

RETIRED GOVERNORS NEWSLETTER 61 AUTUMN 2009

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Editorial

Pensions

Strange and troubling times we live in. Credit crunch, financial melt down and recession. Inflation has turned negative bringing down the cost of many items. For Public Service Pensioners it probably means that negative inflation will have an influence on the uprating of pensions. Gerry Ross, who represents us on the Public Service Pensioners Council, has kindly written an article summarizing the possible changes to both State and Public Service Pension upgrades in the year ahead.

Recording our History

The Retired Governors Newsletter provides an opportunity for its readers to record something of the detail of life in the Prison Service in years gone by. While there will always be official records of prison establishments, the number of prisoners and the major events influencing the service, there is a danger that the way in which people worked will be lost through a lack of recording. Our current older generation of readers has the advantage not only of being able to record what they remember and experienced, but they will also know – from the oral tradition of the Service - something of how an earlier generation of staff worked and lived.

Is it important to try and preserve a record? I believe so, as there are marked changes in the way staff have had to work over the last sixty years. Without a record, this information will be lost. What might we record? I suggest almost anything about the past. For example, I was struck by the comments of an old Chief Officer who started work at Wakefield Prison in 1939. He told me that they

never put prisoners on the top landings of wings. They didn't have to – they were locking up such a low number of prisoners that the top landings were not needed. That sounded amazing to me as a young AG in 1966 working in a very overcrowded Manchester Prison. I also remember the account of an officer joining Bristol Prison in the ninety fifties. No induction training in those days! He was told on his first morning – he was the only officer allocated to a wing – to unlock a certain cell – when he did so the Redband came out and effectively told him what to do for the whole of the early morning routine. Was this the experience of others?

An excellent example of recording our past will be found in “Your Letters” as two colleagues reflected on their early experiences of North Sea Camp.

I am sure that many of our readers have their own memories of how the Service was decades ago. Your Editor will be delighted to hear from you – a few lines as a letter or an article describing past practices will be all very welcome.

PUBLIC SERVICE AND STATE PENSIONS - LATEST

Gerry Ross

In May this year Charles Smith and I attended the AGM of the Public Services Pensioners' Council. Since the start of the year there has been an increasing attack on public service pensions, and this has been easy to recognise in the utterances of politicians and in the media. The work of the Council has focused on the defence of public service pensions. They had meetings with the Shadow Minister for Pensions and with two Liberal Democrat spokespersons on Pensions.

It became clear at the meeting with the Liberal Democrats that their understanding of the issues surrounding public service pensions was seriously deficient, and owed more to the 'politics of envy' rather than an informed appreciation of the real position. In their discussions with the Conservative Shadow Minister he made it clear that there was no argument over accrued rights and neither had they any plans for public service pensions. It was not a priority issue, but if they were elected they would, of course, examine it. This contrasts with the recent statement of David Cameron who spoke about bringing an 'end to the apartheid in pensions' and envisaged public sector pensions gradually 'moving increasingly towards defined contribution rather than final salary schemes'. The clear message from the Council was for members to inform their MP's of the real situation that applies to members working in the public sector. The Council for its part has now agreed to be an equal partner with the Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance, who retained Connect Public Affairs to mount a communications strategy. The campaign will focus on the public sector, and specifically civil service pensions. The General Purposes Committee will contribute half of the cost of the campaign, approximately £3,000.

The Government has made a statement to the TUC that it has no plans to revisit public service pensions. However, in the light of the current and future economic state of the country it is clear that the public sector cannot afford to be complacent. The statement to the TUC is what we would expect from a Government expected to face an election in May next year.

In the present economic climate the 2008/9 Retail Prices has gone negative for the first time in living memory. In the event that this situation continues it is very likely that there will be no increase in civil service pensions in 2010. It would then be argued that if inflation remains negative as measured by the RPI the real value of public service pensions will inevitably increase. Some concerns that there might be a reduction in public service pension entitlements have been examined by the PSPC. Current legislation makes no such provision for such action. New primary legislation would have to be enacted to effect such a change, and with a General Election on the horizon this can be viewed as highly unlikely.

The Council in partnership with the National Pensioners' Convention and other organisations has continued to campaign for substantial increases in the level of the basic State Pension. The Government is committed to increase the State Pension by 2.5 per cent next year. The Council have asked the Government for an increase in the over 80's age allowance describing the 25p per week as ludicrous.

As we move towards the General Election we can expect to hear and read further attacks on public servants pensions. Every opportunity needs to be used to counter much of the misinformation presented in the media, and by politicians. It is important to communicate the real situation of our pensions to Members of Parliament.

STATE PENSIONS AND PUBLIC SERVICE PENSIONS - BACKGROUND

Pensions Act 2004

One of the changes under this act is for people approaching State Pension Age. Before 2005, it had 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; from 2005 this was 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. A good source of information is the Department for Work and Pensions web site - 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

Rates from April 2009

The basic State Retirement Pension was increased by 5.0% from £90.70 per week to £95.23 for a single person and from £145.04 to £152.29 a week for couples.

Additional pension was also increased by 5.0%.

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. So last October 2008, the RPI increase was 5.0% triggering the rises in state and public service pensions applicable from April 2009. The RGN has published details of the increases in our Spring Edition for many years.

Overseas Pensioners

Colleagues in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and some other countries do not receive the increases to their State Pensions. A full list of the countries within which colleagues will receive their full increases to state pensions will be found at www.dwp.gov.uk/international/social-security-agreements/list-of-countries.

A case has been running for many years to try and correct this apparent injustice. In September 2009, the issue went before the European Courts with a verdict expected in March 2010.

Colleagues considering moving abroad may wish to check on the implications of any move on their state pension by consulting the above website.

BUTLER TRUST – VOLUNTEERS WANTED

The Butler Trust is currently seeking volunteers to act in a support and liaison role for establishments in their local areas. The position is voluntary but out of pocket expenses are paid to the volunteers. If you would like to know more before making any commitment telephone Veronica Bird 01423 569316

YOUR LETTERS

Bob Duncan

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Broadstairs
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The astute of you will notice that I have done a 'Blakey' and moved home. The drama and uncertainty dragged on for almost 12 months in all and then it was all a rush. I moved out on the eve of the re-union and began the move the Monday following. Now everything is in a new place I cannot find anything, so if someone has written, and nothing appears it is purely down to me. Give me 3 years and it will surely turn up. Despite the upheaval, I have no regrets, I love being by the sea and back at my roots where I grew up. I am in contact with friend from my teenage days and my 3 cousins who live in Kent. Added to all that, it has by British standards been a bumper summer down here and I have actually swam in the sea. There is a lot to do, but gradually is the word. I have already been persuaded to serve on the Independent Monitoring Board at Elmley prison on the Isle Sheppey, and that is taken up a fair amount of time getting to know a new prison its staff and the rest of the Board.

For those not up to speed, there is the constant overcrowding, more structural changes and diminishing budgets. The rank of Principal Officer is to be phased out over the next few years. Is nothing sacred, it was first introduced in 1842 by the Governor of Pentonville, so it has clearly stood the test of time, but what is that to the “modernisers”?

