

1984

No 1

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Vol. LVI

1984

No. 1

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SHOPPING LIST

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For the first time we have managed a price reduction in the SHOPPING LIST. Corps shields, which went up to £9, have been reduced to £8.50 as we have found a more competitive supplier.

WRAC STAFF BAND

Engagements

February 26	Horse Rangers Association Parade London am
March 9-10	Concert, Civic Hall, Guildford (with Guildford Operatic Company)
24	WRAC Association AGM, London
25	WRAC Association Church Service, RH Chelsea
25	Festival of Youth Concert, Woking pm
April 28-19	Burma Star Association Annual Reunion, London
May 27 - 1 June	Concerts, Bandstand Eastbourne
June 22-24	Aldershot Army Display
July 4	Fleet Carnival
7-8	Finals of Tennis, Wimbledon
12	Corps Dinner Night, London
15-21	Concerts — St James Park Sunday 3-4.30 pm & 6-7.30 pm Monday - Saturday 12.30 - 2 pm & 5.30 - 7 pm
August 1-4	Colchester Searchlight Tattoo Performances 8.15 pm (Saturday only, 3 & 8.15 pm)
5	Military Tattoo — Milton Keynes
19-25	Concerts — Regents Park Sunday 3-4.30 pm & 6-7.30 pm Monday - Saturday 12.30 - 2 pm & 5.30 - 7 pm
26 - 1 Sept	Concerts — Bournemouth

PRESENTATIONS

LSGC

Sgt Susan Marcroft was presented with her LSGC by Col R Ching, Comd APSG, at the Army Careers Information Office, Blackheath on November 22nd last year.

ARMY BOARD DINNER

On December 8th 1983 the Army Board of the Defence Council gave a Dinner in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

It was held in the State Apartments and attended by twenty-four people with Field Marshal Lord Harding of Petherton aged 83 as the senior military guest. The guests were received by the Secretary of State for Defence, the Right Honourable Michael Heseltine MP.

It was an historic occasion and is to be immortalised in a specially commissioned painting by the artist Edward Hall. He was allowed to make the preliminary sketches for the painting of the gathering during the meal in the State Drawing Room which looked magnificent with beautiful floral arrangements and the regimental silver of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards. After Dinner three pipers piped a Pibroch and then the Chief of the General Staff, General Sir John Stanier, welcomed the guests in a truly splendid speech.

For the first time in recent history the Army Board decided to invite a representative of the Women's services of the Army and the Deputy Controller Commandant, Brigadier Eileen Nolan, had the honour of attending this superb occasion and being presented to the Commandant-in-Chief.

In her thanks to the Army Board, Brigadier Nolan said she was sure that all members of the Women's Royal Army Corps would share her pride in the honour and recognition accorded to the Corps by this invitation.



A smiling Sgt Marcroft after the presentation.



WO2 Jean McGovern receiving her LSGC from Col Nan Robertson, Comd WRAC UKLF.

Cover Photograph

Brigadier Helen Meechie, DWRAC with Brigadier Dame Mary Tyrwhitt, DWRAC 1949-1950 and DATS 1946-1949. This year and month mark the 35th anniversary of the formation of our Corps on February 1st 1949.

Our cover photograph shows the first and the present Director of the WRAC, the two youngest officers ever to have held the appointment.

COMMANDER IN CHIEF'S COMMENDATION

On November 9th last year Mrs Jones (Ex Pte Jones 1 Sqn) who had been awarded the Commander in Chief's commendation, attended a presentation ceremony in HQ UKLF. The Commander in Chief General Sir Frank Kitson, presented Mrs Jones with her award and congratulated her on her excellent work during the Falkland Islands emergency.

Following the presentation, Mrs Jones and her husband LCpl Jones (3 Para), together with her mother and other members of the family, were invited for coffee and sherry with the CO 10 Sig Regt (HQ UKLF), Lt Col P B Webster, and members of the regiment.



L-R: Brigadier H G Meechie, DWRAC; General Sir Frank Kitson, C in C; Lt Col P B Webster, CO 10 Sig Regt (UKLF); Mrs Jones; LCpl Jones and Mrs Harris.

GOC'S COMMENDATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND LCPL T L PARKES - 181 PRO COY WRAC

Mrs W Stewart, formerly LCpl Tina Parkes of 181 Pro Coy WRAC was presented with her award of a GOC's Commendation in Northern Ireland on 5 December 1983.

LCpl Parkes was a volunteer searcher who, whilst on operational duty in Belfast in January 1983, was asked to intervene in a fight which had broken out among a number of women who were part of an unruly mob. She managed to

calm the situation in a dignified and sensible manner and maintained order until the Royal Ulster Constabulary arrived. For her courage and her prompt and decisive action the GOC Northern Ireland awarded her a Commendation.



Mrs Stewart receiving her award from Major General J D G Pank.

HEADQUARTER MESS

It was one of last summer's hottest days when members of Headquarter Mess assembled on July 9th for the last AGM to be held at the WRAC College in Camberley.

162 officers attended the luncheon party which followed the AGM, and were later entertained to an open-air concert by the WRAC Staff Band.

Lt Col Naomi Christy brought her camera to record the occasion, at which all but three of the past Directors of the WRAC were present.



L-R:

Back Row: Brig Helen Meechie, Brig Sheila Heaney, Brig Dame Jean Rivett-Drake, Brig Anne Field, Brig Eileen Nolan.

Front Row: Brig Dame Mary Colvin, Brig Dame Mary Tyrwhitt, Brig Dame Mary Railton.

CONGRATULATIONS

We offer our congratulations to:

Lt E P Forster who has won the Director's Prize for Conducting at Kneller Hall, and becomes the Director of Music in March this year.

LCpl H M Corlett, WRAC Staff Band who received the Naomi Wallace Award in 1983. This is an annual award to a musician of high musical ability, presented by the Worshipful Company of Musicians in memory of Naomi Wallace who served in the ATS.

The WRAC Platoon at the RAOC Training Battalion and Depot who held a sponsored charity disco on November 3rd last year in the Blackdown NAAFI, and raised almost £200. Special congratulations to LCpl Ireland who raised £52. The money has gone to the Army Benevolent Fund and the Royal Star & Garter Home.

Capt E K Jackson BA who was awarded the Royal Signals Rose Bowl in 1983 for her work while serving with 22 Signal Regiment in BAOR.

Brigadier Dame Mary Tyrwhitt who celebrated her 80th birthday on December 27th and was the first Director of the WRAC.

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Sergeants will be welcomed.

MEMORIES OF BEIRUT AND THE LEBANON

Capt R M Nichols WRAC (Retd)

I first saw Beirut when on leave from Cairo in early 1944 – little guessing that I would be posted there about 6 months later. Beirut was an attractive town about the size of Aldershot with some fairly modern flats, only two hotels and no high rise buildings. It was very humid in the summer and could be very cold in the winter.

We lived in the Service Women's Club on the sea front which was really intended for leave or short visits but was the only suitable accommodation for serving women. Later on we moved into a flat.

There were two other ATS officers in Beirut when I arrived, a staff captain at District HQ and the other working at the leave camp some way outside the town.

The SSAFA office where I worked, was in the middle of the town next to a shop which sold brocade, jewellery and ornaments of all kinds. It was owned by three brothers called Terzi who were the landlords of the building in which SSAFA had an office on the first floor. On the other side of the road was a Christian Arab called Simon who sold coffee to all the shops in the area. He made it under the stairs and we leant out of the window and clapped our hands and put up fingers to denote the number of cups we wanted. Then five minutes later he would bring it up. He was very attentive, and in the cold weather would bring us small glasses of brandy free! This became rather embarrassing as he would arrive at about 3 pm and say "Cold today, cognac!" When we said that we could not be found drinking brandy in the office in the middle of the afternoon, he would bring it in coffee cups! I realised after a while that one of the objects of his visits was to learn English.

Life was full of parties and dances and there were some very attractive restaurants, and numerous night clubs in Beirut. After I had been there for a few months a WAAF officer came to work with me, and we shared the office with the Red Cross.

My job entailed a great deal of travelling. We went to Damascus once a week by staff car and to Baalbek once a month. Tripoli and Aleppo

were visited once a month, which meant transport to Tripoli where we stayed a night then by train to Aleppo for two nights. My first visit to Tripoli and Aleppo was by the ordinary train and was very slow. Coming back from Tripoli to Beirut the train got to a rise in the terrain and three times the engine pulled the train nearly to the top and ran back to the bottom. This was viewed with delight by many peasants who were standing beside the line to cheer. Eventually the guard got out from the back of the train and walked up to the front (without the train stopping!) and he got it over the crest accompanied by much applause from the onlookers!

After this episode I was provided with a truck to go to Tripoli and permission to travel on a fast electric train for the rest of the journey. I visited the Souk in Aleppo which is about 3 square miles of underground markets. One could get lost very quickly, so I was glad to have a guide.

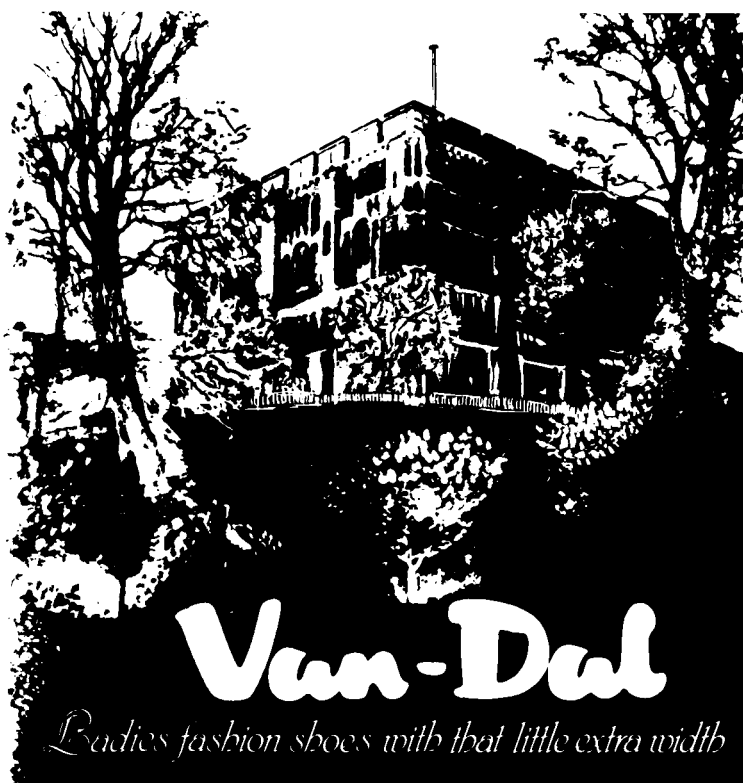
Shopping in Beirut needed much care and patience. I bargained with the Terzi brothers for at least a month over a piece of jewellery, which I eventually got for the price I was prepared to pay. I used to take the girls shopping when they came to the Club on leave, to make sure that they were not cheated.

The drive to Damascus through the mountains to the Bekaa valley was quite stunning. We became used to the hairpin bends and dangerous corners but visitors were sometimes very nervous. Up in the mountains the people would stow the frozen snow in caves during the winter, and in the summer one would meet donkeys carrying it down to the towns in great blocks. Mount Hermon could be seen in the distance, covered in snow summer and winter.

I had visited the ruins at Baalbek with a guide when on leave from Egypt. They are quite superb, and my first thought was to visit the ruins again when I was in Baalbek on duty.

As one approached Damascus the road was not so mountainous and we saw the rivers at the side of the road. ("Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?") One day we drove into a swarm of locusts, fortunately not a bad swarm. The mountain sides in spring are covered in anemones and lilies, and later on wild figs and grapes grow everywhere.

Senior Commander Cundy Cooper from GHQ visited me and we drove up to the Cedars of Lebanon. It was a breathtaking drive but there are very few cedars left after all this time. Some-



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times we could get away to the mountains for a weekend in a local bus (complete with goats). Coming down the mountain one needed strong nerves as the buses raced to overtake each other on the hairpin bends, to shouts of encouragement from the passengers.

I was in Beirut to celebrate VE Day on May 8th 1945. Poor Beirut; I can't imagine it now!

THE DAY WE WENT BACK

We were on holiday in Somerset and wondered if we should go and look at the places we'd known and loved when we first met in 1947 when I was in ATS Signals and my husband was in the Parachute Regiment with the Glider Pilots.

It was a hot day just like those summer days of 1947, and we had carried in our minds a picture of the place where we first met. Was it rose-coloured with the reflection of our love and would we destroy our illusions by going back?

Driving through Dorset we stopped for petrol near the town where my husband had once been

in hospital. "Do you know the Military Hospital which used to be here?" asked my husband. "Oh, that burned down some years ago". We hoped that all our memories wouldn't have vanished so irrevocably.

A little further down the road we stopped to look at the badges which are carved on the chalk hillside. There was the "Jimmy" badge of the Signals which I'd worn so proudly over my left breast pocket. Several County Regiments were also represented. We'd never seen these before although stationed so near.

It was not quite "opening time" when we pulled up outside Wilton House. The huge gateway with the horseman still looked as imposing as it did when Southern Command Signal Office was in a hut in the grounds and we had felt like ants beneath it as we went in carrying our "ration box" containing bread, margarine, tea and milk ready for our duty.

The magnificent fountain which I glimpsed through the gates had no part in my memories as the big house wasn't open to the public then. I had a word with the very smart man at the gate, "Hut in the grounds with a blast wall around it?" "Oh no, no wartime reminders here." The tourists were now arriving in force, many cars

and a whole bus load from Germany. This had no part in our memories so we left.

We found our way into Salisbury but it was market day and difficult to park. My husband was driving so I was looking around and I thought that I spotted where the NAAFI Club had been, the site now occupied by a supermarket.

Making our way to Bulford we went through Amesbury and there was the short hill where the mass of snow in early 1947 had blocked the road and prevented me from visiting my husband in hospital. I could still see in my mind the high white walls on either side when they finally cleared a way through.

Boscombe Down airfield seemed even more busy than in the days when we'd been puzzled by the planes being over before the sound reached us. We hadn't yet heard of jets. Joe's Cafe was gone but the Garrison Church still stood proudly. We'd have liked to have got married there but I was an only daughter and Mum wanted us to be married from home.

Ah! There was the cinema where a military policeman had said to us "Soldiers and ATS will not walk with arms round each other". It was dark and we hadn't thought that we'd be noticed. "This is my wife", replied my husband. "All right, I haven't seen you" he said. You see, they did have a heart!

My husband was asking which turning to take as things were beginning to look unfamiliar. "Tin Town" was gone except for about three corrugated iron structures either forgotten or being kept in memory of the "good old days". "Turn left now, I think", yes, this was the road and there was the MI room where I'd hobbled with my chilblains, still a Medical Centre.

After that it was easy to find our way to New Ward Barracks where 2 Company 3 Command Signals had been billeted, although more houses had been added. There was an open space as the houses went round in a crescent and our youngest son aged twelve years, who was getting a bit bored hearing his Mum and Dad exclaiming over this and that, was delighted to see swings, slides etc on the grass. It all looked more open and brighter now; the chestnut fencing was gone and the white paint on the windows looked fresh. The front gardens were open-plan, which was just as well because we were hoping that our son would take a photograph of us both under one of the front windows. This was the exact spot where our company clerk had photographed us 35 years before, when we had got engaged. As

we stood there waiting for Steve to focus we thought of all the girls who we had known, especially the girl who took the photograph. We wondered if her marriage had been as successful as ours, because soon after taking the snap she went to America to marry her GI whom she had known for only six weeks before he had been posted to the Far East.



