



The Branch

APRIL 2018

Newsletter of the **WILTSHIRE RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION**



THE SALISBURY INCIDENT



The world's attention has focused on the City of Salisbury recently after a military grade nerve agent developed in Russia was used in what appears to have been an attempted assassination of a former Russian double agent and his daughter. The couple were found to be collapsed and in great distress in The Maltings, a shopping precinct in the city centre. A police officer who rushed to their aid also became ill and all three were treated in Salisbury District Hospital.

All three emergency services were required to respond to this very challenging incident. Their work has attracted high praise from Government and the Prime Minister and Home Secretary made personal visits.

Photos reproduced by kind permission of Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service.

The Home Secretary, Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP in Salisbury hearing first hand how fire crews in chemical protection suits and breathing apparatus were able to carry out first stage containment of the areas contaminated by the nerve agent.



The Home Secretary & CFO Ben Ansell



A firefighter gives a 'thumbs up' to colleagues outside the 'hot zone' as progress is made in dealing with the agent.



Just some of the Dorset & Wiltshire FRS resources called upon to attend the incident.

Special security arrangements have been in operation at Salisbury Fire Station because the person or persons that used the nerve agent have yet to be apprehended.

All photos on this page reproduced by kind permission of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service.

Worldwide Press & Media Interest in the Salisbury Incident

Senior representatives of the emergency services answer questions from the press (photos by courtesy of Dorset & Wiltshire FRS)

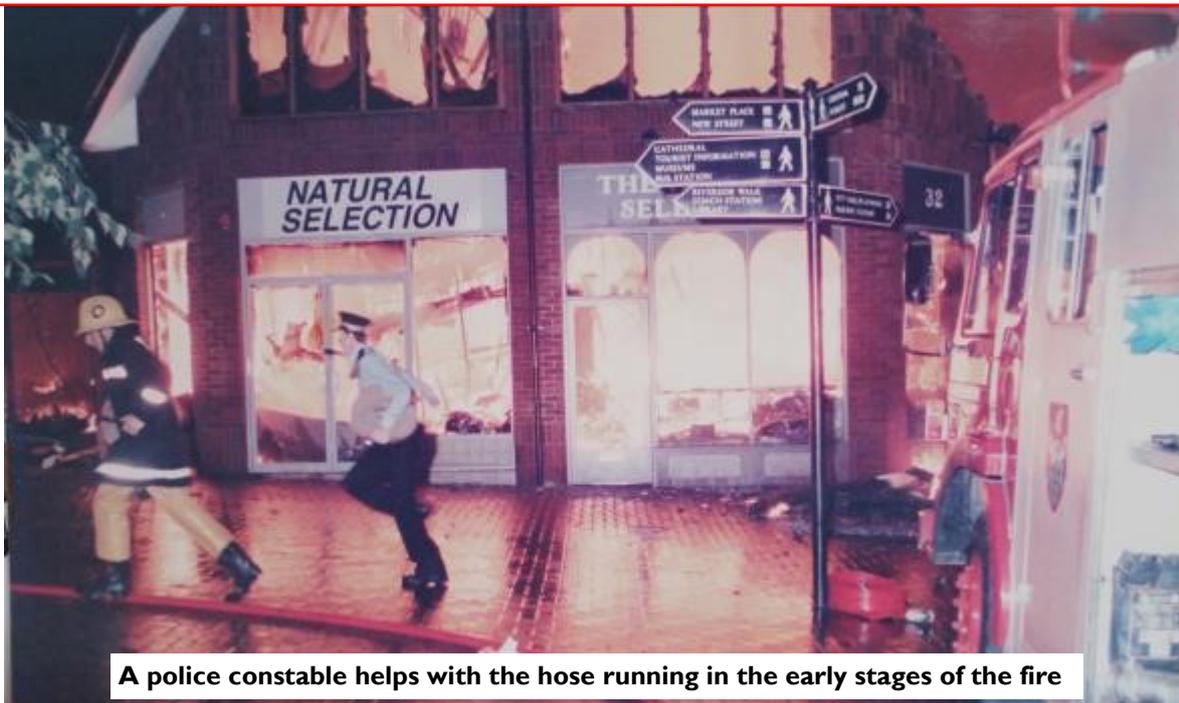


Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service hosted a press conference at FRS Headquarters in Hulse Road, Salisbury as the world's press and media clamoured for detailed information



THE MALTINGS, SALISBURY

The world's attention has been on The Maltings, Salisbury recently because of the nerve agent incident, but in August 1989 a 15-pump fire occurred there.



