



DECEMBER 2018

# INFORMATIVE

➤ The quarterly bulletin of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service



## FIREFIGHTERS AIMING FOR A CHRISTMAS HIT

with charity single

## WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

staff took part in remembrance events

## AWARDS CEREMONY

celebrates great achievements

# WE WILL REMEMBER THEM



**Members of staff from across the Service, joined by some of the Fire Cadets, took part in Remembrance Day events throughout the region in November to commemorate 100 years since the end of the First World War and to pay tribute to those who died.**

Jody McEarchern, Locality Manager, was chosen to represent the Service at the Cenotaph in London and marched along with other firefighters and officers representing all of the 44 fire and rescue services of the United Kingdom.

In the run up to Remembrance Sunday staff supported the 'There but not There' campaign by posing with clear Perspex Tommy silhouettes.



# INNOVATIVE JOINT COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE CELEBRATES TEN YEARS

**The Joint Communications Centre celebrated its tenth anniversary since North Wales Police and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service set up the first of a kind control room together at St Asaph in October 2008.**

Police officers and staff moved into the purpose built 'Crud y Dderwen' centre at St Asaph Business Park in 2006 and were joined two years later by colleagues from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

The bilingual communications centre is designed to support critical incidents in the region as well as to provide key links to the strong network of police and fire officers across North Wales.

Chief Fire Officer Simon Smith said:

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*“Adopting a Joint Communications Centre represented an innovative approach to joint emergency service working, placing North Wales at the very forefront of 999 operations – an innovation which has since been followed by others.”*

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“Working together collaboratively on one open plan operations floor has successfully provided us with greater resilience and enabled us to communicate more closely – and time and again over the last ten years has provided real time benefits for both organisations. As time has moved on so has the technology we have adopted in the centre, ensuring that we continue to respond to incidents as effectively and efficiently as possible across North Wales.”

Chief Constable Gareth Pritchard, who has since retired from the force, said; “Over the years this collaborative way of working with our fire service colleagues has proved invaluable in dealing efficiently and effectively with the wide range of incidents both organisations have to face together, such as road traffic collisions, arson, rescue operations and major incidents.

“There have been many technological developments and improvements in partnership working with other agencies since 2008, but the JCC remains at the hub of emergency service response in North Wales.”



# AWARDS CEREMONY CELEBRATES ACHIEVEMENTS

The annual awards ceremony is one of the highlights of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service calendar and this year's celebration of achievements at Rhyl Community Fire Station in September was no exception.

The event brings people together in order to recognise and celebrate members of staff and the community who have worked hard to improve community safety in North Wales.

Eight Community Awards were presented by Chief Fire Officer Simon Smith, and Councillor Peter Lewis, Deputy Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority.

This year's winners were;

## STATION OF THE YEAR AWARD

This award reflects outstanding work carried out by a fire station during the last 12 months, as recognised by the Professional and Service Standards department.

This year, **Holyhead Fire Station** took the accolade, where staff have continued to maintain a high standard throughout a transitional period involving a change of management and the introduction of a number of new staff.

## THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNER AWARD

This award recognises the work of partner agencies or public bodies who work in partnership with the Service in the quest to deliver vital community safety messages.

**Bangor University staff** were triumphant this year, where the management team has been working with the Service to reduce an unnecessary waste of resources.

The reduction in calls to the fire service to less than a third of previous levels has resulted in Bangor University now being one of the best universities in the country in relation to the low number of fire alarm activations.



As part of the work to raise awareness for young people a liaison group has developed an on line fire safety resource that all students must complete before they are allowed to move in to the halls of residence.

## OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION BY AN INDIVIDUAL AWARD

This award recognises a member of staff who regularly works above and beyond their normal duties.

**Jim Hughes**, Gwynedd and Môn Compliance Officer based in Caernarfon, won this accolade in recognition of the way in which he carries out his role with diligence and professionalism.

Jim has spent much of his career working in health and safety and is always willing to share his knowledge with business owners. He visits business owners or operators outside normal working hours so as not to disrupt their business operations.

Jim also assists the Service by delivering Safe and Well Checks and Fire Awareness Child Education and has represented the Fire Fighters Charity within the Service for the past few years, helping to raise thousands of pounds towards this worthy cause.

## THE DEDICATION TO SERVICE AWARD

Firefighter **Neville Ellis** received this award in recognition of his excellent commitment to the Service, demonstrated by his extended service as a member of the retained duty system for over 33 years.

