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**Issue
72**

Arborfield Old Boys Association Newsletter



Reader & Ward

ARMY APPRENTICES' SCHOOL, ARBORFIELD. APPRENTICE SERJEANTS. NOVEMBER, 1957

Aldershot

www.arborfieldoldboys.co.uk

ARBORFIELD OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION



President

Colonel Andy Rogers ADC

Vice Presidents

All past Commandants

Treasurer

Laurence (Laurie) Blakley (61B)

Chairman

Lt Col Mike Tizard, CEng, FIET, (76B2)

OBAN Editor

Andy Dickson (66B)

Vice Chairman

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

Recruitment Officer

Bruce Leslie (75C)

Secretary

Phil Ellaway (73C)

Database Officer & Webmaster

Ian Clark (62A)

Registrar

Dave Sparrow - (76B2)

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



As I gaze out the window into the rain laden skies, I'm reminded that autumn has most definitely arrived. The trees have all but lost their leaves and next weekend it's Armistice day, and time for our annual march past at the Cenotaph.

Jim Gardner will be handing over the wreath this year as a mark of appreciation for the amount he has contributed over the years of organising.

Georgie Wright-Rivers (77C) will be shadowing him this year as he is taking over the role from Jim in 2019. It reminds me of the need to contribute in order to make this august organisation of ours work.

Many have contributed over the years and I know that many will in the future.

The other day someone made a comment regarding a similar style, members only organisation, they said, "if this organisation did not exist, you would probably have to invent it" and it dawned on me that the same could be applied to the AOBA.

Our forebears certainly thought ahead when they 'invented' the AOBA in 1948 and since that time succession planning for the roles in the organisation has been essential in keeping the organisation, relevant and modern.

We are blessed with a strong and committed committee who keep the Association moving in the right direction. The latest addition is David Sparrow (76B2) who has taken up the role of Membership Secretary a role that has been gapped for some time. I'm pleased that Dave has joined the team as it spreads the load and allows each committee member to make a small contribution instead of one individual being overloaded.

My thanks go to Dave and I wish him well during his tenure.

I suppose really that is my point. The contribution does not have to be great. Just to contribute a small amount of your time is sufficient. You will note later in this publication the succession plan, which still has a couple of vacancies. After 4 years in post, our Treasurer, Laurie, wants to stand down and is looking to a volunteer to take over and after many years of loyal service Roger, our bereavement member, needs to stand down.

The contribution required in both posts are not large, but they are essential to the smooth running of the Association and the care we offer others. Please consider them.

Other business within the Association is buoyant. I can report that Ian is doing stirring work on the GDPR front, data cleansing the database and updating as required. He is also taking on the website from Mark, who is standing down due to his demanding work schedules.

The roles of data base and website are being combined, so Ian will become our IT Officer for want of another title.

You will also note an article in the magazine on the Bohunt School presentations which took place last month; the school is amazing and goes from strength to strength and, I attended a meeting at Arborfield recently to discuss community engagement and the role that AOBA might want to play. More on that later.

I will close by letting you know that my tenure as your Chairman is coming to an end. I will write more in the next OBAN, but I will be standing down at the next AGM ... do you fancy volunteering for it?

And, with that thought, I'll close. Take care and see you soon.

Mike Tizard

Your Chairman
Arte et Marte

Committee Members Reports



Secretary's Report

As I write this Remembrance Sunday has been and gone.

Like many of us I was on parade; I was at Gloucester City's War Memorial. I carried a Standard of the Northern Ireland Veterans Association and a comrade laid a wreath on behalf of NIVA.

We had an International flavour at the ceremony as we have the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps based in Gloucester so there was a smattering of different uniforms present. Several French officers were in attendance and a Polish officer laid a wreath. I also spotted, in the crowd seemingly keeping a low profile, a Bundeswehr officer.

AOBA had a contingent at the Cenotaph. The last parade organised for us by Jim Gardiner. We owe him a massive vote of thanks for organising things. Enjoy your "retirement" Jim.

I thought I would give you an example of the type of email I receive as AOBA Secretary. On the face of it the content is humorous but there is a much more serious message for us all.

I received this email from a member, I won't give his name, and the entire content of the email was this:-
"I have moved twice, but haven't told you"

On the plus side we can now remove that members address details from the database and OBAN mailing list. However, we still don't know the new address.

So the serious side, is we can't contact this member. I have replied to the email with no response. We don't have the correct address so OBAN cannot be sent but more importantly we cannot send the member a GDPR form, and without consent to keep a member's details the membership will have to be cancelled in the future.

So the message to us all is quite simple, please keep us up to date with your changes of address etc., don't lose touch.

And so now we turn to Christmas, which hopefully this edition of OBAN will arrive before.

This year will just be me and "her indoors" so a quiet one for us.

May I wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Phil Ellaway - 73C



Treasurer's Report

I suppose that you could call this time of the year the quiet period in the Treasurers calendar, having completed and dispatched the Gift Aid Claim to HMRC for payment which we should have it in our Bank account within the next few weeks.

Leaving any new member applications to be processed and payment of any invoices received before the end of the year.

It appears that we have a sad lack of applications to take on this post so far from our membership; hopefully someone will step up by the time of the next reunion.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas & New Year

Laurie Blakely - 61B



Database Officer's Report

AOBA Information Management report

At our AGM I accepted taking on the additional responsibility of AOBA webmaster. With that and current technical responsibilities of Data Base Officer and Data Protection Officer, I suggested this all be combined as "Information Management". In doing so, keeping the separate procedures distinct, to enable / allow future members who are interested in succession management to volunteer, not to be daunted by the "whole role", can pick any of three I am currently reporting on.

As Data Base Officer (DBO)

As in previous OBANs, I advised that Microsoft were making changes and that we had to transfer from MS Access based tables to MS Excel tables. I am glad to say this was all completed in May. On completing the process, I was able to add additional functionality to assist committee members to manage their roles.

During the AGM, a couple of requests came from the AGM attendees to include "Lists" of ex-apprentices held by members to assist Bruce in his recruitment process. At the meeting I said I would look into it, DP reasons came to the fore at the time, I am glad to say, "Yes Please do" send them.

Also, at the AGM I was approached in giving "Global Consent" to contact members. Currently any request to contact members requires a committee member to send the request to the member for permission to pass on details. I have included "Global Consent" field on each member record, currently set at "False". If set at "True" will allow the Committee member to pass the contact details to the enquiring members without further reference. To allow this to happen please contact me through the website or "Snail mail" via the AOBA Secretary.

Now David Sparrow has taken on Membership Secretary the work load from the DBO perspective has decreased to a Monitoring /Auditing/Backup activity. This allows me to concentrate on the following two activities.

As Data Protection Officer (DPO)

The key role is to ensure we are compliant with our UK /EU data protection laws. The role also has a neutral aspect to act on any reported breach of data protection from members, any changes to personal data and finally represent AOBA as the initial contact point for the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) on any issues of compliance. This an "Independent" role from the Charity Trusteeship and Committee responsibilities roles inherited in AOBA. In summary, a role of audit, compliance and advising the committee on DP matters.

Application / GDPR Consent status

Members @ Oct'18	= 779
Members with GDPR consent @ Oct'18 Entered	= 264 (33.9%)
Members - GDPR forms to be processed	= 21
Members GDPR outstanding @ Oct'18	= 494 (63%)

I noted in this process our forms were recording details of spouses/partners (when provided). Where provided, this created a second "Data Subject" and no consent from Spouse / partner, a technical breach of DP regulations. In our last Committee meeting, my advice of redacting the existing spouse/partner name, removal of the same field in the database and adjustment of the consent form was accepted. This activity is in progress.

Any member, who has completed or joined AOBA since May 2018, is included in the 285 forms received above. What concerns my role as DPO, is the 63% who have not provided their consent! Please be aware there will be a point in time that the AOBA Committee will have to terminate membership to the AOBA because those members who have not, yet, consented to hold their personal data. This means the DBO will be informed to remove all personal data. Above may give the perspective of a "bureaucratic" process to protect personal data but from a positive perspective completing the consent forms "cleans" AOBA data, improving data quality and allows us to communicate better.

As Webmaster (Under tuition!)

I am currently doing "on line" web-based training to understand the content management system which manages our website. There are 5 modules, of which, the first two modules are key. I am 60% through the first module. In parallel to this, Mark (our Outgoing Webmaster), and I, are going through the detail of the AOBA website.

Web-based training is fine but "down to earth" management of the site etc has required software updates. So, I had to contact my IT consultant, "Nobby Clark" (the other side of my brain!), to install the pre-requisite software and finally "Joomla" – the content management system that manages our site. Interesting times and who said retirement was easy, just another challenge to be addressed!

Ian Clark - 62A



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. (Addresses are on the AOBA website).

We have had a good few months since the reunion in July, with 13 new members joining over the last 3 months. This is a really positive step forward, and one which I will use the experience of Armistice Day in London to progress over the next few weeks.

I am continuing to target the Arborfield Apprentices Facebook Group as a good source contacts, and it is noticeable that more "potential members" from the 70s and 80s are now joining that group.

Could I ask any 69ers reading this and are interested in helping to achieve a good turnout from that year at next year's reunion, to get in touch with me via the e-mail address on the AOBA website, with a view to encouraging as many 69ers as possible to join the AOBA and attend our reunion next year.

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.

Bruce Leslie - 75C



Registrar's Report

I have been in the membership secretary's chair for over 3 months now and I am starting to get the hang of it; just the simple stuff though, there is a long way to go until I can be trusted to do anything complex!

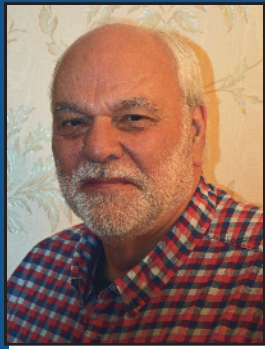
I was asked to lay a wreath at the war memorial in a village called Belton, in North Lincolnshire on remembrance Sunday. I got all dressed up in my service dress, polished my medals and was inspected by DCOS (Domestic Chief of Staff (wife)) before setting out on the 50 mile journey to this lovely little village.

The church service commenced at 0930hrs and after that we marched, walked or limped to the memorial at the other end of the village. I don't know what I was expecting but it was fantastic to see such a massive turnout for a small village, people from babies to very senior pensioners, all showing respect for those who have given everything for our freedom. Don't panic no lecture to follow on Brexit!

Back to the job in hand (my mind wanders more as I get older!) I would like to welcome all the new members who have joined since I took up the reins and also to those who may have slipped through the cracks when the post was gapped. If I can do anything for any of you, do not hesitate to contact me through the web page and I will attempt to help.

I am preparing for my pre-Christmas break in Tenerife shortly to achieve a relaxed state for the Christmas holidays so I will take this opportunity to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Dave Sparrow - 76B2



OBAN Editor's Report

Time flies when you are having fun. Here we are almost at the end of 2018. I swear the years go by quicker the older you get.

Thanks to all those that commented on OBAN 72, even those that spotted my mistakes. I must admit you can get "word-blind" after reading and re-reading many times before it goes to the printer, even with my trusty proof-reader checking my work. (No criticism, Dave).

This is the 7th edition I have produced. I sometimes think it is getting easier and then something happens that brings me back to the ground with a crash, like my hard drive in September. I put it down to a Windows 10 Update but the result was a complete hard drive replacement and re-installation of Windows 10. I can tell you, there was much gnashing of teeth and I cast a few doubts about the parenthood of the person responsible. Anyway, it is all back together and working just fine, for now. I have taken the unusual step of preparing another, older computer with all the software required should it happen again. I have all the data files in two places as well, so belt and braces I should be OK for the future.

The Succession Plan appears in this edition again. We are still short of recruits for key roles. If you feel you can contribute to your Association please drop Mike Tizard a line and let him know your interest. I have moved my "retirement" date out to 2020, assuming you guys vote me in each year.

GDPR is still being worked on by Ian Clark and he has made quite some progress on the forms that have been returned to him. If you haven't got the forms returned to him yet, please download a copy from the AOBA website and send them to him. Alternatively, e-mail any of the Committee members and we will get them e-mailed back to you.

I caught the end of an episode of the TV series Soldier, Soldier (Robson Green etc.), the other day. I must say I was impressed with the reality of the military side of it. It did make me smile with some memories of my time in BAOR. It is funny how things pop into your mind. Who remembers the cigarette coupons we had to use. They were currency for the non-smokers.

My wife asked if I missed the Army and I can honestly say that I don't now but I did just after leaving. She went on to ask if I regretted any of my time, and again, in all honesty, I can say that I don't. There were times when I thought those in charge didn't have a clue as to what they were doing but I have had that in civvy life too. Would I do it all again? Absolutely. I never really felt like a proper soldier until I served in NI and this was one of the main reasons I left eventually. Happy days.

Since I posted a request for articles on Facebook and my pleading at the AGM I have had a rush of articles that will need to wait until OBAN 73 now. Thanks to everyone who has sent articles to me. Please be patient in getting to see them in print.

With the days getting shorter and colder I am spending less time in the garden these days. The weather doesn't help either. There was a few snow flurries this morning (21st Nov), and we have had a few heavy frosts.

I have swapped doing 'inside jobs' in the garage recently re-assembling two bicycles we purchased when we lived in The Netherlands back in the early 80's. I am now an expert on Sturmey Archer 3 speed gears with the help of several videos from the Internet.

I missed the mini Welsh reunion this year. A shame as Bill Sear, (A Jeep Kepper from May 1966), was attending. I am still waiting for somebody to do a write-up and supply some photos so I can include them in OBAN 73. C'mon you guys.....

Finally, this should reach your doormats before Christmas this year. Having said that, I still have to get it printed and mailed. Should be possible in 4 weeks.

Merry Christmas and New year to you all. I hope it is a safe time for you all.

Andy Dickson - 66B

Diary of a Jeep

Bromley has bought himself a Dansette Record player. He paid 2 Guineas extra for the Bermuda version with auto-changer and red leather trim. It's pretty amazing. You can put on loads of 45s and they will play sequentially. Unfortunately, he only has Jim Reeves singing Adios Amigo....Adios, the sooner the better please Jim.

