

1991

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WOMENS ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

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Founded in 1919

Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH
Tel: Aldershot (0252) 355583

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Contributions for next issue by 14 December 1991

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Front Cover Photograph
Lt W K Smart WRAC, Ass Adjt 1 RS,
pictured in the Gulf.

Back Cover Photograph
WRAC Drivers who kept supplies moving
during Operation Granby.



NEW COLONEL COMMANDANT

MAJOR GENERAL J J G MACKENZIE OBE
Colonel Commandant WRAC

Major General Jeremy Mackenzie who was recently appointed the first Colonel Commandant of the WRAC was born in 1941 in Kenya and was educated abroad and at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst.

He was commissioned in 1961 into The Queen's Own Highlanders, and was posted to the Far East where he served with his battalion in the Brunei Rebellion and the Borneo Campaign.

He was attached to 22 SAS for Special Duties from 1966-67, and then returned to his battalion for Service in Germany and Sharjah, before being posted to Sandhurst as a Company Instructor in 1970. This was followed by 18 months with the Argylls as a Company Commander in South Armagh and Scotland, before attending the Canadian Forces Staff College in 1974.

Between 1974 and 1976 he was Brigade Major of 24 Airborne Brigade. He then rejoined his battalion in Belize, becoming Second in Command, and then taking over command when the CO, Colonel David Blair, was killed at Warrenpoint in August 1979. He commanded his battalion for two and a half years, with most of this period spent in Hong Kong.

From 1982 to 1983 he instructed at Staff College, Camberley and then spent one year as Colonel ASD2 in the Ministry of Defence.

From December 1984 he commanded 12th Armoured Brigade in Osnabrück, until being posted to the Staff College as Director Higher Command and Staff Course and Deputy Commandant.

In February 1989 he was promoted to Major General and appointed Commandant of the Staff College. He was appointed GOC 4 Armoured Division in December 1989.

SHOPPING LIST

	£	p&p	
ATS Spoons	1.95	50p	(up to 6)
ATS Shields	9.50	75p	
ATS Silver plated brooches	2.00	20p	(up to 6)
ATS Post Cards	.15	20p	(up to 6)
Biro pens	.30	20p	(up to 6)
Brief Cases	2.00	35p	
Corps Drum Ice Bucket	16.50	2.00	
Corps History (hardback)	5.50	85p	
Corps History (paperback)	3.00	60p	
Corps Shield	9.50	75p	
Document Cases	1.25	35p	
ID Card/Season Ticket/Bank Card Holder	.50	25p	(up to 6)
Key Rings, leather	.60	20p	(up to 6)
Pewter Figures:			
Musician with flute	17.50	80p	
WRAC Private	22.50	80p	
Prints by Ken Howard:			
Unsigned/Indoor	3.00	50p	(up to 3)
Sweatshirts (green, red, black, white and blue)	7.50	75p	
T-shirts (white, red and blue)	3.50	50p	
WRAC Brooches	1.75	20p	(up to 6)
WRAC Association Brooches	1.75	20p	(up to 6)
WRAC Spoons	1.95	50p	(up to 6)

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 WRAC Association A/C and sent to Corps HQ WRAC, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH.

Rates of postage are for UK only. If ordering items to be sent to BAOR, the Republic of Ireland or any other overseas destinations extra money should be included.

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

2Lt/Maj	£1.80 + 25p p&p
Lt/Lt Col	£1.80 + 25p p&p
Capt	£2.10 + 25p p&p
Col/Brig	£2.50 + 25p p&p

Cheques made payable to HQ Mess.

Most Regimental and Corps Headquarters are heeding advice from MOD to show no rank on outgoing mail. Members are requested to return the appropriate section of their Lioness envelope with details of how they wish to be addressed if any change is to be made.

Members should notify all changes of address promptly via their Branch Secretary or direct to Corps Headquarters.

CONGRATULATIONS

We offer our congratulations to:

Brigadier **Brig Ramsey** WRAC who has been granted the freedom of the City of London.



Brig Field and Brig Ramsey with her Freedom Scroll.

Major E E Cunningham WRAC who was awarded a GOC's Commendation in the recent Northern Ireland list.

Cpl S L Chapman who has received the C in C's Commendation for her outstanding work in the G1 Compassionate Branch, HQ BAOR. She moved into the job in September 1987 having been overheard declaring that



Cpl Sarah Chapman receiving her C in C's Commendation from Maj Gen F E Sugden.

she wanted a more demanding job. Initiation was severe; a frantically busy office, with many rules and regulations to absorb. During her 3 years in post she has helped many thousands of people and dealt with many harrowing cases. No one was ever let down and she deservedly enjoyed the confidence of all ranks with whom she had contact. Overall her wonderful sense of honour kept everyone going under pressure. She is now nearing completion of her training as an Army Welfare Assistant.

Cpl Tina Rigby and LCpls Nikki Pearce and Teresa Oliver who organised a sponsored aerobics session at Bulford Camp, raising £582.00 for the Children in Need charity.



Peter Marsden receives the cheque on behalf of Children in Need from LCpl Pearce (L) and LCpl Oliver.

Mrs Elsie E Nash who was awarded the OBE in the New Years Honours List. Mrs Nash served with the ATS between 1943 and 1946 and currently is National Chairman of the Royal British Legion Women's Section.



Mrs E E Nash OBE.

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VISIT OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER

by Capt A Harper WRAC

Ask any "pattermen" of the press why he should have been at the WRAC Centre on Tuesday 4th June 1991, and he would simply reply "why the Queen Mother's visit, of course". After one of the driest Mays on record, June had begun disappointingly wet and stormy, however, when Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother, Commandant-in-Chief WRAC stepped from her black Rolls Royce limousine, the sun made a startling appearance. All the speculation about what Her Majesty would be wearing was resolved as she walked, smiling, resplendent in a lilac outfit with matching hat to inspect the guard



Her Majesty arrives.



Capt "B J" Taylor invites Her Majesty to inspect the Guard of Honour.

of honour provided by the Headquarter & Holding and Training Companies. Brigadier A Field, Deputy Controller Commandant, welcomed Her Majesty and then presented Major J J G Mackenzie, Colonel Commandant WRAC, Brigadier G K Ramsey, Director WRAC, Colonel C A Marriott, Commandant WRAC Centre and WO1 (RSM) E J Lawrence. Flanked by two immaculate RMP mounted escorts, Her Majesty took the Royal Salute, then accompanied by Captain B J Taylor inspected the Guard of Honour, and talked with many of the servicewomen on parade.

With all ceremonial completed Her Majesty then drove to the assault course area to watch Corporals' Course No 518 being put through their paces over the obstacles by the PT staff. Major I J B A Corrigan, commanding the Warrant Officer and NCO Training Wing, explained the training to

Her Majesty and later described meeting the Commandant-in-Chief as one of the most memorable experiences of her career.

Major B E Richardson, Commanding Training Company, then escorted Her Majesty who saw recruits demonstrating their newly acquired skills in map reading, NBC defence and First Aid.

After being photographed with members of the Sergeants Mess and chatting to them over drinks, Her Majesty was presented with a Corps Ice Bucket before moving to the Officers Mess for a superb luncheon of salmon, a trilogy of lamb and summer pudding, prepared under the watchful eye of Master Chef P Bourne ACC.

On her way to re-open the refurbished Corps Museum, Her Majesty was met by a cheering crowd of Association



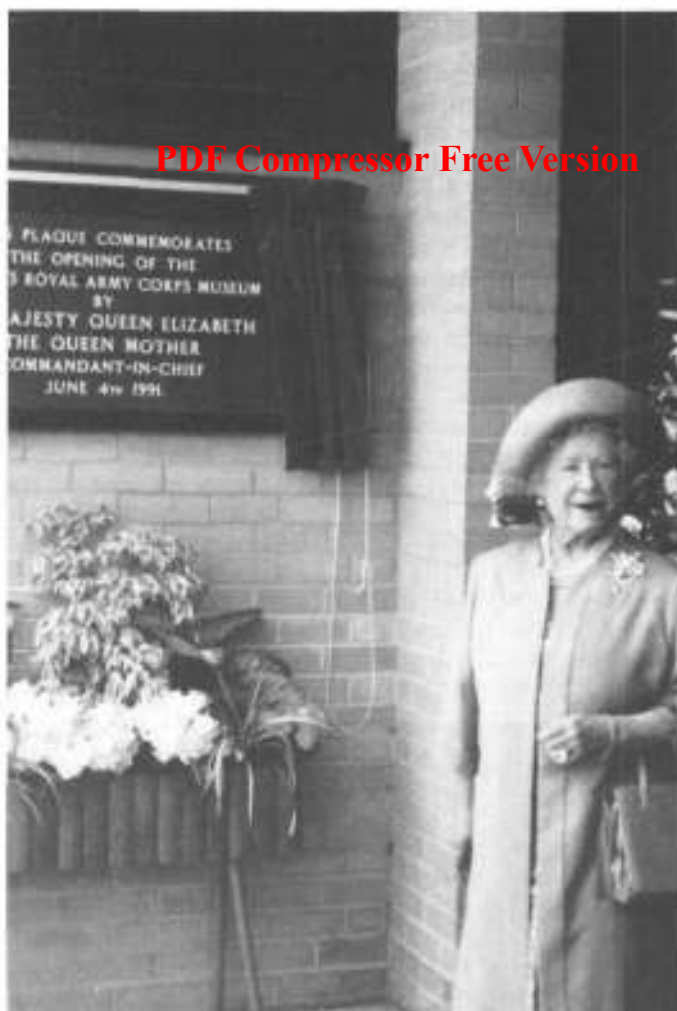
Her Majesty inspects the Training Company headed by Lt Rachel Harris.

Members who had travelled from far and wide for this extra special occasion. Many members had served with the ATS during World War II and remembered their Commandant-in-Chief, then Her Majesty The Queen, playing such an important role in raising the nation's spirits during those dark days.

Arriving at the Museum Her Majesty was welcomed by Brig A Field (as Vice President of the Association and Chairman of Museum Trustees), and presented with a bronze statuette of a servicewoman in uniform. As the crowd strained to see the ceremony fully, the press corps eager to get their front page pictures, obscured the view, and were strongly urged by the ladies to get out of their line of sight!

Hardly a dry eye remained as Her Majesty spoke, paying tribute to the dedication and bravery of servicewomen both past and present before unveiling the commemorative plaque and entering the Museum. Lt Col D Dunn, Corps Secretary was presented, with the Curator, Mrs K R McGregor and her assistant Miss T M Gould. During her tour of the Museum Her Majesty met the designer and those who had been involved with the construction as well as representatives of some ATS trades. Mrs Castle a former Sergeant Major with Anti Aircraft Batteries at Beckenham and Croydon had travelled all the way from Stirling.

Mrs M E Crooks had the day of her life when standing proudly beside her own unique George Medal acquired for the Museum in 1990, and originally presented to her by King George VI in 1948. The sad fact that it had been sold in hard times was completely forgotten as Mrs Crooks reminisced with Her Majesty; happy that her medals were where they could be seen and appreciated by visitors and those interested in the proud history of the ATS.



Her Majesty unveils the plaque.

The newest panel in the Museum records the WRAC contribution to the success of the recent Gulf War and Captain A Forster-Knight related to the Commandant-in-Chief a little of her own experience with 1st Armd Div in the Desert. Her Majesty had a few special words for Lt G A Cutler UDR presently attached to the WRAC Centre before proceeding to the Royal Room which houses the uniforms of Her Majesty The Queen, who served with the ATS, and Princess Mary, Princess Royal, Controller Commandant ATS and WRAC.

As Her Majesty took leave of the Museum Mrs Meryll Evans, the sculptress was presented together with representatives from the benefactors and trustees. Then it was the turn of the patiently waiting members of the Association to greet Her Majesty, photograph her, and wherever possible shake her hand. They were well rewarded as Her Majesty moved slowly amongst them; this was a day for reminiscing and meeting old friends.

Private Amanda Holdsworth, the Centre's youngest recruit will certainly remember the day she presented Her Majesty with a beautiful posy of roses, and, as the Royal car drew away, to the resounding joyful noises of three cheers, old and young alike were left with many warm memories.

Now was the time to discuss the day's events, compare experiences, make new acquaintances and enjoy the delicious cream tea courtesy of Mr Lewis and his team of helpers in the NAAFI.

As everyone relaxed in the late afternoon sunshine the toast was to our remarkable Commandant-in-Chief who had graciously and warmly made this a day to remember. Everyone had a glimpse, everyone has a fond memory.

The Deputy Controller Commandant's letter to Clarence House

I should be most grateful if you would present loyal greetings to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and thank Her Majesty for honouring us so graciously at Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford yesterday.

The serving and ex-servicewomen were so proud and delighted that Her Majesty the Commandant-in-Chief should be with Her Majesty's Corps at Guildford. Indeed, they now have most precious memories of the visit which will remain with them forever. As you may well imagine details of the day will be mentioned most loyally, to families and friends throughout the UK.

All members of the WRAC and Associations are conscious of the unfailing support and great interest the Commandant-in-Chief has given over the years, and are Her Majesty's most loyal and devoted servants.

A Letter from Clarence House

I am commanded by Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother to write and let you know what very great pleasure it gave Her Majesty to visit your Corps Headquarters in Queen Elizabeth Park yesterday.

Queen Elizabeth was most impressed by the smartness and turn-out of the Guard of Honour which Her Majesty inspected on arrival and the Commandant-in-Chief was so pleased to spend the remainder of the morning touring the Barracks to see such a variety of training. The enthusiasm and professionalism of these young servicewomen tackling the assault course or being instructed in the classrooms was most apparent and augurs well for the future.

The Queen Mother was most appreciative of the kindness and hospitality shown to Her Majesty in both the Officers' and the Sergeants' Mess and for the kind gift of the ice bucket emblazoned with the Corps crest, which was presented by Sergeant Boyden.

In the afternoon Queen Elizabeth was delighted to open the reconstructed Museum and Her Majesty congratulates the Curator on a most imaginative and interesting layout which depicts so cleverly the history of the Women's Services. It also gave The Queen Mother much pleasure to meet a multitude of those who had served in the Corps and to hear their stories.

Finally, Queen Elizabeth bids me thank you for the magnificent statuette of a servicewoman. The Queen Mother was deeply touched to receive this present which will always remind her of the Women's Royal Army Corps of which she is so proud to be Commandant-in-Chief.



Her Majesty admired these ATS Kneelers made for garrison churches.

ENGINEERING A CHARITY ABSEIL

by Captain B Donaldson WRAC (V)
125 (Staffs) Fd Sp Sqn RE (V)

Do you get an idea now and again? One day last year, with a blinding flash, I had an idea – to raise money for a good cause and raise our profile at the same time. So much for the good idea; putting it into practice was slightly more difficult. Undaunted, the first thing to do was to decide on the charity and the venue. By involving a local group, it was hoped that we could help the people in our community, and let them know what we could do as a TA Unit. With the full support of our OC Maj Phil Smith we started the plan.

It was decided to support the local group of the British Diabetic Association, and to abseil from the highest point of Stafford District Hospital. Approaches were made to the Hospital Management and the Stafford Diabetic Group, with meetings to outline the plan and set a date. Recce visits were made and indents for kit put in. Many thanks here to QMSI Steve Gillis and SSgt Les Allan for "obtaining" this for us.

Volunteers to run the abseil were chosen. The people taking part were to be mainly those with diabetes, the idea being that diabetes does not stop you doing anything. The sponsorship pledges were coming in thick and fast, and publicity with the local media was arranged, with much help from the Hospital Press Officer. All we had to do now was turn up on the day.

July 26th finally dawned, bright and clear. The abseil team was led by Capt Chris Roylance, Safety Officer, who was ably assisted by Sgt Geoff Harriman, LCpl Mark



L to R. LCpl Lockett, Capt Roylance, Capt Donaldson, Sgt Harriman, Spr Allan.

Lockett and Spr Steve Allan. The morning was spent setting up and testing the equipment. Yours truly was encouraged to go first – and I thought I was only there to look good and take the happy snaps! The actual event took place in the afternoon and went very smoothly. All the participants managed to complete the abseil, some despite a few false starts when they saw how high they were. Good weather ensured a high turnout of spectators who helped to fill the collecting boxes on the day.

Many action photos and a video record were taken, providing much entertainment at the official presentation of the money raised. This final total came to the substantial sum of £2,300. It has been divided between the Diabetic Clinic to purchase monitoring equipment, and the Diabetic Children's Fund. All in all, a well "engineered" event.

THE COURAGE TROPHY

The winners of the WRAC Courage Trophy 1991, London District's tough annual Territorial Army Military Skills Competition, were the 47 (Middlesex Yeomanry) Signal Sqn of 31 Signal Regiment (V). Overall in the competition including the men they were placed 23rd, ahead of nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ of the men's teams.

The 8 strong team was led by Lt Felicity Bowden and Cpl Cathy Bassey. It is a long tough weekend starting at 6am on Saturday and finishing early on Sunday afternoon with the presentation of the cups by a representative from "Courage" the Brewers who sponsor the event. The aim is to encourage the soldiers to improve their military knowledge, skills and fitness all of which are thoroughly tested throughout the weekend.

Cpl Cathy Bassey led the WRAC team to victory in the Cobham Cup which is 31 Signal Regiment's Annual Military Skills Competition. Cpl Bassey thoroughly enjoys life at the TA and finds that it adds an extra dimension to her life and work as a training manager for a catering company. She particularly enjoys the outdoor life and teamwork involved in her role of setting up radio communication systems providing both telephone and telex lines.



Confidence tests – Courage Trophy.



The Winning Team – Courage Trophy WRAC '91.



How do you feel about leaving the Army?

As you're well aware, serving in the Forces isn't just a job. It's a way of life. So, it's no surprise, that after leaving, many people feel as though they're high and dry, like a fish out of water.

But there's no need for you to feel this way. It's perfectly possible for you to keep up with old friends, make use of the unique skills you've acquired, and make a vital contribution to the nation's defence into the bargain.

How? Simply by becoming a member of the Volunteer Forces, which make up a third of our Army and represent a significant part of our commitment to NATO.

There are three options open to you.

Firstly, you can join one of the Territorial Army Independent Units based in the TAVRA region in which you have decided to settle. An ideal route for those leaving Infantry or Cavalry regiments.

Secondly, if you are leaving a Corps, you could retain your capbadge and become a member of either an Independent Unit or a TA Specialist Unit. In either, you can maintain and extend the special skills that you have learned.

Thirdly, you could join the HSF, which fulfils a vital

role in our home defence, and in particular is suitable for people with limited spare time.

You can contribute as much time as you want in any one year. The minimum that we ask is that as a member of the Independent TA you complete 6 weekends, a two-week Summer Camp and some weekday evenings. As a Specialist we ask only 15 days training and two weekends.

And, as a member of the HSF, 6 to 10 days training and one evening per month. In return you will receive payment equivalent to the rates paid to Regular Army soldiers plus an annual tax-free bonus.

If you would like more information about how you can stay in the swim of things, write to the address below, giving details of which option you are interested in, your current age and address, your intended county of residence, and of the regiment you have left or are leaving.



The Territorial Army, Freepost, 4335 (Ref: 9000), Bristol BS1 3YX.

THE ARMY CADET FORCE

The introduction of girls into the Army Cadet Force in 1984 added a new dimension, namely that of giving a more complete view of the tremendous potential of all our youth, not for just boys. It has brought the Army to the youth of fresh air, bringing with them not only the desire to perform well in what had previously been an all male domain, but also a maturity and smart turnout sadly lacking in many of our boys. Any attempts to treat them differently were immediately rebuffed by the girls themselves and very soon we just had cadets.

Sadly we find it difficult to recruit female Officers and Adult Instructors with an ARMY background. We would call on all members of the WRAC on leaving the service to consider the Army Cadet Force as a worthwhile hobby, which serves and helps the youth of the country and also keeps you in contact with service life.

No formal qualifications are required as training can be given in all subjects which include drill, fieldcraft, weapon training, shooting and adventurous training. Pay rates are similar to TA rates of pay.

Most detachments meet two evenings each week and on average there is a training weekend each month and an annual camp of 7-14 days. There are 1650 detachments spread throughout the UK and Northern Ireland so there is sure to be a detachment close to your home.

If you are interested look under ARMY in the telephone directory and either 'phone the County Headquarters of the ACF or the local TAVRA Headquarters for further information.



On exercise with the Army Cadet Force.

GUNNER TA TRADE OPENED TO EX WRAC

The RA Specialist Pool (V) has recently been given authority to recruit ex-WRAC into the trade of Operator Artillery Intelligence.

After initial training the Gnr Op Arty Int is employed with a team of up to 12 members responsible for the collection, collation, evaluation and distribution of military intelligence primarily for the use of artillery units. The job entails using computers, card indexes, maps, charts and plotting boards and requires keen attention to detail.

The minimum commitment for bounty (now £775) is a two week camp (15 days) and 4 other days per year.

For further information contact:

Capt MI Weston RA (V)
CVHQ RA
RA Barracks
Woolwich
London SE18 4BB
Tel: 081 854 2242 Ext 3422

"From Notes to Needles" WRAC Staff Band - Op Granby

In November 1990 the Band became part of 16 Field Ambulance Group along with many other military bands. We were part of Op Granby and were moved to South Cerney in Gloucestershire for a week of "intensive" training which turned out to be more like a Kneller Hall reunion! While we were there the Band was split into six troops, each consisting of a male band, RCT and REME back-up and four or five girls from the WRAC Band - a necessary female contingent, we were told!

When hostilities broke out in January 1991 all six troops met up at Bulford, near Salisbury with some changes due to the bands being sent to the Gulf. Then we were again split up around the country - troops A and B went to RAF Brize Norton, troops C and D to RAF Manston, and troops E and F staying at Bulford.

Thankfully our service of providing the medical transfer of injured soldiers from airports to UK hospitals was never required in as large a number as was first thought. We returned to our favoured role as musicians at the beginning of April, knowing that we had "done our bit" during the Gulf crisis. We soon got back into our Summer Season of Engagements. This included a week in Eastbourne, various concerts, carnivals, Beating Retreats, a very successful tour in Gibraltar and participating in the Edinburgh Tattoo.

