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Lioness

Vol. LVIII

1985

No. 2

WOMENS ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1919

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SHOPPING LIST

	£	p&p
ATS silver plated brooches	1.50	15p (up to 6)
Biro pens	.25	20p (up to 6)
Bookmarks, leather	.40	20p (up to 6)
Brief Cases	1.65	35p
Clipboards	2.80	98p
Coasters, leather	.40	15p
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Corps History (hardback)	5.50	60p
Corps History (paperback)	3.00	50p
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Glass Ash/Pin Tray	1.00	30p
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WRAC Association Brooches	1.75	15p (up to 6)

Most items are in green with the Corps crest in gold. Cheques/Postal Orders should be made payable to CORPS HQ A/C and sent to Corps HQ WRAC, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH.

WRAC STAFF BAND

On May 1st 1985, Musn Alison Hogarth (who joined the Band in January 1985) went to St James's Palace to be presented with her Gold Duke of Edinburgh's award.

The following Band members attended the Pupils Course at the RMSM Kneller Hall from January 1984 - January 1985: Musn Margaret Andrews, Musn Karen Melton, Musn Lynn Morgan. On Prize Day Musn Andrews took the Studio Music Prize for the Best String Pupil of 1984. She was also awarded runner-up prizes for Progress in Harmony and Instrumentation.

WHERE TO SEE THE BAND

Sunday 27 October (pm) — Concert at the Royal Albert Hall in aid of The Royal Masonic Hospital. Also appearing will be the Band of the Irish Guards.

Saturday 9 November — The Band will again be taking part in The Lord Mayor's Show, London.

WRAC IN BERLIN 1967/68

Army Public Information in Berlin have sent us a batch of photographs taken in 1967/68 with no names or descriptions. If you were serving in Berlin at the time and remember being photographed by PR, perhaps you would like to see these photographs and help us to identify the people and places concerned.

NEW HISTORY OF ROYAL SIGNALS ATS/WRAC CONTRIBUTION

The Corps Committee of the Royal Signals has agreed plans for a new history of Royal Signals. Philip Warner, a professional author who has produced a number of books of wide appeal, has agreed to write the history and the appointed Research Manager for the project is Lt Col (Retd) Robin Painter. The researchers are particularly anxious that the major contribution made over the years to the work of Royal Signals by the ATS and WRAC should be included in the new history.

It is intended that the story should be primarily about people and should paint a picture of the work done by Royal Signals in peace and war, the way members of the Corps lived through events and the *people* (of all ranks, male and female) who took part in them. Above all, the aim is that the book should be easy to read and should do justice to all those who, in their way, have made a contribution to the remarkable developments in Army Communications during the period 1939 to 1985.

If you have a story to tell, or contemporary reports or other relics, whether concerning ATS/WRAC work on communications with the Royal Signals on operations or on peacetime activities, please write to, or contact by telephone: Lt Col R P D F Painter, c/o Royal Signals Museum, Blandford Camp, Blandford, Dorset DT11 8RH. Tel: 0258 52581 or Blandford Mil ext 267.

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.

CAMBERLEY ATS

Students who attended NCO Cadre Course at No 1 MT Training Centre ATS from 22 March to 16 April 1945, in particular Bonzi, Rosamund Bladen, "George" Green, Eileen Heron and Liz Oliver, please contact Box No 1, *Lioness*, Corps HQ WRAC, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford GU2 6QH.

REGULAR FORCES EMPLOYMENT ASSOCIATION

The Association, together with the Ministry of Defence and the Manpower Services Commission, is part of the Forces Resettlement Service. Their task is to assist all non-commissioned men and women who served with good character for a minimum of three years, or less if discharged on medical grounds, to find civil employment at the end of their engagements. Their services are free, and they take a long term interest in ex-Regulars who can call on them throughout their working lives.

Their Employment Officers are situated in branches throughout the UK and they maintain close contact with local employers and Jobcentres. Their addresses and telephone numbers can be obtained from Corps HQ WRAC, Post Offices, Jobcentres and local telephone directories.

During the period 1st April 1984 – 31st March 1985 the Association assisted 10,452 men and women with their resettlement and placed 4,290 in employment. Of those placed 34 were from the WRAC.

Cover Photograph

Standard Bearers on the march at the Grand Reunion in Harrogate.

CONGRATULATIONS

We offer our congratulations to:

LCpl Amanda Hill, WRAC Centre, who won the Army Gymnastics Championships 1985.



Holding her well-earned trophy.

Pte S Higgins, QEMH Woolwich, who was runner-up in the "Army Young Chef of the Year" class of the Army Cookery Competition Finals, and Pte Byrne, RAC Gunnery School, Lulworth, who with LCpl Pike ACC was runner-up in the "Cook and Serve Competition".

LCpl D James, at present serving with 22 SAS Regiment, who received the GOC's Commendation when serving with 1 Regiment RMP.

Mrs Russell who looks after the Princess Royal's Memorial Rose Garden at the WRAC Centre and has won five first prizes and four second prizes in the Stoke and District Rose Show. She won the Silver Rose Bowl for the best exhibit in the show, and a Silver Goblet for the most points in the Rose Classes. Both trophies will be displayed in the Officers' Mess.



Mrs Russell and her goblet against a background of roses.

CSM Miller, Sgt Bridgeman, and Sgt Patterson of 3 PCD RE, ably assisted by the junior ranks, who organised a sponsored walk and disco for the Ethiopian Famine Appeal and raised DM 1700 (£450).

29 Coy WRAC who ran a disco in aid of the Ethiopian Famine Appeal and raised DM 2000.



Col Robertson, Comd WRAC BAOR, receives a cheque from Sgt Clarke and Sgt Jones of 29 Coy for DM 2000 for the Ethiopian Famine Appeal.

Corporal Sue Edwards who is a clerk in HQ Land Forces Cyprus and was recently presented with an Award for Distinguished Service by Major General Sir Desmond Langley KCVO, MBE, Commander British Forces, Cyprus.



Receiving her award.

Contributions for next issue by 13th December 1985 in double spacing. Photographs in black & white.

PRESENTATIONS

BEM

Brigadier P F B Hargrave CBE, Director of Army Recruiting presented SSgt Sandy Perry with her BEM. SSgt Perry has served in the WRAC for 22 years, of which 16 have been spent in the WRAC Personnel Selection Centre.

Present at the ceremony were Mrs Perry, SSgt Perry's mother, Colonel A J Smith, Commandant WRAC Centre, Major R A Chilton, Senior Personnel Selection Officer and members of the WRAC Centre Sergeants' Mess.



SSgt Perry receiving her BEM from Brig Hargrave.

Sgt Joyce Tuomey, a recruiter at the ACIO Norbury, was awarded the BEM in the New Year Honours.



Sgt Joyce Tuomey receiving the BEM from Maj Gen J A C G Eyre, GOC London District.

VISIT OF HRH THE DUCHESS OF KENT

Lt A S Hatherell

I was summoned to RHQ and tasked with producing an article for the *Lioness* covering HRH The Duchess of Kent's visit to the WRAC Centre. "When do you want it by?" I tentatively enquired. "Yesterday" came the answer.

I meekly saluted and left the office. The Duchess's Visit! That was weeks ago! How was I going to put the story together? I made my way back to my office and sat down, chewing my pencil and staring into space.

Slowly pictures emerged through the fog in my mind. Ah yes! Thursday 29 November 1984. A cold day. An air of expectation hung over the camp as people busied themselves in preparation for the day ahead; and a day that had been long-awaited and well-rehearsed.

I remember having coffee in Sandes when the dogs came through, sniffing for explosives. That must have been about 10 o'clock. Her arrival,



HRH The Duchess of Kent being greeted by Brig Meechie, DWRAC, and Col Smith, Comdt WRAC Centre.

programmed for about 11 o'clock was both uneventful and unobtrusive. The first most knew of it was the large black car parked outside the Selection Centre. The visit was on!

Inside the building HRH The Duchess of Kent was first briefed by the Corps Recruiting and Liaison Officer, Lieutenant Colonel J E Johnstone MBE, on recruiting matters. This was followed by Senior Personnel Selection Officer, Major R A Chilton, covering Personnel Selection and the Commandant, Colonel A J Smith, who, in turn, brought her up to date on all aspects of training at the WRAC Centre.

Meanwhile, life continued in the camp ... but not quite as usual. All eyes were on the black car. "Has it moved yet?" "Where's she going next?" Although we had been asked not to hang out of windows waving Union Jacks as she drove past, throughout the day her progress was followed by many pairs of curious eyes, discreetly hidden behind windows misted up by the breath of these would-be spectators.

Just after 12 o'clock, it was time for her to move on to the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess for a pre-luncheon drink, where she was greeted by the RSM, WO1 C S Wells, and the PMC, WO2 M E Dennis. All the Warrant Officers and Senior NCOs were gathered to meet her, and they enjoyed a half-hour of talking to Her Royal Highness before, all too soon, she moved off to the Officers' Mess for lunch.

There, carefully-briefed Officers had collected in groups, and Her Royal Highness was introduced to several of them who executed well-rehearsed curtsies (which for many had proved to be the greatest problem of the visit!) After the introductions, accompanied by her ever-present Lady-in-Waiting and Private Detective, she went to lunch.

During the meal, she was entertained by the WRAC Staff Band, conducted by the Band Sergeant Major, WO2 F A M Tull BEM. Before she left, she was able to exchange a few words with the Band. She also spoke to the Master Chef, WO2 D Rushton ACC, and the cooks and stewardesses who had prepared and served the meal. At this point, several people made a quick getaway so that they could be there to meet her at the Education Centre, which was the first port of call of the afternoon's programme. The car stopped only briefly on the way for Her Royal Highness to meet the WOPT, WO2 P A Rosewell, who had turned a delicate shade of blue standing umpiring one of the longest netball matches in the history of the Centre! The visit, as often happens, was

running behind schedule.

Elsewhere in the Centre, things had almost returned to normal. With the initial excitement wearing off, people became rather blasé about having Royalty on the Camp. But still those eyes watched for her car!

Meanwhile, in the Education Centre, our VIP, guided by the OC 2 Training Company, Captain M F Lauder, was shown Week 2 recruits being instructed in practical First Aid. Having disentangled herself from the slings and bandages, she was introduced to the OC 1 Training Company, Captain J A Coates, who took her to meet week 5 recruits who were being taught Map Reading. This was followed by an insight into the Fieldcraft training of the TA recruits. Her Royal Highness sampled the camouflage cream, and discovered, as all soldiers do, that it is easier to put on than to take off!



Discovering that cam cream is more difficult to remove than apply!

Time was slipping away as the procession of cars moved across the square, where a drill lesson was taking place, to the Gym. The OC WO/NCO Wing, Major D L Halliday, was there to greet the visitor and to introduce her to members of her training staff who were putting a Corporals' course through their practical leadership tasks. Her Royal Highness watched the students struggling with benches, planks and the principles of cantilever, before moving on to the Corps Museum, outside which she had been invited to plant a commemorative tree.

This is where the so far smooth-running programme had its first and last hiccup. A wooden walkway had been constructed across the grass to the tree and had been painted a uniform shade of green which had been protected by plastic sheeting for "The Day". When the plastic was removed that morning, however, the paint was attached to it and we were left with mottled boards. The

Commandant's heart must have missed a beat because she knew that at 9 o'clock that morning the walkway was being repainted and by 4 o'clock it would not be dry — she must have been on tenterhooks to find out what the Quartermaster's solution had been. She knew the Quartermaster would come up trumps ... and she did! As she stepped out of her car, Her Royal Highness was greeted by the Corps Secretary, Brigadier (Retd) N C King, and a pristine blue carpet on which to tread her way towards tree and spade.



Planting a tree to commemorate the day.

The planting done, The Duchess of Kent visited the Museum, where the Curator, Major (Retd) D R M Parker and the Assistant Curator Miss J Marston were presented, and signed the Visitors Book. By now she was well behind time, and the JNCOs were anxiously waiting in Sandes Home, where she was supposed to have tea with them before leaving. Undaunted, Her Royal Highness proceeded to Sandes (managing to surprise our much-appreciated gardener and flower-arranger, Mrs Russell, who was completing the planting of the tree). She spent a pleasant, if brief, time talking to several of the Permanent Staff, introduced to her by the OC HQ and H Company, Major J M Ball.

By now it was getting dark and Her Royal Highness's day at the WRAC Centre was drawing to an end. All those who had not met or seen her during the day had the chance to catch a glimpse of her as, after a farewell to the Director and the

Commandant, she left the Centre via a route lined by cheering recruits and Permanent Staff.

And that was that! The visit was over. All those weeks of planning and preparation had come to an end. There was a great sense of relief, and of satisfaction for a job well done. Of course, there had been tense moments and last-minute changes (to wit, one blue carpet), and naturally all the stories of faux pas and near-disaster came flooding out as soon as the Royal visitor had left.

Yes, it was a good day! Not just because it was the climax to a great deal of work by all members of the camp, but because the obvious interest, enthusiasm and sense of humour of our guest had made all that preparation worthwhile.

Yes, I remember 29 November. How could any of us possibly forget it? But how on earth could I write the story on it?

I took the pencil from my mouth, made myself a cup of coffee... and gave it to Second Lieutenant Pevalin to do!

THE WRAC AND THE RED DEVILS

Capt B M Simmonds WRAC

In 1971 Pte Jacky Smith became the first WRAC Servicewoman to be attached to that elite Parachute Regiment Free-fall team, the Red Devils. Sgt Jacky Smith left the Team and the WRAC in 1976, the British National Women's Free-fall Champion.

On Thursday 23 May, the singular distinction of the Parachute Regiment's Red Beret was once more bestowed on a member of the WRAC, Pte Annette Heaton. As many of you will have seen on television or in the newspapers, Pte Heaton not only jumped into the grounds of Kensington Palace, but she received her red beret from no less a person than HRH The Prince of Wales. It was all part of an appeal, launched by the Red Devils for a new Islander aircraft which will cost half a million pounds.

Pte Heaton began her parachuting career before she joined the WRAC. While living in Rochdale

she joined a Manchester club and jumped regularly while she completed a two year catering course at Technical College. She joined the WRAC in 1981 and after a short course with the ACC in Aldershot, was posted as a cook to COD Bicester; a most fortuitous move as Bicester is very near the RAF station of Weston-on-the-Green.

Pte Heaton completed a month of trials with the Red Devils last November and after acceptance by Capt Micky Munn, the team Commander, officially began her attachment in February. She has now completed 280 jumps and will appear with the Red Devils at many of their displays all over the country this summer.

Adventure is obviously something that runs in the family. Pte Heaton's parents confided that her grandmother won a Gold Medal for breast-stroke swimming in the 1924 Paris Olympics. Most of us might manage one parachute jump, but 280 would be beyond our strength or courage.



