

The Retired Prison Governors Newsletter

Founded by Arthur Williamson in 1980 - Now in its 41st year of continuous publication



Issue No 84 Spring 2021

Welcome to the RPGA Newsletter for Spring 2021, and as you will no doubt notice we start the New Year with a new face as editor.

At the Annual General Meeting of the association held online as a “Virtual Meeting” using ZOOM, in November 2020, Paul Laxton announced that he intended to “step back” from his role as editor, due to the serious ill health of his wife, Lennie. Sadly, she has been diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease, a life limiting and debilitating condition, and therefore Paul has quite rightly decided that she is his priority from now on. I realise that this is a very difficult time for them and I am sure that I speak on behalf of all our members when I send them both our very best wishes and to tell them that our thoughts and prayers are with them.



I have therefore stepped into the breach and agreed to take on the role of Editor. I am very aware of the heavy responsibility that goes with the position, especially given that all my predecessors in the role have, over the years and in their own way, stamped their unique style on the Newsletter. This is highlighted by the fact that my first edition as Editor is following on immediately after publication of the 40th Anniversary Edition, which I have to say I thought was the best issue we have ever published, packed as it was with bits and pieces from across the 40-years the Association has been in existence. Congratulations, and thanks to Paul for all his hard work on putting that edition together.

I realise that I have some very large boots to fill, and I only hope that I am up to the challenge. I should however say that I am not entirely alone in this task, as I am being very ably assisted in the Editor’s role by Roger Outram, who is providing me with input in the form of his own contributions to the content, as well as advice, moral and technical support, so thank you Roger.

I was looking back to the Newsletter of Spring 2020 (Edition 82) and could not help thinking that there can be very few people reading this now who would have thought that come the Spring 2021 Edition we would be in a position that we are just starting to emerge from a second lockdown period that lasted from just after Christmas, and that controls and limitations are still in place, and look set to be with us until well into the year.

However, the good news is that not only do we have a selection of vaccines that appear to be effective against the virus, but we also have a vaccination programme that seems to be proving to be efficient and well-organised. Who would have thought that, given the chaos and confusion that marked the first few months?

I suspect that, as by its’ very nature the RPGA membership is “of a certain age” the vast majority of our members will have received at least the first dose of vaccine, and by the time this actually goes to print the likelihood is that many of you will have received the second dose as well. The pandemic has been a strange time indeed, and I personally have been saddened to see some of the more adverse effects on the population as the disease has swept its way across the country, and most of the world. Most saddening has been to see the rise to the surface of what I call the “Me First and Me Only” culture. It has been disheartening to see how so many of the population seemed happy to subscribe to one or more of the many conspiracy theories about the disease, and choose to believe that as all the indicators were that this was an illness that impacted most on the old and vulnerable, they were immune to it, and therefore refuse to comply with the restrictions that were meant to safeguard all of us. At times it really did feel as if the younger generation were willing to sacrifice the older generation, or at least some of us, in order that they could continue to live their lives without restrictions and in any way they chose. I am afraid that it will take many years for this country to fully recover from all that has happened, both in terms of society and of course economically.

Finally I must turn to what I believe is one of the main reasons why people are members of the RPGA, and that is to be able to keep in touch with events, and in particular news of people they once knew and worked with. Sadly since the last edition was published we have lost several members who have died. This includes John Dring, whose death was announced at the beginning of February. Because of his wide-ranging roles in the

Prison Service, particularly in Training, and as an Area Manager, John will be known to, and remembered by many. An obituary to John, written by his good friend Tim Newell, is published on Page 9/12.

Other members, or people that you may have known, who have recently passed include, Roy Robson, John Lewis, Ken Alderson and John W Smith. Our thoughts are with all their families at this difficult time.

So this is my first editorial, and first edition as Editor to present to you, the membership. I do hope that you enjoy it, and please remember when reading these articles, if you think you have a better story to tell, or indeed think you are a better writer, then this is your Newsletter and the contents are in your hands. So please feel free to put pen to paper, or fingers to keyboard, write an article and send it to me. The deadline for the next edition is the beginning of September 2021, so don't be shy, start writing, you are "almost" guaranteed to be published. I can be contacted by email at graham.mumbycroft@gmail.com or by post at 15 Thirsk Drive, Lincoln, LN6 8SZ.

The death of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, The Duke Of Edinburgh was announced on Friday 9th of April. On behalf of the membership of the RPGA we send our thoughts and best wishes to Her majesty The Queen and her family.

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Please remember that this edition of the Newsletter will be available to read on the RPGA Website (www.rpga.org.uk) within a few days of publication. In addition there are currently 23 back editions of the Newsletter that have been uploaded to the website by Roger Outram, who in the Site Editor and Webmaster. Roger is working hard to try to make the website somewhere that members can go to for reference if you are looking for details on a particular article as well as and other information.

The website is still a "Work in Progress" and with this in mind Roger is more than open to any suggestions from members about content, layout and links.

You will note that on the home page we have placed links to several websites that we feel might be a useful source of information. These include links to the main Prison Governors Association website, to allow you to keep abreast of the latest developments in all the works that they do, as well as a link to the MyCSP website for those of you who may have a problem with your pension, or again simply as a means of keeping up with the latest news. Additionally there are also links to sites that provide a wealth of information to retired people including the Civil Service Pensioners Alliance (CSPA), Age UK, The Alzheimer Society and Mind and a link to the main NHS website where you can find a wealth of information across a wide range of health-related subjects and which I can personally recommend as the first place to look if you have a medical problem.

RPGA: E-MAIL REGISTER

The E-Mail register has been operating for around 13 years and has proved itself to be an effective means of rapid communication between members. It offers updates on current prison service developments and allows members to keep in touch with each other. Joining the RPGA does not automatically place you on the register. If you would like to join the register then please send an E-Mail from the address you wish to have registered to Harry Brett at h_brett@sky.com. E-Mail addresses will not be passed to third parties without permission from the person(s) registered to that specific E-Mail address. Please remember that if you change your E-Mail address you must inform Harry Brett, otherwise you will cease to receive further updates. If you have not yet registered your email with Harry I would urge you to do so as it makes communication with you so much easier, and quicker.



From The Chair.

Greetings from Meltham on the West Yorkshire Pennines which are covered in falling snow as I write. Welcome to this 84th edition of the RPGA newsletter which is edited by Graham Mumby-Croft and Roger Outram as our regular Editor Paul Laxton takes a break. Thanks to both of them for stepping in.

I was just reading my newsletter entry from the Anniversary edition last autumn and there is a picture of me with a cycle in warm sunshine down Devon way not knowing what testing times were ahead of us and they have been testing for many in our Association and local communities. We have all

learnt how to do things differently. How have you and your families managed the lockdown that impacts so much on our daily lives? Write and let us know at rpga.org.uk.

There is a difference in the air, and that difference is hope. It was a fleeting moment whilst food shopping at the weekend that I noticed a lightness in everyone's mood. Previous weeks had been heavy with tiredness, and a weary approach to a task that should carry no real emotion. But there was a tangible difference.

Caution seems to be the watch word, yet there are those who want to push yet again. It is no wonder that I fail to understand the constant back and forth between those in Government and politics, and those who advise. Too slow to lockdown! Not quick enough to open up again! Those were the prevalent comments in the media this weekend: and for those wondering I am not hurrying out to book a summer holiday! Someone reminded me this week that being a politician is not a profession – there is no training to do the job and certainly no manual on how to deal with a pandemic. I suppose I am still naive enough to believe they know best; after all we voted for them to make the decisions. But we voted for the rhetoric, for the speech maker, the personality, the party to get things done! Dependent on what you wanted doing of course! I suppose we would all have done things differently and better in the same position!

I am beginning to realise that I don't understand at all and I wonder whether that is where we all are at the moment. Watching the pandemic unfold and the world's commentary on every Government's handling of it has been fascinating. What I am certain of though, is that sense of hope that I believe we are all feeling.

Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness. – Desmond Tutu

I feel that I have come through the isolation fairly well apart from a lost season of holidays, cricket and football as well as a quiet Christmas and loss of family contact. We now have a different daily routine and have at least had excellent home cooked sensible food and long daily walks which has all contributed to a 20 pound weight loss by yours truly. How about yourselves? We have learnt the value of family and friends and to a certain extent eating out is not so important as we thought. I still have a load of clothes I do not need and can't donate the surplus as the charity shops are closed too.

The virtual AGM went ahead 10th November 2020 as planned via the now popular ZOOM application. The headlines are that we are financially sound, membership is steady and I am pleased to report that I, Ray London and Jan Thompson were re-elected to your RPGA committee. We will be doing our level best to ensure the RPGA continues to develop.

I hope that the next time I write this column we will have moved on and got a grip of what has been a horrendous and stressful time for all, keep safe and look after each other.

Graham Smith RPGA Chairman

Holloway Re-visited. (By Brian Penfold)

In my service career I worked at HM Prison Holloway on two occasions and these are my recollections of those times.

In the mid-eighties I was serving as a Trades Officer (when we had those) at Channings Wood in Devon on the only successful direct labour project that the service put in place. This project involved a high number of Trades Officers and civilian workers who, using prisoner labour, built the establishment. At the end of the project some of the TOs became spare and a link was made with Holloway to send a rolling team of STOs, TOs and civilian workers on a month's detached duty to assist with some of their more pressing work. Working at Holloway involved new skills being learnt. More than once I was 'captured' on the stairs on "free flow". I soon learnt to keep my distance.



The Works staff in those days, were called to assist if there was a barricade, as Holloway had a pair of wooden doors on each dormitory and the Works staff removed the door stops with a crowbar so that the doors could then be opened outwards. We helped install simple anti-barricade brackets to get around this. We ate three meals a day in the mess to save money so diet was not our main concern in those days. My striking memory of Holloway then was that each night everything came out of the windows, books, bedding, mattresses, cutlery and anything else not nailed down. Staff came out with blue bands and picked it all up each morning and re-issued new.

In later years I was an operational Manager E based at Wellingborough and received a phone call on a Tuesday from my old Governor, Ed Willetts who wanted me to start at Holloway on the following Monday as he had been posted there after a Home Office report. My Governor at Wellingborough was away on leave, so I was gone by the time he came back, Sorry Peter. As I had previously been an operational Head of Works Services, Ed asked me to go back to that role and work with Co-ordinator Graham Mumby-Croft at Holloway which I agreed to. The existing management team with a couple of exceptions had been moved on the previous Friday. I served three years at Holloway at that time, on permanent detached duty, two as Head of Works Services and one as Head of Security. I always carried out a full day's work and commuted between Wellingborough and Holloway each day which added over three hours if all went well. As Duty Governor on a weekend you had to deal with incidents of self-harm, fires, late receptions and normal duties that to me, all seemed to be accentuated from working in a male establishment. Duty Governor also involved an overnight stay. My first adjudication involved a prisoner crying as she was questioned and then she just ran out of the room. It was a case of adjusting to the establishment and then guiding it, and the staff, in a different direction rather than being too heavy-handed. The staff were in the main, fantastic and just needed leadership at that time.

As Head of Works Services I managed, with the brilliant support of GMC, and the existing Works staff to convert the old lock store to an external Receipt Issue and Despatch facility which allowed all deliveries to be managed before they entered the establishment This included the use of sealed electric vehicles similar to the High Security Estate (where I worked twice at Woodhill), relocating the gate lodge and keys from the first floor to the establishment entrance, converting the old mess to external male and female locker and shower rooms, installed an internal mess, converted the old external DST training room to an overnight stopover suite and Silver command suite that was also then adopted as the national standby gold suite, installed safer cells as well as anti-ligature cell windows throughout the establishment (no more stuff out of the windows). We upgraded C&R facilities and some other projects that I will have forgotten. I managed and upgraded staff training and the staff crèche in the same period. It was not bad for just two years in post. I received the Butler Trust award for my work at that time and took my wife and Ed Willetts up to Buckingham Palace for the day. Nice sandwiches and pictures with the Princess Royal who supports the service. So, my experiences of Holloway were linked but very different. Before I left, to go back to Woodhill, the Holloway site was evaluated, so that has now come to pass with its closure.

I had a great career and Holloway was a memorable part of that career.

THE DEMISE OF THE BORSTAL SYSTEM. WHY? (By John Ramwell.)

Written for the RPGA Newsletter. April, 2020.

Coincidentally I had started work on this piece before I received the manuscript of Jeremy Lodge's book on Lowdham Grange. Needless to say I found it really interesting, particularly as it reinforced my own thoughts on the rationale for the ending of the system in the early '80s which was achieved by the Criminal Justice Act 1982 that abolished the Borstal system in the UK, replacing Borstals with youth custody centres.



