

**LONDON FIRE BRIGADE RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD IN THE CARISBROOKE HALL
VICTORY SERVICES CLUB SEYMOUR STREET W 2 2HF
ON WEDNESDAY 8TH MAY 2013**

The Chairman M. Coffey opened the meeting at 14.45 hours. He invited the meeting to stand and receive the RMA Standard and to observe a one minute silence as a mark of respect for all Firefighters, retired and serving, who had **Booked Gone** since last year's AGM. The total of deceased Firefighters and Widows of the LFB covering the period between April 2012 and April 2013 was 120 of which 21 were members of the RMA. A list of the deceased was posted within the hall and all members who were present received a copy.

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Sir M. Bonham, L. Bradby, Ms. E. Carter, G. Clarkson, Mrs. R. Clarkson, D. Cebunka, M. Dunworth, R. Dobson, M. Dix, D. Ealing, A. Eatheron, R. Fairfax, J. Fitzpatrick MP, R. Holsgrove, K. Hewett, G. Knight, B. Lewis MP, A. Mabbutt, R. Murray, R. Neil MP, G. Perren, Mrs. O. Perren, L. Powell, V. Rawson, P. Rose, P. Settle, Mrs. D. Snowden,

The minutes of the 2012 AGM held in the Carisbrooke Hall on 9th May 2012 were read, it was agreed that they were a true record.

Matters Arising:- None

1. Chairman's Report:- M. Coffey OBE

The Chairman said that he was happy to report that the RMA have had another successful and busy year with many events which, the Secretary will cover in his report. I am sure he said that the membership would like to congratulate the Brigade on its response to the challenges that it faced last year in respect of the Queens Jubilee the Olympics and Paralympic Games. He was sure he said that there was a huge amount of training that went into the preparation prior to these events with everything going off smoothly.

A number of members have contact me he said with regards to the LFBRMA Standard being paraded at the Brigade's Carol Service. Since writing to the Commissioner he reported that the request has been granted and the Standard will be paraded together with the LFB Standard and Union Flag this year.

He said that he would like to take this opportunity to thank on behalf of the membership the Branch Secretaries and Committee Members for their support and work over the past year and especially the work of our Secretary for all the functions that have been arranged by him for the membership over the past year and especially today's AGM and Reunion.

2. Presidential Address:- R. Dexter Deputy Commissioner LFB.

The DC thanked the Chairman for the invitation to address the membership.

She apologised on behalf of the Commissioner who was unable to attend the meeting due to prior engagement.

With the aid of a VDU the DC gave the following report:-

She said that she was pleased to report that the Brigade had had a good year following the appointment of the new Chairman J. Cleverley following last year's local elections. He had, she said, been active in visiting many Fire Stations and talking with many of the firefighters employed on those stations which, no other Chairman has done in the past.

The last year has been very busy for the Brigade we have had the inquest into the Lakanal House Fire, the Queens Jubilee celebrations together with both the Olympics and Paralympic Games, a new training provider Babcock has been appointed and Asset Co have been replaced by an interim provider.

Presidential Address Contd-:

The Lakanal Fire occurred on the 3rd July 2009 in Southwark, 6 people lost their lives in the incident but many other were successfully rescued by the Brigade. The inquest into the deaths opened on the 14th January and the LFB had 45 witnesses called, including the Commissioner. The inquest has concluded and the Coroner has issued a section 43 letter to the Brigade, Southwark Borough Council and the Department of Local Communities. Once issued the various organizations have 56 days to respond to the Coroner in the matters that she has raised with them. In terms of the letter that the LFB received, the Coroner observed that the issues that she raised with the Brigade have been addressed since the incident.

The letter to the Borough concerned works to the building and how they affected the Fire Engineering within the building and how they would affect any future works within the building.

The letter to the DC&LG promotes the use of domestic sprinkler systems and they are pleased that she has highlighted this issue.

A response to the letter from the DC&LG is not expected in the near future.

