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**Issue
70**

Arborfield Old Boys Association Newsletter



www.arborfieldoldboys.co.uk

ARBORFIELD OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION



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Colonel Claire Phillips ADC

Vice Presidents

All past Commandants

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Laurence (Laurie) Blakley (61B)

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Lt Col Mike Tizard, CEng, FIET, (76B)

OBAN Editor

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

Recruitment Officer

Bruce Leslie (75C)

Secretary

Phil Ellaway (73C)

Webmaster

Mark Jobes (77C)

Registrar

Tim Smithson - (79C)

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.

If you have any points you would like raised at these meetings, please contact the Secretary at least two weeks prior to the meetings.

The meeting dates and contact details for all Committee members can be found on the AOBA website.

AOBA Chairman's Report



I take heart that my plea for volunteers which I pushed out in the last edition was answered with an excellent response. Thank you to all those that stepped up and rang or emailed me, it really is much appreciated, and it shows me that the Association remains strong. Tim Smithson, welcome on board.

As a committee we are gearing up for the next committee meeting in April. We have plenty to discuss and as you will read in the reports I think we are doing exceptionally well on all fronts. Recruiting is buoyant, our accounts are in good order and our data base is undergoing reform. The magazine goes from strength to strength and our unsung hero is working hard behind the scenes doing the secretarial work. My public

thanks to you all. This will be our final meeting prior to the reunion and it will of course be centre stage.

On the subject of data you will see from Ian's report that the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 are creating some work. This is something that we cannot avoid as it is embedded in law. The regulations come into effect on 25 May 18 and I'm afraid we will need your help in getting our data compliance in order. Ian completed a training course a few months ago and he has the unenviable job of taking us through the pain of compliance.

The regulations are explicit in their requirements and we need to hold written authority for everyone's data we hold and explain why we are holding it and what we are using it for. I've asked that we take a progressive approach to compliance and to that end we will need your help to get there. More will follow over the next few months and trust me when I say I can hear your groans of displeasure. I'm groaning with you but we cannot dodge this one.

I visited Arborfield the other week to attend the funeral of the Viscount Allenbrooke who was a member of the permanent staff at the college when it closed in 2003. It was a fitting occasion to mark his passing and it became clear during the eulogy that he gave a great deal of his time in educating the apprentices, not simply in academia but in his chosen sports of fencing and canoeing.

My thoughts turned to the permanent staff who were there during my time, while the military types did lots of shouting the civilian instructors had a different approach. I suppose in their different ways they all played their part in helping us. I think they all gave much more than we ever realised and certainly more than we gave them credit for.

Arborfield seems to be changing by the month as parcels of land are methodically being converted to housing. The fields opposite the old college entrance are now full of houses and a new road now connects Sheerlands Road (the road outside the gates) to the main by-pass.

The Mess next to the Cricket pitch came down in late February and the old REME Museum is no more. I do not view this with sadness; I think its progress.

The old stables block has been completely restored and will, in the future be the centre of the village and provide the place for a fitting plaque marking our time at Arborfield. I will keep you informed in subsequent editions.

You will notice a circular regarding the GDPR requirements included with this OBAN.

We need to make sure that we have your correct details on file and that you agree to the AOBA use of your data. This is due to a change in the law as I am sure you are aware with all the publicity this has been getting recently and the requirements to 'agree' to new 'Terms and Conditions' on the websites you visit. It has an added bonus of tidying up our database too.

Please get the form back to us as soon as you can. Any questions, Ian Clark and I will be happy to answer them at the AGM or through e-mail.

Hopefully I'll see you at the reunion – take care.

Mike Tizard

Your Chairman
Arte et Marte

Committee Members Reports



Secretary's Report

As I write this we have just entered March, with just four months to go till the AGM, doesn't seem that long ago we were last at Hinckley.

The best piece of news is of course, for me, that Tim Smithson has stepped up and taken on the Registrars role. I have been doing both my own role as Secretary and the Registrars role for some. I still work and have other activities I must attend to so have some difficulty in dealing with Members queries as quickly as I would like. I offer an apology to you all. Part of the problem seems to be caused by members contacting me instead of the Webmaster over access issues to the Website for instance or, other

committee members for their responsibilities, so the issue is not resolved as quickly as if it was directed to the right person. Please make sure you address your questions to the correct person so we can deal with your issues as quickly as possible.

Can I also remind you all, that we cannot provide you with your old mates address etc., it is unlawful to do so. Please see the comments from Ian Clark and Andy Dickson in regard to Data Protection in this and previous issues. What we can do, at your request, is contact the other party and ask if they would like us to pass their contact details on to other members. I appreciate that this sounds over complicated but as mentioned above we are bound by the law on this issue.

I am looking forward to the AGM, I am not attending the Dinner as I have a prior arrangement that I cannot get out of. I will be there on the Friday evening and on parade on Saturday.

It is also worth mentioning that Isle of White tours are doing an outstanding job in organising our weekend and the workload on me and the rest of the committee has dropped off significantly. I have yet to hear any complaints about how Shirley and her team manage this for us. We should have done this years ago.

I look forward to seeing those of you attending at the Re-union Parade and AGM.

Phil Ellaway - 73C



Registrar's Report

I took the Queens shilling in early 1979 in the ACIO in the Butts Centre, Reading, after completing the entrance exam to the point where the ACIO Ssgt threw the form back at me and said in an annoying tone, "I guess you can do anything in the Army with that score"

So I turned up at Wokingham Train Station on the 11th September 1979 and was gingerly laden on the back of a Bedford for the short trip to Arborfield. Issued with kit, haircut and Army number, 24494249.

Junior Company spent in H3, (8 Squad) as we were destined for D Company, quite a large intake of around 240 boys. Trade training was as a technician and bound for greater things at SEE.

College life was always full of things to do, bulling boots or the ever popular room inspections, sports afternoons in which I did orienteering, orienteering my way back home on my 250cc motorbike to get my mum to do my dhobi. That was an advantage of living only 45 minutes from home.

Groups of us, who had motorbikes, used to terrorise Ye Olde Leathern Bottel or the other pubs in Wokingham and Reading in our senior divs. I had a "Chinese takeaway" scam every few evenings.....Take the orders from about 4 guys in the room, add 50p for the trouble of it, which would pay for my own meal and cover the petrol, a top-box on the bike being a useful thing, until one fateful day when I ran out of fuel on the way back from Wokingham. Thankfully, an understanding civvy gave me a lift back to camp with my bags of curry stinking his car out.

Sportswise, I was only ever any good at tennis and tug-of-war but drill I loved for some reason. I rose to the dizzy rank of Corporal, only to have it taken away for substituting tennis training for a log-run at PT.

The New Registrar (Cont).

I did get the opportunity to crew a 42' yacht from Kiel in Germany around the Baltic Sea between terms 4 and 5. 3 x A/Ts and a Major from the Education Wing, plus the Skipper, a retired Major in the RA.

In the Summer of 81, we marched over to the new college (PMC) which had about as much character as our company clerk, how very depressing, You can keep your hoovers, give me a "bumper" any day.

In our final term we had the SEE tour and could choose, Tels, ECE, or Radar. No-one wanted radar or Tels really, everyone wanted to play with tanks. I'd regained a stripe by this time.

Pass Out was on the new square, no character to that either, in December 81, Dad's video camera rolling for posterity.

Day 1 at SEE, 12 of us were told we were going to be radar techs, (Rapier) no discussion. A career decision handed down by the new OC Radar Department.

Summer of 82 saw me posted as a shiny Craftsman to sunny Dortmund, in Germany BFPO 20, attached to 53 Battery RA, senior Battery of 22 Air Defence Regiment.

My JMC was at Bielefeld in January 1983, a balmy -22C on the fieldcraft week. The SLR's froze and we couldn't dig trenches as the ground was frozen. Shame, as I really liked digging trenches....

I managed to wangle a period of 3 months in Southern Germany as a Ski Instructor and also represent-

ed the Regiment in the Langlauf half marathon ski team.

We went to the Falklands in 83 and did the Lionheart mass exercise as well as detachments with the Danish Army 53 Bty turned their towed Rapier into Tracked Rapier in 1984, so it was back to SEE for a 2 week course in the summer, much fun was had.

1986, the 1st Class course beckoned at SEE once again. My Dad was active in the AOBA at reunions with his trusty camcorder and in 86 we both attended the reunion as Father and Son.

Gleefully leaving in December 86, January 87 saw me posted to Kirton in Lindsey with 16 Regt RA. To 30 Bty as a full screw 1st Class. After the obligatory EPC course in Ripon, interrupted by acute appendicitis, and yet another trip down memory lane at Arborfield for my SMC in 87, I was lining up my cards for promotion.

I did well on this course as also the JMC, and I think it was this that helped get my pass into the Sgt's Mess in 1988 before most of my colleagues.

One day I was offered an RSM's interview and pulled up for being incorrectly dressed. (I always wondered why it wasn't the ASM) I guess it was because it was the RSM's Mess...

I was given the honour of being the Section Head of 30 Bty Support for about a year (as we were between Tiffy's), and on the entertainments committee in the Mess.

Scam number 2 was to install my wife as the Regimental Hairdresser a couple of days a week, and when on ROS, pick up lots of guys on morning inspection for a haircut.... RSM was ok with this as he got a free haircut whenever he needed it.....and I was in his tug-o-war team.

I wangled a week in Gibraltar in 88 covering the duty Radar guys holiday, I did absolutely nothing except go for runs up the Rock and propping up the Mess bar.

The pressure was on for pot-tiffy training but the wife was becoming less interested in being an Army Wife by late 88 so I graciously declined their offer, and the decision to leave was made.

Apparently anyone who PVR's is a sub human and I was unceremoniously dumped into 2nd line (FRS) to live out my 12 month notice period.

I walked out of the gates at Kirton in July 1989, just as we were converting to the SA80 rifle and 30 Bty were due to go to Northern Ireland. I can still remember the RSM shaking my hand and wishing me well, as I started the next chapter of my life.

I am at present getting my head around the tasks involved in being the Registrar for the AOBA.

I know there is some work to do with Ian Clarke on the database and I must get an understanding of the new Data Protection regulations before too much longer.

See you all in July.

Tim Smithson - 79C



Recruitment Officer's Report

A warm welcome to our new members, if you need any help or guidance regarding how our Association works, please reach out to either myself or one of the other committee members.

Thanks to the work of Ian Clark and the help of the Corps Archive staff in Lyneham, we now have a definitive list of 68ers. I am continuing to work with existing, and new members, to recruit 68ers to the fold, to increase support for their 50th anniversary celebrations at the AOBA reunion weekend in July.

To all 68ers reading this, please let me know if you are in contact with any fellow 68ers **who are not AOBA members**, I will then connect with these ex-apprentices with a view to encouraging them to join our association.

The first few months of my tenure were not that successful with respect to new joiners, however since Dec last year we now have 12 new members, I am hopeful that this trend will continue. I continue to work with new members to the Arborfield Apprentices Facebook group and to date have contacted 124 prospective new members.

Finally, please remember that this is OUR association, so to all of you, please take every opportunity to spread the word to keep our membership numbers up.

I look forward to seeing you at the reunion in July.

Bruce Leslie - 75C



Treasurer's Report

After having had a busy number of days in January inputting all your payment information onto the database and sorting out a few anomalies', it has really gone quiet with only the odd payment in from members using PayPal and a number of payments out to our creditors.

Last years audit has been completed and the findings will be presented at the AGM in July.

Having noticed on our website a piece in the latest news section regarding National Insurance Credits and reading the letter attached, I find myself in the same situation with my wife in her case for eight years.

I have spent some time with Ian Clark and Andy Dickson at the REME Museum over the last few months. It is important that I understand the implications of the new Data Protection laws and regulations in regard to the files we keep on the membership. In my case it is not very complicated but it is worth keeping in touch with the way things are panning out and to keep in line with the rest of the committee in this regard.

On investigating and reading the blurb on the National Insurance website, I found the criteria does not cover those born before 6 April 1953 but covers from 1975-76 on.

I have contacted them by phone to be told that it seems that my wife could be entitled to more pension than she has at the present time. She is now going investigate further. Another item they kept quiet about!

I look forward to seeing you all in July.

Laurie Blakely - 61B



Database Officer's Report

Managing your data

When a member joins the AOBA their personal data is extracted from the membership form and entered into a members table held on our Microsoft Share Point site. Likewise annual member's payments are recorded. Both tables are managed by specified officers/trustees of the AOBA committee.

Access to the share point site is limited to some members of the committee. Just by being on the committee doesn't give you right of access to the data.

Overall responsibility of users and passwords is that of AOBA Secretary. The Database Officer carries out "Day to Day " management and querying.

Until now the management application of the share point data has been through Microsoft Access web app. We were informed several months ago Microsoft was going to retire the Web app by April 2018. After discussion with committee officers it was decided to archive the existing tables (note:- containing 2500 members past and current) into MS Excel and stored on the share point site. Current (Active) members (750 +) data and payment details would be held in new Excel tables held on the share point site.

At the time of writing, the data transition from MS Access to Excel to be completed by midnight 12th March 2018. An early date had been planned but in the transition process data quality issues were encountered. These issues included missing postcode/Zip code, missing town name and missing addresses. We have had several instances where OBA's have been returned due to addressing issues. It is essential we are given the correct address data.

Apprentice Intake list project

To assist our Recruitment Officer we wanted to research an apprentice intake list which to our surprise did not exist within AOBA's data! We approached the REME museum and agreed to create intake lists. We were shown a database held by the museum, source unknown. Research of this database held by the museum showed data quality issues and significant amount of duplicate records and as such could not be used for the project.

With help from Andy Dickson 66B we have deployed some 53 hours of researching apprentice records and data entry. This is an on going project.

Once the data is completed it will have a joint copyright held by AOBA and the REME Museum. A copy held by the museum to assist in their work and copy held by AOBA. The AOBA copy will not be for distribution, held in share point, and used by the committee for research and membership validation.

So far, we have recorded 2,533 records. (See the breakdown below from the years shown). We started with 1968 as it is their 50th this year and it seemed logical to assist those trying to track down members from that year. We will go backwards from 1968 as time permits.

I am happy to answer questions on this project or on the GDPR either through the website or in person at the AGM in July. I look forward to seeing you all there.

Ian Clark - 62A

Year	Records	The data we are collating:
1968	276	First Names
1969	355	Surname
1967	235	Intake and Intake year
1970	364	Apprentice company
1971	559	Location of Apprentice record (Museum Records Reference)
1972	506	Who and when the record was entered.
1973	238	
Total	2,533	

Data Protection (GDPR) - Ian Clark 62A

Background

The Data Protection Act is to be superseded by EU's "General Data Protection Regulation" (referred as GDPR) on the **25th May 2018**. The change is significant and confers more rights and protection to "Data Subjects".

