

FIREFIGHTER

FIREFIGHTERS



FIRE BRIGADES UNION CENTENARY 1918-2018

THE MAGAZINE OF THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION | WWW.FBU.ORG.UK | APRIL/MAY 2018

**ENCLOSED
YOUR
MEMORIAL
BADGE**

FIREFIGHTERS
MEMORIAL DAY, 4 MAY



CONTAMINANTS

STEVEN SAYS: DECONTAMINATE AFTER EVERY SHOUT

READ HIS STORY, P10





MATT WRACK FIREFIGHTERS AND THE MANCHESTER ARENA BOMBING

KERSLAKE REPORT

As *Firefighter* went to press the Kerslake Report on the emergency service response to the horrific Manchester Arena bombing last May had just been published.

It is not kind reading for the principal management at Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service. They come in for major criticism for holding off deployment to the bombing for nearly two hours due to a major communications breakdown.

Importantly, the report does make clear that the firefighters were not to blame for the delay and focuses the criticism on the leadership of the GMFRS.

There is a lot of anger among our members in Greater Manchester about the decisions made on that night. The words of one firefighter, speaking anonymously to the *Manchester Evening News*, sums up how our members feel at the moment.

"We were just sitting there, desperate to go. We just wanted to help. There was a massive feeling of regret, disappointment, disapproval, sadness, anger and outrage that we were held back by management and could have helped in some way.

"I want to be 100% clear the firefighters on the night wanted to go and actively pushed management to commit us. We knew and understood the risk but were not allowed to go."

The FBU has been considering the implications of what happened on the night and will review them



A tribute to the victims of the Manchester Arena attack

in light of the report.

The union will begin discussions with the appropriate parties, including the national fire service employers; the national fire chiefs' council and the Home Office to discuss the findings of the report.

CANCER AND CONTAMINANTS

Many of us signed up to the fire service without full knowledge of the effects contaminants from fires could have on our long-term health.

Now, however, new evidence emerges all the time.

Firefighters face the risk of developing cancer because of exposure to toxic chemicals at fires and other incidents.

We look at this issue in depth in this edition of *Firefighter*. We hear from firefighters who have had first-hand experience of cancer and report from an international conference

where leading academics, industry experts and firefighter union representatives discussed practical measures for preventing exposure to contaminants as well as campaigns for presumptive legislation.

The FBU has issued guidance for members on how to avoid being contaminated and we include, in copies of the magazine going to branches, a poster we hope will be displayed prominently at fire stations and other workplaces. It details 10 principles to follow in order to stop contaminants.

FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL DAY- FBU BLACK RIBBON BADGE

The poster is not the only extra included in this magazine.

Next month, the second annual Firefighters Memorial Day will be held on 4 May and every

FBU member will receive a memorial badge.

This is a day for current and retired firefighters, our families and the wider community to join us in honouring our fallen brothers and sisters.

It is important our communities do not forget the sacrifice of those who have gone before us.

Last month, I was honoured to lay a wreath on behalf of the union at a memorial event to honour the 19 firefighters and salvage corps members who died at the Cheapside Street fire in Glasgow in 1960.

No matter how much time has passed, the firefighters who died protecting their communities must be remembered.

I hope you wear the memorial badge with pride on the day and take part in the minute's silence at midday.





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**SPECIAL
DEAL FOR
FBU MEMBERS**

NEWS

MORE POLICE BOSSES

Police and crime commissioners to take over more local fire and rescue services p6



NEW VICE-PRESIDENT

North East executive council member Andy Noble is the FBU's new vice-president 6



Victims of police spying outside New Scotland Yard in London

VICTIMS OF POLICE SPYING WALK OUT OF INQUIRY OVER ITS SECRECY

TRADE UNIONS

The inquiry into police spying on political organisations, including upon prominent trade unionists, is at risk of losing all credibility after a group of core participants walked out in protest at the lack of progress the inquiry has made over the past three years.

The final straw leading to the boycott was the refusal of the judge chairing the inquiry, Sir John Mitting, to reveal the cover names of the police officers who spied on trade unionists, campaigners and activists.

Allowing the identities of the officers to remain hidden means that the full extent of the spying will not be revealed.

Hundreds of potential victims may still not realise that they were spied upon by undercover police officers.

In some of the most notorious cases, women were duped into sexual relationships with these police officers.

In one episode that enraged participants, Judge Mitting remarked that a police officer with the code HN58 would probably not have had intimate relations with those he spied on because he had been married in real life for many years.

One of the core participants to walk out was Baroness Doreen Lawrence, who was spied on as she and her family campaigned for justice over the racist murder of her son Stephen.

'SINCE WE PRESENTED OUR EVIDENCE, WE HAVE NOT BEEN GIVEN A SINGLE DOCUMENT, HEARD ONE TESTIMONY OR HAD ANYTHING ELSE FROM THE INQUIRY TO ACCOUNT FOR THIS BEHAVIOUR'

She said she was saddened by the walkout, but it was action "I was forced to take. (They are) turning what should be a transparent, accountable and public hearing into an inquiry cloaked in secrecy and anonymity."

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack was one of the trade unionists who was spied upon.

"Since we presented our evidence, we have not been given a single document, heard one testimony or had anything else from the inquiry to account for this behaviour," he said.

"That's why the FBU supports the other core participants' protest. Judge Mitting has failed to hold the police to account for their actions. He should think again or get out of the way, so someone else can take it up."

The FBU was given core participant status in the inquiry after the union presented evidence of police spying on a number of officials over many years.

HISTORIC ISSUES OF FIREFIGHTER ONLINE

FBU CENTENARY – FIREFIGHTERS 100

All surviving issues of *Firefighter* magazine, dating back to 1932, have been made available to browse online in what is believed to be a first for a UK trade union publication.

The back catalogue gives a priceless insight into the development of the fire service and its trade union through the 20th century, including the Second World War, the Blitz and the first-ever national firefighters' strike.

The earliest editions of *Firefighter* – pre-1932 – were destroyed in a fire at the union's then headquarters during the Blitz.

Matt Wrack, general secretary of the FBU, said: "The FBU has a rich and engrossing history. Readers will find it an illuminating journey about how their fire and rescue service has developed

over the past 100 years and the essential role the FBU has played in that.

"It is amazing that a small industrial union like ours has been able to regularly publish a high quality journal for the best part of a century."

It took the Modern Records Centre at Warwick University more than a year to digitise the large collection. Rebecca Jones worked on the project. "My father is a retired firefighter from Leicestershire, so it was of great personal interest," she says.

"I found it poignant that the collection ends with 9/11, and the articles on the effect of television on the 1955 general election were fascinating."

You can browse the archives at: <https://bit.ly/2GbmbBkK>

■ If you have any issues dating back to before 1932, please get in touch with us at firefighter@fbu.org.uk



June Wheeler and her son Mark with FBU president Ian Murray (centre) and Jim Bradley's walking stick

SPECIAL VISITORS AT UNION HQ

JIM BRADLEY

FBU head office had special visitors last month – the granddaughter and great-grandson of Jim Bradley, one of the founders of the union after whom the building is named.

June Wheeler and her son Mark, who has followed in the family's trade union tradition, becoming a branch chair of the rail union ASLEF,

donated items to the FBU archives including Jim Bradley's walking stick.

Bradley was born and grew up on the station his firefighter father served at.

He founded the union in 1918 with George Gamble, a firefighter in a private brigade.

Although neither June or Mark can remember Jim Bradley himself, they do have fond memories of his son Jim Bradley Jr.

Uncle Charles, as they knew him, followed his grandfather into the fire service after being freed from a POW camp in the First World War and served for several years in the London Fire Brigade.

