

MAY } 1941
JUNE }

Old Comrades



Association

GAZETTE

GENERAL SECRETARY: Mrs. Johnston, Q.M.A.A.C., O.C.A., 82, Lancaster Gate, London, W.2.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

All contributions for the Gazette should reach the Editor, Q.M.A.A.C., O.C.A. Gazette, 82 Lancaster Gate, London, W.2. **not later than the 21st of the following months:- January, March, May, July, September and November.**

HEADQUARTERS REPORT FOR APRIL AND MAY

A Meeting of Council took place on Saturday, 19th April, when nine members were present with Chief Controller Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan in the Chair. The members present were as follows:- Miss Davy, Miss Ireland, Miss Saunders, Mrs. Powell, Senior Leader Bilbrough, Miss Kenworthy-Browne, Miss Billington (Hon. Treasurer) and Mrs. Johnston (General Secretary).

The first business of the Meeting was the election of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of Council. There being no other nominations Chief Controller Dame Helen was declared Chairman and Miss Davy and Miss Ireland were elected Vice-Chairmen.

Council were very sorry to learn of Miss Cliff's serious motor accident, she suffered from concussion with complete oblivion for a week, with severe bruises and almost lost a foot. The sincere sympathy of the Meeting was expressed and the General Secretary was instructed to write to Miss Cliff.

Miss Binks too had the sympathy of Council in the bombing of her home, fortunately no one was injured.

A draft of a letter to the Under Secretary of State for War (with reference to the Resolution passed at the Annual General Meeting opening the membership of the O.C.A. to serving personnel of the A.T.S.) was considered and approved. A copy of the letter was to be forwarded through the War Office to Groups and Commands of the A.T.S., with a covering letter from the Director, A.T.S. (Chief Controller Dame Helen).

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs. Eager, Miss Binks, Miss Cliff and Miss Batty.

The date of the next Meeting was fixed for THURSDAY, 26th JUNE, 1941, at 6.15 p.m.

BENEVOLENT REPORT FOR APRIL AND MAY, 1941

Six cases were dealt with by the Service Women's Benevolent Fund in April and two in May. Assistance was given to each applicant.

Two grants were made for spectacles and dentures.

Two members were assisted with treatment for arthritis.

One grant covered three months at a convalescent home, half the cost being borne by the British Legion.

One grant was made to meet Ground rent in especially hard circumstances.

One member received a grant for extra nourishment to cover 26 weeks.

One applicant was given a grant towards storage of furniture, part being a loan. This was a special case.

The sum of £63 19s. 6d. was received. The sum of £59 8s. 6d. was disbursed.

THE BIRTHDAY OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN MARY

The following message was sent by our President, Dame Florence Simpson, to the Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Mary, at Badminton:-

"Dear Madam,

Will you kindly convey to Her Majesty, Queen Mary, on behalf of the members of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps Old Comrades Association, the expression of their humble duty and loyal greetings and good wishes on the occasion of Her Majesty's Birthday, 26th May.

The Old Comrades Association Headquarters in Chesham Place was bombed and our General Secretary is now carrying on her work at 82 Lancaster Gate.

I am sure that Her Majesty will be pleased to hear that membership has now been extended to the Auxiliary Territorial Service and to all who care to join when they leave the Service.

Yours very truly,

FLORENCE SIMPSON "

The following gracious reply has been received:-

"Dear Dame Florence,

Queen Mary commands me to convey to you and the members of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps Old Comrades Association the Queen's most sincere thanks for their message of greetings and good wishes on the occasion of Her Majesty's Birthday.

Queen Mary is so sorry to hear of the damage done to the Headquarters but is sure that this will in no way have effected the work carried on so nobly by the Association.

Yours sincerely,

MARGARET WYNDHAM."

VISITORS TO THE OFFICE

The General Secretary has been delighted to see the following Old Comrades who have found time to come and visit the office and to cheer her daily round with their friendliness:- **Miss Grace Shawyer, Mrs. King, Senior Leader Bilbrough, Miss Billington, Sub-Leader Edmonds** (who served under the General Secretary at the First Army Infantry School at Harelott Chateau) Edmonds was looking the picture of health and is enjoying life in her new Service, but she was flattering enough to say that she wished she was still serving under her old U.A.! **Jean Thorp** was another A.T.S. member who called on her way from the Midlands while on short leave, and yet another was **Letemplier** who seems to have been a wanderer over the face of the globe and has promised to write us some account of her doings. She brought with her Volunteer Jeffcoat who has joined the O.C.A. as a Life member.

AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE

It is with great pleasure that we welcome to the ranks of the O.C.A. the following serving members of the A.T.S. who have joined as Life members:-

1. Company Assistant M. J. Marquis.
2. Junior Commander S. D. Morris.
3. Junior Commander K. G. Stocker.
4. Senior Commandant C. H. Service.
5. Company Assistant J. R. Creaghe Haward.
6. Senior Commandant Mrs. M. Carlisle.
7. Company Assistant D. Carlisle.
8. Junior Commander P. M. Lazarus-Barlow.
9. Chief Commandant J.M. Cowper.
10. Junior Commander H. Williamson.
11. Senior Commandant S. D. A. Allen, O.B.E.
12. Junior Commander U. M. K. Cameron.
13. Volunteer Jeffcoat.
14. Senior Commandant J. C. Woods.
15. Company Commander M. J. L. Dixon.

also The Lady Viola Apsley, lately a Chief Commandant in the A.T.S. who has kindly undertaken the work of Hon. Secretary of the A.T.S. Benevolent Fund, and Miss N. H. Bilney who is also an ex-A.T.S.

