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No2

Lioness





Lioness

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WOMENS ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1919

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Brigadier Helen Meechie

TRIPLE CONGRATULATIONS

1986 is a very successful year for Brigadier Helen Meechie. She was made CBE in the Birthday Honours, and only a month later she received the Honorary Doctorate of Laws from the university of Dundee.

In September, Brigadier Meechie will relinquish the appointment of DWRAC. She has been selected to attend the 1987 course at the Royal College of Defence Studies – the first WRAC officer to do so. Brigadier Meechie has broken fresh ground as the first WRAC officer to continue her career after filling the appointment of DWRAC. We join in sending her many congratulations and best wishes for the future.

SHOPPING LIST

	£	p
ATS shield	8.50	60p
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
Corps Drum Ice Bucket	12.00	1.70
Corps History (hardback)	5.50	60p
Corps History (paperback)	3.00	50p
Corps Shield	8.50	60p
Glass Ash/Pin Tray	1.10	30p
ID Card/Season Ticket/Bank Card Holder	.25	15p (up to 6)
Jewel Case (blue velvet)	1.20	25p
Key Cases (to hold 6 keys)	1.10	25p
Key Rings:		
Acrylic	.45	20p (up to 6)
Green Leather	.40	20p (up to 6)
T-shirts (white, red and blue)	3.50	40p
Sweatshirts (green, red, black, white and blue)	7.50	55p
Pewter Figures:		
Musician with flute	17.50	80p
WRAC Private	17.50	80p
WRAC NCO with RMP	17.50	80p
Prints by Ken Howard:		
Signed (indoor only)	5.00	50p (up to 3)
Unsigned	3.00	50p (up to 3)
Scarves 27" x 27" (green with gold badge)	2.75	15p
WRAC Brooches	1.75	15p (up to 6)
WRAC Association Badges	.60	15p (up to 6)
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.

Cover Photograph

The Rt Hon George Younger, Secretary of State for Defence, inspecting the WRAC Quarter Guard at Headquarters United Kingdom Land Forces.

L-R Sgt Anne Wilson, LCpl Denise McConville, Pte Nicole Rennie, Pte Lindsey Ridley, LCpl Jayne Dyer, LCpl Denise Snijder, Pte Julie Harvey, Pte Deborah Edgeworth.

HM THE QUEEN'S 60TH BIRTHDAY

On the 60th Birthday of HM The Queen, the following message was sent to her:

"The Vice-President, Council and All Members of the Women's Royal Army Corps Association, which incorporates the Auxiliary Territorial Service Comrades Association, send loyal greetings and birthday wishes to Her Majesty The Queen, as their most distinguished Life Member, on the occasion of her 60th Birthday."

The following reply was received from Buckingham Palace:

"I am commanded by The Queen to thank you for your kind message of Birthday Greetings. Her Majesty was most touched to receive your letter, and as a Life Member sends the Vice-President, Council and All Members of the Women's Royal Army Corps Association her warmest good wishes".

WRAC STAFF BAND

ENGAGEMENTS

August 24 - 30 Concerts at Pine Walk Bandstand, Bournemouth. (Daily 1100-1230 hrs and 1500-1630 hrs except Saturday 1500-1630 hrs only).

November 8 Lord Mayor's Show, London (am).

December 17 Concert for Chichester Cathedral Trust at All Saints Church, Hove - 1830 hrs.

Band Record "Visions"

Sales of the Band's fourth LP recording "Visions" still continue. The records cost £3.75 (£4.75 including postage and packing) and can be obtained from the Band President, WRAC Centre.

EDITORIAL

In response to requests from members, "Shopping List" now includes ATS shields. These are the same price as WRAC shields (£8.50 plus 60p for postage).

We have given advance notice on page 73 of the 1988 Grand Reunion as the dates are now fixed. Next year's issues of Lioness will give more details.

By now everyone will know of the plan for the Regimental Museum. The building is up and work on the interior will start shortly. On page 53 we print an appeal from Brigadier Anne Field, Deputy Controller Commandant, Vice President of the Association and Chairman of the Museum Trustees. If you wish to subscribe, now is your opportunity.

This is the last issue for your present editor. The journal has been published without a break for 66 years, appearing in July 1920 as the "Old Comrades Association Gazette" published monthly. By 1942 the journal was appearing six times a year, and the May - June issue shows the new title of "QMAAC & ATS Comrades Association Gazette". The July - August 1950 edition was the first to use the present title of "Lioness". Of the ten previous editors, Mrs Garrard was the longest-serving, having held the appointment from 1926 - 1943 and kept the journal alive during those years following the disbandment of the QMAAC in September 1921 until the formation of the ATS in September 1938. Your eleventh editor would like to take this opportunity of thanking all contributors for their help and cooperation over the last 9½ years, and to wish "Lioness" every success in the future.

PRESENTATIONS

LSGC

WO1 June Skelton certainly had a special day to remember when she was recently presented with her LSGC medal. She served with Victor Tp, 29 (BR) Sig Regt (NORTHAG) and Col N R Robertson MBE, Comd WRAC BAOR, kindly accepted the invitation to make the presentation. Every WO and SNCO was present at the occasion, in addition to the many friends who were also invited! It was also a bit of a family affair as her husband Sgt Christopher Skelton, who is with 13 Sig Regt, was the medal orderly. Following the presentation there was a buffet lunch and much celebrating, including the traditional christening of the medal!



L-R: WO1 June Skelton, Col N R Robertson, Sgt Christopher Skelton.

Sgt Margaret Cassels was presented with her LSGC by Col V J Smith RRC, Commandant of the QARANC Training Centre on February 5th.

Sgt Cassels joined the WRAC in 1970 and has served in Guildford, Northern Ireland, Bicester, Aldershot, Shoeburyness and London. Since October 1983 she has worked in the QM Department of the QARANC Training Centre, and has become a well-known and well-liked figure to many recruits, student officers and other members of the QARANC.



Sgt Cassels receiving her LSGC from Col V J Smith.

SSgt Liz Galloway, WRAC Administrative Assistant HQ York Garrison, was presented with her LSGC by Brig G G Arnold, Commander York Garrison at Imphal Barracks York on June 9th.



Shaking hands after the presentation.

CONGRATULATIONS

We offer our Congratulations to:

Brigadier Shirley Nield who takes over as Director WRAC next month.

Sgt Sharon Ley who has become the first female Sergeant Technician in the history of the Royal Corps of Signals, after a 12 month course at Catterick. She is currently designing and constructing electronic gadgetry for training purposes.

Mrs Russell who once again swept the board at the Stoke and District Rose Show with eight first prizes. She also won the prize for the Best Exhibit in the show and the prize for the most points gained. All the roses she exhibited came from the Princess Royal's Memorial Rose Garden at the WRAC Centre.

Cpl S Alexander, 12 Coy WRAC and LCpl C Simms, Larkhill Garrison who won the Madame Prunier Challenge Trophy and also the Silver Medal in the Inter Services Cook and Serve at Hotelympia '86. Also Cpl C Miller, WRAC Centre and Pte M Martin, MVEE who won the Bronze Medal in the Cook and Serve.

The Army Women's Squash Team who retained the Inter Services Trophy with a repeat of their 1985 5-0 victory. Captain D Foggin WRAC was the Combined Services Champion and Captain C Ronan won the Plate Competition.

Major Pepita (Pepi) Simpson who is the first woman to command a military police unit in its 109 year history. Major Simpson commands the Royal Military Police force in Aldershot, Britain's biggest garrison town and home of the British Army.

Brigadier Shirley Nield, Colonel Nan Robertson, Colonel Audrey Smith and Colonel Frances Hutley who received the freedom of the City of London on March 3rd. They were sponsored by Deputy Edwina Coven and Colonel Sir Ronald Gardner-Thorpe.

Lt S M Kingham who won the Sash of Honour on WRAC Course 853 at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

SSgt S Barclay WRAC, serving with the WRAC Wing RMAS who was awarded a GOC's Commendation by the GOC South East District. On December 16th last year, whilst on leave in Warrington, SSgt Barclay went to the aid of an off-duty Woman Police Constable who was trying to stop four youths attacking a young woman.

Pte Julie Fuller, a Sup Spec employed at Ordnance Services Viersen who received a Grade A Certificate for extremely high results achieved on her B2 to B1 upgrading course.

She was awarded the framed certificate by Lt Col M N Roberts RAOC, CO of Ordnance Services Viersen for her outstanding achievement.



Receiving the Certificate of Merit from Lt Col Roberts RAOC.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE VISITS HEADQUARTERS UNITED KINGDOM LAND FORCES AT WILTON

Captain C D Bacon WRAC

Headquarters United Kingdom Land Forces attracts many "high powered" visitors including royalty, MPs, senior officers from UK and abroad. Most arrive by helicopter or by car and are invited to inspect a quarter guard before entering the headquarters building. This quarter guard is either composed of WRAC personnel serving within the headquarters or of the motley collection of cap badges found amongst the male soldiers at HQ UKLF. The potential quarter guard members rotate over a two month cycle, thus sharing the problem of early morning drill parades and uniform inspections.

Although the present Secretary of State for Defence, the Rt Hon George Younger, has served with both the Regular and Territorial Army, it is unlikely that he has ever inspected an all female quarter guard before. However he was obviously not daunted by the experience and spent several minutes talking to each member of the guard. He was particularly interested to discover that Pte Joyce (Jock) Reid originated from his home town.

The members of the WRAC on parade are all employed within HQ UKLF. They work either as drivers for 22 Sqn RCT, staff clerks within the HQ employed by HQ Sqn, 10 Sig Regt or as data telegraphists for 1 Sqn, 10 Sig Regt. Although the early morning drill parades are a slight shock to the system, instant television stardom on TV South is guaranteed.

OPERATION RALEIGH

AN EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

2Lt P J Dickens WRAC

At the beginning of 1984, a television programme inspired me to apply for a place on an expedition which circumnavigates the globe over a period of four years, taking young people to places and adventures which they may never have imagined possible. I was chosen to participate in an Operation Raleigh Selection Weekend in July 1984, after an interview. In Bideford, North Devon, I underwent a series of gruelling tests, both mentally and physically demanding, to see if I was suitable to take part.

It was then a long wait until I discovered I had a place on phase 4B which involved three months in Southern Chile. I was undergoing training at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst when I received the news.

I was then both surprised and delighted to receive the letter from the Ministry of Defence which agreed to my taking part and after nine months in a supernumerary post as Platoon Commander at 10 Company WRAC, Aldershot, the long awaited dream came true. Whilst in Aldershot, I had had to raise £1400 in sponsorship in order to ensure my participation on Operation Raleigh and the response to my letters to companies, friends and relatives was overwhelming — the WRAC Headquarters making up the last £100. I held coffee mornings at home, cycled seventy miles from Eastbourne to London and worked with the local press to raise this sum.

On New Year's Day, the travelling began from the Operation Raleigh Headquarters in London to a village called Chile Chico in Southern Chile. It took nine days to reach our destination having spent twenty-three hours on an aeroplane, twenty-eight hours on a train and thirty-six hours on a cattle ferry which provides Chile Chico with its only contact with the rest of the country, visiting just once a week. Transport in the village consisted of horses ridden by locals dressed in ponchos, cowboy boots and sombreros. The dusty dirt track roads were hardly surprising in a part of the country with a microclimate providing three hundred sunny days a year.

One hundred and eighty members of Operation Raleigh took part on this phase but were divided into groups working in six different project sites. In Chile Chico, twenty-two venturers and four members of staff, including Americans, Canadians, Japanese, Chileans and New Zealanders, with rucksacks on their backs were welcomed by the local people, who adopted us like children.

From 9 January, we settled in a hospedaje or guest house which was unfurnished, uncarpeted but sheltered, and began our first project. This involved building sheep and cattle corrals just outside the village with logs and wire. With enthusiasm, we worked through the heat of the day, while the rest of the village had an afternoon siesta, and finished the work within five days. Gratitude was shown to us in the form of invitations to local shacks for mate, a bitter tasting green tea, which is extremely popular in Chile and tastes foul!

Chile Chico's one truck then took us high up into the mountains to a nature park called Lago Jeinimenni. The group was now extremely isolated and our only communication with Operation Raleigh Headquarters was by a military radio of which I was in charge. Evening and morning situation reports were sent by the venturers in turn under my instruction which proved amusing! Supplies reached us every two or three weeks including medical supplies, dehydrated rations and the post. Letters took less than a week to get from UK to Raleigh's Headquarters 400 miles away, although our mail was taking three weeks to reach home. It was encouraging to know we were missing the freezing conditions in England!



A typical Chilean meal.

One evening we found the frequency for the World Service and sitting by the lake in the middle of nowhere, the Brits amongst us huddled around the radio to listen to the chimes of Big Ben, many miles away.

With home so far away for most of us, we had to make a new temporary home by the large turquoise lake with snow capped mountains towering above it. Two man tents were erected in a circle around a large camp fire sheltered by a clump of trees, alive with parrots and woodpeckers. Washing facilities were limited but we had an immense bath provided by nature in the form of the lake fed by glaciers! My three sets of clothes were washed in the same way and frequently whilst I was still in them! We rarely looked clean. I undoubtedly was the wettest, and muddiest at all times displaying this knack from the first occasion we arrived in Jeinimenni. We came across a log truck stuck at the river crossing and in I dived up to my waist followed by the rest of the group until a chain was formed to float the load to the bank and push the truck out of the current. This enthusiasm for water was my trademark from then on.

Our projects at Lago Jeinimenni included the building of a log cabin for the Forestry Commission workers; planing slates, nailing down floor boards and hours of sawing; as well as repairing the trail around the lake which was rutted and unfinished. We worked for long hours, but in these surroundings every second of labour was a great pleasure.

The silence was broken only by the cries of birds; the lake was still and the tranquillity an experience in itself. The evenings were filled with singing around the camp fire, stories and tales of home and discussions on varying cultures. The sun was our clock and the days ended when the sun went down behind the mountains. In those days at Jeinimenni, the people became a tightly knit group working and living together. We were all very different from one another in ages, nationalities, occupations and backgrounds but this never affected the unity of the group. Each took a turn in running the team as patrol leader.

Dee, our nurse, was called upon very seldom considering our surroundings and work, but stitches were required on two occasions when a fishing hook became lodged in Simon's calf and Luke axed his leg. Health generally could not have been better although I would not recommend dehydrated rations to anyone! These were also in short supply, and therefore supplemented by fish from the lake and hares that we snared in the lower mountains behind the camp. Whole lambs barbecued over the fire were a treat when we could get them, and when supplies were late arriving we ate fried maggots, dug out of rotting logs in desperation, which were really quite palatable!

Whilst at Lago Jeinimenni, a small group was selected to make a trip to the glacier nearby nestling in the mountain

range set back beyond the lake. The walk included conquering dense forest, hacking away the vegetation with machetes to form a path and wading chest high across fast flowing rivers. After eleven hours walking we made camp in a clearing in the trees by the river's edge. As part of a survival course, we slept out in the open on beds of leaves in the thick of puma country. We had a shift throughout the night to build up the fire and scare away any unwanted visitors. I was on watch between midnight and 0100 hours and spent that hour trying to puzzle out what I would do if a puma *did* turn up! It started to rain as I returned to my sleeping bag and at 0430 hours, I realised there was not a square inch of me still dry. By 0600 hours, we were all awake huddling around the fire and wringing out sleeping bags. Rucksacks weighed at least twice as much as before and the trip was aborted. This, I remember as the point of lowest morale during the three month expedition. However we returned to camp to find post and hot doughnuts or "soapipias" waiting for us.

Those who had remained at camp had begun on the construction of a footbridge over the river which feeds the lake and were also designing a pier to assist us in collecting water. When the footbridge was complete a week later, we packed up the camp at Lago Jeinimenni and returned to Chile Chico for their 58th Anniversary town festival. Led by our only Japanese adventurer, Akira Suzuki, we began a 68 kms march towards town covering desert lands, mountains and barren plains. This challenge soon became more demanding than anyone had expected and by 1700 hours on day one, we had lost half the group with various injuries, mainly consisting of blisters. Only eleven of us set up camp that night; the others had been taken to town on the Chile Chico truck.

The following day, we found various problems including lack of water, little food and Ed, the Canadian, could hardly walk at all. Gritted teeth took us into the town that night after twelve hours walking, and full rucksacks were happily thrown from tired backs.



"I made the snares and the axe handle; I caught the hare and now I am going to cook it!"

The festival built up an excellent relationship between the locals and Operation Raleigh, when we competed in anything from singing competitions to basketball matches, as well as the more obscure game — "catching the greased pig"! News of a visit from General Pinochet spurred the local people into repainting the town which we assisted with for several days, rewarded by an invitation to the President's speech and banquet. It was a great occasion for the small, isolated village

but as we all sat in anticipation in the gymnasium, the news reached us that he was not coming. The banquet went ahead as planned but the disappointment and shock of the people was very evident.

With the major community projects completed, our group moved on to do adventure training and caught a ferry to Puerto Murta. In this tiny community, smaller than Chile Chico, we enquired about hiring horses for a trek from Murta to Chile Chico — 300 kms away. This was achieved after two days, in which time we made a trip to the wild bamboo forests. The Army provided a guide and took five lads and myself on a 4 km walk through the forests to a lake. The going was extremely difficult but the prize at the end made it all worth it. I was the first British woman to set eyes on the lake which had only recently been discovered during the construction of a track through the dense bamboo. Also whilst in Puerto Murta we visited some hot springs which was the closest we ever got to a bath! The afternoon and early evening hours were whiled away lying in the sulphur smelling pools of naturally warm water.

The horse trek was the most memorable part of the entire expedition with twenty-six people, of whom two could ride, setting out on fairly wild Chilean animals. We had no saddles or bridles for the first two days and had to improvise with rugs and rope. The scenery throughout these ten days of riding was breathtaking and despite the soreness there were numerous occasions to laugh. Within the first four days, everyone had fallen off but without injury. Melinda, an American student, put her saddle on backwards and Fiona, a saleswoman was led purposefully for several yards by a horse she was supposed to be leading! There were moments for concern though when we found our guide leading us up into the mountains and across scree slopes. Paths were non-existent at this stage and we led the horses across whilst watching the rocks plunge into the lake over 100 feet below us. On the final night we camped at a small farm in Fachinal and I fell asleep to the sound of the St Valentine's volcano roaring over fifteen days ride away.



After a couple of days resting aching limbs and numb bottoms, the Operation Raleigh group started work in the Chile Chico medical centre, cleaning the ambulance, painting the surgery and washing windows. However, because of the language barrier, there was little we could do in the medical field. In Chile the language spoken is Castellano. This is very similar to Spanish and most of us learnt enough to get by, although it never proved a great problem as we were assisted by our three Chilean venturers who all spoke fluent English.

Before setting off to a different project site, six venturers and two members of staff returned to Lago Jeinimenni to do more survival, help finish the log cabin and do some exploring in and around the area. The time was our own as nothing had been arranged for us. I fished a good deal, walked up the mountains behind the camp and did some riding to collect supplies. We had plenty of time to experiment with varieties of food including types of birds, puff balls and nuts. Soon the camp, from so little comfort, became more and more

luxurious. Ed made an excellent sauna using a tent flysheet, branches and turf to create a watertight dome. Inside a pit had been hollowed out and with all inside, the rocks from the fire were dropped in, the zip fastened and water poured over the top. What a way to relax!

Our last night in Jeinimenni was spent sleeping in the Conaf hut we had helped build. This followed a last minute effort to complete the wooden roof, which we managed.

On the journey back to Chile Chico, we stopped and walked up into the mountains in search of the Cave of Hands. The cave walls are decorated with ancient rock paintings of hands and several scientific groups from around the world have visited to make studies. We failed to see this unique sight due to limited time, no guide and no path to the caves. In other words, we failed to discover them altogether and did not have time to search more thoroughly.

Finally, we made a trip from Chile Chico to the San Rafael glacier; a glacier which according to scientists defies nature as it is too far north. Two small fishing boats took the group on a five day voyage to the large lake, made magnificent by the presence of numerous icebergs floating out from the glacier. The sight was spectacular and viewed firstly from an observation post high above and then from the boat which picked its way past the icebergs to the front of the glacier. We were dropped off to stand on the icebergs at one point. One day was spent taking in this unique landscape, where another Operation Raleigh group had been based for the three months. Then the boats headed back, stopping on the way to collect sea urchins from a hermit who lived with his dog in the rain forests near the lake.

The journey home gave us all a chance to meet up again with the other venturers from different project sites and exchange news. There was much to tell. Two days in Santiago were needed to attempt to bring us back to civilisation after the train and ferry journey when I slept in a cattle truck to avoid the overcrowding on the upper decks. Santiago airport saw tearful farewells, as the British venturers said goodbye to friends who remained behind to return to lives they had left for the expedition. Heathrow however, saw astonished parents greeting long haired, rugged and tanned sons and daughters clad in ponchos and sombreros.

Operation Raleigh had provided me with an experience of a lifetime, one I will never forget and hope to repeat some day. Many thanks to all those who made it possible for me to take part.

REGULAR FORCES EMPLOYMENT ASSOCIATION

The Regular Forces Employment 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 consult them throughout their working lives.

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 Unit Resettlement Officers, Corps HQ WRAC, Post Offices, Jobcentres and local telephone directories.

During the period 1 April 1985 - 31 March 1986 the Association assisted 11,370 men and women with their resettlement and placed 4,648 in employment. Of those placed 2,164 were men and women from the Army and 43 were from the WRAC.

