

**ESSEX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**  
**RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION**



**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
Held at 14:30 hrs on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2017  
At the Hadleigh Old Fire Station  
High Street Hadleigh SS7 2PA

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***Present:***

John Smith in the Chair

Bob Baker, Keith Baxter, Steve Blackwell, Linda Boar, Gerry Brazier, Ron Bridges, Dave Brunning, Barry Cable, Janice Cable, Barry Cooper, Fred Coyston, Tim Curd, John Emberson, Graham Farrell, Frank Geraghty, Sam Green, Ray Gregory, Brian Hickey, Linda Hough, Jim Hudson, Chris Merritt, John Payne, Bob Peters, Tony Pizzala, Val Pluck, Martin Pullen, Jayne Ricketts, Jackie Scaggs, Graham Spring, Alan Stone, Les Taylor, Barry Unger, Mick Vanner, Rick Wood, George Wright.

**1) Apologies for absence**

The Secretary reported apologies for absence from the following:

Ron Allen, Carole Bays, Murray Beale, Carole Bester, Peter Brown, Keith Colthorpe, Ken Deex, Jane Foxhall, John Gaynor, Mick Hughes, Ron Murray, Alan Payne, Roger Pickett, George Stone, Dennis White.

**2) Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Retired Members Association held on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2016 were accepted unanimously as a true and accurate record.

**3) Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**4) Report from the Chairman**

The Chairman thanked everyone present for their attendance, and he was aware that some have travelled a considerable distance to attend the meeting, which was much appreciated. He also thanked everyone for their continued support and participation in events during the past year. Sincere thanks were due to Brian Hickey for making the arrangements for us to use Hadleigh Old Fire Station for today's meeting. The building is due to undergo changes in the coming year and it is unclear if it will be suitable for future meetings.

Last year's events programme was one of the fullest ever, with events planned for every month.

- The lunch events continue to be popular, with a good attendance at all four venues, Izumi Chinese Buffet, Whalebone Inn, The New Times Restaurant and fish and chips at Leigh Sailing Club.
- The theatre trip in 2016 was to the Savoy theatre in June to see "Funny Girl" and it was thoroughly enjoyed by those attending. This year's trip is to the Phoenix theatre to see "The Girls" and there is additional interest in this show because one of our members has a daughter in the show.
- Due to the popularity of last year's visit to the Royal Albert Hall for the Classical Spectacular, it has again been included in this year's programme.
- Last August, the very best of British weather created ideal conditions for a boat trip on the Thames from Windsor, with afternoon tea. This year a boat trip has been organised closer to home on the river Deben, followed by lunch at the Waldringfield Golf Club.

The organisation of outings and trips to shows needs to be done months in advance of the event. The companies supplying the tickets require confirmation of bookings, complete with full payment, up to six months prior to the event taking place, and then allow only two to three weeks of the event being advertised for the order to be confirmed. This makes it essential that members apply and pay for tickets as soon as they are informed of the event.

The positive response from members, both last year and this, removes the need to cancel events, which is very much appreciated by those committee members who take on the responsibility for the organisation of such outings. Places will continue to be offered on a first-come-first-served basis, so please continue to book and pay early to avoid disappointment.

On behalf of the members, sincere thanks are due to Jayne Ricketts and Mick Vanner for all their hard work in the organisation of trips to shows and outings, and along with Ron Bridges, for the very successful lunch outings.

The committee endeavours to keep the membership informed of retirements and the demise of retired personnel. The RMA is dependent on receiving information from either Service HQ or individual members. It is important that the committee are given dates, times and venues for retirements, and in the case of deaths of members, dates, times and venue for funerals, along with the wishes of the relatives regarding floral tributes or donations.

The Chairman explained that Service HQ had informed the RMA that they no longer were able to print and send out Newsletters, however, they will continue to disseminate information electronically. Members are reminded to ensure their contact details, are kept up-to-date by advising the Membership Secretary of any changes. It would also be appreciated if those without a computer could provide an email address of someone who is prepared to receive electronic communications on their behalf.