Elsie and Arthur Robinson (Easy Love Sugar and Yorky) April 1947. Outside House 50, New Ward Barracks.

A young blonde lady appeared at the back door of the house where I had shared a downstairs room with another girl. I walked across to explain why we were standing gazing around and found that she was German and not long in England. That very much underlined the new role of the modern Army. As she spoke little English I was unable to explain how changed the houses seemed to be. Then I glimpsed a radiator behind her back. When we had frozen in the terrible winter of 1947 the only heating had been from a coal stove in the very small kitchen which was also equipped with a coal-fired copper for boiling clothes.

After Steve had taken the photo, we left the camp by a road which gave us a view of the "Kiwi", the bird cut in the chalk hillside by NZ soldiers during the 1914-1918 war. I remembered my first sight of it when I arrived at the

camp all those years ago, and wondered what on earth it was.

As we left the camp I thought of all the girls. There was Cpl Dot, Bobbie Dodds, Sgt Maggie in charge of the operators, and numerous others. Although we were only a small unit we used to make a ceremony out of pay parade although we got only £1 a week which included trade pay!

We returned by way of Stonehenge and noted that ancient monument had changed a bit since the days when I had cycled out to it from Bulford, and had got off my bike and wandered round free of charge.

We decided that we were glad to have returned and seen the vast improvements in most things, and we very much hoped that things had turned out as well for all the other girls as they had for YORKY (my husbands nickname) and Easy Love Sugar (my initials, which had to be sent at the end of messages).



Elsie and Arthur Robinson taken at the same spot by their son Stephen in August 1982.

VACANCY IN ROYAL MONMOUTHSHIRE ROYAL ENGINEERS (MILITIA) FOR A TERRITORIAL ARMY PAYMASTER

The senior territorial army unit is looking for a retired WRAC officer who wants to supplement her income by becoming the unit paymaster (TA).

If you are living in the Forest of Dean, South Herefordshire or East Gwent and want to add a little excitement to life, please apply to the Commanding Officer, R NIB RE (M), The Castle, Monmouth, Gwent NP5 3BS.

"WITH THIS RING"

by

Mike Nicholas

**Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families
Association**

Following on this familiar passage from the wedding ceremony, a serviceman, could make a further declaration, "... and I endow thee with SSAFA's help for the rest of thy life." On her marriage to a serviceman or an ex-serviceman the bride receives a very special wedding present, the gift of SSAFA's care and friendship whenever she should need it.

Take the cases of Christine aged 20, Pauline aged 51 and Gladys who will be 86 this year. You wouldn't think that they would have much in common, but they do because they all married into the services. Christine married a corporal in the REME, and is expecting their first baby. When she arrived in BAOR she was visited by the SSAFA Nursing Sister who keeps a careful eye on her and will see her through the birth of her baby and post natal care. Chris will bring her baby for regular visits to the clinic in the Medical Centre. The SSAFA Social Worker too is always available to help her — particularly in the case of some private worry which, if she were at home, she might discuss with her mother.

Pauline's husband did his National Service in the RAF, and they married after his demob in 1951. With their family grown up and her husband in a good job, life was secure and happy. Tragedy struck when she was diagnosed as suffering from multiple sclerosis. Her condition steadily deteriorated and to add to their misery, he was made redundant. SSAFA heard of their plight and moved in quickly. Money was found to buy a battery car and pay some outstanding bills. The local SSAFA representative continues to be in regular touch with them. They know that they now have a friend who is always at hand to help when things get rough.

Gladys's husband died in 1960. He had served as a Leading Stoker in one of the battle cruisers at Jutland. Gladys is by no means destitute but she was living alone, her eyesight was failing and she suffered badly from arthritis. Neighbours were concerned and asked SSAFA to keep an eye on her. She hadn't realised that she was entitled to SSAFA's help. The representative visited her

at least once a week, organised her shopping and laundry and generally ensured that she was safe and comfortable. The time came when she was no longer capable of coping on her own and SSAFA persuaded the Social Services to take her into sheltered housing.

What is SSAFA? The Association was founded in 1885 by Colonel James Gildea of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and an influential group of well-to-do Victorian philanthropists. Life could be very hard in those days for the wife of a sailor or soldier, particularly so in the case of the latter who was not "on the strength" of the regiment. This meant that she had no married quarter, rations or allowances. Life became even tougher for the service wife when the sailor went to sea and the regiment went abroad, leaving the wives behind sometimes for several years. And so it was these unfortunates whom Colonel Gildea, encouraged by Princess (later Queen) Alexandra determined to help. The purpose of its foundation then is just as valid today – to care for the families of all men and women who serve or have ever served in the Armed Forces and Reserves.

Who are the SSAFA people? First of all, the Ladies in Grey. In order that Service families overseas should receive the same health and social care available to civilian families at home, the Ministry of Defence asked SSAFA to provide a professional nursing and social service for which they would pay, but the responsibility for recruiting and administration would lie with SSAFA. The uniformed professional Nursing Sisters/Health Visitors and Social Workers are stationed throughout the overseas garrisons in BAOR, Gibraltar, Cyprus and Hong Kong. Social Workers are also stationed with six of the UK garrisons.

In many ways, of course, the family medical and social problems encountered by the Health Visitors and Social Workers are the same as their civilian counterparts. But there are some important differences – probably the most significant being what the Social Worker describes as "the lack of the extended family".

Due to good pay and availability of married quarters, servicemen are able to marry at a young age and generally their brides are even younger. Within a few months of marriage they may find themselves overseas in a foreign country, in a strange environment and, initially, lacking in friends. Add to this the strangeness of setting up a home for the first time – budgeting, house-keeping and even cooking. The young bride has

no Mum, Granny or elder sister to turn to if things go wrong. She will probably also be on her own for weeks at a time with her husband away on detachment or exercise. She may be expecting her first baby. And so it is to the SSAFA Health Visitor and the Social Worker that she can turn. They will become the surrogate "Mum" in many instances and will combine to develop the self confidence that she will need to become a capable service wife. The Social Workers also act as an important link between overseas and close family at home. Should they be worried by bad news, or even no news, the Social Worker will link up with the nearest SSAFA representative at home in order that problems can be eased and up-to-date information obtained.

About 80% of SSAFA's massive task involves ex-service families. It is the 3000 voluntary representatives organised into 1200 Branches in the UK and Republic of Ireland who undertake this work. SSAFA is never far away. You can find your nearest representative through the Social Services or the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Last year more than 46,000 cases were looked after and more than £1¼ million disbursed in financial grants, most of this money coming from the many service charities for whom SSAFA acts as agent. Debt is by far the largest problem today; the payment of rent arrears, fuel costs, funeral bills and purchases of clothing being the most common needs. Apart from the financial help, the voluntary representative is always at hand to give advice, particularly on entitlement of statutory benefits and pensions, comfort in distress and just plain friendship when life is an uphill struggle.

There are probably around 15 million people in Britain today who are entitled to SSAFA's help should they ever need it. The pity is that there are so many who are unaware of their entitlement. They may struggle on for years before SSAFA finds them.

Voluntary representatives are always needed, particularly in the urban centres. The most important qualities for a representative are mature judgment, dedication and above all compassion. Some have full time jobs, others do not. Some have previous experience of the services but by no means all. Working expenses are paid and a training course given. If you would like to help SSAFA to sustain its vital work by joining its ranks as a volunteer case worker, you should write to The Secretary, SSAFA, 27 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9BZ, Tel: 01-222 9221.

Lois retires on gold hat-trick

Lois Woodhouse has retired from competitive sport while she is at the top, with three gold medals to her credit in 1982. Which is not a bad record in view of the fact that she is a pensioner and her sporting activities are restricted to a wheelchair.

A founder member about seven years ago of the West Lancashire Sports Club for the Disabled, Lois has been a familiar figure at Friday night meetings. Her record is impressive. As a standing competitor in 1977 she won a table tennis silver medal at the Queen's Silver Jubilee Festival of Sport followed by a gold medal and trophy also for table tennis, at the British Sports Association for the Disabled regional games at Lancaster University which was followed by selection for the National Games at Stoke Mandeville. In 1978 she was awarded her club's William Everett Memorial Trophy for the most outstanding sports person of the year, and was elected as sports secretary.

Lois' response to having to revert to being a wheelchair competitor was to carry off the gold medal for table tennis at the Tameside Multi-Disabled Games and the silver medal for javelin, to be followed by a gold medal for table tennis at the BSAD Senior Regional Games at Lancaster and selection again in 1978 for the National Games. She also won a silver medal for medicine ball at her first attempt!

Lois literally had a "field day" at the Liverpool Paraplegic Sports Club day that year, winning the gold medal for table tennis, and the silver medal for javelin, shot and discus.

A 1979 hat-trick for table tennis, winning gold at Warrington, gold in the regional games at Stockport and gold followed by silver for doubles at Bolton was followed by two further golds the following year. Shortly after she became too ill to compete and missed all events in the International Year for the Disabled in 1981.

Lois Woodhouse served in the ATS from 1939-1944 and is a long-standing member of the Association. She lives in Pennington Avenue, Ormskirk, and was an all rounder at hockey, tennis, cricket, riding and fencing before

becoming disabled. Sadly, after a hat-trick of gold medals at Liverpool, Bolton, and Warrington in 1982, she has decided to retire from all competitive sport due to further deterioration of health. Nevertheless she has a stack of honours to admire as a just record for her superb efforts over the years.



A justly proud Lois Woodhouse with her medals.

BOOK REVIEW

A TRUE WAR STORY

By GWEN WOODCOCK

Mrs Woodcock has written a short and very graphic account of life as a recruiting NCO in the ATS. Most of her service was spent in Hull where she endured night after night of the blitz, followed by long intensely busy days with no time even for lunch.

Ex ATS who were recruited by Mrs Woodcock, or served in the area, will have their memories stirred, and may even find themselves in the many excellent snapshots which illustrate the booklet.

The book is for sale price £1.20 postage and packing inclusive, from Mrs Woodcock, 59 Westgarth Avenue, Endike Lane, Hull HU6 8LT or Mrs Dixon, 68 Porlock Drive, Bransholme, Hull HU7 4HZ.

LIAISON & EXCHANGE IN WASHINGTON DC

Sgt S Ballard WRAC

Ten months ago, I was fortunate enough to be selected for the new post that had been created in the British Embassy, Washington DC. With my impending departure to the United States only three months ahead, I had many administrative and personal details to take care of and in no time at all I found myself boarding the scheduled RAF flight bound for Washington.

My first task on arrival was finding accommodation as there are no military facilities available. The hunt for an apartment ended sooner than expected and after living in a hotel for two weeks, I was able to move into my new home in Arlington, Virginia. Public transport is virtually non-existent in the Washington area and my apartment is approximately ten miles from the Embassy, so my next task was to find a car. This turned out to be more difficult but eventually success prevailed and I became yet another commuter, getting caught in the endless traffic jams which are part of everyday life in Washington DC.

The British Embassy is a large six storey building situated next door to the Naval Observatory (which incidentally houses the Vice President's official residence) on Massachusetts Avenue in North West Washington. It is one of the largest embassies in the District with a staff in excess of 400, of whom less than 10% are military. The 10% are the Army and RAF personnel working within the Embassy. The British Navy Staff is located with the United States Navy five miles away in Crystal City. My job on the Army Staff is one of clerical support for the Liaison and Exchange Officer/NCOs who are scattered throughout 16 States in at least 25 different locations.

Now that I have been in the United States for more than six months I realise what a false impression I had of America before I arrived. Skyscrapers just do not exist in Washington DC, and in fact the tallest building in the District is the Washington Monument which stands some 555 feet halfway down the Mall from Capitol Hill where the American equivalent of the Houses of Parliament stands. Apparently, there is an unwritten law that no building is allowed to exceed the height of the Monument within the

District, so those famous skyscrapers will never exist here.

The Monument is one of a long list of places to see in the Washington area, other examples being the Botanical Gardens, the Air and Space Museum, the Zoo, Pentagon, Arlington Cemetery (with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Eternal Flame for John F Kennedy), the Lincoln Memorial and of course the renowned White House.

I have never before seen so many trees in a large city. Practically every street and avenue is lined with trees and in the autumn they offer a spectacular display of different shades of red, brown, orange and yellow which is fantastic. Driving along the parkways one is inclined to think that one is in the heart of the country, and not the capital of the United States.

Shopping here is generally quite a pleasant, dry experience, as the majority of shops are located in large, well maintained malls. Opening hours are different from UK as most shops stay open until 9 pm during the week and are open for about six hours on Sundays.

During September I was able to take my first holiday and decided to spend two weeks travelling north in the New England area. I drove through nine different States, staying at various places including Boston, Cape Cod, Acadia National Park and the White Mountains of New Hampshire. The weather seemed to change from one place to the next and by the end of the holiday I had experienced 99⁰ of sunshine, a day of non stop rain, and rather cold night time temperatures. On the whole it was a most enjoyable holiday and I am now looking forward to my next break in the New Year. This time I shall be heading south towards the sun in Florida and New Orleans with my mother.

Although the Americans and British lifestyles are different in many ways, life in general is most enjoyable across the Atlantic.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members are reminded that Association subscriptions run from 1 January to 31 December and should be paid by 31 December. The February issue of *Lioness* is not sent to members whose subscriptions have not been paid.

Who cares? – the Royal Star & Garter

Since 1916 The Royal Star and Garter has been a true Home for disabled ex-Servicemen of all ranks. Initially residents were all war casualties, but today those with acute or chronic disabilities sustained in Service, or since returning to civilian life can be admitted. We are now able to accept disabled ex-

Servicewomen as well. Admissions can also be short term in the excellent rehabilitation unit.

We depend on your charity so...

Will you help us? With a donation (preferably by covenant) or you might like to remember us with a legacy.



We care for them!
Will you care for us?



The Royal
STAR & GARTER

Home for Disabled Sailors, Soldiers & Airmen.
Richmond, Surrey TW10 6RR. Tel: 01-940 3314

Registered Charity No. 210119

"EXERCISE NOSTALGIA"

Mary Aplin
Plymouth Branch

On the weekend of 12th to 14th August last year, a group of members of the Plymouth branch spent the weekend at Maker Camp, just across the border in Cornwall. This camp housed a mixed Battery during the last war and most of the camp remains as it was then, including the nissen huts and the gun sites. The camp is now owned by Devon County Council and is used during term-time by local schools, but civil organisations are allowed to use it during the school holidays.

Maker Camp is situated at the highest point around Plymouth, with magnificent views across Plymouth Sound. A short climb down brings us into the fishing village of Cawsand where, incidentally, Napoleon's ship was anchored after Waterloo.

We arrived on Friday evening, where an extremely good meal was ready for us, cooked by the civilian staff. We had not organised anything for that evening, so after settling in three or four to a room, a good deal of reminiscing took place!