First a little history as gleaned with grateful thanks from Wikipedia: The Gladstone Committee (1895) first proposed the concept of the borstal, wishing to separate youths from older convicts in adult prisons. It was the task of Sir Evelyn Ruggles-Brise (1857–1935), a prison commissioner, to introduce the system, and the first such institution was established at Borstal Prison in a village called Borstal, near Rochester, Kent, England in 1902. The system was developed on a national basis and formalized in the Prevention of Crime Act 1908. The regimen in these institutions was designed to be "educational rather than punitive", but it was highly regulated, with a focus on routine, discipline and authority during the early years. Borstal institutions were originally designed to offer education, regular work and discipline, though one commentator has claimed that "more often than not they were breeding grounds for bullies and psychopaths." Initially there was much back slapping and self congratulations as resources and commitments were provided in abundance to make it all work.

Rupert Cross recorded his full honour to Paterson and his admirable appointees for their achievement with Borstals. 'Borstal was a success in the late 1930s. Well-authenticated figures show a success rate of around 60 per cent, after a three-year follow-up. At Lowdham Grange, the first open borstal, which was, in a sense, the apple of Patterson's eye, it was as high as 77 per cent.

So what has happened? Today I try and discover the rates of re-offending from the ONS. Here's what I get... Juvenile offenders had a proven re-offending rate of 39.2%. The juvenile re-offending rate decreased by 0.7 percentage points since the same quarter in the previous year. Over the years, the rate has fluctuated between 36.3% and 43.6%. However, for context, the number of offenders in the cohort has fallen by 87% since April to June 2006 creating a more volatile series. Given the recidivism rate of those discharged from the Borstals in the years leading up to 1982 it was hardly surprising. It was said that over 80% re-offended with three years of release. If Borstals were made to work; in other words prevented re-offending by more than 50 or 60% within three years, then it might have been considered money well spent. But it never happened.

Make of this information from the ONS what you will. Basically, many years ago, we in the Borstal System guessed it was about to fail if only on the grounds that the costs were high and the returns minimal. The cost of keeping a borstal boy in the late 70s was not a lot less than £100K p.a. whereas the average cost of keeping an offender in a prison was about £33K. I recall that back in the early 1960s whilst a trainee Hospital Officer at HMP Wormwood Scrubs how it dawned on me that the inmates, old and young, were almost all from what we colloquially called the 'working class.' Should there have been a young prisoner who spoke with an educated accent, who walked head erect and kept himself smart - well a smart as possible given the garb he was presented with - then he would have stuck out like a sore thumb and been hounded to death by his fellow inmates. For the first time I began to realise just how fortunate I had been to have been born into a middle class family with middle class traditions, values and attitudes. 'There but for the grace of God go I' was a mantra that resonated. A crime writer whose work I enjoy, Val McDermid, strikes me as having quite the insight to the psychology of the criminal mind. In her book, 'Out of Bounds' her heroine, DCI Karen Pirie, has just interviewed a suspect, one she paints in very dark colours. "As they waited for the lift, Jason (her Sergeant) heaved a sigh. 'What's the matter?' Karen asked. 'See guys like that. They give me the creeps. His life's burst. How do you end up like that?' 'Bad chances, worse choices.' Jason sighed again. 'I just think sometimes, they

were kids once. They ran about the park kicking a football. They had things they wanted to be. Nobody dreams about being the guy there. Nobody sets out to be like him. And we keep coming up against folk that have got themselves completely fucked up". The way I look at it, we're the lucky ones." Surely this could not be right. Of course we all realise that it is only a relatively small proportion of the total number of those from the under-class within our society at large who end up in custody; but is clear from even a quick observance of the prison population that nearly 100% come from this class of our society. The simple and obvious deduction from this observation is that there is a large part of our population who are destined to come to prison the moment they are born. Their circumstances have so many common denominators such as poor parenting, poverty and poor social conditions that was bound to make them victims. To win the lottery, to really win it big time, one needs to be born into the right place at the right time, to the right parents and to have the right sort of personality (however you decide to define this!). Now I am no left wing socialist, more of a realist, even a pragmatist, as I set to and attempted make my career within the Prison Service as productive as I could both for myself and for those I was paid to care for. Out of 36 years spent in the Prison Service as a Hospital Officer and latterly as a Deputy Governor at HMYOI Hindley near Wigan I spent over eleven employed within the Borstal System, three at Rochester Secure Borstal, Kent and then eight at Gaynes Hall Open Borstal in Cambridgeshire and finally six at Hindley before retiring. Within these three establishments we looked after young men who were less than 23 years of age. From the beginning I found the job to be satisfying in that it allowed me to believe I made a difference, albeit in only small increments. Some years ago I used to give talks to local school students on behalf of the British Exploring Society. I'd start by explaining that, in my view, one needed four ingredients to make a successful life. Viz....

Knowledge. This makes the best use of your education. This opportunity only comes for around for most of us once in a life time.

Opportunities. Seize them when you can and watch out for them coming your way. The trick, of course, is to identify the ones to go for.³

Motivation. This is tied in with your personality and your own insight. It remains so important to wake up to the 'opportunity clock' rather than 'it's another day clock.'

And fourthly? What's your answer? You tell me. There is another ingredient which, without it, makes all the other three redundant. Rarely did I get the answer and at the end of my talk I'd return to this question. Often I'd get the answer from one or more of the students as they had considered my question during my discourse. Of course it is LUCK, Lady Luck. Though many of us can cultivate luck, we all also know just how feckless it can be. Wikipedia goes on to say...As society had changed the system was then already outdated especially since the late 1960s and early 1970s, with many borstals being closed and replaced with institutions called Detention Centres and, from 1972, also with Community Service Order sentences Not so, Detention Centres were never, as far as I am aware, designed to replace Borstals but were to supplement them as an alternative form of 'treatment' known as the 'short sharp shock'. I worked in several on detached duty during my early years in the Service and found them tough but humane. In fact the lads soon got to appreciate the tough physical regime and made the most of the three months (exceptionally six months) spent in their confines. The good food, the fresh air and 'vigorous' routine gave the vast majority a measure of fitness not previously ever experienced. The trouble was, and I'll return to this problem again, they returned inevitably to their homes and culture that had led them to break the law in the first place. With no where else to go but back to their families and friends and support as proffered by their home territory, the outcome was almost definitely predetermined. When I first left the Prison Service to start my retirement some 25 years ago I volunteered some time and effort to a charity that assisted ex young offenders settle back into the community. Often the conditions of early release were that these young men had to live away from their home community in order to prevent them returning to their 'wicked ways.' All the assistance in the world was not going to provide for these guys when all they wanted was the familiarity of their own home and friends. Making them remain in a strange town, often only a bus ride away from their own home town, was tantamount to saying to them 'take that bus ride at your peril.' They would

have been much better off completing their sentence in prison. One of the major issue was one of loneliness. From being constantly surrounded by other inmates and staff they were discharged whilst fired up with great expectations only to be expected to take on the world of relationships, work, finance, mental health, etc. from such a low baseline without having the necessary support. It is no surprise to me that the failure rate within three years of release is so low. "The Criminal Justice Act 1982 officially abolished the borstal system in the UK, introducing youth custody centres instead. As society had changed the system was then already outdated especially since the late 1960s and early 1970s, with many borstals being closed and replaced with institutions called Detention Centres and, from 1972, also with Community Service Order sentences. So the first borstal opened over 100 years ago, establishing a method of dealing with troubled boys that had lasted long enough for me to have an amazing opportunity to make a small but significant difference to their lives. Some evidence for this lies in the fact that I have remained in contact with four of those I met in the Borstal system, supporting them as they raised their own families to the present day when three of the four have grand kids. Whilst on the Internet, where I'm reliably informed lies 'the sum of human knowledge' I recently came across Ron Lovelock. Here, Ron recalls how he came to spend two years in borstal in the 1960s. *"I left home at the age of 15 as I needed to work to help my three younger brothers. Dad worked away a lot and we never got on with our stepmother. So I went to London. I couldn't read or write, so I conned my way into an office job. But trying to live on £4 a week was just impossible - so I started stealing from the place. They got me to buy National Insurance stamps, which was stupid because I kept the money. Eventually I got caught and was sent to borstal - Redditch in Worcester. It was probably the best thing that happened to me in my life. Everyone in there was the same as me - bad kids, but not terrible kids. In the end they either went the wrong way because of the place, or like me they went the right way. Borstal was hard but one of the screws took an interest in me and taught me to read and write. The other boys took the mick out of me about it, but I stood up for myself and carried on doing what I wanted to do. It was no bed of roses, don't get me wrong. The first day I went in there, they stole my dinner and I had to fight back. I think I fought all the way through borstal. A game that we HAD to play was called 'murder ball' - same as rugby but no rules. To get the ball - and you had to get it - you were allowed to punch and kick your opponents. Black eyes and split lips were the norm. Every day was virtually the same. At 6am we had to get up and run two miles, and if we were two minutes over the time they set, we got no breakfast. Meals were pretty basic. Breakfast was usually porridge, bread and jam. We never got bacon and eggs, nothing like that; they just fed us to fill us up. We cleaned the dorms, then they split us up and gave us jobs to do. Mine was bricklaying. We'd stand out in the rain for hours sometimes, laying bricks. Some days we had lessons or gym classes. We never got visitors. In the evening, those who had enough points for good behaviour were allowed downstairs. We'd play table tennis, darts or cards, or talk to each other. There were stacks of books, but those weren't much good until I learned to read. We slept in small dormitories, with six to eight boys in each room. We used to get up to all sorts together; climbing out at night and hiding in the grounds. There was a lake with an old tank at the bottom, and loads of bullets and shells. We used to dive in to get the bullets out. We'd polish them up, drill a hole to knock out the stuff - we didn't realise the danger - and hang them around our necks. I got beaten up a few times by the screws for having those bullets. When I left borstal, the freedom sent me a bit potty. Having been regimented in every way - a time to eat, a time to sleep - I got rid of every clock in the house. Two years later I slipped up again, and did a short stint in prison. I knocked around with some pretty dangerous people, realised that I had a chance of being that and chose not to be. And that was it - I got my life straightened out. Today my borstal is a young offenders' prison. I went back several years ago -nothing had changed, except in my day it was much more of a boot camp. It seems stupid to have gotten rid of borstals - I think the country misses that sort of place. Kids can't be mollycoddled by the do-gooders of today; it doesn't do them any good. They have to learn discipline. And if they don't learn to fend for themselves, they've had it."* (This extract was previously published on the BBC News Website in October 2002) Ron turned his life around; others usually gave up hope. The most important sentence in Ron's account is... 'Borstal was hard but one of the screws took an interest in me and taught me to read and write.' This extract from Ron's account is crucial to

any understanding of the word, 'rehabilitation.' Unless today's young offenders are provided with the wherewithal to turn their young lives around then institutions built to house them will remain 'universities of crime' perpetuating the behaviour that brought them into conflict with society in the first place. And just where do we find the resources, the funding necessary, to allow staff to take an interest and for rehabilitation to become the key to success? Whilst our country and the rest of the world struggle with the Coronavirus and the economic collapse that will inevitably follow in its' wake, then rehabilitation programmes will inevitably suffer. It will never be a priority and all efforts will be centred on simple containment. This I understand. Even though most can appreciate the rationale for spending to invest in the future, to accomplish this, funding must be available in the first place. So if we are forced to agree that funding is the key to changing lives around; funding that may provide the luck so many of us take for granted, then it's a lost cause. End of this road. But there are usually other ways of 'killing a cat other than drown it in cream' (as my Gran used to say!) and those who make the new wave of decisions must not give up at this, albeit important yet not vital, hurdle. First we must try and understand the circumstances that most of these vulnerable youngsters come from, Where membership of the right gang can mean survival or death by knife wounds. Where it is 'dog eat dog' and the only survival tool is strength and violence. This environment is then crucially made so much worse by the presence of drugs; drugs that offer some short respite from the reality of life succumbing to poverty, drugs that lead to death or serious injury which ruins families and destroys whole communities. Okay, I know it all states the obvious but if we are, as a wider society, going to make any difference we must be that 'screw' who took an interest in Ron. Answers not only lie in adequate resources but how we spend these resources. No one is underestimating the part education must play but on its' own this is never going to be sufficient. Now we return to the three ingredients to aid success that I have previously mentioned: motivation, opportunities and, most of all, that elusive Lady Luck.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT MARCH 2021

I am sorry to report the membership totals continue to drop and we now have a total membership of only 394, so if you know any ex-governor grades who may be interested in joining, then let me have their emails or addresses and I will send them an application form.

Having said that, we welcome as new members the following: Ruth Nolan (widow of Pat), Joan Ozanne (widow of Danny), Robert Davies, Anthony Burrows and Eoin Lawrence. We are sorry to report the deaths of Danny Ozanne, Harry Fry, Paul Wailen, John Dring, Bernard Clarke, Ken Alderson, John Smith, Roy Robson and John Lewis. Our deepest condolences go out to their family and friends. We have also lost contact with Edward Owen and Colin Ward who have moved and not informed us of their new address, so if anyone knows of their current address then please advise me and I will put them back on the register. We have had one resignation, Alan Pratt. We have also had 2 members who did not pay their subscription for 2020 and have not responded to letters and emails sent to them, so we have had to remove them also.



I can be contacted by email at h_brett@sky.com or by phone 01477 549216 or 07999 874864.

Obituary: John Dring.

