

1978

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May		
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28	3 - 4.30 pm 6.30 - 8 pm	Concerts in Greenwich Park
29	3 pm	Concert in Alexandra Palace Park
June		
11	3 - 4.30 pm	Concert in Kensington Gardens
22 - 25		Aldershot Army Display
August/ September		
18 Aug - 9 Sep	Edinburgh Tattoo	Military

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Competition Prizewinner

There was a very large response to our Garden and Hedgerow Flowers Competition, including an entry from Canada. The first correct solution to be opened on 1st November was submitted by Sgt W Bugg BEM WRAC, who received the prize of £3.

August 1977 Prize Competition

ANSWERS

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. Stone Crop | 16. Sweet William |
| 2. Thyme | 17. Salvia |
| 3. Broom | 18. Lobelia |
| 4. Dandelion | 19. Alyssum |
| 5. Buttercup | 20. Larkspur |
| 6. Snapdragon | 21. Old Man's Beard |
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| 10. Thrift | 25. Restharrow |
| 11. Snowdrop | 26. Fleabane |
| 12. Bulrush | 27. Iris |
| 13. Hollyhock | 28. Black Medick |
| 14. Pansy | 29. Forget Me Not |
| 15. Marigold | 30. Violet |

MUSEUM

SETTLING IN THE GUILDFORD AREA? We need an Assistant Curator for our own WRAC Museum to start as soon as possible after the end of May. The post is graded as "storewoman" for pay purposes and would suit someone retiring on pension. Please write to the Editor if you are interested or know anybody who might be interested.

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EDITORIAL

The year 1977 will stand out as being unique for the celebration of two important Jubilees: first, the Silver Jubilee of Her Majesty The Queen; and second, the Diamond Jubilee of the formation of the Women's Services. Those who were privileged to attend the Service of Thanksgiving in a packed Westminster Abbey will long remember the simple but moving ceremony with the emphasis on "Service". They will also remember the magnificent Reception at St James's Palace and the spontaneous friendliness of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester. It was a time for reminiscing, renewing old friendships and making new ones.

Inevitably after such a star-studded and exciting year, this year will seem a little flat, but it is important to remember that 1978 also marks a milestone. This will occur on 27th September when it will be 40 years from the date in 1938 when the announcement of the formation of the ATS was made officially (the Royal Warrant having been signed on 9th September 1938).

The article on page 6 may bring back many memories.

We welcome Brigadier E J Nolan CB, our new Deputy Controller Commandant, as our Vice-President and assure her of our affectionate and loyal support.

Cover Photograph

Officer Cadet Elaine Marnoch who is the first woman to play as lone piper on the battlements of Edinburgh Castle. (Courtesy of Scotsman Publications Ltd.)

WRAC College

The WRAC College Harvest Festival Service was held on 6 October 1977. Guests included the Deputy Controller Commandant Colonel L M Davies CBE, the Director Brigadier A Field Hon ADC and Staff Sergeant M Rosie BEM who was posted from the College in May to take up the appointment of Steward at Chequers. Following the Service, senior citizens from the Kingsclere Home and the Evergreen Club were entertained to supper in the Sergeants' Mess whilst the RSM W01 H V White and SSgt Rosie were invited to drinks in the Officers' Mess. When glasses were charged the Commandant, Colonel E J Bowles asked Colonel Davies to present SSgt Rosie with a silver teapot from the officers of the Corps. This token of appreciation is in recognition of ten years invaluable service at the College as Mess Steward of the Officers' Mess during which time she has not only served the permanent staff officers but has also played a great part in the training of hundreds of officers, both regular and TAVR.



SSgt Rosie BEM admiring the silver tea-pot which had just been presented to her by Col L M Davies CBE.

WRAC College

VISIT OF HRH THE DUCHESS OF KENT, CONTROLLER COMMANDANT WRAC 8 DECEMBER 1977

Ten years ago, on 9 August 1967, HRH The Duchess of Kent officiated at a Commissioning Ceremony at the new WRAC College, having been appointed Controller Commandant of the Women's Royal Army Corps in February that year. On 8 December 1977 the Duchess of Kent was again Officiating Officer at a Commissioning Ceremony here at the WRAC College. Although it seems a far cry from the days when the modern barrack buildings, and feminine looking "soldiers" were greeted with headlines like "The Teddy Bear Barracks", there were links with that ceremony ten years ago. Major Annabelle Massey, now the Officer Commanding Regular Commissioning Courses, as Senior Under Officer Annabelle Cunningham had received the Sash of Honour from the Duchess of Kent at the previous Ceremony ten years previously. Now as the same sash was presented to Senior Under Officer Elizabeth Kennedy, one could see that whilst changes had occurred over a decade, the same tradition remained.

During her visit, Her Royal Highness was able to meet almost all of the Permanent Staff. On her arrival, the Royal Pioneer Corps Guard, under the command of Major J P Rawlins 14/20H the Chief Instructor, gave a royal salute. As the Duchess passed RHQ the Orderly Sergeant, Sergeant C Wolf, broke the Standard at the flagstaff head. The Duchess was driven to the Commandant's flat, where she was met by DWRAC, Brigadier A Field, who presented the Deputy Controller Commandant, Brigadier E J Nolan, the Commandant, Colonel E J Bowles, and the RSM, WO1 H V White.

During coffee in the Commandant's flat, the Commandant presented the Second in Command of the WRAC College, Major N L Heath, and the Officer Commanding Regular Commissioning Courses Major A L C Massey.

The Duchess then drove to the Assembly Hall where the commissioning Ceremony was held. A large number of Permanent Staff, under the command of Sergeant E Sharman, were able to see the Duchess as they lined the route to the Assembly Hall.

At the Commissioning Ceremony, the Duchess of Kent presented Commissions to the six successful Officer Cadets, Senior Under Officer E A Kennedy, Officer Cadet Corporal B E Richardson, Officer Cadet C J H Faulkner, Officer Cadet P J Wilkinson QARANC, Officer Cadet R A Seeckts, and Officer Cadet I J B A Andrews. The Duchess recalled the Commissioning Ceremony in 1967 when she had presented the Sash of Honour to Senior Under Officer Cunningham, and said that she would follow the careers of the six newly commissioned Officers with equal interest.



HRH The Duchess of Kent with five new WRAC Officers and one QARANC Officer after she had officiated at the Commissioning Ceremony.

After the Commissioning Ceremony, the Commandant presented the Director of Music, Captain L A E Hopkin. The Duchess then went to the Sergeants' Mess where the RSM presented all the Senior Ranks.

The Duchess moved from the Sergeants' Mess to the Officer Cadets' Mess, where she met and chatted to the families of the Officer Cadets being commissioned. The Commandant presented the Director of Army Nursing Services, Brigadier J O E Moriarty, and several of the College Officers. The Duchess then went to the Officers' Mess for lunch, where she was able to see more members of the Permanent Staff as they carried out their normal Mess Duties. After lunch the Commandant presented the remaining College Officers. The Duchess then posed for photographs with the Officer Cadets being commissioned, in the Reception Hall of the Officers' Mess. As the Duchess of Kent departed from the WRAC College, the route was lined by all members of the Permanent Staff, Officer Cadets and guests, after what had been a truly successful day.



Thank God you're not in their situation.

Like a number of young soldiers trying to keep the precarious peace in Ireland, he was killed. His wife and child were still in married quarters in Germany, his former posting.

They were flown back to England. At the airport SSAFA had organised an escort to accompany them from the airport to a London station where the train was to take them to Scotland. SSAFA had booked a sleeper, and at the end of this long journey, another SSAFA representative had arranged for their relatives to meet them at the station.

But this is not the end of this SSAFA story. SSAFA will continue to keep a friendly eye on this bereaved family for as long as it is necessary, to make sure that the widow and her child shall never feel friendless and forgotten.

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A Memory of the Coronation

Alison Schofield
(Captain Alison Senior)

January 1st, 1977. My husband and elder son were going to play Squash; Oliver 12 years old, said he wanted to stay at home "to watch the Coronation on TV". We'd been away skiing, so I hadn't read the Radio Times. "Is that the News Reel?" I asked idly, and went on "If so, I'm in it — not very good, I'm the one on the pavement side with a drip running down my nose". "No", he said patiently, (mothers are such idiots) "NOT the film, the TV programme — but then, you must have seen that too". The TV programme — I couldn't believe it. I grabbed the Radio Times, and there it was, the programme I'd waited 24 years to see. All arrangements for the day were cancelled and we sat down to watch.

"How do you know you're in it?" the children asked. How did I know? Letters from friends in various parts of the world, as far away as Canada had told me that they had seen me and yet I had never seen it myself, nor, I believe had many others of those actually in the procession.

The whole thing had been a fabulous experience — certainly the high-spot of my officer cadet career, and probably that of my whole army life. How did it all begin? Not long ago I went back to Liphook, where the Officer Cadet Wing then was, to look at the wreck of the place where it all started; the barrack square had been ploughed up and was dotted with gorse bushes, and I couldn't find the foundations of the Cadet Mess and living quarters. Only the Officers' Mess garden could be identified by its once neat shrubs which had grown into trees oddly out-of-keeping in a Hampshire heath.

One day, certainly in the winter, because it was cold I remember, we were told that Cadets between 5ft 5ins and 5ft 8ins were to parade for the CO. Everybody was very excited; nobody had actually told us, but somehow we knew that eight WRAC cadets were to be chosen to march in the Coronation.

Soon the training started. We were marched all over the Surrey/Hampshire border countryside twice a week, when everybody else was playing hockey. As the months went on and the weather got better, the marches got longer. To begin with the last girl had to carry a lamp — for traffic safety (the camp was on the main A3) — now it was light when we got back, but sometimes quite late. Feet initially soft and sore had been massaged

with meths by the MI room until they hurt no more. Sometimes we sang on the march and among our songs was one particular favourite. We would all crowd round the piano in the Cadet mess whilst I thumped out "The House of the Singing Bamboo". It was a very old song on a single sheet — I believe somebody had brought it over from Hong Kong — I've never heard it again since, but we made it our own. It bound together our disparate little group; we sang it when we returned from the Coronation, and then again for the last time the night before our commissioning parade. The words came back to me and I hummed the tune as I watched the old TV programme and saw myself 24 years younger and caught the flash of all the other white hat-bands and gorgette patches; I struggled to remember all their names, and wondered if they and all the other thousands in the procession were watching too.

Back to the training. As the days got longer so did the marching. We usually finished at the Hindhead Cross Roads and then a mile down the A3 to Huron Camp — The Huts Hotel, St Edmunds School on the right, the "Seven Thorns" on the left (then a sleazy pub, the Orderly Officer's nightmare), now a smart restaurant, Connaught Hospital, left wheel, past the Regimental Policewoman on the gate "eyes left" at the Commandant's Office, "right wheel" past the Drill Shed, Halt and Dismiss. Fifteen years later, I was back, following part of the same route every day for five years, taking six pugnacious little boys to St Edmund's. I think that the former journeys had been less exhausting.

One day we were all called together — the military tailors were to be asked to get our uniforms ready early; it had been decided that as the Coronation was to be so shortly before commissioning that we should wear our Officer uniforms, suitably adorned with Cadet Insignia so as to look our best on "the day". The command was received with something less than enthusiasm — apart from a remark by a non-involved cynic that we were presumably going to be commissioned now, barring some earth-shattering misdemeanour. Those of us concerned suspected that our precious, expensive brand-new uniforms might well look like something discarded by the Regimental jumble-sale if the weather was bad. How right we were. As we finished the procession at the bridge in Kensington Gardens, with white gorgette-patches turned into liquid non-military lines dripping down the front of soggy green baratheas our attention was distracted from our own predicament by the sight of the

WRNS, in perfect order, being dismissed, their faces chalk-white with the pipe-clay which had streamed down from their caps. I wonder how many uniforms were ruined for ever on that day? Certainly mine, despite the efforts of the tailors, still bore the imprint of knees and arms which had stretched to accommodate the slightly longer male pace, until the day I left the service.

