

The Retired Prison Governors

In co-operation with: The Prison Governors Association

NEWSLETTER



Founded in 1980 by Arthur Williamson – 34 years of continuous publication

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EDITORIAL

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19. Views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Prison Governors Association, Retired Prison Governors Association or those of the Editor



My understanding that countries wishing to be eligible to join the European Community is that their public services and human rights must be of a standard acceptable to fellow members and on a par to that which fellow members deliver. It comes therefore, (although I know it shouldn't) as somewhat of a surprise to discover that of the 10,500 foreign nationals being held in British prisons, almost 2,000 are E.U citizens. A recent court ruling prevented the transfer back to Lithuania of one of its citizens because the jail conditions in that country breaches human rights. I'm led to believe there are over 400 Lithuanian prisoners incarcerated in our prisons, who, because of this court ruling, must continue to

be a burden to the Service and a cost to the British tax payer.

There are a total of nine states which have to date not ratified the deal thus leaving 1,600 of their kinsfolk being detained in our jails.

All 28 member states were supposed to have ratified a deal allowing the compulsory transfer of prisoners back to their respective states by the end of 2011. This deadline has now been pushed back to May 2015.

You can further bet that once/if ratification is agreed, few if any of those in our prisons will be in a rush to be repatriated, and our courts will be bursting with appeals under the Human Rights Act.

Retirement

Having served 10 years as a PGA representative at Littlehey and Gartree respectively plus almost 15 years serving on the RPGA

Committee, I feel the time has come for me to step down and allow younger fresh blood, who will be more up to date with current prison service regimes, to take my place. This therefore will be the final edition of the Newsletter which will be edited by me. Paul Laxton has offered his services to take over as your new editor and I look forward with some degree of pleasure in reading the future editions. I would wish to take this opportunity to give my thanks to all of you who have contributed the many and varied articles to me. They have and continue to be the very lifeblood of this publication.

I must further record my special thanks to Jenny Adams Young who has acted as proof reader to the Newsletter, a task which is not only extremely onerous but also extremely important. I will continue to manage the email register until my term of office on the committee expires at the next AGM in June of this year.

Submissions for inclusion in the Autumn edition of the Newsletter should be sent to Paul.

Harry Brett will be acting as your email register coordinator from June onwards. I started the register some 13 years ago and, in addition to the newsletter, it has proved to be a successful means of communication between retired colleagues.

Retired Prison Governors Management Committee

Chairman.... Graham Smith, Secretary.....Ray London, Treasurer Graham Mumby-Croft, Membership Secretary.... Harry Brett

Newsletter Editorial Team.... Mick Roebuck, Paul Laxton, Jenny Adams Young

Letters Editor.....Bob Duncan PSPC Representatives.... Paul Laxton, Jan Thompson

Committee Dave Taylor, Alan Hall

RPGA-MAIL REGISTER

The e-mail register has now been operational for over 12 years and has proven itself to be an effective means of rapid communication between members.

It offers updates on current prison events 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 ever growing register please send an email from the address you wish to have registered to Mick Roebuck email: **mjroe68@gmail.com**

E-mail addresses may 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 email address you must inform Mick Roebuck, otherwise you will cease to receive further updates.



50 YEARS AGO

By Michael Selby

On August 13 1964 at 8 o'clock in the morning Peter Anthony Allen was executed by hanging at Walton Gaol, Liverpool. At the exactly same time Gwynne Owen Evans was executed at Strangeways Prison in

Manchester. Both for the murder of John Alan West on 7 April.

This was the last time that executions took place in the United Kingdom.

The following account, relevant to this event, has some interest.

Recently promoted to be Deputy Governor of Everthorpe Closed Borstal, I was selected to be a member of a Senior Course in Criminology at the Institute of Criminology at Cambridge, in early July of that same year. It was for 3 weeks; a collection of police, probation officers, psychologists, prison officials, magistrates and others connected with the process were gathered together and housed in considerable comfort in Harvey Court, part of Gonville and Caius College. I was the youngest there and my most significant contribution was to take my tennis racquet with me, arrange that Bill Driscoll and Ben Lyte should do likewise and we played every afternoon after the last lecture. Present, also, as a member of the course was a Senior Medical Officer from prison in the north. He made a quiet thoughtful contribution but was absent on several days-called away on some undisclosed task.

Curiously Capital Punishment was not on our agenda, there was more concern at the

30 years sentences handed out to the Great Train robbers.

On the last Friday of the course we had been all sent away to visit various facilities and I chose Grendon prison, just recently opened. I returned full of enthusiasm which I unable to share because no feed back discussion was programmed. Instead there was a Formal Dinner in College for which we were required to wear dinner jackets and the guest of honour was the Permanent Secretary, Sir Charles Cunningham himself, no less.; the dreaded C.C.C. It was rumoured the Home Secretary –Henry Brooke-was well under his thumb.

The seating was so arranged that I sat next to the doctor and opposite C.C.C. Sir Charles started with a genial remark to the doctor-clearly they had met before- about one of the convicted murderers awaiting execution, doubting his truthfulness. He required a meeting after the dinner. The doctor unhappily, it seemed to me, nodded in acquiesce.

The dinner meandered on with a speech by Sir Charles, with leaden 'jokes' inserted to lighten the more boring parts. We broke up early, the evening was benign and warm: whilst the others returned to Harvey Court, I waited and waited.

Eventually the doctor emerged, shoulders bent, slowly dragging along, clearly distressed. I suggested we took a different way, he agreed and we meandered down King's Parade, slipped down the side of King's College then on to Queens' College. The Tudor Courts was restful in the moonlight, we walked through and on to the Mathematical Bridge where we stopped. The river was sliding past, the scene serene and peaceful.

"What is going to happen?" I asked.

"They are going to hang, the decision has just been made. It was my medical opinion that there was insufficient evidence submitted by the defence medical team to mitigate and save them and..... I am against hanging. It is my medial judgement that is going to kill them." He was in agony and the cry seemed wrenched out of him.

We stood there, I don't know for how long. Then without another word we continued back to Harvey Court. The course dispersed the next morning-after, for me, a sleepless night.

Sure enough on the following Tuesday there was an announcement that the Queen was unable to exercise the prerogative of Mercy.

To my regret we never met again, he died soon afterwards.

Extract from John Timpson's newspaper column published in the Daily Telegraph Business Section on Monday 29th September, 2014

Question

I saw you being interviewed on television last year and saw that you successfully recruit people from prison. I have a meeting at a local prison, to discuss how I could help those released get back into work. What advice can you give me?

Answer

You can help people leaving prison with mentoring, interview tips and training but what they really need is a job. Some 61% of prison leavers re-offend within two years; nationally, that drops to 19% for those with a job, and in our experience that figure is much lower. We have 370 people who joined us from prison or are working in one of our prison workshops (with a guarantee of an interview on their release).

The scheme started when my son James was visiting Thorn Cross, a prison near Warrington, and was so impressed by Matt, who showed him round, that he gave him a business card and said, "When you get out give me a ring and I'll find you a job." Matt, now a branch manager, was such a success we were keen to help others like him. With very few companies keen to put ex-offenders on the payroll we reckoned we could pick up some star performers and do some good. Over the past 11 years we've learnt a lot of lessons but never doubted the wisdom of employing people from prison.

You can't help everyone. At first, encouraged by well-meaning prison officers, we took on some inmates who were career criminals or had drug problems or mental health issues that got in the way of work. We now do the picking ourselves. Prisons vary, and it makes a big difference if the governor "gets it". Work with prisons that are keen to help with rehabilitation, especially those that encourage Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL). Day release allows prisoners to prepare for work before their parole. We have about 40 people currently working on ROTL - at least 10 are managers of their shop while spending each night in prison.

A lot of employers tell themselves they can't take on ex-prisoners, citing the security risk or adverse publicity. We were also wary of the reaction of colleagues, but couldn't have been more wrong. Our colleagues have taken pride in training people from prison and the scheme has done our reputation more good than we could ever have imagined. Companies that won't interview people from prison should also realise that 20% of all people over 25 have a conviction.

A lot of our success is due to having the right person to do the recruiting and look after the welfare of our ex-offenders. Everyone needs a man like Dennis Phillips, from our People Support Team, who took on the challenge and taught us the importance of solving the problems our ex-offenders face outside work. Now helped by Darren (an ex-offender himself), Dennis deals with issues such as relationship breakdown, contact with children, housing, probation, mental health and financial problems. Ex-offenders get a low credit score and find it hard to get insurance, a mortgage and even a credit card. By providing a job you are giving them a chance to get their lives back on track and, if our experience is anything to go by, you will gather a lot of talented recruits.

My advice to businesses is simple. Take the bull by the horns, interview some prison leavers and give the best ones a job. I don't guarantee they will all be perfect. But I can guarantee that if you need advice, I am happy for you to contact our team.

John Timpson is the chairman of high-street cobbler and key-cutter Timpson

Produced by kind permission of the daily Telegraph



A Short History of the Probation Service

By John Berry

Probation has a history of reforming offenders stretching back more than 100 years with the current changes being made to the probation service one has to ask the question will it still be successfully reforming offenders in another 100 years?

1870s

Frederick Rainer makes a five shilling donation to the Church of England Temperance Society to help break the cycle of offence after offence and sentence after sentence. The Society appoints a 'missionary' to Southwark court and the London Police Court Mission is

born.

1880s

The mission opens homes and shelters - but the Probation of First Offenders Act 1887 contains no element of offender supervision.

1900s

The Probation Service is formally established in 1907. Between 1910 and 1930 the prison population halves, probation has played a major part.

1920s

The 1925 Criminal Justice Act establishes probation committees and the appointment of probation officers becomes a requirement of the courts.

1940s

The 1948 Criminal Justice Act introduces prison after-care and provides for funding of Probation Homes and Hostels.

1950s

The Central Council of Probation - the forerunner of the Probation Association - is formed to speak with one voice for all employee probation committees. Home Secretary Rab Butler attends and says: "I think that your service is perhaps the most devoted in the country."

1960s

Work in prisons has become an integral part of the Probation Service's task. In 1966 the number of probation areas is reduced from 104 to 84 and a year later the Criminal Justice Act introduces parole supervision.

1970s

Community Service Orders are introduced in 1972, designed to be punitive in depriving the offender of leisure time, but constructive in benefiting the community and changing the offender's outlook.

1980s

The Carlisle Review of Parole proposes a coherent system for supervised early release from prison and an Audit Commission Review produces a framework for probation intervention.

1990s

The Criminal Justice Act 1991 gives the Probation Service the lead on all manner of new community sentences. In 1998 a new administration introduces legislative changes, including drug testing orders and new youth justice provision. Electronic tagging arrives.

2000s

The Carter Report proposes an entirely different approach for offender management, with a unified prison and probation service.

2001

The 54 probation areas are reduced to 42 to achieve co-terminosity with other criminal justice agencies. The service operates under a National Directorate, directly accountable to the Home Secretary.

2002

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) come into force, placing a responsibility upon probation staff, in partnership with the police, prison service and others, to protect the public from sexual and violent offenders.

2003

All case work and all reports to include an assessment of risk of dangerousness of offenders.

2004

An amalgamation of prison and probation services with the forming of a National Offender Management Service (NOMS).

2005

The Management of Offenders and Sentencing Bill is introduced in the House of Lords.

2006

The results of the Home Office consultation on its proposals for probation are published.

2007

The service celebrates its centenary. Statistics show that probation met its six-year target to reduce re-offending by 5%. The creation of probation trusts is enshrined in the Offender Management Act.

2008

Moves continue towards a more competitive environment for probation through the creation of public sector trusts.

2010

From April 1, the 34 probation areas and eight trusts that existed through 2009 become 35 self-governing probation trusts accountable to the Secretary of State for Justice through 10 regional Directors of Offender Management.

2014 The Future

Under the Ministry of Justice's plans, new probation trusts will supervise 200,000 low and medium risk offenders, including 45,000 short-sentence prisoners who currently do not receive any probation monitoring. The contracts are worth around £450m a year over seven years.

Six of the 21 partnerships announced by the Ministry involve the crime reduction charity Nacro and Sodexo, a French conglomerate that says it delivers "quality of life services" through almost 500,000 employees in 80 countries. Interserve, a support services business, is the lead company in five of the largest partnerships. Nationwide, 16 charities are part of the partnerships, alongside four organisations formed by current probation staff.

In each of the 21 areas, ministers say that the partnerships - known as Community Rehabilitation Companies (or CRCs) - will work with low and medium risk offenders for a year after they leave jail to try to stabilise their lives and help to prevent them from reoffending.

The probation service, split earlier this year in preparation for the new system, will continue to supervise high-risk ex-offenders.

Community Rehabilitation Companies: 21 Partnerships in detail

- Bidding for six contracts - Sodexo Justice Services and rehabilitation charity Nacro (Northumbria, Cumbria & Lancs; S Yorks, Beds, Northants, Cambs and Herts; Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk)
- Bidding for five: Purple Futures: Interserve PLC, social enterprise 3SC and charities Addaction, P3 and Shelter (Humberside, Lincs and N Yorks; W Yorks, Cheshire & Greater Manchester; Merseyside; Hants and Isle of Wight)
- Achieving Real Change in Communities: Joint venture including probation staff, housing association charities, NHS and local councils (Durham and Tees Valley)
- Bidding for two: The Reducing Reoffending Partnership: Joint venture including Ingeus UK, and charities St Giles Trust and Crime Reduction Initiatives (Staffs and W Midlands; Derbyshire, Leics, Notts and Rutland)
- Bidding for three: Working Links: Public-private-voluntary partnership including probation staff mutual company (Wales, Bristol, Glos, Somerset and Wiltshire; Dorset, Devon & Cornwall)
- Geo Mercia Willowdene: Joint venture involving probation staff, social enterprise and Geo Group UK (Warks and W Mercia)
- Bidding for two: MTCNovo: Joint venture including companies MTC and Amey, probation staff, two charities, social landlord and a college (Thames Valley and London)
- Seetec: A business providing welfare to work schemes (Kent, Surrey and Sussex)

The question we all want answering is will it work? If it does and fewer people are returned back to prison then the reduction in overcrowding may enable prison staff, such as there are due to massive reductions to do something constructive with prisoners. I know that the National Probation service is concerned that difficult to supervise prisoners will be "pushed up" for them to manage, leaving the easier ones with the community rehabilitation companies. Still if we don't innovate then we stagnate!

SOCIALS

Over the last few years, the numbers attending the Members Social Weekend has dwindled, to such an extent that it is no longer viable.

In its place we have introduced a Reunion prior to the AGM at Newbold Revel, this is proving quite popular, but we have noticed that most attending live locally.

We are sure that distance and travel difficulties are deterring people from attending. Consequently, we have had the idea that regional or local meetings may be more popular.

If you are interested in organising or attending a local gathering please contact Ray London. It doesn't have to be a formal structured meeting, a chat over tea or a pint may be more convenient. We can use our email Register to advertise any meeting and drum up support.

By being a member of the RPGA you are showing interest in former colleagues, this is an opportunity to extend those opportunities.

Ray London: raymond_london@hotmail.com or 07858 263941.

Crackdown on Violence in Prisons

From:

[Ministry of Justice](#) and [Andrew Selous MP](#)

First published:

16 November 2014

A major step forward in the fight against violence in prisons has been announced by the Ministry of Justice (MOJ).

The new joint protocol produced by the Prison Service, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) will set out that when there are serious assaults on prison staff, the perpetrators will be prosecuted unless there is a good reason why not.

The protocol will also provide robust guidelines for joint working between prisons, police and CPS to ensure that wherever possible prisoners who commit serious assaults on staff or other serious crimes – such as hostage taking, arson, absconds – are punished through the courts. It will help to improve crime reporting and information sharing and most importantly it will improve the service to victims of crime in prisons, especially hard-working prisons staff. It will be fully implemented in prisons in England and Wales before the end of the financial year.

It is already the case that there is a presumption that sentences for offences committed in prison will be served at the end of, rather than alongside, the initial prison sentence. The protocol will help reinforce this.

This new approach sits within the Prison Service's wider violence reduction strategy, focused on reducing violent behaviour and making the most of the latest technology such as body worn cameras. Work is already underway in London aimed at tackling gang-related crime in London prisons.

The MOJ has also put forward new legislation in the Serious Crime Bill now going through Parliament to ensure that prisoners who possess knives and other offensive weapons in prison will face prosecution under a new criminal offence punishable by up to four years in prison. This will further strengthen the measures available to tackle the most serious violence in our prisons.

Prisons Minister Andrew Selous said:

I am delighted that this new approach to investigating crime in prisons will ensure that those that attack staff are prosecuted and fully brought to justice. It will mean that more of the prisoners who assault staff will spend longer behind bars.

Violence in prisons is not tolerated and assaults on our hardworking staff are unacceptable. I do not underestimate the hard work and challenges that prison staff face on a daily basis which is why we have been working extremely closely with the police and CPS to tackle this issue.

adult responsibility for minors but is insistence sufficient. Only a couple of days ago was I in a local store where a youngster was running amok whilst the mother - assuming it was the mother - simply stood by. Customers quickly exited and business was lost.

All the evidence shows that lack of caring and responsible parents ultimately leads to the children becoming out of control and susceptible to drugs, sex and rock 'n roll as well such as grooming by perverted adults.

Surely any discussion about child abuse should look at the wider picture and include the issue of parental care.

In a similar vein should we not be totally inclusive when we discuss the issue of free speech. Following the gun attack by offended Muslims last week in Paris as they killed journalists from Charlie Hebdo, the civilised world rose up in protest and, of course, understandably so, the focus of the protests was the right to freedom of expression. The pencil was held aloft to signify the power of the pen over the sword.

Not for one moment am I advocating violence in retaliation for the publishing of offensive material. All the same should we not ask ourselves just how far can the media push out the boundaries of decency; how far can individuals and organisations criticise other individuals and organisations in their, often vitriolic, pursuit to denigrate. Recently I have noticed some television advertising pushing the boundaries of what I see as decency. A holiday company called 'Booking.com' repeats over its promotion the words, "Booking wonderful, booking marvellous." Some may say we are seeing a change of standards in society rather than a lowering of standards. Maybe. But surely there are lines of decency and respect that should be held. If not, then just where are the lines to be drawn. Will it be acceptable to insult others on the basis we are entitled to free speech? Will it be acceptable to use pornography to sell washing up powder? Why not? We are already skirting around the use of sex to sell most things.

One of my favourite journalists, Rod Liddle, is often taking swipes at the Catholic Church. This must hurt some devout Catholics. Maybe the advice should be to steer clear of anything you find offensive. Private Eye takes satire to its limits and I wonder just why any half reasonable person would ever take up politics. Perhaps it is fair sport to take pot shots at the establishment but then should we wonder at the quality of those left to lead us as they are left stranded and naked on a broken pedestal. Seems we provide far more protection for minority groups against discrimination proving that we can limit free speech when we see it as necessary.

Freedom of speech and of expression has always been limited to what society judges as decent and inoffensive. The problem comes when part of society could not care less, part take serious offence and part of our society take pleasure in actually causing offence. Clearly what one person sees as liberating another sees as libel. It was ever thus and it remains controversial as well as fascinating.

In this piece I am suggesting that when ever we, as a society, as a government, get into serious discussions we should always be inclusive. Include all the angles. Just how free can free speech become; how far can we go in offending and insulting others such as minority groups before lines of common decency prevail. Then what you may define as a line of decency I may see as a failure to speak out.

Here's an interesting plea by Police Scotland put out over the recent Christmas period, "Please be aware that we will continue to monitor comments on social media and any offensive comments will be investigated." Wow!

Tomorrow (it is 13th January as I write) we see the mass publication of the satirical paper, 'Charlie Hebdo' as millions of copies are sent around the world with caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad. I think I understand the rationale but will the hardline Islamists?

In summary I am suggesting we take on board the whole subject under discussion and in so doing take a closer look at the counter-arguments. Unfortunately I see this suggestion as running against the grain of our nature but I see no harm in suggesting it anyway.

We have always had a complex and challenging prison population but are taking appropriate steps to ensure that we carefully manage the increased levels of violence.

Attorney General Jeremy Wright said:

This protocol will make it clear that prosecution should usually follow when prisoners assault hard-working prison staff. Prison officers deserve the greatest clarity and the best protection we can give them.

These new guidelines will provide additional guidance to prosecutors, who review all charging decisions in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors. It will ensure that different police force and CPS areas pursue prosecutions of crimes within prison in a consistent and efficient way. While it is right that there should be some local prioritisation of crime investigation and prosecution, all agencies want to ensure that serious crimes in prison are dealt with fully by the criminal justice system.

