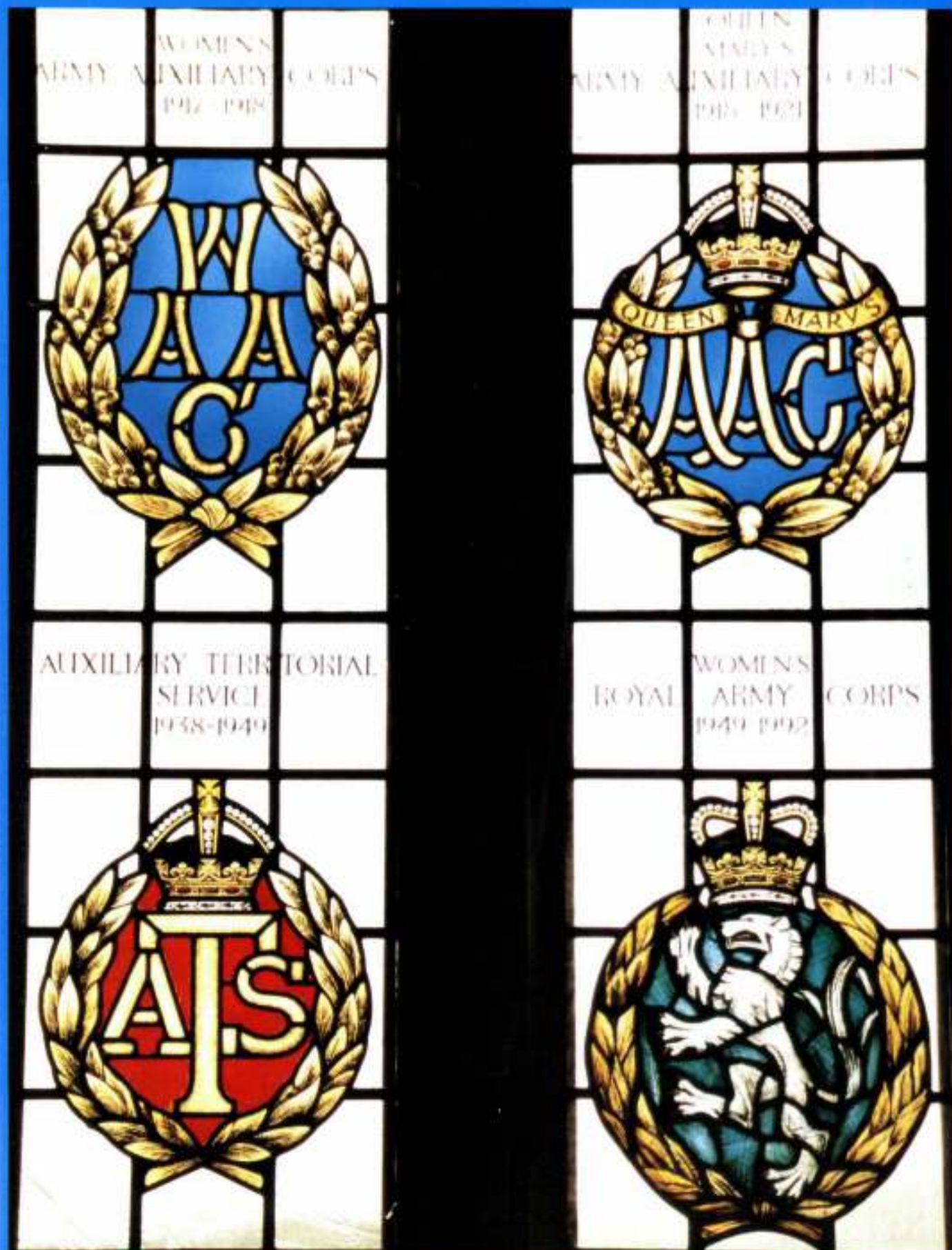


Lioness

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THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

REGISTERED UNDER THE CHARITIES ACT 1960- No 206184

Founded in 1919

Headquarters, WRAC Association, Block 10, AGC Centre, Worthy Down SO21 2RG

Tel: Direct (01962) 887570

ATN (727) 2570

Fax (01962) 887435

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HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF KENT, GCVO

VICE-PRESIDENT

Brigadier A Field, CB, CBE

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Mr M Mager

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General Secretary:**Honorary Treasurer:****Editor of Association Magazine:****Assistant Editors:****Typist**

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Mrs A H S Matthews

Cover Photographs "The Two Farewells"

Front Cover

Completed Window in Guildford Cathedral
(Photo courtesy John Hunt)

Back Cover

ATS in Mall on VJ Day
(Photograph: Michael Meadmore)

Member of the Association of Service Newspapers

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CHARITY COMMISSION

**WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY
CORPS ASSOCIATION**

The Charity Commissioners have made a Scheme for this Charity.

Copies can be obtained from them at
Charity Commission, Woodfield House, Tangier,
Taunton, Somerset, TAB 4BL
(reference DM-206184 A/1-SC)

EDITORIAL

I apologise for the late arrival of this edition of Lioness. The delay has been caused by the handover arrangements of the General Secretary and Editor. However that has now been accomplished and Major K. C. (Bill) Jay will take over the appointment on 1 March 1996. for a six month period. The future long term arrangements are still in doubt. Watch this space! I know that you will all give to Bill Jay the support and kindness which you have shown to me and for which I thank you.

AGC CORPS DAY 1996

The Annual Corps Day of the Adjutant General's Corps is to be celebrated at Worthy Down Near Winchester on Saturday 15th June 1996. The festivities will commence at 11.30 with a Drumhead Service. There will be stalls, static displays, fast food outlets and displays and competitions in the Arena. The day will close with a Band Performance by the AG Corps band.

Lunch and tea will be available at an inclusive price of £7.00.

If you wish to attend please complete the proforma below and send with your remittance.

To: HQ WRAC Association, Block 10, AGC Centre,
Worthy Down, Winchester, SO21 2RG

From

Post Code.....

I/We wish to attend the AG Corps Day on Saturday 15 June 1996 and enclose my cheque/postal order (made out to WRAC Association) for £7.50 per person.

I would be prepared to carry our Branch Standard or the Association Standard. (It would involve a 10.00am start for rehearsals).

I/We will travel by rail/branch coach/car.

Details of car are:

Make Colour Reg No.....

CONGRATULATIONS

Our congratulations go to: Brigadier Anne Field CB, Vice President of the Association on becoming a Commander of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in the New Years Honours List 1996.

Lance Corporal Joanne Raymond, formerly of the WRAC, on the award of the Queen's Commendation for Bravery.

Captain Jenifer Claire Dixon, formerly of the WRAC, on the award of the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service.

Captain Karen Anne Miller, formerly WRAC, on the award of the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Services.

WO II Teresa Alison Griffiths, formerly WRAC, on being made a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in the New Years Honours List 1996.

Sergeant Rachel Cooper, formerly WRAC, on being made a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in the New Years Honours List 1996.

Mrs Ethel Chandler of St Helen's Rest Home, 33 Mile Oak Road, Portslade, Brighton BN41 2PF on reaching her 100th Birthday on 2 August 1995. She was visited by the Mayor & Mayoress of Hove and a representative from the Redoubt Museum at Eastbourne on her birthday which was widely reported in the local papers. Her exploits with the WAAC and QMAAC were included in a book "Brighton Blighty" giving the exploits of local people in both World Wars.

Mr Steve Davies from the University of Glamorgan in Pontypridd. He has devised a programme from scratch for our new office computers to enable us to store all the Association membership records (and there are over 6000) on disc and use them to update payment records and (beware) identify those who have not paid their subscriptions!



Brigadier Anne Field CB CBE



Brigadier Field laying ATS wreath at Carlisle on VJ Day

HUNTLY

The Officers' Association country home in South Devon is situated in its own extensive landscaped grounds south facing over the Teign estuary and its elegance and style will appeal to the ex-officer of either sex.

It offers the comfort, security and peace of mind of a community while preserving the independence and privacy of its individual residents. It may be likened best to a well-run Officers' Mess. Each of the 38 residents has his or her own room, which may be furnished in whole or in part by the resident if desired. The spacious public rooms include a Dining room, Drawing Room, Library, Snooker Room, Ante-Room, two TV Rooms and each bedroom also has a TV aerial point (no licence fee payable).

Applicants should normally be between 65 and 80 years of age, have held a commission and should not be in need of special nursing care, though the staff includes nurses to deal with minor ailments.

Being supported by the Officers' Association the fees are very modest and do not reflect the high level of comfort and service provided.

For further details write or call:

**Assistant General Secretary,
The Officers' Association,
48 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JY
Tel: 0171-930 0125**

Registered Charity 201321

SHOPPING LIST

The Association Badge is available for sale from the WRAC Association HQ. These cost £2.00 including package and posting.

If Branches order from 10-20 badges they may deduct 5% from the cost.

For orders over 20 they may deduct 10% from the cost.

All cheques to WRAC Association please and sent to:

WRAC Association HQ
Block 10
AGC Centre
Worthy Down
Winchester
SO21 2RG



WRAC Association Badge

ENTRIES FOR LIONESS

Entries for Lioness are welcome but the following points should be noted when submitting items:

- a. Entries should be typed whenever possible (Modern scanning machines can copy direct without the need for re-typing/typesetting)
- b. Branch Notes, Obituaries, Golden Weddings etc should copy the format from earlier Lioness editions as far as possible. (This saves re-editing)
- c. Send original photographs. (Although no absolute guarantee can be given we do make every effort to safeguard and return photographs. While modern reprographic techniques are very good the fact remains that every time a picture is copied the quality goes down)
- d. Put captions to photographs (remember the 5 'W's Who, What, Where, When and Why). Indicate the position of people in the photograph eg, Left to Right, Seated/Standing, position in row from right or left looking at the picture or in relation to another recognizable person.
- e. Include maiden names or names at the time of the event as that is how you will be remembered.

Royal Cambridge Home for Soldiers Widows

82/84 Hurst Road, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 9AH

The Deed of Trust of this Home has recently been extended and it is now able to offer accommodation to all women (single or widows) who have served in the Army or the wives of soldiers who have been admitted to the Royal Hospital in Chelsea and who are in need, hardship or distress.

The Home is situated in its own very pleasant grounds near to Hampton Court Palace and a short stroll from the Thames. Every effort is made to maintain the dignity and respect of each resident.

For further details write to the Superintendent at the above address or telephone 0181 979 3788.

RE-DEDICATION OF ST ANDREW'S CHURCH SUNDAY 23 JUNE 1996

The Garrison Church of St Andrew's at Worthy Down is to be refurbished and re-dedicated to commemorate not only the 30th Anniversary of its original dedication but to incorporate the new arrangements with the advent of the Adjutant General's Corps. It will provide a home for the memorabilia of the antecedent Corps. It will house the Standards of the QMAAC, the ATS and the WRAC Association and contain Books of Remembrance. There are already ATS Kneelers in the Church.

The Chaplain to the Forces will conduct the re dedication on Sunday 23 June 1996 at 11.00 am. The Church is very small so the service will be relayed to a Marquee adjacent to the Church.

There will be a light buffet luncheon in the Community Centre following the Service.

If you wish to attend this event please complete the proforma below.

To: General Secretary WRAC Association, Block 10, AGC Centre, Worthy Down, Winchester, SO21 2RG

From.....
.....
.....
.....
.....Post Code.....

I/We wish to attend the Service of Re-dedication at St Andrew's on 23 June 1996.

I would be prepared to carry our Branch Standard or the Association Standard being lodged in the church (delete as applicable).

I/We will travelling by train/branch coach/car (delete as applicable).

Car Details:
Make.....Colour.....Reg No.....

ELEVEN YEARS AS GENERAL SECRETARY

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With Merryl Evans and the Statuette for The Queen Mother



Driving a desk at Guildford

FAREWELL

I retire from the post of General Secretary to the Women's Royal Army Corps Association on 1 March 1996 which is exactly eleven years to the day that I took up the post which was then titled Corps Secretary WRAC. At that time as well as the Association it included responsibility for the WRAC Museum, the WRAC Headquarters Mess, and Corps matters affecting serving soldiers. The ATS & WRAC Benevolent Funds were and still are a major part of the responsibilities of the post. I have been helped over the years by an enthusiastic, knowledgeable, friendly, co-operative, willing and efficient staff and I pay tribute to their dedication and hard work. It has been great fun to know you all and I thank you for allowing me to do a job which I have enjoyed and for your kindness to me. I thank you for the many messages of good wishes for my retirement. I hope that this photo montage illustrates what a great job it has been.

David Dunn, General Secretary



Barbican Reunion with Brig Nolan



With Mary Beeston at Telford



Annual General meeting at Victory Club 1992



1994 Grand Reunion Top Table



Surprised by the Queen Mother!



Surprised by a Signal Sergeant!

ELEVEN YEARS AS GENERAL SECRETARY

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With Her Majesty on Corps Day 1993



A cup of tea at Great Yarmouth



Examining Museum display at Guildford

"No place like home!"

When Princess Margaret visited Princess Christian Homes, residents were proud to show her their "homes from home".

The FORCES HELP SOCIETY tries to ensure that disabled and elderly ex-service men and women can stay in their own homes as long as possible. But when increasing difficulties with day-to-day living call for help to be at hand throughout the 24 hours, the Society aims to provide the best possible residential care, with equipment and staff to give the personal assistance needed, without loss of personal dignity, with companionship or privacy, stimulating activity or rest, as each resident chooses.

This quality of life has been made possible at Princess Christian Homes. Now the Society plans for similar residential care at its St. Vincents Home, Ryde, Isle of Wight. The necessary extension, refurbishment and installation of equipment is being carried out in stages. How soon the entire project can be completed depends on funds coming in.

Please support us now with donations and covenants and help our work to continue into the future with a legacy.



THE FORCES HELP SOCIETY & LORD ROBERTS WORKSHOPS

122 Brompton Road, London SW3 1JE

Tel: 0171-589 3243

Registered Charity No. 209753

VJ DAY in EAST AFRICA

by Barbara Kersley

I read with interest the "Lioness" (No 2) with stories and photographs remembering the VE and VJ 1945 celebrations and noted the absence of any reference to the ATS who served in Kenya, East Africa.

Both VE Day and VJ Day figure vividly in my memory.

I reported to Holding Unit at Radnor Place, Paddington from Embarkation Leave on 8th May 1945 VE Day so was able to enjoy the celebrations in London and the VJ celebrations in Nairobi.

The Orders received were that if the King announced that the War was over before 10.00pm (East Africa time) then the following day would be a holiday, but, if it was announced after 10.00pm then the following day would be a normal working day and the holiday would be the day after. Well, it was announced after 10.00pm and we celebrated! In fact 42 of us were put on a charge for coming in late on VJ night by Snr Cmdr Heaney (whose Obituary appeared in the Lioness in 1991).

What else do I remember about the VJ period? Sgt Jo Aston was murdered the day after VJ Day. She was Orderly Sgt in charge of the Liberty Truck that never arrived in Nairobi to pick up the girls. The African Driver was charged with her murder, found guilty and hanged.

Another coincidence was that the medical for demobilisation was performed by Capt Attlee (nephew of the Prime Minister) and when we arrived back in UK for de mob – our de mob officer at Paddington was Mary Churchill (daughter of Winston Churchill).

My East Africa posting was a very happy time. The only thing I couldn't understand was why there was no medal granted for service in East Africa.

THE CASTLE

by Mrs Vera Wilks (née Bund)

'Returned to Unit', rejected, sacked, banished, whatever term is used the meaning is the same. Not suitable, not wanted, not good enough!! But how did they know I was not good enough? We hadn't really started! I thought everything was going so well! What went wrong? What had I done? OR what had I not done? I hadn't upset anyone had I? Without claiming to be a paragon of virtue, I was not stupid or lazy, or careless, or dishonest, or discourteous. In fact in pre war days when applying for a situation meant producing "references", I possessed two excellent ones. So why? What was so obnoxious about me? Perhaps I was not nice to be near, and my best friends couldn't tell me? But being fastidious bordering on the pernicky, that definitely was not the answer.

It worried me, rejection was demoralizing, but without any kind of explanation it seemed worse, especially as I was the only one "sent down".

My mind kept going round and round the problem. It seemed incredible that just a week previous ten ATS girls at Graywood Hall were chosen for work at THE CASTLE. We were all clerical although recently I had been stationed in Wiltshire at a Command Supply Depot, working on a small telephone switchboard, where I confess to having had an unfortunate habit of cutting the captain off in the middle of his long phone conversations quite unintentionally of course. I swear that switchboard was bewitched! The poor dusty relic looked as if it had been there since the first World War – we hated each other on sight. There were days when all kinds of odd things happened, and the captain, usually a "pussy cat" was inclined to get a bit peevish with us, often going quite red in the face! So you could say that my efforts

as a telephonist left a lot to be desired but, when our company was moved South – whoever took my place at that crazy switchboard – she had my deepest sympathy.

Anyway, no-one in this part of the world would know about those little incidents. The work at THE CASTLE promised to be much more interesting and we were all looking forward to it. THE CASTLE was six miles away so of course we travelled to and from by truck.

My sojourn at THE CASTLE was so short that memories of the place itself are somewhat vague but I do recall vividly our arrival on the first morning. We stood there in the Great Hall gazing up at the huge stone walls with their tattered flags and banners of bygone battles and wondering about their history – hoping that someone would be able to tell us about them. We waited.

The vast floor space was entirely empty of furniture apart from a small lovely desk cringing in the far corner. Behind the desk was a burly Sergeant Major who was determined to ignore us. We waited. On our right there were two high stone archways completely filled in with glass panelling and we could see male officers working behind desks and long tables. Further round there appeared to be some smaller rooms, obviously for the "lower orders". We waited. In another corner there was a wide stone stairway and I never did discover where that led. We waited. No-one seemed to notice we were there.

But suddenly, from a small doorway on the horizon shot a chubby little Sergeant. Like Alice's white rabbit he was in a great hurry and looked very agitated. He glanced at his watch, he was late all right, looked rapidly left and then right as if crossing a busy road, spied us in the distance and made a bee line as fast as his little legs could carry him. The only thing about him that looked important, as far as we were concerned was the sheaf of paper attached to a clip board which he referred to frequently on his journey, so that by the time he arrived he must have known exactly where to put us.

Memory escapes me regarding the other seven ATS but three of us were ushered into a peculiar boot shaped room where we found two male NCO's already ensconced. One was a short cheerful Corporal with a wide grin, the other was a tall dapper Sergeant with a worried frown, and I got a fleeting impression that he was not very keen on a crowd of females invading his private sanctum. However, he mellowed visibly when he spotted the third "invader" bringing up the rear. Judy was very blonde, very pretty and as bright as a button – she could charm the birds off the trees!! That poor Sergeant didn't stand an earthly chance. She made an honest man of him inside twelve months! But that, as they say, is another story.

It took us a day or two to get organised and to find our way about. We found a splendid Nissen Hut NAAFI in the grounds where we could buy great slices of delicious apple pie – why do I remember that detail so clearly? Probably because we were always hungry in those days.

The atmosphere in the office was quite congenial. We all got on well together, except perhaps for the Sergeant who, normally affable and friendly always seemed a little "edgy", a bit curt when I asked for help with some query or had a problem of some kind. I noticed this, but it didn't bother me. Sergeants come in all sorts – some liked to show their authority over female NCO's. And then there was the Corporal, Tony, I caught a couple of his sidelong glances which I could not interpret at the time. It was only in retrospect that those little things become so much bigger. They didn't merit a second thought at the time.

There was so much to do – unpacking, sorting, listing, typing, filing, the usual office routine and all seemed to be going well. There was a certain amount of leg pulling and good natured badinage as you would expect in any mixed

personnel office, and the time went by quickly and pleasantly. Until the fifth day!!

It was a sunny warm September afternoon and we were all quietly beaver away, when into the office strode a tall Lieutenant, good looking sharp featured, rather like TREVOR HOWARD that type. He called my name and handed me a small buff envelope addressed to our Commanding Officer. It was to be delivered as soon as possible, and he turned on his heel and marched out again. Just for the record that was the first and only contact with any Officer that week.

The letter was marked "PRIVATE and CONFIDENTIAL" and hand delivered – what was this? Another war time romance? There was a lot of it about! Come to think of it, our CO was very attractive. I rather relished playing Cupid and on arriving back at Graywood, hurried into the Admin Office to hand the letter to her, and being nosey as well as naive I 'hovered'. The CO read it through, gave me a funny look and read it again. She was silent for a few seconds and then she said, quite abruptly "There is a vacancy in this office, I want you to start tomorrow morning. You are not to go to The Castle any more".

We believed, in those days that "ours is not to reason why....." – but I did, I reasoned why quite often, in fact some of my off-duty time was spent doing just that. It made no sense.

The other Corporal in Admin happened to be my friend and room mate, so we enjoyed working together but there really was not enough to keep two of us fully occupied and it took very little imagination to realise that the vacancy was nothing more than a convenient invention. On closer acquaintance I found the CO to be friendly and charming with a great sense of humour, but it took three weeks for me to pluck up enough courage to ask her out right why I was banished from The Castle. She just smiled, and tapping her pencil thoughtfully on the desk she said "As a matter of fact you were charged with Dumb Insolence". With that, she picked up her hat and walked quickly out of the office.

Now DUMB meaning speechless, at that precise moment I most certainly was, but INSOLENT! – me? Never!!! My friend had stopped typing, eyebrows raised and jaw dropped – to put it mildly we were both very surprised! Obviously from the CO's attitude the subject was closed, to pursue the matter seemed pointless, but I needed to know why I was in disgrace. Why was I not on a charge? Or demoted? or even reprimanded? Why the secrecy? For some reason my face didn't fit – just forget about the whole thing. "I couldn't care less" I said.

But of course that was not true, I did care, very much. What a sad little saga this is – the sequel becomes more cheerful. Not a lot but do stay with it to the end!

.....

A year or two after the war I was on holiday with my husband in Cornwall again and staying at the same hotel was an Ex-ATS Sergeant. You can imagine that we had plenty to chat about, and it came out in conversation that she too had worked at THE CASTLE – FOR TWO YEARS. I was too ashamed to tell her I had been "expelled" after only five days!!

She said how proud we should be of "our work" at THE CASTLE. Apparently the staff there had played a big part in the D DAY Landings – a lot of important planning had been carried out there. Of course it was all very hush hush she said, and she had even seen "Monty" there on two occasions!

Now I cannot vouch for the veracity of all that information but true or not it can be of no importance after all these years, but I believed her for she seemed to be a very sensible, intelligent down to earth kind of person.

As she was speaking something in my brain 'clicked' and the penny dropped at last! Of course! That was the reason! It wasn't my face that didn't fit – it was my name!

It was a German name, or so some one had told me years ago. As far as our family knew, we had no relatives or any connections whatever in Germany, all our fore bears as far back as we could trace (four generations) had all been born in Warwickshire or Worcestershire which surely made us not only thoroughly British but ENGLISH! The name was BUND. It certainly sounds German and I remembered it had caused many a frown in my single days. Long before the advent of 007 I had wished that second letter was 'O' instead of 'U'! I feel sure they were right, that, way back it was of German origin.