A police constable helps with the hose running in the early stages of the fire

The shopping precinct known as THE MALTINGS suffered a severe fire in August 1989. The fire started in a greengrocery shop and was well developed before the Wiltshire Fire Brigade received a call. Fire spread at roof level was unusually rapid, with the party walls appearing to fail to check fire spread even for a short period. The reason for this was later identified by the fire investigator (Station Officer Roger Tombs) as being due to faulty workmanship on the structures that were less than five years old. The loss was £4m and the owners brought a successful legal case against the builder using the WFB fire investigation report to support their case.





Health Matters



ALBI RICHARDSON

Albi has had his right knee replaced at the Brunel Treatment Centre within the Great Western Hospital, Swindon.

The operation appears to have been successful and Albi was discharged to home within five days.

Albi reports favourably on the treatment and nursing care that he was given. "Nothing was too much trouble", was his summary. He is now beginning physiotherapy and may ask to attend the Recovery Centre of the FIRE FIGHTERS CHARITY. We wish Albi a speedy recovery.



DAVID WARD

Dave has had a hip replaced.

The surgery was performed at The Circle Hospital in Reading.

It is pleasing to learn that the operation went to plan and Dave was soon discharged and has begun the recovery and physio phase at home.

We wish him a rapid and full recovery.

TONY ANDREWS

Tony has had his long awaited surgery to correct a back problem.

Initial indications are that the operation has been successful.

We all hope for Tony's sake that the prognosis from here onwards will be positive and he will be relieved of the severe pain that he has had to endure for quite some time.

Go for it, Tony!



SLIMMING! NEED TO LOSE WEIGHT? Yve Usher-Benwell Tells Of Her Success



Yve looking slim and trim today

Having tried just about every diet available on the planet, from cabbage soup to 8 mini-meals a day and everything in between, I had joined Weight Watchers, Slimming World and various other clubs with mixed results, but always the end result is that I was no smaller than when I started.

This was until I heard from a friend about **TEAM BRUTUS** eight week challenge. She had tried it after hearing about it from another friend who had excellent results. My attitude at this point was, "well what have I got to lose; a bit of money and a shed load of weight?"

Having made contact with Team Brutus and passed the acceptability criteria, I waited with trepidation for my info pack and start date to arrive. The plan is all done online with support from the guys who run Team Brutus, Dylan, Rach and Cheryl. All have huge amounts of experience and qualifications in nutrition and fitness.

Dylan will only work with people he knows will commit 100% to following the plan. They set up a Facebook group for all the people taking part in each challenge where we all support each other and we get a daily information or accountability post which normally requires our input as a team.

It is not just a diet, it is also a **complete re-education**, how often do you get part way through a meal and feel full, but there is just a bit more left so you finish it anyway? **I have now learnt that I eat until I am no longer hungry.** It is surprising how few people know the difference with that.

We start the first couple of weeks eating only a limited range of foods, gradually reintroducing new food groups as we

progress through the plan. I learned that we reintroduced dairy products that I appear to be lactose intolerant which would explain why I never lost weight on slimfast!

I have never known myself to get such good results EVER. To date **I have lost 4 stone 2lbs** and hope to lose a bit more yet. Now I have got to the stage where I can allow myself the occasional treat. You do after all have to live, but my treats now are much smaller and healthier than they would have been before the plan.

If you are interested in finding out more just let me know and I can put you in contact with Dylan. He is as mad as a box of frogs, but the man certainly knows his stuff.

Yve



Yve
As she looked when 4 stones heavier



Roger Tombs



IN THIS SECOND ARTICLE ABOUT SEPSIS, ROGER TOMBS DESCRIBES HIS RECENT EXPERIENCE

Most people are aware that if you get a cut or a wound that you need to keep it clean and covered to prevent it going septic. Some will know that failure to do so could ultimately lead to what used to be termed blood poisoning. Nowadays, this is called septicaemia, which in general terms is referred to as SEPSIS. As I understand it full blown sepsis is a progression or condition not always associated with septicaemia (which can occur very quickly) to the body's response to an infection, attacking its own tissues and organs. This is a fairly common life threatening condition, so much so that in recent years every year sepsis has claimed the lives of more people than the combined number of deaths from prostate, bowel and lung cancer.

