

1980

No 2

Lioness





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PRIZE CROSSWORD COMPETITION

The first correct crossword solution opened on 1st May 1980 was submitted by Mrs S Nias of Southampton who has received the prize of £5.

Solution

		1	P	U	2	T	A	3	S	T	4	O	P	5	T	O	6	I	T		
7	O		I		H		E		K		O		T								
8	U	M	P	T	E	E	N		9	A	S	P	H	A	L	T					
	T		E		I		D		Y		D		L		H						
11	O	R	D	E	R	S		12	E		13	P	O	L	I	C	E				
	F		U		15	S	A	N	D	B	A	G		C		L					
16	T	O	P	E		P		I		G		17	A	S	I	A					
	H				18	W	I	L	F	R	E	D									
19	E	N	20	D	S		E		I		A		21	B	R	A	T				
	R		E		23	A	N	T	E	N	N	A		24	U		L				
25	A	B	S	E	N	T		D		26	T	U	N	D	R	A					
	C		P		N		27	E		28	F		G		D		U				
29	E	N	A	M	O	U	R		30	R	O	U	T	I	N	G					
			I		Y		I		A		S		L		H						
	31	C	R	O	S	S	C	O	U	N	T	R	Y								

WRAC Staff Band Engagements

October 12	Concert, Southampton (with Royal Signals). Evening
25	RCT Corps Rally — Royal Albert Hall
November 8	Lord Mayor's Procession — London
December 21	Concert Guild Hall, Preston. Evening.

Cover Photograph

Her Majesty the Queen (now the Queen Mother) visiting a Mixed AA Battery in London in July 1943. Second from the right is Subaltern Mary Churchill (now Lady Soames) whose father was then Prime Minister.

(Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum).

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Lioness

Vol. LIII

1980

No. 2

"1980"

Brigadier E J Nolan CB

This year we shall all celebrate with great joy the 80th Birthday of our Commandant in Chief. As Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother is also the Patron of our Benevolent Fund it was decided, at the AGM of the WRAC Association, that we should mark the year with special fund raising efforts to help our members who are elderly or sick and living on their own on minimal incomes.

We already have thirty-five annuitants benefiting from the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund. They receive £2 per week, paid quarterly, and their ages vary considerably — two are 90, thirteen are over 80, six over 70, six over 60, seven over 50 and the youngest is a WRAC paraplegic in her late 40s.

All the money donated to this fund is invested and we use only the interest to provide the annuities. We need more money in order to raise the number of annuitants and to raise the amounts paid to the existing annuitants. It is therefore felt that our special efforts this year should be directed to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund.

I should like to set a target of £15,000. Perhaps this is ambitious but we have never shirked our responsibilities, and how splendid and worthwhile it would be to be able to tell our Commandant in Chief, and Patron, that at the end of her 80th Birthday Year we have raised enough money to take on another fifteen annuitants.

Will you please help?

Individual subscriptions or money raised by group activities will be equally welcome and will help to make life more bearable for former comrades who know that we still think of them.



Our loyal and affectionate birthday greetings to our Commandant-in-Chief.

EDITORIAL

Older members of the Association and particularly those who were serving during the forties and fifties will remember the keen and untiring interest of our late beloved Controller Commandant, HRH The Princess Royal. During the fifteen years since her death the magnificent display in the Rose Garden at the WRAC Centre has been an annual reminder of all that she did for our Corps. Less tangible but more important is the Fund that was set up in her memory. Brigadier Nolan, our Deputy Controller Commandant and Vice-President of the Association, appeals to us all on this page to mark this special birthday of our Commandant-in-Chief with a donation to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund.

Since we last went to press three new branches have been formed — at Cambridge, Hastings and in Shropshire where members meet at Telford. This is good news for members who live in these areas and will hopefully encourage more ex service-women in these areas to join.

LA DOLCE VITA

Captain A Kirby Harris

There are very few Italian speaking officers in the British Army, so when I volunteered as an interpreter on Exercise Ponte Vecchio I *had* to be considered, despite the misgivings of all concerned. The powers that be were preoccupied mainly by the possible administrative problems arising from the fact that the Italian Army has no women at all. I was more concerned at the thought of my first encounter with the 'real army', as the comfortable cocoon of Guildford had been my only experience of army life and I felt ill-prepared for a month among the Sappers. In fact, however, being female proved a great asset, as, somewhat to the chagrin of the OC and the other male officers more senior than me, the Italians much preferred dealing with me, and my lack of experience of Army work provided more laughs than problems!

The exercise was an exchange between 34 Field Squadron RE and an equivalent unit of an Italian Engineer regiment. The aims were to gain experience of other armies' methods and techniques, and, let's face it, also an exercise in PR. This latter aspect seemed to be a great success, as far as I could tell, as the Italians seemed very impressed by the professional attitude and expertise of our men, who enjoyed being half an hour's drive from the shores of Lake Maggiore.

The journey out was in a Hercules, and my first anxiety was whether the loo really was only a bucket behind a sheet of black plastic! My determination not to mind being one of the boys turned out to be unnecessary, as on the tarmac the Captain presented his compliments and invited me to travel on the flight deck. It was the most enjoyable journey I've ever made, as the views on crossing the Alps were simply magnificent and I thoroughly enjoyed being allowed to 'listen in'.

On arrival at the military airfield the unsuitability of my so-called 'summer order' became more and more bakingly obvious but I was soon ushered into a staff car and we were off to the barracks, where I hoped I would be able to change into my specially issued tropical dress.



The Squadron was housed in a large camp about half an hour's drive from Novara on the Lombardy plain. This was the home of an armoured brigade among whom was a regiment of Bersagliere, whose plumed ceremonial helmets and Wee Willie Winkie nightcap style barrack dress hats were destined to become trophies of the invaders.

I was given allowances to stay in a hotel, as under no circumstances was I to be allowed to stay in the barracks. No one seemed quite sure whether this was to prevent my corrupting the two thousand or so male inhabitants, or vice versa! My search for accommodation developed into quite a saga as I was not willing to stay in the nearest big hotel in Novara, a full half hour's drive away. The young Bersagliere Captain whose lot it was to assist me in my quest, assured me that in the two neighbouring villages was a plethora of the homely little trattoria such as I sought, and how was he to know that one would be full, another too isolated, a third run by a man with shifty eyes, etc. Eventually, in desperation, he took me to some friends of his, who ran the best restaurant in the district and asked them to let their spare room to me. I still dream of the risotto with truffles, guinea fowl in white wine and home grown figs! An even greater bonus was the fact that there were two daughters of my own age and I soon became accepted as one of the family, with whom I ate, watched television, gossiped (very good for my 'normal' Italian) and went out on their evenings off and so on, so that I felt very much that I was going "home" at the end of the day, thus providing me with the oasis of calm and sanity which I sorely needed after each trying day.

It was all great fun and I thoroughly enjoyed myself, but it was also very hard work and my knowledge of Italy and the Italians and their ways and attitudes proved even more valuable than my ability to speak their language. There was often need for cunning and diplomacy in the dealings between two very different styles of life and warfare, as being able to translate "Abigail, tell these damn foreigners to push off and let my men get on with their work", was not enough. We had to expect to be a local curiosity (and the Italians are very inquisitive and always have time to stop and stare). Visiting generals, especially Italians, need to feel wanted, but will accept that their awe-inspiring presence could affect the men's concentration, though they are always delighted to join the OC afterwards for a drink and talk on international relations.

The Squadron's programme comprised many activities, and included a week of adventurous training in the Alps near Aosta and I must say I was delighted to be told my services were more necessary back at camp.

Each section spent a week down at the nearby river, building a floating bridge and navigating it about, and I thoroughly enjoyed my turns at steering it. What was not so pleasant was being thrown into the river as the prize to the section who won the boat race. (Fortunately I had been warned of this eventuality, so was able to astonish them by stripping down to a bathing costume to dry!)

A further week's activities included work with explosives and a day at the ranges, which were quite some distance away in the mountains. I really enjoyed my go on the machine gun, though had great difficulty in bringing the barrel far enough down so that I seemed to be slicing the top off the mountain behind, and the Sergeant in charge told me later "We've just had a message from Switzerland Ma'am; they surrender". I wasn't all that much better with the Beretta pistol either and all my aspirations to be a lady Bond were shattered when I inspected the target, but I was comforted by my instructor who said "You killed all his friends and probably scared him so badly he ran off".

In fact most of my interpreting was done back at camp where the Squadron received an endless procession of high ranking visitors, all part of the Italians' unremitting efforts to make us feel at home. Nothing was impossible or too much trouble. The Squadron officers were constantly amazed by the volume of transport put at our disposal (I had my own personal vehicle to whisk



Cementing the entente cordiale!

me from problem to problem) for both duty and pleasure, as back home vehicles were rather akin to Krugerrands! All possible efforts were made for the men's entertainment, including weekends in Venice and Florence and a bus to the local 'spots'.

One of my more important tasks was to deal with the Bank and sort out the financial arrangements which had been made for our stay. The squadron 2IC was most impressed when, on our first trip to the bank we were, in response to my request, given sixteen million lire without even producing an ID card. He thought we might have moderate success as a latter day Bonnie and Clyde! I am sure that wearing peculiar uniforms assisted us in this task, as the Italian cashiers were obviously prepared for the worst when we walked in and must have been relieved by a simple request for money.

I feel that I helped solve more problems than I caused and was greatly cheered by one General who said, when the comment was made that having a woman around was a great nuisance, "She's got a job on my staff anytime she wants it". The men took my intrusion in good part, though one told me that despite my borrowed beret I looked nothing like a Sapper, and my assistance in telling them what was on the menu, and helping them cope generally with some of the peculiarities of the Italian Army was much appreciated.

