

**Mar
2022**



**Issue
82**

Arborfield Old Boys Association Newsletter



ARBORFIELD OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION



President

Colonel Jason Phillips ADC

Vice Presidents

All past Commandants

Chairman

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

Secretary

Nigel Deacon (77C)

Vice Chairman

Lt Col Bill Cleasby (Retired)
MBE, IEng, FIET, SQ(W) (61C)

Membership Secretary

Maj Dave Sparrow (Retired)
IEng, MSOE, MIRTE (76B2)

Treasurer

Lt Col Bob McKeegan-Brown (Retired) -
(69A)

Webmaster

Mark Jobes (77C)

Recruitment Officer

Bruce Leslie (75C)

Database Manager

Temporarily Vacant

Bereavement Officer

Roger Traves - (57A)

Editor of the Association Newsletter

Andy Dickson (66B)

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.

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Front Cover: Barry Boswell - Year? (Anyone who can tell me what year this is please?)

Rear Cover: C Coy - Year? (Anyone who can tell me what year this is please?)

AOBA Chairman's Report



Dear Members,

I hope this OBAN finds you all fit and well.

I sincerely hope that we have put the pandemic well and truly behind us, and we can, after what seems a very long two years, move on with our lives at last.

When I look back over my past OBAN reports and emails, they read like a potted history of the pandemic, each one reflecting the latest 'buzzwords' from the Government. Let's hope they are confined to history and our lives can return to a semblance of normality.

My pleas for help in the last OBAN have been answered and I would like to thank our new committee members for stepping up and volunteering. You will read about the changes later in this OBAN, but Tim Smithson will be replacing Roger Traves as our Bereavement Officer in July (after the reunion) and Nigel Deacon has already taken over from Phil Ellaway as our Secretary.

A warm welcome to Tim and Nigel and our sincere and heartfelt thanks to Roger and Phil who have both given many years of loyal service; thank you.

I am pleased to confirm that in conjunction with our partners, Isle of Wight Tours, the reunion will take place as planned over the weekend of the 8/9/10 July 2022; you will find a booking form later in this publication.

In my opinion, by far the best and easiest option to book your place is to give Isle of Wight Tours a call and pay by card, but they will also take the paper booking form and cheque if you would prefer.

Central funds are offsetting the overall costs by a considerable sum to ensure that the cost to the individual stays around the same as in previous years. The exception to the rule is for the price of Option 3, the dinner only option, which has seen a sizeable increase. We have done this for good reason as in previous years some individuals decided to pay separately for the dinner and booked their room independently to get the best price. What's wrong with that you may ask (!), well nothing, except the same individuals wanted to have the coffee and cake at the AGM and take the coaches to and from the NMA. This new method should prevent individuals cheating the system. I regret having to go to these lengths, but it does ensure fairness for all.

The reunion will follow a similar format as in previous years, but we are anticipating an increase in numbers due to us celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the 70, 71 and 72 intakes.

An instruction will come out prior to the event, but in short, we will meet at the NMA for an 1100hrs parade which will be supported by our most excellent Pipes and Drums; let's hope they have been practicing. We stay at the NMA for a church service at the Apprentices Memorial (with family members) to remember those no longer with us, before moving to Jury's Hotel in Hinkley. Then it's the AGM at 1600hrs and the Gala Dinner later in the evening. It's a busy but enjoyable day with like minded friends.

I'll close, by bringing you some sad new which has some wider implications. Back in the autumn we were informed of the passing of Paul Sancto who had named the AOBA as a beneficiary in his will. We have since received a large donation into the funds and we are planning to ensure the money is put to good use and we can remember Paul annually at every reunion; more on this at the AGM.

My final thought has to go to those brave souls in the Ukraine who are standing up to the Russian invasion.

Where is the world heading (?) ... stay safe. I hope to see you all at the reunion in July, but in the meantime, take care.

Mike Tizard

Your Chairman
Arte et Marte

Members Passed since OBAN 81

Name	Intake	DoD	Info Received From
Vernon Anderson	74C	22-Nov-21	June Anderson
John Leonard Dennett	51B	21-Nov-21	Jim Gardner
Thomas Grant	42C	01-Jul-21	Craftsman Dec 21 edition Son Alastair Grant
David Charles Giles BEM	64A	13-Nov-21	John Plumb
Robert (Bob) Langley	52B	18-Dec-21	Gerald Peck
Carl G Hayhurst	53A	20-Dec-21	Daughter Alison
Michael Antony (Mike) Scott	68C	03-Nov-21	Craftsman Jan 22 edition Pat Nulty
Joseph F Upritchard	57A	31-Dec-21	Mike O'Driscoll 57A
David (Dave) Thompson	77C	19-Jan-22	Colin Gornall 77C
Maurice David Hutchins	43B	26-Dec-21	Son Allan Hutchins
Christopher James Bates	64C	05-Feb-22	Toby Fields
George Peacock Nobel	61A	03-Feb-22	Roger Elsworth
Thomas Eric (Tom) Wilkins	76C	31-Jan-22	Richard Jones
George Thrower	52A	?	Daughter Lynn
A M Cunningham	42A	?	BACs (Written a letter)
N C Wright	46A	?	BACs (Phoned & left a message)

Stand Easy - By TC

No need at last to turn out more than the usual 'five minutes before'
 No final rub with yellow duster assembling for the morning muster,
 Duties now are in the past it's time for you now to 'stand fast',
 You did your time, you gave your best, and now you've more than earned your rest;
 So sleep your sleep Old Soldier - Friend, contented, knowing in the end,
 That all your friends will pause awhile and fondly think of you – and smile.

Following is a list of unconfirmed deaths of ex Apprentices. If anyone has any details to corroborate the details please get in touch with me via the 'Contacts Page' on the AOBA website.. Andy Dickson 66B

Name	Div	Name	Div
A. Findlay	53B	Bernard Gilbert	42A
George Benfield	41	Cecil Bennett	H36
Anthony (Tony) Reeve	66A	Peter (Pete) H Ayres	66A
David (Jock) F Atkinson	66B	Robert Hall	66B
Ronald Carter	66C	John D Harley	66C
D. P. Lowe	66C	Douglas Knapp	67C
Paul (Brum) Grosvenor	67C	James (Jim) Culley	44A
Michael (Mick) J Clearly	60B	David J Higman	53A

AOBA Committee Succession Plan

Appointment	Name	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Remarks
Chairman	Mike Tizard							At AGM	
Vice Chairman	Bill Cleasby							At AGM	
Secretary	Nigel Deacon							Appointed Apr 2022	
Treasurer	Bob McKeegan-Brown				Appointed Jul 19			At AGM	
Membership	Dave Sparrow			Appointed 1st Oct 18				At AGM	
OBAN Editor	Andy Dickson	Appointed Sep 16						At AGM	
Website	Mark Jobes					Appointed 2020		At AGM	
Database/GDPR	Vacant							ASAP	Soonest
Recruiting	Bruce Leslie		Appointed 1st Sep 17					ASAP	Soonest
Benevolence	Roger Traves								Tim Smithson At AGM
Standard Bearer	Dave Merrick						Appointed Nov 2021		
Remembrance	Steve Thornes						Appointed July 2021		

We are very happy to announce a few changes to the committee. Geordie Wright-Rivers will be assuming the Chairman Role and I will be stepping down and assuming the Vice Chairman role at the AGM in July. We will ask Bill Cleasby to take up an advisory role as Vice President. Also, Nigel Deacon has stepped forward and will replace Phil Ellaway as Secretary at the committee meeting in April. After a long stint as Benevolence Secretary Roger Traves is standing down and Tim Smithson has volunteered to take on this important task. We also welcome our new Standard Bearer Dave Merrick and Remembrance member Steve Thomes. This leaves the very important position of Database/GDPR manager vacant. If you think you may have the skills to fill this post please contact me asap.

Many thanks - Mike Tizard - AOBA Chairman

Secretary's Report



Hello, Everyone.

This is my last report as Secretary. Some of you may know that I actually resigned in December 2019, I will not give my reasons here. I didn't want to drop my comrades on the Committee in the mire, so have hung on, but I reached the end of the line at the end of January.

I find my priorities have changed. I am Chairman of Forces Online, a small charity that supports veterans and their families all over the Country, and this takes up a lot of my time now.

I have served as Secretary for five and a half years, and think it is time for a new vict.. sorry volunteer, so up steps Nigel Deacon (77C) My time is done.

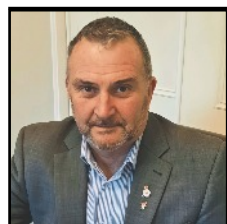
As Secretary since the last OBAN, I have continued to answer emails from members, and most importantly, completed the Annual return to the Charity Commission.

My thanks go to my comrades on the Committee one of the better Committees I have worked with; members don't realise the time and effort they put in to run this Association, so be nice to them.

So, it just remains for me to say goodbye, goodbye.

Arte et Marte

Phil Ellaway - 73C



Hello fellow members.

I would like to introduce myself as your new Secretary

I was part of 77c intake where a certain A/T Cpl Tizzard was the occupant of the bunk in charge of our room.

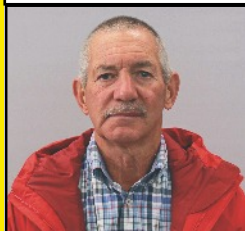
I served just under 9 years before being medically discharged in 1986 with knee problems. During my service I was a VMB and served just over 4 years in BAOR at 28 AER Wksps in Hameln before finishing my time at PCD RE in Mill Hill as a L/Cpl, where would you believe it Cpl Tizzard was also serving!

I've had a number of varied jobs since leaving the Army including owning a recruitment business for 10 years and at the end of November last year I took early retirement from a Management role in DPD UK.

I am looking forward to serving as your new Secretary and being part of keeping our great association going and hopefully growing from strength to strength.

Nigel Deacon - 77C

Treasurer's Report



Hello to you all.

Let me begin my report by saying that the finances of the association have never been in better shape.

The lack of spending during Covid has been one of the contributing factors and although we held two barbeques this did not amount to the same degree of spend as we normally would have had for two Reunions.

The other, more extraordinary, factor has been a bequest from the Estate of the late Paul Anthony Santco, an apprentice from intake 58C. Paul died in 2020 and bequeathed part of his estate to a number of military and civilian charities. Our share of his estate came to £20,500 and this was paid to us in two payments; an initial payment of £1,250 in Oct 2021 and the remaining £19,250 in Jan 2022.

The funds were once again boosted by a refund from HMRC in the form of Gift Aid and I would encourage all those members who have not yet signed up to Gift Aid to do so. It costs the individual but the Association gets £3.00 annually for each member subscribed.

On a personal front, I have been the treasurer for three years and although not onerous I would like to handover the duties in the next few years. If any member would like to shadow me with a view to taking over that would be most welcome.

I am looking forward to this year's reunion and let's hope another surprise variation does not pop up. Stay safe everyone.

Bob McKeegan-Brown - 69A

Webmaster Report



Hello to all.

The only major change to the website is the collation of the Online OBAN and the Download PDF version. Both can now be accessed from the same page.

We now have 644 member accounts on the website with over 26,500 views in 2021 with over 2,800 so far in 2022.

Online Membership management with payments via PayPal is working very well but there are a few cases where chaps are completing the form but failing to complete the PayPal process. These "leads" are then chased up by Bruce Leslie, the recruitment Officer, with a good conversion rate!

The issues with resetting passwords etc. seem to have been resolved with no complaints since I made changes to our email settings.

I have nothing further to report at this time.

Mark Jobes - 77C
Webmaster

OBAN Editors Report



Hello to you all.

I am sure you are all aware that by virtue of your service you are entitled to receive a Veterans' badge to mark your service to the Crown. You may not have received yours or you may have mislaid it. To apply for your badge or a replacement follow the link:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-medal-or-veterans-badge>

Frank (Francis) Hodson is a recently re-joined member. He is from 46B intake. Frank lives in Whitehills in Northamptonshire and will need a lift to the reunion in July as he is partially sighted and can't drive himself. Anyone living close by that could offer Frank a lift to and from the reunion would be appreciated. Make contact with me via the 'contacts page' on the website if you can. I will give you contact details and the full address.

Another appeal for stories for OBAN. I have used up most of my 'long' stories that I have been eking out over the past several issues. This leaves me with lots of pages I need to fill in OBAN 83. Please take the time to contribute. It is a fact that if I don't get articles to include I will have to reduce the size of the issue. At the end of the day it is the members that suffer. My time and efforts will remain about the same. Please get in touch via the Website 'contacts page' and I will send you my e-mail address.

For those of you that contribute regularly, thank you.

Ian Clark, (Our Database Manager who had a stroke), is making progress. He is determined to make it to the reunion this year. I keep in touch with him via e-mail and have visited him a few times when COVID restrictions have permitted. Keep up the progress Ian.

Speaking of the Database Manager..... We are still looking for a replacement for Ian. This is an important role on the Committee and we really do need one of you to step up and volunteer. It is not an onerous role with about 2 or 3 hours a week maintaining the 4 databases we use and a report each OBAN that takes only 10 or 15 minutes to write. I took it upon my self to do some analysis on the Active Members database for this issue and this took me 3 or 4 hours to get it into a readable format but this is not a requirement on a regular basis. (See pages 10 to 12 of this issue). There must be somebody out there with the Excel skills necessary and time available. Contact the Chairman via the 'contacts page' on the website if you have an interest in this role.

You will see the 2022 Reunion details are on page 9. You can get the full page version via the AOBA website. Don't be tardy. This year it will be a well attended event and it would be wise to get in early. It seems ages since we all last met. I am looking forward to seeing you all again.

I am still running short of articles for OBAN. No matter if it just an e-mail or short letter, or, an epic that requires several pages please send them to me. My contact details are on the AOBA Website 'Contacts Page'. If I don't get the material I will just have to reduce the number of pages.

I am pleased to say that Ian Clark is making good progress and hopes to join us at the Reunion. We are still making sure that there are no barriers to him coming but he has set this as a personal target and it would be good to see him there.

Andy Dickson - 66B

Recruitment Officers Report



Dear All,

We continue to see a steady number of new members joining the Association and I am hopeful that the recent publication of the application form for our Reunion Weekend will keep the ball rolling in this respect. If possible please take every opportunity to advertise this event as now is a key time of the year for recruitment.

Jim Chadwick and Alan (Titch) Walton are driving the effort to recruit as many new members from their respective intake years, 71 and 72 respectively. In fact, they are meeting up to discuss things this week and Jim and I had a wee catch up at Murrayfield last Saturday (26th Feb).

I am still looking for volunteers to help with recruitment for our 70ers in preparation for the combined 1970/71/72 50th reunion this year, so if you belong to an intake from 1970 and would like to help please let me know.

Please remember that experience has proven that we have a much better success rate if it is someone from the year in question who is asking the questions regarding joining the AOBA.

My contact details are either via the AOBA website, select Recruitment Officer, or by using the email address below.
bruceleslie1959@gmail.com

Let's continue to grow our Association and increase attendance at our reunion in July and at the Cenotaph parade in London in November 2022. 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.

