

1992

No2

Lioness



**FAREWELL TO
WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS
1 FEBRUARY 1949-6 APRIL 1992**



THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

REGISTERED UNDER THE CHARITIES ACT 1960 – No 206184

Founded in 1919

Headquarters, WRAC Association, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH

Tel: Direct (0252) 355583

Operator (0252) 24431 ext 8583

PATRON

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HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF KENT, GCVO

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Front Cover Photograph
Commandant in Chief and Controller
Commandant inspect parade 25 March 1992

Back Cover Photograph
Platoon with 1st Bn
The King's Own Scottish Borderers

Pictures on pages 78–83 courtesy of *Surrey Advertiser* and *Soldier Magazine*

Contributions for next issue by 14 December 1992

SHOPPING LIST

The stock of items in the Museum Shop is being gradually run down in anticipation of having to move.

At present the items below are available but you are advised to telephone (0252) 355565 to see if the items which you want are still available.

Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to WRAC Association and sent to WRAC Association HQ, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH.

	£	p&p	
ATS Spoons	1.95	60p	(up to 6)
ATS Post Cards	.15	20p	(up to 12)
Baseball Caps Red, Green, Blue, Yellow with WRAC Badge	4.00	60p	
Biro pens	.30	20p	(up to 6)
Corps History (hardback)	5.50	85p	
Corps History (paperback)	3.00	60p	
ID Card/Season Ticket/Bank Card Holder	.70	25p	(up to 6)
Key Rings, leather	.60	20p	(up to 6)
Prints by Ken Howard:			
Unsigned/Indoor	3.00	50p	(up to 3)
WRAC Association Brooches	1.75	20p	(up to 6)
WRAC Badge Postcard	.20	20p	(up to 12)

STATUETTES

Your attention is drawn to the order form on page 62 for statuettes of a WRAC Servicewoman in Field Uniform.

SOUVENIRS

Some items of souvenir value are listed below and are for sale. Cheques for these should be made out to ATS/WRAC Benevolent Fund.

WRAC	Other ranks side hat complete with WRAC Badge (<i>state size please</i>)	£5
WRAC	Stable belt	£2
WRAC	Officers Rank slides (<i>state rank required</i>)	£1 per pair

N.B. The side hats with the Association Badge (not ATS or WRAC badge) may be worn with Association Standard bearer's uniforms or on ex-service parades, e.g. the Cenotaph or your Local Remembrance Day Parade.

Mrs. Vee Robinson whose book "On Target" was reviewed in the No.2/91 edition of Lioness has had the book reprinted. It costs £8.50 incl. p&p and is obtainable from her at:

4 Broomfield Cottages
Wood End Lane
Fillongley
Nr. Coventry CV7 8DF

ATTENTION EX-10 COY WRAC MEMBERS

There are a few copies of "A Day to Remember", the 10 COY Disbandment Day Video left for sale. Cost of the video is £10.00.

Contact: The Admin Unit PRI
Duchess of Kent Barracks
Maida Road
Aldershot
Hampshire GU11 2DW

or: Tel: 0252 347197
347178)

or: Tel Ald Mil: 2197)
347178)

Copies of the video made of the Farewell Ceremonies at Guildford on 25 March 1992 are available by mail, priced £18 including VAT and p&p from:

Visions Unlimited
39 Maltings Road
Brightlingsea
Colchester
Essex CO7 0RG

WEDGWOOD WRAC COMMEMORATIVE TRINKET DISH

To commemorate the disbandment of the WRAC a special limited edition of 1000 Wedgwood fine bone china trinket pots, with lid, have been commissioned. They are oval shaped (approximately 1½" high by 2" width) with the Corps crest on the lid and "Women's Royal Army Corps 1949-1992" on the side in Corps colours. They are available for £11 inc. p.&p. from HQ & H Coy Admin Office, AWTC, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH. Cheques should be made payable to "Central Bank AWTC". On going to press only 600 pots remain hence orders will be accepted on a first come first served basis.

SHIELDS

ATS and WRAC Shields £14.10 each including VAT packing and postage from:

Cavalier Supplies
P.O. Box No. 2
Gilberdyke
Brough
East Yorkshire HU15 2TN

Allow 28 days for delivery.

CONGRATULATIONS

Our congratulations go to:

Lt Gen Sir Jeremy Mackenzie on his appointment as Colonel Commandant Adjutant General's Corps on 6 April 1992.

Brigadier Anne Field on her appointment as Deputy Colonel Commandant of the Adjutant General's Corps on 6 April.

Twice to Brigadier Gael Ramsey. First on assuming the appointment of Commander Aldershot Area and second on being awarded the CBE in the Queens Birthday Honours List in June 1992.

Brigadier Joan Roulstone on her promotion and appointed as Director Women (Army) on 29 April 1992 and on her appointment as an ADC to Her Majesty The Queen.

Staff Sergeant Kathleen Fenland in Washington and Sergeant Alison Winckles in Canada on their award of the British Empire Medal in the Birthday Honours List in June 1992.

Colonel Jean Blackwood TD, the TA Colonel at UKLF on her appointment as a Deputy Lieutenant for the county of Avon.

Mrs (Gunner) M Howard of Southend-on-Sea who was the first woman to be recruited to the RA Specialist Pool (V).



Mrs M Howard receives Oath of Allegiance from Captain Weston RA



Cpl Heather Sturdy, Lance Corporal Donna Davies and Private Michelle Coultham adding spice to the Army Catering Corps

Staff Sergeant Dot Douglas on being the first female member of the Royal Engineers to be awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.



Staff Sergeant Dot Douglas with her parents, Staff Sergeant Sharon Brooks and Captain Felks

Captain Jacqui Strong and Private Lisa Gray on being the first female members on staff at HQ49 Infantry Brigade at Chilwell.



Captain Jacqui Strong and Private Lisa Gray at HQ49 Infantry Brigade at Chilwell

Captain M F Andrews and Captain F J Dunn on the award of the TD.



Brigadier J M Roulstone ADC

BRIGADIER J M ROULSTONE ADC

Brigadier Joan Roulstone was appointed Director Women (Army) on 29 April 1992 when she was also appointed Aide de Camp to Her Majesty The Queen.

Brigadier Roulstone was born in Falkirk, Scotland in November 1945. Following a nomadic education she was commissioned, from the WRAC School of Instruction, Hindhead, into the WRAC in December 1964.

Her early postings encompassed regimental, recruiting and staff appointments. In 1974, on promotion to Major, she became the Senior Instructor NCO and TAVR Training at the WRAC College. Three years later she was appointed as the first female officer to command 1 Squadron, 16 Signal Regiment in BAOR, a mixed operational squadron.

She resigned her commission in 1978 but was persuaded to rejoin the Colours on 1 December 1980 as Women's Services Liaison Officer in North East District. From August 1982 to November 1984 she commanded 2 Squadron, 8th Signal Regiment in Catterick.

Following an appointment in the WRAC Directorate as SO2 WRAC 1, the policy desk, she was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in May 1986 and served in this rank as the Corps Recruiting and Liaison Officer, and Chief G1/G4 and Commander WRAC HQ North East District and 2 Infantry Division.

Prior to her current appointment she was Commander WRAC UKLF in the rank of Colonel.

She is married to Peter, an ex Regular RE officer, who runs a business in Northumberland where they have their home.

DIRECTOR WOMEN (ARMY)

With effect from 1 August 1991, and on the directive of the Adjutant General (AG), the Director Women's Royal Army Corps (DWRAC) became double hatted, taking on the new appointment of Director Women (Army) with the imminent disbandment of the WRAC. DW(A) thus became responsible to AG, through Director General Army Manning and Recruiting, for advice on the execution of policy and on the management of all women in the Army, less those in the Army Medical Services (AMS).

AG also directed that DW(A) should monitor the progress of the integration of women into employing Arms and Services and advise those responsible as and when necessary. In order to achieve this, DW(A) has been given the right of access to manning data and the right to be present at, or represented on, all promotion boards where non-AMS female candidates are being considered.

DW(A)'s responsibilities relating to non-AMS women are,

firstly, to provide the female focus for all women serving in the Regular or Territorial Army, the CCF and the ACF.

secondly, to advise Policy Directors, IGDT and Arms and Services Directors as appropriate, on all aspects of female selection, recruitment, training, manning, employment, deployment, and career management.

There are also two specific areas in which DW(A) has responsibilities for all women, including AMS. These are the co-ordination of women's sport throughout the Army, and advice to the Army Dress Committee on matters related to female dress.

On the 6 April 1992, with the disbandment of the WRAC, the WRAC Directorate properly became the Directorate Women (Army). It has remained on the 10th Floor of Empress State Building MOD, albeit in a slightly small empire, and there are no plans for it to move.

Being situated in MOD, London, is ideal for DW(A) to carry out her new monitoring and advisory role to ensure that women in the Army are receiving fair and equal treatment. Each Command and District has, or is to have, a Female Focus in the HQ, which will enable DW(A) to retain a chain of command. Naturally, DW(A) will be carrying out an extensive programme of visits and will be very much in evidence.

REGIMENTAL SECRETARY

A Retired Officer Grade 2 post as Regimental Secretary to the Adjutant Generals Corps is open for applications now. For details please write to:

**Regimental Colonel
AGC 4 HQ DGAGC
Worthy Down
WINCHESTER SO21 2RG**

or Tel: (0962) 887521. Starting Salary: £15,057 p.a.

**SEE PAGE 52 FOR DETAILS OF
WRAC ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP**



*First and only Commandant-in-Chief of WRAC with
thirteenth and last Director WRAC*

A MESSAGE FROM THE LAST DWRAC

Brigadier G K Ramsey CBE

It is now some months since we saw a series of events to mark the disbandment of the Corps. How very proud I was of all those who worked so hard to achieve such a high standard on every occasion, and how enjoyable each event was. The sheer volume of letters alone, from all corners of the world, showed how much that work was appreciated. On each of the days, I could not but admire the standing, bearing and professionalism of everyone in the public eye. Between us, we could not have given the Corps a more perfect, grand or proud send-off despite the bitter-sweet taste many of us shared.

My sincere thanks to the Corps, serving and retired, for their staunch support over the two-and-a-half years of my tour. It was not easy, but without your help, I do not think any of us could have gone forward so strong in our values and traditions, developed over the years so loyally by the members of the Women's Royal Army Corps.

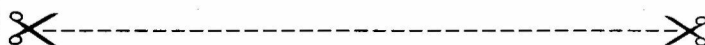
Out with the old and in with the new, the saying goes! In my new appointment, as Commander Aldershot Area, I have already heard news of the first Sergeant Major RCT, Staff Sergeant R E Murphy of 41 Squadron RCT in Aldershot who goes to Berlin in July 1992, as SSM 62 Tpt & Mov Sqn RCT; although outside my area, WO1 (RSM) S Jones RMP, took over as RSM Donnington on 14 April 1992, and WO1 (RSM) L M Horton RMP who took over as RSM, Hong Kong on 29 May 1992. They have gained those appointments in competition with men, and represent a first for women in those two Corps. Our congratulations go with them. Progress is being made and at last women are gaining the recognition and status they so richly deserve.

I end by taking this opportunity to warmly welcome on your behalf my successor, Brigadier Joan Roulstone,

Director Women (Army). Her task ahead will also not be easy. She faces much challenge in continuing to ensure equality for women, and in developing policies which will take women forward to even better and greater things. I know she has the will, spirit and sense of humour to ensure women can never be forgotten ever again, and I know she will not mind if I pledge all our support to her in the years ahead.

WHERE IS MY LIONESSE?

Now that servicewomen and officers of the former WRAC have rebadged and now subscribe to their new corps funds they are no longer automatically members of the WRAC Association. If you know of a serving friend who would like to receive LIONESSE ask her to join using the form below.



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

To the General Secretary
THE WRAC ASSOCIATION
CORPS HQ WRAC
QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK
GUILDFORD SURREY

I wish to join the WRAC Association as a

Life Member (£20) OR Annual Member (£2)

and enclose £.....
(Cheques made payable to WRAC Association).

Date Signature

Subscriptions include "LIONESSE"
(Please Complete in BLOCK LETTERS)

Surname

Christian Names

Address for Correspondence

Permanent Address (if different)

Married or Single

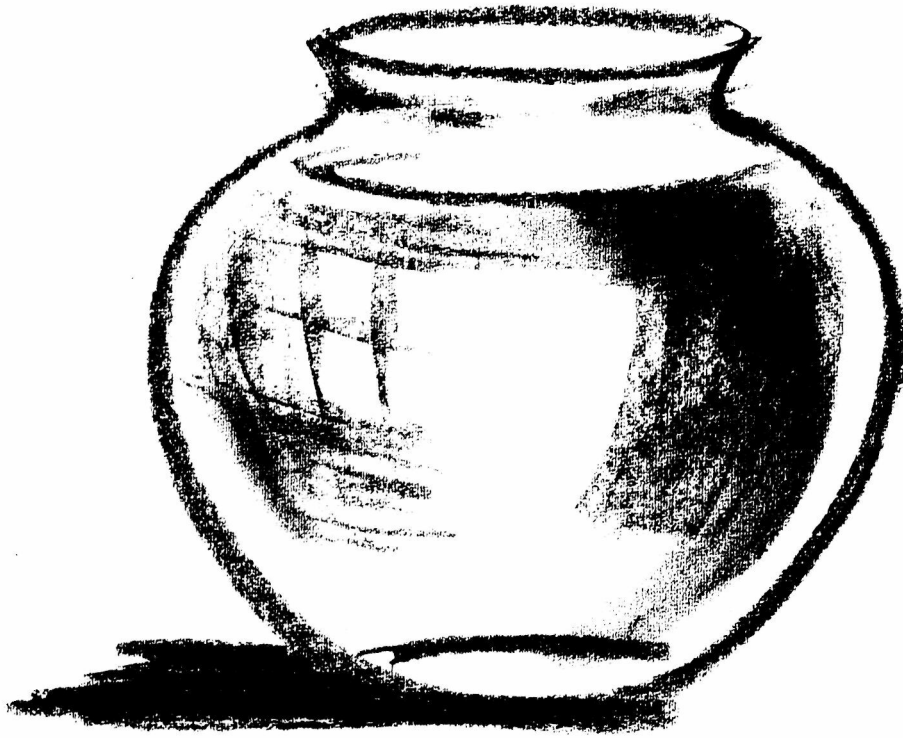
Surname when Serving

Army Number

Present Rank

Date of Enrolment Date of Release

Decorations



How do you feel about leaving the Army?

As you're well aware, serving in the Forces isn't just a job. It's a way of life. So, it's no surprise, that after leaving, many people feel as though they're high and dry, like a fish out of water.

But there's no need for you to feel this way. It's perfectly possible for you to keep up with old friends, make use of the unique skills you've acquired, and make a vital contribution to the nation's defence into the bargain.

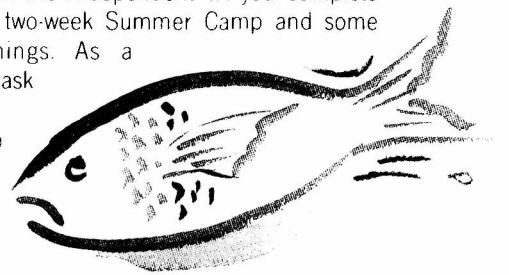
How? Simply by becoming a member of the Volunteer Forces, which make up a third of our Army and represent a significant part of our commitment to NATO.

There are two options open to you.

Firstly, you can join one of the Territorial Army Independent Units based in the TAVRA region in which you have decided to settle. An ideal route for those leaving Infantry or Cavalry regiments.

Secondly, if you are leaving a Corps, you could retain your capbadge and become a member of either an Independent Unit or a TA Specialist Unit. In either, you can maintain and extend the special skills that you have learned.

You can contribute as much time as you want in any one year. The minimum that we ask is that as a member of the Independent TA you complete 6 weekends, a two-week Summer Camp and some weekday evenings. As a Specialist we ask only 15 days training and two weekends.



In return you will receive payment equivalent to the rates paid to Regular Army soldiers plus an annual tax-free bonus.

If you would like more information about how you can stay in the swim of things, write to the address below, giving details of which option you are interested in, your current age and address, your intended county of residence, and of the regiment you have left or are leaving.

The Territorial Army, Freepost, 4335 (Ref: 9000), Bristol BS1 3YX.

UNIT NEWS

DUCHESS OF KENT BARRACKS ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT ARMY LUGE CHAMPIONSHIPS by Lance Corporal Adey

At the beginning of the New Year, information about the sport Luge was announced on Part One Orders. We didn't know at this stage what Luge involved, but the thought of laying on your back 6 ins from the ground on a specially made toboggan down a bobsleigh track at speeds up to 40 mph certainly seemed exciting. We decided to attend a selection and training day at Arborfield's Princess Marina College.

Soon after the end of the selection, 12 of us who then attended were informed we were selected to go to a place called Winterberg in Germany.

At this stage we were aware that at the end of the training week, we would be competing in the Army Novice Luge Championships. The aim then from this was to select any potential talent to ultimately take part in the 1998 Olympic Games.

We departed Arborfield on 1 February 1992 at 8 a.m., excited but mystified as to what was ahead. After a long drive, we got to our destination on 2 February after spending the night in Rheindahlen Garrison. Soon after we arrived at the Bed and Breakfast Hotel, and went to have a look at the track. Much to our surprise it didn't after all look as steep as we imagined it to be, (but then again we hadn't been down it!). However it is a very long track and covers a large area of land. The ice channel which lies at the entrance of Winterberg and which begins at the "kappe", 776m above sea level, is one of the fastest tracks in the world. By now we were thinking "What the hell had we let ourselves in for!". Later that evening we met up with a further 30 novice participants who were all men. We had a brief about track rules and discipline, next day was the big day for the first run.

We started off by walking the track as it is important to do so for indications of timings, curves, and how the surface of the track was looking. We started at the beginning of Kurve 10 finishing at Kurve 14 – approximately 400 metres.

The first time down there was snow on the track, visibility was poor and going down felt like "peas were being shot in your face 1000 times each second", said Pte Chalkie Dawson. We didn't pick up much speed, because

we didn't have the correct clothing, we were inexperienced and due to snow on the track. But considering that, it felt like you were going very fast, especially being 6 inches from the ground. We realised we had to dress to be as streamline as possible.



Lugeing in Winterberg, Germany

Each day we progressed a little further up the track gaining more experience and technique with every slide. Gaining experience includes a collection of bumps, bruises, ice burns that can rip the skin of limbs and the occasional gashed eyebrow!

On our final day of practice, the day before the competition, our times were recorded and looked at that evening. This was to give us all an idea how we were doing individually. We were doing quite well looking at the times, but things can change so quickly. The night before the race we didn't go out, it was full concentration for the next day, going through the moves of the legs, shoulders, head, the shape of the track, when to put pressure on and when to release. This is all important because it is you who controls the way the toboggan is steered. One slight knock can put seconds on your time. The day of the race we knew we each had 3 runs and each time was important.

For the last time we walked the track and we were so nervous because this was the day we had to use all our knowledge and what to do had to be done correctly. The feeling you have is unreal (in short the feeling cannot be explained). "At this point you realise how much respect you have to pay to this sport", said L/Cpl Adey. When it's your turn to do less than a 30 second run down the track the thoughts in your head are unbelievable. Considering all the work that is put into preparing and getting yourself to the start you really only use such a small time sliding. Each time you have to remember what you did wrong and where you did it, and get your act together on your next run. **FULL CONCENTRATION** is needed at all times. One lapse could mean, if you are lucky, sight bruising, but it could result in having a more serious injury.

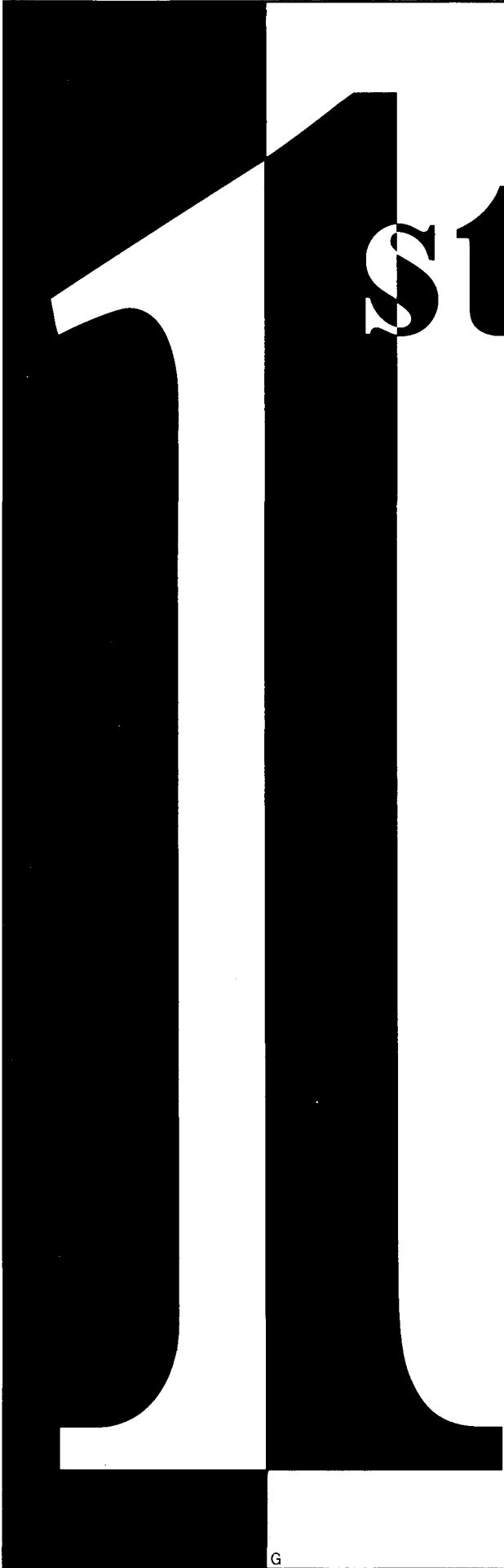
At the start, some of us were feeling more nervous than others. We each had our 3 goes and in between we had to carry our sleds back up to the start, which is harder than it sounds. Walking in the snow and on the ice carrying a 20lb sled is difficult. The main competition was an individual effort, but an Inter Arm and Services Competition was held in parallel.

Ptes Ivens and Jones represented the WRAC and Pte Dawson represented the RCT together with Dvr Anderson.

At the end of the competition everyone eagerly awaited the results. We were talking about the rack and mishaps we had along the way. It was a horrible feeling because you didn't know where you stood at the end of the day. The



*Privates Ivens, Dawson, Lance Corporal Adey and
Private Jones
Ladies Novice Luge team*



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...on active duty.

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when you need us.**

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instructors joined us holding white sheets of paper, quietly talking among themselves. The results were announced and medals were given. Pte Dawson achieved a medal for the fastest lady that day. We had a final speech about the week. A selection board will sit in London in March. There they will consider who will represent the Army in several competitions in other countries leading up to the Olympics in 1998.

All in all we had an enjoyable and worthwhile time, hopefully we all will successfully get through.

The hardest part of the event was sitting on the ferry trying to sum this week up. I hope we have succeeded.

WHY JUMP OUT OF A PERFECTLY SERVICEABLE PLANE AT 2000 FEET? – WHY NOT!

by 2Lt T J Fox

As my Short Service Limited Commission posting I was lucky enough to be sent to Cyprus to join the Transport and Movement Squadron. I knew that the opportunities open to me would be exciting and varied and with the Army offering a course in most areas of adventurous training I decided to take full advantage of the situation and try one of the most dangerous sports available – freefall parachuting.

Cyprus Joint Service Parachute Centre is located at Kingsfield air strip, Dhekelia Garrison, which is situated to the east of the island. The course runs for two weeks, during which you spend two days ground training and the rest of the time on practical. The course is subsidised by the Army for up to 15 jumps per person, after that if you have got the bug and wish to continue with the sport then you have to start paying for yourself.

Arriving at the Parachute Centre on the first day was a bit unnerving. I discovered that I was the only officer on the course of 15 so I knew that I would be open to a lot of teasing and they all wanted me to back down and fail. With this in my mind it only seemed to make me want to complete the course all the more, because believe me I was having serious second thoughts already.

Ground training on the first day including practising landing techniques, aircraft drills eg how to jump out of the plane, and watching videos on all the problems that could arise with the parachute and ways to solve the problem – most reassuring. The second day consisted of learning how to pack the parachute canopy ourselves after a jump ready for our next mad leap.

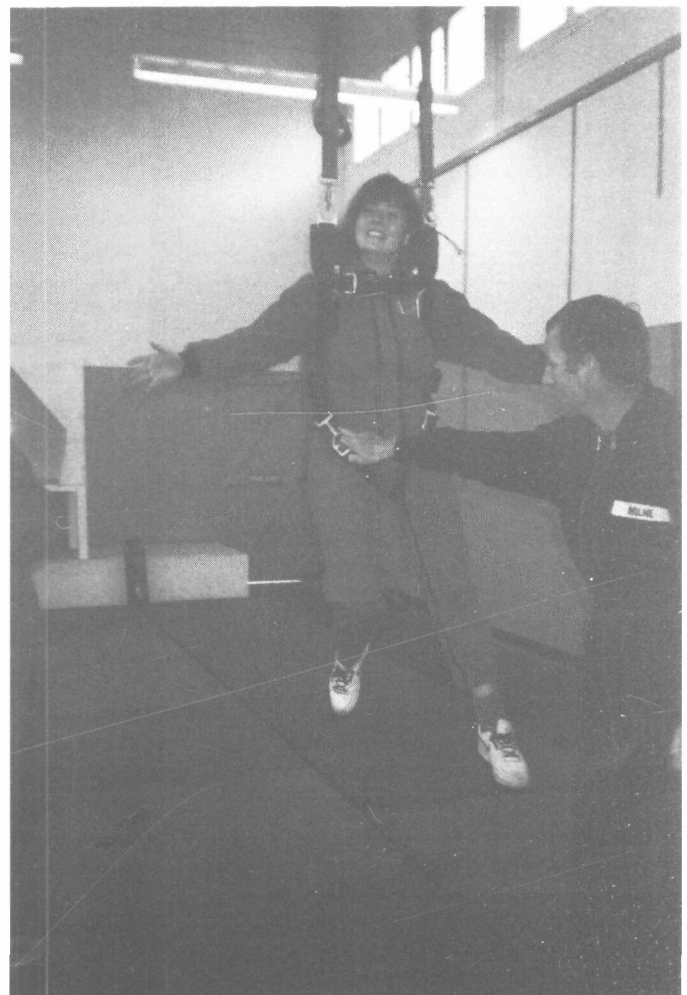
The centre had just purchased new square parachute equipment which allows beginners to learn on square rather than round parachutes and the advantages involved in learning on the new rigs was tremendous. This was proved when half of the group, including myself, used the new equipment available and the other half remained on the rounds – due to lack of sets of rigs. The squares are easier to steer, are most manoeuvrable, pack away quicker and smaller, comfortable to wear, and take all the danger out of landing because you can just step onto the ground, if you time it all right of course. The square parachute is more versatile making it still available for use even when the winds are at a high speed, which would normally ground a round canopy.

On the third day we met at the parachute centre. It was the day of the big jump, the day to test who was going to be up to completing the course and who would fail. At the drop zone we had to wait until the wind conditions were perfect,

and the atmosphere was electric. Could I actually get into the open plane door and jump out? Only time would tell. The signal was given to go and eight of us moved out towards the plane – a Britten Norman Islander. Take off was scary, silence filled the plane except for the wining of the propellers, 1000ft, 2000ft, 3000ft, 3500ft “No 1 in the door” – yes! that was me.

My parachute was attached to a static line and would open immediately without any help from me. Moving into the doorway I looked down onto the small world below, wisps of clouds flew by and your whole world stops. A second of panic wells in your body as you take up the correct position in the door, “Go” comes the shout from the instructor – I just sat there, “Go” came the shout again and without any delay I threw myself out of the door. It all happened so fast that before I realised it I was hanging under the canopy floating towards the earth. It’s so quiet up there and you wonder what all the fuss was about. Then you realise that you’ve yet to land and next problem is steering towards the outlined circle, named the drop zone. I managed to fail completely and landed in a heap – not the gentle landing I was told about – but in a mud field $\frac{1}{2}$ km away – well nobody’s perfect.

I loved every second of it. From there I went on to complete the 15 jumps provided by the Army and then proceeded to complete a further 4. After my tenth jump I was allowed to progress onto freefall and by the time I left the parachute centre I was onto 20 second delays before I had to pull the rip cord to open the chute. The parachuting was good fun but the freefall was a totally exhilarating experience. If I had the chance I wouldn’t hesitate to do it again and progress even further.



***Second Lieutenant Taylor Fox practising landings
at Dhekelia, Cyprus.***

R & H SELF

LADIES BESPOKE TAILORS

by

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Women's Royal Naval Service
Army Women**

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We have fitting rooms in Gosport and London and since our Tailors travel widely we are often able to offer a Personal Visiting Service.

CYPRUS – DOWNHILL SKIING

For those of you unfamiliar with Cyprus, it is not only a sunny holiday island but also boasts a small ski resort on its highest mountain, Mt Olympus, some 6,400 ft high. The resort is small, with only five runs, but it is easily accessible from all parts of the island and this year we had some of the best snow in years, (and the coldest winter this Century!)

On 20 and 21 February 1992, the Army Women's Downhill Ski Team (Cyprus) met up the mountain to compete for the Inter-Services and Individual Trophies. The team consisted of 2Lt Hilary Andrews REME, 2Lt Dee Simpson Int Corps, Cpl Donna Beresford RMP, Cpl Pam Wallace RE and LCpl "Hammy" Hammond WRAC. Under the expert tuition of the team coach Capt Tony Higham APTC we were trained in the techniques of Giant and Special Slalom – "Just take it easy and don't fall!" The course was held on the North Face slope, a steep run roughly equivalent to a difficult red standard slope in an Alpine resort.

The first race was the Giant Slalom, which seemed a fairly easy run, but caused a few problems with Hilary Andrews falling but managing to get up and complete the course. The weather was bad, with poor visibility and high winds at the top of the run, not to mention icy patches all over the course – all very well if you're used to skiing in Scotland! However, all the girls managed to finish.

The second day's racing, the Special Slalom, saw us all fearfully watching the other competitors as they fell one after the other on this difficult course. The run contained 38 gates with 4 "vertical" gates, which are set down the hill rather than across it and require quick turning and speedy reactions. Fortunately the weather was kind to us, snow fell all day so that by the time we raced the course was covered in a thick layer. Once again all the girls managed to finish in creditable times, with an exceptional and aggressive performance from Dee Simpson. Dee was the eventual winner of the Women's Services competition, narrowly beating a WRAF Officer by hundredths of a second.

