

Old Comrades



Association

GAZETTE.

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NOTICE.

OFFICERS OF Q.M.A.A.C., B.E.F.

The Twelfth Annual Re-union of the Officers of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps, who served with the British Expeditionary Force, will be held on Saturday, October 29th, 1932, at the Hotel Belgravja, Grosvenor Gardens, London, S.W. Further particulars will be given in the June issue of the Gazette.

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EX-SERVICE WOMEN'S CLUB, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

Reunions.

Since our last issue we have faithfully carried out our programme, as agreed upon at the Annual Meeting and distributed to members in handy form on a card. The sole alteration made has been the very pleasant one brought about by the kindness of our Patron, Miss Crowdy, in connection with our Christmas party, of which a full account will be found elsewhere.

On May 14th a Theatre Party was well attended and much enjoyed.

On June 11th we had a Familiar Advertisement Competition. About 50 well-known posters had the wording removed, which had to be supplied from memory on cards numbered to correspond with numbers on the pictures. The competition proved a very popular one.

The Disguise Party held on July 9th was the first fancy dress dance we have ventured upon for several years and so many delightful costumes were worn by guests, as well as members, that it was an unqualified success. Everyone, whether in fancy dress or not, was required to disguise themselves as completely as possible by masking and other devices. Great ingenuity and variety were shown in the costumes, head-dresses and masks, and the dancing was enjoyed all the more for the mystery of trying to "place" one's partners. Miss Crowdy came and kindly consented to act as judge of the costumes—no easy matter, we feel sure. Miss Norris, as usual, met the situation with her conjuror's bag of tricks, whence miraculously issued forth numerous little tissue-paper packages for prizes. The judging took place just before supper, and then the whole assemblage unmasked, with the sole exception of an old "Fossil" excavated from the ruins of the 'nineties. This specimen belongs to the genus commonly known as Respectable British Matron, one of whose peculiarities is the early-homing instinct: our affable visitor accordingly took her departure before supper. Had it not been for the late arrival of the "Bulletin" editor, who found her nervously undecided between the terrifying adventure of pressing the devil's own button and being promptly precipitated into the nether regions by way of the lift-well or undertaking the arduous descent of five flights of stairs,

the faithful "James" might have vainly awaited his mistress at the street door, where her discreet closed brougham was surely in readiness to carry her back to the oblivion whence she had emerged for a peep at the dreadful goings-on of the nineteen-thirties.

On August 13th we had a splendid roll-up of thirty members and friends, justifying the Committee's decision to have an occasional speaker on our programme. The Rev. N. Claridge Goss was the chosen speaker, and his "speech" consisted of yarns dealing with "Humour and the pulpit," which were much appreciated. His first section dealt with the young minister and his many pitfalls in trying to appear as though he had been preaching for many years.

In one case the organist asked the young visiting preacher if he had selected the hymns. "Oh no, I always leave that for the organist." Well, perhaps you would like some suitable for the subject of your sermon?" "Oh, I have no subject yet. I never decide until I go into the pulpit what my subject will be." On turning to the first hymn, he found the organist had chosen "For those at sea." Welcome and farewell services and socials, wedding ceremonies and sick visiting, all provided tragic as well as humorous happenings. Dr. Wells, of Scotland, had appendicitis. He left hospital too soon and had to return to have the wound re-opened. One dear old lady, on leaving at the conclusion of her visit, presented him with a book. Imagine his surprise when he read the title, "Old Wells Re-opened."

Mr. Goss then dealt with various ministers and their idiosyncracies, finally telling us of an experience of his in South Australia, with the fatal results—to the sermon—of letting one's gaze roam out of the window. Next to this little country church lived Biddy, a fat Irish woman. Old Biddy had been pulling carrots on this particular Sunday morning, when she came to an extra large one, requiring much pulling. It came out sooner than she expected, causing her to turn a somersault. As she was a believer in the old-fashioned voluminous red flannel petticoats, the sight was disconcerting, and Mr. Goss, losing the thread of his sermon, turned to the hymn book to announce the closing hymn, which he had difficulty in doing. It was, "Look, ye saints, the sight is glorious."