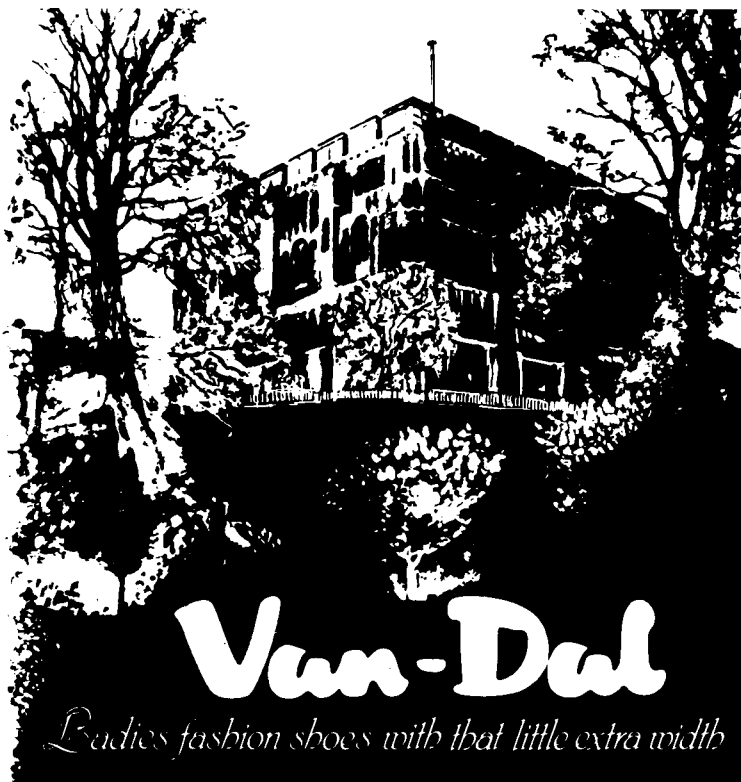
HRH The Prince of Wales presenting Pte Heaton with her red beret.

Courtesy The Mirror Group



Lord Trefgarne, US of S for the Armed Forces, presents Pte Heaton with a letter of intent that the Government will give up to £150,000 towards the Red Devils' Appeal Fund for a new aircraft.

Courtesy Daily Telegraph



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LIONESSES MEET LIONESSES

Ex a KWANZA BACKSTOP — KENYA

Capt E E Cunningham WRAC

We had little idea what lay in store for us when we began a month's expedition in Kenya's Tsavo National Park in November of last year. Our party consisted of 12 WRAC members of 68 Sqn RCT and a small support party of 2 soldiers from 12 Flt AAC and a female civilian (ex WRAC and 68 Sqn RCT). After months of preparation and planning, fund raising and training, we had finally made it to Africa. There were mixed feelings of apprehension and excitement as we drove the 250 miles south from Nairobi to begin our safari.

"a KWANZA" is Swahili for "the first" and this was the very first time that Kenya had played host to an all-female military expedition. Needless to say we attracted a fair amount of interest, and indeed curiosity, from both the authorities and the local people. We apparently caused a great deal of amazement and amusement from the locals in that here were white women in the Army attempting to

do the unthinkable by trekking through the bush, and they could all drive lorries as well!

Our aim was to negotiate some 200 miles over Kenya's largest and most notorious National Park — Tsavo, by means of a foot safari from Mito-Andei to Malindi. Tsavo covers 11,000 square miles of uninhabited bush and is divided into east and west mainly for administrative purposes. Each Park is controlled by a senior warden. Tsavo is notorious for its lack of water, presence of tsetse fly and barren wilderness. However it has always been a paradise for both large and small game. Our expedition coincided with the end of the dry season and the beginning of the rains, and as game movement largely depends on both rainfall and vegetation, we were guaranteed to see an abundance of game throughout our safari as the game migrated away from the permanent water holes with the advent of the rains. Some game was more welcome than others! Our journey was to follow a similar path to both the Tsavo and Athi Rivers and the Galana River — the only permanent rivers in the Park.

We were amazed to find that, despite the dry heat and the dust, so much life could survive within the Park. The rivers were fringed with green trees and riverine vegetation surrounded all the

water-holes. Otherwise the true colours of Tsavo were grey, mauve and red where open plains alternated with bush and scrub, rocky ridges and isolated hills.

We were lucky enough to have the services of Bill Woodley, the senior warden of Tsavo West and a carefully selected team of 5 of his rangers. In Africa Bill Woodley is a legend. Few men have made a greater contribution to wildlife conservation and he is now accepted as one of the foremost authorities on Tsavo. We were to learn a lot from Bill and his rangers, Sgt Tamanga, Mohammed, Kurikum, Kosi and Elui, and many an evening was spent listening in awe to their tales of surviving in the bush. They were fully armed at all times and never let us out of their sight from the moment we set foot in the bush.

The warden's biggest problem, even today, is curtailing poaching, mainly for elephant and rhino but also for small game. Rangers patrol the vast expanse of parkland to glean information on the latest poaching trend and then set about trapping and catching the poachers. Bill used our expedition as an excuse to do some rhino surveillance and we all helped to record information on rhino movement and the age and location of rhino skeletons as and when we discovered them.

Like many expeditions we had our fair share of problems. Our support party arrived in Kenya some weeks ahead of us in order to draw vehicles and stores from BATLSK, based in Nairobi. They also recce'd potential camp sites and, where necessary, cleared bushland, hired a small labour force for the expedition and made contact with the people who would help us on our way. Unfortunately they discovered that our 1,000 lbs of freight had not arrived and due to the Ethiopia crisis all freight had been temporarily grounded. Our freight contained our entire camp – tents, showers, portaloos, generator, medical supplies and a complete array of food, utensils and general items which you cannot buy for love nor money in Africa. After endless signals and the help of the DA Nairobi, our freight was guaranteed to arrive on the next available flight – some 10 days after our main party had arrived. It was decided to continue the expedition as planned with improvised stores very kindly loaned from BATLSK. We would somehow transfer the stores mid-expedition and continue with our own luxury safari camp – purpose-built for our expedition. Not a good start!

Wed 20 Nov 84

The main party, consisting of SSgt June

Rayner, Cpls 'Sam' Simon and Karen Burton, LCpls Lyn Sharp, Elaine Murdoch and Sue Mitchell, and Ptes Colleen Brooks, Jackie Osbaldstone, Sue Shiel, Dee Stewart and 'Raz' Carr arrived at Nairobi Airport. After an enlightening visit to the main market, where we witnessed the hustle and bustle, poverty and interesting array of smells(!), we headed south for Kamboya, the Park HQ of Tsavo West and the Woodleys' home. They had kindly agreed to accommodate the lot of us in their house for the acclimatisation phase. With their own water holes just metres away, glorious views of Kilimanjaro and Mwenzie and an abundance of game, this was better than Treetops any day!

Thu 21 Nov 84

The support party went into the bush to set up our first camp and reorganise stores whilst the rest of us headed up some 5,500 ft into the Chyulu Mtns, accompanied by Bill and Sgt Tamanga. From there we could see quite clearly the first phase of our intended route and the wild, desert wilderness. Quite breathtaking! Our first glimpses of game consisted of impala, giraffes, hartebeests, zebra, and a vast variety of colourful birds. We learnt our first Swahili words and had our first wildlife lessons. A visit to a Maasai manyatta, courtesy of Sgt Tamanga (himself a Maasai ex warrior), is definitely not included on a normal safari tour and we were very lucky to experience this event. The old chief greeted us and we were then swarmed by the women, children and hundreds of flies. In twos and threes we entered one of their huts and sat crouched on the ground in pitch blackness with only a small air vent for light. Milk, mixed with cow's blood was passed (no takers!) and jewellery exchanged hands. A friendly football match against a local team finished off a fabulous first day and attracted over 60 extremely curious locals. We received tremendous support and are definitely top of the popularity stakes!

Fri 22 Nov 84

At 0400 hours our first disaster struck. Whilst asleep in the house on her camp bed, Pte Coleen Brooks was bitten by a snake, later identified as a spitting cobra. Lightening speed is required to save a cobra victim's life and we had only one course of action open to us – to get her to a main hospital (Nairobi) immediately. After an injection of Piriton (to slow down her nervous system) she was whipped off in a landrover within half an hour of being bitten to start the long 250 mile journey. The symptoms of a cobra bite are similar to the

dangerous stages of nerve-agent poisoning, ie vomiting, muscle twitching and jerking, and poor Pte Brooks had developed all these symptoms before she arrived at the hospital. It was largely her own presence of mind and her cool, calm approach which saved her life. She spent her entire month in Nairobi recovering from several operations and had to have a skin graft on her hand (where she was bitten) on returning to BAOR. She is now fully recovered and one of the few people to survive a particularly vicious cobra bite. She won't forget this expedition in a hurry!

The snake was never found and consequently everyone was slightly unnerved by the event. The decision was made to move out the next day and begin the walk. Bill assured us that we would be extremely unlikely to see a snake in the bush as they have a tendency to get out of our way. He was right — we only saw non-poisonous snakes en route.

Sat 24 Nov 84

The walk began at an airstrip at Mtito-Andei and we aimed to walk 8 miles to an RV where transport would await. Eventually we would be walking over 15 miles a day but we were also acclimatising at this stage. The bush was extremely thick, and consequently very dangerous and very slow to negotiate. The rangers all carried heavy rifles, cocked ready to fire at any animal (especially rhino or buffalo) which dared to charge us.

Sun 25 Nov 84

We were all developing good bush sense and moving easier through the bush. We walked the entire distance in single file with the rangers evenly distributed amongst us with one leading, one tailing. We had been briefed when to remain silent and still, and should we be charged by any animal, (God forbid), to hold our ground and DON'T MOVE. The rangers would dispatch any angry beast! Although extremely hot (mid 90°F) we covered approximately 10 miles and walked into our first camp (Rock Camp).

Our support party, Sgt Mark Ryler, LCpl 'Mac' McDonald and Eddie Newbery, had an unenviable task. They would leap frog the main party and move camp every 2 - 4 days. In addition, they fed us, watered us and generally attended to our every whim. Life for them was definitely not easy and it was further complicated in the early stages by not having our luxury lightweight camp. We had hired 3 "camp boys" for the expedition and for the princely sum of £1 a day, they did all the cooking, washing up, washing of our clothes and

yes, even our ironing. Luxury!

Despite the fact that Nathan, Maluki and Manyan spoke no English, where food and drink were concerned an international language seemed to exist! We benefited from their incessant Swahili chatter and marvellous African songs. They were a godsend to the walkers and a headache to the support party who had to live with them every day and had the communication problem to contend with too!

Mon 26 Nov 84

Elephant day! Everyone fit and contending with the heat well. The bush was still very thick but we managed a fast, strong pace. Fresh rhino tracks were spotted and a recent elephant skeleton observed. No tusks, — obviously the poachers had been and gone. We pushed on and made our second camp (Tsavo Gate) with time on our hands, so a game drive to Ngulia Lodge for a swim and a rest was voted in. We had walked 17 miles. Game drives guarantee good game and the rangers said we would see plenty of elephants. They were right! With cameras poised we stopped to photograph one particularly magnificent elephant not too far from the red, mirram track.

Without any warning, it turned around, trumpeted loudly and with massive ears flapping, charged us at full speed. What a commotion! Girls screaming, cameras forgotten and burning rubber as we just escaped. Bill (who was at the wheel) was of course used to charging elephants and assured those in the front of the vehicle that 9 out of 10 times the elephant would pull short and turn around, therefore he would quite happily stand his ground. However, he noticed (at the last moment) that this was a female, tuskless elephant, notoriously aggressive and she was not going to stop. If we were on foot the rangers would have had to shoot.

Tue 27 Nov 84

Rest day. We took a visit to Mzima Springs not far from Tsavo Gate, and a popular tourist area. Rain falls on the Chyulus (48 kms away) and seeps through the porous volcanic ash and collects to emerge at Mzima as clear, sparkling water at a rate of 2,250 million litres per day. This spring supplies all of Mombasa's water. Plenty of hippos, crocodiles and fish, and an abundance of game throughout. Good day had by all.

Wed 28 Nov 84

Maneaters Day! We were all fairly wary today as our walk was to take us through man-eating lion territory. From Tsavo Gate we passed by

Maneater's Motel, crossed the main Nairobi-Mombasa road and railway line and headed east into the bush. The motel was called "Maneaters" because in 1898 28 Asian workers were eaten by Tsavo lions whilst building the railway. Even today Tsavo lions are among the most dangerous lions in Africa. 15 miles later we had passed by incident-free and crossed several crocodile-infested streams. Sighs of relief! We had passed our RV at Tabanguji junction relatively quickly — I suspect it had something to do with the area we had crossed! Our transport collected us and drove us back to Camp at Tsavo Gate where the DA, Col Southerst, was there to meet us. We were hot and tired, and covered in the red dust. The DA had been very good to us and was ensuring that Pte Brooks was OK. He also acted as our postman!

29/30 Nov 84

As Bill had to attend a funeral in Nairobi we used the next two days to move camps from Tsavo Gate to a point on the Galana River called Epiya Chapeyu, leap-frogging the point we had reached by foot at Tabangiji. We also refilled our almost dry water supplies from Aruba Dam and took the opportunity to visit Crocodile Camp, a tented lodge a few miles east of Sala Gate, the eastern most edge of Tsavo Park. Chris Muzungu the manager, had very kindly agreed to us using both his showers and his pool; he also had a marvellous bar! We took advantage of these two days knowing that we still had over 130 miles to walk before we would reach Malindi. The journey from Epiya Chapeyu to Sala Gate was long but enjoyable. An abundance of game — zebra, impala, water buck, oryx, buffalo, St Peter's gazelle, Thompson's gazelle, ostrich and the terrain now quite rough and open. We also noticed that the further east we travelled the hotter and more humid it became. There had been a recent flash flood and a causeway had been totally destroyed — it was intact just a week before. We also saw a pride of lions enjoying the last rays of sunshine.

Sat 1 Dec 84

Sandstorm Day! Bill had returned the night before and we were dropped off at Tabanguji to begin our 15 mile walk into camp at Epiya. We always began at the crack of dawn thereby avoiding the intense midday sun and temperatures of up to 120°F in the shade. Even by 1000 am it was unbearably hot and we had little shade. By now we had established a cracking pace and could cover the open terrain quite fast. We were following a similar course to the Galana river but

deliberately gave the river a wide berth. All the Tsavo rivers are infested with dangerous hippos and crocodiles and many an animal falls foul of the notorious quicksand areas.



Sgt Tamanga, ex Maasai warrior.

Everyone arrived at camp in good spirits having had a good walk and we settled down for a lazy afternoon finding what shade we could. We were rudely interrupted by a violent sandstorm which seemed to appear from nowhere and caught us all totally unprepared. We were completely blinded by the sand and had to hang on for dear life as a gale rattled through our camp, collapsing practically everything in sight. Eventually it died down and we were left, all slightly dishevelled, to repair the damage. What a pitiful sight! Various articles of clothing were scattered over a ½ mile radius; sand was 2 inches deep on our beds and everywhere else, and our camp lay in a sorrowful heap on the ground. In all their years in Africa, the Woodleys had not experienced a sandstorm quite like it. We decided to have a party amongst the debris — under the circumstances it seemed a good idea!

Mon 3 Dec 84

We had decided to push on and make Sala Gate in one day (23 miles). The swimming pool and bar at Crocodile Camp were attractive carrots! Until now we had avoided the red, mirrum tracks and kept to the bush. This was kinder on our feet and avoided the monotony and boredom of endless miles of track. We remained in single file

and the pace was regulated by the front man, Mohammed. We found that when we did hit the track, we had the tendency to break file and lose control of the pace. Also more blisters developed! We therefore kept to the bush where possible. This was by far our hardest day and it was extremely hot. The support party had overtaken us and set up camp at Sala Gate — they had similar problems with the heat and everyone was very tired and irritable.