Slalom racing is a very different sport from Downhill Skiing requiring steady nerves and a controlled but aggressive approach to the course. We all learnt something about ourselves from competing and benefited in many other ways, such as improved skiing technique, gaining race experience and the thrill of being part of a successful team.



Lance Corporal Hammond, Second Lieutenants Andrews and Simpson, Corporal Beresford with their trophies.

EXERCISE SNOW LIONESS II by Captain Annette Harper

The WRAC Centre's new PRI minibus, packed to the hilt with excited skiers and their equipment was to face its longest journey yet to Fulpmes, near Innsbruck in Austria. After over 800 cramped miles, everyone had got to know each other well already and the only male member of the party, nordic ski instructor, Sgt "Gilly" Gilsenan coped remarkably well in the close company of ten women in a bus for over 14 hours.

If Sgt Gilsenan was missing regimental life at 7RHA he made a good job of disguising the fact, and got on with the teaching nordic skiing to the group in a fun, imaginative and patient way. At the end of the exercise all the participants passed their Joint Services Bronze Award test although it is uncertain whether "skating" with balloons between the knees is part of the official assessment. Sgt Andrea Hurst deserves special mention for diving into the snow at every possible opportunity, especially on downhill sections on her langlauf skis. (See page 67). Sgt Gilsenan, a life-long "sweaty", was rather disparaging about the downhill phase of the exercise, claiming that the only real skiing was nordic, and that the other half of the exercise was merely spent "handbagging".

The downhill phase, however, did not lack excitement either. On their first day, the intermediate group went in for a spot of ski mountaineering. Led by downhill ski instructor, Captain Netty Harper, past the middle station on the Schlick 2000 complex, the crisp white snow soon gave way to mud and grass, leaving the party no choice but to tackle the long and steep descent to the valley floor on foot. Not only did they miss the lift for the last run of the day but by the time they had got down they'd issued the last bus home as well. At the point of resorting to taking a taxi back to the accommodation, the day was saved by the ever resourceful Sgt Gilsenan coming to the rescue in the minibus.

The "dare devil" award went jointly to 2LT Leona Jones and Cpl Wendy Summerell (lots of speed and no control) and the "smiler" award went to Pte Paulette Larby, who had never skied before, but learnt very quickly. She, despite being scared stiff by the steepness of the red runs, erupted into fits of laughter each time she reached the bottom.

The real highlight of the trip did not take place on skis, but on toboggans down a frighteningly steep and twisty track only made less so by several Gluhweins drunk beforehand in the cafe at the top of the mountain to the sound of a real Austrian "Oompah" band comprising of the chefs from the cafe.

The exercise was a great success – watch out for our T-Shirts and remember that "sticks and stones may break our bones, but snow and ice excites us".



*Sergeant Gilsenan proposing? Some nordic ski-ing
L-R: 2Lt Jones, Pte Powell, Cpl Summerell,
Sgt Gilsenan, Sergeant Hurst, Capt Taylor*



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EXERCISE YETI RINGER AND EXPEDITION TO NEPAL by Capt C Frearson

At the end of October a party of eight members of Berlin Infantry Brigade set off for a 5 week adventure training expedition to Nepal. Our aim was to trek around the Annapurnas for 21 days, followed by white water rafting on the Trisuli River and a visit to the Royal Chitwan National Park.

Nepal is a small, land locked country which is 800km long and 200km wide, running along the northern border of India. The terrain is varied, changing from the glaciers and Himalayan mountain ranges in the north of up to 8900m high, to the flat jungle area of the Terai, barely 150m above sea level, in the south. As in Britain, the country has 4 distinct seasons, with the monsoons occurring from June through to September. The primary trekking seasons are Spring and Autumn, the days being warm and free from precipitation, although the nights can be very cold.

The expedition party consisting of Capt Caroline Frearson (Team Leader), Capt Andy Cliffe RE (Team 2IC), Lt Mark Knight 1 RWF, Sgt Darren Jones, WCpl Julie Hopkins, LCpl Sean Matthews 1 RWF, WLCpl Angie Hand, and WLCpl Teresa Perry flew from Frankfurt airport on 29 October to Dhaka, on the first stage of our journey to Kathmandu. Having chosen the cheapest route possible, we were not surprised to find ourselves battling for seats on the aircraft, no boarding cards having been issued, or for the 24 hour delay in Dhaka, due to double-booking of the whole flight! eventually arriving in Kathmandu.

A 36-hour period was spent in finalising our trekking itinerary, checking off kit lists, registering the expedition with the British Defence Attaché, sight-seeing and eating westernized food before our departure.

The trekking phase of the expedition began with a 9-hour road journey to Bhote Odar, situated to the South West of the Annapurnas. The only road running East-West through Nepal turned out to be a badly pot-holed dust track. We spent 6 nerve-wracking hours in an old bus jolting along the route.

Arriving in Dhumre, we transferred ourselves, guide, porters, kit and 3 weeks supply of rations onto an Ex-Russian Army truck, whose mechanical reliability looked rather ominous! Arriving 2 hours later in the dark, at Bhote Odar, covered in white dust from the track, we unloaded the kit onto what was to be our first night's campsite. Whilst the tents were being erected the cook set to preparing the evening meal of buffalo meat, vegetables and rice.

The daily routine from now on was to rise at 0600 hrs, wash in a bowl of warm water, have breakfast and then break camp at 0700 hrs. During the days trek, in addition to water stops, we would break at 1100 hrs for a 2 hour lunch, and finish the day at about 1630 hrs. At a pace of about 12

kms per day, we ensured that the porters assisting us, were able to keep up. To our utmost amazement, they managed most of the trek shod only in a pair of flip-flops!

The trek took us in an anti-clockwise circuit around the Annapurnas. We set off on the eastern leg following the valley of the Marsyandi Khola River. The landscape was gently undulating with stepped cultivated rice fields, and in some areas the vegetation tropical. The foliage provided good shelter from the midday sun, soaring to temperatures in the high 20°C's. Gradually the trail became steeper, in places interspersed with sheer descents to cross the river by means of a Nepali bridge—ropes suspended over the water supporting planks, many of which were generally cracked or rotten! It was really quite an experience crossing them just as a herd of goats or train of donkeys began to cross from the other end, the whole bridge would oscillate dramatically!

The further north we headed the more steep and barren the terrain became. Some of the descents proved heavy going on our as yet unprepared knee joints. The path became narrow, barely wide enough for two people to walk abreast, so that when passing donkey trains, we found ourselves precariously clinging on to cliff edges prepared for any rash manoeuvres the cantakerous beasts might have made.

On most nights we managed to find a suitable campsite, but the nearer we drew to the high crossing point at Thorung-La the more populated they became, and on one occasion we found ourselves bedding down in tea-house dormitories with 20 or so other trekkers. After Day 6 of the trek the weather became cooler, dropping to well below 0°C at night, and barely reaching 6°C during the day. We were now at an altitude of 3500m and, as advised by The Himalayan Rescue Association, we stopped for a 24 hour acclimatisation period in Manang. Manang turned out not to be the metropolis we had imagined, situated on crumbling cliffs 300m above the river, the land was sparse of vegetation and covered in scree. However, views of the snow-capped Annapurnas to our west were breath-taking.

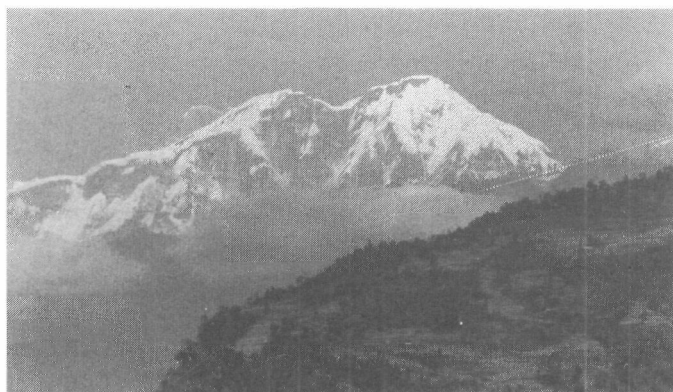
By now the weather had turned inclement, with sleet and driving wind. With the help of our guide we found our way along the now non-existent snow covered path to Letdar at 4300m. After a freezing night spent in a tea house we set off through the snow, with crystal blue skies above,



The team at Thorung-La Pass (5500 metres)

the sleet storm having passed, and we covered the final 200m ascent to Thorung-Phedi. There being no campsite available, we secured bed spaces in the 50-man dormitory and prepared for the following morning's ascent over the Thorung-La pass at 5500m.

Awoken at 0330 hrs, we devoured breakfast in the dormitory (it being – 8°C outside) and then set off crocodile-fashion with our porters up the 1000m ascent to the pass. We zig-zagged our way, guided only by torches, cautiously treading over the ice and snow covered rocks.



Early morning view from Bhote Odar



The team enjoying the Trisuli River

As the sun rose we were mesmerised by the immensity of the Annapurnas. A sight few of us will forget. We plodded on ever upwards, at times knee deep in snow, with the aim of reaching the pass before 1000 hrs, and the onset of the reputed high winds. Misled by many false crests we eventually reached the summit of the pass at 0930 hrs, to be confronted by rows of prayer flags and cairns.

The winds already blowing, we took the requisite team photographs and began the 1600m descent to Muktinath. By now the sun was beating down on the snow causing it to melt and a lot of time was spent sliding down the scree slope, through the slush, on our bottoms! Despite preventive measures, the intensity of the sun's reflection gave us all bad wind and sun burn. As the land began to plateau after 1000m descent we caught our first glimpses of Muktinath, the pilgrimage centre of Nepal for Buddhists and Hindus. Exhausted from the day's exertions we were grateful for the floor space found for us by our guide in a disused monastery and, after a voracious meal, we slept soundly, spirits high having achieved our target by crossing the Thorung-La Pass.

Up early the following morning we began our 6 days descent to Pokhara, following the Jhong Khola valley through country that was arid and desert like. Vegetation was sparse against the contrasting browns of the dramatic geographical formations. The trail descended steeply down boulder-covered paths, relentlessly straining our knees, to the glacial river bed of the Kali Gandaki. Here we picked our way cautiously along the rock-strewn river valley for 3 days, with the glacial raging torrent only metres from us, and the ferocious wind funnelling through the valley covering us in fine sand.

The further south we trekked the less hostile the terrain became, the vegetation began to return and the footing became easier on our ankles and knees. We were rewarded at the end of this phase of the trek by a night's stopover in Tatopani – literally "hot-water" in Nepali – with its hot springs where we could wallow and soak away the aches and dirt from the past 5 days pounding. From Tatopani we headed South-east for the final 4 days of the trek. The route was now far more populated, being the classic Teahouse trek for tourists, and we found ourselves joined on the trail by hordes of middle-aged trekkers undertaking the 5-day trek circuit from Pokhara.

After 1½ days respite, in which we washed our clothes and ourselves, devoured copious quantities of food at every restaurant we could find along the Pokhara lake-side, and caught up with the long overdue postcards, we said our farewells to our ever faithful guide and porters, and headed off for 4 days white-water rafting.

We moved by bus from Pokhara to Maleku where we met our rafting guide and cook from the "Himalayan

White-Water" Company. The campsite had already been set up on the beach alongside the Trisuli River, so we spent the remainder of the day looking over the rafting equipment and receiving a safety briefing. The Trisuli River is probably the most popular rafting river in Nepal. It runs from North-West to Kathmandu and flows South-West, joining the Marsyandi and Kali Gandaki rivers before flowing through the Royal Chitwan National Park. We joined the river mid-way between Kathmandu and the Royal Chitwan National Park, giving us a 3½ day rafting trip finishing near the Park perimeter.

The Trisuli river proved to be quite a challenge in places, whilst in the still waters we ended up paddling (excellent for building up the triceps!) The rapids turned out to be larger than we had envisaged, ensuring that we all got a good drenching, trying to hold on for dear life whilst the guide shouted at us to continue paddling. On the third day we encountered "Upset Rapid". By now experienced rafters (or so we thought) we paddled courageously into the first stage of the rapid, and were pretty pleased that, despite being soaked, we were still all aboard the raft. Then, with no warning, we hit the second phase – sheer pandemonium – it found us all grabbing for a stronghold, most of us unsuccessfully, leaving just 3 of the group aboard the raft. Even the guide had been washed over the side! Having dragged bodies and paddles back on board, and bailed out the water, we set off in search of a beaching point for lunch, and to dry out.

Nepal proved to be an ideal location for adventure training. The country is generally unspoilt by the tourist industry, the Nepalese hospitable and the scenery breathtaking. Our expedition passed all too quickly, but it was a truly worthwhile experience and one that can be highly recommended by all of us.

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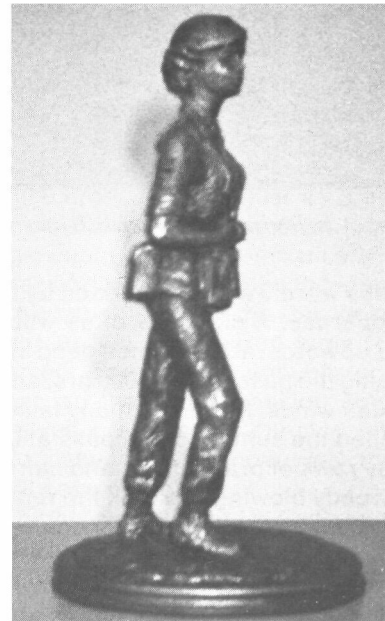
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SKI BOB WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 1992

by Cpl J Boggan

On Sunday 12 January 1992, ski-bobbers were appearing gradually from all over Germany and England for army training at Obersdorf, Bavaria.

There were 12 of us in all, Lt Col Platt and Capt Wright both of REME were trying hard to keep the rest of us organised, which included five women – what a job!

We were Corporal Jayne Boggan, Corporal Rose Graham, Lance Corporal Michelle Douglas, Lance Corporal Michelle Turner and Private Julie Overington.

On arrival we were introduced to their first method of controlling us. To get to the hotel, which just happened to be at the top of a mountain, we had to travel by ski lift which only ran from 8.30 a.m. until 4.30 p.m. Guess where we spent all our evenings!

The first two days were spent refreshing ourselves with ski-bob techniques. Could we remember how to put the bobs together or most importantly how to stop once we pointed ourselves downhill?

The next two days we practiced a bit more speed. It was obvious when we were on the slope as our screams could be heard from the bottom.

On Friday 17 January 1992 we packed up all our kit to travel another 3 hours to Zell-am-See, Austria, the location of the world championships. Were we really ready for this?

After settling in we went for the first viewing of the slopes. Our first reaction was one of total horror. How were we supposed to stay seated on our bobs going down a sheer drop? After a few runs down however we decided it wasn't quite as bad as it first seemed!

The world championships consisted of 4 races, Super G, Downhill, Slalom and giant Slalom, to be counted together for an overall position. Competing against the Austrians, Germans and Czechs I decided it was best to take my first year easily, to make sure I achieved a final position in each race and so have a combination result. The fact that the other nations completed the races in half the time that I did helped me make this otherwise difficult decision!

The first race on Sunday saw our first accident. Michelle Turner slipped off her bob whilst looking down the course and broke a bone in her ankle. She was the first of many to test out the stretcher rescue off the slope. We found it difficult enough walking on the snow and ice, poor Michelle was now having to cope on crutches.

Monday was the start of the downhill, the race I dreaded most. After a practice run and a timed run we were put in order to race on Tuesday. I was extremely relieved to reach the bottom – even more so when I finally opened my eyes and saw that the bob was still with me.

Another 3 were not so fortunate and that was just from the Great Britain team.

WO2 David "Stormin" Norman decided to show us a new way of stopping, as he came hurtling towards a sharp bend at great speed he realised he wasn't quite going to make it so headed off towards the fence, as if he knew it would safely stop the bob travelling any further and give him plenty of time – whilst sommersaulting from a great height in the air – to look down and find a comfortable piece of fresh snow to land in. He was unable to demonstrate this technique again due to a twisted, bruised and swollen knee.

Wednesday was a well earned day off racing and a day to prepare ourselves for the slalom races.

There were two timed runs on both Thursday and Friday through a mass of blue and red flags. Could we remember which to go in and out off, at the same time as we were trying to control our speed and direction? I was relieved to

see clearly the tracks made by those who had raced before me.

By Friday night all the races were over, with just the presentations to go. We had seen the results of the individual races, for the women it was out of a maximum of 18, we were nearly all pulling up at the rear that is those of us still fit to race through the competition. Rose Graham – our most experienced – was pushing up, in with the other nations. We didn't know how many had completed all the combination events, for which there were 10 large trophies. We were so pleased to be called out for the following:

Cpl Rose Graham – 6th

L/Cpl Michelle Douglas – 8th

Cpl Jayne Boggan – 9th

The men also achieved good results.

Our thanks go to those who organised the training and entries to the championships, supporters who provided warm clothing, drinks and their photographic skills and the sponsors who provided valuable funding.

A fantastic time was had by all. Roll on next year!

ARMY ATHLETICS

by Lance Corporal Fiona Palmer

The Army Athletic Championships took place at Aldershot Military Stadium on 7 and 8 June this year.

Getting a flight back to UK was quite easy and I flew back the day before the competition. Luckily for me, due to the fact that the heats were cancelled there were fewer competitors so it gave me an extra day to get used to the British Summer!

At 4.30 p.m. on Saturday 8 June we were at our marks ready to start the final of the 400m. Sixty odd seconds later it was all over! I had achieved my aim of qualification for the Army squad for the Inter-Services, by coming second, not to mention getting a silver medal.

Having been selected for the Performance Course 26 June to 2 July I then had to stay in UK until the course started. The aim of the course is to get everyone together to do some training and include a few races against Hampshire, Surrey and Civil Service teams so that the selectors could pick the best possible team to win.

3 July dawned bright and clear and stayed that way all day... a lot better than the year before.

For a slight change I was to run in my first major 800m race as well as the 4 by 400m relay and although I was a bit nervous, not knowing what to expect, the 800m went really well and I came away not only with a personal best time but also with my first Inter-Services individual medal: a bronze!

To top it all and end a very good day for me we won the 4 by 400m relay, so I got a gold medal to take home with the bronze and silver. A complete set!

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LIFE IN CYPRUS **by Cpl "Smurf" Murphy**

I was completely devastated to hear that I had been posted to Cyprus away from the cold and rain of Northern Ireland. All that sun and sea to enjoy and for the benefit of Queen and country!

However within days my shades, sun tan lotion and bags were packed destined for the Eastern Sovereign Base Area (ESBA), Dhekelia, Cyprus.

This sunblest island is about half the size of Wales and is sandwiched between Turkey, Syria, Israel and Egypt. English is widely spoken but Greek is the native language.

I was to serve with 23 Postal and Courier Squadron RE in the sunny resort, sorry Military Garrison, of Dhekelia: approximately 1½ hours drive from RAF Akrotiri and a mere 10 minutes from the beach!

In between working a strenuous 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. on a Monday and 7 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Tuesday to Friday, the Garrison caters for a wide variety of outdoor pursuits. Other than the number one activity of sunbathing, the activities include sailing, windsurfing, sub-aqua diving and horse-riding.

After an afternoon on the beach, Cyprus offers a vast selection of cheaply-priced restaurants and bars providing both local and European dishes. The infamous Brandy Sour is a favourite sociable cocktail with both Cypriots and Service personnel alike. If you want to make a fool of yourself, why not try some traditional Greek dancing at one of the many Bouzouki nights.

Life in Cyprus rolls along at a fairly relaxed pace and added to the Cyprus "No Problem" attitude, makes for a very enjoyable posting.

CYPRUS SERVICES SWIMMING **by Corporal Jill MacKay**

The swimming season in Cyprus started in June this year with the Dhekelia Garrison Swimming Competition. As there is a distinct lack of women on the Garrison, there would have been no competition for us were it not for the two teams competing from the local school.

What we thought was a strong WRAC team entered, but on the day youth was on the side of the other teams (not to mention speed!), who came 1st and 2nd with the WRAC 3rd.

This even led to the selection of our Garrison team which would compete in the All-Island League which takes place throughout July and August, with the meetings held at the venues of the 5 competing teams: Dhekelia, Akrotiri, Berengaria, Nicosia and Ayios Nikolaos. As the rules in Cyprus are fairly relaxed, dependants are allowed to compete along with service personnel in the Garrison teams and a strong element of this year's teams indeed came from civilian members.

28 August 1991 saw the final of the league meetings at our home pool in Dhekelia and due to a few disappointments throughout the season our final position was 3rd overall.

The Inter-Service competition was held on 4 September at RAF Akrotiri and three members of Dhekelia Garrison were selected for the Army team – Lieutenant "Gucci" Wardner, Corporal "Dolphin" Donna Beresford, and the completion was going very well overall until a disputed disqualification in the 4 by 100m Freestyle relay put the WRAF into the lead and gave them enough clear points to win.

Although we have had an unlucky season, everyone

trained very hard and our tans didn't do too badly with the three hours spent in the pool each week.

EL SANGAY – THE LAST FRONTIER **by Lance Corporal Angie Wyne**

If someone can write a book about NOT making it to the summit of El Sangay – South America's most active volcano which erupts every 15–30 minutes, then I'm sure that I can write an article about making it to the base of the very ominous, El Sangay.

Since 110 Pro Coy RMP is known as the Action Men and Women Company, it was obviously time for a new challenge.

Following a Recce a team of would-be mountaineers was selected, all of varying standards of fitness but with the same goal – to be something challenging and certainly different!

After a few alterations to the team make-up, the following team of 11, set off from Heathrow on 28 October 1991, to fly to Quito, Ecuador. Expedition Leader – Lt Lucy Stephens, WO2 (CSM) Graham Pollard, Sgts Ron Elliot, Jim Sorbie, Cpls Neil Cowen, Dave Lochrie, Carmel Allabyrne (CCRIO – London), Brian Kerr, Willie Wilson (our Medic from 3 AFA), LCpl Nick Dale and myself, LCpl Angie Wyne all from 110 Pro Coy in "sunny" Sennelager, Germany.

As it turned out, roaming around the streets of Quito proved to be, indeed an exploration. Quito is located 2800m above sea level and it was difficult to tell whether it was the altitude, the dirt, or black smoke belching out from the exhausts of the vehicles, which made our breathing difficult.

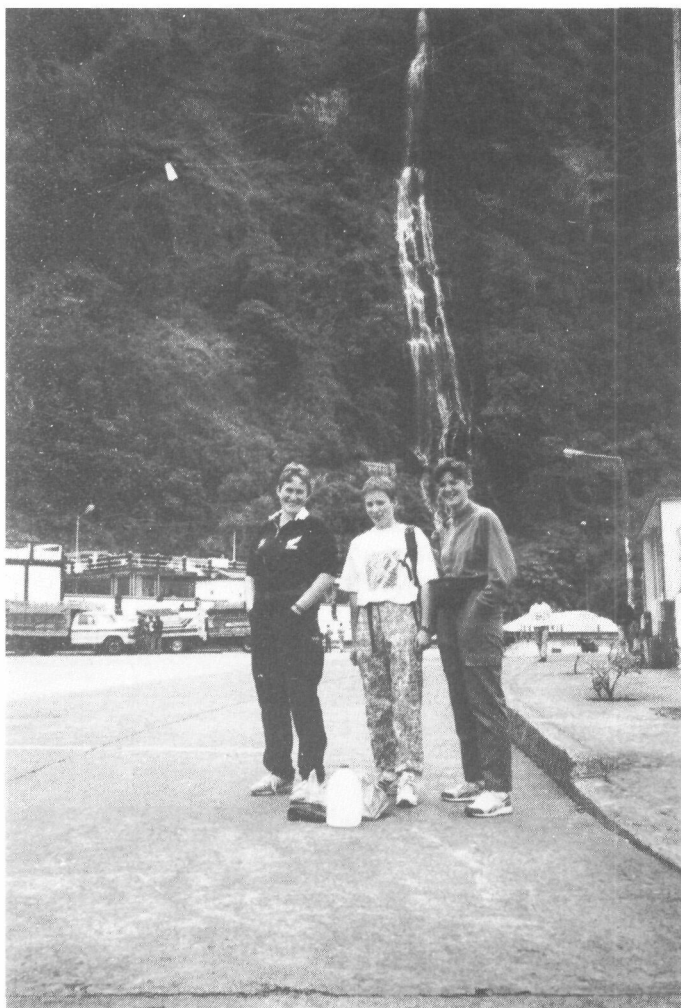
With Ecuador being such a poor country, it was extremely inexpensive to eat out and it was with great surprise and delight, that most of us ate our first meal in Pizza Hut. At the time, Pizza Hut was about the only place that I'd eat in (health or hygiene classes have been omitted from the Ecuadorian National Curriculum). However, by the end of the expedition, I couldn't have cared less, as long as it was food!

Day 2 in Quito was meant to be a day for contacting our guide, who had been contacted in the Recce and our radio support. Contacting our guide, Gerhard Schultz was somewhat difficult. Unfortunately, Gerhard had recently been killed in a rafting accident and so all our travel arrangements, extra equipment and accommodation, not forgetting our 10% deposit was lost in a matter of seconds. However, being in the Army, we were not to be deterred by this minor setback and so, with the help of the British Embassy and Hotel Staff, the team moved onto Plan B – the first of many plan alterations (I think that we were on Plan ZB when we finished).

That night, the first of many, we packed our bergens, in preparation for the 5 hour Bundu bus trip (like something out of an Indiana Jones Film) to Banos, which is to the south of Quito. I wasn't very good at the art of "Bergen Packing" when we first set-off, but I've now got a Master's degree in it. Banos was our main base, where we left surplus kit, whilst we did a training climb on Tungurahua and our "biggy" trek out to Sangay and back. Banos is probably the equivalent of a UK resort, where each vendor seems to sell the same items. It is a spa town, where all the locals go for their weekly wash and the hot springs are fuelled by underground, volcanically pressurised hot water.

It was good to spend another day in Banos, where the

air was much cleaner than Quito's and we were able to acclimatise ourselves. Many people attempting the volcano Tungurahua acclimatise for a week, but our new budget could only afford a day or two. The big "T" is 5200m at the summit, with a refuge at 3800m. Having had 2 days in Banos where the local favourite is roasted guinea pig, I decided to stay away from such a "tasty" delicacy. I managed to force myself into scoffing a few plates of tasty chips and it was the thought of these chips and T-bone steaks, which kept me going at times. It was always something to look forward to and if you've ever eaten dehydrated "glop" for almost a fortnight, then you'll understand the pleasures of eating a stodgy chip. And so, with the thought of a T-bone steak, chips and coke and with the Bergens packed (again) we set off for the big "T". With a Bergen weighing in at about 45–50 lbs, I started the ascent of Tungurahua in good spirits. However, with a gradient of 45°–50° for a climb of 1000m, some 4 hours later, I was calling the big "T" a lot of other things. I must have looked like the hunchback of Notre Dame, by the time I made it to the refuge. There were some spectacular views, especially when we climbed above the cloud level. So it was with a sense of achievement, that I made it to the refuge. The hut was somewhat overrun by a colony of mice and it had a wonderful outside toilet. I can't imagine what we could've caught from it, but it's times like that, you wish you were a man, as Lt Lucy Stephens, Cpl Carmel Allabyne and myself thought on many an occasion. (It's amazing how you adapt to these situations, I think it's termed "character building").



Lt Lucy Stephens, Lance Corporal Angie Wyne and Corporal Carmel Allabyne

The night spent in the refuge, was pretty cold and everyone except myself and Lt Lucy Stephens, set off at dark o'clock to make an attempt on the summit. Believe it or not, at 3800m, you've still got thieves who will rob any kit left unattended and since a lot of kit was being left behind, it was advisable to have two people watching it. The team found the climb very arduous, sinking up to their knees in volcanic ash, almost like trying to climb a very large slag heap and with crampon-teething problems and the weather closing in, it was decided to make a retreat to the refuge. Many of the team suffered from severe headaches on the quick descent, as a result of the sudden change in air pressure.

The descent of the big "T" seemed so much easier than the ascent, but it still hurt on the knees. I made it back down within 1½ hours and with the temperature about 25°C. We had one rest day in Banos, before setting off again in the back of yet another truck, to a village called Alao situated in Sangay National Park. This rest day gave us a chance to shed all surplus kit, even down to cutting a bar of soap in half and limiting ourselves to one set of clothing for emergency changes. My Bergen still felt as though it was lined with lead! Not funny when you've got to lug it around for 9 days of hard trekking. We stayed one day in Alao which was at 4200m high and it gave you a true sense of values. The kids there are lucky if they have shoes, let alone any other clothes, other than the ones on their backs. They were very unsure about us at the beginning, but once we started dishing out sweets, they continued to hang around our little campsite. One thing the kids do have from birth, is a hat and they all seem to have one, throughout their whole lives. Perhaps the hat grows with them.

We were very fortunate, when we set off towards Sangay, for the first day only, our newly appointed guides had arranged mules and horses to carry our Bergens, leaving us only our day sacks to carry. The first day, as did the next 2 days, proved very arduous for everyone and despite the fact that I've run a marathon before, it's the hardest trial that I've put my body and mind through. The weather was kind to us at times, but on the third day out, it poured incessantly. It was an experience of a life time, trekking and climbing through unknown territory where maps haven't been drawn because of its inhospitality and its labrynth of ridges, where previous expeditions have been lost for days. On the second day, we had to hack our way through razor grass which was about 8ft tall and giant rhubarb type plants. For some reason, I kept imagining that Anneka Rice, on her new challenge, would appear from behind a rock and airlift us out to civilianisation. Needless to say, it never happened, but the thought and rations of Dentine kept us going!

There were certainly a lot of dangerous moments involved in the trek, especially crossing knife-edge ridges, being rather muddy and slippery from all the other previous foot-steps. One false step and you were ready to throw your ice axe to save yourself – dangerous stuff!

At times it was easier just to sit down on your backside and slide down the mudslides which had once been hills. Even on the last ½ hour before we reached our final base the trail had been washed away. Yet another change of plan had to be thought out.

So after three days trekking, we reached the base of the legendary El Sangay.

Certainly we were all totally shattered but glad to be there, it was hard to believe that after all the months of training and planning we had finally reached our destination. Three days away from semi-civilisation and no Anneka Rice to save us! It was spectacular Sangay rumbling away and at night you could see the flow of lava,

down the side of it and there we were, eleven lunatics, sleeping comfortably at the base of it!

The next day was spent resting, drying out our kit from the previous three days trekking and since all the girls were exhausted and Sgt Ron Elliott was going through toilet paper, as though it was going out of fashion, it was decided that a team of seven led by WO2 Graham Pollard, would make an attempt on Sangay at 0200 hrs on Remembrance Sunday, 10 November 1991.

