

**LONDON FIRE BRIGADE RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD IN THE CARISBROOKE HALL
VICTORY SERVICES CLUB SEYMOUR STREET W 2 2HF
ON WEDNESDAY 9TH MAY 2012**

The Chairman M. Coffey opened the meeting at 14.35 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 2011 and April 2012 was 129, of which 28 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:-

K. Baxter. D. Bland. J. Blott. Sir M. Bonham. L. Bradby. J. Bryant. D. Cebunka.
B. Coleman. Mrs M.Coffey. R. Dobson. M. Dix. A. Eatherton. E. Havis. D. Harn,
H. Harrison. R. Holsgrove. Sir K. Knight. G. Knight. A. Mabbutt. R. Murray, R. Neil MP
B. Newstead. P. Rose. R. Still. S. Turek.

The minutes of the 2011 AGM held in the Sir Frederick Delve Suite on 18th May 2011 were read, it was agreed that they were a true record.

Matters Arising:- None

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

The Chairman opened his address by welcoming everyone to the Victory Services Club for the Retired Members Association's Annual General Meeting.

I am he said happy to report that the RMA has had a busy and successful year. We have had a number of ceremonial and social events, which the Secretary will cover in his report.

In a year of local authority cuts one of the things that did increase was our pensions. I am sure he said that all members were pleased to see the 5.2% increase in our pension payment at the end of April.

The Fire Authority is facing unprecedented cuts over the next few years and is no longer in a position to support the United Kingdom Annual Service of Remembrance and wreath laying at St Paul's Cathedral, which is organised by the Firefighters Memorial Charitable Trust. I would he said, like to encourage members of our Association to give their support by becoming members of the Firefighters Memorial Trust. Anyone who is interested should speak with the Trust's Secretary, Paul Settle, who is here today, he has application forms available or you can apply through the website the cost is just £12 per year.

Your Committee has been having difficult communications with the Welfare Fund for some time. There has been a reduction in grant from the Welfare Fund and we have just heard that Dave Harn and Norman Paulding, the RMA's Welfare Executive Members have been voted off of the Welfare Fund's Executive Committee. Norman Paulding will give you more information in his report later in the meeting.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee Members and Branch Secretaries for their work and support throughout the year and especially recognise the hard work of our Secretary in organising the functions throughout the year and especially the AGM and Reunion here today in these special surroundings. I would also like to thank all the members who supported the raffle, which was drawn at the Dinner Dance last year and was successful in raising funds. This has helped your Association to continue to hold your membership subscriptions at the same level for the coming year.

Chairman's Report Contd-:

In closing he said that he was sure that all members would like to send their best wishes to the London Fire Brigade as it approaches the very challenging time of the Royal Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the Olympic and Paralympic Games this summer.

Unfortunately our President, Commissioner Ron Dobson is unable to be with us today to give us an update and so I will have the pleasure of introducing the Deputy Commissioner Rita Dexter to you later and she will I am sure update us on what has been happening in the London Fire Brigade over the past year.

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

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

She apologised on behalf of the Commissioner who was unable to attend the meeting due to a meeting with the newly elected leader of the Fire Authority who will replace Councilor Coleman who was not re-elected in the recent local elections. A second council member, M. Tuffrey was also lost as he did not stand for re-election. To date the Mayor has not formally announced the new Chair but it is expected to be Councilor James Cleverly subject to confirmation

In terms of the Authority it is still uncertain as to the political composition of the Authority, on the London Assembly the Conservative group lost 2 seats, Labour gained seats, and this feeds through to have an impact on the makeup of the Assembly, but the numbers are so small that there is room for indiscretion as to how the Assembly is made up, it is assumed that no overall party she said will have control of the Authority.

With the aid of a VDU the DC gave the following report.

Some 5 years ago she said following a dispute, talks were introduced with regards to changing the shift start and finish times for watch based staff who work the 2-2-4 shift pattern. These changes have been introduced and it still provides for a 2-2-4 shift pattern but now provides

for a 10 ½ hour day and a 13 ½ hour night shift, starting at 09:30 and finishing at 20:00 hours We reported to members what the benefits of the changes were with regards to the time spent on community fire safety work, home fire safety visits and training. The indication is that over the first 12 months Fire Fighters were spending 13% more time on community fire safety work 27% on home fire safety visits and 8% on training. In terms of what the Brigade set out to do which underpinned the need for change for start and finish times, the last year seems to have been a success.

