

# Dorking Police 1962-69

## Part 1

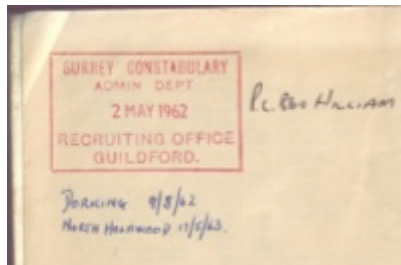
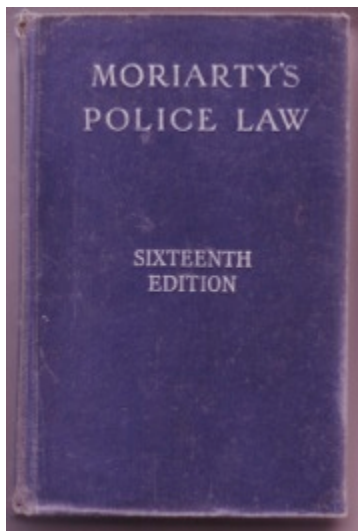
### Initial Training

**Dave Hilliam PC860 Dorking Police 1962-69 written August 2014**

I joined the Surry Constabulary in May 1962 aged 19 years.

I was a somewhat reluctant recruit being married with a young daughter and was in desperate need of housing. The Police Service offered free accommodation – hence my main reason for joining.

On May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1962 I was issued with a copy of “Moriarty’s Police Law” at the recruitment office in Woodbridge Road Guildford – issued with a uniform – and sworn in as a Constable at the local Magistrates Court.



Then I was instructed to report to the No6 District Training School at Sandgate Folkestone for my 3 month Initial Training.

Course No 186 ran from 7<sup>th</sup> May 1962 to 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1962.



The official photo of class B4 shows that there were 16 of us on the course , 9 from Surrey 3 from East Sussex and 4 from Guernsey.

Surrey Officers were: Dave Hilliam, Sam Smith, Peter Crowe, Tony Beswick, Peter Knight, Peter Marsden-Smith, Maurice Bower, Cedric Gardener and Roy Hammond



I enjoyed the course ,which was very well structured and run.



The setting was ideal with fine grounds to relax in during the evenings.

We had periodic long weekends off when five of us would pile into Cedric Gardeners old Riley RME for the journey home. I would be dropped off and picked up at Redhill Station for my onward journey to my wife and daughter in Croydon.

There was a great deal of self-help amongst the new recruits. I had only recently completed my A-levels so, still being in learning mode, I found the class work reasonably easy whilst I was pretty useless at anything physical and could not swim a stroke.

Big Sam Smith on the other hand was my opposite, so I helped him with some learning techniques whilst he taught me to swim and urged me on during some dreadful runs along the beach and over the groins.



The P.I. Instructor Sergeant Wallace asked who could not swim and promptly threw those who couldn't (me included) into the freezing outdoor pool in Folkestone. Struggling to the side I was then declared to be a competent swimmer and ignored from then on. Sam Smith took time during the free period after the "training Session" and taught me to swim sufficiently well for me to enter the Inter-Class swimming gala – which we won!

A useful little book to have around your person –



Hopker's Summons Headings listed nearly every offence that you may have need to use plus thousands of others that should have been repealed years ago!

I think we had to buy this – it was not official issue.



With the course over we went to the HQ at Mount Browne for a few days familiarisation and were then posted to our different divisions.

Along with Peter Marsden-Smith I was posted to Dorking as it had a Section House, which offered accommodation for single officers, and homeless ones like me! I was told there were no Police Houses available and that I would have to wait for one to become vacant. So I started a protracted nine-month stint in the Section House (End room on the right hand side overlooking CID Offices) until May 1963 when I was allocated the North Holmwood Police House. We stayed at North Holmwood until 1965 when we moved to No 2 Police House Chart Lane South, next door to Brian Cane.

Your first two weeks were to be spent with a senior PC who would show you around. I was only allowed two tours of duty with PC Harry Robinson before being let loose to find my own way around a town I had never even visited before. It was embarrassing when the Public would ask me for directions – as often it was I who needed the answers. I went into Whites Estate agents (next to K51) and got a map of the town, which made me slightly more useful.

I bought myself an old Frances Barnett 150cc bike from Tutt's Garage at Westcott and would commute back to my family in Croydon as my duties allowed.

To give me extra time off once a month, a week of “odds & sods” often ended with a double-quick change over. This ran like this: a night duty 10.00pm to 6.00am was followed by a late duty of 2.00pm to 10.00pm which was followed by an early turn of 6.00am to 2.00pm. This put me off duty, if a little shell-shocked, at 2.00pm on a Friday with my next shift being night duty on the following Monday.

In retrospect I now realise that the Dorking Division that I had joined in August 1962 was in the last throws of the “Old Style” of Policing.

I heard that in Guildford in 1962 they still paraded out of the Police Station at the change of shifts with officers dropping off as they reached their areas of Patrol, closely followed by all the town's jobs. In Dorking we were saved this indignity but we were under the guidance of a group of soon to be retired Sergeants – all with their previous military service stripes on their uniforms – who were merely counting down the days to retirement and just going through the motions.

Our Patrol Sergeants were hardly part of any team. Large fat sergeants would ride past you on the way to their meal breaks and shout, “Show me Five” whilst others never stirred from their office.

You could do a full beat duty, correctly attending all of your “points” without seeing or hearing from anyone at the station. You could have been in all sorts of trouble and no one would know. The leadership shown to us in those early months was appalling. Senior Officers worked office hours and were hardly ever seen at an incident – unless it was really serious. I only ever spoke to Superintendent Gunning once and that was after he had “Spoken” to me about “Walking around the station whistling with my hands in my pockets”

Equipment, especially the divisional transport, was old and antiquated and anything new was treated with the upmost suspicion. At least the then PC Brian Cane did his best to improve

things when he wrote off the Sergeant's ancient side-valve Hillman Husky on a prisoner escort to Brixton.

The switchboard sited in the front office was one of the old manual plug-in affairs that you, as Station Officer, had to run as well as everything else. You didn't dare take your eyes off it as the extension flags flapped up and down demanding immediate attention. Once calls had finished you had to manually pull out the plugs to free off the line. Needless to say the worse offence was to cut someone off and that was far too easily done.

But gradually new blood arrived – but the level of support from Sergeants remained patchy – with some, especially those recently promoted out of the Divisional Office onto Patrol Duty, who would actively avoid getting involved. One such sergeant would regularly exit one door as we entered another with a prisoner.

My first winter in the job was the one of 1962-63 when it snowed heavily on Christmas Day and the snow was still there in the following Easter. It was so cold at night that an order came out that we should not do more than two hours outside at a stretch. So we froze solid during the day shifts.

Within months of joining I found myself frequently acting as Coroner's Officer as the number of sudden deaths due to the cold weather rocketed. The old mortuary at Leatherhead froze solid and we had to share the Epsom Hospital mortuary with the Metropolitan Police. Post Mortems went on all day; there were so many with tea and sandwiches being brought in to sustain the living. For some reason I could stomach these Post Mortems – fags and an Air-wick helped. Hence I was often selected to deal with the sudden deaths that came in and often had to take new recruits (with only months in the job myself) to the mortuary with me to view the first dead body that many had seen.

You did two years' probation before being confirmed in the post. This included a two-week session back at Folkestone, but this time at Shorncliffe Barracks, a desperate brick built structure in the middle of nowhere that was then the base of the Kings Own Scottish Borderers better known as the "Poison Dwarfs".

Training Sessions were also held at Reigate Police Station, a group of "Probationers" would travel there from Dorking on the 414 Bus. But inevitably it was the training on the job that counted for more than any of the book learning. In the early days of my service I was lucky enough to experience many different aspects of Policing. There was very little mollycoddling on new recruits. We were thin on the ground and quite often you found yourself the only officer available to deal with any situation that arose.

The Pay was not brilliant either as these Year End P60's of mine for four years shows. Admittedly married men were given a "free" house or lodging allowance. Ultimately it was these relatively low rates of pay in the 1960's that finally allowed me to leave the service in 1969. A civilian employer offered me a salary that, in those days, allowed me to support a mortgage meaning that I could buy my own house.

I had only originally joined to get accommodation for my wife and family.



## **Part 2**

### **Beat Duty**

In August 1962, after my 3 months initial training, I was posted to Dorking. Everyone started out "On the Beat".

You were allocated a set Beat number and a little book that listed all the "Conference Points" you had to make during your tour of duty. Making a "Point" meant standing outside a Public Phone Box at a specific time when, in theory, messages could be passed to you from the Station Officer.

Usually about once during your beat a Sergeant would meet you at one of your Points and would instruct you to "Show me Five" dependant on how long he remained with you. You then recorded in your Pocket book "11.15 K51 PS 123 5 minutes". I didn't know why we did it then and I am still none the wiser.

You had to stand at your Points for 5 minutes during the day and 15 minutes at night.

The 15-minute point at the end of Pixham Lane opposite the cemetery, at 3.15am in the morning was probably the worse one. At night and especially if it was raining I would stand inside this box, brightly illuminated by the bulb inside it, which was easily solved by removing the bulb giving some privacy.

The most frequently visited point was K51 outside the Red Lion (now demolished) in the centre of the High Street, closely followed by K49 at the bottom of Moores Road opposite the Embassy Cinema. You had to make K49 for 15 minutes when on night duty before your meal break in the Station canteen just up the road.

Your break started at the end of the K49 15 minute point, and ended at the start of your next point outside the Post Office 45 minutes later.

There were Town Patrols, which often just meant hanging around K51 every hour; Town Outskirt Patrols that forced you to follow a set route and Rural Patrols which demanded the use of a push bike and took you out into some of the villages.

There was always someone on the Town and Town outskirt Patrols night and day. The Rural Patrols were less frequent and the worse one was the Night Time Rural Patrol when you wouldn't see or meet a sole.

The usual Night Town Patrol Points from memory were as follows:

- 10.00pm Police Station
1. 11.15pm Frazer Gardens
2. 12.15am Dorking North Railway Station
3. 1.15am K49 Moores Road
- 1.30am Meal Break
4. 2.15am Post Office Ansell Road
5. 3.15am Cliftonville Horsham Road
6. 4.15am Westcott Road – West Street
7. 5.45am K49 Moores Road.

