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Who is this woman? - P4



Another boost to rural policing - P3

SNOW AND ICE BRINGS MOTORWAY MAYHEM

THE force became the focus of national media attention on the final day of January with a major operation after freak snow and ice brought the county to a halt.

by Ben Pennington

Worst hit was the M11, where many motorists were left stranded for more than

15 hours between junctions eight and nine.

Problems began at 7pm on January 30 when snow which compacted into sheet ice left lorries unable to navigate inclines.

By 6am the following morning 12 lorries had jack-

knifed, and all lanes and the hard shoulder of the busy northbound carriageway were gridlocked with police unable to reach stranded motorists.

Stansted Airport closed, initially through dangerous conditions and later due to staff being unable to get to work.

Officers worked throughout the night in a bid to alleviate the situation and get support such as medics, recovery vehicles and contractors in place.

Two rest centres were set up at a leisure centre in Saffron Walden and the Aviation Business Centre at Stansted Airport.

Assistant Chief Constable John Broughton, who headed operations from an emergency control centre at the Force Information Room, said he could understand the frustrations of road users.

He said: "It is a problem we can well understand, but adverse weather is something no one can prevent. Safety is our first priority."

By lunchtime gritters had started to make headway at the front and rear of the 13-mile jam, and police were appealing to those who had abandoned their vehicles to claim them.

At 3pm a controlled opening of the motorway was underway, although the counties of Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and Hertfordshire were all delayed in opening key routes across their territories.

Chief Supt Ian Brown, head of Mobile Support Division, said: "As quickly as officers cleared one crash another would occur, and it doesn't take long in a situation like that for a motorway to become gridlocked."

"We faced the same difficulties as other road users, and the control centre was receiving three times the normal volume of calls."

"We did consider evacuating people from their vehicles, but this would have presented problems with the recovery of a much greater number of abandoned vehicles later."

Gun report praises professionalism

A PCA report calling for tighter guidelines on firearms teams has highlighted the high standards already in place within Essex Police.

The study looked at 24 shootings by officers between 1998 and 2001, of which 11 involved 'victims' who apparently wanted to be shot. The PCA noted that incidents involving replicas or unloaded weapons "often involved vulnerable populations".

The report calls for urgent work to develop strategies for 'less lethal' weapons.

ACPO welcomed the positive comments on the professionalism of firearms teams but recognised "there are lessons to be learned".

It has been more than 18 years since armed officers have fired on anyone in Essex, and 13 years since officers were shot at. The force was one of the first to employ the baton gun, used for the first time in January 2002.



Communication consultation

RADIO users were given the opportunity to have their say in the choice of handset that the force will use when it moves to Airwave.

Sixty-two police officers and support staff, from all divisions and departments, were able to try out equipment provided by Motorola and Sepura for three days in January.

The Airwave team set up a number of scenarios in and around the training centre and future users were able to use the handsets to make radio transmissions, phone calls and send text messages.

FIR and Stansted operators were on the receiving end and were able to voice their opinions on the merits of the competing equipment.

The third supplier, Nokia, was unable to take part in the trial, so 24 staff travelled to its premises in Huntingdon to compare its product with the other two.

Training co-ordinator John Staines said: "This is a significant event in the Airwave calendar and puts the user at the forefront. The views of the users will form part of our final assessment on the choice of radio terminal we will buy."

Delivery of Airwave is still on schedule with O2, the service provider, due to hand over the system in October and the system going live in the first areas in early 2004.

Pc Lisa Mogan from Saffron Walden said: "It's good that operational officers are having their say in the choice of radio handset."

● Pc Lisa Mogan was among a number of officers who tested potential Airwave handsets.

Pension proposals

THE rules of the public service pension are set to change under proposals in the Green Paper - *Simplicity, Security and Choice: Working and Saving for Retirement.*

The changes would be applied to new members during the next few years to make an unreduced pension payable from age 65 rather than age 60.

Does this mean police officers would have to stay in service until 65 to get an ordinary pension?

No, the police service, along with the fire service and the armed forces, is expressly excluded from such a change in respect of those who leave these organisations with an immediate pension. This is because the physical activity required justifies the award of an ordinary pension at a lower age.

What changes are being proposed for the police service then?

The paper does propose that those who leave the police service early should in future have their preserved pensions paid from the age of 65 instead of 60, in line with other public servants.

We envisage that such changes would be part of new pension arrangements for the police. The recently published National Policing Plan reiterates the Government's commitment to pension reform for future entrants. Any such reform would be made only after consultation.

So what does the Green Paper mean for existing police officers?

No changes proposed here would affect existing public servants immediately. The

Federation Newsline

by Terry Spelman



Green Paper raises the issues of whether, and under what conditions or incentives, current public service pension scheme members with a pension age of 60 should, at some point in the future, move to a pension age of 65 as well.

Although the paper does not explicitly exclude the possibility of existing scheme members being transferred, at some point in the future, to the higher start date in respect of future accruals, it is clear that the full implication of such a change would require very careful consultation.

The Home Office believes that the future of the police pension scheme needs specific attention. It would envisage any change to the pension age for officers leaving the police with a preserved pension (currently paid from age 60) being made within the context of reform of the current scheme for new entrants, which as stated in the National Policing Plan, is being considered.

However, it would also be appropriate to explore the advantages and disadvantages of existing staff transferring to the new arrangements, and under what conditions.

What do you mean by a new entrant? What happens if someone moves from one employer to another within the

same scheme?

As now, they would not be treated as a new entrant to the pension scheme so the existing rules would have to continue to apply the same way as if someone remained with the same employer. Nor would deferred pensioners or those on a career break be treated as a new entrant.

Why is this being done?

The Green Paper proposes a package of reforms to ensure that people are adequately provided for in retirement. Raising the public sector pension age from 60 to 65 reflects increased life expectancy and the fact that many people want to work longer and build up higher pensions.

Isn't this just a cost saving measure?

No. As people live longer the cost of pensions is increasing. Raising the pension age from 60 to 65 would be part of a package of reforms. Raising the pension age from 60 to 65 will help ensure pensions are affordable and may mean public sector schemes can improve some benefits.

Doesn't the Government want people to build up bigger pensions - this seems to be cutting them?

The Government wants to encourage people to build up higher pensions. The change in pension age will enable those who work longer to be rewarded by a higher pension in retirement.

What about the proposal to increase

the minimum pension age from 50 to 55?

It is proposed to raise the minimum pension age for strenuous occupations from 50 to 55 from 2010. It is being considered whether, and if so how, a higher minimum pension age would apply to the armed forces, fire and police services, which it is recognised have special circumstances. These proposals are subject to consultation.

As stated before, the paper does not explicitly exclude the possibility of existing scheme members being transferred, at some point in the future, to the higher start date in respect of future accruals, it is clear that the full implication of such a change would require very careful consultation. The Home Office believes that the future of the police pension scheme needs specific attention.

The Home Office would envisage any change to the minimum pension age being made within the context of reform of the current scheme for new entrants, which as stated in the National Policing Plan, is being considered. Once again, it would be appropriate to explore the advantages and disadvantages of existing staff transferring to the new arrangements, and under what conditions.

Slight increase in claims

AN annual report has been submitted to the Joint Branch Board by Claims Secretary Mick Englefield for its information and consideration.

The number of civil claims settled in 2002 was 32.

The total amount of compensation paid out during this term was £233,872.07. This is a decrease in last year's total of £47,734.00, however, a number of large claims have been settled but not counted in these figures as they await the results of costs hearings. These hearings have been introduced as a result of the change in legislation and the introduction of CCFA's (Conditional Contracted Fee Arrangements).

The number of civil claims being processed at this time is 93, a slight increase in last year's total of 88. The number of criminal injury claims settled in 2002 was 30.

The amount of compensation paid to members was £43,415.00, a slight decrease in last year's total of £47,734.00. This trend continues as the tariff scheme introduced several years ago now begins to substantially reduce the amount of compensation paid out to applicants.

The Federation is aware that some members may be worried about an enquiry that Russell Jones & Walker are required to make when running personal injury cases. This is what is known as the 'Sarwar' check and requires Russell Jones & Walker to ask members who have relatively low value straightforward cases whether or not they already have the benefit of legal expense insurance cover before they can run their cases using the Federation's collective CFA scheme.

Naturally, members may query the need for such a check. Not only is it work for them to do but they also rightly feel that having paid their Federation subscriptions they should be entitled to use the Federation lawyers.