Please also take any opportunity to advertise the, recently refurbished, AOBA website at <https://arborfieldoldboys.co.uk/>

Bruce Leslie - 75C

Membership Secretary's Report



Gents,

For many years I laughed at or ignored grumpy old men, but it appears that I have become one overnight.

What was supposed to be a fresh New Year, COVID becoming a story to tell our grandchildren, the chains removed and freedom restored. Then along came Putin and we are now in a position which makes the cold war of the seventies and eighties pale into insignificance.

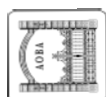
I hope that by the time the OBAN goes to print, all this will have blown over and once more we can start to look forward to foreign holidays and normality back in our lives. Being members of an elite band of military and ex-military, we tend to be a little bit more stoic than the everyday member of the public and thank goodness that we have a sense of humour to match.

One good thing that might come out of this current situation would be that the World starts to regain values and standards, moves away from the woke nonsense and starts listening to other peoples opinions even when we don't necessarily agree with them. Students might become a little bit more open to all cerebral inputs rather than leaning so far to the left that it is amazing they don't fall over. Clearly that is not all students and academics, but it appears that minorities are able to make far more noise and get far more attention than the silent majority.

So, grumpy rant over and looking forward to meeting old friends at the AGM.

If any of you are interested in taking over as New Member Secretary, I am ready to relinquish the post as I have almost completed four years and am probably starting to bore some of you to the point of depression!

Dave (Spuggy) Sparrow - 76B2



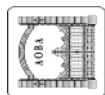
Arborfield Old Boys Association Reunion Weekend 2022

Option	Description	Includes	Cost
Option 1 2 NIGHTS Friday & Saturday Night with Accommodation	This option is for those who want the "Complete Weekend Package" from Friday afternoon until Sunday staying at the hotel with coach transfers included.	This option includes: 2 Nights Accommodation Friday Curry Buffet Saturday Morning Breakfast Coach Transfer to the NMA Parade at the NMA Drum Head Service Return Coach to Hotel AGM at hotel with Tea & Coffee Gala Dinner with wine included on the table Gala Dinner Entertainment Sunday Breakfast	£185 per person Double Room £30 (Sole Occupancy) (was £50)
Option 2 1 NIGHT Saturday Night with Accommodation	This option is for those who wish to stay in the hotel on Saturday night. Coach Transfers included for early arrivals but must be pre-booked. Free parking at Hotel	This option includes: Meet up at the NMA Free Parking & Coach Transfer at the hotel (available if booked prior) Parade at the NMA Drum Head Service Return Coach to Hotel AGM at hotel with Tea & Coffee Gala Dinner with wine included on the table Gala Dinner Entertainment Sunday Breakfast	£115 Double Room £15 (Sole Occupancy) (was £25)
Option 3 Saturday AGM & Gala Dinner Only (excluding accommodation)	This option is for those wishing to enjoy all of Saturday, but not staying at the hotel. (Coach Transport Not Included)	This option includes: Meet up at the NMA Parade at NMA Drum Head Service Own transport to hotel AGM at hotel Gala Dinner with wine included on the table Gala Dinner Entertainment	£59
Option 4 NMA Only ---please PREBOOK with 10W Tours for numbers at the hotel - AGM space not guaranteed unless you book prior	This option is for those wishing to join in at the NMA & AGM only. (Coach Transport Not Included)	This option includes: Meet up at the NMA Parade at NMA Drum Head Service Own transport to Hotel AGM at hotel	Free Please Register your attendance with 10W Tours to ensure you have a seat - numbers are limited under Covid Guidance

Please make your booking before 30th April 2022.
Final Payment due 13th May 2022. Bookings available after this time subject to room availability and hotel rate agreement.
By making a booking with 10W Tours you agree the Trading Charter of 10W Tours.
Your monies paid is secured by our Client Account for your Financial Protection.

Arborfield Old Boys' Association 2022 Reunion Booking Form

01983 405116 10W Tours enquiries@10wtours.com



Arborfield Old Boys Association Reunion Weekend 2022

Friday 8th – Sunday 10th July 2022
at the **4* Jurys Inn Hinkley Island Leicestershire**
YOUR WEEKEND PACKAGE INCLUDES:

Half Board en-suite Accommodation

Transfers to National Memorial Arboretum Parade & Drumhead Service
Welcome Night Curry Buffet Gala Dinner Live Entertainment
Association AGM with Tea & Coffee On Site Car Parking (free)

All Singles are DOUBLE ROOMS FOR SOLE OCCUPANCY with a £TBC per night SUPPLEMENT
***See OVERLEAF for PACKAGE OPTIONS**

OPTION (*see over)	Cost Per Head	No. Attending	Total Cost
One	£185		
Two	£115		
Three	£59		
Four	NIL*		

Your Details:

AOBA Membership No: **Intake:**

Name

Address

Post Code Phone Number

Email

Names of other persons on this booking form: Number of Persons

Rooms Required: Double..... Twin..... Single..... (limited - £TBC on Supp)
Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate all special requests this will be done on a first come first served basis and not guaranteed. There are limited walk-in showers at this venue and are not guaranteed.

Special Requests i.e. diet requirements, walking difficulties etc.

Please indicate numbers of seats required on Coach Transfers to the NMA

I would be willing to share if no single rooms are available ☐ tick (with)
Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate all special requests this will be done on a first come first served basis and not guaranteed. Some disabled rooms are available.

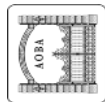
All prices are inclusive of VAT. Book Now to avoid disappointment, places are limited.

Cheques to be made payable to Mount Pleasant (IOW) Ltd - 10W TOURS.

By Making a Booking with 10W Tours you agree to our Trading Charter (our T&Cs)
- details can be found on our website 10wtours.com and will be sent with your confirmation.

10wtours.com • 01983 405116

Mount Pleasant (IOW) Ltd T/A 10W Tours, 51 High Street, Shanklin, IOW. PO37 6JL



DEPOSIT

A non-refundable
BOOKING FEE of
£20.00pp
is required with this
booking form
by 30th April

PAYMENT

Full payment is due by
13 May 2022
Payment Plans/Staged
Payments accepted
contact us for more details

Call 10W Tours on
01983 405116
(MON – FRI 9am to 5pm)
to make your booking
and pay by Card

Pay Direct into our Bank

Lloyds Bank

Sort Code:

30-90-09

Account No:

58799768

Please use your

POSTCODE as reference

CANCELLATION

Cancellation charges
apply as follows:

14 day or less 100%

15 – 27 days 50%

28 – 42 days 30%

More than 42 days –

Booking Fee Only

TRAVEL

INSURANCE

We recommend that
you take out
Travel Insurance.
10W Tours can
arrange this for you.

Phone
01983 405116
for details.

The AOBA Active Members Database

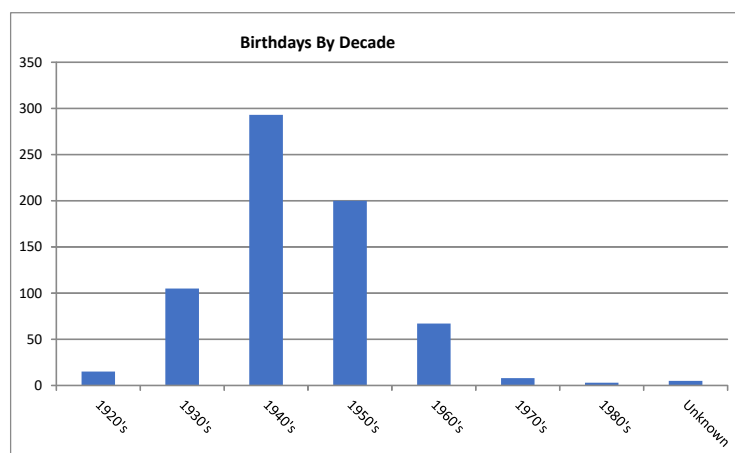
As we don't have a Data Protection Officer/Database Manager at the moment I took it upon myself to do some analysis of our Active Members Database. The Secretary has given me full access to the AOBA databases which is good in most ways but also comes with some responsibility and I have to be very careful what I do. (Always double check before selecting 'Save' just to make sure there are no mistakes). We do have at least one back-up of the main databases on my PC at home so there is always a fallback position.

We currently have 696 Active Members.

This is a moving feast in that we have new members being added all the time by Dave Sparrow and Phil Ellaway. Dave Sparrow. Members are removed from the database when they leave the Association or pass away by Bob McKeekan-Brown, The Secretary and myself.

Doing analysis is always with the latest data but as soon as you think you are finished another member is added or is lost and the data is no longer up to date. We don't lose the data of Passed Members as they are moved to a separate database that we keep.

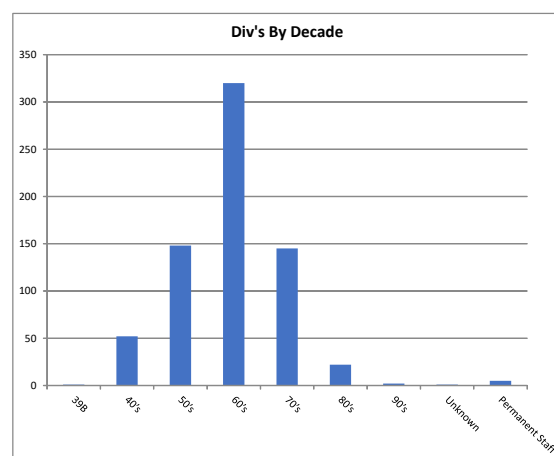
Dates of Birth of Active Members fall into these decades:



The Div's of the Active Members are split as follows:

Div	Qty	Percent
39B	1	0.1%
40's	52	7.5%
50's	148	21.3%
60's	320	46.0%
70's	145	20.8%
80's	22	3.2%
90's	2	0.3%
Unknown	1	0.1%
Permanent Staff	5	0.7%
Total	696	100.0%

Year	Qty	Percentage
1920's	15	2.2%
1930's	105	15.1%
1940's	293	42.1%
1950's	200	28.7%
1960's	67	9.6%
1970's	8	1.1%
1980's	3	0.4%
Unknown	5	0.7%
Total	696	100.0%



Our oldest member is 98 years old!

It is no surprise, looking at the data, that our strength is those members born in the 1940's and 1950's. (You only have to look at the amount of gray hair at the reunions to see this, mine included).

This also translates into the most populated Div's. The 1950's, 1960's and the 1970's being the strongest. This makes sense to me if you add about 15 years to the birthdays you arrive at the approximate Arborfield joining dates.

The 1950's 1960's and 1970's breakdown in years as follows:

Year	Qty	Percentage
1950	5	3.4%
1951	9	6.1%
1952	15	10.1%
1953	10	6.8%
1954	21	14.2%
1955	12	8.1%
1956	15	10.1%
1957	32	21.6%
1958	15	10.1%
1959	14	9.5%
Total	148	100.0%

Year	Qty	Percentage
1960	51	15.9%
1961	29	9.1%
1962	35	10.9%
1963	20	6.3%
1964	44	13.8%
1965	30	9.4%
1966	38	11.9%
1967	25	7.8%
1968	9	2.8%
1969	39	12.2%
Total	320	100.0%

Year	Qty	Percentage
1970	10	6.9%
1971	12	8.3%
1972	10	6.9%
1973	13	9.0%
1974	11	7.6%
1975	23	15.9%
1976	26	17.9%
1977	28	19.3%
1978	6	4.1%
1979	6	4.1%
Total	145	100.0%

Rank	Qty	Percentage
Brig	1	0.14%
Maj Gen	1	0.14%
Col	5	0.72%
Lt Col	15	2.16%
Capt	16	2.30%
Cfn	31	4.45%
WO2	31	4.45%
L/Cpl	35	5.03%
(blank)	56	8.05%
Maj	57	8.19%
SSgt	85	12.21%
Cpl	93	13.36%
WO1 ASM	114	16.38%
Sgt	156	22.41%
Grand Total	696	100.00%

Analysing the ranks achieved, (as they are reported), is also quite interesting.

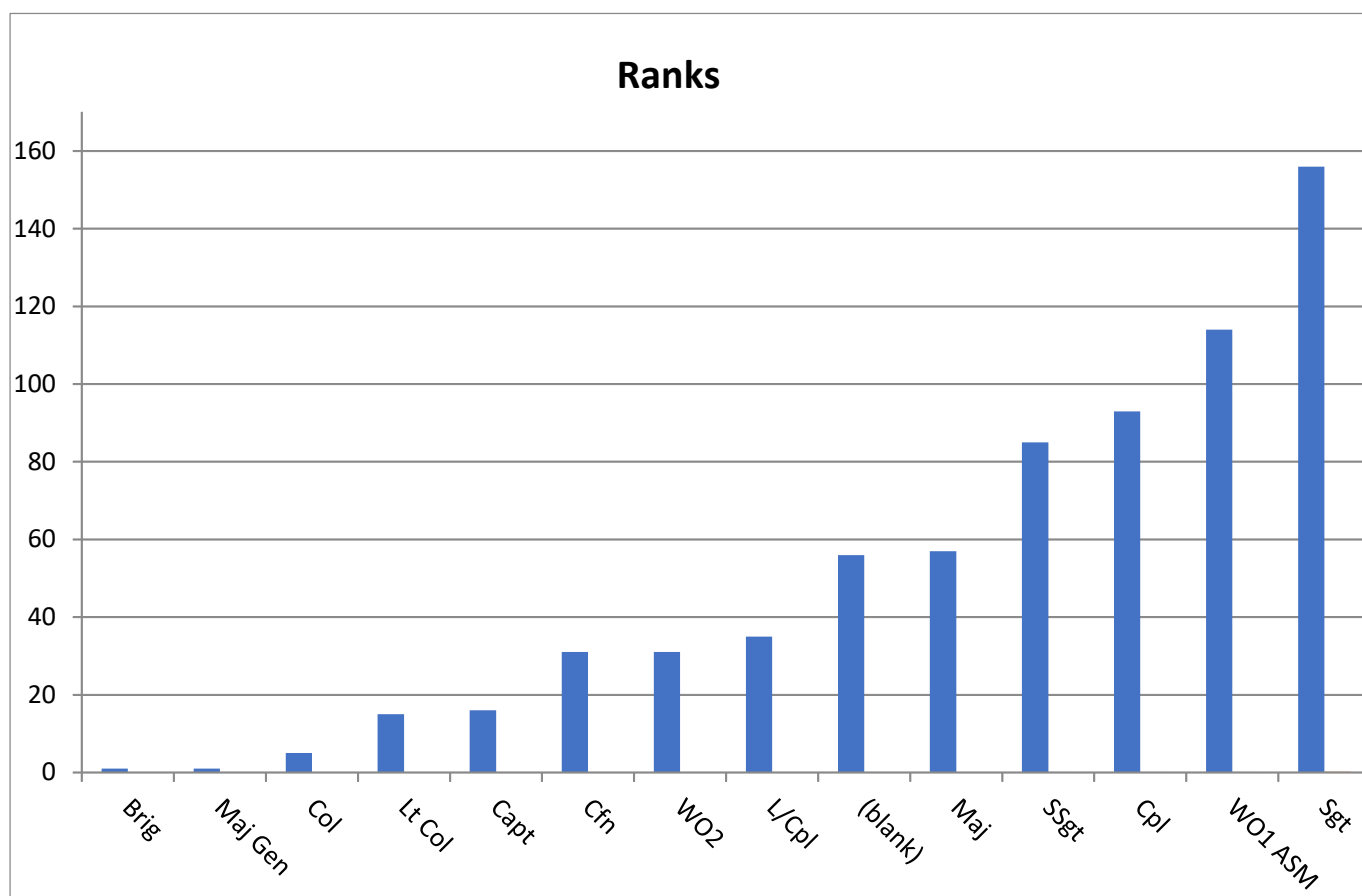
The highest rank of the 696 Active Members is a Brigadier, (From 72C). There is also a Major General amongst the ranks too, (From 48B).

