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WOMENS ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

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REGISTERED UNDER THE CHARITIES ACT 1960 – No 206184

Founded in 1919

Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH
Tel: Aldershot (0252) 24431 Ext. 8583

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Contributions for next issue by 14 December 1990

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"1990"

On 4th August 1990 our Commandant-in-Chief celebrated her 90th Birthday. All members of the WRAC Association both serving and retired sent loyal and affectionate greetings to Her Majesty on this joyful occasion.

Soon after the outbreak of war in 1939 Her Majesty graciously assented to be Commandant-in-Chief of the Auxiliary Territorial Service, continuing with the Women's Royal Army Corps in 1949. Throughout this fifty-one years Her Majesty has shown continued interest, and concern for the Corps, and has attended many social functions as well as visiting units and meeting officers and servicewomen.



H M Queen Elizabeth visiting ATS at a bakery in Aldershot.



Our Commandant in Chief.

THE WRAC STAFF BAND "CELEBRATION"

A double cassette/CD has been made to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Auxiliary Territorial Service and the 40th Anniversary of the Women's Royal Army Corps.

Music heard at the ATS 50th Anniversary Thanksgiving service held in St Pauls Cathedral London on 7th October 1988 and at the celebratory concert held at the Barbican on 8th October 1988 are reproduced in a digital recording under the direction of Captain Ena Forster psm WRAC. Favourites such as *Colonel Bogey*, *Songs of World War II* eg *Lilli Marlene*, *In the Quartermaster's Stores* and *Run Rabbit Run* are produced with the more serious Elgar's *Nimrod*, Khachaturian's *Sabre Dance* and *Preludium*, *Fugue* by Frescobaldi and the magnificent *Crown Imperial*.

In a more lighthearted vein, the Band performs more modern music with a selection from the films *Star Wars*, *Superman* and *Star Trek*. To start and finish both the ATS March and the WRAC Regimental Marches are featured and are played with style, panache and a flourish of pride.

If you are interested in purchasing this recording, please complete the order form reproduced below and send a cheque for £9.99 to the WRAC Staff Band.

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WRAC Association Brooches	1.75	20p	(up to 6)
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Most items are in green with the Corps crest in gold. Please state size – small, medium, large, ex large and second colour choice for sweatshirts and T-shirts.

Cheques/Postal Orders should be made payable to CORPS HQ A/C and sent to Corps HQ WRAC, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH.

WRAC embroidered rank slides on plain olive green background are available from Corps HQ. Prices as follows:

2Lt/Maj	£1.80 + 20p p&p
Lt/Lt Col	£1.80 + 20p p&p
Capt	£2.10 + 20p p&p
Col/Brig	£2.50 + 20p p&p

Cheques made payable to HQ Mess.

WRAC STAFF BAND

Engagements

October 13	ATS Dinner Club Luncheon, Wellington Barracks.
October 17	RAFA Association Concert, Guildhall, Thetford. 8 pm.
November 10	Lord Mayor's Procession. City of London am.
December 19/20	Combined Concert with Portsmouth Chorus, Guildhall, Portsmouth, 7.15 pm.

CONGRATULATIONS

We offer our congratulations to:

2Lt C S Downes WRAC(V) attached 6/7 QUEENS(V) winner of the Needlemakers sword, awarded annually to the young officer who, in the opinion of the CO, has made the greatest contribution to unit life during the year. The Sword was presented by the Master of the Worshipful Company of Needlemakers of London.

2Lt Downes enlisted into the TA in May 1987, joining 6/7 QUEENS, and gained her commission in October 1988. In September 1989 she assumed responsibility for the whole Battalion's recruit training programme. Despite the many problems connected with her civilian job, and the scepticism of some of her military colleagues she has made a major contribution to the Battalion's life, and her dedication to public service has been in the highest tradition of the Territorial Army.



Congratulations go to SSgt Telford who shot particularly well on the A(W)RA training week at Guildford and who was the Army Inter-Services top scorer. She also won the Mason Trophy for the Highest Combined Civil Service/Inter-Service Score, plus the ARA Pendant for the Highest Aggregate Score in the training week matches against the Surrey Ladies, ACC Depot and JIB Ouston. SSgt Telford is also the Army (WS) Small Bore Champion for 1990.



SSgt Helen Telford with her trophies.

DISTINCTION IN TRAINING

Ptes Janine Hosie, Karen McLean and Rachel Howitt have all recently been awarded prizes for distinction in training. Congratulations and best wishes in all their future careers.



Pte Rachel Howitt and OC TTS fighting over her award for distinction in training! Pte Huntingdon looks on.

WRAC PRIVATE WINS ARMED FORCES CHALLENGE CUP

WRAC Pte Suzanne Crawford, 20, snatched victory in the Armed Forces Challenge Cup, held at Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands on Boxing Day.

She won the 500 metre race on "Bustino" beating a very strong field, including the Commander British Forces, Major General Paul Stevenson OBE.

Suzanne has been riding for 14 years, and has won over 1000 rosettes. She nearly became a riding instructor, but decided that a career in the Army was more worthwhile. She currently works as personal assistant to Squadron Leader Operations at the Combat Operations Centre at MPA.

THE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

PATRON HM THE QUEEN

The Officers Association provides services which are available to ex-officers of the Royal Navy (including Royal Marines), the Army and the Royal Air Force, and their widows and dependants, including those who held Commissions in the Women's Services.

Services include:

Employment—an efficient Employment Department to assist ex-officers of all ages and ranks to find suitable employment, both those just leaving the Services and those who have lost their civilian jobs. Many hundreds of ex-officers are found jobs every year over a wide salary range.

Financial Help—assistance is given in a number of ways such as: cash grants to those in financial distress, continuing allowances to those with very small incomes, help towards Homes fees to those who through age or infirmity can no longer run their own homes and can find no suitable home within their means.

Homes Advice—advice on Homes for the elderly.

A Country Home—running "Huntly" a delightful country home at Bishopsteignton, South Devon, which affords comfort and security for lonely ex-officers at or over the age of 65, both male and female, who do not need special nursing care. Selection is made with due regard to need and service record. Personal contributions are assessed according to individual's means.

Bugalows—running a 12-bungalow estate at Leavesden, Herts, for disabled ex-officers and their families.

The Association has offices in London and Dublin and the Scottish Branch has offices in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

All enquiries should be made to the General Secretary, The Officers' Association, 43 Pall Mall, London SW1 5JY. (Tel: 071-930 0125).

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UNIT NEWS

"SATISFIED SOLDIERS" – WRAC CENTRE

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The weddings took place on 16 June 1990 between Captain Barbara Woodward of Training Company and Captain Julian Free of 1 RHA at East Haddon, Northamptonshire and Sergeant Rachel O'Pray, our Remedial Gymnast and Sergeant Mark Browes, a Remedial Gymnast from Headley Court, at Guildford Surrey – events shared by us all in the feverish preparation beforehand and attended by many of the Unit on the day.



Capt and Mrs Julian Free
after their wedding
at East Hadden Church.

Sgt and Mrs Mark Browes
at their reception at the
Hoggs Back Hotel, Farnham.

We wish them every happiness in the future and our best wishes go too to our other brides-to-be whose marriages have been announced. Second Lieutenant Alice Lucas, Assistant Adjutant and Lieutenant Nick Carpenter RAOC, Lieutenant Beverley Bowen, Platoon Commander HQ and H Coy and Lieutenant Steve Goodburn REME and Captain Fiona Gibson, Instructor WO & NCO Wing and Captain John Phipps, Royal Hampshires.

The Recruiting organisation has been "host" to many of our "Satisfied Soldiers" this year. As members of their local Army Careers Offices they have been received warmly by the Office Staffs and have made an excellent contribution to Recruiting whilst enjoying themselves and all the comforts of home. Typical accounts of their experiences are related briefly by Cpl Fletcher a member of our hard pressed Guardroom Staff, soon to be posted to Northern Ireland –

"I thought I knew all there was to know about enlisting but soon found this to be untrue when I visited my local ACIO at Leeds. The office had a cheerful happy atmosphere and I gained more experience and confidence in having to talk to people on a new subject and learned all about KAPE by visiting local schools, fairs and job centres – a thoroughly enjoyable week." and Pte Smart, a potential Telecommunications Technician "in waiting" who will enjoy another magical day in her career when she goes to Buckingham Palace to receive her Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award –

"Over the four weeks attached to ACIO Warrington I spoke to many WRAC applicants, trying to answer as many questions as possible, showing videos, and being involved in the vast amount of administration in recruiting somebody – it was all well worth while."



Brig G K Ramsey MBE ADC and Colonel M G Ramsey
with the new recruits.

Since our last article hundreds more "Satisfied Soldiers" have shared their "Great Day" with parents, friends and Permanent Staff. The Passing Out Parades, always happy occasions, were especially memorable for Dover recruits, Pte Hayley Gibbins, Pte Karen Manning and Pte Kerrie Oakes who met their Inspecting Officer, also from Dover, Brigadier G K Ramsey MBE, ADC on the 10 May 1990 and Pte Diane Morrin of the Territorial Army who was awarded the Outstanding Recruit Certificate in front of her very proud husband SSgt Dave Morrin REME and baby Stuart.



SSgt Morrin, Pte Morrin and Stuart Morrin.

The Chief Constable of Surrey, Mr. Brian Hayes, has been the Inspecting Officer at numerous Passing Out Parades and on every occasion he has made the day "special" for the recruits. His appearance on the 5th April will be remembered by Permanent Staff and Recruits alike as he paid tribute to the Army whose standards never waiver "despite the present pressures on our two services and a heavy training programme; the tight financial restrictions which take little account of the morale, traditions and the high levels of accountability to the public of our two services". He complimented the WRAC Staff Band and all members on Parade for their excellent appearance and bearing and completed the ceremony by presenting the LS & GC medal to Sergeant Carol Button WRAC, Recruiter from ACIO Norwich who was accompanied by her ACO, Major Bill Jones and a contingent from the Pre-Uniform Course from The Norfolk College of Arts and Technology, Kings Lynn. In these particularly trying times we are deeply indebted to the Surrey Constabulary particularly the Guildford Police Force for their unwavering support and interest in our well-being. Strong links continue to be forged between us

and 17 Long Service and Good Conduct Medals were presented by the Commandant on a most memorable day last summer.

The Long Service and Good Conduct Medal was presented also to a "Satisfied Soldier", our Master Chef, WO2 Phil Bourne ACC by Brigadier Barry Bloxham, the Director Army Catering Corps who kindly visited the unit and lunched with all the Chefs on 13 June 1990. The presentation took place in the Sgts Mess in front of Mrs Sue Bourne, colleagues and friends.



WO2 Bourne, Mrs Bourne and Brigadier J B Bloxham DACC

The WRAC Staff Band have many "Satisfied Soldiers" none more so, I suspect, than on 9th May when they presented cheques totalling £2,500 to Cancer Research and the WRAC Benevolent Fund as a result of a Charity Concert in the Civic Hall, Guildford in February.



Lt Col Dunn accompanied by the Director of Music and members of the Band.

They were present too on another great day at Guildford when after years without a Sports Facility, the Pavilion Playing Fields were opened to the stirring sound of "Chariots of Fire" and the splendid sight of WO2 Maggie Smith and her PTIs "breaking" the tape on the finishing line of the Athletics Track, - a prelude to our first games afternoon of Hockey, Volleyball, Rounders and Athletics.

COMBAT STRESS

'Perhaps the bravest man I ever knew...'



and now, he cannot bear to turn a corner

Six-foot-four Sergeant 'Tiny' G'I'r'e, DCM, was perhaps the bravest man his Colonel ever knew.

But now, after seeing service in Aden, after being booby-trapped and ambushed in Northern Ireland, Sergeant 'Tiny' cannot bear to turn a corner. For fear of what is on the other side.

It is the bravest men and women from the Services that suffer most from mental breakdown. For they have tried, each one of them, to give more, much more, than they could in the service of our Country.

We look after these brave men and women. We help them at home, and in hospital. We run our own Convalescent Homes and, for the old, there is our Veterans' Home where they can see out their days in peace.

These men and women have given their minds to their Country. If we are to help them, we must have funds. Do please help us with a donation, and with a legacy too, perhaps. The debt is owed by all of us.

"They've given more than they could - please give as much as you can."



To protect those concerned, this is an amalgam of several such case histories of Patients in our care.

EX-SERVICES MENTAL WELFARE SOCIETY

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Pte Grant in flight.

Our sporting achievements continue to flourish and our latest "crop" of trophies include South East District Orienteering, Swimming and Athletics; our best wishes to the latter teams who take part in the Army Championships shortly and to our opponents we say – "watch this space".



The Sportswomen.

"Satisfied Soldiers" come in many guises – whether they are the dedicated and highly professional PTIs who ran 72 miles (48 BFTs!) for "Soldier in Need" – spearheading the WRAC Centre's contribution to the GOC's Charity Fund with an amazing £300 on day one of our Fund raising campaign.



Front row L-R. Sgt Browse, WO2 Smith, LCpl Townley, LCpl Danks.

Back row L-R. Maj Patrick, Capt Frost, 2Lt Lucas, Cpl Osborne, WO2 Blake, LCpl Maskery.

OR – The "Boisterous Bs" on Summer Training at Pippinford Park seen here "before the battle" but ready to go, led by those intrepid warriors Major Glynis Harvey and WO2 Karen Blake.



Major Harvey, WO2 Blake and the girls.

OR – Our Adventurous Trainers led by Captain Netty Harper and WO2 Maggie Smith, whose adventures on "Exercise Snow Lioness" and "Snowdon" met all the criteria of endurance and endeavour as they will recount later.

Finally a "Satisfied Soldier", who has long been associated with gathering material for the Lioness from various parts of the world and who would like to thank all those who have been badgered for articles and photographs, – Colonel Nan Robertson, Commandant WRAC Centre, was the Inspecting Officer at the Passing Out Parade on 14 June 1990. A most memorable day full of colour, music and pageantry, when seven platoons of Recruits, their Permanent Staff and the WRAC Staff Band were joined on Parade by the Bands, Pipes and Drums of the Royal Highland Fusiliers. Some four hundred in all, watched with great pleasure and pride by over six hundred relatives and friends, provided a splendid spectacle and as the Bands slow marched to "Auld Lang Syne" – many a "hardened warrior" were reduced to tears. However, it was really a day of laughter and after a most stirring service and exciting hymns sung exuberantly by the Band Choir and whole congregation the Senior Recruits and

their parents headed for the "flesh pots" of Guildford. Meanwhile the Permanent Staff, military and civilian and guests, all 263 including members of the Glasgow Branch, irrepressible with abundant energy, past Adjutants, RSMs, Chief Clerks and lifelong hairdressers christened the Junior Ranks Club, splendidly arranged for the occasion by our NAAFI and Contract Staff, by sitting down to a superb lunch prepared by "Q" Bourne and all our cooks, military and civilian. Lastly we presented Mrs Mary Remnant, our cleaning supervisor for 11 years with a plaque in recognition of her excellent service. It was a great day which this "Satisfied Solider" will never forget.



The Commandant accompanied by The Director of Music inspects the Band.

EXERCISE SNOW LIONESS

By Captain A Harper

Exercise Snow Lioness was "underway", an excited bunch of WRAC Officers, servicewomen and an RAF ski instructor all managed to crush into a minibus late on the evening of 3 February. The Commandant had waved us off and that day we had an important ingredient for the trip, a roof rack, packed with skis and poles courtesy of SEME Bordon. The exercise had been nicknamed "Snow" Lioness however as the OIC expedition I was slightly concerned about the amount of snow in Europe and it was just as well that we were going close to a glacier. The journey took a gruelling eighteen hours and we arrived the following evening in the little Austrian village of Mieders just outside Innsbruck in the Stubaital. Morale was still high and the snow had been "spotted". The village fulfilled everyone's expectations of a small Tyrolean village with large farmhouses, wooden barns and distinctive church bells. Our accommodation could not have been better, being two spacious self contained flats at the top of a large farmhouse. Meal times were a chance for us all to try our "culinary skills" as we ate in style, although occasionally the food estimates exceeded demand! Due to the generosity of "CILOR" and what was described as my "gallant efforts" at controlling the accounts no-one went hungry although we could have lived on rice for a week after one particular meal.

Due to the lack of low level snow on our arrival, we had to travel daily for twenty minutes to the glacier which meant a 5.30 a.m. start. We took the first lifts of the day and the slopes were generally empty for the first couple of hours each morning. The beginners took enthusiastically to the downhill skiing due to the lack of low level snow. Many of the first days for the beginners were spent on their bottoms yet everyone quickly mastered the snow plough

due to Sergeant Mark Browes patient instruction and the girls set off to explore the many blue runs which the glacier had to offer as they developed their confidence.

Sigh – at first the constant blue skies and hot sun were taken for granted and it was not until the end of the first week when the snow and wind finally arrived that we realised just what idyllic conditions we had been lucky enough to have. After a busy day's skiing punctuated only by short "hot chocolate" breaks in the mountain cafes most people were ready for sleep after the evening meal. However in an effort to explore the Austrian life-style a little more a few members of the team went to the local swimming pools, saunas, solariums and jacuzzis. It was with some trepidation (no HORROR!) that we discovered that the sauna facilities were all unisex and that no-one wore any clothes.

The trip was a tremendous success highlighted by the birth of a calf at the Seewalds Farm and enjoyed by all despite the nightmare return journey in the snow and the searching for the "Esso" and "Shell" garages. Our special thanks go to Sergeant Mark Browes from the RAF who not only spent hours instructing but even took leave to take part in the exercise and also to our Q Stores and 37 Sqn RCT for their advice. Our best wishes go to Lieutenant Jo Short who took part in the exercise and soon leaves the Army. Roll on next year, the organisation was worth it.



L-R. LCpl Dennett, Cpl Butler, LCpl DelaCroix, LCpl Reeve, Cpl Osborne, LCpl Maskery, Sgt Browse, Sgt Rachel Browse, Capt Harper, Lt Allen, Lt Short.

EXERCISE SNOWDON CLIMB

By WO2 Smith

When I was first asked by members of the PSO Wing at the WRAC Centre if I could arrange an Adventure Training Weekend I thought great – we'd go camping and we would climb Snowdon. "Camping?" they said "what about the hair dryer?" was one comment and "all of those creepy crawlies" another. After a little wheeling and dealing we were invited by the Army Cadet Trg Wing at Kimmel Camp, North Wales to use their facilities during the weekend 20/21 April. With the help of our chef Sergeant Gary Tonkyn, everything was finally put into order for our weekend trip, including my brilliant! driving of the Elizabethan Mini Bus.

We set off at 1230 hrs on Friday for our journey north to the Camp. After a few hiccups with traffic jams etc we finally reached our destination at 2030 hrs where we were met by none other than Maj Hess Brotherton who welcomed us with open arms (as he had been waiting since 1730 hrs for our arrival).

After a quick change it was down to sample the local wine and then return to bed. Next day the girls were awakened by my subtle tones for breakfast at 0700 hrs. Shortly afterwards we drove the 45 minutes to the Snowdon area where we were helped with climbing and abseiling ably assisted by SSI Steve Mullholland APTC who treated the girls with tender loving care. He was assisted by Sgt Jane Duggan who took over from me while I had my mid morning nap. After climbing and abseiling we moved to Snowdon for our climb, this time led by the ever efficient Sgt Jane Duggan (I knew she wanted to be a PTI) and the illustrious Cpl Chris Beckett. On completing Snowdon we proceeded back to camp and were greeted with a nice meal after all the arduous work. That evening we were invited to the local disco where we showed off our dancing skills, with the exception of the "old and bold" who went to bed pretty tired. Where do all the young girls get their energy? After a good night and a long "lie in" we left Kimmel Trg Camp, vowing to return for another trip soon.



Sgt Duggan.

10 COMPANY WRAC

The first half of the year has been extremely busy (as usual!) for 10 Coy in Aldershot.

On the sports front in January, the Company successfully competed in the District Badminton Finals (2nd), the District Cross Country Finals (3rd) and the Army Inter Unit Squash Finals (2nd).

February brought more success in the District Netball Finals (2nd) and in March Sgt Denise McNaught led the hockey team to 3rd place in the Army Inter Unit Finals. Pte Vicky Thrower came joint 1st in the vaulting at the Army Gymnastics on the 18th March and 2nd in the tumblings. Sgt Pauline Doran, LCpl "Lofty" Lofthouse and LCpl Debbie Rowe earned their Army colours in the Inter Services Netball when the Army were runners up to the WRAF. Congratulations to LCpl Carol Chetty who picked up the bronze medal in the under 70kg class in the Army Judo Championships in March, but still retained her position as the Army No. 1 in her usual class (under 48kg) for this year. 10 Coy thrashed the girls from 12 RSME, Chatham to triumph at the District Volleyball finals for the second year in a row at the beginning of May. 10 Coy also won all the District League 2 competitions for the winter season, involving hockey, badminton, netball and squash.

The summer season has got off to a flying start with 10 Coy winning the first two of their league games at rounders beating 251 Sig Sqn and SEME Bordon. Capt Carol O'Nians was placed 3rd in the Army Individual Orienteering Championships held from the 19-21 May and WO1 Pat Rosewell won the veteran event. 10 Coy were runners up in the South East District swimming championships.