The WRAC Staff Band has various vacancies arising during 1991/92 and will be interested in hearing from any interested applicants.

"Final Performance"

After taking many encores as a member of the Staff Band of the Women's Royal Army Corps, WO2 M A Friend gave her final performance on 11 March 1991. The gates closed on a 23 year performance served solely at Guildford, the home of the WRAC Staff Band.

Due to circumstances at the time it was doubtful if members of the band would be available to give WO2 Friend the send off she deserved, but even though time for preparations was short, two occasions were marked. The first being the official "Dining In" of (WO1) RSM Lawrence in the WO's and Sgt's Mess on 1 March 1991. As well as a farewell for WO2 Friend it was also a Reunion Dinner as the band SNCO's had not been together for quite some time, so we were all able to join Miss Friend for her last Regimental Dinner Night.

When Miss Friend's last day arrived, members of the WO's & Sgt's Mess gathered to present her with a beautiful set of Garden Furniture and a hostess trolley for the members of the Band. The trolley was most appropriate as WO2 Friend has been called upon on various occasions to delight members of the Band with her culinary talents; her speciality being home-made fudge! A farewell lunch with the band was arranged, to which Miss Friend's parents were invited and, despite the weather, WO2 Friend was driven out of "those gates" for the last time.

WO2 Friend spent many years as "The Band Secretary" not only as PA to the Director of Music, but also responsible for all the administration concerned with Band Engagement Tours. WO2 Friend played the cornet, and the the Cornet Section travelled far and wide from Canada to Cornwall, East Berlin to Edinburgh.

We all wish her success and happiness and will no doubt see her at future Band Reunions.

Members of the Staff Band also said a fond farewell to Cpl Sue Harper, who left the Band on March 22 1991 after twelve years service. Cpl Harper was a very capable

member of the Clarinet Section, whose experience and sense of humour will be missed. As the 2nd was rather a full day for the Band (TA Parade Day), we took a break and held a small farewell lunch for Cpl Harper down at WONCO Dining Room. The Band presented Cpl Harper with a framed print of Guildford and also a Band pennant. Although Cpl Harper's family are in Cornwall, she is hoping the stay in the Surrey area to continue her career. We wish her all the best of success.

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COMBAT STRESS

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



and now, he cannot bear to turn a corner

Six-foot-four Sergeant 'Tiny' G't'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
BROADWAY HOUSE, THE BROADWAY, WIMBLEDON SW19 1RL. TEL: 081-543 6333

☐ Please find enclosed my donation for £50/£20/£10/£5/£

☐ Please send me details of Payroll Giving

Name/Rank/Number

Regiment or Corps

Address

LS

WRAC STAFF BAND

Engagements

- August 30** 10 Coy WRAC Disbandment Parade, Aldershot.
- October 2** RAFA Concert, Thetford.
- November 2** R B L Colston Hall, Bristol.
- November 9** Lord Mayor's Show, London. Playing Off "Canberra" (P & O) Southampton Docks.
- December 5 or 12** Procession and Carols, Aldershot.
- December 11 or 12** Concert at Portsmouth.
- December 16** Playing off "Canberra" (P & O), Southampton Docks.

FINAL CURTAIN

The Staff Band of the WRAC past and present members' "Ultimate Finale" on the 21st March 1992 at the Civic Hall, Guildford.

This will be a Grand Concert involving as many ex-playing members of the Band as possible.

Rehearsals will be at the Civic Hall from 1400hrs onwards, with a "Grand" public performance in the evening at 1930hrs.

For further information contact the Band Office on Aldershot (0252) 24431 ext. 8568.

All ex-Corps members (musical or not!) are very welcome.

LET'S MAKE THIS A NIGHT TO REMEMBER!

FAREWELL TO 29 COY WRAC

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17 March 1991 The Lowering of the Flag. 29 Coy WRAC.

BAOR

29 Company WRAC – Farewell

On Sunday 17 March 1991, a Parade and Drumhead Service were held to commemorate the disbandment of 29 Coy WRAC. The Parade Commander was WO1 (RSM) S M Poklekowski WRAC and the Inspecting Officer Major J E Brodie-Murphy WRAC, Officer Commanding 29 Coy WRAC.

The Service that followed was conducted by Rev V Dobbin and the music was provided by a 5 piece ensemble from the RAF (G) Band.

29 Coy WRAC was formed on 1 January 1965 on the disbandment of 14 Bn WRAC. The first Commanding Officer was Major N M Pyke WRAC and the RSM was WO1 (RSM) K R O'Shea WRAC.

On Monday 1 April 1991, 29 Coy WRAC was amalgamated with C Coy, Rheindahlen Garrison to form B Coy.

**WRAC PLAIN BADGED CHRISTMAS CARDS
OBTAINABLE FROM CORPS HQ WRAC
Price 50p per card plus p&p**

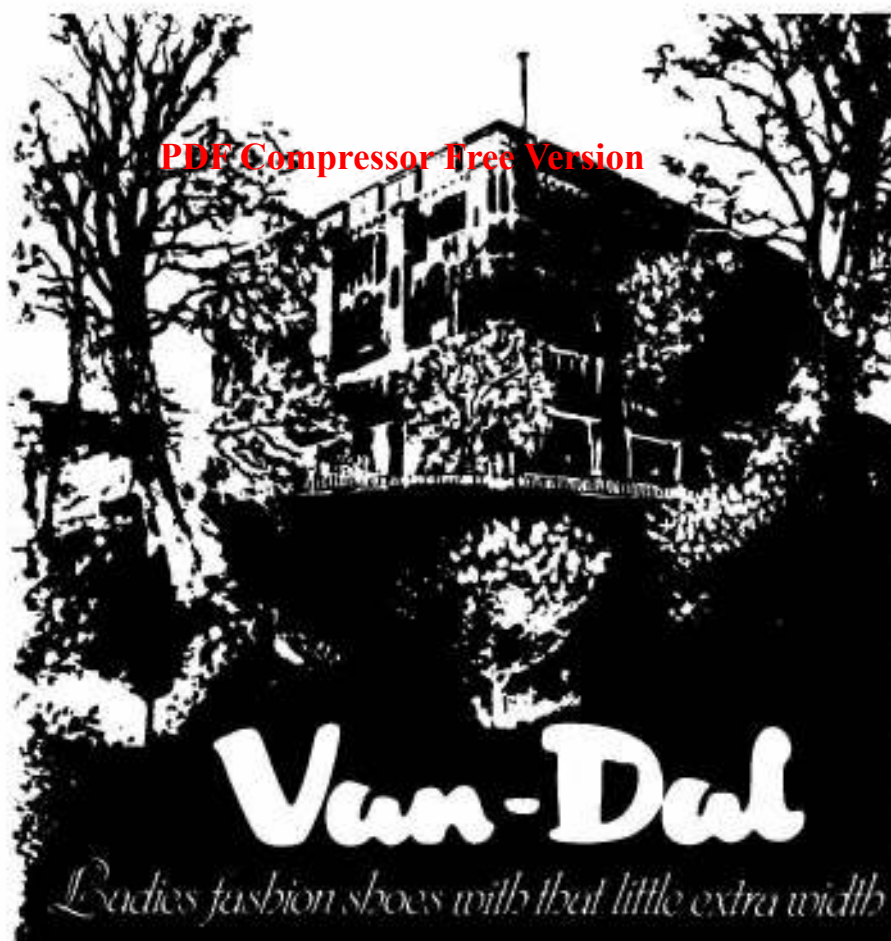
Welcome – B Coy, Rheindahlen Garrison

On Tuesday 2 April 1991, B Coy Rheindahlen Garrison was officially opened by Garrison Commander Col I Cameron. The new Coy comprises both men and women who work in HQ BAOR and the Garrison in varying trades. It is commanded by Major J E Brodie-Murphy WRAC.



Col Cameron prepares to cut the tape.

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Van-Dal

Ladies fashion shoes with that little extra width

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For further information and full colour catalogue write to Van-Dal, Dibden Road, Norwich.

A first for WRAC radio operators ...

Pte Michelle Barden, the first female radio operator to join 4 ADSR is now serving with 3 Sqn. When she joined the Army she knew that she couldn't sit in an office all day and the technical aspects of signals work appealed to her. She is now looking forward to putting her new found knowledge to the test when she goes out on exercise.



Pte Barden with two colleagues from 4 ADSR.

... and WRAC vehicle mechanics

The first intake of female Vehicle Mechanics graduated from the School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, Bordon, in April 1991.

These servicewomen had all completed the demanding



L to R. Ptes Moore, Kelly, Allen and Barlow.

23 week course which included both theory and practical training in automotive engineering. They covered Vehicle Technology and hand skills training before moving onto both wheeled and armoured vehicle repairs. The course ended with Driver Training up to HGV 3 standard.

They have now moved to 1 Corps Troops Workshop in Germany where their training will be put to practice in Field Force Units.

**WHEN MAKING A WILL
PLEASE REMEMBER THE BENEVOLENT FUNDS.**

Farewell To WO1 (RSM) Poklekowski WRAC

Thursday 18 April 1991 saw the departure of WO1 (RSM) S M Poklekowski WRAC the RSM for BAOR and Berlin.

The appointment was lost when 29 Coy WRAC was disbanded in March 1991, but the RSM had stayed on in BAOR to assist with the WRAC Regimental Corporals Course.

WO1 Poklekowski was met on the square where she was conducting the testing of drill mutuals, by the Comd WRAC Col M S Wing and the officers of the disbanded 29 Coy WRAC. From there she was transported by horse drawn cart, along a route lined by WRAC servicewomen, and preceded by a piper from 2 Royal Irish, to the WRAC Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess where a buffet lunch was held and a farewell presentation made.

WO1 S M Poklekowski has now been appointed to a commission in the WRAC.



Farewell to the RSM.

ON PARADE ALL RSMs

The WRAC Centre wishes to compile a list of all the Regimental Sergeant Majors who served at Queen's Camp, Queen Elizabeth Camp, Queen Elizabeth Barracks and Queen Elizabeth Park since 1949.

If you filled the post of RSM or know the whereabouts of any holders please write to:

WO1 (RSM) E J Lawrence, Queen Elizabeth Park, GUILDFORD GU2 6QH

62 Tpt & Mov Sqn (Berlin) RCT

Despite not deploying on Op Granby, the WRAC element of the Squadron were extremely busy as part of the BAOR support operation.

The duties of the much depleted Sqn remained with additional operational responsibilities. The first essential task was for more girls to qualify as HGV drivers and lessons had to be learned in loading and lashing all types of cargo. LCpls Barnes and Mailer became fully qualified "Yorkies" with HGV class 1 licences, and LCpls Clark, Button and Plumb gained their class 2. Details and taskings took us to Austria, Denmark, Hamburg, the Eiffel, and all points in between. Escorting school children's buses put most of the girls off having children for life!

One important task which became known as the "Fox Trot" was the movement of fox recce vehicles to Honne Training area. Two days were spent loading, lashing, convoy driving and other strenuous activities. The WRAC contingent did the Sqn proud.

We have frequent visits from VIP's, one of whom was Brigadier G K Ramsey, DWRAC who spent the morning with the girls on a frost hardened and bitterly cold Grunewald Training Area. All types of Squadron vehicles were out through a demanding cross-country session by the girls, including a tremendous performance on a motorbike by Cpl Prout.

HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother paid her annual visit to the 1st Battalion Irish Guards on St Patrick's day. This involved staff car driving by Cpl Davies and LCpl Hare, baggage driving by LCpl Clark and guard of honour duties by LCpls Barnes and Elliot.



Cpl Wilson asking for stabilizers.

Director WRAC visits Herford

During a recent visit to BAOR Brigadier G K Ramsey visited Herford Garrison and met members of the WRAC at work. These included personnel from 14 Postal and Courier Squadron and clerks working with 4 Armd Div Signal Regt. The Director also met five WRAC chefs who help to provide 250 meals three times a day for the soldiers of 6 Signal Regt. At 4 Sqn she met some of the first female radio operators serving with 4th Armd Div.



Brig Ramsey watches the expert – Pte Sara Wright.

A Message from 10 Downing Street

In a letter to the Director WRAC, the Prime Minister, The Rt Hon John Major, regretted being unable to attend a Corps function and said, "I should have greatly welcomed the opportunity to thank the WRAC for their important contribution to the Allied success in the Gulf conflict, and to wish you all well in the steps now being taken towards full integration into the Corps of the Army. May I ask you to convey my warm appreciation and best wishes to all concerned".

A Message from the Adjutant General

After his visit to the Gulf in March, the Adjutant General, General Sir David Ramsbotham, wrote to the Director WRAC to tell her that during his travels he met a number of WRAC officers and servicewomen and permanently employed officers whom, he said "were all in exceedingly good heart and for whom he heard nothing but praise for the work that they had done".

The Adjutant General summed up by saying: "All in all, the operation was a tremendous achievement and the members of your Corps have a lot to be proud of for their contribution to it. Please pass on my congratulations and best wishes".

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Now, among the ex-service community as in the rest of the population, the number of frail elderly is

increasing, and the informal care which Princess Christian Homes can at present give is not enough. THE FORCES HELP SOCIETY therefore plans to build a new wing, to be called the Lord Roberts Wing, to enable those among the present residents, and others who may enter, with special needs for care, to be looked after by a sufficient number of fully trained staff, in a compact, well-equipped care unit with all its own facilities, able to accommodate women as well as men.

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NORTHERN IRELAND – A PERSONAL VIEW

by LCpl K M Clough B Coy
Rheindahlen Garrison

It was a place I'd always wanted to visit. It was a real challenge for me. When I first arrived there, all sorts of dreadful thoughts ran through my mind. Thoughts of the IRA out to kill any soldier possible made me shiver – and I might be a target too! I remember the CSM saying to me "Oh come on Pte Clough, it's not like it is on television".

Without wanting to appear to be a "drip" I nodded and agreed, "Oh I know Ma'am, I can't wait to go". But even though it was going to be a challenge for me, during my first week in Guildford I felt I would have done anything to get out of it!

Things soon changed when I arrived in N Ireland. As I began to blend in with one platoon of 176 Pro Coy RMP Clooney Base soon became home.

Searcher duties were hard work but great fun. Morale was always high whenever we were sent to work on checkpoints and I still have many penpals from different Regiments with whom I served. On the checkpoints, WRAC duties consisted of searching women, vehicles and operating the vengeful machine. The vengeful machine held details of vehicle registration numbers. Another duty for WRAC searchers was to go out on foot patrol with the "lads". At times although there were serious situations, we also had fun. I've never had so much hassle from women as I did in the City of Londonderry. It was all a little strange at first, after all, aren't we women meant to stick together? I won't repeat the names I was called because I was British! Still, in a funny way it was all to my advantage because it toughened me up.

I also worked in the Armoury in Clooney Base for two months of my tour. I learnt a lot and enjoyed the responsibility.

My tour in N Ireland was meant to be eight months but I enjoyed it so much that I extended my tour to a year. I'd recommend it to any WRAC who enjoys something different. It really is an eye-opener and I'd go back again if given the chance.

BOMB DISPOSAL

by 2Lt L A B Stephens

"Right then – so we've got a 4 inch shell in a back garden in Chatham – no problem. We require a police escort from the A2 roundabout to direct the Bomb Disposal Officer to the incident. She is deploying now so she'll be at the roundabout in 20 minutes". Pause. "Yes, that's right – I did say SHE".

Yet another tasking is received and logged by the Duty Ops Officer in the 24 hr Ops Room at 33 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal). Each task is different from the one before, the only similarity is the surprise with which I am greeted by both police and public alike when they see a woman step out of the Duty Bomb Disposal Officer's (BDO) V8 Landrover.

At least this particular callout was to a genuine unfired shell and not a Cortina manifold, a servo unit from a Hotpoint automatic, an old fire extinguisher or any of the other delights that the Royal Engineers Bomb Disposal unit is sometimes called to.

When I first heard, nearly two years ago, that I was posted to bomb disposal my initial reaction was "You must be joking!" as I consider myself to be one of the most accident-prone people in the British Army – I break bones



Photograph Courtesy of 'Woman' magazine.

more often than other people break fingernails, so Bomb Disposal seemed to be tempting fate just a little. However, here I am at the end of my extended tour and I'm still in one piece. It began with nearly two months intensive training covering chemical bombs, mines, guided weapons, iron bombs and all manner of explosive ordnance and techniques, so with my head full of facts, figures and render safe procedures, I settled into my job as Assistant Adjutant. I quickly discovered that 33 Engr Regt (EOD) is no ordinary unit. Although quite small in number, it encompasses a search squadron, airborne troop, commando troop, diving teams, chemical specialists and has the capability of dealing with virtually every kind of bomb from WW2 (German bombs) to the latest terrorist devices. Its members are currently spread as far afield as the minefields of the Falklands Islands to the sands of Kuwait. To say that the Regiment is busy would be something of an understatement – in 1989 alone it dealt with over 40,000 items of unexploded ordnance and even at that rate it will take over 45 years to clear all the outstanding tasks. Many of the bomb incidents attract a good deal of press interest and being the first woman to carry out bomb disposal duties, I have had to get used to being in such a high profile job. "I need nerves of steel and a steady hand" was a classic misquote attributed to me and published in Woman magazine, as usual I said nothing of the sort, however it made a headline that I shall never live down. Nerves of steel were definitely not required to deal with the 4 inch shell in Chatham because after examination it turned out to be unfired solid shot, the only hazard being DDT – Don't Drop on Toe!

All in all I have had an interesting and exciting tour with never a dull moment. Women in bomb disposal? I thoroughly recommend it.

OPERATION GRANBY

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Gryphon Troop.

Back Row: Ptes Miller, Blackall, Dance, Cartwright, Shaw, Borrett, Tillotson and Smith.

Front Row: LCpl Glenton, LCpl Harborne, Cpl Bagnell, Sgt Janson, LCpl Proud and LCpl Chapman.

GRYPHON TROOP by Sgt Jansen WRAC

I should have realised when the OC was told to send a WRAC Sgt on Op Granby, that with only two of us in 22 RCT, and I'm by far the most junior... We (15 WRAC) descended on 66 Sqn RCT at Tidworth, which was a culture shock for us and them, as WRAC have never served with 66 Sqn before.

We were briefed that our task in the Gulf would be TTF (Truck Tanker Fuel) operators. There followed a weeks course in operating the bewildering equipment, with excellent results.

Not only did we have to adapt to new surroundings and equipment but we also had to make a special effort to get to know each other reasonably well before we faced the daunting prospect of war. 'Gryphon Troop', formed especially for Operation Granby, was a troop of 70 strong.

We left Brize Norton at 0500 hrs on 2 Jan 91 on a Boeing 747 from Kuwaiti Airlines. All WRAC in Club Class needless to say!

The thought of rain in Saudi had not entered our heads until we arrived to 48 hours of non stop rain. Baldric Lines (Tent City) was a wash out and so was everyone's kit. Acclimatizing was not a problem!

Our first task was sandbagging. I don't think we covered this in our two weeks training at Tidworth but we are all B1 sandbaggers now. If you think filling them was hard work, emptying them was muscle binding.

Week 2 flew past as did a million sandbags and still no sight of TTF. We were beginning to wonder if this was an inter unit sandbagging competition. Eventually our ship docked and the TTF's were off loaded and then given away to another squadron, only to be replaced by civilian Mercedes HGV1 articulated fuel tankers each with its own individual personality. Morale was boosted until we saw the state of the vehicles. The lack of 'mod cons' was not the word for it. These vehicles would not have passed an MOT

back home. They were very basic to say the least with a cushion and a plank of wood as driver's seats! Who needed a stereo when the gear box made such good vibes? Only 4 out of 15 WRAC held HGV1 licences so a quick 30 minute familiarisation drive got everyone trained on these special vehicles.

Soon we were driving up and down the notorious MSR "Dodge" (Main Supply Route), delivering fuel to the forward BFI's (Bulk Fuel Installations) for the front line vehicles. The WRAC of Gryphon Troop assisted the Sqn in the movement of 19,500,000 litres of fuel, which became an everyday routine. Never a dull moment on the appropriately named MSR Dodge.

Sooner than we expected we were delivering fuel to our troops in the liberated city of Kuwait. Our task was nearly completed. All that remained was the handing back of our "Choggy Trucks" in a better condition than they were received.

The experience gained from this conflict and the sights we have seen will remain with us for many years. We have successfully completed our task with no injuries or fatalities and proved to everyone how the WRAC can "improvise, adapt and overcome!" It also proved to me that the integration of the WRAC drivers with a predominantly male RCT environment will be a success.

LIFE AT THE FORWARD MAINTENANCE AREA by Pte T A Owen B Coy Rheindahlen

I went to the Gulf on 29 Jan 91. Landing at Al Jubayl airport my initial reaction, as I walked off the aeroplane and saw the helicopters taking off with missiles attached, was what am I doing here. It was all too real, no more playing exercises.

I was sent to HQ FMA (Forward Maintenance Area) where at Al Jubayl I was lucky to have a real bed, sharing a room with 5 other WRAC. Luckily we all got on well, and made the most of the situation that we were in.

I worked in G1/G4, a most interesting job actually dealing with people and the welfare of the soldiers who were serving in the Gulf. I worked 12 hrs plus a day. When I finished I used to return to my room and try to sleep! Unfortunately the nights when we were really tired, there was always a scud attack! When this happened I had to get dressed, put my helmet on, grab my respirator, NBC kit and SMG and run downstairs. Usually we had about 5 minutes to do this, but the night that the scud exploded in the port, only a 5 minute walk from where our accommodation was, we had only 2 minutes to get dressed, when we heard an explosion. We ran downstairs very quickly, to hear the call GAS, GAS! My respirator was on by the second Gas! That night we had to stay in full IPE (individual personal equipment) for 3 hours, to hear the 'all clear' was a blessing! During the time we had to keep our NBC suits on we remained cheerful. I never realised that writing 'blueys' (air letters) was so difficult with NBC gloves on!

Luckily the war finished earlier than expected, and we had a celebration in our room with 'pretend beer'! We were all happy that we were safe and well, and forgot about all the luxuries we didn't have.

When I think back on it now, I feel proud that I was one of the WRAC who was chosen to go to the Gulf; I would not have missed it for the world!

