

LIONESS

SUPPORTING FEMALE VETERANS



IN THIS EDITION

REMEMBRANCE

EVENTS

YOUR MEMORIES OF
HER MAJESTY
QUEEN ELIZABETH II



WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

(Incorporating the QMAAC & ATS Comrades Association)

Registered Charity No. 206184, founded in 1919



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Message from the Vice President



A great deal has happened since our last regular issue of the Lioness, most significantly the sad death of our Patron, Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. I am grateful to the Editor and all who contributed to our

Special Edition commemorating Her Majesty's connections with the ATS, the WRAC and the Association. It was a fitting tribute and an edition I will treasure.

As this edition of the Lioness was going to press, we received the sad news that one of our Life Vice Presidents, Lieutenant Colonel The Lady Martha Bruce OBE TD DL had died. Lady Martha was a contemporary of Her Late Majesty, serving in the ATS and later the WRAC. She has been a stalwart of our Association, remaining in contact with our members until she died, and we are immensely proud to have counted her as one of our own. We will pay a full tribute in the next issue of the Lioness, and hope that you will share your memories of her so they may be included.

Remembrance was a highlight of the autumn. So many of you attended the National Service of Remembrance at the Cenotaph and my thanks go to all those who joined the marvellous marching contingent. It is so important that we pay our respects, and in doing so we also play a part in increasing the visibility of female veterans in society.

I attended the Remembrance activities in Guildford, joining a strong turnout of members answering the call to Guildford in the 30th anniversary year of the WRAC's disbandment. My thanks to Audrey and Rowena for the organisation; I know there was so much work put into the weekend. Sunday started with a poignant service where the WRAC was remembered, and in particular the loss of Caroline Slater (18) and Ann Hamilton (19) in the Guildford pub bombings, followed by our contingent joining local veterans and cadets on the march to the War Memorial. Wreath laying and a trip down memory lane to the site of the former Queen Elizabeth Barracks followed. It was a moving and uplifting experience.

The Trustees held our annual away day, this year focussed on volunteering. An excellent opening address from the CEO of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) set us up to really explore the role of volunteers and how we might better support our volunteers, and take advantage of their skills and abilities. A really positive day and much work to take forward through the Membership Council.

Both I and our CEO Paula, continue our efforts to influence policy and the delivery of support to veterans through the Cobseo Female Veterans Cluster Group. I am delighted to say that Ali Brown has taken over as Chair of the Cluster Group and we have established strong engagement with those leading in areas such as care, health, and terms of service. Some highlights:

- You will (I hope) all be aware of the Independent Review into the effect that the pre 2000 ban on homosexuality has had on LGBTQ veterans; Lord Etherton is reviewing the evidence which has been submitted and a report is due later this year.
- Multiple strands of work are ongoing in the health arena with the NHS England's Service and Ex-Service Women's Health Improvement Group Prevention Programme working on substance abuse, lifestyle prevention of cancer, mental health and wellbeing, and suicide prevention. They are also commissioning domestic/sexual violence services & inclusion of specialist advisors within Sexual Assault Referral Centres, Op Courage, and the Veterans Trauma Network.
- We, as an Association, have engaged with understanding the issues around previous rules on Marriage and Pregnancy, and the Cluster is working with housing charities to encourage the development of more safe spaces suitable for women.
- We are just starting to look at how loneliness affects female veterans. Do get in touch if you feel you might have an experience to share with us. To achieve all the things we aspire to do we need resources, and we have applied for funding through the Armed Forces Covenant Trust. At the time of writing we are through to stage two of the application process and we will announce the results through our social media and website.

We should see richer data from the last census released through 2023, which will give us a clearer understanding of how many female veterans aged 50+ are living in the UK, informing our ongoing work to improve the lived experience for female veterans.

Fiona Gardner

Contents

Message from the Vice President	3
Comings and Goings	7
Features	8
Events	24
ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund	36
Branch News	40
Call to Action	61
In My Day - Reminiscences	67
Reunions & Dinners	70
We Will Remember Her Great Yarmouth and across the UK	74
Remembrance	76
Association News & Updates	78
Association Notices A-Z	81
Obituaries - Their Final Salute	87
Letters	96

Front cover:
Guildford Remembrance
Back cover:
Remembrance

EDITORIAL



From your Branch / Group reports it shows everyone is slowly adjusting to non-pandemic lives and just how busy you have all been now that meeting back up face-to-face again is possible – lunches, dinners, parties, afternoon teas, days out, etc. Hopefully you all take ideas and inspiration from other branches and groups as to what you might be able to do, and when. Don't forget you can mix it up a bit – you might even get some new members who cannot make your 'usual' day, time or venue.

Of course, the last six or so months have been busy across the board – particularly with the death of our Patron, Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Following the Special Edition we put together in the autumn, some of you shared your personal memories of preparing for and/or meeting Her Majesty, and for some others how you marked her passing – by viewing the Lying in State, attending the funeral or just showing your respects.

As usual you have all marked Remembrancetide with your usual respect and enthusiasm – Guildford, Westminster Abbey Field of Remembrance, Festival of Remembrance, London Cenotaph, and others around and about the country. It has been wonderful to read your reports and see your plentiful photos. Once again you have dedicated yourselves to honouring and remembering those who served before or with you and ensuring that "at the going down of the sun, and in the morning, We Will Remember Them".

Over the past few months the Association has been giving consideration to the ethos of 'volunteering' – what is it? who are 'they'? how can volunteers be appropriately supported and thanked? etc. Amanda Hassell shares her experiences and encourages you all to think of yourselves as volunteers.

The ATS & WRAC Benevolence Fund is available to all those who served in the army up to April 1992, provided the Grant

Giving criteria are met. The Benevolence Fund shares their most recent update along with information on what to do if you are 'struggling with money'. If you think any of this applies to yourself, or someone you know, please do get in touch with your local SSAFA or RBL case-worker team – they will come and talk things through with you and forward an application to the ATS & WRAC Benevolence Fund if appropriate.

We have initiated a new feature this time – on page 61 you will find ... coloured 'Call to Action' pages. This is a quick and easy way to see what you can, or need, to do and how to do it – eg event booking forms etc.

And don't forget: Branch/Group Reports - please put it into the body of the email and attach your photos to the email (putting into a word document is no quicker for us).

Please send maximum 4 high resolution photos per Report (or if you've been up to lots, pick the best 1 per event).

Ensure all photos are the highest resolution possible.

Ensure all photos are attached to the email – do not embed them into an attached Word document (we cannot always extract them).

A non-branch-event Report should ideally be:

**350 words + 1 photos – for ½ page
650 words + up to 2 photos – for full-page**

If you have any reports, articles, letters, pleas, memories etc you would like to share with members through the magazine please do send them in. The option to send things in for consideration is open to all members.

We wish you all a happy, safe and healthy 2023 and look forward to hearing your news, views and receiving your reports.

Penny Muxworthy
editor@wraca.org.uk

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SUPPORTING FEMALE VETERANS

Association Vision Statement

To provide camaraderie, benevolence and mutual support to former members of the ATS and WRAC and exert influence within the military charity sector to broaden support for female veterans.

In addition, we welcome to the Association Servicewomen, both serving and retired, of any capbadge.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

The WRAC Association would like to apologise to those of our members who received an empty envelope this Christmas, rather than one containing our specially designed Christmas card.

This resulted from an error at the processing plant of the distribution company we used.

We have now re-sent cards to those who we know missed out, but if you were also one of the unlucky few, please accept our apology along with our very best wishes to you for a happy and healthy 2023.

Chairman of the Membership Council Foreword



It has been an eventful time for all Association members since our last edition of the Lioness, not least due to the death of our Patron, Queen Elizabeth II. I hope you will all enjoy reading about the various exploits of our members in this edition of the Lioness. Enclosed within this Lioness is a key fob demonstrating your membership of this most wonderful Association, I do hope that you all appreciate this form of membership token.

Over a year ago we realised that the WRAC tree in the row of the AGC Antecedent Corps trees at the National Memorial Arboretum had died and the AGC managed to persuade the NMA to provide us with a new tree to replace the sad and unsightly one. As a result, we held our summer event there so could dedicate it, and we were very grateful to the Rev Frances Canham (one of our members) who led the service. The weather was mixed but we managed to keep relatively dry, albeit with the help of a gazebo and umbrellas! We were delighted to have the Yorkshire Military Band with us again to play during the service and for the picnic afterwards – it made the event a wonderful occasion.

The autumn should have brought 2 Area AGM's but the death of the Queen meant that only Scotland and Northern Ireland's went ahead as we incorporated the Association Service of Remembrance into it. The service was reported in the special edition commemorating Queen Elizabeth II. I was very privileged to attend the AGM and I hope that I was able

to let those members attending have a full update of things happening within the Association.

The Cost-of-Living Crisis will be affecting many members of the Association and I therefore remind you that there are many sources of help for veterans, so if you are in need of assistance please apply to SSAFA or the RBL for help, you can also apply to the WRAC Association direct but a caseworker from either SSAFA or the RBL will have to be assigned to take the case forward.

As the Chair of the Membership Council I am keen for members who are members of Branches, to let me and Association HQ know the value to you of Branches so that we can use that information to recruit more members and maybe encourage some of the HQ Branch members to join physical branches/groups where they can enjoy the camaraderie of fellow veterans.

Importantly the members of the Association have been busy over the Remembrance period. I was honoured to meet HM the Queen Consort at the Field of Remembrance and was delighted to be able to introduce the members who were with me. The Festival of Remembrance was attended by numerous members, but we were so pleased that we were asked to nominate up to 5 members to take part in the Festival; 2 were selected and Pauline Milnes and Senga Palmer did a wonderful job representing us. On Remembrance Sunday we had 2 large contingents at the Remembrance Day Parades at the Cenotaph and in Guildford – thank you to all those who took part in these parades and all the many parades around the UK. I was honoured to lead the contingent at the Cenotaph and we were seen on the BBC1 coverage!

I am looking forward to visiting branches and meeting you all – so please do invite me!

Rowena Naile MBE

Upon the death of our patron, Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Fiona Gardner (Vice President), sent a letter of condolences from the whole Association to the King and his family.

The King has kindly directed that this letter be sent, which we gratefully received:





THE OFFICE OF HRH THE DUCHESS OF KENT
ST. JAMES'S PALACE
LONDON SW1A 1BQ

TELEPHONE: (020) 7024 5681

We have been fortunate enough to receive two letters from our President, HRH The Duchess of Kent –

We thank her for remembering us and send her all good wishes.

26th October 2022

Dear Brigadier Gardner

The Duchess of Kent has asked me to thank you for your thoughtful message of sympathy, sent on the passing of HM The Queen.

The Duchess has been touched by the messages she has received and is most grateful for your kind words.

Yours sincerely

Jane McCaughey
Personal Assistant to HRH The Duchess of Kent

Brigadier F H Gardner CBE
Vice President
WRAC Association
Unit 11, Basepoint Business Centre
1 Winnall Valley Road
Winchester
Hampshire
SO23 0LD



THE OFFICE OF HRH THE DUCHESS OF KENT
ST. JAMES'S PALACE
LONDON SW1A 1BQ

TELEPHONE: (020) 7024 5681

7th December 2022

Dear Penny,

As 2022 draws to a close, I send to you and everyone at The Women's Royal Army Corps Association my sincere thanks for all that you have achieved over the course of the past year.

I very much value receiving occasional updates from you and hope you will continue to keep in touch.

My very best wishes to you all for the festive season and wishing you good health and happiness in the year ahead.

Kate

HRH The Duchess of Kent GCVO

Comings and Goings

GOING:



There has been a change of Association Treasurer since our last edition. Barbara Davies stood down after several years of safely managing the Association's various funds, both General and Benevolence Fund.

The management of funds includes the Association's investments, handled by the

Wealth Management Company Brewin Dolphin pictured below.

L-R: Julian McCormack, Tim Savage, Barbara Davies, James Hayley Bell & Alice Farrer



WHY DO I VOLUNTEER?

Amanda Hassell
WRAC Association Trustee



I guess it's something I have inherited from my parents and was very much part of my upbringing. My dad worked in professional sports (football and cricket mostly) and my sister and I participated in lots of different amateur sports – they always needed volunteers to help make it viable. My parents volunteered, and as I got a

bit older there were always informal roles to fill - helping out in various ways such as handing out scorecards or even keeping score at cricket games, providing and serving cricket teas, doing the transport rotas for swimming galas. Before going off to University, I did lots of things to gain work experience, I taught swimming, and life guarded for community events before going to America as a swimming teacher for the summer holidays (I was qualified but not paid). I did sponsored events, litter picks, and organised charity cake stalls. Then a career in the Army gave me lots of other opportunities to volunteer, raising funds for all manner of charities and organising lots of sports events and expeditions in my spare time. I volunteered with World Challenge and led an overseas expedition of young people to Peru (again I was qualified but not paid).

When I left the Regular Army, one of my motivations was to settle in a community and to become part of that community. I very much saw volunteering as a key part of that. It's a great way to get to know people and for them to get to know who you are and what skills you have. I joined the local RBL branch and have recently taken over as Branch Chair. I also joined the WRAC Association and became a trustee. I try to support local and national events, including Armed Forces' Day. I really want to give back to society and it is something I feel really passionate about - being able to help those who have served in the Armed Forces, and to help those less fortunate than myself, those who have fallen on hard times, and those who are just not as mobile as they used to be. I love hearing about people's escapades and just chatting to people!



My sister works in social services and has run various care homes. I often go along to talk to the residents – they usually enjoy a good 'war' story and I have presented at several local clubs and societies close to where I live, sharing stories and photos of my career in the Army and some of the mishaps along the way. I have become a regular member of my local church and that has opened up lots of

small opportunities to volunteer and help out, organising local events such as the Queen's Platinum Jubilee fete and Beacon event, serving tea & coffee on a Sunday morning, delivering leaflets and the local parish magazine. I get such a sense of achievement and pleasure from all these small tasks, and it gives me an opportunity to talk to new and interesting people.

On the sporting theme, I am also a member of the Lord's Taverners Charity - which supports young people with disability, through sport, particularly cricket. Again, it's a charity close to my heart having been brought up in and around cricket. I've done a lot of fundraising over the years - this usually involves some mad cap endurance event such as the 25-hour Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race in 2002, the London Marathon in 2004, swimming the English Channel in 2008 as part of a relay team (it took us 15 hours) and 5 days gruelling cycling around the Test Match cricket grounds in the UK in 2012 and 2014.

I feel very fortunate that despite the odd injury, I am fit and healthy and have had so many great opportunities, so I want to help others and contribute to making the world, the UK, Winchester and my neighbourhood a better place. It's what we do isn't it? The military instils a sense of duty and service, and it is hard to shake off after 30 years! I know that so many charities have to rely on volunteers to carry out their fantastic work - there isn't enough government funding to go around and that isn't going to change in my lifetime, so I believe we can all make a difference in so many ways - big or small, near or far – there is something for everyone.

Amanda Hassell
WRAC Association Trustee

Are you a Volunteer? See page 79 for more information

Features

REMEMBRANCE

GUILDFORD

We are delighted to have received these wonderfully descriptive accounts of the Remembrance weekend in Guildford (in the 30th anniversary year of the disbandment of the WRAC). They capture perfectly both the enduring camaraderie of our veterans and the very special bond with the town we will always call our home.

From 1941 female Army Recruits had been trained in Queens Camp Guildford, which was a hutted camp built for the Militia of the local County Regiment. By 1951 it had become the home of the Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC) Depot and Training Centre and was renamed Queen Elizabeth Camp. It was rebuilt in the early 60s and, as many of us will remember, was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth the Second on 30 October 1964. The WRAC Centre carried out the training of over 150,000 Recruits plus TA Recruits during the life of the Corps, ran cadres for Junior NCO's and was home to the only all Women's Band in Europe until it closed in April 1992.

There have always been strong ties between the Borough of Guildford and the WRAC Centre, and the Corps was very honoured to be given the Freedom of the Borough. On 22nd June 1988 to mark the occasion, members of the WRAC exercised their right to march through the Town. Since then, the area has become a housing estate. Amanda Foster, who was an Instructor with Surrey Cadet Force for nearly 14 years, remembered that the Guildford Detachment now resided in the only building left of the WRAC Centre which previously housed the WRAC Museum. She was able to reconnect with the Detachment Commander and ask if we would be allowed to visit, but it ended up being very much more than dropping in!

As you are all aware the Borough of Guildford centred their Remembrance on Sunday 13th November around the WRAC and so a weekend of Remembrance-related activities was arranged. Forty members of the Association had said they wished to attend.

Guildford Fire Station has open-house for all veterans to join them for a Bacon Butty on the last Thursday of the month and also looks after veterans in need who come to their notice. This year they invited the Association to join them at their Remembrance Ceremony on Saturday 12th November.

Sunday was a packed day of activities which started with our Vice President, Fiona Gardner CBE, joining the Civic Procession to Holy Trinity Church, which was always the practice for the Commandant and so had not happened for 30 years. On the Thursday before, the Civic Secretary found enough seats for everyone attending the service, which was greatly appreciated. The Association Standard was there, Fiona read a lesson, Colonel Patrick Crowley remembered the WRAC in his yearly update, Canon Cotton based his sermon around the two WRAC recruits who were killed in the bombing of the Horse and Groom in 1974 and the Association Collect was included. The WRAC Association was the first contingent in the parade ably led by the Corps of Drums of Burma Company of the Army Cadets, as the usual band was unable to attend. After watching the parade our Vice President joined the Civic Procession to the Castle Grounds where the Act of Remembrance took place and wreaths were laid by the Vice President on the World Wars 1 and 2 Memorial and by Rowena Patrick on the Memorial for more Recent Conflicts.

The Civic Party then returned to the Guildhall where the Mayor Councillor Dennis Booth gave a short address again mentioning the WRAC and the close links with the Borough. All those not attending the Guildhall went across the road to the Keep, where drinks and lunch was served. Everyone was very surprised to see the door open and the Mayor and Mayoress arrive to have drink with us.

We then made our way to Railton Road (named after Dame Mary Railton, a Director of the WRAC) and when everyone arrived at Burma Company of the Surrey Army Cadet Force, they were amazed to see an actual WRAC flag flying over the plaque commemorating the opening of the WRAC Centre by Queen Elizabeth the Second in 1964. The MP for Guildford, Angela Richardson, had tea with us, the Corps of Drums played again and we were also taken to see the Memorial in Foster Road (named after Major Ena Foster a Director of Music). The most moving moment was when the Corps of Drums played Sunset, the WRAC Flag was lowered, folded neatly and handed back to the Vice President for safe keeping.

The weekend gave everyone an opportunity for Remembrance and Reunion after more than 30 years.

Audrey Smith





CREDIT: Guildford ACF 'Lined up and ready to go'



Fiona Gardner laying WRAC Association wreath



WRAC Association with Guildford MP Angela Richardson



After a WRAC Membership Council meeting last February, I promised Audrey Smith that I would really make an effort to get the numbers for this year's 30th Anniversary of our Disbandment.

So once on the train going home, I started posting on Facebook with my aim of getting at least 30 ladies, one to represent each year. With the help of Cathy Munro, a Facebook page and some graphics, the wheels started to roll. This also gave me an opportunity to re-connect with old ACF Colleagues as well.

Within a few weeks we had the numbers, people were talking and getting rather excited. So now over to Audrey for most of the hard work, the meetings, making sure the timings worked, who wanted to see us, and wanted to be seen with us as well!

We had a great number of ladies from all areas of the country who came together for a fabulous weekend. I was lucky enough to get a shout out and little segment on the BBC Radio2 Sarah Cox show on the Friday, so opted for Tina Turner "Simply the Best", but did wonder about requesting "Coming Home" or "Back to our Roots".

Most people arrived on Saturday, and tasted the delights of the Guildford shops, and we then all gathered for the Reception at Guildford Fire Station. A very interesting tour of the station followed and then a very moving and simple ceremony in their Memorial Garden, which set the tone for the weekend - not too sombre, but reflecting on the past, being respectful but inspired by others and their actions.

On Sunday as we waited outside the church, there was excitement and great pride in the air, and seeing faces that everyone recognised was fabulous, but for me it was meeting the ladies that didn't know anyone. Ladies from Tongham, Guildford and Basingstoke who were all pleased to join us and understood that they were coming back to the fold! The service made reference to the WRAC a number of times and I am sure that I heard a very respectful cheer the first time we were mentioned! We formed up outside the Church, everyone grew a few inches taller, the ACF started up and we were back to the Parade Square at Guildford. We marched with pride, and when someone asked at the pub "What do you call a gathering of WRAC?" I suggested "awesome" and just left it at that. The chatter over lunch was as any night in the NAAFI, and lots of stories, giggles and smiling faces reinforced that this was a great day.

The icing on the cake was going back to the only building left from the Queen Elizabeth Barracks which is now the home of Guildford Detachment, Surrey ACF and the Corps of Drums - the very same who had done so well during the Parade. We had now, truly "Come Home". The pride in the room was joyous to witness, again smiles, chatter, more stories and laughter. The Cadets did what they do so well, after only three months training they sounded amazing. The most emotional part of this was when our Flag was finally lowered - the air was tight with emotion whilst the Cadets played. Finally, Audrey Smith pulled a Lioness out of the bag, with everyone receiving an Anniversary Medal.

Not sure whether this is politically correct in print but the general opinion of the weekend was "bloody brilliant"... So same again next year, and back in 2024 for the 60th Anniversary of the opening - just saying!

Amanda Foster

Remembrance is always an important time for all serving personnel and veterans, but this year marked the 30th anniversary of the disbandment of the WRAC. From my experiences in 2019, I knew that Guildford was keen to have the WRAC represented and so I decided to go to Guildford to mark Remembrance in 2022.

The Remembrance Ceremony at Guildford Fire Station was the first stop of the weekend. I arrived to find a full afternoon tea laid out complete with multiple cakes and, in total, about 20 WRAC Veterans attended along with other locally based veterans. It was great to hear the chatter and noise as old friends met again and new friends were made. Attendance was from all over the country with Branches such as Manchester, Cardiff, Hereford and Salisbury present and there were even representatives from Scotland who had made the journey south. After tea we made our way into the vehicle bay and had a short service with our National Standard present and then plenty of photos were taken, mostly of the fire engines. As ever, we were made to feel extremely welcome.



Remembrance wreaths at Guildford Fire Station

Early Sunday morning, we made our way to Holy Trinity Church at the top of Guildford town centre. Our ranks had increased to about 40 and on entering the church, it was good to see the ranks of WRAC veterans and the National Standard, paraded by Sharon Baker-Joyce. The service was moving and poignant with a detailed reference to the WRAC's role in Guildford by Colonel Patrick Crowley. On leaving the church, our veterans headed out to form up at the front of the Parade, ready to march down the High Street to the Castle Grounds. The Parade was led by the National Standard amongst others and, once again, we were able to exercise our Freedom of the Borough which was awarded to the WRAC in 1988. I headed off to find Pip Flegel from Manchester Branch who I was escorting (pushing) to the Castle Grounds.

Pip and I set off to the sounds of the Corps of Drums of Burma Company of the Army Cadets and followed the Parade down the High Street. The Castle Ground was very crowded but with a bit of pushing and asking people to move, I was able to get Pip behind the Memorial with a decent view of the proceedings. A Service was followed by the laying of wreaths, and we had a perfect view of the WRAC Association wreath being laid by our Vice President, Fiona Gardner CBE. The service ended with God Save the King.

Pip and I headed off to the Keep, now with a WRAC veteran escort, and soon the pub was filled with the noise of 40 WRAC veterans jostling for space. Lunch was served and it was good to see the flags of the WRAC and the ATS hanging from the walls of the pub.

The day was not over as after lunch we all made our way to the Army Cadets at Railton Road. This was the site of the WRAC Museum and, as has already been mentioned, is the only building left from the WRAC Centre. This history is marked by a raised plaque in front on the building and, to our delight, at the top of the flagpole was the WRAC flag. Our veterans were absolutely delighted by this, and stories abounded from those who had served at Guildford prior to its closure in 1993. We were joined by Angela Richardson, the MP for Guildford, and a formal military style photo was taken which will bear witness to how much we all enjoyed the afternoon. Just before we all left, the WRAC flag was lowered by two of our members which was especially moving. Now our group was full of tears as well as smiles.

What a weekend. So much work had gone into making it special for all those who attended. Huge thanks must go to Audrey Smith and Rowena Patrick MBE, who had really pulled out all the stops to make everything run smoothly. Also, thanks to Amanda Foster for rallying the troops to attend and for facilitating the visit to the Army Cadets. A complete triumph.

Ali Brown OBE



Manchester Branch were privileged to be invited to attend Remembrance Day in Guildford. So, six of us set off to the place where our Army careers began.

Day one we were entertained by the burly firemen at Guildford fire station and a very good afternoon was had by all who went.

We were so proud to march through the streets of Guildford to the Holy Trinity Church for the Service of Remembrance. We then marched on to the Memorial in the Castle Grounds where our Vice President Fiona Gardner laid our WRAC wreath. It was a truly poignant day. We finished the day being entertained by the Cadets in Guildford and the Corps of drums situated on the very site where our Queen Elizabeth Barracks was situated.



Christine Barnwell-Hayman (Gtr London) & Pip Flegel (Manchester)

Manchester Branch would like to thank the WRAC Association for the invitations, to Audrey Smith for her meticulous organisation making sure we were all accommodated at both the church and the memorial gardens - in fact the whole weekend, including the entertainment, I bet she suffered from many a sleepless night - and to Ali Brown for being my wheelchair pusher, up steep hills and cobbled streets - I bet they could hear her panting at the top of the castle keep. Also thank you to the Manchester Branch for helping to make it a truly great memory of our Remembrance Day Weekend.

Pip Flegel

Guildford Remembrance 2023

For those local members who would like to attend this year, the Borough of Guildford will welcome you. The format will be roughly the same as this year, but we will be marching immediately behind the representatives of the Royal Surrey Regiment (now part of the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment) who are the only other Army unit that have been given the Freedom of the Borough and they received it first.

Audrey Smith



WRAC Flag



Lowering the WRAC Flag



Corps pennant



Audrey Smith



*Wendy Hooton and
National Standard Bearer, Sharon Baker Joyce*



The Castle Gardens

LONDON

Field of Remembrance Westminster Abbey Thursday 10th November 2022

My Remembrance weekend began at the Field of Remembrance, where I planted crosses for our ex WRAC ladies and a few others. Her Majesty the Queen Consort opened the Field of Remembrance this year and our Chair of Membership Council, Lt Col (Retd) Rowena Naile MBE, managed to grab her attention by mentioning Her Late Majesty the Queen being a past member of the ATS. She then drew her attention to our group and the Queen Consort gave us a big smile and a wave.

Wendy Hooton



Rowena Naile introducing members to HM The Queen Consort



WRAC Association plot with crosses of remembrance



*Wendy Hooton, Pauline Milnes, Lynda Armstrong
& Naomi Burden*

FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE A tribute to Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for a lifetime of Service

I just wanted to thank the Association for choosing me to be one of the WRAC Association's representatives at this year's Festival of Remembrance, for which the Royal British Legion chose to focus on the remarkable 70-year reign of HM Queen Elizabeth II. It was an emotional and amazing experience with wonderful memories to last me a lifetime.

A section of the programme featured a tri-service tribute to Her Majesty. This involved thirty-five Military veterans being paired with serving personnel, each one of us representing a year of Her Majesty's reign. I felt honoured and privileged to have been one of two invited by the WRAC Association to represent them on this momentous occasion. The day began early for rehearsals, and after being allocated staircases from which we would exit, our section had a rapid run through, before taking part in a full-dress rehearsal. It was then that I began to realise the enormity of it all, as we grew ever closer to the Matinee performance.



Pauline Milnes marching in

When we were announced by BBC presenter Huw Edwards and began our descent, we were met with a standing ovation, which lasted until after we had entered the auditorium and formed a circle facing outwards to the audience, with the late Queen's monogram in the middle. Such a proud moment!

It was the same for the evening performance but this was extra special as we would be in the presence of the Royal Family, and this year would be the first for Charles in his role as King. An even prouder moment!

My greatest achievement on the night was getting down the stairs without falling, as that was my biggest fear - I think in some of the photos depict the sheer determination on my face not to do so.

The veterans in our section were all such good company, so much so, I have made some new friends who I will keep in touch with. The naval lass who accompanied me was in so much awe of how many years ago it was since I served as I was around the same age as her grandparents. I would like to thank the Association for the opportunity of a lifetime, which has left me with wonderful memories to last forever. Kind Regards,

Pauline Milnes



Veterans and serving military honouring HM the late Queen



Pauline Milnes marching in



Lynda Armstrong, Pauline Milnes and Naomi Burden

Saturday 12th November 2022 I had the honour and privilege to be invited to attend the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall. Initially I thought it was to be a member of the audience but no it was actually to take part in a tribute to Her Majesty the Queen, so I, along with Pauline Milnes, were the lucky two to represent the WRAC.



Pauline Milnes & Senga Palmer



The Tribute class of 2022



The Act of Tribute to HM the Queen



*In-pensioner
Carol Knight*

We had to be there for 8.15, so it was an early start for me as I was staying with friends in Watford. Pauline met me at Kensington Olympia, we jumped on a bus for a short ride, then a walk to the Albert Hall; we picked up our accreditation passes and proceeded to security, the atmosphere was buzzing. We started rehearsals at around 10am, we were then split into small groups and partnered up with a serving military person - I was teamed up with a Sergeant from 30 Field ambulance (I believe a reserve unit).

I knew it was going to be a highly charged emotional day but I wasn't quite prepared, upon hearing the video with the Queen speaking, for how it would affect me. Then hearing the woman read an excerpt from a letter her own father wrote to her from the Falklands; as alas, he didn't return. All in all this experience was up there with being at the garden party at Holyrood 2019 when I, along with 8 other WRAC, met Her Majesty, and my Passing out Parade.

Senga Palmer

CENOTAPH

***"Fabulous day had by all.
Camaraderie second to
none".*** (Jacqueline Veazey)



“It was such a privilege and honour to be part of this emotional day, remembering all we lost, and making lots of new friends. Thank you very much”. (Shirl Ghobrail)





Before the Cenotaph Parade I had already had a busy weekend with the Routes for Remembrance from Edinburgh to London Kings Cross Station [Editor: see Remembrances section], and attendance at The Royal Albert Hall for the Saturday Festival of Remembrance (see above). Then on Sunday 13th I was with the column of WRAC at the Cenotaph for the march past, or in my case the push past as I was in a wheelchair - but I was there, which was a massive achievement for me.

Senga Palmer



This photo is of a wonderful Mother and Daughter who marched with us on the Sunday, at the Cenotaph. Mum is Andrea Skennerton, a WRAC Veteran, and her daughter is Deborah Skennerton Taylor who served for 18 years as a Regular and a further 7 years as a Reservist. How fantastic to have them both marching together!

Ann Stack



"A huge thank you for enabling my mother, Barbara Major, to take part on 13th November. She had a very enjoyable weekend in London visiting her grandchildren as well as her latest great grandchild. Driving to Admiralty Arch on Sunday was so easy (most Londoners do not get up very early!) and meeting up with Mary (Woollard) could not have been easier.

So many people have been in touch to say that they saw her on TV! Everyone made it a very enjoyable event for my mother, and she is extremely grateful. Being able to carry the WLA wreath was a real bonus.

I know that if she is still as fit as she is now, she would be very keen to take part again next year. With kind regards and very many thanks

Jeremy Major



SCOTLAND

Here are my photos from Remembrance Sunday at Perth, laying the wreath for the WRAC in Scotland. Debbie Coupland also laid a poppy spray on Friday 11th at the War Memorial of the 51st Highland Brigade.

It was a great honour to attend the service and lay the wreath and poppy cross on behalf of the WRAC in Scotland.

Helen Jephcote



*Coat, medals, wreath and
Poppy Cross ready for the
Kirk*



Services of Remembrance 2022



Perth War Memorial at St Johns Kirk

NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM, STAFFORDSHIRE

WRAC Tamworth branch attending Remembrance Day service at the NMA Alrewas. We also paid our respects at the WRAC garden.

Chris Whitehead



*L-R: Chris Whitehead, Pat Williams, Elaine Huggins, Lesley
Wallace, Marie Smedley, Ann Gwynne, Karen Cookson*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

AGM: 18 March,
Victory Services Club, London

ATS Memorial: 14 May,
Gt Yarmouth, Norfolk

Armed Forces Day: 24 June,
National event – Falmouth, Cornwall
And around the country

Summer Event: 29 July,
Worthy Down, Hampshire

10k Run: 17 September,
Worcester

WRAC Dinner Club: 14 October

Officers Dining Club: 21 October

Remembrance:
09 November - Field of Remembrance,
London

12 November - Guildford Borough
Cenotaph, London

MEMORIES OF HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II Patron and Member of the WRAC Association

LYING IN STATE

Following our working day on Friday 16th (September) we decided we really must travel to London to pay our respects to our Queen Elizabeth II whilst she was Lying in State in Westminster Hall.

Taking the train to Waterloo the announcements on our arrival in London was 24 hours to queue, and advice to return home and not join the queue! Undeterred we made our way to Southwark Park, with many others, arriving at 8pm, to join the long and winding queue. Approximately 12 hours later, having walked through the night, at 0745 we arrived at Victoria gardens, which left us a further 2 hours to walk through the park to Westminster Hall. We'd had an amazing night of new friends, spectacular views, and a very common reason for treading this path of thanks for our Queen.

It was an amazing occasion even though our walk was 14 hours, not the forecasted 24. It passed so quickly, we had a lovely group of eight new friends, whom we were with the whole way through.

Walking through Westminster Hall was such a very humbling, but emotional experience it's difficult to put into words. Those few minutes in Westminster Hall made everything worth the walk. We wouldn't change any of it, and feel so privileged to have been able to be there.

Daphne Navin and husband Pete (ex-RAPC)



*Floral tribute to HM The Queen in St James' Park
Daphne (ex-WRAC) and Peter (ex-RAPC) Navin*



HM THE QUEEN'S FUNERAL SERVICE

Monica Parrot, Association member and RHC In-pensioner, wrote confirming that she and Carol Knight (another Association member and RHC In-pensioner) attended Her Majesty's funeral as part of a Royal Hospital Chelsea contingent of eight In-pensioners. Monica was also on the BBC One Show the previous evening, very briefly, regarding the funeral.

The eight in-pensioners chosen to go to the funeral spent around 2 hours with more Kings, Queens, Princesses, Princes, Prime Ministers, and delegates from across the world than you could ever imagine, all there together to pay their respects to our Queen; waiting to get on coaches.

"Words will never express the honour and pride of being chosen to attend her Majesty's final journey to her resting place. As I work out how to express my feelings here and now, I am already welling up with sadness and tears remembering it all".

"We all travelled together in a fleet of coaches (most were invited to park at the Royal Hospital Chelsea for coach transfer direct to Westminster Abbey), but all of a sudden it seemed us Chelsea Pensioners were alone outside the Abbey doors being ushered ready to walk down the aisle toward the altar.