I did manage some time off to enjoy myself and spent some most enjoyable days on Isola Bella on Lake Maggiore. On Wednesday afternoons I declined to join in inter-section football or go over the assault course but took myself off to Milan, where I used to live, to visit friends and do some shopping.

Apart from the heat and the dust and my very sore dry throat at the end of it all, I really enjoyed my month with 34 Squadron, and their affectionate telegram on my wedding day confirmed that my first brush with 'real soldiers' had been a success and I had made ninety new friends!

COULD THIS BE YOUR NICHE?

Many readers will remember Mr and Mrs Saunders, who ran the Sandes Home in Guildford for a number of years. (Their daughter Anne and her husband Tony are now running the Sandes Home at Barry and will soon be moving to a new Sandes Home to be opened at Bordon).

I visited Mr and Mrs Saunders recently at Frinton, where she is now resident Housemother in one of the Ernest Luff Homes for the elderly. Her husband Leslie is working in the Bible Bookshop also in Frinton and part of the same organisation.

As we spoke of the great need for staff in the five Ernest Luff Homes at Frinton it occurred to me that there might be someone who has left, or is about to leave the WRAC who would be interested in one of these residential jobs.

A resident Housemother and two resident Assistants are urgently required. There is a pleasant well-furnished flat with accommodation for one or two ladies willing to relieve senior staff for their weekly "time off" and to assist with annual holiday relief.

It may be that someone would be prepared to consider such a job for eighteen months or two years, in the first instance, rather than permanently.

The jobs are not well paid, but Frinton is a charming place on the Essex coast. The homes are

comfortable, and speaking personally I found a two-year job into which I knew I was called, at very low pay, one of the most profitable and enjoyable experiences I have had in full-time Christian work.

The vacancies are for committed Christians and anyone who is interested should contact the Secretary at the Bible Depot, Frinton, Essex — Telephone Frinton 4106.

Joan Garwood

WEEKEND HOUSE PARTY AT THE ROYAL ARMY CHAPLAINS DEPT CENTRE, BAGSHOT PARK

Throughout the year thousands of soldiers, servicewomen and some civilians spend a day, a weekend, or a week at the Royal Army Chaplains Dept Centre at Bagshot Park. In a delightful setting, and very informal atmosphere, all sorts of questions come up for discussion and are honestly dealt with. Some well chosen films provide further "ammunition" for discussion, and some of the longer courses include visits to many interesting establishments and places connected with our national life.

Every Unit has a list of courses available and anyone interested in a vacancy should ask for information at her Orderly Room.

In addition to the official list, there are occasional weekends for Servicewomen who wish to delve deeper into the Christian faith. Anyone interested in this type of programme should write to Miss Garwood, Chaplains' Assistant, WRAC Centre, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH.



A weekend house-party at Bagshot Park.

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So you think you've got Problems?

SSgt E C Barton

Having steered myself through nine years of the Army with relatively no problems, I have recently been somewhat embarrassed by the general interest being shown in me and what is now termed my "Case". People have been stopping me in the street wishing me good luck or instructing me not to give up the 'good fight'. I became a local celebrity. At this point I had better state what it was that I had done which had generated so much interest. What extraordinary act had I committed which could be of so much interest to so many

people? Well – I got married. Getting married posed no great problems, but it was my choice of husband which caused the problems – a British civilian. Now this may not seem particularly noteworthy but as it happened, it coincided with certain improvements in the lot of married service-women and mainly those married to civilians (a rare breed I am told!) Basically the rules covered conditions and allowances, and married service-women could claim the same as servicemen – married quarters, separation allowance etc. This has been yet another leap forward for the WRAC and in my case it has come at a very good time – in theory! However, being probably the first service-woman to claim any of these allowances, my path has not been a smooth one. (The vicar told us that marriage was an uphill struggle – he certainly was right!)

My first round in the 'battle' was getting a married quarter. I duly filled out the forms which were sent away and which duly came back – application rejected! After telephone discussions throughout BAOR the local housing committee were informed that I was to be allocated a quarter under the new regulations. This being done, I attended the march-in to my quarter. Next

problem was trying to convince the BIA that my husband couldn't sign the form as the quarter was in my name. The poor soul departed, quite baffled by it all. (Incidentally, I think the computer at the Regimental Pay Office is still having problems digesting the fact that quarter charges are being paid by a woman!)

So, we had a quarter but the problems were only starting. Our quarter is in camp and to get into camp you need an ID card, so we applied for an ID card for my husband. Back came the reply – "Rejected". My husband is not dependent on me, so he is not a dependant and therefore not entitled to an ID card. The answer to our problem was for my husband to be issued a 'chitty' by the SSO! This ruling started us thinking about what else my husband was not entitled to – medical and dental facilities and all tax free facilities. Does this now mean I must cook two separate dinners – one with duty free food, the other with German food? Does it mean that I must not allow my husband to drive our car? If we should win a duty free raffle prize must we hand it back (or halve it and give back my husband's half of the prize?) I only hope that I am not off work through ill health as my husband would have to carry me to the NAAFI so that I could purchase food (for myself only of course!) to which I am entitled, but then maybe we could arrange another 'chitty'.

Marriage to a civilian does hold some good points. For example, he does not go off on exercise, but unfortunately I do. Looking stunning in my DMS Boots and Combat Kit I was recently waved off to the 'war' by my husband. He has now fully recovered from that traumatic shock.

Then there are the times when I have been duty officer and the doorbell rings at some unearthly time in the morning. My husband takes great delight in waking me up to tell me that I have to go. Then, as I struggle into my uniform, I can hear a muffled voice from under the bed-clothes saying "See you in the morning". Civilian life has got a lot going for it! There is also the social side, and we have not yet decided what should be written on invitations – Mr & SSgt, SSgt & Mr or just Mr & Mrs.

The final blow to my husband came when, jokingly, the unit wives' club asked him to join and they would rename it the Wives' & Husband Club! I am lucky to be married to a thick skinned, civilian with a good sense of humour.

THE ERIC ADAMSON TROPHY FOR THE JSPI STUDENT OF THE YEAR 1979

The Joint School of Photographic Interpretation Student of the Year Trophy for 1979 was awarded to Captain Alison Ewan WRAC who is currently serving as a Photographic Interpreter with 6 Intelligence Company, Intelligence and Security Group (Germany). She was selected from among 102 students, male and female, from all three services and 22 foreign countries who attended JSPI during 1979.

Captain Ewan is the first member of the WRAC to win this award which was first presented in 1962 by Flight Lieutenant E M Adamson RAF.



Captain Alison Ewan receiving the trophy from Group Captain R C Allen, Commanding Officer RAF Wyton.

MY GREAT ADVENTURE

Cpl Liz Davidson

"Cpl Davidson! Do you want to climb a mountain?" Thus the OC told me about how I would be spending my leave. The local youth tutor Barry Ellis, needed some WRAC assistance in looking after ten pupils aged 14-16 from St George's School on a mountaineering expedition in the Far East.

My adventures began on January 2nd 1980 when we left Hong Kong with the aim of climbing Mt Kinabalu – the highest mountain in S E Asia.

Firstly we travelled to Brunei, an Islamic Sultanate on the Island of Borneo, where we stayed for two days before making our way to

Kota Kinabalu in Malaysia. This journey proved to be very interesting and consisted of travelling by ferry, long boat, minibus, train and finally minibus again to Kota Kinabalu National Park which was to be our base for the next five days.

On January 6th our party began the climb — a mere 13,455 ft. Everybody was in good spirits and we set off happily. This attitude didn't last for long once we saw what lay in store. However we plodded on, admiring the scenery and encouraging each other to maintain our confidence and morale. Along the route there were various shelters and by late afternoon we had climbed to 11,000 ft to Panar Laban Huts where we stayed overnight. By this time the three girls in the party were tired and felt unable to manage the journey to the top and asked to drop out. However I had no doubts I would continue. At 3 am the remaining climbers merrily set off leaving the girls to tidy up and recover from their efforts. It was still dark but our ever faithful guide led the way up the rockface and although the going was hard the end was in sight.

It was a fantastic feeling when we eventually reached the top and we waited until 6 am to see the magnificent sunrise. The view was

absolutely breathtaking and everybody agreed that the effort had been well worthwhile. After "happy-snapping" with our cameras we started the descent — the easy part (or so I thought)! By the time we reached the Park HQ our legs were aching and everybody was exhausted.

During the rest of the stay at the Park we went on various nature trails and visited Poring Hot Springs, where we all relaxed in the open air Japanese-style baths.

When we left the mountain, everybody was happy because we had planned a rest before returning to Hong Kong. Again we stayed in Brunei and this time we visited all the local places of interest including a night in the Labi Jungle — quite an experience! The children were apprehensive at the thought of all the insects but later agreed they enjoyed themselves as they set up their Australian light-weight kit, each trying to make his/her bed better than everybody else's.

All good things must come to an end and we left Brunei on January 6th to return to Hong Kong. I had thoroughly enjoyed my 'working holiday' but I have to admit that I was looking forward to getting back to work so that I could have a rest!

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WRAC PROVOST PEACE-KEEPING IN SALISBURY, RHODESIA

Cpl J L Parry

On December 11th last year Corporal Marion Corke, Lance Corporal Carole Pate and I were among the Military Police who flew to Zimbabwe Rhodesia to assist with security duties at Government House Salisbury. Lance Corporal Katherine Quinney had left on December 6th.

