



DYFED-POWYS NARPO NEWSLETTER



Autumn / Winter 2024

FROM THE EDITOR: Hugh Colley

Welcome to the latest issue of the branch newsletter.



I hope you all enjoyed the 'glorious' summer. The summer of 2024 will be remembered by many as the summer we never had!

NARPO tends to steer away from getting involved with party politics. However, I imagine many retirees were shocked when the newly elected government announced the *Early Release Scheme*. The scheme involves releasing eligible prisoners into the community after they have served just **40%** of their sentence. This

has resulted in thousands of prisoners being released early as part of the government's plan to ease prison overcrowding.

To rub salt into the wound, we saw on television, jubilant scenes outside prisons as released criminals were filmed popping champagne and being ushered to luxury cars. Some freely admitting they fully intended resuming their career in crime!

As one newspaper commented, Police officers must surely wonder why they bother catching criminals when they are back on the streets so soon.

In September, I attended the meeting at Carmarthen with Mr. Dafydd Llewellyn (P&CC) which our chairman refers to on page 2. A wide range of policing issues were discussed during the meeting which could easily have gone on much longer.

Mr. Llewellyn explained that the current strength of the force is approximately 1,300 officers (not including PCSOs). Of which, approximately 400 are regarded as frontline officers. Due to the huge demand on resources, the emphasis in modern day policing seems to have shifted towards responding to incidents, often referred to as Fire Brigade Policing.

There's a wide variety of articles in this issue, ranging from Policing in the Caribbean to an article explaining the tremendous benefit therapy dogs provide by helping to improve wellbeing. Also, there's some anecdotes to lighten the mood. Many thanks to the members that contributed articles and photos. Also, I'm very grateful to Phil Hopkins for proof-reading the drafts and his helpful suggestions.

Finally, I receive emails querying as to why photos are no longer being posted on the DPP NARPO website. The explanation is that I haven't received any new material of late, so if you have photos suitable for inclusion please send them to me. hughcolley144@btinternet.com

Wishing you and your families a lovely Christmas and best wishes for 2025.

Hugh

FROM THE CHAIR: Mike Benbow



This year's NARPO annual conference was held at Torquay, based on some of the hotel accommodation you can see why the comedy series *Fawlty Towers* was set there! It didn't get off to a good start, we got soaked walking to the venue in the rain as taxis and public transport were unavailable due to a major event taking place in the town.

The conference itself was well attended and Incorporation again dominated the agenda. There was quite a lot of disquiet around why it was necessary for NARPO to become a limited company. I must confess I still struggle with the concept. Most of the motions were in some way designed to scrutinise the change to a limited company, especially the true cost where some members accused the Executive of actually hiding it.

The Metropolitan Police representative proposed a number of resolutions including keeping subscriptions to the same level as last year and changing to one member one vote. The debate became quite heated and the behaviour of some members towards the London representative in my opinion was offensive. (Both resolutions lost).

NARPO have overspent by over £250,000 per annum for the last two years which the Executive stated was due to the cost of Incorporation (consultancy and legal fees) and also obtaining legal support for trying to get pensions reinstated for widows that had remarried. Currently, there are a significant amount of reserves but if we continue to overspend at the current rate they will soon be exhausted.

There were two excellent presentations which in my view, were the highlights of conference:

The first was a presentation by the Rev D Wilbrahams (National Police Chaplain) regarding the Police Remembrance Trust which exists to ensure all police officers who lost their lives on and in the line of duty are never forgotten. He was supported by a member from Sussex who gave a very moving account of a father who had lost his son in such circumstances. You can find more about the trust at: policememorial.org.uk

Finally, we had a presentation about the Police History Society by Paul Griffiths ex Gwent and Kate Halpin ex Metropolitan. The aim of the society is to educate the public in police history, the presentation actually included an article written by Hugh Colley regarding the first ever Don't Drink & Drive message (See page 8). Many interesting articles can be found at : www.policehistorysociety.com



In September, members met with the Police and Crime Commissioner, Dafydd Llewellyn, at Carmarthen. It was refreshing to meet someone who didn't avoid questions. He gave answers to all questions put to him; some he explained would be more appropriate for the Chief Constable to respond. We discussed the respect that should be provided to deceased retired and serving officers.

Examples were given of the way in which South Wales Police approach such deaths, they have a single point of contact for notifications, offer the force drape, helmet and gloves for the coffin and subject to operational commitments a police motor cyclist for the funeral. He agreed to take up this matter with the Chief Constable.

We discussed the number of officers actually on front line duty, the force morale survey, whether the force had an effective pursuit policy, police retention and why couldn't senior officers do the same as him and use pool cars. A very worthwhile meeting which we hope to repeat and also invite the Chief Constable. I would ask members when we hold these meetings to fully support them by attending in person.

Wishing you all the very best
Mike

IN MEMORIAM

The following have sadly passed away since the last newsletter:

Mr. Alwyn Price (Rtd. PC 19)
Mr. Thomas John Bryan Jenkins (Rtd. PS 23)
Mr. Glyn Jones (Rtd. PS 686)
Mr. Haydn Davies (Rtd. DCC)
Mr. John Davies (Rtd. PS 749)
Mr. Dewi Owen Lewis (Rtd. PC 65)
Mrs. Amanda Tavener, the wife of Martin Tavener (Rtd. C/Insp)
Mr. Howard Clark (Rtd. Insp)
Mr. Paul David Thomas (Rtd. DC 676)
Mr. Nigel Rogers - Lewis (Rtd. PS 312)
Mr. David Morgan (Rtd. DS 135)
Mr. Glyndwr (Glyn) Henry Jones (Rtd. DC 243)
Mr. John Williams (Rtd DC 431)
Mr. William (Bill) John Roberts (Rtd. DC 192)
Mr. David Colin Peters (Rtd. PC 317)
Mr. John Jones (Rtd. PC 123)
Mr. William (Bill) Lionel Davies (Rtd. PC 30)
Mr. David (Dai) John Lewis (Rtd. PC 744)
Mr. Frank Podmore (Rtd. PC)
Mr. Len Davies (Rtd. PC239)
Mr. David Arwyn Hughes (Rtd. PC 286)
Mr. Clive Newton Cowey (Rtd. PS 715)
Mr. Eirwyn (Curly) Edwards (Rtd. C/Insp)
Mr. Joseph (Joe) Price (Rtd. PC 651)
Mr. John David Jones (Rtd. PS 425)
Mr. Laurence (Larry) Richardson (Rtd. PC 736)
Mr. William (Bill) John David Williams (Rtd. Insp)
Mr. Ken Jones (Rtd. PS 341)
Mr. Albert 'Bert' Edwards (Rtd. PC 400)
Mr. Frank Williams (Rtd. PS 272)
Mrs. Marilyn Evans, the wife of Brian George Evans (Rtd. DC)
Mr. Glyndwr (Glyn) Evan Jones (Rtd. PC 356)
Mrs. Sylvia Mary John, widow of Bryan John (Rtd. PC)

FAREWELL TO A STALWART by Hugh Colley



Members were saddened to learn of the death of Clive Cowey on Sunday 14th April. Clive had been a member of NARPO for the past 28 years, holding the post of Treasurer, Secretary and Vice-President.

Since joining the Police as a Mid- Wales Constabulary Cadet in 1964, Clive helped numerous people through his commitment to Dyfed-Powys Police, Police Federation, DPP Welfare Fund, International Police Association and NARPO.

When he stood down from office, Clive was awarded Life Membership of NARPO in recognition of his invaluable and loyal service.

A large number of former colleagues joined family and friends at a service of thanksgiving in Carmarthen to celebrate Clive's life. The eulogy was delivered by Ms. Pam Kelly (Chief Constable, Gwent), a personal friend of Clive's, who described Clive as a perfect gentleman. On behalf of Dyfed-Powys NARPO – thank you Clive for a job well done.

A TRIBUTE TO HOWARD CLARK by Phil Hopkins

I was deeply sorry to hear of the death of Howard at the end of September, following a period of illness. As some of you may recall, Howard was Chair of the Dyfed-Powys branch of NARPO during the early part of this century.

Howard was a keen cyclist and following an unfortunate fall from his bike, he was unable to carry on in the role. As the relatively newly elected Vice-Chair, I took over the reins from Howard.

Prior to retirement from DPP, Howard and I were both members of the Sergeants' Board on the Police Federation Joint Branch Board. Howard as I recall, representing the Headquarters Sergeants, so our friendship spanned forty years.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Howard for his commitment to the Branch during his period as Chair, and send on behalf of the branch, sympathy to Sylvia and the family.

REMINDER: CHANGE OF ADDRESS

To continue receiving NARPO correspondence and circulations it is important that you inform NARPO of any change to your postal or email address.

You can do this by phoning Phil Addicott (Secretary): 07807956928 or by Email: dyfedpowys@narpo.org.

FORCE DEVELOPMENT LOTTERY

The quarterly draws are held in March, June, September and December with additional Christmas Cracker and Summer Spectacular draws.

A list of winners can be found in the Members section of the website with cheques posted from FHQ within a few days of the draw taking place.

WHO'S WHO AT DPP NARPO

The following officers were appointed at the Annual General Meeting held at Carmarthen in June:

Chair: Mike Benbow

Phone: 07717 851183 Email: mbenbow2003@yahoo.co.uk

Vice-Chair: Peter Davies

Phone: 07766 168961 Email: p90pgd@btinternet.com

Secretary & Treasurer: Phil Addicott

Phone: 07807 956928 Email: dyfedpowys@narpo.org

Webmaster / Newsletter Editor: Hugh Colley

Phone: 01646 683232 Email: hughcolley144@btinternet.com

Chaplain: Lynn Rees

Phone: 07904 736364 Email: dlynnrees@btinternet.com

HOSPITAL GIFT FUND AND DONATIONS

When a member of Dyfed-Powys NARPO is hospitalised, or undergoing extended treatment for a serious condition, the Secretary should be informed as soon as possible.

If required, the Secretary will arrange for a payment of £35:00 (increased from £25:00) to be made to the member from the Hospital Gift Fund by payment directly into the member's account, a cheque can be issued if preferred.

If you, or you know a member that is eligible please inform the Secretary (Phone: 07807956928 or Email: dyfedpowys@narpo.org)

Donations to charity and good causes following the death of a member of DPP NARPO has increased from £10:00 to £20:00.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI) SEPTEMBER 2024

The Office of National Statistics has published the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for September 2024 and this stands at 1.7%.

Public service pensions in payment are increased each April in line with prices, measured according to the annual increase in the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) to September of the previous year.

This is in line with the statutory requirement to increase public service pensions in payment each year by the same rate as the additional State Pension.

STATE PENSION

The government has confirmed that the new full state pension will rise by £472 a year from April 2025.

The increase is pegged to wages, which have risen by 4.1%. Under an arrangement called the Triple Lock, the state pension increases each year by either 2.5%, inflation, or earnings growth – whichever is the highest figure.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW NATIONAL EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATIVE

Paul Hayes was recently elected as a Cymru Region representative on the National Executive Committee of NARPO representing the South Wales branches including our branch.



In 1982, I moved from Cardiff to London joining the Metropolitan Police, serving in Kensington, and Royalty & Diplomatic Protection Group, transferring back to South Wales Constabulary in 1986.

Upon my return I was posted to the west side of Cardiff, through my service I have been posted to the uniform patrol, area support group, firearms, Police Helicopter, Force Intelligence, Identification Unit & Local Intelligence.