At the 7th July inquest a large number of staff gave evidence including one former FF who gave evidence via a video link from Belmarsh Prison. Lady Justice Hallett made a number of recommendations as part of her rule 43 finding, none of the recommendations were addressed directly to the Brigade which, is regarded as a positive statement. On her view of the Brigades performance on the day, there were 4 recommendations for the London Resilience Team which deals with inter agency training protocol at major incidents and procedures for establishing initial rendezvous points and for reviewing the procedure for confirmation that traction current is switched off. The coroner examined in detail the issue as to whether FF have a sufficient degree of discretion when following operational procedures and policy, and concluded that it was not right for her to express any views on the way that the Brigade approaches operational risks and discharges its H&S obligation, which again was an important finding, particularly in light of media criticism as to FFs responding effectively and quickly to events on the day.

Last year the Authority agreed to outsource its training provisions to Babcock who currently provide training to other emergency services, but not other Fire Services. The contract commenced on the 1st April. In March it was agreed by the Authority to outsource the mobilising and control services to CAPITA. This was not received well by Control Room staff who will be transferred and become employees of CAPITA in the near future. Also in

Presidential Address Contd-:

March another outsourcing activity was that of Property Services. Members have asked the Brigade to market test the possibility of outsourcing property and to report back to them, there is a strong feeling amongst the current administration in favor of outsourcing and you may see more of this in the future.

The Commissioner last year announced a program to replace 9 existing fire stations with new stations as part of a PFI arrangement. The Government has given the Brigade PFI credits to the value of £55 million in order for the 9 stations to be rebuilt. The developer has been appointed (Blue Three) and building will commence in March next year. Your Chairman mentioned earlier that we are facing hard times financially, to date we have not had to make the cuts that other organisations have had to make, last year we had to find £22.7 million worth of savings without any significant impact on fire stations, some discomfort was felt very heavily in HQ and amongst main grade staff with redundancies. In the next 2 years, unless something changes we shall need to find in the region of £60 million of savings and with the £22.7 million savings already made all the so called easy targets have been identified and the easy savings have been made. It will be a hard time for the new Authority in terms of the decisions that we will be putting in front of them.

In August we saw 5 days of civil unrest. In terms of impact on the Brigade 5241 calls were received and the level of activity in Control was unprecedented, and the response as you would expect was magnificent. Over the 5 days 807 incidents were attended, 109 of these were life at risk fires. In certain places within London we put in place what are now known as forward mobilising procedures, which are special procedures for mobilising appliances, these procedures are intended to provide better management more oversight and safety for appliances and crews being deployed. During the disturbances, appliances were only deployed where police could offer sufficient back up and ensure that crews could work in safe conditions.

During the disturbances 15 appliances were damaged, there were no substantial attacks on FF or appliances and no FF were injured. In my assessment as OIC, the Brigade performed magnificently from FFs on stations to ACO level, planning and training paid off.

In terms of incidents last year, the Brigade attended 16,000 incidents, 7,000 fewer than last year, this is a continuing trend. The times that we get to work at fires is also diminishing, this is an issue with maintenance and competence and is one of the issues that we face going forward. In terms of numbers within the 16K calls, the main cause of fire in the home continues to be misuse of equipment and appliances and is the cause of 40% of all dwelling fires in London.

Nationally cooking appliances accounted for the majority of fires and no smoke alarm was present in 37% of dwelling fires. In London the number was higher, no alarm was present in 51% of dwelling fires. This underlines the need to continue with the program of Home Fire safety visits and the installation of fire alarms. In terms of fatalities at 16 of the 57 deaths which occurred in homes there was no alarm, 8 deaths occurred when there was detection present but it was not working (no batteries). Across the UK the most common non fire call was to RTAs, this is an area where London is significantly different from the rest of the country. These accounted for a ¼ of all calls in the UK. In London the most common call was to lift releases, we are currently working with local authorities to improve their arrangements regarding lift maintenance and releases, this type of incident remains one of our higher number of calls attended and there were 9400 of these last year which relates to just over ¼ of non fire calls received. RTAs in London account for 10% of non fire calls, in context the LFB attended more special service calls than RTAs which makes us different from other Brigades. Incidents of note last year included the M1 scrap yard fire in April, this resulted in the motorway being closed for several days, 10 teenagers have been convicted of arson and some are now working with the Fire Setters Team.