He was executive council member for London during the Second World War.

The oldest item in the FBU archives, the 1919 Rule Book, belonged to Jim Bradley Jr.

SOUNDING OFF

Mandatory voter ID will undermine democracy and risk disenfranchising citizens, says MP Cat Smith

DEMOCRACY IS FOR EVERYONE

In this May's local authority elections the government will be piloting mandatory voter identification in some areas – perhaps one of the most dramatic changes ever to our current voting system.

The Labour Party believes democracy is for everyone. We want everyone's voice to be heard, no matter what their background, which is why we oppose the government plans.

Electoral fraud is a serious crime and it is vital that the police have the resources they need to bring about prosecution. But the government proposals are clearly disproportionate.

Last year there were 28 allegations of impersonation – the type of fraud that voter ID is designed to tackle – out of 45 million votes cast.

That is one allegation for every 1.6 million votes. Of these 28 allegations, one case resulted in a conviction. Trust in our democratic system is vital, which is why strategies to tackle fraud should be based on facts.

Decades of international studies show that highly restrictive ID requirements make it harder for people to vote, reduce turnout and exclude some parts of the electorate, and do little to stop determined fraudsters.

We cannot allow this Conservative government to seriously undermine our democracy and risk disenfranchising voters. The Electoral Commission has warned that 3.5 million voters – 7.5% of the electorate – do not have photo ID.

This is clearly not a party political issue. This is about doing the right thing for our democracy – which is why an unprecedented coalition of leading charities and academics wrote to Chloe Smith, minister for the constitution, calling on the government to urgently reconsider the decision to enforce voter ID this May.





Jason Ablewhite – above on patrol with police officers in Cambridge – will be one of the police and crime commissioners taking over a local fire service. He was elected PCC for Cambridgeshire in May 2016. His career background is in sales and management in the food sector. He retired in 2015 to concentrate on local politics.

MORE FIRE SERVICES TO BE RUN BY CRIME BOSSES

POLICE COMMISSIONER TAKEOVERS

As *Firefighter* went to press, the government announced plans for police and crime commissioners (PCCs) in Cambridgeshire, Staffordshire and West Mercia to take over their local fire and rescue services. Essex fire service was taken over in October 2017.

FBU national officer Dave Green, said: "The FBU is still fully opposed to PCC

takeover of the fire service. It is a threat to our independence. The government has behaved appallingly by commissioning an 'independent' review undertaken by the home secretary, from whose office the whole concept of PCCs running the fire and rescue service originated".

The government will now prepare the necessary statutory instrument to give effect to these proposals in the coming months.



ALAN TOTTERDELL

OBITUARY

Former FBU national officer Alan Totterdell (*left*) has died aged 74 after a serious illness. He held the position from 1985 to 1998 and his remit included organising FBU education, national school and the union's annual conference.

He worked closely with the then chair of conference standing orders committee, Alex Merry. "He was a man of many old fashioned virtues, as well as a few old fashioned opinions," he said. "Alan was a rich part of the fabric of so many lives. It was a privilege to have been a part of his."

Alan's former PA Sue Lafferty counted him as a close friend. "He was thoughtful, kind and had a great sense of humour," she said. "Memories of Alan will last in my heart. He will be sorely missed by all those who knew him".

Alan is survived by his wife Carol and sons, Ian and Neal.

IN BRIEF

FBU ELECTION ROUND-UP

It has been a busy period of elections for FBU officials.

North East executive council member Andy Noble (*below*) becomes the new



vice-president, taking over from Ian Murray, who became president earlier this year.

Brian Hooper was elected to take up the position of EC member for the Eastern region as Jamie Wyatt retires.

Pat Carberry was re-elected national secretary of the LGBT section and Andrew Scattergood becomes the new regional secretary for the West Midlands as Pete Goulden retires.

South West EC member Tam McFarlane was re-elected and he also takes up a new role as a temporary national officer.

SHARING SKILLS

The FBU in Scotland delivered BA training to eight Palestinian firefighters in February as part of a project that has seen MPs table an early day motion applauding their work.

The Palestinian Support Unit, led by the FBU's Jim Malone has, since 2009, delivered training to more than 100 Palestinian firefighters, helping them to learn the latest firefighting techniques which will help them to save lives in their homeland.

DYING TO WORK CAMPAIGN

Derbyshire is the latest service to make the Dying to Work pledge to protect workers who are diagnosed with a terminal illness. At least nine fire and rescue services are now signed up to the scheme.

■ www.dyingtowork.co.uk



West Midlands officials Andrew Scattergood and Steve Price Hunt with FBU members campaigning against enforced contract changes

Campaigning is at the core of what the Fire Brigades Union does. In this News Focus, we look at how some brigades are tackling the challenges

NORTH YORKSHIRE

Collective action has been the difference between success and failure for North Yorkshire FBU's dispute over the use and crewing of tactical response vehicles (TRVs).

An overtime ban was only recently lifted after the fire service agreed to recruit more firefighters so that crewing on the vehicles could be increased from three to four. The union agreed to lift the overtime ban to ensure that the vehicles would be better crewed until new recruits are trained.

Brigade secretary Steve Howley said he was proud of his members sticking together: "100% of our members adhered to the overtime ban putting us in a strong position," he said. It goes to show how much we can achieve if everyone pulls together. We can reverse cuts, get a safer service and get a better deal for members. But that can only happen if we are united."

As a result of the campaign, the FBU was given a seat on the fire authority. It now means that Howley can respond to and challenge incorrect statements from other authority members.

"Before, I would have only been allowed to read out a three-minute statement to the authority and I had no right of reply to their response. Now I can make sure the expert voice of the union is heard," he said.

CHESHIRE

Following a robust campaign of more than two years, Cheshire FBU has managed to overturn a decision to downgrade appliances at two fire stations – saving up to 40 firefighter jobs in the process.

In February, a majority of councillors, from across the political spectrum, rejected the proposals at a review. Now, two wholetime appliances will stay at Crewe fire station and another at Ellesmere Port.

Ahead of the review, officials set about a vigorous 12-month campaign visiting trades councils, attending constituency Labour party meetings, lobbying Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, Cheshire MPs and the police and crime commissioner.

Members knocked on doors and ran campaign stalls in the two town centres creating a broad coalition of support culminating in a 150-strong lobby of the authority on the morning of the meeting.

**'IT GOES TO SHOW
HOW MUCH WE CAN
ACHIEVE IF EVERYONE
PULLS TOGETHER'**

"It was a joyous moment as the vote came in," says brigade secretary Andrew Fox-Hewitt. "Our efforts paid off. Members from all across the county have been in touch to say they are proud of their officials and union."

WEST MIDLANDS

Fired Up, a campaign launched by West Midlands FBU against contract changes that would force new joiners to carry out non-agreed work, continues with a strong focus on communication with members.

Brigade officials Steve Price-Hunt and Andrew Scattergood film regular video updates on a mobile phone before uploading them to Facebook.

It is a cheap, easy and accessible way to ensure members are kept up to date with developments in the campaign.

"It was inspired by Matt Wrack and Tam McFarlane's video updates," says West Midlands FBU organiser Billy Holland.

"It has had great feedback as it delivers a personal message straight to our members' phones and laptops.

"The campaign has had great success raising our concerns with politicians and the public. "Our petition gained over 10,000 signatures in less than one week and the response has been clear. People do not want their firefighters issued with flexible contracts."



UNION LAUNCHES CENTENARY WEBSITE

A new section of the Fire Brigades Union website will explore the history of the union and the fire and rescue service.

Visitors will be able to examine key fire service related events and browse through the digitised archive collection of *Firefighter* magazine dating back to the 1930s.