At the Progressive Whist evening on September 10th, the prizes were won by Miss McDonald, with 98 points, and Mr. Mills, with 94 points.

At the October meeting we just yarned and sang choruses by way of getting into our stride for the dinner.

Armistice.

Thirteen years have gone by since the first, the real Armistice Day, and once more we meet to commemorate what the Armistice stood for, and stands for—the two are not quite synonymous. In some directions our prejudices, born of or fostered by the War, have weakened, in others

completely broken down; we have known disappointment, disillusionment, found the way of peace more elusive, more problematical than the state of war, but, in spite of, and because of, the topsy-turvy state of mind in which the greater part of the world finds itself we cherish the essential message of Armistice Day, which surely is "Pull together-everybody, to prevent its ever happening again." Our happy memories of friendships made, our undeniable recollection that we really were inspired to a higher degree of individual efficiency, mentally and physically, during those stressful years, must not blind us to the fact that modern warfare is no longer a means of noble and manly vindication of honour, individual or collective. It is unmitigated, scientific murder, most foul, and every person who does not actively contribute to world-peace by trying to wipe out evil influences in their own immediate community is an unworthy citizen.

Eleventh Annual Dinner.

Well, here we are again! Time, November 12th, 1931. Place, the Allora, Pitt Street, Sydney. Dramatis Personae: upwards of seventy ex-war-service women and a dozen or so ex-war-service men, none of whom in the circumstances can ever presume to pass for 20-years-young again, or 25 for that matter, or . . . (leave it at that!)

The familiar room had its annual crop of red, white and blue flowers sprouting on all the tables. This year's innovation as to tables was a great success—groups of six, eight or ten being so much more friendly than fours! At the President's table were Miss Isabel Crowdy, O.B.E., W.R.N.S. (Patron), Miss Rose Piper (Red X), Miss Elsie Smith, W.R.N.S., Mrs. James Brennan, W.R.N.S., Mrs. Bevan, W.R.N.S., Mr. Hartley MacAllister (14th Field Ambulance), and the Rev. Ted Davidson (13th Field Artillery, A.I.F.). At each of the other tables one member, distinguished by a red, white and blue posy, acted as hostess, and the more-or-less strangers were well sorted out among the old campaigners, so that nobody—we hope—felt shy or neglected. Union Jacks, menu cards and trumpets on the tables all added to the national colour-scheme, and, as usual, it goes without saying that the catering end of the job was admirably done. It was a great roll-up and the number of applicants for tickets so cheered Miss Norris that she almost forgot that she was three-quarters dead of fatigue before the first guests arrived. This did not make any visible difference to her good spirits and capable chairmanship, and it was altogether a most enjoyable function.

Padre Davidson, no longer at Toc H headquarters, but Rector of a country parish, happened to have arrived in Sydney that day and joined us for a short time. As he was obliged to rush off before the speeches and subsequent programme, Miss Norris particularly requested that he should conduct the assembly in singing the version of "Three Blind Mice," to which he introduced us on a previous occasion. Accordingly we all lifted up our voices—and hands—in the middle of dinner and mimed our way through the old rhyme with great effect. At the conclusion of this effort Miss Norris presented the conductor with three mice which squeaked in alto, tenor and bass tones respectively.

This was a mere interpolation between courses, but with Miss Norris in the chair, one almost expects the unexpected.

In due course the **President** proposed "**The King**," which toast was duly honoured. **Mr. Hartly MacAllister** (14th Field Ambulance) in proposing the toast "**Ex-Service Women**," spoke in glowing terms not only of the women on active service whose courage and efficiency had won for them recognition, admiration and appreciation, but also, and more particularly, of the tens of thousands of women who "kept the home fires burning," steadily, patiently, courageously, with unflagging spirits, though often with broken hearts, throughout the war—and after.