Notes to editors

- There were 3,427 assaults on staff in the 12 months to June 2014, 25% were referred to the police, but the majority were dealt with by adjudication.
- [All sentencing guidelines can be found here](#)
- This is a joint protocol between NOMS, the CPS and ACPO. It sets out the responsibilities of each of the three organisations when crimes are committed within prison.
- The protocol clearly sets out the aggravating factors that would lead to a referral from NOMS to the police. The first of these crimes covered in an associated document, is “assaults on staff” - a priority for all parties. The main points of the protocol are:
 - clear guidance to all parties on those crimes that must be considered for prosecution
 - commitment to joint working at local and national level and the establishment of a national inter-agency forum to monitor the implementation of the protocol and issues arising from it
 - the mandating of the production of “Prison Community Impact Statements” in many circumstances which can be used by the CPS at court to explain the seriousness of the crime and its impact on the unique prison environment, particularly where the crime threatens control and order in prison
 - greater awareness of the rights and roles of the victim in prosecutions and the greater use of victim personal statements to allow the victim to explain the impact the crime has had on them
 - prosecutors to ensure that courts are reminded of the sentencing guidelines specific to serving prisoners which recommend a sentence consecutive to an existing offence particularly for violent crimes
 - a route for appeal against decisions not to prosecute if issues cannot be resolved through local discussion
- The Code for Crown Prosecutors requires the CPS to consider whether there is sufficient evidence and, if so, whether a prosecution is in the public interest before charging.
- For more information contact the MoJ Press Office news desk on 020 3334 3536 and follow us @MoJPress on Twitter

- training of specialist dog teams to search and detect synthetic drugs in prisons - over 530 dogs are currently deployed to prisons in England and Wales, searching cells for hidden drugs, patrolling prison perimeters and searching visitors to prevent drugs from being smuggled in
- a new Public Health Monitoring project will begin this month, analysing up to 10,000 urine samples alongside drug seizures in 10 prisons in the North West for the presence of synthetic drugs, prescription drugs and a wider range of controlled drugs
- a major push on prison communications to make sure that offenders are aware of the consequences of taking NPS – as are visitors of attempting to bring them in
- work with the Home Office to take forward recommendations from the NPS Expert Panel Review, including consideration of further legislative options to tackle NPS misuse

Notes to Editors

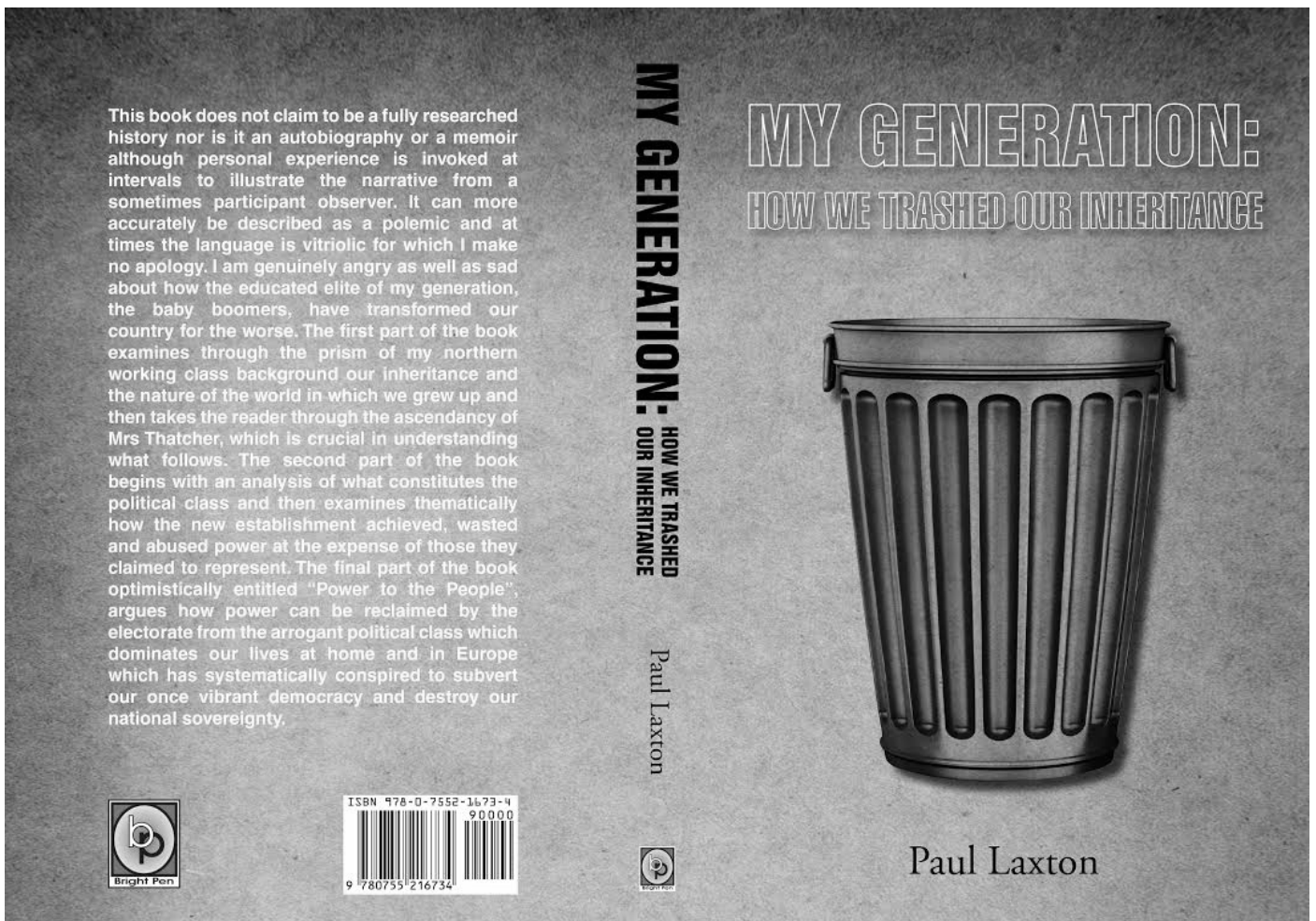
- New Psychoactive Substances cannot be sold for human consumption, and contain one or more chemical compounds that are designed to produce similar effects to illicit drugs. They are often misleadingly referred to as ‘legal highs’. A large number of them have been controlled by the Home Office, and some have also been found to include illegal drugs which make their possession illegal. There are however others which are not yet covered by existing drugs laws. Their misuse in the community has been linked to poisoning, emergency hospital admissions and in some cases, death.
- The Courts and Criminal Justice Bill was passed by the Lords on Wednesday 21 January 2015. Provisions in this Bill will mean that we have the power to specify drugs (including so-called ‘legal highs’) which can be tested for as part of the Mandatory Drug Testing Programme.
- Drug misuse in prisons as tested by the existing MDT programme has declined by 17.0 percentage points over the past 17 years - positive rates were 24.4% in 1996 to 1997 and 7.4% in 2013 to 2014.
- The following information was recently provided in response to a Parliamentary Question (209374) and provides some context about finds of prohibited substances in prison. The table below gives the number of seizures of Mephedrone, BZP, Spice and Ketamine in prisons in England and Wales in the timeframe requested.

	01/01/2010- 31/12/2010	01/01/2011- 31/12/2011	01/01/2012- 31/12/2012	01/01/2013- 31/12/2013	01/01/2014- 31/07/2014
Mephedrone	0	0	0	3	2
BZP	0	1	0	0	0
Spice	15	86	133	262	430
Ketamine	1	3	5	2	4
Total	16	90	138	267	436

- Many drugs are similar in appearance and in some cases drugs seized are not categorically identified by scientific analysis. Where the drug type is easily identifiable, they may have been identified by appearance only.
- All figures in this answer have been drawn from live administrative data systems which may be amended at any time. Although care is taken when processing and analysing the returns, the detail collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large scale recording system. The data has been extracted by searching for the exact terms given in the question and not any slang or alternative spellings. The data is not subject to audit.
- Nearly 10,000 punishments in prison were given for drug offences in 2013.
- For more details please contact MOJ’s press office on telephone: 020 3334 3536.

My Generation

A new book to the market by Paul Laxton



Review of 'My Generation, How we Trashed our Inheritance.'

By Chris Duffin

This is a long and very comprehensive view of how the Author believes that we "Baby Boomers" have left our children and grandchildren in a pretty awful mess.

Each of its 20 Chapters takes elements of Political, Social, and Economic policy, over the last 70 years or so, and argues that the long-term effect of these policies has created serious problems for the future: not only for our financial and social welfare, but also for our moral welfare.

FAMOUS ANCESTORS

By Harry Brett

It is always interesting to delve into history and find that you had a famous ancestor. I am fortunate enough to be a descendant of Sergeant Charles Brett who at the age of 52 was shot by Irish Fenians on 18th September 1867. The first police officer to be shot in Manchester.

He met his death attempting to thwart an escape of two Irish Fenians being transported to Belle Vue prison. Two men were arrested during the early hours of 11th September 1867, loitering in Oak Street in the Shudehill district of Manchester and were detained by the police. They were charged under the Vagrancy Act on suspicion of having the intention to rob a shop. At first the identity of these men was unknown to the police. They were however eventually identified as Colonel Thomas J Kelly and Captain Timothy Easy, both Irish Americans who had fought in the American Civil War. They had both travelled to the British mainland to preach sedition and reorganize Fenians on the mainland.

The authorities, now knowing the importance of their prisoners, took extra security precautions, twelve armed policeman guarded the prison van containing the prisoners on their journey from the court to the prison at Belle Vue. Sergeant Brett, armed with a cutlass was the sole policeman stationed inside the police van containing the two Fenians and four other prisoners.

ATTACK AND MURDER

The journey to Belle Vue took the police van by way of a railway arch on Hyde Road, situated on the boundary between Ardwick and West Gorton. As they passed under the arch, one or two men (depending on which version you believe) stepped out in front of the police van, pointed a pistol (pistols) at the driver and told him to stop.

The police van was then surrounded by a horde of Fenians armed with guns, hammers, sledgehammers, hatchets and crowbars etc.... One group of Fenians formed an extended circle around the van with guns in hand to keep at bay any would be police reinforcements, whilst the remainder set about attempting to prise open the doors of the police van.

After many unsuccessful attempts to prise open the van, the assailants called upon Sergeant Brett to give up his keys to which he responded "I dare not, I must do my duty". It must have been at this point that Sergeant Brett looked through the keyhole at the lock to see what was going on outside, at the same moment as one of his attackers placed his revolver to the keyhole of the van in an attempt to shoot out the lock. The bullet passed through his eye and into his brain, killing him.

Kelly and Easy were individually locked into compartments within the police van, separate from the other prisoners, one of whom took the keys from the dying Sergeant Brett and

passed them through an opening to those besieging the van, thus the two Fenian stalwarts affected their escape and eventually made their way back to America.

Twenty-six of their confederates were arrested and incarcerated in the New Bailey Prison, Salford to await trial. The New Bailey Prison, by then had been in use for eighty years, but proved to be too small and was to close in the latter half of 1869 after the opening of Strangeways Prison in Manchester



TRIAL AND RETRIBUTION

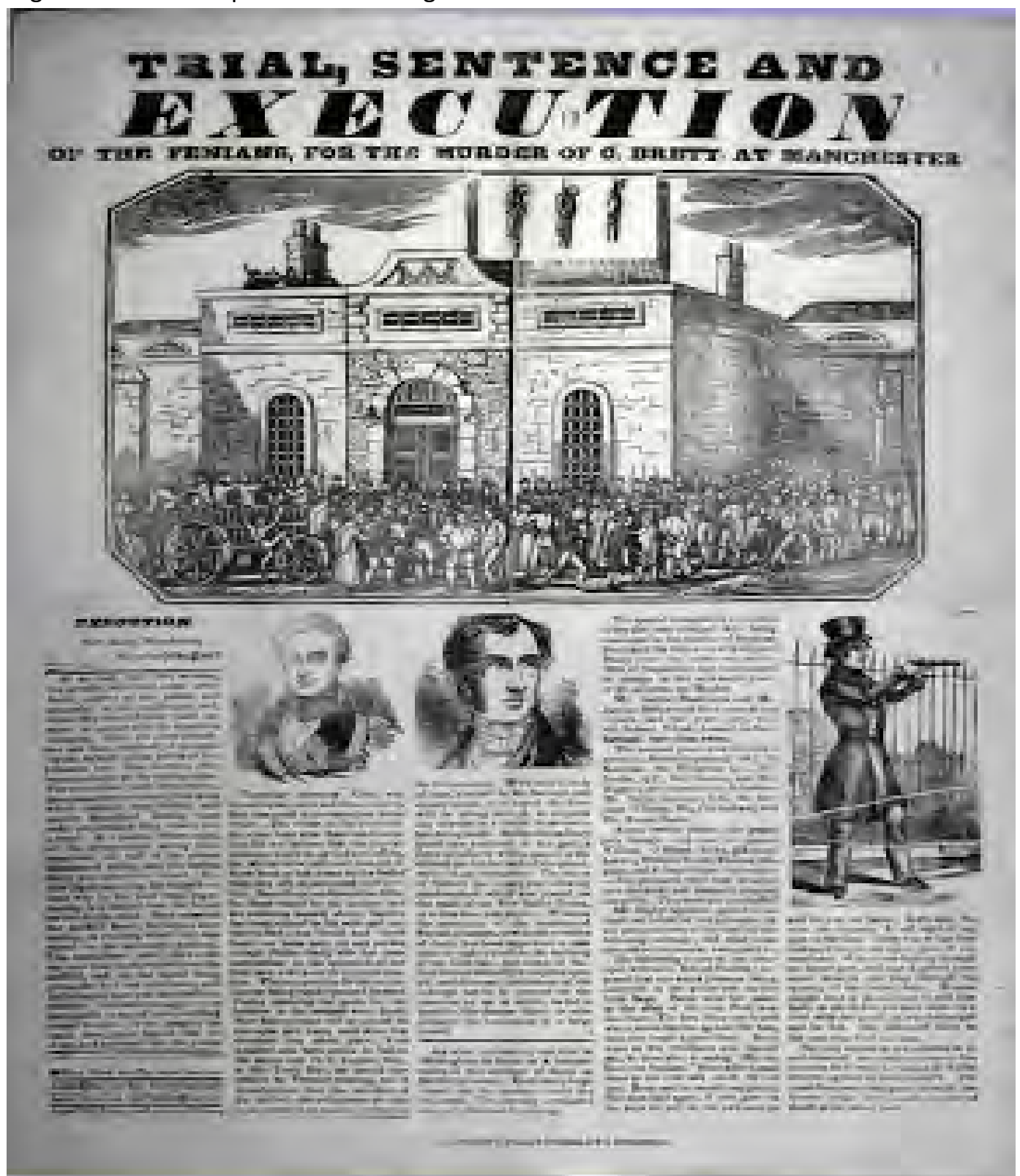
There were many more suspects arrested than the twenty-six men who stood before the Manchester Assizes Court on the morning of the 26th September 1867 accused of murdering Sergeant Brett. Twenty three men were born in Ireland, two in England and one in America. Out of the original twenty-six who stood trial, two were acquitted and discharged, a further twelve were discharged when the crown offered no evidence. The remaining twelve were found guilty in varying degrees of and of various charges. Five were sentenced to death and the other eleven were sentenced to five years penal servitude for obstructing a police officer in the execution of his duty. Two others were later arrested, one from Scotland (Daniel DarraghThompson) and a Patrick Melody from Ireland. Both were tried and convicted some four months after the original trial took place. Thompson was sentenced to hang and Melody was pardoned after serving eleven years.

In all six were sentenced to death, but Thompson was of such ill-health he escaped the hangman's noose and died in prison on 28th June 1870. Edward Shore had his sentence id death, commuted to penal servitude for life and was sent to Millbank Prison to serve his sentence with his other compatriots. Thomas Maguire who had served as a soldier in the Royal Marines for many years was one of those sentenced to death but he received free pardon from the Secretary of State and was released.

THE HANGING

This left three, William Gould (alias O'Brien), William O'Mera, and Allan Michael Larkin who were all found guilty of having feloniously, willfully and with malice aforethought killed and murdered Sergeant Charles Brett, and were sentenced to death. They were all hanged on 23rd November 1867 at New Bailey Prison. The authorities were taking no chances on any

further attempts at escape and in consequence on the day had 2,500 regular and special police on duty in and around the prison, being further enhanced by a detachment of 72nd Highlanders and a squadron of the English Hussars.



THE AFTERMATH

Sergeant Charles Brett was buried in Saint Joseph's cemetery in Moston Manchester where to this day the Brett family grave remains albeit in some disrepair. There is also a lasting memorial in Saint Ann's Church Manchester. It was originally erected in Saint Barnabas

Church, in Ancoats but the church is no longer standing and it was move to Saint Ann's church in 1959. Anyone visiting Saint Ann's church should on entering the church go through the curtain to the right and they will see the memorial on the wall. The inscription reads "Erected by the members of The Manchester Police Force and Friends, in memory of Charles Brett, A Police Sergeant of the City, who for many years worshipped in this church until he fell at his post of duty, a victim of the Violence of Sedition, 18th September 1867. A faithful man, though proffered life, he chose a cruel death rather than betray his trust. The three Irishmen who were hanged became known as the 'Manchester Martyrs'. There is also a plaque where the New Bailey Prison stood near Salford Station, New Bailey Street. It is with a great deal of pride that I am able to claim to be a descendant of such a brave and courageous man. Charles Brett was my grandfather's grandfather's (William Brett) brother.

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ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE

Many of you will have worked; sent staff and or prisoner to the Courts of Appeal Criminal Division (COACD) below are some interesting facts about the building.



Queen Victoria opened the Royal Courts in December 1882 after eleven years of construction.

The building instantly became an awe-inspiring land mark in the heart of London's Fleet Street.

Competing Architects

Architects competed for the contract for the Law Courts (believing they were designing a Cathedral) with each submitting alternative designs with the view of the possible placing of the building on the Thames Embankment.

George Edmund Street

In 1868 it was decided that George Edmund Street, R.A. was to be appointed the sole architect for the Royal Courts of Justice and it was he who designed the whole building from foundation to varied carvings and spires.

George Edmund Street sadly died before the building was opened. It is believed that the stress of the task may have contributed to his death, at the age of 57.

Did you know?

(1) Parliament paid £1,453,000 for the 6-acre (24,000 m²) site upon which 450 houses had to be demolished.

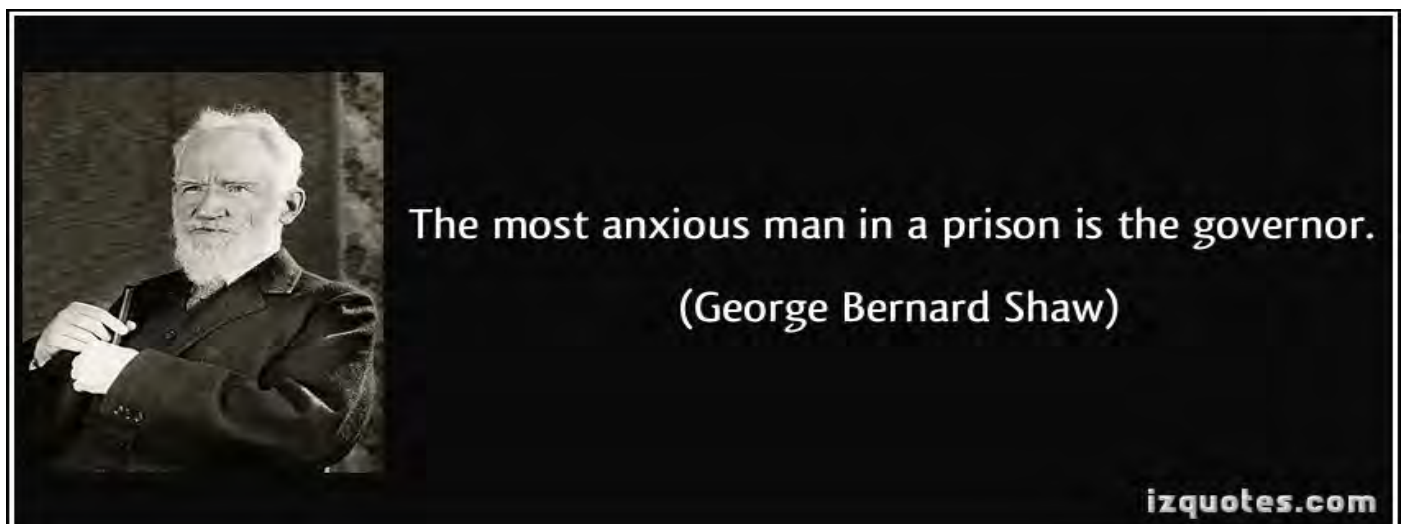
(2) The building was paid for by cash accumulated in court from the estates of the intestate.

(3) A homeless person was once found living in the basement of the courts.

(4) The Lord Chief Justice's Court was originally Court 6. He believed it to be unlucky and requested it be renumbered Court 4, as it is today.

(5) Room 666 is the only one of the renovated 'Treasury Solicitor' rooms that professional stone cleaners have been unable to remove the original painted numbers from, despite many efforts at great cost.

Famous Quotes



I'm Not A Twitcher Really - Honestly!!!

By Jan Thompson



I have enjoyed going out birdwatching for a number of years now and belong to a local club, meeting once a month when we invite a guest speaker. We also have an organised monthly club outing to various birdwatching sites. I emphatically deny being a 'Twitcher' (The definition being: A birdwatcher whose main aim is to collect sightings of rare birds. These people will often race around the country, usually at great cost, to get a fleeting glimpse of these rarities!!!). Just to give an example of the type of other trips I go on, here is a report of my latest jaunt to Norfolk with a couple of friends. We were joined by some other enthusiasts (six participants in total) on a tour organised by a professional bird guider, Chris, with whom we have enjoyed several other trips. **(I apologise now to anyone who is definitely not interested in birds or to anyone who may feel somewhat overwhelmed by the detail contained in the report!)**

Norfolk Birdwatching Tour 2015

Three of us traveled from Leicester to Hunstanton on Thursday, 5th February and made ourselves comfortable in our self-contained apartment before taking a walk along the front on a cold and windy but sunny afternoon. We saw a few waders and gulls but the shore was fairly quiet. Still, we had a lovely home made meal and sufficient wine to look forward to so all was not lost! The next morning we were up and out by 07.45hrs, raring to go and by 08.15 the whole group were ensconced in Chris's 9 seater Bird Mobile!

Day 1: 6th February 2015.



We started the day at Holme but couldn't locate the usually reliable **Snow Bunting** flock although, on a positive note, several hundred **Brent Geese** passed by along the shoreline with sightings of numerous **Skylark**, **Reed Bunting** and several **Rock Pipit** too. We then had lovely close up views of several **Fieldfare** before continuing on to a 'hide'. The pools from the hide held good numbers of approximately

1500 Wigeon, 300 Teal, 40 Gadwall, 100 Lapwing, 4 Marsh Harriers and 5 Snipe.

Moving on to Thornham we had excellent views of the wintering flock of **Twite** (around 40 Twite in total) in the harbour area. A search for **Grey Partridge** was unsuccessful but a **Yellowhammer** was heard. The weather was now bright and sunny, ideal raptor weather, so we headed to Burnham Overy area - this proved to be the right decision as we had



great views of **Rough-legged Buzzard** (a first for me although this does not make me a twitcher!), **5+ Buzzards**, **8+ Red Kite**, a **Peregrine Falcon**,

a **Sparrowhawk**, **3+ Kestrel** and **5+ Marsh Harriers** all in the same area and, at times, nearly all the species in the air together!! This was, for me, one of the highlights as I'm more interested in Raptors and forest/garden birds than waders/sea birds. We also saw lots of **Pink-footed & Brent Geese**, good flocks of **Golden Plover**, **Lapwing** and also **2 Grey Partridge** along with a good selection of shorebirds including **Black-tailed Godwit**, **Grey Plover**, **Dunlin**, **Oystercatcher**, **Ringed Plover** and many **Curlew**.

We finished the day off at an excellent raptor roost where we saw **4 Hen Harriers**, (1 male and 3 juveniles or females - commonly known as ringtails) plus a **Merlin** and a nice couple of **Barn Owls**.

Day 2: 7th February 2015.

Today we headed for the broads but stopped off en-route in North Norfolk to look at the sea shore where there were a few **Red-throated Divers** and **2-3 Common Scoter**. The brackish pool attracted a nice flock of **29 Snow Bunting** that flew up and then returned, revealing their beautiful dramatic black and white plumage.

Also there were a beautiful glittering flock of about **1200 Golden Plover** plus plenty of **Lapwing**. The next eye-catching bird was a first for the year - a superb male **Marsh Harrier** who entertained both us and a female **Marsh Harrier** as it gave a superb full mating display overhead!! We then stopped off in Sheringham where we were treated to great close up views of a superb **Purple Sandpiper**, just 5 metres away. Unfortunately though there were no signs of the Icelandic or Glaucous Gulls seen by other birdwatchers earlier in the week, so we headed down into The Broads where we located a nice, albeit small, group of **Whooper and Bewicke Swans**.

At our next stop we saw approximately **1500 Golden Plover**



and many **Lapwing**, along with several **Snipe** and **Ruff** amongst the masses. There were also about **3500 Pink-footed Geese** and a solitary **Barnacle Goose**. Continuing on, we made several unsuccessful searches for Cranes

but eventually we located a group of **3 Cranes** with great scope views as they fed. We finished the day off at yet another great raptor roost with about **50 Marsh Harriers** plus **3 Hen Harriers** (including 1 male) and **3 Woodcocks**.

Day 3: 8th February 2015

Today we spent time down in the Brecks, an area on the West Norfolk/Suffolk borders. Our first stop was to search for raptors and by 09.45 the first **Buzzards** were in the air followed shortly by a marauding **Peregrine**. A singing **Wood Lark** was a lovely distraction both for its song and its display. Suddenly the Woodpigeons all flushed into the sky but the culprit for this disturbance remained

unseen! A few minutes later a superb 1st year male **Goshawk** went flashing past us and then we realised there was a second bird, an adult **Goshawk**, in hot pursuit!!! The young bird came screaming back past us at close range before heading full into the flock of Woodpigeon, twisting and turning at the last moment, but apparently unsuccessful in it's quest to secure a meal. This was a stunning spectacle to watch with the best **Goshawk** views I have ever had.

We then spent a couple of hours in the forest where we enjoyed excellent views of **Treecreeper**, **Nuthatch** and numerous **Marsh Tit** but unfortunately no sign of any Hawfinch or Crossbill that we had hoped for. We then met up with a friend of Chris's, British Trust of Ornithology (BTO) BirdTrack Co-ordinator Nick Moran. First we headed to a series of feeders on the BTO reserve and here we had stunning close up views of approximately **15 Brambling** and **5 Lesser Redpoll** along with **Goldfinch**, **Greenfinch** and **Marsh Tits**. We then headed off to another private feeder site that Chris knew of where we watched about **80 Tree Sparrow** plus several more **Brambling** whilst we ate our lunch.

