



# BEACON

*PREVENTED, PROTECTED, RESPONDED*

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF CORNWALL FIRE & RESCUE RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION

**July 2025  
Issue 103**

Photograph by Ff Thomas McRitchie, 2:3 Perranporth



**Presidents Tribute to Fallen Colleagues Page 3  
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Version for Sharing

## Editors Comment

Welcome One and All to the third edition of The Beacon, your RMA magazine.

Just to reassure you, I shall continue in my role as Newsletter Editor following my appointment as Chief Fire Officer for the Isles of Scilly Fire and Rescue Service.

I am grateful to those who have contributed to this issue which I hope you will agree has a wide variety of content and features.

The quality of our Newsletter relies on interesting content. If you have any memories, anecdotes, events and news stories you would like to share, these will be most welcome.

Ideally, if these could you email information (with photos if possible) to the editor, Phil Martin.

If technology is a barrier, don't worry! I am sure we can help.

**Philip Martin**



**Chair**  
Jan Sturges

**Social Secretary**  
Phil Berriman,

**Sports & Events**  
Paul Walker

**Welfare Representative**  
Pete Williams

**Hon Secretary**  
Rosemary Smith

**Treasurers**  
Mark and Nicky Boeck

**Newsletter Editor**  
Phil Martin

## A Message from the Chief Fire Officer and Our President



As I enter my fifth year as your Chief Fire Officer, I continue to also be President of the Cornwall Fire and Rescue Retired Members Association, recognising the privilege of both roles I undertake them with a huge amount of pride.

it is a pleasure to contribute once again to The Beacon, a powerful reflection of the great work you are all doing and our ongoing Service camaraderie, stories, and legacy.

First, it is with great sorrow that I acknowledge the tragic loss of two serving firefighters, Jennie Logan of Oxfordshire and Martyn Sadler

of Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and London Fire Brigade, who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty attending an incident in Bicester in May. Their courage, professionalism, and commitment to protecting others embody everything we stand for in our profession.

On behalf of Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service, and indeed our wider fire family, I extend our deepest sympathies to their families, friends, and colleagues, along with thoughts for Mr David Chester who also lost his life. I know their loss is felt profoundly by us all. Crew Manager Myghal Later from Truro fire station attended the funeral procession on behalf of one and all in Cornwall.

Many of you will be aware that South Western Ambulance Service recently made the decision to cease medical co-responding arrangements with fire services across the region. While I understand the complexities involved and challenges all public services face, I have expressed my disappointment at this regional decision which will impact on some of our most rurally isolated communities.

I am so proud of the 29 years our crews committed to delivering timely life-saving interventions as co-responders, making a priceless difference in the critical moments of medical emergencies. We will, of course, continue to work collaboratively with our health partners to explore every opportunity to support our communities.

i would like to express sincere thanks to the RMA for the provision of a CFRS coffin drape, this is an honourable gesture that ensures our departed colleagues are remembered with dignity and respect. My gratitude also goes to our RMA Chairman and committee, whose efforts continue to support connection, wellbeing, and remembrance across our membership.

I would like to finish on a lighter note and thank you for the new and updated selection of RMA merchandise. I have very much enjoyed seeing the range pop up on Facebook. It's both smart and practical and I hope you wear your 'merch' with pride.

With appreciation for your continued support, friendship, and commitment.

Warmest regards,  
Kath

## Chair's Report



It is with a heavy heart that I begin by paying tribute to Martyn Sadler, 38, and Jennie Logan, 30, two Firefighters from Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service who tragically died in the line of duty while attending an incident on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025. Our thoughts are with their families, friends and colleagues across Oxfordshire FRS and London Fire Brigade. Our thoughts are also for the member of the public David Chester, 57, who also lost his

life that day. Martyn and Jennie from your Fire Service Family in Cornwall 'We Thank You for Your Selfless Service'.

I welcome all our new members and reflect on the last few months. We continue to have a great turn out at our lunches, and we will repeat the success of our Social evening in Truro over the coming months. Lanhydrock Hotel and Golf Club lunch enabled us to learn more about Fire Fighters Charity and what is available to our members. A special thanks must go to Natalie Searle and Clare Hannaford from the Charity who gave up their time to talk to us.

I think you will agree that this edition of the 'Beacon' is another bumper issue, jammed packed with stories and items which I am sure will interest you. So, please help us out by submitting your own stories of your time in the Fire Service.

Our New Merchandise is becoming a talking point with sales looking good and our first orders already delivered. Have a look on Facebook and our Veterans Stores page on our website [www.cfrs-rma.org](http://www.cfrs-rma.org)

for what is available and prices.

Our committee have been busy working for you, and I thank them for their continued support. Our new Representative's for Welfare and Sports and Other Social Events have certainly hit the ground running with Confidential Welfare support to you our members and keeping us informed of their role and what is available to us all.

I again thank you all for your support to me and your continued companionship between all of our members.

Enjoy the Summer.

All the Best

**Jan Sturges**

## The Boscastle Floods 21 Years On

**The events of Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2004 placed Cornwall County Fire Brigade at the centre of media attention. The following article reflects my thoughts and actions as the initial Incident Commander.**

I was initially mobilised to Otterham to assist in flooding incidents and en route was diverted to Boscastle with reports of persons in possible difficulties with or in their cars at the main car park adjacent to the river.

