



# The Branch



**Christmas 2013**

**The Newsletter of the Wiltshire Retired Firefighters Association**

# Merry Christmas

**The members of the Executive Committee  
send warmest seasonal greetings to all WRFA members  
and your families.**



## **CAROL SERVICE**

The Chief Fire Officer warmly invites all members of this Association to the Wiltshire FRS Carol Service  
7.30pm 12th December  
St. Andrews Church  
Long Street Devizes  
Seasonal refreshments served after the service.  
Family and friends very welcome too.



## **WRFA FESTIVE LUNCH**

**12th December 2013 Noon**  
**Marsh Farm Hotel**  
**Clarendon Suite**  
**ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT**





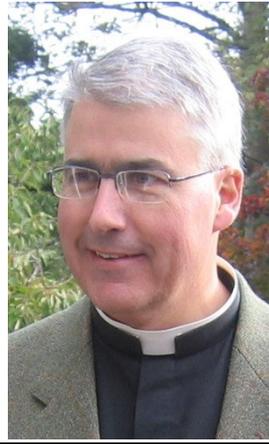
In the magnificent setting of the Assembly Room at

**Devizes Town Hall, the Devizes Town Band is thanked by John Craig for a superb concert.**

(photo by courtesy of John Cox)

## REMEMBRANCE EVENT

Again our Association held an event to pay respect to those who have laid down their lives in war. This was held on 9th November in the Devizes Town Hall. After a delicious dinner served by Sweet Pea Catering, the Devizes Town Band provided a concert of appropriate music that was very much enjoyed. The formal Act of Remembrance followed conducted by Revd. Canon Thomas Woodhouse, Chaplain to the British Fire Services Association. This included the playing of Last Post and Reveille and the observance of two minutes silence.



## CHAPLAIN ON THE MOVE

The news has broken that Revd. Canon Thomas Woodhouse has been appointed as the Team Rector based in Dorchester. Canon Woodhouse has been Vicar of St Bartholomew's in Royal Wootton Bassett for several years and he has also acted as Rural Dean of Calne.

Canon Woodhouse holds the office of Chaplain to the British Fire Services Association, a post he has held for 18 years.

The news that Canon Woodhouse, his wife, Kate, and their four children are to move to Dorchester in February has been received with much dismay by the people of Royal Wootton Bassett.

Many readers of this newsletter will remember Trevor Bassett and his wife, Rosemary. Trevor was DCFO of Wiltshire before moving as CFO of Dorset and is retired in the Dorchester area. Rosemary is ordained and has been Acting Team Rector until Thomas takes over.



