



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED POLICE OFFICERS (London Branch) Annual Report 2010-2011

This report has been compiled by the Secretary to give members a brief outline of the work of their Branch Executive Committee during the past 12 months

The Committee is pleased to report that 2010 was another successful year with a slight increase in membership and success in various ventures.

During the year we were saddened by the loss of our Vice-president, Mr Don Milburn MBE, who had served on the Committee for many years and through whose foresight and determination the Police Pensioners' Housing Association came into being. Our thoughts go out to Marie and her family.

We were further saddened in March by the death of Mrs June Hasler, wife of our President and a Life Member of the Association, who served as our Assistant Secretary for many years. Our thoughts go out to Charles and his family and to the families of all our members who have suffered loss during the past year.

At the Annual General Meeting on 15 April 2010, the existing Committee was re-elected en bloc and one new member, Miss Judith Redford, was elected to serve on the Committee. Mr. Charles Hasler, Branch President, and Mr Don Milburn MBE, Branch Vice-president, continued as ex officio members of the committee.

Life Membership of London Branch (NARPO)

The Committee is pleased to announce its decision to nominate Mr David Richards MBE, for Life Membership of the Association, the highest honour which the Association can bestow.

Mr Richards was instrumental in setting up the Welsh Mets Association in 1970 and has seen the group grow from an initial handful of members to a substantial membership now approaching 80. He works tirelessly for the Association and encourages all his members to join NARPO. He has a keen interest in welfare matters and actively promotes comradeship and friendship. His efforts have resulted in a thriving organisation integral to the Branch's welfare plans.

Honorary Membership of London Branch (NARPO)

The Committee is pleased to announce its decision to nominate Mr Graham Cole for Honorary Membership of the Association.

Mr Cole is well known for his role as PC Stamp in the ITV series The Bill which depicted the life and times of the fictional Metropolitan Police Station, Sun Hill. Had PC Stamp been a real police officer he would have qualified for a pension and would have most certainly joined NARPO as a matter of course – Reg Hollins, his Fed Rep, would have seen to that!

Mr Cole is renowned for his support of Police Charities and is a regular attendee at many police functions. His name and his presence have ensured that the Police Service, in particular the Metropolitan Police Service, has remained in the public eye for the best reasons, and his fund-raising abilities are second to none. In 'retirement' Mr Cole continues to take an active interest in all things police.

Annual General Meeting 2010

The minutes of the 2010 Annual General Meeting were published in London Police Pensioner for the benefit of all members. Mrs Diana Beck BA (Hons) and Mr Colin Burgess were awarded Life Membership of the Association.

Branch motions were comprehensively debated and the new Branch Rules were formally accepted and adopted by the AGM. A more lenient attitude towards security at the AGM had been adopted and once again, the catering at the AGM was of a very high standard.

Volunteers for the Annual Conference and the Annual Ceremony of Remembrance at the Cenotaph had once again been in abundance. The raffle in aid of PPHA was another success, raising some £120.

Annual Conference 2010

The Branch sent some 30 delegates and observers to Conference on 10 September 2010 in Torquay. A full conference report was circulated in NARPO News and London Police Pensioner.

Once again it was a pleasure to meet our colleagues from the City of London Branch. We did not take any motions to Conference but had submitted amendments to two motions, both of which were subsequently lost.

Conference took on a different format and included a question-and-answer session hosted by Mr John Stapleton. Mr Bernard Hogan-Howe QPM, MBA, MA (Oxon), HM Inspector of Constabulary, took an active part in the debate and undertook to write to all Chief Officers urging them to forge closer ties with their NARPO branches.

This Conference was generally accepted as being one of the most interesting and useful to have been held for a long time.

National Executive Committee

Mr Beck and Mrs Cole serve on the National Executive Committee as representatives of London Region. They are both on several national sub-committees and ensure that London Region has a voice in all decisions affecting the Association.

Regular meetings have taken place between the NEC and members of .Government, the Police Federation and other national bodies. The Association continues to take an active and leading part in the PSPC and other pensioner organisations.

Branch Matters

The Committee is pleased to record another busy year. The workload has again risen and membership numbers are on the increase. The work of our two sub-committees is worthy of note.

Welfare Sub-committee

The Welfare Sub-committee met several times during the year and comprises Mr Bob Ferris, Mrs Diana Beck and Mr Colin Burgess. The Chairman and Secretary are ex officio members. The Sub-committee now has a regular feature in London Police Pensioner which is well received.

Towards the end of the year it was decided to hold a survey to ascertain what the members perceive to be as our welfare needs. One of our Ex-Mets groups (Welsh-Mets Association) was chosen as a target area and some 150 members resident in a particular post code area received a written survey form for completion, whilst a similar number in another post code area received a personal face-to-face interview.

The results of the survey are still being analysed, but indications so far are that this has been a most worthwhile exercise and will shape our response to Welfare for many years to come. The Sub-committee (and Mrs Mason) are to be thanked for the hard work they have put into this worthwhile project.

Resources Sub-committee

The Resources Sub-committee met regularly over the year and comprises Mr John Francis, Mr Bob Elder (resigned 2011), Mr Tim Potts and Mr George Taylor. The Chairman and the secretary are ex-officio members.

