



GRAPEVINE

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Autumn 2008

IAWP award winners go down under

**Student officer Sara
is in the spotlight**

**Find out more about
the role of a family
liaison officer**



From the Editor



Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this issue which sees the start of our new column Health Matters. It is being supported by the Wellbeing of Women charity and I would love to hear what you think of it, as well as your suggestions for future topics.

This issue also takes a closer look at the role of Family Liaison Officers and in another double page spread

asks whether changes are needed to the way we investigate rape cases.

Particular thanks go to Jane Townsley who emailed from Australia with photographs and reports from the IAWP conference in Darwin in time to meet our deadline. Look out for more on the workshops and presentations in the winter issue. And of course I mustn't forget to say well done to all the IAWP award winners – especially the four BAWP nominees.

It seems *Grapevine* is a popular read within IAWP circles (see page 4) so remember if you or your force are doing something innovative – share it with colleagues in the UK and across the globe through *Grapevine*.

You can contact me by email or catch up with me at the Autumn PDD on October 13, in Stratford.

Dates for your diary

2008

Autumn Professional Development Day – "Minority in a minority"
– Stratford Holiday Inn. Monday October 13.

2009

Spring Professional Development Day – Theme to be announced.
Stratford Holiday Inn. Wednesday April 22 (awards dinner) and
Thursday April 23 (PDD).

47th Annual IAWP Training Conference – Seattle, USA,
September 20-24.

Autumn Professional Development Day – Theme to be
announced. Stratford Holiday Inn. Monday October 12.

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Dr Nicole Westmarland shares her view that while rape is increasingly being seen by senior police officers as a 'real crime' and specialist units may be on the cards, reporting levels are down. She asks whether this indicates a reduction in offences, or a reduction in confidence in the police?

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From the President's Desk

It is clear The Pledge documented in the Green Paper on policing is here to stay and forces are supportive of the commitment to the public. It is a positive move by the Home Office, however the belief that achieving the pledge itself will result in improved confidence is naive. We really have to ensure we remain in touch with the changing views and sentiments of the public and respond accordingly. We could congratulate ourselves on achievement while not realising the public are dissatisfied, or we could put unnecessary effort into over achievement. We have to get it right for all citizens – and this doesn't mean one size fits

all. Officers and staff have to learn to gauge the needs of individual members of the public and we as a service need to listen more and ask victims, even of serious crimes, their views about how they have been treated during their journey through the criminal justice system to find out the highs and lows.

This year's Senior Women in Policing Conference also highlighted the importance of better understanding the needs of women in the community. Worryingly analysis of my force's incivility complaints on the BCUs last year showed the majority were from women aged between 23-40, who were a witness to an arrest, or the victim of crime. How or why are we treating them in a way that upsets them? We need to find out. While it may be a difficult task this feedback and that from other victims of crime can give us a great insight into both the good and not so good case handling and enable us to design more citizen centric and of course women centric services.

We must use the pledge as a catalyst to ensure we tackle crime and address general policing problems in partnership with the public. And that that relationship has proper communication at its heart.

Join forces with female firefighters

Women in the Fire and Rescue Service are facing similar problems to police officers and staff.

That's what National Co-ordinator Liz Owsley found out when she set out to forge links with emergency service colleagues.

Uniform, isolation, fitness testing and issues around sexism and sexual harassment/bullying are all problems faced by female firefighters.

Liz is now urging forces to open up their women's networks to staff from the fire and rescue service.

"They have a thriving women's network, but their numbers are much lower than in the police service, so you may find some are quite isolated. Female firefighters in your area may welcome the chance to network with, and gain support from police service colleagues." Said Liz.

She added: "Thames Valley Women's Network has already established links with their local fire and rescue women's network, I hope many other forces follow their lead."

Contact information for Fire and Rescue colleagues can be obtained from Liz Owsley.

West Midlands Police encourage more women to become motorcyclists

PCs Jane Smith and Tina Benbow are the first successful graduates of a women-only driver training course run by West Midlands Police.

The officers, pictured here with instructors Sergeant Paul Bowles, PC Steve Tyler and Inspector Ned Kelly, qualified as standard motorcyclists on the course. A coaching programme for the female officers ran alongside the course and practical ways were found to get over the physical barriers caused by the size and weight of the motorcycles they had to ride. For example simple adjustments to the hand grips make the motorcycles more suitable for women.

The force is now looking at including motorcycles which are easier for smaller officers to ride and handle in its next procurement process.



Photograph reproduced courtesy West Midlands Police

German Police add bras to uniform entitlement

German policewomen are set to be given 'police issue' bras which are designed to be safer and more comfortable to wear under body armour.

Female officers will each be allowed to choose three bras from a range of designs each varying in size and style.

All the bras are white, made of thickly padded cotton, polyester and elastic and are reported to be similar to sports bras in appearance. Although they all have 'police' printed on them.

But crucially they don't have any metal or plastic underwiring, fasteners or studs which could dig into the body and cause serious

injury should an officer be shot.

Carmen Kibat, an adviser on equal opportunities for the Hamburg-based Bundespolizei – Germany's federal police force, believes normal bras pose a "safety risk". She

said: "The impact of a bullet can push the metal and plastic bits of a bra into an officer's body, causing serious injury."

The new bras were trialled for two-months by female officers.

All front-line female police officers are being

encouraged to wear the new bras when on duty – although a police spokesperson said they were "optional".



Maternity uniform sourced for Cumbria officers



Cumbria has become the first force in the North West to launch a maternity uniform for officers and staff.

The force has worked with specialist uniform suppliers Crave Maternity and employees are now able to choose items of clothing from an approved list.

The force says the new uniform is "stylist, practical and comfortable."

Previously, pregnant women were offered larger sizes of standard uniform items which were uncomfortable and led to women wearing their own clothes to work.



The launch of the uniform marks the culmination of many months of research conducted by PC Gill Atkinson. The mother-of-two believes Cumbria Constabulary is moving in the right direction on issues relating to maternity and says there are further initiatives to come.

She said: "I believe the maternity uniform will assist women to feel valued and supported throughout their pregnancies and aid the retention of women within the police service."

