

GENERAL

- 386** Liaison Meetings with CWU Group MPs
- 387** Union Skills III Course – Reminder
- 388** Union Skills III Course – CWU Head Office, Wimbledon
- 389** Two Day Grievance & Discipline Course – Leeds
- 390** Obituary – Doug Raftery

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 391** Harassment Complaints Database: Union Policy
- 392** Mandatory Equality & Diversity Training

HEALTH AND SAFETY

No items this week

TELECOMS

No items this week

POSTAL

No items this week

LETTERS TO BRANCHES

- 610** 04/07/07 BT EDDI Process – Simon Sapper
- 611** 05/07/07 21CN Code of Practice – Brian Healy
- 612** 05/07/07 Xansa Pay 2007 – Dave Johnson
- 613** 05/07/07 Royal Mail Dispute Further Announcement of 24 Hour Strike Action – Dave Ward
- 614** 06/07/07 BT Modern Apprentices – Simon Sapper
- 615** 06/07/07 Industrial Action/Working Time Definition under RTD – Terry Pullinger/Martin Collins
- 616** 06/07/07 Lobby of Parliament (Revised) – Billy Hayes
- 617** 06/07/07 Meeting Held with Manpower on 3 July 2007 – Pay Arrangements – Sally Bridge
- 618** 06/07/07 Openreach – Longer Term Resourcing in Service – Ian Cuthbert
- 619** 06/07/07 Monterey North Reorganisation – Simon Sapper
- 620** 09/07/07 CWU's Pete Eggleston wins TUC Safety Representative Award 2007 – Dave Joyce
- 621** 09/07/07 The Royal Mail Group PLC HSE/Lacors Large Organisations Partnership Pilot Partners Action Plans and Rollout – Dave Joyce
- 622** 09/07/07 Union Accounts 2006 – Tony Rupa
- 623** 09/07/07 Security Incidents Update/Security Threats Level – Dave Joyce
- 624** 09/07/07 Tolpuddle – Dorothy Lovett
- 625** 09/07/07 BT Business – Organisation – Glynis Winestein
- 626** 09/07/07 Royal Mail Campaign T-Shirts – Kevin Slocombe
- 627** 10/07/07 Crown Office POL: Crown Office Network Strike Action – Andy Furey
- 628** 10/07/07 BT GS – Engineering Forum – 24th July 2007 – Bill McClory
- 629** 10/07/07 Change of Dates for CWU Disability Special Needs – Michele Emerson
- 630** 10/07/07 BT GS – Professional Community – Bill McClory

LETTERS TO BRANCHES

631	11/07/07	Women into Engineering in BT – Openreach Campaign – Grace Mitchell
632	11/07/07	Royal Mail Dispute – Dave Ward
633	11/07/07	Xansa Pay 2007 – Dave Johnson

GENERAL

386

Liaison Meetings with CWU Group MPs

The following meetings with CWU Group MPs have now been arranged and, for your information, listed below are the dates of the meetings and those nominated to attend:

17 July 2007

PFMC Members to be nominated following Annual Conference, and a representative from the South West Regional Political Committee.

Billy Hayes
General Secretary

387

Union Skills III Course – Reminder

The Communication Workers Union has organised a Union Skills III Course, to be held at the union's Education & Training Centre at Alvescot Lodge. All courses held at Alvescot Lodge are accredited with the National Open College Network. This is a fully integrated course.

The course will be held from **13 – 17 August 2007**. Please submit applications as soon as possible.

Only members who have attended a Union Skills I/Induction and a Union Skills II course are eligible for nomination.

We particularly encourage branches to nominate women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and young members who are often under-represented on the CWU Education and Training Programme.

All courses at Alvescot are residential. The cost of tuition, food and accommodation will be met from the General Fund. Branches requiring financial assistance from the General Fund to enable them to send students to the course, must submit the request with the nomination, to enable the Trustees to consider the request in time.

The Education Centre can offer child-minding facilities for a maximum of three under school age children at any one time. If any applicant from your branch would like child-minding facilities, can you please advise the age and sex of the child on the application form. Further information on the child-minding arrangements will then be sent to successful applicants.

Those nominees who are committee members, branch representatives or branch officers are entitled to leave with pay.

Nominations should be made on the form

for education courses, and returned to Alvescot Lodge by the closing date shown.