These points, in theory, forced you to cross and re-cross the Town Centre. You were expected to try all the door handles to shops etc. to check that they were secure, and then re-check next time around. We had no personal radios of course these arrived much later so we relied on messages to be passed to you while you were making your points.



I was on night Town Patrol one night when there was a smash & Grab at Dunns the Furriers in the High Street soon after 11.00pm. No doubt the villains had watched me trying doors as I moved through the Town. I made the Point at Frazer Gardens (11.15pm), and then wandered slowly down Ashcombe Road to the Railway Station thus not re-crossing the High Street, which was always a temptation. I made the Railway Station Point (12.15am), ambled up to K49 at 1.15am then up Moores Road to the Police Station for my meal break only to discover the world and his uncle had descended on it in response to the raid on Dunns.

The biggest flaw in this entire system was the problem the Station Officer faced when something major occurred. As all hell broke loose in the office he could contact any available radio cars by calling HQ "Control" at Mount Browne by landline as his first response. Then get hold of the Sergeant if there was one working then CID who should have left details of who was on call every night and finally try and work out where his three beat men's next point would be and then have time, or remember to ring them if of course the phone in the Public Phone Box was actually working.

Filling in "Vehicle seen at night" slips broke some of the monotony as stopping and checking vehicles at night raised the problem that you had to be near a phone to call in your checks.

Vehicle and CRO checks were made through New Scotland Yard again by landline (Whitehall 1212). There was at least a 15 minutes wait for the reply whilst some hapless sole physically ran through manual card files. Asking the suspect to wait whilst you went through this routine was hardly an efficient way to catch villains. So it was mainly drunks and travellers (in this age still moving around from Spike to Spike on foot) that you got to speak to. There was one traveller, complete with Rastafarian Dread Locks, who used to pass through regularly and would scare the Public witless by his appearance but was a kind and gentle soul.

There were few “Tea-stops” available in the town at night, places where you could sit down, dry out and have a cup of tea and a cigarette.



The Old Pumping Station Curtis Road

The one that was everyone’s favourite was the old Pumping Station at the end of Curtis Road. Here, back in the 1960s, a huge gleaming Steam Engine powered by massive coal fired boilers pumped the town’s water up from a bore hole 24 hours a day.

At 3.30am on a wet winter’s night it was a haven for many a cold bored and tired beat man.

There were two cinemas in Dorking. The largest was the Embassy Cinema in Reigate Road opposite the K49 Conference Point.



The Embassy Cinema demolished 1983 for Council Office Car Park - Opposite Phone Boxes - K49 Point

It was worth popping into the Embassy to see if the film was worth a later visit – whilst we were usually requested to enter the alternative establishment by its management.

This was the Pavilion in South Street – better known as the “flea pit”. The Pavilion had an old fashioned oblong white canvas screen upon which was projected some pretty old and scratchy films. The clientele however was



The Old PAVILLION CINEMA South St Dorking

usually more interested in each other than with what was being projected.

Disgruntled clients would vent their displeasure by unscrewing the brass ashtrays attached to the backs of the seats and hurling them at the screen. We would normally arrive at the Pavilion well after the audience had left and would commiserate with the management who would then have to sew up the tears made to his screen ready for the next performance.

May's Garage at the end of South Street were Jaguar dealers with plenty of expensive bits of kit parked in their car park at night. During my week of "Lates" before a week of "Nights" I would arrange for them to leave one car in the car park unlocked so that you could shelter in it at night and keep an eye on the place for them. Rob Walker's Pipbrook Garage at the other end of town did the same thing. Rob Walker ran his Formula 1 Racing Team from a nearby garage in the 1960s. It was next to the Pipbrook Mill up London Road. It was always full of the most exotic machinery and I was a frequent caller. The garage was burned down in a fire in the early 1960s. A pre-war racing Delage car was one of the priceless machines that I remember seeing reduced to molten metal. Tutts Garage moved from Westcott into the rebuilt workshops after Rob Walker died – it is now called Tutt's Close but should be Walker's Close.

In the daytime it was Traffic Duty at Pump Corner that kept you busy. We were issued with white linen sleeves that fitted over the lower arm which, in theory make your flailing arm movements more visible. The problem with controlling the traffic at Pump Corner was that once you had started it was difficult to stop. Observation soon taught me that it was far more effective just to let the traffic sort itself out – with you offering the odd gesture from the pavement at Pump Corner to those who wouldn't play fair.

Stepping into the road on "Point Duty", usually when you saw the Sergeant approaching, and actually stopping traffic to let others through gradually built up a longer and longer jam – which at some stage you just had to walk away from or you would have been there all day. Am I right when I remember that West Street allowed two-way traffic then?



The M25 was a long way off and the main A25 went right through the town, although some traffic bye-passed around Ashcombe Road.

Parking was permitted on alternate sides of the High Street each day, which caused no end of bottlenecks but the local shopkeepers were adamant that banning parking would ruin their trade. Parking

was also permitted on "The Cobbles" which marked the old cattle market area.

You were allocated a “Lamp Allowance” to pay for the batteries in the torches that you had to supply yourself; hence I would tend to ride my push bike around at night after meal break with my lights off – both to save batteries and to be less conspicuous. Twice I nearly came to grief in the dark. Once I walked straight into a Telegraph Pole in Ashcombe Road and another time whilst riding the wrong way down South Street with my lights off, turned left into the blackness of Junction Road. I thought I had ridden off the end of the world and fell off in a heap in the road. I didn’t let on about either incident at the time.

When householders went on holiday some would let the Station know. A looseleaf binder in the sergeant’s office held the details of each unoccupied house. If you were on anything other than Town Patrol unoccupied houses were your responsibility. It took ages to go through all the bits of paper to work out which houses were within reach of your beat, note them down in your Pocket Book and then sally forth. But once located, especially on a balmy summer evening, they offered the chance of some rest and relaxation in their back gardens. You then entered up on the sheet at the nick which ones you had visited. This often wasn’t until a few days after the event and the Sergeants used to get quite agitated when checking through the folder to weed out the ones where the occupants had returned to discover some where only a few visits were recorded. You were often asked “Are you sure you didn’t pop in last week, when you were in the area? The question was loaded and the reply obvious.

Often when on night Town Patrol you had to share it with one or two of the town’s “Characters”. Starting with one rather eccentric lady of a certain age who during the day could be seen striding through the town immaculately dressed in a tweed suit, but always talking rather loudly to herself. No problems there, but occasionally, and usually at the dead of night, the same lady would appear in the middle of the road wearing considerably less clothing and demanding “Give me a Man”. As the Surrey Constabulary was there to serve its public it was usual to send one of the newest probationers to deal with her.

Another regular was “Snowy” White – another gentle soul who, I think, used to get his medication muddled up with the result that even after just a few drinks would find him somewhat the worse for wear. Steer him in the direction of his home and off he would go – no problem.

But with **Frank McCormack** it was more serious. This nasty little man would spend his days running around the Town with his trousers tucked in his socks clutching a bottle and making a thorough nuisance of himself. If you were on nights and Frank was around you had to keep your wits about you as he would jump out at you giving you a mini heart attack. After your meal break Frank had normally found somewhere to doss down for the night and with any luck you would find him sleeping off his day’s intake. At times like this revenge was sweet. He was always being arrested and would plead any number of disasters in his life as mitigation for his behaviour. His favourite plea was that he had been taken as a prisoner of war in Korea and badly treated. At one Court appearance when this excuse was anticipated he had the wind blown out of his sails when evidence was produced that he had never been in the Army. Called up for National Service he lasted two weeks before being discharged as

medically unfit. I had evidence of his nastiness in the way he terrorised his old widowed mother. She lived up on the Cotmandene and Frank would threaten her, but never actually strike her, into giving him money for his drink. She always refused to give evidence against her son and despite restraining orders on Frank to keep away from her this frail little lady used to live in daily fear of her son.

Revenge against Frank took many forms. Later in my service when on the Crime Car with Clive Barham a PC who thought he had found a body in the new shops being built in South Street called us. Sure enough right at the back of a shop being constructed was a bundled up body, which we soon identified as being Frank. Like all conscientious officers around Bonfire Night a certain quantity of “Penny Bangers” would have been confiscated and stashed in the Crime Car for later disposal. We decided this would be a good time to dispose of one – inside the shop – next to the sleeping Frank McCormack. The BOOM of the banger going off exceeded anything we had expected. Lights came on in bedrooms as residents enquired what was going on. It took us some time to assure everyone that we were in charge and that there was nothing to worry about. Then we went into the shop to see what had happened. I was convinced we had killed him. But no – he was still fast asleep.

In the weeks running up to Christmas Frank would become particularly active as he endeavoured to get himself put away for Christmas. Arresting him one night Clive Barham and I had no intention of granting him his wish of a warm Christmas and drove him out of Town and up onto Ranmore Common. Abandoning him in the middle of Ranmore we wished him the sentiments of the Season and continued on our way. About 30 minutes later we were back in the town and so was Frank!

All this may sound as if Beat Work was varied and exciting – it was the opposite, it was oppressively boring. But the real value of Beat Work was that elusive reward of “Local Knowledge”. Boredom sent you up and down every Street, Lane and Alley – round every corner and down every path – remembering the **USUAL** so that you could then recognise the **UNUSUAL**. The one advantage we had then, despite all its other shortcomings, was a strong sense of the **LOCAL KNOWLEDE** of our patch.

## Part 3

### Scenes of Crime

I served all of my service in Dorking and after just over a year in the job in September 1963, I was selected to become one of the new team of dedicated Scenes of Crime Officers in the County. Prior to this, and frequently afterwards, CID Officers carried out their own examination of scenes mostly dusting for fingerprints. An intensive course at the HQ Mount Browne gave us the basic skills covering not only “dusting” for fingerprints but also plaster casting of car tracks-footprints etc.

We were also to become responsible for checking that re-licenced wrecks (Cars that had previously been written off but had subsequently been re-registered) were the actual vehicles that had been written off and were not stolen cars that had been “ringed” to look like crash repaired vehicles.

I was not attached to CID but remained a uniformed PC with normal duties and was required to do my SOC duties as and when required. I was supplied with a Triumph 350 cc “Twenty-One” motor cycle (497 PJ), which I kept at my Police House meaning that I could be called out to attend scenes without imposing on anyone else to supply transport. The one drawback was that my bike was not equipped with a radio.