**Remember Subscription for 1992
is due by 31 December 1991**



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Mountains of mail!

We flew to Hannover on December 22nd all excited and relieved to be on our way at last. The flight to AL JUBAYL took approximately 7 hours in a Tri-Star. Once at the airhead we were taken to be processed at Shed 5, where we spent the next 5 to 6 hours being briefed and waiting to check in. A good hour of that was spent trying to find one's own kit amongst the other thousand or so green kit bags and rucksacks. Another hour was spent trying to find out where we were supposed to be going and battling with another local driver to let us on his bus.

Our final destination of the day was to be Camp 4. By this time everyone was tired and the enthusiasm and excitement of the day had almost gone! We had heard about the tented cities of BALDRICK LINES and BLACKADDER CAMP so our camp turned out to be a very nice surprise. The accommodation consisted of long portacabin type blocks and our spirits rose when we realised we had proper beds and hot indoor showers. We were very lucky – it could have so easily been the camp beds and the cold outside showers of the tented camps.

Work turned out to be an absolute nightmare – the volume of mail was unbelievable. Christmas, a busy time for posties anyway, was made worse by the oncoming war and the number of troops involved. Everyone was being sent at least double the amount of letters and parcels they would normally receive and the converted factory come Post Office just couldn't cope. There were mountains of parcel bags all around the outside of the building and a huge pile was made on the waste ground across the road. These piles were all sorted outside with help brought in from other units and as soon as one pile was sorted another was in its place. It was never ending. Even when the war was over the mountain of parcels differed only in the fact that it was kit going home instead of presents coming in.

Needless to say that when faced with that lot day after day all excitement went straight out of the window, but training took over and weeks of long hard hours became routine. Excitement had gone but had been replaced with determination to get the job done. New friendships had been made and were certainly tested throughout the war. A shoulder to cry on and someone to laugh with was definitely needed and new friendships were forged for life.

The ceasefire had been called, the war was over and the excitement came again. When were we going home? Conversations were dominated by talk of home and meeting up on leave. Total strangers from different squadrons and regiments had been bonded together by an experience shared.

by Lieutenant W K Smart WRAC
Asst Adjt 1RS

For the Royal Scots the involvement in the Gulf War was almost immediate with the Regiment's first role being to secure the ports at Bremerhaven and Emden for the 7 Brigade equipment. Having been part of their operation I thought I had seen the last of sand coloured vehicles. How wrong I was!

Once it had been confirmed that the Royals would be going to the Gulf I felt somewhat dejected by the fact that I was not to be included due to posting. The speed of operations changed all this and the order came that I was going too – however my WRAC Company (LCpl Moyes) was not! I was to be the only female with the Royals.

Early morning PT, preparation of vehicles, issuing of kit, NBC training all happened at a rapid pace and suddenly flights to the Gulf were departing. The realization that I was next was, in all honesty, rather daunting. The thought of map reading in the desert and all those beasties! Donned with the masses of kit (too much as I was soon to discover) I then paraded at the MCCP (Movement Control Check Point). The first horror was the silence on the plane when it was struck by lightning. Everyone's immediate thoughts were: "We're being fired at already!" The pilot consoled us and we carried on our way.

Arrival in Dahran meant a delightful journey in a very cramped bus with a 'choggi' driver and sadly his choice of music. Such a trip led us to the infamous 'Blackadder' Camp. Wow! We piled off the bus and into the tented area only to find sleep and a wash were not to be – "Collect your weapon", "get issued with your desert combats" and worst of all – "unpack your kit and decide what you really need. You won't see the rest until the hostilities are over. You've got about 2 hours and then you're going out into the desert". Typical army timing meant that I rushed around only to wait for the transport to take us into the unknown. Dropped off in the dark with no one to meet us put us in good heart! The army system does not change wherever you are – and where were we?! We soon found it was really the meeting point for all those who were "temporarily" lost.

Despite the journey out there were obviously numerous experiences to be had. Firstly adapting to the environment and way of life. Sand getting everywhere was a lesson soon learned. Worrying about the various beasties was certainly conducive to sleepless nights – courtesy of the jocks and their bed time stories! Constant listening to 'The Wizard' for news updates also became somewhat addictive prior to the breakout of the War.

Having got accustomed to the change of routine and grasped the watchkeeping duties I was then to lead a convoy around the desert. "It's easy" I was told. I'd never even been in a convoy let alone navigate in the desert! My driver was dutifully told that he was to be back at the camp by 7 am or else which meant to him that he (and the rest of the convoy) must do the course in double quick time! We raced off in the mist with no lights only to be confronted by another convoy in total disarray. A real recipe for disaster. My boys survived it! Trying to stay awake and concentrate on the map reading was something I had a lot of practice of in the months to follow. The first convoy I led was certainly an experience and lessons were learned and quickly. It was to be my first of many navigations through the desert with A2 Echelon and more following behind! My role as navigation officer was thus confirmed.

The first NBC attack was an uncanny experience. I woke early knowing something was going to happen. On returning from the 'toilet' I was told to get into Dress State 3. The face on the wee jock as he got the "Gas, Gas, Gas" over the radio will stick with me for a long time. The fear of the situation being for real showed.

Once the ground war began and we moved to the initial staging area, I was surprised to find that I did not worry about myself and my drills but rather about the jocks who were with me. I feared for them especially in the knowledge that they had their trust in me to lead through the breach safely. I could not let them down. Keeping cheerie during this time was my main aim – to keep my own morale high as well as theirs and to try and suppress the fear that we all so obviously felt.

Once through the breach I listened in on the net. My immediate thoughts were "Oh God, this is it" as I heard my Commanding Officer say "Contact. Wait Out". The Echelon moved on minutes afterwards. The A2 Echelon moved as a BAA (Brigade Administrative Area), with the Royals leading the right column, following closely behind our Battle Group – and sometimes even in front! We followed through the positions they had taken out – passing bombed out areas, caved in trenches, deserted positions, wreckage everywhere, Iraqis hiding, POWs being searched, burying their dead, being treated for wounds and also walking pitifully towards us waving white rags. A very real experience to which I think people's thoughts are very individual. Talking to the jocks whenever possible during this time was great – to hear all their stories and thoughts. How different they all are in comparison to back in Werli!

The ceasefire was called whilst the Echelon was static and still in Iraq. Thankfully we were to move into Kuwait hours later along with all 7 Brigade's Echelon vehicles. A fantastic array of red lights and chaos.

Being in the Gulf was certainly no bed of roses. Chauvinistic attitudes were certainly not conducive to helping me with my job and I found myself becoming extremely frustrated and depressed with the constant internal battle that I had to face. An only female out there is also a lonely life. Lack of privacy and a lack of understanding by various members for the need of this privacy also made life somewhat difficult at times.

Despite it all I am honoured to have had the experience of the Gulf War whilst serving with the 1st Battalion The Royal Scots and to be given the opportunities that I was. The jocks certainly looked after me and kept me well entertained – even if it did mean receiving over a hundred letters from the Sunday Sport "lonely hearts" column. I only hope that after such a crisis people are more aware of the capabilities of women in the Army.

OP HAVEN

by Lt C Tomlinson WRAC

Four members of the WRAC took part in Operation HAVEN, the deployment to Northern Iraq to assist in alleviating the plight of the Kurdish people. As part of 29 Cdo Regt RA Lt Lisa Tomlinson and LCpls Diane Farline, Debs Cross and Wendy McIntosh flew to Incerlik, in Turkey, on 10 May 1991.

29 Cdo Regt RA comes under command of 3 Cdo Bde, which formed the British Element of Joint Task Force Bravo, a coalition force including soldiers from America, Australia, France, Italy, Spain and Holland. The mission:

"To provide security and humanitarian assistance in

order to expedite the movement of Kurdish displaced persons from refugee camps directly to their homes."

The area we were operating in was the Governorate of Dihok, and initially the prime aim was to persuade the Iraqi forces to withdraw South of the 71 Northing. This would liberate the city of Dihok, a major incentive to encouraging the Kurds to move from the mountains to the safe havens. To achieve this aim, the eighteen guns of 29 Cdo Regt RA were deployed to an area North West of Dihok in support of the Battalion Landing Team of 24 Marine Expeditionary Unit US Marines. The phase was very necessary, effective but tedious. The three WRAC LCpls remained at the Regiment's B Echelon location in Silopi, Turkey. Lt Tomlinson was able to use the spurious excuse of Press Officer to move forward into Iraq to photograph the gun positions.

Once the Iraqi's had pulled out of Dihok the Regiment converted to an infantry role to patrol an area of the safe haven. This was infinitely more interesting as it brought us into direct contact with the Kurds. Regimental Headquarters was based in Goregavan, a village approximately seventeen kilometres North of Dihok, and our TAOR encompassed the surrounding villages of Bagera, Zawita, Mangesh, Khwajawa, Baroshki, Giripit and Badi.

Historically the villages in this area had been populated by people of one religion or tribal group. Since the 1970's Saddam Hussein had systematically destroyed various villages, and forcibly moved people to areas traditionally belonging to another tribe or religion. This had the effect of upsetting the status quo. While we were in the area there was a tribal murder in Bagera, and an Assyrian Christian family was stoned by Kurdish Muslims in Mangesh. We were attempting to get the Kurds back on their feet, giving them a basis for self government, but the Kurds returning to the area were divided and the atmosphere tense.

In addition, there are two principal Kurdish Political Parties, and their respective leaders are rivals for power. Each is supported by armed Peshmerga, guerilla soldiers who are found in every village. Political differences also undermined our efforts to bring stability to the area.

As our TAOR was the furthest area of the safe haven to the south, those people whose homelands were still occupied by Iraqi forces were camping in tents by the roads, unable to be accommodated in the existing villages. This naturally brought additional problems to an already fractious local population.

During the tour food, tents, blankets and clothing were distributed, as well as generators to operate water pumps and electricity. LCpls Cross and McIntosh, both Registry Clerks, had the opportunity to visit various locations and



Lt Lisa Tomlinson at 7 Bty's location, Mangesh, with local children.

meet the Kurds. LCpl Cross, a very accomplished hair-dresser, found herself in constant demand, trimming even the Commanding Officer's hair. LCpl Farline, one of the Regiment's chefs, travelled with the SQMS to distribute surplus food. LCpl Farline was in the unique position of being one half of a married couple serving on Operation HAVEN – her husband is a Marine with Commando Logistic Regiment Royal Marines. As the Regiment's Intelligence Officer, Lt Tomlinson was fortunate to get an insight into the machinations of the Peshmerga, who broke with protocol by inviting women to share their views.

The countryside was breathtaking – mountain ridges, sweeping valleys – and the people fascinating with their alien customs, dress and mannerisms. To visit a turbulent country whose people are trying to achieve autonomy and independence from an autocratic despot is a unique occurrence. In addition, for all of us it was a rare opportunity to work alongside soldiers from different nations, all united in a common aim. Wherever we travelled in Northern Iraq, a smile and a wave was the universal greeting from Americans, French, Italians, Canadians, Spaniards, Dutch, Swedes, Australians, Norwegians and – of course – Kurds.

UNIT NEWS

10 Company WRAC Ex Tenco Trailers

With only 3 months to go before 10 Coy disappears into the sunset for good, we are packing as much in as we possibly can! From 6–20 May 8 members of the Company travelled to America and walked part of the Appalachian Trail. The exercise started on a grey Aldershot Monday morning when the party travelled by minibus to RAF Brize Norton where they caught an 8 hour flight to Dulles Airport, Washington DC. The party consisted of Lt Ally Chaters-Tickner and Lt Angie Herbert (codenamed Batman and Robin!), LCpl Fiona Ray, Ptes Fergie Ferguson, Clare Norrie, Heidi Wakefield, and Jo Clarke.

After hiring a minibus as the admin vehicle and buying provisions, the 6 fearless walkers set off from Thornton Gap Panama heading for Skyland. A few blisters and many miles later, the walkers arrived to a hearty breakfast and temperature of 80 C! The temperature was further increased by some minor traumas with American methylated spirit!

The next leg was from Skyland to Big Meadows, then to Lewis Mountain, where because of poor visibility an interesting visit to Luray Caverns was made.

On Friday 10 May, the expedition moved to Swift Run gap where the scenery became more fantastic, the temperatures hotter and the chance of a swim in the South River falls very appealing!

Saturday 11 May, saw the party move from Loft Mountain via Pinefield gap to Rock Fish Gap.

On Monday 13 May we embarked on the Blue Ridge Mountain trail which was spectacular and also gave the party a chance to visit the Natural Bridge which is one of the seven wonders of the world.

The heaviest rain and thunder we had ever seen greeted us when we woke on Tuesday 14 May. We managed to strike camp and "floated" off to Fallingwater Cascades! The following day, we climbed what is reputed to be the second highest peak in Virginia – Sharp Top Mountain (3875 ft), where the scenery was truly breathtaking. Bearwallow Gap to Curry Gap was our last leg, and after a superb barbecue and a good nights sleep in the campsite at Roanoke the long 250 mile drive back to

Washington DC was made. Two days of splendid R & R followed in Washington DC taking in many fascinating sites, with an "End of Trek" meal to round things off. Arriving safely back in Aldershot on Monday 20 May, we exhausted the rest of the Company with many "Exped Stories". Now 10 Coy has only just time to catch its breath before Ex Tenco Trek sets off to Mont Blanc on the 22 June 1991!



L to R. Lt Herbert and Pte Nozzie on the trail.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Ex Chickerell Challenge by 2Lt S A Mendonça WRAC

It was decided earlier this year to break away from the usual amalgamated camp with 10 Coy WRAC. The two main reasons for this were that 10 Coy WRAC are currently disbanding and we also wanted to hold our own camp which gave the troops a chance to do several adventurous training activities. We shared Chickerell Camp, Weymouth with A Company, 2 PARA who proved to be extremely helpful and amicable. They provided the guard 24 hours a day and also helped show LCpl Northmore the ropes by finding some good climbs in Swanage. Although an hours journey each way it was worthwhile to get the variety of climbs.

The camp consisted of two 4 day packages and each week there were four syndicates to rotate through the following activities: Windsurfing, canoeing, climbing and a (hilly) coastal walk! There were also inter-syndicate sports in the evenings which were great fun and enjoyed by all. (The spectators/DS especially enjoyed the relay events in which the sack race was the most entertaining!)

WEEK ONE – (The heatwave week)

All I can say is – "You were warned!" Sun tan lotion was included on the kit list and as soon as the first group arrived we advised that sunblock and aftersun should be purchased. Those who listened had an enjoyable week and were able to take full advantage of all the activities on offer. The windsurfing was a popular activity and we didn't lose anyone out to sea although SSgt Clark tried to get to France (She had to come back because she didn't have her passport tucked in her wetsuit!) The SSM was thinking of tying elastic on to the boards to keep track of everyone as it was quite windy at times.

We were also lucky to have the opportunity to try clay pigeon shooting a couple of times in the evening. A Coy, 2 PARA ran the range next to the camp and so for the small fee of £3 for 25 rounds some of us had a go at hitting the flying frisbees that flew out of the traps! LCpl Adamson – from SHQ proved to be a hot shot and hit 9 out of 10 in her first attempt! (The onlooking members of 2 PARA just gulped!)

The OC came to visit us during week one and tried his hand at windsurfing and also shot at a few clays in the evening!

WEEK TWO

The changeover day went relatively smoothly and a busload of white pale faced troops arrived to replace the rejuvenated red faced ones who told tales of a twenty mile hike and canoeing in the dark?

The activities took off again for the second week starting with the SSM's favourite "character building" swim test – in the sea in front of all the tourists. The water was freezing and it was amazing to see how fast everyone went around the two markers and under the canoe so they could get dressed again. Pte's Ducker and Tingle tried to impress the Troop Officer with their singing throughout their coastal walk but I'm afraid she just took them along a windier route to drown the din as they sang out of tune.

2Lt Mendonca, Cpl Vincent, LCpl Northmore & Pte Booth took up the offer by 2 PARA to try scuba diving one morning and had a great time at HMS OSPREY.

All in all this years camp was enjoyed by all who attended and gave everyone an opportunity to try something new.



L to R. Pte Hanbidge, Cpl Webb, LCpl Hunton, LCpl Bremner, Pte Chambers.



Pte Davies still smiling – she's not looked down yet!

BOBSLEIGHING

Calling all potential bobsleighters. Are you fit, fast and a slight dare devil? Well, you may enjoy bobsleighting.

The Army Bobsleigh Association are keen to increase the numbers of women participating in the sport and are looking for volunteers. If you are interested and would like to find out more about the sport contact:

Lt J K Wilson
Asst Adjt
Princess Marina College
Aborfield Camp
READING

UKLF ALPINE SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ex Snow Lion 10-16 March 1991
by LCpl Jude Shenton

Although I'd been lucky enough to ski with the Army Womens Services Ski Team over the New Year, it wasn't until March that I took to the slopes of Aviemore, Scotland for the first time. Now we've all heard of the weather stories, and reports, so I wasn't about to take any chances, and into my rucksack went my woolies and long johns.

We started racing on the Monday with a seeding race which would determine where you started in the next days race and so on. The aim was to stay at the top of the seeding list and have the advantage of a better conditioned course. Computers wildly sort out the race results each day, and smoke appears from the admin staffs' ears as they collate numbers and names from teams all over UKLF. There are both teams and individuals entered from regular units, TA units, UOTC, CCF and Apprentice Colleges. Both men and women donned bright colours, bright shapes, furry and even hairy ski suits. With the wide variety of skiing ability the slopes entertained great enthusiasm, encouraging sportmanship and some really wild sights and sounds.

Overall the UKLF Alpine Championships are an excellent way to start on ski racing as a hobby or career, or just for the thrill and exhilaration.

UKLF SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS 1991

by Sgt S Barnes

If you work at the WRAC Centre you don't need to be asked twice if you'd like to go skiing for a week – even if it is the UKLF Ski Championships at Aviemore in Scotland!

The Centre managed to gather together a team of all standards, Capt N Vickers, Capt A Steel, myself and LCpl D Maskery. There were over 160 entrants, varying from TA to Regulars and Juniors to Veterans. The snow conditions were not too good and the warm temperature meant our tans improved, but the snow had to be "cemented" on the courses, making sheet ice!

After a week of hard skiing, some disappointments but also some major achievements the WRAC Centre walked away with all the Regular Army Womens Prizes, including overall Women's Team Champions, LCpl Maskery was awarded the Novice Prize and Capt Vickers Overall Individual Champion.



L to R. Sgt Barnes, Capt Steel, Capt Vickers and LCpl Maskery.

Army Womens Services Ski Team Team – News 1991

This year the Army Womens Services Ski Team (AWSST) was: Capt Sally Holt, Capt Niki Vickers, Lt Tana McQuoid, Lt Sarah Lowe, Lt Pippa Knight, LCpl Curwen (Greer). LCpl Jude Shenton. Team training was carried out with the Royal Signals in Kaprun, Austria during December.

For the Divisional Championships, 1 and 3 Div combined forces in Le Grand Bornand, France. Numbers were low due to the Gulf Crisis, however, skiing conditions were outstanding and a Downhill was run for the first time in 2 years.

The team produced some excellent results against the men, with the "A" Team coming 3rd in the Slalom, 4th in the Giant Slalom and 5th in the Downhill. This was against 13 male teams.

The Army Championships were run from 21 January–02 February in Les Menuires, France. For the first time the women were seeded amongst the men, and they certainly gave them a run for their money! At the end of the competition notable achievements individually were by Lt Tana McQuoid who was seeded 24 amongst 90 competitors, LCpl Karen Curwen seeded 26 and Capt Niki Vickers seeded 33.

Due to initial small squad numbers, the AWSST had to call in two "old" team members to make up a team of the



required standard and experience for the Inter-Services. The team that went forward to the competition at Megeve was: Capt Sally Holt, Capt Vanessa Lang, Capt Susie Castle-Smith, Capt Niki Vickers, Lt Tana McQuoid and LCpl Jude Shenton.

Results for all the competitions were as follows:

Div Championships – 1st in Combination: Lt T McQuoid, Runner Up: Capt N Vickers.

Army Championships – Overall Champion: Lt McQuoid, Runner Up: Capt Vickers, Super "G" Winner, Giant Slalom: LCpl Curwin.

Inter-Services – Winners: RAF, Runners Up: AWSST.

To be runners up for the Inter-Services was, of course, a disappointment. However, due to the loss of a key team member through injury, and reduced numbers the team did well to get as far as they did. Hopefully next season the AWSST will be back to full strength.

Two members deserve a special mention. Firstly LCpl Karen Curwen, who suffered an extremely severe skiing accident, and is still recovering from her leg injury, should be congratulated for her outstanding results during the season, culminating in an 11th position against 90 competitors during a Giant Slalom. This is a first to have a female competitor in the top 15 and shows a level of skiing never seen before in Army Womens' Skiing. Hopefully this will not be the last.

Thanks must also be given to Capt Sally Holt, Captain and Manager of the team whose continued work and enthusiasm for the team has bought it to its present day standing.

As ever, our thanks most go to our Sponsors, without whom the skiing would not have taken place. In particular we thank Lucozade, Peugeot Talbot, Ryder and Sealink.

A TASTE OF DOWNHILL



Imagine the scene: 2 metres and 10 cms of wood attached to your feet, a thin layer of Lycra covering your body, a strong helmet on your head and goggles, which steam up every time you breath, covering your eyes. Below you, a long 2 kms descent of hard packed, icy snow running through gulleys, meadows, over bumps and round corners – a downhill course which will take you just over a minute to complete, reaching speeds of up to 85 kms per hour. Your number is called – apprehensive, nervous, stamping your feet and breathing hard you move forward to the start gate. The timer is ticking by, you glance at the clock, 30 seconds to go . . . by now your heart is in your mouth as fear gradually takes a hold. You close your eyes to try and calm yourself down, imagine the course, remember every turn, the line, every bump and change in the lay of the land – "Be aggressive, be positive – THINK!

