

It's a dog's life in the RSPCA

IT'S A PITY the RSPCA don't treat people as well as they are supposed to treat animals.

Early this year 50-year-old Mrs Kathleen Dovey resigned after 17 years with the RSPCA. She had been told to "get rid of" some birds kept in an aviary at the RSPCA's Edge Lane headquarters.

Unable to face the prospect of destroying birds too tame to release, or which couldn't be found a home, Mrs Dovey gave up her job as a superintendent. When she left, she took a crow, a magpie, two owls and a kestrel, which she still keeps in her garage.

"They forgot they were living creatures they were dealing with," she explained, "they thought it was just stock."

At least one other part-time RSPCA volunteer also resigned in protest over the birds.

Mrs Dovey is devoted to animals. In her 17 years with the RSPCA she never had a summer holiday. "But that was my own fault," she said. "We were always busy boarding in

the summer and you can't get anyone reliable enough."

Her devotion went unrewarded. When she left, the RSPCA gave her the usual pay cheque... plus one day's holiday pay.

Mrs Dovey and her two daughters, who worked with her, also had to leave their £10-a-week RSPCA flat at Edge Lane.

The RSPCA eventually allowed the family to move into a house they own at Newton, on the Wirral.

The house had stood empty for a year and it cost the Doves £80 to move. But Liverpool RSPCA's secretary, Major W.H. Stabback, said they could only stay in the house for three months.

On the day the time was up, August 10, Stabback sent a letter giving the family a fortnight to get out. Later the same day a man from estate agents Ramos Murch & Co called for the keys. He didn't get them.

And as we go to press, the Doves are still there.

Major Stabback, once a Conservative candidate for the City Council,

refused to discuss Mrs Dovey's holiday pay and the family's accommodation problems.

He maintained that Mrs Dovey had "retired".

● If Major Stabback and the RSPCA have seen the last of Mrs Dovey, they may yet hear more about one of the birds she was told to get rid of.

A scarlet macaw, worth around £100, was boarded in the aviary when the RSPCA decided to close it down. It belonged to an elderly man from Birkenhead who was in hospital with a broken leg — and had no-one to look after it.

Faced with the choice of finding a home for it, or having the macaw destroyed, Mrs Dovey handed the bird over to Chester Zoo.

Unfortunately the bird has since died. And, not surprisingly, the owner has taken legal advice over claiming compensation.



Homes kept empty for eight years

THIS HOUSE is one of two in Goodison Road which have stood empty for over eight years.

They are owned by Liverpool's biggest and most inefficient landlord — the City Council.

This house, 151 Goodison Road, and number 159 were bought by the Education Department when they considered expanding Arnot Street School, which is directly behind them.

Presumably the idea was to acquire the whole block and knock it down. But that scheme has now been abandoned. And after all these years, the council plan to let people live in them.

Providing they are fit for habitation, both will be sold. "It's surprising how many people ask about them," a woman in the street said. "You feel ashamed."

They wouldn't give him a chance . . .



DOES a sentence end when someone leaves prison? Top council officials think not.

Recently Liverpool Social Services Department were looking for black unqualified social workers. (Of course this wasn't stated bluntly.)

Their idea was that the best people to work with Liverpool-born blacks, Pakistanis, Chinese etc, were people from these communities.

The Social Services had been forced to realise that young, university-educated social workers just could not cope, however many certificates they held.

One person who applied was Roy Paul, from Toxteth (brother of boxer Larry Paul). He was short-listed.

At his interview Mr Paul was completely frank about his prison record, which included a total of about five years for assault and robbery.

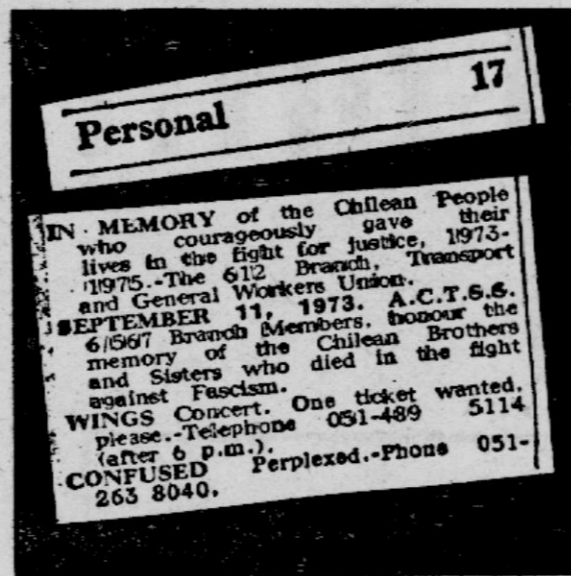
"I wasn't out to fool them," he says. "I explained that having a criminal record I could advise a lot of guys around here where they are going wrong, because I've been through it."