Letter from home.

Mum asked if I could get a compassionate 72 hour pass as granddad had died. Bearing in mind he's died twice already, it was something of a non-starter. Anyway, it's the end of another term, so with a bit of luck I'll get back in time to attend the wake. When I last saw him he was quite poorly and asked if I could prick him with my bayonet before they nailed the lid down - just to be on the safe side. I said I'd see what I could do. I hadn't the heart to tell him I didn't have a bayonet. In the end I improvised with a cocktail stick, but only after scoffing the lump of cheese, the pineapple and the pickled onion.

Another page from the Jeep - another tree falls in the forest.

Kit Inspection 2130 hours

The Room Cpl. asked if I wanted my ammo boots 'hoyed' or 'heaved.' I knew if I said 'heaved' he would heave them across the room. I opted for 'hoyed.' He hoyed them out the window.

Sunday lunchtime. 1200 hours

Listened to the Billy Cotton Band show followed closely by 'With a song in my heart, I behold your adorable face' - the signature tune for Two Way Family Favourites together with Jean Metcalf in London and Cliff Michelmores in Cologne. They have a request from L/Cpl 'whoever' in BFPO

'wherever' for his many loved ones. Could he please have Pat Boon singing 'I'll be home My Darling?' I'm not sure if we have a BFPO or if I actually have any 'loved ones.' If I did, I think they'd prefer 'to get their kicks on Route 66.'

Robbo has pulled lance-jack. I guess flattening your web-belt brasses and buffing them with graphite grease during Workshop Practice isn't a waste of effort after all. He was caught walking past C Coy office without his beret. The CSM told him to put himself on report. I asked him what he was awarded. 'Not-a-lot. I just gave myself a telling off and let myself off.' Top man.

The new batch of Jeeps has arrived, mother's milk still wet upon their whisker-less chins. Their wide-eyed optimism yet to be trampled by the reality of jeep-dom.

Trip to the NAAFI. Spent 1/10 on a tube of whitener for my S.D. belt - daylight bloody robbery. I could have bought 10 Woodbines for less. I like to imagine the product manufacturer thinking up the brand name - White's (of Liverpool) Whitener - pure genius, it must have taken forever to come up with that.

Sunday evening.

Watched Dixon of Dock Green on BBC. The sooner they do away with Bobbies on the beat the better. Z-Cars is loads better. That's the future - cruising around in Panda cars with sirens blaring will soon reduce the crime rate.

Monday evening

Bull-s**t lesson from Ted the room Cpl. It concerned our white S.D. belts in preparation for the Queen's birthday parade. Apparently, the trick is to un-stitch the buckskin and separate the belt from its buckles. (Apparently no-one will ever

notice). This enables you to Brasso the buckles independently prior to reassembling. This way you don't get any crap on the whitened areas. It's best to whiten the belt around a bucket so it doesn't crack when you wear it. He's not entirely stupid our Ted... I would like to include an element of criticism but he's f****ng massive.

Friday night

Played Three-Card Brag in the evening - won 5/6. Switched to Poker - lost 5/6.

Saturday - Queen's Birthday Parade - 1000 hours

I'm sure she wouldn't mind if we just sent her a card. Standing out in the blazing June sunshine for hours, waiting for some Brigadier to take the salute is NOT my idea of a birthday knees up. Wagstaffe fainted - jammy bastard. We had to give three cheers for Her Maj even though she wasn't there. At least it woke up Waggies.

Monday

Double Map Reading 0930 Education Block

Almost as soul destroying as double maths. We were all issued with 1:56000 Ordnance Survey maps of Snowdonia. I'm sure there must be some cheap deal on at the Army Surplus Map store - it's always Snow-bloody-Donia. Captain Hurley asked us to describe the significant features in and around Cadair Idris and what defensive strategies we might consider. While the rest of us were deliberating the effects of contours, trig points, knolls, lakes, rivers and ravines. Taff Evans declared his Nan lives there - in Abergynolwyn actually. Thanks for that Taff. If the Russians attack Wales, please could you ask your Nan to give the War Office a tinkle?

Weapons Training

Introduced to the delights of the Mills Grenade, which we were reliably informed, was designed by William Mills of Sunderland and patented in 1915. Robbo pointed out that, the fact Mr Mills came from Sunderland didn't make him a f****ng Geordie - apparently he's a f****ng Macam - whatever that is.

Nonetheless, like all military equipment, it works better if you clean it. A dozen of the pineapple-shaped objects arrived in a box filled with sticky toffee and axle-grease which took bloody ages to remove. Once our efforts had passed inspection, we were taught how to insert the fuse. At this point Wheeler was sent on an errand - the instructor's not daft. Wheeler's reputation precedes him. McNulty tried pulling the pin with his teeth as per the war movies He lost a filling.

Got the results of our Senior Test. Taff Evans has to re-sit Map Reading. Obviously the fact his Nan lived in Abergynolwyn didn't count towards the final grade. McGuinness received distinctions in all five subjects. We pretend not to notice.

Robbo failed Maths. Falling asleep in most lessons and the board-rubber parting your hair on a regular basis, probably doesn't add to one's ability to manipulate log tables.

The CSM is looking for volunteers for the annual Ten Tors.

It's where around 400 teams of six hike approximately 55 miles around Dartmoor. He believes that Outward Bound, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and Ten Tors are the equivalent of a Masonic hand-shake for AAS Arborfield success. Anyone who thinks spending the

best part of 48 hours with no sleep, no shelter and little food is anyone's idea of a fun weekend would have to be a Wooden-top - which he is.

Got the blue mist whilst beezing my boots. Bugger.

Letter from home.

Step-sister is getting married next Saturday; can I get a 48 hour pass? Answer from the Chief Clerk. 'Having examined your records in some detail they show no evidence of siblings female, male or otherwise.'

I'll take that as a 'No.'

(Author's note: 'Otherwise' hadn't been invented yet. In fact being 'otherwise' was actually still illegal.)

Mum's response some days later:

'I'm sure Uncle Ron (it's his daughter who is getting married) will take issue with your Chief Clerk.'

I'm sure Chiefy is wetting himself.

1000 hours First Aid Lecture MRS Simulated compound fracture of the femur. Wheeler was unanimously elected as the fall guy. We had to splint him up and lash him to a stretcher in preparation for extraction.

We somehow convinced the daft bugger he'd be extracted by helicopter. Around 1030 hours we all buggered off for a Naafi break leaving him strapped in awaiting medi-vac. It took a while for the penny to drop and Wheeler to realise there was no helicopter. He wasn't exactly on cloud nine... or passing any clouds for that matter.

I know we're hard on him. Honestly, it's not bullying, it's 'character building.' I'm simply thankful it's Wheeler's character we're building and not mine.

Light's out.

Time for a final fag. A brief moment of tranquillity. Peace at last - that's if you can ignore McNulty's radiator rattle. In a small corner of Berkshire stillness prevails until dawn breaks and the bugler drags us all kicking and screaming back to reality.

'Come on... Show a leg... Hands off c*cks... hands on socks.... Move yourselves.... Move yourselves.... Where's McGuinness?'

'Outside Corporal.'

'Not again! Go and get him And bring his bed in too.'

More anarchic rants from the Jeep.

Robbo got busted. It was always on the cards. Flattened web-belt brasses and an ability to fart tunefully do not an NCO make. Looking busy whilst doing sweet FA is useful and good time-keeping essential. The problem was his 48 hour pass that somehow extended into 96 hour hangover, the result of an over-dose of Newcastle Brown Ale and the fact that Toon actually won a match. I was hoping that it might open up a vacancy for Yours Truly, but once again the powers-that-be chose to carelessly disregard my numerous talents. Apparently, the art of remaining invisible whilst skiving isn't quite what they're looking for. They have concluded that my successes occur all too rarely and my failures all too often.

The floor bumper broke. I suspected metal fatigue, not to mention my personal fatigue. Clearly the result of over-use and lack of maintenance which applies to the bumper as well. The room Cpl. Suggested I swap it for the one in J6 - they're jeeps and away on 3 Div Camp. That's what I like about Ted. - His absolute integrity.

To be continued.....

HMT Dunera - Andy Dickson 66B



Love it or hate it, Facebook sometimes surprises you.

I visit several Facebook sites, partly out of interest in things military but also to search for articles and information I can use in the OBAN.

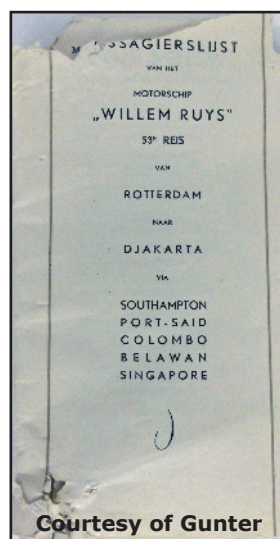
I came across the above photo on one such page. It was posted by Gunter Webster (64B B Coy). He asked if anyone had travelled on board this old troopship.

My mum, 3 siblings and me were on board in 1956, going to meet my dad who had just completed an unaccompanied 2 year tour of Korea and Japan. He had been posted to 221 BVD in Jahore Baru, Malaya (Before it became Malaysia). We were on our way to Singapore to meet up with him.

HMT Dunera got turned back in the Mediterranean due to the Suez crisis and went back to Southampton. We were then sent to a hostel in Blackpool for 6 or 8 weeks or so to wait for another ship.

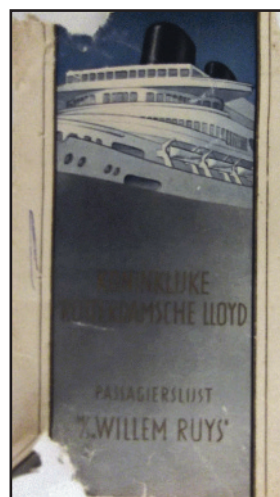
Some time later, we boarded the Willem Ruys in Southampton (It sailed on September 7th 1956) and we set sail for Singapore again, this time going the long way around the Cape of Good Hope and

across the Indian Ocean, stopping at Cape Town, Columbo, Belawan and docking in Singapore on



Courtesy of Gunter

to school which was a pain but we had every afternoon to



Courtesy of Gunter

October 2nd. This was quite an adventure for a 5 year old and I am sure my brother and I made mum's life hell getting into all sorts of mischief.

Each morning on board they made us go to school which was a pain but we had every afternoon to explore.

I remember going on deck in the mornings to collect the flying fish that had landed there each night. I just put them back over the side. No idea

if they were alive or not.

There was a swimming pool on board but we were only allowed in it when it was below a certain depth.



Courtesy of Gunter

Gunter and I exchanged a few PMs on the Facebook page and he sent the photos shown here.

The real surprise was in the last one shown below. He said that this was of his mum, him and his sister with some other people.



Courtesy of Gunter

Well, you could have knocked me down with a feather. The "others" in the photo were my mum and us 4 kids. (I am on the LHS sitting behind Gunter. My eldest sister Pauline is sitting cross legged with the long pigtails, my brother Gerald is on the RHS in front of my mum with my other sister Sandra on my mum's knee. Gunter's mum and sister are the two remaining people in the photo.

I dug around in my photo archives and came up with this photo of my mum at dinner with another lady.



I sent this photo to Gunter. As soon as I sent it the thought crossed my mind that it may be the same lady with my mum shown in the earlier photo.

Last night, (Sep 15th), Gunter called me and confirmed that it was his mum having dinner with my mum.

We chatted for about 15 minutes about various memories we both had of the voyage including an incident where we hit a whale crossing the Indian Ocean. I can still remember all the blood in the water around the ship.

There was also the crossing of the Equator ceremony. I only vaguely remember this (my big sister recalls more of it), where Neptune appeared from the ocean side of the ship and everyone was daubed in some sort of white watery mixture.

Gunter also recalls seeing sharks and sea lions when anchored in Cape Town.

Across the Indian Ocean we were graced by flotillas of dolphins that seem to me to be racing the ship. I was fascinated.

I am flabbergasted by this set of coincidences that all came from

the posting of a photo of HMT Dunera on Facebook.

Gunter joined the AAS in Arborfield as part of 64B and became an Air Tech A&E, just as I did two years later.

Our paths never crossed while we were in the Army. I am not sure if we had, that this story would have ever come to light.

I can't explain how strange it has made me feel to see these photos of my family that we have never seen before over 60 years after they were taken.

Gunter and I have agreed that we will meet and have a beer or two and talk about our experiences on board the Willem Ruys. My memories of the Dunera are not so clear.

By the way, the Willem Ruys became the Achille Lauro and was hijacked by the PLO in 1985. The hijackers killed a disabled Jewish-American, Leon Klinghoffer, and threw his body overboard.

Andy Dickson 66B

The Reds

I calculate that if you ever sang this, you are almost certainly over the official retirement age...

"THE REDS "

Sir Arthur Sullivan composed the tune and Gilbert the vocal score, but the Arborfield lads didn't much like the words, so decided to invent a few more, and that was the birth of the school battle hymn, (although no-one knows, really, quite when), which was captured by many thousand young voices, time and time over again.

It rang across the footballing fields and resounded around the camp hall,
And visiting teams came to fear, soon, the sound, as a harbinger of their downfall.
Many a boxer hanging over the ropes really thought that his last hour had come,
Till, faint, far away, through the mist of the pain came the strains of that inspiring song.

Like a shot of adrenaline via his heart, it exploded straight into his brain,
Then, revitalized, he bent to his task to the ever-repeated refrain.
With the sound in his ears of exuberant cheers, he pounded and punched with aplomb,
Till the poor adversary, who, till then unworried, soon found out that something was wrong.

In the realization that it wasn't one person that he now faced alone in the ring,
He, at first undaunted, then found himself haunted by THE tune they started to sing.
So, love it or not, "The Reds" holds a slot in most Old Boys long standing affection,
For it marked at that time the team spirit sublime that's remembered in fond recollection.

But as years rolled along, the strains of the song faded into the past, now long gone,
And the voices, so youthful which sang it so tuneful, are now just a low baritone.
For the lads who remembered it now are quite aged, and feeling a tiny bit sad,
'Cos that song represented our youth, and recalled the great unity, once, that we had.