In the next issue it is hoped to give the names of the Annual members.

BRANCH REPORTS

St. Leonards

Miss Taylor writes:- In answer to your letter of the 29th April, I am afraid I can be of little help, most of our members are away or busy, I don't meet them very often, and we have had no meetings for nearly two years now. One of the Miss Lings (Lily) has joined the A.T.S. and at present is stationed at Ore, quite near us. Her sister Frances, is still at 31 Wellington Square, they have been very badly hit, as this is a restricted area, but we have had several people, Nurses, etc., who are allowed to come for a rest and quiet. It sounds rather strange, but it is very quiet, not nearly so bad, as many people think—only the possibility of an attempted invasion—will keep people away and they cannot get down to bathe or sit on the beach. We have been most fortunate so far, have sustained no damage. We did have some trying times between September and October last year, lone raiders, but now our men keep them out over the sea. Our garden is lovely, all around it is beautiful, does seem a pity people are unable to enjoy it all, but I trust all will soon be well and oversea will be filling up with weary workers for a rest and quiet.

North Staffs

Our first meeting of the year was held on Saturday, March 29th, at my house when eight of us spent quite a cheery afternoon. Alice Myatt who is now recovering from her accident was fortunate enough to get a lift in spite of petrol shortage and came with her sister Carrie, now assistant matron at the Stoke-on-Trent Institution. Alice Hudson came from Leek. She is disappointed that her doctor will not allow her to apply to join the A.T.S.—but is doing the next best thing—making comforts and equipment for the troops.

We were sorry not to see Mrs. Horobin (Kitty Thurston). She lives near Stafford, and is a recent member of this branch. Her husband has been very ill for several months and she has been obliged to give up her W.V.S. and canteen work.

Mrs. Hulse, also from Leek, was not able to be with us because she has two evacuee children to look after.

We hope to have a Whist Drive very shortly and some more meetings whilst the evenings are light.

It is very hard lines on the General Secretary to have had so many moves in her years of office. Let us hope that there hasn't been another one since the last issue of the Gazette.

H. CLOUGH.

Glasgow and West of Scotland Branch

On a recent visit to Edinburgh I spent a most interesting afternoon at our Club in Drumsheugh Gardens. This as you know has been lent to the Y.W.C.A. "for the duration" as a hostel for Service girls. It is a "hive of industry" and judging from the use that is made of it for meals and recreation it is proving a great boon to the girls.

Miss Innes is ready as ever to put Old Comrades in touch with each other and the moment she knows of your presence in Edinburgh her brain works as to how this can be done. Through her kindness and the courtesy of the Y.W. I was invited to an At Home of the Voluntary Workers on a Sunday afternoon. Members of the A.T.S. took command in kitchen, pantry, offices and dining room to allow the voluntary workers to attend the At Home. The purpose of the At Home was for the workers to meet each other and talk over improvements as to service, etc. After two addresses by officials of the Y.W. and thanks given to the lady workers they divided into their groups and the one in charge (Miss Innes in charge of the Waac group) discussed improvements and got suggestions. These were handed in to the proper quarter. A.T.S. then served tea and true to Waac tradition the little contingent,—including Miss Findlay—retired to the room which is kept for service women with the familiar pictures etc. around, and had a re-union all to ourselves just like old times.

On account of the black-out the O.C.A. has been meeting on Saturday afternoons but from now on we will meet as usual on the Wednesday evenings until September. Every member is doing her bit to win the war. One is teaching English to Polish soldiers, others are entertaining soldiers privately or in the club, many are doing canteen work in the evenings and week-ends. Then there is fire-watching and knitting, whist drives for the boys, etc., etc. The British Legion takes a special interest in a military hospital near, in which one of its members is a Sister, and many gifts have found their way there.

Since my last report, as will have been seen in the papers, we have had a severe blitz and suffered in one way or another, but we, like others, who have been suffering for long "can take it" and will show what stuff we are made of.

E. M. GILCHRIST.

London Branch

Re-unions are once again in full swing although the numbers attending are small and a little disappointing, but they are steadily improving. On April the 17th seven members were present, May 1st the number was doubled and on the 15th which was a special event there were approximately 40 but included in this figure there were at least six guests and visitors and about twelve A.T.S. members. Congratulations to our new member Sub/Ldr. Barnard, A.T.S., ex-W.R.A.F. who seems to be the champion recruiter for the O.C.A. To-date Barnard has proposed and collected subscriptions for 30 A.T.S. serving members and there is every reason to believe that this number will not be far short of a century before the end of the month. There is news from Coddington who writes that she is now married, quite settled down, retired from the A.T.S. and living in Wilts. She wishes to be remembered to everyone and misses very much seeing her old comrades but hopes to be able to spend an occasional week-end in London. We all join in sending her our best wishes for happiness in her new life, and look forward to meeting again some day to talk over both old and new times.

On May 15th a Whist Drive arranged by the Hon. Secretary, supported by Miss L. Saunders was held, Miss B. Ireland, our Branch Vice President and 40 members and friends were present, the proceeds were in aid of our "Comforts Fund" 10th, Btn., The Middlesex Regt. By kind permission of Lt. Col. Cook, M.C., who was unable to be present, Major E. Mayhew, M.C., supported by Capt. and Mrs. Griffiths and Lt. Carmichael attended. Before commencing play a message from Mrs. Johnston was read as follows: "I am so sorry that I cannot be with you on Thursday but I am on fire-watching duty. . . Please give my greetings to all Old and new Old Comrades and my wishes for a very happy and peaceful evening. With my sincere regrets at being unable to attend." A letter was also received from Sen. Ldr. Bilbrough who regretted that she would not be able to attend with her party of A.T.S. members as she was on sick leave.