Thirty per cent of Cumbria's officers are female and nationally they claim to have achieved the highest number of female recruits over the last three years.

Deputy Chief Constable Christine Twigg said the new uniform showed the force's commitment to The Gender Equality Scheme and Gender Agenda 2. Other forces using Crave Maternity include: Devon and Cornwall, Nottinghamshire, South Wales and Gwent.

Yoga to improve health and wellbeing

A CITY of London PC is offering free yoga classes for colleagues in her spare time.

PC Laura Piercy Farley from the force's anti-terrorism and public order unit, has spent four years training to become a yoga teacher, and says the health benefits are "second to none".

She teaches Hatha yoga to force staff and even goes into work to take classes during leave and on rest days. Her dedication earned her a force health and wellbeing award earlier this year.

Medical fitness tested

OFFICERS from six forces have been involved in tests which are part of a radical overhaul of fitness testing for specialist police posts.

The officers have undergone medical tests – such as looking at heart rates and blood lactose levels - to see how suitable job related fitness tests are when compared to the demands of the role.

The results are expected in January says Derek Bonnard, ACPO lead on fitness, he also said that this could lead to general fitness testing for all officers in the future.

Make a donation to WoW

FIFTY per cent of woman will suffer from a reproductive health issue in their lifetime. Wellbeing of Woman (WoW) is dedicated to improving this statistic and the lives of every woman living in the UK.

They do this by funding top quality medical research to find health solutions and supplying grants for specialist training to ensure excellent doctors deliver those solutions.

Deborah Mason, community fundraising manager, said: "WoW works tirelessly to improve women's health today, tomorrow and for the future, and it is important to remember that our work affects everyone – you or the person sitting next to you."

Please visit www.wellbeingofwomen.org.uk for more information or to make a donation.

• See page seven for *Grapevine's* new health matters column – this issue looks at how to deal with awkward symptoms.

International praise for BAWP and Grapevine

THE President of the International Association of Women Police has praised the efforts of the BAWP and female police officers, in general, to advance women in policing.

In a letter to *Grapevine's* editor Kim Madill, Dr Amy Ramsay, from the Ontario Provincial Police, said how impressed she was with the "quality of" *Grapevine*. But, also with the "tremendous accomplishments" showcased in it.

She said: "The BAWP has long been recognised as the epitome of progression for women in policing, given the emphasis that has been placed on gender over the past decade. If only we could get every police agency in every country around the world to embrace the benefits of women in policing."

In summing up she described the recent wave of UK IAWP award winners as a "fitting tribute" to an organisation that "has done so much to promote the advancement of women in policing".

Casting for recovery

A CHARITY which provides fly fishing retreats for women who have or have had breast cancer is looking for support from police fly fishing sections.

Casting for Recovery is a non-profit support and educational programme which provides opportunities for women to meet others in the same situation as them and learn a new sport.

The fishing itself helps with "soft tissue and joint mobility" and the time spent on the water helps women relax.

Weekend retreats also incorporate counselling and educational services.

Any woman who has or has had breast cancer can attend and all meals, accommodation and tuition are provided free of charge.

You can find out more, volunteer to help on a retreat, or make a donation by visiting www.castingforrecovery.org.uk

Proposed reform of the police injury benefits system

The Government are reviewing police injury awards to bring them "in line with modern day policing".

The key proposals, which are detailed below, cover a range of issues including the eligibility criteria for receiving an award and the structure of benefits under the scheme for both former officers and their survivors.

The proposals will affect officers serving at the time of implementation, whether or not they have already sustained an injury. The changes will not affect officers who have already retired at the point the changes are implemented. They will still be dealt with under the system as it currently stands, even if they have not yet applied for an award.

Key proposals include:

- The introduction of life-long adult survivor benefits and the extension of survivor benefits to nominated unmarried and unregistered partners in cases where an officer dies in the line of duty. At present survivor benefits for death in the line of duty are restricted to bereaved spouses and civil partners and are stopped on remarriage or cohabitation. Officers who have an unmarried or unregistered same-sex partner should note that there will be a requirement to make a declaration nominating that partner in order to make them eligible for a survivor award.
- Simplifying injury and survivor awards so they are easier to understand and apply. For instance, if an officer dies or is totally disabled within one year of an injury in the line of duty, financial support will as a matter of course be five times their pensionable salary. Currently financial support is based on four times the officer's actual total salary if that works out to be a lesser amount.
- Making injury and death payments fairer. The pensionable salary on which lump sum awards are based will be changed so that it is based on average pensionable pay. This will take account of a person's working hours averaged over his or her police career rather than simply the pensionable pay at the time the officer ceased to serve. This should make the system fairer for officers who have not worked full-time throughout their career or have reduced their hours shortly before the injury.
- Revising the eligibility criteria and clarifying the definition for injuries received in the line of duty. This clarification will mean officers will be

specifically covered for injury benefits as a result of a terrorist attack and will focus benefits on those injuries received in the line of duty. Proposals will also include withdrawing cover for injury or death sustained on a journey to or from work where the cause was not related to police duty - to bring injury benefits for the police service in line with injury benefits for other public servants.

- Clearer definition of eligibility to apply for injury awards.
- Introducing a five-year time limit for new post-retirement claims, except in the case of specified progressive illnesses and specified conditions with a long incubation period.
- Introducing an absolute cut-off for new claims at age 65 or State Pension Age at the time if over 65.
- Replacing injury pension reviews at age 65 (or the State Pension Age at the time if over 65) by introducing a new minimum retirement income guarantee. Previously officers injured early in their career could have suffered a large reduction in financial support in their retirement if the review took them to the lowest pay banding. The new income guarantee will protect them from this.
- No longer paying injury pensions in cases where a former officer has suffered only a very slight loss of earning capacity as a result of the injury. In cases where the loss of earning capacity is 10 per cent or less the former officer will receive a lump sum payment in recognition of the injury. This will allow benefits to be targeted where they are needed most.

