

The Retired Prison Governors **Newsletter**

In co-operation with: The Prison Governors Association

Founded by Arthur Williamson in 1980 - 40 years of continuous publication



Issue No 82

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Celebrating 40 Years of the RPGA Newsletter



Greetings and felicitations from your editor. More importantly I hope you are all well and stay that way. The chances are that anything I write about the Coronavirus will be out of date by the time this hits your doormat, but we can be sure that the most draconian restrictions on civil liberties since World War Two will be in force. As members of a high risk group, if this means that we either do not catch the virus, or get a critical bed if we need one, it is probably something we are prepared to tolerate. Nevertheless, we should all be wary of the unfettered power that will be given to officialdom, some of whom will inevitably prove unfit to wield it.

We should probably consider ourselves luckier than colleagues still in harness. They face the possibility of infection on a daily basis, and the potential for a violent reaction from prisoners denied

visits, as has occurred in Italy. I'm sure our thoughts are with them every day of what will be a very long haul.

Some of you will have noticed that The Retired Governors Newsletter celebrates its 40th birthday this year. The precise month is unknown to me, and I guess there may not be many people out there who can fill in that particular knowledge gap. I had hoped to publish some archive material in this year's editions, rather as I did when I edited 'The Key,' but unfortunately for me the PGA no longer has a comprehensive archive. I can only presume it disappeared in an office move, and sadly Paddy Scriven, who would surely have known the whereabouts of historic material, is no longer with us. However, I cling to the hope that out there are retired members who were the sons, daughters, and maybe even grandchildren of an older generation of retired members who have long departed for that great Governor's office in the sky, who just may have old copies of the newsletter which have been gathering dust in a drawer for three decades and more. Please have a look, you never know. If any member does find old newsletters, please send either to myself or Roger Outram. We will treat them as treasure trove and return them to you as soon as we have finished with them.

As ever this edition contains Bob Duncan's much loved 'Your Letters' column as well as items from regular contributors. Joining our roster of writers this month are Mike Newell, former President of the PGA, and Jenny Mooney, former Governor of HMP Holme House. Respectively they offer a fascinating insight into the operation of the prison system in two foreign jurisdictions, China and the USA.

Hopefully, by the time it comes to publish the Autumn edition, normality will have been resumed and we will all still be here to enjoy it.

PAUL LAXTON, EDITOR

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RPGA: E-MAIL REGISTER

The E-Mail register has been operating for around 13 years and has proved itself to be an effective means of rapid communication between members. It offers updates on current prison service developments and allows members to keep in touch with each other. Joining the RPGA does not automatically place you on the register. If you would like to join the register then please send an E-Mail from the address you wish to have registered to Harry Brett at h_brett@sky.com. E-Mail addresses 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 E-Mail address you must inform HARRY BRETT, otherwise you will cease to receive further updates.



BERNARD WILSON B.E.M. 31.12.1926 - 16.12.2019

It is with sadness that I inform colleagues and friends of the passing of my father, Bernard Wilson. Bernard was born in Leeds and after leaving school took several jobs knowing that he would eventually be called up for active service. In January 1945 he was called up for service in the Army, firstly with the Royal Armoured Corps then to the 3rd The Kings Own Hussars who were part of the 6th Airborne Brigade as their reconnaissance arm. Upon de-mob he applied for the Prison Service and walked through the gates of HMP Leeds on the 15th August 1949 to a career he loved. He somehow found time to marry in 1950 to Shirley who he had met while on leave from the Army.

Bernard went on to serve at HMP Stafford transferring on promotion to Principal Officer to HMP Parkhurst in February 1966 . Following Parkhurst Bernard then was promoted firstly as Second Chief transferring to HMP Durham in May 1973 and subsequently to First Chief. Then came what for him was his favourite post. In 1978 he joined the Prison Inspectorate. During his time with the Inspectorate, in addition to normal inspection duties, he was part of the team that conducted many inquiries, the escape from HMP Maze being just one. He remained in this post until he retired at the age of sixty although he remained involved in the Butler Trust. It was a proud moment for his family when he was awarded the B.E.M although he was a humble man and played down his efforts and achievements.

Bernard made many lifelong friends during his service. (The picture below is of Bernard with his two great friends Gordon Fowler and Bill Brister) and he will be sorely missed by his family and friends.

CLIVE WILSON





From the Chair

We are I suspect all in shock at the world changing events of the last few weeks and the impact that a microscopic virus has had on what we have taken for granted, our way of life. As the risk is higher with our age group it is crucial that we bite the bullet and do what we can as individuals, as families and as friends rally round at this time albeit 2 metres apart. I write this just as the Prime Minister announces a 12 week stay at home strategy which looks like a long road ahead but is not negotiable. My view is that if you stay at home there is minimal risk and if you do have to go out you raise the risk, so we only do it if there is no other way. By the time you read this we will have moved a few weeks on and I hope we are keeping safe and free from harm. I do feel for those managing the Service and though we have all dealt with command situations this is off the scale and I know our thoughts are with them at this difficult time.

Welcome to this spring edition of the RPGA newsletter and thank you to all those who have contributed your stories and especially those with pictures which are particularly welcome. My thanks to our editor Paul Laxton who has had to continually review and re-edit as things change so quickly. As is my wont I write looking out over the Pennine hills from my window mid-March and see not snow or rain, we have had more than enough of that, but clear blue sky and everything starting to bud. It all looks so peaceful which is deceptive like the Swan gliding on the water but peddling like mad underneath.

On a brighter note and as you may guess from the photo we went to a Burns night arranged by my male voice choir and decided to really go for it. My first time in a kilt [didn't like it much] so armed with the script for my task of proposing a toast to the "Lassies" had a great night! He was a bit of a lad wasn't he, look it up! Yes I did go commando!

Please note the RPGA annual general meeting will hopefully be in the afternoon on the 13th October 2020 at the PGA annual conference Radison Blu Hotel near East Midlands Airport, put it in your diary you will be most welcome. More information will follow.

Graham Smith
RPGA Chairman

Dear Colleagues

Once more I must register disappointment that no-one has written to me with anything I can include in the letters section. Fortunately my very good friend Bob Duncan is maintaining contact with those who have provided him with interesting news over the past many years and he continues to pass it on to me. This Spring season he has contributed some 6000 words for which he has my eternal gratitude, but as sure as night follows day and retirement follows employment, the writing is on the wall for the future of the Letters section and I will leave you, dear reader, to draw your own conclusions. For my part I have spent much of my thirteen years in retirement being enthralled with the contributions made by Bob and now as letters editor, I get to read it all first. Bobs contribution follows and I am sure that you will enjoy it as much as I have. Please spend a few moments to pen some anecdotes from your busy lives and send them to me and I am sure that other readers will find your contributions as interesting as we have all enjoyed the jottings of the legendary Bob Duncan.

Your Letters Spring 2020 - Bob Duncan

Colleagues will be saddened to learn of the death of **Geoffrey Lister**, but at the age of 94 he had a 'good innings.' I served under Geoff when he was Regional Director of the Midlands. As Brendan so aptly writes he was generally serious and hard-working, and one felt there was more to him than he revealed. I had more contact with **Ted Cowper-Johnson** who had such an outward personality. He made a nice balance to Geoff. I marvel at **Brendan's** Obituary, (Printed separately in the Newsletter) because he has captured so beautifully the real Geoff, the one I felt I knew but was never sure as he was always so clearly focused on the task.

Brendan is keeping well but he admits it is harder as we grow older and goes on to say one hip operation for Barbara is enough. Brendan mentioned that Geoff had a wry sense of humour. On one occasion he was visiting Wellingborough for some event and was invited to stay for a meal. He tucked in and had clearly enjoyed what had been served up. Jane asked if he would like some more. He literally turned and looked over his shoulder, and said Grace (his wife) won't know, yes please.

Perhaps the other side of Geoff is illustrated by another occasion when he advised he would be attending the final of the Thompson Football Cup and would like to speak to both teams before the kickoff. This was due at 3 pm, and no sign of Geoff, we waited 25 minutes, no sign and everyone was getting a bit agitated, so I announced 'give it 5 minutes, and must start.' So it commenced, 10 minutes later **Geoff** accompanied by **Grace** appeared, full of apologies he said, 'we attended the service at the Cathedral as usual, it overran a bit. We then had to return home to park my car, and get into the official car to come to the match.' After the match, we invited them home for tea. Some will not know, but Geoff always claimed that Grace was the brains behind the design and specifications of the J and G Official Quarters. He always seemed very proud of her achievement. We for once were occupying the Governor's quarter, but as soon as we approached the house, Grace said that's extra pointing to the porch, and as soon as we entered she declared 'I better inspect it all to see what else you have had done'. I was not sure if she was having a go at Geoff for not spotting it before, or blaming me. I did not really care as I suspect it had been done by my first Deputy at Dover, 'Down the Block Jock', Bill Fingland as he had been a Governor there. I just think Grace had enjoyed herself pointing it all out. For us it was a very nice quarter, that is after Jane, who had to carry out the ' preliminary visit', as I was posted and waiting to take up post, there, on her own without me, due to the prolonged 10-day hostage situation at Scrubs which I could not leave as I was 'silver' and the Governor was absent and refusing to return until he was ready. When Jane had made it clear that she wanted her own cooker installed instead of the 'official one' and the electrician had demanded to know why. She advised him that it had a timer facility beside other advantages and if she was delayed at work it solved the problem. The electrician had retorted

that she should not be working, but at home looking after me. Within a second of Jane's explosive response, the Head of Works realized where this was going and said 'It will be installed the day it arrives!'