It was a pleasure being able to stay in the same place for a couple of days, without practising Bergen packing and having mud baths! Our minds were even able to dream about the most important thing to us – Food! I could even taste the jam in my jam doughnuts dream. Mind you, if you think that's bad, Cpl Carmel Allabyrne dreamt about trundling round Marks and Spencers Food Hall, filling up a shopping trolley as she went!

After a meagre breakfast of a cup of coffee and good old compo biscuits, the remainder of the team and I said our farewells to the "magnificent seven" and guides. We were not to see them for another 12 hours, but we were fortunate to be in radio contact with them.

Within that 12 hour period, the boys endured the hardest task of their lives, leaving them totally exhausted and drained on their return.

With head torches and all necessary climbing kit, they navigated their way along knife-edge ridges, barely 6 inches wide in places, until after 4 hours they reached the 4000m point. The climb was hard enough with the altitude causing difficulty in breathing and the use of crampons and ice axes when they hit the snowline, but they also experienced heart stopping events, when the Volcano erupted 6 times when they were on the climb. There was nowhere for them to hide and fortunately there were no injuries, except for Cpl Dave Lochrie who was hit by a rather hot rock! Other than a bit of bruising he was alright. The team were victorious in making it to the summit at 0920 hours. There was only time for the celebratory photographs with the Union Jack, before the volcano erupted again. The team decided it was time to go. They were all exhausted even before they set off on their descent and were even more shattered by the time they had returned.

All their kit was saturated and there wasn't much for them to do, other than try to get themselves warm and have some food, that's not easy when you're in a two-man tent with no radiators to hang your kit on.

The expedition was a success and a triumphant feat accomplished under the most strenuous of conditions. Now we only had another three days trek back to civilisation the thought didn't seem too bad, since every step meant food, clean clothes and a much needed shower. The one thing that we did notice was that we were all suffering from vitamin deficiency, through consumption of a very basic diet of glop.

I'll never forget our last day's climb back to semi-civilisation. There was literally nothing in my body keeping me going, other than will power and I thought I was seeing a mirage, when a man and boy from Alao appeared from round the corner on our path and he had freshly baked bread rolls, cheese and a bottle of coke. It felt like a feast and as I said to Lt Lucy Stephens, "It's the first time I've had to chew in over a week!" It was heavenly.

Reaching Alao was a dream come true. The last 8 days had been so hard and now they were over. Another day and I'd be consuming plates of chips and T-bone steaks back in Banos. Most of us lost a stone or more in weight. I recommend the following as the ultimate diet programme: A strenuous activity every day for over a week, surviving on less than 1000 calories a day! It can be done. After

spending three days in Banos guess what we did? Yes, correct, we packed our Bergens again. Just when we thought the hard part was over, the "Jungle Trip" was next on the agenda. I don't like to talk about the experience too much, but my psychiatrist says that the flashbacks will subside one day, in about 10 years time!

I imagined that the Amazon Jungle would be full of interesting plants and wildlife. I had anticipated the stickiness of the jungle but having spent the first day in torrential rain in a canoe, it wasn't much fun. This was to be followed by another few comedy-of-error days. The world worries about the rain forests but half the problems would be helped by the local natives being educated – the only wildlife I saw was a beautiful coloured parrot, captured by the natives and bound up until it died a squawking death! Also not being a lover of flies, I found it hard to enjoy the constant company of a million flies. It was, needless to say, a great pleasure to trek back out of the jungle and eventually head on to the city, I had looked forward to leaving Quito.

Once you've lapped Quito, once or twice, you soon lose interest, especially when each trip has to be planned within easy reach of the hotel. Our little jungle trip didn't seem to agree with anyone's stomach. However, on the rare moments of my leaving the toilet seat, I did engage in some holiday present buying. I only hope that the family enjoyed the unusual Ecuadorian Christmas presents!

After a week's relaxing in Quito, it was back to a cold London on 4 December 1991.

Now having had time to reflect upon the expedition, it's good to know that it was a success, taking people with varying abilities on something so daunting. The one thing that we did have in common, though, is that we all put in our best, excelling ourselves at times and pushing ourselves, knowing that there was no one to help, we had to do it to survive. Despite the fact that I didn't make it, along with three others to the top of Sangay, at least we tried. One recommendation that I do have if you go to such a country, is expect the worst and you'll be about right and don't forget your toilet roll! No, honestly, if you get a chance to do something different – do it.

EXERCISE TARTAN TREK – 12 MOD (A) PL WRAC by Private Browne

When the opportunity arose for the staff clerks of the Ministry of Defence establishments in London, to abandon their offices for ten days adventure training in Aviemore, Scotland, it was received with great enthusiasm as well as speculation of what was to come.

We stayed at Rothiemurchus Lodge, a Joint Service Centre set high in the Cairngorm mountain range. With pine forests, snow capped mountains and Loch Morlich, it was an ideal venue for our exercise.

Accompanied by our OC, Capt Mackenzie, Capt Thomson, Sgt Bottomley and Cpl Reeve, we engaged ourselves in hillwalking, a wide variety of watersports, rock climbing, abseiling, orienteering and mountain biking. Despite the rain, we did the activities with determination and a sense of humour, (very important when you're doing a river crossing up to your neck!) We got stuck in boggy marshes and threw ourselves over rock crags, (Pte Allsopp decided hanging upside down was better, and took a soaking in Loch Morlich canoeing, windsurfing and kyaking). Mountain biking proved to be a favourite day, riding through the forests and rivers. The river crossing was attempted but after almost losing the hire bike and a rather wet and disillusioned Pte

Browne downstream, the attempt was abandoned as a bad idea. The orienteering run in Glenmore Forest Park was a success, although after finding her bearings, Pte McDermott realised she had actually run off the map.

In the evenings we hit the sleepy town of Aviemore and gave the locals a run for their money at the ice rink, (Capt Thomson skating around like a bat out of hell!) A karaoke an indoor barbeque held at the lodge revealed unheard of singing talents of our OC's and NCO's. Hoarse voices and thick heads followed the next morning!

The exercise was an excellent break from London and proved to us all that the more you put into challenges, the more you get out of them.



Sergeant Andrea Hurst in her normal ski-ing position



Members of 12 Platoon at Aviemore



Members of 12 Platoon ready to bicycle the mountain

WOMEN TAKE TO THE TARTAN

For the first time ever, the 1st Battalion The King's Own Scottish Borderers (1 KOSB) has opened its doors to a platoon of women. The Jocks are still recovering from the shock! Twenty-nine servicewomen from the Adjutant General's Corps, RCT, RAMC, ACC and QARANC were posted to 1 KOSB for a year, while the Regiment acts as the Province Reinforcement Battalion (PRB) in Northern Ireland.

The majority have seen several changes since they arrived with the XXVth. In January the advance party arrived in Edinburgh consisting mainly of RCT drivers. They had a hectic workload in front of them. First the Battalion headed down South, Company by Company, to complete the Northern Ireland training. It was an introduction for many of the women, to the life of an Infantryman, and they had a chance to test out their military skills. Working out the intricacies of the SA80 rifle was an experience after the sub-machine gun, along with the Jock sense of humour!

Training completed, the stores boxes had to be tackled yet again and the haul from Edinburgh to Weston near Blackpool commenced. After Edinburgh the modern buildings at Weeton were a strange sight, but with the rest of the women arriving, things soon settled down. The clerks got to work in the orderly room; the Jocks headed down to the medical centre when they heard that they could be treated by women; the stores indented for women's uniform; and the Messes also got the female touch. The tailoress was set to work, altering and making tartan skirts, and glengarries were issued to top everything off!

Since then, life continues as normal . . . we're learning about the Scottish ways and learning new skills. The six regimental duty women making up the Signals platoon have been on several Infantryman's radio user courses, and the two Medical Corps servicewomen are ready to transfer to being combat medic technicians. Unfortunately, due to accommodation problems, only one has managed to get out to NI, but hopefully this may change.

Finally – we would like to give our very best wishes to the three soon to be married – Corporal Cox, Corporal Hughes and Lance Corporal Headon.

Photograph of the platoon is on the back cover.

FIRST BATTALION THE WORCESTERSHIRE AND SHERWOOD FORESTERS REGIMENT (29/45 OF FOOT) **by Lance Corporal Jo Windebank**

I was posted into the Pay Office of 1 WFR in August '90 and seven months in Omagh, Northern Ireland, along with thirty other WRAC who made up Richmond Platoon. The platoon is still serving in Northern Ireland and are now working with 2nd Battalion Royal Green Jackets.

I had a great tour of NI and would like to take this chance to thank 1 WFR for teaching me the finer art of partying the Infantry way . . . Cheers lads!

The Battalion arrived in Cyprus in March this year and I'm now the only WRAC servicewoman with them for their 2½ year tour in Dhekelia. Living in the Garrison WRAC accommodation helps me not get too lonely for female company when I'm surrounded by men throughout the working day.

Life with the Battalion has been just as busy for the Pay staff in Cyprus as it was in NI and indeed for the Battalion in general: especially with our recent VIP visit from HRH The

Princess Royal, in her capacity as Colonel in Chief of 1 WFR.

I would like to finish by saying that I look forward to the remaining year and a half that I have left with the Battalion and hope that everything continues to go well for them.

EX HARDFALL 1992 **by Lieutenant Jenny Medley**

South Cerney Friday 7 February at three o'clock in the morning. An experience never to be forgotten.

Amongst the hundred or so people struggling to achieve some degree of comfort on the narrow, vinyl covered chairs, were Lieutenant Jenny Medley, (the Assistant Adjutant) and five servicewomen from 94 Locating Regiment Royal Artillery bound for Arctic Survival Training with the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land) elements of the Regiment. An hour later, heartily nourished by an early morning breakfast of fried egg, fried bread, fried bacon and fried sausages, the group was on its way to RAF Lyneham from where it would be transported by Hercules to Trondheim Airport in Norway.

On arrival at Trondheim, the weather was unbelievably mild with only a smattering of snow over the ground – it didn't bode well for the ski school element of the course. However, as the bus climbed through the mountains up towards Hjerkin, the air got colder and the snow got thicker, to the relief of one and all.

The final destination of all those taking part in the AST course (christened "The Girlie Course", despite the fact that more than half the participants were male) was Furughauglia; a gathering of log cabins covering the hillside. At the centre of the settlement nestled the main building – in the summer a cafe for ramblers, climbers and holiday makers, but during the winter months the most important building in the HQ Bty location, housing the cookhouse and bar. The remainder of the afternoon and

battled against the elements and struggled with such technicalities as the lighting of lamps and stoves in sub-zero conditions in the middle of the night. The days were mainly spent in "Ski School" getting to grips with the Army "Planks".

There were several demonstrations of "Ski Ballet" as the students attempted kick turns and it is generally believed that WPte Kirsten Ross (ACC) and WPte Mhairi Reid (WRAC) may hold the AST Downhill Speed Skiing record (albeit unintentionally) as they disappeared over the brow of the hill, suffering from brake failure.

On the whole, weather conditions were extremely mild, hovering just below zero for the majority of the course. It did get a bit chilly slightly further up the mountain; taking into account the windchill it was minus 18° (not too cold by normal Arctic Warrior standards, but cold enough). The course were then let loose both at the wheel of the BV206 and behind it as a valiant attempt was made at Ski-Oaring



Private K Ross and Lance Corporal Flint

(being towed behind the Hagglund hanging on for dear life to a rope – slightly less effort than "herring-boning" up a hill, but total chaos when someone falls over!)

As a special treat on the last day of the course, the instructors took everybody swimming – in an ice hole in the middle of a lake. These were actually the "ice-breaking drills" and with only a little encouragement required everybody on the course took the plunge.

The final afternoon was spent recovering on the down hill slope at the local ski resort where all erstwhile non-skiers discovered that going down hill is not actually as difficult as the Army plank would have you believe!



Privates Russell, M Ross, K Ross and Reid

evening were dedicated by most, to sleep, only waking briefly for some food and then settling down to sleep again.

After a much needed night's sleep (in rooms that, due to a very efficient heating system, proved to be slightly too warm for comfort). The dozen or so students of the AST gathered together on Saturday morning for a final briefing after which they dashed back to their cabins to sort out kit and prepare for the rigours of the following day.

For the next three days, the members of the course

B COMPANY RHEINDAHLEN

As each day progresses B Company faces new challenges, no two days are ever the same with the continual change over of personnel that the Company administers. People are posted in, and others out, on a daily basis, and then there are the welfare problems, work/living gripes and groans, births, marriages, promotions and so on – all the things that the Company tries to keep a check on – for over 700 – as well as engineering events to ensure people are entertained. The most recent event was a Rounders Competition. Typically the weather was ideal every evening until the proposed date and then the heavens opened. However, in true military style, the event was not going to be cancelled until the very last minute and thankfully it cleared sufficiently for an excellent evening of Rounders.



Major Jan Brodie-Murphy presenting the prizes

Despite it supposedly being a female event, the male blocks also each provided a team and stormed the pitch, walking away with the majority of the prizes. Who says "Brute force and ignorance" doesn't always win?!!

B Company is involved in every sporting event available to females, under the careful eye of Sergeant Cannon and Corporal Priestley, both of whom coax, entice or persuade others to participate and make up the teams. The teams seem to go from strength to strength, with the final invariably ending up as B Coy versus 69 Squadron RCT. B Company stormed the Garrison Athletics Meeting in early May, and Volleyball, Table-Tennis, Swimming, Rounders, Squash, Tennis have all seen some participation from B Company.

Several members of B Company have also been away sailing, and Sergeant Greenland persuaded a selection from Coy HQ to go horse riding – I'll let you read her article to decide on the benefits gained from this escapade!

On 1 April the Company celebrated its first birthday and a couple of weeks later the success of the integration was fully apparent when the men of Coy HQ took over the cooking for a surprise Champagne Breakfast that was organised for the Garrison Deputy Commander's Birthday – they even managed to assist in the cleaning up afterwards too!

The Company at present is preparing for the influx of school children for the annual Junior Tennis week and the Rheindahlen Allied Marches, both of which are due to occur in the summer. Teams are trying to be found for Crossbow 92 and Nijmegen Marches. However with draw-down it is getting harder and harder to find branches in JHQ and Garrison that can release people for training and participation in these events.

SADDLE SORE IN ONE AFTERNOON

by Sergeant J Greenland, B Company – Rheindahlen

Bored with the routine sporting activities that B Coy personnel normally attend I decided to run and organise an afternoon's outing for personnel from Garrison Units to Venlo to a riding trekking stables.

There were nine in the party, me, Staff Sergeant Brookes, SGT Leitch, Corporal Harman, Gunners Sherriff and Scott, Lance Corporal Thompson, Mrs Cameron-Wilton and my husband Corporal Greenland.

The planned two hour trek turned into utter chaos. For starters they had all lied to me "Yes I can ride they all told me", lies all lies.

Gnr Sherriffs horse quickly ascertained that Royal Artillery Gunners taste really good and Gunner Scotts horse ejected him from the saddle with little ado as the horse obviously preferred to roll in the sand.

Staff Sergeant Brookes' horse did not wish to trek and for 2 hours Staff did her utmost to persuade her mount to leave the stable – she was unsuccessful and her money was returned.

Lance Corporal Thompson and my husband were with us one minute then off the next, last seen galloping off into the distance and not seen or heard of again for the full two hours. It reminded me of Falklands days "I counted them all out and counted them all in", a little bit worse for wear but they all came in.

Mrs Cameron-Wilton is most certainly not a natural and throughout the two hours just hung onto the front of the saddle with, would you believe it – her eyes tight shut and screaming and pleading not to allow the horse to go faster than a walk.

Of Sergeant Leitch and Corporal Harman, well what can I say, perfect as ever. If you believe that you will believe anything.

I have decided in future to keep well away from dumb animals – and I am not talking about the horses.

Dinghy sailing I think next – well after this last performance most of them do need drowning.

662 SIGNAL TROOP

by LCpl Jacky Berry

On Sunday 29 September 1991, at 2.00 p.m., a coach pulled out of the 662 Sig Tp MT heading for a glorious week at Melanda Beach near Episkopi. On board were members of the troop including Sgt Annette Williams and myself, all heading for a great adventure.

On arrival we were shown our accommodation, a detached green army tent complete with all 'mod cons'... an issue table and camp beds.

Next, the programme for the weeks "holiday". Cycling, windsurfing, canoeing, rock-climbing, abseiling, not to mention the inter-section competition which included volleyball, soft-ball, football, a trivia quiz, games night and a music quiz... and the most important activity of all... pan-bashing!

After a good sleep Monday dawned clear and bright: well, anything else in Cyprus would have been odd. After PT, Annette went off to bash some pans and I went to try and stand upright on a surf board... oh well, you can't be good at everything!

Monday evening's music quiz turned out to be a real doddle for the "oldies" in 2 section: not that we're that old, just that we could remember all the old recordings!

Tuesday started the same as Monday but a change of activities saw me on the pan-bashing and Annette going for a little ride from Troodos back to camp, downhill most of the way. Unfortunately Annette had only been going a few minutes when her brakes failed and she had a nasty accident. Luckily, prompt medical treatment helped to lessen the damage although quite a few stitches were needed in a head wound. Sadly, the end of Ex Beach Rear for Annette who went home to Dhekelia to be comforted only by Gemma, the Great Dane, since husband John was at Melanda teaching windsurfing.

The rest of the week went very well, no more accidents and a great time had by all.

The story, however, doesn't end there as whilst celebrat-

ing on the last night in a nearby hostelry the weather started to change and got very windy and the revellers were asked if we could help to beach a catamaran which was in danger of being blown onto the rocks. Staff Sergeant John Williams duly took charge and 10 minutes later with ropes secure on the boat, it was dragged and persuaded to come ashore.

Friday arrived and after pushing the Catamaran back into the sea we set about dismantling the camp. At 3.00 p.m. the bus started its journey back to Dhekelia, loaded down with weary, but happy, campers and bags full of dirty washing! Well, at least it only happens once a year, but a very enjoyable time was had by all.

DIVING IN CYPRUS: A DIVE WITH DHEKELIA DIVE CLUB by Corporal Jenkins

It's warm and sunny and it's very early in the morning. The dive today is the Zenobia, a Swedish roll-on-roll-off ferry that capsized and went to the bottom of the sea in 1980: complete with a cargo of 104 articulated lorries. She lies on her side at a depth of 43m and if the sea is calm (which it so often is out here), then the wreck is clearly visible from the surface.

So I've got my diving kit together consisting of shorts and T-shirt . . . no, only joking, it's not that hot down there! I'll have a wet-suit, mask, fins, snorkel, weight-belt, cylinder and buoyancy jacket and then it's off to the dive site. It's about a 30 minute drive from Dhekelia to Larnaca "Fishing Boat Shelter", which takes you through the more industrialised part of the town and then on into the more traditional areas of Larnaca passing numerous bars and restaurants. Eventually I arrive at the shelter where I join the rest of the divers and the boat waiting to take us to the site.

We all put our diving kit onto the boat, which is an exhausting task in itself and then it's all onto the boat and set off out to the site, which is about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile offshore. By the time we reach the site we are completely kitted up and in our dive pairs. It's just a case then of jumping overboard into the clear blue water and down onto the wreck.

You reach the top side of the wreck first, at a depth of 16m. The dive is up to you and your buddy, depending on your experience and ability. You can explore the decks or choose to go in and browse through the Duty Free Shop! There were no casualties when the ship went down and it is illegal for divers to remove any part of the wreck.

For today, I am content to skim along the top deck, looking at the lorries, life boats and the Bridge and having the occasional glance through the portholes. To see a fish looking back at you can give you quite a shock! Before you know it, the air is running low and it's time to return to the surface. Time goes too quickly in the underwater world.

Other dives in Cyprus include tunnels and caves as well as plain shore dives. Cyprus offers a good variety of marine life such as Scorpion fish, Moray eels, Bream, Red Mullet and Soldier fish, which have migrated from the Red Sea and have so far only been seen in this part of the Mediterranean. You may even spot the odd turtle . . . but not of the Hero type!

If you are interested in diving and have always fancied yourself as the next Jacques Cousteau, then Cyprus is a good place to start. It caters for the complete beginner right to the more daring diver and once you have dived in the crystal clear waters off Cyprus then you will almost certainly be hooked.



WRAC Episkopi Rounders Team 1991
L-R: Cpl Cox, Sgt Ford, Sgt McMurchy, Sgt Ramsey
L/Cpl Joy, Cpl Kelly, Cpl Day, Sgt Cheeseman,
WO2 Moore, Sgt Pike L/Cpl Barker

EXERCISE WESTERN ADVENTURE 1 8-25 JANUARY 1992 by Corporal Donald AGC (SPS)

After a long, uncomfortable night spent at Heathrow Airport I met the rest of the crew with whom I was to spend the next 18 days with on board HMS Training Ship Broadsword, one of the Joint Service Sail Training Centres own Gosport Nicholson 55s.

We checked in, and eventually set off to the Caribbean island of Curacao. During the flight everyone took full advantage of the fact that all drinks were completely free so the 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ hour flight seemed to pass more quickly than expected. Time flies when you are having fun.

Once aboard the boat everyone was allocated a bed-space. We quickly unpacked and went to bed for a good nights sleep or so we all thought. The mosquitoes made a meal out of us all and it was so hot that few of us got any sleep at all.

After an early rise, the skipper discovered upon reading the notes left from the previous crew that the boat had no rudder. The rest of the day was spent discovering what there was to do on the island whilst the boat was lifted out of the water to be repaired. On returning to the boat that evening we were informed that there were a few more problems with the boat and the chances were that we would be delayed a few days.

For the next 3 days whilst the boat was being repaired we did very little apart from sunbathe and a spot of sightseeing around the island, our nights were spent sampling the local cocktails whilst watching the Caribbean Sunset. On Day 4 we were finally ready to set sail. After putting on our crew T-shirts to leave the marina and saying our goodbyes to the locals we turned on the ignition and there was nothing. We tried again and there was nothing, after trying countless times there was still nothing. Unfortunately we hadn't quite solved the problem so there was going to be another delay.

Eventually, after a week with our feet still on the ground we actually left and set sail for Kleine Curacao not far

down the coast. The youngest member of the crew, the patriotic Scotsman, brought with him his kilt and full set of bagpipes so he thought it a good idea to play us out of the harbour to the tune of "Oh Flower of Scotland". The island had no marina so we intended to anchor off the beach. The journey took rather longer than expected so when the time came to drop the anchor it was almost dark which made things much harder.

After a week long delay our journey had to be cut slightly short so unfortunately we could not go as far afield as we would have liked. From there we headed for Bonaire. This was our first overnight sail and it was a case of everyone finding their sea legs again. The mother-watch spent hours drooling over a hot stove preparing our evening meal but only two people felt well enough to eat it. The island is renowned for its coral reefs and excellent diving so we spent the day snorkelling and water-skiing.

The next week was spent visiting uninhabited islands. The first of which was the Iles de Aves (Bird Island), a small group of islands inhabited by thousands of birds. On our journey there we came across a small Venezuelan fishing boat and after a bit of bargaining we persuaded them to swap a bucket of fresh fish for a crate of beer. Again we dropped anchor just off the beach so we had to blow up the dinghy as a means of getting ashore. Three people went ashore to try and find something to make a Barbecue out of and we had barbecued fish on the beach.

With only 2 days to go, we left Gran Roque heading for our last port of call, Caracas, Venezuela. Once tied up alongside we went in search of showers, what showers? There were none to be found anywhere. Having overcome a few language problems we managed to persuade a Venezuelan Naval vessel to allow us on board for a badly needed shower.

That afternoon we began the long, endless task of cleaning the boat from top to bottom. The next morning we finished off cleaning the boat and departed for the airport. It was a long, boring overnight flight back to London but before we knew it, it was time to say goodbye to 11 people who less than 3 weeks ago had been complete strangers.

On the whole, it was an experience I would recommend to anyone. All you need is a spirit of adventure and sense of humour! Here's looking forward to the next trip . . .

WRAC IN KENYA 1953-1954

by Major (Retd) Jane Stephens (née Sharcott)

The article "WRAC in KENYA 1953-1957" by Major Beedle stirred many memories for me.

The state of emergency in Kenya due to the Mau-Mau uprising meant that HQ East Africa Command was upgraded to GHQ East Africa with the consequent need for more Staff Officers. This resulted in my posting to Nairobi from Egypt in January 1953 to fill a vacancy as Staff Captain Q.

A strange situation existed. The operation against the Mau-Mau was to be financed partly by various East African countries and was under the control of the Kenya civilian authorities. The housing of British Emergency Troops who would shortly be arriving was also under their control. For various reasons, the Civilian Public Works Department insisted on dealing with this only through GHQ and, in particular, Q Branch. This necessitated the attendance of a staff officer at most discussions and recces, and that staff officer was me.

Because of this I was lucky enough to see a great deal of Kenya. I travelled sometimes by road, often by air, in small

aircraft flown by their owners as part-time pilots for the Kenya Police Air Wing. I have always hated flying—even so, it was quite a thrill at first to pick up the phone and order an aircraft for 8 o'clock the next morning! Unfortunately I was often air sick and earned a reputation among the pilots for "going green right round to the back of your neck".

I have many memories of these excursions up country including a few adventures – it would take far too long to recount them now – but the overwhelming one is of life in a lovely country ruined for both Europeans and Africans by the horrors of the Mau-Mau uprising.

I was fortunate in being able to pay quite a lot of visits to the Nairobi Game Park where I watched a family of lion cubs growing up over the two years I was there. My favourite animals were the giraffes – you might think there were only trees around you and then you would see a long, silly face peering over the top of one.

I also found a great interest in the Kenya Amateur Athletic Association, then in its infancy. I became an official time keeper and travelled to many weekend meetings with them, even as far as Uganda. I also helped to prepare the first ever team to attend a big international event, in Canada. Getting the athletes listed for passports was great fun as most of them had no idea when they were born, and looking into their eyes to try and decide whether they were brown or black sent them off into fits of delicious giggles!

Major Beedle (Jake) and I are still in touch though we have not met for several years now. I ought to mention that it was not I who saw the original Other Ranks settled in. I think that was done by Captain Margaret Downes-Powell who was there when I arrived. I had no official contact with the ORs though I did play in their hockey team.

Thank you, Jake, for bringing back memories of a somewhat unusual posting so long ago.

LEFT RIGHT! LEFT RIGHT!

by Jessie MacDonald

As I stepped off the bus I was surprised to discover it was raining. Somehow it never seemed to rain in Harrogate I recalled forty-six years ago. My fingers trembled with anticipation as I fumbled with the spring on my umbrella. It was heavy groundsheets we used to wear, so it must have rained sometimes!

A taxi to Queen Ethelburga's School was something I could well afford but somehow it didn't seem right. I wanted to savour the walk, relive it and see if I was still able to walk every step of the way to the school. Would my arthritic hip allow me? It would be ignominious to travel other than on foot. Adjusting my plastic hood and glancing at my sensible shoes I recalled it was shoes such as these which had always tramped this way all these years ago. Resolutely clutching my umbrella I set off past the Valley Gardens. As I stumbled I wondered that no Aircrew in the Grand Hotel whistled and called "Did you enjoy your trip?" "How foolish of me", I thought, "I'm nearly seventy, not twenty and the Grand Hotel, I noticed, had another name now". Would the hip hold out? Even as a youngster of twenty I remembered it was a long walk! Sheer willpower prevented me from popping onto the Valley Gardens, scene of many a wartime romance and take a stroll through the pine woods always made more delightful after a shower of rain. Time was of the essence and eagerness drove me on.

Coming within sight of the school before I expected it, I gasped with delight. It looked exactly as I remembered it

though I was still a long way off. Strangely too, the road remained unchanged, dipping down to the old stone bridge then up the slight incline on the other side. A few more houses appeared then I recalled possibly making the journey seem shorter.

Gosh! There was the wooden gate leading into the field, in the same spot as it always was.

As I drew near the school gates I almost expected to see a flurry of khaki-clad figures emerging.

Being Saturday the school grounds were deserted. Delight filled me. No one to question why an elderly woman was wandering in the grounds. Gradually the sun peeped through. I drew off my plastic hood and tried to tidy my wispy grey hair, without much success. I couldn't believe that so little had changed in all these years. The truth of the saying "The bricks and mortar will be here when we're all gone" took on a whole new meaning. The old red brick building with its tall chimneys said it all.

The sheer emptiness of the grounds made it so easy to recapture days long gone. I heard the voices and laughter of a lost generation. A lump rose in my throat and my eyes filled. How many hundreds of girls had passed this way? Where were they all now? Many must be dead but how many had returned just as I had, from all parts of the world, paying tribute to the golden days of their youth?

I smiled contentedly. There would not be many more visits, for me, to my wartime camp!

Reproduced from MOD house magazine "FOCUS"

THE AG CORPS TAKES A BOW

The newly-formed Adjutant General's Corps held its inaugural Corps Day at Worthy Down on 5 June. "It's not often that new corps are formed in the Army," said General Sir David Ramsbotham, the Adjutant General. "The last time was 14 years ago, when the Army Legal Corps came into being."

He explained the rationale for the creation of the Adjutant General's Corps: "We've gathered together all the people whose work is concerned with personnel matters: pay, records, education, security, policing and legal affairs. We think that in the "smaller but better" Army of the future it's not very efficient to have several support organisations carrying out personnel-related duties, which are manpower intensive and demand a lot of administration. So why not bring them all together and take advantage of the Army's considerable computer equipment?"

"Our role, however, is changing. We have to be able to respond at a moment's notice to any demands made on us in the field – for example, to undertake casualty reporting. There are members of the Corps at this very moment carrying out field duties in Cambodia, Yugoslavia and Morocco."

Our major activity of the new Corps, the General added, would be the provision of help and guidance to people affected by Options for Change reductions in the Army strength. "Resettlement advice will come in future from this Corps – which brings together a tremendous range of activities. Quite a challenge for its Director General, Maj Gen Robin Grist!"

The total staff of the AGC, currently 6,080 (one-third of whom are female), will increase to 8,040 by April 1995 when all the Army clerks have transferred to the Corps (which incorporates members from the former Royal Military Police, Royal Army Pay Corps, Military Provost Staff Corps, Royal Army Education Corps, Army Legal Corps, elements of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Women's Royal Army Corps).

Maj Gen Grist, appointed Director General of the AGC on its formation, declared it a huge privilege to head the Corps. "We embrace every aspect of looking after people – with the exceptions of medical and dental care, and the work of the Chaplains. So if we get things wrong, morale will quickly suffer – which means that we must maintain the highest possible standards."

