

## Message from Chairman – Geoff Heal



Well, here we go. Another year is upon us, however as 2023 disappeared into the history books I thought back to the names that I read out at the AGM in Chester. Quite a few I knew very well and served with a lot more. Some I had got to know through the ROA. They will all be missed, but the memories still live on.

The AGM/Reunion in Chester was a great success and it was so nice to meet up with ex-colleagues and old friends. I must say that the new Chief Constable was most impressive and the overall feedback that I got from those that attended spoke highly of her. It is the first Gala Dinner that I have attended where the Chief Constable has taken the trouble to go and speak personally at every table. On the free day, Sunday, Jenny and I took the train to Liverpool. A city that I had never visited yet it held such memories for me via the 'Mersey Sound'. First, we took the open top bus tour, then after lunch we visited the Cavern. A wonderful experience. I was a youth again.

Next year we are going to Stirling where Mel Goudie has got us a great deal for the weekend. We are staying at the 'King Robert Hotel'. In addition to the hotel Mel is also organizing a Whiskey/Gin tasting at a very good rate. I am looking forward to seeing many old faces and hopefully a goodly number of new ones as well. The Chief Constable, our President, will be invited as will the Chair of the DPF, so it is a great opportunity to find out what is happening in MDP and indeed what the future holds. In my time being associated with the ROA I have always felt that both the various Chief Constable's and DPF Officers, have been open and free in answering questions.

I must thank the Committee for their support during the past year, without it we would not be able to function. Likewise, thank you, to you our membership for still wishing to be part of MDP. We are widely spread across the UK, so it is a treat that we come together and keep in touch.

## Welcome to New Members

We are pleased to give a warm welcome to the following new members: Stephen and Linda Farnes, Rachel Williams and Gareth James Lewis.

We look forward to meeting you perhaps at future Reunion/AGM gatherings.

## Chester 2023



Our 2023 AGM Reunion was held in the Queen Hotel, Chester over the weekend of 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> October with 48 members and guests attending. Chairman Geoff Heal warmly welcomed Chief Constable Melanie Dales, DPF Chairman Eamon Keating and Force Liaison Officer Supt Sandy Stewart. Reports and updates were given on the main issues dealt with by Officers since the last

AGM held in 2021. Treasurer Ken Hicks presented his financial report and statement of the audited accounts showing income and expenditure and these were duly approved by members present. Both CC Melanie Dales and DPF Chairman Eamon Keating also addressed the meeting. A report of Conference proceedings and photo gallery can be found on our website and will be circulated separately.

## MDPROA Committee 2023/24



Back Row from L to R: Ken Hicks (Treasurer), Mel Goudie (Vice Chair), Neville Carter

Front Row: Chris McComb, Glyn Wilson, John Barber (Membership Secretary), Geoff Heal (Chairman), David King (Secretary), Sandy Stewart (Liaison Officer)

Missing from photo: Catriona McBeath MBE



## **Force News**

Recruitment remains difficult, new proposals for recruiting into 'difficult' areas such as AWE are being looked at, including potential monetary incentives.

The reviews currently underway in the Force remain on-going and linking in with the wider MOD including the dog review that has been postponed allowing the organisation sufficient time to complete the formal consultation phase with DPF and Trade Unions.

The Deputy Chief Constable recently hosted a workshop, to provide guidance on the promotion process for Superintendents. This process is open to both internal and external candidates.

## **Pensions Update**

All public sector pensions, including the Civil Service pension, are index-linked to inflation, with increases since 2011 being based on the preceding September Consumer Price Index (CPI). The anticipated increase from the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024 will therefore be 6.7%, based on the ONS announcement on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 of the September figure for the CPI. The full increase only applies to pensions that have been in payment for a full year on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024, so those who have more recently retired will see their increases applied pro rata.

## **Triple Lock**

Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, said in his Autumn Statement on 22nd November 2023 that the government's commitment to the State pensions triple lock is to be honoured in full. This means that from April 2024 the government will increase the full 'new' state pension by 8.5% to £221.20 a week, which is worth up to £900 more a year for pensioners.

## **Police Covenant**

The Police Covenant' is a government commitment to ensure the health and wellbeing of members and former members of the police service, their physical protection and the support required by members of their families. The Covenant became law in 2022 and extends to non-home office forces – MDP, BTP and CNC. At the moment it is not clear how it will apply to MDP or indeed too retired officers. DPF confirm that the three non-home office forces have signed an agreement to work together on the various issues but at this stage there is little information on how MDP propose to work with this.

## **In Memoriam**

Albert Scale – 24<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Mike Healey – 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Leonard Lofting 26<sup>th</sup> November 2023





## Force Liaison Officer Says Farewell



Superintendent Sandy Stewart attended his last AGM as Force Liaison Officer ahead of retirement from the force in February 2024. At the gala dinner Chairman, Geoff Heal, on behalf of the association was pleased to present Sandy with a gift in recognition of his help and support since taking on the role in 2016. In due course we look forward to welcoming Sandy as a new member.

In a career spanning nearly 39 years Sandy joined MDP in 1985 at CSB Faslane. He gained promotion to Sergeant in 1992 and transferred to Rosyth, and later spent time at ATR Glencorse prior to promotion to Inspector on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1998 resulting in a move back to Clyde. In 2003 came promotion to Chief Inspector and after two years moved to Scotland Divisional HQ in the role of Ch Insp Ops Support.

In 2014 Sandy transferred to HQ Wethersfield as T/Superintendent Ops then a year later promoted to the rank of Superintendent. In 2016 he became Head of OCC during which time was appointed to the role of Force Liaison Officer. Some three years later came a return to Clyde as Group Supt. In a final move to his career Sandy transferred to Menwith Hill as Group Supt. We wish Sandy a long and happy retirement.



Recognise anyone in this photograph taken in 1972 at the Police Training School, Woolwich Arsenal during a Sergeants Promotion Course.

Thanks to retired member John Nichols for the photo.



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