

**May
2017**



**Issue
67**

Arborfield Old Boys Association Newsletter



www.arborfieldoldboys.co.uk

ARBORFIELD OLD BOYS' **ASSOCIATION**

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All Past Commandants

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Lt Col Bill Cleasby, MBE, IEng, FIET, sq(w), (61C)

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OBAN Editor

Andy Dickson (66B)

Webmaster

Mark Jobes (77C)

Recruitment Officer

Rob Castell (64A)

Database Officer

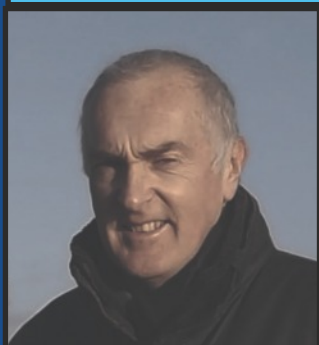
Ian Clark (62A)

Committee Meetings are held at least twice a year in addition to the AGM that is held during the reunion weekend.

You can contact the Secretary with any points you would like raised at these meetings.

Contact details for all committee members can be found on the AOBA website.

AOBA Chairman's Report



I'll open this time with some meaningful changes to the committee. I'm delighted to announce that David Schofield (65A) has volunteered to become the Chairman of the AANM.

Although his appointment has yet to be ratified by the committee, he has their backing and I'm confident he will be selected at their AGM in May. David has a wealth of knowledge and I'm sure he will use this to good effect in his new position; we wish him all the very best in his new role.

This has left a gap in the committee and this has been ably filled by Ian Clark (62A) who has a wealth of experience in data base management. Ian already has the committee scratching its head thinking about what we could and should be doing; welcome on board Ian.

You will recall that in the last newsletter I wrote about the presentation of a trophy on behalf of the AOBA to Bohunt School in Arborfield. The trophy, which I've named 'The Apprentice Cup' is back from the engravers and I presented it to the school last month.

The idea is that it will be formally presented at the School's annual awards for a Science Technology Engineering or Maths (STEM) result; I've enclosed a photo. I'm hoping this will cement relations with the AOBA and Bohunt School Arborfield for many years to come.

Planning for the 2017 reunion is on track.

It would be fair to say there were a few issues during the first few days of the initial on-line application. These were quickly dealt with by Isle of Wright tours and all has been quiet ever since. I say quiet, as Facebook which is always a good gauge of contentment, or otherwise, has been very quiet. The initial comments on Facebook were very negative, so much so that some

individuals were commenting on how easy it is to organise such an event.

I've retained their comments for future reference, so if this year's trial does not go well, I know we have a band of willing volunteers for the future; you see, Facebook does have some advantages.

To close, an update on the Museum. What a tale of woe this has been.

On the face of it, taking two years to move home is totally unacceptable, but it's important to understand some of the problems that have caused the delay. You will be aware the museum operates from a building owned by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation; they own the building and the museum has a lease to operate from it. Before the exhibit fit-out could begin the floors needed to be sorted out, this took well over a year for the contractor to admit liability and for the remedial work to be completed.

Then, after the exhibits had been installed the Defence Fire Officer, who has been consulted throughout the build, deemed the building to be unsafe and issued an Enforcement Notice; you could not make it up!

Over the past month huge progress has been made and we are expecting the museum to be open in late April or early May 17. It has been a journey (!) but I know you will appreciate the results.

Mike Tizard

Mike Tizard 76B2

Your Chairman

P.S. Yet another REME book has hit the streets.

Craftsman of the Army Volume 3 details to exploits of the Corps from 1993 to 2015. The book, which has been compiled by the REME Regimental Headquarters is designed to complement Volumes 1 and 2. Its available from the REME shop (now based in the museum) for £25.00 plus P&P.

Committee Members Reports



Secretary's Report

At the time of writing this piece, I reflect on how time has passed so quickly, it seems hard to believe that we are not far away from this year's re-union. It will be the first one I have attended, I missed last years due to a family wedding on the other side of the country; so I am really looking forward to meeting those of you who are able to make it this year.

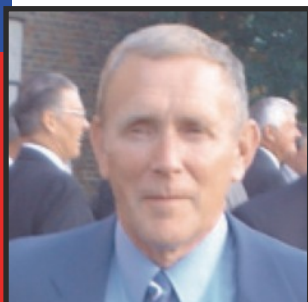
I have been lucky enough to speak to a few of you on the phone, sadly on at least one occasion it was someone reporting the passing of one of our Members. But on each phone call it was a pleasure speaking to you.

Since taking on the Secretary's role, things have been a bit of a blur, learning the ins and outs of the Association; and I would like to give a massive thank you to my predecessor David Schofield for still being there when advice is needed; his knowledge has helped me out on more than one occasion, thank you David.

We have a Committee meeting in a couple of weeks, and we are all looking forward to a tour of the new Museum; we did have a little peek at our last meeting, so it will be fantastic to have a look at the finished article. I still remember the old Museum in Arborfield.

So, I look forward to meeting you all at the reunion, Arte et Marte.

Phil Elleway 73C



Registrar's Report

Checking the Electronic OBAN mailing list it appears that about 50% of our members have changed their email

address since becoming members. **It is important that I have the correct data whether it be snail mail addresses or whatsoever.**

PLEASE LET ME KNOW ASAP, so that I can keep the database up to date.

Please inform me of any changes to your personal information

New members since the last OBAN (66)	
Davies A R	A-72A-D
Crawford I	-67C-B
Milne C A	A-71C-A
Meek T J	A-59B-A
McKeegan-Brown R	A-69-C
Connick R E	A-57B-B
Atkinson C J	A-71B-C
Harwood D	A-67A-D
Newport R	A-77C-D
Jones C	A-63A-D
Shields J A	A-61B-B
Browning L	A-67C-C

Thank you

Alec Powell 64C

Dates for your diary:

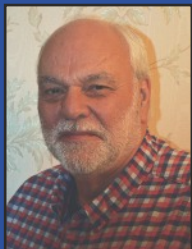
1st June - Trooping of the Colour

June 16th to 19th - REME Corps Weekend & 75 Anniversary - Lyneham

June 24th - Armed Forces Day

July 18th - Xoddam Bowling Trophy (Contact frank.westwood@gmx.de for details)

July 19th/20th/21st - AOBA Reunion



OBAN Editor's Report

OBAN Edition 66 wasn't without its problems. Communications between me and the printing house became an issue, (My fault). Christmas and New Year holidays got in the way and what was supposed to be a festive season edition didn't finally get mailed well into January. In fact, here we are almost into April and I am still getting messages that some people haven't received their hard copies.

On top of that we moved house, not very far from where we lived close to Lyneham, but far enough to lose Internet communications and land line phones for a good few weeks. Mobile reception wasn't good where we were and isn't much better where we are. Packing up and unpacking seems to take an age. No matter how many times we move we still seem to cause ourselves issues. Frustrations reach maximum levels.

For those of you that did receive your hard copies or downloaded the softcopy from the AOBA website I hope it met your expectations. I did receive a few comments, mostly nice, and some constructive, (Which I will take on-board).

Some of the small changes and additions I made still need some work and I still have some further ideas I will introduce as my skill levels allow. I would like to get the 'Letters to the Editor' feature again. (Thanks for the advice Peter Gripton).

I will trot out the standard and repeated request for articles, stories, anecdotes, jokes etc. from you all. Filling up the empty pages is a daunting task and I have only had two attempts at it!

I consider myself to be relatively organised but the amount of e-mail traffic between committee members and from people sending information to me is a challenge. Just dumping data in a separate file is not the answer and I will have to develop a better way of storing data between editions so I don't misplace anything. Nothing worse than getting somebody's hard earned article and losing it on my hard drive...

If you noticed I have dropped my G-mail address and use my normal hotmail account. Don't be shy, drop me a line.

Andy Dickson 66B



Treasurer's Report

As reported in the last issue of OBAN the Gift Aid paperwork was dispatched at the end of November and rather to

my surprise the Association received an early Christmas present of the full amount submitted plus some interest within a fortnight. This was then divided up between the Chairman's Charities there being no calls from any members in need of assistance during the year.

The beginning of January was taken up with inputting Direct Debit subscribers onto the

database and updating the Gift Aid list from then on it is a matter of keeping up to date with any movement in and out of the account i.e. payments in and out, new members joining which entails setting up DDI and BACS payments, members cancelling and dealing with any queries in respect to finances.

I will be presenting the audit report at the AGM for your approval. If attending we will meet then.

Laurie Blakely 61B



Database Officer Report

I would like to introduce myself as the Honorary Database Officer and the journey prior to this appointment.

I arrived at AAC Arborfield from Fort Hall, Kenya in January, 1962. A shock to the body, then a titch at 5 foot coming from a 7-year draught in Kenya to one of the worst winters the UK had! The rest of the UK apprentices had been told to delay arrival by a week whilst us folk from the colonies donned oversized olive green overalls and moved lockers in the snow!

After completing my apprenticeship as an ECT (Electronic Control Technician), and representing both D company and the AAC at Hockey departed to SEE to complete 2nd Class training. On completion was posted to 4 Armoured Workshop REME at Detmold BAOR.

Excellent posting and represented the unit, 20 Armd Brigade and 4 Div at hockey and did stage management for the local drama group.

After about 4 years I returned to SEE to do my 1st Class technician and then specialized in Surface to Air Guided weapons (SAGW – Thunderbird).

I was posted to 36 Heavy Air Defence Regt RA at Shoeburyness. The 3 years with the regiment saw promotion to sergeant, NATO exercise in BAOR, live firing from Aberporth on the West Wales coast.

I continued to play hockey for REME and the Regiment. The Regiment moved to Barker Barracks in Dortmund. After a year, I applied to attend an Artificer selection course and started Tiffy training at SEE Jan 1972. On completion, Dec 1974, I was posted 1st Regiment RHA LAD REME in Detmold and seeing a wee spell at BATUS in Canada. Mainly working on FACE computers, FV432 Command posts and RA simulators.

Again, enjoyed my hockey playing for LAD, Regiment, 20 Armd Brigade, 4 Division and REME BAOR.

After 3 years, I was posted to 5 Armoured workshops REME at Soest. Apart from the military support work as an ECE Tiffy, a Service funds accounting course, ended adding Sgt's mess treasurer for the joint Sgt's Mess. The hockey continued to the workshop winning the BAOR Craftsman Cup and the beating the UK Craftsman cup winners early 1978.

I returned to the UK in 1978 on Voluntary Redundancy and started a career in Quality Assurance Management. The next 25 years I worked as Quality Manager for an American semi-conductor company, consulted in QA management supporting companies supplying the MOD and then Quality and Data Systems manager for an American flexible film manufacturer.

This introduced me into the vagaries of packaging for the meat and cheese industries and their associated health, safety and bio hazard management.

On redundancy, I then joined the South Wales Police as a Principle Officer as a data modeller for the Business Intelligence Data unit, from which I retired after 11 years in September 2015. Currently setting up my own part-time business in photography, a long-time interest along family history, travel and camping.