Miss Elsie Smith (W.R.N.S.) in replying on behalf of ex-service women, voiced the feeling, we all share, of gratitude for the comradeship in general and for individual friendships made possible by service in a common cause.

Comradeship was her keynote, but she passed on to remind us that, proud as we all were of the various arms of the services to which we belonged, we owed much of our fine discipline and organisation to the high standard set and maintained by the pioneer of all women's services—the Army Nursing Service—for whom no praise was too high. (Prolonged applause).

Miss Crowdy, who was unable to stay the whole evening (as she was rejoining the Governor's party to go on to the Lord Mayor's Reception to the Governor-General and Lady Isaacs), thanked the members for the bouquet of red roses (which she carried at the reception afterwards). She then delivered a message from Lady Game to the effect that she would like us, once again to have a Christmas party in the grounds of Government House as her guests on December 10th. (This invitation, as we all know, was superseded by cards from "The Governor and Lady Game" to a Garden Party on Saturday, December 19th).

As Miss Crowdy was obliged to leave at this juncture, Miss Norris, in her stead, proposed the health of "Our Guests and the Artists," which was responded to by **Mr.**

R. H. Swainson.

We had hoped that Miss Rose Piper (Red Cross Welfare Department) would also have spoken, but unfortunately she too left early to attend the reception.

Members who wrote or telegraphed their regrets that they were unable to be present were Dr. Marjory Little, the Misses Cusack, Mrs. W. Davidson, Mrs. Dudley Laurence, Miss Grace Murray, Miss D. Cape and Miss N. Cavanagh.

Apologies were also received from Dr. Mary Booth, Dr. Lucy Gullett and Miss Olive Kelso King.

The lucky number menu-card was found to be held by Mr. MacAllister, and the lucky trumpet by Mr. Boniface, both of whom received prizes.

Miss Hilda Grace contributed several delightful songs at the piano, and kindly accompanied Mr. Val Doultree, who also sang for us. Miss Grace and Mr. Doultree also acted as joint conductors of some synchronised double choruses. We greatly appreciate the kindness of both artistes. At intervals thereafter we burst forth into some of the old favourite songs of service days, which, like old soldiers, never die—and up to the present show no sign of simply fading away. These were interspersed by comic songs sung by Mr. Cornish.

An outstanding feature of this Reunion was that we had no less than four Wren officers present (Miss Crowdy, Mrs. Brennan, Mrs. Bevan, and last, but not least, "Our" Miss Elsie Smith, who was an original member, in fact our first Treasurer, one-time Acting Secretary, an indefatigable worker in the early days, when we held weekly afternoons as well as monthly evenings, and whose presence has always given such an impression of cheerfulness, loyalty and efficiency that even through long absences she has never ceased to be truly missed. We realise that her work in the Girl Guides' Association is very strenuous and absorbing and that we cannot now expect to see her often, but her presence on this occasion was perhaps more widely appreciated than she realised).

Mrs. Brennan contributed to the nautical element in the atmosphere by performing in spirited style just enough introductory steps of the Sailors' Hornpipe to make us want more! Here's hoping for a future occasion. (Mrs. Brennan, by the way, is working with Miss Smith. They have formed the first company of Sea Rangers in New South Wales, who do all sorts of serious and useful things, besides dancing hornpipes and singing shanties by way of light refreshment).

The evening's proceedings concluded with three cheers for Miss Norris and the assurance that "She's a Jolly Good Fellow," Auld Lang Syne, and God Save the King.

Armistice Day.

The President represented the Club in the enclosure (the Patron was with the Vice-Regal party) at the Martin Place celebration, and placed a large sheaf of flannel flowers, tied with red, white and blue ribbon, on the Cenotaph on behalf of the Ex-Service Women.

MISS NORRIS considers the commemoration this year the most impressive yet held, perhaps because it was the simplest. There did not seem to be the smallest sound or movement during the two minutes' silence.

Garden Party at Government House.

The Governor and Lady Game issued invitations to members of the British Ex-Service Association (men), their wives and children and the Ex-Service Women's Club members and their children, to a Garden Party on Saturday, December 19th.