I was an A19 (compulsory) retirement in 2012 and rejoined as Police staff within the Identification Unit where I spent 10 years, supporting and developing the identification process. I then moved to the Training department and have been there ever since and to date within the Initial Police Training Department.

Outside of the service, I have been involved over the years in many different sports the most unusual one for most would be Ice Hockey, as a player, Coach Referee and administrator. Where I developed my skills as a director of the English Ice Hockey Association & Ice Hockey UK.

This is where my experience in the process that we have just gone through, Incorporation was developed and I believe with this knowledge and skills I hope to ensure we move correctly through this. We must ensure that the Region is at the forefront of this process and that we as a group are not forgotten about and that all our voices are heard at the board level.

I have been a member of NARPO from the day I retired, taking over as branch secretary of the Cardiff Branch a few years ago and then being voted onto the regional committee as vice chair. All this has been a great honour for me to support my branch the region and now the national committee.

One thing for those who know me, is I will challenge and push to ensure our members as a whole are represented and that we move forward to secure the organisation's future.

As for me other than my commitments to work and NARPO my children & grandchildren are my focus and still being that taxi driver for all they do is still putting the miles on my car, which I never regret.

I have a good sense of humour, enjoy music, sport (golf), movies and after many years spent in ice rinks, visiting warm places!

Thank you for this opportunity to introduce myself and be assured I am totally committed to the region and the organisation.

A SPEEDY VISIT TO THE ISLE OF MAN



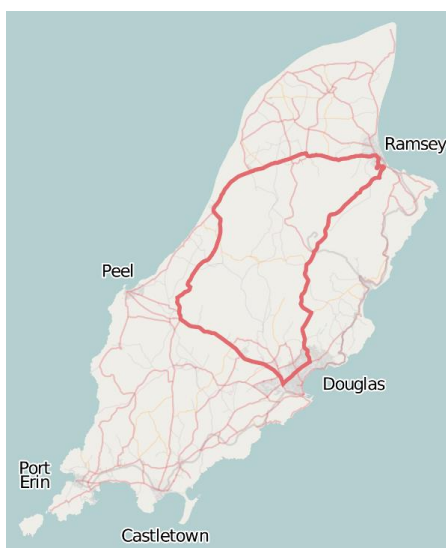
The Isle of Man TT races are an annual motorcycle racing event run held in May and June. The event begins on the late Spring Bank Holiday and runs for thirteen days - It is often called one of the most dangerous racing events in the world. Ron Davies (left) of Carmarthen, known to many as Ron Coch, is a keen biker and gives an insight into his love of bikes and his annual visit to the Isle of Man.

My interest in motorbikes started when I was 5 years old when I was taken for a ride by my father on his BSA C15 motorbike. This led to me buying my first motorbike in 1970 for £165. During my Police service I attended Standard and Advanced motorcycle courses at Bridgend - many thanks to Dyfed-Powys Police for paying me to enjoy my hobby!

In 2017, I was coaxed into joining a group of fellow bikers going to the Isle of Man TT races. Since then, I have been there in 2019, 2021 2022 and this year. This year the group met up at 6:30am before starting the long journey to Liverpool to catch the ferry to Douglas. Having left home at 5:45am I was glad of the breakfast stop at Welshpool and upon reaching Liverpool we left for Douglas.

Having arrived at Douglas we made our way to St Mathew's Catholic Church Hall, our home for the week. Once everyone had chosen their sleeping berth it was time to organise the shopping run for essentials. The hall was to be our home for the week, with 20 guys in the same room sleeping becomes a challenge and ear plugs are definitely an essential item.

To get to our favourite viewing point we had to be up early as the circuit is closed to the public at 10:00 am in order for the races to commence. This year was a mixed year due to bad weather which saw the racing programme being cut short on several days



The TT circuit is just under 38 miles long, the average speed riders achieve is in excess of 130 mph. This is astonishing when you consider that they race on public roads with very few safety features – the fastest speed recorded this year was 209 mph! I'm not sure whether they are mad or brave - possibly both. Thankfully, there were no fatalities this year.

In 2022, I rode the full circuit on what is called 'Mad Sunday' when the course is open to all which was a great experience.

The week quickly came to an end, Saturday morning was spent tidying up the hall and preparing for the journey home. I eventually arrived home at 10:00 pm, extremely tired but having chalked off another TT adventure.

WAS THIS BRITAIN'S FIRST DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE CAMPAIGN?

There is no excuse for drink driving. *If you are going to drive, don't drink. If you are going to drink, don't drive.*

Probably the first *Don't Drink and Drive* message appeared in the middle of the 19th century when the occupants of a mail coach travelling along what is now the A40 London to Fishguard trunk road had a miraculous escape.



The Mail Coach Pillar

The mail coach service ran to an exact and demanding schedule. Apart from quick changes of horses the coach only stopped for collection and delivery of mail and never for the comfort of the passengers.

On Saturday 19th December 1835 the Gloucester to Carmarthen Royal Mail stagecoach was being driven between Brecon and Llandovery by Edward Jenkins. The coach was fully loaded with passengers and Jenkins had whipped the team of horses to a gallop.

As the stagecoach approached a left hand bend the horses drifted across the road only to find they were heading directly towards a cart coming in the opposite direction. Jenkins attempted to turn the team to the left, but he lost control and the horses charged off the road and down a 121ft (38m) precipice, dragging the coach and its occupants with them.

When it reached the bottom of the precipice, the coach, hit a tree and broke into several pieces. Miraculously, everyone on board survived. Jenkins appeared before a magistrate in Llandovery charged with driving a carriage while intoxicated. He denied the charge but was found guilty. The magistrate took a very dim view of the incident fining Jenkins £5 – the equivalent of a massive £800 today!