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend last year's AGM when our Chairman asked for a volunteer as the AOBA's Honorary Database Officer, as I would have then but on hearing I approached the Chairman and was welcomed with opened arms! I see the role to provide "Back Office" data support for the committee and AOBA, and where possible make the business of data management as easy as possible."

Ian Clark 62A



Webmaster's Report

My main work recently has been converting lists that were originally published as images into a text/table format to make them searchable within the

website.

I am also in the process of creating an excel spreadsheet with lists of each intake where the information is available.

The idea to create online forms for applications and renewals has been

discontinued due to concerns over online payments and management of those payments.

There is an issue regarding the current hosting solution for the website which I will discuss at the committee meeting on Friday 21st April.

The website continues to be popular with current homepage visits exceeding 85,000 as of 15/04/17.

Mark Jobs 77C



Recruiting Sergeant's Report

First a warm welcome to all our new members, don't forget that the committee

are here to help you should you need it.

I'm continuing to recruit through social media, Facebook and Forces Reunited, which both seem good sources for finding our ex-apprentices. The new leaflet has been distributed to all the Army museums and RBL branches in the UK and all the Committee members have been given some to distribute. Advertisements for the Association are also regularly placed in the Craftsman & RBL magazines.

At the time of writing we have had twenty-seven new members join since the last AGM eight months ago – two from the Fifties, twelve from the Sixties, ten from the Seventies and three from

the Nineties, and, with a month to go before the closing date for attending the next reunion I've no doubt there will be a late surge to boost these numbers. As you can see from these figures by far the best recruiting source is from the Sixties and Seventies. This, I expect is because as retirement age is reached or approaching many people look back over their lives and want to meet old friends and talk over old times, and that is what the AOBA is all about, no matter what your age.

This year is the 50th Anniversary of the 'Boys of '67', so congratulations to you all.

Finally, it's because of you, the membership, that our great Association keeps going so well, so a plea to you all – recruit new members to keep it that way!

Bob Castell 64A

Recruitment Officer

Sadly, Rob Castell has tendered his resignation from his position as Recruitment Officer of the Arborfield Old Boys Association. Rob has done a sterling job in recruiting new members since he assumed the post 5 years ago. Overall membership has increased during his tenure. His expertise and drive will be missed and we wish Rob well in his endeavours in the future.

This obviously leaves a vacancy for this position on the committee and should you be interested in taking up this challenge please contact either Mike Tizard or Phil Ellway. (Their details can be found on the AOBA webpage).

Diary of a Jeep

Diary of a Jeep

3rd Jan

Day one.

Discovered Reveille isn't a magazine and the bastard on the trumpet was blowing a bugle.

0700 Breakfast. Marched to the cookhouse with our eating irons and a tin mug.

Apparently the brown stain left on the inside of my mug is Bromide - whatever that might be.

1000 hours - Issued with our kit at the QMs. Changed out of our proper clothes. The room corporal said I looked like a bag of s**t. Those of us who weren't 'bags of s**t' were 'Schmos'. I asked the bloke next to me 'What's a Schmo?' He reckoned it was someone who tucked his shirt into his shreddies. Discovered 'Shreddies' were Drawers Cellular.

Next day

Made to form up in three rows outside our new abode, Jeepland, in our ill-fitting SDs. Wheeler had his anklets on the wrong feet. Wheeler was shouted at. McNulty had his boots on the wrong feet. I thought Sgt. Pittendreigh was going to cry.

Went to the MRS for some injections. The MO grabbed my balls and asked me to cough. He reminded me of my old scout master - but he never asked me to cough.

Lunch 1230 hours. Discovered Jipping or Gypping. Or to be more precise, the experience of being jipped. Jeeps are the

lowest form of life. It seems that anyone, even a stray cat can push in front of us at the cookhouse. Any form of protest results in a fat lip or a nasty scratch.

5th Jan

All new arrivals are known as Jeeps. Actually they are all f***ng Jeeps. Nothing to do with motor vehicles or fornication. Jeeps are one step below the amoeba in the eyes of anyone who's been here three months longer than you. You can always spot a fellow Jeep - apart from an expression of vague hopelessness, it looks as though he's trying to smuggle a dinner-plate under his beret.

Gym today. We were introduced to the PTIs. They all looked like brick s**t-houses with legs. I asked Digger Diamond why we had to blacken our brown plimsolls. He made me hang from the wall bars.

6thth Jan

First day of serious square bashing. There was a lot of shouting and stamping of feet. It seems we have to do everything by numbers. Fortunately you only need to be able to count to three. There was a lot of ...one... two... three... one.... two.. Three... one. We were informed that for the first three months of our army career we have to 'one... two...three...one' more or less everything. Unless you are a junior leader - they've yet to find one who can count.

7th Jan

Marched to the camp barber for a bonehead. I asked if he wouldn't mind leaving my side-burns intact. He said he did mind. But at least he didn't make me hang from the wall-bars. I found out later that you could go to Shag Twining and pay a shilling for a decent trim in the Spiders. It would be a foolish Jeep who ventured into the Spiders.

Introduced to beezing - the general idea is to turn your toe-caps into convex shaving mirrors.

8th Jan

Got bollocked for having a Windsor knot in my tie. I thought what's good enough for the Duke of Windsor is good enough for me. Sgt. Pittendreigh thought otherwise. In Jeepland the drill sergeants out-rank Dukes.

Geordie Robson won the farting competition after lights out.

11th Jan

It was Bartlett's birthday so the whole squad gave him the bumps. Unfortunately they tossed him too high, failed to catch him and he ended up in the MRS.

Note to self: Never disclose your D.O.B to anyone.

Bumpered the floor. Still haven't been given a gun.

Spotted on the wall of the ablutions 76D2EL.... Some sort of code. Probably a note to Kilroy who (apparently) was here.

Diary of a Jeep (Cont.)

12th Jan

Wrote to all my relatives to tell them never to send birthday cards or gifts - it's a long walk to the MRS. If I was to be tossed I'd rather hoped it wouldn't be by a blanket.

Scorched my SD trousers. Rubbed the offending area with a half crown - panic over. Studded my ammo boots - now I'm a bloody cobbler. I should have stayed in Northampton.

13th Jan

At present the Russians are pissing off the Americans over Cuba. We all had to go to the air-raid shelters. It was dark and smelled of urine. We were asked by the CSM what precautions we should take in the event of a four minute warning.

A/T McGuiness recommended wearing ear plugs to protect our hearing and dark glasses to avoid the glare. He also suggested drinking milk to ameliorate the effects of radiation. He's a Bombhead sweating on Best A/T.

A voice in the darkness suggested a liaison with the WVS lady. The brave lad who uttered the remark forgot that CSMs can see in the dark. Rodeo beckons.

14th Jan

Caught walking to the NAAFI whilst not swinging my arms. Had to clean the ablutions with my toothbrush. All Jeeps have to swing their arms shoulder high wherever they go, or expect to buy a new toothbrush. It appears that the higher you are up the food

chain - the lower you have to swing your arms.

No weapons issued yet. I do have some ammo pouches, some ammo boots, but no ammo. Apparently ammo pouches work better when they're blancoed..... as do web belts.

15th Jan

Pay parade. Got ten shillings and sixpence. The rest goes into 'credits' whatever they are. Sheet exchange today which meant a trip to the sheet-house.

Took turns today in drilling the squad. Wheeler marched us down the cookhouse steps. I lost count performing Right Marker. - was shouted at.

20th Jan

Assault course today. The water jump was iced over. Bartlett slipped on his rear so he's back in MRS.

Was sent to the NAAFI by some 7 Div lance jack for a 'long weight. (Wait?).

23rd Jan

The pipes are frozen in the spiders and some of the lucky bastards were sent home. Jeepland pipes were not affected. Bugger.

1st Feb

Started training for the Inter-Squad Drill Competition. I don't reckon on our chances. We have Wheeler in our squad who doesn't know his bum from his anklets.

2nd Feb

Gym 1400. The PTIs organised a game of murder

ball - it couldn't be more aptly named. The general idea is to arrange extra work for the M.O.

4th Feb

Church parade. Note to self: Don't stand next to McGuiness he's still sweating on Best A/T.

7th Feb

Watched 9 Div doing rifle drill. Looked cool. Wish we had guns.

Church was boring. We sang Onward Christian Soldiers - surprise surprise.

The Padre gave a sermon on the subject 'Love thy neighbour'. He should be more neighbourly and not hold so many f*****g Church services. Also, he's never encountered one of Geordie Robson's farts.

9th Feb

Major Dundee was tonight's film at the cinema. Got caught sneaking out before the National Anthem. Made to sweep up the fag butts and put away the chairs.

Wrote home to say I was broke.

12th Feb

Mum sent me a 7/6 Postal Order. Went to the NAAFI and pigged out on Nelson squares and a packet of Park Drive. She asked if I'd grown much since I arrived. I'm not sure what she expected - I've only been here 5 weeks - it just feels like 5 years. She said that my uncle Ron shot up when he joined the army. Anyway, he's not my real uncle.

To be continued.....

Proverbs You May Have Come Across....

It takes one woman nine months to have a baby. It cannot be done in one month by impregnating nine women (although it is more fun trying).

The same work under the same conditions will be estimated differently by ten different estimators or by one estimator at ten different times.

Any project can be estimated accurately (once it's completed).

The most valuable and least used PHRASE in a project manager's vocabulary is "I don't know".

Nothing is impossible for the person who doesn't have to do it.

You can con a sucker into committing to an impossible deadline, but you cannot con him into meeting it.

At the heart of every large project is a small project trying to get out.

Too few people on a project can't solve the problems - too many create more problems than they solve.

A problem shared is a buck passed.

A change freeze is like the abominable snowman: it is a myth and would anyway melt when heat is applied.

A user will tell you anything you ask about, but nothing more.

Of several possible interpretations of a communication, the least convenient is the correct one.

What you don't know hurts you.

The conditions attached to a promise are forgotten, only the promise is remembered.

There's never enough time to do it right first time but there's always enough time to go back and do it again.

The bitterness of poor quality lasts long after the sweetness of making a date is forgotten.

I know that you believe that you understand what you think I said but I am not sure you realise that what you heard is not what I meant.

Estimators do it in groups - bottom up and top down.

Good estimators aren't modest: if it's huge they say so.

A verbal contract isn't worth the paper it's written on.

What is not on paper has not been said.

If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there.

If you don't attack the risks, the risks will attack you.

A little risk management saves a lot of fan cleaning.

The sooner you get behind schedule; the more time you have to make it up.

A badly planned project will take three times longer than expected - a well-planned project only twice as long as expected.

If you can keep your head while all about you are losing theirs, you haven't understood the plan.

When all's said and done a lot more is said than done.

If at first you don't succeed, remove all evidence you ever tried.

Feather and down are padding - changes and contingencies will be real events.

If it can go wrong it will - Murphy's law.

It will go wrong in the worst possible way - Sod's law.