Sgt Karen Smith of 10 Coy, Pte Shelly Pleasance and Cpl "Taff" Jones of 41 Sqn organised a sponsored car wash and made £78.00 altogether for their forthcoming tour of Hong Kong with the Army Hockey Team. Some of the money raised was donated to the Soldier in Need Appeal.

During February Sgt Jan Ford and Sgt Linda Thompson from 10 Coy together with SSgt McGregor from 251 Sign Sqn participated in Ex ATLANTIC VENTURE, a sailing exercise in the Caribbean. The girls together with other Forces crew members sailed out of Antigua visiting such exotic places as St Kitts, Montserrat, Nevis, Anguilla and St Martin in a 35 ft craft skippered by Capt Frank Roberts R SIGNALS.



L-R. Sgt Jan Ford, Sgt Linda Thompson, SSgt Rena McGregor.

A wide variety of activities have recently been undertaken by 10 Coy girls. Pte Debbie Ingle, our WRAC girl attached to the Parachute Regiment Free Fall team the Red Devils, has been extremely busy. From December '89 to January '90 she participated in Ex PHOENIX LEAP, skydiving with the team in Florida. She also took part in team training in Kenya from January to April this year and helped out with continuation training from the Kenyan Army Display Team. There was of course time for some R & R when Pte Ingle went on safari! The display season is well under way and the team has been kept busy. Already Pte Ingle has taken part in a world record breaking jump from a hot air balloon over Bath.

LCpl Sharon Millen is set to be the first servicewoman to swim the English Channel. She is due to make her attempt in September this year and hopes to complete the crossing in approximately 12 to 15 hours. She will leave from Shakespeare Bay at Dover and, tide and weather permitting, will aim to arrive at Cap Gris Nez on the French coast. All money raised through sponsorship during the crossing will be donated to the NSPCC and to the Army Benevolent Fund.

10 Coy have also had recent heavy commitments giving assistance to other units. Cpl Mandy Fowles and Pte Sue Robbins helped out 1 PARA with their KAPE tour looking after school children and cadets. Pte Jacky Roberts and Cpl Julie Wilson (251 Sig Sqn) played "nasty local" CIVPOP down at Lydd and Pte Paddy Reith and Pte Tanya Frampton carried out the daunting task of escorting Army school children from Luton airport to London!

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MESS DRESS (EVENING GOWNS)

UNIFORMS

BEIGE LINEN (OVERSEAS DRESSES)

Congratulations to two members of the Company, WO2 Margaret Smith and SSgt Kathy Johnstone who received their LS&GC medals in April which were kindly presented by the Deputy Garrison Commander, Colonel Lane. Another celebration was the order of the day when the Coy 2IC Capt Beverley Walters-Davies was mentioned in despatches in May.

As we "go to press" the Annual Military Training Camp at Browdown, Gosport is already under way. More news and pictures in the next edition.



ADVENTUROUS TRAINING

EXERCISE HIGHLAND HAVOC

During February a group from 10 Coy WRAC travelled to Aviemore in Scotland to participate in Ex HIGHLAND HAVOC – a skiing exercise in the Cairngorms. En route, we stayed at the "One Brewed" Youth Hostel near Hexham, where after early morning aerobics we ran to view Hadrian's wall. We spent the morning visiting ancient sites along the wall, and the afternoon on an adventurous hike (through the Metro Centre in Newcastle!) Day two saw us again doing early morning aerobics before heading north to Scotland and into the blizzards and high winds which were awaiting our arrival.

Over the next week we spent as much time as possible throwing ourselves recklessly down the slopes in the name of skiing! Our group was made up of absolute beginners who, although lacking in skiing skills, were certainly not lacking in enthusiasm and daring. The OIC of

The Army Women's Ski Team – The 'B' Team!!

the group, Lt Hill managed to collide with a party of school children, bringing a new meaning to the term "snow plough". Pte Thrower, our company gymnast, did a back somersault into the mud. LCpl Dickey "skied" down the infamous "White Lady" on her bottom. LCpl Gilliot tied her skis in a knot and threw herself down the slope, whilst the rest of the group humiliated themselves in ways too embarrassing to mention! However, at the end of an exciting week each member of the group succeeded in passing her Joint Services Bronze Skiing Award.

During the week there were times when we were unable to ski and we took the opportunity to explore the highland area by walking along Loch Ness, visiting Castle Urquhart, exploring Fort George, running in Rothiemurroughs estate and of course investigating a few après ski activities.

The journey home was broken at Hartington Hall Youth Hostel in Derbyshire where we enjoyed our final outdoor activities before returning to Aldershot for a rest!!

22 SQUADRON RCT

The Squadron has just been through a very busy period with Op Orderly commitments. Drivers L Cpl Coleman and Ptes Arnell, Coombes, Denn and Elves WRAC all found themselves rushing to emergencies all over London. All five WRAC drivers were commended for their work and found it an experience never to be forgotten.

In early February the Sqn went on Adv Trg in Snowdonia, Ex WELSH HIKE, staying at Tywyn Training Camp. The whole week was wet, cold and windy but when the group finally managed to conquer Snowdon the 'hard way' it made it all worthwhile.

In March the Bulford Troop raised money for the Sight Savers Appeal and Guide Dogs for the Blind through a charity car wash organised by Sgt Davies WRAC, a dog show, and an Easter Egg raffle organised by Cpl Somerville WRAC.



L-R. Pte Arnell, Pte Denn, Lcpl Coleman, Pte Elves and Pte Coombes with their certificates of merit.

8TH SIGNAL REGIMENT

"RACE THE SUN"

"Race the Sun" was an Inter-Regiment Competition organised by 2 Inf Div HQ and Sig Regt. It involved a 16 leg relay race around North Yorkshire incorporating some very interesting sights (except the competitors were too busy to notice them!). The team consisted of three persons per leg competing in everything from running and cycling to swimming Castle Howard lake.

The race started at 0430 hrs on Thursday 10 May 1990 and continued winding its 120 mile way around the countryside for the rest of the day (and well on after dark as well!).

8th Signal Regiment entered a team which included two members of the WRAC.

Leg 11 was a 9 km forest run and one of the competitors was WCpl Holder. The first km was "straight up" a fire break which required a good deal of hands and knees crawling. Once this was negotiated the remaining distance appeared almost "down hill" into Thornton Dale. She handed over to the competitors of leg 12 the cycle orienteering. This was 37 km of hills across to Castle Howard. Lt Nisbet WRAC was one of the 3 representing 8 Sig Regt. Having completed the 37 kms (the last 3 km with a flat tyre), she had great difficulty sitting down for a week!

Overall 8 Sig Regt had a superb but tiring day with the glory of winning the competition. Congratulations to all.



The Zone E cross country champions.

8 Signal Regiment hosted the NE District and Zone E cross country championships on 26 January. The WRAC team won the event with all members finishing in the top 16 and four in the top 10. Cpl Julie Holder won overall covering the distance in 15.44.

The WRAC having won the district went to Aldershot for the Army Championships. The weather was very wet and the course soon became a quagmire. The team came a creditable seventh with Cpl Holder fourth. Congratulations to all who ran.

The 8 Sig Regt girls have also won the Zone E basketball, swimming and athletic competitions.

262 SIGNAL SQUADRON CYPRUS

VISIT OF BRIGADIER G K RAMSEY MBE ADC

At the start of our really hot season here in Cyprus we were visited by the Director Women's Royal Army Corps, Brigadier G K Ramsey MBE ADC. A tight schedule of gruelling appointments took the Director from one end of the island to the other in the space of three days, talking to nearly every WRAC servicewoman along the way.

Brigadier Ramsey visited Dhekelia Garrison on 16 May 1990 and following her office call with Colonel Champion, Garrison Commander and a whistle stop tour of 23 Postal and Courier Squadron Royal Engineers she finally made it to 262 Signal Squadron. She was welcomed by our Officer Commanding Captain Nick Naylor and the Squadron Sergeant Major WO2 Dave Thomas.



Brig G K Ramsey, WO2 D Thomas, Maj W A le Gassick, Capt N Taylor, Lt S Byrne.

The Director then joined all the WRAC in Dhekelia for lunch at the Bitsa Bar down on the beach. It was a wonderful opportunity for the girls and they all picked her brains on such topical subjects as the wider employment of women in the Army, the new uniforms and uniforms as well as more personal problems they each have with postings and co-location.

It was a most successful day but we understand that the Director never managed a day of sunbathing during the whole visit! "Never mind ma'am you're always welcome back!"

A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

3 QUEENS

By SSgt S Fryer WRAC

Posted to 3 QUEENS it said on my posting order. "Who are they?" I thought. Well over the next few months I certainly found out.

On a bright summer's day in July 89 I arrived to start work as Platoon Staff Sergeant setting up a WRAC Platoon within 3 QUEENS. The day started brightly, but as the hours passed by I felt as though I had been put on another planet. I was so alienated from life in an infantry battalion I didn't know what had hit me.

PT was held every morning at 0815 hours I thought "no problem" because for a 27 year old SSgt I was reasonably fit. Boy was I wrong! Now I have reached an average standard of infantry fitness which in WRAC terms, makes me Super Woman.

What is the Platoon doing with 3 QUEENS you may be asking yourself? It is a six month trial to integrate servicewomen within an infantry battalion to enable the men to carry out their role as infantrymen. The Platoon is a mixture of Admin Assistants, Clerks, Drivers, Medical Assistants and Stewardesses. So far, the trial has been a success with the servicewomen being given out-of-the-ordinary jobs to do. For example, six of the Admin Assistants are working in the Signals Platoon and have passed their standard two Signals Course and now proudly wear crossed flags when in uniform, a first I think? We also have Admin Assistants working in Operations and Intelligence; mind you, I find it a bit strange to find them rooting through bins.

One of my main tasks in the beginning was to sort out the accommodation (washing machines etc) but to my relief the Nuffield Trust came to the rescue. With no handover to assist me I had to start from scratch. So armed with the Corps Memorandum (my bible - borrowed from Lisburn Garrison) and with time, patience and communication greater understanding has been reached.

We have completed continuation training, a cadre course and a NIRT course plus numerous BFTs, weapon training and the most horrendous assault course you could imagine. But being as flexible as ever we managed well, that is apart from the 15 foot wall, we needed the help of our male counterparts with that one.

We have been visited by many outside agencies to see how we are getting on (I feel a bit like an animal in a zoo!) but apparently it is the norm when trials are going on so we have accepted it as routine now.



SSgt Fryer giving a helping hand.

Now that the girls and myself have settled well into Battalion life and feel we are doing a worthwhile job, it is probably appropriate to say that without the help of all the members of 3 QUEENS, I don't think we would have achieved so much in such a short time. Thank you. To any member of the WRAC, if you get the chance to serve with an infantry battalion in future years then take it. It will be an experience that you won't regret, but start fitness training now. One last point, I do think this is a positive step in the right direction for the WRAC and our male counterparts, it can work as well in the future as it has during our six month trial.

2 SQUADRON 8th SIGNAL REGIMENT

GUIDE DOGS 'PET' CHARITY

2 Squadron has adopted Guide Dogs for the Blind as their charity and aim to raise enough money to pay for a Guide Dog to be trained.

It costs £1,000 to train a puppy from six weeks of age until it is a fully trained Guide Dog puppy. Honey, is a yellow labrador bred at the Guide Dogs Breeding Centre in Warwickshire. Honey arrived here aged six weeks, six days and is being puppy walked by Lt. Mhairi Nisbet with the help of members of 2 Sqn. Honey will remain here until she is 10 months old when she will go to the Middlesbrough Training Centre for further specialised training.

ANOTHER FIRST FOR THE LADIES

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Sgt Pat Young of 2/52 Lowland Volunteers in Edinburgh has become the first woman in the British Army to successfully complete a Field Firing course at the School of Infantry in Warminster.

During the course, Pat had to fire a variety of weapons, including General Purpose Machine Guns, 6mm and 84mm Anti Tank Weapons, and SA 80 Rifles. She had to learn to blow "blinds", which involves going forward to any round which has not exploded, and blowing it up with plastic explosive.

When Pat arrived at the School of Infantry she was asked if she was "sure she was on the right course", and was she the "best the unit could send" (she soon put them right on THAT one).

There were a few tense moments for Pat while consultations were made to the Geneva Convention and a policy decision was made by HQ UKLF, before it was decided that Pat could actually stay and complete the course.

Pat said "the course was very demanding, but exciting. The part I enjoyed most was Low Level Air Defence, using GPMGs and remote control aircraft. Everyone on the course was rooting for me when it was doubtful if I could stay. Now I can't wait to get back to Edinburgh to put all my new skills into practice". She is now qualified to run any of the ranges her unit may use.

No stranger to storming male bastions, Pat is Provost Sergeant with 2/52 Lowland Volunteers. In a predominantly male infantry battalion this is no mean feat but Pat carried out her duties with confidence and aplomb. When she is not involved in policing duties, Pat is a mainstay of the training and has an impressive list of qualifications in this respect.

Pat has been in the TA for 10 years, and has a 12 year old son. Juggling with a full-time job, a home and family and still finding time for her commitment to the TA is not easy, but never, ever dull.



Sgt Pat Young taking aim.

3 Base Ammunition Depot (3 BAD) is situated adjacent to the Dutch/West German border some 14 miles north west of Mönchengladbach, and is probably the largest military storage installation in Western Europe covering over 1200 hectares of woodland (about the size of Heathrow airport).

WRAC have been employed at 3 BAD since 1986. There was only a handful of girls then. This year has seen a large increase already and when the new accommodation is ready the number will go up to 50 if not more.

On 20 February 1990 Colonel Wing, Commander WRAC BAOR and RSM Poklekowski from 29 Coy, visited us, and in the Control Office, where four WRAC Supply Controllers are employed, Col Wing met the SNCO WRAC, Sgt Steph Edwards.



3 BAD WRAC with Col M S Wing and WO1 Poklekowski.

WLCpl Laura Mumford must be congratulated on her excellent waffling on the subject of trains. Very impressive as LCpl Mumford only joined the UNIT a few months ago! WLCpls Helen McMonagle and Marie Burton managed to mention fencing, as many of the girls have just taken up this sport. Maybe this has something to do with the Comdt being a keen fencer (Brownie points eh girls)!

The majority of the WRAC at 3 BAD are Supply Specialists, so are employed within the Ammunition Storage Department (ASD) which is probably why WO1 (SSM) Thom Harbinson is going grey. WCpl Leslie Scott decided that if she didn't talk too much she would be able to get home quicker to say goodbye to her baby (ie her dog) before she was taken away for quarantine as Cpl Scott and her husband are posted to Bicester.

Pte Allison McNab, who has recently changed trade to Supply Controller is employed in the ASD offices. LCpl Denise Rose was also in the office for this visit but is usually employed in MT and is currently the CAO's driver.

Cpl Ali Bache and LCpl Fiona Garvock are employed in Traffic Branch. In the depot Pte Chris Curry operated the hyster whilst LCpl Sarah Inglis, Ptes Joanne Horrocks, Sue Borwick and Ros Barnett were working on the ground.

Col Wing then visited the Medical Centre to meet Cpl Sally Bowman, our resident medic. The visit came to an end after a brief tour of the WRAC accommodation.

BAOR

29 COMPANY WRAC ORIENTEERING TEAM

29 Coy WRAC have had yet another successful season of orienteering. Winners of the 1989/90 RCZ Orienteering League by almost 170 points over their nearest rivals, 13 Sig Regt, the team shows great promise for next year. Comprising mainly novice runners, with a few "old hands" thrown in to help, two teams qualified to represent the unit in the Army Championships recently held in the Longmoor/Aldershot area. Team A, consisting of Lt Sandy Gibbins, Cpl Tina James and Pte Louise Higgins, came runners-up to 13 Sig Regt, with Team B, Cpl Ann Daldorph, Cpl Debbie Driver and WO1 Pat Rosewell, coming 5th overall.

Some promising individual results were achieved in the RCZ league, with Lt Gibbins taking the W21 prize, Cpl James – W21 third prize, and Pte Higgins the W19 prize. With a few of the more experienced orienteers in the league now posted back to UK, let's hope the interest and enthusiasm remain amongst the rest, and we look forward to 29 Coy defending their title next season.



29 Coy WRAC Orienteering Team.
Back Row L-R. LCpl Amanda Rogers, Cpl Tina James, Cpl Nathalie Yare, Pte Louise Higgins, Lt Sandy Gibbins.
Front Row L-R. WO1 Pat Rosewell, Cpl Debbie Driver, Pte Michelle Hewson, Cpl Ann Daldorph.



Assured of Care – *for the rest of their lives*

PRINCESS CHRISTIAN HOMES, Knaphill, Surrey have been providing sheltered accommodation for elderly ex-servicemen for nearly ninety years. They offer family-type care to single and widowed men who might otherwise spend their declining years in loneliness and difficulty. A small, dedicated staff give of their time without counting hours. To the residents, the Homes are their home in the fullest sense, and as in a family, every effort is made to nurse them at home when they fall ill. In this happy environment many, after living perhaps into their late 90s, have died peacefully in their familiar surroundings after only a short illness.

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increasing, and the informal care which Princess Christian Homes can at present give is not enough.

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EXCHANGE TRAINING – SWITZERLAND 1989

Lieutenant Carolyn Armstrong, Coy WRAC and myself Lieutenant Carolyn Armstrong, Assistant Adjutant with 5th Regiment Royal Artillery recently had the good fortune to visit the Swiss Women's Army Officer Training School in Winterthur, just east of Zurich.

After an overnight train journey from Dusseldorf we arrived in Winterthur to be greeted by our host, First Lieutenant Barbara Steiner. Barbara was one of only six officers in the Women's Section who are actually professional. When the girls were told that we had to do a minimum of three years they were horrified.

On arrival we donned one of the many different uniforms we had taken with us and went to meet the Staff of the School, and sampled the wine and hors-d'oeuvre that had been especially prepared. We were also lucky to be given the chance to go on to the ranges with one of the men's retraining courses. The range was outdoor but the firing points were not – my idea of a good day on the ranges, warm, and dry, and no brass picking! We were firing the assault rifle, and, if we were lucky enough to hit the target the score was immediately flashed up in front of us, much more convenient than pasting up afterwards.



**Lt Carolyn Armstrong getting a little help
from a snowmobile.**

With every different day, there was a different uniform and on Wednesday it was into combats for a trip into the mountains to watch one of the Infantry Companies, which had been living in the mountains for three weeks at a height of approx 2,000 ft. Despite the snow being over a foot deep they put on an impressive display especially the night shoot, which probably got rid of more tracer than I'll see in my whole career.

We visited the capital city, Berne, and made the compulsory trips to the Bears, the clock tower and the chocolate shops. At the British Embassy we had coffee with the Attaché, Lt Col John Bolton Clarke RHA who was a great influence in organising the visit in the first place, and had lunch with Brig Pollock, the only Brigadier in the Swiss Women's Army.

The language proved to be probably our only stumbling block, Swiss German was no match for my smattering of Army basics. However most Swiss are fluent in at least three languages, German, French and English, so we got along in the end.

The Swiss hospitality throughout the visit was second to none. Nothing was too much trouble for anyone. It is only a shame that due to training commitments Lt Steiner was not able to come and visit us so that we could return some of the hospitality and show her around some aspects of the British Army on the Rhine. All in all a very worthwhile exchange trip and one that will hopefully continue in the future.

HELLO FROM MFO SINAI, EGYPT

By Cpl J Miller WRAC

Greetings from the MFO. I expect you are all wondering what MFO means, as I first did 10 months ago when I was first informed I was being posted out here with my husband, Cpl Kevin Miller RCT, for a year.

Well MFO stand for Multinational Force and Observers. The MFO consists of 11 different nations, United Kingdom, United States of America, New Zealand, Colombia, Canada, Fiji, Italy, France, Netherlands, Uruguay and Norway.

THE SINAI The Sinai peninsula, a desert region, is both bridge and barrier between the Asian and African continents. Small villages, based on a fishing and trading economy, are found along the Sinai's Mediterranean coast and the two gulfs that form the peninsula. The interior of the Sinai is the home of the Bedouin who have few permanent settlements and a livelihood based on the herding of goats and camels. The climate is dry and harsh and it is in this desert environment that the peacekeeping mission of the MFO is carried out. Observing and reporting on the four zones, three being in Egypt and one in Israel.

It was hard here for the first few months especially being the first WRAC in the British contingent of 34. There was no specific housing for us, and so special arrangements had to be made for us to have two rooms with an inter-connecting door. We have to share the bathroom and toilet facilities with female transitory personnel.

The work has been varied and different as everything is done "the American way". My job here is Force Military Police Unit (FMPU) clerk, and I deal with all the incident and accident reports, once the FMPU have had the statements. What I do then is read the reports and ask the particular contingent for a Commander's Report for his administrative or disciplinary action. From there it goes to a review board who will then discuss if the punishment suited the crime or not.

I have been secretary to the Force Commander and the Chief of Staff for a month whilst their civilian secretaries were on leave, and I stood in for the Force Chief Clerk whilst he was on a month's leave. As you can see the jobs and work that I have been tasked with have been varied and enjoyable.

I have had plenty of time to travel and see different places, the list is long and varied. To mention a few there was Cairo, the pyramids, the sphinx, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Lebanon border, the Dead Sea, Masada and many more places that previously I had only dreamt of.



This way to the pyramids!