The Sub-committee has undertaken the scrutiny of the roles of all the Branch officers and their deputies. It has made recommendations about the governance of the branch and has tightened up fiscal matters by recommending that the Branch appoints two internal auditors. This was accepted and our current internal auditors are Mr George Taylor and Miss Judith Redford. The Sub-committee has work still to do and the running of the Branch will benefit from its recommendations and conclusions. The members' work is appreciated.

Throughout the year contact has been maintained with, and meetings held with, both our Pension Provider and the Pensions Contract Management Team. In some respects it has been a difficult year because of a Home Office instruction that all Forces in England and Wales had to rationalise injury awards and DWP benefits. This resulted in some 1,200 Metropolitan pensioners' files being retrieved and their injury awards being re-calculated. Some received refunds but most were faced with a demand for repayment of various sums of money. However, the staff at Xafinity Paymaster constantly strive to improve the service they give to our members.

Injury award reviews were again to the fore during the past year. We awaited the results of several High Court cases and Tribunal rulings brought by members. Automatic reduction to Band 1 at the age of 65 was stopped and eventually Occupational Health issued their policy following advice from the MPS Solicitors which was published in LPP.

The Branch made a charitable donation of £5,000 to the Police Rehabilitation Trust. Lord Dear was pleased to accept the cheque at a small presentation ceremony at the House of Lords in November.

There has been no increase in sub-scriptions again this year. The Committee is determined to keep them at the current level for as long as possible.

London Branch Office

The work of the office continues to grow. The office is easily accessible by public and private transport and several meetings with other agencies have been held there.

Welfare and Pensions work has seen an increase over the year. Database administration remains an important function of the office and we can be rightly proud of the accuracy of the data, maintained by the office. We are currently averaging 70 new members each month and when the obituaries, changes of address and other amendments are included, members now realise how busy our Admin Assistant, Mrs Mason, is when her other duties are taken into account.

The IT systems were upgraded during the year. Our branch website is proving very popular and has become a useful tool in the services provided by the Branch. The site can be accessed at www.londonnarpo.org.uk. Thanks must go to Mr Richard Tanner, our Website Manager, for his work in keeping the site interesting and up-to-date.

As ever, visitors - both casual and by appointment - have been welcomed to the office whether "just for a chat", or for help and assistance.

Ex-Mets Groups

Once again, the Committee wishes to express its thanks to all our Ex-Mets groups and to the organisers who ensure that the social aspect of our community runs smoothly and that our welfare strategy is implemented.

At least two group organisers have attended NARPO Contact Courses run by the Wakefield office and it is to be hoped that more organisers will volunteer for future courses.

The Committee expresses a special thanks to the Welsh Mets Association for its participation in our welfare survey. To all organisers, your efforts are greatly appreciated.

London Police Pensioner

Our Editorial Staff, Susi Rogol and Tracey Llewellyn, continues to produce our highly-acclaimed Branch newsletter, London Police Pensioner, which is the envy of other branches.

LPP remains a high-quality, 48-page glossy magazine which is sent to all our members world-wide, and to many other interested parties. Stimulating debate has been encouraged in our letters pages and members' small ads remain a welcome service and source of income.

The magazine remains the main source of disseminating useful information which may affect members and it is expected that it will make a welcome return by popular demand in some form to the website in due course. The Committee thanks the team for their hard work in producing such a stimulating publication.

Metropolitan Police Historical Collection

The Branch continues to support the creation of a Metropolitan Police Museum and we thank Mr Neil Paterson, Keeper of the Collection, for his efforts to keep the subject to the fore in a time of severe spending cuts.

The small exhibition at Empress State Building continues to attract visitors and there is now a designated desk there for members of the Friends of the Metropolitan Police Historical Collection.

The work of the Friends seems to go unthanked but the Committee is aware of their efforts to keep our police heritage alive and accessible to everyone.

Mr George Taylor, NARPO Committee member, keeps us up to date on current matters affecting the collection and Mrs Sioban Clark, Metropolitan Women Police Association, continues to co-ordinate the work of volunteers. The Committee will continue to monitor the progress of the collection.

National Pensioners' Convention

The Branch remains affiliated to the London Region NPC and our committee members Mr Tim Potts and Mr Colin Burgess continue to represent the Branch at NPC functions and events throughout the year. Their regular reports to the Committee ensure that we are kept abreast of current NPC activities.

Their work is greatly appreciated by the Committee.

Police Pensioners' Housing Association

The Branch continues to support the work of the PPHA, a national charity, especially through our London Branch Lottery all the proceeds of which are used to continue the work of PPHA.

The lottery is run by Mrs Norma Brown who this year called on the services of Mrs Rita Ratcliffe to assist at the busy time of sending out and receiving the lottery tickets. Mrs Brown's fund-raising includes the sale of Christmas cards, pens, books and organising raffles.

The Committee thanks Mrs Brown for her work and the others who assist with this worthwhile cause.

Details of the work of the PPHA can be obtained from the Secretary, Mr R. Davies, on 01243 586643 or by email at: ppha.secretary@btinternet.com

Conclusion

This is but a summary of the work of your Committee which cannot function without your support. On your behalf I would like to thank the Committee members for all their efforts during the past year.