The Chairman continued with a vote of thanks to Ron Allen who, despite bouts of ill health over the past year, has continued to ensure members receive their welcomed Birthday cards.

Joint Secretaries, Barry and Janice Cable, Dave Brunning, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary, Graham Farrell have all performed sterling work throughout the year, and their help and support is very much appreciated.

The Chairman said he remained indebted to all members of the Committee for their guidance and counselling in the day to day running of the association making the job of Chair a pleasure.

## **5) Report of the Secretary**

The RMA has had another very successful year and the Committee asked the meeting to give a vote of thanks to the Chair, John Smith, who has steadfastly led the team throughout the year, and he should also be thanked for providing today's excellent buffet.

Whilst the RMA is running successfully, the Committee is always looking for input from the membership and if there is anything that the RMA should be doing to make membership of the association more beneficial, members should let the Secretary know, or one of the Committee members.

The meeting was reminded that the RMA section of the ECFRS website now has pages carrying information on:

- "List of events for 2017", where interest for any event can be registered via a hyperlink which is a direct link to the organiser.
- "Meet Your Committee". Email addresses are included, once again as hyperlinks, making it easier to contact anyone on the Committee.
- "Useful Links" which carries website addresses of the organisations with which the Fire Service is associated. If there is any organisation that is not included, but should be, please let someone on the committee know.
- The minutes of previous AGMs and the last twelve Newsletters are available on the website, and the minutes of today's meeting will be uploaded shortly

The Secretary said he reported last year that there was a possibility that Kelvedon Park would not have the facilities to continue to print and send out the postal copies of the Newsletter, as just outlined by the Chair. They continued to distribute the copies until the beginning of this year, and from the February Newsletter the RMA had to take over this task, along with the associated costs. However, the financial implications were alleviated when an agreement from Kelvedon Park was established that the RMA could print the Newsletters at the Fire Museum and prepare them for posting. Thanks are due to Jayne Ricketts who prints the postal copies, places them in addressed envelopes, which are then delivered to KP to be mailed out to those without email addresses. Kelvedon Park continues to send out the electronic copies of the Newsletter and other notices on behalf of the RMA and the thanks of the Committee go to Chloe Rowling and her team for their invaluable support in this area.

The Committee is still looking to reduce down from 34, the number of people whose Newsletters have to be posted to them. It is very important that all members provide an email address, or the email address of a relative or friend, who would be willing to receive the electronic copy of the Newsletters on their behalf.

Everyone was reminded to add his or her name to the attendance register that was being passed around, so that everyone's participation in the meeting can be recorded in the minutes.

The Secretary then read out the names of colleagues who sadly have passed on during the year.

***RMA Members:***

Sheila Barr, Leo Coltham, Arthur Cooke, Peter Draycott, Bob Hodder

***Non-RMA Members:***

Jim Beaver, Dave Blacketer, Edna Carroll, Michael (red) Claret, Irene Giles, Peter Lupton, Peter Newton, Ann Pinkerton (formerly Guymmer), Brian Rudd, Brian Russell, Claire Sparrow, Geoff Tarling, Lee Vine

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 291 members on the register.

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

Brian Adams, Gerry Brazier, Terry Burridge, Jim Chapman, Ray Child, Terry Doherty, Brian Hickey, Martin Hodder, Dot Jones, Gary Jones, Robert (Danny) Kay, Diane Kralik, Andy Newland, Brenda Parsons, Martin Pullen, Val Pluck, Carl Saye, Graham Spring, and Doug Sylvester.

Members who wished to check his/her subscription status, or make a payment, were invited to see the Membership Secretary directly after the meeting or contact him by email at [grahamwf@btinternet.com](mailto:grahamwf@btinternet.com)

**7) Report from the Treasurer**

The Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 was circulated with the April Newsletter. The attention of the meeting was drawn to the deficit of £161.00 and it was explained that this had been caused by an expense carried over from 2015 and a slightly lower income from subscriptions. In 2015 The Membership Secretary had collected a number of outstanding subscriptions, which had boosted the subscription figure in that year. The amount in the bank over the last five years had averaged out at approximately £3,022, so it was quite a healthy situation.

