

ESSEX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Held at 14:30 hrs on Saturday 28th April 2018
At the Hadleigh Old Fire Station
High Street Hadleigh SS7 2PA

Present:

John Smith in the Chair

Mick Baker, Janet Baker, Bob Baker, Keith Baxter, Carole Bays, Carole Bester, Ron Bridges, Dave Brunning, Barry Cable, Janice Cable, Barry Cooper, Fred Coyston, Ken Deex, John Emberson, Graham Farrell, Jon Fincham, Ed Goward, Sam Green, Ray Gregory, John Harris, Brian Hickey, Linda Hough, Jim Hudson, Mike Jeffrey, Chris Merritt, Colin Miller, Ray Parfitt, Brenda Parsons, John Payne, Alan Payne, Bob Peters, Tony Pizzala, Martin Pullen, Jayne Ricketts, John Rogers, Jackie Scaggs, Peter Signournay, Roger Southgate, Jill Stevens, Alan Stone, Les Taylor, Barry Unger, Mick Vanner, Rod Ward, Eddie Winslow, Rick Wood, George Wright.

Guests:

Chris Baker, Hazel Deex, Haleigh Deex, Ann Edgell, Pamela Emberson, Pat Gregory, Sue Jeffrey, Christine Peters, Tony Pick, Floss Stone, Olga Wright.

1) Apologies for absence

The Secretary reported apologies for absence from the following:

Terry Aldous, Roy Barnes, Rob Binks, Steve Blackwell, Murray Beale, Linda Boar, Peter Brown, Bob Bullard, Tim Curd, Brian Edmonds, Frank Geraghty, Mick Hughes, John MacLean, Ron Murray, Roger Pickett.

2) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Retired Members Association held on 29th April 2017 were accepted unanimously as a true and accurate record.

3) Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4) Report from the Chairman

The Chairman had written, on behalf of the RMA, to the new Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive, Jo Turton, congratulating her on her appointment and, as the CFO/CE is

the President of the RMA, he invited her to today's meeting. There had been no response from her to date.

The Chairman thanked everyone present for attending, appreciating that some had travelled a long way. The proposed changes that were due to take place last year to Hadleigh Old Fire Station failed to materialise, so thanks are due to Brian Hickey for making the venue available to us once again, it is much appreciated.

Last year provided a full programme of events. For the first time a barbeque was organised at the Essex Fire Museum, Grays, and it was held on a Sunday giving members a chance to attend with family, including grandchildren. It was well attended with everyone giving the event the "thumbs up". The Chairman thanked Tony Pizzala and Graham Farrell for their expert cooking technique and serving up the food.

The lunch at Izumi's Chinese Buffet in Brentwood was as popular as ever with between 40 and 50 members present. The venues of the Whalebone and New Times Inn, providing more traditional fare, were also well attended. There is a limit of about 50 places at both restaurants so it is essential to book early when the events are advertised. Our thanks are due to Leigh Sailing Club for letting us take lunch in the clubhouse with its stunning views across the Thames estuary.

The evening dinner at Reid's Restaurant, Billericay gave those members whose work commitments prevent them attending lunches, a chance to catch up with former colleagues. Many new faces were able to enjoy good food in very pleasant surroundings, with good company.

A very interesting visit was made to Lancaster House, St. James's, London SW1. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office now use the house, originally built for the Grand Old Duke of York, for receptions for foreign Ambassadors. A Blue Badge guide gave members a very informative tour, and thanks go to Roger Pickett for providing the introduction.

A very pleasant and relaxed day was spent on a boat trip along the river Deben followed by lunch at the Black Tiles Restaurant, Martlesham. Members were then given the chance to explore the historic town of Woodbridge before returning to the coach.

The theatre trip was to see the show "The Girls". The members of the cast included the daughter of an RMA member and following the show; the cast came front of house and chatted with the RMA party.

The final main outing of the year was to the Royal Albert Hall to enjoy the Classical Spectacular. This was the second visit to this event and still proved to be very popular. This was followed by a well-received dinner at the President Hotel, Russell Square.