Being here has been an experience that I would not have missed, but I will be glad to get back to civilization. To be able to get what you want when you want it will be a pleasure. The nearest place to shop is El Arish which is an hour's journey away and what is available when you get there is undesirable and limited! I now have less than three months before I return to civilization. My husband has been posted back to 68 Squadron RCT, Rheindahlen and I am returning to HQ BAOR.

P.S. I would like to thank the QM from WRAC Centre and Maj Armstrong WRAC Records for all their help and assistance since I have been here, cut off from civilization.

SPORT

HAVE FEMALE WILL FLY

Major P A Binnie WRAC/RAEC

At last, on 9 March I completed all the requirements for my Private Pilot's licence. I have always wanted to fly, but never thought that I would because of my sex! When I was doing my 'A' levels, I walked into an RAF recruiting caravan on my local town square and was told that the RAF don't train women to fly. Similar enquiries to BA met with a brick wall once they realised that I was female, so I knew that the only way that I was going to get to fly was to pay for myself and I did not think that I would ever be able to afford it!

When I joined the Army, I discovered that some airbourne activities were cheaper and within my reach, so I took every opportunity to get my feet off the ground. I had a go at gliding, parachuting, hang gliding, parascending and a microlite before I decided that no matter what the cost, I was going to fly.

The first hurdle was the medical. As I had had a car crash which left me unconscious for two days, I was told that I would have to wait for two years. Then I would have to have an EEG and only if that was normal could I go ahead. The medical itself was very thorough and included an ECG and chest X-ray too, but by December 1988 I was ready to start flying.

I had some lessons in a Piper Cherokee at Aldergrove airport in NI before being posted back to England, I decided to take advantage of the cheaper rates of the Army Flying Association at Middle Wallop. They have a Cessna 150 and after the fixed runway, landing on grass at Middle Wallop was like starting all over again'.

It takes a minimum of 40 flying hours for the licence, but the UK average is about 65. It obviously takes longer when you are doing it part-time as you are so dependent on the weather, instructor and aircraft availability. There are six ground tests, two flying tests, and a solo navigation exercise to complete too. It is not cheap and has cost me in excess of £3,000, but has been worth every penny. Being up in the air gives you a totally different perspective on life and provides me with a challenge and exhilaration which I have not found on the ground.



Maj Binnie beside the 'plane.

INTERNATIONAL LACROSSE

SCOTLAND V ENGLAND

On Saturday 12 May, Lieutenant Jackie Wilson WRAC, wearing number 16, represented Scotland in the ladies lacrosse international against the visiting English ladies.

Jackie is the AWSLO at HQ Scotland, and has donned the tartan skirt and blue Scottish shirt on numerous previous occasions including the 1986 World Cup held in Philadelphia USA.

Jackie scored her side's only goal, but unfortunately for the Scots, their English counterparts scored ten!

SKIING

BRITISH ARMY WOMEN'S SERVICES

SKI TEAM 1989/90

"Enjoy your holiday" is the familiar cry that any member of the Army Women's Services Ski Team is used to hearing before setting off for the beginning of the ski season. The word that grates is "holiday" for although the season is tremendous fun – there is also a great deal of hard work that is continuous throughout the period.

The members of the 1989/90 ski team were: Capt Vanessa Lang, Capt Sally Holt (Team Capt), Capt Niki Vickers, Capt Suzie Castle-Smith, Capt Gail Tilford, Lt Sarah Whatmough, Lt Tana McQuoid, Cpl Karen Smith, Cpl Dawn Bagnell, LCpl Karen Greer and LCpl "Yorkie" Marsh.

Training this year was at Tignes, France and started on 2 December 89 running until 13 January 90. A typical "training" day started at 7.00 am with half an hour of stretching followed by breakfast and a mad rush to put ski kit on, load the minibus and drive to the lifts in time to meet the race trainer by 8.45 am. Taking the lifts up to the glacier can equate to commuting to work – we'd reach our "work place" by 9.15 am and then training began. Skiing was non-stop until 11.45 am, half an hour for lunch and then continue to ski until 3.00 pm. Then the team retreated down the mountain, with another quick change ready for an hour of fast aerobics from 4.00 to 5.00 pm. This year the team was self catering, so if it was "your turn" the evening would be spent preparing and cooking supper. In the meantime other team members were busy preparing their ski edges and waxing bases for the next days skiing. By 9.30 – 10.00 pm everyone was flaked out, and apart from the odd occasion when we'd go for a quick night cap, team members made tracks to bed to regain strength for the next days training. Training lasted six weeks, working Monday to Saturday and having Sunday as a rest day.

By the 13 January 90, the team was looking fit and well prepared for the 1 Armd Div Championships held in Le Grand Bornand, France. The snow conditions were appalling, and we were skiing on a specially prepared piste that did not have enough snow even to cover roots, small bushes and some very lethal rocks. It was survival skiing. 2Lt Tana McQuoid (a new team member) surprised all the male teams by coming eighth overall (out of approx 108 competitors) and winning the Individual Slalom, Giant Slalom and first in the Combined (Slalom and Giant Slalom). The majority of the ski team were positioned in the top 30's, again surprising the men and proving that the standard of WRAC skiing has improved dramatically.

We were all relieved by the snow fall which came just before the Army Championships in Les Menuires, France. The Olympic Piste was in perfect condition for a very interesting Army Championships. LCpl Karen Greer won the Individual Giant Slalom event while 2Lt Tana McQuoid was nursing a rather serious ankle injury. Fortunately she recovered in time to compete in and win the Individual Super Giant Slalom. As can be seen, individual event winners were spread throughout the team, however the most consistent performance over all three events was by Capt Sally Holt who won the Combined Prize (Super G, Giant Slalom and Slalom) and became Army Champion of 1990.

During the Prize-giving Capts Sally Holt and Niki Vickers, and LCpl Karen Greer were awarded their Army Colours and the Team to go forward to the British Services International Ski Championships was announced. After



Army Womens Services Ski Team 1989/1990.
L-R. Capt S Holt, Capt S Whatmough, Lt T McQuoid,
Capt S Castle-Smith, Cpl D Bagnall, Capt G Tilford,
LCpl C Marsh, Capt N Vickers, Capt V Lang,
Cpl K Smith, LCpl K Greer.

some impressive and greatly improved skiing we unfortunately had to say farewell to Cpls Karen Smith, Dawn Bagnell and LCpl Yorkie Marsh who returned to UK. The remainder of the ski team moved on to Megeve for the highlight of the skiing championships.

It must be mentioned that at this stage Capt Vanessa Lang (née Raine) had officially "hung up" her ski boots, and decided to move on to the administrative side of the sport. Vanessa has put years of hard work into making the ski team what it is today – and had many of her own skiing successes, therefore, it was not an easy decision for her to stop competitive racing. I am sure I speak for every member of the ski team past and present, to say how appreciative the team is for her dedication, work and enthusiasm given to the team over the years.

Back to the British Services International Ski Championships in Megeve. Snow conditions ranged from good snow to sheet ice and the team felt somewhat apprehensive after being spoilt by the good conditions at the Army Championships. The WRAF team looked strong and there were new faces in the WRNS team. The US Air Force and Australian Defence Force were also competing. The first race was the Slalom which we won as a team by a margin of 12 seconds. Although ahead overall, this meant we could not afford to make any errors in the Giant Slalom event. At this stage the Championship was still open to any team and the pressure was on us. Fortunately our training paid off, we won the Giant Slalom by a mere two seconds which was enough to make us the winning team!

It was a proud moment when HRH The Duchess of York presented the Wilkinson's Sword, Winners of the British Services International Ski Championship and Open Championships, to the Army Women's Services Ski Team. A special mention must be made of the outstanding performance from 2Lt Tana McQuoid who won the Individual Giant Slalom Trophy, the Special Slalom Trophy, the Ladies Combines Open Champion, the Best Newcomer Trophy and finally the Duchess of York's Trophy for the Ladies Commonwealth Overall Champion.

None of the success or indeed involvement in the skiing championships could have been possible without the financial support of our sponsors. Skiing is an extremely expensive sport, and with less support from the Army it is up to teams to find the bulk of their money from civilian sponsors. Our thanks are extended to the *Daily Mail*,

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SKIBOBING

Racing with a skibob is very demanding and challenging as with any wintersport, and a good fast determined run will leave you with legs like jelly, just as skiing can.

A skibob is built in the form of a bike with skis front and rear instead of wheels and has the same basic technique as skiing. The same element of weight transfer is used, the only difference being that you are seated with your knees bent. Skibobbers do it sitting down!

I was asked if I would like to go to Wertach in January and see how I got on. If I was any good I could join the British team and maybe race in the World Championships in Seefeld the following week. I, of course, jumped at the chance of three weeks away.

The first week was spent in Wertach, Bavaria, where we did some fairly intense training and, in spite of an acute shortage of snow I found that I learnt to skibob very quickly. Of course having some skiing experience helped a lot, plus techniques used in riding as the long saddle must be gripped very tightly with the knees. After some expert coaching, I found myself selected for the British team competing in the World Championships the following week!

Day one eventually arrived and the first race was the Slalom. The hardest race of all, as there are a lot of gates to go through and fairly tight turns. In each event you have to race the course twice to qualify for a place. The second course is always arranged differently from the first. Having foot skied down the course to look at the turns and how the gates were positioned, I was now in a state of total nerves and nausea, wondering what on earth I was doing there.



Cpl Taylor bobbing along.

My number was called and I went forward into the starting box. TV cameras were rolling and cameras clicking everywhere. It was awful. My bleeper to start went and I pushed myself off. I had decided by this time the speed was not as essential as arriving at the bottom in one piece, qualifying for a place.

Once I got going, picking my way through the gates, I began to relax a little and really enjoyed it. I completed my first run successfully and with confidence boosted, went on to complete the second course, and my result was 13th. Not so bad for my first attempt.

I went on to complete all three races. In the Giant Slalom I came 14th and the Super G, which was held instead of the downhill due to lack of snow, I came 17th.

I knew now that I had secured a result in the final combination of all three races.

The other two British ladies had no placing in this as they had both fallen in different races, consequently losing the chance of a place in the combination. After a long wait for the final results, I found to my amazement that I had been placed 9th in the World Championships, which was a fantastic feeling to have done so well at my first attempt.

The next week took us on to Sölden in Austria where we competed in the British Nationals. A far more relaxed week, not as exciting, but nevertheless good fun. I came second in the British Nationals and first in the WRAC, which wasn't difficult, as there were no other WRAC skibobbers!

This brings me on to my final point that we need more WRAC skibobbers in the British team. You must be determined and expect to be involved in a very challenging sport. It's good fun, but it's tough out there against very good competition. Even if you're not the competitive type, I would be pleased to introduce any newcomers to the sport. If there are any other WRAC who would be interested in coming along next year, please contact me through 626 MCTG RCT, BFPO 34. I'll be happy to help you in any way I can.

THE ARMY LADIES NORDIC SKI TEAM 1989/90

Having proved themselves during the previous season, the Army Ladies Nordic Ski team, set out to better their performance during the Divisional and Army Championships of 1990. In an attempt to achieve this aim they were coached, coddled and cared for by CSgt Cass Carr of the KOSB, who throughout the summer and during the "on snow" training phase, ensured that maximum use was made of time and conditions available.

After a summer season training at Leconfield and Colerne, the team finally departed for Sweden, on 2 December full of excitement at getting "on snow" for the first time. Imagine, therefore the great disappointment when the team arrived to face something similar to a rather miserable and wet Scottish winter. The conditions improved slightly but not enough to ensure consistently good training conditions thus the hard decision was made to pack up and move South to Bad Mitterndorf on the Eastern Austrian Border to find snow, and snow was found to everyone's enormous relief.

On the 12 January, the team moved to the 3 Armd Div Championships which were held in Fulpmes just South of Innsbruck. As most of the team were novices to the sport this Championship gave an excellent opportunity to prepare for the Army Championships still to come and get accustomed to race conditions. The biggest disappointment came when the team arrived in Zwiesel to find there was almost no snow at all. Races had to be altered, courses changed and fingers crossed. In the end the competition went ahead but it was a race against time to complete the Championships before the last drop of snow finally melted.

The aim had been to better last year's introductory performance by beating the WRAF who were the slightly more experienced team. But powerful performances from Cpl Tina Howes and Captain Joanne McCausland gave the team heart and encouragement.



The Army Ladies Nordic Ski Team
L-R. Capt Joanne McCausland, Capt Kathy Kneil,
Lt Sara Pipe, LCpl Gill Wright, LCpl Celia Duffield,
Capt Beth Dunn.

LCpl Celia Duffield, a novice langlaufer, surprised everyone with her excellent results as did LCpl Gill Wright who as a latecomer to the team demonstrated great determination in some of the longer races. The Army won the 3 x 5 km Relay handsomely by 5 minutes 42 seconds, followed by an excellent all round team performance in the 10 km cross country to win the Inter Services Events outright.

Like last year there was great enthusiasm to participate in the Military Patrol race. This year, thanks to the WRAF team Captain, Sgt Danni Matuszewska agreeing to join forces with some of the Army team it was possible to hold a Women's Services Competition. Carrying 40 kg in weight and skiing over 20 km across country, many found this to be the toughest yet most rewarding race of all.

On returning to UK, Captain Joanne McCausland took Cpl Tina Howes and LCpl Gill Wright to the UKLF Championships, where their combined strength and experience proved too much for the opposition. Cpl Howes has since been selected for the British Team competing in Hungary so completing, for the Army Ladies Nordic Ski Team, the most successful year yet.

Anyone wishing to join the team should contact Captain Dunn on York Mil 5398, newcomers are always welcome.

16 SIG REGT SPORTS ROUND UP

For many years 16 Sig Regt and 28 (BR) Sig Regt (NORTHAG) were amalgamated units. Now each has their own PTI and they are able to enter separate teams.

For 16 Sig Regt the first season of sport started well, with a trip to Berlin for the Inter-Unit Netball. Twelve teams hit Berlin for the battle to become BAOR Champions. The team from 16 Sig Regt worked hard for a creditable 5th place.

What we lacked on the Netball court we certainly made up for when it came to Basketball. For the second time since Basketball became a recognised WRAC sponsored sport, the ladies from 16 Sig Regt became BAOR champions. Sgt Karen Tindall was voted the most valuable player of the tournament.

So what does the outlook for the Summer season look like? Very promising (all PTI's say that).

All that's left to say is . . . watch this space. 16 Sig Regt are on the up and up.

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THE FIRST STEP
by a recent, young double amputee



The Champions.

Front Row L-R. Cpl Reid, LCpl Withington, Pte Yule,
Sgt Tindall, Cpl Goodman, Pte Walters.
Back Row L-R. LCpl Ewart, Pte Tetttersall, Cpl Matten.

SQUASH

ARMY GIRLS VICTORIOUS (AGAIN)

The Army won the Inter Service Women's Squash Championship for the tenth successive time this year. They fought a slightly more demanding battle than last year to win nine of their ten matches. The Navy were second with six matches with the RAF losing form from last year to trail third. Pte Horrobin (Army) and Wren Barron (Navy) were awarded colours. Much credit is due to the Army team's sponsor Pilgrim Trophies of Aldershot who have been stalwart supporters of the team and who have contributed so much to their continued success.



Back Row L-R. SSgt Kathy Johnstone (captain),
Maj Debbie Foggin, Pte Julie Horrobin.
Front Row L-R. Capt Mandy Barton, LCpl Sian Perkins,
Maj Julia Dixon.

EX WINTER WARRIOR (19 JANUARY-4 FEBRUARY 1990)

By 2Lt E G Wise WRAC
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After our arduous 24 hour journey across Europe in a "luxury" coach, Ex WINTER WARRIOR (SWDIST) arrived unceremoniously at Morrillon in France. The good news was that we were issued with brand new gortex ski suits to fend off the blizzards. The bad news was - there weren't any blizzards and obviously hadn't been for some while according to the green pastures and so the party set off in search of snow.

In good army tradition the communication of our destination left a lot to be desired - as we headed north to Switzerland's Orsierre not south to France's Orsierre!

These minor trials and tribulations did not mar an excellent two weeks skiing exercise in the French Alps. The sun shone and for the majority of the time the snow conditions were excellent. All personnel enjoyed the combination of downhill and Langlauf over the two weeks, and the exercise was successful in providing a challenge to all concerned. The WRAC contingent all did exceptionally well either in learning to ski, improving their skills or falling over! All achieved their bronze awards for Langlaufing.



Pte Bowring, 2Lt Bennett, Cpl Knight, Cpl Allabyrne,
LCpl Tucker, Cpl Emberson, 2Lt Wise.

EX LONESTAR BACKSTOP

By Lt K L Osterburg WRAC/R SIGNALS

Ex LONESTAR BACKSTOP was a four week exercise that took place in Texas.

The expedition was in three phases: acclimatisation, Guadalupe Mountains and The Big Bend National Park. Each phase lasted a week and showed us different features of the state. As none of the expedition had been to Texas before, we were not sure what to expect; the weather for one came up with some surprises.

Acclimatisation. The thing that hit us most was the jet lag. With Texas being nine hours behind Germany we suffered a lot, some more than others.

This phase was held in semi-desert some 50 miles outside El Paso where the famous gun fighter John Wesley Hardin is buried. Camping in the desert holds some surprises, the first one being how cold it gets at night. It was hard going initially to trek through the desert with 30lb packs, but the thought of a rattlesnake or two kept the party moving and together. Water could have been a problem, but luckily the American Military had supplied old missile containers as water troughs for the cattle and we used these for drinking and washing. It was a surprise having to break the ice every morning.

After five days we were all fit and ready to conquer mountains.

Guadalupe Mountains. Within this mountain range is the highest point in Texas, the Guadalupe Peak at 8794ft. The climb was quite exhausting however the views from the top were spectacular, but with 80 mph winds we couldn't get too close to the edge. At this height snow had fallen during the night and it took some imagination to realise that we were in the middle of a desert. It wasn't a lot warmer at 4500ft which was where we were camped. Sleeping at night was still difficult even though we were dressed for the Arctic. Each day our climbs exceeded 8000ft and though we sweated hard we didn't smell due to rapid evaporation. This wasn't true when we visited the Carlsbad Caverns, New Mexico, where the moisture suddenly brought out our true aroma. This was embarrassing but afforded good views as no-one else came near us. There was an abundance of wildlife in the mountains, the most friendly animal being a skunk!



Lt Karen Osterburg nearing the top of Emory Peak.

Our evenings consisted of visiting the Pine Springs store, which was a wooden shack and the only General Store within 50 miles. It was an ideal place to meet the local Rangers who proved to be extremely hospitable, as did all the people we met in Texas.

The Big Bend National Park. Being 400 miles south of the Guadalupe Mountains the weather had gone from one extreme to another. The Big Bend National Park, so called because of the bend in the river Rio Grande, encompassed the Chisos Mountains and proved to be a favourite with the local populace. The advantage was that we met a lot more Americans but the disadvantage was that the climbs and treks were very crowded. Apart from climbing Emory Peak at 8000ft and other lesser peaks, we also had the opportunity to visit Boquillas, Mexico and sample hot springs.

Boquillas is a very primitive Mexican village existing solely for the tourists from the Big Bend. There's no gas or electricity but the thunder boxes made us feel quite at home. The river is crossed in a boat covered in bullet holes from the drug baron shoot outs. The choice then is either to walk to the village or experience a novel ride on a burro. This proved too difficult for Cpl Paddy Bredin who lost his balance in a spectacular fall.

The hot springs were very refreshing after the long trek to find them. They proved too hot for some so they had to cool off in a very fast flowing stretch of the Rio Grande.

Once we left the Big Bend it was a case of saying farewells and then heading for home. We managed to

squeeze in a stopover in New York which was a bit of a culture shock after four weeks of camping, but we just about coped! The jet lag started to set in again but with so many people to tell about the trip it didn't seem quite so bad.

We must pass on our thanks to the staff at Range Command and the National Park Rangers, without whose help the expedition would not have run so smoothly. Have a nice day!

EX DHANRA QUADRANT

By Major L A MacKinnon WRAC/RAPC

"... And the Paymaster can do the CILOR accounting. ... That was how I became the 2IC of the 28 Amphibious Engineer Regiment 8 "person" expedition to climb Mount Kenya.

After meticulous planning and preparation which resulted in no one knowing about us at either Gutersloh or Brize Norton we eventually arrived in Nairobi after a four day delay. However, unfortunately our luggage was left behind in the UK. We decided to go on safari whilst waiting for the bergens and tents to arrive. We booked into a cheap hotel in the city which turned out to be a sort of up-market brothel, unfortunately or fortunately as far as the lads were concerned! But we did have the sad experience of trying unsuccessfully to resuscitate a young American girl who had died during the night. It brought home to us all the sober fact that if an ambulance and doctor could not be found quickly in Kenya's capital, there would be no chance anywhere else.

We spent three days on safari in the Masai Mara National Park. The scenery was fantastic and it was marvellous to see the wild life at close hand, particularly the lions and elephants. On our return to Nairobi we finally met up with all our bergens and set off for Mount Kenya. We spent 10 days in the mountains and the experience was unforgettable. Most members of the party were affected by the altitude at some time and the side effects were usually headaches and feelings of nausea. We took the Sirimon route up which is generally the least used. The temperatures were sometimes extremely low, particularly at night, although one day it was snowing and hot enough to become sun burnt at the same time!



It's hard work getting up some of these hills!