You can share your views on the proposals by visiting:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/about-us/haveyoursay/current-consultations

And then emailing:

policeinjury.awardsconsultation@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Or writing to:

Government Proposals for a Revised Injury Award Scheme
Police Pensions and Retirement Policy Section
Police Finance and Pensions Unit
Home Office, 6th Floor Fry, SE corner
2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF

WOMEN GET STAY OUT OF JAIL CARD

Women committing low level crime in Leeds, Bradford or Liverpool will be given a chance to stay out of jail under a conditional caution pilot scheme.

The women will have to accept the conditional caution and agree to work with staff at the Together Women Centre to tackle the root cause of their offending.

They will also be able to access basic English, Maths or IT training to help break the cycle of crime. Childcare and nutrition advice will also be offered.

Vera Baird, MP launched the pilot scheme. She said: "This option will avoid mothers being divided from their children, and give them opportunities to tackle what are often chaotic lifestyles underpinning their descent into crime.

"The long-term effects can only be good;

offending will be reduced and offenders rehabilitated back into the community."

Harriet Harman, Minister for Women and Equalities, said prison wasn't necessarily the "best answer" for many women offenders who are not a danger to society and often have children dependent on them.

She added that the use of conditional cautions ensures they are punished but also "supported to change their lives".

Offenders may also be required to make amends for any damage they have done, whether through financial means or by apologising to those whose property has been damaged.

The pilot started at the end of August. Its results will determine whether the scheme will be rolled out to a wider group of women offenders and other potentially vulnerable people.

BAWP has stand at national conference

NATIONAL Co-ordinator Liz Owsley and Secretary Carolyn Williamson will be flying the BAWP flag at the 2008 Emergency Services Show in November.



The event brings together professional, government and voluntary emergency organisations and specialist equipment suppliers from across the UK.

The exhibition is free to attend. The conference features a range of speakers on civil contingency and business continuity planning. Topics include the planning for the Beijing Olympics, the RSPCA response to foot and mouth, the handling of 7/7, the summer 2007 floods in Gloucestershire and the lessons learnt.

The show is being held November 19 and 20 at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire. For more information visit

www.theemergencyservicesshow2008.com

Remembering those who gave their lives

Inspector Denise Clark from West Midlands Police represented BAWP at the Care of Police Survivors (COPS) annual service of remembrance in July.

The service was attended by the families and colleagues of police officers who have lost their lives in the course of duty. The Rt Hon Tony McNulty MP, chief constables and senior police officers from 45 forces and representatives from key policing organisations joined them to pay tribute to the ten officers – nine men and one woman – who died between July 2007 and June 2008.

Wreaths were laid in memory of those officers and surviving family members laid single red roses at the trees representing their force in the National Memorial Arboretum.



Denise is pictured (second from left) next to the BAWP tree with the widows of three officers, who attended the weekend.

Pictured from left: Metropolitan Officer PC Jo Hill, wife of PC Nic Hill, who read out a poem during

the ceremony, called: "If I knew it would be the last time"; Sergeant Gill McMurray from Lothian and Borders Police, wife of PC Alan McMurray and PC Kate Parker from North Wales Police, wife of PC Andy Parker, who gave what Denise called an "impactive, emotive and honest" closing address.

ENP is looking for contacts in the UK



The current ENP Committee in Barcelona where the meeting was held

The European Network of Policewomen is looking for more female police officers in the UK to get involved with the network.

BAWP National Co-ordinator Liz Owsley is stepping down as vice president in November leaving a gap for another UK officer.

"It doesn't mean anyone who is interested would automatically take this post – they are looking for general committee members first, or even just country contacts." Says Liz.

"If you are doing a job which involves communicating with colleagues in Europe then this may be perfect for you."

The network hold regular conferences and seminars – the next is in November in Copenhagen and three spaces are available for UK officers at minimal cost.

Committee meetings can be anywhere in Europe.

Find out more at www.enp.nl and details of the November conference are on the BAWP website.

Network re-launches with focus to look out, not in

The way the City of London Police delivers a policing service to women in its community has become the main focus for the women's network.

In a re-launch of the network members pledged to continue driving improvements that benefit both men and women – within the force and in the community.

This evolution in the network's focus is reflected in its new aims, to improve:

- the quality of policing services for all members of the City community;
- the working environment of all staff members.

Pauline Weaver, joint chair, explained: "While the network has always had the core aim of identifying and working to address the barriers that women feel stop them from achieving their full

potential in the force, many of the initiatives we've done and the changes we've brought about have benefited everyone."

Championing flexible working and bringing in the Spring Forward personal development programme are examples.



"We will always raise issues affecting female staff, and provide a social network for women in the force, but moving forward we're also going to look at areas where the policing service we provide to our community could discriminate against women.

"What that means is encouraging people to specifically consider

women's needs, whether they're a victim of crime, a witness or a suspect.

"It's a way of thinking that sets a policing standard for dealing with all members of the community with respect and dignity."

More women off sick

Female officers take nearly fifty per cent more sick days than their male colleagues – according to a report in Police Professional magazine.

The magazine contacted all 43 forces and under the Freedom of Information Act requested details of sickness broken down according to gender.

It revealed that female officers took an average of 44 per cent more days off in the last financial year than men. However despite the average in some forces the difference between the genders was minimal.

The article published August 28, sparked letters to the editor. In one Anna Dovey from Surrey Police shared her view that much female sickness could be down to "gynaecological problems, including 'period pain'." She urged readers to "consider the possibility that simply due to physiological differences between the genders it may not be possible to 'balance out the two sexes'."

The BAWP called for greater analysis of sickness and abstraction data more than a year ago. In the Summer 2007 issue of *Grapevine* President Julie Spence said hard facts were needed to see what is really going on.

Staffordshire Police Chief Inspector Vera Bloor, and colleagues in the female network (Staffordshire Association for Women in Policing), have offered to help the force look at their disproportionate sickness levels and are interested to know what other forces are doing to tackle the differences in sickness levels. "It would be great to know how those forces with much lower differences have done it, is it just a recording issue, or can we share best practice."

Contact Ch Insp Bloor by email: vera.bloor@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

The BAWP has commissioned a piece of academic research on this topic – look out for more details in the next issue of *Grapevine*.