My first task was to set up a rendezvous point at Keltic Garage at the top of the hill in Boscastle, close to the Doctor's surgery.



I passed a message confirming the RV point to Fire Control by landline, and then immediately proceeded to the harbour area in the lower village. Arriving at the Bridge/Wellington Hotel area I was met by a lone Firefighter in charge of 721. The river below was extremely swollen, and 3 feet of water was rushing through the street. It took a few seconds initially for me to understand what was happening, to take in and appreciate the enormity and scale of the situation.



The crew of 721 and one member from a crew from Launceston had lost contact with the driver. Within five minutes of my arrival, I witnessed a rapid increase of water, its speed and depth, buildings starting to fall and to be washed away, and persons waving from windows and rooftops. As no access to

these persons could be gained at all except by helicopter, I considered sending a **'Major Incident Suspected'** message.



The coastguards on scene assisted greatly with their local knowledge. Their call for a SAR helicopter to attend the scene prompted me, in conjunction with the sight of the sudden increase in speed, depth and volume of water that was washing away buildings, to send the following message: **"This is a major disaster area, make pumps 8; Buildings being washed away, multiple rescues to be done from buildings and rooftops. Water six feet deep, moving at 25 miles per hour and increasing adding "I am declaring a Major Incident"**.

This was acknowledged and I very quickly recognised the

need for more helicopters and asked the Coastguard (CG), who had the only communications, to increase the request to four, swiftly increasing this again to 10. I used the CG and runners to communicate with Fire Control via the CG, Helicopter rescue crews and landlines and most messages were able to get through.

The scene being played out before me was a dreadful situation of many persons waving from rooftops and high windows, frantic noises of many others trapped, with their relatives' helpless spectators. The situation built to a crescendo as buildings were washed away and the water became 10 feet deep, moving at speeds up to 40 miles per hour. 70 plus vehicles were being swept away down river in front of me as the river took over the whole of the harbour area and was in the majority of properties, some up to the 1st floor.



The crews from Delabole and one member from Launceston were still unaccounted for and I was starting to have severe concerns for their safety. I was extremely heartened when the seven SAR helicopters started to affect rescues, lifting more than 120 persons from the village rooftops and surrounding areas. They were delivering the majority to safety at the temporary airfield that had been established, the local football pitch at Boscastle, where they were assessed and ministered to by the emergency paramedic services. Some of the other rescued persons were transferred by air ambulances, Cornwall and Devon, directly to hospitals in Truro.

There were two helicopters at a time winching and three, sometimes four, hovering over the harbour waiting to enter

the disaster area, creating an awesome sight that I imagine will no doubt stay with the people who witnessed it for a long time. When I saw Firefighters also being airlifted, I knew they had done the right thing in the circumstances and joined the many civilians high on the buildings to await rescue.



APEX  
Pic by Nick Gregory, 18/08/2004.  
Boscastle Flood

Many lives, without a doubt, were saved by the action alone of six crew members in moving people to positions they could be rescued from.

I made the most calculated and difficult decisions I have ever made in my life i.e. who to rescue first, under the intense circumstances of the sheer effect and roar of the torrent of water, the general noise and the ever-present threat of risk to life. At one time I had many members of the CG with me and relatives

of the trapped persons; the emotions of the relatives, made this a very taxing time and despite some being very distressed I had to prioritise.

The flood had taken all power and phone lines down and I relied upon the CG and their communications, as we had nothing set up until later i.e. mobile phones.

When the rivers burst their banks and flooded the Wellington Hotel to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, the despair and total disbelief of the people at what was happening was evident for all to see. The flood water took with it all access to properties... *it was a disaster area.*



APEX  
Photograph by Marc Hill / 17.09.2004 - The scene at Boscastle  
This morning after yesterday's devastating flood.

My knowledge of many of the buildings from prior Fire Safety visits assisted me to assess the situation as it was rapidly developing, and this

was greatly enhanced by the local knowledge provided to me by the CG and Boscastle residents, which proved to be invaluable.

During the operation we had to have access to two helicopters on our side of the river to complete medical evacuations of two casualties, these persons were later found to be well.

I was relieved at 18:45 when SDO Simpson took over and I was able to meet the crews from Delabole and Launceston who had been airlifted. Enormous relief was evident in both them and me.

The process of rescuing people continued from 16:30 until darkness around 20:30 hours. My colleague Mark Boeck attended at 18:15, I was then able to hand over to Sector Commanders and Water Safety crews from Bodmin and St Austell, reassured by the knowledge the situation was under their control.

Before leaving the scene, I flew in a Coastguard helicopter, which assisted in completing a search with a Thermal Image Camera to

scan all cars and other areas in the valley – no persons were found to need rescue or retrieval.



An excellent and extremely fortunate result for Boscastle and Cornwall, which was undoubtedly, assisted by the rapid intervention of all the SAR Helicopters.



It was a personal challenge for me that I will never forget as long as I live.

