Dear Friends,

I must repeat my thanks to so many of our widow members for the phone calls, e’ mails, cards and letters that arrived in early January. The distribution of the Christmas Gift from all of us may have been delayed but it seems they all did get through amid the Christmas postal chaos.

You will see on page eight that we have a somewhat longer list of congratulation messages than usual. It was especially good to hear of the award of an MBE to one of our members, well deserved Eileen. We also heard about the Golden Wedding of our good friends Claire & Brian McDowell on the eighteenth of last month. For those few of you who do not know, Brian is Chairman of our sister, Bristol (Avon), Branch of NARPO. At their AGM at the end of February, I reminded Brian that we first met just over 35 years ago when Gill and I moved to Bristol and I joined the same Group for a while on Traffic at New Bridewell.

The next few weeks bring the usual concentration of activity within the Branch. In the hope that this edition gets to you in time, there is the Annual General Meeting on the ninth of this month. There are then two events at which I hope to see many of you; the Reunion Dinner, on Friday evening 6th May and the Summer Outing at Slimbridge, on Wednesday 29th June. Be sure not to miss out on the opportunities to join old friends and colleagues. If you cannot manage June then be sure to keep the day free on 5th October for our new event.

After the snow of December and the often damp and chilly times through the early part of this year, we may deserve some sunny days through the upcoming quarter. Fingers crossed that we will all enjoy a really warm Summer.

Forthcoming Events

Branch Annual General Meeting
The AGM is at 3p.m. on Saturday, 9th April, 2011 at Force Headquarters, Valley Road, Portishead.

Branch Annual Reunion Dinner
The Reunion Dinner is on Friday, 6th May, 2011, 7 p.m. for 7.30 p.m. at the Farmers Tavern, Brean Leisure Centre.

Branch Summer Outing
Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust - Wednesday, 29th June 2011. Contact Rod Deane on 01749 675477.

NARPO Golf Championships
Worlebury Golf Club, W-s-Mare, on Wednesday, 20th July, 2011 - tee off at 12noon, coffee from 11a.m. Contact Brian Book on 01934 625159.

Autumn Luncheon - Bishop’s Palace Wells - Wednesday, 5th October, 2011 - Details on page four. Contact Rod Deane on 01749 675477.

Bath Police Retired Club programme for 2011 - contact Clive Tilling at clivetilling@live.co.uk
Wednesday, 8th June Cream Tea - local garden centre venue to be arranged.
October date t.b.a. Musical Evening and buffet.
Friday, 16th December Christmas Dinner

Reunion Dinner, Brean - Friday, 6th May, 2011

Name: ………………………………………………… Sum enclosed: £……:……
I/we would like to be seated with:
**Force Male Voice Choir**

The programme of concerts for the next part of 2011 is as follows. All concerts start at 7.30 p.m.:

- **Saturday, 16th April**  
  Church of the Holy Cross, Mark
- **Saturday, 7th May**  
  St Peter & St Paul Church, South Petherton
- **Saturday, 21st May**  
  St John’s Church, Lodge Causeway, Bristol
- **Saturday, 18th June**  
  All Saints Church, Dulverton

The Choir will be pleased to have your support at each of the venues and to welcome new members.

If you would like to join the Choir please ring Pete Carlyon on 01934 513320 or, to book concert slots for 2012, ring Clive Griffiths on 01275 818709.

**Loss of Widows’ Pensions upon Re-Marriage**

I have been told that the County Treasurer’s Office will, in the next few weeks, be writing to all those in receipt of a Police Widow’s Pension. I wanted to inform all our Widow Members of this letter before it arrives and the staff at County Hall have agreed not to send it until this Newsletter has been distributed.

I trust that all widow members are aware that their police pension is forfeited in the event that they re-marry or are cohabiting. While this has been the subject of frequent challenges by NARPO and the Police Federation over many years, it remains a requirement under the Police Pension Regulations.

The purpose of the letter will be to ensure that no one has, by omission, neglected to inform the County Treasurer of such a change in their ‘single’ status.

I am indebted to the staff at County Hall for agreeing to delay their letters until after this Newsletter has reached you.