Drumhead Service - Chalky White 66C



THE CHURCH MILITANT

From the Original Picture by John Collett, in the possession of Carington Bowles

A priest reads a sermon from his text placed on top of three drums to a sleeping officer in a chair, and a group of bored soldiers of the militia in uniform. 15 September 1779 Hand-coloured mezzotint.

Mezzotint is a printmaking process of the Intaglio family, technically a dry-point method. It was the first tonal method to be used, enabling half-tones to be produced without using line or dot-based techniques like hatching, cross-hatching or stipple.

Checkout the link

<https://www.britishpathe.com/video/drumhead-service> and see the improvisation for a pulpit at a Drumhead Service.

"Piling of the Drums" - a religious service attended by members of a military unit while in the field.

The ancient ceremony of the "Piling of the Drums" had its origins where new Banners or Colours were presented. Colours have always been regarded with great reverence.

Historians record that Colours have been associated with religion from the earliest times. Israelites carried the social Standard of the Maccabees which bore the initial letter of the Hebrew text. These early associations linking religion with the battle flags and standards have their counterpart in the ceremonial attached to Colours today.

Many Commonwealth countries adopted the British custom for the consecration of the Colours prior to the presentation to the Units. The drums are traditionally piled to provide an altar for the consecration.

The drums are brought forward and piled in the centre. The pile consists of five side drums in a circle with the emblazoning the right way up, facing outwards. The bass drum is laid on the side drums and a tenor drum on top, both with the centre of the emblazoning facing the person blessing the Colours. The Colours are then draped on the pile for the consecration, the pikes resting on the hoop to retain the Colours in position. There is no drill laid down for the piling of drums, but the drummers concerned normally turn to their left and right and march out in a single file, forming a circle around the designated spot, turn inwards and arrange their instruments in the centre.

After the Colours have been consecrated, the drums are recovered in the same way. The Colours after being blessed by the various religious leaders, are handed over to the visiting dignitary, who will present the newly consecrated Colours to the CO/Commander of the Unit, the Colours are then trooped.

For centuries, soldiers about to go into battle asked for divine help and guidance in what were known to be difficult times ahead. Because of the distances to be covered and lacking any means of transport to take the soldiers to church, the Regimental Padre conducted the service in the field.

This called for a platform upon which he could place his bible and other pieces of equipment he required to conduct a formal service. Lacking any other altar, the regimental drums were put into service by stacking them in layers which then served as a temporary altar. It was in the 1700's that the first recorded use of the Drumhead for this purpose was documented.

Congregating around Peterborough's Guild Hall, these local residents were taking part in a 'Drum Head' service in 1945. We believe the tradition of a Drum Head service goes back for centuries. Soldiers in the field, without access to their churches, would lay their drums out neatly, consecrate them and use them as an altar



CONGREGATING around Peterborough's Guild Hall, these local residents were taking part in a 'drum head' service in 1945. We believe that the tradition of a drum head service goes back for centuries. Soldiers in the field, without

access to their churches, would lay their drums out neatly, consecrate them and use them as an altar. We were fortunate enough to hear from Bryn Clark, a drum major with the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Anglian Regiment. He said: "I was pleased to read your article regarding the drum head service that was conducted in 1945 at the Guild Hall in

Peterborough. "I can confirm that drum head services still take place throughout the country to this day. As you said (in the article) the drums were used as a battlefield altar." Mr Clark said that these days, the services are normally conducted when a regiment has a church service on the parade square or when on exercise in

the field. He explained: "Once the drums have been stacked, the regimental colours or standards are draped over the drums in respect of the fallen." Reginald Briggs emailed in to add that he has also attended such a service. He said: "I joined as a regular soldier when I was just a boy in 1949. The first time I attended a drum

head service was while I was on active service during the Korean War (1950-1963). "King George VI had died and we had to attend the drum head service at division headquarters. It was a very moving ceremony even for me as a young soldier." Mr Briggs, ex regular Royal Signals, added that drums have also been used as tables at military executions.

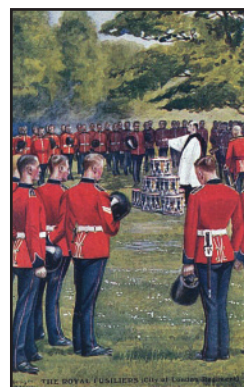
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BMH Nicosia, Cyprus



London Royal Fusiliers
Drum Head Church Service
Military Gale & Polden
Postcard

AOBA DRUM HEAD SERVICE

Like many things military, it soon became a tradition as did our own Drum Head Service held each year at The National Memorial Arboretum during the AOBA Annual Reunion.



Courtesy of the 66Ers Photo Library

The Schools & College Prayer

Teach us good Lord, to
serve Thee as Thou
deserves;
To give and not to count
the cost;
To fight and not to heed
the wounds;
To toil and not to seek
rest;
To labour and not to ask
for any reward save that
knowing that we do Thy
will;
Through Jesus Christ Our
Lord.

AMEN

The National Memorial Arboretum honours the fallen, recognizes service and sacrifice and fosters pride in our country. It is a spiritually uplifting place and is emerging as a world-renowned centre for remembrance.

Origin - The idea for the Arboretum was conceived by Commander David Childs CBE in 1988. He believed that it would form a living tribute to service men and women for future generations to reflect upon and enjoy. Following a meeting with Group Captain Leonard Cheshire VC, an appeal was launched in 1994 by the then Prime Minister, [John Major](#). He believed that the Arboretum would form a living tribute to servicemen and women for future generations to reflect upon and enjoy.

The Arboretum was officially opened on 16 May 2001. It is a registered charity and is part of The Royal British Legion family of charities.



Courtesy of the 66Ers Photo Library

Photos above depict our very own AOBA ex-Apprentice Canon Beverly John, 66A D Company – fondly referred to as Rev Bev. He often tells us how proud he is to lead our Drum Head Service but the author believes that we are ALL very proud of him!

Chalky White - 66C

Goodbye Arborfield

There's a little place in Berkshire County, down by Reading way,
It isn't very big, quite undistinguished, some might say.
And yet, it's known by thousands, maybe millions, mostly men
Who came and spent some time there, passing through or, then again,
Returning to it regularly over many years,
A place for some of memorable times, for others new careers.

It all began there well over one hundred years ago,
The army needed horses, hence a large remount depot
Was located at the village, being accommodation for
The horses which passed through on their way to the First Great War;
And when the war was ended, it then was left unused
For horses were redundant, as the war had clearly proved.

But then, as years elapsed and war clouds gathered yet once more,
This place became the birthplace of a fledgling military Corps
Forged from the fiery furnace of war's technical demands,
From fields of Europe to the distant, far-off desert sands,
It gathered all the artisans from home and overseas
Who came together, founding a great Army dynasty.

So, from this first beginning in those troubled, war-torn years,
The Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
Carved out a name, so well deserved, for skill and expertise,
In their demanding role in seeing that the Army's wheels
Kept turning at those crucial times of triumph or disaster,
When first class training would decide who was the final master.

And this is where this place, this village with its leafy lanes
Has welcomed thousands of young men and boys to come and train
In technical achievement to maintain, repair, inspect
All manner of devices due to damage or neglect,
Some were volunteers who came to make a fine career,
While others served their National Service after training here.

But in these modern times, when change is often made by those
Who sit in judgement far away in remote, lofty pose,
Complacency is ill advised, and facts somehow contrive,
To change, and in collective wisdom, the time has now arrived
For all that once had gone before, that place of work and play
Is now gone while a new chapter is opened far away.

And what of Arborfield where all those memories reside?
A history distinguished, now fated to be filed
In musty books, a passing phase – hardly worth a glance
To those who in the future come to read it just by chance.
But to us who still remember it with reminiscent smile
It stands as proud as any place in this, our Sceptre'd Isle!

TeeCee

The Ten Commandments

As prescribed by Moses to GOC Aldershot, 1066

1. Thou shalt not take thy Sergeants' name in vain, lest thy name be inscribed on a 252 and a course of endurance be prescribed for thee.
2. Thou shalt not skive nor swing the lead, lest thou shalt be called to repent within the precincts of the Officers' Mess amidst many dirty dishes.
3. Honour thy pay book and Quartermaster all the days of thy service, that thy credits will be as the sands of the desert.
4. Thou shalt not take unto thyself thy comrade's kit, nor borrow thereof during his absence, lest thy sins be thrust upon thee with the quickness of the fist that blacketh the eye.
5. Thou shalt not fritter away worldly goods by brag, pontoon or poker, lest the voice of authority shalt say unto thee, 'Render unto me thy name and number' - and thy shekels be in bondage.
6. Thou shalt not line thy purse with ill-gotten coins, made by the flogging of fags midweek, lest thou incur the wrath of the powers-that-be and thereby abide in 'The Temple of the Glass Roof'.
7. Thou shalt not consult with Publicans, lest thy will be filled to overflow with coarse liquor. For it is written, 'He that gets drunk shalt surely go on the fizzer'.
8. Six days shalt thou labour and on the Seventh do twice as much.
9. Thou shalt not kill if the Cook grieveth thee, but put your complaint through the proper channels, where one must expect little and, without doubt, receive even less.
10. And it shall come to pass that thou shalt go into the street called 'Civvy', take unto thyself strange garments and there study the dole and the drawing thereof.

First published in OBAN 44
Feb 2009

Look What Geordie's Found!

Geordie Wright-Rivers (77C) is responsible for the Property Account in the REME Charity. The property has been gathered over many years from many different historical sources.

Look what he's found this month!

Clearly an apprentice school or college artefact, can anyone out there identify it?

Answers to the Editor and to be revealed in the next magazine.



Idiot Sightings

My daughter and I went through the McDonald's driveway window and I gave the cashier a £5 note. Our total was £4.25, so I also handed her 25p. She said, "You gave me too much money". I said, "Yes I know, but this way you can just give me a pound coin back". She sighed and went to get the manager who asked me to repeat my request. I did so, and he handed me back the 25p, and said "We 're sorry but we don't do that kind of thing". The cashier then proceeded to give me back 75p in change. Do not confuse the people at MacD's.

We had to have the garage door repaired. The repairman told us that one of our problems was that we did not have a "large" enough motor on the opener. I thought for a minute, and said that we had the largest one made at that time, a 1/2 horsepower. He shook his head and said, "You need a 1/4 horsepower". I responded that 1/2 was larger than 1/4 and he said, "NOOO, it's not. Four is larger than two". We haven't used that repairman since... this happened in Ipswich, Qld.

I live in a semi rural area. We recently had a new neighbour call the local council P & W office to request the removal of the WOMBAT CROSSING sign on our road. The reason: "Too many wombats are being hit by cars out here! I don't think this is a good place for them to be crossing anymore". Story from Collingwood, Melbourne.

My daughter went to a Mexican takeaway and ordered a taco. She asked the person behind the counter for "minimal lettuce". He said he was sorry, but they only had iceberg lettuce. From Bankstown, Sydney.....

I was at the airport, checking in at the gate when an airport employee asked, "Has anyone put anything in your baggage without your knowledge"? To which I replied, "If it was without my knowledge, how would I know"? He smiled knowingly and nodded, "That's why we ask". This happened in Elizabeth SA.

The pedestrian light on the corner beeps when it's safe to cross the street. I was crossing with an "intellectually challenged" co-worker of mine. She asked if I knew what the beeper was for. I explained that it signals blind people when the light is red. Appalled, she responded, "what on earth are blind people doing driving"?! She is a government employee in ATO Newcastle NSW.

The Veteran BY MARGARET POSTGATE COLE

We came upon him sitting in the sun
Blinded by war, and left. And past the fence
There came young soldiers from the Hand and Flower,
Asking advice of his experience.

And he said this, and that, and told them tales,
And all the nightmares of each empty head
Blew into air; then, hearing us beside,
'Poor chaps, how'd they know what it's like?' he said.

And we stood there, and watched him as he sat,
Turning his sockets where they went away,
Until it came to one of us to ask 'And you're – how old?'
'Nineteen, the third of May.'"Nineteen, the third of May."

Courtesy of: Alec Powell - 64C

Potteries & District R.E.M.E. Association

WW1 Battlefield Tour - 6th Sept -11th Sept 2018

At 2230hrs on Wednesday 5th of September, a rather diverse group left the Potteries for the overnight journey down to Folkestone to catch the early morning Eurotunnel shuttle to take us on a very busy five day tour around some of the Somme & Ypres WW1 memorials.

The nine member group travelling in the Tri-Services Veterans & Support Group mini-bus comprised 3 members of the Potteries & District branch of the R.E.M.E. Association (John Painter, John Wright & Maurice Hope), 2 ex R.A.F veterans aged 94 (Bert Turner) and 95 (Jim Wild), one gentleman in his late eighties, who we discovered later took size 14 shoes, and could only be an ex Coldstream Guardsman (Peter Batkin), one ex Royal Engineer SSM (Geoff Harriman), one ex Craftsman who during service transferred to become a Royal Signaller, (shame on him) Trevor Bailey, and a young 25 year old lance corporal, Royal Signals still serving with 16 Sigs Regt at Stafford (Tom Lindley), who we had to divert to Aldershot on the trip down to pick up, who had been down there on a Hockey jolly.

During the following days, as well as the expected varied "Squaddie" banter from the Corps members, we also became quite familiar with the ins and outs of the Stirling and also the Vulcan bombers. Not to mention Prostate and Bowel operations etc., that afflicts the elder male of the species.

After alighting from the train somewhat bleary eyed our first point of call was to the spectacular Canadian Memorial at Vimy Ridge, where on Easter Monday, April 9th 1917, all four Canadian Corps Divisions attacked as a composite formation.

Four Victoria Crosses were earned for bravery, three on the first day. There were 3,698 dead out of 10,602 casualties. The memorial

took eleven years to build, and was the only memorial from WW1 that the uncrowned King Edward VIII unveiled on July 26th 1926. There are 11,285 Canadian Soldiers names inscribed on the ramparts, all lost, presumed dead in France.

From Vimy Ridge we made our way inland to the town of Arras, where before booking into our Hotel accommodation for the next two nights, we had two more stops to make in the immediate area.