4/5 Dec 84

Rest days and tempers returned. Everyone spent the next 2 days at Crocodile Camp and the rangers went to Voi to collect rations and spend the allowance they had received. Only the camp boys continued their work. We had established quite a rapport with the rangers, built on mutual respect. We would listen flabbergasted whilst Bill told us of tales about his men. Elui, for instance, had survived a fight with a wounded leopard by which he was very badly mauled. He had been horned by a rhino, beaten up by 2 buffalos, attacked by a crocodile, constricted by a python and, like young Colleen Brooks, bitten by a cobra. Except for the cobra, for which he was treated, Elui had stayed alive solely by his own lightning

reactions by fighting to free himself, or the masterful use of his knife with which he despatched the leopard, the python and the cobra. Bill had photographed the python. It measured over 15 feet. Needless to say, this little old, toothless Kamba whom Bill had caught for poaching in 1948, was our hero. It was also a coincidence that all these incidents happened along the very route we were taking, and Elui took great delight in reminding Bill that it was here that such and such attacked him whilst we were all quietly enjoying a well-earned rest on the very spot!

6-8 Dec 84

The final phase. Only 75 miles to go and we were out of Tsavo Park. We would now pass through villages and meet the locals, and our main danger was robbers. We were by no means allowed to relax! We were in a notorious malarial area and were advised to take double doses of malaria tablets. We aimed to walk 15 miles a day for the next 3 days and would then end our safari with a 30 mile night march into Malindi, finishing at the elite Driftwood Club for breakfast. We tried where possible to keep to the bush but this became increasingly difficult and eventually we were forced onto the track. The blisters appeared and

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the sun was scorching. Each day our transport picked us up and returned us to camp at Sala.

We had some welcome visitors one evening. The managers of both Galana and Kalalu Ranch had flown to the nearby airstrip to visit us. They brought their wives and a man who (we discovered later) owned a large proportion of Kenyan land. They had heard all about us and after a party at our camp, they made several trips to fly the majority of us to Galana Ranch, north of the Galana River. They laid on a real feast for us — lobster thermidor, avocados, fresh fruit and plenty of drink. They then flew us all back to camp with just the moon for light. light.

Sun 9 Dec 84

Camp was stripped and we all headed east on the track to Malindi. The support party dropped us off and they continued on to Mombasa to set up our final camp. They would later return to Malindi to welcome us in. We rested in the shade until nightfall and then began our 30 mile walk. Morale was high and we had excellent support en route from Sgt Tamanga and SSgt June Rayner.

Mon 10 Dec 84

We arrived at the Driftwood Club bedraggled and covered in red dust as the sun rose over the Indian Ocean. We tucked into a hearty breakfast and then headed south for Vipingo, just north of Mombasa.

We visited a Samburu workshop and saw the fabulous Massai/Samburu dancers, and visited a snake farm. Our grand finale was the train journey from Mombasa to Nairobi. It all seemed a long, long way and we felt rather pleased with ourselves that we had walked more than 180 miles. All in all it was the experience of a lifetime and hopefully the tale of our adventure will encourage others to organise similar expeditions.



Enjoying a well-deserved rest at the Driftwood Club, Malindi.

WRAC IN SOUTH NORWAY

Pte Sharon Langford -- 16 Signal Regiment

The idea of assisting the Royal Marine Commandos on their annual Exercise in Norway sounded appealing. On December 10th I found myself accompanying four volunteers from the Regiment for briefings in Plymouth.

Pte Lynne Webster and I were attached to the Commando Logistic Regiment, so after saying goodbye to Ptes Nimmo, Calabrese, and Boorman (who, I believe, were attached to HQ Brigade) we attended the inevitable survival lectures. These ranged from how to avoid frostbite to a full demonstration of putting on thermal underwear!

Following a Christmas break and another week in Plymouth in which we became acquainted with our fellow WRAC from 10 Sig Regt and 241 Sig Sqn, we were en route to South Cerney with bulging suitcases and rucksacks laden with ski and arctic gear. A two hour flight in a snow blizzard took us from RAF Lyneham to Sor Gardermoen.

We arrived at Gardermoen Camp, base of the Logistic Regt (and covered in approximately a foot of snow) in time for a scrumptious salad, just one of many to follow! Our accommodation in the sickbay, however, proved better than expected. Complete with all the usual facilities plus continental quilts we felt well at home.

Our role for this deployment was to replace the Signallers in the COMMEN and Exchange, thus enabling them to participate on preparatory courses for Exercise Cold Winter.

The city of Oslo was a popular attraction for both shopping and sightseeing, and we visited the local town of Jessheim and bought viking hats — ideal for the snowy weather or a keepsake from Norway.

Whilst off shift, other opportunities included a test flight in the C in C The Fleet's private Andover, a trip to the Hadeland Glass Factory, visits to Hamar and Ringebu, cross-country skiing along five, ten, and fifteen kilometre tracks, downhill skiing at Hurdal ski-centre, and a day out to the Concert Hall in Oslo.

We would like to thank the Royal Marine Commandos especially Signal Troop for a wonderful time. They made us feel particularly welcome and it was a pleasure to work with them. See you soon boys!

NEVER TRUST YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Captain M F Lauder WRAC

During my time as OC 2 Training Company at the WRAC Centre I have had the dubious honour of reading approximately 1,500 recruit essays entitled "My First Impressions of the WRAC centre". Some of you reading this may well have written one of them; you may even recognize one of the extracts included in this article as your own work. For the benefit of everyone who reads Lioness I would like to share with you some of the lighter moments of this time-consuming task and prove to you that, with our thorough recruiting system and modern-day communications, recruits are as well informed as ever on what their recruit training holds in store for them:

"God!, I thought, is this my room? I can't live here, they haven't even made the beds!"

"At first I thought the parade square was an extra large playground ... but I was soon to be put in the picture."

"That afternoon we made our way to the QM stores. Here I was surprised to find that they didn't store QMs but issued kit."

"I had expected all the officers to be 40-50ish and the sergeant to be built like a tank."

"The corporals were nowhere as bad as I expected – they were definitely human beings."

"I was led to believe that everyone in any rank as long as it was one above you was nasty, vicious and gained sadistic pleasure out of watching you sweat."

"The training NCOs introduced themselves. Real live army types at last. 'What do we call them?' echoed around the block. 'Sir' was rejected as soon as suggested and most of us adopted the ostrich approach of 'speak if you are spoken to and not before!' I think this was one

of the very rare occasions when we have maintained a silence lasting longer than 30 seconds."

and they are still brought up to be naturally tidy and able to look after themselves:

"Perhaps the lesson that most people disliked however was care of uniform. When we saw how we had to iron our shirts we nearly had a fit. I'd always thought the idea of ironing was to get creases out, not put them in."

"The booklet the recruiting sergeant gave me I took home and read from cover to cover, front, back and inside out. I can honestly say that I do not remember seeing the word ironing!"

"The pressures from the ironing began to get me down. I used to count irons to fall asleep, not sheep."

"I do not mind if my room is clean and tidy and my shirts are ironed ... I expect it is better than rock-climbing in my bedroom and being one big un-ironed crease."

Today's recruits are well-motivated:

"I remember being asked why I joined the army and replied for the career prospects and a change but really I have always been fascinated by the forage cap!"

"I knew the army was the type of life I had always wanted even though my friends said it was like a concentration camp because we were herded like animals, given injections, checked for nits and then put in the gas chamber!"

and fit:

"It's obvious when you have come out of a PT lesson, as everyone is walking with stiff legs and their faces are purple."

"Often in our first week I was convinced that PT stood for 'physical torture' but the agony lessens as the weeks progress."

and smart:

"We were then tailored and sent away in our dark brown army issue tights, flat black shoes and short PT skirts and jumpers. We felt

absolutely stunning."

They learn quickly:

"By the first evening I had forgotten how to slouch."

"No longer is it the dust-ridden old shabby shelves and wardrobes, now it's the smart dust-ridden fitted shelves and wardrobes."

and fully understand the principles behind their training:

"The training is preparing us for the rest of our career in the army, to respect people and to digest awful food."

"Getting up at 0530 was also a new step. I used to get up early at home but never in the middle of the night."

"I also stopped to think sometimes why I was scrubbing and polishing so madly at something that in civilian life would be referred to as clean."

"The lessons we have may come in handy, especially First Aid, as we may have to rescue a dummy one day."

"We all hear tales of army officers shouting and bawling for no reason. Well, so far they have always had reason."

And finally:

"Each of us, all 37, in our platoon, although we walk, march, eat, sleep and study as one body of women, are still completely different individuals, each with as many views, beliefs and codes of living as the facets of a diamond. And so I suppose I could say the platoon is full of gems."

Platoon Officer's comment: "Gems!? Brass buttons maybe!"

But, on a serious note, there is also a strong sense of dedication and professionalism:

"I am willing to devote myself to becoming, as our motto says, 'gentle in manner, resolute in deed', a soldier, but most of all a smart and disciplined soldier."

EX PENDULUM SOUTH

**LCpl S A Stant WRAC
3 SQN 10 SIG REGT (HQ UKLF)**

From December 10th 1984 to February 21st this year 3 Sqn 10 Sig Regt (HQ UKLF) lost LCpl Shirley Stant and Ptes Angela Murphy and Susan Cheshire to the Royal Marines Sig Tp CDO LOG REGT in Norway. LCpl Stant takes up the tale ...

"We came to the rescue of the Marines for two months during their winter deployment to Norway. We were attached to the Sig Tp CDO LOG REGT RM for EX PENDULUM SOUTH 85. After several lectures on frostbite, hypothermia and the dangers of the cold, our first rude awakening was the 1 hour and 30 minutes flight to Gardermoen in Norway (courtesy of that friendly airline, the RAF!). We were then led to our accommodation which was situated in the Medical Centre. My idea of roughing it is putting up with black and white TV and the mere thought of the word "Exercise" conjured up all sorts of nasties like bivvies, cam nets and compo! When we stepped into our accommodation of pinewood furniture, fluffy continental quilts and heating ... yes heating, I could hardly believe it! Our only inconvenience was having to walk some 300 yards to the showers.

The WRAC contingent consisted of 12 girls. There were four TA cooks and the rest of us were employed in both the COMMCEN and the exchange. The COMMCEN itself was quite small, in fact it was like working in a cupboard. We had only one simplex circuit which was open from 0600 - 2000 hours midweek and only for precedence traffic at weekends.

The COMMCEN clan consisted of myself and Pte Cheshire (10 Sig Regt), Pte Fyvie (241 Sig Sqn) and Ptes Webster and Langford (16 Sig Regt). Our first week wasn't too busy but we did have

problems with the distribution of signals. We had to decide ourselves where to send signals by reading the text -- this system would never work at home! The man who supervised this glorious chaos and covered up our mistakes was a marine, LCpl Steve Evans.

For the girls in the Exchange, namely Ptes Murphy, Hassell and Howell, all from 10 Sig Regt, it was a different matter. As all three were Data Telegraphists, none of them had ever worked a switchboard so they were a bit confused. However, like the rest of us, they got used to it after a week.

We were able to go skiing as we had been issued with cross-country skis by the Royal Marines, and we also went downhill skiing a couple of times. We had plenty of opportunities to go into Oslo since the postal truck went in every day to collect the mail and returned to camp in the afternoon. The first time we went we spent all morning trying to find "McDonalds" and having found it decided that in future we would take our own "butty box" as it cost £8.50 for two of us!

Sadly the girls from 3 Sqn 10 Sig Regt (HQ UKLF) had to depart to rejoin our Sqn for EX WINTEX -- a far cry from EX PENDULUM SOUTH 85! We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and returned with plenty of cuts and bruises from the skiing and plenty of memories of helping the Royal Marines.

Warrant Officer at Larkhill there was no shortage of instructors volunteering their services, but it seemed a shame that there were no WRAC instructors available.

On that first cold morning in January my instructors and I were greeted by seventeen cold and smiling faces. Maybe they were smiling because of the warmth of the Driver and Maintenance Wing. One hour later when we had the course photograph taken they were still smiling; but this time they were told to smile!

After two weeks learning about dragging and slipping clutches, the major components of a vehicle and the servicing of them, receiving numerous electric shocks, it was a joy to see those seventeen smiling faces covered in oil and grease after one of the practical servicing lessons. Two weeks of hard and enjoyable work had produced seventeen B2 Drivers ready to spread their new found knowledge on anybody and everybody.

At a small end of course party the top student Pte Sally Green of 17 Port Regiment RCT was presented with a framed and inscribed certificate by the Commanding Officer of 14 Field Regiment RA, Lt Col I R G Stewart. All seventeen servicewomen were a credit to their units. Their standard of driving was without exception very good. They have now left for all points of the compass, and my myth about women drivers lies on the floor in tatters. So gentlemen reading this take note. Maybe it's you who is the bad driver.

My instructors and I would like to say a big thank you for letting us run this course and to Pte Rachel Harrison of 22 Sqn RCT for all her help.

DRIVING FORCE

(B3 - B2 UPGRADING COURSE)

WO2 N W Fishwick RA

After two years of phone calls and refusals I was finally given permission to run a B3 to B2 WRAC Driver Upgrading Course at the Support Regiment RA at Larkhill. This course was restricted to servicewomen in the Support Regiment RSA. The Support Regiment is now 14 Field Regiment RA and the second course was about to assemble with students from eight different units as far apart as Nuneaton and Southampton with seventeen servicewomen. For the second time in my three years as the Driver and Maintenance



L-R Back Row: Pte Aggett, LCpl Harding, Pte Philips, Pte Cody, Pte Hutchinson, Pte Taylor, Pte Green, Pte Harrison, Pte Raynes
Front Row: Bdr Mason (Instructor), Pte Moody, Pte Bushby, Pte Evans, Gnr Grieve (Instructor), WO2 Fishwick (OC Wing), Pte Bruce, Pte Craig, Pte Jamieson, LCpl Howkins, Bdr Miller (Instructor).

SPORT

INTER SERVICE HOCKEY

After 29 years it took a talented but little side with plenty of brand new players to win the Inter Service Championships. In 1973 the Army shared the trophy with the Navy. Since then the other two services have not considered the Army a serious threat.

Selection for the Inter Service squad took place in October 1984 instead of the January prior to the Inter Service Championships. The Chairman Lt Col Robinson WRAC, felt it was about time fresh blood was introduced to the squad. A lot of trawling was done in the units and a watchful eye kept at Guildford. The six-a-side competition also gave the chairman an opportunity to practise scouting for talent, to which she devoted herself wholeheartedly. Three of the seven new members of the Inter Service team were Pte Mattinson, who represented England U21; Pte Lincoln, E Anglian Counties and Lt Forsyth, Ireland Junior and Northumberland County. The squad were teamed together from the earliest possible moment so that the team would play regularly together and peak in time for the Inter Service Championships. Matches were played twice monthly with training sessions in the morning prior to the match. This proved very demanding on players' stamina. W02 Kelly, 7RHA, agreed to coach the team and applied himself to his task with considerable enthusiasm.

Prior to the Christmas break the team began to get together losing only one match to the Metropolitan Police 2-1. The snow in January and February resulted in the cancellation of a number of fixtures. In March the team played their hardest fixtures and lost them all, which gave them the shake up they needed!

On Wednesday 20 March, the Army watched the Navy beat the Air Force 2-1. W02 Kelly took a video of the game and used it to instruct the Army side on Thursday morning prior to their game against the RAF. The Army were unlucky on the second day to lose to the RAF as the play had been mostly with the Army. In the second half with two minutes to go the RAF converted a dubiously awarded penalty corner and it was too late for the Army to force a draw. On Friday morning the Army faced last year's winners, the Navy. After 10 minutes play Sgt Rees neatly beat her opponent only to be further impeded by the goalkeeper. The umpire awarded a penalty

stroke and Lt Forsyth was elected to take it. Keeping both the spectators and goalkeeper in suspense, she waited a few seconds before flicking the ball in fine text book style past the goalkeeper's left knee. Two minutes later the Army once again seized their opportunity in one of their many sorties on the Navy goal. Pte Walton fished the ball out from a muddled goal mouth and put it back into the back of the net.

