



•N•A•R•P•O•

A

short history
to commemorate the

Diamond Jubilee

of the
WILTSHIRE BRANCH

1948 to 2008

A COMMEMORATIVE HISTORY OF THE WILTSHIRE BRANCH OF NARPO

1948 to 2008

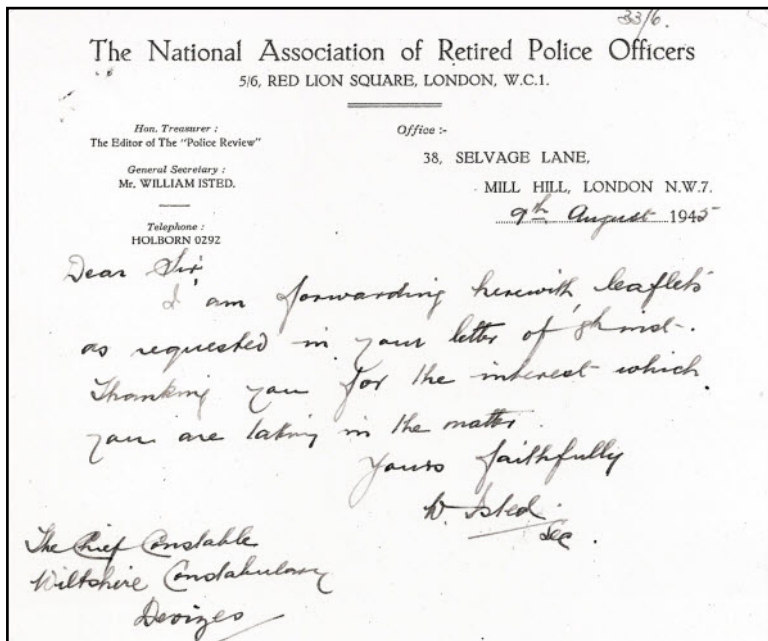
In the November 2007 edition of NARPO News our former President, David Anderton, published his address to Conference at Scarborough on 14th September 2007. He said:

"During the last two years I have been invited to attend several Diamond Jubilee celebrations and I am aware that many more Branches have reached this milestone recently. As the National Association of Retired Police Officers was formed in 1919, why were so many Branches formed in 1946 and 1947?"

This started us thinking about our own history. Records held at our Branch Office only go back as far as 1974 and NARPO Headquarters in Wakefield weren't able to help us, so we did some research at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre at Chippenham (formerly the County Archives). We found that they held a file from Police Headquarters covering the years 1945 to 1953.

Well, not only do we think that we may have answered our President's question, but we have established that the Wiltshire Branch was formed early in 1948, so this year of 2008 is our Diamond Jubilee!

Although NARPO had been formed in 1919, by 1945 there were very few Branches in the Counties. It would seem that at that time NARPO's National Executive enlisted the aid of the County Chief Police Officers' Committee (presumably the forerunner of ACPO) in an attempt to set up more County Branches. As a result on 8th August 1945 our own Chief Constable, Colonel Golden, wrote to NARPO's General Secretary, Mr William Isted, at the national office then at 5/6 Red Lion Square, London. The following day, 9th August 1945 (postal services were obviously much better in those days), Mr Isted wrote to Col. Golden enclosing "leaflets as requested" and thanking him for the interest that he was taking. (*Document 1*)




Document 1

Unfortunately nothing seemed to happen for some time, but on 21st May 1946 Mr Ilsted again wrote to Col. Golden requesting the name of a Wiltshire pensioner who might be prepared to organise a scheme in our County. Most Divisions reported that they had been unable to find anyone, although Swindon put forward the name of a pensioner living in Marlborough. Subsequently it was reported that he was unable to undertake the work. However, interest in forming a Branch continued, and on 17th July 1947 it was reported that an ex-Inspector T Howell living in Devizes might be willing, but again this came to nothing.

