

O B A N



ARBORFIELD OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

ARBORFIELD OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

President - Maj Gen M S Heath CBE, BSc(Eng), CEng, FIEE, FIMgt

Vice Presidents - Past Commandants

COMMITTEE

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Maj (Retd) Mick T Harold (53B)

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College Adjutant - Maj John F Lloyd QLR

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School of Electronic Engineering - Bill E N Pusey (46A) BA, IEng, FIEIE

School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering - Peter D Gripton (56B)

School of Aeronautical Engineering - SSgt Bert W Park (82A)

Honorary Membership Secretary and Editor *OBAN* - John F Northam (47A)

Committee meetings are held 3-4 times per year. Any member wishing to put forward a motion or item to the Committee for consideration may do so by writing directly to the Honorary Secretary. Additionally, an ad hoc administration committee is convened, usually under the Chairmanship of the College Adjutant and attended by all interested parties, to deal with the details of the reunion weekend.

GENERAL AND REUNION INFORMATION

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Arborfield Old Boys' Association Newsletter

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From The Editor

Thanks to all those who took time and trouble to send in contributions to this Issue 6 of *OBAN* enabling us to put together what we would modestly call a "bumper issue". Now that doesn't mean the rest of you can rest on *their* laurels; far better we have more than we can publish in any one issue than having to scratch around for bits to fill in the spaces. The real interest in *OBAN* and on which its survival surely depends, is the involvement of and contributions from you the members. So let's be hearing from you!

The more observant among you will have noted that the Northam aim to move to the West Country this year did not materialise in spite of having a prospective purchaser interested in our property. The situation was changed dramatically with the surprise (and I do mean surprise!) announcement of our only daughter's wedding to take place in September. Not wishing to tempt fate and possibly have the two events coincide we decided to put the move on hold until 1997 (by which time we hope to have recovered financially!). So for the time being at least, Brian Hornsey and I will be working together on this and future *OBANs*.

Unfortunately, this issue is only being sent to those members who have paid their annual Administration Subscription Fee of £5 for 1994. At the same time it is acknowledged that the majority of the remainder will have overlooked or simply forgotten their payment ("there but for the grace of God" as they say) so they have been sent a gentle reminder, their *OBAN* being held pending payment. For those interested in figures at the time of writing, from a total active membership of 536, only 308 have paid their subs for 1994! I might just mention that payment of the annual subscription does help us tremendously by confirming your address details and continued interest in the Association.

The recently formed New Zealand "British Services X-Boys' Association" held its inaugural meeting and dinner to coincide with our own AGM on Saturday 8 October.

I was delighted to have been able to speak to their Chairman on the telephone just half an hour before their meeting at 0830 NZ time to wish them well on behalf of the Chairman and members of the Arborfield OBA. They were somewhat surprised, but delighted, with our greeting and have promised a full report in due course. Sufficient to say that their weekend was a great success and, with wives, 40 sat down to a splendid dinner in the evening. Great news!

Our own reunion was another great success judging by comments received thus far with only a few minor snags which hopefully will have been sorted out by next year - don't forget, if you have any constructive criticisms on how the weekend might be improved please let us know.

It was a particular pleasure to see a number of new faces this year, some returning after a period of absence, others attending for the first time, whatever the reason it's got to be a good sign and an indication of the continuing good health of the Association.

Col Peter Gibson's encouragement and enthusiasm for the OBA is well-known and during his period of office we went from strength to strength, but change was always inevitable so it was a great relief when his successor was announced as Col Mike Dorward, only the second past apprentice to be appointed Commandant of the College and therefore Chairman of the OBA. His commitment to the Association will already be known to those attending the reunion and will be obvious to readers of this Newsletter. We look forward to another period of prosperity under his Chairmanship. Colonel Mike, welcome!

Now it's that time of year again with Christmas almost upon us. So from all of us at this end a Very Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year to you and your families.

John Northam

NOSTALGIC RANGE DAY

Regrettably, due to eleventh hour restrictions imposed by the MOD banning civilians using MOD weapons, the range day as advertised in *OBAN 5* and scheduled for Saturday 23 July had to be cancelled.

Members who had expressed a wish to attend were informed of the cancellation individually.

A Few Words from the Honorary Secretary

Meeting up with old friends again in 1994 was a great pleasure, but as normally happens on these occasions one runs out of time and does not converse with as many friends as one had planned to. Not surprising really, when during the reunion weekend there were over 200 Old Boys and a smattering of wives here in Arborfield.

I know that you will appreciate that setting up the weekend required a lot of voluntary assistance in order to make the reunion a success. The list of helpers (as ever) included the Adjutant, Quartermaster, RSM, CSMs, Balleul Mess Staff, Regimental Restaurant Staff, the College Band, WRVS Lady and of course the apprentices. Judy Booth, although not at the weekend, had collated all the information on the application forms and sent you all your car permits and passes.

The parade this year, I thought went rather well - a smart disciplined body of men under the command of the bowler hatted Roger Nickson. From the feedback I have had it does appear that the Drumhead Service was much appreciated. Bob McGrillen mentioned to me that he had enjoyed the Service, but by the time it came to march off, his knees were almost locked solid (but knowing Bob he soon overcame that problem). I know that Brigadier John Palmer, the reviewing officer, thoroughly enjoyed the parade and meeting old boys at the buffet lunch afterwards. It was a pleasure to have Brigadier John and his wife Sue there on the Saturday. It was also a proud moment for us all to once again have an Arborfield Old Boy on parade as Commandant of Princess Marina College.

There were 150 seated for the reunion dinner which included our senior old boy, Major General Peter Baldwin CBE. It was a splendid meal and the feeling of friendship that prevailed could be felt. From my own point of view, and from comments I received, the dinner could be improved even further if the length of time of the dinner was reduced. I will be working on that for next year.

On the Sunday, for the second year running, we had our dedicated AOBA church service with Padre Broddle, our Chaplain officiating. There were over 90 members in the congregation who gave good voice to the hymns, led by the College Band. The Pipe Major played 'a lump in the throat' lament and joined the Band in an equally emotional rendering of 'Amazing Grace'. Those Old Boys that had died since the last reunion were remembered in our prayers, led by Alan Morton. I would personally like to see more old boys attend this service, because I do believe it pays homage to those old boys that have passed on, and strengthens the resolve of the rest of us. Do try to make the service next year.

There was a slight 'hiccough' this year on accommodation but next year we are going to have a number of spare bedspaces available and tighten up the organisation which should overcome the problems of 1994.

Finally I must say I was delighted to meet Gerry Preston (44A) who had come over from South Australia to attend the reunion which was the 50th Anniversary of his enlistment as an apprentice. Gerry served his 22 years, mostly as a 'tiffy', before he emigrated to Australia, and has been involved in the Flying Doctor Service communications system. Come back again Gerry - you will always be welcome.

Also I must say how pleased I was to see Ken Schofield at the reunion. Ken is a determined and brave man and although he had had health problems to overcome, he was determined to attend the reunion, and he did - I look forward to seeing you next year Ken!

A happy Christmas and prosperous New Year to you all.

Larry Le Var (47A)

SPECIAL APPEAL

Can You Help?

Princess Marina College has recently formed its own Clay Pigeon Club and Golf Club (a 9 hole golf course within Rowcroft Lines is anticipated). If you have any suitable golf equipment or shotguns for which you have no further use, please consider donating them to the College for use by the apprentices.

All offers should be made directly to :

PRI
Princess Marina College
Arborfield
READING RG2 9NJ

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I am delighted to have returned to Arborfield as Commandant, Princess Marina College and also to take on the role as Chairman of the Arborfield Old Boys' Association. In some respects it hasn't sunk in yet as I have only been in the post for a few weeks and am still on a steep learning curve! Everyone tells me that as an ex-boy I should know it all as, deep down, it hasn't actually changed that much over the intervening years. Nothing could be further from the truth! The complex web that exists between the many diverse elements of the College needs a statistician to unravel and even those who have been here for many years only know part of the story.

However, I am making inroads into it and may just about understand it in time to start again when we move to Rowcroft Barracks, drawdown to our new establishment and reorganise in April 1995. The year ahead promises to be extremely busy as we restructure. In addition to the above we are tasked to implement Total Quality Management, prepare for the 18 month course for vehicle mechanics, gunfitters and armourers, introduce validation procedures,

review the Common Military Syllabus (Recruits) and react to the Inspector General Doctrine and Training (IGDT) initiative to move towards Agency status.

Life is never dull but I would not have it any other way.

Despite all the problems, the most rewarding thing is to see our young apprentices pass out into the adult training schools. The look of amazement and joy in the parents' faces makes up for everything when combined with the immense satisfaction which the staff derive from knowing that another output is on its way to being the future warrant officers and officers of the Corps.

At the recent Old Boys' reunion, I met many, many friends and look forward to renewing many more acquaintances over the next few years. I assure you that I will use my best endeavours to further the aims and wishes of the Old Boys' Association and in particular the restoration of the old College gates and the laying of the memorial garden.

Mike Dorward

Farewell to Colonel Peter Gibson

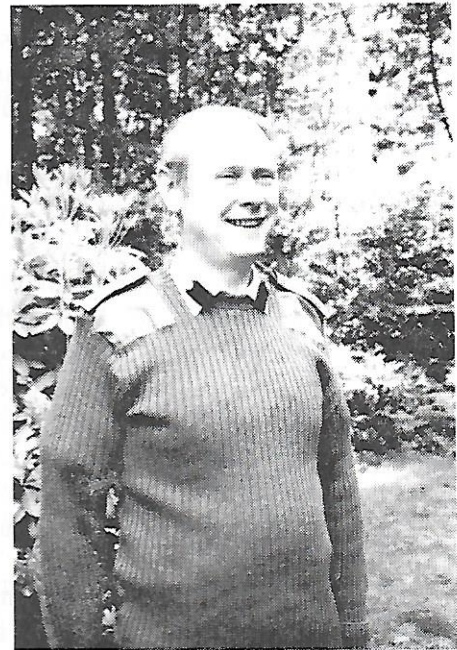
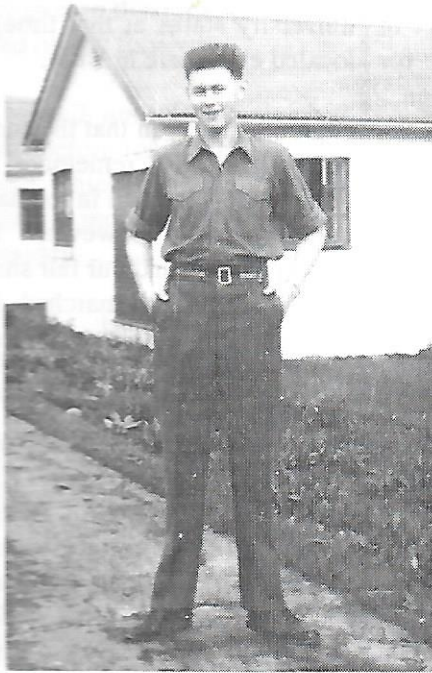
A farewell lunch for Colonel Peter Gibson was held in Hazebrouck Officers Mess on Tuesday 9th August 1994. The lunch was hosted by the Management Committee on behalf of the Old Boys, to thank Peter Gibson for the support he had given to the AOBA during his time as Chairman. In recognition of Peter Gibson's contribution as Chairman he was presented with two inscribed goblets by the Secretary, Larry Le Var. Those attending the lunch (from left to right) were: Larry Le Var, RSM Rowell, Mick Harold, Peter A'hearne, Ian Waller, Peter Gripton, Peter Gibson, John Northam, Victor Alanbrooke, Chris Broddle, John Tustin.



PERSONALITY SLOT

Col Mike Dorward MBE - 60A

I thought I ought to set a good example and start off your new 'personality slot' series to encourage others to follow suit. I enclose two photographs as requested, one at the tender age of 17 and one more recent. The potted history goes as follows:



Then.....and now !

1960-62	Army Apprentices School, Arborfield.	1979	34 Central Wksp, Donnington.
1963	SEE - Thunderbird I SAGW course.	1980-84	OC CIAT, REME Technical Services, Dusseldorf.
1963-64	School of Artillery, Manobier.	1984-85	OC 3 MAG, Electronics Branch, Malvern.
1964	Upgrading at Ferranti, Edinburgh -Thunderbird III.	1985-86	SO2 Electronics, Maintenance Directorate, HQ BAOR, Rheindahlen.
1964-66	37 Hy A D Regt (10 Bty), Pembroke Dock.	1986-88	SO1 Mech, Maintenance Engineering Agency, Melbourne, Australia.
1966-68	Art Radar 36, SEE, Arborfield.	1988-92	Chief Instructor, SEE, Arborfield.
1968-70	10 (Asseye) Bty, 36 Hy A D Regt Shoeburyness	1992-94	Col ES1, HQ BAOR, Rheindahlen.
1970-71	Radar Branch, Malvern.	1994-Date	Commandant, Princess Marina College, Arborfield.
1971-72	Mons Officer Cadet School, Aldershot.		
1972-75	JSRMAT, British Aerospace, Stevenage.		
1975-77	OC 50 Msl Regt Wksp, Minden.		
1977	23 Base Wksp, Wetter.		
1977-79	Technical High School, Masjid-i-Suliman, Iran.		