Work expands to fill the time available for its completion - Parkinson's law.

Murphy, Sod and Parkinson are alive and well - and working on your project.

A project is one small step for the project sponsor, one giant leap for the project manager.

Good project management is not so much knowing what to do and when, as knowing what excuses to give and when.

'Abschied von den Briten'

Peter Gripton, 56B

It is always rather exciting when one receives a 'mystery package' through the post. Such was the occasion around the middle of 2012, when I carefully opened an envelope posted from Germany. Inside was a copy of a special supplement to the '*Cellesche Zeitung*', the 'local newspaper' from the town of Celle, in north-west Germany.

This had been issued to mark the final leaving of the town by British Forces, hence the title above, which had been stationed within the town and surrounding district since the end of the Second World War.

The newspaper had been sent to me by Ken Dawe, an old mate of mine from our 56B 'A' Company days together at Arborfield. Ken had settled in Celle at the end of his Army service and thought that the news would be of interest to me.

I had arrived in Celle, to serve with the REME Workshop of 94 Locating Regiment Royal Artillery, around the end of March 1961, along with good pals Dave Howlett and Rodney Smith, as newly qualified Radar Technicians. (I fully documented my arrival and subsequent service in Celle back in *OBAN36*, quite a few years ago now!)

The Workshop was a veritable 'second home' to so

many ex-boys from Arborfield, it was almost like we'd never left the old place. Amongst that happy band were George Vince (57A) and Alastair McHardy (53B), both of whom I have been in contact with over the last few years, tucking into our fish'n'chip lunches at Mac's apartment overlooking the seaside down at Bognor Regis.



Looking back at those distant times, 1961 was only fifteen or sixteen years after the war, but to be honest I never gave a thought to any 'history' that Celle might have had concerning those dark days.

Life revolved around the ability to visit the town and locate the various hostelrys in search of the finest German beer – or should I say *bier*? And if we weren't 'out on the town', there was always the Bombardier's Mess within the confines of the barracks!

And so, the kindness of Ken Dawe, having sent me the afore-mentioned newspaper, finally gave me an insight into the background of how British troops had made their home in Celle, all the way from 1945 to 2012, a total of some sixty-seven years, dur-

ing which time, to quote the Mayor of Celle, '*former occupiers became friends*'.

For Celle, the Second World War ended on April 12th 1945, when British troops marched into a mostly intact town.

The old order was swept away without any major military engagement.

The half-timbered town suffered very little damage, due to the lack of resistance and because Celle had been designated by the liberators as the seat of a future military government.

The initial 'de-nazification' was placed in the hands of the British forces, but by the end of 1946, this process was passed on to the German people themselves. German military barracks were now occupied by the British troops and renamed with British titles, such as Taunton, Trenchard and Goodwood. The unit I arrived at in 1961, 94 Locating Regt, was based in the '*Heidekaserne*' (Heath Barracks), which had become Taunton Barracks. 'Nine Four' had moved there in 1956 and *remained there until 1993. The main building was part of one of the largest military compounds of the former German Reich – 181 metres long, four and a half storeys high, accommodating some 1,200 personnel in 300 rooms. During the early 1990s, a conversion project was put into place, with the building transformed into the New Town Hall by 1999.*

Memorabilia of the time spent in Celle by British troops will soon only be found in a museum – the *Celle Garrison Museum* on the *Shutzenplatz* to be exact. The collection of British uniforms promises to be quite noteworthy, while Museum documents trace the unique connection between British troops and the town

– they came in war and left in peace.

As a final word, some of you may remember the ‘pop song’ that came out a few years ago:

*Danke schon, bitte schon,
wiedersehen;
Noch ein bier, kommen Sie
hier;*

*Grosse und kleine, und nicht
verstehen;
I wish I could sprechen sie
Deutsch!*

Ah yes, those were the days!

Pete Gripton

One from TC:

Cheer Up

I suppose there are times when we all feel quite low,
And for ordinary blokes who have nowhere to go
To unload all their troublesome worries and fears,
Unable to find a considerate ear,
Life must seem at times to be too much to bear,
Lacking someone who is able to share
And sympathise, help, and listen a while,
Until all cares are banished, and able to smile.

But thankfully, that is the fate we evade,
For while we were busily learning a trade,
We also were weaving a bond, never broken,
Which tied us for life with a vow, quite unspoken,
That we would remain truly comrades of worth
To each other, even to the four corners of Earth,
So, like it or not, ‘cos you’re luckily numbered
Among Arborfield ex-boy’s, you really are lumbered!

A request from the Chairman:

Gentlemen,

At the last AGM I mentioned that we were looking at the Constitution & Rules with a view to updating the document.

I know this could have been a contentious issue but after a lot of effort by your elected AOBA Committee members, many e-mails back and forth between myself and the committee and my experience with the REME Charity, I believe we have come up with an excellent replacement document.

Rather than surprise you all at the next AGM, I encourage you to download a copy from the AOBA website and familiarise yourself with the content.

This way, once we get to the next AGM we will not have to spend a large amount of time reading through the document and be able to address issues and concerns you may have already identified.

If you have any difficulties downloading the document, e-mail Mark Jobes and he will send you a .pdf version for your review. Any of the committee members can help so don’t be afraid to ask.

Mike Tizard 76B2

The Apprentice Cup

From Mike Tizard via e-mail.

I picked up the cup today. • Very nice too. • Can you please put this photo in the next OBAN?

For those that are not aware; I've purchased a trophy for Bo-hunt Wokingham school which sits directly over the old engineering wing on the site of the old Army Apprentice College. The trophy will be presented by one of the committee at the end of a school year to a pupil who has excelled at a Science, Technology, Engineering or Maths (STEM) subject. I've called it 'The Apprentice Cup' • The inscription reads:

The Apprentice Cup

Presented by the

Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

On behalf of

The Arborfield Old Boys Association



I convinced the board of trustees of The REME Charity that perhaps they should purchase it in order to maintain the links back to Arborfield – clearly my argument was compelling as they agreed to fund it!!

AOBA Armistice Weekend - 12th & 13th November 2016

I will start off on the happy note that we had 27 volunteers to attend the Armistice parade for Nov 2016. The response from potential attendees was excellent, this emanated from the AGM in July. Let's hope this continues for future years.

There has been a change to the security arrangements brought in by the Met Police which makes it impossible for tickets allocated to 'A' person who, for one reason or another has to call off attending, can't be transferred to a second person. The tickets are now allocated by name and ID has to be provided before entry to Horse Guards is permitted. Obviously the ID must correspond with the name on the parade ticket. Previous years was much simpler, the secretary (me) requested a number of tickets which were allocated to parade attendees. If at the last minute they were unable to attend that ticket could be given to another person. No name on the ticket made it simple!

A detailed list of all attendees has to be submitted to the British Legion by the end of July and the ticket allocation follows a month later. So this year I will be requesting 35 tickets for AOBA. Hopefully the allocation will be approved and people who were not allocated a place last year will not be disappointed this year. The good news for those who attended last year, I have retained your details provided, so I will only require any changes which have

taken place over the last 12 months.

Let me extend a very warm welcome and a great big thank you to all the new boys on the bloc so to speak, who joined the old and bold for the week end, the Saturday evening dinner or the parade only. We certainly hope that you did enjoy the week end and look forward to seeing you again this year. It would be tremendous to see you all as regular attendees at the week end. A sincere thank you to Mike Tizard our chairman, for commanding the detachment



on parade.

The week end was again a great success with a final total of 37 at the dinner and a record parade attendance of 23. There was to be 25 but two members had to call off because of a sick relative and personal illness. Our turn out for the week end, both events is very pleasing. Hopefully this will continue. Anyone who would like to join the happy throng please do. ALL MEMBERS VERY WELCOME.

Again, Roy Hatch ex parachute training officer of 144 PFA again met the demands of members for Royal Albert Hall tickets, all requests for tickets fully met. Again for the Saturday afternoon performance, the final dress rehearsal for the

Saturday evening performance the actual service of remembrance. Roy once again on behalf of all the members a big thank you. The event certainly starts the week end off with a bang, followed by an excellent dinner that evening.

The Saturday evening dinner, held in the Trafalgar suite, is always a very pleasant event, very relaxing, excellent service and a very good menu. The numbers attending included 7 members and guests of 144 PFA (V) RAMC, most of them were young soldiers when I served as the regular training officer 1986- 88. To be able say "An excellent evening was had by all attending" Good food, excellent company and good dram into the bargain to finish the evening off.

The excellent service provided by the London Black Cab companies which is free to all veterans attending Armistice Parade is a great boost to all veterans but especially those who may not be sound of limb. What an excellent tribute to veterans by the cabbies which I am assured will continue for future years. Another wonderful contribution is that of the British Legion. The marvellous organisation required to process 10,000 - 10,500 veterans, war widows and other representative organisations into a well organised pre parade muster on Horse guards. The planning is obviously a major logistic event in the BLs planning calendar and it is done so well. Never a hic up (that we are aware of!)

AOBA Armistice Weekend - 12th & 13th November 2016 (cont).

Formed up to the rear of Column B, which meant we were the second column to march past the cenotaph. This great honour never becomes boring or mundane! Paying respect to those who fought in the first & second world wars ----- many paying the ultimate sacrifice. This will include the Grandfathers, Fathers, Uncles, and Aunts of our members on parade. And of course our Arborfield colleagues who have lost their lives in the many conflicts over the years since WW2 and the Korean War. To be on parade amongst other ex Arborfield Apprentices is such a proud and poignant moment. When you throw those eyes to the left as you approach the Cenotaph, saluting those who have given the ultimate sacrifice and to those friends and mates who have past from this life. Such a proud moment, where everyone grows and inch or two, shoulders go back as never before and buttons strain on the suit jacket as the chest comes out. Always

experienced by those on parade with the AOBA and without a doubt by all on parade irrespective when and in what arm they served!



Standing on Horse Guards observing and considering the age range of the attendees can be very sobering. When you see organisations like the Burma Star, Trucial Oman Scouts, Arctic Convoy veterans, Korean Vets Ass, men and women from the Commonwealth countries, the vastness of the involvement in conflicts really hits home! And, to witness the age range of the war widows on parade makes one speechless. Young women with their children who are so proud to be wearing dad's medals is heart

wrenching. But hell they are so proud to be paying tribute in their own way. God bless them all.

The public still continue to amaze those marching. It's a continual round of applause from the minute the parade commences until the last detachment has passed the second saluting base opposite the Guards memorial just before we turn back on to Horse guards. Certainly no cold hands about that day.

The salute at the Guards memorial this year was taken by Prince Andrew.

Thank you to all those who attended the week end in support of the AOBA detachment; I hope that you will all continue to do so for many years to come. Any member who would wish to join is for the Armistice week end, or, just the Sunday parade, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me. Contact details are below:

Tel: 01324 623740

Mobile: 0776 112 1673

email:

jim.gardner14@outlook.com

One from TC:

Soldier First

Soldier first before all else, that is the REME way,
And there's a price – a tragic price – that some are called to pay.
It's not enough to use those skills as artisans to work
In maintenance and technicalities, and hope to shirk
The overriding reason why our soldiers pledge their all,
To fight, defending country and obeying duty's call.