Whilst this made call-outs easier it presented me with the problem of how to carry my SOC kit around whilst riding a motorbike. We were supplied with a fabric haversack and I constructed a wooden box to contain most of what I needed that just fitted inside it. It was quite a baptism by fire as with just over a year in the job I was attending reasonably major incidents, whilst the really serious work continued to be done by DC Illing of Dorking CID.

I was being given normal motor cycle tours of duty supporting the Divisional Motorcyclist and the occasional Beat Patrol whilst also being called out from home as and when SOC jobs came in. Thus I kept running up phenomenal overtime units – which I was frequently forced to take as time off as overtime was not paid.

I was all pretty humdrum stuff, dusting for fingerprints, marking up the good ones and preserving the scene until the photographer could come from Mount Browne to photograph them. Sometimes it was better to remove certain items from the scene for dusting back at Dorking (or my Police House) then get any prints photographed.

Recovering stolen cars involved first an examination at the scene then driving them back to Dorking for final examination - photos and collection by owner. There was NEVER a spare garage to do this work.

And always the arduous task of taking elimination fingerprints from those with legitimate access to the scene. It left the person’s hands covered in black ink, with nothing other than an old rag to wipe it off with. Later a clear fluid was used but I just left a trail of “Black-Hand Gang” members behind me.

Checking a re-licenced wreck carried some hidden problems other than the vehicle itself. Sometimes the person re-registering the vehicle was NOT the person who had bought the salvage and repaired it. From the information supplied to me this was not clear so the first few minutes of a wreck enquiry could be a bit fraught if the punter had bought the vehicle without knowing its history.

I ran like this, not a member of CID and not a regular member of the Divisional team for about 18 months.

We had a series of housebreakings all in the Deepdene area where houses were being entered whilst the wife drove the husband down to the railway station. Such properties were easy to

identify, as the wives always left the garage door open. I recall after one such break, where over £3,000 of items were stolen from one room in the space of a few minutes, I sat at home that evening totting up the value of the property in my own front room.

I must have visited hundreds of housebreakings. At each one the lady of the house just wanted to “Clean up this mess” but they were being forced to wait until I had arrived and made things look even worse. You needed to be quite a diplomat sometimes

Breaks never came singly. In the early 60’s Surrey was being ripped apart every night by breakers coming down from the Metropolitan Police District or up from Brighton. There were no crime car patrols then and stopping vehicles for “a routine check “ was unheard of.

One such series of breaks started when I was called out from home early one morning to a house breaking at Newdigate. Internal doors had been smashed and it was evident that more than one person was involved. Whilst working there and finding some decent prints I was directed to another housebreaking at Capel. Upon arrival at the Capel break I soon realised it was the same villains, more good prints and the hint that they may have been travelling in a Blue Bedford Van. Two more breaks were given to me at Capel and then yet one more. I spent all day dealing with these five breaks, good prints everywhere, same villains at all five jobs and evidence of three men involved. I finally rolled into Dorking nick in the early evening looking like a coal miner but feeling quite chuffed that with the information I had gathered from witnesses and with some good prints I was sure that we could clean all these jobs up.

But there parked in one of the garages with the “Don’t Touch – fingerprints” sign on it was a blue Bedford Van! It was my gang of three villains arrested some 3 hours earlier at the scene of the last break -but noone had remembered that I was toiling away in their wake. Still we did get a nice set of “Idents” out of it.

A witness’s ability to correctly recall an incident was tested when a robbery occurred off our patch where a night watchman had been seriously injured and a safe stolen.

The villains made off in a bright Orange painted Tipper Lorry of the Hoveringham Company whose logo was the outline of a Mammoth. The Orange Tipper Lorry – complete with Mammoth logo - was abandoned in a lane at Strood Green just below Brockham where it was found one morning. I attended the scene in the SOC Green Mini-Van and busied myself dusting the lorry and taking plaster castes of some tyre tracks. I wore a white coat over my civvies.



I was there for several hours and could see various people periodically standing at the end of the lane watching me whilst they waited at the bus stop. Fast forward a few days when there was excitement in the CID office when a witness was found who, it was thought, had seen the villains in their getaway vehicle. When the statement came in it was evident that the witness was describing my own activities at the site. He got the day and time wrong properly described my mini-van, gave a very inaccurate description of me and TOTALLY failed to mention the Orange Tipper Lorry with the Mammoth on the side.

Early, I think, in 1965 DI Harvey of Dorking asked me if I wanted to do SOC work for the rest of my service. I now know that he had in mind letting the Leatherhead SOC officer Clive Woodman take over for the whole of the Division in the new mini-van that had just been supplied for the purpose. On the question of me joining CID DI Harvey was quite clear that I was not cut out for the role “You are not enough of a bastard” he told me, which I was actually quite happy to hear.

So I was back full time in Uniform – but I kept 497PJ and effectively became another Divisional Motorcyclist but was still occasionally called on for yet more “elimination Prints” and cover when Clive Woodman was on leave.

## **Part 4**

### **Observation Duties**

In September 1963 after just over a year in the job I became the Scenes of Crime Officer in Dorking.

I was not attached to CID but remained a uniformed PC with normal duties and was required to do my SOC duties as and when required and so worked in a sort of limbo between CID and uniform for nearly 18 months.



It was either my contact with CID or my youthful appearance – as no one ever mistook me for a Policeman that led to me being used on Observation duties or “obbo’s”. The more often I was used on such duties the higher rose my total of successful ones and I began to get a reputation as being a good luck charm for such events. Often I had absolutely no knowledge as to why we were watching someone or thing – it was merely my presence that was required.

You never asked DC Alec Illing why he wanted to know anything; hence I had no idea why I had guided him and some other officers into the back garden of a house whose layout he had asked me to make a note of during my “Routine Enquiries”. I merely watched as they crossed the lawn to secrete themselves behind a wall under a raised patio which later became full of guests drinking cocktails. Was it good luck however when one of the guests chose to relieve himself off the patio and onto the lawn?

A stint as a janitor at Dorking Hospital was a farce. Being required to watch a cloakroom from which items were being stolen I was waylaid by a Sister and told to clean up a very messy casualty department. Another day in a Furniture Shop in Dorking re-arranging chairs in its window display with another officer may have produced results – I was never told.

Again I am not sure of the date but some curious events were being reported. Cars parked in private garages in Dorking were being taken out at night driven 50-60 miles and then put back again. One car from a garage next to a house in Deepdene Wood Dorking had gone walk about twice, so an obbo was arranged and once again I was chosen and told to keep a close eye on the respective car in its garage for one night. It was a cold wet a miserable night so I sat in the back seat of the car in its garage and settled down for what I expected to be another tedious night. Barely had I settled in when the garage door open and someone got into the driving seat. I am not sure who was the more surprised – but once again my good luck was paying off. Once down the nick CID interviewed the young lad. I was in the front office when suddenly he ran out of the front doors and was off down Moores Road.

Others and I were quickly after him and caught up with him in the High Street where I arrested him for the second time. Back at the nick for the second time it transpired he had given a false name and address and was actually a local Dorking lad. His prints turned up on an attempted housebreaking at Fetcham that I had attended as SOC, so I could claim two arrests and one “ident”. We suspected that he was using his joy riding to commit crime, but never proved it. He just said he liked cars.

Some observation duties were less than pleasant and far from tedious. Following the Roy Tutill murder in 1968 I was used as “bait” in the entrapment of homosexuals in Leatherhead. This time I knew exactly what we were doing and why. It was clear that homosexuals had been guilty of Roy’s murder and an active campaign to interview as many as possible was organised. I worked with my then next-door neighbour DC Brian Cane who was then on the Regional Crime Squad and part of the Leatherhead Murder Squad on the Tutill murder. We were centred on the gent’s toilets in a Park on the Kingston Road just over the railway bridge and it worked like this: I would linger in the toilets until I was “picked up” by someone. I would indicate that I lived nearby and invite the punter to join me. I exited first with the punter following and when I was sure he was behind me I would get a hanky out and blow my nose. This was the sign for Brian who was situated in some nearby shrubbery to move in and arrest the punter. I meanwhile would immediately run off. Brian would take our “Catch” to the nearby Police Station in the car and “turn him over to see what fell out”. There was never a question of charging them for importuning, or me for that matter. I would walk back to the Leatherhead nick and wait for Brian to finish and then we would head back to the toilet for our next customer.

Only once did it nearly all go wrong when Brian failed to react to me blowing my nose. He was actually reliving himself in the bushes he later told me once I had calmed down. It was amazing who we caught but not Roy’s murderer who many years later was identified through his DNA.

I also spent nights in the Licencing Office at Tolworth manually checking the files looking for Grey Austin Westminster cars. I found a few Westminster's but also found our then Chief Constable's application. It was easily recognisable as Col. Rutherford always used a bright green ink.

But sometimes things did go right for us. It was around 1965-66 that I was told, one Friday afternoon, to report to the nick for another "Obbo". Me and another officer whose name I can't remember, he may even have been from outside our Division, were driven to where an old blue Commer Van was parked.

My oppo had the keys and he drove the van onto the Goodwyns Estate at Dorking and parked in the School playground opposite the small supermarket at the entrance to the estate.



**Above is the same view today – the only difference being that the tree in the verge was not there in the 1960's**

The van doors were locked and we climbed into the back through a concealed sliding door. In the rear of the van were benches and concealed slots cut in the sides and rear of the van through which you could observe what was going on. There was also a radio. It was mid-afternoon and I was told we would have to wait until early evening if anything was going to come off. It was only then that I was told why we were there. As I recall it this was the chain of events. On the Tuesday of the same week a man had called at the Supermarket opposite us stating that he was from Head Office and was doing a survey of the Branches' security. He was shown the safe and was told when the cash was taken to the bank etc.

The next day another man called at the supermarket stating that **HE** was from Head Office and was doing a survey etc. This second man was genuine and the manager rang Dorking CID on the Thursday morning.