One might say the circle is complete! If any of my old friends from B Company are still around, I would love to hear from them.

50 YEARS ON

Another Past Apprentice's Recollections of an Historic Summer

By Tom Pearce (Feb 44)

As stated by Bryan Adams in the Spring 1994 Issue of OBAN, in the summer of 1944 the boys of the School were dispersed to various locations around the country so as to vacate the camp for the Normandy invasion build-up.

The two most junior intakes at the time, namely Oct.43 & Feb, 44, were moved to Lowercroft Camp at Bury, Lancashire. The Camp consisted of wooden huts and was built in the grounds of what had once been Lowercroft Mill. The Camp was in two halves surrounding a reservoir. We slept in two-tier bunks and made our first acquaintance with the 'dry scrubber', a device that took the place of the 'bumper' and wax polish used on the Arborfield barrack room floors.

No account was taken of our previous Company loyalties as we were all reshuffled into 'X' and 'Y' Companies. Unlike those who were dispersed to REME workshops we did not experience the breath of freedom that Bryan mentions in his account as we took all the prominent members of the disciplinary staff with us. RSM McNally, Provost Sergeant Hodgekiss with his RPs, also a number of physical training and AEC educational staff.

Workshop facilities were limited and it was necessary for each group to check toolkits both at the beginning and end of each workshop period (which could be as short as one and three-quarter

hours) because several different A/Ts used the same bench space in succession. This left little time for the actual file bashing in between.

A greater than usual proportion of the working day was spent on education and PT etc. The gymnasium was an upper floor of one of the old mill buildings and the floor seemed none too safe in places and one was a little apprehensive about dropping a medicine ball from too great a height, for fear that it might disappear to the floor below and you with it.

The camp was very hilly and widely spread and a great deal of exercise was gained just marching from one part to another. The NAAFI was on the far side of the camp from our barrack rooms, so that you always felt you needed another cup of tea by the time you arrived back at your room. We were lucky, however, to have a Salvation Army centre in our part of the camp. The NAAFI was therefore only visited to collect our sweet ration once a week. The roads in camp were not only hilly but some of them consisted of the original Victorian cobblestones. Owing to our studded boots there was much slipping and sliding and many a china tea mug was shattered on the road whilst en route to the cookhouse.

The REME School of Electric Lighting (SEL) as well as No. 1 Radio Mechanics School were also located in Lowercroft Camp. The Military College of Science (not

Royal at that stage and not of university status at that time) was located elsewhere in Bury.

I agree with Bryan that the summer of 1944 was, as I remember, a hot one (weren't they all in the days of our youth). However, being Lancashire we had our fair share of rain as well and marched about wearing groundsheet capes some of the time.

We all seemed to enjoy ourselves. There was a sort of holiday atmosphere about our life there. The town centre was only a tram ride away and the Odeon cinema was showing the early films of Frank Sinatra (for those who liked that sort of thing). There seemed to be no shortage of girls in our own age group in the town (again for those who liked that sort of thing).

As well as the School staff who came with us, we inherited some members of staff who came with the camp. Notable among these was the medical orderly at the MI room. He was a short, grey haired LCpl in the Lancashire Fusiliers who bullied and shouted at all those who had the temerity to report sick, as well as those who went for treatment. I can't remember his name but he was known to one and all as 'Adolf'.

After the summer leave of 1944 we reported back to Arborfield and the regular routine of an A/T's life there, but with happy memories of Bury. Was it really half a century age?

Special Feature

EX-BOYS will be BOYS

By Ken Hayes (42)

There are many caravanners who believe the jockey wheel is an essential part of a caravan.

I had reason to disagree. It had just dropped on my foot.

Betty waited until I had finished hopping before remarking that the swearing which had accompanied my frenetic movements was quite unnecessary.

"Until you have suffered and endured a jockey-wheeled foot you are not qualified to comment."

"I am suffering pain now," she screamed, "specifically in the neck!"

I stood stork-like, rubbing ruefully. "A little sympathy wouldn't come amiss."

"Get the steadies down and you'll get tea and sympathy."

I sipped my tea and felt my foot, wondering why I had agreed to come to Applethorpe. If Pinhead hadn't made me move the caravan the jockey wheel wouldn't have dropped on my foot. And if Beanpole hadn't persuaded me to come to Applethorpe because Pinhead was the warden there I wouldn't have been here at all. Is that a bit confusing? I will explain.

Peter Ivan Newton Head, or P I N Head, and David Gillbetts - nicknamed 'Beanpole' because even at 17 he was touching six feet - and myself are ex-boys: we were all at military school together.

Beanpole had telephoned me a

couple of weeks back. "Guess who I saw at Applethorpe!"

"Applethorpe?"

"Club site near Berrington. Was a railway station. They've made a good job converting it."

"Who did you see?" I reminded. "Pinhead. He's the warden. Major P I N Head." "Major? You mean mister. He came out years ago."

"He did, but he's still very much the major. That's what I want to talk to you about."

It sounded suspiciously like another of Beanpole's little schemes, but as I listened patiently I was reminded of when we were the three muskettiers in Boy's Service, always in trouble and always enjoying it. Beanpole was a gifted practical joker and we were his willing side-kicks. We led a life of larks and laughter.

Beanpole and I left the Army on the completion of our service term, he to electronics while I to surveying. Pinhead soldiered on.

Beanpole told me his delight at his reunion with Pinhead was short-lived. "He's a martinet. Struts about the site. He still carries a swagger stick! Wears those camouflaged trousers smothered with pockets and a khaki shirt with epaulettes. And he's got a thing about lining the side of the caravan on the pitch number peg. Honest, he carries on like a fanatical frog!"

"Hopping mad," I suggested.

"Exactly."

"And exactly why are you telling me this?"

"Just briefing you for when you go to Applethorpe."

"But I'm not going to Applethorpe."

The line went dead. I waited... Nothing. It was like listening to cottonwool balls dropping on to a marshmallow mattress. I gave up waiting. "When am I going to Applethorpe, Beanpole?" I asked.

Pinhead's arrival greeting was like a short measure of concentrated fruit juice. Cordial, but curt. Betty and Nancy nattered nostalgically while I signed in.

I sited and steadied the caravan on our allocated patch. Pinhead, complete with 'uniform' and swagger stick, appeared. He used the swagger stick to point at the peg on to which, he insisted, lined up with I was not. Or words to that effect. So I told Pinhead he was behaving like a ball of string and suggested he should get knotted. The twisted expression around his mouth was not exactly a smile, but it was sneer enough. He tapped my shoulder with the swagger stick, as if offering me half a knighthood.

"How about a little discipline, eh? Don't expect this kind of caper from someone of your background." He leaned closer. "Get on the peg or get off the site, right?"

"But you know we're all meeting Beanpole and Mary here this week-end!"

"Then don't disappoint them!"

Although the landscaping at Applethorpe was both generous and effective its design did not seek to remove its railway origins. Features of its previous use had been deliberately retained. The old ticket office served as the warden's site office and adjacent rooms housed other facilities of a caravanning nature. It was this connection with the past which had inspired Beanpole's plan.

The platform gaslight outside the site office had been electrified and Beanpole had arranged - don't ask me how - for the light bulb to malfunction soon after nine o'clock, when it would be dark. Our cars had been parked casually, but carefully, so that the headlights were aligned on the 'target.' It was approaching dusk when Beanpole pressed the action button. The result was unbelievable.

The faint far-away train whistle had the same effect as a thunderclap. Its haunting, eerie echo had scarcely died in the twilight sky before heads appeared. People emerged from their caravans, puzzled, bemused.

No one actually mentioned it, but the words 'ghost train' were on a score of lips. Beanpole's timing was perfect. He allowed the tension to ease. People exchanged theories. Laughter crept into conversations. Gradually they returned to their caravans. It grew darker.

Beanpole demonstrated his skills once more. The train whistle sounded again. This time louder and stronger, followed by the thunder of metals wheels on metal lines, ever increasing in volume as the Ghost Train approached the railway station, getting nearer and nearer, louder and louder.

Caravanners emerged like rabbits in reverse, bolting out of their burrows at these noises from the past. Suddenly the car's headlights came on and there, caught in their beams, was the uniformed figure, crouched as if in hiding, disturbed by the flood of light. Everyone saw it and watched its startled retreat towards the booking office - the warden's site office.

"It's the warden!" Beanpole called from somewhere in the darkness. "It's the wretched warden, frightening everybody like this!" No, it was not the uniformed figure of a railway porter or station master. The camouflage pattern trousers and khaki shirt with epaulettes were unmistakable. And the swagger stick applied the finishing touch. It was Pinhead to a tee. I was still chuckling as Betty helped me remove my incriminating disguise. Pinhead was well and truly framed.

We were gathered in Pinhead's awning for coffee the following morning. This was the final stage of Beanpole's plan. "Pinhead will obviously deny everything," he had explained after persuading me to carry out the warden impersonation, "He'll be quite innocent, after all. But we can still threaten to report it if he doesn't mend his ways. There'll be dozens of witnesses."

So now was the moment of truth. "Do you recall," Beanpole began in his best Court of Enquiry manner, "the evening we celebrated our release from the army?" He was looking at me so I nodded vigorously, wondering what he was driving at.

"The six of us were there. Pinhead was soldiering on, remember? And he tried to get you and me to change our minds about leaving the army and stay in with him and you said" - Beanpole reminded me - "the day

we saw you in army uniform again you'd personally push the boat out for another party." I was conscious of the five Cheshire-cat-like faces staring at me. It was a set up. A Beanpole special - and I was the patsy.

The truth came out with the corks that evening. The first Pinhead-Beanpole reunion had been a happy occasion and not the martinet characterisation and peg-alignment paranoia I had been given to believe. That was all part and parcel of the plot to get me back into 'uniform', supplied by Pinhead, so that I paid for the party.

"A debt of honour," Beanpole insisted, "so pay up." Pinhead signalled his agreement with an extravagant wave at the gathering glasses. "You pay up, we'll drink up."

Back in our caravan Betty handed me a cup of black coffee for my well-being and a wad of money for my wallet. "What's this then?"

"Coffee."

"I know that. I mean this."

"That's money."

"I know....." I began, but she stopped me.

"You don't know everything, chum. You didn't know we were all in on it, did you? Even other Club members on the site knew because Pinhead had warned quite a few of them - certainly all the ones pitched near the office - about the train noises recording so as not to cause any real alarm. And you didn't know that Beanpole wouldn't really let you pay, did you! This is their share." The contentment of friendship forced the sigh from my lips and I smiled. "That's Ex-boys for you." Betty frowned. "Ex? What do you mean, Ex? The three of you still are!"

(The article 'Ex-BOYS will be BOYS' included in this issue of OBAN originally appeared in 'En Route' magazine, the magazine of the Caravan Club and was brought to our attention by David Cross (42C). We have been given permission to reproduce it here by the editor and the author Ken Hayes, whose letter follows - Ed.)

✉ Ken Hayes (RE 42) writes

Thank you for your kind letter prompted by my En Route story about ex-boys. Yes, you are correct with many of your observations, I am an ex-boy, but not in the Arborfield/Chepstow era. I am pleased that David Hunter (*The En Route editor - Ed*) gave his permission for the story to be reproduced in your Association Newsletter and I would be pleased to receive a recent back-number of it.

I enlisted as an Apprentice Tradesman in 1942 with the Ordnance Survey section of the Royal Engineers. Initially we were stationed at the Grand Marine Hotel at Barton on Sea, near Southampton, but the threat of invasion inspired the school moving to Bryn Howel in North Wales. Last October we held a 50th anniversary reunion at Bryn Howel - about 40 ex-boys and wives - I'm afraid our numbers are dwindling from anno domini! We took over Bryn Howel, which is now a hotel, for the week-end.

To diminish any disappointment you may be suffering that I am not a REME ex-rat I hasten to add that I do have certain affiliations with Arborfield. In the late fifties, early sixties period, on the strength of a story I submitted to the editor and which was later published in **The Craftsman**, I was commissioned to write a series about a character I had called 'Skive' - a sort of military Jeeves. My failing memory recalls that the editor at the time was a Brigadier Clissold? ably assisted by an RSM (with a tin leg) called Bob Clarke - he used to pen the odd article under the name of R Burghfield! Many's the time after an editorial matter at Moat House we three retired to the Bull to lubricate our parched throats! I hope I am ringing a few bells for you.....

