The History of the Garda Síochána Retired Members Association (GSRMA)

R

50th Anniversary
1961 - 2011

FIDELITY AND JUSTICE

Message from Tony Sourke,

President, Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association

I am honoured and humbled to address you, the members of the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association, as your President. It gives me great pleasure to extend my warmest greetings to all our members on this the year of our 50th anniversary.

On September 14th it will be my privilege to welcome Her Excellency, President Mary McAleese, Senator Dr Martin McAleese, Mr Alan Shatter TD, Minister for Justice and Equality and Garda Commissioner Martin Callinan to our 50th anniversary celebrations in Westmanstown Sports and Recreation Club.

The first committee, whose names are listed in this special edition of Síocháin, worked tirelessly to set up the structure of the successful organisation that we have today. Having helped to establish the Irish State and maintain its democratic institutions, in retirement they continued to work in a dignified and selfless manner to promote the interests of retired members of An Garda Síochána in a positive way. Successive energetic committees continued this pioneering work that has continued up to the present day.

It is with deep respect and reverence that we honour those founding fathers; we salute their achievements and acknowledge the role played by their families. I look forward to meeting the large number of our guests, from all parts of the country, attending the event.

In conclusion we remember all members of An Garda Síochána, serving and retired, who have passed to their eternal reward.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh siad.

Tony Sourke
President.
Garda Siochana Retired Members' Association.

Message from Alan Shatter TD,

Minister for Justice and Equality, to the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association

I am delighted to be given this opportunity to wish a very happy 50th anniversary to all the members of the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association and your families.

In a few years we will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of the foundation of this State. This State has its beginnings in the aftermath of a war of independence and a civil war. It was a difficult time for all those involved in the process of government, for all those involved in upholding the law. In order to survive these early years the State needed a law enforcement body that was absolutely fair and impartial and above politics. An Garda Síochána provided this service from the outset. The State is deeply indebted to you and your predecessors for your service and your professionalism. It is appropriate at this time to reflect on the invaluable contribution made by members of the Force to the building of modern Ireland.

Members now retired have served this country well through some difficult and turbulent times and this will not be forgotten. Many of the young members today will not remember the time when part of the island was in the grip of sectarian and political strife. Members of An Garda Síochána lost their lives in the fight against terrorism and we remember them today. The threat from terrorists has changed, but the gardaí continue to protect the citizens from those who want to defy the democratic will of the overwhelming majority of people on this island. The challenges for today's gardaí are as great as ever with the increase in gangland crime and dealing with communities devastated from the ravages of drug abuse. Your legacy is not just to the State but to today's Force which can draw on your experience and example.

Each of you will have lived through periods of change in An Garda Síochána. In 1959 the first female gardaí were appointed and we remember them today and the enormous contribution that women have made to the organisation and to this association. We must also acknowledge those members who performed peace keeping duties overseas and who were global ambassadors for this country. Most of all we remember with the deepest respect all of those who lost their lives in the line of duty.

An Garda Síochána has a proud tradition of support for its members and in the last 50 years your organisation has continued to provide this support for retired members. Not only have you supported each other but you have contributed to many charitable organisations with your time and your money. This is yet another example of what An Garda Síochána do best, looking out for the most vulnerable in our society.

I thank you for the excellence of your service over the years and wish you and your families well. I congratulate this Association on this important anniversary and wish you continued success in the future.

Alan Shatter TD, Minister for Justice and Equality

BACKGROUND

An Garda Síochána was founded in February, 1922. By the late 1950s to early 1960s many of the first generation gardaí had retired. While serving in the Force they lived in official accommodation or received a small rent allowance annually from the State. Suddenly, after retiring, they realised they had to find alternative accommodation and exist on a pension. Some found it difficult to survive and emigrated overseas to seek employment to support their family.

On September 10th 1960, 19 garda pensioners met in the Queen's Hotel, Cork to discuss their grievances. Cork was also the base for the Garda Síochána Pensioners' Organisation (GSPO) that was founded in 1951 and absorbed into the new association. In September 1960 the Cork comrades did not realise that throughout the country garda pensioners were gathering and forming support groups.

In early January, 1961, retired Garda Sergeant Tom Madden wrote three letters to the Dublin Evening Mail highlighting the injustice of the meagre pensions paid to retired members. The feedback was instantaneous and resulted in 40 retired colleagues attending a meeting at Moran's Hotel, Talbot Street, Dublin on Wednesday, January 18th 1961.

LETTERS to the EDITOR

Guards and their pensions

Guards and their pensions

Guards and their pensions: A meeting called

Tom Madden's three letters to the Dublin Evening Mail, January 1961. These led to the formation of our Association.

Their major grievances at the time were that they wanted parity of pensions with gardaí who were retiring at that time and in the future. A garda pensioner who retired in 1955 had 24 per cent less of a pension than that his 1961 retired colleague. These retired gardaí, while serving in the Force, had pushed to have the garda rent allowance of approximately £18 per annum made pensionable.

They were very disappointed in December 1960, when a Government order was made to merge rent allowance permanently into the pay structure for serving members. The rent allowance therefore no longer existed and the question of making it pensionable did not apply. The rights of the garda pensioners were either forgotten or deliberately ignored by the State.

THEIR DEFINITION OF 'PARITY'

"That irrespective of the date of retirement, a garda pension should be automatically adjusted so that it would be the same as the pension of a garda of equivalent rank and service, who had just retired on pension, whether that be then or in the future."

This dream was eventually realised on Budget Day, 1984, when full parity was implemented by the Government.

OFFICERS ELECTED AT MORAN'S HOTEL, DUBLIN, JANUARY, 18TH 1961

The following officers were elected and the meeting was adjourned for one week.

Chairman: Daniel Brosnan
Vice Chairmen: Peter Heffernan/Tom Keyes
Hon. Secretary: Tom Conway
Hon. Treasurer: Tom O' Leary

At the subsequent meeting held at Moran's Hotel, in January 1961 the following committee was elected:
Eugene Farrelly
Michael Conlon
Tom Madden
James Cahill
Frank O'Hehir
Jim Finnerty
Patrick O' Sullivan

A third meeting was scheduled for Moran's Hotel, on Monday, February 6th 1961 and it was agreed that all those attending should contribute a half-crown to fund the organisation.

