BIRMINGHAM BRANCH
AUTUMN 2026 NEWSLETTER

Robert (Bob)Faulkner (1951 – 2026)

The sudden death of Bob Faulkner, the long-standing Chairman of the Birmingham Branch of NARPO has left all of us who had the privilege of knowing him with a deep sense of loss. Bob was 75 years old, but he was still very much a young man. Elsewhere people will comment on his remarkable Police career, that saw him become one of the essential components of the Force Firearms Department. On retirement he continued his firearms involvement with the Force as a senior member of their Inspection and Licensing Department. He also became quickly became a member of the NARPO Birmingham Branch Committee, being elected Chairman of the Branch Committee in 2016, a position he held until his untimely death. Bob was very much a one-off in how he tackled the Chairman's role and he always acknowledged the debt he owed Maureen, his wife, who supported him in every aspect. She really is the embodiment of 'behind every successful man'! He simply never missed a meeting. He instigated a whole new Social Sub-Committee and set about bringing some new initiatives to that role. A whole series of annual visits across the country were organised and he and Maureen were always in attendance. The same commitment applied to Branch social events which continued to grow under his leadership. For years he attended every pre-retirement course and signed up hundreds of new NARPO members. Latterly he attended every Force Presentation evening with the NARPO 'stand' and encouraged all those officers about to retire, to join NARPO. He helped instigate the now well-established Branch Memorial Service and took great pride in reading the names of the departed. He attended almost every annual NARPO Conference and if Birmingham had submitted a Conference motion, he was always prepared to speak on behalf of the membership. His workload was extraordinary, and at the time of life when most people are beginning to slow down, Bob was always prepared to take on additional responsibility. Up until his death he had for many years been the Chairman of the No 3 Region of NARPO. The Branch had been proud to award Bob the most prestigious accolade that NARPO can bestow on any of its members; that of Life Membership.

While his NARPO achievements were remarkable and almost without precedent, he forged a bond with the wider membership and was universally held in respect and affection. He was loved by all those who new him and we hope he fully understood what he meant to so many people. His death is not that of some remote figure but the loss of someone regarded as a friend who went out of his way to touch their lives by what he did for NARPO. For the next few weeks NARPO will be awash with tributes, but for Maureen and the rest of the family, who loved him most dearly, we hope they will gain some solace from all that he achieved. He is simply irreplaceable and we will not see his like again. It was a life well lived.

Branch Updates.

The last few months have been exceptionally busy for the branch, with committee changes, ongoing NARPO work and the usual balance of family and working life. Ken's departure has meant a period of adjustment for the Executive team, and we have taken the opportunity to review how a number of branch processes are managed. Jean will until the AGM 2027 fulfil the role of Branch Chair.

Those members who have an interest in joining the committee are invited to speak to a member of the committee. For future development of the branch, the branch is keen to see members who have recently left the Police Service join.

The Bath trip was attended by 19 members and guests. Those that went had an enjoyable day in the sun.

The memorial service to remember 54 of our members, spouses, partners widows(ers) was attended by 50 members, families and guests with the service conducted by Rev Philip Rogerson, Lead Chaplin for North Yorkshire Police, with attendance by ACC Mike O'Hara and Federation Deputy Secretary Matthew Manwaring.

We must congratulate Danny Knight for completing the Ironman, Wales race, raising just over £19,300 (plus over £3000 in gift aid) for MNDA. The money raised will be used to support families facing what Danny and his family had to face and the research. His father, Stephen Knight (RIP) would have been extremely proud of his achievement.

With Christmas creeping up on us the committee wish you and your families an enjoyable festive season.

Financial Update. (David Jeans Temporary Treasurer)

The Branch accounts are based upon the calendar year, and after audit, are presented to the Annual General Meeting in April each year at which members can raise any questions. This year, the Branch Committee decided that the Branch membership should have an opportunity for an advance sight of its planned 2027 budget and which is copied below. (The Branch presentation now closely matches the NARPO HQ presentation of accounts at the annual conference.)