By that time the national office had moved to 40 Stowe Avenue, Sheffield, and on 13th November 1947 the President of NARPO, John Bell, a former Superintendent, again wrote to the Chief Constable pointing out that Wiltshire was one of the few counties without a Branch Representative, and informing him that in the past twelve months or so 36 new branches had been formed. In that letter he asked for a room to be made available at Headquarters for a meeting at 3pm on Monday, 8th December 1947. (*Document 2*)

11/11/47

**National
of Retired**



**Association
Police Officers**

40 Stowe Avenue,
Sheffield 7.

Nov 13 1947

Sir,

As Wiltshire is one of very few Counties without Branch representation in our Association we are anxious to meet you personally to explain our work on behalf of police widows and orphans in particular and so seek their allegiance. In the past 12 months or so 36 new Branches have been formed.

Therefore, I should be greatly obliged if you would kindly afford us the use of a room for a meeting at 3pm on Monday 8th Decr 1947 at Devizes, at which we have many pensioners present.


I understand that Nov. 15th is your next pensioners cheque distribution date.

If the proposed arrangement for our meeting meets with your approval, may I ask you to secure for me the amount of five pounds necessary for the incision of my letters of invitation to the meeting on the pensioners' cheque envelopes. Each letter bears no name and so may be placed in any envelope.

This valuable help has been given me by friendly and generous donors throughout the County, seeing that we are allied to the Police and are non-commercial and non-political.

In any reply would greatly assist me in having the letter prepared for. (See specimen letter for approval of yourself & donors)

Yours sincerely,
John Bell
President



*Chief Constable
Devizes*

That letter indicated that arrangements were to be made to enclose a notice of the meeting with each November pension cheque, stating that a delegation from the Executive Committee would attend to explain the aims and objectives of the Association in the hope that this would lead to the formation of a Wiltshire Branch. (Document 3)

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED POLICE OFFICERS.

40, Stowe Avenue,
Sheffield, 7.

20th November, 1947.

Dear Sir,

With the kind permission of your Chief Constable, a meeting of Wiltshire Police Pensioners will be held in the County Constabulary Headquarters, Devizes, Wilts., at 3.0 p.m. on Monday, 8th December, 1947.

At that meeting the aims and activities of the Association will be explained by a delegation from the Executive Committee and it is hoped that this will lead to the formation of a Wiltshire Branch and so strengthen the Association in her efforts to secure improved pension conditions, particularly in respect of widows and orphans.

Due primarily to the formation of many new County Branches, the number of Branches has been almost doubled during the past two years.

Please make a special effort to attend the meeting which will close early for the convenience of those travelling some distance home.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN BELL,

President.

N.B. If you reside at a distance, one of the following meetings might suit your convenience :-

Wednesday, 3rd December at 3 p.m. Police H.Q., Winchester.
Thursday, 4th December at 6.30 p.m. do. Southampton.
Friday, 5th December, at 3 p.m. Police Station, Newport,
Isle of Wight.

Document 3

Although there is no direct reference on the file, the meeting would appear to have taken place as planned. Things obviously progressed quickly, as there is a letter written on 18th January 1948 by Chas. Townsend, of 97 Netherhampton Road, Salisbury as Honorary Secretary of NARPO in Wiltshire, asking the Chief Constable for details of all pensioners from the Wiltshire Constabulary to enable him to judge what proportion had joined the Association. The reply indicated that there were at that time 210 male pensioners, but there is no indication of the number who had become branch members. (Document 4 - overleaf)

97 Ketterhampton Rd.
 SALISBURY
 18th Jan. 1948.

Lt. Col. Golden
 Chief Constable
 Wiltshire Constabulary
 Devizes.

Dear Sir,

National Association of
 Retired Police Officers.

May I ask you to be good enough,
 on behalf of the above, to furnish me
 with the total number of pensioners
 from the Wilt Constabulary.

The information is required to
 enable us to judge what proportion
 of the total have joined the
 Association.

Thanking you in anticipation
 Yours faithfully
 Chas. Townsend Sec. N.A.R.P.O.

Document 4

Clearly the Wiltshire Branch had at last been formed, and we can place the inauguration date as being between 13th December 1946 and 18th January 1947. So for all practical purposes we can claim that our Branch dates from 1948, and therefore congratulate ourselves that 2008 is our Diamond Jubilee Year.

On 31st May 1950 the President of NARPO wrote to Col. Golden concerning a suggestion that a North Wiltshire Branch might be formed. This idea seemed to lay dormant for some time, but on 8th January 1952 Allen W Hurwood of 15 Headlands Grove, Swindon wrote to the Chief Constable in his capacity of Honorary Secretary of the "newly formed" North Wiltshire Branch thanking the Chief Constable for granting "facilities for assembly" at Swindon, Chippenham and Marlborough. In the letter he states that membership then numbered 27 members of both sexes.