**Bristol Police Golf Day - Thursday, 19th May, 2011 - Knowle Golf Club**

_Peter Reeves asked that I publicise this event for those eligible to enter._

The annual Bristol Police Golf Day is on 19th May at Knowle Golf Club, starting at 12 noon, and is open to all members of the former Bristol Constabulary. Non-members £33, Knowle members £12, to include golf, prizes and a meal (meal only £10). Please send non-refundable deposit to Dave Hawkes, 42, Courtenay Road, Keynsham BS31 1JS - £10 cheque made out to ‘Knowle Golf Club’. For further information ring Pete on 07810 236866.

**Annual Reunion Dinner - The Farmers Tavern, Brean Leisure Centre - Friday, 6th May, 2011**

The growing number in attendance at the Dinner last year broke all recent records. Can we do even better in 2011? The reply slip at the foot of this and the preceding page should be forwarded to me as soon as possible and no later than 1st May, 2011. Those wishing to use the transport available are asked to contact the volunteer coach organisers as soon as they are able, so that the appropriate vehicles can be booked well in advance.

The transport organisers are:

- **Keynsham**  
  Ray Peters 0117 986 7128
- **Wellington/Taunton**  
  Malcolm Blackmore 01823 335631
- **Weston-super-Mare**  
  John Vincent 01934 413153
- **Yeovil**  
  John Beaven 01935 814569

The costs of the meal have, inevitably, risen slightly again and your committee have decided, after its success in 2010, to incorporate the traditional draw so that each member will have a ‘free’ chance to win a prize. With the Branch subsidy, members and spouses will be charged at £14.00 a head. Guests are welcome but will be charged the full cost of the meal, at £17.00. As before, there is no charge for our Widow Members.

Please check that you have enclosed the correct amount, by cheque to ‘Avon and Somerset Branch NARPO’. Bookings can be taken at the AGM but with cheque payments, please.

**Reunion Dinner, Brean - Friday, 6th May, 2011**

My party will comprise:  
myself / partner and ......................... Guests.

I / we will / will not be using the coach from .........................
**Visit to Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust - Wednesday, 29th June, 2011.**

I am repeating this entry as there is still time to reserve your place if you have not already done so. Rod & Jill Deane have again taken upon themselves the task of organising our Summer 2011 outing and this time we are venturing a few miles north to the world famous wildlife centre designed by the late Sir Peter Scott. We are told that June is a good month to see the many new arrivals with their attentive mothers in their best plumage.

The proposal is for members to arrive as they wish and be able to look around and perhaps enjoy a lunch before we all meet together at 2p.m. when we can participate together in a selection of organised activities. There is a wide choice of activities and we have focused upon the guided walk for those who want it. The group rate admission is normally £8.50 for adults, £6.40 for concessions and £4.50 for children. Branch subsidy will bring the cost down to £5.00 for adult/concessions members.

Towards the latter part of the afternoon it is suggested that we have a get-together in the cafeteria and that those who wish to do so can enjoy a cream tea, almost an obligatory adjunct to these summer outings since they started about five years ago. Please include your request for the tea on the reply slip. The cost of the tea is £4.00 a head. If you have already responded by means of the slip on the January Newsletter please send Rod the further cheque if you require cream teas to be reserved for you and your party.

At this stage, with the numbers for Slimbridge having an upper limit, only Branch members (that always includes partners) can be accommodated. Those wishing to bring guests or children are welcome to contact Rod Deane who will try to accommodate their requests, with those able to attend paying the appropriate full charge.

All slips to Rod Deane at **Amesbury, 9, Blake Road, Wells, Somerset BA5 2JB** and enquiries to Rod on **01749 675477** (mobile 07808920219) or **rod.deane@talktalk.net**. Cheques for the appropriate sum should be forwarded with the completed slip and be made out to ‘**Avon and Somerset Branch NARPO**’

Visit to Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust - Wednesday, 29th June, 2011  
All information in capital letters, please.

Members name: ………………………. Address: ………………………………………

Partner’s name: ………………………. ……………………………... Post Code: …………….

Contact Tel. No. ……………………….. Contact e’mail address. ………………………..

