



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS
MINUTES of the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday
25th April 2010
Apollo Hotel
Birmingham

Present

Mr F. Kinghorn	President
Mr J. Littleton	National Secretary
Mr C.W. Bailey	National Treasurer & Life Vice President*
Mrs L. Bairsto	No 1 District
Mr. C. Bailey	No 2 District*
Mr. A. Beecroft	No 3 District*
Mr. G. Holden	No 4 District
Position Vacant	No 5 District (Bedfordshire)
Mr. P. Robinson QFSM	No 6 District
Mr D. J. Willmott CBE., QFSM.	No 7 District+
Mr C. Richards JP	No 8A District
Mr. A. Jeffries	No 8B District
Mr F. Kinghorn	No 9 District
Mrs W. Garrett	No 15 District (Direct Membership)
Mr B. Wakefield	PSPC, Editorial
Mr. P. Maguire	NARF News
Mr. F. Byrne	NARF Pensions, Editorial
Mr G. Bow MBE	Membership Secretary, Fire Service Charity
Mr R. Orringe MBE	General Purposes Committee & Life Vice President
Mr. A. Beecroft	Standard Bearer
Mr. D.T. Bell	Age UK (England)
Mr. S. Bairsto	No 1 District Chairman
Mrs L. Maguire	No 1 District
Mr. I. Foster	No 4 District
Mr. G.A. Jones	No 4 District
Mr. M. Leadbetter	No 4 District
Mr. T Hartley	No 4 District
Mr. G Stanton	No 4 District
Mrs. M. Stanton	No 4 District
Mr. D Ramsey	No 4 District
Mr. H. Nunn	No 4 District
Mrs. 1 Matthews	No 4 District

Mrs. F.L. Carpenter	No 4 District
Mr. K. Woolley	No 4 District
Mrs. B. Truman	No 4 District
Mrs. NI. Smeed	No 8A District

Note

*Dual Position +Stand-in

The President Mr Fred Kinghorn opened the meeting at 1405hrs and asked everyone to be upstanding for the arrival of The NARF Standard.

The Secretary asked everyone to remain standing and remember former friends who were no longer with us and to remember the two Firefighters from Hampshire who had lost their lives in the tragic fire in Southampton.

This formality over, The President introduced Assistant Chief Fire Officer Mr John Brown of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service who is the Director of Technical Operations and Support (ToPS) John Brown went on to say "He thank the Association for the invitation to be here today and it was his pleasure to represent the Chief Fire Officer at this venue as he was suppose to be in Texas but with the problems with air travel due to the ash from the volcano in Iceland he had this weekend done a sponsored climb wearing a B.A. set up Snowdon which he had been training for the past year for this venture which he completed in 2hrs . He was delight to open the meeting and that the Association had chosen Birmingham, it was good to see old friends and it just show how small the Fire Service is in the Country and he hope that the Fire Precautions were up to standard and if not let him know. He was glad that the Association was in being as it had a place to make sure that retired Firefighters have their rights and was glad to see that the Association had representatives on the Public Service Pension Committee.

John Brown went on to say that the service was changing and this had been mention in the press with a cut in funding off 5 to 10 percent also new equipment is coming. We have to strike a balance with Health and Safety Executive as they are examining what we do in a changing world that the Fire Service is in and these changes will come within the years to come. Engaging with other people is important such as Community safety but this does not mean that you do not need the service.

With the tragic events in Scotland and Hampshire it just shows that with all the training things can go wrong.

The President then presented a NARF Plaque to John Brown

1. The President

The President then read out his address:

I wish to welcome you all to the AGM and hope your journey was uneventful.

We are here at a crucial time with a General Election on 6th May and changes will be made for all of us regardless of which Party is elected. We are told that cuts in public services will have to be made and that public service pensions will be looked at with possible changes being made there as well. We will of course be offered and promised the moon and stars with regard to the Age Related Pension by all parties. Somehow the word "pie in the sky" comes to mind.