(Document 5 - overleaf)

15 Headlands Grove,
Swindon,
Wilts.

8th January, 1952.

The Chief Constable of Wiltshire,
Chief Constable's Office,
Devizes.

Dear Sir,

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION RETIRED POLICE OFFICERS

At the last meeting of the newly formed branch of the above association, held at Old Town Police Station, it was proposed and carried unanimously, that appreciation of your kindness in granting facilities for assembly at Swindon, Chippenham and Marlborough be recorded, and it is my pleasure therefore, in addressing this letter of thanks to you on behalf of all concerned.

It will interest you to hear that our growing membership now numbers twenty-seven, of both sexes. Renewing associations with old acquaintances in old haunts, has a sentimental value which is gratifying, of which I wish you to be aware.

Yours faithfully,



Hon. Secretary.

Document 5

By 30th April 1953 the secretaryship of the North Wiltshire Branch had passed to ex-Sergeant Ernest Stokes of 31 Dean Street Swindon. On that date he wrote to the Chief Constable following a branch meeting in the Court Room at Old Town Police Station, Swindon held on 26th April 1953. In accordance with a resolution passed at the meeting, he asked Col. Golden to become President of that Branch, an invitation that the Chief Constable subsequently declined. The letter stated that the Branch had achieved a membership of 54 in its first year. As his Wiltshire Branch counterpart had done earlier, Ernest Stokes also requested details of Wiltshire Constabulary pensioners, but for his purposes limited his request to those living "north of a line drawn across from Monkton Farleigh, Potterne, to Ludgershall". (*Documents 6(a) to 6(c) - overleaf*)

31, Dean Street,
Swindon, Wilts.
30th April, 1953.

N.A.R.P.O.
North Wilts Branch.

Dear Sir,

At a Branch meeting of the above Association, held at The Court Room, Old Town Police Station, Swindon, on 26th inst. a resolution was passed instructing me to write asking you, Sir, to become President of our Branch.

We had a membership of 54 last year in our first year, and we are hoping to increase it this year, but owing to the scattered area which we cover, it is difficult to entice members to come along to the meetings.

It is now felt that if we had a prominent figure-head, in your personage, it would be more encouraging to the less enthusiastic members to come along.

We fully appreciate the interest and sympathy already shown by you towards our cause and feel we can still rely on you for your continued interest. We therefore should feel honoured, by your acceptance of the Presidency.

May I also ask of you another favour, which is, to provide me with an up-to-date list of Pensioners (including widows) and their addresses, in the North Wilts area. We have no definite ruling of the line across the centre of the County, but according to the addresses of some members belonging to this Branch, I would suggest, all addresses north of a line drawn across from Monkton Farleigh, Potterne to Ludgershall.

Thanking you in anticipation
I am, Sir,
Yours respectfully,
Ernest Stokes (Ex-Sergt)
Hon. Secretary.

Lt. Col. H. A. Golden, M.B.E.,
Chief Constable of Wiltshire,
Chief Constable's Office,
Devizes, Wilts.

Document 6(c)

This is the last dated correspondence on the file held at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, but that file also includes a leaflet about a "Membership Increase Campaign" taking place during 1953, *(Documents 7a to 7d)* and a card headed "National Association of Retired Police Officers" which was to be displayed in all Parade Rooms advising officers that "this station is within the area of the Wiltshire Branch". *(Document 8)*

There is also evidence of attempts to identify and recruit pensioners resident in Wiltshire who had retired from other Forces.

NATIONAL
OF RETIRED



ASSOCIATION
POLICE OFFICERS

MOST IMPORTANT

Sir or Madam,

MEMBERSHIP INCREASE CAMPAIGN

At the present time over 23,000 men and 5,000 women are members of our Association, and this growth in recent years is due in a large measure to a wide recognition of the splendid work wrought for them by our organisation.

The Association exists to secure improved pension conditions and to safeguard police pensioners' interests generally. In many Branches there is a strong social section.