"My task is to draw the Corps" four branches (ranging from the 3,600-strong Staff and Personnel Support branch to the 57 legal advisers in the Army Legal Services branch) into a cohesive organisation with a strong esprit de corps. I think we can achieve this and that we shall become the envy of every army in the world!"

The Duchess of Gloucester, the AGC's Deputy Colonel in Chief, was Guest of Honour at the Corps Day. After being presented with an address of welcome by Lance Corporal Christiane Greet of 5 Airborne Brigade, who abseiled down with three colleagues from a helicopter hovering overhead, the Duchess talked to soldiers and their families and was briefed on the work of the Corps.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

This is a distillation of questions asked on the 'phone, in letters, at area meetings and in casual conversation at the various farewell events.

Q. What has happened to our Royal Patrons?

A. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother relinquishes the title of Commandant-in-Chief of the Womens Royal Army Corps on 6 April 1992. She continues as a Patron of the ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds and on 6 April 1992 became Patron of the WRAC Association.

Her Majesty continues as Commandant-in-Chief of the WRNS and WRAF.

Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Kent ceased to be Controller Commandant on 6 April 1992 when the title lapsed. She remains President of the WRAC Association and President of the ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds.

Her Royal Highness is now Deputy Colonel-in-Chief of the Adjutant General's Corps.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, formerly in the ATS and now a Life Member of the WRAC Association became Colonel-in-Chief of the Adjutant Generals Corps on 6 April 1992.

Q. If Controller Commandant title has lapsed what about the Deputy Controller Commandant?

A. Her title too lapsed on 6 April 1992. Brigadier Field who was Deputy Controller Commandant at that time becomes Deputy Colonel Commandant of the Adjutant General's Corps.

Q. What happened to the Colonel Commandant?

A. Lt General Sir Jeremy Mackenzie who became Colonel Commandant of the WRAC on 19 December 1990 lost that title on 6 April 1992 but immediately became Colonel Commandant of the Adjutant General's Corps.

Q. What about the Director WRAC?

A. As part of the planned creation of an Adjutant General's Corps and the amalgamation of the WRAC and RAPC, Brigadier Ramsey the then Director WRAC also became Director Women (Army). On 6 April 1992 she dropped the title DWRAC. In April 1992 Brigadier Roulstone took over as DW(A).

Q. What is happening to the Guildford Camp?

A. The WRAC Centre at Guildford was redesignated as the Army Women's Training Centre (AWTC) on 6 April 1992. The WRAC flag was lowered on that day and the Army flag now flies there.

The AWTC will continue to train servicewomen until early 1993. The last Passing Out Parade will probably be on 1 April 1993. After that service-women will complete their basic training with their male colleagues in the four regional training centres.

Future plans for the Guildford site are under review.

Q. What is happening to the Museum?

A. The Museum at Guildford will have to close to allow the site to be alienated/sold. The Trustees have looked at several alternate sites and have decided to ask the National Army Museum in Chelsea, London to accept the Corps collection. The NAM hope to display it in a similar way to the Museum in Guildford. The WRAC Association would nominate a panel to inspect the collection annually and advise on matters relating to the Corps and the collection.

This solution should give the story of the service given by women in the British Army as a separate Corps 1917-1992 a high profile in a national not to say international centre.

As a result of this possible move the Museum shop is gradually running down its stock.

Q. What is happening to the Association?

A. The WRAC Association (incorporating the QMAAC and ATS Comrades Association) will continue to exist and retain its title. As one of the aims of the Association is to maintain "esprit de corps" it has to have a Corps with which to maintain "esprit". The rules have therefore been ammended to open the Association to female members of the SPS Branch of the Adjutant General's Corps.

Activities of the Association will remain as at present and plans are being made for a Grand Reunion in 1994 to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Association.

Q. What does SPS stand for?

A. Staff and Personnel Support. It is the branch of the Adjutant General's Corps made up of the former Royal Army Pay Corps, the mainstream of former Women's Royal Army Corps the Staff clerks of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and regimental clerks. Where one used to see officers described as Captain B Brown WRAC it will now read Captain B Brown AGC SPS. Other titles in the Adjutant General's Corps will be AGC RMP (for Provost), AGC ETS (for RAEC), AGC ALS (for Army Legal Services).

Q. What is happening to the Benevolent Fund?

A. The ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds (whose charter also allows for them to help WAAC and QMAAC) will continue their separate existence for the present. The Funds will suffer a dramatic loss of income as the serving officers and service-women will now subscribe their Day's Pay to their new cap badge.

In the future any former servicewoman who needs help and had service in the WRAC and another Corps will be helped by both funds in proportion to her service with each.

The Adjutant General's Corps will naturally establish its own Benevolent Fund which will have in its charter to help former members of the Corps which make up the AGC. At some time in the future it is possible that the ATS and WRAC funds will combine with the AGC fund but that is very much in the future.

- Q. What should I do if I wish to leave money to the Benevolent Fund in my Will?
- A. You can continue to make legacies to the ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds. Do not change a Will already made but any new Wills should add a phrase like "ATS & WRAC Benevolent Funds or their successors".
- Q. What is happening to Corps HQ?
- A. On 6 April 1992 the WRAC Corps HQ was redesignated "HQ WRAC Association". It remains in Guildford at present but will eventually move to Worthy Down.
- The Assistant Corps Secretary left on 29 May 1992 and will not be replaced. The manpower cover for her post has gone to form part of the Adjutant General's Corps HQ.
- Q. What will happen to the Magazine LIONESS?
- A. It will continue as the magazine of the WRAC Association. It is hoped to maintain the size, scope and quality with two editions per year.
- There will be less copies printed as officers and servicewomen will no longer receive a copy as part of their Days Pay subscription to the Association. They can, of course, join the Association as individual members. (See page 52.)
- There will also be fewer articles from serving members, Unit News and adventure training. Although we will ask other Corps Journals to allow articles to be copied into Lioness.
- Q. What will happen to all the Corps Property?
- A. The Corps did not have a lot of property excepting the Officers' Mess. Corps property in the Museum of course remains there. It has been augmented by items from the Officers' Mess which have historical importance.
- The Adjutant General's Corps and HQ Mess has accepted the items which it needed to run our enlarged Mess. The balance was actioned on 27 June 1992. The proceeds of the auction (less costs) went to the Adjutant General's Corps HQ Mess.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Payment of WRAC Association subscriptions entitles members to a copy of each Lioness published yearly, one in February and one in August. The Subscription year is the calendar year. Anyone who has not yet paid subscriptions for 1993 will forfeit Volume II of Lioness this year.

Payment is made by members to Branch Secretaries by 31st December for the following year.

If you know of anyone who has not received their copy of Lioness, it is possible that their Annual Subscription has not yet been received (also see page 52).

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

In order to ensure that you receive Lioness promptly, please inform WRAC Corps Headquarters of all changes of address.

THE ARMED FORCES ART SOCIETY

The Armed Forces Art Society exists to help people in the Services who draw and paint, make sculpture or engrave glass by holding an exhibition in London each year at the National Army Museum in Chelsea at which about 400 works go on show.

Many of the exhibitors are professional artists who have served in the Forces thus ensuring a high standard of work. This also provides a great opportunity for the less experienced to see their work in a major exhibition and to benefit from professional advice.

The Prince of Wales, a distinguished water-colourist, is the Society's Patron.

Further details can be obtained by sending a sae to:

**The Assistant Secretary
Captain Bill Blake
Duke of Yorks HQ
London SW3 4SE**

BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL TATTOO

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The Organisers of the Birmingham International Tattoo wish to muster the maximum Ex-Service Standards this year and extend a very cordial invitation to your Standard Bearer to take part in the Tattoo.

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If you wish to parade your branch standard please apply for details to:-

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**WHEN MAKING A WILL
PLEASE REMEMBER THE BENEVOLENT FUNDS.**

FAREWELL TO THE WRAC

Nobody who would have any interest in reading this magazine could fail to be aware of at least some of the events which have been staged during the past six months to mark the passing of the Women's Royal Army Corps.

Each of the functions has held a mixture of pomp, pride and very real sadness as the pages of history have turned allowing the full integration of women into the ranks of the British Army. Those pages began to turn gradually with the closing of such Units as 10 Company WRAC in Aldershot and 29 Company WRAC in BAOR. Individual Units with WRAC personnel held their own ceremonies and functions of rebadging and farewell and the demise of our Corps advanced with the inevitability of darkness following the day.

WRAC HQ MESS FAREWELL DINNER

The first of this year's Corps farewell functions took place at London's Guildhall on 12 February 1992. There amidst the glory of medieval stonemasonry dating from 1440, with the giants Gog and Magog gazing down, over 500 serving and retired WRAC officers and their guests dined in the presence of Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Kent. Among the official guests were The Right Honourable Archie Hamilton MP, Field Marshal The Lord Bramall, Field Marshal Sir Richard Vincent, General Sir John Larmont, General Sir David Ramsbotham, Major General B T Pennicott, General Sir John Waters, Owen Kelly Esquire, Monsignor J L Mallon, Major General P S Bray and Sir Alastair Aird.

Planning the event fell to Lt Col Valerie Trout, Maj Sue Westlake and Capt Nicky Murdoch ably assisted by WOII J Spence. This committee sent out invitations, chose menus, organised seating plans and overnight accommodation (for those who requested it).

The function began with a reception in the Old Library and Print room when several of those present were presented to Their Royal Highnesses. Three trumpeters from the WRAC Staff Band provided a superb fanfare to announce the arrival of our guests in the banquet hall and the Band played throughout the meal.

After the meal Brigadier Anne Field our Deputy Controller Commandant read a message she had received from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother:

"... To all those who are assembled at your Farewell Dinner this evening I send my greetings, my very warm good wishes and my gratitude for your loyalty and devotion to the Women's Royal Army Corps.

Elizabeth R. Commandant-in-Chief.
12 February 1992.

During the speech, Brigadier Field ad-libbed "Adjutant General, you don't know what you're taking on!" The cheers which followed no doubt strengthened this aside.

Mr John Major, the Prime Minister, who was unable to attend the Dinner, sent the following message to Brigadier Gael Ramsey:

"... Having looked hard at my diary, I very much regret that my commitments already that day make it impossible for me to join you. It is very sad that I must decline this last opportunity to dine with the Corps. However, like you, I am delighted that integration is soon to be a fact, and look forward to seeing the members of the Corps carrying its proud traditions into all the Regiments of the Army.

I wish you all a very successful, if somewhat poignant evening".

Brigadiers Field and Ramsey presented HRH The Duchess of Kent with a bronze statuette of a servicewoman, which, judging by her expression, Her Royal Highness was very pleased to accept.

Brigadier Gael Ramsey read out several messages she had received.

"... All ranks WRAC BAOR wish all WRAC Officers past and present an enjoyable evening on such a momentous occasion. Good foundations have been laid on which to build for the future. Thank you and best wishes".

"... From Commander and Officers WRAC Hong Kong. Greetings on the occasion of the Farewell Regimental Dinner. Although we cannot be with you this evening you are all in our thoughts. We hope you have a pleasant and most enjoyable Dinner".

"... To all our fellow serving and ex-serving members of the WRAC. Sadly we are not able to celebrate the demise of our Corps with you tonight however it goes without saying that we hope you have a spectacular evening, we are with you in thought and spirit be it Brandy Sours. Fondest regards from all serving members of the WRAC, British Forces Cyprus".

From WOI E J Lawrence WRAC Corps RSM. "On the occasion of the WRAC Headquarters Farewell Regimental Dinner, I send the Directors and Officers the very best wishes of all serving warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and servicewomen. We are proud of the Corps that we leave and carry with us the determination to bring its values to those that we join.

From Alison Heathcoate née Cox (Ex-WRAC Captain) 5/ 23 Crows Nest Road, Waverton, New South Wales 2060 Australia.

"Message: Recce still in progress. Natives seem friendly. Will hold our position until we receive further orders. Best wishes for the future to all WRAC Officers and other ranks. Have found suitable poem for 12 February by Famous Oz poet, A B (BANJO) Paterson".

From the 13 verses supplied Brigadier Ramsey chose the following three:)

With never a sound of trumpet,
With never a flag displayed,
The last of the old campaigners
Lined up for the last parade.

And they watched as the old commander
Read out to the cheering men
The Nation's thanks, and the orders
To carry them home again.

They looked at the grim commander,
But never a sign he made.
"Dismiss!" and the old campaigners
Moved off from their last parade".

Brigadier Ramsey went on to hint at a possible future take-over bid for the AG Corps on behalf of the ladies present, much to their delight.

As the Dinner drew to a close the Staff Band, whose performance throughout had been superb, played the Corps Marches with members past and present joining together singing "Early One Morning" with great pride and no little enthusiasm. The memory of that singing and the ovation given in answer to the speech given by Brigadier Ramsey bore testament to the strength of feeling which prevailed that evening. I am sure that no one lucky enough to have attended will ever forget.

WRAC DAY AT RMA SANDHURST

A Service of Commemoration followed by lunch was held at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst on 1 March 1992. The events were organised by Lt Col Jackie Smith WRAC, Officer Commanding Richmond Wing, RMAS, and her staff, and attended by several members of the Corps past and present.

Last August it had been decided that members of HQ Mess would make a presentation to the Royal Memorial Chapel Sandhurst in the shape of three Communion vessels and that a panel in the Chapel be carved in commemoration.

The address at the service was given by the Reverend J Harkness OBE QHC MA, Chaplain General to the Forces:

"In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

St John 19 : 19 "Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews".

Everywhere we turn, we are bombarded by adverts. The advertising industry is a massive operation in which vast sums of money are spent each year. Whether we like it or not, the work of the advertisers invades our lives through newspapers and magazines, radio and television, billboards and transport systems, not forgetting the bombardment of junk mail which we all receive. A principle method is to use slogans and titles to attract attention. They are designed to persuade us that the produce is better and cheaper than its competitors – that an idea or philosophy is more attractive than an opponent's.

Yet titles are important in all our lives. They are the labels which indicate to others who and what we are.

Nowhere is that more important than in the Army where we use abbreviations and shorthand when referring to Regiments and Corps. They give distinctiveness. And that is certainly true for the members of the Women's Royal Army Corps. That especially has meaning for you as we approach that day in a few weeks time when your name and title will be part to the annals of military history. Even the knowledge that your qualities and "esprit de corps" will continue to provide an essential leaven to those organisations who are the inheritors and beneficiaries of all that you have represented through the years, cannot remove a feeling of sadness.

It is no task of mine to dwell on your history – other than to note in its antecedents it is longer than some may realise. For it may be forgotten that soldier's wives served in the Peninsular War fulfilling many of the duties and tasks which were inherited by ladies during the Crimean War and the First World War – and which we have come to take for granted. As your role expanded during the Second World War that was summed up by a very junior member of the Auxiliary Territorial Service, doing what can only be described as a menial task, when she said to a senior visiting officer, "Why ma'am we're the very spinal column!" Those of us who for gender reasons have not been qualified to join the Corps, but have wives, have – in various forms – been given the same message through the years. And I am quite sure that, as in the past, irrespective of the successor badges and titles which will be carried in the ever expanding role of women in the Army, the essential essence of that message will continue to be advertised.

But at this moment let no-one minimise the attachment you have to your present title. Those of us who are Christians feel much the same about ours.

On which has gone down in history is that which in a moment of supreme cynicism Pilate gave to Jesus Christ –

"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" (INRI). It was meant to mock this man whom some called Lord – It was a retaliation against those who had sought his condemnation and put Pilate in the position of compromising his sense of justice. And so they placed this message on a placard, they wrote it in three languages so that all who saw it would understand. They took the longest route to the place of execution. They advertised the message and conveyed the warning. Doubtless they expected it to be quickly forgotten. They were wrong. It still lives on.

Today you have brought your title and all that it encapsulates to this place where we honour Christ – to a place where we are surrounded by the badges and titles of Regiments and Corps, past and present. Your association with this place as a Corps may be shorter than some which are displayed here. But irrespective of that, you now take your honoured place with them.

And you do it uniquely. And that seems right. You have presented these communion vessels in the place where Jesus of Nazareth is worshipped as King and Lord – where his saving death and his triumphant resurrection are celebrated – and where at the altar, through the elements of bread and wine, the promised gifts of his grace are given to his people.

And so focusing now on your gifts, let us pause for a moment of reflection. And let us take a few key notes from this central act of the Church's work and witness and apply them to this special day in your Corps history.

Let us first strike the note of:

1. Remembrance

For Christians that goes all the way back to an Upper Room in Jerusalem where The Last Supper was held – through the event of Calvary and an apparent defeat – to victory and vindication because of an empty tomb on Easter Day. To remember at the Altar table is fundamental as we strive to live out our faith. Your gifts will provide the focal point for the remembering of faith.

In a different way, I would suggest that remembrance is also important to you. Of course no-one will minimise the poignancy with which you greet this and other such occasions in the coming days as you move to the end of a distinguished chapter. But at the same time you will be able to remember the contribution you have made as a Corps to the Army of which you have become such an accepted part. And the measure of that will rest on the depth and quality of the personal memories and the collective history which finds its place within the ongoing story of the British Army.

And it starts here on the Altar.

If there is "remembrance" then I would suggest that there is another note we must strike. It is:

2. Thanksgiving

Among the descriptive words for the service in which these presentation vessels will be used is one which seems especially appropriate. It is the word – "Eucharist". At its simplest it means "thank you". For Christians that has been described as "the heartbeat of the Christian Faith". It finds its focus in the Communion Service to which we bring our gratitude for all that we have and are – and always for this gift of faith.

As you in turn focus on your memorial gifts to this place may I suggest that you bring the quality of gratitude and, as it were, lay them on the altar as a thanksgiving for all that you have been and have achieved.

If we have struck the notes of remembrance and thanksgiving then there is one further note to strike. And that is:

3. Commitment

Quite simply if our remembering and our thanksgiving are to have any validity then we are asked to demonstrate that in our own daily lives. That is why in different versions of the Communion Service you will find these words "And here we offer and present to thee our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice". That is also why in some modern versions these words are used after the Blessing "Go in peace and serve the Lord". There is commitment and with it a promise for the future.

That seems to be to be especially important at this moment. For it is the same commitment which has been a clear and resonant note in the past which you are now being asked to give in a new situation and as part of new structures.

Week by week these Communion vessels will be at the centre of this Memorial Chapel's worship. In their use there will be remembrance, thanksgiving and a call to commitment. What better advert for your Corps, its title and all that it has represented could there be than that". The three vessels are the work of the well known church silversmith, W F Knight of Wellingborough, Northants. The firm closed down about nine years ago. Their work can be seen in many of the great cathedrals and churches: lanterns, chalices and candlesticks.

The two matching chalices are in sterling silver and the design is based on an early chalice. The lines are simple, with a rounded knode. The knode is decorated with the enamels of the four Evangelists, red on one chalice and in light blue on the other. The large latén is made to fit into the cup. One chalice has a lid, which means that it can be used as a ciborium. Both chalices are gilded in the "mercury" method – the gilding is burnt through the metal, not just put on the surface. This method is no longer used. The large cup is ideal for communicating large numbers at the communion.

The third vessel, a ciborium is designed to be used for the altar breads for it can be used as a chalice, as the cup is plain and doesn't have the usual roped edge design of the cup. It is gothic in design and the base is hexagonal, with the "claw feet" finish. The knode is decorated with the pierced effect and the edges are mounted with a cut stone. It is taller than the two chalices.

All three vessels are a good example of the art of the silversmith and are a fitting memorial.

OFFICERS MESS SILVER

The WRAC HQ Mess is trying to trace Lt J McCormick who gave a butter knife and pickle fork at Annual Camp 1959 and Cpt S C A Wilson who presented a whisky quach in November 1972.

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RSM Elizabeth Lawrence "She dances with pace stick"

FREEDOM PARADE 24 MARCH 1992

WO1 (RSM) E J Lawrence AGC (late WRAC)

The day began very early, in fact before the proverbial sparrows had made any comment at all. As I made my way to the WRAC Centre my thoughts were – how many will turn up?

On arrival the Centre was a reassuring hive of activity, coaches arriving, security checks and all the minutiae associated with military occasions. At 0800 the parade square and surrounding roads became a notional life size representation of Guildford High Street and the Guildhall. The place was now full of personnel representing units from as far afield as Cyprus.

It had been decided that the parade would be formed with four companies of about one hundred in strength. The company rolls had been provisionally made up from the returns previously received from (most of) the participating units. The Staff Band had assembled. The four Companies were sized and ready. So off we set, around and around the WRAC Centre. When satisfied that the Parade was looking something like The Plan, a break was called, before we had the mammoth task of getting everyone to the Millmead car park. This involved the activity beloved of generations of servicewomen and known as "Get on the bus, Get off the bus."

The first panic of the morning was the information on arrival at Millmead, that the Police escort had lost a coach and it was now somewhere in the centre of the town! Doubt still exists if this was true or just a test of the RSM's sense of humour.

Just after 1130 the Parade stepped off. There was no

turning back, this was the public beginning of the ceremonies to mark, with pride, the final functions of the WRAC.

The Parade wheeled into the High Street and we could see the long, cobbled hill stretching before us. Fortunately the weather was being kind to us, blustery and cold but no rain. The RSM was able to reassure the Parade commander, Major Sue Westlake, that we were still ALL behind her AND in step.

The parade halted outside the Guildhall where the inspection by the Mayor of Guildford, Mrs Doreen Bellerby took place. The Mayor, in the true spirit of such events

The Mayor and many civic dignitaries attended a lunch in the Officers' Mess and presented the WRAC with a Guildford coat of arms engraved on cut glass.

The RSM disappeared to brood over the Farewell Parade arrangements and mutter incantations over a strange volume known to acolytes of The Big Wooden Compasses as:- "Ceremonial for the Army".



The Director and Mayor of Guildford

(having to be in two places at once), departed up the High Street to Trinity Church where she was to take the Salute.

The Staff Band took their position at the head of the Parade, the Parade moved to the right and stepped off once more, this was the RSM's turn to be nimble in order to take up her position behind the Parade commander.

The salute was taken by the Mayor on the steps of Trinity Church. While heads and eyes were turned right it was observed that the number of corps hierarchy assembled there was almost worthy of entry into the Guinness Book of Records!

Disaster almost struck as the weather changed. A gust of wind blew away about half a dozen music sheets from the bank. Luckily they were playing "Lass of Richmond Hill" and carried it off without faltering. A shower of rain commenced but spirits could not be dampened and the Parade completed its route to the Civic Hall.

"Get on the bus, Get off the bus". Coaches returned all participants to the WRAC Centre. Some servicewomen returned to their units, but many remained to take part in the rehearsal for the Farewell Parade and functions on the following day.



Mayor of Guildford Councillor Doreen Bellerby talks to Corporal Staples



Major Westlake, Parade Commander, RSM Lawrence, Parade Sergeant Major lead contingent up High Street



Chief Superintendent Hurst, Lt General Sir Jeremy Mackenzie, Brig Field, Brig Ramsey, The Mayor of Guildford (Councillor Bellerby) and Col Marriott in the High Street



Mrs Norah Kendall (on left) with the QMAAC Standard.

FAREWELL CEREMONY AT GUILDFORD 25 MARCH 1992

by N Kendall, Standard Bearer

This was the day which will live in the memory of everyone who was present on this truly marvellous and impressive event. A sad and happy day for so many people.

Our thanks and congratulations to everyone concerned in any way towards making it such a huge success.

As a Standard Bearer I felt privileged to carry the Standard of the QMAAC, (it may be the last time it would be paraded) and the service in the Cathedral was very moving. I heard of quite a few present with lumps in their throats.

The parade was very impressive and I know we were very proud to have taken part in that wonderful March Past, and to salute our wonderful Queen Mother.

After a lovely tea and chat with many friends, it was sad to have the rain for the Beating the Retreat and firework display, but it didn't spoil our spirits, what can one say about our lovely band, they are second to none.

It was a wet ending to a wonderful day but I'm sure I echo what a lot of us were saying as we left the centre, if only we could do it all again.

Thank you Guildford – you did us proud and we are proud to be a part of you.

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If you need our help, fill in the card which will be with your discharge documents, or make earlier contact with the Branch in your area of interest. Branch addresses and telephone numbers can be found from Unit/Ship Resettlement Officers; Regimental, Corps and Services Associations; Job Centres and local telephone directories. Or, write to us at Head Office, 25 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2LN.



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ENQUIRIES FOR OTHER BADGES WELCOME

**SEE PAGE 52 FOR DETAILS OF
WRAC ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP**

25 MARCH 1992 FAREWELL CEREMONIES

Wednesday 25 March 1992, the day which saw the WRAC on parade en masse for the last time. The organisation and planning for the day was tremendous, bringing Lt Col Jackie Smith to temporary duty at WRAC Centre from her tour as OC Richmond Wing RMAS and Capt Val Robertson to assist, both ably supported by Sgt Worsdall. The Commandant WRAC Centre, Col Chris Marriott and 2IC, Maj Frances Canham (who was also in charge of security for the day) realised early on in the planning stage that they may need several bottles of aspirin. Together with the Adjutant (Capt B J Taylor) and RSM Lawrence the Committee, headed by Col (now Brig) Joan Roulstone and including Lt Col Val Trout and Lt Col (Retd) David Dunn the Corps Secretary, set about organising a day to remember for all concerned.

The programme was arranged, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother (our Commandant-in-Chief) had graciously accepted an invitation to be reviewing



Controller Commandant entering Guildford Cathedral

officer at the parade and Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Kent (our Controller Commandant) had agreed to be present also.

The day began with a service of Thanksgiving and Farewell at Guildford Cathedral.

Lt General Sir Jeremy Mackenzie (Colonel Commandant WRAC), Brigadier Field (Deputy Controller Commandant WRAC) and Brigadier Ramsey (Director Women's Royal Army Corps) greeted Her Majesty and Her Royal Highness in the Cathedral Narthex. Also present for the service were The Mayor of Guildford, the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey and Mrs Thornton together with many of the Cathedral's dignitaries; The Bishop, the Dean and the Canons Residentiary.

The service began with a fanfare played by three

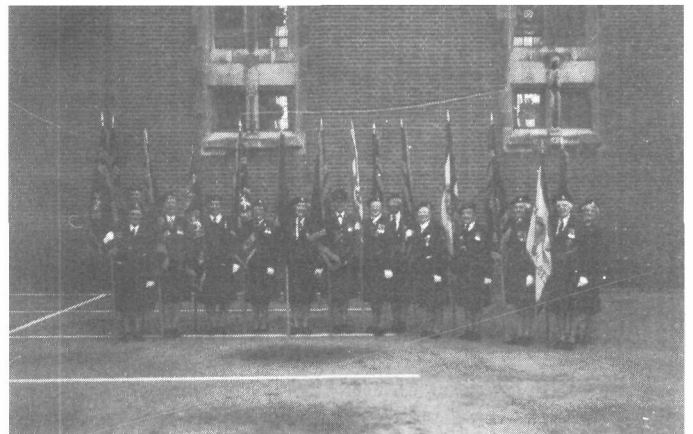
trumpeters of the WRAC Staff Band followed by the first hymn "O worship the king all glorious above" during which the Royal Procession made its way towards the altar and each took up their position.

The Standard Bearers (WRAC Association Standard Bearer – WOJ Barclay, ATS Standard Bearer Mrs Edith Francis and QMAAC Standard Bearer Mrs Norah Kendall) presented their Standards to the Dean. During the only brief rehearsal possible that morning, Miss Barclay had been roundly taken to task by the other Standard Bearers, "We don't do it *that* way, we do it *this* way!" in good Harry Enfield style. With gentle patience but determination Miss Barclay persuaded her companions that by following her example, Her Majesty and Her Royal Highness would be able to read the Standards as opposed to their reverse sides. Eventually Miss Barclay got her way but Canon Richard Fenwick who had heard the discussion was overhead to remark of our veteran ladies, "Hitler didn't stand a chance, did he".

The Lesson was taken from Romans Chapter 12, verses 1 to 11 and was read by Brigadier Anne Field and the Sermon was given by the Chaplain General.



L to R: Mrs Norah Kendall, WOJ Barclay and Mrs Edith Francis with the Standards



Standard Bearers outside the Cathedral

Address given by the Reverend J Harkness OBE QHC MA Chaplain General to the Forces

"In the early part of 1964, a young Chaplain received a message. It had come from the Assistant Chaplain General at The Command Headquarters. It was then passed to the Deputy Assistant Chaplain General – and thereafter

through various Senior Chaplains until it reached the young Chaplain. There was no-one left to whom he could pass it. The message was – “You will report to the WRAC Depot at Hobb’s Barracks, Lingfield and there you will conduct a Service for the Passing Out Parade.” This was to be a new experience. For some two years he had been in the Middle East – there had been occasional moments of excitement, some of exhilaration – also some of anxiety. That all paled into insignificance when compared with this occasion. The recollection is a warmth of welcome – a generous hospitality – and an anxiety which bordered on sheer terror.

Twenty-five years later, the now not so young Chaplain found himself as Inspecting Officer for a Passing Out Parade at the WRAC Centre, Guildford. Again he was given a warm welcome – he was the recipient of generous hospitality – and once more he was anxious near to the point of terror.

Today, the same and somewhat older Chaplain – being myself – stands before you again with an understandable degree of anxiety – terror may overtake me at any moment.

But all of that pales into insignificance when compared with the feelings which this occasion generates for many of you. For it is with mixed emotions – to which we are all sensitive – that you have gathered here in the Cathedral Church of this city of Guildford, a place with which you enjoy a close relationship – to mark the closing of a chapter in your fascinating history.

It would take too long to recount all that that has involved. But through it there is a continuous thread of dedication to duty and service – as you have striven, often against such resistance, to establish yourselves as a recognised and necessary component part of the Army.

It hasn’t been easy. From the beginning there was obstruction from military authority within, and also from those without who were determined to uphold the conventions of society which believed that women should be “in the kitchen” or tied to the “sewing basket” – attitudes which had already been overtaken by social change.

At this point it is customary to quote Florence Nightingale who led the first officially organised band of women to the Crimea. But long before that there had been women, mainly wives, who had accompanied British Armies on campaigns – were on strength – and who had fulfilled various tasks in the support area.

But with the First World War, the contribution of women to the nation’s efforts became a critical need. Against bureaucratic obstruction and male chauvinism there came into being the organisations of your predecessors – “The First Aid Nursing Yeomanry” – “The Women’s Legion” and “The Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps” later to be retitled “Queen Mary’s Army Auxiliary Corps”. This latter provided – mainly – cooks, clerks and drivers, thereby releasing men for the Western Front – and that at a time when there was a dearth of manpower on both the “Home Front” and in the “trenches”.

But when the emergency was over, it was judged – conventionally – that you were not needed. It was back to the “kitchen sink” or to your “embroidery”, until 1938, when faced with the possibility of another World War, the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) was founded.