We decided to head to Lakenheath for the rest of the afternoon. The weather had settled and the skies cleared and it was a pleasant, albeit still chilly, afternoon. A **Great White Egret** was present, which dwarfed several **Little Egrets**.



We then walked up the river path where we heard a **Cetti's Warbler** and calling **Bearded Tits** eventually showed themselves, providing excellent close views. A **Marsh Harrier** was hunting and as the late afternoon light faded, **2**

Barn owls were also out hunting, with one **Barn Owl** showing down to point blank views.

In bird watching terms, this was a great 3 days and we recorded 112 different species during the trip.

Plates 1 Brent geese, Plate 2 Peregrine falcon Plate 3 Golden Plover

Plate 4 Little Egret

The Author's political views are clearly stated throughout and he is no more complimentary to his own allegiances than he is to any Opposition. He is frank to the point of bluntness about who he sees as the Architects of these problems on both the left and the right.

He is no kinder about any other group in Society who he feels needs chastising: Trade Unions and Feminism are but two which stick in the mind.

His research into historical political and social history of the time is impressive or he has an incredibly good memory for such things, and his arguments, whether you agree or disagree, are well put and in some cases food for thought. I can say many would find them very persuasive.

Although I can't say I agree with all his arguments, the book is well written, gives a clear analysis of each subject and challenges the reader to see things his way.

I recommend anyone to read the book and feel there is not a great deal more I can say without going into a deep analysis of each chapter or theory which would mean my review would be as long as the book. I suggest you would not be likely to read it cover to cover in one go, but each chapter is an interesting and informative read.

I have enjoyed speculating on who, out of the RPGA membership, would agree with Paul's arguments and who would disagree and with which of his theories. A very interesting and thought-provoking read.

Pauls book has a cover price of £12.99pence but Paul informs me that Amazons price is slightly less expensive ISBN No 9780-7552-1673-4

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Report from the Chair



Welcome everyone to the spring newsletter especially if you are a new member at the start of your retirement years and I wish you good health and good luck.

Since the RPGA was formed in 1998 it has striven through the valued efforts of many people to inform and be informed on issues that have an impact on our members and your current committee will continue with that key theme.

A major change relevant to this issue is the departure of our current editor Mick Roebuck who, after many years of delivering fully to that key role, retires from the editorship and the committee at the AGM. He hands over to Paul Laxton who will be taking on the mantle of newsletter editor. If you are on our email system you will also be aware of how Mick has researched and informed on what is occurring in today's

Prison Service and on behalf of our members, the committee and myself I would want to thank Mick for his commitment to this key role of the RPGA.

So, whilst expressing our thanks to the outgoing editor we welcome Paul Laxton who has stepped forward to take the newsletter onwards and upwards utilising his past experience as editor of "The Key" the PGA journal.

I would also like to welcome Allan Hall MBE to the committee who, along with Jan Thompson, will now take up the coordination of PSPC pension issues as they may impact on our members ensuring we are informed on current and emerging issues.

Now my annual appeal to our members, consider attending our RPGA AGM and reunion on 16th June 2015 at Newbold Revel. Details of how to attend are contained in this newsletter. Whilst numbers attending are still frustratingly low each AGM votes to continue with the event [including the free buffet] and new faces do appear each year. So, why not have a day out with us on the 16th June and if you do need transport from Rugby station just let us know and we will pick you up, no problem. Finally, I hope you are all enjoying your well earned retirement even if you have already broken those New Year resolutions, well there's always next year.

I will be watching Yorkshire CCC this summer hopefully retaining the Division 1 title and also be going to the odd game at Lancashire Old Trafford [Div.2] with Dave Taylor my cricket buddy. Come on Yorkshire!!

Graham Smith Chairman.

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This is a message sent via Leicestershire Neighbourhood Watch. This information has been sent on behalf of Action Fraud (National Fraud Intelligence Bureau)

HMRC have advised that from April 2015, people over the age of 55 will be given the flexibility of taking a number of smaller lump sum pension pots. 25% of the sum will be tax-free, with the remaining pension fund charged at marginal rate of income tax.

If you take out money from your pension fund before the age of 55, the normal tax rules apply.

We are concerned that fraudsters will take advantage of these rule changes by offering to invest pensions on the victim's behalf. Be very wary of such offers.

Avoid losing your hard-earned cash:

- Do not invest with companies which cold call you, offering extremely high returns. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Seek financial advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau, who work alongside the Treasury delivering the 'Pension Wise' service.
- If you wish to invest your savings in a company, please ensure you seek advice from an FCA registered and authorised advisor
- Be aware of callers offering a free pension review service by phone call, email and text message and do not invest in unregulated markets such as overseas property developments, storage units or forestry.

Have you had recent Problems with your Pension Payments, and trying to resolve them?

We have become aware that some members have experienced problems with their Pension payments during the period when administration of our scheme has been transferred from Hartshead Capita to MyCSP. Please note the following which may be useful if you are one of those affected. It is an article from the CSPA (Civil Service Pensioners Alliance) Group Circular dated 6th November 2014

2. CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONS - CHANGE OF PROVIDER

Page 25 of the Autumn 2014 Issue of The Pensioner advised members of the then imminent hand-over of responsibility for the payment of Civil Service Pensions from Capita Hartshead to MyCSP. This hand-over has now been completed.

If you or any of your members need to contact MyCSP about pension matters, please use the following contact details:

Postal Address: MyCSP, PO Box 2017, Liverpool, L69 2BU

Telephone: 0300 123 6666

Calling from Overseas: +44 1903 835902

Email Address: contactcentre@mycsp.co.uk

MyCSP is currently experiencing very high call volumes following the recent announcement and written communications with all pensioners about the change of provider of from Capita Hartshead to MyCSP.

The Alliance is aware that because of these problems, call waiting times to MyCSP can be up to 25 minutes in duration.

In addition, the relevant page of the MyCSP website, as at 5 November 2014,

<http://www.mycsp.co.uk/members-update/information-for-members.aspx>

carries the following message:

Increased waiting time for telephone queries

The scheme's contact centre is currently experiencing a very high number of telephone calls, which means that waiting times are longer than desired.

Engineers are also working to resolve some intermittent telephony problems that are affecting overseas callers and causing some other calls to be lost or cut off.

Apologies for any inconvenience - normal service will be resumed as soon as possible.

Alliance members with urgent queries about their Civil Service Pensions are advised to first contact MyCSP. If, after speaking to or trying to contact MyCSP, any urgent query remains unresolved, then Alliance members may wish to contact the Alliance HQ on telephone number 020 8688 8418 or, by email, at enquiries@cspsa.co.uk for further advice/assistance.

a home address. After a wait of a few weeks I eventually received my state pension statement which arrived with a leaflet. As you would expect from long experience of civil service bureaucracy the paperwork required a detailed read as it was not always straightforward and at times downright confusing. The first page is reasonably straightforward. It tells you how many qualifying years of national insurance contributions you have in the kitty. The important thing is that your statement shows that you have 35 or more years' worth of contributions as opposed to 30 years in the current scheme. I would doubt that many of our members have less than a full slate of contributions unless you have taken early severance, but if you do have less than 35 qualifying years the leaflet gives a worked example of how the deduction is made. If unlike me you have taken up other employment since leaving the service then depending on how much you earn, you may still be making national insurance contributions and therefore you will need to get another statement nearer to the point at which you claim your state pension. Also on the front page is a figure that tells you the single tier state pension you will receive at notional 2014-15 rates. So far so good: page two is where it gets complicated.

Your statement will show two estimates: one based on the rules of the new state pension scheme and one based on the rules of the existing scheme. You will receive the higher of the two amounts

Given the amount of years retired governors spent in a contracted out scheme, almost invariably the higher amount will be the one based on the existing rules. The amount shown under the new rules will appear terrifying as it deducts your entire period in the civil service pension scheme from the new notional state pension of £148.40. The rate of deduction is £4.24 per tax year in the civil service pension scheme. The new state pension figure is derived from a full 35 years of NI contributions x £4.24 which equals £148.40. So if you spent 30 years in the service your pension under the new state pension rules would be (at 2014-15 notional rates) $£148.40 - 30 \times £4.24 = £21.20$. I'm baffled as to why they have chosen this way to calculate state pension entitlements not least because we still paid 10.6% of our salary above the minimum threshold (currently £5772 p.a.), as opposed to the 12.0% paid by workers who were covered by the state second pension (SERPS) arrangements. Indeed most of us will have also paid the 2% surcharge on workers in the 40% tax bracket. In effect although contracting out will be abolished in April 2016, as long as there are workers retiring who were members of the civil service or other employment where employees were in contracted out schemes prior to April 2016, pension statements will have to continue to show two figures to reflect the time, however short, that an employee spent in a contracted out pension scheme. Thus there will be two systems running side by side for something like half a century. It does appear to be unnecessarily bureaucratic and complicated

In terms of the actual figure you will receive all that I can tell you with confidence is that your state pension which you almost invariably you will receive under the old rules, will be between £113.10 (basic state pension at 2014-15 rates) and £148.40 (new single tier pension at notional 2014-15 rates). I was not able to obtain the formula that is used to calculate the figure. What I can say is that the deduction from the additional pension figure is linked to your earnings and therefore the higher your pay the nearer to the lower figure, £113.10 above, will be your estimated state pension. As members of a final salary scheme your higher pay will be amply reflected in your prison service pension but as I said it is complicated. I would guess that most of you who have yet to claim your state pension would have forgotten that there was some entitlement to an additional state pension on top of the basic old age pension. Yet in reality unless you have been in the civil service since leaving school most of us will have an entitlement to an enhanced state pension as a consequence of the graduated pension scheme (1961-1975) or SERPS (State Earnings Related Second Pension Scheme) which ran from 1978 to 2002 before being replaced by the state second

A ROUGH GUIDE TO THE PARTIES' POLICIES REGARDING PENSIONERS



by Paul Laxton

I was asked by the Committee to provide a guide to the main political parties' policies as they affect pensioners. Regrettably it will be a short guide as they have shown little of their hands at this stage. We may have to wait until the manifestos are published in early April and even then they may not be a definitive guide given the possibility of a hung parliament and the horse trading that will follow. Members may also like to note that the Coalition has developed a predilection for implementing policies that were not

in the manifestos. Obvious examples are the raising of student tuition fees, the fixed term parliaments act, and changing of the rules regarding succession to the crown. Pensioner organizations will be working very hard to pin down politicians in the coming weeks.

CONSERVATIVE The triple lock will be maintained until April 2016. In reality as wages inflation resumes its historic position of exceeding price inflation the triple lock will become less contentious as it will not then be possible for pensioners to do better than workers. As yet there is no position on universal pensioner benefits. All we know is that the current Work and Pensions Secretary believes that universality is an untenable position given the welfare cuts already implemented and further proposed for the working age population. It could be argued that the new Pensioner Bonds which will largely benefit better off pensioners actually make universal benefits more vulnerable.

LABOUR Scrap the winter fuel allowance for higher rate taxpaying pensioners.

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT Scrap both the winter fuel allowance and free TV licenses for higher rate taxpaying pensioners. It is worth noting that the combined saving from not paying these benefits to higher rate taxpaying pensioners is less than £100 million, but in public spending terms.

UKIP Apparently all will be revealed at their Margate Conference on 27-28 February 2015.

Pensions and benefits are not yet devolved to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.



The New State Pension: An update

By Paul Laxton

Since the last AGM of the Public Sector Pensioners Council AGM the Pensions Bill has been guided into law by the Pensions Minister, Steve Webb. Despite intense lobbying by pensioner representative bodies, the government has not budged from its plan to create a two tier scheme. Those of

you who have been following the progress of the bill in the press will be aware that those who reach their state pension age on or before 4 April 2016 are NOT affected by the creation of the new single tier state pension. Your state pension, colloquially known as the old age pension and any additional state pension arrangements remain unchanged. If you have not yet reached state pension age but do so on or before 4 April 2016, then you can get a state pension statement by writing to the address below giving your national insurance number:

The Pension Service 9,
Mail Handling Site A,
Wolverhampton,
WV98 1LU

Alternatively you can phone 0845 300 0168. You will need your national insurance number to hand and it may take a few minutes to be connected to an advisor at busy times. You cannot pursue specific inquiries by E mail. Figures currently being quoted represent the tax year 2014-15 so you will

need to add on the increase to cover inflation, remembering that any part of your quote that represents SERPS and/or graduated pension is increased only at the rate of CPI.

For 2015-16 like your prison service pension, these parts will rise just 1.2% in April 2015. Those of you not already in receipt of the state

pension will discover that there is a deduction from additional state pensions to cover the years spent in a contracted out scheme between 1978 and 1997.

If like me you reach your state pension age on or after 5 April 2016, then life is a little different.

The full rate of the new single tier state pension has not yet been decided as obviously the inflation figure that determines the starting rate in April 2016 is not yet known. However the DWP is using a notional figure of £148.40 for tax year 2014-15 for quotation purposes. If inflation remains low and the triple lock continues to be applied we can expect a figure of just under £156 per week as the starting rate. However only around 40% of new retirees can expect to get the full rate and that 40% emphatically does not include retired prison governors! The reason, as I'm sure you know, is that we paid a reduced rate of national insurance as a "reward" for contracting out of the state second pension scheme and are therefore not eligible for the full rate. The advisor at the DWP said she was amazed at how many people were indignant at discovering they would not be getting the top line. Unlike our colleagues who have already claimed their state pension or will receive it on or before 4 April 2016, our entire period of contracted out service is counted for the purpose of the deduction under the new scheme. However those of you who like me had the pleasure of doubling up after 20 years service will be pleased to know that only your actual tax years in the job will count when it comes to the calculation.

In order to write this article I contacted the DWP (address and phone numbers as in paragraph one) and asked for a quote based on my eligibility for the new single tier pension when I reach my 65th birthday in December 2017. All they required from me was my national insurance number and

pension (S2P). It is the enhancement accrued during our time as members of the civil service pension scheme which is deducted, on the basis that we were contracted out.

Finally, and this may affect some of our members, the estimate will not show the effect of any pension sharing order made against you as a consequence of a divorce. However it will be taken from you when you claim your state pension, or alternatively paid to you when your former spouse claims their state pension.

My head is still banging from trying to draft this in a form that is understandable, evening allowing for the higher IQs of our members. I'll leave the reader to decide whether this is a useful accompaniment to your pension statement.

POSTSCRIPT – According to Money Mail published in the Daily Mail on 11 February 2015, as a response to the large volume of complaints it has received, the DWP will only quote one figure on its forecasts. The new style statements should be available within weeks. Whether they will be any more helpful as regards contracting out is a matter of conjecture. The second change is that pension forecasts will be available to those over 55, rather than 60 as it is at the moment

Correction to the last Newsletter.

It was reported in an article in the last edition of the Newsletter that the first Chief Inspector of the Prison Service was 1981 – 1982 Phillip Barry. We are reliably informed by Bill Brister that in fact the first Inspector was Bill Pierce ex chief probation officer of London. We are grateful to Bill for pointing this out to the editor.

Those of you on the email register will already be aware that the post of Chief Inspector will shortly become vacant again and retired governor grades have been invited to apply.

Blantyre House

PRISONERS are being moved out of a Goudhurst prison for a number of months amid claims of an inability to recruit enough prison officers for prisons in the South East.

Blantyre House, with a capacity of 120, is set to shut indefinitely; it has been announced today. 2nd February 2015

The Ministry of Justice insists the move is to allow refurbishment work to take place and it is expected to be back in use later in the year.

However, the Prison Governors' Association, which represents senior prison staff, expressed surprise at the closure and claims it was not consulted.

It said in a statement: "The PGA has not been consulted on this decision and it leaves us with some major concerns as to the under-usage of the capacity within the open estate.

"We are led to believe that this decision has been borne out of the inability to recruit enough prison officers into some of the prisons in the South of England, and in particular the Isle of Sheppey in Kent, which has been widely reported by most media outlets.

"NOMS have previously stated there would be no further prison closures in this Parliament and therefore the PGA will seek assurances that this is just a temporary measure and there are no further planned temporary or permanent prison closures."

In a statement the PGA said it had not been consulted over the decision and had some "major concerns as to the under-usage of the capacity" within the open jail estate.

A Ministry of Justice spokesman said: "Blantyre House prison is not being closed.

"Prisoners will be moved out temporarily, some refurbishment work will take place and it is expected to be back in use later in the year."

Online tracking service launched for victims of crime

February 2015



Victims of crime can now find the latest information about their case at any time of the day or night thanks to an innovative online service to be launched to police forces across the country.

TrackMyCrime will allow people who report a crime to follow it through the investigation stage easily and securely, exchange messages with their investigating officer to make sure they are up to date with how the case is progressing, and have their questions answered quickly.

This builds on a number of recent Government initiatives to improve the help and support available to victims, and is just one part of a package designed to make the criminal justice system easier to navigate.

Launching the service at the inaugural International Crime and Police Conference Victims' Minister Mike Penning said:

“This Government is committed to doing the best it possibly can for crime victims and has committed more money than ever before to doing so. We want to more than double the existing funding available for supporting victims.

“We are introducing a range of new measures to put victims first, including legislation to enshrine their rights in law and a one-stop-shop to help them find expert support. We have also met the Coalition Commitment to establish 15 new female rape support centres while putting the existing 71 on a more secure financial footing.

“TrackMyCrime builds on this by giving victims more control over their case than ever before and allows them to find out information in a way and at a time that suits them. This is a common sense approach and I look forward to seeing police forces across the country adopting it.”

TrackMyCrime will keep victims updated on the progress of their case, allow them to submit details about stolen or damaged property, and find information on support and advice.

Crucially, officers and victims can securely exchange messages with one another at any time and police can regularly update victims on the progress of the case. This offers more flexibility for victims and will be more efficient for police officers working shifts.

The website will not replace speaking to a police officer in person, but will give people more choice about how and when they can get information about their case. It is expected this will reduce the volume of calls to the non-emergency 101 number.

This builds on the Ministry of Justice’s ‘Commitment to Victims’ launched in September, which included putting a victim’s right to tell a court how their crime has affected them into primary legislation and a new nationwide Victims' Information Service to provide victims with better information and support.

Plans to require advocates to undergo specialist training before taking part in sexual abuse or rape trials are also being developed, which will make going to court less distressing for victims.

Female Rape Support Centres have received £4.1m each year since 2011 from the Ministry of Justice, rising to £4.4m in 2014/15 with an extra £2.15m announced at the end of last year, while a coalition commitment to open 15 new centres across the country to help even more victims of rape and sexual assault has also been met, and increased the number available to victims to 86.

In addition, more than £1m is being provided to specialist rape support organisations across England and Wales as part of the first ever fund to help male victims of rape and sexual violence.

TrackMyCrime was designed and developed by Avon and Somerset Constabulary and acquired by the Ministry of Justice at the start of 2014 with the aim of making it available to all police forces in England and Wales.

Victims in Avon and Somerset, Kent and South Yorkshire are already using TrackMyCrime. Four more police forces plan to go live during spring 2015: Staffordshire, Humberside, Lancashire and Lincolnshire with further forces across England and Wales expected to follow throughout 2015.

TrackMyCrime will be extended in the future so people can follow the progress of their case through the entire criminal justice process.

Booksellers given role in prison book delivery

Published February 2, 2015.

The government has relaxed the prison book ban, but said inmates can only receive parcels from four named booksellers – Waterstones, Blackwell's, Foyles or WH Smith.

The prison book ban was relaxed from 31st January, *The Bookseller* understands, following a High Court ruling that the ban, brought in in November 2013, was unlawful in December.

A Ministry of Justice spokesperson said the new rules on sending in books to prisons were to “ensure the protection and safety of prisons”.

"There never was a specific ban on books and we remain clear that we will not do anything that would create a new conduit for smuggling drugs and extremist materials into our prisons," the MoJ spokesperson said. "In order to ensure the protection and safety of prisons, we have put in place a new system which will mean books can be sent in via an approved retailer, either online or in high street shops. Prisoners also have access to the same public library service as the rest of us, and can buy books through the prison shop."

The spokesperson added: "We remain fully committed to rehabilitation through education and have rolled out schemes such as the Shannon Trust National Reading Network, which includes peer mentoring to improve reading levels."

Retailers have welcomed the relaxation of the book ban, with Waterstones m.d James Daunt saying: "Common sense has finally prevailed."

Gareth Hardy, head of commercial at Blackwell's, meanwhile, said being approved as one of the four main retailers was "all very last minute."

"We received a letter from the Ministry of Justice last week saying that from the 31st January friends and family are allowed to buy books and send them on, but only through approved retailers and asking if we wanted to be part of it," he said. "It is good news on both counts. It is good that prisoners will be allowed to receive books again. As to whether it will be a big sales boost for us, I'm not sure, but it will be interesting to find out."

Sam Husain, c.e.o of Foyles, said: "The rules are that people sending in books aren't allowed to handle them, so if they brought them to the till, we would then have to take them back and get a new one to send to the prison. So we have decided to make it an online-only function, and we will know the book is going to a prison because of the delivery destination given by the buyer. It is actually quite straightforward. We were invited to be involved, I received an email from the MoJ." He added: "The reversal of the book ban is to be welcomed, it is something the Booksellers Association has campaigned hard on."

An MoJ spokesperson told *The Bookseller*: "We had certain criteria to choose a retailer. They had to have a large number of shops and a large online presence and a wide range of books and cover a wide geographical area. For issues of security, we relied on retailers to have an established track record of sourcing and supplying books using a recognized courier service."

New measures were brought in in November last year in England and Wales, preventing prisoners receiving parcels unless under "exceptional circumstances".

In December, after a series of high profile protests from authors and campaign groups such as English PEN and the Howard League, The High Court gave its ruling after the case was brought by Barbara Goron-Jones, a life sentence prisoner at Send Jail in Surrey.

Publishers Association chief executive Richard Mollet said: "It's about time that the government has reviewed its policy which had placed restrictions on prisoners receiving books. Access to books plays a vital role in increasing literacy levels amongst prisoners; aiding rehabilitation and increasing job prospects when released. This is something that the Government should be supporting not preventing."

Interesting Fact 2b. Stouts and Porters are made like Beer; however, the Grains have been roasted prior to being malted. This gives the much Darker colour and coffee/chocolate flavours.

I now hear you ask 'What is the difference between Stout and Porter?' Porter got its' name because it was a strong Dark Beer, probably Stout, favoured by the Porters working in the London Markets. Essentially, I have never come across an acceptable difference, and would refer you to 'A General Dictionary of Commerce, Trade and Manufacturers' published in 1810. There was no difference then: however, it is now generally accepted that Porters are sweeter or fruitier and lighter bodied than Stouts.

Interesting Fact 3. A Barrel which was originally made of Oak or Beech wood, but is now most commonly made of metal or plastic. It contains Beer that has been fermented for storage and transport. Some Beers have additional hops added when they are barrelled. The Beer will continue to 'condition' in the barrel. There are two holes in Barrels, one on the front and one at the opposite edge of the top. When the Barrel is filled these holes are bunged to make a water/air tight seal. When the beer is delivered to the Pub cellar, the Barrel is usually left to settle on its side with the side hole uppermost and a soft wood bung 'spile' to vent it. The front hole has a tap knocked in and the Beer can be poured directly to the Glass or connect to a Beer Engine visible on the Bar as a hand pump. Ideally it is served at an optimum temperature between 12 and 16 Degrees Centigrade. Too cold and it loses flavour and becomes hazy, too warm it becomes flat and loses condition.

A Keg is a pressurised container, usually made of metal which contains Beer or Lager which has been pasteurised. There is only one hole in the top centre which is sealed when the Keg is filled. This seal is a valve which is connected to a Gas supply to force the contents out through a Chiller which reduces the temperature to 5 Degrees C. The finished product is dispensed through a variety of Vulgar Bar Fittings, most of which are so tall the Bar Staff are lost behind them.