The Strand fire in June was one of the Brigade's biggest fires. A 10 story building under construction, a difficult fire with 100 FFs attending. Following this incident a debate took

Presidential Address Contd-:

place as to whether it is policy to let fires burn, which, is not the case, this incident was just a difficult fire.

In September a woman and 5 children died in a house fire in Neasden, it has been a long time since that many fatalities occurred at one incident.

A building under construction collapsed in the center of Ilford, Urban search & Rescue teams were deployed to search for people trapped.

In January we attended a dairy fire next to the BBC TV Center. Another difficult fire where the transport authorities wanted to know when to reopen roads.

In April a 12P fire in a pallet yard in Beckton brought down 3 132,000 volt power lines and caused the closure of the A13 as well as affecting the power supply to 88,000 homes.

One of the highlights last year was the UK rescue challenge in September. Hundreds of FFs gathered at the Excel Centre with tons of equipment to take part in the challenge hosted by the Brigade on behalf of the UK Rescue Organisation. 36 Fire & Rescue Services from all over the UK took part in a variety of rescue challenges with 4 international teams also taking part. The challenges were based on the reconstruction of real incidents, rescue techniques were employed by all crews taking part. In addition to the challenge there was the community fire safety village, where over 1000 children under the supervision of LFB staff learnt how to escape and prevent fire. The LFB team won the USAR section, and the LFB rescue team came overall second as did one of the LFB trauma teams, in the vehicle extraction category the Brigade team finished 6th in a field of 40. Because of this success the Brigade will host the World Games in the Autumn.

New facilities this year include a new station at Walthamstow, rebuilt on the existing site.

The new Control Center at Merton known as the as the London Operations Center, obtained through the Government following the failure of their National Fire Control Project. The lease on the building in Docklands housing the Control Room (2GP) expires in 2014 so we would have had to find alternative accommodation for our control.

New equipment-: The immediate emergency care project began in 2007; Chingford was the setting for the 1st stage last autumn. Now complete every appliance is now equipped with life saving 1st aid equipment. Working closely with the LAS for training all FF are now able to provide emergency 1st aid to the standards laid down by them. The model has been taken up nationally and other Fire Services and the H&S executive have accepted that the Brigade's course exceeds the 1st aid at work regulations.

At the end of August we saw the introduction of 2 new pieces of equipment. In the final part of the 4 stage upgrade of the Brigade's BA, new EDDBA sets on fire rescue tenders are now virtually identical to standard BA sets issued last year. The twin cylinder pack gives the wearer a working duration of 47 minutes compared to 37 minutes for standard duration sets, the introduction of respirators means that FFs can now remove their sets and screw a filter cartridge into the face mask when conditions do not warrant the use of full BA. The final stage of the BA upgrade was the introduction of BA radio telemetry. Because of a failure to agree with the FBU on the resilience of the radio frequencies we are currently twin tracking the new telemetry boards with the old BA entry boards.

Finally the new mobile data terminals which the Commissioner mentioned last year have now been fitted to all mobile fire appliances, this will allow crews to access all risk information on route to calls.

In terms of the year ahead I have already mentioned the new training provider Babcock, with the recent elections I am unable to assess what impact they will have on the Brigade. The Diamond Jubilee celebrations, Olympic and Paralympics have been mentioned by your Chairman, this year we will have to publish our next integrated risk management plan, known as the London Safety Plan, it is in this plan that we set out plans for the Brigade based on the amount of funding that is available.

Presidential Address Contd-:

The Olympics and Paralympic games qualify as our biggest challenge, this year 6 Minis have been provided and given to the Brigade by BMW and will be used as rapid response vehicles based on the Olympic park and crewed by 2 FFs. They are equipped to respond to small incidents, in addition to these, plans have been put into place as we would for any major event. Appliances will be placed around the park and will be reserved for any large incident.