At half time the score was 2-0. The play in the second half was similar to the first. The Army had the majority of play except for 10 minutes when the Navy appeared to be on top. The defence worked tirelessly with two on-the-line saves at full stretch from Sgt Gough. Lt Forsyth captained her team brilliantly from the centre half position, distributing balls and giving a fine display of attacking half back play. Sgt Rees inspired the forward line, driving her wings, Ptes Walton and Lincoln ever onwards. LCpl Raw played out of position linked well with her other forwards and halves and tirelessly devoted herself to both defensive and attacking play.

At full time the Army team had won the game and the competition on goal difference. There was plenty of emotion from many players and spectators, one of whom was Major Myrtle MacLagan, who scored the winning goal last time the Army won the Inter Service Championships in 1955. Brig Meechie took great delight in presenting the trophy to Lt Forsyth who was representing and captaining the team for the first time. After the presentation of the trophy the Director awarded colours to the new players: Ptes Mattinson, Lincoln, Walton, LCpl Raw, Cpl Holmes, Sgt Smith, Lt Forsyth.



The winning team.

L-R Back Row: LCpl Winkles, Sgt Rees, Sgt Gough, W01 Taylor, W02 Kelly (coach), Cpl Holmes, Sgt McMachin, LCpl Emms, Pte Mattinson
Front Row: Cpl Turner, Pte Walton, Lt Forsyth (capt), LCpl Raw, Pte Lincoln, Sgt Smith.

ARMY GIRLS SQUASH THEM ALL

FIFTH SUCCESSIVE YEAR AS INTER SERVICE CHAMPIONS

The start of the 1985 season produced a busy fixture schedule for the Army Women's Squash Rackets Association. The Inter Zone and Army Individual Championship took place on Jan 13-15 and Jan 17-19 respectively at Waverley Squash and Social Club.

The Inter Zone was won convincingly by South West, Western and Wales District who remained unbeaten throughout the tournament. BAOR and London District battled for second place, with BAOR coming out 3 - 2 winners. One of the highlights of the tournament was the confrontation of the Army No 1 Sgt Tuomey, London District, and No 2 SSgt K Johnstone, South West/Western District, where SSgt Johnstone recorded a memorable victory.

The Army Championships followed on from the Inter Zone and promised to produce some very interesting matches. After some very competitive squash the Individual Championship final predictably saw the clash of the Army No 1 and 2 again, with Sgt Tuomey in three straight games, gaining revenge for the earlier defeat and retaining her title. Sgt Tuomey has now established a new Army record, winning the Ladies Open for six successive years.

The first round losers went through to a Plate Competition, and in the final LCpl Denne, RAVC Trg Centre, beat LCpl Dimsdale, 5 UDR. Second round losers went through to a Classic Plate Competition and after some very hard games Lt Timperley came through to the final to meet 2Lt Lucas. This saw the clash of two BAOR teammates, with 2Lt Timperley narrowly pulling through to win. 2Lt Lucas was awarded the Chairman's Trophy for the most determined effort throughout the championships.

These competitions led to the selection of the Army Squad for the Inter Service Championships held at HMS Sultan, Gosport from Jan 27-30.

The Army team was selected as follows: 1st Sgt J Tuomey, 2nd SSgt K Johnstone, 3rd Capt D J Foggin, 4th Cpl S Blackburn, 5th Cpl Todd, Reserve Sgt Woodcock.

The Army excelled themselves this year, despite coming under tremendous pressure from the hosting navy team, and retained the Championship Trophy for the fifth successive year, with resounding 5-0 victories over the WRNS and WRAF.



Sgt Joyce Tuomey receiving the 1985 WS Combined Services Individual Squash Cup from Mr Denne of Watney Mann & Truman Breweries who sponsored the event.



SSgt Kathy Johnstone receiving the 1985 WS Combined Services Individual Squash Runner-up Trophy.

WRAC INTER-SERVICE RIFLE SHOOTING TEAM

The WRAC Inter-Service Rifle Shooting Team came third in the Inter-Service Competition held on Whale Island, HMS EXCELLENT on Monday 11 February 1985. SSgt Curran, pictured here with the team, scored 199 out of a possible 200 to become the best individual shot. Whale Island is normally out of bounds to dogs, but by special dispensation, Morag the team mascot, was allowed on the island to support the team on this special day.



L-R Back Row: LCpl Matten, Cpl McKeown, Pte Cobb, Col Smith (chairman), Pte Couch, Cpl Adamson, Cpl Scuffam, Cpl May
Front Row: Lt Walton (secretary), LCpl Brown, Cpl Graham, SSgt Curran, Sgt Dingley, WO2 Emary and the team mascot Morag.

ORIENTEERING

You either love it or hate it, spend your free time training for it or just have a go on the day. But once the bug has bitten, you may become a fanatic. So what is it all about? It is cunning running in the forest, with a map and compass in your hand.

A number of WRAC have been taking part in the Army Orienteering Championships 1985 near Osnabruck BAOR, the competitors having qualified through District/Area/UKLF Championships. Only 9 servicewomen could qualify from the UK and 18 from BAOR. The Championships were held over two days, an individual event on day one, with a relay on day two. Aggregated times from both days produced the winning team.

The area was open undulating forests but, as some competitors discovered, open forest can

include some very thick plantations, and competitors spent two days hurdling over logs, avoiding bramble banks and for the unwary, getting caught in nettle patches.

After the first day the individual competition was decided with a good win for Capt Emma Ford. The position in the team event was the WRAC Centre with a clear lead over 13 Sig Regt and 3 UDR. However, the situation changed on the second day with the relay event. After the first leg runners had finished, the WRAC Centre had lost their clear lead but some good running by the 2nd and 3rd leg runners led to a nail biting finish with only 8 minutes separating the Centre from 13 Sig Regt, after 6 hours orienteering.

The results were:

Teams	— 1st	WRAC Centre
	2nd	13 Sig Regt
	3rd	3 UDR

Individuals	— 1st	Capt E Ford 29 Coy WRAC
	2nd	Capt C S O'Nians WRAC Centre
	3rd	Maj E D Elliot 15 Bn RAOC

Relay	— 1st	WRAC Adhoc
	2nd	13 Sig Regt
	3rd	WRAC Centre

Women's Services Orienteering needs new younger competitors. It gives added interest to running but, as the age of this year's competitors proved, the cunning part of the running is as important as the physical fitness. The new season starts in the autumn so we hope for some new faces in this interesting and challenging sport.



The winning team. L-R: Cpl Zycinski, WO2 Rosewell, Capt O'Nians.

ARMY WOMEN'S INTER UNIT VOLLEY BALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

In October last year Colonel S P Richards presented prizes to the team from WRAC Wing, RMA Sandhurst, winners of the first ever Army Women's Inter-Unit Volley Ball Championship.

Eight District teams took part in this two-day competition which was held at St Omer Barracks, Aldershot. Although this was the first Army-level competition to be held after Women's Volley Ball became a sponsored sport in 1983, the standard was extremely high. Coaching advice was provided by the two officials CSgt Gordon Neale and WO2 Ray Woodstock. Second and third places went to 13 Signal Regiment (BAOR) and Benbecula (Scotland) respectively.



Col Richards presenting prizes to the winning team, RMA Sandhurst.

EX SNOWFLAKE II

Capt C R Paxton WRAC

Ex SNOWFLAKE II was a fourteen day exercise in Les Arcs, France which aimed to train the Army Women's Ski Team to enable them to compete in the Women's Inter-Service Competition. This competition was held at the RN Ski Championship in Les Arcs in March.

The team was drawn from BAOR, UK and NI. Capt Paxton (HQ Hereford Garrison), WO2 Rosewell (WRAC Centre), Cpl Grierson (12 Int & Sy Coy) and Pte Lay (242 Sig Sqn) travelled by train from UK. The trip began well when the

team found that the only train leaving at the time the UK contingent had been given was the Orient Express. Too good to be true! The slightly humbler train which was to be theirs was leaving 15 minutes earlier than expected. Capt Caddick and Pte Burns (both 44 Sqn RCT), Lt Herniman (21 Engr Regt), Lt Pyatt (35 AEC) and Lt Dougherty (43 AEC) all made their own way to Les Arcs from BAOR.

After a gentle first day, training began in earnest. The pattern was pole training in the mornings and technique training in the afternoons. This consisted of long and testing runs to build stamina and improve style. The evenings were filled with hospitality from our naval hosts and rival teams — all of which were attempts to ruin the following days' training by lacing the punch! Attempts at sabotage failed as many of the team made it to bed by 9pm.

The competition began in the second week. All nine members of the team took part in the Navy Club Race on the first day which gave those who had not raced before a chance to see what they had let themselves in for. On the results of the Club Race six members of the squad were selected to race as the team with one reserve.

The first event of the competition was the Special Slalom. Each competitor had two runs with a combined result to count. The RAF Women's Team went well into the lead on this event with 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th skiers. However, Capt Caddick WRAC was 1st, minimising the damage. Other Army Women's Team members placings were 6th WO2 Rosewell, 9th Pte Burns, 11th Lt Herniman, 15th Lt Dougherty and 18th Lt Pyatt. During the second event, the Giant Slalom, the Army Women's Team caught up considerably. Conditions were not good as the visibility was poor and the course icy. The RAF Women's Team took first two places, but had one of their best skiers disqualified for missing a gate. The Army Women's Team placings were 3rd Capt Caddick, 4th Lt Herniman, 6th Pte Burns, 7th WO2 Rosewell and 14th Lt Pyatt.

The final result for the whole competition was first RAF Women's Team, 2nd Army Women's Team and 3rd RN Women's Team. Capt Caddick was the individual champion for the fourth successive year. Army Women's Team placings overall were 1st Capt Caddick, 4th WO2 Rosewell, 5th Lt Herniman and 9th Pte Burns.

It was a most enjoyable trip with fine weather for the most part, excellent ski conditions and opportunities for some worthwhile training. Next year the Army Women's Team will compete and

train in Fulpmes, Austria, 19 - 31 Jan 86 and then go to Cormeyeur, Italy for the Inter-Services 1 - 7 Feb 86. A squad of eighteen plus a Team Manager and Team Trainer will go to Fulpmes. A team of nine will then be selected to go to Cormeyeur on the basis of performance at the Army Alpine Meeting, Fulpmes. Anyone who has ski-ing experience and would like to race should contact the Army Women's Ski Rep, Capt C R Paxton WRAC, Room 7176, A Org & Sec, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB (Main Bldg Ext 3571).



L-R: Pte Burns, Lt Dougherty, WO2 Rosewell, Captain Caddick, Lt Herniman, Lt Pyatt



Capt Caddick, The Combined Services champion.

WRAC GOLF SOCIETY

The results of the WRAC Golf Championship held at the Army Golf Club Aldershot on June 17 are:

Scratch Competition (Meechie Shield)

- 1st Maj S I F Johncey 12 Coy WRAC
2nd Cp S J Stonier 4 Sqn 16 Sig Regt

Handicap Competition — Clements Cup (Serving Members)

- 1st Cpl S J Stonier
2nd WO1 S C Taylor

Handicap Competition — Bowles Trophy (Retired Members)

- 1st Col E J Bowles
2nd Major E A Saxon

Open Foursome — Clissitt Cup

- 1st Capt Phillips and Sgt Wilkinson
2nd WO1 Taylor and WO2 Swailes

The results of the two recent Corps matches are:

- WRAC v ACC at Aldershot Won 7 - 6
WRAC v RMP at Bognor Regis Lost 2 - 5.

The Captain of the Army Golf Association has agreed to organise a day's golf clinic on Friday 1 November before the next Quarterly Medal Competition at Aldershot on Monday 4 November.

SUBALTERN MARGARET L HODGSON ATS

Does anyone know the whereabouts of Sub Margaret Hodgson who served with Central Interpretation Unit at Medmenham from January 1942 to 1945?

The Intelligence Corps Committee is considering commissioning a painting depicting photographic interpretation tasks undertaken from 1941-1945, and would like to trace Sub Hodgson.

We published an article on the Joint Air Reconnaissance Intelligence Centre in the February 1981 *Lioness* which included a photograph of Margaret Hodgson. If you can help, please contact the Editor.

UNIT NEWS

C COY 15 BN RAOC

C Coy has been involved in a variety of activities in the last six months. From January through to March many members of the Company braved the blizzards and cold of the Cairngorms to spend a fortnight skiing on Ex Knees Bend based at the RAOC Ski Hut at Nethybridge. As a result, LCpl Karen Smith and Pte Jackie Emery were selected to represent the RAOC/WRAC in the Army Ski Championships at Aviemore and were in the winning team, LCpl Smith coming first in the ladies individual.

In April a party of eight set off in the PR1 minibus on Ex Ski Bavaria for a fortnight's skiing in Germany. They drove all the way and after a visit to the AA en route the trusty drivers, WO2 Angie Hamilton, Sgt Sue McHale and Cpl Sue Frankham admirably chauffeured the party to their destination in one piece.

The Exercise was blessed with good snow and brilliant sunshine so all managed to return with a

healthy tan. Lessons had been arranged with a local instructor who turned out to be female, much to the disappointment of the girls! Towards the end of the Exercise, a Slalom Competition was held. Pte Donna Tulley won the trophy for the fastest Novice and Sgt McHale for the best Intermediate. After skiing, the party enjoyed the local "tidal" swimming pool or tried their hand at riding.

In April the unit celebrated the Commissioning of WO1 Doreen Mapley. Sadly the celebrations were followed closely by her departure to Guildford, and she will be missed by all. Wishing to send her off in style, the girls gave a party in her honour where she was surprised with the amorous embraces of a Gorrillagram!

Every week for many months thirty members of the company have worked hard to form an aerobics team. Under the guidance of LCpl Tafe Barry, one of the unit PTIs, they devised a routine suitable for display purposes. On May 19th they made their first public appearance at the RAOC Open Day at Deepcut. Although initially very nervous, the team excelled themselves and are to be congratulated on a fine performance. They are giving repeat performances at a variety of events during the summer.

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Warrant Officers and
Sergeants will be welcomed.

10 COMPANY WRAC

The first half of 1985 has proved to be a busy period for 10 Coy WRAC involving an official visit from both DWRAC and DWRAF and culminating in a hectic two week company training exercise.

The Coy HQ has seen a number of changes in staff: we have bidden farewell to the 2IC Capt Davina Hay who is off to the WRAC Centre as Adjt via JDSC. Capt Wilma Armstrong has moved up to York as the Garrison Adjt, Lt Alison Wright, recently married and now Donaldson, has moved on to SEME Bordon. The Chief Clerk Sgt Obe has joined her husband with the 15/19 Hussars at Bovington and has been replaced by Sgt Birbeck from Northern Ireland.

Capt Nicky Murdoch has taken over as the new 2IC and Capt Carol O'Nians has arrived as the Admin Offr. We have two new platoon officers from Sandhurst, Lt Alison Brown and 2Lt Penny Dickens. With their arrival we have formed a third platoon to cope with the present high number of cook trainees.

We wish all those who have left us, well in their new appointments and welcome all our newcomers to 10 Coy.