Application forms should be addressed to **Trish Lavelle**, Head of Education & Training, CWU Education & Training Centre, Alvescot Lodge, Alvescot, Bampton, Oxon OX18 2PY. Telephone: **01993 843373**; Fax: **01993 840960**; email: **mtodd@cwu.org**

388

Union Skills III Course – CWU Head Office, Wimbledon

The Communication Workers Union has organised a Union Skills III Course, to be held at the CWU Head Office in Wimbledon. This course is accredited with the National Open College Network. This is a fully integrated course.

The course will be held from **1 – 5 October 2007**. Please submit applications as soon as possible.

Those nominees who are committee members, branch representatives or branch officers are entitled to leave with pay. Postal branches, please refer to LTB No. 096/07, issued 5th February 2007.

Application forms should be addressed to: **Trish Lavelle**, Head of Education & Training, CWU Education & Training Centre, Alvescot Lodge, Alvescot, Bampton, Oxon OX18 2PY. Telephone: **01993 843373**; Fax: **01993 840960**; email: **mtodd@cwu.org**

389

Two Day Grievance & Discipline Course – Leeds

The Communication Workers Union has organised a two day Grievance & Discipline Course.

The course will be held in Leeds on **Thursday 13th September** and **Thursday 11th October 2007**.

Nominations should be made on the form for Education Courses, and returned to Alvescot Lodge as soon as possible.

Application forms should be addressed to **Trish Lavelle**, Head of Education & Training, CWU Education & Training Centre, Alvescot Lodge, Alvescot, Bampton, Oxon OX18 2PY. Telephone: **01993 843373**; Fax: **01993 840960**; email: **mtodd@cwu.org**

390

Obituary – Doug Raftery

There are only a few people you meet who have a profound effect on your life and for me Doug

Raftery, who sadly died in May, was a defining influence (pictured below with his wife Doris).

Like many of his generation he joined the GPO., as a 'Boy Messenger' in 1940 at the Western District Office in London. Those were the good old days of four deliveries a day. Doug started his working day at 7.00am when he left home and would be lucky to get back home by 9.00pm when the blitz was in full swing!



At 16 years old he decided to make a career change and transferred to the engineering division. It must have been fate that ensued

he was offered a post on internal duties at Speedwell telephone exchange in Golders Green because it was there that he met the love of his life Doris who was working as a telephone operator. As with so many engineers and operators the switchroom was a connection point for telephone calls and romance and they were married in 1949. They were together for the next 58 years and with two children Susan and Keith theirs was a truly happy union.

Doug grew up in a socialist household, his father a keen Labour supporter and former union officer. With this background it is not surprising that he soon became interested in the local affairs of the Post Office Engineering Union.

In the 1950's he was elected Branch Secretary of the London Metropolitan North West Branch and with the late Jim Higgins as Chairman this formidable duo were a radical thorn in the side of the then POEU National Executive. On checking the 'History of the POEU' I found that in 1961 he moved the successful motion to create a Political Fund.

Doug did not speak very often at Conference, but when he did it was always a well prepared and effective contribution. In the 1960's he was the driving force behind the creation of the Tyburn Branch where I first got to know him. Even the name was his inspiration when he discovered that the river Tyburn flowed through the branch from the Heights of Hampstead. He showed me by example how to run an effective branch and in the early '70s came up with a great pay campaign slogan '£10 pound all round'. It inspired branch meetings all around the country and the NEC, who to the chagrin of the left, achieved the target albeit in a staged settlement.

Like a number of POEU activists he was a

member of the Communist party and I can vividly remember the first time he took me to a meeting of 'the left' in the inevitable smoke filled room above the 'Marquis of Gransby' at Cambridge Circus. As I recall there were only about a dozen plotting the revolution, but they played a key role in radicalising the union. In 1976 he was elected to the National Executive where as you would expect he was both persuasive and diligent and it was my good fortune to serve with him on the Executive.

Even in retirement he carried on serving his community as the Secretary of the 'PO & BT Veterans'. He was a keen photographer and a member of the local Photographic Society, the Swanage Railway Group and the 'Whale Watchers'. He was a very modest man who possessed integrity and many talents that were used to the benefit of the union movement for fifty years of his life – a remarkable contribution.
Tony Young

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

391 Harassment Complaints Database: Union Policy

Branches are again reminded of the need to fill in the Harassment Complaints Database (HCD) Forms, as illustrated in LTB 450/04.

Please ensure that all reps have a copy of LTB 450/04 as it contains useful guidance as well as the form itself. Branches may also find LTB 289/04 useful which contains information on the Harassment Helpline and the Harassment Advice Network as well as the HCD. The completion of the HCD forms is part of our agreement with the Equal Opportunities Commission and is, therefore, CWU policy (the full agreement can be found in LTB 292/04).