The day we did the ascent on the summit of Point Lenana (16,400ft 4985m) a number of people were feeling rather light headed but seven of the team, myself included, reached the top where it was bitterly cold. We stayed just long enough to take some photos and to admire the view.

The descent down the Chogoria route had the most spectacular views ranging across thousands of miles of Kenya. We booked rooms in a "guest house" in Chogoria

village and for the first night of the trip got very badly bitten by all sorts of creatures. The menu at the guest house included caterpillar, but no one had the inclination to try it. Egg and chips seemed a safer bet.

When we returned to Nairobi we had to confirm our flight back as, counter to what we had been told, there were no RAF flights back to UK. So the cheapest options, in four days time, were an Aeroflot flight via Aden, Cyprus and Moscow to Frankfurt; or Gulf Air, stopping at Cairo for five days. Surprise, surprise, the vote was on for Cairo, but the Paymaster, being OIC the American Express card vetoed that and booked Aeroflot.

To fill in the spare time we took the train to Mombassa and had three wonderful days south of Malindi in the Indian Ocean. Here we sampled a fantastic variety of fish and everyone went snorkelling in the coral and caught up with their sun bathing.

After a final night at Mrs Roches camp-site on the outskirts of Nairobi, and a final panic about paying the airport tax in dollars, we boarded the Aeroflot plane for a novel flight back home. Fly Aeroflot by all means, as it is cheaper, but take your own food.

Think about organising an adventure training expedition in your unit, or participating in one. Grants can be obtained fairly easily and you can hire most of the equipment you might need. At the end of our 28 days away we had become a very close group, with improved mountaineering skills and many of the team had achieved something they would probably never do again. It is one of the best ways to get to know soldiers and servicewomen, so go out there and have a go!

... And yes, the Paymaster did have to do the CILOR accounting ...

EXERCISE HEAVY TRAIN 1

By LCpl C M Apps WRAC

Following my success at the Army Parachute Championships held at Netheravon, I was contacted by Maj Card Comdt JSPC(N) and asked if I'd be willing to join the Army Classic (Style and Accuracy) Squad training camp to be held in Cyprus late October early November. Needless to say I *jumped* (sic) at the opportunity! Having accepted the invitation two major problems immediately presented themselves, one being time off work the other MONEY!

My boss Maj N O'Brien Comdt JSPC(L) was kind enough to release me for both the training camp and the Cyprus Championships which immediately followed (thanks Boss).

Now - money - following my recent purchase of a brand new parachute system (a mere £1000) my disposable income was, on the whole, well disposed. Rough calculations including air fares, jump fees and living expenses gave me a target figure of £500 plus to find - PANIC!

Contact with the BAOR Sports Board and their sponsors, P&O Ferries, resulted in a grant of 460DM which with £75 from the WRAC funds helped towards the air fare. Use of one of my travel claims just about balanced the account.

Armed with my air ticket, parachute and sun cream I flew from Dusseldorf to Larnaca and joined the training squad at CCATC Pergamos Camp on the night of the 19 October. The following morning was the first of many early starts, as wheels off at 0600 hrs meant arriving at the Drop Zone 0500hrs. A normal jump day consisted of six training

jumps under the eagle eye of WO2 Scotty Milne PARA, former National Champion. Needless to say with the number and continuity of jumps my performance improved both in style and accuracy. My results in the actual competition marked my steady improvement gaining first place in the Ladies Style and second in the Ladies Accuracy. The Army A team, of which I was a part, was placed first in the team Accuracy event. In total I completed 65 jumps over a two week period with my final descent resulting in a soaking in the DZ pond to mark my 1000th jump.

I would like to express my thanks to the BAOR Sports Board and their sponsors P&O Ferries, the WRAC and my boss Maj N O'Brien for making this trip possible. With the help you have given me I feel I'm a step nearer to achieving my aim of representing Britain in the World Championships next year.

EX JUNGLE CAVERN

By Cpl S Brooks WRAC Provost
RMP HONG KONG

"Right then", a phrase destined to be repeated many a time, signalled the start of Expedition "Jungle Cavern 89", a venture from Hong Kong to the jungles of Borneo. The aims of the expedition were: To climb Gunung Mulu; a height of 2,376m, to climb Gunung Api and view the limestone pinnacles and to explore the largest natural cave system in the world.

We were 11 strong – three WRAC – and after some pre-expedition preparation at HQ Brunei Garrison (they made putting up those "A" frames look so easy), we were ready to face the, as yet, unknown. An exceptionally early start saw all of us, plus bergens, plus food, packed tightly into a land cruiser for the drive to Miri in Sarawak and the start of our trip by various boats of diminishing size up the river Baram. Into Malaysia we went – our adventure had started.

About 6 pm we arrived at our base camp, Gunung Mulu National Park. Home was a wooden hut on stilts, complete with bunk beds and running water. Life in the jungle wasn't too rough at all I decided. How wrong could I be! Next day was a 7 am start with a dip in the river, our only bath, but very refreshing and lots of fun if you didn't look at the colour of the water too closely. The day was spent visiting the caves – a spectacular sight; bats and all. We emerged expecting to be stricken down with symptoms of Mulu Fever, something we had been warned about, but to date we're all clear! We ended up pot-holing waist high in water – good fun, but quite a harrowing experience as there were only three torches between 10 of us – a definite challenge.

The day after was the start of the "Big One"; the ascent of Gunung Mulu. We were assured by Edmund, our local guide, that the trek to Camp 1 was fairly easy going. We should have known better and taken note of the fact that he was wearing wellies. What with swamps, leeches and river crossings on log "bridges" requiring some supreme acrobatic skills, counterbalanced with heavy bergens, it was a lot harder, wetter and muddier than any of us anticipated, and it was certainly a relief to reach Camp 1. After a hot meal, we settled down to sleep on our wooden platform (with roof) and pondered as to what the next day would bring. The next day dawned and, after a cup of coffee and some porridge, we were ready for anything. The day's trek to Camp 4 was very hard work. The leeches took a particular liking to SSgt Jan Town; a group totalling seven attached themselves to the same spot on her ankle.

It was not nice and I'm glad it wasn't me. It was a steep, long, climb. We arrived at Camp 4 tired and, after we'd had some hot food, happy. The next day brought a dark 4 am start in an attempt to reach the summit for sunrise. This was foiled; we hadn't bargained for the steepness and difficulty of the terrain, but we reached the summit about 7 am with a real sense of achievement. After the hand shaking and obligatory photos, we started our descent, which if anything, proved harder than the climb up. Another night at Camp 1 and then a leisurely walk back to the Park and a compulsory dip in the river.

The next day was the assault on Gunung Api. Morale was so high after our previous "conquest" we felt we could do anything. A leisurely walk to Camp 5 where we stayed overnight in the company of a group from Canada and the next day, we commenced our climb. It was more like mountaineering, without safety ropes, but complete with sharp, jagged, limestone rock; ladders crossing deep crevices and knotted rope to hold on to – all good character building stuff! The view at the top made it all worthwhile. It was the most incredible sight – sharply pointed, sheer limestone pinnacles jutting out of the mountain, like numerous huge pencil points. Nobody knows for sure how they came to be formed and it's a sight I'll never forget.

We took our time in getting back to Camp 1. The next day we headed back to our Base Camp and preparations began for our planned feast that evening. Edmund was going to cook us a pig, what we didn't plan on was that it arrived at our hut in live form. However, after the necessary preparations, it was put on the BBQ and we all ate incredibly well that night! Together with tribal dances and soldiers' party games, a truly cultural evening was had by all.



L-R. Cpls Sally McNeill, Sue Brooks, SSgt Jan Town.
Front, Edmund – National Park Guide.

It was with sadness that we had to leave. It had been an adventure in every sense of the word; one we had survived with senses of humour intact and with feelings of having achieved something special, an experience I very much would like to repeat.

EX RED MORAN – KENYA

By Lt K E Kneil WRAC/RAEC

The British Army still exercises in Kenya and so the RAF still fly there. This fact saved Ex RED MORAN nearly £3,300 and meant too that a month in Kenya cost team members £80 each! Surely the bargain of the year.

The team consisted of Lt Kneil WRAC/RAEC, Lt Bracken RAEC, Sgt McLaren RCT and four Junior Leaders from JLR RCT/RAOC.

It was a month full to the brim with activity. The main objective was to climb Mt Kenya, all 17,000 feet. This in itself would take five days, but would also require at least a week's acclimatisation. And then there were the cultural objectives. You don't journey 4,000 odd miles without visiting the world's most spectacular game park – the Massai Mara. Nor do you overlook a chance to experience the daily lot of a typical Kenyan family. And then there was the week's R and R to fit in... If you want to know more, read on.

The body in sea-level Britain gets used to an oxygen rich environment. Muscles bulge with it, which is ideal because it's their fuel supply. The Kenyan capital, Nairobi, stands at 5,500ft, which is higher than Ben Nevis. At this height the air is thinner, and you have to breath harder to supply the body with the required level of oxygen. Yawning is more pronounced. You feel it most of all when you're exercising; you can't run as fast and for as long as you're used to. But the body can adapt, given time. We gave it nine days, sleeping at 10,000ft for most of this time, and climbing peaks up to 14,000ft (Mt Elgon on the Ugandan border, for example). Acclimatisation is not always necessary, of course. Some individuals can climb to Mt Kenyan heights without ill effects. But to ensure the success of any climbing expedition it really is a must.

However, man cannot live by climbing alone. During this first phase of the exercise we also took time off to visit the Massai Mara, part of the Serengeti game reserve. Reserve is misleading, implying a bordered, man-made block of land. The only borders to the Massai Mara are natural ones, and whilst the animals are protected by law, there are no fences. In this part of the world the animals run wild, and to see an elephant or zebra is as commonplace as ducks on a pond in Britain. However, no one can remain casual when face to face with the King of beasts, the lion. Of course you're safe in the vehicle, but they are so placid and you can get so close, you almost feel compelled to stroke them, like you would a dog in the park. Needless to say, you resist the urge.

Having regained altitude we continued our acclimatisation programme, this time in the heart of rural Africa. Having spent a year teaching in a remote village north of Lake Victoria, I had contacts who lived in local mud huts. The arrival of our Safari Landrover caused a stir and the team was soon engulfed in a crowd of enthusiastic Africans. Jessica took us back to her house, and provided a "feast" of chapati, chicken and Coca Cola, a relative luxury. The next day the Juniors came face to face with raw Kenya: mud huts, coffee, maize and banana shambas, small partly clad children, longdrops and the heat of the tropical sun. Despite the poverty the young soldiers were

amazed at the cleanliness of the mud huts, the politeness and respect shown to us by everyone we met and the underlying warmth of the community. Indeed a unique insight into African life.

We left rural Kenya behind to prepare for Mt Kenya (17,000ft). You carry everything with you, and packed with five days food, fuel and kit, our bergens were very heavy.

There are three main routes up Mt Kenya. We chose the longer, but scenically superior route via Chogoria. You can also drive half way up the mountain, which we decided against to keep the challenge and achievement intact. For similar reasons we didn't use porters, but if you have to they can be hired for a small fee.

It was a round trip of some 70 km, begun in shorts and T shirts and finished in windproofs and tracksuits. Navigation is easy and accommodation provided by basic but welcome mountain huts. If these are full, you sleep outside, hence a warm sleeping bag is essential and a bivvy bag is recommended. The Top Hut, which lies just below Point Lenana, our ultimate objective, shares space with a glacier; at 17,000 ft even the equator gets cold, especially at night.



Tackling one of the steeper slopes of Mt Kenya, Lt Kneil and J CSM Adams.

But even if the cold doesn't cause sleepless nights, the altitude will – and did. The climb was never easy, but up to 14,500ft had been managed without real hardship or sickness. The last 2500ft however were much more challenging. Nearly all the team experienced headaches and nausea, commonplace and not serious unless accompanied by other AMS symptoms. The headaches were worst at night, which are restless affairs no matter how tired you might be. On top of this the walking is much more strenuous, as overworked muscles demand more of less oxygen. Group man-management becomes ever important.

We reached the top on Christmas Day, as planned, and celebrated the occasion with party hats and poppers. Our rations were anything but seasonal, of course, and thoughts moved easily to home where turkey, beef and booze adorned every table in every house. Impromptu slides down the glacier provided humorous distractions from the general gloom!

We descended on the so-called Naro Moru path. It's the shortest way up Kenya, but it is uninspiring and the infamous vertical bog is best avoided; wet feet don't matter as much on the way down. Waiting for us was a slap-up meal at the Naro Moru River Lodge, well deserved and painfully overdue. The best night's sleep in days preceded the drive back to BATLSK, with a day here to prepare for the coast!

Watamu, just 60 miles north of Mombassa – the Kenyan Costa, nearly – is the location for the Army's R and R centre. We didn't use it as it happened, but it's easily booked and, so it seemed, a great place to stay. Instead, the Team pulled out of the hotel and into the garden belonging to a Mrs Simpson. For five days she catered for our every need – and more, organising snorkelling sessions and beach barbecues as well as breakfast, dinner and tea – and stickies at 4 o'clock. It was a very informal and intimate setting, very restful, friendly and altogether excellent value for money. Which was true of the trip as a whole.

WHITBREAD ROUND THE WORLD YACHT RACE MAIDEN RESERVE

By Captain S E Davies WRAC

Just four years ago I 'phoned a 24 year old girl who had announced an all female challenge in the Whitbread Round the World Yacht Race. Her aim was to win the Whitbread Trophy. Since that 'phone call I received many letters reflecting the progress of the project "a boat has now been designed . . ." " . . . unfortunately we have not been able to get sponsorship . . ." "we have just bought a secondhand boat . . ." and so on. The old Disque d'Or III in which Switzerland's Pierre Fehlman did the 1981/82 race, was eventually launched and renamed Maiden Great Britain by the Duchess of York in September 1988.

After extensive refitting by her full time crew, she set off for four months sailing which included the Route of Discovery Race from Spain to the Caribbean, and finished in an excellent 2nd place. It was then back to Hamble for a busy six months which saw a new rig design, keel and rudder as well as many refinements to other areas of the yacht. By this time I had been to see Tracy Edwards and we had agreed that I should be the reserve, flying to the stopovers to work on the boat and be available, if it should be necessary, to sail. The WRAC was most supportive and although due to posting it looked unlikely that I would after all be able to participate, CAD Kinton then agreed to release me as necessary for the duration of the race.

I spent as much time as possible during the summer working with the rest of the crew on the boat and doing some sailing with them to enable me to become part of the team and to familiarise myself with the boat. A highlight of this was a sponsorship event in which 10 of us flew to Geneva, donned trapeze harnesses and sailed a lake boat in the annual "Boi d'Or".

The first race I sailed on Maiden was the Fastnet race in August. Unfortunately we had to retire only 50 miles from the Rock, after Jo launched herself involuntarily off the loo and into a bulkhead, badly fracturing a wrist. In a vain effort to get it mended before 2 September we turned around and returned to Plymouth. Although disappointing it was nice to be in front of the maxis for a change and it was a pleasant spinnaker sail back; deck stereo on, the French contingent taking over in the galley and some sunbathing. Meanwhile we watched all the smaller boats and crews (including my husband) still battling their way through increasing head winds to the rock – it looked quite unpleasant.

Soon after the Fastnet race there was a major crew reorganisation, which seemed to interest the press. I was given "first refusal" on one of the two vacant places, which after much deliberation I did not accept; not an easy decision but the right one I believe. I worked on the



The Start – Southampton 1989.

principle that as reserve I would be likely to sail at least one leg, which luckily I did.

I was not able to go to the first stopover in Uruguay, however a ticket to Australia, New Zealand and return landed on the doormat one morning in November, and on the 28th I was flying out to the sun "Down Under". A day later I watched a speck appear over the Australian horizon, the same one that I had last seen disappearing from the Solent three months before. Again, they were making history – then for actually crossing the start line, now for crossing the finish line. In addition they were in 1st place in their class both over the water and on handicap and they were the first British boat to win a leg of this race for 12 years. The boat and crew looked as if they had been out for a five hour sail, not a five week race of endurance in the extreme cold and greyness of the inhospitable Southern Oceans. A day off to recover (from a five weeks sailing or one day's party?) before four weeks hard work stripping, cleaning, repairing and preparing Maiden for leg three – 3,500 miles to New Zealand. It was during this time that Sally Creaser had to return home for a few weeks and I was asked to sail in her place. It was difficult to be too elated about a friend's misfortunes, but I was of course delighted at the prospect. I took over Sally's jobs on the boat, amidst pleas of "but Sally did ALL the washing up", "Sally always gave me her pudding", etc.

Sailing on Maiden was a joy – never having to doubt the seaworthiness of the boat or the ability of the crew, and living in a relaxed and professional atmosphere. There were no arguments, no shouting, no sulking and definitely no bitchiness as some of the papers would like to have.

For the first six days our watch did all the sail changes which got me quickly used to the routines of various manoeuvres and to "life on the foredeck". I soon learned the worth of struggling into a dry suit at the beginning of any watch when we were sailing against the wind.

The watch system used on the boat was a four hour "pairs and opposites" - which worked successfully on Maiden - a small boat with a small crew. One watchleader and bowman swapped with the other watchleader and bowman every four hours. At the middle, two hour point, of their watches the three cockpit girls swapped with the other three - also doing four hours on/off.

Christmas and New Year were both celebrated at sea - Christmas with its usual fare (less alcohol) whilst at an angle of 30° in big waves and New Year also in big seas but sailing fast and surfing with them. We surfed into the new decade and continued to do so in blue or starlit skies for the next 24 hours at speeds of over 20 knots.

After we rounded the top of New Zealand we had an idyllic sail through the beautiful cruising grounds of the East Coast, with not another yacht in sight. In fact we saw no other boats until we were 10 miles from Auckland when the press and speaker craft spotted us. Three gybes later, under the glare of TV lights, we located a very small green buoy - the finish, and then rounded up into Auckland Dock. A truly amazing sight of 12,000 people greeted us, at 0300 on a Monday morning - what a welcome!

Then it was back to another four weeks work on the boat before the start of leg four, after which I flew home.

Maiden had her fair share of problems on the next two legs, but they finished second overall in their class and with a string of records to their credit.

For me the memories are the exhilaration of surfing down mountainous waves in the empty and lonely oceans, of the endless soaring of seabirds that never left us, of the amazing beauty of evenings and of the great team spirit both on the boat and between all the crews ashore. The memories of being cold, wet, tired, bored or wondering what on earth possessed me to do this seem to fade...

WOMEN AT SEA

With a growing number of well qualified and experienced sailors in the WRAC, QARANC and PE and the recent introduction of a number of national and international sailing events for women, it has been proposed to form a WRAC Army Women's Services Sailing Club. The QARANC has been asked if they are keen to join with this idea although they also sail with the RAMC Club.

The purpose of the Club would be to promote cruising, racing and seamanship at all levels, to organise participation by members in service and civilian events, (both cruising and racing) and to provide information and advice on all matters.

I am now trying to compile a list of all those interested in sailing dinghy or offshore cruising or racing, beginner or expert. If you are, or know anyone else who may be interested please contact Capt S E Davies WRAC, RAVC Centre, Welby Lane, Melton Mowbray, Leics and please try to spread the word about sailing as much as possible throughout the Corps.

Private Wootten became an old soldier at 18

DISABLED FOR LIFE

Shot in the head in 1971 whilst serving with the 3rd Battalion The Queens Regiment, Colin Wootten has been left needing constant care and attention. Almost totally paralysed and unable to properly communicate, every day for him is a battle. You can ease the years of pain and suffering by making a contribution for the continued care of Colin and other disabled ex-servicemen.



Donations, covenants and legacies gratefully appreciated.



THE ROYAL STAR & GARTER HOME

Disabled Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen,
Richmond, Surrey, TW10 6RR. Tel: 081-940 3314.

Please find enclosed my donation £ _____
Please send me details of your Covenant Scheme ☐

Name _____

Address _____

Registered Charity No. 210193 & 206790

ATS DINNER CLUB

The Club now has a membership of over 1,000, and this year will have a Buffet Luncheon on Saturday 13 October, at Wellington Barracks, London. We are pleased on this occasion to have the WRAC Staff Band to play for us. There is a limit on tickets (400) at £12 each, for paid up members only. Information on this event will have been circulated to members in the Chairman's July News Letter. Our Membership Secretary has been on the move, please note her new address:

Mrs E D L Jagger
"Juniper Cottage"
Sidford Church Street
SIDMOUTH
EX10 9RE

A Telemessage of loyal greetings was sent to HM The Queen, on her Birthday, the following reply was received:

"I am commanded by The Queen to thank you and all members of the ATS Dinner Club, for your kind thoughts in sending good wishes, which Her Majesty much appreciated, on her Birthday. The Queen warmly reciprocates your good wishes".

WWII CWAC VETERANS 32ND ANNUAL REUNION 1990

TORONTO – CANADA

The Annual Reunion is to be held from Friday 28 September–Saturday 29 September 1990. There will be a variety of activities including social events, wreath laying as well as a reunion luncheon, dinner, dancing and fun for all.