To assist appreciation of the nature of our expenditure, the categories of spend have been modified from previous reports, and % spend figures have been added.

One result of our modified strategic financial planning relates to the 2027 Branch diary which will be distributed later this year, but which the Committee has decided to withdraw in 2028. Around 15% of the annual Branch budget has been spent on its production and postage in recent years, and with the growing use of calendars on mobile phones and other devices, the increasing cost of postage and the fact that much of the Branch information is out of date by the time the diary is distributed, we feel it is appropriate to make the change. In future, we will provide relevant Branch information re contact numbers, and Committee membership etc. via our Branch Newsletters.

Our prize draw fund has been doubled to £300, £200 & 5 x £100 prizes, quarterly. We are looking at other ways of providing greater benefits for our members.

The presentation of our finances can be found in the attached document. Any comments, queries or suggestions for improvement please contact David Jeans via email birmingham2@narpo.org.

Rise in Police and State Pensions – April 2027

Subject to a Parliamentary Order in January/February, police pensions will rise by 3.5% in April 2027. State pensions will rise by 3.9%.

NARPO's annual subscription will rise to £28.92, (9p a month). The subscription should be deducted from February's police pension payment for those members not paying direct to the Branch.

Welcome to New Members
Charlotte Bailey, Sylvia Ellis, Andy Sharp, Mark Harrison, Donna Nichols, Velma Yapp, Adam Garbett, Isobel Matthews, Steven Fear, Ian Griffiths, Scott Meacham. Barbara Haste, Margaret Atkins

Obituaries
Peter Knight, Mark Owen, Robert Lane, Stephen James Matthews, Leslie Thomas Abrahart, Ralph Alan Pettit. Robert (Bob)Faulkner.

FORTHCOMING BRANCH SOCIAL EVENTS

Coffee Morning: Tuesday 10th November 2026 1030 hours

Drayton Bassett Village Club, Drayton Lane, Drayton Bassett, Tamworth, B78 3TX

Book your place with **birmingham@narpo.org.**

Club is opposite the War Memorial at St. Peters Church. Car Park is opposite the entrance to St Peters Church.

Tea, Coffee and cakes will be provided.

Skittles Event: Monday 23rd November 2026 :1500.

Cancelled due to lack of support.

Cardiff Christmas Market Trip - Saturday 5th December 2026

The Christmas market takes place at St John, Working, Hills and Trinity Streets all within the main shopping pedestrian area. Depart Tally Ho at 8am . Return journey departing Cardiff at 4pm. Cost £10pp

Book via Gill Fisher: **gillfisher@uwclub.net/ 0121 707 8849**

BACS: HSBC: Sort Code 40-11-18: A/N 95734819 (National Association of Retired Police Officers)

Reference: Enter CCM and as much of your last name as possible.

Cheque: Payable to NARPO. Write CARDIFF on reverse and post to 16, Coppice Drive, Acocks Green B27 7Nq

Closing date: Friday 20th November 2026.

Christmas Lunch : Tuesday 1 December 2026; 1230 hours for 1300 hours.

Last Booking Date:- 21st November 2026

Robin Hood Golf Club, St. Bernards Road, B92 7DJ. (Entrance on same road as Langley Junior School).

Menu

Starters

Chef's homemade Carrot and Coriander /Soup (v), topped with croutons/ Venison & Beef Shin Terrine with Red Onion Chutney /Cheese Souffle

Mains

Traditional Roast Turkey with Pigs in Blankets, Sage & Onion Seasoning with Rich Pan Gravy/Scottish Trout with Shrimp & Caper Butter/Chianti Braised Beef.
All mains served with Chateaux Potatoes, Honey Glazed Parsnips, Carrots & Sprouts

Desserts

Cherry Almond & Cognac Christmas Pudding with Brandy Sauce/Chocolate Christmas Tree with layers of Biscuits/Dark & White Chocolate Mousse /Gingerbread Cheesecake. Selection of Seasonal Ice.s

Coffee/Tea and Minced Pies.

