



RESPONSE

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AMBULANCE SERVICE STAFF NEWSLETTER.

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★ SPECIAL EDITION ★ SPECIAL EDITION ★ SPECIAL EDITION ★

DEVOTION TO DUTY

TWO King's Mill paramedics are to receive the Service's top commendation – the Leach Award – for acting 'above and beyond the call of duty' at the Bilsthorpe Colliery disaster.

Ex-miner Peter Scrimshaw spent 12 hours and Gary Brown 10 hours underground, assisting the hospital medical team.

Dangers

The Leach Award is given to members of the Service who perform their job 'above and beyond the call of duty'.

The pair were nominated by operational liaison officer Jean Cragg who said: "What they did was above

and beyond their duty, as it's normal practice to wait at the pit head. They knew the dangers. They didn't have to go down the pit. But they put their duty to the public first."

Peter, married, with two children, said: "Being an ex-miner I knew the conditions were hazardous and the roof could collapse at any time. But my main concern was for the trapped miners."

The trip underground took almost an hour and included a three mile ride on a conveyor belt and a walk of the same distance.

Gary also married with one daughter, explained: "Temperatures were over 96 degrees and it was extremely cramped, dark and dusty. It will be an honour to receive the award but I consider that all I did was my job."



● ABOVE: From left, paramedics Gary Brown and Peter Scrimshaw.

NEW JOBS CREATED

THE Service has created 13 new jobs.

Eleven on 'front line' accident and emergency and two on the patient transport service.

The costs are being met by two of the largest purchasers of ambulance services.

The extra accident and emergency crews are being funded by Nottingham Health; and the patient transport personnel by Nottingham City Hospital.

Increasing Demand

The new staff are needed because of increasing demand. And all 13 posts have been made possible due to recent contracting agreements. The A&E contract is agreed on a base line of activity and if this is exceeded, more money is paid.

Chief executive Mike Handy said: "There is no clear reason why accident and emergency

demands are increasing year on year. There are more doctors' urgent referrals, but this by no means explains it completely.

"However, the fact is that the workload

for staff has been increasing steadily. Both we and our purchasers recognised that the previous contracts were too rigid. Our staff were being put under ever-increasing pressure, without the funding to relieve it. The new arrangements solve the problem in a way which suits everyone."



Nottingham Health director of purchasing Keith Sykes added: "Built into the contract are financial incentives linked to agreed response times being exceeded.

"We've had a very long association with the Ambulance Service. This contract is a recognition of the mutual trust."

SPECIAL

This is a Special Edition of your paper. We've produced it to let you know quickly about various important developments in your Service. We know Response is well read and it will continue to be a very important channel of communication between us.

WILFORD STATION UPDATE – SEE CENTRE SPREAD

PERSONAL RADIOS TO HELP SECURITY

CREWS are to be issued with personal radios.

That's one of the aims of the major proposed radio replacement project. And it's an acknowledgement of the increasing potential threat to crews' personal safety.

It will mean that crew members separated in threatening situations will be able individually to contact Control or each other.

Approved

Radio replacement will mean a complete replacement of control equipment, vehicle radios, personal radios and enhancement of base station aerial sites throughout the county.

A business case for the project has been approved in principle by the NHS executive outpost for the region. Although it has not yet been given the formal go-ahead, the Service have been able to proceed with the groundwork, using their own funds.

Chief executive Mike Handy said: "It was only because we had a successful financial year that we are able to fund the first part of this major service improvement ourselves."

Specification

The preparatory work is being done by a top firm of consultants who wrote the national specification for ambulance radio networks.

They will work on drawing up a specification for an invitation to tender. According to Pat Slevin it will mean – "whenever we get the formal go-ahead, we can press on immediately."

The consultants have been asked to ensure close consultation with staff on a wide range of issues including basic questions such as whether personal radios should be clipped to belts or be hand-held.

REACHING THE HEIGHTS



● ABOVE: The only way is up!

BEECHDALE'S 'Over-the-Gang' proved they were a but when they conquer mighty Welsh peak of Snow