Miss Ireland in welcoming the guests said how very much we all appreciated the presence of Major Mayhew, knowing how fully occupied both he and his fellow officers were at this time and she was sorry that more Old Comrades had not been able to be present. Miss Ireland welcomed to the Branch Sub. Ldr. Barnard, A.T.S. together with other N.C.O.'s and other ranks who have joined the O.C.A. London Branch.

Prizes were won by the following:-

Lady's: 1st: E. L. Smith; 2nd: M. Fraser; Consolation: D. Warren.

Gent's: 1st: V. Caseley; 2nd: M. Billington; Consolation: J. Held.

Mystery Prizes: Miss D. Butler and Capt. Griffiths.

A box of chocolates was raffled and won by Mrs. Griffiths, who is the chairwoman of the Regiment's Comforts Fund.

Major E. Mayhew before presenting the prizes conveyed Lt. Col. Cook's regrets at not being able to be present. Major Mayhew expressed his sincere thanks for all the work done by the Branch and said how very much the efforts of our members had been appreciated by the Regiment, that to-date they had received over 200 garments and that he noticed from a special chart prepared by Miss Saunders that an effort was being made to reach the 1,000 mark. In brief Major Mayhew gave a few interesting details concerning the work of the officers and men of the Regiment.

At the conclusion of the drive Lt. Carmichael caused great amusement by selling half-a-pound of tea presented by the Hon. Secretary, by American Auction. By his

efforts and willing co-operation of the company present, the magnificent sum of £2 2s. 6d. was raised for the Fund and it was finally sold to Mrs. Griffiths. Members who were unable to be present certainly missed a very jolly evening. Miss Ireland proposed a vote of thanks to Major Mayhew, Capt. Griffiths and Lt. Carmichael.

Prizes were given by the following members: Donation: Major E. Mayhew. Prizes: Mrs. Johnston, Miss D. Porter, Miss L. Saunders, Mrs. Goldberg, Miss W. Binks and Miss B. Haines.

By all efforts the sum of £5 1s. 0d. was raised, the promoters are more than pleased at the results.

Future Meetings

Re-unions on Thursday, 5th and 19th of June at 6.30 p.m.

Special Event

On Thursday, June 19th at 7 p.m., Sen. Ldr. Bilbrough is arranging a Beetle Drive, Tickets 1s. each. Proceeds will be given to the Wool Fund. Lt. Carmichael has consented to come along and run another American Auction. (Military duties permitting). So please make this drive a huge success by turning up and bringing as many friends as possible. The Hon. Treasurer is still waiting for those subs to come along.

Committee Meeting

The next Committee will be held at 6 p.m. on Thursday, 19th June, please make a note of the date and time. No other notices will be sent out.

Comforts Fund

A further donation from Sen. Ldr. Bilbrough is acknowledged with many thanks also socks from Coddington and Miss Barnard, S.W.I.

B. HAINES, Hon. Secretary.

Tees-Side Branch

You will see by the address that I have had a change since I was down in London in February. It seems that "jerry" has been making a nuisance of himself to you again. Now I hope you are all safe and sound and unhurt. We have had our fire-work displays but the thing we hate most is when our nights are disturbed as you can guess, for the routine in the camp in never relaxed, now in Hardwick Camp if we had been kept awake by "jerry" we were allowed to stay in bed a while longer. You can know we did appreciate that bit of kindness, when we were not on duty. Now its different here as I said before. Our daily routine here is: 7.15 a.m. woken up by orderly N.C.O. of the day; 7.30 a.m. out of bed; 8.15 a.m. breakfast and roll call; 8.45 a.m. parade and short drill "if fine"; 9.0 a.m. hut inspection. That is when you are off duty until we start work at 1.30 p.m. Those who are on early duty start work at 6.30 a.m. and of course miss the parade for that day. This is a central kitchen, and we start work at 1.30 p.m. until 8.0 p.m. and 6.0 a.m. until 1.30 p.m. then we are off work for 24 hours and you can be sure we are ready for that off duty time although it does fly.

The Tees-Side Branch still meet, those who are able meet at the home of **Mrs. Wilkinson**. She is a "warden" but there is always a nice tea waiting for us when we get there, we are sure of being there. They are all doing some kind of work, **Miss Kendra** (our life member) is one of those "group savers" she's gathered in over £600 for War Bonds are something good for the country.

Our Aysgarth member is busy with the W.V.S. and Women's Institute, she is president and quite busy so until the summer I expect we will not see her. Some of the others are falling away, but I hope I can collect them together again as soon as this dreadful time is over. Our treasurer is not often at the meetings, she is living at Billingham and does not make things any easier for her.

L. F. M. FRYER.

Norfolk

Owing to the war and rations our monthly meetings have been temporarily suspended, but some of us meet alternate Tuesdays for tea at the Thatched Tea Rooms, Norwich, at 4 o'clock, where we can exchange news and read letters from absent members. All our members are at present safe and well. Mrs. McDermott is now in charge of the Y.M.C.A. at her home town—they have had a rough time there during the past few weeks, but she keeps very cheerful, and writes newsy letters promptly in reply to the Secretary's S.O.S. after a blitz.

Miss Molly Howes, Nairobi, Kenya Colony, has recently undergone an operation (internal) and we were glad to hear from her that she is steadily improving in health, although rheumatism is still causing her a great deal of pain. She is resting in her small home at present, and doing knitting and sewing.