Post to: **Rod Deane, Amesbury, 9, Blake Road, Wells, Somerset BA5 2JB**
Somerset Earned Its Stripes
My thanks to Paul Harris for an interesting insight into what we were about 40-odd years ago.

I thought I would send you a tale which should warm the hearts of all Somerset traffic men (including you!) before the story is lost in the mists of time.

In the sixties we progressed from Black patrol cars to Green cars and then as part of the South-West Region Holiday traffic scheme to White cars. Remember the old Jaguar 3.4’s? It was found that high visibility (then white) patrol cars had a remarkable beneficial effect on accident rates on major routes. Some time in the late sixties I was visited in my office at Traffic HQ, Taunton (old prison block) by the regional rep for the 3 M’s company (Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing) but,Sadly, I cannot remember his name. He showed me samples of a new product comprising flat plastic sheets of bright fluorescent orange and reflective red in which were set millions of tiny glass beads which reflected light back to the source. He agreed that this reflective sheet could probably be made in any colour. In due course we received samples of one inch wide blue reflective tape. With the approval of Ken Steele the first "Jam Sandwich" was created in Taunton workshops, with a six or eight inch wide fluorescent orange stripe along the sides of the car bordered by one inch blue reflective tape and red reflective sheet across the rear facing sections of the boot. There was a problem in making the flat plastic sheets follow curves and this was solved by the workshop foreman, Mike Coombes, who used a hair drier to soften the sheets and make them more pliable.

At around the same time we were suffering a number of rear end collisions from cars hitting the rears of patrol cars static at an incident scene with only the protection of a flashing blue roof lamp. Several traffic officers were invited to the cinema in Taunton to see the film "Bullit" where we noticed that American police cars used flashing red lights to the rear. Under the legislation in force at the time this was legal in the UK so we persuaded the Bosch company to have a production run to manufacture red spotlights with a dispersing lens which were fitted to the rear corners of the roofs of patrol cars and flashed alternately. No more rear end collisions.

Later, of course, came the Force badge on the front doors and a smaller version for motor cycles. It was not long before the whole of the UK followed these innovative procedures. Somerset traffic men can now be justly proud that the high visibility markings on emergency vehicles, pioneered in Taunton, has gone world-wide. I bet nobody remembers where the ideas originated. Perhaps we should have patented them?

Incidentally research at that time at the Netherlands Road Research Laboratory showed that fluorescent orange was the best high visibility colour in all conditions except mist and fog. It now seems that fluorescent yellow has been universally adopted for clothing and vehicles, yet this colour was only good for fog and mist. Does anyone know why the world has moved from orange to yellow? Maybe it is a fashion thing?

Autumn Luncheon - Bishop’s Palace, Wells - Wednesday, 5th October, 2011
Thanks to Jill & Rod Deane for arranging the first of this new event for the Branch.

The arrangements for our first Autumn Luncheon are well under way. This is a new venture, brought about to meet the needs of our members who wanted another, day-time, gathering later in the year. We hope that you will give this your support, especially if you find the evening journey to Brean in May no longer to your liking. There will be a reply slip in the July Newsletter and there is nothing to do until then, except ensure that you keep 5th October free.

Luncheon will be served by the new caterers at the Bishop’s Palace at 12.30 p.m. and we will all meet for a bit of catching up from 12 noon. The car parking arrangement in Palace Fields that we have enjoyed on a couple of previous occasions will be available all day. Members may like to arrive early to enjoy a bit of free time in Wells during the morning. Wednesdays bring the excellent market to the square in front of the Town Hall, so there is lots to see. Although members can just enjoy the lunch, there will be facility for a conducted tour of the Bishop’s Palace for those interested and at only a small additional cost.

Look out for the reply slip in July and be sure to get yours back to Rod Deane as soon as you can.

Visit to Wildfowl Trust - Slimbridge
I would like to reserve for ………. Branch Members (partners are members - for guests check with Rod):

The visit only (£5 each) ………. Cream Tea (£4) ……….Guest(s) (£8.50/£6.40) ……….Children (£4.50) ………

I enclose my cheque, made out to Avon and Somerset Branch NARPO, in the total sum of £……………….