Our first stop was to the Faubourg d'Amiens Cemetery. At the entrance to the Cemetery stands the Arras Memorial dedicated to nearly 35,000 soldiers of the British, South African and New Zealand forces with no known graves.

Most of these, but not all, were killed in the Battle of Arras, fought between 9th of April and the 16th of May 1917. It gave John Wright the chance to pay his respects to his great uncle Private 203162 Samuel Jesse Wright who served with the 2nd/6th Battalion of the North Staffordshire Regiment, and who lost his life on 21st March 1918, and whose name appears on one of the panels, the first known family visitor to actually attend the site.

Also buried on site were 2,650 known casualties of the Battle. The Arras memorial and the Flying Services Memorial were both built on the site of a previous French military graveyard.

To finish off day one we took advantage of the fact that a small minibus could access a site that normal coach parties cannot, when we visited the WW2 Resistance Execution Square (Le Mur des Fusilles), located in a secluded corner of the old Arras Citadel.

This square is a stark monument to the 218 patriots from various towns and Resistance Groups who were shot dead in the ditches of

the Citadel (Old French Military Barracks), by the German occupiers between 1941 and 1944. Plaques with the names and occupations of the martyrs cover the walls. A single execution post marks the actual point. Many were Polish Coal Miners from the area who struck a blow for their homeland in an adopted country.

At approximately 1600hrs we finally booked into our luxury accommodation, a little bit worse for wear and tired, for the next two nights, The "Premiere Classe Arras Hotel", in nearby Saint -Laurent-Blangy, a cross between a Harry Potter dormitory and two steps down from a Travel Lodge Hotel.

But like all good soldiers, after a couple of hours inspecting the inside of our eye lids, we were all ready to find the nearest suitable diner, and went for the ideal spot. A Buffalo Steakhouse, which did us proud.

Day two of our jaunt dawned with the promise of good weather for the remainder of our trip, and as soon as the usual continental breakfast was out of the way we were all aboard for another busy day.

Our first stop of the day was to be the Poziers Tank Memorial on the Somme Battlefield, which marks the first occasion upon which tanks were used, in the Battle of Flers - Courcellette on 15th September 1916 as part of the ongoing British Somme offensive. The Obelisk memorial on site is surrounded by four mini tanks at a position where tanks had gathered on the previous night before the attack.

Our main visit of the day was to the massive memorial at Thiepval, which is built on the relatively high ground overlooking the Somme River, where some of the fiercest fighting of the war took place.

It towers some 45 metres in height and dominates the battlefield landscape for miles around. It is the largest Commonwealth memorial to the missing in the world, and commemorates more than 72,000 men of the British and South African forces who died in the Somme sector before the 20th March 1918, and have no known graves, the majority died during the 1916 Somme offensive.

It was during the fighting to take the village of Thiepval on September 26th 1916 that Maurice Hope's grandfather, then Cpl Edward William Hope, had won the Military Medal for clearing numerous enemy dugouts single handedly, while serving in the 11th Service Battalion of the City of London Regiment, Royal Fusiliers, who sadly lost his life one year later during the Third Battle of Ypres, known better as Passchendaele.

Following our visit to Thiepval we made our way to the "Auchonvillers Tea Rooms", known to many as the Avril Williams Guest House, for a lunch stop. Never has a plate of Ham, Eggs and Chips been more welcome.

The family run business is in a typical Picardy farmhouse in the heart of the Somme battlefield area, and boasts at the rear a trench network originally built by the French Army in 1914, which was later used as a communications trench by the 29th Division going to and from the front line in 1916.

Across the road from the tea rooms is one of the very best privately owned war museums anywhere, which houses a unique Wall of Remembrance that commemorates those who survived the conflict, as opposed to those who perished, with special named tiles embedded in the wall. Luckily for us, our tour guide is well known to the family (ex RE SSM Geoff Harriman, who just also happens to be the Chairman of the Tri-Services Centre), so we managed to get a private viewing from the owner.

Lunch stop over and bodies revitalised it was off to the nearby site of the attack on Hawthorn Ridge which was a German front line fortification west of the village of Beaumont Hamel. At 0720hrs on the 1st of July 1916, the British fired a mine beneath the redoubt which should have negated the defending German defenders...sadly the plan was thwarted when a war photographer was seen by the defending troops setting up his tripod to record the explosion. The defenders sensing something was about to happen retreated several hundred yards until after the explosion only to return to a defensive position on the crater lip, so that when the men of the 29th Division left the safety of a sunken trench to walk slowly towards the ridge expecting it to be decimated, were savagely cut down by machine gun fire rendering the attack a very costly and total failure.

Our final stop on the day was to the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont Hamel, followed by a visit to the memorial to the 51st (Highland) Division.

A larger than life statue of a Caribou overlooks the 74 acre Dominion of Newfoundland Park, from where the Newfoundland Regiment made an unsuccessful attack on the first day of the Battle of the Somme. It marks the small Regiments first and only major engagement of the war, when in less than 30 minutes the whole Regiment was virtually wiped out.

As a result Canada was given the land in perpetuity by the French people and now own the park which is a National Historic Site of Canada and the surrounding cratered area remains undeveloped to this day, and represents the brave Newfoundlanders symbol of sacrifice and is a source of proud identity.

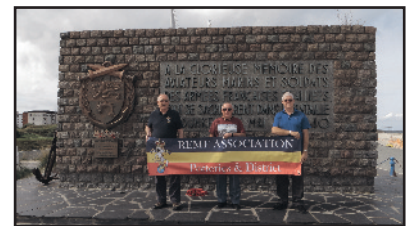
In the adjacent valley is the monument that commemorates the soldiers of the 51st Highland Division who perished during WW1, and is located near to "Y"

ravine on the Newfoundland Park Memorial site. The Division had a major victory here on the 13th of November 1916, during the Battle of the Ancre, in the closing stages of the Somme offensive.

The sculptures model for the "Jock in a frock on a rock", as the memorial has come to be called, is said to be that of CSM Bob Rowan of the Glasgow Highlanders, and faces east towards the village of Beaumont Hamel.

With day 2 done it was back to the Hotel for a wash and brush up prior to our second visit to the Buffalo Steakhouse.

Having got breakfast out of the way we checked out of the Hotel and were back out on the road by 0830hrs for our third busy day, Saturday 8th of September, headed for our first port of call at the Sheffield Memorial Park, which is located on what was the British front line as of 1st July 1916. The park is dedicated to the men of the 12 "Pals Battalions" of the 31st Division, who all took part in the initial attack on the Somme. The Battalions had been raised from local areas in Hull, Leeds, Bradford, Salford, Sheffield, Durham, Barnsley and Accrington.



It was here that "Entente Cordiale" took a bit of a battering...the site is along a narrow track not suitable for coaches, which is exactly what the sign at the entrance to the track states...but being a minibus, which can hardly be termed a coach, it was easily navigable. As we were exiting the track, approximately 100 metres or so from the turn off from the road, we were confronted by a rather irate French farmer who decided not to let us out before he entered the track, constantly gesticulating to the sign, hence the classic "Mexican" standoff situation, while

we were in no position to reverse about a mile from whence we came, and it was far too much trouble for the farmer to reverse his car about a hundred yards to let us out.

After about a twenty minute stand off the problem was solved in the allies favour simply by our driver, Geoff, opening his door and with clenched fist threatening to remonstrate with the said "Frog", who vacated the track faster than an Italian tank in reverse. England 1 France nil!!

With victory assured, we moved on to our next location, the privately owned site of the Lachnagar Mine Crater at La Boisselle. The mine crater was the largest man made crater during the war. It was laid by the 179th Tunnelling Company of the Royal Engineers, and when blown on the 1st of July 1916, the noise was said to have been heard in London. The crater measures a mind boggling 137 metres in diameter at the full extent of the lip, and is 30 metres deep, sadly the surrounding area still contains the undiscovered remains of German, French and British soldiers.

The 34th Division of the Tyneside Scottish, made up mainly of men recruited from Durham and Tyneside, enlisted into the Northumberland Fusiliers who attacked the strong point, and suffered horrendous casualties. The wooden cross on the site was made of roof timbers from a de-consecrated church in Durham.

From the Tyneside Scottish, it was then off to the Red Dragon Memorial to the 38th Welsh Division at Mametz Wood.

The war poet, Robert Graves, who fought in the battle of Mametz Wood, wrote the following....after the battle " It was full of dead Prussian Guards, big men...and dead Royal Welsh Fusiliers and South Wales Borderers, little men", not a single tree was left standing!

(ED's note: "Goodbye to All That" is an excellent book by Robert Graves).

Our Saturday lunch stop was in the town of Albert, which lies on the banks of the river Ancre, and was a key location during the Battle of the Somme. It is situated three miles behind what were then the front lines and many thousands of British troops passed through on the way to the front. The town had to be totally rebuilt after the war. Although the town was captured by the Germans in March 1918 during their ill-fated Spring Offensive, it was retaken by the British in August. The vast underground shelters served as protection for the local residents and now form a main part of the site of one of the most impressive battlefield museums.

Following the lunch stop it was time to hot foot it back to our Hotel on the outskirts of Ypres to get booked into The Hostellerie Daiseldaele, in Dadizele, for the first of our two nights in Belgium. An excellent family run hotel with fantastic food. A short rest, and then it was time to get changed into Blazer and Medal order, in readiness for the main highlight of our visit, the last post ceremony and laying of wreaths at the Menin Gate.

To ensure a parking spot we had to be in the town by 1700hrs, and passed the next two hours or so in a local watering hole, until it was time to take up our position under the Menin Gate (the gateway to the battlefield through which thousands of British Tommies would have gone through on their way to the front, and possibly death!), ready for the nightly ceremony to start at 2000hrs. The Last Post is played by buglers from the local town fire service and has become an integral part of daily life in the town...



It is said that one of the pre requisite qualifications to become a fireman is that they have to be able to blow a bugle! The local people are proud of this simple but moving tribute to the courage and self-sacrifice of those who fell in the defence of their town.

The pre ceremony music was provided by the 1st Claygate Scout & Guide Band from Esher in Surrey, an excellent class one band, who were playing several locations during a short tour in the area. Their bandmaster was an ex Royal Air Force musician from the RAF Uxbridge Band.



Our group of veterans led the way laying their wreaths, with the Potteries & District wreath being laid by Branch President Maurice Hope, proudly wearing a replica MM medal in respect of his grandfather, escorted by John Painter.

L/Cpl Tom Lindley, in No 2 Dress, laid a wreath on behalf of the Royal Signals, and although it was an obvious struggle climbing the steps for our two 90+ RAF veterans they managed to lay their wreaths. Ex RE SSM Geoff Harriman was called upon to recite the exhortation to the dead and the Kohima Prayer, which was not on his agenda at the start of the evening.

Following the service it was chaos negotiating a route out of Ypres, due to coaches etc in all the side streets, but we made it back to the Hotel, which had stayed open to allow us to have our pre booked meal on our return.

Sunday morning saw us visit one of the most well-known venues on the battlefield, the Tyne Cot Memorial & Cemetery. The memorial itself bears the names of some 35,000 officers and men of the British and New Zealand forces who have no known graves.

It is also the final resting place of a further 11,900 soldiers and is the largest Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in the world. Nearly all those died between August 1917 and November 1918. This area is where the Third Battle of Ypres took place, better known as Passchendaele. The cemetery name comes from Tyne Cottage, a barn on the battlefield named by the Northumberland Fusiliers.

Our second morning visit was to the very sombre German War Cemetery at Langemarck, which is one of only 13 German WW1 & WW2 cemeteries in Belgium. In this location there are the remains of 44,000 soldiers buried here, which were brought to this central place from all over the battlefield, in one mass grave alone there are the remains of 24,917. Next to the mass grave are another 10,143 soldiers (Including 2 British soldiers who were killed in action in 1918). A third part of the cemetery holds the remains of 3000 local students.

Sunday lunch was taken along the Menin road at the Hooze Crater cafe and museum. The cafe has some of the best and most intricate trench art made from shell cases anywhere on the battlefield. The adjacent museum is one of the better, smaller privately owned ones, and is housed in an old Chapel built in 1920.

It was around this area of the front line during the battle on 30th July 1915 that the Germans first employed the "Flame Thrower" in warfare. The land changed hands many times during the following years, and was truly stained with the blood of war.

Directly across the road from the cafe is the Hooze Crater Cemetery which has 5,916 burials overall, with 3,500 being of unidentified soldiers. As with many of these cemeteries there are more burials than headstones with, 3, 4 and 5 unknown soldiers buried in a single plot.

It is also here that Edward William Hope MM, of the 11th Service Battalion of the (City of London Regiment) Royal Fusiliers, is buried, so while his fellow travellers were taking refreshment, Maurice Hope was having his photo taken by John Wright at his grandfather's graveside.



Comfort and refreshment break over it was off to our afternoon stop further along the road to Zonnebeke Chateau and the Passchendaele Memorial Museum which is totally devoted to the Third Battle of Ypres in 1917, which during it's 100 days duration nearly half a million soldiers lost their lives for a land gain of only 8 kilometres.

The museum holds the largest public collection of war relics in West Flanders, as well as a well laid out replica trench system highlighting the different trench construction methods used by both sides in the conflict.

Beneath the Chateau is a seemingly endless maze of underground dug out tunnels, twenty feet down a flight of steps, containing enough accommodation to house 2000 men, with a workshop, communications room, headquarters, and first aid post, one could spend a good hour underground.

On arrival we were met with the familiar faces of the 1st Claygate Scout & Guide band which had set

up to play on the Chateau forecourt garden. They obviously recognised us from the previous evening at the Menin Gate, and played the RAF March in honour of the eldest, 95 year old member of our group, and although Jim might deny it, there was definitely a tear there to be seen.

All too soon it was our last day and after a hearty breakfast, and loading our things onto the bus, we were off on a round of short visits before heading westwards towards home.

So it was into Ypres and the Menin Gate to take photos of our wreaths laid on Saturday night, and the obligatory stop at the Belgium chocolate shop on the main square. We hastily left the car park behind us, having reconfigured what was a vertical road sign to a slightly different angle.