I need to start with a letter from Eddie King, he actually wrote in February but his letter was returned to him as wrongly addressed, by the time he wrote again via Harry it was too late for the Spring edition. He wrote to with a great deal of personal sorrow to advise of the death of John Clark, ex Governor of Hatfield. He and John had been great friends since their early days in the Service when John was still a Trades Officer and he was a newly promoted Eng 11. He reminds us that John went to be Assistant Governor then eventually a Governor 3. Eddie finished his service as Governor 1V Works in charge at Wealston. He says about John he was well liked by all his colleagues as a person and was a well-respected Governor by all who came into contact with him. I endorse all that Eddie says, John worked with me when I was Head of Training; he was a true gentleman and an excellent colleague, and a pleasure both to have known and worked with.

Eddie goes on to say, how he would like to take the opportunity to express how much he and his wife enjoy the Retired Governors Newsletter. Carry on the good work. Thanks Eddie, we strive to make the Newsletter both topical and interesting, it is always good to get positive feedback, and it keeps us all going!

I am not the only one on the move, that gallant Betty Dennis thinks she has sold her property in Badsey and has found a little house in Evesham in a quiet residential area.

It is close to all the amenities including the Lidel store, which has been opened up, and the old Regal Cinema, which had been boarded up for years and is now being restored. Convenient buses pass the door, but Betty hopes to remain fit and mobile and able to walk into town and all the events that happen on Crown Meadow beside the river. As she says, nothing is guaranteed until the ink is dry, but as a senior octogenarian it is very brave of her. We all wish you well and hope it all comes to fruition.

Notable absentees from this year’s re-union were Bill and Mary Brister, they were sorely missed. Mary remains not too good, Bill says she has good days but her memory is very bad at times and she is now virtually house bound. Having known the Bristers’ for over 40 years it is so sad when one remembers the vibrant and energetic Mary. Bill also has lost a grandson, who at 29 died whilst on holiday in Greece. Apparently he had a congenitally weak heart but it had never been diagnosed. All our thoughts are with you Bill.

Had a number of visitors at my new abode, including Roger Outram who is well and has a daughter in Kent, so may see more of him. He has joined me in working as a volunteer for the Shannon Trust, says it is both stimulating and

thoroughly enjoyable. So if anyone else is interested let me know. Also in contact with Philippa Lowe, who is also Shannon Trust, she has a property in Ramsgate, actually where Van Gough stayed, so she has sunflowers in the window and a plaque on the wall. We aim to meet up for tea every so often. Also Paul Wailen, who has just retired and says he is thoroughly enjoying it, now able to spend time at the gym and swimming baths.

Off on my hols with my long time friend Alan Rawson in October. He remains well and as active as ever, except he is waiting for a cataract operation.

A very newsy update from Graham and Ann Lawrence about the school they support in Kenya. Some of the money raised at this year's raffle at the re-union went to support the work.

Since the last newsletter a year ago we have been fortunate to visit Kenya and Dabaso School during November 2008 and January/February 2009.

What a difference a year has made!!!

Firstly, Mr Gonah the Head Teacher, retired last August and has been succeeded by Mr Lennox Mwangala. A new Deputy Head Teacher, namely Madam Zipporah, has joined him. Inevitably, some of last year's staff has moved on and new teachers have joined the school; what has remained constant is the commitment and dedication of the teachers to working with all the children to ably assist them in achieving their potential



*Existing classrooms
on the left*

*Refurbished classrooms
on the right*

The school has made steady progress as evidenced in their position in the Performance Table together with their best ever-English result at the end of the last academic year in November 2008. The staff has directly attributed this achievement to our provision of English Dictionaries in February 2008, which involved very many donors. From our visits to the school we have seen clear evidence that the dictionaries have been and continue to be, very well used.

At the teachers' request, Bible Story Books have been donated by a group of children involved in the Anglican Church of Paphos. Other children from this town have contributed a range of essential school materials as well as raising much-needed funds. Local donors (who wish to remain anonymous) have provided essential school supplies as well as toothbrushes and toothpaste as these items are used to reward children for academic achievement/effort as well as supporting the most needy children.

The fabric of Dabaso School is undergoing significant change. Mr Mwangala was successful in applying for funding to build a small Administration Block, which will free up existing office space to increase classroom capacity. The Staff Room has received a very much-needed 'facelift', which has improved the walls and generated essential light. This has had a positive impact on the staff when they are preparing lessons and marking work. Our project has refurbished two Standard 1 (First Year) classrooms, which has involved repairing the floors, skimming and then painting the walls and providing improved blackboard facilities. In addition a major refurbishment of two Standard 2 (Second Year) classrooms has been completed, which has involved raising the roofs and replacing the roofing materials, plastering the walls inside and outside, repairing door and window frames, which has improved security, repairing the floors and walkway to the classrooms and providing much larger blackboards. Local labour has been used and materials have been purchased in the local community, all of which has significantly contributed to the local economy.

Following discussion with the Head Teacher and Mr Karisa (Chairman of the School Management Committee) we have agreed to continue our classroom refurbishment programme. There are seven more classrooms that require attention, these need to be worked on two at a time and then the last three followed by the painting of all nine classrooms as this is the most economic use of resources. The school has a commitment to continue with the new Administration Block when government funding is allocated and other classroom

improvements so that ultimately as a result of our combined efforts we meet at the school gate in the true spirit of partnership work.

The school has also successfully achieved connection to the local electricity supply even though at this early stage only three classrooms can be funded to receive this essential service.

Throughout the year Dabaso School has repeatedly communicated its appreciation of the support that it is receiving by word of mouth and also through 'thank you' letters from staff and the children.

In the current economic climate, when many people find themselves with a reduced income, it is heartening to know that for a comparatively small sum of money practical improvements continue to be made, which will support children both in the immediate and longer term.

From many people who have seen various photographs of children at Dabaso School, several themes have emerged which include:

- Most of the children do not have shoes but they have to walk many kilometres to and from school
- School Uniform is being repeatedly handed down; despite this it is worn with considerable pride
- Light is minimal in this part of Kenya, yet many people in the world frequently take this resource for granted



A heartfelt "Thank You" to all the Donors from everyone at Dabaso School

During this year we will be continuing our efforts to raise funds to deliver the classroom improvements as outlined above and to ensure that essential teaching

aids and writing materials are available to those who are in the early stages of their education.

Well done to you both.

In response to the article on North Sea Camp in the last edition have received a fascinating piece reminiscing about life there in the early fifties. Rowland Adams, Rosamond and Roger Dauncey met over lunch and talked about their time together at the Camp. As a result we have this interesting piece from 'a couple of old codgers':-

Roland joined the Prison & Borstal Service as an AG11 in 1947 direct from the war time Indian Army, being posted to Portland Borstal as a Housemaster, followed by duty at Wormwood Scrubs allocating those sentenced to Borstal Training, later serving at Hatfield Borstal before being posted in 1955 to North Sea Camp, to replace David Gould (AG1) as Deputy Governor. Though he was slightly miffed when told his rank would remain as AG11. It turned out this was a result of a re-organisation of governor grade posts and it was only a short time of duty at NSC before Roland was promoted to AG1 and posted to Hollesley Bay Colony as Deputy Governor.