A week before-hand, in a weird mixture of uniform we set off for our "concentration-area" in Richmond Park; we were to work in battle-dress, but wear unpackable things like hats. When we arrived we found every women's service represented there. In the evenings we were allowed to go out, and London was not far away — a fabulous privilege for cadets usually shut away in the country. London was wonderful at that time. All troops taking part in the Coronation had to wear their full-dress uniform whenever they went out, and London was full of troops from all over the Commonwealth — it was like one enormous musical-comedy set. Some regiments sported uniforms that had been specially resuscitated or even designed for the occasion. All were adorned with extra bits of braid or chain which effectively hid the wearer's rank, and, of course, nobody knew who we were either, since we normally left

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our camp in civilian clothes.

Training had now begun in earnest. All WRAC, *one from every unit, were formed into a squad and drilled, over and over.* A Guards Warrant Officer was in charge. Soap boxes were set up and we wheeled and turned through mock-ups of Admiralty Arch and Hyde Park Corner for three days. By the end of the week we had adapted to the men's pace, our appearance was quite different and we were over the top with excitement. One final parade, so hot that some of us fainted, but we hoped that at least the weather was going to be fine for the Queen, then CB, an early night, a last polish of the shoes and the great day was upon us. We had Reveille and breakfast (small rations and only half a cup of tea) to the news of the first ascent of Everest. I don't remember the time, but it must have been very early, to get into London before it closed to traffic.

My next memory is of being on the march to the front of Buckingham Palace, where we were to stand during the "crowning". The whole area was packed with troops and crowds; suddenly we saw a familiar sight - gorgette patches - but on navy-blue number one dress: it was the combined officer cadet schools of Mons, Buller and Eaton Hall and they were coming straight towards us, *full-tilt under the command of a very self-assured Senior under-Officer.* Idly, as we marched towards the seemingly inevitable collision, I wondered what was going to happen, thoughts of the Charge of the Light Brigade flitted through my mind; I knew some of them of course; we had met at dances where their heavy boots had clumped on *our less protected toes* - was this to be another, unplanned, cheek-to-cheek? One thing was sure, we couldn't stop because of the troops behind us and there was no room to pass. Then, at the last moment it happened. A command was shouted and two hundred very surprised young men performed an about-turn on the march and disappeared from view!

Then the Crowning - relayed by loudspeaker whilst we stood to attention outside the Palace. There was a Guards Regiment lining the route at this point - ventriloquists all, they kept up a running commentary the whole time - their faces quite wooden, ours straight with great effort, so hilarious were their comments.

After the crowning we were "fallen out" into St James's Park. It was pouring with rain; piles of rain-capes had been put on the kerbs, to be distributed to any troops who needed them, and the CSM and Ursula, the reserve, still there in case needed, helped us on with them so as not to

smudge our now very wet white blanco. In the park there were NAAFI tents and we were each given a couple of "wads". By now the head of the procession was starting to move off - it was a long way in front of us so we were able to get a private view of the Commonwealth contingents as they set off down Birdcage Walk - I remember the troops from Tonga in grass-type skirts and bare feet swinging along in the pouring rain with happy grins on their faces - we clapped them enthusiastically, they were such a jolly sight.

Soon we fell in again, and now, for us, the most important part of the procession - the high point of months of training. Down to Parliament Square, and even a watery sun, but not for long. Past the Abbey and we could hear the BBC commentator talking about US over the loudspeakers, and felt a thrill of importance. Then into Whitehall - the Navy were lining the route here, I remember. Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly, the Ritz - not tea on gilt chairs, but standing "easy" outside, the whole massive procession at a halt awaiting the next stage. The rain was pouring down; but it didn't seem to matter now. Then we moved off on the final stage, Park Lane, Oxford Street, Regent Street, past my father's office, where my parents and friends were looking out of the window; I raised my eyes as much as I dared and thought I saw my mother's handkerchief flutter, then straight ahead to Piccadilly Circus, Admiralty Arch, The Mall and the Victoria Memorial (that's the second shot on the TV film) Constitution Hill, Hyde Park Corner ("Up the ATS" shouted a voice in the crowd) and into the Park. Through the Park and, at last the Bridge in Kensington Gardens. It was all over. Back in our buses we had a wonderful view - I was in the front seat on the top deck - the whole of the Park was a mass of tents. A great feeling of relief - it had all passed off in good order, and without major incident.

The rest was anti-climax. The next day we returned to Liphook in the back of a 3-tonner.

The last few weeks passed very quickly; now we were rehearsing for another parade, our "POP" (passing-out). Six weeks later and we had dispersed; I only saw two of the others again - one I served with in Germany, the other I met years later, and we didn't even discuss the Coronation. Now thanks to the BBC I was able to prove to my family that I really had taken part in that magnificent parade. "Look, there she is" shouted Oliver. "Oh doesn't she look cross!!" "So would you with the rain running down your face," I retorted.

1938 AND ALL THAT

COLONEL S M CRAWLEY TD WRAC (RETD)
EDITOR LIONESS 1954-1961

It is always something of a shock to find that one's own youth has passed into history. Can that traumatic moment now be approaching for the ATS? We, who such a short time ago were the new girls, learning the ropes from the First War veterans, are rapidly becoming objects of antiquarian interest. We shall soon be historical characters like Queen Elizabeth I, impersonated in costume on TV against a carefully-researched period background. How are we going to come out of it, I wonder? No doubt the popular view will change from time to time, coloured by the fashions and prejudices of the age. Were we heroic patriots, blood-thirsty warmongers, or pioneers of Women's Lib? Were we sadistic bullies seeking power, frustrated career-women seeking opportunity, or desperate spinsters seeking husbands? What were we like, and what motives impelled us to join the Army? I can only speak, of course, for myself.

I joined the ATS in 1938 because I have an indecisive personality, and if war came, (which seemed a hideous possibility) I wanted someone to tell me what I ought to do about it. Join the Army, I thought, and I would be called up and placed under orders and that would be that. Mine but to DO — and of course if necessary DIE, but I never really expected it to come to that.

I joined as an officer because I did not think that I was good enough for the ranks. Volunteers were recruited into a limited range of jobs which included cooks, clerks and drivers. I could cook rather temperamentally for two people if I had a foolproof thermostatic gas-oven; I could drive an Austin 7 if I had a man on hand to change the wheel for me, and I could type quite neatly at about eight words per minute, using all my fingers, if I never took my eyes off the keyboard. I felt that this was not quite the standard of service for which my King and Country needed me.

I joined No 13 (GD) County of London Coy at 56 Davies Street, not out of any particular attachment to Queen Victoria's Rifles (that was to come later) but because it trained on Mondays. My civilian job involved lecturing at women's meetings, and in those days women did not meet on washday. Before reporting I attended the Officers' Training Course at the Duke of York's Headquarters — all five-and-a-half days of it.

Looking back on this course from the standpoint of greater knowledge and sophistication, it is easy to laugh at it, but for someone as totally ignorant and uncertain as myself, it opened up avenues of understanding and laid a basis of confidence for which I shall always be grateful. The next step was to order my uniform from the military tailor who had made for my father. He was delighted to take me on, but admitted that I presented certain problems. "You see, madam," he said shyly at the fifth fitting, "we are not really accustomed to hips."

So I was enrolled, trained, equipped and posted as Company Assistant to what I still think was the best ATS unit in London or anywhere else. QVR welcomed us with a friendliness that we hardly expected. Accommodation was limited, but a corner of the Drill Hall was screened off with hessian as our Company Office, and here my Company Commander and I enrolled our troops. Our establishment was 53 and we soon had a waiting-list. We recruited from the mansions of Mayfair (upstairs, downstairs) and the big department-stores of Oxford Street. We drew in clerks from West End offices and the wives of our Affiliated Unit. We were lucky in having a few older volunteers who had seen service in France in 1918, but apart from these my Company Commander and I were the only ones who had had any army instruction at all, and the weekly training-evening strained our powers to the utmost. QVR helped most gallantly — I particularly remember classes in bugle-blowing and rifle-shooting, martial skills which must have added appreciably to our value. Even so, we sometimes had to go in on a Thursday evening to catch up with the paper-work. On that night QVR did not train and the Drill Hall was hired out to the Women's League of Health and Beauty. We had to weave our way from the main door to our curtained cubicle through a forest of lightly-clad ladies, swaying their torsos and swinging their plump pink arms in time to the music. This hardly helped to steel our nerves and quicken our wits for the unfamiliar tussle with forms and indents.

We were green beyond belief in those days (speaking for myself of course) but we tried very hard and took ourselves very seriously and used our feminine talents to compensate for our lack of military expertise. We staffed the Canteen for our Unit's week-end exercises, sewed 2,000 buttons on a consignment of Riflemen's greatcoats, and appeared decoratively at the social functions

which QVR (like most of the lively and hospitable pre-war TA) organised on the slightest excuse. Fortunately we were not encouraged to wear khaki on these occasions, as the officers' uniform was not exactly glamorous and for nearly a year the rest of the Company had no uniform at all. By the time we were mobilised most of the middle-sized members were adequately clothed, but the big and little ones were still in their autumn suits and TA armbands when we moved to our war station.

But this is taking us on into 1939, to the sandbags in Grosvenor Square and the Soya stoves in Regents Park and the war which brought our salad-days to an end. In 1938 we were still part-time soldiers, fumbling our way tentatively into a man's world, never looking beyond tomorrow's lecture on Military Discipline, never imagining that we were building something that would still be flourishing forty years later as a permanent part of the Regular Army. The WRAC has its own image now, and we are so used to it that it is hard to look back and envisage ourselves in the different world of forty years ago. It might be safer to leave 1938 to the archaeologists after all, and turn the spotlight on our descendants of 1978 instead. It is easier to feel proud of them than of ourselves in our tenderfoot days — but one thing grows out of another, so perhaps it is the same thing.

Colonel L M Davies CBE

On the 4th November 1977 Colonel Lucy M Davies relinquished her appointment as Deputy Controller Commandant Women's Royal Army Corps.

She has been the Vice President of the Association, Chairman of the Trustees of the Benevolent Fund, Chairman of the Trustees of the WRAC Museum, Member of the Control Board of the Army Benevolent Fund and until 1976, Chairman of Headquarter Mess. We are delighted that Colonel Davies is to continue as Chairman of the Trustees of the Benevolent Fund.

Colonel Davies has not spared herself in all the tasks she has undertaken on behalf of the Corps and the Association. Her advice, guidance, generosity and practical and sympathetic help to all the Committees with which she has been associated has been invaluable.

All service and ex-service members of the Corps and the Association are deeply grateful to the wise counselling they have received and thank Colonel Lucy Davies most sincerely for all she has done in her 10 years as Deputy Controller Commandant.

We send all good wishes to her in her retirement, and hope she has lots of "winners" in the years to come.

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UNIT NEWS

BAOR

SILVER JUBILEE ARMY REVIEW

7 JULY 1977

By W01 (RSM) A Maskens-McIntyre

On Thursday, 7 July 1977 Her Majesty The Queen accompanied by His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, reviewed the Army at Sennelager, West Germany as part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations.