**Peter Robinson, Station Officer (Retired)**

**The Protection team within Cornwall Fire & Rescue Service continue to provide fire safety regulation, advice and guidance as part of our statutory duty under the Fire Safety Order 2005.**

As many will be aware, post-Grenfell Tower, there has been both new and amended legislation with the world of fire safety, ie the Fire Safety Act 2021 and Fire Service (England) Regulations 2022. While these are substantial pieces of legislation, there is greater focus on tall buildings' fire safety arrangements and how occupants (and firefighters) will be in a safer environment.

One of the changes that affects more of our day-to day regulatory work is the requirement to record a fire risk assessment, which has a more significant impact for those with smaller businesses falling under the Fire Safety Order.

The team have also been busy in relation to a number of prosecutions (under the Order), for a range of different premises types and for some differing charges, albeit readers will note some consistency in Article 9 breaches (which for those with a fire safety background will recognise as related to fire risk assessment).

A summary of the press releases for recent cases is set out below:

**Successful Prosecution for Fire Safety breaches at The Tree Inn, Stratton, Bude. (Public House with paying guest sleeping accommodation).**

On **Tuesday 25 March, Cornwall** Fire and Rescue Service successfully prosecuted **Mr Simon Floyd, owner of The Tree Inn, Fore Street, Stratton, Bude**, following multiple serious fire safety breaches. The hearing took place at Bodmin Magistrates' Court, where **Mr Floyd** pleaded guilty to four charges under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Mr Floyd was fined **£8000**, ordered to pay full costs of **£2755** and a

victim surcharge of **£2000** totalling **£12755** by the Magistrates following the hearing.

A fire safety inspection undertaken in May and September 2023 of the public house and its associated guest accommodation identified several critical failures, including:

**Article 8-** failed to take such general fire precautions as were reasonably required in the circumstances to ensure that the premises were safe.

**Article 9-** failed to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to which relevant persons were exposed for the purpose of identifying the general fire precautions you needed to take to comply with the requirements imposed upon the company by or under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

**Article 13-** failed to ensure that the premises were, to the appropriate extent, equipped with fire detectors and alarms.

**Article 14-** where necessary, in order to safeguard the safety of relevant persons, failed to ensure that in the event of danger, it was possible for persons to evacuate the premises as

quickly and as safely as possible in that there was an inadequate means of escape due to :-

- i. Doors on the escape route not being fire doors and did not offer sufficient protection to the means of escape.
- ii. Glass in the doors not being Fire Rated Glazing.
- iii. An Air conditioning unit was situated within the means of escape.
- iv. The wooden external escape not being a protected route.

**Company prosecuted over fire safety breaches in St Ives self-catering holiday accommodation.**

On **Wednesday 23 April 2025, Gill [St Ives] Holiday Enterprises Limited** were sentenced for multiple fire safety breaches under the Regulatory Reform [Fire Safety] Order 2005 at Plymouth Magistrates Court.

Gill [St Ives] Holiday Enterprises Limited pleaded guilty at an earlier hearing held on 11 March 2025 at Bodmin Magistrates Court. On October 17 2023 Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service received notification there

were concerns regarding the fire safety provisions at holiday accommodation known as Premier Apartments Flats 1 to 4 St Ives Cornwall. During an inspection at the Premises on the same day the Fire Safety Inspector found the company had failed to,

- i. make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to relevant persons contrary to Article 9,
- ii. failed to implement general fire precautions contrary to Article 8,
- iii. failed to provide adequate fire detection and warning contrary to Article 13 and failed to ensure that in the event of danger it was possible for persons to evacuate the premises as quickly and as safely as possible Contrary to Article 14.

v. In summing up the District Judge said the 'fire safety matters were extremely serious as we are all aware of the risks that could occur, and that those staying at the premises were on holiday and should be protected from such things'.

The company was ordered to pay a total of £ 33658.00, broken down as follows;

£22660.00 fine for the offences, a victim surcharge of £2000.00 and £8998.00 in costs, the company was given 28 days to make full payment.

### **Successful Prosecution – Failure to provide information under Article 27 of the Fire Safety Order.**

On 11 March 2025, Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service successfully prosecuted three defendants, Jeyapratha Kawasihan, Sobrika Kirupaharan and Yalini Inbaruban the registered owners of Hallworthy Petrol Filling Station Near Camelford in Cornwall for failing to provide information requested under Article 27 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The hearing took place at Bodmin Magistrates' Court, Cornwall where Jeyapratha Kawasihan, Sobrika Kirupaharan and Yalini Inbaruban were all found guilty of repeatedly failing to provide information that would assist Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service in their investigations with regard the safety of the petrol tanks, associated equipment and

who had control of the premises.

During a site inspection of Hallworthy Petrol Filling Station on 20 July 2023 by officers from Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service the petrol filling station was found to have ceased selling petrol and the forecourt was now being used as what could only be described as a makeshift scrapyard.

When a petrol filling station stops selling or storing petrol there are some legal requirements and specific safety measures that need to be implemented to petroleum installation and associated equipment to reduce the risk of explosion or environmental contamination.