Roger, having lived near Hewell Grange Borstal, got to know the then Governor, David Hewlings and his Deputy Vernon Elvey along with Housemasters 'Bunny' Chilvers, Norman Honey and Len White, And was influenced to join the Service through the Direct Entrant Competition. On selection he was posted to NSC in February 1951, as a bachelor Housemaster. Peter Burnett was the Governor with Housemasters, David Gould, as his Deputy. He remained at NSC until 1956 when he was posted to Feltham Borstal.

By the time Roland had taken over as Deputy Governor in 1955, Alan Robertson had replaced Peter Burnett (what a 'different kettle of fish' that was) and Roger had discovered that at NSC there was a tradition of having no officers, Housemasters did everything. True there was a Chief Officer, Foreman of Works, and officers who had central tasks and responsibilities, and all lived in quarters. The H/Ms, including the Deputy Governor, had one day off a week and one weekend off a month. Their hours of work were (theoretically) from 9.0am to 1.0pm and 6.0pm to 9.0pm, rarely did wives see them back on time, especially on Institution Board days!

Roger remembers (and for him dreaded) 'News Quizzes' when every weekday evening all trainees and the H/M listened to the BBC News at 6 pm in the Dining Hall, and then at 6.15pm , the H/M walking between the tables had to quiz the trainees about the news items. Miraculously, those officers who had been on duty prior and during the evening meal all melted away leaving the H/M to cope on his own with the hectoring and uncooperative behaviour of those trainees

behind his back. Staff seemed to feel Direct Entrant AG's needing 'bleeding' into the reality of life.

During our time together at NSC the sentence of Borstal training was one of 5 years, with a minimum of 18 months and a maximum of 3 years training at the establishment, the final 2 years of Licence was under the supervision of the Probation Service, and the trainees could be re-called for further offending. Releases were decided monthly at the Institution Boards, and the progress of every trainee recorded. These Boards dominated housemaster's lives, both in the preparation and dealing with the after effects, especially by all those trainees who did not achieve the result they were hoping for.

These were also the days of the old Borstal Association, with Frank Foster, Denis Potts and Jimmy Hurst, one of them would have interviewed each trainee during the allocation process and assessed them for manual labour on the marsh. When it came to discharge they would be in touch and interview the trainee and arrange his after-care supervision on Licence.

Alan Robertson was a committed but unorthodox Governor, for example, if a trainee looked as if he had been fighting he would be 'locked up' until either he 'squealed' or the other trainee involved came forward. By and large this was understood and someone did come forward, always the right one was to be wondered.

The work allocation for trainees was standard, first month cleaners, next 3 months digging on the marsh to build the sea bank, after that they could volunteer to remain on the bank as seniors or opt for the farm, kitchen etc. Most remained on the bank if they could, as it was the macho job. Winter conditions were bad, but the bank work never stopped because of the tides the sea had to kept at bay.

The trainees were mostly young London thugs who were allocated to NSC to develop work habits. Any trainee refusing work was made to stand on the top of the bank until he asked to go back to work-he was of course treated as a joke by the others whilst standing there!

Sanitation at the camp consisted of buckets with creosote as a disinfectant which, despite frequent emptying always seemed to be full; this type of sanitation applied to all trainees accommodation, also that of all the governor grades and their families as well as the Matron, whose bungalows were all situated in the Camp itself. The buckets were changed daily by a trainee orderly who walked through all the bungalows with fresh buckets and removing the full ones. The smell of creosote lingered well into the day! This was a well sought after job as the wives frequently offered coffee. By the time Roland arrived most of the staff quarters had moved to the edges of the road leading into the Camp. These

along with the Officers' Club were on a septic tank system and were spared the creosote treatment.

Sunday worship for the trainees (compulsory still) took place in Freiston Church and involved each H/M on his own, marching about 30 trainees of his House the 3 miles in order to get there. Not always an easy task to get them there on time, as not all were keen to go and larking about on the way was common. If they arrived late the H/M 'carried the can'. "Scape goating" is nothing new!

Roland recalls that the Governor and H/Ms always turned out early in the morning to wave off their monthly discharges. This was followed by a very cold swim in a large, very muddy pool cut out of the marsh and filled daily by the North Sea, another of Robertson's ideas, and very invigorating! Roger does not remember that bit but Roland assures him as he was there and participated.

Ah! ...Those were the days.

Late news, Betty Dennis is not moving to Evesham after all, you would not credit it but some Estate Agents do not tell the whole truth, Or anything like the true. I know you think that is reserved for politicians, but there are clearly others at it as well. Betty is still planning to move, but staying in Badsey. We you luck and await the next instalment!

Well there you have it. Do keep communicating; it is the heartbeat of the Newsletter.

Bob Duncan

Sept 2009

PEOPLE

I regret to report the death of Bill Carmichael who died at the end of June 2009. Born in 1918, Bill came from Lancashire, worked as fireman on the old LNER Railways and joined the RAF serving as Aircrew during World War 2. He joined the Prison Service after the war, serving as an Assistant Governor at Lowdham Grange open borstal, Manchester Prison as AG1, had a spell in temporary charge of Oxford Prison before settling as Warden of Buckley Hall Detention Centre near Rochdale.

Because Bill retired before the RGN was founded by Arthur Williamson, he did not know of its existence until a chance meeting with Jim Blakey in Durham Cathedral. It is never too late to join the readership of the RGN...

On retirement Bill and his wife Joan settled in Caerphilly and were heavily involved in the setting up and running of the Friends of the Music of Caerphilly.

Peter Kitteridge writes

“Peter Honeybourne's daughter has let me know that Peter died on 29th July. The funeral service was held at the West Wiltshire Crematorium on Monday 17th August.

Peter served at Dartmoor, Bristol, Liverpool, Brixton, Wandsworth and Long Lartin, where he was Chief Officer. He was due to retire in July 1981, but delayed his retirement to assist with the reopening of Rolleston Temporary Prison, following the riots at Brixton and Toxteth. “

Roger Outram sent us the sad news of the death of David Bradley in June. Both David and his wife Gail had worked as Governors in the Service – Gail is only recently retired. David had retired some 10 years ago and had been ill for the last year. The funeral took place in Teignmouth.

I regret to report the death of retired member John Byrne in April who had been ill for some time. John retired from the service in 1993 after the disbandment of the National Prison Officer Recruitment Teams. He served at Hewell Grange, Foston Hall, Acklington and Castington among others. Gerry Ross was able to attend the funeral in Nottingham and met his wife and daughter: the daughter is now in the Service.

More sad news. Jim Blakey heard from Gill Long, daughter of Jackson Burford, that her father died on 28th July. Jackson, whose full name was George Jackson Burford retired as Governor of Shepton Mallet Prison in 1976.

Gill told us that the past few years have been hard on Jackson due to him having had some nasty falls
He would have been 93 in August.

Readers who served at Hollesley Bay may remember Felicity, Countess of Cranbrook whose obituary appeared in the Times in April. She had been a long standing member of the Board of Visitors, including a period as Chairman, and supported the Suffolk Punch stables initiative,

Patrick Gale, the late Michael Gale's novelist son, has recently written a further novel "The Whole Day Through" published by Fourth Estate, London. The novel revolves around the events of a single summer's day. It is described as "a bittersweet love story, shot through with an understanding of mortality, memory and the difficulty of being good".

Unusually the novel also includes a Question and Answer piece with Patrick Gale and his account of a Walk Around Winchester – he describes himself as a “Hampshire Hog” and regards Winchester as home although he now lives in Cornwall.