(By Tim Newell)

John's prison interest came from a series of accidents. Having had a difficult time at school and university he joined the RAF in 1967 but realised it was not a long-term prospect for him. He finished his degree in sociology and having married Jenny in 1969 they were looking for a house. An attraction of the service was that a house was then provided. So, he joined the Prison Service.



Prison Service College, Love Lane. In 1970 he was tutored by Al Papps and Jim Perriss. Ralph Skrine was Deputy Principal and Reg Llewellyn then in charge. John felt the course did not really equip him for working with staff and prisoners, with nothing on management skills or working with the POA.

At the end of the staff course he asked to be posted to Oxford, a local prison or borstal in the south. He was posted to **Strangeways!** Under Captain Davies, rigid in his ways but well respected by staff for his clear leadership. John got on well with him. People he worked with there included Bill Martin who was Dep, providing a good balance to the governor. Other governor grades included Mike Jenkins, and Don McColl. There were occasional incidents of brutality and in the Borstal Allocation Centre one brave officer came forward to tell of an incident as a result of which others went to court and were convicted. Other colleagues included Colin Richardson, Derek Myers, Denis Appleton and Ron Bonacorsi.

On his next move he asked for a borstal in the south and was sent to **Wellingborough** working with Joe Green and Mike Watson Jackson, John Morrison, Peter Gibbs and Tony Sykes. Wellingborough was a big borstal and John was in charge of one wing. Early on in his time at Wellingborough John had to tell his SO not to touch inmates when during an inspection he had cuffed a lad for untidiness in John's presence. He wanted his staff to know that he would not tolerate brutality. Knowing that two officers from Manchester Borstal Allocation Centre were serving sentences for having hit lads he felt he had to draw a line soon. At Wellingborough John worked with matrons, a sympathetic role in Borstals at that time. The one on his wing seemed to attract a few lads particularly in the evenings. John worked the traditional housemaster split shifts of mornings and evenings. This enabled him to look after his children including his new born daughter, Sarah, whilst Jenny obtained her PGCE which led to her significant career in teaching. John would see the Borstal boys in the evenings when he would do casework with them.

Farewell to Wellingborough and he moved on promotion as an AG1 tutor to the **Officer Training School at Leyhill**. In 1977 the family moved into a J type quarter, no central heating and no phone. There was slow service from the Works Department which was centred on the prison. The call box on the corner was much used. The OTS was a good opportunity to learn more about the prison service and being an officer. Some good POs lived nearby. John lectured and introduced a module on mental health as well as lecturing on social development, traditionally done by AGs.

An event of note was the visit of the Queen on the centenary of the Prison Service in 1978. John was part of the bodyguard for her and all went well. He described the preparation steps taken and the desecration of a Victorian orangery, the Works Department taking all the glass out as it would have been too expensive to repair! Some of the people John served with at Leyhill included Jim Webley, principal, Brian McCluckie, Steve Twinn and John May. The setting of the school was impressive in Tortworth Court. While at Leyhill, John trained as a tutor at Sunningdale. He left the OTS in 1981 after five good years.

He moved to **Leicester** as Deputy Governor and there worked with Bryan Payling whom he found well-informed and very helpful. Leicester was a small local but with a special security wing for high-risk men, many organised within the IRA hierarchy. An incident with steel lockers showed how high the security risk was with a group planning escape all the time. The reputation of the horrific incident of the Hughes escape when two

people were murdered was often a reminder of Leicester. The POA was getting militant and had gone to the gate on a few occasions. But luckily there were some good Principal Officers who countered the worst elements of the action such as refusing late escorts, which soon stopped. Industrial relations were well handled by the governor John Richardson and Bryan Payling who 'kept on talking'. John Richardson was succeeded by Bob Mole. He was physically courageous and John as his Dep worked well with him. One weekend John had an incident with a desperately aggressive man who was also self-harming and he ordered that he be put in a body-belt and insisted on the doctor coming in. John reported it to the Governor on the Monday. Bob was pleased and said "I had my doubts about you but you'll do for me!"

Richard Tilt was governor of nearby Bedford and John did deals with him over transfers. When Richard moved to HQ, he asked John to join him on the Manpower Team. He was promoted to Governor 3 and moved there in 1983. There were some excellent staff working with him, like John Cann and Mick Connolly, Alan Davies, Paddy Fitzgerald and Colin Lambert. They talked frankly to staff meetings and POA committees. In measuring the work, it was clear that many places were grossly understaffed. Dealing with the POA at national level Philip Mawer led the work with Fresh Start and the advice of PA consultants. It was a critical time for the Service.

John went on a G2 Board at the age of 39 – unusually young – he was successful and was moved to **Featherstone Prison**. The Regional Director John Sandy, who had opened Featherstone, seemed to have a soft spot for the prison which ran well. It was a complicated multi-functional industrial prison with good facilities. John lived in digs for the time there. Sean O'Neill was the Dep and John Morrison and Tom Mason, some of the AGs. The prison made cell doors and army tank parts, prison shirts and had a good woodwork workshop. He was soon fed up with being in lodgings and asked Brian Emes for a move. He offered John **Aylesbury** which pleased him but the deal was he had to do workshops for Governors from Newbold on Fresh Start before taking up command.

In 1988 John eventually had a three-day handover from Toby Newth at Aylesbury and sadly there was an escape on the last day! It was clear that poor control of scaffolding had enabled the escape to take place. Two weeks later there was a riot at the weekend and John was called in. Fortunately, the lads soon ran out of steam and went behind their doors. There was local press attention and the Regional Director, John Sandy became concerned. John told him the prison was very under-resourced and without more staff it was likely that there would be further trouble. The prison soon became better staffed and resourced. The regime became more suitable for a training environment. John introduced:

- Yoga with the Prison Phoenix Trust,
- Toyota started an apprentice workshop which led to Toyota garage employment,
- The Education Officer developed a wider programme with choice.
- The Personal Officer scheme was developed and staff had to commit to talking to inmates.
- Bryan Payling took over as Deputy. He found papers in the Deps office that showed many issues and petitions had not been dealt with over the years!
- Princess Anne visited as the Braille Workshop had won an award from the Butler Trust
- The Chaplain, Harry Potter introduced opera classes

Regime development involves complexity and a range of activities.

In 1990 John was promoted to Governor 1 and replaced John Staples at **Newbold Revel Prison Service College**. This was a big responsibility with 10 Regional training units. The fallout from Strangeways and then the Woolf Report called for much new training such as Emergency Control Room and Command Courses.

He was 6 years at the College (1990 -1996). So much was happening at the time. Parkhurst and Whitemoor, security horrors! John produced a Prison Service Training Plan, the first one ever. He visited all parts of the estate and had to have a mobile phone fitted into his car, one of the first.

When **Area Managers** became graded as **Assistant Directors** John was boarded and took over from Arthur de Frisching who luckily left Jim Gomersall in the team. John managed eleven governors such as Marjorie Boon (Woodhill), Sarah Payne (Bullington) Paul Mainwaring (Huntercombe), William Payne (Reading), Ed Willetts

(Bedford), Tim Newell (Grendon and Springhill), Mick Knight (Littlehey), Bob Perry (Gartree), Nick Pascoe at Aylesbury and Nick Brooke at Onley.

John worked under Alan Walker Operations Director South, for four years, while Al Papps was Ops Director North.

Issues of the Area included failures to agree, and financial problems of control. The incoming Labour government transformed young offender processes to good effect.

John was Gold commander during a sensitive time in 1999 and was contacted to say that Jenny his wife had had a seizure. He could not leave his post and then realised that he would have to leave the job. He retired in June 2000.

Jenny was seizure-free for some time in which they had some good holidays, and visited Australia with family. There were many periods of remission but sadly Jenny died in 2013, after a 17-year diagnosis.

In retirement John was very busy with prison-related enterprises. John was involved with mentoring senior governors in 2011, and he had been a trustee of the Prison Phoenix Trust since 2001 and chair of Kids VIP, which he was able to hand over to Mitch Egan. He was also working with Assessment Centres for Police, Fire Service and with the Prison Service.

John had prostate cancer in 2001, and did well through the treatment. He has had many sporting interests including tennis (through Midori his second wife). In 2010 Simon was doing the Thame Triathlon - 16 lengths, 12-mile bike ride and 5km run and he gave John an entry for the next year as a Christmas present, which John completed.

In 2017 he was putting up curtains at home and found he could not raise his arms. He was tested and after some time diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease. The shock and stress were massive, he said he went cold. There are some 5000 people affected at present in the country and many die within 4 to 5 years. The deterioration can be slow but is remorseless. However, he decided that nobody likes a moaner so had taken the conscious decision each day to do what he **could** do that day. He took control of his diagnosis.

John played bridge four days a week, he watched opera every night and visited Bayreuth for a memorable occasion. He was a member of the MND Association, which met up regularly to share experience and discuss research and equipment. He had been helped by his doctor and by NHS Continuing Health Care.

John continued to the end to be interested in prison matters, in news of colleagues and current issues. A friend to many, much missed.

John Dring-A personal recollection.

I was lucky enough to be able to serve with John Dring as his Area Works Co-ordinator, when he was the Area Manager, for what was at that time the Central Area. I was a newly-promoted Governor 3 and fresh into the position of Works Co-ordinator, which was itself a new position created specifically to work alongside the new Area Manager structure. So we were all finding our feet, and working out how these new positions would work and our place in the overall structure. This was a particularly sensitive situation as my actual line management sat within Construction Services, and yet I worked exclusively within John's area, and therefore needed to work closely with him.

I always recall that John went out of his way to ensure that he always had time to speak with me, and to provide valuable advice and support, as I learned the secrets of "political management" particularly when dealing with some very senior governors, and on occasions even more senior headquarters staff. I remember his patience when inevitably I made some early mistakes, and he needed to take remedial action.

The main thing that will always stay with me about John was that he really was a true gentleman. He was always impeccably dressed, softly spoken and always calm. As invariably happens in the Prison Service change comes along and working relationships are broken, and John went on to his retirement, and I moved on to another Area when the Central Area ceased to exist, as part of a restructuring. However years later John and I

would meet again through our connection with the RPGA and it was a sign of him as a person that he remembered exactly who I was, and from then on he would always go out of his way to have a word, if we were in the same location for an event. I was so sorry to hear of his diagnosis with MND and whilst inevitable, his death was still a shock. I am sorry to have been unable to attend his funeral but I wish him Eternal Peace.

Graham Mumby-Croft

The impact of Covid-19

There are not many things that could impact on our members all equally and with such terrible consequences as the Covid-19 virus, and thank goodness we are getting a grip of it and returning to some control of our lives. It has been particularly bad for our age group, and our vulnerability as senior folk, who are trying to enjoy retirement after long service to the Crown. Additionally it has prevented us from planning our future activities through doubt and uncertainty.

I hope you have kept safe, had the first jab and can see the oncoming light at the end of the preverbal tunnel. Things are improving as I write, and when we look back I think we will all have learnt something about ourselves, and our resilience to the threats we definitely faced. Thank goodness we didn't run out of toilet rolls, pasta and tinned tomatoes, or did you?

So I ask you how have you dealt with the last 12 months or so? Did something good come out of it that you can use for the future? I would like you to write and share a few lines on your feelings and the impact Covid-19 has had on you and your families and send to our letters editor Roger Outram at roger@rsoutram.co.uk for the next newsletter. We will all learn from each other.



Graham Smith RPGA Chairman

Requests For Information.

We often receive requests from ex-Governors, both members and non-members, asking us to circulate the membership, as they are looking for information about people that they may have known, and lost contact with, or an event from the past that they are interested in gaining more information about. We have received such a request from Peter Atkinson who is looking for help from members in researching a piece of work he is doing on a past event at Gloucester Prison. Peter has asked for the piece below to be placed in the Newsletter, which I am happy to do.

Whenever we receive these requests we will also circulate them to all the members on the email register as this provides the quickest and most efficient method of getting information out to members. So remember, if you have an email address and would like to be informed of requests for information, and you are not registered on the email register, contact Harry Brett at h_brett@sky.com with your details and he will add you to his list.

Gloucester Prison April 1986 - POA Lock-out.

I would like to hear from anybody who remembers playing any role in the incident at Gloucester prison, when a group of Governor Grades locked out POA uniformed staff and ran the jail for 10 days. Receiving any anecdotes from either Governors or POA members would be welcome by way of compiling a narrative on this highly significant event in Industrial Relations history. It would be doubly helpful if anybody knew of the current whereabouts of the then Governor Nick Wall.

Peter Atkinson (former governor rtd.) castlestreet@talktalk.net

THE DEFINITIVE PRISON SERVICE MEMOIR...