Terminology

"Data Controller" – AOBA Chairman

- The organisation that processes your personal data
 - The Chief Executive who has overall responsibility of data protection of the organisation
- "Data Protection Officer" – DPO – AOBA Database Officer
- To inform and advise the organisation and its members about their obligations to comply with the GDPR and other data protection laws.
 - To monitor compliance with the GDPR and other data protection laws, including managing internal data protection activities, advise on data protection impact assessments; train staff and conduct internal audits.
 - To be the first point of contact for supervisory authorities and for individuals whose data is processed (AOBA members).

"Supervisory authority" – The UK Information Commissioner

"Data Subject" – All members of AOBA

"Personal Data" – All personal data provided to the AOBA by its members

AOBA Member rights

The GDPR provides the following rights to AOBA members

- The right to be informed
- The right of access
- The right to rectification
- The right to erasure (Note:- erasure of ALL data would in effect cancel membership)
- The right to restrict processing
- The right to data portability
- The right to object
- Rights in relation to automated decision making and profiling.

What the AOBA committee will doing to comply with GDPR

It is recognised we are not going to compliance "Overnight" as we need to receive signed consent forms from all members. We consider it reasonable to get all these consent forms in over 12 months through AOBA website, AGM weekend attendance and letter/Email.

Over the coming months we will tell you what data we hold and how it is processed and used. It's this activity we need your consent. In brief processing your membership data, paying annual subscriptions, sharing your address data with our printers to deliver OBAN to you. No third party shares or has access to AOBA data.

We have a "simple operation" so we want compliance to be straight forward and simple, not be a "sledge hammer to crack a nut"

Ian Clark - 62A

Database Officer/Data Protection Officer



Webmaster's Report

After having a very disruptive past few months including a relocation back to the UK and the associated house moves/sale/purchases I am now back up and running – well walking slowly and in lots of pain more like. 'Never again', I have shouted numerous times.

Prior to the move I completed the transition to new web servers which seems to have gone quite smoothly. There again if anyone has noticed any issues I would like to hear from them!

Below is a graphic showing the top 5 articles at this time and the associated visit numbers they have received.

On a more important note.

ANYONE who is a member and would like access to the members only content of the website such as the e-OBAN magazine should contact me, the webmaster, via the form in the website Contacts section. No other committee member can do this function at this time! Please include your full name and membership number as these details are used to create the login.

Members should also be aware that no other details other than name and membership number are stored on the website so requests to me for other members contact details cannot be processed and must be sent to the relevant committee member responsible for data control. At the present time this is Ian Clark.

If members who already have a login but are having problems with their login – lost username – password issues then again, please contact me and I will resolve the issue ASAP.

If any member has sent items to me such as photos and articles for publication on the site and they have not yet appeared then please be patient – I will get them done – I just have not been able to carry my large PC around in a suitcase for the last 3 months – they were full of my wife's clothes!

Mark Jobs - 77C

TOP 5 POPULAR ARTICLES

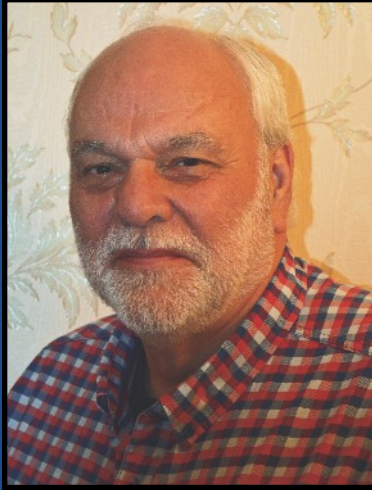
137982 The Arborfield Old Boys Association.

11123 Roll of Honour to 2006

10850 History

10492 Reunions Section

7600 Join Here



OBAN Editor's Report

Gents, another edition of OBAN rolls off the presses..... not exactly without difficulties. I had 33 of the 40 pages completed by the end of February all looking good to be ahead of schedule for an April release, then disaster struck. For some reason my master file got corrupted and I couldn't access it in any way, shape or form. Much gnashing of teeth and I had to start from scratch. At least I had most of the articles and notes available so it wasn't like starting completely from scratch. Still very annoying and another lesson learned.

I am still having trouble getting articles to fill the blank pages. I pester people I see have written items on Facebook and have had some success getting the occasional piece I can use. It is like pulling teeth though. There are the regular stalwarts, (Peter Gibson & Ken Anderson), that keep supplying me with stories that are interesting and useful. I do find reading these stories enjoyable. I also get to dip into Tee Cee's library of Odes and have to find the correct length to fit into some of the gaps I have. Not always easy as formatting poems is particularly difficult when you want to maintain the flow.

We will be embarking on a program to get all our database information corrected for all members. I will probably include a form in this edition of OBAN so that you could inform us of your current details. While I have the form completed I haven't yet worked out how to get it returned to us. (If it is not in here don't worry, we will get it to you eventually and it will be on the website).

I have spent some time with Ian Clark (Database Officer) over the last few months looking at Data Protection and also helping with assembling a database of ex A/T's from the archives at the REME Museum. The idea is to catalogue everyone that went through Arborfield. In February, we spent 3 or 4 days doing this and it was taking each of us about a day to catalogue a full year on each day. Once you get into a rhythm you can crack through the files fairly quickly. We do work under strict supervision and are not allowed to read any of the detailed records just Name, Serial Number, Company and Div. It will be good to get this finished but it depends on our availability and planning with the Museum. We can't just pitch up and get going. Ian will expand on this task a little more in his report.

The Data Protection laws are changing in May this year and we will be bound by rules dictated to us by the law. Ian may appear to be officious when he contacts people who are using AOBA data on the Internet but I can assure you it is not him or the Committee that is dictating this. If anyone uses data or photos that they are not authorised to then they will run foul of these new regulations. Just because you have a photo you have downloaded from the Internet and you appear in it does not mean you have the Copyright to that photo. Indeed, I was chatting with the Archivist at the Museum and she told me that the Ministry of Defence have the copyright to ALL photos that pertain to the World Wars and are enforcing their rights. Be very careful how you use information that on the face of it may seem innocent. (The photos I have used regarding my Grandfather in this issue are mine by the way). Mike also mentions the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) in his report. You will all notice the changes to Terms and Conditions to websites you may belong to as they change to become compliant.

I have included a 3-month calendar inside the back page of this issue. It is a bit sparse with events. If any of you have items you would like included, please drop me an e-mail with the details and I will see what I can do. Just a reminder that the Welsh mini reunion is held on the last Saturday in October. All are welcome. If you want details of the hotel, just drop me a line.

Please make sure you get any issues you want raised at the AGM in July to Phil Ellaway at least two weeks prior to the meeting. I am sure he will do everything he can to accommodate your requests but this two week window allows him and other committee members to prepare properly and give you answers to your questions.

I am looking forward to two weeks on the Thames in June where I will be getting some fishing in, some beer drinking and hopefully enjoying some early summer weather. (I am not too concerned about the weather, the beer and fishing is more important to me. My wife has a different opinion).

I look forward to seeing you all in July.

Andy Dickson - 66B

Diary of a Jeep

July 26th

Another term comes to a close. We are all up before the Coy Commander to discuss progress, or in my case - the lack thereof. Apparently I show little in the way of leadership skills. Were people to follow me, it would purely be out of curiosity. However, if I learn to 'screw the nut' I might just make it. I have yet to locate the 'nut' and the direction of rotation.

Back in J3 we received our room corporal's personal appraisal.

Me: A neckie git.

Wheeler: Are you working your ticket?

Bartlett: Avoid fire picket.

Robson: You require an arse and bowel transplant.

Evans: Avoid all things woollen.

McNulty: Increase the Bromide dosages.

Bromley: Speak bloody English!

McGuinness: Thank you for reducing my reliance on toilet-paper. (I made that last bit up.)

Sept 4th

Letter from home. Mum has got a job in Woolworths. It's nice to know that she's working for a top company. Good organisations like Woolies will be around forever. She sent me a five shilling postal order and a clean vest.

Bromley says his mum works for Cunard. I said mine works quite hard too.

Bartlett is no longer with us. He has transferred to the Medical Corps. We think his extended sojourns in the MRS qualified him for an Honorary Doctorate.

Sept 5th

McGuinness was made full-jack. We pretend not to notice.

Sept 7th

McNulty has arthritis. The M.O. told him he would go blind if he carried on like this. It is quieter at night in the billet now. His wrists are healing.

Sept 9th

Note from Chief Clerk.

The newly opened Bowling Alley in Reading is not an authorised venue or activity for Wednesday Sports afternoons.

16th Sept

Blanket pressing.

Tommo in the end bunk has a new girlfriend. Farmer asked him if she was a virgin.

He said, 'No.... but she bloody soon will be.'

Sex education doesn't feature highly in AAS. Robbo said they should teach it in schools. As if that will ever happen!

16th Sept

TOETs. Tests of Elementary Training. I can now strip and reassemble an LMG blindfolded. I must remember at the height of battle to pack the blindfold.

20th Sept

Gas training. We were locked in a room by the instructor and a tear-gas canister was tossed in. We had to remove our gas-masks and state our number, rank and name. Wheeler forgot his name. Tear gas is a piece of pi\$\$ after one of Robbo's farts.

29th Sept

A few of us went out on the lash. We came back to find McGuinness fast asleep. We quietly wheeled him out through the fire doors on to the square. We left him there until morning. He's either a very sound sleeper or was playing dead.

Such is the life of a REME Apprentice Tradesman. I'm sure I will end up sweeping the streets, or cleaning out the public toilets with a toothbrush, or working as a shoe-shine - skills for which (at least thus far) I'm eminently qualified. However, until then I'm getting three square meals per day, 15 bob a week and have a roof over my head.

Unlike McGuinness at present.

Even more crap from the neckie jeep

Nov 22nd

Back to camp for another term - another rung up on the Jipping ladder.

The CSM came in to tell us President John F Kennedy had been assassinated.

On the BBC Home Service the news-reader said that everybody would remember exactly what they were doing when they heard the awful news. I was bumping the centre-deck. A few weeks later we heard Marilyn Monroe had been found dead. Again I was bumping the f****ng centre-deck. When Mum wrote to say she'd kicked Uncle Ron out for messing around with Auntie Doreen, I was bumping the centre-deck. Maybe if I stopped bumping centre decks, the world would be a safer place. Our CSM disagrees; he likes to see his face in a well-polished centre deck. I don't understand why, he's an ugly bastard.

Nov 24th

Bayonet practice. Digger Diamond filled a couple of sand-bags and hung them from the monkey bars at the Assault Course. He said the idea was to run, jab, twist and withdraw. He said, 'Pretend you're having sex.' I'm not sure what kind of sex Digger Diamond has, but the nearest any of us have got thus far is a fumble in the back row of the Gaumont.

(Author's note: Homosexuality, same-sex marriage, civil partnerships and Gay Pride had yet to be invented. Along with Political Correctness, Multi-Culture-ism, transgender toilets and a few more peculiarities I could mention)

All the talk about sex caused Wheeler's glasses to steam up. He missed the sand-bag, tripped and embedded his bayonet into the six foot wall. Digger Diamond made him do twenty press-ups. We all pi\$\$ed ourselves. We were rewarded with twenty press-ups of our very own. We've stopped

Nov 25th

Got a job as Shag Twining's bat-man. Shag Twining is thought to be something of a lady's man - the clue is in the name. He pays me five bob a week to make his bed, bull his boots and tidy his bed-space. Meanwhile he runs his hair-dressing business in the spider and very kindly pays me on a Wednesday.

I lent Jock Bromley two bob on Wednesday for half-a-crown back on Pay Day (Thursday) which represents an APR in the tens of thousands. It's a lot of Wonga. I toyed with the idea of setting up a Pay-Day-Loan operation to help the guys tide themselves over until they got paid. Everyone thought it was a ludicrous idea. Who, other than the innumerate Jock Bromley, would be daft enough to borrow at such absurd rates of interest?

Nov 26th

Tripped over a medicine ball and bugged up my big toe during gym. I don't know why they call them medicine balls. They aren't particularly medicinal and don't bounce. They're barely round. Anyway I got a B on the medical certificate from the M.O. and am excused boots for three days. Standing on parade in my carpet slippers really winds up the room Cpl (Ted). He never asked to see my sick note; he just took my word for it. I suspect that part of being a good soldier is having honesty and integrity. So, having honesty and integrity creature I am, I wore carpet slippers for a fortnight.

Nov 27th

Got a letter from Mum. She's trying to fix me up with a girl where she works in Woollworths. She says Irene has a lovely personality - that means she's fat. I told mum to ask her for a photo. Mum said Irene didn't have any. She's definitely fat.

Nov 30th

Made a set of Vernier Callipers in Workshop Practice. Mr MacDonald said mine looked more like an adjustable spanner - and not very adjustable at that!

Dec 1st

On the BBC news we heard that England was soon to commence the qualifying stages for the 1966 World Cup. We have no f*****g chance. They say Gordon Banks is a bit special. We are advised to keep an eye out for him.

Dec 3rd

Atkinson and Wagstaffe were arguing about the merits of the methane content of a good fart. I think they both need to get out more. Bromley suggested we ought to see if we could ignite one of Robbo's farts. Bromley doesn't have eyebrows anymore and Robbo has one very sore arse.

Dec 4th

Taught how to use a slide-rule. I'm not entirely sure whenever in my miserable existence I will be obliged to find the Cosine of 18.5 degrees or calculate 76245.73×66.416 ever again. Apparently the slide rule was invented by the Reverend Oughtred in the 17th Century. He sat down one day and carved a piece of wood and fitted it with a slider. He somehow managed to etch upon it various mathematical and trigonometric logarithmic scales which enabled him to make complex calculations. The guy clearly had too much time on his hands and never had a kit inspection or a f*****g centre-deck to bump.

Author's Note.

(RC Priests molesting choir boys had yet to be invented.)

Dec 5th

I went to the Main Gate to telephone Mum. AAS only has only one telephone box for around one thousand personnel. To reach the phone box you have to walk past the Guard room - never a good idea at the best of times as some MP prick is bound to shout at you. Such outings are always treated with a degree of fear and trepidation. Especially if the Doom with the Plume is afoot.

Doom with the Plume: 'Oi you! Stand still! I SAID standstill! What pattern webbing are you wearing?'

'1908 as used in the First World War Corporal.'

'It looks like that was the last time it was f*****g blanco-ed. Report back in fifteen minutes properly turned out.'

'Yes Corporal.'