It would be helpful to learn when you intend publishing my story in the newsletter. At the risk of taking too much of your time I would refer to the enclosed poster (*the text of which is reproduced below - Ed*) which should prove self-explanatory. As you will see from the poster, I am fund raising so that others may achieve recovery. To this end a book of my short stories has been published and all proceeds from its sale are donated to cancer-related charities. If you were agreeable I would like to link the publishing of 'Ex-BOYS will be BOYS' with a reference to 'A Second Helping' to see if any ex-boys would be prepared to purchase the book.

(Ken - Many thanks for your contribution. The editor of Craftsman 56-58 was indeed Brig K G Clissold late RA/RASC, sadly he died suddenly in February 1958. His assistant at the time was a WO2 L A Clark, but we have no evidence of a 'tin leg'! Ed)

A SECOND HELPING by Ken Hayes.

A new publication to boost charity

All proceeds of this book will be donated to cancer-related charities

A SECOND HELPING is a collection of some of the many short stories by Ken Haynes published in national and provincial newspapers and magazines in the UK and overseas.

This book offers the reader a wide variety of stories. Sometimes sad, often funny, always entertaining. A SECOND HELPING has the added merit of serving a worthwhile cause.

"This is a welcome return to the enjoyable days of the newspaper short story." LESLIE THOMAS

A copy of A SECOND HELPING can be obtained from Penny Farthing Publications, P.O. Box 1, Checkendon RG8 0YY

Please make sure you enclose your address in BLOCK CAPITALS and a cheque or money order for £7.95 made payable to Ken Hayes Cancer Fund.

THE VICAR'S HUSBAND

By Denis Marshall (46B)

Much water has passed under the bridge since we were chased around by 'Bing' Lakes in J2 barrack room at the end of 1946. In those days we were on a starvation diet for growing lads and what we did not spend out on our 4 shillings a week on cleaning materials went over the NAAFI counter on sticky buns.

One way to have a good breakfast was to go to communion service in the School church on a Wednesday morning, miss muster parade and help yourself to as much bread, butter and marmalade as you could eat after the service. It was at that time that I attended confirmation classes under padre Munro and was duly confirmed by the Bishop of Oxford, this ensured my hearty meal once a week.

After Arborfield and 18 Command Workshops, I was posted to the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and finished up at the seaport of Takoradi, where I met my future wife Jean. On my return to the UK at the end of my second tour we were married and have just celebrated our Ruby Wedding Anniversary.

After a few more overseas tours and raising a family of 5 daughters, I left the Army in 1974 and moved back to Cornwall and opened up a small hotel, seeing a few ex-boys from time to time.

Jean had always attended church after our marriage, but it was during out hotelier days that she felt called to study for the ministry and one day to become a priest. She was ordained Deacon at Truro Cathedral in 1987 and after being an assistant Curate in our local church for a couple of years combined with hotel life, we decided to sell up and go wherever the church needed her in full time unpaid ministry.

This proved to be at Bodmin in team ministry where she had the care of the church in the lovely Lanhydrock National Trust Estate.

In Cornwall there has always been a strong aversion against women officiating in the church - cleaning YES, but Ministry NO! However, Jean faced up to this, although she got support from some very kind clergy and after 4 years asked for and got a move away to become a Minister-in-Charge of South Petherwin with Trewi and Lawhitton, 3 churches in 2 parishes.

You can imagine what a great day it was on July 2 this year in Truro Cathedral when the Bishop ordained her as priest along with 9 other women. The next day, being Sunday, she celebrated her first Eucharist in a combined service here in South Petherwin. The church was crowded. Amongst the congregation were those who had always supported her over the years. There were very few dry eyes at the communion rail.

After the service we entertained all to a faith lunch in the vicarage. I am still very grateful to Derek Williams (45A) and his wife Hazel for helping clear up during and after.

It is now down to the nitty gritty of Parish life. Prior to our moving into this quite large vicarage, the squatters were in and as it had been empty for a year previous to this, there was a lot of work to be done.

My job here is painter, gardener, cook, bottle-washer, animal keeper (we have 2 cats, a goldfish, an old tortoise and 3 tame ducks on a rather large pond), and all duties connected with maintaining a country vicarage.

Jean is now Priest-in-Charge and while she gets on with her Parish work over a very large area, I stay at home working and trying to keep everyone happy on the phone. I am organising the church fete this year in September in our grounds here. That is quite a task, matching people to a particular stall or job!

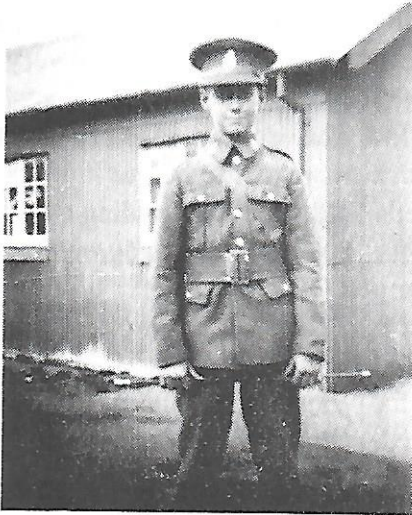
If anyone comes down the A30, just into Cornwall, turn off for Launceston and follow the South Petherwin signs.

It is only 2 miles away. The vicarage is first on the right just before the 30 mph sign. Call in and have a cup of tea and see what life is like for the Vicar's husband and you will be pleasantly surprised.

PERSONALITY SLOT

Frank Bennet (Oct 39)

Your personality slot caught my attention and I have been having a look through my old photographs to see if there is anything suitable. I have come up with three.



The first photograph was taken outside barrack room C1 in late October 1939. We were still 'square bashing' and as can be seen we were doing cane drill that day!



The second photograph was taken by my eldest sister on Christmas Day 1939 at home in Sandwich, Kent during my first leave!

The third photograph was taken in India in 1945 with my old friend Ron Holland (75979295) - Oct 39 B Company. At that time, we were with the 'Chindits' in their Indian Training Areas between Jhansi and Sauger. Incidentally, Ron and I were together for about 8 years. After boy service, we served together in the UK, were drafted together and served in several units together. Promotion separated us, but we were still in the same Division - the old 44 Indian Airborne.



When we left India Ron returned home and got married, and I went to Palestine and joined the 6th Airborne.



After that it was back to the UK and then to BAOR with the Indian Parachute Brigade, 3rd Hussars LAD, 91 Lorried Infantry Brigade - part of 11th Armoured Division - and from there into 'civvy street'.

In 'civvy street' I spent 25 years with BP and Shell, mostly in the Middle East (2 revolutions - India and Libya).

I retired 11 years ago as can be seen from the fourth photograph, and am now sitting here wondering how to finish this article!

By the way I lost touch with Ron Holland after India but, through friends in the Parachute Regimental Association, we were reunited in 1992 and came to the OBA Reunion last year.

PRINCE RUPERT SCHOOL WILHELMSHAVEN

By J A F (Joe) Kinson



At the end of the Second World War when servicemen were able to be reunited with their wives and children, the children often had schooling problems.

In 1946 on moving to Germany, having long distances to travel to school was not unusual. In my case I had to travel daily from Essen to Mulheim, more often than not in the back of an army lorry sitting on hard wooden seats; lovely in the summer months, but not so pleasant in the bitterly cold winter months, experienced in 1946-1947. In many instances they were taught in classes with quite a large age range, often working on different projects. In 1947 Prince Rupert School (PRS) in Wilhelmshaven was opened as a boarding school, for the children of forces and civilian personnel, for example members of the Coal Control Commission of Germany etc. In 1972 the school closed at the Wilhelmshaven site and moved to Rinten. Prince Rupert School was situated at Wilhelmshaven, on the North Sea, at what had been a German Navy Submarine Base.

In the early days the number of pupils amounted to about 250 boys and girls, approx 50 pupils to a house. Five houses were used to accommodate pupils, other houses were used for different purposes. During my era at the school several pupils took the examination for entrance to the army as an Army Apprentice, which was what I did. Normally the trade selected determined which Army Apprentice School one attended, with the exception of the Vehicle trade and some Electrical trades, these being taught at Arborfield and Chepstow.

I know several pupils from my era at PRS completed their apprenticeship at Arborfield and no doubt others attended afterwards. It is also possible that some ex-apprentices may have sent their children to Prince Rupert School Wilhelmshaven, whilst serving in BAOR. It is nearly 50 years since PRS opened and several ex-pupils have formed the Wilhelmshaven Association and are trying to contact as many ex-pupils as possible. During the period January to early September 1994, over 1000 ex-pupils have been located. The Association intends to hold a reunion on 24 June 1995 at Newbury Racecourse - the Berkshire Suite and in the future a visit to the old school site is planned, before the school buildings are demolished.

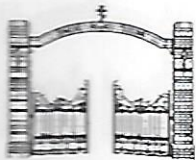
Three newsletters will be circulated to members each year and the Association operates a contact wish list, for a very small fee to cover postage costs etc. The contact wish list enables members to be put in touch with old friends providing those to be contacted are in agreement.

This is already working well and some have made contact with friends who they have not had contact with for over forty-five years.

If any member of the AOBA attended Prince Rupert School Wilhelmshaven and would like information of the Association they should contact Liz Bird, Hon Sec, The Wilhelmshaven Association, 54 Shaftsbury Ave, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh, Hants, SO53 3BP. Tel: (0703) 252925 (after 8 pm, or weekends).

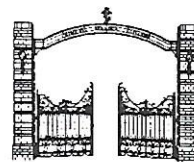
Likewise you may recall that your parents or children attended the school, if so, please advise them of the existence of the Association.

(Joe Kinson was on the military permanent staff at Arborfield from 1953 to 1957 and then returned to the school as a member of the civilian permanent staff from 1982 to 1987 - Ed)



REUNION 94

(As recalled by Tom Pearce Feb 44)



I was assured by one who was there that Friday evening was very enjoyable. All the more so because it was not so crowded in the bar! I travelled on the Saturday morning with a lift from Eddie Broomfield so the reminiscences started long before we arrived at Arborfield. As we turned up into the lane Eddie said I hope we have picked the right week. A queue of cars at the barrier soon re-assured us.

At 10.15 a.m. a large number had already gathered in the WRVS lounge. There was a glitch in the arrival of the coffee but this was eventually resolved.

When gathering on the road for the Parade it was obvious that some had forgotten the 'good soldiers 5 minute rule' and it looked as if there would be only about 20 on parade, but eventually some 69 turned out, from the 170 attending the reunion. We were loudly berated by the Coldstream Guards CSM although the dialogue was incomprehensible to those who had forgotten their hearing aids and indeed maybe by some of the others. However, his frustration could be understood when it took three attempts at numbering from the right. It would seem that we all were to be placed on report. (It subsequently appeared that we had been framed as will be seen later on in this article). The Parade followed the established format with the addition of a short Drumhead Service conducted by the Padre. The Reviewing Officer was Brigadier Palmer. The band again demonstrated the effectiveness of combining the Military Band with the Pipe music. It would have been nice if the Military Band had been a little larger but one must appreciate that the College is only half strength at present. The drill of B Company Apprentice Tradesmen was excellent and they certainly did not deserve to be placed on report.

Prior to the Buffet Lunch, which proved to be excellent, we gathered in the Sergeants Mess for further nattering and a pre lunch drink. I found myself talking to Vic Tivy (44B) who produced a photo of No 23 Regular REME Craftsman Course taken on the square of Hazebrouck Barracks in 1947 (when it was Vehicle Wing REME Trg Centre) and very shortly 4 of the 11 bodies in the photo were drinking together at the bar, and we were all able to recognise and name all the remainder.

We were also able to exchange accounts of our experiences during the intervening 47 years. I am sure similar meetings were taking place throughout the Mess at the same time. This surely is the essence of these reunions.

The Corps Museum was open to visitors in the afternoon and it was well attended. The Corps shop had an extensive range of memorabilia and the queue for purchases was a long one.

The Workshops were open to visitors over the same period, but it was difficult to fit it all in. I, personally, would have liked to have covered both the Electronics section and the Armament section, but had little time left for the latter in the end - another time maybe. My general impression was that the pace of technical instruction in the 5 x 16 week terms available was far greater than in our day.

Having heard that last year's AGM had overrun its allotted time, the majority of members seemed to be taking the opportunity to freshen up and change in preparation for the evening meal. At this juncture I, together with one or two others, found myself without a bed for the night. I fear that some of our number may have carried out some unofficial re-allocation of beds and some may even have occupied them without prior booking. It would, I feel, be helpful if members on arrival having laid claim to a bed were to put an item of their property on it to indicate that it has been taken. It would also be useful if the military staff who allocated beds could liaise with a member of the AOBA Committee to ensure members are grouped with their contemporaries as is done at Dinner. At this point, I must thank the military staff for their efforts that finally ensured I had a pillow to lay my head on at 2.30 a.m.

The AGM ran well to time. Colonel Dorward as Commandant and Chairman opened the meeting and introduced Col Brian Hutchins as the new Vice Chairman in place of Col Sibbons. He also introduced Maj John Lloyd as Adjutant to the College.



