Along with the first ever flying of the new CPA flag, the annual CPA Conference hosted by Essex CPA Branch took place at the Park Inn Hotel, Southend. With a conference theme of ‘Stepping Out of the Boat’ this three day event attracted over 110 delegates, and provided a great opportunity to enjoy a wide range of sessions covering many aspects of the Christian life. In addition, the more adventurous also took the opportunity to dodge the showers and briskly promenade along the aptly named ‘mile long’ Southend Pier. More than one delegate discovered that the walk back seemed decidedly longer than the outward adventure!

The Conference was welcomed to Southend by Chief Superintendent Luke Collinson. After the welcome address, DS Richard Burgess provided an insight into the First World War Chaplains who served on the front line armed with nothing more than a Bible and a deep commitment to serve God. Later, former Essex Branch leader Dave Gilbey spoke about the Chelmsford 24/7 prayer initiative and of a recent week of prayer involving over 50 local churches committing together to an excess of 160 hours of prayer over Chelmsford.

Continuing with the ‘nautical’ theme, David Hillyer from the Christian charity ‘Fellowship Afloat’ also provided a fascinating insight into their ministry based on a Light (ship) Vessel situated on 158 acres of protected salt marsh. At this location they provide sailing and outdoor activities - not only for children and young people, but also for single parents, the homeless and for those with other needs.

Delegates were then involved in two interactive ‘Walk Through the Bible’ sessions, with the energetic support of Tom Greene. He ensured even the most apt Bible scholar was able to consider anew seemingly familiar Bible accounts, including the Conference related theme of Peter stepping out of his boat. (Continued on page 2)
Saturday evening was a time of laughter, tears and fond memories as delegates and invited guests marked Don Axcell’s final day as Executive Director. Through a photo montage and presentations those gathered were all able to take the opportunity to thank Don for his faithful service to the CPA over the last 52 years.

Sunday saw an update from Tony Britten on the work of the International Christian Police Fellowship. This was followed by worship, led by our own CPA praise group and communion led by Don. Included in the service was the commissioning by the Very Reverend Nick Henshall, Dean of Chelmsford, of Lee Russell to the role of Executive Director. And so the Conference ended with delegates encouraged that each should step confidently out of their boat in renewed service to God.

And finally, for four delegates driving back to Wales after the Conference, the weekend still held more when much to their surprise they were stopped by the Police for an ANPR “flagged” issue. However with some tactful and light hearted conversation it wasn’t long before the now slightly bemused officer established that not only was everything in order but also that the car contained one serving police officer, two retired officers and one police officer’s daughter. For the patrolling officer it probably wasn’t so much about him ‘Stepping out of the boat’ but maybe more about him ‘Stepping back in the car’ to try and figure out how he’d managed to have a such a Sunday afternoon encounter with four CPA Conference delegates! God knows!

Where Duty Calls

From a small beginning in the nineteenth century with a lady responding to a seemingly insignificant comment from an officer, the Christian Police Association was born. However its development has remained largely unrecorded until recently retired Executive Director Don Axcell, over many years delved into the Association from a variety of sources and produced in one book a complete history of the CPA which will be of interest to many connected with the Association both past and present.

Available in book (£7.99) and Kindle form (£6.99) from Amazon Books.

Force Seeking Faith Coordinator

Devon and Cornwall are launching a new initiative by seeking a Faith Coordinator to work both from home and to be based ideally either in Plymouth or at Police HQ, Exeter. The role recognises the important part that the faith community plays in blending police resources with volunteers to work together to fill support gaps in the community. The principal responsibility of this paid role will be to stimulate and coordinate the growth of community based volunteer projects that support the Forces overall mission plan.

For further details or an informal discussion please contact Sarah Jeffrey on 07720341614 or sarah.jeffrey@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk
National Day of Prayer for the Police – engagement continues to increase

Meetings were held across the UK to mark National Day of Prayer for the Police on 5th May 2016. This year saw record numbers joining in prayerful support for the police service. One such meeting, held at The Square Methodist Church in Dunstable, drew Christians from many traditions. There was representation from the Catholic Police Guild along with support from Bedfordshire’s Assistant Chief Constable Mike Colbourne, The High Sheriff of Bedfordshire Charles Whitbread and CPA Executive Director Lee Russell.