The reason why they have to make the inquiry is quite simply that the law requires them to do so. The Sarwar case indicates that where somebody with a simple case has the benefit of legal expense insurance, it should be used in preference to the CFA method. At the end of a case the insurance company on the other side will always query the position and if Russell Jones & Walker cannot confirm that they have made the check the insurance company will refuse to pay any legal costs.

In particular, they will refuse to pay the 'provision' or nominal insurance premium that the Federation gets back on every successful personal injury case now. It is therefore vitally important to the financial interests of the Federation that they carry out this check on all cases which they think might fall into the Sarwar category.

If they carry out the check and the member has LEI cover then they are still able to act at no cost to the Federation. They appreciate that this is an unwelcome complexity and that the checks they make can generate extra work.

Considering a degree?

SUE Kelly, your Federation chairman, has been involved in discussions regarding a Public Service Degree at APU, Cambridge. It is holding an open day at its Cambridge campus on February 8 for anyone interested.

The degree is currently being delivered both full and part-time at APU. Students studying include 18 plus individuals intending to join the emergency services, mature students looking to change career, and emergency service workers who attend on day release.

Written in close association with the uniformed and emergency public services, the degree reflects the views of the public service forum established to support this degree.

Previous experience

There can be no better university environment for learning about public services than being taught by lecturers who have previous experience and to be sitting alongside other students who are currently employed in the public services.

The degree is for students who wish to raise their academic capital and get the type of skills that will be useful to them in the uniformed and emergency services. As one leading member of an emergency service stated at the public services forum: "The concept is its strength - it fills a gap - provides someone with the skills, knowledge and understanding that allows them to contribute from day one."

For further details contact Dr Dave Baigent, Pathway Leader on 01223 363271 ext 2326 or by email on d.baigent@apu.ac.uk. The website address is www.apu.ac.uk or you can contact Sgt Wendy Wellham at HQ on ext 55322.

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DNA tool takes one step closer

THE DNA profiles of up to 13,000 criminals are to be added to the national DNA Database, under a new initiative announced last month by Home Office Minister John Denham.

DNA profiles from prisoners and mentally disordered offenders not currently on the database will be added in a significant step towards the target of loading on the database the DNA profiles of the entire criminal population by April 2004.

In addition a national Police Science and Technology Strategy was published.

The strategy blueprint will enable police to make the best possible use of existing technologies and also exploit new scientific developments in combating crime.

It will prioritise co-ordinate and anticipate the science and technology needs of the police service over the next five years to support the objectives of the National Policing Plan.

Poetic praise in Parliament

THE community policing team behind Harwich's thriving *Rhyme Against Crime* initiative was praised by Education Secretary Charles Clarke during a visit to Parliament.

Now in its eighth year, the scheme aims to influence youngsters to stay on the straight and narrow by encouraging them to write poems on a given topic.

Community policing team members visit all the local primary schools to talk to pupils on a set topic and encourage them to express their own thoughts in verse.

The winning poems are published in a book printed and published by local firm Autoprint.

Last year's topic was criminal damage and the theme for 2003 is anti-social behaviour.

Sgt Peter Wood, of Harwich CPT, said: "The greatest reward we get is the impact and response from the youngsters, who clearly relish the opportunity of meeting their local beat officers on a regular basis. Their response is terrific."

The visit to Parliament was arranged by Harwich MP Ivan Henderson. The party included Garry Calver, a member of Harwich Town, which partners Essex Police in *Rhyme Against Crime*.

DIVISIONS are to get a share of Home Office money to help tackle community problems.

Every division will receive a share of the £1,033,353 fund to enable police to target specific concerns, such as anti-social behaviour and drugs which impact on residents' quality of life.

This annual fund is designed to meet crime reduction needs and tackle the priorities set out in the National Policing Plan. Targeted police

Cash to help combat community concerns

operations, youth diversionary schemes and public security advice campaigns are projects the money will support.

Harlow, as the largest division, receives over £171,000, going down to Stansted Airport, which will receive just under £30,000.

Divisional commander for Harlow, Chief Supt Peter Coltman, said: "It will enable us to be financially equal to our crime and disorder partners and allows us to initiate long term, sustained crime reduction projects."

"House burglary, vehicle crime, and drugs misuse, especially the increased use of crack cocaine are national policing problems and these new funds will be really useful for the division to target for long term progress."

Work on drug and alcohol crime is commended in review

Partnership given two-star approval

THE force has been commended in a 'ground-breaking' government review for its contribution to reducing drug and alcohol-related crime in the county.

A joint inspection by the Audit Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary points to Essex providing "a good two-star service" with "promising prospects for improvement".

In the first such exercise between the two bodies, the 12 partnerships in the county were reviewed, with Essex being the first county in the UK to be chosen for a review on its initiatives to reduce drug and alcohol-related crime

by Nishan Wijeratne

and disorder.

Community Safety's Insp Stuart Ashton welcomed the report and is delighted with its findings.

"This independent inspection has shown not only how committed the police and councils are in working together, but also how effective these partnerships have been." Insp Ashton added: "Essex has low crime levels and police performance compares well with similar forces, whilst the performance of some of the council services is amongst the best in the country."

The report also highlights the good work that divisional commanders and local authority chief executives are carrying out in order to improve community safety measures in Essex.

Another area identified as good practice was the extension of the drugs arrest referral scheme that operates in custody suites. This has now been widened, with specialist drugs workers covering Harlow, Southend, Grays and Chelmsford magistrates courts on their Narey dates. It is intended to expand the initiative to Colchester and Basildon later this year.

Insp Ashton added: "Our two-star award is something I feel that Essex can be proud of, but the challenge that now faces us is to ensure that we implement the report's recommendations in order to build on the good work already in place."

The summer 2002 inspection results were published at the end of January and is part of the Government's best value framework which aims to ensure public authorities are making the best use of public money.

Drugs arrests

A SPECIAL operation against trading in heroin and crack cocaine has been launched in Colchester division.

Following the first two phases of Operation Tralee, six men and a woman have been charged with supplying Class A drugs. A second woman has been released on police bail, pending further inquiries.

To gain impact newspapers were invited to accompany officers taking part in the operation.

Divisional commander Chief Supt Dave Murthwaite said: "We are committed to making a real impact on the supply of hard drugs in Colchester."

"We have enjoyed a unique level of co-operation with our local authority partners and we are working with a number of agencies to put in place support mechanisms to respond to the local impact of breaking the supply of Class A drugs."

Academic award

CONGRATULATIONS to Pc Morgan Cronin who was awarded the PMAS book prize at the police training centre.

This prize is for the student who has demonstrated the highest level of academic and professional ability by achieving the highest marks.

Blood donation

YOUR next opportunity to give blood will be at the police HQ assembly hall on Monday, May 2003, so please make a note in your diaries.

VILLAGES in Braintree and Uttlesford are to receive an improved service as the division's new mobile police office takes to the road. The vehicle will also be the first in the county to be staffed jointly by police and council members.

Full-time police driver Pc Kevin Wilson, once on location, will be able to patrol on foot or cycle dealing proactively with any crime and disorder matters and spending time making contact with residents and collecting valuable intelligence.

Assisting will be a police civilian (on a rota basis) effectively providing the role already carried out in police station reception areas.

When the mobile office is visiting Braintree locations a council representative will also be on board. In Uttlesford council staff will attend the office when there is a recognised council problem at the location in question.

Chief Supt Sue Harrison, said: "The introduction of this vehicle demonstrates our commitment to serving rural communities. For those residents without easy access to a police station it provides them with a convenient and consistent point of contact with both the police and the council. There are already three other vehicles operating in the county and they are proving extremely successful."

Chairman of the Essex Police Authority Robert Chambers joined Chief Supt Harrison at the official launch of the vehicle in Finchingfield.

Mr Chambers said: "Residents want more visible policing. This is just the beginning of projects trying to make the police more accessible to rural communities."

Out on the rural road



● Pc Kevin Wilson has taken on the role of full-time driver of Braintree's mobile police office. Photo: Steve Bainbridge, Essex County Newspapers.

Law letters

What tale does this picture tell?



WITH a look of *The Avengers*, actor Brian Blessed and former Chief Constable Sir John Nightingale pose with a pretty girl for a photo.

Sir John is wearing a judge's badge but can anyone help with more information?

I recognised two of the people in the photo but the

rest is a mystery. Can anyone help me with when it was taken, where it was and why?