In 1971 four concerned young men formed CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. It is an independent, voluntary organisation campaigning for Real Ale, Community Pubs and Consumer Rights. It's financed entirely by members' subscriptions, profits from sales of merchandise, and Beer Festival surpluses. Membership has now grown to over 168,000. A major part of campaigning is Key Campaign 3 which is to encourage more people to try a range of real Ales, Ciders and Perries.

I can sense that some of you will be looking back at Interesting Fact 1 and will wonder why the acronym does not include Beer, Cider and Perry. Well, it doesn't because it wouldn't be snappy as CAMRAB CP, and there aren't enough vowels to get another word from all the letters. I bet you Countdown buffs will try!

From the earliest days of CAMRA seeking out traditional Beers, Real Ales have been of paramount importance. This progressed from individuals and small groups seeking out the diminishing number of Real Ale brewers, to Beer Festivals where Real Ales could be made available to those who remembered or had never experienced them. By the late 1970s a new term was being used in the English Language: 'Beer Festival'. There are now about 200 Festivals recognised by CAMRA Branches plus countless others organised by Pubs and Clubs. These Festivals can range in size from small affairs with as few as 6 different Real Ales and perhaps one or two Real Ciders, up to the Great British Beer Festival at Olympia in London, where last year there were over 900 Real Ales, Real Ciders and Perries.

staffing the Tombola, Products and Membership stands. The Festival is open from 5pm until 11pm on Thursday, Noon until 11pm on Friday and Noon until 10pm on Saturday. Having done the analysis this works out to a Minimum Staffing Level (MSL Prison speak!) of 26 per hour for the 27 hours the festival is open. The optimum staffing level is 35 per hour. As most volunteers work shifts of 4 hours this is not quite as horrendous as it appears.

Four weeks from the Festival the Beer and Cider Lists will be completed and the Festival Programme dispatched to the Printers. The Transport Manager will have hired a 7.5 tonne lorry to move the cages and trolleys from the stores to the venues on the Sunday preceding the Festival. This is known as 'Set Up Sunday'. Volunteers and Managers set up their areas of responsibility, the Stillage for the Barrels first so that the Beer, which has been delivered during the previous week, can be racked as early as possible to allow it to settle. This involves ensuring that the Barrels are chocked to stop them moving and have the cooling saddles fitted to keep them at the optimum temperature.

Prior to the Festival the Finance Officer will order the change from the Bank for collection on the Thursday morning. The change is used for float in the cash tills.

The Deputy Organiser is responsible for the selection of the Beers. At the Boozes on the Ouse we have about 65 different Real Ales. At the top of this article I mentioned that by the 1970s, Beer styles were down mainly to Milds, Bitters and Stouts. Also that Family Brewers had disappeared and with them had gone hundreds of recipes. Fortunately, through the dedication of many dedicated Brewers and enthusiasts, these recipes are being rediscovered and brewed again. The result is that we now have a wealth of different Beer styles, including Milds, Bitters, Best Bitters, Old Ales, Barley Wines, India Pale Ales, Golden Ales, and more Stouts and Porters. Fruit Beers and other speciality Beers are also now appearing. The secret of a good Festival is to ensure a good balance of these Beer styles.

The Bottled Beer Manager will ensure his Beer Fridges are filled. The Bottled Beers are usually Continental Beers primarily from Belgium and Germany. However some Beers from local Brewers who don't sell their beers in Barrels are also sold. The Cider Manager will also get his Barrels of Real Cider and Perries set up.

At the end of 'set up', volunteers sit down for lunch and a couple of free pints of either Beer or Cider.

Interesting Fact 4. Real Cider is a traditional drink which is produced naturally from apples and is neither carbonated nor pasteurised. To be Real Cider the apples must be pressed and fermented, not produced from concentrate and served either directly from the barrel or by gravity, not by gas pressure.

Interesting Fact 5. Vintage Cider is Real Cider that contains the juice of one or more of 15 Varieties of Cider Apple as defined by Dr Robert Hogg in 1884.

Interesting Fact 6. Perry is a traditional drink made by fermenting specific varieties of Pear as described by Dr Robert Hogg in 1884. Any other varieties of Pear crushed and fermented produce Pear Cider.



ROUNDING THE CIRCLE.

John Ramwell.

It often occurs to me that we are not very good at trying to round off our serious discussions. We listen and we put our arguments forward but these can be quite limited. We can be selective in our specific topics within an argument and fail to explore all the issues. We get our point of view across and retire. This is particularly true of politics. We argue for a party, be it right, left or centre but we seem to select parts that suit our point of view. Take tax relief and public spending. Many of us argue

for more cash in our pocket but should we not care that our national budget deficit has become virtually unmanageable and that we are taking money from future generations. No, by and large we conveniently forget this aspect.

There are many debates ranging around the globe and around various societies which often cause us some discomfort to the extent we take points of view and opinions only so far, taking pains to steer clear of issues that some may find difficult. We conveniently omit other parts of discussions that we find troublesome.

Perhaps this is because we adopt polarised opinions when fighting our particular corner and to be inclusive of all the arguments weakens our position. Surely it can be right to recognise the opinions of others in our great debates and, as a consequence, appreciate there is nearly always another side to our case. Only lawyers should remain blinkered to the case their client is taking. The rest of us, politicians, economists, religious leaders, teenagers, pensioners, medics, unemployed, over employed; we should all aim to take a well rounded view.

There are more controversies and debates as there are points of view and many such points of view are a result of our up-bringing, of our genetic makeup and the myriad of influences that life and life experiences such as education bring to bear.

So I am asking the question; should we not free our minds of bigotry and prejudice in our attempts to wrestle with life's mysteries by doing our best to really examine all sides of an argument. Could it be that 'the other side' is right.

Should an established theology invite believers to question aspects of their faith. In an over populated world should the Roman Catholic Church review its doctrine on birth control. Should leaders and MPs of the political parties be less emphatic and admit that there are sound areas of agreement as well as disagreement. Should fundamentalists start to believe in non violence.

Take the recent flood of child abuse cases that have swamped our media. Understandably we find such cases abhorrent and we quickly condemn the perpetrators. The media has been full of indignation and wishes to see all the guilty hang out to dry. But surely the discussion should not end with the story of the guilty and the story of the victims; this is too easy by far. We have to also discuss the part other aspects of society have played by either ignoring or, even worse, helping to cover up such atrocities. The establishment, the politicians, the authorities, the headmasters, the institutional directors; all of these and more who have been less than honest or who have not had the courage to stand up and defend the weak when it mattered most. But most of all should we not be discussing the part that parents play in the scheme of things. Where are they when their children, still at a very vulnerable age, are wandering the town and city centres during the night hours being groomed by perverts. Social services and the police will tell you how they have to continuously 'rescue' children from the streets. Why is there no or very little action taken against the parents for their neglect. A rhetorical question to which we can all guess the answers.

Seems crazy that we must take a stringent tests to be allowed to practice law, take a driving test, become a doctor or drive a crane whilst the most serious responsibility of all is having and rearing children. Do we need some discussion about parenting? Do we?

The duty of care is now enshrined in law. We have such a duty towards ourselves as well as others. If any of us fail in our duty of care surely there should be a penalty. Now I realise that penalties and punishments and sanctions are not always the answer but then if not at least part of the answer then what is? We usually insist that there must be some

My Retirement Journal.

Graham Smith



One of a number of things I do in my retirement, well for about 4 weeks a year, is invigilating university exams at what is now known as Leeds Beckett University.

Now, as no one in our street ever went to University, including myself, invigilating is about as close as I am likely to get in my lifetime and yes I know I could still do something as a mature student but what and why??

I have been invigilating [no joked please] for about 5 years and it was at the suggestion of my partner, who happens to work at the university and thought it would give the poor

devil something to do that involves little effort [some things do not change] and to keep me out of mischief, as if!!

Universities are always looking for reliable folk with professional backgrounds to carry out the invigilator role ensuring defensible conduct at exams and as a plus £10 an hour for doing very little although as retired HMPS it is not really about the money is it?

How to apply? Contact your local University and talk to their exams department and they will send you the application form if they are recruiting which they nearly always are. If they like the sound of you, and why wouldn't they, there will be police checks and a couple of days training then off you go.

Exams can range from 400 students taking the same exam to a single student in a room with the invigilator who may have special needs, that's the student not you.

The range of exams I am invigilating this week [end of January] include Health and Safety [everyone's favourite, Global Economic Restructuring, Human Physiology and Regional Clinical Reasoning. Thankfully you do not have to know anything about these things but it does impress me when I watch students tackling such complex stuff.

If you have been a Prison Officer in the past as part of your career you will immediately feel at home whilst patrolling the rows of students checking that they are not cheating but also assisting them if you can [not with the answers highly unlikely] ,it's just like shop 6 at HMPS, well similar. Joking apart students are often stressed and your experience of dealing with people is a big asset to the university as often other invigilators are not always comfortable with managing this type of event, you will be.

As it is the end of January all exams are now finished and it is time for us invigilators to have a holiday after all that effort. We are off to New Orleans for a week and then a cruise around the Caribbean so I will probably see some of you there, this retirement business isn't bad is it?



Clickers Corner

By Mick Roebuck

Windows 10

It only seems a short while since I reported to you that Microsoft was launching its new operating system to be known as Windows 8. Never a company to stand still Microsoft will be bringing to the market its next upgrade to be known as Windows 10 (yes I am aware there was never a Windows 9) due to be launched later in 2015. At the moment, Microsoft have not quoted a price for the new OS but I am reliably informed that a free upgrade will be available for those who currently have Windows 7 or 8 as their OS. Those readers who are purchasing a new computer altogether might wish to hold on a little bit longer and await the arrival of Windows 10, although given Microsoft's past launch predictions it might be nearer next autumn before it goes on general release. It's also rumoured that at the same time as the 10 OS is released a new updated version of Microsoft Office will be launched.

Tips for Speeding up Your PC

I have written several articles in the past advising readers on how to speed up that computer which over the months and years of use has become slow and at times frustrating to use. When a computer is brand new, it works wonderfully well. Over time, though, its performance can slowly begin to worsen. This happens for a number of reasons, but the biggest culprits are things like spyware, adware and other computer threats which are unwittingly downloaded along with other content while online. You don't have to download thousands of MP3s, movies or other items to experience these problems either – nobody is immune to them. Instead of accepting the situation, there are plenty of techniques and strategies that you can use to make it better – a few of the best ones I outline below.

Clean Your Computer's Windows Registry

The biggest cause of slow, sluggish PC performance is errors and problems within its Windows registry. Adware, spyware and other threats usually target the registry, damaging or misplacing important files within it. When it comes to PC cleaning, a daily Windows registry cleaning should be at the top of your list of priorities. However, this should never be done manually – there are too many opportunities for major errors that could seriously damage your PC's operating system. Instead, if you have not already installed it after reading my previous advice, why not try Cleaner or www.glarysoft.com? Both come as free downloads and are simple to use.

Remove Unneeded Files

Every time you log on to the Internet or otherwise use your computer, temporary files are generated. They are usually only needed once; however, they don't disappear on their own. Instead, they accumulate over time until they are cluttering up your computer's file system and affecting its performance. While it's possible to remove these files one-by-one, it's much easier and quicker to use a PC cleaning tool that's designed for the purpose. Try to do so about one time per week to keep your computer humming along with ease.

Remove Unneeded Programs and Old Unwanted Photographs

Like many people, you probably download and try out many different programs each month. How many of them do you actually end up using on a regular basis? Chances are, not very many of them. By getting into the habit of uninstalling unused and unneeded programs, you can keep your computer's file system a lot less cluttered. In turn, your PC's performance will improve dramatically. You can optimize your computer in this way by using its' Add/Remove Programs feature. Its' location varies by operating system, but you should be able to find it somewhere in the Control Panel.

Empty the Recycle Bin

When you click "delete" on a file or a program, it doesn't go away for good – not immediately.

Instead, it sits in your computer's Recycle Bin. As things pile up in the Recycle Bin, your computer can start exhibiting some very annoying problems. If sluggish start-ups and frequent crashes are occurring with increasing frequency – and your computer's recycle bin is very full – go ahead and empty it. From then on, get into the habit of doing so about one time per week. This small but important strategy can make a huge difference.

Perform a Disk Defragmentation

Windows isn't very efficient when it comes to storing files. It actually splits them up, depositing them into whatever spaces are available. The more spaced apart the pieces of a file are, the harder your computer has to work to make them run. The Windows disk defragmentation system tune-up utility works to piece all of those files back together again. The process is a long one, though, and only needs to be done about four times per year. Set it up to run automatically once every three months. By doing so, you'll be able to keep your computer running in tiptop shape.

When it comes to keeping your computer running optimally, small but regular maintenance is the best way to go. Protecting your PC only does so much; even the most careful Internet users in the world unintentionally download malicious software from time to time. By using basic system tune-up tools, cleaning your computer's Windows registry regularly, performing regular file-cleaning maintenance and otherwise optimizing your PC, you should be able to keep it in like-new condition for a lot longer. Even if your computer has been performing slowly for some time, beginning this regimen is sure to produce results. In the end, you'll be able to enjoy a computer that flies along – instead of one that spins its' wheels.

Android Devices

Many of you will by now own something which operates on the android system, whether it be, an I phone, I pad or other hand held device such as Tesco's Hudl and may be wondering about installing an anti virus and or firewall onto the it.

To set your minds at rest it is not normally a requirement for android devices to need such software installed, although there are several freebies available should you feel the need to download one.

While there may well be a lot of Android malware out there, a look at Android's protections and studies from antivirus companies reveals that you're probably safe if you follow some basic precautions. Android itself has some built-in antivirus features. Before considering whether an antivirus app is useful, it's important to examine the features Android already has.

Google Play apps are scanned for malware: Google uses a service named Bouncer to automatically scan apps on the Google Play Store for malware. As soon as an app is uploaded, Bouncer checks it and compares it to other known malware, Trojans, and spyware. Every application is run in a simulated environment to see if it will behave maliciously on an actual device. The app's behaviour is compared to the behaviour of previous malicious apps to look for red flags. New developer accounts are particularly scrutinized – this is to prevent repeat offenders from creating new accounts.

As long as you stick to apps from Google Play, you probably don't need an antivirus – especially if you're using Android 4.2 or later. The majority of Android malware comes from third-party app stores and apps downloaded from suspicious websites. To be extra safe, check the permissions of apps you install. You should also keep away from the type of sites which are known to carry malware, such as those showing pornography.

Nostalgia

If like me you learnt your computer skills on the ZX Spectrum, you might be please to learn that later this year will see its re-launch. I'm reliably informed that it will come, pre loaded with 1,000 games. It will need connecting to your TV in order to play the games, but with android devices readily available I cannot foresee it being a huge success.



Beer Festivals

The things we do in pursuit of pleasure

by Ray London

In 1970 I was one of the first 18 year olds to get the vote, and also became old enough to buy and consume alcohol legally. Both of these passages to adulthood I still take seriously. These activities were really limited in choice. Politics at that time was primarily a three party affair, and Beer Drinking was being dictated by the massive takeovers of traditional British Brewers by six major International Brewing Conglomerations. The British Brewing Industry was in the doldrums after two World Wars and the Depression had starved it of investment. So, unsurprisingly, small family brewers were snapped up, and with them went hundreds of recipes for Ales and Beers many dating back over a hundred years.

Interesting Fact 1. You may not know the difference between Ale and Beer. Nowadays, there is no difference with marketers using them both as a generic term, however, for the purist; Ale contains Water, Yeast, Malted Grain (usually Barley) and other flavouring. Beer is made from Water, Yeast, Malted Grain, and since the time of the Romans Hops.

The big Brewers, in pursuit of profit, went for high volume easy to handle, limited choice products. Keg Beer took off. We all remember the advertisements of the time. 'A Double Diamond works wonders', and the Youngers Tartan Tanker following a Coach full of Football Supporters, and, of course the Watneys Red Barrel Party Seven Cans. How many of you were showered in Beer trying to open one of those awful Improvised Explosive Devices? Beer choice, up to the time had been Mild, Bitter, Porter and Stout, with bottles of Light or Brown Ale. There had been Lager Brewed in North Wales since the First World War, when German Prisoners of War working in the Coal Mines were allowed to brew their own Beer (Lager). The new Mega Brewers went for Bitters and introduced Continental Lagers, advertising campaigns promoted them and Milds, Porters and most Stouts gradually disappeared. I say most Stouts, as Guinness grew its share of the market. Even here I remember the arguments between the traditionalist who would only drink the bottled Guinness and shunned the Keg variety, which even now tastes so much different.

Interesting Fact 2a. What is the difference between Mild and Bitter? Those of you who are Ealing Comedy fans, you may remember a famous line by Stanley Holloway in 'The Titfield Thunderbolt' when he refers to Mild Ale and Bitter Beer.

and 4 Pint Plastic Bottles are useful here.

Usually by closing time at 10pm on Saturday evening, over half the Beer Barrels are empty and hopefully we have exceeded 80% target of Beer sold. Usually the same position has been achieved with Cider sales. The Bottled Beer sales vary according to the stock levels carried forward from the previous Festivals.

Throughout the Festival when so much drink is available, food is a necessary and important feature. In addition to the usual snacks of crisps and nuts, we have subcontracted a stall selling a range of Stuffed Olives, Pies and Cheeses, and another selling hot 'Pub' style dishes.

During the course of the Festival the Volunteers are given Food and Drinks Vouchers and have the opportunity to sample the produce. At the end of each day the Staffing Manager arranges lifts and transport to ensure every volunteer gets home safely.

As soon practicably possible on Saturday evening clearing up starts. As Barrels are emptied they are removed from the Racking, and the Cooling Saddles packed away. As much clearing up as possible is done on the Saturday evening to ease the pressure on Sunday morning, particularly, the stock-taking of Glasses and Bottled Beers.

Sunday Morning, known as 'Take Down', is an extremely busy day. In 4 hours everything has to be taken down, the Cages and Trolleys for our stores correctly packed and the Equipment for HQ stores packed on to the Pallets. This is a logistical challenge, which we now have refined by the use of 'Operational Instructions', effectively Idiots Guides. List and Photographs Laminated on each cage mean it is no more complicated than doing a Jigsaw Puzzle. This ensures that it is now such a slick operation that between 10 and 12 Volunteers easily completes the task. As with set up, the volunteers are fed and watered before the venues are handed back.

By 4 weeks after the event the 'Wash Up' Meeting is held. All Managers submit their Reports and Recommendations and hopefully the Festival can be signed off. I say hopefully, as quite often not all the invoices for Beers and Ciders have been received: consequently only Indicative Accounts can be shown.

Before the process starts over again, the Branch lays on a Coach on a Saturday afternoon to visit Rural Pubs and Breweries in the Branch Area. This is free for those who have volunteered at the Festival and proves very popular, to the extent that we have had to lay on a Double Decker.

No Festival is ever perfect, and all those involved in the organisation are looking at ways we can improve. What better way than visiting other Festivals around the country looking for Good Practice and, of course Good Beers? Perhaps I'll see you at your local Festival, whilst I'm looking to improve ours.

So how does a Beer Festival happen? Well it's a bit like an incident in a Prison really - Planning, Refining, more Planning, Monitoring Progress and good people around you. The Organiser takes on the role of Silver Commander whilst the Managers become the Bronzes.

CAMRA is an organisation which relies wholly on Volunteers, apart from a small Headquarters staff, so the preparation and staging of any Festival is largely down to the commitment of members. Like most voluntary organisations these can be few far between, with a variety of skills and competences, but all are volunteers and welcomed for whatever they can commit. My Local Branch in Huntingdonshire stages 2 Festivals each year, March in St Neots and October in St Ives. As both towns are on the river Great Ouse, we call the Festivals 'Booze on the Ouse'. These Festivals have been going for more than 20 years now and have become well established on the 'Festival Scene', drawing regular attendees from as far as The Midlands, Norwich and London. Both Festivals run from Thursday to Saturday and average a total attendance in excess of 1250. Initial Planning for these Festivals runs 4 years in advance with the booking of the venues: however, specific planning for each Festival starts with the 'Wash Up Meeting' from the previous Festival. Here each of the Functional Managers submits a report on the previous Festival and makes recommendations for subsequent Festivals. If these recommendations are agreed they are included in the Planning process. The Functions we have are:-

Organiser, Deputy Organiser, Health and Safety Officer, Finance Officer, Staffing Officer, Publicity Manager, Transport and Logistics Manager, Glasses Manager, Front of House Manager, Bar Manager, Cask Beer Manager, Cider and Perry Manager, Bottled Beer Manager, Membership and Recruitment Manager, Tombola and Games Manager, Products and Merchandising Manager: 16 jobs, done, by only 6 people.

The first action in getting any CAMRA Beer Festival off the ground is to submit a Festival Budget, prepared by the Organiser and the Deputy Organiser to CAMRA HQ, (in prison parlance Gold Commander); once this is approved the ball can start rolling.

By four months out the Organiser will have published the Action Plan for each of the Managers. The Transport and Logistics Manager will have ordered the Health and Safety Clothing and Equipment, Hydraulic Barrel Lifts and the Coolers from the Headquarters stores. The Logo for the Glasses and Advertising will have been agreed, the Artwork prepared and the Glasses ordered. The Deputy Manager will have started work on the Beer List and both the Cider Manager and Bottled Beer Manager will have started work on resourcing their products.

We share a store with the North Hertfordshire Branch, and jointly own Stillage on which the Barrels are racked and Metal Racking and Wooden panelling which makes up the bar. Spare Glasses, Tombola Prizes, Cooling Trays for the Bottled Beer and 2 and 4 pint plastic bottles for selling carryout beer, Cash Boxes and Tills are also kept there, as too is the stock of Bottled Beers. Over the last couple of years we now store all this equipment on wheeled trolleys or in roller cages similar to those used in Supermarkets, altogether there are 24 of these cages. As the North Herts. Branch also holds three festivals each year, this equipment has to be checked, any deficiencies replaced or repairs effected.

As the date of the Festival approaches, a major task is undertaken: recruiting volunteers. Staff are required to man the door, issue, return and wash Glasses, serve behind the Real Ale Bar, the Cider and Bottled Beer Bar, assist the Finance Officer keeping tills topped up with change and clear of notes, and

Interesting Fact 7. Real Ciders and Perries flavour varies from year to year, according to weather which dictates the juice content of the fruit. Commercial Manufacturers use industrial processes to ensure standardisation of flavour for the fizzy Keg and bottled brands.

On the Tuesday and Wednesday, 'Quality Control' takes place, as each of the Real Ales is sampled to test if it has settled and is ready for sale. Usually this results in about 80% being ready for opening. This is not a problem as the rest comes on stream during the Festival. Occasionally, a Barrel may have to be returned.

Prior to the Festival opening to the public at 5pm the Festivals open at 3pm for a trade session: this is primarily Publicans, Advertisers and Press. We also take the opportunity to present our Branch Awards: these include Rural Pub of the Year, Urban Pub of the Year, Community Pub of the Year, Most Improved Pub of the Year, Cider Pub of the Year and others. We split these awards so that some are presented at St Neots and others at St Ives.

Front of House is the entrance where the General public pay to enter. Entry prices vary according to which session is being attended, the busiest on Friday evening being £3. CAMRA Members get in free on production of a valid membership card for all sessions.

Also in this area is the Glasses Stand. Each year we have a specially printed Glass with a topical Logo relevant to the year. In 2014 we adapted the famous Kitchener recruiting Poster from World War, thereby acknowledging the Centenary of that conflict. For 2015 we considered the bi-centenary of the Battle of Waterloo, but having used a War Related theme in 2014 we opted instead for using the 800th Anniversary of Magna Carta.

Interesting Fact 8. Article 35 of Magna Carta states "Let there be throughout our Realm a constant measure for Corn Ale and Wine" As far as Ale was concerned this was achieved in 1827.