The Brigade were very proud of its organization to both the Olympic and Paralympic Games, these arrangements brought great credit to the Brigade. Six million people attended the games with 4.6 million attending the Paralympic Games with 2 million in the first 3 days. The numbers of people attending was a significant risk to the Brigade, and following discussions with the FBU regarding personnel working on the site we came to an arrangement that they would man the 6 minis located within the park, acting as 1st strike units. They proved to be a great success and the Brigade attended 363 incidents within the park, the majority of which were AFA related in accommodation blocks. The Commissioner held daily meetings to assess the previous day's incidents and how to react to future calls.

Significant incidents within the Brigade during the past year were a 40P fire at Dagenham during the Olympics and it was thought that the smoke from this incident could have affected the closing ceremony, but in the end this was not the case.

A 20P fire in Southwark Town Hall, which was under refurbishment at the time, saw many valuable artifacts salvaged by the Brigade during fire fighting operations. The building not only contains the Town Hall but is also home to museum and library.

An 8P fire in a residential block saw 2 people rescued and the property became structurally unsafe.

A helicopter crashed into a crane in Battersea and finished up in the street below killing the pilot. Fortunately no members of the public were injured. The incident was treated as two separate incidents, the 1st the helicopter crash into the crane and the 2nd the aftermath in the streets below.

Last year I mentioned the appointment of a new training provider, this has now been finalized and Babcock are now the training provider for the Brigade. In the first year we probably did not get off to a good start due to getting the contract wrong, we need to have more time in the future before these contracts are signed. Significant improvements have been recognised and the number of personnel being trained is increasing, we now have a dedicated training facility at Park Royal and Beckton and the regional training facilities at Barking, Croydon, Erith, Feltham, Fichley, Greenwich, Harrow, New Malden and Tottenham have all been refurbished.

80% to 85% of available training places will have been successfully allocated and delegates trained by the end of the 4th quarter, in comparison with 76% in 2011 and 75% in 2010.

Incident in London are down, compared to 10 years ago they are a third lower. Fires are at the lowest level since 1965, nearly half of all incidents are now false alarms and fewer people die

Presidential Address Contd-:

in fires: 33 in 2011/2012. There were 7,000 fires in the home and projected incidents for 2030 will be lower than 2010.

The LFB have to prepare and publish a draft London safety Plan, it is published and can be found on the Brigade's web site. It was discussed by the Authority on the 21st January. At that meeting the Authority voted not to support the plan, and the Commissioner has had a hard job in promoting the plan as all members are not in favor of it. There is a programme of public meetings to discuss the plan the latest of which was in Tower Hamlets last night which was the largest meeting so far. The plan reflects financial realities that we face at this time, and proposals within the plan call for charges to be made for attending persons shut in lifts, and we are now finding that Boroughs are maintaining their lifts to a better standard. Other proposals are for costs to be recovered for false alarms, charging neighbouring Brigades for attendances, reduced attendances for AFAs, better access to fire safety information (RRO) for businesses so they are able to manage their buildings better.

A renewed focus on road safety for young people run by Firefighters who make excellent role models.

A 'Powers Kit' and capability review for the river. The Chair will propose to the Mayor that as there is more activity on the river the LFB should be providing a better service.

The Brigade are also promoting the introduction of domestic sprinklers.

There is a full public consultation running until the 17th June 2013 and a decision by the Authority is expected in either June or July.

Over the past 5 years £6million of savings have been made without touching anything on Fire Stations other than alternate crewing on some stations. Many of the savings have come from support staff and over the next 2 years we shall need to make savings of £42 million. Currently the majority of our budget is spent on operational needs and it is felt that we are now at a point where these savings will now have to come from them and there are proposals in the plan to reduce fire cover and remove Pumps from Chelsea, Chingford, Hayes, Leytonstone, Peckham and Whitechapel and to add a Pump to Hendon, Orpington Stanmore and Twickenham. Stations proposed to close are Belsize, Bow, Clapham, Clerkenwell, Downham, Kingsland, Knightsbridge, New Cross, Silvertown, Southwark, Westminster and Woolwich, we are currently at the consultation stage with these proposals. With the closure of these stations we shall still be able to maintain fire cover and have an appliance on scene within 6 minutes.