Descriptions were obtained and someone thought to check the Vehicle Seen at Night forms for the Wednesday night. A vehicle had been seen exiting the estate in the early hours and its number recorded. The vehicle was registered to a known associate of a safebreaker resident in the west of the County. Photos of the safebreaker and associate were obtained and shown to the Manager of the Supermarket on the Friday morning. Bingo - it was the safebreaker who had made the call on Tuesday. As the safe was full with the weeks takings on a Friday night a plan was swiftly put in place on the Friday morning and "Good luck Hilliam" was told to get down to the nick ASAP. One other pertinent fact should be added here. The safebreaker had only one arm and when on a job was known to wear a sharpened hook in place of his prosthetic hand.

Nighttime fell with little activity. Around midnight a black Humber Hawk drove onto the estate – "Pert's Taxis" I wrote on the message pad that we were then using to converse. Then a few minutes later there were two men sitting on the wall directly in front of us. We could almost hear what they were saying –One lit a cigarette for his mate and both faces were illuminated. My oppo recognised "Mr Hook". We were on!

After what seemed an age, whilst we didn't dare move in the van, the two men got up and crossed the road towards the Supermarkets rear gate on the RHS of the shop. My oppo whispered to me "He isn't wearing his hook ". More good news! My oppo got onto the radio; it only needed a code word to be sent for a pre-arranged plan to be initiated. Cars would encircle the Estate, no blues, no sirens and **WAIT** for the call to close in. We would wait until the two men had climbed over the gate then we would give them enough time to gain an entry into the supermarket before giving the signal.

With the radio on handset we heard the cars reporting that they were in position. My last sight of the two villains was them standing in front of the gate when . . . .DAH DAH - DAH DAH -the Dorking Patrol Sergeant's Car swept onto the estate!

We were both out of the back door of the Van in a flash. My oppo shouted to me to go left whilst he ran right up Goodwyns Road. I ran up to and past the Sergeant who was then standing in front of his car asking me " Right where are they?" This was the same Beat Sergeant, recently promoted out of Division Office, who had the habit of exiting one door of the nick when we arrived at the other with prisoners. I had wanted to tell him what I now told him for quite some time.

Running into Rushett Drive there was a Black Humber Hawk, not Pert's Taxis I then realised. Running back to the scene there was chaos. I told someone about the Humber which it turned out was the villain's car. I took no further part in the proceedings, except smoking too many cigarettes and kicking anything that was loose. I even remember being very rude to a resident who had open his window to ask what all the commotion was. "Oh sorry PC Hilliam" he replied; more bad news.

A dog was called and tracked two men who had passed directly down the side of our obbo van and across the School playing fields and out onto Holmwood Common. After about an

hour the call came in “One Arrested” then about half an hour later “ Second man arrested” – Surrey Police dogs were the bees knees !

At the end of the day it was another “Refused Charge”. “You can’t charge someone for having a cigarette with his mate” being their excuse. When arrested the safebreaker was Not wearing his prosthetic hand. This had almost certainly contained the explosives he was to use on the safe - but he would never admit it. Despite hours of searching we never did find his hand – but my oppo was convinced he was wearing it. It is probably still out there - somewhere on Holmwood Common.

## **Part 5**

### **Police Dogs**

Surrey Police was held in high regard for its Dogs and Dog Section Training with many of the animals carrying the name “Mount Browne” Dorking Division had three Police Dogs and handlers living out at Buckland. I best remember PC Denis Blackman and his dog “Dante”

I recall that sometimes a tedious night of Town Foot Patrol was enlivened in the early hours of the morning when the Dog Section would come into town to do some training. I remember being invited to lay a trail around the Town, simply by walking around.

I always thought that dogs needed the scent of their quarry, an item of clothing, in order to follow a person’s trail but was astounded when I watched these dogs faultlessly follow the path I had earlier merely walked over. They used the scent of the recently disturbed ground I was told; amazing!

But these dogs were no pets; they were trained attack dogs, so if a Dog Handler and his dog were in the canteen you never went up to pat his dog.

I remember the time sheet of PC Mick Morley, another Divisional Motorcyclist in Dorking, one day read:

8.00am Division Post to Leatherhead  
8.30am Said good morning to “Dante”.  
9.00am Epsom Hospital.

When someone had been disturbed at a Scene of Crime and assuming that not too many people had trampled all over it, it was always worth calling out the Dogs. Sometimes, but very rarely, the handler would open the doors of the Dog Van and the dog would refuse to budge. It was no use trying to coax the animal out so out went the message “Dog refused to Work” and another one would turn up.

Searching for lost persons or bodies crowd control during our “Mod & Rocker” periods and later searching for drugs also fell to the Dog Section.

I recall that one busy “Mod & Rocker” weekend on Motor Cycle duty on Boxhill, I was (as usual) in the Forte Tea Rooms having a swift break when a crowd of yobs suddenly appeared. Finishing my tea I ventured out somewhat intimidated to face my fate. To my amazement and relief the yobs immediately stopped – about turned and all ran away. It was only then that I realised that Bob Ruffles very big but very soft Alsatian “Duke” had followed me out in anticipation of being taken for a walk. Another previously unattributed win for the Dog Section.

Each dog was trained not to attack if the villain adopted a certain posture, stand still, kneel down etc. The handler would shout to his quarry “Stand Still” and the dog would stop his attack; at least in theory.

One evening I responded, along with others, to a “Man disturbed” shout at the Betchworth Park Golf Club. I was in Brockham when I got the call so rode the bike (J76) up onto the fairway as far as it would go then ran up onto a Knoll where I had a clear view of the Club House in the distance. I could see all the Blue lights in the distance around the Clubhouse and thought that with any luck the villain would come rushing past me any minute, covering me in glory. But instead all I saw was an Alsatian – nose down and tracking in my direction.

The saw the dog stop raise its head and then start running towards me – she had caught my scent and was now air scenting me. I was now the quarry.

But who was the handler – so who was the dog – so what was the “No attack” posture? Frantic shouts – told me it was Denis Blackman and “Dante” – so I stood **VERY** still. She came up to me, and didn’t attack instead she walked around and around me pushing my legs to throw me off balance. Was I happy when Denis finally ran up and put “Dante” on her leash?

I was later “spoken to” (not for the first time) about not immediately attending the scene of a crime when directed by “Control”. I argued that the last place on earth that the villain would be was at the scene so I always tried to approach it along a route that the villain may have used in his escape. I got nowhere with my argument (again) but in this instance it was fair enough as I had probably prevented “Dante” from tracking the real Villain.

Often the difference between a telling off and a commendation was a very thin line.

## Part 6

### The Four-Minute Warning

Throughout the 1960's the "Cold War" between Russia and the West began to hot up.

The Cuban Missile crisis of 1962 led to an improved Early Warning System that would be initiated by the detection of inbound missiles and aircraft targeted at the United Kingdom.

“ From the early 1960s, initial detection of attack would be provided primarily by the RAF BMEWS station at Fylingdales in North Yorkshire. There, powerful radars would track the inbound missiles and allow confirmation of targets.

Once an alert was initiated the national and local television and radio networks would break into transmissions and broadcast a warning. Simultaneously a system, was employed whereby a key switch activation alerted 250 national Carrier Control Points or CCPs present in Police Stations across the country. In turn the CCPs would, via a signal carried along ordinary phone lines, cause 7,000 powered sirens to start-up. In rural areas, around 11,000 hand powered sirens would be operated by postmasters, rural police officers, or Royal Observer Corps personnel.”

Now all of this information and the pictures of the kit involved came from WIKIPEDIA well after the event.

Back in 1964 we were all a little unsure as to what was going on. In, I think 1964, everyone had to attend a series of lectures by the Civil Defence on the role of the Police in the event of a Nuclear War. These lectures were held in the Club Room beneath the Section House at



Dorking. Here we were shown the "Individual dosimeter" that would record how much radio-activity you had absorbed, but no explanation on what to do if you had "exceeded your dose".

Everyone was less than impressed.

Meanwhile men in brown coats were installing two 6ft high green metal cabinets in the Sergeant's room next to the front office at the Dorking nick.

These cabinets were packed with electrical relays

cables and dials – all very complicated.

The photo shows the insides of these WB400 cabinets.

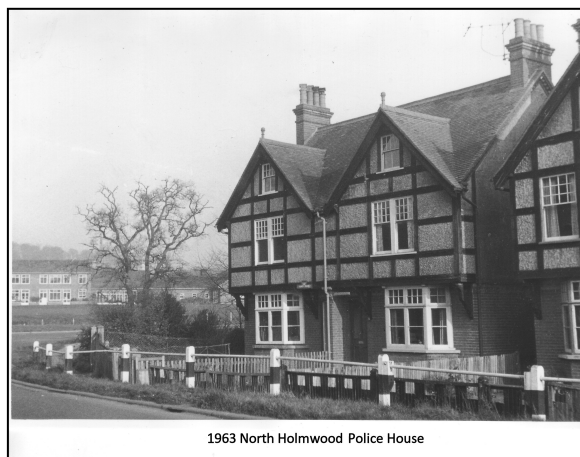


In the front office more equipment was installed.

A panel containing two telephones marked “X” and “Y” with corresponding lights above them was screwed to the wall of the front office along with a **Transmitting Station** consisting of a microphone with a transmit button and other associated knobs and dials.

The photo shows such an installation – in Dorking the Transmitting Station was separated from the X and Y phone panel.

All of this kit was installed over a period of months not just in the Dorking Police Station – but 250 Police Stations around the Country – but at the time nobody seemed to know why – or at least not at our lowly PC level .



I was then living at the North Holmwood Police House and at the same time as the kit arrived at Dorking “they” installed a grey plastic box containing a loud speaker next to the phone in the hallway of my Police House.



It was powered by a dry cell battery and when turned on would emit an annoying “Pipping” sound and became known as “Pipper Boxes”.

The “pipping” was so annoying that we always left ours turned off.

Every so often the “system” was tested. Sgt. “Jock” MAXWELL of Holmwood was our CD officer and I was required to turn my “Pippa Box” on at a specific time and answer the questions on a pre-supplied post card. Thus I would sit by the box in my hallway at North Holmwood.

1. Did your box turn on OK . . . . YES
2. You will now hear a Warning Signal – Pip Pip changes to a Wailing Sound
3. How did you hear the Warning Signal ?
4. Write the Code Word ??????? on your Routine Test Control Card.
5. Return the Card to your Chief Constable
6. Thank you.

As his name suggested Sgt. Maxwell was Scottish and had a strong Scottish accent. In trying to speak the “Code Word” clearly it was usually unintelligible at the other end.