The flight to Salisbury took twenty-three hours and as we were lucky enough to travel with Lord Soames and his staff we were more comfortable than most. None of us had travelled to Africa before and we had no idea what to expect.

We landed at Salisbury Airport to mixed weather and a marvellous welcome. The RMP detachment working with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office were accommodated in a motel within walking distance of the city centre which was luxurious, and we felt as if we were on holiday until that feeling rapidly evaporated when we got down to work the next day.

With the other military police we were responsible for the security of Government House, Lord and Lady Soames' residence, and its grounds. Our main task in our twenty-four hour duty period was to check the authenticity of all visitors. As we had been involved in the security duties for the Constitutional Conference on Rhodesia in Lancaster House we knew Mr Mugabe, Mr Nkomo and Bishop Muzorewa, and it was obvious that they recognised us. In addition to vetting the visitors to Government House, the mail was large and all had to be checked. With our male counterparts we also carried out security patrols day and night within the grounds.

Although we were working very hard we did acquire a suntan and we did manage three days' rest and relaxation. In this time we took the opportunity to see a little more of the country, including the Victoria Falls.

After the election the British Monitoring Force withdrew, but our RMP detachment remained with Lord Soames at Government House until after the Independence Day celebrations. The last few weeks were hectic as the country prepared for Independence. Government House underwent a face lift for HRH Prince Charles who arrived two days before Independence.

We all received VIP tickets for the Independence Ceremony and watched emotionally

as our detachment commander WO1 (RSM) O'Donnell BEM lowered the Union Jack. Our job in Zimbabwe was over and we left for home on April 1st.

Visit to HQ 15th Infantry Division at Limoges, France

Capt Christine Nicholls WRAC

I applied to visit France under the "Echange Au-Pair" scheme which aims to improve understanding between armies, the exchange of ideas and the acquisition of the language. Based with A Branch of the HQ, I saw much of the internal workings, also one of the Regiments in the Division — the famous "Cinquième Chasseurs" (5th Regt Light Infantry) at Périgeux, a beautiful old town famed for its truffles and *pâté de foie gras*.

I visited a Recruiting Office, Selection Centre, Welfare Services HQ and the Divisional Office of the Gendarmerie.

10th June was the 36th Anniversary of the SS's massacre of 650 French people in their village of Oradour-sur-glâne. The ruined village has been kept intact and an annual remembrance service is held there. I was invited to attend as a representative of the British Army and was proud to do so. It was a most moving experience.

My programme included official functions and visits to the homes of senior officers and their families. I was given several examples of Limoges porcelain and enamelwork as souvenirs.



Talking to two officers of the Gendarmerie against a large mural executed in the enamel-work for which Limoges has been famous since the Middle Ages.



SPORT

INTER-SERVICE SKI-ING

The Army had the honour in March 1980 to host the first official inter-service ski meeting at Aviemore in Scotland. The races were mixed and the girls were seeded with the men, making competition very much harder with no straight women's race.

The first day of the competition suited the Army team. The conditions were icy with blizzards and very little snow on the ground which made it a very difficult course. At the end of this stage the army were winning, the other two services having great difficulty in coping with the conditions. On the second day the conditions were very good with powder snow and sunshine. Unfortunately the army were overtaken by the RAF who had been training for the competition for several weeks in these conditions.

The army were a good second, the team consisting of W02 Pat Rosewell, W02 Carol O'Nians, Sgt Bernie Rimmer and Pte Anita Burns.



L - R: W02 O'Nians, W02 Rosewell, Pte Burns
Sgt Rimmer.

EXERCISE WHITE LADY – BAVARIA

2 Lt L J Bownass WRAC

Exercise White Lady was the somewhat grand title given to the BAOR (Women's Services) Novice Skiing Championship. Nevertheless it was a sponsored exercise and, as 2IC Skiing BAOR, I set off for Bavaria at the wheel of a safari land-rover, borrowed from 68 Squadron RCT, to make the final arrangements for the competition and the imminent arrival of the 22 competitors. With little experience of organising such competitions, we found it necessary to seek the aid of several units and individuals, whom I will mention later.

The Championship was held at Grasgern in Bavaria from 24 to 26 March 1980. My main concern before leaving Rheindahlen was that there might be no snow, so it was a relief to find, on arrival, that the snow was still plentiful. This was marred, however, by a blanket of dense fog over the ski slopes, and the thought of 22 novice skiers competing in nil visibility was alarming. Although we had taken the precaution of arranging medical cover with the Admin Unit of Ex Snow Queen we did not wish to have any casualties.

Fortunately, on the days of the competition the weather was bright and sunny with perfect snow. The competitors were drawn from units in Bielefeld, Munster, Hameln, Lubbecke and Rheindahlen and included one Private QARANC and four WRAC Officers. They all travelled by coach from Rheindahlen, a journey of some 9 hours, to their accommodation at the ski hut of 94 Locating Regiment Royal Artillery, where they were kitted out with boots and skis. The minimum qualification for the competition was a 2 week Ex Snow Queen course or its equivalent, though many of the competitors had wider skiing experience.

The first day was spent in practice and competing in a giant slalom to determine the starting positions for the races the following day. The main day of the competition included a morning downhill race and an afternoon slalom. The downhill was very much a cross country course with a fair amount of uphill in it. Downhill speed was essential to avoid tiring and time lost climbing on the uphill stretches. The winning time in this event, by Pte James of 68 Squadron RCT, was 2 mins 12.5 secs. The competitors had two runs on the slalom course in the afternoon. Cpl Gaskell from HQ 1 (BR) Corps, recorded the fastest times on both runs, with 30.6 and 30.5 seconds.

The final competition scores, based on positions and times in the individual runs,

indicated a narrow gap between first, second and third. With her win in the slalom and third place in the downhill, despite losing a stick on the way, Cpl Gaskell won the Championship. The Macfie cup was presented to her by Lt Col L E Watkins RE, Commandant of the Ex Snow Queen Admin Unit. Pte James took the second place and third was Pte Lenderjou of 4 Squadron, 16 Signal Regiment.

The competition was a great success with 22 entries as opposed to 6 in 1979. We are grateful, not only to the competitors who made the most of the occasion, but also to their units for allowing them to take part, to 94 Loc Regt RA for providing accommodation, equipment and instructors to the RMP ski hut for additional equipment and to the Ex Snow Queen Admin Unit for their support, particularly to Lt Col Watkins for presenting the prizes.

INTER-SERVICE TABLE TENNIS

For the third consecutive year the Army table tennis team have convincingly won the Inter-Service Table Tennis Championships. Major M King, W02 Swailes, Sgt Townsend and LCpl Armstrong worked hard as a team to achieve this victorious result. LCpl Armstrong and W02 Swailes were selected to represent the Combined Services team.

LCpl Armstrong then went forward to the Combined Services Competition held at RAF Stanmore. She won the Ladies Singles Championship, Ladies Doubles Championship, aided and abetted by Pte Andrews, and she also won the Mixed Doubles Championship.



L - R

Back Row: Capt Ransom, LCpl Humphrey, Pte Andrews, Sgt Townsend, W02 Taylor.
Front Row: Major King, W02 Swailes, LCpl Armstrong.

INTER-SERVICE VOLLEYBALL

The Inter-Service volleyball match was held on 16 June 1980 at RAF West Drayton. The favourites for the trophy were the WRNS who proved to be too strong for the WRAC and WRAF. However in the first set the WRNS beat the WRAC by only 16-14.



L - R

Back Row:

LCpl Wellings (Asst Coach), Cpl Pollock, LCpl Jeffery, Cpl Johnson, LCpl Wilkinson, CSgt Neale (Coach/Manager)

Front Row:

Pte Lee, Cpl Southern, Pte McMinn, LCpl Newington (Capt).

REGULAR FORCES

EMPLOYMENT ASSOCIATION

The Regular Forces Employment Association is part of the Forces Resettlement Service. It exists to help servicemen and women find suitable employment when they leave the Forces. It also takes a long term interest in ex regulars who may use its services as often as they wish.

The Association has 41 Branches covering the UK, and its employment officers (all ex-service) are in close touch with employers. All services are provided free. During the fifteen months ending 1st April 1980, 33 ex WRAC found employment through the Association.

Addresses and telephone numbers of Branches can be obtained from Corps HQ, or from Post Offices, Employment Offices or local telephone directories.

SKI-ING IN THE BAVARIAN ALPS

Five members of the WRAC took part in the ski-ing exercise in Bavaria for 5 weeks last December and January. The aim of the exercise was to compete in the 2nd Armoured Divisional Ski Championships. The first three weeks were devoted to training and Christmas was spent in a small village called Weiler living in a self catering flat using compo food. As well as downhill ski-ing the girls all entered German civilian Langlauf races and did not disgrace themselves, Capt Lindy Esslemont gaining third place in a 7 km race.

The Ski Championships were held in Rhupolding a hundred miles to the east of Weiler and although we did not actually win anything, we were the only women ski-ing at the Meeting. W02 O'Nians was seeded 32nd in the Giant Slalom race, a very commendable position in a field of 150 men. The girls also took part in a 15 km Langlauf race which saw W02 Mapley do a double somersault to finish — she was so delighted!

The 1980/81 season will see the WRAC once again in Bavaria, hopefully with several more

servicewomen than in previous years.



L - R: Capt Wright, W02 Mapley, Capt Ransom, W02 O'Nians, Capt Esslemont.

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“Lionheart”

Lt Sarah Davies

As Public Relations Officer for the Army Sailing Association I have been more than fortunate to sail and see many types and sizes of boats from bosun dinghies to a Nicholson Ocean 60. However, probably the sail I shall remember most and the one I feel luckiest to have had was the day I spent in the Solent on Britain's America's Cup yacht the 12 metre “Lionheart”.