Events will be organised across the UK throughout 2018 to mark the centenary of the union. Keep an eye on the centenary website for events in your area.

Visit the new website at:

www.fbu.org.uk/centenary

To promote an event, email:

centenary@fbu.org.uk



London firefighters using Proto breathing apparatus leave the scene of a fire in the 1930s



FIREFIGHTERS CAN ACT NOW ON EXPOSURE TO CONTAMINANTS

The risk of exposure to cancer-causing contaminants at fires can be reduced with the adoption of simple procedures, reports **William Murphy**



Steven Burns (seen here speaking) with Gosport fire station watch colleagues

MARK THOMAS

Shaun Williams remembers that, when he was a child in 1976, his retained firefighter father, Gareth, was paged to respond to a large 20-pump forest fire in Snowdonia, North Wales. He was gone for three days. Fires like these were so intense and relief resources so scant that leaving the fire ground during the operation was not possible. When Gareth and his colleagues did get time to rest, they would have stayed at the scene. Incidents like this stand out in Shaun's memory.

Several years later, in 1981, Gareth was diagnosed with throat cancer. Despite several operations to remove the cancerous lump from his neck, it eventually spread to his brain. He died aged just 45.

"Back then, the link between firefighting and cancer wasn't a thing," says Shaun, who went on to follow in his father's footsteps, serving at the same fire

station, Betws-y-Coed, for the best part of 20 years. "No one can say for sure if his cancer was a result of the job, but I think about it a lot. They wouldn't have worn BA at forest fires and face masks weren't in use back then."

Shaun wonders if the regular call-outs to tackle fires involving bracken – common on the slopes of Snowdon, and containing a carcinogenic compound called ptaquiloside – contributed to his father's condition.

RESEARCH

There is a growing body of research to suggest that it may have.

A landmark study by researchers at the University of Central Lancashire found that a firefighter's risk of developing cancer is increased by dangerously high levels of harmful chemicals that remain on PPE following exposure to smoke.

It concluded that skin absorption, rather than inhalation, is the leading cause of exposure to carcinogenic gases created during a fire, known as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).

Anna Stec, lead researcher and professor in fire chemistry and toxicity at the university, said: "We already know the incidence of cancer is higher amongst firefighters compared to the general public, and that it is their leading cause of death. We have now identified skin absorption as their principal source of exposure to cancerous gases."

Researchers came to the worrying conclusion that methods used to clean firefighters' PPE are not effectively implemented. This means that kit is already contaminated when it is next used and the length of time skin is exposed to dangerous fire toxins is increased.

The FBU has issued guidance outlining straightforward measures that members can follow that will reduce the risk of being exposed to contaminants.

Simple steps such as cleaning PPE after each incident and using wet-wipes to remove soot from the skin after a fire will help to reduce exposure.

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service now stores wet-wipes on board every appliance and, after a fire, it is the norm for contaminated BA kit to be placed in a sealed bag and put in a separate locker on the appliance. Gloves have also been issued for servicing BA equipment after a fire, to stop contaminants being absorbed through the hands.

It is a move welcomed by Gosport firefighter Steven Burns, who was diagnosed with bladder cancer five years ago. He has since become a passionate advocate for

decontamination after every fire call.

"There is a lot we can do to protect ourselves," the 46-year-old says. "If you or your PPE smells of smoke, you are contaminated and you need to get it cleaned up as soon as possible."

It was only by chance that Steven was diagnosed in time for doctors to act. The former Royal Navy officer had volunteered to take part in trials of a new piece of army kit – known informally as the combat codpiece – designed to protect soldiers' genitals from roadside bombs in Afghanistan.

His medical showed that there was blood in his urine and he was advised to see his GP immediately.

For a few months Steven ignored the warning signs, believing they were a common symptom in long-distance runners. He had been training hard for a marathon and had always been a fitness fanatic. It was only after returning from a call-out to a car fire that he knew he had to do something. He was feeling depleted, faint, sick.

Just days later, on 7 January 2013 – Steven won't forget that date – doctors found a fist-sized tumour in his bladder.

"When the doctor broke the news, it hit me so hard," he says. "I tried standing up and just fainted, hit the floor, cracked my nose wide open."

'WORST DAY OF MY LIFE'

"When I got home to my family, I looked like I'd been in the wars. My little girl burst into tears when she saw me. Breaking the news to my wife ... it was the worst day of my life." Now, 18 painful operations and 12 rounds of chemotherapy later, he is in remission.

It's been a hard slog of a journey but one that could have been easier if the cancer had been caught earlier. Steven regrets not going to the doctors at an earlier stage and doesn't want other firefighters to make that same mistake.

His message is clear – do everything you can to decontaminate yourself after a shout. And do not ignore any symptoms. Get to the doctors straight away.

"I don't want other firefighters going through what's happened to me," he says. "Constant invasive procedures like colonoscopies and having to self-catheterise; you feel violated and degraded."

"If there's anything we can do to stop so many firefighters contracting cancer; we need to be doing it. Firefighters need to be doing it."

■ Download the FBU guide to avoiding contaminants: www.fbu.org.uk/contaminants-guidance

Firefighters, as a result of their work, are exposed to contaminants that cause cancer. **Sean Starbuck** reports on an international firefighter conference that shows prevention is possible and that, when this fails, compensation is needed



WAVE/ROE

SAVING LIVES, PROT

The issue of occupational cancer drew around 100 firefighters and their union representatives from across the globe to meet in Reykjavik, Iceland in March this year. The conference, hosted by the LSS fire and medical staffs union, saw leading academics, industry experts and firefighter union representatives discuss practical measures for preventing exposure and campaigns for presumptive legislation.

There is now a body of international academic literature on firefighters developing and dying from cancer. In 2007 the International Agency for Research into Cancer (IARC) deemed firefighting as in its Group 2B: “possibly carcinogenic to humans”.

The conference heard about studies from the United States, Scandinavia and Australia that show firefighters face an elevated risk of getting some cancers.

Alex Forrest, from the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Canada, reported that IARC appears ready to reassess firefighting in the light of new research.

The conference heard about firefighters’ exposure to carcinogens such as benzene from diesel exhaust emissions, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) found in smoke.

All studies identify three routes for exposure: inhalation, skin (dermal) and ingestion. Delegates watched a very powerful Miami IAFF film which showed how contaminants find their way onto firefighters’ bodies, even when they are wearing full personal protective equipment (PPE).

CONTAMINATION

Researchers used ink from the retail sector designed to identify theft. It was sprinkled on firefighters’ gear and then tracked on stations. Evidence of contamination was found in mess rooms, offices and all over firefighters’ skin.

To emphasise the impact on firefighters’ families, a small boy played football and ended up with ink on his hands – a warning about putting fire kits in personal vehicles or washing dirty kit at home.

Jefferey Burgess from the University

of Arizona explained his research with the Tucson fire department and IAFF Local 479. His study used urine, blood and skin-wipe samples and DNA testing. It has identified epigenetic changes linked to cancer.

Tommy Kjær, president of the Danish firefighters’ union Brandfolkernes Organisation, described findings from a similar study in Denmark that were published last year.

Juha Laitinen, from the Finnish Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, warned of the risks faced by firefighter trainers, who undertake around 120 “smoke dives” every year and are therefore at increased risk from carcinogens.

Magnús Þórarinnsson, a Gothenburg firefighter, explained the Skellefteå model developed in Sweden by firefighters to better protect themselves.

It is a whole-cycle approach that proceeds from the fire station, through the journey on the appliance to a fire call; procedures at the incident; decontamination afterwards; followed by the return on the appliance; and further cleaning at the fire station.