Miss Norman is now nursing in a Military Hospital, instead of privately—quite near her home at St. Andrew's Hospital. Miss Howson joins us sometimes for tea, when her A.R.P. duties permit. She is looking much better now than a few weeks ago, having had a nice rest. She intends to return to office work soon. Miss West too is looking much better since her retirement although still somewhat lame from sciatica. Mrs. Paston's twins and Geraldine are growing such bonny girls, and all are very busy just at present "digging for victory." A week or so back, they were very proud of their radishes etc. coming up. They are very keen gardeners, and the garden and rockery looked a picture this spring. It hardly seems 9 years since we went to visit them when babies, at Tasburgh.

Mrs. Selva is able to join us once again, as her husband is better and back at business. We hope soon to arrange an evening so that others can join us. In the meantime we continue to meet in the Royal Arcade at 3.45 p.m. for tea and thence on to the Thatched Tea Rooms. Our next meeting is Tuesday, May 27th.

L. W. CHILVERS.

Bristol and West of England Branch

The Annual Meeting of the Branch was held on Saturday, 29th March, 1941, at Bath. Miss Sims, our President, took the Meeting and there were twelve members present. After the signing of the Minutes and the presentation of the Accounts for the year, a short report was given by the Secretary of the activities of the Branch during the year.

Apologies for absence were received from Miss Mountstephen, Miss Cole, Miss Philputt and Mrs. Reed. Miss Cole and Miss Philputt were on duty, and also was Mrs. Reed, who is an Air Raid Warden. Mrs. Rumbold managed to get away from her T.C. H. canteen for an hour. In these difficult days I do appreciate the real efforts which are made to get together.

Miss Sims very kindly brought to show us a letter she has received from Mr. Morrison (Postmaster General) thanking her for her courageous work during a recent blitz. Well done! It is good to know that ex-Waacs are still being "mentioned in despatches."

We have managed to get contact with most of our members, and are thankful to know they are safe.

It was arranged to hold our next gathering at Redcliffe Bay, if possible.

B. MOULD.

Edinburgh

I am afraid we are a very disappointing Branch as regards activities. There never seems to be anything to report. I was surprised, when I came up here, after being used to London and Ilford Branches, to find how stagnant and uninterested this Branch was. I was just beginning

to get together a little circle of the newly joined members when the war broke out, so we shall have to leave that until we get the Club back.

I have not heard any fresh news of any members of the O.C.A. or the A.T.S. since the General Meeting in January, and this has already gone into the Gazette.

I am sorry there is so little money to send you again this month.

GERALDINE D. HARDY.

FUTURE OF THE A.T.S.

It was most interesting and gratifying to read in "The Times" of 4th April, 1941, that the Auxiliary Territorial Service and the Women's Auxiliary Air Force have been granted full military status. For the benefit of members who may not have read Captain Margesson's statement in the House of Commons, the report is printed below.

SIR G. JEFFREYS (Petersfield, U.) asked the Secretary of State for War whether he had any information to give the House regarding the strength and status of the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

CAPTAIN MARGESSON (Rugby, U.).—Yes, Sir. The Auxiliary Territorial Service has proved so valuable to the Army in replacement of men that the Government has decided to increase its numbers greatly and to enlarge the range of duties which it performs. Members of the Service are already discharging important functions connected with the air defence of Great Britain as well as with the rest of the Forces at home, and these are of a character which renders it desirable that the volunteers performing them should be definitely declared members of the Armed Forces of the Crown. The whole Service will accordingly be given full military status.

Women will, of course, be employed only on work for which they have a special aptitude, but the House should know that such work includes duties at searchlight and gun stations. We have a particular need for women with good educational qualifications. The Service will remain a women's Service under the general direction of women, and the disciplinary code of the Army will be applied to it only in so far as the wider responsibilities now envisaged necessitate. I should explain that existing members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service enrolled on the specific understanding that they would be subject on active service to military law and to such penalties as might then be prescribed. They are therefore not being made subject to conditions inconsistent with the terms on which they were enrolled, and I have every reason to believe that they will welcome their new status. (Hear, hear.)

THE W.A.A.F.

Replying to Miss CAZALET (Islington, E., U.) CAPTAIN PALFOUR, Under-Secretary for Air (Thanet, U.), said that the Government had decided to introduce similar measures in respect of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force to those just announced by the Secretary of State for War in connexion with the Auxiliary Territorial Service. It was proposed to give full Air Force status to the W.A.A.F., but the Force would continue as heretofore so far as its organization and administration were concerned, and the disciplinary code of the R.A.F. would be applied to it only in so far as was appropriate and necessary in view of the wider spheres of employment which were envisaged for it.

The position of existing members of the Force was similar to that outlined by the Secretary of State for War in respect of the Auxiliary Territorial Service. It was proposed greatly to increase the strength of this Force, so as to allow of the greatest practicable substitution of women for men over a wide range of duties.