The Vehicle and equipment contract with Asset Co was terminated in 2012, in the early stages of the contract it was beneficial to the Brigade in that we were able to replace the fleet and a good maintenance regime was set up, but over the past 3 years their performance has deteriorated and Asset Co became premier Fire Services, which did not last very long and an interim contract was awarded to Babcock last autumn supplying vehicles and equipment. The other arm of Babcock is supplying our training. The contract runs to the end of 2014 and we are currently negotiating a new contract and members have inquired as to the feasibility of reintroducing the workshops.

It is likely that the fleet will be renewed in 2016.

The International World Rescue Challenge was hosted by the Brigade at the Exell Centre last year saw over the 3 days 7000 visitors. Fire fighters from other countries demonstrated their skills in a competitive and friendly way. The Brigade also did a lot of work on community fire safety in the village and I would recommend it to you as a very enjoyable day out with no charge.

Presidential Address Contd:-

9 new Fire Stations are to be built as part of a PFI package funded by Government, this gives the Brigade £50million free money and construction is due to start in July this year with Plaistow and Old Kent Rd being the first to be re built and benefit from the scheme. Other Stations to be re built are Dagenham, Leytonstone, Shadwell, Purley, Mitcham, Orpington and Dockhead.

The DC following her report asked if there were any questions from the floor:-

T. Richards:-

- Asked that as reported in the press, were Fire fighters at the Lakanal House fire unaware of the layout of the building.
- Have the Brigade stopped 11D inspections.
- How does the Brigade now estimate the attendance times of appliances. In my day he said a Senior officer would drive the route at 30MPH to determine this.
- From his point of view he said that Asset Co was a complete disaster and he found it very distasteful that ex Senior Officers of the LFB were directors of the company.

In reply the DC said at the inquest it was discussed at length whether the Fire fighters were aware of the layout of the building. But before you make a judgment it was a complicated building in as much as they were maisonettes and an unusual structure built on a scissor formation. Some Fire fighters did know the layout but not all did as were off of their own ground.

11D is now 72D under the new regulations and they have not been stopped, we have had discussions as to whether these visits have an important status and Fire fighters do put in a lot of effort to complete these inspections and increase their learning. The information gathered can be placed on the operational risk data base (CRR in your day) and this information can be accessed on route to an incident from the appliance.

Attendance times are now calculated by computerized models and the results are published, this is a better way of determining times as different things can be factored in ie weekend and rush hour traffic.

D. Ewing.

Said that the Commissioner had not been at the meeting for the past 2 years and he felt that he would not be at next year's meeting. We are looking he said at the demise of the LFB, regarding the Lakanal House Fire he thought that this would not have happened in his day, we were taught he said that life comes first and the crews on the day did not do that and he felt that the crews could have saved those people.

He thought he said that as the DC you have been sent here today as a scape goat.

In reply the DC assured the meeting that she was in no way a scape goat and it is not true that you are seeing the demise of the LFB, which is a magnificent organisation, and in my view the more people who castigate the Brigade the stronger we become I have been with the Brigade for many years and have 34 years of public service behind me. As previously stated the LFB is a magnificent organization and it strives and manages to improve all the time, the Brigade is a different Brigade from your time and 9/11 and 7/7 have changed the Brigade.

A comment from the floor said that Health & safety has killed the Brigade.

The DC said that she could understand that argument and said that she did not feel that H&S had killed the Brigade and that all of us who are associated with London Fire Brigade, whether that they be retired or serving members, should uphold the good name of the Brigade. Your comments concerning the Lakanal House Fire and the actions taken are not fair and are detrimental to the Brigade. I would invite you to visit your contemporaries and find out what they did on the day and then come back and tell me what you think.

Presidential Address Contd-:

The Chairman said that the DC would not be taking any other questions as the meeting needed to move on. He thanked the DC for her presentation and told the meeting that he was the DC 12 years ago and it may be that we see the past through rose tinted glasses, we had improvement notices served on us then but we moved on and the Brigade improved.