Please contact Rod Deane if you require any clarification on 01749 675477
More Tales from Down-Under - Part II

After Lakefield we dropped down south to Cooktown where we camped for a few days and witnessed the most wonderful sunsets. Here we had our first wet night. I had, a few days previously, re-proofed the tent in anticipation of rain on the coast. It all dried up in the morning so we packed up in the dry. We were not camping again as I had arranged accommodation from here on. We drove south heading for the Daintree NP on the lovely Bloomfield Track, with a few river crossings from Cooktown to Cape Tribulation. At Cape Tribulation we stayed at a tropical fruit farm, it was hot and very humid, cloud built up in the late afternoons and then gave a few hours of heavy rain. They measure rain here in metres, up to six metres in a year. The beaches in the Daintree are pure Bounty advert as you can see in the picture of Val under the coconut palms.

After Cape Tribulation we stayed for a couple of nights at Redmill House, Daintree Village in a specialist birdwatchers lodge where we did B&B, what a lovely place and breakfast could have gone on for ages. A proper job, the swimming pool was in the lush garden with huge birdwing butterflies swooping about and very large green tree frogs in the evenings. Next we drove down to Cairns where we stayed at Holloways Beach, just to the north of the city. The two bedroomed unit we rented came with a twelve foot tin fishing boat to be launched from the ramp in the mangrove lined creek a mile up the road. We never did launch the boat as Dick had seen the fourteen foot bull crocodile which lived opposite to the boat ramp twenty yards away. Some people have no nerve!

When we left Cairns we were on the way south and heading for home, 1,400 kms away. We drove down the coast road to Rockhampton in two days and made it home on the third day. On arrival we found that there had been twelve inches of unseasonable rain, all lush and green and dams over the tops. A neighbour had even mown the lawn for me with his ride on mower.

In mid-October we took Dick and Marcia to Brisbane to catch their flight home. We will have had a month to get over it all when my brother Patrick and Pippa arrive until the middle of January. No camping this time but we do have a holiday booked with them in December on Lord Howe Island which is out in the Pacific a two hour flight from Brisbane.

Lord Howe Island is described as ‘The last paradise on earth’, by law only 400 people allowed on the island at a time, no TV or any entertainment of any sort but there are some good eating places, and the bird watching is about the best you can get.

My thanks to Bill, Valerie, Dick and Marcia for sharing their adventures with us.

I am sure you will all be pleased to know that contact with Bill in January identified that they had remained safe during the terrible flooding in Queensland each side of the New Year.

Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal

After a brief conversation at the W-s-Mare Christmas Social, Tom Willis sent me the following information.

The Malayan Government approached the British Government in 2005 and negotiated the agreement and Royal approval for the medal to be worn by those who served in Malaysia between August 1957 and August 1966. Tom was among that number and, on 2nd December, 2010 was presented with the medal by Brigadier General Othman Jamal of the Malaysian Army at a ceremony held at the Holiday Inn in Newport.

Our congratulations to Tom and he is keen to let others know who may be eligible for this recognition of service in Malaysia during that time.
Philip James SMITH, MBE

My thanks to Mrs. Ann Beable, Philip’s daughter, for her generosity and to Clare & Simon Anderson for their help with getting in touch with Ann.

Philip Smith retired from the Somersetshire Constabulary as an Inspector at Yeovil in March, 1964. Prior to his retirement he had applied for and was to be successful in being appointed to the post of General Secretary of NARPO. During his police service, Philip was stationed at Frome, Shepton Mallet, Long Ashton, Bridgwater, Taunton and Yeovil, the latter for the final eight years of his thirty years of police duty.

Born in Bristol but spending his formative years at Westbury-sub-Mendip, where his father was the railway Station Master, he was educated at Wells Cathedral School and Clark’s Commercial College. He looked to be following his father when he joined the Great Western Railway at Bristol in 1929 as a ‘telegraphist’. This role was evidently not what he felt best suited him and he joined the Police Force in 1934.