My problem started with a small blister or skin irritation about the size of the end of my index finger. This appeared just below my ankle after a couple of hours on the golf course. It looked like a round blister with the skin removed. It was sore, pink and had a clear fluid oozing from it, just like you can get with a blister. Following showering, for the next two or three days, I kept the wound covered with a plaster and it dried out but was still red and sore. At this point I applied some **hydrocortisone cream** and it healed over in a couple of days. **However, I noticed that the skin over my ankle bone had become red and tender.** I had also been running a little hot for a few days.

The next day, a week after getting the blister I was telephoning when I **started to shake uncontrollably**, so severely that I had trouble hanging on to the phone. A couple of minutes later I **had difficulty breathing** and a **rapid heart beat**. I dialled **999** for an ambulance and my call was treated with **urgency**, especially as I **told them I thought I might have sepsis.**

A senior paramedic arrived within fifteen minutes and carried out tests. On seeing the inflammation visibly travelling up my leg she said that this could be **life threatening** and rushed me by ambulance car (no ambulance available) to **A & E at RUH, Bath.** I was immediately taken into a cubicle and seen by a doctor. Within minutes **I was given antibiotic intravenous infusion and closely monitored** for several hours before being moved to an observation ward. Despite being on an infusion of various antibiotics **my infection continued to grow.** I was closely monitored by doctors and x-rays were taken. After two days, **my left leg was twice the size of my right one.** I had a **large lump in the groin and felt very unwell.** At midnight the consultant and **microbiologist** were called. **This was the turning point because the microbiologist took cultures that were grown in the laboratory to identify the bugs and prescribe the most effective antibiotics.** I left hospital after a week but **continued on strong antibiotics for three months** until the infection was finally cleared.

I was very lucky. Everything worked as it should, there was no delay in getting assistance and I was being treated in hospital within an hour. **The NHS at its best!**

Roger Tombs

OBITUARY



COLIN HODGES

Born 28.12.1940

Died 05.03.2018

Colin was born in Seven Oaks, Kent

He served in the fire service for just under 29 years. He joined in West Yorkshire and moved to Wiltshire in 1977. He was awarded the Fire Brigade Long service & Good Conduct Medal while serving as a Watch Commander at Stratton St Margaret Fire Station, in Swindon.

Colin was happily married to Christine (Chris) and he had two children, Clair and Charlotte. He rejoiced in having grandchildren, Jasmine and Seth. Colin was devoted to all members of his family.

After retirement from Wiltshire Fire brigade, Colin and Chris moved to the South Island of New Zealand where they lived very happily for 18 years. Colin and Chris soon made new friends and became involved in community life.

On 5th March, Colin suddenly collapsed at home and Chris called for an emergency ambulance. In fact, the New Zealand Fire Service reached Colin before the ambulance and the fire crew had started resuscitation attempts when paramedics arrived. Despite their best efforts, Colin could not be resuscitated. The post mortem showed that Colin died of cardiac arrhythmia.

The funeral service was held at St Alban's Church, Pleasant Point on 16th March. Mourners filled the church which is testimony to how many people had come to know and like Colin in the 18 years he had lived among them.

Colin's last resting place is a cemetery in beautiful surroundings at Point Pleasant.

Those of us that had the pleasure and privilege of serving with Colin join with Chris and his family in mourning him. Colin won many lasting friendships and much respect.

Rest in eternal peace, Colin.

JMC



OBITUARY



KENNETH ROBSON HARRISON
Born 22.10.30 Died 19.01.18

Ken Harrison was a member of the WRFA for several years. He introduced himself to me when I was a guest speaker at a Probus Club meeting. When I discovered that he had served for 9 years in the AFS I invited Ken to join the WRFA and he immediately accepted. Due to failing health his attendance at WRFA events was limited but I was in contact with him regularly and he took a great interest in our Association and the fire & rescue service in general.

At the age of 16, Ken became a police cadet in County Durham. He did his National Service in the RAF and hoped to join the police force after completing his military service. However, due to poor eyesight he was not accepted into the police. He joined the Civil Service and eventually was posted to Bureau West in Chippenham, working in the MoD computer centre. By then he had met and married his wife, Margaret.

