



# FIRE BRIGADES UNION

## Scotland *Newsletter*

THE PROFESSIONAL VOICE OF YOUR FIREFIGHTERS

April 2022

### Welcome to the FBU newsletter covering the first quarter of 2022.

My first in my new role as your Executive Council Member, a post I am extremely proud and humbled to have been nominated and elected to, and offer thanks to the members of each Branch that nominated me. I take up the post following a challenging time for our Region. We've had a particularly difficult election run for the Regional Secretaries post. This was ultimately won by Bro. Ian Sim, formerly West Area Secretary who replaced Sister Denise Christie.

Bro Sim has since notified of his resignation from the Regional Secretaries post due to personal circumstances. On behalf of the Regional Executive, Committee and Members I extend thanks to Sister Christie for the years of dedication, work and personal commitment given in pursuit of the best pay terms and conditions for Members. I extend the same thanks to Bro Sim for his work on behalf of Scottish Members and wish both well for the future. Unfortunately, this election was marred by a minority who chose to conduct discourse in a manner far below the expectation of our Union and our Policies. The fallout from this has caused damage to trust and relationships and the standing of our Region and of the wider FBU in the eyes of employers, the wider trade union movement, and observers. Our recovery from this will take time and require commitment from Elected Officials at all levels of the union, as well as the wider membership we serve.

Bro John Malcolm the Regional Chair retired on 12th March and had over 30 years' service and a long and dedicated career spent as an FBU Official in various roles in the West SDA. I thank John for his work on behalf of Members and wish him a long, happy, healthy retirement.

Bro Chris McGlone resigned as EC Member for Region 1 in January this year, he also resigned from the union. At the time Bro McGlone was subject to two Internal Union Discipline (IUD) investigations and due to attend a

hearing. Due to his resignation, the hearing did not take place. It would be inappropriate to comment or speculate further on these matters as they may yet be subject to proceedings or further action.

These resignations and retirements mean that there is a significant cycle of elections now underway which will encompass Regional and Area positions over the coming months. These have now started with the commencement of the Regional Secretary Election and will be immediately followed by the Regional Chair Election.

Over the coming months I encourage Branches and Members to get involved in the election process, this starts with nominations from Branches. It is vital that members participate in the process to ensure their Regional Executive and Committee is made up of Officials that they want working on their behalf.

I would ask all Members to conduct any campaigning in a manner that supports their preferred candidate rather than attacks others, that welcomes participation rather than shuts it down and ultimately is conducted in line with the values and policies of the FBU.

During these election processes the Regional Committee has appointed Bro John McKenzie, formerly East Area Secretary as acting Regional Secretary and Bro Gus Sproul as acting Regional Chair. This interim and ultimately refreshed Regional Committee will have significant work to do as fresh challenges and opportunities arise for our union.

The outcome of the pension remedy and the changes to commutation factors has the potential to see significant levels of retirement from the service and our ranks. It should never be forgotten that it was our union that achieved this outcome, successfully challenging a Westminster government which has been determined to undermine and diminish our member's pensions, ultimately breaching equality legislation in doing so. It can never be

forgotten that the FBU and its members is the only organisation in the fire and rescue service to take on this legal battle, a battle which we have won, and continue to fight regarding a number of other pension challenges including cases of immediate detriment and ensuring RVDS (On Call) Firefighters get access to a 2nd options exercise to buy back pension rights in line with the part time workers legislation.

The FBU have recently entered the early stages of discussions revisiting role expansion and pay with SFRS. We have recent experience of how challenging dialogue, negotiation, and consultation on matters of such importance can be and must ensure that our members interests are at the very heart of any new proposal, and that their legitimate concerns from the previous proposal are suitably addressed by the employer should any new proposal be brought forward.

The country and SFRS are moving towards the recovery stage of the COVID 19 pandemic which has impacted every one of us individually, but also impacted the Service in recruitment and training over the past 2 years. The FBU should and must be included in shaping this recovery and in working to mitigate the challenges this will bring.