That story is well documented. There is no need for me to recount that part of your story. Suffice it to say that at the height of the Second World War you numbered 215,000 – larger than the Army of today, not to mention the Army of tomorrow.

These are your roots. Some of those who had to fight your cause – against great odds – were formidable. It is a story of struggle in which there was a mix of persuasion, attrition and female determination. Perhaps, when you became the WRAC on 1 February 1949, it is hardly surprising that you chose “a lioness rampant as the central motif of your cap badge”. But I would judge you were still regarded in the words of the title of Eileen Bigland’s book – “Britain’s other Army”.

To overcome that and the attitudes which underpin that statement has been a long and difficult task. Of course, all of us who are your guests today, appreciate the sadness and poignancy which this occasion brings. Yet another chapter comes to an end.

But – perhaps I might suggest that it should be marked, yes and celebrated, by the word – “Success”. For that is an essential part of the message of today, while at the same time we acknowledge the deep feelings of regret at the passing of much loved titles and structures on the part of those of you who have worked and striven for recognition within the Army.

And so you now turn to the future. I want to suggest that you should carry forward the qualities which are highlighted in your Corps motto – “Suaviter in modo; fortiter in re.” Of course, I don’t need to translate it for you, but I will for those outside the Corps whose Latin is a little rusty – “Gentle in manner; resolute in deed”. Let me take these in turn:

1. Gentle

In traditional terms, to be described as “gentle”, meant that you had the right to bear arms for crown and country. Too literal a translation today might cause a degree of confusion and present an image of the “Amazonian Warrior”. Perish the thought! And so perhaps in a modern context it would be better to define it as – your right to be part of an armed force. That is what you have established.

But of course the word gentle has a deeper and more profound meaning. It is a particular Christian virtue exemplified by Jesus Christ. Be clear. It doesn’t mean being weak – the docile doormat. Rather the reverse for it defines a strong sense of service which does not recognise boundaries and limitation – which does not compromise on principles – and which expresses itself in unrelenting care and concern for others.

When that is present then you will be true to the inheritance which has been passed to you – and true to those whom you are called to service in the future. Not least, your gentleness will be Christian and Christlike.

Then there is the word:

2. Resolute.

Any reading of your history – especially that of the early years – rapidly proves that that word is singularly appropriate when applied to you. Without the determination and firmness of purpose of those formidable ladies in the early years – and later – there would for you have been only a marginal role. The records tell otherwise.

The fact is that no great cause is ever achieved without resolution. Think of Jesus Christ – Think of the apostles and saints. In a different context, that quality of resolution which is Christian and Christlike, is also yours.

Gentleness and Resolution. There is no need for anxiety on your part, or ours. Rather it is our prayer that, irrespective of the cap badge you will wear and the titles you will carry in the future, that these qualities of gentleness and resolution will continue to characterise the women who serve in the Army. It is also our prayer that you will contribute these to the Army to which we all belong – and will help to make it an Army of which we can all be proud”.



The Queen Mother in Guildford Cathedral

During the following hymn the standards were returned to the Standard Bearers before the prayers which were offered by the Canon in Residence, and officiating Chaplain WRAC Centre. The Chaplain General read The Remembrance which was followed by The Last Post, sounded by SSgt Annette Peters of the WRAC Staff Band. Following The Silence SSgt Peters, sounded Reveille after which the Chaplain General lead The Corps Collect. There then followed a Responsary of Personal Dedication from Psalm 43 and the final hymn during which the Branch Standards were collected. Finally The Blessing, given by the Bishop of Guildford and the National Anthem.

After the Royal Party had processed to the Narthex, the congregation of 1200 serving and retired members of the WRAC returned to Queen Elizabeth Park for the remainder of the days events.

With a cavalcade of Royalty in transit between the Cathedral and Queen Elizabeth Park the security arrangements which had caused so many headaches were put to the test. The routes so carefully recce'd, the parking arrangements at Slyfield for coaches and in Stoughton Barracks and the Map and Air Chart enclave for cars stood the test and proved to have been necessary.

Her Majesty, Her Royal Highness and several visiting dignitaries had been invited to lunch in the Officers' Mess and several serving and retired senior officers were entertained to lunch in the Sergeants' Mess. The remainder of those present retired to the marquees provided for their picnics. Meanwhile, Tina Gould, the Assistant Curator ably assisted by Mr Maurice Mager did a roaring trade in souvenirs in the Museum, as did the staff in the PRI shop. Several members of the permanent staff of WRAC Centre had been selling copies of the WRAC Brochure, a short history of our Corps compiled by Maj Dot Ryder and Capt Val Robertson. (Some copies are still available, priced



£1.00 (plus 28p p&p) from HQ WRAC Association, Queen Elizabeth Park).

After lunch, the assembled multitude gathered on the Parade Square to await the arrival of Her Majesty and Her Royal Highness. The weather, forecast to break from its previous pleasant early spring sunshine held fair as Col Chris Marriott commanded a parade of over 600 Officers and Servicewomen Regular and TA, with typical WRAC precision past Her Majesty who, having reviewed the parade in an open vehicle took the salute. This was followed by a contingent of retired members of the TA and WRAC; over 400 ladies stepped out with shoulders back and heads held high, their obvious pride matched only by that of those spectating.



The Commandant-in-Chief and Controller Commandant approaching the Square.

*In background Captain Morris-Adams ADC,
Sir Jeremy Mackenzie, Major Westlake*

The parade advanced in review order to the crash of gleaming black shoes marching and halting in perfect unison. Her Majesty addressed the parade:

"I am so very pleased to be here at Guildford today, and I would like to congratulate all those on parade on their outstanding smartness and bearing.

It is nearly half a century since I first stood on the Square to review a parade of women who had come forward as volunteers to serve their King and Country.

There may even be some here this afternoon who were present on that occasion.

I would like to say how especially pleased I am to see so large a gathering of Association members, for I know that it



The Parade



The Comrades Association March Past

is not always easy for them to make the journey from their homes.

Their loyalty and support, which has been such a source of strength in the past, has been confirmed yet again by their presence at this final parade.

And I would, at this time, like to announce with much pleasure that I am to continue to be involved with you as Patron of the Women's Royal Army Corps Association.

As the events of the last year have shown, we live in uncertain times, and the standards required of our service men and women remain as testing as ever.

Women continue to serve with all the bravery and dedication the Army has grown to expect: duties in Northern Ireland, the Gulf, in Northern Iraq, and here at home are but a few examples.

The achievements of women's service in the Army over the years mark their success.

Although the events of today acknowledge the end of the Women's Royal Army Corps, women will go forward in their own right, on an equal footing with men, receiving professional recognition for their service to the Crown.

Many new and exciting opportunities now face you, and I have every confidence that the high standards set by those present today will be carried with resolution into the Army of the future.

I have been Commandant-in-Chief, of, firstly, the Auxiliary Territorial Service and, now, the Women's Royal Army Corps

for the past 53 years, and I have been proud and honoured to hold this appointment.

I relinquish it with much personal sadness, and I am, indeed, grateful to you for the loyalty and devotion you have given me over these years.

I offer you all my very best wishes for the future, and my thoughts and prayers will be with you wherever your duties may take you in the service of your Sovereign".

After the parade the Royal Party were conducted to The Elizabethan where several members of Permanent Staff WRAC Centre were presented, while the remainder of the serving and retired members of the Association and HQ Mess made their way to their respective marquees.

Having left the Elizabethan Her Majesty was conducted to the marquee of retired members where she endorsed her world wide reputation; her graciousness is legend. Her Majesty stopped and spoke to several ladies ensuring that all had a day to remember forever. Meanwhile, Her Royal



Commandant-in-Chief talks to spectators

Highness was conducted to the marquees set aside for serving members of the Corps where she also stopped and spoke to several. Again, those favoured were delighted with the knowledge that HRH the Duchess of Kent is interested, is concerned and is to be involved with servicewomen in the future.

Both Her Majesty and Her Royal Highness were presented with bouquets of flowers just before they left Queen Elizabeth Park, their route lined with servicewomen.

It was almost at that very moment that the weather finally broke and the rain poured down. Not to be deterred our Band completed the Beating Retreat, a custom dating



BRANCH NEWS

ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH We're under way, but still with "L" plates! We shall remove these when we have Council approval of our information – hopefully in July.

Five members are transferring from the Leicester Branch. We have had very happy times over the past few years, but a 40 mile round trip was a bit daunting in the Winter, and we have had to miss more than one Christmas party because of adverse weather conditions.

We contacted local papers to gather in those interested and have been amazed at the response. Some phone calls were quite pathetic – "I never meet anybody else who served in the ATS" and "I thought I was the last – like a dinosaur". Some were really funny – two members I had known for 25 years plus and none of knew of the others' service days.

So we're 20+ and ready for off. We're looking forward to joining you.

AYLESBURY After extensive local advertising including a letter to 12 Branches of the Royal British Legion, Womens Section, which created considerable interest, our inaugural meeting was held on Saturday, 30th November 1991.

10 Ex ATS and WRAC personnel attended that day to explore the proposed activities of the new Branch. From these humble beginnings we now have some 25 members – both ex service and servicing members.

Our attendance at Branch Meetings now number about 20 members each month which I feel sure shows the formation of this Branch is proving worthwhile.

We meet every 1st Saturday in the month at 11.00 hrs in the dining room of Aylesbury Ex Service Club. Seating is for 150 persons and maybe one day we will have a full house. I would like to record here our appreciation for the help and generosity we have received from the Committee, Steward and his wife (ex WRAC and one of our members). We are also indebted to them for allowing us the use of the venue free of charge.

Future Branch activities include a visit to Guildford to witness a Passing Out Parade and to the Museum. Later in the year a visit is planned to the Royal Hospital, Chelsea and the National Army Museum.

We have been given a talk on the Royal British Legion and its work which members found most informative and helpful.

Our first year will end with our AGM and Christmas Dinner at the Ex Service Club.

I cannot conclude this Newsletter without thanking Lt Col David Dunn and staff for the help so readily given in the inauguration and continued running of our Branch.

Long may the WRAC Association continue enabling the Ladies in Khaki and Bottle Green to relive the comradeship they found in their service days.



Mrs Dennis, Canterbury Branch with The Queen Mother

from Indian Army days when a drummer was sent into the local towns, signalling that it was time for soldiers to return to camp. Then it was time for the fireworks, slightly damp but nonetheless impressive. The whole ceremony was extremely moving; "Sunset" is always so, and the sight of our Corps Badge ablaze left many with a lump in their throat. A very emotional end to a sad but glorious day – even the heavens cried.

WRAC ASSOCIATION

It is proposed to form a non-geographical branch of the WRAC Association to be called "Band Branch".

It is hoped that the meetings which it is able to hold will be musical ones.

To join either write to Association HQ at Guildford or complete the application form on page 52 and clearly mark it Band Branch.

BOLTON The advent of 1992 was a sad time for Branch, we lost two of our very good members – Betty Hamer and Eva Lowe. Betty had been a member of Manchester Branch for many years until 1981 when the Bolton Branch was formed and Betty became Founder Treasurer. She carried out her duties very conscientiously and she was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation in 1991. She died on March 16 after a five year long fight against cancer. Eva was also a founder member and a member of our Branch welfare Committee; she was a hard worker, very reliable and always cheerful and smiling. She was admitted to Hospital and it came as a great shock to us all that after a short illness of 6 weeks she died of Cancer. Both Betty and Eva rendered sterling service of the Association and the Branch, they will both be very sadly missed.

Following on our 10th Anniversary Dinner Dance last October when the Mayor and Mayoress were in attendance, we received an invitation to visit the Mayor's Parlour. We were received by the Mayor and Mayoress and entertained to tea and then taken on a guided tour of the inner sanctums of the town hall. It was a very enjoyable and enlightening visit; the many photos we took will provide a lasting memory of the visit.

In March four members travelled down to Guildford for the Disbandment Ceremony. It proved to be a memorable occasion, although tinged with sadness. We all felt very proud to join the March Past in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen Mother and the Duchess of Kent. I think we all felt the nostalgia of our Service days, and in spite of the weather none of us would have missed it for the world.

May was a busy month. We attended the V E Day Anniversary Service where a wreath was laid on the Cenotaph in the Town Hall Square.

Some of us paid a visit to Hebden Bridge in Yorkshire, where we spent a very enjoyable day in glorious sunshine, its a visit we intend to repeat in the near future.



Members of Bolton Branch in Fleetwood.

May 24 was Mayoral Sunday and we had been invited to take part in the Civic Procession to the Parish Church, to our surprise we were placed at the head of the ex service personnel column, this I understand was at the insistence of the ex servicemen on the Parade.

Following our last meeting we held a Bring and Buy Sale which raised a total of £62. Our Welfare Committee carry on with the good work of visiting sick members and sending cards and flowers where appreciated.

CANTERBURY Since we changed our venue and moved to a larger hall, we have had a 50 percent increase in members attending our monthly meetings, some of them having to travel quite a distance.

Last December we had a Christmas Lunch with 30 members and friends and a Fish and Chip Lunch in April which preceded our Monthly Meeting! We invited the Canterbury Branch of the Wartime WAAF to a party in September and 30 of their members joined us. We had a marvellous spread followed by a Wartime Quiz compiled by our Chairman. It sounded just like the Parrot House at London Zoo when we got together! They invited us back to them in May and they did us proud. We plan to do the same again next year.

The highlight of 1992 so far has been the Farewell Ceremony at Guildford when 16 of us travelled by coach. The service in Guildford Cathedral was very moving. We were sitting near the front and on looking back to see that sea of young faces, all in uniform, brought back memories to all of us except that in our case, the colour was Khaki.

After the service, we were transported to Queen Elizabeth Park for the rest of the Ceremonies. After the Parade of members of WRAC, Regular and TA past and present, Her Majesty the Queen Mother and Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent toured the marquees and some of our members were lucky enough to shake hands and talk to the Queen Mother. Unfortunately the rain poured down for the Beating the Retreat and Firework Display, but it still went ahead and it was a most moving finale.

Our standard has been very much in evidence this year including the Burma Star Remembrance Services at both



Canterbury Branch at the Italy Star Parade at Ramsgate on 3 May 1992.

Canterbury and Ramsgate, the Italy Star Service, Normandy Veterans Standard dedication, the Battle of Britain Service at Canterbury Cathedral, the Service of Remembrance at the Winter Gardens Margate and at a Service in St Marys' in the Castle at Dover for the presentation of the Four Regimental Kneelers dedicated in memory of those who had served in Dover Garrison. We have two joint Standard Bearers who are very willing to "Show the Flag" and between them do an excellent PR job.

Our fund raising events include two very successful coffee mornings during the Summer. At one the weather was perfect, at the other it rained all morning which proves you can't win them all! We have a Sale in October which precedes our AGM, and Raffle and Bring and Buy at all of our Monthly meetings. Our members are extremely generous and we are able to donate a good sum to the Association Benevolent Fund, to the Princess Royals' Memorial Fund, The Royal Star and Garter Home and RBL Poppy Appeal.

Our membership is 58 Annual Members and 35 Life Members. We are wondering what the future holds for the Association now that re-badging has taken place.

CHESTER After many requests, the Chester Branch will, from 14th September 1992 be changing the time of their meetings to the afternoons. The Branch will hold their monthly meeting at the same venue, on the second Monday of each month at 13.30 hrs.

We would like to take this opportunity of welcoming any past or new members, particularly as we have now arranged a more convenient time.

In August 1991 we celebrated our tenth birthday with a "get together" at our favourite venue "The Hanging Gate" at Weaverham. A number of our members live in the village and together with husbands and friends, a pleasant evening was had by all. We were most fortunate that one of our members Mrs Molly Chopin (ex Sgt in the ATS Catering Copr) very kindly offered to make the birthday cake. Thank you Molly – the cake was wonderful!

A card expressing our congratulations and loyalty was sent to Her Majesty the Queen when she celebrated forty years on the throne. We had a charming acknowledgement from Buckingham Palace.

Our yearly donation was sent to the ATS Benevolent Fund. We hope to increase the amount next year.

Mrs P Bowdler, our Standard Bearer, has proudly carried the Standard on a number of occasions this year. Particularly memorable was the parade of the Normandy Veterans' Association held in May 1992 in Ellesmere Port. After the parade we were treated to a very good buffet and entertainment at the Civic Hall.

This year, ten members of our branch attended the Cenotaph in Whitehall. Our Secretary presented a wreath on behalf of the WRAC Association; the local wreath was laid by Mrs M Hughes.

In December 1991 we had our Christmas Dinner at the Plantation Inn in Chester. Not all members were able to attend this function, so a Christmas Lunch was also enjoyed at the Stafford Hotel, Chester.

We received an invitation to attend a St David's Day Dance at Wrexham, this was hosted by the Dunkirk Veterans' Association. A number of our members attended. We were also invited to, and attended our sister association, the WRENS, social evening.

At our May meeting our guest speaker was the Crime Prevention Officer from the Cheshire Constabulary. His talk was most entertaining and very instructive – particularly as a number of our members do live alone.

We have recently held a very successful jumble sale. All members worked very hard and the sale was well supported.

We are now looking forward to the future of the Association – especially with the amalgamation of our forces with Rhyl and Liverpool, Southport and other area Branches.

We hope to always remember that the value of this organisation is in the great COMRADESHIP. Long may it continue!

Our Best Wishes and Good Luck to all the Branches.

GRAND REUNION 1994

1994 will be the 75th Anniversary of the formation of the Comrades Association in 1919. A Grand Reunion will be held in the Guildford area the weekend of 15/16/17 April 1994.

Details and application forms will be in Lioness No. 1 of 1993.

MAKE A NOTE OF THE DATES.

WE, THE LIMBLESS, LOOK TO YOU FOR HELP

We come from two World Wars, Korea, Kenya, Malaya, Aden, Cyprus, Ulster, The Falklands and all those areas of turmoil where peace must be restored.

Now, disabled and mainly aged, we must look to you for help. Please help by helping our Association.

BLESMA looks after the limbless from all the Services. It helps to overcome the shock of losing arms, or legs or an eye. And, for the severely handicapped, it provides Residential Homes where they can live in peace and dignity.

Help the disabled by helping BLESMA with a donation now or a legacy in the future. We promise you that not one penny will be wasted.

PLEASE GIVE TO THOSE WHO GAVE

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THE FIRST STEP
by a recent, young double amputee

CREWE We started the New Year off with a party in January at the home of our chairman Betty Patton, which we all enjoyed very much, and we were able to welcome two new members.

Eleven members travelled to Guildford for the Farewell Ceremonies on March 25. Crewe Branch was very honoured that our Secretary, Edith Francis, was again chosen to carry the ATS Standard in Guildford Cathedral, and we



Secretary, Edith Francis of Crewe Branch with the ATS Standard.

were very proud that she performed the duty with the same high standard that she did when she carried it at St Pauls Cathedral (1988) The Royal Albert Hall (1989) also at the Glasgow Re-union in 1991. It really made our day when we met the Queen Mother and she shook hands with us all. We send our thanks and congratulations to all those at HQ who worked so hard to make the Farewell Ceremonies successful and a day we will always remember.

We all feel sad that the WRAC has now gone into the past with the QMAAC and ATS, but one thing we will never lose is our comradeship. We must all work hard to keep the Association together and our Secretary and our Secretary, Edith Francis, who is also Western Area Secretary, has been successful in keeping WA together.

We shall be doing our usual fund raising things during the year, starting in May with a coffee morning and we have several civic and service parades lined up. We are hoping to arrange some interesting social outings during the Summer. In the Autumn we are looking forward to a trip to Cardiff for the Western Area Re-union and to renew acquaintances with all old and new friends.

CLEVELAND As reported in the last Lioness Publication we had a very busy time last year raising money to purchase



Cleveland Branch Standard with a few of their members who were on parade on 15 March 1992.

our Branch STANDARD. We had our Dedication Sunday 15 March 1992 at All Saints Church Middlesborough.

Planning the day, I had been very anxious about the weather at this time of year, however, I am happy to report the sun shone and it was lovely. We had a magnificent turn out with much support from many Veterans Associations in the area and there were thirty Standards on parade. The 34 (N) Royal Signals Band led the parade.

We had the Mayors and Mayoress of our four County Boroughs and the Chairman and his wife of Cleveland County Council attended our Dedication Service. Our Standard Bearer Mrs Ann Mahoney did an excellent job, as she had never held a Standard (never mind paraded one) till the Wednesday before our parade. Everyone was delighted; it was a day none of us will forget.

On March 24th a party of 38 Branch members went to the Final parade at Guildford. We felt very honoured to parade our Standard at the Cathedral Service. Many of our members met the Queen Mother and they were delighted and have lots of photos to remind them of the day.

In April a party of our members had a Civic Reception with the Mayor and Mayoress of Stockton on Tees. Everyone enjoyed that function. In May once more 38 members went to Cleethorpes for the Northern Area Reunion. A great day and thanks to all for the hard work by Grimsby Branch.

The next important thing on our Calendar will be in June when Mrs Brenda Horness who was a DR in the ATS will ride with the Royal Signals White Helmet Display Team at Catterick. She has had her trial test, and although she has not sat on a bike since demob in 1946, she was great, tell you about it next time!

Once more I must say we have had a happy, hectic successful start for this year and we intend to carry on in the same way. We would like to send our sincere congratulations and best wishes to the Grand Lady we all admire, who has agreed to be our PATRON.

God Bless The Queen Mother.

FIFE & TAYSIDE Three of our members attended the Farewell Ceremonies for the WRAC in March and seven attended the Church Sunday and buffet lunch organised by the Scottish Area at Redford Barracks in early April.

At our Branch AGM in Perth on 25 April, it was announced that the Dundee section had made a donation of £100 to King's Cross Hospital, Dundee in memory of Mrs A Clarke's husband, and £25 to the Royal Naval Association, Dundee in recognition of help with premises for section meetings. The Perth section made a donation of £50 to Branch funds.

GLASGOW Our Branch continues to flourish despite the fact that after 13 years holding our meetings in the RA Club, we had to find other accommodation owing to the club having to close, but thanks to our treasurer we are now in new accommodation.

We started our 1991/92 Session in September. Our Bring and Buy Sale in October was very successful and we raised £95 for our Erskine Hospital Project.

In November the branch attended the Festival of Remembrance Service in Georges Square where our Treasurer laid the Branch Wreath. Major J Dunn was our guest at our Christmas Dinner held in the Clyde Hall. 10 members attended the Farewell Service for the WRAC, and later took part in the March Past. We also met and renewed friendship with other branches who had been to the Scottish Reunion on 5 April. 50 members were at the last Church Service for the WRAC at Craigiehall, going on to Redford Barracks for lunch, afterwards which we all enjoyed.

The Branch has done quite a lot of travelling this year; we ending our session with an outing to Oban and this was voted to become an annual event.

GREAT GRIMSBY The highlight of the past six months activities was the attendance of our members at the Farewell Ceremonies of the WRAC on 25 March at Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford. The Service in the Cathedral in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen Mother, our Commandant in Chief and Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent, President of the WRAC and other VIP's was very touching and emotions ran high specially when the trumpeter so very ably played the Last Post. At the passing out parade the Queen Mother, elegantly attired in pale blue was gracious and charming and despite the very cold weather, reviewed the parade moving in and out of the columns of smartly dressed and well disciplined WRAC, in a motor vehicle, whilst the band played Greensleeves – Mull of Kintyre and there was much applause when the Corps marched past to the tune of the British Grenadiers. What a well turned out parade of women in their uniforms interspersed with blue and red berets and camouflage jackets and trousers. The final proud moment was the march of the veterans it epitomised their pride in the Corps. Her Majesty the Queen Mother's farewell speech recalled she had been so very glad to be asked to be our Commandant in Chief and to have been with us over 53 years and congratulated the Corps on their outstanding smartness on this their final parade, as WRAC, and it was a source of comfort to her to have been our Patron. We responded with three hearty cheers . . . Several of our ladies had the pleasure of speaking to Her Majesty, in the refreshment marquee after the parade and one realised why she is everyone's favourite. Not for us the short Falklands yomp or the 70 day's Gulf skirmish but six years of hard and bloody war and through it all Her Majesty was always there smiling and comforting everyone. It was a memorable day and the evening's Beating of the Retreat by the incomparable WRAC band, despite the pouring rain, the firework display and the final playing of Auld Lang Syne ended an era. The coming integration into the Adjutant General's Corps will no doubt be successful but how lucky we were to experience the ATS in all its glory.

Great Grimsby hosted the Northern Command's AGM in May and modesty stops our correspondent praising our efforts but suffice to say all our visitors were delighted with the change of venue and it proved to be a happy day. We have accepted many invitations the first half of this year including the national Korean Veterans Reunion at Cleethorpes, Mayor making ceremonies and a happy trip to the Hull

Branch and our summer treat was a day at Pickering in Yorkshire, taking in a ride on the Old Yorkshire Railway through very beautiful scenery. Our funds and membership continue to grow and Great Grimsby continues to be a happy and healthy branch – our wish is for all other branches in the Association to be in the same position.

GREATER LONDON Since we went into print this time last year we have two more notable events to announce.

Two of our long standing members were awarded their certificates of appreciation by Brigadier Gael Ramsey at the Association AGM in April. Mrs Pat Carpenter who had been



Miss Vera Rees being presented with a bouquet and cheque by Colonel Lucy Davies.

our Branch Secretary for many years before moving North made the journey down from York for the presentation. Miss Vera Rees who had given many years service looking after us at the Meeting Hall had a farewell party at our January gathering where she was presented with a cheque and a bouquet of flowers by Colonel Lucy Davies. Brigadier



Miss Vera Rees with her Certificate of Appreciation accompanied by Mrs Pat Gibson, Chairman of Greater London Branch.

Ramsey then presented her with the Certificate of Appreciation in April.

Lt Col V Trout attended our April meeting and spoke about her career in the Corps and told us of the plans and hopes for the Association in the future now that Options for Change have taken place.

HEREFORD We have 32 members, 11 of whom are ex WRAC and we meet on the Wednesday of each month at the RBL Hall – the Legion, very generously, don't charge us for using the facilities.

In March 11 of us travelled to Guildford to the Farewell Ceremonies for the WRAC in a minibus paid for by the SAS which helped us enormously and we are very grateful to them. March 25 was a day of happiness and sadness. The presence of Her Majesty the Queen Mother and Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent gave so much pleasure to us all.

Our thanks to the WRAC who always treat Association members with such care and consideration. The WRAC Band deserve our highest praise and the splendid and display of Beating the Retreat in the dark and rain was especially moving. Recently our treasurer, Miss Joyce Nicholls held a Bring and Buy Sale at her home and we were able to view her copy of the video of the day – all of us were featured on it!

We held our April Meeting at the home of Mrs Mary Davis at Ross-on-Tyne. Three new babies, Philippa, Rachel and Hannah joined us there together with their ex WRAC mothers. We look forward to our August Meeting when Mrs Dorothy Brooks has invited us to her flat at Bernard Hackett Court, Ross-on-Tyne.

Donations from Hereford Branch so far this year have been £20 to the minibus appeal fund, £20 to the RBL Poppy Fund, £25 to BLESUA and £25 to SSAFA. The ATS and WRAC Benevolent Fund will benefit from the forthcoming sale of Bric-a-Brac in the Butter Market on 23 June. We hope to have a car boot sale in Autumn as well. We thank Branch members who can't get to meetings but send donations. It keeps us "all together" and we enjoy helping others. £50 has been sent to the Appeal Fund for gates to be erected at Hyde Park in recognition of the wonderful work Her Majesty the Queen Mother has done.

We look forward to meeting "old" friends at the Area meeting in Cardiff on 17 October. Our congratulations to Brigadier G K Ramsey on her new appointment with the British Army.

ISLE OF WIGHT The article below was printed in the Isle of Wight County Press on 10 April 1992 and is reproduced by kind permission of the Editor:

Well, Grandma, Just What Did You Do in the War?

What did you do in the war grandad?

It's a question asked by many children, fascinated by events which took place some 50 years ago.

However, how often do grandmas get asked the same thing?

The role of women during the second world war is often forgotten, or at most only those working in the munitions factories or on the land are remembered.

Yet thousands of women either volunteered or were conscripted to work alongside the men in the armed forces, making a significant contribution to the defence of our country.

The war may long be over, but the memory of those days live on and many of the women still regularly meet as members of the Women's Royal Army Corps and Auxiliary Territorial Services Association.

The IW branch has 42 members – women of every rank and from all over the country who held down a variety of important jobs during the war.

Branch secretary Mrs Shirley Reynolds, of The Glen, Yarmouth, said many people did not realise the extent of the women's work.

Some replaced male army personnel to release them for active service, but many women also risked their lives.

She said "Although a lot of women had volunteered for service after the outbreak of war, most were actually conscripted."

After initial training, Mrs Reynolds herself was sent to Bradford in 1942 for a six-week army administration course, and then on to Derby where she was stationed with the Royal Engineers Works Services, which was in charge of maintaining the requisitioned army camps, many in stately homes.

She said, "It was strange sharing a barracks with 40 other women at first, and the FFI (free from infection) inspection was demoralising, but we soon got used to it and the camaraderie was fantastic.

"I was made up to a sergeant in six months and by the age of 20 I was in charge of a detachment of girls."

Mrs Vera Royall, of St Catherines Road, Niton, who joined up in 1940 as a telephonist with Southern Command Signals, had to undergo a three-month voyage on a troop ship to Cairo, under the constant threat of attack.

She said, "I volunteered to go overseas and within a month I was on my way. There were 36 ATS girls on board with 5,000 RAF chaps travelling to India.

"The trip was horrendous, although we broke it halfway and spent three weeks in Durban."

Mrs Royall spent two-and-a-half years in the Middle East, working on a switchboard with 81 other women.

"I remember often being hungry, having no hot water in the huts and sleeping in a greatcoat – but we all survived with our sense of humour intact," she said.

Also overseas was Mrs Kay Pascoe-Price, of Bouldnor, Yarmouth, who had joined up in 1938 and who remembered spending her 21st birthday on a troopship bound for France.

She worked her way up from a dispatch rider and was later based with Field Marshal Montgomery and in command of ATS Signals across the whole of Northern Europe, and also attended the Nuremberg trials after the war. She had previously been in charge of the War Office signals in London, based under the Brompton Road tube station.

She said, "Our barracks was a hotel in Buckingham Palace Road and one day I was called out by the orderly sergeant as a German airman had parachuted down and got caught on a spire on the roof.

"But by the time I arrived, the girls had got him down and were feeding him up in their room. None of them had thought to call the police."

Previously in a reserved occupation, Mrs Mabel Swift, of High Park Road, Ryde, was called up in 1943 and worked as a driver.