Our first stop on our homeward route was to the Essex Farm Cemetery & Dressing Station on the side of the Ypres canal, this site is dedicated to men of the Essex Regiment and was an advanced field dressing station, the cramped concrete bunker buildings where initial medical treatment was carried out are still there to visit, as are the graves of 1,204 dead who are buried in the cemetery.

It was here that the most famous of all war poems was penned by Lt Col John McCrea MD, after the death of his friend, "In Flanders Fields".

The good thing about being in a minibus is that we could gain access to smaller, but no less significant sites that large coach parties pass by. One such site was the Brandhoek Cemetery.

Having left the main road we were able to park on the side of a narrow lane adjacent to the site, and before leaving the vehicle we spotted a poor ewe bleating like mad in the nearby field, somehow it had got its head through the open mesh wire fence and got stuck. Despite the poor animals plight, and after numerous unprintable comments about

the creature's vulnerable position, the youngest member of our group was volunteered to carry out a rescue act: he being the only one capable of climbing over the five barred gate into the field! After several minutes of struggle Tom managed to free the beast, and rescaled the gate. No thanks though from the farmer's wife, who could only remonstrate in Flemish from afar about him trespassing on her land, there's no pleasing some people, but at least the sheep appreciated the act.

With the cemetery located midway between Ypres and Poperinge it was comparatively safe from shell fire, so field ambulances were posted there continuously, with the nearby cemetery being started in May 1915.

The most visited grave on the site is that of Captain Noel Chavasse, VC & Bar, MC, who died here of wounds on 4th August 1917. He was an Officer in the RAMC and was the only man to be awarded both the VC and a Bar during WW1, and one of only three men ever to receive such a distinction. His headstone in the cemetery carries uniquely an inscribed representation of two Victoria Crosses.

With plenty of time on our side, we took a lunch break in the town of Poperinge (a name that resonates with all Craftsman that spent time at the Corps Depot at Arborfield, Poperinge Barracks!).

Poperinge was well known to most British "Tommies" as a resting place some twelve miles from the hell of the front line, before they made the trek back to the trenches.

Although we never paid a visit, it is also still the home of Talbot House, founded in 1915 by the Rev Philip "Tubby" Clayton, which was styled as an "Everymans Club", open to all ranks both Officers and men as a rest and recreational haven away from the then described "debauched recreation life of the town"....The start of the Toc - H.

It also had a very sinister meaning to many others. An authentic execution post located in the town hall courtyard is a painful reminder of the fate that awaited many so called deserters and cowards, during WW1.

Most of these poor souls were made examples of to maintain discipline when their only crime was to be suffering from shell shock or PTSD as we know it now, after days of unyielding artillery fire. The condemned men spent their last night in the death cell, which only had one small window on the world directly overlooking the death post where they would be taken out at first light to be "Shot at dawn".

There were 70 documented executions held here in the courtyard, 50 British and 20 French.

With several hours left before we needed to register for the Eurotunnel trip back to the UK, we had time to get to the coast and visit the port area of Dunkirk. This gave us ample time to visit the beaches and the CWGC Cemetery in the town.

The "Memorial des Alliees" was erected by the French to mark Operation Dynamo and is situated on the sea front at Dunkirk. The memorial was erected in 1962 and was created using cobblestones taken from the quays at Dunkirk. It recalls the courage of those soldiers both French and British that held off the German advance long enough to evacuate some 338,226 men from the beaches that it overlooks.

Being in advance of our schedule, it was, "make a brew time", which allowed us to reflect on what had happened in this place, with the dunes spread out in front of us and what used to be "The Mole" over to our left from where the larger rescue craft managed to embark so many men under intense aerial bombardment. Young Tom could not resist the temptation to

disappear in to the distance over the dunes down to the water's edge, while the remainder enjoyed tea and biscuits.

It had always been our intention, if we had time, to lay a second R.E.M.E. Association Branch wreath during our journey, at the Dunkirk Cemetery where we knew members of the Corps were buried, and so it was with time on our hands we made our way into the town. The Dunkirk Memorial forms part of the town cemetery and features an avenue of vertical memorial panels containing the names of the missing, and a shrine in the form of a shelter which has a very impressive engraved window depicting action from the evacuation from the beaches.

The memorial commemorates some 4,505 dead and missing of the British Expeditionary Force, most of whom fell prior to the Battle of Dunkirk in 1939/40. It was not until some 17 years later that it was unveiled by Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.

The adjacent CWGC cemetery, complete with the Cross of Sacrifice, has 1,040 identified casualties from both the first and second world wars. Within the cemetery are also the graves of some brave Norwegians, Polish and Czech's who perished during the battle.

It was only fitting that John Wright be given the honour of laying our wreath here, as his very own father had been one of the many asked to hold the line till the last minute, and who fell back to Dunkirk to find the beaches full, only to have to make his way up the coast to Calais, where sadly he and many others of the last line of defence were taken prisoner and stayed incarcerated in numerous camps in Germany and present day Poland until the end of the war.

With our duty done and last respects made, it was time to re-board the trusty bus and make our way up the coast to Calais. On arrival and dispensing with

with the formalities of passport control etc., we still had two hours to relax and get those last minute gifts & bottles, and to enjoy a snack and cup of good tea, also allowing our "numb bums" to return to normality (not the most comfortable seats to sit on for five days!), before being called forward ready to get in line for boarding.

With an uneventful tunnel crossing completed, the focus now was to get home as early as possible and bring the curtain down on a very

enjoyable and successful journey, with no mishaps in the company of a great bunch of lads.

Things did not turn out quite as we would have liked, due to taking 55 minutes to navigate around the closure of the M20, and hold ups due to sheer volumes of traffic all vying for road space on the A20, before finally escaping from the south east and making our way northwards, with just one comfort stop in the Birmingham area.

Our provisional itinerary had us down at getting back to the Potteries around 2330hrs, obviously that went out the window with the delays, and after dropping off Tom Lindley at Beacon Bks, Stafford, and two others at their respective doorsteps in Penkhull, we eventually touched down at Veterans House in Newcastle at 1am.

Mo Hope - 59B

The Bohunt School

The AOBA was invited to Bohunt School, Wokingham, on 16 October 2018 to present the Apprentice Cup at their annual awards evening.

They were joined by members of the REME Association and REME RHQ who presented the Bluebell Bowl and the Rowcroft Cup. This is the second time we have been invited to the school and the event goes from strength to strength.



The school sits on precisely the same spot as the trade training wing of the old Apprentice College and by my reckoning (it's hard to get your bearings), the assembly hall is where the electrics and hydraulics training classrooms were.

After a short opening speech by the Chairman, Major (Retd) Geordie Wright-Rivers (77C) presented the Apprentice Cup, Lt Col (Retd) John and Rose Edwards OBE the Bluebell Bowl and WO1 ASM Matt Chapman (98B) and Cpl Albert the Rowcroft Cup.

All three trophies were presented for Science Technology Engineering and Maths subjects which is particularly pertinent. The school uses the motto ENJOY, RESPECT, ACHIEVE, which when you think about it, is as relevant today as it was in our day.

Mike Tizard (76B2) - your Chairman .

A Few ditties from Tom Pollard - 43 Intake

King Arthur says to Lancelot "Why weren't you at the lists today?" Lancelot replies "Oh Sire, I played cards with a Chinaman last night and lost everything". Arthur replies " I understand - it's no jest to joust with a chink in your armour".

What do you call a man with a sausage stuck in each ear? "Anything you like, 'cos he can't hear you!"

What do you call a man with an invoice stuck to his head? "Bill"

Why did the chicken only cross the road half way? It was a Rhode Island Red.

Arborfield Heroes

Following came to me via Jim Gardner. A Hero related to an ex-apprentice....

Andy,

John Dennett is one of the old and bold who has attended the Armistice parade weekend and the AOBA weekend for several years. Attached is a very interesting article about his father who fought in both world wars. Although not directly of and ex Arborfield, his father was obviously a principle factor of John becoming an apprentice at Arborfield.

The collage titled and painted by John "To end all Wars" is a terrific piece of Art by an ex-apprentice which we should all be very proud of and I believe very worthy, with the article, of entry into the OBAN. I've copied John in on this email which I'm sure you wont mind. I am aware that OBAN editors are always looking for interesting articles, this is an excellent article with a connection through John.

I would be very interested in what you think Andy.

Very best regards

Jim Gardner 57A

Artwork tribute to father pitched into horror on horseback

By Toby Neal

In the opening days of the Great War, Fred Dennett's unit went into battle in a manner which would have been familiar during the Napoleonic Wars of over 100 years earlier - on horseback and wielding sabres.



It would not be long before the dash and glamour of the old cavalry regiments was swept away forever under a merciless hail of machine gun fire and shrapnel, and there was the advent of a new warfare of barbed wire and trenches with thousands of lives lost to gain a few hundred yards of barren muddy wasteland.

And now, to coincide with the time of remembrance, Fred Dennett's

81-year-old son, John, has donated an artwork to Shropshire Regimental Museum, which honours and recognises his father's service and evokes the terrible conditions in which men fought.

The museum at Shrewsbury Castle already displays Fred's medals from a long and distinguished service which spanned two world wars and almost 50 years - he served 37 years in the regular army and 12 in the Territorials.

He became a Bandmaster with the King's Shropshire Light Infantry and composed several pieces of military music for regimental occasions.



John, of Darwin's Walk, Shrewsbury, said: "I wanted to - the word is not honour, and remembrance is the wrong word as well - but I thought it was appropriate at this time of remembrance to do a painting of some sort which would recognise his service, and make a donation of it to the museum, which already holds some of my father's memorabilia".

"Since I retired I have become an artist, and the two opportunities collided."

His artwork is a multi-media collage which he has called "To End All Wars". It does not feature his father but "the absolute horror of a landscape blasted by war and high explosive and the conditions these people had to undergo daily."



Christine Bernath, curator of the Shropshire Regimental Museum and John Dennett

Mr Dennett added: "Like lots of soldiers of the First World War, my father very rarely spoke in depth about what happened to him. I got dribs and drabs from friends.

It became more and more apparent about how horrific it was. It was horrific for foot soldiers, but he was doubly exposed because he was on a horse. The fact of having a horse among that industrial war machine was quite poignant and horrifying for me".

Born in London, Fred Dennett was only 15 when he joined the army, serving in the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards as a boy trumpeter. This was a cavalry unit which in August 1914 was involved in the first cavalry sabre charge of the conflict, although he himself did not join the regiment in France until late November. In the Dragoons he had the nickname Spider.

His best pal was Roger Southam, and fate would see both men end up in Shrewsbury - Roger was to become manager of Southam's Brewery in Shrewsbury.

Fred was wounded in the left arm during the conflict and injured in rather different circumstances while serving post-war in strife-torn Ireland. He had had a payout at the bookies after putting a bet on Loch Lomond in the Irish Derby, but on his way home was set upon by Irish rebels and robbed of his winnings, suffering serious head injuries.

After attending the Royal Military School of Music he was, in 1931, posted to the 2nd Battalion of the KSLI as Bandmaster and on the outbreak of World War Two went with the battalion to the Dutch West Indies, returning when the battalion was called back to Europe.



His wife and family, including John, returned separately from Bermuda but on the way back their ship was torpedoed and sunk, which John remembers well despite only being five or six at the time. They were rescued and taken to Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The battalion landed on D-Day and, although John does not have a full picture of his father's service, he would have been with it in Normandy.

"As I understand it traditionally the bandsmen became stretcher bearers, or guards to the regimental headquarters".

His father, who was awarded a host of medals including the MBE, Meritorious Service Medal, and two Long Service Medals, retired in 1948 and took over the 4th Battalion (Territorial) Band, being its bandmaster until his second retirement in 1961, and writing the regimental march which was played on the amalgamation parade.



After his retirement from the regular army he was, for a time, the landlord at the Three Fishes

pub in Shrewsbury, and later the Swan at Hookagate. He died in 1991, aged 93.

Christine Bernath, curator of the Shropshire Regimental Museum, said: "I'm very grateful for Mr Dennett's continued support for the museum and it's lovely to have such a personal addition to his father's medals, which we already have. It's nice to be able to tell such a rich family story relating to the regiment and this will be a real asset to the museum."



The collage has been added to the museum's collection and although there is not currently space to display it with the medals, she added that the winter closure starting in December would give an opportunity to rejig certain things.

Courtesy of:



By [Toby Neal](#)
Feature Writer

A journalist in Shropshire for 40 years, mainly writes features and columns, especially about aspects of the county's history. Lives in Telford and based at the paper's Ketley headquarters.

The General

BY SIEGFRIED SASSOON

"Good-morning, good-morning!" the General said
When we met him last week on our way to the line.
Now the soldiers he smiled at are most of 'em dead,
And we're cursing his staff for incompetent swine.
"He's a cheery old card," grunted Harry to Jack
As they slogged up to Arras with rifle and pack.
But he did for them both by his plan of attack.

Courtesy of: Alec Powell - 64C

AOBA Committee Succession Plan

Appointment	Name	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Remarks
Chairman	Mike Tizard					At AGM			
Vice Chairman	Bill Cleasby								
Secretary	Phil Ellaway						At AGM		
Treasurer	Laurie Blakely				At AGM				Soonest
Memberships	Tim Smithson				Appointed 1 Mar 18				
OBAN Editor	Andy Dickson		Appointed 1 Sep 16				At AGM		
Website	Mark Jobes	Appointed 1 Apr 15			At AGM				
Database/GDPR	Ian Clark			Appointed 1 Sep 17			At AGM		
Recruiting	Bruce Leslie			Appointed 1 Sep 17			At AGM		
Benevolence	Roger Traves				At AGM				
Standard Bearer	Ian Tilson				At AGM				Soonest
Remembrance	Jim Gardner				At AGM				

As discussed at the AGM in July 2018, this is the current AOBA Committee Succession Plan. As you can see there are vacancies that have become available at the AGM and those that will become available soon. As Chairman, it is my duty to make sure we have continuity on the committee and I would ask that you consider the coming vacancies and put your name forward so that we can build a plan and have a smooth transition from the incumbent to the appointee.

Many thanks - Mike Tizard - AOBA Chairman

Arborfield Churches - Chalky White 66C

"Churches - buildings used for public Christian worship; an organized body of religious believers, we were so organized we were marched to church every Sunday."

