

THE LATE EDITION



NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER LONDON RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION

JULY 2023

AN EVENTFUL AND PURPOSEFUL AGM

We have no fewer than four guest speakers

Producing **The Late Edition** is getting to be a bit like painting the Forth Bridge in that by the time you finish the January version it is time to start thinking about its July equivalent, but it might just be that the production team are all getting older and that time seems to fly by, which is the last thing you want to see happen.

Sadly our 'Those no longer with us' column seems to get longer with each issue as each issue brings news of even more deaths as loved ones inform me of the passing of their relatives and friends, which causes me to reflect that by far and away the worst aspect of being secretary of the Retired Members' association is the frequency with which I receive such sad news and although this is inevitable, and the very nature of the beast, as they say, it never becomes easier and our letters and emails page this time is exclusively on this subject.

We were particularly saddened to hear of the death of Ivy Smith, a stalwart of the committee over the years and someone who, in particular, did so much to improve the terms and conditions of women in the printing industry, and a moving tribute, and written by those who knew her best, appears on page three, whilst Mary Longfellow remembers her husband, Terry, and Barry Fitzpatrick writes in praise of Dan Tsiricus.

Our AGM duly took place in April – we continue to defy Unite rules by having our AGM **annually** as opposed to every three years as per the rule book; perhaps we are all instinctive rebels or it might just be that we fear that waiting three years might be a little dangerous.

The meeting was also very busy in other aspects in that we had no fewer than four guest speakers, namely Caren Evans, who is the Unite National Officer responsible for retired members, Josh Berlyne, a Unite training officer, and Keith Keys and David Brown, who are secretary and Chair respectively of the GPM Charitable Trust Fund, and an insert explaining how they can help you is included in this newsletter.

There are many ways in which the Trust may be able to help you e.g. assist you to afford a walk-in bath, something that some retired members will find virtually essential - so please read the leaflet carefully and do not hesitate to make an application

for their support.

Caren Evans explained that, as far as retired members are concerned, Unite had been strident in helping to preserve the triple lock and were opposing the government's attempts to delay the payment of the state pension to 68.

In answer to a number of questions on the pensions issue, Caren explained that the Union were about to draw up a list of priorities and refer them to the relevant committee.

The Union are also looking at funeral benefits and insisted that Unite will not sponsor an MP "Unless they are prepared to do something for us."

Josh Berlyne explained the work he is doing as a training organiser and the support he is giving to Unite's retired members committee and conceded that this had not been a priority in the past, so we intend keeping in regular contact with both Caren and Josh and reminding them of the pledges they have made.

Finally I am pleased to report that another successful evening was held at Selhurst Park as we remembered our erstwhile secretary in the form of 'The Alf Parish Memorial Darts Match' – see report on page two.

Mike Pike

MEMBERS MEETINGS 2023

John Marshall Hall, 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY

Wednesday July 5th 2023

Wednesday December 13th 2023

Meetings start at 11 a.m.

*Hopefully you will put these dates in your diary now
and come along to reminisce
with some old friends and colleagues*

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL DARTS COMPETITION

Palace legend helps us remember Alf

In the end there were five teams, but then quality has always been so much more important than quantity, as we gathered to enjoy the Alf Parish Memorial Darts match and remember our erstwhile secretary.

Sadly Doreen was not able to attend whilst Steve was taking advantage of the (Football) international break to have a holiday. "I am actually due to be away, coming back the following day (to the darts match.) Let me see if I can get back earlier", he informed me.

Well, he did get back earlier but was meeting a government committee to discuss the future of the (Football) Premier Division on that day.

I arrived at Selhurst Park soon after 5.30 on March 31st to be greeted by Erin Corrigan, the latest in a long line of outstanding events managers at Crystal Palace Football Club, and who plays football herself – for Dulwich Hamlet. "Mark Bright is here", she informed me, the first player to score a goal at the new Wembley whom, along with Ian Wright, used to terrorise opposing defences to the extent that their goals took Palace to third place in the old First Division in the 1990/91 season.