At the time of the site inspection the Officers were unable to ascertain if the premises had been made suitably safe in accordance with the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmosphere Regulations 2002 or if a suitable assessment of the risks on the premises had been carried out under Article 9 of the Fire Safety Order. Subsequently multiple requests for information were

made under Article 27 of the Fire Safety Order to the three defendants to assist Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service in their investigations to ascertain if the petroleum installation had been made suitably safe. None of the defendants responded or provided the required information.

It is an offence for a person without reasonable excuse, to comply with any requirements imposed by an inspector under article 27 of the Fire Safety Order.

The court fined the defendants as follows;

Jeyapratha Kawasihan, fined £9000 reduced to £6000 for a guilty plea plus £930 costs.

Sobrika Kirupaharan, fined £9000 plus £930 costs.

Yalini Inbaruban, fined £9000 plus £930 costs.

The court ordered that this be paid in full within 28 days and a collection order was made so that the court bailiffs will attempt to collect it, should it not be paid.

## **Successful Prosecution for Fire Safety breaches – Bond Bowden Property Ltd, Liskeard.**

On **25th February 2025**, Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service successfully prosecuted **Bond Bowden Property LTD**, owned by **Mr Duncan Bond**, following multiple serious fire safety breaches.

The hearing took place at Bodmin Magistrates' Court, where the Company pleaded guilty to multiple offences under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. A total fine amount of **£54,698** was awarded by the Magistrates following the hearing.

A fire safety inspection of the premises in 2024 identified several critical failures, including:

- i. Failure to ensure adequate means of escape from the premises.
- ii. Failure to conduct a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment.
- iii. Lack of appropriate fire detection and alarm system.

- iv. Inadequate provisions (including training and awareness for occupants) for safe and swift evacuation in the event of danger.
- v. Failure to maintain fire safety equipment, systems, and devices in good working order.

**Mike Tremellan**  
**Area Manager**

## MEMORY LANE

**Fire Services Fire Pump  
 Push - World Record  
 Attempt  
 1-2 August 1981**

I think I must have missed the memo about not volunteering for things. However, I ended up being part of the Cornwall County Fire Brigade's (as it was then) element of the Combined Cornwall Fire Services Team to break the world record for pushing an 8cwt fire pump the longest distance in 24 hours.

The combined team consisted of teams from Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose (HMS Seahawk), Royal Air Force St Mawgan Fire Section and Cornwall County Fire Brigade.



The CCFB team consisted of Jackie Aitken, Paul Gooding, Peter Brooke from Penzance, a fireman (that's what we were in those days) from Helston – I am ashamed to say I can't remember his name. From Truro, Ian Kinver, and from Camborne, Kenny Uren, Gary Thomas and me, the 9 stone 7 pounds, dripping wet, powerhouse.

Prior to the event we would visit RNAS Culdrose roughly once a week for training and familiarisation of the pump we would have to push. It was basically a Dennis trailer pump with the addition of wheels and a means for steering the pump added to

the front. Additional push bars were also added to make it easier for team members to push and guide the pump around the one-mile course.

Training was organised and 'enforced' by Naval Airman Jan Rendall, who was built like the proverbial outhouse and was an ex-Field Gun Crew member. One thing was for sure: the Navy were taking this very seriously. They fielded four teams, Cornwall Fire fielded two and the RAF also two teams. During training we didn't see much of the RAF as they did their own thing and only came to Culdrose to view the pump and how to steer it and for the pre-event publicity photoshoot. Oh, and they did turn up for the event.

The big day arrived, and the teams assembled at RNAS Culdrose Fire Station for the start. First, I must add that you would think that as we were going to push this pump around an airfield it would be reasonably flat. WRONG! The start at the fire station was straight into an uphill section and then a left turn onto one of the taxiways before a slope took you down to an access road that led back towards the

fire station. Along the access road a nasty little incline before a sharp turn back to the fire station and the next lap could begin.

The challenge was started by Captain Dimmock, the Officer Commanding HMS Seahawk, by throwing a thunder flash onto the ground, at 10:00 hours 1 August 1981.

At the fire station the crews had to change over and this was a technique that took some practice to get right. First the two rear members would drop off the back allowing the two new members to take their place. At the front what was meant to happen was one crew member would drop off allowing the new one to take his place, whilst the other would keep the steering going until the first change had taken place before he then did his changeover.

On one changeover something did not go as planned and the pump careered out of control, collided with the marshal/timekeepers table and trapped Jackie Aitken underneath the pump. In steps Jan Rendall, lifts the

pump up and Jackie is pulled free.

After a brief check-up at the sick bay Jack is returned with a bandaged leg but able to complete his stint at the pump.

The Navy teams were in no doubt the fittest and strongest of the teams and recorded the fastest lap at about 6 minutes. With 8 teams pushing in rotation that meant each team was on the pump roughly once every hour at the start. However, as the pump push progressed injuries and lack of stamina started to take a toll and some crews were amalgamated and required to push more than once an hour.

The Fire Station was base camp, and the Royal Navy had laid on food, drink and entertainment in the form of films and music. Oh, and by the smell, copious amounts of embrocation. It didn't seem to matter what time I went into the station the TV was playing the same bit of Rocky the movie — or was that just my mind playing tricks?