MEETING AT MORAN'S HOTEL – FEBRUARY 6TH 1961

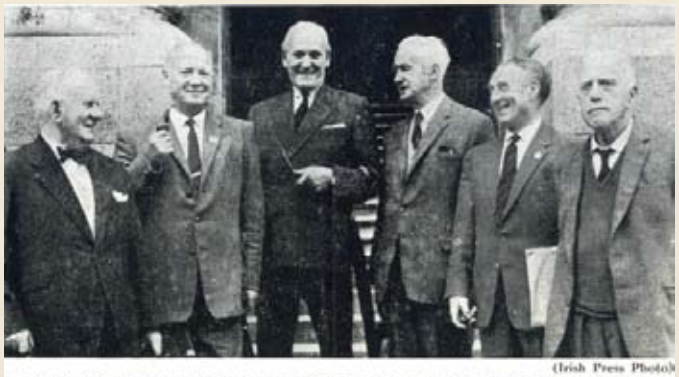
There was huge enthusiasm when over 200 retired gardaí assembled at Moran's Hotel, Talbot Street, Dublin on Monday, February 6th 1961 for the official launch

of the Garda Síochána Pensioners' Association. The meeting agreed to prepare a memorandum to present to the Government outlining their case for increasing garda retirement pensions. A committee meeting was scheduled for the February 27th 1961 to examine a draft copy of the memorandum. Tom O' Leary (treasurer) had no difficulty collecting the half-crown contribution to fund the new association. Membership was open to all in receipt of a pension for service in An Garda Síochána and to widows whose husbands served in the Force. The pressure of administrative work led to the secretary resigning to concentrate on his own employment. The Central Committee then appointed Michael Conlon as acting secretary with Tom O' Leary becoming organising secretary as well as treasurer.

Shortly afterwards the Central Committee expanded and the following were co-opted:
Seán Liddy (President)
Robert Wolfe (Vice-President)
Denis McCarthy (Cork)
Paddy Brogan (Cork)

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

On September 26th 1961, the Garda Síochána Pensioners Association joined the Joint Consultative Council which represented retired State servants, including retired teachers and army officers.

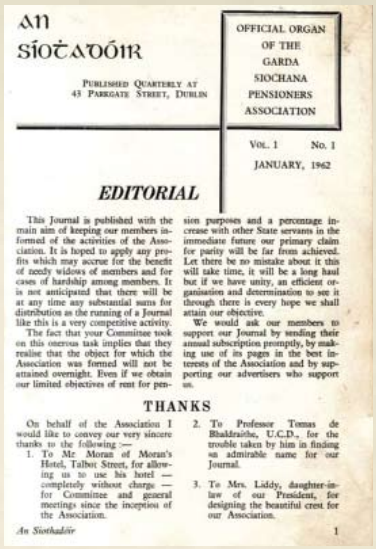


(Irish Press Photo)

The Joint Consultative Council of Retired State Servants who met the Minister for Finance, Dr. Ryan, at Government Buildings recently. They are, from left: H. J. McManus, chairman, Pensioned Teachers' Association; Tom O'Leary, Garda Pensioners' Association; Thomas Carroll, chairman; Joseph Mullins, hon. sec.; Comdt. D. J. Coudron, O.N.E.; Eugene O'Connor, vice-president, Retired Civil Servants' Association.

AN SÍOTHADÓIR

The new Central Committee realised the need for a journal like the Garda Review to communicate with retired gardaí. Capt. DJ O' Kelly, (the first editor of the Garda Review) made a proposition that the firm of Cahill & Co, Parkside Press, Parkgate Street, Dublin, would print, publish and distribute free of charge, a quarterly pensioners' journal, if the association could supply 20 pages of advertisements. The name given to the new journal was An Síothadóir which means pacifier or person who keeps the peace. Tom Keyes was appointed manager and Tom O' Leary, editor. The very first issue of An Síothadóir was published in January, 1962. John Nolan, a retired garda who worked for the publishers, did marvellous work for many years collecting the advertisements for the journal. Later the title of the journal was changed to Síocháin and in January, 1971, retired Garda Sergeant Ted Cahill was appointed the new manager to oversee its publication.



AN SÍOTADÓIR

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY AT 43 PARKGATE STREET, DUBLIN

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE GARDA SIOCHANA PENSIONERS ASSOCIATION

VOL. 1 No. 1
JANUARY, 1962

EDITORIAL

This Journal is published with the main aim of keeping our members informed of the activities of the Association. It is hoped to apply any profits which may accrue for the benefit of needy widows of members and for cases of hardship among members. It is not anticipated that there will be at any time any substantial sums for distribution as the running of a Journal like this is a very competitive activity.

The fact that your Committee took on this onerous task implies that they realise that the object for which the Association was formed will not be attained overnight. Even if we obtain our limited objectives of rent for pension purposes and a percentage increase with other State servants in the immediate future our primary claim for parity will be far from achieved. Let there be no mistake about it this will take time, it will be a long haul but if we have unity, an efficient organisation and determination to see it through there is every hope we shall attain our objective.

We would ask our members to support our Journal by sending their annual subscription promptly, by making use of its pages in the best interests of the Association and by supporting our advertisers who support us.

THANKS

On behalf of the Association I would like to convey our very sincere thanks to the following :—

1. To Mr. Moran of Moran's Hotel, Talbot Street, for allowing us to use his hotel — completely without charge — for Committee and general meetings since the inception of the Association.
2. To Professor Tomas de Bhaldraithe, U.C.D., for the trouble taken by him in finding an admirable name for our Journal.
3. To Mrs. Liddy, daughter-in-law of our President, for designing the beautiful crest for our Association.

An Síothadóir 1

THE FIRST AGM

On February 7th 1962, Moran's Hotel, Dublin was the venue for the first AGM of the new association. A total of 600 representatives countrywide assembled to witness proceedings opened by Daniel Brosnan, Chairman of Central Committee. In his first presidential address, Seán Liddy stated: "All great movements have small beginnings and, as you are aware the embryo of our association came to life here on the 6th of February 1961, and tonight we celebrate its anniversary."

Records show many country branches were well represented with delegates from Ballina, Ballinasloe, Ballinrobe, Boyle, Buncrana, Castlerea, Claremorris, Clonmel, Cork, Drogheda, Dundalk, Ennis, Galway, Gorey, Loughrea, Killaloe, Kilrush, Sligo, Swinford, Thurles, Templemore and Wexford.

Speakers at the first AGM were Daniel Brosnan; Tom Keyes (Vice Chairman); James Cahill, Tom Madden; Denis McCarty (Cork) and TS McDonagh (Dundalk).

The following Central Committee elected in 1962, remained almost unchanged up to the time of President Liddy's death in March, 1965.

President: Seán Liddy
V. President: Robert Wolfe
Chairman: Daniel Brosnan
V. Chairmen: Tom Keyes and Peter Heffernan
Gen. Secretary: Tom O'Leary
Treasurer: Eugene Farelly
Committee: Tom Madden, Frank O' Hehir, Patrick O' Sullivan, Denis McCarthy, Paddy Brogan, Archie McAllister, John Berry.

By December, 1961, membership of the association reached 1,400 and the first central office was opened at 38 Westmoreland Street, Dublin. Later, the annual membership fee was doubled to meet the expense of moving to a new office at 43 Dawson Street in October 1962. Records show that the rent agreed for Dawson Street Office was £15 per quarter. In October 1973, the central office was located at 32 Nassau Street. When that lease expired in April 1999, the Central Committee made a decision to transfer head office to its true home at the Garda Club, Harrington Street, Dublin 8.