On the Saturday morning we had a talk on first aid in the home by a member of the Red Cross, which was both interesting and edifying. Lunch was a picnic, and as the weather was glorious, we sat on the grass and watched yachts and even Brittany Ferries sail past. It was very peaceful and delightful. During the afternoon some of our members went into Cawsand where the annual Carnival was being held, and after having a pleasant swim returned for another delicious evening meal. On Saturday evening we enjoyed a Wine and Cheese Party, when some of our non-resident members joined us. The local hostelry was then invaded by the more energetic of our group and I doubt if the place has been the same since!

Sunday morning saw us all on our way to Maker Church, where Morning Service was being held. The local Vicar had certainly done his homework and was very genuine in the welcome he gave us. Lunch-time and the time for departure came all too quickly. We had once again been blessed with perfect weather and the Camp staff were very helpful and looked after us exceedingly well. The Camp Warden was in REME for 27 years and enjoyed the weekend as much as we did!

The weekend was so successful that we are going to have another camp from 3rd to 5th August 1984 and extend an invitation to any members who would like to join us. We have provisionally planned the following:

Arrive Friday	Transport will be available
afternoon/evening.	from Plymouth Station
Saturday morning.	Bring and Buy Sale
Saturday evening.	Concert and/or Cheese and Wine Party
Sunday morning.	Open-air Service.

There will be a bar throughout the weekend and various raffles, etc.

The weekend will include accommodation (mainly barrack room style) for 2 nights with cooked breakfasts and evening meals and packed lunches. We are unable to give a firm cost, but it will be in the region of £25 for everything except travel to Plymouth.

PROVISIONAL BOOKING FORM "EXERCISE NOSTALGIA" MAKER CAMP, CORNWALL 3 - 5 AUGUST 1984

Name
(BLOCK LETTERS)

Address
(BLOCK LETTERS)

.....
.....

Telephone number

Branch

1. I would like to attend the weekend at Maker Camp.
2. On the Saturday I would prefer:
 - a. River trip
 - b. Visit to Cawsand
 - c. Visit to Plymouth(Delete as necessary)

Signed

Please return to: Miss M Aplin, 11 De La Hay Avenue, Plymouth, Devon PL3 4HS by 31st March 1984, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

WREATH LAYING AT RAVENSBRUECK Captain A C Williams WRAC

On September 6th a group from HQ British Commanders in Chief's Mission to HQ Soviet Forces in Germany (BRIXMIS) visited the site of the Ravensbrueck Concentration Camp, which lies some 50 miles north of East Berlin. The aim of the visit was to lay a wreath to commemorate the British victims of the Nazis' only concentration camp for women and children. The servicewomen in the party were Capt A C Williams, Sgt M H Haw, Cpl J Boland, LCpl S M Burnell — all WRAC — and Capt V Longhorn QARANC. We were all members, or married to members, of BRIXMIS. The visit was kindly arranged by the Soviet liaison staff in Potsdam and two Soviet officers, including Lt Valentina Anufrieva, accompanied us.

Ravensbrueck lies on the edge of a beautiful lake opposite the town of Fuerstenberg. The National Memorial site occupies a small part of the former camp, much of which was burnt down after its liberation by the Soviets in April 1945 to prevent the outbreak of epidemics.

We were shown a very moving film describing the appalling history of Ravensbrueck. Over 92,000 of the 120,000 women and children held in the camp died before liberation came, including several thousand who perished on the infamous forced death march towards the Baltic in April 1945.

We were then taken round the National Memorial which has preserved the former camp Kommandatura, the punishment cell block, the crematorium and the site of the gas chambers, which the SS had dynamited. A member of the National Memorial administration, who was a former inmate, told us that we were the first official British party to visit Ravensbrueck. She said that most of the British prisoners had been repatriated early in 1945 under the auspices of the Red Cross, including Odette Churchill GC. The only British victims of whom she had any details were Violette Szabo (of "Carve her name with pride" fame who served in the ATS), Lillian Rolfe and Denise Bloch, all of whom had been captured whilst with the French Resistance. They arrived in the camp in late 1944 as special Gestapo prisoners and were shot in January 1945

in a passageway next to the punishment bunker.

Finally we moved to the two memorials to the victims of Ravensbrueck. One, a monolith topped by a statue of a woman holding a female corpse in her arms, stands on the lakeside, facing the town of Fuerstenberg. The other memorial is a long brick wall on the site of the gas chambers. Each country from which victims came has its own section, about ten yards long, and an impressive rose bed is planted in front of it.



The British section of the Memorial Wall.

Assisted by Sgt Haw and LCpl Burnell, Lt Col Giles laid a wreath on behalf of all the servicemen and servicewomen in BRIXMIS. After he had made a short moving speech of remembrance, we all saluted the memorial and observed a respectful minute of silence.

As we drove back to Potsdam we all agreed that the visit had been a harrowing experience and a glimpse into the ghastly reality of the Nazi past. We were proud, though, to have been given the opportunity and the honour to pay our respects to the victims of that infamous place.



The card attached to the wreath of roses laid in memory of the British women who perished at Ravensbrueck.

SPORT

WRAC GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

Individual Scratch Competition

- 1st WO1 K J Bettison
2nd Brig H G Meechie

Individual Handicap Competition

- 1st WO1 K J Bettison
2nd Maj M A Harwood

18 Holes Greensome Stableford Competition

- 1st Brig H G Meechie and Maj M A Harwood
2nd Maj V E Trout and Lt M A S Phillips

WRAC GOLF SOCIETY

Sgt M A Bradshaw
ACIO Leeds

Although known to most people, especially regular players, as the "Royal & Ancient" sport, golf is relatively new to the WRAC. But the last 18 months has seen the emergence of the game on a regular basis, and the formation of the WRAC Golf Society, thanks largely to the efforts of our secretary, WO1 Kate Bettison.

Since 1982, the Society has held a quarterly "medal" competition at the Army Golf Club, Aldershot, and we have now held two annual Championships. There have also been two Inter-Corps Matches: against the RE — who soundly beat us, and against the ACC in September this year. This match proved to be our "Ryder Cup", since the teams were all square with the last pair out on the course. Our member of that last pair, and the heroine of the day, was Col Anne Clissitt who won for herself, and for the Corps, on the 18th green! A memorable and exciting finish, and our first win.

We are pleased to have some good and experienced golfers in our midst who have previously been lurking unknown in the Corps. Among them are LCpl Carol Hampshire whose father is a golf professional, Major Sheila Johncey who was virtually brought up on a golf course, and Sgt Lisa Eadie who is this year's Lady Captain at her own golf club. These and other more experienced players have been

patient and encouraging with the complete beginners who have come along and "had a go", and subsequently have become hooked on this fascinating game. Recognition is spreading now that we are getting help and active encouragement from the men of the Army Golf Association, and we are now proudly wearing our own logo on our sweaters.

Our days on the course are very enjoyable and have not been without incident and mirth — not least of which was when one of our most respected members mistook our Director (playing ahead on the fairway) for a (small) tree, and aimed straight for her! WHOOPS!! (Luckily she missed).

If there are any more of you budding Nancy Lopez's out there in the Corps, please contact us through your PTI. Our numbers are swelling and we would like Golf to be a "driving force" in the Corps, before too long!

OLD GIRLS REUNION AT BLACKDOWN BARRACKS

Last July four "old girls" of Blackdown Barracks returned ten years after they completed their A3 Shorthand Writers Course, to see the barracks and meet some of the permanent staff.

Mrs Julia Pearson and Mrs Lengden were posted to 29 Company BAOR after their course, and were joined by Mrs Wren after she had done a tour in Aldershot and Mill Hill. Mrs Pat Ardis was posted to 10 Company Aldershot.

Their visit to ETS brought back memories of working very hard in the classroom. They enjoyed seeing it all again and seemed impressed with today's WRAC.



L-R: Mrs Julia Pearson, Mrs Pat Ardis, Mrs Wren and Mrs Lengden.



Remember her?

She is now being cared for by RUKBA with a life long annuity and, should it ever be necessary, a place in a Residential Home or a Sheltered flat, but we have no pictures of the ever growing number of others like her who are in desperate need of RUKBA's help.

RUKBA is the Charity which looks after the impoverished and/or infirm elderly of professional or similar backgrounds – people who, in their prime, did so much for others, and are today struggling to exist themselves. Will you help us now to give them the security and help they so greatly need?

Last year we spent more than £1½m assisting over 4,800 people. Only the amount of your donations and legacies can decide how many more we can help this year. Please be kind and support our work with a generous contribution – and please remember RUKBA in your Will.



Please do!

**THE ROYAL
UNITED KINGDOM
BENEFICENT
ASSOCIATION**

(Founded 1863)

Patron:

H.M. Queen Elizabeth
the Queen Mother

RUKBA

To: The General Secretary,
RUKBA,
6 AVONMORE ROAD,
LONDON W14 8RL.

I'd like to help – here's my contribution

Name

Address

Amongst its many Annuitants, RUKBA is helping to support Ex ATS Officers and a considerable number of Widows and relatives of Army Officers.

Apart from perhaps becoming Subscribers to RUKBA, Members might care to help its work by volunteering to be our local representatives, known as Honorary Secretaries, who are needed in various parts of the Country. They are our personal link with our Beneficiaries and keep us in touch by visiting and reporting their needs, or by helping them in any way they can. We shall be very pleased to hear from any Members who would like to help the elderly or infirm in this very practical way.

UNIT NEWS

12 COMPANY WRAC "SHINY 12"

Lt Col Marriott once nicknamed 12 Company, WRAC "Shiny 12" and, proud of our nickname, we have set out to prove it. During the past year 12 Company has collected some new trophies, made new liasons, strengthened old ones and broadened horizons. Personnel have come from faraway places, whilst others have gone to Cyprus, Germany, Northern Ireland and of course to the Falklands.

It has been a busy year for us all and we have achieved many things, perhaps the most notable being Cpl Nemeth and Pte Haggan's win in the Army Cook and Serve competition.

During the past year, "Shiny 12" has been asked to supply officers and servicewomen for more than forty outside commitments. These have included serving at committee meetings, collecting for charity at an International rugby match, the Chelsea Flower Show, Wimbledon, the Royal Tournament, the Wembley Musical Pageant and of course the Cenotaph Parade in Whitehall.

July 28th and 29th saw the farewell and congratulation parades for Brigadier D J London CBE ADC, ex-Director Postal and Courier Services and Brigadier R N R P James, the new Director Postal and Courier Services. Member of the postal platoon bravely marched in sweltering mid-day heat and put on a fine performance beside their male colleagues.

12 Company won all the London District winter sports league this year with the exception of the hockey. Our summer sports teams trained hard under SSgt Patterson and Cpls Gilbert and Eyre. Their hard work paid dividends. We won the London District swimming and athletics, and the rounders league. During the summer we came a close second to 29 Company in the Army Athletics Championships at Aldershot with only 0.4 sec between the winners and the runners up. Qualifying for the Army Swimming Championships in Catterick came as a surprise to us and once again 29 Company beat us, this time by 4 points. We look forward to our revenge this year.

The new winter sports season has begun and already the teams are under strict training schedules, hoping to repeat last April's success in winning the Army Womens Hockey Championships.

The unit military training programme was given a new look this year. Lectures on map reading, NBC, first aid, Geneva Convention and fire were given to all junior ranks on a fortnightly basis. The lectures were designed to culminate in a one day exercise, testing the knowledge of the junior ranks.

The exercise was code named "Away Day", and London District transport supplied us with cheap day returns on two coaches to Barossa Common. Ex Away Day 1 was held on July 10th. The corporals were put into syndicates and given a grid reference to a stand. At each stand they were tested and given another grid reference. The sun was hot and the pace scorching. Lt Col Whiteley, Scots Guards and Lt Col Marriott visited each stand and watched the girls struggle in and out of their NBC suits and complete their eating and drinking drills.

Ex Away Day 1 went smoothly but the DS learnt from the experience and eagerly awaited Ex Away Day 2, where they could play evil tricks. This time the lambs led to the slaughter were the Ptes, shepherded by their erstwhile Cpls and LCpls.

After a great deal of preparation October 15th came and so did the rain, with a vengeance. Despite the cold, wind and rain, the company retained their sense of humour throughout the exercise. At the First Aid stand, one Pte said to Sgt Tomlinson, who was supposedly suffering from a leg injury, "Now make sure you tell your mummy you've had an accident when you get home, won't you?". She then asked a member of the DS why on earth she had not telephoned for an ambulance.

Others observed the Bluecoat school CCF "cammed and scrimmed up", and experimented in this relatively new cosmetic fashion. At the end of the exercise, they discarded the carefully selected ferns, because they rightly surmised that the fashion probably would not catch on.

Adventure training is always popular, and 12 Company managed three adventure training exercises this year, with the opportunity to ski, canoe, walk, pony trek and cycle. The first exercise was the annual skiing expedition in February, shared with PCDRE, and was for many an hilarious introduction to this so-called sport of skill. The slopes of the Cairngorms in Scotland

were graced with the various posteriors of 12 Company for four weeks!

Adventure training at Fremington Camp during the merry month of May also brought plenty of variety. The final exercise, appropriately nicknamed Ex Highland Fling by WO1 (RSM) White was for 12 Company personnel only. The catch phrase "Fun with a Capital 'F'", soon became "Tired with a capital 'T' ". The exercise was based at the Guards House Folda, in the Scottish Highlands, and despite being in the middle of nowhere, home entertainment was never short. Pte Mansley performed, for both the party and the locals, excellent impersonations of Tom Jones, Cilla Black and Shirley Bassey.

It has been a busy year for everyone with "Shiny 12". We are hard worked and happy, and naturally proud of our achievements.

8th SIGNAL REGIMENT EXERCISE MAIDEN SCURRY

8th Signal Regiment are pleased to report that they have retained the Regular Winners title for the second year running in Exercise Maiden Scurry 1983. The competition was held in Catterick on 18/19 November 1983 and is designed to test teams at sub unit level under competitive conditions in fitness, basic military knowledge and shooting skills.



Back Row: L-R: Ptes Stewart, Hewitt, Witherstone, Williams, Wheatley, Sheldermine, Spencer.
Front Row: L-R: Ptes Barrey, Dargie, 2 Lt Boxell (team leader), Sgt Mclean (team 2IC), Ptes Kibble and Smith.

RAC CENTRE BOVINGTON AND LULWORTH CAMPS Capt J L Ransom

Before we get too far into the new year, there are a few stories to be told about 1983 at the RAC Centre. Most people think that the RAC Centre is at Bovington and so it is, but there is also a detachment at Lulworth who are part of the RAC Centre — the girls there would certainly agree with me as they get "lemoned" for many of the stewardess duties at Bovington.

1983 was like most others in the army, a year of rushing and a year of waiting with busy and quiet times. In May the announcement of the visit by DWRAC kept us rushing for days. The day itself was relaxed, and the Director managed to talk to most girls on her whistle stop tour. During the spring and summer many girls managed to get away to do some sort of Adventurous training either with 1 RTR at Renney Lentney where the canoeing and potholing were very much enjoyed.

July was another rushed month with an Open Day and a Regimental Weekend. The regimental weekend meant that the whole detachment was updated on NBC, First Aid, Welfare and some sort of international affairs, followed by an afternoon of Super Stars. Unfortunately LCpl Joyce Morrison collided with the kerb on the bicycle ride and managed to knock herself out — she was our medic! Thankfully two days in the MRS helped her recovery.