TECTING OUR PEOPLE

After working at an incident there is wash down on scene, using tents for changing. Contaminated gear is boxed up and transported separately on the appliance.

Swedish firefighters use Viking Guardian suits, which have an outer shell that can be detached after attending a fire, leaving the inner liner as a fully wearable suit to be worn during debriefing and return to base, and are provided with clean hoods and gloves.

Contaminated PPE is washed on site. Firefighters shower and have fresh work wear and PPE.

Ken Block, chief fire officer in Edmonton, Canada, explained similar procedures that his service has introduced to prevent exposure to contaminants.

The conference was shown a film made by the Boston, Massachusetts, fire department, showing its “cancer wall”, with cancer sufferers explaining why there cannot be dirty firefighters any more.

Tommy Verminck, chief executive of the Belgium-based Decontex company, discussed the use of liquid carbon dioxide to clean PPE kit.

Tommy Kristoffersen from the Bergen, Norway, fire service trade union described a new reporting app that firefighters can use to record exposures. It is ready to launch shortly.

Alex Forrest, who pioneered presumptive legislation in Canada, the USA and elsewhere, explained that such laws include a list of occupational cancers linked to some kind of compensation.

If a firefighter covered by the presumptive legislation contracts a disease or condition that is specified in the presumptive law, then that disease or condition is presumed to have come from their occupation.

BURDEN OF PROOF

The burden of proof is on the employer to show that the condition was not caused by the firefighter's work, rather than on the firefighter to prove that it was.

Forrest said the campaign for presumptive legislation had started because of a lack of universal health care (particularly in the US) and expensive cancer treatment bills. It has been extended to cover loss of earnings and pension arrangements.

He pointed out that presumptive legislation in the USA was “all over the place”. Although 40 out of 50 states have some kind of presumptive law, the firefighters covered, the cancers specified and the benefits received, vary from place to place.

It was also clear that the cancer risk thresholds needed for presumption differed from the UK, where a doubling of risk is required.

Peter Marshall, national secretary of the United Firefighters Union of Australia, explained its successful campaign for presumptive legislation.

The union organised a legislative conference and worked with politicians. It got testimony from international experts because no chief officer in Australia was prepared to give evidence.

Jim Quinn, FBU executive council member for Northern Ireland, who also attended the conference, said these findings were “dynamite”.

“Clean is the new tough,” Quinn said after hearing the presentations. The FBU will take everything learned from this conference and put it into the campaign to protect members in the UK.



STAND WITH US ON FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL DAY

The second UK-wide Firefighters Memorial Day takes place on 4 May. Let's make it a day to be proud of

Last May saw the UK mark its first ever Firefighters Memorial Day to commemorate the bravery and sacrifice of those who lost their lives in the line of duty. Thousands of firefighters, bereaved families, supporters and well-wishers observed one minute's silence at midday at fire stations. There was an outpouring of support on social media, with many users changing their profile picture to the FBU memorial badge and sharing pictures of memorial events.

This year, the Firefighters Memorial Trust, supported by the FBU, is hoping for even more activity to commemorate the 2,524 members of the fire and rescue service who have died while protecting the public.

The day means a lot to the loved ones of fallen firefighters. Dave Faust's son, Billy, lost his life alongside colleague Adam Meere tackling a fire in Bethnal Green, East London in 2004. He says the day brings much comfort to his family. "It means an awful lot to us to know the union and fire brigades are remembering the people they have lost," he says. "It is

a really, really great thing – not only for families but for the firefighters themselves and the service."

It is hoped that this new, proud tradition will continue for evermore. Last year firefighters at Hollins fire station in Oldham, Greater Manchester, had planned a memorial parade but, before proceedings could get under way, they were called out to tackle a lorry that was on fire. They completed the minute's silence on their return. And fire crews who were not on duty at the time arranged to hold their own minute's silence when they were on shift.

Let's make this year's Firefighters Memorial Day one to remember.

TOP: Remembrance event on the 60th anniversary of Smithfield Market fire

MIDDLE LEFT: The funeral in 1996 of Avon firefighter Fleur Lombard, the first woman to die in peacetime service in Britain

MIDDLE RIGHT: February premiere in Bristol of the FBU documentary on the union's history, *The Firefighters' Story*

BOTTOM: Last year's memorial event for firefighters Billy Faust and Adam Meere with Billy's family in attendance



PA IMAGES





MARK THOMAS

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR WAYS TO MARK FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL DAY 2018

GET PEOPLE INVOLVED

This year, a number of fire services will organise open days at stations with a one-minute silence as the centrepiece. An important aspect of the day is to enable local communities to honour their firefighters. Getting members of the public, as well as retired and off-duty firefighters, along to local fire stations for the midday silence is a wonderful way to mark the day.



PAUL BOX

THE FIREFIGHTERS' STORY:

100 years of the Fire Brigades Union tells the story of the FBU from its inception in 1918 up to the present day and illustrates how the union and firefighting have changed over 10 decades. The film has already been shown at events in London, Bristol and Glasgow and the union is urging members to organise further screenings across the country. Members in Humberside have organised a film showing at an open day at East Hull fire station.

To register your interest in organising a showing, go to: www.fbu.org.uk/firefighters-story-film-showing

WEAR YOUR MEMORIAL LAPEL BADGE

To mark this year's Memorial Day, every member will receive a newly designed FBU memorial lapel badge (enclosed in this issue of *Firefighter*). These are for members to wear in the run-up to Memorial Day in respectful remembrance of fallen comrades.



SHOUT OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

A video promoting this year's Memorial Day has been put together and members are asked to share it with family and friends through social media. Look out for the film on the FBU's Facebook and Twitter pages and be sure to use the hashtag #FMD18. Members can also change their social media profile picture to the FBU memorial badge for the day.

GET YOUR MP TO SIGN EDM 1115

Write to your MP asking them to sign EDM 1115 - Firefighters Memorial Day, 4 May 2018. It calls for all Parliamentarians to attend their nearest fire station and take part in the minute's silence at midday. You can find and write to your MP using the website www.writetothem.com



STEFANO CAONANO

THE LONG FIGHT TO BAN TOXIC FOAM

Lifesaving fire safety regulations are a legacy of a 1979 fire in Manchester that lives on today – unlike the 10 people who died in the disaster, writes **Helen Hague**

FIREFIGHTERS



FIRE BRIGADES UNION CENTENARY 1918–2018

On 8 May 1979, toxic fumes from plastic foam-filled furniture killed 10 people and left 47 injured in the Woolworths store in Manchester city centre. It would – eventually – lead to new life-saving regulations making furniture less flammable and toxic.

On the bright Spring day, fumes were billowing out of the building as the first fire crews arrived at Piccadilly Gardens at 1.30pm – two minutes after the first 999 call. Firefighter Kevin Brown was among them. As they neared the back of the six-storey building, crews saw people waving frantically from the top floor, with some trapped behind iron bars on the second floor.

“We all knew Woolies. We grew up with Woolies,” says Kevin with no idea back then he would be representing the region on the union’s executive decades later. “People were screaming and shouting, crews had to cut through the bars and lead people out.”

There were around 500 people in the store that lunchtime – those who died were on the second floor, in and around the restaurant where furniture, stuffed with highly flammable polyurethane foam, was stored. It was the toxic fumes from plastic stuffing that claimed the lives of shoppers and diners that day.



Firefighters examine plans of the store in the burned out restaurant area of the Woolworths store in Manchester



Woolworth’s staff member Cyril Baldwin, 68, who had served as an auxiliary firefighter in the Second World War, was the only staff member to die – bravely trying to rescue shoppers.