For much of his police service Philip demonstrated his concern for his colleagues and their families in many ways and particularly through his, almost service-long, involvement with the Police Federation. He was the Somerset Joint Branch Board Secretary between 1947 and 1951 and there followed an almost unbroken period as Chairman of the JBB until retirement loomed. His other interest while serving was in relation to First Aid and Life Saving. He was, for some years, Captain of the Bridgwater First Aid Competition Team.

Although his appointment as General Secretary was in May, 1964, the need for this to be confirmed at a National Executive Committee Meeting meant that he actually took up the reins in July. His salary was set at £750 per annum, not much different to a Constable of the day, and he took over the room in their home, the one that his wife Eleanor thought may be her sewing room, as the National NARPO Office.

Philip served as General Secretary until his retirement in 1979 and, in addition to being the focal point for all NARPO activity throughout those fifteen years, he was a key player in making NARPO a founder body of the Public Service Pensioners’ Council, being appointed its Chairman in 1972. At Conference in the September of 1979 he was elected to the NEC and made a Life Member in recognition of his Service as General Secretary and Treasurer of the Association. He became Vice-Chairman in 1983 and was awarded the MBE for his services to NARPO in 1985. He became Chairman and NARPO President in 1987, relinquishing that Office upon his retirement from the NEC in 1989. In all he had served NARPO at national level for 25 years and remained involved through his membership of this Branch until shortly before his death in October, 1998.

This Branch can be gratefully proud of the immense role played on the national scene by one of our own, right up until his sad departure. Following the death of Eleanor in January, 2004, their daughter, Ann, has contemplated what best to do with the items that Philip had, so appropriately, treasured. That Ann has decided to entrust their appropriate placement with the Officers and Committee of this Branch we consider to be a further honour. This small tribute cannot do justice to the role which Philip Smith played over so many years in support and caring for his police colleagues both when serving and for decades after his police retirement. We hope that we shall be able to ensure that his immense personal contribution will not be forgotten.
Members' Holiday Accommodation

In the depths of Winter you may be planning a break or expecting visitors you cannot accommodate, so here again is the list of Branch members providing accommodation:

Huelgoat, Brittany, Apartment Tom & Iris Norman on 07854193803 or thomasanorman@googlemail.com
Springfield House, Stoney Stratton Ted Allen on 01749 830748 or Ted.Allen@btinternet.com
Mountain Bike Centre, Aberystwyth Ian Luff on 07815 202012 or ianl@mtbcymru.com
Plougasnou, Brittany Beach Cottage Geoff Udall on 01823 331239 Kevin Saunders, eveneme@googlemail.com
Florida Villa, USA Cheryl Boyle on 01242 539099 or cherylemax@tiscali.co.uk
Redwood Gardens, Niagara, Canada Liz & Ian Rigg on 1 905 468 5258 or redwoodgarden.ca
Ross on Wye Charles Lerpiniere on 01989 720485 or Huntersmoon.wyenet.co.uk
Almerimar, Andalucia, Spain Alan Higgs on 01278 684416 or alanhhiggs@tiscali.co.uk
Larnaca, Cyprus David & Sue Grainger on 01454 884938 or malaka@blueyonder.co.uk
Paphos, Cyprus Gary Walker on 07870 277343 or gary.kea@googlemail.com.
Orlando, Florida, Villa Tina & John Daley on 011 7 979 9050 or tina@dakotapointvilla.co.uk
Tregenna Guest House, Falmouth Steve & Jayne Gray on 07901827398 or www.canrichardson.com
Santa Maria, Mallorca - 4 bed house Michele Richardson on 01326 313881 or www.tregennafalmouth.co.uk
Stilegate, West Quantoxhead B&B Heidi Morse on 01984 639119 or www.stilegate.co.uk

Also, Martin Holcombe and his wife arrange Bridge Holidays in the UK and Europe. All levels of experience appear to be catered for and quite a range of locations. Contact Martin on 01934 876500 www.bridge-holidays.com.

Members’ Business Offers

As identified in the October Newsletter, the following Branch Members have identified their post-police retirement business interests. If you are interested in availing yourselves of their services please contact them direct.