REUNION 94 continued



The Chairman said that a recent Army Board decision meant that the future of the College was now secure. The College will move to new accommodation during the Easter break 1995 in Rowcroft Barracks in the ground of the original School. Recruiting will take place to bring the present strength of 488 ATs up to the full complement of 720. He listed an impressive array of sporting successes achieved by the College during the past year.

The Treasurer said that the financial state of the Association was sound but there was no scope for complacency. 240 members had not paid their £5.00 admin subs which was due on 31 March each year. The rule would be - no fee no OBAN. When paying each time members were asked to confirm their address.

Next year's reunion will be held on 6, 7, 8, October 1995. The format may need to be changed due to the new accommodation. There will be a tree planting programme at the new location. The Chairman floated the idea of a memorial garden. A suggestion of an opening ceremony at the time of the next Reunion would be considered after consultation with past Commandants.

A new Zealand branch of Old Boys were holding an inaugural meeting coincidentally on the same day (8 Oct). The Membership Secretary had phoned New Zealand to offer our good wishes and their local chairman had coincidentally been passing the Hotel telephone when the call came through. Our Chairman made special mention of Gerald Preston (Feb 44) who had flown in from South Australia to be present at this Reunion weekend.

The Viscount Alanbrooke gave a progress report on the History Project. A small sub-committee had been formed to manage the activity. A number of useful files had been discovered in official archives.

There was further discussion on the subject of the old school gates. These have obviously become a symbol of Corporate Identity for the Association. The Chairman said that the gates would remain on

the active agenda after the move.

The Dinner was a most excellent meal, well prepared and presented. The candle lighting created the right atmosphere. The music from the Band which was played throughout the meal was at times almost drowned by the level of conversation at the tables. The seating plan was such as to allow old comrades to meet and reminisce. The Corps of Drums again gave their spectacular display with luminescent drum sticks.

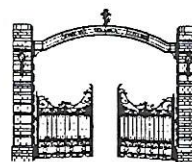
The Commandant gave a speech on the significance of changes in the modern army and the continued relevance of the symbolism of the old (pre REME School cap badge. The CSM read out the charge sheet (already mounted in a photographic frame) against the 69 members who paraded. Appropriately under Section 69 (not Section 40) for being idle on parade. I have no doubt that this framed document will find its way on to the wall of the new Sergeants Mess. Video evidence was then shown to the assembled company. The RSM then said a few words. Fortunately, his statement "Don't rush, the bar is already closed", proved to be untrue.

The Church Service was well attended on the Sunday morning. Hymns were supported by the ubiquitous band and piper. The theme of the service seemed to be the Parables of the New Testament. The interpretation of which was explained in the Address delivered by Lt Col Robertson (Retd) RAMC. An Act of Remembrance for those Old Boys who had fallen on active service was followed by a Lament played on the pipes - a very moving experience. Coffee was served after the service. Farewells and departures followed.

In conclusion, I know I speak for us all in expressing our extreme gratitude to the Commandant, the ATs, the Permanent Staff, the Catering Staff and the Committee for the vast amount of planning and effort that went in to making this a most enjoyable and memorable occasion.



ATTENDEES - Reunion 94



ADEY	KENNETH	42 JAN E	GILPIN	KAYE	52B C
ALANBROOKE	VICTOR	PS	GLOSSOP	BRIAN	57A A
ANDREWS	ANDY	47A B	GRIFFIN	BOB	41 D
BAKER	BILL	44B D	GRINT	DAVID	64A A
BAKER	JIM	46B D	GRIPTON	PETE	56B A
BALDWIN	PETER	42 JAN D	GUTTERIDGE	PATRICK	58B C
BARRETT	BILL	42C B	GUY	TONY	43A A
BARRETT	ALAN	45B B	HADAWAY	KEITH	42 OCT A
BARRETTO	B D	48B	HAMBLY	BOB	64A A
BATES	STANLEY	43A E/C	HAMILTON	JOHN	39OCT D
BAX	ALEX	44A B	HAROLD	MICK	53B D
BENDELL	JEFF	64A A	HAROLD	GEORGE	46A A
BENDELL	CHARLES	42B B/A	HARVEY	CHARLES	43OCT B
BENNETT	FRANK	39OCT	HIGGS	DAVE	44B B
BEUZEVAL	JOHN	63A C	HIND	EDWARD	53A C
BLACKMAN	RAY	39MAY B	HOARE	TONY	47B A
BLACKWELL	TONY	44 D	HODSON	FRANK	46B B
BOND	LEN	39MAY B	HOLLAND	RONALD	39FEB B
BOUCHER	DOUGLAS	43A D/A	HOOPER	WILLIAM	39B
BOWRING	GEOFFREY	62B A	HORNSEY	BRIAN	54A D
BROOMFIELD	EDDIE	45A B	HORWOOD	JOHN	43OCT D
BUDD	STEPHEN	69C A	HOUGHTON	JOHN	56B C
BURTON	WILLIAM	51 B	HOUSE	ANTONY	64A A
CAINE	PETER	44 B	HOWES	JOHN	55B A
CAREW	ROGER	47 C	HOWLETT	DAVID	56B A
CASTELL	BOB	64A A	HUDSON	PAUL	58A D
CHANTLER	FRED	C41 A	HUNT	M W	PS
CHURCH	PETER	57B B	HUNTER	DAVID	43OCT A
CLEMETS	CLEM	50B A	HUNTER	TONY	53B B
COGGINS	MONTY	39 E	HUTCHINS	BRIAN	61B B
COLLIS	JIM	39 A	IRELAND	TONY	46A B
COLQUOUN	DICK	46A C	JEFFERY	TONY	63C B
COPPARD	STAN	57A A	JENNER	KEN	44A B
COSTANZO	MICHAEL	53B A	KAY	NEVILLE	46B C
CRESSWELL	DOUG	42 E	KELLY	BERT	39A E
CROOKES	LES	39A	KELSEY	JOHN	58A D
CROSS	GERRY	39 B/D	KERR	STEPHEN	62C A
CROWSON	PETER	44A C	KINSON	JOE	82-87PS
DANGERFIELD	LES	39 OCT	KNOX	GEOFF	55B D
DAVIDSON	BOB	43 OCT	LE VAR	LARRY	40'S
DE B BARTLETT	RICHARD	52B B/D	LEE	JOHN	55A C
DORWARD	MIKE	60A B	LOY	JOHN	39 B
DOUGALL	BOB	39MAY B/E	LUDFORD	ARCHIE	38 D
DRAKE	TONY	J38	MACDONALD	JAMES	43A A/E
DRASUTIS	J. COLIN	55B B	MACKEY	CHRIS	60A A
DRISCOLL	DONALD	38B	MARDON	ALAN	42 APR
DUMPER	DENNIS	42A C	MARSHALL	GEORGE	46B D
DUTTON	JOHN	43APR A	MARTIN	DUDLEY	H38 D
EDWARDS	EDDIE	46B B	MAUGHAN	RAYMOND	39 B
EGLETON	BARRIE	52B A	MC GUIRE	MICHAEL	42C E/B
EVANS	KEITH	45A B	MC GRILLEN	BOB	46B D
EVANS	MALCOM	47A B	MCCORMICK	WALTER	38C A
FALE	IVOR	B38B	MILLER	ROY	41A B
FARRELL	DENIS	54B D	MOIR	JOHN	39B B
FERNES	DAVID	44B B	MORTON	ALAN	51B B
FOOTNER	WALLY	39OCT B	MULLINS	TONY	61C A
FRANCE	BOB	H38	MURRAY	DEREK	PS
FRAZER	FRANK	42C E	NAYLOR	DAVID	55B
GARDNER	AUBREY	53A C	NICKSON	ROGER	56B
GIBSON	BILL	39 B	NIXON	LAWRENCE	42 C

NORTHAM	JOHN	47A D	STYLES	PETER	39 B/D
O'CALLAGHAN	TREVOR	42C C/A	SULLIVAN	BRIAN	H36
O'SULLIVAN	TERRY	62C B	SULLIVAN	JOHN	39 OCT C
OLIVER	GEORGE	45A A	SURTEES	BILL	65B A
PANTER	DAVID	46A C	SURTEES	TIM	76C D
PARSONS	ANTONY	42C A/B	SURTEES	DARREN	89A D
PATTERSON	PAT	44FEB	SURTEES	JOE	PS
PEARCE	TOM	44 B	SYMONDS	LEONARD	54A C
POULTON	LEONARD	44FEB C	TATE	WILLIAM	44B
PRESTON	GERALD	44A B	THORNTON	JOHN	50B D
PRICHARD	NORMAN	39OCT E	TIMMS	GEORGE	57A C
PRITCHARD	ALAN	42C C	TIVY	VIC	44B D
PURSGLOVE	GERRY	39 MAY D	TODD	JOHN	52A A
RAYNER	ALAN	42OCT E	TRAVES	ROGER	57A
READ	DAVID	65A A	TUCKER	ALLAN	39 OCT
REYNOLDS	JOHN	55B C	WALKER	DON	45A C
ROBERTS	MIKE	54B D	WARD	RON	42 C
ROBERTS	SPANKY	H39 D	WEBB	PATRICK	54B D
RUSSELL	LOFTY	54B D	WELLS	MIKE	49A
SAINSBURY	ARTHUR	39E	WHEATLAND	DEREK	57B A
SANDS	JOHN	42C E	WIGGINS	PAUL	58A
SCHOFIELD	DAVID	65A A	WILKINSON	KENNETH	39B B
SCHOFIELD	KEN	62C C	WILSON	PAUL	42A D
SHINN	PETER	44A D	WINCHESTER	ALAN	42 JAN
SHRUBSOLE	BERNARD	49A B	WOOD	FRED	40 C
SILBY	JIM	39 E	WRIGHT	NORMAN	46A A
SIMMONDS	PETER	45B C			
SMALLMAN	RICHARD	39 OCT B		GUESTS	
SMALLPAGE	ANDY	39 OCT			
SMART	DAVID	42A E	MAJ BRODDLE C	RACHD	PADRE PMColl
SMITH	WILLIAM	39A D	MAJ LLOYD JF	QLR	ADJ PMColl
SOORD	CLIVE	54B C	MAJ A'HEARNE P	RA (Retd)	PRI PMColl
SPARGO	P.S	39C	WO1 MATTHEWS G	REME	RSM SEE
SPEARMAN	IVAN	42 B	WO1 ROWELL JF	GREEN GDS	RSM PMColl
STEPHENSON	WILLIAM	39A B	WO2 ELLISON J	REME	CSM B COY

APOLOGIES - Reunion 94

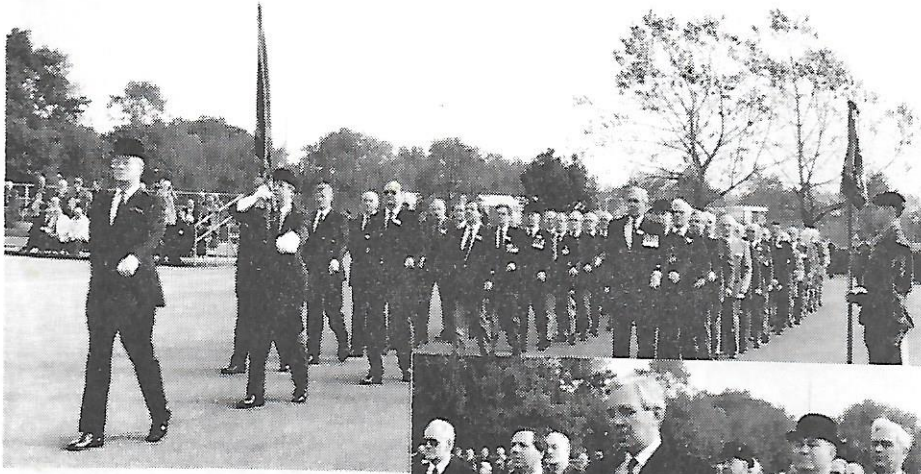
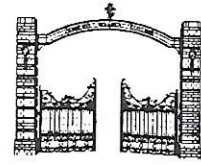
JIM LONG (H36)
 KEN GREEN (B37)
 HARRY HUGHES (PS)
 HARRY SHAW (38B)
 FRED FORD (39A)
 P B HARDY (39A)
 IANTO METCALFE (39B)
 KEN GILES (OCT 42)
 BRYAN ADAMS (42 OCT)
 ALAN LOFTUS (42A)
 ERIC COOMBES (42B)
 MIKE ALLCOCK (42C)
 L W BENTLEY (42C)
 ROY ARNOLD (43B)
 REG BENFIELD (43C)
 JOE CULLEY (44A)
 HARRY PEERS (44A)
 DEREK WILLIAMS (45A)
 TREVOR AHRENS (45B)
 BILL PUSEY (46A)
 BILL WARD (47A)
 FRANK CONROY (48A)