Glasses are available with a £3 refundable deposit. Approximately 50% of attendees choose to take their Glass home. The returned Glasses are washed and reused. The Glasses Stand is run by volunteers from the local Wild Life Trust, who collect for their work when people are leaving and deposits are returned.

Thursday evening is usually the quietest session, relative to the numbers attending on Friday afternoon and the busiest session on Friday evening. It's usually during this session that the first Beers and Ciders sell out. The Beer Barrels at our Festivals hold 72 Pints, whilst the Cider Barrels usually contain 40 Pints. Our target is to sell 80%, thereby having a choice of Beers and Ciders right up to closing time. Any remaining Beers and Ciders are not wasted as Volunteers help themselves whilst clearing up. The 2

Soroptimist International.

By Chris Duffin



As some of you may know, Harry and I moved back from Spain last in December 2012. After 14 years of sun, sand, sea and sangria we felt it was time to come home to our family, friends and a little more (understandable) culture. As we had no great roots in any specific place in the UK we chose to return to Brighton. We like the south coast area and it is a city with theatres, cinemas and concerts in abundance, not to mention its wonderful festival in May.

Having been involved in charity fund raising for victims of domestic violence in Spain I decided to get involved in some charity work in the UK. Having been in touch with Mitch Egan for some time before returning home it was apparent that this was a place we would find what we wanted. On arrival, I was met with an unambiguous request from Mitch to use my spare time to start a branch of the Soroptimists in Brighton as the old branch had closed down some time back and there were lots of people she knew who would be interested in joining. She herself was far too busy to do it so it would be a good thing for me to get involved. Those of you who know Mitch will not be at all surprised that I was not going to be allowed to fritter away my life without doing something useful with it.

I had been approached when I was at Strangeways by a woman who wanted me to become a Soroptimist, but I was too busy with work and life to join anything. I really didn't know very much about them so set about trying to find out more. I contacted them and they suggested I joined the Lewes Branch to become more familiar with the organisation. I duly joined and offered to be their branch secretary for a year in order to find out how they worked before committing myself to starting a branch in Brighton.

I have to say I was amazed how large the organisation is, how many members it has and how many countries it operates in. This year was the 80th Anniversary of Soroptimism and it is a proud, well respected and efficient voice for women and girls all over the world. I have never really been one for joining women's groups but this one captured my imagination.

For those who don't know anything about the Soroptimists, I urge you to go on line and read about the amazing work they do. The name means sisterhood of optimism. Its' aim is to educate, empower and enable women and girls to become self sufficient. Each branch has a sister branch in another country and one in the UK and also have country-wide projects throughout the year. They work with and for each other branches worldwide. They are represented at the highest level of policy making for women and even have a representative at the UN conferences on women's issues.

As part of my familiarisation project, I went along to Harrogate to the annual conference in October and was utterly amazed at the numbers there and the number of countries attending, and this was only those in this corner of the globe.

I have no wish to go into detail to explain the organisation but I thought you might like to read my report back to the branch from Conference which was meant to reignite the enthusiasm of members who operate in small groups and sometimes forget they belong to a much bigger band of great women who genuinely have a cause.

I should add that none of the members are paid except for a few administrators and they all cover their own expenses to conference. I have to say I have enjoyed my year at Lewes and intend to attempt to start a club in Brighton. Should you ever be asked to support any functions of ours, please give generously as the money is extremely well spent.

Report from Soroptimist Conference, Harrogate 2014.

As many of you know, Anne Hudson and I went along to the 80th AGM of Soroptimist International held at the International Conference Centre in Harrogate held on the 6th, 7th and 8th November.

It was my first Conference and, as it was the 80th, it was a significant event.

I thought you might enjoy reading a little about it from the perspective of a novice Soroptimist who had no idea what to expect.

There were 1800 delegates who attended from 35 countries which I have to say was a surprise to me as I had no idea how many of us there were and we are only part of the Organisation as there are other Continents and areas who have their own Conferences.

The Yorkshire branches were the organising committee and had clearly worked hard to make the event not only run smoothly, but enjoyable, sociable and efficient.

At the opening ceremony, all the countries represented entered the auditorium carrying their flag and these flags were placed at the back of the stage for the rest of the conference which reminded all the delegates of how big, important and influential Soroptimists can be.

I will not bore you with all the details of who does what except to say that we are represented at NATO conferences and many other policy making bodies around the world and our voices are heard in Governments of many nations, something about which we should be proud.

Awards were given to branches who were deemed to have been most effective and innovative over the year and these varied from (my old town) Ashton-u-Lyne running a project for children in schools teaching the dangers of pay day loans and loan sharks to Schools in India running small drama sketches to teach boys and girls to respect each other.

The most emotional presentation was given by a young woman from Sierra Leone who talked about FGM. They had run a scheme giving "set up" loans to women in the villages but the lady who did the "cutting" was given a bigger loan in order for her to set up a market garden. This was to compensate her for giving up the practice of cutting, which gave her a living and a "status" in the community. With the set up loan, she retained an income and, with a business which supplied the village with food, she also retained her status in the community. It was believed that over 200 girls had been saved from FGM as a result. The lady giving the presentation had a great deal of trouble speaking through her tears as she told us her cousin had died in her garden that morning from Ebola. It was the fourth member of her direct family to die. It was a very emotional time for her and all the delegates. The Conference made an appeal for aid to be delivered to her area, where none had yet reached, and £7000 was raised for two lorry loads of aid which were despatched the day after Conference.

There were far too many things happening for me to report everything but I just wanted to give a new members' view of the general feeling gained about Soroptimism. I sometimes think that those who have been members of an organisation for a long time get so used to what happens that they don't necessarily appreciate how important their efforts are.

I found the whole experience, stimulating and informative and it has convinced me that Brighton should have its own branch and as such, I will be hoping open one in March of next year.

I hope you find this short report useful and thanks for taking the time to read it.

Thanks Mitch for all your help in this matter.

Chris Duffin , Secretary, Lewes and District.



Your Letters

90 Lindenthorpe Road

Broadstairs Kent

CT10 1DH

Tel 01843 604314

In the last Newsletter I reported that the rank of Principal Officer had sadly been dispensed with. That was short lived, it has now been restored but additional responsibility added to it, as the role of Senior Officer has been downgraded. I cannot explain what was behind all that (someone else might know and could write to us), I am just relieved that the Principal has been restored as I view as critical.

Once again the Service is going through tribulation, having closed prisons and offered generous exit terms to staff wishing to leave to meet its' so-called staffing targets under 'bench marking'. It now finds it is 1,750 staff short nationally and finding difficulty in recruiting, especially in London and the south east. So once again many establishments are relying on detached duty to survive, and staff can be paid for additional hours; but off course it is not overtime as we did away with that. What is even more confusing is that with all the severe restraint being applied to individual budgets, NOMS (or Prison Department as we knew it) is anticipating a £300 million underspend this financial year.

Which only means for those of you that have decided to watch ITV's 'Bring Back Borstal' you can reminisce about happier days when you served and the Service had vision and core values. I am not sure of the intent of the programme, but I endorse the sentiment, as doing away with Borstal was the beginning of a downward spiral. For those 18 and over there is no longer a guarantee of discrete training. The majority are in 'adult prisons': even Rochester Borstal which started it all at the turn of the century is now a mixed establishment, despite the fact it proudly announces BORSTAL over its' front gate. I am sure **Mike Selby** could write something about the historical and political importance of the advent of Borstal. Unfortunately the programme so far has not really made a sound case for its' title. It is though amusing to see two of our former colleagues playing

Governor and Housemaster, although perhaps a little ironic that **Professor David Wilson** should star as a Governor of a Borstal, as according to my research (not foolproof) he spent most of his career in Prisons or Head office. He did go to Rochester in 1988, but by then it was well established as a Youth Custody Centre, not quite the same as I know, as I was posted to Wellingborough, despite representations, only to find I was expected to convert it. Overall I am unsure what the programme conveys, though it does give the feel that the staff took an interest in their charges, but then with a Governor, two Housemaster, and a Matron for 13 'lads' of which 6 opted out, and 2 were eventually expelled, there wasn't much else to do. I can only assume that the tipping out of bed by staff was done for viewing impact, or perhaps I missed something. It was fun seeing **Gerry Hendry** looking so well and just being himself, that nice cuddly bear, father figure who huffs and puffs occasionally. At least the programme did illustrate how Borstals tried to integrate with the local community, and the positive effect it had on all concerned.

I could not resist printing the first review of the programme from the Times... 'At the end of the first episode of this creation of a 1930s-style borstal there was the absurd sight of the kindly governor almost begging young offenders not to walk out. This week it gets even sillier. One of the boys kicks off and brandishes a knife. Knife yielding is clearly a Health and Safety issue, and the young man is promptly excluded from the experiment. So far we have been asked to believe that 1930s borstals were run by kindly and intelligent governors and warm-hearted matrons; that young inmates could walk out whenever they felt like it, and anyone who behaved like a dangerous young thug would be expelled. Yup, I bet that is exactly what it was like.'

I do not expect the programme to make any impact on policy makers, which is a pity as many of the values central to borstals are just as valid today. If you look behind the histrionics, the programme did illustrate the value of learning trade skills, the consistency of having to get up and work each day, the sense of achievement of earning a reward, the value of working in the community on productive projects, and the recognition of the importance of being offered employment on discharge. Finally I could not but have a shudder every time they used the *segregation* cell; most of my charges would have broken out of this in less than 2 minutes.

attend out patients for treatment every two months. They estimate if things do not improve they may have to operate on one foot.

Last year was not good luck-wise. He had a problem with his left eye after a cataract operation, and despite my complaints to the optician, they refused to refer him to the eye clinic. He could not drive properly due to not seeing clearly through his left eye. This resulted in an accident with the car which was a write-off, and hurt him financially. In the end he had to seek help from the Citizens Advice Bureau before he was able to get treatment. They corrected it with laser treatment and it only took 15 minutes.

The weather being so good this year he got a bumper crop of vegetables from his garden; not so much fruit from the trees as the squirrels got to it first. I was tempted to use my air rifle on them but they do serve a useful purpose-whatever that is!

He finishes by saying some people say there is no difference between complete and finished. I beg to differ.

When you marry the right woman you are complete.

When you marry the wrong woman you are finished and when the right one catches you with the wrong you are completely finished.

Brief greetings from **Don and Iris Drew, Paddy Fitzgerald and family and Dave Simons**, so we know they are well. Also from John and Jean Childs who were looking forward to their son and family, who now live in Hong Kong, joining them for Christmas and the New Year.

Speaking to **Bill Brister** the other day he advises me that he has had to have various medical checks, but generally they have been pretty positive. He says he does feel his age a bit, then he was 90 in February. He has spoken to **Stephen Prior** recently who appeared 'chirpy and positive' generally, but felt sad at the direction the Service was moving. They got talking about the TV programme, 'Bring back Borstal', and he reminded me that it was Leon Brittain who turned it into Youth Custody, as he argued that it was a tenet of Europe that it was for the courts to decide on sentences and not the Department. Just shows how fickle politics are, as 20 years later they managed to introduce IPP, a completely indeterminate sentence for serious offenders. True, it has been seriously criticised

scenery'. When Jim's back is better, I will let you know the next instalment! Would you believe it, Jim and Shelia have also been involved with the local bowls club, are the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators and are also involved with a group researching the lives of 106 men from the village who fought in the First World War (ten of them killed), with the intention of having a book published in 2018 to commemorate the centenary. On the health side, Jim says they cannot complain: lots of aches and pains (what do you expect with all that gardening) but they take the pills and get on with it. Sheila has developed a hearing problem which is a bit frustrating, Jim having to repeat things two or three times. On some occasions she guesses what he has said, often followed by a lot of laughter, as she has totally misheard him and then she has to guess what she thinks he has said and try and interpret the answer.

Ron and Sue Curtis have wider issues than their garden, as their son and family now live in Dumbarton, Scotland. On the night of the Scottish Referendum they stayed up all night to follow the results, as the outcome was a cause of great concern to many, including their family, in case it went the way of independence. They continue to follow the developments on devolution with great interest and apprehension about its' possible impact.

Their other son is still enjoying life in the Netherlands and happily Simon's job, although subject to constant changes, is secure.

They still spend much of their summer holiday in France, but in the autumn they spent time with Ron's sister in Chichester, Ron's home town. In particular they attended performances at the newly refurbished and extended Chichester Festival Theatre and went to an open day which allowed them to see behind the scenes, under the stage, dressing rooms etc. It is a magnificent development. Ron used to go there as a penniless student to see plays in the cheap seats when it first opened in 1962.

They continue to be very active in their local Methodist Church and were delighted to lead the Remembrance Service, it being the 100th anniversary of the declaration of the Great War.

Sue's mobility following surgery on her knees has continued to improve. She still uses her bike regularly; she would be lost without it. Ron continues to get

New crackdown on dangerous legal highs in prison

From:

Ministry of Justice

First published:

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Part of:

Law and the justice system

Offenders found abusing so-called 'legal highs' in prison will face a new crackdown by prison authorities from next week.

Prosecution, additional days in prison, segregation, 'closed visits' and a range of other potential penalties, are all on the cards for those who flout the rules.

New, additional powers in the Criminal Courts and Justice Bill will give powers to specify non controlled drugs (including so-called 'legal highs') which can be tested for as part of the Mandatory Drug Testing Programme.

Justice Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Go onto any prison wing, and staff will tell you that whilst we've made good headway on drug misuse in prisons, there's a new phenomenon they are increasingly seeing in the form of so-called 'legal highs'. What we're also hearing is that these substances seem to be part of the problem around increasing violence in our prison estate.

No one should be under any illusion how dangerous the abuse of any drug is. We are determined to make sure governors have every power at their disposal to detect supply, punish those found using or dealing, and enforce a zero tolerance approach.

Prisoners should be very clear – if they think they can get away with using these substances, they need to think again. And the same applies to those who are the suppliers, whether they're inside or outside the prison gates.

Next week, prison governors will receive new guidance from the Ministry of Justice which sets out clearly for the first time the measures available to them to deal with New Psychoactive Substances (NPS /'legal highs'). This will reinforce the prison estate's zero tolerance approach to contraband.

Any prisoner who is suspected of being involved in smuggling prohibited items, including legal highs, through visits can face:

- 'closed visits', where no contact is allowed with their partners or children
- having up to 42 days added to their time in prison
- being confined to their cell for up to 21 days with no association time
- forfeiting up to 100% of earnings, for up to 84 days – average weekly wage is £9.60
- having certain privileges removed for up to 42 days – such as additional visits, higher rates of pay, own clothing, TV, extra time out of cell
- being placed in a higher security prison
- prosecution and a further sentence, if it is a controlled drug

In addition, the Ministry of Justice is embarking on a raft of measures designed to beef up the existing security and prevention measures including:

I am sure we would be interested on your views on the programme.

Readers will be saddened to hear of the death of **Bill Keast** on the 3 January. Bill was born in 1928 and joined the prison service when he was 21. He retired in 1988 after 39 years service and lived in Northallerton. I first new Bill when we were at Dover Borstal together (happy days) and later we were both at the Prison College Love Lane. It was from there that he applied for the Deputy Commissioner post in Bermuda. Everyone warned him of the difficulties of working with Tom Carnegie, who was to be the Commissioner, 'Ah,' said Bill, 'but who would ensure we get a decent emolument package and conditions of service'. He was right of course, and Bill really enjoyed his time in Bermuda which was not surprising as he was always full of life, and made the very best of any situation he was in. His final posting was Governor of Haslar prior to which he had been at Channings Wood.

I was further saddened to hear of the death of **Paddy Fitzgerald** who passed away on the 31st January this year after a short illness. Paddy would have been 80 in April this year, so he had a reasonable innings as they say in the cricketing world. I first met Paddy when he left Swinfen Hall and joined the Liverpool team in 1974. We became firm friends and remained in touch right up to Christmas last year. In many ways Paddy was a quiet unassuming gentleman, with a slightly Irish wicked sense of humour. He was also a man of integrity, humanity, and had a resilience about all he was asked to take on. He rarely grumbled and always made you feel good to be in his presence, or whenever you heard from him, although he was not a great letter writer.

He also served at Risley and Durham and finally at the Training College in Wakefield. I was at the same time at Wakefield Prison, and wished to use the Love Lane College for my daughters wedding reception. She was returning from Egypt to get married in Wakefield. I was having to arrange everything; but Paddy took over the reception element and the College really did us proud, and we had a splendid occasion, I was thrilled that Paddy was at her wedding. I will, as I am sure everyone who knew will, miss him deeply.

I always reflect when news of colleagues reaches us, how lucky we all were to serve alongside so many truly outstanding and genuine people.

John Dring advises that sadly **Ian Boon** died on 10th November 2014. Ian had been ill for some time and was being cared for at home in Derbyshire, where he passed away. Ian served amongst others at Haverigg, Glen Parva, and Midland

days when we played rugby together (yes with the borstal lads), and more recently went walking in the Scottish hills.

Mick and Mary Roebuck have decided, after spending 20 years living in Market Harborough, to up sticks and move to live nearer their daughter. They have bought a property in Knypersley Staffordshire. Neither of them knows the area or anyone who lives there, so it will be the start of a whole new adventure for them.

Their old house in market Harborough will still have some prison service connection as it has been purchased by Hillary Pollack whom many readers will know from her days at the Staff College and latterly the Staff Welfare Dept

Always good to hear news of colleagues and to read of the variety of pursuits they are involved in. I repeat what so many have said, we were all fortunate to serve when we did. Feel free to write, email, or phone me, others will be interested in your news.

From The Treasurer.

It is that time of the year again when I am balancing the accounts for the Association in readiness for them to be sent off to the auditors for certification. This is a requirement that comes from the Retired Prison Governors Association being part of the main Prison Governors Association for accounting purposes. In effect our funds count as assets in the PGA accounts, and therefore must be certified. This involves me in checking and rechecking income and outgoings to ensure that every penny is accounted for, and sending all the documentation off to the accountants for checking and certification.

I will not be in a position to give full details of the accounts until such time as they are certified but what I can reveal is that for the second year running it looks likely that expenditure has exceeded income, albeit by a few hundred pounds. Once the books are certified I will be in a position to report to the committee and to provide them with a breakdown of income and expenditure so that discussions can take place on how to ensure the association continues to remain solvent into the future.

In the meantime I cannot stress strongly enough the importance of ensuring that your Standing Order payments are correct and up to date. If you have changed banks in the past year please check to ensure that you transferred your standing order mandate, and if it has lapsed then please contact me for the documentation for renewal. Membership subscriptions is our only income, and therefore provides the funding for everything that we do for the membership, including of course this Newsletter.

I will of course be preparing a full financial report for the AGM and this will in turn be published in the Autumn Edition of The Newsletter.

Graham Mumby-Croft

Treasurer

Regional Office. He was an Assistant Director from the nineties onwards, and was at the end seconded to the Immigration Department. That was where I last saw him as I was acting as a Consultant to the Immigration Centre at Harmanworth. We were in dispute with the immigration authorities who were being intransigent. Ian came on a formal visit preceding a visit from the Minister, but at the same time took trouble to listen and to our problems and in his own quiet and imitable manner resolved it. He also enjoyed collecting some blackberries which were growing wild around the run-down parking area! He was a quiet man of great wisdom and compassion.

Those with long memories will remember **Catherine Lomax** who retired to Barby Village and has been the village councillor for the last 15 years and has just been appointed Chairman of Daventry District Council. Coun. Lomax, a Liberal Democrat, was first elected in 1998 for Barby, Ashby St Ledges, Onley, Crick and Kilsby. She stated that one of her aims in office was to raise money for her chosen charity, the Alzheimer's Society, and the other to promote the work of the council to the people of what is a very large sparsely populated district. She says her husband Brian, who is also a very active Liberal, normally behaves himself when acting as her consort.

She has recently been told by NOMS that her time as an Independent Monitoring Board member (Board of Visitors to us) must end as she has served long enough on that Board, 15 years at least. She was not pleased as Boards generally are struggling to recruit new members. In token of and recognition of her long service, NOMS were pleased to be able to present her with a gift - a bookmark!

News from **Jim and Sheila Blakey**: you remember them, they were always moving house, I suppose to have something to do in retirement. Well they have now lived in West Haddon for nine years, so Sheila had to think of something else to keep Jim from under her feet. So she decided again that the rear garden should be redesigned for the fourth time. The second design required the purchase of two tons of pea gravel which had to be barrowed through the garage and spread. The third design required the removal of the gravel, which then had to be got rid of, and the laying of 80 square yards of turf. The latest design, that's right, meant removal of turf and the purchase of two tons of pea gravel all to go through the garage. Shelia clearly likes live in what I think is called 'a changing

out walking in the countryside and went back to one of his favourite areas for walking, Calderdale in West Yorkshire, in November.

Danny and Joan Ozanne report that they are both as well as can be expected, but with regular visits to the Doctors and hospital as required. Joan's arthritis is getting a bit worse and makes it more difficult for her to get around. Danny says 'he is able to keep going', but recently had a cataract removed, the joys of getting older.' You are not doing badly Danny for an 86-year old!

He says his daughter is planning to retire from teaching this year, that makes him really old!

Betty Dennis is facing more health issues, and the arthritis has spread to her hips making walking difficult and she is dependent on pain killers. She is now residing with one of sons, but he works away most of the week so she is on her own. Despite her ailments she planted a whole lot of bulbs last year and cannot wait for spring to arrive to bring some warm sunshine and to see all the flowers in bloom. She is now considering a retirement flat near Swindon which has good amenities and beautiful grounds and near the local village.

They managed a holiday in October staying in the Purbeck Hills close to Corfe Castle and Swanage. The weather was fine, glorious countryside, good accommodation with a lovely garden, and sea air.

I really enjoy hearing from Betty, whatever is happening she makes the most of it, remains cheerful despite problems, and faces life full on and gets on with it. It puts everything into perspective and makes me realise how lucky most of us are.

Abi Sheikh says his year has been busy gardening wise as he took on the responsibility of reorganising and maintaining a large garden for a charity organisation with about a quarter of an acre of land. It is hard work but he really enjoys it. Most of the plants came from his garden, when it was dividing up. It was a great pleasure when Wokingham Borough environmental officer commented that it was the best garden she had seen near any public building. He is looking forward to finalising it this spring.

Zarina has had two operations on her back to free trapped nerves and this year had 2 injections to her spine. She has improved but is still in some pain. Health-wise he is generally ok but his feet are beginning to give me trouble and he has to

by Europe and were in December 2012 replaced by Extended Determinate Sentences or mandatory life sentences, depending on the seriousness of the offence. There remain in the system a good number of IPP sentenced prisoners yet to have a date set for their release.

The Rev Tom Johns, whom I am sure many will remember, now lives in the busy village of Bishops Waltham. He says that they are delightful people and he loves every minute of his time there. We were at Wellingborough together and really enjoyed working together. He informs me that a certain 'lad' who was his orderly when we were both there went on to train at the Church Army College and subsequently ministered to tough parishes in Sheffield and Cleethorpes before joining the Church Army H.Q. staff as chief fund raiser (he used to burgle houses). He is now with H.Q. staff at Prison Fellowship and about to offer himself for ordination. He keeps in regular touch with Tom.

Yet another example of what the best of Borstal did achieve!

Veronica Bird was off to her property in Spain for the last time in December as she has now sold it. She has had a couple of health scares, and with the Spanish economy, it was the right time. She is now thinking of moving house, as there is one in her road that she has always loved, that may be coming on the market. It is nearer town so will be easier to walk in when the time comes to have to give up the car. She still visits a local friend every week, the lady was 104 on Xmas day and still in reasonable health. Veronica believes she will live until she is 110.