Female officers make up another one per cent

The number of women policing the country has risen yet again to 24 per cent of all officers.

The one per cent rise on last year was announced in the Home Office Police Service Strength report published in July 2008.

It shows that on March 31 this year 34,402 of the 142,360 officers in England and Wales were female.

The proportion of women in more senior ranks of chief inspector and above is also up from 11 per cent to 12 per cent. The number of women at constable rank is up from 26 per cent to 27 per cent.

It also shows 33 per cent of all new recruits were female.

The report revealed a more even gender balance in other areas of policing

with 33 per cent of all members of the Special Constabulary being female, a massive 60 per cent of all police staff and 44 per cent of all PCSOs.

BAWP Vice President ACC Suzette Davenport says the figures are "great news" but that she is still "concerned" that in the past three years the number of female police officers has only increased at a rate of one per cent year on year. "We want to see a truly representative police force now – not in another 10 or 15 years which is what it will take at the current rate of growth.

"Surely this is evidence to support our call for additional means of achieving a representative service and debate around affirmative action needs to be stepped up a gear."

Event for Essex women



Women working for Essex Police were encouraged to maximise their potential at a 'taster' event run by the Springboard Consultancy. The event was funded 50/50 by the Essex Police College and the Senior Women Officers' Forum. Springboard Trainer Dr Sue Hewitt, (pictured left talking to DI Pauline Bowers) showed delegates the power of networking, the importance of drawing on other people's skills and how to develop inner strength.

Staff are now being urged to take responsibility for their own future development by self-nominating for courses offered by the Springboard Consultancy.

Health Matters

In the first of what will be a regular column on women's health issues, Peter Bowen-Simpkins, Spokesperson for Wellbeing of Women and Medical Director at The London Women's Clinic, talks about awkward symptoms and what you can do to tackle them.

The impact of gynaecological (women's) problems on a busy hard working woman can have a marked deleterious effect on the quality of her work and also on her stress levels. Often personal problems are pushed aside for fear of losing promotion possibilities. Seeking advice is often avoided because of fears of having to undergo surgery or worries about side effects of medications. But things have changed considerably and simple help is at hand.

The menopause occurs around the age of 51 but symptoms do occur up to five years before. They include flushes, night sweats, mood changes, loss of confidence and so on. They can be easily remedied by HRT but there is a considerable worry amongst the lay public that it can cause heart attacks and breast cancer. This is wrong. HRT taken at the time of the menopause actually protects against heart attacks as long as it is being taken. The increased risk of getting breast cancer is two cases per 1000 women per year over the age of 50 (that is a 0.2 per cent increase) and evidence suggests that those who do get it on HRT have an improved survival rate.

Heavy periods are common, especially after 40. There are many causes (they include fibroids, endometriosis, and stress) and, up to the 90's hysterectomy was usually the answer. But now there are simple non-hormonal tablets such as tranexamic acid (Cyklokapron) which may reduce loss by up to 50 per cent. The biggest innovations have been the Mirena intra-uterine system – a sort of hormone implant in the womb, and endometrial ablation – a simple, speedy procedure that destroys the lining of the womb to stop it re-growing. Hysterectomy is now very rare for heavy periods.

Waterworks problems, particularly frequency and incontinence are common in those around the menopause, those who have had children and those who have put on weight. For those who leak with coughing a simple sling procedure done under local anaesthetic has a very high success rate. For those who have urgency and lose urine without being able to control it, there are good medicines and the latest innovation is Botox injections into the bladder that stops it being overactive.

So don't put up with awkward symptoms. Go and do something about it.

IAWP News – direct from

Chief Inspector Jane Townsley was one of the UK officers who made the long journey down under for the 46th Annual IAWP Conference. Here is Jane's report, direct from Oz via email, on the build up to the conference, the awards and a march in 35 degree heat.

As I write this article I am in Darwin, Northern Territories, Australia, having finally made it here for the 2008 International Association of Women Police Training Conference. I left London four days ago! Already I have bumped into friends and other board members who I get to see just once a year at these conferences. The buzz which happens prior to any IAWP conference has begun.

Talk about a small world, last night at the hotel I met Cheryl, who is originally from England, but is now living in Adelaide with her police officer husband. She was in Darwin on business, but there we were miles from the UK discussing the merits of the UK v Australian Police. It gave me a great insight into some of the reasons so many UK police officers who join Australian police forces for a better life end up returning to the UK, or leaving policing altogether. Some return because they miss their families in the UK, others it seems miss our style of policing. I know this is generalising, but those who return to the UK do highlight the policing differences and urge colleagues contemplating such a move to give it some serious thought. Her husband is an Australian who actually spent time as

UK police officer working for GMP, maybe his reasons for returning to Australia are the same in reverse?

Other BAWP members already here are: Carol Thomas, our secretary Carolyn Williamson, Izzy Harrison, Helen Rawlings and Heather Wright. I know more are on their way.

The officers I am really looking forward to meeting again are our own BAWP award winners, who will be making the trip to collect their well deserved international awards from the IAWP President. Our British IAWP award recipients are:

- Shahina Ahmed, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, IAWP Civilian Achievement Award;
- Louisa Pepper, Suffolk Constabulary, IAWP Mary-Jo Blohowski Leadership award;
- Sandra Hutton, Tayside Police, IAWP Community Service Award;
- Jane Horwood, West Mercia Constabulary, IAWP Mentoring award.