If colleagues will allow me some discretion, I would like to digress for a moment. My son achieved a first-class degree in civil engineering at Nottingham University. He had a year's experience of working in engineering prior to university. On graduation, he volunteered to undertake 2 years of voluntary service abroad. He was allocated to Uganda and the task of using local labour and stones collected by the villagers to build medical centres in remote villages. I went out with Paul Wailen to visit him there and travelled with him to all the sites he was working on. I was very proud of him. It is a beautiful country that was ravaged and made poor by the antics of Idi Amin, 'the Butcher of Uganda'. Poor as they are the children are so friendly and always intrigued by a white visitor. Since then I have financially sponsored and corresponded with a Ugandan child through a charity. My current child, Odeta has just had her ninth Birthday, the highlights of her the year have been she has 'learned her letters' and her father has bought Odeta her first pair of shoes. It humbled me and was a pertinent reminder of the real spirit of Christmas.

In the last edition, I reported that **Paul Wailen** was fully recovered from previous medical problems. That was clearly tempting fate as just before the rather late publication of the last Newsletter he had awful pains and was rushed to a hospital. The consultants took quite a while to diagnose the problem and then debated whether an operation was feasible. It was and he then had major surgery and was in intensive care for a period and then a few weeks in hospital before discharge. Unfortunately during the surgery, they discovered Paul had the onset of cancer. So once he was fit enough to undertake chemotherapy he was given the option of a low dose or a high one with the risk of more side effects but a more rapid route to recovery. He bravely opted for the high dose. I was unable to make contact after his first report in November that all seemed to go well, for the whole of mid-December to mid-January he was, 'flat out on his bed not knowing what was going on'. The hospital now accepts that the first dose was too high, and it has been all reviewed. He had the second treatment in mid-January and all was well when I spoke to him. Let us hope that is the end of it and Paul does have a healthier and happy New Year.

A short greeting from **Steve Metcalf**, he appears to have given up his enthusiasm for sailing to some degree and taken up bridge to ward off boredom and dementia. This year just good wishes from the **Rev Tom John**, so he is still amongst us in retirement.

Veronica Bird has moved to the property she has always wanted in Harrogate but is proving a bit of a headache. She is having it modernized, but finding good workman in the Harrogate area is not proving easy. She is still in big demand to give talks to a host of different groups, and on some days has given two talks at different venues. All 'fees' given her are donated generously to Yorkshire Cancer Care, Butler Trust, Kidney Research and Shannon Trust. All have benefitted by over £1,000 each so far. Veronica is already booked, amongst others, for the North East Women's Institute Annual Lunch when over 200 are expected to attend. There is clearly a genuine interest in what actually takes place in our prisons. Veronica says she meets all kinds of interesting people, including a gentleman who went to school with **Tim Newell and Phil Wheatley**.

John and Jean Childs say they have the usual ailments for those who have reached the age of 85, with various hospital appointments. They do though 'keep moving' and ensure that they get out every day for a walk and possibly a latte. They had a family reunion in December with Simon and family home from Hong Kong, and David and wife from Singapore, and Jennie and family from Southampton. They have 6 grandsons and 2 great-grandsons, so as they say 'we are kept busy'. I have known John and Jean for over 50 years when we were all at Dover together. The happy memories from those days are as vivid as ever and they are genuinely caring and good people.

Congratulations to **Ron and Sue Curtis** on their 50th Wedding Anniversary which they celebrated by renting a holiday home in Trevone, Cornwall and having a family reunion and were blessed with a gloriously sunny week followed by a second gathering for a lunch with family and friends and neighbours at their favourite country pub in Rutland, with fine weather once again. Again a colleague from Dover days and I knew them when they were only a courting couple!

In contrast, a winter trip they made to Orkney early in the year, when they were delayed from making the ferry crossing from the north of Scotland to Orkney by high winds and seas, so they saw more of Caithness than usual. Despite continuing bad weather they got around the island as usual, and in particular, learning more about one of their heroes, the Arctic explorer John Rae and visiting the house where he grew up, in a poor state now, but soon to be restored by the John Rae Society. They say they are keeping well; I admire their fitness with all the intrepid walks they manage.

Ron was kind enough to say he enjoyed my contribution to the Newsletter and in particular my memories of Graham Gregory Smith and the hostage incident at Scrubs as Ron was part of that.

Colin Tanswell writes 'I was walking in the St John's area of Wakefield last week and passed by your old house. **Fred Abbott**, who I served with at Hewell Grange, lived in Belgravia Road nearby when he was at Wakefield Prison. We are still in touch and they have now moved from Leicestershire, where they retired, to Sheringham in Norfolk, another coincidence as it is only a stone's throw from where we had our holiday caravan for over 20 years.

I am recovered from an accident, of falling off the ladder, as far as I can hope. I recently completed a course of physiotherapy, an almost complete waste of time; all they did was give me exercises to do at home, no hands-on treatment, not like the Springwell Health Clinic whom I patronized whilst I was at the college. I still suffer pain occasionally, but I am 80, and I am able to walk a couple of miles regularly, use my exercise bike and carry out minor essential tasks in the garden. My eldest son still lives with us and is a godsend to assist with more demanding tasks.

My youngest son, who was born when I was at the College, now lives in Winnipeg in Canada; we visited him and his wife in April/May experiencing the vast variations in weather that is a feature of their climate. In winter it is well below zero and remains so until the spring, I do not know how they stand it as they then get mosquitoes in the summer. We hope to go again but a major drawback is the cost of travel insurance, now almost as costly as the flights, with our medical history.

We have managed to avoid the floods which have occurred nearby, although it has been a close call, history has shown that following long periods of heavy rain, water flows off the fields into our road, frightening though fortunately not inundating this time.

Veronica Bird gave her talk to our church members recently and I had hoped to go and make myself known to her, I am not sure we have ever met. Unfortunately, circumstances prevented me from attending.'

Angela Burgess and David Turner state they are both keeping well and keep fit by walking the dog. That is in stark contrast to **Abi and Zarina Sheikh**, also from my Pentonville days, as Zarina's medical condition has grown worse and she is severely limited in not being able to walk at all. He says the year has been stressful for him as well as Zarina; it seems to be spiraling downwards quite rapidly since Zarina was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Matters got worse when she had a nasty fall in the kitchen which resulted in a fracture of the forearm and a dislocated shoulder. 'I phoned at 2 pm, but we had to wait 4 hours for an ambulance to come, then another 2 hours in the ambulance before a space in the waiting room could be found, then a further 4 hours before a doctor could attend to her. It was 4 am the next morning before we came home with

instructions to take paracetamol for the pain. Then we discovered that the shoulder had not been set right and there was a long delay to get treatment, she has lost the use of her right arm and hand. We have been attending physiotherapy sessions, neurology clinics and other clinics at least twice a week since June with little improvement or signs of recovery.' Abi has now had the house converted as far as possible to meet her needs, and is her carer. To add to his troubles the water main outside his house burst damaging the entire block paving in his drive, and confining Zarina to the house. Trying to get it sorted and receive compensation from Thames Water he says was like that of an elephant telling a mouse to fight him. He now takes on all the household chores and takes Zarina out in her wheelchair, so he has less time for his beloved garden. He had, however, made major reorganization prior to all the above. Now he can wait to see the fruits of his labour. Abi has diabetes but is otherwise reasonably healthy. He said his faith helped and he would cope with all that was necessary. His children and grandchildren were all doing well so that gave him great comfort. He acknowledged there are many much worse off than him. He asked me to wish him luck. I am sure we all do that in abundance.

Jenny Adams Young has not been very well of late. However, she fears she might be faring better than her beloved cat Crystal Tips, who has reached the age of 19.6 and is now very frail. Jenny has now resigned from the RPGA Committee after 8 years. I am sure we all wish her well and a big thank you for all she did both for the Newsletter and in organizing recent AGM and reunion venues. This was no easy task.

My privilege to hear from my old buddy at Liverpool Prison, **Danny Ozanne**, we were always called by the Governor, **George Bride**, 'My boys'. Danny is now 92 and has written to me himself, and it is difficult to read since his strokes he cannot use his right hand. I was very touched and moved and admired him for his tenacity, and felt it really displayed the deep bond between us. Thank you, Danny. It helped that Joan had added an explanation and some hints on the content. Other than that Danny, although he does get tired, keeps quite well and has regular checks at the hospital as his pacemaker has about completed its time. Joan remains troubled with arthritis and that limits her activities and she gets a little short breath. I will try and visit them this year.

Lovely Christmas wishes from **Sheila and Jim Blakey**, he reminds us all that he will be 82 next April and Sheila (you guess) are not doing too badly, and they had their 60th wedding anniversary in December, so extra congratulations to them as they outshine Ron and Sue! Over the last two years, Jim has had both his shoulder joints replaced and is now feeling good. He now has much more movement in both arms and shoulders. He is hoping the hospital physiotherapist will discharge me soon (think yourself lucky, most patients I know complain that they do not get enough physiotherapy!) I wish I had them operated on years ago, but doctors put the pain down to statins and kept changing the type of statin when all along it was arthritis. Now Jim has problems with kidney stones and by coincidence so has his son at the same time, and he drinks 3 litres of water a day for many years, and now has the same problem! All the family are doing well and live within close proximity, which always a great gratification.

A short missive from **Dave Simons and Anne** reminiscing that we had the 'best of times both in service and serving the RPGA.' When I was in Cambridgeshire we used to meet up occasionally for a lunch, he says he misses those days. He has given up golf (never knew his handicap- I suspect if he had told me it would have been exaggerated) as he can no longer leave Ann for too long as her memory is not good and it can be dangerous. He says he has had a good innings so cannot complain, then goes on to say 'I spend most of my time now complaining about all and everything with this world gone mad, I must be getting old.' There is no cure for either on the national health, so you will just live with it. Miss you, you 'old so and so'.

Bill Abbott advises that he has now completed 12 months without taking on any work. He also reminds me of his new address; I will let Harry know in case he has not been updated. (A reminder to everyone to keep the RPGA up to date with your address.) He says I might like a scouse language card – a suave shop in the city is pushing them hard. I know I have served in Liverpool twice, but the card is blank inside and the front just says 'K'NELL IT'S GRIMBO', can anyone translate, please?