FRANK WEBB (63C)
 COLIN GRIBBLE ((78C)
 PETER BUTLER (46A)
 DESMOND CARPENTER (39)
 COLIN CHANCE (58B)
 ROY DURSTON (54B)
 KEN GREEN (B37)
 TOM HOYES (44C)
 SPIKE HUGHES (45B)
 DAVID JACKSON (59C)
 ALAN LOFTUS (42A)
 MIKE WHORDLEY (61A)
 FRANK PENFOLD MBE (42C)
 MIKE PARSONS (46B)
 ROY GUNBY (42A)
 MICHEAL DICKINSON (42A)
 COL MIKE SIBBONS (61C)

 COL PETER GIBSON (PS)
 COL JOHN PEACOCK (PS)
 COL SAM RORERTS (PS)



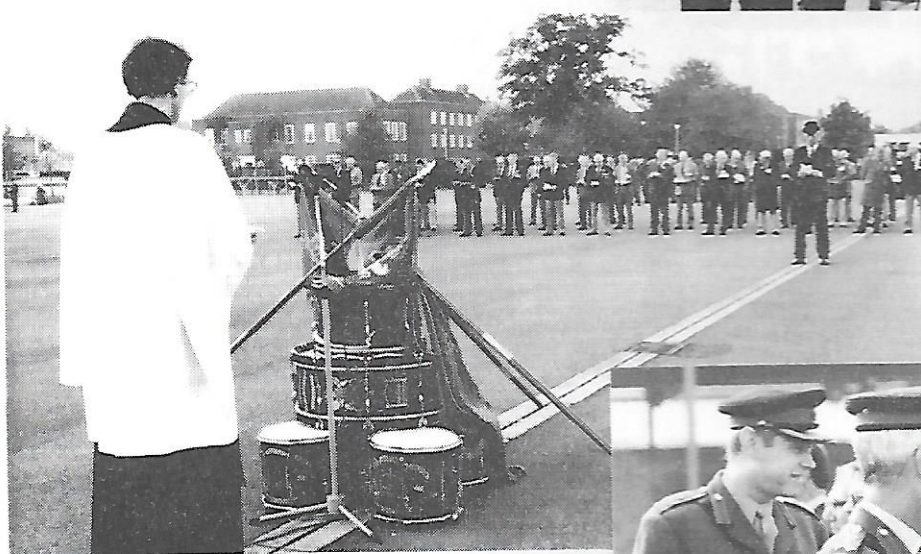
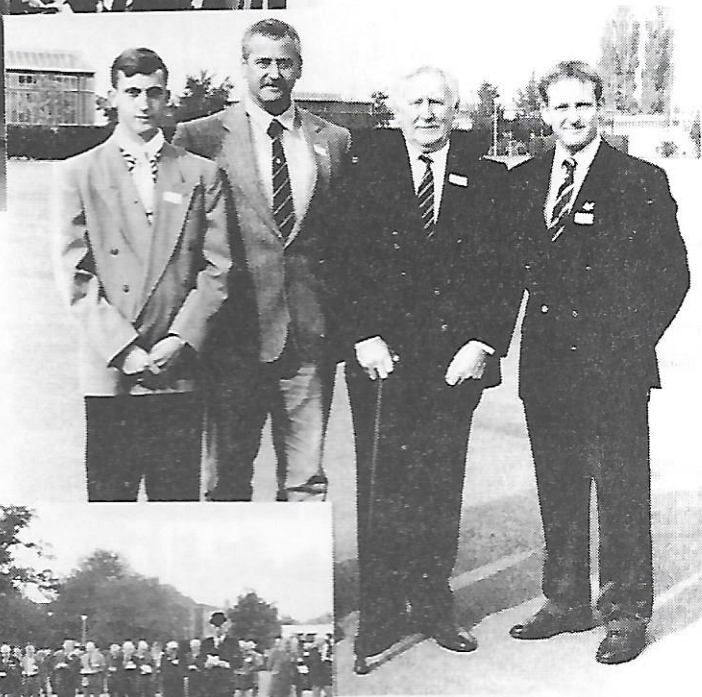
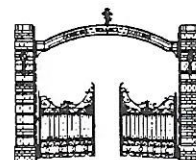
REUNION 94



THE PARADE

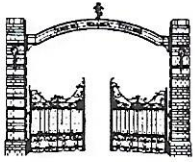


REUNION 94

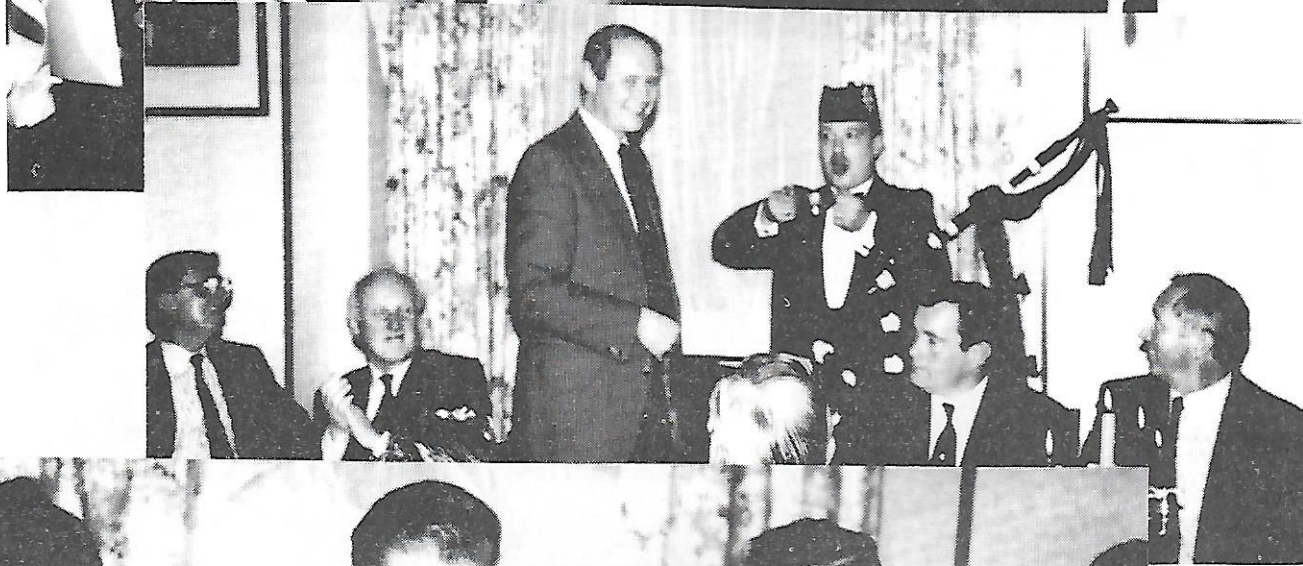
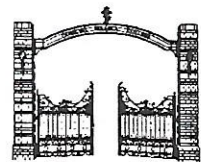


THE SURTEES BOYS
(2nd photo from the top)

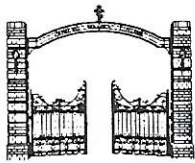
THE DRUMHEAD SERVICE
(3rd photo from the top)



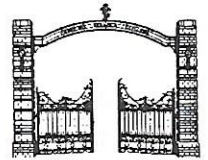
REUNION 94



THE DINNER



REUNION 94



THE DINNER

ARBORFIELD OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT - 9 OCT 93 TO 8 OCT 94

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>1992/93</u>	<u>1993/94</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>1992/93</u>	<u>1993/94</u>
<u>Reserve Fund Account</u>					
Balance brought forward	1614.74	1662.52	Transferred to GPF (10% of gross)	184.72	269.17
Subscriptions	232.50	1029.23	Balance carried forward	1662.52	2422.58
	<u>£1847.24</u>	<u>£2691.75</u>		<u>£1847.24</u>	<u>£2691.75</u>
<u>Tie Account</u>					
Stock on hand	304.50	479.40	Stock brought forward	280.80	304.50
Income from sales	184.90	305.50	Purchase of stock	173.90	470.00
	<u>£489.40</u>	<u>£784.90</u>	Transfer of profit to GPF	34.70	10.40
				<u>£489.40</u>	<u>£784.90</u>
<u>Reunion Account</u>					
Balance brought forward	257.79	466.55	Expenditure - Refunds	89.00	- -
Income	5297.76	5618.47	- Estimated Creditors	5000.00	5000.00
	<u>£5555.55</u>	<u>£6085.02</u>	Balance carried forward	466.55	1085.02
				<u>£5555.55</u>	<u>£6085.02</u>
<u>Norman Fursden Award</u>					
Balance brought forward	1306.00	1288.85	Awards	89.52	36.44
Interest	72.37	69.76	Balance carried forward	1288.85	1322.17
	<u>£1378.37</u>	<u>£1358.61</u>		<u>£1378.37</u>	<u>£1358.61</u>
<u>Aerial Pictures Account</u>					
Stock write off	- -	1.78	Purchase of stock	117.72	24.78
Income from sales	143.50	23.00	Transfer of profit to GPF	25.78	- -
	<u>£143.50</u>	<u>£24.78</u>		<u>£143.50</u>	<u>£24.78</u>

ARBORFIELD OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>1992/93</u>	<u>1993/94</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>1992/93</u>	<u>1993/94</u>
<u>General Purpose Fund</u>					
Balance brought forward	3134.65	4477.83	Bowler Hat - Hire	- -	5.00
Transfer from Reserve Fund	184.72	269.17	Church flowers	44.40	- -
Profit transfer from Tie A/c	34.70	10.40	Gift and Farewell Lunch Col Gibson	- -	117.31
Profit transfer from Aerial Pictures A/c	25.78	- -	Wreaths - including Armistice Day	42.75	24.90
Profit from miscellaneous sales	8.50	- -	Write off - Aerial Pictures stock	- -	1.78
Interest	308.02	465.27	Write off - College ties	- -	117.50
Donations	85.10	115.50	Donations	- -	50.00
Administration	1437.56	1182.41	Administration	538.12	552.89
			Photographs	39.93	- -
			Framed College Print for Museum	- -	30.42
			Presentation - Mr Weller	76.00	- -
			Balance carried forward	4477.83	5620.78
	<u>£5219.03</u>	<u>£6520.58</u>		<u>£5219.03</u>	<u>£6520.58</u>

BALANCE SHEET

<u>Assets</u>			<u>Liabilities</u>		
Cash at Bank	12591.25	14971.15	General Purpose Fund	4477.83	5620.78
Stock of Ties	304.50	479.40	Reserve Fund	1662.52	2422.58
			Reunion Account	466.55	1085.02
			Norman Fursden Award	1288.85	1322.17
			Creditors - Reunion - Estimate	5000.00	5000.00
	<u>£12895.75</u>	<u>£15450.55</u>		<u>£12895.75</u>	<u>£15450.55</u>

1993 REUNION COSTS

Waiters ED Pay	495.00
Messing - casual meals	300.00
Refund - Mr Burton	22.00
Dinner & Wine Bill	2908.61
Barrack damages	221.84
Church flowers	39.60
Overestimated Costs	1012.95
Total	<u>5000.00</u>

ARBORFIELD REVISITED (or 1946 and all that)



Larry Le Var John Shaw Victor Alanbrooke John Northam

Those of you who were apprentices in the early days of the School, particularly the 1940s, just think of any item that might legitimately have been found in a typical AT's bedspace of the period (with the exception of a locker, bed, 3 biscuits and a bolster) and it will almost certainly be found in the unique collection of memorabilia presented to the REME Corps Museum on 8 August 1994 by John Shaw (46B).

John's collection of original items, some saved from his own apprentice days, others assiduously collected over the years, contains not only a full set of kit, from tin helmet to boots and a full set of 1937 pattern webbing, but also documents, contemporary literature, cigarettes, light fittings, electric iron, playing

cards etc. Also included are framed examples of badges representing the regiments and corps of the staff of the time.

The visit and presentation came about as a result of Capt (Retd) Viscount Alanbrooke's appeal to former apprentices for contributions towards his College History Project.

John replied with a wealth of anecdotal and documentary evidence of his own apprentice period finally making the generous offer to donate his entire collection to the safe keeping of the Museum. It is the first collection of its kind ever received by the Museum.

It is the intention, as and when space and security permit, to make it a

permanent display as a lasting and poignant reminder of the life of an apprentice in those early days.

John was given a tour of the College on the day and entertained to lunch.

The day had a special significance for me as John and I are old buddies from 21 Comd Wksp, Burscough, and last saw each other in 1950!

Larry Le Var, as Museum Curator and Hon Sec of the OBA, would like to express his gratitude through OBAN on behalf of both organisations to John for his generosity.

John Northam

THE STORY OF A CAP BADGE

BY A.J.T

(This is the first of 2 articles extracted from THE ARBORFIELD APPRENTICE magazine for 1961 and believed to have been written by Major A J Tucker, REME, who was the OIC Electrical & Electronics Dept during the Spring term of that year)



This original REME cap badge was not, however, too popular in some parts of the Corps. Some wearers considered that the central symbol of a pair of calipers laid support to the saying 'Rough Engineering Made Easy', others in the electrical and electronic side of the corps were disappointed that the badge only incorporated a purely mechanical symbol.