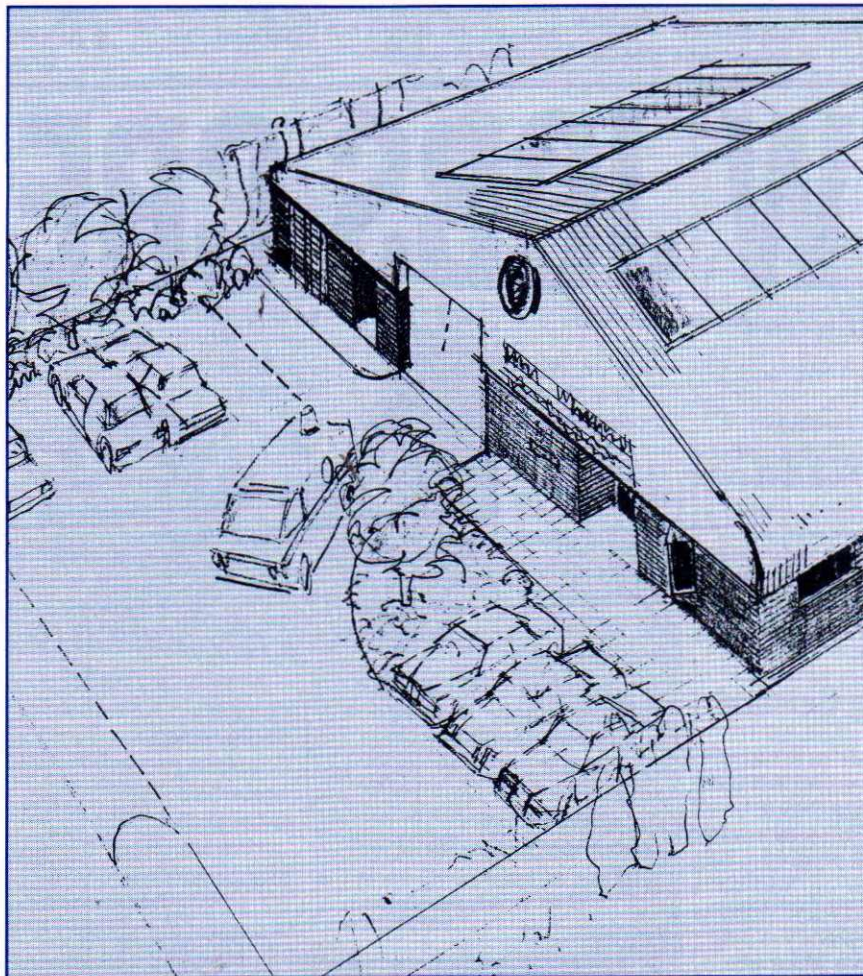
The gang – Bob Arberry, D Steven Peacock, John and Gare Bob Stanesby, Kev Russell, Ian Neil Butler, Graham Sutton, James Taylor – took under three climb 3,095ft carrying an eig training mannequin on a s weighing an additional two stone

Raising Funds

They hope to have raised £ their paraplegic Olympic fund.

On the ground were Dave Butler (don't mention the ba sausages) and Simon Clunie wh

GREEN LIGHT



DETAILED pl started for the of Wilford A Station. It s completed b of this y

THE existing build demolished. The si cleared to allow an imp £390,000 new station to

The 12-week planni followed by an inte building programme.

The new Wilford considerably larger, ir four-bay to a six-bay c Following the ORH co extra staff have already

Model

Staff facilities will be in the Nottinghamshire

Apart from the pop within its immediate Wilford is strategically the closest station to be the M1 motorway and International Airport.

The detailed planni taking place covers no site clearance but al

● ABOVE: An artists impression of Wilford Ambulance Station.

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radio contact with the walkers.

And lending their support all the way to the top were Ann Richards and her son, Gaynor Hawkins and Jane Hands.

Co-ordinator Bob Arberry said: "The conditions were perfect – sunny and warm – but there was thick snow towards the peak."

Cheerful

After the climb the nine – dirty, sweaty, tired, but cheerful – were greeted by Mike Handy and wife Julia who joined them for a meal and jug or two of 'Speckled Hen' in a local ale house.

Bob's final word: "I would like to thank everyone who took part especially Mike Handy, Pat Slevin, Malcolm Hinchley, Gary Spiers and Arthur Jamison for helping to get the venture off the ground."



● ABOVE: 'Peak' performance.
● BELOW: Snowdon.



CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

THERE are some early indications that the revised A&E shift pattern changes are resulting in less disruptions to meal breaks.

The changes – a result of outside consultants' recommendations – followed very close consultation with staff, including 'paid-for' discussion sessions where no management were present.

Fine Tuning

The new shift patterns and other changes were brought in on 11 April and are now undergoing a three month 'shake-down' period which could result in fine-tuning.

Operations director Pat Slevin said: "We had been working to resource patterns set up over 10 years ago. Society has changed a lot in that time – many more nightclubs and population changes south of the Trent.

Better Service

"The recent alterations to our working patterns haven't been universally popular. But we're convinced they will provide an even better service to the public. That, after all is what the Service is about."

NEW A&E VEHICLES

THE Service is investing £380,000 in its 1994 vehicle replacement programme.

Ten new accident and emergency vehicles are being ordered, replacing a sixth of the A&E fleet. The Ford Transit Turbo Diesel 2.5 litre engine vehicles have been chosen for their economy and performance.

Quieter

The vehicles also give improved road holding and are quieter, giving even better patient care.