For the spectators from 29 Company, the day started at 0530 hours when they boarded a coach for Sennelager with their packed meals. It was very much a Regimental/Family day and coaches arrived from all over BAOR with soldiers in uniform, medals gleaming, wives in their best hats, children in Sunday best, many in patriotic red, white and blue and carrying Union Jacks.

The Queen arrived at 1120 hours, and with the first bang of the 21 gun salute the stair liners set off from behind the Royal Box to position themselves on the stairs, while two reserves and myself stood by the side of the box ready to fill any gap on the stairs should the heat or occasion overtake anyone. Much to my relief, but to the disappointment of the reserves, this did not happen. When the Queen was seated in the Royal Box the girls came off the stairs and were then able to watch the review. The girls working in the messes in the camp area were able to watch the parade on TV as it happened; all the others working in the background on the parade site could see it in the afternoon, when the film was shown on TV. There were 6 sets all showing the review at various stages and the films were re-run throughout the afternoon.

The Royal Party left the Parade site for lunch in the Sennelager Training Camp mess while everyone else stayed at the site. All Garrison HQ and Regiments had large marquees set up at the back of the parade area; some of them even set out the Regimental silver for the grand Jubilee lunch.

After lunch, the Royal Party returned to the site to walk about and meet a number of selected people. Sgt McMullen and Cpl Meades were both to be presented, and because of numbers involved and the time factor, the Queen and Duke split up and went in opposite directions.

Four members of 29 Company who perhaps

were luckier than most were Cpl Nugent, Ptes Hamilton, Wilde and Raymond-Barker, who were standing by the railings at the approach to the walkabout area. The Queen spoke to them on her way in and the Duke of Edinburgh spoke to them on his way out, so they were all very thrilled.

Next the Queen was to visit displays on various activities. One was a Northern Ireland scene where Sgt Cardy WRAC and Cpl Morris WRAC were to act out as a searcher and her subject, another was of an intelligence and security set up, with LCpl Fearon WRAC as a member of the team. The WRAC played a big part in the preparations for the Review and the following are to be congratulated on receiving the Jubilee Medal — Maj Mackenzie, Capt Randell, Sgts Herriman, Jones, McMullen and Meades and Pte Hulse.

29 Company WRAC

Efforts to raise money for the Diamond Jubilee of the Women's Services took the form of a Grand Draw. Altogether £1,051 was raised of which £636 was sent to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund.

The draw took place on 10 September 1977 in the Sgts Mess and was combined with a cheese and wine party followed by a disco. More than 50 serving and 40 ex-service women attended. Our picture shows Colonel D P Clark (now DDWRAC UKLF) presenting the cheques.



L to R W01 (RSM) A Maskens-McIntyre, Col D P Clark MBE, Sqn Ldr R J Tippell WRAF, Col M Hitchcock QARANC, W02 J Walton.

4 SQN 16th SIGNAL REGIMENT WRAC BENEVOLENT FUND DISCO

4 Aug 77 — 'Down in the cellar something stirred' — the music went round and round, the heat increased, the chatter grew, whilst the glasses clinked. Meanwhile back at the bar, Sgt Stanton stood arm on corner seat, glasses steamed up, surveying the scene. Yes, she and her committee had achieved a successful evening on behalf of the WRAC Benevolent Fund. At a close estimate, the draw and entrance fee had raised DMs 518 — 50 Pfs (£126.16).

It had all started as a suggestion from the 2IC. "We will raise money", she had said, quietly replacing her feet on the desk, whilst mumbling, "Carry on Sergeant". The "Jimmy Club", a tastefully furnished squadron meeting house, was certainly pulsating to the beat from the "Disco Dames", alias Ptes Beaney and Payling, our own DJs. The little pink elephants trod remorselessly along the wall as the lights flashed and whirled from the disco, in the low ceiling dance area. The bar under the protecting arm of Cpl Black, R Sigs, did a roaring trade for club funds, keeping Ptes Lofty Davey and Tiny Barrowcliff WRAC busy all evening on the glasses trail. The draw prizes which included dress material, record, tool box, cigars, bottles of vino and the like, attracted sales, helped on by the persistence of Ptes Henderson and Harding and LCpls Jones and Buckley.

At the door, keeping the surging masses at bay, Cpl Roosendaal dealt deftly with dancers, dalliers and drinkers, ably assisted by Y of S Altham and his spearhead force, who scanned the horizon for unwelcome clouds, especially when the Disco decided to drop a stitch and stop. Never fear, the resident Tech Cpl Meachin R Sigs was at the rescue, one exasperated bang on the turn table and the music went round and round. Thus the evening ended with a good time being had by all, and a goodly cheque for 'our' fund.

R G W

VISIT OF DWRAC TO SCOTLAND

Pte E Sinclair

On Tuesday 14th November, Brigadier Anne Field flew into Edinburgh for a visit to Scotland.

That night she attended the Haldane Dinner which is held annually by Edinburgh & Heriot-Watt UOTC. Next day Brigadier Field made various calls at our Headquarters Scotland. I had

the pleasure and honour of serving coffee to the Brigadier when she was meeting some officers at Craigiehall, 2Lt Joanna Perks WRAC, Lt Christina Buchanan WRAC, Major Janet Gillies, QARANC, and Major Claire Weaver DADWRAC.

Before lunch, the Brigadier had drinks in the Sgts Mess, arranged by RSM Phillips. In the Mess Brigadier Field saw and spoke to many of the Recruiting Sgts from throughout Scotland, also Regular Sgts.

After lunch in the Officers' Mess where Brigadier Field met as many WRAC Officers as possible from Scotland, she had a "chatter" with some of the girls from 242 Sig Sqn in 'A' Block. Along with the living in members here at Craigiehall, the Brigadier spoke to some of the WRAC girls who were here from other units in England, staying in Scotland while the firemen's strike was on. She was very interested with what the girls thought of the situation and all the girls were delighted to have been able to see and talk with her.

After visiting 'A' Block the Brigadier visited the switchboard, and then Comcen before meeting some WRAC Provosts serving in the Castle. Then a quick change in the Officers' Mess before catching her flight back to London.

WEST MIDLAND DISTRICT CAD KINETON

On 25 October 1977 Lt Col D J Freeland ADWRAC West Midland District, South West District and Wales paid a farewell visit to CAD Kineton and spoke to servicewomen in all the departments where they are employed. We shall miss Lt Col Freeland and wish her every happiness for the future.



L to R Pte Lucas, Lt Lobb, Lt Col Freeland, Pte Winchester.

ALDERSHOT 41 SQUADRON RCT

During the weekend 8-10 July the WRAC of 41 Sqn RCT decided to become campers and departed in a cloud of dust for the Welsh border armed with suitable visas. Crossing the border presented no problem with Sgt Gay Benton's knowledge of the Welsh language (learned in Germany) and all 10 girls arrived at Llangorse lake in mid Wales after a detailed mental exercise in translating weird place names to suit the map.

Tents pitched, perhaps not the orthodox way, and fed with the local delicacies, all took part in the activities of Pony Trekking, Boating, Swimming and vigorous PT in the mornings. Everybody shared the camp chores and, although mainly drivers, tried to prove that "Cordon-Bleu" was a subsidiary trade. All enjoyed themselves immensely and have wider ideas of scaling Ben Nevis next year.

The activities within the unit has produced a girls' shooting team for the RCT Falling Plate Competition and they compare very favourably as markswomen looking at the soldiers' results.

LCpl Carol Johnson represented the WRAC as a driver on behalf of the RCT at the Royal Albert Hall on 1 October for the Golden Jubilee of the RCT/RASC Association in the presence of HRH Princess Alice Duchess of Gloucester. Wedding bells are in the air for Pte Julie Stephens in the very near future but it is hoped she will remain with us for some time to come.

We say goodbye to Pte Wendy Pearson who has been with us for 2½ years and wish her all the best in her new unit in BAOR.

WRAC DETACHMENT, 2 ARMD DIV HQ AND SIG REGT NIJMEGEN MARCHES (19-22 JULY 1977) Sgt L Bowdrey

Each year, the town of Nijmegen in Holland holds a four day march covering a total distance of one hundred miles. It is an international event which includes military and civilian participants, entering as teams or individuals.

Over the past years 2 Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt have entered a team for the marches, but due to exercise commitments in July this year the Regiment was unable to spare the men. On hearing of this, our OC, Lt Philippa Roberts, considered it an ideal opportunity to put the WRAC

Detachment on the map — literally! A Team of eleven girls had to be found, but since the exercise period also committed most of the WRAC clerks, only seven girls were available and so HQ Sqn in Lubbecke kindly sacrificed four soldiers to make up our team.

With Lt Roberts as our team captain, the team members were Sgt Laurie Bowdrey, LCpl Debbie Mears, Ptes Bernie Fildes, Lynn Hulse, Sandy Lewis and Arlene Sewell, and from HQ Sqn Cpl Dennis Braithwaite, Sig Jimmy Axon, Sig Geordie Gordon and Dvr John Whitefield. Last, but not least, was Sgt Sheila Hatchell, who acted as our bicycle orderly. Having selected the team, strenuous training began in earnest in March, with weekend walks all over Lubbecke and neighbouring Minden.

The 17th July came all too quickly and we found ourselves travelling to Nijmegen with mixed feelings of excitement and apprehension. The marches were not due to begin until Tuesday, 19th July and so on our arrival we had a day and a half to acquaint ourselves with the town of Nijmegen.

All the male military participants were accommodated outside of the town in a tented camp. We girls were billeted in a large garage situated underneath the town's main Post Office, and shared our accommodation with eight hundred servicewomen from all parts of the globe, American, British, Danish, Dutch, Swedish and Swiss.

The evening before the first day of the march was spent watching the Opening Flag Ceremony



A very tired group having marched 95 miles at this point. Left to right LCpl Debbie Mears, Sig Jimmy Axon, Sgt Laurie Bowdrey, Pte Sandy Lewis, Sgt Sheila Hatchell, Dvr John Whitefield, Lt Philippa Roberts, Pte Bernie Fildes, Sig Geordie Gordon, Pte Arlene Sewell, Pte Lynn Hulse.

where we witnessed a colourful array of national flags and uniforms. Then back to the billets and to bed in preparation for an early start the next morning.

Day One started at 0600 hrs and on our first twenty-five miles we were eager and also awe-struck at the many thousands of marchers taking part (28,000 in all, including a civilian team from Japan). We returned to camp at about 1630 hrs and after tea, most of us went straight to bed nursing gradually forming blisters!

We had an even earlier start the next day and this time we were not quite so eager. Although blisters began to be more painful and we became aware of other creeping aches and pains, we soldiered on with Ptes Sandy Lewis and Arlene Sewell leading the singing. So far the weather had been kind to us, being cool enough to walk comfortably, but on our return approach to Nijmegen the heavens suddenly opened and it poured with rain. By the time we reached camp, we were soaked to the skin, feet squelching inside our shoes and with no hope of our clothes, especially footwear, drying out for the next morning.

The third day began at 0430 hrs (it was still dark outside!) with damp shoes and dampened spirits — our blisters had emerged with a vengeance. This day was reputedly supposed to be the worst of the four, since the "Seven Sisters" a range of hills, had to be climbed. So with feet heavily swathed in bandages and plasters we trudged off to encounter those formidable hills. To our immense relief they turned out to be mere slopes compared with the very high ridge in Lubbecke, over which we did most of our training!