The Doom is as thick as s**t but claims to have 5 GECs. ???

Clearly repartee and wit weren't on the syllabus.

Dec 8th

Kit inspection. Boots airborne. Centre-deck received Room Cpl's stamp of approval. Quite painful when excused boots.

Dec 10th

Graffiti discovered in the bog whilst enjoying a well-earned break from bumping.

It doesn't help to stand on the seat, the crabs in here can jump six feet.

Nil carborundum illigitimi.

Kilroy wuz here.

No he wuzent.

Wot Me?

Yes you.

Jesus saves.

Moses invests.

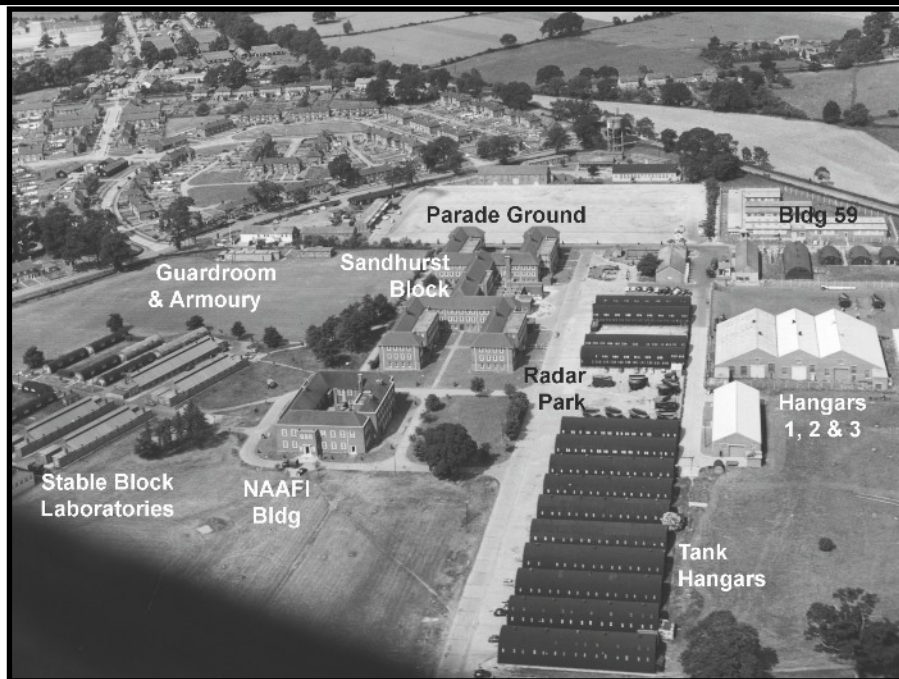
S**t happens - especially on the bog.

Meet me here at 10 pm xxx - signed CPL. McGuinness....(I made that bit up).

Another term comes to an end. Home again to civilisation, my mother's chaotic love life and her lousy cooking. She's disappointed that I still haven't grown much. She still prattles on about how much Uncle Ron had grown when he came back from National Service. All I can say is, it didn't do much for his f*****g eyesight if he bugged off with Auntie Doreen. Irene, the girl my mum tried to fix me up with, as expected, turned out to be a blob. I've passed her on to McNulty - he'll go out with anything as long as it's below eighty and breathing. I think even the breathing may be optional. He said he may pop over and visit me over Christmas - the cat's left home.

Merry Christmas.

Hazy Hazebrouck Days - Ken Anderson 58A



Memories of 5 Trng Btn REME

With five other Radar Mechs I passed out of the Army Apprentices School in December 1960 and after a two week Christmas Break joined 5 Trng Btn REME in Hazebrouck Barracks for our Third Class to Second Class trade training which was to last some three months.

At that time Radar and ECE Mech training was carried out at 5 Trng Btn and Tels Mech training at 3 Trng Btn in Bailleau Barracks, at that time soldiers at 5 Btn wore Red & White shoulder flashes and those at 3 Btn Blue and White. In 1965 all electronic trades came together when the Battalions were disbanded and replaced by the School of Electronic Engineering.

The entrance to Hazebrouck Barracks was off Biggs Lane directly opposite the Married Quarters in Hill Road, the RSMs MQ was on the corner of that road so care needed to be taken when coming back from a night out at the Bramshill Hunt public house.

To the left of the entrance to the camp was the Guard Room and beyond that Regimental HQ, around the corner to the left was a building housing the Regimental HQ. Opposite the Guard Room was the Armoury that had made

national headlines six years earlier in 1955 when the IRA raided it. (A Pathe Newsreel can be seen on the internet at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8g6N3Ok87Fk>).

Proceeding past the Guard Room and QM Stores was a large regimental parade ground, since replaced by the SEE classroom and laboratory block, I only remember one event there with the whole Battalion on parade. It remains in my mind as we were all Standing 'At Ease' when the Parade Commander a young Captain gave the order for the parade to advance, having been well trained in drill and parades at Boys School and realising what was about to happen I shouted at the top of my voice from within the ranks "As You Were". Everything stopped and order was restored, no one ever commented on what was a young Lance Corporal doing!!

Beyond the parade ground a low lying brick building known as Bldg. 59 surrounded by security fencing. It had 24 hour secure access as this was used for classroom training on the then secret Corporal Missile System.

Back at the entrance to the Camp and behind the Armoury on the right was a sports field used as the home for REME Rugby and at the top of the field a relatively newly constructed 'Other Ranks' accommodation known as the Sandhurst Block. This consisted of four two storey wings for other ranks accommodation and a central block for the cookhouse and dining hall. After three years living in the spiders of the army Apprentices School the luxury of living in large spacious centrally heated brick barrack rooms was eye opening.

As was the freedom to come and go as adults wherever and whenever needed. One memory I have of living there was of one my fellow 58Aers called Flash Davies who had acquired an ex police Velocette motor bike and was rebuilding its engine in the barrack room and testing it running there.

At that time I bought my own first motorcycle, a BSA B31 350cc, which I used to travel home to Portsmouth and onto the Isle of Wight at weekends. Unfortunately I had a few incidents on Sunday nights travelling back to camp on greasy roads so decided that a bike was too dangerous for me and that a car would be safer once I could afford one.

To the right of the Sandhurst Block was a similarly constructed building for the NAAFI (later to become the White Horse Club) housing a well-stocked shop and spacious canteen with the upper floor used as a Church and occasionally for Courts Martial. NAAFI breaks were quite different from those at the Army Apprentice School with plenty of time to enjoy hot food from a wide variety of consumables including bacon rolls, egg sandwiches and steak pies as well as freshly brewed tea and coffee.

To the right of the Rugby Field and in front of the NAAFI were a number of old Stable Blocks, the legacy of when Arborfield was a Remount Depot.

(http://www.arborfieldhistory.org.uk/C20/memories_Remount_Depot_Closure.htm).

These now housed the electronic trade training laboratories. I particularly remember one housing all the high power high voltage transmission line demonstrations for the Radar Mechs with lots of high tension sparking and crack-

ling. Another was the machine lab that was full of electric motors, alternators and generators. Later one of them was to become the REME Rugby Social Bar and changing rooms. Further down the road from the stable blocks towards Biggs Lane were a couple of buildings housing the regimental tailors and the barbers shop.

Back to the regimental parade ground, at the back of that towards the Langley Common Road was the Camp Gymnasium. A second similarly sized building was used for teaching the specialised sub system of the 4Mk7 Tactical Control radar, the IFF (Identification Friend or Foe) and the Film Recording and Target Simulators, fairly heavy stuff at the time for a newly graduated 3rd Class tradesman.

Behind the Sandhurst Block and NAAFI building a road ran the whole width of the camp. Alongside this road were two groups of large Nissen type hangars for ECE training and containing at that time Centurion tanks and possibly

other AFVs. I remember these were the last days of National Service and most of the ECE NS guys were ex University people who had their enlistment deferred to continue their education, there didn't seem to be any love lost from them to us newly promoted L/Cpl third class tradesmen.

I remember the hangars having large coke fires for heating, a necessity in January and February 1961. Between the two groups of hangars was the Radar Park with a number of 3Mk7 FC and 4Mk7 TC radars with their Lister and Meadows diesel power generators. Those hazy days in 5 Btn and Hazebrouck was a completely different life after three years at Boys School. Of course getting into the real Army only started after that 2nd Class trade training on posting to a working unit, in my case the School of Artillery at Larkhill where I was to spend a wonderful four and a half years.

Ken Anderson - 58A



58A Radar Mechs at the AAS



The NAAFI



The Radar Park



On Parade



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Please email malcolm@modelsforheroes.co.uk to confirm a place and we will see you there!

www.wargamesreading.co.uk

www.modelsforheroes.co.uk



Ernie Cummings - His Life

It was May 1939 that Portsmouth won the FA Cup by defeating Wolverhampton Wanderers and the town went wild. The streets were crowded with people gathered outside any shop with radios (then called 'wireless sets') which were turned up to full volume.

I was listening outside of Keasts shop on the corner of Magdala Road. I remember the roars when Pompey scored a goal, and they scored four. There couldn't have been more noise made at Wembley itself. Celebrations went on well into the night. The Wolves had started hot favourites to win and their manager (Major Frank Buckley) was reputed to have treated the players with monkey gland tablets to fortify them in mind and body. The comments in Portsmouth after the match can be imagined.

Shortly after the Cup Final in May everyone began to talk about the likelihood of the Country going to war with Germany. Neville Chamberlain, the then Prime Minister had been to Munich, in Germany, in the latter part of 1938 and had come back waving a piece of paper. History shows that he was a fool before he became Prime Minister and he was treated as such by Hitler and Von Ribbentrop (the German Foreign Secretary).

From May 1939 onwards the signs that we were about to go to war began to be clear. The Territorial Army was mobilised and a Militia was started. All men, who were, I think between the ages of 21 and 23 were called up to enlist in the Services. The only exceptions were those who were doing work of national importance, those found unfit after a rigorous examination by a military medical board and certain students who had their call up delayed until the end of their studies. I suspect others with well-connected families managed to dodge the call-up. Many others volunteered for service.

There were insufficient uniforms to equip the militia and instead of wearing khaki they were issued with grey civilian trousers and a navy blue blazer. Very few rifles were available for them so a variety of make believe substitutes were used for training until small arms became available. When rifles were eventually issued to the 'chosen few' they were mostly Short Muzzle Lee Enfield (SMLE) weapons that were last used in the Great War of 1914-18.

In the July and August the prospects of going to war began to loom. The Germans had invaded parts of the Balkans and were on the point of invading Poland. The British Government issued an ultimatum to the Germans to desist and when the Germans carried out their threat, a final three days ultimatum was given for them to withdraw. On the morning of Sunday, 3rd September 1939 I was sitting with a few friends on a grassy bank at the corner of Wymering Lane and Colchester Road listening to a radio.

At 11 o'clock Prime Minister Chamberlain made a speech in which he informed the rest of the world that as no reply had been received to the last ultimatum "We are at war with Germany". This made me a bit apprehensive about having to enlist in October but there was no escaping the fact that this was going to happen and I would have to make the best of it. My parents were not too happy with my impending departure but can't remember many tears being shed. On October 6th 1939 at 09.00 I had to present myself, complete with a battered old suitcase containing such small items of clothing as I had, to the Recruiting Sergeant at the Connaught Drill Hall. There I was formally sworn in as a member of His Majesty's Forces and an attestation paper to enlist in the Royal Army Ordinance Corp as an Apprentice Tradesman. I was given the 'Kings Shilling' thus

binding myself to allegiance to the King. My pay was to start at eleven pence (5d) per day. I signed to serve eight years with the colours (Regular Army) followed by four years in the Army Reserve and was given my Regimental Number of 7601291.

This number was to become trans-fixed in my memory for the rest of my life. At 10.30am the four new boy soldiers who had enlisted with me were taken to Hilsea Barracks in Portsmouth.

The first thing we were subjected to was a medical inspection. We had to stand stark naked in line until the medical officer eventually arrived to poke us about, ask a few meaningless questions about whether we were suffering from any of a number of diseases and then we were told to get dressed. Next stop was the Quartermasters Stores where we were measured up for our uniforms and issued with seemingly endless items of kit from a shaving brush, (we were only 14 years old) to a mass of belts and buckles of webbing equipment. All of this was stuffed into a kitbag which was almost as big as us.

Among the items of kit were two pieces of fibre, one red and one green, held together with a loop of waxed string! We later had to stamp our name and regimental number on the fibre pieces and were ordered to wear them around our neck at all times throughout our service. These were to be our identity disks for use in casualty clearance from the battlefield if killed or wounded. In the case of being killed, the red disk was to be buried with the body and the green one returned to Command Headquarters to help with documentation. For a fourteen year old, new to the service this was a worrying thought to say the least.

For the first couple of weeks the new recruits were shuttled around from the Barrack Square to the Gymnasium, to the dentist and all sorts of strange places. We seemed to spend a huge amount of time learning how to polish our boots and brass buttons badges and buckles. We had to learn to recognise various ranks, who to call corporal, sergeant, sir etc., who to salute and so on.

Hilsea Barracks, up to 1939, was a main barracks of the RAOC It held men tradesmen and workshops as well as boy apprentices. In 1939 however, this was to change.

With the call up of the Territorial Army and the Militia there was no priority for the apprentice school in the barracks and the space taken up by the trades rooms and boy's barrack rooms, (Dormitories), was needed for more important purposes such as training for war. The apprentice school was therefore quickly moved to amalgamate with the newly opened school at Arborfield in Berkshire.

Arborfield was, up to 1939, just an area of countryside between Reading and Wokingham housing a 'Remount Depot' and a few married quarters. It was occupied solely by the army. With the military build-up then going on in Britain it proved to be an ideal isolated spot for housing some of the growing number of soldiers being 'called up'.

Apart from the new apprentice school a huge anti-aircraft artillery training wing had been built together with a fairly secret training school for Radar operators, most of whom were women of the Auxiliary Territorial Service, or ATS Girls as they became known. Radar, at that time was on the top-secret list and its first use was in detecting and giving warning of the enemy air raids soon to begin. All of this was out of bounds to the boys from the

apprentice school and in any case we weren't allowed out of barracks for the first six months of our service. We were deemed to be unfit to be seen as representatives of the Regular Army as opposed to the "conscripts" as the militiamen came to be known.

The conscripts were gradually getting kitted out in a new uniform, which came to be known as 'battle dress'. We regulars were still in our 'SD' or Service Dress, buttons gleaming, white blanded belt round our waist? Boots highly polished, and wearing our stiff, peaked hats, this being in contrast to the berets worn by the conscripts. When we at last were allowed out of barracks we took great pride in our appearance.