She said, "I was told to say I could drive anything, and was given a three ton truck!

"But it was OK once I got the hang of double declutching."

Mrs Pat Green of Crocker Street, Newport, helped bring down enemy planes.

She joined up from the Island in 1939, based in Oswestry and Windsor, and was eventually stationed in Newcastle.

Her duties ranged from those of a master gunner's clerk to being a predictor operator and a plotting officer for the anti-aircraft squad.

She said, "My proudest moment was giving the orders for the gun to fire and it being right on target."

Mrs Eileen Hardesty, of Clayton Road, Freshwater volunteered in 1943 and worked as a special wireless operator in the secret Y group.

She was based at the Isle of Man and in Lancashire, intercepting the German transmissions which were then sent off to be decoded using the Enigma machine which had been captured from Poland.

"As well as finding the V1 and V2 sites we pinpointed the exact position of the Bismarck, although our work on this wasn't revealed until recently," she said.

As the unsung heroines of the war, it's not surprising the WRAC & ATS Association members want more people to know about their work, but they are also keen to contact any women who were in the WRAC and ATS but have not joined the society.

The group not only offers the chance to rekindle old friendships and remember old times, but has an extensive welfare and assistance programme.

Anyone interested should contact Mrs Reynolds on 760829.

LONDON It does not seem quite correct to say that we "enjoyed" the Farewell to the WRAC at Guildford in March, as it was a sad occasion which was also a celebration and the sixty-three members of this branch who attended had a great day for which we thank everyone concerned with the organisation. Even the heavy rain in the evening was not able to dampen our spirits and we were able to cheer the members of the WRAC Band who played valiantly on in the best tradition. Major E P Forster must surely have felt that she was in imminent danger of going down with her ship/parade ground. The fireworks were terrific and certainly no "damp squib". A special and loyal vote of thanks to Her Majesty the Queen Mother who was so indefatigable in speaking to so many of us and making the occasion memorable with the warmth of her smile.



L-R: Mrs Barbara Alexander, Miss Elsie Sycamore, Mrs Emily Richards with their Certificates of Appreciation.

At the Association AGM in April, our Vice-President Mrs Barbara Alexander, Mrs Emily Richards and Miss Elsie Sycamore were presented with well deserved Certificates of Appreciation by Brigadier Gael Ramsey. Between them they have served an impressive 91 years on the Branch Committee out of their collective 113 years of membership of the Association. In February we enjoyed a nostalgic afternoon when Terry Chapman from the Imperial War

Museum gave a talk on the Role of British Women during the Second World War. Since he illustrated his talk with recordings of songs from the Quartermasters Stores via the Stiefgield Line and Berkley Square to We'll Meet Again, it soon became a singsong when everyone found that they hadn't forgotten the words! The following month welcomed Bob Parkin, the General Manager of The Royal British Legion Poppy Factory which this year is celebrating its first seventy years. It has been an impressive achievement from the beginning and as it was pointed out to use the need for funds generated by the annual Poppy Appeal do not grow less and thanks to the generosity of members we were able to send them a donation.

The first of this year's coach trips in May was to the lovely gardens of Benington Lordship in Hertfordshire, which we enjoyed in brilliant sunshine after a delicious lunch in the Church Hall. A late report from a member who attended the Garden Party for the first Adjutants General's Corps Day at Worthy Down tells me that, sadly, that event was "rained off" even worse than the Farewell Ceremonies – could it be that someone, somewhere is displeased with the latest turn of events?

MANCHESTER How can anyone follow the visit to Guildford. All our feelings and memories rolled into one never to be forgotten.

After March we met again at the Branch. We had a good turn out after our Winter break! A few sadly couldn't make it due to ill health. We kept them in our thoughts as we made arrangements for future venues. Like everyone else in the Corps we are keeping fingers crossed regarding different aspects and how it will affect us in the near future.

In May we held our annual dinner and were pleased to welcome our friends from Stockport, Rochdale and Bolton. We had a very enjoyable evening, each bringing a little gift, which was then raffled bringing a total of £49 for ATS Fund. Most of us won a prize and those who were unfortunate not to win were presented with the table flowers so everyone went away with a memento. It was a very pleasant evening although sad in a way. Our treasurer was with the party that went to Guildford. She gave us a very detailed account of events which was very poignant; we all listened with great interest and sadness.

We tucked into an excellent meal then, had the Loyal Toast, Absent friends and ATS Corps.

We were planning a visit to "Eden Camp" in July which is near Maltby in Yorkshire. To the uninitiated this is a Modern History Theme Museum covering War Time Britain 1939–45. It was at that time used as a Prisoner of War Camp and now depicts a copy of what an army site was like in those days (as if we didn't know).

Right now we feel a little in limbo, but I feel sure we can say like the old adage "Old soldiers never die they simply fade away!" No matter what, we shall still carry on with the special friendships and consideration of absent friends which is the basis of our ATS movement. I am sure all Branches will say "Hear Hear" to that.

NORFOLK & SUFFOLK Branch has a membership of over 90, spread over the two counties, and three new members have been welcomed this year. Monthly meetings are held in Norwich which, in spite of the distance some of us have to travel from county, and regularly attended by 30 to 35 members.

We started the year with our annual luncheon, held in the Music Room of our beautiful Assembly House in the City Centre. We presented gifts to our retiring Chairman, Mrs Joan Shreeve, who had magnificently filled that post for the past nine years.

On March 25 eleven of us left at 5.30 a.m. for Guildford where we had a most splendid day in spite of it being such a sad occasion, with the weather in sympathy. The fact that we were in "Norfolk" group interested Her Majesty the Queen Mother, who told us of how well she knows the county from her visits to Sandringham. We are very grateful to all those at Guildford who were our hosts. We have purchased a copy of the video made of the occasion, and intend to show it at one of our meetings.

On 2nd May two members attended a service in the Memorial Garden in Norwich to remember those who died in the "Baedeker" raid on the city. During the latter part of April 1942 Norwich suffered devastating air raids resulting in many lives lost. Among the grassy graves surrounded by daffodils and falling cherry blossom, the Bishop of Norwich gave a very moving address to commemorate those civilians who died fifty years ago, remembering also those German civilians who suffered.

One of our members has embroidered two kneelers, one with the ATS crest and the other with the WRAC insignia. We hope these will be dedicated at the service in the Cathedral in June and the kneelers placed in the Chapel of The Royal Norfolk regiment, to which regiment some of our members were attached and carried out their war-time service.

Members continue to knit jumpers and blankets for Oxfam to distribute.

The first speaker at our meeting this year was responsible for the setting up of the Museum of the Royal Norfolk Regiment when in 1991 it was transferred.

PLYMOUTH Plymouth Branch has had a busy and successful half year, with our Standard Paraded at various Plymouth and District Associations Anniversaries.

A special occasion to always be remembered was the Farewell Ceremonies at Guildford, when fifteen of our members attended. Because of geographical aspects, the day was very long indeed, but everyone returned enthralled with the day's events.

Representatives attended the Area Reunion at Exeter on May 17 when high teas, after events, was thoroughly enjoyed.

On June 14, many members will attend the Branch Annual Service held in St Katherine's Church. The Royal Citadel, Our Standard and Marching Party will take part in the re-occupation of the Royal Citadel by the 29th Commando Regiment, RA, on July 11.

We plan to hold a Jumble Sale in Sept in order to boost our funds. There is always an enthusiastic response from the public during a busy morning.

The Annual Festival of Remembrance Service will be held in Plymouth on November 6, at Plymouth Pavilions Leisure Centre.

We send our good wishes to all.

SALISBURY It has been a busy and happy six months since the last report and our numbers at meetings have been well up to average now that we have changed to lunch time meetings. January saw us greet a WPC from the local Police Force who gave us an interesting insight into her daily work at the station and answered our many questions. In February we welcomed Mrs Pauline Hunt who regularly takes a lorry to the children in Romania. This time she was leaving shortly with yet another convoy and we were able to present her with food and clothing for the very needy people. She made us very aware of the great suffering and deprivation in the country and of the wonderful work that is being done by a small band of very dedicated people. March 25 and we were away in the minibus to Guildford –

what a day we all had despite the rain and how much we all loved seeing Her Majesty the Queen Mother and Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent. It was a sad day but a proud one for us all. Our Speaker for the March meeting took us on a tour of Salisbury Cathedral with her camera. We all know the Cathedral rather well we wondered what she would have to show us – and surprised we were. I think many of us are still trying to find some of the many small and interesting things you can find if you look high up and low down and in odd corners. Our April meeting was a Faith Lunch and the food was delicious! May saw a party of us at the Area Reunion at Exeter. A good day where we were well looked after by the British Legion and all enjoyed the various excursions arranged for us to see something of Exeter.

Our final outing was on June 5 when a few members were able to attend the Adjutant General's Corps Inaugural Garden Party at Worthy Down, Winchester. The weather was most unkind and it poured with rain and was very cold the whole afternoon – however the welcome from everyone was very warm and we were able to see and to have quite a long chat with Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester who spent a considerable time with everyone. The Buffet Tea was excellent!

SOMERSET Our first meeting was cancelled as only 3 members were going to attend. As we have a new "home", (the TA Centre) I felt that the £17.50, the cost of hiring and insurance did not warrant such a number attending, so this meeting was cancelled.

The second meeting in January was a Quiz night attended by 12 members.

With the third meeting 7 members came to hear a most interesting talk by the Council of Voluntary Services.

In February we had a lunch time get together with 26 members enjoying our annual lunch.

In April we had a skittles evening, 18 members and friends had a skittle and supper.

14 members attend the sub area Reunion at Exeter and had a very enjoyable day.

We have other events coming up during this year.

Ten members made the trip to Guildford with 2 members going to the Cathedral. What a day! To those members who did not attend, how can you begin to describe it, the Cathedral Service, the informal lunch (providing you hadn't left yours on the coach), the searching out of old comrades. The parade, which to me was the most memorable part of the day, with our Association taking part in the march past. Then like riding a bike – you never forget how to march. Then later on the tea, when you got it, was good.

The Queen Mother and the Duchess of Kent did their "rounds", almost being mobbed, what a headache for the security men, with all those women donning their handbags and cameras. What a good training ground for any new security guard.

Some of us braved the weather and what a finale. The Beating Retreat and the firework display. I know along with others, I had tears and loads of memories of the past and also of the day. A day I will never forget. Can I say that our members cannot begin to comprehend the work that went into the day, but we would like to say a big thank you to all those concerned.

We now have 75 members in our Branch.

SHROPSHIRE The Branch continues to meet monthly and an average of 20 members attend. It is pleasing that Retired Lt Col Robinson is able to return to our meetings and that she is recovering well from her recent illness. We have had several worthwhile events recently, not least our visit to Guildford on 25 March. The journey was well worth the

effort. We all thought the whole thing was very well organised and we enjoyed it immensely. How nice it was to greet Major Norma Heath, also recuperating, we do miss her links with our Branch and we wish her well.

Last November Terri Goff our Welfare Person celebrated her Ruby Wedding, and what an occasion we made of that. Together with Fred, and the family they threw a super party at which the Branch entertained and made a name for itself. Our crazy "fashion show" was a triumph, even the children cannot stop talking about "old ladies" crawling around as "babies".

Lucy Bowyer has recently celebrated her Golden Wedding. The Branch held a Social to which Charles and the remainder of Lucy's family came, and once more it was "cabaret time" something quite different, but everyone seemed to enjoy it.

Lucy Bowyer is still doing stalwart work with the "Standard", she is accompanied always by her "Batman" husband Charles, and we are very proud of them both.

It is understood that Capt Maggie Purkis is coming to a Donnington posting together with her husband Colin who is to be CO of Dental Group, Donnington. We welcome them, and their family to this beautiful area, and look forward to Capt Purkis becoming an active member of our Branch.

SOUTHAMPTON Our January meeting was a very happy start to the year as a "surprise" was promised to members. We became the proud owners of our very own Standard and this was paraded before our members on this evening, which we suitably toasted. On 1st March our Standard was dedicated in preparation for the final WRAC Ceremonies at Guildford on 25 March. What a marvellous day this proved to be for us all with many of us speaking to the Queen Mother and the Duchess of Kent. Our thanks to HQ WRAC for the obvious hand work to make the day the success it certainly was.

On the 21 March our own coach with 20 members attended the WRAC Band Concert in Guildford Civic Hall. An evening thoroughly enjoyed, and in particular seeing and hearing past members of the band, some travelling from abroad specially to take part.

Still to do with the demise of the WRAC, on 30 March saw us at Marchwood to view the rebadging parade of the WRAC, with the WRAC Band playing. An invitation we were very happy to accept, the new contact being maintained for the future.

Our Annual Dinner on 1 April was again enjoyed by 34

members. The AGM at the Victory Club saw three of us in attendance. 29 April was the Annual Luncheon of the IOW Branch to which we are always invited, and it was very much enjoyed by 10 of our members.

Due to the distance involved only 2 of our members attend the SW Area Reunion at Exeter on 17 May. Again enjoyed, but it was important to attend as reconstruction of areas was very much to the fore.

Our June meeting is always an American Supper to which we invited members of the WREN's Association, plus something a little different for us; a slide quiz, very enjoyed as well as taxing the brain.

Coming right up to date, 16 members attended an Inaugural Garden Party at Worthy Down, the new home of the Adjutant General's Corps, which the Duchess of Gloucester visited and at which the now Staff Band of the AGC played. All stands very well displayed in vast grounds, but the weather was so unkind, very cold and very wet, not the AGC fault!

SWANSEA Our Christmas Dinner was held at the Dolphin Hotel, Swansea, and was very well attended and enjoyed by all. In January we were once again meeting at Swansea Guildhall where we settled down to plan future outings and Speakers.

A 6 a.m. start on the 25 March and we were off to the "Farewell Ceremonies" of the WRAC at Guildford, in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother and Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent. It was a wonderful sight to see the parade of the WRAC and regular TA Members, past and present and to see Her Majesty taking the salute. We were honoured to be spoken to by her after the Parade and also later on when she toured the Marquees. An excellent meal was prepared for



Members of Swansea Branch.

us all and it must have been a tremendous task for the Staff. Thank you all.

In April we were entertained with a talk by Mr Levy of "Addis" factory about their products. He very kindly left his samples to be shared amongst us.

At our May meeting we were very pleased to share our tea and cakes with the "Lord Mayor of Swansea", Byron Owen. He gave us the highlights of his year in office and it was a very busy time for him.

The next day we were off to the RAC Rangers at Castle Martin. The Cardiff Branch picked us up at Swansea and we were pleased to share the coach to Merion Camp.

The Rhyll Band arrived soon after and it was good to see old friends again. A nice cup of tea was waiting for us and then our "billets" were allocated to us. What luxury when we think back to the early days of the last war, but the comradeship is still there. More tea and lovely pastries



The new Standard of the Southampton Branch with Vice-Chairman and founder member, Mrs Audrey Pickett (L) and Standard Bearer, Miss Mary Barker.

and cakes and we were given a welcoming brief by Major Walters.

Our coaches took us later to visit "Stack Rocks" a local landmark. A home to many varieties of sea birds. Then to Flimstone Chapel for a service conducted by The Rev R J Coombes, the Senior Chaplain Wales, then we returned to Merrion Camp. Our evening dinner was held in the Officers Mess. We were entertained by the band of the 4 RRW(V) during and after our excellent meal. The sight of the tables set with the Mess Silver was very impressive.

After speeches we settled down to a good sing song and some fun with the band, then off to our very comfortable beds, we were not very long in getting to sleep . . .

After a very good breakfast the next morning, we set off to a briefing in the Model Room by Comdt Lt Col M B Portman and German Liaison Officer Lt Col H Gollwitzer.

In the coaches again, we set off to Warren Church for a visit, and a short talk on its history by Lt Col Portman. We then visited Warren Tower Range Control, where some of the more nimble members climbed to the Tower.

Back at Merrion Camp we visited the German Tank Hanger, after a talk and demonstration of these big tanks by their crews, it was time for our Major Walters to drive around the course and show how well she could do. Photographs were taken of us and we went back to the officers mess for an excellent lunch. Goodbyes were said and we left for our return home. What a lovely time. Our thanks to all. May we say hello to Myra Norton, who has broken her arm. Get Well Soon Myra.

WESTCLIFF A new Branch of the WRAC Association was opened on 13 March 1992. Capt Vanessa West a serving soldier from Colchester, accepted a painting on behalf of the Branch, from the founder member and secretary Ellen Ralph. Squadron-Leader Councillor Ken Cater officially opened the Branch in the Westcliff-on-Sea Royal British Legion HQ.

It was nice to meet Joyce and Daphne from Chelmsford. The girls did a great job of providing a lovely spread for us and our guests.

The day at Guildford on 25 March was a dream come true for me and never will be forgotten. When I saw the Queen Mum's jeep coming towards the Past Soldier's line up I was so proud I forced myself out of my wheelchair to stand to attention, and was well rewarded with a beautiful

smile and a wave. A very big THANK YOU to all those who worked so hard to make the day a success.

We welcomed 5 new members in April. Pat Maskell is our Entertainments Officer Ivy Ekersall Treasurer, Dorothy Hill looks after the register and collects the tea money, Betty Heal is the main charwaller but usually gets a voluntary helper.

In May we are having a slide show by someone from the National Trust. In June we are having a Pub lunch, and in July we are visiting a Local Day and Activity Centre. August activities are cancelled due to holidays and in September we will discuss what we intend to do the following year. Latest membership 24.

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE

The Royal British Legion Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey will be opened at 11.15 a.m. on Tuesday 5 November 1992. Association members are welcome to attend.

WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND This year brings a big change for us – after holding our meetings in the Club Room at Bincleaves Barracks for the past 35 years, we have had to look for a new "home", as the Barracks will soon be closing. I am glad to be able to report that the Royal British Legion are agreeable to our using a room at their HQ and we start our meetings there in September.

Owing to the very strict security recently in the Barracks we have not been able to have our usual quota of speakers at meetings – but we have not become static! We have had more "Domestic" meetings when we enjoy the fellowship and friendliness of our fellow members, and Branch and Association business is fully discussed. Our regular Bring and Buy evenings are very popular and successful. We have also had some very happy coffee mornings at the homes of Bridport and Dorchester members who are unable to come regularly to meetings in Weymouth. We feel that these occasions are of great value in maintaining our fellowship with these members, as well as being very enjoyable. Two members attended the Mayor Making ceremony and the Mayor's Reception, and the Remembrance Sunday Services are always well attended. A number of us enjoyed a social evening recently with the local Branch of the Association of WRENS.

The Branch bought the materials, and Mrs McElwaine, one of our members, made up a Church kneeler incorporating the ATS crest, and this was presented to the Garrison Church at Bovington Camp on Sunday 12 January, at Morning Service. Sixteen of us were present, and the kneeler was dedicated by the Garrison Padre, the Revd M Wright. After the service we were invited to the Church Room for coffee, when we met military and civilian members for the congregation – and gained a new member for our Branch!

Eighteen of us travelled to Guildford on 25 March, for the Farewell Ceremonies: the four who had tickets for the Cathedral Service left at what seemed like the crack of dawn! – the others followed by mini-bus later for the afternoon events. A truly memorable day, never to be forgotten – our Standard on parade in the Cathedral – and what a beautiful service! Then the Parade and March Past. Then the biggest thrill of all for some – shaking hands with the Queen Mother, or talking to the Duchess of Kent. In spite of the rain, the mini-bus party stayed for the Beating of Retreat and the Fireworks, and thoroughly enjoyed the



Members of the new Westcliff Branch.

Front Row L-R: Ken Carter MBE, Gwen Spinks, Ellen Ralph (in wheelchair), Capt West, Christine Giller.

Back Row L-R: Barbara Armitage (guest), Chairman RBL, Pat Maskell, Betty Heal, Ruby Woods, Daphne Attridge, Joyce Wright, Elizabeth Callow.

end of the day. It may have been farewell to the WRAC but what memories we all have of our Service days!

Recently we had our summer outing, and we went to Glorious Devon – to the seaside! To three seaside resorts, Sidmouth, Budleigh Salterton and Exmouth. The sun shone for us, and a good time was had by all.

Mrs Joan Wratten, a member who has been incapacitated for some years following a stroke, has now been admitted to the care of a Nursing Home, and we are planning to visit her whenever we can. Visits are made to members who are admitted to Hospital, and "Get Well" cards are sent.

Programmes of all Branch events are circulated to all members twice a year, and our membership is now 38 Annual Members, and 20 Life Members.

WINCANTON AND BLACKMORE VALE Eleven members had a most enjoyable day at the Area Reunion at Cheltenham in September.

In October we helped SSAAFA with a collection at Wincanton Racecourse which raised £490.

We joined the British Legion as usual for the Remembrance Day March and Wreath-laying Ceremony and, also in November, sadly, we lost one of our Founder Members, Mrs Madge Pearce.

Our Christmas Lunch was held at our usual meeting place in the Memorial Hall, beautifully decorated for the occasion. Everyone had been asked to bring a war-time photograph of themselves, but very few were recognisable!

In March we hired a mini-bus and, driven by one of our members, ten of us went to Guildford for the Final Parade of the WRAC, staying on to watch the ceremony of Beating the Retreat and Firework Display. Two of us had the honour of speaking to HM the Queen Mother after the Parade. It

was memorable day and not even the rain dampened our enthusiasm!

I enjoyed my first visit to the AGM in London in April and, later in the month, we held our Annual Coffee Morning, which was well supported, raising nearly £200.

We enjoyed a lovely day in Exeter for the Area Reunion in May. Many thanks to all members of the Branch for making us so welcome.

There was much discussion about the future of the SW Area and, although Wincanton had originally wanted to stay in the same group, after reporting on the Meeting to our Members, they voted to form a smaller group, with Exeter, Plymouth and Somerset. We look forward to joining these Branches for future events and hope that distance will not prevent members from attending, but we are over 100 miles from Plymouth, while previously we were in the centre of four other Branches and not more than 35 miles away.

We are planning our third Birthday and Garden Meeting in July and are going to the Garden Festival of Wales in September.

We continue to meet monthly on the 4th Tuesday, and currently have 32 members, with an average attendance of about 24.

REUNIONS

CWAC ANNUAL CANADA-WIDE VETERANS' REUNION

A decision has been made to hold a **34th Annual CANADA-WIDE CWAC VETERANS' OF WW 11 REUNION** and celebrating **Canada's 125th Birthday**, sponsored as usual by the **CWAC Unit # 47 of the Canadian Corps Association**. The last weekend in September is the time, namely, **Friday, September 25 and Saturday, September 26, at 201 Niagara Street**. Reunion Bulletins will be going out soon as well as Publicity. Anyone requiring a Reunion Bulletin for details should contact us at the above address. Hotel accommodation at the Executive Motor Hotel should be reserved by forwarding requests to Mrs Shirley Wood Heesaker, Reunion Chairman, as instructed in your Reunion Registration Forms.

GLASGOW GRAND REUNION 1991 SCOTTISH WHISKY

A very few miniature bottles of the Scottish Whisky, especially blended for the 1991 Grand Reunion in Glasgow are still available – price £2.00 per bottle. Cheques made payable to "WRAC Association", Scottish Area, and including a 50p donation towards postage, should be sent to Capt (Retd) P M Stevenson, c/o ACIO Glasgow, 78 Queen Street, Glasgow G1 3DN (Tel 041 221 9955, Ext 25).

WESTERN AREA REUNION

Western Area Re-union and Social Afternoon is to be held at the TA Centre, Gabalfa Avenue, Llandaff North, Cardiff on Saturday 17th October 1992 from 13.30 hrs to 17.30 hrs.

Tickets are £3.50 and available from the Cardiff Secretary

EPILOGUE

So now it has loomed before us
Inevitable and final,
That end which we thought would never come.
Indispensible, they once told us
A bulwark.
And those of us, those many beings
who before
have shaken hands
made promises to keep in touch
are wondering;
Is this, then the valediction which ends them all?
In our hollowness we can but envy those whose
youth may profit from such change.
Whose wider fields and broader paths
may find such joy as once we knew.
But we take heart, we must.
Our paths will cross, they did before
and will again.
Reminiscences, old times, old friends
Laughter . . . weariness
Nothing can take from us that sharing
that companionship
that intangible feeling of Belonging.
These for all time are ours.
These cannot end.

Written on the demise of the W.R.A.C.
by Margaret Cranmer.
(Exeter Branch W.R.A.C. Association)

– Mrs Margaret Crook, 9 Cherry Close, Fairwater, Cardiff CF5 3RQ.

Refreshments are included.

Please Note,

Owing to Security Regulations, Association Membership cards must be shown to gain admission to the TA Centre.



Mrs Edith Francis, Secretary, Western Area receives a bouquet from Mrs Helen Thomas, Secretary of Birmingham Branch at the Western Area Reunion in Birmingham.

NORTHERN AREA REUNION 1992

A very happy Northern Area Reunion was held in the Memorial Hall at Cleethorpes on Saturday 16 May, with a capacity attendance from some fourteen Branches, and including one ex-member of Bradford who was visiting from Canada.

As the American WAC were celebrating their 50th Anniversary a message had been sent via Brigadier Nolan who was attending in person, and in return she had sent greetings to our reunion. A copy of the message was presented to Grimsby Branch with thanks for all their hard work in organising the various local aspects of the Reunion. A farewell gift was also presented to our retiring Chairman, Lt Col R E Cornwall, in recognition of her contribution to Northern Area whilst in office.

Our guest speaker was Brigadier A Field CB who had travelled north for the occasion, and she gave a resumé of events in the "Right Royal Year" which the association had experienced and outlined the various changes which would take place as a result of re-organisation. It appeared the Association is thriving and will continue to do so in the future.

For the first time the Reunion featured a Lunch instead of Afternoon Tea and this change of format appeared to be very popular. It was a splendid meal of ample proportions which everyone thoroughly enjoyed and which appeared to satisfy even the heartiest appetites!

A very successful Raffle with a wide range of prizes took place during the afternoon and there was also a collection in aid of the Princess Royal's Fund. A video presentation of the farewell ceremonies at Guildford was also given, which brought back memories for those who attended and showed the various events to those who were not able to go.

All in all, it was quite an action-packed Reunion and we hope the event will be even bigger and better in 1993

SCOTTISH AREA REUNION – 1992

The 1992 Scottish Area Reunion is being held in the Clyde Hall, Bridge Street, Glasgow on Saturday, 17 October 1992 from 11.30 a.m.

A three course meal with coffee/tea at 12.30 p.m. preceeds the Annual General Meeting. It is proposed to show a video of the WRAC Farewell Parade at Guildford before a final cup of tea with biscuits. A Raffle will also take place.

Cost per head will be £7.00.

Any ex members of the QMAAC, ATS or WRAC will be most welcome, but, if not members of any Scottish Branches, they must contact Capt P M Stevenson c/o Army Careers Information Office, Charlotte House, 78 Queen Street, Glasgow G1 3DN for further details (Tel 041 221 9955, Ext 25).



Members of Glasgow Branch.

50TH ANNIVERSARY – 495 BTY 93rd SL REGT.

Mrs Mary Horrocks (née Carley) sent us news of the 50th anniversary celebrations of 495 Bty. Nine of the original members who did their original SL training at Kimmel Park, Rhyl went back to their roots. They were entertained by the present occupants of Kimmel Park and given a tour of the camp which has now changed a lot. The members were Audrey Osborne, Ethel Smith, Helen Payne, Helen Pickington, Alma Pierrepont, Gertie Smith Eleanor McAll, Nan Kerr and May Carley.



Reunion of members of 495 Bty 93rd SL Regt at Colwyn Bay

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Member of the Association of Service Newspapers

NEW ZEALAND GROUP ATS REUNION

The first official reunion of ATS in New Zealand took place earlier this year. They were delighted to receive a message of greetings from the ATS Dinner Club in UK.



*ATS Reunion in New Zealand outside
St Matthews Church Auckland.*



SAXONS HOCKEY CLUB CYPRUS

Easter 1993 heralds the 21st Anniversary of the founding of Saxons Hockey Club. To commemorate this memorable occasion the Club is hoping that as many ex-Saxons as possible will return to Cyprus for a reunion Festival to be held during the period 17 to 19 April.

We would like as many ex-Saxons as possible to celebrate this auspicious occasion with us. If you are interested in taking part or would like more details of the event please contact the anniversary committee through:

Rob Cowin
Chairman Saxons Hockey Club
St John's School
BFPO 53 E

Make your 1993 holiday one to remember, start saving now!

LOST

Camera – Olympus Trip 125. The above camera was lost in the tea marquee at the Centre on 26th March 1992. There are two exposures on film.

Any information regarding above will be gratefully received by Mrs. N. Kendall, 76 Coach Road, Baildon, Shipley, W. Yorks BD17 5HR.

PROPOSED REUNION

Would any ex ATS personnel who served at any of the following RASC Command Supply Depots (Lingfield, Oakwood Hill, Dorking, Surrey) 1943–45 who would welcome a reunion with ex RASC staff please contact Don Lafferty, 2 Stirling Way, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 5RP with SAE.

ATS DINNER CLUB

"The Annual Luncheon of the ATS Dinner Club will be held at Wellington Barracks on Saturday, 3rd October, 1992. Our membership now exceeds 1100, but we still look forward to hearing from ex ATS. members.

Details from Membership Secretary, Mrs E Jagger, 9, Balfour Manor, Broadway, Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 8XW."

525 H (M) AA Bty

In the No 2 1992 Issue we reported on our Norwich Reunion and our proposed 1992 meeting in Belgium.

Happily, we had a successful weekend in Antwerp! We had a dinner on Friday 15th in the Waldorf hotel with 15 people, comprised of 8 of our H 525 GL "girls" two husbands – of Margaret and Ida, Joseph Martens his wife and daughter – Joseph was the 14 year old boy (in 1944/5) who used to take our washing to his mother. We also had Mme Bergé de Bakker, a member of the resistance when she was 19 years old and Mme Germaine Janieu another local lady who was, this weekend, hostess to one of our party Ex Sgt McHardie (now Wilson).

Our weekend was very full – all organised by Ida and Vic Meer who live in Schoten Antwerp.

We were received at the City Hall with a glass of Champagne and presented with a lovely headsquare each; the men in our party were given a tie. we had an escorted tour of the magnificent building.

During the weekend we were shown Old Antwerp and also had a tour of Reubens House. An extremely successful weekend. How do we follow this!

Those '525 ers' at the reunion were Ida France (Mees) Margaret Muskett (McIntosh) Mabel Dee (Bolton) Helen McHardie (Wilson) Nika Ede (Hollis) Rosa Davis (Riley) Mona Lindsay (Healy) Doris Wright (Higgins).