“Lionheart” is crewed by twelve hand picked yachtsmen drawn from the pool of twenty or so, all who train hard and endeavour to reach their target of going with “Lionheart” to Newport, Rhode Island, this summer to contend for the Americas Cup. The cup was won by America in 1851 and since then has stayed firmly in their hands on the far side of the Atlantic. One man however that will definitely go to the States is Sergeant Peter Buchanan RCT, “Lionheart's” shore manager. Without Sgt Peter Buchanan who is an experienced sailor the team and the challenge would run into trouble! He is the back up for the project – the man who ensures that everything goes smoothly and that the press and crew are kept happy. It was because of the Army's interest, that I was lucky enough to be offered a sail. I arrived at Port Hamble Marina at 8.30 am on Sunday 13 April to be met by Sgt Buchanan and his two sons, and was promptly offered tea and breakfast aboard the motor launch that acts as chaperon when “Lionheart” negotiates the River Hamble out into the Solent.

One by one members of the crew arrived, and then the press.

The tender to “Lionheart” and the launch refuelled whilst adjustments were made to “Lionheart's” rigging – then at 10.30 we set off down the Hamble negotiating the many other yachts out sailing that Sunday, all who were keen to see “Lionheart” and her crew.

Once the press had taken their photographs and interviewed the crew I was transferred from the launch to “Lionheart” for my sail. She had no hand rails and moving down her to find a safe place to sit I had to use members of the crew to hold on to – much to their amusement! The day was being used to test various different sails – and consequently sail changes were frequent with winches winding and crew members moving quickly to pack and hoist sails as was needed.

The weather was perfect – brilliant sunshine and a reasonable wind as we surged through the glistening waters of the Solent. We even flew one of the brightly coloured spinnakers which I helped to repack when it was time to turn to a different point of sail. My sail lasted until 15.30, when Sgt Buchanan and the launch returned to take me back to Port Hamble and to give me a rather late and welcome lunch. It is a day I shall never forget. Good luck to “Lionheart” and all her crew in Newport, Rhode Island.

UNIT NEWS

WRAC BATTERY – ROYAL SCHOOL OF ARTILLERY

It is always difficult to think of bigger and better ways of earning money for charity. The idea of a sponsored walk, although effective, has been used so often that it is now greeted with little enthusiasm. Administrative Wing RSA therefore produced a new idea for raising money – ‘The BFT sponsored run’. A runner represented each rank from Private to Lieutenant Colonel and the WRAC organised the sponsorship of the race. The Commandant Brigadier Jones started the relay and our PTI LCpl Jo Southerington ran the first leg.

Sponsor money was collected for each minute knocked off the individual's own maximum BFT time allowed. The estimated target was £250 but the final total reached over £500. This caused much consternation to the sponsors who possibly believed that financial support was a soft option to running. The collected total was sent to the Variety Club of Great Britain as our contribution towards their nationwide walk appeal.

Earlier in the year, again with an eye to fitness and the summer fashions, three servicewomen involved themselves in a Sponsored Slim. Cpl Liz Martin and Ptes Julia Wild and Ann Clarke were able to obtain many sponsors as people knew how difficult it was to lose weight.

After a concerted effort by the servicewomen, and help from our PTI and cooks, a total of £76.80 was raised with a weight loss of 2 stone 4 lbs — £2.40 per lb. The money has been used to buy equipment for the WRAC Adventurous Training Exercise 'Mountain Beret'.

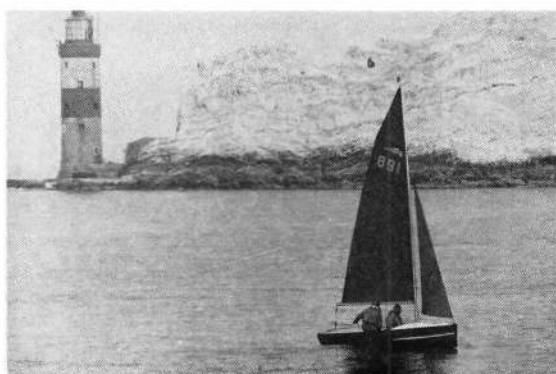


Brigadier Jones starts the race and LCpl Southerington is off.

THE PORT GIRLS

Marchwood Military Port on the edge of Southampton Water is run by the RCT for the shipment of Army freight and passengers all over the world. As part of the wider employment scheme some of the administrative posts within the port have been dual roled and a WRAC detachment set up. Amidst much curiosity and speculation the girls moved into their accommodation in February 1980. They started work in the port as drivers and clerks and are now very much a part of the organisation. By way of additional benefit to 17 Port Regiment and other local units NAAFI JRC turnover has tripled since the girls moved into camp!

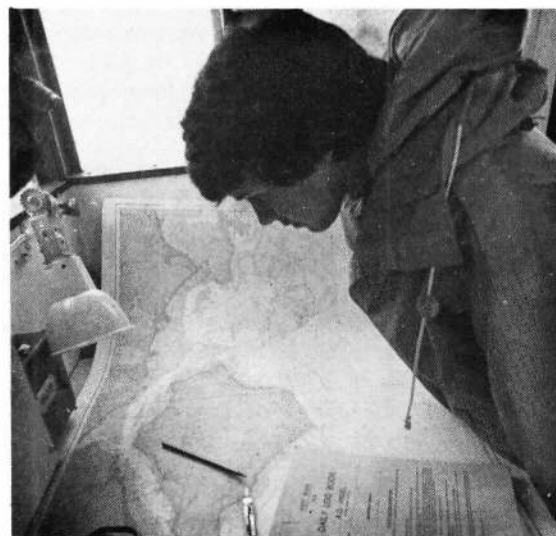
One of the first ventures in which WRAC were involved was Island 80. This was a sponsored sail in two dinghies around the Isle of Wight in April. Eight men and two girls volunteered to crew the boats in shifts for the 60 mile sail, and with



Pte Peck and Cpl Cross passing the Needles.

unusually good weather for April and favourable winds the course was completed in 15 hours. Over £1000 was raised for two charities, the Jubilee Sailing Trust and RNLI. The Jubilee Trust is an ambitious project to build a square-rigger sailing ship for disabled people to crew. Sir Alec Rose is one of their Vice Presidents and in June he received the cheque for £800 from Island 80 on board the sailing training ship Royalist which was being partially crewed by disabled children.

Sailing continues to play an important part in the detachment's sports programme with Pte Peck gaining racing experience as a member of the RCT team. We are off to Dartmoor in September for three days climbing, walking and trekking in the National Park. Our first entry into inter-unit sports is the SE District Swimming Championships where we hope to show that WRAC Marchwood is a small but successful unit.



Capt Bayliss studying the chart intently.

TA

31 (GL) SIGNAL REGIMENT (V) THE COURAGE TROPHY 1980

2 Lt J Harper WRAC (V)

Early on the morning of Saturday, April 15th, a group of 8 girls gathered in Hammersmith TAC for a session of frantic revision on the more "Warry" aspects of the Territorial Army, prior to moving out to the Courage Trophy competition — an Infantry based competition for all TA Units based near London.

On our arrival we (and our webbing) were inspected for vital pieces of combat equipment, such as clean socks, boot cleaning kit and even "washing and shaving" kit, before being sent off into the wilderness for our first cross-country march, which, as the valleys grew steeper and our webbing grew heavier, rapidly degenerated into a cross-country stagger. Even the finishing line held no wild excitement for us, as we were then told that we had two minutes before we tackled the assault course. However, with a fair amount of support from our Colonel and Yeoman, and even more from 4 Para we flung ourselves over the obstacles and arrived, albeit bruised and dripping wet, in one piece at the other end, where we took just a few minutes "Rest and Recuperation" before regrouping.

Whilst this excitement had been going on, our drivers, Sgt Ronni Jacobs and Pte Linda Dominguez had been having a hair-raising time themselves during the MT phase of the competition, which involved cross-country driving, and reversing trailers. Just before our team took part in this phase, one of the other teams overturned their landrover which, understandably, did nothing for our confidence, but our drivers had no problems completing the course and gaining excellent marks.

After our First-Aid test, which was greatly helped by our medic Cpl Anne Dawton and the previous coaching of Pte Dominguez, we moved into the tactical phase of the competition, setting up a patrol base, and the next three hours were spent building bashas, digging trenches and laying out defensive positions.

Soon after dark, our drivers left us once more to compete in an 80 mile night rally, and at 2300 our recce patrol, comprising Cpl Jan Billin, Pte Pauline Davies, Pte Carol Young and myself set off, leaving Cpl Dawton and Pte Kinchington to "Hold the Fort".

Our patrol route took us through the most horrendous country that many of us had experienced — at one point I indicated "follow me" and fell straight into a quagmire. Pte Davies took my orders to heart and fell in after me, but luckily Cpl Billin and Pte Young came to our rescue and we hastily re-plotted our route to avoid as much of the mud as possible. The night passed quickly as we trudged through the mud, mud and more mud, with Cpl Billin keeping us on course with her wonderful sense of direction. But when we finally arrived back at base at 0500 we



A helping hand for Cpl Dowton from LCpl Hare, LCpl Billin and Pte Davies on the assault course.

were told to change to British summertime (0600) and be ready to move in one hour (0700)! Morale hit an all time low!

Our next task was another cross-country march, during which we changed our tactics by running and marching alternately until we started to climb what appeared to be a mountain, when we once more degenerated into staggering skywards!! Halfway up this mountain it began to snow, and never has snow been more welcome — it cooled us down and made our last mile a fairly pleasant run.