"Ten seconds" shouts the startman, and you place your poles over the start wand, now the timer starts beeping – 5 second to go on the last continuous beep . . . you're off! Now fear has long since passed, every possible sensation is ignored as concentration takes over. Suddenly you have forgotten about the ice, your technique, your position because every single ounce of you is concentrating on flinging yourself down and forward as fast as possible without falling. That would be fatal. A warning bell sounds at the gate in the 'meadows' – a jump coming up. Again you fling yourself forward as you take off over a lip to land a split second later and continue. Sixty seconds feels like a million years and by now your legs are screaming at you to stop, but you keep going – the end is in sight, you force your legs to serve you to the very last second until at last, you've made it – through the finish gate! Breathless, shaking with relief, adrenalin and exhaustion you undo your helmet and pull it off, looking toward the clock, 1 minute, 59 seconds, 18 hundredths. The relief surpasses any other emotion for a while until reality dawns – in 3 hours time you will be going through it all – all over again!

WO's Training Day 28 June 1991

Anyone wishing to purchase a copy of the photograph taken on the study day should contact the RSM, WRAC Centre.

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The 1991 Army Welfare Assistants Seminar by Sgt Sue Beasley

Every year the usually tranquil grounds of the Royal Army Chaplains Department Centre at Bagshot Park is a buzz with chitter chatter and gossip from about 40 Army Welfare Assistants. I refer of course to the AWAs Annual Seminar. This year was no exception, but added to the usual "who's that" and "what's going on in your part of the world" was "did you manage to get combats and boots?" Yes, we AWAs do don uniform even though it is only occasionally! We knew this seminar would be slightly different because it included the Military Training Day, but I don't think any of us would have imagined how much fun we would actually have.

We all arrived on Tuesday night and quickly caught up on the latest gossip and also added baby tips for Sgt Sue Newman. Congratulations to her and husband Kevin who expect their first baby in September. Then a quick talk by Captain Jo Myers when we were put into appropriate groups for the training day. What happened next was a first for any seminar – most people in bed by 2300 hrs completely sober!

Wednesday at 0600 hrs, the weather was beautiful, the sky blue and sun shining. In my part of the accommodation everyone was practising the buddy buddy system of dressing. Incidentally, WO2 Elaine Smart and SSgt Cindy Wyllie I never did find my elastics, are you sure you didn't borrow them? So being the ever professional soldiers we are, a couple of hair elastics later, off we set for a hearty breakfast of toast and tea.

The coach journey to the Guards Depot at Pirbright passed quite quickly and after being welcomed by the Training Officer we were assembled in our groups ready for anything. The groups did a round robin of weapon training and firing the SA80, NBC dry training and the BFT. The instructors on the firing range were very patient with us and impressed when "dead eye dick" alias Sgt Jackie Moody, scored 29 shots out of a possible 30.

More laughs during the NBC dry training, when I took my respirator out of its pouch and out popped a small can of lager secretly put there by a friend who later certainly had a lot to answer for. The can was discreetly left for the instructor and well received.

The BFT course at Pirbright is not bad (if that's possible) and most people finished with good timings. We were then entertained by the RSM and his committee in the WOs and Sgts Mess. After leaving the mess we reassembled ready for the command tasks and assault course which started off as a competition, but ended up as a free for all! The PTIs demonstrated the tasks correctly, and not to be out done we demonstrated them incorrectly.

Brig Winder and Capt Jo Myers led by example and cleared the water jump unscathed, not that any of us wished any different! In spite of a few broken nails, bruised and with slightly smudged make-up we finished in high spirits and still smiling. The Guards Depot seemed most impressed with our standards of professionalism and good humour throughout the day and might even invite us back next year!

Thursday was a class room training day relating to stress which proved to be very interesting and useful after the previous day's activities. Friday brought a very informative discussion led by Revd Frank Parkinson on possible repercussions from Op Granby; a subject most AWAs have been actively involved in since the crisis began.

A somewhat short Open Forum indicated that the 1991 AWA Seminar was a great success (or did we just want to get home!). I would like to take this opportunity to thank

everyone who worked hard to make the Seminar so enjoyable and to the AWAs who worked hard to enjoy it. It just leaves me to say one thing to the instigator – (who said she had a bad leg) – SSgt Jackie Murphy you'd better be there next year!



Sgt Sue Beasley "leading the way" on the assault course.

EX LONG LOOK 1990 by Sgt E Williams WRAC 1 Sqn 16 Sig Regt

Are you in the Scottish Army? What is your cap badge? Why are your stripes really big? These questions were just a few of the many strange comments that greeted me during my 4 month exchange in New Zealand on Exercise Long Look 1990. It all began one cold dull day at One Sqn HQ where I was slogging away at all the paperwork on my desk when my SSM Babs Davies asked me if I wanted to be nominated for Exercise Long Look. After about 2 seconds consideration I casually volunteered my services!

On 20 June 1990 I received a letter from my New Zealand counterpart Sgt Maggie Beattie of the NZ Army Medical Corps, with help and advice, and by 4 August I was all packed and ready to start the journey for my holiday oops I mean exercise. We boarded the flight at Dusseldorf Airport which took us via Dubai and Singapore to Sydney, Australia where the New Zealand contingent (me) boarded a RNZAF flight for the final part of our journey.

On Monday 6 August we arrived at Auckland New Zealand, and were taken by coach to a camp in Papakura where we stayed for 2 days familiarisation. On Wednesday 8 August we left Auckland for our various host units, mine was to be 2 Field Hospital located within Trentham Military Camp, Wellington. My appointment was Admin Clerk and my duties included raising signals, collection and distribution of mail, attending to admin and pay problems and booking flights and preparing warrants.

Whilst at Trentham I had the chance to visit various camps including Waiouru Military Camp which is the main training centre for most corps. I attended a passing out parade of armed male and female soldiers. Is this a sign of things to come I asked myself?

After a few weeks in Wellington I went on a 3 week attachment with a Medical Battalion based in Christchurch, South Island. During my time there I saw some of the famous sights including the Christ Church Cathedral and the Ferryman Historic Park which is a re-creation of a New Zealand Edwardian township. I also visited Shantytown which is a replica of a West Coast gold mining town at the turn of the century, where I tried my hand at gold panning with some success. I'm sure I must have toured

the whole of the South Island and I have the 12 x 26 films worth of photos to prove it. It was in between sightseeing and taking the odd photo here and there that I was encouraged to take part in a "bungy jump". What is a bungy jump you may ask? Well it's when a person jumps off a bridge 143 feet above a river with a big rubber band around the ankles. Yes I did it, and I paid £43, for the jump, receiving a certificate, T-Shirt and a video of me jumping (with a wee bit of persuasion) and for getting the fright of my life!



Sgt Williams plunging from a great height.

After going down in the world I very quickly came up again by being asked to attend a NZ WRAC Reunion Lunch as an official guest. I enjoyed this very much. The NZ WRAC was disbanded in 1977, but the interest and loyalty of the ex WRAC members was as strong as ever.

After my 3 weeks touring, I mean working, I returned to Trentham. One thing that surprised me was that, in NZ you travel in uniform, and if you are going from one island to the other by military flight the dress is uniform, so I ended up touring the country in my barrack dress!

When I was half way into my tour I was given 2 weeks leave and as I was fortunate to have friends living in Australia I took the opportunity to visit them in Melbourne.

After my leave I went back to Trentham for a few days work, and was told that I would be assisting on a recce of 2 Field Hospital's annual camp sited at Napier. So I was off again armed with my camera on an interesting recce via the scenic views, then it was back to work for another few days before visiting a Maori village (Rotorwa), 8 hours drive north of Wellington.

Arriving in Rotorwa I was struck by the scenery and the spectacular thermal site where geysers play and mud pools simmer. One could almost forget the horrible smell so fascinating were the sights. Next stop was to a Maori Hangi and concert. A Hangi is a Maori oven in which food is cooked by steam, in a shallow pit in the ground. Firewood is piled over the pit and rocks placed on top of the wood so that as the wood burns the stones sink slowly into the pit. When the burning wood is removed water is sprinkled on the stones to make steam, food is placed in containers on top of the stones and then the hole is covered with leaves and dirt to seal in the steam. The food cooks for about 3 hours and though it may not be the quickest meal it must be

the cheapest and well worth waiting for. What better way to finish off the Maori food than with an evening of cultural dancing and songs. By the end of my time at Rotorwa I was feeling quite Maori, I mean merry!

Then, all too soon, my return trip to Germany was due; time for me to leave Kiwi Land, a great country with lovely people. As I boarded the plane my final thoughts were that Ex Long Look was an excellent experience which I would recommend to anyone. To see a new culture at close hand and to experience a country with so many links with the UK but so far away was a once in a lifetime trip that I was delighted to have made.

Are you changing your cap badge?

If and when you change your cap badge please remember that you are still eligible to be a member of the WRAC Association. The Association, which incorporated the ATS Comrades' Association, which had in its turn incorporated the Comrades Association for WAAC and QMAAC, dates from 1919. The aims of the Association are to keep serving and ex-servicewomen in touch with each other, and to help them in times of hardship and trouble.

Please contact the General Secretary at Corps HQ WRAC, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH.

Officers rebadging are entitled to be voluntary members of the WRAC Headquarters Mess. Please contact the Secretary HQ Mess, at Corps HQ, Guildford.

Forecast of Events 1992

12 February	Headquarter Mess Regimental Dinner at Guildhall, London.
1 March	A Church service to be held at the Royal Memorial Chapel, Sandhurst, followed by luncheon, to include a presentation to the Chapel.
21 March	"Ultimate Finale" - Concert by past and present members of the WRAC Staff Band to be held at the Civic Hall, Guildford.
24 March	Service of Thanksgiving at Guildford Cathedral.
3 April	Final WRAC HQ Mess Regimental Dinner, Guildford
11 April	WRAC Association AGM, Victory Services Club, London.

Further details of all events will be circulated and repeated in Lioness 1/92, but please note dates in your diary.

VACANCY AT CORPS HQ

The post of Assistant Corps Secretary in Corps HQ WRAC, Guildford will become vacant in November this year. It is a Retired Officer Grade 3 appointment, and interested, eligible applicants should telephone or write to Corps HQ for more information. This is a small, friendly unit and we work in pleasant surroundings. Although it is a full-time post, leave and public holidays are generous. The work is varied and includes being Editor of Lioness, Curator of the WRAC Museum, for which there is a full-time assistant Curator, and Secretary of the WRAC Headquarter Mess.

OPERATION RALEIGH

OKAVANGO ADVENTURE

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It was when the RSM found me in RHQ one morning at 0831 hours and asked whether the Officers Mess had burnt down that I realized that I had been working too hard. Finding a file marked "Operation Raleigh" was the start and three months later I was at Gaborone Airport awaiting the start of the Botswana expedition.

Our first task was to drive the Raleigh Landrovers from the Capital to Field Headquarters in Maun. Taking it in turns to drive we headed north past Francistown to set up camp overnight on the edge of the salt pans at Makgadikgadi. Though hot and dusty the journey was easy going but then the tarmac road ran out and for the next 800km we were bounced over the ruts and pot holes of the dirt roads. It was a great relief to arrive at the Island Safari Lodge camp site which was to be home for the next 2 weeks whilst the project leaders planned and set up their expeditions.

Appointed as the expedition Canoe Instructor I immediately set off to conduct a recce of the Okavango Delta, which stretches for 15000 km² across the North west corner of Botswana and is a maze of water ways, winding its way between tall reeds and papayas grass. Dotted throughout the Delta are many hundreds of small sand islands with the large ones covered in palm trees and supporting a wide variety of African game. My journey was by power boat and I was amazed at the skill with which the

native handled the boat and his unhesitating confidence as to which route to follow. Seemingly endless channels thread their way between the islands and reed banks and I lost all sense of direction. Looking at my 1:500 000 scale map which bore no resemblance to the current lie of the land, as each year the Delta carves a new route in flood, I had my first inclination of the navigational nightmare I had let myself in for! With the preparation and planning phase over it was time to meet the 77 international venturers, who were divided into 6 groups, one being allocated to each project site. At last the flotilla of eight 2 man open Canadian touring canoes were put on the water and the expedition had begun. The expedition was to last 10 days for each group, during which time we were to be completely self sufficient. Our aim was to paddle approximately 150 km up stream to rendezvous with another group who were trekking around the Delta. The target was ambitious and required a good 8 hours paddling each day. I lead 3 such canoe expeditions and had many exciting incidents including an elephant crashing through our camp site and numerous encounters with hippos.

The hippo is perhaps the most dangerous animal in the Okavango Delta accounting for more deaths than all the other animals. We learnt quite early on how real this danger was. Territorial by nature they are none too keen on being disturbed by trespassers whilst wallowing in the cool, crystal clear water of the Okavango. Our first sighting made a lasting impression as the water boiled and parted, revealing an enormous head snorting its rage. Everyone leapt into action, paddling skills, forgotten as boats collided with each other like dodgem cars. Definitely time for the anti-hippo and water safety drills to be reinstated! Such sightings became more frequent but one could not afford to be complacent as at 0900 hours 5 November 1990, when we had been paddling for 2 hours and I was about to call a halt for a mid morning break, I sensed hippo in the area. I gave the signal to paddle in single file, close to the bank. This was acknowledged by all boats which took the appropriate action, apart from the last boat which had only just altered course to comply with the signal when... Splash! Not a time to be larking about I thought and then realized the significance of the capsize - it was far from intentional. The hippo had remained submerged whilst 7 of the canoes had passed over then had ambushed the last boat, rising up underneath it, toppling venturers and equipment into the water. Not content with the damage and chaos already caused the hippo vented his rage on the canoe - holing it and removing the decking from one side. The venturers reacted quickly and were soon safely on the bank. Having retrieved the "lost equipment" from the bottom of the Delta I was keen to get everyone back on the water soonest to ensure that there was no loss of confidence. The attacked canoe was a write-off and so we hid it amongst the reeds to be collected later and repacked the 7 canoes to accommodate the 2 ship wrecked venturers.

Having spent a month as the project leader for the canoe expedition it was time to take up a less glamorous role back at Field Headquarters with the compensation of a camp bed and other luxuries. 0530 hours saw me in the office tent ready to begin the mornings radio schedules. It took 2 hours to complete the situation reports from all 6 sites, much of the time being spent trying to verify their shopping lists as, due to poor reception, each item required to be spelt out phonetically. I then drove to Maun to do the shopping. I spent the last 3 weeks of the expedition at a village 1 hour north of Maun. Our task was to build a community hall for the people of Shorobe, the



Drinking the cool, crystal clear water of the Okavango.

work being done with the minimum of tools. (Who needs a cement mixer when you have 4 willing volunteers with spades?) The community hall was located in the heart of the village and received much interest from the locals who would often volunteer to work along side us. During my time at Shorobe the opportunity arose for me to go on a game drive in the Moremi wild life reserve. It was a 6 hour drive to Moremi over what was probably the worst road in Botswana. Bouncing around on the back of a flat bed open truck I thought nothing could be worse and then the heavens opened and the rainy season began with a vengeance. We arrived in Moremi soaked to the skin to discover that the marquee which was to be home had been visited by the 14th/16th Baboon Regiment. A notorious troop of savages who had great delight in rummaging through all the stores and rations, opening every packet of soap, tea, coffee and caused complete devastation. Having spent 2 hours putting the marquees to rights my thoughts on African wildlife were not so rosy as they had once been!

The expedition passed all too quickly and it was time to clean the equipment and pack up the project sites. It was a truly worthwhile experience during which everybody learnt something about themselves and how they integrated within a team. Learning to work with limited resources, in a new environment, carrying out tasks which one would never have considered prior to the expedition, all helped create the challenge.

REUNION NOTICES

ATS Dinner Club

The Annual Luncheon of the ATS Dinner Club will be held on Saturday 5 October 1991 at the Bloomsbury Crest Hotel, London. There will also be a business meeting when a new committee will be elected, and it is hoped that as many members as possible will attend. Although membership of the Club exceeds 1,000 we would like to hear from any former member of the ATS.

Enquiries to the membership Secretary: Mrs B Jagger, 9 Balfour Manor, Broadway, Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 8XW.

Birmingham International Tattoo

There is to be an International Tattoo featuring the Band of the Royal Marines, Massed Police Bands and bands from France and Holland and other attractions at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham on 19th and 20th October 1991.

The organisers have invited ex service organisations to parade their Standards on either or both days. Branches which are interested should contact: Joe Kirtin, The Royal British Legion, 41 Spring Hill, Birmingham 18. Tel: 021 233 3418.

WRAC Association

The **Eastern and London Area Reunion** will take place on Saturday 21 September 1991 at Chelsea Barracks, London between 1030 am and 4 pm.

A buffet lunch will be provided. Members are requested to inform their Branches by 31 August 1991 if they wish to attend.

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The next **Northern Area Reunion** will be held at the Memorial Hall, Cleethorpes, on Saturday 16 May 1992 and will take the form of a Buffet Lunch followed by an afternoon Reunion.

Full details will be published in the next issue of "Lioness" - No. 1/92 - distributed at the end of February.

WESTERN AREA REUNION - 1991

The Western Area Reunion, hosted by Birmingham Branch, will be held on Saturday 28 September 1991 at the Birmingham United Services Club, Gough Street, from 1.30-5 pm.

Further details may be obtained from the Area Secretary Mrs E Francis, 22 Stalbridge Road, Crewe, Cheshire CW2 7LP. Please enclose SAE.

Canadian Women's Army Corps
50th Anniversary Reunion
Friday 27 September 1991-Sunday 29 September 1991
in Toronto, Canada.

For information write without delay to:
W.W.II CWAC Veterans
Canada Wide 50th Anniversary Reunion
201 Niagara Street, Toronto, Canada M5V 1C9
Phone 416-781-2872, 416-755-0296
or 416-535-2930 day or evening.

Found on 29 June 1991.

Light blue Dannimac coat at WRAC Centre.
Apply to Corps H.Q.

ATS/WRAC PROVOST 50th Anniversary 1992

Those interested in a reunion at Chichester in 1992 please write to Miss A Purton c/o Corps HQ WRAC, Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6QH.

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ATS/WRAC Kneelers

Lioness 1/91 mentioned a project for the provision of ATS badged kneelers for Garrison and other churches.

Several Association branches have responded in addition to a number of individuals.

The ATS and WRAC kneelers for the RMP chapel at Chichester were dedicated in a service on 14th July. The pair for St Mary's in Dover Castle are ready, as are the ATS kneelers for Shorncliffe and Larkhill Garrison churches. The Royal Signals at Catterick, The Royal Corps of Transport at Leconfield and the Royal Engineers at Chatham should get their's soon.

Perhaps we could hear how others are fairing?

This is a tangible way to preserve our cap badges for posterity. Further information from Daphne Hill 4 Springwood Road, Heathfield TN21 8JY.

REUNION REPORTS

ATS Provost Northern Ireland

On the 1st and 2nd June eleven former members of the ATS Provost (Northern Ireland) held a reunion in Chesterfield, their first meeting since December 1945. A wonderful time was had by all. Those attending were (maiden names): Hetty Barker (Canada), Cathy Griggs, Ena Simpson, Ivy Stephenson, Alma Taylor, Maud Musselwhite, Zena Fox, Amy Kemp, Irene Urquhart, Kay Stewart and Gwen Ordish.



HQ RASC, 3 AA Group

We six ex-ATS have been holding a weekend Reunion every year since 1970. We were stationed at Newton St Loe, near Bath at HQ RASC, 3 AA Group. Our names then were L to R, Muriel Lock, Doreen Thomas, Dorothy Barker, Renee Harris, Vera Collins, Peggy Alexander. Muriel is now married to our ex-Sgt Reg Essex. We would dearly



Reunion at Bath.

love to hear from Bridget O'Loughlin. If you're out there Bridget, please phone Muriel - 0454 412391.

555 Bty RA

Mary Buckingham (née Plewes) and Nessie Johnstone (née Porteous) who both served with 555 Bty RA were reunited this year at Mrs Johnstone's home in Victoria, Australia. Mrs Johnstone joined the Association in 1987, travelling to UK for both Grand Reunions in 1988 and 1991, and is thrilled to have renewed friendships with former army chums.



L to R. Nessie Johnstone and Mary Buckingham.

GL Section 525 H(M) AA Bty

The publication of a photograph in the Lioness 2/90 of members of 525 (M)HAA Bty in Belgium resulted in 9 members of the GL Section who served with the battery in both Kent and Belgium holding a reunion in Norwich. One of the party was Ida France now Mees who married a Belgian. Her husband Victor was one of several husbands who accompanied their wives to the reunion with Philip Flavell, one of the male sergeants, and his wife Pearl. We had an excellent party organised by Margaret Muskett, and we are now hoping, with the help of Victor and Ida Mees, to hold our next meeting in Schoten Belgium. If any more of our GL Section are out there and interested they should contact Margaret or myself Mabel Bolton (Dee) on 091 236 5465, 15 Netherton Gdns, Woodlands Park Wideopen, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE13 6JU.

A FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY – ATS RECRUITING IN THE MIDDLE EAST

by E J White, née Thomson

In 1940 Chief Commander Audrey Chitty was sent to Cairo to discuss the enrolment into the Service of British Army wives and other women stationed in Egypt; while that proved impractical, later in the year a group of specially enrolled servicewomen in the categories of clerks, cooks, orderlies, telephonists and a number of linguists were sent to Egypt to serve at the secret army Interrogation Centre in Maadi; they were named 501 Company ATS. Also stationed out of Cairo were members of the Women's Transport Corps, who in 1941 were re-named 502 Ambulance Car Company ATS. It was the continual television broadcasts in the early days of the recent Gulf War however – especially the reference to Israel under Scud missile attack – which have brought to mind recollections of fifty years ago when recruiting in Palestine (as it was then known), to encourage Jewish and Arab women to join the Auxiliary Territorial Service became a reality, following Chief Commander Chitty's considerable liaison with Mrs Samuel of the Jewish Agency. In late summer 1941, I was called to the War Office for an interview with Chief Commander Chitty, and in October, in the rank of subaltern, reported to Guildford Training Centre, there to meet the eight NCO's who had also been selected to serve in Israel – first at the Training Centre which was to be established in Sarafand, about 30 miles north of Jerusalem.