The annual extravaganza at the RAC Centre is the Open Day when we entertain the great British public to the delights of the army. The WRAC secondhand bookstall did well this year and we made a record of £150. The RAC Memorial Fund kindly donated £200 to the WRAC Benevolent Fund.

During the summer LCpl Elle Allan and Pte Denise Swann assisted at Wimbledon coming back with cries of "deuce" and "advantage" even during the detachment rounders matches! Pte Denise Swann and Pte Julia Keen were on duty at the Royal Tournament and Pte Swann had the honour of presenting a bouquet of flowers to the Duchess of Gloucester.

In the autumn, LCpl Jan Dytor, Pte Caroline Jenkins and Pte Helen Coleman took part in a Wheelchair marathon where they pushed a 19

stone lad in a wheelchair (they drew the short straw with the heaviest participant) in a superb time of 4½ hours. A particularly big pat on the back for them.

In December the WRAC decided to "Tow-a-Tank" for charity. On a busy Saturday in Wareham High Street the girls dressed as slaves and punks, pulled a Scorpion 8 tonne tracked vehicle for 1 km. The tank was sponsored and £400 was raised for a local school for under privileged children. The event was followed by a very enjoyable social.

On the sporting front the RAC Centre has gone from strength to strength not least because of the efforts of Cpl Sleightholme who has now left us to go to 16 Signal Regiment. Our greatest achievement was coming joint first with BAOR at the Army Swimming Championships in Catterick. Unfortunately we were unable to bring the trophy home as the team had not won the Medley Relay – the deciding factor in the event of a draw. Our thanks go to our hard working and handsome trainer LCpl Jack Frost of 1 RTR. Pte Caroline Jenkins won the Inter Services Javelin Championships and 2Lt Sue Mawby won the Inter Services Orienteering Championships. They both worked hard for these achievements and are congratulated on their efforts. The RAC Centre team were also runners up in the District Cross Country Championships, and the District Athletic Championships.



LCpl Dytor, Pte Jenkins and Pte Coleman finishing the British Sports Association for the Disabled Wheelchair Marathon.



Towing-a-Tank in Wareham High Street dressed as punks and slaves.

HONG KONG

For the WRAC in Hong Kong 1983 began with Exercise Trailwalker II, a marathon trek over the Maclehoose Trail. Named after the last Governor of Hong Kong, Sir Murray Maclehoose, the trail covers 62 miles over the peaks of the New Territories, rising to a total height of 14,000 feet. The aim of the exercise was to complete the trail in under 48 hours and raise money for charity. The WRAC team, followed by an admin party which rarely caught up with them, walked for the first 24 hours non stop, and eventually finished in 41 hours and 14 minutes. We raised £500 in sponsorship.

Our next excitement came in February with the visit of Brigadier Eileen Nolan, our Deputy Controller Commandant. Brigadier Nolan brought us up to date with news of the WRAC Association and Benevolent Fund and, for the



The RAC Centre Swimming Team with their Trainer LCpl Frost

L-R: Back Row: Pte Jenkins, Cpl Sleightholme, LCpl Frost, LCpl Blay, Pte Bond

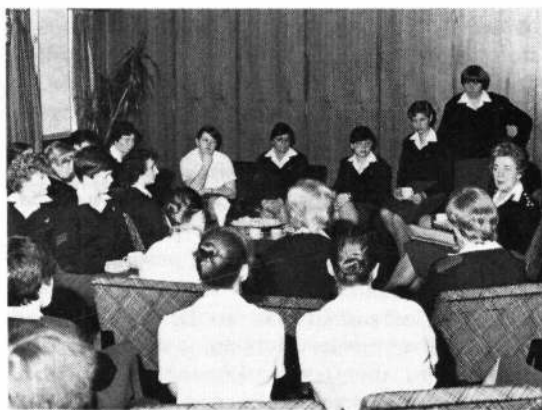
Front Row: Pte Caulder, Capt Ransom, Pte Blay, Pte Gratrix.

first time in Hong Kong, we held a re-union for ex members of the Corps. We were all very grateful for the Brigadier's visit, and gained much from news of home, which at times seems far away.

Following the visit of the Controller Commandant HRH the Duchess of Kent in October 1982, and the visit of the Deputy Controller Commandant in February last year, it was hard to believe that we would be honoured with a visit in October from our Director, Brigadier Meechie. Brigadier Meechie arrived promising that she always brought good weather and for the first week of her visit that was what we had. In addition to meeting all the girls, we sampled Chinese cuisine, held a WRAC cocktail party and spent a day on Lamma Island, with a seafood lunch followed by sunbathing and swimming.

The Director's visit was meant to culminate with a swimming gala and barbecue on Stonecutters' Island. Unfortunately six weeks after Typhoon Ellen devastated Hong Kong, Typhoon Joe moved in our direction. A sea trip to Stonecutters was out of the question, so when everyone else went back to their quarters, the WRAC gathered in HMS Tamar for our barbecue and team games. It was a great success, ending with Cpl Gladys Cox insisting that the Director and Comd WRAC each perform a charade for the assembled company!

The Director did much to raise our morale. She listened to our questions and left us all convinced that we are not forgotten by the rest of the WRAC, 8000 miles away.



Brig E J Nolan addressing members of the WRAC.



Brig H G Meechie signs the visitors' book in the Sergeants Mess watched by WO1 (RSM) G T Dunkerley Gren Gds and WO2 (CSM) T Milton.

C COMPANY 15 BATTALION RAOC Exercise Hard Fell VI 4-23 July 1983

Exercise Hard Fell VI was the annual WRAC Summer Camp for the servicewomen of 15 Bn RAOC, to prove that there is life beyond the vast sheds of the Depot. 123 WRAC personnel attended the camp during a three week period broken into three separate weeks of training.

The base was at Halton Training Camp, Lancaster, a wooden hutted camp ideally placed near the Trough of Bowland, the Three Peaks and the River Lune. The exercise will be remembered by the camp staff as "that lot who wanted curtains up at the windows!" The camp offered excellent canoeing facilities — one hundred yards and three yawns between the billets and the



The WRAC team for Exercise Trailwalker II.
L-R: Cpl Rolt, Maj Elliott, LCpl Robson, Cpl Wright, Capt Quinlan, Cpl Cox and Cpl Ferguson.

river — an on site POL point and a ten minute stumble through the camp grounds to the village hostelry.

Walking and climbing areas were only 40 minutes away by 4 tonner which meant the songs wafting from the back of the vehicle could be sweet and wholesome before hoarseness and depravity set in!

Each week followed a similar programme, and as luckily the sun shone for three weeks no wet weather programmes had to be implemented.

The adventurous training programme was divided into three days of individual activities, hill-walking, rock climbing and canoeing, with two days set aside for a 36 hour expedition.

Cpl Blackburn, dutifully aided by Gilbert the yellow albatross, and Cpl Treadwell from the Light Division Depot, led the hill walking groups in various directions. The walks usually ended in Slaidburn, a picturesque village of tourist fame, which offered the hospitality of "The Hark to Bounty", and provided a refreshing end to the day's exercise.

The rock-climbing groups discovered that it was necessary to complete an arduous mountaineering route before the climbing face was reached. The instructors, full of encouragement and understanding, realised the thirst producing effect of the walk and sun, so took the cold drink to the top of the rocks and cried "Come and get it!" Motivation increased tremendously although rumour has it that cracks appeared in the rock face from the continual vibration of quivering knees! All the girls attempted to climb and the vast majority reached the top with a feeling of exhilaration and determination to have another go. The sequel to the tale was of course that while the drinks were on the top of the rocks with the girls, the haversack rations were at the bottom.

Motivation stirred again to develop abseiling skills. Various techniques were applied such as the ape walk, the bottom first slide, the cart-wheel swing and the rope burns hands rush. Some managed an Everest example, but all reached solid ground eventually with, I might add, the strictest safety rules enforced at all times.

Canoeing on the River Lune produced some promising paddlers and startling sunburns. Most of the girls had never sat in a canoe before the camp, so viewed the idea with doubt and suspicion. However, gentle coaxing from the instructors ensured that every girl passed her swimming test and paddled for part of the day.

Some reached the dizzy heights of shooting the weir, while others resigned themselves to the fact that they would turn circles for ever.

The most memorable part of the camp was the 36 hour expedition. After alighting from the 4 tonner, we were horrified at the sight of Ingleborough, the first hill to be climbed. Arriving at the camp site, exhausted figures could be seen fighting with tent poles and fly sheets, hexistoves and compo. Unusual aromas of culinary delights quickly drifted over the camp site, most of which were eaten out of curiosity rather than hunger. Entertainment was provided by a local inn which apparently had never closed, and aching limbs were revived by medicinal liquids which reached parts other liquids couldn't! The second day's walk took us happily over Pen-y-Ghent.

Back at Halton Training Camp there was the usual scramble for showers before a welcome meal was devoured with fervour. Maj Rook, OC WRAC, visited the camp during the first and second week and amazed us all with her walking prowess and local knowledge. Lt Col Stobie RAOC, the Commanding Officer, joined the exercise during the third week and displayed great abseiling and canoeing skills. Overall, the exercise was most successful. All the girls were introduced to rock-climbing, canoeing and hill walking skills, and many are continuing with these activities back in Donnington.

RESIDENTIAL HOMES

The Joint Committee of the Order of St John and British Red Cross Society maintains a residential home, Mais House, Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex which is open to all ex-servicemen and women. Officers and other ranks are eligible to apply. Queen Alexandra House, Folkestone is open to ex-servicewomen and widows of ex-servicemen.

Residents contribute according to their circumstances and no application is refused on financial grounds.

Applicants should write in the first instance to the General Secretary, Joint Committee Order of St John and British Red Cross Society, 6 Grosvenor Crescent, London SW1X 1EH. Accommodation is limited, and applicants are advised to apply immediately in order to receive further information from the Director of the Homes Department.

22 SQUADRON RCT HQ UKLF WILTON

22 Squadron saw many changes in 1983, notably the decrease in the number of RCT soldiers and the increase of WRAC drivers. April saw the arrival of 10 Signal Regiment Headquarters to UKLF and the integration of 1 Squadron (MT WRAC drivers) with 22 Squadron RCT. Although the Signals drivers still wear their "Jimmies", they live with and work alongside the girls of 22 Squadron, so everybody is one big family.

At the beginning of June, thirteen members of the Squadron took part in "Exercise BROKEN FOOT", a camping weekend at Osmington Mills, near Weymouth. Lieutenant Fiona Blood led the party of eleven girls who were joined by Captain Dave Allen and Sergeant Geoff Shore. In August, Lieutenant Blood aided by Staff Sergeant Dickie Bird and Corporal Sheila Janson led members of the Squadron on the twenty-five mile course of the Chichester March and managed to get Privates Pooley, Maxwell, Dean, Dunne, Rutherford, Phillips, Norfor and Stanford round the course, ending the last mile and a half in full song.

The Annual Summer Camp was held this year at Renney Lentney near Plymouth. Activities such as sailing, pony trekking, abseiling and walking on Dartmoor with a night under canvas kept all members of the Squadron on their toes. Adventure training was a new experience for many of the girls as 22 Squadron is their first posting after training.

On November 9th Brigadier H G Meechie, Director WRAC visited 22 Squadron. The Brigadier met WRAC members of the Squadron including Corporal Denise John who is second driver to Commander UK Field Army.

The Squadron covers 1½ million miles every year and there is still time for the girls to follow their various sporting activities. Private Pooley who joined the Squadron in March is very keen on judo. In the summer she acquired her brown belt at Cardiff and more recently she attended the West of England championships in Bristol and took the silver medal in the ladies under 8 stone. Corporal Walker, whose job is normally to drive the Chief of Staff UKLF, is a member of the Army Badminton Team and was with them

when they toured Cyprus last year. Corporal Walker came first in the singles and doubles for the third year running in the SW District championships. She also plays for the Salisbury District Civilian Badminton Club and toured Guernsey with them last November.

Corporal Maycock who joined us in April from the Signals MT is an Army canoeist. She won the Army Women's Slalom Championships at Llandyssul in Wales last May, and represented the Army in the Inter-Service White Water championships at Sanquhar in the mixed team. In July she entered the Long Distance and Sprint championships held at Monmouth where she achieved third place in both the 5m sprint and long distance races. Private Fox another member from the Signals MT who joined us is an Army Volleyball player and toured Holland last year with the Army squad.

With the beginning of 1984 the Squadron is hard at work. The winter is still with us and winter driving conditions are foremost in our minds, particularly for the members of the Squadron for whom it is the first winter behind the wheel.



L-R: Lt Blood, Brig Meechie, Cpl John, LCpl Allen, Col Robertson, Maj Hale.

Contributions for next issue by
13th December 1983 in double
spacing. Photographs in black & white.

FALKLAND ISLANDS

VISIT OF COLONEL N R ROBERTSON MBE

With Christmas only four days away, the WRAC Servicewomen in the Falkland Islands bid farewell to Colonel Robertson, Comd WRAC UKLF after she had spent a very hectic three days visiting the WRAC contingent.

Shortly after her arrival off the airbridge, Colonel Robertson presented a Christmas gift to each girl from her unit in UK or BAOR and they were all thrilled.

During her stay Colonel Robertson visited all the locations where the girls are employed, which included Lookout Camp, the Provost Unit, the Forces Post Office and the Supply Ship of the Logistic Battalion, the "Tor Caledonia". The "Tor Caledonia" a merchant vessel, is moored in Port Stanley Harbour. Its position commands an excellent view of the town of Stanley and Mt Kent, Mt Longdon, and Twin Sisters. Colonel Robertson was pleased to see how well we had settled into our jobs and also into our permanent accommodation at Lookout Camp, having moved off the coastel "Pursuivant".

During her stay she took a helicopter trip to visit Bn HQ 2 RRF at Goose Green. En route there was a stop to visit a Gentoo penguin colony in the south of East Falkland and a small island south of Bluff Cove where sea lions and their families were seen in the water and sunbathing on the rocks. A sadder part of the tour of East Falkland was the visit to Blue Beach Cemetery located at San Carlos Settlement which is beautifully kept, and commemorates all those who died in the Falklands War.

On her last day after a short helicopter trip from Stanley, Colonel Robertson walked the battlefield of Mount Longdon and listened to an account of the involvement of 3 Para in taking that vital position prior to the formal Argentine surrender on June 14th 1982.

Summer in the Falklands is an excellent time to be in the South Atlantic and all the WRAC girls are facing up to the challenge very well.



Col N R Robertson, Comd WRAC UKLF with Lt Col R Rhodes, CO of the Falkland Islands Logistic Battalion and Capt L W I McGregor WRAC on board the supply ship "Tor Caledonia" in Port Stanley harbour. Also L-R: Pte Kenington, LCpl Preston, Pte Gray and Pte Baxter, all WRAC.



Col N R Robertson watching Pte Fiona Baxter at work on board the supply ship "Tor Caledonia".

BRANDS HATCH – HERE WE COME!

**Cpl J S M May WRAC
68 Sqn RCT**

"Hang a right, 300 metres", I yelled to my driver Cpl "Spud" Murphy. We were Landrover No. 47 on the Ex STARLIGHT rally, the last of the main rallies before Ex MAGNUM SPIRIT, which for ralliers is the highlight of the year in BAOR and in which we were due to take part.