Full details from:

Mrs Shirley Wood Heesaker
201 Niagara Street
Toronto
ONTARIO
CANADA M5V 1C9

Tel: 781-2872, 781-3821

GLASGOW BRANCH

We are holding a Ceilidh (Scottish Party) in Clyde Hall, City Centre on Friday evening 12 April 1991, prior to the Grand Reunion. The proceeds will be donated to the Princess Louise Hospital, Erskine, for disabled servicemen and women, and tickets, which are limited will cost £5.00 each – they will be sold on a first come first served basis. The tickets will be on sale from 10 September 1990. Please state branch when applying for tickets to:

Mrs J M McGavin
11 Central Avenue
GLASGOW
G32 9JP
Tel: 041 778 2375

NORTHERN AREA REUNION – 1990

The 1990 Northern Area Reunion will be held in the Lounge Hall, Harrogate, on Saturday 15 September from 2–5.30 pm.

Tickets £4.50 (including tea) obtainable from Miss M Bradley, 60 West End Avenue, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 9BY (Tel: 0423 507023) not later than Saturday 8 September.

Please send stamped addressed envelope with cheque/postal order made payable to
"WRAC ASSOCIATION (NORTHERN AREA)".

Please note that bookings must be made by 8 September – no tickets will be available after that date or at the door.

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE 1990

Westminster Abbey 8th November

The QMAAC/ATS/WRAC plot will be Number 100 this year in the centre of the Field and will be three times the size of the standard plot.

The Corps/Association cross planting ceremony will be at 11.15 am and HM The Queen Mother is due to arrive at 11.30 am.

REUNION AFTER 43 YEARS

Mrs Joan Young (née Linton) left and Mrs Ivy Atkinson (née Peacock) right, have met again after 43 years. They both joined the ATS in 1947 and after Basic Training they were posted to Winchester and served with The Kings Royal Rifles and The Rifle Brigade. Mrs Young now lives in Northolt and Mrs Atkinson lives in Sunderland. Both have kept in contact by letter and Christmas cards. They finally met up again at Northolt in August 1989.



REUNION

Former members of the 43rd West Lancs Coy ATS met in Fulwood Barton, Lancashire, in the Preston/Blackpool area. Other reunions will probably be held and the organiser is Mrs Patricia Paterson (née Cardwell), of Station Lane, Barton or in case of difficulty Major E Tye Tel: 659811 extension 2204.



43rd West Lancs Coy ATS Reunion.

MERSEYSIDE REUNION 1990

During March 21 members of the ATS who served on Merseyside between 1942-1944 travelled from all over the North West to attend their annual reunion lunch at the Scarisbrick Hotel, Southport. Three members arrived after this photograph was taken.



Photo by courtesy of
Trinity Weekly Newspapers, Southport.

DON'T SAY GOODBYE SAY HELLO.

If you're about to leave the Services the prospect of Civvy Street could be as daunting as it is exciting. After all, you've got to settle, make new friends and generally take on a new life.

Why not say hello to The Royal British Legion. We can be a great help by providing a link with the past and a friendly social environment with sporting and recreational facilities for people with similar backgrounds to your own.

And, of course, your membership will ensure that we're always there to help ex-servicemen and women in need.

For details of membership or more information about the work of The Royal British Legion please send off the coupon.



THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Please send me details on

Becoming a member of The Royal British Legion ☐

The benevolent work of The Royal British Legion ☐

Send to: The National Recruiting Officer, Headquarters,
The Royal British Legion, 48 Pall Mall, London SW1 5JY.

Name

Address

Postcode

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION WOMEN'S SECTION

Most people have heard of The Royal British Legion, and many are aware that there is a Women's Section – but how many really know what these dedicated women do? They are inclined to go about their work of raising money quietly and efficiently and are even quieter about the spending of that money, believing that welfare work should be confidential.

It is perhaps that confidentiality that has deprived the Women's Section of publicity which they need to stimulate interest in the search for new members.

Perhaps some of the facts will surprise people – hopefully they will make fellow ex WRAC/ATS feel inclined to join us, for our aims and purposes are very similar – to try to improve the lot of those of our fellows who have fallen on hard times.

We are very happy to provide interesting Speakers about our work. Please contact the National Secretary – address below.

How do we help?

Some examples:

Flats, Houses – let at realistic rents to ex-Servicewomen.

Ex-Servicewomen's Allowance Scheme, provides over 1,000 women with a quarterly allowance.

Birthday Gift Scheme sends each of these ladies a card and £5 on their Birthday to ensure that on their special day, someone remembers them!

Welfare Grants – cash made available in urgent cases of need.

Mobility Scooters – for disabled ladies.

If you are interested and require further information please contact the National Secretary, 48 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JY.

ATS – EX-EAST AFRICA COMMAND

Since 1946 members of the ATS Clerical Group who served in East Africa (Nairobi etc) between 1942-1945, have held an Annual Reunion in London. We would welcome new members.

Please contact: Betty Belfield (née Davison) at 3 Castelnau, Barnes, London SW13 9RP.

458 (M) HY AA BATTERY RA

By R L Argent ATS

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I had just left school when World War I broke out and I can remember listening to the proclamation on the wireless and my cousin, who was staying with us at the time, being recalled to Essex, to help evacuate the children at his school.

For two years after that, I did office work and in my spare time I helped my mother, who was in the WVS and in charge of an evacuee hostel, in Westbury. The children who were sent there were unable to be billeted in private homes, due to maladjustment, head lice and skin problems. There was also work in the canteen with so many troops in the town, many from Commonwealth countries.

My father was away from home most of the time, catering for the armed forces in transit and my sister had joined the Nursing Reserve and had been sent to a Military Hospital in Gloucester and my brother was still at school, so in 1942 I decided to join the ATS.

After a medical examination, an IQ Test and swearing the enlistment oath, in March I was on my way for basic training at Honiton, with pay 7/6d (37½p). My memories of this time were of blanket rash, as we had no sheets, numerous inoculations and hours of drill on the barrack square, so none of us were sorry to leave to go to our units.

I had opted to be a radar operator on an Ack Ack site, so at the end of March I was sent to the Prince Maurice Barracks at Devizes, for specialist training in radiolocation. Conditions there were about the same as at Honiton, only this time our mattress consisted of three "biscuits" filled with straw. After a hectic day, drilling and having instruction on aircraft recognition, the rudiments of power unit maintenance, the intricate technology of the radar equipment, besides route marches and gas chamber tests, we were only too happy to lie on these well named "biscuits". We were issued with battle dress, boots, leather jerkins, fur overcoats, fatigue denims and unmentionable under garments. Now where were those glamorous ATS girls on the posters – sadly our dreams had vanished! This phase didn't last long for me as, when on fatigues in the medical unit, I picked up some swabs and caught scarlet fever, and I was rushed to the American Red Cross Harvard University Isolation Hospital in Salisbury. It caused quite a panic in the Camp but luckily no one else caught it. All note books and personal belongings had to be destroyed and when I recovered, I had to start all over again but with a new contingent of personnel.

After our training, we were now formed into 458 (Mixed Hy AA Bty and the radar operators proudly put on their radar flashes and were known as OFC's (Operators fire control) but before we were ready to man a gun site, we were sent to a Firing Camp at Bude, for a fortnight. We had to plot the range, bearing and angle of the target and then 'phone through to the gunners "On target . . . Fire".

In July, a convoy of lorries took us to Hayling Island and we really felt at war when we arrived there and saw the nissen huts and gun emplacements; four for the large guns and two for the smaller ones.

Our first job was to make paths to get to the radar cabin, transmitter and power unit, so we were given pickaxes and shovels and when the job was done, duck-boards were put over in wet and icy weather but we kept clear of the mud and we became quite adept at getting to our posts within three minutes of the alert sounding, even on the darkest of nights. The predictor girls worked in the Command Post,



Trafalgar Square 1945.

close to the guns, for day-time plotting.

We lived in the nissen huts, when not on duty, which were very cold and draughty and had one stove which was difficult to light and with fuel in short supply, the huts were often unheated. They also attracted many species of wild life, lizards, frogs, field mice and numerous tiny creatures which liked hiding in our boots. I still shake out my shoes, even to this day! The ablutions were not the last word of luxury and provided mostly cold water and the bath house was exposed to the elements and it meant quite a walk to get there.

When we were on duty we slept in a manning hut near the radar cabins and as we had no heating at all and not much room to move about the hot cocoa brought to us was always welcome and we amused ourselves by playing records on an old gramophone, the same ones over and over again. Starting up the generator on cold wintry nights, was quite a feat but we also had long sunny summers to make up for the winter.

One day, after doing a stint in the radar cabin, the REME discovered that the gun cotton underneath our seats was just about to explode, because of the heat. It was there in case of an invasion and it would have been used to destroy the sets. One job I hated doing, was climbing up on to the cabin and then up the latter to grease the aerial, but it

provided a lovely view of the island from there. All the beaches were mined and a lot of secret missions were made by the sailors and divers who used to come to the camp for social evenings. They introduced us to putting rum in our NAAFI coffee!

At the end of the field lived a retired Marine instructor and his wife who had a smallholding there and they "adopted" our five girl team. We spent many happy off-duty hours with them one Christmas, when we were on manning duty and not relishing our lunch of cheese and corned beef sandwiches, they produced a cooked Christmas dinner for us to eat in the hut. I shall never forget their kindness and also that of the elderly ladies who kept a canteen in their cottage called Meadowsweet, where we were always made so welcome.

Before we left Hayling Island many of us were confirmed at the little St. Mary's Church and the kind folk at Meadowsweet gave us a splendid tea afterwards, probably much of it from their own rations.

There was another gun site in the south of the island and the competition was keen to see who could shoot down the most enemy planes. Once the AA Batteries bagged a Messerschmitt 109 which was seven miles up and this was reported in the daily newspaper. It was a spy plane escorted by two heavily armed Focke-Wulf 190's, the sky was so clear that if it had returned to Germany, it would have carried back a detailed panorama of the Portsmouth Naval Base. The gun action lasted less than a minute and caused great excitement for the islanders. Luckily for us and them, our planes gave the friendly signal so we didn't get too gun happy and we didn't always hit the enemy target either! The German planes tried to hit the gun sites on several occasions, dropping land mines and bombs quite close by.

About this time, the V1s or "doodlebugs" as they were called, were being directed towards London, so we were to be sent there to try to shoot them down before they reached the city, but first we went to another Firing Camp at Sheringham in Norfolk. We were billeted in a large hotel on top of the cliffs and later on we heard that the next Battery to move in after us had many casualties when the hotel was hit by a bomb.

The gun site we were assigned to was at the Westminster Bank Sports Ground at Norbury SW London and it was surrounded by new housing estates. Most of the battery personnel were Londoners so they were delighted with the move as it meant they could get home more often.

The guns were firing about 900-1,000 rounds of ammo on many occasions as the doodlebugs came thick and fast both day and night. Gradually the houses around were flattened during the raids and things got so bad that several of us took a crash course in First Aid and when not on duty, we tried to help with the casualties. I can still vividly remember seeing a mother with a baby in her arms and he had glass in every part of his body, including his mouth and people were running about dazed and badly hurt. Their pet animals were lying dead or injured in the roads. It was devastation all round. At one time we heard sobbing coming from a tottering rather unsafe house and when we climbed the wobbly staircase, we found a poor old man in shock and we had to coax him out of the house to get him to safety. One night the Fire Station nearby was hit and many of the firemen were killed.

Our site was not spared, and one night, when our team was on duty, the camp was on the receiving end and the Lewis gunner was blown out of his gun pit together with his gun. The explosion was about five yards from him, but he survived. The men's huts went down like a pack of cards and the pavilion where the girls slept suffered much

damage and many were cut by flying glass. As the pavilion was uninhabitable, we slept under canvas and usually under our beds with our tin hats on.

Later on, when the long range V2's were directed towards London, we had more sophisticated radar equipment, with paraboloids instead of aerials and more up to date screens, similar to the ones used today. Our first sets were only Mk 1 as radiolocation was a fairly new invention then.

The enemy were using everything they had in one last vain attempt but the end of the war was now in sight.

In a letter to my sister I wrote, "We were all awakened by thunderflashes being thrown and everyone was shouting and singing because news had just come through that the war was over. Actually one of the Home Guard, who worked for a newspaper, started the rumour and officers from Scotland Yard came down to investigate as our celebrations were a bit premature and the next day it was reported on the front page of the *Daily Mail*.

It was a couple of days afterwards that VE Day was announced. I continued in my letter, "All the people started putting up their decorations, all the lights went on and there was dancing in the streets".

The next day we had a short Service of Thanksgiving in camp and in the afternoon some of us decided to go to Westminster to mingle with the crowds and we could hardly move in the crush. We waited to see Churchill but saw Herbert Morrison instead. Afterwards we were pushed along by the crowds to Buckingham Palace and everyone was shouting for the King. It was about 4 o'clock when the Royal Family came out on to the balcony and we returned again in the evening to hear his speech.

When we returned to camp the celebration bonfire was almost out but dancing went on till the early hours. . . What a glorious day it was!

TAXI TO TANGLIN

By Miss E Needham

Aircraft descent was gradual, below me the unfurling carpet of light was Singapore. Twenty-four years had elapsed since my last arrival on this island, yet it felt familiar.

Inside the ultra-modern, immaculate Changi International Airport could this be the Singapore I remembered? Outside, the intense humid heat told me it was. Thankfully an air-conditioned courtesy car waited to whisk me along the East Coast Parkway to my hotel, unknown to me, having been built on land reclaimed from the harbour.

During the years since Independence change was inevitable, just how much was unbelievable; therefore the sight of the Padang and Raffles Hotel from my hotel room was something of a relief. Other familiar landmarks were barely recognisable or had vanished. Orchard Road now a wide tree shaded thoroughfare with an underground rail system beneath it. Gone the Cold Storage and Singapura Hotel, replaced by skyscrapers housing International Hotels and futuristic shopping malls. CK Tangs now a department store and not a camphorwood chest in sight! Singapore river is now pollution free, bumboats and odour are no more. Street food stalls have mainly been replaced by outdoor eating complexes. Fast food has arrived and many Singaporeans are to be seen enjoying pizzas, Big Macs and steak and French fries smothered in ketchup. Aware of the significance of red to the Chinese I felt it prudent to risk the occasional blob myself!

A city tour took me past the Botanic Gardens, close to the site of Tanglin Barracks which I presumed would have fallen beneath the bulldozer years ago. Anxious to find out, I later enlisted the help of an elderly taxi driver and was amazed to find the camp still intact and occupied by the Singapore Armed Forces. The compound formerly accommodating 4 Coy WRAC was now closed off. The Sergeants' Mess (opened 1965) was now an Officers' Mess. A young Singapore Army Major kindly invited me in to look around. Apart from the furniture nothing had changed, I could almost feel the presence of Mr Tao. The bar, though unstocked was open and I couldn't resist perching on the corner bar stool just for old time's sake. Visited the ground floor sleeping quarters but I didn't venture further since the lift was "out of order".

From here the Cockpit Hotel, struggling survivor of the colonial past, seemed the only place to sip a Singapore Sling and reflect. Amidst the potted palms and delicate aroma of curry who could forget starched uniforms, cotton underwear, Quiet Hour – Happy Hour! Amah's market, cholera jabs, Singapore ear, torrential rain, monsoon drains; now mostly memories. On leaving the Mess for the very last time, a trick of the imagination perhaps – but I swore I glimpsed Ena and Kim scuttling by with a length of dress material!

The visit had been a memorable yet eerie experience. Tanglin appeared to be fixed in a time warp from which it seemed reluctant to emerge. Allowed to run down, the whole barracks looked forlorn and almost seemed to be waiting for someone to say a last farewell before its proposed demolition in early 1990.

On behalf of all who ever served there – I did just that.

TRIGGERED MEMORIES

By Mrs P M Jefferis (née Jolley)

I have often scanned magazines, wondering if I would find news of ex-ATS friends, either from Queen's Camp, Guildford (June 1943), G L Radar Training, Oswestry (July 1943) or 476 (Mixed) HAA Battery, 137 Regiment at Colindale, North London, and later Belgium and Germany.

Then in the Lioness No 1/90, not one but two mentions of 476 appeared. I wish I had known about (Corporal?) Betty Nevin and (Sergeant?) Maureen Browne before, as I was in Auckland last year and would have liked to have contacted them.

The other articles – An Obituary to an ATS Girl (Doris Fellowes) brought back so many memories – I could write a book! We moved from our gun site in Townsend Lane to Weybridge in transit for Belgium, and were billeted in requisitioned houses, over Christmas, with no heating and no hot water. Never were cookhouse fatigues so popular! Weybridge Common was transformed into Fairyland with heavy hoar frost and the frost from local residents was equally cold when we tried to seek warmth and a hot drink in local cafes! We went by train from Weybridge to Southend, not knowing where we were and I am sure we crossed from Tilbury, not Dover, on the *Ulster Monarch* to Ostend on 19 January. Most of us were very sea-sick and spent as much time as possible on deck in the fresh air. On approaching Ostend our Sergeant ordered us down into the saloon, which reeked of the last meal, to polish our buttons and boots as we were told we were the first ATS to land there. I have never been able to stand the smell of tinned peas since that day. We landed in a blizzard anyway and I don't suppose the locals were watching.

We went by truck to Overijse, near Brussels, where we girls were in wooden huts, but the poor men were under canvas in thick snow. The snow didn't last forever and we had a happy time there. We were supposed to be operational against "doodlebugs" relieving an all male battery which moved up nearer the front line, but we saw no action. Some of us were lucky enough to be "adopted" by village families who did our washing for us in exchange for coffee, soap and cigarettes, and entertained us for simple meals. I kept in touch with my "hostess" for 44 years and visited the family several times. Sadly she died last year.



476 (M) HAA Bty – Overijse.

We moved from Overijse to Moerbeke on the Dutch/Belgian border and then to a camp outside Hamburg (does anyone remember the name of the place?) where we were under canvas in both places, working in the vehicle parks. I well remember skiving either in, or under the lorries we were supposed to be greasing to return to the UK. We were in Moerbeke on VE Day and had a wonderful time in Ghent with the celebrations.

In Hamburg 476 was disbanded and several of us were posted to HQ BAOR at Minden and Bad Oeynhausen. It seemed strange living in a house and working in an office, after nissen huts and tents and the regimentation of gun site life, but it helped us to adjust to civilian life ready for demob.

Life in the ATS in those days may not have been as glamorous as it is in the WRAC today but most of us enjoyed the good times, the wonderful comradeship, the dances, housey-housey in the NAAFI or just chatting round the fumey coke stove in the manning hut. And we made the best of the bad – trying to get diesel splashes off boots so that they might shine for parade, the cold, and snow on the beds, "lats" fatigues, cookhouse fatigues cleaning black, greasy, sooty saucepans with tepid water and soda – no brillo or Fairy Liquid in those days, and then – nice and warm in bed with pleasant dreams – "Take Post"!! Happy Days!

I would love to hear from anyone who shares some of these memories.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1990

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The Annual General Meeting was held in the Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF on Saturday 21 April 1990 at 2.30 p.m.

The Chair was taken by Brigadier A Field CB, Vice-President of the Association. She welcomed 260 members to the meeting on the day that was the birthday of Her Majesty The Queen, the most distinguished Life member of the Association.

She thanked the Chairman of London Area for organising the fund raising activities and the Director and officers for allowing the Staff Band to give a concert following the AGM.

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 15 April 1989 having been circulated to Branches were taken as read and signed.

A message of congratulations to the Women's Auxiliary Air Force on the occasion of their Golden Jubilee had been sent on behalf of the Association and an acknowledgement received from Dame Anne Stephens, Chairman of the Golden Jubilee Committee, remembering with pride and pleasure the many occasions when WAAF and ATS served side by side.

The Chairman of Council, Major E O Coven, reported that in the period since the last AGM Council had met twice.

The Association had continued to expand and she was pleased to inform the meeting that the membership total for retired and serving members had passed the 10,000 mark. 224 Life members had joined in the last financial year.

The Chairman reported that there were 80 branches of the Association with five new branches having been formed.

A total of 326 tickets had been issued to members to attend the Service and Parade at the Cenotaph.

The QMAAC, ATS and WRAC plot at the Field of Remembrance which is opened on the Thursday before Remembrance Sunday had been moved from its former place near St Margaret's to the centre of the Field. Negotiations were in hand to increase the size of the plot. Members were asked to note that the Service to open the Field would be at 11.30 a.m. half an hour earlier than before.

In closing Major Coven said that she proposed to resign from the post of Chairman on 1 May 1990.

The Vice-Chairman thanked the Chairman of Council for her report and offered her regrets that Major Coven would be retiring from the post on 1 May. The Vice-President said that Major Coven had given much service to the Association as Vice-President of Council, Vice-Chairman of Council, a Benevolent Fund Trustee and most of all for 30 years as the Advertising Manager for Lioness magazine. Through her City connections she had been most helpful in fund raising for the Museum Appeal.

Mrs E Laurence-Smith, the Honorary Treasurer, reported that the Association was in a healthy state financially with the Accumulated Funds standing at £123,207 and an excess of income over expenditure for the year of the large sum of £35,555.

This had been mainly because of an unexpected but very welcome legacy of £25,601 from the estate of Miss Bertha Henderson of Glasgow. This had been a non-recurring item without which the excess of income would have been £9,954.

The Honorary Treasurer explained that the Lioness

magazine which derived its income from the Annual and Life subscriptions of members had made a loss of £3,618 last year, and an accumulated loss of £12,629 over the last six years. This loss had been paid for by the investment income of the Association which had investments worth £60,650. However, Council had felt that it could not go on using the income of investments built up over the 71 years of the Association's existence for subsidising the present membership and their magazine.