News from the Ex-Service Women's Club, N.S.W.**The Birthday Party**

In October we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the formation of the Ex-Service Women's Club. I know there are some of you who remember the very first gathering at the Soldiers' Club in George Street. It was a great innovation, especially as so many of you were strangers to Sydney and it meant a lot to you in those days to have a place where you could get together and feel at home. Many of you have met month after month since then on the second Thursday, and at the end of twenty years still find great pleasure in the hours spent together on these nights. Many of the old members have dropped out. Some have returned home, and still, at the end of twenty years, we are enrolling new members. The Club's existence holds together still that great spirit of comradeship which was born during the "other war." In the pre-war days, when we looked forward to attaining our 20th birthday, we had hoped for a fitting celebration for it. What form it was to have taken we had not decided, leaving it till nearer the time to do so; but just look what happened in the meantime — and so we just had our ordinary birthday gathering. Had we done anything more elaborate I don't think a happier crowd than we were could have been the result. Nor could a nicer supper have been laid out for us, with three beautifully iced birthday cakes. The cakes were donated by Mrs. Simpson, Mrs. Morrissey and Miss Scurrah. Two of the cakes each had twenty candles, which were duly lit and blown out (for luck), after which they were cut and distributed to the members. The third one was not cut, but, as I have told you previously, was turned to good account for the Anzac Buffet Fund. There was a good roll up of members this year, and I feel it gives us all a great thrill to celebrate these special nights. They never seem to lag; in fact the time passes all too quickly. There is not much that is new that I can write about this October anniversary. We all know it so well. On behalf of the members I would like to thank Mrs. Simpson for her delicious cake, and to herself and the staff for the great interest they take in our Club doings, and to tell them how happy and comfortable we are there. Thanks to Mrs. Morrissey and Miss Scurrah for their cakes, also to any other members who brought along contributions to help swell the feast. Sure it was a very happy birthday re-union. May we have very many more.

The Annual Dinner

This year was our second war-time dinner. This year we dispensed with official guests. This year we found a new rendezvous, not new really, but new for our dinner, as this was the first time we have held it at the Lyceum Club. And were we pleased! The two latter changes were "thumbs up," the former not so good. The attendance this year was up to standard, and a pleasing feature of the evening was the number of menfolk who were present; Mr. Ford (A.S.C.), Mr. Gallagher (London Scottish), Mr. Lewin (Essex Regt.), Mr. Tait (13th Batt. A.I.F.), Mr. Burton (47th Div. Territorials), Mr. Peachy (A.M.C.), Mr. Cranston (8th Royal Scots), Capt. Mills (A.I.F.), Mr. Hancock (1st A.M.G.B.), Mr. Allen (93rd Anti A.C. Sect.).

The toast of the evening to His Majesty the King was proposed by Mrs. Peachey. There were no long-drawn-out speeches this year; each were short and to the point. The toast of the Ex-Service Women was proposed in a very amusing speech by Mr. Peachy, to which Mrs. Moore responded in equally amusing terms. As all the speakers were a last-minute idea of Mrs. Peachey's, Mrs. Moore confessed she got such a fright when Mrs. Peachey

asked her to respond to the toast of the Ex-Service Women that she could not enjoy her dinner, for which we were all very sorry, but not so later in the evening when by some means she became the possessor of the beautiful birthday cake (aforesaid mentioned). Miss Brough proposed the toast to Our Guests, which was ably responded to by Capt. Mills, who, by the way, had travelled eight hundred miles the previous night to be present at the dinner. Hitherto I think the travelling record was held by Mrs. Foley, who for many years now has travelled specially from Newcastle for the dinner. This year Mrs. Foley brought an ex-Waac guest, Mrs. Arms, whom I knew as Betty Martin in my first camp at Bettisfield Park before going to France, nearly twenty-three years ago, and who I had not seen since that time. Betty also met Rose Crowther, who was in the same camp with her in France. It was a great re-union, as you will imagine, there were many "do you remember?" etc. It was great seeing her again.

Ex-Service Women's Club, 26 Victoria Street, Bondi Junction, N.S.W., Australia.

Dear Mrs. Johnston,

We are all wondering if the O.C.A. offices are still intact, out in this country, so many miles away it is hard to imagine what London or any part of England looks like now after all the raids, we hope all are safe. I see where some of the mail to England was lost but think I wrote you last in January. We are very busy with one thing and another, the Meeting last month everyone was knitting, we arranged nothing special as so many are away with their children. The usual picnic was held the third Thursday in January, a nice hot day, till late afternoon when a heavy storm cleared the beach in quick time. Spent our day at the soldiers canteen on February 6th, a very long one too, twelve hours, and catered for 1,232 men of the services. Last night a card evening was arranged, that netted £1 for our air-raid victims fund in addition there is always a raffle and jam to buy not to mention the sweets for sale. All very encouraging, by the end of the year we should have a nice sum to hand in to the main fund. Mrs. Peachey is not enjoying the best of health just at present and we are hoping after a spell in hospital she will be very much better, she is such a nice person and very popular with everyone.

Mrs. Briggs and myself attended the the Annual Meeting of the W.V.S. in Sydney this morning, I believe there is a very large unit in England, out here they do a lot for the Lord Mayor's Comforts Fund as there is little else to do at present, but one never know just what is going to happen next.

My husband is in Palestine with the A.I.F. he sent me a cable last week. Next month we are hoping to have a speaker so everyone can keep on with their knitting, and of course, April brings us to the end of our financial year. I could tell you lots of interesting news Mrs. Johnston, but well it is not allowed on either side. We pray for victory and peace as everyone does and trust you are all safe and well. Very best wishes from all members.

Yours sincerely,

ETHEL MILLS.

Another Old Comrade has written from a delightful address, Eden Lane, Rainbow Bay, Coolangatta, Queensland. She is Mrs. Batterham, possibly better known as **Mrs. Hollerhead**. She lost her first husband a few years ago and has remarried. Unfortunately she is not well and has been attending Brisbane Hospital for months; in consequence she is unable to undertake any war work and is much grieved about it.

From The Secretary of the N. Z. Ex-Service Women's Association.