As the 24 hours was nearing the end, all those that could still run, ran behind the pump as the Royal Navy team that had started the run brought the pump over the line at 10:00 hours 2 August 1981 completing 186 miles. It didn't beat the world record of 205 miles, but let's be fair, that was done inside a stadium on level ground with no weather to contend with. However, we did gain the British record and raised £2,500 for local charities.

After the event the Royal Navy laid on a spread for those that took part along with the supporting staff. I have had the privilege in my Fire Service career of dining with all three of the Armed Forces and I can say without doubt that the Royal Navy is the best when it comes to hospitality.

As an afterthought, I was proud to have taken part in the event, but would I do it again? You are joking of course. I have now read the memo about not volunteering for things.

Apologies if my memory of the event differs from other people's recollection but it was a while ago!

### **Chris Rickett**

#### **The story continued from the Naval Firefighters' Perspective**

The summer of 1981 saw an extraordinary coming together of military and civilian fire services in Cornwall. While the world record narrowly slipped through their fingers, what was achieved over those 24 hours at RNAS Culdrose was nothing short of remarkable.



Led by POA John 'Jan' Rowe, the Royal Navy Aircraft Handlers team — including Jan Rendal, Paddy Humphrey, Andy Richards, Brum Lewis, Eric Robinson, John Kirk, Bob Carroll, John Campbell, Geoff Down, and Bungy Williams — gave everything they had to the challenge. From the first thunder flash to the final lap, they exemplified what discipline, teamwork, and training could accomplish.

Covering 186 miles — a British record — the teams pushed through exhaustion, mishaps, and aching muscles with determination and no shortage of good humour. A fastest lap of just six minutes underscored the commitment and fitness of those involved, and while the world record of 205 miles remained intact, over £2,500 raised for Cornish charities proved the mission a resounding success.

This event stands as a proud moment in the shared history of the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and Local Authority Fire Service — a vivid reminder of what can be achieved when services unite behind a single cause.

Once a firefighter, always a firefighter.

**Andrew "Scouse" Richards  
CPO (A) Retired, RNAS  
Culdrose**

**From Cardiff to Cornwall  
A Life in and around the Fire  
Service**

I was born in Cardiff, proudly Welsh, but with strong Cornish roots – my grandfather was born in St Ives before the family moved across the border more than a century ago. So, in many ways, Cornwall always felt like a second home. I'm married to Dianne (born in Cardiff City Fire Station – yes, really!), and we have two sons and two grandchildren, all still living in Wales.

My fire service journey started with a bit of a twist. Back in 1978, South Glamorgan Fire Service were recruiting after the big strike. The pay looked decent (£75 a week!) and the promise of a job for life was appealing. I applied, was successful – and then, in a strange twist of timing, was offered a supervisor role in my current job on the very same day. I chose the promotion

and rang the fire service to turn them down. I thought that was the end of that.

Six years later, they advertised again. I applied – quietly forgetting I'd already turned them down once. Unfortunately, they hadn't forgotten. "So why is now the right time to join?" they asked in the interview. "Weren't all those same reasons true six years ago?" I owned up. Luckily, honesty paid off – and I got the offer again.



Training school at Cardiff Central was tough – 13 weeks, and at 26, I was nearly the oldest on the course. Most of the lads had family in the job, so I was proud to make it in on my own merits (twice!).

My first posting was Red Watch at Station A1. South Glamorgan was a tight-knit service with just eight

stations, but there was always plenty going on – fire control, admin, workshops, all on one busy site. The camaraderie was brilliant, and the pranks were legendary. Whatever happened to those old initiations?

It was at work that I met Dianne, she worked in fire Control. Handy, but it meant I could never pretend I'd had a rough night shift... she always knew exactly what I'd been up to!



A few station moves later, I started studying for promotion and eventually worked my way up to Sub Officer. My dream job was running my own watch, and I got there in the end.

By now, South Glamorgan had merged with Mid Glam and Gwent to form the much bigger South Wales Fire & Rescue Service.

I spent many years at Blue Watch Ely – through another strike, a tragic line-of-duty death, and changes in how promotions worked. Eventually, I passed the Station Manager's assessment (after a few attempts – no shame there!). Things were shifting – officers became "managers" and vice versa. No one was quite sure who was managing or officering anymore.

By then, Cornwall had become our retirement plan. We managed to buy a flat in St Ives and began plotting our move. I even looked into transferring down. The process meant reverting to firefighter level, and although I passed the written tests, the infamous beep test got the better of me – level 7 just wasn't quite enough.

Back in Wales, following an operation, I was placed on day duties. That led to project work, then a transfer into Fire Safety for my final few years. I really enjoyed that part of the job, and eventually reached Station Manager rank, even enjoying a year as a "flexi" – which was great for the pension pot!

When people asked what I had lined up for retirement, I proudly said: "Absolutely b\*\*\*\* all." My last day was kit in, car keys handed over, and straight down the M5 to Cornwall.



We moved here in 2013, rented a lovely holiday let for six months and house-hunted across the county before settling down properly. Of course, the 'do nothing' plan didn't last long. I started doing Fire Risk Assessments for local holiday lets – a nice way to stay connected and earn some cruise money.