Alan Rawson remains not so well. He was advised he could have an operation to ease the stiffness in his right hand, but there were risks and he would need to convalesce after it. The general advice from his family was not to have it done, but Alan believed it was more straight forward than was being made out and he would also be able to play the organ properly. So he went ahead, but due complications had to remain bedridden in hospital for a week then to a nursing home, where he remained until virtually the end of January. He is now back home but with very limited mobility. He has helpers come in 3 times a day during the week and his family ensure he is ok at weekends. I am advised by his brother-in-law that if you try to make contact by phone you will not always get through: either he presses the wrong knob or drops the phone (I know the situation well). It very sad to see how Alan has gone downhill: I remember the

MEMBERSHIP REPORT 2015

By **Harry Brett** membership Secretary



Membership continues to fall with the loss of another 6 in total to 459. We continue to recruit some governors who retire but less are now retiring after the VEDS purge of the last 2 years or so. We have also had a particularly high number of deaths since the last magazine. We are pleased to welcome new members, Margaret Higman (widow of Dennis), Bryan McMillan, Robert Young, John O'Neill, Jeanette Brumby (widow of Stanley), Muriel Keast (widow of Bill), Paddy Fox and Jonathan Uzzell.

We are sorry to inform of the deaths of the following members, Ron Wilkinson, Bill Ritson, N Cook, Denis Atkins, Stanley Brumby, John Wyatt, Colin Pratt, Bill Keast and Paddy Fitzgerald. Our thoughts and deepest condolences go out to their family and friends. We have also been informed of the deaths of non-members who we are sure be known to many. They are David Osborne, Ian Boon, Jayne Blake, Bill Pendall and Doreen Prince. Our deepest condolences go out to family and friends.

We have also had one resignation Ron Hart who has had to go into a care home and Jack Northway. We have also had newsletters returned from Susan Maiden-Dalton, Kevin Dunn-Beeching and Stephanie Martin-Wilson, so if anyone has their new address please let me know and I will put them back on the membership lists.

Members will be interested to hear that the UK Statistics Authority commissioned Paul Johnson, Director of the Institute of Fiscal studies, to conduct an independent review to ensure that UK Consumer Price Statistics met current and future user needs. The report was published on 8th January 2015 and the 'UK Consumer Price Statistics: A Review' which made the following recommendations:

That the office of National Statistics (ONS) should move to the use of CPI(H) as the main measure of inflation rather than CPI (this includes housing elements as well).

That the Government and regulators should, in the wake of the switch from RPI to CPI for up rating benefits & pensions, stop using RPI for other purposes e.g. increases in the utility costs, travel fares etc.

That the Government and the ONS should publish more information about the impact of price increases and the costs on different groups of households.

The Board of the UK Statistics Authority will now be considering the recommendations of the Review with a view to launching a public consultation on the issues arising from the Review later in 2015

New open prison unit launched at Drake Hall

From: Ministry of Justice

Justice Minister Simon Hughes opens a new unit at Drake Hall women's prison aimed at preparing offenders for release.

Justice Minister Simon Hughes today (5 February 2015) opened a new unit at Drake Hall women's prison aimed at preparing offenders for release, as well as ensuring links to their children are maintained during their sentence.

HMP Drake Hall will open new accommodation, just beyond the prison gate, which will house up to 25 offenders in open conditions. Time spent in open prisons affords low risk prisoners the opportunity to find work, re-establish family ties, reintegrate into the community and ensure housing needs are met before their release. These are essential components for successful resettlement and an important factor in protecting the public.

The new open unit at Drake Hall will also contain a facility that will allow the children of prisoners to stay overnight with their mothers for a meaningful visit. Helping offenders maintain relationships with their children can be a powerful factor in their rehabilitation, reducing the chance of them reoffending on release.

Justice Minister Simon Hughes said:

The new unit at Drake Hall represents a stepping stone back into the community for these women, giving them the chance to take responsibility and prepare to turn their lives around on release.

For mothers, the overnight facility will also offer the chance to strengthen relations with their children, which can be one of the most powerful possible motivations to turn away from crime for good.

This development is part of our wide-ranging reforms to drive down the number of women who reoffend by holding them closer to their families and the communities into which they will eventually be released.

The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) is reconfiguring the women's prison estate, so that all women's prisons will become resettlement prisons under the Transforming Rehabilitation reforms. This will help female offenders serve their sentence as close to home as possible while getting access to rehabilitative services they need in prison and through the gate into the community.

All offenders being located in open conditions have been risk assessed and categorised as being of low risk to the public. All visits of children to the overnight centre will also be thoroughly risk assessed beforehand.

Notes to editors

1. Drake Hall prison is located in Eccleshall, Staffordshire, with an operational capacity of 315 prisoners.
2. Of the 12 women's prisons, only East Sutton Park (Kent) and Askham Grange (Yorkshire) are open prisons. Styal was the first 'closed' prison to develop open accommodation alongside the main establishment – opened 29 January 2015.
3. The overnight unit at Drake Hall will be strictly for the use of children – prisoners' partners will not be allowed to stay overnight. Drake Hall is the second prison to open such a facility.

Styal prison launches new open unit

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Law and the justice system

Justice Minister Simon Hughes opens new accommodation which will act as a stepping stone back into the community for female prisoners nearing release.

Justice Minister Simon Hughes today (29 January 2015) opened new accommodation just outside the gates of Styal prison, which will act as a stepping stone back into the community for female prisoners nearing release.

Time spent in open prisons affords low risk prisoners the opportunity to find work, re-establish family ties, reintegrate into the community and ensure housing needs are met before their release. These are essential components for successful resettlement and an important factor in protecting the public.

However until today, a female offender nearing release from custody would need to move to one of only 2 women's open prisons, potentially having to move a long distance away from their homes, families and local community.

That is why the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) is reconfiguring the women's prison estate, to keep women closer to home by providing smaller open prison units next to existing 'closed' prisons.

HMP Styal is the first prison to launch its open accommodation, with a house just beyond the prison gate which will house up to 25 offenders.

Justice Minister Simon Hughes said:

The launch of the open accommodation at Styal is the first step of a vital reform we are making to the women's prison estate – helping female offenders prepare for their release by testing them in open conditions, and at the same time keeping them as close to home as possible.

This will mean that before leaving custody, they can already start to make the local links they need on their release – such as finding job opportunities, housing, or other local services.

These are essential factors to helping offenders turn away from crime and change their lives for good.

All offenders being located in open conditions have been risk assessed and categorised as being of low risk to the public and a low risk of reoffending.

Notes to Editors

1. Styal prison is a women's local prison near Wilmslow in Cheshire and serves the Courts of North West England and Wales. The prison has capacity to hold 460 women in closed conditions and up to a further 25 in open conditions.
2. Of the 12 women's prisons, only East Sutton Park (Kent) and Askham Grange (Yorkshire) are open prisons. Styal is the first 'closed' prison to develop open accommodation alongside the main establishment.
3. For more information contact the MoJ Press Office newsdesk on 020 3334 3536 and follow us @MoJPress on Twitter

A CRICKETER'S DIARY

By Dave Taylor

PART 2



Lancashire v Durham 27-30 June 2011

It is the 27th June and the summer equinox has passed; to the pessimists amongst us that means the nights start getting darker as we slowly but inextricably weave our way towards autumn. Not for us - the eternally optimistic Lancashire supporting cricket lover does this cause any anxiety

- the anxiety is the fact that we are today facing the team I have previously described as the best team we have met so far this year - Durham. The weather is warm yet overcast - an ideal climate if you win the toss and put in the opposition to bat. You will be able to tell your fast bowlers to get the ball swinging in ideal atmospheric conditions. Heavier atmospheres enable the cricket ball to do wonders, and yet nobody can tell us for sure what the scientific explanation is for this phenomenon. And if we win the toss, well..... When Lancashire travelled to Durham in May and lost by an innings and over 100 runs I asked whether we had just played the eventual County Champions. We had been comprehensively beaten in all departments -batting, bowling, fielding and captaincy - and that was the reason for our thoughts about this opposition. We now had home advantage, or playing in Lancashire at Aigburth which was our home for the whole of this season, and there is always a feeling that home advantage may sway the match. For instance the pitch would have been prepared by the groundsmen in the fashion dictated by the home side according to their strengths; a green pitch for our seam attack or a flat pitch for our batting. This works if you have an advantage in either department over the other side and is dependant to a large extent on whether or not you win the toss. Durham had a ferocious bowling seam attack with Harmison and Onions spearheading the onslaught with Thorpe as first change seam bowler and Borthwick and Benkenstein as the spin option. A green wicket had been prepared but just before the match our premier bowler and captain, Glen Chapple, withdrew from the squad through injury. Any groundsman or amateur gardener will tell you that you prepare a surface well in advance by the way it is groomed in the days before a game is to be played upon it. When injury strikes suddenly and close to the beginning of a match you have no way of changing the planned pitch. This factor, coupled with the fact that at 10.30 on the morning of the toss Mark Chilton, acting captain in Chapple's absence, lost the toss and Lancashire were put in to bat meant that everything had turned to something that rhymes with grit. Curses.....

The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley, [often go awry]
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promised joy.

Robert Burns sums it up more beautifully than ever I could.

The first over was bowled by Graham Onions. On the third ball of his first over he trapped Paul Horton LBW [leg before wicket]. The ball had swung too much for the Lancashire opener to protect himself. These things happen, and anyone who has played cricket will tell you that the hardest thing in cricket is to open the batting against a fast bowling attack when the conditions are ideal for bowlers and allow the new ball to swing late. This is what makes cricket so fascinating. To those that do not watch the game as intently, it seems as if the batsmen are hopeless if they can't defend their wicket by getting their bat in the way. But it is so much harder than that. Batting requires a tremendous amount of concentration; good eyesight and the need for lightning reactions. If a ball is bowled from 22 yards away at 90 miles per hour, you have exactly half a second to decide what to do. That is slightly more than a blink of an eye; so the last thing you want to do is blink. Eyes wide open, mind concentrated and hope you have spent enough time in the cricket nets practising for this moment. Suddenly the umpire's finger goes up and you are on that lonely walk back to the pavilion. There is no applause; no thanks for the fact that you have put yourself in harm's way by facing such excels in favourable bowling conditions, no shouts of 'hard luck old boy' - just the baffled stare of the spectator wondering why you are so inept and thinking that you are not even good enough to open the batting for such a great County.

What happened next may have pleased Paul Horton inasmuch that his shame was to be shared, but this was of no recompense to the Lancashire spectator. Karl Brown was caught behind by the wicket keeper off the bowling of Thorp, having scored 3 runs with the Lancashire score on 7. When the score got to 11 Mark Chilton was caught behind by the wicket keeper again off the bowling of Thorp. Lancashire had lost three wickets having scored only 11 runs. Steven Croft and Stephen Moore were now left to bring some respectability to the score line. Croft managed to hold up one end whilst Moore took his score on. However in the seventeenth over Croft was caught behind by the wicket keeper off the bowling of Thorpe and Lancashire were 37 for 4.

The wicket keeper for Durham for quite a few years has been Phil Mustard, and unsurprisingly his nickname is 'The Colonel' [fans of Cluedo will need no explanation.] When Graham Onions started playing for Durham 1st XI it was only to be expected that at some time or other their names would appear together in some scenario. This happened during a T20 match when I had taken my 12 year old Grandson and 8 year old Grand-daughter to Old Trafford to watch Lancashire play Durham. Sure enough the first wicket fell fairly quickly, and when the stadium announcer, Matt Proctor's voice stated '*caught Mustard bowled Onions*' you would have thought that Charlie Chaplin had just walked past. Uproarious laughter erupted from the two youngsters which became infectious and soon had everybody else rolling in the aisles. Neither of them has ever forgotten it.

The 5th wicket fell with the score on 52 and the last five wickets fell for another 32 runs meaning that Lancashire had been bowled out for 84 runs. Still, we knew we were playing the best team, and we had lost the toss in favourable bowling conditions, but..... this was pretty pathetic. In 145 minutes Lancashire had only amassed 84 runs and Thorp had taken 6 wickets for 20 runs in just over 12 overs. The fact that a lot of them were caught behind the wicket was indicative of the superb swing bowling. And 145 minutes is 25 minutes after the lunch interval - in reality five past two in the afternoon. Still the conditions were still overcast so let's see how they would fare. The most optimistic of our followers were tempted to say that if it was hard for us to bat on then would it be equally as difficult for them? They failed to recognise the difference between application and ineptitude.

On the third ball of Durham's innings with the score on 1 Kyle Hogg struck - LBW. In the third over of the day with the score on 8 Hogg struck again - another LBW. In the ninth over Sajid Mahmood struck and they were 3 wickets down for 38 runs. The thought was beginning to cross people's minds that perhaps our batters weren't quite as inept as we had first thought. With 15 minutes of play left Junaid Khan took the last wicket and Durham had been bowled out for 186 - a lead of 102. So, yes, it was hard to bat on, but Dale Benkenstein managed to score on his own just 1 run less than the whole of the Lancashire side had made in scoring 83 runs and that included those 19 extras. So, in fact, he had scored 18 more runs than all the Lancashire batsmen. All this had happened and we still hadn't finished the first day's play. Arrangements were hastily being made by all and sundry for things to do for the fourth day; it was obvious we weren't going to be here. Lancashire saw out the day without losing a wicket and finished on 4 runs. 20 wickets had fallen in a day and that usually is a rallying cry for the pitch inspectors from the England & Wales Cricket Board [ECB] to send a pitch inspector to the venue. He makes an assessment whether it was indeed a suitable surface on which first class cricket should be played. The inspectors came and assessed that there was nothing wrong with the wicket that had been prepared; the collapse of wickets was due to the ineptitude of the batting and the excellence of the bowling. We could have saved them a trip.

Khan, Mahmood and Hogg had taken 8 wickets between them. Wow - what a days cricket!!

The next morning saw the opening pair of Stephen Moore and Paul Horton put on 58 runs - 58 more than they had achieved in the first innings. To be fair the weather had brightened up and the pitch was a day old, so the demons that existed the previous day had disappeared to a certain extent but concentration was still required. Lancashire batted out most of the day and achieved 282 all out in five hours and 20 minutes of play. Durham needed 181 to win and had two days and a bit to do it in. They were favourites. They achieved their total just before tea on the third day and were worthy winners if only we had won the toss??!!

YORKSHIRE v LANCASHIRE 20-23 JULY

Next up were Yorkshire on 20th July. Starting on the 20th July at Headingley Stadium this was going to be interesting; not obviously because it was a Roses Match, but Yorkshire would be desperate to want revenge for what they saw as an unlikely win earlier in that year at Aigburth. We Lancastrians enjoy doing a bit of missionary work whenever we visit that other county. You can always tell a Yorkshire man - but you can't tell him much. And one of the traditions that our group maintain

is that we always breakfast in the world famous Ugly Mugs Café. Now I say world famous - it is mentioned in quite a few autobiographies and is a feature of many visits to Headingley. We always enjoy a warm welcome there and the food is great. The fare is simple - which befits the County, and it is delicious and plentiful which is always an important part of the criteria whenever we are on tour. Headingley is a ground to which we commute on a daily basis, only being just over 40 miles from Manchester and that is why the breakfast is so welcome.



The cricket gang outside the world famous Ugly Mugs Café at Headingley

Umpires very rarely get a mention in reports on cricket. There are exceptions to the rule of course and perhaps the most famous English umpire of modern times is Harold Bird, commonly known throughout the world as 'Dickie Bird'. He is currently President of Yorkshire County Cricket Club. I see him on the occasions that Lancashire and Yorkshire meet, and I dine in his company on occasions and he is still the same irrepressible enthusiastic man he always was; and long may he remain so. He has written his autobiography [well somebody has anyway] and he is always eager to sign the book if you will buy one. It is said he is so keen to sign copies of his book that the unsigned ones retain more value.

Supporters of cricket usually have favourites among umpires and most have a list of those umpires that they would rather not see on their home ground. This is much the same in other team sports such as rugby union and football. This feeling usually emanates from a match that lingers long in the memory and could be last season, last decade, last century or even further back than that. Currently cricket umpires have to retire upon reaching the age of 65 years of age. They are employed by the England and Wales Cricket Board [ECB] until they are elevated on to the International panel, when they become employed by the International Cricket Council [ICC]. Some even achieve the dizzy heights of the elite list. Those are the umpires you see mostly at Ashes matches between Australia and England and other important tests between the eight top cricketing Nations [Australia, England, India, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, New Zealand and West Indies.] The umpires for this particular Roses match were Neil Mallender and George Sharp. [Incidentally, George Sharp and Peter Willey were forced to retire at the end of the 2014 season and they are challenging the ruling of the ECB that umpires have to retire at 65 on the grounds of age discrimination.] Most umpires are former County players and the ECB think they are honest enough to umpire their former counties. In reality in modern times players do not play for just a single County anymore and therefore it would be difficult to police a system whereby no umpire could stand in a game involving a County for which he had played. You would also need a lot more umpires. I mention this because at times there appear to be several umpires who have played for a particular County. Northamptonshire seem to have a lot of ex-players currently who are First Class umpires. When I say First Class umpires it has nothing to do with the standard they have attained, it just means that they are approved by the ECB to umpire First Class fixtures. In the list for 2015 there are 25 umpires named on the First

Class list and 7 reserves. 44 umpires officiate in Minor Counties cricket, which consists of 20 counties from Cornwall to Cumberland and Suffolk to Wales.

There are currently 5 umpires on the first class list who have played no first class cricket at all, although some of them have played to a good standard in minor counties or second XI. Nine of the current crop have represented England, and 5 of them have represented Northamptonshire at first XI. The two Northants ex-players who were officiating today were not popular with Lancashire supporters, or at least one of them wasn't. Neil Mallender was umpiring the Cheltenham & Gloucester [50 over] Final at Lords between Sussex and Lancashire in 2006. A couple of decisions given by Neil, particularly the one that gave out our star batsman, Australian Stuart Law, was somewhat contentious and lingers long in the memory. Strange that isn't it? Hello, we thought, it's bad enough playing Yorkshire at Headingley but then you find out Neil is at one end and suddenly the trials of Sisyphus seem relatively benign.

The day began as usual with Lancashire losing the toss and Yorkshire electing to ask Lancashire to bat. It was another overcast day and we feared the worst. No matter what people say about Yorkshire folk they are always hospitable. We were invited up into the new Carnegie pavilion and dined in the Taverners with some stalwarts of the old days that included ex-internationals Brian Close, Ray Illingworth, Bob Appleyard and Geoff Cope. Geoff was hosting us and sadly he is now suffering from a degenerative eye disease and has a beautiful black Labrador as his guide. Yorkshire has been good to ex-players and Geoff does a wonderful job. It is always good to see him.

Things started a little better than was the case against Durham. We made 7 runs this time before we lost the first wicket. On this occasion it was Stephen Moore trudging back to the pavilion without troubling the scorers. Croft and Smith shared a stand of 76 runs, both scoring fifties as Smith went on to a 42 run partnership with wicket keeper Gareth Cross. Lancashire were 304 for 7 at the end of the first day. We would have taken that at 10.30 this morning when the toss was lost.

The next morning began in an all too familiar pattern when the three remaining wickets fell for 24 runs. All out for 328 we now had to pile the pressure on Yorkshire and our bowlers had to perform. Tom Bresnan was away with England although he was expected to be named twelfth man and was expected to return to play for Yorkshire by mid-afternoon. This is a usual scenario agreed between counties before the toss and accommodates the best of both worlds for both the player and the County. Therefore we expected Bresnan to bat lower down the order than he usually did. The bowling department started to work its stuff. With Yorkshire posting only 3 runs on the board Kyle Hogg struck to have Joe Root caught behind for no score in the third over. With the score on 22 Hogg struck again to bag the wicket of danger man Jacques Rudolph for 12. With his very next ball Hogg pinned Yorkshire Captain Gale in front of his stumps LBW. 22 for 3. Five more wickets fell in the next 11 overs to leave Yorkshire in desperate straits at 45 for 8. It is impolite to show too much delirium in front of one's guests but we were bursting.

But, as in life as in cricket, it very often comes back to bite you. Richard Pyrah coming in at number 8 took guard. He could have been the penultimate batsman as Tim Bresnan had not yet returned from London after having been despatched from The Oval. Pyrah stopped at the crease one minute short of three hours, accompanied in a stand of 154 runs and contributing 117 runs he steered Yorkshire back from the brink, surpassing his previous highest score of 87 in a county game. Even as Lancastrians we had to admire such a feat. When Sidebottom was struck LBW by Chapple for 52 runs in the 54th over, Bresnan was safely ensconced in the dressing room padded up and ready to bat. He came in and hit a swashbuckling 19 runs before Pyrah was out leaving Yorkshire in the position of having come back from the brink and finish on 239. This was about 150 more than I thought they would get when we had them 45 for 8. Still, we had a lead of 89 runs and we had to make the most of it. Hogg had crucified their top order batsmen but there was a sting in the tale. What would happen next? And they say cricket is boring?

Moore and Horton go out to bat nearly at the end of day two. Horton faced thirteen balls and was dismissed back to the pavilion caught at slip for 2 runs. Stephen Moore only faced 10 balls before he was on his way back without a run to his name. Brown and Chilton steadied the ship but not for long. With the score on 33 Chilton was bowled by Pyrah for 10 runs. Surely this chap Pyrah was not going to take most of the wickets when he had singlehandedly saved Yorkshire from disgrace with his batting.

With 41 overs left in the day to have a crack at the Somerset openers, we anticipated their second innings with a mixture of fear and trepidation. We knew they were a good batting side, conditions were favourable and they could, and would, probably bat out for a draw being so many runs behind in the first innings. However, at the end of those 41 overs Somerset had lost 5 wickets for only 105 runs. Only 5 runs ahead and the first 5 batsmen back in the pavilion, we felt there was an opening, if only we could exploit it. The trouble with cricket is that you think you know what's going to happen but it never does. This is why I find it such a fascinating game. The longer form of the game can be as intriguing as a game of chess or as dull as a game of Monopoly. The shorter form of the game has the same emotions albeit more contracted but none of the endless variations and twists and turns dependent so much on the strategy employed by the opposing captains and the vagaries of both the toss and the pitch. And it also gives us something to talk about whilst we are eating our steak and drinking our beer in the evening.

Day 4 - the warm Somerset sun was bathing the ground and the spectators; shirt sleeve order for the day. Two more quick wickets and we could be in a position to win the game. Our wish was granted and with the score on 130 Somerset had lost 7 wickets; 30 runs ahead. We allowed ourselves a nervous twitch which brought the mouth up at either end. It was more of a reaction than a positive action. At the wicket now were Thomas and Trego - two fast bowlers who were not in the side for their batting. We were readily keeping an ear on the other game at Southampton where Hampshire were holding out against Warwickshire and hadn't lost a wicket in the morning session. What also was intriguing was that Yorkshire needed to win against their opponents to stay in the First Division. We had spies everywhere, reporting on the situations concerning both Yorkshire and Hampshire. Reports came every 5 minutes and were hurriedly passed from row to row of spectator. We were all watching three games at once but the most important one was being played out in front of our eyes. When just after lunch we received the message that Yorkshire had been beaten and therefore relegated, we could concentrate on just the two games. Trego was now becoming a real nuisance. He and Thomas took Somerset past the deficit and they put on 75 runs before Thomas gave up his wicket to Simon Kerrigan, caught at second slip. We thought we had the breakthrough; Somerset 8 wickets down and only 39 in front, surely we were within touching distance now? We reckoned without the fighting spirit of a team who wanted to finish as high in the Championship as they could, for, like football, a higher position is rewarded with more money from the England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB). Trego and Kartik put on 95 runs together, playing very sensibly and seeming in no danger. As 300 runs appeared on the board our hearts hung heavy and we started reparations by saying what a great season it had been and that we had seen some great games, and, well, if it wasn't meant to be then it wasn't meant to be. A few of us had put money towards a card on Day 3 and presented it to the players attaching our thanks for a great season of cricket, no matter what the outcome of today's match. We felt it had been a privilege all summer long to watch these young players develop and mature into a side that almost took the Championship. Hampshire were still holding out and had only lost three wickets by mid afternoon, but if Warwickshire drew their match and we drew ours, which was looking the most likely result, then Warwickshire would be Champions.