I will be additionally proud at the IAWP Awards Luncheon as I will be MC for the ceremony this

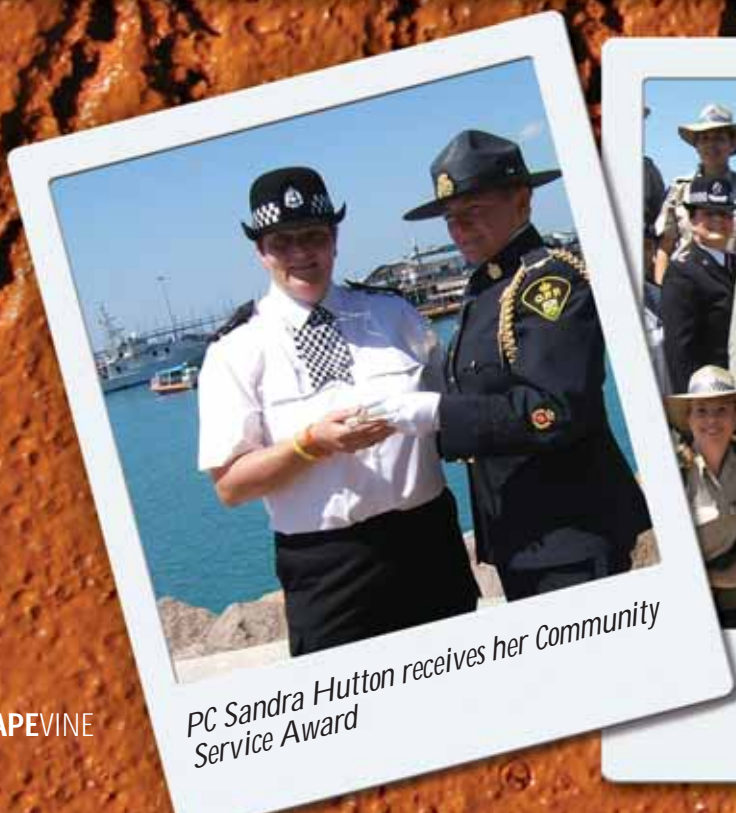
year, politics get in the way of policing and the IAWP awards chair could not come to Australia due to her duties at the Republican Party Convention in Minnesota.

This is a timely moment to remind you all to look out for the launch of our search for the 2009 BAWP Award winners. Please keep an eye on Jane's Police Review for further information. We will also publish details on our website and send details to all UK forces. Since the creation of the BAWP Awards in 2006 12 British officers and police staff have received IAWP awards, more than the total number of recipients during the previous history of IAWP. It just goes to demonstrate the quality of officers and staff that we have in the UK. I am looking forward to receiving as many nominations for

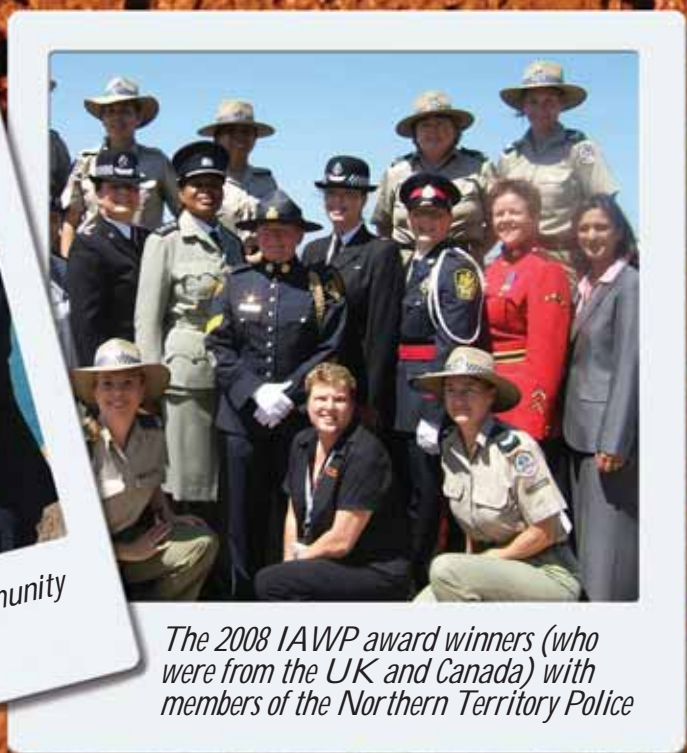
BAWP awards as in the previous years, each year the number has increased, let's see if 2009 can break the 100 barrier.

A reminder of the categories: Officer of the Year, Police Staff Achievement, Leadership, Community Service, Mentoring, Excellence in Performance, Bravery, Benenden Healthcare Achievement in Staff Well Being and Special Recognition.

So start thinking now about those officers and staff who have set themselves above the rest and begin building up the evidence for the nomination for 2009.



PC Sandra Hutton receives her Community Service Award



The 2008 IAWP award winners (who were from the UK and Canada) with members of the Northern Territory Police

from Darwin, Australia

Opening ceremony and parade

A TOTAL of 540 delegates from 35 countries filled the brand new convention centre at Darwin for the opening ceremony. There was the usual welcomes from dignitaries, but more importantly from the indigenous people whose land the delegates had come to.

A great moment was the presentation to our own secretary Carolyn Williamson, MBE with the Dr. Lois Higgins-Grote IAWP Heritage award. This award is given each year to recognize: "Substantial and significant contributions to women police and the IAWP. In recognition of outstanding and dedicated service to IAWP over a period of years and especially during milestones of the organisation."

The delegates also witnessed the presentation of the IAWP International Recognition and Scholarship Award to Assistant Superintendent Yvonne Alexander from the Commonwealth of Dominica Republic Police Force.

The parade followed; let me tell you that marching in wool tunics in 35 degree heat is no joke. As for the Mounties in their big boots and gloves, well it was amazing nobody collapsed from heat exhaustion. One of the highlights of the march was going along Mitchell Street, the main backpacker street of bars and hotels in Darwin to the cries of "The poms are here!" It just seemed to spur us on to raise our arms that bit higher and march that bit prouder.