Mrs Laurence-Smith said that she would be relinquishing the post after 17 years at the next Council meeting.

The Vice-President thanked the Honorary Treasurer for her Report and especially for her long and devoted service over 17 years on behalf of the Association. These remarks were greeted with applause.

Captain K R McGregor the Editor of Lioness reported that in February 1990 all former records had been broken when 12,000 copies of Lioness were printed. This 50% increase in the print run was made in order that all servicewomen contributing to Corps funds through the Day's Pay Scheme, should receive a personal copy of Lioness. Formerly they had shared one copy between three, and in some cases had not been seeing a magazine at all. The huge stack of parcels had mainly been packed by Corps HQ staff, but had been helped by two members of HQ&H Coy WRAC Centre. She thanked Colonel Robertson for this help.

Contributions to Lioness had far exceeded the space available for publication and articles submitted were often too lengthy and required drastic editing. A balance had to be achieved to cater for all groups and interests.

Combined Service Publications Ltd now dealt with our advertising, in place of Major Coven's Nuvview Agency, and our increased circulation ought to appeal to potential advertisers. Advertisers like to see a bright up-to-date publication and the staff was always seeking ways to keep up with modern trends without destroying the individuality of the magazine.

The Vice-President thanked Captain McGregor for her Report.

Brigadier A Field, Chairman of the Trustees, reported that the Trustees had met twice during the year 1 November 1988 to 31 October 1989 which was the financial year and reporting year for the Funds.

She said that she regretted to have to report that General Sir Thomas Morony who had agreed to be a Patron in 1988, sadly died in 1989.

Brigadier Field said that in the year under review the Funds had passed a sad milestone. There had been over 1,000 cases considered by the Funds, an increase of 130 over the previous year.

Grants had also increased from £142,000 in 1987/88 to £170,000 in 1988/89, a 20% increase.

The Chairman said that the Trustees would like to record their thanks to all those who subscribed to the Funds including £3,500 from Branches of the Association and the retired members and units who made donations totalling £7,466, the servicewomen and officers who are in the Day's Pay Scheme which produces well over half the income of the Funds, Lt Col Soames and members of the Grants Committee, The Army Benevolent Fund who support the Funds in so many ways and the Voluntary Workers of SSAFA/FHS, Secretaries of Association Branches, the Royal British Legion, particularly the Women's Section, and Social Workers of the DSS who submitted cases for consideration to the Grants Committee.

Brigadier Field paid tribute to Mrs Laurence-Smith who

was retiring. She had served the funds for 16 years with compassion, a desire to help, great attention to detail and a thoroughness which had ensured that former servicewomen in need were helped as much as is humanly possible. In her time she had dealt with over 8,800 cases and supervised the distribution of over one million pounds.

She had watched the case load grow from 300 a year when she had started to over 1,000 in her last year. A tremendous increase which she had coped with, with enormous dedication and used her experience for the benefit of those who need our help. The Chairman wished her well in her retirement.

Brigadier A Field, Chairman of the Museum Trustees, reported that construction of the Royal Room would start on Monday 23 April and be completed by early May.

She reported that the Museum had purchased at auction a unique medal associated with the ATS. This was the George Medal awarded to LCpl Emma Margaret Richards for bravery after an ammunition depot explosion in 1948.

The Trustees were grateful for help from the Victoria and Albert Museum Purchase Grant Fund, the Army Museums Ogilby Trust and an anonymous donation in making this purchase.

Brigadier Field reported that the Museum Redevelopment was nearly paid for and by the summer of 1990 the account should be clear. She added that the Museum would always have the need for funds as for example the purchase of LCpl Richards medal, but it was nice to know that the redevelopment has been successfully paid for and she wished to thank all those who had helped.

The amendments to Rules which had been approved by Council and had been circulated to branches were approved with the exception of three minor points which were referred back to the Council to review.

The proposed increase in subscriptions to £2 for Annual members and £20 for Life members was approved.

The Rules concerning the Composition of Council and the Officers of the Association were still under consideration and would be reported to the next AGM after consideration by Council.

Council had proposed that the four existing Council Vice-Presidents Miss M D Bradley, Mrs H M Fuller, Major D R M Parker and Lt Col M W Soames be re-elected for a further year from 1 November 1990.

The Chairman reported that Council had decided at its meeting in January 1988, that some form of acknowledgement of work done by members on behalf of the Association as a whole should be established and that a Certificate of Appreciation should be instituted and rules for the award be established. The Council recommended that the rules should be:

- (a) The Certificate should only be awarded to members of the Association (although Council had some discretion).
- (b) Fifteen years membership of the Association was the basic criteria but the individual should have held some position of responsibility as well for some of these years or done work on behalf of the Association as a whole.

The General Secretary would send details of the scheme and nomination forms to branches and recommendations received would be screened by Council and the first certificates will be presented at the Grand Reunion in 1991 in Glasgow.

Lieutenant Colonel J L Lawson, Chairman of the Organising Committee, said that the 1991 Grand Reunion

would be held in Glasgow on Saturday 13 April and Sunday 14 April 1991. On the Saturday there would be tours of Loch Lomond or the Burrell Collection for members in the morning while the Secretaries' and Council were holding their meetings and lunch in the City Chambers.

In the afternoon the Annual General Meeting would be held in the Ballroom of the City Chambers and there would be a dinner with entertainment in the Albany Hotel in the evening.

On Sunday 14 April 1991 there would be a Service in Glasgow Cathedral followed by a March Past in the City Centre. After that the Lord Provost would entertain members.

Lt Col Lawson added that the Glasgow Branch were planning to hold a Ceilidh on the evening of Friday 12 April 1991 and anyone who was planning to be in Glasgow on that evening was invited to attend. Details would be in Lioness No 2/90.

Mrs Connie Mark said that she had assembled in London a photographic exhibition of the part played by women of the West Indies in the British Army and said that she would be prepared to take it to other parts of the country.

The next Annual General Meeting of the Association would be held on Saturday 13 April 1991 at City Chambers Glasgow at 2.30 p.m. during the Grand reunion.

The full Minutes of the meeting have been circulated to branch secretaries and copies may be obtained from the General Secretary.

NOTICE

CAN YOU HELP SOLVE A MYSTERY?

In 1943 a painting of HRH Prince Arthur Duke of Connaught painted by Herkomer was loaned to the ATS Senior Officers' School at Bagshot Park.

No trace can now be found of the painting or its fate.

Do you have any knowledge of the painting or its whereabouts? If so, please write to Corps HQ.

FOCUS ON THE BENEVOLENT FUNDS

(This is an extract of the Annual Report of the work of the Funds and the audited accounts. Full copies may be had on application).

The ATS and WRAC Funds exist to help all women who have served or who are serving in the Army. This does not include the nursing services who have their own benevolent fund.

The Funds are managed by a Board of Trustees who establish policy and appoint a Grants Committee to apply the funds as appropriate.

The Grants Committee of the Funds is chaired by Lt Col (Retd) M W Soames MBE and consists of retired officers who are volunteers, a regular officer and a regular warrant officer nominated by Commander WRAC at United Kingdom Land Forces attend each meeting.

The Grants Committee meets every fortnight at Corps Headquarters to consider all cases put to them that require grants of more than £150. Cases requiring less than £150 are dealt with out of Committee by the Joint Secretaries of the Funds.

The Committee is of course greatly assisted in its work by the helpful reports and recommendations received from the many voluntary bodies and professional organisations. The majority of cases are investigated by honorary representatives of SSAFA/FHS and to them we owe a special debt of gratitude.

A total of 1018 cases were considered during the financial year: 774 of these were ex-ATS; 237 were serving and ex-WRAC and seven were ex-QMAAC applicants. The total reflects an increase of 130 cases over the equivalent period of the previous year.

Analysis of cases dealt with by the Grants Committee:

	ATS	WRAC & QMAAC
General distress due to ill health, debts etc	86	29
Beds and Bedding	38	7
Clothing	98	27
Furniture and Furnishings	75	34
Funeral Expenses	8	2
Holidays, Convalescent	38	4
House Repairs, Decoration	71	14
Light and Fuel	90	18
Maintenance, Nursing Home Fees	50	18
Medical Expenses, Wheelchairs, Spectacles	49	12
Removal and Storage Charges	22	11
Railway, Bus Fares	18	3
Rent, Rates and Mortgage	35	21
School Fees, Education Grants	2	9
Telephone Installation and Accounts, TV Licences	47	10
No grants made	47	25
	<u>774</u>	<u>244</u>

TOTAL: 1018 (includes 7 QMAAC)

The amount spent on grants was £170,000 as against £142,000 in 1987/88.

The Trustees are very grateful to all those who make donations to the Funds but in particular would like to thank the serving members of the Corps who subscribe under the Day's Pay Scheme. Without this help the Funds would not be in a position to cope with such a large number of cases and meet the considerable expenditure. It is rewarding to know that 91% of servicewomen who subscribe now covenant their donations.

The amount recovered from the Inland Revenue from covenanted donations amounted this year to £23,202.

The Trustees approved a donation of £8,000 to the Army Benevolent Fund and once again would like to record their gratitude to the Executive Staff who are always so helpful and respond so generously to all major cases submitted to them. As well as helping in individual cases where our own Funds have been unable to meet the full amount of financial aid requested, the Army Benevolent Fund provide Annual Supplementary Allowances to four ex-servicewomen who are suffering particular hardship. The Trustees of the Army Benevolent Fund also approved annual grants for 12 ex-servicewomen where there was a shortfall in Nursing Home expenses.

The Funds are providing 140 Television sets under our Television Rental Scheme – a cost to the Funds of £9,400 for the year. In addition, 110 television licences are being paid for. This service is offered to selected elderly women who are to some degree housebound, who live alone and are dependent on their television for company and of course are having to manage on a very low income. The letters of appreciation received confirm what a worthwhile undertaking this is.

The Trustees are grateful to all Branches who kindly send knitwear so that parcels can be sent to selected families who are pleased to have extra woollies for their children. Special thanks must go to Brigadier Eileen Nolan

and Mrs Drew of Canterbury Branch for their individual contributions to our "knitwear department".

EXAMPLES OF CASES ASSISTED

An ex-WRAC Pte aged 66 with five years service in the ATS and WRAC. Very disabled with arthritis of the spine. lives on an estate a long way from shops and bus stops. Unless she pays for a mini-cab she does not go out. It was suggested by her physiotherapist that she should try to get an electrically controlled wheelchair. For three years she had been saving every penny herself but had never managed to put enough away. A grant of £500 from the Funds was made towards the purchase of the chair; the Army Benevolent Fund made a similar grant of £500.

Extract from her letter "How on earth does one begin to thank you and your Committee. to say I am grateful is a gross understatement. Having an electric chair to get around on your own opens up the whole world again. I have been confined to my home for so long I can't describe the horizons it will open up for me now".

A LCpl serving in Northern Ireland. She and her husband lost a considerable amount of personal possessions in a bomb attack at Lisburn in December 1988. Many of the possessions were not properly insured and jewellery of sentimental value was lost. A donation of £150 was made to partly compensate for some of the loss. We understand that the husband's Benevolent Fund made a similar donation.

An ex-ATS Sgt aged 73 with seven years service. A widow living on a basic State pension of £44.57 per week. Suffers from Hodgkin's Disease. After much chemotherapy and radium treatment her health has improved but she finds it a struggle to keep herself warm in the winter on her income living in Ayrshire. A grant of £200 was made to clear an outstanding HP debt and to purchase much needed warm clothing. The Trustees of the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund accepted her as an annuitant receiving quarterly payments of £65.

An ex-WRAC Cpl now aged 29 was involved in a road accident while on duty in Cyprus in 1986, injuring her spine and leaving her paralysed from the waist down. After eight months at Stoke Mandeville Hospital she moved into the family home. After nearly a year the time had come when she felt she must meet the challenge of making a life for herself. The local authority provided her with a council property of her own and a grant to enable the house to be modified for her wheelchair. The Army Benevolent Fund approved a grant of £9,000 towards the adaptations and to set up the home. The SSAFA representative dealing with the case is carefully controlling the disbursement of the grant. A grant of £1,000 had previously been made by the Army Benevolent Fund to help the parents meet expenses during the time their daughter was at Stoke Mandeville. A grant of £900 was also made from our Funds for this purpose. This young ex-Cpl now lives in her own home with a carer but manages light domestic chores.

A donation of £300 was sent to the Sue Ryder Home at Henley-on-Thames where a terminally ill ex-ATS Pte aged 67 with 3½ years service was being cared for. The Home is a Registered Charity and therefore does not charge the patients but relies on voluntary donations and DSS statutory allowances where applicable. It currently costs £103 per day to care for each patient who is nursed there.

An ex WRAC Pte aged 34. Widowed in 1987. Left with four young children and a 23-year-old brother suffering from spina bifida to look after. She has suffered from depression since her husband's death and has asthma along with three of her children. Her financial affairs got completely out of hand and she found herself heavily in debt with rent arrears, credit trading and heating bills. A grant of £398 was made to clear some of the debts. Liaison was being made with the King George V Fund for sailors as her late husband had been a Merchant Seaman.

SOME LETTERS RECEIVED

"May I thank you most sincerely for restoring my faith in human nature. Thank you very much for your generosity to enable me to buy a cooker. I really do appreciate it very much. You can rest assured it will be put to good use as I do not like junk food but good old-fashioned English food. Please excuse this writing as I have been blind for three years but have had operations on both eyes and am learning to see properly again".

"I would like to express my sincere thanks to you and everybody concerned for the contribution to my convalescence expenses. I cannot really explain to you what a wonderful help it has been to me. I've been to Weston for two weeks and now feel able to cope with my every day life once again after all my worries. As you know I am in my 90th year and life does seem a problem, but with help and friends as you have been, I look forward once again". (Letter from ex-QMAAC applicant.)

"I would like to thank you and all concerned for the generous and kind donation of £500 - £400 from your Benevolent Funds and £100 from the Victory (Ex-Services) Benevolent Trust Fund towards the cost of having a stair-lift installed in our new home. The lift has now been installed and it has given my wife a new lease of life we never thought was possible".

"We don't really know how to thank you enough for the grant to pay the gas bills for the year and also the rail passes (OAP's). We only originally asked Bishop Hawker for a loan for our fares to Hammersmith Hospital to visit our sick son, never thinking of any other help so you will understand I hope what your help means to us. Fortunately, we both still have happy memories of our life in the Services and now realize that the same comradeship we gained then still carries on".

CASE SECRETARY RETIRES

Mrs Elizabeth Laurence-Smith left Corps Headquarters on 5 April 1990 after 16½ years as the Case Secretary to the ATS/WRAC Benevolent Funds. She had also been Joint Secretary to the Benevolent Funds and the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund. She had been a member of the Grants Committee for some years before becoming the full time Case Secretary.

In her long tenure Mrs Laurence-Smith showed great compassion in dealing with the cases which came to the Benevolent Fund and ensured that those who were in need were given as much help as possible. During the year in which she began there were 300 cases by the time she left it had risen to over 1,000 cases in one year. In all she dealt with over 8,800 and supervised the distribution of grants of over one million pounds. She coped with this ever increasing demand with great devotion and gave a lot of her time to ensure that benevolence was timely and thorough.

In addition to her duties as Case Secretary, Mrs Laurence-Smith was for 17½ years the Honorary Treasurer of the WRAC Association and to mark this tremendous service the members of Council and the Branches of the Association made a presentation to her.

We were all delighted that her work for the Funds was recognised by the award of an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in 1990. It is a just and fitting tribute to her devotion and dedication.

Her post at Corps HQ has been filled by Mrs Alice Matthews (née Ferguson) who served in the WRAC for nine years and retired as a Captain in 1972. She lives in Lightwater with her husband and two children. We welcome her to Corps HQ and hope that she will stay with us for many years to come.



L-R. Brig Nolan, Mrs Laurence-Smith, Brig Field, Lt Col Laurence-Smith and Col Davies.

To: The Editor
Lioness

Dear Editor

May I please thank, through you, all members of the Association Branches who so kindly and generously contributed to my retirement present. This is a lovely Royal Doulton Dinner Service which I shall treasure for the rest of my life.

During my 17 years as Honorary Treasurer of the Association I have met many members at the AGMs and Grand Reunions. Very recently my husband and I were guests at the 10th Anniversary luncheon of the Hastings Branch which we very much enjoyed.

I would like to think that I could offer all members dinner on my new service but I know that the membership of the Association is over 10,000 and I am afraid my culinary expertise does not quite run to this!

However, I very much look forward to seeing many members again at the Grand Reunion in Glasgow next year and at many reunions after that.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Laurence-Smith

BRANCH NEWS

BOLTON Our branch continues to flourish despite the fact that we have lost a number of members who have decided to form their own Branch in Accrington. We wish them every success in this venture, and hope that they go from strength to strength, as there is great potential in North Lancashire. Sadly Claire Holden and Barbara Guthrie died since the last issue of Lioness.

In March we held our monthly meeting, followed by a buffet luncheon, provided by Betty Hamer, one of our founder members who is no longer able to attend meetings due to ill health. She also gave an iced cake in celebration of her Ruby wedding, and which was much enjoyed. Thank you Betty. The Bring and Buy which was held on the same day raised the sum of £48.

During July we are scheduled to visit a local bakery and also the Granada Television Studios to see the making of a "WHO DONE IT" Quiz show.

We also recruited two new members and we try to make our meetings as interesting as possible in order to attract more new members. We are holding our Annual Dinner on 19 October, which always proves to be a popular event.

CAMBRIDGE We hold our meetings on the first Monday in every month, and once a month we go out to Dinner on someone's birthday. We have some nice outings which I enjoy very much. I am the oldest member at our Club, 79, but I manage to get to all the meetings. I also enjoy reading the Lioness.



Miss Violet Rhodes.

Miss Rhodes, who recently went for a holiday in Scotland to the Loch Lomond Hotel, arranged to meet there her former ATS friend Ann. Both had been stationed at the 84th British General Hospital in Berlin in 1945 and had not seen each other for 44 years. She came with her two daughters and sons-in-law. They had so much to catch up with. Miss Violet Rhodes now lives in Cambridge and Mrs Ann MacDermott lives in Lanarkshire.

CANTERBURY 1989 was a very successful year for our fund raising efforts and we were able to donate money to several charities. Our Social Activities have included a Christmas lunch and our Annual Lunch in March, which were both well supported and a coach outing to Greenwich in May, visiting the Maritime Museum, Royal Observatory and the Cutty Sark. Also in May we visited the Small Ships assembled at Dover for the 50th Anniversary of Dunkirk and we took our Standard to Ramsgate Harbour to welcome the ships on their return journey. Our Standard has been very much in evidence this year and our thanks go to Joint Standard bearers and escorts.

Those of us that are going to the Grand Reunion in Glasgow in 1991 are hopefully booked in and are saving hard!! We look forward to meeting you all and send best wishes to all branches.



Canterbury Branch members at the harbour.

CHESTER We have had a very interesting past year gaining some new members, one being a former member of the WRAC Staff Band.

Last November our AGM was well supported and 10 members including our Chairman and Secretary, attended the Service at the Cenotaph in Whitehall. We planted a cross in memory of Mrs Jane Walmsley ATS in the gardens of Westminster Abbey. Everyone had a thoroughly enjoyable weekend and arriving home we learned that we had been on Television. The branch wreath was laid at the Chester Cenotaph by our retiring Chairman Mrs Hilda Phillips.

In December we held another very successful buffet dance at the Junior Ranks Club, Dale Barracks, Chester. We are indebted to the Cheshire Regiment for their hospitality and our guests of honour were Major and Mrs R Shaw, OC HQ Coy, and Captain and Mrs M Winstanley, from the Cheshire Regiment.

During Christmas week we held our Annual Dinner, and our yearly donation was sent to the ATS/WRAC Benevolent Funds.

Our first meeting of the year was in February, when we also kept another rendezvous at the Naval Club where the Association of Wrens held a St Valentine's dance which was a great success. In March we joined the Chester Military Police at Upton British Legion for Hot Pot Supper and a most enjoyable game of bingo.

In April members and friends went for a tour of the Wrexham Brewery with drinks provided! A great gesture we all thought. In May we hope to revisit the Atomic Energy Authority at Risley and Chatsworth House.

We intend to become more active in the near future by holding jumble sales and coffee mornings to swell our funds. We have had 18 members apply for the Glasgow reunion, when we look forward to meeting old and making new friends and perhaps, from the dim and distant past, meeting some one we served with all those years ago.

COLCHESTER The branch continues to thrive despite the formation of Baintree and Chelmsford Branches who have claimed two and eight members respectively.

To celebrate the anniversary of "D" Day we met Chelmsford Branch at the Georges and Dragon, Kelvedon, for a ploughman's lunch.

We are looking forward to the Area Meeting later in the year which may well be held in Colchester, which will draw a bigger crowd than having to go to London.

Our thanks go to Lieutenant Colonel Dunn and his staff who keep us up to date with information, and work so hard for us.

HEREFORD The branch has 29 members now and several ladies waiting in the side-lines until after their annual holidays.

Last February we extended an invitation to Mrs Edith Francis the Area Secretary from Crewe Branch, to join us at a meeting. We send our grateful thanks to her for attending and giving valuable information on the work of the Association and the Royal British Legion.