INAUGURATION OF A WIDOWS' COMMITTEE

In 1952, Garda Martin Quigley, Irishtown Station Dublin, died leaving his widow Elizabeth to rear their seven children. Four years later, Mrs Quigley carried-out a survey to establish the names of other garda widows. Through her voluntary work, she corresponded with many garda widows and built a support group. A ladies' branch of the Garda Síochána Pensioners Association was officially launched at Moran's Hotel, Dublin on the July 24th 1962.

President Seán Liddy along with Vice Chairman Tom Keyes were present at the inauguration. The new ladies committee elected were:
President: Mrs Elizabeth Quigley
Hon. Secretary: Mrs Marjorie Ellis
Treasurer: Mrs Elizabeth Cummins

(Irish Press Photo)

Committee: Mrs Alice Flanagan, Mrs Elizabeth Gallagher, Mrs Margaret McGilloway, Mrs Nora O' Halloran, and Mrs Christina Sinnott.

Mrs Quigley held the office of President for ten years.

The committee nominated two representatives to attend Central Committee meetings. After establishing the Widows' Committee, the Central Committee did marvellous work in persuading the Government, in 1962, to increase the minimum scale for widows from £59 to £98 per annum plus a substantial increase in children's allowance.

In 1986, the ladies committee was disbanded because, by then, they were part of improved branch committee structure which was able to nominate widows and retired members to the Central Committee of the association.

AGM – TUESDAY, MARCH 3RD 1964

The third AGM saw Moran's Hotel packed to capacity with at least 200 people unable to gain admission. The Central Committee realised that in future they would have to seek a larger venue.

President Seán Liddy informed those present that both he and Tom O' Leary had travelled to the Irish Club in London during the year to establish a new branch of the association. Seventy-five retired gardaí attended the London meeting. They emigrated after giving a lifetime of valuable service because they could not afford to live here on their miserable pensions. Most of them were still paying for their families' education back home.

LIST OF CENTRAL COMMITTEES

1966
President: Seán Hughes
Chairman: Daniel Brosnan
Gen. Sec.: Tom O' Leary
Committee: Eugene Farrelly, Denis Connolly, Tom Keyes, Peter Heffernan, Patrick O' Sullivan, Frank O' Hehir, Tom Madden, John Berry, A. McAllister, Bill Isdell, Pat Campbell, Elizabeth Quigley, Marjorie Ellis.

1967
President: Seán Hughes
Chairman: Daniel Brosnan
Gen. Sec.: Tom O' Leary
Committee: Eugene Farrelly, Denis Connolly, Frank O' Hehir, Peter Shiel, John Berry, Tom Madden, A. McAllister, Pat Campbell, Elizabeth Quigley, Marjorie Ellis.

1968
President: Seán Hughes
Chairman: Daniel Brosnan
Gen. Sec.: Tom O' Leary
Committee: Peter Shiel, Denis Connolly, Frank O' Hehir, Eugene Farrelly, John McBrien, Michael Kiely, Tom Madden, Elizabeth Quigley, Marjorie Ellis.

1969
President: Seán Hughes
Chairman: Daniel Brosnan
Gen. Sec.: Tom O' Leary
Committee: Eugene Farrelly, Denis Connolly, John Berry, J. Cronin, Frank O' Hehir, A. McAllister, Peter Shiel, Seán Flase, Pat Campbell, J. Molloy, TJ Casey, Tom Madden, Marjorie Ellis, Elizabeth Quigley.

1970
President: Seán Hughes
Chairman: Daniel Brosnan
Gen. Sec.: Tom O' Leary
Committee: Eugene Farrelly, Denis Connolly, Tom Keyes, Tom Madden, Frank O' Hehir.

1971
President: Seán Hughes
Chairman: Daniel Brosnan
Gen. Sec.: Tom O' Leary
Committee: Eugene Farrelly,Denis Connolly, Tom Keyes, Tom Madden, John Berry, Pat Campbel, Bill Isdell, A. McAllister, Frank O' Hehir, Patrick O' Sullivan, Peter Shiel, Tom Cahill, Elizabeth Quigley, Marjorie Ellis.

1972
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Daniel Brosnan
Gen. Sec.: Tom O' Leary
Committee: Eugene Farrelly, Denis Connolly, John Berry, Seán Hughes, Tom Keyes, Pat Campbell, Ted Cahill, A. McAllister, Frank O' Hehir, Peter Shiel, Patrick E. Sheahan, Marjorie Ellis, Christina Sinnott.

1973
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Daniel Brosnan
Gen. Sec.: Tom O' Leary
Committee: Eugene Farrelly, Seán Hughes, Denis Connolly, Tom Keyes, John Berry, Pat Campbell, Ted Cahill, Bill Isdell, A. McAllister, Frank O' Hehir, Patrick O' Sullivan, Peter Shiel, Patrick E. Sheahan, Marjorie Ellis, Christina Sinnott.

1974
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Tom O' Leary
Gen. Sec.: Tom Costello
Committee: Eugene Farrelly, Seán Hughes, Denis Connolly, Tom Keyes, John Berry, Pat Campbell, Ted Cahill, Bill Isdell, A McAllister, Frank O' Hehir, Patrick O' Sullivan, Peter Shiel, Patrick E. Sheahan, Marjorie Ellis, Christina Sinnott.

1975
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Tom O' Leary
Gen. Sec.: Tom Costello
Committee: Denis Connolly, Seán Hughes, Tom Collins, Tom Keyes, Pat Campbell, Tom Delaney, Bill Isdell, Seán MacBrinn, A. McAllister, Malachy Tuohy, Patrick O' Sullivan, Patrick E. Sheahan, John Cashin, James Callery, Dan Brosnan, Eugene Farrelly, Marjorie Ellis Teresa Coffey.

1976
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Tom O' Leary
Gen. Sec.: Tom Costello
Committee: Denis Connolly, Eugene Farrelly, Tom Collins, Frank O' Hehir, Pat Campbell, Tom Delaney, Bill Isdell, A. McAllister, John Cashin, James Callery, Herbert Lee, Vincent Collins, Marjorie Ellis, Lillian Hyland.

1977
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Tom O' Leary
Gen. Sec.: Tom Costello
Committee: Bill Isdell, Eugene Farrelly, Frank O' Hehir, Denis Connolly, Tom Collins, Pat Campbell, Tom Delaney, A. McAllister, John Cashill, James Callery, Herbert Lee, Marjorie Ellis, Lillian Hyland.

1978
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Tom O' Leary
Gen. Sec.: Dan Spillane
Committee: Tom Collins, Pat Campbell, Frank O' Hehir, Tom Costello, Bill Isdell, Eugene Farrelly, Tom Delaney, A. McAllister, John Cashin, James Callery, Herbert Lee, Marjorie Ellis, Lillian Hyland.

1979
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Jim Fitzgerald
Gen. Sec.: Dan Spillane
Committee: Bill Isdell, Tom Collins, Eugene Farrelly, Pat Campbell, James Callery, John Cashin, Tom Costello, Tom Delaney, Paddy Driscoll, Herbert Lee, Dan O' Donovan, Tom O' Leary, Marjorie Ellis, Lillian Hyland.