## FIREMEN WHO FELL IN THE GREAT WAR



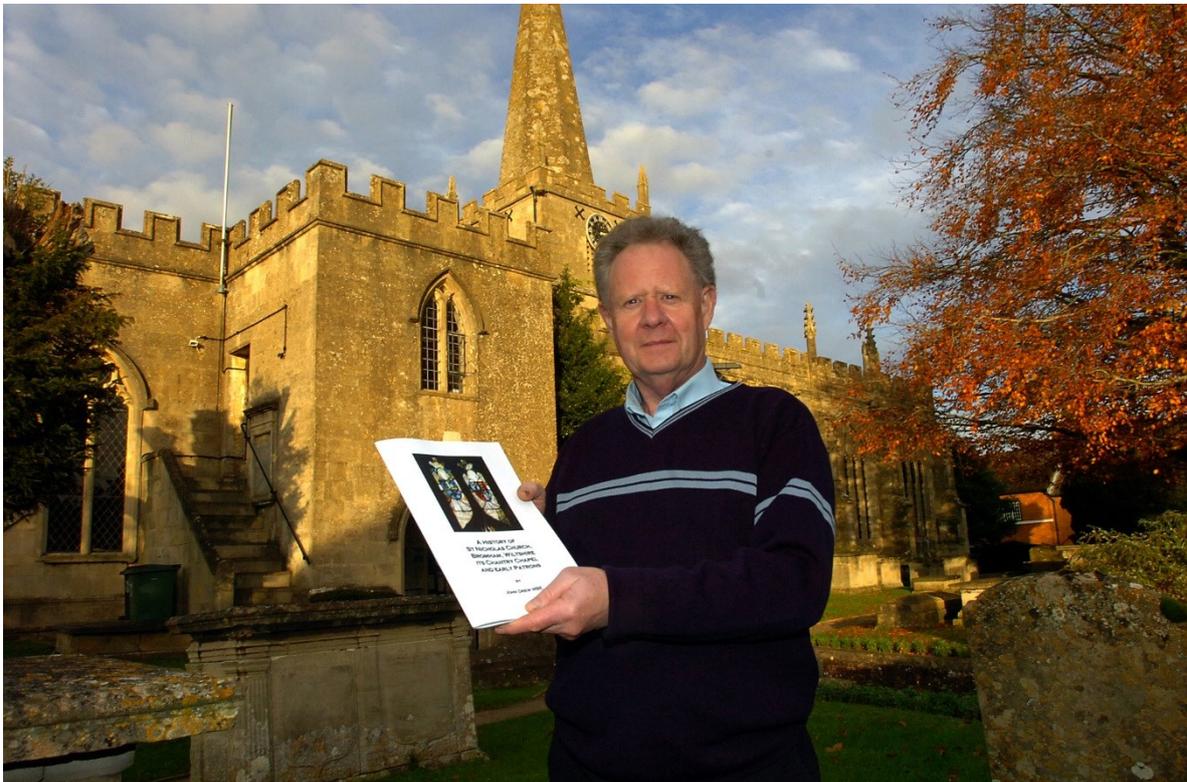
The soldiers in this picture could well have been professional firemen in civvie street before being conscripted to fight in World War One. In 1915, all men under 25 were liable to be conscripted and the reserved occupation status was removed from members of public and private fire brigades. Now a research project has begun by Malcolm Tovey of Leicester and Alan House of Hampshire to create a roll of honour for those ex-firemen who were killed fighting in the war. The photo probably shows a garrison fire appliance somewhere in England. **Photo courtesy of Adrian Pegg (Bath)**



## Steve Williams

WRFA member, Steve Williams, has become a military historian and is seen here teaching school children about World War One. He is dressed in the authentic uniform of the Wiltshire Regiment as worn in the battles of the Great War.

Photo by courtesy of Gazette & Herald newspaper.



## John Drew MBE

WRFA member, John Drew, has just had a book published that took him 8 years to research. The book charts the history of St Nicholas Church, Bromham. John and Carol Drew have lived in the village for 36 years and John is a church warden.

St Nicholas Church was built between 1086 and 1094 and is Grade 1 listed. It was originally built without a spire but one was added in 1510. John's book tells how the spire suffered much damage and reconstruction over the years. In 1735 a man tried to 'fly' down the steeple on a rope using a board with a groove cut into it. This caused part of the spire to collapse and the man's life was only spared when a tree broke his fall.

The book may be purchased from the village post office or from John himself. His phone number is 01380 850908. The price is £8.00 plus postage and packing. Monies raised from the sale will be devoted to the church restoration fund.

Photo by courtesy of Gazette & Herald newspaper.



**Health Matters**  
 News of members dealing with illness



**JANET BRINGLOE**

Janet has had her further operation for breast cancer performed at SDH, Salisbury and reports having come through it very well. A course of radiotherapy has now been prescribed at Southampton. We hope 2014 is a much better year for Janet and Bruce. They so deserve it.

**MARTYN SNELL**

After an exhaustive series of tests at GWH, Swindon, Martyn has been found to have some cancerous cells in his liver for which he is starting a course of mild chemotherapy. We wish Martyn a full recovery and assure him and Liz of our support.

**VI SMITH**

Vi came out of hospital on 28th November after surgery on her bladder and was initially in a lot of pain. She has her daughter, Pat, with her as a carer in the short term and is receiving daily treatment from the community nurse. Vi hopes to have a recuperation break at one of the Fire Fighters Charity centres later. Get well soon, Vi.

**JOHN PERRY**

John has an ulcer on his leg for which he is receiving treatment including antibiotics. John and Maureen are still hoping to be able to attend the Christmas Lunch at Marsh Farm Hotel. We wish them both well and look forward to seeing them soon.

**ALBI RICHARDSON**

After a lengthy period of mysterious illness, Albi's problems have finally been diagnosed as being caused by inappropriate blood pressure medication. He is currently trying new medication and we wish him and Margaret well.

**JOE NASH**

Joe is in the early stages of recovery from a knee replacement operation. His new joint is still very sore and he cannot yet drive. However, he is hoping that the New Year will see him much improved. We hope so!