D Troop 301/93rd S/L Regt are having their annual reunion on 19 September 1992 at the Union Jack Club near Waterloo Station, London. About 30 members usually attend but more are always very welcome. If you served at Taunton with D Troop, why not get in touch with Ann Slater, 39 Hawthorn Road, Great Clacton, Essex CO11 4QZ.

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE VETERANS

The SHAEF Veterans Association of America will be making a commemorative visit to Britain and France in 1992. Details may be obtained from J Clifford Williams 21 Grovelands Road, Palmers Green, London N13 4RJ.

WALES SUB AREA REUNION

The Welsh Branches of the WRAC Association, (Cardiff, Swansea, Rhyl and Wrexham) visited the RAC Ranges Castlemartin on 7/8 May 1992. The visit began with a service in Flimston Chapel on the range followed by a dinner in the Officers' Mess. Guests included Brigadier Bruce Willing, Commander 160 (Wales) Brigade and

Lieutenant Colonel Helmut Gollwitzer, Federal German Army Liaison Officer. The following day the association were given a briefing on the ranges and a coach tour of the area. The visit ended with a demonstration of the LEOPARD 2 tank by the Federal German Army.



*Wales Sub Area members in reunion at
Castlemartin ranges.*

WAR OFFICE RECORDS KING ALFRED COLLEGE REUNION

Those ATS who had worked in the War Office Records Unit at King Alfred College in Winchester held their annual reunion on 10th and 11th July 1992.

Twelve members of the group met initially at the railway station in Winchester before exploring old haunts and having lunch in the Royal Hotel.

Fourteen members attended a service in the new college chapel on Sunday 11 July together with members of the college. This was followed by lunch with a separate table for the War Office clerks.

Next Reunion will be Friday 2 and Saturday 3 July 1993. Details from:

Miss C I Ellis
"Whitehaven"
Boyatt Lane
Otterbourne
WINCHESTER SO21 2HP
Telephone 0703 254024

AIRBORNE FORCES REUNION

The Northwest Region of the Parachute Regimental Association are holding a reunion for all ex Airborne forces **and their families** from 30 April to 2 May 1993 ie over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend.

The Reunion will be held at Norbreck Castle Hotel, Queens Promenade, Blackpool. Details from:

P J Love Esq
26 Hawkhurst Avenue
Fulwood
PRESTON
Lancs PR2 4XR
Tel (0772) 719882

ASSOCIATION NEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1991

The Annual General Meeting was held in Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF on Saturday 11 April 1992 at 2.30 p.m.

The Chair was taken by Colonel B M Laverack MBE, Vice-Chairman of the Council of the Association.

She welcomed 250 members to the meeting. She explained that Brigadier A Field CB the Vice-President was on duty in Cyprus and she read a signal from the Vice-President offering good wishes to those present at the AGM. The Chairman remarked that it was still less than a year since the previous AGM and she asked that the gratitude of the Association to the Scottish Area for laying on such a marvellous reunion should be recorded.

The Chairman said that the present meeting was being held during momentous and changing times. The WRAC had ceased to exist as a separate Corps of the Army on 6 April 1992. There had been several notable events since the last AGM.

- 4 June 1991 HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother formally opened the WRAC Museum at Guildford.
- 12 Feb 1992 WRAC Headquarters Mess had held a Farewell Dinner in Guildhall attended by HRH The Duchess of Kent.
- 27 Feb 1992 Reception given by the Commandant-in-Chief at Clarence House for members of the Corps and the Association.
- 1 March 1992 Presentation of Communion Vessels to the Chapel of RMA Sandhurst by WRAC HQ Mess to commemorate the training of WRAC Officers at the Academy.
- 20 March 1992 Final dinner of Warrant Officers and Senior NCOs of WRAC at Russell Hotel, London.
- 21 March 1992 Final concert by the WRAC Staff Band in Civic Hall, Guildford.
- 24 March 1992 WRAC exercised its rights as Freemen of Guildford with a march through the Borough.
- 25 March 1992 Farewell ceremonies attended by HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and HRH The Duchess of Kent. A service in Guildford Cathedral followed by a review and parade in WRAC Centre. In the evening a Beating Retreat was performed followed by a fireworks finale.

The Chairman explained that although the WRAC had ceased to exist the WRAC Association would continue and HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother had agreed to be a Patron of the Association. This remark was greeted with applause.

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 13 April 1991 having been circulated to Branches were taken as read and signed.

Colonel B M Laverack, Vice-Chairman of Council said that in the absence of the Vice-President who was also Chairman of Council she would report. She said that the Council had met twice since the last AGM.

The Council had considered the changes likely to occur as the Government implemented Options for Change. They had decided on the advice of the Charity Commissioners that the WRAC Association should continue.

The Council noted that the Grand Reunion in Glasgow had been self supporting financially and had donated a surplus of income over expenditure of £606 to the Benevolent Fund. Scottish Area were to be congratulated.

Council also noted that the Museum would remain as the WRAC Museum at Guildford for as long as possible. The National Army Museum in Chelsea, London were being asked to accept the WRAC Museum Collection.

Attendance at the Cenotaph Service and Parade continued to rise and 350 tickets had been issued compared to 290 the year before.

The drop in membership of the Association had continued as the regulars rebadged. However 120 new Life members had joined in the year ending 31 October 1991 and since then a further 101 had joined many of them those who are still serving but who wish to retain their links with their former comrades.

The Accumulated funds stood at £179,600 which indicated that the Association was healthy financially although it was difficult to make a year on year comparison.

With the anticipated disbandment of the WRAC the accounts of the Museum had been moved from Corps HQ fund which would "fail" to be charitable on 6 April 1992 to the Association account. Thus £4,553 of the Accumulated funds was in fact stock in the Museum shop and £19,003 of the money on Deposit was the Museum bank balance. The Association's share of the accumulated funds was therefore £155,444 roughly the same as last year which was still healthy.

Lioness magazine cost £21,303 to produce and post to members. This was £3,167 more than had been received by subscription income, but was less than the £3,449 subsidy required in 1990.

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

SSAFA/FHS does everything possible to reach and attempt to alleviate need or distress among Service and ex-Service men and women who have served in any Branch of the Armed Forces of the Crown and their wives, families, widows and dependants.

SSAFA/FHS also acts, in effect, as agent for Civilian and the Services and Regimental Benevolent Funds, and disburse over £3 million every year to those in need.

In 1991 our volunteers (some 6,000) were able to provide advice, friendship or help in some form of another in over 75,000 instances.

Volunteers are needed to do casework or to make friendship visits. They are often needed to be responsible for organising a Branch or Division (900 in the UK). To be treasurers, training organisers, publicity officers and fundraisers. To be typists, office administrators, answer the telephone, drive the sick and elderly to hospital, the list is endless. Training is given and all out of pocket expenses are paid.

If you would like to offer help, or require further information, please write to:-

Mrs Ann Needle
Organisation and Recruitment Officer
SSAFA Central Office
Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother House
19 Queen Elizabeth Street
London SE1 2LP
Tel: 071-403 8783 ext 223.

Administrative expenses remained constant except for printing where the cost of reprinting the rules following the Glasgow AGM had been quite expensive.

Some new investments had been made in 1990 which resulted in an increase in Investment income from £5,253 to £7,919 but as interest rates fell Deposit Income had fallen from £14,566 to £10,980 and a total excess of income over expenditure of £17,450 resulted. £3,181 of that surplus belonged to the Museum.

Mrs Matthews ended by saying that the next year would show some radical changes with the loss of income from the regular officers and servicewomen which would only be partially offset by the small print run of Lioness and the possible move of the Museum to another home.

The Chairman thanked the Honorary Treasurer for her report.

Capt M B S Purkis, Editor of Lioness reported that she had taken over as Editor of Lioness for only one edition. She would have to leave Guildford at the end of May.

For the most recent edition, it had been possible to provide the printers, Commercial Press, with a floppy disc of the articles for publication. This disc was compatible with their equipment, which has meant they did not have to re-type each page, providing a saving of time and thereby cost to the Association. She asked that all Association members should send in contributions for Lioness with photographs. These photos would be returned to contributors once the magazine had been published, but any report no matter how well written was improved by illustration. Mrs Purkis said that the mixture of regular and retired members news was the correct format and it was intended to approach the editors of magazines of these Corps to which former WRAC had rebadged for articles from servicewomen.

Mrs Purkis thanked Mrs Evans who had typed all of Lioness and Commercial Press (Guildford) who had been so co-operative.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Purkis for her report and wished her well for the future.

Lt Col M W Soames, Chairman of the Grants Committee reported in the absence of Brig Field the Chairman of Trustees of the ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds.

She reported that the Trustees had met twice during the year. She thanked everyone who had contributed to the funds by making donations, by arranging covenants and by fund raising. As well as thanking members of the Grants Committee, she also thanked the Army Benevolent Fund, the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust, the Royal British Legion Womens section and all the other Army Regiments and Corps who combined to make co-operative grants.

The joint grants are particularly important now that the Women's Royal Army Corps had been disbanded, resulting in the loss of the one day's pay scheme which represented half the income to the Funds. To encourage good relationships with the other organisations the Committee had invited representatives to attend Grants Committee Meetings. So far representatives from the Royal Navy, the Royal Artillery, the Royal Corps of Transport and the Royal Engineers had attended.

The Television scheme continues for the moment. Last year the funds paid for the rental of 193 Television sets and 171 licences at a cost of just over £20,000.

The Trustees were grateful to Pontins Holidays and the ABF for arranging for single parents to have a holiday with their children.

The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund would not be affected by all the changes. Last year 57 beneficiaries received quarterly grants of £65 (£5 per week) as well as a

Christmas gift of £55. There are currently several cases under consideration as annuitants.

A total of 1,092 cases had been considered by the Benevolent Fund during last year; 883 of these had been ex-ATS; 209 had been ex-WRAC. There had been no new ex-QMAAC applicants. The amount spent on grants had been £171, 456 compared with £186, 538 in 1989/90. For 92/93 the budget has been reduced to £160,000.

As next year the funds would depend entirely on investment income, of approximately £100,000, in addition to generous donations she urged even greater efforts at Association fund raising.

Col Laverack Chairman of the Executive Committee reported that the Committee had considered three specific remits from the Council during the year on:-

- Certificates of Appreciation
- Future of Lioness
- Rules of the Association

She said that the citations for Certificates of Appreciation had been a joy to read and indicated a degree of involvement in the Association by its members which was heartwarming. Nine Certificates had been awarded. The Committee were against any general relaxation of the 15 year qualifying period but would consider exceptional cases.

The Committee's recommendations on the future of Lioness magazine were that:

- the title should remain
- two issues a year should be published
- the size should remain at A4
- colour should continue to be used for covers

The Committee felt that Director Women (Army) should contribute an article for each edition and that magazines of Corps employing servicewomen should be asked to allow articles from servicewomen to be reprinted in Lioness.

The Chairman explained that the rules which had been approved at the AGM of 1991 in Glasgow had been printed and distributed. Since then changes in the WRAC and the restructuring of Army Districts had made further changes necessary. With the end of the WRAC as a Corps with which the Association could maintain "esprit de Corps" the Charity Commissioners had ruled that to remain charitable in law the Association should be opened to include female members of the Adjutant General's Corps (Staff and Personnel Support Branch). The Charity Commissioners had also advised that standard rules should be included to cover changes to the rules themselves and for dissolving the Association should this become necessary.

Council had also recommended changes to the rules to cover changes in appointment titles with the end of the WRAC. With the reduction in the numbers of military districts and the large size of the new districts coupled with the loss of Commanders WRAC at District HQs to be Chairman of Areas it would be necessary to revise the Area structure within the Association. Council proposed that Branches should form themselves into Area Groups where there was a mutual interest and where a voluntary retired member to act as Chairman could be found.

Areas were to make proposals for Council to consider.

Revisions of the rules to encompass these proposals had been submitted to branches for consideration and were accepted by the Meeting.

Miss M D Bradley and Mrs H M Fuller were re-elected as Vice-Presidents of Council for a further year.

In introducing Brigadier G K Ramsey MBE ADC, Director Women (Army) (DW(A)) the Chairman congratulated her on her appointment as Commander of Aldershot Area in May 1992. The first woman to become an Area Commander.

Brig Ramsey introduced her successor Col J M Roulstone. Brig Ramsey said that the post of DW(A) retained a one star appointment specifically tasked to look after the interests of Women in the Army. In the long term the task would be to ensure equal and fair treatment for women especially equality of opportunity. DW(A) would also oversee recruitment, manning, training, employment and conditions of service for women as well as dress and sport. This would involve close co-operation with the Training organisation and the proposed Royal Logistics Corps.

She said that the former WRAC Staff Band would become the Staff Band of the Adjutant General's Corps and the aim was to retain it as an all female band for as long as possible.

The Chairman thanked Brig Ramsey for her report and for all the arrangements for the farewell ceremonies and for including the Association so fully in these events.

Brig Ramsey then presented Certificates of Appreciation to:

Mrs Barbara Alexander	London Branch
Mrs Patricia Carpenter	Greater London Branch
Mrs Margaret Hawksworth	Sheffield Branch (accepted by Mrs Bell)
Miss Vera Rees	Greater London Branch
Mrs Emily Richards	London Branch
Mrs Iris Smith	Wimbledon Branch
Miss Elsie Sycamore	London Branch

Certificates for Mrs V M Bradford and Miss Phyllis White both of the former Brighton Branch would be presented at a later date.

The next Annual General Meeting would be held on 3 April 1993 in London.

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CORRESPONDENCE

WHERE ARE YOU NOW? Following the search for who, what, where or when for the photograph sent in by Mr Michael Howard in Issue No 1 of 1991, we were able to identify 3 members of the Berkshire platoon with the help of Mrs S Johnson of Felixstowe. Since then Doris E Madill, the Secretary CWAC Unit 47, Canadian Corps Association has written to say that Mary Owen is now Mary Betteredge and is living near Cambridge. She also recognised J/Cmdr Rowena Guggisberg sadly now deceased. Keep the ideas coming in!

Mrs Mary Kirk (née Dobbs) of 178, Walnut Avenue, Weaverham, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 3DN, would like to hear from anyone who was in 549 HAA Bty especially Anne Rothwell, Ann Richards and Elise Williamson. Mrs Kirk is still in touch with Joan Garrett and Cpl Heap who married Billy Myles, and would be happy to put old friends in touch with them. She is also looking for Audrey Devlin, Lilly Rosewell and Rose Murphy who were with her in Torpoint in 1942.

Mrs Evelyn O'Neill who is the secretary of the Newcastle Branch, is looking for members of 484 HAA(M) Bty Drum and Bugle Band and especially the "big drummer" Gladys Holden. If anyone can help her please write to Mrs O'Neill at 33 Bede Burn View, Jarrow, Tyne and Wear.



484 HAA(M) Bty Drum and Bugle Band

Is there anyone out there who was a member of 4 Coy WRAC, Singapore between June and December 1967? Jean Donner, (now Mrs Rodney (Steve) Stephens) and Cpl Eileen Pearson (now Mrs Ken Wilkinson) would like to get in touch. Jean, who worked in the Command Pay Office, was married at All Saints' Garrison Church, Wessex Estate and Eileen (who was a cook) was married at the Garrison Church, Tanglin. As they are both approaching their Silver Wedding anniversaries, they are trying to get in touch with as many people as possible who knew them so that they can arrange a celebration/reunion. Names that they remember are: Maggie Cowan, Stella Scattlebury, Alma Burns, Kathy Lyons, Ann Melling (or Mellor), Audrey Norris, the QM Margaret (surname forgotten), Gail Esau, Audrey Souter, Sally (surname forgotten), Captains Bateman and Holloway and Major Godin. Anyone remembering either Jean or Eileen or any of the above might like to write to: Mrs J M Stephens, 32 Mayfield Road, Cove, Farnborough, Hants GU14 8RS.

Does anyone remember Mrs. Marjorie Monkman ("Blondie") who was a driver at 206 PCTU? Are Joyce Beardsley from Nottingham, EHA Smith (Spiller) from

Australia, LKM Maning (Kath) from London or Jessie from Cheadle Hulme out there? If anyone remembers these ladies please write to: Mrs Majorie Monkman, 24 Hill Rise, Ruislip, Middlesex HA4 7JL.

Mrs Joyce Taylor (née Wadd) remembers Margaret Isted, Elizabeth Russell, Monica McCormick and Kay Evans (now Innes) from 71 AA Brigade HQ at Hythe (1944-45). If anyone has news of them or remembers Joyce Taylor from that time she would be very glad if you would write to her at: 3 Crealock Grove, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 947.

Mrs Kathleen Price ("Fitz") would like to contact Doris Gridley who served with 10 London District Signals from 1942-1943. Mrs Price now lives at 11 Newton Close, Woodberry Down, London N4 2RH.

Does the name Grace Wise ring a bell in anyone's memory? She was a young driver in 1947 and her last known address was on North Cheam, Surrey. She is urgently sought by Rita Dean (now Rita Longhurst) of 23 Jopling Street, North Ryde, Sydney, NSW 2113, Australia.

Ex-members of the 25th Western MT Coy (later 585 MT Coy), 640 MT Coy or 721 Car Coy are sought by Ena Campbell (now Ena Scott) of Tudor House, Shore Street, Drummole, Stranraer DG9 9PU.

Miss Jillian Scott of 30 Herd Green, Knightsbridge West, Livingston, West Lothian, Scotland EH54 8PU is very anxious to learn about her grandmother, Mrs Dorothy Campbell (née Souter) who died in 1963. All that is known is that she served from approximately 1940 onwards in the Glasgow area.

Elsie May Smith is the long lost sister of Evelyn Smith (now Mrs Evelyn Duncan) who very much wants to contact her. She last heard of her sister when she joined the ATS during WW2 and she believes she has married since then and was once living in Windsor. Any information at all would be gratefully received by: Evelyn Duncan at 30 Garstang Road, Southport, Merseyside PR9 9XW.

A house is the link this time that it is hoped will trigger memories. Carol Handley (née Hooper) and Robbie Gillespie lived there when they worked at HQ AA Command Stanmore and lived in Kestrel Grove. If you shared that experience please write to Carol Handley at: 40C Clarendon Road, Llanrunry, Cardiff CF3 9HR as she is planning a reunion.



Sunny days at Kestrel Grove.



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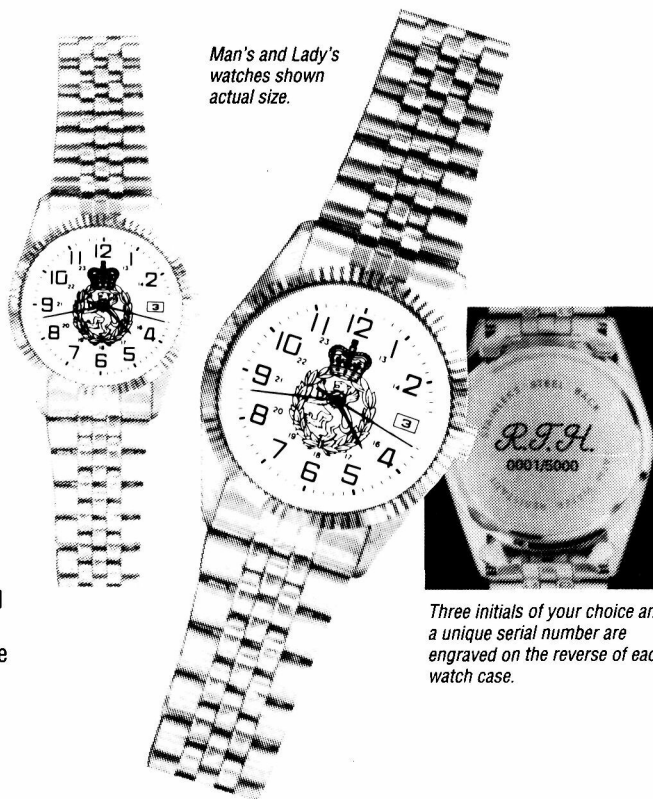
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Delivery subject to availability.

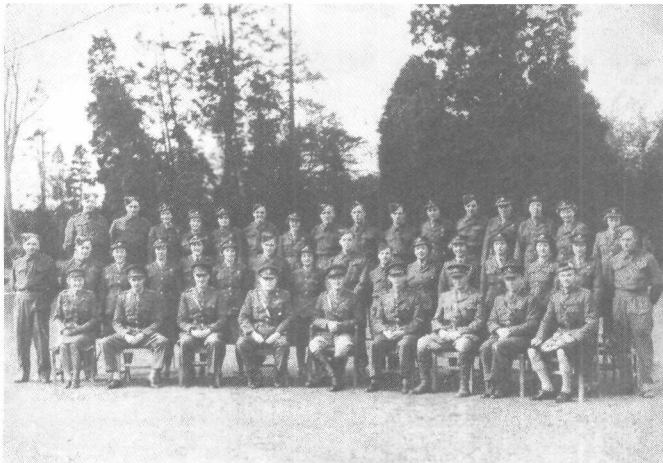
LNO2

Mrs Sylvia (Sue) Crook (née Cpl Woolston) sent a letter asking for any information about ex-members of 606 MHAA Bty RA and has had letters from Phyllis Entwistle, Vera Lovell and Carol Thickett. The photograph (below) shows members of the Predictor Team taken at Hove in July 1944. During her search she has been contacted by ex-members of 447, 464, 473, 529, 625 and 627 Batteries who would like to be put in touch with old friends. Any one from those Batteries seeking old comrades should write to Mrs Crook at: 14 The Larches, Horsell Vale, Woking, GU21 4RE.



606 MHAA Bty RA Predictor Team during a lull in doodlebug activity.
Standing L-R: Pte Kathleen Currie, Pte Lilian Skelton, Pte Alison McManus (née Preston), Cpl Sylvia (Sue) Crook (née Woolston), L/Cpl Beryl Hudd.
Kneeling L-R: Pte Carol Garrod (née Thickett), Pte Gladys Clegg, Pte Lucy Lutkin.

Mrs J K Rawling of 4 Copland Terrace, Shieldfield, Newcastle, Tyne and Wear NE2 1YB has sent this photograph (she is in the back row 7th from the left). If you're on this photo, or know someone who is, please get in touch with Mrs Rawling at the above address.



J K Rawling and friends – 1943

The notice of the death of Mrs Amy Carbert (née Cotterall) "Cottie", was published in Lioness No. 2 of 1991. Since then Miss A G Learmouth has written from Merseyside with some details of her service. In 1915 at the age of 21, Amy Carbert joined the WAAC in Warrington but she was discharged in 1920 when she got married. She served in Hastings and in Aldershot where she became a games and drill instructor. She was amongst the first women to report for duty at Blackdown Camp, Camberley, where she worked in the Officers' Mess of 8th London Post Office Rifles in Alma Barracks. She then became a Forewoman

(Sgt) and moved to Blackdown House, Didcot.

She joined the ATS in Liverpool in 1939 and served for 2 more years before being discharged on age.

Mrs Diana Hess (who was J Comd Diana Lee) sent us a letter and 2 photographs, one taken 49 years after the other, and she also sent us this letter telling us about them:

The wartime group was taken in 1942 in Chichester where we were stationed and as 106 AA Division (M) Signal Unit we manned the very busy Operations Room. The smaller photograph was taken in September 1991



Back Row: Audrey Chapman, Peggy Hobden, Beatie Wheeler, "Eve"—?, Kitty Drake.
Front Row: "Tammy"—?, Joan Milner, Sgt E G Wager, Cpl E Hookins and Alison Malcolm.
Front Row: 4th from left Cpl Crampton (now Small) 6th from left Sgt Tizzard (now Judge) 7th from left J/Comd Lee (now Hess)



49 years on: L-R: Mrs Judge, Mrs Hess, Mrs Small

when Sgt Dorothy Tizzard (now Judge), J Comd Diana Lee (now Hess) and Cpl Jo Crampton (now Small) got together for a non-stop talking lunch. All of us were pre-war recruits and we all agreed that it was a wonderful period of tremendous work-satisfaction and lasting friendship.

The real point of this letter is to suggest that Jo Crampton W/18 must have been on the doorstep when the first Recruiting Office opened on Day 1 and it could be that she might be the earliest recruit still very much alive and now living in New Zealand. Dorothy Tizzard as W/2022 is another early recruit in 1938. I, Diana Lee, W/17381 lagged behind – a later recruit on 11 July 1939 and called up on 3 September. I did have to lie to join as I was still under 17 but determined to be involved when and if war should come.

Mr Christopher M Evans of 50 Castle Court, St Lawrence, Ventnor, Isle of Wight PO38 1VE Telephone 0983 854147 is seeking news of Mrs Dorothy Curtiss (née Read) who was an ATS Private in BAOR with Supply and Transport Branch of HQ XXX Corps at Plon near Kiel. She was married at Plon church in 1946 to H J (Gus) Curtiss of Brockley, London SE4. She left the ATS in 1946.

Mr D M Landin of 26 Elm Grove, Rhyl, Clwyd LL18 3PE asks if anyone could lend him a copy of "On Target" by Vee Robinson. (See page 49.)

Jane Skinner (née MacIntyre) is looking for Dorothy Petts (Now Dorothy Newlands or Newman) who she met while serving at 170 Provost Coy, Chelsea. If anyone knows Dorothy, please write to: Mrs Jane Skinner, 3 Montrose Mansions, Corpach, Fort William, Inverness-shire.

Pte Eve Ball is sought by her ex-landlady at Nottingham, Mrs Hall. Eve was stationed with Mrs F M Holmes at REME HQ, Nottingham between 1939 and 1945 and shared lodgings with her too. If anyone knows where Eve Ball is, Mrs Holmes of 182 Branerton Road, Bilborough, Nottingham NG8 4NF would love to hear from you.

Mrs Harriet Campbell (née Miller), served as a wireless operator at Scottish Command HQ from 1944-1947, and she would be very interested to contact anyone who knew her then. In particular she wants to know the whereabouts of Lilian Arnold who's shown in the photograph taken after the Disbandment Parade on 25 March 1992. Does anyone know her address? If so, please write to: Mrs Harriet C Campbell, 38 Baton Road, Shotts, Lanarkshire ML7 4HE.

Does anyone recognise or remember L/Cpl Frankie Cole who became Mrs F M Groves? If so please drop her a line at: "The Warhaven", 25 McLachlan Street, Marunda, Cairns 4870 Queensland, Australia.

Mrs E Gwyer (who was Cpl Hookins ATS) has sent us a letter and photograph which may spark some memories:

Royal Armament Research and Defence Establishment (Chertsey) (Army Element) – LONGCROSS.

I was very interested to read in the "Lioness" No. 2 (1989) a report in the Unit News of the above establishment. In March 1942 I was one of 9 recruits, plus a sergeant, sent from the Guildford Training Centre to Egham, being billeted at Royal Holloway College, to work for the Ministry of Supply in the capacity of Clerks, Typists and Shorthand Typists at a house called "Wood Lee" on the road to Virginia Water. We were awaiting the completion of the halt at Longcross before moving out there. We then travelled each day by train from Egham. Some of us worked for the Department of Tank Design and some for the Fighting Vehicle Proving Establishment (FVPE as it was then known). Building was still going on but we, plus all civilian and army staff, worked in one huge building which was divided into various offices on an open-plan scheme. There was also a building serving as the canteen. There were a few other buildings for accommodation for the army personnel, plus tanks! You can imagine how interested I was to see how much this site has developed over the years.

I hope the members of the WRAC now stationed there enjoy life as much as we did; we spent many happy hours (in the lunch break) walking around Chobham Common and the surrounding lanes and woodlands, many of which I expect have now been obliterated.

We eventually lived in a requisitioned house "Elm Lodge" at the top of Four Elms Hill and expanded into another platoon who worked for the Signals at Englefield Green, thus making a Company.

We had in our time several Officers, one of which was Junior Comd Sheila Dunlop, who I feel sure is the same one who celebrated a sapphire wedding in 1991; to her I would like to send Kind Regards and Best Wishes. I am enclosing a photograph of the original "10" and hope that someone may recognise an old comrade and remember the happy times as well as the bad, that we all had.

Good luck to all those members of the WRAC still at Longcross.

(E Gwyer, Mrs) (née Hookins, Cpl ATS)



Happy days at Longcross.

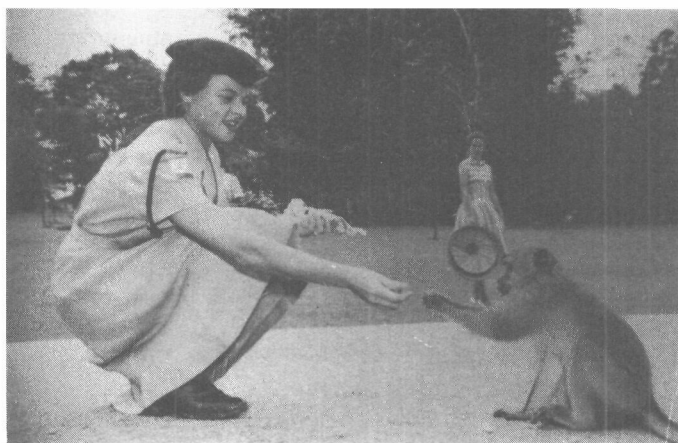
*Ring any bells?
We are looking for these ladies!*

WO 1 Marge Fossey, ex Women's Australian Army Corps, of 10 Venerble Street, 17 Miles Rocks, Queensland 4073 Australia is keen to get in touch with ex WO 2 Babs Bloomfield WRAC whom she met at Guildford whilst on Ex Long Look.



L/Cpl Frances M Cole

Christine Weekes of 94 Eileen Street, Gornells 6110 Western Australia who served with 14 Indep Coy WRAC in Singapore 1959–61 would like to hear from anyone who remembers her as Private Christine (Toni) Partridge.



Christine Weekes (née Partridge) in Singapore

Mrs S A Crook (née Cpl S A Woolston) was enlisted on 11 September 1942 and she sent the following letter: Perusing through my AB64 and Demob papers I realize that by being hustled out of the ATS as soon as possible after VE Day (as were married women and old men) I served just twenty-seven days short of the time needed to qualify for a service medal. Where are my medals say my children and grand-children when they see men with five/ six or more medals proudly displayed. Suddenly I feel deprived! Does anyone else feel this way? Just a thought!

Mrs Audrey Wilson (née Guntrip) of 103 Kings Road, Fleet, Hants GU13 9AR wishes to hear from Mary Marsh, last heard of at 7 The Quadrant, Totley, Sheffield.

Do you know the ladies in this photograph? Mrs Susan Sinclair (née Hendry) of 54 Eastburn Road, Balonrock East, Glasgow RG21 3HP would like you to get in touch if you do. The photo was taken on arrival at Suez in January 1943.



First day at Suez.