Interesting to see Brodie Clarke – formerly Governor of Whitemoor - on BBC National News during July representing the UK Border Agency. One of the significant changes to the Prison Service in recent years is the number of opportunities there now appear to be for senior people to move into related fields of work.

Another serving Governor in an unusual and challenging position is Vicky Blakeman, former Governor of Garth. She is currently overseeing the construction of a new Afghan Prison Service – so let us hope she returns with a job well done and unharmed.

In the Spring, Phil Wheatley, Director General of the Prison Service, was reported as having a fall out with the Serious Organised Crime Agency whose annual report launch included allegations that organised crime bosses were operating from prisons by using internet games to pass on their orders. The Prison Service denied these allegations and Phil Wheatley is said to have received an apology.

Dick Crowson, formerly Governor of the prison on Guernsey, and with considerable service in England and Wales, has been in touch with Mick Roebuck. Dick is living in North Devon – we have the contact details for anyone wishing to be in touch with him – Dick tells us he would be pleased to hear from former colleagues.

Earlier this year, the Times published a letter from Graham Clark, former Governor of Wandsworth, supporting the value of theatre and the arts in prison.

Queen’s Birthday Honours 2009 for NOMS staff

OBEs have been awarded to:

Paul Foweather, Governor of HMP Hull, for public and voluntary service.
Nigel Hancock, Senior Manager A, Safer Custody Group, for services to safer custody.

MBEs have been awarded to:

Myrtle Augee, Senior Officer, HMP Pentonville, for services to HM Prison Service.

Mostapha Bouker, Deputy Race Equality Officer, HMP Belmarsh, for services to race equality at HMP Belmarsh.

Stephen Brown, Senior Officer, HMP & YOI Brinsford, for services to HM Prison Service and to the community.

Alberto Crisci, Catering Services Manager, HMP High Down for services to the catering industry.

Anthony Fox, Senior Officer, HMP/YOI New Hall, for services to HM Prison Service.

Stewart Leach, Principal Officer, lately Belmarsh East Project, for services to HM Prison Service.

Neil McNally, Instructional Officer, HMP Frankland, for services to HM Prison Service.

Graham Pennington, Principal Officer, HMP Manchester, for services to HM Prison Service.

Bernard Unsworth, Independent Monitoring Board, HMP Kirkham, for continued commitment to staff and prisoners.

Prison Officer of the Year 2009

Senior Officer Dom Chapman of HMP Nottingham is Prison Officer of the Year 2009, it was announced at this year's annual awards ceremony on Thursday night (25 June).

Dom, who also won the Safer Custody category, clinched the title for her outstanding work as Violence Reduction Co-ordinator at her establishment.

Director General Phil Wheatley presented the award and said: "I am absolutely delighted that Dom Chapman has won the Prison Officer of the Year Award. Her work has been of the highest quality and has helped both staff and prisoners to work and live in a safer environment.

"It is a real example of how a truly committed and determined person can really make a difference."

The category winners were:

- Decency: Terri Duddy, Prison Officer – HMP Erlestoke
- Managing Difficult Prisoners: Ian Owens, Prison Officer – HMP Manchester
- Reducing Reoffending: Ralph Blair, Senior Officer – HMP Preston

- Safer Custody: Dom Chapman, Senior Officer – HMP Nottingham
- Security: Nigel O'Brien, Senior Officer – HMP Swaleside
- Staff Support: Hannah Davies, Operational Support Grade – HMP Risley
- Working with Young People: Justin Colman, Senior Care Manager – HMP & YOI Ashfield
- Diversity: Sarah Wilson, Principal Officer – HMP Holme House
- Lifetime Achievement: Michael Cassidy, Principal Officer – HMP & YOI Low Newton

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

PGA OFFICE

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

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

Public Service work opportunities

Readers may find it worth consulting the public appointments website – www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/pau

For those interested in overseas work, there is a new website for the Cabinet Office Stabilisation Unit which identifies expertise required for some posts abroad. Inevitably this tends to be in conflict areas. Consult www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk.

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.

Following the re-organisation of Police Complaints, Police Authorities occasionally require lay people to sit as Independent Members of Staff Misconduct panels. 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. The latest advert for new lay members went out in August 2009 with a closing date of September 2009. We were able to advise those on our email list of the existence of the advert. The website to consult is www.employmenttribunalmembers.co.uk.

There are also opportunities for lay members of other Tribunals most of which are under the Ministry of Justice following recent re-organisations.

The Home Office advertises for members of the Parole Board from time to time.

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 service Boards sit in public so it is reasonably easy to observe the work of the Boards.

For anyone seeking work opportunities, it is worth visiting the Government's Age Positive Network to be found at www.agepositive.gov.uk. This includes a substantial list of employers with a good record of employing people over 50. The Age and Employment Network (TAEN) is another source of general employment advice. This is an independent charity, supported by Help the Aged and helps job seekers get in touch with relevant organisations. This can be found at www.taen.org.uk/individuals.htm.

Recent Job Opportunities

Below are examples of recently circulated work opportunities to those on our RGN email system. If you are likely to be interested in such work opportunities, it is advisable to join the email system – contact Mick Roebuck who kindly runs it for us – as a quick response may be required to adverts.

St Helena. – four month contract

From: James Haines [<mailto:jrhaines@jrhaines.force9.co.uk>]

The Prison Supervisor will be away from the island for four months from 6th August and the Chief of Police is looking for someone to supervise the island prison (approx 10 prisoners) in his absence. There is an assistant prison supervisor but the main reason for seeking additional cover is because they have a remand prisoner who has set fire to his cell, has assaulted one member of staff and threatened others. He is diagnosed with psychotic personality traits. The post requires someone with operational experience at an appropriate level of seniority. The island governor also requires the person appointed to carry out staff training. They are offering £20,000 plus travel and accommodation for a four month contract. Ideally they require someone from 6th August to 9th December. Because of the mail boat schedules there are only limited opportunities to travel to and from the island. The prison supervisor acknowledges that it may be difficult to get someone for 6th August and has said that they may be able to hold the fort until early September which is the next time the mail boat sails to St Helena.

The post will probably suit recently retired governor/principal officer with few commitments and who likes a quiet life. No airport and the mail boat only calls about once a month – so once you're there, you're there!!

Traveling within the UK?

Public Transport Information

There is an advice/information service including all rail services; buses and road information on www.traveldirect.info

Booking a rail ticket?

Railcard information is available on www.railcard.co.uk

Timetable information is available on www.nationalrail.co.uk

Problems with a train journey?

Passenger Focus is the Rail Passenger Watchdog

www.passengerfocus.org.uk

or Telephone 08453022022

Travelling to London?

Service information about London Transport is available on

www.tfl.gov.uk/journeyplanner

Information about Oyster cards – generally the cheapest way to travel within London - is available on www.tfl.uk/oyster

Problems with public transport in London?

London Travelwatch is the passenger watchdog in London

<http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk>

Problems with an air journey?

Advice is available from the Civil Aviation Authority www.caa.co.uk

Complaints about Air Travel – try the Air Transport Users Council

Tel 0207240 6061

RAILCARD CHANGES 2009

- * Railcards now £26 up by £2
- * Railcards do not get a discount on travel before 9.30 Monday to Friday in the South East.
- * Railcards can be bought for 3 years at £65 – a good discount plus protection against future rises – they have to be bought on line via www.railcards.co.uk
- * Disabled persons railcard £18 - or £48 for 3 years - can be bought at stations.