This year the 50th Anniversary of the greatest loss of life at an incident in peacetime. 14 firemen of Glasgow Fire Brigade and 5 Salvage men from Glasgow Salvage Corps lost their lives at a whisky bond in Cheapside Street Glasgow on 28th May 1960. A Memorial Service in their honour was held at Glasgow Cathedral on the same date last month at which I had the privilege to attend.

The attendance of the Honour Guard from Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Service was outstanding, the Service itself carried out with great dignity. The Chief Fire Officer, Brian Sweeney gave the address in a manner which proved his commitment to those under his command.

Further sad news is of the two Firefighters who gave their lives from Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service.

We are now in a position where decisions made by Firefighters are being questioned, not only in the press but also the court of law. A situation exists where manslaughter charges are being brought due to a loss of life and in Scotland questions are being asked why a female was not rescued from a 60ft deep shaft for 6hrs. It would appear that as personnel were not trained in this type of rescue, had an injury occurred to them, the Officer in charge would have been held responsible and charged in a court of law. We allowed in the past, the Health and Safety Executive to dictate how the Service should carry out this function. They made the rules and we did nothing. For my life I can not understand why the Chief Officers at the time and the Inspectorate did not challenge this, we were the experts in our field and should have prepared to deny the Executive's role. Is it too late? What we need is a Judge, Magistrate or Sheriff to accept that the service knows what to do quickly and methodically when life is at risk. The Association is in the position at the moment of gaining Members in some areas and losing in others. A number of areas have started local retired groups with the assistance of Brigades. This is commendable but as we already exist, why do newly retired personnel not join us, Do they understand that their pensions are being threatened.

I hope that we have a lively and informative meeting and in closing I wish to give my thanks to all of you for the work that you do, hopefully our Members remember that.

2. Apologies for Absence

Mr J. Goddard	Pension Committee
Mr D. Hayden	No 7 District
Mr H. Martin	No 11 District
Mrs P. Bathurst	No 6 District Secretary
Mr E Shill	No 4 District

3. Minutes of AGM held 10th May 2009 at Menzies Strathallan Hotel

The minutes were read for accuracy.

Proposed that the minutes were correct

Proposed: Mr. S. Bairsto

Seconded: Mr. F. Byrne

Carried Unanimously

Matters Arising.

There was one matter arising.

4. General Secretary Report and Correspondence.

May I begin, by wishing you and yours a happy and successful 2010, I trust that you enjoyed a good festive season and that you are now rested and ready for the fray.

This year in September will see me attending the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service Retired Firefighters Association Annual General Meeting in Toowoomba this I am doing whilst visiting my daughter in Australia. I have managed to obtain a number of the UK Veterans Badges that I will be taking with me to present to members.

The service in 2009 at the Fire and Rescue Garden of Humanity at the National Memorial Service was a great success.

Once again rumours have been spread about the Public Service Pension was going to be 2.4% this has prove to be incorrect. This must stop, it is not professional and will confuse members and lead to lack of confidence in the information that we circulate. So could I ask, before anyone publishes or gives out figures please contact me so that we can make sure that the information provided is correct?

On behalf of the President, Treasurer and myself I thank you all for your hard work and support throughout the year, lets make 2010 even more successful.

5. Treasurers Report

Colin Bailey hoped that everyone had picked up a treasurers report from the table before the meeting and went on to say that the reports were long and covered a numbers of pages but he believed that everyone should have the full accounts before them and that there are no secrets and every penny has been accounted for, this is so that District representatives could take back the full facts to branches.

Colin Bailey went on to say that a number of members have not paid for last year, Colin went no to say that ail members should pay before 31 December each year. Colin also reported that due to economy downturn interest on the accounts were low but we were not here to make big profits and we were holding our own.

Colin Bailey advised that there is 68K invested which might seem a lot to hold in hand. This he explained was attributable to our Auditors recommending that if possible we should always have enough in reserve for at least two to three years of expected expenditure. At the moment what is shown is enough for two years.

Cohn Bailey asked if anyone had any question.