Soon after Mark entered the room and stayed for the whole evening, presenting the trophy to the winning team at the event's conclusion and he subsequently sent me the following email:

*Hi Mike,
Nice to meet you.
I actually really enjoyed the night; I spoke with Doreen and said I will gladly attend future events on the club's behalf if she wishes; might even take part in the next one.
Regards
Mark*

Roger Hough, who organises the Greenwich and Woolwich Constituency Labour Party's team and who also masterminds the draw, observed "Mark Bright did a good job, I think he spoke to everyone there."

As well as Roger's team we were also delighted to see two other CLP participants, namely Orpington and Bromley & Chislehurst, the latter being particularly apposite as it was Alf's constituency and the darts competition was their idea in the first place.

The other two sides were Old Wilsonians' Cricket Club, the defending champions, and Men of the Hill, a combination of the Old Wilsonians' Super Vets football team and the Kent over 50s cricket side.

The competition itself was fast and furious, highly competitive and very close, with many absorbing games, and we ultimately got through to the final between Mike Fox, of Bromley and Chislehurst, and Steve Cranenburgh of Orpington CLPs, who entertained us grandly, with Mike being the eventual winner.

The evening raised £700 and the money was distributed

equally between the five teams. CPFC were, as ever, the perfect hosts, providing all of the raffle prizes, a free buffet and the dartboards and we are already looking forward to next year's tournament.

The delightful Caroline was again on the bar, this time with her equally glamorous sister, whilst the Palace Chairman made up, to a degree, for his absence by putting a tab behind said bar for half an hour, which was much appreciated.

The following afternoon both he and Mark Bright could be seen in the Director's box as Palace played Leicester City, and it would be churlish of me not to mention the result – 2-1 to Palace, although, had it been the other way round, I might have been more reluctant to mention this!



Mike Fox receives the trophy from Mark Bright



The 'Men of the Hill' team engage with Mark Bright

THE UNIQUE IVY SMITH WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN

Friends and colleagues remember her fondly

It is with deep regret and sadness that we are writing an obituary to our dear friend, Ivy Smith.



Ivy was a member of the Union for over 70 years and during that time she stood for office and was active in every company where she was employed. Ivy started work at the age of 14 at Macorckadales, dressed in short white socks and a ribbon in her hair and from that time she never looked back.

Ivy was a member and Chair of the London Women's Branch of SOGAT, fighting for equal pay and equality for women in the union, always giving sound advice to women in mixed sex Branches, because these women did not have a voice at the time, as well as in the companies where she was employed, leaving her first place of work because she had got married – women did not have a choice in the 1950s and beyond.

Ivy became a 'jobber', eventually working for IPC, and as the factories closed, was a member of 'The Pool', travelling to wherever she was needed. During this time Ivy gave birth to two children, Gina and Graham.

When the children were older Ivy worked full time for the Labour Party, during which time she improved the terms and conditions of the staff, and not only her own union members. Also during her time working for the Labour Party, Ivy became convener, representing many different unions, and was involved, with others, in leading two major disputes, improving the financial position of many of the staff, and was assisted in this by the support of Dennis Skinner, MP.

Ivy played a key role in the amalgamation of the London Central Branch, which was all male, and the London Women's Branch, thereby forming The London Branch, becoming the deputy chair, and chaired the first ever delegate meeting of the new branch with much aplomb.

She had a natural ability to persuade people to her way of thinking, without being pushy, and leaving them to believe it was their idea, a natural talent that she had.

Ivy also played a big part in the Wapping dispute, marching every Wednesday and Saturday, serving soup in the small caravan. She was always pleased that her first customers were the homeless, giving them seconds when requested.

At one of the big marches the caravan was attacked by a number of police, or possibly the army in police uniforms, – there were no numbers on display. She was called "A silly old woman" and told to go home by one endearing officer, but ignored his abusive remarks and returned to the caravan, serving soup to whomever required it; she wore the abuse with pride.

Ivy was loved and respected by all the members and made life long friends wherever she went.

She will be missed by her family, friends and colleagues and all of the people whose working lives she improved. Ivy lived a long life, being 91 when she died but, unfortunately, not long enough.