Flower Shows

To obtain a list of the dates of nearly every Flower show in the UK, go to www.Gardenshows.com.

I recommend the Harrogate Shows, Shrewsbury Show, Holker Hall Show and my own (of which I am a vice President) Southport Flower Show.

Silver surfer Alf (Jennings)

Prison Service Journal

Many colleagues read the Prison Service Journal from time to time during their working life. Others wrote articles for the Journal and served on the Editorial Board. The Journal continues to publish – the latest edition in July 2009 is Number 184. Selected articles are available in the Resource Centre of the Prison Service website – www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk.

The latest edition includes an emphasis on Women in Prison. There is a particularly interesting article “International Review of Women’s prisons by Helen Fair of the International centre for Prison Studies at King’s College London.

From Our Archives

Edition 14 – November 1986

We covered the **Memorial Service for Duncan Fairn** - who was first ex Governor to Chair the Prisons Board – including:-

“I should think at once of his wit and irrepressible humour because I have suffered a bit from both. His wit was never barbed, but to the point. He worked hard, was clear in his directives and thoughtful in debate or lecture. “

(Bob Taylor)

“Fairn was never a man to hide behind the safety of the book of prison standing orders, and governors could reply on him to give authority and support for adventurous decisions, untrammelled by Civil Service caution.”

(Alan Packham)

Edition 9 – February 1985

Closure of Gaynes Hall Borstal

Leslie Portch wrote – in Arthur’s “Letters” column - :-
“It was quite a moving ceremony. David Waddilove – the first Governor in 1949 – welcomed the congregation. Keith Gibson, recently retired Regional Director, read the lesson. Tom Hayes was there – he told me he hoped to get his Borstal Book published in 1985...”

Edition 2 – July 1980

Alan Parsons wrote – again in Arthur’s letter column
“I formally retired on 30th April 1980. So far I haven’t been active in finding another job but am now one of the country’s 1800,000 unemployed. What a pass to come by after 43 years service to the Crown out of a working life of 46 years. Congratulations on the high standard of production of the first “NEWSLETTER”. I found it well worthwhile and look forward to receiving more”



Clickers’ Corner

Mick Roebuck

Back to basics

Slowly but surely I became aware that my computer had become much slower of late and was failing to respond as efficiently to the keyboard as it had done in the past.

I carried out all the usual tasks such as de-fragmenting the drive, cleaning out old files, checking the registry etc. and whilst some small improvement had been gained the system was still not operating as efficiently as it should be.

It must be the mouse thought I, so after giving it a good clean and still finding no improvement I decided to buy a new one.

Arriving home with my new purchase I wheeled out my computer trolley in order to reach the USB port at the back. On finding the appropriate connection I discovered to my amazement that the socket had somehow worked loose and my mouse was not fully connected I pushed it firmly home to find that all was now working fine.

The lesson to be learnt from this is one of the basic problem solving steps, always check your connections.

P.S. does anyone wish to buy a mouse? New and unused only one careful owner.

This issues tip.

When working in Microsoft Word you can easily put the current days date onto any document by pressing Shift, Alt and d. Shift Alt and t will also print the current time for you.

Removing hardware

How many of you when removing such items as digital cameras, memory sticks, or other pieces of hardware from your computer just pull it straight from the USB or other socket it's plugged into without giving it further thought. I would suggest that most of you do. Whilst you will probably get away with this method without causing any problems to your computer or the associated equipment, doing so may well at some stage cause damage to one or the other.

Taking a look along your Task Bar (that's the one which runs across the bottom of your monitor screen) you will see a selection of small icons; one of which may well be something akin to a small green arrow above a small grey box looking shape. Yes it is very small. It is usually located on the right hand side. Fear not if you cannot identify it from my description.

SI By resting your curser on each of the symbols for a few moments you will see text appear informing you what each of them represents. One should say "Safely Remove Hardware". That's the one you seek. Right clicking onto the icon will list the various pieces of hardware which are currently attached to your computer. Cameras, memory sticks etc may well be identified as "USB Mass Storage Device", which after all is what they are. Clicking again on the name of the item you wish to remove will place the item into a safe removal mode. A message should now appear on your monitor informing you that it is now safe to remove the selected piece of hardware from your computer.

A Fix your problems.

A past issue of the Newsletter has seen me strongly recommend this, all in one free download, which will fix many if not all of your computer problems.

It was previously known As Advanced Windows Care and those of you who took my advice would have downloaded this programme. Since my first recommendation for this product several Newsletter issues back this freebie has not only been improved and updated but now comes with the new name of Advanced System Care. Once downloaded, you can run the scan as often as you wish by clicking on the quick launch icon which appears on your desktop. I will guarantee the first time you launch the programme it will identify many problems on your system and immediately correct them for you.

Along with other freebies on the same page it can be found at www.iobit.com and downloaded by a simple click from your mouse.

Out of the programmes' listed on the website ensure that you select the one named "Advanced System Care" You will at some stage be asked if you want to upgrade/register to the professional version. By clicking on Remind Me Later whenever it pops up you will remain with the free download.

Passport photographs.

My wife and I recently had to renew our 10 year passports at a cost of £72 each per passport, plus £6.85 each checking fee offered by the Post Office, plus a further £4 each for new photographs. In order to save you getting out your calculators the total come to £165.70 pence. You can save the £6.85 by not having the Post Office check the documents for you but you would then have to add the cost of postage.

For those of you with a digital camera you can save the £4 per person photograph charge levied at the photo booths by taking your own photographs and using the website www.epassportphoto.com By following the simple on screen instructions you will be able to produce your own fully biometric compatible passport photographs.

Change your background

Ever wondered how to change the background on your monitor screen to that of one of your own photographs, perhaps a holiday snap, family group or something more memorable.

To do this call up the photograph you would like to have, right click on it and from the drop down menu which now appears select "Set as Background." Hey presto its that simple. You can of course perform this process as often as you wish.

Several other facilities are offered when you right click onto your desktop one of which gives you the option to re-arrange the icons on your desktop. Why not give it a go and give your screen a complete makeover.

How much memory is there left?

You bought the latest computer and the shop told you it had oodles of memory, but that was some time ago, since when you have downloaded lots of programmes, stored a raft of files and photographs. So how much memory do you have left?

To find the answer to that could not be easier.

1. Click on My Computer
2. When it opens click on the C drive.
3. On the left side of the screen you will see the answer.

Windows 7

Microsoft announced that they will be launching their new operating system to be known as Windows 7 later this year. Some may be tempted to buy it straight away

but the wiser amongst you will wait awhile and not purchase until Service Pack 1 has been released. By then any major operating problems should have been discovered and hopefully repaired.

Vista users

We all like our computers to operate at maximum capacity and Vista has a built in tool which will help you check for any problems.

To create your report open up the start menu and go to Control Panel, then click onto System & Maintenance follow this by clicking onto Performance Information and Tools. Now click the Advanced tools button on the left hand side of the window. Finally select Generate a system health report.

Your PC will now scan your system and provide you with an on screen report.

POSSIBLY THE WORLD'S MOST STUPID INSTRUCTIONS???