CALLING ALL ATS

Thames TV are screening "A People's War", the social history of World War II, starting in the autumn. One of the programmes will have the theme "Women and the War Effort" and this will include conversations with some ex-ATS members.

DWRAC'S VISIT TO NORTHERN IRELAND

Lt J M V Turner WRAC

After much planning by Maj Wendy le Gassick, Comd WRAC, unexpected fog delayed the Director's visit by several hours which threatened to throw an already tight schedule into turmoil. How was DWRAC going to get to Londonderry in the quickest time possible? At this point Capt Evelyn Hogg, OC 175 Pro Coy, saved the day by obtaining not only a helicopter, but the Chief Flying Instructor to pilot it.

So, after a delayed start, the Brigadier left for Londonderry. Meanwhile at Ebrington Bks there was an element of confusion about what time DWRAC would arrive. All became clear 20 minutes before the landing, and the reception party was ready and waiting. A perhaps slightly weary Director alighted from the Gazelle, having five minutes to smooth any ruffled edges before meeting the D Comd 8 Inf Bde, Col M A Benjamin. Escorted by Capt Marion Lauder, SO3 G1 8 Inf Bde, around the headquarters, she met WRAC personnel in 122 Int Sect and HQ 8 Inf Bde & Sig Sqn. After an all too brief visit, the Director was on her way to Clooney Base, luckily just down the road.

After an all ranks lunch at Clooney she was given a short brief by Capt Robin Calder BEM, RMP, explaining the role of the 51 WRAC employed in 176 Pro Coy. This was followed by a visit across the water to Fort George which is a security base in the City of Londonderry, escorted by Lt Kate Blackburn. Several WRAC Provost girls, under command of Sgt Debbie Young, are presently employed there in the Vehicle Intelligence Cell. The visit to Fort George was followed by a trip out to one of the 4 PVCs that employ WRAC searchers, and it gave the Director a good opportunity to see the duties on which the WRAC searchers are employed.

From the PVC the Director drove straight to Ballykelly airfield where a BEAVER was ready and waiting to whisk her to Aldergrove, where she visited 175 Pro Coy Det Aldergrove. The girls meanwhile had been in and out of the NAAFI buying biscuits, most of which they had eaten, having been waiting for DWRAC to arrive since 0900 hrs, due to a change in the programme after the Director's flight was delayed.



Taking a break!

L-R LCpl Hitchens, Cpl Pelling, LCpl Buist at 175 Pro Coy Det Aldergrove. Far right seated Maj W A le Gassick.

The evening activities were just as busy as the day, beginning with drinks in the Sgts' Mess with all but three of the WRAC SNCOs presently serving in the Province. After drinks, the Brigadier was driven to the Officers' Mess Annexe for a Buffet Supper organised by Capt Dianne Pollington. This gave her the opportunity to meet many of the Commanders and Commanding Officers employing WRAC, and 31 regular and TA WRAC officers from around the Province. The evening was enjoyed by all, and certainly the presence of several members of the WRAC Association added to the occasion.

The following day began with a visit to 233 Sig Sqn (NI), where Maj Charles Kemp R Sigs introduced the Director to his new "computerised briefing system". DWRAC was then accompanied by Lt Margaret Roberts to the COMMEN and Telephone Exchange, where she met Sgt Jan Garnett the Exchange Supervisor. She then moved to the conference room to meet the WRAC employed in Admin Tp, W Tp and E Tp. DWRAC's next appointment was at HQNI to meet the CLF, Maj Gen A S Jeapes OBE, MC, before being driven to the Sandhurst Block to see the WRAC accommodation. Here, Lt Dee Allan, Asst Adjt Lisburn Garrison, introduced the Director to WRAC of various trades employed within the garrison. After lunch in the Officers' Mess, with all her regular WRAC officers serving in the Province, DWRAC returned to HQNI to meet the girls employed in FRU, WIU and 12 Int & Sy Coy, accompanied by Maj Richard Gregory-Smith Int Corps, OC 12 Int & Sy Coy, and Lt Jill Turner the Admin Offr. The visit to the Coy also included a trip to Ladas Drive to meet more members of 12 Int & Sy Coy, FRU and SMIU. After a welcome cup of tea, the Director departed for Drumadd Bks, Armagh, where she was met by Capt Evelyn Hogg, OC WRAC 175 Pro Coy. The Director was shown around the Terrorist Recognition Cell and even found herself, momentarily, on video which was played back to her on the spot by Cpl Diane Taylor. After meeting the remaining WRAC employed in Drumadd Bks, DWRAC returned to Lisburn where Maj Wendy le Gassick handed over to Maj Pru Samson, Comd Women UDR to meet the servicewomen of the Ulster Defence Regiment (The Greenfinches).

The evening was spent initially at Carrickfergus with 1st/9th (County Antrim) Battalion where DWRAC presented an Ulster Defence Regiment Medal to a Greenfinch and watched Greenfinches on the indoor .22 range. The Director then left for Antrim where she visited on route, a mobile patrol on VCP duty which included two Greenfinches. On arrival at Antrim, she watched the Greenfinches "search training" and was then given a light supper with both permanent cadre and part-time Greenfinches from the five companies of the Battalion.



DWRAC visits the telephone exchange and meets Sgt Garnett (standing) and LCpl Bullock.

On the last day of the visit the Director visited 3rd (County Down) Battalion and 11th (Craigavon) Battalion UDR where she met a number of permanent cadre servicewomen at their places of work and had lunch with Greenfinch officers and SNCOs representing all nine Ulster Defence Regiment Battalions.

After an all too brief visit, it was time for the Director to make her final quick change back into civilian clothes and race to Aldergrove Airport to catch the 1620 hours shuttle back to London, so drawing to a close Brig Meechie's last visit to the Province as DWRAC.



DWRAC signing the visitors' book at 3rd (County Down) Battalion, Ulster Defence Regiment.

PROJECT WALLACE

JOINT SERVICES EXPEDITION TO NORTHERN SULAWESI

Capt Y Pritchard WRAC

Project Wallace was a major year-long expedition to the Indonesian rain forests of Sulawesi (formerly Celebes). It was organised by the Royal Entomological Society of London to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the society and the granting of the Royal Charter.

Named after Alfred Russell Wallace, the 19th century naturalist who travelled extensively in South East Asia, including Sulawesi, Project Wallace provided the opportunity for scores of scientists from all over the world, with the help of a service support team to study insect life in a little known jungle area, the Dumoga-Bone valley of Northern Sulawesi. The Service Support Team was in three phases and I was lucky enough to be selected, initially as the cook, and subsequently as admin officer on Phase 2. After endless bureaucracy, preparation and repacking, I arrived with 20 other service personnel at the Dumoga National Park at the end of a two day journey by plane and landrover.

Contrary to what I had expected, Base Camp turned out to be quite civilized. I had imagined it to be nothing more than a tented camp with little or no facilities or home comforts. However, Base Camp nestling on the edge of the jungle consisted of a main building containing a dining room, kitchen and some sleeping accommodation. Further accommodation was in picturesque wooden huts, raised on stilts and looking out over hazy jungle-covered mountains. Although there was no hot and cold running water, we had the next best thing, the Tumpah River, clear and cool and running adjacent to our camp. It was tedious collecting water in 20 litre jerricans to supply the daily needs of the camp, but at the end of a humid

tropical day there was no greater feeling of luxury than a long cool soak in the middle of the river.

There is no indigenous population in Sulawesi, no head hunters or cannibals and therefore no man-made jungle tracks. Phase 1 (thank goodness) had already cut a number of trails and had established sub-camps, but it fell to us to maintain them. Although some of the scientists were happy enough to limit their research to the immediate area around Base Camp, there were those who required that we go several days' walk into the jungle, climbing as high as 2000m in the process. This stretched all our available resources and everyone was involved carrying generators (for light traps), insect traps, fuel and rations.

Although my first sortie into the jungle was not as bad as I imagined it would be, I only walked for two hours that first day and was exhausted by the time I crawled into my successfully erected basha. Later I couldn't imagine why I had felt so tired after a two day stroll into the jungle, because, before the month was out, I was carrying 20 litre jerricans of water out to the sub-camps. Although it is impossible to die of thirst in a jungle as almost every vine, tree and palm is a flask of water, it is sometimes a long process extracting it, and scientists, engrossed in their life's work are notoriously impatient. Eventually six day excursions into the jungle, carrying over 40 lbs of re-supply equipment, turned out to be all in a day's work. We would set out at 7am and invariably stop walking by 4 pm. As light was failing we would establish camp, change out of our soaking wet day clothes, de-leech and put on our deliciously warm night attire. If the wood wasn't too saturated with water we would make a fire, save our precious cooking fuel, and cook over the open flames. After six or seven hours almost non-stop walking, sleep came very easily. At first light we would get up, make breakfast, eat, then prevaricate whilst we built up sufficient courage to remove our cosy warm sleeping clothes and put on the soaking wet, freezing cold day clothes. I would never have believed that just north of the equator in a tropical rain forest it would be possible to feel cold. However, once you leave the lower forest, the mist hangs like a mantle over the trees, permeating all but the most waterproof of containers. On the ridges of this Tolkien landscape, where the trees were spaced further apart as we climbed higher, the merest breeze sent icy shivers through our bodies.

At first I was disappointed with the jungle as I had prepared myself for a breathtaking display of colour. If the neat wooden houses on the way to Base Camp, with their fenced off gardens displaying a beautiful array of tropical flora was anything to go by, I was in for a real treat once in the jungle. But for days I didn't see a single colourful bloom, just a mass of green. Then, as I learned to recognize some of the plants growing in the jungle, I no longer saw a "mass" but a great diversity of shapes and sizes, and everywhere I looked I saw something strange and unusual. Rattan vine, full of the most delicious cool water, twisted and turned inextricably along the jungle floor before hauling itself up some neighbouring tree — its almost unlimited powers of growth making it impossible to see where it started or finished. There were beautiful palms with perfect, smooth, cylindrical stems crowned with complete circles of fan-shaped leaves four to six feet across. These made excellent water catchment devices as well as umbrellas against the inevitable torrential mid-afternoon downpour. Perhaps most spectacular of all were the immense buttress trees, dwarfing everything around them. The devastation when one of these ancient jungle cathedrals fell was enormous and for several days afterwards our passage through the jungle would be severely hampered.

If I was disappointed initially by the lack of colourful flora, the butterflies more than made up for this apparent deficiency. Large semi-transparent Wood Nymph butterflies

would fly lazily in front of me along the jungle track, while at the edge of the Tumpah river the Androcles Swallowtails swooped haphazardly amongst the undergrowth, their long tails fluttering like streamers. On the damp beaches adjacent to the river swarmed blue-banded Swallowtails, while spectacular Birdwing butterflies measuring seven or eight inches across, beautifully marked with satiny-yellow on a jet-black background sailed above them. But the most breathtaking and fabulous of all the scores of butterflies I saw was the enormous and exquisite Blumei Swallowtail. With iridescent-green and peacock-blue stripes on a black background, it was without a doubt the most beautiful creature I have ever seen.

Back at Base Camp, you cannot imagine how good the first ice cold beer tasted, or how refreshing the water of the Tumpah river felt, washing away the dirt, sweat and weariness of several days in the jungle. The day after a strenuous hike into the forest was always declared a day of rest, when it was possible to recuperate and replenish the tan which the dark humid jungle had completely sweated away. On these rest days it was also time to catch up with what the scientists were doing. We asked how the study of the genitalia of the mosquito was progressing. We enquired politely if the dung was attracting interesting beetles of the same name; whether or not a new species of grasshopper had provided a clue to the complexities of evolution, and whether the previous night's light trapping had yielded any hitherto unnamed moths. Aquatic invertebrates, rice pests, blow flies, ecological studies of bees, immature black-flies, cran flies and the more incomprehensible Coleoptera, Diptera, Odonata and Lepidoptera, proved that nothing was considered too small or too insignificant to be worthy of scientific study. My fear of the genus "creepy crawly" disappeared as I became almost as enthusiastic and involved as the scientists themselves.

Sometimes I had to leave Base Camp and the jungle to collect fresh rations from Kotamabagu, the nearest large town one and a half hours away by landrover. Delicious paw-paw, mango and pineapple made a welcome addition to a four month diet of compo. Despite the monotony of menus A to F, I was only once tempted by the local delicacy, fricasse of bat with potatoes and rice, washed down with Sangier (palm wine), tapped from especially cultivated palms.

As Admin Officer I had to visit the provincial capital of North Sulawesi, Manado, five hours away by landrover, and deal with the administration involved in transporting scientists to and from Base Camp. It was no easy task as Indonesian bureaucracy, protocol and time wasting are developed to a fine art. Despite their bungling bureaucracy the inhabitants of Minahasa (as this part of Sulawesi is called) were a friendly, helpful people, though very inquisitive. When we visited the local beach the inhabitants of all the villages would turn out to watch the "orang putih" (white man) jump into the water for no discernible good reason.

Whilst Phase 2 were in Sulawesi, the BBC arrived to film for their "Wildlife On One" series, adopting I thought some very dubious filming techniques. As a result of this, Natural History programmes will never be the same to me again. The rare and very shy anoa, or pig deer, filmed quietly grazing at the edge of the forest was in fact a tame animal which belonged to the Park Headquarters Staff. A close look at the television screen reveals the mark of the collar on its neck. The deadly pit viper, filmed skulking in the undergrowth ready to strike at the ankles of people walking within a couple of feet of it, was the captive of the camp doctor and had inadvertently been left in its container in the sun that morning. It nearly died, and we had to pour water on it to make it look alert and ferocious. But the most fortunate of animals to be filmed by the BBC had to be the bats. Tubenosed, Striped-faced and Naked-backed bats, the last with

their most unusual green fur, have much to be thankful for as they were spectacularly rescued from the local village market where they would have been roasted for Sunday lunch. They were then artistically arranged in their "natural habitat" (an Army tent decorated with jungle foliage) before being filmed. The bats gave a brilliant performance before being released and given another chance to live.

The expedition by all accounts was a resounding success. Many species of insects new to science have been discovered and much beneficial work has been done in the fields of agriculture, medicine and forestry. I consider myself extremely fortunate to have been part of the service support team for Project Wallace, arguably the most important entomological expedition of this century.



Enjoying life in the jungle.

APPEAL FROM THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

You may be one of the millions who served in Her Majesty's Forces in the last war, and, if so, you are in a minority of some 30% of the population. In fact, although the war ended more than 40 years ago and most of us have memories of it, be it through war service, National Service, or just the odd war film on television, it is quite surprising to think that nobody under 60 now could have served throughout the Second World War.

This inevitably leads more and more people to ask what then does the Legion do today except, perhaps, pay homage to "our glorious dead" of two world wars. What can be its financial needs? The fact is that the Legion not only honours the dead in the best way possible — by caring for the living, but also meets more demands on its services than ever before.

Since the end of the Second World War, there have been 70 so-called "peacetime" conflicts including the Falklands and today's tragedy in Northern Ireland. Disabled young men need work, the unemployed need financial assistance, many veterans need nursing care and attention in our residential and convalescent homes — indeed, literally thousands of ex-Service men and women, as well as their dependants, need help in one way or another.

All this work is financed mainly by the proceeds from our annual Poppy Appeal and only 6p in every £1 spent goes towards administration, including fund-raising. May I, through the courtesy of your columns, remind your readers that time can be as valuable to us as money — time spent in collecting it. We desperately need more collectors to assist our hard-pressed army of volunteers.

Anybody who would like to become a collector this year has only to dial 100 and ask their telephone operator for 'Freefone Poppy Appeal'. They will immediately be connected with the Poppy Appeal Headquarters who will make arrangements for their local Poppy Organiser to contact them. There is no charge made for this telephone call. Please help now, whilst the thought is fresh in your mind.



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A Tour of Brunei with the Gurkhas

Captain Rachel O'Meara WRAC

I had always thought my chances of getting a more exotic posting than Rheindahlen were probably fairly slim. It just shows how wrong you can be! Out of the blue came a posting to the resident Gurkha Battalion in Brunei, at that time 6th Gurkhas. The CO was also the Garrison Commander and the workload going through the Adjutant's office was very heavy, particularly with the abnormal number of VIP visitors who go to Brunei. (There were four Royal visits in my first year). Normally such visitors would stay for half a day in most units, but due to air flights they would have to stay for some days in Brunei. So a WRAC Assistant Adjutant was requested, and in May 1984, I arrived.

The Islamic state of Brunei, situated in north Borneo and sandwiched between the Malaysian States of Sabah and Sarawak, gained Independence from Britain in January 1984. However, at Brunei's request the Gurkha Battalion and small garrison of support troops remained. The country is fairly small, with fewer than a quarter of a million inhabitants. It is mostly covered in jungle, although the coastal strip is well cultivated. It is one of the world's richest countries due to its oil and natural gas, and the majority of the population are Malays.

Although I had lived in the Far East as a child, I was still expecting culture shock. And I got it. Firstly, there was Brunei itself; semi sophisticated with its fast cars but few roads, its smart houses along with its kampons, and all the confused products of a third world country which suddenly over half a century finds itself rich beyond its wildest expectations. Secondly, there was the difference with working with Gurkhas. Many had never really come across a woman in the

Army, let alone be told that she was the latest addition to their British officer complement. But having had the facts explained to them at roll call, it was accepted as normal. So much so, in fact, that I was addressed on the whole as "Sahib", which means officer as well as sir. I decided not to confuse the issue, and left it at that. My job was interesting and busy, with hardly a day passing without learning more about the traditions and systems of the Gurkhas, which vary further from Regiment to Regiment. In Brunei, like Hong Kong, many of the men are allowed to have their wives and families with them, which gave me an even better insight into the Gurkha culture.

In November 1984, when I had been in Brunei for six months, the resident battalion changed and 6th Gurkhas were replaced by 1/2 Goorkhas. It was sad to see the now familiar faces go, but I found 1/2 GR equally charming. We had to go through the incredulity of a "Lady Sahib" all over again, but it was no great problem — except for one exhausting incident. In conversation with some Gurkhas shortly after the new Battalion's arrival, one of them was still a touch confused by my existence. I explained simply that the Battalion now had a LADY officer. He looked at me in astonished fashion, which took me aback slightly as I thought we had at least established these basic facts, plus I was in uniform. "Who is the Officer?" he demanded. Well, I thought, I might not be Raquel Welch, but I could normally be positively identified by most people as a female. "I am!" I replied. He looked even more surprised. There was really nothing more for me to say, so I carried on my way, and thought I'd better take a jolly hard look in the mirror. It was not until a day or so later that I heard from his OC that the Gurkha had thought that I'd declared myself a "LAZY Officer"!

With the new battalion, I was also made Intelligence Officer, which gave me the opportunity to go on battalion exercises in the jungle, sometimes for up to ten days, when I would also carry out watchkeeping duties. They say that

horses sweat, gentlemen perspire and ladies glow. I think I must have been a horse in a previous life! At times we would not be located near a river for a week, so washing was a luxury. I really enjoyed these exercises though, and learnt quite a lot.



Battalion Jungle Exercise.



Inter-Company competition. First prize is on the left!

One of the highlights of my tour was a visit to Nepal. I was fortunate enough to go to both the East, Kathmandu and then on a short trek from Pokhara in the West. All British officers with Gurkha units normally go on an official trek at some time in their service. This involves walking over the foothills of the Himalayas investigating various applications for grants from the Gurkha Welfare Trust. This could be anything from money to repair irrigation works, to a student grant for an ex-Gurkha soldier's child. This is what I was doing too. There are hardly any roads in the country, so no vehicles can be used in the hills. Everything is carried by the people themselves, or occasionally by mules. It was a fascinating visit, which also put a lot of things into perspective when trying to understand the ways of the Gurkhas.

As regards to my own social life, I was fortunate that Brunei Shell Petroleum is based at the same end of the state as the British Garrison, and their Panaga Club provided all the sports and activities one could have time for, ranging from netball to amateur dramatics to photography. There are several

thousand ex-patriates involved in the oil business there, which stopped it from being a lonely tour. On free weekends, I would often go exploring the jungle with some others, or visit neighbouring Sabah and Sarawak.

I sadly left Brunei in December 1985. I'd even got used to the daily early morning PT, and had cracked what colour sports shirt I was supposed to wear on different days of the week (Gurkhas regimentation being what it is). I handed over to another WRAC subaltern, and am now posted as SO3 to Headquarters Brigade of Gurkhas in Hong Kong for six months before going to RMAS. It is very interesting to see the Brigade of Gurkhas from another view point. I will always be impressed by the professionalism of the Gurkhas, which along with their agreeable dispositions, lively sense of humour and kindness, makes me feel extremely fortunate to have served with these most pleasant of people.

AND HER SUCCESSOR

BRUNEI

Lt Joanne Pevalin WRAC

I wonder how many other people thought the same as I did when I first heard I was posted to Brunei – I knew I'd heard of the place and I knew it was roughly east of UK, but where exactly, and who else is there?

Needless to say I soon found out and had 6 months to contemplate the prospect of a posting as Asst Adjt 1/2 GR. Having spent my first 18 months of commissioning within WRAC training organisations, I had a distinct feeling my next job would be a change from the last. I've since discovered that was probably my greatest understatement of 1985! Working with the Gurkhas in Brunei is like being in another army!

Firstly Brunei itself. Brunei was once a British Protectorate. However, since 1984 it has been a fully independent Sovereign State under its Sultan – Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah. It is a small State of just over 2,000 square miles, the vast majority of which is covered in primary and secondary jungle. The State's population of some 22,000 people live mainly along the coastal strip which varies between 1-3 Km wide. The capital of Negara Brunei Darussalam, as it is officially named, is Bandar Seri Begawan which is the home of the majority of the State's population, and indeed the only other WRAC personnel in the State. There are presently 4 WRAC personnel (2 officers and 2 SNCOs) on loan service with the Royal Brunei Armed Forces, although this is shortly to be cut. They are based just outside Bandar Seri Begawan, some 75 miles away from the Gurkha Battalion.