A lovely missive received from **John Ship** in Hua Him in the Thai province of Prachuap Khiri Khan. "Good morning Bob, I am sitting here having my morning cup of coffee by our pool in the unseasonably cold weather, it's 8.20 and just reached 20 degrees Centigrade, I think that is about 68 in old money. I'm happy with the temperature but Ice keeps muttering 'very cold'. If the weather forecast is to be believed it's due to warm up later in the week and should be back to a more acceptable mid-thirties in time for the Christmas festivities.

My health is still OK, the occasional aches, pains and twinges that come with age, madam tries her hardest to maintain my fairly healthy diet, and I see my heart specialist every three months in Bangkok for a checkup. I have an appointment next week, so I am standing by for my regular telling off that my cholesterol is too high so I am trying to eat even healthier for a week, not easy with some of our favourite foods high in the stuff, squid, prawns and other assorted shellfish, but we are doing our best.

We still manage to travel, got back from Ipoh in Malaysia yesterday, a really wonderful old city and steeped in history. We flew into Kuala Lumpur from our local airport and after a couple of days in KL caught the train to Ipoh, modern and comfortable trains with a return fare of £14 for the 2.5-hour journey with reserved seating. The train travels through the Malayan jungle, lovely views, at least from the comfort of our seats in the train, but I couldn't help wondering what it must have been like for the troops, on both sides, on the ground in WW2 and the subsequent Malayan Emergency.

I managed a trip to the UK in May, I had some airline points to use up so was given permission to go on my own, Ice did not come with me but gave me an extensive shopping list. I stayed in Ealing on my last night with a hope of seeing Paul, I didn't realize that he'd moved so unfortunately was not able to catch up with him. Please give him my best when you see him.

I was saddened by the death of **Graham GH**, I first met him at Dover when he was the Housemaster of Hastings House. I then had the honour of working under him at the Scrubs. There were some wonderful tributes to him on the Scrubs Facebook page, as Mike Selby said in your jottings 'you know where you are with him, he's straight' – that of course applied to staff and prisoners.

Your reference to **Frank Liesching** in your piece, yes he was eccentric, and certainly very different to **Bill Brister**, reminded me of one weekend when I was on duty in Walmer House when he phoned and asked me to send a lad to do a job for him. When said lad returned I asked him what he had been asked to do, he told me that he had been asked to pack some Governors Handbooks, and then promptly produced one which he claimed the Governor had given him, though I suspect he'd purloined it. It rather made me chuckle as I'd previously asked Mr Liesching if I could borrow one to study; he had refused my request due to 'security concerns', that must have been more than 50 years ago, but it still makes me chuckle.

We have a busy Christmas schedule, a number of friends from the local Masonic community are meeting up with our wives on the 23rd for dinner, we're attending a party hosted by German friends on Christmas Eve. Ice went to University with his wife. We plan to have Christmas lunch on our own, I think madam is reluctant to share our £100 turkey, we're hosting a Boxing Day pool party and then a party with some Dutch friends on the 30th and New Year's eve at a party at the Hilton on the beach. Retirement was never going to be easy!

We're visiting the UK next summer, flying into Edinburgh where we are staying a few nights before doing a driving tour of the Highlands, we are meeting a couple of ex Pentonville staff whilst doing so, Dave Scrivener/Richardson and Stuey Johnson, I wonder if the latter was the person who wrote to you? We're then flying to Reykjavik where we are staying a few days before flying down to London for a few days then visiting friends and family in Staplehurst, home of John and Yvonne Hooker who you will remember from the Scrubs. We will then fit in other trips such as Stratford on Avon, before flying home after a month in England."

Well! A far eastern perspective and how one of our colleagues manages to 'get by!' It looks like he having a pretty good time! I have alerted Paul re the visit and updated John.

I was invited to attend the farewell gathering in London from a senior officer at Pentonville; yes it was **Stuey Johnson** who had invited me. Remember I have been retired for 20 years, but his email was so kind and full of praise for my time there that it brought a tear to my eye and I could not resist. It was a lovely occasion, but more so as I met up with **Alan Brady**, ex Pentonville and then Holloway. He was a very good AG2 with good reports but was not called to the Board, we wrote an appeal, and he was called and came near the top of the list of those promoted. He was so grateful, I always remember it. He still lives in London, looks very well and enjoying retirement. On this occasion as it has cropped up, I cannot resist including the message I received:

Dear Governor Duncan

"I hope this message finds you in good health and that life is treating you well? I am retiring from Her Majesty's Prison Service after 34 years (30 of which have been served at HMP Pentonville). My last working day will be Monday 16 December 2019. Before I hang up my keys for the last time, I wanted to write to you to express my gratitude for all you did for this wonderful old prison, it's fabulous staff and me personally. I will never forget the day we went to see HRH Princess Anne at Buckingham Palace, when my team secured the Butler Trust Award and the enormous pride I felt to be stood alongside you and in that fantastic and historic setting. The award could not have been won without your never-ending support and encouragement to me and my team and I will always remain in your debt for that.

This old jail doesn't forget those that treated her well. No one in my time here has shown more commitment and dedication towards protecting this wonderful institution than you Sir and for that, you will never be forgotten. Unfortunately, the new breed of senior managers doesn't seem to share our passion for HMP Pentonville and I do fear for her future.

In closing, I would consider it an honour if you were able to attend my leaving do on Saturday 14th December, there is a reunion of the 'old guard' on the same evening, so I am hopeful there will be a few of the old faces in attendance.

It was an honour and privilege to have served under your leadership in 'The Model Prison' and I will always hold you in the highest esteem. God bless you, Sir."

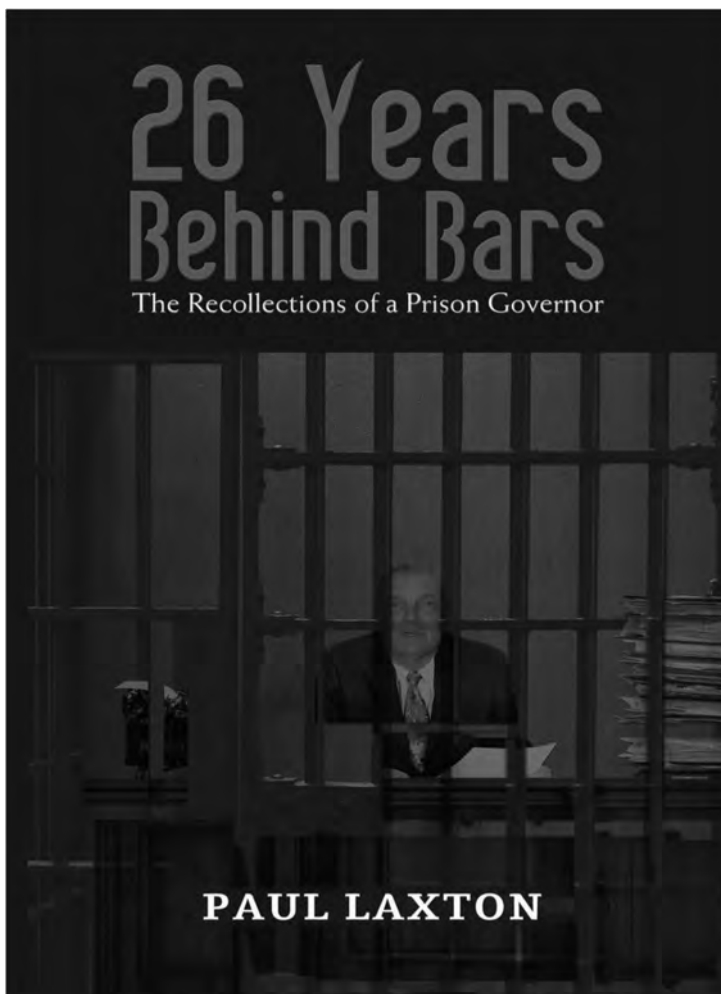
How could that not bring a tear of joy to one, so I went and it was a wonderful evening and we are going to stay in touch. The post-event message was even more glowing! As Dave Simons states, 'we served in the best of times.' I served in many establishments but Dover Borstal and Pentonville created the greatest comradeship and lasting friendships amongst its Governor grades. Ironically Dover is now closed, and Pentonville has resisted 3 attempts to close it, and it remains under threat. But we all know you cannot stop those in power continually making the wrong decision, and for the wrong reasons. Ironically as well, as an aside, both establishments have had academic books written about them by leading criminologists.

The Prime Minister has pledged £2.5 billion to build 10,000 prison spaces. These I suspect will be ill-designed by modern architects and not designed with staffing in mind. It is of note when private companies were allowed to build and run prisons they used a modified radial design. Ill-designed new prisons of this magnitude are not the answer. The finance needs to be directed at much overdue and much-needed refurbishment of the existing stock. There are prisons now where the main heating boilers no longer function, Elmley is one and Littlehey another. For months they have been replaced by temporary boilers not fit for the job. Articles now appear in papers about extra clothing being issued to prisoners as there is neither hot water nor heating. The Times has revealed that at the end of 2019 there was a backlog of 180,000 maintenance jobs with an estimated price tag of £900 million. These prisons are functioning and delivering. Invest in them properly and you will not need to spend £2.5 billion, nor recruit thousands of staff in addition. Ah, but whoever listens to the pussy cat.

I really appreciate hearing news of colleagues, and many of you have stated the same over the years and thanked us for our efforts. That is why I continue to spend considerable time transcribing with one finger it all into the computer. Roger would do it much more efficiently and quickly. My role is only to support him. Can I encourage you to put pen to paper as amongst you all there is news you could share, we would and your colleagues would also love to hear a bit your world. Send it straight to Roger, though I will always be happy to pass it on.

Bob. Jan. 2020

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The revised and updated version of '26 Years Behind Bars: The Recollections of a Prison Governor' by Paul Laxton, has recently been published by Austin Macauley.