In 1841, the Mail Coach Pillar pictured above, was erected and marks the spot where the mail coach plunged over the precipice. The inscription on the pillar bears details of the incident and states that the aim of the monument is:

‘To caution mail coach drivers to keep from intoxication’.

In 1985, an event was held at Llandovery to commemorate 150 years since the miraculous escape.

The photo shows NARPO member David Morgan leading a team of horses drawing a stagecoach like the one that came to grief in 1835.

Sadly, despite continual road safety campaigns, every year over 200 deaths occur on Britain's roads due to a driver / rider being impaired by alcohol.



YOU COULDN'T MAKE IT UP!

The anonymised entries were judged by Mr. Don Evans (Rtd. C/ Supt):

A PASSAGE THROUGH TIME by Dorian Penfold

One Saturday morning I was on Station Office Duty at Oakham Police Station, Leicestershire Constabulary, (transferred there in 1979), when I answered a phone call from an elderly lady who lived in the town. Her complaint was: "I'm fed up with it, it happens every Friday night. This youth throws his fish and chip papers in my front garden, and then he whistles up my back passage."

At the time I wasn't quite sure which back passage she meant!

MOTORCYCLE MAYHEM AT DELTA WHISKY by Phil Hopkins

Colleagues who worked in Welshpool back in the seventies will recall a certain officer whose conversations were often littered with expletives. He was the Sub-Divisional motor cyclist.

One day, the Sergeant living in the adjoining police house went into the garden that backed onto the station yard where his four-year-old son was playing with his toy police motorcycle. The young lad was kicking his toy and shouting "The f*****g thing won't start, the f*****g thing won't start"!

Obviously puzzled at what was going on, Sergeant Ralph Ford asked his son Andrew why he was behaving like that. Andrew replied, "That's what Mr Pierce says when his motorbike won't start"!

Ralph Ford and Henry Pierce are no longer with us, Andrew Ford is a highly talented musician living in Bilbao, Spain and plays in the city orchestra.

GETTING MY OWN BACK by Hugh Colley

I've been involved with Police sport ever since making my debut in the Mid-Wales Constabulary football team as a 16 year old Cadet way back in 1966. However, a 'low point' in my football career goes back to the early 80s when playing in goal. It was a Sunday morning match played at Angle for South-Pembrokeshire Police against the local club. The pitch overlooks the Milford Haven waterway and is exposed to the elements. Prior to kick-off, Paul Phillips (skipper) gave strict instructions that due to the strong headwind, we were to keep the ball on the ground. The game was going well until shortly before half time, by which time it was blowing a 'hooley'! I collected the ball on the edge of the area and ignoring Paul's instructions, I launched the ball into orbit. The ball rose almost vertically until a gust of wind swept it back over my head. I backtracked as quickly as I could but ended up in the back of the net together with the ball. Both sets of players burst into hysterics and I was speechless (for once). The freak Own Goal even got a mention in the local newspaper. Today, 40 years later, I'm still reminded about the goal I scored at Angle. Matches against clubs and organisations were a great way of getting to know and being accepted by the community – sadly such matches appear to have fallen by the wayside.

IT'S A FUNNY OLD WORLD by Alan Jones



Back in the 60s I was on foot patrol in Newtown when a lad came running up to me saying that his mate had fallen into the river. The Severn was in flood and when I went down to the riverbank I could see his mate floating a few yards off the bank. With people watching I had to do something so I started

to wade into the river. Luckily, the current brought him closer to me and I managed to drag him out of the river.

Resuscitation involved holding the lad by his ankles and shaking him vigorously. I stopped a passing car to drive us to the hospital – he made a full recovery.

A couple years later Jacqui and I moved into a police house in Newtown and the father of the lad that escaped drowning was contracted to decorate the house. I went to see him to ask if we could have some better quality wallpaper and I would pay the difference.

His wife refused saying she did not trust the police to pay!

OOPS, WRONG ADDRESS by Harry Rees



In 1969, Pembroke Power Station was being constructed which saw a huge influx of labourers billeted on site or local lodging houses. They were earning big money, in comparison, as a young PC I was earning less than £50 per four weeks. While they were earning over £100 per week! A vast number were arrested for simple drunkenness as most of their spare cash was spent on alcohol and betting.

Following arrest, they were detained at Pembroke Dock until sober. On this particular night the Sergeant ended his tour of duty at 2:00am and gave strict instructions that a prisoner arrested for drunkenness was to be bailed at 4:00am. He was bailed and the prisoner told us that he lived at a lodging house in Water Street, Pembroke Dock, just a short distance from the Police Station. With the help of a colleague, we escorted him to his lodgings, opened the unlocked front door and sat him on the settee in the lounge. We continued on patrol and about thirty minutes later responded to a 999 call from a hysterical woman claiming that a drunken man had broken into her home in Water Street.

We attended at the address and took the prisoner to his proper lodgings at the identical numbered house in Laws Street - the adjoining street. We endorsed the incident log accordingly saying that an inebriated man had returned to the wrong address.

We kept this story to ourselves for a very long time - I suppose experience is simply the name we give to our mistakes.

FAREWELL TO CHARLIE PAPA

Pembroke Dock Police Station is set to move from its current location in Water Street to a new site on Argyle Street.



Dyfed-Powys Police confirmed the move, stating it was part of ongoing efforts to modernise Pembrokeshire's policing structure. The present police station is considered to be too large and too costly to run. It also contains a custody suite that is no longer used, as all arrests are now booked into Haverfordwest Police Station.

The new station is expected to be situated in the former Pembrokeshire County Council customer service centre in Argyle Street with the current property being advertised for sale on the open market. The current station was opened in the early 60s as part of the Pembrokeshire Police modernisation programme and holds happy memories for many NARPO members.

MEET JONESY ALSO KNOWN AS GARY!