The Equal Opportunities Commission has raised concerns with us regarding the completion rate, which we need to address, otherwise we will fall foul of the agreement. Therefore, please ensure that any complaint raised with branch reps by members that involves possible harassment should be notified to HQ via these forms.

We appreciate that this will add to an already busy work schedule for those reps that have the responsibility for completing them, but there is no scope for non-compliance. We must accept that this will become an accepted culture in terms of harassment reporting.

The data that will come through to HQ will be vital in enabling us to analyse and identify any obvious patterns where problems exist.

We extend our appreciation to all those branches already complying with the policy

and look forward to the co-operation of all branches in this matter.

Any enquiries regarding this paragraph please contact **Michèle Emerson** at CWU HQ.

392 Mandatory Equality & Diversity Training
Branch secretaries are requested to ensure that any person in their branch who has CWU rep responsibilities and has not yet completed their mandatory Equality & Diversity training are enrolled in the courses that are planned throughout the regions in the forthcoming months.

All reps must do the training – this includes divisional reps, area reps, unit reps and branch officers. For clarification on dates please contact either your regional secretary.

The training has been running now for over three years and there are still a substantial number of reps who have not completed the training. Your co-operation in this matter is greatly appreciated.
Equal Opportunities Department.

EVENTS BULLETIN

Friday 13th – Sunday 15th July 2007: Tolpuddle Martyrs' Festival. On February 24th, 1834, six farm labourers from the Dorset village of Tolpuddle were arrested on a charge of taking part in an 'illegal oath' ceremony. In the eyes of their masters, however, the real offence was that they had dared to form a trade union to defend their livelihood. For this they were sentenced to seven years' transportation to the penal colonies of Australia. The sentences provoked an immense outcry, leading to the first great mass trade union protest. The campaign won free pardons and the Martyrs' return to England. A historic episode in the struggle for trade unionists' rights in Great Britain. For more information visit www.tuc.org.uk/tolpuddle

Sunday 15 July 2007: Rise: London United 2007. Clapham Common, London SW4 (subject to licence). 12pm – 8:30pm. Free event. The Mayor of London Ken Livingstone is backing Europe's largest anti-racist festival. The event is backed by the Trades Union Congress, National Assembly Against Racism and diverse community organisations. Rise: London United 2007 will feature a wide range of music, performance and other activities. Past performers include Graham Coxon, De La Soul, Common, Buzzcocks, Roy Ayers, Sway and the Wailers, with stages featuring African, Asian and Cuban music, Dub and hip hop DJs, comedy acts and the annual Poetry Slam organised in conjunction with the Poetry Society. There

will also be a children's play area, food and drink, exhibitions and arts and crafts. The Mayor said the venue for this year's event had extra significance in 2007 – the bicentenary year of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade: 'This year's Rise: London United is taking place in Clapham, which has strong historical links to the campaigners who helped bring in the legislation, which brought to an end the transatlantic slave trade in Britain.' More details will be announced shortly. Public information: www.risefestival.org or **020 7983 6554**.

Wednesday 18th July 2007: National Pensioners Convention – Eastern Region Meeting. Will be held at Moreton Community Centre, Symonds Road, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk at 1pm. For more information contact **Nobby Clark** Eastern Region Retired Members Secretary on **07713 155575**.

Sunday 5 August 2007: Leeds Pride Event. 12.00 Nelson Mendala Gardens and Lower Briggate, Leeds. Major march and rally commencing from Nelson Mendala Square (outside Leeds Civic Hall) and marching through Leeds to end at Lower Briggate. There will be a rally with speakers at midday and the march will include the Pink Bus, fire engine and ambulance. You are invited to bring along any union banners and to join in! When the march ends, there will be stalls and other events. For more information contact cbeastall@tuc.org.uk Yorkshire & the Humber TUC.

Monday 8th October 2007: Eastern Regional Retired Members' Committee Meeting. To be held in Community, Swinton House, 324 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8D at 11am. For more information contact **Nobby Clark** Eastern Region Retired Members Secretary on **07713 155575**.



If you have anything for the events bulletin page please send your contribution to:

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Wimbledon SW19 1RX
Tel: **020 8971 7497**
Email: mmurray@cwu.org

Details must arrive nine days before publication and must include a contact phone number, brief summary of the event, email and website address. Listings are free, but inclusion is not guaranteed.