The final day arrived at last — only twenty-five more miles to do and at 0345 hrs, our earliest start yet, we wondered how we would get through the day. Gradually as the day wore on and the mileage we had covered increased, we realised that we were going to make it after all and made a last effort to finish in a burst of song (by that time we had gleaned a full repertoire of marching songs from the men marching beside us). Our last resting place came upon us suddenly and it was here that we were told we had completed one hundred miles. All that was left was the final March Past behind the military bands into Nijmegen. That was our moment of glory. The streets were lined with cheering, flower-throwing crowds and the festival atmosphere helped to swell our feelings of pride and sense of achievement.



SPORT



Squash

The Army Individual Women's Championship was held at Aldershot from 21st — 23rd November 1977. The winner was Capt A S Armitage-Smith WRAC and the runner up once again was Lt A C Moules WRAC.

Tennis

The winner of the Army Women's Singles Championships of 1977 was 2Lt J R Dixon. She also won the Inter-Services Singles competition, and with Capt J F M Whitehead won the Inter-Service Doubles competition.

Inter-Service Championships

The Army Women's Lawn Tennis team won the Inter-Service (Women's) Championships at Wimbledon on 1-2 August 1977 for the first time in eleven years. They won 8 matches compared with 5 matches each won by the Navy and RAF.



Front Row: L to R Capt A Wood QARANC, Capt J Whitehead WRAC, Capt S Birch QARANC (team captain)

Back Row: L to R 2Lt S Bedford WRAC (Reserve) 2Lt J Dixon WRAC, Cpl C Rolfe WRAC, Lt A Moules WRAC

CONGRATULATIONS

We offer our congratulations to:

Major Betty Fisher MBE TD (retd) who was recently elected the first woman Mayor of Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire having been a Town Councillor for eight years and held the position of Chairman of the Council.

Miss Jean Moore, also of Wootton Bassett, who having been elected a Town Councillor and North Wiltshire District Councillor followed this up by becoming a Wiltshire County Councillor, all achieved in one year.

Miss Lois Woodhouse who won a Gold Medal and Trophy for table tennis at the Lancashire Sports Club for the Disabled, and was a member of the North West Team at the national disabled games at Stoke Mandeville.

Major Betty Hunter-Cowan who with her friend Major Phyllis Heyman, QARANC (retd) did so much for refugees during the Turkish invasion of Cyprus and in spite of severe injuries sustained from a fall has resisted MEDEVAC to UK and continues to "show the flag" in what was her beloved Kyrenia and is now off-shore Turkey.

SSgt Pat Swailes, a PT instructor serving in York who was Assistant Leader of a 4-week expedition to the Colombia Ice Fields to probe giant glaciers in North West Canada. She was the only woman in the team. During the expedition — code named "Ice Queen 77" they explored many ice caves and mountains and covered a total of 11,000 miles in Canada, collecting soil and mineral samples for scientific analysis in this country.

Mrs Nancy Wright-Turner who with Miss Betty Apsley (ex WRNS) and Miss Ruth Marsden (ex WRAF) were responsible for initiating and organising the Service of Thanksgiving commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the formation of the Women's Services of the Crown in St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast.

Pte Wheelhouse who received a prize as Best Student on Operator Intelligence and Security Course No 68 at the Intelligence Corps Depot. She is only the second member of the WRAC to gain this award and established a precedent by being the first member of the WRAC to wear the

green Intelligence Corps beret on a passing out parade.

Pte J Bradford, 71st (Yeomanry) Signals Regiment TAVR, who received the Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award in June 1977.

Pte L Eyre, WRAC Centre, who represented Great Britain in a 13 nation International Swimming & Diving Competition in Rennes, France and is the Army Women's Diving Champion.

W01 Betty Green and SSgt Peggy Rose who were awarded the MSM in 1977.

Cpl Trail who was judged the best Lady Driver in the Lorry Driver of the Year competition at South Ruislip in May 1977.

SSgt Sheila Hatchell who entered the Royal Scottish Automobile Club 32nd International Rally in June 1977. It was her first major rally and she was the only female driver to finish. In recognition of her performance she was given a special award by the Committee and by ESSO.

Pte Marion Mansfield of the WRAC TA who passed out top on the last recruit training course to be held at Burniston Barracks, Scarborough. Courses are now being held at the WRAC Centre Guildford.



Pte Mansfield receiving her prize from Brigadier Field Hon ADC DWAC.

The Day the German V2 Rocket Fell

EX-CSM E PIKE

It was during the last year of the war – January 1945. I was in the ATS and attached to a Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment which had requisitioned two empty houses in a London suburb, one for the Regimental Headquarters and the other for the ATS Headquarters and the Quartermaster's Store. The houses were in different streets but close to each other.

It happened at 12.45 pm on a Sunday morning and I can remember it as if it happened yesterday – now more than 33 years ago! As CSM I occupied the front room and two of my girls were clerks in the back room which led out to the back garden through French doors. The QM Store was upstairs. My subaltern telephoned me from a gunsite a few miles away and wanted some information which necessitated going to the files which were kept in the rear office, so I put the phone down on my desk while she waited on the other end. While I was at the filing cabinet there was suddenly a most uncanny and eerie feeling which to this day I cannot describe. The girls said – “What is it?” and I immediately thought that it could be a bomb on its way down as there was no noise. I ordered them quickly to get under their trestle tables on which were their typewriters. One girl was so petrified I had literally to push her down under the table and dive for shelter myself, while saying the most fervent prayer of my life as I thought the end had come. The next minute all was bedlam. The windows were all blown out (together with all the papers off the desks), the ceiling had come down covering everything with plaster, the door was blown completely off its hinges and was lying across the typewriter which belonged to the girl whom I had pushed down. Being mid-winter we had a coal fire burning and the coals were scattered all over the floor among the debris. When all was quiet I told the girls not to move and asked them if they were OK, to which thankfully they said “Yes”. When I had decided it was safe to emerge I told them to come into my front office.

My first duty was to report the incident

immediately to Brigade Headquarters, but when I went into my office I found it in a terrible state and the telephone was lying on my desk covered in debris. When I tried to get through, the line, of course, was out of order. I said to the girls that the blast must have blown the phone off its rest, having forgotten that I had left my subaltern holding on the other end for a reply! I was wondering what my next move should be when the girls told me that I had been injured, which I could not believe but they pointed to the front of my khaki tunic which had blood on it. I found I had a cut by the corner of my left eye and another over my left ear, but I felt no pain and it was not serious, so I just gave it first-aid treatment. Then the QM sergeant came down from upstairs with his clerk and told me that they were both OK though the Store was in a bit of a mess, and the staircase was not too safe.

The next thing was the Battery Commander and his men arriving in a utility truck with all the injured men. He himself had been slightly injured. He asked me if there were any casualties and when I said “No, Sir” he said “You are one – get in the truck, we are all going to hospital.” I explained that I would have to collect the papers from the garden and clear up, but he said his men would attend to that, and ordered me to get in the truck saying that I probably had glass splinters and dust in the cuts. When we reached hospital it was like a battlefield – there were people lying all over the corridor floors, on benches and beds. As I was only slightly injured I felt I could help the nurses who were rushed off their feet. I saw one man who had his ear roughly bandaged and blood was seeping through the dressing and he looked very groggy. I asked him if he would like me to loosen his collar and tie and he said “Yes please”, but as soon as I did he said “Do it up again quickly” which I promptly did. Apparently it was acting as a tourniquet and the blood rushed up as soon as it was loosened. I got a nurse to come and examine him as he was losing a lot of blood and she immediately took him to the operating theatre. There was a very indignant old lady lying on a bed and when I went over to speak to her she informed me that she was 102 years old and that they should not have bothered with her when there were so many others needing more urgent attention!

When our party had been attended to we went back to HQ, and to my great surprise the officer to whom I had previously been speaking on the telephone was waiting for me. She said she had

heard the explosion of the rocket and thought I had "had it" as the line went dead, so she came over post haste and was relieved to learn that there were no serious casualties to our people, though there were many injuries among civilians living in the area. The strange thing was that we did not hear the explosion, and later learnt that it was because we were too close – about 200 yards away. I did not realise how lucky we had been until I had time to see the scores of houses around us just a mass of rubble. Apparently the rocket just missed a huge block of flats and fell in soft ground by a stream running nearby. Had it hit the flats I would not be alive to tell the tale.

The next day I awoke with two lovely black eyes which looked as if I was wearing sun glasses. Although I had been in the service nearly 7 years having joined in 1938, and had experienced many serious air raids, this was the first time I had received any injury. I was one of the lucky ones.

Editor's Note

Miss Pike was the first volunteer to join 1st City of London ATS Company at White City in 1938. She is now living in Auckland, New Zealand.

A Life on the Ocean Wave

2Lt D Gell

On Monday 29 August I set off for the port of Mistley near Manningtree in Essex, complete with waterproofs and non-slip shoes. I had been invited by the crew of the sailing barge *Thallata* to look after eleven boys who would be on board for a week, and when I arrived at our port of embarkation the boat was moored to the jetty, its sails neatly furled, and quietly bobbing up and down with the motion of the waves. Suddenly the silence was shattered as eleven lads between the ages of 13 and 17 leapt up through the hatches to welcome me on board. The first to greet me was a strapping youth who moved my kit on board as though it weighed nothing at all. As I posed for photographs I wondered who was in charge of whom, for they all appeared far more at home than I did. But there was no time for debate as we set sail immediately with the skipper John

Kemp and the 1st mate Jane Benham, shouting such nautical terms as "set the main sail", "make fast the missen" and such like.

Once everything was under way we went below for the initial briefing where I learnt that I was totally responsible for the lads below deck, the cooking, cleaning and general discipline. We all had to be initiated into the miracle of the ablutions which were operated by a mystical pump system. We decided that the best way would be to operate two shift systems, one on deck and one below, cooking and cleaning. So the first below deck team started on the task of endless sandwiches and cups of tea. Meal times were dreaded by the below deck team because of the enormous amount we had to make to satisfy their gargantuan appetites. Steak and kidney pies, spaghetti bolognaise, all mixed together! Suffice it to say that the condition of the food and the incessant rolling of the ship did little for my constitution.

The boys were always full of life and I needed eyes in the back of my head. I dreaded silences because they were a prelude to something dastardly. My pet hate became the ablutions, as I was invariably locked in and would find myself drenched as the deck hose appeared through the ventilator. On one memorable day we disembarked to help a post graduate do some research on the marshes. Unfortunately the day was disastrous as far as any research was concerned as my group got cut off by the tide! There was nothing to do but relax on the beach until the tide went out again. The older boys agreed to look after the younger ones whilst I had a rest, and in my innocence I drowsed in the sun. I woke to find myself buried up to my neck in sand! Later on in the day we wrote our reports. The boys were doing it under protest and I had to carry on eleven conversations at the same time, correcting grammar and spelling, and answering general knowledge questions. I needed to have read the complete Oxford English Dictionary and the Encyclopaedia Britannica. That night as I crawled into bed, a shattered wreck, I felt a strange crawling sensation around my feet. I leapt out of bed and to my horror, I discovered two crabs.

My final humiliation was when I misguidedly agreed to have my photograph taken in one of the boys' hammocks. Once in the hammock I was trussed up with a rope and abandoned – protesting weakly that a joke was a joke and please could they untie me! I had a wonderful time really and in spite of everything, I would do it again.

TRI-SERVICE ROUND-THE-WORLD RACE

Sgt Sharon Hope (23) joined nine servicemen for the first leg of the Whitbread Round the World Yacht Race.

