007

This was the fifth time that the Reunion has been held at this venue and it proved to be equally as good as on previous occasions. The spacious entrance lounge and reception area were ideal for the purpose of meeting people on arrival and was agreeable as a place where members could sit and talk, or

generally relax between items listed on the programme.

Two private areas had been set aside for tea, coffee and pastries in the morning and afternoon. The church service, which has become something of a tradition at the Reunion, was held in the Bromsgrove Suite. We were most appreciative of The Reverend Wendy Carey, Chaplaincy Training Officer from Newbold Revel, who conducted the service assisted by her husband Peter.

There was some lively participation at the AGM held in the Bromsgrove Suite. The members present expressed general satisfaction with the venue and that we should return there on 7th June for the Reunion of 2008.

The raffle raised £136 which was donated to the RPGA Benevolent Fund.

Lunch was served on group tables set aside in the dining room and for this year the buffet was chosen as:-

- Assorted Sandwiches
- Toasted Ham and Pineapple Baguette
- Smoked salmon and Sour Cream Vol-au-vents
- Baby Baked Potatoes
- Chicken and Mushroom Sate
- Hunters Pie
- Vegetable Skewer
- Jalopeno Poppers
- (All served with a selection of dips and sauces)
- Fresh Fruit Basket
- Tarte au Citron
- Cheese Biscuits and Grapes.
- Tea, coffee .

The bar was open throughout the day where drinks could be obtained and for those who felt the need for a stroll, the patio led to a pleasant well laid out garden area.

Several people took the opportunity to stay over at the hotel where favourable rates had been obtained when making the original booking.

Among those who attended were:-

Wendy and Peter Carey (Chaplain)

Graham Smith and Roberta Bampton

Bill and Mary Brister

John and Jenny Ramwell

Bernard and Margery Marchant

Don and Iris Drew  
LWF and SA Steinhausen  
Martin and Catherine Kealy  
Lin Cooper  
Carol L Davies  
Ron and Sue Curtis  
Dave Simons  
Bob Duncan

Harry and Carol Brett  
Olwen Spears  
Jim and Sheila Blakey  
Charles and Kath Smith  
John and Jenny Dring  
Roland Adams  
Geoff and Grace Lister  
Harold and Sylvia Brown  
Margaret and Brenda Brooks  
Joe and Betty Greenhalgh  
Pat and Ann Lynch  
Barbara Longstaff  
Don and Janet Shaw  
Peter and Jenny Kitteridge.  
Harold and Anne Prior  
Maggie Donnelly  
Mick Roebuck  
Marilyn Parkin  
Gerry Ross

Apologies  
Jack and Shirley Northway  
Terry Weiler  
Alan and Margaret Tee  
Joe and Mary Whitty  
Neville and Hilda Joseph  
Derek Shaw  
Arthur and Peggy Williamson  
Mary Roebuck  
Brendan and Barbara O'Friel

## **RPGA REUNION 2008**

Due to the favourable comments received arrangements have been made for the reunion to be held at the same venue on Saturday 7th June 2008  
The programme will be :-



1100	Arrival - Tea & Coffee available
1200	Opportunity to mingle
1230	Lunch served in the Dining Room
1400	Church Service in the Bromsgrove Suite
1500	Photographs
1530	Annual General Meeting
1630	Tea and pastries
1700	Departure

For those wishing to purchase their own drinks. The bar will be open from arrival to departure.

The price for the event is £16 per person.

To reserve places please complete the booking form as published in this newsletter and send with a cheque payable to RPGA.

To - Charles Smith,  
10 Dewey Avenue,  
Liverpool,  
L9 0LU

Telephone - 0151 525 9188

#### OVERNIGHT ACOMMODATION

A preferential rate has been agreed for those who would like stay overnight at the hotel on the Friday and / or Saturday. The price for dinner bed and breakfast being £108 per room, per night, based upon two sharing and £70 per room, single occupancy. The price for Bed and Breakfast only is £78 per room per night based upon two sharing and £55 per room for single occupancy.

Bookings must be made direct with the Hilton Bromsgrove on 0121 447 7888 and quote The Retired Prison Governors Reunion.

Another option for accommodation, would be, that The Hilton Hotel Group have in the past advertised in various newspapers and periodicals, a special Spring/ Summer offer of reduced rates for a two night stay at hotels within their group. This tends to be after Christmas and was around February of last year. But please bear in mind that that previously, there has been quite a demand for accommodation in June, due to various functions being held at the hotel.

#### HOW TO GET THERE.

**BY ROAD** - The Hotel is located along Birmingham Road (A38) which runs between the M5 Junction 4 and M42 Junction 1. Approximately 1.3 Km north of the M42 and 1.5 Km south of the M5.

**BY RAIL** - From Birmingham New Street Station catch a connecting train to Bromsgrove Station. 30 Minutes by car from Birmingham

International Station.

BUS ROUTES - From Birmingham city centre and the City bus station, catch either the No 143 or 144 to Bromsgrove - both services travel down Birmingham Road.