Army life for me proved wonderful from day one after the initial shock of having to look after myself and having no mummy or daddy to run to for help. The "Permanent Staff" took over the lives of us recruits almost wholly at the start. These were trained soldiers from a variety of regiments who were to mould us into a well-disciplined group, self-reliant fit, and trained in the manner of a sound mind in a sound body.

The Apprentice School was organised into five companies, from A to E and each company was divided into three platoons from 1 to 3. This was along the same lines as a normal battalion of a regiment. We were housed in 'Spiders', these being blocks of six wooden barrack rooms, three each side of a central corridor.

As well as the barrack rooms each block contained a washroom and shower area and a room for the platoon sergeant. Each company was accommodated in two of these blocks. I was in 'A' Company and billeted in room A3 together with the other Electrical Trades Apprentices.

The Company Sergeant Major was CSM Nick Ozanne of the Hampshire Regiment and our platoon Sergeant was Trev Trevivian of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry (DCLI). I think Nick Ozanne had a greater influence on my future life than any other individual.

He had a quality that encouraged loyalty to himself, the Company and the School. In return, although he was a very strict disciplinarian, he returned that loyalty. Whenever any of his Company was in trouble he would endeavour to sort it out in his own way instead of formal disciplinary charges leading to an appearance in front of the Company Commander, (Captain 'Daddy' Davis, Royal Enniskillen Dragoon Guards). Very often, Nick's punishment would be worse than that likely to be given by the Company Commander but at least there was no record written into a boy's Conduct Sheet. This was an army form that accompanied a soldier throughout his service.

Although he wasn't a particularly good sportsman himself, except as a very good boxer, Nick was intensely proud of the achievements of his Company on the sports fields. As I was in most of the sports teams and thanks to Copper Wells, not a bad little boxer, Nick did me a few favours when I was in trouble, which was once, for being caught smoking somewhere. In this case one of his 'favours' was to invite me to have a couple of rounds personal training with him in the gymnasium ring. That was not a happy experience.

Some days afterwards Nick called me to one side and told me he hoped I would never let him down again and I never did. It also taught me not to let down anyone else who happened to be in charge of me or in my charge in either my regimental or personal life.

Nick was recalled to his Regiment in 1940-41 and I was to see no more of him for over fifty years when I visited his house in Guernsey. As happened at school, many lasting friendships were formed during my apprenticeship. There was a strong 'Esprit de Corps' amongst the whole school and particularly amongst the members of each company. After we left the school as full-blown Class 3 Tradesmen we often met up with each other and many hours were then spent talking over our apprenticeship days.

The apprentices day started with the bugle call "Reveille" at 06.00 am when the Orderly Corporal would come into each barrack room shouting us to 'get out of bed you lazy soldiers' (or words roughly to that effect).

Our bed mattress consisted of three square biscuits of stuffed material, a pillow, two sheets and three blankets. The bed-spring slid in and out.

After getting up we would go to the washroom to clean our teeth. For the first time in my life I had a toothbrush, (which was issued as part of our kit), have a shower and return to the barrack room to get dressed.

We would then make up our bed. This was done by piling the 'biscuits' one on top of the other and folding the sheets and blankets in such a way that they showed alternate layers of blanket and sheets. All of this had to be squared off so that it presented a neat, clean appearance. The service dress hat was placed on top of the pile and our best very highly polished boots were in front of it. The bottom part of the bedspring was slid inwards.

After this was done each boy had different duties to perform. These varied from taking down the blackout shutters from the windows, (there was a war on and no lights could be shown

after sundown), cleaning and polishing the galvanised rubbish bucket, checking that fire buckets of sand or water were topped up and so on. The worst job of all was polishing the barrack room floor. Four boys would be allocated this duty and the floor was polished and dry-scrubbed until it shone like a mirror.

After these chores were completed we would wait for the cook-house bugle call and go off to have breakfast. This consisted of porridge and either scrambled dried egg or beans on toast. As food was rationed during war-time there was never anything left over.

After breakfast we would return to our rooms to get dressed into our overalls and wait for the bugler to sound the parade call upon which we would run to the rear of the barrack square and form up into our platoons in three ranks. Five minutes later the Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) would march onto the front of the square, halt and do a smart left turn, finishing up facing the assembled school, eyes to the front and his pace stick tucked rigidly under his left arm and firmly in his left hand.

He would then scream out at the top of his voice "Right Markers" whereupon one boy from each platoon would march forward and halt on a marked spot so that there were five in line and three in depth spaced out on the square.

When this was done, the RSM, (Ben Cook of the Grenadier Guards), would shout at the top of his very loud voice, "Get on parade". Forward we would march in our ranks of three until we reached our respective marker; would then come to a halt and await the next command, which was "Right Dress". This caused us to extend our right arm so that it touched the shoulder of the boy next to us, turn our head to the right and shuffle

about until each rank of each platoon was in an absolutely straight line. All of this was followed by an inspection by the Company Sergeant Major who would be accompanied by the platoon sergeant

He would march slowly along each rank, first from the front then along the rear, pointing out to the platoon sergeant that this boys boots weren't up to scratch, that boy needed a haircut or various other faults. Next order was sure to be "Take his name, sergeant". The platoon sergeant would make a note of the boys name and number, (in my case it would be Cummins 7601291.

That evening each boy who had been noted would have to report to the platoon sergeant with the fault corrected and to receive such other punishment as the sergeant deemed fit to impose. This could vary from polishing his boots or equipment to scrubbing the barrack block corridor. Woe betide anyone who offended a second time for that was sure to mean an appearance in front of the Company Commander on a charge usually phrased as 'conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline'.

The Company Commanders punishment could "vary between an admonishment equivalent to a good "telling off, seven days confinement to barracks, 'CB' (also known as Jankers), or a remand to appear in front of the Commandant, (Colonel Hillborn at the time). Anyone who was placed on CB had to answer a bugle call to report to the guardroom at 6.30 am, which usually meant getting up before reveille and everything done in a rush between then and breakfast.

Graham Cummings - Intake 39

To be continued....

One from Tee Cee

The 'Arborfield Slide'

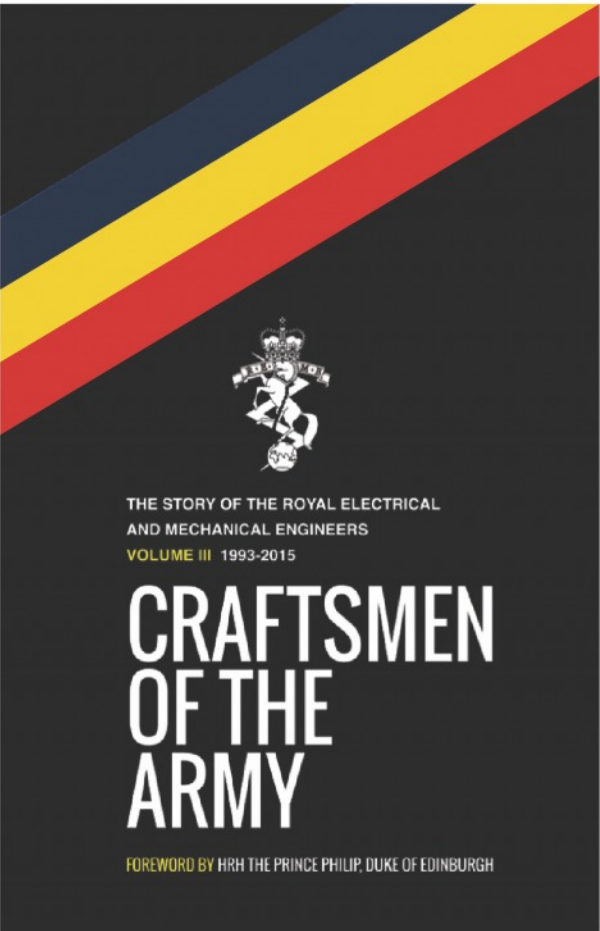
It's not in the drill book, you'll not find it there,
It's broken the heart of drill pigs on the square,
No matter how hard they all shouted and tried
To outlaw it, it lived on - the 'Arborfield Slide'.

Employed in the main when marching to class
Or moving from A to B - mostly en masse,
It was the special way of achieving the 'halt'
With flair and panache, a move to exalt.

On word of command as left foot passed the right,
The right boot stamped down, while the left dragged up tight
Against side of the left, as the right stamped once more,
With slight bend of the knee, all in total rapport.

To say it was frowned on by Permanent Staff
Was a large understatement, it quite drove them daft
With frustration and anger, and still, without doubt
Their efforts to forbid it all came to nowt.

And now, at the Old Boys reunions we see
That the Arborfield Slide 's achieved longevity,
For, when on parade, and though decades have gone,
When the halt is called, the "Slide" still lives on!



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FOREWORD BY HRH THE PRINCE PHILIP, DUKE OF EDINBURGH

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It's Not Really Cricket - Peter Gripton 56B

Childhood games

England's recent dismal performance in the 5-match Test series 'down under' reminded me of my own rather variable cricketing career! This all started during my early years in the Walton suburb of Liverpool.

I was brought up in a short cul-de-sac (posh name for dead end!) called Milton Road. This contained two opposite rows of around six or seven two-up two-down houses, running off at right-angles from Stuart Road. Thus the end of Milton Road consisted, when built, of two gable ends of the rather larger and more imposing houses along the length of Stuart Road.

I say 'when built' because, at some point during World War II, the right-hand gable end had disappeared thanks to the efforts of a German bomb! I think two houses must have been hit and subsequently demolished, thus leaving a rather large bomb-site at the junction of Stuart and Milton Roads. For the kids of Milton Road this provided a convenient playground for many long years, only disappearing when the space was filled by the construction of some garages for the rapidly rising number of motor-cars.

The opposite gable end belonged to a lady called May Becket who had a small baby, but I cannot recall ever seeing a 'Mr Becket', if there ever was one! May's claim to fame is that her gable end provided an ideal wall upon which we kids of Milton Road could chalk a wicket – a set of three cricket stumps and two bails. Neither the stumps nor bails ever went flying of course, so it was always up to 'the umpire' to adjudicate as to whether or not the ball had hit the wicket!

The bowler's run –up, of course, was provided by the rough area of the bomb-site on the opposite

side of the road. There was one rather obstinate defect in the layout of our cricket pitch, in that the kerb of the pavement ran inconveniently right across where the batsman's crease should have appeared! One of the rules of 'our' version of cricket was that, if the ball hit the kerb and bounced off in any direction, these would count as runs to the fortunate batsman!

The cricket ball in question was actually a tennis-ball, so seam bowling and spinning were out of the question!

Whatever the drawbacks of these arrangements, our version of cricket provided hours of endless fun and entertainment, whatever the weather, which seemed to have little or no effect on the state of the pitch! The one main cause of a stoppage in play was when Mrs Beckett came out of her back-yard door to complain the her baby couldn't sleep due to the noise made by the ball hitting her gable end wall!

No such distractions for the famous West Indian cricket side of 1950! As well as their three formidable batsmen, Worrell, Walcott and Weekes, they had two spinners in Alf Valentine and Sonny Ramadhin, who tore the England side to bits with their combination of left-hand and right-hand skullduggery! Older members of our readership will remember the famous calypso written that year – '*Cricket, lovely cricket*'.

Growing – and learning!

For me, the year 1951 brought with it the final term of junior school and the taking of the 'Eleven-plus' examinations. This brought to an end my education at the local Arnot Street school in Walton and a move to the famous Liverpool Institute High School for Boys 'in town', known affec-

tionately to all ex-students as '*The Inny*'.

It was situated under the shadow of the very imposing Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, from which, in February 1952, its bells rang out for hours on the sad day that brought the death of King George VI.

Apart from the formal education on offer, the school's two school yards, upper and lower, gave scope for the continuation of my cricketing career – again played on a concrete pitch with a tennis ball!

Despite these drawbacks, some sporting teacher must have decided that there was enough talent on show to provide enough players to provide a 'school team'. Thus came the day when, during what must have been a 'sports afternoon', players were encouraged to bat and bowl, while the sports master kept a written record of possible future cricket legends!

Surprise, surprise, at the end of that practice session, penciled in against my name was the term '*slogger*'!

And so one blustery afternoon, the selected batsmen and bowlers turned out on the cricket pitches at Mersey Road, down by the river at Otterspool, in the southern reaches of Liverpool.

I remember that day well, as I had to borrow a bicycle off one of my neighbours and pedal my way from the northern edge of the city in order to attend this momentous occasion.

When the time came for me to have my six-ball over of batting, it turned out that the bowler chosen to share my moment of discovery was one of the teachers – Les 'Squinty' Morgan. Right I thought, here's my big chance, this was going to be a doddle!

Now 'Squinty' wasn't given that nickname by chance, his eyes certainly didn't look in the same direction; surely he couldn't bowl either speedily or accurately? I stood there at the crease, fully expecting to thrash the first ball to the boundary.

Of course, I hadn't taken into account that I was now playing on a surface of grass, nor that the cricket ball was of the shiny red type with a seam! The first ball came gently towards me and my bat sliced through the air towards where the ball was awaiting dispatch. But where was it?

Somehow it had hit the ground and changed direction and I had knocked spots off a small portion of fresh air! Rather embarrassed by this non-event, I prepared for the next ball with added resolve and firm intent.

Unfortunately for 'Slogger' Gripton, this ball turned in the opposite direction to the first and I once again heaved my bat in vain. By the end of that over, all six balls had found their way past my bat with ease and my long cricketering career came to an untimely end!

Old 'Squinty' had used guile and cunning to overcome youth and bravado. The cricket pitches of Mersey Road were never to see me again – I decided, there and then, that it was far more fun to return to being a spectator, a pastime I had pursued in earlier years at Wadham Road, home of the mighty Bootle cricket team.

(The zenith of my spectating activities was to be watching Lancashire win a one-day trophy at 'the home of cricket', Lords, many years later.)

Last chance of fame!

By the early seventies, all thoughts of actually playing cricket had long since disappeared! Having left 'The Inny' as the

proud owner of two 'O' Levels, I had done my apprenticeship at Arborfield, then served my nine-year term with REME and was now on the teaching staff as a civilian instructor at SEME Bordon.

On the same teaching staff was none other than Colin Drasutis, who had not only been at 'The Inny' but also at 'boy's school' with me, albeit a year ahead in seniority. I had bought a house in Greatham, Hampshire, while Colin was living just a few miles away in Liphook.

Colin had kept alive his sporting activities and was now playing for the Liphook Second XI. For some reason or other, he had asked if I still played cricket? Well, that had to be answered negatively of course, but when he informed me that the official meeting place of said cricket team was in the 'Green Dragon' pub in Liphook, it sort of sparked my interest!