Ken had a very strong desire for community service and he was accepted into the Special Constabulary. His qualities as a leader were recognised and he became the Chief Commandant of Wiltshire Special Constabulary.

When the FBU strike hit the fire service in 1977, Ken hoped that he would be called upon to assist the military due to his extensive knowledge and experience of the 'Green Goddess' fire appliances. However, his services were not called upon.

In his leisure time, Ken was a keen and very competent yacht sailor. He shared many hours of sailing with his wife and also with some of his staff from Bureau West. Ken identified that sailing had a powerful team building quality and took full advantage of it.

Ken was a devoted husband and father. Ken and Margaret had two children, Robert and Philippa. They would have celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in December 2018. The funeral service at St Andrew's Church, Chippenham was very well attended and was an impressive tribute to a remarkable man.

Rest in eternal peace, Ken.

John Craig

OBITUARY



ERNEST JOHN WARREN **1946 : 2018**

Ernie, as most people knew him, was a former Station Officer at Marlborough. He joined Wiltshire Fire Brigade as a retained firefighter in 1974. He served all his time in Marlborough, rising through the ranks to be Station Officer in charge.

Ernie was born in Swindon, but moved with his family to Fyfield. He went to the local secondary school in Marlborough. This later became known as St John's School and it was there that he worked for over thirty years.

On leaving school, Ernie joined the Merchant Navy and travelled much of the world. After leaving the navy, Ernie returned to Marlborough and worked for a number of local building firms before becoming the Lab Technician and Caretaker at St John's School. Ernie became an invaluable and much respected member of the staff, and was well liked by both colleagues and pupils. After his retirement from St John's, Ernie worked at Marlborough College as a Houseman at Preshute House overseeing the general maintenance and upkeep. Ernie was married to Judy for over 40 years. They have one daughter, Joanne. Ernie was devoted to his family and will be very much missed by them.

His funeral service was attended by a great many of his friends, family and colleagues. Ernie had been a very community-minded person from his early days of playing for the town's football teams, to his work at St John's School and especially through his service to the Fire Brigade. At the funeral service conducted by Canon Henry Pearson, he stated that serving in the Fire Brigade played a large part in Ernie's life. The large number of people that attended his funeral service was testament to how much Ernie was liked and respected in Marlborough.

Rest in peace, Ernie.

DW



Welcoming NEW MEMBERS



ALUN GRIFFITHS

Alun has recently been warmly welcomed into membership.

He served in Wiltshire Fire Brigade as a Fireman on Green Watch, Swindon and then on Blue Watch at Swindon after promotion to Leading Fireman. He was then posted to the Brigade Training Centre in Devizes as a Driving Instructor..

He now holds a senior fire safety position with BP. He has retained a home address in Maidenhead.

Alun is married to Lynn. He reports his leisure interests as rugby, golf, cycling, travel, walking, theatre and eating out.

We are delighted to have Alun in membership and wish him many years of enjoyable fellowship with us.

PAULINE MURPHY

It has been a great pleasure to welcome Pauline into membership very recently. Pauline worked at Wiltshire Fire Brigade HQ, Potterne from November 1998 until November 2008. Her duties were to provide secretarial support to the principal officers.

Pauline lives at Wedhampton, near Devizes and is married to John.

Pauline is already well known to the members of the Walking Group. In addition to walking, Pauline lists her other main interest as theatre.

Thank you for joining us, Pauline, and we hope you get benefit from your membership in many ways and for a long time.

ROOM FOR MORE!

It is probably very true that most WRFA members know of several others who are eligible to join WRFA but have not yet done so. Please encourage such folks to join us. The low subscriptions (£10 per year) represent incredible value for money . New members can be sure of a warm welcome.