News outlets blamed Woolworths for the deaths. According to the Woolworths Museum, a website, it was “an utter failure of management, a poor building with feeble precautions and untrained staff which had cost 10 innocent people their lives. Customers died while managers dithered.” But without highly flammable furniture stuffing there would have been no deaths that day.

Fire kit was more basic back then – “wellies and no gloves” as Kevin Brown recalls. He should know – after rescuing shoppers he had to leave the fire scene to get the steam burns on his gloveless hands treated in hospital.

Days before Woolworths caught fire, Manchester firefighter Mike Fordham, then 28, had moved to London as the union’s first national health and safety official. For Mike, getting toxic, flammable foam banned from furniture was deeply personal.

He was 18 years old when, early on Christmas Day 1968, his watch was called to a house fire in which five children died after foam furniture caught fire. They had opened their Christmas presents in the front room and gone back upstairs. A piece of wrapping paper later caught light and set the sofa on fire. When the door was opened, before the fire crew arrived, a gust of wind sent toxic flames shooting upstairs.

As “the junior man”, it was Mike’s job to “carry the five dead children out, wrapped in sheets. At 18, naive and new to



The 1979 Manchester Woolworths fire

the job, I've got to say that was massive," says Mike. "We dealt with it in the traditional way – the crew took me out and got me absolutely paralytic." It was an extreme instance of what many other firefighters had gone through.

After the Woolworths fire, the need to get new regulations to stop people dying after inhaling toxic fumes from burning plastic had a new urgency. But it would be a tough slog. The fire took place five days after the election that took Margaret Thatcher to power. The tragedy was not enough to focus the minds of the new Tory government, ideologically committed to "cutting red tape" and "removing burdens on business" – not to mention strong lobbying from the furniture industry.

Vigorous campaigning by the FBU and other fire safety experts, including enlightened chief fire officers, paved the way for vital safety changes as the death toll from toxic plastic fumes continued to mount in the 1980s.

But it took nearly nine years after the Woolworths fire and

the deaths of 17 more children, killed by toxic fumes in their own homes, for the government to act. Such numbers, when individual tragedies are bunched together, shock the public. It was a classic instance of the "stable-door" approach that had shaped fire safety legislation – change comes not only after the horse has bolted, but also after mounting public outrage at needless deaths.

COUNTLESS LIVES SAVED

The Furniture and Furnishing (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 made people safer in their own homes and have saved countless lives. Under the new regulations, furniture would ignite less easily and burn more slowly and fire hazard warning labels on fabrics would be compulsory.

Woolworths fire veteran Kevin Brown doubts if firefighters would be able to respond so speedily to a fire on the same site today. "There were 10 appliances at the scene within 10 minutes when Woolworths caught fire," he says. "Now, since the cuts, four of those appliances have disappeared."

Mike Fordham retired from the FBU 12 years ago, after a lifetime campaigning for improved fire safety. As he watched the live TV footage of flames shooting up the sides of Grenfell Tower, his thoughts turned immediately to earlier fire tragedies. "They've put the stuff we got banned from the inside of buildings on the outside of tower blocks ... we got foam furniture banned for giving off horrendous toxic fumes and they went and lined the outside of tower blocks with similar stuff."

VIGOROUS CAMPAIGNING BY THE
FBU AND OTHER FIRE SAFETY
EXPERTS, PAVED THE WAY FOR
VITAL SAFETY CHANGES

ELLIOT BROWN



FIREFIGHTERS SPECIAL EDITION WATCHES

Last year Elliot Brown delivered a successful firefighters' watch project that raised £11,000 for firefighters' charities.

We received so many good comments that we asked Elliot Brown to run the project again with an additional version aimed at women.

Elliot Brown enjoys a reputation for producing 'tool' watches worn by demanding people – the military, mountain rescue, extreme athletes and firefighters. They are made with the kind of fit-for-purpose reliability lacking in so much of today's world.



The watch above is the original Canford firefighters' special edition. A 44mm watch with a Swiss movement and inner rotating timing bezel, it comes with black rubber and premium leather straps.

The watch to the left is the new Kimmeridge smaller edition at 38mm. It uses the same Swiss movement, shock absorption system and triple sealed crown capable of standing up to Elliot Brown's test at 200m in water that every watch must pass. It has a deep blue face and matching custom rubber strap.

Elliot Brown is very supportive of firefighters and once again will be donating a generous £35 from every watch sold to our charities. These watches make the perfect gift and with your help we hope to raise another significant sum.

I recently took delivery of one of your firefighter Canford watches. To say I'm impressed is the very least I can say. The watch is fantastic and is already sitting pride of place. The service and communication was also impressive and I can only thank you for adding the extra engraving, making

the watch very personal. The style and strap selection makes this watch ready for all occasions. It feels and looks great. Thank you once again and congratulations on your design and personable approach to customers. I will promote this as much as possible and already have friends and

firefighters alike commenting on the watch. So far, it is standing up to life as a firefighter with ease.

Many thanks and wishing the company well.

A. Griffiths

DWFRS Blue/Christchurch

To order, go to: www.elliottbrownwatches.com/fire

Personalise your watch with up to 20 characters engraved on the case back.

Spread payments into three monthly instalments (works with Visa or Mastercard credit cards).

Order deadline is **30 June** for

delivery in November 2018. All watches are made to order and it takes 130 days to make and test each one.

Offer available to firefighters, support staff and their families.

Not available to the public.



LEGAL BEAGLE

MASS DISMISSALS

– YOUR RIGHTS

Doug Christie of Thompsons Solicitors looks at legal ways to combat threatened mass dismissals

Recent news that a UK fire service was looking into the possibility of sacking firefighters and offering them re-employment only if they accepted unilaterally imposed terms and conditions, including working more hours, is just one more example of employers' unacceptable behaviour.

When it comes to threatened mass dismissals like this, steps can and should be taken to protect the rights of workers.

Depending on the numbers involved, a mass dismissal may trigger a need for what is known as "collective consultation" with the appropriate representative – the workers' trade union. The employer must provide genuine reasons for the dismissals and provide a platform for workers to challenge any opportunistic threats to their employment.

COLLECTIVE CONSULTATION

If a mass dismissal triggers the duty to consult described above, the employer must consult the union 30 or 45 days (depending on the numbers) before the first dismissal takes place. The following information must be provided to the representative:

- Reasons for the proposals to dismiss
- Numbers and descriptions of employees whom it is proposed to dismiss
- The total number of employees of any such description employed by the

employer at the establishment in question

- The proposed method of selecting employees who may be dismissed
- The proposed method of carrying out the dismissals, with regard to any agreed procedure, including the period over which the dismissals are to take effect
- The proposed method of calculating the amount of any redundancy payments
- Numbers of agency workers working temporarily for and under the supervision and direction of the employer
- Parts of the undertaking in which those agency workers are working and the type of work they are carrying out.

This information must be provided to the representative in writing.

Consultation must also take place on:

- avoiding the dismissals,
- reducing numbers of employees to be dismissed, and
- mitigating the consequences of the dismissals.

This must be a meaningful and genuine attempt at consultation. Agreement between employers and the representatives must be sought, even if no such agreement is reached. Notices of dismissal cannot be issued until the consultation has concluded. In effect, employers are legally bound to listen to their workers during this process.

Collective consultation can be a useful tool to combat employers threatening workers with dismissal unless they agree to new terms and

conditions. Even if the act of dismissal is in itself an empty threat, the duty to consult would still stand. If the employer fails to consult, a legal claim against them can be made.

There are certain special and rare circumstances in which an employer does not have to consult. An example would be a sudden disaster which would force any business to shut down. Such circumstances are very difficult to establish and should always be challenged.