I thus went along to attend my first team meeting and to meet team captain 'Harry' – sorry, but I have forgotten his surname over time. He asked whether I was a batsman or bowler and I couldn't honestly be affirmative to either pastime!

But then came probably the most important question – did I have a car? When I was able to say 'yes' to that, I was welcomed into the side with open arms! Apparently there was always the problem of finding transportation to away fixtures, so a car owning team member was quite a bonus!

Liphook was fortunate in having its own pavilion, situated on the local recreation field just along the main A3 road running from Portsmouth to London. *(In those days the A3 was single carriageway and ran directly through the village.)* Away games took place all over the local area and we played at some lovely places, my favourite being at a pitch belong-

ing to ICI Verde, home to the local village side of Fern Hurst. Whatever the venue, either home or away, games were invariably followed by morale-boosting meetings at the 'Green Dragon'! The more stringent 'drink driving' laws were yet to come into practice, so it was a great temptation to enjoy 'the odd pint' before driving home!

Luckily for me, once I'd negotiated my way out of the pub car park and around the roundabout on the A3, the road down from Liphook to Greatham was a three-mile straight run!

I probably played for Liphook Seconds for just a couple of summers before deciding that I'd reached my retirement age – well, the sporting one anyway! It had been great fun and ended my rather inglorious attempts at a cricketering career!

One game stands out – it must have been an away game, though at which venue I know not – just the moment a legend was born! We had a young lad named Malcolm Webb in the side, rather tall and on the skinny side, and an enthusiastic 'fast medium' bowler.

On this particular occasion he ran up to the wicket as usual, his arm came over at a rate of knots – and the ball flew almost straight up in the air, taking an arc through the summer sky and, after what seemed an eternity, dropped directly on top of the batsman's stumps! Our skipper shouted an excited 'Owzat?' and immediately Malcolm's future name became 'Bomber Webb'! Somehow, 'Slogger' Gripton never quite lived up to his name – I just hope that 'Bomber Webb' went on to a long and illustrious career.

Peter Gripton - 56B



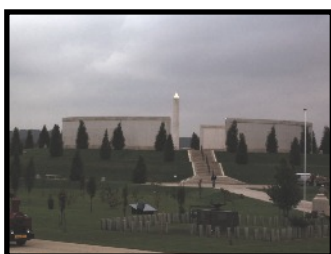
CALLING ALL EX-APPRENTICES

The Annual Reunion Weekend of the Army Apprentices National Memorial Trust will take place on Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th May 2018. All ex-apprentices are very welcome to attend all or part of this weekend which is being held at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, Staffordshire.

The weekend will start with the Annual General Meeting of the Army Apprentices National Memorial Trust which will be held in the Poppy Room at the National Memorial Arboretum at 13:00 hrs on Saturday 12th May. This will be followed in the evening by a Gala Dinner and after-dinner entertainment at the Hallmark Mickleover Court Hotel, Mickleover, Derby. This is a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and colleagues – and swap the inevitable war stories! The bar opens at 18:30 hrs and dinner is served at 19:30 hrs. There will be a donation collection on the evening to defray the cost of the after-dinner entertainment.

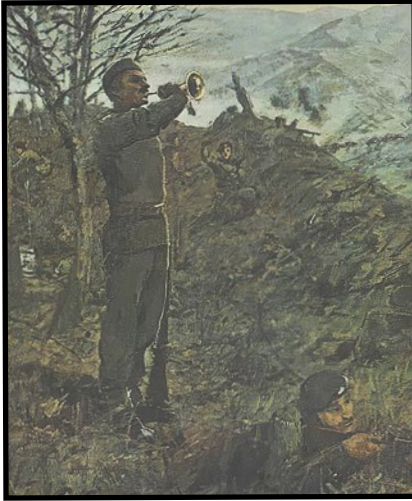
The Annual Drumhead Memorial Service will be held at 12:00 hrs on Sunday 13th May at the Army Apprentices Memorial in the National Memorial Arboretum. The service will be led by Rev Gary Kelly (Carlisle 67C) and will include music provided by the Army Apprentices Pipe Band, who will also be playing at the REME memorial prior to the Drumhead Service. In addition to the Standards of the Old Boys Associations of all 4 Apprentice Colleges the Standards of the local Royal Engineers Association, REME Association and Royal Signals Association will be on parade.

The Hallmark Mickleover Court Hotel is offering special rates for the weekend with a Double Room for £138 per night and a Single Room for £100 per night. These prices include bed, breakfast and the Gala Dinner/evening meal. For those not wishing to stay at the hotel the cost for the Gala Dinner alone is £26 per head. Bookings can be made direct with the hotel, quoting "Army Apprentices Reunion", by telephone 01332 521234 or by e-mail at mickleovercourt@hallmarkhotels.co.uk, the hotel's website is www.hallmarkhotels.co.uk



Arborfield Heroes

Drum Major Buss



The clamour from the Chinese battle bugles sounded like a screaming chorus of death as they prepared for another assault on the shattered British line in Korea 1951. Both sensed it was near the end and the besieged men of B Company squared their shoulders as the last of the ammunition was handed out.

Each man had only five rounds, for each Bren gun there was only one-and-a-half magazines and the Stens were down to half a magazine apiece but these were men of the Gloucester Regiment – many of them yeoman stock – and they did not give in easily.

Suddenly, a new sound cut right through the frenzied blaring of the Chinese trumpets. It was a lone bugler, Drum Major Philip Buss, playing the Last Post. The haunting lament for fallen comrades rose high – and the Chinese fell strangely silent. Then to the delight of what remained of B Company, he proceeded to play every call in the buglers repertoire. Every one, that is, except "Retreat".

It was a poignant and morale boosting moment during what became known as the Siege of Gloster Hill, one of the most outstanding displays of courage during the Korean War, which ended over 60 years ago.

Philip Buss later transferred to the Royal Education Corps and served as an instructor at the Army Apprentices School Arborfield in the late 1950's.

Capt. John D Churchill MC



In 1960 the Division structure of the Army Apprentices School at Arborfield changed from 6 Divisions, 2 a year with summer and winter (with Easter Bunny addition) Intakes to 9 Divisions with 3 Divs a year corresponding to the January, Easter and August Intakes. The Senior Divs that ruled the roost in the Companies were all brought together in a new Senior Company in September 1960 for their final trade and military training. New military permanent staff were posted into this Company to add professional military experience for the final training of the Apprentices completing their three years at Arborfield.

The Second-in-Command of Senior Company was a Capt. John D Churchill MC of the Suffolk Regiment. He was born on 17 November 1932 in Wickford, Essex and joined the Army at Sandhurst. After 18 months he was commissioned on 6 February 1953 into the Suffolk Regiment. Then followed 2 courses of instruction at the Small Arms School, Hythe and the Tactical Wing, Warminster. Later he rejoined his Regiment at Trieste and then to Germany, where he took command of the M.G. Pl. In 1956, still with his Regiment, he went to Cyprus for 3 months. Then next to the Regimental Depot at Bury St Edmonds to train recruits. After 2 years there he volunteered for service with the Sultan of Muscat's Forces. Here he became 2IC of a Company of the Central Oman Group consisting of 4 infantry platoons each of mortars and MGs, one 75-millimetre Howitzer and one Pack Howitzer and a Troop of armoured cars from the Life Guards.

During the last two months of 1958, whilst training a half company of the Armed Forces of the Sultan of Oman, Captain Churchill, by his courage and personal leadership of many patrols, imbued with a confidence which enabled them to operate at will in the mountain refuge of the Omani rebels. On one occasion he went forward alone to within a short distance of the enemy thereby causing them to reveal their positions and enabling decisive action to be taken against them. On another occasion he established a patrol within fifty yards of a rebel post and held his ground until the rebels withdrew under covering fire from other posts. Although slightly wounded Captain Churchill then successfully extricated the patrol. For his conduct on this occasion he was awarded the Military Cross that he later received from the Queen at Buckingham Palace.

He remained at the Army Apprentices School until September 1962, then rejoining his former Regiment, now known as the 1st East Anglia Regiment, based at Felixstowe.

Editors Comments: Both these articles were provided by Ken Anderson (58A). If anyone has any other Arborfield Heroes they would like including in future OBANs please send me the details.

Kenneth Bertram Giles – 42C

I thought it was going to rain, got home and Auntie was taking the washing in only to find it was black with soot. The soot was from the fires at Dunkirk.

It wasn't long before the trains came through with the soldiers from Dunkirk. I was on duty at the station and saw them. No proper uniforms, they looked tired and some were wounded, it wasn't just the British, there were foreign soldiers as well.

It was now that everyone was joining up, and they were calling for Army Cadets you had to be 12yrs old. I was and joined up. We were issued with full Battle Dress. I was in B Company and we had to parade in the school playground. We went to Tonbridge and practiced field craft and were dive bombed by RAF who dropped bags of flour on us? It was all good fun!

During the Battle of Britain I used to lay in the fields and watch "dog fights" and then take cover when the "ack ack" guns started to fire for fear of being hit by falling shrapnel.

Funny thing is I had always wanted to be a soldier right from the start. We had lots of air raids, land mines and also incendiaries dropped all around. One bomb killed Mrs. Austin in the next street, we watched as the ARP tunnelled under the debris to find her body. The land mine blew a hole big enough to take a double decker bus. I remember I had been to tea with RH and his Mum insisted on taking me home because there was an air raid on, then "jerry" decided to drop incendiaries, we ran and sheltered as best we could against a wall, luckily we were ok. At about this time RH's brother Charlie, who was a Flight Sgt in the RAF was killed.

I was getting on for 14 years now and at school. We were given

information sheets to read on various jobs, one such sheet was written by a Col. Howe of the Royal West Kent Regiment, and I decided to take a test to be an Army Apprentice. Auntie was in full agreement for she always knew that I wanted to be a soldier albeit it wasn't the Household Cavalry (which was my dream from a boy). The choice for me was either a Soldier or a Butcher Boy — no choice!

I duly reported to the Army Recruiting Office to be sworn in. I was sworn in by Col Howe who gave me the Kings Shilling and also gave me 2 shillings out of his own pocket saying I might need it, he also gave me a travel warrant to a place called Wokingham which was the other side of London. I was quite rich, the neighbours had given me a wallet with £1 in it, and I am sure that Auntie gave me money as well.

I left home leaving them at the gate, didn't want to let the side down if I cried! Anyway I left the recruiting office with the Sgt telling all the conscripts that here was young man who had taken the King's Shilling and had signed up for 12 yrs – this was received with cries and whistles from the conscripts!

Now for the big adventure, I had never been to London before let alone travel across it. I got onto the train, it took me to Waterloo Station where I had to change - I found the right platform and about half an hour later I was at Wokingham.

I got off the train to be met by an adult soldier who soon got me onto a lorry with other boys of my age, and off we went to Arborfield. When we got off the lorry we were told which Coy we were assigned to. I was B Coy and my number 2548141. I am going to cheat a bit now and take some pieces from the Old Boys Magazine and put them in — later I will

get some photos of the school copied.

We were at the school for 3 yrs training to become a Soldier and in my case a vehicle mechanic. Education too, at first you had to get your 2nd class certificate, that in adult life would take you up to Sgt — then take your 1st class certificate which would take you to Warrant Officer (WOI).

The War was on and everyone in civvie street was called up, so we were very lucky with our education, for we had headmasters teaching us Maths (Mr Higgins taught us Maths).

Professor Attori from Edinburgh University taught us English and Italian - there were many other very good teachers).

Work Shop practice was taught by Sgt Bennet, who told us about the 'Bessemer Process. Sport was taught by Dennis Compton the Cricketer, Danagher the Boxer, Tamlin the athlete - Constable the racing cyclist - and several other notable names- can't remember them all.

In the workshop there were some who had been mechanics all of their lives and so taught us to a very high standard. We were not only taught about vehicles but also allied trades such as electrics and ironwork in the forge etc..

On the soldiering side were Guards and many from other regiments. The RSM was McNally of the Scots Guards. For the first six weeks you did square bashing and PT. Learnt how to make your bed, polish boots and blanco the webbing on your belt.

We had three bands, the Military Band was the band of the 4/7th Dragoon Guards which was augmented by boys who could play an instrument. We had a Bagpipe Band which were mostly boys that had been at a school in Scotland "Queen Vics" and we had a Drum and Fife Band comprising mostly

of ex Duke of York boys better known as "Dukies".

Now that we could march we went on the daily parades, but the Sunday Parade was THE Parade — you dressed in your best SD and marched to Church (held in Camp Hall) led by the Pipes. Come out from Church, march out of the Main Gate with Drum and Fife, in at the top gate where the Military Band took over. We were in Wings. A body of about 50 boys up to now in three ranks, when you reached the top of the square you all turned left, now you were in line abreast, keeping in line was quite a feat but we did - all 1,000 boys marching past the Colonel who would take the salute.

After the 6 weeks square bashing we now started in the workshops where we learnt to use a file and then make various tools, use grinders, lathes etc., During the War there were various money making efforts, such as "Wings for Victory", "Dig for Victory" etc., this was where the public were urged to contribute towards the war effort. As I was one of the smallest boys in the school I was picked along with others of my size - they also picked tall boys, 50 of each. We would march with other contingents of the forces on these special days. We went all over the place and enjoyed it especially the 'bun fights' afterwards!

The school had to be self-supporting in vegetables so we had to take it in turns to work on the land. We had a big shire horse called 'Gilbert No1' — he used to pull the plough, when we were on agriculture we were allowed a piece of cake and either milk or cocoa and if we didn't work hard enough the cake was given to Gilbert and the cocoa was thrown away.

We all had a love/hate relationship with RSM Ben Cook and how we all feared him. Stories about him are legend and often concerned Gilbert the great shire horse.

One day on 'farm fatigues with Ben when the tea and NAAFI cake arrived at break time. Ben gave it all to Gilbert as he had worked harder than the boys! Who will ever forget the morning that Ben led Gilbert along the top of the square during muster parade stopping right in the middle to allow the horse to urinate - it was rumoured that Ben used a cavalryman's trick to start the horse off. One memory especially of Gilbert falling into the Emergency Water Supply tank by the workshop block. The language used in extricating the beast from a watery grave wasn't fit for our ears! I don't think Ben gave the horse any of morning break cake for at least a week after that incident!

Ben Cook looked a fearsome sight to most 14 yr olds, but we soon found out there was a chuckle lurking around inside him. Being hitched to the plough was a regular occurrence normally when Ben thought the 'orse was tired' The agricultural party of my intake did spend an extraordinary amount of time between the shafts — this came about because Ben caught us throwing potatoes at Gilbert. Ben was returning from a night in the Senior Ranks Mess, after trying to drink the place dry, aboard his trusty bicycle. No lights even in peace time. Sgt Hotchkiss attempted to waylay him. On one occasion he was too successful, causing Ben and his steed to part company, resulting in Ben being 'on parade' for a while with his leg in plaster!