I can only speak for myself, my own feelings, but I immediately wanted to cry, as I do now, writing this. The sadness awaiting us through those doors was palpable, you could feel it even before you stepped inside. You could see a sea of people in mourning dress. I didn't look left or right as I walked in line with the others, keeping my head down and biting my lip to stop myself from crying. Once we had been seated it was easier to calm a little and take in the surroundings and the sea of guests.

The service was sad, but the farewell to her Majesty was beautiful, and I feel blessed to have been a part of it all.

After the funeral our Governor took us to a reception in Westminster that made our day even more surreal. Lots of MPs and Lords were there and chatted very freely to us, friendly and interested. It was a day to remember for always.

I think a few of the pensioners directing cars etc may have seen some of the people we saw, but it wouldn't have been too many.

I can't begin to tell you how proud and honoured we were to have had that wonderful opportunity to say farewell to our Majesty in such a way".

**Monica Parrot
Chelsea In-pensioner**



WHEN I MET THE QUEEN

I have a short story about HM Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip. When I was 16, we lived in Glenrothes, Scotland for a couple of years. My Dad was an engineer at the Scottish Gas Plant in Cardenden. We heard on the grapevine that the Royal couple were due to visit the plant. Everyone was so excited. A few days before the great event, the gardener's came in and spent ages planting plants/flowers all along and on both sides of the long entrance (approx. 300 yards long from the gate) to Reception, where I worked as receptionist, telephonist and typist. The whole place outside was re-painted and a few changes were also made inside. We were all given our orders of what we could do and not do on that particular day, including not using the ladies upstairs as it had been revamped especially for the Queen.

It was lovely seeing the couple, so happy. I remember thinking how tall Prince Philip was. I was not allowed to come out of reception, but the Queen gave me such a beautiful smile as she passed. A few days later the gardeners were back taking out the lovely plants which had brightened up the place and made a world of difference as we drove in through the gates to work. We could not believe it, what a shame. None of us had cottoned on that the flowers were only borrowed – Ha!

Margaret Wroot
(Winchester branch member)

I was at the Association/Benevolent Fund when The Queen became our Patron. I was also presented to her when she opened the AGC Museum. I have a photograph and she is smiling at me - I always say it is because I was the first person she met that day who was shorter than her! We had a lunch in the Officers' Mess afterwards.

After she left, I went back to the office but soon realised that I was the only one there so went back to the Mess where everyone was still "celebrating" the visit. That was the very afternoon that Joe Bright took the photograph of me which I used in The Lioness as Editor. If you look closely - even although it is a black and white photo - you can see my cheeks look ever so slightly flushed!

Nothing to do with the Corps/Association but the very first time I saw The Queen close up was when I was about 7/8. My Great Aunt – exWRAF - was Matron of Quarriers Homes, a children's home southwest of Glasgow, when the Queen visited. My Great Aunt was presented but we just looked on. The family story is that my Dad was "ogling" at her car when she came out of the Church service and she sneezed when she was getting into it and apologised to my Dad. As they say, "Fame comes to different people in different ways".

Jane Fairburn



I think I was about 10 when the Queen was due to drive past where I lived, and my father (who knew these things) said that Mum and I should cross the main road because HM always sat on the left in the car. So we duly positioned ourselves near the curb and waited. We heard her arriving before we saw the car because the whole road was lined so there was a lot of cheering. Did I see the Queen? No, needless to say that she was sitting on the right, but I did get a glimpse of Prince Philip though.

I did stand carpet guard for her (and the then Prince Charles) when I was working at the Royal Tournament at Earls Court.

Herme Emery

In 2019 a group of us were invited to the Annual Royal Garden Party at Holyrood Palace, to represent the Association members from Scotland. These are some of the photos of that wonderful day.



MEMORIES OF HM THE QUEEN DURING MY LIFE

I was fortunate to meet HM The Queen three times during my life across a span of some 50 years. Each occasion was memorable in its own way, and I thought I would write these down as we enter a new Carolean age.

My first meeting with HM The Queen was at the tender age of 4 when The Queen visited Highcliffe on Sea. On this occasion I did not get very close, but I do remember being herded, along with other members of my kindergarten class, into the high street quite early in the day. We were formed up on the pavement and given very small union flags to hold with strict instructions to wave them madly when a large black car approached. After a few false starts, as there were a lot of large black cars about that day, we finally spotted the right one and waved our flags as if our very lives depended on it. Satisfied that we had done as we had been told, we were then paraded back to school with none of us really that sure what had just happened.

Fast forward some 35 years and I was serving as the Chief of Staff of the AGC Training Group at Worthy Down. As our Commander-in-Chief, Her Majesty was visiting the AGC Centre, as it was then, and was to meet all the various units on the site. I was to escort her around the stands that had been put together by the units that made up the AGC Training Group which included the Worthy Down Support Unit, the School of Employment, the RMP Training Centre at Chichester, the Army School of Education, and the Defence Animal Centre at Melton Mowbray. So, after weeks of planning and dressed in Service Dress, I stood at the front of the stands and caught sight of the hordes of press coming towards me. That made me even more nervous than meeting Her Majesty. With warm greetings and a very relaxed manner, Her Majesty almost guided me around the unit stands and very quickly put everyone at ease. This part of the visit seemed to flash by in seconds although I was told afterwards that it was at least 15 minutes. I could not remember a thing that I had said, and this was to become a theme for me when meeting members of the Royal Family. After lunch in the Officers' Mess, the visit was over, and I am sure we must have celebrated with a drink or two. The group photograph taken on the day has disappeared over the years, but the memory is rigidly fixed in my head.

Moving forwards another 15 years, and having left the Army, I was fortunate enough to be Vice President of the WRAC Association. The year was 2017 which marked the Centenary of Women in the Military (in non-nursing roles), and of the WAAC/QMAAC (formed in 1917). I had attended a meeting at the Army and Navy Club in late 2016 to discuss a possible Royal visit to the Club (I was one of the few female members and Her Majesty was the Patron). To my absolute delight, the Royal visit expanded to including the WRAC Association and thus our Patron was going to visit us in this very special year. What could be more perfect. As the planning got underway, the visit was further expanded to include HRH Princess Anne, who is Patron of the Association of WRNS; so, a double visit with the two members of the Royal family who had a connection with women who served. As you can imagine, the visit was planned to within the minute, and it was quickly confirmed that Her Majesty would meet 30 members of the WRAC Association with HRH Princess Anne meeting 20 members of the Association of WRNS. Getting the groups together, writing the necessary briefs and then getting the information out without telling anyone who was actually visiting, became my every waking moment. Fortunately, we were able to arrange for five ATS ladies to meet Her Majesty on a one-to-one basis, separate to the groups. I was so pleased that this was possible as I really wanted to mark the pioneering women of the Second World War and celebrate the connection that Her Majesty had with her Service in the ATS.

So, the day dawned. Outfit chosen I made my way to the Army and Navy Club and, heart in mouth and with a very dry throat, I waited for our Patron to arrive accompanied by HRH Princess Anne. I should have known not to worry. From the moment of her arrival, Her Majesty put everyone at her ease and spoke to every single person that was presented to her. A 30-minute visit became an hour, and I was on cloud nine. For me, the most poignant moment was the meeting with the ATS ladies and them chatting with Her Majesty about their Service. Absolutely thrilling but once again, I have no idea what I actually said on the day.

As the Royal party moved off to meet members of the Army and Navy Club, I just remember a huge wave of emotion and relief and, very timely, glasses of champagne were served to us, and I know that I gulped mine down pretty quickly. What a day and one that will live with me forever.

Over 50 years I feel so fortunate to have met Her Majesty in a variety of locations and guises; as my Queen, as my Commander-in-Chief and as Patron of the WRAC Association.

Ali Brown OBE



'HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II'S REGIMENTAL MARCH'



The 2020 Queen's Birthday Parade at Windsor Castle

On Monday, 24th October the annual dinner of the Nulli Secundus Club, the officers' dining club of the Coldstream Guards, was held in London and the 150 or so attendees were delighted by two novel aspects of this event.

The first novelty was the wording of the Loyal Toast, which was to 'His Majesty the King'; almost no one present was old enough to recall the last time that this had been the case.

The second pleasant surprise was that the short musical programme played by the Band of the Coldstream Guards under the direction of its Director of Music, Major Stewart Halliday, included 'HM Queen Elizabeth II's Regimental March', otherwise known as the 'Quick March of the Auxiliary Territorial Service'.

Many 'Lioness' readers will recall 'Lass of Richmond Hill', the regimental Quick March of the Women's Royal Army Corps, but far fewer will remember the ATS's equivalent, which was last played ceremonially at the Queen's Birthday Parade in Windsor Castle on 13th June 2020 as a 75th anniversary tribute to Her Majesty's wartime service in the ATS.

On 1st May 1945 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth (later the Queen Mother) chose the tune that was to become the 'Quick March for the Auxiliary Territorial Service' when it was first performed in the gardens of Buckingham Palace, along with four other candidate marches, all written by the military musician students at Churchill House, Aldershot (the wartime location of Kneller Hall). On that occasion Queen Elizabeth was accompanied by His Majesty the King, Princess Elizabeth, the Princess Royal and several senior ATS officers. Unlike the WRAC, whose Slow March was 'Greensleeves', there seems to be no record of a Slow March having been chosen for the ATS.

The writer of the successful ATS Quick March was Student Edwin George Spooner of the Royal Fusiliers, who went on to become the Bandmaster of the 2nd Bn and then of the 1st Bn of the Manchester Regiment.

This march would have been well known to members of the Staff Band of the WRAC, but, following its disbandment in the early 1990s, the ATS's Quick March would only rarely have been heard by veterans or the public. Its revival in 2020 was a fitting tribute not only to the Queen, but also to the members of the ATS.



Major Lauren Petritz-Watts

Female musicians play an increasingly vital part in the composition of today's Corps of Army Music and of its constituent bands, including the Bands of the Household Division. The appointment earlier this year of Major Lauren Petritz-Watts as the Director of Music of the Band of the Welsh Guards has once again highlighted this fact. Today a quarter of the members of the Coldstream Band are female, including Musician Olivia Watts.



Musician Olivia Watts, Principal Bassoon

Long may the 'Quick March of the Auxiliary Territorial Service' and the 'Lass of Richmond Hill' entertain listeners and also remind them of the loyal service of those who so proudly marched to those stirring tunes.

[Note: I am grateful to Major Stewart Halliday for much of the detail in this article.]

Maj Gen (retd) Peter G Williams CMG OBE
Formerly Coldstream Guards
Husband of Capt A C Williams (nee Rankine)
Formerly WRAC (RAEC) 1979-83

OPENING OF THE MEMORIAL TO THE WOMEN OF WW2

It started with a phone call from my eighty-five-year-old mother who was a long-time member of the WRAC association in Perth. She told me the association members could go to London to be there at the opening of the memorial to The Women of World War Two. She said she would like to go but wasn't sure about travelling there on her own, but if she was to go she could take a support person with her. How could I refuse? I know that it meant a lot to mother. I had grown up with stories of her service in the ATS and she would always describe how, as a nineteen year old volunteer member of the ATS, she was called up three days before World War Two started and went to Queens Barracks in Perth using her admin skills to sign on returning Black Watch service men. Later she would be stationed in England on various gun sites in charge of the women who manned the anti-aircraft guns. My mother would rise in rank to become RSM Dunsmore.

I had organised for someone from SSAFA to meet us at Heathrow airport. Although the memorial was to be opened on Saturday 9th July 2005 we had arranged to travel on the 7th July and take in the sights, and enjoy some of the events that were taking place to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the end of the war. As we were in the lounge in Glasgow Airport, we heard on the radio that there had been an explosion in London. We rather naively thought it might be a gas explosion, but by the time we arrived in London the pilot had confirmed it was a terrorist attack and London was in lockdown. The lady from SSAFA could not meet us but had sent a taxi, which was fantastic. It took us three hours to do what would have been a forty minute journey. Fortunately we were staying close to Whitehall so we could, on the Saturday, walk to the event where the memorial would be unveiled by Queen Elizabeth II. Looking back on it now there was never any question raised that the Queen would not be there, even given the security risks involved.

It was a lovely sunny July day as we made our way to Whitehall, where we had coffee in Cafe Churchill with a nice woman who had been in the WRENS. I remember Baroness Boothroyd coming in and wishing us good morning. We got through security and were greeted by a member of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry who showed us to our seats. There were various dignitaries there including Lady Thatcher, Dame Vera Lynn and Baroness Boothroyd. The Queen arrived calm and radiant - over the years she must have unveiled many monuments but I think this one must have been closest to her heart as she too served in the ATS. There were gasps from the crowd when the Queen unveiled the statue in black bronze depicting seventeen sets of clothing hung up to represent the many roles that women took in World War Two. I was particularly struck by the words of Baroness Boothroyd who dedicated the memorial.

"This monument is dedicated to all the women who served our country and the cause of freedom, in uniform and on the home front. I hope that future generations who pass this way will ask themselves: 'what sort of women were they?' and look at our history for the answer."

At the end of the ceremony the Queen came over to where we were sitting, and although she did not directly speak to my mother and I individually, the fact that we were able to see her so close meant a great deal to us both and something my mother would often talk about later. I always, when I watch the Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph, catch a glimpse of the monument and remember the day I was lucky enough to be at its unveiling.

Shelagh Low
Perth & Kinross



Events

PAST EVENTS

HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II'S PLATINUM JUBILEE, 2nd June 2022

We had a fabulous weekend in London celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (in June 2022). We watched the superb Fly Past, visited the Superbloom at the Tower of London where they had sown 20 million flower seeds, and met up with our first Yeoman Warder Moira Cameron. We watched the amazing Platinum Jubilee Parade in the Mall, and some of us went to the wonderful Platinum Jubilee Concert at the Royal Festival Hall.

Amazing memories made for all.

Jan Rees, Jennie Thomas, Nan Bulman, Mary Blake, June Stoneman, Pat Rosewell, Millie Elias, Helen Davies, Nell Fray, Dawn Mackender, Lyn Barton and Barbara Keeble.



EAST ANGLIAN BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds 14th – 19th June 2022

Our 2nd Beer & Cider Festival as volunteers was here again and I was delighted to have 22 willing applicants! Some helped last year but we had newbies too.

As a reminder, the WRAC Association is one of the beneficiaries of the East Anglian Beer & Cider Festival. The more hours we can give the larger the donation we receive from the profits. Last year (2021) we received an incredible £1,300.

On Day 1 we helped set up the event, putting out tables, chairs and benches in the marquee and surrounding area, fixing signage to fencing, arranging the Gin, Pimms & Prosecco Bar, washing glasses and setting up the admin/entrance area.

The girls arrived (and Sean Crowley, our Lion), aprons on ready for action! A briefing was given and then it was time to serve some beer & cider ... and sample some, of course! You have to know the quality of what you're selling!... Everyone had a fab time and looked forward to the next day. It really is unique serving beer in the cathedral. Our Dean of St Edmundsbury, the Very Revd Joe Hawes is brilliant, fun and such a forward thinker.

**The Dean of
St Edmundsbury
Joe Hawes
with Mary Blake**



Sean Crowley, Debbie Crowley, Jackie Clark, Linda Clark, Kath Kay, Karen Ballard, Mary Linnegan, Mary Blake, Gwen Greenwood, Julie Bloomfield, Wendy Hooton

The weekend came and there were some excellent tribute bands and some great entertainment. It was buzzing! There is obviously Beer and Cider but there is also a Bottled Beer bar and a Gin, Pimms & Prosecco Bar at very favourable prices.

There is a cafe in the Refectory - delicious cheese scones - and food stalls set up near the stage where they have the entertainment.

Not forgetting we had "the heatwave", which made keeping the beer and cider cool a huge challenge! They soaked towels in water placing them over the barrels and had a cold water sprinkler running over them. One keg did explode in the cathedral, but fortunately no damage!



Gina Spacey



Jan TC Rees



Pauline Milnes & Jennie Thomas



Leslie Scott



Annie Powell

All too soon it came to an end, but some great memories were made and everyone was looking forward to next year. The dates of which are 23rd - 28th August 2023 and the nearest hotel is the Premier Inn Town Centre, although the other Premier Inn is only a 15-20-minute walk. The Angel Hotel is opposite, but more expensive, and there are nearby pubs and B&B's, and campsites should you wish to visit or help next year. If you don't want to volunteer, why not come along as a visitor? For volunteers, the day is split into shifts so you can do as many or as few as you wish. Some helped doing shifts for a few days' others helped for one day. Every little helps. For visitors, the more money we take the more profit for the charities.

Please contact me for more information if you are interested as a volunteer or visitor. I'm sure you won't regret it ... ask others who have been and see the photos.

My grateful thanks to all our volunteers who thoroughly enjoyed the festival and made it a lot of fun. Here's to next year! Cheers!

Wendy Hooton

ARMED FORCES DAY 2022 Bury St Edmunds

I put the call out for some helpers on AFD and was not disappointed. We set up the stall in the local Market - my thanks to Sharon Fairweather-Murray for loaning us the gazebo and tables from West Suffolk Council. We had our usual tombola with uniforms on the mannequins to attract attention. The large Armed Forces Day flag, donated by Julie Silver, was fixed to the side of our gazebo; it was facing down Abbeygate Street for all to see as they approached the Market.

Thank you to all who gave us prizes for the tombola, they were very much appreciated. We raised a fabulous £260 for the WRAC Association. Thank you to my helpers, Helen Davies, Lyn Hatch, Andrea Denham, Mary Stearn (Chief cake maker!) and Dawn Mackender).

Wendy Hooton



AGC SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE (INCLUDING ANTECEDENT CORPS 30TH ANNIVERSARY) 6th July 2022, National Memorial Arboretum

The Adjutant General Corps (AGC) was formed in 1992 following the decline in the Soviet threat after the end of the Cold War and as The British Army downsized and streamlined. A number of Administrative Corps combined to form the AGC, and following the disbandment of The Women's Royal Army Corps, many WRAC ladies transferred to the AGC Corps.

In remembrance of those who served in the WRAC, I was given the privilege of laying a Wreath at The AGC Service of Remembrance and was accompanied by Standard Bearer, Sharon Baker-Joyce. It was a poignant and humbling occasion and was attended by families who had lost loved ones alongside Veterans, Regulars and Reservists.

Thereafter, we were invited to a delicious high tea where we sat with soldiers of all ranks and swapped stories of our time in Service. Whilst many things have changed over the years, some things have remained the same - namely camaraderie, humour and respect. What an honour it was to be amongst so many courageous and brave soldiers.

Ann Stack



**Ann Stack &
Sharon Baker-Joyce**



SUMMER EVENT 2022, NMA 30th July 2022

Saturday 30th July 2022 saw an impressive number of WRAC Association members, who had travelled from various branches, congregate at the ever-popular National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas for a Service of Dedication of the WRAC Association Tree in the AGC Antecedent Corps Grove of Trees situated near The Lion Statue. This replacement tree was a lovely purple beech, planted for posterity. Thank you to all the volunteers for making sure everyone knew where and when to be seated so everything would go to plan.

Our Vice President, Brigadier (Retd) Fiona Gardner CBE gave the welcoming speech and The Revd Frances Canham MTh officiated the service. The weather was mixed but everyone enjoyed the service and sang with gusto and pride accompanied by The Yorkshire Military Band. As ever, Director of Music, Louise Lingard-Snape performed an impressive bugle solo rendition of the Last Post followed by Reveille after the Prayer of Dedication.

Afterwards the band delighted the passing visitors as they played a selection of tunes while the association members soaked up the ambiance of the area, enjoyed their picnic lunches and caught up with friends old and new. A perfect way to end a wonderful event.

Suaviter in modo – Fortiter in re

**Shirley Gladwin
Shropshire Branch**



**Rowena Naile, Frances Canham &
Fiona Gardner**

Fagus purpurea (purple Beech) and Plaque for WRAC Association tree in AGC Antecedent Corps line of trees.



New tree in AGC Antecedent Corps line of trees

Plaque for WRAC Association tree in AGC Antecedent Corps line of trees

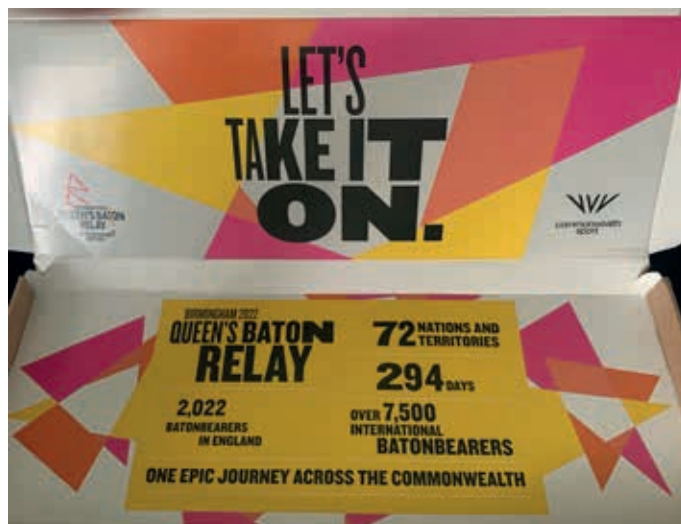


Wales & The West volunteer stewards

This comes with thanks to all of the ladies in Wales & The West Area who volunteered to steward at the Picnic and Tree Dedication. It ensured that we were able to direct our 'Girls in Green' with a cheery smile to the correct area and assist those who requested it. Your help was very much appreciated and helped to make the day a success. Alongside this, a big thank you to all of you who were able to participate in the event. Although blustery with a few drops of rain in the air, the Service and Picnic remained dry (thank goodness). Meeting up with friends and making new ones is an intrinsic part of WRAC events and this was no different. We had a wonderful service accompanied by live music, set in the beautiful surroundings of the NMA. Following our Picnic, many then viewed the tree dedicated to The WRAC; as well as visited our Memorials and Garden, and the many Monuments at The Arboretum.

Ann Stack

COMMONWEALTH GAMES, Birmingham 2022 28 July – 8 August 2022



"Bury St Edmunds takes part in the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay 9th July 2022"

I was delighted to be nominated by Babs Anderson for the 16th Official Queen's Baton Relay. It was just incredible to then be selected from all the nominations! Thank you, Babs! My thoughts went back to Eileen Hobson, RIP, my shift Sergeant in Hong Kong 1975/77. Eileen, with her dog Sailor was selected to be an Olympic Torch Bearer in 2012. A proud moment for her.

The Baton's journey began on 7th October 2021 with Her Majesty the Queen placing her message to the Commonwealth into the Baton.

I received my official uniform and then awaited the date and place I would be carrying the Baton. Luckily it was in Bury St Edmunds, where I live. The unbelievable moment was when I received the date it was the 9th July 2022, 20 years ago to the day my husband had died. I couldn't quite believe it, it was going to be an emotional day and even more special.

The day arrived and the weather couldn't have been better considering we were having a heatwave! The sky was blue, the sun was shining and there was a slight breeze, just perfect. I had a BBC radio interview in the morning and a local BBC television interview when I had finished. I was handed the Baton from Lyn Carpenter, an England National Netball player.

I walked the final leg through the Abbey Gardens and stopped on the final straight to raise the Baton to two special people - once for Her Majesty The Queen, and once for my late husband Colin. I was met by Clare Countess of Euston, the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, and other VIP's for a photograph.

At the end of my leg I asked if I could have a proper look at the Baton. Through the top I could see EIIR and a purple ribbon. The policeman, one of many protecting the Baton, did something so the top opened. I could clearly see where the message had been placed and took no time in getting my mobile phone from my pocket and taking a photo! The moment had been captured!



Wendy Hooton & the Queen's Baton in Bury St Edmunds Abbey Gardens



Wendy Hooton & the Queen's Baton in Bury St Edmunds Abbey Gardens



Lyn Carpenter, an England National Netball player, Wendy Hooton and VIP guests



The Queen's Games Message, in The Baton



Local press coverage

My grateful thanks to Mary Blake, Dawn Mackender and Nigel & Sue Wolstenholme for offering to be stewards on the day. For this the West Suffolk Council donated £100 to the WRAC Association, just brilliant!

My daughter Hannah surprised me with tickets for the Opening Ceremony of the Commonwealth Games. I was able to watch the Queen's Baton on its final journey, a spectacular evening and another special memory.

I have had an email to inform me I will be receiving a Commemorative Souvenir Mini Baton, which is 1/3rd scale of the Queen's Baton. I can't wait to receive it and it will be extra special as our most gracious Queen is no longer with us...

Wendy Hooton

"Wendy Hooton - a good cause champion and Army veteran from Bury St Edmunds was selected to be the (Eastern) region's Baton Bearer for the Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay.

Wendy was nominated by her friend and fellow Army veteran Barbara 'Babs' Anderson and was chosen to be baton bearer to champion her fund-raising efforts for the WRAC Association, which is the only charity that specifically supports female veterans including those who served in the Second World War. The day also marked the 20th anniversary of the death of her husband Colin."

The Birmingham 2022 Queen's Baton was carried around the Abbey Gardens in Bury St Edmunds and historic Abbey ruins by three baton bearers before being delivered to the Festival of Suffolk Community Games at Bury's Athletics Track.

The baton visited every corner of the Commonwealth, and across England for 29 days, before ending up at the Commonwealth Games opening ceremony in Birmingham, on July 28.

About the Queen's Baton Relay:

The Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay brings together communities and cities across the Commonwealth in the build-up to the Commonwealth Games. Baton Bearers are selected for being inspirational figures of their community who are always ready to take on a challenge: those who've made a tangible, positive impact on communities around them.

The baton itself was extremely high tech, equipped with sensors to measure the heart rate of the baton bearers, and fitted with 'lungs' for measuring atmospheric conditions, whereby all data was sent to the University of Birmingham for research purposes. This year's baton made its way 140,000km (86,992 miles) across the Commonwealth, passing through 7,500 other Baton Bearers internationally.

The first Baton bearer was Bernie Millard from Bury St Edmunds - a veteran of the Royal Marine Commandos, chairman of Bury St Edmunds British Legion, a former school teacher of 20 years and who has raised thousands of pounds for charity. He then passed the baton to Lyn Carpenter, from Thurrock in Essex, who was chosen after being involved in netball for more than 40 years.

The final leg was taken by Wendy Hooton, a fund-raising Women's Royal Army Corps veteran of 18 years, from Bury St Edmunds. Not only has Wendy raised more than £100,000 for the Women's Royal Army Corps Association charity, but also supports town events such as this year's East Anglian Beer and Cider Festival and had a stall on the market for Armed Forces Day.

After completing the final section of the relay, she said: "It felt absolutely brilliant. I'm ecstatic that I was chosen from the nominations to do this because it is a such a big thing. It is one thing to be nominated, but to be selected is just absolutely brilliant and what a fantastic day for it - lovely breeze, blue skies and the sun shining - perfect."



Wendy stopped on the final straight of the route, to lift the baton and salute two special people, by saying 'One for The Queen and one for Colin' - Wendy's husband who had died 20 years ago to the day. She said: "I could not believe it that the baton has gone all around the Commonwealth and of all the days it came to Bury St Edmunds was the 20th anniversary of Colin's passing.

HM's Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk, Clare Countess of Euston, who was one of the VIPs at the event and presented the baton to the first bearer, said: "I think this is such an exciting occasion for Bury St Edmunds. I feel it is quite emotional that this object has been the whole way around the world and we all have the privilege today to see it carried in Bury St Edmunds."

Courtesy of Suffolk News

GENERAL:

Janet Downie and Linda Butler at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games this year. Both are Yorkshire-women and have watched cricket for over 60 years, since they were children. So when they saw cricket was on the Commonwealth Games schedule they decided to attend a couple of games at Edgbaston.

Jan has been a member of the WRAC Association many years. She served in WRAC as an EAG from 1967-1971 and spent all her time at Shoburyness. Linda served 14 years as a QA at 212 & 219 Field Hospitals(V) from 1984-1997, and joined the WRAC Association 2 years ago.

Linda lives in West Bromwich and is a member of Birmingham Branch, though never been to a meeting ... yet. Jan is not in a branch [Editor: yet?].



Linda (right) and sister Janet Downie

CYCLEFEST, August 2022

Over the years CycleFest has evolved and is now a week of activities held in Kent, just outside of Ashford. This year the week also included Stand-up paddle boarding, sea swimming and canoeing/kayaking.

The first ride out celebrated Pat (Budgie) Rosewell's 70th birthday, and this was marked with a cycle ride to Headcorn aerodrome and a surprise flight for Budgie. Yes, at last the Budgie would fly for a wing walk. Budgie, as always, took it all in her stride. She impressed the pilot so much her flight was slightly extended. Supported on the ground by the CycleFest gals this was a cracking way to start the week.



The following days involved bike rides and trips to Hythe for paddle boarding, canoeing/kayaking and sea swimming, although Leona Goffin, Karen Baxter and Cheryl Jones nearly ended up in Calais after taking a wrong turn on the M20.

There were also days of cycling, and most evenings saw a sing-song with Julie White kindly leading the choir. I'm glad we live in the middle of nowhere and have a very understanding neighbour in Jade who just loved hearing the singing and laughter.

The girls also enjoyed a meal out at the local pub on the Saturday evening with a new location this year, which saw us all have a fantastic meal and host at the Chequers on the Green. We all must have behaved as we are welcome back in 2023.

The annual time trial did not disappoint with the speedy Karen Radford taking top honours. Thank you to the marshals who made this safe for the ladies to complete. Thanks also go to Sally Howson, Jane Pendred and of course Ali Steed for stepping up being ride leaders so the ladies were safe when riding out.

CycleFest2023 will again be a week-long event. Details are on the WRAC Veterans Cycle Club Facebook page if you're interested or contact Liz King liz@trispiritevents.com

Liz King



MARG DAVIES - KEEP ON WALKING 2022 Scotland Completed, 2023 Ireland – Here I come

In April 2022 Denise and I made a leisurely, two-day journey to Scotland, stopping for the night at Carlisle. This was only my second venture 'over the border', the previous occasion being when I was a young 2nd Lieutenant back in 1972! Another young officer and I decided to go on a car tour on our week's leave from 2 Training Company, Guildford. If my memory serves me correctly, the rain started as we crossed the border on the A1 just north of Berwick and continued past Edinburgh and Perth to Dundee. It was still raining as we stopped beside Loch Ness searching for Nessie (how we got there eludes me!). At that point we cut our losses and turned south past Glasgow and back over the border, where it promptly stopped raining!!



So, fifty years later, my hopes were not high for decent weather. How wrong could I be? On Thursday 21st April 2022 we crossed the border on the M6/M74 in glorious sunshine and headed past Lockerbie towards Glasgow and then onward on the M80/M9/A9 towards the Cairngorms. The skies were blue and the scenery breath-taking. Although we were spending two nights in Inverness, we detoured to Spean Bridge (and admired the Commando Memorial from afar) and thence to Fort Augustus and Inverness so that we could see the lie of the land in the Great Glen before I started my walk.

On Friday 22nd April 2022 we drove from our hotel to Fort George, just outside Inverness, where I was to start my walk. It was an early 8.30am start, but I was delighted and honoured to meet-up with 3 ex-WRAC, Moira Thom, Margaret Irvine and Ann Sinclair, who had travelled in the wee small hours from Aberdeen to wish me well on my journey. Sadly, the weather was not quite so welcoming, there was a stiff 'breeze' and a persistent sea mist. We took some photos and had a wander around the outside of Fort George (it's an active Army Barracks, home to the Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (3 SCOTS)).

**Moira, Ann & Margaret
seeing me off**



I started my walk with a cheery wave from my well-wishers and headed back towards Ardersier and Culloden. Before I had to cross the main A96 road Denise picked me up (she'd had to get some petrol as we had been driving on fumes since arriving in Inverness!) and drove me to Cawdor which had strong links to my home-county, Pembrokeshire. I had a lovely walk around the woods of Cawdor Estate. It reminded me so much of Stackpole Estate Woods not far from Pembroke. After a quick snack we headed for Clava Cairns and Culloden (to make-up the missing Great Glen miles). Walking in these historic areas certainly gave me plenty of food for thought; I really felt I was walking with history as both were very atmospheric and thought-provoking settings. So, around 20 miles walking completed on Day 1 in four different locations around the Inverness area.

My walk 'proper', along the Great Glen Way, started on Saturday 23rd April at Inverness. I walked the 80+ miles of the Great Glen Way via Fort Augustus and onto the finish in Fort William on Thursday 28th April, where I was delighted to be met by two more ex-WRAC intrepid travellers, Liz Dixon and Janette Deans who had journeyed across Scotland to greet me as I walked to the finishing post (even though I'd apparently tried to ignore them!!).



**Start of the last day's
walking**

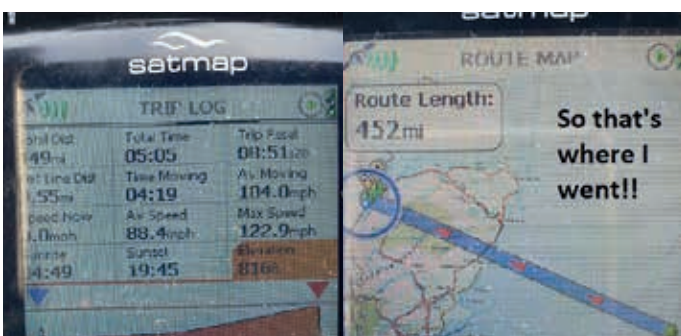


Liz Dixon and Janette Deans

You can read a blow-by-blow account of each daily walk (together with pictures) in my Blog 'Marg Davies Charity Walks' on Blogspot (<http://margdavieswalks.blogspot.co.uk>)

Usually something funny/weird happens on my walks and Scotland was no exception!! When I do these solo walks I'm well-prepared: I have paper maps, guide pamphlets (if available), my Satmap "gizmo" (which tells me where I am) and a walking activity app on my phone which tells me where I've been. It's a bit like belt, braces, extra string and emergency knicker elastic just in case!! Day 2 of my walk was long but, come mid-day, it was going really well. I'd started with a damp climb up into the low cloud beyond Inverness. As the day progressed the weather had cleared a bit; the afternoon was looking very promising weather-wise, and I'd had an excellent lunch at the Eco-Café at Abriachan. My Satmap showed I had completed 12.5 miles, so I probably had another 8 or so miles before reaching Drumnadrochit. Suddenly, my Satmap decided to have a funny turn! In fact it went completely, stark-staring bonkers!! One minute it said I had done 12.5 miles and the next 430 miles!! Fortunately, I had my 'back-ups' with me and the trail itself was clear and well signposted. It was only when I got back to our accommodation later that afternoon that I was able to see what had happened.

In the two-minute hiccup my Gizmo had shot off to the middle of the North Sea and back (I blame the Russians!!). According to the gizmo that day I had done the following: Total Distance – 452 miles; Av Speed – 80.7 mph; Max Speed – 122.9 mph!!!! The one thing I could happily agree with was that I had been walking for 5hrs 36mins!! That day, in truth, I had actually walked just over 20 miles at an average speed of just over 3mph!!