Altogether 620 adults and 225 children were present.

After being received by Sir Philip and Lady Game on arrival, the guests strolled about the garden while the children were gradually collected on the lawn at the side of the house. Here they sat for tea, being waited on by Mrs. Brennan's very efficient Sea Rangers and some other Guides, who afterwards turned their attention to the grown-ups of the party, dashing back and forth between the verandah buffet and the lawns with an endless procession of trays of tea, cakes and ice-creams.

Miss Crowdy, the Governor's sons and daughter and other members of the Vice-Regal household were no less busy, insuring that no guest was overlooked.

After tea, Sir Philip was presented with an illuminated address and Lady Game with a beautiful bouquet on behalf of the members of the British Ex-Service Association, an organisation in which the Governor has always especially interested himself.

Then some clever performances were given by a conjuror, a ventriloquist and finally a group of Scottish dancers and a piper, all in full-dress Scots costume.

At about 5.30 p.m. the National Anthem was sung, bringing a very happy and informal party to a close.

SHANGHAI CAMP.

There is not much to report this month on Camp activities as up to the present it has been too early to have many visitors.

The Committee, however, have been very energetic in adding the final touches to make the Camp really attractive. It is impossible to find words in which to describe the charms of the riverside. At the time of writing, which is May 1st, members are enjoying swimming, boating and physical exercises, added to which the sun is shining gloriously—what more can one ask for?

It may be of interest to those who are contemplating visiting the Camp to know that, according to precedent, one private week-end booking per month has been allowed and the following dates have been taken: May 28th, June 11th, July 23rd, August 6th, and September 10th.

We hope to have goodly numbers for all the other week-ends so please be generous with your support.

S. T. HANNEN.

BRANCH REPORTS FOR MAY.

Birmingham.

The United Services Club Annual Meeting was held on April 13th. There was a very good attendance of members; the balance-sheet was submitted and approved, and after a discussion the dates for Sunday rambles were finally fixed for June 19th, July 10th, September 11th. It is to be hoped the weather will be kind as most of the fixtures last year had to be abandoned. The place to be visited on June 19th is Kinver. Details as to meeting-place will be given later. There are still a few subscriptions outstanding, which I should like to receive as soon as possible.

E. I. DIPPLE.

Brighton.

Wednesday, May 25th. Whist Drive at Jay's Cafe, 5 St. James's Street, for members and friends. Open at 7.30, to start punctually at 8 p.m. Charge 1s., including refreshments and prizes.

Alas! the weather was not kind for our proposed joint primrose ramble with Tunbridge Wells Branch. However, four of us braved the elements and arrived at Crowborough, whence we set off in two Austin Sevens to the woods, where we soon picked enough primroses to show

our intentions. Then we retired to Mrs. Houchen's home for our "picnic" tea. We enjoyed our visit very much, and were much interested in the beautiful Angora rabbits, "Starlight" and the rest, some thirty of them, whose wool she spins herself and knits into cardigans and berets, etc. We hope to have another trip when the weather is more settled.

Our last meeting was at Mrs. Anscombe's, by kind invitation, where we amused ourselves playing Rummey, etc., and eating a very nice supper. H. A. BARON.

Glasgow and West of Scotland.

At the invitation of Miss Laird, the meeting on Wednesday took place at the new premises of the Queen Margaret Students' Union, University Avenue, of which she is the resident secretary. This is one of the University buildings, and the decorations and furnishings, which have been carried out under the supervision of Miss Laird and a committee, are quite in keeping with the oak panelled rooms and latticed windows. A tour of inspection brought forth constant exclamations of delight. The "all electric" kitchen appealed particularly to the housewives among us. Here sink and draining boards, etc., are made of mono metal and gleam like silver, though "Brasso" is banished from the establishment. Here, also, is every labour-saving device on the market, including dish-washing machine, potato-peeling machine, coffee machine, etc., etc.