Proposed: Mrs L Bistro proposed that the Treasurers report be accepted as a true record

Seconded: Mr J. Littleton

Carried Unanimously

5a Fix Subscriptions for 2010/2011

Proposed that National Subscriptions be fixed for 2008 at the present rates

Proposed: Mr. C. Richards

Seconded: Mr. F. Byrne

Carried Unanimously

5b Appointment of Auditors for 2008

Present Auditors are:

Chipchase Manners & Co

Chartered Accountants

The decision was to stay with current auditors.

Proposed: Mr. F. Kinghorn

Seconded: Mr. T. Orringe

Carried Unanimously

6. Appointment of Officials

The President hoped that every one had the current list of Appointments for 2010/2011 which was attached to the AGM papers.

Confirmation of Appointments and Officials' for 2010/2011 (See Attached Sheet)

Proposed: Mrs. L. Bistro

Seconded: Mr. G. Jones

Carried Unanimously

7. Fire Service Memorial Trust

7a. Firefighters Monument- National Memorial Arboretum

The Annual Service of Thanksgiving is due to be held on Sunday 9th May. It will commence at 1200 hours. Brigades should have notified all retired organisations and a good turnout is hoped for.

7b Annual International Service of Remembrance

This will commence at 1200 hours at Church of St Bartholomew the Great, West Smithfield, London on Sunday 12th September.

Colin Bailey told us that two more names are to be added to those already on the memorial in London. These are Alan Bannen and James Shears, the two Hampshire firefighters who died so tragically in a recent tower block fire.

The Remembrance Sunday Parade will be held on Sunday 14th November and Colin told us that only 24 places have been allocated this year.

7c. Retired Operational Membership of FMCT

Colin Bailey made a plea as follows:

We are all aware that the Firefighters Memorial Trust honours and commemorates firefighters who have made the ultimate sacrifice. More than 2000 of them (our own comrades), appear on the National Memorial.

I cannot, therefore understand the reluctance of NARF members to give their support to the FMT by registering for Retired Membership. Approximately 2,300 retired members nationally have done so, but nearly 1,500 of them are from London RMA. It follows, therefore, that very few NARF members have registered, despite each NARF member receiving a registration form.

8. Motions 1/2010 from No2 District

While pensions are linked to inflation, the increase should be that inflation rate, or 2%, whichever is the greater.

The meeting were informed that this motion had been withdrawn at the Council Meeting the day before.

2/2010 from No7 District

The curtailed motion (minus the first paragraph) was put: - This District urges National Council to review its own quality of service to redress this perception and in particular, to use the publication NARF News to do so by the Editorial Committee becoming more proactive in producing a publication that is more relevant and informative to the NARF membership, taking into account the plethora of issues impacting upon the lives of pensioners in the UK that merit research and being reported

Jerry Willmott from No7 District pointed out that as put the motion was ungrammatical and incomplete necessitating that it be revised to accommodate those inadequacies. The motion appropriately revised is as follows: -

"This District urges National Council to review its own quality of service in order to redress the perception that NARF funds do not represent good value for money in comparison to the lesser sums paid to branches, and in particular, to use the publication NARF News to do so by the Editorial Committee becoming more proactive in producing a publication that is more relevant and informative to the NARF membership, taking into account the plethora of issues impacting upon the lives of pensioners in the UK that merit research and being reported"

This motion was put to the vote.

For 30

Against 0

Abstention 3

This motion was passed

3/2010 from No 3 District

Members who have attained the age of 80 years and have 10 years or more continuous membership with NARF, should have their subscriptions waived on a National basis whereby subs would not be payable at all, whilst allowing these members to have the same rights as paying members.

Members concerned would have to apply to their respective branches for exemption, as we have no other way of knowing how old individuals are'

A discussion took place on this motion and was put to the vote.

**For 0
Against 31
Abstention 1**

This motion failed

As there was no other business the President asked that a N.A.R.F. Plaque be given to the General Secretary for presentation to the Queensland Retired Firefighters Association as he will be attending their AGM whilst on holiday In Australia, this was approved.

The President thanked everyone for attending the meeting and asked everyone to stand to allow the Standard to be marched out.

The President wished everyone a safe journey home