During wartime it was impossible to replace the badge but with the advent of peace, consideration was given to a new design which was to be truly symbolic of the Corps. In 1947 the old badge was replaced by the one worn so frequently in this garrison.

This present REME badge incorporates parts of the crests of both the Institute of Mechanical Engineers and the Institute of Electrical Engineers.

The horse and chain are symbolic of power under control.

The lightening flash stands for electrical engineering.

The globe indicates that engineering is worldwide.

The old cap badge which was proudly worn in wartime, is now a collectors item. The present cap badge is the one that all of you will wear, equally proudly, when you complete your training at this School.

A.J.T.

On 1st October, 1942, some 78,000 officers and men of the RE, RASC and RAOC, replaced their existing cap badges with the one shown above and on that day REME was born. This new corps of soldier technicians was responsible for the recovery, maintenance and repair of the majority of electrical and mechanical equipment in the army.

At the height of the second World War, over 160,000 REME cap badges were being worn by officers and men throughout the world. It was proudly worn throughout the major campaign in Europe, the Middle and Far East and was also seen in such widely diverse places as the island of Madagascar and the 'Pentagon' in Washington, USA.

Here in Arborfield the new cap badge was much in evidence when the Training Establishment REME replaced the former RAOC AFV Mechanical School.

The soldier's badge was originally made of brass but due to shortage of raw material, for a time it was made, along with badges of other corps, in a brown plastic material. Luckily this economy measure did not last long, and the badge in its brass form lasted until 1947.

Within the Dominions and Colonial Forces sister corps were formed at various times between 1942 and 1945 and they adopted the same REME badge to suit their particular title.

ROYAL ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS

Radar and Control Equipment Tradesmen at War

BY A.J.T

(This is the second of 2 articles extracted from THE ARBORFIELD APPRENTICE magazine for 1961 and believed to have been written by Major A J Tucker, REME, who was the OIC Electrical & Electronics Dept during the Autumn term of that year)

Earlier this term (Autumn 1961 - Ed) we all attended a church service which recalled the days of the Battle of Britain. This took place in 1940 before REME was formed and it was the tradesmen of the RAOC who were then making a significant contribution to the winning of this battle, by their skill and effort in maintaining the weapons of the Anti-Aircraft Command.

The radar sets used during those early days of World War II were crude and simple compared to those which we use today (1961) and the predictors were mainly mechanical, being looked after by Instrument Mechanics. However, they were rapidly being improved and RAOC tradesmen together with civilian engineers were continually modifying them to improve their performance.

When REME was formed in 1942, the radars used to guide the guns were much more reliable and suited to their task. In addition, large quantities of radar controlled searchlights were coming off production. The radars had previously been largely nursed by scientists but now Telecommunication Mechanics (Heavy Anti-Aircraft) - the predecessors of our present day Radar Technicians - were actively assisted in the task. These Tele Mechs (HAA) were selected men drawn from all sections of the army. They were given a short course, of about 2 months, on basic electronics in various schools throughout the country, and were then given further training in army schools on this still

very secret equipment. No notebooks could be taken out of the classroom for evening swotting and as there were similar difficulties in getting hold of notebooks in workshops, many a Tele Mech (HAA) learnt the complete circuit diagram of the sets by heart. (they were not quite so complicated as they are now).

The Tele Mechs lived and worked on the gun and searchlight sites as well as in the workshops and were very proud of their charges - the secret device which was later to be called radar.

On damp nights part of the transmitter might well find its way into the cooks' hut - 'it doesn't like the damp, sir'. These REME mechanics were up and about during the whole of the many night alerts, and immediately tackled any adjustment or repair found necessary.

If condensers were not available they made them from silver paper and insulating tape. While if a man of the gun or searchlight crew was sick, many is the time a REME mechanic took his place. The Electrical Control equipment mechanic, who was the forerunner of our present Control Equipment Technician, was initially only concerned with the remote control equipment on the guns and searchlights. When, in late 1943, electronic predictors were obtained from America, the ECE also took over the maintenance of this equipment.

Both tradesmen were involved in adopting our existing radars and guns for use with this new predictor and General Sir Frederick Pile, GCB, DSO, MC, the GOCinC of AA Command from 1939 to 1945, had this to say about them:

"The raids came before they had finished the work, so that they stood by with their meters and instruments while the batteries went into action. They kept the apparatus working as best they could, and immediately the raid was over they were back on the job again. It is one of the many achievements by our remarkable REME craftsmen."

Although the majority of the Tele Mechs (HAA) and ECE were employed in UK, others served with Anti-Aircraft units in such places as Malta and Gibraltar.

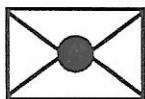
With the advent of the Second Front in 1944, they also served and in a few cases died, on the continent of Europe.

In the next issue of the magazine the Vehicle Mechanic and Electrician will be featured.

A.J.T.

(Unfortunately no further article appeared. After further research an article written in the Autumn 1962 issue of THE ARBORFIELD APPRENTICE 'rues the loss of our OC Major Tucker, who is off to sunnier climes.' - so perhaps this was the reason. - Ed)

YOUR LETTERS



✍ Peter Coleman(43A) writes:

Reference CA (Chaucer) Harvey's letter in *OBAN* 5 concerning the discussion about who was the first boy RSM at Arborfield.

The very first AT/RSM was Gordon Lake(s), known as 'Bing' of intake 43A. Until that time (1946) each Company had an AT SSgt as senior boy.

✍ Steve Budd (69C) writes:

I would like a great favour from someone. Autumn 1970 (24 years ago) I went with A Company on the 4 Division camp to the Normandy Beaches. I cannot recall the dates we sailed to Cherbourg and sailed back from Le Havre. Neither can I recall the camp sites we stayed at.

We walked the beach routes each day already set out for us and camped each night. We stopped in Arromanches for several days.

We also visited various other places including Bayeaux and also crossed the Pegasus bridge.

I have numerous memories, but I cannot recall the dates, where we stayed, or our itinerary, though I possess various photographs. I would love to hear from anyone who was on this trip who can fill me in on the gaps in my memory.

I do remember that the Normandy Beaches trip was an idea of (Major) George Atkins RA.

Of the apprentices who went on this trip, I seem to remember the following: Dave Purvis, Spud Taylor, Scott Walker, Mick Wherton and Tony Moore. So if any of you are reading this letter, could you please contact me on 0252 870980.

✍ R.P. Butler (46A) writes

I felt I must write and congratulate you and all the people who are associated with the production of *OBAN* - Well done! I am extremely pleased with the whole newsletter - but there again, ex-boys 'can do anything', can't they? I notice that you (John Northam) are of intake 47A, but I cannot remember you personally. I was in B Company, but one tended to live very much as 'barrack rooms' and stick with your own trade comrades (I think or at least that is how I remember it - apart from being hungry all the time!). The trouble is so much water has passed under the bridge and yet I feel sure it was only yesterday. May I wish you all success with *OBAN*.

(Thank you Peter and I'm sure you are right that we tended to stick with our own groups and seldom got to know other intakes. - Ed)

✍ John Shaw (42A) writes:

While at Arborfield in 42-44 I can remember very few names of the permanent staff, but one name stays with me, Sgt Evans of the South Wales Borderers and I notice WJ Sullivan (39C) recalls his name on page 14 of *OBAN* 5. Why I remember his name I know not. He was not 'hard' on me, but he must have appealed because he was a good soldier, someone to imitate.

✍ David Fisher (49B) writes

George Fleetwood (56B) in *Anecdotes From Arborfield*, Spring Issue *OBAN*, enquired if anyone remembered Fred Silvers, Provost Sergeant. It may be of interest to many readers to hear that I met Fred at the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham, in the Autumn of 1965, where he was preparing his return to civilian life. I remember him having numerous driving lessons in a desperate bid to pass the test, after a number of failures.

I do not believe he was ever successful. Imagine my surprise on bumping into him some time later, patrolling the streets of Swindon, immaculate in the uniform of that town's only traffic warden! 'Slashed peak' and highly 'bulled' boots prominent.

I subsequently heard reports of Fred in altercation with many members of the public, even to suggesting to one errant motorist to 'Stand up straight and get your haircut'!

Much later in 1981, I heard from a colleague who had shared many happy times with Fred as members of the local angling Club. He was remembered as an amicable and valued companion with a keen sense of humour!

Sadly, he thought Fred had died in the 1970s, but I have not heard this confirmed.

(I think many of us now think of Fred Silvers with a mixture of amusement and - dare I say - affection? Thanks for an interesting bit of news - Ed).

✍ *Eric Corscadden (42A) writes*

We have just formed an association of ex-boys here in New Zealand and have thrown it open to all British ex-boys due to the small number from anyone of the Army Technical Schools. The title is 'BSXBA' (British Services X Boys Association). It has been agreed to include all wives and also wives of members who have died and in this respect Noeline Tingey (*see comment at the end of this letter - Ed*) has been invited to our first annual get together at Lake Taupo, which incidentally is the same weekend as your annual Reunion, 7th, 8th and 9th of October. I believe our Secretary, Deny Goldfinch, will be writing officially to the AOBA to so advise. Deny is an ex-Chepstow boy and the prime mover with regard to our organisation. At the inaugural meeting of the BSXBA I had the pleasure of meeting Joe Culley, who came up from Mt Maunganui and we shall be seeing him again in October.

With reference to the list of contributors to the College History article in *OBAN 5*, I see the name of SC Budd (69C) and cannot help wondering if this is the son of Harry Budd (42A - C Company). Harry was an ex-Dukey and the timing would be just about right.

(For the benefit of members who may not know, Noeline Tingey is the widow of Bill Tingey (39A) whose poem, 'The Choice Is Yours', was published in OBAN 5. Good luck with BSXBA and we hope your first meeting was a success. May we expect a full report for OBAN 7. SC Budd (69C) is the nephew of Harry Budd - you were close - Ed).

✍ *Bryan Adams ((Oct 42) writes*

Although a resident apprentice all over the period, I never did know who used the School in our absence during the summer of 1944. It was said to have been used for vehicle waterproofing - is this correct? Were the accommodation spider-blocks occupied by strangers? Were the workshops used? On our return I did not notice any evidence of a temporary takeover and the school magazine never published the story. Did any staff remain there over the period? Does any photograph exist of its temporary function? I would be most interested if someone can relate this little piece of Arborfield history.

(I'm sure someone out there can provide the answers and fill the gap in this small piece of School history - Ed)

✍ *Pete Jones (42A) writes from South Africa*

Well, after thinking I had been dropped from the mailing list for the non-payment of dues, my Spring 1994 *OBAN* turned up on Friday 19 August. How's that for the day the pack pony died!

As usual, it gave me many hours of nostalgia - you really do a great job and I promise to trek to the bank and get something done about my overdue account. Thank goodness the great general election passed off without the violence we all expected. You could not buy 9mm or 12 gauge ammo for love nor money.

As is to be expected, things are chaotic at present but after all the pushing and shoving is over maybe things will settle down a bit. Crime is at an all time high, especially car hi-jacking, the murder of white country people and the cop-killing!

As usual, I am trying all ways up to make the get together this year - it is one of my main aims in life. It is much too late to book now but I am sure you would not mind if I turned up for the bar! Anyway, thank you for the *OBAN* - as the old cliché goes, 'my cheque will be in the post.' Regards to all who know my name and once again congratulations to all who make the *OBAN* possible.

(Well, you didn't turn up at the bar Pete and your cheque is still in the post - Ed)

✍ *Alan Tucker (TBA) writes*

Apologies for slight delay due to the onset of shingles, I will also delay booking into the Annual Reunion until I see how matters progress. My wife opened your mail (*J. Northam's mail- Ed*) to me and was delighted to find the letter from Bill Tingey in *OBAN* 3, only to read the sad news of his death while reading of your trip to New Zealand in *OBAN* 5. He was of great assistance to her in seeing to our two boys on the troop ship to Hong Kong, and it would have been nice to renew contact.

It is obvious from the material you sent, that a firmer and more interested administration of AOBA has taken over, and I wish you well in your efforts.

✍ *Doug (Phil) Phillips (39B) writes*

I enjoyed the article by Fred Ford (39A) in the Autumn edition of *OBAN*. How well he has caught the way we all felt about those early days. Reading his comments I can clearly recall the events and personalities he has recorded and it is hard to believe it was so many years ago.

I place the episode of the Heinkel bombs as around 1940-41 also and it has always stood out in my mind. In 'F' block we were already 'bulling up' for church parade when we heard the drone of an aircraft.

I believe it was Peter King who was a 'plane buff', who said by the sound of the engines it was one of 'ours.' It was a lovely bright morning so we all went out onto the square in time to see it make a 'run in' from the main gate to the hospital gate direction.