There were no further questions on the accounts.

## **8) 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. All current members of the Committee were willing to continue in office, and the meeting agreed to re-elect them en bloc. The Chairman impressed upon the meeting that the Committee needs new blood and encouraged everyone to advise him if they knew of anyone who would like to join the team.

## **9) Events**

Mick Vanner informed the meeting that there are still 20 places left for the River Deben Boat Trip on 15<sup>th</sup> August. This is an area of outstanding natural beauty and well worth a visit. Anyone interested in booking a place should contact him.

At this point, Mick Vanner thanked his colleague, Jayne Ricketts, for her support working with him in organising the events, as together they researched, booked, and sold the events.

On Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May the Committee has a trial visit to the London Gateway Port to ascertain whether it will be suitable for planned trips for the members. The maximum number for the trip is 15 and there are 5 places unfilled. If anyone would like to go, Mick Vanner or Jayne Ricketts should be contacted as soon as possible.

Other events arranged for the forthcoming year are:

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May – Lunch at the New Times Carvery.

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June – Visit to Lancaster House – this venue is not normally open to the general public, but has been arranged specially for the RMA by Roger Pickett.

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June – Theatre trip to Phoenix Theatre to see “The Girls”.

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> July – Barbecue at the Fire Museum

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> September – Fish & Chips lunch at Leigh Sailing Club.

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November – Classical Spectacular at the Royal Albert Hall.

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December – Lunch at the Whalebone Inn.

Currently there was nothing planned for October and it has been suggested that the members might like an evening meal. A show of hands indicated that the majority of the meeting thought this idea should be pursued.

Suggestions for future trips include visits to The London Guildhall, The Palace of Westminster and the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

*[Secretary’s note: The details of all the 2017 Events can be found on the RMA Website [www.essex-fire.gov.uk/Media/Retired\\_Members\\_Association/](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/Media/Retired_Members_Association/) where interest in any event can be registered online].*

## **10) Any Other Business**

A member asked if there was any arrangement for the RMA to work together with Mick Jones who was the administrator of the "Old Gits" Facebook page. He was advised that there was currently no tie-up with him.

A picture of a proposed members' badge had been circulated to the meeting and the Chairman explained that this had arisen at a members' lunch meeting and when the diners were asked if they would like to purchase a member's badge, there was a positive outcome to the vote. Jayne Ricketts and Tony Pizzala had met with the manufacturers who had produced the item in the picture. It comprised a blue background with an ECFRS badge in the centre and Retired Members Association round the outside. There was a query on the size of the badge, proposed as 25mm, and it was confirmed that this was the chosen diameter. Whilst the RMA would pick up the bill for the dies, the members would be asked to pay approximately £2/£3 each for the badge, which was considered to be reasonable.

The meeting unanimously accepted the design and size of the badge.

A question from the floor asked whether those members without email addresses should be asked to pay the cost of the postage for their Newsletters. In reply the Chairman explained that this was something that might have to be considered in the future, but currently Service HQ were covering the postage costs.

That concluded the business of the Annual General Meeting.

The Chairman now called a special General Meeting to consider the following:

That Article 13 of the Constitution of the Retired Members Association be amended to include the wording "including all subscriptions paid in advance," The proposed new wording would read:

#### "13. LIQUIDATION OF THE ASSOCIATION

"When it appears to the Committee that the need for the Association has ceased to exist the Committee shall have power to dispose of the assets of the Association, including all subscriptions paid in advance, by way of a donation to The Firefighters' Charity."

There was a unanimous vote to accept the proposed amendment, with no one against and no abstentions.

The proposal was carried.

That concluded the business of the Special General Meeting.