3. Secretary's Report-: B. Sargent MBE.

The Secretary said that it gave him much pleasure to be with everyone today in this magnificent venue where your Committee feel that we have at last found a home for our AGM and Reunion following the success of last year, and 4 years of uncertainty following the change of policy by the Brigade on the sale and consumption of alcohol on Brigade premises. I hope he said that you the membership are equally pleased with the venue and the arrangements that have been made with the Club on your behalf today and he looked forward, as he hoped the membership would, to attending many more functions at the VSC.

To be at this meeting and to attend the Reunion he said, you need to be a member of the RMA or to be invited by the Association. It has come to the Committee's attention that tickets are being bought by members for non members of the RMA. Tickets are also being advertised on Web sites, the Association does not advertise tickets on any Web sites whatsoever. Today's AGM and Reunion is subsidised by the Association through member's subscriptions and donations. If some members continue to operate in this way, the Committee will in the future have to increase the price of the tickets and the annual subscriptions. Refunds on tickets can always be made up to a few days prior to the event, to gain a refund members need only to contact their Branch Secretary, not pass on the ticket or try to sell it on a Web site to someone you do not know and who may not be a member. If any retired fire fighter in the room today is not a member of the RMA it is time that you thought long and hard about being a parasite and living off of your colleagues and become a member, the cost is only £10 per year and joining packs were available from the Secretary for completion. Because of this ticket sales may change next year, members will only be able to purchase 1 ticket and you may need to produce your membership card on entry. Once again it seems that the minority are spoiling it for the majority.

The past year has once again been successful he said, membership remains stable, but unfortunately 20 RMA members and 3 widows have passed away since our last AGM.

P. Royal our Ladies Branch Secretary has decided to stand down this year through ill health. Pat became our Ladies Branch Secretary following the formation of the Branch 5 years ago. Prior to that she assisted her husband Rex with the Surrey Branch and was the driving force behind the Branch. She has been associated with the RMA for many years and her retirement will be a loss to the Association, on behalf of the membership the Secretary thanked Pat for her work and dedication to her members in the Ladies Branch and to the Association where she has sat on the Committee for an equal amount of years. The Chairman he said will make a presentation to Pat later in the meeting. Our Treasurer E. Stocker has kindly agreed to take over the Branch and he also thanked her for taking on the day to day running of the Branch.

When we come to voting on our Officers for the coming year you will see that the position of Membership Secretary could not be determined when the papers for today's meeting were printed. Jim Geoghegan has now decided to stand down and H. Paviour is to be nominated as Membership Secretary.

Jim started off with the RMA as Kent Branch Secretary and in 2002 volunteered to take over the task as Membership Secretary. Since then he has had the enviable task of collating and refining our membership data base and has encouraged many retiring fire fighters to join the Association. His retirement will also be a loss to the Association and due to the lateness of receiving this information it is hoped that a presentation will be made to Jim at the next

Secretary's Report Contd:-

Committee meeting, on behalf of the membership the Secretary thanked Jim and offered his thanks to Jim for his work and dedication to the Association and its Members and to Harry for stepping in at this late stage to cover the position.

The Diary of events last year was well received and all events that were arranged were fully booked. With this in mind the number of events this year has been increased some new ones have been added. A good response has been received for most of the events, but if any Members are interested, there are a limited amount of places still available to visit the Tower of London to witness the Ceremony of the Keys, the Jazz Lunch Cruise on the Thames, the Annual Dinner Dance, The Battlefield Tour to Ypres and the guided tour of Westminster Abbey. If anyone is interested or would like more information, members were asked to speak with the Secretary after the meeting.

Through the hard work of our Chairman I can report that the Association have been granted permission to parade our Standard at future Brigade Carol Services, which this year will be held in Westminster Cathedral.

The Magazine continues to grow under the editor Keith Sefton as does the Web site which is now managed by Barry Shilstone who took over from Keith who stepped in last year following the retirement of Dennis Cebunka due to ill health.