- This product not intended for use as a dental drill. - *On an electric router made for carpenters.*
- Take two tablets until passing away. - *Label on a medicine bottle in Japan.*
- Caution: knives are sharp. – *On a knife sharpener.*
- Choking hazard: this toy is a small ball. - *On a child's rubber ball.*
- Caution: remove infant before storing chair. – *On a pushchair.*
- Don't drive standing up through the sunroof while you're closing it. - *From a car owners manual.*
- Please store in the cold section of the refrigerator. - *On a bag of fresh grapes in Australia.*
- Not suitable for children aged 36 months or less. - *On a birthday card for a one year old.*
- If swallowed contact poison control. - *On a tube of toothpaste.*
- Warning: do not climb in this bag and zip it up. Doing so will cause injury and death. - *On a tiny 15cm protective package.*
- For best results start with a clean bathtub before use. - *On a bottle of bathtub cleaner.*
- For use on animals only. - *On an electric cattle prod.*
- Not to be used for drying hair. - *On a blowtorch.*
- Refuse to be put in dustbin. - *From a government office in the UK.*
- When you have finished your meal, return used food. - *At a language school in the USA.*
- Stop! This is the last rung. - *On an aluminium ladder.*
- Warning: this product may contain residue of nuts. - *On a packet of cashew nut pieces.*
- Save a child. Push down and turn. To open: Close tightly - *On a medicine bottle.*

RPGA E-MAIL REGISTER

The e-mail register has now been in operation for over 4 years and has proven to be a fast and effective means of communicating information to members between Newsletter issues.

If you are not on the register and would like to join, please send an email to Mick Roebuck michael.roebuck2@btopenworld.com from the email address you would wish to have registered on the system, requesting that you be placed on the register.

Emails containing information are sent at least once per month. If you have not received the monthly information update it could be because you have either, failed to register, changed your email address without informing the system or have been taken off the register for another reason. If you fall into one or more of these categories, you are strongly advised to re submit your details.

For members already on the register please do remember to resubmit your new details whenever you change to a new email address

E-mail addresses may not be passed onto third parties without permission from the person registered to that specific email address

NB NEW EMAIL REG AD

Fraud Calls to Mobile Numbers

John Berry kindly forwarded us this advice from a police crime prevention officer

If you receive a phone call on your mobile from any person, saying that he or she is a company engineer, or telling that they're checking your mobile line, and you have to press #90 or #09 or any other number, end this call immediately without pressing any numbers.

There is a fraud company using a device that once you press #90 or #09 they can access your 'SIM' card and make calls at your expense.

Forward this message to as many colleagues, relatives and friends as you can, to stop it.

Recently Retired Colleagues may wish to study the circular below forwarded to us by the PGA.

EPN 251

Civil Service Compensation Scheme (CSCS)

CER payments to people aged 57 to 60

Audience This Notice will be of particular interest to:

- Those concerned with awards for people departing on CER terms

Action Settle grievances raised by those who have left on CER terms aged between 57 and 60 and whose lump sum compensation has been reduced by the tapering provisions of the CSCS.

Timing Immediate

1. Certain aspects of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme (CSCS) provisions were challenged in the Employment Tribunal in 2008 (in the case of Mr J M Wallis and Others v The Cabinet Office and Others) where Mr Wallis succeeded in his claim that the tapering, for those aged 57 to 60, of the lump sum element of the Compulsory Early Retirement (CER) terms was not objectively justified.
2. Employers will be aware that the CSCS terms have been under review for some time with the objective of developing reformed terms better suited to today's Civil Service. While we anticipate that the new terms will take full account of the *Wallis* judgment we are not yet in a position to give details of those new terms or their effective date. In the meantime, grievances are being raised by some individuals

who are aware of the *Wallis* judgment and wish to secure their position.

3. In anticipation of changes to the CSCS terms, employers are now instructed to settle grievances lodged by those who have already departed and which cover the tapering of the lump sum element of CER terms. In other words, people who have departed on CER terms aged between 57 and 60 and who have raised a grievance should receive a top-up payment so that they have the full lump sum payment of six months' pensionable pay. Employers will need to liaise with their APAC to determine the top-up amount to be paid. Given that payments are calculated according to this set formula, the Treasury does not consider such payments to be novel and contentious or subject to the special severance payment procedures. Treasury approval is therefore no longer required for such payments.

4. You should note that this instruction does **not** apply to tapered lump sum payments made on Compulsory Early Severance or Flexible Early Severance terms (where we continue to argue that the tapering is justified) or to redundancy payments made to people over pension age. You should also not settle grievances in relation to departures at a date in the future (when the rules of the CSCS could be different), or pay untapered lump sums where no grievance has been lodged.

Contacts

Enquiries about content, distribution or to receive in a different format

employerhelpdesk@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk

01256 846414

Employer Helpdesk, Civil Service Pensions, Grosvenor House, Basing View, Basingstoke, RG21 4HG

You can find electronic copies of the EPG, all current EPNs and forms on our website www.civilservice.gov.uk/pensions in the Guidance for employers section.

If this notice is to be circulated to members, then please remove contact details as the helpdesk is for employers only. Members should be directed to your pensions administrator if they have any queries.

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Return to Justice

Another look at the National Prison Service Collection four years on.

By Mick Roebuck

It was thought by your committee that it would be a worthwhile exercise and help to satisfy reader's curiosity for one of us to pay a visit to the Galleries Of Justice Museum in Nottingham to see what if any progress had been made in advancing the display and information made available to the public. Contacting the museum curator Bev Baker I was surprised how well she remembered me and equally just, how enthusiastic she was towards me paying them another visit. So at the end of last April my wife and I duly set off to Nottingham, arriving at the Galleries around lunch time.

Bev as ever was the perfect host and offered me a free run of the Museum to see and photograph whatever I wished.