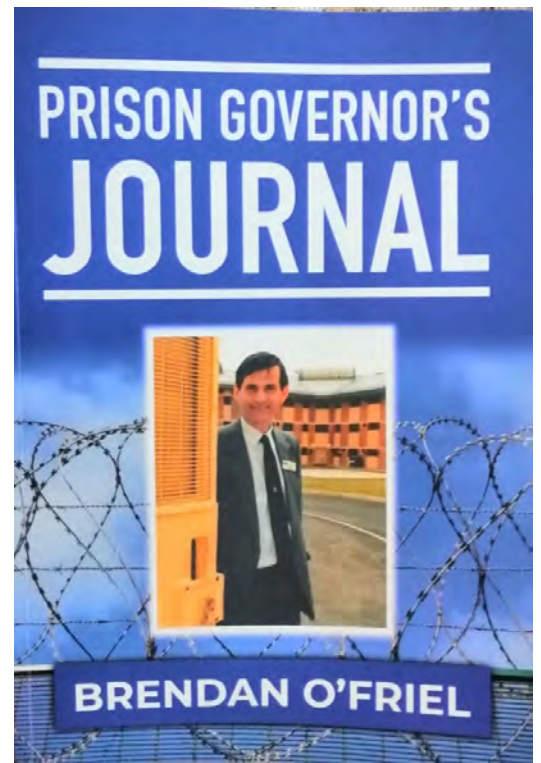
Book Review by Paul Laxton.

Perhaps the most surprising thing about Brendan O'Friel's memoirs is the length of time it has taken for him to have them published, given that he retired as long ago as 1996. Indeed some of those who are now retired Governors will have joined and retired from the prison service in between the Strangeways riot of 1990, and the publication of Mr O'Friel's book, 'Prison Governor's Journal.' It is Brendan O'Friel's misfortune among the wider public to be remembered as the man whose prison was reduced to rubble in April 1990, in a riot that commenced on All Fools Day, and dragged out for 25 days. For those of us who were in the service at the time, whether you knew him or not, the memory is rather different. The man we remember was a leader with strong moral purpose derived from his staunch Catholic faith, a man regarded as first among equals by his peers, a man whose aura alone commanded silence when he entered a room.

The Prison Governor's Association of which Mr O'Friel was a founding father and its national leader for five years, occasionally awards at its Annual Conference an honour known as the 'O'Friel Phoenix,' to the member or members who have been sorely tried by personal and professional adversity in the past year. It is well named as Brendan O'Friel found himself at the centre of a media firestorm, as well as the one consuming his prison. Yet he emerged with his dignity intact and his reputation heightened. The true villains of the piece, politicians and senior civil servants, would get their comeuppance when the Woolf Enquiry report was published the following year. Readers who do not have a ready acquaintance with those 25 days in April, may be astonished to learn that the then Director General of the Prison Service, Christopher Train, claimed in an interview that Brendan O'Friel had called off a planned attempt to retake the prison on the second day of the riot, when the truth was that he was overruled over the telephone by the Deputy Director General, Brian Emes, in a conversation that took place when Mr Train was in the same room as his Deputy. Chris Train is long dead and therefore cannot speak for himself, but it is inconceivable that he was not aware of his Deputy's order. Almost as baffling is the fact that emerged later that ministers were not aware of who really made the decision to abort the use of force.

In describing the Strangeways affair, the reader gets a true flavour of the author. Most writers readily deploy either the bludgeon or the sabre when seeking to eviscerate a historic adversary. Mr O'Friel has a very different style, largely letting facts speak for themselves, sparing in his commentary, but unsparing in laying the blame where it belongs. As a co-religionist of the author (in my case a lapsed one), I was brought up never to call anyone a liar. I suspect it was the same for Mr O'Friel, who never actually uses the word, but leads you to an inescapable conclusion. I could say much more about senior civil servants from my own time on the NEC of the Prison Governors Association, but it would not be proper to associate Mr O'Friel, however indirectly, with my views and experiences after his retirement.

The Prison Service is sometimes referred to as the 'fourth emergency service,' and is certainly viewed as the Cinderella service by those who work in it. I think I can safely associate Brendan O'Friel with that view. There are a number of themes that run through the book, but it is clear to me that Prison Overcrowding, and its baleful consequences, is the overriding theme. You would not put bunk beds in a hospital ward, you would not expect patients to eat their meal in a toilet, yet politicians of all stripes not only tolerate these conditions but actively encourage the courts with their rhetoric to further overcrowd already overcrowded local prisons. It is as though the Poor Law, (and most prisoners are poor) and more pertinently its principle of 'less eligibility,' is alive and



well in our prison system, rooted like Japanese Knotweed. For Brendan O'Friel overcrowding is a moral issue, because it attacks the moral fabric of the institution itself, degrading staff and prisoners alike. The reader will swiftly draw the conclusion that the main villain is Michael Howard, Home Secretary for the last three years of the author's career, who swiftly reversed the positive momentum generated by his predecessor but one, Kenneth Baker, that followed the publication of the Wolf report in 1991. Under Michael Howard the prison population doubled, and has remained between 85,000 and 90,000 ever since. No Home Secretary, since 2007 Justice Secretary, dares to seriously challenge the Howard mantra that 'Prison Works,' for fear of being jumped all over by the populist press and perhaps forfeiting the next General Election. Sadly there are no votes in prison reform. At the beginning of the book, Mr O'Friel quotes Winston Churchill; 'The mood and temper of the public in regard to the treatment of crime and criminals is one of the most unfailing tests of the civilisation of any country.' Chapter 14 describes in detail how the country fails that test.

Space does not permit me to comment at length on the other themes of the book. However, the poor industrial relations between the service and the Prison Officers Association are laid bare. I am of the view that an employer gets the trade unions it deserves, but accept that this does not help a hard pressed Governor trying to innovate and improve conditions for prisoners when the main staff association has a very different focus; preserving their earnings by ensuring large amounts of guaranteed overtime regardless of work actually done. The buying out of overtime and premium payments may have improved the health of staff, but it did nothing for their wealth, as successive administrations forced down starting pay. As for privatisation it simply transferred wealth from the workforce to shareholders. Mr O'Friel is excoriating about the treatment of prison officers over the period of his career, not just the absence of proper professional remuneration, but more particularly with regard to the inadequacies of ongoing training and development. In more recent times the Prison Service brought in new terms and conditions that capped the top rate of pay at 5-6k less than those fortunate enough to have joined before 2013. That is after my time, never mind Brendan O'Friel's, and he doesn't need me to point out to him that nothing has changed. The reader may also note that Mr O'Friel is very clear about that which can be blamed on ministers, and that which can be blamed on officials. He is very clear that it is civil servants who are to blame for recurring staffing crises and recruitment failings.

So where does this book stand in the not very well populated pantheon of prison service memoirs? Perhaps surprisingly to some, two of the very best prison service memoirs have been written by former prison officers, Robert Douglas, whose service was in the 60's and 70's, and Neil Samworth, whose service was in the 21st Century. Very different eras and very different books. The Governor's perspective is very different on another level, and the hearing of a voice of great authority and unimpeachable moral integrity is long overdue. Brendan O'Friel has given us a fascinating history of the service over more than three decades through the prism of his own career. Although there is some more demanding reading for those unfamiliar with Prison Service bureaucracy, the book is accessible for the general reader, as well as essential for criminal justice professionals, on whose bookshelves it should have pride of place. It should also be essential reading for MPs, Treasure this volume, books of this quality are a rare breed.

PAUL LAXTON

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Another Request For Information.

Occasionally we also receive requests from outside the membership, usually from academics or media outlets researching a particular topic. Most of these requests come via the PGA Office, as this is usually the first point of reference when someone is attempting to reach out to retired Prison Governors.

We are always happy to pass these on to the membership as there is no doubt that there is a wealth of knowledge and information out there that these organisations simply need and introduction to enable them to plug into. From the responses that we get it is also something that you appreciate and enjoy, after all, don't we all have a head full of stuff from our days in The Service that we simply love to share with anyone who will listen, or is that only me?

With this in mind we have received this request for information from Dr Eleanor March of The University of Birmingham seeking information about working in Victorian prison establishments. If you feel that you may be able to help Dr March and her team with this work then please make contact with her directly, her contact details are shown in the piece below.

I am working on a project at the Universities of Birmingham and Bath, researching the history and operation of Victorian-era prison buildings in England and Wales.

As part of this project, we would like to speak to retired prison staff about what it was like to work in these historic buildings. We will also be speaking to current prison staff, once Covid-19 restrictions are hopefully relaxed.

We are very keen to speak to retired prison governors who have worked in Victorian-era prisons. I would therefore be very grateful if you could circulate details of the project via your mailing list and newsletter. I have attached a brief article about the project.

If you have any questions, or need more information, please let me know. Thank you in advance for your help.

Kind regards,

Dr Eleanor March

Research Fellow in Interdisciplinary Prison Research

University of Birmingham

School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES)

College of Life and Environmental Sciences

Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT, UK

What was it like to work in Victorian-era prison buildings?

Researchers at the Universities of Birmingham and Bath are researching how Victorian-era prison buildings have survived into the present day, and the ways in which the buildings have been adapted over time.

As part of this project, they are interested in hearing about what it was like to work in these buildings in the past. They would like to speak to **former** prison staff with experience of working in these buildings in England and Wales, including retired Prison Governors.

Interviews would last around one hour and would be carried out via telephone or online video call (e.g. What's App, Zoom, Skype or whatever suits). Participation is entirely voluntary and all participant responses are confidential and anonymous.

For more information, please visit the project website at: www.victorian-prisons.com

If you are interested in taking part, please email the project team at victorian.prisons@contacts.bham.ac.uk

From The Treasurer.

As you can imagine the past year has been a very quiet one with regard to activity for the RPGA, although as Treasurer I still have the task of checking the bank accounts to reconcile the standing order payments coming in to cover subscriptions. This task has not changed with the pandemic, as the membership remains reasonably stable and so there are still the best part of 390 separate bank transactions to check and to log on the spreadsheet that I use to track and record payments by individual members. Based on this information, every year Harry and I compare our lists to find where there are any disparities. We do this to ensure that our lists match each other's as closely as possible given the fact that Harry carries the names of people as members who do not pay a subscription, usually because they are the widow/widower of a member who has died. However each year I will receive at least one payment from someone I am not aware of, and conversely I will also not receive payment from someone who is, or was, a member and from whom I was expecting payment. This can occur if a member dies and Harry is not made aware of this, or it can be, and often is, that someone may have changed banks and forgotten to change their Standing Order. We do of course also get members who, for whatever reason, decide to cancel their membership and not inform us.



So at the end of the 2020 financial year I did a full reconciliation of the payments received and provided Harry with a list of names of those people that I had not received a payment from either in 2019 or 2020. The reason for the 2-years is that Harry and I wait until 2 consecutive years of non-payment of subscriptions has passed before we take the step of removing anyone from the membership list, unless of course we have been informed of their death, or resignation. Once I have done this Harry will make every effort to make contact, and it is only if he does not receive a response that we then look to remove that person from the membership list. Sadly Harry received several responses confirming that the person in question had indeed died, and we had not previously been informed. Unfortunately we have one or two members who seem to have simply disappeared off the face of the earth and we receive no response from them, and surprisingly no feedback from anyone who may have known them as to where they are now. There is very little we can do in this situation, and after the 2-year wait, we remove them from membership. Interestingly, although they do not respond to correspondence or pay their subscription, the Newsletter we send is not returned as "unknown".

Another purpose for my checking the subscription is that I very occasionally get a payment twice. Often this is because someone has changed banks, or accounts, and set up a new standing order, and failed to cancel the old one, I then receive payment twice. There were three of these this year, two of which were sorted out very quickly by email and the third one, (to which I had to write as we had no email address), has not responded, so this investigation continues.

In a similar vein, you may recall that some time ago I wrote about the old Lloyds account that had been set up many years ago, and all but abandoned when the account with Barclays was opened, and became the primary account for the Association. At the end of 2019 the Lloyds account was closed down, on the basis that if any of the eleven members who were still paying through this account were still alive, and wished to continue their membership, they would make contact to ask why their payments had been stopped. From the list of eleven members paying into that account I was contacted by only one person, and I am hopeful of being able to sort this one out in the near future. From the remaining ten, nothing was heard.

The accounts for 2020 have now gone off for audit and I will look to make a full report to the AGM in October, and of course publish the figures in the Autumn 21 Newsletter. However the headlines are that at the moment the finances are very healthy, despite the fact that the 40th Edition of the Newsletter cost almost twice as much as a "normal edition" at £2390. However it was a cracking read, and well worth the money.

Committee and running expenses have been almost zero this year as all meetings are being held by Zoom, including the AGM.

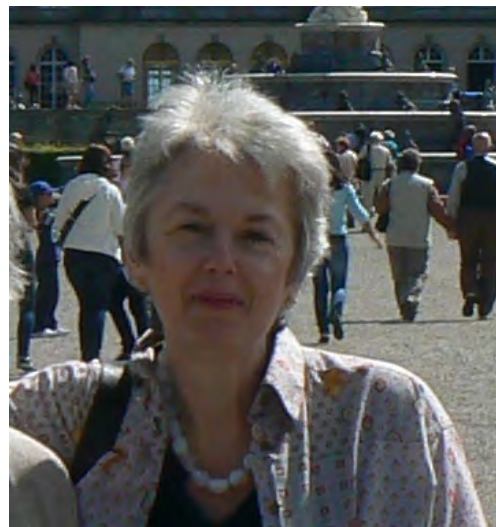
The main financial event in the year was that the Benevolent Fund was handed back to the PGA. This money had been passed to the RPGA several years ago when Paddy Scriven was the PGA Treasurer and from that time it had effectively sat in the bank, doing nothing. The PGA treasurer agreed to take responsibility for this back under the wing of the PGA, with the safeguard that should a member of the RPGA ever find themselves in the position of needing help, they can apply to the fund in the same way as before.