And where the British Army serves, at home, or distantly,
Then REME soldiers will be there, and by necessity
Will fight as equals, help, assist to bear their comrade's load,
Share any deprivation or discomfort that affords.
And should they fall and ultimately be called on to pay
The highest price, then as always, that is the REME way.

Ian Tilson sent these photos in for publication.



62A Tels



62B on Parade in 8 Div



John Embleton



Phil Rowe

Letter to the Editor:

Dear Sir.
Is this any use for OBAN? ♡ The next time you visit the Old Boys Memorial at the national Arboretum, cast your eyes to the right and you will see a red oval plaque by a tree. The tree is named in memory of A/T. R.S.M. C.J. Jeffery. 59B. B.Coy. Arborfield. Army. Apprentice. School. One of Arborfields Best.

John, as he was known was an excellent leader, tradesman and friend. So since there is no more room on the Memorial for further names, if you want to remember a chum or a relative, contact the Arboretum about naming a tree, especially in the glade round our memorial.
John(Pud) Crowther 60c.

C'mon guys..... More letters please. Ed.

Remembrance Day at Bohunt - Wokingham

On Friday 11th November Lt Col M W Le Var and Aborfield apprentice Mr David Schofield and his wife Rosalind were invited to share Remembrance Day at Bohunt Wokingham. The aim of the day was to show the special links Bohunt Wokingham has with Remembrance Day with its military history. The day started with a Remembrance assembly that all students attended. Both Larry and David spoke to whole school about the site and the importance of Remembrance day to them.



The tour of the school by Ayden McCormack

First we met in the theatre and greeted everyone as we would then we took them on a tour around the school. First thing we did was to see all the classrooms upstairs the first room we went into was the English room and Larry said "look they all have them miniature computers," we explained how we used iPads at school. The next room we went to was one of the Maths rooms inside the teacher was teaching how to collect like terms. Then next on the tour of the school was the languages room (Mandarin/French) at the

time of the tour it was French they were using their iPads for a Nearpod lesson (live lesson). Then as we figured out that we missed out the humanities room (history, geography and PSRE) at that time there was geography with the art teacher learning how to plot 4 grid references.

We then made our way down stairs to the STEM rooms (science, technology, engineering and maths.) When we explained what STEM meant and they both said "well that definitely is our thing." As we went in there was not a class in there and the teacher was in there working on his computer. We showed him what project we were working on which was moisture sensors there told use that in the camp to pass they had to get a clay ball and make it into a perfect circle it took about 6 months and if it was not to the right standards that the chief expected, then he would make you do it all over again. Next on the list of classrooms to visit was the science lab at that time there were doing a practical testing Newton's laws.



After the science room we then walked outside and went to the sports hall. As we were going to the hall we stopped to look at the new school, we then carried on walking to the hall. We said we would go into the main hall then round the back. We went into the main hall and we said that we have 2 basketball courts, 8 badminton courts, 1 netball, 2 football and 20 climbing walls with ropes. We then walked round the hall after we did that we got out of the main hall and into the dance studio where there wasn't much to see in there so then we moved on to the MPR (multipurpose room) we told them that these were the old squash courts. As we were walking back from the sports hall Larry found a special tree that they planted when there were on the site training. When we got back to school we all had some tea and biscuits we then gave them a Q and A.

The Interview by Luke Payne

My favourite part of the story's David told us was the story about the engine that kept breaking down. So we asked him what was the most difficult machine he had to repair and he told us about the tank that kept on breaking down. It was called a Chieftain. So it had a bad engine and the engine was positioned horizontally from the piston engine. It had 2 crank shafts one at the bottom and one at the top interconnected with the pistons.

Bohunt - Wokingham (Cont.)

So if think about it, that if they fired together the whole thing would explode. Because it was so badly engineered it didn't last much time at all. So David was a Commander of a forward repair group so if a tank broke down he would have to go to it wherever it was in battle and fix it. This one especially would take over 24 hours to fix and once you had fixed it the tank itself would only drive for another 2 miles.

During this you wouldn't be able to get any sleep, no wash, nothing!

Larry also told us when he went down to check on them he saw a commander injured with blood everywhere and bandages. He was so tired that he'd fallen asleep standing up; however, he had finished the job anyway. The commanders of these jobs must have had mountains of responsibility directing a group of tired engineers

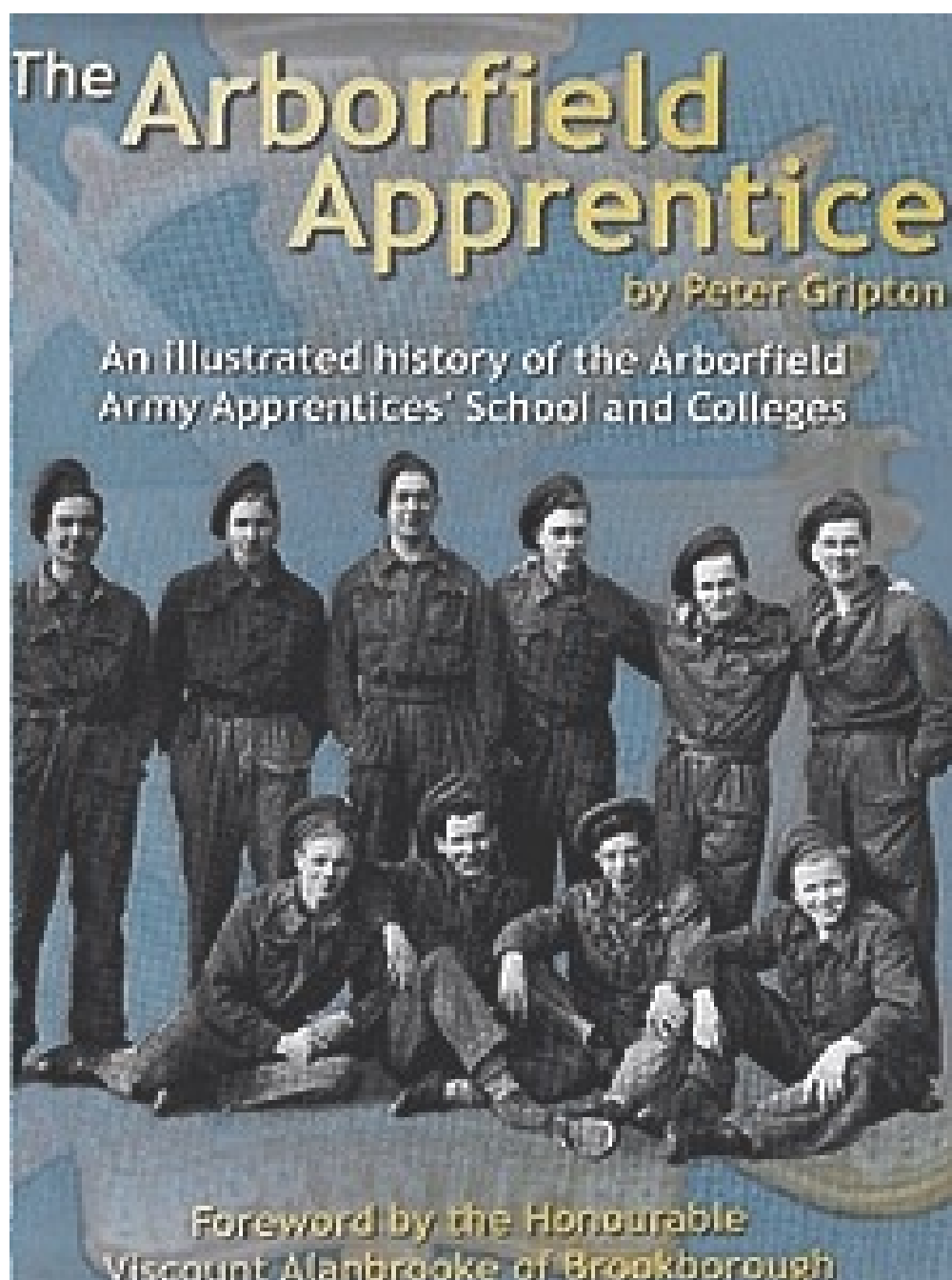
whilst they are exhausted themselves without being able to shave or anything. David said he'd gone 3 nights and 2 days without any sleep! That must have been atrocious!

We really enjoyed spending time with David and Larry, and hearing about their time at Arborfield. It was great to learn more about the history of our new school and its links to the military. We hope to share more days with REME



Editors note:

The grammar and spelling in the above article is as it was presented. I felt that if I changed anything I may change the intent or meaning so, I have left it as it was presented, warts and all.



Please note that the views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of either the Editor or of the Arborfield Old Boys Association and therefore, no responsibility for these will be accepted. All contributions and articles for inclusion in OBAN are most warmly welcomed although text in Microsoft Word format and photo/images in TIFF or high JPEG formats are preferred. Photographs or diagrams must be high resolution if they are to look acceptable - aim for something at least 100kb in size.

Send articles and photographs separately, please do not embed photographs within the text.

Membership of the Arborfield Old Boys Association is open to all those who served as apprentice or staff member, at one of the Army Apprentices' Schools or Colleges at Arborfield between 1939 and 2004. There is an annual subscription of £15.00. Application forms are available by post from the Honorary Secretary, and on the website www.arborfieldoldboys.co.uk

Front Cover: The Gates

Rear Cover: Do Not Demolish! The demise of the Old School

Caption Competition



Quite a few responses. My favourite was:

"Keep an eye on the clock. The RSM said that all apprentices have to be back at camp by 1800hrs. For VM's, that's when the big hand is on the 12 and the little hand is on the 6"

Well done, Rev Bev. (Ex VM).

I will see about getting a prize to you shortly.

Andy

Here is the competition for this issue.
E-mail, SMS or snail mail an answer to me. My details are on the AOBA website.



Your Caption:

75C Reunion - Phil Bex 75C

Where did the idea come from?

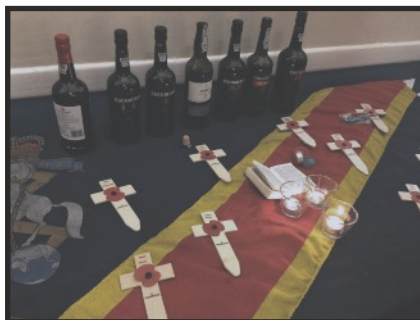
A chance meeting on Facebook by myself and Ray Thaw some 2 years previous lead to conversations of days of yore, what we've done, what we're doing, I served with so and so, which in turn lead to questions have you seen him, do you know where they are now, all the normal run of the mill questions that get asked when you haven't seen anyone for a period of time.