There are times in any sport when you recognise a turning point in any game. You recognise it at the time, not when you look back on the game but at that instant, you know that this is the moment. In this game I recognised it immediately. It was a rare occurrence and one so outstandingly executed it could not possibly be anything but game-changing. Even for those who are not such keen followers of the game you will have seen the pre-match routine that all cricket sides undertake before the start of play every day. It varies in that some may knock a soccer ball about, some throw a rugby ball but all teams practice two things; high catches and throwing the ball at the stumps - commonly called throwing down in cricket. Now we all know that practice and game situations are different no matter what sport you play. What you can do in practice you cannot always do during a game. I have known world beaters on the training ground but they disappoint when it comes to the real thing. When Trego was caught at slip for a very creditable 120 runs, we applauded the wicket but thought it was too little too late. Kartik was still there holding up one end and there were only 34 overs left in the day, when Hussain came to join him. Both were spin bowlers but Kartik proved he could score runs, something he didn't prove in his short spell at Lancashire in 2006. The score went on to 310 and we were 210 runs behind with overs running out. Then came that moment. Trego wanted to keep the strike and as Kartik faced the fourth ball of Kerrigans over he wanted to pinch a single. He steered the ball wide of Keedy's left hand and started on his run. Keedy was certainly no slouch in the field and was quick across the grass, and this is when all those hours of practice at throw downs paid off. He had about one and a half stumps to aim at and he reached the ball quicker than Kartik had imagined. But Kartik had already called for the run as he wanted Hussain to only face one ball and he would take the whole of the next over till the fifth or six ball and then take a quick single so he could face the majority of the deliveries as he was the more accomplished batsman. Keedy hurled the ball left handed at the stumps to which Hussain was running. We watched in anticipation, almost out of our seats. The arms of the players went aloft in appeal as he tore down all three stumps with Hussain nowhere near the crease. The crowd appealed

of the pitch first thing. We were lying second in the County Championship table, Durham had slipped to third and Warwickshire were leading the way. Warwickshire's last game was against the opponents we had to face today, and Hampshire looked as if they were going to be relegated. Lancashire began their innings and progress was slow. This we didn't mind because the main concern was staying at the crease and seeing the shine off the new ball [balls are lacquered and lose their shine and hardness after about 25-30 overs, which means it is less likely to swing and/or bounce so the fast bowlers become less effective]. Things soon reverted to type and on 21 the first wicket fell. In the 46th over we had scored 125 runs and lost 5 wickets. Not quite what we were looking for. Tom Smith was batting well and when Glen Chapple came to join him after Cross the wicket keeper had scored a rapid 34, Lancashire were ready to collapse on 183 for 6.

The role of a cricket captain is more considered than in a shorter sport such as football. Decisions are considered before they are made and you have more of a chance of leading by example. This was certainly where Glen Chapple shone. Peter Moores had come to Lancashire in 2009 having been ignominiously dealt with by England over the notorious Kevin Pieterse. Lancashire snapped up Peter Moores and one of his first duties was to appoint Chapple as club captain - and he had no hesitation in making the appointment. Chapple had all the qualities Moores was looking for; experience - he was 36 years of age and had made his Lancashire debut as a teenager; leading by example - Chapple was a fast bowler and would still have been first choice bowler in any of the 18 counties in England and Wales; stamina - even at his mature years he was able to bowl as many overs as a man 15 years younger, and he would bowl them better because of his experience; and leadership - his decision making was firm and he backed his players as well as himself. On this occasion he shone like a beacon. In a stand of 55 he took the score to 238. His fellow fast bowler, Kyle Hogg, came to join him. In 25 overs they put on 116 runs, and when Hogg departed for 51, the last two wickets came in and put on another 54 runs to complete an innings score of 388. Chapple had contributed 97 runs to the cause and he received a standing ovation coming back to the pavilion on the morning of the 2nd Day, just as he had received a rapturous welcome when finishing Day 1 on 77 not out.

Hampshire in return made Lancashire sweat in the field and they had scored 103 runs before Dawson was bowled by Kerrigan. Their innings progressed steadily and ex-England man Sean Irvine made a magnificent 128 having occupied the crease for 4 and a half hours. They finished Day 2 on 229 for 5, and just after lunch on Day 3 were all out for 381 - 7 runs behind. Lancashire had 50 overs to bat and made excellent progress finishing the day on 95 for 2. They were scoring at over 6 runs an over and it was obvious they wanted to post a total for Hampshire to chase on Day 4. Moore and Brown put on 161 for the 3rd wicket and when Karl Brown was out the innings was declared. Stephen Moore was 169 not out and having scored 353 they left Hampshire to chase 360 runs in a minimum of 77 overs. This was now a proper game and a rumble of conversational undercurrent went round the ground; discussions as to whether we'd left them enough overs, had we declared too soon, we'll never bowl them out in that number of overs - everyone had an opinion. Only time would tell whose opinion would be more accurate - and we would know because they would perambulate the ground saying "I told you they had declared too early!!" Don't you just hate a smart Alec? Someone who doesn't recognise 20-20 vision is not needed for the benefit of hindsight and smugness is such a pejorative emotion. Still, these are the amusements and trials a cricket watcher tolerates; tales which are told in the pub on a cold winter's night in front of a roaring fire, but they do evoke a snigger or two when history lends a different perspective to events.

As Lancashire took to the field there was a palpable atmosphere of anticipation. This was a crucial part of the game; this was a crucial game, and this was a crucial time in the chase for that elusive Championship. Would Lancashire choke, as they had done at The Oval in 2007 when we failed by 27 runs to win the Championship? But that game at The Oval was the last game of the Championship and in 2011 we had still to travel to Taunton with its notoriously flat wicket where scoring runs was par for the course and therefore scoring enough runs in the allotted time would place a real strain on the team. And it would mean nothing if this game was lost or drawn as Warwickshire would be in an almost unassailable position to capture the main prize. As the advert says, "Recycling - the possibilities are endless."

In the first 10 overs Hampshire defended against the new ball as if their lives depended on it - and they did really because if they wanted to avoid relegation they had to win this game. It was a Day 4 pitch and Lancashire had thrown Simon Kerrigan in at the deep end and he came on to bowl very early in the innings. He was bowling from the Pavilion end and after three balls of his second over he took the wicket of Liam Dawson, stumped coming forward to a spinning ball which he misjudged terribly. The other left arm spinner in the side, Gary Keedy, now joined Kerrigan and bowled from the River end. Two left arm spinners on at both ends was a rare sight, but that wicket must have been taking spin because 10 overs later Kerrigan trapped Adams LBW when he was on 21 and the score on 53. In the 31st over Carberry went for a well created 29, caught at short leg off the bowling of Keedy. The spinners were now weaving their magic and by the end of the day they

would have bowled over 70 overs between them. That is a rare statistic; but back to the here and now and having seen off the top three batsmen hopes among the Lancashire supporters were rising. McKenzie and Vince were now at the wicket together and still the spinners practised their craft. Kerrigan and Keedy now swapped ends with Kerrigan bowling from the River end. Would it make a difference? Well it was worth a try. With the score on 77 Vince was trapped in front having scored 8 runs; and 30 runs later Ervine went for 16, caught in the slips off the bowling of Kerrigan with the score on 107. Just 49 overs had been bowled and I need to explain something technical to you now in order that you understand what happened next.

On the last day of a cricket match there are a minimum of 96 overs to be bowled, as is the case on every other day. But that sometimes does not happen. A cricket day is 6 hours long (11 a.m. to 6 p.m. with the breaks for lunch and tea) and the authorities expect County sides to bowl 16 overs an hour to complete the 96 for the day in the allotted time. This makes sense as each session lasts two hours (start of play to lunch is 11.00 - 13.00; 40 minutes for lunch then play recommences from 13.40 - 15.40; then tea is taken at that time [20 minutes] and then the players come out for the last session of the match from 4-6). This removes the accusation of slave labour as on a hot day they have drinks every hour they are on the field as well. In April May and September the substitute fielder is more used to bringing out replacement hand warmers than drinks. However, to complicate things further, on Day 4, the last day, the law states: -

When one hour of playing time of the match remains, according to the agreed hours of play, the over in progress shall be completed. The next over shall be the first of a minimum of 20 overs which must be bowled, provided that a result is not reached earlier and provided that there is no interval or interruption in play.

The bowler's end umpire shall indicate the commencement of this 20 overs to the players and to the scorers. The period of play thereafter shall be referred to as the last hour, whatever its actual duration.

Now a minimum is 20 overs but with two spinners bowling you will get a lot more than 20 overs bowled. And so it proved to be, but not before a dramatic turn of events when the score was on 107. Ervine was bowled with the third ball of Kerrigan's over. With the fifth ball of his over he bowled wicket-keeper Bates without scoring. Hampshire were now 107 for 6 and the Lancashire tails were up. Keedy bowled a maiden over without taking a wicket but in the next over Kerrigan bowled Mascarenhas through the gate to leave them 7 wickets down and less than 35 overs to go - well 15 to the hour and another 20 thereafter. Two more wickets fell to Kerrigan in the next 8 overs and we were now in the last hour. McKenzie and Tomlinson were putting up some brave resistance and the crowd were on the edge of their seats. When Keedy came on to bowl what was surely the last over with only 3 minutes to the end of the hour, Lancashire hearts hardened against the inevitable. Whatever the outcome we had seen a remarkable cricket match, packed with excitement and pathos, and we would applaud the players, both sets, from the field of play at the end of the game. But we reckoned without the determination of the spinner from Ormskirk. He had already taken a magnificent 8 wickets in the innings, with Keedy taking the other one, and he was not ready to give up yet. Fielders, 10 of them, crouched around the bat when McKenzie came to

face the last over. Oohs and aahs greeted the first ball. The tension was electric and then, suddenly on the second ball of the over, McKenzie reached forward and the ball caught the edge of his bat. Everything seemed to be transmitted in slow motion then. Smith, fielding at second slip went low to his right and all of a sudden everything came back to full speed. The whole team ran to Tom Smith as he ran apace towards the covers. We'd done it!! With 4 balls to spare Kerrigan had bowled out the entire Hampshire side bar one to win the match and send us home deliriously happy. Kerrigan returned with figures of having bowled 37 overs and taken 9 wickets for 51 runs. A remarkable piece of bowling from an undoubted star of the future. Taunton here we come!!



Tom Smith (24) wheels away after an amazing catch to seal Lancashire's victory in the match v Hampshire.

Somerset v Lancashire 12-15 September 2011

6.30 on the morning of the 12th of September saw me pick up my passenger from Oldham and set off for the County Ground at Taunton. It is a pleasure to visit the delights of Somerset at any time of the cricketing calendar but this trip was filled with anticipation; tempered mild anticipation. It had been 77 years since Lancashire had won the title, although they did share it with Surrey in 1950 when the points system was considerably less complicated and the game only lasted three days and played on uncovered wickets. In those days you dressed for every occasion including the toss and poor old Peter Marnier was dropped as Captain of the side for not wearing his blazer to breakfast. Modern coaches were more forgiving and we often saw players out and about when we were on away trips just taking the night air in the modern dress of track suit bottoms and short sleeved t-shirts.

We arrived at 10.15, having forsaken a stop for breakfast on the 180 mile journey in the hope that we could purchase a bacon butty at the ground. We knew we could of course as our usual seats were in front of the old scoreboard which housed an outlet underneath which specialised in Blackthorn cider and bacon torpedoes, as well as the ritual Cornish Pasty. It was a trifle early for the cider (although we have been known to indulge at 10.30 in a morning on occasions) and we stuck to coffee and the sarnie.

In keeping with the season's habits we allowed Somerset to win the toss and were made to stand in the field while Somerset piled on the runs. I have mentioned previously that Taunton is a pitch which is a delight to bat on; get out there and book in - bed and breakfast, as David Lloyd would say. We settled back and let the disappointment wash over us. Possibly the best chance of winning would be to win the toss and bat and hope we get enough runs to bat them out of the game. Alas, this was not to be. Warwickshire were playing Hampshire and they only needed to win to be uncatchable, which made us second favourites I'm afraid.

In the opening overs of the day our premier bowler and Captain Glen Chapple injured himself. It looked like a hamstring and at the age he was we didn't anticipate him taking any further part in the game. How little we knew of our Captain Fantastic. Bandaged and smelling like a horse who was about to run the Grand National, he emerged some 20 overs later and bowled off a short run. How he did it I don't know but a special mention must be made to Sam Burns the physio for strapping him up and enabling him to carry on. I feel sure that if it wasn't the last game Sam would not have allowed Glen anywhere near the bowling crease but he knew the Captain and daren't even suggest that at this point of the season. Before Jos Buttler (now a Lancashire player and England wicket keeper) had been caught and bowled by Gary Keedy for 69 Somerset were 259 for 3 with 15 overs still left in the day. They finished on 314 for 5 with Hildreth on 161 not out. Whether he had paid for his bed & breakfast in advance was a matter for debate.

Day 2 began with Lancashire bowling out Somerset in a further 15 overs for 380 runs. Keedy had taken 4 wickets and Hildreth had been caught in the slips by Houghton off the bowling of Smith for a magnificent 186. He left the field to a standing ovation. Well, if you couldn't make runs on a Taunton wicket then you couldn't make runs anywhere. Lancashire started their innings well and the score had passed the hundred mark before the first wicket fell. Horton had just reached his half century when he was caught behind by Buttler off the bowling of spinner Murali Kartik. We predicted a collapse now but Moore and Brown put on another hundred before Moore (68) became Kartik's second victim. Lancashire finished the day on 247 for 3 after Brown became Kartik's third victim, caught in the deep for a creditable 60 runs. Lancashire supporters tottered home reasonably happy to taste the delights of local cider in the plethora of hostelrys that abound in Taunton. Our gang usually sought out a Wetherspoon's on an evening, Tuesday was steak night (pint and a steak for 6.99) and Thursday was curry night (2 for 1). Several other followers tended to congregate in there and we soon found ourselves discussing various topics before the night was through, which of course included Lancashire's possibility of winning here. The general consensus was that even if we managed to win, Warwickshire were likely to beat Hampshire and would claim the Championship.

Day 3 started in bright sunshine as had days 1 and 2 and we were in the throes of an Indian summer. In fact we had experienced glorious summer weather wise and had not lost too many days to the elements. The beautiful weather was matched only by the quality of the batting on display by Lancashire. Having started the day on 247 for 3 they raced to 480 with a marvellous last wicket stand of 57 from Kerrigan and Keedy. How valuable could that prove to be to take a lead of 100 into the second innings. Thank goodness for flat tracks at Taunton!!

It was left to the bowlers to save Lancashire's bacon. Mahmood and Hogg both hit fifties in a stand of 80 which brought some respectability to the second innings. Lancashire finished on 239 which meant Yorkshire had to chase 283 runs to win. They finished day 3 on 133 for 6, 150 runs short of where they needed to be with only four wickets left. Bets anyone?

The last day started as every other day of this encounter with a hearty breakfast at The Ugly Mugs. Our bowlers would be fresh from a good night's rest (we hoped) and would be ready to steam in at the Yorkies. When Sidebottom was caught at slip off the bowling of Chapple with only another 30 runs on the board our hopes soared. 13 runs later and Yorkshire Captain Gale's stubborn resistance was broken when Lancashire's Captain Marvel, Glen Chapple had him plum LBW - 177 for 8. Lancashire needed two wickets and Yorkshire needed 106 more runs. Surely we were in the driving seat now. Shazad knocked off a quick 22 runs with four boundaries before he was caught behind off the bowling of Hogg. He had put on 53 runs in a stand with Adil Rashid and we were glad to see the back of him. Lancashire had Yorkshire 9 wickets down and they only needed 53 runs to win.

Then in strode Richard Pyrah, scorer of 117 runs in the first innings and hearts sank. The slow countdown for Yorkshire supporters began. Rashid was still in and scoring well. Then it was 43 runs to win. Should Lancashire keep the spinners on or risk losing extras to the seamers? It is often easier as a late order batsman to fluke runs off a fast bowler because of the pace of the ball than it is from a slow spinner. Lancashire continued with Keedy [spinner] at one end and fast bowler Hogg at the other. Rashid moved up to 40 runs and Yorkshire only needed 33 to win. The secret was to keep the weaker batsman on strike so that he would have to face the most number of deliveries; but Rashid was playing well and we knew from the first innings what Pyrah was capable of. What price a wicket? What strategy to employ? This is where you earn your money now Captain Marvel. Rashid hits a 4 and suddenly it is only 29 runs to win. Plenty of time left as there were still nearly 60 overs left in the day. The vociferous support that was encamped around us grew noisier as Yorkshire inched towards their target. 'C'mon Yorkshire' was the cry. This was not the time to ridicule their supporters because of their monosyllabic support of their team. This was a true test of nerve and ability; a Roses match worthy of the name but no good to us if we lost it. Boom!! Another 4 slips to the boundary off Hogg and now they only need 25 runs to win. One wicket; one wicket is all Lancashire need to beat our closest neighbours and biggest rivals. But where will it come from. Pyrah now on strike; he was the man who had scored the fewest runs in the partnership and had seen less of the bowling so the tactic was to keep him on strike.

Keedy bowling in his sixteenth over of the innings and Pyrah hits an off cut and scores two runs. Two balls left in Keedy's over. Up he steps for the fifth ball of his sixteenth over; Pyrah steps back before his wicket and the ball hits him on the pad right in front of the wicket. The whole Lancashire team goes up in an anxious and frenzied appeal. The Lancashire supporters are out of their seats, even those who cannot tell whether Pyrah had retreated in front of the stumps and therefore the ball was going on to hit the stumps anyway. All eyes turned towards the standing umpire - oh no. oh no, not Neil Mallender surely??!! The slow finger of fate was released from the umpire's pocket and signalled Pyrah out LBW. Pandemonium broke out amongst the Lancashire supporters but in true sportsman style we shook hands with the opposition supporters sat around us and waited until they were out of sight before letting out a collective whoop of delight. Keedy in the middle was buried on the bottom of a heap of Lancashire jerseys, still with bodies in them. It is a wonder he didn't sustain an injury. Lancashire had achieved a victory over Yorkshire by the very tight margin of 23 runs. The journey home would not be a quiet one.

Lancashire v Nottinghamshire 26-29 July

26th July saw us travel to Southport and Birkdale Cricket Club on Trafalgar road in Southport for our home game against Nottinghamshire. Lancashire is a big county and it has long been a tradition, not just in Lancashire but amongst all first class counties, that the game is taken out and played around the county. This enables folks who would not normally watch first class cricket, as well as those who watched cricket and found it being played a little closer to home, could access the game perhaps for the first time or without having to travel long distances. In an age old practice that had become common on a sunny morning on what appeared to be a nice flat wicket, Glen Chapple, returning as captain lost the toss and Nottinghamshire, not unsurprisingly, opted to bat first. Our seamers were going to have to graft hard to make any headway on a pitch as batsman friendly as this appeared to be and so we settled back expecting to watch a display of batting from a succession of fine Nottinghamshire batsmen, among whose number were Internationals such as Hales, Wessels, Patel and Voges.

Notts started off slowly although you knew they were just feeling their way, waiting for the shine to disappear off the ball in about 20-25 overs and then they would start attacking the bowlers with intent. Hales and Edwards put on 18 and then suddenly the first wicket fell. Edwards was caught behind off the bowling of the evergreen Kyle Hogg. In came Mattheus Wessels, whose father was an international class batter and his son was rapidly following in his footsteps; Lancashire fans thought that they were in for an afternoon of class batting. It is a strange concept that, in cricket, as in most other sports, you can appreciate a master craftsman, even though he plays for the opposition, without being quite so partisan as some other tribal sports such as soccer. He faced 10 balls and Tom Smith trapped him LBW without troubling the scorers. Then came a remarkable sequence of events, and not one that is seen very often. Notts were on 27 for 2 when Samit Patel came to the crease. Another class act, but it was from the last ball of the over that Wessels had been bowled so Hales faced the next ball from Hogg; Hogg had him caught behind when he had made just 18 runs - 27 for 3. Adam Voges comes to the crease, faces three balls and is trapped LBW by Hogg - 27 for 4. Steven Mullaney makes his way to the crease. Mr. Mullaney was a Lancashire player who left because he couldn't keep a permanent place in the first team. He had started having considerable success at Notts with both bat and ball which caused some consternation amongst the diehard Lancastrians, although I don't recall anybody saying anything when he was released some three years earlier. But if you wait long enough things will turn your way and sure enough on the last ball of the over he was on the long walk back to the pavilion having been bowled by Hogg - 27 for 5; three wickets in 7 balls and not a hat-trick to be found anywhere. We couldn't believe this; we had Notts 5 wickets down and only 27 on the board? There was plenty of embarrassed laughter and scratching of heads as we contemplated what we had just seen. Ever the eternal pessimists someone was heard to say, "Well they've still got a lot of batting to come". When captain Chris Read was LBW to Chapple when the score was on 53, even the most pessimistic supporter bucked up. Patel was still at the crease and the tail-enders were to make another 150 runs before we had bowled out the Nottinghamshire batsmen. Hogg claimed 5 wickets from 13 overs conceding only 28 runs which was a magnificent performance. Things were looking up and with 31 overs left in the day we could make a decent fist of this. Oh dear - what have I said!! At the end of the first day's play we were 86 for 4. Croft and night watchman Keedy were at the crease and we were only 114 runs behind - not a lot if you say it quickly. Tomorrow is another day.

Tomorrow was indeed another day but not quite as good as the previous day. The rest of the wickets fell for a further 94 runs and we conceded a 24 run lead in the first innings. It had taken only 24 overs to finish us off. Andre Adams, recalled to the Nottinghamshire attack, had taken 6 wickets. The only light at the end of the tunnel now was that we still had 70 overs left in the day to try and restrict Notts to a total that we could chase in the fourth innings. In less than 12 overs Hales had hit his 50 and only 2 wickets had fallen. But this time it was Glen Chapple who took charge and he took 6 wickets in their second innings and with just 4 overs left in the day we had bowled out Notts for 223. They had a lead of 257 and we had a score 258 to win. Say it quickly someone. We survived the 4 overs left on Day 2 without losing a wicket which was the sole purpose of the exercise.

Day 3 and we posted 37 runs on the board before losing a wicket. With the score on 103 for 5 however we lost three wickets in 9 balls to leave us in dire straits [I never did like their music anyway] at 103 for 8. Skittled out for a measly 128 we lost the game by 129 runs. The master plan was unravelling; but for those of us who had travelled round the country as well as watching the cricket at Aigburth we were unanimous in our sentiment that even if we didn't win the title, and we were third in the table at this stage behind Warwickshire and Durham, we had seen some splendid cricket. But there were 5 games to go with three of them at Fortress Aigburth. Hang on to your hats folks; it's going to be a bumpy ride.

Lancashire v Warwickshire

The first day of August saw Lancashire take on Warwickshire at Aigburth. To say the captain was unlucky with the toss would not do justice to the phrase that it was an understatement. I know there is a 50% chance of losing the toss, but that doesn't take away from the fact that there is a 50% chance of winning it either. Warwickshire, besides Durham, were the main rivals for the Championship. We needed all the advantage we could. Any successful team will tell you that there has to be an element of luck in any victory fought for over 5 months: Fergie time, penalty decisions, injuries, umpires; these all contribute and play their part. Need I tell you who won the toss this particular morning? No. So we batted on an overcast morning whilst they licked their lips in anticipation of the ball doing cartwheels before landing directly on middle stump having long since bamboozled the bloke with a bat in his hand. But we got off to a decent start with Stephen Moore scoring freely before getting out for 76 runs. The score was on 131 when he departed but another 4 wickets had also fallen before he was given out. So, the all too familiar story that we were bowled out for 189 in under 47 overs. Extras was the third

highest scorer with 21 runs and THE Warwickshire medium pacer Neil Carter, so often in the last three years near to being released by Warwickshire, came in with 6 wickets.