A total of 95 got commissioned and 230 became Artificers, (I didn't count those that became Artificers and then got commissioned), with a further 156 getting their third stripe.

This is a massive total of 482 (69% of Active Members) that reached senior rank or was commissioned.

This would seem to indicate that the Apprentice system produced the senior ranks and officers of the REME that it was set out to do.

I find this a remarkable set of data.



Active Members by Country of Residence:

Country	Qty
Cyprus	1
Philippines	1
Thailand	1
The Netherlands	1
United Arab Emirates	1
Republic of Ireland	2
(blank)	2
Canada	3
New Zealand	3
France	4
Spain	4
Australia	8
United States of America	9
Germany	10
United Kingdom	646
Grand Total	696

It is hardly surprising that the majority of our Active Members reside in the UK.

However, we do have 50 members living overseas and keeping up their subs!

It seems we left some behind when BAOR closed as 10 are still living in Germany.

The USA and Australia, (My adopted country), have almost 20 between them with a few others spread across the world.

County	Qty
Cheshire	11
Essex	11
Hertfordshire	11
Nottinghamshire	11
Suffolk	12
Cambridgeshire	13
Staffordshire	13
Worcestershire	14
Lancashire	15
Gloucestershire	16
Norfolk	16
Surrey	17
Kent	18
Sussex	20
(blank)	21
Devon	21
Lincolnshire	21
Wiltshire	25
Dorset	27
Somerset	27
Berkshire	30
Yorkshire	40
Hampshire	78
Total	488

Of the 696 Active Members 70% (488) live in these 21 Counties. (There are 21 addresses where we do not have any address data).

30 of our numbers didn't move very far away from Arborfield since leaving and live in Berkshire.

Hampshire seems to be the most attractive county with 78 members living there.

Post Nominal's:

We have quite a few Active Members who have been recognized for their efforts.

3 X BEM

5 X BSc

12 X MBE

2 X MA

1 X OBE

5 X MSC

1 X Legion D'Honour

Several CEng, Eng Tech, IEng, CMIOH, LLB, MBA, BA etc.

This is quite an accomplished group.

It has been interesting looking over the data we keep.

I have tried to keep the data above as neutral as possible so no offence is caused and so that I keep on the right side of the GDPR regulations.

If you would like further analysis on your own Div/Year let me know and I will see what I can do.

Andy Dickson 66B

Trip of a Lifetime - Edward Clarkson - 63A

"Can you come to my office please, Edward?" "Edward!" - He was the only soldier who ever called me Edward everyone else, even at Boarding School (Duke of York's Royal Military School), had called me Nobby. (Good old Google informs me that back in the day because clerks in London used to wear 'Nobby hats' - a type of bowler hat, so all "clerks" were called "Nobby" - so now, you know!) Who was this person? John Sandy my ASM at Sek Kong Detachment from 50 Comd Wksp in Hong Kong.

A real gent was John - treated everybody with great respect. It couldn't be anything awful, things were going well, I was in charge of the bus repair shop, in those days we collected children for school and then did the NAAFI run for the wives, so work was going well with a brilliant team of Chinese mechanics. Sport was going well too - I had just been selected to captain the Combined Services Hockey Team, we played in the HK national league - (so not that). I had just been given a new quarter in (Thanks to John for pulling strings) Sek Kong which meant moving from Dills Corner - (so not that). In fact life was brilliant so what could top that? John said, "I have to inform you that you will be going on exercise with 7th Gurkha Rifles on Exercise 'Coconut Grove' - yes and? "Well it's very difficult to run a jungle exercise in Hong Kong because there isn't much of it here and there is always the threat of snakes and there isn't any where you are going" he said. "Also you will be the advance of the advance party - in other words you will be going on your own". He was obviously enjoying this, I could tell. "Oh and you leave in 2 weeks so get your kit together" Yes but where am I going? Oh um Fiji. "What? I'm sorry Sir but I thought for a minute you just said 'Fiji'. "Indeed I did young man, so shoot off to 7GR and get the entire lowdown" you will get a team together and will be the REME support for the exercise.

Bloody hell Fiji, where is it? How am I getting there? What will the wife say? And so it began that sunny day in May as I ran around like a scalded cat trying to sort it all out.

After much tooting and froing it boiled down to this. I was flying alone to Suva in Fiji leaving on 24th June at 1555 on Flight TG611 via Bangkok, Sydney and landing in Nandi then a quick hop to Suva with an overnight stop in Sydney. It seems we, the Army, had a fleet of vehicles in Fiji for UK forces to carry out jungle training (who knew?) because it seems there are no snakes in Fiji (who knew that), maybe St Patrick travelled further than people thought! My task was to inspect all the vehicles, getting one Land Rover ready for the Company Commander of 7GR (Major Forestier-Walker) by 1st of July so he could carry out site visits for the exercise. Travelling with him were Capt Merritt RRF, Capt Hazlewood the Cheshire's and Capt Hutt RCT. They were all landing on 1st July and I was going to pick them up. Right what vehicles are involved, where to start, speak to Ord Dept in Kowloon they are bound to know being the owners of all HK equipment, silly me I drew a blank



So kitted out, off I went to Kai Tak Airport for the flight to Fiji, Starting with flight to Bangkok on flight No Thai Air TG611 at 1555hrs landing in Bangkok at 1730 hrs. Then dashing across the Terminal to connect with Thai Air TG981 to Sydney leaving at 1845hrs landing the next day at 1025hrs bleary eyed. Booked into the Gazebo Hotel in Kings Cross the only round hotel I've ever stayed in. It was well situated in the middle of Kings Cross that had a bit of a reputation for sleaziness but after the Reeperbahn in Hamburg - it wasn't, I decided to go for a drink before finding somewhere to eat, the bar was on the top floor with the pool, so I jumped into the lift after a few floors it stopped and this gentleman got into the lift wearing shorts, vest and his thongs (look it up) as he walked in he called out in a loud voice 'G'day' an arcytypel Ozzy welcome to Australia. I wondered around Kings Cross and thought I'll eat something unusual. I saw a Lebanese restaurant a bit unusual and never having eaten Lebanese in I went. A guy came to take my request and I couldn't help but notice his very English accent I said that's quite an unusual Australian accent you've got. It turns out he was touring Australia and was working in this restaurant to pay his way. I asked him where he was from he replied Reading, Blimey I used to live in Reading and my parents still did. His Dad ran the Hotel on Reading Bridge. What a small world!

Next day bright and early I boarded Qantas flight QF574 from Sydney to Nandi. I couldn't help but notice the plane was almost empty and after 40 minutes we were still on the ground, then an announcement over the tannoy said that we were waiting for one customer. However after another 15 minutes no show, another announcement said that they were sorry for the delay and as compensation all drinks on board were free. Whoopee! Looking back I may have overindulged but with dinner eaten and able to stretch over the middle 5 seats of the jumbo I slept all the way to Fiji.

We landed at Nandi and I was slightly hung over and had 55 minutes to disembark and catch the plane to Suva (capital of Fiji) Fiji Air Flight FJ198. Eventually landing at 1755 exactly 50 hours after leaving Hong Kong and a Fijian soldier met me and took me to Queen Elizabeth Barracks Sergeants Mess. Slightly sparse a bed, two sheets and nothing else not even a locker. Oh well sort out tomorrow and so to bed.

Day one, warm and sunny into breakfast a sort of Fijian 'full English' and so to work finding the Workshop and couldn't help noticing that the Barracks were remiss in the soldier department! It seems the regiment were on UN duties and so the Barracks was running a skeleton staff. I eventually found the senior Office a Major in the New Zealand Army who was the QM, explained what I was doing and off I went.

The fleet consisted of 2 Bedford RL's 49EL99 and 53EL10, 3 Land Rovers 56FK28, 55FE57 and 55FK61 and 4 off ¾ ton trailers. Two Land Rovers were moveable and were in fact being used by the MT section the rest were in a state of disrepair, the Bedford's were dead and the trailers had not moved in years. I spent the first week just getting the fleet working, freeing off brakes repairing fuel pumps etc. 55FK61 had a cracked block between cylinders 3&4. Eventually I managed to get all of them moving and was then able to carry out a thorough inspection. There was also a FAMTO stores all the parts were NATO numbered they also had a letter allocated to it. There were a series of boxes and the box was lettered so lettered parts went into lettered boxes. Unfortunately they were just lay around in a vehicle bay I managed to get a secured bay and stored them in there.

The reason I had gone ahead was to prepare two of the Land Rovers for the Recce Party and having done so on the evening of Sunday 1st July I collect the 4 officers that made up the Main Recce Party (Maj Forrister-Walker & GR, Capt Merritt RRF, Capt Hazlewood Cheshires, Capt Hutt RCT) from Suva Airport and dropped them off at the Officers mess. Next day was our first 'O' Group. I explained how far I had got and what was left to do they spent the rest of the day planning, then on Monday morning off they went on a reccy. This suited me as there was plenty to do.

It wasn't all work, there was a sports field between work and the mess and one evening I saw a group of guys playing rugby (of course). Fiji had not made any real impression in the rugby world and it had only been in the 60's that a couple of Fijian players Orisi Dawai and Joe Levula had been asked to play for Rochdale Hornets. They had been asked to come over earlier but had been refused because their Chief had refused travel (Fiji is very tribal), and it was said that the guys played bare footed and only wore boots because of the cold. Anyway I wondered over to watch the practice game and sure enough several of the players were bare footed and I saw why, remember Fiji is a poor country and boots and balls are expensive to buy. The players were not only bare footed but the ball was a rugby shaped piece of wood, it very quickly occurred to me why they don't kick but love to run with the ball. The fact I didn't join the game had nothing to do with the fact that all the players were over 6' tall and 16 stone, oh all right it was!

Although the Regiment were away with the UN the Mess was always full. It was a meeting house for all serving and retired members and it was these who frequented the Mess. The rules were very simple one, all were welcome as indeed I was from the first night, two as you walked into the mess and bought a jug of beer plonked it on the table and off you went. The jugs kept coming and it was interesting keeping up, but I practiced diligently every night and I like to think I didn't let the Corps down!

Downtown Suva was a small town and it quickly became apparent there were two distinct groups Indian and Fijian. As I stated before that Fiji is Tribal and the chiefs still hold a lot of power and are not afraid to use it. The Indians, years ago were indentured workers brought to Fiji to work in the sugar cane plantations. The idea was they would work build up a nest egg and then go back to India. But as shown all over the world it didn't work. They work hard build up a nest egg and then stay making a new home. There has been a conflict there for years and it became apparent that several workers became quite prosperous and started to set up villages and wanted to buy land. The land however is only owned by Fijians and they didn't want to pass it on so a law was passed that land could not be sold and must remain in Fijian hands, the indigenous population. This has been a thorn in Fijian history to this very day. However I had no problem with any of them. One occasion does remain in my mind, when I saw that there was a gang of Fijians working at a road junction, and as the guys wondered up to work one of them was carrying a guitar. To work! It became obvious later in the day that work finished early and all the guys sat around singing. I don't know what the word for Bukra (in the future but not necessarily tomorrow) and Ma'lesh (No matter) but it applies in Fiji, Tomorrow, tomorrow always tomorrow.

I meet many characters during my visit and one wasn't a Fijian but a Kiwi a guy called Bruce Kenyon who ended up as the Drum Major for the NZ Army Band but when I met him was a barrel cheasted, full of life guy and was a Sgt at the time and attached to the Fiji Army Band as an instructor, he used to visit Fiji for 4 to 6 weeks at a time (Some have it tough). He was a great character, we got on really well and some of the banter can't be printed but I'm sure you all know what I mean! I'm still in touch with Bruce on social media all these 42 years later. It was very clear that UK played an important part of Fijian life amplified by the fact that several guys invited me into their houses and I was quite surprised to see in all cases a photo of the Queen and Prince Philip hanging in pride of place in the living room.

After the Reccy party left I got stuck into trying to get the fleet into some order. Mostly compiling a lengthy report on the condition and what was needed to get them all roadworthy. The reccy party returned on Monday 9 July and the vehicles were undamaged so a final check on them and a debrief from Maj Forestier Walker and it was time to fly back to HK on Wednesday 11 July.

The trip back was Nandi to Sydney then to Bangkok and on to HK. Planes weren't as fast as now so it meant overnight stops in Sydney and Bangkok. Sydney was uneventful but in Bangkok we met an interesting taxi driver who insisted we should see some of the sites in the Thai capital. So he took us to the Pat Pong district where we were roundly entertained. On reporting to the Thai Air desk the next day we were informed that we were being upgraded to 1st Class. Could this trip get any better? I don't think so.

That's the end of part 1 - tune in next for Pt 2 to include:-

Submitting a very lengthy list of spares to RAOC, going on a two week holiday with the family to Batu Ferringhi, Penang, free of charge paid by a grateful Hong Kong Government. Returning (yes returning) to Fiji with a REME detachment for Ex Coconut Grove with 7GR, Fire Walking, R&R on Fijis Leper Colony, swimming with sharks, shooting wild goats for supper and much much more. Toodle pip.

Edward Clarkson - 63A

The Search for the Missing Major Award Boards

Between 2012 and 2015 I followed the progress of the AOBA committee in their search for the missing Award Boards, dating back to 1939, listing the names of A/Ts awarded the following:

AWARD OF HONOUR/COMMANDANT'S CUP
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR'S CUP/COMMANDANT'S SPECIAL AWARD.

In January 2015 I approached the committee and asked, as a non-committee member, if I could continue the search on their behalf. They wished me well.

These boards were originally located between the two exit doors at the top of the sloping floor in the main camp hall/gym Rowcroft. Each name inscribed in gold leaf on a black background. (See attached)

When the AAC moved from Rowcroft to PMC in Hazebrouck, 1981, the boards were relocated to the side walls of PMC camp hall/gym close to the later slide in name tablet version fixed to stage wall. (See attached)

All boards remained there until 1995 when the College relocated again back to Rowcroft as AAC.

It has been reported, in the past, the boards were moved from PMC to RAOC Depot, Bramley Camp along with other items for storage.

I now know the boards were last seen, by the then A/T/RSM, behind gym equipment, in a storeroom, off the main hall floor area.

When asked, the incumbent Commandant 95/96, Lt. Col. R. Mount informed the A/T/RSM he intended to get them back on display after relocation. There are no confirmed sightings since.

I have been able to contact all the Commandants and Commanders between 1991 and 2003 except Lt. Col R. Mount.