If an employer still wants to press ahead with termination and re-engagement, this would be a serious matter and industrial action might be required.

It is also possible to bring claims for unfair dismissal, but an employer has only to show what is known as a "genuine business need" to defend such proceedings. So claims for unfair dismissal will be strongest where particular circumstances apply, such as an attempt to impose working hours which would be unlawful under the Working Time Regulations.

In these circumstances it may also be possible to claim for an unlawful inducement. This is where an employer seeks to offer an inducement to drive employees on to terms and conditions which are not collectively negotiated. The inducement in this case would be the offer of re-engagement as the alternative would simply be dismissal.

Compensation of over £4,000 per worker is payable where these claims succeed.

If you find yourself in a similar situation with your employer, Thompsons' advice is to always seek advice from the union first.



**FBU FREEPHONE
LEGAL ADVICE
0808 100 6061
IN SCOTLAND
0800 089 1331**

WWW.THOMPSONSTRADUION.LAW/TRADE-UNIONS/FBU

NOW AND ALWAYS,



Firefighters and trade unionists were essential in liberating Italy from fascism. Their history needs to be remembered, writes **Riccardo La Torre**

The firemen will be there, again in front rank. We will have learnt in the Fire Brigades Union the lessons which must be applied to society as a whole. We shall know the value of unity and loyalty, of persistence against tremendous odds, of self-discipline and of democratic discussion. By the virtue of our knowledge we shall take the lead."

The principles outlined by FBU national officer Peter Pain in 1941 are shared by firefighters all across the world. Pain was a prominent anti-fascist and was named in Hitler's "Black Book" list of people who were to be executed in the event of a Nazi invasion of the UK.

Firefighters in Italy during the Second World War embodied Pain's words. Their selfless and courageous acts were instrumental in the liberation of the Italian people and Europe from fascism and in the fight against the Nazis.

An enduring myth of the war is that the allies alone liberated Italy. The story of the Resistance (La Resistenza), which from 1943 to 1945 saw hundreds of thousands of Italian workers and trade unionists battle against fascism, is often forgotten.

Known as partisans, they took to the mountains to carry out guerrilla warfare against the occupying German army as well as the followers of the fascist

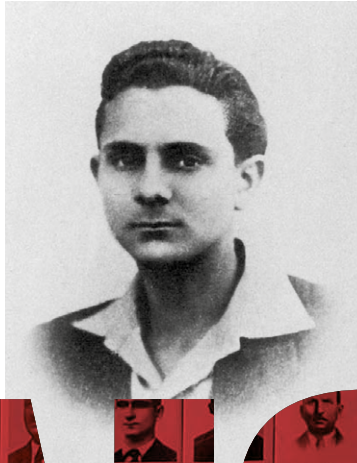
dictator Mussolini. Most of the partisans were either communists or socialists, but they also included anti-fascist Catholics. Others simply fought to rid Italian soil of occupying troops. The Resistance worked in a system of support that included political parties, anti-fascist networks and large sections of the working class.

One of the youngest partisans to be captured and executed by the fascists was 19-year-old Turin



Italian partisan firefighters

© COMANDO PROVINCIALE VIGILI DEL FUOCO TORINO



firefighter Pensiero Stringa. He had refused conscription to Mussolini's forces and instead took to the mountains to fight against them. His death in 1945 inspired fellow firefighters to form their own squad – the Stringa brigade – to take the fight to the fascists. As with all uniformed services in Italy at this time, they were subject to strict fascist controls, making their efforts even more risky.

AT LEAST 30 FIREFIGHTERS EXECUTED

The Stringa brigade was famous for emptying the water tanks of their fire appliances and using the space to smuggle British POWs and Jews across the Swiss border to safety. At least 30 Turin firefighters were executed by the Nazis for doing this incredibly dangerous work. Many more were arrested and sent to concentration camps.

The Nazis adopted a policy of ruthless reprisals – killing 10 Italians for every German killed by partisans – in an effort to undermine support for the Resistance.

One such incident, known as the Ardeatine Massacre, saw German troops execute 335 Italian prisoners and civilians in response to a partisan attack on an SS police regiment in Rome.

19-year-old firefighter Pensiero Stringa (above) was executed by the fascist authorities and gave his name to a partisan brigade

The Nazi response backfired and strengthened the relationship between the partisans and the people.

Partisan activities helped to liberate Naples, Florence and Milan, ultimately leading to the liberation of the rest of Italy in 1945. Most interestingly, and often unreported, the final large cities in Italy were liberated by insurrection following two days of general strike action.

Up to 700,000 Italians were involved in the Resistance. According to an Italian ministerial committee, 35,828 partisans were killed in action or executed and as many as 9,980 Italian civilians were killed in reprisals by the German and fascist forces. Their struggle and sacrifice ultimately led to the defeat of fascism in Italy.

OFFICIAL CELEBRATION

Italians now officially celebrate Liberation Day on 25 April, also known as the Anniversary of the Resistance. The day is marked with marches and festivals in towns and cities across Italy. I am lucky to have attended many liberation celebrations myself and would encourage any trade unionist to do the same if they ever get the chance.

Firefighters have always had a strong and special relationship with our communities and society as a whole. As Peter Pain said: "Firefighters know the value of unity, loyalty and persistence against tremendous odds".

These are values held by FBU members today and the story of the Italian firefighter partisans who risked and sacrificed their lives for freedom show that these values echo through the proud history of firefighters across the world.

ITALIANS CELEBRATE LIBERATION DAY ON 25 APRIL EACH YEAR

THIS COULD BE THE START OF SOMETHING BIG

Graham Badrock, chair of Chester Retired Firefighters, explains how retired FBU members joined with other local organisations and people to fight against cuts



The whole-time status of the second pumps stationed at Crewe and Ellesmere Port fire stations in Cheshire has been secured, although we will have to wait until 2020 to be sure of Ellesmere's second pump.

Cheshire fire service had 13 full-time fire engines in 2013, but this year would have had only nine if proposals to downgrade the second pumps at Ellesmere Port and Crewe to "on call" fire engines been approved.

Chief fire officer Paul Hancock's plans were turned over by councillors at a meeting of the Cheshire Fire Authority (CFA) on 14 February following a massive multi-pronged campaign.

It involved Cheshire FBU, retired Cheshire FBU members, local Labour party branches, Cheshire MPs, Community branches of the Unite union, members of the public and Chester Trades Council.

We all came together to fight against the cuts set out in the misnamed "Making Cheshire Safer" integrated risk management plan.

The campaign was started by Cheshire FBU officials, and quickly taken up by retired and out of trade (ROOT) FBU members who worked

from a pub where they mapped out a strategy for the campaign.

Its strength lay in the approach of using both political and public avenues to campaign. We split into teams and set to (after we had finished our pints of course).

Chester's Labour MP Chris Matheson organised two meetings, one with the Labour CFA chair and chief fire officer to allow us to persuade

Weaver Vale and Crewe) all backed anti-cuts motions and their respective MPs made anti-cuts statements to the press.

Crewe and Nantwich MP Laura Smith went the extra mile by planning a whole CLP/FBU campaign in Crewe that culminated in her joining a public march to the fire authority meeting, delivering a fantastic speech and handing in the public petition.

It was a hard battle with many ups and downs, and ROOT members needed frequent trips to the pub to talk and drink strategy, but we stayed strong to see it through to the end.

The successful outcome at the CFA meeting received much favourable local press coverage, but sadly no Oscars were won, despite



Crewe and Nantwich MP Laura Smith joined local campaigners

them of our case – patronising and arrogant was our impression of the chief's approach. The other was at the House of Commons with other MPs from Cheshire and Halton.