Arborfield Churches

Arborfield has had one or more church buildings since Saxon times. The Saxon wooden church was replaced in the 13th Century by a flint and chalk building that still exists today as a romantic ruin near the River Loddon. It fell into disrepair by 1862, when the decision was made to build a replacement building on a site much closer to the main settlement at Arborfield Cross. For many years it was hidden by ivy which covered all sides almost to ground level - there's evidence that it was ivy-clad back in Edwardian times.

By the mid-18th Century, a group of Dissenters had built their own chapel opposite the Bull Inn at Arborfield Cross. According to the history published in 1922 by the Women's Institute, in the mid-1800's, "there was an empty Church and a flourishing Chapel, but in a very short time the Chapel was pulled down, as no-one went to it, and those who did not go to

Church regularly every Sunday could be counted on two hands. The men went in the morning and the women in the afternoon in the winter, evening in the summer". **Note** - that's because everyone was in the Brams, notice the men went in the morning so they could go straight to the pub for opening time. Now we know the real reason why we were marched to Church on a Sunday morning...!



However, the legend is cloaked with suspicion and dark goings on, such as virgin apprentices being sacrificed in water tanks!



Courtesy of 66ers Photo Gallery

The replacement St. Bartholomew's Church was consecrated in 1863 and is faced in flint. Some of the building materials were taken from the old church, leaving just the East Wall and the brick-built Conroy Chapel. In the 1930's the Standen Tomb and other monuments were moved into the new church, along with a surviving stained-glass window known as "Aaron's Head", and the roof of the old Conroy Chapel was removed. The new church is about half a mile from Arborfield Cross along Church Lane, on the site of an old farmstead known as 'Elisha's Farm'.

For the full article go to the following link

<http://www.arborfieldhistory.org.uk/churches.htm>

Courtesy of the Arborfield Local History Society

<http://www.arborfieldhistory.org.uk/properties.htm>

Chalky White 66C

Motoring Terms

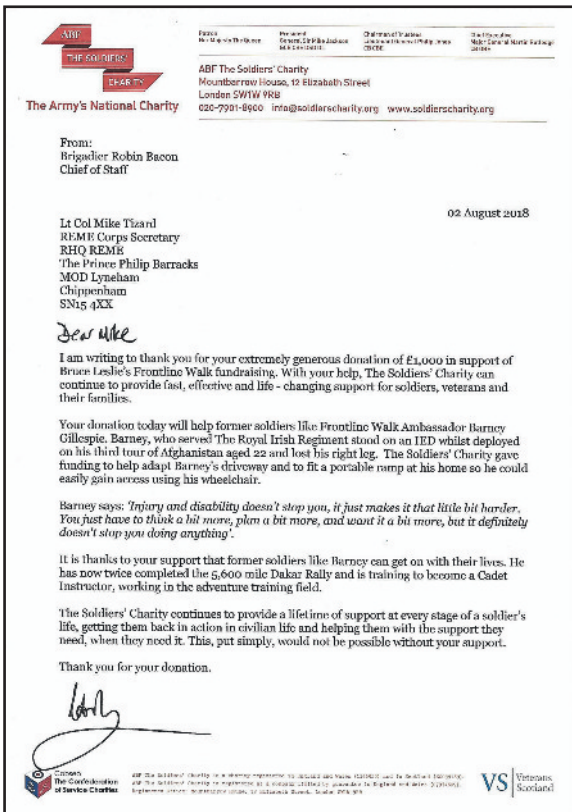
ACCIDENT - Der bludimessen
BONNET - Pullenob und knucklechopper
BREATHALYSER - Die puffintem fur pistenarsen
CLUTCH - Die kuplink mit sclippen und schaken
CYCLIST - Der pedalpushink pillloken
ESTATE CAR - Der bagerroom fur shaggininauto
EXHAUST - Spitzenpoppen bangentuben
FOOTBRAKE - Der edbangeronvindschreen stop-penquick
GEAR LEVER - Biggensticken fur kangaroojumpen
HEADLIGHTS - Das dippendontdazzelubastad
HIGHWAY CODE - Der wipen fur arsen
INDICATORS - Die plinken tickentocken

JUGGERNAUT - Der friggengretten trukken
LEARNER - Die twaten mit elplatz
NEAR ACCIDENT - Der friggen nearen schittenselfen
PARKING METER - Der tennerpinscher und klocken-werr
PUNCTURE - Die phlatt mit bludyfriggen
SEATBELTS - Der klunkenklicker frauleintrapper
SKID - Der bannanan waltzen
SPEEDOMETER - Das Egoboozta mit Digitsundnee dle
TYRES - Flattenfahrts
WINDSCREEN WIPER - Der flippenflappen mucken schpredder.

Charities

At the AGM, The Association agreed to make donations to a few charitable causes.

Below are the responses we have had from those charities.



Letter from: Gordon Bonner - 49B

If a man can take any pleasure it is in recalling the thought of kindness done.

Catullus C84 - c54BC - Roman Poet

Dear Mike,

On behalf of myself and Muriel, many thanks for the very generous donation to us by The Association.

To us it was a ray of light in what is a very dark time, and demonstrates in a very timely fashion, that we are indeed a band of brothers.

Yours as ever,

Gordon



Letter from: Gerry Hill MBE QGM + Bar

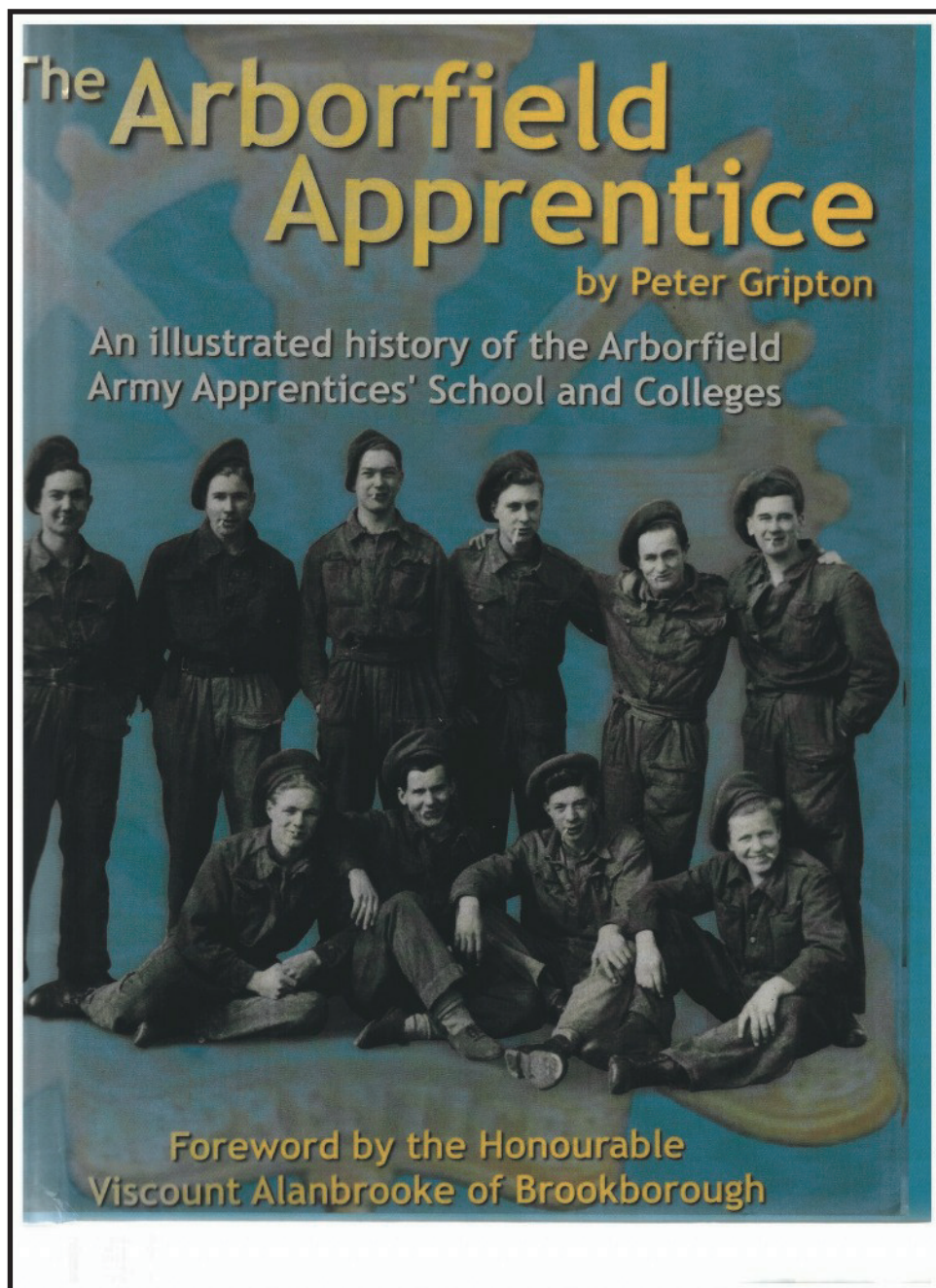
Dear Lt Col Tizard,

Please can we personally thank you for your generous donation of £1,000 from The Arborfield Old Boys Association. The money will make a big difference our former service personnel as they make the transition to civilian life meaningful employment.

When you serve you take on the challenges every day, all of which are designed to make you tougher and stronger. However, leaving the service can be a challenge that many of us feel under prepared for. Hire A Hero helps make that challenge more manageable.

Many thanks once again.

Gerry - CEO Hire A Hero



Available for £21.90 Plus P&P from Lulu.com

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: Apprentice Sgts 1957

Rear Cover: AAC Cake Competition - Year Unknown

Goodbye Arborfield

There's a little place in Berkshire County, down by Reading way,
It isn't very big, quite undistinguished, some might say.
And yet, it's known by thousands, maybe millions, mostly men
Who came and spent some time there, passing through or, then again,
Returning to it regularly over many years,
A place for some of memorable times, for others new careers.

It all began there well over one hundred years ago,
The army needed horses, hence a large remount depot
Was located at the village, being accommodation for
The horses which passed through on their way to the First Great War;
And when the war was ended, it then was left unused
For horses were redundant, as the war had clearly proved.

But then, as years elapsed and war clouds gathered yet once more,
This place became the birthplace of a fledgling military Corps
Forged from the fiery furnace of war's technical demands,
From fields of Europe to the distant, far-off desert sands,
It gathered all the artisans from home and overseas
Who came together, founding a great Army dynasty.

So, from this first beginning in those troubled, war-torn years,
The Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
Carved out a name, so well deserved, for skill and expertise,
In their demanding role in seeing that the Army's wheels
Kept turning at those crucial times of triumph or disaster,
When first class training would decide who was the final master.

And this is where this place, this village with its leafy lanes
Has welcomed thousands of young men and boys to come and train
In technical achievement to maintain, repair, inspect
All manner of devices due to damage or neglect,
Some were volunteers who came to make a fine career,
While others served their National Service after training here.

But in these modern times, when change is often made by those
Who sit in judgement far away in remote, lofty pose,
Complacency is ill advised, and facts somehow contrive,
To change, and in collective wisdom, the time has now arrived
For all that once had gone before, that place of work and play
Is now gone while a new chapter is opened far away.

And what of Arborfield where all those memories reside?
A history distinguished, now fated to be filed
In musty books, a passing phase – hardly worth a glance
To those who in the future come to read it just by chance.
But to us who still remember it with reminiscent smile
It stands as proud as any place in this, our Sceptre'd Isle!

TeeCee

BENEVOLENCE

Please remember that the AOBA maintains a **Benevolence Fund**, for the benefit of any Old Boy who may be in distress or going through hard times. If you know of any case where the Fund can be of assistance, please contact the Secretary. His address is available on the AOBA website.

PRINCESS MARINA COLLEGE

A Brief Historical Survey

1939-1992

by Capt (Retd) DB Richards Dip Ed Tech with additional material by Major MV Costanzo REME

THE FORMATION

The training of young tradesmen in the Army is by no means a recent innovation. Prior to World War Two, Artificers RA, Armourers RAOC (both specialist trades) and other tradesmen for technical corps were trained at Woolwich, Hilsea and Chepstow.

The boys were taken direct from school and taught a trade in a manner similar to industrial practice; except that the military apprentices were also trained as soldiers so that they could take their proper place in the regiments or corps to which they would eventually be posted.

With mechanisation going ahead it was clear, by the early 1930s, that the Army would be unable to obtain enough tradesmen for its needs from adult enlistment and existing apprentice training units. Two hundred Fitter Apprentices were recruited and enlisted on 1 October 1936 of whom 100 started their training at Bramley and 100 at Hilsea.

During the summer of 1939 around one dozen Bramley apprentices went to Woolwich to be trained as Instrument Mechanics, whilst the rest of the Bramley first intake, and a few of the Hilsea intake, proceeded to Aldershot to complete their training. Some older apprentices who completed training in 1939 served in France with the BEF in various Field Workshops.

There was still a shortage of specialist soldier-tradesmen however, so it was decided to build three new Army Technical Schools at Arborfield, Fort Darland (Chatham) and Jersey (Channel Islands). These schools were to produce tradesmen for the special needs of RAOC, RE and RASC respectively.

Here then, we have the seed of our present Princess Marina College at Arborfield, over 50 years ago. The School was designed to house and train up to 1,000 apprentices at any one time.

Building at Arborfield began in 1938 on the site of the Remount Depot and quickly took shape; sports fields, workshops, offices, barrack rooms, gymnasium, NAAFI, officers' mess, sergeants' mess and a hospital. The buildings, like many others of that period, were constructed of wood and corrugated iron and fitted with hot water central heating - they were destined to be in use for 42 years.

Long before they were completed the selection of staff was being considered and some of the first incumbents were as follows; Commandant and Chief Instructor: Colonel FA Hilborn, MBE (late RAOC) Deputy Chief Instructor: Major W Tanner

RAOC Adjutant: Captain C Morgan SWB

Company Officers: Captains P Kaye 5 DG and W Hughes SWB

Workshop Officers: Lieutenants G Trevithick RAOC and C Zweigbergk,

RAOC Chaplain: Reverend Squires, CF

RSM: B Cook, GREN GDS

Civilian Workshop Instructors: Mr MacKereth, Mr Pugh, Mr Wheeler and many more of whom we have no record.