Dennis always looked for a ways through the web site to raise funds for the Association and I am confident he said that this will continue under the direction of Barry. As was stated last year if you the membership have the facility and are looking to purchase anything for your home, car, a holiday, join the wine club, or purchase discounted printer cartridges you only need to log onto our web site and follow the links to easy fund raising, and the RMA will receive a percentage of what you spend.

Your Committee have decided that you will again receive a diary with this year's Christmas issue of the magazine, the Secretary again appealed to members to think hard about supplying articles for inclusion in future issues which can be on any subject be it Fire Service related or about holidays or hobbies.

RMA trading items can be purchased from Erik Crichton who looks after our shop and he is with us today to take any orders. The Secretary asked members to be aware that when ordering items from Erik over the telephone that they are contacting him at his home, and that we do not have as many members think a shop on the high street or in an office, also some items may be out of stock.

The Secretary reminded members to inform their Branch Secretary of any changes to their personal details, the Association continue to waste a considerable amount of money producing and sending out the magazine and annual request for subscriptions to people who have moved away and have not informed us he said. We no longer have the luxury of being able to obtain a list of pensioners from the LPFA or are in receipt of a grant from the Welfare Fund to help with the administration of the Association, with this in mind we are now reliant on you to inform us of any changes that may have occurred and you will be saving the RMA money in wasted and duplicated postage.

Two requests from the BBC have been received, one from the factual department who are making a new programme for BBC1 daytime with the provisional title The Return. The series will look at events from recent British and Social History. The aim is to hear about the events from those who were involved. Some of the incidents they hope to feature in the programme are the Paddington Rail disaster, The Abbeystead pumping station explosion (1984), The Clapham Rail Crash (1988) The Moorgate Tube disaster (1975) and The Lockington Rail Crash (1986). The format of the programme would be to hear testimony

Secretary's Report Contd:-

from those at the scene and then to reunite survivors of the disaster with those who helped rescue them.

They would like to get in touch with some of the people whose bravery helped save lives and they would like to hear from any members who were present at any of these events. The production is currently being set up and they are proposing to talk to people with a view to taking part as soon as possible, any filming of individual experiences should take no more than a day.

The other is from a student who is making a radio programme as part of her MA degree in radio and would like to interview ex fire fighters about their experiences in fire fighting.

Any members wishing to take part and become either a radio or TV star were asked to speak with the Secretary after the meeting and he would pass their details to the relevant party.

Today is a time when as in the past as your Secretary I am able to publicly thank on your behalf, the officers of our Association. Without their help it would be a full time job for me to administer the Association, which, continues to flourish under the stewardship of our Chairman Martin Coffey and our Membership Secretary Jim Geoghegan who are constantly encouraging retired fire fighters to join. Our Chairman, has been very supportive over the past year together with his wife Mary, in supporting not only the RMA events but also those that we are invited to attend, he is also always on hand to give advice and help with the day to day running of the Association. The Treasurer, Magazine Editor, Web Site Manager, all Branch Secretaries and Committee members have again given their time over the past year to help run an organisation which is dedicated to helping its members and their families not only in retirement but at times when things such as ill health financial problems and bereavements occur, without their involvement and the support of you the membership the Association would not exist. To the Standard Bearers who have attended 20 Remembrance services and Ceremonial events over the past year and unfortunately 56 funerals of ex fire fighters.

He then recorded his thanks to the staff at the VSC, who have worked tirelessly and have been on hand to help with, and arrange the AGM and Reunion and will continue to serve the Association with food and drink at the Reunion, and to our guest speakers who have taken time to come here today to report to you on the London Fire Brigade and the Fire Fighters Charity both of which we have all had a long and enjoyable association with over many years.