Sharon whose home is in Exmouth, Devon, joined the WRAC in September 1971 and is at present serving as an instructor at the Army Physical Training School, Bulford, Wilts. She was one of four women applicants for the Services' team and is the first Servicewoman to take part in a round-the-world race. Skippered by a Royal Air Force Officer Sqn Ldr Jim Watts, the first crew left Portsmouth for Cape Town in August in the Royal Navy's adventurous training yacht Adventure representing the three services. A second crew took over from Cape Town to Auckland New Zealand, a third from Auckland to Rio de Janeiro, and a fourth crew will start from Rio for the final homeward lap, finishing in the United Kingdom in April 1978.

Sharon, a keen all round sportswoman counts sailing as her favourite activity. In 1976 she took part in the Sail Training Association's Tall Ships Race to America in the Army's Yacht Kukri when she was on the Bermuda — New York, New York — Boston legs. Her job on the first leg of the round-the-world yacht race was as the "ship's doctor"; she undertook a course in first aid sufficient to deal with minor ailments during the trip.

Adventure, a 55ft cutter rigged ocean racing sloop, is one of about 15 entries competing for the Whitbread Challenge Trophy and a number of other prizes. She was the Royal Navy's entry in the 1973-74 Whitbread race, winning three of the four legs and coming second overall. Over 600 sailors soldiers and airmen applied to take part in the race, regarded by the Services as a unique opportunity for adventurous training. Intensive and strenuous selection trials whittled the number down to the final group of just over 40, from which the crews were chosen.



THE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION, 28 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8QE, relieves distress among ex-officers and dependants, with financial grants, help in finding places in Residential Homes for the elderly, Nursing Homes and Convalescent Homes and, if necessary, assistance with fees. It gives help and advice regarding retired pay and pensions and in the preparation of appeals regarding Disability or War Widows Pensions. The Resettlement and Employment Department is part of the Regular Forces Resettlement Service and helps ex-officers of all ages to find employment.

If you hear of any ex-officers or officers' widows in distress, please tell them to write to The General Secretary, The Officers' Association, 28 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8QE. (01-235 8112)

TAVR

HAIRSTYLES FIXED, HEARTS BEATING and SKIRTS FLYING...

Lt Chris Bland WRAC (V)

When 34 (N) Signal Regiment (V) paraded proudly to receive the Freedom of Darlington on Saturday 11th June this year, the WRAC contingent stole the show — as usual.

'Kiddies' were wide-eyed at 'all those ladies marching' to the splendid music provided by our own Regimental Band. 'Mums' took time off from shopping to lean on their prams outside Darlington Town Hall, no doubt musing wistfully on the possibility of donning a uniform to get a share of the appreciative wolf whistles. 'Dads'? Well, they just wolf whistled!

We WRAC are always ready to turn up in our glory for a public parade and on this particular occasion we constituted one third of the total turnout. Three Parade Personalities were Capt Mary Nicholson, Sgt Marjorie Turner and LCpl Dot Little. Capt Mary Nicholson who lives on Teesside is a member of our Middlesbrough Squadron. She is Senior Mistress of a large mixed comprehensive school in North Yorkshire. Her specialist subject is Geography which would explain her interest in all things abroad and why she has taken advantage of the many opportunities to travel with the Army, most recently to BAOR where she took part in the Communications Exercise 'Plain Sailing'. Mary has lately changed TAVR jobs — from OC of a Communications Troop to the vital role of OC Recruits for her Squadron.

Sgt Marjorie Turner is a Senior Assistant in the Contracts Office of a large fishing company in Hull. TAVR-wise she is a well qualified Data-Telegraphist and Switchboard instructor. Her Army Service dates back some years, having joined the Regular Army aged 17 and served 5 years on the South Coast as a Predictor and Height Finder with 529 (Mixed) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery during the latter years of the war. She has served 17 years in the TAVR, originally in 60th (Mixed) Signal Regiment during the period of amalgamation with 49 (WR) Signal Regiment which in turn became part of 34 (N) Signal Regiment (V) in 1967. Needless to say she is an

invaluable member of the WRAC element and holds the TAVR Efficiency Medal.

Our third personality, 20 year old LCpl Dot Little serves in our Gateshead Detachment. She joined the Regiment in March 1975 and has put those 3 years to good use to become a B2 Data Telegraphist. Outside the TAVR LCpl Little is secretary to a gynaecologist at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Gateshead.

Our photograph, taken during the inspection, shows from left to right: Col L J D Davies TD, Honorary Colonel; Lt Col G C Beadle, CO; Maj G C Mitchell TD, then 2IC; Capt M Nicholson; the Mayor of Darlington; Sgt Marjorie Turner; LCpl Little.



Tayforth UOTC

W02 Bell with members of her unit after she had been presented with the Queen's Jubilee Medal by Lt Gen Sir David Scott Barrett, GOC Scotland, when he visited Tayforth UOTC in camp at Penhale in Cornwall.



Edinburgh Military Tattoo

1977

CAPTAIN D HENDERSON

Tattoos are almost becoming part of the Scottish Universities OTC's Programme but Edinburgh is always special. The Castle, the Esplanade filled with 9,500 spectators each night, the lights and the massed pipes and drums send chills down the spine of even the most hardened "Sassenach".

Last year as many of you will have seen on TV the WRAC Officer Cadets from Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Heriot Watt, Glasgow and Strathclyde, and Tayforth danced appropriately a Jubilee Medley of a Strathspey and Reel.

Several of the dancers were veterans of the American Tattoo in 1976 but this did not detract from the excitement of Edinburgh at Festival time and in particular the opportunity to represent the

WRAC in this major international event in the year of the Queen's Silver Jubilee and the Corps' Diamond Jubilee. But it was certainly not all excitement and bright lights. Plenty of hard work too goes into making such an event a success and there were many pairs of well worn dancing shoes after the week long rehearsals prior to the 28 performances. There was also a march along Princes Street (Lass of Richmond Hill was played as we passed the saluting base) and an appearance on Pebble Mill at One.

Officer Cadet Elaine Marnoch of Aberdeen OTC (pictured on the cover) made history by being the first woman to play as lone piper on the battlements. Undaunted by the height, Elaine played brilliantly and drew praise from all the pipers and drummers of the Scottish Regiments. "Yon lass officer s'no haf a player!"

But it is when you ruin your only pair of court shoes on the Castle cobblestones, all the blouses arrive size 42 and all the skirts arrive size 24" waist, Elaine is standing in the corner tuning the pipes and there are four Royal Irish Rangers' jackets to be ironed that the dramas start. The Tattoo is a "blend" in true Scottish style of work, tension, fun and friendship.

If you accept that ...

All ex-Servicemen and women have a continuing duty

- to remember fallen comrades
- to give succour to their dependents
- to assist those afflicted with war disabilities
- to support those who have fallen on difficult times
- to advise and help those who today are returning to civil life
- and to transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy



... your place is in The Royal British Legion

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GENERAL SECRETARY
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The City of London and The Women's Royal Army Corps

By Major and Deputy Edwina Coven JP

On the 20th February 1942, a young, totally unworldly girl with a bit of a stammer and a decidedly large girth, shy and apprehensive, arrived at the gates of the Duke of Wellington's Regimental Depot in Halifax which, at the time, went under the nomenclature of No 6 ATS Training Centre. Six weeks later, after Initial Training, she began to understand a little of what it was all about and she liked what she understood.

Fourteen years on, a matured woman (happily married), several stone lighter, with easy speech, a developed sense of service and an overwhelming desire to put back into the Women's Royal Army Corps something of the immense amount she had taken out, was 'wined out' and settled into civilian life. There were the odd WRAC things to which she could contribute — Public Relations for the Service, running the advertising for "Lioness", the Benevolent Fund, this and that. But where was the big THANK YOU to come from?

Delight, delight! The opportunity arose.

The City of London is divided into 26 Electoral Wards. These Wards in turn have Wards Clubs — sometimes the Wards, though equal in stature and importance, are too small numerically to have separate clubs and two combine. So it is with the Vintry and Dowgate Wards Club. On the 28th April, 1977, as Deputy of Dowgate Ward, I had the honour of being elected to the Chair of the Vintry and Dowgate Wards Club. Not only was it the year of the Queen's Silver Jubilee and the Centenary of the Wards Club — by enormous good fortune it was also the year of the 60th Anniversary of the Inauguration of the Three Women's Services of the Crown.

I wound up a mental clock and the minutes began to tick away to Tuesday, 4th October 1977, the day I had set for the triple celebration. First, needless to say, I talked to my husband, Frank, about it. Did he think I was aiming too high to try and make it a day into which various facets of the City of London could be drawn? His opinion was that with a lot of hard work and meticulous co-ordination it could work and, he'd be there beside me to help achieve it. He was. From A to Z!

Next I sought the advice of Colonel and



Sir Robin Gillett (then Lord Mayor of London) with Major and Deputy Edwina Coven JP, Chairman of the Vintry and Dowgate Wards Club. In the background is the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Terence Lewin.

Alderman Ronald Gardner-Thorpe TD. He commanded the 5th Battalion (TA) The Buffs and stands 6ft 3ins in his socks. To him, the WRAC owes a great debt; but for his support our Parade might never have taken place.

The then Lord Mayor of London, Alderman Sir Robin Gillett Bt GBE DSc RNR, was extremely keen on the idea — he suggested including a Church Service — and agreed to inspect a Detachment and take the salute of the WRAC at a March Past; the Chief Commoner of the City of London gave his permission (and only he is empowered to do this) for the WRAC to occupy Guildhall Yard and for the Band to play there; the City Police undertook to stop the traffic in the centre of the City during lunch hour (no mean compliment); the Rural Dean The Reverend Basil Watson RN, allowed the Corporation Church to be used — and the WRAC were on their way to being the first Woman's Service in the 1000 year-plus history of the City of London to be inspected at Guildhall by a Lord Mayor and then, led by their own all-woman band, to march in the City.

The Director, Brigadier Eileen Nolan CB, gave much concrete assistance as well as her blessing (as did her successor, Brigadier Anne Field during the following months); ADWRAC London District, Lieutenant Colonel Jill Tait secured the troops from 12th Battalion WRAC and 39 Signals (TA) City of London and took over most of the general

co-ordination of those taking part, and the Director Staff Band, Captain Lynn Hopkins got cracking working on the most marvellous and diverse music ever to be played by the WRAC on one day. Hers was the responsibility for an Anthem in Church signalling the arrival of the Lord Mayor, marching tunes, and music suitable for a luncheon graced by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, various other Mayors and Peers of the Realm, Ambassadors from several countries, the Heads of the 3 Women's Services, City dignitaries and about 150 other guests at Skinners' Hall. In all 204 people sat down to luncheon, more than ever before in the Hall's records going back many centuries.

Rear Admiral Ellis the Lord Mayor's Private Secretary, Lieutenant Colonel Milo the Sword Bearer, Lieutenant Colonel Brooke Johnson the Mace Bearer, Colonel Thacker the City Marshal, and Major Dobson and Miss Reid of the Remembrancer of the City of London's Office, together with Mr Marshall and Mr Lucioni, all worked steadfastly with me to ensure the WRAC was to succeed in its recognition by the City.

How the members of the detachment and the band must have striven! There was only one rehearsal in situ – and that took place at about 8.45 pm in Guildhall Yard under floodlights, and the glaring eyes of CSM Felkin, Welsh Guards, London District. His pace-stick flashed, his voice roared – the Guildhall shook to its very foundations. But there was also pride and kindness displayed by Mr Felkin and his 'polishing' of the Parade will long be remembered with awe and pleasure.