Private Hire Services (Wincanton) Jeff Salter on 01963 34318 or www.daxgroup.co.uk
Plumbing, Heating & Electrical (W-s-M) Dave Allen Plumbing on 01934 633726 or 07970950768
Stamps - British & Colonial Nigel Cox on 01643 708055 Stamp Fairs throughout the South West.
Oxleaze Kitchens & Joinery Biggs on 01761 462927 or www.oxleazeworkshop.co.uk.
Toastmaster Services David Read on 01934 513489 or www.davidreadtoastmaster.co.uk.
Will & Power of Attorney David Read on 01934 513489
AALocksmiths Craig Andres on 0117 907 7498 or www.aalockandkey.co.uk.
Hypnotherapy/Health Coaching Trevor Hoskisson on 01392 346320 or trev@intelligentlifestyles,co.uk.

Casual Handyman Assistance

I have been contacted by Peter Hill, who retired from the Devon & Cornwall Force and lives in Sidmouth. He has been looking after a lady in her eighties, Miss. Muriel Chattell, who is about to move from Sidmouth to Minehead. Peter is seeking assistance for someone in the Minehead area to perform the casual odd jobs, decorating and light gardening that he has been doing when Miss Chattell moves. She is content to pay for the assistance. If you think that you could help, please contact Peter on 01395 579785, 07835 517161 or peter.hill28@btinternet.com.

Avon and Somerset Probation Service - Minibus Drivers Needed - Yeovil Area

I have received a plea from Jane Clark, Finance Contracts & Estates Manager for the Avon and Somerset Probation Trust, to further publicise the urgent need for minibus drivers. The earlier information resulted in quite a good response except in the Yeovil area. Drivers work a minimum of 28 hours over a 4 week period, on a flexible basis with the payment currently set at £7.35 per hour + enhancements after 7p.m. The duties involve transporting offenders who are involved in the probationary activities around the Avon and Somerset Probation Area.

If you want to apply or get further information please contact the Trust through their website at www.jobsinprobation.com. As a sign of the times the Trust only accept applications and CVs electronically.

Force Club Membership

Most of you will have received the notice with your March pension advice regarding the replacement of our Honorary Membership of the Force Club with a subscription of £1.00 per month. Subscribing will allow access to a wide range of offers through the Club Website BUT membership of local, District, clubs will not be affected. I am told that Force Club membership is not necessary for you to continue your involvement locally.
**Member Changes**

We welcome the following new Members:

- David McDONALD, Constable from Weston-super-Mare, who retired in September, 1996.
- Richard BABER, D/Sergeant from Weston-super-Mare, who retired on 9th November, 2010.
- Steven CUTLER, Constable from Minehead, who retired on 28th December, 2010.
- Jackie McDONALD, Constable from Nailsea, who retired on 28th December, 2010.
- Andrew BAIRD, Constable from Radstock RPU, who retired on 1st February, 2011.
- Alan WEST, Inspector from Taunton, who retired on 1st February, 2011.
- Malcolm SHOVEL, Constable from Taunton, who retired on 2nd February, 2011.

David Alan BUTCHER, who retired from Suffolk but served last in this Force at Yeovil, has joined us as an Additional Member.

I am informed that Mr. K. Hattersley & Mr. P. Wheatley have transferred their memberships to the Bristol (Avon) Branch.

**Obituary**

It is with deep regret that I report the deaths of the following members and offer sincere sympathy to all of their relatives and friends:

- 2nd January, 2011 Madge TREEBY, 97 years, widow of George, who died in 1981.
- 29th January, 2011 William (Bill) BAILEY, 87 years, who retired in 1976. He leaves a widow, Barbara.
- 8th February, 2011 Christopher GREGORY, 87 years, who retired in 1977. He leaves a widow, Marjorie.

The small Print—I must take the precaution of adding this note to safeguard the Avon and Somerset Branch of NARPO and me. Services and products that are referred to in this Newsletter are included for information only and their appearance in these pages does not indicate any recommendation. The comments of contributors to the Newsletter are their own and not, necessarily, the views of the Branch Officers, Committee or Editor.

Dave Leach  
Branch Secretary  
1st April, 2011