I loved my time in Scotland where the weather was perfect for walking; reasonably dry while not too hot, a slight breeze but not enough to set you back. The scenery was stunning and the walking itself pleasant enough on the forest tracks, when I wasn't being run-over by massive logging trucks. As I had thought, I was wise to start at Inverness and get the hilly bits over whilst I was still fairly fresh. The later days, walking near the lochs and canal, were a lot easier on the knees. Everyone had been telling me to be wary of "the midges!" I think I came across one in the whole time I was there - it photo-bombed me whilst I was taking a selfie beside a loch!!



This year, again, I have been humbled by everyone's kind and generous donations. This was the first year that I had used 'Give As You Live' as a fundraising platform and it seemed to work well.

I was delighted to be able to raise £4,399.63 + £695.50 Gift Aid (total £5,095.13) for my two charities, the WRAC Association and The National Caribbean Memorial Charity. My grateful thanks to everyone who has supported me.

2023 100 Mile Walking Challenge

I am now planning my 2023 walk which will take place in Northern Ireland (mainly west Fermanagh and south Tyrone) in late April 2023. Normally I do one 100-mile linear route from point A to point B. This time I will be doing a series of walks, some circular, in and around two forested areas of Northern Ireland, occasionally criss-crossing the border with the Republic of Ireland. You can read about my past walks and follow me in Ireland in April at <http://margdavieswalks.blogspot.co.uk>. I have met with Sylvia Connachan and will liaise with her to try and rendezvous with some of the ladies of Ulster Branch.

As usual I am hoping to raise funds for two charities; this time it's the WRAC Association and the Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund in Memory of Mel Howells (friend, ex-WRAC and colleague) who recently died from Pancreatic Cancer.

In the UK, around 10,000 new cases of pancreatic cancer are diagnosed each year and it has the lowest survival rate of all common cancers – only around 5% of those diagnosed survive for five years or more.

I realise that there are many calls upon your finances these days, but I would be very grateful if you could donate to my fundraising, and I assure you that all of your donation will go to the two charities where it will help change lives. Use the address below or scan the QR Code: <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/margs-ireland-100-mile-charity-walk-2023>



EVENTS - FORTHCOMING

ATS 80TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION Great Yarmouth, Sunday 14th May 2023 14.00, Imperial Hotel, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk

2023 marks the 80th anniversary of the air raid that claimed the lives of 26 ATS ladies.

We will, therefore, be appropriately honouring them with a short service at the plaque dedicated to them at the Imperial Hotel, North Drive, Great Yarmouth.

The short Act of Remembrance and Commemoration will be followed by tea and cakes in the hotel.

For catering purposes we will need to know how many people to expect – please see page 63 for a Booking Form.
Cost £5 per Member.

This event saw the single largest loss of ATS lives during World War II.

Come join us to remember them, their service and their sacrifice, in this the year that also marks the 85th anniversary of the formation of ATS (in 1938).

Following the report and article in the last edition of Lioness we received the following:

"I do remember those ATS ladies, or at least some of them. I was 8 years old; my brother was 9 during WW2.

My brother and I were playing on the recreation ground behind where the ATS ladies were billeted; we heard cries of laughter and screaming so, being curious kids, we climbed the wall to see what was going on. Several of the ladies were playing with a ball, then they spotted us peering over the wall and called us down to join them. They helped us down from the wall and we joined them in their game. After a while we stopped playing and we sat with them chatting, they gave us orange juice and cake, then it was time to leave. They then helped us back over the wall. One of the one's who helped me gave me hug and said 'when the war is over she would come back and adopt me'. Little did we know what was to happen then.

A couple of days later, early in the morning on that fateful day, my brother and I were having tea and toast with some soldiers we had met earlier who were billeted at a house on North Drive, No.36, two houses from Salisbury Road going north on North Drive. We finished our tea and toast, said thanks and walked across the North Drive and stood on the sea wall looking straight out to sea. There was a solitary soldier manning a gun emplacement located on the north end of the boating lake surrounded with sandbags.

I saw him standing looking out to sea, then something strange happened, coming towards us was what looked like a torpedo coming straight at us, it was almost touching the sea. As it got closer, we could see the pilot in his goggles and hat like a skull cap. As it got closer still it pulled up over our heads, then we realised it was a plane. At that moment we heard explosions further south down North Drive; we raced across the road to

the front yard of the house we had just left and ducked down behind a low fence. Then I peered over, looking towards where the explosion came from just in time to see a building collapsing across the North Drive with lots of dust coming from it. Suddenly we were picked up by two soldiers and raced inside the house, pushed down on the floor and told to stay down. Unfortunately, the soldier who picked up my brother jumped on top him and pushed the air out of him with a big gasp and a groan.

Then all went quiet, except for explosions around the town. We got up and went outside, the dust was still rising from the house south down North Drive. We then spotted a lot of smoke and dust coming from the direction of our home and we were off running as fast as our little legs would carry us because we thought it was our place that had been hit. We raced along Salisbury Road, over North Denes road into the passage behind our house. Outside our gate was a lady covered from head to toe in soot, it was our Mother looking for us. An explosion close by had blown the soot down our chimney right through the house and my mother was inside at the same time and got totally covered in soot, it took weeks to clean up the house and herself.

It wasn't till a day or so later that we realised that the house we saw collapsing across the North Drive was the same house where we had played games with the ATS girls. That so many had died shocked us and we were very upset because we had enjoyed a very happy time for just a moment, in time of war. I am 87 years old now and those girls have always had a special place in my heart. At the moment I am writing a book on my memories of WW2 from the age of 5 years old, and those ATS GIRLS, who gave us so much joy, will have a very special mention. Sadly, I do not remember any of their names.

I now live in Western Australia, having migrated here in the sixties, so I hope that my memories can help to remember those ATS ladies somehow. The memories of the war stay deep in the mind. Many years ago, I was living with my family of 5 children in Albany, Western Australia, when I was fast asleep one night and there was huge crack of thunder. I shot out of bed; my mind was racing, I had to get my children down the air raid shelter. I stopped at their bedroom door realising it was just thunder, but still a bad memory.

***Kind Regards
Eric A Beckett (and Doris Beckett)***



PIP (FLEGEL) & EWOK'S SCOOTER SPRINT 2023 17th – 22nd July 2023

It all started on 17th March 1971 at the tender age of 17, when my journey began in the Army. The Courts signed my papers to join the WRAC and I took the Oath at Coventry Army Careers Office. It was a date that was to change my life and set me on the road to the best times of my life. Basic training was 6 weeks at Queen Elizabeth Barracks Guildford where I soon learned the meaning of the words Loyalty, Comradeship and Friendship.

After five really enjoyable years I was unexpectedly discharged and started a new life in civvy street. I developed nomadic tendencies and lived everywhere and never actually met up with old comrades and friends. Then one day I was introduced to The WRAC Association. I am now in touch with old comrades and have made new friends, enjoyed reunions and fantastic get togethers which is all thanks to the Association. Closer to home we have formed the Manchester Branch which has quickly developed into a thriving group who meet every month and enjoy various activities and days out.

So, in recognition of the benefits that my Service in the Army and the WRAC Association have brought into my life, I have come up with this challenge as my way of giving something back to the Association.

My Challenge will trace my steps from my enlistment to the location of my Basic Training and will be raising money for the WRAC Association. The challenge will commence on Monday 17th July 2023, at 1000hrs and will consist of myself and Ewok on my mobility scooter aka "The Pip-ellium Falcon". Ewok and I will travel from Coventry Army Careers Office to Guildford Cathedral via the monuments located where Queen Elizabeth Barracks used to be. The approximately 150 miles will take us roughly 6 days at an average speed of 5 miles an hour and will finish on Saturday 22nd July 2023.

I am so lucky to have the "Pip Stop Crew" to support me on my journey, which consists of: a team of 3 WRAC Veterans, Dawn Hawker (PR Agent), Issy Hamilton-Conboy (Catering), Jacky Walton (pacemaker/guide); REME Veteran Jeff Hawker (scooter engineer) and RE Veteran Frank Spencer (logistics).

We will hopefully be offered bed and breakfast, and maybe a shower, at the military barracks we will be passing on our way. I have even booked a number 4 haircut just in case I don't get a wash for a week!

I will be setting up a "Just Giving Page" in the near future and we will be carrying collection buckets to wave at people en route. Hopefully we will be able to get local media involved and highlight not only the WRAC Association but also the wider issues faced by female veterans.

Initial planning of my route takes me through Coventry, Banbury, Oxford, Aldershot and finishes in Guildford. I would love it if we could meet up with fellow Lionesses on my journey through the towns and villages to give me encouragement and support. Members from local Branches would be a very welcome sight indeed. Finally, a welcome from members would be perfect on the steps of the Cathedral with a celebration on the Saturday night with all welcome.

A perfect way to end my journey from enlistment to passing out of Guildford.

Cheers
Pip Flegel and Ewok



SUMMER EVENT 2023 Saturday 29th July 2023 12.00 start

**Come join us for a visit to Worthy Down
(if you were posted there at any time you
are unlikely to recognise it now).**

**Walk the new Heritage Trail, with mentions
of the WRAC's history and connections to
the site.**

**See the re-planted Association Rose
Garden and enjoy a picnic lunch.**

**There will also be an opportunity to go on
to the AGC Museum in Winchester, which
holds some ex-ATS and ex-WRAC materials
and information.**

**Exact details for the day are still being
discussed and worked through, so for
now please complete the 'Expression of
Interest' Form on page 63 and we will keep
you updated with information, timings,
cost, etc.**

**Nearer the time we will also confirm
your attendance – and ask you for some
additional information, for security
purposes (eg car / vehicle registration
details). All attendees will also need
some form of photo ID (eg driving licence,
passports & veterans railcard, veterans
card, etc). A Function Pass will be issued
to everyone by the Gate Security team.**



WRAC LIONESSES 11th ANNUAL FUNDRAISING 10k

17th September 2023 Worcester City Run

COME AND JOIN US FOR A DAY OR WEEKEND OF FUN AND LAUGHTER

RUNNERS, WALKERS AND SUPPORTERS ALL WELCOME
(Walkers must complete within 2 hours)

POST RUN SUPPER & RAFFLE
(Proceeds to the WRAC Association)

DATE: Sunday 17th September 2023

TIME: 0900hrs

PLACE: Worcester City Centre

(Entry details coming soon on our Facebook group)

Contact WENDY HOOTON for more information:

Email: wendyhootonski@aol.com Mobile: 07775505326

Facebook Wendy Hooton

ASK TO JOIN our WRAC LIONESSES FUNDRAISING GROUP ON FACEBOOK
(All requests will be sent a direct message on Messenger prior to acceptance).
[Wendy will let you all know when entries open]

WE ARE WAITING FOR YOU....



ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund

**Making A
Difference**

Are you unable to attend events due to finances? Worried about the cost to attend branch meetings or trips?

Then the Membership Support Grant may be able to assist. This grant was introduced to assist members to attend either Branch or Association social events where without financial assistance they would be unable to do so. Grants can be awarded up to £100 per event but must not exceed £200 per year per member. Eligibility criteria applies.

Want to know more?

Contact Julie Winks on 07741 327094 or email: benfund@wraca.org.uk



How can the Benevolent Fund Help?

One-Off And Recurring Grants

The ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund awards one-off financial grants to purchase specific goods, services or facilities for eligible former servicewomen, or their dependents, in need. The charity also provides regular payments (Recurring Grants) to former servicewomen who are either elderly, alone, living on low incomes or in ill health, and makes contributions to top-up care-home fees and the costs of care at home.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR HELP?

Any former ATS or WRAC servicewoman, including TA, with one day's paid service or more, is eligible for assistance.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER CRITERIA?

Yes, you must be in need of financial help. There's also a limit on the amount of savings that you can have above which the Benevolent Fund is unable to make an award.

ONE OFF GRANTS

The fund has helped with one-off grants in a wide range of categories.

REGULAR CHARITABLE PAYMENTS:

- Princess Royal Memorial Fund Annual Maintenance Grants (AMG) – a grant to help with day-to-day living expenses. Applicants will be of State Retirement Age, living on a low income.
- Overseas Princess Royal Memorial Fund Annual Maintenance Grant (Overseas PRMF AMG) – these have the same criteria as the AMG but for those ex service women living overseas.
- Ben Fund Annual Maintenance Grant (AMG) – this grant is for applicants below state pension age where there is a long term need for support. It would apply to those who are unable to find employment through no fault of their own due to being persistently in poor health or caring for family members.
- Ben Fund Support Supplement (SS) – a short term grant of variable duration for those applicants below State Retirement Age. It can be used to cover income shortfalls arising from delays in receiving state benefits or short term loss of salary due to medical treatment.
- Care Enhancement Grant (CEG) – weekly assistance for beneficiaries of state pensionable age to cover nursing/care home fees top up, care at home or a personal expense allowance for those resident in a nursing/care home.
- All Regular Charitable Payments are reviewed on an annual basis.

SO HOW DO YOU APPLY FOR HELP?

If you are a former ATS or WRAC regular or TA servicewoman who needs assistance, or if you know someone who does, then your first port of call is your local branch of SSAFA or regional Royal British Legion (RBL) office. SSAFA or the RBL will arrange for a trained caseworker to interview you in your home to establish the full range of assistance that you need. The caseworker will complete a report that includes details of your household income. This is called means-testing and ensures that your Benevolent Fund's charitable money goes to those in real need. When the report is complete it is sent to the Benevolent Fund Secretary. Once received, applications are considered at the appropriate grants committee meeting and a decision is taken.

RBL: 0808 802 8080

www.britishlegion.org.uk/about-us/contact-us



SSAFA: 0800 731 4880

www.ssafa.org.uk/help-you/do-you-need-our-help-or-support



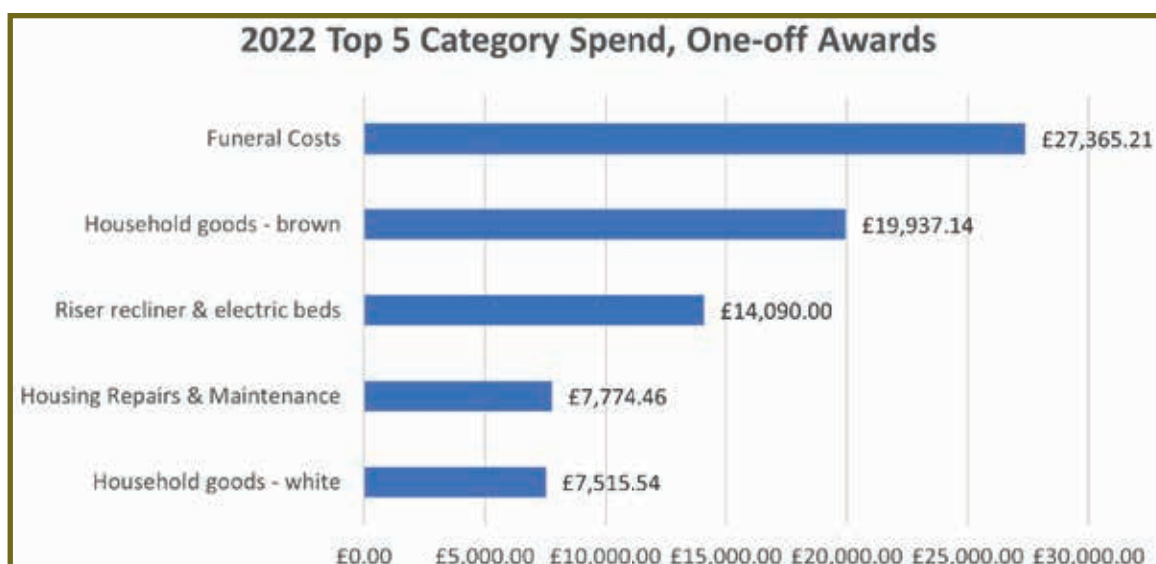
Applications for the above grants cannot be accepted direct by the Benevolent Fund Secretary.

BENEVOLENT FUND EXPENDITURE

Key Facts 2022

- 188 applications for assistance were received during 2022 with 147 awards granted.
- 13 beneficiaries have been awarded one of our Annual Maintenance Grants for the next year.
- 6 beneficiaries are supported with Nursing Home Top Up Fees.

The top 5 one-off grant categories during 2022 are listed below.



Awards are also made for the following categories:

house repairs

general needs

carpets and flooring

electric wheelchairs/mobility aids

furniture

priority debt

respite breaks

food vouchers

removal expenses

bathroom adaptations

central heating

clothing

white goods

house adaptations

rent, deposits and bonds

travel and transport

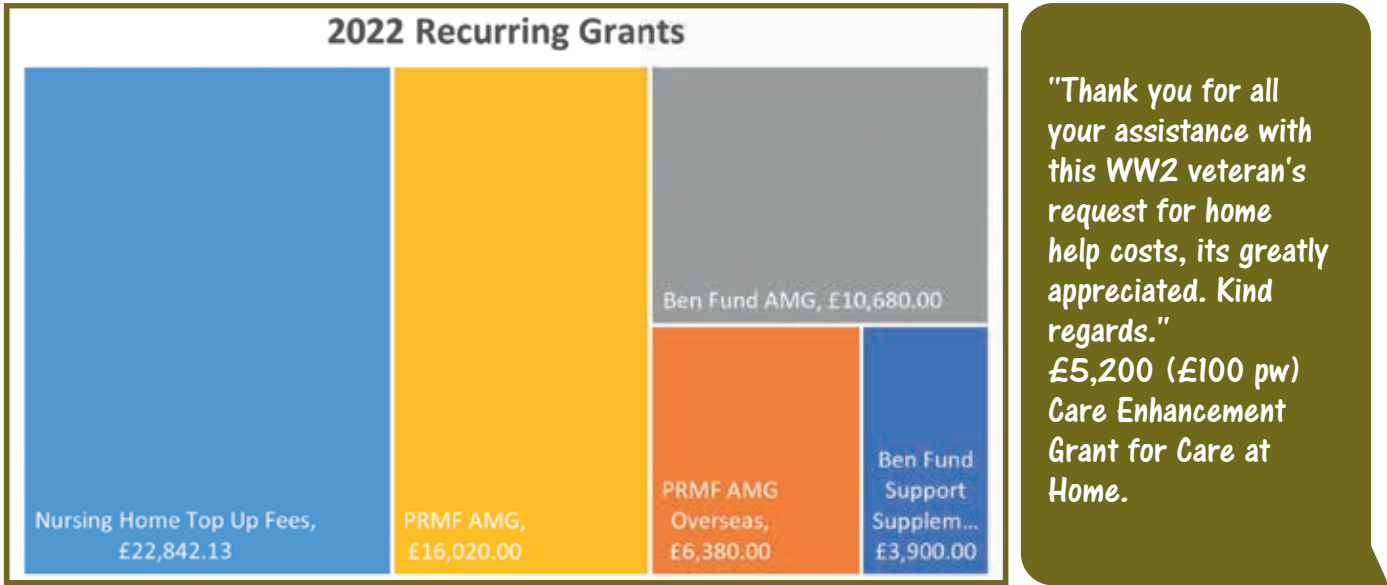
funeral costs

disability grants

ONE OFF GRANTS

Recurring Grants

As well as awarding one-off grants for specific items or goods the Ben Fund also assists with several recurring grants. These grants are awarded for a period of one year, except for the Support Supplement, and are reviewed annually. These grants are to assist those beneficiaries that are on low income, with daily living costs or to assist with Nursing Home Fees. Please see the section entitled 'How Can the Ben Fund Help' above for more details of the grants available.



"When I told XXX about the award, she burst into tears and stated that she had just been wondering how she was going to pay all these increasing bills. She is really grateful and always thanks me for the help she gets from SSAFA and the Benevolent Fund. Thank you." £2,670 (£50 pw) Ben Fund Annual Maintenance Grant.

"Thank you so much for helping my client. She is absolutely delighted and very grateful for your support. Her son is her carer and now their lives will be much easier with these items. Thank you very much." £238.97 White Goods.

Struggling with money?

Find out what you're
entitled to.



Find benefits, grants and financial support online.



Benefits Calculator

Use the benefits calculator to check what benefits, tax credits and other state support you are entitled to.

Turn2us online tools are independent of government agencies including the Department of Work and Pensions. Your information will remain confidential.

turn2us.org.uk/benefitscalculator



Grants Search

Use our Grants Search to check if you are eligible for a cash grant. Charitable grants do not have to be paid back.

turn2us.org.uk/grantssearch



Information and Support

Go online to find what other financial support is available.

turn2us.org.uk

BRANCH NEWS

Benefits of being a Branch/Group member – some of your views:

“Membership raises awareness of the military in society. Members are informed of, and invited to, the national events which keep the role of women in the armed forces in the public eye.” KA

“Being part of the WRAC Association and a member of your local branch gives us all a sense of togetherness, a sense of friendship, loyalty and above all laughter”. PF

- **If you organise or co-ordinate a group of female veterans, whether as a Branch or Special Interest Group (be that crafting, in-take or leaving years, where you served, what trade or unit you were attached to, sport, a hobby, etc, etc) please let us know.**
- **Share your news with us.**
- **We will happily share that information with other members and help promote your Group, what you do and who to contact for more information and/or to get involved.**

The most important thing is that you are women ‘Supporting Female Veterans’ – the size or nature of the group matters not. And we are here to help you.

If any branch/group does not list their meeting details (eg when, where, what, etc) please telephone or email their contact person, or look them up on social media – as per their request.

London & South East

Area Co-ordinator:

Nina Smith

Email: southeast.area@wraca.org

wracnina@yahoo.co.uk

Tel: 07771 834 730

Canterbury

When: 13.00 on the first Wednesday of the month (except Jan, Feb, Mar)
Where: Newport Court, Cowdray Place, Old Dover Road, Canterbury, CT1 3PB
Contact: Jenny Smith
Tel: 01843-613552

Greater London

When: 14.00 Saturdays in March, May, July and September
Where: Please phone for details
Contact: Chrissie Mills
Tel: 020 8578 2715

Invicta

When: 4th Saturday of each month
Contact: Karen Radford (Chair)
email: mousemole@msn.com,
or Jackie Elliman (Sec)
Facebook: WRAC Invicta Branch

London

When: 1st weekend of each month
Contact: Lauren Fia MacKenzie
Tel: 07709 172351

Worthing

When: 11.00 last Tuesday of the month (except December)
Where: Lancing Methodist Church Hall
Contact: Janet McKechnie
Tel: 01273-249746

Canterbury

MaryAnn Clark

On December 7th the Canterbury branch met for our annual Christmas lunch at the Miller's Arms Canterbury. A most enjoyable lunch was had by all who managed to attend. We also discussed what exciting things we will be doing in the new year.



Christmas lunch

Greater London

Elaine Osborne

On 18 November In-Pensioner Connie Evans (ATS) of The Royal Hospital Chelsea turned 101 years old. Connie is a member of The Greater London Branch of the WRAC Association. The RHC threw her a lovely party – with ‘101 Dalmatians’ decorations.



Virginia Hopson, Connie and Ron in his tuxedo

Invicta

Karen (Radders) Radford

What a year we have all had. Invicta Branch has grown in numbers although we still have some shy ones out there who have yet to join us on our monthly meals and WRAC events.

This year has seen some poignant birthdays for some, Grand Reunion and Dinner Club events (to name a few); the Festival of Remembrance Royal Albert Hall and the veterans March at the Cenotaph for others.

If Branch members want to become involved please feel free to contact Karen Radford, Eve Carroll or Jackie Elliman on FB, Instagram or through the Association.

If anyone is nervous or worried about meeting up we can always manage a little private get together with a small number so you can test the water. We don't bite, promise! We are all veterans alike who enjoy each other's company and have fun.

Worthing

Carolyn Hill

Three events to tell you about since our last report. The first, the Queen's Jubilee Garden party, combined with our Eddie Sinclair's 100th birthday – quite a day. She looked a picture on her very special day. Our thanks to Cathy Munro for providing the ATS flags that pleased her so much, and a birthday telegram from the ATS pay office, where Eddie used to work.

The second, a visit to the model railway at Pulborough Garden Centre, a favourite passion and pastime of Dave and Maggie Costan. Maggie very sadly passed away 4 years ago now, but Dave invited us to see the carriage specially built in honour of his wife. Maggie's train was lovingly crafted with our badge. We were treated to complimentary tickets for the ride, and visited the cafe for refreshments. A really lovely day out.



Eddie Sinclair



Pulborough Garden Centre model railway - & Maggie's carriage

The third was a long overdue (COVID) commemoration of the glass window on Worthing Pier. The branch commissioned the window to honour all those members who have passed on since we started the group 12 years ago. We invited some of the families we are still in touch with, and our Chairman gave a speech explaining some of our history and reason for being. We were pleased that our Area Co-ordinator, Nina Smith, was also able to join us on this occasion. The motto at the bottom of the window says how we feel about it 'Too good in life, to be forgotten in death'.



Commemorative window on Worthing Pier



Eastern

Area Co-ordinator: Lyn Hatch

Email: eastern.area@wraca.org.uk

Cambridge

Contact: Jean Farrington

Tel: 01223 503867

Email: jeanfarrington62@gmail.com;

Facebook: Cambridge Branch WRAC Association

Colchester & District

Contact: Kerry Warnes

Tel: 0776 3122474

Email: kerrypam@hotmail.com;

Facebook: WRAC/ATS Veterans of Colchester and Surrounding Areas

Grantham

Contact: Lou Davies

email: tonymitzy1@hotmail.co.uk

Herts/Bucks/Beds

Contact: Chris Barratt

01799 526671

Email: 78chrisbarrett@gmail.com;

Facebook: WRAC/ATS (Herts, Beds, Bucks)

Leicestershire & Nottinghamshire

When: 13.30, 2nd Tuesday of the month

Where: Devonshire Place, 78 London Road, Leicester, LE2 0RA

Contact: Sue Slattery

Tel: 0116 259 2743

Lincoln & District

When: 12.00-14.00, 3rd Tuesday of the month

Where: Holy Cross Church Hall, Skillingthorpe Road, Lincoln, LN6 7RB.

Contact: Sue Smith Tel: 01636-671874

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/Lincoln&District

Lincolnshire

When/Where: Very informal group, meeting as and when commitments allow.

Contact: Mary@faver.plus.com or Suebevers@btinternet.com

Norfolk

Contact: Lyn Hatch

Tel: 07929 070665;

Email wracnorfolk@aol.com;

Facebook: WRAC/ATS Veterans Norfolk

Peterborough & District

Contact: Dot Ryder / Chris Corker
Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/groups/WRACPeterborough

Suffolk

Contact: Liz Ives
Tel: 01473 807099 / 07714-259949;
Email – eaissafa@outlook.com

Colchester & District

Heather Savin

I would like to start by thanking everyone that was involved in producing the edition of the Lioness that paid tribute to Queen Elizabeth II. It was a very good read and showed the close links between her Majesty and the military. Some members of the branch paid tribute at the AFVBC on 18th September, where a table was laid out in her memory. The occasion ended with a port toast in honour of Her Majesty.



So, an update from our branch. Seaside Havoc went ahead as planned thanks to Vinnie Vincent's hard work. The weather was amazing, thankfully not too hot. Although attendance was down on previous years, we still had a great time, and the annual tug of war competition was held. Unfortunately, the losing side were robbed by a technicality (the other team were better!) but as they say it is the taking part that matters. Lyn Hatch joined us and was brave enough to go for a swim. It was lovely to meet up and have a good catch up, especially with those who are not always able to get to Colchester.



Seaside Havoc Tug-of-War

Our next event was a Buffet and Disco held at the Belle Vue Social Club in celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Once again, they did us proud with an amazing spread. This was a joint event with the AFVBC and our branch, arranged by Kerry Warnes. Plenty of dancing, eating and drinking (not too much – honest) took place, with a good time had by all.



Unfortunately, the planned barbecue did not come to fruition, but it will definitely happen next year, all things being equal. We hope to be able to confirm the date in early 2023, so members can put it in their calendars. At the time of writing the proposed Games Night remains in the planning stage.

In September branch members attended the funeral of Wilma Sutton (ex WRAC) and helped form the Guard of Honour, along with members of the Colchester Branch of the Royal British Legion. Although Wilma was not a member of the branch, she was well known in the veteran community, through her work with the RBL.

Our members took part in Remembrance Parades at various locations. Two branch members, Jenni Rizzuto and I attended in Colchester. It was the first time singing 'God Save the King'. There was a great sense of pride marching along the High Street with members of the public applauding all the veterans. It is hoped that more members will be able to attend next year and represent the WRAC Association.

Our Christmas Lunch, on 10th December 2022, is again with the Colchester AFVBC. Kerry is taking the lead on the organisational front for this one. We will be doing our take on a raffle, the exact format has yet to be decided, although on a previous occasion a "speed raffle" went down well.

Time to think about 2023, when the AGM is likely to be our first event.

Leicestershire & Nottinghamshire

Chris Corker

It would be remiss of us not to mention the sad news of the death of our Patron, HM the Queen. Her passing has left a hole in all our hearts which can never be filled. She was steadfast, constant, dutiful and throughout all the highs and lows remained the most loved lady of all time. We are so proud to have served in the ATS and WRAC and to have been able to call her "Our Boss".

June 21st: Members met at Palmers Garden Centre, Enderby for lunch.

June 25th: Armed Forces Day - 4 members and Lyn with the Standard attended the parade and service in Leicester.



Lyn on Parade at Armed Forces Day

July 12th: A social meeting with tea and cakes and finalising some future events. The branch held a quiz which was related to HM the Queen and was compiled by Sandra Smith and taught us some things we did not know. A letter was received from Fiona thanking us for her invitation to the Jubilee Lunch. Agnes Doig celebrated her 91st birthday.

July 20th: Members and friends went for a ride on the Grand Central Railway departing and returning to Loughborough with a stop for lunch at Quorn.

July 30th: Six members of the branch attended the tree dedication at the NMA.



Members at Grand Central Railway



Chris, Dot, Sue, Anne, Debbie, Carol and Gus at NMA

August 16th. Some of the branch members went for a cruise on the Symphony from Loughborough to Mountsorrel, where they stopped for lunch and then cruised back to Loughborough.



September Meeting was cancelled.

September 20th: 5 members met at Eye Kettleby Lakes for lunch.

October 11th: A 2-minute silence was held for HM the Queen.

A very quick AGM was held, and the previous officers were re-elected. A hilarious game of Bingo followed.

October 24th: Carol Morris and Sue Slattery attended a meeting of all Veteran Associations in Leicestershire at the LCC in Glenfield.

October 29th: Carol Morris and Sue Slattery sold poppies at the Leicester City football stadium.

November 8th: 15 members attended the meeting with a Christmas Bring and Buy Theme. There was a wide selection of goodies to buy and some slices of Sandra's lovely Victoria sponge. A lively discussion took place on events for 2023 with details to be finalised.

By the time this article is read we shall be well into 2023 and we would like to wish all fellow Lionesses a healthy and prosperous year.

Norfolk

Lyn Hatch

It's been a busy summer. Taking advantage of the lovely weather the walking group have continued to meet on the first Wednesday of the month.

On Norfolk Day the group met at Oxnead Bridge on the river Bure for a picnic and an opportunity to kayak. It turned into an adventurous day - the launch site was in a field where a herd of cows also used the slip way to drink from the river. The whole herd, including the bull, decided to join the party, at this point there was a hasty retreat and the group spent the rest of the day walking around Oxnead Hall and church.



Liz Winter kayaking at Oxnead Bridge on the river Bure

In September a few of us met for lunch at the Recruiting Sergeant, and we welcomed Fiona Shortis to the branch.

Due to other commitments, this year we held our Christmas lunch early. It was well attended, the biggest gathering for some time this year. It was lovely to catch up with everyone and great to start planning our events for next year.

On a sad note, Joan Awbery, who was the driving force of the branch for many years, passed away in November. She was a great supporter of the Association, and she will be dearly missed.



Christmas lunch

North West

Area Co-ordinator:

Dawn Hawker

Contact: northwest.area@wraca.org.uk

Bury & Rochdale

Branch closed but if you would like more information please contact Dawn Hawker: northwest.area@wraca.org.uk

Cumbria

If you are interested in joining a newly forming Cumbria Informal Branch please Contact: Kerryanne Wilde on 07972 799307 or Email khtraining@aol.com

Lancashire

If you are interested in meeting for the occasional informal Saturday lunch Where: At the Walton Fox, Bamber Bridge, Preston
Contact: Gail Newsham on 07939 505485 or Email gaildkl@talktalk.net

Liverpool

When: 12noon, 1st Wednesday monthly
Where: The Holiday Inn, Lime St, LN1 1NQ (opposite the station)
Contact: Pat Brown
Tel: 0151 724 5966 / 07896-486171
Email: pat-br@hotmail.co.uk

Manchester

When: 11.00 2nd Sunday of the month
Where: The Swinging Bridge, Trafford Boulevard, Trafford Park, M41 7JE
Contact: Pip Flegel 07375-095532
Email: pipflegel2009@gmail.com

Oldham

When: 19.00/19.15 3rd Thursday of the month
Where: Different restaurants – phone for details
Contact: Kath Kirtley 07910 925070 kathleenkirtley@gmail.com
or Susan Feeney 0781 3313508 susan4michael@yahoo.co.uk

Wirral & Chester

When: 19.00, 3rd Tuesday each month
Where: TA Centre, Chetwynd, Wexford Road, Oxtan, Birkenhead, L43 9TF
Contact: Sharon Broderick MBE (Chair) Tel: 07784-068826
Email: sharonbroderick139@sky.com
Jean Hayes (Secretary)
Email: Hayes_3000@yahoo.co.uk

Manchester

Pip Flegel & Lieann Andrew

After 2 years of lock down due to Covid WRAC Manchester Branch hit 2022 with a Bang. We were invited to, or organised, many events throughout the year, starting with Grand Reunion in Leeds, Tree Dedication NMA, Buckingham Palace, Car Boot Sale, The Manchester 10k, Crazy Golf, Dinner Club, Guildford Remembrance Parade and Manchester Branch Standard Dedication (so proud of our very smart standard bearer Wendy Summerell), I was invited by the Lord Mayor of Manchester to represent the WRAC at Manchester Cathedral at the memorial of Her Majesty the Queen, Birmingham Jumper Bash and our own Manchester Xmas Party. To say Manchester Branch have had a ball is an understatement.



At the invitation of Branch Secretary Babs, Birmingham and Manchester Branches will be Twinned, which means we will be sharing events throughout the coming year, so watch this space and what a brilliant idea Babs!!!

Being part of the WRAC Association and a member of your local branch gives us all a sense of togetherness, a sense of friendship, loyalty and above all laughter. So if you would like to be any part of the above please join us - Manchester Branch will make you feel most welcome.