In late April and early May we ran our first two week training camp at Okehampton. The exercise which ran in two, week-long phases was an opportunity for almost the whole company to get away from Aldershot and carry out a combination of military and adventure training. One day was spent tackling the Royal Marines Endurance Course at the Commando Training Centre at Lympstone, which proved to be a truly unforgettable experience! We had some pretty varied weather during our fortnight, but we worked hard and played hard and returned to Aldershot having completed a successful but tiring two weeks. 10 Coy's adventurous pursuits have continued and parachuting seems to have become a front runner in the popularity stakes. Pte Jones and Pte Moulden attended a weekend course at Colerne with the RCT's Parachute Display Team. In March this year Pte Heaton, a keen parachute enthusiast joined 10 Coy from Bicester. After further training she has now become a fully fledged member of the Red Devils, the Parachute Regiment's elite display team, and in May this year she was presented with her Red Beret by HRH Prince Charles in the grounds of Kensington Palace.

So far this year 10 Coy have been afforded a number of opportunities to participate in adventure training exercises. In March, 10 girls including two lucky platoon officers went skiing with 61 Sqn RCT in Aviemore and enjoyed a valuable week. In May, 242 Sigs Sqn played host to some members of the Company who joined them for their own adventure training exercise Rannoch Gallop. Despite mixed weather all those who took part thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

On the sports front 10 Coy continues to enter teams in all the district competitions, and this season we succeeded in winning the South East District Netball Championships. Individual members of the company are still doing sponsored events such as half marathons and some skied on "Winter Warrior". Later this year we have a team entered in the Chichester Marches. 1985 continues with a busy programme for 10 Coy WRAC.

ROYAL SCHOOL OF ARTILLERY LARKHILL

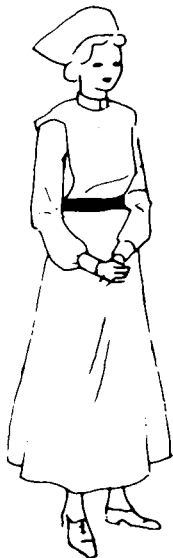
Spot The Ball

In March, the WRAC Members of the RSA challenged 132 Battery to a Rugby Match in order to raise funds for BLESMA.

WHO WON? WHO CARES?, the match raised in excess of £100.



BLESMA was the winner here.



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.



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

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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.

WRAC LARKHILL

24 HOUR SPONSORED DISCO

On November 22nd and 23rd, 12 WRAC girls and 2 Gunners staged a 24 hour sponsored disco in the Wagon Lines Club Larkhill. Each participant wore fancy dress, varying from skeletons to football gear. The two brave men in the group wore drag to the amusement of all concerned.

A grand total of £514.82 was raised by the occasion and all proceeds were presented to Mr Barry Graham, team leader of the Bulford Branch of the NSPCC. Six of the disco dancers were there to make the presentation. Congratulations to Cpl Vivian Lee on her organisation of a very successful venture.



L-R: Barry Graham, Pte Amos, Cpl Lee, Sgt Easterbrook, Pte Murray, LCpl Gray, Pte Hogg

BAOR

The WRAC in BAOR have had a busy six months with exercises, sports, fund raising and normal day to day work — if anything can be normal in BAOR where the pace of life is very fast.

A WRAC weekend was held in Rheindahlen from March 29-31 which was a great success. We were fortunate to have the WRAC Staff Band visiting at the time and so were able to enjoy an excellent Band Concert on the Friday evening to which we invited a large number of guests. Everyone had nothing but praise for the Band. The weekend continued with a Study Period on

Saturday, followed by a WRAC dinner night in the evening, when the Band again excelled.

On Sunday we were able to have our own WRAC Church Service in St Boniface Church, with contingents from 29 Coy WRAC, 68 Sqn RCT and Int & Sy Gp marching to church behind the Band — a most impressive sight. The salute was taken by Colonel N R Robertson MBE Comd WRAC BAOR and Berlin and the collection was in aid of the WRAC Benevolent Fund.

The weekend concluded with a WRAC reunion for ex-members of the WRAC living in BAOR. This took place in the WO's and Sgts Mess, and was such a success that it is planned to make it a feature of any future WRAC weekend in BAOR.

STOCKING MATCH

Hearing a plea for donations to BLESMA on BFBS Radio in February LCpl Joy Gillespie of 11 Postal and Courier Sqn Verden decided to organize a football match between WRAC 1st Armoured Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment and men of 2 Sqn 1 Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt.

The match held at forest ground Verden was well supported and a total of DM 1000 was raised in aid of BLESMA. The male team were slightly handicapped by having to wear stockings while some had their ankles tied together! In the end, after a good performance by both teams, the WRAC side emerged victorious by 12 goals to 5.



The Winners

L-R Back Row: Mrs Mitchell, Pte Coffee, Capt Foster, Pte Taylor, Pte Bellamy, Cpl Cadman
Front Row: LCpl Gillespie, Cpl Wright, LCpl Marigold, Mrs Graham, LCpl Bunting, Pte Miles.

BERLIN

In Berlin the numbers of NCOs and Servicewomen are gradually increasing with more DTGs and drivers arriving. This has made it a little easier to assemble sports teams and we continue to enter as many BAOR events as we can although our enthusiasm often surpasses our talent!

One notable success was the 1984/85 Squash Championships with Cpl Jackie Todd winning the Ladies Open and Sgt Bev Acres the Ladies Plate. We also managed to plough through the snow to Rheindahlen for the Orienteering Championships in which the team achieved 3rd place. The Cross Country proved to be less successful – we lost 3 runners through injury. Finally, a number of NCOs participated in the Berlin 25km road race – an annual event starting and finishing at the impressive Olympic Stadium and taking in many of the city's famous sights en route. All the competitors completed the distance.

Each year several NCOs get the chance to take part in the Queen's Birthday Parade and the Allied Forces Day Parade. Both are high profile protocol events with thousands participating and spectating and this year Sgt Maureen Green and Cpls Tracy Callaly and Eve Purves were on the Parade inspected by HRH The Prince of Wales.

For five members of the Corps the high point of 1985 was a trip with BRIXMIS into East Germany. Capt Penny Johnson, Sgt Chris McLoughlin, Cpls Mandy Morrison, Maxine Williams and LCpl Adrienne Wright were taken to Ravensbruecke – to the site of a Second World War concentration camp for women and children. It was very shortly after the 40th Anniversary of the liberation of the camp and after watching a film and laying a wreath, the Soviet Commandant of the area gave them a guided tour of the remains of the camp, and a tour of the museum. It was a very sad and sobering morning. It was followed by an equally memorable lunch in the local Soviet NAAFI – it was a good job none of them were vegetarian!

The air in Berlin must be pleasing to Cupid – quite a number of marriages have taken place recently including Capt Penny Johnson (nee Longlands), Sgt Marion Wilson (nee Linne), Cpl

Cher Payne (nee Chillard), LCpl Tracy Howe (nee Marsh) and LCpl Kim Atkinson (nee McKinlay). Sadly the Berliner Luft didn't seem to agree with Sgt Gladys Cox who arrived and was posted again before she'd even finished unpacking her 57 boxes! However her well deserved promotion was to blame for allowing an air of calm to return to the block!

BMH MUNSTER

PEDAL PUSHING COOKS RAISE OVER DM 2000 FOR FAMINE RELIEF

On May 15th when the rest of BAOR were still tucked up in bed, five intrepid cooks from BMH Munster undertook the mammoth task of cycling from their unit to Garrison Catering in Rheindahlen. The 100 mile sponsored ride in aid of Ethiopian Famine Relief was organised by LCpl Bevis and nobly supported by WO2 Wilson and Sgt Fitton from ACC.

The valiant team comprising Cpl Francis, LCpl Roberts, LCpl Briscoe, Pte Flintham and of course LCpl Bevis, left Munster at 0600 hrs, and at 1645 hrs the tape was broken across the entrance by the five tired but smiling cyclists.

The girls and their supporting team were met by Capt D Harold, Garrison Catering Officer and WO1 D M McFall RSM BAOR. Champagne corks popped to celebrate the final amount raised in excess of DM 2000, a fine total to reward a fine ride.



Five smiling cyclists.

13 SIGNAL REGIMENT

The last year has been extremely busy for the Regiment, but we still found time to achieve distinction in the various military and sporting events open to us. Just before Christmas we said goodbye to Sgt June Molloy, our PTI, who has left the Army to be with her husband, and welcomed in her place Sgt Sally Cranwell-Child.

At the Berlin Skill-at-Arms meeting from 7-9 May in superb weather conditions SSgt Jan Sykes took the Gold Medal (WS) in both pistol and SMG. Her score in the SMG had some males blushing!

The BAOR (WS) Orienteering Championships took place at Holzen, near Menden on 27th April. This event was run in conjunction with the male (BR) RCZ Championships. There were six WS Teams — 29 Coy WRAC 'A', 3PCD RE WRAC, 16 Sig Regt WRAC, 13 Sig Regt WRAC, and BMH Rintgln — who ran on the very well laid out and testing 'B' course. Capt Ford of 29 Coy WRAC was the 1st Individual with Capt Bolt, 12 Dental Gp coming second, and with our own LCpl Budden third. We became winners of the team trophy in front of 3 PCD RE WRAC from Dusseldorf.

Both teams qualified for the Army Championships which were held at Osnabruck, but unfortunately we only came second, but as a bonus two of us and Sgt Cranwell-Child represented the Army (WS) in the Individual French Army Championships held near Baden Baden on the 29th and 30th May, with WO2 Jo Bolland coming second and Sgt Terry Lang third.



Lt Col Howard, CO, celebrates with the BAOR (WS) champions

L-R: Sgt Lang, WO2 Bolland, LCpl Budden.

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Serving officers are entitled to free nursing and maintenance in a ward bed. Others and their dependants (unless insured for more) are charged £49 a day for a private room. Civilian patients are charged £112 a day. Consultants fees are a matter for personal arrangement between the patient and the consultant. Where necessary help can be provided from a generously administered Benevolent Fund.

Subject to age, BUPA gives friends of the Hospital a 15% reduction on their BUPACARE subscriptions, and PPP and WESTERN PROVIDENT a 25% on their FAMILY MASTERPLAN AND SUPERCOVER policies respectively, if payment is made by direct debit.

The hospital is currently treating 2,200 in-patients and 1400 out-patients a year. It is not part of the N.H.S. and is dependant on voluntary donations for its work for the Services.

If you would like to receive more information or become a subscriber please write to the Appeals Secretary, (WRAC), 6 Buckingham Place, London SW1E 6HR or phone 01-828 4454. Applications for admission should be made to the Matron on 01-486 4411.

Abbeyfield Society

29 COY WRAC

Since February 1985 29 Company WRAC has seen a large turnover of Company Staff.

The Company said goodbye to Maj Sue Wing who left on promotion to become Commander WRAC London District. Sgt Sandy Barclay was shipped off to the Falklands and Sgt Wendy Jones skipped off to liven up Bovington.

2Lt Fiona Frost left us for the Gunners in Lippstadt and 2Lt Debbie Coulter (nee Fenn) is soon to emigrate to America with her husband.

29 Company WRAC welcomed into the family Maj Glynis Harvey and a gaggle of subalterns, namely 2Lt Jo Bower, 2Lt Gilly Cole and 2Lt Nicky Vickers, the latter being kept in check by our new Admin Sgts – Sgt Lyn Etherington and Sgt Hilary Aaron.

On the sporting side 29 Company WRAC were the winning team in the Army Cross Country championships and at the RCZ Skill at Arms Meeting. They were the BAOR netball champions and they won the Smallbore Plate in the Rheindahlen Garrison Winter League. SSgt Helen Telford won the Individual Pistol (WRAC) and came 17th overall out of 72 men and women at the RCZ Skill at Arms Meeting, and Cpl Del Rees became BAOR Cross Country Champion. Capt Emma Ford became BAOR and then Army Orienteering Champion.

LCpl Lawton became Chef of the Year for Western Catering District BAOR. This made her eligible to enter the Army finals.

JOAN MARY WHITE who served with a Heavy Anti Aircraft Regiment in Cleadow in 1943 should contact Corps HQ to learn something to her advantage.

ABBEYFIELD is a response to one of the most pressing problems of our time: namely that the number of lonely and frail elderly people in our population is increasing.

ABBEYFIELD is a federation of voluntary local societies, each with charitable status, which set up and manage family-sized houses, where seven to nine elderly people have their own bed-sitting room. Residents furnish their own room with their treasured possessions; they lead their own lives; and come together for the main meals of the day, which are prepared by the resident housekeeper.

ABBEYFIELD houses therefore offer "a home within a home" to those who, though fit for their years, nevertheless feel they would be happier living in the kind of supportive atmosphere an Abbeyfield house offers. Abbeyfield is rooted in the local community. Residents are normally drawn from within their own locality. No-one is below pensionable age, and the majority are over seventy-five.

VOLUNTEERS. There is always a need for those who will give friendship and practical help. (Visiting, car-rides, gardening, decorating, typing, fund-raising and standing-in for the housekeeper, for instance). Professional skills are invaluable. If there is no local society or house in your area, perhaps you could start one. It's not as difficult as you might think!

HOUSEKEEPERS are also needed. Advertisements appear in national or local journals from time to time. A housekeeper is someone vital to the happiness and well-being of her 'family', finding an opportunity of service and satisfaction in meeting a need.

BENEFACTORS. Financial help from Statutory Sources has always been less than could have been used, so voluntary financial help is urgently needed, especially in these difficult times. If we are to continue to expand our service, we constantly need money. Gifts and legacies are always welcome – and properly used.

FRIENDS. Above all, Abbeyfield needs people who know, who understand, who care, and who will have much or little time to give. You may feel your resources or talents are limited but if you can help, write to: The Abbeyfield Society, 186-192 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 1AB.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

8th MAY, 1985

Major A G Learmouth MBE TD

I was honoured to be asked to attend the service in Westminster Abbey on the 8th May, 1985, to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe.

I was given an Order of Service as I entered the Abbey, a copy of which will be in the Museum at Guildford. I was seated in the South Transept with a television screen a few feet away showing the inside of the Abbey. I could see and at the same time feel, what the Service meant to the people surrounding me.

Just six Standards were placed in the Sacramentum, and they were escorted by a war widow, a member of the Land Army and the WRVS, a Victoria Cross holder, a Royal Navy rating, a soldier, an airman, a representative of industry, a policeman, an ambulance man, a fireman and a merchant seaman. Candles were lit at the grave of the Unknown Warrior.

Religious leaders from Japan, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, France, Russia and the USA were greeted by the Heads of the Churches in the British Isles.

The first lesson was read by the National President of the Royal British Legion, the second by a nurse from a London hospital, and the third by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.

There was a Procession of Hope, during which a school girl read extracts from the Bible and young girls and boys from the Royal Ballet School laid posies of white flowers on a blue cross before the Altar.

We sang hymns, everybody joining in. No tears, but closed solemn faces and, with great difficulty getting down and up, many said their prayers kneeling on the bare stone floor.

The sermon by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, MC was very sincere. He had experienced war first hand at the Front as a Tank Commander; he felt war was not a panacea for

every ill, but the victory which closed Belsen, Buchenwald, Dachau and Auschwitz was itself sufficient cause for thanksgiving.

I came away thinking the message was also contained in the second verse of our National Anthem —

Not on this land alone —
But be God's Mercies known
From shore to shore.
Lord, make the nations see
That men should brothers be,
And form one family,
The wide world o'er.