**PROBABLE BREAKTHROUGH IN PROSTATE CANCER DIAGNOSIS**

Cancer Research UK scientists believe they may have found the way to distinguish between prostate tumours in men that are aggressive and those that require no treatment. Currently, clinicians know that many men diagnosed with this form of cancer are subjected to treatments that can cause incontinence and impotence when their disease will never actually become a threat to life. The latest research has identified that patients with a high level of a protein named as NAALADL2 are those likely to develop the aggressive and life threatening form of the disease and who therefore require surgery and/or other forms of treatment such as radiotherapy/chemotherapy. The research suggests that screening for high levels of this protein will bring the refinement to prostate cancer diagnosis for which doctors have hoped would one day be found. Dr Hayley Whitaker has pointed out that the research he is leading is at an early stage but clinical trials will follow to hopefully confirm this long awaited breakthrough.

## MORE ABOUT HEALTH

### PAT BAXTER

Pat is home after very recently undergoing major spinal surgery for the second time. The condition requiring surgery is rare. Peter is reported to be doing an outstanding job as Pat's carer. A card has been sent to Pat expressing the best wishes of the WRFA for a rapid return to good health.

### HOPE OF A BREAKTHROUGH IN TREATING DEMENTIA

On December 3rd 2013, two major UK charities announced exciting news about the progress being made by researchers looking for a treatment or preventative measures for dementia. The **British Heart Foundation** and the **Alzheimer's Society** announced that the drug **AMLODIPINE** used to treat high blood pressure is showing signs that it can substantially improve memory loss and cognitive health. The drug given in doses of only 10mg per day costs only 4p a day. The treatment and care of dementia sufferers in the UK costs more than the combined costs of dealing with cancer, heart disease and strokes.

A two year clinical trial has started and if the results of these trials confirm early indications

Amlodipine could be licensed for treatment of dementia patients within five years. Jeremy Hughes, the CEO of the Alzheimer's Society has said of this development: as follows

*"It is scandalous that despite affecting 150,000 people there are no effective treatments for vascular dementia and very few new treatments under investigation. This groundbreaking trial could be the best hope we have to get an effective treatment in use in the next decade."*



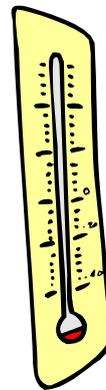
### CANCER SURVIVAL RATES

Cancer survival statistics in the UK are amongst the worst in the European Union despite all the money and resources devoted to cancer prevention, screening and treatment. Part of the reason for this experts feel is due to GPs who are delaying in about 50% of cases referring patients for specialist treatment. For many years, the NHS has pushed out publicity stressing the need to go to your GP the moment you suspect an illness might be cancer but the irony is that in too many cases the GP does not follow guidelines in speedily referring the patient. This is said to indicate a need for GPs to be better trained and given more support.



### SING FOR YOUR HEALTH

Research just published claims to prove that singing, either individually, in small groups or part of a choir, is good for your health. The study found that singing gives a real boost to psychological welfare. Oxford Brookes University conducted the study.



### KEEPING WARM

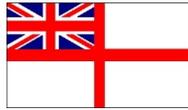
As we move into winter charities and health experts are pointing out that deaths related to the cold weather rose by one third last winter and no one wants to see a repeat of those figures.

The importance of maintaining a warm home or at least one warm room is being emphasised.

If any WRFA member is experiencing difficulty with winter cold, please contact the Association or the Fire Fighters Charity.



# OBITUARY



## William Ian George Williamson

Our Association lost a valued and popular member on 26th October when Ian Williamson, better known to many of us as "Wiggy", passed away in GWH, Swindon. He had endured several years of ill health requiring him to have kidney dialysis and robbing him of his sight in his later years.

Ian was born in May 1934 in Scotland. He joined the Royal Navy aged 16 as a Boy Seaman and he thoroughly enjoyed his time in the navy. He travelled to many parts of the world during his service but his favourite posting was Malta.

On leaving the Royal Navy, Wiggy married his beloved Winnie and they set up home in Pewsey. Wiggy joined the retained fire service at Pewsey and soon found that it provided him with the opportunity for service and camaraderie that he had enjoyed in the Royal Navy. He became one of the station's characters and he served with distinction.