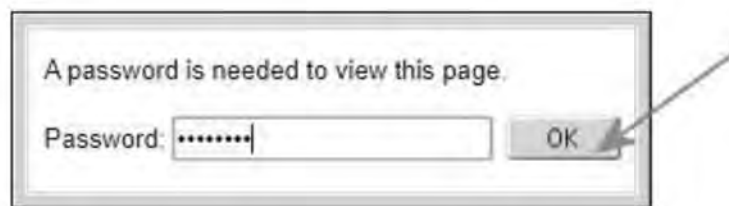
Written from the perspective of a participant observer, The author gives a unique insight into the modern prison service and the workings of the public sector. The book is educational describing the prison system over three decades in the context of social, political and organisational change, in particular the impact of the decline of deference, the growth of public managerialism, and the rise of identity politics. The final chapter lays bare the current crisis in a service where we were once proud to work.

Please note that the author will be making a donation to RPGA funds in lieu of an advertising fee

1. Type www.rpga.org.uk in the URL (Search) Line and “click” “Enter” the website will open up on your screen.



2. Click on the word “Home” on the list at the left of the page and you will be asked for a password. Type **perennis** in the box and click “OK”



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5. The newsletter for that particular issue will open and be readable. You can also download it and print it off if you wish.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT – FEBRUARY 2020

The membership total is down to 411, a loss of 5 since the last report. We welcome new members David Jennings, Robert Kennedy, Agatha Prempeh, Shaun Clark, Joan Thulborn (widow of Brian) and Stephen Fradley.

We are sorry to announce the deaths of members Brian Thulborn, Brian Coatsworth, James Edwards, Geoff Lister, Bernard Wilson and Harold Prior. We have also been informed of the deaths of ex staff, who many will know, Judith Matthews, William Rose-Quirie OBE, and Colin Baker. Our deepest condolences go out to family and friends. We have also been informed recently of the death of Harry Fletcher, former Assistant General Secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, and doughty campaigner for victims' rights.

We have had a resignation from Christine Fincham and lost touch with Mrs Foster, Ivy Lewis and Mrs S Stopforth, so if there is anyone in touch with them, and they would like to re-join then please let me know.

Members will be aware that we work closely with the Civil Service Pensioners Alliance, in fact many are members of both organisations. Currently the CSPA has been heavily involved in attempting to ensure some CSPA members, who it is stated have been overpaid due to departmental calculation errors, do not have to pay the full amount of arrears. Some overpayments are quoted in their thousands. The CSPA have taken legal advice regarding the Limitations Act and are in discussions with the Cabinet Office. Another area of great concern is that widows be allowed to retain their pensions if they chose to re-marry. It is intended to seek the support of MP's and lobby Parliament for support for the retention of life-time pensions later this year.

Anyone is interested in joining the CSPA (£2 per month) then please let me know at h_brett@sky.com and I will send you the joining forms.

Prison Service Journal - Number 247 January 2020

Some retired colleagues may be interested to read the latest edition of the PSJ.

it is centred on leadership - a subject many of us knew quite a lot about in years gone by! The subject was covered in the 2019 Perrie Lectures which the PSJ kindly prints giving more people the chance to catch up with current thinking about the Service. The articles include one entitled "Against Prison Management" by Jamie Bennett, a former Governor of Grendon/Spring Hill and one entitled "Leadership Humanity and Hope " by Steve Robinson - Deputy Governor of Guys March. There is a thoughtful contribution from Michael Spurr, former Governor and Director General. So there is a good sprinkling of views from those with knowledge of the "coal face" as well as some well written contributions from academics and researchers.

I was especially impressed by Jamie Bennett's contribution which seemed to me - looking back 20 years - captured the difficulties Governors faced and showed an independence from the prevailing cult of "managerialism" which I found rather encouraging. Perhaps much of what we were trying to achieve all those years ago was not so wide of the mark - especially given the constraints we faced at the time. The good news is that the PSJ can be accessed on line so anyone wanting to follow this up can find the articles this way.

And I have to mention that the PSJ concludes with my Obit on Roland Adamsso the Edition included a nod to our past contribution to Leadership in the Service.

Brendan O'Friel



Figure 1 OTS Leyhill 1969

This is a view of “Tortworth Court” or the Officers Training School (OTS) as it was when I did my 8 weeks POUT (Prison Officer under Training)training there in 1969. It is now a posh De Vere hotel.

I am indebted to Les Sunshine one of our longstanding members for this photo and the one below.

Following my initial one month induction at HMP Stafford in February 1969 along with 5 other hopefuls we travelled separately south on the M5, yes it was built then, and to start our residential training at the OTS adjacent to HMP Leyhill. In fact parties of prisoners maintained the extensive grounds and prepared food in the kitchens on a daily basis. Some of you will be aware that Leyhill OTS staff were regarded as proper Prison Officers and those trained at OTS Wakefield, which ran in tandem, were just “Screws”. I couldn’t possibly comment.

We slept in dormitories at that time and in alphabetical order too, so us Smiths were all in one dorm named Medomsley, the room above the left bay window in the picture. I had no idea where Medomsley was at that time This was all a new experience, not just the training but being away from home for 8 weeks with no mobiles or emails to keep in touch, just a queue at the one phone box at the school. A key skill at that time was discipline and the ability to march and then command your section on daily parades, observed by your section PO (no S.O.’s in those days). See the picture below, although this was taken later as we did not have uniforms in 1969.

At that time, although we joined and did our first month at the recruiting establishment (for me that was HMP Stafford), we were posted to any establishment in England and Wales depending where the need was at that time. Single men were nearly always posted to a London jail. We were told our posting at the end of week 4 as we returned home for the half term to break the news for our loved ones - good or bad. As you may imagine, a posting to the Isle of Wight from the North East was quite a shock but that is how it was and so we got on with it.

I remember Concorde on its first test flight flanked by 3 jets flying over the OTS in April 69, all very exciting, and also cider in the Officers Club at Leyhill, a shilling (5p) a pint, lethal stuff it was too. Funny what sticks in your mind after all these years.

I have fond memories of the training especially our section PO's who were real role models for us. Our PO was PO Tom who in later years was the Governor at Foston Hall in Derbyshire. The most feared PO at that time was named Hannigan (I think) and when he said it was Monday that is what it was, no arguing even though we knew it was wrong.

One of my proudest times in my 40 years and 5 weeks in HMPS was when I was head of Prison Officer training based at Aberford Road Wakefield, which I was unfortunate enough to close in 2002 when the Service needed to save money. What a waste! The place was the envy of many international visitors who would have taken it home with them if they could.

I expect newly recruited Officers these days still get a buzz out of the current training, and I hope they have fond memories of their time at OTS or whatever it is called today in years to come.

GRAHAM SMITH



Figure 2 Officers on Parade OTS Leyhill

AYLESBURY CHOIR INITIATIVE

The recent programme where Gareth Malone of Choir T.V. visited Aylesbury Prison was profoundly moving. A brave initiative by the Governor Laura Sapwell. If you missed it try and get a recording -it's fascinating, indeed an emotional experience..

I wrote to congratulate Laura and she replied that the response has been most encouraging and there is a possibility of further support to build on the achievement. We should wish her well.

Michael Selby

Reflections on the Chinese Prison System 2006-2013



In recent months there have been an exceptional number of stories about events in China. Most recently about Huawei, the Coronavirus and the treatment of the Uyghur Population in Xinjiang Province. Each event is reported in a manner that indicates China represents a threat to the Western World, without placing the events within the cultural and historical context of China, the most populated Country in the World. The response has made me reflect upon my time in China, when as part of the International Centre for Prison Studies, I was able to visit China on numerous occasions. Indeed I visited so many Provinces and Prisons I unintentionally became known as the Western 'Professor' who had visited more Prisons in China than anyone other than those who worked for the Ministry of Justice. As a result of that I am I think able to provide a unique perspective on Chinese Prisons run by the Chinese Ministry of Justice.

My first visit to China was in January 2006 to speak at a Seminar at Beijing University on Work and Education in Prisons from a British standpoint. That Conference organized by the British Council came about because China had made two very significant decisions about the operation of Prisons. The first was that the work within Prisons would no longer be part of the National Production Plan, and secondly the remotely located camp style Industrial Prisons would be replaced by purpose built Prisons nearer to Population Centres. This was both a challenge for the Ministry of Justice and for Provincial Administrations. This was a Country that was due to host the Olympics in 2008 and had built virtually all facilities from scratch. It had also decided to reshape it's economy by moving more than 200 million people from rural to urban areas, in new and expanded Cities, focused on increased production of Industrial Goods. When China decides to do something things happen quickly, whether it be high-speed Trains or building new Isolation Hospitals for Coronavirus Patients in 10 days!

All the views expressed in this Article are personal, based upon observation, experience and extensive discussion with Prison Staff, Directors and quite a few Prisoners. They are not based upon any Academic Theory or Research.

There are frequent (and understandable) references to Human Rights abuses in the treatment of Prisoners in China. I need to begin by making it clear that if Prisons are a microcosm of Society as understood by Academics then it is natural that Prisoners in the System do not have more Rights than Citizens in the Community. China is a Single Party State and expanded Rights for Citizens are seen as a threat to that, consider for a moment the recent disturbances in Hong Kong.

I also need to be clear there are two Systems operating in China. The one operated by the MOJ China, with over 650 prisons holding around 1.65 million Prisoners, is the one I worked with throughout. All Prisoners in this System have been detained on the authorisation of a Court or on transfer from Police Jurisdiction in Detention Houses. The second system is operated by the Ministry of Public Security and holds around 650,000 Prisoners. These prisoners include all those detained pre trial, those serving less than 12 months and those detained in Re-education and treatment camps, including compulsory treatment for drug misuse and Administrative detention. This is also the Ministry responsible for the administration of the Death Penalty. During my time in China I did not visit any of these Prisons, although I know Nigel Newcomen did in his role as the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman.