Neville joined the Service in March 1985 and has served his entire career at Dolgellau Fire Station.

## COMMITMENT TO THE WELSH LANGUAGE AWARD

This award recognises a valuable contribution to the Welsh language, or a particular commitment and determination towards learning Welsh over the past 12 months.

It was **Simon Bromley**, a member of the Operations Department in Rhyl, who was chosen as the winner this year. Having recently taken part in a media training course for Welsh speakers Simon has undertaken numerous radio and television interviews through the medium of Welsh, ensuring vital fire safety messages are heard and demonstrating a real commitment to the Welsh language.

## CHARITY AWARD

This award goes to an individual or team who has worked hard to raise money for a charity.

Nefyn firefighter **Dylan Morris**, together with his wife **Sian**, organised a group of 45 cyclists to ride from Caernarfon to Arrow Park Hospital on the Wirral in June to raise money in memory of their young son Tomos who sadly passed away when born prematurely.

Dylan and Sian had spent many weeks at Arrow Park, staying at the Mac House, and this was their way of thanking the staff for all the support they received during this difficult time.

During one of the most challenging and difficult times in their lives, they raised over £30,000 that will make a real and lasting difference to other families.

## HEALTH CHAMPIONS AWARD

The Service has long since recognised the link between healthy employees and an efficient, productive workforce. Staff are encouraged to maintain their fitness to ensure their safety and the safety of others in the community.

This is an award which goes to an individual or team who has worked hard to raise the profile, or be exemplars of health and fitness.

This year **Keith Williams**, Watch Manager at Caernarfon Fire Station and a Driving Instructor in the Training and Development Department, was named as Health Champion.

Not only does Keith work very hard to maintain his own level of fitness but he also encourages his colleagues to do the same. He has established a regular walking club, whereby once a month, he encourages staff to take part in planned walking activities, to appreciate and take advantage of the beautiful North Wales countryside.

## YOUNG PERSON OF THE YEAR

This year saw four young people winning in this category, recognised for demonstrating their commitment to the Service.

Flintshire and Wrexham Business Fire Safety Apprentice **Laura Roberts** is part of a new apprenticeship scheme that seeks to provide Business Fire Safety officers for the future.

In her short time since joining the Service earlier this year, Laura has undertaken a variety of training and development sessions and has an ability to absorb and digest information quickly, resulting in her becoming a great asset to the business fire safety team.

**Calum Winstanley** and his twin stepbrothers, **Callum** and **Corey Rayner**, had just finished a football event on a Saturday in August and were walking along Rhyl promenade with a 12-year-old friend when they heard frantic screams coming from the sea.

They saw two girls waving and shouting for help some distance from the shore. Recognising the danger instantly due to their young firefighter cadet training, they flagged down a lifeguard. They then ran to the lifeguard station to call for reinforcements, sparking a rescue which involved volunteers from Rhyl RNLI and Rhyl Coastguard Rescue Team.



## LONG SERVICE AND GOOD CONDUCT MEDALS

During the ceremony, six members of staff were presented with Long Service and Good Conduct Medals by the Lord Lieutenant of Clwyd, Mr Edmund Seymour Bailey.

This medal is awarded to firefighters by Her Majesty's Representative in recognition of 20 years service.

The medal recipients this year were;

**Mark Jat**  
**Brian Lewis**  
**Louise O'Meara**  
**Alex Roberts**  
**Emma Langford-Hughes**  
**Andrew Williams**

Peter Lewis, Deputy Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority, presented the Loyal Service award to **Simon Smith**, Chief Fire Officer, and **Rikki Hawarden**, Watch Manager Ruthin and Maintenance Assistant, who both successfully completed forty years of exemplary service.

# BONFIRE DISPLAYS

# GO OFF WITH A

# BANG!

Staff from across the Service worked in partnership with North Wales Police to support the annual BANG campaign over the Halloween and bonfire period.

The 'Be A Nice Guy' campaign is aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour and making North Wales a safe place at this time of year.

The Service funded a number of diversionary activities across North Wales, as well as supporting the work of firefighters to arrange or assist at organised bonfire displays throughout the region.

Justin Evans, Head of Community Safety, said: "Safety at this time of year is the responsibility of us all. We cannot over emphasise that the best way to reduce the number of injuries during bonfire celebrations is by attending organised events. They are the safest type of displays, have the best facilities and offer the best value for money.