I managed, sometime ago now, to get my contacts details and reasons to Lt. Col. R. Mount, via a third party, but have not received a reply.

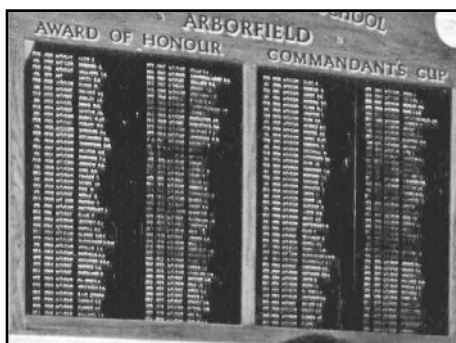
In 2020 I was joined in the search by Rob Castell and in addition to many other establishments, we have contacted AMOT (Army Museums Ogilby Trust) members asking if they have any of the boards. Their replies have all been negative.

Yes, there are Award Boards in our own REME museum, Lyneham, but we are told these are the replacement 'slide in tablet' versions.

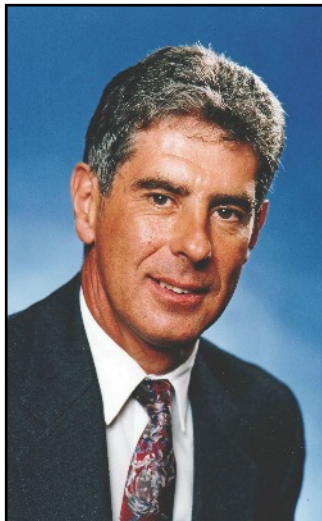
Now the BIG QUESTION is: Anyone out there recall seeing these boards after the relocation from PMC to AAC in 1995?

Please contact us on schoolboards1939@hotmail.com

Alan Jones 61B and Rob Castell 64A



Post Military History - David Brock 65B



After being dined out at Malvern Electronics Branch, it was time to start planning the next phase of my life in Civvy Street. I know many long-serving soldiers find this period difficult, after years of military discipline. I was one of the lucky ones.

Having sent out my CVs to agencies, I got some replies. The oddest one was to be interviewed for a managerial post in a shopping centre. I didn't go for the interview as London shopping centres are not the calmest environments to have to work in. At the end of November, I did get a reply from an agency, who said that I could/would get a job as a building services engineer, with a Livery Company, (nothing to do with horses!) the Worshipful Company of Salters' in EC2 London.

I asked him why he thought that I was a possible fit and he said that according to my CV, I had completed a refrigeration and air conditioning (A/C) course in 1979 with the RE's. The agent said I needed to go to see the incumbent engineer and be shown the building before attending for interview at a later date.

When I arrived at Salters' Hall, I was told to wait for Mr John Parry, who would be with me soon. In the reception, I met a guy who was the assistant engineer, immaculately dressed in a long sleeved white shirt, tie and pressed trousers. I thought it strange, that he was just sitting in reception. I found out later that he was not the best engineer, and was a bit lazy about doing mundane, routine tasks that were given to him. He had been expecting to be promoted to Chief Engineer when the present one retired.

Mr Parry arrived and invited me to see the building, its layout, the engineers' office and all the plant rooms. He explained what my responsibilities would be. The list seemed endless. Building services was a new concept to me, and would take time to learn. We went for coffee upstairs in the "out mess". He told me about his back ground. He had been in Malaya for many years working in the tin mining industry and had married a Malay woman. He had taken up his post at Salters when it was first opened by the Duke of Kent in 1976. Parry was about 75 years old, when I met him in 1990 and he had been working in Salters' Hall for about 15 years.

The building was located opposite the Barbican Centre, and consisted of 10 floors. Four were sublet office areas, the rest were reception, Salters' and Plant areas. Adjoining the hall was a small London park, in the form of a "knot garden" intended to be viewed from above with public access and was maintained by external gardeners.

A few weeks later, I was asked to appear before the "Court of Assistants". I arrived at Salters' Hall and was met by the commissionaire, told to wait in reception as my meeting was only a small part of a bigger meeting. At the appointed time the Clerk of the Company, came to reception to meet me. He introduced himself as Colonel (Michael) Barnaby, KRH, formerly of the 15/19 Kings Royal Hussars, that I had served with in BAOR, from 1970-72.

We went up to the 5th floor and I was taken straight into the Courtroom. There were several males in their 70/80's. The Colonel questioned me mainly and there was one member who was part of the UK electrical distribution system. Questioning was not difficult. Had I had a good look around the building? Did I think that I could look after the building and keep it running? Was I going to say NO?

The next questions were more personal. If I got the job, would I have any problem about living on site? Was I getting a divorce? No! That had happened 12 months prior in 1989.

There was a caveat, in that I would be taken on as the Assistant Engineer, for up to 12 months or until Mr Parry retired, as the other engineer was no longer working for the company. I would be shown the workings and methods of repair that were used. I could ask for any courses that I needed and I would be allowed to attend them. My job would only become permanent if I was assessed as suitable at the time of Mr Parry's retirement and I was expected to start as soon as possible in the New Year. That date was 2nd January 1991, I also gave up my army terminal leave and worked for the company on attachment until I reached my retirement from the Army on February 27th 1991. They and I understood that I could not be paid while I was still serving.

Over a year previously I had met Anne at a local Country & Western music club in Woolwich and we got on well and we were due to get married on 2nd February 1991. I couldn't ask for time off to go on our honeymoon so we went to Mexico for three weeks including Christmas and returned in time for my new job start date.

Other important facts given to me were that the accommodation on site was a tax-free perk because it had a "tied cottage" arrangement, as my job would also require me to work as and when required, carry out security and fire protection checks. Pension rights earned with the company were non-contributory, and became a very good pension after 16 years. My starting salary was not good, but I enjoyed the work that I had undertaken. My remit was to repair anything that did not require me to be licenced, such as gas, and lift repairs. We were taught how to safely remove people who sometimes could not release themselves from the lift car by normal button use.

The retiring Resident Engineer was allocated a council flat and moved out of Salters Hall in October and I was now Resident Engineer. In my time with Mr Parry, I chose a submariner engineering petty officer as a new assistant engineer. His name was Michael Cullimore. He had served on ships, before becoming a submariner. He was under-weight and looked older than his years because of his many years in submarines. We worked well together. He did routine work, while I did a lot of administration, fault finding and heavier jobs. In the beginning we were having lots of burnt tails on wiring terminals within cabinets; we eventually attributed the problem to the last assistant engineer, not tightening down terminals as required. After two years of the job being done correctly, we had no further burnt tails, and the task was then done on a rolling basis over 24 months.

We would also work on Saturday mornings, to enable us to service boilers and other large plant items. We were working on double pay, so we endured the hardship! When the Salters' Company had large functions, we were required to wear evening dress and operate the lifts correctly, to get 120+ personnel and guests safely to the 5th floor.

Mr Parry had taught me well and only on one occasion during my 16 years did I find it necessary to call in a more experienced engineer to fault find something that I hadn't manage to fix myself. External engineers had already been contracted over the years to do adjustments, checks and repairs. The air compressors that were used to supply air to temperature controls on the 13 air conditioning (a/c) plants throughout the building were serviced by an agent. The temperature controls used an air supply and mains power to control a/c in the building.

Fire appliances were distributed across all non-rented areas. There were about 40 of them but the invoice for checking and servicing the items came to over £350. They were water, foam, and CO2. When I checked out the invoice, I found that instead of an each cost, per type, they separately charged for emptying and then refilling with water and for removal and weighing CO2 canisters. Also there was an overall charge for each inspected appliance. When I rang the owner of the company, I told him I was not renewing my contract with him.

When asked why, I asked him to explain to me how fire appliances were inspected, particularly water and foam types. He said unscrew the brass top of the appliance, weigh the gas cylinder, empty out the water, inspect the interior with the aid of a light, refill with water and re-assemble. So I pointed out that to inspect the item required it to be empty and therefore a charge should not be raised for the emptying and refilling. He begged me to not remove my business from him, but I found another agent who did the same tasks for less than £100. The original agent was also charging Salters Company for public parking, when they parked their vehicle for free on our premises.

Water systems were also maintained by a specialist company on a 6 monthly basis. This would prevent and lower any risk of Legionnaires' disease. We also had to remove all shower heads and run water through all pipes monthly, to ensure no contamination occurred in dead legs.

In my time at Salters, I wore many hats, Resident Engineer, building security, fire officer, Health & Safety (H&S), COSHH and Portable Appliance Testing. (PAT.) I also had to order spares, and arrange payments. I would often want urgent spares and the companies I dealt with would insist that I use pro forma invoices, even for amounts of under £50. When I told them it was urgent, they would not budge. My company had been in business for 600 years and they wouldn't trust us but we had to trust them with our cash and hope that they would deliver the correct goods on time.

Soon after Mr Parry had retired, I was asked to see the Beadle, an ex. cruise ships man, in his office. He then told me that he didn't like military men, and that if I needed to go to floors 5-7, his domain, I needed to ask his permission. I asked how I was to inspect and replace high level lighting, and other tasks. He said that he would inform me of any problems that arose. I agreed and got on with other tasks. A couple of weeks later, there was an important function for all the Livery. The Clerk called me to his office the next day and asked me why I hadn't replaced two obvious flood lights for the function. Having briefed the Clerk, he called the Beadle and read him the riot act.

I was again called to the Beadle's office, this time to receive an apology. Job done - no further problems, but it was obvious that we were never going to be mates. When the Beadle became very ill, the assistant Beadle, a Frenchman, took over, as Beadle. We got on well socially, but we would clash heads on occasions. We had problems with COSHH, because he would not ask his suppliers, for COSHH paperwork, so I could keep the details of substances on file. When the City of London (COL) H&S department came to check, on building safety, I had to explain why there was no COSHH information in the Beadle's area. I had to go to the Assistant Clerk's office. He was the accountant, and was the second senior staff member. I told him the reason for the missing records, and that I had other things to do and that ultimately, the Clerk was responsibility for all H&S. I was only deputised to do H&S, and as it was a voluntary arrangement, I would happily resign from the COSHH task. He asked me who else could do it, and I suggested that he the Assistant Clerk, or Beadle could do the task. I received the Beadle's paperwork within 10 days.

My original assistant clerk was a Commander Jefferson, an ex-navy guy, who was old school and wasn't the friendliest, when I asked about MMA and pay for my assistant's time to come to Salters' Hall, when I was on holiday, he refused. My assistant did the task anyway and when the assistant clerk was replaced because of retirement age, I gave my assistant 3 hours pay at double time for the task, nobody noticed. In my job spec. it stated that I had to find a temporary cover during any long absence for any reason. Imagine the security problems and the cost of an engineer? I made an executive decision!

The new assistant clerk was Major Roland Goodison MBE an ex RGJ and later RAPC. He was a much friendlier person, and we would have a beer or two off site. I did wonder why he employed an accountant to do his tax return, instead of doing his own. The company did use a software package known as SAGE to assist the Salters' payroll clerk. One year I was given my P60 passed it to my wife Anne to look over, and she said the tax due was too high and therefore wrong. I asked the pay clerk to do it manually herself. She also agreed that it was wrong and had to inform SAGE, that there was a software error in their package. It only affected those in higher tax brackets; we did wonder whether the software providers corrected the error before other companies sent in their tax returns.

In 1992, the year of the Baltic Exchange bombing, I was contacted by the local water board, and was informed that the supply to our building had been interrupted, because they had turned off our isolator and when turning it back on again the tap head had broken off. He asked me how long I could last without water in the building. I said we had large storage tanks but I wasn't sure and he said that they would carry out the repair the following morning, a Saturday. I was in bed and was woken by the noise of a jackhammer, but it didn't last very long. I assumed the task was easy. I got up, dressed and went to see the operatives. There was no one there. I rang the water board and asked why they had stopped. They said the locals in the Barbican centre, complained to the police and they had shut them down, for making a noise. A representative came to see me and gave me a number to contact if I ran out of water. At about 1700hrs, I asked for an emergency fill up of my storage tanks. At about 1900hrs, a large bowser arrived and the operator asked me how much I needed. I told him I would tell him when I had enough. Then the driver connected up his hoses to my tank, and started the auxiliary engine to pump the water. The noise was horrendous; it was a donkey engine with no exhaust silencer on it. All the lights went on in the Barbican and a spokesman came to ask us to stop. I had the delight in telling him that they could have let them repair the problem which would have only been noisy for 10 minutes. It was now an emergency, and the fill up would not be halted, until the tanks were full. It took three hours and I enjoyed my quiet time in our flat on the other side of the building.

On another occasion, our Commissionaire asked me to go to reception, as I had a visitor who was a Barbican resident. She had come in to tell me to get rid of the seagull on our building roof. She said it was nesting and was also dive bombing her every time she went out on her balcony. I said the solution for her was don't go out on your balcony. She thought that I was out-of-order, and insisted I get rid of it. Pointing out to her that the law protected nesting birds, their eggs and their young, there wasn't much I could do about the problem this year. I told her to go ahead and make any complaint to whoever she wanted and I would do what I could. About a week later, she appeared for round 2. She said that I had done nothing to get rid of the problem. I said that I had and had put up a sign that said, "Seagulls are forbidden to nest on this roof" but apparently gulls can't read! I did ask her if she would like to come up to the roof and see it, but she just headed off out the door. You can't please some people!

I loved the Salters' paid holiday allocation of 25 days per year, excluding public holidays and weekends. The company also shut down for Christmas from about New Year's Eve until January 2nd depending on the calendar. So, using the system we could go away for three holidays of about 14 days in most years.

In 1994, all staff and spouses were invited to the 600th anniversary of the foundation of the Salters' Company. The event was very well organised and took place in Armoury House of The Honourable Artillery Company. The finest wines and Champaign which had been purchased and laid down for many years especially for the event were provided, even for the staff. The evening banquet was exceptional and the early breakfast was served with a bottle of Champaign, which at that time of the day was mostly wasted! We were also entertained by the Pasadena Roof Orchestra. Do you remember them?

Another time that staff, (not working on the day), were invited to mix with the Salters' members, family and friends was for the Lord Mayor's show. We had breakfast, and attended the Lord Mayor's procession and returned to the hall for luncheon with the Livery. The year that the Salters' provided the Lord Mayor, we attended the parade in the Lord Mayor's stands adjacent to St Pauls. We had a great view and a seat for the duration of the parade. Every year we always attended the huge City of London firework display, also held on the evening of the Lord Mayor's Show.

There was a 1960s office tower block next to us, this was where the City of London, H&S department, could be found. They overlooked our building. One day I was called to reception, to see an H&S inspector. He told me that he wanted to see our method for getting on to various flat roofs on our building. We went up to the top floor by lift and went out on the walkways which were very safe. Then I took a 10-foot wooden ladder, footed it in a step and climbed up. That was OK according to him. He followed me up and I pulled up the ladder, and put it against a shear wall which had no footing and climbed up. At this point he decided that I needed to install I-bolts to enable those climbing the ladder to so safely.