1980
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Jim Fitzgerald
Gen. Sec.: Dan Spillane
Committee: Tom Collins, Eugene Farrelly, Tom Delaney, John Cashin, Tom Costello, Paddy Driscoll, Bill Isdell, Herbert Lee, Dan O' Donovan, Lilian Hyland, Helena Glynn.

1981
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Jim Fitzgerald
Gen. Sec.: Dan Spillane
Committee: Tom Collins, Eugene Farrelly, James Callery, Tom Dellaney, John Cashin, Paddy Driscoll, Dan O' Donovan, Tom O' Leary, Herbert Lee, Bill Isdell, Michael Sutton, Lilian Hyland, Helena Glynn.

1982
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Jim Fitzgerald
Gen. Sec.: Dan Spillane
Committee: Herbert Lee, James Callery, Eugene Farrelly, Tom Delaney, Michael Sutton, John Cashin, Tom Costello, Paddy Driscoll, Redmond Shea, Patrick Clerkin, Bill Isdell, William Farrell, Lillian Hyland, Helena Glynn.

1983
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Jim Fitzgerald
Gen. Sec.: Dan Spillane
Committee: Herbert Lee, Eugene Farrelly, James Callery, Tom Delaney, Michael Sutton, John Cashin, Tom Costello, Paddy Driscoll, Redmond Shea, Patrick Clerkin, Bill Isdell, William Farrell, Lillian Hyland, Helena Glynn.

1984
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Jim Fitzgerald
Gen. Sec.: Dan Spillane
Committee: Herbert Lee, James Callery, Eugene Farrelly, Tom Delaney, Michael Sutton, John Cashin, Tom Costello, Redmond Shea, Patrick Clerkin, Bill Isdell, William Farrell, Dave Dillane, Paddy Driscoll, Frank White, Lillian Hyland, Helena Glynn.

1985
President: Alfred I. Flood
Chairman: Jim Fitzgerald
Gen. Sec.: Dan Spillane
Committee: John Cashin, Patrick Clerkin, Tom Delaney, Dave Dillane, Paddy Driscoll, Bill Isdell, Redmond Shea, Michael Sutton, James McGreedy, Lillian Hyland, Helena Glynn.

1986
President: James Callery
Chairman: Jim Fitzgerald
Gen. Sec.: Dan Spillane
Committee: Paddy Driscoll, Michael Sutton, Tom Delaney, John Cashin, Patrick Clerkin, Redmond Shea, Dave Dillane, Frank White, Helena Glynn, Kay O' Shaughnessy, Lillian Hyland.

1987
President: James Callery
Chairman: Jim Fitzgerald
Gen. Sec.: Dan Spillane
Committee: John Cashill, Patrick Clerkin, Dave Dillane, John Hartigan, Tom Ryan, Michael Sutton, Paddy Driscoll, Kay O' Shaughnessy.

1988
President: James Callery
Chairman: Jim Fitzgerald
Gen. Sec.: Dan Spillane
Committee: Patrick Clerkin, Patrick Dunne, Paddy Driscoll PJ Rogan, Tom Ryan, Dave Dillane, John Hartigan, Michael Sutton, Frank White, Helena Glynn, Kay O' Shaughnessy.

1989
President: Paddy Driscoll
Chairman: Jim Fitzgerald
Gen. Sec.: Dan Spillane
Committee: Michael Bohan, Dave Dillane, Dave Devaney, Tom Ryan, PJ Rogan, Seán Murray, Frank White, Helena Glynn, Kay O' Shaughnessy, Brid Reid.

1990
President: Paddy Driscoll
Chairman: Tom Ryan
Gen. Sec.: Frank White
Committee: Michael Bohan, Dave Dillane, Seán Murray, PJ Rogan, James Callery, David Devaney, Joe Wilson, Don Boyle, Peg McNamara, Brid Reid, Bernie Morrisey.

1991
President: Paddy Driscoll
Chairman: Tom Ryan
Gen. Sec.: Frank White
Committee: Michael Bohan, Joe Wilson, Dave Dillane, Dave Devaney, Seán Murray, PJ Rogan, Pat Quinn, John Hartigan, Paddy McGinley, Bernie Morrissey.

1992
President: Dave Dillane
Chairman: Tom Ryan
Gen. Sec.: Frank White
Committee: Paddy McGinley, Bríd Reid, Bernie Morrissey, Seán Murray, John Hartigan, PJ Rogan, Michael Bohan, Joe Wilson, Pat Quinn, Dave Devaney, Don Boyle.

1993
President: Dave Dillane
Chairman: Tom Ryan
Gen. Sec.: Frank White
Committee: Tom Hennessy, Peter McGing, Paddy McGinley, John Mulcair, Seán Murray, Paddy Driscoll, Bríd Reid, PJ Rogan, Joe Wilson, Dave Devaney.

1994
President: Dave Dillane
Chairman: Tom Ryan
Gen. Sec.: Don Boyle
Committee: PJ Rogan, Tom Ryan, Seán Murray, Pat Fitzgerald, Bríd Reid, Dave Devaney, Tom Hennessy, Pat Quinn, Peter McGinley, Dan Kenny, Paddy McGinley, John Mulcair.

1995
President: Tom Ryan
Chairman: PJ Rogan
Gen. Sec.: Don Boyle
Committee: Phil Callanan, Joe Wilson, Dave Dillane, Dave Devaney, Peter McGing, Pat Quinn, Brid Reid, Tom Hennessy, Paddy McGinley.

1996
President: Tom Ryan
Chairman: PJ Rogan
Gen. Sec.: Don Boyle
Committee: Phil Callanan, Dave Devaney, Dave Dillane, Pat Fitzgerald, Tom Hennessy, John Mulcair, Peter McGing, Brid Reid, Joe Wilson, John Hickey, Dan McCann, Frank White.

1997
President: Tom Ryan
Chairman: PJ Rogan
Gen. Sec.: Don Boyle
Committee: Dave Devaney, Tom Hennessy, John Hickey, Phil Callanan, Dave Dillane, Pat Fitzgerald, Dan Kenny, Joe Wilson, Peter McGing.

1998
President: Seán Murray
Chairman: Dave Devaney
Gen. Sec.: Don Boyle
Committee: PJ Rogan, Tom Ryan, Phil Callanan, Dave Devaney, John Hickey, Peter McGing, Jim Cannon, Dave Dillane, Hue Gallagher, Tom Hennessy.

1999
President: Seán Murray
Chairman: Dave Devaney
Gen. Sec.: Don Boyle
Committee: Phil Callanan, Jim Cannon, John Durcan, Pat Fitzgerald, Tom Hennessy, John Hickey, Peter McGinley, PJ Rogan, Tom Ryan, Dave Dillane, Hue Gallagher, Dan McCann, Pádraic Costello.

2000
President: Seán Murray
Chairman: Dave Devaney
Gen. Sec.: Don Boyle
Committee: Tom Hennessy, Peter McGing, Hue Gallagher, John Durcan, Jim Cannon, Christy Lonergan, Phil Callanan, Joe Wilson, John Hickey, Seán Cashman, Padraic Costello, Pat Fitzgerald.