We then had the idea of trying to track down as many of the guys as we could remember with the notion of having a get together in Preston on the weekend of 15th March 2014. So a Facebook page was created and then the task of trawling social media such as Forces Reunited, Linkedin, Facebook, AOBA, etc... anywhere where someone might have signed up to, once we had made contact we pointed them towards our Facebook page.

Trying to find so many people obviously leads you to find the people who are no longer with us, which for anyone to discover was very sad. So we set up a table of REMEmbrance at every meet so we were able to toast absent friends.

24 guys managed to make it to Preston from all over the place, Denmark and ought

that part of my life had ended but it just goes to prove when you join a club such as ours, you never know what's round the corner.



Guernsey to name a couple. Very little sleep was had that night as tales of bravado and near misses could be heard throughout the night, with the license to expand the tale as more bottles of port became empty.

During one of the more sober moments we all decided that it would be a great idea if we celebrated our 40th Anniversary of walking through Arborfield's gates, so the wheels had been set in motion and we set it for the nearest date we could to our first day Tuesday 9th September 1975, we managed to make it for Saturday 5th September 2015.



We held mini meets up and down the land in places such as Scarborough, Edinburgh and Reading.

The Reading meet was very poignant as it enabled us to have a guided tour around the old college (ably conducted by our very own chairman) to see the state it was in before the bulldozers came in to flatten it all.

Numbers were swelling from meet to meet as everyone got down to the task of trying to find as many of the guys they could. This was helped by one of the guys still having our jeep land passing out parade programme with the list of squads on it, 10 squads 282 names, how many will we find?

Along the way we came across guys that were in 75A and 75B so we opened up the reunion to all 75er's. There were even some old squad Sergeants' found and a certain B Coy CSM, and invites were handed out to these as well.

Where are we going to have this reunion, there could only be one place and it had to be Arborfield. As numbers grew weekly we needed to find accommodation and a venue to host us.

The Best Western at Sindlesham Mill agreed to put us up and gave us the pub attached to them for a Friday night BBQ.

We also booked the Legion in Arborfield to host the reunion, (how many of us had sneaked in to here for an under age pint?)

They really did us proud by letting us take them over for the night and gave us a fantastic buffet. The only thing they wouldn't do for us, was to go back to 1975 prices behind the bar! Ah well, you can't win them all!!!

Of the 282 names on that passing out programme, 149 had been found up to then and 94 attend with 37

wives. They came from all over the globe such as Germany, Denmark, USA, Canada, Thailand and Dubai.

On that night many friendships were rekindled and others struck up, tales of our days at Arborfield relived and probably embellished.

We are still searching for the guys we haven't found yet and we are growing, but not as quickly as we were and we are being a bit more adventurous with our meets in places such as Guernsey and France.

As we strive to find the ones still missing we hope to exceed the numbers that attended the 40th at our 45th, you can only hope.

I for one would like to thank everyone that has put in time and effort to organise a meet and to the guys who make the effort to attend.

I thought that part of my life had ended but it just goes to prove when you join a club such as ours, you never know what's round the corner.



From TC:

'Cheer Up'

I suppose there are times when we all feel quite low,
And for ordinary blokes who have nowhere to go
To unload all their troublesome worries and fears,
Unable to find a considerate ear,
Life must seem at times to be too much to bear,
Lacking someone who is able to share
And sympathise, help, and listen a while,
Until all cares are banished, and able to smile.

But thankfully, that is the fate we evade,
For while we were busily learning a trade,
We also were weaving a bond, never broken,
Which tied us for life with a vow, quite unspoken,
That we would remain truly comrades of worth
To each other, even to the four corners of Earth,
So, like it or not, 'cos you're luckily numbered
Among Arborfield ex-boy's, you really are lumbered!

Into the ULU – Borneo 1965-66

In 1963 the Indonesian Army that threatened the Northern Borneo areas of Sarawak, Brunei and Sabah numbered 330,00 men including three thousand commandos. Of these six thousand were within twenty miles of the Borneo frontier with Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo).

My first posting after leaving Arborfield, as described in "The Early Days of Digital Computing in the British Army" was to the Trials Wing of the School of Artillery at Larkhill. In 1963 with SSgt Dick Thoukidides I started work on the trials of the Green Archer mortar locating radar. In the spring of 1965 now with two years intensive experience of the system I was posted to the 3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery then up the road at Netheravon. At that time they had no guns or radar, as they were shortly to move to Detmold in BAOR so I spent several more weeks at Larkhill, it was as though I never left.

In May, leaving my wife and new born daughter behind, I drove to Detmold to join the regiment now equipped with 105mm Abbott SP guns and Green Archer radars. My stay in Detmold didn't last long as the Radar Troop was ordered to deploy on an operational tour to Borneo as the Indonesians use of mortar bombardment was creating a major worry for our ground forces on the border.

After a short embarkation leave the Troop assembled at the Royal Artillery's Woolwich Barracks where in short shift we were given medicals and a cocktail of jabs for cholera, yellow fever and typhoid. The same evening we were transported by lorry to the West London Air Terminal to check in for our flight to the Far East. Then by coach to Heathrow where we flew to Singapore's civilian airport, Paya Lebar, in a Bristol Britannia whispering giant airliner.

The flight took just under 24 hours with refuelling stops in Rome and Colombo in Ceylon. After an overnight stop in Nee Soon transit camp we travelled by train from Singapore up the Malaysian peninsula to Malacca. The railway as a single track for most of the journey cut through the jungle with vegetation just a few feet away from the sides of the railway carriages. There was a boarding platform at the ends of each carriage where one could stand to enjoy a little breeze and the many exotic smells. Then it was on by lorry onto the 28th Commonwealth Infantry Brigade Camp at Terendak.

We spent a fortnight at Terendak becoming quickly acclimatized to the Malaysian climate and gaining the benefit of some fairly intensive training in the art of jungle warfare which was quite different to the basic

infantry training learnt in Boys School.

I was surprised how easy it was to be ambushed in the jungle by an enemy hidden just a couple of yards away and virtually invisible to us. I also personally spent a couple of days with the RAF learning the arts and techniques of tasking and marshaling helicopters – skills that were to be put into place in the not too distant future.

Now fully kitted out with jungle greens we travelled back to Singapore, again by train, where we were quickly transported to RAF Changi where we embarked on an Armstrong Argosy aeroplane for a flight over to Borneo. Landing at Kuching airport our first impression was first how hot it was and secondly how good and gracious were those air defence batteries on such a high state of alert. Welcome to a war zone!

Operation Claret

Within half an hour we drove in a small convoy to our base camp at Bau (known as the gateway to Kuching) where we split into three parties. Two of the parties were then flown by helicopters to two forward border posts on the Borneo/Indonesian border at Stass and Serekin.

Each of these had a platoon from the 2nd/10th Gurkha Rifles, a 105mm Pack Howitzer from 4 Regt RA and a Green Archer mortar locating radar.

Back at Bau was the Gurkhas

Into the Ulu (Cont.)

HQ and the Radar Troops command post the support team of a REME Tiffy, myself with our own Green Archer Radar Repair Vehicle and a RAOC stores clerk for spares.

The enemy was regularly bombarding the border and by the very nature of mortar fire could move very quickly from position to position. The Green Archer could locate a mortar position very quickly and quite often before the first bomb reached the ground.

Two scenarios were employed to counter them the first to immediately return fire using the 105mm pack howitzer and secondly to track the movements of the mortars over a period of days and then to send the Gurkhas to ambush and engage the enemy.

Officially the Commonwealth troops were not allowed to cross the border into Indonesian territory but this changed with Operation Claret that was kept quite secret from London.

Claret missions primarily targeted zones in and around Indonesian bases and their supply routes. The Gurkhas and other British units were striking much deeper into enemy territory by the height of the Confrontation in 1965, sometimes up to 20,000 yards.

One sizeable Claret mission of this time was 'Operation Kingdom Come'. In early

August 1965, Colonel 'Nick' Neill, commander of 2nd Battalion of the 2nd KEO Gurkhas, had formulated a plan that he outlined to a small audience at battalion HQ.

Across the border, the Indonesians were using the River Centime to ferry men and supplies to a fairly sizeable base at the village of Barbing Baba and Neill was determined their efforts should be disrupted.

Three 2nd Gurkha companies and one SAS squadron were ordered to infiltrate enemy territory and make a series of river ambushes along a ten-mile front within five to seven miles of enemy territory. The battle of Bau was one of the toughest battles fought by the Gurkhas in the Borneo campaign came in November 1965. The 2nd/10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkhas had become aware of an Indonesian effort to construct a base in the Bau area and, on 21 November, its C Company – backed up by 2nd/10th's Reconnaissance and Assault Pioneer platoons – was sent out to neutralize this enemy presence.

In early 1966 the Indonesians then moved their efforts to cross the border further east in Sarawak towards Tebedu where they had previously attacked the local police station and were there was now a small lightly defended forward base station. To counter this it was decided to reinforce the base with a company of Gurkhas, gunners

with a 5.5" gun and a 105mm pack howitzer with some dozen or more SAS dropped over the border to gather intelligence. With mortar bombardment a continuing problem it was decided that part of the Radar Troop with a third Green Archer also be moved there.

To support this a decision was also made to move myself with the Radar Repair Vehicle, generator and stores trailer there as well, the remainder of the Troop and my Tiffy flying in by helicopter first.

We were ordered to rendezvous with the convoy of Gurkhas at the 15-mile post outside Kuching. On arrival at the RV the convoy commander a young lieutenant looked at our vehicles and asked what speed we could make along the jungle road, on being told 20 mph he said "too slow" and the convoy took off at high speed with him leaving us with a single Ferret to escort us for the journey.

Fortunately we arrived safely where I was greeted by my Tiffy with the news that my promotion to Sgt had just through.

Outside the actual base camp at Tebedu was a small hill some 500 feet high where it was planned to deploy the Green Archer radar and its Silent Generator although it was first necessary to shave off the top to make a platform for the emplacement.

The radar and generator were then lifted into place by a RAF Belvedere helicopter and it was here that I put into use the skills learned earlier of tasking the helicopter lift. It took quite some skill by the helicopter crew, as the emplacement was only just large enough for the equipment.

Just a few days later the Gurkhas fought what was to become the final battle of the Confrontation eventually

destroying the Indonesian units on another nearby hilltop even though pressure from nearby enemy units was increasing fast. At the end of the fighting the Gurkha casualties were three dead and one seriously wounded whilst the Indonesians lost 24 men. Gurkhas Ranjit Rai and Maunsell both received the Military Cross, while Rambahadur Limbu was awarded Britain's highest award for bravery in the face

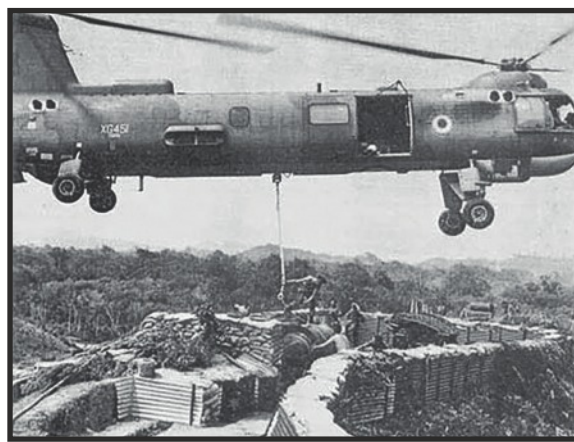
of the enemy, the Victoria Cross (VC).