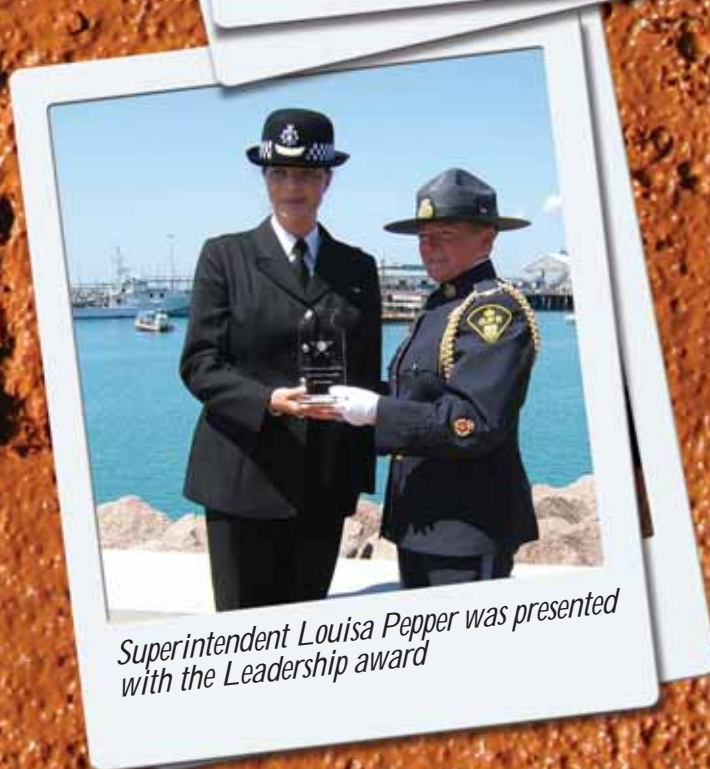


A display of traditional aboriginal dancing by group One Mob – different country

► Look out for a report on the conference presentations and workshops in the next issue of Grapevine.



The UK award winners with BAWP President Julie Spence



Superintendent Louisa Pepper was presented with the Leadership award

Shahina Ahmed was named the recipient of the Civilian Achievement Award



In the Spotlight

Name: Sara Freestone **Age:** 31

Current posting/role: Student Police Officer

Brief career history: Five years as an Export Sales Correspondent for WBB Minerals; I was made redundant when they relocated. I then moved to Dorset and worked in customer services for Durable, a stationery supplier. I joined Dorset Police in January 2004 and worked first in administration before becoming a PCSO in May 2005. I started my training as a police officer in July 2008.

Family: Mother, father and younger brother who all live in Devon, which is where I am from originally.

Q. What did you want to be when you were growing up?

A. When I was at school I always wanted to be a vet, but that soon changed after I worked at a veterinary practice for a week on work experience. The whole thing was very traumatic especially for a young girl, which I was at the time. It wasn't the thought of all those years of study, it was the fact that I couldn't bear the thought of all those animals suffering, it was so sad. I think I spent most of the week crying or trying not to be ill when I was watching the vet operating on animals. Never again.

Q. Who has been your greatest inspiration or role model and why?

A. Throughout my very limited career it has always been men that have been in the challenging, highly paid job roles who were either managing directors, or chairman of companies. It wasn't until I joined Dorset Police that I met women in those similar roles. I found it an inspiration that they had both a challenging work role and the responsibility of a home life, as this was all new to me. Since working for the police it has become apparent that both men and women within the force juggle busy work/life balances.

Q. What is the most memorable moment of your career to date?

A. I think when I had found out that I had passed my assessment to join as a regular. It was a difficult process and very time consuming and I worked hard to get



through. It was also a long wait. I know I would have been very disappointed if I had failed and I don't even know what I would have done

Q. What barriers to success have you come across and how did you deal with them?

A. When I started as a PCSO the role was fairly new and little was known about our powers. I had to learn what I was doing and try to advise colleagues and supervisors of our responsibilities and role. It was an interesting time as my colleague and I were sent to a station for the first time. We weren't completely confident about what we should or shouldn't be doing. So we went out, got to know the area and carried out high visibility patrols at every opportunity. Supervisors did check on us to make sure everything was ok and if we had any problems the door was always open. But we all learned from our experiences along the way and this is now a thing of the past.

Q. How have you achieved a satisfactory work/life balance?

A. Definitely, I don't have any family and so I am lucky enough to do what I want when I want.

Q. What advice would you give to an ambitious new officer or member of police staff?

A. Just keep going, things may be difficult or you may not get what you want on the first try, but I do believe that if at first you don't succeed and all that...

Q. What three words describe your personality?

A. Fun, helpful, a good listener

Q. What are your vices?

A. Tea and biscuits, cake

Q. Where is your favourite holiday destination and why?

A. Cuba I went there last year and had the best time it is so lovely. Cheap, friendly, the people can't do enough to help you, the weather was nice. I would definitely recommend it as a holiday destination.

Q. Where do you see yourself in five years time?

A. Hopefully I will have passed my probation. I would like to take my sergeants exam at the end of my probation and I would like to be search trained so who knows.

Happy and you know it

Everyone wants to be happy, but it is all too easy to get out of the habit of happiness, says Angela Hackett. The key is to build on your natural talents and to throw yourself into living your life to the fullest.

When our work leads us to be exposed to the darker more brutal side of life it can colour our judgement and make us hyper-vigilant to seeing the downside of life and missing out on what is actually a very positive world. You will get what you are looking for, so look for problems and you will get them, look for a positive and happy experience and you will get that.

I believe that the way forward is to minimise the negative and focus on a more positive response to life. I am not advocating standing in front of the mirror making positive affirmations. You can say all the positive things you like, but if you believe life is a bit of a disappointment then no amount of 'positive thinking' will move you on.

The key to happiness is this: dedicate yourself to the development of your natural talents and abilities by doing what you love to do. You can only make the slightest improvement by concentrating on the areas you struggle with, but can become an absolute ace in the areas where your natural talents lie, such as motivating others.

Being happy requires that you define your life in your own terms and then throw your whole heart into living your life to the fullest.

Help yourself first

In Edmond Rostand's play *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Cyrano is asked why he is so intensely individualistic and unconcerned with the opinions and judgments of others. He replies with these wonderful words: "I am what I am because early in life I decided that I would please at least myself in all things."

Your happiness likewise depends upon your ability to please yourself. You can be happy only when you are living your life in the very best way possible and in your happiness you will find yourself more able to help and accommodate others.

It is all too often said that it is more important to make other people happy than it is to make yourself happy. This is nonsense. The fact is that you can't give away to anyone else what you don't have for yourself. Just as you can't give money to the poor if you don't have any, you can't make someone else happy if you yourself are miserable.



"I am what I am because early in life I decided that I would please at least myself in all things."

Cyrano de Bergerac

brisk walk for a couple of minutes will bring rewards.