Our introduction to the Retired Members Association came via a friend of a friend, and after our first lunch at the Inn For All Seasons, we were hooked. Aside from holidays, we've missed very few over the past eight years. I eventually took on the role of organising the

lunches – mostly because at the AGMs, when we were asked for, everyone else took a step back!

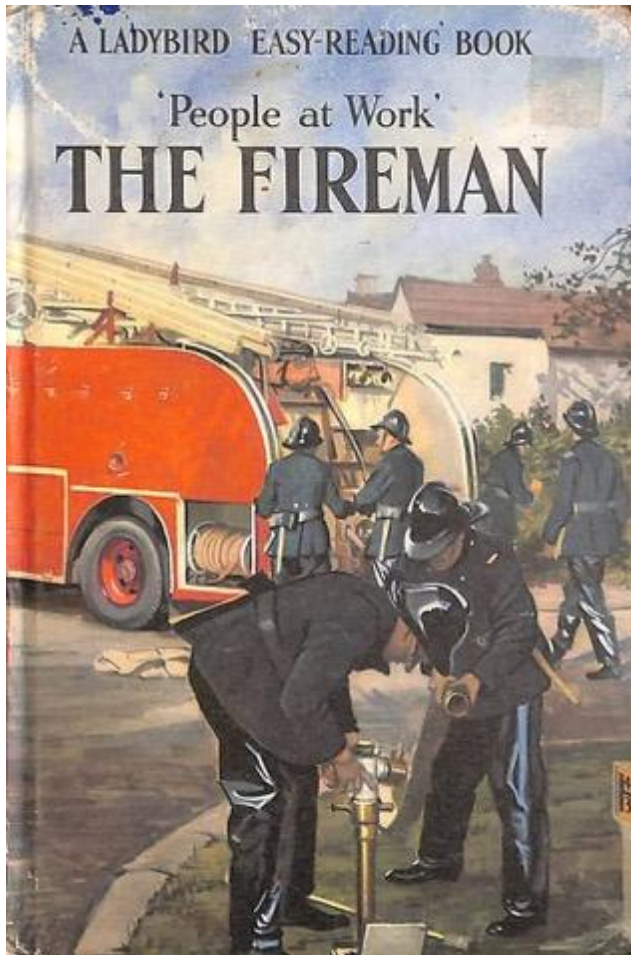
It's been great fun, but not without its challenges. Finding venues that can cater for 40 is harder than it looks – and they often want pre-orders, which can be a headache. Still, we keep trying new places – The Borough Arms was a hit last year.

And finally – I'm still learning everyone's names. Be patient with me – it's only been eight years!

**Phil Berriman**

## Images that Helped Shape a Career

The first book I remember owning and cherishing was 'The Fireman' published by Ladybird.



I loved the illustrations depicting the work of the Service and the easy reading it made. This must have been around 1971 as I recall taking the book into my reception class. I'd already decided my career path!

Fast forward 49 years to 2020, by which time I had retired from Cornwall Fire and

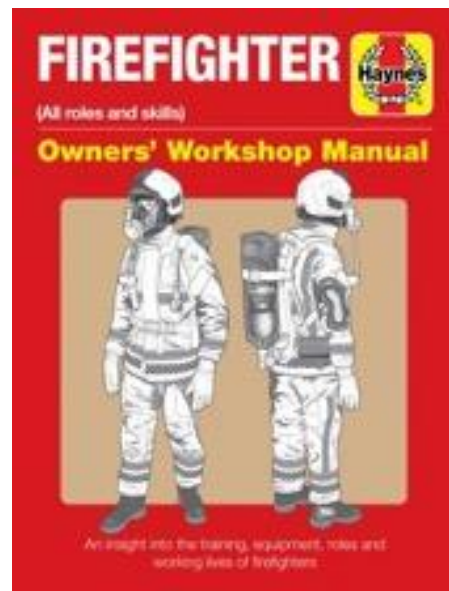
Rescue Service, and I was now working for the Ambulance service. I was called to assist a lovely lady who was coincidentally the next-door Neighbour of my son who is the officer in charge at 2:3 Perranporth. Through conversation with the patient, I established she had a family link with the fire service, and she proudly showed me an amazing scrapbook of Perranporth fire station history.

Amongst the fantastic photos, one particularly caught my eye. The picture was of Perranporth crews tackling a heath fire at St Agnes beacon, the black and white photo had the stations Austin Loadstar appliance in the background, and I knew that I'd seen that picture before.