Inside the Union is Miss Laird's flat, also up-to-date and furnished to suit the surroundings. Here began the "Waacish" part of the evening—photos, souvenirs, chat, and refreshments round a huge fireplace with a "roaring" fire.

New Member.—We are pleased to welcome Miss Stewart, of the Sunderland Branch.

The Hut.—This opens in May and we hope Old Comrades will take advantage of it. E. M. GILCHRIST.

Norfolk.

The monthly meeting was held on Thursday, April 28th, at 27 Branksome Close, Norwich, our hostesses being the Misses Newberry and Prothero. This was in the nature of a "house warming," our two members having removed from Thorpe to a charming new house on the outskirts of the city.

Fortunately a good number of members were present, and one and all were delighted to wander round the rooms, garden and orchard, on a tour of inspection. Certainly the country view from all the windows was charming, and the singing of the birds gave a touch of peace to the world outside.

A most appetising supper was prepared for us, which one and all enjoyed. Repairing to the drawing-room, letters to the branch were read. We were glad to hear news of Miss Howes, our member in Kenya Colony; and also of Mac, our popular member who recently took up a post in the Isle of Wight.

Time, as usual, raced on its way. It was a kindly thought of our hostesses which prompted them to take Mrs. Rumbold to the station in their car, and also Miss Green to Wymondham, as it enabled them to spend a longer time with us.

Summer picnics came in for much discussion at the latter end of the evening, although no arrangements were made. However, members will be notified by post when something has definitely materialised for May and June.

New York.

L. W. CHILVERS.

Waacs in and around New York meet the second Thursday of each month. Telephone, Nevins 8-5250, for information on how to reach meeting-place, which is very easy of access.

G. ROSE.

London.

Coming Events.—The Supper and Dance to be held on Saturday, the 7th of May, is causing quite a flutter in the nest and is, of course, keeping us busy and excited. At present, well over a hundred tickets have been sold, and we are looking forward to the affair being a brilliant social event. A full report of the gay doings will be published in next month's Gazette.

Aldershot Tattoo Trip.—The 11th of June was the date fixed for the trip to Aldershot, but as the bookings at the end of April did not justify any action being taken, I am afraid this event will have to be missed this year. If nothing definite can be fixed up for the few people who have booked their seats, then the booking fees will be returned in plenty of time for them to make other arrangements, if they wish to do so.

Visit to Deptford Settlement.—On Saturday, 18th June, we are visiting the Deptford Settlement at the invitation of Miss Bertrand, who is arranging a programme. If the programme is anything like the last one Miss Bertrand arranged, it will certainly be interesting. Members wishing to join the party should drop me a card telling me so, and they can either meet at the Ex-Service Women's Club, at two o'clock, or go straight to The Albany Institute, Creek Road, Deptford, S.E.1, and await our arrival. **But please say beforehand which you will do.**

We propose to take our children to the camp again this year, and the date is fixed for Saturday, 2nd July. If members and friends who intend to help would let me know early and send their fares along, two 'buses could be booked and make the journey much easier for them. The 'bus could also pick up any people going to the camp for the week-end if they fancied the drive down—and the company, which I assure them is a bright one. Forty-eight people at 2s. 6d. would pay for the second 'bus, **but I must have the fares sent to me at once so that arrangements can be made.**

Also, if anybody has any bright ideas with regard to entertaining, these shall be appreciated—three to eleven years of age makes a lot of work and gives quite an amount of worry to the helpers, be they ever so willing. I shall arrange this year that the children be split up into groups according to age, and detail two or more helpers, to entertain in their own way; this I think might make the work easier; also, we might hear ourselves speak, a thing we cannot do sometimes for the din the children make when they are altogether. Members wishing to help by donations should forward any contribution to Miss R. S. Andrews, c/o The Ex-Service Women's Club, 5 Buckingham Gate, S.W.1, before Thursday, 30th June, or drop me a card saying what to expect so that no more money than is absolutely necessary is spent. We always need lots of cake (plain ones), so will the bakers please get busy one day for the kiddies. Cash donations are always most welcome, no matter how small; just a few stamps gives as much pleasure as a large amount. We need lots and lots of things to make the afternoon a success with the kiddies, and by asking I am obeying the orders of many members who have always considered it their privilege to help to supply the needs of the children on the two occasions which they look forward to with great pleasure and excitement—the party in the winter, and Shanghai Camp in the summer.