2001
President: PJ Rogan
Chairman: Phil Callanan
Gen. Sec.: Don Boyle
Committee: John Hickey, Pádraic Costello, Jim Cannon, Seán Cashman, Peter Donelon, John Durcan, Pat Fitzgerald, John Hennessy, Christy Lonergan, Attracta Lynch, Paddy O' Brien, Joe Storey, John Thornhill.

2002 to 2004
President: PJ Rogan
Chairman: John Hennessy
Gen. Sec.: Eddie O' Donovan
Committee: John Hickey, Paddy O' Brien, Phil Callanan, Seán Cashman, Pádraic Costello, Pat Doherty, John Durcan, John Hartigan, Christy Lonergan, Grace Lyden, Attracta Lynch, Joe Storey, John Thornhill.

2004 to 2006
President: John Hickey
Chairman: John Durcan
Gen. Sec.: Gerard Lovett
Committee: Pádraic Costell, John Hartigan, Jim Cannon, Pat Doherty, Joe Dunleavy, John Hennessy, Jim Joyce, Christy Lonergan, Grace Lyden, PJ Rogan, Tony Sourke, Joe Storey, John Thornhill.

2006 to 2008
President: Pádraic Costello
Chairman: John Durcan
Gen. Sec.: Gerard Lovett
Committee: Cathal Murphy, Tony Sourke, John Hartigan, Gerry Buckley, Jim Cannon, Joe Dunleavy, Fintan Dunne, Christy Lonergan, Grace Lyden, Charlie McCarron, John F. Murray, Tony Sourke, Joe Storey, John Thornhill.

2008 to 2010
President: Pádraic Costello
Chairman: Cathal Murphy
Gen. Sec.: Gerard Lovett
Committee: Charlie McCarron, Tony Sourke, John Hartigan, Gerry Buckley, Noel Campbell, Jim Cannon, Joe Dunleavy, Fintan Dunne, John Durcan, Pat Lehane, Christy Lonergan, Grace Lyden, Charlie McCarron, John F. Murray.

2010 to 2012
President: Tony Sourke
Chairman: Charlie McCarron
Gen. Sec.: Gerard Lovett (2010) John Rafter (2011)
Committee: Gerry Blake, Grace Lyden, Fintan Dunne, Tim Bowe, Noel Campbell, Pádraic Costello, John Durcan, Paschal Feeney, Tom Griffin, John Hartigan, Pat Lehane, Christy Lonergan, Noel McCarthy.

FOUNDING MEMBERS

Below is a brief profile of the founding members of our Association.

TOM MADDEN

Tom Madden was born in Castlebar in 1899 and joined An Garda Síochána in 1922. He was one of the station party sent to open Mullingar Garda Barracks in September 1922. On November 8th of that year, along with 80 gardaí under Superintendent Cullen, he set off from South Wall, Dublin on the S.S. Munster with a task to make-up a station party for Cork city. The Cork barracks was sited initially at the School of Music and later at Moore's Hotel. He had his share of danger and excitement in those turbulent times in Cork city. One outstanding incident occurred in the spring of 1923, while he was on traffic duty at the corner of Washington Street. That morning when taking-up traffic point duty at 10am, he observed a typed poster on a shop building. It was signed by a famous Republican leader and read: "Any member of the Civic Guards found on traffic duty at this point after 12 noon on this date will be shot down without further notice." By 11am a large crowd had gathered and remained to see if Madden would be shot. Madden stayed on the point until 1pm and returned to it again at 2pm. Nothing happened. He returned to the DMA in 1928, was promoted to sergeant in 1937 and retired in 1960. In January 1961 he wrote the three letters to the Dublin Evening Mail that led to the formation of the Garda Síochána Pensioners' Association. He later served for many years on the Central Committee of the association.

DANIEL BROSNAN

Daniel Brosnan was a Kerryman who rose through the ranks from sergeant in 1924 to superintendent in 1953. All his garda service was in Dublin Metropolitan Division. For a number of years he served on the Central Council of the Representative Body at Garda HQ. At the first meeting of the Garda Pensioners' Association in January 1961, his negotiating skills came to good use after he was unanimously elected chairman. For the following 13 years, Daniel Brosnan was the driving force and chairman behind the Central Committee of the Association.

THOMAS KEYES

Tom Keyes was one of the first vice chairmen of the Central Committee and was appointed manager to An Síothadóir journal in 1962. Hailing from Tipperary, he joined An Garda Síochána in March, 1922 and was promoted to sergeant six months later. He was sent with a party of eight to open Raphoe Station and seven months later was promoted to inspector and assigned to New Ross. Promoted superintendent in 1924, he served as district officer in Bantry, Bandon and Abbeyleix before retiring in 1955. A founder member of GPA, he is credited with compiling the first memorandum of the association sent to Government. He was the first to advocate 'parity' with serving members.

TOM O' LEARY

Tom O' Leary was born in Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare. Tom, with Reg. No. 5343, spent most of his garda service as a Weights and Measures inspector with Dublin Corporation. He retired from An Garda Síochána in June 1952. In January 1961 he was a founding member and first treasurer of the Garda Pensioners' Association. Elected general secretary in 1962 he held the office for ten years. In October 1973, he was elected Central Committee chairman. During his term in office, the Association set-up a network of branches throughout the country. As editor of An Síothadóir and Síocháin he kept all the Garda retired members well informed. After his retirement from the Central Committee in 1979, the Dublin South branch presented O' Leary with a rolled gold mounted umbrella in appreciation of his work. He died on the December 14th 1981.

EUGENE FARRELLY

A native of Kingscourt, Co. Cavan, Eugene Farrelly joined An Garda Síochána in 1925. He was promoted detective sergeant in 1947 while attached to Dublin Castle. He retired from the gardaí in 1957 and became a founding member of the association in 1961. In 1962 he was elected treasurer and held the post for a number of years.

PETER HEFFERNAN

A native of Kilkenny, Peter Heffernan joined the Dublin Metropolitan Police in 1905. He was promoted sergeant in 1922 and three years later his DMP service was amalgamated into An Garda Síochána. He was promoted to inspector in 1926 and to superintendent in 1940. He was one of the founding members of the Association and elected vice-chairman in 1961.

ROBERT WOLFE

Robert Wolfe was member of the old DMP at the time of the Anglo Irish Treaty. He was promoted sergeant in 1922 and continued his police service into An Garda Síochána. In 1930 he was promoted to inspector and ten years later superintendent. He was promoted to chief superintendent rank in 1942 and was transferred to Dublin Castle. Following retirement in 1947, he wrote A Police Guide to the Law of Evidence which was widely sought by gardaí and law students. One of the first vice presidents of the Garda Pensioners' Association, Wolfe died in 1965

DENIS MCCARTHY

Denis McCarthy lived at Windmill Road in Cork and was Hon. Secretary of the Cork Branch which was founded a few months prior to the national body. With a Cork membership of 127, he was able to provide great support to the founding members of the Garda Síochána Pensioners Association. At the first AGM in Moran's Hotel Dublin, McCarthy stated that on September 10th 1960, the babe of the association was born when 19 true comrades got together at the Queen's Hotel in Cork city. He was co-opted onto the Central Committee in 1961.