However, his enthusiasm got the better of him when he was part of the Pewsey crew called to a terraced house full of smoke. Someone pointed out a cat seen sitting at a first floor window and without hesitation, Wiggy pitched a ladder, ran up it, smashed the window and entered to rescue the cat...only to find that the moggy was in no danger because it was the wrong house!.

Wiggy's funeral service was held on 7th November at St Mary's Church in Marlborough. It was very well attended.

As a tribute to his great grandfather, Wiggy's little grandson, Finley, was brought to the service wearing Wiggy's miniature medals.

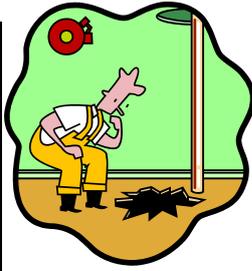
Rest in Peace, Wiggy.

**Born 25th May 1934**

**Answered the Last Call**

**26th Oct. 2013**





# BLUE LIGHT NEWS

## Snippets about the latest happenings in the 999 services



### INTEROPERABILITY FRAMEWORK

The flavour of the month in today's UK emergency services appears to be interoperability. The Government is behind the launch of the **Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP)** which has led to the creation of a joint doctrine called the Interoperability Framework. In simple terms, this new initiative is clearly aimed at improving the way that the blue light services work together at major incidents. The doctrine provides specific guidelines. Since October, a national training programme has been running to train 260 JESIP trainers who will be turned loose on the nation's police, fire and ambulance services in 2014 in order to carry out enough training course to train 18,000 tactical commanders who apparently need to be trained in how to work with the other emergency services.

### AMBULANCE RESPONSE TIMES

Recently released statistics have shown the South West Ambulance Service's response times to 999 calls are the worst in the country. A furious political row has broken out over this matter because the problem is not confined to the South West Ambulance Trust and several other ambulance trusts are also performing badly on response times. Labour is seizing on this as evidence that the Coalition Government is not protecting the NHS adequately. The problem of poor response times by ambulances is said to be linked to the crisis in Accident & Emergency Departments in hospitals that keep ambulances waiting to deliver their patients for too long. The government is defending its position by claiming to have plans to invest more money in A & E department.



Photo courtesy of Wiltshire Times

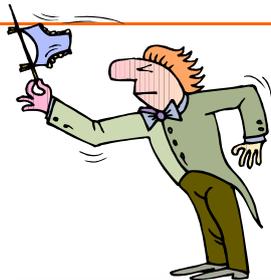
### FBU PENSION DISPUTE

The dispute between the government and the Fire Brigades Union is moving into another phase. On December 4th, the FBU announced that, having secured authority to do so by balloting its members, it is planning to widen the range of industrial action beyond only taking strike action. At the time of going to press, THE BRANCH has no information on what form this extended industrial action will take. The dispute arises from proposed radical changes to the fire pension scheme



### THREE SCOTTISH FIRE DEATHS IN FOUR DAYS

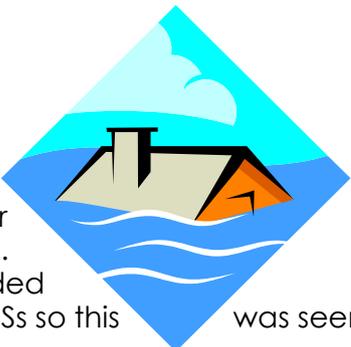
Recently three elderly women died in house fires in Scotland causing the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service to again issue appeals for greater vigilance over the elderly. Home visits by fire fighters are again being offered.



### GLOUCESTERSHIRE FRS HEADS EAST TO ASSIST

When unusual tidal and wind conditions combined on 5th December to create flooding on parts of the east coast of England, Gloucestershire FRS step of offering assistance services in Essex, The assistance was and crews from the were sent to help their leagues in East Anglia. shire were badly flooded was given by other FRSs so this

took the unusual ance to fire and res-Suffolk and Norfolk. gratefully accepted Gloucestershire FRS hard pressed col-Parts of Gloucester- in 2008 and help was seen as returning favours.



### HOT PANTS!

A lady in Guildford sparked a kitchen blaze when she put her knickers in the microwave to dry them. Surrey FRS has issued guidance warning of the dangers of using microwaves for this purpose. Readers of THE BRANCH should use alternative methods of drying knickers.

