

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS

City of Wolverhampton and Walsall Branch



Established 1968

Age Concern Forum
National Council of Ageing
National Pensioners Convention

Registered under the Data Protection Act 1998.

www.narfire.org.uk
www.wmnarf.net

John Littleton, Chair
NARF Office
Erdington Fire Station (WMFS)
Orphanage Road
Erdington
Birmingham
B24 9HR
Tele: 0121 380 6059
e-mail
retired.firefighters@wmfs.net

June 2024

Welcome to the latest NARF Newsletter.

Chairman's Comments.

The West Midlands Branch of NARF suffered a great loss in January 2024 with the passing of our President, Chief Fire Officer Wayne Brown. Wayne had not been in the West Midlands Fire Service for long but had started various projects and was well thought of by other senior officers and the workforce. This was evident by the numbers that attended his funeral both in London and at the internet event in HQ. Our condolences go to all his family.

It's that time of year again where we ask for your support for our Prize Draw. Monies raised from the draw goes to the Boroughs to enable them to give a Christmas present to the widows of ex members. There is no compulsion to buy tickets but we obviously hope you will take part. Full details are on the last page of this letter.

The new Chief Executive Officer of the Brigade, Oliver Lee OBE has taken over at the President of the West Midlands Branch of NARF.. Oliver joined the WMFS in March 2024 & is Birmingham born & bred. He attended Cambridge University & joined the Royal Marines where he commanded 45 Commando where he became the youngest full Colonel since World War Two. He served in Helmand in Afghanistan where he was known for reducing violence & improving engagement and regeneration. On leaving after 18 years in 2014 he had roles in Whitehall and became CEO of 'The Challenge', a social enterprise scheme developing young people. He also served as CEO of 'Places Of Leisure' leading 6,500 staff over 100 sites. He has two teenage children & loves rugby & hill walking.

John Littleton Chair

Congratulations

Congratulations go to our Chairman John Littleton who at the National AGM in Walsall became President of the National Association Of Retired Firefighters, following a period of three years as Vice President. The only other West Midland member ever to be National President was Brian Wakefield from 2003 – 2006.

John joined Wolverhampton Fire & Ambulance Service in 1966. On the formation of the West Midlands Fire Service 50 years ago (1974) he served

at Wolverhampton, Tettenhall, Willenhall & BA Training School at the Training Centre in Smethwick before going back to Wolverhampton & Tettenhall before retiring on 30/6/99. John then joined NARF and eventually became National General Secretary and Chair of the West Midlands Branch. Congratulations also go to Dudley & Sandwell member Ramsay Rhodes who on 16th July 2024 reaches the grand old age of 100. Well done Ramsay have a great day.

Ramsay joined the National Fire Service in 1946, after leaving the Royal Navy, being on the same course as George Merrell & training at Sutton Park. He was then posted to Tettenhall, Red Lion Street Wolverhampton & Bilston. Promoted to Lfm at Brierley Hill & then SubO at Bilston, then back to Brierley Hill as Stn O. Eventually he became a specialist fire prevention officer at Oldbury, retiring in 1977. He then worked for Sandwell Health Authority as Fire Safety Officer until he retired from that in 1986.

His first major fire was when the Wolverhampton Hippodrome Theatre burnt down on a night so cold the Firemen were sticking to the ladders so Chief Fire Officer Prosser authorised the tea truck to issue of a tot of whiskey to the crews !

Asked for the secret of his long life he said 'Just keep going & take short breaks on a regular basis'.

Sports & Welfare Fund Update.

Paul Julian NARF's rep on the S & W Committee has asked that those NARF members who are also S&W members to ensure they inform S & W of their e-mail addresses as their e-mail address database is not up to date and members might therefore be missing various offers. Please forward your E-Mail addresses to sportsandwelfare@wmfs.net with your name.

Museum

The WMFS Museum is now open by appointment & covers Birmingham FB, Auxiliary FB, National F.S, Birmingham Fire & Ambulance Service & West Midlands Fire Service including those Brigades who joined Birmingham Fire & Ambulance Service to form WMFS in 1974. To book a tour contact heritage.group@wmfs.net

Tuesdays and Saturdays are the usual days but others could be available.

Anniversaries

To mark the 50th Anniversary of the forming of the WMFS an event was held at FSHQ and some open days nominated for the Heritage Group to attend with a display of 1974 uniform & equipment. These are at Ward End 21/7, Stourbridge 27/7, Fallings Park 3/8, Woodgate Valley 11/8 & Coventry 1/9. 2024 also sees the 150th anniversary of the forming of the Birmingham Fire Brigade & the 100th anniversary of the building of Aston Fire Station.

Pensions Dept.

Following the difficulties in the Pensions Department the new CEO has identified sorting the problems out as one of his eight priorities. He has

therefore authorised an increased budget to the department and appointed an interim Pensions & Payroll Manager Ms Keeren Nijjar. Two or three temporary pension practitioners are also to be added to the dept to help clear the backlog.

Firefighters Charity

The Firefighter's Charity is pleased to announce that King Charles the Third has agreed to be Patron of the Charity. This follows his Mother, Queen Elizabeth the Second's, long period in the role.

What's On

The Band of the WMFS are giving a concert at Sutton Town Hall on 6/7/24 at 7.30 tickets from 0121 296 9543

A West Midlands Committee Meeting will be held at HQ on 16/10/24 at 1230 hrs.

Birmingham Borough's Committee Meeting will be on 2/10/24 at the NARF Office, Aston Fire Station at 1100 hrs.

Wolverhampton & Walsall Borough's Committee Meeting will be on 30/10/24 1930hrs & their Christmas Dinner will be on 29th November. Contact John Littleton.

Dudley & Sandwell Borough's Committee Meeting will be on 1/10/24 at Haden Cross Fire Station at 1930 hrs.

Coventry & Solihull Borough's Committee Meetings will be on 1/8/24 & 7/11/24 at Binley Fire Station at 1100 hrs.

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Prize Draw 2024

This year's Prize Draw is afoot again raising money to buy ex members widows a Christmas gift. These gifts are always appreciated but there is absolutely no obligation to buy tickets.

Please find enclosed two books of tickets.

The draw will take place on 6th August 2024 at 1200 hrs at The WMFS Museum, Aston Fire Station. B6 6ED.

1st Prize £500 2nd Prize £200 3rd Prize £100 4th Prize £50 10 Prizes of £25

Tickets are £1 each (1 Book £5, 2 Books £10) Single Tickets are allowed.

There is no need to return unwanted tickets.

Please make cheques out to '**WMFS Pensioners Association**'

Put your name, address & phone number on the ticket stub (the small part) & return them to us in the envelope provided, remembering to

put a stamp on it. Keep the main part of the ticket (large part) for your records.

If you wish to pay directly into our account, please do so but let us know,

using your name as the reference.

Our A/C is Lloyds 34058668 Sort Code 77-85-14

Further tickets are available from Ian Forrester on 0121 451 2086 or

valandian@hotmail.co.uk

Winners will be contacted and listed on the West Midlands NARF Website

on wmnarf.co.uk

Thank You & Good Luck !