October 4th dawned. Of course it was pouring with rain! We dripped into Church. The Anthem went well. The Reverend Basil Watson, his generosity of spirit bursting through, made our Celebratory Service meaningful; the City of London Boys' School and the City of London Girls' School choirs sang beautifully. We went out into Guildhall Yard to brilliant sunshine. The WRAC were lined up ready. The Lord Mayor inspected. Then, to the strains of "Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill" as fine a Parade that has ever had the honour of marching in the City of London, swung out of Guildhall and on through the historic City.

Thank you, all of you, who made this day possible. Forgive me if I have failed to mention by name anyone who assisted in making the occasion so memorable for so many people. Above all, perhaps, thank you Women's Royal Army Corps,

for making me and thousands of other women constantly aware of the rewards to be gained through service to one's beloved country.



The Staff Band and a detachment of WRAC drawn up in Guildhall Yard ready for inspection by Sir Robin Gillett (then Lord Mayor of London) who can be seen talking to the Director of Music and the Drum Major.

Found

A small diamond was found at St James's Palace after the Reception on 27th October. A lady did enquire for a missing diamond but she did not leave her name. Please write to the Editor if it is your diamond or you know who has lost it.

Planning a Holiday for 1978?

Take a look at the new advertisement inside the back cover. This might be just what you are looking for; the happy, casual and totally relaxed atmosphere of the taverna with the comfort, quality and efficiency of the best hotel. It seems that here you get the best of both worlds.

BOOK REVIEW

SERVICE WOMEN

WRNS, WRAC & WRAF

by Vivienne Reynolds, Elizabeth Saxon and Helen Renton

Educational Explorers, Reading £2.95

Published in Jubilee Year as a tribute to the three Women's Services in the career series "My Life and My Work" this book is primarily for the school or college leaver still uncertain about a profession or a job. Nevertheless it is extremely entertaining and informative for readers of all ages, and should be recommended to parents and teachers, and anyone else involved with careers for the young.

We are presented with service life through the autobiographies of three officers, the WRNS officer beginning from birth, the WRAF officer from the end of her schooldays, and our own WRAC officer launching us into the horror of drilling (and losing!) a squad in a cold drizzle on a misty barrack square. Writing modestly about their various achievements and humorously about the less glamorous side of life, they give us a graphic picture of their careers, mixing with frankness the exciting and the mundane. Surely only the most timid and stay-at-home of the young would not be tempted at least to find out more about a service career. Many an older reader whose service life is over or who was always a civilian will be green with envy!

It is a beautifully produced little book, well bound and excellently printed on good quality paper with eight well chosen pages of photographs.

33 Sig Regt (V) — Liverpool

The Val De Marne International March 1977

W02 Gouldson APTC

With a fortnight's leave from my civilian employment coming up in September it seemed a good idea to have a weekend in Paris with HQ

Squadron's team entered for the Val De Marne International March. Out of an original list of 15 the team was finally reduced to seven. Myself and Sgt Keith Reynolds giving moral support to five WRAC soldiers!

The journey was uneventful but enjoyable. The 0705 train to London, a coach to Ramsgate, the HOVER LLOYD to Calais and then we picked up the 2030 coach to Paris. There we were met by an open French Army Truck which allowed the French car casanovas early greetings from our Huyton ladies ("Allo der Wack") for some 20 kilometres to our barracks.

Settling into our accommodation it was a welcome sight to see Cpls Frank Rowlands, Barry Shone and LCpl Patrick Black of 80 Squadron's Team who were also "Showing the Flag for the Thirty Third". Well done chaps.

With more than six hundred competitors, from the very young to the more seasoned veterans, a very happy family gathering assembled at Chateau de Villiers ready for the trek. The girls having "borrowed" a broom handle for our Regimental flag, we awaited the weighing of our packs at "checkout" before finally at 1000 hours we stepped off to the strains of "In My Liverpool Home".

With blisters beginning to form, we were grateful after 12 km for our first stop, where we ate a packed meal of a tin of sardines, some French corned beef (ugh!) a tin of raisin juice and the traditional French loaf.

Back to marching, and we descended from the hills to cobbled streets along the river banks to be engulfed in a thunderstorm. Pressing on we eventually crossed the River Marne at 20 km. From the 28 km mark to the final "run in" was very similar to Windsor Great Park; a long straight road in parklands lined with trees. Crowds lined the route all the way to the finishing line, and with the French Foreign Legion and the Americans having large contingents their songs echoed far away across the parkland.

Not to be outdone, the "Thirty Third" filled the air with "Roll me over in the clover", "Heart of my Heart" and "The bells are ringing for me and my girl". The crowds rose to the gameness of the girls and the clapping and cheering to the finishing line was a marvellous welcome. Within 20 minutes the march past took place at Chateau de Vincennes, an imposing castle and courtyard. Both Sgt Reynolds and myself were quick to remove the concrete slabs from our packs! A shower followed by a visit to the international bar provided the necessary refreshment.

On Monday morning we started our journey homeward, and finally arrived at Lime Street Station, Liverpool at 0235 hours on Tuesday.

I would like to pay tribute to the guts and determination of the WRAC team, and I applaud the pluck of 80 Sqn's team, particularly Cpl Rowlands who completed the 45 km march even though he required hospital treatment afterwards! Finally, my thanks to Sgt Laura Nuttall for her hard work in making all the administrative arrangements, and for transporting us to Lime Street Station at 0630 hours to set the "Adventure" on its way.

BLESMA

BLESMA's claim that "not a penny of it will be wasted" of the donations which they urgently seek is a fair one.

The Association was founded by limbless ex-servicemen and is managed by limbless ex-servicemen. It is governed by an Executive Council of

limbless ex-servicemen and the work, in the main, is done voluntarily by members who are themselves limbless. Their small administration comprises only three full-time officers who are all limbless ex-servicemen.

Their principal object is to promote the welfare of all men and women who have lost a limb or an eye as a result of service in the Forces and to help needy dependants of such men and women.

Colin Latham was one of these. He lost both his legs while driving a tank in Germany in 1953, when he was only 19. Yet in spite of the terrible handicap, he has achieved much more than many able-bodied men. He is a champion swimmer (two gold medals and one silver achieved last September), an international sportsman, traveller, keen gardener and dancer. He has a full-time job in an engineers' department of a radar equipment manufacturer where he has been working from 1959, yet he still finds time to visit other limbless people in hospital to show that physical handicap need not be a barrier to a reasonably normal life. His car, like so many other benefits was fought for and won by BLESMA. In spite of his guts and perseverance and the tremendous support of his wife, he admits "If it hadn't been for BLESMA, I wouldn't be where I am today".

WE, THE LIMBLESS, LOOK TO YOU FOR HELP

We come from both world wars. We come from Kenya, Malaya, Aden, Cyprus... and from Ulster. From keeping the peace no less than from war we limbless look to you for help.

And you **can** help, by helping our Association. BLESMA (the British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association) looks after the limbless from all the Services. It helps, with advice and encouragement, to overcome the shock of losing arms, or legs or an eye. It sees that red-tape does not stand in the way of the right entitlement to pension. And, for the severely handicapped and the elderly, it provides Residential Homes where they can live in peace and dignity.

Help BLESMA, please. We need money desperately. And, we promise you, not a penny of it will be wasted.



Donations and information: Major The Earl of Ancaster, KCVO TD., Midland Bank Limited: 60 West Smithfield, London EC1A 9DX.

British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association
'GIVE TO THOSE WHO GAVE-PLEASE'

ASSOCIATION NEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1978

The AGM is to be held on Saturday 15th April 1978 at the WRAC Centre, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford at 2.45 pm. In order to gain admittance to Queen Elizabeth Park, members will be required to show a copy of Lioness No 1 of 1978 to the police at the gate. So please bring this copy of the Lioness with you.

The AGM will be immediately followed by a concert given by the WRAC Staff Band and then by tea at approximately 4.45 pm.

Those members wishing to have tea must purchase tea tickets in advance, price 30p from the General Secretary. In order to save on labour and postage, members are requested to obtain tea tickets through Branch Secretaries wherever possible.

Queen Elizabeth Park is situated off Grange Road at Stoughton, Guildford. The No 98 bus from the Farnham Road bus station which is about 400 yards from the main railway station, stops at the turning to the WRAC Centre. The bus leaves Guildford at 5, 20, 35 and 50 minutes past the hour and the bus stop for the WRAC Centre is known as "Grange Road, WRAC Camp".

SECRETARIES' MEETING AND LUNCH

The Secretaries' meeting will be held at 2 pm at the WRAC Centre on 15th April 1978. Members of Council look forward to meeting Branch Secretaries for lunch as their guests. Please meet between 12.30 pm and 12.45 pm for lunch at 1 pm. It will not be possible to provide lunch in the WRAC Centre for other members of the Association.

AGM 1978 AGENDA

1. To confirm the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 2nd April 1977
2. Business arising from the Minutes
3. To receive the Report of Council
4. To receive the Report of the Honorary Treasurer
5. To receive the Report of the Editor of Lioness
6. To receive the Reports of Committees

7. Resolutions:

a. Branch Resolution — Scotland

That Rule 10f be amended to read: "A sum of up to £8 to cover postage may be issued annually to each Area or Sub Area, by the Treasurer of the Association"

b. Council Resolution:

That the last sentence of Rule 11m Headquarter Branch be amended to read: "£8 to cover postage may be issued annually by the Treasurer"

c. Election of Council Vice Presidents.

8. Any Other Business

9. Date of next meeting

REUNIONS

ATS DINNER CLUB

The Annual Luncheon of the ATS Dinner Club was held at the Bloomsbury Centre Hotel on Saturday 8th October, 1977. The Chairman, Mrs A J Stevenson, presided.

After the toasts of "The Club", proposed by the President, Dame Leslie Whateley, and "Absent Friends" by the Vice President, Brigadier Dame Mary Tyrwhitt, had been drunk, the Chairman made a brief speech. She welcomed, as official guests, the Director WRAC Brigadier A Field and the Chairman of Council of the WRAC Association, Lieutenant Colonel G E M Saunders-Davies. Mrs Stevenson also told members that a telegram of loyal greeting had been sent to Her Majesty The Queen, on behalf of all present, to mark the occasion of Her Majesty's Silver Jubilee, and read a reply which had been received from Buckingham Palace.

Following a suggestion from a member, a collection was made and £46.00 was contributed. This was divided equally between the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund and the WRAC Benevolent Fund.

Membership of the Club is open to anyone who served in the ATS and particulars can be obtained from the secretary, Mrs M Storer, Bel Air, Llangrove, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 6EY.

Please note that the next luncheon will be held on Saturday 14th October, 1978, to avoid clashing with the Northern Area Re-union. In future it is hoped that the function will take place on the first Saturday of each October.

NORTHERN AREA REUNION 1977

The Northern Area Reunion was held in the Crescent Room of the Royal Baths Assembly Rooms, Harrogate, on Saturday 24th September.

Lt Col C G Parsons, Chairman of Northern Area, opened by welcoming everyone present, including some new members and those currently serving in the WRAC whom we were very pleased to see. The Director had hoped to join us but was unable to do so due to a visit abroad and Lt Col Parsons read out a telegram which she had sent expressing "All good wishes for a happy and successful Reunion". Since the Director was not present to tell us herself, the Chairman gave an account of happenings in the Corps today.