"We had our Annual Dinner as usual in August, forty-four members attending, and we had one hundred and forty-four members and guests at the social and dance in the evening. We had a really good time. We are changing our rooms to the British Legion Headquarters. They will be far better for us, and the Women's Auxiliary they have started are trying to do what they can towards the war effort. Later on we are going to try and arrange it so that members from the country will be able to come in and have a cup of tea and a rest. The official opening of the British Legion rooms is to be on the 19/10/40, so I do hope the rooms will be a payable concern, as they have gone to a lot of trouble and expense.

"Everyone at home must be doing wonderful work. I expect they are glad the winter is on; they may not get the air-raids.

"Our President, Mrs. Burbage, and members send their kind regards to your President, yourself and members.

"Mrs. Cranston writes to say she has had news of Mrs. Burrett (Betty Seavers), who has sold her home and is (still) touring New Zealand by caravan for two years, then intends to settle again. She is very happy and well and her wee daughter loves the life; she is six years old now. Jo Davies is at Herne Bay with her twin sons. Her husband has become a complete invalid now, so life cannot be a bed of roses for her, but she writes very cheery and devil may care, as usual.

"Mrs. Cranston also sent news that Mrs. Forson, of Balmain, has taken unto herself a partner along the road of life, and whom I hear is a very fine fellow and a great chum for Bob, her young son. I am sure all members will join me in wishing Mr. and Mrs. William MacRaid long life, happiness and prosperity in their new life."

CORRESPONDENCE

From Rose Tye (Knight, 2121, Pont de l'Arche), Folly Hill Farm, Upper Hale, Farnham, Surrey. (late of Harringay, N.4.)

You will see by the above address that I've joined the evacuees; in other words, I'm a quitter, but not from choice, believe me. We were bombed out end of the street one night, bringing down half our house, and again a fortnight later, completely devastating it and ruining all we had. I was not there the second time as Mr. Tye brought me down here, where Norma was evacuated, the day following the first bombing when an aerial torpedo came down on the other side of the street, bringing down eight houses and shattering all the doors, roofs and windows in the vicinity, ours amongst them. It was a shattering roar, and I went unconscious with the shock. However, as I came round my boy George said "Come on Mum, this is where your First Aid will come in handy." This was all I needed, and I pulled myself together, grabbed my First Aid case, and put on my helmet, as Jerry was still overhead raining down bombs, and the guns barking. However, that didn't seem to matter now; one felt he had done his worst and there was nothing else to fear, and I went in and out of different houses dealing with shock cases and cuts from

glass, etc. It was a horrible experience and I shall never forget it — pitch dark, pouring with rain, crying and screaming people, tumbling over shattered glass and debris, and the ghastly cries for help from the poor victims buried underneath the wreckage of houses. I was out all night backwards and forwards with tea and hot water. I was thankful I had an electric kettle, as the gas mains had been broken and no one could make tea except myself—never was it more welcome. Then came reaction, and I collapsed utterly, so Mr. Tye brought me down here. I felt terribly ill for a time, and also as the result of having got soaked with the rain that night. I had a foul cough for weeks. I have now quite recovered, but I'll never forget that night as long as I live.

Mr. Tye, Joyce and the boys still stayed on there until the second bomb came at the bottom of the garden. Luckily they were not in the shelter that night as it was flooded. Mr. Tye was under the kitchen table, George and Jack under the billiards table, and Joyce, over confident as there had been no alert the previous night, had gone to her own bed. However, the hand of God was over Joyce that night, for hers was the only room left standing—the rest all crashed in, and miraculously not one of the family was hurt.

I was lucky enough to secure an old farmhouse down here, and now, since the second bombing, all the family except Bennie and Jim are here. It has meant buying a new home again. However, our chins are up, and I think I can say without boasting, it will take more than Hitler and his murder gang to keep the Tyes down. He has bruised and battered our home but not our spirits. Mr. Tye and George travel to town daily, Joyce has started as a bus conductress on the Aldershot District Traction Co., and Jack is working for a local firm doing Government work.

My eldest boy, Bennie (aged 20) has been in the R.A.F. for six or seven months, and recently Jim has joined up, also in the R.A.F. Bennie is training as an Air Gunner and Wireless Operator and is getting on splendidly so far. We had a real thrilling letter from him some time ago and feel intensely proud of him. When he got to where he is stationed now he entered for boxing championships as there were some competitors needed. The doctor, however, forbade him to go in for them as he still had a nasty arm from vaccination. However, on the night of the competitions they called for a volunteer from the ringside, so he jumped up and volunteered. The M.O. who had previously refused him, examined him again, was very dubious, but finally consented, but insisted on having the arm well padded first. He went in and beat his first opponent, half-an-hour afterwards he beat his second, and half-an-hour later his third, coming in the finals. At the last match he beat the finalist and became Champion of the Station. We thought that pretty good as there were 3000 R.A.F.'s there. He was presented with a silver cup by the C.O. of the Station at a dance held in their drill hall, and the Sports Officer asked him to go into strict training to represent the R.A.F. a fortnight later. He hadn't done any boxing since he was Champion of North London Schools at Hornsey.

We are in an isolated part of the village here right up high on a hill, and it is wonderfully healthy and invigorating. We have simply marvellous views from our front garden, miles of fields and park, looking right away to Hindhead. It will be particularly lovely here in the Spring and Summer. All the same, my heart is still in London, and I just hated deserting her!