We had decided that I would navigate and Cpl Murphy would drive. At this stage I didn't realise that I would have to contend with herringbones, tulips, tracers, swivels, romers and potties (not the type that go under the bed!). However, we did have some help from SSgt Alistair Hopkinson, the Army rally champion, and were reasonably confident before the big day.

The rally took place on the night of September 17th through till morning, in an area just north of the Sauerland. We arrived at the starting point with plenty of time in hand which we used to eye up the opposition (a formidable sight) and to seek as many last minute tips from the "professionals" as we could. We were surprised to find that we were the only female crew, which gave us a good chance of winning a trophy if we finished. The experts told us that if we got into any trouble or if time was against us, then we were to "Cut and Run". We discovered that this meant that we should get back to the main time controls (TCs) to count as finishers on the rally. We were confident that we didn't need this "Cut and Run" nonsense.

So the big moment came. I picked up my instructions from the starting point and raced back to our rover. We had 45 minutes to plot our first 8 TCs and before we knew it we were on the starting ramp and ready to go. Our start time – 2247 hours. '5, 4, 3, 2, 1, GO! – we were off! Our hearts were beating nineteen to the dozen and we were oblivious to the cheers of our well wishers.

The first 6 TCs went like a dream, then fate dealt an evil blow – all our main lights went out after only 30 minutes on the road. We were left with only our side lights and spot lights and the situation didn't look too bright. Unintentionally we appeared at TC 10 (one of the main TCs) and Landrover 47 was doing something only the experts could do – "Cutting and Running"! With words of encouragement we cut

and ran to TC 20 (another major point) and on to the halfway halt. For beginners, we were doing a great job despite our earlier misfortunes. Our lights were repaired for us by another pit crew by wiring the whole lot up to the battery. Now we couldn't turn them off!

We raced off from the halfway halt not entirely convinced of our whereabouts. Before I had a chance to alert my driver, another landrover overtook us and I shouted "follow that rover". The landrover led us to a TC and by then I had found out exactly where we were and where we were going. My driver breathed a sigh of relief. The next TCs were relatively easy to find except the last one, on which we wasted valuable time. By now we were both extremely tired so you can imagine our relief when we eventually finished at 0532 hours.

Well ... we had qualified as finishers even if we did have the most penalty points. What we didn't know at this stage was that we had secured the Mihin trophy despite everything. It made it all seem worthwhile when we trudged our weary way back to Rheindahlen knowing that at least we had some idea of what lay in store for us on Ex MAGNUM SPIRIT.

1st REGIMENT ROYAL HORSE ARTILLERY



Lt Camilla Aitchison, Assistant Adjutant with Captain Chris Down Adjutant of 1 RHA who is indicating an artillery target whilst on live firing in the snow on Munsterlagen – South Ranges near Hohne.

RECRUITERS VISIT THE REDCAPS

Thirty-four WRAC and QARANC recruiters came together from all over the country to visit the Royal Military Police Training Centre at Chichester. The aim of the visit was to see the training of WRAC Provost recruits. It was not only to improve recruiters' knowledge of current training but to establish what exactly is required of a WRAC Provost NCO.

The recruiters were able to see the girls training alongside the men in mixed squads. The girls are expected to achieve a very high standard of fitness by working in the gymnasium and taking part in assault courses and runs. This helps them in their field training at Longmoor. The recruiters also saw WRAC Provost recruits demonstrating arrest with the Low Profile Baton and self defence as well as weapon training, drill and driver training.

In the afternoon the recruiters visited the RMP Close Circuit Television Studio and the Special Investigation Branch Laboratories. Finally they saw the Police Duties testing taking place in the environmental testing centre at Tangmere House. Tangmere House is an old married quarter in which rooms are converted to represent scenes, ie Barrack Room, Married Quarter sitting room, bedroom, NAAFI Bar etc. Incidents are staged in these rooms as well as the surrounding area and recruits in their final phase of training are sent in to deal with the situations. Tangmere House also has a mock Duty Room, Interview Rooms, Report Writing Room and is equipped with Close Circuit Television.

The visit proved beneficial to both Training Centre staff and the recruiters – some of whom met the girls they had personally recruited.



Lavinia Duchess of Norfolk on a recent visit to the RMP Training Centre meeting Captain Alison Beadle, WRAC Provost.

GENERAL MOUNTAINEERING

SSgt L Pring WRAC

In retrospect, the day I put pen to paper and applied to be allowed to go on a General Mountaineering course, was the day somebody must have slipped some hallucinatory into my coffee! I now understand why people tried to talk me out of it or gave me incredulous looks when the subject arose.

The course assembly time was 0915 hours on a Monday morning – a coincidence that the only train to pass through Tulloch during the day arrives at that time. JSMTTC Tulloch in Inverness-shire lies directly behind the railway station, and these two buildings, a house and caravan, constitute Tulloch in all its glory. The nearest village, Roybridge, is 6 miles away and Fort William town is 20 miles distant. At Tulloch, a dozen people stepped off the train clutching an assortment of rucksacks and sleeping bags and all looking very apprehensive. We were led across the railway track and into the JSMTTC where we quickly introduced ourselves. There was a varied assortment of RAF and Army representatives ranging from a trainee RAF Jaguar pilot to an Army bandsman. Representing the female services was a young Wren who is private secretary to three senior naval officers, and myself. The accommodation was certainly better than we had been led to believe from the joining instructions. Basic was the word used, but compared to how we were going to live later on



WRAC Recruiters with Major Terry Scriven RMP, Deputy Commandant RMP Training Centre, and Captain Alison Beadle, WRAC Provost.

in the course, it was luxurious. The men were accommodated in bunk beds in three rooms downstairs. The Wren and I shared a small room upstairs next to the OC's office/bedroom.

We were quickly issued with our assortment of alarming equipment: helmets, belts, karabiners, boots, rucksacks, survival bags, coats, breeches, waterproofs, maps, whistles, compasses, tents, cookers, 24 hr ration packs. The list was endless and we wondered just how far away were these mountains. We were then introduced to the staff, and told the rules of the house. No TV between 0800-1900 hours and worse, no baths as the hot water was in short supply. We all had a personal interview with the OC to assess our experience and level of fitness, thus determining which of the three groups we would join. I was unlucky. My allocated instructor was an SAS candidate, MCP and mountain goat rolled into a wiry, extremely athletic looking form (this guy regularly competed in mountain marathons) and I had the nerve to think I was fit! The other instructors looked much more aged and gentle.

We then piled into a white bus and were driven to a small rock face where we were quickly instructed in ropes, types, lengths, knots, rocks, belays, abseiling and rock climbing technique. Several hours later we were driven back to the centre for food – our first that day. That was the end of the practice session. It was out to the mountains to try it for real the next day.

The following morning was wet, windy and wild. On with the wetproofs and out to the mountains. We were later told that Scotland is the hardest place to do this course as you have to cover much rough ground on foot to get to the mountains, whereas in Wales the mountains are more accessible.

Our instructor decided that we would cover two or three gentle mountains that day. We did three, one more than the other groups. It is amazing what damage an extra mountain can do to your feet as I compared my physical condition with that of the Wren at the end of the day! We learnt to mountain navigate down to the last contour line, assess the time it would take to complete a planned route according to pre-conceived regulations on the subject, assess the "climbability" of the mountains and forecast the weather.

In the next few days, things got worse, the mountains got higher and the winds stronger. We were led up to the Gods on what the instructor assured us were interesting climbs and

we wouldn't be disappointed. We weren't. I must have lost a year's supply of adrenalin in a few short minutes at one point. "Do tell me if you feel you need a rope" said the instructor before he dashed off to the next ridge. Fine, and I would have done so if he had been within ear-shot!

The JSMTTC provided all meals. A hearty breakfast was mandatory, after which we packed our own lunch, 4 slices of bread per person. I still wonder what on earth possessed me to make treacle sandwiches as I unpacked the soggy mess on a mountain peak later that day! Each day, one group would be on duty to wash up, set tables and generally do the domestic work. Evenings were spent gazing forlornly out of the windows at the surrounding mountains, watching the one receivable TV channel, reading last week's newspaper or trying to persuade the more amiable of the instructors into giving lifts to the village pub. I foolishly went out for daily 8 mile runs and it became apparent to me half way through the course that I could not continue to cover 10-15 miles a day climbing treacherous country, and run, so reluctantly I abandoned the running – except of course when I was coming down the mountain scree the easy way.

The highlight of the course was the 3 day expedition. Gaily we checked our tents, collected rations, packed rucksacks and set off for the 4 hour bus drive into the remote highlands about 80 miles south of John O'Groats. The plan for the other two groups was to trek daily from the campsite, climb mountains and return. Our instructor decided that we would climb a very interesting mountain which entailed packing our kit on our backs and travelling a considerable distance, taking in a few mountain tops on the way there. Disdainfully showing the other groups a considerable measure of superiority, we set off. There was an unsurpassable moment when we sat on whitewashed gravel beside a loch, the waters gently lapping up to the edge between the mountains with not a road, house or human in sight, which I would not have missed for anything. There was one scary moment when after I had managed to jump across a 4' crevasse (500' deep) on to the tiniest rocky ledge, the instructor assured the lad behind me to jump, and he would catch him. Fortunately for them both, he did – by the hood of his mountain jacket!

The course slowly wound down after that. We returned to Tulloch, did a little more rock climbing and attended various slide shows given

by the instructors/photographers on their mountaineering achievements. They are a very dedicated, nerveless lot, living in a different world, and we were most impressed. I left Tulloch clutching a Joint Service Certificate qualifying me in General Mountaineering. It may not be a lot of use to me in Londonderry but I did gain an in-depth insight into the complexity of mountaineering, became fitter, saw Scotland from a totally different view and made some new friends.

NEW WRAC ACCOMMODATION BLOCK

A two-year dream came to fruition last July when Colonel N. Robertson MBE WRAC officially opened the new accommodation block for the WRAC in Colchester. No longer are the girls required to live in old and out-of-the-way former married quarters. They now live in a large block of their own, formed from two renovated quarters in the grounds of what will become the Headquarters of Eastern District and is still the old military hospital. This large block provides accommodation for the junior ranks of the WRAC and QARANC based in Colchester, and there is enough room for servicewomen in transit or visiting the town.

Fifteen girls are accommodated in rooms containing one, two or three beds, and there is a large lounge complete with a TV set, a kitchenette and a washing room. The only thing missing at the official opening was a telephone, though this is now installed — with the number remaining ex-directory.



The new accommodation.



Colonel Nan Robertson MBE planting a tree to commemorate the official opening.



One of the new bedrooms.

40th ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY Invitation from D-Day WRENS

Under the auspices of the Mayor of the London Borough of Merton, a Dance to commemorate D-Day, especially for those unable to go to France on the 40th Anniversary, because of overcrowding, will be held at Civic Hall, Town Hall, Wimbledon, 1 minute station, on May 4th 1984. Dancing to Herb Miller (brother of Major Glenn Miller) Orchestra. Entrance £5. Adequate seating on balcony for non-dancers and wounded. Tickets from Mrs G Hamilton, 13 Totham Lodge, Richmond Road, W. Wimbledon SW20 with SAE please.

HQ 2 REGT RMP – BERLIN
SSgt B Rimmer WRAC

It is sometimes thought that WRAC Provost are always busy on patrol, "looking for trouble" together with their male counterparts. Not so! As well as patrols, writing reports, and checking documents at "Bravo and Charlie", the girls in Berlin often get caught up in ceremonial duties.

In September the British Berlin Tattoo was the centre of attraction, and the WRAC (GPD) NCOs were busy looking after the reception of all the VIP guests.

In November the girls, spruced up in No 1 Dress, were carrying out traffic control and security duties at the Soviet War Memorial Parade.



The Bentley with the registration number TATTOO 1 used by the Tattoo Director and driven by LCpl Mandy Winch who is opening the door.



The last GOC Berlin, Major General Mostyn, leaving the city for the last time with LCpl Shirley Taylor, newly arrived, who saw him safely on his way – to promotion, a Knighthood and the appointment of Military Secretary.

MODERN DAY TRAVEL WITH YOUR
DWRAC
W02 J E Ryan WRAC

I was posted back from Hong Kong arriving in UK on October 19th. The DWRAC had been visiting Hong Kong and Brunei and was returning on the same plane to England. I discovered that it was a lot easier to enter Hong Kong than to leave it. It took three attempts to get through immigration, the last being successful. In the first instance I had not been given an exemption certificate for airport departure tax, and the second time I was given an exemption certificate for a child! Having got through immigration everybody boarded the aircraft and got ready for take off. Ten minutes before we were due to leave, the pilot announced that there would be a delay because a freight aircraft had crashed at the end of the runway as it was taking off. Fortunately there were no injuries. It was later announced that there would be at least two hours before we could take off, and we were free to leave the aircraft, keeping to the confines of the terminal.

The DWRAC and I decided to seek some refreshment and this was achieved after fighting our way through the Australian Rugby Team playing cricket in the corridor of the airport gate complex.

The next announcement told us that the aircraft would not take off until the following morning, and HQBF Hong Kong signalled the information to the Director's PA.

I spent the night on the plane and by 8am my morale was at a low ebb because the aircraft had not moved one yard on the long trip home. However, we did eventually get off but in Dubai my morale was not improved when I found that I was the only person who buzzed going through security control. This resulted in my being searched by a large female Arab customs official, who made me look like Twiggy.

Eventually we arrived in Gatwick, 12 hours late.

I am not really sure who was the "jinx", myself or the Director. I will accept the blame for two reasons, firstly that my whole journey was a series of minor "hiccups" and secondly, the Director outranks me!

VAD CLUB

The VAD Club has been in existence since 1920 when it was founded for the benefit of members of the Voluntary Aid Detachments of the First World War. While VADs of the Second World War also benefited from their Club, the scope of the membership has been greatly extended in recent years and applications are now invited from both men and women. HRH The Princess Royal held Honorary membership and HRH The Princess Alexandra does so at the present time.

Situated close to Marble Arch and almost opposite an underground National Car Park, the VAD Club offers reasonably priced bedroom accommodation, full restaurant and quick bar lunch facilities, a venue for private parties and meetings and reciprocal arrangements with some other Clubs at home and abroad.

For further details please contact the Secretary at: 44 Great Cumberland Place, London W1H 8BS. Tel: 01-262 5536.

TA

40 (U) SIGNAL REGIMENT (V) VISIT OF DWRAC

We had the pleasure of a visit from Brigadier Helen Meechie to the Regiment on 17 July last year. A full programme was organised to show the Brigadier various aspects of WRAC training within the Regiment.

Having met the CO of the Regiment, Lt Colonel Alan de Bretton Gordon, the OC WRAC, Major Robyn Wymbs and the other female officers in the Mess for coffee, Brigadier Meechie went on a tour of the unit, accompanied by Major Wymbs and Staff Sergeant Spece WRAC.

The first stop was a visit to a Mobile Radio Terminal manned by Captain Trish Riley and the girls of 85 Squadron, then to the Tape Relay Centre, where she met Captain Jenny Wilson and WO Cdt Rosa Matthews, 66 Squadron. The next stop was with Lt Carol Twinem, the WRAC Officer with the Regiment's Training Squadron, where Brigadier Meechie met WRAC Recruits anxiously preparing for their Recruit Course at Guildford.

Another memorable stage of the visit was the presentation of Efficiency Medals in the Sergeants Mess to five sergeants in the Regiment. Among them Sgts Montgomery and Williamson, WRAC. Congratulations to both of them.