PATRICK O' SULLIVAN

Pat O' Sullivan had served in Pearse Street as an inspector. He attended the first meeting in January 1961 and played an active part in forming the new association. Pat was a member of the Central Committee from 1961 until 1974.

JAMES CAHILL

James Cahill was on the 1961 Central Committee. He joined the Force in June 1923 with the Reg. No. 4826 and a year later was promoted to sergeant. Cahill spent most of his service in the Cavan/Monaghan Division and retired in 1952. Cahill died in January 1979.

DENIS CONNOLLY

Denis Connolly was a native of Glengarriff, Co. Cork and a founding member of An Garda Síochána with Reg. No. 854. In 1962 he retired at the rank of chief superintendent and joined the Garda Síochána Pensioners' Association. In 1966 he was elected as one of its vice presidents and held the office for over ten years.

FRANK O'HEHIR

Frank O'Hehir was born near Ennis, Co. Clare and was a founding member of An Garda Síochána, holding Reg. No. 96. His brother James, who joined the Force with him on the first recruitment day, was issued with Reg. No. 88. Frank gave all his garda service in Donegal and retired from Buncrana Station in April, 1958. Following retirement, he moved to live in Marino, Dublin with his family.

In January 1961, O'Hehir created history again when he was one of the first retired members to join the new association. He was elected onto the first Central Committee where he gave 18 years sterling service. He died in February 1983.

ARCHIE MCALLISTER

Archie McAllister was born in Cloughmills, Co. Antrim. He was one of the founding members of An Garda Síochána, (Reg. No. 3114). McAllister served in Donegal, Granard, Redmills and retired from Killucan in 1954. He was very involved with the formation of the Garda Pensioners' Association and in 1962 was elected to the Central Committee. His service record with the Central Committee lasted until his death in August, 1978.

PADDY BROGAN

A native of Dunmore, Co. Galway, Brogan retired from An Garda Síochána on March 18th 1960 having served in New Ross, Enniscorthy, Dingle and Clonakilty. Following retirement he went to live in Wilton Road, Cork city. He was elected chairman of the Cork branch of the Garda Pensioners' Association when it was formed in late 1960. In 1961 he was co-opted onto the Central Committee of the Association.

JOHN BERRY (TC)

John Berry was born in Clonbrook, Co. Kildare and joined An Garda Síochána with Reg. No. 1455. He resided at Windsor Road, Rathmines, Dublin. He served as a detective sergeant in Pearse Street and Dublin Castle. After retiring from An Garda Síochána on May 25th 1951 he served as an elected representative of Dublin Town Council from 1966-73. From 1962 he was a prominent member on the Central Committee of the Garda Síochána Pensioners' Association and was vice chairman for some years. He died in 1981.

PRESIDENTS

FIRST PRESIDENT – SEÁN LIDDY

Seán was a native of Cooraclare, Co. Clare, where he was local TD for the period 1918/22. He joined An Garda Síochána in 1922 and retired in 1953 as chief superintendent of Sligo/Leitrim Division. After retirement he was appointed as a member of the Military Service Board. In 1961 he was co-opted to the Central Committee and appointed to the position of president of the Garda Síochána Pensioners' Association. While returning home from the garda pensioners office on Monday evening, March 29th 1965, President Seán Liddy was involved in a traffic accident in Dublin and died the following morning. He was laid to rest in Kilmacduane Cemetery, Cooraclare, with full military honours. His wife Nan, who died on January 8th 1984, was also a native of Cooraclare. The Garda Veterans 'Liddy Medal', is now awarded by the Association to members of the GSRMA who were seriously injured in the discharge of duty.

SEÁN HUGHES

Seán Hughes was born in Claremorris, Co. Mayo. He joined An Garda Síochána in April 1922 and in July of that year he was chosen to take charge of gardaí for the protection of Government Buildings. In March 1923 he was appointed district officer for Sligo Garda District. By 1928, he was district officer in Howth. While stationed there he read law in the national university and was called to the Bar in 1934. He spent ten years as district officer in Mallow before moving to Midleton in 1943. He was a Munster representative on the Garda Representative Body for many years before retiring from An Garda Síochána in July 1957. At the AGM of the Garda Síochána Pensioners' Association in March, 1966, he was elected the second president of the association and held the office for six years. He died in September, 1978.

ALFRED I. FLOOD

Alfred Ignatius Flood was born in Dublin in 1904 and received his secondary education in Belvedere College. He joined An Garda Síochána in 1924 and had Reg. No. 6328. Better known as Alfie to friends, the name 'A.I. Flood' appeared on many official garda circulars. He was a member of the college rugby teams which won the Leinster Senior Schools' Cup in 1923 and 1924. On leaving college he joined An Garda Síochána and at 19 years of age was promoted sergeant and posted to Tipperary Division. During the 1930s he was promoted to inspector and superintendent ranks and in September 1965 was elevated to chief superintendent. In March 1967, he was promoted assistant commissioner and in May that year became deputy garda commissioner. He retired from the Force on April 9th 1972 after completing 47 years and four months service. Following retirement he became a member of the Garda Pensioners' Association and at their 1972 AGM was elected president. He held the post for a total of 14 years. He died on the March 30th 1997.

JAMES CALLERY

James Callery was a native of Ballyjamesduff, Co. Cavan and joined An Garda Síochána in 1925. He served in many stations from Mayo, Birr, Drogheda, Roscommon and Naas. Following his promotion to superintendent in 1963 he served in Belmullet and Carrickmacross before retiring in 1969. After retiring from the Force, he became an active member in the Drogheda branch of the association and was elected to the Central Committee in 1975. At the ADM in Dublin in July, 1986, James Callery was elected president for a three year term.

PADDY DRISCOLL

Paddy Driscoll was a native of Ballycotton, Co. Cork, where football played a huge part in his life. Driscoll figured on the remarkable garda team that won the 1950 Cork County Football Championship and for ten years had the honour of representing Cork. He served as a garda immigration officer in Cork and retired in the 1970s. After retirement from An Garda Síochána, he became actively involved with the Garda Pensioners' Association. In 1979, he was elected to the Central Committee and for 13 years played an active role in the association. He was president of our Association for three years – 1989 to 1991.

DAVE DILLANE

Dave Dillane was born in Abbeydorney, Co. Kerry and joined An Garda Síochána in 1952. He won a County Football Championship medal with Leighlin Bridge while stationed in Carlow in 1957. Two years later he was promoted to sergeant. He retired from the Force from Glin, Co. Limerick in 1982 and went back to live in Abbeydorney with his wife, Catherine. Dillane immediately joined the Tralee Branch of the Garda Síochána Pensioners' Association and while branch secretary helped to revive the local branch. In 1984, he was elected to the Central Committee and he held the position for 16 years. Between 1992 and 1995, he was president of the Association.