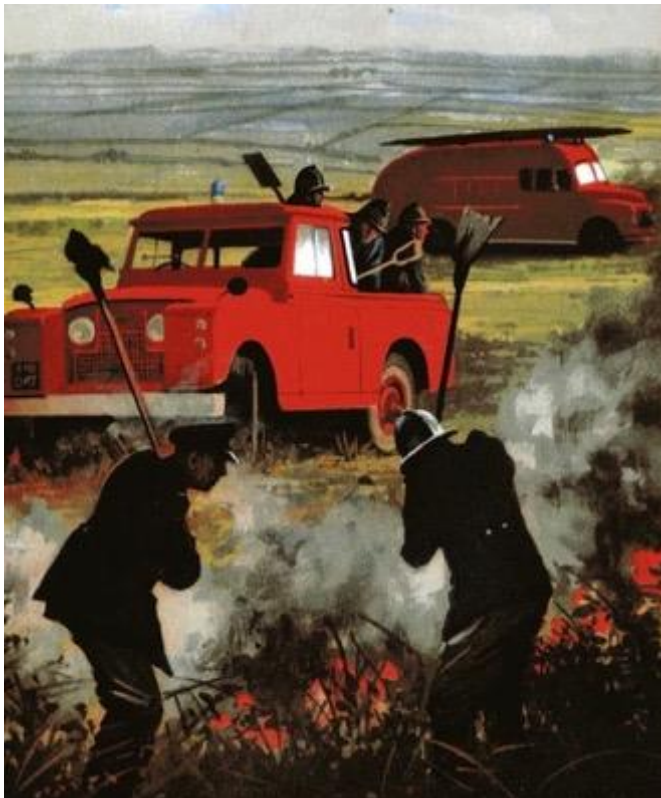


With the owner's permission, I took a photo of the image and when I got home, I found my

copy of the book I'd so enjoyed so many decades earlier, amongst the many other fire related books in the loft. Sure enough, the last picture in the book was a color illustration depicting the same photo shown to me earlier, although a fire brigade Land Rover had been added in for visual effect, I guess.



By coincidence as it turned out, when I'd written my own book, the Haynes Firefighter manual, two years previous to that revelation.



I love the fact that Perranporth and Cornwall fire feature in my earliest fire service memories, I could never have imagined the long-term link that would follow in my own career and that of my son.

Along with photos of my son, staged and taken on Perranporth fire station (including the front cover illustration), I too used an image of their crew at work at a small aircraft incident, so continuing the publishing legacy of the station.

**Phil Martin**

## Sports & Events

After a very enjoyable Beer and Curry night in Truro as well as the lower attendance visit to Blag Flag Brewery in Perranporth. I am pleased to offer three more planned social events for our RMA social calendar.



**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2025  
Seiners Arms, Perranporth  
7:30pm**



Our newsletter editor hosts another night of music, fun and laughter with an eighties theme! Musingo is a bit of a music quiz, a bit of a disco and a whole lot of fun!

The August event is in aid of the Firefighters Charity. Booking is essential, these events sell out fast!

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September  
2025 Seiners Arms  
Perranporth 2pm - 7pm  
(times tbc)**

For all those who remember dancing to the beat on disco nights we bring you Afternoon Delight. A mix of classic dance tunes covering the 80's to present day giving an afternoon of disco heaven and home by seven. An afternoon of fun, fitness and friendship, turning the clock back with full bar and retro basket meal menu. Please put the date in your diaries and full details will follow.

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2025  
Beer and Curry Night Truro**

By popular demand another beer and curry night is planned in Truro meeting in The Old Ale House Truro at

6pm with a curry at the Kathmandu Palace.

Again please put the date in your diaries and full details will be circulated via email. Could I also ask that you invite any recently retired CFRS colleagues as guests to help develop our membership numbers.

Have a wonderful summer

## Paul Walker RMA Sports and Events

### RMA Lunch Dates

<b>Dates &amp; Venues</b>	
<b>5<sup>th</sup> September</b>	The Shire, Pendarves Rd, Camborne TR14 0RT.  Two course lunch
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> October</b>	The Quintrell Inn, 2 North Way, Quintrell Downs, Newquay TR8 4LA  Carvery Lunch
<b>7<sup>th</sup> November</b>	The Borough Arms, Dunmere, Bodmin PL31 2RD  Selection of choices from their main menu.
As always, Phil Berriman will contact you for numbers nearer each event.  <b>Reminder</b> – Please reply directly to Phil as he coordinates the details with the venue.	

### Pensions Update

I am aware that some RMA members will be awaiting feedback regarding pensions enquiries linked to their previous on call roles. These cases are referred to as being part of the 'Matthews Remedy'. A link to details around this is below;

<https://fpsmember.org/matthews-remedy>

Please note that retired members will need to check the eligibility criteria before contacting Cornwall Council (the Fire and Rescue Authority) and this is explained via the link above.

Those who do meet the criteria will need to make contact by email to the following inbox;  
[firepensions.secondoptions@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:firepensions.secondoptions@cornwall.gov.uk)

## Vacancy for a Retired Members Representative

As a result of my appointment as the Isles of Scilly Chief Fire Officer, there is now a vacancy for a retired members employee representative on

the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Pensions Board. Further details will be circulated to members by email, but I'd like to give you a heads up. Full training is given, and your commitment is to a quarterly meeting. I have been on the Board for the past 9 years. Initially, in Service as an employer representative and latterly as a retired employee representative. I found it an interesting and rewarding role.

## **Phil Martin**

### **Firefighters Charity Living Well Groups**

How are you finding your retirement? Do you love it? Was it easy to leave the FRS or did you find there were some (unexpected, maybe) challenges?

Retirement is something lots of us start to anticipate as it approaches, imagining a freeing up of time and, hopefully, financial security- and indeed retirement can bring all of this, often alongside an enthusiasm to pursue hobbies, engage with some volunteering or to travel more.