15 Wakefield Street, St. Pancras, London, W.C.1.

Dear Miss Haines,

You asked if anyone had any news of Old Comrades, for news certainly has been scarce because of not being able to have our usual re-union meetings. Well now, about a fortnight ago, I was due to a few days leave from the Ambulance Service, so took the opportunity to pay a visit to Newcastle, to see my mother and family. Whilst there, I saw many friends amongst them, some Old Comrades. In fact, I stayed a couple of nights with **Mrs. Avey nee Marion Harrison** of Scotton Camp, Catterick Bridge. She worked in the Post Office there, sorting the letters we all used to look forward to so eagerly. Then I learnt that I was quite near to **Miss Maunders's** home in Heaton, you know, she is Secretary of the Newcastle Branch of the O.C.A. where I used to be a member, before I left for London, some twelve years ago. It was a very pleasant surprise, when one morning, I left my friend's house to post a letter, and on turning the corner, I bumped straight into Miss Maunders and we both stood gazing at each other in surprise and amazement, for neither had expected such a pleasant shock, which ended in a very kind invitation, and an acceptance to tea with her the next day. That was a red letter day, for whilst there, I also enjoyed the company of her very kind mother and sister **Dagmar** who is also an old comrade. And it was certainly an added pleasure to be greeted by yet another Old Comrade, **Miss Maude Floyd**, who is so-joining with Miss Maunders just now. It was the great opportunity I'd been wanting, to thank them personally for their practical help to me when they had learnt that I had lost my entire home through having it demolished by Germany's "Crazy Gang." Naturally Miss Maunders and Miss Floyd were eager to hear all about London and especially hoped that our Club in Buckingham Gate was safe and untouched. On leaving, they asked me to give their sincere wishes for the safety and well-being of all Old Comrades of the London Branch when I met them again. Then I had one day at Reigate with **Mrs. Taylor (Birchie)**, who was anxious for me to stay overnight, but being anxious myself not to be late for work the next day, I was sorry not to be able to accept her kind invitation, especially as I ran straight into the blitz of incendiary bombs after leaving Reigate. She was so worried that I received word from her next day, asking and hoping I'd come to no harm the night before. Then on Sunday last, I paid a visit to Chorley Wood, to spend the day with **Miss Wayes**, whose office has been evacuated to that part of the world. My word, how peaceful and beautiful and fine it was. One could hardly believe that there really was a war on. The green trees in blossom, the daffodils, bluebells, forget-me-nots, the brown and white cottage, basking in the warm sun, and most noticeable of all, the peace and quietness and stillness, was nature's tonic for any nerve-racked soul. Miss Wayes enjoys and appreciates it all, but she tells me she does miss the company of the Old Comrades. So I told her to do her utmost to get to the Whist Drive which is shortly to take place, I'm sure in these trying times, we all need a change of some kind, and what could be better than a few hours in the cherry, understanding company of Old Comrades whose fine spirit of comradeship has lived through all the years since the Great War, and which spirit is greater than ever, now that we are in the throes of another, more vile even than the last. But it's the spirit that is going to pull us through to victory, and so long as our men and women of our Army, Navy and Air Force and Civil Defences, maintain that same spirit which carried their mothers and fathers through the last war, well, who would have to doubt that the end could be any other than a glorious victory for us.

LILIAN McKAY.

WEDDING OF WAACLET

GREY-TYE. On April 16th, 1941, at St. Andrew's Church, Farnham, Surrey, Leading Aircraftsman Donald James Grey to Jocelyn Edith Emily Tye, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Tye (Rose Knight, 2121, Pont de l'Arche).

NEWS OF OLD COMRADES

Patricia Mulligan at one time Secretary of Blackpool Branch is now a Sub-Leader in the A.T.S. and is stationed at a lonely but healthy Camp where the sea lashes up against the Camp wall. She writes very cheerfully despite somewhat difficult conditions generally. However they were delighted at being inspected by the Princess Royal, though Mulligan was greatly disappointed that Chief Controller Dame Helen was not with her.

We are glad to have better news of **Mrs. Agnes McMurray** who has been very ill for many months. She served in Scotland under the same name. Mrs. Alice Elliott who served as **2376 Forewoman Batersby**, Calais and Vendroux, writes from Leeds "I have received a letter from the husband of one of our Old Comrades informing me of the death of his wife, Mrs. H. Copeland, Notch Hill Farm, British Columbia. Mrs. Copeland was **Violet Bollow, Clerk** with the R.A.S.C., Calais and Vendroux. Members of the R.A.S.C. will remember that Vi. married Sergeant Copeland of the Canadian Regiment. They were married at the Church in the Wooden Hut at Vendroux, October 15th, 1918. Mr. Copeland writes that they buried Violet amidst the hills she loved so well. As senior N.C.O. at the R.A.S.C. Depot it is my duty to inform as many of the Old Comrades as I can but so many are moving about that I think the Gazette would be the best channel through which to impart the information."

Dr. M. Wicks of Salford is very busy as always but has found time to extend an open invitation for three of the local A.T.S. to supper fortnightly. She wishes that she could do more but has not the time. She writes that the A.T.S. are very fresh and bright and are much impressed by the fact that Dame Helen has stayed with her. Miss Wicks is ably helped in entertaining the A.T.S. by **Davey** who served at Camp I., Etaples, and been with Miss Wicks for many years.

Isabel Prue who has moved from Folkestone to Tunbridge Wells sends good wishes to Old Comrades and her thanks to those who are carrying on the work of the O.C.A. We appreciate her kind message.

Irene Smith keeps in touch with **B. Davison** (known as Goody Two Shoes) of the Buffet, Flinders Park, South Australia, who has forwarded her subscription to the Gazette for two years. Davison passes on her Gazette to an Old Comrade in New Zealand and thus our news goes on round the world.

Madeline Carter, who was a Forewoman, is now a Senior Leader in the A.T.S. She let her membership of the O.C.A. drop through illness but she now intends to re-join.