He hoped that the members present would have an enjoyable time at the Reunion which will follow the AGM, and as he said at the beginning of his report that the Committee now feel that today's venue is satisfactory, and we hope that you as members of the RMA will encourage your colleagues who are not with us today to attend next year and together with their support, we shall return next year with a larger attendance at both the AGM and Reunion, he also asked members to encourage any of their colleagues who are not members or are in the last 2 years of service to make the effort and join the Association, all the details can be found on our web site.

He said that members who have served in the Armed Forces or have either a, father, mother, grandparent, son or daughter who have or are serving in the armed forces, then you may apply to become a family member of the club for £25 per year. This will entitle you to the use of all the facilities that is on view today plus the club bar and restaurant and the use of the 198en suite bedrooms located on site. More information and a joining pack is available from the club's reception.

In closing he wished everyone a very pleasant afternoon in the company of old friends and colleagues, for everyone's support throughout the past year and more importantly the members who have taken the trouble to attend the AGM, he then wished everyone a long, healthy and happy retirement and a safe journey home.

4. Fire Fighters Charity Report:- A. Poole

A. Poole introduced himself to the meeting and said that he was the RMA's Firefighters Charity representative.

This year he said was the Charities 70th anniversary. Previously known as the Benevolent Fund it was started in 1943 with money given by Canada and the USA and was founded to help sick and injured Firemen and the Widows and families of Firemen killed during the war. To this day nothing has changed and the Charity is still administering the same help and has gone from a small voluntary organization to one of the most successful charities in the country.

From a small house in Littlehampton the Charity now has a convalescent and rehabilitation center at Harcombe House in Devon and Jubilee House in Penrith providing care and services of all kinds to Fire Service personnel including physiotherapy, rest and recuperation and holiday lets. This year will see the introduction of a programme to help with mental health at 2 of the sites.

I have he said been involved with the Charity for the past 38 years and in that time been fortunate to act as Assistant Group Secretary for the LFB along with other members such as Frank Truscott, Graham Watson, Ron Martin, David Roberts, Mick Horne , Barry Hammond and Dan West. Since last year the Brigade have not replaced our last 2 Assistant Group Secretaries and there is now no direct contact with the LFB to the Charity. Anyone seeking help or information from the charity will have to call them direct on 0800.

This may upset some people but with all the cuts that are taking place at least there is a free phone number to make contact with the Charity. The personal touch has now disappeared and we are unable to make home visits or represent the Charity at member's funerals. With this in mind he asked that if anyone at the meeting today, knew of anyone who needed the help of the charity that they encourage them to make the call. Barry Hammond and myself, he said sit on the RMA's Committee and can be contacted if help or information is required.

As was stated earlier this year is the Charities 70th anniversary, and to commemorate this and to raise additional funds, a lapel badge has been commissioned and are on sale today at a minimum cost of £1.

He thanked all members who give freely to the Charity and asked those who did not to think about making a donation, without which the Charity would not exist or be able to continue to up the high standards of care and treatment, the cost of which is £9 million per annum.

The Charity is also looking for volunteers to help with collections at Tesco's, A list of dates can be found in the hall and if any anyone can spare a few hours to help with these collections it would be welcomed by the Charity, please use the phone number on the list to confirm your availability.

In closing may I mention a Charity called Firemen Remembered run by Stephanie Maltman. She and a small Committee are dedicated to erecting plaques in and around London where AFS/NFS Firemen and Firewomen were killed during the 2nd World War.

To date 21 plaques have been erected the latest being on a Café in Plashet Road E15, where a service was held in respect of the 5 Firemen from Beckenham Kent and 1 from West Ham who were killed by a direct hit during a bombing raid on the 19th/20th March 1941, and at Stratford Fire Station where a plaque was placed in memory of Cyril Demarne OBE Chief Officer of the West Ham Fire Brigade.

5. Treasurer's Report:- Adoption of Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2013

Given by the Chairman:-

The Chairman informed the meeting that the accounts were again in good order; this was due to our Treasurer's continued commitment and good management. He asked the meeting to refer to the statement of accounts supplied by the Treasurer, which were attached to the papers appertaining to the meeting and had been examined.

He asked the meeting if there were any questions relating to the balance sheet.