For the sake of domestic security, it was imperative for the Indonesian army to halt the Confrontation; it was using up valuable resources and manpower for little reward. Suharto and the generals came to terms with the British and Malaysians, signing a formal peace on 11 August 1966.

Ken Anderson 58A



Preparing a Green Archer to be air lifted by a RAF Belvedere helicopter.



Ken Anderson supervising the air lift placement of a Silent Generator onto the Tebedu hilltop.

Another from TC

Elections

The time is coming round again when we will all endure the pain
Of politicians at the door, promising a whole lot more
Of anything that we desire, or anything that we aspire
To, just as long as we propose to pencil in a little cross
On voting slips with their name on, so they know they can carry on
With voting themselves more pay rises - sod the public spending crisis.

They'll decide what candidates will stand, so relatives and mates
Will join them in their cozy club, and what of us? Well, there's the rub,
The poor, long suffering public will do as they're told, once backsides fill
The Commons benches once again, away, divorced from real world pain.
And party? Well political colour stands for nowt, as they all holler
About how they're misunderstood, and how they're really being good.

And that is when they take the Mick, assuming that we're all so thick,
Not knowing how to live our lives, and needing them to help us strive,
Yet those have mainly never worked or known success, and always shirked
When challenged, ever knowing naught, incapable of original thought.
So be prepared and get a grip, resist the urge to give them lip,
For if back in, or got the sack, they'll make sure that THEY'RE alright Jack!

Football - An Abiding Passion

As far back as I can remember, having been born in within the confines of the City of Liverpool, football became an abiding passion. With our father being a sometimes supporter of Liverpool Football Club, it was somehow inevitable that myself and two younger brothers would find ourselves swearing allegiance to Everton and thus become True Blues! After all, Goodison Park, Everton's home ground, was hardly more than a corner-kick away from where we lived, while Liverpool's Anfield ground was far away, across the other side of Stanley Park. Before our childhood trips to the Saturday afternoon pictures, during the football season, we boys would stand at the corner of our street, watching the crowds of supporters making their way down Stuart Road, heading for either Goodison or Anfield, depending on which team was at home that day, Everton or Liverpool. There were no in-betweens; you either supported 'the Blues' or 'the Reds'. By the time that both the pictures and the football matches had finished, we would be back from the Bedford cinema, standing outside May Beckett's house on the corner, hopefully trying to cadge a programme off one of the returning fans, first asking them "What was the score, mister?"

If Everton had managed to win, there would then be the excitement of waiting for the Liverpool Echo football edition

to reach the local shops, around six o'clock. (Those were the days when all soccer matches kicked off at 3 o'clock Saturday afternoon, before game timings all began to be controlled by the vagaries of the TV scheduling.) If I remember correctly, the paper shop to which I used to dash was down Breeze Hill, towards Rice Lane, where the papers would arrive, still warm and the ink still damp from the printing. This would then be read from cover to cover, it was full of football news on a Saturday evening – in fact it was known as the 'Football Echo' that day. Pictures and stories about our heroes would be diligently cut out and pasted into large scrapbooks, full of brown paper pages, to be read over and over again in the months ahead – I wonder what happened to them all? One of the highlights of the football reports in those days was the inevitable cartoon drawn by the famous George Green. Very simple in style and content, but with witty and honest comments, they were always a delight to read.

Football certainly played a large part in the lives of most boys in Liverpool. I can remember that the first game I ever saw at Goodison Park was a pre-season friendly between Everton and an Irish side, Shamrock Rovers, which Everton – 'the Blues' – won by a whopping 7 – 1. Most of the first games I went to see were when 'the reserves' played on alternate

Saturdays, these were cheaper than watching the first team and one of our neighbours, Mr. Ben Fuller, would often kindly give us a couple of spare tickets in the stands – a dream come true! I still remember most of the names of my heroes of those days, such as Ted Sagar, TG 'Tommy' Jones, Peter Farrell, Tommy Eglington, Cyril Lello, Ted Buckle, Dave Hickson, and John Willie Parker, to name just a few. Of course, at that time, there were no real 'foreign' players in the Football League, apart from the Irish, Scots and Welsh lads. Most of the Everton squad seemed quite old to us lads, and usually sported the slicked-down (Brylcreemed?) shiny hairstyles of the day. I guess centre-forward Dave Hickson bucked the trend, with his unruly blonde hair a touch longer than was the standard fashion. He was certainly a 'boyhood hero' to me, and was referred to by the local soccer reporters as 'the stormy petrel'.

Centre-halves in those days were uncompromising in their play, and it was no surprise to see attacking forwards 'gently nudged' off the ball – to such an extent that they sometimes ended up over the concrete wall and into the crowd! So Dave always had his work cut out, trying to emulate his Goodison predecessors like 'Dixie' Dean and Tommy Lawton. What he may have lacked in skill, he certainly made up for in the 'guts' department, able to give out as good as he got.

I once saw him play against big Jack Chisholm (was he then with Plymouth Argyle?) and the two literally kicked each other all over the park! But there was no resentment, just a desire to get on with the game – and a handshake at the end said it all. Another I recall who came from the same mould was Malcolm Barrass, I think he was with Bolton Wanderers. Come to think of it, in those days, the First Division seemed to be mainly made up from Lancashire sides such as Bolton Wanderers, Blackburn Rovers, Blackpool, Burnley, Preston North End and the like. *(Good to see that a few of them made their way back in more recent years! And, being a born and bred 'scouser', I won't actually mention those other two clubs who play their soccer at the other end of the East Lancs Road!)*

As we got older, we boys then started to go to the first-team games, paying ninepence to take up our places in the 'boys' pen'. This was in one corner of the ground, tucked under the stand at the Gwladys Street end, where we were literally penned in by railings, so I guess the view wasn't all that great. But the main thing is that we were there! As the games got towards their end, some fifteen minutes before the final whistle, all the ground gates would be opened to let out those spectators who wished to get away early to catch their trams. But this was also the signal for loads of youngsters, who couldn't afford the entrance fee, to

dash into the ground and get a brief glimpse of their heroes before the end of the match.

The Goodison goal machine!

I can recall one season, probably when I was about thirteen, when Everton scored twenty goals in three games, two sixes and an eight. This was when Everton were pushing for promotion back to the First Division, as it was then – they'd been relegated for some three seasons at the time. (George Green's cartoon showed an 'Everton tank' firing footballs from its barrel – either into an empty net or knocking the goalie over on their way in.) While on that subject, I was actually at the game, the last of the season in 1954, when Everton did get their promotion – and they have managed (but only just!) to retain their senior status ever since. The match was at Oldham, who were skippered then by George Hardwick, an ex-England international. Oldham's goalie (goalkeeper) was George Burnett, who had previously played for Everton, and he seemed to do the Blues a few favours that evening, dropping the ball at Parker's feet on a couple of occasions. Everton won 4 – 0, and went up as runners-up to Leicester City and have managed to 'stay up' in the higher echelon ever since.

How well I remember the thrill of that day. I caught the bus home from school, dropping off at Walton Church, and being picked up by Jack Whitley and a couple of his

mates in a 'Standard Vanguard'. The game had an evening kick-off and the East Lancs Road seemed thronged with traffic, every single Evertonian must have been going there. When we arrived at Boundary Park, the Oldham ground, the low walls surrounding the terraces had been coated with fresh tar, but this still didn't stop hundreds of fans from 'bunking in'! We had tickets, bought legally I suppose, so we actually went through the turnstiles – but we were probably in the minority that evening! One disappointment was buying 'a programme' for the game, only to find out that it was a bootleg copy, run off by some enterprising local and not worth the paper it was printed on – what a rip-off!

Another three Finals

It was to be many years since 1966 before the Blues got their chance of another FA Cup Final at Wembley. That was 1984 in fact, but it was the beginning of a 'purple spell' in Everton's history. By that year, my younger daughter Michelle had become very interested in football and we began to attend quite a number of games, particularly if they took place within easy travelling range from our home in Greatham – the London clubs of course, plus such places as Southampton, Oxford, Swindon and Watford. Everton reached the semi-final and I took Michelle up to Highbury to see the game against Southampton.

Adrian 'Inchy' Heath scored the only goal and it was 'Wembley, Wembley, here we come!' We played Watford in the Final, I remember the Everton fans singing 'Elton John's a homosexual' before the game, as the singer was chairman of Watford at the time. Graeme Sharp and Andy Gray scored the goals that won us the Cup that year. Andy's clincher was a typically old-fashioned centre-forward's goal. He went up with the Watford goalkeeper and virtually headed the ball out of his hands! (The accompanying photograph shows the winning team!)

The next two seasons followed a similar pattern, with both semi-finals taking place at Villa Park, Birmingham, and both leading on to another Final appearance beneath the twin towers. (I think I'm right in saying that Joyce made one of those trips with me. I dropped her off at Birmingham's shopping-centre, 'The Bullring', and she whiled away a few hours while I went to the match!) But Manchester United beat us 1-0 after extra-time in 1985's Final and next year it was Liverpool's turn by a margin of 3-1. These were obviously disappointing results, but it had proved a memorable three years, especially after the lads had gone on to win the European Cup Winners' Cup in 1985. 1989 brought another all-Merseyside Final, but once again the Reds got the better of us with a 3-2 victory.

Close to relegation

Things haven't quite lived up to some high hopes since then, I'm afraid; in fact the Blues have drifted far too close to relegation in recent years. In 1994, they had to win their last game of the season in order not to go down. My brother Geoff and wife Sue were over visiting from Australia at the time and, in fact, we were all down in Devon together for a weekend at Colyton. We were actually in Sidmouth on the Saturday afternoon; I seem to recall it was a bit drizzly. We were walking around the town under brollies, while I had a 'tranny' (transistor radio) up against my ear.

Most depressing, as with about twenty minutes to go, the Blues were 0-2 down, at home against Wimbledon. (Sounds familiar? Check out the 1966 Cup Final!) Game over, season over, my interest in football definitely over! Then, incredibly, they began to claw their way back and it ended up with Graham Stuart mishitting the softest, jammiest goal you could imagine. But they all count and Everton lived to fight another day – and they're still fighting! The natives of Sidmouth must have thought there were a couple of loonies on the loose, as Geoff and I danced through the rain in celebration!

After that earlier series of Cup Finals, things turned quiet again for a few years. But, in 1995, with another 'old Blue', Joe Royle, back at Goodison as manager, the

team returned to Wembley again. They were up against Manchester United and few neutral observers gave them much of a chance, but a Paul Rideout goal gained a surprise victory. Also starring in that side was a Nigerian player, I think he was called Daniel Amakachi, or something similar. On Merseyside he was referred to as 'The Black Cab' – from the Scouse wit version of Daniel 'I'm a taxi!' I had to make do with watching that game on the telly, at home, with Michelle and husband James, who were visiting for the weekend. Sadly, I won't get to see Wembley's twin towers again, as they've now pulled them down!