The British Garrison, which incorporates the Gurkha Battalion, is located in Seria, which is the focal point of oil production within Brunei. A common sight here are the famous "Nodding Donkeys". These machines pump oil from the underground reserves, which have been productive since 1927. At this end of the State therefore, there is a large and well established European community working for Brunei Shell Petroleum.

The Garrison is split into two, the Gurkha Battalion forming a large part and the remainder being administrative support, including AAC, Signals, Postal and Courier Service, Workshops, Hospital, Schools and Movement Control. Also located at Seria is TTB (Training Team Brunei); the old Jungle Warfare School from Malaya. The Garrison in total is commanded by the Commandant of the resident Gurkha Battalion.

So where does a WRAC subaltern fit into all this? As

Asst Adjt to the resident Gurkha Battalion in Brunei, my main role and indeed the justification for the post, is Visit Coordination. There are up to 300 visits to the British Garrison per year, some of which (though not all, fortunately!) require programmes — for some reason people seem keen to come on "familiarisation" visits to Brunei. I wonder why? When I'm not scribbling away at visit programmes, wondering if the helicopter will turn up or whether the visitor is keeping to his programme, you'll find me being the IO, which is basically looking after the map store when not on exercise, coordinating the Battalion Photography and public relations and just occasionally assisting the Adjutant!

Most of the visits which I deal with are for Lt Cols and above, but the visit this year that probably caused the most turned heads was the visit of Brigadier Meechie DWRAC. It was enough of a shock to the Gurkha system receiving a female subaltern, so I was intrigued to await the reaction to a female Brigadier! Explaining the visit to some of the Queen's Gurkha Officers went well until I said "she". "She?" came the reply with a confused look! The Brigadier only made a short visit to this end of the State and was actually very well received by all.

The Battalion's tour in Brunei is for 2 years and thus their training and exercise programme is split into two distinct halves. The first year is concentrated jungle warfare training, getting the Battalion used to the unique terrain and training environments, and the second year is a wind down of jungle training and a build up to training for their next posting. In the case of 1/2 GR this means the second half of 1986 sees the last jungle based exercises and the start of Internal Security and Limited Warfare training in preparation for their move to Hong Kong in November 1986.

Like the Garrison support elements I am fortunate to stay in Brunei while the Battalion changes. Having said goodbye to 1/2 GR at the airport, we shall be welcoming 1/7 GR to Brunei for the start of their two year tour.

Working with the Gurkhas is, as I have already said, a unique experience. The way of life and the atmosphere surrounding the Gurkhas is something completely removed from life in the average British army unit either in UK or BAOR.

Nepalese culture still plays an important part in the life of every Gurkha soldier despite the vastly different lifestyle that he lives here in Brunei, Hong Kong or the UK. I must admit that even after six months with the Gurkhas I still am not completely "au fait" with Nepali traditions or lifestyle. From what I have seen though, it is fascinating. Probably the most enjoyable evening I have spent here was an evening, during a long jungle exercise, when it was decided the Battalion would let their hair down for a few hours. So in a clearing in the jungle, lights were strung up in the trees and we held a "nautch". Drums, mess tins, flutes and tin cans were produced from nowhere to make some really very tuneful music, and the Gurkhas burst into song and dance. The dancing was quite a challenge to us young British officers as it is a cross between Indian dancing and Russian Cossack dancing — quite testing on the thighs and knees! The beauty of this is the simple and effective way in which the soldiers can entertain themselves; again something I cannot imagine happening in the average British Infantry Battalion.

There are obviously disadvantages, such as the constant necessary explanations of who I am, to new soldiers who have never met a female officer before and cannot truly comprehend what I am saying — rumours that the Assistant Adjutant is really a WRVS, a nurse, and worst of all the Adjutant's wife are rife!

As to Brunei itself. It is a small State with little to offer in the form of ready made entertainment, but it is an

opportunity to travel and see the rest of Malaysia and indeed, if one can spare the cash, the rest of SE Asia. And that is an opportunity that is becoming more and more rare every year as postings abroad are cut. So, if you're the lucky subaltern to be offered this post when my time is up, don't hesitate if you're interested in a completely new and challenging way of life, are keen to travel and, most of all, enjoy the sun!



DWRAC being briefed by OC B Coy on a future jungle exercise.



Helicopters are essential for effective jungle operations.

VACANCY FOR AN ARMY CAREERS OFFICER ON THE ARMY RECRUITING STAFF

The appointment of Army Careers Officer-in-Charge, will become available on 2nd May 1987 at the Army Careers Information Office, 152 High Street, Below Bar, Southampton. The successful applicant will be required to report for duty two weeks prior to that date, to commence takeover of the duties. The post is in the grade of ACO2, equating to RO2. Conditions of service are laid down in AGA1, Issue No 62, Volume 2, Chapter 41. MOD (DAR2c) will supply more details if required.

Applications for the above appointment are invited from colonels, lieutenant colonels and majors (including Womens Services) and should be submitted on Annex C to the above AGA1 direct to The Ministry of Defence (DAR2c), Room 1112, Empress State Building, Lillie Road, London SW6 1TR. Closing date for applications is 1st October 1986.

Applicants should satisfy the conditions in paragraph 41.008a of the AGA1. The successful applicant, if not already retired will be required to retire on taking up the appointment. Records of service are required and applicants should give previous appointments held, qualifications, local connections or experience which would be of value in connection with the appointment.



MUSEUM APPEAL

A MESSAGE FROM

BRIGADIER ANNE FIELD CB

DEPUTY CONTROLLER COMMANDANT

I welcome the opportunity to bring to the attention of all readers of *LIONESS* the fact that the Trustees of the WRAC Museum have launched an appeal to raise £40,000 for the refurbishment and renovation of the Corps Museum at Guildford.

The Museum will tell the story of our predecessors' pioneer work in World War I to establish that women had a role to play in support of the Army.

The formation of the ATS in 1938 at the very outbreak of World War II showed that the lesson had been learned and by the end of the war over a quarter of a million women were in the ATS. This service was recognised by the formation of the WRAC in 1949 as an integrated and full part of the Regular and Territorial Army.

We can all be proud of the part that our Corps has played since 1917 and this story should be presented with imagination and style to the new generation of recruits as well as the general public and past members of the Corps.

I hope that you feel that you can help to make this project a reality and will subscribe to the appeal. Details of the ways you can contribute to the appeal are shown on the forms opposite.

Names of contributors will be recorded in the Contributions Book which will be kept in the Museum.

Anne Field

Brigadier

WRAC Museum Redevelopment Appeal

CORPS HEADQUARTERS W.R.A.C.
QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK,
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What can you do to help?

You can help the redevelopment of the new WRAC Museum by

- Making a one time donation using Form A
- Making a donation by Deed of Covenant over four years.** The Museum can claim back Income Tax at basic rate so every £1 which you donate becomes £1.41. (Use Form B).
- Giving items for use in the Museum displays.

Form A

I enclose a donation of £ p towards the WRAC Museum Appeal

Name.

Address.

.....Post CodeDate

Form B

To your BankBranch

Address.Post Code

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BANKERS ORDER

Please pay to the Women's Royal Army Corps Association (incorporating Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps and Auxiliary Territorial Service Comrades Association) Account No 60633646, National Westminster Bank PLC, 4 Worplesdon Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH now the sum of £ p (in words) and thereafter a similar sum annually for the subsequent three years commencing on the first day of May 1987 being my annual subscription to the WRAC Museum Fund.

SignedDate

Name & Address

.....Post Code

DEED OF COVENANT – WRAC MUSEUM FUND

I (Rank/Title)

(Full name in capital letters)

of

(Full address in capital letters)

undertake to pay The Women's Royal Army Corps Association for a period of four years or during my lifetime whichever period is shorter, commencing on the † day of (month) 1986 a sum as will, after deduction of Income Tax at the basic rate, amount to £ (the actual amount that you want to pay).

SignatureDate

In the presence of (Signature of Witness)

Address of Witness

† This date must NOT be earlier than the date of signature.

PLEASE RETURN WHOLE FORM TO CORPS HQ, NOT YOUR BANK

Exercise Winter Warrior

27 Feb — 13 Mar 86

Lt F J Boxell WRAC

Exercise Winter Warrior started 24 hours earlier than most of us had expected due to a mix-up in departure dates. Most of us thought we were leaving on Friday afternoon so packing was left until Thursday evening. It was a shock to receive a phone call on Thursday morning informing us that we were leaving that afternoon! It was then a case of sprinting back to accommodation, throwing items into suitcases and running for trains in order to reach Regents Park in time. Thanks to the generosity of their Commanding Officer, Cpl Wright and LCpl Palser were chauffeur-driven in his staff car all the way from Leconfield to Dover where they joined the rest of the party. The main party of 15 servicewomen, 46 servicemen and 3 officers set off from Regents Park and arrived at Dover. We were then informed that the ferry was delayed until 0100 hrs. It was turning into a very long day!

After a rough voyage, a rather dishevelled group disembarked at a deserted Oostende at 0600 hrs. Nobody was there to meet us but eventually a luxurious coach with frozen toilet arrived to take us to Wertach. At the end of the twelve hour journey we were given a hot meal, introduced to our instructors and issued our langlaufing kit ready for an early start the next day.

The morning brought our first clear view of Wertach and a manure heap outside the window. Altogether we had three days langlaufing, culminating in a 5 km race.

The downhill skiing started in earnest on the Monday and continued for eight glorious days. The weather was sunny and warm and the skiing conditions were on the whole marvellous. Perhaps the most memorable day for the top group was being taken to Fellhorn for the last day's skiing the German side of the mountain followed by a 4 km run down into Austria for lunch before catching the cable car back up into Germany.

The whole group passed their bronze proficiency test in langlaufing and down-hill skiing — mainly due to the instruction received. Several of the group were recommended to take their silver proficiency test but due to the lack of an official tester were unable to do so. There was even the opportunity for a slalom race — an event that nobody had previously tried. There was plenty going on socially too, whether it was a trip to the one and only disco in Wertach or one of the other bars or a visit to the nearby swimming pool, sauna and outdoor jacuzzi. There was even time for a day's shopping combined with a visit to the castle where "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" was filmed. Unfortunately all good things come to an end and all too soon it was time to return to England after our fortnight's break.



Winter Warriors!

THE WRAC IN HONG KONG

LCpl K Baxter WRAC

On reading the latest edition of "Lioness", I thought it about time that mention should be made about all the hard working WRAC serving in Hong Kong. The WRAC seem to be growing in strength and at the moment there are over 70 servicewomen and officers in the Territory.

The majority of WRAC in Hong Kong are Data Telegraphists who are attached to 247 Gurkha Signals Squadron, based at HMS TAMAR. The minority consists of RMPs, Military Accountants, Clerks, Admin Assistants, TE Technicians, Postal and Courier, Supply Specialists and last but not least our PTI who keeps, or tries to keep, us in trim.

There are a wide variety of sports and recreational activities which go on throughout the year, and it plays a big part in our lives. Recently the WRAC hockey team, known as "Cats" were narrowly beaten in the final of the local hockey league by one of the strong civilian teams.

The New Year brought in many events. Only recently, three lucky girls went off to Singapore for a 6-week exchange with the New Zealand Forces, and in September we have a detachment of WRAC going to Brunei for 2 weeks on Ex Jungle Maiden, a jungle survival course.

February saw the visit of HRH The Duchess of Kent and also Brigadier Meechie, DWRAC. The WRAC held a sports night in the presence of DWRAC, who also kindly presented the medals. The visit of HRH The Duchess of Kent obviously meant bringing our No 2's out of cold storage. HRH was in Hong Kong to open the Hong Kong Arts Festival, but she met members of the WRAC and afterwards was entertained to a lunch which was attended by a number of WRAC.

Ex Distant Venture VII was an adventurous training off-shore sailing expedition which lasted from January 8th - April 23rd. The expedition included members from the WRAC and was held to give service personnel from British Forces Hong Kong deepwater sailing experience under challenging conditions. The nature of the activity was to sail from Hong Kong to the Philippines on the BFHK Yacht "East Wind of the Orient" and to participate in the South China Sea Race. The voyage was broken down into 7 legs, each leg lasting 2 weeks with a crew changeover. Everyone who took part returned not only with a sun tan but also with vivid memories of their long and wonderful journey which covered many nautical miles.

April brought the British Forces Athletic Championships which was held in the New Territories. The ladies' individual events were held with mixed feelings, as no more than eight took part. The competition proved very beneficial to our PTI, Cpl Relf, who entered events to make up the numbers and took six 1st place titles.

Also in April, the WRAC in conjunction with the WRNS held a Fund Raising month, appropriately named "Ex Spirit of Adventure". The aim was to raise as much money as possible for the WRAC/WRNS Benevolent Fund and the UK Kidney Research Fund. The WRNS, though only small in numbers, had a horse racing night and managed to raise just over HK\$2,000. The WRAC, who outnumber the WRNS considerably, held several activities which raised quite a substantial amount. The Fun Run attracted many people from all over HMS TAMAR, not only military but civilian personnel as well. To run a mile and drink a can of beer afterwards — what better way to spend your lunch break?

The girls in 247 Gurkha Signal Squadron held a Fun Bowling night and included in the ticket price was a fish and chip supper and a raffle draw. This event attracted many people and raised \$1104.00.

Our last event was a joint effort by both the WRAC and WRNS. It was a 24 hour sponsored trampoline bounce and was

started off by Comd WRAC, Major Trehern at 6 pm on May 2nd. Each group of four bounded for an hour, with sleep breaks in between, and music and refreshments were on hand. The TV cameras and journalists were also invited along to capture this special event which raised \$12,889.00.

After all our hard efforts, a total of HK\$20,201 was raised, which at the current rate of exchange is roughly £1,726. Well done to everyone who participated and to our CSM, WO2 Dennis who thought up the idea in the first place.



Capt Chantal Bailey at the start of the trampolining marathon.

49 FD REGT RA

Pte Sharon Donnachie WRAC

During the final week of a class 3 Clerical Course held at Blackdown in Surrey last Summer, I was informed that I would be joining 49th Field Regiment. I naturally assumed that the unit already had WRAC. However, on arrival at Topcliffe the Assistant Adjutant, Lt Lush left me in no doubt whatsoever that the five WRAC being posted in that day were the first women on the camp for several years.

The next few days were rather hectic. Everyone made us feel really welcome and helped us fit into the strange new environment. We were given our respective jobs and fairly quickly we settled into a daily routine.

We were encouraged to participate in the social and sporting activities of the Regiment and by the end of our first week in station we found ourselves parachuting from a height of 2,500 feet with several members of the wives club, who were jumping for charity. We were also given the opportunity to train with any of the Regimental sports teams, excepting of course football and rugby.

One of the main disadvantages of living in Topcliffe was that none of us could drive. However, the Regiment came up with the perfect answer, and we all began taking driving lessons in military landrovers. Unfortunately due to various exercises and bad weather conditions the course was not completed, but we do hope to resume the lessons in the near future.

49 Fd Regt have successfully avoided any possible difficulties that could have arisen with so few girls on station, and so far all the WRAC have enjoyed our time with them.

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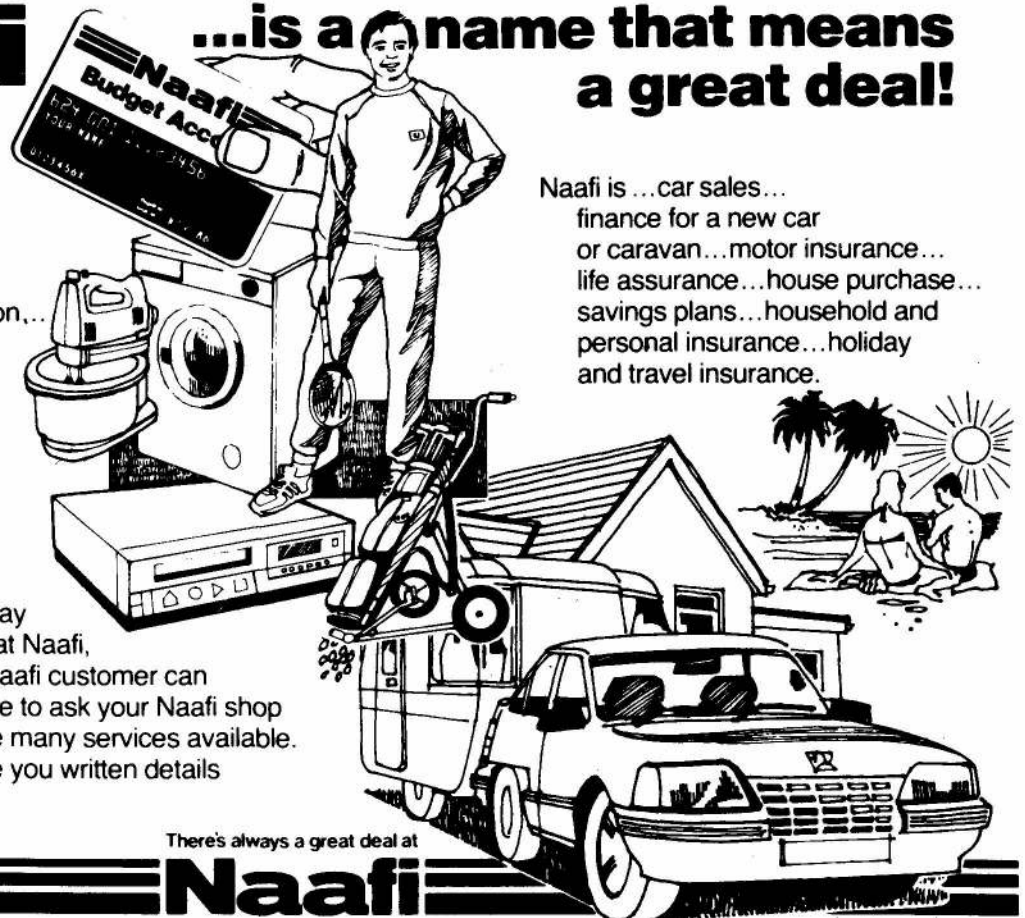
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20 SQUADRON RCT

BAOR RCT OFFSHORE REGATTA

Ex Kielwin

SURVIVAL IN THE ARCTIC

When offered the opportunity to spend three weeks in Norway on winter exercises, Lt Christine Knipe jumped at the chance. She is based at Bulford as Assistant Adjutant of HQ Logistic Support Battalion and joined up with her battalion in the Voss area of Norway where it was taking part in exercise "Hardfall" with the British contingent of the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force. She was the only serving female in the Voss area, but was expected to qualify in Arctic survival like every other member of the force.

The survival course which lasts for four days and nights meant that Lt Knipe, after a long ski march into the mountains carrying a fifty pound pack, had to live out on the ice and snow covered slopes with the twenty men in her group. After two days living in small tents the group dug two snow caves in which they and Christine lived for a further two days. The snow caves have two small entrances and a wide snow ledge on which the occupants sleep in their arctic sleeping bag. Once inside, the entrances are closed with blocks of snow leaving only a small gap for air to circulate through the chamber. Candles are then lit which give out enough heat to keep the inside temperature just above freezing and cooking can take place using small burners.

Christine's most vivid memories of the exercise were the night ski marches with glimpses of the Northern nights, digging the snow caves and applying skin cream and basic make-up during her hours of night watch by the light from the spluttering candles.



All ready for the long ski march.

The BAOR RCT Regatta took place between 20-25 May 1986, and it was decided with the permission of Major P W Harper RCT the OC, that 20 Sqn would enter a team, the first UK team to do so.

The following is an account of what turned out to be a very demanding trip.

At 1900 hrs on May 17th we all met outside the Workshops in Regents Park Bks, Albany Street, London, the we being as follows: Skipper WO1 (ASM) Doug Ebbatson REME, Scurvy dogs Sgt Kaz Campbell WRAC, Cpl Taff MacLeod REME, Dvr Alan King RCT, Pte Chris Booth WRAC. This was the start of our week's sailing and everyone was happy, smiling and full of life.

The drive to Dover was uneventful, but being half RCT and half REME we were, of course, two hours early for the boat. We had a good crossing to Zeebrugge, and the drive to Minden was in bright sunshine all the way.

Monday was a German bank holiday so we decided to do some sightseeing. Young Chris Booth had never been to Germany before, so we all went on a river cruise down the Weser and then on a leisurely stroll around the Minden town centre. Chris couldn't get over how clean everywhere was.

On Tuesday at 0630 we all poured ourselves into the mini-bus for the 5 hour drive to Kiel and took over our yacht, a Contessa 28 named Petrel. The programme for the Regatta laid down timings, 1400 hrs Skippers briefing, 1600-1800 hrs shake down sail in KIERLER Fjord. However when the Skipper returned from the briefing he said we were all sailing to FAABORG (DENMARK) tonight.

Slipping the British Kiel Yacht Club at about 1600 hrs, the first of many mishaps occurred. Taff, thinking his sunglasses might fall off whilst he was pulling the warps took them off and put them in his shirt pocket; they promptly jumped out and fell in the water. As we left Kiel the girls were dressed in T-shirts and shorts and the men stripped to the waist. This didn't last long; once out into open water the wind got up and the temperature dropped, so it was on with oilskins. After a tricky night approach to Faaborg, with Taff doing the navigation, we finally tied up, sorted the yacht out, had a meal and got our heads down about 0130 hrs. Quite an eventful trip but it was a good shake down for the crew, as at one point only the Skipper and Kaz (who had never sailed before) were fit to do anything.