One day I was asked to do something in the workshop and I refused. Refusing to obey an order is quite something - I was quickly doubled down to the Guard Room, frisked and put into No1 cell to await company orders in the morning. The cell was very small with a wood pillow and bed. Food was brought in and I slept like a log. Next morning I was marched in front of Cpt Heal, he was the Coy Commander - he said the charge of disobeying an order was too much for him to handle especially in war time, so I was remanded for Col's Orders, up until

now I had not been too worried -but now things were looking decidedly gloomy.

I was marched back out whilst he considered what he should do with me. By now all 4'11" at 15 was waiting to know my fate! My eyes were a bit watery and I would have happily obeyed any orders! I was marched back into the room, given a severe telling off and awarded 7 days confined to barracks - otherwise known as 'jankers', my sentence was to run consecutively to the 7 days I had picked up the day before for being in bed 7 mins after reveille! It really wasn't fair, a Guards Sgt was Orderly Sgt, but he had the job of waking everyone up and making sure your feet were on the deck, mine were, but I put them back in bed, he had nipped round the outside and looked through the window. In fact he had nicked three of us! The glass in the window was terrible all bevelled and misshapen, so when we marched in on Coy Orders we were asked if we had anything to say. I was the spokesperson and said that the Sgt was wrong because if you looked through the window it was impossible to see if a person was lying down or standing up! For that little episode we were each awarded 7 days confined to barracks. So life for the next 14 days were hectic running everywhere and doing lots of fatigues.

When you were on jankers you had to go to the Guard Room whenever a certain bugle call was played, the words to the call were "you can be on jankers as long as you like as long as you answer the call" so if there weren't many fatigues you would have to change from best dress to denim, to 2nd best dress and you had to do it quickly. If you didn't do it quickly enough you would be on orders for malingering. In order to help anyone on jankers the boys in your room would help clean the kit and help you to change from one uniform to another, such was the bond formed with one another.

I remember going home on leave and upon returning to camp, at Waterloo Station being approached by a woman old enough to be my mother asking if I wanted short time for 2/6d - I blushed like a beetroot much to the amusement of the adult squad-dies.

So life went on. Just before "D Day" the school was taken over, required for fighting troops. I was posted to a REME workshop at Ashford in Kent. Here we worked on Sherman Tanks and being the smallest I would be lowered head first into the engine compartment to undo the holding bolts of the Chrysler engine.

We lived in Nissen huts and we had a whale of a time. The tanks were part of the Guard Armoured Brigade. I was able to go home on some weekends which was good. It was at this time we were having Doodle Bugs over, they were rocket propelled aircraft - no pilot, they just ran out of fuel and came down anywhere, and when they came down they just blew up. Not nice, when you heard the engine cut you dived for cover.

Uncle Ebb, one of Auntie's brothers in law, he used to train Shire Horses for the local brewery, was killed by a doodle bug - not much left of him or the horse.

When "D Day" came the tanks moved out and we were allowed to see them embark at Dover but got no further as we were only 16. Company Sgt Major Herby Depper was in charge of us at Ashford - he was in the Rifle Brigade, he had been an army champion boxer, gone to seed, three of us boys could get into his belt! So it is a fact that if you were fit and healthy and stop you will go to fat. Sgt Hunter of the Argyles (I think) was our Military man and Cpl Constable was our PT man.

I suppose we stayed at Ashford for about 3 months, long enough to have a doodle bug come down close by and kill several of the soldiers. We returned to Arborfield and back to the old regime. At 17yrs we were taught to drive, first on Bedford 15 cwt trucks then 3 ton lorries and finally on tank transporter, me, small again, had to have wooden blocks

on the pedals so that I could reach!

I passed, not without incident, we had to drive through Henley and it was a Saturday the first day of the Regatta after the hostilities. There were lots of people about and it was NAAFI break - I was driving this Tank Transporter with trailer and I was going to turn left. My instructor said 'no you will never make it' - 'yes I will said I, the instructor was right and we had an almighty traffic jam which took hours to sort out - was my face RED.

Now came the trade test time, I didn't want to go into the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, so I passed some of the trade test and failed the rest. The powers that be told me to sit the test again, I did and passed the failed bit and failed the passed bit! I was given my Hammer & Tongs to wear on my sleeve.

At this time the chaps I had lived with since joining up went and I was left behind - not only too small but also too young to go. I was only 3 months too young - so I had to kick around.

Kenneth Bertram Giles - 42C



A 'Classical' Lambretta comes to Arborfield

The Lambretta 125LD was manufactured in 1955 so can assume my Aunt Edith bought one in the late 50's. I was born in '57 and from my earliest memories I recall it being stored in an outhouse at Ivy Cottage where she lived with my Grandparents.

In my early teens it was an act of mischief to secretly get it out and run up and down the drive, a childish fascination with mechanics, motorbikes and, as second best – a Lambretta. All were aware of my interest and with that in mind, my Aunt vowed to keep it until I was old enough to be legal, whereupon she would give it to me.



Interest faded as my life changed dramatically when on 07 September 1973 I reported to The Army Apprentice College, Arborfield to commence a career in the military. As a new apprentice to intake 73C the remaining link to the Lambretta was that I had chosen to undertake a Vehicle Mechanic Apprenticeship.

I did, however notice that there were 2 'scooters' already resident in the College and, though memory may be wrong, I believe they belonged to Anthony Pitt and Peter Mapstone, then my seniors and resident in C Company.

College life continued until one Saturday afternoon in early July '74 I was found and summoned to the Guard Room; There at the gates was my Dad and Uncle. They had driven down from Carlisle, Cumbria in a Morris Minor pick-up

that was probably as old as the Lambretta that was in the back. My Aunt had kept her promise and given me the Lambretta.

It was no mean journey for my Dad and Uncle as the upholstery and general comfort factor of the Morris Minor did not lend itself to such a long journey – That was commitment! Well, I must have been allowed to sign them in and, however done, I got them 'billeted' overnight with showers and visits to the cookhouse all above board; though the 'board' was probably deemed as rough as their journey.

They were both ex- National Service so the experience of "spider" accommodation and ablutions brought some level of memory back to them. However, they were most complimentary of the cookhouse food, relative to that in their time.

A couple of pints in the 'Brams' was the least I could do for their efforts. A short visit but I bade farewell without envy for their 400 mile drive home on the Sunday morning. It is some testament to the pick-up that it made an 800 mile trip without a hitch.



At this stage I was going steady with a girl from Bracknell so the Lambretta had its' work cut out! Now bear in mind I was half way through a mechanic apprenticeship so some things should have come easy. Could I get this Lambretta started – NO! Well the DS helped by deducing that somewhere along the line an ignition/induction coil had been

removed from the magneto so no spark generation. I had to get one manufactured specifically for this ancient beast. So, off I went to Bracknell to show and share my new-found wheels with my girlfriend.

All seemed to go well for a few journeys and then it started to 'pop and fart' towards the end of each run. This steadily got worse until one evening it just packed in half way back to camp. I had to push the thing for about 3 miles. Questions were asked of the DS and I ended up changing the plug a few times, but the results proved the same sequence of events.

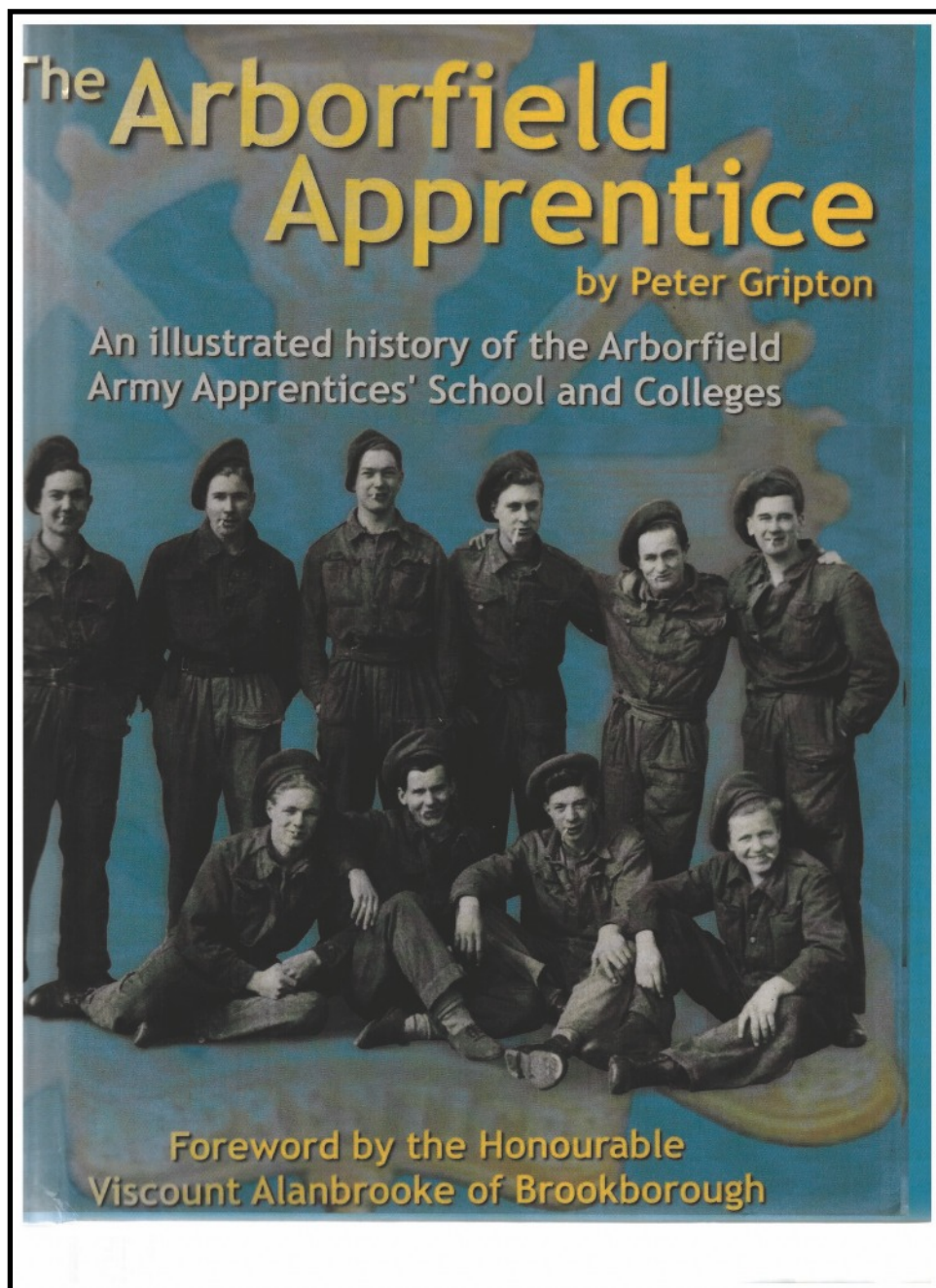
This went on for almost a year and my midnight walks of 2-3 miles either into Bracknell or back to camp equally continued. Needless to say, my lack of confidence in its' performance precluded any romantic adventures that can be attributed to the Lambretta.

Now this is where I kick myself as the end of College was approaching and I had by now purchased a car (perhaps another tale to tell). What to do with the Lambretta in consideration of the love from my Aunt and commitment of Dad and Uncle? Well, now wrongly I feel, I sold it and 'moved on' as today's parlance goes.

Now the nub of the story that shames the then newly qualified VM (A):

All that was wrong with the Lambretta is that I had repeatedly used the wrong sparking plug. I had used a "cold" running plug in a "hot", running engine, so when the engine ran hard and hot the plug cut-out!

Alan Wood - 73C



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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 apprentices or staff members, at one of the Army Apprentice' 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: Spring Time at Arborfield on the Nuffield Road

The Army System is Simple

"The system is really quite simple." You see, all people in the Army are soldiers, all privates are soldiers, but not all soldiers are privates. Some are officers who are commissioned, but some are officers who are not commissioned.

Obviously if every private was called private it would be confusing, so some privates are called things like trooper, driver, gunner, craftsmen, sapper or signaller.

Not all of the drivers actually drive because some of them cook, but we don't call them cooks, for that matter, not all drivers are called drivers – some of them are privates or gunners.

Gunners as I'm sure you know are the guys that fire guns, unless of course they are drivers or signallers in which case we call them gunners rather than drivers or signallers just to make it clearer. All gunners belong to the artillery, except that in the infantry we have gunners who are called privates because they fire a different sort of gun, for the same reason we call our drivers and signallers private as well.

A Lance Corporal is called Corporal, unless he is a Lance Bombardier then we call him Bombardier to distinguish him from a full Bombardier, who is just like a Corporal.

All other ranks are called by their rank for the sake of simplicity except that Staff Sergeants are called Staff, but they are not on the staff, some Warrant Officers, who are not officers, are called Sergeant Major although they are not Sergeants or Majors. Some Warrant Officers are called Mister which is the same thing that we call some officers but they are not Warrant Officers. A Lieutenant is also called Mister because they are subalterns, but we always write their rank as Lieutenant or Second Lieutenant, and second comes before first.

When we talk about groups of soldiers there obviously has to be clear distinction. We call them Officers and Soldiers although we know that officers are soldiers too, sometimes we talk about officers and other ranks which is the same as calling them soldiers. I guess it is easiest when we talk about rank and file which is all the troops on parade except the officers and some of the NCOs – and a few of the privates – and the term is used whether everyone is on parade or not.

A large unit is called a battalion, unless it is a regiment but sometimes a regiment is much bigger than a battalion and then it has nothing to do with the other sort of regiment.

Sub units are called companies unless they are squadrons or troops or batteries for that matter. That is not radio batteries and don't confuse this type of troop with the type who are soldiers but not officers.

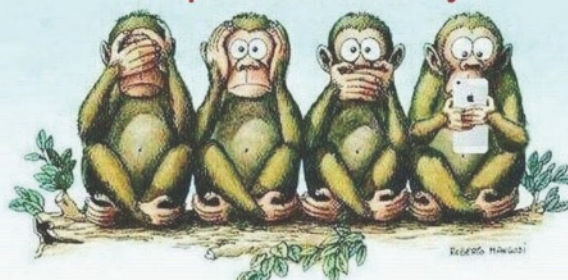
Mostly the Army is divided into Corps as well as units, not the sort of Corps which is a couple of divisions but the sort which tells you straight away what trade each man performs, whether he is a tradesman or not. The Infantry Corps has all the infantrymen for example and the Artillery Corps has all the gunners. Both these Corps also have signallers and drivers except those who are in the Signals or Transport Corps. Both these Corps provide a special service and that's why the Transport Corps provides cooks. In fact the Signals Corps is not a service at all because it is an Arm.