We had a lovely morning in March visiting the Town Hall in the City, when we presented the Mayor with an ATS plaque. It will soon hopefully be joined by a WRAC plaque, as we now have six ex WRAC members. The mix of younger and older members leads to lively discussions.



Hereford Branch.

Our Bring and Buy in June raised over £50 for funds and we are indebted to Mrs Mary Nicholls for arranging this with the help of her daughter Joyce and friend Margaret. Our thanks also to the stalwarts who give and buy so regularly.

In July a few of us are going to Alton Towers for the Royal British Legion Rally in aid of their Poppy Appeal. Mrs Eva Burton, ex ATS, is Honorary Secretary of Hereford Royal British Legion Mens' Section and so we support each others functions.

We hope to rent a stall in the local Butter Market on 4 September and several of our ladies are travelling to the Area Meeting at Crewe on 29 September. We are all looking forward to a great weekend at Glasgow in April 1991 and saving like crazy! Mrs Ena Price our Treasurer is wearing a big smile these days as she travels to our Bank and rightly so. My thanks again to all who give so generously.

ISLE OF WIGHT Our first contribution to the Lioness – The Dedication of our New Branch Standard.

What a fabulous day! Over 200 people filled the tiny Parish Church at Yarmouth to witness the Dedication Service of our Standard which was presented to the Branch by one of our members Mrs. C K Pascoe-Price. The 22 April 1990 will be imprinted on all the minds of those who took part with us including over 22 Standards from Ex-Service Associations and RBL Branches on the Island. To members of the RBL our grateful thanks for all their help during practices for this occasion. During the Dedication Service Buglers from the IOW Nautical Cadet Corps sounded The Last Post and Reveille. The Band also led the "march past", the salute being taken by Mr S R Dabell DL and their Worshipships the Mayors of Yarmouth and South Wight. Also on the saluting base was Lt Col G Webber Chairman of the Army Benevolent Fund and Ghurka Trust for the Island. The collection taken during the service was donated to Yarmouth Church which suffered severely during the last hurricane.

Afterwards refreshments, donated by our members, were served to all in the Scout Hall – we even had some of the husbands helping – in the kitchen no less!! Our sincere thanks to you all and at the end of the day, which I may add went without a "hiccup", we saw our friends from Portsmouth and Southampton Branches back on the



Isle of Wight Branch 22 April 1990.

ferries to the mainland. Our Fourth Birthday Lunch was held at Shanklin when we were able to present to the IOW Body Scanner Appeal a cheque for £200. We were duly thanked by one of their Committee members.

We went to Portsmouth on the 13 May for the SW Area Reunion and 17 of us are busy making plans for the Glasgow Reunion in 1991.

MANCHESTER We were happy to meet again on the first Wednesday in March to catch up with each others news. Membership of the branch has increased by five. Our dinner in May was attended by 41 members with a sprinkling of friends. We welcomed three members from Rochdale branch and Betty Hamer from Bolton to an excellent meal. Many raffle prizes were donated so that we were able to send £50 to the ATS Benevolent Fund.

Bolton, Stockport and Rochdale branches were all formed from Manchester branch and it would be nice to have a combined effort some time. We are looking forward to attend their reunion in September.

Several of our people have booked for the Glasgow Reunion in 1991.

August seems early to remind members, but don't forget the bring and buy sale in November, followed by our usual bring-a-bite party in December, plus your increased subscription of TWO POUNDS for 1991.

NEWCASTLE We continue on our constant course, ably supported by an average of 30 regular attenders. In July we shall have seen "42nd Street" at our Theatre Royal and courtesy of our Chairman, who obtains tickets, we shall have organised visits to Tyne Tees Television quiz shows and a charity concert in our City Hall. Perhaps also another coffee morning at the Mansion House with the Lord Mayor. The Glasgow celebrations have created much interest and we shall be well represented there.

Regretfully one of our respected members Mrs Nancy Blenkinsop née Hart, who had been blind for some time and in hospital, died on 25 May. She will be sadly missed by us all.

PORTSMOUTH We started the year on a sad note as our President, Mrs Phyllis Williams, died on 23 January, after years of ill health. Ten members and our Standard attended the funeral together with Royal British Legion Standards and buglers from the RBL Band.

After working hard all the year the South Western Area Reunion was hosted by the Portsmouth branch on Sunday 13 May 1990. Our VIP guests were Col J M Roulstone, Lt Col (Retd) J Freeland, Lt Col (Retd) D Dunn and Mrs Dunn and Mrs J Ford. The weather was good and everyone enjoyed either the visit to the D-Day Museum or simply walking along our sea front. The tea was held at The Royal Sailors Home Club. We had a beautiful cake made by Mrs V Fewings which looked too good to cut. Our raffle for which all the prizes were provided by branch members raised £200.80. This will enable us to increase our donations to charity and the balance to branch funds to help purchase a new Standard which we hope to have in the next year or so. Everyone left for home about 6.30 p.m. after a very enjoyable but for the branch members rather a hectic day.

RHYL On Wednesday 9 May, 17 members of the Rhyl Branch set off at 7 a.m. to travel through lovely countryside to HQ Brecon, arriving at 11.50 a.m. We were guests of our Chairman Major Liz Walters together with Wrexham, Swansea and Cardiff Branches. We were greeted very warmly by our hostess Warrant Officer Rayner, she looked after the Rhyl girls wonderfully well all day. Up in the Sgts' Mess where we had pre-lunch drinks we met Lt Col Dean and other male members also various ranks of females. We were made to feel so welcome. A delicious lunch was produced followed by coffee or tea.



Sgt Gillian Collins, one of the seven WRAC helpers serving tea.

After lunch we were entertained with a video about the girls of today, by Major Walters WRAC and Captain Reddihough QARANC. Our next call was to the Museum where we were met by the Curator Major R P Smith. We could have spent so much time there as it was so interesting. (Maybe we will be asked again!) Then we went back to the Study Centre where a super tea had been laid out with simply delicious sandwiches of all varieties and the highlight a huge cake with the Army crest. Dorothy Medcalf 84 years young, from our branch, who has letters of commendation from Montgomery for outstanding services, had the honour of cutting the cake. Mr Robert Thomas played the piano and the singing was led by our own Phyllis who apart from a good voice is jolly too.

We had a wonderful day – many thanks to Major Liz Walters and the staff at the Barracks. We arrived back in Rhyl tired but very happy. The feeling of comradeship was with us all day.

SALISBURY 1990 began in a stormy fashion for Salisbury branch!! Our January meeting was held at lunch time on the 25th, the day of the great storm. Seventeen hardy souls battled their way to St Martin's Hall, where the electricity was off, and the roofs of the surrounding buildings were flapping about, and crashing down. Despite all the noise and chaos outside, we enjoyed hearing from one of our members, Mrs Suzanne Gordon. She read us an interesting letter from one of her fellow ex-ATS friends, who had attended the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the liberation and defence of Antwerp. Eventually the electricity was restored in time for us to have a cup of coffee, before we ventured out into the storm again for the dangerous journey home.

In March we held a Spring flower arrangement competition, won by Mrs June Jones, and in April Mrs Gordon gave us an interesting talk on the "Overlord" tapestry. She illustrated this with vivid colourful slides, giving members a foretaste of what they would see at the Reunion in Portsmouth.

The Reunion in Portsmouth was a splendid day out. The sun shone, and 22 members thoroughly enjoyed their visit to the "D" Day Museum. The tea was delicious, beautifully served in the Sailors' rest, and, to complete our day, Salisbury branch came home with 12 prizes. Thank you Portsmouth, for all your hard work.

We continue to meet on the fourth Thursday of the month, and our membership remains steady. It was unanimously decided to meet at lunch time from November to March, and at 7.15 p.m. in the summer months. Visits to come are trips to the Poppy factory at Richmond, to the WRAC Centre for a Passing Out Parade, and lunch at Mere, with a tour of the historic buildings there.

We were saddened by the sudden death of Mrs Mary Swanston, ex-WRNS, who was an associate member of the branch. Our sympathy goes out to her family. Our sympathy is also extended to Mrs Joslin, whose husband, Col Archibald Joslin was killed in a road traffic accident.

Members who have booked for Glasgow are looking forward to their trip north of the border, and to meeting all their friends from other areas. Our best wishes to all members everywhere.

SHROPSHIRE Funds were raised during 1989 to purchase a bed for the new Princess Royal Hospital in Telford and in December 1989 several members attended the presentation.

A day in Guildford was enjoyed in May when we attended a Passing Out Parade. In spite of the weather being wet and having to set out from Telford at around 5.30 a.m., everyone enjoyed it immensely.

On 2 June 1990, Chris Grigg (ex Secretary) married Dennis Jones, a member of the Light Infantry Association. It was a great day with everyone in great form. Members of the WRAC Association provided the buffet which proved a great success. The cake was made by Chairperson Terry Goff.

Chris Jones would like to thank all her WRAC Association Comrades for the provision of the wonderful buffet at her wedding. Their friendship will never be forgotten by Chris or Dennis. "It was second to none."



The Happy Couple.

SOMERSET As our members are scattered all over the County, there are a great many of them who, unfortunately, we never meet. The rest of us rely on the monthly get-togethers which are arranged at different venues around the County.

We had a successful lunch party attended by 56 members and friends, including some from Wincanton Branch. Nine of us had an enjoyable day at Portsmouth at the SW Area Reunion where our hosts had worked very hard to make it a success. Our next big event is our Bar-B-Q at the home of one of our members. Last year 63 of us gathered together and had a super evening as well as raising a lot of money for charities.

SOUTHAMPTON At the beginning of this year we sadly lost one of our long standing members, Mrs Cis Jeffery, who had been ill for some time.

The gales forced us to cancel our February meeting, but in April 28 members enjoyed our usual Annual Dinner.

Three members enjoyed the AGM in London, on 21 April, especially as the WRAC Band played "Happy Birthday" for the Queen and the Secretary! The next day four ladies attended the Dedication Service of IOW's new Standard. An excellent achievement. A week later seven of us were back in the IOW to join them in their Fourth Birthday Luncheon. A most enjoyable day, excellent weather and crossing.

In May a coach took us to Portsmouth, (picking up Dorothy Woolley, Greater London Branch, and Marion Chase, who had not met for 15 years) for the Area Reunion. It was a very enjoyable day, with good weather, and an interesting visit to the "D" Day Museum, ending with an excellent meal. Many thanks Portsmouth.

Great fun was had recently in holding a stall at a local Spring Fair, raising £47.71 for funds.

At our June meeting we welcomed 10 WRNS members to a "Fine Lines" Party Plan sale, plus coffee and biscuits, and a raffle. An excellent evening, making for the funds £44.55.

SWANSEA We continue to meet on the first Wednesday of each month at The Swansea Guildhall.

We ended 1989 with visits to the "Holiday Inn" and a Combined Services Dinner Dance at the Dolphin Hotel, Swansea. A great time was had by all. Our Christmas festivities were at the West Cross Hotel and was attended by the Lord Mayor of Swansea, Councillor Lorna Aldron. This year we have had talks on "Welsh Love Spoons", "Poetry and Prose", and a film about life in the WRAC, presented by Sgt Magnan and Pte Mainwaring. They looked very smart in their uniforms. (Oh to be 18 again!!)

In May we enjoyed a visit to Brecon, which was a great day out for us. We met many friends from Cardiff and Newport. In July we are looking forward to our visit to Guildford. Our August meeting will once again take place in Mubies, at the home of our President, Mrs Veronica Barrington.



Christmas Festivities at Swansea.

WINCANTON We started our Branch in July 1989, and currently have 29 members. We have attended the Area AGM in Salisbury, the AGM in London, the Area Reunion at Portsmouth, and joined the Remembrance Sunday Parade in Wincanton. A shopping trip to Bristol, a stall at Wincanton Christmas Fair and a Christmas Lunch were other events.

We joined the Somerset Branch for lunch and welcomed some of them, and Colonel Freeland, to our meeting in March. We look forward to welcoming Somerset Branch members at our 1st BIRTHDAY garden meeting in July. Monthly meetings 4th Tuesday, 10.30 a.m., Wincanton Memorial Hall. New members always welcome.

WOLVERHAMPTON We started the year with our usual Bingo session in anticipation of bad weather, after which we have had a very varied and entertaining half year.

We have had a talk by the West Midland Travel on "A Day in the Life of a Bus Driver" and another by the Severn Trent Water Authority which covers our area. An Easter Fayre was held in March to help with funds and in May a few members gave their own "Memories of Service Life" which proved both amusing and amazing.

Entertainment wise we have had an outing to Turner's Musical Merry-Go-Round at Wootton, Northampton when the ex-ATS showed they could still dance the light fantastic and sing. Groups of members were shown around the local *Express and Star* newspaper and entertained to tea. In June and July we visited Bantock House, a local stately home and were invited to join the WRAC at Donnington, for the day.

Some of us will be attending the Western Area Reunion at Crewe on 29 September and arrangements are in hand for the Grand Reunion in Glasgow next April.

BOOK REVIEW

THE HUMAN FACTOR

By Joan I. Smith

THE HUMAN FACTOR is the story of a young woman who is conscripted into the Auxiliary Territorial Service in England in 1942 and becomes a High Grade Cypher Operator in Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, serving in France and Germany.

Life in a top secret headquarters in which servicemen and women of different nationalities are thrown together is vividly described. Included are the intimate details of the induction of women conscripts into the army, the landing of a team of ATS on the American OMAHA beachhead, and the impact on Supreme Headquarters of the German breakthrough in the Ardennes in December 1944. It presents a fascinating account of life in wartime Britain and France.

There is the romantic background of her engagement to a gunner in the Yeomanry who then serves in the Middle East in the Abyssinian campaign, in Tobruk and the subsequent fighting in Libya until he returns to the UK to marry her after four and a half years overseas.

After the war Joan Smith lived in Aberdeenshire while her husband studied for a degree in Forestry. They then lived in Tanganyika for 13 years before settling in Perth, Western Australia.

Copies are available from F G Smith, 36 Vincent Street, Nedlands 6009, Western Australia at a cost of \$A14.95 (p&p UK £8, Airmail £9).

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Colonel E S (Betty) MACFIE TD wishes to inform all her friends that her address is now, Winton Nursing Home, Wallop House, Nether Wallop, STOCKBRIDGE, Hants SO20 8HE. Tel: (0264) 781349

Correspondence

Mrs Vera Royall (née Hines) writing from "Seascope", St Catherine's Road, Niton Undercliff, Isle of Wight PO38 2NE would like to contact telephonists who served in Salisbury between 1940-43, or the Middle East. Mrs Royall would also like news of Subaltern Congrieve, Southern Command, and J Comd Kay Sanderson, GHQ Cairo. Tel: 0983-730341.

Mr Richard Collin of the BBC Timewatch programme is anxious to trace Junior Commander Syles of the ATS who was PA to the Chief of Staff of the 20th Indian Division in Indo-China in August 1945. His address is: BBC Timewatch, Room N614, BBC TV, Elstree, Borehamwood, Herts WD6 1JF. Tel: 081-207 8153

Mrs Irene Tack (née Thomas) served as a Cpl with the RAPC at Redcliffe, Manchester 1942-1946. If anyone remembers her please write to her at 486 Carmarthen Road, Cwmdu, Swansea, Glamorgan SA5 8LL.

Mrs Margaret Muskett (née McIntosh) now living at 97 Drayton Wood Road, Hellesdon, Norwich NR6 5BZ saw the plea from G L Wallah's from 525 Bty in issue No 2/89 (Newcastle Branch News). Mrs Muskett has sent a photograph taken on site in Antwerp, showing her second from the right, next to LCpl Calloway. The happy prisoner is of course a British gunner!



Mrs A Shaxted (née Hill) requests any ATS personnel stationed at HQ 21 Army Group BUCO (West) Fort Southwick, Portsmouth before or after 'D' Day 1944, please contact her on 0376 511882.

Mrs Constance Tarr (née Poole) who lives at 136 Gerrards Green, Beaminster, Dorset DT8 3EA, is still trying to contact former ATS J Comd Heather M Spencer, who served between April 1942-January 1944 at Bulford and Oxford. If any former colleagues remember her please write to Mrs Tarr at the above address.

Mrs Mabel Taylor (née March) of 30 Hargreaves Court, Whitby Avenue, Ingol, Preston, Lancs would like to trace any girls who were in GOR 182 HAA Regt.

Mrs P R R Neech of 58 Cathwaite, Paston, Peterborough, Cambs PE4 6BE is keen to start a "branch" for housebound members who can correspond with each other. She was in Tanglin Singapore from 1947-1949 and would like to hear from any other housebound members of the Association wherever they served.

Mrs D Campbell (née Lynch), 44 Inchkeith Place, Hall Glen, Falkirk FK1 2PG, Tel: 0324 22291, is looking forward to the Grand Reunion in Scotland next year. She served with 477M HAA Bty RA and hopes to meet old friends like Irene Buckley from Kingstanding, Birmingham, also Alice Marsden, Lena Whitehouse, Jackie Flowers, Doris Skinner, Diana Combe-Johnstone, and anyone else who remembers her.

Mr Ross G Perry of 50 Leinster Road, Liverpool L13 5SX, Tel: 051 2205116, likes to write letters and promises to reply to any received. One of his hobbies is collecting badges and insignia, and enjoys car boot sales where he sometimes finds items of uniform. He would like to learn about formation signs worn by the ATS during WWII and who wore a chrome cap badge?

Through this column Mrs Connie Mark (née McDonald) who served for 10 years in Jamaica, made contact with her former CSM Brenda Moor who now lives in Wadhurst, East Sussex. Mrs Mark visited Miss Moor and they enjoyed catching up on the last 44 years.



Mrs Connie Mark and Miss Brenda Moor.

Mrs Lisa Mitchell (née Zikic), 388 Watnall Road, Hucknall, Notts NG15 6FQ, Tel: 0602 636549, is arranging a reunion on the first weekend in September. Any ex-WRAC members of 16 Sig Regt who served in Beilefeld between 1970 and 1972, especially Cpl D C Linda Jones from Welshpool, and Jackie Brown who toured with the "Quick Silver" team during 1971. Anyone with information or who is interested in the reunion please ring or write to Mrs Mitchell.

Mrs Phyllis Standing (née Griffiths) of 24 Sholing Drive, Rhyl, Clwyd LL18 3UR served with the ATS between 1941 and 1944 would like to hear from Mary Dare 4 Coy ATS (FSAG) St Omer Barracks, or Kay who was ATS Provost or any ATS members stationed at Aldershot at the same time.



Mrs Phyllis Standing (née Griffiths).

Miss Berry Abbott has written from "The Moorings", 24 Georges Road, Babbacombe, Torquay, Devon TQ1 3QY seeking news of Eileen Farrell with whom she was a learner driver at Fleet, Camberley in the autumn of 1944. Eileen became an NCO driving instructor at Gresford, Wales. Any address from the past would be appreciated.

Mrs Stella Keough (née Peterson) served in the ATS between April 1942 and September 1946. After basic training at Leicester she trained as a wireless operator at Strathpeffer in Scotland. After various postings in England and Wales she served her last months at AA Signals at Capenders Park, Herts then No 1 Coy at Gravesend Drill Hall. If anyone remembers her please write to 3 Woodcroft Avenue, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 3PT.

Mrs Jean Eastham (née Hart) 11 North House Lane, Lytham St Annes, Lancs FY8 4NT has sent a photograph of ex-Cpl Gough with whom she served in Berlin during the Blockade 1948-49.

She writes that Cpl Gough and her staff did a wonderful job feeding about 50 ATS, when food and supplies were extremely limited. The date - 24 August 48 was also when all troops were at the ready and relations between East and West were strained to their limits.

The photographs came from former J Comd Edna Chester, now Mrs Quinlan, the OC ATS at the time. If anyone has information on the whereabouts of Cpl Gough, please contact Mrs Eastham.



**Cpl Gough HQ BTB 1948.
"Count the calories!"**

Mrs Stella Hill (née Kinchin) writing c/o 18 Sydney Avenue, Hamble, Southampton, Hants would like to make contact with any member of the ATS who served with her in 1939-1941 with the RE in Chatham, and in Maidstone at 63 PTW 13 ITC, from 1941 until demobilisation.

Mrs "Stevie" White (née Stevens) 6 "Old Grammer", Old Grammer Lane, Bungay, Suffolk NR35 1TU, Tel: 0986 5662, would like to hear from any volunteer member of the 3rd Surrey Coy ATS who trained with her at the Queens House, West Croydon in 1939. They were posted to Blackdown, Hants, for duties with the No 1 Trg Coy RASC. Miss R Mortimer was the Company Commander and Miss J Middleditch the Junior Commander.

Mrs V Gray has sent a photograph of herself standing behind two ATS colleagues from Peninsula Barracks 1948-1949. She remembers Major Sibley, Captain Minford, SSgt Mary Greenfield, Sgt Vi Britchfield, Cpl Margaret Fox, LCpl Cora Bennett and others. She lives at 9 Chestnut Terrace, Houghton le Spring, Tyne & Wear DH1 5JU.



Mrs V Gray.

Miss D G Hart, formerly SSgt "Terry" Hart has written from 28 Coneyburrow Road, Sherwood Estate, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 3NB requesting that all ATS members of 102 Group, who were part of the BEF 1940 and stationed in France contact her at the above address, or Miss Brenda Moor ex-CSM, Bay Cottage, Sparrows Green, Wadhurst, East Sussex TN5 6BP. Both ladies are members of the Dunkirk Veterans Association and in this year which is the 50th Anniversary of the Dunkirk operation they hope to make contact with former comrades.