Contributions to this obituary were made by many of Ivy's friends, who will miss her forever

Ivy's son, Graham, warmed everyone's hearts when he paid tribute to his Mum at her funeral on March 20th

When thinking of what to say about Mum today I quickly realised it would be impossible to acknowledge all of her qualities and achievements in just a few minutes, so instead I thought I would share just a few memories that I have been thinking about over the last few weeks.

From Mum's childhood there were always plenty of stories about the war. One of my favourites was about the time Mum was on her way home from school. I think she had bunked off lessons so was on her way home on her own and was chased down Links Road by a German fighter.

The story was repeated often and each time the fighter got lower and closer until it was neatly trimming the hedges of Tooting and Mum could see the colour of the pilot's eyes through his goggles. Fortunately for us Mum was rescued by a milkman, who had already taken cover and rushed out to throw her over a fence to safety.

Politics was, of course, a huge part of Mum's life. I do recall that when Gina and I were young we were never expected to blindly follow her political views. Instead we would watch the

IVY SMITH *continued*

BBC news together and then Mum would pretend to interview us to see what we thought. I used to believe that this was to enable us to think independently and develop our own view of the world but, with hindsight, I strongly suspect the questions were cleverly loaded to help us always reach the 'correct' answer!

Mum's achievements at the print union, SOGAT, and the Labour Party, would be impressive for anyone at any time, but for a woman at that time they were truly remarkable. None of this, though, could have been achieved without the unwavering love and support from our Dad, and they made a formidable team.

How Dad coped with two children during school holidays whilst working nights remains a mystery to me.

Mum felt Dad's loss deeply, but she found the strength to continue to do the best she could, and the decision to move from Streatham to the bungalow, three doors down from

Gina, was both brave and wise.

Family and friends were a central part of Mum's life. She made friends with ease everywhere she went to the extent that finding places to put Christmas cards became an annual problem – fortunately we lived in a house with the longest hallway in Streatham!

The support of her closest friends has been immense in recent years. Holidays with 'the girls' were a highlight and these continued until just last November. There are lots of stories from these trips, but I suspect that much of what happened at 'Turkey and Tinsel' stayed at 'Turkey and Tinsel.'

Mum thought the world of her grand-children. When young they loved listening to the stories she would make up and, as they grew, she would have an anecdote or song for every occasion, most of them with a moral or some advice hidden within, although I think the grand-children cottoned on to this tactic fairly early on.

TERRY LONGFELLOW 1935-2022

Mary's Tribute To Her Wonderful Husband, Terry

My husband, Terry Longfellow, was born in 1935 in Ponders End, Middlesex and, at the age of one, his parents moved to Palmers Green, North London. Terry had recollections of life under war time conditions – like sitting on Boscombe beach with his mum before the ARP (Air Raid Precautions) man told them to move sharpish as landmines had been buried there! He and a few friends used to go to an Italian prisoner of war camp nearby and shout 'Cookie! Cookie!' and the prisoners used to come and give them sweets just to get rid of them!

After leaving school at 15, he had visions of being an electrician but his dad had other ideas. "You are going to be a printer, son" he said. His grandfather was a printer and the story goes that he got the sack for printing a wrong word in the Bible. As you obeyed your parents in those days, his dad contacted printers in the City of London for Terry to be taken on as an apprentice. This was at Smith & Ebbs, and he later attended the London School of Printing for one day a week.

After serving his apprenticeship, Terry had various jobs before he joined Fanfolds Ltd in Edmonton as a machine minder and stayed there for nineteen years. He recalled many happy memories, including getting his finger stuck in a brass bracket on his machine and after several attempts trying to release it, it was decided to dismantle part of the machine and send the offending part, and Terry, off to the local hospital where doctors somehow released his finger. This caused merriment in A&E – and on the shop floor!

He was asked on another occasion if he would like to work on a new envelope machine called a Heidelberg. Yes, he said not realising how big this machine was. The machine was shipped over from Germany and with it came a giant of a man who installed it and as his English was practically non-existent and Terry's German the same, they didn't exactly get on very well! He was twice Terry's size and also had red hair as did Terry. The machine room held it breathe on a few occasions

fearing WW3 was about to break out! After 3 weeks he left and Terry got to grips working this monster. There was a big opening celebration with the McCorquodale family coming to "christen" the machine with champagne which flowed like water. The lady doing the honours was Barbara Cartland, dressed in pink from top to toe, and Terry was getting concerned because she kept walking into the machine with a glass in her hand!