Arms do all the fighting, although Signals don't have to fight too much, rather like the Engineers who are also an Arm but they don't fight too much either. So you see it's quite simple really....

Stolen from the Internet.....

The Whatsape

Finally the fourth ape! He is the sum of the first three:
He sees nobody, hears nobody and speaks to nobody.



The REME Museum



The REME Museum in Arborfield, after a final farewell, closed to the public on 23 April 2015. For the next 5 months, the Museum staff, with a lot of help from some excellent volunteers, set about the enormous task of packing up over a 100,000 items. With the Collections all safely wrapped and packed, the Museum relocated to Lyneham in September 2015. The new home for the Museum was the "old" RAF Officers' Mess. The building was refurbished, and a new Vehicle Hall was constructed to combine two parts of the Old Mess into one building. The new Vehicle Hall was smaller than the one at Arborfield but this was balanced by the fact the project refurbished the double height dining room into a second Vehicle Hall.



Next came the task of redesigning a new Museum. The Museum Curator (Jennifer Allison) spent a considerable amount of time prior

to leaving Arborfield holding focus groups with serving REME Officers and Soldiers, and also, members of the public to determine what people expected to see in the new Museum and how best to portray the story of the Corps.

The Museum in partnership with a professional museum design firm (PLB Ltd) set about the task of designing the new galleries. The small Museum team spent hour after hour writing the interpretation for panels and searching for the best pictures as well as personal quotes in order to tell the story of REME in the voice of those who have served.

The Museum had planned to open on the 1st October 2016, however, not long after moving into the building it became evident that after some years of being unoccupied the building was fighting against being reused. The ground floor wooden floors all began to warp resulting in months of remedial action; the wood was removed and concrete screed laid before recovering with vinyl. As the weeks went by, a number of other building issues created further delays and staff began to wonder just when the museum was going to open; was the building cursed?



Work continued to resolve all the outstanding building problems, and with the support of the Corps, the day drew ever closer when it would be possible to finally open the Museum's doors. Eventually, permission was granted, and just hours later, the REME Museum was opened in Lyneham on 6th June 2017; and an auspicious date 73 years earlier! The Museum's entrance to the exhibition galleries is via a landing craft to simulate the landing on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day.

The new Museum is now operational, with 7 new galleries providing a unique, interactive visitor experience for all ages.



The Museum boasts many excellent facilities. A brand new large professionally designed café (already becoming very popular with the locals and the military staff based at Lyneham). There are dedicated educational facilities, which will be used to provide workshop modules in line with the National curriculum for local schools as well as for adult lectures throughout the year. In the Museum grounds is a new children's assault course housed behind the Poperinghe gates.



The Museum's Archives have been overhauled with new roller racking to better protect the collections. The Conference Room is adjacent to the Archives and can be booked for research sessions as well as for meetings and presentations. Finally, there is a purpose-built reception area and gift shop (again already very popular with military staff at Lyneham as well the visitors).

Since opening the Museum has received many fantastic reviews from those who have visited and the Museum has just been awarded the Visit England "Hidden Gem" accolade. The Museum would like to thank all those indi-

viduals who helped with focus groups, moving vehicles, packing collection items, providing donations and oral histories. Finally, to all the Gold Card holders, whose generous support over the years, has meant that we could afford to purchase some of these brand new displays, now is the time to put those Gold Cards to good use and visit your brand-new Museum. The Museum is open Tuesday to Saturday 1000-16.30 hrs

Arte et Marte

R J Henderson Maj (retd)
Museum Director

From One VM to Another - Alan Wood - 73C

On arrival at The Army Apprentice College, Arborfield, I found a fellow resident from Carlisle, Cumbria. Paul Seycell was his name but despite hailing from the same area we did not become close friends. He was on the VM roll as was I, which makes this little story a little more amusing.

Paul had bought a rather beat up Vauxhall HA. The driver's door was half rotten with both bottom door frames badly rusted too. The paintwork was dull and faded and it looked more like a candidate for the scrap heap than a credible purchase for the road. The bottom line factor was that he could not get it to run for more than a few seconds.

I cannot remember what he paid for it, but I beat him down to £50 cash, and so I'd bought my first car.

I admit to an advantage because I thought I knew what the problem was yet could not believe he did not. We were, after all on the same VM curriculum and close to

the final term and qualification. The body work took most of the time but was not difficult and those repairs plus a T-cut and polish brought it up fine. Yes, it was still an 'old banger' but it was mine and looked respectable. Still a bargain for the purchase cost and body repairs.

Before those body repairs were instigated it was important to prove the engine was sound. Whoever had the car before Paul had undertaken a cylinder head job for some reason and therein was the problem. That person had simply failed to clean away the 'bits and bobs' of the old head gasket. Whilst that was the main issue, I nevertheless, reground the valves, checked the timing, renewed belts, plugs and points



etc - I gave it a full service all round and, hey-presto, she ran like a dream.

I was dating a girl from Bracknell and my Lambretta was proven unreliable but at last I now had the chance for some romantic 'travels' (ah-hem) in a car. The car took us all over Berkshire, the south and even up to Carlisle and The Lake District so, yes, romance flourished until one very wet, rainy day. She was not best pleased one day when I drove through some standing water: My bodywork repairs failed to note that in the wheel well, on the arch, is a square access plate. The one on the passenger side was corroded but obviously held in place by the carpet --- until that day. This patch gave way to the pressure of water and so dearest girl got drenched! We survived that but not my posting to Germany; Ah, my first love ----- A Vauxhall HA?

Alan Wood - 73C

The Front Line Walk - Bruce Leslie - 75C

This year I have my walking boots on again and will be taking part in the Frontline Walk in memory of all those lost during the Hundred Days Offensive in October 1918 (more information on Page 31 of this edition).

This will involve a 100km trek, over 3 days, across the battlefields of WWI to commemorate the Centenary of the First World War

whilst helping to support the soldiers and veterans of today.

I will also be walking to honour the memory of my Great Grandfather: Rifleman JOHN JAMES CORKISH, 5th Bn. King's Liverpool Regiment, who was killed in action 20th September 1917 at the Battle of Menin Ridge Road, aged 39. He was

laid to rest at the Tyne Cot Cemetery - Belgium.

I will be requesting charitable support from the AOBA and will write an article about the walk on my return. I hope it will be published at the end of this year/beginning of 2019.

Bruce Leslie 75C

Ed's Comments:

This article and the one on page 33 reminded me of my grandfathers contribution in the great war. He rarely spoke of what he did and what he saw but I can remember as a small boy sitting on his lap and him showing me a tin box he used to keep his medals and other paraphernalia in.

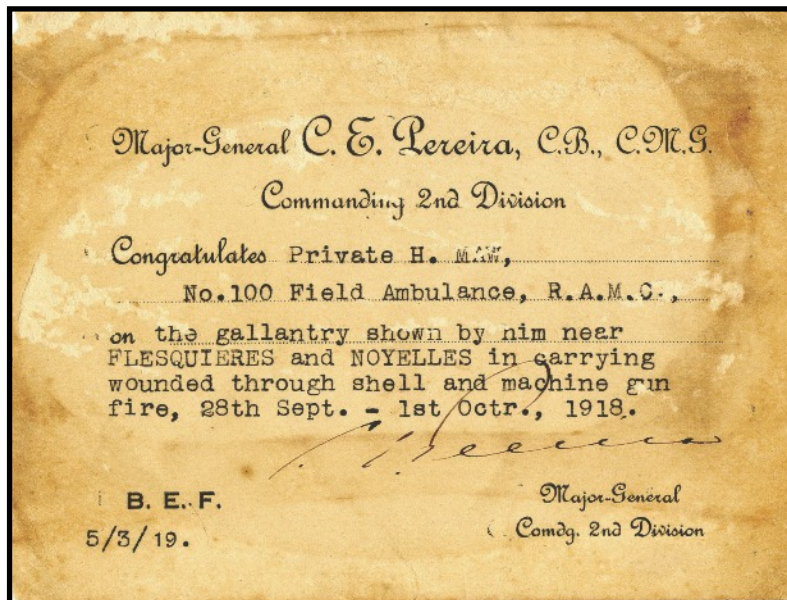
Inside the box was the scroll shown below.

Granddad was a 'drover' and took a horse and cart around the battlefields to collect the wounded and dead soldiers and take them back to either the safety of a field hospital for treatment or, sadly, the collecting point where all the dead ended up.

I am very proud of his efforts and this scroll. I have the original scroll and his medals, (shown below), as well as my wife's granddad's and my own father's medals. (I had all the medals preserved and new ribbons attached a few years back).

RIP Private Harold Maw

Andy Dickson - 66B



The Hundred Days Offensive- A brief Account - Bruce Leslie 75C

The Hundred Days Offensive

was the final period of the First World War, during which the Allies launched a series of offensives against the Central Powers on the Western Front from 8 August to 11 November 1918, beginning with the Battle of Amiens.

The Battle of Amiens:

The Battle of Amiens (with the French attack on the southern flank called the Battle of Montdidier) opened on 8th August 1918, with an attack by more than 10 Allied divisions—Australian, Canadian, British and French forces—with more than 500 tanks.

Through careful preparation, the Allies achieved surprise. The attack, led by the British Fourth Army, broke through the German lines and tanks attacked German rear positions, sowing panic and confusion. By the end of the day, a gap 15 miles wide had been created in the German line south of the Somme.

The Allies had taken 17,000 prisoners and 330 guns. Total German losses were estimated to be 30,000 men, while the Allies had suffered about 6,500 killed, wounded and missing. The collapse in German morale led Erich Ludendorff to dub it "the Black Day of the German Army".

The advance continued for three more days but without the spectacular results of 8 August, since the rapid advance outran the supporting artillery and ran short of supplies.

During those three days, the Allies had managed to gain 12 miles, but most of that had occurred on the first day, as a result of the Germans adding reinforcements.

On 10th August, the Germans began to pull out of the salient that

they had managed to occupy during Operation Michael in March, back towards the Hindenburg Line.

Somme:

On 15 August 1918, Foch demanded that Haig continue the Amiens offensive, even though the attack was faltering as the troops outran their supplies and artillery and German reserves were being moved to the sector.

Haig refused and prepared to launch a fresh offensive by the Third Army at Albert (the Battle of Albert), which opened on 21st August. The offensive was a success, pushing the German 2nd Army back over a 34 mile front. The attack was widened on the south, by the French Tenth Army starting the Second Battle of Noyon on 17th August, capturing the town of Noyon on 29 August. On 26th August, to the north of the initial attack, the First Army widened the attack by another 7 miles with the Second Battle of Arras of 1918.

Battles of the Hindenburg Line:

Foch planned a series of concentric attacks on the German lines in France (sometimes referred to as the Grand Offensive), with the various axis of advance designed to cut German lateral communications, intending that the success of an attack would enable the entire front line to be advanced. The main German defences were anchored on the Hindenburg Line, a series of defensive fortifications stretching from Cerny on the Aisne river to Arras. Before Foch's main offensive was launched, the remaining German salients west and east of the line were crushed at Havrincourt and St Mihiel on 12th September and at the Battle

of Épehy and the Battle of the Canal du Nord on 27th September.

The first attack of the Grand Offensive was launched on 26th September by the French and the AEF in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive (this offensive includes the Battle of Somme-Py, the Battle of Saint-Thierry, the Battle of Montfaucon, and the Battle of Chesne of 1st November). The offensive involved attacking over difficult terrain, resulting in the Hindenburg Line not being broken until 17th October. Two days later, the Army Group under Albert I of Belgium (the Belgian Army, the British Second Army and the French Sixth Army), attacked near Ypres in Flanders (the Fifth Battle of Ypres). Both attacks made good progress initially but were then slowed by supply difficulties.

On 29th September, the central attack on the Hindenburg Line commenced, with the British Fourth Army (with British, Australian and American forces) attacking in the Battle of St Quentin Canal and the French First Army attacking fortifications outside St Quentin. By 5th October, the Allies had broken through the entire depth of the Hindenburg defences over a 19 mile front.

On 8th October, the First and Third British Armies broke through the Hindenburg Line at the Second Battle of Cambrai. This collapse forced the German High Command to accept that the war had to be ended. The evidence of failing German morale also convinced many Allied commanders and political leaders that the war could be ended in 1918; previously, all efforts had been concentrated on building up forces to mount a decisive attack in 1919.

Bruce Leslie - 75C

The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner - AJ Wood - 73C

The Army Athletics Individual Championships (Under 21's) were held in the Aldershot Stadium on 05 July 1975. Was this the pinnacle of my running achievements whilst at the Army Apprentice College, Arborfield?

It had been a long and exhausting day with glorious sunshine, but I had been a "pratt"; I'd enjoyed the sun a little too much and the 10,000m was one of the last races. I got the biggest cheers and applause of the day – I assure you, I did! Everyone's attention was on me because they were waiting to start the next race but could not do so until the track was clear. I was drained of energy, but I was not going to give up; I came in last, running the last 2 laps on my own, the track all to myself.

Notwithstanding the debacle of the 1,000m, early in the day I did win the 400m to become Army Junior Champion with a time of 52.2 seconds. (An odd comparison but that was the qualifying time for the women's entry for the Olympics.) That and my contribution to The Army v Wales meeting, won me the Army Athletic Association medal and Grade III certificate and cloth badge. So, yes it was a pinnacle.

It was not the pinnacle as there were others. My emphasis was on long distance running so the sprint and athletics generally

came late in my time at the College.

It started with my entry (73C) and the youthful keenness to impress by not being late for lessons; I rarely went anywhere with others, where orderly marching was required but ran everywhere on my own.

This soon extended to evening runs and thus enrolment into the Cross-Country Team. The College regularly competed in the South West District League and I soon became a regular winner.

I achieved REME Junior Cross Country Champion and with it came my Corps Colours. I failed to gain SW District Champion as that went to a lad from the RAOC, who's name I can not recall. I beat him only once when running our home course at Arborfield and that was due to an unfair advantage gained. Part of the course, nearing the end, ran parallel to the old air-raid bunkers, just behind the 'Jeepland' block. On this occasion the track was flooded – I mean flooded. I met this lad coming back towards me. He was unfamiliar with the course and did not realise it did run through the flood. I thus took the lead and swam about 20 mtr and managed to hold him off to the finish.