Final details are being agreed on the patient compartment design specification before tenders are invited. The design includes special storage space for the ever increasing paramedic equipment.

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IT'S A MYSTERY

A 'mystery' patient will be evaluating the service given by Nottinghamshire Ambulance Service and Queen's Medical Centre.

It's a national first, with purchaser and provider joining forces to test their systems – from patient collection right through to the clinical area.

Tick Form

The 'patient' – a member of the Community Health Council - will be given a tick form noting if:

- ★ collection was on time
- ★ the driver called at the house in person
- ★ assistance was offered
- ★ seatbelts were worn
- ★ confidentiality was upheld
- ★ vehicle was tidy etc

Scheme co-ordinator and ambulance liaison officer John Adkin said: "This is a basic quality initiative and is in no way a finger-pointing exercise. It's a simple way to



evaluate our operations from start to finish."

If the pilot scheme is successful then the aim is to send a 'mystery' patient to City, King's Mill and Bassetlaw Hospitals.

★ See July issue for the outcome of the 'mystery' patient survey.

plans for A&E and other cover during the building programme.

Chief executive Mike Handy said: "Population changes have underlined the importance of retaining

both Wilford and West Bridgford south of the river.

"The new station is important in maintaining our service to the public and in upgrading the staff conditions."

BUILDING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

THE Service is considering installing a state-of-the-art computer network which will control energy, security and fire alarms from a central point.

The aim is to save £30,000 a year in energy bills, and it means the system would pay for itself in three years.

Enhanced Security

Traditional keys would go – security would be enhanced using electronic devices such as swipe cards which would secure drug stores and other sensitive areas.

The sophisticated building management system would

automatically adjust internal temperatures in line with those outside and 'close down' rooms not in use.

Since signing the Energy Management 'Declaration of Commitment' last year, the Service is already making an estimated annual saving of £11,000.

Energy manager Philip Winstanley said: "We've managed to make these savings thanks to staff support. We can now re-invest the money in this new system, bringing even greater savings."

The computer would also centralise fire alarm signalling for the entire station network, in the headquarters in Nottingham.

At present individual stations are not

connected to a central control. When they're unattended, they rely on the public reacting to an alarm sounding at the station, and contacting the fire service.

Beechdale control would be alerted, electronically, pinpointing where and when there's a fire. The electronic system would also identify if anyone is on site.

Major Step

Philip said: "This system would be a major step forward to improving our environment both internally and externally. It's a market leader that can be developed and updated for the future."

OUR JOURNEY TO CROATIA

EXPLODING landmines, bombed-out towns and hostile Serbian forces just a few hundred yards away, were just some of the experiences Jean Cragg faced on her mercy mission to Croatia.

Jean – driving an ambulance – was part of a Nottinghamshire Constabulary aid convoy going to the war-torn country.

It took almost three days' solid driving before the party reached Croatia.

Dramatic

Jean said: "The impact of war was dramatically sudden. We drove 50 miles through beautiful Croatian countryside and then suddenly we came to a town which had been completely destroyed."

"The sight was shocking. The church, school, hospital and homes were all wrecked by either tanks or high explosives. There was no one there – it was a ghost town."

Later, at an aid centre, Jean began to appreciate the physical dangers. She explained: "Although the Serbian frontline was only 500 yards away we were told

landmines were more likely to kill us than crossfire and we should stick to the tarmac at all times. Just minutes before we arrived, three Croatian policeman had been blown up."

When Jean finally delivered the ambulance to the hospital at Winkovski the conditions were appalling. She said: "The 400-bed hospital was almost completely wrecked through shelling. It was very sad to see staff working in such shocking conditions."

"Months earlier 80 staff had

been rounded up and shot outside the hospital. This was just one of the atrocities we learned about.

Worthwhile

"Although this donation was a drop in the ocean, the people's gratitude was overwhelming. It made it all worthwhile."

If anyone is interested in a slide show and talk about Jean's trip please contact her at headquarters.



NEW LEGAL EAGLES

THE Service's new solicitors are Evershed, Wells & Hind. They were appointed after a recent market testing exercise.

SERVICING EQUIPMENT

LIFE saving equipment is now being serviced by King's Mill Hospital.

All medical equipment will be checked and maintained regularly by the hospital's Medical Equipment Servicing Unit (MESU) which has BS 5750 accreditation.

'ROBBO' COMPETITION

RESULTS of the 'Robbo' Competition will now appear in the July edition of Response.

EFFICIENT TRANSPORT

OUR purchasers think the Patient Transport Service (PTS) is an efficient organisation with the patients' interests at heart.

This was the very pleasing response which consultants ORH got when asked to include the purchasers in their research on the PTS.

The research has been aimed at devising a monitoring system for better standards and methods of testing the effectiveness of planning, control and liaison.

An action plan has now been formulated to present to the board.