We did as H&S require and a couple of years later, my assistant carried out the task of getting on to the same flat roof, by the required system. He then became tired and after climbing up and down the ladders, promptly fell off the topmost ladder. He was winded and out of touch with everyone, as he only had a pager and no phone. Eventually he recovered enough to get himself down from the roof and was taken to A&E. This meant I had to fill out and send in an accident report as per H&S regulations. A few days later an H&S person arrived and we went back up on the roof. He checked what we had in situ and then asked me whose fault was the accident? To which I replied the H&S department of the COL. I pointed out that the original method, we had used since 1976 for over 30 years without incident, was safe enough and their method was tiring and not simple. They never bothered me during the rest of my time there.

The engineering department was overseen by Knight Frank (KF) real estate consultants. The problem was that they were paid a percentage of money spent, so they were always trying to send in inspectors of all descriptions to check things that I was also capable of reporting on. In the year 1999, the subject of the "millennium bug" raised its head. The Clerk asked me to raise with him any problems that I thought would be affected by the bug. I duly went through all equipment that I was responsible for. I decided that there was nothing in the engineering department, or the service areas, that could be troubled by the Millennium bug, and reported the same to the Clerk.

Then I was informed by KF that a specialist engineer was to come and check out my findings. I was fuming, another huge waste of cash by KF was about to happen. The specialist turned up and was met by me. I asked him what he wanted to do. He said we should go to my office and talk about the subject. He started off by asking me what items in Salters' Hall engineering department would be affected by the bug. To which I replied, apparently, I do not know, so please don't ask me that question! I said you can ask me what I have and I will take you to see it, if I have one.

This didn't go down well, so he asked to visit each plant room and the lift areas. I took him around the building and he made copious notes. When the report finally came in it had only one item that he found that I hadn't considered as it wasn't even our equipment. That was the remote metering for our electrical supplies. Did he really think the London Electricity Board (LEB) would have allowed their meters to be affected by the bug? On the next meeting with KF, the Clerk and A/Clerk, I pointedly asked whether KF was spending Salters' money wisely. I surmised that at the costs of a specialist would have been approaching a £1000, which I had correctly done for free.

Another time an outside agency was appointed to do an H&S assessment for the whole building less rented parts. It took many hours, looking in every room and cupboard, within Salters' Hall. We also looked at outside areas including gardens. We had three fountains within the garden area, and each was protected by change of surfaces, from slab to chippings, or from grass to paving slabs. He insisted that the fountain-ponds should be fenced off or netted to prevent young children and careless adults from falling into the water. If we had had mums visiting with children, it was on very rare occasions. I suggested that the river authorities did not fence in their rivers, and perhaps that when they did the Salters' Company should comply. The Company agreed with me and I did not need to fence in or net the fountains.

Another team came to the building to correctly assess and fit modern fire safety signs. I was not allowed to dissuade them from the task in hand. They went to the Salters' private areas and fitted the smallest signs that are allowed to the walls as required, as I watched them. They were noticeable, but not really bad. A past Master, Major-General, Sir Michael Palmer, (Ex 14/20 KRH) told me to remove the offending signs. I replied that it would be against the H&S act to remove them once fitted. He insisted that I do so. I said that I would, if he gave me written authority. I never received any correspondence so they remained and he never mentioned them to me again.

One day in the early hours of the morning, the fire alarms sounded. The plant equipment, shut down and I jumped out of bed dressed in sweat pants, grabbed my master keys and ran to the fire panel, it directed me to the basement one floor below our flat. I found the basement full of steam and stopped my wife calling 999 and told her she was safe. I then slowly made my way through known territory, with limited visibility. I knew it wasn't my office area, so I opened the door to the pump room which was also clear. That left one room which was issuing steam from under the door. I used my key to unlock the door and found that I could not see anything in the room.

I daren't enter because the water temperature was in the range of 80-90 C. I ensured all pumps and a/c were safely off. I then waited an hour and returned to find the problem. When I entered the plantroom, it had much less steam and I found that there was drain-down valve letting by. I knew the fibre washer had disintegrated. I went to find a suitable replacement and found another serviceable valve. To prevent scalding, I put on my coveralls, wellington boots, acid gloves, Perspex face shield and a rubber apron. I then replaced the valve, which was still spraying water, but managed to get the item replaced, by keeping as far away from it as possible. I reinstated the plant to normal running and retired to bed.

On another occasion I was again awakened by the fire alarms, this time it was a leak on the hot water primary run-and-standby pump set. The 4" pipework terminated the pump-sets with vibration free connectors, which incorporated a small balloon of rubber, which prevented vibration being transmitted to the pipework and therefore building. The installation was only about 10 years old; I was there when it was installed. I had no spare and had to go to my supplier who opened at 0800hrs. I had the equipment up and running by 0900hrs. Sadly the next one failed an hour later. When I told the sales people they said that they were items of finite life and were supposed to be replaced at about the ten-year point. That fact was not in the plant manual supplied by the installer. The rest of the anti-vibration mounts were all replaced that weekend, during overtime of course. Apparently, the chilled water systems life was much longer and never failed in my time.

In 2003 the Commissionaire called me, as an engineer had arrived who had never been at Salters' Hall before. I went to reception and spotted the usual van used by the engineers who serviced and tested my compressor sets. I looked at the guy in his van and waited until he collected his tools and spares. As he walked towards me I said I think that I know you don't I? He said that he had never been to the building and I didn't know him. I said so your name isn't Paul then? Better still I said your last name is Neal. Now he knew that we had met before. I said the magic words Terendak and Malaysia. I had recognised him from over 40 years ago. He continued to service my compressors, but I lost touch with him after I retired a few years later. Since found on Facebook.

On one occasion Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was invited to dinner at Salters' Hall. The greeting committee were supposed to meet him on the ground floor. Then after the formal greeting I was to take him and the party to the 5th floor in the lift. About ten minutes too early, I saw a London cab arrive and parked in the under-croft. I knew that this was our special guest and he was early! I told the commissionaire to call the 5th floor by phone; I locked out my lift with my control key. My assistant Michael had already gone to the upper floor. I then asked one of the three members who had just walked in to greet Prince Philip. They ran away down the stairs to the basement areas. My wife Anne and the girls handing out programmes and checking names in reception were amazed when he arrived early and on his own and then asking them "Am I in the right place?" The girls missed the opportunity to say, "Tell us who you are, Sir, and we will tell you if you are in the right place!"

I stepped forward and apologised for the missing greeting party and asked him to let me take him to the 5th floor. Of course, as we went up in the lift, the greeting party arrived on the ground floor, who then had to turn round and head up to the 5th floor, it was like the Keystone Cops! I knew they would only be a short time before everyone was going to be in the right place. The following morning, the Clerk told me he was happy with my actions on the previous evening. "Arte et Marte".

Another notable guest was Princess Anne, who as patron of Jersey Zoo gave the annual Durrell Lecture in the presence of Gerald's family who ran Jersey Zoo in the Channel Islands. My wife Anne had permission to attend the lecture. Anne had said that Princess Anne was a great orator and could talk freely on subject with little recourse to her notes. Anne spoke to one of the Durrell family, who asked her if she had been to Jersey zoo. Anne had said no, but that she had read all of Gerald Durrell's books over the years. She was greeted by his family and when the subject of tea came up, Anne went to find the Beadle who furnished the table with tea, coffee and a range of biscuits.

During our time at Salters' Hall, we held an annual friends and family garden party. The only rules we had were don't bring any booze, keep the noise down after 2200hrs and enjoy your time at the hall. Luckily, we chose a July weekend for good weather and we were always hot and dry. There would have been between 40 and 50 people at the parties and we never got any complaints from our neighbours. Lots of our guests would stay the night too, sleeping wherever they could find peace and quiet.

Before we had CCTV installed, we were frequently annoyed by people in the under croft, which was our apartment ceiling. On one occasion it was obvious that a female had walked into the under croft and walked down the stairway to the locked garden gate. I went up to the under croft and saw the female below the stairs and was obviously making herself presentable, post urination. I opened the door and said firmly, please smile for the camera and I pointed upwards. She was obviously embarrassed and left very quickly. I don't think she would make that mistake in the City ever again.

Other problems were groups of skate boarders, who would come and skate on the smooth paved surface and fly down the stairs, landing well or crashing, but making a terrible din. I would ask them to leave, and get a load of verbal abuse from them. My response, I am calling the police and I would go to the reception desk phone and go through the motions of ringing the police and talking to the police. I would return to our flat. Of course, in the City, you only need to wait 5 minutes or so and there would be at least one siren. They never wait to see if they arrive at our premises or not.

As the years passed by, Anne and I decided that due to Anne's health, two cancers among other things, we debated about my retiring and traveling the world before we became too old or too ill.

I retired early in 2007. We went back to our house in Welling and spent the next four years refurbishing the 1950's house. We would work on the house in the summer and spend most of the winter in mainly warm or hot places. In our time together we both visited all six continents, 125 countries and travelled a million kilometres by air. We also had been on 20 sea and river cruises.

When Covid hit we had just made it home from Madagascar and went almost straight into lockdown. That was to be our last holiday journey together. Sadly Anne's next health problem was badly misdiagnosed. After spending a lot of time in hospital and three months being cared for at home by me with pain relief being given by district nurses, she finally succumbed.

Anne has left a huge void in my life!

I hope that you will be able to sort out the ending. I have proof read the article several times, but the Gremlins seem to creep in!

David Brock - 65B

Ed's Comments: There are no words that can make losing a life partner any easier.
Savour the times you had together Dave.

Too Good Not To Share

- When one door closes another door opens, you are probably in prison.
- To me, "Drink Responsibly" means don't spill it
- Age 60 might be the new 40, but 9.00pm is the new midnight.
- It's the start of a brand new day and I am off like a herd of turtles.
- The older I get the earlier it gets late.
- When I say, "The other day", I could be referring to any time between yesterday and 15 years ago.
- I remember being able to get up without making sound effects.
- I had my patience tested. I am negative.
- Remember, if you lose a sock in the drier it comes back as a Tupperware lid that doesn't fit any of your containers.
- If you are sitting in public and a stranger takes the seat next to you, just stare straight ahead and say, "Did you bring the money?"
- When you ask me what I am doing today and I say "nothing" it does not mean I am free. It means I am doing nothing.
- I finally got 8 hours of sleep. It took me three days, but whatever.
- I run like the winded.
- I hate when a couple argues in public, and I miss the beginning and don't know whose side I am on.
- When someone asks what I did over the weekend, I squint and ask, "Why, what did you hear?"
- When you do squats, are your knees supposed to sound like a goat chewing on an aluminium can stuffed with celery?
- I don't mean to interrupt people. I just randomly remember things and get really excited.
- When I ask for directions, please don't use words like "east".
- Don't bother walking a mile in my shoes. That would be boring. Spend 30 seconds in my head. That will freak you right out.
- Sometimes, someone unexpected comes into your life, out of nowhere, makes your heart race and changes you forever. We call those people policemen.

A "Funny" from Frank McKenna - 66C

Whilst on training exercise at Sennybridge camp a group of us DS staff decided to visit the local pub for a few wets.

Being winter it was no surprise that snow started to fall and by the time we were ready to leave the car park was deep in snow .

As we exited the pub one guy (John Addison) shouts look guys a "Roller" and hurry's across the car park towards the Rolls Royce car for closer inspection . As he gets alongside the car he slips and goes down his full length beside the car .

Quick as you like Billy Dow says " is it undersealed John ?"

Regards

Frank McKenna 66C

The Arborfield Apprentice

by Peter Gripton

An illustrated history of the Arborfield
Army Apprentices' School and Colleges



Foreword by the Honourable
Viscount Alan Brooke of Brookborough

Available for £21.90 plus P & P from Lulu.com (Price may vary based on Exchange Rate)

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 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

Nepal - George Marshall - 46B

Not long back from Sarawak and enjoying the delights of Singapore Garrison, working out of District Headquarters in Fort Canning, I was once again, summoned to the all familiar 'Higher Authority' to be told an Art Vehicle was urgently needed in Nepal.

A little knowledge is needed at this point relative to the political situation in Nepal which had recently become an Independent Nation. The post war battle between East and West was in full flow with the Americans pouring money into the country busily building dams to improve irrigation and the Russians building hospitals for the benefit of the Nepalese. We Brits of course had a head start with our Gurkhas, so our choice was to improve the condition and access to our pension paying posts, often remotely situated in the Himalayan foothills. We had a head start in that the Gurkhas had a well established Line of Communication set up in Barrackpore just outside Calcutta, which operated the transit system for soldiers going on leave from units mostly in the Far East.

The specific project being undertaken was centred on an area north of the Indian State of Purnea in the Kosi province at a township called Birtinaga, where a brand new hospital and a thirty mile access road from the Indian railhead at Jogbani was to be built. Construction of the road was the priority, which ran across the flat floodplain up into the foothills of the Himalayas. The British Army Sappers had the responsibility for running the whole project with earth moving equipment recently brought back from the Korean war. Labour was provided by the time honoured method of digging out soil from the ground and building an embankment, utilising locals, mostly female carrying head baskets. Once banked up the soil was compacted and rolled flat.

Needless to say, the equipment was clapped out to start with on top of the bureaucratic process of negotiating the Indian Customs checks and transit difficulties in getting it all up into Nepal. Failing equipment was therefore causing unacceptable delays. Added to this was the threatening arrival of the monsoon, during which work would be impossible. The main cause of delays was claimed to be due to a lack of suitable tools and repair effort, although to be fair the small REME element with the Sappers were doing a magnificent job with limited resources.

Solution. Form up an LAD. That however takes time, but if specialist tools were available, a Vehicle Mech's supplementary toolkit for instance, carried as personal luggage by additional tradesmen to overcome possible import problems, then 'Hey Presto'. Now if any reader is familiar with said toolbox it is somewhat heavy and not conducive to hand luggage by Cathay Pacific Airlines, but yours truly and assistant. Cpl (then) Hughes, whom I think was an ex Arborfield boy, after being jabbed against every possible tropical disease, departed Singapore en route to Calcutta via Bangkok.

On arrival we were greeted by our REME man in the L of C and taken to Barrackpore where we were introduced to both the delights of the Orient and to await the protocols and visas that required us to be civilians to enter Nepal.

One week later initially enjoying the experience of first class travel on Indian rail, crossing the Ganges by a heavily overcrowded ferry and savouring an overnight journey in a replica of a cattle wagon, we duly arrived at the end of the line. There we were met by the sole occupant of the RAOC Depot, a WO1 (whom much later became a neighbour in MQ's in Chillwell), treated to an excellent curry and set off along the half built road leading up into the hills. Little did I realise at this stage how well I would get to know this long pile of banked up earth.

The new road terminated at Birtinagah where the hospital was well under construction, but it was still located on the north edge of the plain so it was somewhat hot and not conducive to the likes of we Europeans, so like our Colonial predecessors, the Sappers moved up into the hills and established a camp at a small village called Phusre. Recalling that, other than the few Gurkha soldiers needed to guard the camp, the British Army was not permitted to build anything of a permanent nature. Exercising their initiative however, I settled into the most luxurious tented camp of my whole career, with the obligatory EPIP tented roof to show it was temporary, with brick block walls, fireplaces, fresh water piped down from a small reservoir higher up in the hills and a tennis court for the OC whose hobby it happened to be.