By the way, readers may notice a Latin connection in a previously told tale referring to my schooldays at the Liverpool Institute. Well, Everton's motto is in Latin too! 'Nil satis nisi optimum' – literally 'not enough, unless the best'. A more contemporary translation comes out as 'Only the best is good enough'. Again, a high aiming point I suppose, but hardly one that has been reached since 1995! Ah well, one can only live in hope and expectation – perhaps next season! As I sit browsing back through this article, I recall that early in 2005, the Blues had miraculously been going great guns that season, and were currently in fourth position in the Premier League – what used to be called the First Division.

On one particular weekend they were drawn to play down at Plymouth in the FA Cup – bringing back memories of exactly thirty years previously when I made the trip down there for another 3rd-round tie.

By the end of that season, the Blues managed to hang on to fourth place and thus qualified to represent the English Premier League in European football. Sadly, that didn't last further than the first qualifying round and probably led to the poor League performance that followed. Heading towards the end of the year, you'd have bet on them being relegated. But a fairly successful run of games,

mid-season, finally saw them end in mid-table. I'm afraid you've got to have millions of pounds nowadays to be a successful club – and the 'Merseyside Millionaires' of earlier days have long since disappeared. But we still live in hope!

Footnote

It was quite an amazing coincidence that two of Everton's most famous heroes both died whilst later attending football matches at Goodison. 'Dixie' Dean was the first, in March 1980, followed by Harry Catterick in March 1985. More recently, another two favourites died at early ages – Brian Labone in April 2006,

aged 66, and Alan Ball in April 2007, he was only 61 years of age.

(The above is based upon a chapter written as part of a 'biography' that I had published a few years ago. At the time I edited this in February 2016, my favourite team had just won three games 'on the trot' by the same score of 3 – 0. So hope springs eternal – and I shall hopefully carry on supporting 'the Blues' for a few years yet! Perhaps the above will inspire some of you readers to write about your own passion?)

Pete Gripton, 56B



Editors Note: Football may not be your passion. I know there are anglers, trumpet players, walkers and many more of you with hobbies that may be interesting for your mates to read about. Don't be shy.

Origin of Sayings

Armed to the teeth

Meaning: Fully prepared for a confrontation.

Origin: Medieval warriors were often so laden with weapons that sometimes they would have to carry one in their teeth.

Bite the Bullet

Meaning: Face up to unpleasant reality.

Origin: Before anaesthetics were invented, injured soldiers would bite on a bullet to help them endure the pain of an operation/amputation.

Balls to the Wall

Meaning: Pushed to the limit.

Origin: It derives from aviation. The 'balls' sat on top of the levers controlling the throttle and fuel mixtures. Pushing them forward toward the front wall of the cockpit made the plane go faster.

Chance Your Arm

Meaning: Take a risk.

Origin: The arm in question refers to a stripe of military rank worn on the upper sleeve. Take a risk and you might be demoted, thereby losing a stripe.

Cold Feet

Meaning: To show reluctance.

Origin: It's a military term. A man who has cold or frozen feet — a common affliction until the late 19th century — can't rush into battle, and so proceeds slowly.

Flash in the pan

Meaning: Something disappointingly short-lived.

Origin: There was an old type of gun that had a 'pan' on which a trail of powder led from the charge to the flint. Sometimes the powder ignited, but the gun didn't go off. Hence it was merely a flash in the pan.

"I Heard It Through the Grapevine"

"I heard it through the grapevine" has its origins in the American Civil War. Many things we say have their origins in the military.

The telegraph was invented in the mid-19th century by Samuel Morse, and by 1861, telegraph wires stretched from coast to coast. The wires were described as grapevines, because of the way they hung from telegraph poles. During the Civil War, news was transmitted via telegraph.

There's some debate about if the news that the soldiers received through the telegraph was spurious or genuine, but one thing is certain — information that was heard via the telegraph was "heard through the grapevine." Today, when news passes through "the grapevine," we often refer to rumours and hearsay.

"Face the Music"

There are times when we just have to own up to our mistakes and "face the music." One origin of this phrase stems from the disgraceful

dismissal of a military officer. The shamed soldier, after he was relieved of his duties, had to make his final march accompanied by the drum cadence of his old unit — a process referred to as "drumming out."

Murphy's Law

the cynic's (or the realist's) view of the world. This phrase began with an Air Force engineer.

"If anything can go wrong, it will." That's an adage that has been in use in the United States since the mid-20th century. This phrase was coined in 1948 at Edwards Air Force Base and named after Capt. Edward A. Murphy, an engineer working on Air Force Project MX981.

The story goes that Murphy's assistant was installing gauges to measure the G-forces a test-dummy would receive on a rocket-sled blasting forward on a 1.9-mile track. When the instruments read zero after the test-run, Murphy berated his assistant saying, "If there's more than one way to do a job and one of those ways will result in disaster, then somebody will do it that way."

Sunday is not a washing day...

..... At least not at Wellington Barracks, London In October 1953, I was Deputy to a Sgt. VM (acting unpaid) located at the Old Cavalry Barracks Hounslow Heath. The only other inhabitants of this large condemned decaying complex were an SAS Detachment who would not talk to us, unless they had a problem with a vehicle and needed help.

For rations, we were attached to 70 Staff Car Company RASC who serviced The SE Regional Command HQ.

However, this arrangement did not last long since the unit management were unwilling to cater with our coming and going at odd hours and our POL needs.

••Our Sgt. was barred from the Sgt Mess for breaching the dress code, he was usually in denims, and we were clearly not welcome. Our role was to provide a field repair and recovery service for a •RASC Tank Transporter Company located in the Midlands and were deployed across the South of the country on a 24/7 basis.

The Units we supported were the Diamond T Tractor towing a Dyson Trailer. •The loads were primarily tanks, mostly Centurions and given the needs of our forces in Korea, these movements were often allocated "Urgent Category" status in terms of routing.

The incident concerning the washing arose out of a unit breakdown on a Saturday in an approach road to Hyde Park Corner.

As a rule Movements set out to avoid city centres and to travel off-peak. We were not advised of movements as a matter of course and the first we would be aware of a problem was when a Driver called the emergency number at Hounslow, which often or not was answered by me.

This call for support was quickly followed by other calls from the Met Police, and a local government highways official, all demanding immediate action. In this instance, there was no one available at Hounslow to send to the scene. They were all out on jobs. No mobile phones in those days. I took the decision to call in a heavy lift civilian contractor, based on the previous experience of the difficulty in securing military support after hours.

In theory, we had approval at a senior level; to call on assets held by the Royal Artillery at Woolwich and 10 Command Workshops Mill Hill but there was always problems on their part when it came to meeting our operational needs. Excuses such as Duty Driver not qualified to drive a Scammell Recovery Vehicle or vehicle off the road etc. in terms of Mill Hill, often the telephone

phone was not answered weekends and if contact was made, there was usually no one available or prepared to authorise the despatch of a suitable vehicle.

The contractor was instructed, as was the norm, to move the unit to the nearest military establishment, which in this instance was Wellington Barracks, who proved to be reluctant hosts and insisted that the unit be parked as far out of sight as possible.

Our two RASC Drivers were both regulars and old hands with a background of active service in France, Germany and Palestine. The practice was for the TT Units to go from job to job and only return to Base every two months or so.

They were given a food and lodging allowance and visited on a weekly basis with mail, and clean denims etc. Road TT duty was very popular and provided many interesting opportunities for those assigned. The less said on this the better.

Arriving at Wellington Barracks, they were parked on the left of the buildings and the square (sacred ground) but just in sight of the road, •Birdcage Walk and part of Buckingham Palace.

Our Drivers given the availability of hot water in the Barracks took this opportunity to do some washing underwear, shirts

and socks. On the road, they slept "rough" in the space behind the DT Cab.

Running a line from the trailer to the nearest drainpipe, they hung their washing out to dry. A task they had carried out before at other locations. On Sunday, Morning the Adjutant arrived to check on the arrangements for the 11am Service at the Guards Chapel and was greeted by the sight of the Drivers washing flapping in the early morning breeze.

Within minutes the Adjutant, Orderly Officer, Orderly Sgt and Guard Commander arrived on the scene. Our Drivers who were having a lay in experienced a rude awaking. As one of them said to me later, we thought that they were inviting us for an early breakfast in the Mess. A typical example of Scouse humour in conditions of adversity.

One of the features of service or association with the Brigade of Guards is that an individual can become subject to a verbal onslaught for a minor, real or perceived offence, often followed by a sweating e.g. close order fast-paced foot drill.

Many Guards Non Commissioned Officers have developed the verbal dressing down into an art form and were literally able to foam at the mouth in their assumed anger. Our Drivers faced with this onslaught and after the initial shock of being rudely awaked by four angry

individuals, had receded, assumed that the whole episode was either a joke or wind up and dissolved into laughter.

This infuriated the Guardsmen and screams of "lock the buggers up" ensued and they were carted off to the Guardroom at the double with no breakfast. Still thinking it was all a bad dream. The washing disappeared from sight, never to be seen again. ●●As our Lead Driver said to me later, "they did not even allow us one free telephone call".

I was in the meantime, receiving calls with demands that We/I do something and with my immediate superior out of contact, I called our Workshops Officer, (a Major due to leave shortly on a posting to BAOR) on his private line, one only to be used as a very last resort. He in turn called our ASM (WO1) who was on leave in Essex and told him to sort it out.

This man was rarely seen in or around the workshops, or in the field; he delegated everything, apart, from Orderly Officer duties, which he could not avoid. He always gave me the impression that he was just passing through our unit, on his way to somewhere more interesting.

I do not know what his military background was or remember his name but he had an impressive row of ribbons, some pre WW2 and I think an MID. He had a strong military presence about him.

He dealt with the Guards ruffled feathers quickly and took control of the situation, obtained the release of our Drivers, diagnosed the problem with the DT as a fuel injection one and by moving some of Guards vehicles around, screened the sight of our transporter from public and military gaze. A VM attended the following Monday and the unit was on its way that afternoon.

We found out later that the load, a sheeted down Centurion Tank, had been shipped back from Korea with battle damage for scientific ●evaluation and the movement was supposed to be carried out discretely ●without ●attracting undue public, press or military attention.

The paperwork for the civilian contractor with the appropriate signatures was processed, thankfully, after the event and we moved on.

There was always work Many DT`s had seen service in WW11 and were barely fit for purpose, spares were in short supply and units were being cannibalized to meet minimum service manning requirements.

All that was on offer as a replacement at that time was the so-called Mighty Antar, a vehicle unwanted by the civil sector which I am not qualified to comment on, I leave that to others.

John Nicholson 50B A Coy

Aircraft Training Wing - Arborfield



I came across this photo in the AOBA Photo Archive.