TA

NORTHUMBRIAN UNIVERSITIES OFFICERS TRAINING CORPS

Lt J Berriman WRAC(V)

May is the time of year when most Officer Cadets in the unit are forgiven for sparse attendance — being students they are hard at work revising for end of year exams. Studying has to be a first priority, with all members of the unit coming from Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Higher Education over a vast area from the Tees to the Tweed. Out of about 220 Officer Cadets, 25% are female and form an integral part of three of the four sub-units (Infantry, RA and REME but are excluded from the RAC). Over the past year training has been varied, exciting and certainly eventful providing a welcome change from academic work and campus life.

In May 1984 those members of the unit who had spare time between revising spent a few long hot days on the ranges preparing for the North

East District Skill-at-Arms Meeting (NEDSAM). Their hard work was rewarded when one of the two WRAC teams entered won the SMG cup, closely followed by the second team. The celebrations lasted well into the night!

Annual Camp, for two weeks in July, is the time everyone looks forward to during the gruelling weekends away in the winter months. Last year it was at Barry Buddon on the Firth of Tay. The first week consisted of sub-unit, weapons and fitness training interspersed with leadership lectures and a variety of devious command tasks. The week ended in a two day unit exercise with the RA in position, assaulted on all sides by the other three sub-units! For the second week of camp the RA sub-units left Scotland to go and compete in inter-OTC competitions at Otterburn and Catterick. The Infantry and REME moved north to Glen Clova to take part in an escape and evasion exercise. This was to run along the lines of a survival exercise too. As part of the first week's training, the Royal Marines had given demonstrations on building shelters, living off the land and cooking "unusual" dishes, so everyone had a little training in the basic skills. Before release to start the exercise, the men were stripped down to the 'bare essentials' to prevent smuggling out anything more than a penknife, but while this was going on Col Gael Ramsey (then Comd WRAC NE & NW Dist) who was visiting the unit, arrived on the scene. Not wanting discrimination, and to the delight of the men (but horror of the girls), Col Ramsey decided to take them to a sheltered spot and supervise a strip search herself! So began an enjoyable exercise which concluded camp for yet another year.

October saw the entry of a new recruit squad. With an average course length of 3 years, after which they must leave the OTC, there is a rapid turnover of personnel. The recruit training therefore only lasts one term and in December they take the Military Training Qualification (MTQ) 1 exam. This year's results reflected a high standard of training all round.

The unit provided a Guard of Honour for the Queen Mother in November, on the occasion of the official opening of the Medical School in Newcastle upon Tyne. Parades are rare occasions for the OTC, so much so that we did not even have enough sets of No 2s for the girls. Two days before the parade the AQMS had to make an emergency dash to the WRAC Centre at Guildford to borrow about fifteen forage caps! Also in November many of the senior WOCdts competed in the NE District March and Shoot competition — Maidens Scurry.

After doing well at all stands, they came a close second by only .7 of a point, disappointing but good experience.

The spring term, January to March, is devoted to sub-unit training with additional lectures for the seniors before taking the MTQ 2 exam. All OCdts must pass this exam before applying for a commission and attending the District Assessment Board. So far the majority of girls who have taken this exam have passed.

Finally, back to May 1985 and NEDSAM. This year the WRAC teams excelled and won every prize available — SMG and pistol cups, and a recruit, WOCdt Merrylees won best female shot in both SMG and pistol. The high standard achieved must be partly due to the personal coaching and high standard of humour supplied by the RSM over long hours spent on the range!



Guard of Honour for HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother on the occasion of the official opening of the Newcastle University Medical School.



**L-R Back Row: SUO Gregory, Capt Daly, Lt Berriman, RSM Smith, WO Cdt Aynsley, JUO Burgan
Kneeling: WO Cdt Hodge, JUO Grundy, WO Cdt Merrylees**

GRAND REUNION – HARROGATE

The organisers of the raffle at Harrogate on April 13th would like to thank all those who brought gifts to the stand, and to those WRAC members of 8 Signal Regiment Catterick who were such a great help. The raffle made £634.

A STANDARD BEARER AT THE GRAND REUNION

(The Grand Reunion 1985 as seen through the eyes of a very inexperienced Standard Bearer)

Mrs Sue Hirst, Keighley Branch

I was terrified when I was informed by our Branch Secretary that she had "volunteered" me to be a Standard Bearer at the Grand Reunion in Harrogate. I am "official" Standard Bearer for the Keighley Branch (much to the amusement of my two children), but as we do not yet have a standard, "our Edna" thought it "would be good practice" for me. They say when you are in the Army you should never ever volunteer for anything, and the same applies if you are a member of Keighley Branch!

All in all, the occasion was a great success. Very laughable one minute and very moving the next. I met some lovely ladies that weekend, and I wouldn't have missed it for the world. Unfortunately, I didn't meet up with any of the girls I joined up with, but I did meet my Sgt from basic training. So ex-Sgt Williams from Plymouth, if you read this, it was really lovely to see you again, and I'm only too sorry that I didn't pluck up enough courage to approach you before, after staring at you from afar for two days, wondering where I had seen you before, October 1963 was a long time ago. It was very reassuring for me to see you in church after that seemingly endless slow march up the aisle, and your smile told me that I had done everything correctly. After all, you were the first person to teach a very naive private the basics of the drill square, so I hope I didn't let you or my colleagues down.

The Saturday rehearsal had a few minor hiccups, but all in all went quite smoothly, thanks to a very kind GSM, who seemed to age more and more as the minutes went by. The worst worry for me was getting the standard back into the sling. It is very easy when you know how, but it was all very new to me, and the standard was very heavy. I just wished I had practised with the long brush or something!

The great day dawned, thankfully without rain. I think the prayers of all of us had been answered. I got myself ready, and horror of horrors ... I found I couldn't get my feet into my flat shoes. After the revels of the last couple of days I felt as though I'd done a 30 mile "bash". I had to wear "heels" and padded the tender spots with cotton wool, hoping that I wouldn't leave a trail of cotton wool balls behind me in church.

On Sunday the church was full to bursting, and when it came my turn to slow-march down the aisle, carrying the precious ATS Standard, I began to realise it was a very great honour, and I felt very proud indeed. The march back up the aisle after the service was something I'll always remember. I don't think there was a dry eye anywhere! As we came up the main street for the march past I heard a voice shout "Come on girls, bags of swank!" and I think we gave it all we had. I have a recording from TV news of the march-past and I didn't realise how long that parade was. That video will now be one of my treasures.

Whenever I hear "Greensleeves" I will always have a lump in my throat and when our turn comes to parade our new standard through Keighley for the dedication I will miss the support of all the lovely ladies and our fantastic staff band. So think of us at Keighley when our turn comes, and we won't let you down!



Retired members following their Standard Bearers.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1985

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Conference Centre, Harrogate on Saturday 13 April 1985 at 2.30 pm.

The Chair was taken by Brigadier A Field CB, Vice President of the Association.

Brigadier A Field welcomed the members to the AGM associated as it was with the Grand Reunion of 1985. She thanked all those who had helped with the organization and in particular Lt Col G K Ramsey as Chairman of the Northern Area, Colonel V K Stead, Vice Chairman and Miss Monica Bradley the Area Secretary.

Colonel F M Cook, Chairman of the Council reported that two more branches had been formed at Richmond and Keighley, making 59 and that there were now over 8,000 members, a figure not achieved since 20 years ago.

172 members from 20 branches attended the Remembrance Day Parade in Whitehall on 11 November 1984 and the London Branch laid a wreath on behalf of the Association.

Mrs K E Laurence-Smith reported that the audited accounts reflected another satisfactory year. The balance sheet showed that the accumulated funds had increased from £62,284 to £70,437 and the overall income was up by £1,832. The income from investment and deposit interest had increased by £770 to £7,218, and this increase in the investment income helped to keep the subscription rate at its present level. Overall expenses had increased but only by £263 leaving an excess of income over expenditure of £7,653. Investments increased by £3,962. A few holdings of fixed interest stock, bought some years ago, give relatively low returns now but in the light of a certain gain to maturity in the relatively near future it had been decided to keep them. The average yield on the portfolio had been 10%.

Major D R M Parker the Editor of *Lioness* reported that for the February edition the printers

had had a crisis and the result was that several thousand copies of *Lioness* had been late arriving in the Corps HQ office. However, thanks to the Commandant of the WRAC Centre who gave her permission, and some very helpful co-operation, five able and willing girls were lent to help. Corps HQ staff had put everything else aside to get the job done, and the original posting date had been achieved.

As long as it is possible to despatch "*Lioness*" with the help of volunteers, subscriptions will go to printing and postage only, which should stave off the sort of increase which has been evident in the price of commercial magazines and newspapers.

The Chairman of the Trustees of the ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds, Brigadier E J Nolan said that the Trustees had met twice during the year to approve expenditure, decide on financial and investment policy and generally to supervise the running of the Funds. The financial position was greatly enhanced by a legacy of £40,000 from the estate of the late Major Peggy Gribble; £20,000 of which was invested for the benefit of annuitants of the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund and £20,000 for the WRAC Benevolent Fund. The Trustees expressed their gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the Benevolent Funds. 94% of officers and 55% of servicewomen now covenant their donations and the numbers grow each month.

The Grants Committee continued to meet every fortnight throughout the year, and a total of 574 cases were considered. 419 of these were ex-ATS, 152 were serving and ex-servicewomen of the WRAC and 3 were ex-QMAAC. There was a 6% increase on last year. Grants made during the year amounted to £70,510 an increase of just over 18% on 1983.

The Trustees expressed their gratitude to Lt Col Mary Soames who had been a devoted Chairman of the Grants Committee for the past eleven years and also to all members of the Committee. The presence of serving Officers and Warrant Officers on the Committee had been particularly welcome. The Trustees were particularly grateful to Mrs Laurence-Smith the Case Secretary for her devotion and dedication to the affairs of the Funds.

As well as direct financial help the Funds provided 63 television sets under a special contract with Radio Rentals Ltd and 52 television licences were paid for by the Funds.

The Benevolent Funds have been given support in many ways by the Army Benevolent Fund but

one of the most welcome had been the provision of a free one-week holiday for one-parent families at a Pontin's Holiday Centre of their choice. Eight mothers and sixteen children were sent on holiday last year.

At the end of the financial year there were 46 annuitants of the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund, each receiving a payment of £3.50 per week. A Christmas bonus of £35 had been made to each annuitant from the WRAC Benevolent Fund.

All the Trustees wished to express their gratitude to Brigadier Norman King who had been a Joint Secretary of the Funds for ten years and his patience and wisdom had been of great help to the Trustees.

The Chairman of the Museum Trustees Brigadier A Field reported that there had been about 4300 visitors to the Museum in 1984, and they included regular and TA recruits, members of the Association in branch parties and small groups, other local groups and a number of individuals carrying out research.

The Museum had closed for rebuilding. The last visitor before the doors closed had been HRH The Duchess of Kent who visited the WRAC Centre on 29 November 1984. After rebuilding there would be a considerably larger room with more display space. Research had continued and so had sales of all the items under "Shopping List" in the latest "Lioness".

Brigadier Field said that she had invited Brigadier Nolan to chair a Committee which would organise the creation of a video and tape library in the Museum. The intention is to record for posterity the interesting and unusual events which serving and ex-servicewomen had experienced. As well as going back to record wartime exploits and experiences the Museum propose to keep a contemporary record so that the present does not slip into the unrecorded past.

A new design for an Association Standard was displayed and accepted by the meeting as the official design. The specification is given in full below:

3' 9" x 3' Double nylon/wool.

Kenya Red (BCC 237) and Rifle Green (BCC 27) horizontal divide with Kenya Red uppermost. At centre Corps badge (with horizontal colour divide in line with that of standard) together with the designatory unit:

QMAAC WRAC ATS

contained in a single scroll in gold with black lettering all similar to the Association brooch. Above the badge in an arc: WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS. Below the arc but above the badge

in a straight line: ASSOCIATION. Both to be rolls of gold with black lettering. Space below crest to be left for later inclusion of branch name. The name of the branch and the word "BRANCH" to be in a straight line on roll of gold with black lettering. Fitted with gold worsted fringe and gold cord and tassel to match. Kenya Red sleeve with leather securing tabs.

Standards may be purchased from Messrs George Potter & Co Ltd, Potters Corner, Grosvenor Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 3DP. Telephone: 0252 23226. The cost of any Standard is to be borne by Branches who should obtain a quotation before ordering.

The Vice President reminded the meeting that the next Grand Reunion would be in 1988 when it would be the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the ATS. Council felt that London was probably the best general location but asked for views on this point and on the form that the Reunion might take. It was important that all suggestions be considered and that interested parties, for example the ATS Dinner Club, be consulted.

After a general discussion when many venues were proposed including Buckingham Palace, the Albert Hall and St James's Palace, it was considered that a Committee should be formed to investigate all options and present detailed proposals to the next AGM.

By acclamation Brigadier Norman King the retiring General Secretary was invited to become an Honorary Life Member of the Association in recognition of his ten years faithful stewardship and help to the Association.

Resolutions were passed to allow Council to elect more than four Life Vice Presidents and to amend the rules to reflect the disbandment of the WRAC College and redesignation of officers.

Brigadier E J Nolan was elected as a Council Vice President and Colonel B M Laverack, Mrs Weldon and Major E O Coven were re-elected. Miss A G Learmouth was ineligible for re-election and was thanked for her services. Colonel E J Bowles was elected as Chairman of Council effective from 1 November 1985 for three years.

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

THE GRAND REUNION HARROGATE

It seems difficult to realise, after such a long period of anticipation and planning, that the 1985 Grand Reunion has actually come and gone! However, the "invasion" of Harrogate did take place and the weekend of 13/14 April proved to be an action-packed and memorable one for the larger number of people who converged on the town from all directions by road, rail and air.

Unfortunately the weather was somewhat inhospitable but did not appear to dampen the spirits of the assembly – and the Mayor's exhortation to pray for an improvement for the Church Parade certainly worked, as the long column of marchers was able to snake its way through the town in a relatively bright interlude!

The highlights of the weekend were undoubtedly the Civic Reception and Reunion Dinner on Saturday evening, where the superb playing of the Band, the happy atmosphere and the sing-song finale contributed to a get-together to remember. Then on Sunday came the very moving Church Service at St Peter's followed by the March Past as a fitting end to the Reunion.

Many members and guests have written to say how much they enjoyed themselves in Harrogate, and judging by the complimentary comments forthcoming from local officials and inhabitants (who normally take in their stride large groups of visitors descending on them throughout the year) they, in turn, enjoyed having us in their midst.

Perhaps the essence of the whole weekend is captured by the Rev Neville Sugden, Vicar of St Peter's, who writes: "Joan and I were very privileged to share in your great Party and to meet so many pleasant people. It was a most inspiring time and I counted with pride over 500 Association members marching as one man past the War Memorial and headed so splendidly by your Corps Band. The Church has never been so full for over a hundred years and I am sure will never be so again in my lifetime. It was a most memorable occasion which will grow with the memories, and I shall always be grateful that it was an Army unit, the WRAC, which enabled me to share 'an experience of a lifetime'."

A big Thank you to everyone from Northern Area for your support in helping to make the Reunion a success and we hope you will retain some happy memories of your brief visit to our home ground.



Ready for the March Past

L-R: The Mayor of Harrogate and Brig Field (on the dais), the Mayoress, Col Cook, Brig Meechie, Col Stead, Lt Col Ramsey.



Serving members lead the March Past headed by Maj Roulstone.



No generation gap here!