The Chairman then introduced the guest speaker, Miss Edith Simpson, who gave a fascinating and often hilarious talk on "Mrs Beeton", involving her cookery, household management, life and times. It was evident that this surprisingly youthful lady (most of us had always imagined her to be a greying and formidable matron) was well in advance of the society of her time.

Miss G Winterburn of Harrogate thanked

Miss Simpson for her most interesting talk and also the Chairman for her "news summary".

JUBILEE REUNION IN NORWICH

The 40th Norwich Company ATS was formed before the outbreak of the last war with The Hon Mrs Barclay MBE as the first Company Commander. Thanks to the enterprise and hard work of Mrs Iris Ricketts, and the assistance of the Eastern Evening News, thirty-two of the original members of the Company gathered for a reunion luncheon on 9th July last year. For most of them it was the first meeting in more than thirty years, and it was timed to coincide with the Queen's visit to Norwich. After the Loyal Toast Mrs Ricketts told the assembled company that a letter of loyal greetings had been sent to Her Majesty The Queen on their behalf and she read a reply which had been received from Buckingham Palace.

To everyone's great pleasure, The Hon Mrs Barclay (now in her late 80's) was present with one of her daughters, Mrs Cassel, whose two sisters were also members of the Company.

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NORTHERN AREA REUNION 1978

The Northern Area Reunion will be held in the Crescent Room, Royal Baths Assembly Rooms, Harrogate, on Saturday 7th October 1978 from 2.30 to 6 pm.

Tickets £1, including tea, may be obtained from Miss M Bradley, 60 West End Avenue, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 9BY (telephone 57023 evenings). Please send stamped addressed envelope with remittance payable to "WRAC Association — Northern Area Committee" not later than Thursday 28th September.

QMAAC TEA PARTY

The QMAAC Tea Party will be held at The Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF on Thursday 30th March 1978 from 3 pm to 5.30 pm.

Please apply to General Secretary WRAC Association before 17th March enclosing 80p for ticket.

BRANCH NEWS

BATH. Our Branch continues to be very active with meetings arranged at members' homes on the first and third Mondays of every month. Our jumble sales which were held in March and October, were most successful. The proceeds of the first of these was used to finance a Silver Jubilee Luncheon held on 29th May, with 70 members and guests completing the superb menu with a special Jubilee Cake and toasting Her Majesty The Queen in champagne. The proceeds of this lunch were sent to The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund. A party of members had a most entertaining, if wet, day at Larkhill on 12th June, and a coach load of members and friends visited Guildford on Open Day. Our grateful thanks to all the people who made both days so enjoyable.

Coach trips with husbands and friends to Powderham Castle in July, and Blenheim Palace in September, completed our summer activities. Autumn found us busy with preparations and the management of our very successful stall at the Bath Halloween Fair at the Octagon. The proceeds of our October Jumble Sale and Halloween Fair Stall enabled us to make various donations when we met for our Christmas Dinner on 12th December.

BRADFORD. We continue to thrive and our monthly meetings are well supported and our financial situation is sound. We have had faith suppers, bring and buy sales, a bargain party and a cheese and wine party. We all enjoyed an evening's visit to Littlewood's store and a dinner dance which was arranged by the Dunkirk Veterans Association. Three of our members paraded with the standard in La Panne, Belgium on the Dunkirk Veterans Annual Pilgrimage. (The standard aroused some curiosity as no one could identify it.) A Christmas Dinner at a City Centre restaurant completed our 1977 programme.

GUERNSEY. The Branch, small in number, continues to flourish and meets regularly. We would welcome visitors to Guernsey. Anyone can write or telephone to Mrs E F C Wadge, Beckington, Doyle Road, St Peter Port, Guernsey, CI, Tel: Guernsey 24336. She would personally be delighted to have news of anyone who served with her in the pre-war Company attached to the Artists Rifles or subsequently at Blackdown, Huddersfield or Scotland.

MANCHESTER. Manchester Branch continues to flourish with a membership of 50. Many members are unable to attend meetings but we try to keep in touch with everyone.

In April we held our Annual Dinner. 28 members attended and a very pleasant evening was enjoyed by all.

In May Mrs E Davison who has been a member almost since the Association was formed, retired and has now left the area. She wishes to remain a member of the Branch. We had a party to say our farewells and wish her well, and we hope to see her from time to time. In fact she made a very welcome return to our mini reunion in October.

In July 12 members went on parade when we attended the Jubilee Service in Manchester Cathedral. The Service was attended by the Mayor and Mayoress of Manchester who afterwards entertained ex-service personnel to tea in the Town Hall. Mrs Souter and Mrs Inglis both ex QMAAC went on parade and we felt very proud indeed of them.

In October the Western Area Secretaries' meeting and mini reunion was attended by 30 members and everyone enjoyed the afternoon. The raffle realized £8.00 which is being sent to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund.

STAFFORD. The Branch continues to flourish with an average of 20 members attending the monthly meetings out of our total of 33 members.

We were very saddened by the sudden illness and death of our President Miss Iris Shelley in November who will be greatly missed.

We were sorry to lose one of our oldest members Miss M Dean now moved to Shaftesbury but hoping our loss is Salisbury Branch's gain.

Our instructive and interesting talks have included "Hats – a wonderful collection made out of next to nothing", and "Dr Barnardos". Our raffle proceeds that evening were given to the cause, and Mrs Dickson (ex Mayor of Stafford) gave us a very enjoyable talk on her life with many amusing episodes during her ATS service. Our summer trips were interesting and enjoyable – a hike round the lanes and back to Mrs Lloyd's home for a barbecue, Mrs Dickson's house for a "Drink and a Snack" – a trip to Willowbridge Garden Trust and a boat trip to Tixall Wides.

Our successful jumble sale, raffles and Bring and Buy sales have enabled us to make our usual Christmas Donations including £10.00 to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund and £5.00 to Stafford Hospital Radio.

ULSTER. Since the AGM on 4th December 1976, the Branch has been reasonably active. As agreed at the AGM books were purchased for the serving members, and delivered to Army HQ on the 14th December by the Branch Chairman and Secretary. They appeared to be much appreciated, although not as spectacular as bags of gaily wrapped Christmas parcels.

A very successful luncheon was held on 12th February at The Wildfowlers Restaurant in Greyabbey; 37 members attended. We were delighted to have with us Major S Nield, then DADWRAC, who spoke briefly on the role of the WRAC in Northern Ireland. Many old and new members of the Branch had a very pleasant reunion in the peace and quiet of the small historical County Down village. It was a particular joy to have with us a member visiting us from England, Edith Thorpe (nee Killen).

Members of the Branch were present in the Sinclair Seaman's Church on Sunday 8th May, to participate in a service of dedication of new colours for the Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association. It was a heartening experience to hear and see, in Belfast, a band at the head of a marching column of ex-service personnel, some of whom were members of this Branch. Mrs May

Johnston has been appointed to the Corps of Commissionaires, the first woman to be so appointed. It is an honour for Northern Ireland and for this Branch. We are very proud of May, and wish her success. She replied to an advertisement and, we believe, caused some consternation, as a reply from a woman had not been anticipated. The question of a suitable uniform presented a problem, but this has been resolved by May herself, who looks very smart in navy blue when on duty.

The Jubilee visit of the Queen to Northern Ireland was the highlight of the year, particularly for those Branch members who were fortunate enough to be invited to one of the garden parties. Mrs Nancy Dalzell was very much involved with the visit, in a working capacity at Coleraine, where she was responsible for catering for a large group of people attending. Mrs Kitty Stephens, whose husband Major Stephens is Comptroller of the Castle, entertained the Royal visitors at Hillsborough Castle, and was responsible not only for the accommodation of the Royal party, but also for the catering at the Castle.

With Christmas looming and Branch funds low, a *Wine and Cheese party*, originally planned for the Spring, was held on 21st September. With the very able assistance of Mrs Kitty Stephens the party took place at Hillsborough. 103 members and guests were present and had a wonderful evening in the beautiful and stately rooms of the Castle, where they were able to enjoy the delightful and gracious surroundings. It was a thrill to walk through the room where Her Majesty had so recently held an investiture, and see the actual chairs on the dais which had been used at the ceremony. The evening was a financial and social success. It is hoped a repeat performance will be possible in the Spring. Several serving members of the WRAC were on duty at the entrance to the Castle. The "old girls" looked at them with nostalgia – were we really like that so many years ago, as young and as eager to serve? It is thoughts like these that keep Branches in existence, and makes it such a pleasure for Ulster Branch to raise funds for the annual "Christmas Present" spree.

Bearing in mind the old days, the Branch has subscribed to a *Poppy Cross*, which will be placed in the Garden of Remembrance each year by a member of the Branch.

On the 28th October, many members of the Branch joined in a Service of Thanksgiving at Belfast Cathedral to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the formation of the women's services.

It has been a fairly active, and certainly an exciting year for the Ulster Branch. Our only regret is that, as we grow older, younger members are not coming forward to swell our ranks. Perhaps we should consider making 1978 a year when we try to attract new blood into the Branch.

WOLVERHAMPTON. Because of rising costs, we have had to give up our rooms at the library and now hold meetings in members' homes. Our membership is 22.

JULY ... To celebrate the Silver Jubilee, a 1st World War Veterans' gathering was organised by the Wolverhampton & District Ex-Service Council, and members were very pleased when asked to help. Even though the day was wet, there was a good turn out by the Veterans who obviously enjoyed themselves.

OCTOBER ... Although the visit was short the Secretary had a happy time with old friends at the Manchester reunion.

NOVEMBER 13th ... A day we had all been waiting for, when a Festival of Remembrance was held in our Civic Hall. Leading the Parade and alongside a Chelsea Pensioner, to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the formation of the Women's Services, was Mrs Sansum wearing the uniform of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, a uniform she first donned 60 years ago. Mrs Sansum recalls as though it were yesterday, seeing a tram trundling along the main road bearing the slogan "Join the Women's Army". "I'm going to do that tomorrow" she told her companion, and join she did, giving up her job as a daily domestic help to work in the kitchens of the Officers' Mess at Salisbury. The cook turned out to be a woman from Wolverhampton! Mrs Sansum, whose name then was Florence Bowkett, would like to hear from or about Trixie Williams from Stratford on Avon, Madge Hulse from Newcastle on Tyne, May Cook, Wales and Dolly Stovell. Florrie, who later married a soldier, has a daughter, two granddaughters and one great grandson. "I'm proud as punch" said Florrie, when asked to take part in the Parade "and it feels great to be in uniform again." There was a standing ovation and I'm sure many an eye was dimmed by tears. All the officers saluted her and ORs stood to attention or shook her hand. Everybody showed the admiration and pride we all have for the WAAC and QMAAC. The Branch Standard was carried in the Parade by our Chairman, Miss Mary Davies.



Mrs Sansum trying on the WAAC uniform with the help of Mrs Beeston, (courtesy of Wolverhampton Chronicle), and wearing her uniform 60 years ago.