As you get older, however, you are more likely to experience health issues; while life expectancy has increased steadily over the past decades (good news!), healthy life expectancy (the number of years you spend in good health) has stayed fairly static at around 62 yrs.

Poor health often leads to poor mobility; we're part of an ageing population, as we're regularly told, and a backlog of hospital appointments can mean long waits for surgery such as joint replacements. It's also a fact of life that as you get older, you are also more likely to face the loss of a partner or become a carer for a partner or need care yourself.

Poor health influences our daily lives, it can make us feel tired, and a bit low; depression or low mood is more likely to occur when you have a chronic health condition and becomes much more likely when you have two or more. This, in turn, impacts our desire to socialise and through a combination of factors social circles can begin to dwindle.

Studies have shown that people who stay socially connected as they get older live happier lives. When we're working, particularly when we work as part of a team, we develop friendships and a sense of belonging. After we retire, especially when work has been a big aspect of our social life, we need to keep or make new social connections to make up for the loss of the working relationships we had.

The benefits of being part of a social group, whether it's a friends or family group, or part of a team or club have a positive impact for your mental health and wellbeing, the more groups you are a part of and the greater the sense of belonging within them, the more significant the effect, even when you're experiencing challenges around poorer health.

At Fire Fighters Charity we recognise that as people move through their retirement, there might be a need to help people re-connect or make new acquaintances. We launched our Living Well Group initiative in 2018, and we now have 23 face-to-face groups and one online group running. The idea behind

Living Well Groups is that they are a social event, run in a fire station, and meet monthly.

There's no commitment to attend, we provide refreshments and occasional speakers.



We have groups across the UK- all of them are supported by volunteers who commit to some training and one day a month of their time to run the group. All administration and communications are undertaken by the charity.

Other groups have been running for up to six years and numbers are growing all the time. The groups are fun and sociable, and the charity supports not just the people who worked for the FRS (in any capacity), but also their partners, and we welcome widows and widowers to the group. We find that attendees at groups are more likely to contact us for other support

too because they're more aware of the services that the charity offers.

More than that our Living Well Groups offer support and friendship, a regular get together where attendees can catch up, make new friends, talk about their time in the service, learn about new subjects and generally have a nice time.

It would be great to have a group like this in Cornwall; I hope that you agree! For this to happen we would ideally need to find two (or potentially more) volunteers to support the group. So, if you'd be interested in giving us a little of your time (I could write a whole other piece on the joys of volunteering), and you're happy to greet people and make them a cup of tea or coffee, I would love to hear from you.

You can contact me on:  
[channaford@firefighterscharity.org.uk](mailto:channaford@firefighterscharity.org.uk) or you can ring me on 07970 107933

**Clare Hannaford**  
**Communities Development**  
**Lead**



## Just for Fun and Groans

I went to the Doctors, she said 'I'd like to talk about your weight'. I said, 'well I didn't expect it to be 30 minutes after my appointment time but at least the chairs are comfy'.

For me, drinking brake fluid is not a problem. I can stop anytime.

I popped in to a restaurant earlier to book a table. It was busy and the manager said do you mind waiting a bit?

I said no.

Good, he said. Take these drinks to table 9.

I just watched a documentary about beavers.

Best dam show I've ever seen.

To the person who stole my trainers and hi vis jacket...

You can run but you can't hide.

I'm so excited for this week's autopsy club! It's open Mike night!

I said to the gym instructor: Can you teach me to do the splits?

He said: How flexible are you?

I said: Well, I can't make Tuesdays.

I slipped over and twisted my ankle in Waterstones yesterday. I'd wandered in to the non-friction section.

Would it kill the makers of avocados to put a different toy inside? I have 23 wooden balls already.

### RMA SOCIAL MEDIA

 **facebook**: Cornwall Fire and Rescue Retired Members Association

**Website:** [www.cfrs-rma.org](http://www.cfrs-rma.org)

## The Weary Traveller

All were uplifted at B.11 station,  
words to inspire and lift up a nation.  
Chris Rickett was coming to give them a talk,  
almost as exciting as eating white chalk.  
He travelled so far, but he didn't care,  
so many words he wanted to share.  
Driving along through the wind and the rain,  
too much for the fields, too much for the drain.

On the radiotelephone, he heard D.6,  
mobile to Torpoint in a bit of a fix.  
An exercise he'd arranged for that very night,  
might have to be cancelled, with no one in sight.

Chris listened and wondered, who was involved?  
A few minutes later the mystery was solved.  
A fire was the problem that caused the delay,  
B.3 would be late, he heard them say.

He arrived at Torpoint and spoke to Charles White,  
within a few minutes he then saw the light.  
An exercise was on involving BA,  
what more could be done? What more could he say?

The end of the story is really quite sad,  
the lecture was missed and weren't Torpoint glad!  
But one day the talk will have to be done,  
it may not be Chris, could Rodney be the one?

Written by Senior Control Operator, Brian Trebell, this poem describes the events of an evening where Chris Rickett was due to deliver a lecture on the Cold War preparations for a potential nuclear attack. A challenging session ('almost as exciting as eating white chalk') to both deliver and receive no doubt!