So it was usual practice to ring Dorking nick to speak to Sgt. Maxwell and ask him what the wretched word was that he was trying to say, then put it on the Post card and send it off to God knows who!

The last bit of kit that completed this National Defence System was a hand-cranked Siren housed in a wooden carrying case that was delivered one day to my North Holmwood Police House.

Too large to store downstairs the siren lived in an upstairs bedroom.

Thus slowly everything became a little clearer.

Although we were never actually told, Dorking Nick was a “Carrier Control Point” CCP and that I, in my occasional role as the North Holmwood Policeman, was the actual end-point in the Nations “**Four Minute Warning**” system.

The chain of events, should the Soviets launch nuclear missiles against us was as follows:

1. The Radar equipment at RAF BMEWS station at Fylingdales would detect the missiles.

### YOUR FOUR MINUTES STARTS NOW !

2. The trajectory of the missiles would determine the target area.
3. The CCP in Police Stations in that area would be told by the “X” Telephone ringing.
4. The Warning Signal would be sent via the Transmitting Station in the nick – out to the “Pippa Boxes” in rural Police Houses.
5. The Warning Signal would inform **ME** to activate my Hand Siren to warn residents that an attack was imminent. I would presumably then be vaporised as I cranked away outside.

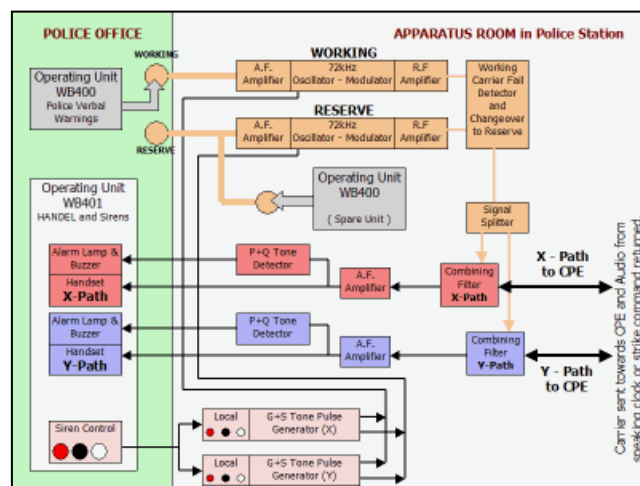
Now the pressing question was – how much of the original “Four Minute Warning” was left by the time my Pippa Box told me to crank up the siren to tell the poor folk of North Holmwood that their final minutes on earth had arrived?

Simple – let’s see how long it takes to get the Siren downstairs – into the front garden - out of its crate – onto its stand – get the handle fixed – and turned to generate a wail that might just be heard in the nearby Beacon Stores ?

Answer 4.5 mins – conclusion – **we are all doomed!**

The Siren was put up in the attic of the Police House where it probably still is!

You couldn’t make this up; no-one would believe you which is why I include all the official photos of the kit involved.



It was unbelievable to me then, and still is, that no-one had started at the sharp end and worked backwards to realise that the entire system was totally futile and a massive waste of money.

But my faith in the System was further eroded when . . . . .

### **The evening the “X” phone went off**

I was Station Officer at Dorking one evening – probably around 1965-66 as “X” and “Y” phones had by then become part of the office furniture. I was relieving the day’s Station Officer whilst he had his meal break – and I was alone, all the Office staff and Officers had gone home, and the Duty Sgt. was out, I know not where. Nothing odd there as things were nice and quiet when. . . **the “X” phone suddenly went off.** I didn’t ring - it buzzed violently and loudly and its adjacent light flashed brightly. In the seconds it took me to move from behind the desk to the panel holding the phone I remember thinking . . . “ Why should World War 3 break out when I’m here all on my own ?”

I picked up the phone and to my amazement heard two ladies chatting away. I listened to them happily chatting when I broke into their conversation and asked them who they were and where were they speaking from. Fortunately they could hear me and each gave me their names and telephone numbers. I asked them to put down their receivers and did the same with the “X” phone. All fell silent again. Had I actually averted WW3?

As I pointed out earlier lowly PC’s like me were never actually told what this system was all about, even though we were the ones at the sharp end who were, presumably, expected to initiate the alarm.

I had no idea who needed to be told so I made the compulsorily entry in the “Day Bok” listing the details of the two women who had been chatting and marked the disposal up for the Duty Sergeant to deal with when he returned. The Station Officer was the first back from meal break. I pointed out the incident and rode off into the early evening non-nuclear sun set.

It was a few days later I found myself back in the front office when I thought I’d look up the entries “disposal” column to see what the outcome of my little incident was.

There was a single word in the disposal column - - - **“IMPOSSIBLE”**

So obviously I had dreamed it all up. Beam me up Scotty!

## Part 7

### Animals (of all shapes and sizes)

Dorking Division was primarily a rural area. The most famous animal was the “Large Black Surrey Dog”. This creature was constantly leaping out in front of motorists causing them to swerve, crash or lose control. I recall actually heading some Accident Reports (SC15A and SC15B) with the words “Large Black Surrey Dog strikes again”.

Another was the “Surrey Puma” which had even become nationally famous by its appearances throughout the County. I can’t recall it ever appearing on our patch, no doubt our Large Black Surrey Dog had scared it off.

Accidents involving animals were pretty frequent. Run a dog over and you had to report it, do the same with a cat and we were not interested. I once headed the entry in the Day Book when a caller reported that he had impaled some poor moggie on the front of his car: CAT AS TROPHY. Yet another “Spoken to”

When we hit a Barn Owl one night, in the Crime Car, the world was suddenly filled with feathers.

Hitting a cow full on at 50 mph causes an awful lot of damage and a terrible mess. Clive BARHAM and I had to deal with such an incident one foggy night just before a Boeing Airliner crashed on its approach to Gatwick Airport. We were very late booking off and had just left for home when the plane came down. That was one shout I was relieved to have missed.

Cows would be found wandering around all over the place. We would do our best to get them off the roads ASAP, which sometimes meant turning them into people’s gardens with unpredictable outcomes.

I vividly recall a donkey running up the A24 at Capel one night, long before the bypass was built. I approached the beast waving arms and torch about to drive it in front of me. But the wretched animal would have none of it and instead chased me up the Capel High Street. Its nasty big teeth were inches away from my posterior until I vaulted over a garden wall to safety. The donkey lived in a field overlooking the road and I swear it “eeyore” at me every time I passed.

A flock of sheep loose on the A24 Mickelham bypass one Bank Holiday weekend resulted in a photo in the Mirror, not of me, but another officer called with me to deal.

Londoner’s out for a drive on Leith Hill would report escaped deer to us quite regularly.

But it was the scream of a vixen at night that started more “rape taking place” calls than actual incidents – thank goodness.

## Part 8

### Divisional Motor Cyclists

After just over a year in the job in September 1963, I was selected to become one of the new team of dedicated Scenes of Crime Officers.

I was not attached to CID but remained a uniformed PC with normal duties and was required to do my SOC duties as and when required.



I was supplied with a Triumph 350 cc “Twenty-One” motorcycle (497 PJ), which I kept at my Police House meaning that I could be called out to attend SOCs without imposing on anyone else to supply transport.

Thus very early on in my Police Service I was carrying out the duties of a Divisional Motor Cyclist.

The Divisional Motor Cyclist was the workhorse of any Division.

My time sheet would designate that I was on “Enquiries” either using 497 PJ which did not have a radio or on the 500cc Triumph which was fitted with a radio (designated M2HJ76 or J76 for short) if its usual rider PC Vernon Watkins was day off.

The picture is of a similar Radio Bike of that era.

Motor Cyclists usually worked two shifts:- 8.00am – 4.00pm or 4.00pm to 12mn. Reporting to the Station at 8.00am, and if I was the only motorcyclist on duty, the first job was to run the Divisional Post over to Leatherhead.



You were hardly a free agent as your Pigeon Hole in the constables Office was ALWAYS bulging with “Enquiries” allocated by the Station Sergeant. I recall the Sergeant Pat Kennefick was one of the most efficient Station Sergeants and he and I had a good rapport over the volume of work that he habitually kept throwing at me. Then there were the Day Book jobs that had been allocated to you, which you had to pick up and deal with – along of course with the back-log of work that you were constantly trying to clear. It seemed that I was never able to clear the backlog of work in my box.

For about 18 months, from September 1963 I doubled up as the Dorking SOC Officer.

Call outs from home to SOC, which usually came in the morning, often meant that I was working double shifts especially if I was on late turn. I ran up enormous overtime totals and often had to take a whole week off to clear them.

The trouble was that the Motor Cyclists were usually the first choice to attend any incidents that came in during the day. Thus you would set out full of good intentions and with a list of things to be done but you would be constantly side tracked by the Station Officer, or “Control” if you were on the radio bike J76.

A lot of the work was boring routine stuff. Serving Summonses – taking statements – clearing up queries –and giving out “Death Messages”.

I was sent to one family to ascertain IF the dead body found in an hotel somewhere off our patch WAS the husband of the wife I was then talking to. To put it mildly you have to be sensitive to people’s emotions at times like these. It transpired that it WAS her husband. I made sure there was someone there to support her and rode away to the next job.

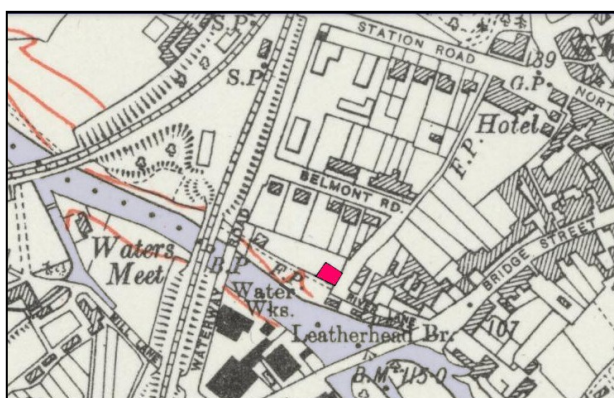
She later made a complaint against me. Not that I had done the job badly just that I was too young to be doing a job like that! Sometimes you can’t win.

The most stressful and time consuming of incidents were the Road Traffic Accidents and Sudden Deaths.