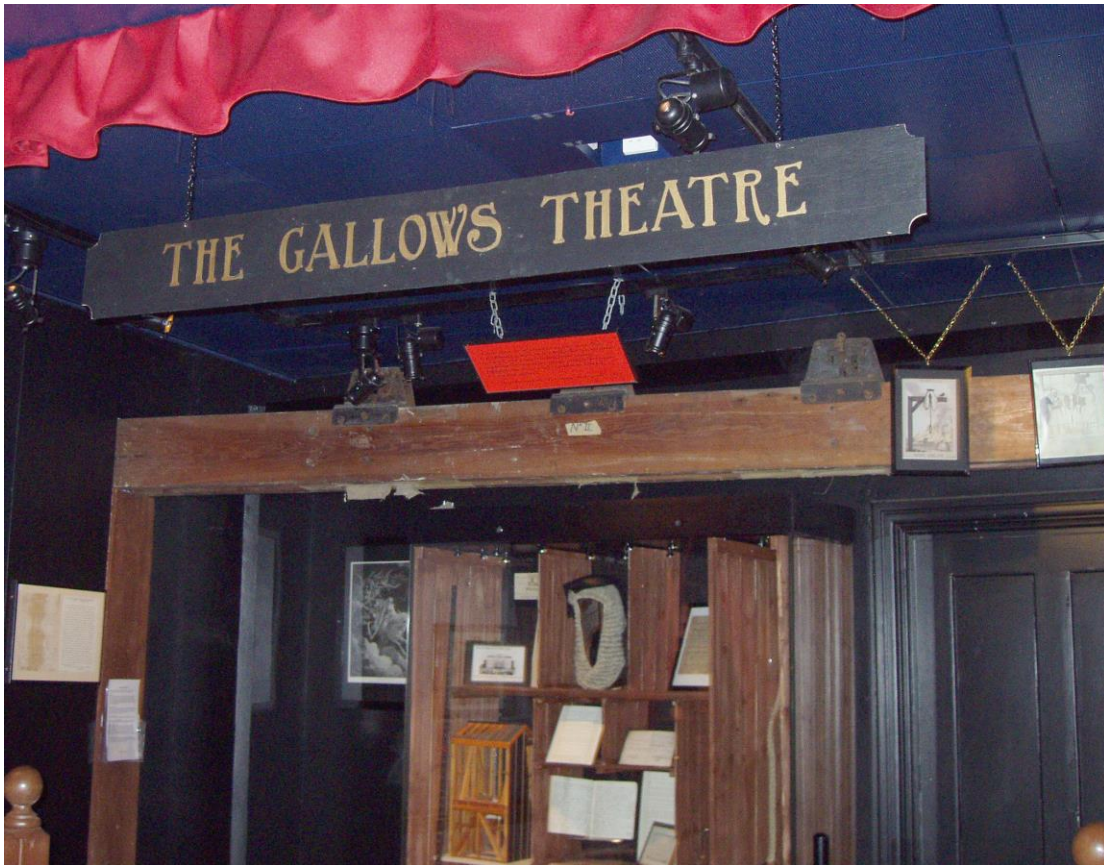
Before I set off to tour the exhibition, the three of us sat down in the cafeteria whilst I explained the purpose of the visit.

It quickly became apparent from our conversation, that we the retired governors, hold lots of information that is not recorded and is quickly being lost in the mists of time, and as Bev went on to inform me that whilst some things may be recorded in words, photographs or equipment they do not give an full insight into what they truly meant or did.

A simple example of this was when I explained the different cell cards and what each colour depicted in terms of religion. She was interested to learn about living in quarters, but not as one might think from the staffs' point of view but from the wives who lived in them.

Whilst they had photographs of redbands, she was not aware that each band for security reasons carried a photograph of the prisoner to whom it had been allocated.

Borstals are something they are particularly interested in as is discovering more details about as are such things as the Morrison hour, Dartmoor exchange schemes, Tutor Organisers', No1 diets, infamous prisoners and for those of you who are a little older than me condemned cell duties, the list go on and on.



Readers if we don't pass on to them what we know it might well be forgotten forever.

But what about the exhibition itself? My first question on that front was to ask how well attended the Galleries had become. Bev explained that despite the current recession visitor numbers had been strong with Easter being particularly busy.

Visiting school groups continued to use the many facilities on offer especially given that crime and punishment is now on the National

Curriculum. Academics used its archives as a research facility as do others who are conducting research into the law, crime, and punishment.

As for the exhibition itself, I saw lots more items on display than there was on my visit. More cells have been opened as exhibit areas, one of which had been designed by school children.

Bev and a colleague have written a book showing through numerous photographs and accompanying text prisons through the ages. Towards the end of the book, the final chapters show lots of those things we were associated with in our professional lives and no doubt, many of you will recognise some of the people depicted therein, perhaps even yourselves. The book is entitled “The History Of Prisons In Britain” and if not available in your local bookshops can be obtained through Tempus Publishing of Gloucester.



The Galleries would also be interested in receiving any suitable donations from any members to place either in the archives or for immediate display.

The Galleries Of Justice is located at The Lace Market, Nottingham. NG1 1HN Telephone 0115 952 0555

Email info@galleriesofjustice.org.uk

Website www.galleriesofjustice.org.uk

If you do decide to make contact please ensure than you make them aware that you are associated with the Prison Service or that you are a member of the RPGA.

Also remember that your committee have negotiated free entrance to the Museum for RPGA members, subject to you telephoning in advance.

Prison Service Medal

The PGA has told us that a new long service and good conduct medal was been agreed in principle and is likely to be available from next year. We expect to be able to report more fully in a future edition – there may even be some backdating but no more than a year or two.....

Annual General Meeting of the Retired Prison Governors' Association on Saturday 6th June 2009 at the Hilton Hotel Bromsgrove.

Present: D Simons Chairman
J Blakey Treasurer
G Ross Secretary/PSPC
H Brett Membership Secretary
R Duncan Letters Editor
M Roebuck Deputy Editor RGN
C Smith Social Events/ PSPC
G Smith Social Events

The Chairman welcomed all present to the AGM and Reunion.

1. **Apologies:** Bill and Mary Brister, Don and Iris Drew, Alan and Margaret Tee, Terry Weiler, Brendan O'Friel.
2. **Minutes of the AGM on the 7th June 2008.** These were accepted as a true record.
3. **Matters arising.** None.
4. **Treasurer's Report.** Jim Blakey presented his report for the period 1st January to the 31st December 2008. Our financial position remains very strong with a healthy balance of £8626.95. His report gave a detailed breakdown of our income and expenditure. The RPGA Benevolent Fund had a balance of £5493.17. This agenda item was discussed later at number 8. The Chairman paid tribute to the work of our Treasurer, and the meeting registered their thanks.
5. **Membership Report.** Harry Brett gave a detailed report on the changes in membership over the year. Our numbers had increased from 435 to 448. Any queries in respect of membership were always followed up.

6. **Social Events.** Charles Smith reported on the social weekend at the Firs Hotel Bournemouth. It was a very successful event. The standard of the rooms and catering was good. The venue for our AGM and Reunion was discussed. The general view was that Bromsgrove was geographically the most convenient for this occasion. Graham Smith who manages the arrangements expects to obtain the same price from the Hilton Hotel for next year. The general view was that the facilities were good.
7. **Retired Governors' Newsletter.** Mick Roebuck thanked all those who had contributed to the last edition of the newsletter. He had received very favourable comments from our readers on the content of that edition. Letters Editor Bob Duncan encouraged members to continue to contribute, as readers letters are always of interest.
8. **RPGA Benevolent Fund.** The Treasurer noted that our accounts showed that we are in a very strong position. There have been no calls on the fund, although we are always very ready to receive such applications. Tribute was paid to the Trustees for their work in visits to members. Alan Rawson a member of the Benevolent Fund Committee told the meeting that most of the visits were to one member.
9. **Public Services Pensioners' Council.** Gerry Ross and Charles Smith had attended the AGM of the Council in May. Over the year the Public Service Pensioners' Council had focussed on the defence of public service pensions from ill informed criticisms by some groups. The most high profile attacks came from the Liberal Democrats spokespersons. They had meetings with the Liberal Democrats, and formed the impression that they had little understanding of the central issues surrounding public service pensions. Their arguments owed more to the 'politics of envy' rather than an appreciation of the real position. They had also met the Conservative Shadow Minister, who had said that they had no plans for public service pensions. They did not regard it as a priority issue, but if they were elected they would, of course, examine it. With an election in the next 12 months this statement was no surprise. With the Retail Price Index negative for the first time, it was said that if this situation continues, there may be no pension increase in 2010. Charles Smith stressed the importance of members speaking to Liberal Democrats about the true situation of public service pensions. Harry Brett drew on his experience with the Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance. He referred to the many retired civil servants on very low pensions, and the importance of protecting their pensions.
10. **Proposed new rule entitled "Retired Members.** Jim Blakey gave a brief history of the PGA since its formation in 1987. The RPGA were invited by the PGA to examine the Rules and Constitution with a view to updating them. Jim and a small working group carried out this work. A draft of the

new rule "Retired Members" was presented to the RPGA at their Committee Meeting at the PSC on the 24th March 2009. This was considered and discussed in the context of the current rules and constitution. The committee gave their approval to this amendment to the rules and constitution of the PGA. The AGM introduced an amendment to the rule which reads: "An AGM will be held normally at a Reunion organised for members and guests ". The rule was then put to the meeting and was given unanimous approval.