As always, if you have any questions feel free to contact me: my details are in the editorial.

Graham Mumby-Croft-Treasurer.

On Things Unknown: By Jenny Adams Young

Like many of you reading this publication, I have relatives & ancestors who have taken part in past wars & conflicts, many of whom, if they survived, did not speak of their experiences thereafter, either through modesty, because it was too painful to resurrect, or because they wished to bury the trauma they & their compatriots endured. While the majority of these were men, it is important to remember there were women—ambulance drivers, nurses, intelligence workers for example—also involved, all of whom, in their own particular way, risked their lives for their fellow men & women.



My late father was one of those, who volunteered for the Second World War & was sent to India & Burma to face the Japanese. I did not know much of what happened to him, apart from the little he told me. He was a Doctor & so was a Medical Officer assigned to an army unit & given the rank of Captain. As a medical professional he did not carry a gun. He once told me of walking through the jungle with his helper (interestingly a man who reputedly was half Indian & half Italian) he had been given to assist him in his work, when a tiger walked across their path only a few feet away from them. I asked if he was frightened (as I would have been) & he said no, not at all, the tiger was not interested in them & he had never seen such a beautiful creature in all his life before. I also knew that he had been hospitalised, had had malaria, beriberi & dysentery, & when he finally returned to the UK, at five feet eleven inches tall he weighed five stones & ten pounds. I also knew he was fortunate not to have been taken prisoner, but that he had been involved in some operational conflicts, as he spoke of being left in charge of a Unit when his Commanding Officer was injured, & his struggle to get the men to eat (a continuous diet of rice & bully beef is not ideal in such a situation). But that is all I knew, along with the fact that he did not send for his medals when the war ended.

It was therefore a great surprise to me to be contacted a few weeks ago by a man who wrote a book in the year 2000, which he is now updating for re-publication. Although he would not class himself as such, it quickly became clear to me that he is an expert of considerable renown on the Burma Campaign, & in particular on the defensive action & battles on the Imphal Plain. He told me that that the Officer-in-Charge of each Unit was required to keep a War Diary, similar to the Governor's Diary in a prison, to record daily events of note. He had been doing further research & had found an account relating to my late father in the National Archives at Kew. It transpires that he was involved in the defence of Lion Box in April 1944, which was a pivotal moment in the fighting & the war as a whole. Specifically he was recorded in an act of extreme bravery when he crawled under enemy fire into a ditch to tend to the wounded men, who were lying amongst those who were already dead, & some of whose lives he was consequently able to save. To do so he had clearly risked his own life.

My late father was a quiet, reserved & intelligent man, who hid his light under a bushel. I never knew this about him, & I doubt if my mother did either. This information was an emotional revelation for me, about a man who did not have an easy life before the Second World War & certainly did not afterwards. It made me pause, yet again, to ponder, how many other small & hidden acts of courage by so many unknown, unsung & unnumbered men & women went on to change the lives not only of the individuals involved, but of future generations they would never meet.

As Churchill wrote, 'Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities because it has been said it is the quality which guarantees all others'.

Letters Page:

I am pleased to report that once again I have a considerable tome from my good friend Bob Duncan which I reproduce below. I also delighted to have received the very first letter sent directly to me from John Berry, and include a letter from John Ramwell sent to Paul Laxton as editor.



As an aside Bob Duncan has written a book which I had the privilege of proof reading and preparing for publication which is now completed. It is essentially an autobiography intended for his grandchildren, but it contains a great deal of information and anecdote of Bob's journey through the prison service which I found extremely interesting. Bob has given his permission for us to publish the relevant parts of book which we will hopefully serialise within the Newsletter over the next few issues.

As ever please take time to write something that will be of interest to all your retired friends and colleagues and send them to me. Nice short chatty letters will be published in this section of the newsletter longer with more specific content will be considered for a separate entry in the Newsletter. The address to use is roger@rsoutram.co.uk or **Roger Outram, 12 Grove Park, Magazine Lane, Wisbech, PE13 1LF.**

Letters:

Hi Roger,

It's been a few editions since I made any contributions and now the feelings of guilt are back. Not that I have much of value to say, but I do enjoy reading what others have contributed and without individuals sending in articles the Newsletter might be somewhat slimmer.

It has certainly been an interesting 6 months with Covid lockdown and totally new ways of working. I have not been in court for 5 months and only now are we starting to return, but that may soon change as the virus is starting to surge again. Visiting HMP Leicester as an IMB member has been interesting. The prison is doing really well but even then, we have lost a prisoner to Covid and several staff members have been very seriously ill.

However, the prisoners are coping well with the regime even though it is very restricted. The colder weather might cause some problems as exercise may be curtailed. Visits are by iPad although we are just about to start social visits again - very restricted but at least they will be face-to-face with social distancing to reduce any chance of infection.

The work I do chairing mental health act panels has all gone online via Microsoft teams, although in early September we did manage one face-to-face hearing before virus levels rose and we had to go back to online only. Patients seem to be coping with the change OK although for some the use of masks is causing them distress. If anything, this has been a very busy time and I am often part of 6-8 MH panels per week. Now that we are not driving to the hospitals to hold the panels it is amazing how much more you can get done at home. A panel in Nottingham would often take the best part of 4-5 hours with traffic and the actual hearing. Now it is into the study, light up the computer. log on to Microsoft teams and go.

I was sad to see that Paul Dixon and Mel Constantine had passed away. They were both from my Assistant Governor year (33 AG's) and Mel and I joined together at Manchester prison in 1976. I remember working with Paul at Love Lane in the Training planning unit - the old wooden huts by the side of the main college building. Bill Rose-Quirie was the Head of Works Chief Officer II when I joined the Service at HM Borstal



Feltham in 1976 and he went on to have a long a distinguished career. I am still in contact with Alison who I first met at Love Lane when she was a trainer and working on her PhD in prison management. Judith Mathews was also a colleague at Training Services. It was good to see that John Dring was still cheerful despite his illness. Sadly, since I started this letter I have received an email from Harry that John had passed away. I worked with him at Newbold Revel when he was the Head of College and then he was my Area Manager when I moved to Gartree.

Having now been retired 13.5 years I am working towards the same ideas that John Powles has - for me 31 years with HMPS and now I am looking forward to the same number of pensionable years, so 17.5 to go.

I enjoyed the article about Lowdham Grange and emailed the author to remind him that David Walmsley reprised that walk at the 50th anniversary in 1980 leading a group of Feltham Borstal boys back along the same route. I remember visiting Lowdham because we used to send boys from Glen Parva there when we re-categorised them as being suitable to move from a closed to open borstal. I still have the wooden magazine rack I bought from Lowdham on one of my visits.

Next year I complete my time as a member of the East Midlands Veterans and Pensions Advisory Committee. I joined when my son, a Captain with the Royal Irish Regiment was seriously injured after serving in Afghanistan and it has been great to see the gradual improvements being made for Veterans. My only concern is that as we go forward Governments may forget the sacrifices made by so many Veterans and reduce the level and up-rating of benefits payable to them.

I will also be retiring from the Magistracy having reached, in March 2021 the grand old age of 70. Strange that you can sit on a jury until you are 75 but not stay as a Magistrate. There is a suggestion that the age may move to 72 but that will probably not be decided until after I retire. Still, it has been interesting to have worked as a Prison Governor, Magistrate and IMB member, Mental Health Act associate hospital manager, as well as working part-time for 10 years after I left HMPS as an Assistant Director with a physiotherapy company. A somewhat interesting and varied career. I will still continue with the mental health act work into the future: it is interesting, varied and I enjoy it and the pay, such as it is, gives me some additional funding (after the Revenue and Customs have had their additional share) to pursue my hobbies.

I have been able to add a further volume on prisons to my growing collection. This is the diary of a prison governor - James Newham who was Governor of Maidstone prison - and it contains some fascinating reflections upon prison life and the oversight of the Prison Commission on his management of the prison. It also contains a passing reflection on the hanging of John Lee at Exeter prison in Feb 1885, (the man they could not hang), who, after 3 attempts, had his sentence commuted to life imprisonment. The trap door used to be in the museum at Newbold Revel before it was all moved to the Galleries of Justice in Nottingham.

I have been compiling his letter over the last few months and now we are back into what I suspect will be a long lockdown given this new variant of Covid 19. Still, could be worse. Have a peaceful and obviously quiet Christmas and hopefully 2021 will allow us to have more freedom of travel in a safer, virus-controlled society.

Regards John

John Berry OBE, JP

From John Ramwell,
Member R P G A.
Westhoughton.

RETIREMENT

Thanks for the 40th Anniversary Edition of our Newsletter. I was just thinking...could we not refer to it as a magazine?

Anyway, I can feel the urge to write for the Newsletter on what is, at least, a relevant subject: retirement.

Realising that several of the winning Irish Six Nations team in yesterday's game v Italy weren't even born when I retired in the late 20th Century made me think that if I've anything to say, I'd better get on with it!

Not that I'm claiming to hold any record. My father retired aged 55 as did I. My retirement date came as part of my conditions of service as did my Dad's, earned by spending many years working in West Africa. For each year thus employed he was entitled to three months of his retirement, normally due at 65. I remember how surprised his employer (Unilever) was at him taking retirement so early. Apparently it was usual to perhaps leave a year early; but ten...!

"A man is as rich as the fewness of his wants," was his guiding force. He died aged 85 having being able to indulge in his passion for fly fishing and chrysanthemum cultivation.

We have, my generation has, been extremely fortunate. In fact my wife Jenny, and I have been more fortunate than we could have ever imagined.

On retiring I managed to launch a magazine on ocean kayaking for which I held the post of editor for a few years; before we started a business based on the British Country & Western Music scene; before buying a second home in Newfoundland, Canada before the invidious pandemic hit by which time, quite frankly, I was ready for lockdown. We've been so lucky with our ups and downs in that neither were that extreme and so remained manageable.

Not so those still climbing the ladder of work, of rearing a family whilst preparing financially for retirement. Though we, my generation, started from a low base following the Second World War (I can remember food rationing) the future kept showing promises, most of which were kept.

Just before Covid19 struck the Governor of the establishment I retired from back in '97 kindly acceded to my request for a chat. To say it was illuminating would be a gross understatement. Not once did he claim to be a victim of bad luck. 'It is what it is and we've all to make the best of what we have' was the definitive tone as he described how, soon after his arrival he made it clear that, if nothing else, he wanted a clean prison.

Fully aware of difficult issues such as prisoner welfare, reducing budgets, staff morale and pressure from 'above' which included his own masters as well as politicians and the media, he set about getting his staff on side and used his aim of a cleaner prison as his method for achieving this. It had worked. One gets a sense about any establishment after only a short while. My senses told me he was successful. I recently heard he had been transferred to Liverpool. This has to be their gain and hopefully not a loss to his previous establishment.

What came across to me was the clear differences from 'my days' to the present time, seemingly mostly led by less and less available resources.

From experiencing so much financial waste during my early years to the imposition of greater accountability in my latter we were never that short. Once the Area Manager had been convinced we would make the best appropriate use of funds we usually got what we'd asked for.

But then came the 2008 crash. My own experience was limited to noting our local grass verges were no longer kept trimmed. The impact on public services was massive and we all know the results. I used to think, and still do, that climbing up a ladder is a darn sight easier than coming down. Just to develop this analogy a little further... how about climbing down blindfolded whilst carrying a bucket of water in each hand!

Try this whilst hoping you can make it to 'Terra Firma' in one piece rather than hurtling down in free fall as you're sodden wet through from the contents of the buckets.

Am earnestly hoping that the future returns with all, if not most, of the promises it held for us... and soon.

John J Ramwell.

Westthoughton, Bolton, BL5 2SL

YOUR CORRESPONDENCE from Bob Duncan

This has not been the best of years for any of us, more colleagues have left us, and more are not in good health. On the other hand we ought to give a thought for colleagues still serving. I am still in touch with Elmley Prison and can state for a fact the conditions that they are currently working under are more demanding and daunting than anything we faced. They are very much in the front line as 'carers' but get very little credit for their devotion.

In fact when Kent, and in particular the district of Swale (which includes Medway and the Isle of Sheppey) had a sudden rise in the number of confirmed virus cases and was very much in the news, some local councillors tried to claim that it was all because of the three prisons in the area. There were no facts to support this claim. I felt strongly it was an unnecessary slur on the prison service.

I do not understand Facebook, but many retired colleagues use it and I seem to be a recipient. It is useful and interesting; firstly, it informs me that they are still drawing their pension and secondly I am amazed at the quantity and quality of the photos they share. More importantly I came across this picture. All praise to the Butler Trust for recognising the importance of the work that prison staff undertake and for doing something tangible to show their support.