At 0700 hrs on Wednesday the duty officer woke us up, and we all had a shower and breakfast. We think Taff has flu, and Chris is still suffering from sea sickness.

Race 1 started at 1100 hrs. This was a figure of eight around the islands of Avernako and Lyo with the start and finish outside Faaborg Harbour. The wind was very light and we crossed the line last (12th). However we soon got back into the race after some slick tacking, in overcast weather. We had lunch about 1500 hrs and the sun even tried to come out. We finally crossed the finish line 11th but got 10th place because a yacht went aground.

Thursday started cold and damp with a fairly brisk wind, so oilskins and wellies were the order of the day. The Skipper decided to use a No 2 Genoa and a reef in the main sail to try to relieve the crew of sea sickness. There were two races, the first with a start time of 1100 hrs around Lyo and then back into Faaborg for lunch, and the second around Avernako - Billes Grunde and finish at Aeroskobing. As we motored out for the first race we pulled up the main sail and the reefing swan necks fell off. With only minutes to go before the start we had a slight panic tying down the first reef in the main.

However after a disastrous start we finally finished the race 11th.

The second race started at 14.30 hrs. This time we had a better start with all twelve yachts in a tight bunch, with all the crew feeling fit now there was some exhilarating sailing. However we rounded the last mark of the course in 12th place, but with skill and luck we pulled firstly back to 11th and then we had a great race with the 10th yacht and just pipped him on the line to take 10th place.

After a meal we decided that we had not sampled the local night life so we went for a stroll to the nearest pub which all the other crews had descended upon. This proved to be most rewarding, as a guitarist appeared and we all had a good sing song.

Friday dawned very grey in both weather and feelings. Nobody seemed interested in breakfast. It was Race 4 today, and the start was at 1130 hrs five miles away, so we slipped Aeroskobing at 1000 hrs. It was raining with a force 3 wind.

We got to the start line and started tacking up and down. We heard the 10 minute horn and it was time to try and sort out our start position. As the 5 minute horn went we were up with the Fleet in a good position to start. With one minute to go we came about and approached the line. We then had to put in a quick tack to avoid a yacht in front of us, so we tacked again and finally crossed the line, as usual, last. This is when the skipper informed the crew that we had not finished but had only just started!

After ducking and diving amongst the other yachts we finally broke out into clean wind and with some good tacking we rounded the windward mark in seventh place having overtaken five yachts. We then went off on a run with twin headsails, and after about a mile the wind dropped and it suddenly became a drifting match. The wind came and went in very short, but very good bursts. The course was shortened and as a result we had an exciting finish just pipping another yacht by five seconds to finish in 6th place, our best effort yet.

Well it was Race 5 on Saturday back to Kiel starting at 1115. We had another bad start, but the race to the windward mark was not too bad. We were well placed if we could get around it, but luck was not with us and we had to throw in a tack putting us on port and had to avoid a couple of yachts, finally rounding it last — again! We then had a long reach to the next mark of the course, pulling up to 7th place, which pleased us immensely. We noticed that the No 2 Genoa, which was tied to the guard rails, was now dragging in the sea. It was a mad dash to get the sail out of the water. The yacht suddenly lurched to one side and Kaz almost made us practise man overboard drill. Taff, being the gentleman he is, went to her rescue (because she was the chef?) and got her leg out of the water. We then got back to concentrating on the race and as we rounded the next mark we had made up another place and we were now 6th.

All we had left of the race now was a beat to the next mark and then a reach to the finish. We were full of hopes that we might even improve on our present position. However this was not to be. We couldn't point high enough on a starboard tack, and lost three places on the beat reaching the finish in 9th place. We tied up at the BKYC about 1900 hrs having had an exciting day of mixed fortunes.

We were placed 10th overall in the regatta, a position which pleased us as the crew had not sailed together before and one had never sailed at all. The two girls certainly brightened up the Fleet as they were the only girls sailing. Major Mike Nuttall gave his address to all crews, and mentioned that it was nice to see 20 Sqn RCT out from UK.

After the prizegiving we headed back to Minden for the night and then on to Zeebrugge and UK, arriving at Regents Park Bks at 0930 hrs on May 27th. The skipper would like to thank his crew for all their efforts during what turned out to be an excellent ten days. The full crew would like to thank 4 Armd Div Tpt Regt RCT for their kind hospitality and to the staff at BKYC for all their efforts.

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SPORT

ARMY (WRAC) HOCKEY CYPRUS

After a very successful hockey season with the WRAC winning all their pre-Inter-Service matches, and then going on to win the Inter-Service match against the WRAF, the following Servicewomen were presented with their Army colours for the 1985/86 season: Sgt M Gillespie, Cpl E Moth, LCpl D Williams, LCpl S Buckle, LCpl J Breen. Sgt Gillespie is stationed at HQ LFC, and the other four NCOs are serving with 9 Sig Regt.



Sgt Maxine Gillespie, Team Captain and organiser, receiving her colours from Col A J Swan, Deputy Chief of Staff.

NETBALL

The Army Netball Team were the successful team at the Inter-Service Netball Competition this year. The tournament was held at RAF West Drayton and the Army retained the cup for the third consecutive year.

All the matches were very close and the spirit and standard of play was high throughout. Congratulations to all the squad who trained hard and supported magnificently.

Next season the Army are hosting the Inter-service competition which is to be held in Aldershot on 23 and 24 March. It would be nice to see as many supporters as possible to cheer on the Army team as it makes such a difference to the team's morale.



Sgt Lesley Davison, Captain of the Army team, receiving the cup from Air Cdre Shirley Jones, DWRAF.

SKIING 1986

This year has seen some new departures for Army Ladies Skiing in both the Nordic and Alpine disciplines. For the first time the Army Ladies Alpine Team competed alongside the men at both the Army Meeting in Fulpmes and at the Inter-Services in Cormayeur. The Army Ladies Nordic Team was formed for the first time and competed fully at the British National Army and BAOR Championships at Zwiesel in their own specific race programme, which included a Ladies Inter-Service Match.

The Army Ladies Alpine Ski Squad set off from UK on 17 Jan 86 in two very overloaded "Sherpas". They made slow progress through Germany but in spite of a number of hair-raising incidents they arrived safely in Fulpmes the next night. After a day's acclimatization — relaxing in the swimming pool and generally establishing the female service presence in Fulpmes — the team started training. The trainer had all the right credentials (blonde, blue eyes and 6' 2") but nevertheless he was relentless with his training schedule, teaching the team to ski on their edges and on one ski, not to mention the alternative techniques for negotiating poles — through, over and round!

Twelve of the squad of 20 were put forward to compete in the Army Championships. Training and race practice paid off and during the race period performances improved. The top Ladies Team times compared very favourably with the men. Once the serious events were over, the final day was a fun day with a Team Parallel Slalom, including a large jump and the Lady Hamilton Vase Toboggan race. The Ladies Team in the Parallel Slalom fought its way, through a deluge of snowballs, to the quarter finals — surprising some of the men. In the Toboggan Race, too, the girls put up a spirited performance resulting in a multiple pile up at bend 2! Those members of the Team who were injured were undeterred and headed for the top again.

Capt Caddick (WSLO Preston) took all the Ladies prizes (Slalom, Giant Slalom and Combined) with LCpl Burns (44 Sqn RCT) coming second and Lt Dougherty (43 AEC) coming third.

From the Army meeting the Team was split into those returning to UK and those selected to represent the Army Ladies Team in Cormayeur. The Team arrived in Cormayeur the evening before the day of the first race, after a long and exhausting journey. In spite of the hassle, jet lag and tiredness, the Team skied well and ended up 30 seconds ahead at the end of Day 1. This early lead was maintained and the Army Ladies Team had a resounding victory. Capt Caddick won both the Slalom and Giant Slalom and therefore the combined event. This was her fifth successful season as Combined Services Champion. It was the first time the Army Ladies had raced alongside the men in the Army and Inter-Service Championship. It was a big step in the right direction for Army Ladies Skiing and seeing the Army winning both the Men's and Ladies' prizes in this first year of the Ladies participation at either event was extremely encouraging.

On the Nordic side there was a similar success story. A team of 7 went to the British National/Army and BAOR Championships at Zwiesel. With the exception of Cpl Jeffrey all members of the team were from SEME Bordon and thanks to the support from their CO, Lt Col Pullen, they were able to train extremely hard in the months leading up to the competition. The exercise properly began on 2 Jan 86 when the Team made their way to 24 Fd Ambulance, Catterick for the preparation stage. Here Lt Col Thayne RAMC taught the Team some of the more basic aspects of competition skiing and the important skills of waxing. From there the Team set off for Dover picking up the trainer, Lt White RAMC, who displayed much patience and a well developed sense of humour throughout team training.

The Team were accommodated in a small town called Fraureau about 10km from Zwiesel, and there were plenty of tracks for the Team to practice on near the apartment. Thanks to their earlier fitness and shooting training they were able to concentrate on Nordic technique. The training paid off and the Team produced very creditable results. Cpl Jeffrey (AMTC Silberhutte) took 1st place in the 5km Cross Country, the 10km Cross Country and the 20km Cross Country. The 2nd Army lady was LCpl Edwards (SEME Bordon) who was 12th in the 5km Cross Country, 10th in the 10km Cross Country and 12th in the 20km Cross Country. The Army Ladies Team won the 3x5 Cross Country Relay. Pte Watt (SEME Bordon) received a special prize from the Race Jury in the 20km Cross Country for "guts and determination". LCpl Corp (SEME Bordon) was awarded a special prize by the Range Officer in the 5km Biathlon Sprint for achieving a staggeringly low range score hitting 5 out of 5 targets in the standing position, a feat rarely achieved.

The Team did particularly well to participate in the Ladies Military Patrol Race, a Military Team Race run over 12km of natural country. Near the end of the race is a 50m range where the team must engage 15 disc targets, with an SLR, from the prone position. The course was rigorous and made treacherous by the fact that the old tracks were covered with hard pack ice and cutters were unable to cut any new ones. It was a major achievement for the Team to complete the race.

A Ladies Inter-Services Competition was held for the first time and the Army Ladies Team was Cpl Jeffrey, Pte Edwards and LCpl Banks. All three were awarded their Army Colours. The Team have done extremely well to compete at national level their first year on snow.



Members of the Army Ladies squad at the Army meeting, Fulpmes Austria.

L-R Back Row: LCpl Mitchell, Sgt Richards, Lt Burrows, Lt Dougherty, Maj Crinson.

Front Row: Capt Stone, Cpl McCammont, Capt Caddick, Capt Humphreys.



The Army Ladies Nordic Team at the UK Army Championships, Ballater in March.

L-R Pte Watt, LCpl Banks, LCpl Edwards, LCpl Corp, LCpl Chapman.

The Team, less Cpl Jeffrey, were in action again shortly afterwards at the UK Championships at Ballater. LCpl Edwards came 1st in the 5km Ladies Cross Country and 2nd in the 10km Ladies Cross Country. LCpl Banks came 3rd in both events.

Training courses will be run for both Nordic and Alpine, details of which will be circulated shortly. If you are interested in either discipline you should contact the following:

Captain C R Paxton, Army Ladies Skiing Rep, A Org & Sec, Room 7176, Ministry of Defence, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB
Telephone Main Bldg Mil Ext 3571.

Captain A Humphreys, Asst Army Ladies Skiing Rep (Alpine), 4 Sqn, 16 Signal Regt, BFPO 39
Telephone Bielefeld Mil 2661.

Captain J Brodie-Murphy, Asst Army Ladies Skiing Rep (Nordic), SEME Regt, Bordon, Hants.
Telephone Bordon Mil 406.

ROWING IN THE WRAC

Cpl Lorraine Dale

It is a formidable sight, early on a Saturday morning, to see a group of energetic girls from 6 Intelligence Company in Rheindahlen take to the water for another strenuous rowing session.

It all started in July last year when Cpl Jan Williams formed a WRAC rowing team. This sport is presently unrecognised in the RAC but popular in the RAF. Since then, this small group has been rowing with the men and women of the Royal Air Force Germany Rowing Association Club in Holland. Despite no previous experience, their determination has enabled them to progress to a high standard in the comparatively short time they have been involved with the sport. The girls' rigorous training schedule consists of daily physical training and practical rowing training twice a week in the winter and three times a week in the summer months.

The team has attended regattas in various parts of Holland, rowing against Dutch crews. The girls also made a trip to UK last November to row as guests at the RAF Rowing Club "Head of the River" race. They achieved a commendable result by finishing second.

For the future, they will be entering the Dutch league again, and racing most weekends. There is the Lincoln to Boston marathon in September and invitations to row in Amsterdam and Denmark.



L-R Back Row: FS 'H' Firth - Coach, LCpl Denise Matthews, Cpl Carol Froggatt (WRAF), LCpl Sharon Mason.

Front Row: Cpl Anne Marshall, Cpl Lorraine Dale, LCpl Haley Pearson, Cpl Jan Williams, LCpl Maggie Rowson, Flt Lr Ray Wood - Coach.

UNIT NEWS

10 COMPANY WRAC

During the past six months the staff in 10 Company have been involved in a number of new ventures. In October we were very lucky to have a sauna and solarium fitted in the Barracks. This luxurious facility has allowed all the members of the Duchess of Kent Barracks to maintain a tan all year round! In December after all the usual festivities we said farewell to 2Lt Penny Dickens who went off to sunny climates on Operation Raleigh to spend three months in Chile.

After Christmas with the next major event in the Company diary being the Annual Company Training exercise, we settled down into the normal routine. This was only broken by several members of the unit taking part in various skiing exercises in Austria, Germany and Scotland.

With a success behind the Army in the Inter-services netball, the second in command was able to concentrate on finalising the details for the company training exercise which was a fortnight on Dartmoor. During the two week-long phases the girls completed all their mandatory training and also enjoyed a day's hill-walking, a visit to the Royal Marines Commando Training Centre at Lympstone and half a day's pony trekking. The visit to Lympstone was particularly challenging and after a morning of rock climbing and weapon training everyone lined up to start the endurance run. This is a run which all Royal Marine recruits have to complete during their basic training. The record for them in full packs and webbing over a four mile run to the course, a 3 mile course and then a four mile run back to camp is 72 minutes. It took us up hills, through 30 foot tunnels, through five foot deep pools of freezing water and finally through a submerged water tunnel. This proved to be the most "character building" test on the whole of the exercise but gave a great feeling of achievement at the end of it.

After 2½ weeks' rigorous work for the DS we returned to Aldershot and straight into a handover of OC's. We said farewell to Maj Jackie Smith (several times!) and bid a hearty welcome to Maj Jacquie Lindsay who joins us from the RMAS. We wish them both well in their new appointments. Lt Alison Forster-Knight left us immediately after Company training to take up her new job at Depot Light Division. (I hope there will be fewer phone calls for her there!) We welcomed a new subaltern to the 10 Coy fold, 2Lt Jayne Sneller who has joined us straight from RMAS.

For the future the company looks forward to an adventure training exercise in Weymouth. The big summer "thrash" has a Caribbean theme and this year the unit will be entertained by a genuine steel band. As the weather improves, 10 Coy WRAC continue to train their sports teams returning only to the sunbeds to maintain an all year tan should the weather take a sudden turn for the worse.



SSgt Pam McMullen emerging unharmed from the water-tunnel on the Royal Marines endurance run.

12 COMPANY WRAC

FOLDA

The history books state that the last invasion of Scotland occurred in 1745. However, on February 1st 1986, 32 members of 12 Company WRAC swept into Folda in the Scottish Highlands. Our mission was to brave the elements for a week-long skiing exercise.

Skiing started in earnest on the Monday morning, and conditions were excellent. We were divided into groups according to our ability on skis. In other words anyone who could stand up without falling over and stay on a T bar was put into the expert category and allowed up the mountain. Here, the more advanced members of the group were able to demonstrate their magnetic attraction for trees and their skill at human skittles!

Although the snow lay deep and crisp and even, Lt Maltman and Pte 'Snoopy' Edwards managed to find one or two troughs. The intrepid skiers progressed from snow ploughs to parallels in no time at all. Fortunately, there were no major mishaps.

Sgt Barnes became the resident chef. With her wedding day planned to take place a few weeks later, she did not fancy walking down the aisle with a leg in plaster, so she became a dab hand at cooking. All sorts of culinary delights found their way to the supper table. The "piece de resistance" was a huge cherry pie produced on the final night, embossed with the Corps Crest in pastry!

By the time we returned to London the hours of being exhorted to "bend ze knees" seemed worthwhile. Almost everyone had ventured up the mountain to experience the hair-raising speed of Franz Klammer and the taste of fresh snow.

D COY WRAC – CAD KINETON

The Company has been exceptionally busy on the sports side. In the SW District Championships LCpl Hulbert received the Badminton Ladies Plate as her first prize. The results of the West Area Women's Table Tennis Championships proved a boost to the Company when Pte Telfer won the Ladies Open Singles and LCpl McCann was runner-up. Pte Telfer and LCpl McCann then proceeded to wipe the board clear by winning the Ladies Open Doubles with SSgt Willoughby and LCpl Duffy as runner-up.

CAD Kinton agreed to compete against COD Bicester in an inter-unit athletics afternoon which turned out to be a tremendous success. The only problem we have now is getting all our trophies engraved!

We said farewell to Sgt Rees who left us to join 20 Sqn RCT, and extend a warm welcome to her replacement Sgt Thomas who joined us from 44 Sqn RCT, RMAS.

ISLE OF BENBECULA RADAR COURSE NO 1

On January 13th the RA Range Hebrides introduced its very own Basic Radar Course. This consisted of one week of Theory and another of Practical work. The course was an introduction to the job of Range Assistant. Although the course was serious in many respects, every day had its moments of light relief. For example, on our very first morning and every morning to follow, we were awakened by rapid fire questions, the most memorable of these being "What does IPA stand for?" Silence rang around the room, as nobody had any idea of the answer. It was not until later that we discovered

IPA stood for Indian Pale Ale and would have to be bought if answers were not forthcoming!

The course began with an introduction to the Range, its history and the facilities with which we would come into contact. This was followed by a lecture on First Aid which is a necessity on all courses. Much to the disapproval of the girls EAR was performed not on a live but a dead dummy.

Our other lectures were given by Major Concannon and SMIG MacAulay. These covered the history of the Islands and the Land Launched Missiles fired on the range. During the lectures, missiles were produced in the classroom; much to our relief they were unarmed.

The following day our first lecture was on Radar Principles which included practical work on the circuits and batteries and introduced us to the basic components of the Radar and their significance. We combined this knowledge by each of us becoming a component and acting out the cycle of events which occur within the Radar. To end this lecture we watched an ancient film on Radar types.

Next day we went on from land launched missiles to sea and air launched missiles. It was after this lecture that the new girls were given their first opportunity to use the Radar equipment. To finish off the first week we had a quiz amongst the students to revise the week's work. This ended with the losing team supplying the very first crate of IPA to the instructors. Now the theory was over but the practical was yet to come.

Our second week began by learning how each piece of equipment is integrated within the Range which incorporated a guided tour of the Range Control Building. Our first release from captivity was a trip to RAF Benbecula. It was here we were able to see other radars in operation within a different job environment. We surprised not only ourselves but them as well when we understood the technical jargon. They were so impressed that they made us a cup of tea! Our next adventure was to see an actual Target System, this being the Falconet. After being taken round and shown how the Target was

assembled we were taken to the Launch Area and shown flight simulations.

The highlight of the week was a visit to the 17 Mk 1 which is a mobile Radar appropriately positioned outside the nearest pub. We used the 17 Mk 1 and went on to the James Dalton Range Launch. This enabled us to see a marine Radar in operation.

As the course drew to a close we visited the Launch Areas and were shown the work which is done on the firing point. The day was rounded up with yet another quiz. Examination Day had at last arrived. The exams consisted of a written test followed by a practical test on the Radar. Everyone on the course passed with flying colours and presentations of certificates and prizes were made by Lt Col Ransome Williams, CO of the Range Wing.



Range Asst working radar during Rapid Firings.



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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.

RAVC TRAINING CENTRE

If you have ever been to Melton Mowbray in the winter it is an event you would not forget. Seeing the Kennelmaids cleaning out the kennels and grooming the dogs daily in the sleet and rain is a sight to behold. The rider grooms, exercising their horses, put the students of the Long Equitation Course through their paces and endlessly try to protect their thighs from the annual chilblains that afflict the less fortunate during the winter season.

We have had a busy time since the last issue of *Lioness*. Perhaps the most notable event was the visit of Her Royal Highness Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester. Princess Alice was charmed by the animals and of course all the members of the Women's Royal Army Corps.

From the moment she was greeted by the guard of honour, which included Ptes Rimmer and Wood on horseback, and LCpl Money and Pte King with their guard dogs, she was clearly delighted with the tour.

After lunch with the Commandant, Colonel G R Durrant MBE and the officers, Princess Alice enjoyed a musical ride which was given by Cpls Pedlar and Maxwell, LCpl Thornton and Ptes Rimmer, Dickey, Daveron, Hurst and Wood in the Indoor Riding School.

In the sunshine outside, the Princess watched German Shepherd dogs and Rottweiler War dogs dealing with an "intruder" and saw the kennelmaids including LCpl Wilson put the trainee dogs through their paces.