In the war years, at that particular time and place, and in those circumstances I could understand a name like that would be considered "unwelcome"! Had it caused another frown? Did the 'top brass' decide that perhaps it would be better to have it quietly weeded out? And yes, it would have been rather difficult to explain!

Well, that I believe is the solution to my little mystery – I only wish I had thought of it sooner!

Was that the answer? If it is wrong I shall never know now!! It was all so long ago.

THE OTHER STORY by Mrs Sue Crook (née Woolston)

On the evening of 7th October 1943 at the HQ site of 606 Bty in Perry Park, Birmingham a dance had been arranged. As I was to stay overnight, before my journey to Epping Forest on 8th, I decided to go into the NAAFI. I knew none of the girls so positioned myself in a corner and sat knitting some khaki gloves and watching the dancing.

I was surprised when Lt Crook asked me to dance and wondered why he was there. We had danced together before at the Stone Cross site but of course never more than two dances in one evening. Fraternising was not encouraged between Officers/Other Ranks. After several dances with other girls he again asked me and afterwards sat and chatted for 1/2 hour or so, over a bottle of beer! He jokingly remarked that I could make him some gloves – then off he went.

Due to the secrecy of my trip to London for the Royal March Past Lt Crook thought I was going on a course. I received a letter asking me to meet him in London – I suggested St Martins in the Fields (as our lorry would drop me there) when I replied to the letter, at an address in High Holborn. The lorry driver delivered it personally – and it was he who met me after an hour of waiting, to say that Lt Crook was not on leave until the following week, (my mistake!) But I had been invited to supper by his parents. I did not go. In those days one did not get involved with family – and what would I say? Besides, there was no time before joining my transport back to camp.

We met briefly during the course of duty in the following few days and arranged a visit to the cinema in Walsall – he travelled on the top deck of the bus – I on the lower, and later entered the camp separately.

On Thursday 28th the whole battery moved to Whitby Firing Camp and were billeted in a large hotel overlooking the harbour. Daily, we marched through the town and climbed the 199 steps, past St Mary's Church where we invariably rested at the halfway point, then continuing up past the Abbey to East Cliff where our practice took place firing at the 'sleeve' being towed by an Aircraft.

Bill and I met both Sat/Sun 31st evening and he told me he had to travel to Blackpool on Monday 1st November for a week's course and would be back Saturday 6th. He

wished to ask me something on his return? We were all kept busy that week – alternating our duties as usual with 'cookhouse fatigues' up on the cliffs or general cleaning duties in the Hotel when not firing. We were all far more experienced than when at our first firing camp in '42. As a No.1 predictor 'waitah' I found it exhilarating to watch the fuse dial and call 'Fire' for we had little real action in Sussex/B'ham.

Saturday 6th arrived – a brief evening meeting with Bill on his return and an arrangement to meet on Sunday evening, when we were to meet another RA Officer and the ATS Officer to go for a drink – then we would go to the cinema. We walked/talked first – then met the others and later to the cinema. It was afterwards as we walked along the harbour that Bill proposed marriage. Happily I accepted. He confessed that his intention was to do so earlier and celebrate with a drink but was afraid I would say 'no'.

It was obvious one or both would be posted if the CO found out. How could we escape when the Whitby moon shone brightly and my stripes were so well blanched after the Parade in London? A rumour was relayed back to me – Mr Crook had been seen with a Corporal. (Strangely there was another Corporal Sylvia who was with us). It was not me – relief.

Letters of surprise came from our families – I had made no mention when on leave in September. Back at Stone X we arranged a 48 hour pass – 18th/19th November to visit them in London/Bedford.

Back at camp there was a 'flu epidemic with most people confined to their barrack rooms.

The CO called Bill to say he had been posted to Infantry training on the Isle of Man – he was to leave on Monday 22nd November for 2 months. We spent the Sunday evening in the NAAFI with just a few survivors of 'flu. The CO had been very surprised to hear our news, as were many on site. We wrote daily – then I took my 7 days leave at Xmas to make Wedding plans at Bedford.

On 3rd January 1944 I was sent to Beaumaris (Anglesey) on a PT course in spite of the fact I would leave early. Both Bill and I arrived home on 22nd January.

Just 3 months after our meeting in London, Monday 24th January 1944 we were married in St Martin's Church, Bedford.

Upon my return to camp 10 days later I was posted to HQ site where I could be watched. I made friends with Margery Wells, we are still in touch.

Bill survived Europe and was demobbed in June 1946. After a happy 46 years he died in August 1990. He would be so happy to know that his first letter (to Saga) for Battery Linking became so rewarding to those in Ack Ack.

Oh yes! the Gloves! – He saved for use in Europe.

THE BARDWELL SISTERS **by Mrs Dorothy Crussell**

My sister, Jean and I were both in the ATS. My sister Jean (1941–1945), myself (1942–1946). I was demobbed, Jean was invalided out. She was at Luton in Nissen Huts after Northampton: in bad damp conditions. She had bronchitis often and it affected her lungs, she now gets a pension for life.



Bill and Sue Crook



Jean Bardwell

We were both at No 1 ATS Training Centre (Talavera Camp) Northampton. Jean was a telephonist permanent staff, her work was in an underground bunker. The girls



PDF Compressor Free Version

Dorothy Bardwell

even had to sleep there, between shifts. She also had quarters in Hut A6.

I joined the ATS May 1942 and Jean being older than me claimed me, which in the ATS one could do as Ex-ATS know – I missed my Passing Out Parade (after 3 weeks basic training) as I was in sick bay with tonsillitis. I stayed on as permanent staff with Jean in Hut A6 (Ration Stores) until the camp closed down. Jean went to Luton, myself to Torquay, Devon as Holdee, and stayed on permanent staff with Southern Command Holding unit, later moving to Leicester, Devises Wilts, Aldermaston Berks and Demob Guildford near where I live now. I was always an Essex girl until 7 years ago.

I was staying with Jean in Northampton, she married an airman she had met at a NAAFI dance on camp in Northampton. Her husband died a week before their 50th wedding anniversary. New Year's Day 1995. We were going through a box of old photographs and found two photos of ATS girls Jean had known at Luton. But she couldn't remember their names – perhaps someone, somewhere, recognises themselves or a friend, relation, perhaps they would be pleased to receive the photographs.

Through the Lioness I received a call one morning from a lady who had traced me after fifty three years, I had written to the Lioness previously about our (cat) mascot, the two Olives, still friends, recognised me, they were in Hut A6 Northampton T.Centre with both Jean and me. We're keeping in touch and hope to meet soon. Imagine how surprised I was – doing my housework : phone rings and lady asks are you Dot Bardwell (single name) Olive had certainly done some detective work with help of someone from Lioness to trace me, when we do meet we've a lot of years to catch up on.

EXCELLENT WOMEN by Veronica Dodkins

I have never regretted the 10½ years I spent in the ATS and WRAC; and one of the special bonuses was that I met so many "excellent women". That was a phrase used by my Grandmother. "She is an excellent woman" and you knew it was someone you could admire and trust all the way. I could name three or four now, but I will spare their blushes, and ask your blessing on someone with whom I never served and who I only met in the last years of her life.

Harriet Grief, formerly Price, came to live in our village, and immediately stepped into our everyday world ready to join in and help where she could. We were all drawn to her poise, warmth and enthusiasm. Harriet had a degree in Languages before joining the WRAC and won the Sash of Honour at the OCTU Passing Out Parade in October 1958. She must have been an excellent officer. Like so many others she gave it up for marriage and motherhood. She faced her last illness with admirable courage, so that not only were her husband and her son strengthened by her faith and fortitude, but all of us as we stepped from our village church, felt a glow and a benediction going with us.

It is sad, as the years go by to read the names of former friends and comrades on those last few pages in 'The Lioness'; and I wonder how many have not been mentioned. Perhaps their families thought we did not need to know. But of course we do; remembering days filled with hard work and action, but also the lighter moments when it was good to be among friends. I have not seen the name of WO2 Mary Roberts, formerly Grant, who died a few years ago of a heart attack in her home in Scotland. My close friend Sgt Pam Clayton, formerly Duff died last year after a long and very brave fight against cancer. It was a pleasure and a privilege to have known them.

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**THE WRAC OFFICERS' DINING CLUB –
INAUGURAL DINNER – SATURDAY 14 OCTOBER 1995
by Captain Angie Howell (née Bolwell)**

There must be many people who, like me, were in two minds about attending the inaugural dinner of the WRAC Officers' Dining Club. I kept thinking that I would hardly know anyone and that having left the WRAC over 8 years ago, I wouldn't have much left in common with those who did go. However, I ultimately decided to give it a try – if nothing else I knew I would enjoy a break from the children and the chance to do some shopping in London.

I spent most of Saturday doing a good impression of "shopper of the year", and arrived at the Army and Navy Club, Pall Mall footsore and apprehensive about the evening ahead. When I saw my accommodation, an en suite room with a big, old fashioned bath, I blessed Val Trout for finding such a brilliant location for the dinner.

Restored and suitably dressed I descended to the bar for pre-dinner drinks, to discover that I could hardly get in! It was packed with familiar faces and ringing with the sound of



OFFICERS AT DINNER

greetings and laughter. I was struck immediately by the happy, relaxed atmosphere. This wasn't a Regimental Dinner, this was a group of old friends getting together for a good time.



OFFICERS AT DINNER

Before I'd had a chance to chat to half the people I wanted to, there was a bugle call and we moved in to dinner. We enjoyed an excellent five course meal to the music of the Band of the Royal Yeomanry who impressed us all with their rendition of the Post Horn Gallop and then we, in return, impressed them with a proud, resonant rendering of "Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill".

Speeches were minimal, just votes of thanks to Val Trout and those who had helped her to organise the evening, and then we adjourned to the lounge to get back to the serious business of catching up on news and gossip. The club staff were marvellous and kept the bar open until four o'clock in the morning for those of us who couldn't tear ourselves away despite the dictates of common sense!

The final piece-de-resistance was a full English breakfast the next morning, along with as much coffee as was necessary to help some of us face the day. For me, it was a weekend I will remember for a very long time. Those of you who stayed away missed a treat. The plan is to hold two dinners a year, one in the North and one in the South. Make sure you don't miss the next one!

**DUTY ABROAD
A Silver Cross for the lady
who kneels beside Grave No. 9
by David Leake**

In the dead stillness of a Norwegian forest, the melancholy notes of the Last Post drifted skywards through the lacy canopy of trees. Wisps of frozen breath rose from the bowed assembly in Nature's green and vaulting cathedral, and an Englishwoman murmured, as she has done year upon year in that solitary place, a quiet prayer for victims of atrocity resting far from home.

Captured on special operations in the Second World War, six Britons were shot, bound together with barbed wire and secretly buried in the depths of Trandum Forest, as were 173 Norwegians and 15 Soviets in a series of mass murders whose infamy endures to this day.

Mrs Dorothy Melby prays for them all, but every Remembrance Day she makes a lone trek through the trees to place a poppy wreath upon Grave No 9, standing it against a simple stone cross erected in memory of six brave men whose remains once lay there.

This year there was an extra ceremony on 8th May, the day that marked the 50th anniversary of the end of the war in Europe, she was one of more than 1,000 people, who ignored the biting wind at a service conducted by Bishop Hauge, the priest who brought spiritual comfort to the prisoners just before their deaths and who spoke of their courage in their final hours.

For the former Dorothy Dobson, a Stoke on Trent (Staffordshire) girl who married a Norwegian soldier she met while serving with the Auxiliary Territorial Service in Wolverhampton, it again brought vividly to mind the first time she heard of the cold blooded slaughter by German firing squads.

That was 50 years ago, too, when as a clerk attached to the Royal Army Service Corps she helped to type out "the terrible details" of what had happened.

It was the beginning of an extraordinary connection with Trandum which has seen her become the unofficial custodian of the burial site and has earned her the lasting friendship and admiration of successive Royal Marine and Naval units sent to the area of Arctic training.

Under the whispering canopy Mrs Dorothy Melby, whose abiding devotion we honour with the Silver Cross of St George, prays and remembers. For her, in that beautiful place, the spirits of long dead heroes will never die. (MRS Melby has been awarded a Certificate of Appreciation by the Association for her work. Ed.)

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DOVER REVISITED by Mrs D M Perry

I went to visit my son who lives near Dover, so we went to Dover Castle. We went into the church of St Mary's in the Castle and saw an ATS plaque on the wall there. A man saw us looking at it. He asked "were you in the ATS?" I was proud to say "I was!" He turned out to be the vergier. He brought a chalice and paten for us to see. It was silver and quite a modern design dedicated to ATS who died in Dover in Ack Ack in The London Battery at Hell Fire Corner. He didn't know the details of the action, too young, (but had been in Merchant Navy). He said the chalice and paten are not locked away but used at every communion service.

I attended the Remembrance Service in 1985 when Mrs Jean Bishop ex ATS Provost used to arrange the service and catering. 300 attended on that occasion; but no service takes place these days, but at least the chalice and paten are in use.

I used to be a teleplotter in a S/C Regt in Norfolk. Pte Dorothy Wheatley 467 72 RA Dot Williams to Ack Ack friends so would like to hear from anyone who remembers, also Micky who served with me at Old Hanstanton - in the Manor House there as a decoder and teleplotter.

It was interesting to see the hospital and telephone exchange in Dover Castle. We also saw an ATS Kneeler and WRAC Kneeler in the side chapel there.

FOOTSLOGGING AND BLISTERS 7th July 1941 till 6th June 1946 by Betty Hamer (née Lester)

One day at the beginning of July 1941 papers came for me to report to Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry Barracks at Oxford.

Arriving at New Street Station, Birmingham all of a wobble, I saw another girl with a suitcase looking like me and got into conversation. I found that she was going to the same camp; we travelled together and remained friends all through our ATS service.

Arriving at Oxford Camp, Head Inspection, Nail Inspection and then Inoculations, etc, etc.



MRS HAMER

Then Kit Issue, nothing fitted, we looked like we felt.

On being shown our Hut Lilian Barell (as my chum was called) found two beds next to each other. After making our beds a Corporal came in and barked lights out in 5 minutes; well when we seemed to have only just gone to sleep we suddenly heard a bugle blaring out "Rise and Shine" 5.30 in the morning. I turned to my chum and said "Oh Mam buy me out", but we ran to the ablution 3 or 4 minutes away, cold water, but I do agree it woke us up.

Then PT in Khaki Issue and Bras that flattened ones chest and Khaki Overalls we went out on the square.

Oh my legs, arms and every bone in my body went up down and round about, all over the place.

After an hour breakfast, kippers and powdered egg and huge buckets of "sweet tea" and wedges of bread and margarine. It went down and just when we thought we may get a rest on the square again with the mens Drill Sergeant.

Oh boy, he was a terror all the men were hanging out of their hut windows laughing. You might know half of us were really 'green', some went left some went right.

The Sergeant said those famous words "You may have broken your mothers hearts but you won't break mine."

Next to the Tailors who had a nightmare job of making uniform fit, she did a marvellous job I must say.

Then to add insult to injury a route march, we thought a nice walk how wrong can you get, five miles with a full kit bag. I never knew one could get blisters on your feet like we did but we did.

After six weeks of this including lectures we were asked what we wanted to do, my pal and I both went for "Medical Orderly" so in due course we were posted to Southern Command 6th Gloucester Clerical Coy at Salisbury Plain!!!

We were billeted at The Theological College, Wilton, Salisbury. We arrived there by truck on a glorious hot day full of ourselves, or thought we were.

The College was right opposite the beautiful Cathedral renowned for having as many windows as there are days in the year, several of us were Confirmed there eventually.

We started work in Sick Bay under a lovely VAD Betty Wainwright, it was a great nursing experience.

We got used to the Food and I must say we did enjoy it and thrived.

I did not enjoy the jabs, only the part about 48 hours off duty.

Eventually I was sent to Tidworth Military Hospital to work, I arrived one Monday to be met by a Theatre Sister who before I could blink an eyelid said "into the theatre now", 'full stop' never having been inside an operating theatre before I felt sick, especially when I saw a man on the table with a gaping cut on his leg, I was told if you feel faint just go outside but don't faint here.

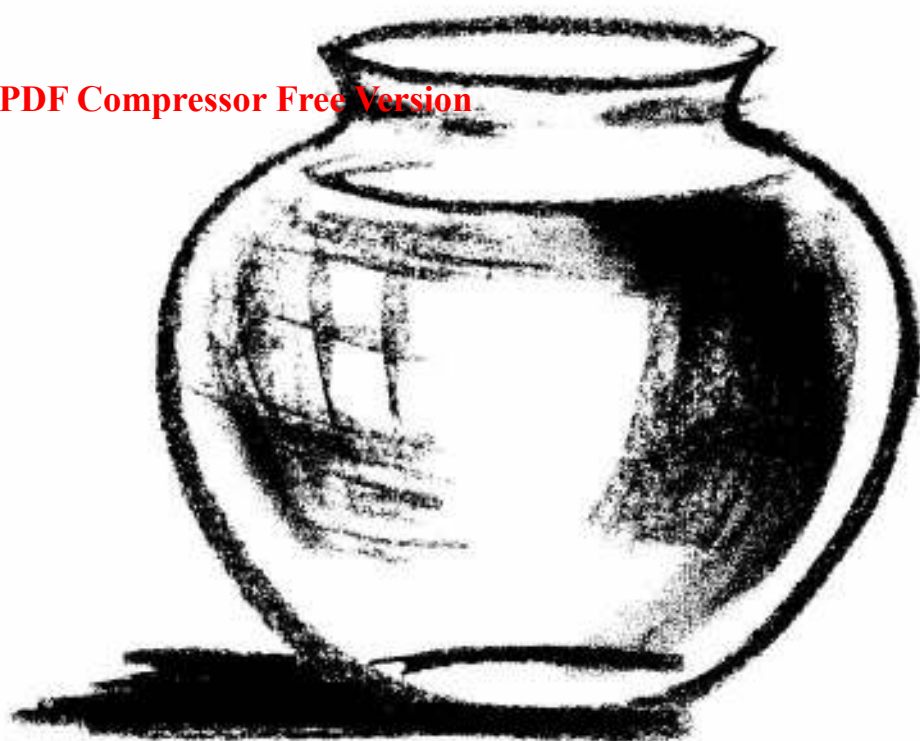
Yes I managed to get outside before all went blank.

On coming round a Porter was giving me a large dose of "Sal Volatile" and then theatre again.

I continued in different hospitals seeing some gruesome sights and funny ones, one in particular.

The late Princess Royal was coming to visit the ward where I happened to be on duty and going through the ward doors I spied the Princess and her followers coming down the corridor. I had a bed pan in my hand. Hurriedly back peddling I put the offending article in one of the men's bedside lockers and managed to compose myself and I hope salute, shortest way up and the longest way down.

The years moved on and I stayed until 1946 and can honestly say I enjoyed it and don't regret a moment of it, now I'm an OAP I can sit and remember and they are wonderful memories, I came home to Birmingham where I lived then and continued to nurse until I become 60 when I had to retire, and still had sore feet.



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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.

MY BIKE AND I **by Major Daphne Lance**

I was called up three days before war was declared and was immediately put to specialise in MT – not wanting to lose my femininity I gave up smoking and grew my hair until I could nearly sit on it.

At first I refused to learn to ride a motor cycle but in the end relented and was sent to the Driver Training Centre. They had difficulty in finding a large enough crash helmet to accommodate my hair.

On my return the Brigadier was so chuffed with my success that he insisted on taking his test of riding pillion behind me. Lower ranking officers had to learn to ride motor cycles.

I found life quite amusing on the road. When trying to start the infernal machine I might be bending over to prime the carburettor when I would be slapped on the backside and a voice would say "having trouble old man"? The person would be amazed when a female voice answered.

One day I had to deliver dispatches from Folkestone to Aldershot. On my return I called at my uncle's at Wrotham. My uncle was a typical Indian Army General "A good leg in a boot! What, What".

I rode into the drive, lugged my machine onto the stand and pushed up my goggles.

I was wearing my own breeches and New Market boots, ATS tunic and leather jerkin, through which my Sergeant stripes showed.

Uncle was pruning the roses. I strode up to him and gave him a smacking kiss. He recoiled thinking he had been kissed by a male Sergeant. My aunt made tea but during my visit my uncle didn't utter a word, just stared at me.

I was sent on a cross country course outside Bournemouth. On arrival I found I was the only woman. The staff said the course was not for women but I pointed out that Command Orders said one officer from each unit would attend.

They eventually found me a 350cc machine. I must say I found it exhausting trying to keep up with those on 500cc machines.

One day we pulled up in a valley and were told we were to go up a very steep hill. We were to give full throttle but remember to turn it off just before the top.

The first two men didn't make it. I was next in line and the Instructor told me to tackle a much smaller slope. I declined and took a view at the big hill with full acceleration. I made it but "me oh my!" I forgot to turn off the throttle and the bike went one way and I the other down the other side of the peak, – no harm done and I was first up.

Those were the days full of challenges. What of the future, perhaps I will have to learn the intricacies of an electric chair for mobility!

REFLECTIONS ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARIES OF VE AND VJ DAYS

by Mrs Kathleen J Brownbill (née Coote)

Just a few memories of the VE and VJ events attended by my friend, Joyce and myself, all of which were blessed by glorious weather, and my first feeling each day was one of heartfelt thanks. Just to be able to be there and to honour all those who suffered, lost their lives or loved ones, was a tremendous privilege. I was thankful too, that the sun shone down on all those who attended, and made perfection of the incredible planning, organisation and dedication that went into these events. I believe only the British can do this so superbly, and I felt immensely proud.

A few memories, first of the VE Celebrations and the Opening Ceremony on the 6th May, where we were so near The Queen Mother as she entered her stand. She was very gracious and beautiful and her speech was incredibly moving.

The concert that evening was unforgettable, with so many great stars on stage, all the old songs we loved, and of course, Dame Vera Lynn.

The flypast as the sun set over London was memorable, and we just stood up, waved our Union Jacks and cheered so loudly as the planes flew low overhead – surely, the crew must have heard us!

The Heads of State Ceremony the following day, Sunday 7th May, at which HM The Queen and many members of the Royal Family were present, was another moving occasion. Yet again, it was wonderful to be so near to the side of the VIP stand and the ramp up which The Queen walked, and to see her so clearly. This was very emotional, for she waved and smiled at us and looked very lovely.

In a day so full of memories, a special one for me was the release of the doves – a symbol of Peace. Another was of the Royal Standard as it flew so close to us, and one knew their Queen was present.

On Saturday, 19th August, we were fortunate enough to have wonderful seats for the Service of Remembrance and Commitment; we overlooked the Queen Victoria Memorial, with Buckingham Palace to our right, and The Mall, with its many Union Jacks and great crowds to our left, so that we felt very much a part of all that was happening.

A few quick memories (how can one condense momentous occasions like these?) Well – the giant TV screens at each event, bringing to us so clearly all that we could not see close up or first hand. Modern technology that really works for us all.

Watching and hearing Viscount Slim, OBE, DL, President of the Burma Star Association, speak.

The two minutes silence.

