

AUTUMN/WINTER NEWSLETTER 2020

Secretary: Jane Castle

07554014360

ivyjanecastle@aol.com

What a year 2020 has turned out to be. We all will remember this year for our own personal reasons, but I'm sure each and every one of us has been affected in some way or another by Covid 19. First and most important, I hope that you have all remained safe and well during this pandemic. Missed holidays, trips, parties, socials etc all are insignificant when so many people are so desperately poorly and sadly many are dying. I certainly hope that a successful vaccine can be generated quickly so that we can return to some sort of normal, although I'm not sure any of our lives will be the same as 'pre-covid'. We will just have to adapt to a new kind of normal. We continue to support our wonderful NHS and all emergency services during this difficult time. The NHS have worked tirelessly throughout this pandemic and some services are gradually returning to normal which will be a relief to many. As winter approaches and we expect a second spike in Covid 19 cases, do everything you can to stay healthy. In the meantime, try to keep up to date with the current guidelines for the area you live and remember **HANDS, FACE & SPACE**.

MEMBERSHIP

Since our last newsletter, I have been notified of the death of two widow members, Mrs Astle of Mirfield and Mrs Joyce Butler of Dewsbury. Also, I have to report the death of Mr David Walker of Tingley. Unfortunately I have no further details as all these deaths were reported to HQ.

There have been no new members and therefore membership is currently 195, made up as follows:- Full members – 168, widow/er members – 23, life members – 3, Associate members – 1.

NARPO TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance continues to be a minefield. You have to have it but then always worry about the small print when you need it. Not many people are travelling at the moment, but if you are planning a trip, make sure you are not travelling against the advice of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. I have been in touch with the company via email and they do respond in a couple of days and have been quite helpful. More information in relation to this is available on the Narpo website.

WASPI WOMEN LOSE PENSION CLAIM AT COURT OF APPEAL

The Court of Appeal has unanimously rejected an appeal by two women against the decision of the High Court in October 2019 that the mechanisms chosen by the government to implement changes which equalised the State Pension Age between men and women over

the period April 2010 to November 2018 and raised the State Pension Age from 65 to 66, 67, or 68 depending on age, did not amount to unlawful discrimination on the grounds of age or sex under either EU law or the Human Rights Convention. The Court of Appeal ruled that it was impossible to say that the government's decision to strike the balance where it did between the need to put State Pension provision on a sustainable footing and the recognition of the hardship that could result for those affected by the changes was manifestly without reasonable foundation. Despite the sympathy that the appellate judges, like the members of the High Court, felt for the appellants and other women in their position, the Court of Appeal was satisfied that this was not a case where the court could interfere with the decisions taken through the parliamentary process. Lawyers for the appellants, Julie Delve and Karen Glynn, had argued that the economic burden should have been shifted onto younger women who faced less social discrimination in the workplace and were likely to earn more and have better opportunities over the course of their careers. But the Court of Appeal said rising life expectancy and the growing ratio of retirees to workers meant the government had to act urgently. As regards whether there was any legal obligation on the government to notify people of the change to their pension age, the Court of Appeal held that in any event the High Court was entitled to conclude on the evidence that the publicity campaign implemented by the DWP had been adequate and reasonable. In addition, the application for judicial review had been made substantially out of time and the long delay in bringing the proceedings would have precluded the grant of any remedy even if the grounds of challenge had been made out.

SPRING LUNCHEON 2020

In our last newsletter I said that Martin would reimburse members who had paid for the Spring Lunch which had to be cancelled at the next meeting. We now face a dilemma as we have no idea when the next meeting will be, possibly our AGM next March. If you require reimbursing before then, please contact Martin directly on 07802 725231.

CORRESPONDENCE

Back in June I received a letter from our life member Bill Vivian. With his permission it is reproduced for our members

"Thank you for your recent newsletter which has prompted me to write. Although in normal circumstances my wife Pat and I are no longer able to attend meetings, due to old age etc. which entailed a return journey of over 100 miles from our home in East Yorkshire, I still have a keen interest in the affairs of Dewsbury Branch. I am regularly in contact with Malcolm who was Secretary when I was Chairman, with David Harrison as Treasurer; Malcolm keeps me up to date with what's going on. I was particularly interested to read about your new members, Colin, Alan, Ian, Keith and John who all served in the Division whilst I was at Dewsbury back in the 70's and 80's. Seems a long time ago now but happy memories of those days. They were all good lads and it's great to know that they are still OK and wanting to be involved with other ex-colleagues through NARPO. Please give our regards to all members of the Branch and let's hope that we all keep clear of Covid 19 and thank you for all your work in keeping the Branch going. With Best Wishes to all, Regards, Bill Vivian.

Thank you Bill for your kind words which I'm sure our members will enjoy reading.

KEEPING US UPDATED

Please remember to notify NARPO of any changes in your circumstances, address, telephone and emails etc. We aim to help as much as we can. The Dewsbury Narpo WhatsApp group seems to be working well. If you would like your number to be added to this group, please text Martin on 07802 72523.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

There will be no Christmas Lunch this year. It is impossible to plan such an event within the current guidelines and as most of our attendees are of mature years, it's not a viable event.

MEETINGS

As you are all mostly aware, our September meeting was cancelled. The December meeting is also cancelled. At this moment in time, it looks likely that the next time we will meet as a group will be the AGM in March 2021.

This brings me to the unfortunate news that I am resigning from the position of Secretary of the branch. My personal circumstances have changed and attending meetings is now extremely difficult for me. The only meeting I could attend would be December each year and although the role isn't onerous, it does require a secretary who can at least attend the AGM and be able to process new member requests, forward information, etc. I therefore ask you all to consider if you could take on the role of secretary with immediate effect. I am happy to continue processing any new member requests until the end of December, but after then I will be unavailable. I am happy to pass on all paperwork, documents to the new Secretary and can give some training in the role (not much needed). The role can be as relaxing or demanding as you wish to make it and I urge you to consider this. Martin Lynn, deputy Secretary is happy to continue to assist but is unable to take on the full role. If you feel willing and able to fill this position, please contact me ASAP on the above telephone number.

My personal thanks to you all for supporting me in this role since I took over from Kath Bainbridge-Keith as secretary in 2014, but especially to Paul Howgate (Chairman), Dave Harrison (ex-treasurer) and Martin Lynn for their help and guidance. I do hope to attend some meetings in the future and I'll see you there. Bye for now, Jane

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING Tuesday 9th March 2021 at 7.30pm Mirfield Constitutional Club
This will be the AGM**