As Fred said the marking were so clear as was the gun line that spat from front mounted guns. The AA camp across the way opened up with Bren guns and then I stood in awe as a stick of bombs was released from the plane. I thought at least I would be blown off my feet and it seemed an age before they landed. However, they caused us no harm and it was said that the only casualty was a cow in a field across the way from the hospital.

Yes, I also tried to get German measles but in spite of playing an infected mouth-organ along with many others was to my dismay, unable to do so. Anyway, I seem to recall the 28 days leave was then replaced by isolation only. Referring to company concerts, I was involved with most of C Company's songs. I even remember the words, which we sang as follows:

" We are the boys of Company C
We live in barracks F & G
We chip and file,
We laugh and smile
All merry lads are we,"

to the tune of "We are the Robbers of the Cave",
from Chu Chin Chow, I believe.

Ron Callaghan (42A) writes about the time Provost Sergeant Hotchkiss was dumped into one of the static water tanks. We certainly sorted out 'Grockle' that day! I wonder was it possible that he had a spark of decency in him somewhere, if so he never showed it.

What a different man in most things was RSM Ben Cook. He looked a fearsome sight to most 14 year olds, but we soon found out that there was a chuckle lurking around inside him.

I was outside the stores waiting for an issue of kit when he towered over me "Where're you from boy?" He growled. "Oxford Sir!" I replied. "Well, I'm from Cambridge and they will win again next year," said he with a wicked grin.

The last reunion I attended was about three years ago. I was with Tom Barnett (C42). We made the acquaintance of Arthur Dibben (Oct 39 - A Coy). I remembered the name and we were soon recalling old times, faces and names to go with them sprang to mind.

We really had to make the most of things in those days and I doubt if anyone who passed through 'The Gates' has not carried part of the spirit we attained through life with them.

So being we decided to look up the old place or what was left of it and after a struggle made it to where, for us, it all began. Not a lot to see, the square, air raid shelters at the top, and the old cottage where we had our respirators tested in the gas chamber.

We had intended to have a march past of our own on the parade ground, but it chucking it down with rain stair rods in fact, so we settled for winding down the car windows and going through the motions in our minds. You could almost hear the School's pipe band. I used to have to march behind that.

Then, how about the 4/7 Dragoon Guards, Sunday church parades and going out of bounds to the dances at 'California', where the dance band section with Slim the drummer giving us a

knowing smile, him with an armful of good conduct stripes, us with our 'dodgers up.'

Who remembers the Garrison Theatre, another place we used to visit that was also out of bounds. That is, of course, when we had the money which wasn't all that often. However, if you could get on one of the outside working parties to the local farms once in a while, then the ten shillings for the day's work was a very big asset.

I seem to have rambled on a bit, so I had better head for the post box. As I will not be attending the 1994 reunion, may I wish everyone who does, a great time.

(Thank you Doug for a most interesting and amusing letter - Ed)

✍ John Maddox (Sept 44) writes

I thank you for the copy of OBAN 4 which I have read and re-read with great interest and, I must admit with just a trace of a tear in the eye.

There was no mention of any of my 'old cronies' therein but I do remember some of the people who attended the last Reunion. ill Tate of 'B' Company was a first class athlete, short distance running being his forté. Robert Dann of 'C' Company was, I believe, always referred to as 'Big Dann'.

Young McNally I knew, although junior to me, but of course everybody recognized him for obvious reasons.

I would like to place an order for a green Association tie as I did end up as a Greenjacket. In the spirit of friendship, I can forgive Titch Schofield for his derogatory remarks about the Greenjackets.

My own experience was that the rest of the Army, particularly the Guards regiments always referred to the Greenjackets as the 'Black Mafia', but it never bothered us.

Ron Callaghan's letter provoked one or two memories but all I can remember about daily kit layouts was rolling up two leather boot laces like hosepipes and sowing them together to keep them in place. I can, however, remember the names of almost every boy who was in Barrack Room A1 on the seventh of September, 1944. I have taken the liberty of listing them in strict alphabetical order, of course, in the hope that one or more of them may appear in your membership records.

Those who were, with me, incarcerated in barrack room A1 on September 7, 1944 were:

Tam 'Jock' Bennett, from Glasgow,
John 'Tarzan' Birch,
'Ginger' Bone, a Woolwich cadet from London,
Alan 'Taff' Bucket, from Stonehouse, Glos.,
Charlie Courage from Aberdeen,
Kenny Henderson, ex Queen Victoria School,
Bill Jelly from Portsmouth,
Derek 'Eck' Kirkpatrick from York,
Jim Marshall from Stonehaven,
Peter Rout from Croydon,
'Fishy' Salmon from the Isle of Wight,
Will 'Willy' Wines, ex Duke of York School,
and Boy Lance Corporal Probert.

There were a few others, faces come to mind but I am afraid their names elude me. When you consider that with one exception it is 47 years since I saw any of them I think my memory is pretty good.

I would particularly like to trace 'Happy' Brown who was one of the most agreeable, loyal and genuine people I have met in my entire life. In the three years I have never met anyone who had a bad word to say about him.

'Happy' Brown was a big lad, like myself not the smartist of soldiers and he played hockey as goalkeeper. He once headed a hockey ball to prevent a goal and even the resulting bump on the head didn't keep the smile off his face for long!

There were bad times and good times, some days when I hoped it would all turn out to be a bad dream, however, on reflection I would not have

missed the experience, comradeship or the training I learned at Arborfield, how to live with other people, how to make the best of difficult situations as well as how to keep my head down when the fur was flying.

Walking back from Reading on a Saturday, stony broke after seeing a football match wasn't so bad when you had the company of good friends and believe me we usually were stony broke, being paid only four shillings a week.

Then again, who in civvy street would lend you his only pair of shoes to attend a dance in the Camp Hall on Thursday night? In our room only about half the boys owned civvy shoes.

Forgive me please, I haven't met or written to another Arborfield Apprentice since 1959, when I bumped into 'Taffy' Bucket in Gloucester (Bucket not Bouquet). The memories flood back, it is quite hard to stop writing them but close I must for fear of boring you to death.

I intend to visit the old camp site in person on the seventh of September to see if I may be permitted to walk through the gates on the 50th Anniversary of my first ever entry. Nothing more, just to walk through the gates will be enough. Then I will attend the next Reunion. Come hell or high water I intend to be there!

(Thanks John for writing, far from boring, quite the opposite. - Ed)

Stan Horne (47B) writes

Last night I spoke to Rob Loader, with whom I was on boy service. He told me about the Old Boys' Association and I would be grateful if you could let me have further information.

I must admit I am completely out of touch with all the ex-boys - except my brother Ern. To be honest I do not think he is a member - I do not even remember him ever mentioning the Association.

My name is Stan Horne, army number 21126001.

I joined the Army Apprentices School on September 3 1947. I was in A Company and trained as a Radio Mechanic, leaving the School I went to Lydd in Kent to train as a Radar Mechanic. In 1951 I was posted to the AAPC Tonfanau, North Wales.

Late in 1952 I was posted to Japan for one year, following which I was claimed to Benghazi by my eldest brother. As there was no radar either in Japan or Benghazi I asked for a transfer to Egypt in 1954.

Because of the slow run down of soldiers I was then posted back to Fort Stanley in Hong Kong. In March 1955 I was again moved to the Royal Malay Artillery on Blakang Mati at Singapore, finally returning to the UK in November 1955.

Following my disembarkation leave I was posted as a Radar Mechanic to the REME Workshops at Donnington.

Shortly after I joined 8 Joint Service Trials Unit at RAF Henlow where we worked at English Electric, Stevenage, on the Thunderbird guided missile, travelling to Australia in October 1957 to carry out the service trials with the unit. I took early demob after 9 years, leaving the Army on Christmas Day 1959. Since then I lost contact with all my army pals.

Only over the past few days having regained contact with Rob Loader who has been able to tell me of others of my school days, which has aroused my interest.

✍ *Paul Wiggins (58A) writes*

Just a line to say how much I enjoyed my day at the AOBA Reunion on Saturday October 8. As it was the first time I have attended I had no idea beforehand what a well organised event it was to be. My thanks to all for making it a great day. I look forward to next year - God willing!

✍ *Tony Ireland (46A) writes*

The other day, over lunch with a couple of other ex-boys, the subject came up of who was the youngest to reach 'Tiffy' rank and after some discussion I reckon I am a likely contender.

I was promoted SSgt on 8 August 1953, having been born on 4 February 1931. If my arithmetic is correct I was 22 years, 5 months and 4 days old - perhaps this puts me on the starting line?

(Can anyone out there beat this? - Ed.)

✍ *John Howes (55B) writes*

Firstly, I would like to thank the Membership Secretary and the AOBA Committee for all the hard work that went into producing a marvellous weekend. The only comment I would make is the length of the evening meal. This, I feel along with many others, was fine but we were left waiting a long time for the rest of the evening. Perhaps this could be speeded up somewhat. The content was fine.

I would like to offer a few suggestions for next year. If it could be made possible to march on our old square and then march to the old gates for the dedication, I think this would be much appreciated by all. Also, would it be possible to have a professional video made of the ceremony and then offer copies for sale in the subsequent issue of *OBAN* and make a few pence at the same time.

Just to reiterate a thought made by someone else, a list of attendees could be displayed at the parade assembly point (*better in the WRVS room - Ed.*) so that members could seek out old friends more easily. Once again thank you for a wonderful weekend and keep up the good work!

(Any constructive comments are always welcome and will be looked at by your committee - Ed.)

✍ *Gerry Preston (44A) writes*

It is hard to describe one's emotions at returning to England from Australia after 26 years to attend the OBA reunion, which was the 50th Anniversary for the '44 intakes. It was special enough for me to make the effort and I was rewarded by meeting many old comrades.

Ken Jenner has kept in touch over the years and alerted me to the 50th, John Dutton sent me some recent OBANs and Larry Le Var went out of his way to make me especially welcome. After literally being in the wilderness for so long to meet so many old friends, some, I confess I had forgotten, really made the journey worthwhile. In some ways it was also a 55th for I met friends from the Dukies from 1939.



Arborfield of course had changed so much I couldn't even find my old quarter in Hill Road, but the spirit of the present apprentices I met and spoke to was as strong as ever. The Museum was I thought particularly well done covering such a vast range of theatres and campaigns. If you have room I would like to pass on some advice received from Field Marshal Montgomery at a passing out parade in, I think, 1946. 'Learn not only your own trade well, but also those of your mates, as best you can, he may not always be there!' Heeding this advice has saved me and at times my unit on many occasions.

To all involved in running the reunion I say thank you, it was excellent from being met at the guardroom to the end of the Sunday church service. I am resolved to return again and, like MacArthur, I shall.

✍ *George Head (43C) writes from Spain*

Many thanks for the latest issue of *OBAN*. Marvellous memories some ex-ATs have! I remember Dave Ratter as the first boy RSM and, I believe B Company must have had yellow 'tags'. That is the only colour I can remember (vaguely) and I believe it started on our return from Bury, Lancs? Did Dave Ratter (Electrics?) come to some harm in Kenya or thereabouts? A rumour travelled the spiders just before I left for the obligatory 6-week training course - at Royal West Kent Depot, Maidstone - prior to basic training at 1 Training Regt RE, Malvern, during the winter of 46/47, which was a bit cold to be square bashing and throwing Bailey bridges together in a hurry.

How we envied everyone else going to REME. Needless to say, I spent as much time as possible after that in warmer climates far from large, unfriendly squares; peopled by extremely keen types with gimlet eyes which could spot a harmless ex-AT as though by present day satellite!

As you can see I'm still in an AT-friendly location/environment - I can recommend it if you are not too energetic!

By the way, the reminder concerning claims for medical things, such as deafness, was most helpful - I have two payments totalling just under £4000.00 as a result and, though not a natural scrounger, I would be grateful for any other tips via future issues of *OBAN*.

(Come on now, was it Dave Ratter or Gordon Lakes? B Coy wore red tags, D Coy yellow, C Coy green and A Coy blue. But you knew that already). - Ed)

Ed Dudley Martin () writes

With regard to getting those subs paid in on time, is there any reason why the subs should not be listed on the Application form sent out with the forthcoming programme of events?

In this way I think everyone who fills in and returns their programme, stating their particular options (with costs), could not fail to see and hopefully act upon when adding up the amount which they send in acceptance.

I think that this would also act as a timely reminder to us all, and could be targetted towards the forthcoming year well in advance. Perhaps it is asking too much of stifled brains like mine to tell me in May when I know that the Reunion is not until October!!

May I take this opportunity to thank all of you who put in so much hard work for months and months to provide with what must be the finest Reunion anyone could wish for.

If the ever increasing numbers say anything at all it is a fitting tribute to the enormous pleasure those attending get from being made part of the College again. I would not wish to miss our get together each year and I know that my friends feel the same. WELL DONE!