# Never To Be Forgotten

Bruce and Janet Bringloe have kindly submitted this article about their recent visit to New York

**September 11th, 2001**, a day that will never be forgotten, when the twin towers of the World Trade Centre, New York, were hit by aircraft that had been hijacked by Islamist extremists. Nearly 3,000 people from 90 nations were killed, more than 400 were first responders performing their duty.

We have recently returned from a wonderful cruise to North America and were in New York on 10th and 11th September. With help from Ted Rohlfing, a friend of John Craig, we were introduced to Lee Lelpi, a retired fire fighter and a man of exceptional courage. Lee's son was a fire fighter whose life was taken on 9/11. Lee has since channelled his energy to achieve a wonderful memorial in the Tribute Centre, next to a fire station. The centre brings together



Manhattan today with its twin beams of light where the twin towers once stood.

personal experiences of many that were involved in that fateful day. The galleries convey the tragedy and also the passionate response from around the world. Reading the words of those closely affected was a very humbling experience. The human spirit is remarkably courageous and resilient in times of tragedy. Security, as you would expect, is extremely tight, but Lee enabled us to visit, as family members, the National memorial, a huge privilege.

The National Memorial honours the men, women and children who perished in the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 and February 26th, 1993. The two pools, with 32 foot waterfalls cascading into them have been built on the footprints of the twin towers and around the perimeter of the pools inscribed in bronze are the names of the victims, including the aircraft passengers. The arrangement of names is based on "meaningful adjacencies" that reflect where victims were and relationships they shared with others lost on that day. Many of the families were carrying photographs and as they gathered we heard them speaking of the lives of their loved ones in a positive vein as they placed their flowers near the names. There were some tears but also many smiles on the faces of those remembering. Our emotions were with them.

The mission statement on the memorial reads as follows:

***May the lives remembered, the deeds recognized, and the spirit reawakened be eternal beacons, which reaffirm respect for life, strengthen our resolve to preserve freedom, and inspire an end to hatred, ignorance and intolerance.***

**TO BE CONTINUED** : the next edition of **THE BRANCH** will carry the report of Bruce and Janet's visit to St. Paul's Chapel, Manhattan, that played a significant part in the 9/11 story.

## ABOUT OUR PENSIONS!

### **FAIRER COMMUTATION CAMPAIGN**

This relates to males on the Fireman's Pension Scheme who retired between 1998 and 2005. A campaign spearheaded by the FBU is in progress to **pursue a claim for additional commutation**. It is a complex matter but if the campaign succeeds it should bring substantial additional commutation sums to thousands of our male fire pensioners.

Not surprisingly, the Government is doing all in its power to resist the claims for fairer commutation and has resorted to the courts to stave off the campaigner's appeal for the Pension Ombudsman to mount an investigation.

However, progress is being made and the legal process has failed to give the Government the outcome it was hoping for which means that the Pension Ombudsman is free to carry out his investigation, the outcome of which is awaited.

### **STATE PENSION INCREASE**

The UK State Pension will be increased by £2.95 from April 2014. This is a rise of 2.7%.

If public sector pensions are adjusted in the same way, they should also be raised by 2.7% but at the time of going to press **THE BRANCH** has no confirmation of this.

Research has shown that the UK State Pension is one of the least generous in the developed world with only that of Mexico being less generous to pensioners.



# FIRE MARKS

By Martyn Snell

Martyn has just joined WRFA .  
He has an interest in fire marks.



Martyn Snell

The early part of my service with Wiltshire Fire Brigade as a retained fire fighter was materialising into fire and water because my fulltime job was with Wessex Water. Whilst on holiday I picked up a book called **Shires Album No.2 FIRE MARKS**. In this book it explains that after the Great Fire of London in 1666 Sun Insurance opened its first office in 1710 and those who took out insurance with that company were given the opportunity to have a **fire mark** as evidence that they were insured with that company Some of the marks bore the policy number too.

In my home town of Malmesbury I can remember there being four fire marks, but one in the High Street is now missing. The other three I have recorded and photographed to try to secure

When I began working fulltime for Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service as a Hydrant Technician I was covering north Wiltshire. From the Fire Brigade Museum I obtained a list of fire marks in Wiltshire. This list gave me the inspiration to search for and locate the listed fire marks. Many hours in the evenings and weekends were spent plotting potential locations and planning the finding of them fitted in with my hydrant maintenance duties. Following this I was told of a book **British Fire Marks** written by Brian Wright. I purchased this book and it indicated to me that many of the original insurance companies have since disappeared.