Whilst the numbers of Prisoners involved are colossal, the population of China is 1.4 billion and this produces an incarceration rate of approximately 160/100,000. If we compare this with the USA it has a population of 330 million and has 2.12 million Prisoners with an incarceration rate of 655/100,000. We can see that these two Countries hold over 50% of the World's Prisoners. Size does matter in China, Guangdong the largest Province has a population of almost 115 million and over 135,000 prisoners, it is therefore not surprising that Prisons with a population under 2000 are rare, and Prisons with populations of over 10,000 are not uncommon. The women's Prison in Guangdong, which I visited, had a population of 6,000 (there is only one women's Prison per Province).

The Prisons in each Province are controlled by the MOJ, who set the Policy and Rules and Regulations, these are interpreted and administered by the Provincial Government who are responsible for delivery. As you might expect there is an ever-present tension, very similar to the UK distinction between Policy and Operations.

The Chinese System has some very distinct differences with Western models that draw unfair comparisons because they do not account for the differences in Asian and Western Cultures. China has a culture of Collective Responsibility where the Family and the Community are more important than the Individual, and indeed individuality in the past has been discouraged. This approach leads to a single rehabilitative model, which is based upon Confucian Philosophy.

Put simply this means that the reason someone is in Prison is because they did not know how to behave as Good Citizen. Consequently, their Rehabilitation is teaching them how to achieve this through a respect for the law, respect for Chinese Culture and hard work to make reparation, as well as contributing to the Community. Rehabilitation is compulsory and an Individual's personal progress and release is based upon this response. Education therefore includes the Law of the Land, classes in Chinese Arts such as calligraphy and watercolors, hard but productive Labour and respect for families.

Prisoners live in communal cells usually for 12-18, within this the Prisoners are organized in groups of 3, there are few personal possessions and very little leisure time. The Cell operates collectively in both its successes and failures, attracting rewards and punishments based upon the collective performances. The other Prisoners within the group monitor those who are at risk of self-harm.

When a Prisoner does not conform they are seen, their bad behavior is explained because they do not understand their role as a prisoner, and I have witnessed prisoners in Segregation chanting the Prison Rules that they must learn by heart before being able to leave Segregation. This is a further extension of the Confucian approach. Segregation is harsh (but not brutal) and used often in contravention of conventions such as those appertaining to natural light.

Work is hard and on an industrial scale as is education. When Phil Copple accompanied me to China, and we visited a Young Offenders prison for 2000, he was amazed to see everybody in Education on a Saturday with facilities to cater for such numbers. There are a large number of old Prisons still being replaced, where the work and health and safety standards leave much to be desired, but throughout my time in China these were being replaced at a rapid rate.

Much of our work was to progress the Human Rights Agenda in China and needless to say this was highly sensitive. China is not a signatory to any International prison standards. However, we should not think the absence of this means that prisoners have no rights and are subject to arbitrary rules. Indeed there is an obsession with following the Rules and ensuring standards are met.

Much of this comes from the culture of compensation and blame. Every prison I visited had the same targets: no escapes; no deaths (including suicide); no incidents of health or hygiene; no corruption and no concerted indiscipline. There is a long history in Chinese culture of the payment of compensation when adverse events occur, and in the past this has meant that prosecution can be avoided by paying compensation. Of course should the State fail in its duty then it will pay compensation and those responsible will lose their jobs. In Chinese Prisons this fear fuels a complete no risk environment.

The concept of Resettlement did not exist when I first went to China as the focus was on completing the sentence, and transitional arrangements involved risk and Governors had no discretionary powers. By the time I left each Province had been instructed to open a Resettlement Prison, however it was the internal regime that was focused on preparation for release, and there was little or no involvement from the Community or change to the Governors' powers.

There is no independent scrutiny in Chinese Prisons. We have to remember China is a Single Party State and the idea of a devolved independent power to examine State responsibilities is seen as extremely dangerous to the operation of the State. For this reason, it is unlikely that in the short term there will be anything approaching an independent Inspectorate or a formal Ombudsman for Prisoners. I had the pleasure of speaking at a Conference for 80 Prosecutors in Shanxi province. I spoke about internal systems of accountability and Anne Owers (former Chief Inspector) spoke about external scrutiny. The Head of the People's Procuratorate thanked us for our input and said China had a perfectly good system, which he thought was better. This does not mean there are not systems of complaint or scrutiny, and on all my visits to prisons a member of the MOJ accompanied me from Beijing. It was clear that the senior staff were more nervous of what he was going to say or do than anyone else.

I am not naïve enough to think that we revolutionised the operation of Chinese Prisons. We did, however, provoke thoughts of alternative solutions to some of the problems our colleagues were facing. Much of this was achieved through the visits to the UK of over 100 senior Governors and Directors who had the opportunity to observe UK prisons and discuss with their counterparts the problems they faced. After all the key problems are the same: Security; Discipline; Staff Corruption; Suicide and Self Harm; Finance; Rehabilitation and Re-offending; Staff training; Public Perception. I learned that setting the Agenda for any meeting revolved around these issues. I also learned that doing business in China is entirely different and in the post Brexit years, where it is likely we will do much more business with China, we need to understand the model. In an open meeting with prison professionals the response was always the same, there had been no escapes, no incidents, no assaults on staff or prisoners, in fact everything was perfect. In private over lunch and dinner the discussions were very different.

I began my time in China visiting to 'Show Prisons', where after a brief tour, I would watch a 'variety show' performed by the Prisoners. By the eighth year I was visiting Qinghai and Gansu provinces both with borders to Tibet and Xinjiang the most sensitive of regions. I found myself being escorted around a prison with a full SWAT squad because they saw all the occupants as Terrorists and were obsessed with my safety. It took 8 years to reach this level of trust and unfortunately we lost it all in 2015 because of decisions by the Cameron Government and the focus on Trade. Whilst I was out in China there was a large contingent of Professionals from all branches of the Criminal Justice System, including Police, Courts, Judges, Academics and Lawyers, each trying to improve aspects of life for those caught in the System. Progress was made, the use of the death penalty reduced, with less offences attracting the penalty, the concept of disclosure was introduced for defence lawyers, some modified PACE rules were introduced, and a requirement was placed upon

prosecutors not to rely on Confessions alone and search for corroborating evidence. I myself spoke at a Conference in Wuhan about the prevention of Confessions extracted by torture.

These professionals were from many countries. I understand many of those Countries have continued to fund their work and I am sure that progress has continued. To my knowledge the UK Prison Service has not been involved in further work.

I do believe that some of those who visited the UK from the younger generation will have taken forward and developed some of the ideas that were formulated through this work, and I am sure that in parts of China some Prisoners are benefitting from our work.

This is a very brief article about something that requires more time and space, more than an article but not quite a book.

MIKE NEWELL



TIME AND CHANGE



JOHN RAMWELL

Living, as we do, day by day, it's not always that obvious how rapidly things change around us as we plod on. But change has always been with us. From the age of the cave dweller through to the age of the street dweller (as in homeless - today) so much keeps changing and we have coped. We adapt. In fact, as a species, we're almost too good at adapting. More than 99 percent of all species, amounting to over five billion species that ever lived on Earth, are estimated to have died out. Civilisation, as we know it, is only about 6,000 years old which, in the scheme of things, is no time at all and whereas so many of the globes' species becomes extinct over the millions of years from when life first emerged, we have thrived. I was born in 1941 into a world already populated by 2,300 million. Today it is 7,324.782 million. But this piece is not about climate change or about sustainability; it is about the current speed at which so much changes around us and our ability and, in many cases, our inability. to cope. I want to briefly examine what has happened to us during my life time, more specifically, what is happening to those embraced by our culture and our society. How our beliefs, our ethics, our attitudes to such as generational inequality, to morality, to sexuality has changed within one generation. This whole issue of how our life styles has altered in what, even in contemporary historical terms, is a blink of an eye is amazing and unprecedented.

Take racism. Even I can remember those appalling signs outside properties to let which said, 'no Irish, no blacks, no dogs.' Today we still struggle against intolerance but I see local school children seemingly totally accepting that skin colour is inconsequential. My own generation has still a way to go.

Take sexuality. I well remember, as a young Hospital Officer, escorting prisoners to NHS Aversion Clinics where electric shocks were employed to cure homosexuality. To be gay back a few years ago was a burden too far; even today it can be difficult. We all realise that attitudes fed by bigotry will never fade entirely. Yet we've come a long way in a short time as we are able to largely accept same-sex marriages.

Take equality. To be born into the aristocracy was to claim every possible privilege as a birth right but whereas to be born in the backstreets of such as Salford normally meant inadequate education, harsh working conditions and an average lifespan of 25 years. Okay, I realise we have some way to go. But we've arrived at a period of acceptance where most of us have a fair(er) chance of success that hitherto was denied to the working class.

Take human rights. We do take our access to justice and to fairness for granted even though our daily media reminds us others are not so fortunate. This does not imply that we've achieved a level of universal rights that is totally acceptable. I doubt we ever will. Much still depends on individual ability to fight a cause, be it with wealth or circumstances.

Take religious belief. There is little doubt that our society has become so much more tolerant of those with different beliefs from our own, including the majority who are of no faith. But, unfortunately, it is not just our acceptance of others who are different, but the self-inflicted disintegration of some institutions, one in particular, that has left many bereft of belief with little or nothing to fill the vacuum. Having a strong religious belief was an important part of our ammunition in dealing with the curse of modern society, stress. I wonder whether the increasing rate of addictions, mental health deterioration and self-harm has not increased commensurate with the rate at which we have become more atheistic.

Take modern life styles. Drugs, mental illness, pornography, addictions, kids living with single parents, death of high street. These issues cross over into issues I've dealt with or have yet to deal with. Not many are new to us but the severity of them has increased many fold to an extent many of those affected are simply unable to cope or do so at enormous personal cost whilst. At the same time funding and resources are being sliced back.