With only map reading and voice procedure to endure the team began to relax, with the exception of Sgt Jacobs and myself who had to take part in the voice procedure test. We spent a few frantic minutes revising our vast knowledge of voice procedure in order not to embarrass ourselves in front of our own squadron who were running that phase of the competition. Thereafter followed the map reading, and apart from the team leader who had by this time lost her glasses and managed to have the map upside down, the team achieved excellent marks.

We returned to the Duke of York's Barracks where we learnt that we had in fact won the Ladies' Section, and after a display by 4 Para we received our prizes of a tankard and a crate of beer each — and a good evening was had by all!

Many thanks to everyone who organised the competition — they managed to make (in retrospect) a very enjoyable weekend. Also to our two "Team Coaches", Lt Terry Exell and 2Lt Alan Woodford RIR, who had the unenviable task of trying to turn us into Infanteers for the weekend.

33 SIGNAL REGIMENT (V) FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH OF KNOWSLEY

On Sunday May 4th The Metropolitan Borough of Knowsley formally extended to the Regiment the privilege of Freedom of Entry to the Borough. Many spectators, including families of those on parade, gathered at Knowsley to watch the Freedom Ceremony held outside the Huyton Suite and shortly after midday the Parade marched on accompanied by the Band of the Royal Corps of Signals. The Parade was attended by the Mayor, Councillor J F Bohanna, The Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside, Wg Commdr J M Stoddard AE, the Master of Signals Maj Gen P E M Bradley CB CBE DSO, and the Hon Col, Col J G Bryson OBE TD

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JP DL LLM. During the course of the Ceremony the Commanding Officer received the "Freedom" Scroll and presented the Mayor with a statuette of Mercury.

Afterwards members of the Regiment and their families were entertained by The Borough at The Huyton Suite, thus concluding a most memorable event in the history of the Regiment.



Capt Jennifer Hindshaw conducting the Mayor of Knowsley, Councillor Jack Bohanna, during the inspection of the WRAC Guard.

WRAC (HIGHLANDS) – TA SILVER

Major D M Henderson WRAC TA

Readers, particularly the younger members of the Corps, may be interested in these two photographs of two decanters, two silver pieces and a pipe banner, which belonged to Headquarters WRAC, Highland District. These items are currently housed in a corner of the Regimental Museum of the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders at Stirling Castle (the whole Castle and the Regimental Museum are well worth a visit if you happen to be in the area). The two decanters are engraved with the WRAC badge and on the reverse the Highland Division sign "HD".

The silver bell on the left of the photograph was presented to 317 (Scottish Command) Bn WRAC TA to commemorate Le Chardon Ecosais Dieppe 1958 and the Battalion Double 1959 by Controller V H C Stirling CBE TD Hon Colonel.

The other silver item on the right is the Bruce Trophy which takes the form of a quaich or ancient Scottish drinking vessel. Presented by Lt Col Lady Martha Bruce OBE TD in July 1961, to be awarded annually to the winner of an MT competition, the trophy was open to teams from 527 Coy RASC, 99 Angus/Perth Coy WRAC, 907 Coy RASC and 100 Fife Coy WRAC.

The final item is certainly unique. A WRAC pipe banner presented and indeed made by Lady Martha Bruce. I had the honour to carry this banner at the Grand Reunion in Glasgow on 19th April 1980.

Banners are carried by the pipers of Scottish and Gurkha Battalions. Originally when a piper was a personal servant of a Clan Chief, the banner showed the piper's affiliations, the Clan crest being displayed either on one or on both sides of the banner. After the Jacobite rebellions of

1715 and 1745 the bagpipe was declared a "weapon" of war and was forbidden except in the Army where the officers continued the tradition of banners by presenting them to the Regiment to be carried by the pipers and having usually the Regimental crest on one side very often accompanied by battle honours and their personal crest on the other. There are very complicated rules and regulations about when and where banners may be carried and these rules vary from regiment to regiment. As far as I know there is only the one WRAC pipe banner.

Headquarters WRAC Highland District was disbanded on 27th April 1967, but with the planned expansion of WRAC perhaps these items will again adorn a Highland dinner table to the tune of the Regimental pipe march "Ho Ro My Nut Brown Maiden" and the Divisional march "The WRAC of the 51st (Highland) Division".



Trophies which belonged to HQ WRAC Highland District now in the Regimental Museum of the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders at Stirling Castle.



WRAC Pipe Banner made and presented by Lt Col Lady Martha Bruce.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1980

The Annual General Meeting was held at The City Chambers Glasgow on Saturday 19th April 1980. Brigadier E J Nolan CB Vice President of the Association was in the Chair. Mrs Weldon the Chairman of the Association reported that the Grand Reunion in 1979 in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen had resulted in an increase in membership to 6840 including 3771 serving officers and servicewomen.

Council had discussed whether it would be practical to increase the number of issues of Lioness from two to three. They had decided that so long as costs continued to rise at their present rate it should remain at two per year.

The Honorary Treasurer reported that the

financial state of the Association was sound but that with rising costs our ability to hold our current subscription rates was largely dependent on improving our income from investment.

Colonel Davies the Chairman of the Benevolent Fund Trustees reported that £19,889 had been disbursed in grants to those in need. The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund was providing needy annuitants with £2 per week.

Brigadier Nolan the Chairman of the Museum Trustees reported that 5355 persons had visited the Museum and that plans were being made to improve the display space and lighting.

It was unanimously decided that as HM The Queen Mother was Patron of the Benevolent Funds, a concerted effort should be made in 1980 to mark her 80th birthday by raising Funds for the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund.

The location of the AGM 1981 was discussed and unanimously agreed that it should be held at The Victory Club in London on 25 April 1981 and that the AGM in 1982 should be held at Plymouth together with a Grand Reunion.

Copies of the Minutes of the AGM are held by Branch Secretaries but any member requiring a personal copy can obtain it from the General Secretary.

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BRANCH NEWS

KENT. We meet at least once a month, trying to arrange meetings or events in different areas to encourage the scattered members to come to at least one meeting during the year.

Attendance is best at dinners so we have an extra one this year. We also have meetings at members' homes; outings to the Royal Chelsea Hospital and Dover Castle; a picnic, our annual Service at the old Garrison Church at Canterbury, a Coffee Morning and the November Parade.

We have a bring and buy stall at most of our meetings and with the proceeds of the Coffee Morning we are able to send good donations (£70 last year) to the Association Benevolent Funds, and as we believe that charity begins at home, this is our main aim although we do help the Royal British Legion with the Poppy appeal, both by collecting and donation.

Our Standard is now 22 years old but is much admired when taken on the Parades at Canterbury Cathedral and the Festival of Remembrance at Margate.

Some members may be interested to know that our President Lt Col Angela Cobb (Retd) (nee Stebbins) started the ATS band in the 1940s.

Some years ago, the Sunday Telegraph supplement published a double centre page picture of the band, taken in 1944.

We now have over 100 members in Kent and are looking for more, and we hope that we might be able to start up a branch in Maidstone or the Medway towns so that those members living in that area can have their own meetings nearer home.

LONDON We continue to hold our meetings on the third Thursday of each month at the Duke of York's Headquarters Chelsea. We have had some interesting evenings in recent months. One of our members, Miss Elsie Sycamore described to us her visit to the Holy Land, and Miss Mary Curtis entertained us with her colour slides of Brittany. Another item on our programme was entitled "Why I Like It", when members brought a treasure and explained its personal significance. We were pleased to see our President, Mrs Giles on this occasion. Four members travelled to Glasgow in April for the AGM in the splendour of the City Chambers and had a very enjoyable weekend.

Two of our members who served in the QMAAC celebrate their 90th Birthdays this year — Miss A Martin on the 29th July and Miss M Druitt on 13th October. We would like to take this opportunity of wishing them health and happiness.

MANCHESTER The Branch continues to flourish and attendance at our meetings has increased. Many new members who joined in 1979, as a result of the Grand Reunion renewed their subscriptions in 1980.

Many excellent photographs were taken at Guildford and these have been proudly shown at meetings. Our Chairman was delighted to have a photograph of the Queen accepted by her Majesty, and I think a copy now rests in everyone's album.

We held our main fund raising Bring & Buy sale in December which was followed by an excellent buffet supper.

Five members attended the Glasgow reunion in April, and gave glowing reports of its success.

We were very sorry to lose Mrs Freda Jones who died in April. She had been a loyal member and good friend for many years. £17 was sent to Cancer Research in her memory. She was the delegate to the Manchester & District Liaison Ex Services Association of which the Branch are members. Mrs B Dean will now represent the Branch, and Mrs N Bairnith is the deputy delegate.

On Tuesday 24th June, 26 members and friends (whom we hope will soon be members) met together at the Masonic Temple in Manchester

for our Annual Dinner. An excellent meal was served in most comfortable surroundings. The raffle realized £10 to be sent for the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund.

Our next meeting will be on August 7th at Broughton House a home for disabled ex-servicewomen. We shall be collecting groceries for a stall at the Broughton House Garden Party and also supporting a bric-a-brac stall for the Autumn Fair there in November.

On December 4th it will once again be our Annual Bring and Buy sale, followed by a buffet supper.

We have 24 Life and 39 Annual members. Some members live too far away to attend meetings and we hope that they will keep in touch.

PLYMOUTH We are still enjoying our various activities, namely Christmas Party, Cheese and Wine Party at Plymouth Guildhall and of course the occasional Jumble Sale to help funds. The highlight of our year so far was our visit to Glasgow for the Scottish Reunion. Twelve of our members attended and enjoyed every minute of the weekend.