The dropping, as it ended, of over a million poppies by a Lancaster bomber as it flew over The Mall and the Queen Victoria Memorial. I shall never forget the drone of its engines and the poppies as they fell and fluttered over and around us and we picked some up. How thickly they lay in the road in front of us as the Parade passed by.

To see the holders of the Victoria Cross and the George Cross.

To watch the lines of Jeeps go by – all various types and each with a Chelsea Pensioner sitting in the back.

I especially remember the Gurkhas who were in the stands, so helpful and courteous and with a certain bearing quiet and dignified.



VJ DAY
Jean Webster and Mary Beeston

Seeing thousands of Veterans with so many, many medals, marching upright and proud.

The flags of the many nations who took part in the war and who helped us to victory, being unfurled in a circle round the Queen Victoria Memorial, and the Royal Standard flying from the Palace.

The very moving service and the beautiful singing of the choir.

We were struck too, as always, at how well dressed everyone was and how well behaved all these large crowds were. One felt one was part of a great nation pulling together once again.

To end the day sitting on the steps of Westminster Bridge, able to hear Big Ben and to watch the flypast which concluded with a single Spitfire, and then the magnificent Fireworks Display from barges moored on The Thames and set to resounding music, just made one feel too full to speak – a feeling we experienced more than once throughout the many events we attended, in London, Salisbury and Portsmouth.

Again, back to London on Sunday 20th August, for the final tribute – A Musical Tribute and Beating Retreat Ceremony on Horse Guards Parade, and once more, wonderful seats. We met an Australian Veteran and his wife at the Reception in the Drill Hall, Portsmouth. He wore the Burma Star and had hopes there, of meeting old friends from those far off days. We saw them again several rows in front of us at Horse Guards Parade and were able to speak with them once more. They will be home in Perth by now, having, like so very many thousands, travelled so far to attend these events. We will never again witness gatherings such as these.



IN VETERANS CENTRE

Mavis, Doreen Dennis, Jenny, Jean Webster, Mary Beeston

As the Ceremony unfolded before us, I felt very proud to be British – to see our Queen walk so quietly and poised to the dais on the stage opposite to our Stand to make an outstanding and memorable speech.

As darkness fell, buildings were floodlit and looked so beautiful – that wonderful skyline which had miraculously survived the blitz. The colours, the marching, the lovely singing, massed bands; one felt history was both passing by – and being made, before our eyes.

After the departure of HM The Queen, being able to watch the whole Buckingham Palace Ceremony on the large TV screens, just rounded off this moving occasion, with The Queen being seen so clearly as she waved to us all from the balcony at Buckingham Palace.

COMMEMORATION OF VJ DAY

19TH AUGUST 1995

by Brigadier E J Nolan CB

In the September of last year I was asked if I would represent our Association at the Service being planned to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the end of World War II. I was, of course, extremely pleased to accept the honour and looked forward to 19th August 1995.

In due course I received two splendid invitations. The first, from the Prime Minister and Her Majesty's Government, to Luncheon at Lancaster House in the presence of HM The Queen and members of the Royal Family, and the second for the Service and March Past outside Buckingham Palace at 3pm.

I am sure that most readers, if they were not on Parade or among the 100,000 onlookers in the vicinity of the Palace, were glued to the television for most of the day. It was certainly one of the hottest days of the year!

The Luncheon Party was superb – 145 hosts and guests, many from all over the world, and just 20 of the number were ladies. How proud I was to represent the ATS on such an occasion.

The events which followed the Luncheon are etched in my memory – our walk from Lancaster House, amidst the cheering crowds as we made our way to the Royal Box for the Service.

The sight of the Veterans lined up for the March Past (they had stood throughout the Service). Thousands of men and women remembering.

The dramatic silence as the lone Lancaster Bomber then flew overhead scattering its cargo of a million poppy petals in memory of the fallen.

The excitement as The Queen and her family moved among the veterans at the end of the Service and then drove to the Saluting Dais in The Mall.

And finally the wonderful March Past of proud men and women who had so much to remember. This showed on the faces of every single one as they saluted their Sovereign, with the cheering crowds showing their appreciation throughout.

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THE LAST BIG PARADE by Mrs Jean Ryder (née Wakelin)

Saturday 19th August 1995. The sun was beating relentlessly down on London creating a jungle like heat, which was perfect for on this day we gathered to remember the men who had fought in the steamy jungles of the Far East – the forgotten army – but now to be a very much remembered army.

Five of us, four ex-ATS and one WAAF from Somerset travelled to London by coach. On arrival we made our way to The Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre which, with Westminster Central Hall, had been designated Veterans Centres. There many facilities were available including refreshments, entertainment and a Data base system called Vetlink designed to put wartime colleagues in touch with each other. There were hundreds of ex-service people there and it was rather over whelming. However the young servicemen and women on duty were very kind and their eagerness to be of help to us veterans was very heartwarming. It was also rather heartaching to remember that, when we had been in uniform and serving during the war, we too had been young.

By 2pm we had assembled at our Association forming up point in Birdcage Walk, at 2.15pm we were marched off to the Palace. The service of remembrance and commitment commenced at 3pm. The slight breeze was hardly ruffling the flags of the allied nations unfurled around the Victoria Memorial as the Archbishop of Canterbury led the Act of Remembrance. Viscount Slim, President of the Burma Star Association spoke the Kohima epitaph, "When you go home, tell them of us and say, For your tomorrow we gave our today". The Last Post sounded and there was silence. For two minutes not a sound was heard, nor any movement. Then suddenly a droning noise. A Lancaster bomber, flying very low, came up The Mall dropping from its bomb doors a shower of red poppies. They floated slowly down, brilliant against the clear blue sky. We sang the last hymn "For All The Saints" and then we waited. Inevitably with such a huge operation delays were bound to occur. The heat was almost

band struck up the years fell away, the heat was forgotten and we were young ATS again marching down The Mall. Then "eyes left" from our Grenadier and there was Her Majesty The Queen, with many of the Royal Family, taking the salute.

The crowds were out in force all down The Mall – waving flags and cheering. There were cries of "Well Done" and "Thank you". Some carried home made placards bearing similar messages. The policemen on duty were clapping



VJ DAY
Mrs Rogers Mrs Dennis

and this outpouring of warmth and gratitude is our most moving memory of that day. The media would have us believe that this generation knows nothing of, and cares less about, the sacrifices made during the war. After that experience in The Mall we know it isn't true.

The parade over, we made our way back to the Veterans Centre.

We are grateful and proud that we were able that day to march alongside Burma Star and other veterans. It is a day



ATS Assembly Point

unbearable but, thanks to the London Policemen and the Grenadier Guardsmen who were constantly amongst us with trays bearing beakers of water and lots of cheerful encouragement, most of us survived.

At last the Grenadier in charge of our contingent gave the order "By the left, quick march" adding a warning not to let him down!! We pulled our willing shoulders back and as the



EVE MILLS and JEAN RYDER (née WAKELIN)

we shall never forget – a memory of a kaleidoscope of hundreds of people, rows of medals, bands, flags, marching feet, those wonderful people in The Mall – and, of course, THE HEAT.

Our families saw us on the television and we are now on the video – fame at last!!

I was one of the party of five from Somerset. I did not go on the parade but stood and watched in the heat. However,

I was lucky enough to receive tickets for the Reception at The Tower of London and the Beat Retreat at Horse Guards Parade.

When my son and I arrived at The Tower we were greeted with a glass of wine. We were on the riverside immediately opposite the Royal Yacht. Prince Charles was strolling along chatting to various people, including a very elderly Gurkha whose chest was covered with medals and decorations. We also saw John Major, Ted Heath and various Cabinet members. Although it was evening it was still very warm. We saw various members of the Royal Family arrive in the Royal Barge to go to the Royal Yacht. Eventually The Queen arrived escorted by a flotilla of assorted river craft from Thames Police, Port Health Authority, London Fire Brigade and many others including nine Dunkirk little ships.

A 50 gun salute was fired from 4 batteries at various locations on the river bank from 7pm, when The Queen embarked at Westminster Pier on her progress down the river, at 4 second intervals until she reached Britannia at The Tower of London. At 7.40 the Air Display commenced with aircraft of the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force giving a 40 minute fly past of modern aircraft finishing with a formation of 20 Hawker Trainers depicting the figure 50.

Then followed a helicopter display, each group "dipping" in salute over the Royal Yacht. Then came the Red Arrows and finally a lone Spitfire. It was very moving.

After this we went to the Moat where an enormous marquee had been erected and all sorts of interesting "eats" were served and drinks. Many people sat at tables outside. The evening was perfect, warm and still. The Gurkha band was playing. Then we all went back to the riverside to watch those wonderful fireworks, accompanied by beautiful music. The fireworks were set off from barges in 5 different locations along the river so that whichever way you looked you saw the same display. Sadly it had to finish and crowds left to return home to find police in charge at Tower Hill Underground Station only allowing enough people to fill one train at a time. Trains every 10 minutes. My son and I decided to walk to Liverpool Street Station and it was a wonderful experience in a warm summer night, to walk with crowds of happy people and no unpleasantness in City streets.

On the Sunday night we went to Horse Guards Parade. I have watched Beat Retreat many times on television but to actually be there and see the bands marching was wonderful.

Gurkhas showed us to our seats. They are such smiling happy men, at least they appear to be. Each couple was given a sealed envelope to be opened when instructed. In it was a small torch which operated by rolling the top over. Just before Jerusalem was sung we were told to turn them on. The lights were dimmed and there were all these little stars twinkling all around the arena. It was a great moment. It was lovely too that a great number of children from various schools formed a choir and a Guard of Honour for The Queen when she walked across the arena to give her address.

At the end of all the ceremony the Royal Family went by car to Buckingham Palace, followed by the massed bands, choir and the children. We were asked to stay in our seats to watch the Sunset Ceremony on the TV screen but many left. Some to follow the procession and some, like us, to catch the last train at 11pm from Liverpool Street to Hertfordshire. We could hear the bands and singing on the night air. A wonderful experience. Something I shall never forget.

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VJ DAY CELEBRATIONS NORTH SHORE CITY, NEW ZEALAND by Mrs Joyce Taylor (née Prichard)

Veterans living in North Shore City were given a Civil Reception at Takapuna. Almost 1,000 attended, plus partners. All names and branches of the Services they served in were read out as each veteran received a commemorative medallion. This mammoth task was done by one of our TV personalities. Many women representing all branches of the Services, both British and New Zealand were there. Among the ATS were Mary Nicol (served in the Orkneys) and Audrey Holland (née Williams).



VJ PARADE SHIPSTON ON STOUR
Mrs Phyll Harvey (née Cpl Birch)

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VJ DAY CELEBRATIONS 19TH AUGUST 1995
by Captain Eileen Carter MBE TD

I arrived and still not believing we were really going on board Her Majesty's Yacht Britannia Pat Gibson and I were dropped off at a table. By that time the crowds and general excitement of everyone swept us along and we felt highly important as we arrived at Tower Pier. One of our Greater London Branch members appeared like a genie and she had in fact been waiting to take our photographs as we arrived.

We were amongst the first to arrive at the pier alongside MV Westminster which was to carry us across to the Royal Yacht. That afforded us a wonderful view of the Britannia dressed overall and as Her Majesty arrived aboard the guns at the Tower gave a Royal salute. The Queen was piped abroad and the Royal Standard was raised. Her Majesty had arrived from Lambeth pier on board the Port of London Authority Barge Royal Nore attended by the Royal Bargemaster and the Royal Watermen dressed in their splendid red and black uniforms along the desk – a sight worthy of any picture book. From then on a succession of little boats and various craft passed by in salute to The Queen all making their various river noises and their passengers waving in the hopes of being seen. Next came the RAF with a wonderful display in waves of planes old and new culminating in a '50' formation done to perfection of course. After that came the helicopters in spectacular performances and showing off their skills to the delight of the crowd who were so thick on both sides of the river and solid the whole length of Tower Bridge. The final fly past with the helicopters flew Union flags from their winch ropes. The Red Arrows completed the fly past leaving behind the appropriate trails of red, white and blue.

At last we were on our way across the water to board the Royal Yacht. Her Majesty must have had a terrific rush to change and maybe have a bite to eat – once we were on deck we kept being moved along about 5 paces at a time whilst obviously things were running very late "upstairs". When we were introduced to Her Majesty and gave our names, apologies were made that everything was so rushed but it all seemed to add to the general relaxed atmosphere and The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh were laughing and so at ease when they greeted everyone individually. Her Majesty was wearing a pretty pink dress. The rest of the Royal Family were all on board and they mingled and talked to everyone together with members of the Royal Household and the senior crew members. The whole atmosphere was totally relaxed and everyone was there to enjoy the party and the fireworks – formality was nil and everyone just chatted freely and made us most welcome. It was not easy to pick out the Royals in their civilian clothes in the half light no uniforms nor tiaras! – so it was very easy to find oneself rubbing shoulders with almost anyone.

Time for the fireworks and we were told to go to the top deck to get the best view. As we reached the top of the stairs two excited boys rushed past us and I was able to have a quick word with Prince Harry. Prince William rushed across the deck shouting after Tiggy. The fireworks were fantastic to our front and rear so it was a job to know which way to look. Prince Edward stood beside us taking photographs as he said there may not be another sight like that for another fifty years, he very kindly told me how the whole display was operated by computer and not lit by matches as people of my generation imagined. The Duke of Kent was immediately behind us and Prince and Princess Michael of Kent to our left so we truly could say we were surrounded by the Royals. At one stage I tried to pull myself



Pat Gibson and Eileen Carter at Tower of London

together to realise I really was standing on the deck of Her Majesty's Yacht Britannia drinking brandy and ginger and listening to the strains of Land of Hope and Glory, always my favourite piece of music. Another cherished moment was when I actually saw and spoke to someone wearing the Victoria Cross – before that the Victoria Cross had always been something I had seen in a museum.

Need I say we wished the whole night would never end but the highlight was yet to come. As we went back to the lower deck before departure we just went and stood beside a lady in pink looking over the side of the yacht. Imagine our surprise, delight and excitement when she turned to speak to us – Her Majesty no less! Press reporting rules (my own) prevent me from repeating the conversation but sufficient to say that Her Majesty had thoroughly enjoyed her day and she was thrilled at all the spectators from the very old to the very young who had come out to celebrate VJ Day and the end of the war 50 years ago.

Pat and I felt very honoured to have represented the WRAC Association on such a night. The Queen was a warm loving and happy monarch that night and it was a great pleasure and honour to have seen her in such a happy and relaxed state in what was her own home, she told us she was staying on the Royal Yacht for three nights. A splendid lady, a wonderful Queen and long may she reign over us.

**ROYAL BRITISH LEGION CLUB,
LIMASSOL, CYPRUS**

The Royal British Legion Club, 4 Petrombey Street,
Potamos Yermasoyas, Limassol, CYPRUS
welcomes visits from former servicewomen
who may be visiting the Island.

RECRUITERS REMEMBERED by Miss Brenda Hancock

On hearing of the death of a much loved and respected Retired Recruiting Officer – Captain A H (Toni) HARRISON, MBE, Croix de Guerre, I had hoped to read a tribute to her in *The Lioness* but alas, only a brief obituary notice appeared, with no mention of her long service at the Central London Recruiting Depot in Whitehall nor of her time living, and working for the Resistance Movement, in occupied France during World War II. However, Toni was a very modest person, so perhaps only her immediate family knew the full story of her brave conduct during that period of her life.

My thoughts turn to the many Recruiters, including myself, we worked with Captain Harrison at CLRD over the years and know that they too will be saddened at her passing – but – where are they now and why do Recruiters never have Reunions? Where are "Toni's girls" from my days at CLRD? – Shirley Frost, Dawn Beaulieu, "Dabs" Brooks, Jeanne Kick, Peggy Sylverton, Connie Dunnett? and what about Betsy Clewlow, Bobby Haynes and Yvonne Balment – plus many others who have happy memories of their time spent upstairs in 5 Great Scotland Yard? Would love to hear from anyone who remembers me and those bygone days when we worked and laughed with 'Mon Capitaine'. I expect you are all scattered far and wide for we always used to say "Old Recruiters never die, they only get posted to remote out-stations".

PORTSMOUTH – VJ DAY ONE by Mrs Kathleen J Brownbill (née Coote)

Tuesday 15th August, the first of two days of Portsmouth's "Celebrations and Commemoration", began with the release from Southsea Common of thousands of balloons which we saw from the bus, rising in a great close knit cloud over the roof tops. Once off the bus, as we walked to the Common, we found them "flying and bowling" along the streets, and joined with the crowds in catching them and removing the little cards on which one wrote names and addresses and posted them to the Royal British Legion in London. One might have one of the three winning cards! They are all numbered. It was a great way to start the day.

Blue skies, glorious sunshine and a walk through beautiful floral displays to Southsea Castle. Our Veterans cards gave us free entrance and we thoroughly enjoyed all we saw. We were, to cap it all, just in time to watch the Fort Cumberland Guard and Drum Corps in their colourful historic uniforms, practising their drill and firing canon and musket. Then – tea, within the castle walls, and off once more to catch a bus – this time to the Drill Hall and the reception given there by the City of Portsmouth.



STANDARD BEARERS AT PORTSMOUTH

The queues completely surrounded this enormous hall, with coaches everywhere letting more off, yet, in no time we were all inside, with a band playing, food and drink dispensed and a warm welcome. – The arrangements were fantastic. It was so interesting meeting and talking with some of the Veterans. I went upstairs and looked down on the crowds. This was both a tremendous, and humbling, experience – to see this great hall full of people who had travelled from far and wide to attend this occasion, bringing with them, perhaps, family members and, very definitely, memories of 50 years or more ago and their hopes of meeting up with old comrades.

The day ended with a concert at The Guildhall – an outstandingly beautiful building – given by Syd Lawrence and his Orchestra, playing all the old Glenn Miller and other tunes, which were so much a part of our lives those many years ago. The Guildhall was completely full – not a seat to be had.

The whole evening was charged with emotion. We left Portsmouth conscious of having been privileged to share in a very special and memorable day.

INTER SERVICE VETERANS TENNIS by Captain Nikki ROCHELLE

In 1995 we were pleased to welcome four new players to the Veterans Tennis Team, Sadie Tillbrook and Paula Thorne, who with Penny Gold and Daphne Portway who played third couple with Joan Freeland. Although the team played with plenty of enthusiasm and had some close



Tennis Veterans
*Back Row: Jackie Whitehead, Joan Freeland,
Daphne Portway*
*Front Row: Penny Gold, Angie Lynch, Sadie Tillbrook,
Paula Thorne*

games we only managed to win two of the six matches and were beaten into third place, the RAF taking the winners honours yet again. In the three years the competition has been running a total of ten players have represented the Army with a further three keen to have a go when fitness and availability allows. As we go to press I am negotiating with the Army LTA to include a Ladies Veterans Doubles Tournament on one of the days of the Army Championships in July, this would aid team selection for the Inter Services and provide another competition for us to play in. Last year one was organised but did not get off the ground as the plan was to play over three days, just not viable for working lady vets. This year we will be at Wimbledon on Tuesday 6 August and have high hopes of taking the winners trophy.

WRAC PT RE-UNION by Captain Kate BETTISON

The first WRAC Physical Training Re-union took place at the Army School of Physical Training on 10 June 1995, and was open to all former AIPTs, SOPTs, GIs and WRAC PTIs. The event was organised by Captains Nikki Rochelle and Kate Bettison who had absolutely no idea who was likely to come creeping out of the woodwork when the idea was first mooted. As the maximum seating number in the WOs' & Sgts' Mess was 120, it became a little worrying when names from the archives began appearing in droves as the old PT grapevine cranked into action. Eventually 102 ladies dined, so it came as a great relief to the organisers not to have to pitch a large marquee on Queens Avenue.

The evening began with a reception, followed by a mass photo call during which the chatter and hilarity proved a nightmare for the photographer as he strove to persuade everyone to face forward at the same time. Somehow he managed it perfectly! The next hurdle was shepherding the still talking masses back into the Mess for dinner. Nikki Rochelle formally welcomed everyone, adding that she hoped this milestone would be the first of many re-unions. There was an attempt during dinner to listen to taped music of the WRAC Band, but even they could not overcome the sound barrier!

During coffee when it was thought that the vocal chords might appreciate a rest, Kate Bettison invited the gathering on a short trip down memory lane. The old and bold relived the days of the annual nail biting 'flip the kipper' game against the Wives Club at the APTC Re-union weekend, and how an eventual escape route was planned so that we could have our own exclusive parties at the Hawley Sailing Club!

On the dining tables were many pieces of silver which had been presented to the WRAC PT Wing by various Officers who had served at the ASPT. Mention was made about them all and the one officer present to acknowledge her trophy was Angela O'Brien née Moules, who presented it for gymnastics. Probably the most celebrated AIPT to present a trophy was the late Major Myrtle MacLagan, whose claim to fame was being the first lady cricketer to score a century for England. Travelling a little further into the sporting annals of time, it was a privilege to have with us Audrey Mitchell née Williamson who won a silver medal at the 1948 Olympic Games for the then 100 yards. Lt Col Ann Bray paid tribute to her success.

Away from sport, the theatrical achievements of Betsy Clewlow were acknowledged. In between being the Army Javelin champion, she became the permanent holder of the



PTI RE-UNION

*Pat Darby, Paula Thorne, Judy Lister, Helen Sleightholme,
Jenny McMahon, Sheila Lloyd-Graham, Marie Bass,
Kate Bettison*

Army Annual Singing Competition and now spends much of her time appearing in Old Tyme Music Hall Acts, Summer Seasons and television.

Sadly it was impossible to recognise the accomplishments of all those present. Whilst many had obviously left the Army and had carved out new and successful careers in other fields, some still remained and were doing well. Suffice to say if there had been an award for the highest military achiever it would have undoubtedly gone to Col Cas Bolland who aspired from being a LCpl PTI in 1964 to the current senior female officer in the British Army and Hon ADC to Her Majesty The Queen. Quite an achievement.

The formal events of the evening were concluded by Maj Dora Nightingale who was the first PTI ever to be commissioned. She expressed her thanks and delight at being among her great PT family again and was already looking forward to the next occasion which will probably be in three years time.

ATS MEMBERS OF THE WINTON CLUB – RE-UNION AT KING ALFRED'S COLLEGE – WINCHESTER 8TH JULY 1995

During the War King Alfred's College in Winchester was "occupied" by the ATS. The members of The Winton Club, founded in 1874 for former students, permit ex ATS who worked or lived in the College, to be members of their Club and attend annual reunions. So, on the 8th July 1995, again a beautiful day, it always seem to be sunny, although once we did have a thunder storm, we all attended the reunion service in the College Chapel. A new building since our day, one of the lessons was read by a member of the ATS.

The Church Service was followed by lunch, the roll call, composed according to the years spent at college, is called during the after dinner speeches, one gentleman attending sixty-eight years on, but the loudest cheer was for the ATS fifty years on. It was interesting to learn that the Principal was BORN fifty years ago . . .

On the Friday before (7th) the College re-union about twenty-four of us met for an informal coffee morning and lunch at The Eagle Hotel, Andover Road, Winchester.