In view of the interest shown in the pullovers with the ATS badge worn by the members of Bradford branch at the Harrogate reunion, any members interested are asked to write for details to the following address: M M Trophies, Emblem House, Church Street, Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire WF16 0LF.

REUNIONS

NO 2 SUB-AREA, SOUTH WEST AREA

Somerset branch were glad, at last, to act as host branch to the Sub-Area Reunion on Sunday 2 June, and the weather was glorious. The Reunion was held at Tiverton, a small market town in Devon, which welcomed us by starting to dig up the streets in the middle of the town and closing the conveniences nearest the car park we had sought permission to use! However, our members were on hand to welcome everyone and divide them into small parties and conduct them to the three places of interest open to us for the afternoon.

The vicar of St Peter's church, the Rev David Whitaker was waiting to show the beauties of his church and tell us something of its history.

The Tiverton Museum has a first class collection of artifacts including a railway station complete with the "Tivvy Bumper" an engine which pulled the little trains on the Culm Valley Line -- before Beeching. The line was replaced by buses which, in their turn, have been axed.

The third place of interest was Tiverton Castle which was a Cavalier stronghold in the Civil War. This was one of the former homes of the Earls of Devon and is still in private hands.

We hope that our guests found time to visit at least two of the interesting places. After the "walkabout" everyone made their way to the Tiverton hotel where a good meal was waiting.

Our Chairman, Mrs D M Hill welcomed the guests who included the Association's new General Secretary and his wife, Lt Col and Mrs D Dunn, Col S P Nield, Chairman of the SW Area, Lt Col D J Freeland, Vice Chairman, the Rev David Whitaker, Mr Christopher Merson, Asst Curator of Tiverton Museum and serving members of the WRAC from Larkhill.

Col Nield gave a very comprehensive account of the activities of the Corps in these modern times and of the theatres in which they now serve. This includes a WRAC Engineer Officer IC a section of Sappers in the Falkland Islands. Col Nield also mentioned that the WRAC are in demand for the training of new women's armies in Commonwealth countries.

There followed the inevitable raffle and the chairman wished everyone a safe journey home and reminded them of next year's reunion in Bath.

DIDCOT GARRISON GROUP ATS

Members of Didcot Garrison Group ATS Old Comrades and guests gathered on Saturday 20th April 1985 at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo, London to celebrate their 40th reunion. The luncheon and service supplied by the Club was excellent, and much enjoyed by all present.

Major F M Harford MBE (Retd), gave a very amusing talk of the times in 1939 when she herself and the members joined the ranks of the ATS and reminded all of the dreaded kit inspections and the fun of learning to march trying to keep ones legs, arms and feet in proper order on the parade ground. It made us all smile to remember those days.

Major George Shaw RE (Retd) supporting Mrs Wagstaff spoke of the tea parties held each year from 1945 to 1985 when the 40th reunion was celebrated with a luncheon. A beautiful bouquet of flowers was presented to Mrs Wagstaff and the members showed their appreciation by singing "For she's a jolly good fellow". A raffle was held and a cheque sent to the ATS Benevolent Fund.

It was a memorable day for all who attended. Members came from Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Devon and most other English counties, and returned home full of nostalgic memories.

REUNION NOTICES

CREWE BRANCH

Crewe Branch are hosting a Western Area secretaries' meeting to be followed by a Social at 2 pm on Saturday, September 28th at the Victoria Social Club, Gatefield Street, Crewe. There will be a buffet, stalls and music. Everyone is welcome.

ATS DINNER CLUB

The Annual luncheon of the ATS Dinner Club will be held on Saturday 5th October 1985 at the Bloomsbury Crest Hotel, London. There will also be a Business Meeting when a new Committee will be elected. We hope as many members as possible will attend.

The membership continues to increase and we are happy to report that a number of enquiries were received after the Harrogate Reunion, and some have joined. We would like to hear from many more ATS members, and enquiries should be sent to the Honorary Secretary, Miss C I Lawrence, 23 Trinity Close, The Pavement, London SW4 0JD, who will be pleased to supply the necessary information.

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE DOVER CASTLE

The Dover branch are holding their annual Remembrance Service at St Mary's-in-the-Castle, Dover at 3pm on Sunday 20 October 1985. All members of the Association are very welcome to attend, and refreshments will be served after the service. Last year 300 people attended, and they hope for a greater number this year.

Enquiries to Mrs J M Bishop, 13 St Anne's Court, Heathfield Avenue, Dover, Kent CT16 2JY.

NORTHERN AREA REUNION – 1985

As the Northern Area Branches are still recovering from involvement in the Grand Union it has been decided not to hold our usual autumn gathering in 1985 but to postpone this until early in 1986 in anticipation of good weather and light nights for homeward journeys!

It has not been possible to finalise plans in time for publication in this issue of the Lioness, but the provisional plan is to hold the next Northern Area Reunion in Harrogate on either 10 or 17 May 1986. It will be the usual Saturday afternoon get-together from about 2 to 6 pm and cost of tickets will include afternoon tea.

Full details will appear in the February 1986 Lioness but earlier information can be obtained from Miss M Bradley, 60 West End Avenue, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG2 9BY. (Tel: 0423-57023).

WORLD WAR TWO CWAC VETERANS

27th ANNUAL REUNION 1985

We still haven't located all our CWAC friends of those great days of World War II.

This event is sponsored by the Canadian Corps Association, CWAC 47, the last weekend in September 1985, in Toronto, Canada. This is the 27th Annual Reunion for our Canadian Women's Army Corps.

For complete Reunion Brochure write to: CWAC Veterans' Reunion Chairman, Mrs Shirley Wood Heesaker, 201 Niagara Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5V 1C9. Tel: 781-2872, 781-3821.

BRANCH NEWS

CHESTER Our membership is now 43, and the average attendance at meetings is about 25. During the past year and a half we have enjoyed a variety of interesting talks and demonstrations; one of particular interest to us all was given by SSgt Ward WRAC who told us of the "Army of Today". We found this extremely informative; times have certainly changed since we were in khaki! We have also had some very successful social evenings and our Annual Dance was held in October — that too, was a huge success. Being fortunate enough to live near the lovely River Dee, we had an extremely pleasant trip up the river one evening in the summer and had supper at a hotel on the river bank. As everyone had such a good time, we hope to repeat this soon.

We have attended various military parades, such as Standard dedications, and in November went to London to take part in the parade at the Cenotaph.

At each meeting we hold a raffle and also have a White Elephant Stall. These help to boost our funds and we have sent donations to SSAFA and the ATS Benevolent fund.

We keep in touch with any member who is sick, or in hospital, and we also sent donations to the Special Care Baby Unit in the Countess of Chester Hospital, in memory of a late colleague whose special charity it was.

Some of our members attended the reunion in Harrogate and voted it a wonderful experience.

CREWE We are busy preparing for our Secretaries' Meeting and Social on September 28th. We have held jumble sales to raise funds and have booked a pianist for the afternoon. Plans for the buffet are in hand.

In our first year our membership has reached 30. We meet every month and have a good attendance at these meetings.

Eight of our members attended the Cenotaph Service in London last November, and fifteen of us attended the Grand Reunion in Harrogate which we enjoyed very much indeed.

DEAL Activities this year have included one branch annual dinner in February which was well attended in spite of the bad weather, and talks by a local writer on China, and our president Miss Elizabeth de Bourbel on her Mexican holiday.

We were pleased to join the Hastings branch 5th anniversary band concert and sorry that transport difficulties prevented us from attending the church service earlier in the day.

We have had a bring and buy sale to boost our funds.

Five of our members attended the Grand Reunion in Harrogate and were very impressed with the younger serving members of the WRAC Association. Their friendliness was appreciated and as they lined the pavement at the end of our march past their applause did much to encourage those of us at the rear who might have been feeling it was a long way to go!

We had an enjoyable outing with friends to Leeds Castle, Kent on a perfect June day. VE day celebrations included an evening with our local RAFA branch.

At the end of last year we attended the Burma Star Association Christmas dance and presented their president with a WRAC plaque which is now displayed at all their meetings. They and the RAFA have been particularly kind in offering help and extending invitations.

Events to look forward to include the Dover Patrol service at St Margaret's bay, our annual garden party in August and the Canterbury branch church service.

We have attended several official functions and feel pleased that we are becoming known in the town largely through the monthly reports in the East Kent Mercury.



Enjoying the Annual Dinner

Courtesy Basil Kidd and East Kent Mercury

GLASGOW We are still a very active branch and have welcomed some new members. We meet every second Tuesday of the month from September to May in the RA Club in Glasgow.

We have had a very successful year with a varied programme. Our friends from the Association of WRNS joined us for our April meeting when Major Meg Pyatt QARANC gave a talk and showed a film of her stay in Nepal.

Twenty-six members travelled to Harrogate for the Grand Reunion which we all enjoyed. Most members took part in the March Past. We would like to thank Harrogate Branch and also the people of the city for their warm and friendly welcome.

GUERNSEY We continue to meet on the third Thursday of each month with the exception of July and August. Our meetings are held at various members houses and we also enjoy going out for an evening meal.

In May, to celebrate forty years liberation, HRH The Duchess of Kent visited the island. Our President Miss H Ragson was invited to a reception and presented to Her Royal Highness who was most interested to hear about the branch and its activities.

We have sent donations to The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund and also to The Ethiopia Famine Fund.

HASTINGS On Sunday April 28th we held our fifth anniversary. At 3 pm a Church Service was held at the Parish Church St Leonards-on-Sea and the church was packed with guests and friends of the members. All the local VIPs supported us, and the many ex-service Associations in the town attended with their Standards, making a very colourful showing. We were honoured to have with us the Staff Band of the WRAC.

After the service visitors who were staying for the evening concert were entertained to tea at the

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Yelton Hotel, and were able to meet members for a chat. An excellent tea was provided by the hotel and we were able to relax there until proceeding to the Hastings Pier Ballroom for a Concert.

At 7 pm everyone congregated in the ballroom and red roses were on sale as we are trying to revive St George's Day tradition in the town. Many ex-service Associations were represented there including a member of the Old Contemptibles who marched very firmly onto the stage. We then all settled down to have a most enjoyable concert given by the Staff Band. The variety of music played and the quality of playing was much commented on and many people said that it was the best military band that they had heard. Coming from male members of other Associations it was quite a compliment.

Hastings Branch would like to thank Canterbury Branch for their support at the celebrations; we all appreciated having them with us.

We are pleased to say that we are still getting new members, some as the result of the publicity we received from the Anniversary. We have also been able to advise other people who were visiting the town of their nearest branches.

LONDON Our meetings at the Union Jack Club continue to be well attended and membership is increasing with eleven new members so far this year. Our two Bring and Buy fund raising events and various raffles resulted in a splendid boost to funds of £300.

Talks from Mrs Yardley of the Save The Children Fund, with lovely slides of Princess Anne touring in Africa, and in contrast a talk from a representative from Sainsbury's about how to get value for money in food purchases, were much enjoyed. We also had an hilarious account of a holiday in Russia from one of our members, Mrs Gerda Mendham; and an annual event which we have come to count on with great pleasure, Miss Mary Curtis and her colour slides of holidays, this year in Devon and Cornwall. In February we had a most amusing talk (in spite of the seriousness of the subject) from Mr R R Holland, Deputy General Secretary of BLESMA. This moved members so that we were able to collect an immediate contribution of £25 towards their funds.

It was with regret that we accepted the

resignations of our committee Chairman Mrs MV Curtis and also our Secretary Miss Mary Slocombe who has served the branch faithfully in this capacity for 21 years. Luckily Miss Slocombe will continue to serve on the committee where she will be of great help to our new Secretary.

The Branch had its usual good attendance at the Garden of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey and also at the Remembrance Day Parade when we were privileged to lay the wreath on behalf of the Association. 26 members attended the Grand Reunion at Harrogate and were full of admiration for the marvellous way everything was organised.

MANCHESTER The Branch continues to thrive with 26 Life and 44 Annual members. We continue to meet on the first Wednesday of each month (except January and February). We usually have 25 - 30 members present. We ended 1984 with our Bring and Buy Sale followed by a party.

Sixteen members attended the Grand Reunion in Harrogate and it was a splendid weekend. Many thanks to all concerned.

Eighteen went on parade with the Ex-Services Associations on May 12th to commemorate VE. Mavis Cruschiancy laid the wreath on behalf of the Branch. We held our Annual Dinner on May 29th when 44 members had an enjoyable evening and an excellent meal. Rochdale Branch was well represented and Mrs Souter (ex-QMAAC) was also with us. The raffle proceeds were sent to Broughton House, a home for disabled ex-service-men.

We are continuing to hold plant and book sales at our meetings, these are popular and also help swell our funds. We are now collecting groceries for the Broughton House Fete in September. Several members hope to go to the Crewe Reunion at the end of September.

We have had several new members this year, and all are welcome at the RAMC Barracks, off King's Road Manchester MC16.

RICHMONDSHIRE This Branch was formed in May 1984 and although still small in numbers has already developed great enthusiasm and esprit de corps. Though our combined service covers the period 1939 to the late seventies our membership is predominantly ex-WRAC. Sadly, however, we are apt to lose our younger members when their husbands are posted from Catterick Garrison.

We meet monthly, usually in Catterick Garrison. Among other activities we have had an excellent talk and slide show on Swaledale by Maj F C T Williams (Retd), have visited a candle factory and have held a combined meeting with the Catterick Garrison Branch of the Association. We were well represented at both the Northern Area Reunion and the Grand Reunion at Harrogate, where we were proud to have some of our members in the parade. We were also able to visit one of our members when she was in the Duchess of Kent's Military Hospital.

Our finances are so far modest and have been raised entirely by raffles and stalls at our monthly meetings. However in July we are having a "Charity Stall" in Richmond's Saturday market, which we hope will boost our funds.

SHROPSHIRE Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month, usually in the Oakengates Community Centre, at 7.30 pm. More members would be very welcome, and anyone who is interested should contact the chairman, Mrs Joan Purcell – Tel: Telford 3785.

The Annual Outing last year was to the Liverpool Flower Festival. Members and friends much appreciated the beautiful floral displays. A pub meal was enjoyed on the return journey.

12 members attended the Western Area Reunion held in Wolverhampton on Saturday September 22nd. Three members paraded at COD Donnington on Remembrance Sunday. The Christmas Dinner was held at the Caledonia Hotel, Oakengates – 26 members attended. A buffet supper was held at the December monthly meeting. Regrettably only 11 members were able to attend – the remainder were fog-bound. There were no meetings in January or February due to fog and heavy snow falls. Six of our members attended the Annual General Meeting held in

Harrogate.

A profit of £180.40 for Branch Funds was raised on two Rummage Sales. We have donated £50 to the WRAC Benevolent Fund, £10 to the Shropshire Hospice Fund, and £10 to the Red Cross Ethiopian Appeal.

Two of our members, Mrs "Scott" Mills and Miss Brenda Cookson, who live in Shrewsbury, have been staying with relatives in Australia and New Zealand. A quote from their letter: "We marched through Perth on April 25th – Anzac Day – with members of the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS). We formed up outside the Anzac House and marched along St George's Terrace on to the Esplanade beside the Swan River for the memorial service. It was the most unforgettable day. We then marched past the saluting base where the Governor, Professor Gordon Reid, took the salute. What a thrill it all was, with the City of Perth's high rise buildings a perfect backdrop and the Swan River mirroring the sunny and brilliant clear blue sky. We were even on TV! Afterwards we went to a party at 109 Sig Sqn and met many ex-servicemen and women and Squadron members who gave us a great welcome". They are now heading for the USA and Disneyland en route for UK!