Working as I do with Fire Safety, I have seen much more of the work that they undertake regarding fire safety regulation over the past year. I should like to thank them and I am impressed with the work that they carry out, and over the past year they have had a magnificent year, especially in respect of work carried out on BEKO fridges. The enforcement team continues to do fantastic work with temporary structures as do the Fire Safety Engineering team who have worked on the Shard, and the Transport team who are currently working on Cross Rail.

In closing the DC thanked the Chairman and the Membership for giving her the opportunity to update the RMA with the work that the Brigade continue to do.

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

The Secretary opened his address by echoing the words of the Chairman and welcoming all those who were present. As you are now aware he said Southwark has recently been leased to Babcock who are now overseeing the Brigade's training, and as the future of Southwark training school is yet to be determined, and with this in mind your Committee feel that it is now the time to make a break from Southwark and hopefully with your support we have found a permanent home to hold our AGM and Reunion here today and this could become a permanent place where we are able to hold future AGM's and Reunions and will in time rival Southwark.

It is with sadness he said that he once again had to report of the passing of a LVP. Len Robinson, joined the NFS in 1946 and after completing his basic training in 1947 was posted to Edmonton Fire Station which was part of the Middlesex Fire Brigade, he subsequently served at Potters Bar when it had the distinction of being in both the Middlesex and Hertfordshire Fire Brigades. In 1965 he became a member of the LFB and as a Lfm was posted to Tottenham, he retired in 1971 while being stationed at Walthamstow. Following his retirement he became Branch Secretary for the Essex Branch. After completing 15 years as Branch Secretary he was made a LVP and moved to Wales. On behalf of the Association the Secretary offered his thanks for the work that Len did on behalf of his members. Condolences were sent to his wife Marjorie and it was due to his long association with the Fire Service that the local Brigade attended the funeral and acted as a Guard of Honor.

The Secretary thanked all members who purchased raffle tickets for last years grand draw , with your help we were able to raise £4170 for the Associations funds, the results of the draw can be found in the winter issue of the Roundthread. The Committee has decided not to hold a draw this year but will consider holding one for next year and would welcome support and ideas from members if this comes to fruition.

All events that were published in last year's Diary of Events took place and he thanked all members who took part and supported the events. With that in mind, and because of the support shown by members, this year will see another full diary of events which will include visits to the Clock Tower at the Palace of Westminster, The Ceremony of the Keys at the Tower of London, a Jack the Ripper Walk and the annual Battlefield tour to the Normandy Landings, culminating in the Annual Dinner Dance which this year will be held in the Victory Services Club on the 20th October.

He told the meeting that places were still available for some events and if anyone would like to attend or required further information they should see him following the meeting. He also

Secretary's Report Contd:-

asked that if there is anything that members would like him to arrange he is open to suggestions for next year when it is hoped that we shall take the Battlefield tour to Ypres during the summer.

He apologised for a mistake on this year's Diary of Events the FFMCT Memorial Service in September should read St Bartholomew's Church not Bishopsgate Church.

The Magazine continues to grow under the editor Keith Sefton as does the Web site which is managed by Dennis Cebunka. Dennis has always looked for a ways through the web site to raise funds for the Association and if you have the facility and are looking to purchase anything for your home, car, a holiday, even wine, he has also recently arranged for members to purchase discounted printer cartridges. To make a purchase you will 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.

Unfortunately due to ill health Dennis has to stand down as our web site manager, Keith Sefton has agreed to take over the role and is at present looking after the site, due to his work load with the magazine he is not able to continue with this reference and the Secretary asked the meeting that if anyone is willing to take this job and has the time and is computer literate the Committee would welcome their involvement. He said that he would like to record his thanks to Dennis on behalf of the Association for setting up and maintaining the site and hope that he makes a full and speedy recovery.

In recent months the Association has received complaints from members who are not receiving their magazine and other communications sent out by the Association, the Committee has looked at these complaints and has found that in the majority of cases members have failed to tell their Branch Secretary that they have moved, please let us know if you change your address and not only will you continue to get the magazine and mail shot on time but you will be saving the RMA money in wasted and duplicated postage.

The dates of issue of the magazine have recently been changed and you should have received the latest edition last month. The reason for this is so that we can get next year's diary to you in plenty of time before the start of the New Year. The Secretary again appealed to members to think hard about supplying articles for inclusion in future issues of the magazine, which can be on any subject be it Fire Service related or about holidays or hobbies.