One of the first locations I visited was the village of Urchfont. There I noticed that two of the listed fire marks were missing. This was hard to understand because I had seen them when I visited the village several weeks before. The first mark was of the West of England insurance company over a shop in the High Street but only one third could be seen because the bottom portion was under a clay tiled ridge along a slate abutting roof. The second was on 'The Green' fixed to a red brick built house with a brick canopy, slate finished. It had the Sun fire mark No. 685634 mounted in the porch. I made contact with the lady owner of the house and she was very pleased and told me she thought that the fire mark was genuine. We emailed the Sun Alliance archivist and awaited his reply. His answer came. He even sent to us a copy of the original policy which matched the number on the fire mark. It also gave the name of the person who insured the property. My belief was that the woodhouse on the gable end had burnt down leaving the rest of the property as it stands today.

Here is a copy of the entry from the Royal & Sun Alliance Archives

**675634 Robert Peirce of the Parish of Enford in Wilts. Breeches maker. £100**  
**On his House and the Woodhouse adjoining at Urchfont in Wilts in Duty 2/-**  
**Xmas 1799 Tenure of John Peirce Senior thatched not exceeding One**  
**Whitfield Hundred pounds**  
**W.Godfrey J.Chalie G.Mansone**

Anyone in this type of employment at that time (breeches maker) would probably have used fuelled heat for his leather work. Today a gas Bunsen burner stands on a saddlers bench top to do this work.

Most of the fire marks were in a prominent position and well secured because they had to be clearly visible to show which company had the property insured. Unfortunately many that I have been unable to locate have either been removed and sold on the open market by collectors or house owners have moved and taken the fire mark with them. Realising that these fire marks are part of our heritage, I contacted conservation officers and asked them to consider listing fire marks as part of the fabric of the building to avoid them being removed.

As I travelled the county, I recorded and photographed as many fire marks as I possibly could to build up a visual record. Insurance was big business and fire marks proudly sat projecting out on gable ends of buildings, from tythe barn doors and mansion house porches. For obvious reasons not many thatched properties had fire marks on them and those that did were of brick or stone construction.

No one could have been more privileged than I when I found the only Salamander Mark on a barn at Chapple Knapp. Also, I found the Fire Life Farmers mark hidden away on a preserved barn in West Lavington.



Fire Life Farmers Fire Mark



Salamander Fire Mark



## SOCIAL EVENTS

Where all the flings are being flung and when



## ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCING

What could develop into an exciting new venture for WRFA is on offer from Colin and Heather Hill who have kindly agreed to organise ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCE sessions for us. They need a quick response from members and friends that would like to be involved or to know more.

Initially, please contact John Craig on 01380 726343 who will put you in touch with Colin and Heather.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

16th March 2014 Lunch at Grasmere House Hotel, Salisbury  
8th November 2014 Remembrance Event, Devizes Town Hall



## Good News! We're Going Back to the Grasmere House!

Our previous Sunday Lunches at the Grasmere House Hotel in Salisbury have proved so popular that we are returning there on 16th March 2014.

Watch for the booking form after Christmas.

### WHAT JUBILEE HOUSE MEANS TO JOHN & MAUREEN PERRY

John and I have recently been to Jubilee House for a two week stay. It is a very impressive place and a treat to which to go. We were there in December 2012, also for two weeks, and this latest visit was a continuation of our treatment. We have a stop-over about half way because it is 291 miles from our bungalow in Wilton to Jubilee House. By breaking the journey we are not as tired when we arrive.

From the moment you arrive until you leave, you feel as if you are in a 'bubble' ...secure from all worries and the outside world. NO phone ringing...NO hospital or doctor's appointments.

John had his leg partially amputated in August 2012. Among other ailments he has a serious respiratory problem (C.O.P.D) which is holding back his progress with walking. I have a back problem that is ongoing and not helped by pushing John's wheelchair and lifting it in and out of the car.

At Jubilee House John receives physiotherapy, use of the hydrotherapy pool, gym and exercise room. The nursing staff take over his care completely and wheel him everywhere. They look after him 24/7 just as I have to do when we are at home. Nothing is too much trouble for them. The only thing I still have to do is give John his medication. In all other respects I have a complete break from being his every day carer. I am also very well looked after. Like John I have use of the Hydrotherapy pool, the gym and the exercise room and take walks that are programmed into my schedule of treatment.