POSTINGS WING KING ALFRED COLLEDGE 1945

*Dorothy Williams, Muriel Crowdy, Dorothy Lee,
Myrtle Lewis, Lottie McGraw, Iris Taylor, Joyce Webb,
Joyce Sinclair (Edwards)*



MEMBERS AT RE-UNION
(Photo courtesy of Hampshire Chronicle)

A DAY TO REMEMBER ON REMEMBRANCE DAY by Peggy Bell and Trudy Bond Norfolk and Suffolk Branch

We have been among the privileged ones to receive tickets for the Remembrance Day Service in Westminster Abbey. Our day started early with a taxi ride to Norwich to catch the 7am train to London. We arrived there at 9.30 and after another taxi ride to the Abbey we were dropped off about a mile away owing to the tight security arrangements. However, as it was a lovely sunny morning we greatly enjoyed the walk along the Embankment to the Abbey.

Here we were shown to our seats, vacant and all ready waiting for us. We sat with other ATS members, some of whom had travelled great distances, even from Scotland. Our seats were close to the tomb of the Unknown Warrior.

The service started at 10.30am and, like all remembrance services, a very sad and solemn occasion and we are sure many of us shed tears remembering our loved ones and the friends we had lost.

Big Ben struck 11am, the artillery guns sounded outside in the distance and at that moment we are sure all London stood still. Inside the Abbey all was peace, not a sound as people bowed their heads and remembered.

The next part of the service was the scattering of poppies on the tomb of the Unknown Warrior.

After the service we left the Abbey into bright and warm sunshine in time to watch the parade, two very kind policemen having made a space for us to stand – maybe the medals that we wore had something to do with that.

Afterwards we returned to the Garden of Remembrance and laid the crosses we had brought with us on the appropriate Regimental Gardens.

A very sad occasion but a great day to remember.

ATS DINNER CLUB

Two hundred and fifty members of the ATS Dinner Club attended their Annual Luncheon on Saturday 7th October 1995 at the Mount Royal Hotel in Bryanston Street, London.

This was our first Luncheon at this hotel and members seemed to be very pleased with the venue and with the lunch provided. The Chairman, Lt Col Betty Michell, read greetings from HM The Queen and HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and toasts were drunk accordingly!

Details were given of the proposed venue for next year's Luncheon 1996, which by popular vote is to be held in Birmingham. This will give members who live in the Midlands and the North a better and easier chance to attend.

WRAC POSTAL ANNUAL RE-UNION 1995 by Margaret Grant MBE (Edinburgh)

The 7th Reunion of former WRAC Postal & Courier Operators took place in LONDON 26th to 29th October 1995. The Annual event was attended by members from all over Britain.

A well organised weekend of entertainment started on Thursday evening at the Chelsea Pensioners Club where we sang and danced the night away to their great band, very talented musicians.

Friday was a busy day, starting with a boat trip on the River Thames then lunch at Greenwich for some of us, whilst remainder went visiting Historical Buildings and shopping for gifts to take home. In the evening a Tour of the Tower of London, then we were invited to the Beefeaters Club for an excellent buffet and later on we watched the Ceremony of the Keys. Saturday evening we had a sensational Re-union Dinner at the Victory Services Club then we sat and reminisced until the early hours.

Sunday after breakfast we attended church service at the Royal Hospital Chelsea Chapel. We were proud and privileged to parade alongside the Chelsea Pensioners. The Governor, on his inspection, spoke to every woman on parade before we marched in for the Service.

I was honoured to be asked by the Reverend Tom Hiney MC to read the WRAC Collect. Thanks to the number who attended, I was very proud of them on parade as it is well over 30 years since some of them had paraded. It must have been all that good training we had at Richmond Park! I have been informed that we are the only women that have had this Honour so it was indeed an emotional time, never to be repeated, a great honour to have been there!

SHOPPING LIST

The Association Badge is available for sale from the WRAC Association HQ These cost £2.00 including package and posting.

If Branches order from 10-20 badges they may deduct 5% from the cost.

For orders over 20 they may deduct 10% from the cost.

All cheques to WRAC Association please and sent to:

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WRAC Association Badge

AIR CRASH 1945
by Mrs Joan Awbery

The last edition of *Lioness* (p.99) contained a short article by Mrs Elizabeth Heal concerning the loss of 17 ATS in a flying accident over the Mediterranean in October 1945. By a coincidence much information had recently come my way about this tragedy. It started with a list, provided by Mr Val Grimble, of names on the Brookwood memorial to those who have no known graves and commenced a line of enquiry about the loss of so many ATS on the same day. Thanks to Mr Grimble, our indefatigable researcher in all matters ATS, some information came to light and from then on many people were involved in providing greater details of this terrible occasion.

Not only did Mr Grimble furnish the names of the girls who died but also the names of the crew of the lost aircraft. One of these was Flight Lieutenant John Whymark, DSO, DFC of 103 Sqn, based at that time at Elsham Wolds. Coincidentally a cousin of mine was with that Squadron at Elsham Wolds and he was able to put me in touch with John Whymark's son, Robert, now in Saudi Arabia. Mr Whymark has most generously written in considerable detail so that, from having just a bare outline, the whole incident has become one of great personal interest in this poignant story. Mr Whymark put me in touch with his mother and step father Mr and Mrs Basil Henderson who were greatly involved at the time of the tragedy.

It appears that the 17 ATS, some with GHQ 2nd Echelon CMF, returning from leave and others going overseas for the first time, flew out on 4 October 1945 from Glatton airfield near Peterborough for Pomigliano, near Naples. It is clear from parents' letters that the girls originally expected to be returned either by land as the majority troops did at that time, via France and Switzerland, or by sea and indeed one girl is reported to have gone to Liverpool twice to return by ship but each time the sailing was cancelled. It was decided to send them out to Italy by 'plane.

Several aircraft were engaged in trooping at that time. This particular Lancaster, whose pilot was F/Lt G Taylor with F/Lt Whymark among the crew, took off at 1am on October 4th. Bad weather was anticipated over the sea around Corsica and the crews briefed to fly at 2000 ft only. At 4.40am the aircraft made contact with its home base and a few minutes later called Foggia, Italy. These messages were received and acknowledged but nothing further was heard and at no time were distress signals received.

About dawn Base received messages from three of the aircraft saying they were turning back because of bad weather and they were instructed to land in the south of France. Two of the planes did this. One plane was never heard of again. It may never be known why, or exactly where the aircraft went down, the most likely cause is suspected to have been the weather with thunderstorms in the area.

Parents were notified on October 9th that their daughters were missing but no further information was forthcoming. Their pleas to the Air Ministry and ATS Records brought no help; they were informed that names and details were being publicly withheld until sufficient time had elapsed to make certain the plane would not be found. In desperation families wrote to national newspapers in an effort to discover what had happened.

The first public indication of the disaster appears to be on Friday November 16th when the *Daily Express* reported that they had received a letter from the mother of one of the girls saying "My daughter, with 32 other ATS left Peterborough on October 4th. One plane with 16 ATS reached Italy safely. The other had to turn back over France because of engine trouble. That is all I know. It was not reported to the world that 17 girls had simply vanished". Other parents protested

about the secrecy, other newspapers took up the story and questions were asked of the Air Ministry. But still families had great difficulty in finding out details and their letters to the Press made distressing reading.

The Air Ministry's Lord Stansgate reported that parties, including mountaineers, were searching the overland route. Eighteen rescue teams, including ski-ing and mountaineering experts posted along the main European air routes were on call should the 'plane be found the crews flying over the route were asked to keep a look out, but because of the circumstances nothing could ever be confirmed about the reason for the plane's disappearance.

Lord Stansgate said that the accident record in Transport Command "must be considered in relation to the scale and character of its activities which continued to be downward." To improve safety in the air flying control organisation was being standardised, an extension system of radar being provided and a new organisation, created to search for missing aircraft was being used. Improved and more detailed meteorological information and staging posts were being reorganised to enable aircraft on trunk routes to divert in the event of unfavourable weather or other emergency.

But of course, all this was too late to prevent the terrible tragedy made all the more devastating because by then the war was over, this was peace time and no enemy threat involved. The parents' and families' grief would have been almost unbearable.

The names of the girls are as given by Mrs Heal in the last *Lioness* and are on the Brookwood Memorial. The two Nursing sisters lost were Sister J S A Curran QAIMNS and a South African Nurse, Sister Sadler.

From this tragedy and its aftermath, some happiness came. The gentleman who is Mr Robert Whymark's step father, Mr Basil Henderson had been engaged to one of the girls who died, Lance Corporal May Mann. Through their mutual enquiries about the deaths of the crew and the ATS passengers, Mr Henderson met the widow of Flt Lt John Whymark and they eventually married.

Mr Whymark and Mr and Mrs Henderson have been most generous in sending me extracts from official documents and reports, copies of newspaper articles, letters and, in Mr and Mrs Henderson's case, their own personal recollections and I am very grateful to them.

AIR CRASH
by Mrs Betty Cullum (née Anderson)

I read with interest the article written by Mrs Elizabeth Heal on the 1945 Air Crash as I was one of the lucky ones who arrived safely back in Italy on another plane.

I knew several of the girls who were killed, Jessie Semark, Alice Lilleyman, May Mann among others who were stationed with me in 602 Company, 3rd Mediterranean Group in Caserta, Italy. The crash was very hushed up at the time and, even today, I do not know where or how the crash occurred but I do know how saddened we all were when we heard the news.

Some of the ATS girls killed were drafted to North Africa in June 1944 and were transferred to Italy at a later date. They all, as I did too, survived the war and in October 1944 were granted home leave – the first for some considerable time. It was from this leave that the girls were returning to their overseas units which made it all the more tragic for their families.

I was CSM of 602 Company and I often remember that sad day and my lucky escape even though 50 years have passed but my memories of the friends I made and the companionship I found will remain with me always with the aid of the WRAC Association.

LONDON AREA GROUP RE-UNION – AYLESBURY 2ND SEPTEMBER 1995

I went to bed on Friday 1st September thinking 'Oh heck, what have we let ourselves in for?' I'm sure most of my fellow committee members must have felt the same unless made of sterner stuff than I!

Up at 0615 on 'The Day', breakfast, shower and even time to do the crossword, before being picked up at 0810, to the accompaniment of a huge clap of thunder. We did manage to load the car and be on our way before the downpour started.

We arrived at the Ex-Service Club at about 0850, to find Alma Stride, our indefatigable Chairman giving a last minute briefing. Then we all set about making ready for our guests, putting up notices, setting out our stalls and donning our red sashes – Orderly Sergeants for the day!

The caterers were beavering away around us, and before we knew it, our guests started to arrive. First on the scene, 2 intrepid ladies from Medway, followed closely by some of London Branch and then I lost count. Our guest of honour, Brigadier Field arrived together with Mrs Eileen Carter, the London Area Group Chairman. We all had coffee and biscuits in the lounge, before taking our seats in the hall, for Alma's welcoming address, in which she reminded us that our branch was still only a baby, as it does not celebrate its 4th birthday until November.

Brigadier Field then brought us up to date on the Association news. This was followed by a talk by Dr Jarvis, who spoke about the covert operations which went on at Bletchley Park during the war. (I thought it was Wilfred Babbage who designed the first computer). A tasty lunch was served at 1300, with a yummy pudding, and our second

the Ex-Service Club at Aylesbury for the use of their facilities: the caterers for their excellent and cheerful service and all our guests for making the effort to come – thank you Ilford, Medway, London, Greater London and Wimbledon, and all the Aylesbury girls, whose hard work made the event possible. Who knows, we might do it again one day perhaps in about 5 years time.



**RECRUITS AND TRAINING NCO, DROITWICH 1941
REUNITED AT LONDON GROUP RE-UNION**
*Winifred Pontifex ; Penny Riddy (Renson) ;
Jo Richardson (Fox) ; Nina Garnham (Pitt) ;
Freddie Weatherley (Allen)*



**VICE-PRESIDENT, GROUP CHAIRMAN,
BRANCH CHAIRMAN AND ORGANISING COMMITTEE
AT AYLESBURY**

speaker, Mr Gerald Line spoke about Ellesborough Church and its connections with the Prime Ministers country home, Chequers – a well named establishment – it has had a very chequered history (ouch!). Time allowed after this to 'mingle', buy souvenirs and see if our numbers had come up on the raffle, before tea, with sandwiches, cakes and biscuits and a slice of our celebratory cake.

Our last speaker was Mr John Williams, Bucks Emergency Services Organiser for the WRVS, who told us about the present day role of the WRVS (they don't just serve cuppas from mobile canteens these days). We think the day went well – we had some very complimentary remarks made to us – but we await the reactions of our guests with interest. We thought our venue a little small for 119 ladies and 3 gents, plus the catering staff, but we thank

YORK A-A RE-UNION – 5TH AUGUST 1995 by Mrs Holder (née Lewis)

With very mixed feelings we arrived at York for the 3rd Re-union of Ex-ATS girls who served in Mixed Heavy Ack-Ack Batteries during World War II. Following the first re-union arranged by Vee Robinson in 1993 we weren't sure what would happen in the future so you can imagine how thrilled we were to learn that "retired" Major David Robertson was prepared to organise Re-union 2 at Imphal Barracks in 1994!

Once again we had a wonderful time, and our "joy" at being with old friends must have made the Major decide that it was worth repeating in '95. However, we were told "it" was to be the last at the Barracks and in all fairness we couldn't be too greedy – there would be other ex-service groups who would love the opportunity of a "get together" in those surroundings.

Nevertheless, in spite of some sadness, we were determined to enjoy ourselves and we certainly did, with a buffet supper and entertainment on the evening of August 5th (Saturday).

The following morning we assembled at the Barracks and were "bussed" – some 300+, to the Memorial Gardens for a Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving, after which we marched through York – with the Salute being taken by our "boss" Sir Martin Farndale, the Master Gunner and also Major General Patrick Cordingley, DSO, GOC, 2nd Division, York, on our return to the Barracks we had lunch, followed by speeches from Major Robertson (retired) and the Master

Gunner. "Well", we thought "That's that – whatever happens in the future we've had three wonderful re-unions in York, renewed old friendships and made many, many new ones and at our time of life (don't forget we are veterans!!) we've learned not to expect too much".

Then – Major General Cordingley took the microphone saying how much they'd all enjoyed having us and – would we like to come again in 1996? We left him in no doubt about our answer – YES PLEASE!! – So, all being well and God willing it will be "look out York, here we are again??"

On behalf of everyone, may I place on record our grateful thanks to Vee Robinson for the 'brain storm' which resulted in Re-union No 1, David Robertson and all at Imphal Barracks for Nos 2 and 3.

(See page 52 for details of 1996 Reunion at York. Ed.)

Y GROUP RE-UNION – BEAUMANOR (Speech made at plaque dedication)

It's very gratifying to see so many of you here today and, indeed, it's a fitting tribute to all the hard work put in by Margaret Remwick in arranging the event and to Joan Nicholls for making the whole thing possible.

I feel something of a fraud standing here today in that this is your reunion and I have no real right to be here except, perhaps, in *loco parentis* for my late father who was at Beaumanor from 1941 until its closure in 1969.

However, when I heard that there was to be a reunion of Woygites, I felt very strongly that the opportunity should be taken, in some way, to commemorate formally the important contribution that you all made to winning the war against Germany and Japan. And this seems especially important in this year as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the end of that war.

As a casual observer of military history it seems to me that war is a very unnatural activity even for those professional soldiers who train in its art. For those civilians who find themselves in wartime service it must be very strange indeed.

But those of you who found yourselves in Y group were here *only partly* by chance. You were here because you showed an aptitude for the often difficult and always painstaking work that was so essential to the reading of the enemy's mind. Moreover, whilst there must have been a spread of abilities as in any community, once here you remained here because you could demonstrate real skill during the long months that you were incarcerated within these grounds. Some of the flavour of this can be found in the Chronicles of the beloved St Upid. "The Exiles" "The Chosen Few". I hope I won't embarrass you by referring to you as an elite.



Mrs Monkman (centre) at
Y GROUP RE-UNION

For those brave men and women who found themselves amidst the bullets and bombs of some campaign which, with the benefit of hindsight that 50 years provides, they can now see were perhaps politically motivated or militarily inept because of poor intelligence, must feel that sadly, however heroic their efforts, they perhaps made only slight contribution to the overall war effort. The members of Y Service, on the other hand, have experienced the reverse in that the value of your contribution can only now be seen to be very significant. At the time I'm sure that many of you felt that your efforts might be better employed closer to the front.

But it was of immense value. Since the release to the public of BP's success, there have been, not surprisingly, a number of detractors who have claimed that even the possession of such vast amounts of intelligence had little effect upon the war. To which I feel we could all say "Phooey". Let there be no mistake. The efforts of all of you here, however employed; as intercept operator, teleprinter operator, runner, plotter, logger, engineer, driver, or whatever, provided the first stage in an intelligence gathering exercise that was unprecedented then and, I suspect, has not been matched for success since.

If we simply consider for one moment the dark days towards the end of 1942 and the Battle of the Atlantic and the success of Y in limiting the effectiveness of the U Boat packs, it is fair to say that your efforts, even if we accept that they might not have won the war, without a shadow of a doubt prevented us from losing it. Those of you who might have been at Alan Stripp's lecture at the IWM just over a week ago will have heard him quote Sir Harry Hinsley, the official biographer of British Intelligence, claim that the work that you did helped shorten the war by between 1 and 2 years.



Y GROUP MEMBERS AT BEAUMANOR
Kay Standing (Metcalfe) : Vera Swire (Athins)
Gladys Earle (Webb) : Betty Medway (Nichols) :
Jo May (Woodward)
Majorie Bushell : Vera Knowles (Briggs)

Friends of the National Army Museum

The Society of Friends of the National Army Museum are having a recruiting drive to attract more members to participate in their varied and interesting programme of events.

If you would like to know more please write to:-

Right Reverend Michael Mann KCVO
Chairman
Society of Friends of the National Army Museum
Royal Hospital Road
CHELSEA SW3 4HT

**1995 ANNUAL REUNION –
ATS REUNION ASSOCIATION, LONDON, ONTARIO**

The 7th Annual Re-union of former ATS members took place in London, Ontario on the 13th, 14th and 15th September 1995. The weekend event was enjoyed by over 100 members, who came from across Canada and the USA.

Special guests were Peggy and John Binns, who came from Newcastle-on-Tyne, Peggy brought greetings from her local Branch of the ATS/WRAC Association.

Highlights of the event included Friday night dinner and entertainment with a special performance by the Royal Scots O'Mocha Pipe Band.



ORGANISING COMMITTEE
Wyn Raven : Barb Smith : Betty Anderson

Saturday was a busy day, a business meeting in the morning, a boat cruise in the afternoon, and the gala dinner and entertainment in the evening. One of the most hilarious features of the evening is "Drill Parade" and Inspection by "Col" George.

Sunday morning brings the event to a close, with a Farewell breakfast.

The 8th Annual Re-union will be held in London, Ontario on 15th, 16th and 17th September 1996.

The event will be held at the Howard Johnson Motel, for information and registration details please contact : Betty Anderson, 389 Wharmcliffe Road, N London, Ontario, Canada N6G 1E4.

The re-union is open to all former members of the ATS AND their spouses or guest.

**GRAND ISLE OF MAN CONVENTION AND
WORLD WAR II + 50 RE-UNION
30TH JUNE TO 7TH JULY 1995
by Edna Tingle (née Gilbert)**

Last July I attended a World War II + 50 Re-union in the Isle of Man. It was organised by the Isle of Man Joint Ex-Services Association for ex-service personnel who were stationed there during 1940-45.

I was a 'Y' Signals trainee, one of around 2,000 members of the ATS who trained there during the war. Of the many ex-service who attended the re-union only 21 of the 'Y' Signals were present. Others were from the Navy, Army 'OCTU' and RAF.

We were cordially welcomed and entertained during the week and taken out and about around the Island visiting places of interest which brought back nostalgic memories of our days there in the 'forties'.

On our first evening there was an official reception and welcome by the Mayor of Douglas and members of Douglas Corporation and other dignitaries, including the comedian Norman Wisdom who lives on the Island! It was a lovely evening, finishing off with a buffet supper.

Sunday morning we attended a Service of Thanksgiving and Dedication at St George's Church, followed by a march to the cenotaph on the promenade. In the evening we were entertained by the Band of the Royal Marines (Scotland) at the Villa Marina with a concert of commemorative music and songs which brought back memories of war time. A very enjoyable evening again.

Wednesday was our visit to the Tynwald Ceremony at St John's a few miles west of Douglas. It is held once a year in the open air on Tynwald Hill and is attended by members of the Isle of Man Parliament. We felt very proud as we ex-service members assembled for a short march to our reserved stand on the Hill, especially when we were clapped by onlookers lining the route! We listened to the Service which was relayed from the Church before the official ceremony. The Lieutenant Governor, Sir Lawrence Jones, led the procession of other dignitaries of the Isle of Man Government to the canopied podium for the proceedings of promulgating the laws of the Island. We were very moved by the ceremonies. The Royal Marines Band were there again to entertain the throngs of people.

Our final evening was again at the Villa Marina, this time for a dance and entertainment. Our favourite war time tunes were played in the style of Glenn Miller by the Douglas Big Dance Band. A good time was had by all!

SILVER PLATED ATS BADGES

ASSOCIATION HQ now holds a stock of the silver plated replicas of the ATS badge which was issued to volunteers in 1938-39 before uniforms were available. The cost is £2.75 each including packing and postage.

Branches may order in bulk and a 5% discount is allowed for orders over 10 badges.

(The stock of those badges offered by London Branch in the last Lioness has been exhausted)

**HIGHEST AWARDS FOR
EXCEPTIONAL COURAGE GIVEN
TO WOMEN 1939-1995**

Squadron Leader Beryl E Escott WRAF (Retd) is researching to write a book with the above title. She is interested in the stories of women of the United Kingdom and Old Commonwealth who received the George Cross, George Medal, The Queen's Gallantry Medal, the Military Medal, and MBEs/BEMs awarded for gallantry. If you know the details of anyone who would fit her remit please write to her at:-

9 Falstaff Court
Guild Street
STRATFORD UPON AVON
WARWICKSHIRE CV37 6RB

She is the author of several books on the WAAF, its history and wartime exploits. She will be pleased to send you details for ordering.

ON AND OFF THE BUSES
WELFARE FOR WOMEN SOLDIERS
by Lt Col (Retd) David Dunn

The Army can sometimes be compared to one of those London buses which travels a circular route through the metropolis. When you are young you stand on the pavement and watch the bus pass by in all its colourful splendour, sometimes preceded by a band playing the tunes of glory. Those inside are a mysterious group but from the legend on the front of the bus you can tell that they have come from exciting places and adventures and are destined for more. You long to be allowed on to join them. When that great day comes you board the bus and find initially that you are jostled and treated a little suspiciously and expected to know rather more than you actually do despite your time bus spotting on the outside. Anyway as the journey progresses you pick up the ethos, the language, the camaraderie, the routine, the pecking order and your place in the scheme of things. You are given more responsible tasks like looking after the money, safety, control of groups, negotiating diversions and telling others when they have reached their destination. You note the splendidly attired and be-medalled driver (CGS) and wonder if you will ever get to drive the bus yourself! As you visit the points on your route, excitement, adventure and even danger occur and you endure your share of that, not to mention changes in the climate both fiscal and natural. Some people fall off the bus and are killed, others are injured on a sudden stop or change of direction and have to be helped off, some pick up nasty complaints from their comrades or the less salubrious parts of the route and they too have to get off before they either wanted or intended. You find the effort to reach the upper deck with its better view quite an effort with barriers placed in the way or others to squeeze past. You are approached by the conductor and asked if in addition to your duty you would be prepared to put something (A Days Pay is suggested) into the hat to help those who have been forced off the bus or fell on leaving or succumbed to some distress a little later. He points some of them out to you living in the bus shelters or standing forlornly on the sidewalk with their hands held out. Then all of a sudden some johnnie come lately tells you that you have gone full circle on the route, your ticket has expired and it is time to debus. You are back on the pavement!