I can be contacted at HQ on 01245 491491 ext 50771 or via the police museum.

Sarah Ward
Museum Curator, Police HQ.

Memories of 'misery'

WHENEVER I read *The Law* another of our former colleagues has tragically passed away and I was particularly saddened to hear of the death of Harry Moxham, one of the true characters of Essex Police.

Everyone had a story to tell about Harry.

He was known as Dc Misery because he gave off a rough gruff exterior but underneath he was the kindest man you would wish to meet and was also responsible for training lots of young aspiring detectives.

It is particularly amusing how he came by his nickname.

Some years ago a man went into the police station at Southend. He had left his car parked on the seafront with valuables on view and they had been stolen.

Harry took the complaint and also had an idea where the property could be recovered. The victim lived in London and was not contactable at home that day so Harry arranged for him to phone the police station about 5pm and ask for Dc Moxham, spelt M.O.X.H.A.M.

For some reason the man had difficulty remembering or pronouncing the name 'Moxham' so Harry said: "Just ask for Dc Misery".

Just after 5pm the man phoned the police station and asked for Dc Misery. The call was taken by Paddy Castell who explained that they didn't have a Dc Misery working at Southend. The victim adamantly replied: "Yes you do, his name is spelt M.O.X.H.A.M".

Paddy had tears running down his face from laughter but that was typical of Harry. If there was a laugh to be had it would always be at his own expense.

The worth of Harry, and this imagery, are reflected by the 200 or so people who attended his funeral, including Tom Dickinson, a former Det Chief Supt of City of London Police who read the eulogy. It was an excellent turnout for a man who left the force back in the early 80s.

David Bright, Southend-on-Sea

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Small is beautiful

I THOUGHT I should comment on the recent proposals from the Policy Exchange (an independent 'think tank') regarding the present perceived dissatisfaction with the accountability of our various police forces to their local communities.

They assert that forces are now too big and police authorities are but the toothless lap dogs of chief constables or central government, powerless to ensure the forces for which they are responsible actually pay attention to the needs of local communities, rather than the internal agendas of the police.

They propose that forces should be much smaller, with American-style structures of elected police authorities, or even local mayors, playing a far greater role in deciding police priorities and strategy.

This would certainly get away from the problem of central government dictating policy and would be something of a return to those fondly remembered days when every city, borough and some towns had its own force.

In those days small was beautiful.

Officers were not clambering over one another to drive the area car two weeks after joining, nor to transfer off beat work after a few months, nor thinking their career had come to a

dead stop if they had not reached superintendent within five years.

Officers were aware they had to serve their apprenticeship, acquire skills and knowledge on the street, learn about their local community, its problems and character and acquire the art of communicating with people.

Those were indeed the days my friends.

Anyone attending the 'borough' reunions at Southend can see that the pride lives on, after 30 years.

There was also patronage, the old school tie, Masonic influence, political corruption, police corruption and all that goes hand in glove with people too long in one place with too much power and influence.

If we could have the best of one world without the worst of the other, there may be something in the Policy Exchange proposals.

Who can deny that the police have lost touch, have become obsessed with so-called intelligence-led policing that has little or nothing to do with the priorities of those they police?

The police are slowly but surely alienating themselves from communities.

We hear much about inequality, pay differentials, unsociable hours, poor equipment, health and safety and all the other issues that take up the time of the police,

except one, the concept of service.

Perhaps the time has come for the police to return to being a local service, known by local people, seen every day, held in esteem and respect by all, whose members cease their 'butterfly' existence, flitting from post to post and settle long enough to gain pride in 'their' community and the part they play in it.

Having the divisional commander accountable to an elected mayor would certainly ensure local priorities were given prominence in the annual policing plan.

Tony Hall, Harlow

Overcome by support

I WRITE with regard to my late husband John H.W. Cackett.

Judging by the amount of cards received and the attendance of his many associates including 'borough' and Essex Police and road safety officers, he would have been quite overcome.

He suffered considerable pain and discomfort over the past 11 years without once saying "why me?" Instead he said "I've had a life" ... a very positive person.

Thank you all for the support that has been given to our son Peter and myself.

Mrs J Cackett, Southend

The accolades flood in

PRAISE from all quarters has been received by Essex Police for its handling of Operation Spinnaker and the successful conviction of Stuart Campbell for the abduction and murder of his niece, Danielle Jones.

Head of Crime Det Chief Supt Steve Reynolds said: "What has been satisfying for me is the congratulations I have received, on



● Det Chief Supt Steve Reynolds.

behalf of the team and Essex Police, on how we investigated the crime and how well we came across in the media. I have received letters from the commander of the Serious Crime Group, Metropolitan Police, other senior officers and from divisional commanders within Essex. The media have been complimentary about how we dealt with them during the search, before and after the trial."

A letter from Sky News reporter Rachel Ammet said: "I was really impressed with the way Essex Police handled the trial - from the pre-trial briefing onwards, you went the extra mile to help us when you had plenty else to worry about. I can't remember covering a trial when the press were better looked after and your openness and helpfulness really made a difference to our coverage."

The producers and team, who worked with Essex Police on the special BBC programme *Missing*

Danielle also wrote in support while in Thurrock visitors called or people phoned the police stations to congratulate the police on the result of the trial shortly after the verdict.

Most important in all of this are the family of the missing teenager, but even Danielle's mother Linda has taken time to write to Det Chief Supt Reynolds. In her letter she expresses her personal thanks to him for "heading a superb investigation" and states he should be "extremely proud".

She also acknowledges the "kindness, compassion and thoughtfulness" shown throughout.

She wrote: "We very much appreciate all the hard work that went into the investigation and the true dedication shown by all the officers involved . . . we were extremely impressed by the professional way things were conducted."

Mrs Jones finished the letter by saying how "privileged" she and

husband Tony feel to have met so many "wonderful people".

The next stage in this unique investigation will be a debrief in March with over 180 officers and support staff. It has been difficult for organisers to limit the number of people to attend as nearly 1,000 personnel worked on the investigation at various times. Chief Constable David Stevens will be awarding letters of congratulations to 186 people for their significant involvement, but acknowledges the contribution of many other staff.

At the debrief a plenary session will be followed by smaller group discussions on specific aspects of the operation.

The TV and New Media department are working with two detectives to put together a

"We very much appreciate all the hard work that went into the investigation and the true dedication shown by all the officers."

Linda Jones

presentation on what was the biggest investigation the force has undertaken. It will look at the investigative process and the logistics of staffing such an operation, aiming to show the high and lows and good practice learned. Media coverage and interviews with expert witnesses will be included.

Det Chief Supt Reynolds said: "I can't thank staff enough for their contribution towards Operation Spinnaker and we shall be holding an informal reception after the debrief to recognise, in some small way, everyone's efforts in this case."

A career across the border does not suit everyone

Transfer officers come back home

TWO officers who left Essex for the Metropolitan Police have returned to the county after less than six months with another two applications to return also submitted.

Promises of larger salaries and better job prospects have enticed several officers to cross the borders but "after tax the salary isn't as much as you expect" said one officer, and "you become a number rather than an individual".

Many forces are facing recruitment difficulties at the moment. The Metropolitan Police has been criticised in some quarters for its hard-hitting campaign aimed at 'poaching' experienced officers from neighbouring forces. But it too is losing more experienced officers to other forces than it is gaining, and at the same time is managing a huge growth of probationers.

Whilst nationwide solutions for recruitment and retention need to be addressed at a ministerial level, individuals still face the difficult task of deciding their own best career move.

One officer who transferred to the Met, Pc Dave Wheddon has returned to his former shift at Thurrock.

Media training on the increase

MEDIA skills training is being increased at Essex Police in response to high demand.

The one-day *Making the Most of the Media* course, tailored to meet the needs of officers and support staff who have regular contact with local newspapers, will be held six times during 2003/4, instead of three.

This course will also be used as the media section of the training for recently-appointed sergeants. Participants on the sergeants' course will be advised individually of the date.

The one-day advanced *Media Skills Training for Radio and TV* course, which is run for officers who are likely to take part

regularly in broadcast interviews, will also be held six times during 2003/4.

The course dates are:
Making the Most of the Media: April 14, June 16, October 16, December 22, February 6 and March 15.

Media Skills for Radio and TV: May 12, July 14, September 15, November 10, January 12 and February 16.