TOM RYAN

Tom Ryan joined An Garda Síochána in 1943 and retired as superintendent in 1981. A qualified barrister, he was a founder member of the Garda Social Club, the National Federation Pensioners' Association and the Irish Senior Citizens Parliament. Ryan was a member of the Central Committee of the Garda Pensioners' Association for twelve years. He was elected chairman between 1990 and 1994 and president of the Association for three years

1995 to 1998. Afterwards he served as a trustee and member of the Síocháin editorial board.

SEÁN MURRAY

Seán Murray was a native of Cavan and joined An Garda Síochána in 1943. His service record spans from Donegal, Castlebar, Galway, Clonmel and finally retiring as district officer in Fermoy in 1984. He was secretary of the local branch of the association and for 25 years looked after the welfare of retired gardaí and garda widows in the region. In 1989, he was elected to the Central Committee and served as president from 1998 to 2001.

PJ ROGAN

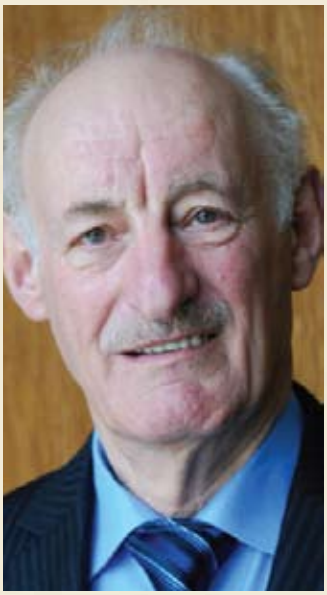
PJ Rogan, a native of Foxford Co. Mayo, joined An Garda Síochána in 1956, serving in Fitzgibbon Street, Galway, and the Training Centre. His 1981 promotion to inspector rank took him to Garda HQ in Dublin. In 1985 he went to Clonmel from where he retired a year later. Rogan was general secretary of the AGSI from 1983 to 1984. After retiring from the Force, he helped to establish a new branch for the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association in Templemore. In 1988 he was elected to the Central Committee and was chairman of the committee from 1995 to 1998. He was president of the association from 2001 to 2004. His local branch, that he helped to establish, now has a membership of 60.

JOHN HICKEY

John Hickey is a native of Belgooley near Kinsale. His father Tom was a founding member of the Force who served in nearby Ballyfeard Station. John joined An Garda Síochána in 1954 and was promoted to sergeant six year later in Dundalk. After a further ten years he was promoted to inspector and in 1977 he went to Tipperary town as a superintendent. Chief superintendent rank came in 1989 when he took charge of Westmeath Division. He retired from An Garda Síochána in 1993 and joined the Athlone Branch giving 12 years as branch secretary. Between 1996 and 2006, he was a member of the Central Committee and was president of the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association from 2004 to 2006.

PÁDRAIC COSTELLO

Pádraic Costello was a member of the AGSI National Executive for three terms prior to retiring from An Garda Síochána as a detective inspector in 1995. An active member of the Dún Laoghaire Branch of Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association he was elected to the Central Committee in 1999. He held the office of president from 2006 to 2010.



TONY SOURKE

Tony Sourke, a native of the seaside town of Rush, is the twelfth person to hold the office of president of Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association. Retiring as a detective superintendent in 2003, he became active in the Dublin West Branch of the association. He served on Central Committees since 2004.

CHAIRPERSONS

JIM FITZGERALD

Jim Fitzgerald was a high-profile official with the Garda Representative Body until his retirement from the Force in July 1977. Having given 12 years as chairman of the Garda RB his many talents were sought by the Garda Síochána Pensioners' Association. In 1979, Fitzgerald, a member of the Naas Branch, was elected to the Central Committee. Immediately he was elected chairman and from that position he steered our association for 12 years. A dedicated office holder, he was highly respected by branch members.

DAVE DEVANEY

Dave Devaney, a native of Tuam, Co Galway, joined An Garda Síochána in 1944. His service record is like a geography map of Ireland, from Kerry to Cork, Shannon, Birr, Abbeyleix, Newbridge, Gorey and Dublin. Promotion to sergeant came in 1955, followed by inspector rank in 1964 and superintendent in 1968. For many years he was secretary of the Garda Superintendents' Association. He retired from the Force in 1988 and joined the Dublin South branch of the Garda Síochána Pensioners' Association. One year later, he was elected onto the Central Committee where he gave 12 years unbroken service to the Association. He was chairman of the committee from 1998 to 2000.

PHIL CALLINAN

Phil Callinan, a native of Tipperary, joined An Garda Síochána in 1958. While on duty as a sergeant in Tullow, Co. Carlow, on January 16th 1978, he was shot and seriously injured during a bank robbery. He had a long association with the AGSI and was their president for two terms from 1978 until 1982. After retiring from the Force he was elected to the Central Committee of the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association. He gave ten years on the committee and was chairman from 2001 until 2002.

JACK HENNESSY

Jack Hennessy retired as a detective inspector from Garda Technical Bureau in 1988. Since then he is a very active member of the Naas Branch. In 2000 he was elected as a Leinster Rep. on the Central Committee and served three terms and served as chairman from 2002 to 2004. He represented the association on St Paul's Medical Aid Board during his period on the Central Committee.

JOHN DURCAN

John Durcan represented the garda sergeants and inspectors from Donegal for over 20 years on the AGSI National Executive. He was a great ambassador for the AGSI while holding their presidential office for seven years. After retiring from An Garda Síochána in 1998 he joined the GSRMA and elected to the Central Committee in 2000. He was chairman of Central Committee from 2004 to 2008.

CAHAL MURPHY

Cahal Murphy retired as a detective garda from Kevin Street in 1991. Since his retirement, he has given huge energy to the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association in Dublin South Branch. In 2006, he was elected to the Central Committee for a two year term and held the office of treasurer. On his re-election to the committee in 2008, he was appointed chairman. During 2008 to 2010, he shared his vast knowledge on welfare and entitlements with retired colleagues countrywide.

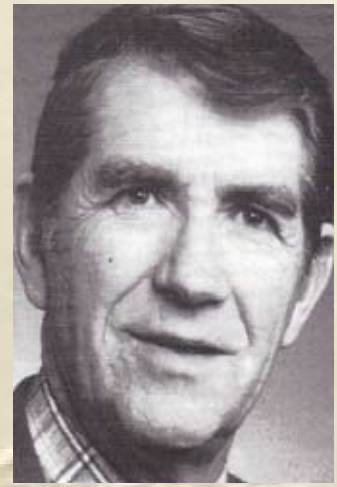
CHARLIE MCCARRON

A native of the Orchard County but now living in Co. Louth, Charlie McCarron retired as sergeant-in-charge of Garda In-Service for Louth/Meath in November 2000. Afterwards, he became very active with the Dundalk Branch of the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association where he is now branch secretary. He has served on the Central Committee of the association since 2006. In 2010, he was appointed chairman.

GENERAL SECRETARIES

THOMAS COSTELLO

Tom Costello was a native of Co. Galway. He joined the Force in 1922 with Reg. No. 2861. He retired as a sergeant from Carlow-Kildare Division in 1963. Between 1974 and 1976 he was general secretary to the Association.