PEOPLE & PLACES

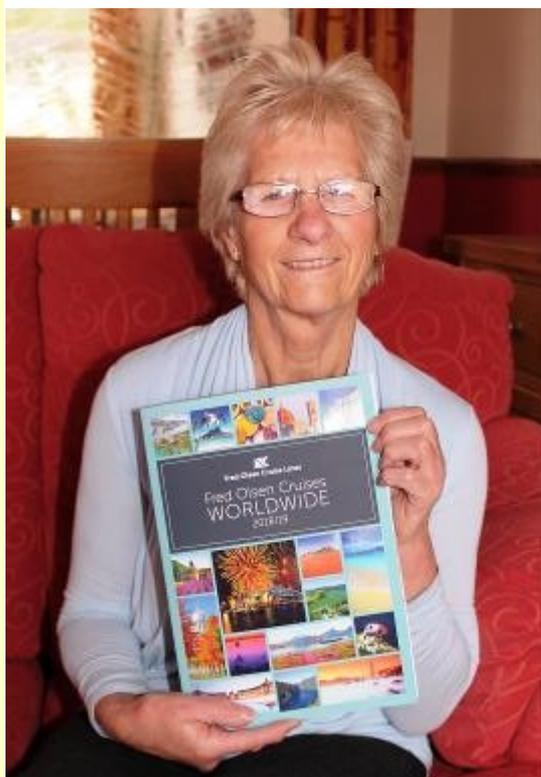
CRUISING!

With a bit of help from WRFA

WRFA member, DIANE COOK, is glad she joined the WRFA for a number of reasons, one of which is the fact that her membership allowed her to claim a discount on a Caribbean cruise with FRED OLSEN CRUISES. Later this year, Diane is sailing from Southampton for 17 night voyage that will take her to Lisbon, Funchal, Antigua, St. Maarten, Tortola, St Kitts and Barbados.

When booking, Diane remembered seeing an advert in THE BRANCH that informed of discounts available to WRFA members from Fred Olsen. If you are booking for the first time with that company, WRFA members can claim a **10%** discount. If it is not the first time booking, you can still claim a **5%** discount. Just quote the code **WRFA10** when booking.

Bon voyage, Diane!



CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Two more of our members have recently moved home.

BRIAN & JACKIE GRAY have moved into sheltered accommodation within Swindon.

DAVID & LINDA BRIGGS have changed address within the Melksham area.

Requests for their new addresses should be sent to the Secretary/Treasurer of WRFA who will pass them on to Brian or David.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual subscriptions to WRFA fell due on 1st April. If you have not yet paid, please do so by sending your cheque without further delay or you can pay by fast bank transfer of just **£10.00** to account name **Wiltshire Retired Firefighters Association, Sort Code 77-50-05, Account Number 28196668.**





WRFA Social Life



SUNDAY LUNCH

1.00pm 10th June 2018

**Preceded by Annual General Meeting
at 11.00am**

At Devizes Conservative Club, Long Street

*Booking form from website or with this
newsletter*



Lest We Forget REMEMBRANCE EVENT

10th November 2018

6.30pm

Devizes Town Hall

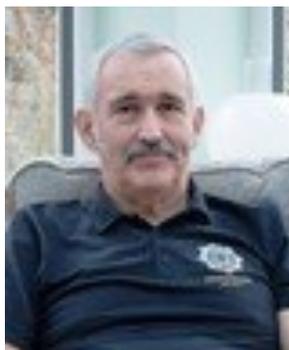
**Two-course Dinner
Band Concert**

**WRFA
Christmas Festive
Lunch
Bear Hotel, Devizes
Saturday 15th
December 2018
1.00pm
Note your diary!**





**Helpline Number
0800 389 8820**



LUDO NOMINATED FOR AWARD

The revival of the Fire Fighters Charity *Spirit of Fire Awards Ceremony* this year brought a call for nominations to receive awards in the various categories. The WRFA Executive Committee at its February meeting took the unanimous decision to nominate **LUDO MACAULAY** for an award in the **RETIRED MEMBERS** category. We now wait to see if he will actually be the award recipient on the night. Best of luck, Ludo!

SHOUT! Magazine

All members of the WRFA should have received by Royal Mail a delivery of the summer edition of SHOUT! Magazine published by the FIRE FIGHTERS CHARITY and targeted at retired members of the fire & rescue service.

If you did not receive your copy, please inform the Secretary/Treasurer of the WRFA, JOHN CRAIG (01380 726343).



'MARTHA'

Preparing for the 75 Challenge

In response to the current 75 MILES CHALLENGE being promoted by the FIRE FIGHTERS CHARITY as a fund raiser, the Chairman of WRFA, **CHRIS WANNELL**, is planning to drive the 75 year old turntable ladder that he owns the 75 miles from Swindon to Bridgwater. Chris has named the appliance, 'Martha' and she has been involved in countless fund raisers for the Charity before. After wartime service in Essex, Martha completed her operational service at Bridgwater as part of the Somerset Fire Brigade fleet.