11. **Election of Officers.** The present officers were willing to continue in their present posts. They are: Harry Brett, Gerry Ross, Mick Roebuck, and Graham Smith. All were returned unopposed.
12. **Draw.** Mick Roebuck, who had made the arrangements for the draw was pleased to report that it had raised the sum of £105. It had been agreed that this would be divided between two charities, which were supported by two of our members. They are: Dabaso School in Kenya, which has the involvement of Graham and Ann Lawrence, and a boy's and girl's home in Cochabamba, Bolivia, which receives the support and involvement of Gordon and Evelyn Hutchinson. The work of both charities gives a searing insight into the struggle that many young people face in trying to improve their lives in situations of extreme adversity.
13. **Any other Business.** The Chairman thanked all present for their attendance. The date of the next AGM and Reunion will be notified as soon as arrangements have been finalised.

Gerry Ross
Secretary

RETIRED PRISON GOVERNORS REUNION 2009

Held at the Hilton Hotel Bromsgrove on Saturday 6th June
2009

This was the seventh 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. who conducted the service.

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 5th June for the Reunion of 2010.

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
- Breaded Camembert Pieces.
- 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:-

- Revd Wendy Carey Chaplain and Peter Carey
- Graham Smith and Roberta Bampton.
- Roger and Rosamund Dauncey
- Roland E Adams
- Graham and Ann Lawrence.
- Margaret and Brenda Brooks.
- Martin and Mrs C E Kealy.
- Elizabeth Kealy
- John Dring
- Jim and Sheila Blakey
- Mick and Mary Roebuck
- Bob Duncan.
- Dave Simons.
- Gerry Ross.
- Harry and Carol Brett

Harry and Sylvia Brown.
Bernard and Margery Marchant.
Geoff and Grace Lister.
Charles and Kath Smith.
Ron and Sue Curtis.
Pat and Ann Lynch.
Barbara Longstaff.
Ron Hart.

Apologies
Terry Weiler
Don and Iris Drew
Allan and Margaret Tee
Brendan O'Friel
Bill and Mary Brister.

RPGA REUNION 2010

Due to the favourable comments received and suitable costs agreed, arrangements have been made to for the reunion to be held at the same venue on Saturday 5th June 2010.

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
1445	Annual General Meeting
1545	Photographs
1600	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,
21 Bowness Avenue,
Ainsdale,
Southport,
PR8 3QP

telephone - 01704 575 266

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 £110 per room, per night, based upon two sharing and £75 per room, 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.

REPORT ON WEEKEND BREAK 2009.

The event was held from Thursday 26th March to Sunday 29th march 2009. The venue was Hinton Firs Hotel, Bournemouth.

It commenced very well with a Bucks fizz reception on the Thursday evening. , Dinner was served each evening at the large round tables, which makes for plenty of good lively conversation. For those of an energetic nature there was dancing in the ballroom on Saturday evening.

During the daytime each followed their own inclination as to how to get the time over before dinner. Some made cultural visits to nearby historic edifices such as cathedrals or the excellent Russell Cotes museum in Bournemouth; some gave up their time to helping the struggling British economy by buying things in the shops and stores. Others followed the national characteristic of our Island race by undertaking the sea water voyage round Poole harbour and across to Brownsea Island, site of Baden Powells first Boy Scout Camp, where for a time one could be reminded of the days of youth, wonder what happened to my copy of Scouting for Boys? And where did I put my

woggle when we moved? It was quite obvious that some of our group were giving a lot of time considering which of the many places to visit, this was evident because they were often seen reclining in chairs in the hotel lounge deep in thought with their eyes closed.

The weekend was rounded off with an excellent Sunday lunch before departure

As most members will be aware, we have stayed on several occasions at this hotel and I think that one of the reasons for this must be that people are content with the standards of accommodation, service and food that they provide. Either that or we don't have to concern our heads in trying to navigate to somewhere else every two years and we know the way from the hotel to Bournemouth town centre without getting lost. It is also comforting to be able to find the dining room, the bar and then the way to bed without too much head scratching.

Whatever the reason it was a most enjoyable few days and good to meet each other again. Some of our regular attendees were unable to be with us and our very best wishes are sent to them.

Those who attended were.

Margaret and Brenda Brooks
Pat and Ann Lynch
John and Liz Towers
Harry and Janet Walsh
Mick and Mary Roebuck
Marylyn Parkin
Jack and Shirly Northway
John and Barbara Yates
Don and Iris Drew
Maurice and Molly Eccles
Charles and Kath Smith
Barbara Longstaff
Malcom and Ivy Brown
Keith and Sheila French

RPGA Weekend Break 2010

The RPGA weekend Break 2010 is to be held in Nottingham from Thursday 15th April to Sunday 18th April 2010.

Accommodation will be at Harts Hotel,
Standard Hill,
Park Row,
Nottingham, NG1 6GN
Telephone - 0115 988 190
www.hartsnottingham.co.uk

Harts is a 4 star, privately owned boutique hotel, built in 2002 on the former ramparts of Nottingham's medieval, castle not far from the city centre and accessible by foot from the railway station. Harts Restaurant has brought to Nottingham Nationally acclaimed cooking.

Nottingham and the surrounding area have a wide variety of places of interest to visit. Museums, Galleries, Arts centres and Shopping.

These include :-

Nottingham Castle. Once a seat of Royal Power, now a mansion houses, museum and Art Gallery.

Galleries of Justice Museum

Based at the old Court House and Goal and in use as a Prison for centuries. It houses The H M Prison Service Collection. An optional visit for the group is to be arranged with the curator of the museum.

City of Caves Exhibition

Where one can descend into a network of original Anglo Saxon tunnels and observe how the network of caves have been used for centuries by local people.

The cost per room for three night's dinner bed and breakfast is:-

£420 per Double /Twin room
Room

£300 per Single

At the time of booking a refundable deposit must be paid of:-

£ 270 per Double/twin Rooms
£225 per Single Room

This deposit is fully refundable on cancellation of no less than 48 hours notice from the date of arrival 15th April 2010.

Balance to be paid on departure.

Car parking is complementary for guests staying two nights or more.

Please note that only a limited number of places are available for this event.

Completed Booking forms with cheques made out to Harts.

To be sent to

Mr C T Smith
21 Bowness Avenue,
Ainsdale,
Southport,
PR8 3QP

Acknowledgments of bookings including directions for travel will be sent.

For any enquiries contact Charles Smith telephone 01704 575 266.

E mail - smithpr8@btinternet.com