Vegetarian, Vegan & Gluten Free options available. Cost: £25pp.

Payment by BACS transfer to:

HSBC Sort Code: 40 11 18 : Account: National Association of Retired Police Officers

Account Number: 95734819 Reference: 'CL' and as much of your surname as possible.

Cheques payable to NARPO and write Christmas Lunch on reverse and send to: Roz Race 26 Austin Close, Acocks Green, Birmingham B27 6SQ.

Any queries Telephone 07914-385555 or email rozrace@gmail.com

All names of those attending, with their Meal choices should be sent via email or by post. A contact number, email address and any special dietary requirements are required.

Christmas Buffet: Thursday 17th December 2026: 1230 for 1300 hrs

Sutton Coldfield Golf Club, B74 3ER.

An informal Buffet (Christmas jumpers are welcome) with a free raffle. Cost : £10.00 per person. A free Raffle will take place. **Last Booking Date:- 8th December 2026**

Payment by BACS transfer to:

HSBC Sort Code: 40 11 18 Account: National Association of Retired Police Officers

Account Number: 95734819 Reference: 'SC' and as much of your surname as possible.

Cheques payable to NARPO and write "Sutton Coldfield" on reverse and send to: Roz Race 26 Austin Close, Acocks Green. Birmingham B27 6SQ. Please provide all names of those attending. A contact number, email address and any special dietary requirements that are required.

Any queries contact 07914 385555 or email: rozrace@gmail.com

Events 2027

AGM & Social afternoon. (Buffet provided): Saturday 10 April 2027 1200 hrs
Summer Lunch: Saturday 19 June 2017: 12 noon
Annual Conference: Friday 10 September 2027: Blackpool
Memorial Service Saturday 30 October 2027 1200 hrs
Christmas Lunch Tuesday 7 December 2027 1300hrs (Sutton Coldfield Golf Club)

Further details of the events will be added to the branch website and Facebook page.

Non Branch Events

Annual Reunion: Walsall FC from 1200-1600 on Tuesday 13th April 2027. Arranged by Dennis Dixon.

To reserve a place a deposit of £10 is required. Contact den.dixon@btinternet.com or 07710689868. Optional buffet is available £17 per head. Surplus funds will be donated to the Benevolent Fund

Police Care UK Carol Concert: Tuesday 24th November, 2026 @7.30pm

Christ Church, Jubilee Square, Woking GU21 6YG. An evening of traditional carols, readings, mince pies and mulled wine. Book your place at www.policecare.org.uk.

Whisky, Tango Froxtrot. (Comedy)

Former Dudley Steelworker, Union shop steward, 30-year police veteran and comedian, Jack Bryan is, once again, taking audiences behind the Thin Blue Line with his critically acclaimed, tragi-comedy, solo show

Stourbridge Town Hall, 7.30pm on 27th November 2026. All tickets are £15

The Lantern Theatre, 77 St James St, Brighton, BN2 1PA, 7pm, 19/20/22 November, Tickets £12/£10 concessions.

Don't pay to claim campaign

Claims Management Companies (CMCs) are contacting pensioners, offering to handle claims for benefits like Attendance Allowance or missing Home Responsibilities Protection (HRP), for a fee.

This isn't illegal, but the fees can be several hundred pounds. Some people don't realise they've entered into an agreement until it's too late.

Trusted help is available for free from organisations including Citizens Advice and Independent Age. Visit the campaign site to find out more about how customers are being protected from financial harm and also watch a video on how to apply for Attendance Allowance.

New River Cruising & Escorted Touring Partner

Celebrate the festive season with Travelmarvel this December. Discover some of Europe's most iconic Christmas markets on a river cruise, or travel to Canada for a seasonal escape and Christmas Day amid Banff's stunning scenery.