Take technology. Communications, IT, social media, speed of change, on line research & shopping. Our lives have changed so considerably that it is impossible to over-rate the impact of such as use of mobile phones, Facebook, invasion of our privacy by such as surveillance cameras and personal data collection and protection. I've enjoyed using technology in and around the home. I take advantage of WiFi and bluetooth to the extent that Alexa almost rules our home. But, like everything else, it comes at a price. I know with some certainty that Alexa listens to what we say. You've only got to mention, within it's hearing, that you fancy a 'cuppa' when Amazon lists every make of tea on your potential wish list. I can live with this in return for being able to remotely control so many aspects of our home. Nothing is ever absolutely free!

Take modern welfare, NHS, housing crisis. We take an awful lot for granted as the State steps in to care for us from cradle to grave. But we also abuse these advantages rather than respect them. We see so much as being a God-given right rather than a privilege and the result is a collapsing health service and over-reliance on our welfare arrangements. And the cost to the public funds is a necessary diversion of resources so that we don't have sufficient affordable housing stock whilst we do have a crisis in schools, prisons and the collapse of so much of our infrastructure.

Take personal finance Pensions, low wages, debt, Massive and widespread debt, are elephants in the room. Our failure to deal effectively with modern pensions when so many fail to invest in one is a volcano waiting to erupt. Combine this with so many taking a mortgage or rent into their retirement and the cost of care if required, then our volcano is going to erupt with more than a bang and a plume of smoke. Okay, I could go on with my 'take this, take that.' Like a piece of string that keeps unravelling, the more you tug, the more it unravels. Continuing with this metaphor, the fundamental question remains. Are we able to unravel in time to coil it into a neat ball? The world has always been a place of change that usually sees incremental improvement, often two steps forward and one back. History shows us how humanity bounces back after cataclysmic events such as world wars, the Black Death and financial collapse. But, together with our natural fortitude and determination, over time we soon settle down and continue plodding onwards. Just maybe the ingredient, time, that we've relied on in the past, will not be enough. We need some wake-up calls so that our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren may inherit a life my generation have rather taken for granted as we jumped on the gravy train as it pulled out of the WW2 Railway Station. I'm asking whether, despite having so many factors in our favour as we cope with change, are changes coming too fast this time around? We can only hope not.

And I've not yet emphasised the big, big, big, huge, gigantic elephant in the room, climate change.



NOW LET'S GET SOCIAL CARE DONE

The Conservatives won the election under the slogan "let's Get Brexit Done. Whether Brexit really is done is another argument, but the Government's majority trumps not just the desire of opposition parties to remain in the EU, it also trumps Mr. Johnson's own Brexit ultras. It may be, therefore, that the inevitability of the parliamentary arithmetic will puncture the passions and thus bring about a much needed lowering of the political temperature as our politicians digest the new reality, thus allowing them to finally get back to the desperately neglected domestic agenda. **Once it gets Coronavirus 'done,' perhaps the government will pay attention to a running sore that has been left unattended by successive**

governments since a Royal Commission reported way back in 1999; that of social care. Post-election both Labour and Conservative politicians have talked about restoring the trust they have forfeited. They need to realise that 'getting social care done,' is the acid test of that commitment.

As long ago as the Labour party conference in September 1997, the then Prime Minister, Tony Blair, said "I don't want our children growing up in a country where the only way pensioners can get long term care is by selling their home." Ten years later when Mr Blair left office, pensioners were still selling their homes to obtain personal care. At the last election in December, the current incumbent at Number Ten, Boris Johnson, twenty-two years later made the same promise that was so casually broken by his predecessor but three. In between successive governments have ducked and dived like Arthur Daley, or more accurately fiddled like Nero while the assets so carefully accumulated by older people unfortunate enough to find themselves in residential care, drained away. Mr Blair's government also failed to implement a key recommendation of the Royal Commission, that personal care should be free at the point of use.

At the last election the Labour party made exactly that promise to pensioners if it were elected. Free personal care is already provided in Scotland, where Health is a devolved responsibility. It is important to remember that this is not a hugely generous concession to those forced into residential care, as board and lodging charges can make up as much as three-quarters of the cost of a place, now averaging around £34k per annum. Thus there is real difference between the two parties; one that has pledged to safeguard the rights of property owners and their heirs, and one that believes that the better off should continue to pay up front as much of their wealth is derived from property, the rising value of which has massively outstripped inflation, and is, therefore, unearned income. Respectively these are classic conservative and socialist positions, but both in their own way clash with electoral and economic reality. Mr Johnson has to somehow reconcile the interests of home owners in marginal constituencies as disparate as Barnet and Burnley, the former the seventh wealthiest borough in the UK by income, the latter second only to Middlesbrough in the top ten of England's most deprived towns and cities, and part of the much vaunted 'red wall' that crumbled at the last election to hand victory to the Tories.

The problem for Mr Corbyn's successor is similar to the one with Brexit, where something like 2/3rds of Labour MP's elected in 2017 represented leave constituencies, in that around 63% of voters are owner occupiers, many of whom have adult children for whom an inheritance may represent their only hope of getting on the property ladder. Last year self funders paid out £10.9 billion in care costs, a good chunk of which will have come from home sales. As the Tories won the election, the economic reality of that figure is their problem.

The other significant promise in the Tory manifesto was to seek a cross party solution in the House of Commons. If passions really do cool after Brexit, that may be possible. It is also the policy of the Civil Service Pensioners Alliance, for the very good reason that they want a solution which endures for a generation, one that in effect becomes de-politicised by an outcome owned by all the major political parties. Can it happen? Well, the Conservatives will in my view need to move towards a public sector solution, with social care provided either under the umbrella of the NHS, a parallel organisation with its own distinct identity, perhaps known as the National Care Service, or alternatively by local authorities. The Labour party will need to take a more accommodating approach to property owners and potential heirs. Critically, both parties will need to cease hurling insults at their opponents and using hyperbolic language to decry proposals made by their opponents in good faith. Cries of 'death tax' and 'dementia tax' have demeaned the debate for squalid electoral advantage.

It was Jeremy Hunt's idea when Secretary of State that his fiefdom became the Department of Health and Social Care. That now needs to be given real substance. I note with interest that the very same Jeremy Hunt has been elected as Chair of the House of Commons Health and Social Care Select Committee. The Guardian was much exercised by potential conflicts of interest and the prospect of Mr. Hunt marking his own homework from an influential backbench position, but I prefer to take a slightly more generous view. Mr. Hunt was indeed Secretary of State for six years, but progress on the vexed question of funding social care was first blocked by David Cameron's all-powerful Chancellor, George Osborne, and wrecked completely under Theresa May's leadership when the manifesto policy on social care fell apart on the day of its launch, in part contributing to the election of a minority government which found itself completely bogged down over Brexit. This is Jeremy Hunt's opportunity to hold Mr Johnson's government to account, and to see that Social Care does get done. If that coincides with Mr. Hunt getting some of the credit and restoring his position in the Conservative party, then that is a by-product about which we should not be concerned.

It will be a moral outrage if this parliament ends like its predecessors over the last two decades, with social care still chronically underfunded and in the hands of private companies who are not fit for purpose. I would go further and borrow from Gladstone and call for the private companies 'to be expelled bag and baggage from the land they have desolated and profaned.'

If our politicians are serious about regaining trust then these cross party talks need to begin as soon as possible after the announcement of the new Labour party leader on April 4th, and be put under the same time pressure as our future trading relationship with the EU. Mr Johnson is adamant that the transitional membership of the EU ends on 31 December, Coronavirus or no Coronavirus. Unless we are totally overwhelmed there is no good reason why Mr Johnson cannot make the same commitment to have a bill ready to put before the House of Commons. If government and parliament can deliver this, then we might just start to take them seriously again. The cynics among you might now be looking for flying pigs, but democracy will only survive if politicians understand that they are our servants, not our masters.

PAUL LAXTON

Obituary:

Geoffrey Lister – Governor and Director of Prisons 20.02.1925 - 18.11.2019

Working in the Prison Service from the end of the Second World War meant facing relentless and growing problems of overcrowding, poor accommodation and deteriorating regimes. Over the following decades, further shocks rocked the Service: security lapses, prisoner disorder and staff industrial action. It became a Service in crisis.

The task of grappling effectively with the many problems of the Service began in October 1979, with the publication of Mr Justice May's Report of his Committee of Inquiry into the UK Prison Services. This Inquiry had been set up because of the very serious breakdown of industrial relations within the three UK Prison Services. The Report's recommendations were the catalyst for many improvements – a process considerably aided by the appointment of Willie Whitelaw as Home Secretary following the Conservative victory in the 1979 General Election.

Whitelaw agreed to major changes to the Prisons Board, the body responsible for managing the prisons in England and Wales. Geoffrey Lister, Midland Regional Director was one of those appointed to the new Prisons Board, a position he was to hold until his retirement. Lister's extensive experience of running prisons and young offender establishments helped to shape both policy and operational decisions at Board level. From 1980 to 1985 substantial improvements started to be delivered and new approaches to regimes and staffing developed. It was during these years that the foundations were laid for the radical improvements of 1987 when "Fresh Start" began to transform the Prison Service through changes to the way staff worked which brought much-needed improvements to prisoner regimes.

This final appointment was a fitting climax to Lister's considerable career as a Governor. His formal education had been disrupted by war service but he returned to university in 1947 and graduated before joining the Service in 1950. In those days – in common with many other careers and professions - there were relatively few graduate Governors.

A committed member of the Church of England, Lister briefly contemplated a Church vocation taking up a place at the Hostel of the Resurrection in Leeds to train for the priesthood. His religious principles may well have influenced his ultimate choice of career and may also have accounted for the importance he attached to taking the right decision. While some found him cautious about developing new approaches, almost everyone regarded him as a Governor with the highest principles: deeply committed to caring for both his staff and his prisoners. Although generally serious and very hardworking, he also occasionally displayed a very perceptive sense of humour.