In reply Warwickshire finished Day 1 on 30 for the loss of only 1 wicket. On Day 2 Warwickshire moved their score on to 280 all out just 10 overs before the end of the day - 91 runs ahead. The pitch was taking spin gradually and Keedy the Lancashire off spinner had weighed in with three wickets. 16 overs were left to negotiate on Day 2 for the Lancashire openers. They batted with a caution that had escaped them for the last two games and moved Lancashire on to 32 without losing a wicket. Promising start against the league leaders and the weather was set fair for the duration. Game on.

Day 3 saw Lancashire buckle down and show some great spirit. In particular Karl Brown and Steven Croft batted magnificently, taking Lancashire at one stage to 292 for 3. They came together when the score was on 84 and Croft scored a magnificent 122 runs, equalling his previous highest first class score. Brown lost his wicket 6 overs later with the score on 305 and his personal tally 91 runs. What a shame he couldn't convert it to a century - the highlight of any batsman's career in first class cricket. The tail put up some stubborn resistance and finished the day on 379 for 9.

The batsmen out in the middle lasted less than 2 overs on the morning of the last day's play and only added one run to the total. Warwickshire needed 290 to win and Lancashire needed 10 wickets, and there were 92 overs left in the day. This could go either way. With these two teams vying for a win to give them a better chance of a tilt at the title, this match took on enormous significance. The intention of a team, i.e. are they going to chase the runs or guard their wickets and just ensure that they do not lose, often becomes clear in the first 20-30 overs of the match. Therefore the opposing team's strategy will be determined by the approach they make. Warwickshire started off well and scored 72 runs in 15 overs (5 runs an over against a required run rate of less than 3.5 runs per over) before they lost their first wicket. It was going to be cat and mouse as their intention was clear. The next three wickets fell for just 20 runs in the next 4 overs. Surely Warwickshire would now steady the ship and play out for a draw? The ball was spinning now and Keedy was amongst the wickets. The fourth day of a match usually provides a spinning wicket if the weather has been dry and this was proving no exception. Lancashire needed 6 more wickets and Warwickshire needed 194 runs still and there were 76 overs left to bowl. An intriguing scenario, made all the more so by the fact that we were neck and neck with Warwickshire in the race for the Championship. Did I mention that we had not won the title outright for 77 years?

Ambrose occupied the crease for two and a half hours, facing 137 balls and scoring 66 runs. He was there at the end to see Warwickshire hold on when the captains shook hands on a draw at six ten in the evening. The bowlers had bowled their hearts out and try as they may it wasn't to be. There was no change in the table, but Durham still hung on to us in terms of points.

That evening as I drove away from the ground, I came to a halt at the traffic lights near the Jaguar Land Rover factory at Speke and a car drew alongside mine. The passenger window wound down and a friendly beep of the horn attracted my attention. I looked across and there was Kyle Hogg, Lancashire opening fast bowler and a friend. I wound down my window and he shouted across, "We nearly made it". Yes we did, and as we both drew away from the lights a smile crept across my face; I thought that we may be close to something special this year. Players who give their all on the field as true professionals ought; and yet display the common touch. Nirvana could hardly be better than this.

Lancashire v Worcestershire 17 - 20 August

This match was played at Stanley Park in Blackpool, home of Blackpool Cricket Club and a stone's throw from both the famous beach and the even more famous Tower. Any vacation in Blackpool requires a stay in a B & B with a stern landlady and some rude picture postcard scenarios. We obliged of course, as did the landlady, and four of our number were thrown out of a Blackpool Social Club for talking during the bingo - a crime considered extremely serious in any Social Club in the North of England, and it brought back memories of Colin Crompton and the 'Wheeltappers & Shunters Club' for those of you who remember it. [We learned some 12 months later that the place had been burnt to the ground - and we were nowhere near Blackpool at the time]. The sea air and bracing promenade perambulations were good for the soul, the Victorians told us. We took them at their word and stayed in the pub. The weather was set fair and we had four days of cricket to look forward to. The B & B was within walking distance of the ground and therefore the car was left to gather salt for four days.

Worcestershire County Cricket Club were having a poor season and in fact had yo-yoed between the first and second divisions with regularity over the past few seasons. On the other hand we had learned that Durham were struggling in their Championship game and we looked forward to gaining ground if we could get past Worcestershire.

We will disregard the toss as the pain it might bring to both Glen Chapple and Mark Chilton might be a step too far and, healthy and fit as they both are, we have no wish to burden them mentally. So Lancashire were invited to bat first. The usual scenario followed and we were soon 4 wickets down with only 79 runs on the board; Moore Brown and Smith had not made 30 runs between them. In the middle still was Paul Horton, batting steadily and sensibly and holding one end up, but lacking support from the other end. However he went with the score on 79 and Maharooof came out to join Steven Croft at the crease.

Most professional sportsmen and women can remember where they started, who supported them in their endeavours through thick and thin and how family played a big part in their journey to professionalism. In Steven Croft's case, Blackpool Cricket Club was where it all started for him. As with any alma mater, there is a fondness of memory attached to such a place and so it was with Steven. He still lived in Blackpool and his heart definitely still resided there. Wouldn't it be fabulous for him to run up a score - a substantial score - on his home ground; the ground where he had first dreamed of wearing the Red Rose of Lancashire and where he had honed his basic skills. This is of course the stuff of dreams and fairy tales and nonsense and happen very infrequently; Boycott scoring his hundredth hundred on his home ground in Leeds, Joe Root scoring his first century for England on his home ground Headingley, Jim Laker taking 19 wickets in a test match - a

feat never equalled since. These were the benchmarks attained once in a lifetime.



The late lamented and treasured Alan West (middle) in the antiquated score box at Stanley Park Blackpool. You didn't need google - you just asked Alan

A stand of 87 saw them both take the score to 166 when Maharooof departed for 29. Crofty had hit 50 runs in 60 deliveries, counting 9 boundaries. His score crept up as he and wicket keeper cross piled on 90 runs and Crofty scored his century in 98 balls with eleven fours and four sixes. The crowd stood to a man (and woman) as he went past his hundred.

Emotion was etched large on his face and he took more time than was necessary to settle after the ovation. What a proud moment for him, as well as his family and loved ones. With the score on 256 he was caught in the deep for 107 trying to launch the spinner for another enormous 6 over mid off. Another standing ovation accompanied him leaving the field. Sadly Lancs only added a further 26 as they capitulated to the bowling of Andrew.

There were 24 overs left to bowl and we felt that if we could get into the openers tonight for the last hour and a half then tomorrow would bring renewed hope and vigour. Sure enough Chapple and Hogg devastated the openers and in the blink of an eye Worcestershire had lost 5 wickets with only 21 runs on the board. The next morning saw a Worcester recovery and they crept to 202 all out with great contributions from the middle order. Lancashire had a first innings lead of 80 runs and needed to keep up the pressure on the opposition with a decent second innings. This would enable the Lancashire bowlers to have a suitable target to bowl at in order to win the match.

The top order batted well with Steven Croft adding a 50 to go with his hundred in the first innings. Total scored = 248, which left Worcestershire needing 328 to win. At the close of Day 3 Worcestershire were 203 for 5 with Vikram Solanki having scored a magnificent hundred. Day 4 would be tense - we needed 5 wickets and the opposition needed 125 runs in 96 overs. Surely we couldn't lose our grip on the title and lose against the bottom club? Luckily for us Solanki had gone in the last over of the previous evening and two new batsmen were at the crease. Fast and straight boys, fast and straight, and field as if your life depended on it. Nothing will get past you - nothing. Tom Smith stepped up to the mark and bowled out of his skin and took four wickets for very few runs and helped out by spinner Keedy, Worcester were bowled out for 230 and Lancashire won by 98 runs. Onwards and upwards boys. Three games to go and it couldn't be tighter.

Worcestershire v Lancashire 31st August - 3rd September

Cricket fixtures are not constructed in an easy to follow pattern, particularly for those of us that travel to away matches. So to travel to New Road Worcester 11 days after having faced them at Blackpool did not seem in the slightest bit odd to us. And besides, New Road is one of the most picturesque grounds in the country. You are transported back 100 years as you sit in the glorious sunshine in the Graham Hick Pavilion, looking at Worcester Cathedral in the distance on the hill; and

with the sprawl of the Malvern Hills away to your right you could be forgiven for forgetting that the reason you are here is to watch cricket. Afternoon tea in the Ladies Pavilion is a delight that is not to be missed with home-made cakes and pastries galore. The queue usually starts about 2 p.m. and you have to sacrifice a bit of cricket watching to partake - but it is well worth it. We usually dig out at the Olde Talbot Inn, a hostelry in the centre of the town which has a vast and pleasing array of draught beers as well as a location from which you can walk to the ground. The walk is also superb, past the old St. Mary's church with its enormously tall spire and down to the River Severn where you walk past the famous Browns Restaurant where fresh lobster and steak sit side by side to be eaten in fabulous surroundings; and we have done that a time or two. This is a fixture which, after the Roses match, is always the first to go into the calendar and book the rooms. This is an adventure not to be missed and Lancashire always take a very large and supportive crowd because of all that I have mentioned.

For once the toss was won and we batted on a bright summer's day with the prospect of a match to be savoured after the keenly fought contest at Blackpool. By 12.20 [we start at 11] Lancashire had lost 5 wickets with only 67 runs on the board. Everyone began examining their hotel check-out policy as we felt sure we couldn't survive 4 days. Just after lunch Lancashire had been skittled out for 161. Kyle Hogg and Sajid Mahmood had scored 74 of those runs and extras accounted for a further 24, so in all 8 batsmen had contributed 63 runs. Perhaps it was a good toss to lose, but we picked a rare occasion to win it. Looking at the pitch is so fraught with hazards that one often wonders what they are looking for. In the words of Henry Blofeld, *Blowers from Test Match Special, the captains prod the pitch, listen to it, stroke the grass and pontificate as if they were choosing a vintage wine, and then appear to have made with wrong decision, which is very gratifying for the rest of us!!* Still - let's see how they bat on it. They had no trouble, with J.G. Cameron scoring 98 helping his side to amass a total of 237. At one stage we had them 119 for 6, but they escaped, slipped the net, ran off the rod or no matter which metaphor you wish to choose, they just adapted better to the conditions. They had closed Day 1 on 209 for 6, so when they were all out we still had 80 overs left in the day.

Stephen Moore had been allowed to return home as his wife was about to give birth in Manchester. Stephen was disappointed, not for the fact that he was about to become a father, but for the fact that he had spent his foremost years at New Road, where he had honed his not inconsiderate batting skills and wanted to make a return. He was picked in the squad but got the call when we were batting in the first innings [and he had been dismissed for 18]. When Worcester were bowled at in the morning of the second day, the call was put in [I presume] to ask Stephen to return if all was OK with the birth. I again presume that everything was alright and that he started to make his way down the M6 and M5 to arrive in time to take up a position in the batting order that would fit in with the timing of his arrival. How fate plucks your hairy chin and laughs at the fate of your razor. In the 25th over we were 60 for 6. Everyone is looking round at the entrance to the ground to see Stephen Moore arrive. 60 for 7 - another nervous look round; 60 for 8 and the nervous look became one of anger, blaming the poor fellows wife and harping on about the opposite sex in the most misogynist manner I have ever heard at a cricket match since Lancashire County Cricket Club voted to allow women in the pavilion - and that was all of 20 years ago!! 80 for 9 and the game was up. Hogg was second highest scorer with 18 runs, and when he was skittled out we were all out for 80 runs. The Championship was disappearing in front of our eyes. This was the first game that Worcestershire had won all season and we were on the receiving end. The next morning I found solace in the 8 o'clock Communion in the Cathedral. I was praying for my team, but also for absolution for the thoughts I had experienced about women and childbirth the previous day.

Lancashire v Hampshire 7-10 September 2011

Looking back now on the game against Hampshire it was probably the most thrilling game I have ever had the pleasure to witness. Yes there were the excitement and antics of Taunton to come but for sheer edge of the seat stuff this match took some beating. And all this in a season where we had beaten Yorkshire twice in unbelievable circumstances. Summer was receding into autumn but the weather was better than the Indian summer we were experiencing; wall to wall sunshine in Liverpool for all 4 days. I swear that Aigburth has its own micro-climate being that close to the river and so near to the sea.

The toss went the way of so many others that year and we were put in to bat. Even though we were experiencing unseasonably warm weather the sun gets up in the sky later which means that any night dew takes longer to disappear and be absorbed by the sun's rays, which are not as powerful at this time of the year. Matches that start in April have a commencement time of 10.30 because of the nights closing in at the other end of the day and that can add to the dampness

and as George Sharp raised his finger we knew we had resurrected a chance. 32 overs to score 210 runs at a rate of just under 7 runs an over. The game was in the balance still but it was in our hands now. Come on the Red Rose!!!

Horton and Moore went off like rockets scoring 131 runs without the loss of a wicket and in only 17 overs. We were well up with the run rate (actually scoring at 8 an over). Horton went for an impressive 55 off 49 balls. He had played his part in a team game and had seen the shine off the ball. Well done Paul. In came Karl Brown and kept up the run flow, until he lost Moore on 135. Moore had scored 71 runs in 55 balls and he too had played his part. I learned later that Kyle Hogg, the fast bowler who usually batted number 10 and hoped he wouldn't be needed, actually refused to move from his seat in the dressing room in case it affected the fall of wickets (most cricketers are superstitious). He never saw any of the runs Lancashire scored in the second innings but just emerged when he heard the roar. Lancashire had 14 more overs in which to score 80 runs. Word came from Southampton that Warwickshire had shaken hands on a draw with Hampshire, and that put us in the driving seat. A rather amusing aside was that the trophy was in the boot of the car being driven by Mike Gatting, ex-England Captain and ECB supremo as far as League cricket was concerned. He was half way to Southampton when the draw between Warwickshire was announced and the news that Lancashire were speeding towards victory and he had to turn round and make haste to Taunton. Of course this is not true as there are two trophies - the real one and a replica one - and one would already have been at Southampton and MG would have had the other one in his boot as he made his way leisurely from Lords when he heard things were going Lancashire's way.

The Championship now looked as if it was coming back with us to Old Trafford. Croft and Brown finished off in style with three overs to spare and the celebrations began.

UK CONSUMER PRICE STATISTICS: A REVIEW

In May 2013, the UK Statistics Authority commissioned Paul Johnson, the Director of the Institute of Fiscal Studies, to conduct an independent review to ensure that UK Consumer Price Statistics met current and future user needs.

On 8 January 2015, the UK Statistics Authority published the **UK Consumer Price Statistics: A Review** and issued a Press Release setting out the principal conclusions of that Review, copies of which are enclosed.

CPSA Groups & Branches will note that the Review recommends:

- that the Office of National Statistics (ONS) should move to the use of CPI(H) as the main measure of inflation rather than CPI
- that Government and regulators should, in the wake the switch from RPI to CPI for uprating benefits & pensions, stop using RPI for other purposes e.g. increases in utility costs, travel fares etc. etc.
- that the Government and ONS should publish more information about the impact of price increases & costs on different groups of households

The Board of the UK Statistics Authority will now be considering the recommendations of this Review with a view to launching a public consultation on the issues arising from the Review later in 2015.

Clearly, this Review will have direct impacts on the likelihood of restoring RPI as the indexation used for annual increases in pensions and the future campaign activities of those pensioner organisations that came together with the Alliance in 2010 to form the RPI/CPI Campaign Group.

The Alliance has started to discuss the implications of this Review with other pensioner organisations, particularly its partners in the *Later Life Ambitions* campaign and the Public Service Pensioners' Council (PSPC) and will keep members, Groups & Branches advised on relevant developments.

In the meantime, if any Group or Branch wishes to access the Summary and Recommendations of **UK Consumer Price Statistics: A Review**, please go to:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/reports---correspondence/current-reviews/range-of-prices-statistics.html>

Extract from CPSA Newsletter February 2015



I never wanted to be the last Governor

By Gerry Hendry

When I first entered the portals of HMP Northallerton in early 1980 as a POUT (prison Officer Under Training) I started my career at what was the County Goal, a Georgian prison modernised by the Victorians and struggling to survive in a modern world.



I was keen as mustard and anxious to make a difference, after all that was the reason I joined, to make a difference. I had struggled for some time to bring myself to apply for the

Service, some of my best friends were good solid prison officers and told me I was the right sort of person for the service. I didn't know "what the right sort of person was, indeed the training Senior Officer Dave Bullivant told me on day one that there was no education or training course that prepared you to be a Prison Officer. *"No one has grown up wanting to be a Screw, and every person you meet will have had a career before joining Tinker, Tailor, Soldier and yesUndertakers"*

He was right and I met such a diverse group of colleagues in a public service stretching over 32 years and enjoyed every minute of it.

I had followed a meandering career path that took me the length and breadth of England and Wales and eventually took me to the former County Goal of Shropshire with startling similarities to HMP Northallerton.

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Shrewsbury was a place I had heard of as like Lancaster Castle and Shepton Mallet there was constant talk of closure. At Wakefield OTS when one of my course members opened his brown envelope and read Shrewsbury he was immediately told by the Section PO Derek Williamson not to get too happy as it was due for closure later that year. Yet here I was in 2005 as the Governing Governor and raring to go.



At my first full staff meeting I made it clear what I expected of the **staff** ***'Prisons are only as good as the staff who run them. We must work to achieve a well-ordered and controlled prison.... Reform and rehabilitation are not things we 'do' to prisoners... we have an absolute obligation to do everything we can to encourage reform... we have a duty to help our prisoners... the decency agenda is about building relationships with prisoners based on knowing them and respecting them... It is about preserving the dignity of prisoners... It is about embodying the values of integrity, honesty, confidence, conviction, good judgment and flexibility***

My Boss Bryan Payling made it quite clear to me that there was little to do as it was a good little prison *"If it aint broke don't try to fix it"* he told me *"but if you can do it better then go ahead you stand or fall on your performance"* he was true to his word and he gave me my head to get on with the job. No micro managing just honest to goodness support just what an Area Manager should be. Shortly after my appointment Mike Spur visited and made it clear that we were not due for closure but that we needed to work hard to keep it that way. I had already made that point to staff during my early meetings and was

blessed with good working relations with my POA and the rest of the Whitley Unions. At my first full staff meeting I made it clear what I expected of the staff *'Prisons are only as good as the staff who run them,'* I said on that occasion, addressing my full staff. *'We must work to achieve a well-ordered and controlled prison.... Reform and rehabilitation are not things we 'do' to prisoners... we have an absolute obligation to do everything we can to encourage reform... we have a duty to help our prisoners... the decency agenda is about building relationships with prisoners based on knowing them and respecting them... It is about preserving the dignity of prisoners... It is about embodying the values of integrity, honesty, confidence, conviction, good judgment and flexibility*

We worked hard and year on year we continually improved with the effort of the staff and a dedicated SMT. Mike Newell had always told me that a Governor had to have a Deputy he could trust implicitly and I had had some of the best, Pete Love, Martyn Gair and latterly Graham Weale. Our HMIP Inspections were highly rated and our performance figures across the board placed us as a level 4 high performing prison which put us in a safe place. Politics however do not follow logic and the announcement of the building of a private prison next to Featherstone set the hounds of doom running again after the hare.

When the first round of closures came it was predominantly 1960 build prisons that were closed, their high maintenance and future building costs had sealed their fate. We had been visited by the same teams from headquarters and been given the green light. Millions were spent on a new Gymnasium, Education Extension , reroofing and upgrades to the alarm systems. That level of investment expenditure was surely going to keep us safe for the future.

All the experts were of one voice ***'All the evidence suggests,'*** they said, ***'that smaller establishments meet the aims of the Government's rehabilitation revolution agenda.'***

David Cameron agreed, ***'The idea that big is beautiful when it comes to prisons is wrong.'*** and Nick Herbert, until recently Minister of State at the Ministry of Justice: ***'Huge prison warehouses are wrong. What's needed is a network of smaller local prisons with better integration with the local community and more focus on reducing reoffending.'***

A follow up visit resulted in further funds being released to upgrade the walls, the landing rails were all replaced and a full refit of all cells undertaken these were sure and certain signs of a stable and long lasting future.

I studied the needs of the West Midlands and after several meetings with population managers and regime planners we rerolled to a Category C prison holding older vulnerable prisoners and sex offenders in denial who were clogging up Whatton, Stafford and other SOTP delivering sites. We were able to reduce staff and costs considerably which we knew would contribute to our long term survival.

We wrongly believed that Featherstone 2, HMP Oakwood was not a rival as it had a different function from us but the political dogma is all powerful and we suddenly found that the whole of the West Midlands establishments were being realigned not only to meet the needs of the newly opened Oakwood but the recently privatised HMP Birmingham and another private prison HMP

Dovegate.



RailTrack Training Site

We were at the cutting edge of Rehabilitation and had even launched our own charity to help deliver resettlement through the gate at a fraction of the costs being proposed by planners with a proven track record of success. . We had a commercial print shop producing quality products for internal and external use. Our workshops were the best performing in the country aligned with local and national employers. We had a Railtrack training site with guaranteed employment on release. We had a long term contract with the Canal and River Trust recycling lock gates in to garden furniture, a vibrant regime with good training and education programmes , full employment and huge future potential.

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In spite of this we were doomed to be closed as plans were being proposed for another huge prison at Wrexham which could hold up

to 2500 prisoners to be run by the private sector. Chris Grayling became a regular visitor to Oakwood and the press were fed good news stories of its innovation and modern conditions and its value for money. At the same time, the same machine was feeding stories of high costs and highly paid civil servants with golden pensions. The writing was clearly on the wall.

Then came the fateful day, we knew that there were going to be closure announcements ; I was told by my Deputy Director of Custodial Services (Area Manager) Luke Sargeant that I should stay by the telephone as DDCSs and Governors were going to be made aware the evening before. Seven o'clock they said and when it came and went I was relieved but at seven twenty the phone rang and I was told closure was to be announced and that I was to tell no one until the next morning when he would come to the jail with a team from headquarters and that I would make the announcement at the same time as Chris Grayling broke the news publicly.

When I arrived early next morning I read the paperwork about the pending announcement which was given to me and I was furious as the reasons for closure were given as the high costs of running the prison but the figures quoted were nonsense and when I pointed this out I was told that the method of calculation was different... My budget was £7.9 million yet the figures quoted showed that I had an annual budget of £13 million. Apparently the costs of Headquarters staffing , Regional Teams of every ilk, Shared Services and other factors are apportioned to the running costs of public sector prisons.

That was the second worst announcement I have ever had to make the first being the loss of my dear friend and colleague Martyn Gair.

The first week was a daze there were hundreds of staff and prisoners who had no idea what their future held for them. I was astounded at the inability of Shared Services, who were supposed to be helping me, and HR to answer even basic questions, a situation that didn't change over the next few months. There were some long serving staff nearing retirement who were delighted at the prospects of redundancy and hundreds more who needed to find jobs elsewhere.

Everyone was certain that as the Governor I knew all the answers. In reality I was just as much in the dark as they were as the HR teams and Shared Services struggled to understand the complex rules that applied to some staff but not others. Chaos ruled and answers changed daily depending on which part of the organisation you spoke with.

The selection of staff for redundancy was based upon the timing of applications but when the lists were produced they looked suspiciously like costliest out first in March and those with the lowest pay out on the second tranche in June.

I was surprised at how quickly we were able to decant the prison and that we did so without a single incident, a testimony to the staff / prisoner relationships. When the last prisoner left staff started to strip the place and we transferred all our assets to other establishments. I was amazed and proud of my staff who did an amazing job with good humour and dignity.