There were none

Treasurer's Report Contd-:

As there were no questions, D. Bradbury proposed the accounts and F. Freeman seconded the motion to adopt the examined accounts for the year ending 31st December 2013, on a vote on a show of hands the meeting accepted the examined report unanimously.

7. Election of Officers for 2013/2014-:

The Chairman asked the meeting to refer to the nominations contained within the papers for the meeting. All members nominated had agreed to stand for the relevant positions for the coming year. He asked if there were any other nominations, there were none.

The Chairman asked if the meeting would accept the nominations and vote on them en bloc, this was agreed and on a show of hands the meeting accepted unanimously the nominations.

Officers & Committee for 2013/2014 -:

Chairman	M. Coffey OBE
Vice Chairman	Sir K. Knight CBE DL
Secretary	B. Sargent MBE
Treasurer	Mrs E. Stocker
Membership Sec	H. Paviour
Ass Membership Sec	K. Sefton

Committee:-	C. Elve	D. Harn	A. Phillips
	C. Hart	A. Poole	G. Perren MBE
	F. Freeman	E. Crichton	K. Martin
	R. Stevenson	N. Paulding	T. Richards

Fire Fighters Charity Rep	A. Poole	
Standard Bearers	N. Paulding	D. Bradbury
Examiners	A. Gilfrin	Mrs. N. Dodwell
Magazine Editor	K. Sefton	
Web Site Manager	B. Shilstone	
Chaplain	J. Potter	

Following the election of Officers, the Chairman said that the Committee had decided to nominate to the membership D. Harn for the position of LVP. David he said had served as one of the Associations Welfare Representatives and that due to the Welfare Fund reorganising their Executive Committee his position has been terminated. David has also worked on the Associations Committee for many years he said, his knowledge of both the Association and Welfare Fund would be missed by the Fund and he felt that for his commitment to the Association he should be recognised with the position of LVP of the Association. With that in mind he asked the meeting to accept the nomination, and on a show of hands the meeting accepted unanimously the nomination.

The Chairman gave a brief history of P. Royal's involvement with the RMA. The outgoing Ladies Branch Secretary he said had worked tirelessly over many years, not only for her members but helped with the running of the Surrey Branch with her husband Rex.

The Chairman presented Pat with a small gift which was in recognition of her work for the RMA.

10. A O B:-

E. Havis

Said that he was a wartime Fireman and had been associated with the Fire Service since 1942. I believe he said that the cuts to the Service are wrong, the Brigade have very special people working for them, they are not the normal run of the mill people, they care about others and they put their safety on the line every day. We are constantly getting people saying that they are going to cut the service and in my mind this is the worst thing that can be done. My philosophy is that when something is not broken then do not try to mend it, if you do it will end up 10 times worse than it was in the first place. The service is good, it demands respect as do the men and women who work for it, and when you start messing with peoples feelings and taking things away from them that is the day we will get a second rate Fire Service, which to date I haven't seen.

Before closing the meeting the Chairman said that he recognised the comments that have been made, nobody wants to see a second rate Fire Service, our Chairman, Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner are professional people and they are striving to make the Brigade better, they provide an excellent service to the population of London and the many thousands of people who come into the Capital every day.

When he was the DC, he said that he had attended similar public meetings and we were trying to improve the Brigade and it was hard trying to explain why we were taking Pumps off of the run and closing stations, for an officer that doesn't come easily. We need to recognise that in the current situation finances are tight and as the DC said earlier the risk is changing and we have to ensure that the LFB are properly trained, supported and resourced for the work that they carry out. I am sure he said that the politicians and management are continually trying to improve the Brigade with very limited resources.

There being no other business the Chairman, M. Coffey thanked everyone for attending the AGM; he wished everyone a pleasant afternoon and hoped that they would enjoy the Reunion. He then closed the meeting at 1610 hours

**The 2014 AGM & Reunion will take place on the 7th May at the
Victory Services Club Seymour Street W2 2HF commencing at 2:30pm
And will be followed by the Annual Reunion**