It was taken in 1976 in the aircraft hanger, Bailleu.

I contacted Byron, (Ron to you), Hooper to see if he could pin down any names. (Ron was on Permanent Staff and is at the end of the second row on the right hand side).

He has identified, Brian Dennis & Chalky White, (Chalky was one of my instructors when I did my trade training), in the back row, Al Maloney, (Greenie who went on to be commissioned and reached Major), Eric Kennet, ex ASM Kirwan, Barbara (?), The ASM in uniform is Terry France.

Anyone put names to the remainder of the faces?



Nigel Wickenden probably won't thank me for sharing this photo. He is with ex ASM Kirwan, (Also pictured above), looking like he is learning how to use an inclinometer on a Chipmunk aileron it looks like.

Nigel can probably fill us in with the detail at this years reunion.

Definitions

It takes one woman nine months to have a baby. It cannot be done in one month by impregnating nine women (although it is more fun trying).

The same work under the same conditions will be estimated differently by ten different estimators or by one estimator at ten different times.

Any project can be estimated accurately (once it's completed).

The most valuable and least used WORD in a project manager's vocabulary is "NO".

The most valuable and least used PHRASE in a project manager's vocabulary is "I don't know".

Nothing is impossible for the person who doesn't have to do it.

You can con a sucker into committing to an impossible deadline, but you cannot con him into meeting it.

At the heart of every large project is a small project trying to get out.

If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything.

If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it probably is a duck.

Too few people on a project can't solve the problems - too many create more problems than they solve.

A problem shared is a buck passed.

A change freeze is like the abominable snowman: it is a myth and would anyway melt when heat is applied.

A user will tell you anything you ask about, but nothing more.

Of several possible interpretations of a communication, the least convenient is the correct one.

What you don't know hurts you.

The conditions attached to a promise are forgotten, only the promise is remembered.

There's never enough time to do it right first time but there's always enough time to go back and do it again.

The bitterness of poor quality lasts long after the sweetness of making a date is forgotten.

I know that you believe that you understand what you think I said but I am not sure you realise that what you heard is not what I meant.

Estimators do it in groups - bottom up and top down.

Good estimators aren't modest: if it's huge they say so.

The sooner you begin coding the later you finish.

A verbal contract isn't worth the paper it's written on.

What is not on paper has not been said.

If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there.

If you fail to plan you are planning to fail.

If you don't attack the risks, the risks will attack you.

A little risk management saves a lot of fan cleaning.

The sooner you get behind schedule, the more time you have to make it up.

Arborfield Old Boys' Association Web Shop

Here we have a few items which we hope are of interest to you. They can be ordered and paid for using Paypal, or credit/debit card. We have added 4% to the prices to cover the cost of this service, plus £1:50 postage and packing per item. The Web Shop is run by our Honorary Treasure Laurie Blakley, and he will have items available at the reunions.

Lapel Badge



Very attractive Lapel Badge in Black and Gold
Approximately 25 x 20 mm. £3.50 + £1:50 P&P

Ties



Original Company Colours
£8.00 + £1.50 P&P



AOBA Coffee Mug
£5.00 + £1.50 P&P



Also available are a small amount of Blazer Badges @ £10.60 + £1:50 P&P,
Mugs with the AOBA badge @ £5.88 + £1:50 P&P
Please contact Laurie for overseas postage costs, and any other enquiries.

Reporting the Deaths of All Arborfield Old Boys

Roger Traves Bereavement Officer Arborfield Old Boys Association (AOBA)

e-mail: rog.ski@talktalk.net

Tel: 01202 471063

Reporting Deaths of all ex Arborfield apprentices (This includes members and non members of the AOBA)

In the event of an ex Arborfield apprentices death it would be most helpful if members could report as much of the following information to the Bereavement Officer or to any AOBA Committee member: The full name of the deceased, his intake number and date of death. Also the full name and address of the deceased next of kin (n-o-k) Normally who ever reports the death is a friend or is known to the family and it is better that they negotiate on our behalf with the n-o-k or family, not myself or committee members to obtain all the necessary information.

Note: After some drumhead services a few members have mentioned that some deaths were not read out and no crosses were planted for them. Majority of the names mentioned were found to be from the previous year and were recorded, a small number were not. The reason why we miss some is because we have not been informed or we have insufficient information to record the death. Members are reminded to report deaths as and when they are aware of them. If you know of an ex Arborfield boy who has passed away and he is not listed in the AOBA Roll of Honour (Can be seen on the AOBA Website) then please let me have their details.

A request for an AOBA Remembrance Scroll

I would like to remind members that I do not automatically send out a Remembrance Scroll when I'm notified of a death. •I only send them when requested by whoever has made contact with the family of the deceased and only then when the n-o-k has confirmed that they would like to receive one. •Remembrance Scrolls can be requested in the memory of the deceased for both AOBA members and non members. The minimum information required, before a scroll is sent, is listed in sub paragraphs a. & b. below:

- a. Full name of the deceased, his intake number and date of death.
- b. The n-o-k or family member's full name, ensuring that we have their first name, and the address to where the scroll should be sent.
- c. If a member of the AOBA his membership number, if available.

When it has been confirmed that the n-o-k of the deceased has requested a Remembrance Scroll, I will only send one if I have all the detail as listed in sub paragraphs a. & b. above. I will not send a scroll until I'm in receipt of all this detail. As you can imagine, if we get any of this detail wrong, it could cause extra grief to the bereaved.

Editors Note:

I recently heard of the passing of an ex-Boy through some of the websites I visit. I was pretty sure that the person wasn't a member of our association.

I offered condolences and tried to gather as much information as I could but failed in the most important aspect in that I didn't inform Roger.

As you can see there is quite some actions that need to take place no matter if they are a member or not. Please learn by my mistake

MAJOR GEORGE ELLIOT HODGE, FIIE



**Born in Richmond
Surrey 24th May 1928**

George's army career began as an apprenticed tradesman during the war years qualifying in telecommunication engineering in 1945. He soon specialised in Radar and served in BAOR and the Middle East with heavy air defence and mortar locating Royal Artillery Units before accepting a commission in 1965.

Training formed a thread running through the whole of George's career, he first started teaching basic electrical principles and radar equipment in the late 1940s, he designed a course on a then new air defence locating and guidance system, FCE 7, and then taught it in the 1950s, twice commanded a department at the School of Electronic Engineering

teaching Radar and control equipment to all ranks, initiated the first courses in the Rapier weapon system and at one time headed a department responsible for writing training objectives and validating training. His experience of training in these areas and his enthusiasm for his work equipped him for his first civilian post as a Training Officer with the National Supervisory Council for Intruder Alarms (NSCIA) in 1981 and he retired three years early to take up the appointment.

He stimulated the production of national qualifications for intruder alarm Engineering with City & Guilds, designed and managed the NSCIA Youth Training Scheme and Skill Competence Tests and was initially involved in forming NVQ's for the industry.

His work involved travelling to visit YTS placements and to manage short training courses and seminars in alarm engineering and related security matters. He also arranged and managed participation in security exhibitions.

At 60 years of age in 1988 he decided to change his work completely and was appointed

Technical Editor of a security magazine, Security Installer, in which capacity he had to learn to type. He devised training features and testing procedures for security products which are still in use today. Eventually appointed Editorial Director he continued as a Technical Consultant to the magazine after his retirement until well into his 70s.

Once retired he became a director of the Security Systems & Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB) which again brought him into contact with Brig Alan Needham (ex Director General of NSCIA).

His personal life was a busy one with an involvement in the local residents association and an increasing commitment to Freemasonry of which he was an active member. He published a news sheet for the Provinces of Berkshire and London as well as his normal Masonic activities, which tended to be secretarial in content.



He occasionally escaped from these duties to sail with his family and friends. During service life he conducted a number of adventurous training cruises, was a competitive dinghy sailor and at one time was Secretary of the REME Yacht Club. As an RYA Coastal Skipper he pottered the Solent in one or other of Corps Yachts. Later he purchased with a friend a 26 ft bilge keeler, Tuesday's Child, which was brought round from the Isle of Man to Portsmouth and then cruised the West Country. She was traded in for an LM 27, a comfortable motor sailor, used to cruise the Channel Islands, the French Coastline and Brittany. His final boat was a motor yacht, Snowflake, kept on the Thames because his wife only enjoyed river cruising.

However he usually went off annually to explore the waters of the East Coast of England and other places easily reached from his Thames mooring.

His highly developed work ethic kept him busy all his life and although he had a few disappointments he was reasonably content with his lot.

Career in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers:

1942 – 1945 – Engineering apprenticeship in Telecommunication Engineering at the Army Technical School, Arborfield.
1945-1965 - Training, employment and management of a wide variety of radar engineering tasks including repair, maintenance, teaching and

the production of technical manuals. Highest rank WO1.

1965 - Commissioned
1965-1969 - Command of Light Air Defence Weapon systems maintenance and repair platoon at the School of Artillery, Manorbier.
1969-1971 - Command of HQ 1st British Corps Light Aid Detachment maintaining the headquarters' vehicles.
1971-1974 - Head of Department at School of Electronic Engineering teaching Radar Systems.
1974-1977 - Responsible for base workshop refurbishments of missile systems, electronic test equipment, pilotless surveillance aircraft and clean room production at 35 Central Workshop, Old Dalby.
1977-1978 - Head of Department at School of Electronic Engineering

John Victor Smithson 46B

Victor's son informed us as follows:

It is my sad duty to inform you of the passing of my father this morning, November 12th 2016, at the Royal Cornwall Hospital after a short illness. Sgt. John Victor Smithson, 14469998, joined the Army Apprentice School in 46B intake, (33 years before me), and produced the video for OBAN, "Farewell to Arborfield" as well as being a staunch supporter of the museum.

Ed's note: This notification was published in Edition 66 but with errors corrected here. Apologies to Tim Smithson and family.

Deaths Notified since the last OBAN

Surname	Christian Name	Div	Date of Passing
Bach	Alan George	59A	14-Jan-17
Brown	John Warburton	44B	05-Sep-16
Colls	Frederick	39B	22-Aug-16
Fairclough	James Michael	72C	10-Dec-16
Gibson	John (Paddy)	55B	26-Mar-17
Gillam	Alan George	45B	08-Dec-16
Hirst	Geoffrey	64C	22-Nov-16
Hodge	George Elliot	42B	30-Dec-16
Margle	Paul	59A	09-Apr-17
McKenzie	Terry	45A	02-Apr-17
Penfold MBE	Frank	42C	09-Dec-16
Ross	Neil	69C	06-Apr-15
Rumgay	Lyndsey	70C	02-May-17
Rumgay	Lindsay	70C	03-May-17
Shoobridge	Ian	68(?)	02-Dec-03
Smith	Archibald (Wally)	49A	02-Jan-17
Smith	Alan George	66A	24-Feb-17
Tiley	Gerald Peter	56A	21-Jul-15
Westerby	Graham	53B	05-Feb-17