I can't go without mentioning My Challenge starting 17th of July (2023) to raise funds for the WRAC Association - the "Pip n Ewok Coventry to Guildford Mobility Scooter Sprint" with "The Pip Stop Crew" of WRAC Lionesses, Dawn

Hawker, Issy Hamilton-Conboy Jackie Walton, and two army veterans Jeff and Frank, and not to forget our honorary member Ewok. [See Events page 34 for more information]. Please come and say hello if you happen to see me and Ewok on the road.

Oldham

Kath Kirtley

A couple of photos to show that we have been up and about



L-R: Kath Kirtley, Elaine Brookes, Debbie Davies, Rene Burlinson, Teresa Newton & Susan Feeney



Susan Feeney and Debbie Davies at WRAC Dinner Club

Wirral & Chester

Sharon Broderick MBE

Well, it certainly has been a busy few months here in Wirral and Chester, with lots going on. We meet every month at both branches for our formal meeting and on top of this we try to get at least one get together for a meal each month also.

Following the sad loss of Her Majesty most of our ladies were unable to travel to London to pay their respects, however Pat Dance did travel to the capital. She was able to pay both her and our respects, whilst our late Queen lay in state, and camped out on the Mall in order to get a front row seat for the funeral.



Pat Dance in the Mall

A good friend to some of the Wirral Branch ladies, Shirl Ghobrial from the Guilford area, also attended the capital and whilst in the queue to go into Westminster Hall, she was interviewed by her local TV station. She proudly reported that she was there to represent all the WRAC and ATS veterans who were unable to make the journey to London. Thank you, Shirl, you are a true Lioness.

The rest of the Wirral ladies were invited to both the Metropolitan and Liverpool Cathedrals for services of thanksgiving for our Queen. Our ladies were proudly front and centre at both services and looked very smart.

We were also personally invited to the proclamation of King Charles III at Birkenhead Town Hall by the Major of Wirral. Again, our ladies did us proud and we welcomed a few new members into the branch as a result.



Proclamation of King Charles III at Birkenhead Town Hall



Pat Sanders reflected on the time she met the queen during her service in Edinburgh.

In other news, we have had Lynne Cooke inspecting the Mersey Tunnels. We thought she was going to brick it up at one point!!!



Lynne Cooke and the Merseyside Tunnels

Kath Harrison had contemplated becoming a nun whilst away with the Outpost Charity but managed to kick the habit just in time! Kath Harrison and Sharon Broderick got stuck in a very long traffic jam whilst on their way to Forres, Scotland in July. It was that bad that there was a full brass band playing on the M6, and great fun with a full-sized table football competition going on!



Kath Harrison



Kath Harrison & Sharon Broderick

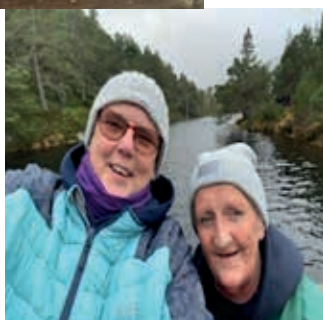
The whole branch were able to attend the Not Forgotten Association Drive-in Garden Party at Knowsley Hall on 6th September. Pat Dance and Kath Harrison even managed to brave the heavy thunderstorm to cheer on the Freddy Mercury tribute!!

Dot and Penny were the last women standing in the game of Kings and Queens but were unfortunately pipped at the post by one of the Liverpool Branch girls. There was lots of hilarity, and Ruby the cocker spaniel pup warned us of the almighty thunderstorm that was heading our way. But Shelia Brown, Jan Gillison and Lynne Cooke made sure we all battened down the hatches just in time. A great time was had by all, and we were very grateful for the hospitality of the Not Forgotten Association.



Not Forgotten Assoc Drive-in Garden Party

Sharon Broderick and Kath Harrison went to Aviemore on a Veterans Outpost Charity Camp in November and enjoyed Go-Karting (the Stig and Mini Stig), hill walking and checking how big Kath is next to a polar bear!



We have got lots planned for the coming year and I'm sure there will be a few scrapes and laughs along the way.

North East

Area Co-ordinator:

Lesley Roberts

Contact: northern.area@wraca.org.uk

Area Secretary: Helen Rowan.

Tel: 07714-950219



Bradford

Contact: Lee Guthrie

Tel: 07909 961188

Email: Lee.guthrie@sky.com

Cleveland

When: 12.30 4th Wednesday of the month

Where: Café Etch, 5 Gilkes St, Middlesbrough, TS1 5ET

Contact: Suzanne Allan

Tel: 07801 571528

Email: s_l_allan@msn.com

Doncaster

Contact: Veronica Hanson

Tel: 01226 714757

East Riding & North Lincolnshire

Contact: Dorothy Mitchelmore

Tel: 07897 449920

Email: mydeluxe06@icloud.com

Grimsby

When: 14.00 2nd Friday of each month

Where: Cartergate Social Club, Cartergate, Grimsby, DN31 1QZ

Contact: Gail Davy Tel: 01472 347868

Hull & East Riding

When: The 1st Friday of the month

Where: Wenlock Barracks, Anlaby Road, Hull, HU3 6PB

Contact: Janet Mitchell

Tel: 01482 508087

or Janet Marshall TEL: 01482 806799

Leeds

When: 12.30 1st Wednesday of the month

Where: The RBL, 73-75 Albion St, Leeds, LS1 5AA

And

When: 11.00 3rd Saturday of each month

Where: The Cosy Club, 53 Albion St, Leeds, LS1 5AA (except January)

Contact: Jayne Maitland

Tel: 07904-084491

Email: jayne849@msn.com

Newcastle

When: 12.00 3rd Thursday of the month

Where: Leazes End Club, 45-47 Leazes Park Road, Newcastle, NE1 4PG

Contact: Tanya Hall Tel: 07590 323497

Sheffield

When: 11.00 1st Thursday of the month except January and August

Where: The Benjamin Huntsman (Wetherspoons), Cambridge Street, Sheffield

Contact: Brenda Colley

Tel: 01709 365828

York

When: 14.00-16.00 1st Wednesday of the month (except August), phone to confirm

Where: Haxby & Wiggington Methodist Church Hall, Haxby, York, YO32 2JJ haxbyandwiggingtonmethodistchurch.org.uk

Contact: Feona Dixon

Tel: 01904 633438

East Riding & North Lincolnshire

Dorothy Mitchelmore



Since the last edition the members have been busy enjoying a variety of pursuits.

A mystery coach weekend was booked in September and several members met up at the crack of dawn at several pick up locations. It was good fun not actually knowing where we would be going to and a little bit exciting. We had some fun with the coach driver as we all tried to guess where he was taking us. We eventually arrived in Lichfield and spent a lovely afternoon walking round this very pretty city.





Mystery bus trip

The next day saw us in Stratford upon Avon and as we had all hit the charity shops on our first day, on day two we were feeling somewhat worn out and, some of us definitely needed a breather; I joined Annie Baxter Mulligan at the Crowne Plaza and we enjoyed a leisurely breakfast on the house, and very nice it was too



Annie Baxter Mulligan, Stratford upon Avon

October saw lots of the members attend the WRAC Dinner Club weekend in Nottingham. We enjoyed a lovely Chinese meal on the Friday evening and I noticed there were 5 ladies who all served together in the Big House at JHQ either with Northag Signal Troop or BAOR switchboard on the table. The Saturday night was amazing with the ladies all remembering Mel Howell by wearing tiaras. What a fantastic sight and a fitting tribute to a lovely lady gone too soon.



November saw us attending Remembrance weekend in London. We tend to pack a lot into our London breaks. We enjoyed a quick lunch, followed by a fabulous afternoon show at the Shaftsbury Theatre, watching Yes Juliet. An absolute must-see show and I highly recommend it. We ended a fully packed day with a visit to China Town for an amazing dinner.

We awoke early and wolfed down our breakfast, made sure we were parade-ready and sped off towards Horseguards Parade. We were able to hail one of the black cabs who take any veterans, free of charge. He was so lovely and the only thing he asked us for was a photograph. What an amazing thing they do every year for us veterans.

Having a long-term health condition has left me unable to keep up with the pace of things and sadly the previous two years had me watching from the side. This year, with a little coaxing and an offer from Kay Relp to push me round, I reluctantly accepted her very kind offer. I am so pleased that her and Annie persuaded me as I once again felt part of the pack. We finished the day at the Imperial pub with lots of the girls. What a great weekend.



Dorothy Michelmores & Kay Relp



Dorothy Michelmores & Ann Stack

The end of November saw the branch enjoying a night at the casino with our partners. It's fair to say we had a great time but no major winners. Annie Baxter Mulligan was the luckiest so well done her.



December saw us all gather for our Secret Santa lunch at the Rose & Crown in Beverley. We had a lovely afternoon, and I was amazed to see some lovely gifts our ladies had managed to buy with a maximum budget of just £5. Well done everyone.



The Not Forgotten Association travelled around the UK in December and organised Christmas lunch in ten locations throughout. I was lucky to get a ticket and, along with Roberta Grant and our husbands, had a lovely afternoon in Leeds where we joined QA Jan Foster and her husband Scouse for what was a great laugh.



So, as we come to the end of the year I look back and thank you all for joining me along the way. I've had a blast and I hope you all have too.

Grimsby

Gail Davy

There has not been a lot going on in Grimsby recently. Our oldest member Lily has dementia and is now being looked after in a residential home. Since being in there she has had a fall, broken her hip and had covid, but now all is well - except she has forgotten she has been vegetarian all her life, now eats anything!!!

Monica the branch vice-chairman is also in a nursing home with her husband, who is not well enough to be on his own.

The October meeting was our AGM when all officials were elected for a further year. We also celebrated the 50th birthday of our youngest member and treasurer Alyson.



Alyson's 50th birthday party

We are preparing for our Christmas lunch at present and looking forward to Christmas celebrations.

Newcastle

Tanya 'Lolly' Hall

Well, it's been a long time since I have written anything for The Lioness Magazine - so here goes. We are a small branch with an average of 6 members attending meetings. Our age range at the moment is 56 to 97 years of age - and sadly this will mean our numbers will keep getting fewer and fewer. I have put WRAC Association advertisement leaflets on as many free Community advertising boards as I can find - so with luck we may get some new members - fingers crossed.

Since Covid lockdown - like everywhere else - our meetings had been suspended - but we are slowly getting back to "normal" and getting a bit more active. In August we managed to have a day at the beach huts in Blyth on the North East coast. The weather gave us a few treats - we were sandblasted, soaked to the skin and then baked till we were red - the joys of our typical weather. The last of us to leave were then treated to another downpour as we reached our cars.

I must say, it was an honour to be joined for the day by Joyce Nicholls from Hereford Branch who was up north, visiting relatives - I think she enjoyed herself. Some of us took a tour of The Blyth Battery - an old WW1 Coastal Artillery Battery that was upgraded and refitted for use in WWII - each room had different displays. I did ask for the cigarette to be removed from the ATS display!!

We had a fish and chip lunch from the nearby award-winning fish shop - which was enjoyed by everyone. We hope to make this a yearly event and will invite all Lionesses to join us, if they are in the area. Keep an eye on our facebook page for next year's date.

Scotland & N Ireland

Area Co-ordinator:

Helen Jephcote

Email: scotland.ni.area@wraca.org.uk

Aberdeen

When: 11.00 2nd Tuesday of the month (except January)

Where: Ma Cameron's (Snug Bar), 6-8 Little Belmont Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1JG

Contact: Sandra Lemmon

Email: huggles46@btopenworld.com

Dumfries

Branch closed

Edinburgh

When: 2nd Saturday of the month

Where: The Scot's Guards Club, Cliftonville Terrace, Edinburgh, over the road from Haymarket Station

Contact: Senga Palmer

Tel: 07876 782773

Facebook: Edinburgh and area WRAC/ women who served, social group

Fife & Tayside

When: Last Thursday of the month

Where: Salutation Hotel, 34 South Street, Perth, PH2 8PH

Contact: Debbie Coupland

Email: debbiecoulpland14@gmail.com

Glasgow

When: 13.00 2nd Monday of the month

Where: RHF Museum, 518 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3LW

Contact: Joyce Steele

Tel: 0141 322 5639

Stirling

When: 12.00 last Saturday of the month
Contact: Liz Dixon Tel:01786 743635
Email: liz_m_dixon@yahoo.co.uk

Ulster

When: Meetings 3-4 times per year
Where: Location varies, please call
Contact: Sylvia Connachan
Tel: 02892 693533 or 07484 142194
Email: conna2312@gmail.com

West of Scotland

Based in / around Glasgow area
Contact: Cathy Philip
Email: catriona223@gmail.com

Aberdeen

Sandra Lemmon

Let me introduce myself – I am Sandra Lemmon and I have taken over from Mhiari Irvin as Secretary/Treasurer of the Aberdeen branch. We'd love to see any of you, if you are in the Aberdeen area.

Fife & Tayside

Debbie Coupland

In common with many branches across the land, I am sure, the pandemic has dealt a hard blow to the numbers of members who are able to attend any kind of public event these days.

Nevertheless, not least because members of the WRAC Association / Fife & Tayside Branch were in the vanguard of the creation of the new Tri-Service Memorial that now stands outside St John's Kirk in the centre of Perth, this couple of redoubtable members (Barbara Farrow & Yvonne Allen) were very proud to be part of the Association of Perth Veterans' Remembrance Parade on Friday 11th November 2022 - in the course of which a wreath on behalf of all members past and present was laid.



We held our annual Christmas lunch in the Salutation Hotel, where we were also joined by Janette Deans.



I am off to Australia on a long-awaited sojourn, but I will still be contactable – so if anyone wants to contact, or join, the branch please do email me and I will forward to someone in Fife & Tayside for them to follow-up until I am back.

Stirling

Liz Dixon

Things have not quite recovered from Covid here, so we do not currently have a regular meeting date or venue, but I keep in contact with members by phone or FB page (WRAC Stirling Branch). I hope to get this sorted after Christmas and get our meetings for 2023 back on track to last Saturday of the month, aiming for Sat 28th January.

People can contact me by email or Messenger, search for Elizabeth Dixon.

Ulster

Sylvia Connachan

Ladies I hope this finds you well, looking forward to Christmas, New Year and, of course, 2023.

On a sad note, we have said our goodbyes and prayers to our Patron, Queen Elizabeth II, on her passing, on 8th September 2022. Now we have a new King, Charles III - he has a new life to live now, which he has been preparing for, may it go smoothly for him. "God Save the King". The Not Forgotten Association in Ulster received a lovely letter from the Palace, on the passing of our Queen.

Our Branch went to a strawberry fair, at Ballance House, Lisburn, which is associated with the Anzacs, Australia, which our branch supports.

I was hoping to attend Scotland & Northern Ireland Area AGM in Stirling, Scotland, but unfortunately I was unable to, for which I was sorry. Hopefully, I will be able to attend in 2023.



I met up with, Marie Jenkins, Sarah Cairns, Sandra Reid, Sylvia Connachan, in Belfast, for couple hours, had coffee and catch-up. We had a lovely few hours together.

I went to Dungannon, with Rosemary Stewart, to meet our great friend Marg Davies, had coffee and talked about the walk she is going to do, round North and South Ireland. All being well we will be able to meet up again to cheer Marg on.



We had our AGM 22nd October 2022, at Lisburn Royal British Legion, which has opened their doors to the Association to have their meetings. It is good getting back to normal. We went for lunch before at Pizzerallys, not far away and had a lovely day.

Jill Hope, one of our new members, and I attended the Field of Remembrance, to lay our cross. It was a lovely day. On the Saturday, I went to the Festival of Remembrance at the Waterfront Hall, Belfast, with local Royal British Legion members. It was a wonderful evening. On the Friday 11th November I attended my local Cenotaph to lay our wreath.



Sylvia Connachan, and Jill Hope, at Belfast City Hall, Remembrance



Sylvia Connachan and Jill Hope.



Field of Remembrance, Belfast City Hall, 1st November 2022

On Sunday 13th November, Jill Hope and I attended the Belfast City Hall Cenotaph, to take part in the Remembrance Service and to lay our wreath. Unfortunately, I had taken a slight turn and had to step out of the parade. Luckily, I had laid the wreath before it happened. I felt bad for Jill, as it was her first time at a Cenotaph. Happily, I am feeling a lot better now. Joan laid a wreath for the Not Forgotten Association.

We have booked our Christmas lunch for 3rd December at New Forge. Pamela Crawford is coming home to see family and attend our lunch. It should be a great day; we usually have a good time at our lunches.

Ulster Branch wishes you all a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year. Enjoy yourselves, have a great and memorable year in 2023.

Take Care, Stay Safe.

National & Overseas

Band

When: The Band Branch is a national Branch and does not meet on a monthly basis.

If you have Band news for the Lioness send direct to Editor@WRACLioness

Griffin

Griffin Branch is a virtual Facebook group primarily designed to unite those ex members of the WRAC who do not yet belong to the Association, or if they do already belong do not have a geographic branch to attend.

Contact: Cathy Munro MBE

Email cathmunro@hotmail.com.

Tel: 01733 201231 (working hours)

Mobile: 07786 260988

Facebook page: WRAC Griffin Branch

Mediterranean

Branch now closed

Perth (Australia)

Contact: Ann Page

ann.page3@bigpond.com

South & South West

Area Co-ordinator:

Amanda Foster

southwest.area@wraca.org.uk

Tel: 07788 316596

It has been an odd few months and has become very clear to me that having a full time job and being an Area Co-ordinator is not the best combination! I had visions of visiting everyone by now, but sadly have only managed two Branches so far! plus the odd telephone call or email, and not everyone is on Facebook – so this rather reflects how we should all consider recruiting and communications in the future. It is difficult when some groups are literally only three members, and others have ladies passing. I really hope I can do better in 2023.

Please remember, if you meet and have a coffee, or go for a monthly walk, meet up for supper, or whatever - you can call yourselves a Branch or Group. This is crucial in order to get the message out and meet others, so please do not think that you need to source a gallant leader, whizzy treasurer and a press agent who was once a headline reporter!

Meet Up, Chat, Giggle and Share Stories – whatever it takes keep your “gatherings” going. You just need a point of contact to rally the troops. Also try and mix up where and when you meet – some during the day, some at weekends and the odd evening as well. This way you can cater for all ages and working or retirement patterns.

I am hoping that we have seen the back of Covid, and with some extra leave I can get to meet all the wonderful ladies that are in our Area. It's pretty far and wide!

I must mention the wonderful Rose Kilpatrick who has done so much to ignite Swindon Branch - getting it off the ground and gathering everyone together – but alas, due to ill health she has had to step down as Branch lead. I do hope everyone who attended those meetings, enjoyed the picnics and trips will think about being the main contact and keep the branch going.

Of course, the passing of Her Majesty has had a huge impact on all of us, and speaking to a number of you about this, we all still can't quite believe she has passed. What a bonus to receive the Special Edition publication with so many positive memories.

By now all of us that did attend Remembrance in Guildford have come down back to earth after a truly memorable weekend and I am very pleased that I played a small part in gathering everyone.

Wishing everyone a warm and safe few winter months and may you have the Christmas you wish for.

Bath

Contact: Sylvia Musgrave
Tel: 01225 339904

Bournemouth

When: 12noon, 2nd Wednesday of the month, March, June, September and December

Where: Lynton Court TableTable restaurant (in Premier Inn), 47 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, BH1 3PA, for informal lunch
Contact: Val Wright Tel: 01202 314047 or Jillian Hurst Tel: 01202 679433

Bristol

When: 12 noon 1st Thursday of the month
Where: Contact the branch for details of location(s)
Contact: Judith Stinchcombe
Tel: 07837 455352
Email: wracbristolbranch@mail.com

New Forest

Branch Closed

Plymouth

Contact: Jean Cundy-Borge
Tel: 01752 567844
or Evon Roberts Tel: 01752 215780

Portsmouth & Isle of Wight

When: 10.30 1st Saturday of the month
Where: The Maritime Club, Queen's Street, Portsmouth
Contact: Sally Watson
Tel: 02392-799028

Salisbury

When: Mixture of 'coffee meet-ups' during the day and Saturdays; and 4th Wednesday of the month.
Contact: Amanda Foster
email: SalisburyWRACVets@gmail.com;
Facebook: WRAC Salisbury Branch;
Twitter: @SalisburyWRACVets.

Southampton

When: 19.00-21.30 1st Wednesday of the month
Where: Phone for details
Contact: Jean Doe Tel: 01794 523146

Swindon

For now please contact Amanda Foster for information.
Contact: WRAC Swindon Branch, WRACSwindonbranch@gmail.com
southwest.area@wraca.org.uk
07788 316596

Torbay & Area

Contact: Pauline Marr
Tel: 07787 763779
Email paulinemarr55@gmail.com

Weymouth & Portland

When: 13.00 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month (no meetings from late December to late February and late June to late September)
Where: RAFA Club, Maiden Street, Weymouth, DT4 8AY

Winchester

When: 2nd Thursday of January, March, September and November plus a summer outing
Where: Location varies depending on lunch or evening meeting
Contact: Herme Emary
winchester18.wrac.sec@gmail.com

Bristol

Judith Stinchcombe

Ladies in Bristol are in high spirits and continue to support each other, both online and at our monthly meeting at the Slug and Lettuce. These have proved that face to face and online are both essential lifelines, as we know atmosphere and banter is good for the soul.

A number of us have joined in many of the summer activities - Armed Forces Day, Bristol's Rolling Thunder, and our very own Garden Party.



Margaret's Garden Party



Sue in charge of Rolling thunder

I have been working with Veterans in Bristol and Gloucester who now have a one-stop shop, where you can learn about available support and meet at the monthly hubs, at Bedminster Cricket Club and Gloucester Rugby Club. These have been driven by the local teams from Armed Forces charity Help for Heroes, in tandem with Op Courage, the veterans' mental health service from the NHS, and Veterans UK, the Ministry of Defence's dedicated support organisation for service personnel, veterans and their families. The hubs meet on the final Thursday of the month at Bedminster Cricket Club, and the second Wednesday of each month at Gloucester Rugby Club, Kingsholm, from 10am to 1pm. Entry is free, appointments are not required, and refreshments are available.



Angie and Margaret on the NMA Train



Judith at the Heritage Hub with poppies



Judith, Margaret, Belle and Angie at the WRAC Dinner Club

Bristol Branch is open to everyone and meets at 12.00 noon on the first Thursday in each month, email or telephone for more details.

Plymouth

Jean, Evon and Ann



Having received all our jabs and boosters we had hoped we were stepping out of the sad times and enjoying our get together every 4th Tuesday of the month in the Moments Café. Visits out for lunch to places like Darts farm at Clyst St George, Exeter were arranged and enjoyed by all.

Then the death of her Majesty the Queen was announced on the 8th September, and meetings were cancelled for the next 10 days.

Our next meeting was 27th September at the Moments Cafe & memory Hub 69a New George Street, Plymouth. At the start we held a two minute silence in honour of our Patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Several of our members had arranged to go to the WRAC Dinner Club dinner in October. On Friday 11th November there was a Service of Remembrance in the Guildhall Plymouth. December 3rd was earmarked for lunch at the Tamar View Restaurant.

Members were reminded that Armed Forces Day was Saturday 24th June 2023 and volunteers would be needed again.

We hope you all enjoyed a Happy and Healthy Christmas and New Year
Jean and Evon

Ruth requested a weekday trip to Windy Ridge Eating House, East Cornwall. So, our Social Secretary, Carol duly arranged a visit on 10th November with 17, including guests, attending. Most pre-booked their food, which arrived very quickly once we were all seated comfortably. Alcoholic beverages were consumed by some and after enjoying a hearty main course, deserts were ordered and enjoyed.



After a short while, some retail therapy was carried out in the small market across in Kernow Mill grounds, together with time browsing in Kernow Mill.

We made our way home, tired and happy via the St Germans valley and the Torpoint Ferry. So now we are looking forward to our Christmas events.
Ann

Portsmouth & Isle of Wight

Val Duke



July saw the first AGM of the newly formed branch and officers were duly elected. We identified 4-5 events for the coming year. The first, in October, saw a trip to the IW, where we met up with Tracy for coffee & cakes in Ryde, prior to travelling to Cowes to wish Rose Ide a happy birthday for her forthcoming 103rd birthday. (Rose was one of the three ladies presented to the Countess of Wessex at the centenary celebrations).

In November our Standard was carried once again by Sally and the wreath laid by Phyllis at the remembrance service parade.



Rose Ide's 103 birthday



Salisbury

Amanda Foster



Firstly, I must thank the branch, especially Jackie and Linda Clark who have stepped up as my work got very busy! They have been sending emails, organising our evenings and more. Carol Martin has done a great job in gathering us together for a Christmas lunch in December as well.

The branch has held both regular drinks and chats at the Rugby Club but, mindful that some ladies don't like the evenings, we also have some great Coffee, Cake and Catch-up sessions, mainly run at the Salisbury Rugby Club who support us very well.

August saw our Annual BBQ and thanks to Lisa for hosting us in her garden. We are very lucky that we run alongside the local Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club, who has a packed agenda with breakfast, Sunday lunches and Friday

evening drinks so we are never short of anything to do.

October saw a lady come and do a talk on Colours – to explain what colours might suit us. This was well attended but not sure about the colour of green on the scale of things. This month we see one of our own ladies running a jewellery workshop.

As the year closes down, I know we are all reflecting on what has happened over the past two years but also looking forward to a busy and positive 2023. We might not be the largest branch, but we have a great mixture of ladies and times of service. We all come together when needs must and support each other. Ladies – you are a fabulous group and Thank You!

Winchester

Herme Emary

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In January (2022) for our first meeting of the year it was decided to go to the Old Vine, a venue we have visited a few times before. The bonus being that they have a small room to the rear of the building that is just about the right size to accommodate us and, as we tend to get a bit noisy, we do not disturb anyone else. On the last visit the staff did tend to forget that we were there but, on this visit we were served very well with someone coming to check if we needed anything. Their new menu was different, but everyone enjoyed their meal. With 11 attendees it was a good start to the year.



Rowena & Kim at The Old Vine



Daphne, Helen, Ray, Margaret, Denise and Lynn at The Old Vine

Something a little different in March - a trip to the theatre. Only 5 takers but we certainly had a good time. We met up in the ARC (was the Discovery Centre, was the Library) which is next door to the theatre, for a bit of lunch (hot chocolate was nice but food choice was disappointing and a bit expensive). The play, Crimes Camera Action, was hilarious and everyone enjoyed it. The cast consisted of 4 people playing all the parts, which is guaranteed to generate some funny scenes and add to the comedy.

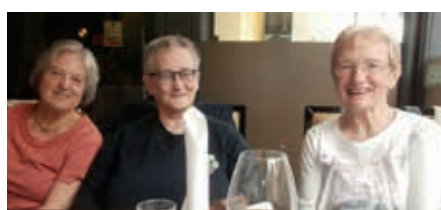
In May it was back to the branch's favourite eating place in Winchester, The Porterhouse, always guaranteed to draw a crowd – 17 this time. Some attendees had not joined us for a while so it was great to catch up with everyone.



Sandy, Rowena and Maggie at The Porterhouse



Kim, Ray and Margaret at The Porterhouse



Janet, Herme and Lynn at The Porterhouse

Over the summer months a trip to London had been planned with a visit to Tower Bridge and also the Tower in Bloom. A few of us wanted to go but in the end it was cancelled because of the train dispute.

A planned trip to Bletchley Park was also cancelled, even opening it up to Salisbury and Southampton Branches we were unable to fill the bus, which was a shame for the people who actually wanted to go.

So in August 10 of us once again descended on the Porterhouse. What can I say but good company and good food.



Ray, Margaret, Helen, Patsy, Sandy, Rowena, Emma, Daphne and Maggie at The Porterhouse

In September it was once again off to the theatre. We originally had 6 people (Margaret, Ray, Sandy, Kim, Daphne, Herme) going but, unfortunately Margaret and Ray were unable to join us as they were both ill. We met up at the ARC on a lovely sunny day, so we were able to sit outside in the sunshine and have something to eat. Then off to see Crimes on Centre Court - the performance was given by the New Old Friends Company (as in March). What was even more hilarious, is the scene near the end of the play of a slow-motion tennis match where the ball was on the end of a pole had most people crying with laughter. If the New Old Friends Company come to a theatre near you go and see them, you will not be disappointed.

With the sad news in September of the death of HM The Queen it was decided that in October we would gather at the Porterhouse for a final farewell to our Patron HM the Queen. We had a splendid turnout of 16 members. Another bright sunny day; I was early so able to sit in the sun for a while before joining everyone. As always, we were welcomed by the friendly staff and had an excellent meal. Rowena gave a toast to the new King and to absent friends.



Helen, Lynn, Janice, Lesley, Chris, Janet, Rowena, Herme, Daphne, JJ, Sandy, Kim, Margaret, Ray, Maggie and Patsy at The Porterhouse

Wales & The West

Area Co-ordinator:

Ann Stack

Email: [wales.westmidlands.area@](mailto:wales.westmidlands.area@wraca.org.uk)

wraca.org.uk

Tel: 07921 832094

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A warm hello from all of us in our Area. Well, what a roller coaster the latter half of this year has been. So many changes and waves of National emotions. From celebrating The Platinum Jubilee of our wonderful Queen, to mourning her passing, and respectfully welcoming King Charles to the throne, we have, in our own ways, paid homage to our Royal Family. Many ladies in our area have spoken fondly about the times they waited to catch a glimpse of Queen Elizabeth II (as children or adults) when she visited their local area, to those who were fortunate enough to be introduced to her. How proud we all are to have served her.

In turn, we are reminded of our own Lionesses who are struggling and remember those who have passed on to their final posting during this time.

We look forward to reading about your branch news and activities and hope you enjoy what we have been doing in Wales & The West Area.

Birmingham

When: 11.00 1st Wednesday of the month

Where: Solomon Cutler (Wetherspoons), Broad Street, Birmingham City Centre B1 2DS

Contact: Babs Anderson

Tel: 07921 832094

Email: babs.blay@gmail.com

Cardiff

When: 2nd Tuesday of the month 6pm

Where: The Fox & Hounds, Old Church Rd, Whitchurch, Cardiff, CF14 1AD

(Please double check before attending in case of changes)

Contact: Branch Secretary: Deserie Mansfield

Email: WRACCardiff1@outlook.com

Facebook: WRAC Cardiff Branch

Twitter: @WRACCardiff

Chester

When: 13.00, 2nd Monday of the month

Where: Chester Military Museum, The Castle, Chester, CH1 2DN

Contact: Pat Sanders

Tel: 07733 270567

Colwyn Bay

When: 1300hrs - 1500hrs last

Wednesday of every month

Where: Woody's Lodge, Eirias Park,

Colwyn Bay LL29 7SP

Contact: Lynda Goodier

Tel: 07392 729387

Email: goodierlynda@yahoo.co.uk

Derby

Contact: Judy Smith Tel: 07790 848364

Email: judy.smith4529@gmail.com

Gloucestershire

Contact: Frances Fairclough

Tel: 07739-344846

Email: fran.f@btopenworld.com

Ann Stack, anndewsnip@hotmail.com

Facebook: Gloucestershire Branch

WRAC.

Hereford

When: 19.00 last Tuesday of the month

Where: The Herdsman, 54 Widemarsh, Hereford, HR4 9HG

Contact: Lynda Armstrong

Tel: 01443 837592

Marches & Mid-Wales

When: 4 times per year (very informal, friendly meetings including lunch. Often meet up for organised, fun activity, day out)

Where: Location varies, please phone

Contact: Michelle Boyden

Tel: 01588 661166 / 07812037191

Email: midgeymoo.1963@gmail.com

Oxfordshire

When: 2nd Saturday each month, 12.30 for lunch

Where: Littlebury Hotel, Bicester

Contact: Karen Smith

Tel: 07923 693656 / 01869 321393

Shropshire

When: 19.00 1st Wednesday of the month (except December and January). Come 1.5 hours earlier if you wish to join us for lunch/dinner.

Where: The Red Lion, Holyhead Road, Wellington, Telford, TF1 2EW

Contact: Chris Powell

Tel: 01743 241646

Email: chris.powell3@mypostoffice.co.uk

Tamworth

Contact: Mrs Pat Williams (Chairman) on pat@williams.cx, or Chris Whitehead (Secretary) on chris_wo1@hotmail.com

Worcester

If you are interested in joining a new WRAC Worcester Group, to meet up for a chat and coffee, please

Contact: Jane Griffin-Ash

Tel: 07880 732245

Email janebash@hotmail.co.uk.

Facebook: 'Worcestershire WRAC Group'

Birmingham

Babs Anderson

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Since I last reported on the deer-ing-do of Brum Branch, we have been as busy as ever. Alongside organising our own events, we have been invited to other Branches. We love to join our friends in whatever they're doing.

Early in June, a bunch of intrepid members set off for another visit to Bletchley Park, home of the codebreakers and one time posting of our own Betty Webb. There have been yet more improvements to the site so there was more to take in.

We were invited to join the Hereford Branch at The Royal Mint, Llantrisant - so several of us polished up our Welsh accents and followed our lovely young guide around, answering her rhetorical questions (incorrectly) and having an interesting time. It was fascinating to see where our coinage is made and how much care is taken to ensure it is perfect. The Royal Mint is certainly on our list for a re-visit.

The WRAC Association arranged a summer event at the National Memorial Arboretum to rededicate our tree, and many of our Branch members were there to join other friends for a big picnic in the WRAC Association plot. It's lovely that we will be holding regular meet-ups at the NMA.

Birmingham and Manchester Branches decided in July to enter into a twinning arrangement. The plan is to do more things together as we move forward with a similar outlook. Exciting times lie ahead, although we are in the early stages at the moment.

Just like the rest of the country, we were shocked and saddened at the passing of Her Majesty the Queen early in September. On the day of the funeral, we gathered at the newly opened All Arms Bar, Weoley Castle, Birmingham to join with other veterans to watch events together. Despite the very sad occasion, we enjoyed ourselves and plan to re-visit whenever there is a suitable event.

As a Branch, we were further saddened by the passing of one of our few remaining ATS friends, Lenora Jeffreys. Her funeral took place on what should have been her 102nd birthday. Several of the girls were able to attend and see her off to her final posting. We were particularly pleased that Sharon Baker-Joyce was able to parade the National Standard alongside the Birmingham Branch Standard. Nora would have been thrilled at the level of celebration

of her life. She was transported to the crematorium on the back of a Land Rover, was piped to the service by Andy de Comyn and a bugler sounded Last Post. She will be missed.



Sharon Baker-Joyce, Susan Pearce, Sue Dolphin, Yvonne Thick, Lesley Wallace, Eunice Adams, Heather Gaughran and Rosie Garrison at Nora Jeffrey's funeral



Nora Jeffrey's last staff car

The WRAC Dinner Club weekend has always been a big event in our Branch calendar, but it was more poignant on this, the 25th Anniversary year. Many of our Branch members were in Nottingham, burning up the dance floor at the Gala Dinner or checking out all the cocktail bars in the city centre. It was a wonderful weekend.