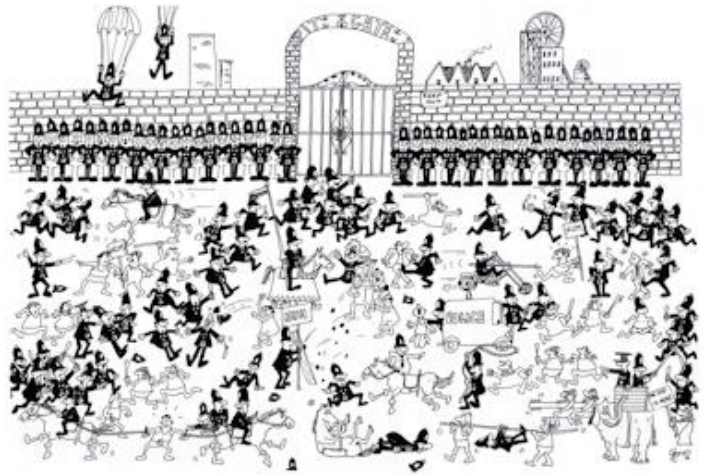
Over the past few years Gary (Jonesy) Jones of Llanidloes has lightened the mood by providing the newsletter and NARPO News with several job-related cartoons.



Gary joined the Metropolitan Police as a Cadet in 1977 before transferring to Dyfed-Powys in 1986 where he performed several roles in D (Powys) Division until retiring in 2006. Jonesy has kindly provided the following article about his marvellous talent.

My first memory of drawing was as a youngster copying characters from The Beano comic onto a sketch pad using pencils and ink. My first commercial drawing depicted the Miners' Strike which was sold to police officers and miners during the 1984/85 dispute. Costing £1:00 a copy, it made me a small fortune.

Shortly after retirement I took up digital drawing on an iPad using an Apple Pencil. It was a game changer and enabled me to draw and print my work as well as being able to send digital copies to publications such as this newsletter.



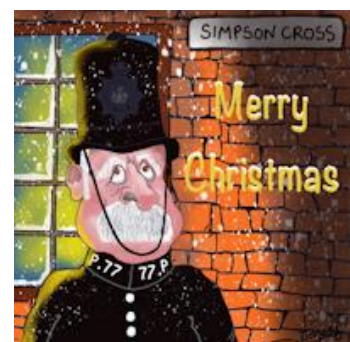
"A lady should be able to climb into her kitchen sink without the fear of being exposed to by someone in the next street!"

Today, my range of illustrations, cards, and private commissions are sold in the UK and abroad. Some of my 'mischievous' Christmas cards have ended up in Massachusetts, USA. Recently, I was honoured to be asked to illustrate a children's book by a young poet – achieving a lifetime ambition for us both.

Those that know me, know I have no political correctness filter, but to date I've not been blocked by NARPO!

As the season of goodwill is not too far away, I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Best wishes
Jonesy
(Sometimes known as Gary)



THE MID-WALES CONSTABULARY LIVES ON



The Mid-Wales Constabulary was established on 1st April 1948 by amalgamation of the Radnorshire, Breconshire and Montgomeryshire Constabularies. With its HQ in Newtown the force area stretched from Machynlleth and Llanfyllin in the north to Crickhowell and Ystradgynlais in the south.

The first Chief Constable was Captain Humphrey C Lloyd. The last Chief Constable being Mr Richard Benjamin Thomas who headed a force with an establishment of 225 officers. ('RB' followed Mr. JR Jones as Chief Constable of Dyfed-Powys).

On 1st April 1968 the Mid-Wales Constabulary became part of the newly formed Dyfed-Powys Constabulary under Chief Constable John R Jones. Chief Superintendent Mervyn Morgan was appointed OIC of the Mid-Wales 'D' Division.

In 1981, Mr Bob Wildblood QPM, who at that time was ACC Dyfed-Powys, commented that the only time he met up with former Mid-Wales Constabulary colleagues was when attending funerals.

As a result, the Mid-Wales Constabulary Association (MWCA) was born with the first reunion held at the Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells and apart from the Covid years, the Association has met every year since then.



The 2024 MWCA reunion was held at the Greyhound Hotel, Builth Wells in October when 30 members and guests (above), including several NARPO members enjoyed reminiscing about their time in the Mid – Wales Constabulary.

It's over 55 years since the force ceased to exist, yet the memory of a very proud force lives on. Many thanks go to Barry Hicks (MWCA Secretary / Treasurer) who does an excellent job organising the reunion. Long may they continue.

OUR BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS ADVENTURE

The British Virgin Islands (BVI) are a British Overseas Territory in the Caribbean. The capital, Road Town, is on Tortola, the largest island, which is about 12 miles long and 3 miles wide. The population of the BVI is approximately 32,000.

The Royal Virgin Islands Police Force is divided into three operational divisions:

- Community Policing
- Specialist Operations – includes CID and Marine Unit
- Management Services

The Specialist Operations division includes a Criminal Investigation Department and a Marine Unit. The force employs a total of nearly 300 people, of whom around 240 are dedicated police officers or auxiliary constables.

NARPO member Andy Couzens of Tenby spent 12 months working with the Royal Virgin Islands Police. Andy has provided this account of his time spent in the Caribbean sunshine.



I retired from Dyfed-Powys Police in February 2015 at the age of 49 leaving me with a workplace void which initially I found rather difficult to adjust to.

Fast forward to 2022, whilst browsing the internet this employment opportunity caught my attention: **Detective**

Constables Wanted in the British Virgin Islands. I had some knowledge of the islands being aware that the Commissioner of Police was former DPP Chief Constable Mr. Mark Collins.

Within a short time, I'm sat at home being interviewed online by three people including Mr. Collins. During the interview I was asked if I'd like to work with the Major Crime Unit (MCU). Although this was a different role to the one which I'd applied for, I readily agreed.