It was a SNCO APTI that coerced me into athletics and I began to develop my sprinting. Despite my

love of long distance, the 5,000m and 10,000m track events held little appeal; I found them too boring. Thus the 1,500m became my favourite though this S/Sgt did enter me into 400m and 200m events. Thus enters a little confusion in my memory as the Corps Athletics were also held in the summer of 1975 at Aldershot and before the Army event.

The REME Corps Athletics (Junior) also provided another pinnacle wherein I won the 'Victor Ludorum' Cup for my overall performance. I won the 400m definitely, but will stand correction on the rest; I believe I won the 1,500m, 2nd in 200m and 400m relay and 2nd in Pole Vault.

In writing I am conscious of appearing somewhat boastful so ask the reader to be tolerant. I look back with pride, not only on these achievements in running but because of what "The College" did for me. I was a shy, reserved, young boy from a small village on the Solway Plain of NW England. I grew up through my time at Arborfield and hope all of you who read this just reflect with pride on the achievements we all made in passing out through those gates.

I went on to have a most successful Army career, ending up as Major AJ Wood, RLC Diptpm.

Alan Wood - 73C

Cheer Up! - Tee Cee

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!

Boys School - Tee Cee

"Boys School". What do you recall of the place?
Where time seemed to move at a lowly snails pace,
Just counting the days till you went off on leave,
To freedom; for some just a temporary reprieve
From the gypping and bullying, too scared to rebel
At that Lancejack who daily was giving you hell.

And the jankers and rodeo which you had incurred
For some minor infringement, considered absurd
By your average civilian with plain common sense,
But which plagued you and made your daily existence
A struggle to keep your morale more or less
Above misery, hunger and sheer helplessness.

Those endless room jobs, the repetitive chores
Of dusting the lampshades, or bumping the floors
With that to-and-fro motion which could drive you in-
sane,
Yet you knew in the morning, you'd do it again
And again and again, until shining and gleaming,
While all that you had was backache, muscles screaming.

But that was just while you were back in your room,
Once out on the square then, the unnerving boom
And ear-splitting scream of some banshees from hell
Had you doubling around until you couldn't tell
Whether coming or going and surely you'd give
Anything for civilian life that you had lived.

And down in the workshops things weren't any better,
All that filing and sawing of metal to get a
Flat surface to scribe on and then make a hole
Which you filed out again, your ultimate goal
Was to fit yet another piece matching the figure
Of what you'd removed, as your blisters grew bigger.

Those three years passed slowly. No. Time didn't fly,
Interminable days dragged as they passed us by,
It seemed we were stuck in a time warp, stagnating,
Existing on six bob a week and debating
As to whether we'd spend it on Zebo or polish
Important decisions which gave us no solace.

At last the day came that we'd yearned for so long,
And the times we'd rehearsed this parade were now
done,
We slow marched and wheeled to the tune "Auld Lang
Syne",
Making silent self promise that this was the last time
That we'd never march on that square ever again,
Remembering the blisters, the noise and the rain.

Now, fast-forward five decades, and thoughts idly turn
To those days of your youth. Curiosity burns
In your mind, and you wonder just what happened to
All those room-mates who shared your life and you knew
Much better than anyone, even their Mothers,
For you shared a life so much closer than brothers.

And then you remember the great times you had,
All that joking and laughter, and feeling quite sad
That you had lost touch with the spirit you shared
And those friends who had meant so much to you and
fared
Along with you, your life with its highs and its lows,
Looking out at you still from those faded photos.

You think of how great those old Christmases were
When the senior ranks, officers all gathered there
To serve up the best meal of the year without doubt,
Roast turkey or chicken, spuds and Brussels sprouts
Followed by mince pies and then Christmas pud,
And felt at that moment that life was so good.

And mornings when gathered to go off on leave,
With pockets crammed full of the money retrieved
From our credits, so flush with the cash that we'd earned,
Those fivers we had that now literally burned
The holes in our pockets, just waiting to spend
As we headed for home to our family and friends.

Yet when you arrived and met up with your mates,
They somehow seemed changed, it was just that innate
Feeling that something was missing you felt,
A sense that what you had, had faded to melt
Into past times now gone from recall, now estranged,
When in truth, they'd not altered, it was you who had
changed.

Then it dawned on you slowly that life as you knew it
Was gone, and your new life as you traversed through
it
Would hold far more interest than you had foreseen,
When you walked through those gates at the age of
fifteen.
For as you learned, gaining experience then,
You had changed, unaware, turned from youths into
men.

So look at it once again as the time passes,
And probably you'll feel the need to wear glasses,
While some may have lens with a quite rosy hue,
Others will never feel, as many do,
That our time spent at "Boys School" was not dissipated,
And our formative years there were not ever wasted.

TeeCee

Ed's Comments: Sorry for the formatting TC. You have to write shorter poems.

Letters to the Editor

Richard Griffiths writes:

What is an OBAN? I'm pretty sure it was the half time mark of our "apprenticeship", maybe even passing in. I was in 3 Platoon and won the plaque for best shot and the mug for best at drill. It was a little unfair because those skills came easy to me being the son of a 24yr serving RE and attending Army Cadets from age 14 till my enlistment at age 17.

I asked him what Div were you in?

His reply: To be honest I can't recall exactly how we defined ourselves. I'm thinking St. Omar was my Company. The thing is, it was all changing as I went through. No one failed our intake and that wasn't because we were all good. We also weren't 2 or 3 years there, it was shorter. After the Apprentice College I went over to SEAE.



Ed's Comments: I saw this photo posted on Facebook and asked Richard to provide some details. I have given him the answer to his question about OBAN and also where to find joining details.

From Andy Knowles:

Derek (Jock) McKenzie 64A D Coy

I was on the coast of the Moray Firth at a small town called Burghead. I had come here for a long weekend with my wife. Whilst walking about the town, I recalled that the only person I had known who came from this area was Derek.

On spec I visited the Harbour Inn and got talking to the owner asking if he knew anything about Derek. He took me to the end of the bar where there were a couple of photographic montages. He pointed out two pictures of Derek. He had been a regular at his establishment for some years. He thought it was about ten years ago that he had passed.

He had never married and he could not remember when he had returned to Burghead. The following day I went to the local cemetery and after a short search I found Derek's grave. He had been struck down at the age of 49 by the dreaded Big C. So it had been twenty years since his passing. I had not heard anymore about Derek after we left Arborfield. I would be grateful for any information that anyone may have on his service years. I will be visiting again later this year and will leave a memento of his days in the army.

From a past Editor of OBAN, the Author of The Army Apprentice and often writer of articles for the OBAN :
Peter Gripton 56B

How pleasing it was to receive the latest OBAN (No.69) this morning and find that the 'Letters to the Editor' space is back in action. I recall that when I was editing OBAN myself - seems a long, long time ago! - I was always grateful to receive such 'letters', whether through the old letter box or appearing as an e-mail on my desk-top! So I have taken the opportunity to 'put my money where my proverbial mouth is' and submit my own minor offering - while hoping that many more readers will make the effort to send copy, however small it may appear, to the Editor, who is making a great effort at keeping the OBAN alive and kicking. And a Happy New Year to one and all!

Pete Gripton, 56B

Obituaries

Former WO2 John Delaney Vaughan

Former WO2 John Delaney Vaughan, known as Charlie, enlisted at the age of 15½, at the Arborfield Apprentices' School on 3 September 1946, where he completed an apprenticeship and joined REME on 26 August 1949 as an Armourer. He served in Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Aden, Germany, Singapore and units in the UK. In 1965, he took a change of course and on promotion to WO2 became a Company Sergeant Major, where he continued until discharged in April 1971. As a civilian he became a teacher and taught for many years in the military community in Colchester. In 2006, after the loss of his beloved wife, Jill, he entered the Royal Hospital, Chelsea where he died on 1 October 2017. Much missed by his children Anne, Andrew and Julie and grandchildren Zoe, Justine, Gary, Heidi, Lewis and Jacob.

Former Cpl Malcolm Tanner

It is with regret that we inform the Corps of the death of Former Cpl Malcolm John Tanner who died on 9 August 2017, aged 74. Despite having a heart transplant 20 years ago, he lived a full and active life but in the last couple of years his health began to deteriorate.

He was the eldest of three brothers, one of whom followed him into the Corps. Malcolm joined as an Army Apprentice aged 15 in 1958 at Arborfield and was later transferred to the newly opened school at Carlisle.

He trained as a Gun Fitter and served for nine years in the Corps. His first posting was with 40 Field Regiment RA in BAOR and he deployed with them on active service in Borneo. His later career included service with tank units in North Africa at El Adam and with the 17/21st Lancers again in BAOR.

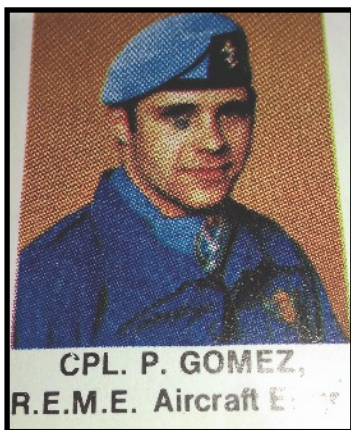
Despite his long absences abroad he never neglected his family and he left Regular service in 1970 to return home to look after our recently widowed mother. Having seen our mother settled he returned to the military environment, serving in the TA with the Westminster Yeomanry, before joining Millbank Technical Services in Iran in 1973 in their support to the Shah of Iran's tank force.

His Iranian adventures terminated when the Shah was overthrown in the revolution in 1979 and he made a dangerous cross-country journey in a last minute escape on one of the last UK flights out of the country. Back in the UK, Malcolm took employment with the Redland Tile Company which led to more foreign travel, installing vast tile making plants in France and Thailand until his need for a heart transplant in 1997 led to early retirement.

Both prior to this and after, he continued to pursue his lifelong love of cricket, playing in his local league. He also became actively involved with the REME Association Surrey Branch, taking up the post of Branch Secretary, becoming the key member in driving the group's activities and business. Malcolm undertook his duties conscientiously and was instrumental in arranging care and support for those members for whom welfare and company was becoming necessary. But being a master of Own Time Management, he had many other commitments such as the busy but lonely, manager's role for his block of flats. He maintained strong links with the London Sharpshooters Association, often visiting overseas battlefields in France, Portugal and Gallipoli, yet his enthusiasm for the REME Association never dimmed, nor his keenness to help others, despite his many painful conditions.

If he wasn't organising funeral arrangements for deceased members, welfare assistance for others, he'd be collecting in Crawley for Help for Heroes, helping Merstham Royal British Legion volunteers sell Poppies in Redhill or linking with Yeomanry events, especially at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday. With the onset of now failing health in 2016 he moved into the Royal Hospital Chelsea to join the small but select band of REME In-Pensioners. It was at this point that Malcolm handed over Association Branch Secretary duties to Major (Ret'd) Robin Needham, but still maintained a keen and much appreciated presence. It was especially nice to see him at group events splendidly attired in his Chelsea Pensioner's uniform when he would gently and proudly advise anyone remarking on his 'red' tunic that it was actually scarlet.

Editors note: Both these are courtesy of The Craftsman Magazine



S/Sgt Paul Gomez

Paul was one of 10 children for Doctors Joan & George Gomez. They all grew up in Wimbledon SW19 . 4 girls then 6 adopted children.

Paul & his twin Peter, enlisted on 3rd September 1968. Apparently 1st twins to enlist on same day. Peter went to RACS Harrogate . Paul to Arborfield. On passing out he was posted to AAC REME Middle Wallop. In 1976 Cpl Gomez was very proud to be selected as an Aircraft Engr for the Blue Eagles Helicopter Display Team. Paul enjoyed 24 years with the AAC serving in N. Ireland, Germany, The Falklands, Canada (where we met in 1979. My father was RSM BATUS) and Antarctica. He felt very honoured & thoroughly enjoyed, 2 x 2 season secondment's with BAS maintaining their Twin Otters on Rothera Antarctica. Paul's final posting was 657 sqn AAC based at Oakington, Cambridge-

shire. He retired as a S/Sgt in December 1992.

He was offered a position of Temp Management Service Assist with Anglian Water here in Huntingdon. This lovely man decided on early retirement , from AW on 31.03.16 having reached the position of Asset Information Strategy Manager.

Sadly, in January 2017 Paul was diagnosed with inoperable Oesophageal Cancer. He underwent 19 gruelling weeks of chemotherapy. He was very brave, never complaining. Sadly on 18th July 2017 Paul had a massive stroke & died at Peterborough Hospital on 20th July. My dear husband & best friend. We all miss him so very much.

Ed's Comments: Information supplied by Paul's wife, Annette.

Reported Deaths since OBAN 69

Name	Intake	Date of Death	Info Received From
Phillip (Phil) Warrington	68C	23 rd Nov 17	Frank Westwood - 66A
John A H Sharp	49A	2 nd Mar 18	Roger Traves
Trevor (Wack) Williams	64A	Jan 18	Roger Traves
Paul Rae Gomez	68C	20 th Jul 17	Annette Gomez (Widow)
Anthony (Tony) Blythman	52A	24 th Aug 17	Trevor Stubberfield - 52A
Edward Derek Smith	48B	24 th Nov 17	Susan Osarigie (Daughter)
Joe O'Brien	57B	6 th Mar 18	Anna O'Brien (Wife)
Frank Casey	PS 86	25 th Jan 18	Christopher Rowe (Nephew)
John Delaney Vaughn	46B	1 st Oct 17	The Craftsman Magazine
Jack Seed	64A	28 th Dec 07	Kevin O'Mahoney (Belated Entry)
John Alexander Henderson	49A	2 nd Mar 18	Roger Traves
Richard J Manning	45B	25 th Mar 17	Neville Kay - 46B
Derek (Jock) McKenzie	64A	9 th Nov 1997	Andy Knowles (Belated Entry)

May 2018

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3 - Local Elections in England	4	5	6
7 May Day Bank Holiday	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 - Wedding of Prince Harry & Meghan Markle / FA Cup Final	20
21 Victoria Day (Scott.)	22	23	24	25	26 - Champions League Final	27
28 Spring Bank Holiday	29	30	31			

June 2018

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9 - Trooping the Colour	10
11	12	13	14 - World Cup Finals - Russia	15	16	17 - Fathers Day in the UK
18	19	20	21 - Summer Solstice	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

July 2018

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 - F1 Grand Prix - Silverstone
9	10	11	12 - Battle of the Boyne (NI)	13 - Xoddam Trophy/ AOBA Weekend	14 - AOBA Weekend	15 - AOBA Weekend
16	17	18	19 - Golf - The Open - Carnoustie	20 - Golf - The Open - Carnoustie	21 - Golf - The Open - Carnoustie	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