The Commandant and Deputy Chief Instructor were frequent visitors to the site, from Aldershot where they were serving, to advise on the construction and fitting out of the School.

RSM Ben Cook was Regimental

Sergeant Major until 1941 when he was commissioned and became the School Quartermaster. In this appointment he was instrumental in laying out the playing fields, gardens and hedgerows of the camp area - no small task. In 1944 his work was



Warrant Officers and Sergeants in December 1939. The Commandant, Colonel P.G. Davies and on his right, Captain C. Morgan and RSM B. Cook.

recognised by the award of the MBE.

By 1st May 1939 the almost completed School was ready for its first intake of 400 boys who were badged RAOC. The first prospective apprentice, J Oakley, walked from Wokingham Station for fear that he would be late in reporting for duty.

Later that month the square was completed but the workshops were not finished until June. Soon the familiar figure of RSM Cook could be seen leading squads of small, newly-joined boy-soldiers and from a distance his somewhat rasping voice could be heard with remarks like "Now, who is that officer over there? 'Aven't I already told yer?"

RAOC and RASC boys were transferred to Arborfield from Jersey, Hilsea and Didcot, arriving during the summer months. Further intakes followed in October 1939 and in April and October 1940; and yet more arrived from Hilsea and Chepstow.

The April 1941 intake of potential armourers was the last to be badged RAOC. It was also in 1941 that the Drum and Fife Band was formed, composed entirely of ex-pupils from the Duke of York's School. They supported the band of the 4th/7th Royal Dragoon Guards who were stationed at the School whilst the regiment was on active service.

In January 1942, 250 new apprentices arrived, the first to be badged General Service Corps (GSC). Significantly, from the formation of REME in October 1942, all RAOC boys were rebadged REME, the remainder keeping their GSC badges. The School was thus, to all intents, the first School with a direct affiliation to the Corps.

Looking back to 1942 one must sympathise with the apprentices in their aversion to wearing brass ATS insignia on their epaulettes thus confusing them with the then familiar female element of the war-time Army. After the January 1943 intake, the powers-that-be took the point. Cloth shoulder flashes 'Army Technical School', in gold lettering on a black background, gave the more dignified title.

It was in 1942 that 'Monty' visited the School for the first time.

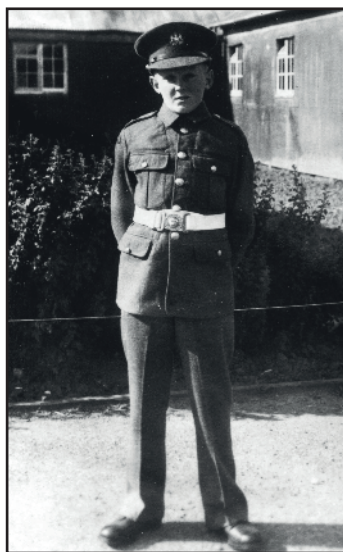
Apart from a break of 12 months (November 1939-November 1940) when Colonel PG Davies, CMG, CBE, was in post, the first Commandant held the chair until September 1943. His regime thus saw, not only the opening of the School, but also the formation of REME. Colonel Hilborn was the only commandant to have served a double tour and he was commemorated by having the then Stevenson Road (after the engineer) renamed Hilborn Road, in his honour.

THE DISPERSAL

Colonel JD White. DSO, MC, (late RAOC) took over as Commandant in October 1943. Two events of particular note during his tour were the 'dispersal' and the initiation of the Woolwich Arsenal Engineering Apprenticeship (later Cadetship) Scheme.

The Woolwich Apprenticeship Scheme was evolved to enable certain apprentices to proceed to Woolwich Polytechnic and the Royal Arsenal, with the object of taking a course culminating in the attainment of an engineering degree or diploma, thereby qualifying for an engineering commission. In November 1944 eight apprentices were selected for

the course from candidates put forward by Arborfield and Chepstow.



The Arborfield Apprentice. A/T (now Lt Colonel) P.A. Daykin

The same term a new commitment was placed upon the School, that of training apprentices as Draughtsmen (mechanical). This was necessitated by the closing of the Army Apprentices School, Taunton.

The 'dispersal' took place at the time when the invasion forces were assembling for the Normandy landings; the School was evacuated and Arborfield became a concentration area for troops.



'Monty' talks to an apprentice in 1942 with Colonel Hilborn behind.

Beginning on 17th April 1944, Colonel White's command was dispersed in detachments to Aldershot, Ashton-under-Lyne, Ashford (Kent), Bury (Twocross), Chilwell, Donnington, Greenford,

Gopsall Hall (near Nuneaton), Old Dalby, Sevenoaks and Woolwich. The Aldershot detachment, of 115 apprentices, continued their trade training at 13 Command Workshop. Only 67 returned to Arborfield. Of the remainder, 29 had already passed their trade tests and were awaiting postings.

The 72 in the Ashton-under-Lyne detachment started at Aldershot in the Motor Fitters' School. They then went to Ashton-under-Lyne, to the 14th Technical Training Centre, to complete the driving part of the course. 25 returned to Aldershot to await posting age.

The Ashford (Kent) detachment was 140 strong. Conditions were found to be much harsher than at Arborfield and they also experienced the whims of the flying bomb. The Bury detachment also found difficulties at first, in accommodation and training facilities, but soon settled down as a happy, compact unit sharing Lowcroft Camp with the School of Electric Lighting. The Chilwell detachment found considerable interest in attending workshops because of the variety of material being turned out for D-Day. Donnington, too, appears to have been a happy detachment; there were no complaints about the food, accommodation or training and there was no doubt that the boys left behind a good impression of the Army Technical School.

To be continued.....

Editors Note:

This article is part of a booklet titled "A Brief History" of Princess Marina College. It was handed to me at the last committee meeting at Lyneham in October by Mike Tizard.

There are copies held in the Archives in the REME Museum.

I will publish sections of it in subsequent OBAN's.

This edition was published by Colonel P. H. Gibson (Commandant) in June 1992.

Apologies for the quality of the photos. I can only work with what I have. - Ed

Letters to the Editor

A couple of weeks ago I met with Dave Cosway at the REME Museum for some lunch and a chat. While I was there I was approached by one of the staff and given an envelope addressed to me care of the Museum.

Inside was a card from Colin Long who was making contact to see if he could get back on the list of OBAN. I did some checking and he was already on the mailing list but obviously, after reading the letter below, we had the incorrect address for him.

I wrote to him and told him that we had made the alteration on the database and that he should receive copies automatically from now onwards. I will also pop a few back copies in the mail to him. This raises a question in that how can we as an organisation help our colleagues who become lost to us through no fault of their own? If Colin hadn't had the foresight to contact me via the Museum we would never know where he was.

If anyone would care to write to him, please contact me and I will give you his address.

Andy Dickson (66B) OBAN Editor

Dear Andy,

Many thanks for your letter dated 3rd Sep.

I have some old copies of OBAN but will be delighted to receive any published from this day forward. My renewed interest came about some weeks ago when reminiscing to myself about my days at the school and who was the permanent staff RSM. Eventually, McNally came to mind and I recall as a "Jeep" being given a talk by him in which he said that he didn't wear underclothes and even in the summer "Short Sleeve Order" period he still kept his SD jacket on and buttoned up to the neck. I certainly couldn't have done it.

He lived in a cottage not far from the school gates and kept chickens so you can bet he had an egg for breakfast each day and a chicken dinner every so often.

At the moment, I am living in a care home. My wife passed away two years ago after becoming ill with three types of cancer making it impossible to find the major cause and therefore treat it.

About ten years ago I started taking a long time to pass water, (Piss), and found that my prostate gland was blocking up and I was taken into hospital for a "re-bore". Coming out of the anaesthetic I heard two nurses talking about how I had died on the table and had to be resuscitated.

Sometime later I had water works problems again and after further consultation it was decided to remove the gland altogether, so another operation and I had to be resuscitated again. This seems to have worked but I do have to wear a large incontinence pad, (Baby's for the uninitiated), and change it twice a day. I have an especially large one that takes me through the night.

All this means that I can no longer look after myself and I am therefore in a care home with carers available at the touch of a call button. I have to pay for this out of the money I received from the sale of my home. When it runs out I will be at the mercy of the NHS.

I have a good relationship with my carers and the food they provide is excellent. I have no complaints but I most enjoy when I have chips for lunch and make myself "chip butties". Pork, mashed potatoes, carrots and gravy today.

You have my permission to publish this letter if you want to.

Yours sincerely

Colin Long (49B) and proud of it.

Pete Gripton, 56B, writes:

I may be a little premature here, but it is heartening to see that the '*Letters to the Editor*' column appears to have 'taken off' quite well, if OBAN 71 is anything to go by! I have been sitting around for over an hour this afternoon, while our 'gardening care' people have been outside of the house, front and back, aerating, scarifying and re-seeding the so-called lawns! I say 'so-called' because, after the hot summer this year, the grass has certainly taken a hammering – looking like the left-overs following a World War One battle-scene! Ah well, no complaints, at least it was a summer to remember – and, at my number of advanced years, one not to be sniffed at! In the past few weeks my wife and I have been fortunate enough to spend a few days in each of three beautiful areas of the country – The Cotswolds, Yorkshire Dales and Lake District. And next week, all going well, we shall be spending a week down on the lovely Gower Peninsula just outside Swansea. Can't be bad eh? Best wishes to all ex-brats reading this.

Regarding Colin Newby:

2nd October 2018

Dear Andy,

Your belated entry in the deaths in the recent OBAN brought back memories of Colin Newby, whom I knew well initially from our time together at Arborfield. We played together in the Arborfield Apprentices' cricket team in the summer of 1951. I next met him some 30 years later in 1983 when he joined my headquarters as a Colonel running a Branch at the Logistic Executive of The RAOC Directorate HQ at Andover. He had been awarded the OBE in the 1983 New Year Honour's list for his work in an earlier appointment as a Lieutenant Colonel. He was married to Christine and had a young daughter. After initially living in a married quarter, he then bought a house in Andover. Unfortunately, on the weekend before the family were due to move in he suffered a brain stem infarction, which left him totally paralysed and although completely aware of what was going on could only communicate by blinking his eyes. He very bravely continued to live in this way for a further ten years until he died in 1993.

Yours sincerely

Gerry Berragan 48B

One from Tom Pollard - 43D

After reading my article about Arborfield an Old Boy asked me "What about sex?" I declined politely, saying that I had always been straight and besides I was far too old. He said that he meant about sex at Arborfield.

I said there was no such thing as far as I knew; in those days there were no sex education lessons and, being an only child raised by grandparents, all I knew was that there were boys, who had short hair and wore trousers, and girls who had long hair and wore skirts. I had attended mixed schools, but at play times there was no mixing - boys ran around at one end of the playground and the girls were at the other end, either skipping or standing in giggling groups. Later on I went to dances in Reading. I only danced as I had to leave early to get back to camp.

When, after the Passing Out Parade, we were sent to Maidstone it was a different matter; we were now men. I went to a dance in the Corn Exchange and danced all evening with a charming lady who was lonely as she had lost her husband during the War. I walked her home afterwards and she invited me in as it was a cold night. She stoked up the fire and we sat on the sofa, talking. From Maidstone I returned to Arborfield and stayed with her at weekends until I was posted abroad a year later. She wrote to me soon after, saying that she was getting married, so I hope she enjoyed a very happy life.

Happy days.

Tom Pollard - 43D

Tom Pollard - 43D Writes

In the 40s there was the Woolwich Arsenal Engineering Apprenticeship Scheme. Sixteen boys were selected to be on a year-long course to prepare them to be a Woolwich Cadet, and at the end of the course some became Cadets at Woolwich. In 1945 Adams, Evans, Hickson, Norman, Sands, Saxton, Stanley and Stark passed. In 1946 again sixteen were selected, of whom I was one, and only five passed - Burton, Norman, Owen, Crabb, and Taylor. All I remember of the course is that we went to Sandhurst to use their Chemistry Lab, as the School did not have the facility. I remember nothing of any instruction or teachers; I do recall Owen and myself being in an empty classroom and using our berets as frisbees. Owen was accepted, and I was not, perhaps because he caught the beret more than I did!

I did not want to become an engineering apprentice, but of course we had to do as ordered. I don't know if going to Woolwich meant a successful life; did anyone come across any Cadets who had become Officers? For those of us not chosen it meant that we had lost a year of trade training, and consequently I, for one, had to have an extremely simple trade test, being instructed what to do, and then classified as a Telemech (Field). I could have unscrewed the back of a radio but would then have been stuck. It was so arranged that wherever I was posted I never had to attempt any repair.

Did the Woolwich scheme continue until the end of Arborfield? Are there any readers who were beneficiaries of it? I hope they will let us know.

Tom Pollard 43D

A piece of history from Eggy Egleton - 52B

The Rank of Lance Corporal in REME

Back in 2010 I mentioned about L/Cpl not being a rank. I was talking to a retired Royal Artillery officer and he did not know that L/Cpl was only an appointment. Some old boys do not realise that REME was one of the first units to make L/Cpl a rank. Until 1st September, 1961 L/Cpl was a local appointment and when posted you lost the rank. REME created the rank of Corps L/Cpl the man had to be qualified to be a Cpl. i.e. second class trade, second class education and second class regimental. On completion of my second class recovery course at Bordon in January 1959 I was made a Corps L/Cpl as I was already a local L/Cpl with two service stripes.

Sometime ago there was an article about pipe bands. When we arrived at Arborfield in 1952 the Pipe Major was in the Irish Guards and called Batt, when he left, a Sgt in the RAEC took over.

Eggy - 52B

Tom Pollard writes:

"At Arborfield did H.M.G. a stately pleasure
dome decree
t'would be a home for bright eyed boys
happy with their teenage joys
of filing metal flat and true
only a perfect cube would do.

It would include a marching ground
for all the boys to double round
ordered by the sergeant's cries
sweetly rising to the skies.