He was involved in many improvements throughout his career for example developing one of the earliest pre-release courses for prisoners at Wakefield Prison. When working at Headquarters, he was heavily involved in the development of Control and Restraint Training – a vital and successful initiative to enable staff to control prisoner violence while remaining accountable for their actions.

Geoffrey Lister was born at Lightcliffe, a village near Halifax to Norman and Elizabeth Lister. His father worked as a Supervisor in a local carpet factory. He was educated at the local Church of England Elementary School and Hipperholme Grammar School. In 1943 – in the depth of the war - he volunteered for the Indian army as a schoolboy Officer Cadet from the University Training Corps. Commissioned from the Officers Training School, Bangalore, he became a Captain of an Air Dispatch Platoon. In 1944/45 at Imphal and Akyab in Burma, he was involved in the supply by airdrop to units of the XIV Army in their advance from Imphal to Rangoon and was mentioned in dispatches. At the end of the war, he returned to India where he

commanded a detached platoon at St Thomas Mount Airfield, Madras, and was the last British Officer to serve there prior to independence.

On demobilisation he returned to Leeds University and in 1950 was one of their first graduates in Social Studies. He quickly applied to join the Prison Service through the direct entrant Assistant Governor scheme and was accepted and posted to the secure borstal on Portland Bill in Dorset. While at Leeds University he had met Grace Cartwright from Tunstall who was training to be a Probation Officer. In November 1950 soon after commencing his duties with the Prison Service, he married Grace and they moved into Prison Quarters.

In 1956, he was transferred to Hollesley Bay Colony, the large open borstal near Woodbridge in Suffolk. He was seconded to take a course in Applied Social Studies at the London School of Economics and then posted as Deputy Governor to Hull Borstal.

Promotion to Assistant Governor Class One followed in 1958 with a posting to Wakefield Prison, his first experience of working with adult prisoners. Alan Bainton, a very talented and influential Governor was in charge, and encouraged Lister to develop some of the first pre-release courses in the service.

In November 1962, he was given his first command as Governor of Pollington Borstal near Goole, Yorkshire. Pollington was part of a national experiment to test the impact of different treatments upon young offenders. Three small open borstals ran different regimes with qualified young offenders allocated to each on a random basis. Lister's task was to run Pollington as a therapeutic community using group counselling techniques.

In 1967, he was appointed Deputy Principal of the Prison Service College at Wakefield.

In 1969, he was promoted to Governor Class Two and posted to Maidstone Prison in Kent. In July 1972, he returned to Hollesley Bay as Governor and in October 1973 was promoted to Governor Class One and posted to Stafford Prison, a very difficult overcrowded Victorian Training Prison. In 1976, he was transferred to take charge of Albany Prison on the Isle of Wight, one of the "dispersal" prisons holding top security prisoners.

In 1978, he was further promoted to Assistant Director and appointed Head of P7 Division at Headquarters, with personnel responsibilities, including promotions, postings and the training of staff. In 1980, as part of the radical changes to Prison Headquarters following the May Inquiry, Lister was appointed Director of the Midland Region and to the Prisons Board. He held this post until his retirement in 1985.

He continued to be very interested in prison issues following his retirement to Lichfield and was involved in prison work for a number of years. He spent two years in Mauritius from 1986 – 1987 advising the Government on prison matters especially personnel policy; later he spent months in The Seychelles assisting the modernisation of their prisons. Nearer home, in 1990 he was asked to assist the Woolf Inquiry into the Strangeways and the related disturbances. In subsequent years he also provided independent advice to Government on aspects of introducing private prisons within the UK, an innovation about which he had considerable reservations although he supported attempts to bring new methods into prison work.

Locally, he was active within the Lichfield Festival Association and was a member of the Guild of Stewards of Lichfield Cathedral.

Grace predeceased him in 2015. He leaves two daughters both now retired. Susan worked for the NHS as a Senior Nurse in Sheffield and Kathryn in Education first as a School Meals Organiser and then as a School Teacher in Harrow.

BRENDAN O'FRIEL

PRISON VISIT - THE USA, DIFFERENT COUNTRY, DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE



JENNY MOONEY

I've had a long and interesting career in the criminal justice system, and latterly the senior civil service. The best part (looking back with those glasses that help you forget the grim bits) was working in prisons – latterly when I was in charge of first, Deerbolt Young Offender Institution, and then HMP Holme House. I left (and joined the Retired Prison Governors Association) in 2016, retiring from full time work in September 2019, though I'm still keeping my hand in! And shortly after my retirement, I got an opportunity to visit my friend – let's call him Dave – who is serving a life sentence in the US. This article is an attempt to share my impressions, and perhaps to make some sense of an event which had more of an impact than I had anticipated.

Rewind to the late 70s. Whilst I had spent most of my teenage years wanting to be a prison governor (thanks mainly to Googie Withers who made it look so easy), I shifted my goal and trained as a probation officer at a university in the Midlands. Dave was a friend of friends really – the best friend of the boyfriend of one of my flatmates. I always thought of him as American, he had a strong American accent, and he spent a lot of time in our company. An intelligent, open and kind young man, I remember that he had a car and would sometimes give me a lift to the station when I was off to visit my boyfriend who lived near Newcastle.

We lost touch after graduation, although we both stayed in touch with a mutual friend Mark. Fast forward to a reunion in 2003, when I met up with Mark and he told me that Dave was on remand in prison in New York for allegedly killing his wife– let's call her Jane – whom he had met when we were at university. Dave and Jane had lived together in the UK for many years – Jane had 2 children whom Dave brought up as his own. However in the late 90s, Dave had been offered a job in New York, they had married at that point and gone to live there.

I was shocked to hear this and wrote to Dave, but again lost touch – he was convicted in 2004 and sentenced to life with a 26 year tariff. I made contact again a few years ago when Mark told me that Dave was quite low and asked me if I would write to him. Since then I've written a couple of times a year – it's quite difficult to know what to say and of course, I wasn't able to talk about my work! Another mutual friend, Martin, visits the US to see family and every now and again does a whip round. Various of us donate a small amount and Martin navigates the complexities of paying into Dave's spends account! And that was the level of my contact with Dave, until last year.

I retired as I had reached a significant birthday, for which my elder son decided he would treat me to a trip to New York! An amazing present! In the early planning stages, he said 'haven't you got a friend who's in prison in New York' – and the idea was planted.....

New York is, of course, a big state.....when I checked google maps I realized that visiting Dave was not just going to be a matter of hopping on the metro – however having got the idea, I was determined to see it through, despite the fact that it would involve an internal flight, hiring a car and an overnight stay. I tried to prepare well: I wrote to the Governor (Superintendent) – and got a reply. I had a conference call with Mark and Martin, both of whom had visited Dave, though in a different prison and several years ago. I researched the internet from which I gleaned that visits at this particular correctional facility took place only on Saturdays and Sundays; that they were from 8.30 -15.00 (yes, really), and that no visiting order was required – one could just turn up, as long as the ‘inmate’ (shudder) was expecting you. At this stage I hadn’t let Dave know that I was going – clearly I didn’t want to raise his hopes if things didn’t work out. However the Deputy Superintendent emailed me to confirm that although Dave should only have visits on the ‘odd’ days of the month (because his prison number ends in an odd number!), I would be allowed to visit on the day I requested, 8th December, because I was coming a long way. She sent me an authorisation, and copied it to Dave. I then sent him a card to explain what was happening.

I found myself people watching, and that felt very familiar. There were seasoned visitors, waiting patiently, many with young children; new visitors who were anxious and didn’t know what to expect; elderly parents (I assumed), young girlfriends/partners. There were no refreshments, and the provision for young children was a small supply of colouring books and blunt crayons. There were torn notices on the wall advertising drug courses and urging friends and family to report any concerns about the safety of their loved ones to staff. I noted with a mixture of amusement and irony that the soap dispenser in the ladies’ toilet was branded ‘Liberty’. What I hadn’t anticipated (although friends tell me this used to happen in our prisons) was the delivery, by the seasoned visitors mainly, of huge quantities of food! I realized that the system was that you booked in, carrying several supermarket bags for life full of doughnuts, bagels etc. – then when your name was called, took these bags to the bubble where they were handed over, presumably for searching before being passed to the prisoner. People would then take their bags back to their cars and return to the Visitors centre to wait.....

I also worked out, and my friend the ‘volunteer’ confirmed, that people were being called into the prison in groups of 4, and eventually, around 11.00 (yes, really!), I heard Dave’s name called. The volunteer cautioned me to curb my excitement! He warned me that the next stage involved being booked in at the Gate.....

Through to the gate I went. An unfriendly young female officer was booking people onto the IT system, which was interminably slow. A small girl in front of me skipped excitedly, her mum spotted my passport and was really interested to know that I’d come from the UK. She was visiting the little girl’s father, she said – he will be out in 2021, she will wait. All very familiar. Every woman who went through the metal detector was setting it off. A male officer was then handing them a brown paper bag and sending them to ‘Room 1’ where they had to remove their bra, put it on the bag, give the bag to the officer to be put through the scanner, go back through the arch, retrieve the brown paper bag and go to ‘Room 2’ to put it back on. One woman was furious ‘mine’s all plastic, I bought it especially’. I was of course subject to the same procedure, whereupon I discovered that Room 2 was in fact a toilet, and occupied. I asked if I could go back to Room 1 – ‘no you can’t, it’s for security reasons’. At this point I’d been in the States for just over a day, and, until I got to the prison, I had been struck by how friendly everybody was. Whilst nobody at the prison was rude or unpleasant, they were brusque and unsmiling. A young man just in front of me kept setting the metal detector off. Staff said it was his pants (trousers to you and me), and suggested he went back to the visitors centre and ask to borrow some joggers. He demurred – whether that was because he didn’t want the indignity or hassle, or whether he actually was trying to get something in I don’t know. He declined his visit and said he’d come back another time.