After several weeks of training at Guildford and in being fitted with tropical kit, with seven of the NCO's, we entrained for Glasgow and on to board a troopship at Gourrock; also aboard were Senior Commander Helen Pine and Junior Commander Kay Stocker who were to set up the recruiting and training centre, at Sarafand. Our troopship sailed in convoy to Freetown, then accompanied, via the Cape of Good Hope to Durban; the monotony of that pleasant voyage was varied with drill training sessions and on one occasion Senior Commander Pine took the salute as I paraded the NCO's on deck. We were clad in tropical kit including pith helmets; the occasion was photographed and eventually appeared on the March/April page of the ATS calendar for 1945 when the need for tight military security had lessened. Following arrival at our destination, the pith helmets were consigned to army stores never again to be seen.

In Durban we transhipped to the NIEW AMSTERDAM which zig-zagged north to Aden and into the Red Sea, finally dropping anchor at Suez. Our nine week voyage over, we boarded the train for 24 hours journey to Jerusalem, arriving early on a fine Sunday morning. All was shuttered and still; there seemed little prospect of breakfast until finally Army personnel appeared and provided transport to Sarafand, our final destination. There we took over a collection of huts, some unfinished, which was to be the ATS Recruiting and training centre; the various army units stationed in the area were helpful in seeing us established in that new and rather strange environment. That was in January 1942.

It was not long before women, mostly from the kibbutzim, were applying to join the Service. They were fitted with uniforms, attended training sessions and lectures on Army procedure; at times their limited knowledge of English and their varied European cultural backgrounds created difficulties, however at the end of the month in camp, eager to work with the British Army, the trainees were posted to various units in Egypt filling vacancies as hospital orderlies, clerks, storewomen and so on. At the

end of three months at the Training Centre, I was posted to the Canal Zone in charge of two platoons, each attached to a military hospital – one at Kantara on the Suez Canal, the other at Quassasin on the road to Cairo. Months later a third platoon was established in the area, I was promoted to Junior Commander rank and a Jewish subaltern was posted to the company; she was Shershona Gershonowitz; in halting English she used sometimes to talk of her childhood at the time of the Russian Revolution of 1918.

A second draft of ATS officers and other ranks had arrived from Britain, some to serve at GHQ in Cairo, some to train the increasing number of Jewish and the sprinkling of Arab recruits at Sarafand. NCO training had been introduced and more ATS companies were established to serve mainly with the RAOC and REME units stationed at Tel-el-Kebir in the Sweetwater Canal area.

Late in 1942 as casualties from the North African campaign arrived at the military hospitals in the Canal zone, the women responded magnificently to the demands of long and arduous hours on duty. Then as the campaign drew to a close and the armed forces were transported across the Mediterranean to the new battle-front of Italy, the pressure of work in the military hospitals and other service units eased as the Canal Zone became something of a backwater, and minor disciplinary problems among the women such as absence without leave and uniform irregularities were apparent. By then however, following the long months under pressure, weekend and longer leave was re-instated and gradually the women settled into new routines.

Recruiting had been extended to other areas of the Middle East and of 5000 women serving there in the ATS in 1943, in addition to those from Britain and from Israel, there were Greeks and Cypriots. Some 500 were accommodated in huts and tents in the ATS camp fenced about within the Tel-el-Kebir base – said to have a perimeter of 40 miles.

Meanwhile the political situation in Israel had become tense; recruiting had dwindled to a trickle but the importance of maintaining liaison with the Jewish Agency resulted in my being posted (after sixteen months as a company commander in the Canal Zone), as recruiting officer, based in Sarafand. I was assisted by two subalterns, one Jewish, one Arab, and as our main source of recruitment was still the settlements, I travelled the length of the country, staying a day or two at different kibbutzim, from that first established 25 years earlier in the north – by then a happy, comfortable community – to the newest in southern Israel, where the members live frugally as they worked under immensely harsh conditions, striving to turn the wilderness into flourishing farmland. After six months as recruiting officer, I was promoted to Senior Commander and was posted to Tel-el-Kebir as 2IC, late in 1943.

By November 1944 I had been stationed a year in Tel-el-Kebir and had completed the ATS three year term of service abroad; however as I had heard that my twin brother from New Zealand was likely to pass through Egypt with NZ army reinforcements, I was granted an extension of overseas service and was posted to Cairo to command the companies billeted in the Kasr-el-Nil barracks. My brother arrived at Maadi, we met during the two or three days before his unit moved on to Italy. Then in May 1945 with several other ATS personnel, I embarked for Britain and on a very "dry" ship, with a special issue of a bottle of beer to all ranks, we celebrated VE Day in mid-Atlantic.

Altogether my term of service in the Middle East had proved an interesting and rewarding experience and this summary has been compiled as a tribute to all ranks of the

ATS who served there, and especially to those volunteers who, fifty years ago, trained at Sarafand to serve with the British Army in a time of great need.

May 1991. **PDF Compressor Free Version**
Auckland, NZ.

WRAC IN KENYA 1953-1957

by Major (Retd) E S BEEDLE (née JACOBS)

When the postings were announced at the end of the 1953 Spring Course at the WRAC Staff College, I must have been the only student to consult a map. I was to be DADWRAC East Africa Command and "G3" HQ GHQ Troops, Nairobi.

DADWRAC was both a staff and a regimental appointment. I was the only WRAC admin officer, and the WRAC contingent comprised about 60 ORs and a varying number of Staff Officers (including "Staff Only"). GHQ Troops was the HQ of "Base" troops, and two non-operational King's African Rifle Battalions (one in Uganda and one in Tanganyika): my "G" appointment was changed to "Staff Captain "A".

A state of emergency had been proclaimed in Kenya on 21st October 1952, and, in retrospect it amazes me that I had to find Nairobi on the map, and that my knowledge of the Mau Mau uprising was practically non-existent. It is true I was in Singapore at the time and that we had a "little local difficulty" of our own in Malaya, but that should be no excuse. Until I received my posting, I (and I believe my fellow students) had no idea that the WRAC was included in the re-inforcements being sent to Kenya. With the exception of "my" administrative staff, the contingent, which arrived in Nairobi before I did in August 1953, was employed at the Pay and Record Office, though GHQ clerks, included two WOII PAs, which helped balance the rank structure, and, incidentally, provided me with an unofficial CSM... willingly.

I write "my" administrative staff advisedly, because the contingent's administration was all under the control of the Camp Commandant with a WRAC sergeant on our clerical (and pay) side, and a WRAC corporal, who doubled as storewoman and NCO in charge of quarters. Captain June Sharcott (Staff Captain "Q") was already en poste, and had seen the original women settled in - and I arrived with all the initiatives completed, and took over a going concern.

The staff appointment with GHQ Troops and the regimental one with the WRAC worked well together. (This article is really just a *factual* account of the regimental one.) As DADWRAC, I had direct access to the Chief of Staff. Otherwise I was company commander, platoon commander (which, oddly enough I had never been before), paying the women every week, and in all other ways (I hope!) putting my previous regimental experience into practice. If I were away, one of the regular officers took over. What I liked to do above all was to meet all incoming planes, and see out all departing servicewomen.

With an extension to my original posting, I stayed on after the WRAC contingent returned home (with the exception of one staff captain) during the early half of 1957. By one of those quirks of fate, HQ GHQ Troops was disbanded on 1st August 1957, 17½ years to the day since I started my service in the ATS - and I retired, already married, on that day.



Pay Parade 1950's style.

WRAC ASSOCIATION GRAND REUNION - SCOTLAND

by Mrs Mollie Gale and Major Jo Dunn WRAC

On Friday 12 April 1991 members of the Association from all eighty branches began to assemble in Glasgow for the start of the WRAC Association Grand Reunion Week-end which had been in the planning since 1989 but was now actually upon us. Many wondered if the Glaswegians knew what they were in for!

The weekend started with a Ceilidh. This was organised by the Glasgow Branch and it took place in the Clyde Hall. They had the Pipers and dancers from the Glasgow and Strathclyde University Officer Training Corps to lead the reels. Also an excellent buffet, provided by the Clyde Hall and the Glasgow Branch Committee Members. It was a splendid evening which approximately 300 Association Members attended. A total of £1400.00 was raised for the Princess Louise Scottish Hospital (Mary Erskine) for Ex Servicemen/women.

On the Saturday morning coach trips 288 members departed for Loch Lomondside and 105 to the Burrell Collection. These coaches were organised by Major Catriona Mathieson and she may have had a hand in the sunny weather as well! Meanwhile, a willing band of volunteers drawn from the local Recruiting Offices were setting up stalls in the City Chambers. These included a WRAC Corps Headquarters table, a tombola organised by Ayr Branch and the Whisky Minatures organised by the Inverness Branch. Later at the Secretaries Meeting the Raffle Prizes were drawn. The top Prize being a carriage clock kindly donated by HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

At 2.30pm the Annual General Meeting took place in the beautiful surroundings of the Banqueting Hall of the City Chambers. 506 Association members were present and at the conclusion of a lively meeting Certificates of Appreciation were presented to 20 members by Brigadier Anne Field, Association Vice President. Members then departed to prepare themselves for the Grand Reunion Dinner at the Albany Hotel that evening.

As there were at least 800 Members present for the Dinner Sergeant Major Balloch from the Army Careers Office in Glasgow was on parade to keep them all in order. He was ably assisted by servicewomen from 242 Signal Squadron and Womens Services Recruiting Staff from the local area.

At 7 pm the top table was piped into Dinner by Piper Thompson from Glasgow and Strathclyde University Officers Training Corps. Lt Col Janet Lawson Vice Chairman of Scottish area and chairman of the Reunion

Committee was in the Chair. The principal guest was Baillie Chalmers, who represented the Lord Provost of Glasgow. After grace the messages were read out by Capt Pat Stevenson Secretary to the Reunion Committee. These included greetings from Her Majesty the Queen, HRH the Duchess of Kent, our friends in Canada and WRAC serving in Cyprus, Hong Kong and SHAPE. After a delicious meal Brigadier Anne Field gave her welcoming address which included greetings from HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and then an update on Corps news. Baillie Chalmers then gave an entertaining reply which caused quite a few eyebrows to rise because she did it all without notes! One member said afterwards that it was the first time in 42 years that she had seen a guest speaker receive a standing ovation. After the formal side was complete we settled back to the entertainers a delightful trio who gave us light opera with Scottish and wartime songs culminating in a very resounding rendition of Auld Lang Syne. Sadly due to duties in connection with operations in the Gulf we were unable to have the WRAC band playing. However due to the good connections of the reunion Secretary, Captain Pat Stevenson, the band of 1/52 Lowland Volunteers came to the rescue and not only played beautifully but entered into the spirit of the occasion and all present were very grateful.

On Sunday morning over seven hundred members assembled at Glasgow Cathedral where they joined the congregation for a thanksgiving service at which our Corps and Branch Standards were paraded. The service was taken by The Reverend William Morris who made everyone feel very welcome. The lessons were read by Brigadier Anne Field and Major Jo Dunn. During the service Pipe Major D Pincoch of Glasgow and Strathclyde University Officer Training Corps played the lament "Sleep, Beauty Sleep" which was very moving and as the sound of the pipes faded into the distance it was a moment for all of us to remember those we loved and had lost. The collection was taken by the Cathedral sidemen accompanied by members of 32 Signal Regiment and 242 Signal Squadron.



Standard Bearers in Glasgow.

After the service members moved to George Square in front of the City Chambers where there was to be a march past of 567 Association members led by Branch and Association Standards. The salute was taken by Baillie Patricia Chalmers. Regimental Sergeant Major Bob Smith from the Army Careers Office in Glasgow was in charge. He and his band of male recruiters were kept busy organising the gathering into a parade led at the front by

the band of 1/52 Lowland Volunteers and the pipers of Glasgow and Strathclyde University.

It could not have been a more perfect day. The sun shone brightly and everyone was happy. The march past went very well and looked super.

The final event was a reception in the City Chambers hosted by Baillie Chalmers on behalf of the City of Glasgow. There was a magnificent spread of food and wine and it was greatly enjoyed by the 700 members of the Association who were present and was a marvellous gesture by the City of Glasgow who had done so much to make the Association welcome. At the reception Brigadier Anne Field presented to the City an engraved glass vase from the WRAC Association. It depicted the badge of the Association together with those of the QMAAC, ATS and WRAC as well as a commemorative inscription.

When we had finished the parade the Regimental Sergeant Major said "Well done everyone, we will now have four cheers; three for you and one for the RSM!" All were well deserved and it seemed an ingenious innovation.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1991

The Annual General Meeting was held in the City Chambers Glasgow on Saturday 13 April 1991 at 2.30 pm.

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

She welcomed 506 members to the meeting. She thanked Major Dunn and the Scottish Area for making the arrangements for the Reunion and the AGM. She especially thanked Lt Col Lawson Chairman of the Reunion Committee, Capt Stevenson the Area Secretary, the staff of the ACIO Glasgow and the Glasgow Branch members. The Chairman explained that as a result of their employment during the Gulf War the WRAC Staff Band were unable to be present but that their place had been taken by the Band of the 1/52 Lowland Volunteers and Pipes of the Glasgow and Strathclyde University OTC. The Chairman congratulated Mrs Elizabeth Laurence-Smith, the former Honorary Treasurer on the award of the MBE in the Queens Birthday Honours 1990.

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 21 April 1990 have been circulated to Branches were taken as read and signed.

Colonel B M Laverack, Vice Chairman of Council reported that she has been acting Chairman of Council since 1 May 1990 when Major Coven had resigned. Colonel Laverack paid tribute to Major Coven's service to the Association. These remarks were greeted with applause. Colonel Laverack said that the Council had met twice since the last AGM. Two principal matters decided had been on reports from the Executive Committee, first on the Rules of Association and second on the Certificate of Appreciation.

The Rules of the Association which were its charter to operate were last revised in 1973 and reprinted in 1980. The Council had decided that a thorough review was necessary.

The AGM in 1990 had endorsed the changes in Rules as they related to subscriptions and had been promised a full revision by the AGM 1991. The proposed new rules had been printed in the Centre pages of Lioness No 1/91 (Members agreed them by a show of hands at a later stage in the Meeting).

During the year Council had approved the Rules for the



Miss Muriel Thomson receiving her Certificate of Appreciation from Brigadier A Field.

award of a Certificate of Appreciation. The Executive Committee had considered 21 citations submitted by Areas and recommended that all 21 should be awarded a Certificate and Council had approved.

Colonel Laverack reported that membership of the Association, retired, annual and life members, regular and TA members was still in excess of 10,000 but that the number had dropped as regular officers rebadged to their permanently employed Corps in October 1990. 186 new Life Members had joined in 1990.

290 tickets had been issued to those wishing to attend the Service and March Past at the Cenotaph in Whithall on Remembrance Sunday 1990.

A larger plot in the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey had been secured. In 1989 the Field was reorganised because of repair work at the Abbey and the QMAAC/ATS/WRAC plot had been moved to the centre of the Field. The space allocated had been insufficient to accommodate those who attended the Service of Dedication and from 1990 onwards a plot three times larger than the original has been allocated to QMAAC/ATS/WRAC.

The Chairman thanked Colonel Laverack for her report and thanked her for her work as Chairman of the Executive Committee and as acting Chairman of Council as well as her work as a Trustee of the Benevolent Fund and a member of the Grants Committee.

Mrs A H S Matthews in her first report as Honorary Treasurer said that the Association was in a healthy state financially with the Accumulated Funds standing at £155,898 and an excess of income over expenditure for the year of £515,802.

Mrs Matthews explained that the full benefit of the increase in subscriptions which had been introduced after the last AGM had not yet been achieved as they had only started half way through the financial year. The current year would be the first when everyone paid the new subscription. The Association had suffered as had everyone else from the fall in stock market values and the portfolio value had fallen but the income to the funds from its investments had been ahead of the rate of inflation and in the longer term the value of the portfolio should rise again. Council had taken the opportunity of the lower

prices for shares to invest £30,000 of the Association capital and this should improve the investment for the future.

The increase in costs for the *Lioness* had been accounted for by two reasons: first an increase in the numbers printed from 8000 to 11000 so that each servicewoman would receive a copy and the introduction of colour picture for the front cover.

Mrs Matthews was able to report that the deficit of £10,198 in the Museum Redevelopment Account had been eliminated and the surplus of £6,414 shown in the Accounts for 1990 would be returned to the Association general funds which supported the Appeal so well in its early stages.

The Vice President thanked the Honorary Treasurer for her report.

Captain K R McGregor the Editor of the *Lioness* reported that during the past year *Lioness* had moved to full colour on the front cover, and in the last edition a complete colour cover had been produced.

In 1990 *Lioness* had joined the Association of Service Newspapers and should benefit from increased advertising revenue. It was hoped that members responding to advertisements would quote the source. This encouraged advertisers to consider that their money had been well spent.

The Editor said that to produce a quality publication was extremely expensive and consequently copies could not be sent to members who have not paid their subscriptions which ran from 1 Jan - 31 Dec each year.

She thanked Colonel Marriott, Commandant WRAC Centre for her continued support in many ways and particularly for allowing members of the Centre to help distribute *Lioness*, thus saving the Association considerable expense. Free distribution via the British Forces Post Office for those serving abroad would become a contracted service for which the Association would have to pay with effect from August 1991.

The Vice President thanked Captain McGregor for her report and congratulated her on the move to coloured covers of the magazine.

Brigadier A Field, Chairman of Trustees, ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds reported that the Trustees had met twice during the year. She said that on their behalf she would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the Funds by making donations, fund-raising, covenants; to thank also Lt Col Soames and members of the Grants Committee and The Army Benevolent Fund who supported in so many ways, including payment to seven annuitants who received a weekly allowance of £5, as well as generous help with Nursing Home fees for 23 ex-servicewomen.

A total of 1,126 cases had been considered during the year; 884 of these had been ex-ATS 232 had been ex-WRAC and 10 had been ex-QMAAC applicants. The amount spent on grants had been £186,538, as against £170,000 in 1988/89.

As well as direct financial help, the Funds paid for the provision of 161 television sets and 139 licences at an annual cost of almost £20,000.

There are 60 beneficiaries of the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund. Quarterly payments of £65 (£5.00 per week) were made and in addition a Christmas gift of £50 had been sent to each annuitant. All donations to the Fund were invested, and only the income used to provide the annuities.

The Funds had been affected by the economic situation and financial changes. The value of the portfolio had failed to keep up with inflation. The increase in VAT would affect most things, including the cost of the Television Rental

scheme. The TV licences have also just been increased by 9½%.

There would be further problems which would arise from Re-Badging with a resulting decrease on the income to the Funds from the Day's Pay Scheme which until now had represented more than 50% of the income to the Funds.

The Chairman urged branches to maintain their fund raising activities.

Brigadier A Field, Chairman of the Museum Trustees stated that she could report to the AGM that the Redevelopment of the Museum as originally planned had now been completed. Phase III which was The Royal Room had been opened to the public in May 1990 and has been universally admired both as a visual display and as a record of the Royal connection with the Corps from 1918 onwards.

She reminded members that the Honorary Treasurer had explained that the Redevelopment Appeal had met its obligations and would be closed. The Museum would now look to its own capital and profits made from sales from the shop for the day to day running costs.

The Chairman said that the WRAC had been heavily involved in the Operation in the Gulf (OP GRANBY) and that special panels depicting that involvement would be added to the display.

The Chairman reported that the Women's Army Corps Association of America had donated Volume II of the History of the WAC to the Museum.

Brigadier Field reported that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother had graciously agreed to open the Museum officially on 4 June 1991.

Council had proposed that Miss M D Bradley and Mrs H M Fuller be elected as Council Vice Presidents for the coming year. Aberdeen Branch seconded the proposal which was carried unanimously.

Brigadier G K Ramsey Director WRAC gave members a resume of future plans for the WRAC. She explained that permanently employed officers had already rebadged to their employing Corps and that servicewomen would rebadge during 1991.

In April 1992 the WRAC Officers and Servicewomen not employed with other Corps would amalgamate with the Royal Army Pay Corps to form a new Adjutant Generals Corps (AG). The AG Corps would also embrace legal, medical, educational and provost functions. Brigadier Ramsey said that the Corps had much to be proud of. Women had achieved equal X factor with the men to cover exigencies of the service such as separation and unsociable hours and were therefore now on equal pay. Women were now able to enter all trades less the Infantry and the Royal Armoured Corps although they served with both in a support capacity. There would be a focus for women's issues after the new AG Corps had formed. The wider employment of women in the Army would continue and it was planned that up to 10% of the strength of the Army would be women.

Brigadier Field thanked the Director for her briefing and said that liaison with the RAPC was well advanced and she felt sure that institutions such as the WRAC Association and the WRAC Benevolent Funds continue to exist.

The Chairman invited Areas to offer to host the 1994 Grand Reunion which would mark the 75th Anniversary of the formation of the Association.

The next Annual General Meeting would be held on Saturday 11 April 1992 in the Victory Services Club at 2.30 pm.

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

FOCUS ON THE BENEVOLENT FUNDS

(This is a precis of the Annual Report of the work of The Funds. Full copies may be had on application).

The ATS and WRAC 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 M W Soames 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 also 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 Trustees welcome as the new Case Secretary and Secretary to the Trustees Mrs A H S Matthews (nee Ferguson). She served in the WRAC for 9 years and retired as a Captain in 1972. She is married with two children and prior to taking up the appointment worked for the Red Cross.

The Trustees were conscious that the accounts showed that the Capital values of the Funds have not maintained their value compared to October 1986, allowing for inflation. However this remains the aim of the Trustees and it is hoped that in the long term their real value will be maintained.

The Trustees were pleased to note that despite the short term fall in Capital values the income to the funds was in excess of the rate of inflation.

1126 cases were considered during the financial year: 884 of these were ex-ATS: 232 were serving and ex-WRAC and 10 were ex-QMAAC applicants. The total reflects an increase of 108 cases over the equivalent period of the previous year.

The amount spent on grants was £186,538 against £170,000 in 1988/89.

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. 93% of servicewomen who subscribe now covenant their donations. The amount recovered from the Inland Revenue from covenanted donations amounted this year to £29,555.51.

The Trustees approved a donation of £10,000 to the Army Benevolent Fund. The Army Benevolent Fund provide Annual Supplementary Allowances to seven ex-servicewomen who are suffering particular hardship. The Trustees of the Army Benevolent Fund also approved grants for 23 ex-servicewomen where there is a shortfall in Nursing Home expenses.