Applications for a place on either course should be made to Essex Police Training Centre, through support managers, using form TS/1. All courses will be held at the training centre.

by Kim Perks

Pc Dave Wheddon: "I joined the Met because I thought it would increase my chances of specialising but they operate a system whereby all transferees are committed to stay on shift for two years.

"I personally found the duties I undertook quite mundane and there was not as much diversity as in the workload in Essex. I do feel that I have more freedom and responsibility in Essex Police but would never discourage anyone from trying something new, it just wasn't right for me personally."

Head of training Supt Dave Folkard said: "There's no doubt that the Metropolitan Police Service recruitment campaign sounds highly attractive, but the fact that a number of officers are returning to Essex after a relatively short period of time proves that it doesn't suit everyone.

"An individual's career path is a major decision and with any major decision it is best to weigh up the pros and cons. Of course we want officers to stay in Essex but we also fully accept an officer's right to transfer and acknowledge the recruitment difficulties the Metropolitan Police face. What we are endeavouring to do is ensure that officers are equipped with all the knowledge available before making a decision, and what better source than someone who has tried and tested it."

New role for former detective

CRIMESTOPPERS has a new regional chairman who is also a former Essex detective.

David Bright retired as a superintendent three years ago and has now taken over the Crimestoppers mantle from Clive Hardingham. Ironically it was Mr Bright who introduced Crimestoppers to Essex back in the 80s.

Mr Bright said: "It's a bit like coming home. The whole idea of Crimestoppers is in support of the work of Essex Police and to help drive home the message that crime is unacceptable. My task is to carry on the excellent work of Clive Hardingham. The charity has already resulted in about 940 prisoners and an achievement for me will be to bring that number to 1,000."

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL PLANNING SERVICES - DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

This is a Green Belt district located in an attractive part of Essex but close to the attraction and amenities of London. The Development Control Group handles a large workload of a wide variety.

ENFORCEMENT OFFICER - PDC/23

Salary from £13788 to £20442 (including London Inner Fringe Allowance), plus essential user car allowance. Eligible for leased car after six months

Experience of planning enforcement procedures would be an advantage, but we are seeking a well-organised and positive team member to assist in the enforcement of planning control in a variety of circumstances. An ability to work with scaled plans and maps is essential, and court experience would be desirable.

You will show self-motivation and an ability to communicate effectively in writing and in person, a commitment to a quality service and an ability to utilise a P.C. In return, an opportunity to gain considerable experience through a varied workload will be offered, in offices located in a pleasant town and with an authority committed to staff development.

COMPLIANCE AND ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT OFFICER - PDC/24 (Part time 18 hours)

Salary from £12957 to £16623 (including London Inner Fringe Allowance), pro-rata

Planning Services is looking for a Compliance and Administration Support Officer to work as part of its enforcement team. This is a challenging post which will entail checking for breaches of planning control and for compliance with planning conditions and enforcement notices. This post is part time, working 18 hours afternoons Monday-Friday but other times might be considered.

The work will involve site visits and attending meetings, it may also involve the attendance at planning appeals and court on occasions.

You will need to be self-motivated, have the ability to communicate effectively and use a P.C. You should also be prepared to work in a busy but convivial office environment with the opportunity to work on a range of projects or tasks. In return, there is an opportunity to gain considerable experience through a varied workload, in offices located in a Green Belt District in close proximity to Epping Forest.

If you would like to know more about these posts, contact Peter Geraghty on 01992 564112. These posts do not attract a relocation package. (Under single status all jobs are currently being evaluated and this may affect the salary.)

Please telephone 01992 564433 (24 hour answerphone) for an application form and further details (No C.V.'s please)

Closing date: 21st February 2003

Interviews for these Posts will take place on 3rd and 6th March 2003

Please quote ref: PDC/23 or PDC/24

Positive prognosis for medical investigations



● Adrian Tyson went on patrol with representatives from the Metropolitan Police, DC, death scene investigators from the Chief Medical Examiner's office, fire investigation and homicide detectives. All work together to preserve the scene, secure the victim and conduct a thorough investigation.

WHEN nine-year-old Tony Clowes died in a pre-operation anaesthetic room at Broomfield Hospital in July 2001, few could guess at the repercussions for investigations into medical-related deaths, writes Ben Pennington.

One of those who recognised the lack of police expertise on the subject was Adrian Tyson, known by most as 'Geordie', who at the time was a detective sergeant at Harlow's major investigation team.

Recently returned from a five-month Fullbright scholarship in America into investigating such deaths, Adrian is now taking the lead in drawing up a multi-agency Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), a national policy in relation to serious incidents involving NHS patients.

The MOU is aimed at four main areas: agreeing the roles and responsibility of each agency; providing guidance to the NHS about incidents requiring referral to police; providing guidance on agencies working together; and determining

internal and external communication strategies.

Now an inspector, Adrian is delighted to be able to put his newfound knowledge into practice so soon after his scholarship.

He said: "I learnt a great deal from our US colleagues about inter-agency working, and I'm hopeful that best practice can be quickly utilised to improve handling of medical-related deaths.

"The number of deaths referred to police that are attributed to medically-related practices in the UK is rapidly increasing, and we need to be better prepared to take on that work."

Adrian's interest in the subject stemmed from Operation Halifax, the year-long investigation involving a former nurse and the care of her terminally ill child patients.

The force has also been involved in the investigation into the death of a man at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow, as well as the inquiry into the death of Tony Clowes. The latter case led to a linked police inquiry looking into similar matters across the country.

Adrian won sponsorship for his visit from the Fullbright Fellowship, which gives out just 14 awards in the UK each year.

One of the areas under the scheme is police studies, open to both officers and support staff, within which there

Detective gleans a wealth of information during a scholarship across the Atlantic which could have national impact on UK police forces and health organisations

is list of subjects which candidates can choose from.

Adrian picked the category Enhancing Public Safety and went up against nearly 200 people who were shortlisted.

After his research project outline was assessed by senior academics and senior members of the Fullbright Fellowship he was interviewed by a panel of experts including senior police officers, civil servants and academics.

Speaking before he travelled to America, Adrian said: "By having a more proficient response to dealing with these deaths we can not only improve the standard of our investigations but also the standard of medical care which patients receive."

He worked with the Criminal Justice Departments of the American University, and the environmental and occupational health departments of the George Washington University. The aim was to study the elements of a death scene and investigative processes used, alongside academic

research into law and public health issues.

The situation in America varies quite significantly from the UK. For example, medical examiners in the USA review all deaths, and only hand a case over to the police once it is deemed suspicious.

In the UK, it is the police who decide if there are any suspicious circumstances and then report back to the coroner.

But there are similarities with the percentage of medical-related deaths per head of population on both sides of the pond.

Based with Washington's office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Dr Jonathan Arden, Adrian viewed Washington's state-of-the-art mortuary, a one-stop unit which can accommodate full body X-rays, photographs, fingerprinting, and all samples. The mortuary also contains a secure isolated room to deal with any infectious bodies.

Adrian said: "In the UK, we would

have to go to about five different organisations to extract that information.

"Washington DC is about ten square miles, and deals with the same amount of deaths each year as Essex's MITs do. The coroner's office has the same amount of detectives as all of the MIT section."

Adrian found there were fundamental differences in the way UK and US investigators work.

"All of the agencies work together to provide support for each other, each in their own specialist field. Everyone brings something different to the table."

Academic research exposed Adrian to other unique American practices, such as epidemiology, used to plot the spread of injuries geographically, and victimology. He met with lecturer and writer, Emilie Viani, who used the web to broadcast live to the whole of the USA about how people were affected by September 11.

Kazi Quinton, coroner's officer for Harlow, also joined Adrian in Washington. Kazi reviewed the coroner's processes in the States and as a result prepared a response for the Coroner's Review, and has been asked to sit on the working group looking at future working practices for coroner's officers in the UK.

"That Kazi and I have been selected for such crucial roles is a source of great pride," said Adrian. "There's a great deal we can do to improve the investigation and handling of medical-related deaths in this country, and it's a privilege to be able to play a part."

And thanks to the Fullbright Fellowship and Adrian's wanderlust, as well as the Essex Police Federation who provided memorabilia, the good name of Essex Police has now found its way across the globe to countries as diverse as China, Australia, India, Tajikistan, USA, Chile, and Turkey.

Searching for vital clues

WITH more and more television dramas and documentaries focusing on police, and the significance of evidence gathering, interest in the work of scenes of crime officers (SOCOs) is on the increase.