The history of the Association, extending over 30 years, is one of frequent, persistent and sustained effort on behalf of police pensioners and police widows. It includes representations to Government Departments, deputations to the Home Secretary, the giving of evidence before Government Committees, and correspondence and interviews with Members of Parliament, besides the 'lobbying' of Members at the House of Commons. Valuable assistance in connection with pensioners' problems has been given to members of the Association by the General Secretary and Branch Secretaries.

Directions as to the policy of the Association are given to the National Executive Committee by the Council, which meets annually, and consists of officers of the Association, the National Executive Committee and the delegates from Branches. The Executive Committee meets four times a year. The "Bulletin" published quarterly gives up-to-date and authoritative news.

Close co-operation is maintained with our kindred organisation—The Retired Police Officers' Association (Scotland)—also with other Associations with pensioners' interests. Following the traditions of the Police Service, the Association is non-political in character, and we receive valuable help from Chief Constables and their Executive Officers.

At the time of the passing of the Police Pensions Act, 1948, much success attended our efforts to secure improvements on behalf of our widows and orphans; and non-members in common with our members benefited as a result of our representations. More recently the Association was very active when the Pensions (Increase) Act, 1952 and the Police Pensions Regulations, 1952 were before Parliament.

Those of us who were serving in 1921 thought that the pensions awarded by the Desborough Report were going to be adequate for our time; but how wrong we were.

Since the "Oaksey" and the "Eve" Reports were published pensions have fallen in value, and are still falling. Can you afford to ignore this? Your duty to yourself and to your dependants should prompt you to join the Association without delay.

Our aim is that every police pensioner should be a member, for the larger our membership the greater will be the influence of the Association. Whenever a deputation is received by a Minister of State, invariably there arises the enquiry as to how many pensioners the Association represents.

Those who are about to retire on pension from the Police Service are urged to join the Association immediately after retirement.

The Association has never admitted failure (a) to obtain an amendment of the Police Pensions Regulations, so that police widows whose husbands died before the 5th July, 1948, should receive the pension payable had their husbands died after that date; or (b) to obtain the re-assessment of all police pensions so as to conform to present day values.

A pleasing feature of the Association's progress is the number of women members. Every police widow and each wife should be a member; in regard to widows' pensions their practical experience would be invaluable. There are police widow members of the National Executive Committee and their assistance is very much appreciated. In a large number of our Branches women are active members of the Branch Committee.

As England and Wales are covered by a network of 153 Branches, you can join in whatever district you reside irrespective of the Force from which you retired. The name and address of the nearest Branch Secretary can be obtained from your local Police Station. Please complete the form attached and forward it to him without delay. Your ability and experience will greatly strengthen us in our endeavours.

All the officials of the Association, with the exception of the General Secretary, give their time and energy without any remuneration.

The Annual Subscription of 2/6 each for pensioners and their wives, and 2/- for widows, is about one half-penny per week.

ENROL NOW and if you are married ENROL YOUR WIFE

Yours faithfully,

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**ENROL
Now.
Recruit
Others
Locally !**

**NARPO
Assists
Retired
Police
Officers**

**THEIR WIDOWS
AND THEIR
DEPENDANTS !**

YOUR CLEAR DUTY IS TO :

- 1 JOIN YOUR LOCAL BRANCH NOW.**
- 2 PERSUADE YOUR FELLOW PENSIONERS
TO ENROL.**
- 3 READ THE QUARTERLY BULLETIN.**

General Secretary—Mr. F. J. MARTIN,

"Yennacott,"

Dousland,

and: Head Office, National Association of Retired Police Officers,
Mr. Yelverton, S. Devon

URGENT



Join now by completing this Enrolment Form. It may be used by a husband and wife, the full name of the latter being written underneath the full name of her husband.

Please enrol me as a member of the National Association of Retired Police Officers.

Name * Police Pensioner
(in full) * Pensioner's Wife
..... * Police Widow
..... * Police (Woman)
Pensioner

Address

Force from which pensioned
(Name, and whether County, City or Borough)

* Please delete lines inapplicable

To

Hqn. Secretary Branch N.A.R.P.O.

Subscription enclosed.

Please note : If you are already a member, please hand this Form to a friend and secure his or her enrolment.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED POLICE OFFICERS

This Station is Within the Area of
The **WILTSHIRE** *Branch*

WHOSE SECRETARY C. Townsend,

RESIDES AT 97, Netherhampton Road,
Salisbury, Wiltshire

And from whom all particulars as to Membership can be obtained.