The Funds are providing 161 television sets and pay for 139 television licences under our Television Rental Scheme - a cost to the Funds of £19,642 for the year. This service is offered to selected elderly women who are to some degree housebound, who live alone and are dependant on their television for company and 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 may be sent to selected families who are pleased to have extra woollies for their children. Special thanks must go to Major Margaret Atwood and Mrs Drew of Canterbury Branch.

EXAMPLES OF CASES ASSISTED

An ex-QMAAC Private, aged 97, who served in the First World War, was hospitalised due to a fractured arm, leg and nose. As doctors recommended convalescence, the Green Howards, (her husband's regiment) and our funds each granted £250 to enable her to spend two weeks recuperating in a Swanage guest house.

An ex-Lance Corporal aged 75, who served in the ATS for eight years, now lives alone having given up her career over thirty years ago to nurse ailing parents and sister, all of whom are now dead. After she had been burgled twice, a grant of £450 was made to install a burglar alarm system to allow her peace of mind and increase her security.

An ex-Sergeant, aged 74, who served in the ATS for five years, suffers from Motor Neurone Disease. As she is totally physically disabled a first grant of £100 was made for a telephone help line. A subsequent grant of £500 was made towards the cost of an orthokinetic chair as she is unable to sit up or lie down unaided.

An ex-Corporal, aged 64, who served for three years in the ATS suffers from Multiple Sclerosis. Her husband gave up his work to care for her as she was confined to a wheelchair. Although access to the garden was possible, there was no hardstanding for the wheelchair. The Royal British Legion Women's Section, The Helena Trust, The Royal Army Ordnance Corps (with whom her husband had served) combined with ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds to make a grant of £612 for a small patio.

An ex-Private, aged 40, who served in the WRAC (Regular) for eighteen months, and the WRAC (TA) for two and a half years, suffers from the progressive disease Behcet's Syndrome. Despite being confined to a wheelchair, she copes with bringing up her two children, and running her home. She is active in fund raising for charities and recently made a sponsored parachute jump for this purpose. To enable her to have a respite care holiday the Army Benevolent Trust made a grant of £350 with a contribution of £50 from our funds.

An ex-Corporal (divorced) who had served in the WRAC was diagnosed in her thirties as terminally ill. As she was concerned about how the costs of her funeral might affect her eight year old son, she was assured that a grant would be made for this purpose. During her hospice care she received a grant of £150 to help improve the quality of life, and on her subsequent death, her funeral was paid for at a cost of £780.

SOME LETTERS RECEIVED

"May I first thank you for your letter regarding my mother. More over I am very grateful for your continued assistance towards the nursing home fees. As I know you will understand it is a continuing worry how to raise the finance for the nursing care of my mother who is now extremely frail. I have today learned that the fees have once more been raised which obviously is causing me great concern."

(The applicant was a member of the Women's Legion Army Service Corps during The First World War).

"I would like to thank you very much for money sent to me from the Princess Royal's Memorial Fund. It has been a great help to me through the year and I enjoy my television. Many thanks for cheque received for Christmas. It is a great help to me."

"With the help of SSAFA I have today received a grant from you to enable me to move. As I was alone in Lancashire and had suffered a fall, my people in the south were anxious that I should try to move nearer so they could help me. Thanks to your help I have been able to do that and I am now settling in. It is very hard to put my thanks into words but I really am very grateful to the Benevolent Funds and what you have done."

"I am writing to you on behalf of my wife to thank you for your generous grant to help with her expenses while she has been in hospital for eight weeks awaiting heart surgery. I am praying to God that all goes well. My wife is unable to write so once again thank you very much."

"May I say a very grateful thanks for the cheque which is paying for my new bed. Its a big worry taken off my mind. I know there used to be a Benevolent Fund when I was in the ATS but I never thought I would need or get any assistance from it. So once again many thanks for your assistance to me."

"Just a few lines to let you know how grateful I was on receiving help. I have been a widow now for 13 years and health not too good. I am glad I wore the ATS uniform. I knew we wouldn't be forgotten."

PRINCESS ROYAL'S MEMORIAL FUND

Princess Mary, Princess Royal, was Controller Commandant of both the ATS and WRAC and held the appointment for 24 years until her death in 1965.

At that time the Council of the WRAC Association sponsored the raising of a Fund in her memory to be called The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund. Its purpose was to provide a permanent memorial to Her Royal Highness in the form of a rose garden at Guildford in the WRAC Centre. This was achieved at minimal expense and the bulk of the monies raised was put to charitable use 'to the relief of distress among needy and handicapped ex-service-women of all three Corps by means of long term maintenance grants outside the scope of the ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds.'

The Benevolent Funds make one off grants which do not qualify as income for tax purposes but a long term maintenance grant would be treated as such, and might affect other benefits being received by an individual ex-servicewoman. The scale of grants has therefore been kept within the 'disregard' level set by the Department of Social Security."

All the money raised when the fund was instituted in 1965 plus money raised by a special appeal in 1980 to commemorate the 80th Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother our Commandant-in-Chief, and other donations received have been treated as the capital of the fund and invested by the Trustees. Only the income from these investments is used to make grants.

A weekly allowance of £5 is paid to ex-servicewomen who qualify. In addition to the criteria set out above of being 'aged and handicapped' the Trustees also look for ex-servicewomen who are living alone and on a low income. Although it is a weekly sum the allowance is paid by cheque in quarterly instalments on 1 January, 1 April, 1 July and 1 October with Christmas bonus in November.

This year there were 60 annuitants at the start and 57 at the end, but this disguises the fact that sadly six died

during the year and three new cases were accepted by the Trustees.

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

Many branches of the Association make donations to the Benevolent Fund and these are acknowledged in the report. As income to the Funds will decline markedly when the serving officers and servicewomen rebadge all branches are urged to consider the Benevolent Fund or The Princess Royal Memorial Fund when raising money for charity or disposing of excess funds.

BRANCH NEWS

ACCRINGTON The Branch was set up in February of 1990. A few of the members from Bolton Branch felt that a local Branch had a good chance of succeeding. The first meeting was attended by nine members, and a campaign of recruitment was instigated so that our membership has now reached 21.

Our initial meetings were mainly concerned with fund raising, recruiting and finding a reasonably permanent meeting place. The Branch now meets on the First Tuesday of each month at King Street Working Mens' Club.

We have had talks on the work of the Samaritans, crime prevention and personal protection. The Lancashire Fire Brigade told us about safety in the home followed by a visit to the Fire Station.

Our Christmas Dinner was held at Accrington & Rossendale College. The catering students produced an excellent meal enjoyed by all who attended.

Three members are knitting squares to raise money for the Memorial Chapel to the Accrington PALS. Six of us have been invited to take part in the Lancashire Age Concern 50th Anniversary Parade to St John's Church, which is to coincide with the opening of PALS Chapel.

Our Branch Secretary attended the Annual General Meeting in Glasgow. Following her report we, as a Branch, would like to thank everybody concerned in Glasgow for the warm hospitality that was shown.

BOLTON 1991 got off to a good start with a visit to a Pantomime in Manchester. We also did our bit during the Gulf Crisis by 'adopting' a nursing sister of the QARANC, Captain Valerie Goode, who was serving in a Field Hospital. We were able to send out two parcels containing toiletries, boiled sweets and other commodities which were much appreciated. Fortunately it was all over very soon and we were pleased to hear that Valerie had arrived home safe and sound.

In March we visited Pilkington Glass Museum, at St Helens, which proved to be both interesting and enjoyable. In April five members travelled to Glasgow, and enjoyed a fantastic weekend. Our thanks to all those concerned with the organisation which resulted in such a memorable occasion. One member, Mrs Betty Hamer, had been awarded a Certificate of Appreciation, unfortunately she was not well enough to attend, but the Branch Secretary received the Certificate from Brigadier Field on her behalf.

We have visited Wigan Market and the New Galleries shopping mall. After visiting Fleetwood Market we were entertained to tea by one of our members who lives in Cleveleys. It was a perfect summer day and we enjoyed an al fresco meal in the garden, thank you very much Gladys.

On May 6th eleven members attended a Service at the War Memorial in remembrance of VE Day along with other

ex-service organisations and Mrs Eva Lowe laid flowers from the Association.

We were saddened to learn of the death of Mrs Winnie Killoran who had been an associate member from the early days of the formation of the Branch. She was a keen and generous fund raiser who will be sadly missed. Our next important event is our Dinner Dance to mark the tenth anniversary of the formation of the Branch to be held in October. We have invited the Mayor and Mayoress of Bolton, and Captain Goode QARANC.

We seem to have packed a lot into these few months as well as holding our monthly meetings.

BRADFORD The day had arrived – the one we had waited for, saved for and talked about for so long, and as we waited for the coach we were as excited as a bunch of kids on their way to the seaside.



Bradford Branch Standard Bearer Mrs N Kendall.

Having been Standard Bearer for our branch for nine years I was thrilled to be asked to carry the 'Old' ATS Standard at the Service and march past. Everyone was delighted for me, and my family, who take a lot of interest in my activities, were very proud. In fact my 15 year old grandson was heard to remark that his Gran was now famous.

On Saturday afternoon, along with other Standard Bearers, we had a rehearsal at the Cathedral under the eagle eye of RSM Smith, a patient man who at the end said he was very pleased and hoped we would be as good on the day.

It was fun to go to dinner that evening and forget the 'ordeal' facing us on Sunday. It was a lovely dinner which we all enjoyed followed by an excellent cabaret.

Sunday morning, and the sun was shining – a good sign. By now my stomach was churning. You wouldn't expect me to be nervous after doing it for so long, but the thought of that long aisle at the Cathedral, with the eyes of all the dignitaries and congregation on us, was daunting.

The slow march at the advancing age of 60 plus is not easy, but it passed without a hitch and after a beautiful service we were soon outside to be transported into the City for the parade and march past. After all these years the sound of the band and the order 'Quick March' never fails – it's as if we are girls again, creaking bones forgotten, stepping out with pride. A truly grand sight and an unforgettable memory to savour for a long time.

The whole weekend was a huge success and I would like to thank the Glasgow branch for all their hard work, we do appreciate it. We would also like to offer a big thank you to the people of Glasgow for their hospitality and kindness.

May I include one or two anecdotes on the trials of being a Standard Bearer. Lots of people don't know what we are, or what we stand for, and I get curious looks and remarks when I stand at bus stops on my way to and from parades. One particular day a man and his little boy had been eyeing me for quite some time and finally his curiosity got the better of him and he blurted out "are you something to do with the Brownies?" I will not print my thoughts, but I'm sure you can imagine. One learns to be patient and tactful.

The second occasion was on a bus and after looking at my black standard case was asked if I was going to play snooker. Another time someone thought I was going fishing!! I am proud to carry the Standard for my Branch and hope to carry on for a long time yet, or as I tell them, as long as my legs will carry me.

CHESTER In 1991 we celebrate the 10th anniversary of our branch which continues to grow. We have had a very busy year including a successful jumble sale, and we have also attended many parades including the Dunkirk Veterans 50th Anniversary.

Our AGM in November was well attended and later that month we held our Christmas dance at the Masonic Hall. A number of other associations were present and all agreed that it was a great night. We rounded off the year in December with our Christmas dinner at the Plantation Hotel.

In April nineteen of our members attended the Grand Reunion in Glasgow. Here we must give a huge vote of thanks to our colleagues in the Glasgow branch for making the reunion so memorable. It made us feel very proud to see our Branch Standard with the many Standards on parade in the Cathedral.

DUMFRIES This branch here at Drumfries in Galloway has had a good year with four new members joining.

Our programme of events started with an outing in June on a wonderful sunny day to Loch Lomond also visiting Luss where the TV soap opera 'Take the High Road' is filmed. A Beetle Drive in November made the magnificent sum of £253.00 for the Erskine Hospital, and the WRAC Benevolent Fund.

At our Christmas Lunch in December members elected to send proceeds of the Raffle, to the Daily Telegraph Gulf Fund. In March Major Jo Dunn, Commander WRAC Scotland, was the guest of honour at our Annual Dinner. She gave a splendid speech and opened our eyes to the new world of the WRAC.

This all culminated in the Grand Reunion in Scotland where two of our members Miss Lilian Hodgson BEM and Miss Grace Gibson were presented with Certificates of Appreciation for outstanding service to the WRAC Association.

FIFE AND TAYSIDE Last Autumn it was our Branch's turn to host the AGM of the Scottish Area. The venue was Perth, and the large turnout enjoyed a buffet lunch before getting down to the business of the afternoon.

The Grand Reunion in April proved to be a most enjoyable occasion. The Branch was well represented at all the functions, including the dinner and entertainment on Saturday evening, and the Civic Reception on Sunday. We succeeded in being lucky in drawing two of the prizes in the raffle. Those of us who attended morning service on Sunday were very impressed by the beautiful Glasgow Cathedral.

23 members attended the Branch AGM at the end of April when the Secretary read aloud a letter of thanks from the Administrator of Erskine Hospital for our donation. The meeting was a lively one, with reports on the event and speeches at the Grand Reunion, followed by the Hon Treasurer's report and news from the sections' representatives of their social and fund raising activities. It was unanimously decided to make a donation of £50 to the Queen Victoria School, Dunblane, (for the Sons of Scottish Servicemen and women) and to subsidise a lunch for members at our autumn get-together. The meeting closed amidst a buzz of conversation – nothing changes!



Lady Martha Bruce welcomed HRH The Princess of Wales to Scotland.

In her capacity as the Queen's Deputy Lieutenant for Fife, the Branch Chairman, Colonel The Lady Martha Bruce OBE, TD, welcomed the Princess of Wales when she arrived on a visit to RAF Leuchars in March.

GLASGOW On behalf of all the Scottish branches we were delighted to welcome members of the Association to Glasgow on the occasion of our Grand Reunion. Thank you to all who wrote so many lovely letters expressing their joy and delight in all the events from the Ceilidh on Friday evening to the Cathedral Service and reception in the City Chambers on Sunday.

Many friendships were renewed and new friends made. Now we are looking forward to meeting again at the next Grand Reunion. All good wishes from Glasgow to all Association Branches.

GRIMSBY Great Grimsby held its annual dinner dance in January attended by 219 guests including local dignitaries and from the bordering town of Cleethorpes. It was most successful with the Tombola prizes excelling previous years, and the dancing and singing of war-time favourites enjoyed by everyone. Our membership continues to increase as do the invitations from other associations to participate in their activities. The Grand Reunion in

Glasgow was splendid – thirty nine of our ladies and three from Hull went by coach and enjoyed every moment of the programme. The organisation by the Glasgow association was first class – their hospitality and the friendliness – overwhelming. The Anniversary of VE Day, May 8 coincided with our monthly meeting and we not only entertained fifteen ladies from the Hull branch, but we had the added pleasure of a visit from Lt Col R E Cornwell WRAC (Chairman) and Col (Retd) F M Cook (Vice Chairman) of Northern Area. Our own Chaplain the Rev Wendy Isam was in attendance and lead the prayers. After sitting in on our meeting Lt Col Cornwell confirmed that unlike London's bid to host the Olympics – we had succeeded in our bid to host Northern Area's 1992 AGM. Now we can plan and look forward to greeting the Northern members next Spring. A sumptuous buffet had been provided by our ladies and after refreshments and a photocall our VIPs said goodbye. Raffle prizes were then drawn and bingo was played.

On Sunday morning our standard bearer Grace Talbutt and escorts attended the Mayoral Sunday Parade and supported the new Mayor Mrs Kathleen Bell. After a heart-warming service we paraded back to the Town Hall for a reception headed by the magnificent Police band. A visit to Burghley House in Stamford and a trip around the lovely old town was our midsummer treat; a beautiful finish to an exciting six months activities. Despite contributions to various charities including the Princess Royal's fund and to our Chaplains Church, St Andrews, in recognition of the sterling work they do in providing meals for retired citizens and gifts of flowers to our sick members, our Treasurer is still able to report a healthy balance of funds. We send greetings to all Association members and hope they have as happy and fulfilling a programme as we do in Great Grimsby.

together with friends from the Southampton and Portsmouth Branches – pity the weather wasn't too wonderful, however, the warmth of the occasion made up for the lack of sunshine.

Mrs M Hall from Ryde has celebrated her 92nd birthday. This remarkable lady volunteered to join the WAAC in 1917 and was posted to France almost immediately. Mrs Hall shows great interest in our activities although she can no longer attend meetings. She looks forward to reading *Lioness* and our Welfare Officers regularly visit both Mrs Hall and her sister.



Mrs M Hall (née Duncan) in 1917/18 . . . and more than 70 years later.

We had a stall at Bembridge Street Fair in May and with crowds of holiday makers and local residents our white elephant and home produce tables were soon emptied. Added to these main events we have enjoyed coffee mornings, cream teas and lunches all held in members' homes.

GREATER LONDON It is a long time since we requested a space in *Lioness* but we must record the fact that our secretary, Mrs Pat Carpenter (late of The Tower Of London!) unfortunately had to leave us after almost ten very successful and rewarding years with the branch. At a farewell party at our February meeting Pat was given a cheque in appreciation for all the hard work she had done for us over the years and everyone wished her well at her new home near York.

The branch meets only three times a year due mainly to the scattered location of our members but we are a thriving branch and well attended with, on average, 80 regular attenders. We can always muster a fair number for any outside activity and 20 of our members have just enjoyed the Glasgow Reunion which was first class in every sense of the word.

ILFORD Another milestone was achieved by Ilford branch on the 4th May when we were able to celebrate the 80th birthday of Edith Crump. Edith has been a member of Ilford branch since 1946 and, during the years when our membership was very small, loyally supported us. I am happy to say that our branch membership has increased these past few years and from a total membership of 39, 16 members were able to be present to celebrate with Edith.

Among our members, mainly ex ATS, we have two ex QMAAC both well into their 90's.

ISLE OF WIGHT Since our last report we have had an extremely busy time – our Halloween Party last October was an outstanding success – all attended in fancy dress – very ingenious too! We were welcomed at the home of Vera and her husband and we had a right 'Royal' time. For the first time we held a Christmas Fayre at Bembridge Village Hall all the produce being made and supplied by our members including coffee and hot mince pies served immaculately by several of the husbands – on fatigues as well! On 12th December we had our usual Christmas lunch when we were pleased to welcome our Padre and sister also many friends including several members of the Burma Star Association. Our faithful friend and member Mary Robbins acted as auctioneer at our raffle, her wit and humour completing the Christmas spirit!

What a wonderful Reunion in Glasgow – eighteen of our members travelled up to Scotland and sampled the fantastic hospitality of the Scots and Glaswegians in particular. Our very sincere thanks to you all for making our stay so very memorable – well done to you all.

Our birthday lunch held at Ventnor on the 8th May was again most enjoyable and we were so pleased to welcome as our special guest Mrs Kate McGregor from Corps HQ



Pat Carpenter at her "Farewell Party".

Brigadier Gael Ramsey MBE ADC Director WRAC visited us in late April and spoke of the forthcoming changes within the Corps and it is good to know that our traditions will continue into the future.

MANCHESTER After our winter break we met again in March and in spite of wild and windy weather about twenty of us braved the elements. Some of us who were destined for the AGM in Glasgow arranged a meeting to get travel tickets from the bus terminal. We finalised details over a pub lunch!

After a pleasant trip we arrived in Glasgow to pouring rain. A rapid change at the hotel and then off to the Ceilidh getting wet again on the way! The wonderful reception given us by Glasgow branch dispelled all feelings of dampness and created the perfect start to a wonderful weekend.

The fun continued on Saturday when we woke to bright sunshine and set off by coach to either Loch Lomond or the magnificent Burrell collection. Stopping for coffee and a visit to a conservation village on the way, we bought souvenirs, sampled fudge and shortbread, courtesy of the proprietor who gave us a calendar before we left. We returned from our trips in time to buy souvenirs at the City Chambers, and grab a quick lunch before the AGM and tea.

Not much time was left to return to our hotel, wash change and arrive at the Albany Hotel for dinner and entertainment. It was quite a sight to see all eight hundred members linking hands and singing 'We'll meet again' and 'Auld Lang Syne' before dispersing that evening.

On a perfect Sunday morning we made our way to the Cathedral for our service from where we were ferried by coach to the assembly point for the March Past. WO1 Smith and a CSgt from the Queen's Own Highlanders kept us firmly in line. With the band playing, standards flying and medals proudly worn we set off. The salute was taken by Bailie Patricia Chalmers. After the parade WO1 Smith called for 4 cheers, three for the ATS and WRAC and 1 for himself! Then we had to forgo the civic reception and head back to Manchester after a memorable weekend. Our May meeting was taken up with looking at all the snapshots taken in Glasgow. We held our annual dinner on May 21st and welcomed friends from Rochdale, Stockport, Bolton and other local branches. We had a super night, lots of raffle prizes and memories, then a mad dash for taxis or the last bus home. We are getting quite used to this

gadding about but at our June meeting, we all took a deep breath whilst we planned our itinerary for the months ahead.

NEWCASTLE Here is a snap of some of our members at Glasgow Cathedral before the Reunion service. 'What happened next?'... A lady asked the group to step back and Mrs Peggy Binns slipped on the cobbles and fell. To get herself up she pulled on to the piper's kilt! She had to be taken to hospital and a badly sprained foot was diagnosed. Lt Col R Cornwell WRAC who was on the train going home, made arrangements for Peggy to be met at the station with a wheelchair. We thank her very much for her kindness and friendliness, and British Rail were very good with their help. Peggy has nearly recovered from her ordeal and can smile about it all.

Despite this we enjoyed our wonderful weekend.



The smile before the fall!

PLYMOUTH On looking back, 1990 was a very energetic year for the Branch, wherein we visited our Truro members, and enjoyed Nan Heyward's hospitality at her home in Coad's Green, Launceston. Our anniversary Service of the Branch Standard dedication was held at the Church of St Katherine on the Hoe, The Royal Citadel, courtesy of CO 29 Cmdo RM. We helped 29 Cmdo with their fund raising by manning a stall at their Open Day, held at Plymouth Brickfield Sportsground. Our Standard and Escort paraded at the Federation of ExServicemen and Women's Annual Festival of Remembrance Service at Plymouth Guildhall. We enjoyed our Jumble Sales and Bingo evenings, and, as a fitting finale, and by the good offices of RSM Gillet, 29 Cmdo, we particularly enjoyed a very happy Christmas Party at the Citadel. Our Chairman, Lenora, and the Committee, formed a chorus line, and with great trepidation and gusto, gave forth with the following ditty, composed by Mary Bifers, to the tune of 'Even though the darkest clouds are in the Sky':-

Back in 1941, when we were young
We joined the Army - we did have fun
Back in 1941 when we were young - so young.