SOCOs are tasked with finding vital physical evidence to provide clues for investigating officers, and make the connections which prove who was at a scene, when and why.

Dc Sue Jones' first murder took place in a snowy field.

Numbered by the cold, it took her hours to search the site for vital clues.

Sue, 31, has been a detective with Southend's SOC unit since 2000. It's her job to search areas where an offence has been committed, take photographs and fingerprints, and collate findings into useful and actionable evidence.

Her interest in police work started early.

"When I was at school I certainly didn't want a desk job," she says.

"I wanted something active. I think if you ask anyone when they first join the police, it's such a completely different way of looking and working that it's so exciting, and really interesting."

Sue spent two years in Chelmsford, before taking successive postings in

South Woodham Ferrers, Maldon and Basildon, still as a uniformed constable.

"It was there that I saw the scenes of crime job advert in the internal news," she remembers.

Sue was accepted, and nine weeks of intensive training in Durham followed.

"We spent three weeks on photography, three weeks on fingerprints and three weeks on forensics," Sue says.

"I worked hard and really enjoyed it. I hadn't really had any input in the classroom since I joined the police, so it was really nice just to get back to that."

After finishing training in March 2000, Sue took on her first SOC posting in Southend six months later.

The work of a SOC starts with a visual search of the crime scene.

"It's also really important to talk to the aggrieved with crimes like thefts from cars and burglaries, just to find out what the important things are and what's missing."

The rule after that is photographs, forensics, then finally fingerprints. Forensics can include anything from cigarette butts dropped by the criminal to clothing fibres which can be matched to their garments.

One of the problems of working with

SOC, Sue has found, is the level of public interest.

"If I was out on the street fingerprinting a shop window, I'd get people crowding around," she says with a laugh.

"There are so many programmes about forensics on television now, and

"It's no good being squeamish if you do this job."

people are really interested in it. They don't give me advice, but when you go to a burglary people are really keen for you to find something, and a lot of the time you know whether you're going to find something just by looking around.

"Sometimes they can hinder rather than help."

Southend SOC unit contains just seven people - five constables, a sergeant and a civilian vehicle forensics examiner - to cover Southend, Rayleigh, Rochford, Great Wakering and the surrounding areas.

"We also have to cover 24 hours, so someone's in the office from 9am to 10pm in this area, then between our office, Grays and Basildon we have to cover nights on a rota basis," says Sue.

"If I'm on nights I'll be covering Southend, Grays and Basildon on my own - and a lot of crime does happen at night.

"It can be stressful at nights - sometimes everyone wants you, and they're all asking how long you're going to be.

"Having said that, pressure is much better than just sitting around." An average of one in five SOCOS are female, and Sue is sometimes still greeted by surprised looks from the victim when she arrives at a crime scene.

"They say they weren't expecting me, and I ask if they were expecting an old man instead," she says, chuckling.

Sue deals with so many cases that she admits it's hard to remember many of them. But that first murder does stand out.

"It was outside in February or March, and it was snowing," she says. "I was outside all day long freezing cold. It was the worst crime scene scenario you can imagine."

Despite the problems, Sue finds the work rewarding.

"In this role you can see you're catching people, whereas in the uniform role it can be a bit dispiriting to arrest someone, do a lot of work, then go to court and maybe they'll get off," she explains. "We're relying more and more on forensic evidence these days."

After two years as an SOC, Sue has seen her share of distressing sights.

"They can be very traumatic," she says. "Things like murders and rapes are major scenes, but in a way you're geared up to deal with them.

"We deal with recovering the body, removing it and wrapping it so we can protect any evidence and recover that as well.

"We have to maintain continuity, so we would also go to the mortuary and carry on with the postmortem as well.

"It's no good being squeamish if you do this job, and some of the things we have to do aren't very pleasant at all, but you have to detach yourself a little bit from that.

"The best way to look at it is that you're helping, and doing your best for the victim's family as well."



● LEFT: Harlow coroner's officer Kazi Quinton joined Adrian in Washington.

● ABOVE: Chief Medical Examiner for DC, Dr Jonathon Arden is a forensic pathologist, a doctor and a coroner. He has three pathologists working to him, dealing with all unexplained deaths.

Health & Welfare

Forced to take on credit cards?

WITH approx 58 million credit cards in circulation and borrowing having reached 140 billion are we the consumer in control?

Like many others I used to be happy paying cash or writing a cheque. I now have six credit/store cards, and so do the majority of my family and friends. Fortunately, I do not owe anything on them, so why did I get them?

The truth of the matter is I felt pressurised to take them on, to enable me to order items over the phone to internet shop, pay my holiday deposit, reservations etc. Over the past decade the way we spend our money has changed with virtually everything somewhere along the line requiring a credit card. Inevitably lenders have followed suit.

Credit and store cards can be used to the consumer's advantage, you do not need to carry large amounts of cash around, you can have up to 56 days grace before payment. In some instances you can get extra insurance or warranty on some purchases. However, what if you are not disciplined enough to clear the amount outstanding each month, and more to the point don't have the means to do so.

Temptation to just pay the minimum will always creep in. Lenders charge interest for the facility of borrowing from them and it is not as low as you may think, when you compare it to an average unsecured loan. You need to make a concerted effort to reduce your borrowing by paying back that little bit more and by not using your card in the interim.

You could transfer your existing balance to a credit card with a lower interest rate of an introductory offer. However, be aware that introductory offers are usually only for a selected period of time and not for new purchases.

Store cards are another source of credit where often customers are tempted with an offer of ten per cent off all purchases on the day you sign up. But if you only pay back the minimum payment month after month you will end up paying more for your purchases than if you bought them without the discount!

For some people the only way to rid of debt is to take drastic action such as cutting up their cards, taking control of their debt and removing temptation.

For more information on money problems see my website www.mtcinfo.co.uk or telephone 0207 670 9010 at Jeffreys Henry Jacobs. Arrangements to discuss money problems can be made through on 58604 or 58605.

Mike Thomas

Awarded for fire heroics

by Bob Shoemith

TWO Southend officers have been nominated for a national police bravery award after their heroic exploits at a house fire in Westcliff.

Gail Lawmon, 27, and Daniel Nice, 28, were the recipients of Chief Constable's Commendations after their actions during a fire last September in which they rescued an 18-month-old baby. They have been nominated for this year's police bravery awards, which are due to be announced on July 1, 2003 at a ceremony in London.

On the morning of Wednesday, September 18 the two officers went to the house on Salisbury Avenue. The fire had started in a children's bedroom and had moved slowly to the parents' bedroom. Being a school day, only the parents, along with their 18-month-old baby girl and six-year-old son were left in the house. The parents escaped to a first floor roof, the two children remained in a smoke-filled third bedroom.

The officers, who were first on the scene, arrived to find a house well in the grip of fire. They quickly established that children were trapped in the

property and that members of the public were in the house attempting a rescue. Due to the extent of the fire the officers concluded that it was unsafe to allow these people to remain in the house.

They cleared the property of the courageous members of the public. Realising the dangers faced and at considerable personal risk, they chose to douse a curtain in water to protect them from the heat and smoke, and made several attempts to access the first floor, but were unfortunately beaten back by immense heat and flames.

Pc Lawmon said: "Adrenaline takes over and we did fear for our lives at the top of the stairs as flames were coming through the stairs, but you do what you have to do, we were also concerned that the curtain would catch alight."

Pc Nice commented: "I didn't really think about the dangers, the reality of it all didn't sink in until after the event." At this stage the Essex Fire and Rescue Service arrived wearing breathing apparatus and the



● Constables Daniel Nice and Gail Lawmon nominated for this year's police bravery awards.

officers were able to relay information and direct them to the baby girl, found lifeless behind a safety-gate. A boy of six years was also found by the fire crew and removed to safety.

The police officers took the baby from the fire officer administered first aid by way of resuscitation using oxygen supplied by the fire crews. The baby made a full recovery as did the child.

The police officers acted promptly with the safety of others in mind. They both attempted to reach the children knowing they were placing themselves at great risk. Their actions prevented

any other members of the public suffering burns or smoke inhalation, and certainly the two children trapped in the building could have suffered severe injuries or even worse, died.

Pc Nice, a father-of-three from Chelmsford, and keen motorcyclist was at the time five weeks into his tutoring training, having been with Essex Police just six months said: "I'm absolutely shocked, chuffed, proud and honoured with the nomination." Pc Gail Lawmon, from Rayleigh with nine years service said: "I am delighted and overwhelmed and it is certainly nice to have the recognition."