We thoroughly enjoy our time at Jubilee House and recommend its benefits to anyone that needs them. While there, your ailments are regarded as confidential and you do not have to discuss such matters with the other clients there under treatment. There is a bar if you want an alcoholic drink and a lounge area to give you somewhere to sit other than your own room.

In summary, we would state that Jubilee House can be thoroughly recommended as can Marine Court in Littlehampton and Harcombe House near Chudleigh. **MAUREEN PERRY**

### The Chairman urges us forward

**KEN SEAGER**, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees has published an upbeat report looking back on the achievements the Fire Fighters Charity has made in 2013. Calling it an Impact Report, the Chairman leaves the reader in no doubt that the charity is making progress and doing so in a harsh economic climate. The Five Year Plan to which the charity is working is ambitious and is committing the charity to additional expenditure. The Impact Report uses some case histories as examples of the huge difference to the lives of beneficiaries the charity is making.

However, progress comes with a price tag attached. The trustees knew when they approved it that the first three years of the plan would mean the charity going into deficit but the last two years of the plan will hopefully see black ink replacing red on the balance sheet. BUT, this won't happen unless we all commit to giving even

greater support.. The charity needs to increase its income by £1m per year and the hope is that we shall all examine ourselves to see how we can help to make this happen. Fund raising must be boosted.



Ken Seager

**ARE YOU IN THE REGULAR GIVER SCHEME TO OUR CHARITY? IF YOU ARE NOT, WHY NOT JOIN NOW?**

**Contact John Craig 01380 726343**

FFC INCOME 2012/13 £7,952,529

FFC EXPENDITURE 2012/13 £8,335,806



# We have winners!



**Talented Tui's winning entry.**  
Santa gives Rudolph a rest and uses a fire engine for motive power.

## TUI IS A WINNER!

Tui Jackson is the daughter of WRFA member, Rob Jackson, and Sarah-Jane Jackson. Tui is seven and she won the competition run by the Fire Fighters Charity to design the charity's Christmas card this year.

We are so proud of you, Tui



## 'BELINDA' THE LEYLAND WINS FOR THE WANNELL FAMILY



**Chris makes an acceptance speech while Audrey gleefully clutches the trophy**



### 'BELINDA' IS A WINNER

Chris Wannell's 1930's vintage Leyland Pump won 'Best In Show' at the Woodcote Steam Rally. Woodcote is near Reading. Chris has named the pump 'Belinda'.



The money raised from the rally is donated to several good causes most of which are connected with village life but some went to the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight



Tony Oliver

## FOCUS ON TONY

**TONY OLIVER** retired from Wiltshire Fire Brigade in November 2004 and joined this association. He is married to Linda and they live in Salisbury.

Tony has always had an interest in photography and retirement gave him more time to devote to his love of this hobby. As soon as he had retired he joined the **Salisbury Camera Club**. He is still a member and for three years held the post of club Chairman. He is currently the Vice Chairman and Competition Secretary.

In 2006 Tony joined the **Royal Photographic Society (RPS)** having won free membership for one year by winning a competition in *Wiltshire Life* magazine. The winning entry was a photograph entitled *Stratford Sub-Castle Winter's Dawn*. (See below)



In 2009, Tony became a Licentiate of the PRS and attained a similar qualification with the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain. The right to put the letters LRPS and CPAGB after his name was hard won. Tony had to submit examples of his photography to independent panels for assessment.

Further evidence of his skill and expertise with a camera comes with the fact that Tony has had several examples of his work chosen for National Exhibition.

Tony acts as a Photographic Judge for the Southern Counties Photographic Federation and this entails visiting the federation's camera clubs and critiquing the work of their members.

Tony is not resting on his laurels and is always seeking ways to develop his own photographic knowledge and skills. He has a particular interest in researching the work of famous photographers over the last 100 years.

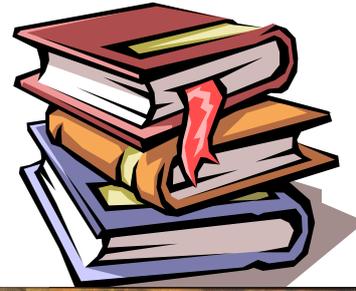
If you wish to see more of Tony's work, readers are encouraged to visit his personal website

**[www.aropics.com](http://www.aropics.com)**



## Book Reviews

Stuck to know what to buy as a Christmas gift? You might find the answer on this page!