Accompanying the Brigadier on her visit was Major Glynis Harvey, the new Commander WRAC NI. We extend a warm welcome to her.



Pte Linda Coulter WRAC (V) (right) explaining the workings of the Onan Mobile Generator to Brigadier Meechie while Pte Margaret Johnston WRAC (V) looks on.



Brigadier Meechie presenting the TA Efficiency Medal to Sergeant Montgomery.

31 (GL) SIGNAL REGIMENT (V)

The Regiment held a mixed Cadre Course at Crowborough Camp in September for the training of potential JNCOs.

With true WRAC Pride, the two top student places were taken by Pte Roxanne Norris, who is married with two small sons who were amazed to see their mother drill a mixed squad of soldiers!

Pte Beverley Holley took second place, and dare I suggest that the remaining three girls on the Course probably coped better than their male colleagues who were twelve in total.

In November we were happy to have a party of girls represent the Territorial Army in the Royal Festival of Remembrance. Sgt Jan Billin proved an admirable leader having done her Drill Course at the Guard's Depot earlier in the year.

UOTC

NATIONAL ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION COMPETITIONS

2 Lt Fiona Johnston WRAC (TA) who serves with the Oxford University OTC received the King George VI University Challenge Cup for the top UOTC Gunner Troop in the competitions organised by the National Artillery Association, firing their guns against seven other OTC Troops.

The presentations were made at the Guildhall on October 29th, and victory was all the sweeter for the Oxford Gunners who revenged last year's win by their Cambridge rivals!



2 Lt Fiona Johnston receiving the trophy from Maj Gen Dick Gerrard-Wright CBE, Director TA & Cadets.

26 Engineer Regiment 'I NEED A MAN'

"I need a man!" This plaintive and heart-warming cry was heard from Officer Cadet Tracy Graham who had recently spent two weeks attached to 26 Engineer Regiment at Iserlohn.

It was not a demand for one of the 26 Engineer Regiment Sappers — who currently serve from the Falkland Islands to Canada as well as in BAOR — but for help in holding up the Can Am motorcycle on which she was training with other soldiers of the Regiment.

Tracy has just finished her final year at Cardiff University and is sampling army life before further training in Food Science and Nutrition. In addition to motorcycle training she has joined the Sappers in diving, driving plant at major construction earthworks and ranges, as well as visiting other units and local points of interest.



Officer Cadet Tracy Graham and motorcycle.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

ANGLO/FRENCH ARMISTICE PARADES

Last year the Hastings branch was invited by the Hastings Joint Council of Ex-Service Associations to send representatives to attend the Armistice Day Parades of our twin town, Bethune, in France. We were also asked to join a group of Bethune Ex-Servicewomen who would be returning to Hastings to attend the Mayor's Armistice Day Parade and the Festival of Remembrance.

This was the first time that a WRAC Association contingent had been on the Continent to join the Remembrance Day functions and four of our members, Mary Bilton, Ivy Stewart, Wyn Wakelin and Dolly Taylor Smith were proud to take our newly dedicated standard to Bethune.

On November 10th, a party of twenty, including the Mayor and Mayoress of Hastings, travelled to France to be welcomed at a Reception by the President of the Bethune Committee of Ex-Service Associations – Colonel (Air) Marcel Bodelot, a highly decorated French Air Force Officer. Before the Reception a "Veillee Funebre" (Funeral Vigil) was held at the War Memorial at which our standard was paraded.

On November 11th, which is a national holiday in France, our contingent took part in the Bethune Armistice Day Parades at which our standard was proudly carried and a wreath laid on the Bethune War Memorial. Following Mass at the Church of St Vaast, the parade proceeded to the British Military Cemetery to lay a wreath on our own War Memorial. The Union Flag was carried by a member of the Women's Royal Army Corps Association who also led the Parade. The afternoon was spent attending a Civic Luncheon as guests of the Mayor of Bethune.

On November 12th the Hastings group, together with twenty French ex-servicemen, set off for Hastings where on arrival they were given an informal reception, after which they were entertained by their Hastings hosts and in most homes they watched with great interest the Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance on television.

On Remembrance Sunday, the Bethune

contingent joined the Mayor's Armistice Parade in Alexandra Park when our standard was again carried and a wreath from the branch laid on the War Memorial. Following this, the two minutes silence was observed at Divisions held at the Sea Cadets Training Ship "Hastings".

Lunch at a local hotel was hosted by the Hastings Joint Council of Ex-Service Associations and in the evening our French guests attended the annual Festival of Remembrance held at the White Rock Pavilion, carrying their Tricolour and standards in the "Cavalcade of Standards". Without a standard one very proud elderly gentleman marched on to the stage representing our Old Contemptibles.

The service following the Cavalcade, in its simple sincerity, made a great impression on our Bethune guests – as did the poppy petals which floated down from the roof at the end of the evening.

On Monday morning, November 14th, our guests returned to France after a most rewarding two way visit which we feel has helped to bring our two nations closer together in a mutual understanding of a shared experience.

ASSISTANT ORGANISER, EASTERN REGION, ARMY BENEVOLENT FUND

The Army Benevolent Fund are looking for a mature, personable ex-serviceman/woman to take over in July 1984, the post of Assistant Organiser, Eastern Region, which includes running the Regional Account.

The offices are situated in South Kensington and ideally applicants should live within easy commuting distance. Applicants should have office management experience, be capable book-keepers with sound accounts knowledge and be able to type.

The salary is in the range of £5700 - £7200 inclusive but is being reviewed on April 1st 1984. There is four weeks paid annual leave and the post is pensionable.

Further details can be obtained from Brigadier H C Millman OBE, Regional Organiser, Eastern Region, The Army Benevolent Fund, 41 Queens Gate, South Kensington, London SW7 5HR.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1984

The AGM will be held on Saturday 24 March 1984 at 2.30 pm in the Carisbrooke Hall at The Victory Services Club, 63-79 Seymour Street, London W2 (near Marble Arch).

AGENDA

1. To confirm the Minutes of the AGM held on Saturday 12 March 1983
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. **Council Resolution**
That a new rule be approved and inserted as a new paragraph in the Rules as follows:

13. Badge — The Association badge is a laurel wreath surmounted by a crown within the wreath a lioness rampant. Beneath the laurel wreath a scroll with the words QMAAC, WRAC, ATS.

b. Branch Resolutions

1. Edinburgh Branch:

"As the financial position of the Association is now healthy and the excess of income over expenditure in the last published accounts exceeds expenditure by approximately 20 per cent it is proposed that Rule 11(g) line 3 is amended to read: "Seventy pence" in lieu of "Eighty pence".

2. Hastings Branch:

"That the specification of an Association standard be inserted in the rules to assist branches wishing to acquire a standard".

c. Election of Council Vice Presidents

8. Any other Business

9. Date and place of next Meeting

It is necessary for all members attending the AGM to have tickets to obtain admittance to



WE, THE LIMBLESS, LOOK TO YOU FOR HELP

We come from both world wars. We come from Korea, Kenya, Malaya, Aden, Cyprus, Ulster and from the Falklands.

Now, disabled, we must look to you for help. Please help by helping our Association.

BLESMA looks after the limbless from all the Services. It helps to overcome the shock of losing arms, or legs or an eye. And, for the severely handicapped, it provides Residential Homes where they can live in peace and dignity.

Help the disabled by helping BLESMA. We promise you that not one penny of your donation will be wasted.



Give to those who gave — please

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EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION

The Victory Services Club. Tickets can be obtained from The General Secretary, WRAC Association, Corps HQ WRAC, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford GU 6QH. Fund raising after the AGM will be in aid of Princess Royal's Memorial Fund. It will consist of a raffle organised by London Area and a Bottle Stall organised by Col L M Davies CBE. Bottles for the Bottle Stall can be delivered to Col L M Davies c/o The Victory Services Club either before or on the day of the AGM. Donations for raffle prizes to Lt Col C A Marriott WRAC, HQ London District, Horse Guards, Whitehall, London SW1A 2AX as soon as possible and before the day of the AGM.

REUNIONS

NORTHERN AREA REUNION 1983

A capacity crowd gathered in the Royal Baths Assembly Rooms, Harrogate on October 22nd for the Northern Area Reunion, and a very enjoyable afternoon was had by all.

Lt Col C K Ramsey MBE, Chairman of Northern Area, welcomed everyone present from near and far, and said how pleased we were that both the Deputy Controller Commandant and Director WRAC were able to attend. The Association was thriving in the north and yet another new branch was in the process of being formed in Keighley. The next Grand Reunion would be held in Harrogate on 13/14 April 1985 and it was hoped this would be a memorable gathering with a bumper attendance.

Brigadier E J Nolan CB, Deputy Controller Commandant, thanked Northern Area for inviting her to the Reunion and gave a comprehensive review of up-to-date Association news and information on the Benevolent Funds which were currently in a healthy state. She also reminded us that 1988 would bring the 50th anniversary of the ATS — another celebration to note when planning our long-term commitments.

Brigadier H G Meechie, Director WRAC, said she was delighted to be with us even if in a somewhat jet-lagged state since she had only just returned from an official visit to Hong Kong and Brunei. Almost 60 WRAC were now serving in Hong Kong and others in various distant parts of

the world ranging from Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe to Australia and the Falklands. She showed some fascinating slides of her visit to Brunei, which reinforced the comment that the climate there was slightly different from that in the north of England!

Captain M E Hammersley, ably assisted by Corporals Brocklehurst, Stevens and Topping, then presented a racy account of life in the TA which struck a few chords of memory judging by the sympathetic laughter!

This was followed by W02 P A Rosewell who gave an account and showed some beautiful slides of her recent WRAC attachment in the Canadian Rockies where she enjoyed both skiing and scenery. Her adventures were followed enviously by us all and her "travelogue" was greatly appreciated. A Vote of Thanks to all the speakers was proposed by Mrs O'Neill of Bradford branch.

ATS DINNER CLUB

The Annual Luncheon of the ATS Dinner Club was held on Saturday 1st October 1983 at the Bloomsbury Crest Hotel, London, and was attended by 230 members and 20 guests, ten of whom joined the Club on the spot. It was a particularly happy occasion and time was set aside for inquiries about old comrades, both present and absent. These were made over the microphone by our hostess, and several old friends were put in touch, or their whereabouts made known.

A telegram of Loyal Greetings was sent to Her Majesty the Queen, and a gracious reply has been received. Also a telegram of love and good wishes was sent to our Patron, Dame Leslie Whateley, who regrettably was unable to attend. Dame Leslie telephoned her thanks to the hotel during the Luncheon.

We are happy to report that enquiries are still being received for membership which has reached 622 including 247 Life Members. The date of the next Luncheon is Saturday October 6th 1984, in London, and we look forward to seeing as many members as possible.

We would like to hear from former members of the ATS. Anyone wishing to join the Club is invited to write to the Honorary Secretary, Miss C I Lawrence, 23 Trinity Close, The Pavement, London SW4 0JD, who will be pleased to send the necessary information.

HULL BRANCH

WESTERN AREA REUNION – 1983

At the Western Area Reunion held at The Royal British Legion Club, Telford on Saturday 22nd October, some 75 members attended from Wrexham, Chester, North Staffordshire, Stafford, Wolverhampton and Huddersfield.

Mrs Terri Goff, Chairman of the Shropshire Branch, welcomed everyone, and expressed pleasure in introducing Colonel Sue Richards, Colonel WRAC Directorate and Lt Colonel Anne Bray, Commander WRAC, South West District.

Refreshments were served and members were entertained to music and songs. Produce, Bring and Buy and Tombola Stalls raised money towards WRAC Funds. £50 has been sent to the WRAC Benevolent Fund and £5 to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund.

Following the success of the Social we held last year, we will again be holding this event in the Union Jack Club, Kingston Square, Hull on July 20th 1984. We hope to see our friends from Bradford, York and Barnsley, and any other nearby branch.

All profits will go towards the Grand Reunion in Harrogate in 1985.

WESTERN AREA REUNION – 1984

The Western Area Reunion will be held at the Royal British Legion Club, Penn, Wolverhampton on Saturday 22nd September 1984 from 2 pm to 6 pm. Tickets £2 including refreshments, obtainable from Secretary Mrs Mary Beeston, Tel: 0902-56086, not later than 8th September. Please send SAE with remittance payable to WRAC Association Wolverhampton.

There will be a Tombola Stall, Bring and Buy, "Where are they now", "It happened to me"! Directions to the Club will be enclosed with tickets.

If anyone wishes to stay for the normal evening entertainment, at the RBL Club, they will be made very welcome. We will endeavour to arrange accommodation if required.

REUNION NOTICES

QMAAC TEA PARTY

The Annual QMAAC Tea Party will be held at The Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour Street, London W2 on Friday, 23 March 1984 from 2.30 pm to 5 pm. Tickets price £1 from Corps HQ WRAC, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH.

WOLVERHAMPTON BRANCH Meetings 1984

Meetings at the Maltings Day Centre, Stafford Street, Wolverhampton 7.30 - 9.30 pm on Mondays 23 January, 27 February, 26 March, 25 June, 23 July, 24 September, 22 October, 26 November. Serving members on leave always welcome. Contact Secretary on Wolverhampton 56086.

BRANCH NEWS

BATH Our membership stands at 57 which includes 10 life members. Despite the fact that our members are well scattered over several counties, we still manage to see 14 to 18 members at most of our meetings, which are held twice a month at members' homes.

We have had a busy but enjoyable year including two Jumble Sales, and in late October a successful day when some of our members manned our two stalls at the Halloween Fair in Bath. Goods on sale were made or given by members and friends, and the "Chinese Market" proved as popular as ever. From these events £75 will be donated to The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund and £150 amongst other chosen charities.

During 1983 we enjoyed our day in Salisbury attending the Area Reunion. There were 22 of

our members able to make this trip and pleased to meet old friends again. In July we had a day out at the seaside in Devon and in September a visit to the Wild-Life Park at Burford (Oxon). Also in late September, a very enjoyable evening was spent at an hotel in Lydford-on-Fosse.

Our Christmas Dinner was held at Pratts Hotel, Bath, on Monday 12th December. We shall look forward to another successful year in 1984.

BOLTON Our branch was launched in June last year and we hold our meetings on the last Thursday of each month. We have not got many members yet, but are hoping to recruit more. We had a very good reunion at Smithills Coaching House in Bolton, as you can see from the photograph.



Members of the Bolton branch enjoying their reunion.
(Courtesy Bolton Evening News)

BRADFORD We have had a very busy two years since our new members joined us, and have an average attendance of 40 at meetings. Our standard has been paraded on numerous occasions by our very competent Standard Bearer, Mrs Norah Kendall. On the Dunkirk Veterans Parade in Belgium she was complimented by General Sir Peter Hunt who said he was very pleased to see an ATS Standard there.

A party of 38 attended "The Salute to Blesma" at Blackpool where about a hundred ex ATS joined a guard of honour led by the Wolverhampton and Bradford standards.

In November, for the second year running, we hosted a reunion for the 1914-18 Veterans. In addition to preparing a meal we provided all the home-baked food and waited on the men. Most

of the arrangements were made by the Secretary, Miss Ivy Weston BEM. The Deputy Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress attended.