We are looking forward to being hosts for the 1982 Reunion in Plymouth.

We have several more functions in the future, namely a Dinner and Dance at Calstock in Cornwall and our own Dinner in August. In October we are entertaining the WRNS on the occasion of their Diamond Jubilee, then concentrating on our Christmas Fair in December.



ULSTER Forty-five members and friends enjoyed our Annual Luncheon on 27th February and after the Loyal Toast our President Ethel Thompson gave us a most interesting and informative talk on her trip to South Africa. In a lighter mood Doris Smith told us of her experiences on the Glasgow Football Special en route to the Reunion at Guildford. (Don't know what happened but she was able to show us a Glengarry). Two Committee meetings were held in the home of our Vice President Gwen Angus and between talk and tea we were able to make arrangements for our cheese and wine party.

Weather-wise we had the luck of the Irish with us on May 14th when we entertained 144 guests at Government House. The gardens were really beautiful, the dips and cheese delicious and all voted the evening a great success. The magnificent sum of £250.00 was raised and will be distributed to charities at our Annual General Meeting.

We are looking forward to a visit to WRAC HQ in Lisburn in September when we hope to see what life is like in the modern Army.

SSAFA VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

SSAFA must recruit new voluntary workers to replace the many dedicated people now retiring after many years of valuable work. The need is greatest in the urban areas such as Greater London, Greater Manchester, Tyne and Wear, Merseyside — all favoured for Army recruiting and resettlement by ex-servicemen and women. Inevitably therefore, they are the centres where SSAFA is most needed but where potential volunteers are harder to find.

SSAFA representatives must be genuinely caring people, full of common sense and willing to learn. Obviously, experience in the Services, either as an officer or senior NCO, or as the wife, widow or husband of either, is valuable. Training is provided in the field with an experienced worker and also at a SSAFA induction course either at head office in London or in the appropriate county. Expenses are paid and all necessary literature and stationery are provided.

Offers will be welcomed directly at the local county office of SSAFA or may be sent to: SSAFA HEAD OFFICE, 27 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9BZ.

Sgt A M Wallace WRAC gave an excellent vote of thanks.

The welcomes and thanks over, the real business of the evening began with meeting, recognising and chatting to old friends. Judging from the babel ensuing it was a great success and the hours flew so quickly that it was soon time to sing "Auld lang Syne", then the National Anthem, and a thought in many a mind, "Haste-Ye-Back".

REUNIONS

SCOTTISH REUNION 1980

Scotland gave a sunny welcome to all ex QMAAC/ATS/WRAC who journeyed from near and far to attend the Scottish Reunion held in Glasgow on Saturday, 19th April 1980. The City was looking its best and the floral decorations in George Square gave an added welcome to the visitors as they approached the City Chambers.

The company assembled in the Banqueting Hall. The Chairman and Guests were piped to their table by Major D Henderson WRAC (V).

The Chairman, Miss M M Thomson TD welcomed the company.

Messages from Her Majesty The Queen, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Kent were read by Major J M Perry WRAC. Dinner was then served, followed by the Toasts to the Queen and the Queen Mother our Commandant-in-Chief.

The Right Hon The Lord Provost David Hodge CBE OStJ JP welcomed the visitors on behalf of the City of Glasgow.

Brigadier E J Nolan CB Vice President and Deputy Controller Commandant, spoke of this being the Queen Mother's 80th birthday year and suggested that our gifts be in the form of donations to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund.

Brigadier A Field CB Hon ADC DWRAC brought us up to date with the service of today — how different from "our day".

DRIVERS AND CLERKS

REUNION DINNER

The D & CTC Reunion Dinner held at Worthing on May 17th was attended by serving members as well as ex-members of the ATS/WRAC. Two years had passed since our first reunion, which was an experiment — one that paid off for this year our numbers increased by 25 per cent.

We were honoured to have as our guest Colonel H Powell DDWRAC whom all of us present had at one time either served alongside or under. Major (QM) Henderson, now stationed in Scotland made that long journey to Worthing to be with us again. Friends came from all parts of England to celebrate another get-together, to recall past experiences and to share once again that comradeship that exists amongst service personnel.

The success of these reunions are such that it was decided we should make them annually. Therefore the date of the next one will be Saturday 23 May 1981 to be held in Worthing, Sussex. For all the details contact me, Miss F J Little, 'Kabete', Common Hill, West Chiltonington RH20 2NR W Sussex, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope please.

FOUND

A watch was found in the City Chambers, Glasgow after the AGM on 18th April. Please contact Major J M Perry WRAC at HQ Scotland, Edinburgh or the Editor.

NO 2 SUB AREA

This year Portsmouth Branch had the honour of acting as hosts for the Sub Area Reunion. On a bright sunny afternoon 160 members from Bath, Southampton, Bournemouth, Salisbury, Brighton, Cheltenham and Weymouth assembled at the Royal Marine Barracks Eastney, Portsmouth. They were welcomed by Major A Brown, Director of the RM Museum, and his staff. The museum is housed in a beautiful building which was once the Officers Mess Royal Marines and contains some very varied and interesting exhibits covering the history of the Royal Marines through the years up to the present day.

After an interesting afternoon everyone moved to the Rock Garden Pavilion for tea. A speech of welcome was made by Portsmouth Chairman Mrs P Williams and a telegram read from HM The Queen Mother. Replies were given by our guests of

honour Col G Saunders-Davies and Brigadier N King. During the tea a raffle was held which raised £32, half of which was sent to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund and half to the branch funds. At 6 pm Portsmouth Branch saw their guests back to their coaches for the journey home after what everyone voted was a very enjoyable reunion.



Members of the branches in No 2 Sub Area outside the Museum of the Royal Marines.
(Courtesy Portsmouth & Sunderland Newspapers Ltd).

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

REUNION NOTICES

ATS DINNER CLUB The 1980 Luncheon for members and their guests will be held on Saturday 4th October 1980 at the Bloomsbury Centre Hotel, London. Ex-ATS are eligible for membership and details of the Dinner Club can be obtained from the Hon Secretary, Miss C I Lawrence, 23 Trinity Close, The Pavement, London SW4 0JD.

DRIVERS AND CLERKS TRAINING CENTRE REUNION The date of the next reunion will be Saturday 23 May 1981 to be held in Worthing, Sussex. For all details contact Miss F J Little, 'Kabete', Common Hill, West Chiltington, W Sussex RH20 2NR, enclosing stamped addressed envelope.

NORTHERN AREA REUNION 1980

The Northern Area Reunion will be held in the Royal Baths Assembly Rooms, Harrogate, on Saturday 27th September 1980 from 2.30 to 6pm. Tickets £1.50, including tea, obtainable from Miss M Bradley, 60 West End Avenue, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 9BY (Tel: 0423-57023 evenings) not later than Friday 19th September. Please send stamped addressed envelope with remittance, payable to "WRAC Association - Northern Area".

Produce Bring and Buy stall in aid of Princess Royal's Memorial Fund.

WESTERN AREA REUNION

A reunion will be held at The United Service Club, Humber Road, Wolverhampton, on Saturday 18th October 1980, 2 pm to 6 pm. We extend a special invitation to the many new members of the Association to come and meet old friends and make some new, and the Club Committee invites members to remain after the reunion and join in the evening entertainment. There will be a Buffet. Further information and tickets £1.25, available from the Secretary Mrs M Beeston, 60 Campion House, Heath Town, Wolverhampton, enclosing stamped addressed envelope.

INTERNATIONAL REUNION OF BRITISH EX SERVICEWOMEN, ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA

The International Reunion of British Ex-Servicewomen will be held in Adelaide SA from 23rd to 27th April 1981. This will be the third bi-annual gathering and for the first time will be combined with the British Ex-Service Legion of Australia (SA Division) Inc. Further details may be obtained from Mrs E M Rose, President 1981 Reunion of British Ex-Service Women, 9 Koonunga Avenue, Rostrevor SA 5073.

CANADIAN WOMEN'S ARMY CORPS VETERANS 2ND ANNUAL REUNION

This event is sponsored by the Canadian Corps Association, CWAC Unit 47, and takes place on September 26th and 27th in Toronto, Canada.

For particulars write to CWAC Veterans Reunion Chairman, Mrs Shirley Wood Heesaker, 201 Niagara Street, Toronto, Canada M5V 1C9.

Correspondence

Mrs M Cole of Avon House, Woodway Road, Teignmouth, Devon TQ14 8PR writes:

I joined the ATS in January 1940 and did my training at Aldermaston Court. My first posting was to GHQ 2nd Echelon, RE Section at Margate, and from there we were evacuated to Weston-super-Mare at the time of Dunkirk. Next, to Bournemouth to the Pioneer Corps Pay Office, then to Exeter to an Infantry Record Office for three years and finally to ATS Records at Winchester until "demob" in December 1945.

I would dearly love to contact any old friends — have kept in touch with a few — and with a maiden name like "McBrearty" someone should remember me. I was W/30276 Cpl Kathleen McBrearty.

2 Kendal Close
Chandlersford
Eastleigh
Hants

Dear Editor

It was with great interest that I noted your remark in the *Lioness* "Where are the volunteers who met in 1938". I am pleased to tell you there are fifteen of us right here in Southampton Branch.