- Take a moment to enjoy something simple. Enjoy the cleverness of nature or hearing laughter, stop and enjoy this moment.
- At the end of the day think of three things you are grateful for. Numerous studies are now proving that people who recognise what they are grateful for lead happier lives. Even being grateful that this day is over and you can get some sleep will do.
- Finally, find something to laugh about, the very best medicine known to man, woman or child.

Here's to your success and happiness.

Suffering and self-sacrifice merely depress and discourage other people. If you want to make others happy, start by living the kind of life and doing the kind of things that make you happy. Be a good example of how to live a happy and contented life. And even if that feels a little difficult in the present moment, try to fake it till you make it. You will be amazed at how much better you feel and before you know it you will be genuinely happier yourself.

Here are some ideas you could try out:

- Define the activities you really love and enjoy, at home and work, and then organise your life so you do more of them.
- Decide to believe in yourself and trust your own feelings. When you are deciding to do something ask 'will it please me to do this?'
- Do something that brings happiness to others (without causing unhappiness to yourself) and experience how much pleasure their pleasure brings you.
- Take some physical action. Your body was made to move and will always function best with movement of some sort every 50 minutes. Your brain will work better for the surge of oxygen and your muscles will thank you. It does not have to be anything too strenuous, even a

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A supporting role for both a family and an investigation

Family Liaison Officers (FLOs) are involved in almost every high-profile police investigation. It is a crucial role which is anything but 'pink and fluffy'. In reality it can involve long hours and fighting to achieve a fine balance between meeting the needs of the family and the investigation, but Cambridgeshire DC Kim Bowen says it is always rewarding in the end.

It is a job that few of us would envy – entering a grief-stricken family desperately trying to come to terms with the death of a loved one.

But the part played by the family liaison officer (FLO) is considered crucial to most major inquiries by police forces nationwide.

So what makes a role that would have seemed alien, and possibly even pointless, to police officers working only a decade ago so significant?

DC Kim Bowen, who has been a FLO for seven of her 17 years as a police officer, has seen first-hand the importance of the role in cases including the July 7 London bombings, accidental deaths and killings in Cambridgeshire.

“You become an important part of the family. That is why the exit strategy at the end of a case can be difficult but is very important”

The 36-year-old detective said it was not just about comforting words and building bridges, but also gathering information that could prove instrumental to solving an investigation.

DC Bowen, who has worked in Peterborough and Cambridge but spent the past two years in the major investigations team at the force headquarters, said: “The family is always vital to any investigation. Before FLOs existed, there was a lot of information that would fall by the wayside, but it is now an





DC Kim Bowen

“It is not pink and fluffy; it’s about helping the family through their trauma”

exchange of information.

“It is not pink and fluffy; it’s about helping the family through their trauma. When you are being trained you are told it is a ‘big I for Investigation’, and a ‘little s for support’ as we are not trained counsellors, however we are able to put families in contact with specialist agencies which can provide support.”

The gravity of the role is clear in the first, introduction to the family – “We are police officers, we are investigators, we are here to work as a link between you and the inquiry and we are here to gather information”.

This information will centre on the victim – their lifestyle, who they associated with, hobbies, if they had any concerns or problems and why they were at the location at the time of the incident.

DC Bowen continued: “Then we give them the information as we know it. You have to choose your words very carefully because the family will listen to every word. We have to be honest and upfront, but we can’t always tell them all of the information or we may not know all of the information. With holding information from the family is unusual and is only done following careful consideration by the Senior Investigating Officer”

Other issues which may need addressing immediately include the formal identification of the victim -and who will carry this out – and possible media interest – the family will be kept informed of all press releases, this is really important as there are time issues. FLOs try to get the information to the family before anything is released to the media, which can be difficult if something is broadcast on the local radio.

DC Bowen said initial reactions from families varied but were generally positive.

“For a time I was a FLO on cold case reviews in Northern Ireland. They had cases that were 30 years old and yet some families had never had a police officer come to their house and explain what was happening.

“The feelings and emotions were like it happened yesterday. Some were very positive because they wanted information but there were others who were still very hostile.

“Whenever a FLO is deployed, you are entering a family at the worst possible time. They are in a distressed state and can be in shock. They have just had a loved one taken away and we start asking all these questions. But they still welcome you in, in the majority of cases, because they are so eager to find out what happened.”

Not all cases involve victims who have died. Just after the July 7 London bombings, DC Bowen and another FLO were assigned to a man from Peterborough who believed his wife had been a victim of the attack and was in a London hospital but had not been traced.

“In the end we managed to track her down because we discovered she owned a Mazda car

Training for major disasters

FLO officers in Cambridgeshire are being trained in new skills which would allow them to deal with the aftermath of a large-scale incident such as a terrorist attack.

Disaster victim identification, or DVI, is about ensuring the process by which victims are identified is carried out speedily and with dignity.

DVI trained officers will be deployed when there is a large number of dead or injured people and it is not easy to discover their identities.

The training includes issues relating to fingerprints, dental records, DNA, human rights, and dealing with next of kin.

In the event of a large-scale incident, victims, their family and friends would also be supported by volunteers who make up the critical incident personal support team, or CIPST.

CIPST is a joint project between Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridgeshire Constabulary and was set up in November 2004.

The support given by CIPST volunteers could include offering guidance, advice and assisting other agencies in helping victims, family and friends through a critical incident. Volunteers recently assisted in the response to flooding in Norfolk.

In future incidents, FLOs may well work side-by-side with CIPST volunteers when deployed to families.

and she had a Mazda key ring in her possession. We spent the next 24 hours with him trying to identify his wife. We talked about what she would do every day, what she would wear and details about her lifestyle because our aim was to gather as much information as possible in order to identify her. She had been badly injured but survived.

Despite the emotive nature of many jobs, DC Bowen said it was important to stay detached. An FLO can often be with a family for long periods, taking in all the significant milestones of a case, including formal identification, the funeral, and any court proceedings or inquest.

She added: “You become an important part of the family. That is why the exit strategy at the end of a case can be difficult but is very important.