One fascinating email was from Max Morrison, only it was meant for his son whose Christian name must be Duncan, but the computer had sent it to me.

Oh dear, senility settling in, it is happening to too many of us. Do not worry; I appreciate every contribution however it comes.

Phil Wheatley is looking well, travels a lot and is a keen photographer, as is Alan Scott and Luke Sergeant who both look remarkably fit and happy. Luke is a keen and successful gardener. His garden abounds with colour. He would normally open it up to the public to raise money for charity. The dreadful pandemic prevented that last year and probably this one also.

Always pleased to hear news of my dear friends John and Jean Childs, I cannot believe we have now known each other for coming up to 60 years and John must be near to being our oldest member. His handwriting gets a little more difficult to read each year, but his mind remains as clear as ever. As John states, they fall into the 'Extremely Vulnerable Group' in respect of the virus, and are weaker these days due to age, but they have kept mentally strong. As a number of their children work and live abroad it has been a sad year in that they have been unable to visit. The exception has been their daughter who lives in Southampton who has tried to visit more. They have several grandsons and they have kept in touch via 'face time meetings.'

Another dear friend also originally from our Dover days, Ron and Sue Curtis are both well but sum up the year as 'bizarre' and outline very vividly how the virus has impacted on the frail and elderly. Sue's mother, although suffering from dementia, was with some support managing at home on her own. As her condition deteriorated the family were sharing travelling to be with her in Dover weekly. This became increasingly difficult, and place was found for her in a care home. 'She is receiving good care but our only regular communication with her is via What's App which she does not always understand. Visiting is limited to one person and then in Covid-restricted conditions. The normal activities and stimulation for residents are seriously curtailed. It is far from an ideal time to be in a care home. Many of us because of our age have had to face this issue re someone in their family. I felt Ron and Sue had spelt it out so clearly.

Sadly, as I type this, I attended and participated in the Funeral of Paul Wailen yesterday (15 Jan 2021). He had died on Christmas Day at home in his flat in Rotherhithe being looked after by his partner. This is my third funeral with restricted numbers and no singing; there were less than the 30 allowed, as a few could not make it at last minute, including his sister-in-law who fell down the stairs the previous day and was taken to hospital. I still have not adjusted to the loss of Paul. I first met Paul when I was posted to the Scrubs in 1979, 2 days after the riot! He also accompanied me to Uganda to visit my son who was undertaking 2 years voluntary service building medical centres in remote villages.

The undertakers were brilliant and helped considerably in creating a positive atmosphere in which to celebrate Paul's life. It was a full Catholic Mass so it would have helped if the church had been a little warmer! Paul's elder brother by 10 years, said he never expected he would be attending his younger brother's funeral. I met several of Paul's friends I did not know, and it was a joy and privilege to talk to them. The only advantage of restricted numbers is that you know they are all close and dear friends of Paul.

Another close and dear friend, Danny Ozanne, passed away in September 2020. I was unable to go to his funeral but Veronica Bird attended. She relates, "There were 60-70 there, mostly from the Salvation Army in

full uniform. They lined the route and clapped Danny into the Crematorium, which was very moving. Only 30 went into the chapel with the others remaining outside. Joan coped very well with the support from her family. There was no one else from the Service there. Joan was so thrilled to see me there, it made the journey to get there so worthwhile and it all helped me to face another chapter in my life. I had worked with Danny for 4 years at Risley and he helped me enormously with the difficulties at Risley which were many. He was always there to offer support and a very kind person."



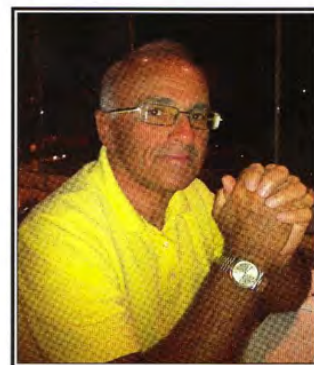
Danny Ozanne was born in Rushden, Northamptonshire on 13th October 1928. He was the eldest son of Salvation Army officers and a third generation Salvationist. His parents went on to have four more sons and a daughter. Danny's early life was marked by moving many times as a Salvation Army officer's child and by the impact of the Blitz in World War Two, which curtailed his educational

opportunities. After the war, he completed his national service in Malaya and returned to train as a Salvation Army officer. He was posted to the corps at Raiman and a chance meeting between his mother and Vesta Errington, with whom she had trained, introduced him to Vesta's daughter, Joan. Although their relationship got off to an inauspicious start, they soon fell very much in love and married on 28th May 1955. They have remained deeply in love over all the years since.

Danny and Joan were stationed in Corps in West Yorkshire and then Cornwall. They left the work when their eldest daughter was still a baby and Danny worked in children's homes and taught in an Approved School in Kent. He joined the Prison Service and he worked in a variety of borstals and prisons, including some of the biggest and most challenging in the country such as Liverpool Prison, Strangeways in Manchester, and Risley Remand Centre near Warrington. He eventually retired from Northeye Prison near Bexhill-on-Sea, where he was governor, in 1988.

He then moved north to Doncaster to be nearer to his grown-up children and their families. He and Joan became active and committed members of the Salvation Army in Doncaster and Danny served as band sergeant for some years. He also worked for a Prison Service Charity for some time, travelling round to shops in the region.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
PAUL BERNARD WAILEN
 20TH JUNE 1948 – 25TH DECEMBER 2020



FRIDAY 15TH JANUARY 2021

ST PETER AND THE GUARDIAN ANGELS

In his later years, Danny was a familiar figure at the corps, always there to talk to, help and support others. He died at home in the early hours of 18th September with Joan by his side.

I had worked with Danny at Liverpool in the early 70's, we bonded from day one and you could not wish for a more able and friendly colleague. Danny and I alternated driving to the prison each week, with big Jack Hanson puffing away in the back, and we all felt uplifted driving over the Aintree race course each morning. Danny and I were almost like brothers. George Bride was the Governor, and he always referred to us as 'his boys'. I tried to visit Danny every year for a good old 'natter', but not last year due to the virus. Joan wrote me such a lovely letter; I enclose it in full.

Dear Bob

I received a letter from the R.N.L.I. saying a big thank you for the £25 which had been given to them by the Retired Prison Governors Association. What a lovely thought. Danny would have been so moved, for the R.N.L.I. was close to his heart. Whichever seaside resort we lived in or visited he always went down to talk to them and observe. Could you say a big thank you to whoever is responsible, we are most grateful. My faith is strong and so I have strength for each day. I have fond memories of you and Jane, Jack and Dorothy Hanson when we all lived in Maghull.

God bless yours affectionately, Joan

Jim and Shelia Blakey have been through a rough patch: they write, 'What a terrible year for so many people. We have virtually self-isolated since early February having developed pneumonia in late January following our Bowls Club annual dinner. A couple attending had recently returned from abroad and Covid 19 had not even been heard of by the general public at the time. I had many of the symptoms of Covid. I had an inkling not all was well and rang 111 which was answered immediately, they contact the local practice, a Doctor came to the bungalow within an hour and I was on medication that afternoon as the GP was desperate to keep me out of hospital. Absolutely brilliant treatment. The reason I believe it was Covid was that a couple days later Shelia became delirious, vomited violently, recovered sufficiently to go to bed and slept the clock round. Not nice. Other than that we have not left the bungalow other than for medical appointments. I am getting through a novel a week on average. We have a seven mile trip if we want anything other than from the Co-op, Paul and Lin have been very good in making sure we have plenty of provisions. The Sainsbury home delivery service has also looked after us very well. Fortunately, being pensioners, we have not had to jump through the hoops of applying for Government handouts as have so many.

I have to say I am really starting to feel my age. Now that my shoulder problems have been resolved I feel I should be able to do most of what I used to. Sadly that is not the case. Shortage of breath and aching muscles prevent that. Still we are better off than many of our age. (I think your very wise words reflect the position many are feeling amongst our readers). Son, Paul is well but his business has taken quite a hit.

Our bowls club programme has been totally decimated this year with all matches cancelled. Following my shoulder operation I felt fit enough to play having missed out on the two previous seasons and had bought lighter bowls and new 'whites' for the new season. They remain in their packaging. 2020 is our centenary year and we had plans to hold a major event in September, to no avail."

That is a tale of how easy it is to succumb to the virus unknowingly, and taking precautions remains imperative for us all. It is also a tribute to the swift and wonderful care from our Health Service. Let it be hoped we can all expect the same should it be necessary.

A card from Kit and Kate Jarman to say they are keeping well, but the ongoing conditions are a strain. Much the same from Steve and Lesley Metcalfe, saying they have had a bad 2020 but are surviving, and looking forward to a better 2020. Dave and Anne Simons reminding me of the good times when we all served! Best wishes from the Rev Tom Johns, who has moved house again, and I have his new address. From Angela

Burgess and David Taylor (Pentonville), to say that are still going despite the year we have had. Now retired 7.5 years and not missing it! The dog keeps them going and gives them exercise.

Contact with Tim Newell, who states they are both well and keeping to the rules which means they have not seen their daughter in Leeds for over a year. Tim says his allotment gives good exercise. He is in regular touch with John Dring, but a bit less now under the current restrictions. John remains in positive spirit. Sadly his voice is deteriorating but he can still hold a conversation over the phone. He has recorded his voice so that his computer will take over his speech soon with eye control – the wonders of technology.

His house is fitted with all sorts of support so that Midori can care for him with a professional carer as well. He plays bridge every afternoon and watches opera most evenings. He remains remarkably positive and takes a keen interest in all that is going on nationally and internationally. Encyclopaedic knowledge of all the staff he worked with over the years.

John was possibly one of the fittest of us all in our time; he is probably one of the bravest with what he is now facing. He is a shining example to us all.

Just after writing the above news arrived from Tim Newell that John had died at home on Saturday 30 January. He remained courageous to the end facing full on all the issues he had to face.

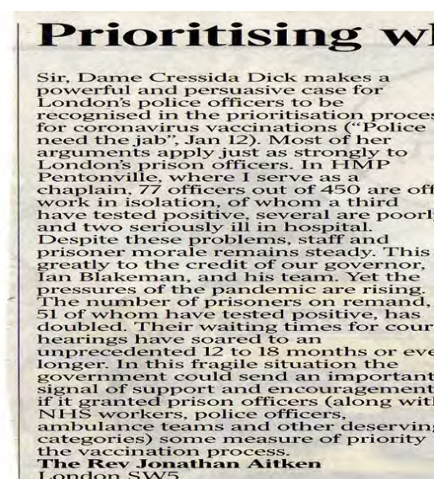
Local prisons are full, and the remand population has increased from 10,043 to a figure now of 12,274, its highest figure for 6 years. It is rumoured that a proportion of these will not come to court until 2022. The likelihood is that many of these will have probably served more time on remand than the sentence they eventually receive. In addition there are 403,568 outstanding cases in magistrate's courts and 53,950 in crown courts making a total of 457,518. Should this be tackled in due course expediently the prison service is likely to be overwhelmed, with the possible outcome that all the big local prisons will have to concentrate on 'warehousing' rather than rehabilitation or even providing adequate pre-release preparation. The situation reference establishing housing on discharge will just continue to escalate.

A note from Sue and Colin Tanswell to say there is not much news as they have been virtually housebound since March, especially Sue as she needed to shield since her cancer treatment. They are just about managing to keep active. They had hoped to visit their son in Canada in 2021 but that is now looking like a faint hope.

For those who are not readers of the Times Newspaper I include a very supportive letter from The Rev Jonathan Aitken, which although about a specific prison applies to most prisons. He is the only person of whom I am aware who has made public the positive way prison staff have risen to the challenge facing all prisons, despite the risk to their own health and well being. His plea that they should be placed in the priority group for the vaccine is absolutely correct.

I remain in touch with John Ship by email and have been in respect of Paul Wailen. The annoying fact is, during our winter in particular he always describes how he is sitting in the garden over his morning coffee in temperatures in the 70's, whilst here it could even be snowing!

Had a chat with Dave Simons on the phone, he is well, but Ann is still very limited in what she can manage. He states he has hardly been out over the last 6 months, and then only for essentials, the car has only done about 40 miles over the last few months. He has very good neighbours which is a great help. We naturally had a good natter about the 'old times,' each memory sparking another. So much livelier and more interesting than just communicating in an email; It just warms the heart and brings back all those positive feelings about the service in our time and the people we served alongside. Quarters were a great asset, not only providing a house, but



creating a mini village: we cared about our neighbours. We also got around our establishment more frequently instead of being stuck at a desk answering piles of emails.