L-R: (name unknown), Connie Starling, Elsie Gullane, Dorothy Seager, Vera Travill and Susan Hendry. Sunny days at Kestrel Grove.

To meet up again after such a time gap and to pick up the threads without any effort speaks well for the essential friendships which were fostered in those days.

I do congratulate you on the quality and style of *Lioness* – all the opportunities for the current women make me green with envy and I do hope that the demise of the WRAC will not lessen any of the present chances. To think that in my first commissioned days (211304!) I was required to sign – just once, not in triplicate – that I had no objection to living in a male officers' mess as the only female! – rather I felt that the males should have been made to sign they didn't mind a 19 year old female being thrust into their midst!

Miss Ethel Wilkie wrote asking for a reprint of her sister's obituary notice published in *Lioness* No. 1, 1992, the details of which came from the local branch. Mrs Eden Steptoe (née Wilkie) of Hucclescote, Gloucester, died on 12 December 1991. She was a member of the ATS Band and one of the original members of the WRAC Staff Band. Ethel Wilkie served with her sister in the Band for 7 years.

Mrs Elspeth Manasseh (who was Major Elspeth Roberts) has sent her regrets at not being able to attend the farewell ceremonies of the WRAC in March and goes on to say: "Having been one of the first officers of the Corps I should have liked to see its end! I remember very well the Passing Out Parade at Windsor which was taken by the late Princess Royal. It was a great day and we were all given a copy of the Princess' address which I still have. In fact I was the Chief Cadet! A long time ago now!

Mrs Margaret A Morris (ex Cpl) sent this letter from Hutton, Lancs:

"On Friday, May 22 1992 I travelled with my husband and other Dunkirk Veterans on a pilgrimage into Belgium and France. In Belgium we visited Haverlee War Cemetery where we came across six ATS graves. As I served in the ATS from 1938–1945, this was of particular interest to me so I took particulars of the names:

Sub D J Liddell – died 13.1.45

Isabel Goodfellow – W/99333 – died 16.1.45. Age 24.

Cpl E K Harris – W/127632 – died 13.1.45. Age 24.

L/Cpl M Rose – W/108074 – died 13.1.45. Age 24.

Eileen May Smith – W/92858 – died 13.1.45. Age 21.

Clara Carter – W/77979 – died 7.5.45. Age 26.

Our attention was drawn to the fact that four girls died on the same day and perhaps some of your readers might know more about this coincidence.

Mr M D Booker of "Shuna", 7 Lindale Crescent, Burnley, Lancs BB10 1EX recently visited Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Kuala Lumpur and photographed the grave of WO2 Winifred Ethel Elsmore who died in 1947 aged 40. Anyone who would like to know more should contact him. His mother was Alice Eleanor Bootland who joined the ATS in York and served in Halifax, Guildford and Leicester.

On the last day of the WRAC, Corps HQ received the following message: "Best Wishes for the future of all ranks from members of the late 301 Battalion".

Were you, or anyone you know part of C Coy, Guildford in January 1944; 6 Platoon (G Squad) from March–May 1944; 123 Coy (CMT) RASC Chatham 1944–1946; Permanent Staff D & CTC 1950–1952; 70 Coy RASC 1950–1953. Mrs M J Hughes-Owens of 32A Long Street, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos GL12 7BT would like to hear from you and would be especially pleased for news of Tony Hurst, Robbie Robins, Archey Lloyd and Rita Hilliwell.

FOCUS ON THE BENEVOLENT FUNDS

(This is a precis of the Annual Report of the work of The Funds. Full copies may be had on application).

The ATS and WRAC exist to help all women who have served or who are serving in the Army. This does not include the nursing services who have their own benevolent fund.

The Funds are managed by a Board of Trustees who establish policy and appoint a Grants Committee to apply the funds as appropriate. The Grants Committee of the Funds is chaired by Lt Col M W Soames and consists of retired officers who are volunteers. We try to arrange for a regular officer and a regular warrant officer to attend each meeting. The Grants Committee meets every fortnight at Corps Headquarters to consider all cases put to them that require grants of more than £200. Cases requiring less than £200 are dealt with out of Committee by the Joint Secretaries of the Funds.

The Trustees would like to express their appreciation to the Chairman and members of the Committee, including the Serving Officers and Warrant Officers for their continuing help and support at the fortnightly meetings in spite of the heavy demands on the members' time and the number of cases they have to consider.

The Committee is greatly assisted in its work by the helpful reports and recommendations received from the many voluntary bodies and professional organisations. The majority of cases are investigated by honorary representatives of SSAFA/FHS and to them we owe a special debt of gratitude.

A total of 1092 cases was considered during this financial year: 883 of these were ex-ATS: 209 were serving and ex-WRAC. There were no new QMAAC cases in this period. The total reflects a decrease of 34 cases over the equivalent period of the previous year. This is the first decrease since 1980.

The amount spent on grants was £171, 456 as against £186, 538 in 1989/90.

The Trustees would point out that this fall of £15,082 in the year on year comparison is the first drop since records were kept. £10,000 is accounted for by the fact that the donation to the Army Benevolent Fund was not made through the Grants Account this year. The £5,082 fall in real terms in grants made to applicants is not a measure of decreased demand but recognition by the Trustees that grants will have to be scaled down once regular officers and servicewomen of the WRAC cease to donate to the WRAC Benevolent Fund through the Day's Pay Scheme.

The Trustees are very grateful to all those who make donations to the Funds but in particular would like to thank the serving members of the Corps who still subscribe under the Day's Pay Scheme. Without this help the funds would not be in a position to cope with such a large number of cases and meet the considerable expenditure. It is rewarding to know that 94.5% of servicewomen who subscribe now covenant their donations. £37,472 was recovered from the Inland Revenue on conventional donations.

The Trustees are pleased to note that the accumulated funds indicate that the fall in value of the investments which occurred in October 1990 has been restored and once again the capital value is in line with the October 1986 level allowing for inflation. In fact the value of the funds was £89,724 above the criteria.

The Trustees approved a donation of £8,000 to the Army Benevolent Fund and once again would like to record their gratitude to the Executive Staff who are always so helpful

and respond so generously to all major cases submitted to them. As well as helping in individual cases where our own Funds have been unable to meet the full amount of financial aid requested, the Army Benevolent Fund provide Annual Supplementary Allowances to ex-servicewomen who are suffering particular hardship. The Trustees of the Army Benevolent Fund also approved annual grants for twenty-three ex-servicewomen where there was a shortfall in Nursing Home expenses.

The Trustees also report that the bungalow at Thorpe St Andrew near Norwich which has appeared as an asset in the ATS Benevolent Fund account for many years has been sold. One half of the bungalow had been left to the Fund and the other half to the RAMC Benevolent Fund. The depressed state of the market meant that it realised less at sale than had been shown in the previous accounts. A sum equivalent to the money received was invested by the WRAC Association Benevolent Fund.

The Funds are providing 193 television sets under our Television Rental Scheme – a cost to the Funds of £20,328 for the year. In addition, 171 television licences are being paid for. This service is offered to selected elderly women who are to some degree housebound, who live alone and are dependent on their television for company and are having to manage on a very low income. The letters of appreciation received confirm what a worthwhile undertaking this is.

The Trustees are grateful to all Branches who kindly send knitwear so that parcels may be sent to selected families who are pleased to have extra woollies for their children. Special thanks must go to Mrs Drew, Mrs Francis and Canterbury Branch for their individual contributions to our "knitwear department".

The fund office received 3,357 pieces of mail during the year and 2,578 letters were posted out at a cost of £495.

EXAMPLES OF CASES ASSISTED

An ex ATS Sgt aged 86, who served for 4 years during the war, is unmarried and lives alone in Newmarket. She has spent her life caring for others, particularly her mother and her sister, who have both now died. As she is severely arthritic and has difficulty in walking, the British Legion and SSAFA raised funds for a NOVA shopping trolley which she could not contemplate on her pension of £53.75 per week. We made a grant of £150 towards this trolley which has increased her independence tremendously.

An ex ATS Driver aged 78, who served for 3 years during the war lives in Doncaster having been divorced twice. She attends hospital frequently because of severe arthritis but decided to try herbal and alternative remedies which are expensive. The result was that she could not pay an electricity bill of £113. She was threatened with court action and disconnection of the electricity supply. Her weekly income is her pension of £55.20 pence. It was later found that she was sleeping on a worn mattress on a wooden slatted base which SSAFA felt to be quite unsuitable in her condition. We granted £210 towards a new bed and her electricity debt.

An ex WRAC Private, aged 37, who served for 2 years was married to a Sgt who had served for 19 years until he was court martialled and imprisoned in Barlinnie Jail. The family – mother and three teenage children – receives only income support and child allowance totalling £82 per week as a service pension was not valid. They had to be rehoused from their quarter by Inverness Council but had no furniture or equipment. Due to heavy local demand, none was available from the Salvation Army or WRVS. We therefore made a grant of £200 and the RAOC granted £600 to help equip their new home.

An ex WRAC Private aged 28, who served for three years has two young children is separated from her husband who is a serving Corporal. Because the £70 per week maintenance which he pays to them is in excess of DSS limits, she has no recourse to further income support. When she was required to vacate the married quarter we made a grant of £250 for cooker, beds and furnishings for the newly allocated council house.

An ex WRAC Private, aged 55 who served for 2 years, gave up her work (and therefore her income) to nurse her terminally ill husband in Leicester. Throughout his distressing illness, she remained cheerful and showed great devotion. When he died, his loss of income meant that she now receives only Income Support of £36.70 per week until the age of 60. As she was very worried about her financial difficulties and even her ability to pay for her fuel bills, we made a grant of £100.

An ex WRAC Private, aged 42, who served for 2 years was married to a Sgt who had served for 22 years. Although he had been on a housing list in Sussex for 12 years, no accommodation was allocated so the couple, with a teenage daughter, moved in with his parents. After being unemployed for 9 months he found a job with a security firm, working 16 hour days. He then had a car accident, which through no fault of his own, resulted in his losing his car and therefore his job. He committed suicide, leaving his family devastated. His wife worked as a cleaner earning £90 per week. She faced funeral expenses of £874 and credit card debts of £2,500. We made an immediate grant of £150 for general distress and the Royal Engineers granted an interim £370 while relevant widow's and service pensions were being assessed.

SOME LETTERS RECEIVED

"Thank you very much indeed for the knitted garments which you sent for my daughter. They are a perfect fit. You will never really believe just how much we appreciate them. A young mother made happy by your kind gestures." (Age 26).

CASTLE OF MEY HOUSE, SHOTTERMILL, HASLEMERE, SURREY

The RBL Women's Section owns a purpose-built house with 22 unfurnished flatlets in Haslemere.

Each flatlet at Castle of Mey House has its own front door, a small lobby with floor-to-ceiling storage cupboards, a living room with a small partitioned kitchen area and a shower room. There are bathrooms on each floor, plus extra storage facilities. There is a communal lounge and a laundry room and a guest room is available and can be booked through the House Supervisor. The rent includes heating and hot water, the tenant paying for any electricity used by the small cooker and refrigerator provided, which is metered. There is also a telephone point in each room.

Any enquiries for this accommodation should be sent to the National Secretary, The Royal British Legion Women's Section, Haig House, 48 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JY.

cooking at all! I cannot tell you how much of a weight has been lifted off my shoulders now, as there are only so many meals of toast you can give a child. The maternity grant was such a lovely surprise and so welcome. Please thank all concerned for all their efforts on my behalf." (Separated, aged 27).

"May I thank the ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds for nominating me and my 2 children for the Pontins holiday at Pakefield. The accommodation was excellent, and the meals surpassed all expectations. I've never seen the children eat so much. Maybe the sea air had something to do with it. They spend most days in Captain Crocodile's Castle, the swimming pool and the outside play area. We also visited the American Theme Park at Lowestoft. I enclose £7.00 which I didn't expect to have at the end of the holiday – perhaps some other family will benefit from this refund. Please also find enclosed a free entry voucher to Alton Towers. We are all indebted to the Benevolent Fund and you can rest assured that we have had a holiday which will be remembered for many years to come. I will never be able to repay your kindness and generosity." (Age 38).

"Thank you for your generous grant of £544 to help me with some of my debts. When SSAFA rang me and asked if he could come round as you had agreed to help, I just sat and wept. I have taken some terrible knocks in the last three years and the last ten have not been easy. This has restored some of my faith in human nature. I am very very proud of having been a member of the WRAC and humbled that present members are prepared to help their comrades. Once again thank you very much. Perhaps one day I may be able to make it up in some small way." (Spinster, age 51).

"I am just writing to tell you that your cheque for £25 has done more good for this single 58 year old lady than just its monetary value (although that was, of course, much appreciated). After all the rebuffs she has had recently, your recognition that she has had difficulties, plus the practical help of your cheque, has helped her morale enormously. I am sure she will be writing to you herself, but I wanted to add my own thanks for your sympathetic handling of the case." (From SSAFA).

"A little note of thanks for your grant. This was one of those cases which makes SSAFA's sometimes arduous work so worth while. She was so pleased and grateful and as it was her 70th birthday that very day, she said it was a most wonderful and unexpected present. Please convey to your committee our thanks – its so nice to share happiness. The cooker will be paid for as soon as I get the exact amount. The window shopping for the coat has already begun!" (From SSAFA re 70 year old divorcee).

I regret to say that my sister died quite peacefully not knowing that she had an inoperable condition, still bright and yes – still fighting. Your Fund paid for a television licence and the rental of a small television set. She was most grateful for this, being a widow and living on her own and housebound through strokes and arthritis. It was marvellous entertainment and company. Please send my own personal thanks to your committee."

"I am sure the SSAFA representative will have informed you of my late mother's death. I have thanked him personally but I can't speak too highly of his cheerful help to us all. I am writing to thank you for the wonderful financial support, given by you, to assist my mother over the last most difficult years of her life in the Nursing Home. She was always very grateful."

"I would like to thank you very much for the grant of £326 to restore my electric wheelchair to working order. I was really lost without it as I can't get outdoors otherwise. I am still only 57 and live in a block with old people over 70 years,

"I would like to take this chance to thank you very much for the grant from the Fund for a cooker. Having to move following the break up of my marriage, I was in a rented house with my two year old daughter and no means of

so I need a break from them. I don't know when I will be (if ever) able to walk again as I can't have any replacements as I am too young, so you can see what the chair means to me. They are marvellous, but can be quite expensive to run. Again a very big "Thank You" for your help.

"I am writing to say "Thank You" so very much for the grant of £150 so that I can have a telephone installed – it will make all the difference in the world for me. I lost my husband eight weeks ago and I am a diabetic so the telephone will be a life-line." (Widow, age 63).

"I write to send my heartfelt thanks to you for the most generous help given in my most appalling difficulties. It has eased the great mental strain considerably. I have really been so ill with the way I have been left alone to try to cope, and your help has done more good than a multitude of my doctor's pills. Again so very many thanks!" (Separated, age 63).

"I wish to thank you very much for the grant of £150. I can go and buy my new bed and sheets which I need, and a nice pair of shoes. I feel terrible if my shoes begin to look old and guess its being in the army that made me take care of my shoes. I have a lovely little one bedroom bungalow now which I'm very happy in. Thank you again." (Widow, age 66).

"I received yesterday the carpet you so kindly arranged for my new downstairs flat. My family did everything for me while I was convalescing from a hip replacement. They bought hall and bathroom carpets. Your carpet is for living room and bedroom. They are so thankful to you also, as they were concerned that I may have fallen on uneven flooring. Thank you so much. I was very worried about this late but necessary move." (Widow, age 67).

"May I express my most grateful thanks for the recent grant made to assist me to clear an outstanding electricity account. My request for help was made to SSAFA and I have been overwhelmed with the generosity and speed of the assistance given. It's a great comfort to know that the former "ATS" of the 1940's are not forgotten after all these years. Very many thanks and every success in your future work and endeavours." (Married, age 69).

"SSAFA phoned me today to tell me the wonderful news that you have granted me £500 towards an electric buggy. I was so overcome, I wept (with joy you understand). It is my birthday on Xmas day and I have never had such a wonderful Birthday/Xmas present in my life. How can I thank all concerned. Words seem very inadequate but I do thank you very sincerely and do hope that you all had as happy a Christmas as I have had." (Divorcee, age 68).

"I am writing to thank you for the great help you have rendered me. I wish I was in my 20's again so that I could still be serving with the ATS. I am very very grateful to you. My family lost their only son in the Atlantic during the war then there were two sisters in the WRAF and me in the Army. My father had served in the 1st World War. So we did our bit for our country and would do it again. Thank you for your help in a time of great need." (Widow, age 70).

"I am writing to give my thanks for your help that you have given to enable me to have a new bed. Last night I had a good night's sleep, and got up this morning without aching all over my body for the first time in months and I will be eternally grateful. I know that it's a good many years since I was in the ATS and I hate to be a scrounger but I didn't know who else to turn to. Little did I think when I was serving as a young woman, that at 72 years old, I would have to write and ask for help. It just goes to show that you never know what lies in store. So once again please accept my many thanks."

To the Trustees and all concerned with the Benevolent Fund. I just had to say a big thank you for your help getting for me a shopping scooter so that I can be independent. I suffer with rheumatoid arthritis and angina and haven't

been able to get about but you have given me a new lease of life. Once again many thanks." (Widow, age 77).

"Please may I express my sincere appreciation for your kindness and help that you have accorded me in the grant of £200 to enable me to have my telephone transferred and other necessities like bedding. I am now handicapped by severe arthritis and housebound. (Didn't ever think this could happen to Old Soldiers?) Thank you all very much." (Old Soldier, age 80).

"What a wonderful May Day surprise when I received a letter from the local British Limbless Ex Serviceman's Association Secretary telling me about your grant for my holiday at the BLESMA home in Crieff. I really could not believe that I saw and read what I thought I saw. I am most grateful to you for this wonderful help. Please convey my very sincere thanks to all those involved with the decision making in these cases. I can assure them all that one 79 years young lady, minus a leg, is going to thoroughly enjoy her holiday while thinking often of those who footed the bill. Thank you again and God Bless you all."

PRINCESS ROYAL'S MEMORIAL FUND

Princess Mary, Princess Royal, was Controller Commandant of both the ATS and WRAC and held the appointment for 24 years until her death in 1965.

At that time the Council of the WRAC Association sponsored the raising of a Fund in her memory to be called The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund. Its purpose was to provide a permanent memorial to Her Royal Highness in the form of a rose garden at Guildford in the WRAC Centre. This was achieved at minimal expense and the bulk of the monies raised was put to charitable use "to the relief of distress among needy and handicapped ex-servicewomen of all three Corps by means of long term maintenance grants outside the scope of the ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds".

The Benevolent Funds make one off grants which do not qualify as income for tax purposes but a long term maintenance grant would be treated as such, and might affect other benefits being received by an individual ex-servicewoman. The scale of grants has therefore been kept within the "disregard" level set by the Department of Social Security. The disregard level was increased to £10 per week in 1991 but the Trustees were not able to match this from the Funds available and the grants remained at £5 per week for 1991.

All the money raised when the Fund was instituted in 1965 plus money raised by a special appeal in 1980 to commemorate the 80th Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother our Commandant-in-Chief, and other donations received have been treated as the capital of the Fund and invested by the Trustees. Only the income from these investments is used for the purpose of the Funds.

A weekly allowance of £5 is paid to ex-servicewomen who qualify. In addition to the criteria set out above of being "aged and handicapped" the Trustees also look for ex-servicewomen who are living alone and on a low income. Although it is a weekly sum the allowance is paid by cheque in quarterly instalments on 1 January, 1 April, 1 July and 1 October with a Christmas bonus in November. For 1991 the bonus was £55.

This year there were 57 annuitants at the start and 55 at the end, but this disguises the fact that sadly 6 died during the year and 4 new cases were accepted by the Trustees.

LONDON GAZETTE

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S CORPS

REGULAR ARMY

Lt Gen Sir Jeremy Mackenzie KCB, OBE (469051) relinquishes the appointment of Colonel Commandant Women's Royal Army Corps, 6 April 1992 and is appointed Colonel Commandant Adjutant General's Corps with effect from the same date.

Brigadier Anne Field CB (399675) relinquishes the appointment of Deputy Controller Commandant Women's Royal Army Corps, 6 April 1992 and is appointed Deputy Colonel Commandant Adjutant General's Corps with effect from the same date.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

HAMBLET-BEAR. On 28 November 1942. Sergeant W J Hamblet RMP to Private Veronica Bear ATS at "Good Shepherd" West Derby. Now at 2A Pensby Drive, Great Sutton L66 4RD.

OWEN-WHITE. On 6 April 1942 Ernest S Owen to Ada White ATS at Holy Trinity Church, Idle, Bradford. Now at 20 Vernon Place, Bradford BD2 4QN.



Mr and Mrs Owen celebrate their Golden Wedding in Cyprus

PERSONAL MESSAGE: GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE

Having become acquainted with Corporal Brigid Carstairs as she was at the time of my posting in January 1941 to the 4th Berks Platoon, ATS, attached to the 5th AA Division Signals in Reading, today, almost 52 years later, it is my extreme pleasure to send expressions of Congratulations and very best wishes for the future, to Brigid and Sydney Hallam, on the occasion of their 50th Golden Wedding Anniversary on 19 December 1992.

(Brigid also served with 480(M) HAA Battery.) Happy Reminiscences, joyful celebrations. With fond memories, from Doris (Bunch) Madill, ex-Sgt ATS, Toronto, Canada.

FOR SALE. Officer's Service Dress size 12. Height 5'5" – £40. Forage Cap. Size 57cm – £10. Contact Mrs. H. Goater Telephone (0962) 734531.

TRIBUTE

COLONEL JOCELYN FISHER CBE

Colonel Fisher who died on 21 July 1992 joined the ATS in 1938 and served in the United Kingdom throughout the war and then stayed on in the WRAC. She attended the Third WRAC Staff College Course at Frimley and was posted as MA to the GOC British Troops Austria. On her return a period of illness kept her from active duty for almost a year, but her subsequent senior appointments with the Corps included ADWRAC Western Command, Commandant Depot and Training Centre WRAC and finally AAG AG16. She was awarded the CBE in Her Majesty The Queen's 1967 Birthday Honours List and retired later that year, settling in Devonshire with her sister whom she later nursed devotedly, through a long illness.

We shall remember Jocelyn's happy personality (her infectious laugh brightened many a working day for those who worked for her), her great interest in the WRAC Association during her time on Council and her enthusiastic chairmanship of the Army (Women's) Netball Association for five years.

THE SSAFA ROYAL HOMES FOR OFFICERS' WIDOWS AND DAUGHTERS QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S COURT WIMBLEDON, SW19 7DE

Queen Alexandra's Court comprises 75 unfurnished flats and flatlets and occupies some four acres in gracious surroundings. A Warden and Nursing Sister reside on the estate. The flats are for widows and unmarried daughters of limited means, of deceased officers of all three Services.

Further particulars, for those between the ages of 50 and 75, can be obtained from: The Warden (Tel: 081-946 5182).

POST SCRIPTS

Miss N A Elsworthy of 3 The Knoll, Little Glenham Woodbridge, Suffolk IP13 0BE would like to hear from anyone who served in Pyrland Hall Taunton, Midway Camp Taunton or Horfield Barracks Bristol.

Mrs Terri Goff of 3 Moorland Road, Newport, Shropshire TF10 7PZ Tel: 0952 811532 would like to hear from Nancy Colquhoun, Ginger Hadley, Ris Lingley, Olive Wright, Cathy McDiarmid, Marion Blakeman, Monty Gilbert, Anne Bryant, Doreen Cheary or anyone who worked with Cpl Terri Holmes, Cpl Margery K McKeating or Pte Joyce Parfait on the Rhine Army Exchange 1946-1949.

OBITUARY

ARMSTRONG. Mrs V Armstrong MBE (née Pain) of Stroud on 19 April 1992. J/Com ATS.

AUSTIN. Mrs Iona Austin (née Pelleschi) of Dover in April 1992. ATS.

AYLIOIN. Mrs K Aylion (née Harbour) of Prestatyn, Clwyd on 23 August 1991. ATS.

BATHER. Miss E L Bather of West Kirby Wirral on 4 January 1992. ATS.

BREALEY. Mrs June Mary Brealey (née Oakley) of Birmingham in June 1992. ATS.

BUTCHER. Mrs L E Butcher (née Johnson) of Burford on 30 October 1991. ATS.

CHIPPINDALE. Mrs I M Chippindale of Wiltshire on 8 May 1992. ATS.

CLARKE. Mrs E Clarke of Hastings in May 1992. ATS.

COLEMAN. Mrs M Coleman of Banstead in Jun 1992. ATS.

DALY. Mrs M Daly (née Walker) of Handsworth Birmingham in November 1991. ATS/WRAC.

DAVID. Mrs C David (née Stewart) of Basingstoke on 6 March 1992. ATS.

DAVIES. Mrs E Davies (née Jubb) of Middlesborough on 12 July 1992. ATS.

DIENER. Mrs Dora Diener (née Parker) of London N19. ATS.

DIXON. Mrs J I Dixon (née Stewart) of Shipley on 5 August 1992. ATS.

DUFF. Mrs I D Duff (née Shedden) of Irvine Ayrshire on 18 June 1992. ATS.

EARP. Mrs C M Earp (née Ackland) of London on 1 April 1992. ATS.

FAIRLEY. Miss C M Fairley of Edinburgh in November 1991. QMAAC.

FISHER. Colonel Jocelyn Fisher CBE of Topsham, Exeter, Devon on 21 July 1992. ATS/WRAC.

FLETCHER. Mrs M Fletcher (née Kilgallon) of York on 7 February 1992. ATS.

GAYNOR. Mrs Jean Gaynor (née Masters) of Portsmouth in February 1992. WRAC.

GILMOUR. The Honorary Mrs V Gilmour OBE of Alton Hampshire in 1991. ATS.

GOOD. Mrs J D H Good (née Penman) of Langney Eastbourne on 21 March 1992. ATS.

GRAINGER. Mrs A M Grainer (née Donaldson) of Libburn on 23 March 1992. ATS.

GREGORY. Miss G E Gregory of Cornwall on 16 October 1991. ATS.

HALL. Mrs P A E Hall (née Dawes) of Streatham London on 25 November 1991. ATS.

HAMER. Mrs E Hamer (née Fairhurst formerly Barber) of Bolton on 16 March 1992. ATS.

HARVEY. Mrs M Harvey (née Wade).

HINGSTON. Lt Col D C M Hingston of Walton on Thames on 27 February 1992. WRAC.

HODKIN. Mrs E Hodkin (née Bayne) of Creiff Perthshire on 22 February 1992. ATS.

HOFMAN. Mrs E Hofman (née Drury) New York USA in February 1992.

HOMER. Mrs I M H Homer of Edinburgh in May 1992. ATS.

HOWE. Mrs F Howe of Keighley on 27 January 1992. ATS/WRAC.

HUBBARD. Miss B Hubbard of Topsham Devon on 14 July 1992. HAA Batt RA.

HUMPHREYS. Miss B B Humphreys of Richmond on 29 May 1992. ATS.

JACKSON. Mrs J Jackson (née Gratton) of Newhaven in 1991.

KEEFE. Miss A Keefe of Yeovil in April 1992. ATS.

KITSON. Mrs A Kitson (née O'Neill) of Belfast on 15 February 1992. ATS.

LEAK. Mrs P Leak (née Rundle) of Chichester on 15 March 1992. S/Sgt ATS.

LITTLE. Mrs L M Little of Penrith in February 1992. ATS.

LOWE. Mrs E Lowe (née Hawksworth) of Bolton on 10 April 1992. ATS.

MARTIN. Mrs M Martin of Gloucester in March 1992.

MASSEY. Mrs M Massey of Hartlepool on 30 January 1992. ATS.

MORGAN. Mrs M H Morgan (née Pine) of Bishopston Glamorgan on 5 May 1992. Lt Col ATS.

MORTON. Mrs J M Morton (née Thompson) of Walsall in June 1991. WRAC.

MCKIE. Miss M G McKie of Forest Gate London in May 1992. ATS.

MCLAUGHLIN. Miss Maureen McLaughlin of Market Deeping, Lincolnshire on 28 July 1992. S/Sgt WRAC.

MCLEAN. Mrs. M McLean of Cornwall on 27 January 1992. QMAATC/ATS.

OGDEN. Mrs E Ogden of Braculsham Bay in February 1992. ATS.

OGILVIE. Mrs D W Ogilvie of Cheltenham on 18 June 1992. ATS.

OWENS. Mrs J Owens (née Williams) of Pwllheli in May 1991. ATS.

PAYNTER. Mrs M C E Paynter of Womersley Nr Guildford on 15 June 1992. ATS.

PEARCE. Mrs M Pearce (née Horsley) of Gillingham Dorset in November 1991. ATS/WRAC.

PHILLIPS. Mrs J R Phillips of Edmonton London on 18 September 1991. ATS.

RAWSON. Mrs Adelaide Rawson (née Rogers) of Newport. ATS.

RAINSBURY. Miss M E I Rainsbury of Mansfield in April 1992. WRAC/ATS/TA.

RITCHIE. Mrs G Ritchie (née McLaren) of East Fulton Linwood on 18 June 1992. ATS.

SHEVILL. Mrs E Shevill (née Twissell) of Bath on 31 March 1992. ATS.

SKEFFINGTON-WHITE. Mrs M Skeffington-White OBE (née Appleby) of Boston Spa Yorks on 18 January 1992. ATS.

SMITH. Mrs C A Smith of High Ercall in June 1992. ATS.

SMITTEN. Mrs C Smitten (née Lea) of Brighton in August 1991. ATS.

STENNARD. Mrs V M L Stennard of Bath on 30 March 1992. ATS.

THEOBALD. Mrs M Theobald of Forest Gate London on 9 May 1992. ATS.

THOMAS. Major (Retd) K W Thomas (née Samuels) of Studley Warwickshire on 16 April 1992. WRAC/ATS/FANY.

THOMPSON. Mrs D Thompson (née Swan) in Spring 1991. ATS.

TODD. Mrs R M Todd (née Lamb) of Sunderland in January 1992. ATS.

TROUGHTON. Lady C G Troughton (née Mitford) of Lochbroom Ross-shire on 13 October 1991. Chf Cmdr ATS.

VAUGHAN. Mrs D Vaughan (née Marshall) on 5 March 1992. ATS.

WHARLDALL. Mrs M Wharldall (née Abbott) of Pudsey on 15 April 1992. ATS.

WINSKILL. Mrs J E Winskill of Penrith on 14 December 1991. ATS.

WOOLLARD. Mrs M Woollard of Blackpool in June 1991. ATS.

YOUNG. Mrs E Young (née Urwin) of London in March 1992. ATS.