DAN SPILLANE

Dan Spillane, a native of Tralee, was a Weights and Measures inspector at Garda HQ until he retired in 1977. In 1978, he was appointed general secretary of Garda Síochána Pensioners' Association and editor of Síocháin. He ran a very efficient central office for the association until he retired as general secretary in June, 1989. He continued as editor of Síocháin until his untimely death in December, 1989.

FRANK WHITE

Frank White, a native of Co. Sligo, played inter-county football for Sligo and Donegal. He had a strong association with the Garda Representative Association from the days of the Conroy Commission. He retired from the Force in 1978 and became active with the Garda Síochána Pensioners' Association. He was employed at head office from 1980 to 2000 serving for a lengthy period as general secretary and association trustee. Frank White is the oldest surviving general secretary.

DON BOYLE

Don Boyle was born in Dublin but reared on the Curragh of Kildare where his dad was an army officer. He joined An Garda Síochána in 1955 and spent all his service in Detective Branch. While at Dublin Castle he was promoted detective sergeant in 1965 and in 1979 to detective inspector. In 1990, he retired from the force and appointed assistant general secretary for the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association. In 1994, Don was promoted to the general secretary position and held the title for nine years.

EDDIE O' DONOVAN

Eddie O' Donovan is a native of Tralee where his father Dan served as a garda for many years. His father, who represented Kerry on the Central Committee from 1979 to 1982 died in 2006 at the age of 104 years. Eddie, retired from the Garda Ministerial Driving Pool in 1997 and in 2001 was appointed deputy general secretary of the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association. During 2002 to 2004 he was general secretary and gave a further four years as editor of Síocháin.

GERARD LOVETT

Gerard Lovett, a native of Ballingeary, Co. Cork, retired in 2004 as a detective inspector with the Special Detective Unit. He was appointed general secretary of the association in January 2005 and held the position for six years. His thorough understanding of the association and IT skills were a great asset to Central Committee and branch secretaries. Gerard is now employed part-time as assistant general secretary.

JOHN RAFTER

John Rafter is a Dubliner who in December 2010 retired as a sergeant from Change Management Section of Garda HQ. He is now general secretary of the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

JOHN DUFFY

John Duffy retired as an inspector in 2002 after spending his final eight years as Garda Archivist and Curator in the Garda Museum. Immediately, he took up the role as deputy general secretary for the association and gave eight years in the position.

GERALDINE KIRWAN

Geraldine Kirwan is a native of Carlow and following resignation from An Garda Síochána where she served in Garda HQ she joined the association as office administrator in 2004.

OUR NAME

A NEW NAME FOR NEW GENERATION

In 1988, the Kildare branch submitted a motion for debate at the ADM to change the name to 'Association of Retired Gardaí'.

It was clear from the debate that the younger members of the association were not happy with the word 'pensioners' as it made them seem prematurely old. However, the 'Old Guard' of the Garda Síochána Pensioners' Association had muscle and the motion was defeated. It was almost a decade later that a similar motion appeared on the conference clár for debate. This time many branches were in favour of changing the name but it took a few more years to finally agree on a new title. On January 1st 2002, the name was changed to the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association (GSRMA).

OUR CREST

The official crest of the association was designed by Mrs Liddy, daughter-in-law of President Seán Liddy. The central theme is the dove, a symbol of peace. The black belt suggests strength and unity. The black motif is a symbolic tribute to our dead comrades. The motto is loyalty and justice.

OUR CHAIN

HISTORY OF THE CHAIN

Michael Bohan from Drogheda, became a member of the Central Committee in 1989. Shortly afterwards he proposed that the president should wear a chain of office while attending official functions. His dream became a reality for the 30th anniversary of the Association, in 1991. Chairman Tom Ryan had the pleasure of presenting the new chain of office to President Paddy Driscoll.

The chain was designed by Mr Lua Breen, Dunfanaghy, Co. Donegal. His intention in designing the chain, was to project the Association as a modern progressive body, yet mindful of its history. The overall medal shape has a symmetry which is reminiscent of John Maxwell's original garda badge design but with a simpler and more contemporary approach. The overall 'square circle' shape suggests discipline and restrained power. The incorporated Dove of Peace is a fitting symbol and the blue enamel

depicts the uniform colour. The black enamel is a reminder of deceased members. The whole chain of office, with 30 plates, is fabricated in gold-plated sterling silver with an enamelled crest. The association crest and motto are hand engraved.

OUR WEBSITE

As part of the 50th anniversary celebration, the Garda Síochána Retired Members' Association launched the www.gardaretired.com website to improve our service. The site was designed by James O' Sullivan and Jamjodesign at Inniscarra Co. Cork.

1922 COMMEMORATIVE MEDALS

While An Garda Síochána was celebrating its 70th anniversary in 1992, Commissioner Patrick Culligan honoured 29 surviving members of An Garda Síochána who were founding members of the Force. The garda veterans were invited to a special function at the Garda College and each was presented with 1922 commemorative medals. Later that year, Her Excellency, President Mary Robinson, invited these garda veterans to Áras an Uachtaráin to officially thank them for their garda service. James Phelan, (Reg. No. 363) the senior man present made a presentation to President Robinson.

Founding Members were easily recognised. Both spent many years building up the Association in Thurles and mid Tipperary.

Above: Founding members Patrick Wall, Reg. No. 3924 (on left) and Michael J. Reidy, Reg. No. 6293.

Maureen Browne, writing in The Irish Press on Saturday, November 23rd 1968, reminds us of how the first generation of retired gardaí were easily recognised "by their upright posture, a familiar blue shirt and a way of looking you straight in the eye. We know them and meet them every day strolling through our city streets, tending their gardens or working in some part-time jobs".

Some of us, in the Garda Síochána Retired Members Association, may remember the harsh conditions the first generation of gardaí had to contend with. The 'Barrack Regulations' which hung in every station, were invoked to keep the member in his place, governing not only his working hours but his domestic and social life. Roll call at 11pm; 24-hours leave per month; permission to wear civvies; permission to marry; divine service parades; unlimited working hours; transfer without explanation – all for £3 to £4.50 per week.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE 2010-2012

Front row (L-R): John Rafter (Gen. Sec.), Gerard Blake (Treasurer), Charlie McCarron (Chairman), Tony Sourke (President), Grace Lyden (Vice-President), Pádraic Costello, John Durcan.
Back row (L-R): Tim Bowe, Tom Griffin, Christy Lonergan, Noel McCarthy, Paschal Feeney, Noel Campbell, John Hartigan, Pat Lehane, Fintan Dunne (insertion).

EDITORIAL COMMENT

This history was researched by Tim Bowe, Cork City Branch Secretary GSRMA, and a member of the Central Committee since 2010. He wishes to acknowledge the cooperation given by Sergeant Paul Maher, Curator of Garda Museum Dublin Castle, the Central Committee and Head Office Staff GSRMA. The research is ongoing and updates may appear on our new website www.gardaretired.com