Document 8

We have no historical information from the end of that file in 1953 until the commencement in 1974 of records still held at our Branch Office, but obviously there was an amalgamation of the Wiltshire and North Wiltshire Branches during the mid 1950's or early 1960's and we know that by the mid 1960's they had merged into a single Wiltshire Branch serving the whole County.

From that time the Branch held two formal meetings a year, usually at Police Headquarters. The Annual General Meeting was held in the Spring and a half-yearly meeting took place in the Autumn. This pattern continued until 2001, when a half-yearly meeting had been planned for October, but never actually took place and gave way to the start of a programme of informal social evenings. From that time until the present day we have continued to hold our Annual General Meeting in March or April, but have steadily developed a varied and well-supported social programme.

Our records show that the following have served the Wiltshire Branch in the period from 1974 to the present time:

Spring 1974 to Autumn 1981	Chairman	Jack S Tanswell
	Secretary & Treasurer	John M Jones
	(who stood down in October 1981 after 9 years in office)	
Autumn 1981 to Spring 1984	Chairman	Jack S Tanswell
	Secretary & Treasurer	Vic Alstowe
Spring 1984 to Spring 1986	Chairman	Jack S Tanswell
	Vice-Chairman	Des York
	Secretary & Treasurer	Vic Alstowe
Spring 1986 to Spring 1989	Chairman	John M Jones
	Vice-Chairman	Des York
	Secretary & Treasurer	Vic Alstowe
Spring 1989 to Spring 1992	Chairman	Ken Tidy
	Vice-Chairman	Des York
	Secretary & Treasurer	Vic Alstowe

Spring 1992 to Spring 1996	Chairman Vice-Chairman Secretary & Treasurer Assistant Secretary	Ken Tidy Des York Vic Alstowe Peter Conway
Spring 1996 to Spring 1997	Chairman Vice-Chairman Secretary & Treasurer Assistant Secretary	Ken Tidy Des York Vic Alstowe Max Phesse
Spring 1997 to Spring 1999	Chairman Vice-Chairman Secretary & Treasurer Assistant Secretary	Ken Tidy Des York Derek Francis Max Phesse
Spring 1999 to Spring 2003	Chairman Vice-Chairman Secretary & Treasurer Ass't Sec/Treasurer	Max Phesse Steve Higgs Derek Francis Eddie Bush
Spring 2003 to Spring 2005	Chairman Vice-Chairman Secretary & Treasurer Ass't Sec/Treasurer Social Secretary	Max Phesse Mike Mizen Derek Francis Eddie Bush Dave Frampton
Spring 2005 to Spring 2008	Chairman Vice-Chairman Secretary & Treasurer Ass't Sec/Treasurer Social Secretary Ass't Social Secretary	Max Phesse Derek Francis Brian Reed Eddie Bush Dave Frampton Mike Mizen
Spring 2008 to Spring 2009	Chairman Vice-Chairman Secretary & Treasurer Deputy Sec/Social Sec Assistant Treasurer Ass't Social Secretary	Max Phesse Derek Francis Brian Reed Dave Frampton Eddie Bush Mike Mizen

In 1975 the Branch Accounts showed an annual turnover of £366. In 2007 our turnover amounted to over £42,000 of which £33,300 related to group holidays and other social events.

Subscriptions in 1975 were 84p per year, with widows paying 12p. For 2008 our annual subscription is £16.08, with widows receiving free membership.

In 1975 we had 181 full members and 7 widows, but by the end of 2007 we had a total of 672 members, comprising 544 full members, 120 widows, 2 Life Members, 3 Associate Members and 3 Additional Members. Our membership continues to grow and, as we approach the final quarter of the year, we have a total membership of 722.

We mark our Diamond Jubilee Year with a celebration dinner at the Bear Hotel, Devizes on Friday 24th October with the Chief Constable, Mr Brian Moore, and his wife Jill as our Guests of Honour.

For the future, our social programme will be developed and improved where possible, but we will also be concentrating our efforts on improving the services we offer locally for our members, particularly with regard to welfare.

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Wiltshire Branch

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BRANCH SECRETARY

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