“It is hard work to always be meeting the needs of the inquiry and the family, and it can affect your family life because of the long hours, but it is always rewarding in the end.”

Rape – not just an



Dr Nicole Westmarland is a criminologist at Durham University, Chair of Rape Crisis England and Wales and a member of the ACPO Rape Working Group. Here she supports the ACPO view that specialist teams are needed to improve the quality of rape investigations, but argues prevention is better than any cure.

On a particularly wet July morning, senior police officers (mainly chief constables and assistant chief constables) from all force areas gathered in Westminster. Four speakers took the floor to talk about improving police responses to rape - ACPO rape lead ACC John Yates, Home Office Minister Vernon Coaker, Dr Alison Jones, Lancashire SAFE and myself.

By chance, the conference fell on the week the Fawcett Society publicised the latest regional rape conviction rates. As usual, they made for depressing reading. The conviction rate overall did rise but not to any extent worth celebrating (to 6.1 per cent). The media ran with the usual 'postcode lottery' stories, with forces with particularly high (Cleveland at 13.2 per cent) and low (Leicestershire at 2.8 per cent) conviction rates highlighted. Gloucestershire was featured as a success story, after seeing a significant rise from its previous place at the bottom of the rankings (from 0.86 per cent to 7.4 per cent).

It is worth noting that last year was a very unusual one in terms of rape reporting. For the first time in over a decade, the number of rapes reported to the police actually fell. Home Office

figures show that rape of a female fell to 11,648 offences (a decrease of 8 per cent when compared with 2006-7) and rape of a male fell to 1,006 offences (a decrease of 13 per cent). Of course, we know that rape is massively under-reported – but does that answer why there was such a dip in reporting last year? There's optimistic and pessimistic ways of answering this question.

With my optimistic hat on, the response would be that we have finally peaked at the amount of rape that exists. That rape is still massively under-reported, but at the same rate as it always has been. From this perspective, the reduction in rape reports represents a real reduction in rape.

But with my pessimistic hat on, the response would focus on a substantially reduced lack of confidence in the criminal justice system. The last two years have really seen information about the low conviction rate enter the popular media and therefore public consciousness. From The Guardian to The Sun, most readers now know what the police and Rape Crisis have known for many years – that rape convictions are incredibly rare. Fingers would also be pointed at two television programmes broadcast in February 2007 which showed simulated rape trials. With

very different levels of credibility ('The Verdict' with its celebrity jury featuring low on the scale and 'Consent' featuring highly), both police officers and rape crisis workers alike admit that they are likely to have reduced reporting. So, from this pessimistic perspective, rape has not decreased – only the reporting of it.

The highlight of the conference was John Yates' announcement that 'specialist units' are the way forward. He highlighted the improvements that specialist teams have made following the Stephen Lawrence and Victoria Climbié enquiries. A persuasive argument was made in terms of why rape investigations should be seen as a specialism. As evidence of success, he cited impressive statistics about large increases in police detections for these crimes. The pilot area for a specialist team was named as Hampshire and named – as any little sister of the Metropolitan Police Sapphire team should be – Operation Crystal.

I did experience a bit of a déjà vu moment as he was talking - haven't we been here before with vice teams and domestic violence units? And haven't many of these been disbanded? What about other specialist teams such as the West Yorkshire Rape Investigation Unit – or don't they

other offence...

“My point is simply that as rape is increasingly seen within the police as ‘serious’, as ‘real crime’ requiring ‘real detective work’, ‘specialist teams’ and the most senior staff, the gender balance of the room has shifted”

count unless they're named after semi-precious jewels? And what exactly are trained sexual offence liaison officers if not specialists?

I actually agree that specialist teams are almost certainly the right way forward. Currently, there is just too much variation between force areas (and I'm talking about the way rape victims are treated rather than conviction rates here). A clearer ACPO vision that labels rape as requiring specialist training and skills will hopefully reduce some of the ambiguity over whether dealing with rape is 'just another offence' or something requiring particular expertise.

From my point of view, there was something else particularly interesting at this conference. This was the first time I have seen a predominantly male audience at a rape conference. So what was different about this conference? Of course, it is because it was for the most senior officers and the most senior officers tend to be male. My point is simply that as rape is increasingly seen within the police as 'serious', as 'real crime' requiring 'real detective work', 'specialist teams' and the most senior staff, the gender balance of the room has shifted.

I don't have a problem with men taking

leadership roles in rape cases. Part of me thinks 'about time!' On a serious note though, ACC John Yates does an excellent job as ACPO lead. But my hope is that when the senior officers returned to their force areas, they didn't just talk at (or even worse send emails to) but actually listened to the female officers who have been doing rape work for many years or even decades.

There are some really excellent women police who have quietly been specialising in this work when it did not have its new status. They attended women's group events when it was not seen as valid use of police time. They were on Rape Crisis AGM invite lists long before multi-agency sexual violence forums existed. If its specialist teams that forces are after, they would do well to start by looking at what they've already got.

So, imagine we've got all the specialist teams in place. All of the ACPO Rape Working Group are happy because they've got a team named after their birthstone. Job done? Clearly not, because aside from the rest of the Criminal Justice System, there are of course all the victims who will never make an official report. For these, we need to ensure that there is adequate rape crisis provision to help them move on with their lives – regardless

of whether they want to engage with the criminal justice system. There remain large areas of the country with no rape crisis provision at all. There is still no funding for a national rape crisis helpline.

There needs to be a rape crisis centre in every city and major town – support after rape should be a right, not a privilege. Longer term though, wouldn't it be excellent if we didn't actually need a rape crisis centre in every city and town? If we could scale back the size of specialist rape teams? I am, of course, thinking about prevention. We've had over three decades of second wave feminism in the UK, and can proudly say that we've been quite successful at ending the silence about sexual violence and developing quite literally life saving services that are highly valued by the women that use them. But we have to admit that few inroads into actually reducing or even ending sexual violence.

So yes, let's set up specialist teams. But let's also include prevention as part of the remit of these teams. Let's bring education representatives around the multi-agency table at sexual violence forums. Specialist teams must not become an end in themselves, but rather a temporary step towards the real end of reducing sexual violence.

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