Christmas Markets on the Danube (https://www.travelmarvel.com)

Route: Nuremburg to Budapest (or reverse) **Price:** From £1,795 per person

Explore Christmas markets along the Danube, soak up the festive atmosphere and enjoy local treats and cultural traditions.

Rhine & Moselle Christmas Markets

Route: Amsterdam to Basel (or reverse) **Price:** From £2,295 per person

Discover beautiful scenery and idyllic Christmas markets along the Rhine and Moselle rivers.

Exclusive NARPO member discount

NARPO members can save 10% on all APT & Travelmarvel trips departing in 2026 and 2027.

- Book by 31 December 2026 and quote **NARPO10**.
- The discount applies to the tour and cruise price only.
- Airfares, port and airport taxes, tipping and sundry items are excluded.

For more information or to book, call the travel experts on **0800 046 7715**.

Employment Opportunities

From time-to-time companies contact the branch with job opportunities. These can be located on the News and jobs sections of our website and Facebook. The latest was for driving opportunities across the UK.

Volunteering: Citizen Advice: Telford and Wrekin

Client Service Volunteers/Disability Benefit Specialist Volunteers

Syer House (Suite 4) Stafford Park1 , Telford. TF3 3BD

Contact either volunteerrecruitment@telfordcab.co.uk or attend a drop-in-session for more information.

Mondays: 12:00–1:00 pm or Fridays: 1:00–3:00 pm

Citizen Advice will be sending more details of the volunteer roles and when received these will be uploaded to our Website and Facebook page.

Remembering our War Heros ' by Anthony Fisher (written by Maggie Pearce, Walsall & Birmingham).

On 28, June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinan, who was heir to the throne of Austria- Hungary, and his wife, Sophie, were assassinated, by Gavrilo Princip, 19 yrs, a Bosnian Serb Student. A consequent of the killing served as an immediate spark that ignited World War 1, which started on 28 July 1914 when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

The Allied powers included the British Empire, French Empire, Russia, Italy and later the USA.

The Central power consisted of Germany, Austria-Hungry, and The Ottoman Empire.

The war was fought primarily through brutal trench warfare on land, a massive naval blockade, and early air combat.

The trench warfare involved soldiers digging 6ft deep trenches, protected by barbwire, and equipped with machine guns. As a result of continuous heavy rain, they were very muddy and smelt of rotting fish, un-washed bodies and chemical fumes caused by mustard/chlorine gas attacks. They were infested with millions of lice and rats that fed on sleeping soldiers.

One, such soldier who fought in the trenches in WW1 was Ladywood's Private 177 Frederick Jukes. He had been a regular soldier serving with the 1st Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment in India (Quetta) originally, having enlisted in October 1903, age 17 ½. On the outbreak of WW1, he re-enlisted serving on the Ypres salient.

In October 1914 he is known to have served with Lt BL. Montgomery.

Between the 24-26 December 1914, it is believed Frederick took part in the now famous Christmas Truce of 1914. During this brief period soldiers from both sides rejoiced in carol singing, playing football, burying the dead, and shaking hands with each other. The truce ended when British soldier opened fire.

It is further believed that on May 3, 1915, Frederick was involved in the Shell Trap Farm attack later to be known as Mouse Trap (Ypres Salient). This was the site of fierce combat and a devastating attack by German soldiers using mustard gas. As a result of this incident, it is known Frederick was admitted to General Hospital Rouen. France, where he was treated for gas poisoning, and gunshot wounds.

In June of that year, he was in Cheltenham hospital, England suffering from a sickness. which was common in the aftermath of a gassing.

Later in November he was back in Rouen Hospital France, with a groin ulcer.

It is believed that although he returned to service in France, he was later discharged from the army on 30 November 1917, it's believed on the grounds that his contract was up. His war records stated he was "A sober, steady, reliable man."