The Wickford way

THE people of Wickford will see an increased number of officers out on patrol under a new policing system.

Basildon central response team officers have been moved to outlying stations and Wickford will now be staffed 24 hours a day.

Previously in charge of the team at Basildon, Insp David Miller, an officer with 16 years experience, has moved to take charge of Wickford Police Station.

He said: "We will be looking at crime trends, prioritising areas that need to be targeted and proactively target individuals who are causing a nuisance. We are not going to crack crime overnight, but this system gives officers more ownership of the local plot."

Changes afoot

WITHAM is making changes to the way it polices its rural areas. For three months the public office at Kelvedon police station will be open on a Wednesday between 6pm and 8pm. If this proves successful it will be extended further.

The rural community officers will join forces with their community colleagues at Witham creating a larger team that can meet the demands of rural policing and increase high visibility policing.

Insp Alan Cotgrove said: "These changes will provide additional facilities to enable the community to report incidents and pass on intelligence. The staff changes aim to help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the rural areas and provide a better service."

Charity challenge to the Sahara



● Magistrate John Hunt discusses his epic journey with Chief Constable David Stevens.

"CERTIFIABLE!" That's the self-assessment of Essex magistrate John Hunt, who will not only run his 50th marathon this year but is also heading to the Sahara to take part in The Marathon Des Sables - "the toughest footrace on Earth".

The reason, apart from the personal challenge, is to raise cash for Convoy 2000, a charity which is supported by Essex Police and helps Romanian children live a better quality of life, and the Dove Project, a women's refuge in Southend.

Most people in their 60th year would be looking to put their feet up but John, who will be self-funding the trip, clocks up 60 miles a week, more recently with a 14lb backpack.

In April, in temperatures of up to 120 degrees, he will cover 138 miles over six days, the equivalent to five-and-a-half marathons. For about 20 per cent of the course he will wade knee-deep through sand dunes carrying all his own kit. The only items supplied by event organisers are water and a tent.

The big test comes on the fourth day when competitors set off across barren wilderness to complete a 45 to 50 mile stage. The challenge is to complete this before dark (which few do) so that they can rest up before the Marathon Stage.

Former Essex detective and organiser of Convoy 2000, David Bright, said: "I have total admiration for John. Having made a number of trips to Romania I know how desperate the situation is. Likewise I know only too well the sadness that many young women and children face, and how desperate they must be to have to seek refuge."

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Mick's wild days are over

Time for relaxation

BRENTWOOD played host to the county's annual conference for wildlife liaison officers where Mick Barry was presented with a uniquely-framed picture of a buzzard to help remind him of his 14 years' service.

The then Acting Assistant Chief Constable David Hudson opened the conference at Thorndon Country Park where Mick, who was one of the original team of officers when the wildlife scheme was launched in Essex, made his final contribution to the members.

Pc Barry Kaufmann-Wright has taken over the reins as the force's WLO, while Mick continues in his role as the administration manager at the force information room.

CAREER detective **Mervyn Pickard** has retired after 30 years' service, 27 of which he spent with CID.

He started his service at Colchester, then served at the fraud squad followed by various stints at Brentwood, HQ, Pitsea and Harlow.

Retiring as a sergeant he admits he has no regrets about his service and goes as far as to say he enjoyed nearly every day.

He was involved in lots of good jobs but a highlight was working with the dedicated surveillance unit. Retirement sees him undertaking some DIY jobs in his new home in Hereford,

Names in the news

working with computers, spending more time with his family and trying out the full set of golf clubs, an accessory every retired police officer seems to have but one he has never actually used.

Pc **Jim Hollick** who joined in 1973, is set to retire this month after completing 30 years.

Jim, who lives in Chelmsford, has no real plans for his

retirement apart from taking it easy for a while. He leaves his colleagues in public order training after six years and feels that new responsibilities and things occurring make for an exciting future in the unit.

He previously worked in Chelmsford division for 12 years and had spells with the Force Support Unit.

Pc **Brian Cordery**, 58, retires from Stansted Airport after 30 years.

Jennifer Bray, 54, retires after 28 years' service at Tendring, where she worked as the local intelligence officer's assistant.

A NEW year and it is time to remind our members and readers about the AGM and our annual meal at the New Times Restaurant.

However, before I give the details I must just mention our Christmas celebrations with around 40 members and friends enjoying a very pleasant meal and dance at the HQ Sports and Social Club in December.

The food and service was excellent but despite this we managed to dance until closing time. It was again organised by Frank and Terrie Joslin, with an excellent raffle.

Back to 2003. The first event is a meal at the New Times restaurant at Tiptree. I have booked 24 places for Friday, March 7. We will meet in the bar at 7.30pm and sit down at 8pm.

Arrangements are as for last year with members paying for their own meals. Please let me know if you are going to join us so that I can confirm numbers.

That's the fun part, now for the serious side, well not really. At our AGM the business side doesn't normally take too long so we will again provide a fish and chip supper at the end.

The date is Thursday, March 13 and the venue is the HQ Sports and Social Club. Meet at 7.30pm with the AGM at 8pm. Please come along and support your local branch.

Another date for your diaries is another AGM the following Thursday, March 20 when Region 10 will be holding their AGM at the same venue, so come along and support them as well.

Bill Fancourt

Market Place

COSTA Blanca, near Torrevieja. 2 bed apartment, sleeps 6. 10 minute walk to beach/town. Private pool. From 155 Euros per week. Contact Mick Ager 0034 617110096.

COSTA Blanca, Javea, golf/residential La Sella, 3 bed, 2 bath with roof terrace. Horse riding, golf, tennis, pools on complex. From £225pw. Brochure/details from Paul on 01245 494043 or email p-marrion@Hotmail.com.

DINING table and six chairs, mahogany colour. Three piece cabinet £100 or will split. Contact 01702 302950

FLORIDA Kissimmee. Luxury 4 bedrooms, own screened pool plus kiddie pool. Tel Del or Pam on 01268 750062.

LAKESIDE chalet, Cotswold Water Parks. Exclusive fully equipped 2 bedrooms, bathroom, kitchen, lounge, and terrace. Leisure centre on site. From £150 to £300 per week. Contact Stuart McKie on 07973 639342.

NERJA Torrox, Costa del Sol. 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom apartment in a quiet location. Views to the sea and close to golf courses. Contact Lyn Gowlett, ednet 51638 or 01376 514593.

SOLID pine stereo cabinet, excellent condition, flip lid, glass front. 3ft high, £70 ono. Contact 07976 065913.

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VOLKSWAGEN Golf GT-TDi 115bhp, 2000 'W'. Owned from new, full dealer service history. Six months warranty, 48,000 miles, vgc, £10,500. Call Mark Elliott ext 60437.

A tragic and sudden loss

COLCHESTER has said a sad but fond farewell to station office assistant **Christine Strange** who died suddenly at her home on January 12, 2003.

Appointed as one of the first station office assistants for Essex Police in 1985, Chris was attached to a shift at Colchester.

She quickly became a respected member of the 'family' and in her first year her inspector wrote: "Chris is very much part of the shift in the same way as police officers."

In her CV for the job she listed people as one of her interests and she is fondly remembered for her people skills.

Divisional commander Chief Supt Dave Murthwaite delivered the eulogy at Christine's funeral. He said: "If there was an SOA I would have chosen to be in our control room at the onset of the hurricane that hit us in 1987 then it would be Chris. Thankfully, for the officers on duty and the people of Colchester, it was Chris."

"I leant on Chris having great confidence in her assessment of individuals and incidents, her objectivity, directness and honesty"

She was an 'auntie' to the new recruits and gave wise counsel to experienced officers who sought her advice.

Known for her steady and authoritative influence at control and dealing with the more difficult customers at the front office, Chris was not only caring but committed.

Sadly another SOA, **John Gyesman** who had worked at Epping for just short of two years has also died. He had celebrated his 60th birthday just a couple of weeks before his death on January 27.

Margaret Davies, known as Maggie died in January aged 59 after a battle

against cancer. Maggie, who was married to retired police officer Don Davies, took early retirement at the end of last year from the Central Ticket Office at Rayleigh, where she had worked for over 12 years.

Jan Barker, manager at the ticket office said: "It is a true loss of a lovely lady. Maggie was a very courageous person and had a great sense of humour, keeping all of her friends and colleagues on their toes and amused. Maggie will be greatly missed by all."