The 5th Hants Platoon ATS were formed in September 1938 and we attended meetings weekly at a local drill hall in Southampton. We were attached to the 72nd HAA Regt TA and in July 1939 travelled by troop train to Burrow Head Scotland for two weeks Firing Camp and living under canvas. Our mobilization papers arrived on the 2nd Sept to report at mid-day the following day, and so on the day war was declared we were billeted in a dance hall on the outskirts of the town, going out by lorry daily to our duties to the various gun sites situated around the town.

We also keep in touch with volunteers in Canada and New Zealand and many of the volunteers not in the Association.

I am enclosing a photograph taken in Scotland in 1939 and also one of the ex volunteers taken at the Association Annual Dinner in 1978.

We stayed with the 72nd HAA Regt right through the Battle of Britain and the Blitz until 1941 when the Regiment went overseas.

Surely this must be *the* record?

Betty Keating (Mrs)



Camp in Scotland 1939.



Annual dinner 1978.

Miss M Beckett JP of 23 George Street, Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 7EY refers to Miss Morris's letter in the last *Lioness* claiming that ten of the original sixty 3rd Warwickshire ATS have met annually since 1939. Miss Beckett lists twelve members of the 10th Cumberland ATS Coy whose last reunion was in February 1980 and five others who were unavoidably prevented from being with them. She goes on to say: "I have not sent this letter in any sense of trying to beat any record but simply to show how very proud we feel to have been ATS".

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Dear Madam,

My No 1 1980 copy of Lioness has just arrived and I am interested in the photograph of HM King George VI at Kingston — page 23.

I expect by now you have received the correct answer, but cannot help being reminded of HM's visit there on 23rd October 1939. At that time I was a driver ATS (FANY) attached to the East Surrey Depot at Kingston Barracks, and the excitement over the Royal visit was intense. I clearly recall a moment in the Cookhouse, where a sergeant cook who had seen service in the 1914-18 War was back in uniform. I heard her say to a nervous ATS helper: "If 'e asts yer wot yer givin 'em don't say RISSOLES, because they're CROQUETTES today!"

To my regret I no longer can recall the name of the ATS Officer in the picture — she was, I think, a peacetime Girl Guide Commissioner, if that is any help.

Yours sincerely,
Eileen Bliss Lauer

Jewells,
Faussett Hill,
Street End,
Canterbury,
Kent

Dear Editor,

Re the photo on page 23 of the Lioness, No. 1 1980. I am almost certain that the Junior Commander is Miss JANSON-POTTS.

I was part of the ATS Company that she commanded — the 21st County of London, but our platoon was attached to the Welsh Guards at Sandown Park, Esher a few miles away.

I keep in touch with some of the girls of our platoon and we are all associate members of the Welsh Guards Association.

It would be nice to hear from any of the Kingston or Esher girls.

Jenny J Wells
(nee Flint)

Mrs B Kilby of 128 Hill Street, Rhymney, Gwent NP2 5TH (W/17814 Pte Betty Andrewartha) would like to hear from anyone who joined the 1st Middlesex Coy ATS at Hendon before the war. She was posted to Jack Straw Castle at Hampstead and later to Bramley near Basingstoke.

Mrs Joan Johnson of Box 18 Gambo, Newfoundland, Canada A0G 2E0 would like to get in touch with anyone who served in 135 (M) HAA Regt RA. She was Pte Ivy Joan Rogers and she served in Romney Marshes, Whitby, Oswestry, Weymouth and in Scotland.

Mrs Joyce Dixon (nee Beetham) of 68 Porlock Drive, Bransholme, Hull served in 514 (M) HAA Battery, 151 Regt for more than four years. Five years ago ten of them had a reunion weekend in London. She would like to know what became of the rest of the GL section of 514 Battery, particularly Chris Jukes, Betty Hill, Edie Heaton and Joan Barrett who all came from the Wolverhampton and Birmingham area, also Doris Taylor, Kenny Baker, Eileen Attreed and C S M Sheppard.



Five members of 514 (M) HAA Battery in 1945.

Miss B Humphreys of 4 Tintern House, Abbots Manor Estate, Victoria, London SW1 would like to hear from anyone who served with 24th (M) HAA Regt RA Between 1939 - 1942.

Greensleeves,
77 Salisbury Road,
Stafford

19 May 1980

Dear Editor,

I do feel that Louise Brown has started something and I can replace her in the "Army Guinness Book of Records" with the attached list of my postings. I attended thirteen different courses and eight TA Camps. I signed off on 5th September 1961 with plain clothes allowance of £4.10.0d! I thoroughly enjoyed all the travelling and wonder how many members I served with will remember me?

Now to beat Miss Morris's record:

16.11.38 Joined 14th Bn Bucks, Drill Hall, Slough

6. 9.39 Called up to 2nd Bn O & B Lt Inf. Slough

15.11.39 No 1 Det RAMC Crookham

15.12.39 ATS Reception Depot, Aldermaston

16. 9.42 No 1 WOHU Radnor Place, Paddington

28.11.42 Chester S/M Group

3. 2.43 Isle of Man Co ATS

20.12.45 583 Coy RASC Chester

18. 2.46 C Coy Sussex Group, Haywards Heath

9. 4.46 ECHU Lingfield

1. 5.46 D Coy SCHQ Group Warminster

1. 8.46 H Coy South Wilts Group, Wilton

1. 2.49 C Coy 9th Bn WRAC

8. 4.49 WOHD Unit Brighton and Embarkation Leave

28. 4.49 Embarked on Empress of Australia

8. 5.49 On Disembarkation A Coy 16th Bn WRAC Fayid

10. 5.49 211 Transit Camp, Ismailia

27. 2.51 Embarked Port Said on Empire Pride to Liverpool

8. 3.51 WOHD Unit Brighton

29. 5.51 7 Bn WRAC Didcot

19. 9.52 316 Sc CMD Bn WRAC/TA Aberdeen

24. 6.54 D & C Training Centre, Salisbury (later moved to Yeovil)

30. 7.57 323 (Staffs) Bn WRAC TA Lichfield (later moved to Stafford)

10. 1.59 327 Bn WRAC TA Duke of York's HQ Chelsea

11. 7.60 Depot and Training Centre WRAC Guildford until service completed on 5th September 1961

On 15 December 1939 Aldermaston Training

Centre came into being and Miss Beston, later Adjutant, formed the Aldermaston T/C Association with the staff. We had annual reunions in London or at Aldermaston, and now meet with permission from the Director at Aldermaston Court annually with a picnic by the lake. We had a most enjoyable reunion last April, with a lovely day as well.

Cpl Bloomfield (now Mrs Upright) and I met on 15th December 1939. We keep in touch and have many get-togethers as she is in Birmingham only a 'phone call away.

Incidentally, the officer, Miss Smallwood, leading the 3rd Warwickshire ATS, in the last issue, was one of our officers at Aldermaston and came to our reunions.

Yours sincerely,
M E Norcott

Mrs York (nee Pte Hughes) of 27c Crescent Road, Rowley Park, Stafford ST17 9AL sent us this photograph taken in 1943 or 1944. The girls belong to 480 (M) HAA Battery of 162 Regiment RA stationed at a camp on the coast near Plymouth. Mrs York also served with 450 (M) HAA Battery, which was the second mixed battery to be formed. She would like to contact anyone who served with either of these two batteries, and hopes that someone will recognise some of the faces in the photograph.



Some of the girls serving with 480 (M) HAA Battery near Plymouth.

Darney House,
Dunkineely,
Co Donegal
Ireland
4 March 1980

BAOR
Lisburn

Bielefeld
N. Ireland. In our 13th
year of marriage we
moved into our 13th
house, and I had had
enough.

Dear Editor,

Having read Mrs Brown's letter in my copy of the Lioness, I felt compelled to put paper into my typewriter. (Bought in 1943, second hand, travelled round with me ever since, and typed many confidential reports, and even Pt I and Pt II Orders in its time!).

I realised with some horror that it was 38 years ago this month that I set off for No 8 ATS Training Centre, Leicester, armed with my gas mask and my little suitcase.

From there my postings, as far as I can remember, were:

Leicester	No 8 ATS Training Centre
Newcastle	PT School
Taunton	S/L Trg Regt (PT Cpl)
Wrexham	ATS Trg Centre (PT Cpl)
Pennicuick	Pre-OCTU
Stirling	Holding Unit
Edinburgh	OCTU
Slough & Stoke Poges	(Pln Comdr)
Durham	NCOs School (Instr)
Warrington	ATS Trg Centre (Instr)
Pontefract	Pre-OCTU Instr
Leicester	Pre-OCTU Instr
Windsor	Pre-OCTU & OCTU Instr
Bicester	QM
Drimond & Bodmin	Army School of Edn (Moved from Scotland to Cornwall)
Winchester	MS & ATS Record Office
Liphook	NCOs Wing (Instr)
Salisbury	Company Commander
Fayid	Company Commander
Cyprus	Company Commander

In Fayid I met my husband backstage in the GHQ Theatre Group. We flew home from Cyprus to get married, and having completed our tour there we served with the RCT in:

BAOR	Hamm, Munster & Paderborn
Shrivenham	
Singapore	
Catterick	

We bought this old farm house, which we did up, and converted pig-sties etc. into workshops, and we run a tiny family craft business. One of the disadvantages of living in peace and quiet is the distance and expense of travelling, and I am sad that I have been unable to attend any Reunions, and have lost touch with many old friends. Correspondence or visits would be welcome.

While in Germany, we had one DWRAC to stay, and one to tea. I was sorry that Eileen Nolan did not become Director until we had retired. We first met when she was a very junior Sub and served in three Units together, and she was my bridesmaid. Our wedding was also attended by the then director, Dame Molly Railton.