*"Bonfire celebrations increase anxiety for senior citizens and pet owners, so attending community events helps reduce this distress. I am pleased that we were able to support so many local events."*

Staff also attended the 'Spooktacular' event hosted by North Wales Police. This was the first time the police held this event and hundreds of youngsters came along dressed up in Halloween costume to learn about safety at this time of year.



# FIREFIGHTERS AIM FOR CHRISTMAS HIT WITH CHARITY SINGLE



**Three members of North Wales Fire and Rescue staff are part of the Fire Tones choir set up with the aim of producing a Christmas charity single.**

Paul Scott, Head of Business Fire Safety, along with Bethan Jones and Gwenan Hughes, Firefighters Control, joined other fire and rescue service staff from across the UK at a recording studio in Birmingham to produce the 'Do They Know It's Christmas?' track.

The charity single is headed up by staff from Welshpool Fire Station, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, to help raise funds for The Fire Fighters Charity and Band Aid Trust.

Chris Birdsell, a firefighter from Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, who came up with the idea, explains: "We wanted to release our version of the No.1 song 'Do They Know It's Christmas' in a bid to get into the Christmas music chart's top 10.

"We succeeded in gaining permission to cover the song from the Band Aid (FEED THE WORLD TRUST), and copywriters Warner Chappell Music, along with support from record label Universal Music.

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*"We agreed a 50/50 split of profits between the Band Aid Trust and The Fire Fighters Charity – which are both amazing and well deserving."*

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The choir won't know if they have achieved their aim until Sunday 23rd December when the Christmas Chart will be announced.

**To find out how to support the choir please follow @Thefiretones999.**



# STUDENTS TOP OF THE CLASS FOR FIRE SAFETY



## Fire and rescue service staff have been targeting students during September as part of a campaign to educate about fire safety.

Representatives visited Freshers Fairs at both Bangor and Glyndŵr universities where students took part in a short safety quiz in return for a free set of headphones promoting how to safely charge mobile phones.

The Service is also working with staff from both universities to further educate about fire safety and drive down false alarms, as well as targeting potentially vulnerable students in private rented accommodation.

Gwyn Jones, Community Safety Manger for Gwynedd and Anglesey, said: “The Freshers Fairs were extremely busy and we spoke to hundreds of students about the importance of fire safety, sharing our tips to keep them safe.

“We’ve also been giving advice on how to avoid false alarms at the halls of residence – in fact we have been working in partnership with both universities on this issue for a number of years and have seen considerable progress.

“Many of these young people are living away from home and their parents for the first time and are potentially very vulnerable.

“Our messages were promoted on social media, encouraging students to like and share our Facebook posts and to follow us on Twitter and Instagram for even more fire safety advice.

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***“We will continue to work with staff at the universities throughout the year to promote fire safety at various events at their sites.”***

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# ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISION EXERCISE IMPROVES UNDERSTANDING

**Fire crews joined with paramedics, technicians and doctors for a realistic road traffic collision exercise in September.**

Graham Woodyatt, Crew Manager at Llandudno Fire Station, explained: "Outreach Medic Rescue Skills provides bespoke clinical education training, from first aid right up to advanced paramedics, as well as in specialist rescues to the emergency services.

"The exercise scenario consisted of two cars with live actors playing 'casualties' who had sustained injuries, and a training dummy whose condition could be controlled remotely using an iPad.

"It allowed the crews to experience working alongside paramedics in a simulated hazardous environment and to collaborate closely to extract the patients from the vehicles. There was nothing but positive feedback from the crews involved and also all those attending from Outreach Medic Rescue Skills."

Graham Owen, Quality and Events Manager at Outreach Medic Rescue Skills, added: "We believe the best kind of training is the realistic kind.

"This joint exercise gave our clinicians an opportunity to experience working alongside colleagues from the fire and rescue service to provide the best level of care in challenging environments such as at road traffic collisions.

*"Both parties worked side by side, improving interoperability and understanding of roles and responsibilities, command structures and processes involved during such an event."*



# SUMMER EVENTS WINNER ANNOUNCED

**Visitors to the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service stand at the summer events were given the opportunity to take part in our smoke alarm safety competition as part of the on-going campaign to highlight the importance of having and maintaining a working smoke alarm.**

Robat Roberts from Gwynedd won the competition and visited a fire station with his sisters to be presented with a Fitbit watch as his prize.