Former Insp **George Harris** died in January at Powys, South Wales, aged 59.

He had served at Maldon, Colchester, Braintree and Chelmsford for 30 years before retiring in 1995. He leaves a widow Christine. The funeral service took place on January 18, at Llwydcoed Crematorium, Aberdare.

Growing older gracefully

DIGNITY in old age is very important and **RUKBA**, the Royal United Kingdom Beneficent Association is a charity which champions independence for older people.

It aims to enable older people in financial difficulty to live their lives independently with peace of mind. The charity can provide a small regular income and issues grants for repairs and equipment and can provide clothing and bed linen.

When people become too frail to

stay in their own homes, **RUKBA** may be able to help with nursing and residential home fees.

RUKBA has a network of 1,000 volunteer visitors who offer friendship and practical support.

Most of the beneficiaries have never needed help before so all assistance is given with the utmost discretion and sensitivity.

If you know someone the charity may be able to help contact Mrs Rosemary Buissert, 22 Springfield Road, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3AR, telephone 01284 750485.

Renew old acquaintances

A GARDEN party, meetings, talks, outings, barbecue, quiz evening and annual dinner all contributed to another very successful year for the Colchester and east Essex branch of **NARPO**.

Seventeen different events were organised which were all well supported. The year culminated in a Christmas social held at Colchester Police Station with the kind permission of divisional commander Chief Supt Dave Murthwaite.

Over 60 members attended the final event of the year and saw branch chairman Frank Reed present Mr Graham Reardon, who is the fundraising director of Saint Helena Hospice with a cheque for £1,200. This money is to be used at the hospice day centre, recently set up on the site of the old Clacton Police Station. In 2001 the branch donated £720 to the same



charity. Mr Reardon said he was delighted to received the donation and thanked all members for their generosity.

During the evening **NARPO** life membership certificates were presented to two previous chairmen, Mike Blackwell and John Burrows, amongst much applause. The chairman also acknowledged the huge input by branch secretary Reg Shelley and the committee for their hard work along with the membership for their support.

Among the guests were Chief Supt Dave Murthwaite, Chelmsford branch secretary, Tony Cooper and Mary Beattie MBE from Heath Lodge,

Lexden, who is a tireless worker for the hospice and a great supporter of **NARPO**.

She even allows us to use her home for our annual garden party. This year's party raised over £400 and the same amount was raised at a barbecue at the home of our vice chairman, Robin Finch.

The provisional itinerary for 2003 includes 18 events and Little Haven Children's Hospice is the nominated charity for the year.

The branch goes from strength to strength with a growing membership. Any retired officer living in the Colchester and north east Essex area who is not a member is invited to join us and renew friendships with old colleagues.

Contact the honorary secretary Reg Shelley on 01206 547739 for a chat and details.

BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE - ONE WORD PER BOX

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Send to The Editor, The Law, Press Office,
Essex Police Headquarters.

Only adverts from those directly connected to Essex Police (either serving or retired) will be accepted. Adverts should be restricted to a maximum of 24 words and repeat ads should be re-submitted on a monthly basis. The Law team reserves the right to edit or omit any advert which doesn't meet this criteria.

Police raise alarm on cold callers

POLICE in Braintree are issuing a warning to elderly residents after a series of overly 'persuasive' cold calling incidents by a man selling alarm systems.

One 80-year-old man agreed on the doorstep to buy some small systems at £20 each. Five were fitted to the front door and windows and the occupier paid £220. No invoice or receipt was provided and the seller left.

Inquiries have shown that other elderly residents have been approached.

Although the alarms, which are white in colour and fixed using self-adhesive pads, appear to work they are not thought to be worth the money charged. It means that although no offences appear to have been committed police are concerned and have informed Essex Trading Standards.

Essex Police does not recommend or endorse any specific alarm or security company but is advising individuals to obtain written quotations from at least three bona-fide alarm companies who are either NACOSS or SSAIB approved alarm installers.

Essex Trading Standards runs a hotline number for people unhappy with individual companies. The number is 08456 044466.

Return of the roadshows

WITH drug-related crime remaining high on the Government's hit-list, the force's 2Smart4 Drugs campaign has once again hit the road to help convince schoolchildren that drugs are for mugs.



● Sinead joins 2Smart4 Drugs.

by Nishan Wijeratne

Sinead from BBC's *Fame Academy* was at The Brentwood Centre launch, where the award-winning drugs education programme will inform youngsters about the dangers surrounding substance misuse in a fun, imaginative way.

The county's basketball team the Essex Leopards will also be joining Essex FM DJ Lucy Irving and the Chain Reaction Theatre Company on the nine-week long roadshow.

With the flagship initiative now in its seventh year, community safety officer Pc Victoria Wilson is confident the roadshow's safety messages conveyed in the 90s is reaping rewards with today's children who are now more likely to come into contact with drugs in their late teens.

"Each year we seem to come up with innovative, new ways of exploring these issues with the pupils, but the overall, underlying message hasn't changed," said Pc Wilson. "We're frequently contacted by young people who attended our roadshows from previous years who are thanking us properly now that they've entered the adult world. It's often said that education awareness in adolescent years pays off as one strives to

become a young adult."

The 2Smart4 Drugs roadshows attract nearly 15,000 children aged 11-13 and inform them by way of drama scenarios and music that drug and alcohol abuse can harm not only their health, but also their relationships, finances and lifestyle.

In addition to receiving support from Prime Minister Tony Blair, Olympic-medal winner Dean Macey is urging parents to ensure their children attend their nearest roadshows.

"Taking drugs to improve your chances of winning is cheating and cowardly," said the Canvey Island athlete. "If I don't win my event, I want to know that I've at least lost fairly and squarely - and not to someone who has taken drugs."

As with previous years, the shows are current and topical. An adaptation of Sound of the Underground from *Pop Rivals' Girls Aloud* is this year's flagship song with an anti-drug message, sung by the Chain Reaction Theatre Company. This will be practised at this week's dress rehearsal.

The 2Smart4 Drugs roadshow will be kicking off their tour at the Brentwood Centre on Friday, January 31, with other tour dates in Thurrock, Colchester, Basildon, Uttlesford, Harlow and Southend.

A return to old-fashioned police work

THE minority in Burnham who persistently cause damage and nuisance to their neighbours should beware as the police and town council launch a partnership to crack down on those upsetting the lives of other residents.

Police are providing dedicated reassurance patrols, including covert operations, and dealing with public disorder, nuisance and general incivility. They are also targeting the sale of alcohol to youngsters and underage drinking.

Letters have been sent to the parents of youngsters suspected of being on the fringe of disorder. This is being coupled with continued use of the Maldon youth service, which provides an excellent outreach support.

A poster campaign encouraging people to pass on information and support their community will run throughout the town.

Insp Kevin Jacobs said: "It is my intention to go back to some old-fashioned policing skills, taking youngsters home to parents, if necessary, and teaching them to respect their communities. Those people who do not heed our advice will be dealt with accordingly."

Trio save stab victim

THREE officers who helped save the life of a badly-wounded man have been commended for their actions by Chief Constable David Stevens.

Sgt Shirley Cole and constables Shaun Hammond and Rachel Watson were confronted with an horrific sight when they arrived at a house in Witham. A naked man was slumped in a doorway having received stab wounds to his stomach, back and legs.

The man had lost a great deal of blood and his stomach had been ripped open and although the officers administered prompt first aid the wounds were so great that the contents of the first aid kits were insufficient.

The officers thought the man would die. He was taken to hospital and has survived his ordeal but without their actions it is clear the man would have died from his injuries and blood loss.

Also commended at the same ceremony were Thurrock Tactical Team officers Sgt Daniel Stolen and constables Philip Moody, Martin Jeggo, Clifford Benton and James Burke for making a significant impact on volume crime detection in the division.

Between January and May 2002, they dealt with 15 individual offenders who admitted 356 offences valued in excess of £1 million. The custodial sentences they received came to a total of 18 years.

80s reunion plans

CALLING cadets of 1988, where are you now? Dc Pete Chivers is planning a reunion for former police cadets or those on the police vocational course in 1988. The date and venue for the re-union is still to be decided but contact Pete and register your interest at Brentwood CID or by email.

Cadets settling in well

A GROUP of very enthusiastic young people are making their mark in Harlow, Thurrock, Basildon and Southend divisions following the re-introduction of cadets to the force.