Within a few weeks, my wife Andrea and I set off for Tortola having been dropped off at Heathrow by our close friends, Wayne (Rtd. PC498) & Ann Ebsworth,

What an amazing adventure we experienced. The MCU office was made up of former UK officers together with officers from all over the Caribbean. The first few weeks were challenging, finding my feet, getting accepted, plus trying to understand the various accents!

Outside of work we were kept busy, we bought a car, found an apartment close to the beach, organised Andrea's immigration status, took a driving test and adapted to living in a faraway country.

(Photo: Cane Garden Beach - the view from our apartment)





I was involved in numerous murder inquiries where the majority of the victims had been shot. I attended crime scenes in black Caribbean areas, on occasions these were challenging but in the main, engagement with the local community was positive

One investigation conducted by the team was on the island of Virgin Gorda, where the Force Marine Unit transported us between islands.
(Photo: Virgin Gorda Police Station).

Andrea adjusted to island life really well, she quickly became better known in our village than me. Locals would acknowledge us when we were out walking, drivers would beep their horn when passing and people would recognise us in the supermarket, often addressing us by name.

Andrea volunteered at the Virgin Islands Search & Rescue Office in Road Town. Her generosity to locals soon became obvious and I would chuckle when I saw a local character known as Ace wearing my sons' clothes. Although he had a few personal issues, Ace was always respectful towards us.

For the last three months of my contract, I changed roles to work on a marine intelligence project. I was assisted by a Canadian born auxiliary officer who had lived on the island for many years and possessed exceptional marine based knowledge.



With huge quantities of drugs being transported by sea, we were kept very busy and we made a significant contribution to the project.

(Photo: Inspector Johnny James (DPP) on secondment to the BVI to train the Marine Unit, Commissioner of Police Mark Collins and me).



While in the BVI Andrea and I travelled extensively, visiting, New York, Miami, US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico to name just a few.
(Photo: Andrea & me at St. Juan).

Travelling and meeting people from very different backgrounds to ours enriched our lives making us more tolerant of others. We returned home a year later far better for the experience.

I hope you enjoyed reading a brief insight to our Caribbean adventure.

Regards Andy (Cuz)

A VISIT TO THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM by Phil Hopkins

Last September, Gill and I made a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum, near Lichfield, something we had planned to do for a while.

Arriving just after opening time, we were surprised at how many visitors were already on site, although it was a sunny day for a change!.

We took the land train around the site to get our bearings and this worked well as we could see where the various memorials that we were interested in seeing were located. The driver made some unscheduled stops and gave us some interesting facts. This included details of a talk by one of the volunteers at the 'Shot at Dawn' memorial taking place later that morning. Without being told this, we would have been unaware of it happening.

After the land train, we just walked and walked, stopping for a while by several memorials to absorb everything. There are almost four hundred memorials in the Arboretum, an impossible number to see in one visit. My brother lives a short drive away from the Arboretum and despite several visits, there are still many memorials he hasn't seen.



We arrived at the 'Shot at Dawn' (left) memorial in time to listen to a very moving summary about the 309 British and Commonwealth soldiers who were shot for a variety of offences. Most were shot after a very short trial with barely an opportunity to give a defence.

Some of the soldiers were underage when they volunteered and many are believed to have been suffering from PTSD, which

was not recognised until 1980. In 2006, all were officially pardoned by the British Government. The location of this memorial was deliberately sited at the most easterly part of the Arboretum, where the sun rises first – a deliberate poignant decision.

Walking to the furthest point on the site, as a keen football fan I was interested in the memorial to the football match (right) played on the battlefields on Christmas Day 1914, between British and German troops.

British and German soldiers met in no man's land and exchanged gifts, took photographs and some played impromptu games of football. They also buried casualties and repaired trenches and dugouts. After Boxing Day, meetings in no man's land dwindled out.



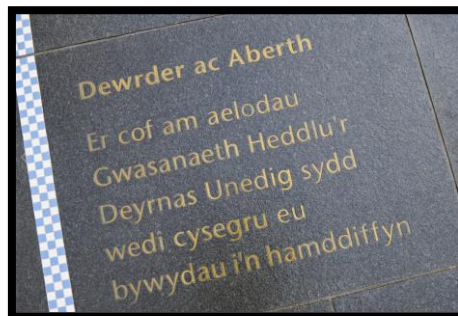
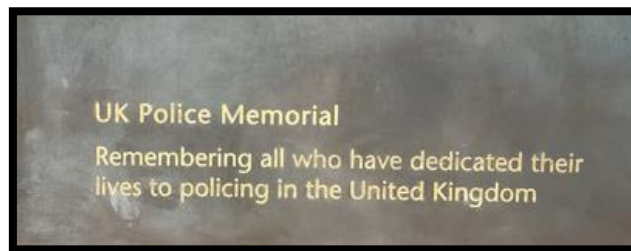


Our final stopping point was at the UK Police Memorial (left), dedicated in July 2021 by King (then Prince) Charles. It was good to see inscriptions in both English and Welsh (below). As can be seen from the photo, the memorial depicts an open door at the equivalent time of ten o'clock.

This was chosen as the most common time that officers go out on duty, not knowing if they will return. When we visited, the sun was streaming through the leaf shaped apertures on the memorial – we certainly saw it at its best.

There are seats in the area, giving visitors the time to sit and reflect - it is a fitting memorial to those officers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice

After all the walking, we didn't relish pounding 'The Beat' - the original Police Memorial Avenue, with trees planted to represent every British police force. That will have to wait for another time.



A couple of points to finish:-

The majority of trees planted on The Beat are Horse Chestnuts. The reason being this is that the original police batons were usually made from this wood.

A visit to the Arboretum is highly recommended, although it is a lot to try and fit into one visit. Admission is free with facilities to donate towards running costs. Without the knowledgeable and helpful volunteers, the facility could not function.