We saw the Doc, we took the oath, we signed for kit,
The cap was tight - the shoes didn't fit
Back in 1941 when we were young.

Tuesdays on the Square, the Sergeant swore that she would shoot us,
She said she'd see for sure each Tuesday never, never would be
Our Good News Day -

Back in 1941, we did our best, we stood the test
And you know the rest,
Back in 1941 when we were young.

Now its nearly nineteen hundred and ninety one,
We're not so young - but we still have fun,
Cheers! and all the best for 1991.

PORTSMOUTH We have had a very busy year. Four members attended the reunion in Glasgow, a most memorable weekend, when our Secretary was most honoured to be presented with a Certificate of Appreciation. During the year we have held a coffee morning, a Cheese and Wine party and had a stall at the Red Cross Fair which raised funds to enable us to send donations to the WRAC Benevolent Fund, The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund and the Star and Garter Home. The highlight of our year, however, was the laying up of our old Standard and the Dedication of the new one on Sunday 9th June at St Mary's Church. We were supported by members from Southampton and the Isle of Wight branches, and other ex-service Associations. 20 Standards and their members were on parade and the Royal British Legion provided 3 parade marshalls who were a great help with all the arrangements. Our VIP guests were the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Portsmouth and the Vice President of the Portsmouth ex-service Association. They took the salute with our Chairman. It was a beautiful service and a good parade although the day was very windy. Tea for 200 guests was held at the Royal British Legion Club and it was an afternoon which will be long remembered by us all. A member's husband made a video of the parade and part of the service giving us a permanent record of the occasion. A party of us went to Guildford on the 4th June for the visit of HM The Queen Mother and our treasurer, who had made an ATS Kneeler, was fortunate enough to meet Her Majesty when she stopped to admire the display. It was a lovely afternoon enjoyed by us all. Our sincere thanks to everyone at HQ who worked so hard to make the afternoon such a success.

SALISBURY The Salisbury branch continues to flourish and the past six months have been busy and, as usual, lots of fun. The Christmas Party ended 1990 in fine style with an excellent lunch at the Playhouse Theatre and included a Grand Draw. The first three meetings of the year were at lunchtime and members enjoyed a most interesting talk on local village churches, a Silent Auction, and for Easter a chance to show cooking and millinery skills with Easter cakes and bonnets. Then it was April and for six members the long awaited trip to Glasgow for the Grand Reunion, some by rail and some by road. The two day visit became for most of us five most enjoyable days. Having spent Friday seeing Glasgow in pouring rain, including taking refuge in the Cathedral for which we were most grateful as it was a most worth while visit with our own excellent guide. Saturday was a glorious sunny day for our coach trip to Loch Lomond and the surrounding area, then a quick dash to the City Chambers for the AGM. We were very proud when our Secretary, Mrs Joan Morgan, went to the stage to receive her certificate for all her hard and willing service over a very long period – Well done Joan. To end a grand day came the Reunion dinner – a super meal and great entertainment – we all sang very well! Sunday and the Cathedral Service and March Past – both beautifully arranged and greatly enjoyed, and then to complete a wonderful weekend the Reception given by the City. We now look forward to the rest of the summer with a barge trip on the canal near Marlborough; a pub lunch at the Green Dragon at Alderbury and a visit to our friends at the Wincanton Branch. Best wishes to everyone and happy holidays.

SHROPSHIRE We left Shropshire early on a warm Spring morning for our train to Glasgow and the WRAC Association Grand Reunion. As we got North of Lancaster, clouds gathered and on arrival at Central Station the

'Scottish Mist' we had viewed on approach was coming down in stair-roads. Undaunted we made our way to our respective hotels and guest-houses to a warm Scots welcome. Those with enough energy left paddled their way from taxi to Ceilidh, afterwards going to bed tired, wet but happy.

Thank goodness the weather next morning was dry although cold as we renewed friendships and made new ones at the City Chambers gathering prior to the AGM. In the evening there was never to be forgotten Dinner and entertainment at the Albany Hotel, the end of which came too soon with the singing of Old Lang Syne and the nostalgia that that song provokes.

Our Standard Bearer (Mrs L Bowyer) was accorded the honour of carrying the Corps Standard for the Cathedral Service and the subsequent March Past in George Square. A memorable occasion which merits hearty congratulations and sincere thanks to the members of Glasgow Branch and their helpers for the venue and organisation plus hard work which went into making the event so successful.

SOMERSET After a 'recruiting tea party' put on by members who live in the Burnham on Sea area, it was very nice to welcome 6 new members to the Branch. We have had our usual Theatre evening, Annual Dinner, Skittles evening, Supper party and Lunch party so far this year. Some of us visited the WRAC Museum in June. July is the time for our Bar-B-Que evening, which usually attracts a large gathering. September is our last meeting before the AGM in October, when we shall have a tea party combined with an Audio Visual slide show about Canada, put on by our Chairman.

It is with great regret that we announce the death of our oldest member, Mrs Frances Stark, on 19th May at the age of 95. Mrs Stark was a member of the WRAF during the First World War. She then joined 40 Coy ATS in October 1938 with the Regimental number W/7. Mrs Stark attended our Branch meetings up to the age of 90 and was a most widely travelled and very interesting member of the Branch.

SOUTHAMPTON Our monthly meetings started in January with a Bring and Buy of those unwanted Christmas presents; always good for a little fund raising. With bitterly cold weather and the promise of snow in February few members were expected, so that when 15 turned up we were amazed and a game of bingo was enjoyed by all.

At the March meeting a member's husband gave a cookery demonstration, including a roast chicken dinner, the various foods being our raffle prize. On a sad note for us we presented a farewell gift to Mrs Daphne James who was returning permanently to Australia.

In April 35 of us attended our Annual Dinner, same menu, same place, but enjoyed that much more each year. Two days later four of our members went to the Grand Reunion in Glasgow, and what a grand time we had, even the perpetual rain of the previous two weeks stopped for us with continuous sunshine from the Saturday onwards making the Loch Lomond trip incredibly picturesque. There was so much friendliness every where we went and it was obvious Glasgow branch had put so much work into making the Grand Reunion such a great success. Many thanks to you Glasgow.

The month of May was more active than usual for in addition to our usual meeting which included Handmade and Homemade items for sale, we were again invited by the I.O.W. branch to their 6th Annual Lunch in Ventnor on 8th May overlooking cliffs and the sea. Six of our members

went along enjoying the sea trip, the coach trip and then to an excellent meal and welcome from the I.O.W. members.

On the 23rd May 20 of us went by coach to Richmond to visit the Royal Star & Garter Home for disabled servicemen and women. Not really knowing what to expect we found ourselves thoroughly impressed with the occupational facilities, the caring and interest given to the residents, also to the very warm welcome given to us by all concerned whilst on tour of the Home. A lovely old building, once a hotel, situated in beautiful surroundings. A highly recommended day out. We were also happy to meet one lady who was in the ATS and another from the FANYs who now live there.

On Spring Bank Holiday Monday we had a stall at a Fair held by the Samaritans. Our profit of £87.00 is a great boost towards our aim to be the owners of our own Standard, and all fund raising efforts are currently geared to this end.

In June we are entertaining members of the WRENs to an American Supper plus a talk on 'Overland to India'.

Sadly in February we lost one of our long standing members Mrs Joan Pook who will be greatly missed.

SWANSEA The Swansea branch of the ATS and WRAC Association have enjoyed a very busy and varied programme of events this year. Our meetings are very well attended and we have recruited two new members.

In March we were the guests of The Lord Mayor of Swansea, councillor Colin Hammacott, for tea and Welsh cakes at the Swansea Guildhall. We went to Glasgow in April for the WRAC Association Grand Reunion. The accommodation was excellent and soon after our arrival we proceeded to our evening entertainment which was first class. The menu was excellent and everyone was in agreement that the evening went far too quickly. We visited the impressive Glasgow Cathedral on the Sunday morning before saying our farewells to the 'Granite City'.



Branch Members with the Lord Mayor of Swansea.

We were on the road again in May when we travelled to Brecon to be warmly welcomed by Major Walters and her staff with a good 'cuppa' and biscuits. That evening after a few drinks and a lovely meal we had a jolly good 'sing song', just like the 'good old days'. The following day we paraded to the cookhouse for our breakfast and viewed the artistic murals which were painted by the Italian POW's. We then boarded our coaches to visit the Sennybridge Ranges and stopped for our 'haversack ration' lunch, before travelling reluctantly back to billets to resume our journey home. All our members send their thanks to everyone at Brecon for a most enjoyable time.

WEYMOUTH and PORTLAND We have had two highlights recently - the first being the Grand Reunion at Glasgow, a

truly happy occasion, so very well organised. The second was our visit to Guildford on 4th June, for the opening of the Museum by the Queen Mother, our Commandant-in-Chief. Fifteen of our members were privileged to attend, and it was a day long to be remembered.

We continue our usual round of bi-monthly meetings, with business evenings, 'entertaining ourselves' evenings, plus very popular Bring and Buy Sales to boost funds. We also had our annual dinner at a local hotel in March.

Two members attended the Mayor-making ceremony and others went to the Civic Service for the new Major. Our outgoing Mayor and Mayoress had a thanksgiving service for their year of office and some of us went to that. The remembrance Day services at Weymouth and Portland were well attended and wreaths were laid at both Cenotaphs.

Sadly, two members have died this year - Mrs Nell Mitchell, who was a tireless worker for the mentally handicapped, and Mrs Una Buyce who lived mostly in America. She joined the ATS over fifty years ago and attended the Golden Jubilee Reunion, her own 50th anniversary. We miss them both very much.

New members are also welcomed, some are transferred to other Branches so our membership remains stable.

WINCANTON and BLACKMORE Currently we have 30 members, and continue to hold monthly meetings in Wincanton Memorial Hall on the 4th Tuesday.

We celebrated our first Birthday in July with a garden meeting, and were pleased to have Colonel Roulstone as our guest of honour, and eight members of the Somerset branch.

Ten of us joined the Remembrance Sunday march through Wincanton before laying our wreaths.

One of the local hotels was a venue for our Christmas lunch this year.

Only one member was able to attend the Glasgow Reunion, but we are all looking forward to hearing her accounts of the event!

A Coffee Morning in April enabled us to send £140 to the Red Cross for relief work in the Gulf.

WIMBLEDON Wimbledon branch after holding their pre-Christmas party looked forward to meeting in February, to hear all about SSAFA from a local representative. Alas and alack the snow came down and our meeting was cancelled. All is not lost as we will be welcoming the lady from SSAFA in June.

In March we had an illustrated talk on 'London's Coffee Houses and Gentlemen's Clubs' and in April held a successful Bring and Buy sale which will help us to meet our charity donations.

A speaker from the 'Wimbledon Guild' came to our May meeting. This is a local charity helping those in need, running a luncheon club, meals on wheels, a day centre and has accommodation for elderly people unable to manage on their own.

1991 has been a sad year for the branch - in January our Treasurer since 1983, Miss Betty Poulson died after a short illness, followed in April by one of our Founder members, Miss Kay Gregson, who had served the branch as Treasurer, Chairman and President and both she and Miss Poulson will be greatly missed. Members from the branch attended both of their funerals to pay their last respects and sent donations to nominated charities in lieu of floral tributes.

WOLVERHAMPTON We continue to meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month above the offices of the Voluntary Sector Council, Wolverhampton.

We started the year on a sad note with the death of Betty Nutt, our Treasurer of many years. She will be very sadly missed. We lost another member, Sylvia Marchant, who will also be sadly missed.

Ten of our members went to Glasgow in April for the Grand Reunion and a great time was had by all. Many thanks must be given to Glasgow for the organisation of such a successful weekend.

Many congratulations to two of our members, Mary Davies and Mary Beeston, on being awarded the Certificate of Appreciation for their contribution to the Association. We are very proud of them. Betty Nutt had been awarded the Certificate but unfortunately died before it could be presented.

We have had an interesting year so far with Mary Davies showing us how to make those fancy carrier bags for holding our Christmas presents and in June we have Mrs Gwen Healer coming to show us how to tackle our alterations and crocheting.

Two members went to Guildford on 4th June when the Queen Mother was visiting to open the museum.

**WHEN MAKING A WILL
PLEASE REMEMBER THE BENEVOLENT FUNDS.**

Correspondence

Nora Brown (née Burrows) in the USA wishes to have news of Joan Ruddock (nee Brown) of South Shields late of the 303 TSBO section in Brussels 1945. Contact Lily Hartt (nee Garnett) 13 South Road, Manchester M20 0PR Tel No: 061-448-1284 with any information for onward transmission to the U.S.A.

Mrs B Tondziel, Honorary Secretary of the Middlesbrough branch of the Association has sent a photograph of some of her members with the Mayor of Middlesbrough Mrs Marje Barker, a new member of the Branch.



**Branch members with the Mayor Mrs Marge Barker:
Mrs Mary Wilson, Mrs Bette Davies, Mrs Vera Verrell,
Mrs May Fixter, Mrs Mary Reed, Mrs Lily Beach,
Mrs Irene White, Mrs Betty Tondziel,
Miss Cecilia Bagot, Miss Margaret Chambers
and Mrs Ann Conlin.**

A letter from Miss Kay Smith of 33 Ridgway, High Ercall, Shropshire TF6 6BY requests news of members of the Sergeants' Mess at the Ordnance Depot at Donnington between 1961 and 67. Miss Smith was the WRAC Orderly room Sergeant and has recently contacted WO2 Audrey Merton. They seek news of WO2 (CSM) Amy Humphries, WO2 (RQMS) "Tilly" Tellick and WO1 Lily Brooks. They would also like to hear from WO1 (RSM) "Dilly" Norton whose last known address was Stafford and who served at the Drivers and Clerks Training school at Yeovil in the late 1950's and any other members of the Sergeants' Mess there.

Mrs S Johnson of Flat 40 Homeorr House, Felix Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk, IP11 7EH thinks that she recognised the photo sent by Michael Howard, published in the last edition. She thinks that the group shown are some of the original ATS members of the Berkshire platoon. Mrs Johnson (nee Brightwell) served with the 2nd Berkshire platoon between 1941 and 45, and thinks that she recognises Lily Hunt, Dot Hatcher and Mary Owen. The platoon formed before the outbreak of war and recruited in the Bracknell, Wokingham and Ascot area, proudly wearing the Berkshire flash on their tunic sleeves. Any more ideas?

Our old friend Eric Taylor is preparing another book following his highly successful publications 'Women who went to War' and 'Forces Sweethearts'. He would now like to hear from any of our members/readers who have recollections of the many happy hours spent rehearsing and performing shows as part of a concert party to entertain troops. So if you were a performer or simply a member of the audience, please write to him at 21 High Oaks, York YO3 0LB.

In seeking copy for his latest book Eric Taylor will no doubt receive great help from Mrs Gay Clark who served with "The Bombshells" concert party during World War 2.



"Cpl" Gay Clark.

In spite of many health problems for both herself and her husband Gay Clark continues to wear her ATS uniform at all sorts of fund raising activities and when entertaining the elderly. Keep up the good work Gay, and lets hope that you are both much better soon.

We receive regular requests from those seeking to purchase ATS uniform, sometimes complete, but more often hats and badges. Mrs Winifred D Rice, 47 Cranston Ave, Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada E2K 3M7 would like to have an ATS field cap for sentimental reasons. Please contact her direct. Spare badges and items of uniform can be sold to collectors to raise money for the Museum or the Benevolent Funds.

Mr A W G Portch, now living in Exeter, would like to contact or hear news about J Comd Monica Campbell-Vaughan. They were stationed together with 1 and 2 Bns ASTU at Beckett Park, Leeds in 1943. Miss Campbell-Vaughan married an officer called Goldsmith who was killed in Burma. Mr Portch knows she married again but does not know the name. If you can help Mr Portch in his search he is happy to be contacted on 0392-68756.

Mr J Wallace of 27 Borthwick Road, London E15 1UD is trying to trace Becky Simpson, Ex ATS, sister of Arthur Simpson who served in the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry stationed in Belfast in 1942.

Mrs P J Davies (née June Hooper) would like to hear from anyone who was in HQ Platoon D & CTCD Figsbury Bks, Salisbury between mid 1952 and January 1954, or 140 Provost Coy WRAC Sloane Square London between January and October 1954. She also wonders if anyone remembers what became of Anita "Mac" McCosh who was at H & D Richmond Camp, Kingston at the same time. Please write to Mrs Davis at 59 Studland Close, Millbrook, Southampton SO1 9BA.

Miss Cecilia Pritchard of 96 Ruskin Park House, Champion Hill, London SE5 8TH read with interest Mrs M D Gales article "still-in-step" (Lioness 1/91) which triggered memories of her own pre-OCTU, WOSB and the severe winter of 1947/48. Miss Pritchard was posted as a staff car driver to Regents Park Bks and she later drove ambulances in Belgium in 1945. After writing to Lioness in 1977 Miss Pritchard was contacted by former comrades Jean Silcock, Jan Butler and Sheila Hooker who lives in New Zealand now. Happily Jean, Jan and Cecilia met at St Paul's and the Barbican in 1988.

Mrs E A Carden (née Forth) has written from 24 Ramillies Road, Sunderland SR5 5JE in the hope of tracing former colleagues who served with her in May 1945 at Pontefract Trg Centre, Castle Donnington, Raby Castle or Chilwell. Vera (Bobby) Burnip who was a bridesmaid at her wedding in 1948, and last heard of 15 years ago, Gwyneth Rees, Ruth Cleggy, Lily Sims and Anne Phelan were among those remembered.

Mrs Cath Skelhorn (née Power) of 4 Pershore Ave, Grimsby, South Humberside would like to thank Mrs Alice Patrick (née Roberts) for mentioning her name in Lioness 1/91. Mrs Skelhorn looked for Mrs Patrick in vain at the Glasgow Reunion, but hoped to see her at Bridlington in June. If any other 590 Bty Sperry predictor girls stationed at Bedfont Middlesex would like to contact Mrs Skelhorn she would be delighted to hear from them eg Sue Booth, Alice Claxton, Beatie Moore, Joyce D Brown, Rene Wilby and Marion Atherton.

Miss Molly Clay, 14 Malthouse Close, North Street, Wincanton, Somerset, BA9 9TA would like to hear from anyone who joined the 1st Suffolk Company, ATS at

Ipswich in early 1939. The Company was called up on 3 Sep 39 and posted to Shoeburyness, attached to the 22nd Medium & Heavy Training Regt RA. She would also like to contact anyone who served with the Int Corps at Beaumanor and Bletchley Park in 1941 - 1944. She is in touch with several others, one of whom is trying to arrange a Reunion.

Mrs A Robinson (née Stirk), 39 Jesmond Road, Harrogate, N. Yorks HG1 4SA has sent a photograph taken at No 4 TPO Squad, ATS Signal School, Denbury near Newton Abbot, Devon, during March 1946. The names of those pictured were: Samways, Smith, Ryan, Johnstone, Piggott, Stirk, Skinner, Rowe, Roberts and Cpl Davies whilst "Scotty" is missing from the group. Mrs Robinson remembers tossing up with Piggott for the last two postings. "She went to Cowley, and I went to Bulford". Mrs Robinson wonders what happened to all her former comrades.



**No. 4 TPO (Teleprinter Operator) Squad,
ATS SIGNALS SCHOOL.**

Mrs Daphne Neech (née Whittingham) wrote a charming and appreciative letter after reading her last edition of Lioness. She marvels at the memories of so many who can recall quite clearly names and camp details from nearly 50 years ago. She says that her recollections are mostly of a happy fuzz of enthusiasm and activity spiced with anticipation. She would be so pleased to hear from anybody who was at Glen Parva around August 1946 to the March-Out to Guildford, and anyone who remembers the early days back at Guildford between December 1946 to July 1947 - from any company and any aspect of those carefree days of settling down to a peace time service. Finally please write if you can recall Tanglin between mid 1947 and mid 1949. Mrs Neech has MS and deals with all correspondence very successfully with her word processor and promises to answer all letters. Although she remembers faces and nicknames the only full names that she can recall are Cpl Doreen Brady (Trg Coy) and Cpl Janet Walsh (FAELF) both from Liverpool. Mrs Neech looks forward to many letters to 58 Cathwaite, Paston, Peterborough, Cambs PE4 6BE.

Mrs Joan Colburn (née Hatton) has written from 88 Hillmorton Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B74 4SG to say that she was interested to read about the gentleman who was an orphan in Droitwich in 1943 or 1944. "I was in the ATS attached to the Royal Army Pay Corps in Droitwich from 1942 to 1946, stationed first at

the Chateau Impney, then the Royal Worcestershire Hotel, and finally the Norbury Hotel, which is now council offices, I believe. I remember the orphanage on the main road on the way to Worcester, and recall that at Christmas time we invited all the boys to the Norbury for a party. We all gave a small amount to provide them with a gift. I knew some of the girls did occasionally take the boys out for an afternoon. Perhaps this bit of information will jog someone else's memory?"

Mr Clifford White, 9 Thornton Road, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead, L63 5PN is seeking news of two ATS friends. Sgt J Knight and Cpl Dorothy Jolley, both of whom were on the pre OCTU cadre at Fenham. Cpl Jolley took part in the Christmas concert (1942) dressed in despatch riders' uniform. If you can help please contact Mr White at the above address.

Mrs Margaret Fox (née Price) has written from 23 Bartlett Drive, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH7 7JT with a photograph of "B" troop 464 (M) HAA Bty RA. Mrs Fox would be happy to hear from anyone from 464 Bty where she served with her twin sister Jean (Bunty) who rose to the dizzy heights of Corporal!



B Troop 464 (M) HAA Bty RA.