During nearly ten years of my service, I was accompanied by my wire-haired Dachsund, "ATS Regulations, 1943" commonly known as Regs, a well known and loved character in a large circle of the Corps. Normally well behaved, he excelled himself by chewing one of RSM Hadley's slippers, burying a bone in CSM Saunders' bedroom chair, and once inspecting the Guard & Fire Picquet, one of the few times he followed perfectly to heel! We now have Emma, very like him in colour, though not such a friendly nature.

I might add that I am the daughter and granddaughter of soldiers, and also have miniatures of great, great grand Uncles in military uniforms. I got a great thrill in Warrington marching into Barracks on Church Parade behind my father's Regimental Band, playing the Regimental March that I had known since my childhood, and wearing one of his old badges. Our son had a WRAC godmother and a REME godfather and is now serving in the Irish Army, having recently completed a tour in the Lebanon with the peace keeping Forces. We do not know if his son will keep up the family tradition as he is only 18 months old!

Do I qualify for the (Army) Guinness Book of Records? But I am sure that many people can beat my record.

Mrs K O'Kelly de Conejera
nee Meredith. Pte to Major ATS & WRAC

Mrs E M Nancarrow of 76 Middle Street, Deal, Kent CT14 6HL writes: "The 11th County of London Company formed in 1938 are still meeting. I was a new girl, not joining until 1939 at Hammersmith. Sgt Solter, Cpl Buddle (now Mrs Toublic), Susie Hayes (Mrs Hamilton), Hilda Fosse (Mrs Hussey) and most of the other 48 had been there since 11 November 1938.

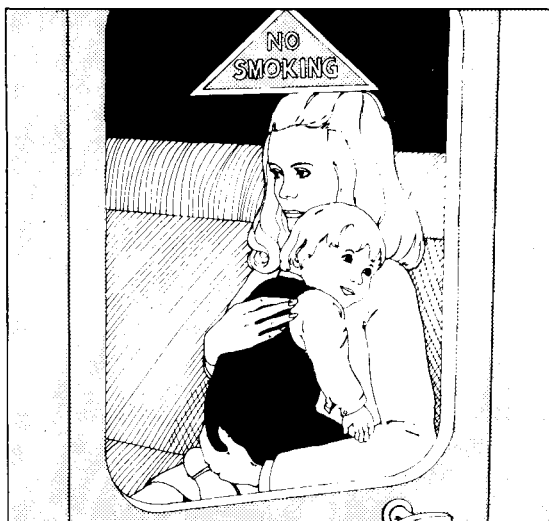
We still meet and always keep in touch. About ten or twelve attend the ATS Luncheon. Some had been together for most of the war, but I rejoined them at the first Albert Hall reunion.

We even have our original Senior Leader Christine Adams, now Mrs Salisbury-Jones, who was a WAAC".

Mrs Nancarrow hopes that any ex member of the 11th County of London Company who has lost touch with the others will write to her.

Mrs P Toublic of 103 Avon Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 2JX also served with 11th County of London Coy and writes: "I have read with interest all the letters in the recent Lioness of longstanding friendships among ATS girls. But I think my old Coy must surely take some beating. We the 11th County of London had our first drill parade at Adam & Eve Mews on 11th Nov 1938, later we were attached to Princess Louise Kensington Regt. As they were a machine gun unit we were not able to serve with them on the outbreak of war, so we were mobilised and sent to join the RE's at Longmoor. Many of us moved around over the war years, but our hearts and roots were there!

About twelve or so meet each year at the ATS Luncheon, and though many are unable to travel and quite a few have died, there must be at least twenty of the old Coy still in touch, including our first Coy Comdr and Sen Ldr. I was married in the Middle East in 1944 and had three Longmoor pals as guests".



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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27 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9BZ.

TRIBUTES

Colonel M K Crewe-Read CBE TD

Many of our members will have been saddened to learn of the death of Colonel Mary Crewe-Read in London on 16th May.

Colonel Crewe-Read joined the ATS at Wrexham in December 1938 and had a varied wartime career, reaching the rank of Chief Commander (Lt Colonel) in 1942 when she commanded No 12 ATS Training Centre at Wrexham. She filled a number of appointments as a Chief Commander between 1942 and 1949 including ADATS HQ 2 AA Group and ADATS HQ London District. In March 1949 she was appointed DDWRAC HQ Western Command and promoted to Colonel. Subsequent appointments included Commandant of the School of Instruction at Hindhead and DDWRAC HQ Eastern Command, from which she retired in 1956.

Brigadier Dame Mary Railton writes:- "There will be many who remember Colonel Crewe-Read during her years of service in both the ATS and the WRAC. I knew her only at the end of her service life, but it is through the years that followed and right up until the time of her death that I remember her most vividly, when as a retired officer she continued to serve her Corps so faithfully and loyally. As a valued member of our Council and Benevolent Funds and as a supporter of all our Reunions and Functions she played her part to the full.

Blessed as she was with good looks and a flair for dress Mary graced any gathering, but perhaps it was her forthrightness and honest approach to the problems of life coupled with a warm heart that so endeared her to us.

The Corps has lost a true and loyal friend — one to be remembered with great affection by many, both young and old".

Mrs J Ling

(ex-Chief Commander ATS)

Those who knew Chief Commander J Ling will be sorry to hear that she died at Froxfield near Marlborough on 23rd August 1979. Brigadier Dame Mary Railton attended the funeral.

OBITUARY

Astbury. Mrs L Astbury (nee Metcalf) of York on 30 March 1980. ATS and WRAC.

Batterham. Mrs A M Batterham (nee Harry) of Townsville, Queensland, Australia on 28 March 1980. QMAAC. Association member since 1931.

Christie. Miss M Christie of Bloomfield Place, Glasgow on 3 January 1980. ATS.

Crewe-Read. Colonel M K Crewe-Read CBE TD of Queen's Gate, London on 16 May 1980. ATS and WRAC.

Fox. Miss G M Fox OBE of Baildon, Yorkshire on 21 March 1980. QMAAC Camp III Abbeville.

Geirnaert. Mrs C E Geirnaert (nee Mordaunt) of Leominster, Herefordshire in April 1980. Chief Commander ATS.

Jones. Mrs F Jones of Victoria Park, Manchester on 27 April 1980. ATS.

Ladyman. Miss Lilian Ladyman (Ladybird) of Antrim, Northern Ireland on 1 February 1980. ATS.

Last. Miss M Last TD of Belvidere, Shrewsbury on 11 April 1980. Subaltern ATS and Major WRAC TA.

Mackintosh. Major A D Mackintosh of Glengarry, East Kilbride on 22 March 1980. ATS and WRAC.

Miller. Mrs B Miller (nee Monk) of Upper Bloomfield Road, Bath on 10 February 1980. ATS.

Nicholson. Miss P Nicholson of Kendal, Cumbria on 1 April 1980. WRAC. Secretary Kendal Branch.

O'Leary. Miss A O'Leary of Linton, Cambs on 25 April 1980. ATS.

Perrett. Miss D E (Perry) Perrett of Bexhill, Sussex on 10 March 1980. W02 ATS.

Stroud. Lieut Colonel D Stroud of Banbury, Oxon on 15 June 1980. ATS and WRAC.

Ventress. Mrs B G Ventress of Tinshill, Leeds. ATS.

Watts. Mrs K A Watts of Chester on 2 October 1979. ATS.

Williams. Miss D Williams of Bognor, Sussex in February 1980. ATS and WRAC.

LONDON GAZETTE

BIRTHDAY HONOURS AND SERVICE AWARDS IN ULSTER

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BEM

Sergeant D M Clough, Sergeant M E Mullany,
Corporal A M McNish

MENTION IN DESPATCHES

Sergeant D A Bond, Private J B Beattie UDR

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Majors: E A Smith, J L Lawson

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A L Tritton, A J Lobb, C M Staples,
D F Davies, J A Jones

Lieutenants: J P R Perry

2/Lieutenants: A D Farmer, V R Hammick,
G Harrison, J E Harrison, S M Joyner,
J B Riley, M R L Stewart, S E Tait

2/Lieutenants (on probation): A Smith,
J M Anderson, E A Newnham

Special Regular Commissions

Captains: L B Smith

Short Service Commissions

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C A Blake, S C Gorford, K L Carruthers,
M L Haywood, P M Watkins, J M Rayne,
B Lowe, J S McLaren, E Brown, J C A Smith

Lieutenants: J Dowson, J M Sugden, L A Wade,
E A Kennedy, B E Richardson, R A Seeckts,
M A Hamilton, D E Baxter, S J Meyer,
K A Lee, J E Marshall, B M Quinlan,
J E Sawyer, S B Marriott, C M Daybell,
A E Jones

2/Lieutenants: M G E Croft, Y Neophytou,
J A Coates, F J W Dennis, B O'Hara,
R D Symes

2/Lieutenants (on probation): H E Colmer,
C R Haigh, J McElwee, A C Rankine,
M A E Turner, S A Wicks, C Woodcock,
J L Hillier, J C J Harper, A R Beisly,
S P Horton, S M Gale, D J Foggin,
C H Merrington-Rust, C D Wilding, C E Ford,
J Knatt, J S Young, A M L Michelli

RETIREMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Regular Army

Lieutenant Colonel: J M F S Tait

Major: J R Allt, E G Pritchard-Davies,
J Cato-Symonds

Captains: P Pounds, I J Horner, S E Forbes,
A M H Barrington-Ward

Lieutenants: A Z G Sherburn

Short Service Commissions

Captains: A D Squire, K M Howie, B Lowe

Lieutenants: J A Capon, L A Franklin, S M Kerr

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