The new recruits joined in November under a pilot scheme, which allows young people to join as cadets from the age of 17-and-a-half for a period of six to nine months.

Taking the opportunity to observe regular officers, the cadets have also supported 2Smart4 Drugs, anti-drink spiking and Keep Yourself Safe campaigns.

They have also observed the work of other emergency services, Victim Support and lent a hand at local hospices.

Pilot co-ordinator Sergeant Wendy Welham said: "The scheme has got off to a good start.

"Divisions are getting used to cadets again and our next intake in September will be placed with Chelmsford and Rayleigh divisions.

"Hopefully some of the first intake will be able to join the regulars in May following normal recruitment procedures."

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ON yer bike will take on a new meaning for anyone game enough to accept the challenge of travelling through Vietnam.

This will be a chance to meet like-minded people and travel through a land of stunning contrasts.

It will require stamina, courage and personal determination and will raise funds for research into Glycogen Storage Disease, a group of little known disorders which can be fatal to children.

There will be a fee of £295 and a minimum sponsorship of £2,500 is required but organisers provide flights, meals, accommodation and back up support.

For further information contact the organisers on 0870 872 8721 or go to www.vietnambikeride.org.

Just choose a challenge

EVER thought of following the Inca trail in Peru, running a marathon, bike riding along part of the Tour de France route or to Paris or even taking part in the Three Peaks challenge in aid of charity?

Action Research is a leading medical charity, dedicated to preventing and treating disease and disability by funding vital medical research. They want support in raising money and in return offer the chance to take part in some exciting adventures.

If you want to know more call 01732 744031 or visit www.actionresearch.org.uk.

National selection

FOR the first time Essex Police has four runners selected to represent the National cross country team. Pc Mick Bond, Chelmsford, Sgt Vic Spain, Braintree, Pc Russ Welch, Harlow and Derek Walker, SOA at Colchester will be competing against a RAF team at Halton.

Aim to net more players

THE force volleyball team is looking to strengthen its squad this season and push for top honours in the national league. The sport, which first originated in the USA, is played by two sets of team on a court divided by a net, with the object of the game being to ground the ball into the opponent's court, whilst prevent-

ing it from being grounded in one's own half. Team manager Jo Reynolds is looking to meet new colleagues from across the organisation and boost the profile of the squad.

"We're looking for both men and women to join our training sessions which are great fun as well as being good exercise," said the Southend constable. "It doesn't

matter if you've never played before and have no idea of the rules as the main aim is to attract people to the game.

The team trains every Tuesday evening at the EPTC gym between 7.30pm and 9pm, with structured training sessions culminating in a series of games.

For further information contact Jo on extension 30445 or via email.

Conquer the hills

ENTRIES are now being taken for the Cheviot 2000; the annual team fell race over the hills of the Northumberland National Park, which is taking place on June 21, 2003.

Described as one of the most gruelling events of its kind, the event is open to all UK forces, other emergency services and the armed services.

The course circumnavigates a 22-mile circular route in the remote Cheviot Hills, traversing every point of, or above, sea level.

Although Essex is obviously not the best place to train, anyone game enough to enter has to participate in a team of three.

The entrance fee of £48 provides a t-shirt for all those who complete the course and a buffet supper at the post-race presentation evening.

For an entry form send a SAE to Insp Dave Rickaby, Newcastle Central Area Command, Market Street, Newcastle on Tyne NE1 6XA.

Telephone 0191 214 6555 extension 62602 for any further details.

Entries close May 1, 2003.

Lottery winners

THE lucky winner of the January lottery was Sgt Melanie Koya from Thurrock who picks up £1,500.

Victor Butler at Harlow benefits by £750, Pc Clayton Ford at Rayleigh picks up £375 and £200 goes to Nigel Potter at HQ.

The £50 consolations prizes are shared amongst Pc Heidi Lee, Chelmsford, Pc Robert O'Sullivan, Rayleigh, Pc Alan Fitz-John, Thurrock, Pc Trevor Sleet, RPU Stanway, Pc Samantha Anderson, Basildon, Mr R Bell, retired, Michael Aitchison, Colchester, Pc Paul Screech, Thurrock, Pc Alan Chapman, RPU Chigwell and the final lucky ticket holder is Pc Gary Cootes, MSD, HQ.

Cup success

THE force football team has reached the quarter finals of this year's National Police Cup after beating Suffolk 1-0 thanks to an early strike from Southend's Craig Bolton.

A home tie beckons, with their opponents yet to be decided.

A cup double looms as South Wales Police were due to make the trip across to Essex in the south Midlands Cup at the start of the month.

Meanwhile, the Essex Police vets are currently lying in mid-table in the Ridleys Essex Veterans League, with the players hoping for a long run in the National Veterans Police Cup.

Keep your finances fit

IF you want to be a member of a health and leisure club but can't afford it a unique scheme known as Health-Force might hold the key.

Health-Force, which is based in Colchester and whose director is former police officer Tony Kitching has responded to demands for cheaper health options by securing with discounts of up to 50 per cent and no joining fee.

No joining fee alone could save you up to £225 and monthly subscription starts at as little as just £14.50. What's more there is a choice of over 200 clubs nationwide including some well known names like, TopNotch, Club Moativation, LA Fitness and some of the best independent clubs around.

To illustrate the savings you can make TopNotch charge over £50 per month for full membership whereas Health-Force Associate Membership is just £29 per month. TopNotch charge up to £225 joining fee but through the Health-Force scheme you pay nothing.

The deal gets even better if you join a Club Moativation with prices starting at just £20. Club Moativation is owned by Queens Moat Houses and as part of the Health-Force deal you also get a 25 per cent discount on your food



● Service desk assistants Julie Palmer and Sharon Percival try out the fitness equipment at Club Moativation in Harlow.

and drinks bill at any of its hotels as well as 30 per cent discount on leisure breaks and 10 per cent discount on any merchandise.

LA Fitness normally charges over £50 but you get Health-Force membership for just £25.

You don't need to be put off joining a club because you think you already need to be super fit and own all the latest sports gear. Health-Force have found that more than 80 per cent of its members have never joined a health and leisure club. A bank of telephone

operators talk you through the scheme and help you choose the right club for you. Staff at the club will then show you around and answer any questions you might have.

Once you have joined a club the staff will show you how to use the equipment as well as create a workout regime for you.

For the latest list of clubs, facilities, prices and any restrictions on access check out the Health-Force website at www.health-force.co.uk or call their hotline on 08701 201 999.

If you find they don't have a club near you yet don't despair just let them know which club you would like and they will do their best to get them on to the scheme.

In addition if you are interested in joining a golf club but can't afford it, the Golf-Force scheme offers membership at 100 golf clubs nationwide for £320 or less. Just call 08701 201 999 or visit the website at www.golf-force.co.uk.

To achieve these discounts you must contact Health-Force or Golf-Force and not the clubs direct.

Sports & leisure news in brief

THE venue for the 5km fun run in memory of Dc Mick Page has changed.

The run is scheduled for May 31 and to make the event more accessible for everyone the location will now be Hylands Park in Chelmsford.

For more information contact Dc Liz Chalk.



RESULTS from the latest Croker Cup competitions were quite varied. Colchester came out top in the Badminton, with HQ second

followed by Tendring, Harlow, Braintree and finally Chelmsford.

In swimming the honours were taken by Rayleigh with 12 points. Braintree were runners-up, followed by Basildon, Harlow, Colchester, HQ and Southend.

The updated table shows a tie between Braintree and Harlow both with 66 points, Colchester ten behind on 56, then three tied on 29 - HQ, Southend and Rayleigh, followed by Basildon and Thurrock on 24 with Tendring on 16 and Chelmsford on 15.



BACK by popular demand, the Braintree triathlon is set for Sunday, June 8 at the Riverside Centre swimming pool, St. John's Road, Braintree.

It comprises a 400m pool swim followed by a 22km bike ride and finishing with a 5km run. Those who competed last year are encouraged to come again and improve their personal bests.

Organisers Pc Kevin Rowe at Dunmow, Sgt Peter Bryan at MSD, Chigwell and Insp Mark Harman at MSD, Bocking would welcome anyone who can help on the day. Contact them by phone or email.



DEVON House Health and Leisure, Chelmsford is offering all Essex Police Sports Association members a special January price of £21 per month, normally £35. For full details contact Ian or Andrew on 0800 9520522.