Launched straight into the tasks piling up it was difficult to decide our priorities, but I recall unpacking some brand new road rollers, supplied in flat pack kit form and, you guessed it, no manuals or handbooks. The fleet of Bedford QLs just had to be kept running so as long as they stopped and started when required, such optional extras as windscreens and shock absorbers could be discarded on failure. I do not think our instructors in MT1 or MT2 would have approved!

The top priority task was to maintain progress on the road build. As stated, earth was piled up by hand, then flattened and compacted with D4 tractors hauling sheepsfoot rollers. No problems there from reliable equipment, except they were operated by local labour, who constantly worked the machines until they ran out of fuel, sucking in every grain of dust and dirt in the extremely hot and dusty air, necessitating the cleaning of all tanks and filters.

Thus began a regular daily trip down the road seeking out casualties before stopping off at the railhead on the Indian border for a quick curry before heading back up to the camp. We had rigged up a Bedford MW with welding gear, toolboxes and whatever spares we could scrounge, cannibalisation being the major source as it was evident that little equipment would ever see its country of origin again.

Interestingly, the local population continued to drive haphazardly from A to B mostly in well overloaded trucks and it was not unusual to come across a broken down vehicle with its engine in pieces and three days later still there with passengers patiently waiting to resume their journey.

Europeans in India and Nepal were discouraged from driving owing to the tendency of excitable crowds deciding the blame, which could end in blood spilt! However, rules are rules and the Birtinaga Officials insisted that tracked vehicles could only be driven by qualified operators. Hence our Ghurka liaison officer arranged for me to apply for a licence. It went like this with the official, have you brought your tracked vehicle with you? No I reply I do not have a licence. Long pause as he reflected this fact then I offered the fact that we had a roller nearby on the hospital site. His face lit up and said he would allow me to drive it down to his office.

As a test of my driving ability it exemplified all I learnt at Arborfield, go forward, push the lever forward, go backwards, pull the lever back. I passed with flying colours and to this day I am the proud owner of a document heavy enough to warrant a trailer to carry it, all in Sanskrit which my wife is convinced is a marriage certificate!

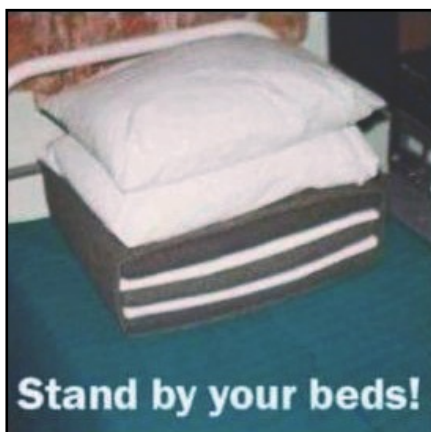
This episode in my Military career proved that anything is possible. A change of engine in the absence of any craneage can be accomplished by seeking a convenient tree and rigging a block and tackle. Not so easy was to control a pet monkey we acquired who accompanied us once outside camp. His favourite trick was rapidly removing wiring carefully threaded into conduits after short circuits.

But all good things come to an end. Once the monsoon arrived, the tractors were replaced by elephants to haul the rollers and work slowed. My one regret is that although I managed a few short walks up into the foothills of the Himalayas. I was not able to go higher to see more of this fascinating part of the world prior to returning to Singapore, less the toolkit!

Perhaps some of our readers can update us on the conclusion of the project.

George Marshall - 46B

Who remembers these phrases?



Looking out for the blind man - Arthur Ward 50B

It was 1958 while serving attached to the A.P.L in the Aden Protectorate.

Before moving to Zinjibar then Dhalla, our Battalion H.Q, we would be based at Mukerias close to the then Yemen border with one Company below the escarpment at Lodar.

Our method of contact between fortified positions, apart from the radio was by air or vehicle.

Some limited areas would require us to go up or down in most directions by using a bit of foot work.

The main rock face, Therra Pass, in our area at that time was only as wide as two camels which would descend in a steep sharp zigzag pattern. The Pass could be just as tiring whether you walked up or down it.

Nearby were the beginnings of the intended new vehicle road supervised by a South African surveyor called Shepperton (Shep).

He lived alone on site below, at his fort tower so as to employ labour supplied by the Sultan Zahra, from the Lodar village areas. Shep was the only man that I have ever known who could order the cook to bring dinner or drinks up the corner stairway by firing a shot out through one of his slit windows!

The new road foundations had only extended under a half mile of the zigzags required until there was another small single rough track nearby to the top which seemed to be little used. Many years ago, some Italians had surveyed this route but Shep found that when reading their plans, he would wonder just how they managed to mark the road centres on some of the cliff face?

On this occasion, a Schoolie Sgt and myself were ordered to take a land rover and wait above this small track at the top of the escarpment for the arrival of three U.K.NCO's coming from below near Lodar. Long into the afternoon we waited hoping for a sighting before evening came. A night journey with one land rover and five rifles on the return trip would not be a good idea if meeting groups of wandering Yemini dissident tribesmen who, on weeks previously had been attacking some local villages at night.

The hot dry winds blew up over the escarpment and there was little shade.

Earlier we saw a land rover arriving down at Sheps tower but for over an hour there was no further movement. He was well known for offering refreshments to visitors before taking people to join this small track up.

Our strained eyes would at last see the six legged shadows attempting the climb between the rocks until they changed into a slow staggering group close together. After deciding that these were our expected passengers, I fired one shot skyward to alert them. They may be tired or injured but we had no means of knowing the reason at that distance as the glare of the sun didn't help.

They continued their slow climb so that after another half hour we could see that one of them was being supported and in obvious difficulties making their resting times longer and longer.

We decided that one of us should descend to assist the climbers, so with the short straw, I made my way down to them where I realised their reason for lingering. The staggering casualty (walking wounded) was none other than our RAMC Sgt, known as 'Uncle' because he was well known for handing out many coloured tablets for everything. He was able to stand but appeared to be otherwise mentally unconscious and blinded to all about him.

But for the fact that he was not frothing from the mouth, I could have believed it to be Rabies, having had to shoot two Kelps (dogs) with such symptoms previously, although he did have glazed eyes. His condition was soon explained to me, that they had been given some beer but Uncle had chosen whisky for too long and too many.

The climb to the dizzy heights had done its worst and his condition, being unknown, was no joke and thought to be a danger to him.

At the time, I remember cutting my especially saved orange into pieces to persuade him to keep moving by feeding him this at every turning in the rock face while continuing our climb until reaching the top. This was the only form of communication that he appeared to understand.

Not much was said as we settled him in the land rover where Schoolie was ready to drive us away.

Arriving at the camp, he was bedded down and checked by the Battalion Medical Officer. The following day he was back to normal, nearly, with a sore head!

A warning to everyone that strong drink and going up to a few thousand feet above sea level don't mix. He never did try it in the opposite direction!

Arthur Ward - 50B

AOBA Remembrance History - Roger Traves 57A

(Bereavement & Remembrance Scroll Secretary)

It is about time for me to remind everyone how we the Arborfield Old Boys started down the road to remember our own absent friends. I hope that we can continue on to pay tribute to them at our annual memorial services and to be compassionate and supportive to their families. This is a unique service that has been developed over 2 decades and demonstrates the caring nature of our members.

Looking back to when the OBAN was first produced probably in 1956 to 1963, then resurrected again in 1992, there was no official recording of ex Arborfield apprentice's or permanent staff deaths; however some deaths and obituaries were reported in OBAN.

When I joined the AOBA in 1986 there was no OBAN or website in existence. OBAN was reintroduced by John Northam 47A in 1992 and the website was started by David Schofield 65A in 2000. I'm not sure when the Arborfield memorial garden was established, it may have been in 1995, but I do remember that it was refurbished around 2000.

In the late 80s our secretary Sam Weller 54B organised annual reunions, they were held with a parade on Saturday morning, in the afternoon we reviewed College memorabilia and attended the AGM; followed in the evening with dinner and drinks in the Sgt's Mess. On Sunday a normal church service was held in the Garrison St Eligus church with no mention of official tributes to deaths of ex apprentices.

Approximately early in the 90s when we had our first memorial services at Arborfield the odd remembrance cross appeared in the memorial garden, probably put there by an unknown old boy. At one AGM the question was asked why isn't the Association officially recording deaths and planting named crosses in the memorial garden? It was then agreed in 2007 that the association will record deaths and plant named crosses annually in the memorial garden, and the assistant secretary Keith Evans 45A was given this task. I helped Keith with this work. Keith also collected all known previous deaths from OBANs and from other articles and documented them. All this information is now listed on our website under "Roll of Honour" to 2006.



The Army Apprentice School Memorial

From 2007 to 2011 we have annually recorded all notified deaths and planted named remembrance crosses in the Arborfield memorial garden. From 2012 when Arborfield Garrison was closing down we had to move our venue to the Army Apprentice School Memorial (AASM) that was built and dedicated in 2011 at the National Memorial Arboretum, where we continue to do the same annual parade & memorial services. During all the plans to move REME training out of Arborfield & Bordon I think there were some plans to re-establish the memorial garden at Mod St Athen, Mod Lyneham or at the Arborfield Garrison church. The Arborfield Memorial Garden I believe has now been lost amongst all the rebuilding work within the Garrison.

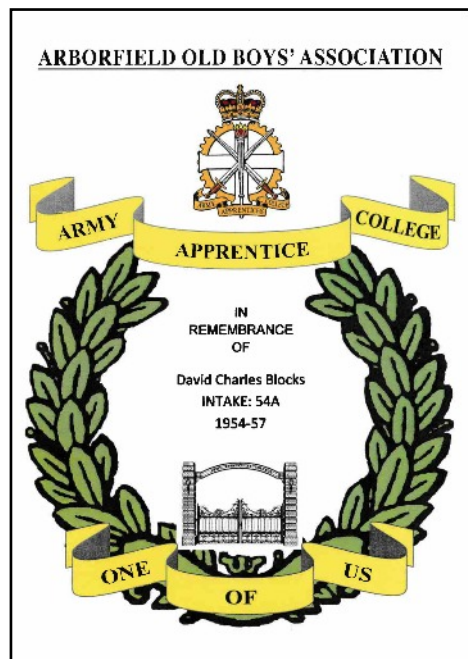
At the July 2007 AGM it was proposed that we should also send a sympathy card or framed scroll to the family of the deceased. Eddie Broomhall 45A agreed to look at these options and report back to the Committee. In 2007/8 an A4 size

Remembrance scroll was produced and passed by the Committee for issue and the first scrolls were sent out in Jan 2008 with a cover letter inviting the families to attend the annual memorial service.

In 2005 Keith Evans also started to arrange with the Royal British Legion annual Remembrance parades for our association members at the London Cenotaph.

Early in 2010 Eddie Broomhall took ill and Keith Evans asked me if I could take over the task of remembrance scrolls which I did. Sadly Eddie passed away in December 2010.

Also sadly in 2012 Keith suddenly died, so I took over the registering of deaths as well.



I decided that the current remembrance scroll format needed to be changed due to 2 reasons. One it was too large and two the cost of postage was excessive. It was agreed by the Committee in 2014 to reduce the size to A5 and replace the open gates graphic with closed gates. Our OBAN printers produced a new batch of A5 scrolls and A5 envelopes were purchased. The cost of postage was reduced from a large 1st class stamp to a normal 1st class stamp. The scroll was designed so it can be easily framed by the recipient if required.

I have now been involved since 2007 with apprentice bereavement work and took on Eddie's & Keith's tasks from 2010 & 2012 respectively, which in total is over 14 years.

I requested 4 or 5 years ago for someone to take over this task when I suffered a TIA (a minor stroke) but I'm still here doing it. I'm very aware that if I resign and nobody takes it on then all the good work that previous members have contributed to and the many families who have benefitted from this unique service that we offer as an Association will be lost forever.

Our next memorial service in July 2022 will be a large one to encompass 3 years of notified deaths that could not be held annually due to the covid lockdown. I'm proposing to stand down after the July 2022 memorial service, because if I do not then no one is ever going to come forward. However now I have said that I am still prepared to help out for a short period if someone is prepared to stand

in. I sincerely hope someone will come forward to continue on with all the good work.

This job can be very rewarding when you receive letters back from grieving widows and siblings expressing their gratitude for our kindness in not forgetting their loved ones.

Just to remind everyone that we now record all reported deaths and offer a remembrance scroll to the next of kin of the deceased, even if he or she was not a member of the AOBA. Also their names are added to the Roll of Honour. A cross bearing the name and intake of every notified death are produced for planting onto the AASM and the families of the deceased are invited to attend the memorial service.

Anyone who is aware of any ex Arborfield apprentices or permanent staff's deaths, can you please report them directly to the Remembrance Scroll Secretary or to any Committee member on the website under contacts, with as much of the following information as possible:

Full name, Intake, or for PS period of teaching, Date of death and their family contact details. From bitter experience we cannot record a death unless we have a confirmed date of death.

We are now getting an increasing number of requests from ex Arborfield apprentices whose fathers have sadly passed away that were apprentice boys from Carlisle or Chepstow, asking if a named cross for their father can be laid on the AASM during our AOBA memorial service. It has recently been agreed that we can also cater for these requests; however to save any misunderstandings between the associations, Carlisle & Chepstow Old Boys Committees are being formally approached and informed when we get these type of requests.

I was asked 5 years ago if I would be prepared to be a Trustee for the AASM and to be the AOBA representative. I agreed to do this thinking I would soon be handing over the AOBA Bereavement Secretaries job, but alas no luck to date. I hope someone will come forward before July 2022 to continue on with the bereavement work; otherwise all the compassionate work put in by our predecessors, many of them who have now passed on themselves, will be lost forever.



Statistics

The Association has since 2007 produced 600 named crosses and planted them in either the Arborfield Garden of Remembrance or on the Army Apprentice Memorial at the NMA during our annual reunions. Also we have sent 322 Remembrance Scrolls to the next of kin's of the deceased. Prior to 2007 over 200 deaths were recorded and on the Roll of Honour we have in excess of 800 deaths listed.

To keep the AOBA running efficiently we need the younger generation to come forward and volunteer to fill the vacant posts, otherwise the association will eventually collapse & disband. Many members of the committee have been 'doing their bit' for far too long, and will resign if not replaced. If this were to happen we would see the inevitable collapse of the AOBA. Some of the other apprentice associations are reporting that they are struggling severely and there is a lot of talk that Harrogate & Chepstow may soon close down for the lack of interest from their members.

So, come on you ex Arborfield youngsters out there come forward to continue on with the good work that our predecessors have developed, to keep the AOBA alive and well. Our future or our demise is in your hands.