After he was on this machine for a couple of years, he asked to go on something else but the powers that be didn't want him to go and anyway nobody else wanted the job! Eventually they gave in and Terry moved on to another machine. By this time redundancy was looming and the firm relocated - without Terry and his machine.

After redundancy he decided he wanted a change from the print and trained as a gas meter collector. His "office" was his car and dispatched to empty meters in houses. The sights he saw in some made your hair curl; pigeons flying about, busted meters and lonely housewives; needless to say, he gave up and went back to the print!

He was always grateful to the NGA in finding him work, encouraging him to "go and have a look" and in later years enjoyed reading 'The Late Edition.' He worked in Romford, Enfield, and finally finished working at Coleridge Press, Dollis Hill. He was persuaded to work another year past retirement, but said it was a sad day walking out for the final time.

Terry was a big reader, spending hours in bookshops. On many Saturdays we would visit Foyles in Charing Cross Road or browse through record shops seeing if there was anything of interest in the way of jazz and big bands.

He was also very knowledgeable about World War 2, especially U-boats and went to Kiel to see the U-995 that is moored up

TERRY LONGFELLOW *continued*

as a museum. Going inside you realise how claustrophobic they are.

Terry was a big jazz fan, especially Humphry Lyttelton and Chris Barber, whom we saw on numerous occasions, but his great passion was the Ted Heath Band, seeing them in the 1950s at the London Palladium. He had a large collection and an extensive comprehensive catalogue that his brother-in-law made of the band, listing every musician who played in it.

His favourite mode of transport was motorbikes, starting with a small engine his dad fixed to his pedestal bike up to a Honda 750 Four. However, he found this was too much to handle as there was a 30-odd year gap from his last bike, and he forgot how busy the roads had become!

He was a good cook – shepherds pies, beef stews, sausage and potato pie all came easy to him, but his specialty was chips, and, as our daughter said “my dad makes the best chips in the world!”.

In his youth Terry joined the Boys Brigade in 1948, joined the band and proudly played the big bass drum. They were successful in entering competitions and even played at Wembley.

His abiding memory was seeing Billy Graham at Harringay Stadium and he always remembered the atmosphere he created. As a child, our daughter joined the choir in our local



church and Terry and I went along to support her. He took an active role in the church and finished up as churchwarden, which he thoroughly enjoyed.

During the last 6 years of his life Terry's health deteriorated and, sadly, he passed away on 1st March last year. With a packed church, we gave him the best funeral we could, with his music, laughter and happy memories recalled.

It's not easy recalling someone's life when you have been married 61 years; there is so much you want to say; this is just a snapshot of a very lovely and respected man. You are greatly missed, Tel.

Mary Longfellow

SOME OTHER THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Political fund ballot

Pleased to report that the political ballot, which is held every ten years, had a 91% majority, which means that the Union can continue to campaign on political activities, e.g. the right to strike, defending the triple lock, the NHS and the right to have a political voice.

The Wapping Memorial

Progress on removing the Wapping Memorial from the John Marshall Hall has been slow but we are getting there.

Our secretary has had a number of meetings with those involved and St Bride's Church has agreed to house it.

There is still a certain amount of bureaucracy to be completed and we cannot promise that the memorial will be in its new home before our next Branch meeting on July 5th, but are confident that it will be so by the December meeting.

Unite have agreed to pay for all of the expenses involved

A Glorious History

Ann Field and Tony Burke have written a book entitled 'A Glorious History' which traces the history of the Print Unions and was launched on February 16th at the Marx Memorial

Library and, as well as Ann herself, a number of other members of the Branch were also in attendance.

Louisa Bull chaired the meeting whilst Kate Bell, who is now deputy general secretary of the TUC, represented that body and said a few words. The book highlights the struggle for workers' rights which the Tories attempted to destroy.

"Unless we convey these struggles of the past to current workers, we might have to start again, and the intention of the book is to bring all these issues together as many anti Trade Union laws still exist", Ann insisted.