### **Sudden Deaths**

Dorking did not have an officer designated as the Coroner’s Officer the role falling to whoever was sent on the job, which was usually the Divisional Motor Cyclist. My early months in the job during the cold winter of 1962-63 when many old people succumbed to the atrocious weather showed that, unusually (and a bit unnaturally) I was able to cope with the Post Mortem examination that was required following a Sudden Death.

You would attend the scene of the death and arrange for a doctor to attend if there was not one already present. This was to determine that life was extinct and assuming there was nothing to arouse your suspicions a call would be made to Sherlocks, the local undertaker, to remove the body to the Leatherhead Mortuary.



You were required to fix a brown luggage label to the body at the scene, which would be used for identification purposes. The big toe was the favourite attachment point. The Leatherhead Mortuary, unlike the one at Epsom was not part of the Hospital but was an isolated building behind the private houses in Belmont Road (shown red in the early map of the Town). It bore no signage as to what it

was, or what went on inside it.

Back to the nick, chats with the Station Sergeant who would then ring the Coroner and tell him what we had been able to establish concerning the death. Sometimes, but not often, we had sufficient information for the Coroner to be satisfied as to the cause of death and there was no PM. But usually he ordered a PM and the call was placed with Dr Keith Mant's (Home Office Pathologist) secretary who ran his diary.

When you attended the mortuary for the PM there were always more than one to be performed. Dr Mant would only turn out for a specific death if there were suspicious circumstances. Otherwise he would wait until he had two or three to deal with at the same time.

All you, as Coroner's Officer, actually had to do was identify to the Pathologist that this was the correct body (Luggage tag on big toe). But in non-complicated cases the Mortuary Assistant had already open the body by the time Dr Mant arrived and so it could be pretty upsetting for many officers.

Dr Mant would arrive in his Humber Imperial Saloon with his secretary, a well turned out young lady equipped with clip board and notes. Dr MANT would then perform the PM whilst you either remained inside the mortuary or made your excuses and escaped into the open air. Another problem with the Leatherhead mortuary was that the outside door opened directly into the "Operating theatre" so once things had started it was best not to open the door for fear that some member of the Public may be passing. Dr Mant's secretary remained next to him as he dictated notes on his findings.

If you showed any interest in the proceedings Dr MANT was happy to explain some of the more interesting things he found. Dr Mant would usually give you a verbal cause of death that you would record in your Pocket Book. Sometimes he would take samples away which would delay proceedings.

Back to the nick for more chats with the Station Sergeant who would then ring the Coroner with the cause of death. Usually it would be natural causes, no inquest, but sometimes the Coroner would order an inquest. I never dealt with a sudden death that resulted in an inquest as these were usually identified as such in the initial enquiries and CID would take over.

Once we had an unidentified body found. With my SOC hat on I was required to take the fingerprints of the deceased whilst the photographer took photos. These were then published in the Surrey Intelligence Report and the National Police Gazette.

In this sort of environment there was often a level of "graveyard humour" that made such incidents bearable. Respect for the dead was always there but sometimes things happened that made you smile even under such stressful situations.

I had dealt with the suicide of a young woman found in the bedroom of a house where she lived alone. After about four hours I was able to leave the scene and the nextdoor neighbour asked me if I would like a cup of tea. I was literally gasping and when the cup of steaming tea was presented to me the lady smiled at me sympathetically as I drank. But it was Herbal Tea

and tasted and smelled like Parma-Violets. And she just stood there smiling at me whilst I had to drink it all down.

On another occasion we had a report of a “Pig on the Line - Brockham”. The call came into the office when both Mick Morley and I were available. Mick on J76 and me on 497PJ were soon on the scene on the Redhill/Reading Railway Line at Brockham where a footbridge crosses the line. It soon became apparent that it was in fact a human body that had apparently been hit by more than one train. As Mick Morley was on the radio bike I went down onto the line to join Railway Staff from the nearby Betchworth Railway Station who had made the discovery.

There were elements at the scene that I was not happy with and I declared a Major Incident resulting in half of Dorking nick joining us at the scene. It was a cold snowy morning and hours later the distressing job of collecting all the body parts was completed and it was decided that a strong cup of tea back at Dorking nick was called for. We were all soon back at the nick trying to make light of what had been a pretty harrowing affair.

Whilst in the canteen I was called out to the front office to take a phone call:

Voice: “Is that the officer who was on the line at Brockham just now ?

Me: “ Yes what’s the problem?

Voice: “Station Master at Betchworth here – we have found a leg”

Me: “ A LEG! Where?

Voice: “ On the track at Betchworth Station. We picked it up and it’s in the office now”

Me: “ I can’t believe it – OK I shall be out there straight away”

I told the Station Officer of the call who said nothing in reply and went outside and got on my bike to head out to Betchworth.

I was just about to pull away when Mick MORLEY leaned out of the window and shouted:

“Station Master at Betchworth here . . . EVER BEEN HAD !

### **Road Traffic Accidents**

RTAs were numerous and too frequently fatal. Traffic Department was, in theory, the section geared up to deal with such events but frequently it was the Divisional Motor Cyclist who was first on the scene. My heart always sank when I arrived at a serious RTA to discover I was the first to arrive and more worrying that the Ambulance was not yet in attendance.

The first job of checking for casualties fell to you as even if there were members of the Public in attendance they were normally just standing back looking. We had all received First Aid training from St John’s Ambulance and you soon learned that it was not the casualties who

were shouting loudly that you had to worry about – it was the ones who were alive but very still and quiet.

Fatal Accidents carried with them the fact that they were also Sudden Deaths and that there would be a PM and then almost certainly an inquest to determine the cause of death – along with any offences under the Road Traffic Act. Therefore a senior Officer would always turn out to assist at the scene.

Collecting the evidence at the scene could take ages, and I was more usually engaged on Traffic Control at such incidents after Traffic Dept. and an Inspector had taken over at the scene.

I recall a head-on collision between two cars that had resulted in multiple deaths with the bodies trapped in the vehicles until the Fire Brigade could cut them out. I was one side of the accident with my Oppo the other side working a one-way system around the scene, the two cars being covered by tarpaulins whilst we awaited the arrival of the Fire Brigade. It was early evening and rapidly getting dark – when a car heading towards me had evidently not seen the warning signs that we had placed down the road. At the last moment he saw me and skidded to a halt whilst I took cover in the ditch. To put it mildly I was livid. I went up to the car and found an elderly couple, in a state of shock, sitting in the back with a young man driving. I remonstrated with the driver on his bad driving and, as he seemed indifferent to my advice, I physically dragged him out of his car and across to one of the vehicles involved in the accident pulled back the tarpaulin and showed him what bad driving could result in.

The young man was pretty shocked and very remorseful as we walked back to his car where it transpired that it was his parents who were the rear seat passengers.

In confidence the father later told me that he was grateful for what I had done as it was far more effective than a fine for Driving without Due Care.

My one time colleague from initial training Peter Marsden Marsden-Smith (his full name **WAS** P.M. Marsden-Smith) was killed when driving north down the A24 Mickelham Bye-Pass. He failed to negotiate the long right-hand bend at the end of the straight through the cutting. Fortunately I was not on duty at the time. Peter had an aunt living in Dorking who found him and I think his wife accommodation in Leslie Cottage at the end of the lane just off Church Street. Peter was a very sound sleeper who was occasionally late for early turns. If I was on nights and he was on early, Peter would hang a string attached to his toes out of his bedroom window. At 5.00am I would pull the string to get him up, he would throw down the key and I would let myself in and put the kettle on.

### **Unexploded Bombs**

Early on in my service we seemed to keep receiving reports of both unexploded bombs and various parts of aircraft falling from the sky. Whilst I was on the beat early in 1963 an American Air Force jet was forced to jettison its auxiliary fuel tanks over Leith Hill. I was then a resident of the section house and we were suddenly overrun by American Air Force personnel who had been tasked with retrieving their lost property ASAP. Whilst not involved

in the actual retrieval operations, what I do remember were the evenings spent with these American's in the Station's Social Club Bar. Harry Robinson was the usual man behind the bar and once the Americans had become used to drinking our warm beer many friendships were formed.

Fast forward to June 1963, when President Kennedy landed at Gatwick Airport on a state visit. Several Officers from Dorking, including PC Robinson, were detailed to be part of the guard of honour, whilst a few others and I were the other side of the cordon mingling with the crowd. I remember Air Force ONE a gleaming Boeing 707 taxiing to a stop the stairs being wheeled in place and the door to the aircraft opening. Instead of the President emerging it was an American Air Force Officer who stood at the top of the stairs looking rather as if he was surprised to find himself there. But he soon regained his composure when he recognised Harry Robinson behind all the dignitaries at the foot of the stairs. Waving wildly he shouted "Hallo Robby" – it was the commanding Officer of the team we had earlier had at Dorking.

**Unexploded Bombs** tended to be found either on Ranmore Common or, less frequently on Box Hill. I was told that during WW2 there were ant-aircraft batteries on both Hills lobbing any amount of metalwork into the air. Inevitably some of it came straight down again to lay buried in the ground until deeper ploughing techniques and land clearances made them float back to the surface.

Being just too young for National Service I had zero experience or knowledge of such things and treated any "Suspect" bomb as the real thing until someone told me differently.

Thus the Bomb Disposal Squad of the Army were regular visitors. Occasionally the "suspect" turned out to be both live and very dangerous. The Bomb Squad would declare the device too dangerous to move and it was destroyed on site in a "controlled explosion". I got the impression that such events were the pinnacle of the Disposal Squads endeavours.

After a flurry of UXBs in the early 60's it went strangely quiet on the UXB front until a few years later when, as Divisional Motor Cyclist, I was sent to the Box Hill Boy's School following the report of a UXB in the grounds. I was taken down the playing fields at the rear of school to a derelict brick built building with no roof. A ladder had been placed against one wall and climbing it I looked down into the interior of the building. It was full of water but rising out of the water was a black metallic looking object that, in my mind, looked exactly like a bomb and a big one at that. Call out the troops! Soon the playing field was full of Police, Fire Brigade and Bomb Disposal but no pupils from the school, which we had evacuated. The decision on whether to close the A24 Mickelham Bye-Pass, which ran along the bottom of the playing field was delayed until the water had been pumped out and we could see what we were dealing with. A pump was carefully lowered down and the water level began to drop. Revealing the other three legs of an old Victorian dining table.