Other notable events have been the promotions of five of our personnel. Cpl Wilson was promoted to Sgt and is now our Chief Kennelmaid. Pte Brown our Admin Assistant was promoted to LCpl as were Ptes Thornton, Payne and Heffey.

Our OIC Captain Mohan bravely attempted the Basic Dog Handlers Course which all the kennelmaids complete when they arrive at the Training Centre. By all accounts she made a commendable effort, but would be the first to admit that working with animals is a job for the professionals.

The Veterinary Hospital also saw the birth of a foal, "Maggie" and the refurbishment of their rest room thanks to the artistic talents of Cpl Meldrum. The Veterinary Officer Captain Carver also agreed to release LCpl Heffey for a two month attachment to Cyprus to act as an instructor at the Joint Services Saddle Club.

The OIC Dog School, Captain Hepworth, has also ensured that the kennelmaids continue to take part in the Dog Drafts abroad. Sgt Wilson and Ptes Purvis, Easton, Jones and Davies have been able to visit Hong Kong. LCpl Revell and Ptes Wickett and Godfrey have been to Germany. Finally Pte S Dickey had the pleasure of travelling to Cyprus.

We are now approaching the season for Riding Competitions. Already we have had a success at the Royal Windsor Horse Show. Cpls Pedlar and Maxwell and Pte Gaut came 5th out of 23 teams in the Team event.

Last but not least we must say a very warm welcome to our new Admin Sergeant, Sgt Bulman. As an ex Training NCO she has already made a big impression on us! Sgt Bulman is a good sport and it is lovely to have her aboard.

LIFE WITH THE POSTIES 11 PC SQN RE

LCpl Jill Marigold

For all those who think that life with the posties is sorting letters into pigeon holes with BFPO numbers, I can assure you they are wrong.

I arrived at 11 PC Sqn RE Headquarters at BFPO 32 (Verden, Northern Germany) in 1984, and the last 2 years have just flown past; three weeks of them literally when I went to Sennelager for the basic free fall parachuting course. It was really exhilarating and "airmail" took on a whole new meaning for me!

Most of the time I have been employed at the Squadron Headquarters on relief duties, and my work has ranged from clerking and typing to delivering mail to HM Forces ships calling at German and Danish ports. The long mail runs to visiting ships also gave me the opportunity for extra driving training and early last year I passed my test. Being a driver I am also now on standby for any "Rapid Response Service" items that the General at Divisional Headquarters may originate at a moment's notice.

One of the highlights of my tour was the squadron's adventurous training in Bavaria. It certainly was a fun-filled week. The weather was kind to us most of the time and we managed to squeeze in lots of activities. I enjoyed the rock climbing and abseiling most and was quite confident in the canoe. The long treks also gave me a chance to break in my new boots, but the blisters were all worth it — the scenery in Bavaria was fantastic.

It's not all been play, though. Not long ago I completed one of the most important trade courses I have to attend. After a lot of hard work, particularly on the accounts side, I qualified as a B1 Postal and Courier Operator at the training wing of our Depot at Mill Hill, London. Despite the hard work on the course it was nice to meet other WRAC "Posties" serving in Cyprus, Hong Kong, Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands as well as Northern Ireland and BAOR. The squadron's military training has been pretty tough too. I have attended regular cadre courses on all military skills as well as exercising in the Soltau/Luneburg training area in the freezing cold.

There's still lots more I want to do. I've become quite involved with the Brownies this last year, I've had some German lessons at the Education Centre and I'm still working on improving my typing. Just for a change I think I'll put in for a Falklands tour.



LCpl Jill Marigold "on the range".

EXERCISE TENDER FOOT

LCpl Angie Raw, LCpl Jackie Walton, Pte Donna Wilson

The Delyn Walk takes place every year in North Wales around Holywell. Eighteen members of the WRAC from the 8th and 11th Signal Regiments based in Catterick Garrison in North Yorkshire, took part in a sponsored walk organised by Lt Sally Billson. The charity selected to receive the proceeds raised was Research into Freidreichs Ataxia — a disease which attacks the nervous system.

On hearing about the walk everybody thought it was a good idea to enter but as the time grew nearer people were having second thoughts — but come Saturday afternoon all eighteen girls were present and ready to go.

We left 8 Sig Regt on Saturday 10 May and returned on Sunday evening. It was a long journey but everybody kept their spirits high. On arriving in Wales we were shown our accommodation — a local village hall! We dropped our bags off and were then locked out for the evening. So under strong protest we were forced to go socialising, and we managed to entertain ourselves quite well!

Back at the village hall we tiptoed in, trying to avoid the rows of sleeping bodies. Sleeping on a hard floor on a Saturday night is not everybody's idea of fun!

We got an early start on Sunday morning — quarter to seven to be exact! We set off on the walk at 7.30 and after an autocratic vote, LCpl Angie Raw became the map reader. The pace was steady and flowing. Singing seemed to be the main activity with most of the group joining in. 2Lt Anne Gow was a little apprehensive at first but with a little gentle persuasion she soon found her voice.

The first 10 miles were quite easy going and everybody was thoroughly enjoying themselves. At about the 12 mile point some members of the group began to develop sore feet. After 15 miles we stopped for lunch — at which point many of us took the opportunity to tend our blistered and aching feet.

At this point enthusiasm faltered slightly although everyone kept their spirits up singing and telling jokes. At about 18 miles we discovered a hamburger stall — it's amazing the effect junk food has on morale! Everyone dug deep and found some dormant energy!

At the 20 mile point we had to stop so that two of the girls could get their feet treated by St John's Ambulance. Everybody was pleased to be on the final stretch as we were all obviously tired. We finally arrived at the finish at 4.45 pm and gratefully collected our medals.

The journey home was in marked contrast to our outward journey — most people were asleep in various contortive positions! We hope that the final total raised for Freidreichs Ataxia will be nearly £500.

DO YOU WANT THIS JOB?

The Secretary of an old-established Service Charity in Central London requires an assistant to run the office and help in the task of providing assistance for widows and orphans of men of the armed forces. Good typing skills essential: shorthand desirable. The requirement is for about 25 hours a week worked in 3 or 4 days. Hours are flexible. Salary in region of £6000 depending on days worked. Good organising ability, sound sense of priorities and sensible attitude to human problems vital. Contact Brigadier Blomfield-Smith, Tel: 01-930-9370.

Contributions for next issue by
13th December 1986 in double
spacing. Photographs in black & white.

VISIT OF THE CONTROLLER COMMANDANT TO THE WRAC AT JARIC

Captain Sue Mundill Wood WRAC

On April 9th Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Kent, visited the WRAC officers stationed at the Joint Air Reconnaissance Intelligence Centre (JARIC) at RAF Bampton near Huntingdon in Cambridgeshire. Captain Sue Mundill Wood, OC WRAC, greeted Her Royal Highness at the main entrance of JARIC and accompanied the Royal Party throughout the day as Escorting Officer.

The morning was spent finding out about JARIC's role, and touring several departments to view displays and equipment. The final stop before luncheon was at Lieutenant Jenny Procter's office. Lieutenant Procter is the Assistant Executive Officer and Her Royal Highness chatted with her about her initial training at RMA Sandhurst, and on the many duties she performs at the hub of JARIC's administrative world. After luncheon in JARIC Officer's Mess, the Royal Party returned to JARIC for the major part of the visit — to meet and talk to the WRAC Photographic Interpreters.

Both Captain Sue Mundill Wood and Captain Dee Armstrong work in the Land Squadron within Operations Wing, while Captain Lindy Turner who was on a routine visit to JARIC, works with 6 Intelligence Company in Rheindahlen. All three gave detailed presentations on their work, and the Controller Commandant was kind enough to say how impressed she was by the level of knowledge and professionalism displayed.

Before Her Royal Highness left JARIC, Group Captain Oxlee, the Commanding Officer presented her with a beautiful model of Anmer House, her family home, which had been made with the aid of aerial photography by JARIC's Model Section. She was quite clearly delighted with this memento and at having spent a whole day seeing for herself the fascinating work being undertaken by WRAC PI Officers.



HRH The Duchess of Kent with L-R Capt L J Turner, Capt D J Armstrong
Lt J J M Procter, Capt S J Mundill Wood.

FAREWELL VISIT OF DWRAC TO BAOR

Capt F J Gibson WRAC

Brig H G Meechie CBE ADC, DWRAC paid her farewell visit to BAOR during the weekend of 9-11 May 1986. To commemorate her visit, a WRAC Weekend was held in Rheindahlen and more than 80 WRAC officers and senior ranks attended. The weekend started with a Study Day on May 10th which was followed by a Corps Dinner that evening. The Dinner Night was magnificent, with 14 guests and 34 officers sitting down to a delicious dinner, and a superb programme of music played by the Alanbrooke Band, Royal Artillery.

On Sunday, more than 200 WRAC of all ranks attended a Corps Church Service at St Boniface Church, Rheindahlen followed by a buffet lunch in the WRAC WOs and Sgts' Mess, where several members of the BAOR Branch of the WRAC Association joined us. The service was extremely well attended by both WRAC and guests alike, with a guard of honour waiting to greet the Director as she arrived. After the service, the congregation gathered in the WRAC WOs and Sgts' Mess, where the Mess Caterer had laid on a magnificent spread, and champagne cocktails for everyone.

The weekend was a tremendous opportunity for all the officers and senior ranks in BAOR to bid a personal farewell to Brig Meechie, and also to meet each other and discuss pertinent aspects of the Corps today during the study period.

It was a very special occasion for the RSM, WO1 Mitchell, who was presented with the LS and GC medal by Brig Meechie. There were several other surprise presentations made too. Amongst the officers present, there were two Ceremonial Sash winners from previous courses at Sandhurst. Lt Gemma Fesemeyer and 2Lt Nikki Vickers were each presented with an engraved silver paper knife to commemorate their achievement. Lt Julia Hands, permanently employed with the Royal Signals, another sash winner who completed the latter part of her commissioning course at Sandhurst was presented with a silver carriage clock to mark her achievement.

The final presentation was a very popular one and a complete surprise to the recipient. Col Rosemary Denne, a retired WRAC officer now working as RO in G4 Quartering in HQ BAOR was presented with a WRAC Ice Bucket by the Director to mark her 40th anniversary of joining the WRAC!

After the lunch, Comd WRAC, Colonel N R Robertson made a special presentation and speech to the Director, on behalf of all the WRAC in BAOR. All the officers and senior ranks then lined the pathway and road outside the Mess, to wave goodbye to the Director as she departed for Amsterdam.



WRAC officers and senior NCOs say goodbye to Brig Helen Meechie as she leaves the Sgts' Mess in Rheindahlen.



Brig Meechie presenting the LS&GC to the RSM WO1 Mitchell.



Col Rosemary Denne receiving a present from Brig Meechie to mark her 40th anniversary since joining the Corps.

16 SIG REGT

1 SQN 16 SIG REGT, JHQ RHEINDAHLEN BAOR

**Visit of Her Royal Highness,
The Princess Anne
Colonel-in-Chief The Royal Signals**

After an immense period of preparation the gloomy environment of the BAOR COMMCEN was transformed to sparkling preparedness for the visit on May 6th of Princess Anne.

Her Royal Highness spent the morning visiting the COMMCEN speaking to both soldiers and servicewomen, although as always work continued. All the members of the Squadron appreciated her interest in the current working and future developments within the COMMCEN, and many of the Squadron were fortunate enough to be presented.

Later in the day she was hosted by the soldiers and servicewomen of 16 Signal Regiment in the gym at Krefeld, where many of them had the opportunity to chat informally with her.

ADC TO HRH THE PRINCESS ANNE

Lt J Hands WRAC

"Your name is being thrown around as a candidate for ADC to Princess Anne". That was the whisper I heard way back in February when the Royal Visit seemed so far away! It then appeared in print on the Warning Order, and then the preparations began! HRH was to visit 16th and 21st Signal Regiments in her capacity as Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Corps of Signals.

My first task was to find out what an ADC wears when working with Royalty, but to this day I'm not sure that I was correct in my final outfit. Ideally, No 1 uniform should be worn but time and availability precluded this and I was advised to wear the various accoutrements with my No 2 Dress. I was then faced with shrieks of horror such as, "You can't wear white gloves with No 2's", or "Gold epaulettes on No 2's? Never!" and even at the last minute, "There should be red thread through those all-gold shoulder cords". It was too late to start looking for red-threaded aiguillettes, so I stuck by my decision!

Looking back over the two days I realise that my job was not so much looking after Princess Anne, because the rest of the Regiment was doing that more than adequately. No, I spent most of the time looking after VIPs; directing people to the right convoy in the convoy of 9, was one of my main tasks, as was organising the duty free purchases for those returning to the UK.

This account wouldn't be complete without a mention of the Wellington Boots! The one request made of me was to find two pairs of boots for HRH and her Lady-in-Waiting. They were to be brand new of course, complete with a brand new pair of socks. I was asked at 1 am to have them by 9 am which I managed — just — using all the unofficial channels I knew! Naturally they were not used on the day (a Princess always comes prepared) but at least we were ready.

247 PRO COY RMP BERLIN

247 Provost Company Royal Military Police is located in the Olympic Stadium in the British Sector of West Berlin and has 7 WRAC Provost NCOs including 1 Sgt and 6 JNCOs. The JNCOs are integrated into the four general police duties platoons and are employed in garrison provost duties. The Company must be unique in the Corps of Royal Military Police for the number of WRAC Pro NCOs married to Military Policemen. We have 3 married couples working harmoniously (or so it seems!) in the same unit.

Their duties can include deployment to such well known places as Checkpoint Charlie, where allied troops and their families can enter the Soviet Sector of Berlin to see life behind the Iron Curtain. Another well known duty is at the Tiergarten Soviet War Memorial where 18 Soviet soldiers, escorted through the British Sector by RMP NCOs, provide a ceremonial guard for their memorial which was built following the battle for Berlin in 1945. Other tasks involve processing travellers at Checkpoint Bravo on the 104 mile autobahn from Berlin to Helmstedt which passes through East Germany; patrolling the famous Berlin Wall and normal Provost discipline patrols.

Life in Berlin for a WRAC Provost NCO is certainly busy, when one considers that during 1985 the unit dealt with 481 traffic accidents, 350 crime case files and 53,000 travellers on the Corridor. Prominent among the duties in Berlin for WRAC Provost during the summer months are the Queen's Birthday Parade and the Allied Forces Day Parade. Both these

ceremonial duties are large crowd pullers and with HRH The Prince of Wales taking the salute at the Trooping in 1985 over 30,000 Berliners turned out to watch.

Service in the Corps is always a challenge but in Berlin, with all that it has to offer both on and off duty, it is also very interesting and exciting.

WOMEN AT WAR 1 PC REGT RE

On Sunday May 18th 21 girls from 1 PC Regt RE assembled at the Soltau/Luneburg training area to take part in the annual military training. This is the second year that the Regiment have allocated a week specifically for girls after the success of the course held last year. This year we were fortunate to have with us Lt Gilly Cole from 29 Coy WRAC, and PCS Branch HQ BAOR kindly released Sgt Kate Barrick to assist with the administration.

Our luck was with us, for the sun shone and the girls anticipated a pleasant week ahead of them. Monday morning dawned, and at 0545 hrs the girls sleepily emerged from their tents, already having second thoughts about volunteering. First things first, and what better start to the week's training period than a BFT? It is very pleasing to record that all the girls (some with a little help from their friends) managed to get round in the required time.

More exacting and strenuous training followed. But after lessons on NBC, Map Reading, First Aid and Weapon Training, the majority of the girls were still smiling at the end, with the prospect of an end of course barbecue and party to finish off the week. During the week the Commander Postal and Courier Services NWE, Col L G Calcutt and the Commander WRAC BAOR, Col N R Robertson visited the girls and watched as they practised their ambush procedures followed by a Pyro-Technics display. The girls then set out on their night exercise, the aim of which was to put everything that they had learnt during the week into practice.

All in all it was a very hard but enjoyable week in sunny Soltau, and all the girls without exception were pleased to have the opportunity to take a break from their routine work.

AND THEN THERE WERE NONE!

(or the life and times of the WRAC Detachment of the
Proof & Experimental Establishment Shoeburyness)

Sgt J M Legg WRAC

Shoebury — where?! For the uneducated amongst you, there has been a WRAC Detachment (in varying sizes) at the Proof & Experimental Establishment Shoeburyness (next to Southend-on-Sea) for the past 46 years.

Although numbering less than 40 for the past decade, the Detachment has continued to play a valuable role in the smooth running of the Range. As well as providing WRAC for the trades of Cook, Clerk, Admin Asst, Dvr and Medic, it has also provided EAs(G), Experimental Assistants (Gunnery). EAs(G), who in fact comprise over two-thirds of the Detachment, are a unique trade. Although they have a passing similarity to the Range Assistants at Benbecula, the training is sufficiently different for cross postings to be impractical. For this reason an EA(G) can spend her entire career at Shoebury.

Sadly however, as a result of the Contractorisation of the Ranges, the last WRAC servicewoman will leave Shoebury in Aug 86. While for the minority it merely entails a new posting,

for the EAs(G) it has meant the end of an era. By the very nature of the specialist trade they were left with two choices, to reallocate or leave the Service. Three have chosen to remain in the WRAC.

What follows is an indulgence on our part, an opportunity to look back at the events that shaped and moulded this unusual Detachment, with particular reference to the development of the EAs(G) trade.

In 1940/41 all men under a certain age were posted away from the Ranges for active service. To fill the gaps ATS were posted in as part of 'D' Coy ATS. By late 1941 the numbers were rising fast and the 17th Independent Company ATS was formed. Most of the ATS were billeted in the Wakering Road Quarters, a row of houses which are still in use, with a Mess, Cookhouse and YWCA nearby. ATS personnel belonging to the Velocity Squad were quartered and fed in wooden huts on the New Ranges near what was then known as the "piggeries". (Today it is the site of the Fire Station and a Car Park). By 1943 the strength of the Coy had risen to 200 comprising Clerks, Cooks, Batwomen, Drivers, Orderlies, the Velocity Squad and EAs(G). It also included several technical ATS Officers employed in various sections of the Range.

The work of the EAs(G) now centred around four main sections; the OP Section, the Wireless Section, the Radar Section and the Solenoid Velocity Apparatus (SVA) Section. The Velocity Squad consisted of non tradeswomen who were employed on coil winding and screen making for SVA and Boulonge, the erection of Jump cards, loading and checking ammunition on to trucks and recovery of shells, particularly the mortar bombs fired from 'F' Bty.

OR Range Kit at this time consisted of navy blue skirts, white shirts and navy blue pullovers which were issued from the "Forces Comfort Fund". Pea Jackets and/or Range Macs were worn in bad weather and slacks were only worn when ATS personnel were actually going out on detail. ATS Officers wore white skirts, white shirts, with a black tie or open necked, with navy blazer type jackets. All ranks wore navy blue and red forage caps. A Cpl Kelly obtained a khaki BD from one of the men, dyed it navy blue and wore it. She was immediately charged for wearing unauthorised clothing. The then Superintendent, who had to be informed of all charges, asked to see Cpl Kelly who was marched in wearing the blue BD. He thought the blue BD was an excellent idea and blue BDs were ordered and issued to all EAs(G). Until then they wore khaki ATS uniform.

There was a duty roster for Orderly Officer, Orderly Sgt and Fire picquets each night and these duties were known as PAD (Passive Air Defence). There was a special duty room for these personnel and sleeping was taken in turns. Duties consisted of the normal orderly duties, fire fighting and the evacuation of personnel to the shelters if necessary. Irrespective of age and service, Cpls and below had to be in their quarters by 2200 hrs each night and lights out was at 2215 hrs. One late pass per week until 2300 hrs could be granted if applied for. If necessary there was normal work on Saturdays and Sundays. If there was no work, personnel were given 36 hrs off, but not allowed to go away for the weekend. Only 10% of the strength were permitted to be away at any one time. Discipline was very strict and any one who was charged and found guilty was immediately taken off Range work and posted. Personnel proceeding on sands for recovery or wireless communications had to take their respirators and steel helmets. A lot of recovery was carried out using horses and range wagons with the girls riding horses if necessary.

At the end of the war, women were demobbed according to their age and service group and the strength of the Company considerably reduced, until a decision was made to continue the trade of EA(G) for ATS personnel. From 1945 - 1949 the ATS continued to demonstrate their abilities on the Range and



Visit of Chief Controller Dame Helen Gwynne Vaughan.



Range recovery in 1945.



Visit of HRH The Princess Royal 28 May 1961.

in the summer of 1948 the OPs moved into their present building.

The mid 1950s saw an increase to the Detachment with the arrival of 14 OsF C (Operators Fire Control) and Plotters from the disbandment of the last regular mixed HAA Regt.

The late 1950s saw an increase in the involvement of the EAs(G) on trial work. No longer confined to Shoebury they worked at other Ranges (Eskmeals, Pendine, Larkhill) at other sites (Blackfriars Bridge, Branden) and at Hohne in Germany. Towards the end of 1959, the OP Section, Radar Section and PCC (Velocity) Section were amalgamated to form the Instrumentation Section, allowing Personnel to be detailed from one office.

The 1960s saw a lot of changes. In October 1960 the first detachment of WRAC EAs(G) were posted to 16 JSTU in Australia. A year later, the first detachment of WRAC EAs(G) were posted to Ty Croes (TERA).