L-R: Sgt B Moore, Scots Guards; Mrs M Hoggard, Mayor of Blackpool; Mrs K Abbott, Mayoress of Blackpool; Mr A Parkinson, Chairman; Piper D Fleming, Scots Guards; the Standard Bearer from Bradford and Mrs Mary Davies, Wolverhampton Standard Bearer.

DEAL The Deal and Walmer branch was formed at the beginning of last year. Our first function was a garden party in August at the home of Cdr and Mrs Bloy, where we were joined by members of the other Kent branches. Our thanks to our host and hostess for a most enjoyable afternoon.



Members of the Deal & Walmer Branch in the garden of their host and hostess, Cdr Desmond Bloy (centre) and Mrs Jessie Bloy.

(Courtesy Basil Kidd and East Kent Mercury)

HARROGATE The branch continues to flourish and has enjoyed another year of varied activities which have been well supported by members.

Our social events have been very successful

and have included supper at the "Cock and Castle", the Annual Dinner at the Courtlands Hotel and a Mystery Tour into the Yorkshire Dales. We also paid a visit to Knaresborough to explore the historic sights and were subsequently entertained to supper at the home of one of our members, Maud Hoffman, who lives in Knaresborough. A very happy evening was spent and we are indebted to Maud for her hospitality. We also made up a party to see "The Sound of Music" at the Royal Hall, a first class presentation by the Harrogate Operatic Society.

Meetings in our Club Room have ranged from Beetles 'n' Bingo and a Recipe Supper and White Elephant stall to slides of Paris, Brussels and Tunisia. There was also a very enjoyable evening devoted to "Treasures and Mementoes" when many interesting and surprising items and stories emerged.

We operated a stall at the local Bilton Gala where, in spite of bad weather, our "home-made" Tombola and raffling of a large Snoopy toy made by our member Joyce Love, raised the magnificent sum of £95.

Needless to say we also attended the Northern Area Reunion in Harrogate and were able to meet some of our distant members who were able to attend.

HASTINGS This branch has had a marvellous year. We have acquired 8 new members recently and now have a total of 40, thanks to a good amount of publicity from the local press.

In August, after a year of hard fund raising, we managed to purchase our standard. On Sunday, September 11th at St Leonards Parish Church the standard was dedicated at a service attended by a large number of local VIPs and friends, who included the Deputy Lieutenant of the County, the Hastings Mayor and Mayoress, the Rother District Chairman, our local Member of Parliament and the Mayors of Bexhill and Rye. We were greatly helped by the members of the other ex-service Associations, before and during the service, over matters of etiquette and order. Nearly all these Associations attended with their standards. Brigadier Eileen Nolan was entertained to lunch prior to the service by the secretary Marjorie Campbell and Esme Pritchard-Davies. After the service photographs were taken by the local press and friends and we then entertained our guests to tea. The standard was carried by Dorothy Dixon who formed the Hastings Branch in 1980.

Since then we have been inundated with invitations to other functions namely the Battle of Britain Parade, the Trafalgar Day Parade and the annual Remembrance Service at the White Rock Pavilion Hastings. On November 11th, four of our members went to Bethune in France to attend their Remembrance Parade. This is reported elsewhere.

Eleven members of the branch attended the AGM and had a very enjoyable day meeting old friends.

In May we held our Annual Dinner at a local hotel when a very enjoyable evening was spent. We have also held three successful Jumble Sales during 1983 which has enabled us to send donations to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund and also to help purchase our standard. Every year we have one outing to enable some of our older members, who do not like to come out in the evening, to join us and meet old friends.

Visits are made to our disabled and elderly members at frequent intervals and always just before Christmas. Our first QMAAC member, Mrs Marjorie Grindley, lives in Bexhill and hopes to attend some of the meetings.



The dedication of the Hastings branch standard at St Leonards Parish Church.

HULL We meet on the first Friday of each month at the Royal British Legion, Beverley Road, Hull. This year we broke fresh ground by holding a Social Evening in the ex-services Union Jack Club in Hull. It was one of the hottest July evenings ever known. We were delighted to welcome guests from Bradford, Barnsley, Huddersfield and

York and some very brave husbands were amongst their number. The evening turned out a huge success and Hull members are extremely grateful to all the people who made this possible.

Mrs Joyce Dixon entertained four ex-ATS, from distant parts of the country, with whom she served in 514 (M) HAA Battery. Joyce also caused great hilarity by appearing in her ATS uniform, which still fits if she holds her breath! We wondered what Lt Col Gael Ramsay who was with us thought of the antics of some of the older members!

Out of the proceeds of the event we were able to make donations to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund and the Royal Star and Garter Home. We also have a tidy sum awaiting the 1985 Grand Reunion to be held in Harrogate.

LONDON We continue to meet at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo on the third Thursday of each month. Our Annual General Meeting was held in November, when our officers and committee were elected.

In August we visited the Tower of London, where we watched the Ceremony of the Keys. Our thanks to Miss Holmes, secretary of the Ilford Branch and Mrs Carpenter, secretary of Greater London Branch for arranging the visit. Also in August we joined with members of the ATS Dinner Club to hear an enjoyable concert by the WRAC Band in Regents Park.

Members were present at the Parade at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday and at the Service of the Planting of the Cross at Westminster on November 10th.

We have an interesting programme for 1984, including talks by representatives from Sainsburys and the Save the Children Fund.

MANCHESTER We meet on the first Tuesday of each month (except Jan and Feb) at the RAMC Barracks, Kings Road. Our attendance at meetings remains about 20 to 25.

Bolton sub-branch became a branch in its own right last May. Rochdale has started a sub-branch and hopes to follow Bolton's example in the near future. In June members of Bolton and Rochdale joined us at our annual dinner which was a most enjoyable evening. The proceeds of the raffle were sent to the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund.

At our July meeting we had a surprise visitor

from Australia, Mrs Marjorie Phillips, a former member of Manchester branch and a Life member of the Association. She brought greetings from the South Australia branch of the WRAAC, and gave us a photograph of their members and a souvenir coaster with WRAAC on it. Later in July our Treasurer held a garden party at her home. Our thanks to Mrs Dugmore for making everyone so welcome.

In October, 23 members from Bolton, Rochdale and Manchester went to Harrogate for the Northern Area reunion. We had a lovely day for the event and it was a most enjoyable afternoon.

On November 9th members from Bolton and Manchester went to the BLESMA concert at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool and took part in the Guard of Honour. Twenty members paraded at the Cenotaph on November 13th. Miss Jean Silcock laid the wreath on behalf of the Branch. Mrs Norma Earith, one of our members, laid the wreath on behalf of the Manchester District Liaison Ex-Services Association of which she has been Chairman for the past twelve months.

Our Bring and Buy Sale and Party in December was a profitable and splendid evening. We are grateful to everyone who came along and for the donations.

We have to report with regret the death of two members, Mrs Effie Ward, ex QMAAC, who was a member for more than 35 years, and Mrs Doreen Elms, ex WRAC who sadly died aged 52. We shall miss them both.

PLYMOUTH Once again the Branch has been busy and recent activities included a weekend camp at Maker Camp in August, which is the subject of a separate article in this issue, along with details of a proposed camp in August 84. We worked hard for our Autumn Fair in September and had a most successful afternoon. We opened at 2 pm with a mountain of goods for sale and had virtually sold out by 3.45 pm! We were very pleased with the result. Our Annual Dinner was held in October and our AGM in November.

By the time this issue is published we will have been round Carol Singing again, had our Christmas meeting-cum-social evening and have yet another Jumble Sale under our belts. We will also have had our New Year Party in January and will be starting to look forward to another full year.

SOUTHAMPTON Having just held our AGM we are starting another year with some new Committee members and retaining some who continue to serve.

It has been a happy year, beginning with a visit to the local WRNS Association who invited us to their Trafalgar Day celebrations.

We held a "Hand Made and Home Made" evening in March and a Cheese and Wine party in July by way of fund raising efforts, and were able to send a cheque to the Benevolent Fund.

We have had speakers at some meetings and derived pleasure and interest from them. In September we had a celebration to mark the 35th Anniversary of the formation of the Branch. We made this an American Supper and enough food was provided to feed a Regiment! One of our ladies produced a superb cake which was beautifully decorated with ATS and WRAC badges.

We are now extremely busy preparing for the Area Reunion to be held in Southampton in 1984.

WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND We recently had a "Hobbies & Recipes" evening, which was very enjoyable. All kinds of talents came to light including knitting, quilting, cookery and horticulture to name a few. Favourite recipes were handed round.

One member, Mrs Audrey Bartlett who belongs to a writers circle read us some of her work which gave pleasure to all.

WIMBLEDON Meetings are held at the Community Centre, St George's Road, Wimbledon SW19 at 8 pm on the second Friday in the month with the exception of the November meeting which takes place on the third Friday. No meeting is held during the month of August. A fee of 25p room money and 10p raffle money is charged at each meeting.

In April, 16 members joined in the Art Appreciation Lecture given by Miss M Walker. Consternation reigned when members were required to draw a life study, the results of which would have in some cases put Picasso to shame!

We give our thanks to Miss Walker for giving such encouragement to our efforts. Our Bring and Buy Sale was held in May and a sum of £38.75 was raised. The Cheese and Wine Party was held in June. 18 members joined in this pleasant evening and we were pleased that Dame Mary Railton was able to join us for this event.

On August 14th, thirteen members and one husband (who survived!) enjoyed the hospitality of Dame Mary Railton and Colonel Holt at Great Bedwyn. This day in our calendar is always anticipated with pleasure and this year proved to be no exception. We send our warmest thanks to our hostesses for adding this rare tranquil English day to our memories.

September brought the Harvest Home, a new venture for our members. Various items including bay leaves, beetroot, fruit, jam etc. were supplied by members and later sold, raising the sum of £10.54, a valuable addition to our funds. Doreen Snell was good enough to rise at 6 am to go to Covent Garden to make purchases for her demonstration on October 14th. Not only were we able to learn how to make table, door and wall decorations but were able to buy suitable material to make our own efforts for the Christmas festival.

The branch AGM was held on the 18th November and was attended by 18 members. Miss P J Whitefield, who had given previous notice of her resignation as Chairman, was prevented from attending by the illness of her mother. The chair was taken by the President, Dame Mary Railton. During the meeting charity donations for 1984 were agreed as follows: £12 Royal British Legion, £5 Imperial Cancer Research Fund, £5 St Dunstons, £20 The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund.

Correspondence

Mrs Iris Hogan, Flat 1 Dalmeny Shopping Centre, Noble Parade, Dalmeny, NSW 2546, Australia (nee Pte I G Priest) sends best wishes to all members of the East Kent Branch. She recently moved from Wagga Wagga, and would be glad to start a branch of the Association if enough people are interested. She served with 574 (M) HAA Battery and finished her army career at Weybourne Firing Camp.

Mrs Sue Hirst (nee Waind) of 174 Long Lee Lane, Keighley, W Yorkshire writes about joining the Association:

"Looking in our local paper, I saw an advert announcing the opening of the WRAC Association Keighley Branch. It was with some trepidation on a cold night in November, when I nervously drove along to the address given.

Being the grand old age of 37 (and having 'cased the joint' with a previous phone call) I knew I would be one of the youngest members, in fact, *THE* youngest, and the first WRAC member.

I took along a couple of snapshots, to prove that I had done my bit with the colours, and these were passed around with lots of interest shown. It was fascinating and amusing listening to the exploits of these ladies, in the days of khaki knickers and lisle stockings! More and more ladies kept arriving. We even had three ex WAAFs – one was an aircraft mechanic on bombers during the war, and she showed a picture of her husband who was aircrew.

The next meeting was our Christmas dinner. What a marvellous night! Our lot were first on and last off the dance floor, and we left the restaurant to a big round of applause. I felt very proud to be with these ladies on that night. They all gave a little bit more than I did in those dark days of World War 2, but it seems they have never lost their great sense of humour. I am really glad I joined the WRAC Association. I had four happy years with the colours, and it's great to re-live them again with all my new friends. So if any of the ladies of the Keighley Branch read this, thanks for making me so welcome!

I would be pleased to hear from anyone I served with at 251 Sig Sqn at Aldershot, and 235 Sig Sqn (DCN) in Malta from 1965 to 1967."

Mrs Rita Fellows (nee Luckman) of 20 Mount Nod Way, Coventry CV5 7GY would like to hear from old friends who served in 477 HAA Battery, particularly Sgt Peggy, Madge and Betty who were in charge.

Mrs T Roberts of 19 Worslade Road, Tooting SW17 0BT would like to contact any ex-member of A Section, 501 (m) HAA Battery who served with them from 1941-1944.

Mrs B Barker (nee Braithwaite) of 9 Southfield Crescent, York YO2 2PJ would like to hear from any of her old Ack Ack friends. She was with 591 (M) HAA Battery RA which was formed as a mixed battery at Wokingham and moved in succession to Datchet, Windsor, Bude, Whitby and finally Ramsgate.

Joan Liscio (nee Caccavalo), who was an ATS GI bride, is coming to London for a holiday, and would very much like to meet anyone who remembers her. She worked in the ATS stores in Kings Road, Kingston-on-Thames for most of the war, with Sgt Grubb.

Anyone who remembers Joan is asked to contact Mrs Jenny Wells (nee Flint) at Jewells, Faussett Hill, Street End, Canterbury, Kent.

Mrs Peggy Gordon (nee Jones) of 4 Babilla Street, Fairview Park 5126, South Australia writes: "We have lived in Australia since 1951 and I would love to get in touch with old friends, especially a Cpl Mary Nightingale from Cambridge who left our unit in 1944 to get married. We were attached to No 5 and 8 "Y" Wings at Shenley and then Harrogate".

Mr R A Wagstaff of 17 Fairfield, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 1QX (ex Pte RAOC Medical Orderly with 571 Vehicle Group at Tel El Kebir) would like to contact ATS who were in Egypt between 1941-1945 and attached to 6 Base Ordnance Depot or any unit stationed at Tel El Kebir. Some of the switchboard operators at Tel El Kebir were ATS.

Mr Orville Martin of 2510 Hayward Road, Louisville, Kentucky 40222, USA has been trying to locate some ATS friends who were stationed near Salisbury in 1943, and worked in an officers' mess. He would like to find ex-Private Eve Porter and two ex-privates (Gladys and Phyllis) who worked with her. He would like to hear from any ex-ATS who knew him or Lloyd Peterson when they were stationed with the US Army at Tidworth Barracks in 1943.

Ex-CSM Cynthia (Sally) Healey of Badgers Cottage, Pleck, Marnhull, Dorset DT10 1NY is compiling a small book "ATS with the BEF 1940" for publication later this year. Anyone who served in France from April to June 1940 in the areas of Paris, Rouen, Rennes, Vitre, Nantes, Le Mans and Dieppe, and would like to contribute a few notes about their experiences should get in touch as soon as possible.

Anyone who would like to purchase the book (£3-£4) should write to Miss Healey. Profits will be divided between the ATS Benevolent Fund and the Dunkirk Veterans Association.

BIRTHS

DYER. On 13th September 1983 to Mr and Mrs Dyer (Major Katy Dyer) a daughter, Rosemary Joan.

FINLAY. On 22 August 1983 to Major and Mrs Finlay (Major Joanna Finlay) a son, Alexander James.

