

# ESSEX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2020



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## CENTENARY CELEBRATION



Members, family and friends met at The New Times, Tiptree to celebrate not only Christmas but also the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of RMA member Bill Coyston.

CFO Jo Turton sent her apologies as she was unable to attend due to recent surgery but Neil Fenwick said he was delighted to represent SHQ and presented Bill with gifts. RMA member Roger Pickett paid tribute to Bill saying it was a true honour to know this well respected gentleman.....



Roger continued by saying that Bill was an absolute pain when he was an ADO but very 'Old School' and with the standards of his generation. He joined Grays Fire Brigade in 1935 as a junior fireman with his career being interrupted in 1940 when he joined the Royal Artillery. Returning from active service at the wars end he instantly rejoined the National Fire Service and followed this through to the formation of the Essex County Fire Brigade on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1948, before finally retiring in 1979.

### **SERVICE RECALLED by Bill Coyston**

*This article is taken from an edition of Escape Magazine, held in the library at ECFRS Museum*

*I have been asked by several people to write how I joined the Grays Fire Brigade and to relate one or two stories, so here goes.....*

*I have to go back to 1925 for my first recollection – the Fire Brigade Competitions held at Waltham Abbey. Grays had a very good day and it is the celebrations after that I remember.*

*My father had joined the Fire Brigade in 1912 and was a keen competitor and later a competition judge. We used to travel to parts of Essex and Kent for competitions and it was through these activities that I became interested in the Service.*

*Later, when my father became in charge of Grays, he strongly advocated that the County Council should take over the running of the many Fire Brigades with their restricted practises.*

*In 1935 I was asked if I wanted to join the Fire Brigade and on 3<sup>rd</sup> April I became a member of the Grays Fire Brigade. I think I must have liked it as I retired on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1979 – you can work it out for yourself.*

*The first fire I attended was at W. E. Walsham's Ltd., Argent Street, Grays. I see from the report that we were engaged for 12 ¼ hours and I received the equivalent of £1.37 ½ pence.*

*When the war came Grays had, and I believe, the first conscientious objector. This received great publicity and we suffered many criticisms for working with him, but at least he had the courage of his convictions.*

*Since the war I have served at all stations in the old 'C' and 'B' Divisions and also at Harlow, Chelmsford and Colchester. I am sure Delly will recall how he used to relieve me late when he was on out duty – he never could get there on time!*

*I recall one Midstream exercise for which we had been issued with hook ladders for boarding a vessel in midstream. On this occasion the fireman (Cliff Moss?) hooked a ladder on as the fireboat rose on a wave and we left him hanging on as the fireboat drifted away.*

*I have attended many incidents but the most memorable are the two Magnet fires and the many incidents at oil installations.*

*I have been asked, by Station Officers wanting my job, why I have stayed so long – well, it is because I have enjoyed my career in the Service. I have many memories of which one can feel proud, though I sometimes regret that I did not achieve more or accomplish greater deeds. To you all, both civilian and uniformed staff, good luck and best wishes.*



**The parties over, it's time to call.....**

**Once again, good luck and best wishes**

**Thank you all for coming  
Bill**

## FUTURE EVENTS

### Izumi Lunch Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**Now Booking**

We return to the Izumi Restaurant on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February for the first event of 2020 for an 'eat as much as you like' buffet. This venue is very popular with members and will get the year's events off to a good start.

To assist the restaurant, please advise Tony if you will be attending, full details on the attached flyer.

### Brick Lane Musical Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020

**Fully Booked**

The trip to Brick Lane Musical is now fully booked, but a waiting list is in operation in case of cancellations. If you would like to go on the list please email Jayne at [jayne.ricketts@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jayne.ricketts@tiscali.co.uk) or telephone 01277 623413.

Full details can be found on the attached flyer.

### ECFRS RMA AGM Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2020

**Reserve the date**

The Retired Members Association Annual General Meeting will take place on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2020 and will be held in The Village Hall, Maldon Road, Hatfield Peverel, CM3 2HP and your committee look forward to welcoming you all at this new venue. Further details will follow.