A request he said had been received from a retired Essex fire fighter who is carrying out research for a paper on the National Fire Service Dispute which took place in 1951. It was the first national dispute in the newly organised Fire Service and he would like to interview members who may have been involved in the dispute and were serving at the time.

Another request has been received from the BBC who would like to interview members who served during the Blitz, they are making a program called How We Won The War and are traveling the length and breadth of the country uncovering and celebrating civilian stories of WW2.

You will find with your papers for today's meeting he said a sample of what trading items are on offer to you, they can be purchased from Erik Crichton who looks after our shop and he is with us today to take any orders, please complete the attached form and pass it to Erik and your goods will be dispatched on receipt of payment. Please be aware that when ordering items from Erik over the telephone you are contacting him at his home, we do not have as many members think a shop on the high street or in an office please be aware that some items may be out of stock.

Today is a time when 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

Secretary's Report Contd:-

Coffey and our Membership Secretary Jim Geoghegan who is constantly encouraging retired fire fighters to join. Our Chairman, has been active together with his wife Mary, in supporting not only the RMA events but also those that we are invited to attend, he is always on hand to give advice and help with the day to day running of the Association. The Treasurer, Magazine Editor, Standard Bearers, 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 in retirement, without their involvement and the support of you the membership the Association would not exist.

The Secretary also thanked Veronica Babayan and 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 us with food and drink at the Reunion.

The following report was given on behalf of the Membership Secretary J. Geoghegan:-

2012 has proved to be a slightly brighter year for RMA membership. Returns from branches indicate that a slight increase in membership has occurred. However, membership is still quite a way off of the figures of a few years ago.

We still continue to lose existing members who have, for whatever reason, decided not to renew their link with the Association. It is not possible to blame the unreliability of the postal system this year as the standing order uptake continues to grow, and the members who have not renewed have made a conscious decision not to.

This year, a cut off point has been imposed for renewals to allow for a presentation of membership figures to the AGM. There may be a lot of members out there who have, even 3 months after receiving the renewal reminder, still not got around to renewing. These members will have been taken off the nominal roll and the magazine subscription list. If they renew later, it is an easy task to reactivate their membership. Quite often, it takes the non arrival of the magazine or even the diary/Christmas Card to remind people that they forgot to post their renewal.

Branch Secretary's continue to encourage and generate new member applications as do the retirement briefing sessions held by LFB. I am repeating my annual appeal for the membership's views on reasons for non renewal. If anyone knows of a retired member who is not a member or is a lapsed member, maybe they could ask them if they have a specific reason why they do not want to be a member. If you hear of one, please let me know.

We continue to offer the facility for new members to request to pay their subscription by bank transfer. This provides instant injections of funds to RMA and saves the interminable queues in the shrinking number of banks with counter facilities. This appears to be gaining some support with new members and I would hope that, maybe, we could extend this to annual renewals.

Our deceased list continues to show many familiar names of our former colleagues. Among those this year is that of Ron Borrows and Bob Peskett, both former senior officers and members of the RMA. Unfortunately, as is the case every year, a lot of the names on this year's list will be familiar to many of you.

In addition to the retired members, 2 serving members of the LFB passed away this year.

In closing the Secretary hoped that everyone attending would have an enjoyable afternoon at the Reunion and he hoped that the new venue was satisfactory and that the membership would encourage their colleagues who were 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.

Secretary's Report Contd:-

If you do enjoy today's venue he said, and either yourself, father, grandfather, son or daughter 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 you see today plus the club bar and restaurant and the use of the 198en suite bedrooms located on site. You can get more information and a joining pack from the club's reception

He wished everyone a very pleasant afternoon in the company of old friends and colleagues, he also hoped that everyone would have a safe journey home and thanked everyone for their support throughout the past year and more importantly their attendance today.

4. Welfare Report:- N. Paulding

He told the meeting that he had recently attend the Welfare Fund's AGM as one of their Committee members. At that meeting a resolution was put to the meeting which had been proposed by their Committee at a meeting at which he did not attend.

The resolution:-

The Executive Council proposed that clause 5/1 of the articles of the Association be removed.