Mr Paul impressed the interviewing panel, which included top social workers. In fact, he was their first choice and was recommended for a job.

Several weeks passed and eventually Mr Paul learned he had been turned down, against the wishes of the panel. The veto on his appointment had been made at the highest level.

Top officials decided Mr Paul hadn't served enough time outside. He had only come out of prison in February (though his last year had been spent in a semi-open prison where he had taken a number of educational courses).

Perhaps — he was told — there might be a job... if he applied in a few more months.



Too many to remember?

THE SECOND anniversary of the military coup in Chile was not forgotten by some Merseyside trade unionists.

But they were not allowed to pay their respects in the way they wanted to the thousands of workers who were killed.

The Liverpool Echo refused to allow paid advertisements in their 'In Memoriam' classification on September 11.

The Echo said the adverts were "political" and that the 'In Memoriam' section was for individuals and not large numbers of people. (Estimates of the number killed by the Chilean junta start at 10,000.)

However, the Echo's principled stand did not stretch to refusing trade union money altogether. The advertisements eventually appeared in the 'Personal' column, alongside ads about people with emotional problems and from others who 'urgently required' tickets to a pop concert.

GIVING KIRKBY A BAD NAME...

Bill out, Dave back

BILL MARSHALL, the former chairman of Kirkby council who claimed to have paid for the extension to his home in a most peculiar way, has got more problems.

Following our article (last issue) Marshall and his business partner, Bill Ashton, have parted company. Mr Ashton says the former councillor no longer has any connection with either ABP Contract Cleaners or A & M Warehousing.

Marshall gave up his accountant's job at Yorkshire Imperial Metals to start ABP in 1970. Ashton joined him over a year later and quickly became the senior partner.

In 1973 Ashton paid himself £9,099 against Marshall's £6,099.

Perhaps it was Marshall's activities as a councillor which were taking up his time. Until Knowsley council took over in 1974, he was a key figure in Kirkby as Pharaoh Dave Tempest's side-kick.

Like Tempest, and suspended council architect Eric Spender Stevenson, Marshall had expensive home improve-

ments done by builder George Leatherbarrow.

Police investigating Leatherbarrow's £10 million-worth of council contracts have been hearing various odd tales about how they all claim to have paid for the work.

COLLEAGUES at Yorkshire Imperial Metals are presumably glad to see former Knowsley council leader Dave Tempest fully recovered and back at work.

An old "war wound" has been playing him up since June, shortly after our "Corruption in Kirkby" edition, and has prevented him showing his face in usual haunts.

UNION SACKS OFFICIAL

(HE WOULDN'T WORK IN MANCHESTER)

THE NATIONAL Union of Public Employees are being taken to an Industrial Tribunal over the sacking of a Merseyside union official.

The sacked man, George Warburton, has been an area organiser for NUPE for the last three years. He was sacked for refusing to move from the union's Bebington office to NUPE's regional office in Manchester.

His dismissal brought widespread protests from a number of Merseyside branches. Telegrams, letters and a 15-man deputation were sent to London.

Whether or not they greatly admired Mr Warburton, some members feel his case raises an important issue: Who should have more say in appointing and dismissing local officials — the membership or the national executive council?

NUPE asked Mr Warburton to move to Manchester as part of the current reorganisation of the union.

They point out that officials agree in their contract to move around, and that Mr Warburton could still live at his home in Penketh and work in Manchester.

Mr Warburton, 44, says he would be forced to live nearer Manchester and he would prefer to work on Merseyside. He maintains that none of the other officials from Bebington were even approached when he refused the move.



Council chief cashes in

BILL SEFTON, chairman of Merseyside County Council has a new job.

He's been appointed chairman of the North West Economic Development Council. So he will have even less time to rest at his North Wales country cottage.

Still, if the Labour leader feels tired perhaps his bank balance will cheer him up.

His new part-time job with the NEDC gives him £1,000 a year.

Not a fortune, perhaps. But then there's that other job as chairman of the Runcorn Development Corporation. This brings in a much more healthy £4,300 a year, plus expenses.

Add the £1,536 he received in allowances and expenses from the Merseyside council, and that gives him at least £6,836 (nearly £140 a week).

Despite these jobs, Sefton still has time to be a director, shareholder and manager of a garage firm, Oakwalk Ltd. He owns this firm with former councillor Mr Brian Crookes.

How much does he pay himself? That's difficult to say. His company haven't filed any accounts since 1972.

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