Frederick received a wound badge [reference 466928 similar to that of his great grandsons' collar number mentioned further on] He also received a Pip Squeak and Wilfred medal which were awarded to personnel who served In WW1. He also had additional medals for his time in India. In total Frederick served 5 years 191 days with the Royal Warwickshire's and a further 6 years 275 days in the Army Reserves. He eventually received a war pension on the basis that he had cardiac valve enlargement aggravated by war service. In 1928, his wife Agnus, passed away from consumption, leaving him to bring up four children on his own. Many years later, when Frederick, was asked what he did during the Great War (WW1) by one of his grandchildren, in a firm voice, with one finger raised up said **"WHEN YOU SEE THE LIFE GO OUT OF THEM, ITS NOT A VERY NICE THING TO DO. SO DON'T ASK ME AGAIN"** A once robust man, who stood strong and proud, and who did not suffer fools

gladly before WW1 the pain and trauma of having to take lives of others was visibly etched on his face, and from his body language, it was obvious that he did not want to talk about it.

In contrast he spoke fondly of his time in India. Sadly, Frederick passed away in 1970 in his early eighties. He is now at rest at War-stone Lane, cemetery in the Jeweller Quarter, Birmingham. The claims about Fredericks times in WW1, do not have their roots in hearsay, or stories passed down from generation to generation, but in his battalion war diaries.

Fredericks great grandson, Anthony Fisher who is a retired West Midlands Police officer (collar No 4628) and who had served at Ladywood, Thornhill Road Handsworth, Stoney Stanton Road Coventry, Digbeth and Steelhouse Lane Birmingham City centre, after transferring from the Met, has been researching his family history for the last 26 years. As part of his research into his great granddads' life, he has visited the battlefields, cemeteries, and inside the portfolio he has compiled for his great grandfather. Anthony regularly attends and keeps his great grandad's grave, which he found after his retirement from the force in 2010, in first class condition. He also attends the Hall of Memory Birmingham City Centre on 11th November each year. Last year he wore his grandad's war medals for the first time, and they will be worn again this year. Frederick had a younger brother Alfred who died in service shortly before the end of the war.

RIP PRIVATE 177 FREDERICK JUKES. YOU SERVED YOUR KING AND COUNTRY WITH PRIDE, HONOR AND RESPECT.

Benevolent Fund purchases life enhancing equipment for member

Welcome to our charity's latest update for Birmingham NARPO

Last month we purchased a specialised chair for longstanding member Brian Breakwell. The 80-year-old pensioner served with West Midlands Police for over 25 years until he was forced to medically retire in 1997 following a serious road traffic accident that left him with life-changing injuries.

"At the time of the accident I was on Secondment to London's Anti-Terrorism Unit at New Scotland Yard," recalls Brian.

"I had been there for a while travelling from my home in Sutton Coldfield on a Sunday night then returning home from London the following Friday evening. On the evening of Wednesday 11 December 1996, I received a telephone call from my wife to say that she had been rushed into hospital as a result of a vein blockage. Unable to get a train back to Birmingham that night I caught then next available train the following day and used my wife's car, a Mini Metro, to take me the short distance to visit her in Little Aston Hospital, Sutton Coldfield."

"I stayed with her until she was taken off for surgery and agreed to return the following morning to see her. I left the hospital grounds in the early evening and started to make my way back home. I remember travelling along the Chester Road, passing what was then the Porsche Garage, then I remember waking up in Walsall Manor Hospital ten days later."

Brian had been involved in a head on collision with an 18-year-old driver. The teenager was driving in a convoy with four other vehicles heading out for a works Christmas party. "The lad in the convoy was lying in third position and he was doing his best to keep his place with the other drivers," explains Brain.

"Even to this day, I cannot recall anything about the accident. I just remember waking up all those days later in hospital."

Travelling at speed the teenage lost control of his vehicle, veering towards Brian before colliding head on with the Mini Metro.