You continue to watch the bus go past you on the route and when it stops you and others of your ilk can chat through the windows to those whom you remember, and who still remember you, and are still on the bus. You notice how the bus is filling up with youngsters; maybe even your own children have hopped aboard. You also realise that the new driver was once your best friend until he pushed past you on the steps to the upper deck and trod on your toes. Some are allowed to reboard in plain clothes to do administrative work needing continuity and experience.

To continue the analogy there are of course many buses that make up the Army. Some are painted tartan, some are exclusive and full of engineers or educators, some are armour plated, some tow guns and some are still in their 18th Century livery. Many of the buses that you used to remember with hackles and county designations have gone to the Depot or combined their routes like "Devon & Dorset" or "Gloucester, Hampshire, Wiltshire and Berkshire" or simply "Highlanders". The number of buses is now so reduced that you could get all the passengers inside Wembley Stadium to watch a Cup Final!

Two buses in particular should be remembered. One was painted khaki and marked ATS (it carried a quarter of a million passengers in its day). The other was bottle green

or sometimes lovat green and marked WRAC (it carried some 170,000 passengers). A good and grateful government replaced the temporary khaki one with the full time green one in 1949 and then took that one off the schedule in 1992. It told those on board to join other buses which had been up to that point rather exclusively male and with much narrower stairs to the top deck and with a lot of traditional baggage blocking the passageways. It was either that or leave the bus.

The bus analogy breaks down a little on the question of fares. Usually one pays to travel but in this instance one was paid during the journey and if it was long enough one was given a token for a cup of tea on debussing. There were some discounted fares but these were usually for the benefit of the operator, not the passenger. For example the quarter of a million who travelled on the khaki ATS bus were only paid two thirds the rate of those on the male buses despite 1055 of them being killed or injured on the short 1939-45 journey and 679 being recognised as outstanding with an award. Those who got off the khaki bus between 1947 and 1949 when it changed colour returned to a pavement where women were not expected to work but stay at home in the traditional 'women's place'. Those 170,000 on the green bus were denied, for more than twenty years when the Military Salary was part of the tariff, that magic 'X' factor, given to their male colleagues on the other buses for the inconvenience of service life compared to being a civilian. That despite the fact that one of the WRAC was awarded a Military Medal for Gallantry.

When the lovat green bus was taken out of service and sent to the Depot the Driver and Conductor of that particular bus and their other helpers very sensibly took all their money, goods and chattles with them and accepted an offer of shelter in a newly painted Depot marked Adjutant General's Corps. They sent their memorabilia to the National Army Museum for them to display most graphically that women had a 'Right to Serve' and show that they did so most effectively and efficiently. (Go and see the exhibition for yourself). The money was invested for the benefit of those former passengers who might need help. About £2,000,000 was invested and it produces roughly £100,000 a year as income. When the bus was running and the Day's Pay Scheme was operating, an additional sum of £157,000 was received on board making a total of £267,000. Grants totalling £200,000 were made directly to comrades who needed help. The operating surplus helped to pay for the assistant conductor (Case Secretary) who was not provided by the bus company (shame!), to pay for running expenses and to help build up the £2,000,000 of Capital for investment. It should be remembered that the £200,000 made in grants from the funds was not the total of help given to comrades from the khaki and green buses. Some of them had struck up liaisons with passengers on the other buses and some help came from those vehicles. They also received roadside assistance from those 'very, very nice people' on the Charity busses marked ABF, SSAFA, FHS, RBL, RBL(Women's Section), Officers Association and campaign associations who receive donations from service and ex-service individuals as well as those who never got on a bus but knew someone who did or were grateful to those who travelled the dangerous route on their behalf. In all we calculate that the ATS & WRAC Benevolent Funds arranged grants totalling £250,000 to over a thousand individuals in 1994.

So where does this parable lead us? It leaves us with more and more comrades getting older each year and more likely to need help while at the same time funds diminish as inflation erodes the value of investments and the costs of Care in the Community, Nursing Home Fees and spectacular new equipment all rise. Those from the ATS

bus who left into a society which did not expect women to fend for themselves and subscribe to pensions are now largely alone in their 70s and 80s. They either remained single or are now widowed or divorced or abandoned. Their children, where there were any, are usually mobile, often unemployed and more often with families of their own. Those from the WRAC green bus are aged 60 or less. Many of them remained single too. Some tried the single parent route, some tried the marriage route but were unsuccessful and some got caught in the British Army's Arabian approach to marriage. (Instead of saying "I renounce thee" three times, the soldier merely visits his Regimental Administrative Office and declares himself to be a 'Single Soldier' and abandons his wife (often ex-service) to illegal occupancy of a quarter and facing eviction!). All in all a constituency needing help.

The need is for another £2,000,000 to double the investment income to the fund to meet the anticipated 1000 cases a year well into the 21st Century and remain independent and recognizable to those who got off the khaki and green buses.

Anyone winning the National Lottery and finding the prize too big need look no further. Failing that a legacy in your Will, a Gift Aid donation, a CAF remittance or just a cheque now would be well received and gratefully accepted by The ATS & WRAC Benevolent Fund (Charity No 247793) at Worthy Down, Winchester, SO21 2RG.

The buses may have been stopped but the need for transport remains. It would be nice if it were Public Transport (Veterans Express Coaches) but that is too much to hope for now that the buses have been deregulated and it is everyone for herself.

It is going to be a bumpy ride. Hold very tight please. Ting! Ting!

ARTICLE

by Mrs Enid Turner (née Roots)

Reading with interest recent articles written by past members of the ATS has prompted me to put pen to paper and write of my happy recollections from joining up until demob.

I finally made it in March 1945 when I reported to Glen Parva Barracks in Leicester. I went along to the Stores to be kitted out where I found they had run out of suspender belts. One of the requirements when being issued with kit was to put on a pair of "those" stockings and issue shoes. I packed everything else into a kit bag and trudged back to the Billet. On route I had to pass other billets occupied by soldiers (male). Can you imagine my embarrassment of having to run the gauntlet of "What's the matter luv 'ave they run out again?" while holding my kit bag on my shoulder with one hand while desperately trying to keep up my stocks with the other! Glad to say operation accomplished – just!

There was, however, a distinct absence of laughs during the medical parades to collect "jabs" also notable for having to stand in line in just knicks and bra, hand on hip waiting your turn. The girl in front of me fainted and as I stood patiently for someone to pick her up a very loud voice cried out "Come along Private, don't stand there – just step over her as we haven't got all day. She'll come round!" I crossed my fingers hoping the needle wasn't as blunt as the voice!

Next morning – drill parade! "Come on, get those arms swinging" did nothing for the pain and discomfort of the previous day's inoculations or for the "terms of endearment" repeatedly muttered under one's breath as the hours wore on! The day finally capped by the stupid jerk who played a record of "Home Sweet Home" on her gramophone. I just cannot remember what happened to her or that record!!!

OFFICERS BRANCH LUNCHEON

The annual meeting of the Officers Branch of the WRAC Association will take place in the Officers Mess of the AG Corps Centre at Worthy Down nr Winchester on Saturday 21 September 1996.

The Meeting will assemble mid-morning for coffee. This will be followed by a briefing on matters of interest and an opportunity to ask questions.

Pre-lunch drinks will consist of an initial drink included in the overall price. After that a cash bar will be operated.

Lunch will be a hot buffet in the Dining Room of the Officers Mess. Wine will be served with the meal.

Inclusive price for morning coffee, lunch with wine will be £10.

Please send your cheque for £10 made out to WRAC Association with the application form below and an sae for return of your ticket and programme.

Transport will meet the train from London arriving at Winchester Station at 10.00 am. It will collect others arriving from other destinations before that time.

NB. There is a limit on the numbers that the Worthy Down Mess can hold.

Please apply no later than 29 July 1996.

CLOSING DATE 29 JULY 1996

**TO: WRAC Association HQ,
Block 10, AGC Centre,
Worth Down, Hants SO21 2RG**

From:.....

.....
.....

I wish to attend the meeting for former WRAC Officers on Saturday 21 September 1996.

I will travel by car/train (delete)

My car details are:

Make	Colour	Reg No.
------	--------	---------

I enclose a cheque for £10 for the lunch.

I enclose cheque for £12 for the lunch and transport from and to Winchester Station.

I enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for my receipt, programme and ticket.

CHEQUES TO WRAC ASSOCIATION PLEASE.

Date.....Signed.....

During the course of the following six weeks one had to decide on a chosen career. There were a number of 10–15 minute talks about various trades available but one in particular took all of 30 minutes! Can you remember which one? Yes, you're right! "Cooks"! However, at last one began to sense that we were beginning to do something worthwhile even though VE Day was, in fact, not far away.

From Glen Parva I was posted to Craigmillars in Edinburgh to start Signal training with 25 OKL. This was also where my first Charge took place due to having missed the last Tram back to camp. The ensuing Admonition took account of girls from the South could not possibly know of the local travelling chaos that accompanied Scottish

Unknown to us the Orderly Officer also visited the billet during the same afternoon and the following day we were issued with a stern warning by the Camp Commandant as to the dangers of imbibing the local brew! Many a giggle was also had recalling the occasion when having previously handed in our AB64s for recording our impending 72 hour mid-course leave details the pay books were promptly withdrawn again by a very red-faced young Subaltern! Later it transpired that she had very neatly but quite erroneously written "72 hours inter-course leave"! Remember Ma'am?



Lucilla Tapp, Majorie Sharples, Enid Roots

holidays! This brush with the law also gave me my first introduction to Red Caps!!!! Waiting for one at the Gate to catch you as you walked out, stockings on inside out, non-issue tie and, crime of all crimes, hair up at the side of one's cap! Having established one's guilt one was sent back to change only to revert back again once outside.

Early in July the whole Signal School moved down to Denbury in Devon leaving one with fond memories of Edinburgh in general and the Randolph Club in particular. How different Denbury was to Edinburgh! A small village one mile from the Camp and remote enough for us to walk around in shirtsleeves and without caps! It was a wonderful time there – so many laughs and such companionship! Our adopted theme tunes were "I'm beginning to see the light" and "You've got to accentuate the positive" had special significance. An initiation into rough cider occurred after Church Parade one very hot Sunday when the landlady advised "half of rough and half of sweet". After only 2 halves we were quite merry and during the walk back to Camp we managed to turn the local signpost around claiming it was to confuse the enemy! We also collected two large bunches of wild flowers and placed them in the billet fire buckets before collapsing on our beds and promptly falling asleep.



Sadie Solomans, Enid Roots, Mary Fogarty

I ask anyone who served at Denbury if you can remember the Village Hall and its 'dance floor'? Despite the shortcomings of the latter it was the scene of so many laughs and happy times. These came flooding back when I recently re visited Denbury for old times sake. The Camp is now, somewhat ironically, a Prison but Denbury itself has not changed save for a few more houses and a garage. The Village Hall is still very much as it was despite having been "tarted up" as one local put it!

All good things come to an end and eventually I was posted to the War Office. However, a year later following the arrival of "Monty" as CIS another posting saw me at the Drill Hall, Derby. I married some three months later and was demobbed.

Which now brings me to the point of my story! During my time at the Signal School I formed a friendship with four other girls and we became almost inseparable and we kept in touch until after I was married. I am enclosing two snapshots taken at Denbury.

One other who became a great friend while I was at the War Office was Betty Newlands who later married a Bill Williams and emigrated to Montreal, Canada in the early 1950s.

I would dearly love to hear from any of the above and any other girls I may have met at either Glen Parva or Signal School.

BRANCH REPORTS

ALDERSHOT. As usual our committee has planned an exciting series of events for us, despite heat exhaustion! In August we were given a most interesting talk about the work of the Customs and Excise, followed in September by a Quiz Night to sharpen our wits. In October we held our Annual Dinner at the Squires Holt restaurant on the Hogs Back - a very enjoyable and well attended occasion.



ALDERSHOT BRANCH
Annual Dinner at Squires Holt

At our AGM, held in November, it was announced that the final figures for our May Fayre and donations had resulted in £650 for the Benevolent Fund, which has now been despatched. Next year we plan to hold a summer coffee morning in aid of the fund and are investigating issuing swear boxes to members who would like to make a small (depending on how much they swear!) weekly donation; if any branch already does something similar we should be happy to hear their ideas. Our Christmas party was also well attended, despite the seasonal snow, mince pies and mulled wine disappearing at a rate of knots. Gwenda and Peter Easton braved the weather to bring along their plant stall, which included some rare and beautiful specimens (three of which are offspring of that from the old WRAC Association office at Guildford) and Gwenda also organised a raffle which helped to offset expenses.

Lieutenant Colonel Mary Soames took our (then) oldest member to Buckingham Palace before it closed to the public for the season; for Emily Richards it was an exciting and memorable day but alas the following week she was taken ill and has had a prolonged spell in hospital: happily she is making a good recovery in a nursing home and hopes to return to her flatlet at William Knott House, Aldershot. If any ex-ATS who served with her would like to write to her, cards and letters can be forwarded via the branch. However, Emily has been slightly upstaged by our newest and now oldest member, Mrs Adeline Davies (née Ransom), who has just had her 98th birthday. Mrs Davies served in France during World War I when she was Wkr 24643 and during World War II she cared for foreign refugee children in Farnham. Our contact with her is the result of an appeal for information and memories advertised in the Lioness, which her daughter happened to see. She has now been interviewed by a representative of the National Army Museum and her recollections have been preserved in the form of a taped interview; she has a fascinating album of photographs of herself and fellow servicemen and women taken at home and in France, which is at present on loan for copying.

The Aldershot branch usually meets on the third Tuesday of the month at the Church of Scotland Hall, Queens Avenue, Aldershot, so, please come and join us in March if you happen to be in the area on the 19th at 7.30pm.

AYLESBURY. We have had a hectic few months since the last issue, preparing for the 1995 London Area Group Reunion, which we hosted at the Ex-Service Club, Walton Street, Aylesbury on 2 September.

We catered for 116 guests, plus 3 speakers, members from all five branches in the group attending, plus some from Medway Branch. It seemed to go very well, and as a result of the generosity of all those who attended, we were able to send a donation of £200 to the Benevolent Fund.

Five of our members attended the Remembrance Service at the Civic Centre Aylesbury, and laid a wreath on behalf of our fallen comrades.

We have been partying again: on 2 December we had our Branch Christmas Party, celebrated in the usual way, with plenty of good food, crackers, party games and carols. Our voices are not what they were these days, but a good time was had by all. The party was arranged by the Hemel Hempstead platoon, who did a super job, thanks girls.

More new recruits have joined our ranks, Jean James, Ellen Duddridge and Sylvia Clay.

Sadly, since our last report, we have lost one of our founders, Sheila Baxter, who died during the summer after a long illness. Sheila was our first Branch Treasurer, and we shall miss her.

BATH. Membership of the Bath Branch has reached 86. The Branch was formed in 1946 and has met without a break from that date twice a month. The average attendance is 25 to 30 members, some of whom travel quite a distance from the surrounding area, many having to use two buses.

Once a year we now have a Coffee Morning in a hotel at Weston-super-Mare so that members from Wells, Shepton Mallet, Clevedon, Portishead, Bristol can meet up with people who come from Trowbridge, Westbury and Bath.

Events organised this last year include a Coffee Morning to commemorate VE Day; attending the Corps Day at Worthy Down which was very much enjoyed by members in spite of the unexpected cold weather in the middle of such a scorching summer; a Tea Party in the Secretary's home, again on the only day in the summer when we had much needed rain so events had to be somewhat curtailed; several outings, one to Clark's village in Street where we found some bargains, Cheddar Gorge, and Bournemouth. We are joined on these trips by members of other Veterans Organisations, and we were invited by the North Africa Star Association to join them for a visit to Earls Court for the Royal Tournament. Three members were present in London for the VJ Day commemoration, a never to be forgotten experience. Next year we will be hosting the Southern Area Reunion.



BATH BRANCH
at VE Day Event

BIRMINGHAM. We are still going strong. Have had five new members, sadly we have lost two of our older members. We have 73 Annual and 37 Life Members. Our meetings average about 50. Some of our members are WRAC so they are still at work.

25 of our members went to Worthy Down and our Standard was represented there. Our members had a very good day thanks to everybody that organised it.

We had two big parades in Birmingham for VE Day and our Standard was there as well, also we were at Portsmouth for VJ and was it hot but thanks to a very kind gentleman who got the army to keep us in cold drinks. Also in London where everybody was so helpful it was just like the 40's when everybody helped one another.

We had a lovely time at Hereford Reunion where 45 of our ladies attended. Thanks to Jo and her ladies for all the hard work they put into it also the SAS meal was something different.

Some of our speakers this year included a Police Officer who runs the museum here, it was very interesting, some of the streets are still there where the crimes happened.

We have also had Air Ambulance that was very interesting and how they save lives.

BOLTON. Since our last report we have changed our meeting venue. We still meet on the last Thursday of the month and our new venue is a very nice hostelry, situated in the town centre. The room is very pleasant and we are provided with tea and biscuits free of charge. We have also increased our membership by three since we made the change.

In July we had a trip out to Fleetwood and enjoyed a lovely day by the sea in glorious sunshine, but as we were leaving Fleetwood we encountered a terrific downpour, the sky was like ink, and the traffic crawled along bumper to bumper. Thunder and lightening didn't help and as we approached Bolton the storm had cleared, and we were all very relieved to arrive home safely.

August was a very busy month, with the VJ Day commemorations. We paraded on the Town Hall Square for the Remembrance Service where Lucy Ainsworth laid the ATS Wreath. This was followed by a Service in Bolton Parish Church where a plaque was dedicated to the Far East Prisoners of War.

Five members travelled to Liverpool on the previous Sunday to attend a Service in the Cathedral organised by the Burma Star Association.

In October we held our Annual Dinner at a local coaching house. We enjoyed an excellent meal and the photo was taken in the gardens.



BOLTON BRANCH DINNER

We were very sad to hear of the death of one of our members - Blanche Bushell. Blanche had been ill for some time following an accident whilst shopping in the Supermarket. She attended our meeting on September 28th the first for a long time. She died of a heart attack on October 3rd. She had served as Branch Treasurer for five years and she will be greatly missed.

We held our Christmas Dinner on December 7th, a bit early but we are all so busy at this time of the year its hard to fit everything in. We will be having our usual Christmas Buffet following our December meeting.

BOURNEMOUTH. The Branch meet regularly on the 2nd Wednesday in the month at the Cadogan Hotel, Poole Road, at 2.30pm. It is well attended and membership has increased.

On a sad note we have lost three members. Firstly Mrs Lilian Collins (née Stock) ATS after a brave fight against cancer.

In July, Lieutenant Colonel Cynthia de Garis Martin of Poole, died.

Also in July, Major(QM) E E Harrison MBE, WRAC died.

Our Past Chairman has retired from office, also our Treasurer for fifteen years, Joan Vaughan.

In April, several members had an enjoyable day trip to the Isle of Wight to attend a well organised South Group Reunion. Our hosts made it a memorable visit.

In May, a few members joined the Secretary, who took the Salute with the Mayor of Bournemouth for the ex-Service and ex-WW2 Civilian Organisations at the Civic Service of Thanksgiving at the Pier Approach.

Our own group party for VE Commemoration was given by Doreen Snell at her home.

She prepared a delicious tea, complete with an ATS Insignia decorated cake which we ate in the garden in



**BOURNEMOUTH BRANCH
VE Day Celebration Tea Party**

Front Row:

*Freda Brown (née Dugdale), Joan Vaughan, Nora Corbett,
Kitty Clark (née Neal), Margaret Fox*

Back Rows:

*Amy Weightman, Hilda (Mick) Walter, Mrs M Lanham
Doreen Snell (née Lorenzi), Margaret Miles,
Dorothy Braybrook (née Pook)
Dora Wicks, Doreen Hill (née Petre), Mrs C Deakin
(née Sutton), Mrs B Hammond (née Brown)
Irene Mills (née Paget), Peggy Higgins (née Herbert),
Vivienne Parsons (née Brush),
Miss M Tatum, MBE, Pearl Penny (née Warr),
Vera Lovell (née Cooper),
Kathleen Brownbill (née Coot), Joyce Faris*

glorious weather. Everyone took a photo of herself in uniform, which was displayed. Great fun was had trying to identify and name the owner.

The Opening Ceremony for the VE Events held in Hyde Park was attended by six members. The Queen Mother's speech was particularly memorable. The parade took place outside Buckingham Palace, on VE Day, 50 years ago! Everything was superbly arranged and appreciated by all the Veterans who had travelled from all over the world.

Once again the Annual Summer Outing to Bere Regis took place, the coach journey took us through the lovely Dorset countryside. The Royal British Legion put on a special tea for us.

Two talented entertainers came to our August meeting. They brought a carefully edited tape which recorded the main speeches and events from 1939/1945. Alternating, they sang nostalgic songs in which we joined, remembering all the words. It was a very enjoyable afternoon.

A few members visited Portsmouth on the 15/16th August to attend the VJ Commemorations, with a great gathering of Veterans. Others travelled as far north as York and south to Weymouth to join in various events.

On 19th August, some returned to London to witness the final ceremonies, along with other Veterans some with many medals. They had seats overlooking the Queen Victoria Memorial.

BRADFORD. This year our thoughts have been dominated with memories of VE Day and in August VJ Day.

In Bradford we had a Service of Thanksgiving in Bradford Cathedral, attended by the Lord Mayor, Lord Lieutenant West Yorkshire and many more dignitaries, followed by a parade March Past and reception at the Norfolk Gardens Hotel. A video was taken of the events and this will serve as a reminder of a very emotional and stirring day which we will always remember.

In September we had a hypnotist come to talk to us and to demonstrate. A very eerie experience which caused quite a few nodding heads, lulled by this soft spoken voice.

Peggy Kenny and Nora Houldsworth travelled to York for the NW Secretaries Reunion and a large party went to the NE reunion at the Anstey Suite York where we had a most enjoyable day.

We are pleased to welcome a new member Mrs Christine Freer WRAC.

A coffee morning, bring and buy sale, pie and peas lunch with a viewing of the VJ Day video was held at Norah



*VE DAY in the Park in May
Norah Kendall, Peggy Kenny, Nora Houldsworth
Evelyn Arnold, Elsie Lambert*

Kendall's and this was a great success.

The Standard was paraded at Battle of Britain Service and again at the Festival of Remembrance and concert at St George's Hall, then at the Cenotaph the following week.