New Committee Members needed

Your Branch committee continues to work hard and assiduously but, sadly, we have lost a number of its constituent parts over the last few years and so have a number of vacancies.

Laurie Pocock has been working with Bob Parks, our current treasurer, and will take over this position in due course after which Bob will continue to be a committee member, but we still need others, albeit not to fill a particular role, so, if you are interested then please make your feelings known – we will be delighted to hear from you.

THANK YOU



& KEY WORKERS

THE GPM CHARITABLE TRUST FUND IS HERE TO HELP YOU

A reminder that the GPM Charitable trust is an independent Charity, administered by Keith Keys, aimed at employees and their families who are working or have been employed within the Graphical, Paper and Media industries, and is here to help you.

The object of the charity is to help those and their dependents who are in need, including in the following ways:

The purchasing of mobility aids

Help in financing home improvements to enable applicants to remain in their homes.

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For more details contact Keith Keys.

Telephone: 07733 262 991 or email: gpmcharitabletrust@tiscali.co.uk

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DAN TSIRICUS - A TRUE STALWART OF THE UNION

Barry Fitzpatrick remembers a true champion of the people

Dan Tsiricus has sadly died in Cyprus after being treated for lung cancer.

Dan was FoC at Thomson Regional Newspapers before being made redundant. He then became FoC at 'The Mail on Sunday', a job that he only secured after the union went into dispute when the company tried to block his appointment.

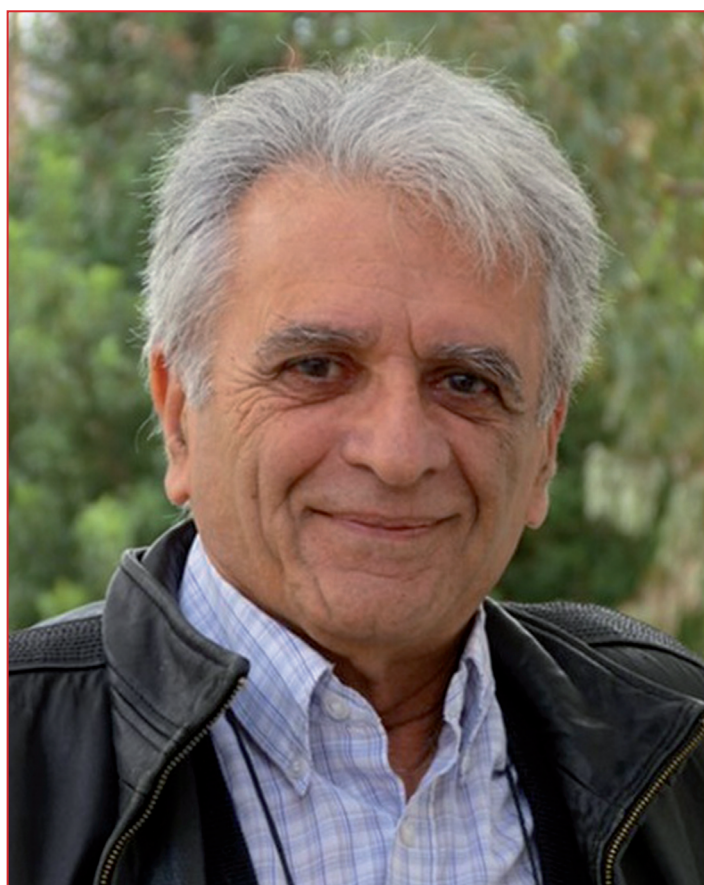
Dan was a man whom, throughout his life, always served the members first, was highly thought of by them and always stood in front when needed.

He played a prominent part during the Wapping dispute and I spent many a cold night with him on the picket line.

Dan began his political career early by leaving his homeland during the dictatorship of the Greek Colonels.

He has earned an honourable place in the history of the union.