### Firemen Artists 1940-45

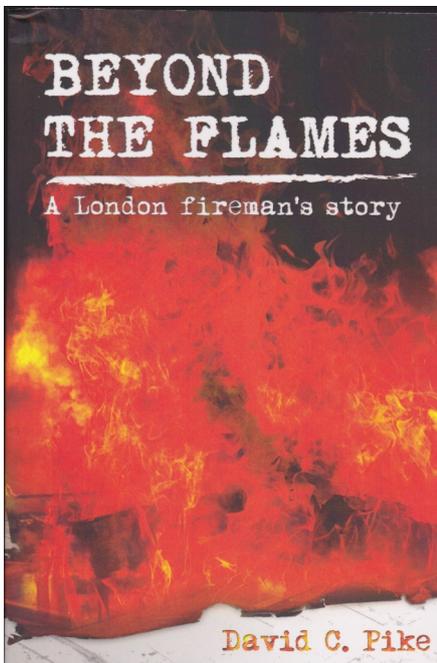
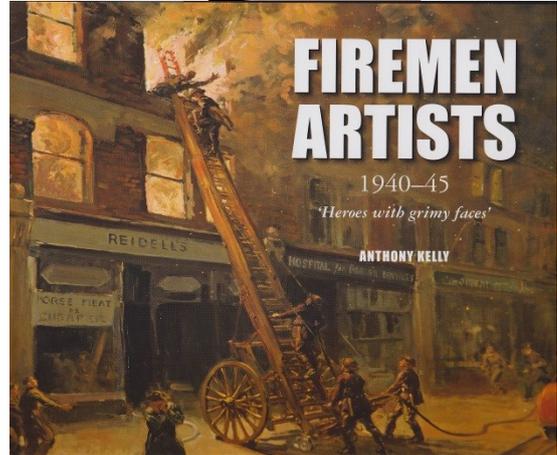
#### Heroes with Grimy Faces

During World War II, a number of painters and designers were among the thousands recruited into the wartime UK fire service. These men participated in some of the most challenging operational situations that any fire fighter will ever face and they used their talents to produce paintings of these historic events. Anthony Kelly has compiled many of their best works into this superbly edited and produced volume that I consider is worth every penny of its £24.99 price tag.

The firemen/artists got themselves organised during the war and they staged exhibitions of their work raising money for the fire service charities in doing so.

The paintings of the Blitz fire fighting cover between them just about every operational activity., but in order to record the full picture of what life was like in the wartime fire brigade, many of the paintings show life as it was on the fire station. Although the title of the book is "Firemen Artists", some of the paintings included in the book were the work of women. For example, one particularly eye catching image is a water colour drawing of a fire woman changing her clothes and the model in question hasn't got a stitch on above the waist. It was painted by Julia Lowenthal.

I heartily recommend this book to anyone with an interest in art and/or the wartime history of the British Fire Service. Published by Halsgrove Press in hardback only ISBN 978-1-906690-48-9 **JOHN CRAIG**



### Beyond the Flames

#### A London fireman's Story

Author David C. Pike

The author has produced in paperback a very comprehensive personal account of his service in the LFB from 1965 to 1996. He joined under the Junior Fireman Scheme and after basic training was posted to Red Watch B22 Lambeth to serve out his probationary period. As his career progressed he was moved to other stations and different references. Many of the names mentioned are people that I knew too and it is interesting to read the way in which David Pike perceived these individuals including the Chief Fire Officers under which he served. There is even a brief mention of the late Jeff Townley who retired to Wiltshire with his wife Margaret and who became a member of our association.

David's account misses very few details and covers issues ranging from the FBU strike in 1977 to an extra marital dalliance he embarked upon with a lady member of the brigade.

Many now serving with only a few years under their belts will probably read with horror and disgust David's frequent mentions of the large part

that alcohol played in the on-duty life of the LFB in his days. For example, he writes about attending a working job as part of a pump crew when the station officer in charge was drunk and incapable but this was covered up. Also, interviews with senior ranks were often conducted with the interviewing officer clutching a glass of whisky.

Price in paperback £12.99 publisher **AUSTIN MACAULEY.**

**JOHN CRAIG**

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