Two years ago Peggy's house was burgled and among the items taken was a wallet with her most treasured possessions - namely her war medals and various badges of great sentimental value to her and no-one else. Two days before Remembrance Sunday the medals were recovered intact and returned to Peggy. It was an appropriate time for this to happen. I need hardly say that Peggy had quite a spring in her step that morning.

BRAINTREE AND WITHAM. The Braintree & Witham Branch was founded in 1990 by Mrs Doris Manning. She has since moved to Harlow to join her family but she has by no means been forgotten.

We are now a small, but very happy and friendly group, who meet monthly in each others homes.

On average eleven of our fourteen members attend our monthly meetings, where we discuss all topics. We have various outings throughout the year and a Christmas Lunch at Braintree College.

We also give an annual donation of £50 to the WRAC Benevolent Fund and £50 to our local school for special need children.

Two of our members were fortunate enough to go to the Garden Party at Buckingham Palace last year. Being a small Branch we are more like one Happy Family, sharing together both good times and bad. Long may we continue

CANTERBURY. On the 3rd January 1996 we will be changing our venue to the Dominican Priory, St Peter's Lane, Canterbury. We have had to change the day of our meetings to the 1st Wednesday of the month and we hope to see more members at our meetings now that we are in the centre of Canterbury. A warm welcome to any Association Members visiting the city. Our meetings start at 2pm.

What a wonderful year it has been, what with the weather, the VE parades, the H(M) AA.RA Reunion in York, the VJ parades in London and locally.

Four of our members went to London for the VJ parade and met up with other Association Members for the 'never to be forgotten' parade and service. It was a very hot day, but the trees in Birdcage Walk afforded some shade whilst waiting for the 'off'. Plenty of tea, water, soft drinks were distributed by serving members of the Army, Navy and Royal Air Force (also plenty of portaloos!) and plenty of good natured banter.

The bands struck up and off we went headed by 3 of our Association Standards. We were brought to a halt in Spur Road, near Buckingham Palace, but couldn't see anything. We heard the service as it was relayed over the tannoy system, then a wonderful moving sight as a Lancaster Bomber flying right up the centre of The Mall began to drop thousands of poppies. The service over it seemed we were kept waiting for hours in the scorching heat, then the band in front of us struck up and we were off. As we emerged from Spur Road into The Mall, we saw all those cheering crowds of people - cheering us! What a thrill it was as we approached the Royal Saluting Dais and saw the Royal Family and Heads of State. Her Majesty The Queen and Prince Philip took the salute. Although our feet were aching, our hearts were light as we completed the march.

In the past we have had joint Standard bearers. Phyl Owen and May Bennett. Now unfortunately May has had to give up owing to ill-health and Phyl is moving onto pastures new following her recent marriage. Maria Power, an ex-WRAC Sergeant has agreed to step in as Standard bearer and she had a PDF Compressor Free Version to press. She carried the Standard at the dedication service of a new Standard of the Margate RBL Women's Section, at the Diamond Jubilee Service of the Royal Naval Association and at the Festival of Remembrance Service at the Winter Gardens, Margate. We all feel we are fortunate to have her. Now we are busy raising funds for a new Standard as our present one is well past its sell-by date!



FIVE NEW MEMBERS OF RA ASSOCIATION

Another exciting piece of news. Five of our members who were in Ack Ack have been accepted as Life Members into the Royal Artillery Association, Ramsgate Branch and were presented with their cards and welcomed into the Association at their last meeting. A photographer was there to record the event!

In August, instead of our usual meeting we congregated at Mavis Middleton's beach hut for a dip, a paddle and a picnic - and a little bit of business. It was a wonderful idea and we hope to do the same in 1996.

Some of us went up to London for the Parade at the Cenotaph and others attended their local Remembrance Services. Others have been busy helping with the Poppy Appeal. We were lucky enough to have been sent 2 tickets for the service at Westminster Abbey, which was very much enjoyed by the Members who attended.

We've just had our yearly party to which we invite the Wartime WAAFS and the WRNS and over 70 of us were entertained once again by Kay Rawlings and her company of troubadours. Thanks to 'our girls' for the mouth watering selection of eats.

CARDIFF/NEWPORT. Members and their families were present at a spectacular occasion on 20th August when the VJ Day 50th Anniversary was marked by a Commemoration held in the grounds of Cardiff Castle in the presence of HRH The Prince of Wales. Following a Drumhead Service, our members took part in the 'Veterans' Parade through the town centre and marched past Prince Charles who took the salute at City Hall. Participating military personnel were drawn from HMS Cardiff and HMS Cambria, the Royal Air Force, St Athan and Valley, and a host of Army regiments. This was followed by a delightful garden party, a flypast of World War II aircraft and a free fall parachute display by the Red Devils. In the evening the famous arena of Cardiff

Castle was the scene of a pageant, which concluded with Beating Retreat and a magnificent firework display.

Several members attended the Area Re-Union at Hereford on 30th September. On 7th November we held a very successful bring-and-buy afternoon.

Should members of other branches find themselves in our part of the country, they would be most welcome at our meetings, which are usually held on the second Tuesday of the month. Details can be obtained from our Secretary, Edna Thomas (telephone 01222-498250).

CHELMSFORD. Our Branch has truly celebrated in this special Anniversary Year of 1995 with outings and events galore never to be repeated, (we can't afford them).

March, Warner's Yarmouth I-O-W. Two trophies brought back for General Knowledge Quiz. April, AGM much enjoyed, and visit to London Theatre to see 'A Passionate Woman'. May 8th, VE Day, a luncheon party at Southend Bandstand where we danced and sang, all dressed in Red, White and Blue, the general public loved it and were so interested in our Association.

Later in month we held our Annual May Fair with takings of £159, all profit as everything donated by members. Our Secretary was lucky in obtaining a ticket for the Service in St Paul's and luncheon with Nicholas Soames who was very chatty and spoke of his mother enjoying her ATS Service.

June, we had a river trip from Woodbridge to Felixstowe and wasn't it hot, just the day for sea breezes.



**CHELMSFORD BRANCH
River Trip**

July, our Annual Anniversary tea party; a daughter of one of our members made a beautiful cake iced, depicting our badges, it looked lovely placed on our cloth which is embroidered with names of all members in ATS colours; one member charges 30p to embroider a name if it proves a chore; money goes in box to buy flowers for sick folk.

August, a Drumhead Service and parade in local park, wonderful turnout and didn't we get cheered? Luncheon followed prepared by members.

September saw us at Warner's Alvaston Hall, 1st and 2nd prizes in Fancy Dress awarded us.

November, Remembrance Service was the best attended to date and the weather left no excuses for not attending, it was beautiful. We later went to a lovely Garden Centre to buy Christmas decorations and presents, enjoying mincepies and a cuppa. Following this we embarked on our first ever Turkey and Tinsel at Boumemouth, 2nd and 3rd prizes Fancy Dress once again, and lastly, in a jubilant mood we set off for a shopping trip to Norwich, enjoying sherry, mincepies, sausage rolls and crackers on the coach and carol singing for those who had any energy left to sing.

Apart from all these activities we've collected £100 and sponsored an Oak Tree, one of a hundred to be planted by the Borough Council to commemorate this 50th Anniversary VE/VJ year. We shall take special interest in our particular tree; all sponsors names are being entered in a book for posterity. We've had speakers, competitions, performed a play, beetle drives, you name it, we've done it! None of this could have taken place without our wonderful helpers who collect monies for outings, do the Bring and Buy and Raffle; we hope to send a generous donation to the ATS Benevolent Fund in the New Year.

We have had sadness, losing 4 members during the year but feel honoured, that 6 WAAFS and 5 WRNS have joined us, preferring our meetings to theirs we understand.

We also send out a Newsletter each month and Press Announcement so there is much to keep us all busy, though there is plenty of time for a chat too.

We conclude our celebrations with the Annual Christmas luncheon December 19th when we have invited our new Area Chairman, Lady Kemball to join us and help us wind up a year to remember.

CLEVELAND. Since last I wrote we have once again increased our membership. I would like to take this opportunity of saying "Hello" to New Members who are unable to attend our meetings. We would be very pleased to hear from you at any time.

The topic for this year has to be without a doubt the 50th Anniversary of VE Day celebrations. Wasn't it wonderful to see the shows in Hyde Park and all the Veterans out and about on our TV screens?

I am sure the young people have learned quite a lot from just being there, I found myself with a lump in my throat a few times that week, memories are very precious to many of those who Gave Their All. They will never be forgotten, we do Commemorate as we Celebrate.

My members did us proud, we are a County Branch and there were Parades in three of the Boroughs, fortunately on different dates, we attended all with our Standard. We had lots of invitations to attend various functions from the Veterans Associations, and enjoyed them all.

We are now looking forward to the VJ Celebrations in August. The Branch held a Coffee Morning in April and were able to send a cheque to our Benevolent Fund. In September we are holding an afternoon "Come to Tea" to try and raise more for Branch and the Benevolent Fund. In August it is our yearly outing, this year we are off to visit Holy Island, Bamburgh, and Sea Houses up the Northumbrian coast. July is the Branch Party. We have members from Newcastle, Sunderland, and Middlesbrough

Branches joining us for the afternoon. Our members are going to entertain, they have been practising for weeks, hopefully we should have some photographs for February Lioness. Quite a few members are off to the Ack Ack Reunion in York in September and will also be attending the NE Group Reunion WRAC Association to be held in York September 2nd 1995.

COLCHESTER. Our branch is still meeting on the second Wednesday of each month at the Methodist Church Hall in Colchester. We have a monthly attendance of some 60 members who come from the surrounding area by bus, train and car - a tremendous effort by all concerned.

Looking back over the last 12 months a lot seems to have happened to make it a year to remember. Sadly our Branch Secretary and some of our other members have died but several new ladies have joined our ranks. Our VJ and VE anniversary activities will long be remembered. We were invited by the Mayor of Colchester to an evening of celebration in the Mayor's Parlour we really thought we had made our mark on the town. We were given a lovely buffet together with wine followed by a lively sing-song of all the old wartime tunes accompanied by a super local choir.

Another of our visits was to the Imperial War Museum where we again made our presence felt in another way. Although we enjoyed the exhibits we were disappointed to find that unlike the National Army Museum there was hardly any mention of the role played by the Women's Services in either World War. We commented on this forcibly to the staff and seemed to have given the Exhibitions Officer something to think about. We also had a very pleasant day out at Southend-on-Sea, a place many of us had not been to for years. It brought back lots of memories of happy days in the past.

Remembrance Day was observed by many of us at the War Memorials in Colchester and Clacton. Vera Cole our Secretary laying a wreath at Colchester, and Peggy Wiggett at Clacton. Both services were well attended, helped by a beautifully bright sunny day.

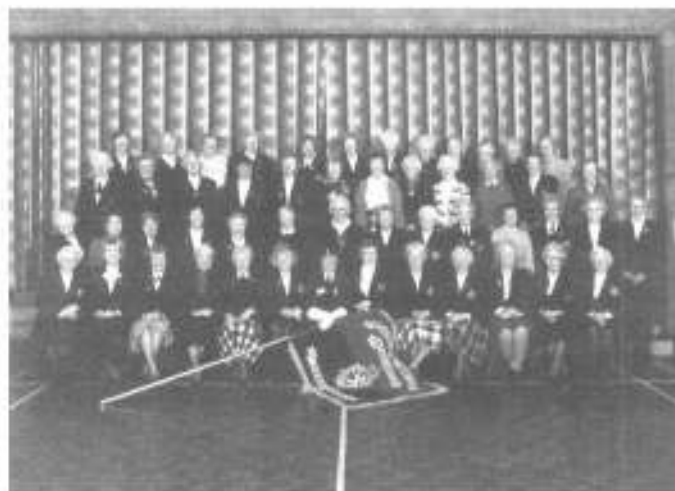
Our Christmas outing will be to Alton Garden Centre at Wickford where there will be an extensive display of seasonal goodies. We are having lunch at the Brewers Fair and the owner of the restaurant has given us a substantial discount on the price of our meal. As he explained, "If it wasn't for all that you ladies did for us in the last war I wouldn't be here!" - there's gratitude for you.

In December we are having our annual Christmas Party and Buffet and on the 8th December 70 of our members will be enjoying Christmas Lunch at the Clacton Golf Club where we have been for several years now.

COVENTRY. Since our last report for the Lioness we have had a very busy time. We still meet on the second Friday of the month, at the Royal Warwicks Club, and we average 28 members per meeting. We were invited to the parade and service to commemorate the crossing of the Rhine by the 6th Airborne Division, and we attended the VE and VJ Parades, in Coventry and the VJ Parade in London. We were very proud to be a part of it all.

Some of our ladies did a Fun Run (well a walk really) for the Royal British Legion in May and had a really good day.

During the year we went to Ashorne Hall in Warwickshire for an afternoon's entertainment and tea. We were invited to Birmingham for their Birthday Party and Hereford to the Area Reunion. Many thanks to the Birmingham and Hereford Branches for a lovely day. We held a very early Christmas Party this year at Turner's Merry-Go-Round in Northampton and had a wonderful day, including a ride on the Merry-Go-Round - Oh what memories that brought back!



CLEVELAND BRANCH

WRAC Association Grand Reunion 1997

PDF Compressor Free Version
**19TH & 20TH APRIL 1997
BLACKPOOL**

PROGRAMME

Saturday 19 April 1997

(All events except outings will be based
on the Norbreck Castle Hotel)

AM Outings to local areas of Interest arranged by Blackpool Branch

- 1145 Secretaries Meeting
- 1230 Council and Secretaries Luncheon
- 1430 Annual General Meeting
- 1800 Reception hosted by Mayor of Blackpool
- 1900 Reunion Dinner
- 2230 Disperse

Sunday 20 April 1997

- 0930 Church Service in Blackpool Parish Church
(St John The Evangelist)
- 1030 March Past to Town Hall and on to Cenotaph

Outings

The Outings are being arranged by the Blackpool Branch and further details will be in Lioness No 2/96.

Accommodation

The Norbreck Castle Hotel, Queens Promenade, Blackpool FY2 9AA (Tel 01253 352341) are now accepting bookings for the Grand Reunion. They are offering a two night package (ie Friday 18 and Saturday 19 April) as follows:-

Friday – 3 Course Table d'Hote Dinner
Overnight accommodation

Saturday – Full English Breakfast
Overnight accommodation

Sunday – Full English Breakfast

£80.00 per person sharing a twin or double bedded room

£15.00 supplement per night for single accommodation

For early arrivals on 17 April or stopovers on 20 April a special rate of £35 per person for Dinner, Bed and Breakfast per night per person sharing.

WRAC Association Grand Reunion 1997

19 & 20 April 1997 – Blackpool

APPLICATION FORM

PDF Compressor Free Version

(Application can only be made by the individual named. You cannot apply for someone else)

Numbers for the Dinner are limited to 1000. Applications will be dealt with in order of receipt.
Priority to Association members.

PHOTOCOPIES OF THIS FORM ARE ACCEPTABLE

APPLICANT

Surname.....

First names

How you wish envelope to be addressed: Miss/Mrs (*delete*)

Other (*please state*)

Address

.....

.....

.....

.....Postcode

Association Branch

I wish to apply for tickets for the following events:

Grand Reunion Dinner @ £20.00.....YES/NO

Church Service.....YES/NO

and enclose a Cheque/Money Order made payable to
‘WRAC ASSOCIATION’.

I will be travelling by train/public coach/car/branch coach.
(Please delete as appropriate.)

1. ALL APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACKNOWLEDGED.

2. TICKETS AND INFORMATION SHEET WILL BE SENT OUT IN EARLY
1997.

Send to:
HQ WRAC ASSOCIATION
BLOCK 10, A.G.C. CENTRE
WORTH DOWN SO21 2RG

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date received.....

Member.....YES/NO

Life/Annual

Length of membership.....

Subs paid for 1996.....YES/NO

Branch confirmed.....

Branch Official

TICKETS SENT

Church

Dinner

Secretaries Lunch.....

INITIALS

Receipt No

Date ack sent.....

INITIALS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1996

The Annual General Meeting of the WRAC Association will be held at The Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour Street, LONDON W2 2HF at 2.30 pm on Saturday 20th April 1996 (admission to the AGM will be by Membership Card)

AGENDA

1. Chairman's Opening remarks
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Confirmation of Minutes of AGM held at National Army Museum on 22 April 1995
4. Business arising from the Meeting
5. Report of Council
6. Financial Report
7. Report by Editor of Lioness
8. Reports of Committees
 - (a) ATS & WRAC Benevolent Fund
 - (b) Executive Committee
9. Resolutions
 - (a) Motions of Urgency
 - (b) Council Resolutions
 - (1) Election of Vice Presidents of Council
 - (2) Amendments to Rules
10. Any Other Business
11. Date of next AGM (19 April 1997 at Blackpool)

RULE CHANGES – ITEM 9 (b) (2)

RULE 7 (b)

Delete the following:-

"Director Women (Army)

Colonel Female Focus UKLF

The former Director for three years after relinquishment of the appointment

A representative of QMAAC whenever possible"

RULE 10 (a)

Amend "£20.00" to read "£30.00"

RULE 10 (b)

Amend "£2.00" to read "£4.00"

RULE 13 (e)

In the first sentence amend "£2.00" to read "£4.00" Amend the second sentence to read "At the end of the Branch Financial Year (30 September) the Branch Treasurer is to forward to the Treasurer of the Association a balance sheet showing the financial state of the Branch".

SECRETARIES MEETING

There will be a meeting of Branch Secretaries (or other nominated Committee member) in the Carisbrooke Hall of the Victory Services Club at 11.45 am on Saturday 20th April 1996.

Members of Council invite those attending this Secretaries Meeting to join them as guests for lunch prior to the AGM.

Application forms for tickets for the luncheon have already been circulated to those concerned.

CREWE. We have had a very busy year starting with the VE Celebrations and fitting our fund raising efforts in between. We have managed to send once again £500 to the Benevolent Fund.

Our Standard Bearer, Edith Francis, had paraded the ATS Standard on numerous occasions.

The Ack Ack had a reunion weekend in Nantwich on June 30th and for their church service on the Sunday July 2nd Edith was asked to carry the ATS Standard, Betty Patton and Blanche Hope were escorts, the Royal Artillery Standard was carried by Mr Cecil Ward. It was a very smart affair, Mrs Vee Robinson who organised the weekend laid a Poppy Wreath on the War Memorial and the ATS Standard took precedence. The Salute was taken by Lord Kitchener.

On August 13th Edith was asked to parade the Standard at Hanley, members of the Branch accompanied her, the service was held in the Salvation Army Citadel followed by the parade, then a meal and entertainment.

August 14th she went down to Portsmouth to carry the ATS Standard, there were 100 Standards on parade, all National Standards were in the front rank including the ATS, Birmingham and the Isle of Wight Branch Standards were also carried.

On August 17th our Branch held a Celebration Dance it was the start of our VJ Celebrations in Crewe. On August 20th Crewe Town had a big parade and Drum Head Service in Queen's Park where the Burma Star Memorial is situated. Edith supported by branch members carried the ATS Standard and our chairman laid an ATS Poppy Wreath. The Gurkhas were invited to lead the parade. In the evening we all attended a United Services VJ Dance and we organised the raffle.

August 25th we attended Mabel Redfern's Golden Wedding Party at the Crown Hotel Nantwich, we all enjoyed a lovely evening and we gave them a piece of Aynsley China to mark the occasion, we wish Mabel and Leslie continued good health and happiness in the future.

Once again on August 27th Edith paraded the ATS Standard escorted by Betty Patton and Mabel Lightfoot at a local event organised by the Cheshire Regiment.



CREWE BRANCH MEMBERS AT NANTWICH
Mabel Redfern, Blanche Hope, Elsie Walton, Betty Patton

Then on September 3rd the RBL at Sandbach asked Edith to carry the ATS Standard at their VJ Service and Parade so once again we accompanied her.

Our chairman Betty Patton went down to London to a reunion of 301 Battery 92S/L Reg on September 16th at the Union Jack Club. She enjoyed meeting up with old comrades from 50 years ago and sends them her best wishes.

A party of us went down to Hereford for the Area Reunion by mini bus. Hereford Branch had worked very hard to make it a very enjoyable occasion and what a good idea the Branch photographs were, we were very pleased with ours. So thank you, Hereford, for making it a day to remember.

This year only four of us from Crewe Branch went down to London for the Service and Parade at the Cenotaph, it is always a very moving occasion and the ATS were well represented this year.

The following week turned out to be rather hectic, the Branch held a dance on Thursday November 24th at Crewe, Friday 25th we all attended Blanche Hope's Golden Wedding Party held at the Crowsfoot Hall, Nantwich, once again we all had a lovely evening. To mark the occasion we presented them with a cheque and we wish Blanche and Frank continued good health and happiness. The next day we had a stall in the Xmas Fair held at Nantwich Civic Hall which had entailed quite a lot of work prior to the day, this completed our fund raising for this year.

We are all looking forward to our Xmas Outing to the Pantomime at Crewe theatre in December.

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY. Miss Grace Gibson ex-ATS and WRAC TA was 80 on 27th of June 1995. The Branch gave a tea party for her with a cake and presentation. The photograph shows her with other octogenarians who attended the party. It was a very happy occasion.



DUMFRIESSHIRE BRANCH

*From left to right : Miss Lilian Hodgson : Mrs Geraldine Kirkpatrick (Peason)
Miss Grace Gibson : Miss Margaret Bisset : Mrs Marion Amos (Richardson)*

EDINBURGH. The Edinburgh Branch of the WRAC Association has felt itself much diminished by the death on 29 December of Betty Vetch (aged 91).

By profession she was a teacher and, from all reports, a very well-liked and successful one. She joined the ATS before war was officially declared and returned to civilian life after the war was over.

Betty Vetch was a very active member of the Edinburgh Branch and, until she was no longer physically able to do so, carried out the duties of "Visitor", keeping in touch with any of our members who were ailing in any way.

Both in and out of the Army she was well-respected and maintained discipline with the proverbial velvet glove. For several years she served at the OCTU in Edinburgh where she would advise her cadets that, though they might not be wholly successful in this subject or that, they could all be 'militarily perfect'. She herself had high standards, standards which cadets under her wing would, in their future service, endeavour to emulate.

EXETER. The Exeter Branch celebrated its tenth Birthday in October 1995. From a nucleus of eight ladies we have now grown to a membership of seventy five and still counting.

The year has been a memorable one with an attendance of between 25 and 30 ladies at each meeting. Our Speakers were many and various including representatives from The United Nations Association, Marks and Spencer, The Abbeyfield Society and our local University Theatre. By slide shows we have travelled up the Nile and thro' the gardens of The Royal Horticultural Society.

Mrs Irene Woods, a very talented lady, stitched a panel for a quilt on which she embroidered our WRAC logo. The quilt was to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations, and it now hangs in the Civic Hall in Exeter. Thank you Irene. You have put us 'on the Quilt' if not 'on the Map'.

Our social events have included a visit to The Theatre Royal in Plymouth, a garden party in Topsham, joining our friends at the South West reunion in Taunton, and a fund raising Silent Auction. Like all our comrades, The Event of the year was the celebration of VE Day and those of us who were lucky enough to get tickets for any of the events in Hyde Park or St Paul's Cathedral were indeed truly blessed. We scarcely recognised one another in our posh hats.....