Like Jim Blakey, I am also now feeling my age, and at the same time so many colleagues of my era are no longer with us. The two combined lead me to conclude I need to take even more of a back seat. I still believe passionately that the overriding aim of the Newsletter is to gather news of colleagues and share it, and many have been in touch to confirm that. I will always be happy to receive information and pass it on. I also believe that the committee en bloc needs to regain a heightened awareness of this priority, and each of them contribute more. They must all be in contact with a few colleagues. I do not deny that I have taken the lead in some correspondence, but many a letter came out of the blue. My 16-year correspondence with Betty Dennis was a labour of love, much of which was never printed. I never met her, but she clearly felt comforted by my efforts, and I would often receive a 16-page letter to digest. In this time of lockdown maintaining contact is even more imperative. Perhaps we have passed that golden age when we cared about each other. If so, we need to face up to that, we need to get our act together and remember we are committed to serve. It has been my privilege to serve now for 22 years. If it is now not thought important to share news of colleagues, then we lessen the value of the Newsletter. If it is accepted then it is a commitment of the whole committee, and not something shuffled off to a lone member.

RSD 27.01.21

And Now For Something Completely Different.

As you will be aware from news earlier in the edition, Motor Neurone Disease has come to the forefront of our thoughts as we mourn the loss of John Dring, and send our thoughts and good wishes to Paul Laxton's wife Lennie, as she fights this awful illness.

This got me to thinking that it would be go to do something positive toward helping to tackle the illness, to help to support sufferers, and to aid research into a possible cures. I have therefore suggested to the Management Committee, that through the newsletter, the RPGA looks to raise funds for the Motor Neurone Association (MNA), a charity that seeks to provide these very services. Therefore, in order to attempt to raise some funds for this charity we are publishing a general knowledge quiz, and offering a First Prize of £25 and 2 Runner-Up prizes of £10 each for correct entries, or the highest scores.

For every entry we receive the RPGA will donate £2 to the MNA charity, and in order to increase the donation we are inviting you to include a donation with your entry to a minimum value of £2, (to match fund our contribution), but feel free to donate more if you wish. Please note that these donations are entirely voluntary and will not impact on your entry to the quiz.

The idea for the quiz has come from Mike Lewis, who many of you will remember as the former Governor of Oxford, Whatton and North Sea Camp, and a former Prison Governors Association NEC Member. Not only has Mike come up with the idea, he has set the questions, and he has also very kindly, and generously, offered to donate the prizes as well.

The rules for entry are very simple:

Send your answers, (hopefully with your donation) to me at:

Graham Mumby-Croft

15 Thirsk Drive

Lincoln

LN6 8SZ

Or by email to graham.mumbycroft@gmail.com

Mark your entry QUIZ. Cheques made payable to RPGA.

The closing date for entries is 31st July 2021.

Answers and winners will be announced in the Autumn Newsletter published in October 2021.

In the event that more than one entry scores the maximum then these will all be entered into a draw and the winning entry and runners up will be drawn randomly.

We are not able to enter into correspondence regarding the quiz, and as Mike has set the questions, his decision on the correct answer will be final.

As this is a new venture I have no idea how it will go, but I would urge you to please take the time to enter the quiz, on the basis that it is a bit of light-hearted fun, designed to raise some money for an extremely good cause.

Warm up Questions:

These questions are provided to give you a bit of practice, and to see just where Mike's thoughts are in terms of question setting, before you attempt the main quiz. So this is just for fun and the answers are on Page 32.

- 1 Former European Royal House, some operas?
- 2 Water source that takes coins!
- 3 George Bernard Shaw play (madman he rants) anagram 4,3,3,3.
- 4 Rival of Oliver (Charlemagne Knight).
- 5 Cocktail mixer – US Sectarian, take a seat!
- 6 'Flanders its mare but not its mayoress' - to whom does this refer?
- 7 Hanover ruler and women post 1928
- 8 French King's son & Spanish King's daughter
- 9 Commotion after 'one away' 3,3,3.
- 10 Month of Robespierre's demise, a lobster?
- 11 What is reputed to have been found at the bottom of a mineshaft anywhere in the world?
- 12 What is a Peterman?

RPGA Main Quiz Questions: (37 questions with a maximum score of 40)

- 1 Which English King was obsessed with witchcraft and wrote a book on the subject?
- 2 Which royal personage escaped from one of our prisons?
- 3 Which English coins have no monarch's head on the obverse (head's) side?
- 4 Which English coin has two monarchs' heads on the obverse (head's) side?
- 5 What has South Africa to do with the Royal Tournament Display Pageant?
- 6 Rope artist – Don't get tied up with this!
- 7 Why was clipping associated with executions (seems a heavy punishment for personal grooming or topiary)?
- 8 Which two authors served time in our jails? (1 point for each)
- 9 In a police investigation, a peer of the realm was questioned re his association in a serious criminal act. His solicitor handed the investigator a piece of paper with the letters PAV written on it. Who, or what, was P.A.V.?
- 10 Which English monarch parented 17 legitimate off-springs, none of whom became monarchs?
- 11 Which English monarch parented 10 illegitimate children and 2 legitimate ones, none of whom became monarchs?
- 12 It is normal practice for successive monarchs to have their obverse (head's) side pointing in different directions i.e. looking to the left, next one to the right. Who broke the mould and why?
- 13 Why is the work of Archimedes relevant even today in the field of numismatics?
- 14 When I served on the Moor I met more 'killicks' and 'bootnecks' than one could shake a stick at. What are 'killicks' and 'bootnecks'? (1 point for each)
- 15 Which English penal establishment was bombed extensively during World War 2 with no casualties and no damage to buildings?
- 16 Which penal establishment is reputed to have the highest perimeter wall?
- 17 Which penal establishment has a circular perimeter wall?
- 18 Which penal establishment has a curved wing block?
- 19 Which English King was the last to lead his army into battle?

- 20 Which penal establishment was originally built to house boy soldiers?
- 21 Which historic prison, still in use, was built to house prisoners of war?
- 22 Which former penal establishment was at one time used to house American Olympic athletes?
- 23 An Escape and an Admiral caused the Prison Service to “Go to the Dogs”-Why?
- 24 The remains of the inventor of the radial system, i.e. wings radiating from a central point, to enable observation of all cells, have been under lock and key ever since his death, -Where?
- 25 Who was Queen Victoria’s father?
- 26 In numismatic terms, who was known as Old Copper Nose?
- 27 Y.O.I. that Jane Eyre was fond of!
- 28 Which British Isles penal establishment is the farthest North?
- 29 Until it closed which prison was the most Easterly in the British Isles, and which prison holds that record now? (1 point each)
- 30 Which British Isles penal establishment is the farthest South?
- 31 Which British Isles penal establishment is the most Westerly?
- 32 What is the value, in old money, of the Sun, Venus and Uranus?
- 33 Many prisons were formerly large houses or estates i.e. Leyhill, Askham Grange, Lowdham Grange, but which former Northern English prison was named after a watercourse, and is now a school?
- 34 Which English Royal was lucky to avoid an overdue parking fine?
- 35 Many of us can remember the Prison Koestler Award (Literature and the Arts). Arthur Koestler (author, critic and anti-fascist) was incarcerated in many countries: France, Spain and Great Britain. Which prison did he describe as ‘the most humane, but its’ plumbing left a lot to be desired’?
- 36 HMS Warrior was said to be the first iron-clad warship (iron on wood protection) – not so! Which was the first of this type?
- 37 Most Victorian prisons had a non-reeking lum) but what was its actual use?

Bob Duncan-An Extract From His Autobiography.

Our friend and former committee member Bob Duncan has spent his time usefully during the Covid Lockdown writing an autobiography, primarily for his grandchildren to enjoy when they become mature enough to be interested in their own family history. The inspiration for this piece of work came from his brother Leonard who pestered him to write and also to show how their Mother, who raised them on her own following the premature passing of their Father and was their inspiration to do well. While his lengthy tome (some 400 pages) contains much about his own formative and educational years there is also a wealth of interesting and prison related content which he has kindly agreed to allow it to be serialised in our Newsletter. Here is the first instalment.



Where it all really began School over and the beginnings of Work

I adored the teaching by the 6th form master of English Literature; he made the subject come alive and also made us read around the subject and more widely than the set books. He was also the careers master, and when it became clear that I was not going into the navy, he stated I should be considering going to university. I explained that I really needed to start work as mother had finically struggled for far too long, he suggested I try then for Executive Grade Competition for the Civil Service; he also stressed that I should get a university place and then request to defer it for a year. He further advised me that another pupil had just applied for the London School of Economics, why not ask him for the details and follow suit. So that is what I did and in due course, I was offered a place without even an interview, and it was deferred for one year.

Having applied to join the Executive Class of the Civil Service and being offered an interview I went to London to attend that. The interview panel looked rather ancient to young me, but they were clearly intelligent. The interview was not too testing and seemed to be going quite well until they asked if I had any

questions. I politely asked if they could give me any more details about the hostels for young people coming to London to work. They all looked at each and clearly did not have a clue and gave the impression that it was below their class level to know about such things, they suggested I enquire elsewhere. Then they announced that they thought 'my talents' well suited me for the Exchequer and Audit Department, and what did I think of that. I did have not a blind clue as to what E&A did, but I wanted employment, so I responded that it sounded very interesting. So that was that I just had to await the confirmation letter and joining instructions.

I remained at school until Monday 15th December 1958 as I had been awarded a school prize which was to be presented by the Headmaster, Mr. Pearce on what was termed 'Speech Day' and took place at the Winter Gardens Theatre, Margate, with the whole school present. I had chosen a Bible and the novel Dr Zhivago. Both of which I still have.

WORK

I commenced my employment with the Exchequer and Audit Department the next day at 9.30 am, so I assume I travelled up the previous evening. I had made enquiries reference hostel accommodation provided by the Government for those coming to London for the first time. I had been allocated to the one in Cadogan Street, just off Sloane Square, which is just one tube stop from Victoria Station. The area also contained several embassies and 400 yards away Harrods. The building was Victorian but had lost some of its elegance through poor or limited maintenance. There were 7 of us in my room; we had a bed a three-foot mat and a small locker, and one clean sheet a week. As we were all in employment and paying our way, the meals, except for Sunday, were pretty gruesome, but above the levels of a Dickensian workhouse gruel.

One of the occupants in the room was a more mature clerical officer from Leeds. He organized schedules so that we kept our room clean and tidy, with the windows all washed down at the weekend. He also set a spirit of mutual support amongst us all. If anyone was short of money any week (there were quite a few gambling groups amongst other residents in other rooms which anyone could join) he would arrange for us all to chip in to help out. A colleague from school also used the hostel (Smithy) and when a bed became available, we managed to get him allocated to our room. One day one of the group had heard that Bridget Bardot was going to be filming on the embankment at 5 am on a Sunday. I do not think the tube was running that early, so we all got up very early and walked to the embankment to watch. It was a shot of her getting out of a taxi with a load of parcels and walking to an entrance next to the Embankment tube station. Every time she got from the taxi and the 'take' was not right, she just dropped all the parcels on the ground for someone else to pick and back to her sitting in the Taxi. So, we saw quite a lot of her and enjoyed our morning. Some years later I saw the film on TV. What had taken over an hour to film early in the morning to avoid the rush hour crowd streaming out of the tube station, only took 2 minutes in the film.

I mentioned that Harrod's was nearby, I cannot remember why, but I was dared to go there and try to purchase one table tennis ball. So, I entered the portals of the famous store, it was all a bit daunting, but I was not one to back out of a dare, so I approached the sports section and enquired of a rather haughty sales assistant if I was at the right place to purchase table tennis equipment. She confirmed that I was, so I explained I was from the hostel, I doubt she understood or cared; and could I have one table tennis ball, please. I got a rather funny look, but a voice said, 'If that is what sir wants, I will get you one'. I cannot remember the price, but when she took the coins offered, she gave such a look of disdain as if they were tainted in some way.

It so happened that another school chum from Chatham House also joined the Civil Service as an executive officer and came to reside in the same hostel. There was a branch of Chatham House School 'Old Boys Association' which met in London once a month, so we both joined and attended. Through that, we heard about Ted Heath hosting an 'old boy's dinner' at the House of Commons.

The office of the 'Department of Exchequer and Audit' I was allocated to was in one of the Nash Terrace Buildings in Regents Park, which was looking a bit shabby and in need of some upgrading. That has now taken place, and they sell for millions. As I type this it has been reported that Bernie Ecclestone's daughter Celestine's lives there and has just been burgled and robbed of £50 million of jewellery. I doubt my time there qualifies me as having habited what is now millionaire's row. My starting salary at age 18, including the inner London allowance, was £614 before tax and national insurance. I probably ended up with about £42 a month of which £20 at least went to the hostel. Within a few months, we were moved out to offices in Gower Street as developers had purchased the property in Hyde Park.

I climbed the wooden, uncarpeted stairs to the 3rd floor and was met by the 'Senior Auditor' and shown my desk. I asked whom I should turn to for advice on auditing, and his reply was 'Get a book out of the library or ask your new colleagues.' When I next left the office room, I noticed a rather elderly gentleman in some kind of uniform sitting on a chair at the top of the stairs. On my return, I enquired as to who he was. It was explained that he was the official messenger for all the offices. He received any delivery of mail or files that had been requested from other departments at the entry door and then he carries them up to the offices on this floor. Having climbed the stairs, he is temporarily exhausted and has to have a half-hour sit down before descending again! In those days Lyon's ran restaurants and one was near Great Portland Street Tube Station just outside the Regents Park, it served excellent food at a very modest price, and so I could eat there at lunchtime and not have to bother with the hostel food if it was nothing special. I was still missing my mother's cooking!