It is regrettable that bookings for shows cannot be refunded; ultimately the responsibility for the resale of tickets rests with the individual. The event organiser

may be able to assist when a waiting list is available. Members are reminded that once final numbers are given to restaurants, no refunds can be made.

A suggestion was made last year to look at the possibility of providing RMA ties and mugs. A minimum number would have to be purchased, and this would involve considerable expenditure. This year a number of association lapel badges were purchased by popular demand, and despite information made available to the members, two thirds of the original order of 250, remains unsold. The suggestion would be reconsidered at a later date.

The Chairman emphasised the need for new blood on the Committee. Some members have served for a number of years. For example, Ron Allen, who sadly passed away this week, sent out birthday cards to members for the last 22 years, Dave Brunning has served as Honorary Treasure for 18 years, and Mick Hughes had served in various positions during his 20-plus years on the Committee. It was unreasonable to expect Committee members to serve for so long, and if new blood did not join the Committee, the RMA would not be able to continue.

Ray Parfitt joined the Committee during the year, and he was a very welcome addition to the team.

An invitation has been received from the Brigade Chaplain, Rob Binks, to facilitate a Christmas carol service at his church in Warley, Brentwood. He cordially extends an invitation to members of the RMA, hoping to see many members present at this year's service. A show of hands indicated that approximately 60% of the members present would be interested in attending a carol concert. The Newsletter would carry the details when known.

The Chairman thanked the members for their continued support, support which is vital to the success of the organisation. Special thanks go to Jayne Ricketts and Mick Vanner and those members of the Committee who undertake the task of organising events and trips, which provide the interest that will sustain the organisation into the future.

5) Report of the Secretary

At the last AGM in April 2017 the meeting was presented with a Special Resolution to amend Article 13 of the Constitution. The proposal was to revise the wording so that in the event of the winding up of the Association, all subscriptions paid in advance would be considered assets of the Association and would be included in the payment to the Fire Fighters' Charity.

This Resolution was passed unanimously by the members at the last AGM, but could not become operative until submitted to the President (The Chief Fire Officer) for his final approval. This amendment was subsequently ratified by ACFO Eckley and the new wording was incorporated into the Articles and published on the RMA website on 17th June 2017.

As from next month, new legislation to be known as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will come into force, and this replaces the Data Protection Act

1998. This means that the RMA will have to collect from its members their consent to store their personal data and they must now give permission for the RMA to contact them with newsletters, and details of events etc. There are other requirements and the last Newsletter carried information on GDPR with an instruction on how to respond in order to make the RMA GDPR compliant. It is important that all members complete the form and return it to the Membership Secretary or give their permission by email or phone. The RMA may not be able to contact members in future if the required permission is not given. Spare forms are available at this meeting for completion and submission to the Membership Secretary today.

On 1st April Ron Allen advised the Chairman that he was no longer able to send out the birthday cards on behalf of the Association, and handed the task over to the Secretaries. Ron has steadfastly sent birthday cards to all members for the last 22 years. He had an excellent system in place, which made it easy to take over, and the Secretary reported that all April birthdays were celebrated with an RMA birthday card delivered on time. Whilst all were aware that Ron sadly passed away earlier this week, the Secretary proposed a round of applause for Ron for his dedication over the years to the birthday card duties.

At this point the Secretary, on behalf of the RMA Committee, thanked the Chairman, John (Smudger) for his brilliant work fastidiously leading the Committee throughout the past year. Smudger has also gone far beyond the call of duty by providing today's excellent buffet. The meeting was asked give a round of applause for the Chairman.

The Secretary then read out the names of the colleagues who have died since the last AGM.

RMA Members:

Ron Allen, Colin Bristow, Bill Lumb, Ron Mortimer, Charlie Newham, Alan Painter, Val Pluck, Eugenie Richardson, Harry Tucker, Dennis White.

Non-RMA Members:

Steve Ager, Dave Blaney, Albert Botfield, Bill Connell, Doug Eyre, George Fewell, Robert Hars, Tony Kemp, Frank Ladd, Bill MacManus, Martin Wild, Ray Pocock, John Salter, Mervyn Sheldon, Tony Smith, Dave Squires, Don Stewart, Roger Vickery, George Wheale, Dave Wymark, and Darcy the ECFRS Search & Rescue Dog.