Marilyn Preece checks out a cocktail at WRAC Dinner Club



Benita Davies dealing with a glass of red stuff



Pat Neale toasts us all



Branch Chairman Sue Dolphin keeps us all in order

As I write this, we are all preparing to join with our fellow members at various Remembrance events. It will be one of the few occasions in the year when we are serious for more than a couple of minutes and then spend time celebrating our comradeship.

By the time you read this report, we will have gathered for our world-famous Christmas Jumper Bash, the usual pantomime and visits to a couple of other Branches to celebrate Christmas with them. You could never accuse us of not enjoying our Branch life.

Remember, you can count on Brum Branch. We have an abacus.

Gloucestershire

Ann Stack

25th June 2022 and Armed Forces Day returned to Gloucester after being postponed for 2 years and it certainly felt very special. Gloucester did us proud and as we set off from The Cathedral, cheering crowds lined the streets as we marched to the pace set by The Sergeant Major of The Glorious Gloster's Regiment. We were joined by our very own Chelsea Pensioner, Monica Parrot, which added to the pride we all felt parading. Numerous Veterans visited our stand in Gloucester Quays after the Parade, as well as an iconic politician, a certain Mr Churchill, no less. The Mayor and Sheriff of Gloucester were very interested in knowing more about The WRAC and we were able to chat about our Benevolent Fund and WRAC Association to them which, in turn, they have promoted. We also spotted a roving BBC reporter who we waylaid for an interview and the result was broadcasted that afternoon with numerous mentions of The Women's Royal Army Corps!





Armed Forces Day

On the 13th August and in the heat of the summer, a group of us took a tour of historic Gloucester City. Our Guide was an RAF Veteran (we forgave him) called Ted and his knowledge of the area was phenomenal. Amongst the many things we discovered about our city was that Charles Dickens based the character of Scrooge on a Gloucester banker by the name of Jeremy Wood who was renowned for his spectacular meanness. In more modern times, the first ever British and Allied Jet was designed and built in Gloucester. We felt we deserved our delicious lunch after our 2½ hour walking tour so decamped to The Robert Raikes (founder of The Sunday School) Pub. PS – Ted reported that he thoroughly enjoyed the banter and company of The WRAC Army gals.



Gloucester City tour

October 14th - Recruitment Day! A dozen of us gathered for a morning at The Army Careers Office in Gloucester. The whole team were there to meet us and took us through the recruitment process. It was fascinating listening to the different experiences and career paths of The Reservists and Regulars who delivered our session. We were especially interested in how female soldiers function in today's Army. As you can imagine, we had endless questions

and discussed how things were in our day compared to how things are now. The team were superb and as well as laying out equipment for us to look at and try on, they also provided a very good NAAFI break of coffee, tea and biscuits. Would we all sign on the dotted line again? A resounding...YES!



Army Recruitment day visit

Remembrance Sunday saw our very first WRAC Poppy Wreath being laid at the War Memorial in Gloucester Park. This is a very proud moment for our Branch and something we will continue to do within the City and Shire.

Hereford

Lynda Armstrong

Here we are again and what a great, fun filled few months it's been since I last wrote for The Lioness Magazine.

Hereford Branch, with others from Birmingham and Worcester, made a visit to The Royal Mint in Llantrisant back in July. There were 25 of us in total and we were lucky enough to be given a personal tour by one of their lovely staff. Everyone had such a nice day and we ended with a light lunch in their café. Some of the information the girls were told was quite surprising. I think maybe some will take a second trip as it was so informative.



Mary Woollard, Paddington Bear & Ali Brown



Sue Walton and her Dad Ken Follett (The Royal Mint)



Herford and friends at the Royal Mint



Joyce Nicholls



Alison Brown, Mary Woollard and Barbara Davies outside The Royal Mint



This year's Veterans Summer Lunch was once again held at The Greenman in Fownhope, but this year for a change, Mary Woollard arranged us a BBQ instead of the usual formal luncheon. Everyone said how lovely it all was, so may do this again next year. This event is doubly enjoyable as we also send out an invite to veteran soldiers from The Worcester & Hereford Grenadier Guards Association and also members from Malvern & District Branch of The Royal Engineers Association. These gentlemen, with their wives, enjoy coming along and chatting with us girls and tell us of what escapades they got up to when they served.



Veterans Lunch: Marg Davies, Binny Eckley and Bill and Tony from the Royal Engineers Association



Joyce Nicholls, Brian & Louisa Ash, Mary Woollard, Tracey Loftus and Steve



Pat Cooper, Liz Milton, Ali Brown, Mary Woollard, Victoria Halliwell, Heather Bradbury and Barbara Davies

Our annual picnic was once again held in August and what a wonderful day we all had. Joyce Nicholls always puts so much time and effort into making this day run so well for us. The sun was shining, and we had a fabulous turn out. This year we combined our picnic with our Branch's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. I had a beautiful cake made by a local lady and it was superb, in both looks and taste.



Annual Picnic: Pat Cooper, Anna Toon and Annabelle Massey at our annual picnic, Queenswood.



Dawn Major and Jane Griffin-Ash enjoying the picnic



Our lovely cake to commemorate The Queens Platinum Jubilee



Gillian Bastin at our Queenswood picnic



Alison, Mary and Miriam Unwin, in deep discussion



Marg Davies enjoying her picnic

We have had another member join us since I last wrote, Lynn Williams. Lynn happened to see one of Joyce Nicholls posters in the window of The First Light Cafe Hereford and in turn sent me an email asking for info. Just goes to show these small things do get noticed.

WRAC Dinner Club again this year was another massive success, so huge thanks to the committee for all their hard work, best wishes to the outgoing committee and all the best to the new committee for the upcoming year ahead.



WRAC Dinner Club: Jan Foster, Lynda Armstrong and Monica Parrot

One of our members Mrs Pat Cooper has had to go into hospital for a second hip operation in October. We all wish Pat a speedy recovery and hope to see her soon at one of our gatherings.

Miss Vi Brown had a fall following our meeting back in February and has come up against illness since, so I would like to take this opportunity to wish her well and to say we miss her at our meetings. Hopefully, will see her again soon. We also send our love and best wishes to our members that we have been unable to see for quite a long while: to our two ATS ladies, Mrs Jo Anscombe and Mrs Jean Butler, to our Chairman Rosemary Jones, our members Miss Vi Brown, Ms Janet Knight, Miss Sue Richards and Miss Susan Wilson, we think about you all and hope you are keeping well.

A few of our ladies went to London, Guildford and locally in Hereford for Remembrance Weekend this year. A lovely turn out from all ladies, well done each of you for paying your respects.

Oxfordshire

Karen Smith



Since the printing of the last Lioness we have had a few changes as I have taken over from Christine Townsend, although she is still a solid member of our group, and a mentor for myself. We have reinstated our newsletter to reach members with whom we had lost contact due to covid. Every month we have our monthly meeting and lunch at the Littlebury Hotel. In the last 2 months we welcomed 3 new members; Avril Stone, Gillian McVey and Katharine French.

In July we paid a visit to Bletchley Park, which was well attended (sorry no pictures from this event). On 3 September we had a day visit to The Pig Place for the Veterans Weekend, meeting up with members whom we had lost contact with due to Covid. It was lovely to meet up with Ali and Trish.



The Pig Place for the Veterans Weekend

A group of us managed to make Leeds although we had dropouts due to Covid, for me this was an eye opener being my first time, but a great weekend was had by all.



At Grand Reunion, Leeds

A group of our ladies also attended WRAC Dinner Club. Although I did not make it, I was informed a good time was had by those who did.



At WRAC Dinner Club

On Remembrance Day, we had a group go to Guilford to represent our Group, [see Remembrances for picture taken by our member, Jan Dytor].

We also had members attend the London Cenotaph – lots of pictures from other Group members. We had one member, Jean, attend the local TA event in Banbury to represent our Ladies, the rest of us attended the Service at Bicester, which was much better organised than last year, and after years of fighting and letter writing, we were where we should be in the parade behind the Regular Army. The next battle is to get our name correct!



Bicester Remembrance

After the passing of our Queen, a group of us attended the Proclamation, at which we spoke with the Mayor of Bicester. Although at short notice, we were invited to a special Commemoration Service marking the Death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the 16 September 2022. Christine and I attended in Greens to represent the Group.

Christine and I also contacted our local Royal British Legion and attended a meeting, which we hope will bring a closer alliance between us.

Coming up for the rest of this year we have Midge, who every year with the help of Flo, decorates our tree in the church, pictures will be in our next report.

We have our regular meetings every 2nd Saturday of the month. December will be our Xmas Jumper meeting, and our Xmas Party will be on the 7th of January 2023.

In 2023 we are hoping to get out more for day trips and maybe arrange to meet other Groups. We also have the much-postponed AGM with Wales and the West Area, which I will be attending and hopefully encourage a few of our members to attend as well.

We at the OXFORDSHIRE AND AREA WRAC BRANCH, wish you all a Merry Christmas And A Happy New Year.

Shropshire

Sandra Davies

We bid you hello. We hope that you all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and if Easter is early, Happy Easter as well!

It has been agreed with the branch members that attend the meetings, that we will forego the usual ramblings and just run with the following pictorial tribute that I have put together myself along with these few words.

We bid farewell to 3 stalwarts, 2 from the branch and 1 from the country.

Nancy "Annie" Tipton was requested to join the parade ground in the sky on 23rd June 2022.

Melanie "Mel" Howell also received her orders to report to the same parade ground on 6th August 2022.

Then to top it all The Boss was summonsed on the 8th September 2022.



May God look after these ladies, and may all our other ladies welcome them with open arms and love.

Take care one and all.

Tamworth

Chris Whitehead

We usually meet on a Friday lunchtime and the dates vary to accommodate shift patterns of those of us still working, but we are hoping to arrange a Saturday meet in the new year for others I know of in the area who work full time. As we are a very spread out group we vary our meeting locations so that travel across the district is fair.

Some of us were at the NMA a few times - Armed forces Day in June and, of course, the WRAC Tree dedication and Picnic in July, where 4 of us helped direct you to the correct area. The tree is not near the WRAC plot but in a grove of other (AGC Antecedent Corps) trees, although not too far from the main building. If anyone visits the NMA let us know, someone is usually up for a visit.

We have worked hard over the last couple of years (delayed by Covid etc.) to arrange the Wales and the West Area AGM/ Reunion meet up and finally we were nearly there in September. Very sadly this was postponed until 2023, as the date was just after the death of our dear Queen and before her Majesty's state funeral.

Pat, Lesley and Nicola paid their respects in Westminster Hall. Well done to them for patiently queueing. My sister and I visited London on Sunday, the day before the funeral, but didn't manage to queue. Rather, we stood for a while outside the Hall in Parliament Square and saw some of the hundreds and thousands of flowers in Hyde Park. Many areas of the city were closed as King Charles prepared to meet dignitaries arriving from across the world, don't know who passed us as all the car windows were darkened.

As we are spread across the district we help at many different locations supporting the RBL with the Poppy Appeal. Between us we have done shifts

in Swadlincote, Burntwood, National Memorial Arboretum (NMA), Tamworth and Mere Green.

I'm writing this before the Remembrance weekend events. I know that we will be attending the service of Remembrance at the NMA and then gathering for lunch afterwards. We are also looking forward to our Christmas jumper/Secret Santa lunch early in December. By the time you see this it will be 2023 so I hope you all had a great Christmas and Happy New Year.

Interest Groups

If you co-ordinate or organise a 'special interest' group, let us know so that we can help you and your group out and about the Association. Please give us a contact name and details, for others, who might like to join you

CycleFest

Contact: Liz King
Liz@trispirevents.com

Royal Hospital Chelsea

Contact: (IP) Madge Cole

WRAC Association 2023 Pocket Diary

Get organised with the new 2023 Pocket Diary

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Lights, Camera, Call to Action!

Could you share your story for the small screen? The WRAC Association is teaming up with a military oral history charity to film a series of chats with our members. Legasee Educational Trust is looking to add to its archive of filmed personal accounts, ensuring that the stories of female veterans are captured and told to future generations. The stories gathered will also help in the creation of a series of educational teaching resources being developed for secondary school pupils.

"We are very used to hearing of the bravery and sacrifice that the military endure on a day-to-day basis but the voices of women who served are still a minority" says Martin Bisiker, Founder and Trustee of The Legasee Educational Trust. "Through conversations with museums and other educational partners, we know that there is a significant growing interest in the role of women in the military and in particular the sacrifices that have been made to service for family life. We want to redress the balance and provide evidence based, first-hand accounts from which young people can learn". Over the course of the past few years the filming team have met and interviewed a number of ladies from the AGC, the ATS and the WRAC. These include Sally George who was a cornet player and member of the WRAC band from 1976 to 1982. She says of her training: "looking back at it now I can see why you were shouted at and why you were told to do this and do that and why the discipline was very harsh. Because it was completely different ... you were in the military, it wasn't a normal job. If anything happened and you weren't concentrating somebody could lose their life, so it was all built around that."



Watch Sally's interview, along with over 670 others at www.legasee.org.uk. There you can meet veterans whose experiences cross the breadth of service life, including Daphne Brookes-Young who was a WRAC Association member until she died in 2020. She recalls her service in the ATS: "I saw a recruiting film and decided, without saying anything to my parents, at seventeen and a half I would volunteer rather than be called up ... I wasn't in all that long. I was a very very small cog in a big wheel, but I'm proud of the bit I did do."



WRAC Member Rachel Webster served a 24-year military career, including the RMP and AGC: "So much has changed [since] I joined in 1989 to when I left in 2013. Much, much better; more inclusive, a lot more diverse. As a female joining now you've got all the women that you can actually look up to and see 'actually I can reach that rank'."



Being interviewed on camera may sound daunting, but Martin's team are experts at putting people at their ease and getting the very best out of their interviewees. Those who have taken part in the past have spoken of their enjoyment of the experience, and how their nerves changed to delight in being able to tell their stories in such detail and in their own words. Plus, coming away with a DVD of the full interview is a wonderful gift to share with family.



Do you have an interesting story to share about your service or the impact your service has had on your life? In confidence, please contact Martin Bisiker on martin@legasee.org.uk, or get in touch with the Association office for more information on info@wraca.org.uk.

Michelle
Apter 'being
interviewed'

CALL TO ACTION

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

AGM:	18 March, Victory Services Club, London
ATS Memorial:	14 May, Gt Yarmouth, Norfolk
Founder's Day:	8 June, Royal Hospital Chelsea, London
Armed Forces Day:	24 June National event – Falmouth, Cornwall and around the country
Summer Event:	29 July, Worthy Down, Hampshire
10k Run:	17 September, Worcester
WRAC Dinner Club:	14 October
Officers Dining Club:	21 October
Remembrance:	09 November - Field of Remembrance, London 12 November - Guildford Borough Cenotaph, London

Lights, Camera, Action!

To take part in the Legasee Educational Trust filming of individuals' stories of their time in the ATS, WRAC and Army contact:
Martin Bisiker on martin@legasee.org.uk,
or get in touch with the Association office for more via info@wraca.org.uk.

This is your opportunity to share your stories, which will be gathered to also help in the creation of a series of educational teaching resources being developed for secondary school pupils.

More information on the Legasee Education Trust can be found on the opposite page and on their website: www.legasee.org.uk.

Lioness & Postal Information from HQ

Change of Address: Please remember to notify us of any change of address – whether for yourself or a friend. Every time Lioness is distributed a number of copies are returned as we are unaware that Members have moved.

Events

Tickets

If you would like to be considered for any of the invitations or tickets to non-Association events, that we occasionally receive (eg The Not Forgotten Association, etc), then please register your interest by emailing office.manager@wraca.org.uk. Type EVENT TICKET REGISTER as the subject heading.

Please note that the vast majority of these events take place in London or the South.

Founder's Day, Royal Hospital Chelsea. We have received a limited number of tickets to attend this event. You need to be at RHC by 10am. The formal proceedings conclude before noon. Please contact HQ Office if you would like to attend - tickets etc are sent direct by the Royal Hospital.

Remembrance

London

At going to press we confirm the dates for 2023 are:

- Thu 09 Nov 2023 Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey. This will be ticketed.
- Sun 12 Nov 2023 Cenotaph Parade. This is always ticketed

Please note that the RBL's criteria for this Parade, is that participation is only open to Veterans (no carers, unless they also served) and you will need to be in possession of 2 forms of ID, one of which must be photo ID.

- Sun 12 Nov 2023 Westminster Abbey Service – Enquire of HQ Office/Tanya what 2023's arrangements may be for this service, but requests will need to be made to the office if you are interested.

Guildford

- Sun 12 Nov 2023 Guildford Borough Remembrance events. As one of only two Regiments that have Freedom of the Borough this is a very symbolic venue for the Association and we encourage as many of you as possible to attend (please refer to pages 8-11 for this year's report & page 81) especially if you are unsuccessful with London tickets.

If you wish to be considered for a ticket from the allocations the Association receives for any of these please contact HQ Office/Tanya via letter or email office.manager@wraca.org.uk no later than 01 July 2023.

If demand exceeds supply a ballot will take place, as with all events.

Dress on Parade

In line with the Royal British Legion and other Regimental Associations, parade dress is to be smart and appropriate; the norm is for dark colours.

Within the WRAC Association the tradition has arisen to wear a green WRAC Association fleece or a bottle green blazer. Fleece, sew-on Association badges and scarves are all available from HQ Office and/or the online Shop.

Please note this form of dress is not mandatory.

Those who do not possess it are still very welcome to parade, as long as they are dressed smartly and appropriately. (See Medals & Badges etiquette below for further information).

Since the Association is no longer an active Corps (regiment) Stable belts and forage caps should NOT be worn.

Medals and Badges Etiquette

Etiquette rules for wearing medals, only allow the wearing of official awards.

- The WRAC Association badge and the Veterans badge may be worn on the left lapel by the position of the buttonhole.
- The medals awarded to a deceased Service/ex-Service person may be worn on the right breast by a near relative (no more than one group should be worn by any individual).
- Unofficial medals, or badges, other than the WRAC Association badge/pin and Veterans badge, should not be worn when representing the WRAC Association.
- Unofficial purchased medals and foreign medals which do not have the Sovereign's permission to be worn are not allowed.

ATS 80th Anniversary Commemoration Great Yarmouth

Sunday 14th May 2023 - 14.00, Imperial Hotel, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk

2023 marks the 80th anniversary of the air raid that claimed the lives of 26 ATS ladies.

We will, therefore, appropriately honour them with a short service at the plaque dedicated to them at the Imperial Hotel, North Drive, Great Yarmouth.

The short Act of Remembrance and Commemoration will be followed by tea and cakes in the hotel.
For catering purposes we will need to know how many people to expect.

Cost £5 per Member.

This event saw the single largest loss of ATS lives during World War II.

Come join us to remember them, their service and their sacrifice.

BOOKING FORM

Wherever possible please book online via: wraca.org.uk/event/gy80/

Or return this form to: WRAC Association, Unit 11, Basepoint, 1 Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, SO23 0LD by 31st March 2023, or email to office.manager@wraca.org.uk

I wish to attend the Great Yarmouth ATS Commemoration event Sunday 14th May 2023
at the Imperial Hotel, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk:

Surname: First Name (known as):

Email:

Tel No:

Dietary Requirements:

Please send £5 per Member to:

SUMMER EVENT 2023

Saturday 29th July 2023 12.00 start

Come join us for a visit to Worthy Down (if you were posted there at any time you are unlikely to recognise it now).

Walk the new Heritage Trail, with mentions of the WRAC's history and connections to the site.

See the re-planted Association Rose Garden and enjoy a picnic lunch with friends.

Visit the AGC Museum in Winchester and the RLC Museum at Worthy Down

Please 'Register your Interest' below or online. We will send further information and details when available.

See Page 34 for further information.

FORM to 'REGISTER MY INTEREST':

Please Please Register you interest by email, letter or this form - and send to the HQ Office: info@wraca.org.uk

Or return this form to: WRAC Association, Unit 11, Basepoint, 1 Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, SO23 0LD by 10th July 2023, or email to office.manager@wraca.org.uk

I am interested in attending the Summer Event on Saturday 29th July 2023 at Worthy Down, Winchester, Hampshire:

Surname: First Name (known as):

Email:

Tel No:

Please send me further information and details when available.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

Last chance to book for the 2023 AGM will be held in the, Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour Street, London, W2 2HF on Saturday 18th March 2023, commencing at 14.00.

TIMETABLE

12:30-13:00	Branch/Group Secretaries Meeting (balcony of the Carisbrooke Hall)
14:00	AGM
15:30	Afternoon tea (for Association members only, must be pre-booked)

DRAFT AGENDA:

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Confirmation of 2022 Minutes
4. Business Arising
5. Governance Report
6. Membership Council Report
7. Benevolent Fund Report
8. Influence Report
9. Annual Report and Accounts
10. Resolutions
 - a. Trustee/Membership Council
 - b. Branch
11. Guest Speaker – Col Victoria Whiting ADC
12. Any Other Business
13. Date of Next Meeting – Saturday 16th March 2024

Refreshments: Afternoon tea will be served on completion of the AGM. This is only available to WRAC Association members who have pre-booked by completing the form below.

BOOKING FORM

Wherever possible please Register/book online via: wraca.org.uk/event/agm-2023/
Or return this form to: WRAC Association, Unit 11, Basepoint, 1 Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, SO23 0LD by 5th March 2023, or email to office.manager@wraca.org.uk

I wish to attend the AGM and afternoon tea on Saturday 18th March 2023 at the Victory Services Club, London:

Surname: First Name (known as):

Email:

Tel No:

Please tick as appropriate:

- ☐ I wish to attend the AGM and afternoon tea.
- ☐ I wish to attend the AGM but will not be staying for afternoon tea.

Dietary Requirements:

BRANCH OR OTHER GROUP NEWS / UPDATES

- If you organise or co-ordinate a group of female veterans, whether as a Branch or Special Interest Group (be that crafting, in-take or leaving years, where you served, what trade or unit you were attached to, sport, a hobby, etc, etc) please let us know.
- Share your news with us.
- We will happily share that information with other members and help promote your Group, what you do and who to contact for more information and/or to get involved.

If you are aware that a Branch/Group listed in Branch News (pages 40-59) has incorrect information (contact person, day/time/venue), is not even listed (or no longer exists) please do let HQ Office, and the Editor, know. Emails were sent out last year to those we have contact details for asking for confirmation and/or updates – thank you to everyone who responded.

There are a few branches we have not heard from, so if you know the up-to-date information please let us know. It does not have to be the official Point of Contact who lets us know.

The information printed is as we know it. We are aware that it does differ to that on the Association website. We want to make sure both sources of information are the same for everyone's benefit.

**The most important thing is that you are women 'Supporting Female Veterans'
– the size or nature of the group matters not.
We are here to help you.**

FOR PUBLICATION

BRANCH / GROUP REPORTS: For those of you who are able to submit by email please

- Put the detail into the body of the email
- Attach your photos to the email, ideally as jpegs
- Send maximum 4 high resolution photos per Report (or if you've been up to lots, pick the best 1 per event)
- Ensure all photos are the highest resolution possible
- Attach all photos to the email – do not embed them into an attached Word document (we cannot always extract them)

REPORTS / ARTICLES:

- **350 words + 1 photos – for ½ page**
- **650 words + up to 2 photos – for full-page**

PHOTO QUALITY:

Photos that have been sent via or downloaded from platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, facebook etc are automatically made low resolution by the programme often making them unusable in Lioness as we need high resolution images.

Please send us the original photo that was taken. You can attach it to an email directly from your phone (if you have an email account on your phone.)

You can add it to your online storage such as google drive / one-drive / i-cloud etc and then add it to your email article when you are ready to send it in.

You can also attach your phone to your computer, if you have one, using the same cable you use to charge your phone and copy it onto your computer to the attach to your email.

Next Edition

Copy date: 15th June 2023

In order that your magazine can be put together, printed and delivered in time for early September we really do need your articles by: 15th June 2023.

**Feature(s) – AGM (March)
85th anniversary of ATS formation (9th Sept 1938)**

HOW TO TAKE BETTER PHOTOS ON YOUR PHONE



The phones on our cameras just keep getting better and better - but with all the amazing functionality at our fingertips, how do you know where to start? I'm taking it back to basics with some top tips to take a great photo, every time.

1. Frame your subject

Think about the photo you want to create, rather than trying to replicate what's in front of you. What is the focus or subject of the photo and how can you best frame them (or it!)?

2. Light your subject

Lighting is very important for all photographs and mobile phone photography is no exception. Avoid taking photos of people and objects with a brightly lit background, otherwise your subject will appear dark. Use a ring light or LED light, try the flash on your phone, or simply reposition your subject so that natural light falls onto them.

3. Keep it steady

Use a tripod or stand up against a wall / tree or post to steady your body, hands and phone, to avoid shaky blurry photos. You can even leave your phone in a stable position and use the timer function!

4. Work the angles

Stand on a chair for an aerial view, or squat down and shoot from below (although be careful shooting anyone self-conscious of their double chin!). A different angle gives your photography a more interesting look.



5. Try a new mode

Make your subject pop with portrait mode, giving you a short depth of field (blurred background). Make sure you follow the instructions on how far back to stand. Or try burst mode for action shots - with multiple photos capturing the subject as they move, you can choose the best & delete the rest.



6. Play with the light

Tap your screen and use the yellow square with the sunshine icon to meter the light and adjust the exposure. Slide the sunshine up and down on the subject to get the right exposure just right.

About

Hi, I'm Sam, Wedding, Family and Personal Branding Photographer. I'm based in Winchester but work all around the Hampshire area. My passion for photography goes back to my childhood – I've always loved to capture people's special moments and create images they can treasure. I know how important great photography is to help you capture special memories and tell your story, so I make it my mission to ensure you get exactly what you need from our time together.

Drop me an email and let's chat about what kind of images you need for your family, business, or special occasion.

M: 07727 064462

E: sam@samgavinsphotography.com



Shared by Judy Hasnip from her archives:

Still working my way through my 'hoard', and I came across this photo. It appeared in the Spring edition of the RAPC Journal, April 1965. Lunch breaks were a lot more fun back then!!

Party was held in the Mess on 19th December and, in the experience of this writer at least, the arrival of an Irish Santa Claus in the form of Sgt. Mooney, R.E., was quite definitely a novelty. This Party is open to the children of all who work in the Castle, civilian or military, regardless of status, and very well behaved they were, too. On 22nd December we were most pleased to accept an invitation to drinks in the Officers' Mess. The following day we waited on the tables at the Junior Ranks' Dinner, and fine waiters some of us would make. Not a drop of soup was spilt! After that, we went our different ways to celebrate or rest, depending on our stamina.

Some well-known faces have left our ranks since the last notes were submitted. S.S.M. Hogwood has now departed for the rigours of a civilian existence, and S.Q.M.S. Jackson, who never showed any signs of accepting Scots citizenship, is now at Ashton-under-Lyne. Sgt. Borthwick and Cpl. Gray have both said farewell to Auld Reekie's wintry winds, and are now perspiring freely in Brunei and Aden respectively. The whole Office will miss the cheerful grin of Pte. Jenny Parnham, W.R.A.C., who is now at R.P.O., Guildford. Jenny, who worked in Central Tech. ran innumerable messages around the Office, and was undoubtedly ruler of her own little roost. We welcome in her place Pte. Gibson, W.R.A.C., on cross-posting from R.P.O., Guildford, and she can rest assured that in a very short time she will know her way around the Office blindfold.

(RAPC) Journal news relating to WRAC personnel was very thin on the ground. Then I stumbled on this report, which accompanied the top photo. The condescending tone made me realise just what we were up against back in the day.



Service-day Memories Helen Duncan

It was late winter of 1962, I went to Westbury for a few days to face the Officer Selection Board. In the early summer of 1963, I was part of the 32nd Officer Cadet Course based at Hindhead; we were commissioned on 18th December 1963. I have the order of service. The address was given by The Rt Rev G E Reindorp D.D. Lord Bishop of Guildford. General Sir James Cassels, Adjutant General to the Forces gave the address and presentations. The WRAC Band under the Director of Music Lieutenant E Crowcroft played a selection of music.

My first short posting was to Bicester and then, in the early summer of 1964, I joined a Recruiting Team which began a tour of Scotland and England. Sadly, this was cut short because of an outbreak of typhoid in Aberdeen. We were put into isolation at the WRAC camp in Lingfield before being given the all clear and resumed our tour.



My next and final posting was to Beaconsfield where I remained until my marriage in December 1966.

I hope you find these memories and photos of interest.



Footnote to 'Recruitment Adverts' (2022#2 edition)

The adverts are definitely post 1965, and could have even been circa 1970. I can date them fairly accurately as I know, and served with, some of the people in the photos.

The girl holding the 'ticker tape' was known as 'Pinky', and she was a Corporal who was stationed in Aden with me in 1965. The lad with his back to the camera was a friend stationed there with the RAF.

The RMP in the coloured advert was, according to friends, a 'pin up' for the RMP's - it's easy to see why!

I guess knowing these people was the main reason for holding on to them.

Thanks to all for another great edition of the 'Lioness'.

Judy Hasnip

Footnote to Elizabethan Bus Voucher

This voucher appeared in the 2022#2 edition of the Lioness and seemed clearly signed by M M F Reid. I recognised the initials at once and sent a copy to the late Margaret (McGregor Fraser)'s family - the middle child is my Goddaughter.

Margaret and I were Officer Cadets at Hindhead in 1963. By the date this was most probably her first working day as a 2nd LT (after Commissioning on 8th August we had 2 weeks Leave).

Another coincidence: Jennifer Barker and I Commissioned on 8 August 1963, and her daughter Katherine Allt (another Goddaughter) on 8 August 2003.

Mrs Helen Jeffries nee Beaver (WRAC 1963-70)

Mollie Hendry's (nee Sparrow) story of the 2nd World War as she experienced it.

[Editor: Mollie has kindly shared her detailed recollections of the War years, 1939 to 1945. Due to its size we will be sharing these recollections, through Lioness, in instalments. Instalment no.1, 1939 & 1940, are below. The remaining years will follow in subsequent Lioness editions].

1939: Although it was expected, it was a shock when war was declared on 3rd September (Dad's birthday). Almost immediately after the declaration we had an air raid siren - not knowing what to expect we all tried to dive under the table, with our gas masks, which had already been issued. False alarm. Things were very quiet for a long time, although troops were sent over to France. The only good thing that happened to the Allies was the scuttling of the German warship the Admiral Graf Spee (in December).

1940: My brother Harry was called up early in 1940, as he was 21 when war broke out. I was 19. Fairly quiet at first and then the Germans started bombing France, Belgium, Holland, etc and the war escalated. Very anxious days while

the German army pushed the Allies back towards the coast. Eventually our troops had to try and get out of Europe – dreadful days as we did not get much news, but knew it was bad.

To me the very worst time was the evacuation of our troops from Dunkirk – so many brave men on the beach without protection from the guns and bombs of the enemy. It was, as Churchill said, “England’s Finest Hours” when the navy, merchant navy and all kinds of small craft came to rescue those men. We only heard on the radio and read in the newspapers of the brave deeds, courage and fortitude that was shown by the rescuers and the rescued. So many lives lost though, but it could have been much worse. Even today the thought of Dunkirk moves me to tears.

Then, to add to our misery, Mussolini declared war on the Allies. I do not think that the majority of Italians were in favour of fighting England. We stood alone. Mussolini was of course a Fascist. We had some of these madmen in England, led by Oswald [Mosley]. England was pretty liberal about these odd cults, but they put him away somewhere (imprisoned or put in some sort of camp) to keep him out of mischief.

At home we had to face the realities. Here our government really behaved well – they insisted on us having a blackout – no lights to be shown, all windows curtained with black cloth. There were no street lights and the transport had to black out most of their headlights, leaving a very small centre which pointed downwards. One got used to all this, of course.

During this year many British cities were bombed, including Coventry – the Cathedral being almost destroyed. In July the Battle of Britain began in earnest. At first the Luftwaffe sent many planes over during the day to London. Most of us just had to continue with our jobs as far as possible, but then our ‘gallant few’ fighter pilots caused so much damage to the invading planes that the Germans changed to night bombing instead. These were terrible times, particularly for those living on the eastern or southern borders of London. Sometimes the German planes could not find their targets, so jettisoned their bombs (in fields or on property) on the way back home.

One lovely day a number of my friends and I went for a day on the river (Thames), and we really enjoyed it, having to return to north London by train. I looked out of the window and saw a glow in the sky. What was this? – no lights were allowed. Someone said, “it is a big fire in London”, (at that time we were getting a lot of incendiary bombs dropped). The train stopped on the south side of the Thames, we were told it was going no further and we had to get out and walk across the bridge, I think it was Waterloo. This was not a pleasant experience, but being about 12 of us, we kept each other’s spirits up and dived into any shelter we could find when we heard the sirens, guns and aircraft. Eventually we got to the underground and made our respective ways home. Here I would say that my best friend Iris was with us, and she lived in Ilford, east of London. She opted not to take my suggestion of coming home with me, as she said “my mother will be worried”. Eventually, she and one of the men spent the night on the floor of a railway carriage in Liverpool Street Station, because that train too refused to go any further.

And she turned up at the office the next day – a little late, but in one piece. That’s what we did in those days. Apart from these awful incendiary bombs, we got high explosives, which could demolish a whole building, and landmines, which although they did not go deep, spread destruction over a very large area. The incendiary bombs led to a great deal of damage in London, because the following H.E.-planes could see where to drop them by the from the incendiaries.

Iris and I worked together in High Holborn – which is about half-way between the West End (Oxford Street etc) and the City proper. When we came up at the underground station in the morning, after an air raid the night before, we never knew whether or not our building would be standing. I remember walking through and around rubble and broken glass where an unfortunate building had been knocked down. At this time, when we were getting air raids almost every night, men were on buildings all over the City and surrounds were expected to take turns to man the rooftops so they could report any first, or advancing enemy aircraft. These were ordinary office workers, who also had to put in a day’s work. Fortunately, the women were not expected to take turns.

To let you know how close we came to disaster, I will tell you about the little shop on the opposite side of High Holborn, where we used to get the most delicious sandwiches for lunch. That was bombed one night – so no more sandwiches. Then we had a small shop at the back of the building, facing down Bedford Row (the street for CAs), run by a Belgian couple, who made the most delicious pastries. They too were bombed - so you see how we could also have been unlucky. One heard so many tragic cases – one being when a high explosive bomb hit the middle of the road in the City (at the Bank) and went straight through to the underground shelter where many people were sleeping. Large numbers of casualties.

We had so few public shelters that most people, afraid to stay at home, took their beds and food to the nearest underground station and slept there. Coming home from an evening out, one had to tread very carefully among all those sleeping in the station. I never did this, I took my chances and slept at home (a three storey house, with my mother, cousin and me on the top floor, so we had to go downstairs when the air raid sirens sounded). There was always the danger of epidemics, but the stations and shelters were kept very clean, and everybody did their bit to ensure hygienic conditions.

[Editor: Thank you so much for sharing this with us – and especially in this, the 85th year of the ATS’s formation. Another instalment will be in the next Lioness edition].