As a Region it has never been more important for our members to unite and build the collective voice, and strength we must have as the largest Region in our union, defending what we have, fighting for what we are due, and ultimately shaping the future of our Service. None of these challenges can be fixed by any one individual; it is through our collective strength that we shall succeed. I am though, excited to take on the role as your Executive Council Member, to stand beside you all in facing and overcoming the challenges ahead and to be trusted to be your voice at a national level within your union.

*Yours in unity*

Colin Brown  
Executive Council Member

# Bro Colin Speight

It is with great sadness we bring the tragic news of a lost brother at the end of last year. Colin Speight (Speighty) sadly passed away on December 11th 2021, aged 47.

Colin decided from an early age that he was going to be a firefighter, after seeing a fire engine drive into a nearby street, with blue lights on and the sirens blaring.

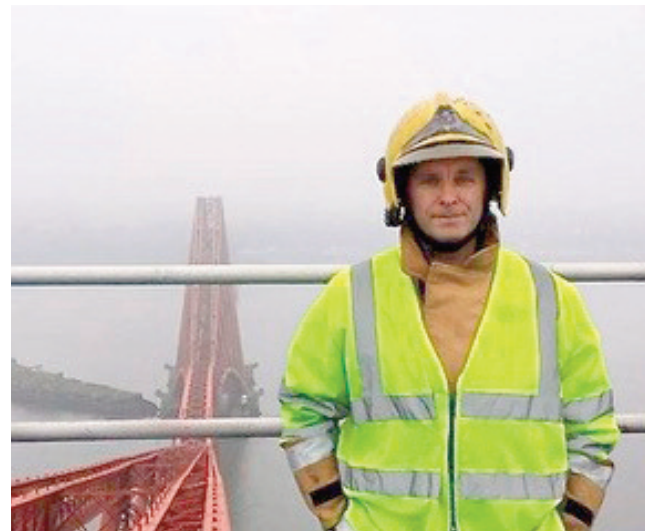
Aged 18, as soon as Colin was eligible, he applied to join the fire service and being successful he joined the RDS crew in St Andrews in 1992. He served there until 1998 when he left to travel around Australia. Colin rejoined the RDS in 2003, spending most of his retained career at Cupar Fire Station where he swiftly rose to the rank of Crew Commander.

Dreams became a reality in 2006 when Colin joined the wholetime within then, Fife Fire & Rescue Service. A brief spell at Kirkcaldy ended with a move to Methil where he spent over 10 years, before being promoted to Crew Commander at Glenrothes. A few years after which he was temporarily promoted to Watch Commander.

Colin loved being a Firefighter and was extremely passionate about his job, and this shone through in all that he did. Colin took the time to engage with everyone and would do anything for anyone - that is just who he was. It was these attributes that made him an exceptional firefighter. Colin was a practical joker who regularly played pranks on his colleagues, making him even more endearing to everyone, Colin's sudden passing has left a massive void within both the stations and the community as a whole.

Colin is survived by his daughter Caley, Mum Margaret, and Stepdad Bill and our thoughts and condolences are with all Colin's family, friends and comrades.

Chris Murphy, East Area Vice Chair.



## FIREFIGHTERS 100 LOTTERY

### THE GOOD CAUSES

**The Firefighters 100 Lottery Fund shall be administered appropriately by the Fire Brigades Union for the future benefit of all firefighters and their bereaved families in accordance with the following good cause criteria:**

1. Family support and welfare: to provide longer-term support to the families of firefighters killed or seriously injured in the line of duty, including financial support such as individual bursaries to help towards the costs of further education, or grants towards the provision of specialist medical equipment, or support for inquests or similar processes.

2. Memorials and remembrance: to support, establish and maintain memorials and/or memorial events in remembrance of firefighters killed in the line of duty.

3. Protect, prevent and promote: to promote the lessons learnt from the deaths and serious injuries of firefighters so as to better protect firefighters, the communities they serve and prevent deaths and injuries in the future.

4. Research: to support research into the physical and mental health and wellbeing of firefighters; the "all hazards" nature of the modern fire and rescue service role; and the prevention, protection and intervention work firefighters undertake to save lives in our communities.

5. Humanitarian assistance: to support humanitarian initiatives and appeals, including internationally, which are aimed at assisting those affected by fire or disaster and where there is a particular need for the support of skilled fire and rescue service intervention.