Barry Fitzpatrick



THOSE NO LONGER WITH US

It is with regret that we have to inform you of the deaths of the following members since our last edition:

A Burrows	Brian Jones	Freddie Osborne
G Claydon	Richard Kelly	Reginald Phillips
Erasmus Commodore	Robert Lazarus	J. Roper
Alan Fraser	Douglas Lock	N. Sharp
Derek Friday	Terry Longfellow	Ivy Smith
Paul Grantham	Peter Merchant	Tinnie Talbot
William Gregory	Clifford Miller	Michael Thompson
Eric Ronald Haynes	D. Norris	Dan Tsiricus
Arthur Holdcroft	J. Notman	Horace Woods
Derek Jackson	Bernard O'Brien	

Our thoughts and condolences go out to all those who have been left behind.

If you have a contribution that you would like included in the next edition please contact the editor.

By telephone: **020 8659 6443** By email: **owmikepike@yahoo.co.uk**

By post: **Mike Pike, Secretary, RMA,
68a Knighton Park Road, Sydenham, London SE26 5RL**

LETTERS & EMAILS TO THE EDITOR

You can contact the editor by telephone on **020 8659 6443**, by email **owmikepike@yahoo.co.uk** or by post **Mike Pike, Secretary, RMA, 68a Knighton Park Road, Sydenham, London SE26 5RL**

Dear Mike,

Please find attached a tribute to my dear husband Terry, who passed away on 1st March 2022. He liked to read **The Late Edition**, and I thought any working colleagues he had might like to know of his passing. It would be great if he could be remembered in your letters section in the next edition.

Please feel free to contact me if you so wish. Could you please keep my name on the mailing list - I, too, enjoyed reading all the news!

Many thanks,
Mary Longfellow

Mary's moving tribute to Terry appears elsewhere in this edition

Dear Mike,

I am writing to let you know that my father, Derek Jackson, passed away peacefully on 18th June 2022 after struggling with his health for some time. Dad worked as a printer all his life, only interrupted by National Service which took him to Cyprus and the Middle East during the Suez crisis.

My father worked at the Bank Of England Printing Works at Debden for the majority of his career as a charge hand on one of the web machines. He was very proud of the consistent quality of work required to print the Queen's Bank Notes.

He was also a Union rep, FOC for the NGA, and passionate about helping his fellow work mates achieve better pay and conditions.

My father is survived by his wife, Beryl, who would very much appreciate seeing this Letter published in the Late Edition.

Kind regards,
Gary Jackson (son)

PS. Please continue to send the Late Edition to my mother if this is possible

Dear Mike,

I should have got round to this sooner, but am writing now as the latest **The Late Edition** just found its way into my mailbox this morning and to let you know that my dad, Eric Ronald Haynes, passed away 2 years ago on 27th December 2020.

Dad worked in the print for all of his long life; he was 101 when he died, and started work as an apprentice in the Art and Craft of Fine Etching for the Amalgamated Press in London at 15 years of age in 1935.

Retiring to Devon in 1985, he began a second life devoted to his art and became prolific, specialising in watercolours, calling himself a marine and landscape artist because of his love for boats and the countryside. He became a life member and President of the Teignmouth Art Society after many years of devoted service, a post he held until his death.

Please remove him from your mailing list and pass on my regards to anyone who would have known him.

Kind regards,
Roy Haynes

Dear Mike,

It is with sadness that I inform you that Raymond 'Laz' Lazarus passed away in October 2022 very suddenly.

He completed his printing apprenticeship when he finished his National Service and was working in hot metal until the end. He worked on 'The Financial Times' and 'The Express' until being made redundant.

He enjoyed the camaraderie and we often met his colleagues at the Christmas Carol service and lunch

Please include him in the obituary section in the next issue of **The Late Edition**.

Kind regards,
Audrey Lazarus

Dear Mike,

I apologise for the delay in notifying you but I am sorry to advise you that my father, Peter Merchant, passed away on 17 December 2021.

Peter was a typesetter at 'The Evening Standard' for many years before retiring when technology took over.

He leaves two daughters, Jacqueline and myself, seven grandchildren and - to date - 8 great grandchildren.

Kind regards,
Sue Boothby

IF MEMBERS ADDRESS OR CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER, PLEASE KINDLY INFORM THE SECRETARY - DETAILS ABOVE,
IN ORDER THAT WE CAN UPDATE OUR RECORDS.