When we moved to Gower Street there were 3 colleagues in my office including the one, I was replacing! He was an Australian who had been recruited on a temporary basis at the end of the war as there was a shortage of workers. How effective he was in the job I have no idea as it was clear he had already packed up working and certainly handed no advice or guidance to me. The total E&A staff at that office location was about 24. On my 3rd day at work there he appeared at about 11.30 am and announced 'Let's all go', and everybody abandoned their desks and donned their jackets and coats. I followed the crowd and we ended up in a local drinking club where 'the Australian' was a member. I assumed it was either a farewell party or a pre-Christmas celebration, which it could well have been. However, in the next 9 months or so that I worked there, he returned to the office several times at about 11 am, picked up the phone and advised the switchboard that if any phone calls came through to tell them all lines are engaged. Then, as before, he led the whole staff to his club where we all imbibed for the next few hours. At about 2.45 pm it would be announced, it is tea break time at the office, so we had better get back for it!

Brian was the 'head of the team' and he sat facing the rest of us. He clearly was the most conscientious of the team and was always concentrating on his work. He was a pleasant man but not very sociable but had good relationships with his less conscientious colleagues. I became fed up with both the cost of the underground, and the fact I had to change lines to get to the office, so I took my ancient bike to London and began cycling to work. There was one other cyclist in the total office group and there was an unspoken rivalry about who could get in first. Looking back, I cannot believe I cycled around Marble Arch twice a day, with traffic pouring around nonstop, and thought little of it.

Everyone had to 'book in' on arrival and record the time; you could elect to be an 8.30 or a 9.00 starter, for some reason I had elected for a 9 am start, possibly thinking I might get held up in traffic some days. I was usually in well before 9 am. Eddie who sat in front of me had started work as a telegram delivery boy with the post office and had gradually worked his way up through the civil service. He had seen it all, was outgoing and a great talker and well past worrying about petty regulation. He sidled up to me one morning a few weeks after I joined and asked for a quiet word. He said you are a 9 am starter and I am an 8.30 starter, I accept I am not always a prompt 8.30 arriver, and you arrive ahead of time more often. It does not look good that you are booked in ahead of me when I should be here 30 minutes before you, could you wait to sign in until I have signed. I told him it would be no problem.

Eddie's routine was to arrive (whatever time he could make it), put the kettle on and make a cup of tea, return to his desk and plug his electric shaver into the light, get out his breakfast sandwich and newspaper and enjoy the first half an hour winding down from his journey to work. However, in his own way, he was very kind and taught me a lot about approaching the 'big new world of work'. Whilst we are on characters, the other new member in our little office was Smithy, who was a bit mean, and his pride and joy was his vintage car. He booked his summer leave for a fortnight, and we all knew he was driving to Italy and back with his family. A week after he was due back there was no sign of him and no word. It was 2 weeks later that he eventually returned to the office. There had been a mechanical problem with his car, and he refused to get it seen to locally as he claimed the Italians were trying to fleece him. The car still had 1st and 2nd gear, so he drove all the way back to England at 15-20 miles an hour, hence the long absence.

Exchequer and Audit scrutinized the spending of all the other Government Departments, although they all have their own internal auditors. It can also initiate inquiries on its own. One of the auditors where I was placed was in fact inquiring into whether pharmaceutical firms supply drugs to the National Health Service were

working in a cartel and inflating prices. Before the Report was even finalized, several firms suddenly reduced prices as obviously they had wind of what was coming. This was in the late 50s 'but if the media are correct' the problem remains with us.

There was in fact 'training for the job'; it consisted off a half-day a week on Friday afternoon at the City of London College, but it started in September, and as I had started in December, I was unable to commence it for another 9 months.

The system in the office seemed to be that files on an area of concern would arrive from somewhere and were allocated to the appropriate auditor. I could read the entries already recorded but did not have much of a clue what I was supposed to do about it. Our team dealt with The Ministry of Health issues. I would send for the Ministries' own relevant files. That would buy me some time, and then I would scribble some notes in the file, put in the 'out tray' and hope it would not come back.

Most files were handwritten in those days, and all had to have a chronological list of all new entries. The other Departments did not trust E&A as it reported on them directly to the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee. So, they played their own games, which included 'file not available as with the Minister', or they just delayed sending it. When it did arrive the papers, one wished to home in on had been removed but they still remained in the index. When queried, they would make some excuse, such as 'this is a very active area and we had to retain those papers. Of course, it worked both ways when the Senior Auditor enquired when he would get an update; one had plenty of excuses by blaming the other Ministry.

Exchequer and Audit also did quality checks by small teams visiting regional offices of major departments. On one of these, I was the junior member of a team of four that went to inspect the financial accounts of Northern Island at Stormont House. It was the first time I had flown; Heathrow was much more basic then. We were there for a fortnight, so having savoured the delights of some of the pubs in Belfast; it was agreed we would finish early on Friday and hire a car and do a tour of Northern Ireland. The coastline around Northern Island is incredible and we included the 'Giant's Causeway' in the tour. It happened to be the English football Cup Final on the Saturday, so the first pub that said it had a TV and that we could watch the football got our custom for the afternoon; we then drove on and found a hotel for the night. We did a rounded tour so entered the south so that we could come back via mountains of Mourne. Another 2-week audit trip I went on in February 1964 was to Nottingham, Peter; my friend from university had taken a teaching post there, so we linked up. I can remember going to the theatre there which had just been recently refurbished and was looking very good. Peter said we are going down to London at the end of the week in the Morris Minor; we could give you a lift. I cannot remember whether his car had no heater or whether it was broken, but it was a very cold night, and I think I shivered for a good part of the journey. Another trip was to Carmarthen and we were staying in a hotel, we had been to the two local cinemas so that night we had stayed in and were in the lounge playing cards with a kitty. We asked if we could have a pot of tea for four; a young lass arrived with the drinks on a tray, took one look and said in a loud voice 'Sinful' and plonked the tray down and left. The government owned the Royal Stud, based at Gillingham in Dorset which was in business to breed highbred horses. It decided to sell it off, but all the accounts had to be formally audited before that could be finalized, and E&A was asked to do it. I for some reason was selected to undertake it. 'Not having a clue as to what was required, I just ticked everything with the authorised E&A green pencil. I never heard another word about it!

One day a paper marked Top Secret appeared amongst others in my in-tray. It was I believe about Strontium 90 in milk. It was pretty boring, and I could not fathom why it was classified. I had no idea what to do with it, so I left it in the out tray. A few days later when I arrived for work, I found I had received a missive from internal security stating that I was in breach of security and they had removed the document and to have the document returned I was required to contact them. As I only wished to get rid of the documents, I did nothing, and that was the end of that!

There was Congregational Church in Tottenham Court Road, 500 yards from the office which held a short mid-day Service, so I started to attend. As I walked in one day to one of these services, the organist was playing the overture to Cavalier Rusticana by Mascagni; I was overwhelmed and over-awed, it has remained one of my favourite pieces of Music. I later saw the complete opera at Covent Garden.

Exchequer had its own rugby club and played against other civil service teams and the police. If you were selected, training was organized at the civil service sports ground in Chiswick every Wednesday afternoon, so

why sit in a stuffy office staring at boring figures? I still played wing forward and scored or contributed to several tries. My department had its best season for a while. There was also the summer Sports Day at Chiswick and anyone who wished to go, including the top brass, could spend the day there. There was what was called 'Divisions' in Exchequer and Audit that is there 9 different sections concentrating on different aspects of Government spending. Traditionally each Division entered volunteers from their staff in a series of athletic events (running, high jump, long jump, throwing cricket ball and walking etc.) There was a cup for the winning team and a cup (The Victor Ludorum) for the individual who accumulated the most points. These were presented by the Auditor General who also bought a drink for the individual winner. Their name would be inscribed on the cup. As the 'new boy' I stood back and let those who wished to volunteer to enter the various athletic events carry on, whatever was left I said I would have a go at. So, I got a feel for the whole event, including how seriously some took it, I thought it was just a fun day.

Although E&A salaries were higher than the standard Executive Officer pay rate, and there were increases for time served and inflation settlement each year, it would take me some time to climb up the ladder. So I had started making enquiries as to what fees and living expenses I would get from the County Council, if I took my place at University and due to our family circumstances, it was remarkably generous. I also knew I could work on the buses in the summer vacation, and all in all, I would be better off. So, I approached the personnel department and advised them of my plans to leave. They recommended that instead of resigning I could ask for 3 years unpaid sabbatical leave; in which case I would have a legal right to return to E&A if I needed to. It appeared I could not lose. So, I prepared myself to go to university. *To be continued*.....

Sad News.

As this issue of the newsletter was about to go to print we received news of the death of Derek Twiner who many of you will know and may probably have worked with.

Brendan O'Friel writes:

After joining in 1964, he worked at Huntercombe and Reading before moving to Onley in 1968. In 1970, he moved as a tutor to Wakefield College and was promoted to AG1 in post at Wakefield. In 1976 following promotion to Governor 3, he moved to Leeds as Deputy Governor. His first command was at New Hall Camp in 1979. From there he was promoted to Governor 2 and took charge of Castington. He continued as a Governor 2 serving at HQ P6 (1985); Canterbury from 1988 and Standford Hill from 1991.

A lovely man - I can still remember him talking to my very young children at Onley in a very gentle but interested way. He was a good colleague and well liked during the time he was at Onley.

Bob Duncan recalls:

Derek and I where on the same initial training course, he was a very competent and pleasant person. We kept in touch whilst serving, and eventually retired to Canterbury. We spoke on the phone several times, and where planning to meet up once covid safe. Now it will never happen. He still collected historical postcards and other things as well.

He loved opera and frequented the Marlow theatre when opera was on, we were planning to attend together but the virus put paid to that as well. He was always an interesting person to talk to. By the time we eventually get back to some kind of normality the odds are not many, if any of my course will still be around. The rather sobering thought, as Derek was the same age as myself, it might include me! All part of the ethos of getting old!

I will miss Derek especially as we never managed to meet up., which I regret, it would have been my privilege to have met up for one chance to reminisce. Lost too many dear colleagues this year.

If permitted I will try and attend his funeral.

Answers to the Warm –Up Questions from the Quiz.

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Savoy | 7 Elector |
| 2 Wishing Well | 8 Dauphin – Infanta |
| 3 Arms and the Man | 9 Hue and cry |
| 4 Roland | 10 Thermidor |
| 5 Shaker | 11 A Cornishman. |
| 6 Anne of Cleaves | 12 A safecracker. |
-

And Finally:

Roger and I have been discussing moving the Computer Corner section onto the website (www.rpga.org.uk) in order to make it more immediate and up to date. We would welcome feedback with your thoughts on this subject. However, I make no apology for returning to the subject of fraud and scams once more, as it has become clear that amongst the many unwanted effects caused by the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, there has been a huge increase in attempts to part people from their money through scam texts, emails and social media messages, including adverts. One of the most common, and easiest to fall for at the moment is one involving an email or text message informing you that a delivery company, (Royal Mail/DPS/Hermes/Amazon etc.) are unable to deliver your parcel as there is a payment to be made, and then giving details of a website to log onto to make the payment. This fraud is playing on the fact that many people will indeed be expecting a delivery, and it is not unreasonable to expect an extra charge, especially if it is coming from abroad. Check very carefully before you click that link in the message as it could well be a scam.

The message below comes directly from Action Fraud, a national police site seeking to prevent fraud.

If a hacker got into your email or social media account, what would they find? Health and banking information? Names and contact details for your friends and family? Private photos and messages? For most people, it's at least one of those.

Your email and social media accounts contain a wealth of personal information about you, which makes them a lucrative target for cyber criminals. **Between February 2020 and February 2021, Action Fraud received 15,214 reports about email and social media account hacking.** The majority of reports (88%) were made by individuals, with 12% of reports being made by businesses. Analysis of the crime reports revealed that Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat were the most affected social media accounts, with phishing messages being the most common tactic used by cyber criminals to lure unsuspecting victims.

The motivation behind the hacks are varied and can range from financial gain, to revenge or personal amusement. Some victims are extorted for money, whilst others have their accounts used to send malicious links to their contacts. One victim who had multiple email and social media accounts hacked paid over £2,000 to regain access to them. Another victim reported that her hacked Facebook account was used to trick her friends into sending money into a PayPal account they thought belonged to her.

Secure your email and social media accounts in just a few minutes. Here's what you need to do:

1: Use a strong and separate password for your email, as well as other important accounts, such as your banking or social media accounts.

2: Enable two-factor authentication (2FA). It will help to stop hackers from getting into your online accounts, even if they have your password.

3: If you can't access your account, search the company's online support or help pages. You'll find information about how to recover your account.

For detailed instructions on how to reset your password or enable 2FA on your accounts, visit: <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/secureyouraccounts>