Petitions were started, Facebook groups got active, letter writing to the local press began and posters started to appear in Cheshire towns.

Four Cheshire constituency Labour parties (Chester, Ellesmere Port,

many dazzling smiles.

We pay tribute to the Labour councillors who, due to the campaign, changed their position from that advised by the chief fire officer.

The big learn here for the FBU is just how much talent, expertise and commitment ROOT members have to offer. Perhaps this could be the start of other ROOT members being utilised effectively by the FBU in the future.

LETTER

SUPPORT YOUR UNION ALL THE WAY – YOUR LIFE, COMMUNITY AND FAMILY ARE AT STAKE

I read in *Firefighter* (Feb/March 2018) the letter from a retired member of my generation, Mr Ally Spence of Aberdeen.

He is absolutely right. The fire service is under

more pressure today than at any time since the 1977 strike.

Most of the waffle comes from people who know nothing of the fire service and also from some senior

officers who have "pulled up the ladder, Jack" now that they have got their good positions.

Please support your union all the way. It will be hard, it always has been,

but it is your life, your community and families' future at stake.

Terry Burden
Retired member
Hertfordshire

STATION CAT PUBLICITY – WHO WANTS IT?

WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

Hardly a day goes by without media reports of the latest inappropriate use of the 999 system – from the seagull with a broken wing to the person trapped in a bunk and needing to be rescued. The caller, if identified, can be sure of a roasting from the press.

So, when the Beast from the East struck and a car slipped off an icy road into the front of Northamptonshire Police and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold's house, he must have been in a bit of a predicament.

A call to either a builder or an insurer appeared to have been out of the question.

Rather than dial 999 and risk unwanted attention from the press, Mr Mold decided to text Northamptonshire's Chief Fire Officer, Darren Dovey, about the accident.

A fire appliance was duly dispatched to Mr Mold's address, where firefighters secured the porch.

Talking of DIY (Delegating It Yourway), your Cat has been thinking of having a new cat flap fitted.

Has anyone got Mr Dovey's number?

NUTS AND SPANNERS

Your Cat couldn't help a wry smile recently.

Reading *Mirror Online* I came upon the story of a gentleman in dire need of help from the fire service.

Two crews, from Maindee and Malpass in South



Commissioner Stephen Mold, left

Wales, were dispatched to reports of a man with a steel ring spanner stuck on his genitals.

The report does not say how the spanner had ended up there, how successful the release operation was, nor how the firefighters planned to extract the individual from his predicament.

But the incident did promote a lot of torque on social media. As you would expect, there were many references to tightening nuts, lubrication with WD-40, as well as people interested in the size of the offending spanner.

What your cat thought most amusing was that South Wales Fire Service felt the need to issue a safety warning to the public reminding them only to use tools as per the manufacturer's instructions.

Obviously adjusting your own ballcock is fraught with danger and you should always seek the advice of a reputable plumber. (*Mirror*, 21 February)



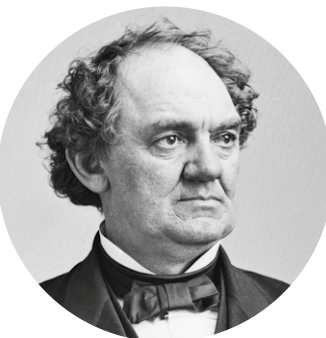
AND THE WINNER IS ...

Stretched out on the couch watching the Oscars recently, your Cat got to thinking ... there should be a Self-Publicist in the Face of Adversity award. Those famous words attributed to Phineas T. Barnum, the 19th century American circus owner, came to mind: "There's no such thing as bad publicity".

To be considered for such an award, nominees should, like Barnum, be able to exhibit an almost constant presence in the media and, even on the worst of days, continue as if nothing untoward has happened.

If there were such an award, your Cat would propose the senior managers of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (NYFRS). Following on from such notable highlights as:

- The implementation of smaller tactical response vehicles to cut crew sizes, then backtracking and using



Phineas T. Barnum – No such thing as bad publicity

the same size crews as for normal fire appliances on the smaller vehicles

- Massive pay rises for senior managers while cutting frontline services
- Reducing control staff and using another brigade's control room 400 miles away to cover any shortfall resulting in fire crews being sent to the wrong address by the other control room.

NYFRS have now gone one step further, they are on the telly.

The BBC reported on its *Inside Out* programme that, due to a failure of technology in the NYFRS fire control room, there was a seven-minute delay in despatching an appliance to a restaurant blaze.

The Magpie Café in Whitby, North Yorkshire – once described by Rick Stein as the best fish and chip shop in Britain – suffered extensive damage in the fire last year.

The restaurant's owners believe it was 20 to 25 minutes before a fire engine arrived at the café, which is less than a mile from the town's fire station.

The fire was estimated to have caused around £1m of damage and was eventually tackled by eight appliances including an aerial ladder.

Owen Hayward, one of the NYFRS senior managers who benefited from a £35K pay rise, chose to focus on the 6,000 calls NYFRS attended last year, saying the Magpie fish and chip restaurant was an "isolated incident".

A control room operator manager from NYFRS who has recently resigned because of stress told the BBC that there were many, many faults with the system.

25-YEAR BADGES



Joe Kerr (r), service training centre, Kent, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Tim Malpass



Dave Foster (l), Shaftesbury RDS, Dorset & Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Karen Adams with members from both Shaftesbury and Gillingham RDS crews looking on



Mat Hodge (r), service training centre, Kent, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Mark Simmons



Stuart Harris (l), John Rebol and Chris Wilson (r), Barking, London, with their 25-year badges



Stephen Johnston (l), green watch, Offerton, Greater Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from D Division secretary Peter Gilbertson with watch members looking on



David James (r), red watch, Maesteg, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Ciaran Gibbons



Harvey Dorling (l), Folkestone, Kent, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Richard Gatehouse



Jon Hinds (r), red watch, Yeovil, Devon & Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from brigade rep Dave Lock with colleagues looking on



Samual Sansom (l), Amersham, Buckinghamshire (now retired), receives his 25-year badge from Damon Robertson



Stuart Freeth (r), Bournbrook, West Midlands, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Andrew Scattergood with members looking on



Joel Condor (r), red watch, Kirkdale, Merseyside, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Steve Scummins



Graham Davies (r), delta watch, Birchwood, Cheshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Steven Haste with Matt Kindon and Anant Patel looking on



Dave Bryant (r), Barking, London, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Jon Wharmsby



Keith Bragg (4th from r), Swanage RDS, Dorset & Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from station rep Mark Watson with colleagues looking on



Karen Jackson (r), Barking, London, receives her 25-year badge from branch rep Jon Wharmsby



David Ross (r), East Linton, East Lothian, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from Region 1 retained rep Tam Mitchell



Graham Cooper (r), Chadderton, Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Lee Burns



Ian Melville (r), white watch, Moss Side, Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from borough divisional rep David Yearley with colleagues looking on



Liam Bates (l), white watch, Withington, Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from borough divisional rep David Yearley with colleagues looking on



Andy Hayes (r), green watch, Rewley Road, Oxfordshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Jimmy Harris with colleagues looking on



Des Howells (l), white watch, Maindee, Newport, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from regional H&S rep Simon Fleming in Lanzarote, with white watch current and retired colleagues looking on



Peter Scott (r), Haltwhistle (retained), Northumberland, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Guy Tiffin with colleagues looking on



Officers' rep Craig Drinkald (r), receives his 25-year badge from officers' rep Simon Amos at FBU head office



Neil Priestley (l), Abingdon, Oxfordshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Duncan Smith with blue watch colleagues looking on