Trumpeters/Buglers for Funerals

We recently received this information which some may find of interest:

A veteran is entitled to a trumpeter/bugler provided by public money if they have completed pensionable service or completed an operational tour (NI, Iraq etc). If this was not the case then they would be required to pay for the costs. The army has a process so that trumpeters and buglers can be allocated appropriately.

To apply for this service individuals should contact the Army Music Tasking authority at LONDIST-SSTAArmyBandsMailbox@mod.gov.uk

Trumpet Major, Kings Troop:
KingsTpRHA-TptMaj@mod.gov.uk

Reunions & Dinners

WRAC Dinner Club Saturday 8th October 2022

Thursday 6th October saw us setting off for this year's Dinner Club event. Squeezing myself into Chris Powell's car along with 100+Teddy Bears, we take to the road. I'm easily recognisable as I'm the only one not wearing a Dinner Club t-shirt! Thankfully Google maps didn't let us down and we were soon arriving at our destination ... Crowne Plaza hotel, Nottingham, for a weekend of friendship, fun and frolics.

Once settled into our rooms it was time to catch up with the other early bird arrivals over a tippie or three. Our evening was spent at leisure ... a trip to a local hostelry for a bite to eat, and where we enjoyed some karaoke fun ... who knew Karen Radders Radford had such a good voice!

Friday dawned bright and dry (always a bonus), and after a hearty breakfast we popped into the committee room to register and part with our hard-earned cash. The persuasive selling tactics of all committee members (they could sell sand to the Arabs!) soon had me and my money parting company in an endeavour to win one of the coveted Dinner Club bears ... with some success I must admit. Not forgetting raffle tickets and several attempts on the numbers board - my purse was soon depleted.

Decided on a little bumble into town for a browse around the shops and some refreshments. What I hadn't bargained on was getting caught in a torrential downpour! Arrived back at the hotel resembling a drowned rat! But the smile was soon back on my face when I heard I'd won £100 on the numbers board - every cloud does have a silver lining.

Friday evening, we were once again left to our own devices - which meant more shenanigans down at the local watering hole ... well we did have to practice for the main event on Saturday!

Saturday arrived and with it more and more Dinner Club members, it was great to re-new old friendships and the have the chance to meet new friends, that's what epitomises this unique weekend.

After a short power nap, it was time to don our glad rags and meet for pre-dinner drinks and the customary photo shoot before taking our places in the function room. The tables were beautifully decorated, and it was heart-warming to see so many members wearing tiaras in memory of our friend and committee member, Melanie Howell, and I'm sure I spotted more than one purple rinse in the crowd!

The meal was delicious and served by very pleasant and professional staff - a credit to the hotel. The raffle, as always, brought plenty of cheers (not necessarily because of a winning ticket!), but the committee's sales pitch paid off as both myself and Jan Foster won Red Letter Day vouchers. Then the entertainment began, and everyone took to the dance floor to the sounds of a great band, and didn't stop until the early hours! A brilliant time was had by all.

Yes, there were a few sore heads Sunday morning, but we made it to the farewell meeting ... well who can resist a rousing chorus of "So long, farewell" to see us on our way.

To all committee members who worked so tirelessly to ensure we had a fantastic and memorable night ... you more than succeeded. See you all next year wherever that may be!!
Gaynor Webster

[Editor: The WRAC Dinner Club is a separate entity to the Association, so if you would like to attend this amazingly-fun event next year please contact Heather Bradbury heather.bradbury@icloud.com They will send you an application form and keep you updated on where, when, what, etc. All you then need do is turn up and have fun].



Chris Powell, Jan Foster, Gaynor Webster, Sue Jackson, Sheila Murphy and Debbie Wilson



Gaynor, Jan and Chris



Lucky raffle winners Gaynor and Jan



WRAC Officer's Dining Club

The WRAC & RMAS Sisterhood Officers' Dinner moved to a new location in 2022, and we dined and were looked after very well at the Union Jack Club. It was great to see 80 attendees at the Dinner, the inevitable last minute cancellations due to illness (covid!) meant a few more missed an excellent night. The commissioning years were from 1958 to 1999, resulting in lots of old friends meeting up and new friends being made. WSC 913 held a mini reunion, and other intakes may like to do that next year when the Dinner will be held on a Saturday towards the end of November.

Many thanks to Ish Thomson and Sue Hatton who have been organising the Dinner for far more years than they envisaged.

Rowena Naile MBE



WRAC 1963 COMMISSIONING REUNION

For ALL those Commissioned in 1963

**60th Anniversary Reception
and Luncheon
at RMA Sandhurst on
Thursday 28th September 2023**

For further details and to apply please contact: Helen Jeffries (nee Beaver) at helenmcj9@hotmail.com, as soon as possible.

WRAC attending the 100th Anniversary of the RSA Edinburgh Branch 18th – 20th November 2022

Twice a year the Herforder Association organise two weekends of fun and frivolity for their members, one in the North of the country and one in the South of the country to allow maximum attendance. These weekends are usually informal, however, this year, it was decided to hold a 'Black Tie' Dinner to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the RSA Edinburgh Branch and 20 years of the Herforder Association. The event was held over 3 days in the King Robert Hotel, Bannockburn, Stirling, 18th – 20th November 2022.

Our honoured guests were Baroness Ruth Davidson, Honorary Colonel 32 Signal Regiment, who gave us an update on the Regiment and its plans, and, Major General David McDowall CBE, Chairman RSA who presented the 100-year Pennant to the Standard Bearer Mr Bill May, and gave a short speech on the importance of the veteran's community and integration of the associations and affiliated groups. This event had significantly proved that ethos.

The whole evening was magical and brought together friends from the Reserves, Regulars, and veterans' communities across the UK to celebrate this great achievement.

If you served in Germany, you could request to join the Herforder Association through their Face Book Page.

Helen Jephcote



WRAC PT REUNION 14 – 17 May 2023

Our next PTI Reunion is being held at Stratford Upon Avon from Sunday 14 - Wednesday 17 May 2023. We have secured a block booking at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, which is situated alongside the beautiful River Avon and a short walk away from the town, famous as William Shakespeare's birthplace.

Our programme includes a narrow boat cruise, golf at Stratford Golf Club, our usual Dinner Night and the opportunity to explore this very scenic part of the country.

We would be delighted to welcome all our former PTI's to our new venture, which promises to be great fun in picturesque surroundings.

If you would like to join us, please contact: katebettison24@gmail.com for further information.

We Will Remember Her Great Yarmouth and across the UK

If you attended last year's Great Yarmouth service or have been following our 'We Will Remember Her' campaign in the Lioness and on our website, you will know how hard we have been working to ensure that the 26 ATS servicewomen killed in 1943 when a bomb fell on their Norfolk coastal quarters are properly remembered.

This year, we hope that our members will also gather in the hometowns of those 26 servicewomen stretching from the Highlands to Hampshire, to remember them in a series of services at 1400 on Sunday 14th of May.



In 1994 a plaque was unveiled to commemorate the place where the bomb fell and year after year, Joan Awbery ensured a gathering took place in Great Yarmouth with a Service of Remembrance. Last year, after the plaque became damaged, a replacement was dedicated with a wonderful turnout of our members. This May marks 80 years since that fateful morning, and we are once again gathering together at Great Yarmouth. If you would like to join us there we would be pleased to welcome as many members as possible for this service, and you can find out more on page 63.

Our fantastic volunteer force led by Deserie Mansfield and Janette Deans has been doing marvellous work towards getting the 26 women remembered in their home towns. We know where the women are buried and we know which ones have so far been added to a local war memorial. It is our hope that, whilst the principle service takes place in Great Yarmouth, our members will gather at gravesides and war memorials to carry out their own act of Remembrance. Our padre, the Reverend Sue Wing, will write some appropriate words to be read at each location, and we would like to feature photographs from each gathering in the next issue of the Lioness.

The list below details all the locations where we hope to gather, alongside the women to be remembered there. We are not organising these events formally, however it would be helpful to know how many will attend each location and put people in touch with one another to make arrangements. Whether you attend as an individual or as a branch, please email info@wraca.org.uk, or call the office on 0300 400 1992 to find out more or let us know which location you will be attending.

We will remember...

Lance Corporal Eileen Hunt is buried at Holy Trinity Churchyard, Besthorpe, Nottinghamshire, where she is also remembered on a memorial plaque

Private Jean Copley is buried at Aston-cum-Aughton Cemetery in South Yorkshire

Private Kathleen Gaunt is buried at Bingley Cemetery in West Yorkshire

Private Jessie Sharp is buried at Hessle Cemetery, Haltemprice in East Yorkshire

Private Jessica Lewis from Boscombe, Bournemouth is buried at Bournemouth East Cemetery in Hampshire

Corporal Enid Line is buried at New Southgate Cemetery, Hertfordshire, and remembered on the memorial wall at the Bank of England in London



Private Ivy Moore and Private Roma Pearson from Grimsby, Lincolnshire are buried at Scartho Road Cemetery in Lincolnshire

Sergeant Viola Wells and Private Marjorie Sutton are remembered on a memorial plaque within St Lawrence's Church, Fulstow in Lincolnshire

Private May Johnson is remembered at Louth War Memorial in Lincolnshire



Private Vera Mann is buried at Holbeck Cemetery in West Yorkshire

Private Bernadette Bell is buried at St. Joseph's R.C. Cemetery in Moston, Lancashire

Private Louisa Farnes is buried at Oxbridge Lane Cemetery in Stockton-on-Tees

Private Louisa Maxwell is buried at St. Nicholas Churchyard, Gosforth on Tyneside

Private Nora James is buried at St. Mary's Churchyard, Rolleston-on-Dove in Staffordshire

Corporal Margaret Galbraith is remembered on the war memorial at New Mills in Derbyshire

Private Elizabeth MacKay is remembered at Nigg War Memorial in the Highlands



Lance Corporal Mollie Carter is buried at Handsworth New Cemetery in South Yorkshire

Private Dorothy Fawkes is remembered on the Corsenside Obelisk War Memorial, Corsenside in Northumberland

Private Jean Scougall is buried at Morningside Cemetery, Edinburgh

Lance Corporal Anna MacLeod is remembered on the Lewis War Memorial in Stornoway

Four of the servicewomen are buried at Great Yarmouth, but we hope to remember them at their hometown war memorials: Private Doris Wimbush from Doncaster, Private Jane McAulay from Germiston in Glasgow, Private Doris Travers from Northampton and Private Lilian Grimmer from Cobholm in Norfolk.

If we can ensure that each one of these locations has a WRAC Association contingent in attendance at 14:00 on Sunday 14th May we will have achieved a multi-location act of Remembrance which says much about our bonds today and more about our thanks to those 26 ATS servicewomen. We hope to see you somewhere in May.

FALKLANDS FORTY CHALLENGE

I saw this challenge to commemorate 40 years since the Falklands War. As my late husband was a Falklands veteran, I thought I would take up this challenge, organised by the RBLI to honour the lives of those lost during the Falklands War and to support Falklands veterans.

I had to complete 40 miles in the month of May and did this by Nordic walking and completing the Manchester 10k run.

I raised £378 for the RBLI thanks to everyone's generosity.

Photo of my late husband Colin Hooton in the Pay Office in Stanley, Group photo of the Pay Team on the QE2.

Photo credits Paul RG Haley

LEST WE FORGET

Wendy Hooton



Remembrance



ROUTES OF REMEMBRANCE Friday 11th November 2022 Edinburgh to Kings Cross, London

I had a very busy weekend attending 3 events to mark remembrance this year.

It started off at 05.48 from Edinburgh Waverley to London Kings Cross. I boarded the train with some friends in Edinburgh; we were all up at cock crow although I think that Cockrell may still have been sleeping. Anyway, myself, Grace and Harry Courtney and Derek Lambert were en-route to London as part of the Veterans Charity 'Routes of Remembrance'. Last year there was a whole carriage filled with us, this year not so, possibly due to other commitments and/or also recent industrial action by the railways. All was going well until we reached Berwick upon Tweed - the train in front of ours had an accident and hit something on the line; it turned out to be a sheep, but the hold-up caused us to be an hour and half late getting into Kings Cross. By this time the service on Kings Cross concourse had already been held. However, we held our own little service and laid wreaths on behalf of the WRAC, Royal Signals and the Herforder Association.

Senga Palmer



*Memorial bench at Kings Cross Station
with WRAC Association wreath*



WRAC and Military Working Dogs wreaths



Wreaths from ASLEF, Herforder Assoc & RBL



Wreaths from WRAC Assoc, Signals & Military Working Dogs



Harry Courtney, Senga Palmer and Derek Lambert



Kings Cross Station War Memorial

THE FALKLAND ISLANDS 1982 SERVICE OF REFLECTION

I was honoured to be invited to this Service of Reflection by the Royal Naval Association Stowmarket and privileged to read the Kohima epitaph - my late husband was a Falklands veteran.

There is a Facebook group called Scarves for Falklands Veterans which was started by a Falkland Islander called Rachel Simons. Her aim is to give a scarf to every person of Class 82'. It is her way of saying thank you to all those who helped liberate their islands.

I decided to ask if it was possible for the group to send me scarves for the Falkland veterans who would be at this service of reflection. Lorrin Evans, ex RN, answered the call and sent me 9 scarves. I was delighted to present them after the service, although it was quite emotional for everyone.

LEST WE FORGET

Wendy Hooton



POPPY APPEAL Rotherham East 2022

In 2020 we embarked on a Global Pandemic, which affected the whole world in many different ways. In this year I was asked if I would be interested in being a 'PAO' - I know we abbreviate everything in the Forces, but I had to ask what this one was. Before long I had begun my journey as a 'Poppy Appeal Organiser' for Rotherham East to raise vital funds for the Royal British Legion to ensure our Veterans were looked after when required.

It was a very difficult journey as everyone was working from home, most businesses were not open, it had a huge effect on where we could place our poppies & tins so the public could wear their Poppies for Remembrance. Volunteers were hard to find, most were elderly and were vulnerable, and the Cadets were not allowed to participate as normal.

What a contrast it is now, we have just finished Poppy Appeal 2022. We had all the cadets out, Army, RAF, Sea and the Scouts. The other volunteers ranged from all ages, across civilians to ex-forces. It was a fantastic team and we covered Asda, Tesco & Morrisons and the Rotherham General Hospital. Volunteers did varied shifts, whatever they could manage, some after their normal jobs in the evening. We even had a few amazing Lionesses (including two that travelled from Chesterfield and Worksop - Leona Goffin and Karen Baxter).

The public were very generous, as always, even though we are facing a Cost of Living crisis with soaring energy bills and rising costs in everything, they just kept giving. We raised just over £20,000 in 2020, £47,000 in 2021, and we are hoping to beat that this year. It is crucial that we carry on raising money to help our Veterans in their time of need.

If anyone would like to get involved with the Poppy Appeal in your area please contact your nearest Royal British Legion Branch.

Cheryl Jones

We know that most of you attend Remembrance services and parades in your local villages, towns and cities. It is wonderful that you support your local area.

Everyone – please remember to send in your reports and photos for inclusion next time.



Association News and Updates

CONGRATULATIONS

... to the following who have celebrated their 100th birthdays since the last Lioness edition:

Kathleen Dawson, Tauranga, New Zealand (July)
Hilda Rose Whitwood, Abgindon (August)
Joyce I Roberts, Sompting (September)
Harriet Wilson, Round Lake, USA (September)
Doris Chavasse, Solihull (December)
Joan James, Vancouver, Canada (December)
Joan Edith Dekker-Thomason, Amersfoort, Netherlands (December)
Doris Champion, Ringwood (December)
Clarice McDonald, Windsor (December)



If you know of any ex-ATS who is due to celebrate their 100th birthday in late 2023 and 2024 please let us know. We may not have their details but want to ensure that we send them the Associations' very best wishes along with a card and some flowers. Please let HQ Office know.

MOVING HOUSE?

If you have moved recently, or are about to move **please** let us have your new address (and email address) as soon as possible. This will help us reduce the number of Lioness magazines which are returned undelivered.

Please email your change of address to office.manager@wracaorg.uk, phone us on 0300 400 1992 or post to WRAC Association, Unit 11 Basepoint, Winnall Valley Road, Winchester SO23 0LD.

PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR OLD POST CODE.

News on insurance for Branches

The WRAC Association HQ has expanded their insurance policy for Branches to include running, cycling and walking.

I did look into cover for a sailing branch and camping and caravanning branch, however, the insurance company and I couldn't see an eventuality whereby a Member wouldn't already be covered since the owner of any boat, or vehicle, or caravan would have to have their own insurance anyway. Likewise, expeditions or charities offering opportunities for veterans would have to have insurance cover in place eg Turn to Starboard sailing courses.

The additional cover to include running, cycling and walking supplements that are already in place to enable Branches to meet regularly, run market stalls and such like.

Towergate Wilsons specialise in cover for military units and charities such as ours. They also provide individuals with insurance for caravans and sailing boats amongst other things.



Are you a volunteer?

(continued from Amanda Hassell's article, page 7)

.... You probably are a volunteer – so be proud of the volunteering roles you fill both informal and formal. And if you aren't currently a volunteer, why not think about taking on a new volunteering role to support the WRAC Association and its members?

Do you help fellow ATS and WRAC veterans in any way, such as taking them to events, calling round to see them to help with chores such as shopping, phoning and emailing them to see how they are? Are you part of the Buddy Buddy scheme? Do you help with organised events? Do you fundraise? Do you take part in national and local events to promote our charitable cause? Do you sit on the benevolence grant committee?

If you do any of these things, then you are absolutely a **VOLUNTEER** within the WRAC Association.

We tend to think of volunteers as people who do traditional charitable tasks such as running a charity shop, marshalling events, campaigning, driving those with accessibility issues etc., as well as those who are Trustees of the organisation or are branch co-ordinators. However, we often overlook all the other informal roles that many of us fill our time with, which may include running events, serving refreshments, befriending, giving advice, guidance or information, monitoring and conserving wildlife, giving first-aid, providing legal help, driving or transporting people especially those who have mobility issues.

What is volunteering?

- Volunteering is when someone spends unpaid time doing something to benefit others. Helping your close friends or relatives isn't volunteering, but doing something for others for the benefit of the community or environment is volunteering.
- It can be formal and organised by organisations, or it can be informal often within communities - such as driving someone to a hospital appointment or tidying/ litter picking in your local park
- Volunteers can be any age and from any background, they may be working or retired
- It should always be a free choice made by the person giving up their time.
- Volunteers don't get paid - because they are not doing a job which a paid member of staff should do. Volunteers should never replace a paid role.
- Volunteering is not employment - volunteers aren't employees and aren't covered by employment law.
- Volunteers should never be out of pocket for their volunteering.
- Volunteers should expect there to be an agreement as to what their contribution will be, however large or small. They should expect to meet their commitments - do what they said they would do – and expect full training (if required), support and appreciation from the organisation.
- Each volunteer has their own reasons for volunteering, these include: getting experience to get into work or change career, supporting a cause that is meaningful to them, meeting other people, representing others such as a committee rep, contributing to the local community, changing something for the better, using their skills or experience to help others, doing something completely different or new, learning new skills, continuing professional development

The Association trustees recently held an away day, hosted at the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) HQ, to explore and discuss volunteering. We identified the following list of volunteer roles (though not exhaustive) that exist within the WRAC Association:

**Trustees,
Area co-ordinators,
Branch and Group leaders/secretaries/point of contact,
Life Vice Presidents,
Event helpers,
Standard bearers,
Religious leaders,
Advisors,
Internal auditor,
Musicians,
Fundraisers,
Media contributors,**



We have undertaken to develop a volunteer policy, and to be more mindful about our volunteers to ensure that they are fully appreciated and, where appropriate, formally recognised.

We'd love to hear more about the volunteering that you are all doing for your local branches and communities, and especially to find out more about the unsung heroes who we know are out there. If you want more information on volunteering, then the NCVO has a very good website and information: ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/involving-volunteers.

[For examples of how Amanda gets involved with volunteering see Page 7]

**Amanda Hassell
Association Trustee**

News on insurance for Branches

The WRAC Association HQ has expanded their insurance policy for Branches to include running, cycling and walking.

We also looked into cover for a sailing branch and camping and caravanning branch, however, the insurance company and we couldn't see an eventuality whereby a Member wouldn't already be covered since the owner of any boat, or vehicle, or caravan would have to have their own insurance anyway. Likewise, expeditions or charities offering opportunities for veterans would have to have insurance cover in place eg Turn to Starboard sailing courses.

The additional cover to include running, cycling and walking supplements that already in place to enable Branches to meet regularly, run market stalls and such like.

Towergate Wilsons specialise in cover for military units and charities such as ours. They also provide individuals with insurance for caravans and sailing boats amongst other things.

So, if the issue of appropriate insurance cover for certain Interest Group branches/groups has been holding you back from starting and promoting one of these let us know, so we can ensure you are included in the list of branches/groups. And we will help you promote your Group as well.



PHOTOGRAPHS:

At the Branch Secretaries Meeting Tanya kindly gave some tips on how to maximise the quality of your smart-phone photos, so:

- *Please send in good quality photographs.*
- *Limit them to the best (in quality and quantity) – ideally 3 – 4.*
- *Please 'attach' photographs to emails / articles, ideally as jpegs.*
- *Please do not embed them within a word (or other) document – it makes it really difficult to copy and share them to the magazine.*
- *Please title photographs, as least with those in it. You know who they are – I and others may not.*

Thank you one and all for your contributions – they make great reading, and it is wonderful to see you all so active, busy and living up to Comradeship, Support and Esprit de Corps.

Please continue to send in your branch/group news, reports and updates – and don't forget, they are not exclusively for those who title themselves 'branches'. If you are part of an 'interest group', eg cycling, caravanning, walking, crafting, etc, please send those reports in too, along with contact details so others can join you.

Editor

PHOTO QUALITY:

Photos that have been sent via or downloaded from platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, facebook etc are automatically made low resolution by the programme often making them unusable in Lioness as we need high resolution images.

Please send us the original photo that was taken. You can attach it to an email directly from your phone (if you have an email account on your phone.)

You can add it to your online storage such as google drive / one-drive / i-cloud etc and then add it to your email article when you are ready to send it in.

You can also attach your phone to your computer, if you have one, using the same cable you use to charge your phone and copy it onto your computer to attach to your email.

Association Notices A - Z

Change of Address. Please remember to notify us of any change of address. Every time Lioness is distributed a number of copies are returned as we are unaware that Members have moved.



Donations. You can send a donation to the Association at any time. More information can be found inside this edition. Donations can also be made online via the Association website or by phone 0300-400-1992. Whatever you decide to do, PLEASE make sure that we have a Gift Aid form from you - if you pay tax, we can reclaim the tax and the government adds to the donation you have made, without it costing you any more.



Dress on Parade. In line with the Royal British Legion and other Regimental Associations, parade dress is to be smart and appropriate; the norm is for dark colours. Since the Association is no longer an active Corps (regiment) Stable belts and forage caps should NOT be worn. Within the WRAC Association the tradition has arisen to wear a green WRAC Association fleece or a bottle green blazer. **Please note that this form of dress is not mandatory and those who do not possess it are still very welcome to parade, as long as they are dressed smartly and appropriately.** (See Medals & Badges etiquette below for further information).



Event Tickets. We occasionally receive free tickets for events, or invitations to attend functions organised by The Not Forgotten Association. Historically these have primarily been offered to regional Branch members. However if you are an **HQ Branch member** and would like to register your interest in being sent information about these events please email office.manager@wraca.org.uk and type **EVENT TICKET REGISTER** as the subject heading. Please note that the vast majority of these events take place in London or the South.



Lioness (audio version). Due to the size of recent Lioness editions we have been unable to offer this service. However, we continue to keep it on file and will resume as, when and if it is possible.



Lioness. Articles for inclusion in the next edition of Lioness must be received by **15th June 2023**. Please email direct to editor@wraca.org.uk. Please type the text into the body of the email, not as an attached document.



Please send photos as attachments to the email; do NOT embed them into a document, as it makes life very difficult this end. Ideally send just 3 or 4 good quality photos (jpg format only). Additionally, if you are able to give names to people in a photo that would be helpful, and we will try and include.

Medals and Badges Etiquette. Etiquette rules for wearing medals only allow the wearing of official awards.



The WRAC Association badge and the Veterans badge may be worn on the left lapel by the position of the buttonhole.

- The medals awarded to a deceased Service/ex-Service person may be worn on the right breast by a near relative (no more than one group should be worn by any individual).
- Unofficial medals, or badges, other than the WRAC Association badge/pin and Veterans badge, should not be worn when representing the WRAC Association.
- Unofficial purchased medals and foreign medals which do not have the Sovereign's permission to be worn are not allowed.

Memorabilia. We have a selection of Association Memorabilia available to purchase online via the website, by post or by phone.



Remembrance. By tradition The Association receives an allocation of tickets for the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on the Thursday prior to Remembrance Sunday, for the Cenotaph Parade and for the service in Westminster Abbey on Remembrance Sunday, via the RBL, and for Remembrance in Guildford. Tickets are open to any member of the WRAC Association who wishes to attend, prior attendance or Branch participation are not a prerequisite.



At going to press we confirm the dates for 2023 are:
Thu 09 Nov 2023 Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey. This will be ticketed – please apply to the HQ Office if you wish to attend.

Sun 12 Nov 2023 Cenotaph Parade. This is always ticketed. Enquire of HQ Office/Tanya what 2023's arrangements may be for this service, but requests will need to be made to the office if you are interested, by email (office.manager@wraca.org.uk) or letter only.

- If demand exceeds supply a ballot will take place, as with all events.

Guildford. – We are invited each year to the Service of Remembrance in Guildford (the 'mother' town of the WRAC Association). This is hugely significant to the Association as we enjoy Freedom of the Borough. Please consider attending here if you are unable to attend the London Cenotaph; and register your interest in attending with HQ Office. Space in the church is limited. Please enquire of the Association Office for 2023's details – by email (office.manager@wraca.org.uk) or letter only.

Overseas Members. Overseas Members are requested to pay an additional £5.00 per year to cover additional Lioness postage costs. Only sterling payments can be accepted.



Veterans UK. Veterans UK is your one stop shop for all queries about Service Records, Medals, Pensions and much more. Go to www.veterans-uk.info or phone 0808 1914 2 18.



Subscriptions. Annual Members are reminded that subscriptions are due as at 01 October. Subscriptions can be paid online, by phone (0300 400 1992), by post with a cheque/postal order (sterling only) payable to WRAC Association or via your Branch.



For your convenience, we now offer multiple-year (3, 6 or 10 years) subscriptions (after your initial first year of Membership). See Member Log-in area of the Association website or telephone HQ office manager on 0300-400-1992. (No discounts apply).

WRAC Dinner Club. The WRAC Dinner Club meets every year on the second Saturday in October (Saturday 14th October 2023), full details can be found at www.wracdinnerclub.co.uk.

WRAC Officers' Dining Club. The WRAC Officer's Dining Club Dinner will take place on Saturday 21 October 2023. For more details email wracofficersdc@gmail.com or visit the Facebook Closed Group 'WRAC Officers' Dining Club'.

**Royal Hospital Chelsea
Founder's Day, 8th June 2023.**

Please contact HQ Office if you are interested in attending. This is a 10am start.

NEWS & VIEWS (general)

OTHER (military) ASSOCIATIONS / ORGANISATIONS:

UK-wide Veteran's Survey

This is the first-ever exercise to collect feedback from the veterans' community across the UK coordinated by the Office for Veterans' Affairs and the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The online survey launched on 10 November and will be live for 12 weeks (to middle February). The survey gives ex-UK armed forces personnel and their families the opportunity to provide direct feedback to the government on their experiences, access to and use of services for veterans.

Responses to the survey will help us better understand the experiences, needs and well-being of our veteran community, and guide future action.

The Office for Veterans Affairs are hoping that a wide range of views from as many ex-UK armed forces veterans and their families as possible, have shared their feedback. We look forward to seeing the outcome of this work and will report on its findings in due course.

Military Wives Choirs

In January (2022) the Military Wives Choirs announced the start of a year-long research project with Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) which sees a unique partnership between the Veterans and Families Institute for Military Social Research (VFI) and the Cambridge Institute for Music Therapy Research (CIMTR). Thanks to a grant from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust's Tackling Loneliness & Isolation programme, the research aims to uncover barriers to joining a choir faced by women in the (widest) military community and aims to produce a monitoring tool to enable the charity to evaluate the impact a choir has for its members.

As both an independent charity and subsidiary of SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, the Military Wives Choirs work collaboratively with SSAFA in their mission to provide support to our Forces and their families; and as such are delighted to be working with Anglia Ruskin University to expand their understanding of the barriers women face in accessing the service they offer.

If you would like to find out more about the work of the VFI or the CIMTR, you can find out more via their own websites online. To find out more about the Military Wives Choirs, visit their website: www.militarywiveschoirs.org.

Of themselves, the Military Wives Choirs say:

"With 72 choirs and nearly 2,000 members in British military bases across the UK and overseas, the Military Wives Choirs is a charity that brings all women in the military community closer together and empowers them through singing. The emphasis is on all women: the choirs contain wives of serving personnel, along with those currently serving, veterans, mothers, sisters and daughters, and others with a military connection."

Please contact the Military Wives Choirs direct if you're interested in their research and/or in joining a choir.

DEFENCE DISCOUNT SERVICE

Some of you may know about this Service offered to all those serving in, or who served in, the Armed Forces and the armed forces community. The below is taken from the 'home page' of their website – so please take a look, sign up and take advantage of the discounts they have negotiated for your benefit.

"The official MoD discount service for the Armed Forces, Veterans and Armed Forces Community. It provides discounts both online and on the high street for members of the Armed Forces, Veterans and Armed Forces Community.

Defence Discount Service is home of the Defence Privilege Card, the vetted discount card that can be used in stores, restaurants and venues to obtain armed forces discounts. This discount card allows Veterans and the Armed Forces Community to have a card that can allow them to receive military discounts."

WHO QUALIFIES?

**Serving Armed Forces
Reserve Forces
Spouses/Partners of serving personnel
HM Armed Forces Veterans (ex serving)
MoD Civil Servants
Bereaved Family Members
War/Service Widow(er)s
Cadet Forces (over 16)
NATO Personnel in the UK**

<https://www.defencediscountservice.co.uk/>





Johnny Mercer MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London
SW1A 2AS

MC2022/11500

14 July 2022

Dear veterans and their families,

Last week the Prime Minister appointed me to be the Minister for Veterans' Affairs - further delivering on a long term promise to the UK's veteran community to get the whole of Her Majesty's Government operating in the most effective way to support you and your families.

This Government has committed to making this country the best country to be a veteran in the world by 2028. It is my job to deliver on that commitment; I am determined to do so, and I will make myself accountable to you for doing so.

While veterans care has advanced significantly over the last fifteen years, I recognise that this has not been felt equally by everybody, or experienced equally across every community of the United Kingdom. Huge strides have been made to meet the increase in demand for support since 2003, and I pay tribute to the thousands of brilliant people who have worked incredibly hard - often as volunteers - to improve life after service for our veterans.

The vast majority of our veterans go on to live fulfilled and empowered lives after service. You all know that veterans make fantastic employees, go on to great careers, give back to their communities and hugely benefit from their time in military service. I am determined that we change the narrative around the UK's veteran population so that your service is recognised and your successes celebrated.

But some veterans do face deep struggles, which I will relentlessly strive to tackle. We will forge a path towards ensuring that every one of our community who needs help knows where to turn, and is met by good quality, evidence based care that will improve their lives.

The Office for Veterans' Affairs has achieved great things since its conception in 2019, and will continue to ensure that the Nation's debt to those who serve is honoured. We are already taking action to protect veterans from vexatious legal pursuit into old age. We are delivering England's first complete mental health care pathway for veterans in Op COURAGE. And we will be addressing the harm to our LGBT community from the years of the ban. The Government set out bold commitments in the Veterans' Strategy Action Plan 2022-24 in January this year to improve veteran healthcare, employment, access to digital services and more, and we will meet them all.

This is a significant moment of change. I hope that the Nation looks back in the years ahead with pride at what we achieve, and that this step change is felt by every one of you. I look forward to the challenge.

**JOHNNY MERCER MP
MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

The New Armed Forces Covenant Duty:

What organisations in scope will need to know



Announced on 10th November, 'The Covenant Duty' came into force on 22nd November 2022. The Duty is supported by Statutory Guidance to help in-scope bodies understand what is required of them under the new Covenant Duty.

What is the new Armed Forces Covenant Duty?

The new Covenant Duty is a legal obligation on certain public bodies to 'have due regard' to the principles of the Covenant, and requires decisions about the development and delivery of certain services to be made with conscious consideration of the needs of the Armed Forces community.

Who does the new Duty affect?

The new legal obligation impacts organisations that are responsible for delivering principally statutory functions in healthcare, education, and housing services. The Armed Forces community will be affected as beneficiaries of the new Duty.

What will the new Armed Forces Covenant Duty do?

The new Covenant Duty will raise awareness amongst organisations that provide services in healthcare, education, and housing of how Service life can impact on the Armed Forces community, and how disadvantages can arise due to Service when members of that community seek to access key local services.

The Duty will require organisations delivering local services to pay due regard to the Covenant principles when exercising functions in the areas of housing, healthcare, and education.

"Due regard" means that organisations in scope of the Duty will need to consciously consider the unique obligations and sacrifices made by the Armed Forces; that it is desirable to remove disadvantages faced by the Armed Forces community; and that special provision may be justified in some circumstances.

Why has this new Duty been introduced?

There has been good progress under the Covenant to date, but more work is needed to improve consistency of delivery. The increased awareness that is inherent in the new Duty will help to improve delivery as understanding grows.

There is no desire to add an administrative burden unduly on organisations. The legislation has been designed around a Duty to pay due regard, as this is the best way to minimise any burden placed on service providers while maximising the wider impact of Covenant delivery into the future.

How will this affect the Armed Forces community?

Service life affects serving personnel, veterans, and their families in many ways. Whether it's through frequent house moves, separation from loved ones and support networks or unfamiliarity with civilian life, for example, they can find themselves on the back foot when accessing public goods and services. The Covenant Duty will raise awareness amongst providers of public services, like schools and hospitals, about how Service life can impact the Armed Forces community. In turn, this will lead to more informed policymaking as these

organisations will better understand the uniqueness of Service and how this can cause disadvantage accessing these services compared to civilians.

This won't mean that the Armed Forces community will be placed at the front of the queue. But it will mean their circumstances will receive a fairer assessment when their cases are considered. In this way we can help to ensure that the Armed Forces community are treated fairly now and in the future.

Key functions covered by the new Duty include issues such as: the allocation of social housing; healthcare waiting list policies; and schools' admissions. A full list of the functions in scope of the Duty are listed below.

What does this mean for those organisations who need to fulfil their obligations under the new Duty?

The new Duty applies to organisations responsible for delivering education, healthcare, and housing services. A range of organisations are covered by the scope of the Duty, such as local authorities, NHS trusts, and schools and academies, for example. A full list of the organisations and functions covered by the new Duty are listed below.