It was a great opportunity for Christian groups to pray for the police both nationally and locally. As Branch leader DC Mandy Godfree (pictured) later explained, ‘This was a day of reconciliation and solidarity, bringing Jesus to the heart of the community and to ask for His hand to be on all that the police stand for and for the personal lives of those that work within it. Our Branch is blessed with regular support from over 50 churches and Christian groups across the county, for which we are always grateful.’

Lee Russell also met with Nottinghamshire CPA branch leader Matt McFarlane at a prayer event for the police at Mapperley. Matt worked closely with the Force Chaplain, David Monckton in setting up this event.

CPA and Social Media – excellent results

Over the past months, the interest in the CPA through social media has significantly increased. Andy Robinson, Hertfordshire deputy Branch leader and social media coordinator explained more: - ‘As a result of both the Conference and our National Day of Prayer we’ve seen our social media engagement go through the roof! It’s a really powerful tool for engaging with people and gaining support for the CPA. It also allows everyone to see what other Branches are doing and to share photos and links to spur each other on. For a while my phone was just going crazy and I couldn’t keep up with all the re-tweets and messages and I’m now really keen to keep things going through regular posts and by developing our social media strategy.’

Andy’s plan for the National Day of Prayer for the Police was to break down the ‘One Hour Prayer Guide’ into bite-size chunks which he then posted every half an hour to capture as wide an audience as possible and to provide fuel for prayers. Andy added ‘ Most people are busy and find it difficult to have a whole hour to pray, but this approach hopefully prompted people to pray short prayers as they read the posts’.

The stats revealed: - New CPA followers via Twitter 23; Via Facebook 36. Visits to Home Page; Twitter 720, Facebook 180. Number of times messages viewed; Twitter 25,900, Facebook 17,206. The number of times users subsequently clicked ‘like’ or made a comment on Facebook posts; 2,784.

Why not donate to CPA on line?

You can do so securely through give.net via the link https://my.give.net/cpa_national/Donate/GiftDetails
Time to Churk it Out?

An imaginative initiative has recently been launched by Dyfed Powys Branch for those who find Sunday church either not practical or not for them. As such a lunch time work/church meeting “Churk” is held every Wednesday at 1 p.m. at Dyfed Powys Police HQ. Branch Leader Inspector Stuart Bell explained. ‘Churk is very informal and there is some chat, some Christian teaching, some Bible study and some biscuits, probably Hob-Nobs, and other stuff like ‘What is life all about; what does the Bible say about life and death and are Hob-Nobs the best biscuits ever’. Well, Churk seeks to answer these and many other questions - and it’s open to everyone regardless of faith.’

…and finally, from The Director

I hope you like the new look “On and Off Duty”.

As you will be aware, the first edition was printed in 1883. This is the 1,020 issue – an amazing testimony to those who have prepared the written “voice” of the CPA for all those years. On and Off Duty will now be produced each month, merging with the successful monthly update which Assistant Director Allan Spencer has been preparing in recent years.

Please let me know what you think. I hope you agree that merging On and Off Duty into a monthly issue absolutely maintains our commitment to keeping it at the centre of CPA communication. The July issue will feature an extended article covering the Cleveland Police Memorial Service which was held recently.

ON & OFF DUTY is the CPA monthly digest of news and articles. We also update a monthly Prayer Diary intended to inform and encourage those associated with the CPA. Please forward any items for consideration to the Editor by the 20th of each month. Items should be forwarded to: office@CPAuk.net

NB. All items published will also be available for unrestricted viewing via Internet. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the CPA Council.

OUR PURPOSE is to
glorify Jesus Christ in the Police Service.

OUR MISSION is to
■ encourage and support Christians in the Police Service
■ communicate in words and action, the truth, message and hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ to colleagues and the community we serve
■ build bridges between the Christian community and the police.

OUR VISION is to see
■ an active and growing Branch of CPA in every Police Service in the UK and every Christian in the Police Service to fulfill their potential in Jesus Christ
■ colleagues and those we serve come to know Jesus Christ personally
■ police and churches working together in every community to reduce crime and improve quality of life.