**<https://www.firefighters100lottery.co.uk/support/firefighters/buytickets>**

# Firefighter Pension Scheme Calculators

FBU National Officials along with Scottish Regional Officials attend both the Pension Scheme Advisory Board and Firefighter Pension Board meetings, on behalf of Scottish FBU members.

Concerns have been highlighted recently within these forums, in relation to inaccurate pension calculations on online pension calculators unapproved by the Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA)

The SPPA have asked that members of Firefighter Pension Schemes are reminded to use the approved pension calculators available on the

SPPA website rather than using any "home-made" versions. This is to ensure that accurate figures are produced and used by members for decision making in relation to their pensions.

The link to the calculator on the SPPA website is as follows:

<https://pensions.gov.scot/firefighters/your-membership/calculators/firefighters-pension-calculator>

Any issues with the calculator should be directed to the SPPA by sending an email to [sppafirepensions@gov.scot](mailto:sppafirepensions@gov.scot).



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# William Fraser

## FBU Red Plaque Unveiling 24th April 2022

On the morning of March 2nd 1909, First Class Fireman William Fraser, aged just 28 and a father to a new born baby, sadly lost his life fighting a large warehouse fire in Aberdeen. William was struck by a downpipe that knocked him off a wheeled escape ladder in a bookbinders premise at Adelphi Court. He somersaulted twice, falling approximately 40 feet to the

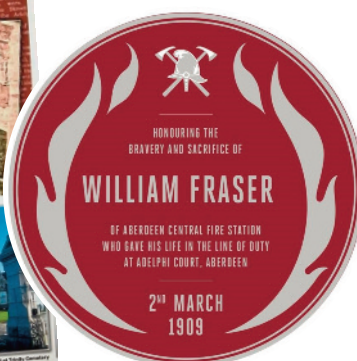
ground where he sadly remained unconscious.

The Fire Brigades Union, Red Plaque scheme remembers fallen firefighters across the country by the means of a plaque, situated close to the location where the firefighter lost their life, protecting their community, accompanied by a well-publicised unveiling ceremony with the attendance of family members, members of the public, fire service employees, union officials and press.

In memory of William's service, the region are holding a Red Plaque Ceremony in Aberdeen on Sunday 24th April 2022 with an open invite to all FBU members wishing to attend to show their respects.

FBU Officials along with members from the SFRS and William's family will meet at Aberdeen Central Fire Station, to head the short distance to Trinity Cemetery for a small service at noon. There will then be a vehicle procession, led by the Heritage Club, (family only) travelling from Trinity Cemetery, along King Street and onto Union Street where it will be met by Piper Jack Stewart. The procession will conclude at the site of the plaque, outside the entrance to Adelphi Court, for the main ceremony, due to commence at 12:45pm.

The Ceremony is scheduled to conclude with wreath laying followed by light refreshments and antique vehicle display from SFRS Heritage Club at Central Fire Station, Mounthooly Way, Aberdeen.



# 25 Year Membership Presentations



CC Davie McNeely (R) Dunfermline White watch receiving 25 recognition from East Area Vice Chair Chris Murphy



CC Fire Safety Ally Keith receiving 25 recognition from East Area Organiser Davey Strachan



CC Suzanne Tassiker-Dowson (left) Marionville White Watch receiving 25 year recognition from East Area Organiser Davey Strachan



FF David Kay (R) Dunfermline Amber watch receiving 25 year recognition from East Area Vice Chair Chris Murphy.



FF Gary Philp (R) Dunfermline Amber watch receiving 25 year recognition from East Area Vice Chair Chris Murphy



FF Graeme Sinclair (Right, Marionville Amber watch) receiving 25 year recognition from East Area Organiser, Davey Strachan



FF Robert Michinson (R) Dunfermline Amber watch receiving 25 year recognition from East Area Vice Chair Chris Murphy



WC Sandy Garvie (R) from P&P receiving 25 year from East Area Vice Chair Chris Murphy



FF Mark Paton (L) Govan Amber Watch receiving 25 year recognition from Branch Chair Stephen Robertston

## FBU Scotland - Officials

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