LONDON GAZETTE

NEW YEAR HONOURS

MBE

Maj J E Blakeley

BEM

Sgt A Parry, Sgt V C B Stone, Cpl B I Ludlow

APPOINTMENT

Brigadier E J Nolan CB appointed Deputy Controller Commandant 4 November 1977 in succession to Col L M Davies CBE, tenure expired

PROMOTIONS

Regular Army

Lieutenant Colonels: A M M Clissitt, H G Meechie, N R Robertson MBE

Major: S L Williams BEM

Captains: C E Farr, S E Forbes, M J Osborn, A M Parfitt, A C Spencer, A Trehern

Lieutenants: S M Bishop, L C Gurney, A J Lobb, G A Thomson, A L Tritton, E M Walters

2/Lieutenants: C J Lewington, H M Prior, C Shaw

2/Lieutenant on probation: U H B Osmond

Special Regular Commissions

Captains: P K Jarman, P A Laing-Morton, V E Trout

Lieutenants: C M Buchanan, L B Haworth, C C Kennedy, G A Short

Short Service Commissions

Captains: A W C Fazan, K M Howie, S C Jones, C M Kimber, P A Prince, P M Sharrock, D V Stephens, G V Warren

Lieutenants: S L Bates, C A Blake, S C Broom, B Crichtlow, A S Crampton, L J Esslemont, H D Gray, D Hay, N M Hopwood, E Lovelace, J S McLaren, C J Moore, J Perks,

L A Phillips-Lewis, J L Ransom, A R Roadnight, C G Snedden, A K Stasiuk, U J Tudor, A White

2/Lieutenants: P A Ash-Edwards, S L Blenkinsop, K N Carter, J R Dixon, J J Langdon-Mudge, C Nicholls, C R Paxton, M A Wilson

2/Lieutenants on probation: S E Curzon, J Dowson, K G Findlay, V J Freeman-Tozer, J M McKinnon, A M Moyes, A Pritchard, J M Rayne, N S Rixson, E K Russell, A K Sabbat, J M Sugden, L A Wade, P M Watkins, D M Willcox

RETIREMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

Regular Army

Majors: B Blueman, A C Hole

Captains: J Fulton, S M Somerville

Lieutenants: S M Brown, A C Moules

Short Service Commissions

Captains: S D Campbell, S A White

Lieutenants: H J Clews, P J Merrett, N J Pratt, S Puckle Hobbs

2/Lieutenant: C E A Auger

2/Lieutenant on probation: S E Knox

APOLOGY

The Editor offers sincere apologies to Lt Woolford whose name was wrongly included among "retirements and resignations" in the last *Lioness*.

Our History

Copies of the WRAC History in the "Famous Regiments" series of books are still available from Corps HQ WRAC for £5.95 incl. p & p compared with the publishers' price of £8.50. Just send us £5.95 and the book is yours. Cheques payable to Corps HQ WRAC.

Did you Serve with the BEF?

Mrs G Phillips (nee Ena Graham) would like to get in touch with any of the ATS who served with her in France in 1940. Twenty-two girls were stationed in Dieppe from where they were evacuated and she remembers that they were among the last ATS to leave France. The names she recalls are Bell, D. Blanchet, V. Hildreth, Peg Leeson, Pat Orme, Nora Stafford and M Wilson. If you were there will you write to Mrs Phillips, 25 Palmersville, Forest Hall, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE12.

PERSONAL COLUMN

WANTED No 1 Dress Height 5' 3", size 14. Captain L E Finch, London District Pro Coy RMP, 76D Rochester Row, London SW1P 1JU.

FOR SALE Officer's Mess Dress excellent condition £15, No 2 Dress hardly worn £10, Regimental Dress never worn £8. All approx. size 16. Box 1/78.

FOR SALE Officer's Mess Dress hardly worn £50, No 2 Dress (tailor made Bernard Weatherill) £20, size 18. Miss E J Ensor, 32 New Site, Meadowlands Caravan Park, Weybridge, Surrey KT15 2RG.

FOR SALE Two No 2 Dresses, both hardly worn, size 12 (35-24-35), Height 5' 1½". Miss C E Auger, White Lodge, Talbot Road, Cheltenham, Glos. Tel: Cheltenham 54550.

FOR SALE Officer's Hat and badge £12. No 2 Dress unworn £75. No 2 Dress worn six times £50. Miss S Knox, 205 Hillmorton Road, Rugby, Warwickshire.

FOR SALE Officer's No 2 Dress size 12. Hat and badge (6. 7/8). Beret and badge. Officer's summer blouse. All brand new. 2Lt S I Murton WRAC (TAVR), 118 Melciss Road, Wickersley, Rotherham S66 0BY, South Yorkshire. Tel: 9 am - 5 pm Monday - Friday Worksoop (Notts) 2831, Ext 238. After 5 pm tel: 0709848645.

FOR SALE. Greatcoat £125. Mess Dress £60. No. 2 Dress £90. All brand new. Summer blouses £6 for 2, No 2 Dress £40. Hat & badge (6½) £10. Beret £6. Gloves (7) £2. All hardly worn. Measurements 36-26-38, height 5' 7½". 2Lt J M Robertshaw, 12 Company WRAC, Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, London NW7. Tel 01-346 2611 Ext 352 or 01-346 2433. After 15 April 1978 please write to Mrs J M Robertshaw, c/o Braeside, London Road, Cosham, Portsmouth, Hants. Tel Cosham (07018) 77441.

Ashton. Mrs M L Ashton of Brighton on 2 October 77. QMAAC

Ballantyne. Mrs C Ballantyne of Bath on 2 September 1977. ATS and Major WRAC.

Bradley. Miss C Bradley of Shoreham-on-Sea in December 1977. Sgt WRAC.

Crane. Miss M A Crane of Chalford, Glos. on 2 July 1977. ATS

Cunningham. Mrs M Cunningham (nee Priestley) of Bradford on 13 October 1977. WRAC

Dunn. Mrs L Dunn of York on 9 November 1977. ATS and WRAC(TA)

George. Mrs E George of Selly Oak, Birmingham in July 1977. QMAAC.

Giruk. Mrs M Giruk of Wolverhampton on 21 November 1977. ATS

Lyon. Miss V D A Lyon OBE of Wimbledon on 28 June 1977. QMAAC

Mackenzie. Mrs M Mackenzie of London on 16 November 1977. QMAAC.

MacKillop. Miss F M MacKillop of Palmerston North, New Zealand on 2 November 1977. ATS

McClure. Miss M McClure of Keightley on 20 July 1977.

McIntosh. Mrs H McIntosh of Swindon. WRAC 1956-1968.

McKimm. Miss J McKimm of Omagh, Co. Tyrone.

O'Brien. Miss B I K O'Brien in January 1977. Senior Commander ATS.

Oldfield. Mrs M Oldfield of York on 29 September 1977. ATS

Robinson. Mrs W V Robinson of Deal. QMAAC and ex-RSM ATS

Scragg. Mrs E Scragg of Newton le Willows on 14 August 1977. QMAAC

Shelley. Miss I A Shelley of Gonsall on 22 November 1977. ATS 1942-49. President of Stafford Branch.

Tayler. Pte S M Tayler of 29 Coy WRAC, BAOR on 13 November 1977 as the result of a traffic accident.

Travers. Captain G Travers on 30 August 1977. WRAC 1970-77.

Warrilow. Mrs. E. Warrilow (nee Ringer) of Salcombe on 27 September 1977. ATS. Member of Middle East Officers Association.

White. Miss H M White of Weymouth in December 1977. ATS.

Woods. Mrs I C Woods CBE in November 1976. Controller ATS

**THE WOMENS' ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION
(INCORPORATING QUEEN MARY'S ARMY AUXILIARY CORPS AND AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL
SERVICE COMRADES ASSOCIATION)**

SCHEDULE OF INVESTMENTS AT 31st OCTOBER 1977

<i>Cost 1976</i>		<i>Cost</i>	<i>Market Value 31st October 1977</i>
634.57	Charifund Trust Units (M & G Group) 1,000 Units	634.57	1,551.00
1,423.08	London County Stock 5½% 1985-87 £2,305.75	1,423.08	1,718.48
50.00	Royal British Legion Housing Assn. £50 Bond	50.00	50.00
1,331.55	8¼% Treasury 'A' Stock — 1997 £1,376.71	1,331.55	1,194.30
943.25	8% Treasury Stock — 2002-06 £1,026.51	943.25	800.68
2,686.57	7¼% Treasury Stock 2012-15 £5,231.12		
	1,317.00	2,686.57	
		<u>992.69</u>	
	£6,548.12	3,679.26	5,042.05
966.50	9% Treasury Convertible Stock 1980 £1,042.05		
—	985.26	966.50	
—	983.45	981.57	
		<u>971.16</u>	
	£3,010.76	2,919.23	3,131.19
£8,035.52		<u>£10,980.94</u>	<u>£13,487.70</u>

BALANCE SHEET — 31st OCTOBER 1977

	£	1977	£	1976	£
GENERAL FUND					
Balance at 1st November 1976 ...	8,066		5,827		
Add: Excess of Income over Expenditure ...	3,996	12,062	2,239		8,066
LIFE SUBSCRIPTION FUND					
Membership Life Subscription ...	1,390		1,211		
Lioness Life Subscription ...	1,617	3,007	1,308		2,519
SPECIAL FUND					
Legacy — Lt. Col. C.A. Cecil ...	391		391		
Lioness Donation Fund ...	291	682	291		682
		<u>£15,751</u>		<u>£11,267</u>	
Represented by:					
FIXED ASSETS					
<i>Office Furniture</i>					
Balance at 1st November 1976 ...	53		59		
Less: Depreciation for the year ...	5	48	6		53
Investments — at cost per Schedule ...		10,981			8,036
(Market Value £13,488)					
<i>Current Assets</i>					
Stock of Badges at cost ...	35		42		
Sundry Debtors ...	195		155		
Cash at Bank: Current Account ...	1,461		793		
Deposit Account ...	1,212		2,519		
	2,673		3,312		
National Savings Bank — Investment Account ...	2,000		—		
Cash in Hand ...	27		15		
	<u>4,930</u>		<u>3,524</u>		
Less: CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Sundry Creditors ...	208		346		
	208	4,722	346		3,178
		<u>£15,751</u>		<u>£11,267</u>	

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st OCTOBER 1977

	1977		1976	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
Subscriptions:—				
Annual	2,382		1,268	
Proportion of Four Yearly and Membership Life Subscriptions	170	2,552	185	1,453
Income from Investments		992		781
Deposit Account Interest		193		112
Donations		12		117
Sale of Publications		6		19
Sale of Badges		4		5
Branch Funds received on closure		11		36
Q.M.A.A.C. Reunion — Sale of tickets	49		13	
Less: Catering, Printing and Sundry Expenses	56	(7)	20	(7)
		<u>3,763</u>		<u>2,516</u>
Grand Reunion: Sale of Tickets etc.	—		863	
Less: Expenditure	—	—	915	(52)
Grand Draw: Sale of Tickets	657		—	
Less: Expenditure	196		—	
	461		—	
Less: Donation to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund	231	230	—	—
		3,993		2,464
Less: Total Expenditure		(3)		225
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE		<u>£3,996</u>		<u>£2,239</u>

	1977		1976	
	£	£	£	£
EXPENDITURE				
BRANCHES				
Capitation Fees	114		111	
Grants... ..	5	119	5	116
THE LIONESS PUBLICATION				
Printing, Postage etc.	2,165		2,494	
Less:				
Subscriptions			2,405	
Proportion of Four yearly and Life Subscriptions	215		239	
Advertisement Revenue... ..	208	2,871	225	2,869
		(587)		(375)
				(259)
Expenses of Annual General Meeting and Secretary's Meeting		117		85
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES				
Printing and Stationery	126		64	
Postage	103		88	
Subscriptions and Donations	30		30	
Commissions, etc. re purchase of shares	22		16	
Sundry Expenses	38		63	
Audit and Accountancy Fee	143		132	
Depreciation of Office Furniture	5	467	6	399
		<u>£ (3)</u>		<u>£ 225</u>

HOLIDAYS IN CORFU



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For further information please contact:

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