Mark Ames (l), Oxfordshire brigade secretary, receives his 25-year badge from FBU national officer John McGhee (since retired),



Paul Simmons (r), South Wales officers' branch, receives his 25-year badge from officers' rep Ian Buckley



Murray Stewart (r), East Linton, East Lothian, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from Scottish retained rep Tam Mitchell



Alexander Robertson (r), Larbert, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from East of Scotland secretary John McKenzie



Darrell Drew (r), Larbert, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from East of Scotland secretary John McKenzie



Graeme Mackie (r), Larbert, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from East of Scotland secretary John McKenzie



Ian Aitken (c), Larbert, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from East of Scotland secretary John McKenzie with watch colleagues looking on



Perry Richards (c), green watch, Walthamstow, London, since retired, receives his 25-year badge from general secretary Matt Wrack with (l-r) FF Black, CM LeSurf, FF Wright, WM Chambers, FF Remyn, FF Anderson and CM Carpen

25-YEAR BADGES



Alastair Morrison (r), Antrim, Northern Ireland, receives his 25-year badge from regional secretary Stephen Boyd



Phil Furey (r), branch rep, Leek, Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from West Midlands EC member Barry Downey



Andy Cooke (r), branch rep, Stafford, Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from West Midlands EC member Barry Downey



Pete Wildman (r), branch rep, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire, receives his 25-year badge from West Midlands EC member Barry Downey



Colin Speight (l), Methil, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from Fife lead official Allan Still



FBU London regional organiser Steve White presents 25-year badges to (l-r), **John Casey**, **Nick Burge**, Steve White, **Dean Brennand**, **Bert Gregg**, all of blue watch, Heathrow, London



Alun James (r), Merthyr, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from Steve Owen



Murray Rankine (r), Larbert, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from East of Scotland secretary John McKenzie



Paul White (l), Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Greg O'Neill with colleagues looking on



Chris Millward (l), Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Greg O'Neill with colleagues looking on



Daniel McBride (r), red watch, Easterhouse, Glasgow, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Tam Hanlon



Gerard McManus (l), blue watch, Easterhouse, Glasgow (since retired), receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Tam Hanlon



Ian Herd (l), Prestatyn, North Wales, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Parry Davies



David Colebourne (r), blue watch, Bank Hall, Merseyside, receives his 25-year badge from regional secretary Mark Rowe



David Brown (r), retained, Galashiels, Mid/East Lothian and Scottish Borders, receives his 25-year badge from MELSB lead official Gus Sproul



Martin Hendrick (l), Yeovil, Devon & Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from EC member Tam McFarlane with blue watch colleagues looking on



Tony Root (centre), red watch, Guildford, Surrey FRS, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Lee Belsten, with his watch members looking on



Robert King (r), green watch, Banbury, Oxfordshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Mark Ames with colleagues looking on



Ian Guest (l), green watch, Woking, Surrey, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Graham Whitfield



Michael Joseph (r), Chorley USAR, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Kev Wilkie with colleagues looking on



Jim McGuinness (l), Duffryn, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from Steve Saunders with (l-r), Ryan Godfrey, Paul Beynon and Ben Jones



Alan Myers (r), white watch, Whitechapel, London, receives his 25-year badge from Hackney borough secretary Nathan Cane with colleagues (l-r), CM Magee, FF Yardley, FF Walsh, FF Adlam and FF Cox



Steve George (l), Yeovil, Devon and Somerset, receives his 25-year badge from EC member Tam McFarlane with blue watch colleagues looking on



Gareth McClean (r), Telford, Shropshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Matt Lamb with white watch members looking on



Graham Wilson (r), amber watch, Sighthill, Edinburgh, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Steven Latimer with colleagues looking on



Michael Craig (r), prevention and protection, eastern area command, Northern Ireland, receives his 25-year badge from ONC rep Mark Watson

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Advise your brigade organiser of any
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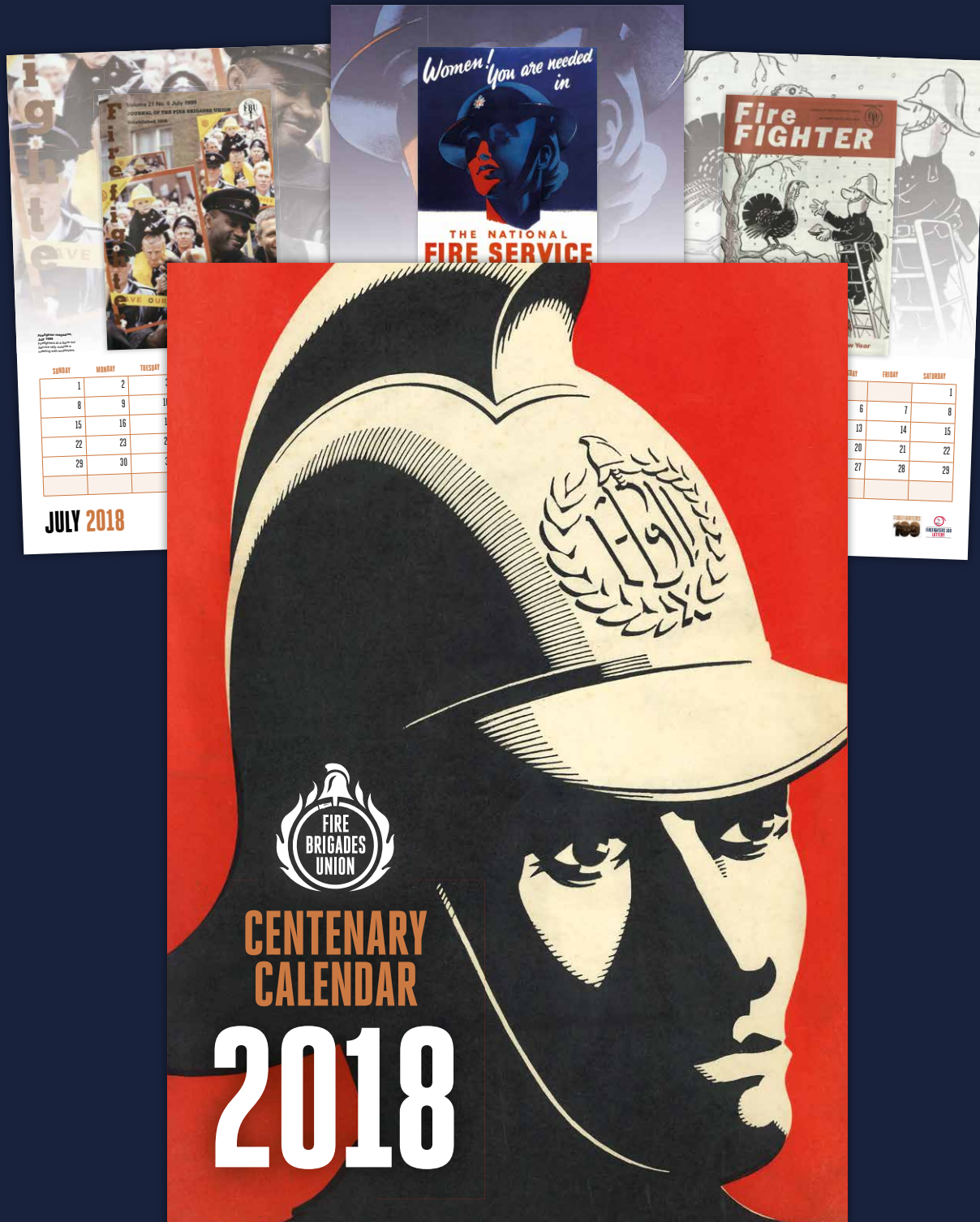
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Please include full details for every picture – full names
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