KIRBY HARRIS. On 8 September 1983 to Lieutenant Commander and Mrs Kirby Harris (Captain Abigail Kirby Harris) a second son, Peter Giles Henry.

McCULLOUGH. On 10 September 1983 to Mr and Mrs McCullough (Major Sue McCullough) a son, Hugo Patrick Murray.

TRIBUTE

MRS E M SEDGWICK (nee SHEPHERD)

"One of the most intrepid, charming and colourful characters ever to have lived in Eastbourne" writes the Herald, "was Mrs Elizabeth Sedgwick — known in flying and Army circles as Dolly Shepherd". She died at her home

in Meads, within two months of her 97th birthday, on 21st September 1983.

At the age of 18 she joined a parachute team, giving displays throughout the country, before the advent of the harness — holding only to a trapeze bar, and with a narrow sling to help take the weight of her body — this before the aeroplane had flown in Europe. In 1908 she made an historic first-ever mid-air rescue of a fellow parachutist from above the clouds at 11,000 ft — for which she is credited in the Guinness Book of Records.

At the outbreak of the First World War she joined the newly-formed Emergency Corps, becoming one of the first sergeants, and when it became the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps she immediately volunteered for France. With seven other driver-mechanics she was sent to Calais and was attached to the Army Service Corps. Among the many officers she drove was General Thompson when he went to meet General Haig, whilst she was on loan to the American Army. She also drove President Poincaré, and King Albert of the Belgians when he returned to Bruges after the Armistice.

In 1919 she married Captain Sedgwick, Rent and Lands Officer for the northern sector of France, and lived in Blackheath, SE London, where she had one daughter. During the 1930's she was involved in welfare work with children.

At the outbreak of the Second World War she helped with evacuation of children and drove for the Fire Service, becoming Deputy Chief Shelter Warden and Shelter Welfare Officer for the Borough of Lewisham in SE London, and finally Shelter Staff Officer.

After the death of her husband in 1956 she moved to Eastbourne, where she lived with her daughter. Maintaining her interest in aeronautics, she flew with the Red Devils at the age of 90, during one of their parachute displays at Worthing, and in July of last year she was the guest of the RAF Falcons Parachute Display Team at an Air Show in Eastbourne. They could not have guessed then that only two months later they would be attending her funeral, together with members of the Red Devils.

Mrs Sedgwick was an active member of the QMAAC Luncheon Club for many years, and after its disbandment she held a reunion in her home last year, as reported in the Lioness No 1 1982. She also wrote an article about her experiences in the Army, entitled "A Glimpse of the Past" — published in the 1979 No 2 edition of the Lioness.

OBITUARY

Boggett. Mrs A E Boggett (nee Baker) of Ulverston, Cumbria on 23 October 1983. QMAAC Rouen.

Brett. Mrs Elsie Brett (nee Ayling) of Upper Norwood on 31 October 1983. ATS.

Corran. Mrs Sheila Corran (nee Edwards) of Norley, Cheshire in October 1983. ATS.

Elms. Mrs D Elms of Wilmslow, Cheshire on 4 December 1983. WRAC.

Fitzhugh. Miss F Fitzhugh of London on 4 May 1983. ATS.

Gledhill. Mrs Elizabeth Gledhill (nee Skimmines) at Bradford, formerly of Carlisle, in May 1983. ATS.

Greer. Mrs V G Greer (nee Bullock) of Nottingham on 26 May 1983. WO1 ATS and WRAC.

Gribble. Major M E (Peggy) Gribble of Woodbridge, Suffolk on 13 November 1983. ATS and WRAC.

Grundy. Mrs M Grundy MBE of Tunbridge Wells, Kent. QMAAC Abbeville.

Honeybone. Miss Mary Honeybone BEM of London on 30 August 1983. ATS and WRAC 1940-1967.

Howe. Major S M Howe MBE on 11 June 1983.

Jackson. Miss E R Jackson of Wolverhampton on 27 August 1983. ATS.

Jacques. Miss Frances Jacques (Jacky) of Guisley, Yorkshire on 6 August 1983. ATS 1938-1948.

Matless. Miss Maureen Matless of Worthing, Sussex in September 1983. ATS and WRAC.

Moorcroft. Mrs Kathleen Moorcroft TD (nee Heppard) of Rossett, Clwyd on 26 December 1983. ATS and Major WRAC.

Noel-Morgan. Lt E Noel-Morgan on 10 June 1983.

Nugent. Mrs May Nugent (nee Winearles) in July 1982. ATS. Old Dalby COD 1942-1945.

Reed. Miss Edith (Reedy) Reed of Bishops Stortford, Herts on 16 April 1983. WRAC.

Robertson. Mrs Elsie Robertson of Liphook, Hants on 31 October 1983. WAAC and QMAAC.

Rodgers. Miss May Rodgers of Loughborough, Leics on 6 November 1983. ATS and WRAC.

Sedgwick. Mrs Elizabeth Sedgwick (nee Shepherd) of Eastbourne, Sussex on 21 September 1983. WAAC and QMAAC.

Ward. Mrs E Ward of Failsworth, Manchester in November 1983. QMAAC.

Weston. Major L E Weston of Brighton, Sussex on 13 August 1983. ATS and WRAC.

Willis. Mrs "Willie" Willis of New Zealand in November 1983. Remembered with great affection by members of Didcot Garrison Group ATS who have sent a donation to the ATS Benevolent Fund in her memory.

Woods. Mrs Alison Woods on 10 July 1983. Y Signals ATS.

LONDON GAZETTE

NEW YEAR HONOURS

MBE

WO1 D Mapley

BEM

WO2 F A M Tull, Staff Sergeant C Cameron TA

PROMOTIONS

Regular Army

Lieutenant Colonel: A A Kelly

Majors: S Burwell, J A Freebairn, R E R Henderson
S I F Johncey, S E Reynolds, J C A Smith,
S J G Turner

Captains: J M Ripley, G M Gibson, H M Davies,
C J Lewington, A M J Howell

Lieutenants: C S Buckley

2 Lieutenants: F E Frost, F A Rider

Short Service Commissions

Captains: C E Raley, C H Merrington-Rust,
L M Patrick, J S Young, S E A Broad,
A Maskens-McIntyre, A M King, J A Borthwick,
S A J Eckersley, P J Denton, E M Wilson,
J P Catford

Lieutenants: A Jackson, SP Gardner, V J Martin,
S May, B I Williams, H A Davis, V A Grimmett,
L M Hartley, M Hutber, R O'Meara,
A Saunders, L J Scott-Fox, E R Mollison,
P A Wignall, J E Ellis, W C Armstrong,
C Atcheson, A M Peck, S E Stone,
K A Morrison, G A Maltman, L E Baxter,
K M Munnoch, B Davies, J C Chambers,
A R Corley, N J Ribbans, C A Tanner,
L A Taylor

2 Lieutenants: C R Atkinson, J Bower, S Deasy,
D Hill, P A Lucas, V M Wood, K S Morgan

Short Service Volunteer Commissions

Captain: S A Mohan

Lieutenant: J A Appleby

RETIREMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Regular Army

Majors: D M Athoe, A L C Massey MBE, S Halsey
Major (QM): C H Wales

Special Regular Commissions

Major: M Mackenzie
Captain: J F M Weston-Davies

Short Service Commissions

Captains: D McLeod, S C Beaumont
Lieutenants: L F Rough, D M A Coupland,
D V Clarkson, A Jones

PERSONAL COLUMN

PERSONAL COLUMN CHARGES — 4 lines
£2.00, additional lines 60p each. Non members
50% extra. Write to the Editor at Corps HQ.

ANTHOLOGY OF SERVICE WIVES, Mrs Joyce
Davies, 7 Blacksmiths Road, Longwick,
Aylesbury, Bucks is compiling an anthology of
service wives of all nationalities and wants
personal experiences, poems, letters, photo-
graphs etc. Pre-war material appreciated. All sub-
missions carefully handled.

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Miss M E Jepson and Miss M A McLaughlin.

BED & BREAKFAST. Guest house Chester
£7.00 per night. All rooms central heating,
showers etc. TV lounge. Props Mr & Mrs A L
Roscoe, 18 Vicarage Road, Hoole, Chester.

WANTED. Collector wants last war cloth
formation signs, single items or collections.
Reasonable prices paid. SSgt (CQMS) B L Morris,
150 Pro Coy RMP, Beachhead Lines, Richmond
Road, Catterick Garrison, N Yorkshire.

WANTED Mess dress size 10-12. Any price
considered. Please contact Lt S M Kirkham
WRAC, Junior Leaders' Regiment RE, Old Park
Barracks, Dover. Ext 43.

FOR SALE. Officers Greatcoat and No 1 Dress,
hardly worn. Size 12/14. Contact Editor,
Guildford Mil ext 283.

FOR SALE. No 2 Dress size 12, 5' 4". Very good
condition. Contact AQM WRAC Centre,
Guildford Mil ext 246.

FOR SALE. No 2 Dress Bernard Weatherill,
size 14, height 5' 7". £140. Tel: Cambridge
870155.

FOR SALE. Officers Greatcoat and No 2 Dress,
both Moss Bros. Mess Dress with silk sash. All
size 12/14, 5' 7". Offers to Nicky Thomas, Little
Burton, Monkland Leominster, Herefordshire.
Tel: Pembridge (05447) 297. Available March
1984.

FOR SALE. Officers Greatcoat with silk lining,
size 12/14 £30. Tel: Gosport (Hants) 28690 after
5.30 pm.

FOR SALE. Officers Greatcoat £25. Mess Dress
£30. No 2 Dress uniform £30. all size 14/16,
5' 7". Tel: 0304-823798.

FOR SALE. Officers Greatcoat, No 2 Dress
uniform, 3 Tropical dresses, senior officer's
hat, handbag. Size 14, 5' 5". Offers to Mrs D J
Freeland. Tel: Warminster 40527.

FOR SALE. Officers Greatcoat £30, No 2 Dress
uniform £25. Mess Dress £20. All size 14.
Contact A Jones, 30 Wattleton Road,
Beaconsfield, Bucks. Tel: 04946-2325.

FOR SALE. Officers Greatcoat, 2 No 2 Dress
uniforms, size 12/14, 5' 6". Offers to Mrs L F
Rough. Tel: 0793-827269 after 6 pm.

FOR SALE. No 2 Dress in good condition £50
ono. Size 14, 5' 8". Tel: Swindon (0793) 727232
after 6 pm.

FOR SALE. No 1 Dress, Bernard Weatherill,
bust 37-38, waist 27-28. Scotts hat size 7.1/8.
Offers to Miss J Brett, Fairacres Farm,
Sandyhurst Lane, Ashford, Kent. Tel: Ashford
20820.

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BALANCE SHEET – 31st OCTOBER 1983

	£	1983	£	£	1982	£
ACCUMULATED FUNDS						
GENERAL FUND						
Balance at 1st November 1982			48,273			39,368
Add: Excess of Income over Expenditure			6,084			8,905
Gain on Sale of Investment			106			—
			<u>54,463</u>			<u>48,273</u>
LIFE SUBSCRIPTION FUND						
Membership Life Subscription	3,199			2,857		
Lioness Life Subscription	<u>4,622</u>			<u>4,073</u>		
			<u>7,821</u>			<u>6,930</u>
			<u>£62,284</u>			<u>£55,203</u>
REPRESENTED BY:						
FIXED ASSETS						
Office Furniture and Equipment at Cost less Depreciation			185			327
INVESTMENTS						
At Cost per Schedule (Market Value £64,248) ...			54,213			44,734
CURRENT ASSETS						
Stock of Badges	248			319		
Sundry Debtors	555			1,100		
Cash at Bank — Current Account	2,075			2,630		
— Deposit Account	1,469			3,220		
— Investment Account	3,794			3,352		
Cash in Hand	82			57		
	<u>8,223</u>			<u>10,678</u>		
Less: Sundry Creditors	<u>337</u>			<u>536</u>		
			<u>7,886</u>			<u>10,142</u>
			<u>£62,284</u>			<u>£55,203</u>

SCHEDULE OF INVESTMENTS AT 31st OCTOBER 1983

1982 Cost £		Cost £	Market Value 31st October 1983 £
2,303	M. & G. Charifund — 4,195 Units	6,248	8,757
2,912	London County Stock 5½% 1985/87 — £4,359.53	2,912	3,755
50	Royal British Legion Housing Assn. — £50 Bond	50	50
5,311	8½% Treasury Loan - 1997 — £6,718.09	5,311	5,979
2,433	8% Treasury Loan - 2002/06 — £3,336.04	2,433	2,786
3,679	7½% Treasury Loan - 2012/15 — £6,548.12	3,679	5,435
3,046	8½% Treasury Loan - 1987/90 — £3,490.98	3,046	3,238
1,490	9½% Treasury Stock - 1983 — £1,545.68	—	—
8,793	11½% Treasury Stock - 1989 — £9,927.62	8,793	10,325
5,765	12½% Treasury Loan - 1995 — £5,991.31	5,765	6,635
4,978	14% Exchequer Stock - 1986 — £5,101.54	4,978	5,514
3,974	12½% Treasury Loan - 1992 — £4,331.65	3,974	4,862
—	10½% Exchequer Stock - 1988 — £3,477.36	3,475	3,434
—	8½% Treasury Stock - 1984/86 — £1,536.99	1,568	1,512
—	City of Bristol 11½% Redeemable Stock - 2008 — £2,006.26	1,981	1,966
<u>£44,734</u>		<u>£54,213</u>	<u>£64,248</u>

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st OCTOBER 1983

	£	<u>1983</u>	£	£	<u>1982</u>	£
INCOME						
SUBSCRIPTIONS						
Annual	2,966			3,613		
Proportion of Life Subscriptions	<u>244</u>			<u>229</u>		
			3,210			3,842
THE LIONESS PUBLICATION —						
Subscriptions... ..	4,548			5,548		
Proportion of Life Subscriptions	330			290		
Advertisement Revenue	<u>596</u>			<u>413</u>		
	5,474			6,251		
Less: Cost of Publication	<u>6,663</u>		(1,189)	<u>5,101</u>		1,150
OTHER INCOME						
Income from Investments	6,199			5,334		
Deposit Account Interest	249			401		
Sale of Badges	4			22		
Funds held on behalf of Western Area	—			37		
Q.M.A.A.C. Reunion	<u>(24)</u>			<u>(29)</u>		
			6,428			5,765
TOTAL INCOME CARRIED FORWARD ...			<u><u>£8,449</u></u>			<u><u>£10,757</u></u>

EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st OCTOBER 1983

	£	<u>1983</u>	£	£	<u>1982</u>	£
INCOME BROUGHT FORWARD... ..			<u><u>8,449</u></u>			<u><u>10,757</u></u>
EXPENDITURE						
Branch Expenses:						
Capitation Fees	425			390		
Grants	<u>34</u>			<u>24</u>		
			459			414
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES						
A.G.M. Expenses	929			668		
Printing and Stationery	140			47		
Postages	78			96		
Subscriptions and Donations	140			135		
Share Purchase Expenses	127			48		
Sundry Expenses	54			34		
Audit and Accountancy Fee	296			267		
Depreciation	<u>142</u>			<u>143</u>		
			1,906			1,438
			<u><u>£2,365</u></u>			<u><u>£ 1,852</u></u>
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE ...			<u><u>£6,084</u></u>			<u><u>£ 8,905</u></u>

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