## CONGRATULATIONS

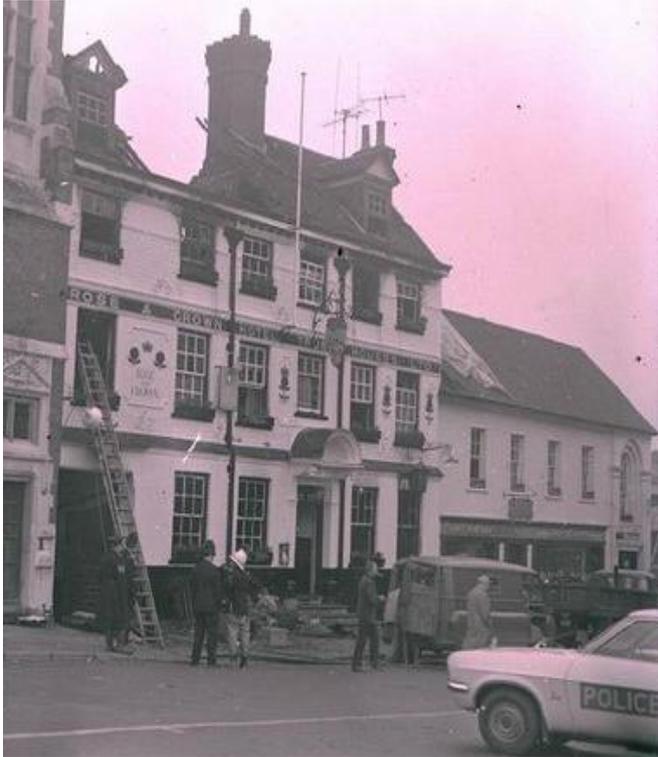


Congratulations to Les Nicholl and Paul Pemberton who were awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) in the New Year's Honour List 2020.

Les Nicholl (left) - For services to the Fire and Rescue Service and the community in Essex.

Paul Pemberton (right) - For services to Hearing Impaired People in Essex.

## 50 YEARS ON.....



Essex County Fire and Rescue Service firefighters marked Boxing Day with an act of remembrance for the eleven people who tragically lost their lives in The Rose and Crown Hotel fire, Saffron Walden, which caught alight on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1969.

A minutes silence was held at 11am outside Boots Pharmacy in the town, the site of the original hotel and firefighters past and present also held a parade and laid a wreath.

An ECFRS spokesperson said: "The legacy of the Rose and Crown fire changed the face of fire safety legislation in hotels and boarding houses across the UK for ever."

*photo courtesy of ECFRS Museum*

Following the fire, Parliament passed the Fire Precautions Act 1971, improving fire safety in licenced properties across the country.

## OBITUARY

It is with regret to inform you of the death of RMA member David Honey and our thoughts are with his family and friends. David served at Coggeshall Fire Station from 1957 to 1986.

The Association has also been informed of the deaths of non RMA members Ken Washer and Mo Copsey and once again our thoughts are with their respective family and friends.

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

**Luncheon Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

## ***Jzumi Oriental Buffet & Grill***



***Be there at 12 noon to meet up with old friends and colleagues***

***Enjoy an "Eat as much as you like buffet"***

***£8.95 per person (payable on the day)***

**THE RESTAURANT IS LOCATED AT  
BRENTWOOD LEISURE PARK,  
WARLEY GAP, BRENTWOOD, CM13 3DP**

***If you would like to attend please inform Tony Pizzala on***

***07925 042667 or email [tonypizzala1950@gmail.com](mailto:tonypizzala1950@gmail.com)***

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

**Brick Lane Musical with Lunch  
Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020**



Join RMA members for a matinee show and lunch in this totally unique theatre and dining venue. Brick Lane Music Hall, named after its original home in Brick Lane, receives worldwide acclaim and attracts audiences from all over the country to its home in a former church in London's Docklands.

Our coach will drop off at the pedestrian gate located in front of the main doors and there is a short, level walk into the theatre. Once seated at our table we will be served a three course lunch, freshly prepared on the premises, before the matinee performance. To accompany your meal a licenced bar will be available for you to purchase drinks.



As they say, laughter is the best medicine in the world, so do away with the winter blues, come and enjoy this good old fashioned music hall event. The trip will depart from Hawkwell Fire Station, before proceeding to Billericay Fire Station with parking available at both sites. Seats for the music hall show and the three course meal are £45.00 per person, and are on hold for the Association for a limited time. To secure your place on this event send a cheque made payable to B. Ricketts to 2 Everest Rise, Billericay, Essex CM12 9JB. Please advise of any dietary requirements at the time of booking.

The cost of the coach and the drivers gratuity will become payable on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020. It is anticipated that if all places are filled on this event the cost will be in the region of £12/13.00 per person