## **Mods and Rockers**

In the mid-sixties it was the habit of Rockers on Motor Cycles to knock chunks out of Mods on Motor Scooters. They would travel down to the Coast – Brighton and Margate to perform these rituals and for a couple of years used Box Hill as their venue. But Dorking or specifically the Mickelham Bye Pass and Ryker's Café at the Burford Bridge was always a Mecca for the Rockers.

On summer week-ends hundreds of motor cyclists would gather and race each other up and down the Bye-Pass to the considerable danger of day trippers going down to the coast and to the ever popular Box Hill beauty spot. Our answer to this annoyance was to patrol the same road stopping every motorcyclist we could to their general annoyance

The favourite routine was to watch as your mate stopped someone, wait for him to release them and promptly stop them again. Many HORT 1 forms were issued for the production of documents and where applicable specific offences were reported.

Prior to December 1965 there was no blanket speed limit on de-restricted roads like the Mickelham Bye-Pass. The solution was to report motorcyclists caught weaving between the traffic at excessive speeds for "Driving at a speed dangerous". Our Dorking magistrates understood what was going on and I recall Mrs Dubison chair of the Bench hearing one of these cases that I had brought. Mrs Dubison had earlier seen my wife and our young family shopping in the town and remarked on how "charming" she thought our two children were.

Having taken the oath stated my name and number I was just about to launch into my evidence when she stopped me. "How are your two lovely children officer?" I was asked, a sufficient reason for an immediate appeal I would have thought.

Another favourite haunt of the Rockers was the "Tirola Coffee Bar" North Street Dorking. The café was run by an ex-road manager for Cliff Richard and served nothing stronger than coffee but was often the scene of altercations between rival bike gangs.

## **Box Hill and Mods and Rockers**

The years 1965 and 1966 saw Box Hill feature in the craze for Mods and Rockers to assemble at a resort and cause any amount of chaos. But it was slightly different for the Box Hill events. Certainly the Rockers were there, as normal, on their bikes but the "Mod" element arrived by train at Box Hill station and then swarmed over the Hill on foot.

There were no social media sites then to arrange where the location of the next "bash" was to be. Rumours circulated and informants in the Metropolitan Police would be used to identify possible sites. I recall being sent out to the A3 Hook Roundabout early one Sunday morning in 1965 to gauge how many motor cyclists were heading south indicating that Box Hill was, as suspected, that day's venue.

Best fun was to be had when a train arrived from London at Box Hill Station. Half the passengers were straight over the fence and away but we would funnel the rest through a line

of officers who would check for offensive weapons. Chief items causing offence were belts holding up trousers and boot laces holding on shoes. With both of these removed the mobility of the individual was considerably curtailed. You would spend your day herding groups of jobs on your Motor Bike off the top of Box Hill and out onto Headley Heath where you would abandon them and go back to get some more.

The following year 1966 saw the same events being repeated but this time with more jobs and an increase in the levels of violence and damage. My Motor cycling career came to an end when I was one of a group of three Police Motor Cyclists being sent hither and thither all day to deal with incidents on and around Box Hill. I recall coming down Pebble Hill to respond to a call to attend Betchworth Railway Station and seeing jobs jumping from car to car that were stuck in the traffic causing considerable damages to their roofs. Whatever the problem was at Betchworth, it was quickly resolved by putting everyone on a train heading I know not where.

There was then a slight pause before the next shout came in to attend Deepdene Station Dorking as not doubt that is where the train we had just loaded up was heading. I distinctly recall my two colleagues immediately heading off on their Police Motor Cycles whilst I made a conscious decision not to rush into this next event.

I turned onto the A25 and headed off towards Dorking on the old faithful J76.

I only ever had some still snapshots in my mind of what happened next.

SNAP: A solo Motorcycle turning in the road directly in front of me.

SNAP: In an ambulance (Siren noises) with excruciating pain in my back

SNAP: Bright lights and someone sewing up my face with a needle and thread.

I had hit a solo Motor Cyclist with a girl on the pillion doing a “U” turn on the A25 Reigate Road on a left hand bend just past the Old Coach Road.

Of the three of us involved, the girl pillion rider suffered the most having to have her right leg amputated below the knee as it had taken the full impact. I smashed through the Perspex screen on my bike and then must have flown through the air as I was found off the side of the road on the slope leading down to the River Mole. The rider of the other bike was basically un-injured. Apart from some lost teeth and a fractured skull I had no lasting injuries but I was badly bruised all over and it took me nearly three months to get back to work again.

Months after the accident the senior officer dealing with the case interviewed me at the nick. When he had finished he just happened to leave the accident file behind when he left the room. I knew that I then had the choice of discovering who the other parties were but as I had no sense of guilt over the accident I left the folder closed. Thus ended my service as a Police Motor Cyclist, I never rode a motorcycle again.

From being bored on the beat I had then been educated during my time during SOC and then kept VERY busy as a Motor Cyclist. Returning to light duties meant many sessions as Station

Officer plus some turns on the beat and I was ready again this time for Crime Car Duties with Clive Barham.

But you don't come that close to the lights going out without changing your general attitude to life, from then on my family and I came first.

## Part 9

### Crime Car

In the mid 1960's attitudes began to change.

The realisation that something had to be done to stem the increasing crime rates in the County may have been the spur that turned the old Divisional Vehicle into the Crime Car.



The equipment remained the same – a Hillman Husky Estate but fitted with the export 1600cc engine and an alternator instead of the standard dynamo to allow the radio and other equipment to function - but it was hardly a rapid pursuit vehicle.

What was different with the Crime Car was that now the emphasis was on stopping and checking vehicles instead of the old “General Patrol” function.

The car was crewed by two officers who would always work together, whenever possible, and around 1966/67 I was teamed up with PC Clemence and then later with Clive BARHAM. There were no limits set on where we could go or who we could stop the emphasis was on catching villains but obviously general police duties (mainly RTAs) sometimes would occupy our time.

#### **“Just a Routine Check Sir”**

Clive Barham was a keen sea fisherman – hence we would often “fish off the groin” which was what we called the junction of the A24 with the A25 near Spital Heath (no M25 then!). Our routine was to watch the traffic passing and if either of us saw anything vaguely suspicious we would be off to check them. Many times I would ask Clive why we were off after someone and he would have no good reason. It was relatively easy to determine if a person actually owned the vehicle they was driving – asking them what was in the boot - before you opened it. Enquiring when the tax expired or simply asking them to turn off the engine not easy if you had wired the car (in those days very easily done)

Many and varied were the reasons given for arresting people. Some duty sergeants back at the nick understood our situations and would help in determining if we had actually caught a villain whilst others just saw our arrival at the nick as an opportunity to take their meal break.

Once we had stopped a vehicle being driven by a young lady and I was talking to her through the driver's window when Clive suddenly reached past me and pulled the woman's hair. It came off in his hand, it was a wig and we were dealing with a man. Back at the nick I asked Clive what has aroused his suspicions and he replied, "She had hairy arms". Using such astute powers of observation we would bravely pursue our foes.

Frequently our haul would be potential offenders – travelling up from Brighton or down from London - whom we had in all likelihood prevented from committing crime. At night it was common for a vehicle travelling across the County to have been stopped earlier in another Division. A quick check via "Control" and we could compare the stories given to us with those given earlier to other officers.

### **Police Radios**

Vehicle and name checks were now done via the radio. They still took time but you knew you had struck gold when "Control" would first ask you to switch to handset before giving you the result of a check - just in case the villain was in the car with you.

Some things remained antiquated – one being the "Lost or Stolen Vehicle Sheet". This was a piece of paper usually attached to a clip board upon which you were expected to record details of all Lost or Stolen vehicles. All Station messages from control would broadcast details of such vehicles, which you were expected to enter on the sheet. But by the time you had found the wretched piece of paper in amongst all the debris that tended to accumulate – you had forgotten the number.

Each car used to have a copy of the "Surrey Atlas" a hardbound book containing street maps of the entire county. Very useful if you were off your patch and lost. But even greater fun when there was a chase on anywhere in the County.

Control would switch to "talk through" whenever car-to-car messages were essential, this also meant that everyone could hear what was going on. Once a chase had been initiated you could follow it in the "Surrey Atlas" as someone could usually be relied on to transmit the current location of the action :- "Page 65 – A6 to A7".

I think the "Surrey Atlas" was issued in conjunction with a scheme to make Police Radio messages less easy to intercept. These were VHF signals and easily picked up by anyone with a VHF radio set. Many local garages would have a radio permanently tuned into the Surrey Police frequency to pick up details of local RTAs. Often a breakdown truck would appear at the scene of an RTA without being called for "Just passing, can I help" being the excuse.

Under the proposed scheme code letters and locations would describe incidents by reference to the Surrey Atlas. A Damage only accident in South Street Dorking would translate into something like "ABC1 at 65 A5".

I recall that we were actually issued with a booklet listing all types of Incidents and associated Code letters and for a few weeks it was tried out. Obviously the whole thing was a complete disaster. You would lose the booklet, mislay the Atlas and for Motor Cyclists they always had to stop to find the booklet under layers of wet clothing and then remind control that they did not have a Surrey Atlas about their person.

A “Call Back” button on the handset unit on the vehicle’s petrol tank solved the problem of motorcyclists stopping to answer their radios.

Conversations with control would run like this “HJ J76 receiving – over.” One push on the “call back” button “Call-Back received – RTA South Street Dorking – received over.” One push on the call back button “Call back received HJ standby. Two pushes on the “Call back” meant that you would pull over and actually speak to control.

The busy signal on the radio was a not unpleasant tone. You could exactly imitate this sound with your own low whistle and as an experiment I once sat in a packed canteen at Dorking quietly whistling away. No one heard me, we were so used to the sound.

I was once solo in the car on the top of Box Hill when an incident broke in Pixham Lane Dorking. I drove the car to the lookout and had an excellent aerial view of the scene below me including the villain making his escape on foot. Via “talk-through” I directed other units to intercept the villain who was arrested. Only then did Control ask me where on earth I was.

One problem with these early radio sets was they needed a lot of power so you had to keep the engine running, which would cause it to overheat. After one rather long session controlling traffic at an RTA the old Husky had been left with its engine running in order to keep the blue light and the radio going. When we returned to it steam was issuing from every orifice and it was as dead as a dodo. No choice but to “escort” one of the breakdown trucks that was towing one of the vehicles involved in the RTA with another rope also pulling us along as well.