As an ex-Hilsea armourer who moved (by courtesy of the Luftwaffe) to Arborfield in 1940, it is very flattering to find oneself with my colleague 'Bomber' France at the top table for dinner - a very far cry from those days in July 1938 when brought to Hilsea from the backwoods of Sussex by my dear mother, who bomber still insists made my bed for me on that inaugural day!

I think that on several occasions the inspecting officer has passed us by quickly perhaps through embarrassment that there are a few of us with 1938 on our identification tag!

On this occasion the Brigadier seemed perplexed at my OBA shield badge.

Thanks to all of you who gave us such a memorable weekend, everything was just perfect, despite me falling down the steps flat on my face after the AGM. I think some thought that it was through drink! I simply took a step that was not there.

Some may have thought that I was grovelling at the feet of the Committee. It was entirely my own fault and apart from a bruise or two no harm was done.

P.S. How about having the Main Gates from Hilsea Barracks bought up and re-located!? Then we could add those of Chepstow, Jersey and Bramley plus any others around.

(Thank you Dudley. As for your postscript, I'm saying now! - Ed) .

SPECIAL REQUEST TO ALL MEMBERS

In order to give the Association wider publicity and hopefully to increase membership, members are asked to consider placing an advertisement in their local newspaper, highlighting the existence of the AOBA and inviting any 'detached' ex-boys to contact John Northam for more information.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Roger Hoskins - 57A at Arborfield, with the last 6 months spent at Carlisle, is looking for old friends. If anyone out there would like to get re-acquainted, please write to: Roger Hoskins, 17 Lismore Street, CARLISLE, CA1 2AH

DONATIONS

The Association acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

Alan Birch (Oct 44):	£2.50	(self-imposed fine for late payment of admin subs '94)
G H Lakes (43A):	£1.00	
Howard Trill (54A):	£5.00	
G A Harold (46A):	£10.00	
Mike Whordley (61A):	£5.00	(The little extra is not to ease my conscience - though it helps - but to ease the postage costs here to Dubai).
Tony Guy (43A)	£8.50	
Tony Drake (J38)	£50.00	

ADMINISTRATION SUBSCRIPTION FOR 1995

Gentlemen,

With effect from 1995 Admin Subscriptions must be paid **ANNUALLY** by **31 MARCH**.

Your Admin Subscription of £5.00 for 1995 is due before 31 March 1995.

Please note that payment of the Admin Subscriptions is necessary to ensure that you remain on the active list and continue to receive future *OBANs*, reunion information and Association correspondence.

Have you paid your subs for 1994?

ARBORFIELD OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION Administration Subscription 1995

Cheques should be crossed and made payable to Central Bank, Princess Marina College (OBA Account) and sent to the Membership Secretary.

Membership No. Surname Forenames

Address

Post Code

Herewith Admin Subs for £5.00 for the year 1995



If you are an ex-REME Sergeant's Mess member and would like to consider joining the REME Corps Sergeants Mess as a retired member, details may be obtained by writing to:

Mr John Wakefield
c/o REME Corps Mess Office
Bailleul Mess
Hazebrouck Barracks
Arborfield
Reading RG2 9NH

DEATHS

It is with deep regret that the Association reports the deaths of the following members:

RICHARD (CURLY) BALDOCK (42B)
TED FOUNTAIN (38B)

IN MEMORIAM BRYN RICHARDS (PS)

Bryn devoted 22 years to the College, 4 in uniform as assistant to the SEO and 18 as a civilian Burnham Lecturer. Bryn was helpful to everyone, a good friend and a perfectionist. The many tasks which he took on all bore his hallmark of dedicated enthusiasm. His activities at one time encompassed teaching in, and civilian manager of, General Studies Department, Chief Librarian, member of the New College Build Co-ord Committee, Editor of the College Magazine and OIC of the Model Club, together with many minor commitments. It is probably not surprising that, during his service to the college he suffered two heart attacks. However, after each, phoenix like, he returned and continued to give of himself. In the ten years before retirement he was the Archivist in which capacity he is well known to many old boys. During this time he wrote 'A Brief History' of the College and two updates to the original. He was delighted to participate in the OBA affairs and was extremely pleased when he was awarded an 'honorary OBA tie' in recognition of his services. He retired in 1991 to Berkhamstead looking forward to a happy period with his wife Norma and in which to develop his artistic and handiwork activities. However, trouble with his heart re-emerged and he underwent a bypass operation. It was just when he was beginning to feel better after a long struggle back to health that he suffered his third and last heart attack, on his feet, on the go, just like him. He leaves a widow, Norma and two sons, Vaughan and Brent and a granddaughter, Paris, to whom the OBA send their sympathy and warmest appreciation of Bryn's services to the College.

ARBORFIELD OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Acknowledgements

The Editor wishes to thank the following for their help in the production of this Newsletter and apologises for any errors or omissions.

Front Cover Design

Judy Booth, Curatorial Officer, REME Corps Museum

Word Processing, Sub-editing & Layout

Brian Hornsey (54A)

All Contributors

Printing

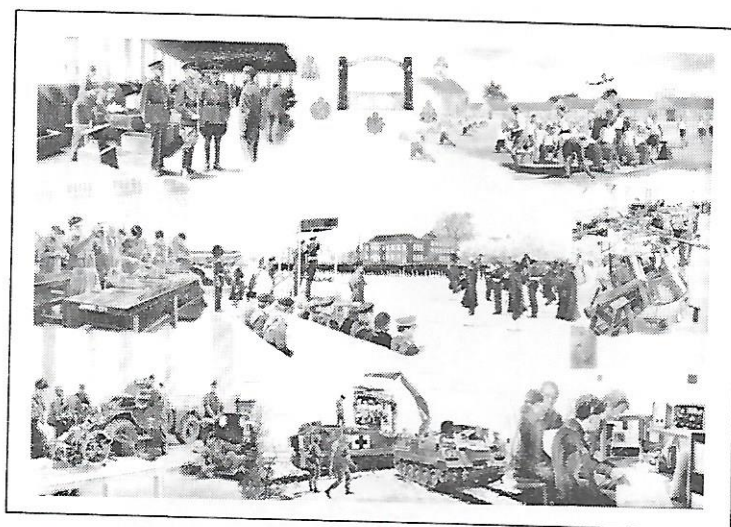
SERC² Printing Dept, SEE Arborfield

COLLEGE ITEMS.

The following item commissioned to commemorate 50 years of apprentice training at Arborfield is available from the PRI Princess Marina College, Arborfield, Reading, Berks RG2 9NJ.

Cheques payable to "PRI Princess Marina College".

Please do NOT make cheques for this item payable to the OBA.



Print measures
28" x 22" @ £6.50
(incl P&P) UK only

Item A. Unframed College Print

ASSOCIATION ITEMS.

The following items may be ordered from the Membership Secretary:

Item 1. "Princess Marina College - A Brief History 1939-1992". This 24-page illustrated A5 booklet is offered FREE to members. However, to cover P&P please send: UK and EEC - 40p; Europe (other than EEC) - 65p; US, CAN, Middle East - £1.55; AUST, NZ - £1.85p.

Item 2. Aerial Photo of Old School (circa 1950). This photograph, showing a passing out parade in progress, is temporarily unavailable.

Item 3. Association Ties. These terylene ties have a single motif incorporating the College Gates in gold with scroll and letters AOBA below. They are available in royal blue, maroon and green (note that green ties are only available while stocks last). Please state colour preference when ordering. Price £5.50 each incl P&P, UK only.

Please make cheques for these items payable to Central Bank Princess Marina College (OBA account).

Please note that postage on overseas orders for items A, 2 and 3 will increase as appropriate.

THE CRAFTSMAN

Subscription Rates:

Single Copy:	70p.
Annual Subscription:	£13.00, surface post paid.
Overseas Subscription:	£16.00 surface post paid.
Air Mail Rates:	On application.

All correspondence should be sent to :

The Editor,
The Craftsman,
Isaac Newton Road,
Arborfield, Reading,
Berkshire, RG2 9LN.

REFLECTIONS OF AN IDLE GUARDSMAN

by Dave Sexstone (59C)

From boy soldier to old soldier in 5 years - This is the story of Dave Sexstone in *Reflections of an Idle Guardsman*.

Dave began his Army career at 16 after time as a boy scout with Baden-Powell as his hero. He joined with youthful enthusiasm, a head full of romantic ideas about seeing the world.....and not much else.

All good stuff, but soon learned there was more to Army life than knowing about knots and knives with spikes to remove stones from horses hooves.

Dave learned fast, like tens of thousands of other youngsters called up for National Service, while he was doing his boy service and three years with the Colours.

It is a story many others have told or would like to tell - but for all that it is an interesting read and will

recall for many their days as young soldiers.

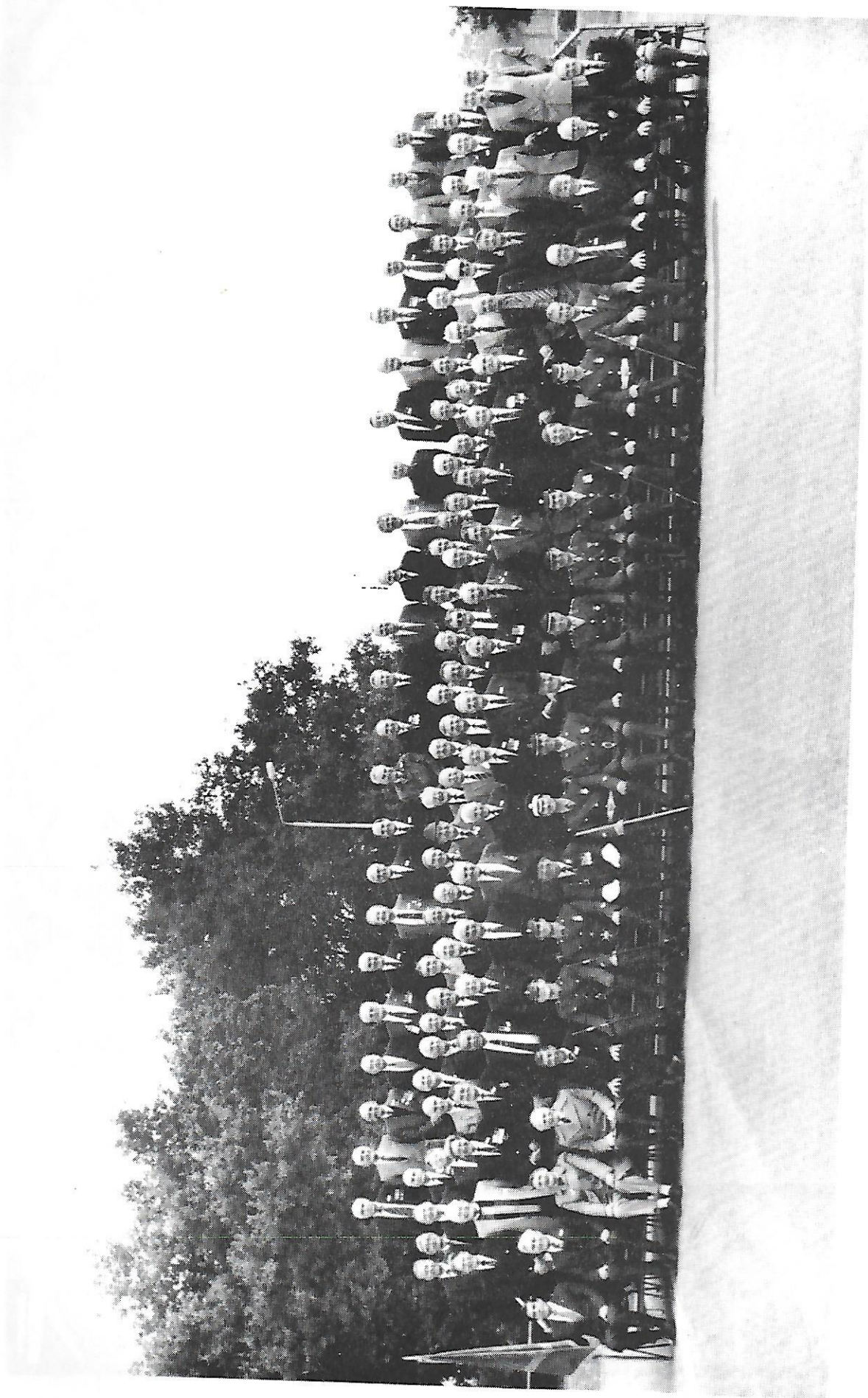
Some of Dave's stories run to just a few lines. Take this one for example:

'In the spring of 1962, my best mate and I plotted to desert. The plan was to go to France, spend a season picking grapes and then join the French Foreign Legion. It seemed like a good idea at the time, but I met a girl and fell in love, and that was the end of that.'

The four letter words which litter the pages are not likely to mar the enjoyment of an entertaining and amusing tale of Army life.

This book is offered at a special discount price of only £6.00 to members of the AOBA.

Book orders to Dave Sexstone, 8 St Catherines Road, Southampton, SO18 1LJ.



ARBORFIELD OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION - REUNION 1994