Miss V. D. A. LYON (Connaught Club and Alder-shot: D.A. Boulogne) is Parish Secretary and right-hand "man" to the very busy Vicar of St. John's, Notting Hill. She says, "I cannot think of a job I should like better." The work is absorbing and most interesting. Her address is The Vicarage, 63 Ladbroke Grove, W.11.

A delightful piece of news is of the marriage of **Coddington** so well known to many members of London Branch and a great help to Miss Warrior on the Gazette distribution Committee. She has lately been serving in the A.T.S. at Hounslow. All O.C.s will join in wishing Mrs. Kelly, (as she now is) every happiness. She is now living in Swindon.

BRANCHES

Adelaide.	Mrs. M. Scott, 16 Elizabeth Street, Evandale, Adelaide.		
Birmingham.	Miss E. I. Dipple, 17 Somerset Road, Handsworth.	Offices, Band of Hope League, Martineau Street.	Wednesday 7.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.
Blackpool.	Mrs. K. Fry, 136 Albert Road, Blackpool.		
Bournemouth.	Miss F. E. Lever, A.T.C.L., Craighurst, 7 Church Road, Parkstone, Dorset.		
Bradford.	Mrs. A. Goodman, 2 Tivoli Place, Little Horton, Bradford.		2nd Wednesday.
Brighton.	Mrs. E. C. Jolly, 107 Preston Drove, Brighton, 6.	Aqua Restaurant, Old Steine, Brighton.	2nd Monday and 4th Wednesday, 7.30 p.m.
Bristol and West of England.	Miss B. Mould, 11 The Tynning, Bath.		Not fixed.
Cheltenham.	Mrs. Mann, Cornerways, Churchdown, Gloucester.		
Exeter.	Mrs. Vicary, Castle House, Powderham, near Exeter.	16 Dix Field, Exeter.	First Thursday of the month, at 3.30 p.m.
Edinburgh and East of Scotland.	Mrs. G. D. Hardy, 51 Lockharton Ave., Edinburgh 11.	Women's United Services Club, 12 Drumsheugh Grdns., Edinburgh	1st Tuesday of each month, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Glasgow and West of Scotland.	Miss E. M. Gilchrist, M.B.E., 13 Royal Terrace West, Glasgow.	251 Renfrew Street, Glasgow.	Every Wednesday, 7.30.
Headquarters.	Mrs. Pratt Barlow, O.B.E., 82, Lancaster Gate, W.2.		
Irish Free State.	Mrs. O'Meara, M.B.E., Cove Cottage, Dunmore East, County Waterford.		Not fixed.
Leeds.	Miss E. Mair, 27 Virginia Road, Off University Road, Leeds.		5 Park Square, first Wednesday, 7.30 p.m.
Liverpool.	Mrs. E. Edwards, 49 Moss Grove, Liverpool 8.		
London.	Miss B. Haines, c/o 5 Buckingham Gate, S.W.1.	1st and 3rd Thursdays in each month at the Ex-Service Women's Club, 5 Buckingham Gate, S.W.1.	Thursday evenings, 7.30 to 10 p.m.
Ilford.	Mrs. Taylor, 15 Stanhope Gardens, Ilford, Essex.	Mrs. E. A. Thomas, 94 Whyteville Road, Forest Gate, E.7.	Alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m.
Manchester.	Mrs. G. Cardell, Lancaster House, Salford, 7.	Raglan Café, 24 Mosley St., Manchester.	2nd and 4th Thursday, 7 to 10.30 p.m.
Newcastle-on-Tyne.	Miss C. W. Maunder, 31, Norwood Avenue, Heaton, Newcastle.		Members notified individually.
	Mrs. B. Lester, Gourrock, Redewater Road, Fenham.	Interviews at British Legion, N.E. Area Offices, 10 Leazes Terrace, Newcastle.	
New South Wales.	Mrs. E. Mills, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer	Ex-Service Women's Club, 26, Victoria Street, Bondi Junction, N.S.W.	
New York.	Mrs. G. Rose. Phone Nevins 8-5250.		
Norfolk.	Mrs. L. W. Chilvers, 32 Grove Road, Norwich.		Monthly. Members notified individually.
Northern Ireland.	Sen. Leader N. Hughes, A.T.S., Palace Barracks, Holywood, Co. Down.		Third Wednesday in the month at 8 p.m.
North Staffs.	Mrs. G. H. Clough, 3 Eleanor View, Newcastle.	Nell Gwynne Restaurant, Newcastle.	Second Tuesday in month 7.30 p.m.
Notts.	Mrs. Skellington,	20 Burns Street, Nottingham. Tel. 76614.	First Wednesday in the month, 7 to 9.30 p.m.
Oxford.	Mrs. Jackman, 23 Grays Road, Headington, Oxford.		Members notified individually.
Plymouth.	Mrs. O. Foster, 2 Notte St., Plymouth.		
Cardiff and S. Wales.	Mrs. Diana Foster, 7 The Grove, Runney, Cardiff.	Y.M.C.A., Cardiff.	Second and last Tuesday at 7.30 p.m.
Shoreham-by-Sea. (in abeyance) St. Leonard's.	Miss E. Taylor, 58 West Hill, St. Leonards-on-Sea.	The Café, 5 The Street, Old Shoreham.	2nd Tuesday each month at 7.30 p.m.
Tees-side.	Mrs. Fryer, 12 Shildon Street, Darlington, Co. Durham.		Not fixed.
Transvaal.	Mrs. Widdicombe, 8 Gascoigne Street Observatory, Johannesburg, S. Africa.		

Editor Gazette—Mrs. A. E. B. Johnston, 82, Lancaster Gate, London, W.2.

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