Mrs Dorothy M Merson has written to say that last Autumn 40 ex-members of 576 Coy (CMT) RASC, who were stationed at Bracondale, Norwich in the late 1940's held a reunion in Norwich. It is hoped to hold another early next year, and we would like to hear from any "576" members who would be interested in attending. Please contact Mrs Pat Peggs (née Fielding) Cornerways, 61 Brian Ave, Norwich, NR1 2PD.

Mrs Desiree Volley (née Aisthorpe) of 58 Beverley Crescent, Great Grimsby DN32 9TD was prompted to write on the 50th Anniversary of the sinking of HMS Hood with the loss of 1400 men on 24 May 41. On that very day whilst at RAOC Records in Leicester she went on a cycle ride with ATS friends from Portsmouth. Coming upon a lilac tree they set about gathering the beautiful blooms in spite of some misgivings and returning to camp decorated the dining room. As tea began that night the news broadcast, to everyone's horror, the loss of the Hood. She has never cut lilac again. On a happier note, later that year Jo Aston and Mrs Volley acted as bridesmaids to their friend Pat Newell, when she married. Mrs Volley would like to hear from any of the Pompey girls eg Sgt Vi White and sister Cynthia, Mary Lardy, Peggy Pope, Gloria, Boots, Toots, Robbie or Muriel from the North and any others who are members of the Association. Please contact her. Jo Aston, her special friend was, sadly, murdered when posted to Egypt later in the war.

Miss C J Lawrence has written from 23 Trinity Close, The Pavement, London SW4 0JD wondering how many ex ATS are still using their issue (1940) hair and clothes brushes? Miss Lawrence is, and although the hair brush is minus a few bristles it has a lot of use left in it and is the best hair brush that she has ever had. That's quality for you!

Mrs S Passmore, Mount Pleasant, Chiseldon Wilts SN4 0NA writes that the Local History Group is researching the history of Chiseldon, also known as Draycot Camp, Wilts with the intention of producing a book. The Camp was first set up by the Army in 1914 and continued in use until the 1960's. They would be pleased to hear from anyone who was there and has memories, photographs, documents or any other information about the Camp. Even the smallest scraps of information would be welcome.

Mrs Mary Hodgson (née de Vail) of 21 Firsbrook Close, Whitmore Deans, Wolverhampton WV6 0UD has recently returned with her husband from the 'Rats of Tobruk' World Reunion held in Sydney, Australia. During her stay she met Mrs Alice Durkin (née Wairing) ex ATS, and later in Perth on Anzac day she met another ex ATS, Mrs Betty Simpson, from Rockingham, WA. She marched with the AWAS, 'a lovely lot of girls' who are celebrating the 50th Anniversary of their formation this year.

Reading the last edition of Lioness reminded Mrs Irene Barden (née Davies) of a cook, Ivy Agar, with whom she attended a course at Honiton in March 1942. After her training Mrs Barden served with 556 H.A.A. Regt RA. If anyone remembers Ivy Agar please contact Mrs Barden at No 7 Duralls Cottages, School Lane, Ashurstwood, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 3RH.



68th Eastern Pl, H Coy ATS, Hyderabad Bks, Colchester 11 Jun 45.

Mrs Winifred Elkins (née Stephens) has sent a photograph taken on 11 June 1945 of the 68th Eastern Platoon of H Coy ATS, Hyderabad Bks, Colchester, Essex commanded by Sub F A Rockall. If you are pictured here, or served with the Platoon please contact Mrs Elkins at 109 Mercer Way, Romsey, Hants SO51 7PN. She would love to contact Trixie Seemark, Mary Daley, Nora Foley or Beryl Barson.

Mrs Isobel 'Pippen' Henry (nee Kerr) recently visited Corps HQ with her husband during a trip to UK. She served with 1 War Office Signal Group between 1943 and 1945 at Queen Anne's Gate, and she would like to hear from former comrades. Please write to her c/o Post Office, Currumbin Beach, Queensland 4223, Australia.

Mrs Doris Higgins (née Wright) served in 236 HAA Regt from 1942–1946 in Glasgow, London, Burham-on-Crouch and Belgium. She would like to hear from any of the radar operators from those days. Please write to her at 126 Victoria Road, Horwich, Bolton. B16 5PA.

PDF Compressor Free Version

Mrs B Humphries lives in the Royal Star and Garter Home in Richmond, Surrey, TW10 6RR. She wrote recently about some of her memories of Blackdown Camp, Hants during the early part of the war. The highlight of their social life was a fancy dress ball when she and a friend, Rusty, arranged all the costumes for their group. They were very varied, with some in evening dress, one having a medieval theme, Hungarian national costume, a Tin Soldier, Red Indian but the eventual winner wore a towelling outfit depicting, "Miss Palmolive". Miss Humphries went as "Taboo" the Elephant Boy but sadly her facial dye ran in the heat. In spite of two officers' attempts to rectify matters with burnt cork, the effect was lost and at about 10 pm our writer left the dance in disgust.

BOOK REVIEWS

Changing Step by Jill Beatty

Published by Christian Focus Publications Price £2.95

I taught Corps History to WO & NCO courses in the "old days" of the WRAC College in Camberley 1978–80. Part of the course material was a film which (apart from giving the instructor a much needed breather!) made me proud to be a member of a Corps with such a courageous and positive heritage. But it is experience and spirit of individuals which really makes history live.

This book by Jill Beatty (ATS/WRAC 1941–52) does just that. Part of her story was given in the Lioness in 1988. This is the whole story to date – and what a story! It was intensely personal, very honest and gives fascinating insights into several "sorts" of lives. Anyone who has served in the ATS/WRAC in the past, present (!) or women in the Services in the future will find it an excellent read. But the ingredients are universally interesting, including as they do – love, laughter, war, death, fear, more love, pain grief and a Christian faith that works. Yes this book is overtly Christian, but not threateningly so. It is a "warts & all" book which touches the whole of life and also brings a challenge to think on what *real* life is all about. I thoroughly recommend it to all who want a meander down Memory Lane and also to any who are suffering stress, pain or grief. This book will point you to an unfailing source of strength, hope and comfort.

May I make the plea that the new women in the Army do not forget the Army of Women who paved the way and set the standard. May the history you make be as courageous and positive as that of your "ancestors"!
MISS MARGARET KING (Major Retired WRAC)

"The Wearing O' The Khaki by Pat Williams Burr

Published by Excalibur Press of London Price £4.95

"The Wearing O' The Khaki" is an account of a young girl's wartime experiences during the years 1939–1946. Its fascination lies in the extreme contrast between the teenagers of today and those young people who grew up in the years of World War II. These words were written in the introduction to this excellent little book which reflects the thoughts emotions and reactions of young women, who from all walks of life came together with a common

purpose. Whatever the job, and however tedious, there was humour to carry them through. Pat Williams Burr trained as a driver – taught by a hefty Sergeant who exhorted them to "show it who's master!" I laughed out loud at the description of her first battles with the internal combustion engine, but in spite of one hilarious, near fatal hiccup, she prevailed.

The Girls Behind the Guns by Dorothy Brewer Kerr

Published by Robert Hale Price £13.95

"The Girls behind The Guns" is a fascinating book, dedicated to ATS Kine-Theodolite operators, giving an authoritative insight into the world of those mathematically able young women.

The task of the "kine girl" was to achieve better weapon control for anti-aircraft guns after their poor showing in the London Blitz. The use of radar added to their success and later in the war they tracked the first of the V2 rockets, calculating their launch sites.

This book is not without its lighter side as one learns a little of the "off-duty" times and the comradeship which abounded during World War II. One is also made aware of the many types of girl, from every background, brought together with the common aim of defeating the enemy.

We share, finally, the joy and excitement of V E Day in Holland and the knowledge that through the sacrifice and strivings of so many Britain was, again, safe.

On Target by Vee Robinson

Published by Verity Press Price £4.95

"On Target" is a well produced and reasonably priced book which follows one group of ATS from their first day together in a Heavy Anti Aircraft Battery to their last, when the battery was disbanded following the defeat of Germany in 1945. Not allowed to join the Land Army Vee Robinson was employed at the local Daimler works, where aero engines were manufactured; but when the first ATS were employed with Ack Ack, she knew exactly where she wanted to be.

Her vivid description of her service is a most enjoyable read and gives to those, who were not there, a real insight into the rigours of life on a gun site. The role of the ATS with the Gunners has not been forgotten as the WRAC Museum has, beside the superb model of a gun site, the silver gun presented by General Sir Frederick Pile on the disbandment of Ack Ack Command in recognition of the splendid achievements of the women who served with the Royal Artillery.

PERSONAL COLUMN

PERSONAL COLUMN CHARGES: Four lines £6.00. Additional lines 90p each. Non-members 50% extra. Those leaving the service may advertise items of uniform for sale free, as there is a great demand for such items especially from TA officers. Write to the Editor at Corps HQ.

FOR SALE Officers No 2 Dress Jacket Size 34" Chest – £30. Three Barrack Skirts Size 12 – £20 each. Forage Cap and Badge Size 58 – £30. Mess Dress Size 12 – £50. Contact Tel No: 0635 200091 evenings.

FOR SALE Officers No 2 Dress Uniform Size 12 Height 5'5" vgc £50. Tel: 0980 631194 (days).

FOR SALE Officers Mess Dress Size 14 Height 5'8" £75. No 2 Dress (Jacket and 2 Skirts) Size 14 Height 5'8" £50. Contact Jill Trainor on 0252 616448.

FOR SALE Officers Mess Dress £50. Officers Great Coat £50. Officers No 2 Dress Uniform £50. One Jacket £20. All items to fit Size 14 Height 5'4". Tel: 0522 730779.

FOR SALE 2 Barrack Skirts £10, £5. No 2 Dress £30. To fit size 10/12 Ht 5'5". 3 Mess Dress Pips and 1 Set Collar Dogs. Contact Tel No: Main Building (07121) 87116, Weekends (0590) 679812.

FOR SALE Officers Mess Dress Jacket, as new, Size 14 £110. Contact SO3 WRAC, HQ BAOR, BFPO 140.

FOR SALE Officers Uniform: Mess Dress Size 14 (small) 5'6" £50. Mess Dress Size 12 5'4" £50. Greatcoat Size 12 5'4" £50. 2 x No 2 Dress Size 12 5'4" £40 each. Forage Cap Size 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ £10. Contact Mrs Nicolson 043 684 2224.

WANTED Officers No 2 Dress, and Mess Dress for Height 5'4" Bust 34", Hips 35". Contact Lt K Milledge 6 Hull Road, Cottingham, N Humberside HU16 4QB.

WANTED Officers Mess Dress Size 12/14 Height 5'9". Contact Mrs S Shepherd, 53 Speldhurst Road, London W4 1BN.

LONDON GAZETTE

Birthday Honours

BEM

Staff Sergeants: S A Dicks, E D Feest (V), L J Wyllie.
Sergeant L E Lilley.

Service Awards in Ulster

BEM

Staff Sergeant S Fryer.

Operation Granby Awards

MBE

Warrant Officer Class 1 C A M Rowat.

BEM

Staff Sergeant S E Edwards.
Sergeant D Richardson.
Corporal J P Ford (V).

PROMOTIONS

Regular Army

Captains: K N Thurlow, A E Munro, F T West.
Lieutenant L E Callow.

Short Service Commissions

Captains: H M Graham, D J Bell, K L Daly, J P Heron,
K M Shears, I S Stewart, N G H Vickers, B J Taylor,
J Collis, S M Wood, J M Deans, J C Belcourt,
L M Derben, V S Bright, P A Quigley.
Lieutenants: S C Goodwin, C T Almonds, Z J S Almonds,
K L Bulgin, J Hutchinson, J K Medley, J Naylor,
B A Nicholls, S J Loftus (née Hale), K A Baxter,
L R Dickson, J Hart, S V Roberts, M Young.
Second Lieutenants: S J Hale, L I Jones, G A Murray,
F S Pennell.
Late Entry Lieutenants: K B Kay, A M Platt, E M L Fearon.

Short Service Volunteer Commissions

Major P M Huggett
Captain S P Coulthard
Lieutenant S P J Hood
Second Lieutenants: L Moore, D A Sinson, S V Kerr,
J S Campbell.

RETIREMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Regular Army

Majors: P M Simpson, J A Freebairn, R D Patrick.

Short Service Commissions

Captains: G M A Rodgers, A J Girffiths, C J de Vos,
C A Nicholson, S E Davies, N J Marshall, S H Hennah,
S A Hickinbottom, P L Smith.

Long Service and Good Conduct Medals have been awarded to:

Warrant Officer Class 1 A T Powell-Smith.
Staff Sergeants: S Gray, M K Higgins.
Sergeants: J M Ford, Y J Graham.

BIRTHS

SIMPSON On 19 February 1991 to Pepita (née Hollingsworth) and Keith a son (George Harry).

SIMMONDS. On 1 May 1991 to Bridget (née Quinlan) and Gavin a son (Guylee Eric).

SAPPHIRE WEDDING

PLUCK-DUNLOP On 9 March 1946. Major Douglas F Pluck, Royal Artillery to J/Comd Sheila Dunlop ATS. Present address: Pemberton House, 2 Dove Close, Harleston, Norfolk, IP20 9LR.

RUBY WEDDING

BRIDSON-GARMAN. On 28 July 1951. S/Sgt Frank Bridson to Sgt Phyll Garman. Both RPO Canterbury. Now residing at 4 Coxhoe Road, Billingham, Cleveland. TS23 3BL.

OBITUARY

ADAMS. Miss M L Adams of Peterborough in January 1991. ATS/WRAC.

ANDREWS. Mrs K Andrews (née Horton) of Birmingham in December 1990. ATS.

ASHTON. Miss Olive Ashton of Warrington on 14 April 1991. Capt ATS WRAC/TA.

AULD. Miss N A Auld of Glasgow on 5 January 1991. ATS.

BENNETT. Mrs Helena M Bennett (née Bott) of Wolverhampton in February 1991. Pte ATS.

BENSON. Miss N Benson of Strachur in 1991. Pte ATS.

BLACKETT. Mrs Mollie Blackett of Tweedmouth in March 1991. Sgt ATS.

BOWBLY. Miss Agatha Bowbly of Liphook in 1991. S/Comd ATS.

BROWN. Miss E M Brown of Edinburgh on 10 June 1991. ATS.

BUYCE. Mrs Una V Buyce (née Winter) of Michigan, USA on 27 February 1991. Sgt ATS.

CARBERT. Mrs Amy E Carbert (née Cotterall "Cottie") on 7 January 1991. WAAC/ATS.

CARR. Mrs Elaine Carr (née Jones-Davies) of Norwich in January 1991. Cpl ATS.

CHANDLER. Mrs C Chandler (née Clague) of Douglas, Isle of Man on 24 April 1991. Cpl ATS.

CHAPMAN. Mrs A Chapman (née Little) of London in 1990. ATS.

CLARK. Col (Retd) D P Clark MBE BA (née Chandler) of Walsham, Norfolk on 4 June 1991. WRAC.

CLARKE. Miss Dorothy Edith Clarke of Warwick on 31 March 1991. ATS.

CLARK THOMAS. Mrs Dorothy Clark Thomas (née Atkinson) of Kingsbridge. ATS.

DARBY. Mrs Beatrice Darby of Darwen, Lancs on 26 January 1991. ATS.

DAWSON. Mrs Gladys M Dawson of Coventry on 2 April 1991. WAAC/QMAAC.

DICK. Mrs Rita Dick (née Laverick) of South Shields. ATS.

DURRANT. Miss Lily Durrant (née Storey) of Liverpool on 13 February 1991. ATS.

EDWARDS. Mrs Ivy Edwards (née Brayshaw) of Wadebridge, Cornwall on 8 February 1991. ATS.

ELLIOT. Mrs Freda Elliot (née Beckwith) of Gorran Haven on 1 April 1991. Sgt ATS.

ELLWOOD. Miss A M Ellwood of Abbey Home in 1991. QMAAC.

FINDLAY. Mrs N Findlay of Newcastle-upon-Tyne on 22 December 1990. ATS.

FRASER THOMPSON. Mrs D Fraser Thompson of Pulborough on 9 May 1991. ATS.

GOODWIN. Mrs Margaret (Maggie) Goodwin (née Sims) of Mallorca, Spain on 25 January 1991 Major WRAC.

GREGSON. Miss A K Gregson MBE of Wimbledon on 18 April 1991. ATS.

HALL. Mrs E E Hall (née Jones) of Cleaton Moor in January 1991. Pte ATS.

HARDING. Mrs Anne Harding (née Coady) of Amersham in February 1991. L/Cpl ATS.

HEANEY. Brig S A E Heaney MBE TD BA of Edinburgh on 1 February 1991. ATS/WRAC.

HEMINGWAY. Miss J Hemingway of Shipley in 1990.

HOE. Mrs E M Hoe of Fulford in February 1991 Lt WRAC TA.

HUNT. Mrs Doris V Hunt (née Millard) of Salisbury in March 1991. Pte ATS.

HEWITT. Mrs A Hewitt (née Close) of Whitehaven in January 1991. Pte ATS.

HUTSON. Mrs Thelma Hutson (née Criss) of Hove in February 1991. Pte ATS.

JOHNSON. Mrs Christina J Johnson (née Box) of Leicester on 30 November 1988. ATS.

KELLY. Miss C Kelly of Glasgow on 16 April 1991. CSM ATS.

KENNY. Miss M K Kenny of London in January 1991. Pte ATS.

LOASBY. Mrs Sheila Loasby (née Juliand) of Leicester on 3 May 1991. WO1.

LYNAS-SMITH. Mrs Ina Lynas-Smith of Caernarfon on 27 October 1990. ATS.

MARCHANT. Mrs Sylvia Marchant of Wolverhampton in 1991.

MCLEOD. Mrs M J McLeod (née Grainger) of Middlesbrough in December 1990. Pte ATS.

McMILLAN. Miss Catherine McMillan of Edinburgh in 1991. ATS.

MITCHELL. Mrs Nellie Alexandra Mitchell (née Page) of Portland, Dorset on 12 November 1990. ATS.

MURRAY. Mrs Josephine Mary Murray OBE of Brecon, S. Wales on 4 March 1991. ATS.

NESS. Miss Doreen Ness of Willerby in December 1990. Sgt ATS.

NUTT. Miss Betty Nutt of Wolverhampton on 9 January 1991. Cpl ATS.

O'REILLY. WO1 (RSM) R O'Reilly of South Shields in 1988. ATS.

TRIBUTE



Brigadier S A E Heaney CB MBE TD BA

Brigadier Sheila Anne Elizabeth Heaney who died on 1 February 1991 was born on 11 June 1917 in Liverpool the daughter of a consultant surgeon. She attended Huyton College and then Liverpool University graduating in 1938. Brigadier Heaney also took an engineering course at Loughborough College of Technology. In January 1939 she joined the newly formed Auxilliary Territorial Service as one of the first two subalterns in Liverpool.

She had a long and distinguished career with wide experience and served overseas in Egypt and East Africa as well as attending the United States Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas. In East Africa in 1945 she was Officer Commanding the ATS clerical group and in the Middle East served with the Palestine Group of the ATS.

She returned to the United Kingdom in 1948 and became DAAG AG 16 at the War Office from November 1948 to January 1951. She returned to this Branch as a full Colonel from June 1967 to June 1970. Her command appointments included 1 Independent Company WRAC from 1955 to 1957, 140 Provost Company WRAC from 1957 to 1959 and the Officer Training Wing at the WRAC School of Instruction from 1961 to 1962. Her staff appointments in the UK besides the two tours in AG 16 included GSO 2 (Mobilisation) at Western Command, WRAC 1 on the Director's Staff, a tour at the WRAC Records office and ADWRAC at Northern Command.

With her sociological background, wide Corps experience and keen brain Sheila Heaney became Director of the WRAC in the rank of Brigadier in 1970. She guided her Corps extremely wisely and efficiently through her three year tour of duty during which time she was an honorary Aide de Camp to Her Majesty the Queen.

On retirement she settled in Edinburgh where she worked with a variety of voluntary organisations. Her major commitment was to the WRVS where she was for 3 years the organiser of Edinburgh District and then Chairman for Scotland for 4 years. Her other great interest was St Columba's Hospice to which she devoted much time and service. It was as a patient at St Columba's that she spent her last days in the care of friends.

WHY WEAR A POPPY?

"Please wear a poppy", the lady said,
And held one forth, but I shook my head.
Then I stopped and watched as she offered them there,
And her face was old and lined with care;
But beneath the scars the years had made
There remained a smile that refused to fade.
A boy came whistling down the street,
Bouncing along on care-free feet.
His smile was full of joy and fun,
"Lady" said he, "may I have one?"
When she'd pinned it on, he turned to say:
"Why do we wear a poppy to-day?"
The lady smiled in her wistful way
And answered: "This is Remembrance Day,
"And the poppy there is a symbol for
The gallant men who died in the war."
"And because they did, you and I are free –
That's why we wear a poppy, you see.
I had a boy about your size,
With golden hair and big blue eyes.
"He loved to play and jump and shout,
Free as a bird, he would race about.
As the years went by, he learned and grew,
And became a man – as you will, too."
"He was fine and strong, with a boyish smile,
But he'd seemed with us such a little while
When war broke out and he went away.
I still remember his face that day.

"When he smiled at me and said good-bye.
I'll be back soon, Mum, so please don't cry"
But the war went on and he had to stay,
And all I could do was wait and pray.
"His letters told of the awful fight
(I can see it still in my dreams at night),
With the tanks and guns and cruel barbed wire,
And the mines and bullets, the bombs and fire."
"Till at last, at last, the war was won –
And that's why we wear a poppy, son".
The small boy turned as if to go,
Then said: "Thanks, lady, I'm glad to know.
"That sure did sound like an awful fight,
But your son – did he come back alright?"
A tear rolled down each faded cheek;
She shook her head, but didn't speak.
I slunk away in a sort of shame,
And if you were me, you'd have done the same;
For our thanks, in giving, is oft delayed,
Though our freedom was bought – and thousands paid!
And so, when we see a poppy worn,
Let us reflect on the burden borne
By those who gave their very all
When asked to answer their country's call
That we at home in peace might live.
Then wear a poppy! Remember – and Give!

Sent by Mrs E M Simson (née Dearlove)
from Australia.

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.

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