In keeping with the tradition, the meeting was asked to give a round of applause in celebration of the lives of late colleagues.

6) Report from the Membership Secretary

There are currently 293 members on the register.

There have been 106 responses to the call in the last Newsletter for permission to hold data under the new General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR), 39 written, 9 by telephone, and 58 by email. For those who had not yet responded, forms were available on the top table.

The following new members were welcomed into the Association during the year since the last AGM:

Rob Binks, Gwen Boulter, Warren Breeze, Alan (Tiny) Church, Michael Clarke, Jon Fincham, John Gayner, Ed Gower, Steve Hill, Martyn James, Frank Livens, Lee Markwick, Bob Ramsey, Steve Salt, Rick Wood.

Subscriptions for the year became payable on 1st April and members who wished to check his/her subscription status, or make a payment, were invited to see the Membership Secretary after the meeting, or contact him by email at grahamwf@btinternet.com. The Membership Secretary reminded the meeting that the easiest way to pay the subscription was to set up a Standing Order at the bank, and he would supply account details on request.

The Membership Secretary also had a supply of members' badges with him and these were on sale at £1.20 each.

7) Report from the Treasurer

The Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st December 2017 was circulated with the April Newsletter. The attention of the meeting was drawn to the excess of expenditure over income of £603.04 and this was brought about by the purchase of birthday cards at £258.00 and membership badges at £346.12. There was also a second bulk purchase of postage stamps (for the birthday cards) to beat the price increase. There was currently £2,724 in the bank, which was considered to be a healthy situation.

There were no further questions on the accounts.

The Treasurer confirmed that he was standing down with immediate effect and the RMA needed someone to take over his duties. He underlined that the task was very easy and anyone taking over, would not find it at all onerous.

8) Subscription rate for 2018/2019

The Committee has decided that there is no need to increase the subscription amount of £2 per annum.

9) Election of Officers

The Chairman asked if there were any members who would like to serve on the Committee, but there was no response from the meeting. The following members of the Committee were willing to continue in office, and the meeting agreed to re-elect them en bloc.

The Committee

Chair: John Smith, *Secretaries:* Barry Cable, Janice Cable, *Membership Secretary and Treasurer:* Graham Farrell. Other committee members: Ron Bridges, Ray Parfitt, Roger Pickett, Tony Pizzala, Jayne Ricketts, and Mick Vanner

The Chairman once again emphasised the need for new blood on the Committee and encouraged everyone to advise him if they knew of anyone who would like to join the team. He repeated his request for someone to volunteer to take over the role of Honorary Treasurer, but there was no response. He then advised the meeting that as no one else could take up the position, the Membership Secretary was willing to include finance within his duties.

10) Events

Mick Vanner advised the meeting that the notice board contained details of the planned events, and anyone interested in any event should add his/her name to the appropriate list.

The tours are:

Tuesday 29th May: London Bus Tour

Wednesday 13th June: Carvery Luncheon, New Times, Tiptree

Monday 2nd July: Smokehouse & Canal Cruise

Sunday 29th July: Summer Barbeque

Friday 24th August: A Steaming Adventure

The Fish & Chips lunch will again take place at the Leigh Sailing Club, but a date has yet to be fixed. A dinner will be organised at Reid's in Billericay, as last year, and a date will be confirmed as soon as possible. The Newsletter will carry full details when they are known.

The RMA theatre outing for 2018 is "Tina – the Tina Turner Musical" at the Aldwych Theatre in November, and all tickets have been sold. Mick Vanner thanked all who had reserved places for paying promptly, 14 months in advance. It is always necessary to pay for the tickets as soon as they become available, otherwise they will be lost.

[Secretary's note: The details of all the 2018 Events can be found on the RMA Website http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/img/pics/pdf_1525434181.pdf where interest in any event can be registered online].

11) Any Other Business

In answer to a question from the floor, the Chairman confirmed that all guests are welcome to join the members at the buffet, which follows the meeting.

That concluded the business of the 2018 Annual General Meeting.