Miss Judy Rudd (ex SSgt J Newton) of 32 Livingstone Road, Scarborough, N Yorks YO12 7LH has sent a photograph of the Sergeants' Mess at Chilwell 1942/43. She would like to hear from anyone who remembers her but particularly her room mate and friend Hilda McLean who was a SSgt until demob in 1945. Mrs Rudd hopes to meet former friends at the 1991 reunion.



Sergeants' Mess, Chilwell.

Mrs L M Ashcroft of 103 Uppingham, Skelmersdale, Lancs WN8 8HD has written a book of her personal experiences entitled "A Blandfordian Launching Out". If any member can help Mrs Ashcroft with details about unit based in Blandford during and after the war please write to her at the above address.

Mr T Rixon of 10 Riddell Avenue, Langold, Nr Worksop, Notts S81 9SR, would like to hear from anyone male or female who served with his late wife (née Doris Ince) ex ATS of Horwich, Bolton, Lancs, stationed at Kimmel Park, Rhyl, North Wales, 1942-1944 47/44 Search-light Wing, School of Artillery, 216 Search-light Training Regt.

Mrs M L Smith (née Roberts) would like to hear from girls who trained with her in 2 Trg Coy Guildford, January 1966. She would also like to contact Cpl A Rigg RCT who was stationed at the FVRDE Chertsey, and who taught her to drive. Please contact Mrs Smith at 109 Scorton Avenue, Layton, Blackpool, Lancs FY3 7HD.

Mrs Kathleen Batson (née Cpl K Cordy) writing from "Lavender Cottage", 10 Castleacre Road, Great Massingham, Nr King's Lynn PE32 2HN. Tel: 048-524 520341, would like to contact former drivers who served with her at Linley Lodge, Nr Nuneaton, staff driving at Norwich Barracks 1943-1944 and later Gopsal Hall, Twycross.

Mrs O Marjorie Bushell of 6 The Grove, Pott Row, Grimston, King's Lynn PE32 1DG, thanks all 'Y' group ATS who contacted her recently. She would still welcome news of Pat Myatt and Kath (Taffy) Griffiths or any member pictured here, and Betty Ridgway who was Signals but not 'Y' group.



Mrs D Rumsey of 60 Jubilee Avenue, Great Clacton, Essex, would be delighted to hear from any former colleagues who served with her, then Cpl Dorothy Fraser, in Orkney between 1940 and 1945.

Margaret Millar (now Thornhill), Pat Conway and Kath Ingram who served with the ATS 579 (M) HAA Battery on Radar would like to hear from any friends from the days in London, South Coast, and Belgium, also from ex MI Room colleagues from Bad Oeynhausen. Contact: Miss P Conway of 272 Telegraph Road, Heswall, Wirral, Cheshire L60 7SG.

Mrs Glen Davies ex SSgt RAOC c/o DOA (PIO) 5A Frederick Street, Belfast BT1 2PA would like to trace Mary Smith (Smyth) from Scotland, ex Cpl Staff Clerk, served in Singapore District 1969 and then HQ FARELE at the same time.

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Following the article in Lioness No 1/90 "An Obituary to an ATS girl" Mrs M C Smyth (née Revell) wrote from 23 Yoakley Square, Margate, Kent CT49 4BA. Mrs Smyth kindly sent a photograph of the grave where Pte Doris Fellowes is buried in Ghent. At least once a year a group from the RBL visit the cemetery and lay a poppy spray on as many graves as possible. Mrs Smyth wrote, "It's a privilege to do it".



Mrs Smyth laying the wreath.

Mrs Dorothy Fairbairn (née Edmonson) writing from "Random Patch", 6 Bridge End Park, Egremont, Cumbria CA22 2PH would like to trace former ATS colleague Carol Harrison from Liverpool. They were stationed together at Glen Parva Barracks, Leicester, and kept in touch for some years. Cpl Marjorie Pont was with the London District Group in Bryanston Square and Sloane Gardens, Chelsea 1947. Marjorie came from Bury St. Edmunds.

Mrs Daphne McGavin of 10 Wellsfield, Hockley Road, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8DW has written with the sad news of her mother's death. Mrs Alice Boardman (née Higgs) died peacefully at home on 28 Feb 90. She served in the WAAC during World War 1 in France where she met her future husband who was serving with the HAC. Mrs Boardman attended every reunion until the last which was a great occasion for the few remaining members. Her two daughters followed in her footsteps serving in the ATS in World War 2 and are life members of the ATS Dinner Club, and members of the London Branch of the WRAC Association.

Mrs Kathleen Smith (née Grunwell) 17 Broadlands Drive, Bolton le Sands, Nr Carnforth, Lancs would love to hear from the girls of F Coy RAOC (Hut 29) stationed at COD Donnington from 1942-1945. She has happy memories of Doris Fox, Alice Salt, Phil Turner, Peggy France, Dulcie Jones and Jessie Philbin.

Mrs Peggy Binns (née Bell) had a happy reunion in 1988 with a friend who was billeted with her in married quarters in Aldershot 1943-44. The friend, Ellen Doonan married a Canadian soldier and they lost touch until one day an old address book was found and the hunt was on culminating in a phone call from Vancouver at 4 am one morning!

Others names in the book were Jackie Paton from Glasgow, Flo Shepherd from Forest Row, Edith Green from Uxbridge, Irene King from Long Melford, Olive Cook and Jessie White (née Watson) from Wandsworth. Please contact Mrs Binns at 22 Denbeigh Place, Benton, Newcastle-on-Tyne NE12 8DE.

Mr Michael Holland from Stonehouse, Gloucester sent this photograph which belonged to his late Aunt, Miss Flora Evelyn Holland, pictured in the second row from the back, sixth along. If any reader recognises the photograph and can add any details please contact the Editor at Corps HQ WRAC.

Mrs E M Lewis, 26 Merlin Crescent, Townhill, Swansea SA1 6PS has asked if anyone remembers Irene Tack (née Cpl Thomas) who served with the RAPC, Radcliffe, Manchester 1942-46.

Mrs E P Butcher, 35 Purbeck Close, Wyke Road, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9QU recently acquired a suitcase containing uniforms bearing the name of Muriel (I M P) Shrubbs (W/46342). Mrs Butcher would like to contact this lady or any known relative and would be grateful for information about her whereabouts.

ALDERMASTON When I was a recruit in 'A' Coy at the Depot in May 1942, there were five Free French Servicewomen in our hut. Does anyone remember them? I would like to contact E Birtwistle from Lancashire who after the War ran an employment agency in London. Does anyone know the whereabouts of W/7883 Pat Thomas who I think came from Buxton? Can anyone help me? Mrs Daphne Hill (née Phillips) 4 Springwood Road, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8JY.



Dot Bardwell and Shoo Shoo at Aldermaston.

Mrs Dot Crussell (née Bardwell) writing from 33 Phillips Crescent, Headley, Bordon GU35 8NU says that the cat at Aldermaston mentioned by Miss Pamela Froom was hers. The name Shoo Shoo was derived from the Southern Command Holding Unit (SCHU). The cat was a stray who appeared on camp at Devizes and stayed. Although all strays were "collected", Shoo Shoo was exempted and he moved to Aldermaston on a puppy harness! In fact he travelled a great deal in this manner. After demob in 1946 Dot married and Shoo Shoo lived for a further four years. He is still sadly missed.

LONDON GAZETTE

BIRTHDAY HONOURS **PDF Compressor Free Version** MBE

Major H R Haynes

BEM

A/WO2 J Hughes
SSgt D J Mahood
Sgt G A Haw

SERVICE AWARDS IN ULSTER

MENTION IN DESPATCHES

Captain B Walters-Davies

PROMOTIONS

Regular Army

Captain T Stewart

Short Service Commission

Captains: V S Collins, D A Maddox, A Gordon, V C E Barraud, H A Carmichael, A S Chesworth, J M Davidson, J E Myers, J Parkin, S E Parkinson, E Roberts, S C Steele, E D F Vingoe, S Pipe, N F Harold, F J Rogers, S M Higgins, S M Burrell, S J Castle-Smith, S M Harrison, C E T Hoile, E E Mallet, C R Neil, A L Seward, B R Woodward, K E Knell, F J Rogers.
Lieutenants: L M A Bailey, P Catwin, C M Day, L J Fraser, A L Green, L J Maclean, L A McAteer, J A Nott, M C Sear, J K Wilson, D Waddington, J I Wright, G S Wroe.

Short Service Volunteer Commissions

Second Lieutenant: L J Hall, D A Sinson, L Moore, J S Campbell, L M Chadwick, F J Hall.

RETIREMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Regular Army

Majors: L M Ganter, D. McWilliam.
Captains: P J Wall, C Ronan.

Special Regular Commission

Major R Morgan

Short Service Commissions

Captains: M T Crook, A M Birkett, P A Pyatt, K M Alderson.

Long Service and Good Conduct Medals have been awarded to:

WO1 P M Remnant, WO2 P M Maddison, SSgt B A Cafferkey, SSgt B Davies, SSgt P Galbraith, SSgt E Jeffery, SSgt K Johnstone, SSgt K L Loftus, SSgt G C Rich, SSgt D Parkin BEM, Sgt S L Cooper, Sgt J T Murphy, Cpl J Berry, Cpl M J MacSkimming, Cpl C E McKeon BEM, Cpl J S M Whitney-May.

PERSONAL COLUMN

PERSONAL COLUMN CHARGES: Four lines £6.00
Additional lines 90p each. Non-members 50% extra. Write to the Editor at Corps HQ.

1940 Association. For all those interested in Wartime Britain. Details: Michael Conway (Secretary) 43 The Drive, Ilford, Essex IG1 3HB. Tel: 081-554-8169.

FOR SALE Officers Mess Dress with silk sash. Size 12/14. Height 5'3½" £50. No 2 Dress. Size 12/14 £50. Barrack Skirt. Size 12/14 £25. Contact: H S Davison, 0705-754057.

FOR SALE. Mess Dress with silk sash. No 2 Dress. Sizes 10/12. Height 5'3" £30 each. Tel: Major Tye, YORK Mil Ext 2204.

FOR SALE Major's forage cap. Size 6¾. Unworn. £70. Contact: L M Ganter, FLEET 614721.

FOR SALE Officers No 2 Dress £50. Matching spare jacket £15. Officers Greatcoat £30. Officers Tropical Dresses (two available) £30 each. All Size 12/14. Height 5'5". Miscellaneous items – forage cap, beret, unworn court shoes, jumpers, handbag, blouses, shirts, ties, rank slides (Capt) pairs of pips. Contact: Angi Howell, 0252 332732.

FOR SALE Officers Greatcoat red silk lining. Service Dress. Mess Dress – nearly new. Two Moss Bros Summer Blouses (size 12). Field Officers Hat – never worn. All items to fit Size 12/14. Height 5'5". All reasonable offers considered. Contact: K F Binks, Home Tel: 081-675-1813, Office Tel: 071-799-3745.

WANTED Officers Mess Dress. Size 12. Height 5'9". Contact: 2Lt Anne Burbridge, Flat 1, 27 Osborne Road, Southsea PO5 3LR.

FIGHT FOR SIGHT

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Royal Patron HRH The Duke of York

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Institute of Ophthalmology

Moorfields Eye Hospital

Judd Street

LONDON WC1H 9QS

Telephone: 071-387 9621

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OBITUARY

ADAMS. Major (Retd) D J Adams of Ashendon, Aylesbury on 27 June 1990. ATS/WRAC TA.

AINLEY. Mrs V E F Ainley of Putnoe, Bedford. ATS.

ALEXANDER. Miss A T Alexander of Edinburgh in January 1990. Major ATS/WRAC.

ALLIN. Miss J E (Lyn) Allin of London on 31 January 1990. Captain WRAC TA.

ANDREW. Miss Edna M Andrew of Manchester on 10 December 1989. ATS/WRAC TA.

ARMOUR-BROWN. Mrs J Armour-Brown MBE of Stirling on 23 January 1990. Senior Leader Admin WAAC/ATS.

BACKHOUSE. Major W M Backhouse MBE TD on 13 January 1990. WRAC.

BAIN. Mrs E D Bain (née Fraser) of Caithness. ATS.

BARKER. Mrs N Barker (née Thomas) of Newport, Essex. QMAAC.

BLENKINSOP. Mrs A Blenkinsop (née Hart) of Newcastle on 25 May 1990. ATS.

BOARDMAN. Mrs Alice Boardman (née Higgs) on 28 February 1990. WAAC.

BUXTON. Mrs Joan Buxton (née Self) of Middlesbrough in 1990. ATS

CARLTON-ROBINSON. Mrs M W Carlton-Robinson of London on 1 March 1990. ATS.

CHAPPELL. Mrs Alexandra Chappell (née Wallace) of Luton in 1990. ATS/WRAC.

CLARK. Elsie Kate Clark in February 1990. WAAC.

CLOKE. Mrs D Cloke (née Beavan) of Boreham Wood on 14 January 1990. ATS.

CRAWFORD. Mrs M C Crawford (née Allen) of Omagh on 22 January 1990. ATS.

CUNNINGHAM. Miss M "Peggy" Cunningham of Liverpool on 20 January 1990. ATS.

DAVIES. Miss A M Davies of Newport in February 1990. ATS.

DAVIES. Mrs G D Davies (née Blacker) of Amesbury. ATS/WRAC.

DOAR. Miss C Doar of Southsea in February 1990. QMAAC.

DRIESEN. Miss M Driesen of Walsall in 1989. ATS.

GARROD. Miss E M Garrod of Norwich on 5 December 1989. ATS.

GRACIE. Major B M Gracie on 3 January 1990. WRAC.

GUTHRIE. Mrs Barbara Guthrie of Burnley on 29 May 1990. ATS.

HOLDEN. Miss C V Holden of Blackburn on 30 December 1989. ATS.

HORSFIELD. Mrs J Horsfield (née Taylor) of Corbridge on 25 October 1990. ATS.

IRVINE. Mrs M J Irvine of Belfast on 6 March 1990. ATS.

JEFFERY. Mrs Elizabeth L S Jeffery of Chandlers Ford in 1990. ATS.

JOHNSON. Mrs R E Johnson (née Lindsey) of Wroughton, Wiltshire in May 1990. ATS/WRAC.

LANGHAM. Miss M A Langham of York on 4 January 1990. ATS.

LITTLEJOHN. Miss Nancy Littlejohn of Surrey on 21 April 1990. ATS.

McBURNIEY. Mrs M McBurniey (née Usher) of Whitehead on 28 December 1989. ATS.

McNEILLY. Mrs J McNeilly (née Westcott) of Pontypridd on 6 February 1990. ATS.

McPHAIL. Mrs Margaret McPhail (née Beveridge) of Glasgow on 28 March 1990. ATS.

MIDDLETON. Miss M H Middleton (née Weightman) of Washington, Tyne & Wear on 19 August 1989. ATS.

OGILVIE. Mrs Margaret McCrindle Ogilvie of Edinburgh on 8 May 1990. ATS.

OVENDEN. Miss J M Ovenden of Ashford. ATS.

PIM. Miss N V M Pim TD of Grantham on 8 January 1990. Chief Commander ATS.

RICE. Mrs C P Rice MBE of Milford Haven in January 1990. ATS.

RICHARDS. Mrs E M Richards (née Mackenzie) of Farnham in January 1990. FANY/ATS.

RIGBY. Miss G M Rigby of Leeds on 20 December 1989. ATS/WRAC/TA.

ROY. Mrs Rita Roy (née Postgate) of Middlesbrough on 23 May 1990. ATS.

RUCH. Mrs Kathleen Ruch (née Notley) of Gardena, USA on 17 February 1990. ATS.

SLACK. SSGT Pat Slack of Prestatyn in 1990. WRAC.

STEVENSON. Miss J Stevenson of Bangor, Co Down in January 1990. ATS.

SWEETING. Miss D M Sweeting of Sunderland on 25 December 1989. ATS.

THEOBALD. Mrs Anne Theobald of Moreton Hampstead on 7 April 1990. WRAC TA.

TONER. Mrs Margaret Toner (née Adamson) of Liverpool on 13 April 1990. ATS.

TUCKER. Mrs J H Tucker (née Dyke) of Glastonbury on 27 February 1990. ATS.

UNDERHILL. Mrs H P Underhill (née Miller) of Gorleston, Norfolk on 21 April 1990. ATS.

WATKINSON. Mrs G D Watkinson of Harrogate on 25 January 1990. WRAC TA.

WILLIAMS. Mrs P M Williams of Southsea on 23 January 1990. ATS.

WILSON. Miss G Wilson of Winchester on 1 February 1990. ATS.

YALE. Miss L Yale of Pwelli. Subaltern ATS.

RUBY WEDDING

CLAY-NEGUS. On 2 August 1950. Ralph Clay to Diana Negus Ex ATS/WRAC AA Command. Now at Wincanton, Somerset BA8 0AL.

COOMBER-WOOLLET. On 25 March 1950. S/Man Jack Coomber Royal Naval Patrol Service to Betty Woollett Ex ATS. Now at 37 Kenilworth Court, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1TY.

BIRTH

JENNINGS (née COATES). To Philip and Judith Jennings, a second daughter (Katherine Frances), born 6 January 1990, a sister for Rebecca.

WRAC ASSOCIATION APPOINTMENTS

For security reasons and based upon MOD advice, names and addresses of those holding appointments in the WRAC Association will not be published in future editions of Lioness, but will be circulated separately to those concerned. **PDF Compressor Free Version**

For the information of members, branches exist in the following places and full details can be supplied to members on request to Association HQ.

South-East Area

ALDERSHOT
BRIGHTON
CANTERBURY
DEAL
EASTBOURNE
HASTINGS
MEDWAY

Western Area

BIRMINGHAM
CARDIFF AND NEWPORT
COVENTRY
CREWE
HEREFORD
RHYL
SHROPSHIRE
STAFFORD
SWANSEA
WOLVERHAMPTON
WREXHAM

London and Eastern Area

BRAINTREE
CAMBRIDGE
CHELMSFORD
COLCHESTER
GREATER LONDON
ILFORD
LONDON

NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK
WIMBLEDON

Scottish Area

ABERDEEN
AYRSHIRE
DUMFRIESSHIRE
EDINBURGH
FIFE AND TAYSIDE
GLASGOW
INVERNESS
STIRLING

Northern Ireland Area

OMAGH
ULSTER

South-West Area

ANDOVER
BATH
BOURNEMOUTH
CHELTENHAM
EXETER
GUERNSEY
ISLE OF WIGHT
PLYMOUTH
PORTSMOUTH
SALISBURY
SOMERSET
SOUTHAMPTON
SWINDON

WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND
WINCANTON

Northern Area

ACCRINGTON
BARNLEY
BERWICK
BRADFORD
BOLTON
CHESTER
CLEVELAND
GRIMSBY
HARROGATE
HULL
KEIGHLEY
KENDAL
LEEDS
LEICESTER
LIVERPOOL
MANCHESTER
MIDDLESBROUGH
NEWCASTLE
PENRITH
RICHMONDSHIRE
ROCHDALE
SCARBOROUGH
SHEFFIELD
SHIPLEY
SOUTHPORT
STOCKPORT
SUNDERLAND
YORK

MUSEUM NOTES

It seems fitting that in the year that our Commandant-in-Chief celebrates her 90th Birthday the Royal Room has been completed. It was sympathetically designed by Mr David Smith of the Crown Suppliers to display the uniforms of HM The Queen and HRH Princess Mary, Princess Royal who was Controller Commandant ATS and WRAC until her death in 1965.

The dramatic red and black colour scheme works well and for the first time for many years items of Corps silver have a permanent home. The focal point is the charming new (signed) photographic portrait of HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

On 20 March 1990 the George Medal awarded to LCpl M E Richards ATS was auctioned at Christies. As this was the only George Medal awarded to a member of the ATS the Trustees considered it to be an essential part of Corps history and it was secured for the Museum. The cost was partially offset by grants from the V & A, AMOT, and a private donation.

LCpl Richards ATS, a medical orderly was awarded the medal as a result of her brave conduct in assisting the Medical Officer after an explosion of anti-tank mine fuses in an ammunition examination hut of No. 32 Ammunition Supply Depot at Saxelby, Leics, on the morning of Wednesday 14 January 1948. In spite of the continuing danger of further explosions LCpl Richards coolly continued her duties both calming frightened and injured men, and helping to tend their often severe wounds. "It was considered that the behaviour of LCpl Richards was in the highest tradition of the Army and the Auxiliary Territorial Service, and was worthy of high recognition".

WRAC MUSEUM REDEVELOPMENT APPEAL BENEFACTORS

List No. 8

This list is in addition to lists 1-7 published in previous editions of Lioness.

Names here are those who have subscribed since previous lists or whose details required amendment.

Individuals

Mr J Howe
Miss H Pearce
Mrs P W M York

SSAFA

The Soldiers' Sailors and Airmen's Families Association and the Forces Help Society are anxious to recruit voluntary case workers. Anyone interested should contact:

Mrs Ann Needle
SSAFA Central Office
Queen Elizabeth
The Queen Mother House
19 Queen Elizabeth Street
LONDON SE1 2LP

or telephone 071-403-8783.
Training will be given to volunteers.

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