Brian suffered a broken spine in a number of places, broken sternum, a number of broken ribs, his right arm, wrist and hand were badly shattered and required surgery to insert plates and screws. He also suffered several internal injuries which involved severe organ bruising, and a badly dislocated right shoulder.

At the age of 51 Brian's life had changed instantly. His career with West Midlands Police was over and he was faced with years of rehabilitation.

"When I was finally discharged from hospital some time into the New Year, I found it extremely difficult," explains Brian.

"I had my family around me but somehow, I found it difficult to cope with the situation I found myself in. Prior to the accident, even at the age of 51, for my age I was incredibly fit and took great pride in that fact. Now, not able to sleep at night, because of the constant discomfort, having to be helped to negotiate the stairs at home each night, I felt absolutely helpless and felt I was an absolute hindrance to my family.

Living with the effects of the accident have been both physically and emotionally challenging for Brian and in recent years his condition has worsened.

"Recently, I found that I just couldn't get out of a chair without my back feeling like it was about to snap due to the unbelievable pain. Then, a chance visit with an old friend, changed all that.

"I remember I was having a pretty rough day that day and each time I got up to use her toilet, she saw the pain I was in. She asked me if I'd mind if she spoke to someone about helping me. I was desperate so I said yes.

"The rest is history."

We were made aware of Brian's situation and immediately agreed to fund a specialised 'rise and fall' chair that is electrically powered to gently lift and tilt to help Brian to stand up.

"I'm using the chair every single day and whether it's because I'm not placing my back under so much stress and pressure, I'm really feeling the benefits. I'm now sleeping for longer periods at night and not in so much pain when I eventually wake up. The difference it has made to my life is just unbelievable.

"I just cannot find the appropriate words to explain to you, just how grateful I am to the Benevolent Fund, for making this possible. I never dreamt that something so serious and life-altering would happen to me which meant I would be benefitting from the assistance of the Benevolent Fund many years later, but it did. They are here for you right through your service and beyond!"

Already this year we have given out almost £100,000 to support our members. As a charity, we rely on the kind support of serving officers and police staff who pay a £2 monthly subscription and retired members who pay just £1. The money goes towards various benefits as well as charitable grants to help those in times of hardship and need.

If you're a member of the Benevolent Fund and you wish to updated your contact details please get in touch. We share regular email updates throughout the year as well as posting updates on our website www.wmpben.co.uk

COMMITTEE

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Executive

Chair and Welfare Advisor — Jean Wachala | Phone: 07884 430399 | Email: jwachala@yahoocom

Branch Secretary and Membership Secretary — Linda Boyle | Phone: 07388 040632 | Email: birmingham@narpo.org

Branch Treasurer (Temporary) — David Jeans | Phone: 07711 547411 | Email: birmingham2@narpo.org

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NARPO HQ
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Password: XPOL1919
Email: hq@narpo.org
Phone: 01924 362166

Insurance

NARPO Travel Insurance
Website: https://csis.co.uk/narpo
Phone: 01622 766960

Health Insurance
Phone: 0800 389 7724

Home, Car and Breakdown Insurance
Phone: 0151 242 7645

Pensions and Financial Services

XPS Pension Enquiries
Phone: 0333 0707920
Email: westmids.police@xpsgroup.com
Website: www.mypension.com/police

Police Credit Union
Email: info@serveandprotectcu.co.uk
Phone: 0121 700 1222

Royal London Group (Previously PMAS)
Website: www.bspokegroup.co.uk
Phone: 0800 032 7781

Welfare, Support and Rehabilitation

Benevolent Fund
Email: info@wmpben.co.uk
Phone: 0121 752 4919

Police Federation
Email: westmidlandspf@polfed.org
Phone: 0121 700 1100

Police Care UK
Website: https://www.policecare.org.uk
Phone: 0300 012 0030

Flint House Rehabilitation Centre
Website: http://www.flinthouse.co.uk

Police Treatment Centre (Harrogate)
Website: https://www.thepolicetreatmentcentres.org



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