In November 1963 the Instrumentation Section was civilianised with the exception of the WRAC. The soldiers were posted to the Gun or Range squads or back to Regiments. The work undertaken by Instrumentation was divided into three groups; the civilians undertook Groups 1 and 2 and the WRAC became Group 3 and were responsible for the OP Radar and communications duties and no longer undertook velocities. They continued to detail their own personnel. By August 1964 the WRAC ceased to be known as 17th Independent Company WRAC and became the WRAC Detachment P&EE. A farewell parade was held with an inspection by Colonel M D M Humphery DDWRAC Eastern Command. The Company flag was lowered from the flagpole outside 'D' block and was replaced by the P&EE flag. In the evening a celebration dance was held in the Garrison Gymnasium. Also during this month, the Range Signals Section took over Range communications including Control, the WRAC still manning Battery communications however. The AEI Radar, manned by P&GC personnel, took over Range Surveillance duties in November 1965 although the WRAC using the Decca Mobile remained responsible for obtaining Radar Fall of Shot results when required.

B1 Computing Section was formed in the early 1970s. It comprised an SNCO plus four and involved the EAs(G) in the then revolutionary world of compiling results by computer. The late 1970s saw the introduction of Green Archer to record the Radar Fall of Shot results in replacement of the outdated Decca Mobile.

The early 1980s saw the EAs(G) Section strengthen its position only to be disbanded in 1986. In 1980 the Field Section, OP Office were trained to carry out Range Survey using Theodolites and Telerometers etc and hence have been responsible for carrying out such Survey as required. Also this year the Computing Section, which now consists of a permanent staff of one Sergeant and one Corporal plus two other Junior Ranks on a rota basis, obtained its first Micro-computer. In 1984 the last three women to be trained as EAs(G) at Shoeburyness were posted in. On June 15th last year about 75 ex-EAs(G) and serving members of the WRAC detachment attended a reunion, held at Horseshoe Barracks. The occasion was marked by the planting of a tree and the unveiling of a plaque dedicated to all the EAs(G) who have served at P&EE (S) since 1940. We were privileged to have the company of Col A J Smith WRAC, (an ex OC WRAC at Shoebury) who bravely assisted Col Spackman RA with the planting of the tree. After the tree had been planted there was a Range Tour and in the evening a very successful function was held.

On March 26th this year Brig H G Meechie, DWRAC, accompanied by Lt Col M S Wing WRAC visited the Range to say farewell to the Detachment as a whole and to the EAs(G) in particular. This month the last WRAC Servicewoman will leave P&EE Shoeburyness.



Cpl Lloyd and LCpl Watson explain how the survey equipment at P&EE Shoeburyness is used by the EAs (G), to the Director on her visit on 26 March 1986.



Pte McGill explains use of the survey equipment to the Director. LCpl Watson talking to Lt Col Wing. Pte Weller standing ready to explain her role.



The WRAC Detachment with DWRAC, Lt Col M S Wing WRAC, the Superintendent (Col D H C Creswell) and Deputy Superintendent (Lt Col R G W Brown RA) on 26 March 1986.

ATS JUNIOR OFFICERS SCHOOL

A history of the Royal Holloway College, Egham has been commissioned in honour of the Centenary (1886 - 1986).

During the last war, half of the College was taken over by the War Department. No 2 ATS OCTU opened there in 1941 and moved to Windsor in early 1942. The ATS Junior Officers School took over the premises and remained there until September 1945.

If you attended a course at Egham and would be prepared to assist the author, would you write to Mrs C Bingham, 199 Prince of Wales Road, London NW5 3QB.

TA

156 TPT REGT RCT (V)

Life in this Merseyside Regiment has certainly been action packed and fun-filled since our last "Lioness". January saw the aptly named Mobilisation Exercise Cold Box 1, in the North Pole, or was it Catterick? Despite the adverse weather conditions, our team in the inter-Troop stretcher race did very well. Our 37 minute time over a hilly three-mile course conveying two full jerrycans was faster than some of the male teams!

The RCT cross-country took place on March 22nd, and after the Assistant Adjutant pleading with and bribing us all for some volunteers, a team was raised; Cpl Eileen Keen, LCpl Christine Clarke, OCdt Helena Roberts and 2Lt Nicci Harold. The course proved challenging, the weather more so and all in all, a good day was had by all.

There are various of our "girls" on adventurous training this summer, and five from 235 Sqn are training for a parachute jump on September 6th. Sponsors in aid of "Mencap" are welcomed.

The last few months have seen various of us on training courses, the most recent being recruit course No 112 at Guildford.

RETIREMENT

Major G Murgatroyd WRAC (V)

Major Gwen Murgatroyd retired from 39 (City of London) Signal Regiment (V) as senior WRAC Officer on 8th April after thirty-seven years, and many reorganisations, in the Territorial Army.

In October 1948 she joined 593 HAA Regt as a Radar Operator rising to the rank of sergeant in that unit. After she had been in 593 for five years, the first reorganisation took place when all heavy mixed regiments were disbanded. As a consequence, she transferred to the Transport Company which was affiliated to the Royal Corps of Transport. During the thirteen years she was with this Company her job was that of a driving instructor teaching the girls to drive heavy goods vehicles as well as landrovers. It was during this period that the second reorganisation took place, and the Transport Company became an independent WRAC unit, 326 City of London which was part of 54 East Anglian Division, and the affiliation with the RCT ceased.

In 1967 yet another reorganisation took place and consequently she had to look for another unit to join. Having looked at the Royal Observer Corps, the RNVR and the RAFVR, none of which appealed, she heard about 39 Signal Regiment which at that time was also being reorganised. A vacancy with Headquarters Squadron as an MT sergeant became available and she took a chance. Major Murgatroyd combined her TA duties with a demanding career as a senior executive with British Airways. She will be much missed in 39 Signal Regiment who wish her a very happy retirement.

AID TO DAILY RATES OF PAY (Notes from a Pay Clerks Course in 1943)

Mrs G Hansford (ex-WO2 Shreeve)

*Daisy enrolled at the minimum rate.
Worked as an Orderly, drew one and eight.
Served for six months, and was good at the job.
Earned war proficiency, rose to two bob.
Served for a year from the day she was new.
Twopence for increment, made two and two.
Proved a success at replacing the men.
Put up a stripe and was paid two and ten.
Now she's a Corporal winning the war.
Wearing two chevrons and paid three and four.
When she's a Sergeant she'll get a bit more.
(Sergeants non tradeswomen draw four and four)
Soon we shall see as she goes for her pay.
CSM Daisy at six bob a day.**

* 6/- = 30p

HASTINGS AND BETHUNE VE DAY ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

This year the "Comite D'Entente des Anciens Combattants et Societies Patriotiques de Bethune" invited ex-service men and women of Hastings, their twin town, to join them in their Services of Remembrance and celebrations for the anniversary of VE Day. Six representatives of the Hastings Branch of the WRAC Association were privileged to accept the invitation and joined twenty-four other ex-service personnel on May 6th to journey to Bethune. A welcoming reception awaited us which enabled us to meet our French counterparts. We were each designated a host family with whom we would stay for the three nights. What a welcome they gave us! The language difference was no barrier; nor that we had never met before. We were like old friends having a reunion after forty-one years. Eventually the party broke up and we went "home" with our hosts.

The following morning we were invited to join the Navigation Ex-Service Men's Association and Patriotiques Societies at their reunion. We met at 11.30 am and sat down to a very jolly four course meal before starting out for the National Cemetery at Notre Dame de Lorette where a Ceremony of Remembrance was held at the Sanctuary (War Memorial). This was a most impressive ceremony. After a short Service and one minute silence, the Flame of Remembrance was lit. A wreath was laid on behalf of the British by one of our members and our Standard was paraded with seven from Bethune and five from Hastings as well as the national flags of both countries.

From Lorette we went to Bauvin by the Canal bank. Once again we stopped for a reception before boarding a barge that took us back to Bethune. All the Standards were paraded along each side of the barge, and as we passed other barges we were greeted with salutes from their sirens. This trip was televised but we had left before it was shown on the Northern French programme. The weather was cold and very windy, and the Standard Bearers did a marvellous job especially as the journey took two hours.

At 7.30 pm we attended a Ceremony at Bethune War Memorial and again our Standard was among those paraded. Afterwards we attended a small reception at the Canal Freight Office and spent the rest of the evening with our respective hosts.

At 9 am on May 8th we mustered for Parade in the Town Square where we marched to another War Memorial. Here we

had a short ceremony and wreath laying. Afterward, the English came into their own and marched to the British War Cemetery. We were met at the gates by a Scottish Piper who played us through to the British Memorial where we laid wreaths. After leaving the Cemetery we went to the Canal Yachting Base where a Mass was being held.

At 1 pm we attended a Banquet in the "Salle Carpentier" which lasted until well after 7 pm! In between courses the Hastings Ex-Service Singers sang and the founder would have been proud to hear them in full voice (with no piano). The French thoroughly enjoyed the singing and then their Choir entertained us, after which the two groups joined and we had a good round of English and French versions of the old war-time songs.

On May 9th we met at the Town Hall at 8.30 am for a visit to Vimy Ridge. This we found to be a most impressive monument raised in memory of the Canadians who fought and died in the first world war. The Canadians had managed to capture the Ridge after three years of successfully withstanding all offences.

In the afternoon we visited Eperlecques — a little village near St Omer. Here a huge bunker was built in which to construct Hitler's secret weapon, the V2, which was to destroy London and the south of England. Of the 7,840 aimed at Britain only a few hundred reached their goal. This fortified factory was built at the beginning of 1943 — most of the work being done by political prisoners, many of whom died of hunger and thirst. The Memorial was very impressive and a widow of one of the prisoners still tends it every day.

Among the trees a pathway runs which is lined with flags (Avenue of Flags) representing the many nationalities who passed through this terrible factory.

Here we left our friends — sadly our four days were over. We look forward to welcoming our Bethune friends to Hastings in November.

GREETINGS FROM TORONTO, CANADA

Doris Madill

Members not belonging to regular Branches and attending regular meetings in the UK are usually thought of as absent friends, if living abroad. My purpose for writing this is to point out how valuable a life-line the "Lioness" is to those who are domiciled outside of UK.

Having been involved here, in Toronto, for many years, as Secretary of the CWAC Unit // 47 of the Canadian Corps Association, my involvement has given me the acquired knowledge of the work that goes into the compiling, etc, to get the finished product out to all members. Bouquets are rarely offered through the written word, so hopefully this will be published in order to thank Major (Retd) D R M Parker and all of the staff very deservedly for their dedication in communicating the interests of serving, and ex-servicewomen, via "Lioness". The members here always look forward to receiving it.

There are certain pieces of information therein contained that members can participate in, such as writing to ill members, attending reunions, purchasing WRAC Staff Band records and sending keepsakes to the Museum, to mention a few. It also works the opposite way, for the CWAC Unit // 47 have been pen-pals with the Liverpool Branch of the Association for the past 12 years. We have entertained the Staff Band in our Clubhouse in Toronto. With thanks to our Annual CWAC Canada-Wide Reunion notice appearing in the "Lioness", we have received several queries and had visits from UK members. The latest, as a result of the reunion notice, is contact with the New Zealand WRAC Association who have given us the name of one of their members who lives in Toronto, and has now become a member of the CWAC Unit // 47.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1986

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF on Saturday 12 April 1986 and was attended by over 350 members.

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

The Chairman of Council, Colonel E J Bowles paid tribute to the work of her predecessor. She said that the number of Association Branches had risen to 60 in the year with the addition of three new branches at Exeter, Southport and Sunderland. Birmingham Branch had closed and North Stafford had merged with Crewe. The strength of the Association had risen to 8186 an increase in the year of 156. Of this 96 were serving members and 60 ex-service.

200 tickets were issued to 22 branches wishing to participate in the Remembrance Day Parade in Whitehall. This is 28 more members and two more branches than in 1984.

The Standard of the Association which had been approved at the 1985 AGM had been on parade three times. On 8 May, Miss Mary Atkinson of the York Branch had carried it at Westminster Abbey for the service to commemorate the end of the Second World War. On 24 October at Guildford, Mrs Jenny Wells from Canterbury, the Chairman of No 2 Sub Area had presented the Standard for dedication during a church service at the WRAC Centre. It was also paraded at the Royal Albert Hall during the Festival of Remembrance on Saturday 9 November.

Mrs E Laurence-Smith, the Honorary Treasurer said that the accounts for the year ending 31 October 1985 reflected another satisfactory year. The accumulated funds had increased from £70,437 to £78,705 and overall income was up by £905. The income from investments and deposit interest had increased by £808 to £8,026. The actual sum invested had increased by £6,000 and the total value of investments was nearly £80,000. This represented a 14% growth in value in the year. The average yield on the portfolio had been 9%.

The Honorary Treasurer emphasised the importance of investing for future income. The expenses of the day-to-day running of the Association, including producing and posting two editions of Lioness, cost £616 more for the year than had been received from members in subscriptions. It was the investment income of £8,026 which had allowed subscriptions to remain at their present level.

Major D R M Parker said that members would have noticed that the February Lioness was a different size from previous issues. This was because it was necessary to conform to modern page measurements in order to mitigate rising costs. This did not mean that Lioness would be less expensive to produce, but costs should escalate at a slower speed. Major Coven had continued to work extremely hard on behalf of Lioness finding new advertisers and persuading old ones to continue. The Mills & Boon coloured inserts had brought in about £100 of extra income. Major Parker concluded by thanking branches, units and individual members, who had contributed to the last two issues. Without such support Lioness could not exist.

In thanking Major Parker for her report the Chairman said that sadly this would be the last AGM that Major Parker would attend as Editor of Lioness. She had been in the post for over 9 years and the 19 editions which she had edited had given many hours of pleasure to Association members. After adoption of her report there was a prolonged ovation for Major Parker

The Chairman of the Trustees, Brigadier E J Nolan said that the Trustees of the ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds 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 Trustees were very grateful to everyone who had contributed to the Benevolent Funds through Covenants or Donations, and in particular to the serving members of the Corps for their yearly contributions. Without this support the help given to those in need would have to be curtailed.

The Grants Committee had considered a total of 682 cases during the financial year 1984/85. 497 of these were ex-ATS, 185 were serving and ex-servicewomen of the WRAC. This had been an increase of just over 18% on the cases dealt with during the previous year. The amount spent on grants during the year had been £96,739 compared to £70,510 in 1983/84, an increase of 37%.

The Trustees expressed their gratitude to Lt Colonel M W Soames who had been a devoted Chairman of the Grants Committee for the past 12 years and to all members of the Committee who had attended the meetings.

The Chairman paid tribute to the work of Mrs Laurence-Smith for her devotion and dedication to the funds and in coping with the extra workload as Case Secretary. In concluding, the Chairman of Trustees said that she was happy to report that the funds were in a very healthy financial position with the value of assets having passed £1,000,000.

The Chairman of the WRAC Museum Trustees, Brigadier A Field, reported that the museum had closed in November 1984 for rebuilding. There was now 30% more floor space and the glass walls and flat roof had been replaced by brick walls and a pitched roof.

The Trustees had decided to introduce a new concept, telling the history of the Corps chronologically with the use of models, photographs and artistic displays. The Trustees had commissioned an initial layout from a well-known design consultant and had decided that the Corps should launch a special Appeal to raise £40,000 by voluntary subscription. The Chairman pointed out that the sooner the money was raised the sooner the museum would be re-opened.

To help research the early history of the WRAC, The Director Brigadier Meechie, had kindly lent an officer to go through all the official records since 1949.

The Chairman paid tribute to Major Parker's work as Curator of the Museum and Secretary to the Trustees over the past nine years.

The AGM agreed that under rule 10(a) BAOR should constitute an Area. This was to bring BAOR into line with UK Districts.

AGM also agreed that the specification of the Association Standard should appear in the Rules of the Association. The AGM voted by 33 votes to 2 that Association Standard bearers should wear: A green beret with Association brooch in it, matching jacket and skirt (not pullover) of a dark green colour, white shirt with tie and black or brown lace-up shoes.

Major E O Coven, Colonel B M Laverack, Brigadier E J Nolan and Mrs E P Weldon were elected Council Vice Presidents.

Brigadier Nolan gave details of Council recommendations for the 1988 Reunion and the AGM endorsed them. Details appear elsewhere in *Lioness*. It was anticipated that the cost to individuals would be between £15 and £20 exclusive of accommodation and travel.

Assistance with publicity was requested by Branches. An advertising poster was available from Corps HQ and has been issued to Branch Secretaries. Further copies were available on request from Corps HQ. It was suggested that possible locations for display were: Libraries, Citizens Advice Bureaux, Railway and Bus Stations, Womens Institutes and Towns-

women Guilds, Royal British Legion Branches, Church Notice Boards. Letters written to local papers and "Phone Ins" at local radio stations were good for publicity.

Insurance for Branch Standards was available through Corps HQ on the basis of £1 premium per £100 value. The question of personal liability insurance for Standard bearers and members attending the meetings was a branch responsibility.

Saturday 11 April 1987 at the Victory Services Club was agreed for the next AGM and Branch resolutions for that Meeting should be sent to Corps HQ by Branch Secretaries by 15 November 1986.

Copies of the full Minutes of the AGM are held by Branch Secretaries should members wish to read them. A personal copy may be obtained by application to the Corps Secretary.

DEDICATION OF THE CHESTER BRANCH STANDARD

Mrs Pamela Bowdler presented the Chester Branch Standard for dedication at St John's Church, Vicar's Lane, Chester by Canon R S Lunt on May 14th. Mrs Hamblet, Branch Treasurer and Mrs Hughes Branch Secretary were escorts.

Over 100 attended the service which was followed by a social evening at the Belgrave Hotel. A substantial donation was made by the Chairman, Mrs Coulter, towards the cost of the Standard.

STEPPING BACK INTO UNIFORM

Ex-SSgt Madge Cole

I felt extremely proud and honoured when asked by the Chairman of the Hull Branch of the WRAC Association if I would like to be the bearer of the Branch Standard. Being the youngest member of the branch, I felt even more honoured, and the prospect of wearing a uniform once more filled me with pride.

The date chosen for the Dedication of the Standard was Sunday, 12th January, 10.30 am at St John's Church, Newland, Hull. The officiating Minister was the Rev Michael Vernon. A rehearsal was held at the Church on the previous day. This being the first time I had carried a Standard, I was extremely nervous, but with the much appreciated help and guidance from ex RAF Flt Lt John Tremble, Queen's Colour Standard Bearer for the Hull branch of the Royal British Legion, Mr J Russell, Standard Bearer for the Hull Branch of the RAF Association, our Branch Chairman, Mrs P Evison and Secretary, Mrs P Ward, I was helped tremendously, not forgetting the support of my two escorts Mrs A Barnes and Mrs V Parkinson.

The great day arrived and we assembled at the Vicarage for coffee, kindly provided by Mrs Vernon for all Standard Bearers, official guests and branch members.

The other Standard bearers delivered their Standards to the altar at the beginning of the service, whilst my two escorts and I remained at the back of the Church until it was time to carry the Standard up the aisle and deliver it to the Minister for dedication.

After the dedication and the National Anthem, I proudly carried the Standard down the aisle behind the Queen's Colour Standard and out into the churchyard, then along with the other Standard bearers lined up each side of the Church doorway until the congregation had left.

Afterwards we all gathered at the Royal Air Force Association Club for the Loyal Toast and a buffet snack, very kindly prepared by the RAF ladies.

We owe our grateful thanks to Rev M Vernon, the Standard

Bearer, the Royal Air Force Association, the Royal British Legion, Colonel Marriott and the serving members of the Women's Royal Army Corps for giving their time and expertise to make our Standard Dedication a memorable day.

DEDICATION OF THE WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND BRANCH STANDARD

It was a glorious day for the Dedication of the Branch Standard on Sunday April 27th. The sun shone brightly while the ceremony was conducted in Holy Trinity Church, Weymouth by Rev Stephen Venner, and attended by 100 people.

Joining the branch members and friends, were the Mayor and Mayoress of the Borough, the Town Mayor of Portland, Lt Col Freeland Chairman of No 2 Sub Area with the Secretary Joan Beresford, representatives and Standards of other local ex-service associations, and members from ten branches of No 2 Sub Area. The Standards from Salisbury and Portsmouth were in attendance to support Mrs Anne Scott the Standard Bearer, who had bought the Standard for the Branch.

After the Dedication, everyone had tea in the Crown Hotel, where the Mayor cut a beautiful cake with a sword belonging to Major Overd RE, Commandant RETC Weymouth.

The Branch was delighted to welcome so many people, some of whom had travelled a long way to join us on our very special day.



REUNIONS

NORTHERN AREA REUNION 1986

The Northern Area Reunion was held in the Lounge Hall, Harrogate, on Saturday May 10th. It was well attended by members from most of the Northern Branches in spite of the change from October to May, providing a clash with holiday dates and competition from the RAF who were holding their national Reunion the same weekend and had taken up almost all hotel accommodation! In fact it was a very busy weekend in Harrogate.

We were pleased to welcome the new Chairman of Northern Area, Lt Col C A Marriott, who was presiding at her first Northern Area Reunion, and guests Col F E Hutley of the WRAC Directorate and Lt Col D Dunn the General Secretary of the Association.

Col Hutley gave a most interesting and comprehensive account of what is happening in the Corps today and the activities of all ranks from the Director downwards, from which it was obvious that the high traditions of the Corps are being maintained in the eighties.

Lt Col Dunn spoke on Association matters and also gave an account of the work of the Benevolent Fund and the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund which now has 55 annuitants and has

an increasing rather than a decreasing need to provide help to others. He also drew attention to the new Corps Museum building being erected at Guildford which will provide 30% more floor space for exhibits, and asked members to bear in mind the appeal to raise £40,000 towards this.