Moonlight Week-end at Camp.—The moon is really large and round, and very bright on the 16th of July, so London Branch has decided to book the camp for the week-end and go for a midnight ramble on the Saturday night—at least the energetic ones will ramble. The house-party will be looked after by Miss R. S. Andrews and Miss S. T. Hannen. Final arrangements will be published next month; in the meantime send along your booking, otherwise you may be too late.

If there is any member who has paid her subscription and has not yet received a receipt and membership card, please let me know. Also will those members who have not yet paid their 1932 subscriptions, please send them along so as to avoid having reminders sent to them.

R. S. ANDREWS.

Leeds.

Jumble Sale.—The satisfactory sum of nearly £5 was taken at our first Jumble Sale. With the reduction for expenses the net result was £3 0s. 1d. The experience was quite a novel one, and we shall certainly have another sale in the near future.

Outings and Rambles.—All Old Comrades and friends are cordially invited to join in any of the rambles and outings arranged. Please, when joining us, don't hesitate to make yourself known.

Otley Chenin, Sunday, 22nd May. Meet Briggate Barrier, Leeds, 10.45 a.m. Leave 11 a.m. Take rations.

East Keswick, Sunday, 5th June. Meet Roundhay Park Gates (train) at 10.45 a.m. Leave 11 a.m. prompt. Take rations.

Plumpton Rocks, Sunday, 19th June. Time of leaving Vicar Lane, Leeds, depends on the 'bus service, but approximately 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Exact time will be notified later.

A. ANNIKIN.

BIRTH.

Kerrage.—On April 4th, at Streatham, London, S.W., to Mr. and Mrs. A. Kerrage, a daughter. (Mrs. Kerrage was Minnie Sanderson, of Deptford and Windsor).

ADVERTISEMENTS

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Canvey Island.—To Let, a three-roomed Bungalow, furnished. For full particulars, apply to Miss A. Yetton, 72 Cranmer Road, Forest Gate, London, E.7.

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Bournemouth.—Mrs. A. Stocker, "Glencora," 3 Hawkwood Road, Boscombe. Comfortable board residence, good food; separate tables; 4 mins. sea, one minute Arcade, shops, etc. Every consideration for the comfort of visitors; large shady lawn, South aspect; Moderate terms.—Telephone: Bournemouth 962.

Stormont House, 43 and 45 Longridge Road, Earls Court, S.W.5. Misses A. Crockford and O. Mainland. Bed, bath and breakfast from 5/6 single rooms; from 5/- each double rooms. Lunch, tea and dinner optional; 6d. per night extra for bookings for less than three nights. Gas fires in rooms. Telephone: Frobisher, 0986

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George IV. Hotel, Gt. Amwell, Ware, Herts. Telephone: Stanstead Abbots 39. A beautiful spot for a quiet country holiday. Saturday to Monday, 15s. Other terms on application. Teas, luncheons. Parties catered for by arrangement. Combine a ramble with your general meeting and come here for tea. Club-room accommodates 50.—A. G. Brown and A. Edwards (Camp 1, Etaples).

Pure Home-made Chocolates, Bon-Bons, Toffees, Caramels, etc. Fancy boxes of Chocolates and Sweets, suitable for Presents, from 2s. 6d. to £2 2s. 0d. Price list on application.—Miss E. Cockledge, 2 Bracken Road, West, Brighouse, Yorkshire.

Ann Wilkinson, 159 Ebury Street, Victoria, S.W.1, ex-W.A.A.C., has opened at the above address. Knitting wools, silks, art needlework lingerie, hosiery, children's frocks and woollies; maids' uniforms ready made and made to measure.—C. Wilkinson, Garrison Headquarters, Felixstowe.