Some examples of rewarding comments and letters.:

1. *My children and I were very touched at the thought of a memorial for Bob and would like to thank you and all concerned for the certificate of remembrance. Please would you pass on our thanks to all those who thought of us at this sad time. We give permission to use any photos and again would like to thank the Association for giving us a wonderful memory about Bob.*

2. *Thank you very much for sending me the remembrance scroll in memory of my dear husband Les whom I miss so very much. I appreciate it a lot and it was very kind of you. I hope to attend the memorial service next July.*

3. *Thank you most sincerely for your kind sympathy and for the remembrance scroll which I'm pleased to accept in memory of my dear husband Desmond. We both enjoyed receiving our copy of OBAN as Desmond was registered as partially sighted, I would read it to him. Thank you for thinking of us.*

4. *It was lovely to receive the remembrance scroll, we framed it and it looks lovely on the wall. Thank you so much for all your correspondence and kindness.*

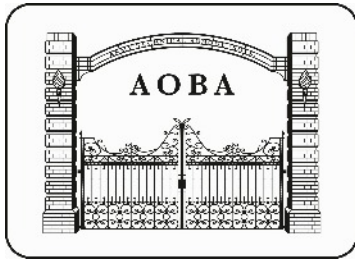


Maya Angelou

When you see me sitting quietly,
Like a sack left on the shelf,
Don't think I need your chattering.
I'm listening to myself.
Hold! Stop! Don't pity me!
Hold! Stop your sympathy!
Understanding if you got it,
Otherwise I'll do without it!
When my bones are stiff and aching,
And my feet won't climb the stair,

I will only ask one favor:
Don't bring me no rocking chair.
When you see me walking, stumbling,
Don't study and get it wrong.
'Cause tired don't mean lazy
And every goodbye ain't gone.
I'm the same person I was back then,
A little less hair, a little less chin,
A lot less lungs and much less wind.
But ain't I lucky I can still breathe in.

Sample Letter sent to Bereaved Family



BEREAVEMENT & REMEMBRANCE
SCROLL SECRETARY

Mrs S Blocks
6 Deer Street
Another Town
Sidshire

Roger Traves

*Address Removed for
GDPR Purposes*

23 December 2021

Dear

ARBORFIELD OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION (AOBA)

On behalf of the Chairman and all members of the Arborfield Old Boys' Association please accept this Remembrance Scroll in recognition of the memory of your husband David Charles Blocks.

Please accept our deepest sympathy on the loss of David who was one of us, being an ex Arborfield Army Apprentice.

With kindest thoughts

(Roger Traves)

Bereavement & Remembrance
Scroll Secretary

*Thank you kindly for informing us of your husband's passing, also thank you for agreeing to accept a remembrance scroll in David's memory; please accept my personal & sincere condolences on the sad loss of Dear David. A cross bearing David's name and intake will be placed on the Army Apprentice School Memorial (AASM) at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) Croxall Road, Alrewas, Burton-on-Trent. DE13 7AR during the next Arborfield Old Boys Reunion Drumhead Service and his name will be read out before the last post is sounded. His name will also be added to the roll of honour on the AOBA website. Relatives are welcome to attend this parade & drumhead memorial service commencing at **10:45hrs on Saturday 09 July 2022**. Relatives who attend are warmly invited at the end of the service to come forward and place their loved ones cross onto the AASM, or alternatively they can take the cross away with our blessings to place on a private family memorial. To help us cater for the numbers of relatives attending can you please confirm if you will be coming, listing others that may be accompanying you. More information and memorial/reunion photographs can be found on the following websites at:*

www.arborfieldoldboys.co.uk
www.apprenticememorial.org.uk

Ed's Note: The Bereavement Secretary can be contacted via the AOBA 'Contacts' Webpage

Workshop Tools Explained - Graham Chilton - 53B

PILLAR DRILL:

A tall upright machine, useful for suddenly snatching flat metal bar out of your hands so that it smacks you in the chest and flings your beer across the room, denting the freshly painted project which you had carefully set in the corner where nothing could get to it.

WIRE WHEEL:

Cleans paint off bolts and then throws them somewhere under the workbench with the speed of light. Also removes fingerprints and calluses from hands in less time than it takes you to say "Oh sh1t".

PLIERS:

Used to round off bolt heads. Sometimes used in the creation of blood-blisters.

BELT SANDER:

An electric sanding tool commonly used to convert minor touch-up jobs into major refinishing jobs.

HACKSAW:

One of a family of cutting tools built on the Ouija board principle. It transforms human energy into a crooked, unpredictable motion, and the more you attempt to influence its course, the more dismal your future becomes.

MOLE GRIPS:

Generally used after pliers to completely round off bolt heads. If nothing else is available, they can also be used to transfer intense welding heat to the palm of your hand.

OXYACETYLENE TORCH:

Used almost entirely for setting fire to various flammable objects in your workshop. Also handy for igniting the grease inside the wheel hub from where you want to remove a bearing.

HYDRAULIC JACK:

Used for lowering a car to the ground after you have installed new brake shoes, trapping the jack handle firmly under the bumper.

BAND SAW:

A large stationary power saw primarily used to cut perfectly good metal sheet into smaller pieces, so that they fit more easily into the bin after you cut on the inside of your carefully pre-marked line.

TWO-TON ENGINE HOIST:

A tool for testing the maximum tensile strength of everything you forgot to disconnect.

PHILLIPS SCREWDRIVER:

Normally used to stab the vacuum seals under lids or for opening old-style paper-and-tin oil cans and splashing oil on your nice clean clothes; can also be used, as the name implies, to butcher Phillips screw heads.

STRAIGHT SCREWDRIVER:

A tool for opening paint tins. Sometimes used to convert common slotted screws into non-removable screws and butchering your palms.

PRY BAR:

See Screwdriver

HAMMER:

Originally employed as a weapon of war, the hammer is nowadays used as a divining rod to locate and destroy the most expensive parts adjacent to the object you are trying to hit.

STANLEY KNIFE:

Used to open and slice through the contents of parcels delivered to your front door; works particularly well on new seats, vinyl records, liquids in plastic bottles and rubber or plastic parts. Especially useful for slicing work clothes, but only while in use. Also, an effective remover of skin from backs of hands and thumbs.

ADJUSTABLE SPANNER

aka "Another hammer", aka "the Universal Nut Lathe", aka "Crescent Wrench". Commonly used as one size fits all, usually results in rounding off nut heads before the use of pliers. Will randomly adjust size between bolts, resulting in injury, swearing and multiple threats to any inanimate objects in the immediate vicinity.

BASTARD TOOL:

Any handy tool that you grab and throw across the garage while yelling "Bastard!" at the top of your voice. It is also, most often, the next tool that you will need.

Desert Diary – Rob Castell 64A

During the 60's the Army carried out training exercises in the Libyan Desert under an arrangement with the Libyan government of King Idris. Various Battlegroups from BAOR would regularly be flown into the RAF base at El Adam for this purpose. To support these Battlegroups whilst on exercise a REME Advanced Workshop Detachment was based at Chatham Camp in the desert west of El Adem. My father, a newly commissioned officer, was sent from where he was stationed in Fallingbowl at 7 Armoured Workshops, to Chatham Camp as 2I/C of the AWD. These are extracts from the diary he kept whilst there and show the arduous conditions under which the AWD had to operate, caused by the intense heat & sandstorms, and also the frustrations caused by 'communication' problems with Command.

Rob Castell

Part 1 - Chatham Camp – Very Hot & Very Bothered

20th May 69 - The AWD (Advanced Workshop Detachment) opened for work at Chatham Camp with 28 men from 1 Div. ABU (Administration/Advance Base Unit), Waterloo Camp

24th May 69 - OC AWD and Lt RW Castell REME arrived at Chatham Camp.

May 69 - 'B' Vehicles received for repair 12; Repaired 6; Awaiting stores 6 - 'A' vehicles received for repair 9; Repaired 2; Awaiting stores 7

31st May 69 - Temperature 100F. Leyland and LCpl Mitchell from 1 Div. ABU arrived at AWD

7th June 69 - Temperature 100F. SSgt Whitehouse, Cpl Leadbetter, Cfn. Malcolm & Cfn. Gee sent to RAF Maint. Flight, El Adam.

Chatham Camp



June 69 - Personnel of AWD allowed to Bomba beach in groups of 3 to 4 with Battlegroup personnel (except June war anniversary period)

19th June 69 - Visit by CREME NEARELF (Lt Col HR Jeffs) Requested list of suggested G1098 tools and equipment for an AWD for Centurions, Ferrets and 432's Required me to sign (copy to him) of a report for HQ REME 1 Div. on the impracticability of power pack repair.

24 June 69 - Handover between Battlegroups, 14/20 Kings Hussars & 1 R. Irish Rangers.

27th June 69 - Personnel of AWD notified for relief were enplaned for BAOR. Relieving personnel had arrived on 24th June. 1 Div. asked BLT (British Liaison Team) to arrange outward flights – this was passed by BLT back to Battlegroup. Flights finally arranged between Battlegroup & BLT.

Note: Prior to enplanement of relieved personnel a signal was dispatched to HQ REME 1 Div. to clarify instructions regarding LCpl Silk who has been at REME Detachment ABU El Adam since the disbandment of 1 Div. ABU. Reply from 1 Div. implied that LCpl Silk should have been at AWD from the beginning. No instructions have been issued to me to this effect.

This detachment now has two Reccy Mechs, LCpl Mitchel & LCpl Wright. Possibly LCpl Mitchell should be at El Adam, but 44206 EME dated 7th May does not show a vacancy for a Reccy Mech at El Adam, so he remains here at present.

Note: DADEME BLT visits Battlegroup usually once a week.

28th June 69 - At the request of DADEME BLT one man will be detached to 2 RI Rangers at Tobruk on a rotary (fortnightly) system. This serves also to provide some relief for personnel.

Note: The stores situation is such that in order to repair any equipment, and provide work for personnel, controlled cannibalisation is inevitable and is in process. The state of lethargy apparent on my arrival is now slowly being overcome. Projects to improve the lot of personnel have been put in hand, e.g. cooling devices for water and drinks, manufacture of fan and lighting facilities, beds etc obtained from ABU, establishment of the canteen as a paying proposition, improvement of the bar.

Note: It is as well, I believe to include here some comments on the working conditions and situation of this site. It would appear from comments made to personnel before their despatch to this location that some enlightenment is necessary.

Chatham camp is situated 66 miles west of El Adem, which is a very rough and extremely filthy three and a half hour journey across the desert. Bomba beach referred to previously is approx. the same distance and rather east of north.

The camp is situated at a point where washing water only may be obtained by pumping. All drinking water is brought in from El Adem. The working area is on a surface with an average of six inches of dust of the quality of Fullers Earth.

Temperatures on the shop floor range from 90F to 140F.

Dust storms are frequent, and dust will penetrate anything, even closed suitcases or banded boxes of stores.

Offices are of course tents, and in the case of the AWD, very well worn ones. Desks and paperwork have to be 'blown off' before attending to work (a habit which may become hard to break)

Films are shown by the Battlegroup quite regularly and this is the only relief. Despite conditions the morale of the men is good now that work is obtainable, and the stores situation is becoming rather better.

With respect, the main frustration is the lack of information from Command, i.e. on the move back of the first relief of 15 men to BAOR, information was received only five days before the last flight was due out. The men did not know who was going back or when. In order to avoid this happening again 1 Irish Rangers have booked flights for eleven remaining personnel for 23rd July. If some are not to be relieved their flights will be cancelled.

Much delay is caused by incorrectly addressed mail, (official) and private mail incorrectly addressed by forwarding units. Most mail for AWD still comes addressed to 1 Div. ABU or BFPO 56

3rd July 69 – Temperature 98F. Data centre signalled to obtain SUC for AWD

4th July 69 - Suggested G1098 for AWD dispatched to CREME FARELF.

Both 434's VOR for HIAB crane reflux valves, these are on demand. BLT asked if it was possible to obtain them from NEARELF. Reply states that all 434 spares now to be channelled through El Adem

5th July 69 – One Leyland recovery VOR for intermediate gearbox, BLT asked to arrange with gearbox from a nearby recently BLR'd Leyland from the LAD at El Adem. The only recovery vehicles remaining serviceable are a Leyland and a Bedford Light. There are now great difficulties obtaining lifts for pack changes.

6th July 69 – Bedford Light VOR for rear axle.

8th July 69 – AQMS Glover obtained from El Adem (Art Veh)

Bomba Beach



9th July 69 – The answer to the query regarding the Leyland gearbox is no. Replacement gearbox now on demand.

10th July 69 – Permission has now been received to cannibalise Leyland gearbox!! Three men dispatched to El Adam for this purpose. Temperature 90F

11th July 69 – LCpl Mitchell (Reccy Mech) sent to El Adam on instructions from DADEME BLT. LCpl Mitchell was informed by BLT that he is there until October, he has never previously been informed of this and I have no instructions regarding it. BLUEBELL BLT is clarifying with HQ REME 1 Div.

11th July 69 – Temperature 115F. Visits to Bomba beach have been discontinued owing to pressure of work.

12th July 69 – Temperature 95F. No news from Command ref reliefs, signal sent. Reflux valves for 434's reported delivered here at Chatham Camp – there is no trace of them.

13th July 69 – Temperature 90F. Reply ref relief's received. The information required NOT included. The point is – who is not being relieved? How much time, if any, will be available for handover of Tels equipment? Further information will be 'available next week'
Reply from Data centre received, HQ BAOR to produce SUC & SOP

14th July 69 – Reflux valves for 434's located by OC AWD at Curzon Camp, 20 miles further into the desert, they had been addressed to the Queens Dragoon Guards! Repair of 434's now in hand.

15th July 69 – Temperature 92F. Leyland in hand, one 434 now repaired, second 434 awaiting lockout jack.

16th July 69 – No information on flights or reliefs. Cpl McAusland (Tels) warned his flight may have to be delayed or cancelled. BLT are aware that LCpl Mitchell is not to be relieved since only 10 men are shown as remaining at AWD by the HQ 1 Div. REME signal. This sort of situation highlights my previous remarks.

We have at last received permission to send groups of four to visit Malta for R&R. Arrangements with effect 1st August. Unfortunately too late to provide relief to those who have been here the longest and will soon be returning to BAOR

17th July 69 – Temperature 90F. Severe dust storms all day, nevertheless four FRT jobs carried out and vehicles returned to service (one 423 & three Centurions) in time for Battlerun. Work at Chatham is not possible after 11.30 owing to dust storms.
Leyland gearbox completed.

Signal dated 15th July received from HQ 1 Div. via BLT. Only six names shown as due for relief! Signalled HQ REME for clarification.

18th July 69 – Temperature 93F. Dust storms all day and getting worse, little work possible. Heard rumour that Cfn Probert is in hospital at El Adam, signal sent to BLT for confirmation and if he will be fit for RTU (BAOR) on 23rd July as arranged. (This man was detached to 2 RI Rangers at Tobruk)
Letter from DADEME BLT intimates they are not sure of LCpl's Mitchells position. They asked for a replacement for me when he is RTU (BAOR) I have signalled them to say I have already cancelled his flight and they must confirm his situation with HQ REME 1 Div. as I had already suggested on 11th July.

19th July 69 – Temperature 100F. Dust storms and high winds continue, but work is possible.

20th July – Temperature 100F. Strong winds but less dust.
Confirmation received that Cfn Probert is in hospital with a crushed hand.

21st July 69 – Q Glover and driver dispatched to El Adam to sort out flight, kit, tool box and pay of Cfn Probert.
Both 434's checked for defective hoses as instructed by DADEME – found to be serviceable.