Some colour slides of the 1985 Grand Reunion in Harrogate were then shown, bringing back nostalgic memories to those who attended and providing a brief review for those who could not come.

After a substantial tea Col Hutley drew the lucky prize winners in the Raffle held during the afternoon, and gradually the chatter subsided as members embarked on their homeward journeys.

SHENLEY "Y" SIGNALS REUNION

Kath Tucker (Bath Branch)

On Saturday April 26th at the George Hotel Lichfield, a group of ex ATS from far and wide gathered for a memorable reunion. The 51 present included one who had travelled from America for the occasion. Most had arrived the previous day for a two night stay at the hotel.

On arrival we were given a colour coded tag to denote the particular watch we had been on at Shenley. We had also been provided (in advance) with a list of names and addresses of all who were expected to attend, and this was a great help in one or two instances where memory failed! After dinner in the hotel restaurant, the lounge bar became the general meeting place and for the rest of the evening we exchanged news, reminisced and compared old photographs which most of us had taken along.

The ballroom had been put at our disposal and became the venue for Saturday's jollifications. At 10.30 we gathered for coffee and partook of a cake which had been provided, iced and suitably inscribed for the occasion. At 11 am a reporter and photographer arrived from the local newspaper office, resulting in the event being duly recorded in the next issue of the "Mercury".

After a buffet lunch served in the ballroom, we had some free time to explore the town with its Cathedral, Dr Johnson's birthplace (now a museum), old buildings and open-air market.

We reassembled at 3.30 and heard from Peggy Tombes, the organiser, how the reunion had come to fruition from a chance remark made at a mini-reunion held some two years previously. She then communicated to us the contents of various letters she had received in connection with the occasion, including one from America and one from Australia. There were also apologies from several unable to attend, among them Muriel Young, and Captain Tansley (who had been invited to join us for lunch).

During this time we drank champagne, a case of which had been presented to us by an admirer whose wish it was to remain anonymous. Peggy was presented with a piece of Stuart crystal on behalf of the assembled company as a mark of appreciation for all her hard work and dedication, resulting in such a successful weekend. To trace and contact so many of us after a lapse of 40 years and to organise the weekend to such a fine degree was a most admirable achievement and earned the respect of us all.

Tea was served and again there was a cake, beautifully decorated in white icing with Corps badges and flashes in gold and blue respectively. Once again Peggy had pulled out all the stops to get this done with the aid of the ACC.

After the evening meal it was back to the ballroom where a small bar had opened, and the rest of the time was spent happily chatting, taking more photographs and singing some of the old wartime songs.

FELSTED AND NEWMARKET ATS

It was with great pleasure and pride that the organiser was able to read out the following message to those present on June 7th, and it was received with delight. "The Queen sincerely thanks all ex-Service Members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service who are present at the Victory Services Club for a Reunion, for their kind message of loyal greetings sent on the occasion of their 40th Anniversary. Her Majesty greatly appreciated this message and hopes that the occasion is a great success."

This was the highlight of a very special reunion of ex-ATS from two Headquarters, Essex and Suffolk District stationed at Felsted, Essex, later combining to form East Anglian District at Newmarket. A total of 25, including two daughters accompanying their mothers and a "representative" sister of one of two unit members from Argentina who happened to be over on a visit, met as they do annually at the Victory Services Club in London. After initial greetings and exclamations of surprise to see some long-absent faces of a number who had made a special effort to attend this year, being the 40th since demobilisation in 1946, they enjoyed the usual excellent buffet. A decorated iced cake was ceremoniously cut by Mrs Rosemary Ilott, who was the CO at Felsted, and a generous slice was passed round with a glass of sherry.

After the reading of Her Majesty's message and the Loyal Toast, the organiser was presented with a delightful locket and chain as a thank you gift for all the work she had undertaken over the years to arrange these reunions and keep everyone in touch at least once a year. There followed the usual reminiscing and catching up of news, with the feeling of disbelief that so many years had passed since we all wore the same uniform.

If anyone reading this remembers serving either at Felsted or Newmarket and would like further details, please contact Mrs Jean (Gardiner) Brooks at Cheltenham (0242) 519849. News of other old colleagues is always most welcome.

REUNION NOTICES

WORLD WAR TWO CWAC VETERANS

28th ANNUAL REUNION 1986

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

This event is sponsored by the Canadian Corps Association, CWAC 47, the last weekend in September 1986, in Toronto, Ontario. This is the 28th Annual Reunion for our Canadian Women's Army Corps.

Here is our schedule in brief:

Friday evening from 7pm September 26th — Photo viewing, Wreath Laying Ceremony, Social Time, Dancing and Fun.

Saturday 12 noon to closing, September 27th — Reunion Luncheon, Dinner, Dancing and Fun for all.

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.

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE — DOVER CASTLE

The Dover Branch are holding their annual Remembrance Service at St Mary's-in-the-Castle, Dover at 3 pm on Sunday, 19 October 1986. All members of the Association are very welcome to attend, and refreshments will be served after the service.

Enquiries to Miss M Kennedy, 144 The Gateway, Dover, Kent CT16 1LJ.

ATS DINNER CLUB

The Annual luncheon of the ATS Dinner Club will be held on Saturday 4th October 1986 at the Bloomsbury Crest Hotel, London W1.

Membership of the Club continues to increase, but we would like to hear from many more ex-ATS. Enquiries should be sent to the Treasurer, Miss E Wade, 2 Chestnut Court, 65 Mulgrave Road, Sutton, Surrey SM2 6LR.

WESTERN AREA

If any members have any particular talent, or good ideas for a "War Time Type Concert Party" and can volunteer their services for 15th November 1987, please contact: Chris Grigg, Shropshire Branch, Tel: Telford 55537 or Mary Beeston, Wolverhampton Branch, Tel: Wolverhampton 56086.

Copies of any Barrack Room songs (preferably with music) from any members would be most gratefully received.

We hope to hold the Concert in the Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton and have at least one nationally known war-time entertainer.

GRAND REUNION 1988

The Annual General Meeting of the WRAC Association on Saturday 12 April 1986 approved the following outline arrangements for the 1988 Grand Reunion which will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1938.

Fri 7 Oct 88 — 2 or 3 pm.

Service of Thanksgiving in St Paul's Cathedral

Sat 8 Oct 88 —

Grand Reunion in the Barbican Centre London.

Outline programme:

Morning — Secretaries' Meeting followed by Council and Secretaries' lunch.

Afternoon — The Annual General Meeting postponed from April.

Evening — Buffet Supper followed by speeches.

The public area of the Barbican Centre will be open from 8.30 am. Members can meet their friends, make purchases of souvenirs and have something to eat before the AGM.

Members will be expected to make their own travel and accommodation arrangements although lists of accommodation will be provided. The cost per member exclusive of travel and accommodation is expected to be between £15 and £20.

The Ex-Service Fellowship Centres run two residential homes for ex-servicemen and ex-merchant seamen and their widows. New Belvedere House in Stepney, East London, can take 29 residents. Hollenden House in Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, can take 52. Residents, who must ordinarily be of pensionable age, have their own rooms in comfortable buildings.

They are not nursing homes, and residents on admission must be capable of looking after themselves though some help, for example with bathing, can be given. Those interested should apply to: The Administrator, Ex-Service Fellowship Centres, 8 Lower Grosvenor Place, London SW1W 0EP.

BRANCH NEWS

DOVER AND FOLKESTONE The main event in our year is the Remembrance Service held at the Church of St Mary's-in-the-Castle, by kind permission of the Garrison Commander, conducted by the Garrison Chaplain. This Service was instituted by our Branch Founder, Mrs Jean Bishop, who was Secretary of the branch until last November.

The members were very pleased to welcome Brigadier Field and Lt Colonel & Mrs Dunn to the Service on 20th October. The Deputy Constable of Dover Castle, Brigadier M Lee and the Mayors and Mayoresses of Dover and Folkestone very kindly attended along with many members of the Association from other Branches in Kent, Sussex and Surrey. It was a great pleasure to have with us four ex-ATS members who served at the Castle in 1940 and who were subscribers to a Chalice which the ATS of that time presented to the Church. The Chaplain, the Rev P Craig, received a plaque from the Branch to be displayed in the Church thus forming a link through the Church with comrades serving during the war years.

During the summer members and friends made a visit to the Royal Hospital, Chelsea which they found most interesting and enjoyable. Various members gave tea parties in their homes during the year which the more active members attended. Several members attended the Cenotaph Service on Remembrance Sunday and a wreath was laid on behalf of the Branch at the Dover War Memorial.

A Christmas lunch was held in Dover which was well attended and a presentation was made to the retiring Secretary, Mrs Bishop.

We now hope for more new members to help in our fund raising efforts which enabled us to send £95 to the Benevolent Funds.

EXETER Our numbers have continued to increase, but some members living outside Exeter have transport problems.

Our Annual General Meeting was held on May 13th and the Exeter Branch of the Royal British Legion very kindly allowed us to use their Headquarters. A new Chairman was appointed — Mrs Elizabeth Buckley and also a Secretary and Treasurer — Mrs Joan Hall and Mrs Hilda Hiscox respectively.

We met again on June 24th at the RBL, and our next meeting will be in September. We are hoping to arrange a Birthday Lunch on October 28th.

GLASGOW The branch continued to meet in the RA Club, from September to May. We are still a growing branch and the average attendance at meetings is 35 - 40.

We started our session in September with a coffee evening and holiday gift stall, with the proceeds going to the Erskine

Hospital.

Our area AGM was in October with the Glasgow Branch giving a luncheon in the HQ Officers' Mess of 154 (Lowland) RCT TA. We are grateful to Lt Col Constable for the use of the unit facilities. We met for the first time Major Sue Westlake, Comd WRAC Scotland, our new Chairman. She was our guest at our Christmas party, where she entertained us by playing her guitar and singing. In January Major Westlake was the guest at our dinner, which 38 members attended, and once again we had the hospitality of the Officers' Mess at 154 (Lowland) RCT TA. It was a most enjoyable evening.

Our Branch was invited to join in the Remembrance Service in George Square, where we laid a wreath.

HASTINGS With the expansion of the branch to fifty members there have been requests for more social events, and to organise and fund such functions a Social Section under the Chairmanship of Mary Bilton has been formed. Mary was a founder member of the branch as was Joan Lovell who is now running a most lucrative "Bring & Buy" stall at our monthly meetings.

The Hastings Ex-Service Singers were originally formed to lead community singing at the Festival of Remembrance held annually at the White Rock Theatre. The Group was started by a branch member, another member is secretary, and eight members are singers. In addition to the Festival, they have now entertained at such functions as the Red Cross Christmas Party and at the Blind Centre, and on one occasion participated in a concert to raise funds for a local Church. The Group now numbers twenty-six, all of whom are members of Ex-Service Associations.

May 6th was a very busy day for the branch. Six of our members left for our twin town of Bethune to participate in their VE Day commemoration, and in Hastings eight members represented the branch when the Queen Mother inaugurated the new electrified railway service. A description of the four day visit to Bethune is on page 69.

The representatives at Hastings Railway Station were just to the right of the dais from which the Queen Mother spoke when she unveiled the plaque. As usual we wore our green berets, white jumpers and green skirts, which made us a smart and conspicuous group. We are most grateful to British Rail for permitting us to participate.

We send greetings and best wishes to all branches, especially Wimbledon — the tree from which this branch grew.

LIVERPOOL Although it is some time since we reported in the Lioness, the Branch continues to be very active. We are usually represented at all reunions and functions, not only locally but also area and national. Many of our members attended the Grand Reunion in Harrogate, which we all enjoyed.

We have representatives on the Merseyside Council of Ex-Service and Regimental Associations. This body joined with the Royal British Legion to hold a service of thanksgiving at the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral in September 1985, to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the ending of the Second World War. Our members attended the service and some took part in the march past the Cenotaph. The Council also award certificates for exceptional work for the benefit of service and ex-service men and women over a period of time. We were all very proud when our Branch President, Miss A G Learmouth MBE TD was presented with one of these certificates by the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside. Each year we attend the Remembrance Service at the local Cenotaph and every member is given the opportunity, in turn, of laying our wreath.

We meet every third Wednesday in the month (except July and August) and try to vary our activities. Our main fund raising event is a Bring and Buy sale each December. The proceeds from this enable us to make charitable donations and help to pay the rent of our meeting room. We have also found that an occasional book sale is another way to increase our funds. In January we had a very enjoyable cheese and wine party. In May this year we were pleased to entertain some members of the newly formed Southport Branch and we wish them every success in the future.

We are now looking forward to our 40th birthday party in October. When we held a 10th anniversary celebration in 1956 we little thought we would still be "soldiering-on" 30 years later.

Our membership remains steady at about 45 with an average of 25 attending meetings. We enjoy getting together on these occasions and it is the loyal support and generosity of our members which has enabled the Branch to continue all these years. We are always pleased to welcome ex-WRAC and ATS to our meetings.

LONDON Monthly Meetings at the Union Jack Club have maintained a good attendance and membership has steadily increased with a welcome addition of several newly retired WRAC members as well as many ex-ATS. Our two Bring and Buy afternoons and various raffles resulted in a satisfactory £290 for funds.

Our programme for the year has included an interesting talk from the Senior Librarian of the Borough of Lambeth, and a heart-warming showing of video tapes of the rehabilitation and recreational work of BLESMA from Mr R R Holland the Deputy General Secretary. The water-skiing expertise of the limbless is an example to us all that there is no disability that cannot be overcome by those with the courage to do so, and we were pleased to be able to make a contribution to the splendid work of BLESMA. In another field, we heard from a member of the Samaritans about the friendly and caring ear that they provide as they man their telephones twenty-four hours of every day all over the country for the relief of the lonely and distressed. Miss Mary Curtis also gave us a fascinating glimpse of wild Wales with her beautiful colour slides.

A good turn out of members was maintained at the Garden of Remembrance and on the Remembrance Day parade in November.

MANCHESTER We meet on the first Wednesday of the month from April to December at the RAMC Barracks, Upper Chorlton Road, and upwards of fifteen members attend.

We were invited to attend the social following the Secretaries' meeting in Crewe, and the company, not to mention the food, was first-class. We had our usual Bring and Buy sale and Christmas party to bring our year to a close.

Several members attended the AGM on April 12th and those who attended the Northern area reunion in Harrogate voted it a great success. We very much regret the loss of our very popular Chairman Mrs Joan Beadell (nee Boar) in April this year. She is sadly missed. A very active member, Mrs Norma Earith, has moved to Prestatyn. She could sell a raffle ticket to a beggar, and we were sorry to see her go!

31 members and friends attended our annual dinner on May 29th. We had an excellent meal, and we shall be making donations to the charities from the raffle profits.

ROCHDALE We had our Standard dedicated in April and it was a very proud day for us. Bolton, Bradford and Manchester

branches were represented, and the Bradford Standard bearer led the parade to our Parish Church. 14 Standards were carried including the British Legion Women's Section of which several of us are members.

There was a very good attendance at the Church, and after paying the organist's fee, the collection was halved between the Church fund and the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund. The sun came out whilst we were in Church (it rained heavily on the way there) so we were able to parade the Standard through the town back to the British Legion for a buffet and concert by the band who led the parade.

Several of us enjoyed the Northern reunion at Harrogate, and the weekend after we again paraded our Standard at the town's Mayor-making ceremony.

We are shortly to lose one of our members, Ida Farrinond who is going to Australia, but she is hoping to join a branch over there. We will be very sorry to lose her.



On the way to the dedication of our Standard.

SALISBURY We continue to meet at the Royal British Legion on the fourth Thursday in each month, during the winter months. During the summer we are very fortunate to have the pleasure of meeting in members' homes and gardens. We have an average attendance of 25 - 30 members at meetings.

In April we held our annual get-together at the Sgts' Mess UKLF with serving members. We all look forward to this occasion and our guest of honour was Colonel S P Nield, South West Area Chairman.

Fifteen members attended the South West Area reunion at Bath on Sunday May 18th when we had a most enjoyable day out. We have several new members, all ex-ATS, who are looking forward to attending the ATS Dinner Club luncheon in October. Sadly we have lost three very faithful members over the past year. Rosemary Pyke was one of the first to join the Association in Salisbury; she served as a Junior Commander ATS from 1938 - 1945. Nora Godwin joined the ATS in 1939 serving 4 years at GHQ Middle East and leaving the service in 1945. Major Judy Watts MBE who also served in the Middle East died in March. She was very involved in running a home for orphans in Hong Kong.

One of our members was recently allocated a Royal British Legion flat where she is very happy.

SHROPSHIRE We continue to meet on the second Tuesday of each month at the Oakengates Community Centre, Telford at 7.30 pm. More members would be very welcome and anyone who is interested should contact the Chairman, Mrs Terri Goff, on Telford 811532.

The Annual outing on June 8th last year was to the Cheshire Workshops at Burwardsley, Near Chester. Members and friends watched candle making and various other crafts before having supper in the Hayloft Restaurant. A VJ day barbecue was held at the home of our Chairman, Mrs Joan Purcell to which ten members came. A service at the Parish

Church, Hadley, Telford, held on August 11th was also attended by ten members. A wreath was laid at the Hadley Memorial.

Sixteen members attended a Western Area reunion at Crewe on September 28th. Several members paraded at the Cenotaph in Whitehall on Remembrance Sunday and thirteen members attended the service at COD Donnington. The Christmas Dinner was held at The Duke of York Hotel, Trench, Telford on December 14th. Nine members attended the AGM in London on Saturday April 12th.

A profit of £250.11 for Branch Funds was raised on three Rummage Sales, and Nancy Meredith a 69 year old member who had won a flight in a RAF Glider at Cosford, raised £50.50 sponsorship money. We have donated £150 to the Shropshire Hospice and £50 to the WRAC Benevolent Fund.

SOUTHAMPTON We continue to flourish with a membership of 46, and get an average attendance of 30 at our monthly meetings.

1986, so far, has been very good to us as we have enjoyed, amongst other activities, a cookery demonstration by the husband of one of our members, a First Aid talk and resuscitation demonstration on "Annie", and a slide show on Riding for the Disabled, which gave room for much thought.

On April 28th two of our members were invited by Weymouth & Portland Branch to the Dedication of their new Standard, followed by tea at a nearby hotel. A most interesting and enjoyable day, blessed with continuous sunshine — being the first sunny weekend of the year. The day was made even more enjoyable as the President, Mrs Peg McElwaine, was our ex Territorial Army colleague whom we had not seen for 18 years. What a marvellous welcome we received.

May 7th saw 32 of us sitting down to our usual Annual Dinner held at the Kings Court Hotel. This is an event always looked forward to and enjoyed in a nice relaxed atmosphere.

Our thanks go to the Bath branch, who were the hosts for this year's Sub Area Re-union on May 18th for a very well organised and happy day, again being blessed by sunshine! We went by coach to this event, and many enjoyed a trip down the river in the afternoon, followed by a most welcome tea and huge raffle. Old acquaintances were renewed and new ones made, making it all very worthwhile.

We are now looking forward to an American Supper evening to which members of the Association of Wrens have been invited. At the same time we are busy preparing for and manning a stand we have at the Southampton 3-day Annual Show on the Common, with a view to hopefully increasing our membership.

Correspondence

Mrs B Simpson of 35 Hercules Street, Rockingham, W Australia wrote to us in April describing the Anzac Day Parade and Service in Perth in which she took part. "I was overwhelmed by the kindness and friendliness of these ladies who included me in their luncheon after the parade. The service was held in the open on the Esplanade and there were literally thousands of people lining the route. HE Professor Gordon Reid, Governor of Western Australia, was the Reviewing Officer. Remembrance of our dear Queen and members of the Royal Family dominated the beginning of the service".

Mrs Simpson received four letters from different parts of England from members she had not seen or heard of since 1945 as a result of her notice in the last Lioness. She was very happy to receive these letters and has now moved to her permanent address.

Mrs K Palmer, Flat 91 Lord Walsingham Court, Glebe Close, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 2LT wrote to pay tribute to her dear friend and colleague of 28 years, Betty Clark (nee Evans) whose death was reported in the last Lioness. Katie Palmer, as she was known in the Sgts' Mess at Guildford, feels sure that many ex-service members will remember Betty for her fun and for the most delicious pastry which she made for them in the Sgts' Mess. She will also be remembered with affection by those whom she taught in the School of Cookery.

Miss Florence Soars of Flat 13, 105 Turnstone Court, Westgate Bay Avenue, Westgate, Kent would like to hear from anyone who was stationed in Brighton during the last war. She was at the Ocean Hotel, Saltdean, Brighton which was an ATS Reception Depot at the beginning of the war.

Mrs Grace Hansford (ex-WO2 G Shreeve) of 3 Shimmoor Street, Katoomba, NSW 2780, Australia sent the photograph which was taken outside St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh after a service to mark the start of the WRAC in 1949. At the time she was Chief Clerk to the ADWRAC Scottish Command, Lt Col Rosemary Wells, and remained there until 1951 when she was posted to Singapore. She was discharged in 1953 and went from Singapore to Australia. Mrs Hansford has visited England three times since then and is planning her next trip for 1988 so that she can come to the Grand Reunion.



L-R: Gen Sir Gordon MacMillan, GOCinC Scottish Command, HRH The Princess Royal, Brig Dame Mary Tyrwhitt, DWRAC, Lt Col R J Wells, ADWRAC Scottish Command, Dame Helen Gwynne Vaughan.

Mrs Pauline O'Connell (nee Yeo) of 75 Pitt Street, Wanganui, North Island, New Zealand would like to hear from anyone who served with her at the Army School of Education, Wilton Park, Beaconsfield, Bucks from December 1953 to November 1956.