The Executive Council believes that the interests of retired members are sufficiently represented at Executive Council level by the appointed Secretary and Treasurer of each Area, Commands and BHQ. The removal of this clause and the subsequent reduction in size of the Executive Council recognise that each Area/Command and BHQ committee is set up to include a retired members representative, therefore the interests of retired members are considered throughout the official structure of the Welfare Fund.

He said this now means that each area of the Welfare Fund now have their own retired members representative. There was an amendment to the resolution from the floor which was,

That one of these representatives would sit on the Committee to co-ordinate the business of Welfare Fund members.

The RMA Welfare Fund representatives D. Harn and myself are no longer involved with the Fund or these changes and have been voted off of the Funds Committee. It also means that if members wish to communicate with the Fund it needs to be done through your Area representative. The vote in favor of this resolution was carried by 75% of those present.

The Chairman asked if any members would like to make a contribution:-

T. Richards

Stated that it appeared to him that D. Harn and N. Paulding had been removed from the Committee because they have asked questions regarding the investments of the Fund in the past and the dealings concerning the Escape PH where a lot of money was lost. If they feel that they have got to rule out our representatives then we should not accept any future funding from them and remain as our own Association.

N. Paulding

The Fund proposed that if a grant was provided to the RMA that only members of the Fund who are also members of the RMA should benefit from the grant. In response NP told the Welfare Committee that he felt that this would create a two tier RMA and that he could in no way agree to this.

Chairman

Said that he felt that the relationship between the RMA and the Fund had changed, Originally the RMA had received the grant in lieu of the loss of facilities at the sports grounds which included funded functions and meeting rooms? Over the past years the grant has been reduced from what he understood to be £10K to £1500 this year. Over recent years we

Welfare Report Contd-:

have had difficult relationships, the Committee have discussed these issues recently and he said that he had called a special meeting of the Committee to try to resolve the issue. This he said is one of the reasons that the Grand Draw which was mentioned earlier is a means of maintaining our finances. The motion before us is that we break our ties with the Welfare Fund and that no member of the RMA will receive special support and that we are all treated as equals. He said that he felt that this was the best way forward and would like the support of the membership here today with this motion. Like N. Paulding and D. Harn who have represented you on these Committees for many years they do not wish to see our organisation split in any way by having different standards for our members which your Committee is in favour of.

He asked the meeting by a show of hands to vote on the motion.

The result was that the majority of the meeting was in favor of the motion with 8 members against the motion and 6 members abstaining.

The Chairman declared that the motion was carried; he thanked the meeting for their support on a difficult issue and asked if there were any other questions from the floor.

T. Bucksey.

Said that he would have liked to have spoken before the vote was taken. I am he said the Retired Members Representative for Western Command. He said that he appreciated that the links between the RMA and the Fund have been going on for a long time, the discussions that he had been involved in over the past 18 months he had not witnessed any hostility towards the RMA. What I can tell you he said is that through my involvement that there is no desire on the part of the Fund to take away or break the link between the two organisations. What I believe is that the Fund has tried to make a closer link and what we would all like to see is that every retired member is a member of both organisations. For various reasons the Fund's Executive have taken decisions regarding their funding and a lot of that is down to accountability to their members for the use of that money. I am sure that you will remember he said that when you were serving on stations that there was a lot of emphasis on people joining the Brigade and coming onto stations and using the facilities provided by the Fund, if they were not a member they were encouraged to join the Fund so that they could have the use of the equipment provided. It has been a tradition of the Fund that money paid into the Fund is used by and for its members, so I think he said that there is an understanding that if a grant is given it is used for the benefit of Welfare Fund members and I think that is where they are coming from. I also understand he said that N. Paulding has a point of view with regards to seeing it as a two tier system, what we should be working towards is getting all RMA members to be members of both organisations, that I feel he said is a long way off as there is a lot of work to be done and taking the step that you have taken today is now going to make that bridge harder to cross than easier.

A member from the floor said that this was the first time that he had heard about this problem, and should he not have received a letter from the Fund explaining the problem and giving him the opportunity to read about it, as should all other members of the Fund. He said that when he joined in 1974 the Fund was the best thing you could belong to, it looked after you. When we have votes and put these issues together, we as members voted for the motion and a small select section has voted to do this thing, you are all aware what happened to Aveley and Ewell and how they were disposed of, if we cut and run now we cannot fight them and we should be given a chance to find out why this has been done to us. I should like to read about this he said and discuss with other members and the Fund to see what can be done about this.