## Personal Radios

Personal Radios had arrived by this time, so we could talk to Dorking nick directly. The first ones we had were in two parts – a receiver and a transmitter with a pop-up aerial. Reception was patchy from the transmitter situated on the Dorking Section House roof. When we were first issued with them, around 1968 I think, they were quite a novelty. In the early hours of one morning, after the Duty Sergeant had gone off duty, we were up Box Hill and I called up PC Eddie Armstrong who was Station Officer.

There was a considerable amount of backchat when another voice suddenly broke in “Last station identify yourself.” Fearing the worse I reverted to correct radio procedures giving my collar number name and location. It was a relief when the reply came, “Morning mate – Station Officer Crowborough here”. By some fluke Crowborough in East Sussex could receive our messages when we transmitting from Box Hill. It became a regular nighttime habit to call up Crowborough from then on.



This fluke came in handy when in 1968 Roy Tutill was murdered. Soon after his body had been discovered another lad from Chart Downs went missing. He was later found hanged and I was one of the search party in the area on foot, when he was found. We needed to contact Dorking but the personal radios were not working, as we were the other side of the Glory Woods from Dorking, which was probably blocking the signal. I climbed a tree to gain some height and tried calling up Crowborough – and got through, who then open a landline to Dorking enabling us to converse. I got all sorts of praise for this and all through messing around.

### **Messing About**

Even life in the Crime Car could become boring. On night turn if nothing had happened before meal break (2.00am) then there was a good chance that you had a tedious few hours in front of you. Air Guns were frequently seen in those days and often in the hands of young youths hence we occasionally had a seized airgun with us that we would eventually hand in.

Sweeping your headlights over a golf course at night caught many a bunny rabbits long enough for the observer, who was riding “side-saddle” with the door open to let off a shot. Strangely enough the Goods Yard at Ockley Railway Station was alive with rabbits at night. We never hit anything!

The number plate game was another way of keeping occupied. Playing the game meant that you had to see the number you were looking for on a vehicle in the correct order. There was a time when every policeman in the division was playing. In those days Registration Numbers on vehicles were just numbers and letters. In 1963 the “A” suffix was added then “B” in 1964 etc. making the dating of cars much easier. There was a joke doing the rounds at this time “Why do Policemen go around in twos? “Because one knows his numbers and the other knows his letters.”

One afternoon I was on number 46, so looking for No 47 when we drove up Dorking High Street. Parked outside Clears Electrical Shop was a grey Daimler No??? 48. Now every Dorking copper knew that the police doctor Dr John Partridge drove a Jaguar Registration No JRP47. So it was a rapid drive down the High Street up Moores Road and into Dr Partridge’s drive to cop the number 47 off his Jag; success car parked in driveway. Turn round back up High Street to Clears Electrical and Grey Daimler??? 48 had gone!

Booking off that same evening we were entering some disposals in the Day Book when we noticed an entry reporting that a well-dressed lady accompanied by a Chauffeur had kited a very large cheque at Clears Electrical that afternoon. The manager of the shop thought that they had departed in a large grey car. Clive and I were obviously a good team as he remembered the letters and of course I remembered its number 48. More praise and again for messing about

### **Box Hill**

Box Hill tended to dominate our lives. We were up and down it all day; at weekends it was swamped with day trippers getting into all sorts of trouble and at night it became the centre for more sinister activities.

## **The Zig-Zag**

The Zig-Zag road running up the hill from the Burford Bridge was actually a private road and would be closed on the 31<sup>st</sup> December every year to maintain that status. Hence traffic Offences on this particular section of road could not, technically, be prosecuted. However one flasher who jumped out of the bushes on the Zig-Zag stark naked right in front of us soon wished he had looked first. Being a private road the Zig-Zag could be closed off without resource to notices and bye-laws etc. and was frequently used by film companies. Driving up the Zig-Zag one day Clive and I were amazed to see a driverless milk float coming down the road towards us. It was to be used in a James Bond film and was being road tested.

On another occasion we had stopped a white Mk2 Jaguar on the Mickelham bye-pass to discover that it was to be used as the villain's car in an episode of "Z Cars". The occupants of the Jag were so chuffed that we had thought their vehicle fit to stop that we were invited to meet the Director at the Burford Bridge Hotel. Here we were told that the Jag was to be filmed being pushed off the Hill into the Brockham Chalk Pits the following day and would we like to watch. The resulting sequence was used time and time again on the TV not just in Z cars.

In 1963 the American producer Carl Foreman filmed sequences of a film called "The Victors" on the Zig-Zag and Box Hill became a hillside in Italy for this WW2 film in which many famous stars featured, I remember Eli Wallach and became a fan from then on. The film company were there for over a week and we could get a paid rest day to work there stopping the traffic. Which is what I was doing on the day when the dummy "Pillbox" that had been constructed on the first "Z" bend was to be blown up, as the climax to the entire sequence. We were issued with walkie-talkies and I was designated "Policeman No 1" at the bottom of the hill. First I was directed to stop the traffic and to tell everyone to open their windows. Then I was told to hide myself – so sat down behind a bush with an excellent view of the proceedings. I listened in as Mr Foreman checked with each of the many cameras that were to capture this one off event. Then there was a message for me "Policeman No 1 will you take your bloody hat off". Apparently my helmet was protruding from the bush and would have been in the shot. So nearly was I famous

## **The Forte Tea Rooms**

At the top of the Zig-Zag stood the Fort Tea rooms run by Bob Ruffles and his wife Greta. This was a frequent tea stop and we would not hide the fact that we were there but park the Husky prominently in front. Bob was a regular source of information about what was going on up on the hill. He would walk his very large but very soft Alsatian every day and knew where any "dodgy" cars might be found. At night we would circle around the back of his premises giving Bob a quick flash of the blue light so that he knew who it was.

## **"Stop or I set the dog on you"**

Box Hill was the destination of choice for many distinct types, courting couples and the "peepers" who were associated with them, day trippers down from London in their own cars and those doing the same thing but in stolen vehicles and finally suicides who thought Box Hill a suitable place to end it all. Stolen vehicles and suicides would normally be found on early turn.

Into the Tea Rooms for a cup of tea and to get directions to any suspect vehicles that Bob had noticed, then a drive over the top of the hill to check out any vehicles still concealed in the woods.

At night time the routine was different. At any time after 11.00pm we would drive quickly across the top of the hill with blue light flashing to the Wimpy Bar. Stop, blue light out, turn round and drive slowly back across top of hill but this time lights out and off the road amongst the trees. The theory was that anyone up to no good would have seen us apparently leaving the area and would then think "They are not around at present so I will shove off". It frequently worked, any number of cars would start up and start moving through the woods. Similarly many a "peeper" on foot would be flushed out as we drove through and sometimes courting couples would actually wind down their windows and tell us of anything suspicious. One poor girl called for our help when her "customer" had a heart attack and died trapping her beneath him. I need not mention the remarks that that incident generated! Anyone on foot would tend to run off towards the road and then straight over where the slope is extremely steep. It was no fun chasing anyone down that slope so with my last available breath I would shout: "Police – stop or I will set the dog on you ". I remember on two occasions when this actually worked.

### **Accident Involving a Police Vehicle**

We were not always working with our regular partner due to annual leave, sickness and any number of other reasons. In such circumstances we would then usually be teamed up with another Crime Car Officer and we quickly adapted to each other's different methods – as the aims remained the same. On 17<sup>th</sup> February 1968 lightning struck twice for me when PC Bob Bartlett, who was driving, crashed the Husky out at Charlwood .

No other vehicles were involved and we ended upside down in a ditch suspended by our safety belts. After some struggling we exited through the back door. I was OK apart from having a chunk of hair pulled out when my head hit the roof of the car but Bob was concussed and needed to go to hospital.

One of the worse elements of my earlier motor cycle crash had been when Insp. John Over had called at my home to tell my wife that I was in Redhill Hospital following an accident. Just under two years later here I was again about to be whisked off the Redhill with Bob. I refused to go and went straight home. I just needed a few days off. But of course my wife knew that I had been involved in another accident and to save her from any future anguish I would make a habit of ringing her if I was late or overdue for any reason. This was not easy to do sometimes when you were marooned somewhere remote from any phones.

In 1969 the old Huskys were replaced with Austin 1300 Automatics as the Crime Cars. In June 1969, with Clive Barham driving, we went off the road on the A24 just north of its junction with Pixham Lane. We ploughed into the central reservation knocking down a few trees before coming to rest the right way up (this time!) but in the opposite carriageway. I only bruised my leg when the Fire extinguisher came loose and hit me, but the car was a write off. Put back on light duties usually as Station Officer – In July 1969 I was in the office the night Neil Armstrong landed on the moon.

We rigged up a TV in the office and watched it all night. Going off duty at 6.00am I woke everyone at home and sat them down in front of the box – as this was HISTORY. Only my daughter had vague memories of the event.

I also began to seriously reflect on my future.

## **RESIGNATION**

Towards the end on 1969 I put in my resignation. It wasn't just the accidents.

My reasoning was that if I wished to advance my Police Career then any promotion would have brought with it the necessity to uproot my little family and move them to where I had been directed – not where they wanted to go. I was struck by the number of officers who were literally counting down the days to their retirement. There was a feeling that you were trapped in the job, that there was nothing else you could do. There was a sense that you lived and worked and only associated with others in the bubble that was the Police Service. It took nerve to cut yourself off from this support network and go it alone. There was little knowledge of the job market and how it worked outside the service.

And then, after a bit of persuasion, as I knew the company when it had its offices in North Holmwood, I had an offer of a job with the Olyslager Organisation in Vincent Lane Dorking. The job was one I was well suited to perform and gave me a wage that immediately allowed me to purchase my own house in Horsham, as on resignation you immediately receive a "Notice to Quit" your Police House. Other perks included regular hours and regular meals working in a modern warm and dry office, sleeping every night and new friends who like me for who I was not what I was.

I grew my hair and soon discovered that the world was actually full of very nice kind people.

I have no regrets about joining the Police Service, as it served me well. Much of my subsequent advancements were due to the self-confidence and judgement that the job had given me, but my decision to leave was one of the best decisions of my life.