There is ample parking which costs £6 (£4 if booked online in advance) and a café on site.

PEMBROKESHIRE POLICE CADETS UNDERGOING TRAINING - 1962

Many thanks to Howard Griffiths of Wolfscastle, near Haverfordwest, for putting names to the faces of these six young Police Cadets.



Back row (L to R): Tony Eden (Rtd. DS441), the late Chris James (Rtd. Supt), Middle: David Newton, Howard Griffiths (Rtd. PS466) Front: David Bates (later joined Staffordshire Police) and believed to be Gary Evans. The Training Sergeant is Viv Richards B.Sc. (later Inspector).

TUDOR CONSTABLES COURSE AT FRIAR'S PARK HQ - 1984



Standing (L to R): Dulais Williams, Neeson Richards, Neil Bulley, Sue Mills, Marie Gardener, Bethan Phillips, Gerald Prosser, Peter Voros. Front: Wyn Foster, Ken Rees, C/Insp John Charles Davies, Inspector John James, John Lynch, Norman Minchin.

DYFED-POWYS POLICE JOINT BRANCH BOARD - 1995



1 Phil Hopkins 2 John Edwards 3 Gloria Hughes 4 Alison Ebsworth (Secretarial Staff) 5 Clive Cowey 6 John Thomas 7 Lorna McQuilliam 8 Phil Small 9 Peter Mair 10 Phil Price 11 Mike Benbow 12 Dean Richards 13 John Williams 14 Gerald Jones 15 Derek Bloomfield 16 Gerald Prosser 17 Ken Wyburn 18 Russell Smith 19 Mike Williams 20 Norman Welch.

LLANELLI 'A' DIVISION RUGBY XV EARLY 80's

Photo taken prior to a match against Carmarthen 'B' Division.



Back row (L to R): John Davies Terry Stokes Peter McGarrigle Bob Jones Howard Davies Delme Phillips Geoff Roberts Dilwyn Augustus Mike (Pop) Davies. Front row: Alan Lewis Norman Welch Gwilym Evans Alun Williams and Roger Anthony.

Sadly, a number of the officers that appear in these photos are no longer with us.

PICTURE PARADE



Congratulations to NARPO member Pat Cochrane of Newtown who celebrated his 98th birthday in November. Pat joined the Mid-Wales Constabulary in 1950 and was the Scenes of Crime Officer at Newtown until his retirement in October 1982.

Alongside Pat is Mike Denyard who also became a SOCO at Newtown.



Ieuan Matthews of Pembroke is the Chairman of the Sandy Bear Bereavement Charity. The charity is dedicated to supporting young people and their families who have experienced the death of a loved one.

At a presentation evening held at Narberth, Ieuan was awarded the Pembrokeshire 'Volunteer of the Year' trophy by the High Sheriff of Dyfed, Mr Meurig Raymond CBE, DL.



Mrs Sylvia Perkins, the widow of the late Sergeant John Perkins is the current Mayoress of Carmarthen.

At an event held in May to celebrate the re-opening of the St. John's Ambulance hub at Carmarthen, Sylvia met Fr. Liam Bradley, Lead Chaplain, Dyfed-Powys Police.

Sylvia is a member of NARPO and regularly attends events held at Carmarthen along with Mrs Jean Evans who supplied the photo.



184 years between them and still going strong! On the left is Doug Jones (94 years) of Brecon and on the right is Bryan 'Dinger' Bell (90 years) of Welshpool. They met up at the Mid – Wales Constabulary Association reunion in October.

Both served at Brecon in the 70s and judging by their smiles they thoroughly enjoyed recalling their days at Delta Bravo.

THE FAMILY TRADITION CONTINUES by Dai Edwards

Just when they thought they could finally move on, Dyfed-Powys Police have decided to continue an unbroken streak that dates back to 1947.

When John Edwards joined the Carmarthenshire Constabulary in 1947 following his service with the Welsh Guards, it would surely have been hard to envisage his great-granddaughter continuing an Edwards family tradition some 77 years later.



PC Emily Edwards No.81 (left) became the fourth generation to serve within Dyfed-Powys Police and is shown here during her passing out ceremony in Carmarthen on 11th October 2024.

Also shown in the below photograph are her father, PS Dai Edwards 505 who retired the following day, and Emily's Dadcu Mark Edwards a retired Chief Inspector and member of DPP NARPO.

It is a remarkable service record for the family which either shows a burning desire to serve their local community or an incredible lack of imagination in seeking out other career opportunities, perhaps a combination of the two!

Emily's great-grandfather was the late Chief Superintendent John (Jack) Edwards who retired at Newtown in 1982. His four sons Clive, Mark (Dai's father), Andrew and Philip all followed in their father's footsteps and on two previous occasions there have been five Edwards's serving at the same time.



C / Supt. John Edwards & sons

My sister, Helen, also works at HQ as a financial investigator within the Economic Crime Team so there are still two generations left to keep the record alive.

Policing is a rewarding career; the only regret perhaps is that John Edwards hadn't decided to become a professional footballer as I would rather have followed in those footsteps and retired after a fulfilling career as a Manchester United footballer!

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SAY HI TO THE WELLBEING & TRAUMA SUPPORT DOGS by Kim Jameson

Kim Jameson (Rtd. PS828) retired from Dyfed-Powys Police in 2003 after 21 years' service followed by a further eight years as a member of the Support Staff.



Kim is a passionate dog lover and a volunteer with **Pets As Therapy (PAT)** - a national charity that enhances the health and wellbeing of thousands of people across the UK by visiting all types of establishments to support those affected by trauma. They also get the opportunity to attend national events and to support wellbeing outreach services. When a dog is introduced to the workplace, the atmosphere immediately changes and people want to interact with the dog.