ULSTER In March the Ulster Branch met for their Annual Luncheon, which is always a very happy occasion, when members can relax and reminisce about their days in the ATS and WRAC. As usual there was a big turn out for this event.

Several members attended the Grand Reunion in Harrogate and reported to those of us who were unable to attend that we had missed an excellent event.

We held our Wine and Cheese party in May in Hillsborough Castle (known previously as Government House) and the Northern Ireland Secretary paid us a surprise visit. He stayed about an hour and met most of the members who were present. We were also delighted that Lts Wilton and Turner WRAC from HQ Lisburn along with several other servicewomen were able to attend. Our special thanks to LCpls Butler and Firth, who looking very smart in uniform, directed our guests.

We are looking forward to our next joint meeting of our own members with members of the Omagh Branch at their Annual Luncheon in September.

Correspondence

Mrs Maud Sheridan of 16 Stonebridge Lane, Long Itchington, Rugby writes: "I was interested to read in the "Lioness" of the idea to form a library of members' experiences for the WRAC Museum.

I was born in the Aldershot Barracks in 1893. As a child I travelled with the Army to Gibraltar, Malta, Egypt and India.

I was twenty-one and working in Yorkshire when the Great War broke out in 1914. When they asked for volunteers to join the Women's Legion to cook for the troops, I offered my services although I had no experience in this work. We had to go to the Labour Exchange to enlist and there I was given instructions to travel to Biggleswade. When I arrived I found that lack of experience did not matter as we were trained to cook in "Aldershot Ovens" and on trench fires for the troops. We were billeted on the inhabitants of Biggleswade.

Sometime after being at the camp we were visited by a group of Army Officers who came to see us at work and after they had gone, Miss Atkinson, our Administrator, told me that I had been chosen to go with her to London. When we arrived in London we joined with other girls and after training together we were formed into the WAAC.

Miss Finlay's number was 1 and Miss Atkinson was 2 and we younger girls were numbered alphabetically. As my maiden name was Winkfield I became number 27. We trained in Hyde Park and then went over to France in two batches.

I have many memories of those days. One highlight was when King George V and the Prince of Wales came to visit the troops. Captain Escoffier (son of the famous chef) was at our camp. When he knew that the King was coming he sent to an hotel in London (the Savoy, I think) to borrow a set of special waitresses uniforms for us to wear. They were well starched and frilled. I remember having to polish some beautiful red apples till they shone like jewels.

I stayed in France after the Armistice to help with the clerical work to finish things up. When I came back to England I took part in the first Victory March past the Cenotaph proudly wearing the medal I had just received on July 19th 1919.

I am now ninety-two years old and still enjoy reading the "Lioness" and keeping up to date in what I helped to start - WAAC - QMAAC - ATS and now WRAC."



In borrowed caps and aprons ready for the visit of King George V and the Prince of Wales.



A group of WAAC. Mrs Sheridan is on the right.

Mrs Joyce Dixon of 68 Porlock Drive, Bransholme, Hull HU7 4HZ with Mrs Minnie Coulson and Mrs Vera Parkinson wrote to describe the items of uniform which they wore for the sing-song after the Reunion Dinner at Harrogate. Everything was genuine army issue except their shirts. Mrs Dixon's uniform was her own but her stockings and Mrs Parkinson's skirt and pullover and Mrs Coulson's pyjamas were lent by Mrs May Kirby (ex Sgt Redmore) who had more than 24 years' service. Mrs Parkinson's forage cap was lent by Mrs Pollie Ward. Mrs Dixon thanks WO2 Linnegan for coming on stage with them and hopes that they jogged a few wartime memories. She also hopes to be back with their act sometime in the 1988 Grand Reunion.

Mrs J M Robinson (nee Pte Jane Burgess) of 3 Whiteland Rise, Westbury, Wilts, would like to hear from anyone who served with her in 517 (M) HAA Bty RA from 1942 - 1945.

Sister Gwendoline (ex-WO2 G Wright) of the Convent of the Sacred Passion, Lower Road, Effingham, Leatherhead, Surrey KT24 5JP extends an invitation from the Reverend Mother to any member who would like to have a few hours of peace and quiet. It would be for the day only until their Guest House is completed. They have moved from their convent at East Hanningfield because the hospital there was closed. Anyone wishing to take advantage of this kind invitation should telephone Bookham 57091.

Ms Janet Empsall (nee Roper) of 122 Meridian Close, Boston PE21 1NE Lincolnshire, would like to contact Sgt Marion Patricia King WRAC, Pte Liz Twigg (nee Smith) and Fiona Charlesworth (nee Frazer) who were at Larkhill between 1964 - 1968. Anyone who knows of their whereabouts please write to the above address.

From: Brigadier N C King MBE

Dear Editor,

I wish to thank all the members of the Association for their great kindness in making me an Honorary Life Member which will enable me to maintain the many friendships I made during my time as General Secretary.

I also wish to thank everybody for their exceedingly generous gift of a reproduction Queen Anne Miniature Tallboy to house my hi-fi equipment. It is very beautiful, gives me immense pleasure and will remind me of you all every day.

Thank you very much.

Norman King

Mrs Beth Thomas (ex Pte Thomson) of Abberd Lodge, 66 Oxford Road, Calne, Wilts SN11 8AH has sent us the photograph below taken with Mrs Mary Sinclair (ex Cpl Hart) and Mrs Gladys Micklas (ex Cpl Woodford) when they met at her home after almost 40 years when Mrs Micklas was visiting England from Georgia, USA. The last time they were all together Pte Thomson was bridesmaid to Cpl Woodford when she married Sgt John Micklas of HQ US 5th Army at Gardone Riviera in Italy. Mrs Thomas wonders whether any former ATS who were with HQ AAI, CMF or HQ US 5th Army remembers them from those wartime days.



L-R: Mrs Thomas, Mrs Sinclair, Mrs Micklas.

BIRTH

GRIFFIN On January 17th 1985 to Captain and Mrs M C C Griffin (Captain Pam Griffin, nee Robinson) a son, David Howard Calton.

WHITEFOORD HOUSE 53 Canongate, Edinburgh EH8 8BS

Whitefoord House is a residential hostel for ex-Service men and women in necessitous circumstances, situated in Old Edinburgh, 200 yards up The Royal Mile from the Palace of Holyroodhouse.

The Residence, which has been extensively modernised at a cost of £1.7 million, is administered by the independent charity, Scottish Veterans' Residences, in conjunction with the similarly constituted Whitedael Housing Association.

The accommodation comprises one hundred fully furnished single bedrooms, with well equipped communal facilities, consisting of a spacious reading room, two television lounges, two games rooms, a bowling green, a sheltered internal courtyard and a colourful rose garden. The establishment has its own laundry which is also available to residents for their private use.

Full board catering is provided to a high standard on a cafeteria system at an overall cost of £70 per week, the rates always being kept at a level which is fully accepted by the DHSS for supplementary benefit for those in less fortunate circumstances.

Enquiries and applications should be addressed to The Superintendent, Whitefoord House, 53 Canongate, Edinburgh EH8 8BS.

EDITOR'S NOTE

This advertisement has been slightly reworded to indicate that the facilities offered are for people in necessitous circumstances. Whitefoord House does not provide — as some members thought — holiday accommodation.

MARRIAGE

JOHNSON-LONGLANDS On December 29 1984 Captain Peter Johnson RE to Captain Penny Longlands WRAC.

RUBY WEDDING

HOWARTH - SEMKEN. On 17th March 1945 at our Lady of Lourdes Church, Wanstead, Dvr John Anthony Howarth RASC to Cpl Gladys Muriel Semken ATS. Now at 33 Hollywood Lane, Wainscott, Rochester, Kent.

OBITUARY

Allardyce. Captain L E Allardyce WRAC on 10 April 1984.

Alton. Mrs E Alton of Hyde, Cheshire in November 1984. ATS.

Attwood. Miss Evelyn Valerie Attwood of Watford, Herts on 25 May 1985. WO1 ATS and WRAC 1944 - 1969. Fortified by the Rites of the Catholic Church.

Belfield. Mr Bruce E Belfield on 22 February 1985. Lecturer at WRAC College.

Clasper. Miss Mary Clasper of Dulwich, London in June 1983. ATS.

Collett-Wadge. Mrs D C Collett-Wadge at St Peter Port, Guernsey on 29 September 1984. Junior Commander ATS.

Douglas-Jones. Mrs Gwyneth M M Douglas-Jones of Cheltenham on 14 April 1985. Senior Commander ATS.

Drummond-Beswick. Mrs J Drummond-Beswick of Tunbridge Wells, Kent on 18 June 1985. ATS.

Fleetwood-Jones. Major Gwyneth F Fleetwood-Jones MBE of Winchester on 12 June 1985. ATS and WRAC.

Forbes-Irvine. Mrs Margaret S Forbes-Irvine (nee Bond) of Banchory, Scotland on 5 November 1984. Senior Commander ATS.

Garrett. Miss Winifred Garrett of Belfast in May 1985. Sergeant ATS and WRAC.

Gilman. Mrs Elizabeth Gilman of Wimborne, Dorset on 14 April 1985. RSM ATS and WRAC.

Gormans. Mrs Anne Gormans (nee Gannon) in Canada on 25 April 1985. WO2 WRAC and Cookery Instructor at Queen Elizabeth Camp during 21 years service. First woman President of Canadian Legion (Burkes Falls, Ontario).

Groom. Mrs Eileen Groom (nee Boxley) of Romford, Essex on 6 June 1985. ATS.

Handley. Mrs Fryn Handley of Summerhill, Wrexham on 3 January 1985. ATS.

Harvey. Miss J Harvey of Hastings, Sussex in April 1985. ATS.

Hawtrey-Williams. Major Joy Hawtrey-Williams in New Zealand on 5 February 1985. ATS and WRAC.

Latham. Lt Colonel Beryl Latham of Chandlers Ford, Hampshire on 22 January 1985. ATS and WRAC.

Martin. Miss Kathleen Martin of Branton, Devon on 24 May 1985. Sergeant ATS and WRAC.

Messenger. Miss Alice Messenger of Parkstone, Dorset on 13 March 1985. QMAAC.

Parker. Miss Lena Parker in Harrogate, late of Clacton-on-Sea, on 22 February 1985. ATS and Captain WRAC. Founder member and secretary of ATS Dinner Club.

Pearson. Miss Grace Pearson of Boscombe, Bournemouth on 15 January 1985. WAAC and QMAAC.

Ritchie. Mrs Flora V Ritchie of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk on 19 April 1985. QMAAC.

Robinson. Mrs Grace (Robby) Robinson of Norwich on 18 June 1985. WO2 ATS 1938-45.

Rose. Miss K M Rose on 4 April 1985. Junior Commander ATS.

Skyrme. Miss Mary E Skyrme on 6 October 1984.

Smith. Miss Irene (Nin) Smith of Bath on 2 May 1985. QMAAC.

Thompson. Mrs Eileen Thompson of Crewe, Cheshire on 26 January 1985. ATS.

Wilson. Miss Agnes M Wilson of Islip, Oxford on 6 November 1984. Senior Commander ATS at Didcot.

Wooldridge. Mrs P G Wooldridge of Hastings, Sussex. ATS.

Wright. Miss Kathleen P Wright of Ponteland, Northumberland on 8 June 1985. ATS.

LONDON GAZETTE

BIRTHDAY HONOURS

MBE

WO2 S Odell

BEM

SSgt R I Grant, SSgt G M Latus, Sgt B M Fry,
Sgt E P Sissem TA

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MENTIONS IN DESPATCHES

SSgt D S Dawson, Sgt J E Darragh UDR,
Pte S Campbell UDR

PROMOTIONS

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Lieutenant Colonels: J L Lawson MBE, C R Bolland
M S Wing

Captains: A M Boileau, D Foster

Special Regular Commission

Captain L Blake

Short Service Commissions

Captains: E A McKay, A Hughes, P A Oak-Rhind,
J F Harper, L E Davies, D L Pollington,
I M Gordon, J C Gwilliam, E C Hogg,
S M Marklew, S J Mundill Wood

Lieutenants: H M Jones (EF1), W L Bobbitt,
L J Disney, J A Sloan, P L Smith, J M V Turner,
J J Hayes, D Mapley, K S Morgan

Short Service Volunteer Commission

Lieutenant E F Storey

RETIREMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Regular Army

Colonel S P Richards
Lieutenant Colonel A Bray
Majors: E R C Flanders, K F Binks
Captains: E A Powell, H M Davies, A L Wood
Captain (QM) M I Woolford
Lieutenant C A Woodhead

Short Service Commissions

Captains: A S Stevens, K A Coram
Lieutenant L J Disney

WRAC MUSEUM

The new museum is rapidly taking shape out of a pile of bricks and insulating blocks. Hopefully it will be finished by Christmas.

If you have any buttons or badges, uniforms or documents which you no longer want to keep, we can give them a good home. ATS service dress jackets and skirts and ATS shoes would be specially welcome.

THE CORPS COLLECT

Following the very moving Church Service at St Peter's, Harrogate on April 14th which was the culmination of the Grand Reunion, we have been asked to print the Corps Collect.

O merciful God and Father of us all, whose will it is that we should help one another; give to us, the members of the Women's Royal Army Corps, grace that we may fulfil the same. Make us gentle, courteous and forbearing. Direct our lives so that we may have courage and resolution in the performance of our duty and hallow all our comradeship by the blessing of Thy Spirit for His sake who loved us and gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord.

PERSONAL COLUMN

TO LET Caravan 4/5 Berth, fully equipped. Select site Filey, North Yorkshire. Tel: York 793181.

FOR SALE Mess Dress worn 6 times £75. No 2 Dress £100. Size 10, 5' 6". Contact Lt C A V Aitchison. Tel: 08677-2575.

FOR SALE Greatcoat, No 2 Dress, Mess Dress. Size 16, 5' 7". Contact Col S P Richards. Tel: Ludlow (0584) 2217.

FOR SALE Officers Greatcoat, silk lining, No 2 Dress. Size 12, 5' 5". Additional items available. Wedding Dress Shepherdess style. Size 12, £50 ono. Two signed framed prints by Ken Howard. Contact Mrs Davis. Tel: Warminster 217974.

FOR SALE Greatcoat No 1 Dress, No 2 Dress, Mess Dress. Size 14, 5' 8". All excellent condition. Tel: 06845-61868.

FOR SALE Officers Greatcoat, No 2 Dress, Mess Dress, Lady's Wet Suit. £30 each ono. Size 14/16, 5' 7". Very good condition. Contact Mrs Coleman, Sandhill Grange, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, S Yorks S62 5NT.

FOR SALE No 2 Dress and extra skirt. Size 14, 5' 9" £30. Tel: 0727-51431.

AREA AND SUB-AREA SECRETARIES

NORTHERN AREA	Miss M Bradley, 60 West End Avenue, Harrogate, N Yorkshire HG2 9BY (Secretary of Harrogate Branch)
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WESTERN AREA	Mrs J Bleasdale, 3 Knoll Croft, Aldridge, W. Midlands WS9 8LR
BAOR	Mrs M Homewood, c/o 8 Regt RCT, BFPO 17

EX SERVICE BRANCH SECRETARIES AS AT 1 JUNE 1985

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LEICESTER	Miss D Palmer, 40 Greenhill Road, Leicester LE2 3DJ	Northern
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ULSTER	Mrs A G Warnock, 3 Erinvale Park, Belfast 10	N Ireland
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