The Duty will raise awareness of the how Service life can impact on members of the Armed Forces community. This will help ensure that providers of public services consider the Armed Forces community when developing or delivering policies that affect them. The Covenant Duty does not mandate what organisations must do – only that they must consider the Armed Forces community alongside other legal requirements. This allows affected organisations the flexibility to balance local needs within the local context.

What support is available for organisations to help them apply the new law?

The MOD has produced Statutory Guidance to help affected organisations to understand and comply with the Covenant Duty. This explains the Armed Forces Covenant, and includes examples of where disadvantage can arise, of good practice, and other useful information.

The Covenant Duty applies to England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Organisations who need to comply with the new law:

England:

- Local authorities
- Governing bodies of maintained schools and further education institutions
- Proprietors of Academies
- Non-maintained special schools and special post-16 institutions
- NHS England, Integrated Care Boards, NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts

Wales:

- Local authorities
- Governing bodies of maintained schools
- Local Health Boards, Special Health Authorities, and NHS Trusts

Scotland:

- Local authorities and local authority landlords
- Integration authorities, Health Boards, Special Health Boards, and the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service
- Persons or bodies whose help is requested under section 23 of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

Northern Ireland:

- The Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- The Education Authority and the Board of Governors of a grant-aided school
- The Department of Health (Northern Ireland), but only when exercising the relevant healthcare functions in scope of the Duty that were exercised by the former Regional Health and Social Care Board prior its dissolution
- Local Commissioning Groups, and Health and Social Care Trusts

Public services provided by organisations affected by the new law:

Healthcare:

- Provision of healthcare services
 - Planning and funding
 - Co-operation between bodies and professionals
- These three healthcare functions are within scope of the Duty in the following settings:
- NHS Primary Care services, including general practice, community pharmacies, NHS dental, NHS optometry services and public health screening services.
 - NHS Secondary Care services, including urgent and emergency care, hospital and community services, specialist care, mental health services, and additional needs services (as applicable).
 - Local authority-delivered healthcare services, including sexual health services and drug and alcohol misuse services.

Education:

- Admissions
 - Educational attainment and curriculum
 - Child wellbeing
 - Transport
 - Attendance
 - Additional needs support
 - Use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only)
- These education functions are within scope of the Duty in compulsory education settings, that is:
- Primary,
 - Secondary,
 - and, for England only, Compulsory further education.

The Duty does not cover nursery (early years education), higher education, or other voluntary adult education settings.

Housing:

- Allocations policy for social housing
- Tenancy strategies (England only)
- Homelessness
- Disabled Facilities Grants



A part of the Ministry of Defence, that can assist with:

- Urgent help for veterans
- Contact Veterans UK
- Armed Forces Pensions
- Medals and Badges
- Service Records

What they do: They “provide free support for veterans and their families, including a helpline, Veterans Welfare Service, Defence Transition Services and injury/bereavement compensation scheme payments.”

More information on the services they provide and how they might help can be found on their website:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk>

Contact them via:

General enquiries:

Email: veterans-uk@mod.gov.uk

Freephone (UK only): 0808 1914 2 18

Telephone (from overseas): +44 1253 866 043

Their current opening hours are *8.00 am to 4.00 pm Monday to Friday. Please email us for enquiries outside these times.

Armed Forces Pension enquiries:

UK: 0800 085 3600 From Overseas: 0044 141 224 3600

Medals enquiries:

Email: DBS-Medals@mod.gov.uk

Phone: Veterans UK Helpline 0808 1914 2 18

Service Records and Subject Access Request enquiries

Please refer to their website page: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/requests-for-personal-data-and-service-records>

Or phone their General enquiries.

VETERANS CARD – HOW TO APPLY

From the Veterans UK website

"A new ID card for armed forces veterans, which will help them access specialist support and services, has started to be issued to service leavers.

The cards allow veterans to easily verify their service to the NHS, their local authority, and charities, helping them to access support and services where needed.

All other veterans will be able to apply for a new ID card by the end of this year, to mark their time in the armed forces".

Service description

To apply for a veteran's ID card the service will allow users and providers of beneficial services to veterans to confirm that someone has served in the UK armed forces in a one-off, simple process, so veterans can access the services they are entitled to.

The service allows a veteran to:
request a physical veteran's ID card
request a digital veteran's ID card
sign up to a mailing list for veterans

Service users

This service is for UK armed forces veterans. This is now available to those who left prior to 2018.

However, it is still a 'work in progress' so contact Veterans UK direct for more information and guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk>

VETERANS RAIL CARD

– HOW TO APPLY 1/3 off rail travel

- For UK Veterans who served at least one day in His Majesty's Armed Forces or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined military operations
- Buy a Railcard and keep it with you when you travel (on your phone or wallet)
- Save on most tickets including Advance tickets

Go to: <https://www.veterans-railcard.co.uk/> for more information and application forms. Alternatively have a conversation with your local rail operator / ticket office.

VETERANS BADGE – HOW TO APPLY

You can get an armed forces veterans badge if you've served in any of the UK armed forces - there's no fee.

Eligibility

You can apply if you were in the:

- army
- Royal Navy
- Royal Marines
- Royal Air Force (RAF)
- volunteer or regular reserves

You cannot apply if you:

- served in the armed forces of another country
- served alongside the UK armed forces, for example in the Canadian Navy or Royal Australian Air Force

How to apply

Download and fill in the application for an armed forces veterans badge, via the government website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-veterans-badge-application-form>), or

You can also call the enquiries line to get a paper application form sent to you.

Medals and veterans badges enquiries

Freephone (UK): 0800 085 3600

Telephone (from overseas): +44 141 224 3600

You'll need to give as much information on the form as possible, such as:

- the force you served in, for example the army or Royal Navy
- service number
- period of service

Post the form to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Medal Office - the address is on the form. Do not send the form by email.

After you've applied

You'll usually get your veterans badge within 6 to 8 weeks of applying.

If you lose your badge, you can apply for a replacement.

Get help

If you need to contact MOD about your veterans badge application, you can phone, fax or send an email to dbs-modmo-vetsbadge@mod.gov.uk.

You can NOT apply for a veterans badge by email.

Female Veterans - Who Knows What; Who Identifies as What

The Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) research outcomes were shared with the world last August, highlighting that the: Public knows little about UK ex-servicewomen

In an Ipsos poll of more than 2,000 people aged 16+ from across the UK, 82% of people in the UK responded they know very little about women who have served in the Armed Forces, learning most of what they do know from television (factual programmes = 37%, film/TV dramas = 32%). 79% admired women who have served within the Armed Forces, however, the MoD's 2020 target of women making up 15% of all Armed Forces personnel was never met, indeed, the most recent figures show women make up just under 12% of the intake, comparing poorly to the USA (16.5%) and Australia (18.6%). Following the Atherton report, the MoD signalled an intention for women to make up 30% of the intake by 2030. However, this new research suggests there remains a huge lack of awareness among the general public thereby impacting this target.

The survey also revealed that 68% supported women being able to occupy combat roles, falling to 56% when asked if they would support a female relative or friend joining the Armed Forces in a combat role.

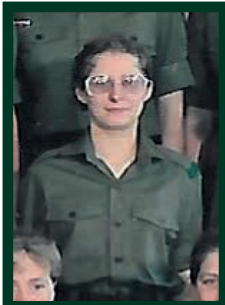
Dr Lauren Godier-McBard, Associate Professor at ARU, said: "Our results clearly show a lack of knowledge about women who have served in the Armed Forces although they are supported and admired by the public and recent television shows have attempted to depict the lives of servicewomen. However, there is still a worrying lack of knowledge about women in the Armed Forces, the roles they can carry out and the impact of this on them after military service. It is clear there is a need for more research into the experiences of women in the Armed Forces."



Obituaries - Their Final Salute



JUDITH (JUDI) MAIR BOWES Died 23rd June 2022



Judi joined the WRAC in 1992 and although only managed to serve for a short time, she was, till the day she died, a passionate supporter of the Armed forces and her overcoat bears testament to this as it is covered with badges of the armed forces she supported. She would always support anything local, but the highlight for her, I think, was being able to meet The Last Dam Buster, Johnnie Johnson. Although sadly Judi and I were only together for 7 years she managed to pack so much into her life; it was like watching a whirlwind.

Judi moved to Gloucestershire and became manager of the Fragrance shop. It was while working there she discovered that her cancer had returned, and she would have to endure chemotherapy and radiotherapy. This she took in her stride and worked through it, her favourite saying was "I am not going anywhere, and it will not beat me". While doing all this she managed to produce stunning cross stitch patterns for friends and customers alike, maintain her love of reading and the Tudors and, if that was not enough, she was the admin officer for TS Gloucester, our local Sea Cadet Unit.

However, it soon became apparent that her cancer was taking its toll and she had to give up work and the Cadets, which disappointed her as she hated letting anyone down. However, the enforced rest seemed to help, but she became very tired easily and accepted the offer of a week in the Cheltenham Sue Ryder Hospice, the purpose being to let her (and me) rest and to sort her medications out. For the first week it seemed to be working, but when she challenged the doctor to tell her how long she had, we were both stunned when he said five weeks. She accepted this very stoically and we planned for the inevitable. During this time Judi had many visitors, a mark of the many friendships she forged in her short time in the county. When the time came it was peaceful and I was proud to be there for her. She died with her typical smile on her face.

Her funeral was an internment of ashes into our local Garden of Remembrance and was well attend with many in uniform to give her a fitting send off, as she would have loved.

Rob Griffin



MRS GWENDA EASTON (Nee BURBRIDGE) 17th July 1926 - Died 2nd August 2022

Formerly Chair and Sec of Aldershot branch, from Axminster and ex-ATS and ex-WRAC

FRANCES EMILY EVANS (Nee FLEMING) 14th February 1923 - 25th July 2022



Frances was born in Leeson Park, Dublin on 14 February 1923 to Violet and Bertram (Bertie) Fleming. She was educated at Alexandra College, Dublin and enjoyed piano, dance, photography, sailing, horse-riding, her lifelong hobby of golf and watching rugby union - she was a keen supporter of Ireland (and when not playing) Wales.

Frances spent over six years with the Auxiliary Territorial Service and then the Women's Royal Army Corps, from 12 April 1943 to late 1949. She was one of 70,000 of her compatriots who signed up to fight for King and country and private 197027 enlisted in Belfast. On arrival for supper that first evening she found she had not been quick enough to sit down and her supper had been eaten; fortunately, a Dublin friend took

pity on her and something was rustled up for her. While in Northern Ireland Frances discovered that, if you took your gas mask out of its case, the case would hold a little black dress; this was very useful for attending dances in Ballymena and other places. Thankfully the gas mask itself was not needed. With the loyal support of her fellow soldiers who polished her buttons and shoes, Frances was selected for OCTU in May 1944 and became Subaltern Fleming at No 2 ATS OCTU 17th course in September 1944 at Windsor.

Frances was then sent to the ultra "hush-hush" Range, Experimental Establishment at Ynyslas near Borth in West Wales. The sand dunes of Ynyslas were a remarkable place, a mini Cape Canaveral, where about 40 scientists and 200 ATS watched as our first guided missiles were tested from the beaches. These missiles were designed to counter Hitler's Vengeance, or V, weapons. When our prototype missiles did what they were supposed to do in testing, the boffins and ATS girls cheered and Frances and her colleagues knew then that we would win the war. Frances spent VE night in Tenby having driven a truckload of soldiers into town to celebrate. They were not permitted to pay for a drink that night.

By 1947 Frances was based with the Royal Artillery at Manorbier, near Tenby. From there, in 1948, she proceeded, again with the Royal Artillery, to Birch Lines, Park Hall Camp, Oswestry where, as officer commanding of her unit, she proudly presented them to General Wood in Shrewsbury on the formation of the WRAC in February 1949. She attended a military law course in December 1948.

Frances returned to Dublin in late 1949. Her career took her to Trinity College Dublin for 12 years where she was the first non-graduate to work on the front square. During that time Frances met Len Evans (later Captain Evans and Commodore of Sealink) and she moved to Holyhead after their wedding in July 1963. This was her home for 57 years before she spent her last two years in a care home in Bodorgan.

Frances was into her tenth decade of golf when she retired from it in 2016 (with a handicap of 36 – she had been a 10 handicap) and thoroughly enjoyed membership at Milltown Golf Club in Dublin and at Holyhead Golf Club.

To Frances, family was everything. She was a devoted aunt to 4 nieces and nephews, 12 great nieces and nephews, 30 great great nieces and nephews and, so far, 2 great great great nieces and nephews. She was also a wonderful grandmother, cousin and friend. Above

all she was a devoted and adored wife to Len and mother to Eleanor.

Frances died, on 25 July 2022, at Ysbyty Gwynedd after a short illness, well into her 100th year.

Eleanor Evans



BARBARA J FOSDICK (Canada) 28th June 1924 - 27th October 2022



Our dear old soldier Mum, Barbara Fosdick has died, and left the field. Barbara is survived by family, and extended circles of relatives and dear friends who will miss her and celebrate her memory, most especially her daughter, Gillian, and son, Bill, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Born in England in 1924, Barbara was in her 99th year. At seventeen, the War was on, and she leapt into action. Joining the Army, she served in the ATS, a Mixed (Male & Female) Battery of Anti-Aircraft gunners. She was immensely proud to be on the first all-women's Fire Control Team credited with bringing down an enemy aircraft. At the war's end, she came to Canada, on her own, where she met Bill Fosdick, another Veteran, home from the war. They married and raised their children in Edmonton. The family moved to Victoria in 1968 and called the west coast home for 55 years.

Barbara retired from her work at the McPherson Library at the University of Victoria in 1989. The last 33 years of her life have been the very best of all. She was an extremely proud Grandmother and was so thrilled to be a Great Grandma. She loved to travel. And gamble. And sing. We laughed a lot. A speaker with the Veteran's Bureau, Barbara shared her stories of the war with thousands of local school children at Remembrance Day Assemblies. An Honorary Lifetime member of the Royal Canadian Legion, Barbara had served as President of the Women's Ex-Service Branch until they stood down in 2009.

She was an Olympic Torch Bearer, as well as a recipient of the Minister of Veteran's Affairs Commendation and the Queen's Jubilee Medal.

Barbara was a game old girl of the 'can-do' tribe. She could bake a pie, bind a wound, splice a wire, write a story or quilt an applique picture. She was practically famous for her Welsh Cakes and Cheese Krispies. We loved her dearly. A life-long Anglican and a faithful member of St. Philip parish for thirty years, she made the transition to St. Mary's Oak Bay in August 2022 after the traditional service at St. Philip's ended. She was always a great believer in a good send-off, and a joyful thanksgiving for a life well-lived was held on Sunday November 20th 2022, with donations in her memory going to support the local Poppy Fund.

(Published in Times Colonist and shared by the family)



JEAN LE GASSICK (formally Trapmore, Nee Stephenson) 26nd December 1929 – 23rd May 2021

Jean Stephenson was born in Holton Le Clay on 26th December 1929. She enlisted into the ATS on 16th August 1947 in Grimsby. In joining she followed in the footsteps of her elder sister Pat and the instigator of their enlistments, their aunt, Captain Eunice Chadwick. Her mother was horrified, "a waste of a good education!" for a grammar school girl. She was soon christened 'Steve' due to her surname and her birth date being St Stephen's Day, and this nickname survived for the rest of her life.

Her initial trade was telephonist, but in January 1948 she reclassified to driver. Driving staff cars at Wilton she met Lt Col Albert Trapmore R SIGNALS. They married in July 1949, when she was discharged. Bert was posted to Herford in Germany where Steve's education came to the fore as she 'matriculated' in German and spoke it fluently. Their daughter Wendy was born in 1950 and eventually followed her parents into the service. After Bert's death in 1954 she married Captain Cyril (Sandy) le Gassick R SIGNALS in 1956 and their son Stuart was born in West Ewell a year later.

The couple spent 25 years travelling the globe, from Singapore, throughout Germany and Britain. Any MSQ which has a rockery on the corner of the front path – they probably lived there; she hated people cutting across the corners

and ruining the grass. In 1985 they finally settled in Logie, Aberdeenshire where Sandy built the family home. Both she and Sandy worked for the National Trust for Scotland after they retired from military life.

Their son Stuart decided that the Army was not for him and moved to the USA working as an international squash coach. She 'got her own back' on the family by gallivanting across America and staying in Youth Hostels. These were the earliest days of mobile phones and waiting for daily updates was nerve wracking. Later her annual visits to see her grandchildren were less worrying for us all. During retirement Steve and her sister Pat used their 'Soldier's Service Book' to prove their military credentials to stay at the Union Jack Club making many jolly trips to London.

Steve joined the WRAC Association as a life member in February 1989. She always took a keen interest in her children's careers and that of their friends. Steve was an outstanding national bridge player, excellent golfer, devoted grandmother, keen gardener and great hostess. Her visits to USA stopped in 2018 when she found the journey too taxing. To receive two anniversary cards from HM The Queen, for their 60th and 65th wedding anniversaries, filled them both with the greatest pride and a lot of champagne! Her Majesty had presented Sandy with his MBE in 1965 and they were thrilled to join Wendy and her husband Tony for the awarding of their MBEs years later.

W/345836 died most unexpectedly on Sunday 23rd May 2021 from a heart attack, aged 91 years. Three days later her beloved Sandy joined her in heaven. At their joint funeral, held on a glorious day in Elphinstone cemetery, Logie, a piper played 'Nut Brown Maiden'.

Wendy le Gassick



MARY HANSON
(L/Cpl W/152141)
2nd July 1921 –
8th October 2022



Mary Hanson was born in Batley, Yorkshire on 2nd July 1921, the eldest of 4 children, moving with the family to Bradford, in the mid 1930's. On the outbreak of WW2 Mary was working as a window dresser at Novello's Department Store, Bradford. She wanted to 'join up' and enlist in the WRNS (Navy) as she thought the uniform was much nicer. Her mother wouldn't give Mary her birth certificate but by December 1941 the National Services Act (No 2) made conscription of women a legal requirement and single women of 20-30 years were called up first. So, Mary's mother had no choice but to let her go when called up.

It was to the ATS that Mary enlisted on the 15th May 1942 and started her training as a Private in the ATS/TC, stationed at Bingley and attending the Technical College in Leeds. Like many other young women, they took it all in their stride, followed orders and went where they were sent.

After passing her RAOC Trade Test 111, she was posted to S Coy to Ruabon, North Wales on 1st November 1942 as a Clerk. Most of Mary's wartime service was spent at Overton-on-Dee on the Welsh-English border, going on to pass her TT 11, qualifying for an appointment as Clerk, RAOC Group Class 11. By February 1943 Mary had passed her TT1 and was promoted to Lance Corporal. Being moved around to different Companies was expected and Mary was in A, S, F, and L Coy's throughout her service. During August 1945 Mary was posted from Overton-on-Dee to Chester and then to Mersey Sub District. She was released from ATS on 4th May 1946, relegated to U/List, finally being discharged 1st April 1954, her services 'no longer being required'."

Mary had fond memories from her wartime experiences, and it gave her a new-found freedom and independence. She recalled once going home on leave,

missing her bus to the train station and a lorry stopping to ask offer a lift. She jumped in without a care and on asking if she liked chocolate, said yes, the driver then saying help yourself behind you - it was a wagon full of Cadbury's chocolate. She took two bars and duly ate them. Mary also used to love dancing and had very fond memories of some of the American soldiers who occasionally attended local events.

Mary didn't like the style of cap with "duck's beak" (as she called it), part of her day-to-day work uniform which they had to wear, so decided to unpick the stitching and sewed it back on the other way. It was so admired by some of the other girls they asked her to change theirs as well. She said that no officer ever commented on what they had done. The women's officers were stricter than the men when on parade inspection. Hair had not to touch the back of their collar, but many angles of the head and neck, along with the occasional tape to hold hair up in curls, were used to disguise the actual hair length

One of Mary's jobs, at Overton-on-Dee, was to order supplies, where she gained the nick name "Hammer" following a bit of a mix up over the quantity of hammers she ordered! a nickname her army friends continued to use after the war ended. Mary was glad, like everyone else, when the war ended and it was a matter of getting on with things as she returned to civilian life.

Mary remained lifelong friends with Joan from Hull, and Gwen who went on to marry John, who lived near Ormskirk, Lancashire. She lived an interesting and varied life, working in a variety jobs, including British Road Services (now Exel plc), ERNIE and a short spell as a housekeeper to Benedictine Monks, putting her Army skills to good use. Mary enjoyed travelling home and abroad, during which she developed a love for the English Lake District, as well as classical music.

Mary never married and lived near her nephew John and his family in Chorley, Lancashire. At the age of 96, in January 2018, and with the help of her nephew, Mary successfully applied for her service records and the 1939 – 1945 War Medal and the WW2 Defence Medal, awarded to her but which, like many others, she never applied for, and were never automatically issued. Along with the medals was a letter of thanks from the Under-Secretary of State for Defence. In June 2018 Mary finally received her Armed Forces Veterans Badge from the Ministry of Defence, just in time for Armed Forces Day and her 97th birthday.

Thank you, Mary. We salute you!
John Holland and family

**DOREEN HILL
(SOUTH, Nee MARKHAM)
Died 27th December 2022**



My Nan, Doreen Hill enlisted in the ATS on, I believe, 18th May 1943. Her service number was W/276815, and at the time of her discharge in 1945, she was married and had been promoted to Sergeant. Her name at this point was Doreen Markham.

I feel a huge regret that my Nan had never made contact with the association as I feel she would have benefited greatly from the support you could and would have provided her. Sadly, over the past few years, we were witness to her declining health, primarily due to dementia, and subsequently the associated complications, which finally took her from us in the early hours of Tuesday 27th December, in Skegness, Lincolnshire. It was always her wish to reach 100 years and receive her "telegram" sadly, this is not to be.

My Nan never claimed her war medal as she always felt she didn't deserve it, which I absolutely know not to be true.

Kind Regards
Shaun Dunham



**MELANIE (MEL) HOWELL
Died 6th August 2022**



Mel was a larger-than-life character who opened a WRAC Mediterranean Branch when living in Spain, and organiser of the famous Benidorm Babes Trips. She was also Joint Hotel Organiser of the WRAC Dinner club. She always had a smile and welcome. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

[Facebook post]



**ISABELLA (ELLA)
LAURENCE
(Nee Robertson)
21st April 1930 –
5th January 2022**



Ella was a beloved sister, Aunt, Great Aunt and friend. She joined the TA in the early 1950s before enlisting in the Women's Royal Army Corps in 1957. This took her all over Britain and also France. She spoke fondly of her time spent in Aldershot and Guildford. She gained the rank of Warrant Officer Class 2 and greatly enjoyed her time in the army.

Marie MacDonald

**NICOLA JANE MARSHALL
(Nee Ribbans)
06th August 1962 –
17th October 2022**



It is with great sadness that the family of Nikki Marshall (nee Ribbans) announce her passing, after her battle against bowel cancer, on 17th October 2022 at the age of 60. Nikki passed away peacefully at home in Woolaston, Gloucestershire and will be lovingly remembered by her husband Tony and their daughters Abigail and Jessica.

Nikki was commissioned into the Women's Royal Army Corps in December 1981 at the WRAC College, Camberley. Her first posting was with the RAOC at the Defence Ammunition Depot and School where she commanded the WRAC troops who worked in and around the Ammunition Depot. During the Falklands Conflict she became Operations Officer responsible for the outload of ammunition to the Task Force. Her talents were recognised, and she

was promoted to become the Assistant Adjutant with 40 Field Regiment RA. She was one of a few female officers to take up such a position at this time (1983-1985) and was the only female in a Regiment of over 400 officers and soldiers.

Nikki was a strong swimmer and in her own right earned a place in the 40 Field Regiment swimming team. However, she was stopped from competing in the Brigade Championships (at the poolside) as she was a woman! She was commended for her professionalism and helped to set an easier path for others to follow. Nikki had a short posting as Company Second-in-Command to a Special Communications Unit before being pulled early to assume the position of Platoon Commander and Instructor at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (January 1987 – April 1989, covering WSC881 – 883). She found it a demanding role but one that she enjoyed enormously and one that she was very proud of.

Nikki then joined her husband (also serving) in Germany to become the Detmold Garrison Adjutant. She had just gotten on top of the job when troops from Germany were mobilised and deployed to the Gulf in September 1990. She was redeployed to Fallingbommel to run the Casualty Reporting Centre and received a Military Commendation for meritorious service in support of Operation GRANBY. She did return to Detmold in March 1991, until she left the Service to accompany her husband on a loan service posting to Zimbabwe.

Nikki was extremely proud of her Corps and having served in the Army. She had 2 daughters and went onto a second career in primary teaching. Nikki was an energetic member of the Innsworth Military Wives Choir and active member of her local athletics club.

Nikki was diagnosed with bowel cancer in October 2021, however, by April 2022 it was clear the cancer had spread. Treatment proved ineffective and at the beginning of October this year she was made comfortable at home, as was her wish, and received care from the NHS Community and Great Oaks Hospice teams.

Tony Marshall



ELIZABETH (BEANIE) MCINTOSH (WRAC) Died 13th August 2022 (age 49)

It's with heavy heart that I have to post this information. Elizabeth Beanie Tosh McIntosh passed away suddenly this weekend. She had been in hospital poorly for a couple of weeks and was discharged Thursday 11th August, but sadly she was found to have passed on Saturday 13th.

She only served a few years and left to have her son, then a few years later tragedy struck her younger sister who died giving birth to her twin girls. Beanie stepped into raising them while her parents took care of the older brother (all lived within two streets of each other).

Beanie was a live wire with a big heart who at 49 years of age was called to the final parade. She joined in 1989 and served as a cook. She will be missed by so many. She leaves her son Dee, 2 grandsons, her late sister's teenage son and teenage twin girls.

The funeral took place on 2nd September. It was a very emotional service at the graveside. Beanie was laid to rest alongside her younger sister, in Harvieston cemetery in Gorebridge Mid Lothian. There were a great many folks who turned out to see this Lioness off on her final parade. It looked like the whole village of Gorebridge turned out to send her off.

Senga Palmer



MAJOR (RETD) 'MACK' MASKENS-MCINTYRE Died 22nd November 2022



Tribute to Mack, given at her funeral in December:

"We are here today to celebrate the life, and to mourn the passing, of Mack or 'M squared' as she was known within the Service, or Ann as she was known within her family. It is a great privilege for me, as a Life Vice President of the Women's Royal Army Corps Association, and as a friend, to pay tribute to her.

She was born and brought up in Middlesbrough where she was the younger of two daughters. 'Our Mary', as Mack affectionately called her older sister, and whom we are so thrilled to see with us here today, recalls that when Mack left secondary education she just bided her time until she reached her seventeenth birthday when she could go to the Army recruiting office to 'sign on'. So, in 1957, Mack achieved her ambition and joined the Women's Royal Army Corps. She was selected as a Pay Clerk attached to the RAPC - and that love of all things financial and accounting followed her throughout her life.

Mack was a natural when it came to military life, and she had a most distinguished career with postings to Hong Kong, Cyprus and Germany as well as Northern Ireland at the height of the troubles. She quickly rose through the ranks to reach the pinnacle of her soldier service as a Warrant Officer Class One and as a Regimental Sergeant Major. She was a formidable and respected RSM and was held in the highest regard by all ranks. Her exceptional service as a soldier was duly recognised and rewarded with a Quartermaster's Commission in 1981. She was a typically conscientious WRAC QM, painstakingly accounting for all her stores and taking pride in ensuring her unit was well equipped with all it needed and that the accommodation was up to scratch. She was an outstanding QM at the WRAC Training Centre Guildford and her Commanding Officers acknowledged that they were indeed fortunate to have a QM of Mack's calibre, expertise and experience.

When the WRAC disbanded in 1992 Mack almost single-handedly closed the

Unit down and handed over the keys to the Barracks. She had no desire to join the Adjutant General's Corps but had to finish her Army Service somewhere so she was posted to the RMP Centre at Chichester as their QM (the RMP were a Branch of the AG Corps). They took Mack to their hearts, and she was very happy completing her Army career there with them. When she retired after nearly 40 years devoted service to Queen and Country she was still wearing her WRAC cap badge in her Service Hat!

In retirement she threw herself wholeheartedly into the WRAC Association as an Area Chairman, Trustee, and member of our Benevolent Fund Grants Committee. She was our Parade Commander at the Cenotaph for 14 years, always immaculately dressed in her WRAC Greatcoat and wearing her precious beret! We followed her commands to the letter, we dare not do otherwise, and I can see her now sizing us off on Horse Guards Parade so that our squad looked professional and balanced.

She was Association Chairman of South and Southwest Area for many years, certainly throughout my tenure as Vice President. It was a huge area from Cornwall up to Bristol and back down through Bath to Salisbury, Portsmouth and back along the South Coast to Plymouth. She was on the road constantly ensuring that the 10 Branches in her care were well supported and advised. Very often she would carry a Branch Standard at a member's funeral in the absence of the Branch bearer. She also travelled the length and breadth of the country to attend the funeral of other members with whom she had served, even if they were not in her area. She never missed an Association Meeting, an AGM or a Grand Reunion - she was always there - a constant reassuring presence.

For me personally, she was a trusted and much loved friend. In recent years she used to come into Dorchester when I was looking after my ailing Mother and sit with us, which was a great comfort. Today is especially poignant for me as three years ago to this very day Mack sang 'Psalm 23', unaccompanied, at my Mum's funeral. She had a beautiful voice, as those of you here today who sing in this Church's choir will acknowledge, and on friends' birthdays she would give a lovely rendition of 'Happy Birthday' over the phone.

She was a seasoned traveller and managed to visit most parts of the world either during her annual leave whilst in the army or in her retirement. She sponsored a young Kenyan boy, Felix, through his education and was thrilled to meet up with him just a couple of

years ago. He is now at university reading Medicine, thanks to Mack. How wonderful too that she managed to fulfil her lifelong dream to visit the Galapagos just three months ago.

Mack's sudden and untimely death has shocked us all. I was with her at the WRAC Officers' Dinner in London just 4 days before she died - she was in good form that evening, and she bought me a bottle of Champagne to celebrate my 70th Birthday. We travelled part way home together the next day, as far as Guildford, and the abiding memory I shall have of Mack is waving to her as she trundled down the platform at Guildford station to catch her connection to Axminster. Guildford of all places, how ironic!

It is impossible in just a few minutes to do justice to such a unique and irreplaceable person. Mack's life was spent helping others whether it be her own family, her adopted family in Africa, her Church, her community in Charmouth, or those of us who were privileged to call her our friend - her kindness and generosity knew no bounds. Thank you, Mack, for touching all our lives along the way and for the special legacy and memories you have left us - we will endeavour to continue to uphold your very high standards within the WRAC Association and in our daily lives. You truly exemplified our Corps Motto, 'Gentle in Manner, Resolute in Deed' and our Association will be so much poorer without you.

You will be remembered by us all with the greatest respect and affection.

Mack - we salute you!
Lt Col (Retd) Sue Westlake MBE



MARJORIE MONKMAN (Nee Abrahams) 17th May 1921 – 11th August 2022



Marjorie was born, and grew up, in Stepney, London, in May 1921 to Amelia and Louis Abrahams. She had a younger sister, Adelaide, and brother, Joseph. She attended Merryvale Road boarding school, Chislehurst, Kent.

In her teens she joined the Land Army at Datchet and Mount Grace Priory in Yorkshire, and when WW2 broke out she joined the ATS. She was trained at Guildford and by the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANYs) at Camberley, Surrey, as a driver - this included K2 ambulances, troupe carriers and Matchless motorbikes, various vans and cars, being taught to strip down engines, change plugs and wheels. This was the same place and training that our Queen Elizabeth underwent just a few weeks after my mother left Camberley. Her driving often involved working with SOE at Bletchley Park and Beau Manor, driving important people from airfields and secretive locations in the middle of the night. She was stationed at various stately homes - Keddestone Hall, Woodehouse Eaves, Haddon Hall Derbyshire, Ingestone Hall Essex, Beau Manor and Matlock Bath.

During this time my mother met George Monkman at Matlock in Derbyshire. They married after a six-week courtship. Dad was from Scarborough and a very modest, mainly farming on the moors background but extremely bright. When they met Dad was training as a manager in the Forestry Commission and was due to start training in Scandinavia and the Forest of Dean. Unfortunately, the war intervened, and Dad was sent down the coal mines as a Bevin Boy - these were picked randomly from all walks of life as fuel was needed for the war effort. Subsequently, I was born in Skellow, a mining village in Yorkshire.

We left Yorkshire three years later, in 1947. My parents lived a full life enjoying boating on the Thames and many visits to the west country, especially South Petherton and Lyme Regis.

Sadly, Dad passed away in 1981 only 61 years old. Mum's life was in limbo for a long time except for constant contact with her ex-army associations, regularly going to meetings and many parades at the Cenotaph in London for Remembrance Day marches.

In recent years she met Major Tom, an ex-Royal Marine Commando. They formed a very close friendship and he took her to many places visiting old war graves of close friends that he had lost during many dangerous campaigns in Sicily, Naples, Rome, Holland and the Beaches of Normandy.

She was grandmother to Harvey and Anthony, and great grandmother to great

grand-daughters Darcy, Delphie and Bidour.

Her final years were spent in a nursing home and recently celebrated her 101st birthday. She leaves behind a legacy of many interesting stories of a very vibrant and full life.



**SHEILA PAVIER
(Nee WHITE)
7th January 1934 -
7th October 2022**



Sheila White joined the Territorial Army in 1957 (along with her sister Janet), training to become a cook in the Royal Artillery. Her family originally lived in Earlsfield, London, joining the Territorial Army, based in Chelsea Barracks.

Once a year, their Regiment would go to Norfolk for a week for the annual camp. This was in order to carry out field exercises such as orienteering and cooking out in the wild, strengthening their vital survival skills necessary as soldiers. Sheila (and her sister Janet) said they had a great time being in the TA and looked back on that part of her life with fond memories.

Extracted from 'In My Day' 2021#2



**MRS VALERIE PECKHAM
(Nee Jordan)
Died 21st July 2022, age 96**

My Mother was a blind veteran of 96 years old having been called up at the age of 18. She left on the SS Andies for the Middle East, arriving in Cairo, working at the Middle East Land Forces Headquarters, as a Personal Assistant to a Brigadier. My Mother returned to England at the age of 22 In 1947.

My Father also returned from Burma that same year - Bengal Assam Coy in the Royal Signals. My parents met at a dance raising money for the Armed Forces, in Southampton.

My mother and I lived together and in 1989 moved to South Africa - Johannesburg and Hillcrest, half an hour from Durban. We returned to England in 2016, first renting in Salisbury, then in May last year (2021) we moved to Harnham, on the other side of Salisbury. Sadly, my Mother had breast cancer, diabetes and old age along with macular degeneration. My Father died at 89 from cancer of the throat. However, I was truly blessed to have had such wonderful parents in my life.

Deborah Peckham
(daughter)

[Dorothy also wrote a short note thanking the Benevolence Fund for their grant assistance for her mother].