The Chairman thanked all those for their contributions. He said that there is a lot of misunderstanding as to what the Welfare Fund and the RMA do. A lot of people seem to think that they are the same thing, and clearly we are not and without embarrassing the DC the Welfare Fund is no longer anything to do with the Brigade. It is a stand alone organisation no longer sponsored or financed by the LFB or the Authority. I recognise the points that have

Welfare Report Contd-:

been made he said and he did not wish to comment on how the Fund communicates with their members that is for them. The decision that has been taken is not that we are breaking all relationships but it is to do with the fact that over the past 10 years the RMA have received a grant from the Fund and have not officially been told why the grant has been reduced. The motion that has been passed today is that the RMA wish to stand alone without relying on a grant and that is why we held a Grand Draw to raise funds so that the RMA can continue to provide a level of support, that the Committee feel is appropriate for its members. We are not going to war and I do not want anyone to think he said that the majority of members here today are members of both organisations. Each organisation is able to offer to you different things, and I think that what the RMA offer you is of a good standard and we wish to continue in that vein and that is also the case of the Fund. Both Committees are only interested in providing their members with the best level of support that they can. In breaking ties it is for us to say that we recognise your position and the way that you wish to proceed and to use your funds within your Areas to give support to your retired members, but we shall continue to do the same for our members and go our own way and make our own funding. I feel he said that this is a good position to be in and it is helpful for both organisations, and I do welcome the comments that have been made which are helpful.

The Chairman allowed one more speaker from the floor

T. Richards

Agreed that that there was a misunderstanding, all that the resolution does he said, is that it says to the Fund thank you for your support over the years and we as an organisation no longer wish to take your money in the future as we wish to stand on our own feet. Ten years ago I moved a motion to the membership of the RMA that we broke away from MARF because it was becoming a talking shop and nothing was happening except from taking our annual subscriptions. I think he said that members will remember this and agree that it was the correct decision at that time and we have benefited from that decision, it is hard to make the break from the Fund but I thank you for your funding but we no longer want it.

In closing N. Paulding said that he had spoken with C. Connolly the CE of the Fund on the question of welfare, bearing in mind that the Welfare Fund, who are now a limited company do no longer get involved with members welfare, when asked to supply this support to members they pass on the request to either the RMA or the FF Charity, the Fund acknowledged this fact and they agreed that they are a Sports & Social club and that it would take too much money to change their name from Welfare Fund to Sports & Social Club.

5. Fire Fighters Charity Report-: Kate Griffith

With the aid of a VDU K. Griffith gave the following report-:

She started by thanking the Chairman and RMA for the invitation to address the membership at the RMAs AGM.

Since J. Parry gave his address last year, she said, I should like to define the Charities vision. It will not come as a surprise to you that our vision is to make a positive influence by supporting members of the Fire Service community when they need help, and work together to influence their quality of life, changing it for the better, which I think that you will agree with.

In terms of how we are going to achieve this we undertake a lot of fund raising and this is how the London Region income has been made up this year-:

Regular Giving £465.941-: Public Regular Giving £19.851-: Volunteer Fund Raising £17.940
Regional Fund Raising £49.842 -: Sporting & Overseas Events £26.251-: Fire Service Lottery
£120,107 -: Public Lottery £375.00.-: Prize Draws £10.745 -: Recycling £156.00.

The Volunteer Fund Raising looks she said to be reduced from last year but due to our accounting system it is now shown in the Regional Fund Raising pot, which has raised

Fire Fighters Charity Report Contd:-

£49,842. All aspects have grown and one area we are going into is recycling, yellow bins will be appearing on Fire Stations and we are asking you to dispose of your old clothes, shoes and bedding.

The amount of people that we have helped this year in London has increased; we have reduced the number of continuing support cases by enabling people to support themselves. One of the things that the Charity is looking at is re-enablement rather than dependency, giving solutions to problems rather than giving cash to help them to survive and this will help them to become self sufficient and will increase their quality of life. We have had increased numbers attending the 3 centers for recuperation, and in London we have helped 3% of retired Firefighters, 19% of dependents, 2% of Support Staff and 48% of full time Firefighters.