I made it through to the airlock by about 11.30. I was frustrated, of course, I'd deliberately come early but hadn't anticipated all the waiting: and it had not finished. Dave is still a maximum security prisoner because of his sentence length, but he is in a wheelchair, and is therefore in a hospital wing in a medium secure prison. He'd written to me on receipt of my card to say how much he was looking forward to seeing me, but also to warn me that he was not allowed to go to the Visits hall, and that I would be taken from the gate to the hospital wing in a prison van! He also warned me that the staff were not particularly quick about providing this transport. But soon after going through the airlock, showing my ultra violet stamp to the officer and explaining again why I was there on an even day of the month, I could see a black van at the end of a short walkway, and the gate officer opened the door and waved me through. Once again, my excitement was short lived. The driver got out, held up his hand and said 'I'm not your ride'. I went back to the lobby and waited. And waited. Eventually I went back to the airlock, and asked very politely why I was delayed. 'Ah Ma'am, at this time of day we have to count all the prisoners so there is no movement'. I was caught up in a roll check! Memories of just how long they can take flooded back. In my governing days I would sometimes go to the control room and enquire gently just who it was who couldn't count....here I was powerless to do anything but wait until the roll was reconciled. At about 11.50, I was allowed through and onto the prison van, and then to the hospital wing. At about 12.15, having been at the prison for 3.5 hours, I was finally able to see my friend!

The visit took place in a room which Dave said was, during the week, used as a waiting room for prisoners seeing visiting consultants/dentists etc. There was a vending machine but no cups (I hadn't had anything to eat or drink since leaving my hotel). One prison officer seemed to be in charge; he was not unfriendly and quite discreet. Dave had to wheel his chair so that he was facing the prison officer. But we were able to talk, and talk we did! I'd confessed to Mark and Martin that I was worried that we might run out of things to talk about. Don't worry they had said, he'll talk! Dave gets very few visitors. His dad died many years ago, his Mum is very elderly and lives in London (I rang her after the visit, she was so pleased to hear from me). The children he brought up will have nothing to do with him. I had not intended to talk about the alleged offence (Dave denies absolutely that he killed his wife), but he wanted to talk about it, but we also reminisced, talked about music and bizarrely about Shakespeare. Dave was an English scholar and I've seen many performances in the 18 years he has been locked up. He seemed to me to be resigned to his sentence, he is eligible for parole in another 8 years, but told me he thinks he will be in his seventies by the time he is released. My recent work has brought me into contact with a few people who have been inside for a long time, and I know something of the practical issues that brings, quite apart from the emotional toll. Dave was incarcerated in the early days of mobile phones – I had set up a WhatsApp group for myself, Martin, Mark and another friend. I'd called it 'Friends of Dave' and because he is (still) a Spurs fan, had used a Spurs logo as the icon. I tried to explain this concept to him! It was the only time in the visit when he became tearful – 'you did that, for me?'.

My watch had been confiscated (security?) and there was no clock in the room, I didn't want to ask in case Dave thought I was wanting to leave, but I was trying to gauge how long we might have left, and wondering what the protocol was for the end of visits. Sure enough, the officer who had driven the van entered the room, and actually said 'time's up guys!' I was allowed to give Dave a hug (permitted at the beginning and end of the visit), then escorted back to the van, back to the gate, back to the visitors centre to retrieve my belongings and then made my way across the car park, past the bus taking many visitors back, I assume, to the nearest town. I'd spent nearly 3 hours with Dave, and the best part of 7 hours at the prison. I was completely drained. And starving hungry!

Getting back to Manhattan was another story, for another day, but I eventually met up with my son much later that evening and told him the tale over an excellent meal and beer in Chinatown. We stayed in the

States until the following Saturday and had an amazing time, and on returning to London I was able to meet Mark and Martin for a debrief before heading home. Martin had had a Christmas card from Dave, posted since my visit, in which he'd said he'd had a great day, my visit was 'awesome'. I've also had a card since then, and have written to Dave with a screenshot from the WhatsApp conversation which I hope will get through their censorship!

It's now 2 months since my visit, and I've had plenty of thinking time. I am so glad that I went. Dave was well, to say pleased to see me would be an understatement. I felt that I was so near, I 'ought' to go, and of course, as well as the wish to see Dave, there was a professional curiosity. I was able to listen to Dave and accept what he was saying in a way that those who don't 'know' the system can't do. I can now write to him from a position of much better understanding, and support him quietly, as others do, through another few years of something I just couldn't bear. From the professional perspective, I have always been a huge supporter of our visitors centres, and, admittedly based on only one prison, we do things much better here! Similarly, I have always wanted visits to be run compassionately, in recognition of the fact that the family are not serving a sentence (whilst not being naïve about the security risks). I have always known intellectually that domestic visitors are powerless, often not understanding processes, frequently worried about the person they are visiting. I experienced some of that and found it very hard! It's unlikely that I'll get the opportunity to visit Dave again, though I would take it if it came. I would just make sure I got there even earlier, with a book, and of course some doughnuts!

JENNY MOONEY



TIM NEWELL



JOHN DRING

AND



Some 2019 AGM attendees, from left to right: Graham Smith, Paul Laxton, Ray London, Jan Thompson, Flo Herbert, Chris Duffin, John Berry



Your Committee, from left to right: Dave Taylor, Graham Mumby-Croft, Ray London, Paul Laxton, Jan Thompson, Graham Smith (Chairman), Harry Brett

From The Treasurer

I do hope that this edition of my Treasurers Report finds you all in good health, or at least as good as can be expected, and still enjoying retirement. Due to the fact that the AGM was moved to October last year, it was not until the Autumn copy of the Newsletter was published that I was in a position to publish the accounts, which had been signed off by the auditors in April. I now find myself in the position of having sent off “the books” for audit once again and therefore not being in a position to be able to inform you officially of what the financial situation currently is. However I am in a position to be able to report that I am now happy that the ramifications that followed the changes to subscription rates, (surprisingly, now almost 3 years ago), have eventually settled down with the final piece of the jigsaw being the closing down of the original “NEWSLETTER” bank account that was opened when the association was originally formed.

This has meant that the payments that I was receiving of £5 and £10 per year, from members who had either passed away, moved away, or were in a position to not be able to manage their accounts, were stopped. As yet, Harry Brett and I have not received contact from anyone to complain that their membership payments have stopped. Having said that, I do still have a few members who having changed their Standing Order to the new subscription rate, have obviously forgotten to cancel the original as I have about 4 members from whom I am receiving payment twice a year, actually often on the same day, of subs at the old rate, and the new rate. I will be writing to those concerned and Harry and I are now undertaking a full audit of our respective membership lists to ensure that we are both effectively “singing from the same hymn sheet”. If you wish to check your bank account, and discover that you are one of the “double payers” then please write and let me know, and I will arrange a refund. Please remember though,,,,,,please do not then cancel both Standing Orders or I will then find myself in the position of having to write to you because I have received no subscriptions, I do have one member who has done just that. No names, No pack drill, but I will be in touch.

What I am able to report from this years accounts is that at the year end it looks as if we have a healthy surplus of income over expenditure, even allowing for the fact that the PGA are yet to invoice me for the 2020 diaries, which means that I will likely have to bear the cost of two lots of diaries from this years income. The main improvement in our finances has come from the reduced cost of running the association, including a reduction in the committee, by not replacing members who leave, and our attempts to keep travelling costs as low as possible. A big influence on the finances was the generous offer from the PGA to allow us to run the AGM at the same time, and at the same venue as their annual conference. This has greatly reduced our costs, whilst at the same time giving us access to a really good venue, and the opportunity to meet socially with some of our serving colleagues, and to hear their experiences in today’s Prison Service. However I am happy to be able to report that, barring any unforeseen major price increases, I do not envisage the need to adjust subscription rates for the 2021 financial year, and hopefully beyond then too. The full financial results will be available for the AGM, and published in the Autumn edition of the Newsletter.

You will not be surprised to learn that my task as treasurer is still not made any easier by the banks, who I am sure try to make things as awkward as possible. The latest ploy is for them to change the layout, and format of the Bank Statements, with entries obviously restricted to a certain number of characters per line. The result of this is that, where I have two, or more members with the same surname, it has become much more difficult for me to identify which member the payment is from. This is complicated further by the fact that there are several members who pay their subscriptions from a bank account that is not in their own name, and in these cases I have had to become something of a detective to track down which payment belongs to which member.

Oh Well, it keeps me out of mischief, and out from under my wife’s feet.

I wish you all a long and peaceful summer.

Graham Mumby-Croft, Treasurer

NOTICE OF 2020 AGM

The 2020 AGM of the Retired Prison Governors Association will take place at the Radisson Blu Hotel, East Midlands Airport, on Tuesday 13 October 2020 at 2PM. Our AGM is taking place at the same venue as the Annual Conference of The Prison Governors Association so as well as the chance to meet up with fellow retired colleagues, there is the opportunity for retired members to catch up with old friends, former colleagues, and proteges still in service, over lunch or in the margins of conference. Lunch is served from 12.30 PM.

Those members who wish to attend the AGM and/or take lunch should contact Ray London by telephone on 01450 390135 or by Email at raymond_london@hotmail.com by 31 August 2020

We look forward to seeing you there.

THE INAUGURAL JOHN MARRIOTT LECTURE

The inaugural John Marriott Lecture is scheduled to take place at the Aldersgate Room in Central Hall, Westminster at 18.30 hours on Tuesday 9 June 2020, Coronavirus permitting. Sir Martin Narey will deliver the inaugural lecture which intends to challenge, question and change the way as a society we treat offenders and their victims, so it should be well worth attending. Mark Leech, Chair of Unlock, will also be giving a lecture on the necessity of Inspection. Afterwards a panel discussion will be chaired by former HMCIP, Nick Hardwick. Proceedings close at 21.30 hours. Tickets cost £25.

The editor is obliged to Brendan O’Friel for this information.