**DORRON PHILLIPSON
(W/447991)
25th June 1955 -
26th November 2022**

Dorron's family home was Hartlepool, where her mother still lives, she was an only child. Dorron, better known as Dor, joined up at Guildford in September 1972. Subsequently she was posted to Mill Hill as a Postie, Royal Engineer.

She was an active member of the Greater London Branch.

Elaine Osborne (Ozzy)



**(IP) JEAN SIMMONS
(WRAC)
11th April 1937 -
29th November 2022**

A MILITARY TRIBUTE

Jean was born in Gosport on 11th April 1937. She enlisted at Southampton on 22nd October 1954, badged to the Women's Royal Army Corps and trained as a switchboard operator working with a variety of different Royal Signals units. She was posted to the Middle East Land Force in Cyprus for two years between October 1955 and September 1957 and was discharged on 21st October 1957. Shortly afterwards she re-joined at London, on 10th April 1958, and served a further thirteen months before leaving the Army to get married. She was discharged on 19th May 1959 in the rank of Lance Corporal. For her service Jean was awarded the General Service Medal with clasp for Cyprus.

Following her Army service, she found employment as a Telephonist and

Supervisor with British Telecom for nineteen years until 1990, when she was employed by Sainsbury's for five years until 1995.

She remained connected with the military and made a valuable contribution to service charities; working as a SSAFA caseworker, where her compassion and empathy with service veterans made their lives so much better; then as divisional secretary for SSAFA for eight years and later as the Doncaster Group Secretary for the RBL.

Always proud of her military service and experience Jean was an active member of the WRAC Association and remained involved with the Association on joining the Royal Hospital on 29th March 2016.

Jean was posted to Long Ward 7 as part of Number 2 Company, and she took full advantage of the many external trips and activities. She attended over a hundred separate events over the course of the next three years, including being part of the Royal Hospital's contingent at the Edinburgh Tattoo in August 2016 and she very much enjoyed the Battlefield Tour to Malta in October 2016. She also attended a variety of different external events hosted and organised by the Royal Signals Association and was selected on a number of occasions to attend the traditional Christmas lunch at Gordon Ramsay's restaurant.

With her kind, and outgoing, friendly nature Jean was perfect for her role as part of the sales team in the RHC Souvenir Shop which she assumed in March 2017, greeting our many visitors and tour groups. I think she really loved the interaction with so many different people who visited the RHC and she certainly carried the job out with great enthusiasm and diligence until June 2022 when she retired.

Jean's health meant that in September 2022, she, reluctantly at first, moved into Jones Ward. She acknowledged and greatly appreciated the support of the staff in Jones Ward and soon settled in and enjoyed being close to her friend Pam Richards. She tried to remain mobile and whenever she was able she would visit Ranelagh Gardens and the RHC grounds.

Jean was a very popular In Pensioner with many friends in the community, but her greatest love was for her family and I remember how her face would light up when she told me she was expecting a visit from one of her daughters, or grandchildren/great grandchildren. Sadly, Jean died in Chelsea and Westminster Hospital on 29th November 2022 aged 85. Our prayers and thoughts are with Jean, her family and her friends.

Lt Col (Retd) Jonathan G O Lowe MBE
Head of Veterans Outreach, RHC

**MRS WINIFRED (FREDDIE)
EDITH WEATHERLEY
(ATS/Royal Artillery/Royal
Army Pay Corps)
Died 1st August 2022, age 101**



'Mum' joined the ATS in July 1941 and after six-week's basic training joined 451 HAA (Heavy Ack Ack) Royal Artillery as a radar operator for the anti-aircraft guns. She was stationed at a number of UK camps but served mainly in Bristol and Hull.

The Anti-aircraft guns that she did the radar location for were the 3.7ins – used on the 451 HAA (M) Battery RA she served with. They could either be fixed or mobile (despite the mud!) and were towed by a AEC Matador truck. Mum described a journey her unit undertook during the war when it re-located from Bristol to Hull, sitting in the cab of a Matador and receiving admiring glances from young boys as they went past! The colour shot of the 3.7in anti-aircraft gun is of one that's restored and is in the grounds of Dover Castle. When I showed the picture of it to my Mum in her late '90s she immediately said "that's a 3.7!"



In May 1945, when WWII ended (by then a Sergeant), she was seconded/ transferred to the Royal Army Pay Corps and stayed in this unit until her demob in December 1945. 'Mum' always described her service in the Army as "the most exciting time in my life". I think she found the experience both liberating and empowering. She finished her brief service career as a Sergeant and was very proud of her 'stripes'.

Mum married "my late Father" (who served in North Africa) in January 1946.

In 1989 Mum sent a letter to People's Friend, which was subsequently published, of which this is an excerpt:

**WOMEN IN KHAKI
THE DAY THAT ROYALTY NEARLY
GOT THE WRONG ANSWER**

I joined the ATS in 1941 and was posted to the newly formed 451 HAA (Mixed) Battery, Royal Artillery, as a Radar Operator. We were stationed on a gun site just outside Bristol and whilst there we were informed that we were to be visited by the then Princess Royal, Princess Mary.

The week before the visit the ATS were all confined to barracks for misuse of Army property, in reality an excuse to give the barrack rooms, cookhouse and surroundings a monumental spring clean. No stone was left un-whitened, no ledge or top of door undusted. The strips of lino between our beds in the Nissen Huts were polished to a suicidal state.

The evening before the great day, Dorothy Grey, a tall, attractive Lancastrian, staggered into the hut and collapsed on the bed next to mine. "I've had enough", she moaned. "Not out of the camp for ten days and cookhouse fatigue today was murder". We sympathised, she had been set to clean up fire-blackened dixies and tea buckets to gleam like the family silver. "If the Princess asks me if I like it", she went on, "I shall tell her the truth".

Next day we polished our already shiny cap badges, boots and gaiters, stood by our beds, were inspected by all and sundry from the Junior Commander down to the Orderly Corporal, hung about getting bored stiff, with Dorothy getting even more mutinous.

Suddenly the word went round "she's here", and we leapt to attention as the hut door opened and the Princess and her entourage came in. She spoke to one girl, moved up the room and stopped opposite Dorothy. "Do you like the life?" she asked. We held our breath. "Oh yes, Ma'am" said Dorothy, beaming. Silently we all breathed out and relaxed. The Princess spoke to me; I don't remember what she said, but I have a memory of a

tall, upright figure, the strain of the war years beginning to show in her face, but with the most beautiful blue eyes that I have ever seen.

Brian Weatherley



**(ELWYNE) PRISCILLA
WELDON
(Nee CHALDECOTT)
(ex ATS)**

**15th June 1919 –
28th January 2022**



(This Eulogy extract is in addition to the short piece in the 2022/2 Lioness edition)

Born in Newcastle upon Tyne, Priscilla was the third child of five. Their father was a naval architect, a 'reserved occupation' during WW1, but with no ship work in 1918 the family moved south, settling in Guildford, Surrey. Brought up by a despotic nanny, always called 'Nurse', time spent in the drawing room downstairs with the adults was limited to 5 – 6pm. At meals, the three taboo subjects were religion, politics and what was on your plate. This indoctrination, as such an impressionable age, may explain her usual response to "what are we going to eat?" as "Potato and Point", in short "Don't ask".

Following an excessively strict and closeted upbringing, she was sent to Ancaster House boarding school in Bexhill-on-Sea, where she excelled at gymnastics. Pre's daughter, Sari, suffered not only the same fate but the same housemistress. 1936 – 1938 were Pre's salad days, before joining her adored brother in uniform when she enlisted in the ATS as a cook; an activity

she never particularly enjoyed, though she did once win a Yorkshire Pudding competition. In September 1939 she was asked if she wanted to be an Officer and a week later she was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant and posted to RMAS Sandhurst, moving to Aldershot in the following year. In addition to her military duties, which included forming an ATS Fife and Drum band, she started doing tapestry, which began a life-long pastime with needlework. On promotion to Captain she was a Company Commander in charge of 300 women.

1943 saw Pre on various postings around Kent, during which time she experienced the first V-1 (doodlebug) raids. By her own admission, Pre took full advantage of the merriment of VE Day. She was demobbed in 1946.

In 1947 she attended a course entitled 'India at the Crossroads' for the benefit of hot baths and unrationed food. There she met Major Hamilton Edward Crosdill Weldon, otherwise known as 'Koko'. It was love at first sight and after only nine meetings they married on 3rd January 1948, followed by a honeymoon of three days in Bournemouth. Thus, she became a dutiful army wife, and their first quarter was in Bulford, Wiltshire, with hired furniture. Wendy, Koko's daughter from his first marriage, chose to live with them. With one child already committed to boarding school, money was very tight. Three further children followed – Sari, Kevin and Mark. There were various postings in France, England and Germany, before Koko was promoted and she became a Commanding Officer's wife responsible for all the wives and families in the regiment. After Brigade command, a War Office appointment and command of the School of Artillery, Manorbier, Koko retired in 1962 to be Secretary of Greater London Territorial Army Reserve in what is now the Duke of York's Square, King's Road, London. Pre then threw herself into voluntary work.

Between 1962 and 1974 she volunteered at two deaf and blind clubs, having learnt to speak on her hands as her aunt had been deaf. Starting in the same year, but going on to 1988, she was on the board of the ATS and WRAC Benevolent Fund, chairing it for two years. In 1974 she joined the WRVS.

Pre followed all Koko's passions – the theatre, horse racing, travel and shooting. In the latter arena she was known as 'Sporting Madame' for her ability to keep going all day and not gossip.

Koko died in 1985, by which time they had moved to Farnham and were worshipping at St Peter's Church, Wrecclesham. Pre ran the Over 60's Club, assisted with the Sunday School and creche, as well as being a

Sidesperson and regular Reader. She also initiated the making of kneelers for the whole congregation. She collected stamps for charity, embroidered pictures and made latch hook carpets. From 1986 until 2010 she was involved in the organisation and running of the Brightwells Gostrey Monday Club for people over 50 living alone. She subsequently assisted with the Wednesday Club and delivered Meals on Wheels in her distinctive red Smart car. In all these activities she was helping those who were significantly younger than herself. It was a great relief that on her 94th birthday she stopped driving. She only did so as she was required to take a driving test – something she had never done and yet driven without an accident for over 75 years.

Priscilla had a quiet determination, but never sought the limelight, always putting others before herself. She was most comfortable with close friends and family. During her younger brother Nigel's latter days they would meet regularly for lunch. When you asked how she was, the reply was invariably "Fine", and she expected you to accept such a succinct reply. She and Koko were devoted to each other. They were never seen to argue. It is sobering to realise that she was a widow only one year short of such a blissful marriage. She was a loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Always 'neat and tidy', fiercely independent and never wanting to attract any fuss, she was a notably selfless person always giving generously of herself and what she had. Her long life was devoted to the service of others – a life well-lived, for which we are all hugely grateful and proud.



Last Post

AWBERY, Mrs Joan (nee Stittle) of Norwich on 19th November 2022 (ATS)

BAGNALL, Mrs Norah (nee Turpin) of London on 30th July 2022 (ATS)

BARRATT, Mrs Anne (nee McMullen / Wilson) of Swanage on 24th December 2022 (ATS)

BARRETT, Miss Judith Bowes of Gloucester, 23rd June 2022

BRINKLEY, Mrs Jane (nee Anderson) of Portsmouth on 18th December 2022 (ATS)

BRUCE, the Lady Martha OBE TD, of Limekilns, Dunfermline, 22nd January 2023 (ATS & WRAC)

COLLYNS, Mrs Elisabeth (nee Achurch) of Warminster on 26th July 2022 (WRAC)

CONNIS, Mrs A of Netley, Abbey, Hampshire in 2022 (ATS)

COOK, Mrs Lillian (nee Ward) of Bristol in August 2022 (ATS)

GERMANY, Marjorie of Torquay in July 2022 (ATS)

GREEN, Miss Grace of Lincolnshire on 9th October 2022 (WRAC)

HELPS, Mrs Joan (nee Martin) of the Isle of Man on 16th August 2022 (ATS)

HICKMAN, Miss Maureen (Mo) of Burnley on 6th July 2022 (WRAC)

JONES, Mrs Marion of Shrewsbury on 5th January 2023 (ATS)

JEFFREYS, Mrs Leonora (Nora) of Smethwick on 18th September 2022 (ATS)

KING, Mrs Marjorie (nee Bassant) of Dereham, Norfolk on 14th November 2022

LANDSLOWNE, Mrs Lorna (nee Lutkins) of Norwich on 14th December 2022 (ATS)

LYON, Mrs Freda (nee Bailey) of Bournemouth on 28th November 2022 (ATS)

MACKANESS, Mrs Heather (nee Skinner) of Warminster on 3rd January 2022 (WRAC)

NEAL, Mrs Teresa (nee Prynne) of Leicester on 1st November 2022 (ATS)

OLDHAM, Mrs Winifred of Brighton on 7th August 2022 (ATS)

PAGE, Mrs Ann (nee Campbell) of Fife in July 2022 (ATS)

PEART, Dorothy, of Jamaica, 30 November 2022 age 101 (ATS)

PETERS, Ms Carol of Norfolk on 2nd November 2022 (WRAC)

PITTS, Doreen (nee Spurrell) of Plymouth in August 2022 (ATS)

POWELL, Mrs Margaret (nee Watson) of Uttroxteter on 12th October 2022 (ATS)

RHODES, Mrs Annie (nee Moore) of Leeds on 29th October 2022 (WRAC)

RICH, Mrs Joan of Felixstowe on 29th July 2022 (ATS)

SNODGRASS, Mary, of Ashchurch nr Tewksbury, December 2022

SUTTON, Mrs Wilma (nee Milne) of Colchester on 7th August 2022 (WRAC)

TAYLOR, Ms Diane of Plymouth in December 2022 (WRAC)

THORNTON, Mrs Marjorie (nee Pullen) of South Australia in July 2022 (ATS)

TWIST, Mrs Jane (nee Messruther) of Catterick on 12th December 2022 (WRAC)

WESTROP, Mrs Dorothy (nee Hall) of Thornton Cleveleys on 21st September 2022 (WRAC)

Letters.....



Good Morning

Re. Emily Tippett

The Tippett family are very grateful of all of your support with our Mum's care costs at the end of her life, so it was a unanimous decision that the money went to you; we have made a donation into your bank.

Mum and Dad both passed during COVID and were not able to have a funeral befitting them. We took their ashes 'home' to a little village in Brecon which they had left 20 years previously and had them interred there.

It was a mark of Mum and Dad that after the service, we had a large room full of people, some of whom had not seen them since they left, chatting and telling stories about them. Most of which in some way seemed to include the village pub.

Anyway, thank you again from us all
The Tippetts

I am looking for a photo of 1971 (72???) intake at Guildford.

My wife, Jeanette Charlotte Thomson, died 16 months ago and I am putting together separate photo albums, for myself and late wife. She joined up, I think, during the postal strikes of February 1971. However, she never finished her basic training - and she would never say why. Does anyone have copy of that intake photo?

[Editor: if you do please let HQ office know]

Mr Bill Pritchard

My name is Kim Davies and I am the Collections and Public Engagement Manager at the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock. In 2023, the museum hopes to launch a brand-new exhibition focusing on Women and War from the Second World War to the present day. We hope to look into the history of the Auxiliary Territorial Service and the Women's Royal Army Corps.

We are looking for stories and objects from women from all walks of life who can illustrate the pivotal roles women have taken in wartime, but also stories of today's military women with a link to Oxfordshire. It would be great to work with your members and Association on this project.

[Editor: If you have anything you would like to share with the Museum please contact them direct].

Kim Davies
Collections and Public Engagement
Manager

01993 810215

Looking for ...
Christine (Chris) from Cheshire really regrets losing contact with the bridesmaid from her first wedding. Do you know, or perhaps you are: Ann(e) Skinnin who originated from Belfast and served at Mönchengladbach in the Field Records Office during the early to mid-1960s.

[Editor: If you are able to put these two ladies back in touch with each other please let HQ office know]

Dear Editor
Where are they now?

The reason for contacting you is that I have managed to contact three of the women in my original Spec Ops/signals group from the early 1960's. Of the other three, one has since passed away, but I am unable to trace the final two. I would love to get in touch with them, taking into consideration that we are all 75 plus now.

We were in training at 224 Sigs from around July 1964 and posted to Germany around February 1965 when our training finished. We remained there until summer 1966 when we were obliged to retrain as AN(SI) s - Intelligence Corps. That's another story!! The two women I would love to contact from my original squad are Maureen Dobbs from Nottingham and Marion (Frankie) King from Gravesend. I have no idea of their married names. Frankie and I were quite good friends in training and used to joke about the bottle green greatcoats being cast-offs from the Russian army.

Might it be possible that any of your members know of the whereabouts of Maureen or Frankie or their families. I would appreciate your help. [Editor: Please contact HQ office if you are able to help].
Yours sincerely

Jac Denley-Jones (formerly Robinson)
W/421466

NO MORE CIVVY TOILS. page 91
[inside back cover], No. 2 Lioness.
I was so excited when I saw the photo that Georgia Lyons had sent in. I am in the photo - 3rd left in the back row. I can just see my blonde fringe and my eyes. I remember the photo being taken, I believe it was for the Manchester Evening news.

It was the largest intake the WRAC had ever had and all because of the TV programme 'Coronation Street'. The story line was about the two single girls who lived in the flat above the corner shop. One of them decided to join the WRAC.

Six of us went from work to the Army Recruiting office in Oldham, but only two of us actually qualified to eventually take the oath at Manchester Recruiting Office - Carol Mather and myself, Rene Dickinson.

Rene Burlinson (nee Dickinson)

My Mother, Edna Sinclair ATS, has often appeared in articles in the *Lioness*. She was an Accounting Machine Operator in the Pay Corps, attached to the Royal Artillery at Foots Cray, Kent from 1942 to 1946. She reached the marvellous age of 100 on 26th June 2022. My mother would like to thank Lt Col (Retd) RC Naile MBE, and the Association, for the much-appreciated birthday card and message which she was honoured to receive.

I have attached a photo of her on her actual birthday holding the birthday card from the Queen, prior to celebrating the day with family and close friends.



With kind regards
Deborah Sinclair-Batchelor

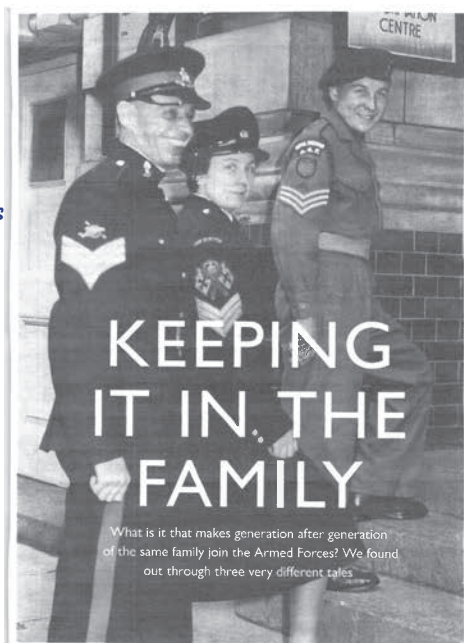
KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

Dear Editor

As a long-standing member of the Association, I wondered whether you would be interested to see a story which has been issued in the July copy of the *Royal British Legion*. It was difficult for me to obtain more additional copies and I have therefore put to use my own copier [Editor – which we have scanned], but not without problems. However, I thought it would be of interest to you and your members.

Regretfully now I have mobility problems and find difficulty in moving around, and it is some years since I was able to attend any function – in fact some twelve years since I had a wonderful time with several of my old colleagues from the Central London Recruiting Office, where I spent some twenty plus years of my service – I thank heaven for the telephone where we all keep in touch from time to time. Then I retired in 1977 – in due course I joined Eastbourne branch of the Association and Brighton until it closed down. So you will understand I look forward to Association news via the magazine.

Yours sincerely
Mrs Jeanne Kick BEM



What is it that makes generation after generation of the same family join the Armed Forces? We found out through three very different tales



Jeanne Kick

For Jeanne, 99, it was inevitable she'd join the Army. Her father, David, served in the First World War and she grew up surrounded by service people. At 18, she joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service, and devoted 30 years to the Armed Forces. Her late husband, Fred, spent 50 years in the Army, and her son David, now 79, also served.

“Being in uniform gave you meaning
– and I miss being someone”

“My father, originally from Canada, was in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, so when he moved to the UK in 1915, he was keen to enlist. He joined the 4th Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussars but was transferred to the Mounted Military Police. He had the honour of being a pallbearer for the Unknown Warrior in late 1920, escorting the body through France and ensuring its safe passage onto HMS *Verdun* on its way to its final resting place of Westminster Abbey.

Dad left the Army just after this and worked for the Imperial War Graves Commission in France and Belgium. My mother was in nursing service during both World Wars, and I was born in the Red Cross Hospital in Paris. Most people in the Commission were ex-service, so I was brought up among Army people and Army kids, so the military became second nature. After we moved back to England, I joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1941, when I was 18. My first job was in the Royal Corps of Signals during the Second World War. I married and came out of the Army to have my son David, but went back again in 1950. I was awarded the Medal for Long Service and Good Conduct and, in 1954, I went to work for the department of military recruitment in London, where I remained until I retired in 1977.

I remarried in 1957. My second husband, Freddie, was in the Royal Artillery – he began his Armed Forces career in 1938 and fought in the Second World War. We were attached to the same Territorial Army unit. He was my best friend – being in the Army together really does make for a good marriage!

We had the most wonderful life in the Army. There was a great sense of togetherness, no matter the rank. Being in uniform gave you a meaning, an importance – and I miss being someone, David saw how happy we were and signed up to the Army Cadets when he was a teenager, joining Freddie's regiment. He made Sergeant's rank in the Scots Guards and served for 22 years, very much enjoying the comradeship he experienced throughout. We were all based in London and it was so lovely to be together.

I've been an RBL member for 79 years and have been awarded my gold badge. When I retired, Freddie and I joined our local Peacehaven & Telscombe Branch. Since then, I've been Vice Chair and then Chair of the Hove Branch. I'm turning 100 in March but I've already got a letter from HM The Queen, which I received with my British Empire Medal in 1976. I'm proud of that, and of Freddie's Freedom of the City of London. We always said that we did it between us. Whatever you do, you always have friends and family to help. You can't do it without them.”

Left: Jeanne with her husband, Freddie (left), on the steps of the recruiting office where she enlisted her son, David (right), into the Scots Guards
Below: Jeanne's father David (fourth from left), escorting the body of the Unknown Warrior, saluted by Ferdinand Foch



To the team at HQ

Firstly, on behalf of the Portsmouth Branch I would like to thank you for the great Lioness, it was a lovely surprise to everyone I have spoken to. So on behalf of our branch I enclose a donation towards cost of production.

On page 28 there is a photo from the front cover of the Lioness. In the foreground, next to Her Majesty, are the two boys of the Portsmouth Branch, sadly now passed. They were Mary Lindsey and Joan Jelly – Mary was our sort-of official photographer as she always had her camera. She took many photos that day, only to discover that she had no film in her camera!! No need to say we never let her live it down, and she always stuck a piece of tape on the back of her camera saying FILM IN. Thanks again

Phyllis Price
Treasurer, Portsmouth Branch



It is amazing the amount of detail that you are able to include in the Lioness, including all the photographs and I would like to congratulate you and your team for all your hard work. Not forgetting, of course, the recent special edition featuring Her Majesty the Queen. A very sad time for us all. Sending best wishes

Kate Bettison

Of course, the passing of Her Majesty has made a huge impact on us all, and speaking to a number of you about this, we all still can't quite believe she has passed. What a bonus to receive the publication last week with so many positive memories.

South & S.West Area

Dear Editor

Thank you so very very much for mailing the three Lioness magazines. They are phenomenal! Outstanding and tremendous. I have thoroughly been inspired by all the remarkable endeavours of the fine Lioness staff, all ATS and WRAC members, these past many years. Their loyalty, friendships and duty is remarkable! I dearly loved over beloved Queen Elizabeth, it is a joy to read the many ways she served throughout her long life. The photographs and stories are beautiful. Congratulations to everyone who submitted and shared and also for putting these three remarkable Lioness magazines together.

May you and everyone there continue in good health, and I wish everyone joy over the holidays.

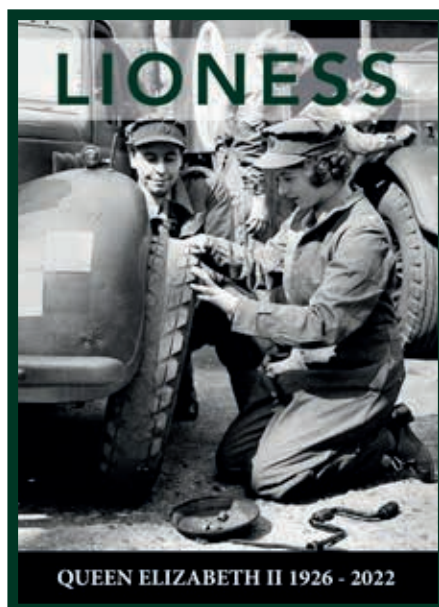
Lynda Holmes
Canada

I would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all involved with the publication of the special edition for HM the Queen. It was a fantastic read.

Kind Regards,
Pauline Milne

Today I received the Special Edition of the Association Journal – what a fantastic production! Thanks to all concerned with its in-depth record of HM The Queen's connection with the ATS/WRAC. I have to admit I shed a few tears.

Gwyneth Stratten



Researchers identify simple and effective methods for GP practices to identify veterans

Researchers have identified low-cost, easily implemented initiatives which should significantly improve veteran registration in primary healthcare, as set out in a new report. The study saw veteran registration increase by 218% at the 12 GP practices in North West England which took part.

Improving GP registration by veterans is vitally important and subsequent declaration of veteran status ensures that ex-Service personnel can access veteran-specific services that are aimed at addressing service-attributable health problems.

The initiatives included zap stands and posters inside the practices, sending text messages to all registered patients, utilising links with the local community and communications with local care homes.

The research, funded by Forces in Mind Trust, sets out a series of recommendations for GP practices across the country, to improve veteran registration and care.

- More consistent coding of medical records with the code 'Military Veteran' used across all practices
- Better training of healthcare and administrative staff to gain an understanding of the Armed Forces Community and their needs
- Ensuring text message systems are able to send batch messages with responses automatically coded
- Appointing Veterans Champions within GP practices
- Using internal and external advertising within Primary Healthcare practices and in the community

Ensure your GP practice lists appropriate patients as veterans, and that they have you listed as one. Maybe suggest some of these tools to them to help increase their engagement with the 'service' and 'veterans' communities.

This poem was written by one of our buddies (Dora Cudlip), who sadly died last year but who thoroughly enjoyed her buddy catch-ups.

How we won the war!

Now to bring to you some memories of my wartime days,
Though I must say my life was changed in so many ways.
The first years of the war were grim, there was little about to shout,
Until females nineteen twenty born – had to go and sort things out!

To think my country relied on me – came as quite a shock,
But there it was, I had to go – I couldn't change the clock.
So I joined the Women's Army – or A.T.S. as better known,
And set off to fight or whatsoever – all on my very own!

Too soon I found myself parading proudly along with all the rest,
With my cap so large dropped over my eyes – in my little army vest.
And thick lisle khaki stockings, which when washed turned pea green,
And my skirt – yes, khaki too – so long my knees weren't seen.

Although many an effort was made to be as smart as poss.,
Some part of uniform fitted well, others were quite a loss.
The khaki bloomers took the cake, they really were a size,
They would cover a double-decker bus – and I'm not telling lies!

Like pin cushions my poor arms appeared with so many jabs,
What earthly good they really did I couldn't just keep tabs,
Miles through town and cities we'd march from day to day,
With blisters on my little feet – all for two bob pay!

But with female help, hard work and plenty more,
Victory did come at last – peace was at our door.
The celebrations were wonderful – crowds and crowds we met,
But I'm not telling all – 'twas a day with no regret!

My loathsome sergeant-major – tried hard to much impress,
She knew it all – she'd sold undies for M and S.
Your memories of V.E. perhaps I shall never know,
But the greatest joy I had that day was to tell her where to go!

Dora Cudlip



KEEP CALM AND BE A BUDDY

**40 Women serving in
the Army today are
waiting
to be Buddied up
with you.**

**Register now at
[www.wraca.org.uk/
support](http://www.wraca.org.uk/support)**

**or call 0330 400
1992**

WRAC Association, Unit 11, Basepoint Business Centre, 1 Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, SO23 0LD

Tel: 0300 400 1992 (local rate call, including mobiles) Email: office.manager@wraca.org.uk

Benevolence: benfund@wraca.org.uk Tel: 07741 327094

Lioness: editor@wraca.org.uk

Website: www.wraca.org.uk





2023 AGM

STOP PRESS

CHANGE TO 2023 AGM ARRANGEMENTS

Saturday 18th March, 14.00

Dear Association member

Many of you will have realised by now that there is a Rail Strike planned for the weekend of our AGM in London which will prevent the majority of members planning to attend being able to get to London.

As a result, **the AGM will now take place on-line**, at the same time on the same date i.e. 1400 hrs on Saturday 18 March.

Further details will be issued in due course. I hope that many of you are able to join the on-line meeting so that you can hear details of how the Association has performed in the last year and how we are planning to go forward.

It is a great shame that we will not be able to meet in person to socialise before and after the AGM, but I would encourage you to come to either Great Yarmouth or the satellite 'We Will Remember Her' events on 14 May, or to the summer event at Worthy Down on 29 July. You can find more details in this issue of the Lioness.

Yours faithfully

Rowena Naile MBE
Chair of Membership Council



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM FOR

THE CHARITY THAT 'SUPPORTS FEMALE VETERANS' (Charity Registration: WRAC Association, 206184)

I WISH TO APPLY FOR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Please complete this form in **BLOCK LETTERS**

Miss/Mrs/Ms/Other: Surname:

First Names: Known as:

Surname when serving: Post nominals:

Address for Correspondence:

.....

..... Post Code:

Telephone No(s): Date of Birth:

Email:

Local Branch (if known): Area:

Please indicate your preferred method of contact?:

(Your copy of the Lioness magazine will be posted to you unless you advise otherwise)

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- 2 copies of Lioness magazine per year
- Events, Friendship and Support through HQ, Area Co-ordinators and network of Branches
- Invitation to WRAC Grand Reunions Association and AGMs
- Notification of WRAC Association events
- Option to apply for tickets to certain non-WRAC Association events (geography and timescales permitting)
- Priority booking for WRAC Association and other events
- Various updates from HQ and Areas via letter or email

The WRAC Association holds data in order to carry out its 'legitimate business activities' - these include running an efficient and effective Membership organisation that "Supports Female Veterans" by encouraging "comradeship, esprit de corps, benevolence and preserving traditions" (ie friendship, community and support). Personal Data is processed for WRAC Association purposes only - including the organising of events, editing and distribution of the Lioness members' magazine, and linking individuals with Headquarters and Area Co-ordinators, by post, email and telephone - and is not shared with any third party individual or organisation. In line with the Association's charitable status, and for the purposes of GDPR, the 'Association' includes Headquarters and Area Co-ordinators (it does not include individual WRAC branches). Please be assured that we do NOT share your information with any third-party individual or organisation. Please contact the WRAC Association by post or email if you have any queries.

Please tick here ☐ if you do NOT want your contact details shared with your regional Area Co-ordinator:

Signature Date

Association Membership is not exclusive to those who served as ATS, WRAC and/or signed-up pre 1992. Membership is also open to those still serving under any cap badge. Please share the following information with the Association if you wish:

Army Number Last Rank Held:
(Present Rank if still serving)

Date of Enrolment: Date of Release:



WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

LEGACY & DONATIONS FORM

Leaving a Legacy donation to the WRAC Association is an extremely tax efficient way of supporting the Association (which is a registered charity) into the future.

The key facts:

- * A legacy costs NOTHING in your lifetime.
- * You can make a gift of any size: there is no minimum or maximum amount.
- * Even a modest gift will have a huge impact.
- * You do not have to be a millionaire or wealthy to leave a legacy.
- * A gift can be a specified amount or a percentage of the residue of your estate, after you have provided for family and friends.
- * You can specify where you want your money to be directed.
- * A legacy can reduce the inheritance tax liability on your estate.
- * You can change your mind at any point.

Whilst there is no requirement to do so, it would be helpful to the Association if you would complete the form below giving details of your intended legacy/donation and return it to the Association Secretary. This would be for information purposes only and will be treated with total discretion.

I wish to give the sum of £ _____, or _____% of my residual estate, to the WRAC Association (Registered Charity Number 206184).

FROM :

Your Full Name: _____ **Title:** _____

Address: _____

Post code: _____ **Telephone:** _____

Your Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

PLEASE ENSURE YOU SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOUR SOLICITOR.

Making a Donation to the WRAC Association is a simple and easy way of showing additional support for the Association. Donations are invaluable in enabling the Association to do all it does to 'Support Female Veterans'.

If you wish to make a donation (whether regular or one-off) you can do so by:

- * Using this form, or
- * Going to our website (Website: www.wraca.org.uk/donate)



DONATION and CHARITY GIFT AID DECLARATION

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below:

☐ I want to Gift Aid my donation of £_____ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to:
WRAC Association Charity Number 206184

☐ I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

My Details: Title First name or initial(s) Surname

Full Home address

.....

Postcode..... Email address Date

To make a regular monthly or annual donation please either visit our website or your Bank to arrange a Direct Debit, using the prefix DON and your surname as a reference.

Please notify the WRAC Association if you:

- want to cancel this declaration
- change your name or home address
- no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

If you are a non-UK tax payer or do not wish to sign this declaration it would still be good to hear from you. If this is the case please complete name and address above and tick below:

☐ I do not wish to complete this Gift Aid Declaration and/or

☐ I am a non UK tax payer or do not pay enough Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax to make it worthwhile.

**Return to: The Association Secretary, WRAC Association, Unit 11 Basepoint,
1 Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, Hants, SO23 0LD**

Tel: 0300-400-1992 Email: office.manager@wraca.org.uk



WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS DINNER CLUB

Application for Membership

Please complete the form in BLOCK LETTERS

Full Name: Known as:

Address:

..... Post Code:

Tel No: Mobile:

Email:

WRAC/Armed Forces Service From: To:

Army/Service No:

Surname(s) when serving:

Trade/Job when serving:

**I wish to join the WRAC Dinner Club and enclose £20 for 5-year Membership
Cheque/Postal Order must be made payable to: WRAC Dinner Club**

**To pay by Bank Transfer the Account Number is 16974260 and the Sort Code 30-98-90.
Please put the Applicant's full name as the reference**

Signature: Date:

Please return the completed form to:

**Heather Bradbury, WRAC Dinner Club Membership Secretary
107 Canaan, The Pastures, Lowton, Warrington WA3 1EG**

Email: heather.bradbury@icloud.com

A 2nd Class Postage Stamp would be much appreciated. Thank you

(WRAC Dinner Club Membership Secretary to input Membership No:)