They would be fed with food divine
with porridge and sweet trifle fine
a NAAFI there would also be
to provide them with both cakes and tea.

Accommodation there would be
in huts of utmost luxury
many happy hours would pass
buffing the floor to look like glass.

P.T.I.s would teach them games
all of them had famous names.
At their trades they'd soon excel
and all gloom they'd just expel.

After three years they would be
fit to serve the old country,
boys no longer, now they're grown
into men who'll stand alone."

Old Tom - 43D

Arthur Ward e-mails:

Even today, I am not sure whether I did! It was on one sunny afternoon, back in those troubled EOKA days of Cyprus, where, I had been left in charge of Armourers shop resulting from our WO having a hockey accident to his knee cap requiring some Treatment in the UK.

Now, because many camps had been fired upon by some passing private vehicles, we were instructed to place two fixed LMG mountings at the entrance of our tented camp, 1 Infantry Workshop REME, close to the old Nicosia, Kykkos road.

Because our area was rock hard, a generator with a pneumatic drill arrived at the scene.

Someone elected me for the job which meant that after fuelling up and being unsure of the correct grip, I was to attempt starting this rather large generator left at the gate.

I began to swing the cranking handle which on the third attempt, back-fired only to swing me upward in the wrong direction.

My next view was of a clear sky while being then grounded and flat on my back, only to be questioned by my passing OC as to my health.

Speaking without a salute, I managed to groan that my right arm seemed numbed and twisted at the wrist, where upon he carried on to complete his daily camp inspection leaving me to take the first Landrover to the BMH which was then situated on the outskirts of Nicosia on the Larnaca road .

After the X-ray it was explained to

me that a lot of small bones in my right wrist had been damaged.

The hospital Ward where I first rested my weary arm, hoping for a better style of food, was already near full with those who had been on the ground near to a bad helicopter crash landing, so that they had all been struck by its many flying parts.

The next thing was to be given the jab to make me sleepy then I was carted out into the sunshine to be lifted up two steps into what I thought was a very small operating room only to be shaken all over the place until I realised that it was in fact the back of another ambulance as I was transported to somewhere else.

Once on the slab and half smiling at the masked governor of my fate, I was given the a jab followed by those long remembered words:

"Tell me when you taste onions?"

I tried and believed that I really did taste them until being lost in the mist of forgotten time.

Later I was to awake in that same ward where I noted that the helicopter mob were all being made ready for transport to somewhere.

When learning that this was to be UK, I thought, "My luck is in". Soon everyone was gone, except me. "Sorry lad you're back to unit tomorrow", I was informed.

Back at unit complete with right arm in plaster, my unsmiling CSM, believing me to be disabled ordered me back to my tent until when attending the required Pay parade I saluted with my left

hand. (As I remembered from our 1950's wounded drill instructor at Arborfield, Sgt Buckley, Grenadier Guards). It was then that the pay Sgt called me to sign my Statement of accounts.

The cat was now out of the bag, so to speak because our CSM remarked, "You didn't say you were left handed!". To which I replied, "You didn't ask me sir!" That did it because it was then that I became the instant CSM's Clerk with its only perk being to put everyone on the list for guard duty except me.

I must, in fairness, explain that the state of mind of our CSM was often governed by his recurring migraine, forcing him to disappear into his darkened tent for long periods. Peace on earth for all!

Being both keeper of the CSM's peace and overseeing the armourers shop work was not a great work load but I might be doing some other lucky/poor devil out of this prestigious position with our non-smiling CSM, so I requested to return to trade and to be excused any generator drill.

After my near six weeks of being the one arm scribe, come bicycle mechanic, the medics cut off my plaster of encumbrance.

Recently, when accepting an operation at the NHS in UK, I would relate the onion story to the anaesthetist who was about to do his needle work on me.

He, while smiling through his mask remarked that he only uses Strawberries!

Arthur Ward 50B

Obituaries

The death of Gerald (Gerry) Conlon 83B DOD 18.07.18 has been reported in the obituary column of the Craftsman September 2018.

The obituary reads: Former Corporal Gerald (Gerry) Conlon. It is with much regret that we must announce the passing of Corporal Gerry Conlon who after a short illness, passed away 18 July 2018. Gerry enlisted into REME at Princess Marina College, Arborfield as a Technical Clerk on 16 August 1983. He served with 4 Armd Div Transport Regiment (84-87) 6 Armd Wksp REME (87-89) and Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (89-90). Leaving the Army at the later end of 1990. Gerry was an accomplished sportsman and represented REME BAOR at sailing, with the highlight in winning the Girling Sailing Trophy as a member of the team 1987. He was also a talented runner and a competitive Biathlon contestant representing the REME in Germany.

Ann Burt (Wife of Alex Burt)

You may not be aware that on 12th October the TAAPAD Pipe Major, Alex Burt sadly lost his wife, Ann, of nearly 50 years to cancer? The Corps Col and AOBA both independently sent him a card, and when I met him today (24th October) at Ann's funeral (Medway Crematorium) he was totally bewildered as to 'How did they know'???

He was also more than 'touched' when the pipe band he formed 3 years ago, (of mainly ex REME apprentices) also showed up at his wife's funeral in a show of strength and support, some travelling from as far away as Germany!

Alex is always posting items on Facebook of the funerals he attends to play the bagpipes for fallen colleagues, friends and relatives, so today it was the combined agreement of his TAAPAD colleagues that he be fully supported.

I am not one for narratives, and spent 23 years in the Wiltshire police dodging the press and media like bullets! So, can I please leave this with you to insert appropriate words to accompany the attached images, which were captured by another TAAPAD band member, Tony Church (TC to all that know him) and he has given his full permission to use these photos in both the Craftsman and AOBA magazines. Perhaps the memo in the article for the serving staff is that when they leave the service, AOBA is there for them to still help and support and provide opportunities to continue and increase friendships with people of a 'shared experience'!?

I attach photos of TAAPAD lining up to receive the hearse, and after the service, with Alex (wearing the red jacket).

Nick Cane ('76C)



Barrie James Parker - 65C B Coy



Barrie passed away on the 1st April 2018 after several years fighting against serious illness.

Barrie became part of 65C B Squad/Company in September 1965 & was "christened" with the nickname of "Specs" due to his wearing "Buddy Holly" style glasses. This was in preference to being called "Horace" as Barrie came from Keynsham (that's K-E-Y-N-S-H-A-M!) at the time Horace Batchelor could be heard most nights on Radio Luxembourg advertising a football pools system.

On moving to the Company from J Coy, Barrie and Mike Shepherd, being very astute, on having to "choose" a hobby, realised that being a member of a band they had to go to band practice in the mornings instead of parades or fatigues, and would occasionally attend outside functions, so they joined

the Pipe Band. Although not from a Scottish background, Barrie was very committed to and enjoyed being a member of the Pipe Band.

Barrie completed his training as a Vehicle Mechanic at Arborfield and after "Passing Out" served with, amongst others units, the Queen's Royal Irish Hussars and the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment.

Barrie met Carole, his "Bride to be" in Mudeford, near Christchurch and they were married on the 10th April 1976. Barrie was very proud of their 3 children, Raymond, Jemma & Claire and loved spending his time with the grandchildren. He would have been so pleased to have met his latest grandson but sadly this was not to be.

The Army & REME was a huge part of Barrie's life which he classed as "Family". So much so, that after leaving the Colours and settling in to civilian life, where he started off as a mechanic and later moved on to become an HGV Driver.

He joined the TA & became a Captain in the Army Cadet Force and was greatly respected by all his cadets. Being a very sociable and helpful man, Barrie got involved with and gained great appreciation and respect from the charities "Sae our Soldier", "Care after Combat" and "SSAFA". He was also involved with the Bristol branch of the REME Association, as the Membership Secretary, as well as serving on the AOBA Committee for several years until ill health prevented him from continuing.

Barrie's funeral took place on the 23rd April at Haycombe Crematorium in Bath and befittingly was very well attended.

Alex Burt & TeeCee, dressed splendidly in their Pipe Band Regalia, led and accompanied the Cortege to the Chapel, playing the Army Apprentices March on entry to the Chape, then playing again for the move from Chapel to the Garden of Remembrance.

Amongst the family and many friends, there were six of us from 65C. (5 of whom shared the same barrack room as Barrie). Several more from other intakes and many friends from the TA, REME Association and the Royal British Legion. The AOBA Chairman, Mike Tizard, laid the AOBA wreath and Stephen from the Bristol branch attended with their Standard.

Typical of Barrie's outlook on life was his choice of the final song of the service which was "Always look on the bright side of life".

Barrie will be greatly missed by his wife Carole, children Raymond, Jemma and Claire, and his grandchildren, Elliot, Patrick, Orlagh and Aaron.

Carole would like to give her heartfelt thanks to all of the "Old Boys" who attended Barrie's funeral and for all the messages of condolences.

RIP Barrie.

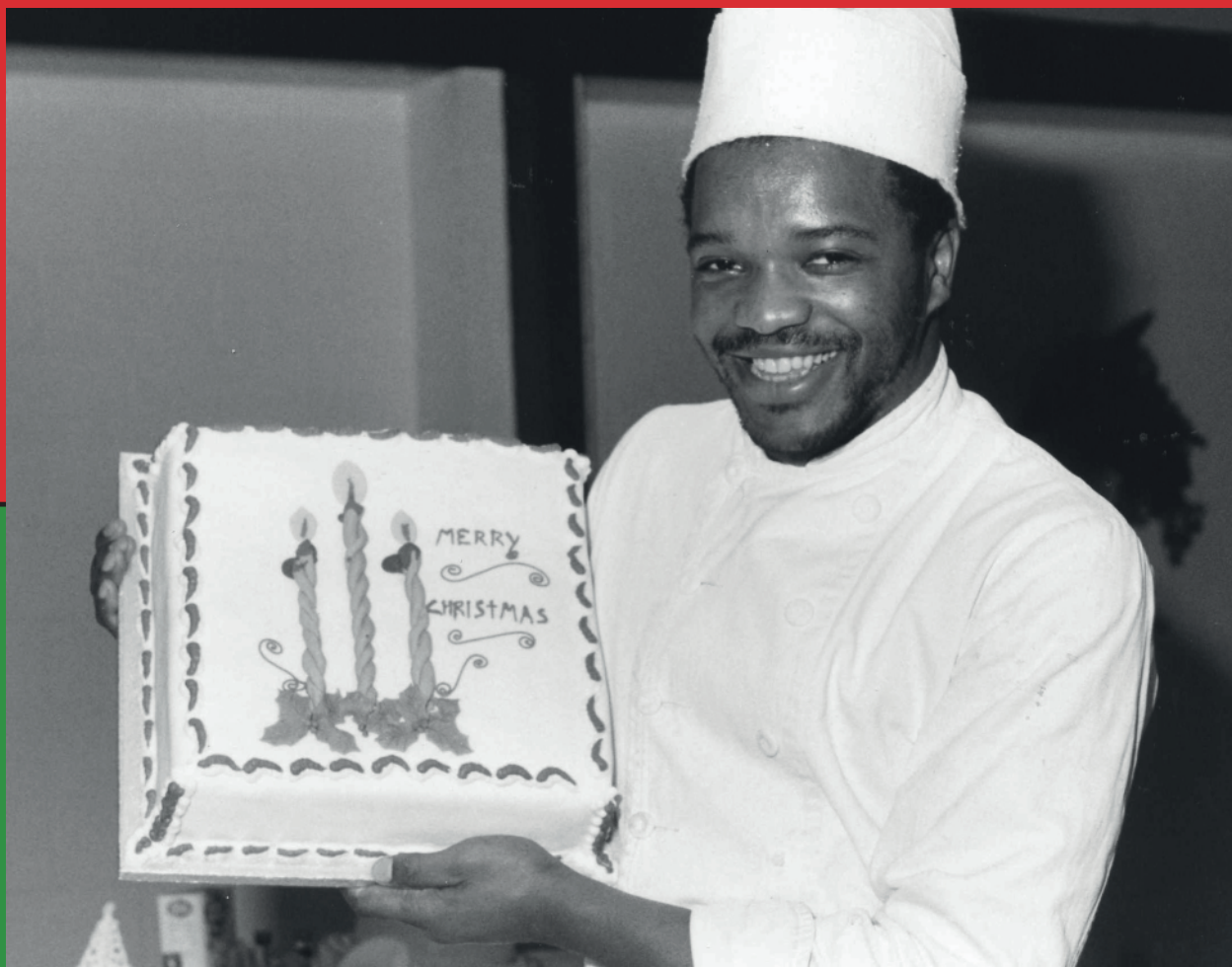
Dave Cosway 65C B Coy

New Members Joined the AOBA Since July 2018

Initials	Surname	Christian Name	Division
DD	Airdrie	David	69C
S	Barnes	Steven	76A
PR	Beard	Paul	77C
P A	Binns	Paul	81B
C	Butt	Colin	73C
AR	Edwards	Tony	71C
P	Hammond	Phil	69A
RG	Holden	Bob	52C
A	Stone	Tony	77C
MT	Thomas	Mark	75C
RM	Twentyman	Dick	67B
PA	Williams	Peter	73C

Reported Deaths since OBAN 71

Name	Intake	DOD	Information received from
James Patrick (Jimmy) McGuire	52A	15-Jul-18	Reported by Gerald Peck. Widow Jenny
Brain Derek (Lex) Barker	54B	04-Aug-18	Reported by daughter Gillian Langton
Gerald (Gerry) Conlon	83B	18-Jul-18	Craftsman September 18
George Cassells	49B	11-Jun-56	Gordon Bonner Belated entry
Roy Bruce McGarvie	43A	29-Aug-18	BACs reported by Laurence Blakley
Eric Desmond Stratford	H35	25-Sep-18	Chris Dennis
William (Bill) Bailey	60B	19-Sep-18	Mike Davis
Stanley Brian (Stan) Earle	57A	23-Sep-18	Bob Sleep
Bruce Thomas Cooksey	64A	10-Jan-18	Incorrectly noted as PS in OBAN 71



**This photo is from the AOBA Archives.
Probably a Christmas Cake competition.**