Brigadier Field kindly accepted our invitation to join us for our 10th Anniversary lunch and we hope she will make a return visit when we host our S.West Area Reunion in May.

FIFE AND TAYSIDE. After an enjoyable lunch in May, members held their AGM, with Mrs Betty Berwick taking over as Secretary from Major Isobel Gordon. Following the business part of the meeting, VE Day was commemorated by the cutting of a cake, bearing the WRAC Association badge, which had been commissioned by the Chairman, Colonel The Lady Martha Bruce, OBE TD.

Another Branch lunch in September didn't quite go as planned, due to the flooding of the premises booked for the meeting, although actual food was available after a rapid tactical redeployment! Eight members attended the WRAC Association Scotland AGM hosted by the Aberdeen Branch in October. Early December saw the Branch Christmas lunch well attended, with everyone receiving a surprise from the "Santa sack".



FIFE AND TAYSIDE BRANCH MEMBERS

GREAT GRIMSBY. We continue to meet once a month and are pleased to say our membership keeps stable; in fact Pamela Hains WRAC who was stationed, Yeovil 1961 and Larkhill 1964 has recently joined our Branch. We continue with our fund raising efforts, our Christmas Fayre made a profit of £430 which enables us to give generous donations to WRAC Association Benevolent Fund - Princess Mary's Fund and Poppy Appeal.

On Remembrance Sunday members took part in services at Grimsby and Cleethorpes and a small contingent marched in White Hall - our Chairman carried our wreath. Wreaths were also laid at War Memorials in Grimsby and Cleethorpes. Joyce Leverton made a Poppy Wreath which she placed on the Cleethorpes Cenotaph after the parade, and with another member and her grandson placed a cross on one of our comrades graves - the trio took Salute and recited Homily in honour of fallen comrades.

Members sold poppies during the week before Remembrance Sunday in supermarkets in Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Scunthorpe. Our members from Scunthorpe (Mrs Eileen Scivener [née Robson] of 93rd S/L unit) raised the splendid total of £735.01 during this collection week.

Our members enjoyed an outing to Shipley which included a boat-trip - excellent scenery and excellent company. We hope to get our Quiz team back into action in the near future.



GREAT GRIMSBY CUSHION

I enclose photograph of cushion embroidered by one of our members which was dedicated by our chaplain for use in church.

GREATER LONDON. Major Beth Rosenbaum was born in Cape Town, South Africa in May 1915, she died peacefully in Rochester, Kent on 5th September 1995.

She attended the University School of Applied Arts and was employed as a Commercial Artist before enlisting in the South African Union Defence Force in November 1939. During the war she served in the Middle East, Sudan and Eritria; being commissioned in 1944, she was seconded to British Forces GHQ Middle East.

Beth was released from the UDF and given a regular commission in the ATS, graduating from the British Army Staff College, Camberley.

In 1954 she served in Malaya and was Mentioned in Despatches.

Before retiring in 1968 Beth was General Staff Officer, Army Staff Duties Directorate; during this time she was responsible for organising the British troops who participated in the film 'The Longest Day'.

HASTINGS. As I write this a very busy year is coming to an end. For those who served in the Second World War it was with proud memories and comradeship that the VE and VJ anniversaries were supported. The VE anniversary was mentioned in the previous issue of LIONESS and in Hastings the VJ anniversary was recognised with a march from the Railway Station, along the sea front, to the Holy Trinity Church, returning after the Service via the Town Hall where the Mayor took the Salute. At the Mayor's invitation three members attended a concert at the White Rock Theatre and at a Parade through Battle followed by a

Service in the Abbey grounds Pam Waite and Win Wakelin represented the Branch.

During the year we have been well represented at the annual Church Services of other Associations such as the Ex-Prisoners of Dunkirk Veterans Service. This year was a sad occasion as due to the age of members they found it necessary to lay up their Standard - their Parade each year has been included in our Programme since we started nearly 16 years ago and it is so sad to say farewell to those now classified as friends.

A visit to Canterbury and Dover was organised by Sue Dash as our annual outing and we had a full coach load. It was a grand day and we finished up with a fish and chip supper in a cafe right beside the beach at Lydd. A new addition to our programme was a Strawberry Tea organised by our V/Chairman and held in her garden - the weather was perfect, the strawberries delicious and the company grand; in addition to which we made some money for funds. Thank you Joan Lovell.

Our Welfare Member excelled herself by running a Coffee Morning for the Welfare Fund at which she raised £184.92. This, in spite of the fact that the centre of Hastings is being rebuilt and at the time of the Coffee Morning the demolition squads were working with maximum noise, dirt and disturbance outside the RBL Hall where we hold our functions.

Molly Steele (Wright) joined the ATS in 1938 and was released on VJ Day. To celebrate her 90th Birthday we gave her an arrangement of mixed flowers and she is still active enough to have enjoyed a birthday which seemed to continue for many days. Our congratulations Molly.

We were delighted and proud to carry the ATS Standard in addition to the WRACA Standard at our Remembrance functions this year. On Sunday morning, 12th November we assembled in the Safeway Car Park for the march to the War Memorial in Alexandra Park and our photograph shows Joan Lovell carrying the ATS Standard, Margery Lucas carrying the WRACA Standard with Pauline Cook holding our wreath. Each year at the Festival of Remembrance in the White Rock Theatre the Mayor makes an appeal on behalf of the Benevolent Funds of the participating Associations. We again managed to get the required eleven representatives who marched across the front of the Theatre and on to the stage to 'Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill'. Once on the stage and having acknowledged the applause of the audience (usually about a thousand strong) the Standards took up position on the Stage with the



**HASTINGS BRANCH
with ATS and Branch Standards**

remainder marching off. The ATS Standard received just recognition and Joan Lovell was required to step forward to acknowledge the special applause. We all felt this to be a 50th Anniversary bonus.

HEREFORD. Since my last Lioness report we have hosted the Wales and West Area Reunion. After all the hard work, we raised the magnificent sum of £905 for the Benevolent Fund and had a wonderful time. Our thanks go to everyone who helped raise this huge amount and that includes all twelve Branches from the Area.

Many thanks also to some Branches outside the Area, who could not attend, but sent good wishes and especially to Rhyl Branch for their kind donation. We were glad that Colonel and Mrs Dunn were with us, as well as our friendly Mayor and Mayoress Councillor and Mrs George Hyde, Padre Jimmy Morrison, Chaplain to the Forces of 22 SAS and Senior Chaplain Wales was a splendid MC and Major Danny West ex-SAS was an excellent "after meal" speaker. We were grateful for the help of the Hereford Cadets in assisting us in many ways during the afternoon - so smart in their uniforms under the command of Lieutenant Collin Payne. The huge raffle sent prizes around the country and CREWE BRANCH were rewarded for selling the most raffle books - 100 with a large bottle of white wine with the SAS label. Thank you to all who bought tickets.

Getting back to more "mundane" things, our market stall in June last year raised £110.85 and the Ross ladies had sent the proceeds of their Cream Tea to us - A splendid £101.50 which included a £10 anonymous gift. Well done ladies. Also, £93.32p was the profit from our October stall. As well as the reunion cheque we have sent £200 to the Benevolent Fund from the Branch and £50 each to SSAFA and BLESMA and plan more money to these three charities early in 1966.

Several church services and parades have been held in this 50th anniversary and members have been present at all in Hereford. Mrs Ena Price took part in the "Tribute and Promise" service and was asked to offer two 'Promises'. Thank you Ena - we are proud of you. The Drumhead Service on September 10th was attended by six members who braved the rain which forced the Service into the Cathedral. The Parade was cancelled so General Sir Peter de la Billiere could not take the Salute - but he did attend the Service.

The Street Party in August was a great success and thankfully a beautiful day. Two ex-Ack Ack members, Mrs Phyl Bates and Mrs Win Birt, were present in York, in August, for the RA reunion. Once again we must thank Mrs Eva Burton for laying our Poppy Wreath at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday at the Civic Service.

Our Christmas lunch, again at the Stage Coach Inn, was attended by only sixteen members owing to illness but we had a lovely time. We made £12.50 for Branch funds from a 10% refund off the cost of our meal and £22.50 from a raffle for shopmobility. This is our Mayor's Charity - for electric chairs and assistance to the elderly and disabled enabling them to do their own shopping in the city's precinct.

During 1995 we have welcomed twelve new members, making 55 now but still a happy mix of ATS and WRAC. We are very proud of our younger members who are still serving, especially those in 'war-zones'.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to Branch funds during the year, especially for the reunion raffle, etc. We wish our 'not-so-well' members, a speedy recovery, and thank all for keeping in touch with Branch Secretary and generously donating funds.

HULL. Hull Branch like everyone has had an eventful year. Our Standard Bearer, Mrs Dorothy Mirfin has carried our Standard at all the major events, our members are grateful to have her and her dedication is very much appreciated.

It has been a year to remember. One of the main light events in Hull was when the BBC Songs of Praise programme came to our Holy Trinity Church for VE Sunday when we were part of the ex-Service congregation and Princess Alexandra together with her husband Sir Angus Ogilvy were also present.

Actually being there in the Church was a wonderful

experience, to hear the music and singing live was so much better than TV or radio.

The programme makers had thought of Hull for a venue when the newly appointed Bishop of Hull wrote asking them to come, as Hull was the most bombed city in the country, having continual raids right up to the last weeks of the war and the only mention they ever got was 'a North East coast town'. They had the highest death rate per head of population, 94% of their buildings were damaged or destroyed, 90% of churches were the same. In 1939 there were 92,000 homes, in 1945 only 5,945 remained undamaged.

Then came the VJ commemoration starting with an amazing Flower Festival in Beverley Minster. Our Standard Bearer was there for the grand opening, the weather was wonderful, the Minster usually so cold was a cool retreat, where the floral displays, together with the Minster architecture, lit by extra lighting, could be enjoyed.

On VJ Sunday we joined the large Parade in Beverley followed by a service in the Minster.

Our Remembrance Day Parade and Service took place in perfect autumn weather when our Wreath, one of many, was laid on the town Cenotaph.

This year our members have helped the Royal British Legion with the Poppy Appeal. Our meetings take place on the first Friday of each month on the premises of the Royal British Legion at 2pm.

INVERNESS BRANCH. November was an open meeting when next session's programme was discussed and agreed. Our President Nancy Barclay, Vice President Agnes Joss and Honorary Member Mary Cruickshanks attended the Armistice Service at Cavell Gardens and laid a wreath on behalf of our members.

Our Christmas Lunch was held in December at Dow's Restaurant. We had an excellent lunch, the atmosphere very relaxed, the food great and the staff very attentive, this helped to make the afternoon most enjoyable.

In January after business was dealt with letters from HQ regarding VE/VJ Day celebrations were read and discussed. The President then introduced Mr Thaxton from the Osprey Reserve. He showed us beautiful slides of the Reserve from the beginning to the present day, it made us realise the amount of work done by the RSPB in order to preserve these magnificent birds. We hope to visit the Reserve in the coming year.

Our AGM is in February and this meeting was made easier by the Office Bearers and Committee electing to stay for another year.

In March after the usual business was discussed the President introduced Dr Wilkes, he gave us a most enlightening talk on Homeopathy.



INVERNESS BRANCH MEMBERS

Our April meeting was opened with the President giving us the sad news that one of our members Miss Katie Smith had died. Many members attended her funeral. A donation was made to the Highland Hospice in her memory. Mr Paul from Howden's Garden Centre was introduced, he gave us a very instructive talk on the care of house plants and which plants were more suitable for the garden. This made us keen to return home to go out and put our garden in order.



ALDOURIE CASTLE

*L to R Agnes Love (Watson) : Marie Matheson (Mackay) :
Rena Burns (Grant)
Evelyn Burns (Mitchell) : Annie Milne (Macpherson) :
Nanet Harris (Couper)
Molly Macpherson (Duncan) : Cissie Matheson : Ruth Sharp
Chrissie Morrison (Chisholm) : Betty Owens (Miller)*

May was our VE Day celebration month. Our guest Mrs Molly Doyle led us in community singing, all the old wartime songs were sung bringing back many memories, then two young dancers Lorraine and Laura demonstrated how the Highland Fling, Sword Dance and the Irish Jig should be danced. A scrumptious tea was provided and served by the Committee.

Our Annual Outing was held in June. We left Inverness at 10.45am travelling through the Black Isle and along the Sutherland coast to the Falls of Shin, the views were magnificent. We had an excellent lunch at the Shin's Cafe. It was a beautiful day - sun shining brilliantly. We arrived back in Inverness at 4.00pm after seeing the countryside at its best.

We do not have official meetings during July and August, but several of our members met for morning coffee and lunch. Many of our members attended the Memorial Service for Lady Fraser Tytler at Aldourie Castle, and were given a very warm welcome.

On Monday we celebrated VJ Day with a lunch in Dow's Restaurant. As usual an excellent lunch was served. We had our Raffle and Mrs Helen MacIntyre won the special cake with the ATS Logo baked by our Vice President Mrs Agnes Joss.

LEEDS. We are now almost at the end of our busiest year ever. All our members have been involved in VE and VJ Day Parades, Services and Re-unions.

Eight of us set off from Leeds Station and with much help from BR Staff with trolleys a wheel chair and use of lifts we arrived at Alveston Hall, Nantwich for the Mixed Hy AA Re-union.

There we met up with more of our members and their service friends making a party of 15 altogether. The weekend was hilarious, the remaining hotel guests must have wondered where we oldies got all our energy from (Gun and Searchlight site training by fierce RSM's).

The Sunday Parade and Service in Nantwich was very moving and we were honoured to be joined by Lord Kitchener.



**LEEDS BRANCH MEMBERS
at Nantwich**

The highlight of the year was the Mixed Hy AA Re-union at Imphal Barracks, York, which was supposed to be our final such event as we are all now very long in the tooth but General Cordingley was so impressed by the numbers attending and our Parading through York that he said we may be able to have one more. We have our fingers crossed. The Open Air Service in the Garden of Remembrance was memorable even if it was a very hot sunny day and we all had to stand. The RSM in charge obviously thought some of us would drop out of the March Past as we were followed by an Ambulance!! He didn't realise that we had been trained in the old fashioned tough regime!!

On 9th September 8 members joined up with members of the 1st and 8th Armies at Eden Camp Nr Driffield for their VJ Day Service. Between 800 and 900 Veterans marched through the Camp the Altar in the Chapel was made by them. It now houses many memories of WW2 and is very worth a visit.

We now have 4 new members who will soon realise what a happy, friendly mob we are. One former ATS Sgt, we adopted at York, as she was on her own, must have thought us all completely mad but she still enjoyed our friendship.

Major Conley and Margaret Watson who have been Secretary and Treasurer for many years are retiring so we must find replacements. Thank you May and Margaret for running the Branch for so long you will be hard to replace.

We shall also be saying farewell to Rose Watson (née Sweet) who is moving south to her family. We all wish her happiness in her new home, we shall miss your cake Rose.



**LEEDS MEMBERS AT CIVIC VE DAY
Ethel Cotterell, Major of Leeds, Rose Watson**

LEICESTER AND NOTTINGHAM. 1995 has seen our Branch continuing its monthly meetings with an average attendance of 15-20. We have now changed our venue and are able to meet during the afternoon (2nd Tuesday of the month) and hopefully this will mean more members attending. We cover a wide area - Nottingham, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire and to all those members unable to come to meetings we send our good wishes.

We have gained 11 new members this year and hope to see those who are able, at our meetings. Sadly we also lost 5 members including Joan Bell who had been a member since 1968, Iris Bullock who had entertained us with talks and slides and Gillian Sanders, Kathleen Emery and Peggy Richardson who couldn't get to our meetings. Our condolences go to their families.



LEICESTER BRANCH MEMBERS

*Back Row : Lilian Hollis, Ellen Ward, Louise Coltman,
May Mitchell*

*Front Row : WAAF Friend, Vera Barratt, Barbara Castell,
Majorie Brutnell,
Standard Bearer Vi Rawlins*

We held our Bring and Buy which is always very popular; were taken on a visit to Italy via talk and slides; had a visit from a lady involved in a project "Women in Wartime" and a group of us paid a visit to our Haymarket Theatre for a 'Look Behind the Scenes', very interesting but not at all the glamorous lifestyle we imagine it to be. We also held our Harvest Auction which helps to raise money for our funds.

In this year of VE/VJ celebrations 4 members were invited by our friends at Ashby to their VE Teaparty and had a very enjoyable afternoon. Two members Lilian Hollis and Barbara Castell went to London for the VE festivities and met two of our Branch members Joan Beesley and Dorothy Hilton outside St Paul's Cathedral and just managed a short chat before rushing off for the next stage of the celebrations. It was nice to put faces to names. At the same time some of our members together with our Standard Bearer Mrs Vi Rawlins took part in the VE Parade and March Past held in Leicester.

In July we decided to hold a "Get Together" and our WAAF friends joined with us in preparing the food for a cold buffet and inviting other service women to join us. We did have a lovely afternoon together.

August saw three of our members including the Standard at Portsmouth for the Veterans Reunion. It was a memorable three days. Back again in Leicester for Vi to take the Standard to London for the VJ Parade then back she came the same day to take part the next day with our members in the VJ celebrations in Leicester. Our Standard has been paraded 145 times so far in 1995 and on 12 of those occasions some of our members have also taken part.

Ten members travelled to Hereford and enjoyed the Wales and West Re-union at the end of September and in November eight members went to London to the RBL Festival of Remembrance at the Albert Hall and stayed down overnight to attend the Cenotaph Service and Parade. It was the privilege of our Branch to carry the Wreath on behalf of the Association and Louise Coltman carried the wreath for us. We all found the Service and Parade at the Cenotaph to be a very moving experience. There was a very large contingent this year and it pleased everyone that we had been moved forward in the parade.

To finish our year we have our Christmas Party in December to look forward to and we are joining with our friends the WAAF's again.

1995 has been a very memorable year especially for those of us fortunate to be well and able to take part. We now look forward to 1996, will it match 1995 - we shall see!

PS Are there any members who possess a side hat which is of no further use to them? We are looking for 8 side hats which must be in very good condition. If you can help please phone L Hollis on 0116 2876086.

LIVERPOOL. We continue to meet regularly every month except in January and August and apart from dealing with business we usually have some sort of "entertainment" such as a quiz, bingo, etc. Members have attended the tea dances organised by Chester and Rhyl Branches, which they have enjoyed. Of course, during 1995 there have been special events in Liverpool marking the 50th Anniversary of the end of the war, culminating in the Tribute and Promise ceremony at Anfield Football Stadium on Sunday 20th August. We all find it hard to realise that it is 50 years since we were young women beginning to look forward to being demobbed. We wonder where all those years have gone!

In 1996 Liverpool Branch will be 50 years old and we have met regularly during all that time. However, we understand the Branch was originally formed between the two wars as part of the QMAAC Old Comrades' Association. As the member who started it again in 1946 was leaving the area she handed over the Secretaryship to Miss I F Smith in 1948. Miss Smith handed over to Miss A Hayward in 1952 and she handed over to our present Secretary, Mrs M Barton, in 1968. Our first Treasurer, Miss W Moody, served until about 1949 when she passed the job over to Mrs E M Lloyd. She served in this position until her death in 1990, when our present Treasurer, Miss A Hayward, took over. We have, therefore, been fortunate to have had long serving Branch Officers. We change our Chairman each year, and Miss A G Learmouth, MBE, TD, has been our President for many years. At various times our attendance at meetings has become very small but we have always continued to meet and since changing our meeting time to the afternoon, attendance has improved.

I have to end on a sad note by reporting the death in November of our member, Miss Irene Walker. Miss Walker joined the Branch in 1946. She was also an active member of the Royal British Legion, Netherton Branch, being a founder member of the Women's Section of that Branch and serving as its Chairman for some years. It was this experience which prompted her to offer to be Chairman of the new North West Group of the Association in order to get it started. She worked very hard and was the driving force, with the aid of the Liverpool Branch members, behind the Group's first Reunion in 1994. She had resigned from the position of Chairman of the Group in October. Irene enjoyed attending Association reunions and special events and was always good company. We will all miss her.

LONDON. There was a good turn out of members for the AGC Corps Day at Worthy Down in June - an enjoyable if rather chilly occasion. We felt very privileged to take part in the VJ Parade in August which we all managed without mishap in spite of the tropical heat, thanks to the very welcome ministrations of guardsmen and cadets with a constant supply of bottled water. Our only regret was that we were unable to hear any of the Service conducted outside Buckingham Palace.

I was also lucky enough to attend the reception at the Tower of London in the evening from where we saw the arrival of HM The Queen to the Britannia and a splendid view of the impressive firework display.

The London Area Reunion was hosted this year by Aylesbury Branch who laid on a super lunch and an interesting programme. We thank them for all their hard work. In September we again met the Royal British Legion Women's Section and the WRNS Association in a friendly Quiz. We were unable to improve our position and were again second to the winners, the Women's Section.

How good it was to see HM The Queen Mother at the Field of Remembrance, going round in a little 'buggy'. We did not know then that her hip replacement operation was imminent and we send her all good wishes. Thanks to



LONDON BRANCH MEMBERS ON VJ DAY
Dorothy Foster - Eva Ellison

representations by many members, we were in Column B for the Cenotaph parade this year and there was a good turn out from many branches. On behalf of members the branch laid an ATS wreath.

We have had many new members during the year but sadly, nine deaths. Elsie Sycamore who has been a member of the committee since 1962 has now retired and we thank her for her long service. We are happy to welcome two new members, Dorothy Farr and Margaret Rose.

From March we will be holding our meetings as well as the Christmas Lunch in the Gascoigne Room at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo.

MANCHESTER. We have been inundated with requests to join in parades from all directions and indeed enjoyed each one we have managed to attend. Marched behind all kinds of Bands and of course, when some of us attended the VJ Parade in London, a treat indeed for us to march behind the Guards Band, what a treat! We wouldn't dare put a foot wrong, particularly as a Guards Officer was shouting orders. We had tickets for most of the performances including the Retreat and the fireworks, not to forget the London cabbies, they were great to us all. For our friends who didn't make it to London I am sure the commentary on the BBC was enjoyed by all. The BBC are great at these sort of things. Many a tape recorder was busy that week-end.

From one parade to another, we paraded with the Royal British Legion for Armistice Remembrance, laid a wreath to

comrades in the ATS who gave their all. In the evening we stayed for a concert and a knees up. Oh yes, some of us managed that, a few creeks and groans but showed good form I think!

Some of us have just returned from a Christmas Show given by Ashton-on-Mersey Show band I have mentioned them at write up before. All the old lovely music we all love, with happy memories of days gone by but the music is still the same. There I'm getting nostalgic but we are allowed that at Christmas I think.