22nd July – Temperature 110F. AWD personnel called together and addressed by CO of 1 Royal Irish Rangers, Lt Col. Russell, who expressed satisfaction for the work done and thanked them, this was much appreciated.

23rd July 69 – Temperature 105F. Handover to 1 KOSB completed.

Reliefs from Germany, two Cpls and two Cfn – no Tels mechs! No explanation, no signal. It may be feasible to hand over Tels equipment to the LAD Tels techs on arrival. I am not prepared to change Cpl McAusland's flight again.

Signal from DADEME BLT, BLT SUNRAY will consult visiting officers from HQ REME NEARELF reference R&R flights to Malta. Signalled back explaining again I already have permission from GSO NEARELF, CREME NEARELF and DADEME Malta for clearance and accommodation.

Signal back from DADEME BLT is unhelpful in the extreme. I will visit ASAP.

Period 4 FORWARD reports despatched.

	<u>Received</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>In Hand</u>	<u>Awaiting spares</u>
Cents	3	3	-	-
432	8	2	-	6
Ferret	8	4	-	4
Power packs	13	9	1	4
'B' vehs.	30	20	5 BLR	5
Tels	52	49	-	3

July 69 – Attended conference at BLT El Adam – subject, withdrawal of BAOR stockpile. Present, Lt Col Cartwright, R. Staffs (OC BLT), Major. Chown (AQ HQ 1 Div.) Capt. Peace, (REME) and three others. Learnt that AWD will embark LSL (Landing Ship Logistic) on 2nd October and arrive at Bremerhaven on 11th October! Obtained permission off OC BLT to apply for flights to Malta.

Major Chown visited Chatham to discuss the withdrawal and speak to the men.

Note: The last few days average temperature is 100F with frequent dust storms.

28th July 69 – Applications for first R&R flights to Malta handed to movements.

30th July 69 – Applications for 2nd & 3rd R&R flights to Malta handed to movements.

Q Glover and one man sent to El Adam to inspect BAOR 4x10 ton AEC.

Temperature 110F, wind up to 30 knots.

CO of 1 KOSB Battlegroup invited AWD to join his Minden day parade at Chatham (210th anniversary)

Completed inspection of 31 432s, 27 Ferrets and 6 'B' vehicles at Chatham prior to preparation for withdrawal.

31st July 69 – Two NCOs despatched to CURZON to carry out inspections of 432s & Ferrets.

434 and crew despatched to CURZON to carry out Centurion engine change.

Temperature 102F. Visit by GOC NEARELF, Major General MW Holme CBE MC.

1st Aug 69 – AWD joined in the Minden day parade where officers and men were presented with a Minden rose. The rose is worn in the hat during the day.

Inspection of 4x 10 tonners completed at El Adam.

4th Aug 69 – OC and four men flew to Malta for R&R.

5th Aug 69 – MT office lost in fire.

8th Aug 69 – OC and four men returned from Malta.

11th Aug 69 – Four men flew to Malta for R&R.

15th Aug 69 – The four men in Malta are unable to obtain a return flight.

16th Aug 69 – Since the beginning of the month temperatures have dropped to around 90F due to strong north winds, consequently we have suffered from almost continuous dust storms. These are thick and it is difficult to eat meals because of them.

All vehicles for recovery to BAOR have been inspected and stores demanded.
List of lubricants for servicing after move to El Adam passed to DODOS two days ago.
List of filters required by 1 Div. despatched three days ago.
The metalworker and two VMs repairing 4x10 tonners at El Adam for the past week.
Flights for BAOR have been confirmed for Cfn Townsby and Cfn Farrow on 20th & 21st Aug.
Two men from 1 KOSB & 2x3 ton Bedfords have been found by an aircraft search after being lost for two days.

19th Aug 69 – Two days of intense heat, 140F on working area.
Three men flew to Malta for R&R.
Two men arrive to replace Townsby & Farrow, one with a tool box and a Stirling SMG!

20th Aug 69 – Four men on R&R in Malta return.
Battlegroups completed handover, now under command of Lt Col Nagle, 39 Regt group.
Visit by Brig R Lynn CRA & Lt Col Twiss CRE.
End of stats period 5, reports dispatched.

	<u>Received</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>In Hand</u>	<u>Awaiting spares</u>
Cents	7	3	4	-
432	10	6	1	3
Ferret	11	5	1	5
Power packs	7	3	1	3
'B' vehs.	27	13	12 BLR	2
Tels	37	30	-	7



Ed's Comments:

This is an interesting post.
I did some research via Google and copied the map above to show the area concerned. The black circle is the approximate location of El Adem camp. The beach is east of Tobruk.

There was an RAF Base there for some time and any number of aircraft crashes are mentioned in the various Google sites I visited.

I visited Libya many times in the late 1970's and can vouch for the temperatures mentioned here. The sand storms were horrific and a colleague I had working with me got sunstroke and very bad sunburn on his shoulders, (Despite the warning from me that he should cover up he was determined to go back to Scotland with a tan and not looking like a milk bottle!)

Andy Dickson 66B

"D" SQUAD, JUNIOR COMPANY, ARMY APPRENTICES SCHOOL, ARBORFIELD
 INTAKE PWS & HIA PAY to 24th SEPTEMBER, 1945
 Jackson, Tennant, Hef, Lee, Baker, Casale
 Macdonald, Smith, Coppock, Christie, Corbett, Macdonald, Saunders, St
 Mungton, Bell, Cpl Kearney, Cpl Hunter, Cpl O'Connell, L/Cpl Powell, Saunders, Longford



Major (retired) Thomas Grant - Scribe: Alastair (Son)

Major (Retired) Thomas Grant REME passed away suddenly on 1st July 2021 aged 93.



At Arborfield aged 16

As a child he lived in Elie, Fife, leaving Scotland to join the Army Technical School, Arborfield at the age of 15 in 1942. Signing on with REME on his 18th Birthday in 1945 brought a return to Scotland with REME Dumfries and Command Workshop, Stirling together with an LAD attachment to Bomb Disposal in Great Yarmouth clearing mines off the North Norfolk Beaches. Two years in Malaya and Singapore followed and successfully passing Artificer selection tests meant promotion to Sgt and a return to the UK for training in Bordon. It was while here that he met a Joan Norris working in the NAAFI as a cashier. Finishing the course in second place meant promotion to SSgt and a role with 6 (Veh) Training Bn which involved setting and marking exam papers for all courses including Junior Officers.

Dad rarely talked about his Army career but he did mention a Vehicle water proofing exercise at Bordon. The test involved driving a Truck through Oakhanger Pond, naturally without testing water depth first. Taking the precaution of sitting on the roof of the cab Dad was swept off by the deluge and had to swim for it. The Driver carried on standing at the controls with Pipe clenched firmly in Jaw. Dad rued that the Camp had a special tank for

that kind of test now and felt some of the fun had been taken out of it as a result.

By now 1951 and three years of service in the Middle East started with No 2 Base Wksp REME Tel-el-Kabir in Egypt over hauling 100 engines a week. A brief period of leave involved marrying Joan on 12th July 1952. No 3 Base Wksp Benghazi followed with work on Centurion AFV with a mixed Military, German civilian and local staff.

The end of 1954 saw the start of 6 years with BAOR including 2 Armd Wksp REME Lippstadt and LAD at Divisional Signal Regt Herford. The latter included converting his 12-year engagement signed during his Artificer training in Bordon to 22 years. He was selected to join a DEME (BAOR) Work Study Team in 1959 at Cranfield working on various REME Field projects. This included producing the first standard Procedures for AFV Major Assembly exchanges in the field.

A posting to Gibraltar 55 Garrison Wksp in 1961 followed. Brigadier M F Scott, then the Inspector of REME took time out from a formal inspection to award the then Artificer Quarter-Master Sergeant T Grant his Long Service and Good Conduct Medals.

Promoted to WO1 a return to the UK followed in 1963 to DDEME Inspection Team at Catterick and then joining 41 Comd Wksp REME in York.

A successful application for a LSR Commission in February 1965 resulted in Promotion to Lieutenant and then joining 19 Tank Transporter Sqn Wksp at Ranby Camp, Retford. On being commissioned his CO noted "Grant is a Warrant Officer of outstanding ability. He has a positive flair for organisation and is more than willing to accept the burden of responsibility. Although his quiet manner may suggest otherwise he is in fact a very strong character and is completely loyal and reliable. Promotion to a LS Regular Officer Commission is an achievement gained in the face of considerable competition."

A return to BAOR meant postings to Verden and Fallingbomel the latter with 7 Field Wksp. Mum and Dad both loved the Army life in Germany with the entertaining and Social Circle which went with it. Two tours of Northern Ireland in the mid 1970's were completed and then another return to BAOR finishing with 79 Railway Sqn Wksp.

Retirement as Major in 1981 prompted a return to Bordon and taking a Retired Officers role with HQ REME TA until final retirement in May 1992. This concluded a service career only 4 months short of 50 years.



Outside the British Army of the Rhine REME Workshop. Dad on the right.

The return to Bordon meant the chance to play more Golf which was lifelong interest. He was a long-time member of Blackmoor Golf Club and was proud to be Club Captain in 1992-93.

His wife Joan passed away in 2019 and he is survived by children Pamela and Alastair, a Grandson and two Great Grand Daughters

Obituary - Noble George Peacock - Former WO1 (ASM) REME

Scribes: Debbie Hargreaves (Daughter and Roger Elsworth Former WO1 (ASM)).

George passed away on February 3rd 2022 aged 76 years.

Dates of service 1960 to 1994, 33 years and 130 days in total.

It is with great sadness that I have to report the death of my father.

23855569 WO1(ASM) (Retired) George Peacock Noble born 24 May 1945, died 03 February 2022, aged 76 years.

George enlisted in November 1960 at Holbart Barracks in Detmold (BAOR) before joining the Army Apprentice School Arborfield early in 1961 as part of the General Service Corps.

George served his 3-year apprenticeship as an Electronics Control Equipment Technician transferring to the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) on his 18th birthday.

Graduating from Arborfield in 1963 as a L/Cpl George had a very successful career being promoted to the highest non-commissioned rank of WO1 (ASM) on the 21 January 1982. His warrant awarded by John Nott the Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom.

George served in a variety of Units which included;
35 Central Workshops and 35 Base Workshops REME Old Dalby
36 Heavy Air Defence Regiment RA Dortmund
School of Electronic Engineering Arborfield on 5 occasions
2nd Field Regiment RA Dortmund
26 Field Regiment RA Dortmund
27 Missile Regiment RA Dortmund
He also served a short tour in Belize as a PRE-Team Leader.

During his service of 33 years and 130 days George was employed on the repair and maintenance of a variety of complex electronic equipment which ranged from supervising repair teams on guided missile systems, computing systems and electronic control equipment.

He also worked as a project officer on the repair of RADAR systems and on the planning of work programmes with the support of a mainly civilian work force.

As a senior technical sergeant major in an electronic training unit, he was responsible for the welfare, discipline and conduct of training for 250 staff and students.

In his last post at the School of Electronic Engineering Arborfield he was employed in the design and delivery of advanced electronic equipment repair and maintenance courses up to BTEC/HND level.

In his Certificate of Service Testimonial, George was cited as a highly competent engineer, a confident and efficient manager of people and a popular team member with an excellent sense of humour who loved all aspects of Army life. During his service George was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal and the Clasp to the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

Post Army Career.

Upon retirement George was recruited as a civilian into the position of Officer's Mess Manager at the Defence Animal Training Regiment (DATR), Melton Mowbray. The DATR delivers animal handling training for more the 400 personnel and role specific training for hundreds of military working animals per year. George remained in this role for 17 years, loving both the job and the team he managed and worked with on a daily basis.

Royal British Legion (RBL) activities.

Throughout his working and retired life George was an active member of the local RBL branch in Melton Mowbray and was engaged in multiple roles as part of the Branch Committee team.

He gravitated post-committee to the small team that undertook the management of the town Poppy Appeal activities each year. He supported the co-ordination and logistics activities of the volunteer teams, personally distributing and then collecting poppy boxes and donation tins throughout the town and immediate surrounding village areas.

George Noble was a recognised face and character in the British Legion and Melton Mowbray life and will be sadly missed by many and loved by the family he leaves behind: Jacqueline his wife, daughter Debbie and son Glen.

Lt. Col. (Retd) Maurice David Hutchins

I regret to inform the Corps of the passing of Lt. Col (ret'd) Maurice Hutchins who passed away on the 26th December 2021 aged 92.

Maurice joined the Army Technical School (Boys) at Arborfield aged 14 in 1943. He passed out in 1946 with Field Marshal Viscount Bernard S. Montgomery of Alamein taking the salute.

At the age of 21 and now a sergeant, he attended a ball where he met Mary, who, just five months later became his wife. Married for just a few months short of 70 years Mary sadly passed away in January 2021.

In May of 1953 the first of five children, Joan arrived.

Maurice's career progressed and in 1954 he was posted to Khartoum, Sudan. In December of that year their second child Allan arrived.

It was in Sudan that Maurice's love of golf started. As he recalled, "The workshop was situated in a Fort beside Khartoum Airport. At the five corners between the Fort wall, which was shaped like Queen Victoria's crown, we built five "browns", engine oil rolled into the sand with marmalade cans for the holes. The clubs were manufactured in the workshop -out of working hours of course- iron heads forged by the blacksmith, woods crafted by the chippie. shafts provided from wireless aerials by the tells shop and leather grips by the coach trimmer.

We sent home for golf balls. We played twice round the fort and over the fort wall to the 11th hole on the lawn outside the Sgts mess, the only green."

By the time he returned to England the golf bug had bitten!

On his return to England, he was stationed at 4 Bn Bordon as a Lecturer and, where he proudly recalled, they won the Army Cup in football. After that, a move to 5 Bn Arborfield, having earlier converted from Artificer (instruments) to Artificer (Radar and Tele communications).

In 1963 Maurice was commissioned from WO1. It was soon after that he was instrumental in the inclusion of golf for both soldiers and officers.

He was Captain of ROGS in 1971/2 and became the first captain of the RGA in 1973/4. A year later he became the first person to receive the corps colours for golf.

Further postings were mainly in the UK with the exception of a spell at Herford, Germany as EME (Tels) 4th Division. (1967-79). By now the family had grown with the arrival of Claire, Helen and finally Douglas.

In 1970 a move to Christchurch, Dorset S.R.D.E. was followed in 1976 as Commanding Officer (CO) of the REME workshop serving Catterick Garrison. During this period, he oversaw the deployment of the Green Goddess's during the national firemen's strike in 1977.

A final posting as CO REME Records Office in Leicester in 1978 before retirement in 1979. Maurice finished his career as Lt. Colonel. We understand he was the first to achieve this rank in the REME from joining as a boy soldier.

In retirement Mary and Maurice ran a successful guest house in Bournemouth for many years. Outside of work, Maurice took over as secretary for Dorset County Golf in 1986. Over the next 18 years he transformed the post to a full-time paid position. Other interests included bridge where they both ran a local bridge club.

Maurice is now reunited with Mary and leaves behind five children, eleven grandchildren and one great grandson. He was adored by them all.