Over the next 5 years we shall be working to improve the quality of our services, increase the number of beneficiaries that can use our services and expand the services looking at new areas which will include adult mental health which is one of the highest causes of sick leave overtaking back pain. In the past the charity has centered its help on physical ailments rather than mental health problems and we shall be seeking expert advice from experts working in mental health.

We continue to invest in the centers, the rooms at Jubilee House have been re-furbished, at Littlehampton we have upgraded the Ronnie Green Wing and have installed a sprinkler system, we are also providing a rehabilitation center and are building a new administration block. This means that all 3 centers will now be able to offer rehabilitation and recuperation to the same level. We are also reinvesting in our buildings, for example photo electric cells have been installed at Harcombe House, which gives the charity a saving of £2000 per month on our electricity bill, we have also had an economically friendly sewage system installed which was partly funded by a Trust. Marine Court is currently undergoing the biggest re-development, big changes are taking place with the building of a rehabilitation center, the residential flats have been upgraded and thermal cladding and insulation together with sprinkler systems have been fitted. The work was completed in November and all residents have now moved back in.

Within the Ronnie Green Wing, all bathrooms have been adapted to cater for the disabled. It is hoped that the rehabilitation wing will be opened in the spring of 2013 when we will be welcoming back our first beneficiaries.

To complete these works we need to raise funds. We have recently had a fund raising review and it was established that we need to stop the negative trend in our fund raising lines which have not been as effective as they could be, but while changing this we need to sustain and improve our income levels to meet our beneficiary improvements. To make these improvements we need to raise an additional £1 million over the next 5 years, the areas in which we shall be doing this are with Regular Giving, Lottery, Events, Treks, Corporate Sponsorship, Trust Legacies, and Merchandising and Marketing.

The retired members are the one section that is increasing and we hope that you will support us by using the Regular Giving scheme and purchase trading items via the web site.

Other challenges that we are looking at developing is a new Supporter Care Team who will be able to talk to you as one Charity, not as separate departments within the Charity. We are also looking at more performance management from our staff, improving our communications by strengthening our links to the various RMA organisations around the country, and to NARF and the FBU, this will enable us to improve our services in the future with a view to our beneficiaries needs and how we can add other services.

In closing she said that she hoped that all members of the RMA were receiving the Charities magazine SHOUT, if not she said that she had with her forms to update the charities mailing list, which will also be of help when the charity needs to keep in touch with you.

6. Treasurer's Report:- Adoption of Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2011

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

Treasurer's Report Contd-:

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

As there were no questions, the Chairman asked that the meeting to adopt the examined accounts for the year ending 31st December 2011, on a vote on a show of hands the meeting accepted the examined report unanimously.

7. Election of Officers for 2011/2012-:

The Chairman asked the meeting to refer to the nomination form 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. As N. Paulding and D. Harn had been removed from the Welfare Fund's Committee, and following the motion to no longer take a grant from the Fund, D. Harn and N. Paulding were removed from the nomination form as RMA Welfare Representatives, but would remain as members of the RMA Committee. K. Sefton would be standing as the Web Site Manager due to D. Cebunka being unable to continue in this role due to illness.

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 2011/2012 -:

Chairman	M. Coffey OBE
Vice Chairman	Sir K. Knight
Secretary	B. Sargent MBE
Treasurer	Mrs E. Stocker
Membership Sec	J. Geoghegan
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
	Mrs. P. Royal	R. Stevenson	N. Paulding

Fire Fighters Charity Rep	A. Poole	
Standard Bearers	N. Paulding	D. Bradbury
Examiners	A. Gilfrin	Mrs. N. Dodwell
Magazine Editors	K. Sefton	G. Perren MBE
Web Site Manager	K. Sefton	
Chaplain	J. Potter	

Following the election of Officers, the Chairman said that the Committee had decided to nominate to the membership three retiring Branch Secretaries for the position of LVP. Hugh Harrison, Michael Dunworth and Gary Knight had all served the Association and their members for many years he said, their knowledge of the Association would be missed and he felt that their commitment to the Association should be recognised. With that in mind he asked the meeting to accept the nominations, and on a show of hands the meeting accepted unanimously the nominations.

10. A O B-:

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 1615 hours

**The 2013 AGM & Reunion will take place on the 8th May at the
Victory Services Club Seymour Street W2 2HF commencing at 2:30pm**