Today, Kim together with Golden Willow, Robyn and Barney, her beautiful golden retrievers visit Police Stations within the force area to help officers and staff with their well-being. Kim has kindly written this account of the invaluable service the Wellbeing Service provides.

In 2022, I was asked by PC Hannah Chiffi at HQ if I would be prepared to take my dogs to an event the force was holding. I readily agreed and then attended several more Wellbeing Events at several stations.

I discovered that The National Police Wellbeing Service had a K-9 unit called **OK9 Wellbeing Trauma and Support Dogs**. I wanted to be a part of this important service and so the journey began. Together with Human Resources and Occupational Health we started looking into setting up a similar volunteer unit within Dyfed Powys.



It's been a long journey but in late 2023 we got the go ahead. My dogs were assessed, and we became a Volunteer Police Wellbeing Trauma and Support Dogs Team. I am very proud to be part of this project, I feel I have come full circle and I'm now qualified as an Assessor for OK9. My dogs love the attention they get and don't fully appreciate how much good they do!

Personally, I get huge satisfaction in giving back to the service that gave me so much. My retirement was on medical grounds, this meant I couldn't physically do the job anymore. I also believe I was suffering with PTSD following a particularly traumatic and long running enquiry. I wish we had had something like this back then as it would have helped me so much.

I am fortunate that I am now fit and healthy, which enables me to perform this volunteering within the Police service. and enjoy the experience of reading. They have a wonderful life leading full, active lives outdoors in all weathers. At present we are the only team within the force area, it would be great to get more people interested. I am based in Pembrokeshire and am happy to travel but obviously the wellbeing of the dogs is paramount. Some stations are a little too far to travel from Pembroke, especially as I have a new addition to the family who is a very nervous rescue dog. I am currently an assessor for Pets as Therapy and am hoping to do the same for OK9 Dogs.

What do we do?

Anything really that might help Officers and Support Staff with their Wellbeing. We have supported the DPP Wellbeing Weeks, and I am sure Occupation Health would agree that the dogs are a draw to get people to come out to their van.

The benefits being that more people are now having Health Checks which must be good news – they also get some de-stressing from the dogs during the process.

Also, when there has been a particularly traumatic incident we can come in and provide officers with much-needed stress relief. Currently, we go into the Force Control Centre once a month providing a much need morale boost to the staff working there.



If you would like more information, I am happy to speak to you - just drop me an email and I will get back to you. My email address is goldenpawprints@me.com

DON'T DIE OF EMBARRASSMENT - DO THE TEST!

Bowel screening aims to find cancer at an early stage when treatment is likely to be more effective. Early detection is key. At least 9 out of 10 people will survive bowel cancer if it's found and treated early. Bowel cancer screening can save lives but in Wales - only 65% of people invited to take part in screening actually do so.



The test kit (left) is designed to measure how much blood is in your poo and can be completed at home.

Once you have posted your sample your results will be back with you within two weeks. People aged between 50 and 74 and living in Wales are invited to take the test every two years.

As of Wednesday 9th October 2024, Bowel Screening Wales started to invite people aged 50 for bowel cancer screening for the first time. The programme will be rolled out to the newly eligible age group gradually over the next 10 months.

Note: If you are aged 50 you do not need to request a test kit, you will be automatically invited.

ST. DAVID'S DAY CELEBRATION

Fifty members of Dyfed-Powys NARPO celebrated the special day at a coffee morning held in Haverfordwest with plenty of red shirts and daffodils on display.



There was lots of reminiscing and laughter during the hugely enjoyable event which ended with attendees singing a rousing rendition of the national anthem.

NORTH POWYS COFFEE MORNING

Twenty seven members enjoyed a coffee morning with a difference on 25th November at Themes Restaurant, Newtown



Themes is a working restaurant staffed entirely by students who are undergoing training in all aspects of the hospitality sector.

DYLAN HUGHES – UPDATE



The last edition of the newsletter included an article about Dylan Hughes (left), the grandson of NARPO member Gloria Hughes, who represented Wales in the 2023 Physical Disability Rugby League (PDRL) World Cup.

In recognition of Dylan being the only team member to play in every international PDRL match played by Wales, he was appointed captain of the team in a friendly match against England in October at Eccles, Greater Manchester. Unfortunately, the game was abandoned in the first half due to one of Dylan's team-mates suffering a serious injury.

Congratulations Dylan, hopefully you will have another opportunity to captain your national team.

NARPO GOLF DAY by Phil Hopkins

Golfers may have noticed the absence of the 2024 NARPO Golf Day.

I last organised the competition in 2019 and Covid put paid to the next two years' events. The Golf Days held in the following two years were organised by Ian John and then Gareth Wheatman.

For the Golf Day to continue, we need someone prepared to take on the role of organiser. The competition has always been held at Builth Wells Golf Club due to its central location and as we are always well looked after there.

We have been very fortunate that member David Jones, of David M Jones and Partners, Accountants of Hay on Wye sponsors the event and has pledged to continue his support.

It is not an onerous task and I will be happy to provide any assistance. It would be a pity if this date on the social calendar does not continue. Please contact me if you are interested.

AND FINALLY - POLICE MOUNTED SECTION



In 1911, Mr. Winston Churchill was Home Secretary and ordered each force to form a Mounted Section. This photo was taken in 1914 and shows the Pembrokeshire Police Mounted Section at Albion Square, Pembroke Dock. During World War 1 the section was disbanded.

On a lighter note, this is a true seasonal story: A young girl was riding her new bike when she was stopped by a Police officer on horseback. He asked, "Did Santa get you that bike?" "Yes" replies the little girl. "Well tell him to put lights on it next year". The girl looks up at the officer and says, "Did Santa bring you that lovely horse?" Playing along with the game, the officer replied, "Yes, he certainly did". "Well," says the girl "Next year tell Santa that the dick goes under the horse not on top of it!!"