Any ex-ATS friends of Mrs U M H Smith (nee Sgt Ursula "Tessa" Worts) who would like to meet at a reunion party, please contact Mrs S Goddard, 58 Chilvers Bank, Baldock, Herts SG7 6HT.

Mr J Maxwell of 102 Gibbon Road, London SE15 3XL would like to contact anyone who served with his late mother Patricia Mary Maxwell (nee Gieran) of E Coy, No 2 Northern Ireland Group between 1941 - 1946.

Mrs J Stewart (nee Smith) of 168A Callowbrook Lane, Rubery, Birmingham B45 9LB was one of the recruits in the photo published on page 21 of the last Lioness. She is on the right in the second row, and went on to serve in the Canal Zone with Jeanne Vincent (second right back row) now Mrs Retter of New Zealand. She would like to hear from Betty Stutchberry, June Sayer, Jean Rawlins, Marjorie Tindall, May Ross and anybody else in the photograph.

Mrs J Ledger (nee Wilby) of 55 Hope Street, Barnsley, South Yorks S75 2AY would like to contact anyone who served with her in No 1 ATS Signal Coy, ME Forces, Cairo, Egypt in 1945. They were switchboard operators on the Middle East exchange, and had a marvellous time in spite of the flies and heat.

Mrs Jo Anscombe (Pte Joyce Steer) of 7 Welford Green, Moor Farm, Hereford HR4 0PE writes that she responded to Mrs June Robinson's plea for ex GL Wallahs of 517 (M) HAA Bty from 1942 - 1945 at Lowestoft to contact her. The result was a memorable reunion in Hereford on April 2nd and a meeting arranged for July 5th at Larkhill. She writes "I joined the ATS on Friday February 13th (a lucky day for me!) and trained at Guildford. The photograph of 3 Platoon, A Coy was taken at the end of our 3-week basic training. After leaving Guildford I was posted to Newark and later went to my first gun site at Corby. I would love to hear from anyone interested in writing to me".



Miss A P Cox (ex Capt WRAC) has emigrated to Sydney and is at present with her sister. Her address is: c/o Miss Pam Cox, Flat 1, 78 Macpherson Street, Bronte, Sydney 2024, New South Wales. Tel: Sydney 3874108. She would love to hear from her old colleagues now, and please look her up if you visit Sydney.

Miss Mary K Wilson of 2A Mile End House, Stray Road, Harrogate HG2 8AR would like to hear from any of the five drivers stationed at Eindhoven or Breda 1945 - 46, Jean Brown, Diana Hamilton, Esme Sills, Leslie Little and Barbara Tickner.

Mrs Iris Boytor (nee Addinall) of 449 Parnell Road, Parnell, Auckland 1, New Zealand writes that eight ex-ATS living in New Zealand attended the Sydney reunion for ex-service-women in November last year. She advised that "anyone visiting Sydney should call at the British Ex-Services Club, 541 Kent Street, Sydney, NSW 2000 where they will meet the Secretary, Mrs Olive Durkin, and be assured of a wonderful reception".

Mr Paul "Duke" Hammersley who was ASM of the LAD attached to 13th Line of Communications Signal Regiment at Chislehurst in Kent will be visiting the UK from New Zealand in 1986 and would like to make contact with any friends from that time especially Jeanne Jennings. Please contact via Corps HQ at Guildford.

Miss Alice Wilson of 13 Daimler Avenue, Studd Hill, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 8AE was another recruit at No 7 ATS Training Centre, Guildford who kept her platoon photograph. Sgt Marjorie Dean was the Platoon Sgt. Miss Wilson is second from the right in the back row, and the date is March 3rd 1942.



Mrs Jean Hird (ex Pte Jean Smith) of 19 Dudley Walk, Lead Lane, Ripon, N Yorkshire would like to contact anyone who served with her in 555 (M) HAA Battery which was formed in Reading in June 1942. She did her basic training at Pontefract and went from there to Sheringham on a firing course and then to a gun site near Plymouth.

Mrs J Hall (nee Hawker) of 160 Wear Bay Road, Folkestone, Kent asks if anyone recognises themselves in the photograph below. If so, please get in touch with her. This was a Guard of Honour for the wedding of Pte Dorothy McEvitt to Gnr George Sibert at the Catholic Church, Folkestone in 1943. They were all stationed with 130 LAA Regt.



Mrs Peggy Davies of 5 Hawthorne Close, Nether Poppleton, York YO2 6HP would like to hear from anyone who served in 126 Bty, 46 (M) HAA Regt from June 1949 to the disbandment of the Regiment in 1955, or in Hong Kong from 1956-1958.

Mrs Davies writes "When I was asked by Lt Col Ramsey to be lead singer at the Harrogate Grand Reunion, I agreed with some trepidation. When I stepped on to the stage and the Staff Band struck up, I gazed at about 800 faces and hoped that everyone would join in. Everyone followed suit".

Miss Norah Fallon of 17 Bakers Almshouses, Lea Bridge Road, London E10 7EF would like to contact New Zealand ex-servicewomen in the UK for a reunion on Anzac Day, April 15th 1987. She served with the NZ Army and the NZ Air Force in the 1950s, having served in the ATS in Northern Ireland. She sends special greetings to all ex-members of 525 Coast Regt RA.

Mrs Dot Crussell (nee Bardwell) of 39 Jacksons Lane, Billericay, Essex CM11 1AH would like to hear from old friends who served in the ATS from 1942-1946, particularly Dot Lewis from Barking and Winnie Browning from Bristol. Mrs Crussell was on the permanent staff of No 1 ATS Training Centre, Talavera Camp, Northampton and later in Torquay, Leicester, Devizes and Aldermaston.

Mrs A Smith (ex Pte Kemp from Bromsgrove) of 25 Wilmott Close, Gosport, Hants PO12 3SB, tel: 0705-527140 wishes to trace ATS who served with her at Bovington Camp and West Lulworth Camp, attached to the Royal Tank Regt from 1941-1944. They were Pte Connie Passingham, Pte Betty Andrews, LCpl Hazel Gillingham and Joyce Pettit, and others whose surnames she cannot remember.

Mrs Sylvia Musgrave, Chairman of the Bath Branch has sent the photographs below showing some of the members waiting to greet our President, HRH The Duchess of Kent when she arrived to open a centre for studies. In the group picture Mrs Musgrave is holding the Association badge and on the extreme left is Miss Betty Mould MBE who served in the QMAAC and is now 92 and still very active in branch affairs. The other photograph shows the Duchess of Kent speaking to Miss Mould.

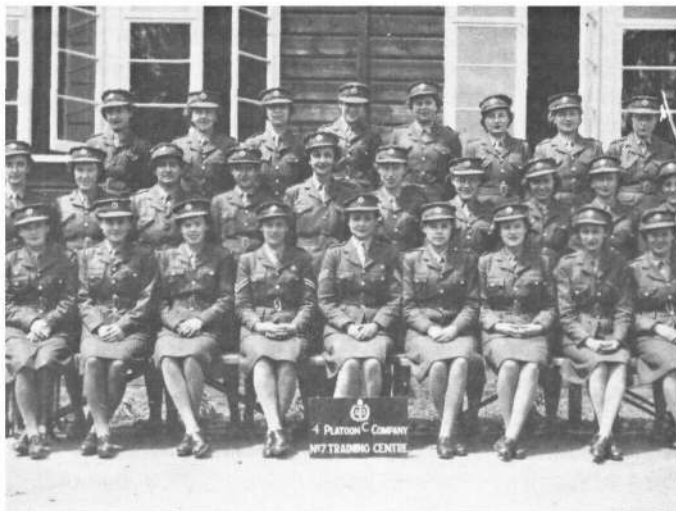
Mrs Musgrave and Miss Mould formed the Bath branch 39 years ago.



Mrs J M Falla (nee Pte June Crawford) of La Moye House, La Moye Vale, Guernsey, Channel Islands would like to hear from anyone who served in 590 (M) HAA Regt in Hayes, Middlesex from 1942 - 1943.

Mrs Elizabeth Thomas of Abberd Lodge, 66 Oxford Road, Calne, Wilts SN11 8AH writes that in June she and her husband went on a pilgrimage to the D-Day beaches arranged by his former regiment, the 22nd Dragoons. During their stay she was introduced to an ex-ATS of the Free French forces who had trained at No 7 ATS Training Centre, Guildford in 1941. Her name was Emilienne Amandack (now Mme Nicole) and she lives in Le Havre.

In the photograph below Mme Nicole is first left in the back row. If you are also in the photograph and remember her on the course do write to her c/o Mrs Thomas. She would love to hear from you.



BIRTHS

ROLLINS On July 9th 1986 to Major and Mrs J W Rollins (Captain Anne Rollins) a daughter, Olivia Anne.

STEVENSON On October 11th 1985 to Lieutenant and Mrs A C Stevenson (Captain Julie Stevenson, nee Simons) a son, Christopher James Donald.

MARRIAGE

SWINHoe-YOUNG On 1 April 1986 in Fareham, Hampshire, Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Crispin Swinhoe to Miss Josephine Young (Captain Jo Young).

OBITUARY

Atkinson. Mrs Mollie Atkinson (nee Bogle) of Bradford on 19 February 1986. ATS.

Bartlett. Mrs A P Bartlett of Poole, Dorset on 24 January 1986. Subaltern ATS.

Beadell. Mrs J Beadell (nee Boar) of Chorlton-cum-Hardy in April 1986. ATS and WRAC.

Cadden. Lt Col N K Cadden OBE of Omagh on 6 February 1986. ATS and WRAC.

Dale. Mrs B M Dale (nee Lord) of Norwich on 16 February 1986. ATS.

Darby. 2Lt J M Darby WRAC TA in a road accident while on exercise on 30 May 1986. WRAC TA.

Duckworth. Miss M Duckworth of Bradford on 11 February 1986. ATS.

Eke. Mrs K Eke (nee Springate) on 21 February 1986. Lt (QM) WRAC TA.

Felton-Jones. Mrs V M Felton-Jones (nee Griffin) of Queensferry, Clwyd on 10 April 1986. ATS.

Glasgow. Mrs M M Glasgow of Clogher, Co Tyrone on 29 June 1985. ATS.

Godwin. Miss Nora Godwin of Salisbury in February 1986. ATS.

Gray. Miss M I Gray of Edinburgh on 3 March 1986. ATS.

Heaney. Miss Beatrice Heaney of Burntwood, Staffs on 31 July 1985. QMAAC.

Ind. Mrs Alison Ind of Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire on 8 January 1986. ATS.

Jackson. Mrs I J Jackson (nee Smart) of Peterborough in October 1985. ATS.

Jones. Miss Olwen Jones of London SW1 on 3 May 1986. ATS and WRAC.

Kember. Miss Ada Kember of Brighton, Sussex on 20 March 1986. QMAAC and ATS.

Liardet. Lady (Dorothy) Liardet of Haslemere, Surrey on 7 April 1986. Chief Commander ATS.

McColl-Berry. Miss J McColl-Berry on 3 March 1986. Subaltern ATS.

McKay. Mrs Marie McKay of Glasgow on 13 January 1986. ATS.

Oakes. Mrs M Oakes (nee Bunn) of Long Eaton, Notts in June 1986. ATS.

Paterson. Miss Judith Paterson (Olive Oak) of Cardiff on 8 May 1986. ATS.

Potter. Miss M M Potter of London W6 on 15 May 1986. Chief Commander ATS.

Romanis. Mrs G Romanis of Carlisle on 7 February 1986. WRAC TA. Founder and former Secretary of the Carlisle Branch.

Sandeman-Allen. Lady Margaret Sandeman-Allen (nee Marquis) of London SW3 on 4 March 1986. Senior Commander ATS.

Scrivener. Mrs I M Scrivener (nee White) of Sittingbourne, Kent in June 1986. ATS.

Spray. Mrs Pam Spray of St Leonards on Sea, Sussex on 21 June 1986. ATS.

Templeman. Miss E V Templeman of Knebworth Park, Herts on 24 February 1986. ATS.

Tewkesbury. Miss Marjorie Tewkesbury of Bootle, Lancs in March 1986. ATS.

Thomson. Miss N J Thomson of Bristol in December 1985. Junior Commander ATS.

de Torre Hermosa. Irene, Marquesa de Torre Hermosa OBE TD (nee Bignold de Cologan) of Achanalt, Ross-shire on 2 June 1986. Chief Commander ATS.

Tuffery. Miss Cicely G M Tuffery of Falmouth, Cornwall on 10 March 1986. ATS and RSM WRAC.

Watkin. Pte Watkin of Aldershot, Hants in a traffic accident on 27 April 1986. WRAC TA.

Watts. Major E V (Judy) Watts MBE of Warminster, Wilts on 22 February 1986. ATS and WRAC.

Webb. Mrs M M Webb (nee Parsons) of Crosby, Lancs on 30 May 1986. ATS.

White. Miss Judith E White of Tetbury, Glos on 12 May 1985. Controller ATS.

Wild. Mrs Jose Wild (nee Ruston) of Stockport, Cheshire on 28 February 1986. ATS.

Yetton. Miss Ada Yetton of Bexhill, Sussex on 19 February 1986. QMAAC.

Young. Miss D H Young of Folkestone, Kent on 24 March 1986. WAAC and QMAAC.

LONDON GAZETTE

BIRTHDAY HONOURS

CBE

Brigadier H G Meechie ADC

MBE

WO2 M E V Colquhoun

BEM

Sergeant A L Carroll

PROMOTIONS

Regular Army

Brigadier S P Nield

Colonel G K Ramsey MBE

Lieutenant Colonel J M Roulstone

Captains: S J Lambert, J E Grafton

Lieutenants: T. Stewart, G A Tilford

Special Regular Commissions

Captains: C J Lewis, G Harrison

Short Service Commissions

Captains: H Wildman, C S O'Nians, E A Crittenden, C Ronan, F A Moore, M T Crooke, J L Bedborough, L J Bownass, K P Sawford, J K Greig, A M Jackson, P M Fincham, S L Vincent, L M Wilde, M A S Phillips, K J Bettison, M R L Stewart, K L Scott

Lieutenants: J Trainor, K D Jones, D M Allen, A S Chesworth, S A Holt, S M Parks, J E Pevalin, S M Wilson, E A Dunn, K M Attfield, S M Charlesworth, S P Dixon, A C Hart, L S Horton, D J Oberheim, C Frearson, N P Moffat, I Thomson, S H Watson, M L Tait, A J Bradley, F E Evans, S Davison, F H Gardner, S M Kingham, F M E Thomas, A Venner, G M Ward, X R Bamber, N A Collier-Jackson, J Donald, G E Ireland, K E Pulverman, A J Tindall, E R Williams, D A Bould

2Lieutenants: H J Allen, F M Cathcart, C J Colby, J R Cooke, M E Harvell, C A Glasgow, C M J Hay, L E Hewitt, D D Jardine, D Johnson, S E Kemp, S J Newman, J V Rawson, S E Ross, J R Sneller, S C L Walker

Short Service Volunteer Commission

Lieutenant P J Winder

RETIREMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Regular Army

Majors: R C Warne MBE, S J B Webb, R A Chilton, M R Ashplant

Captains: J M Ripley, A J Giles

Short Service Commissions

Captains: A Rollins, J E Chisholm, B M Simmonds, R E A Woods

Lieutenant H L Baylis

PERSONAL COLUMN

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

FOR SALE Everything for the well-dressed officer. Complete uniform from Mess Dress to Combats. Slim size 10, 5' 5". Contact Mrs Chisholm, 12 Bishopton Park, Ripon, North Yorkshire. Tel: Ripon 707933.

FOR SALE No 2 Dress size 12. Brand new £225 negotiable. Contact Capt M G E Piers. Tel: Middle Wallop Mil 227 or 0823-490333 (evenings).

FOR SALE No 2 Dress uniform complete with cap. Size 12, 5' 11". Good condition. Contact Miss Gillian Ness. Tel: 0344-883537 (evenings).

FOR SALE No 2 Dress in immaculate condition £40. Mess Dress and sash £40. Barrack skirt £15, both good condition. All size 10/12, 5' 4". Offers considered. Tel: 01-751-1074. May deliver Aldershot area.

FOR SALE No 2 Dress hardly worn £100. Mess Dress and silk sash £50. Barrack skirt £15. All size 5' 10". Forage cap with badge size 7¼ £20. Tel: 0730-63767.

FOR SALE No 2 Dress in excellent condition. Size 12/14, height 5' 7". £40. Tel: Hemel Hempstead 59125.

FOR SALE British Warm £50. No 2 Dress £45. Officer's beret with badge £3. Barrack skirt £15. All ono. Tel: 042877 (Passfield) 272.

FOR SALE No 2 Dress uniform £50. Size 12, 5' 4". Tel: 025126-3195.

FOR SALE No 2 Dress as new. Size 12, 5' 4". £100 or near offer. Tel: Catterick Mil 2068.

FOR SALE Uniforms to fit 5' 4", 38" bust, 42" hips. No 2 Dress jacket and skirt hardly used £75. No 2 Dress jacket and skirt used £25. Extra No 2 Dress skirt £15. 7 tab tie shirts, £5 each. Some tab ties included for total of £35 for shirts and ties. Mess Dress £50, silk sash £25. OR EVERYTHING FOR £200. Tel: 042873-4571 evenings.

FOR SALE Mess Dress £30. Greatcoat £30. Tropical Dress £10. Riding mac £5. Complete range of uniform size 14/16, 5' 4". Tel: 0734-734421.

FOR SALE Mess Dress size 16 (slim) 5' 7". Nearly new, fully lined. No sash or pips £100 ono. Tel: Leicester Mil 235 or 0509-235037 evenings.

FOR SALE Mess Dress worn five times £100. No 2 Dress £125. Size 12, 5' 6". Both in excellent condition. Contact Mrs Disney. Tel: 08045-58220 evenings.

WANTED Accommodation for non-smoking couple in Guildford area September 1986 - April 1987. Contact Capt A Webb RE, Tel: 0752 (Plymouth) 700844.

WRAC ASSOCIATION APPOINTMENTS

HQ BRANCH Chairman Colonel (Retd) E J Bowles, 12 Chantry Court, Church Road, Frimley, Camberley, Surrey GU16 5AB
Representative of QMAAC Mrs M V Curtis, 293 Mawneys Road, Romford, Essex RM7 8DR
Secretary
General Secretary

SOUTH EAST AREA

Chairman Lt Colonel C R Bolland WRAC
HQ South East District, Steele's Road,
Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DP
Vice Chairman Lt Col (Retd) A Bray,
Burgh Hill Place, Bramshott, Liphook,
Hants GU30 7RQ

NO 1 SUB AREA

Chairman Lt Col (Retd) A Bray

NO 2 SUB AREA

Chairman Mrs J J Wells, Jewells, Faussett Hill,
Street End, Canterbury, Kent CT4 7AJ

BRANCH SECRETARIES

ALDERSHOT Mrs D Davis, 3 Drake Avenue, Mytchett,
Camberley, Surrey GU16 6AN
BRIGHTON Mrs V M Bradford, 30 Bodiam Avenue,
Brighton BN2 4LB
CANTERBURY Mrs D Dennis, 27 Oakwood Road, Sturry,
Canterbury, Kent CT2 0LU
DEAL Mrs R Quinn, 17 Patterson Close, Upper
Deal CT14 9LZ
DOVER Miss M. Kennedy, 144 The Gateway,
Marine Parade, Dover, Kent CT16 1LJ
HASTINGS Miss D Dixon, 39 Pine Avenue, Hastings,
E Sussex
MEDWAY Mrs H M Dodd, 26 Forge Lane,
Midgham, Rochester, Kent ME3 7AS

SOUTH WEST AREA

Chairman	Colonel F E Hutley, Comd WRAC UKLF, Old Sarum, Erskine Barracks, Wilton, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP2 0AG
Vice Chairman	Lt Colonel (Retd) D J Freeland, Overstream House, Heytesbury, Wiltshire BA12 0EE
Secretary	Miss J Beresford, 6 Heath Farm, Barford St Martin, Nr Salisbury, Wiltshire

NO 1 SUB AREA

Chairman	Vacant
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NO 2 SUB AREA

Chairman	Lt Colonel (Retd) D J Freeland
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BRANCH SECRETARIES

BATH	Mrs J Morris, 25 Roundhill Grove, Bath BA2 1JT
BOURNMOUTH	Mrs V Lovell, 29 Norwich Mansions, Norwich Avenue West, Bournemouth BH2 6AL
CHELTENHAM	Miss L Stuart-Taylor, 17 Cambray Court, Cambray Place, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 1JU
EXETER	Mrs J Hall, Sidmeadow, Sid Road, Sidmouth, Devon
GUERNSEY	Mrs L Hamilton, Le Puits, Havelet, St Peter Port, Guernsey, Channel Islands
ISLE OF WIGHT	Mrs F Midland, Tile House, The Broadway, Totland, Isle of Wight
PLYMOUTH	Mrs C King, 22 Springhill, Pennycross, Plymouth, Devon PL2 3QZ
PORTSMOUTH	Miss I Bray, 153 Clive Road, Fratton, Portsmouth, Hants
SALISBURY	Mrs J Morgan, 21 Hedley Davis Court, Cherry Orchard Lane, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP2 7UE
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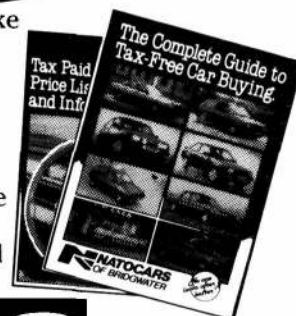
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