MIDDLESBROUGH. In May all our members attended the marches and various events for the VE Day Celebrations. We also attended the Battle of Britain march organised by the RAF Association. Some of our members were in London for the AGM. We had some days out in the summer. In August we organised a Dinner and Dance to commemorate the VJ Celebrations. Other Associations attended and displayed their Standards. The Naval Cadets gave us a display accompanied by the Pipes and Drums. The Air Force Cadets helped with the Tombola and the Territorial Army helped with the Raffle. Major Fiona Campbell accepted our invitation to attend as our VIP and she gave the toast. The Mayor and Mayoress of Middlesbrough also attended as our VIP guests and we exchanged plaques. The whole evening was a great success and everyone enjoyed themselves. Most of our members attended the Northern Reunion which was very enjoyable. On the 12th November most members were at the Cenotaph to lay a wreath which was a very moving experience.

NEWCASTLE. Our meetings are well attended and it seems every month we are getting new members. We took part in the VJ Parade in Newcastle, also joined in celebrations.

Some of the members took part in the Royal British Legion broadcast of the BBC Remembrance Sunday Half Hour of Praise.

We also attended the Armistice Parade and Service in Newcastle. Members had a coach trip to the Border Country and enjoyed our day at the North East Re-union at York Racecourse.

Mrs Peggy Binns has been to Canada and stayed with an ex-comrade, she took a citation from us to their Re-union.

Twenty members went for a week-end to Warner's Holiday Hotel at Alveston, Cheshire, and had an enjoyable time.

NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK. During 1995 sixteen new members have joined the Branch and increasing numbers are attending our monthly meetings. We are delighted to welcome former WRAC members - we hope eventually to recruit more as we need younger people to take over and continue after we can no longer be quite so active. Not that we intend to fade out yet, the mutual interests, the pleasure of getting together once a month and the spirit of comradeship all help to keep us young.

We turned out in force to parade on VJ commemoration day followed by a service in the cathedral in the coolness of which we were thankful to arrive after the heat of that afternoon. Two members were in Westminster Abbey and their account of the day is elsewhere in the Lioness.

In October members attended the 80th anniversary service of the death of Nurse Edith Cavell whose grave lies just outside the cathedral. On November 11th five of us went to join our Great Yarmouth colleagues who held a service and laid a wreath of poppies beside the plaque commemorating 26 ATS girls who died in an air raid in May 1943. It is the intention of the Yarmouth group again to hold a service there on the anniversary, 11th May 1996 and if any members are in the area at that time they will be most welcome. Details will be available in April from Mrs Beryl Coupar, telephone 01493 730129.



AT GREAT YARMOUTH PLAQUE

Some of us have been to the recent Dresden Trust exhibition in the Cathedral; pictures depicting the ruins of Dresden and of the Cross and Orb that will be Britain's contribution towards the rebuilding of the Frauenkirsch "In memory of all those killed by aerial bombardment throughout the World". The exhibition will be touring the country.

We were saddened by the death of Mrs Geraldine Dack on 30th October. Gerry had been a much loved and respected member of our Branch and she will be sadly missed.

Miss Ann Scott has resigned as secretary, and the post has been taken over by Mrs Joan Awbery. Special thanks were given to Ann at our AGM in November and she was presented with a book in appreciation of her year's work.

We held our usual Christmas party at the December meeting and we were delighted to welcome Lady Kemball, who spoke to us of her role as chairman of the WRAC Eastern Group and of her visits to other Branches in the Group. One of her suggestions was that Branches might like to compile a list of members with their full service history and exchange lists with other Branches in the hope of bringing together old friends who have lost contact. This seems an excellent idea and we intend to implement it in the new year.

This year members have continued to knit for Oxfam and have produced 140 garments and 8 blankets. We also collect used stamps and foreign coins for Oxfam. We have contributed to WRAC Benevolent Funds, to BLESMA and to the MacMillan Nurses in memory of Gerry Dack and to the local Ambulance Service.

OMAGH.



OMAGH MEMBERS ANNUAL OUTING

ONTARIO. As the only organised overseas branch we delight in having a variety of British Ex-Service members from WAAF as well as ATS. We have an enjoyable social life here in London, Ontario.



**ONTARIO MEMBERS
at Mini Golf Meeting**

PLYMOUTH. In this year of Commemoration and Remembrance Plymouth Branch has, very sadly, lost one of its founder and most stalwart members, Mrs Joyce Donovan. Besides being a Standard Bearer for the Branch she had also been, for 30 years, Standard Bearer for the Women's Section of St Budeaux Branch of the Royal British Legion. That she was held in high regard by all the Ex-Service organisations in Plymouth was shown by the stream of Standards that were paraded at her Funeral. She will be greatly missed.



PLYMOUTH BRANCH MEMBERS

The Branch has continued to be highly active with trips and functions. When the dates of the SW Area Reunion were changed from June to September the Branch, who had been planning for this June "away-day" for some time found themselves all dressed up with nowhere to go. Mrs Pauline Barlow, of the Somerset Branch, however, very kindly invited us to lunch at her house at Burnham-on-Sea to meet other members of that Branch. Despite the fact that it was probably the only slightly chilly day in the Long Hot Summer of 95 we all had a thoroughly enjoyable time. Our grateful thanks and

congratulations go to the Burnham-on-Sea members who prepared such a wonderful lunch for 33 Plymouth members.

Our Standard was carried at various VJ Parades and Memorials in Plymouth culminating in the Service and Parade on 20th August. A 12-strong contingent of ATS/WRAC marched proudly behind the Standard along Royal Parade. We were delighted to see that, in a photo taken by the Western Evening Herald, we were all perfectly in step and gave an immaculate eyes left! Meanwhile, up in London, our Treasurer, Mrs Betty Mitchell, was marching with the Association contingent at the National Parade. The weather was very warm but Betty reported back that it had been an experience she would not have missed for the world.

Monday 21st August saw the inaugural venture of a new society soon to be known as the "LASSES". The Branch had arranged for a River trip to Calstock for members and it was decided to invite other Ex-Servicewomen's organisations to join us. Consequently on that Monday, on board the "Southern Belle", (a well-known Plymouth Pleasure boat!) 79 members of the WRAC Association, the Association of WRNS, the WAAF Association and the Land Army, together with friends, headed up the Tamar towards Cotehele. In a spirit of true Service comradeship but spiced with a hint of Inter-Service rivalry it proved to be a memorable afternoon not only for those on board but also those on shore who saw - and heard us!! - sail past. It was agreed that afternoon that there should be more contact between the four associations and LASSES (Land, Air and Sea Society of Ex-Servicewomen) should be formed. The Secretaries are now meeting on a regular monthly basis and the next quadri-service event will be a Carol Service to be held at HMS Drake in December.

Thirteen members of the Branch travelled to Taunton for the South West Area AGM on 20th September. The AGM and lunch was followed by an interesting talk from Miss Tice whose grandfather had served Queen Victoria as part of the Royal Household. Thank you Somerset Branch for such an enlightening day.

At our October meeting we were delighted to welcome Mrs Joan Frost from the Cambridge Branch who had taken up our "Lioness" offer to join our meeting. Joan served in Plymouth during the war and it was good to hear her memories of those days.

Three of our members, Mrs Mary Davis, Mrs Jean Cundy-Borge and Mrs Betty Mitchell, travelled to London in November for the Cenotaph Service; they were very proud to march in what was a most impressive "company" of ATS/WRAC. Our General Secretary had obviously got his message across to the RBL!

In tandem with the WRNS who, like us, have very few younger members to carry on the traditions, we launched a recruiting drive in Plymouth and managed to recruit a few more members. We now plan to start a WRAC/WRNS monthly evening social event in addition to our usual monthly Monday afternoon meetings.

The Branch has been so pleased to welcome visitors to our meetings and we reiterate our invitation to all readers. If you are holidaying, visiting or just passing through the Plymouth area on the first Monday of the month why not drop in. We would love to see any Association "grockle" in the region!! Branch Secretary is Glynis Harvey (01752-336203) who will give details of the meeting and will, if at all possible, arrange transport.

PORTSMOUTH. We have been very busy since our last report. On a rather damp cold 4th June 6 members and our Standard went to the Royal British Legion parade and service at Sandhurst. We all enjoyed this very much and hope we can go again sometime. There is a very good photograph of our Standard Bearer Mrs P Price and the Isle-

of-Wight Standard Bearer Mrs J Trowbridge in the Royal British Legion Journal. August saw us at the VJ events in Portsmouth. On Tuesday 15th August we went to the reception at the local drill hall. There were hundreds of people there, we have a band concert and refreshments and met members from Bournemouth, Crewe and Leicester. On a very hot Wednesday 16th August we were on Southsea Common for a parade along the sea front and a drum head service at the Naval War Memorial. This was a very moving service and parade-three bands over one hundred Standards and a parade of at least 800 or more excellently marshalled by the Royal Navy. We again met members from Isle-of-Wight, Bournemouth, Crewe, Leicester and Birmingham. Standards from the Isle-of-Wight, Leicester and Birmingham were present and Mrs Francis from Crewe carried the ATS Standard.



VJ DAY AT PORTSMOUTH
Mrs Metherell, Mrs Thomas, Mrs Francis, Miss Bray
(By Courtesy of The News Portsmouth)

We were very impressed by Miss Muriel Tatum from Bournemouth who marched in the front rank of our section of the parade, she kept in step all the way and seemed to be as fresh when she finished as when she started in spite of being six years older than most of us. On the Saturday 19th August members went to London to take part in the parade. They thought this was a memorable day and felt very honoured to be there. However they were very disappointed that the service was not relayed to the people waiting in the wings for the march past. Things have been quiet since August, we had a nice tea party in Mary Lindsay's garden on the slopes of Portsdown Hill and a good coffee morning at Mary Moore's house in spite of the thunder storm. We shall be having a bring and buy morning at Edna Metherell's home on 21st October. These fund raising events together with some very generous donations received recently from members who cannot attend meetings enable us to send donations to the WRAC Benevolent Fund, Princess Royal's Memorial Fund and the Royal Star and Garter Home and cover the branch running costs. We shall finish the year with our usual remembrance services and our christmas dinner.

RHYL. We started our second half of the year with our usual major fund raiser, it being in the form of a Tea Dance held in the Town Hall Rhyl. For the VE VJ year it was more of a special effort, the girls worked hard making the buffet and entertaining our friends from other Branches. A good afternoon was had by all with most satisfactory results.

A party of our Branch spent a very pleasant evening including dinner at the attractive activities centre Sale Water Park in July, the secretary was unable to go being in hospital having a complete knee replacement operation. There was also a coffee morning well attended that month.

In August two members Yvonne and Phyllis went to York for the Gunners re-union and met up with many friends. On August 12th VJ Day 11 members went to Wrexham for the Area Royal British Legion re-union, the girls were thrilled to meet the Chelsea pensioner, it was a very good turn out. The VJ celebrations on August 20th started with a service and parade at St Thomas' Church Rhyl then 14 members travelled by cars to Manchester for the parade and celebrations at G.Mex, a very full but satisfying day. Battle of Britain service and the march to the Remembrance Gardens Service, afterwards they were guests at the RAFA HQ for a buffet. We still have our monthly meetings the first Monday of the month at their club. Yvonne and Phyllis went to the ATS Dinner Club luncheon at the Thistle Mount Royal Hotel, London for the Annual lunch and get together, Joan had to miss out again. Our AGM in October was well attended and a good meeting was accomplished, we decided that for our major effort 1996 we will hold a Social Afternoon at Rhyl Town Hall on September 4th 1996, more about it later to the Branches. We do have a popular event each month for our members with lunch at one of the many venues in Rhyl. Our Christmas Fair was held in November, well attended by ATS and public with good results. On Remembrance Sunday 19 girls met at St Thomas' Church Rhyl for the Service then marched up to the Remembrance Gardens where Betty Dean laid the ATS wreath, the Rhyl Town Mayor entertained all that had attended at the Oriel Restaurant, New Pavilion Theatre, Rhyl to light refreshments. Our last meeting for 1995 will take the form of a social the girls provide the food and we have a celebration drink, our Christmas Lunch this year will be at the Splash Point Hotel, Rhyl on Tuesday December 19th. We decided this year that going out at night doesn't suit us so a popular choice is lunch.

ROCHDALE. Despite the bonus of a lovely summer, and taking holidays into account, we have still had good attendance at our meetings and keep our interests alive with various outings.

In July a number of us paid a visit to the "Rylands Library" in Manchester which proved very interesting.

VJ Day in August was commemorated by our members attending their own local celebrations, parades, etc., and happy and nostalgic experiences were had at the various venues. Most of the Rochdale members also attended a special celebration by ex-service personnel at The Queen Elizabeth Hall in Oldham.

On 10th September we visited Eden Camp, North Yorkshire which coincided with the Green Howards Association, North Region Thanksgiving and Remembrance Dedication of the 50th Anniversary of Cessation of Hostilities. It was a glorious sunny day and the camp was bulging at the seams with visitors. We joined in the service and march past, met other ladies from the Leeds and Sheffield Branches and were glad to be a part of a very impressive and enjoyable day (photograph enclosed) - we hope to make another visit in the future.

October 23rd, another lovely sunny day, and we were off on a trip of Sadben (witches country). Even though we had a super lunch at a Country House Hotel, the witches were at work because all the places of interest we had planned to visit were closed - end of season! Still, a pleasant time was had by all.

At our regular meeting on October 28th, five of our members were presented with Certificates, by Major Reggie Lawson-Timms of the Royal British Legion, for 13 years service to the Poppy Appeal.

November 10th saw us on our annual visit to The Queen Elizabeth Hall to take part in the 25th Annual Festival of Remembrance, which is conducted along the same lines as



ROCHDALE MEMBERS WITH CERTIFICATES
Back Row : Mona Schofield, Lucy Fouracre, Mary Campbell
Front Row : Joyce Goddard, Major Lawson-Timms,
Elisa Caldwell
(Absent Vera Dargan)

the Albert Hall Festival. There were entertainments, IE displays, bands and the parade of Standards of which there were 30-40. The Rochdale ATS Standard was carried by Doris Huntbach who very smartly and proudly marched to the tune of "Greensleeves". The service ended with the poppies falling during the service. "Lest We Forget", the ex-service organisers of Oldham put on a wonderful evening.

SALISBURY. Writing on the day of the first snow of winter, it is warming to recall a wonderful picnic lunch we had on a glorious June summer day in the gardens of the home of Brigadier Helen Meechie and Colonel Valerie Trout. They provided an excellent lunch, and some interesting competitions raised money for our Branch funds. Winners were Nancy Bloom, Gladys Pope and Pat Charles.



LUNCH AT AMESBURY
May Robinson, Betty Knox, Jenny Exton

With the vagaries of our weather, just two days later there was a biting wind and overcast sky when members attended the Adjutant General's Corps Day at Worthy Down. There was much interesting information displayed by all Branches of the Corps. During the Arena events we were fascinated by the demonstration of 'geese herding'. Our congratulations to the catering team for providing excellent meals too.

Many members attended 50th Anniversary events, the service in Salisbury Cathedral attended by the Duchess of Gloucester being the most outstanding.

In July we were entertained by three member residents at Hedley Davis Court, Joan Morgan, May Robinson and Muriel Viney. They had worked hard to provide a very tasty buffet.

At our Annual Meeting in September Claire Edwards reviewed a very busy and enjoyable year and the following officers were elected: Chair, Suzanne Gordon, Vice chair, Gladys Pope, Secretary, Joan Morgan and Treasurer, Veronica Dodkins.

At our October meeting Suzanne gave an interesting report on the 2-day Heavy Ack-Ack reunion she had attended in York, with over 300 ladies taking part in the march past. Joan Morgan reported on the annual ATS lunch held in London which 5 of our members attended. We are glad to say Irene Ludlow has recovered from her unfortunate fall that day.

Our knowledge of the history of Dolls Houses over the past 300 years was improved by a fascinating illustrated talk given by Mrs M Allen in November.

The first snow of winter here did not deter 28 members gathering for our annual Christmas lunch today (6th December), held at the Grey Fisher. The meal was excellent, after which Suzanne read extracts from a report on combatant and non-combatant rolls of gunners and ATS members during the war. This caused much hilarity, particularly with the ex-ack-ack members present.

Our monthly meetings are well attended and we all look forward to another varied programme next year and the area reunion in Bath in May.

SHIPLEY. Where does the time go? It seems like only yesterday since my last Branch report, yet here we are almost into 1996.

Another Annual General Meeting has been and gone, the existing committee were re-elected with the exception of 2 members who did not wish to continue for personal reasons. Thank you Mary and Evelyn for your past support, we extend a warm welcome to Grace, our new committee member.

1995 has been a good year for our Branch, we have enjoyed fellowship and interesting entertainments. Our attendances at meetings average 25-30 which is pretty good for a small Branch.

As usual, we have managed to send contributions to both our Benevolent Funds - This is due to the generosity and fund-raising enthusiasm of our members.

I must take this opportunity to convey my thanks to our Chairman Lois, our Treasurer Jean, our Minute Secretary Joyce and all the hard working Committee members and Branch members for all their help and support during 1995.

We are looking forward to our usual Christmas Party and Lunch an annual event (organised and prepared by the committee). This event is always popular and well attended, everyone receives a present and good time is had by all.

SOMERSET.



SOMERSET BRANCH MEMBERS

STAFFORD. For two years we have met in a very small room at the Royal British Legion Club free of charge. Although we appreciated their generosity this has been most unsatisfactory, and during the summer months we decided to look around for more suitable accommodation. Now that we are nearly all in our last 60s and early 70s it was agreed to hold afternoon meetings in future and a new venue has been found at Trinity Church Hall in the centre of Stafford. This is available on the second Thursday of each month from 1430hrs to 1630hrs. Our first meeting was on Thursday 14th September, and proved to be a great success as 4 members, who have been unable to join us at evening meetings owing to poor Public Transport after 1900hrs, can now attend and we have also acquired 3 new members.

During the summer months we have been out into the country for Bar Meals rather than meeting indoors during that lovely weather. On VJ Day several members attended a Service in Lichfield Cathedral at the invitation of the Lord Lieutenant of the County. This was followed by a Parade and the afternoon's events were rounded off by the Paratroop Regimental Band Beating Retreat in the local Park.

Four of our members attended the Wales and West Area Reunion at Hereford on 30th September 1995 where we had an enjoyable day. Five members attended the Remembrance Day events in London and a wreath was laid at the Stafford War Memorial before attending the Service in our local Church.

We have recently been saddened by the loss of one of our members, Major Elise Beedle (née Jacobs) known to us as Jake, who lived in Lichfield and for a number of years attended our meetings. She had served in ATS and WRAC from 1940 to 1957. Mrs J D M Hendricks (née Ravenscroft) writes "Mrs Beedle was universally liked and respected and had great integrity, intelligence and fine sense of fun. She had a gift for encouraging and building up one's confidence, and was a true friend to all who served with her. She served in Kenya during the Mau Mau emergency.

After her retirement and marriage she did a great deal of public work and served as the Sheriff of Lichfield. In spite of her honours she was a modest woman, who did a great deal for charity, in a quiet way.

She will be remembered and missed by her many friends."

Looking back we have had a busy but successful year and our membership now stands at 6 Life members, 30 Annual members and one Associate member.

SWANSEA. We continue to meet in the Guildhall, Swansea and will do so until March 1996 when the new Unitary Authorities come into being. Since our last report we have had a talk from a local police sergeant on home security. In spite of the precautions taken by most of our members one has been burgled twice by the same person.



SWANSEA MEMBERS AT HEREFORD

Our August party was held in very hot sunshine, the lawns were shady and the tide too far out to paddle but lots of iced drinks helped to keep us cool.

Four members attended a VE Tree Planting ceremony at the County Hall and a service at the Cenotaph.

September 30th saw 15 of us in Hereford at the WRAC Re-union, which was enjoyed by all. In October we had a talk on British Waterways and on November 1st held an early Christmas Lunch in the lovely Sketty Hall in Singleton Park. On November 11th members attended a service at the Brangwyn Hall and another at St Mary's Church, Swansea. At the Cenotaph on the Promenade the winds were so strong that the Poppy Wreaths were all blown away. They were rescued and relaid when the storm abated.

In December we ended our year with a Mince Pie and Sherry Party and now look forward to welcoming the Wales and Western Branches to the 1996 Re-union on October 12th at the John Chard VC Drill Hall, Swansea which is in the centre of the city.

ULSTER. We have had a great social round since the last Lioness here in Ulster.

Ten members attended a garden party at Government House given by Sir Patrick and Lady Mayhew and attended by HRH The Prince of Wales who mingled with the guests.

Prince Andrew was back in the Province for VJ Celebrations - a service in Belfast Cathedral followed by a reception given by the Northern Ireland Office then Beating Retreat and fireworks display at Carrickfergus Castle.

Two of our members Mae Milne (Edgar) and Gwen Angus joined the veterans for VJ parade in London and were fortunate to be spoken to by HM The Queen before the parade down The Mall.

34 members travelled 80 miles to join the Omagh Branch for the Annual Lunch in October and we held our AGM in November when 42 members attended.

WALES AND THE WEST. Group Reunion at Hereford, 30 September 1995.

Over 250 association members made the trip to Stirling Lines at Hereford on 30th September for the 1995 area reunion. The Mayor and Mayoress of Hereford (Councillor George and Mrs Hyde), Lt Col and Mrs Dunn, Padre Jimmy Morrison and Mr Danny West were invited guests.

The Mayor gave a short speech of welcome and opened the proceedings, after which the cake and craft stalls did quite a brisk trade.

The Padre said Grace and the Association Collect before we had our meal, this was well organised, there being a choice of four menus and a vegetarian menu as well.

After the meal Danny West gave an interesting and amusing talk about the SAS Regiment.

The Mayor, Padre and Col Dunn helped with the draw, after which it was time for us to go our different ways.

Thank you to Jo Anscombe and Hereford Branch for this very well organised reunion, from which a donation of £900 has been sent to the Association Benevolent Fund.

Well Done, Hereford.

WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND. We have now been in our new meeting room at the RNA Club for 9 months and the afternoon meetings have proved popular with members. We now have 42 Annual and 21 Life members - 5 new members having joined this year.

We have had happy celebrations for VE and VJ Days. We attended the "Rendezvous" meetings in the Pavilion leading up to both "Days", getting us in the mood for the celebrations themselves. The Street party had a setback when the promised chairs and tables did not appear, but Hotel and Boarding Houses turned up trumps in answer to



VE DAY WEYMOUTH
Mrs M Pearce, Mrs E Pring, Miss R Stanbridge

the SOS and all were seated. Celebration cakes and drinks were produced and a good time was had by all.

As many members as possible took part in the VE and VJ Parades at Weymouth and also Dorchester, and we were pleased to find that we could still march after 50 years. Our Standard was carried by Mrs E Pring on these occasions.

The Area Reunion, hosted by Isle of Wight Branch, was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended, and the Isle of Wight members are to be congratulated on such a splendid and well organised reunion.

Members from Dorchester and Bridport were able to join us for our Annual Lunch in March, and we had a very enjoyable summer outing to Dartmouth, when we have our usual good weather.

The Civic events we attended were the Mayor Making and the Mayor's Service and the Battle of Britain Service.

Our programmes are now able to include more speakers as we have a larger room, and these alternate with "Domestic" meetings when business is discussed. Bring and Buy sales are popular and help to boost the funds, and we enjoy the occasional Bingo game. A donation has gone to the ATS Benevolent Fund.

A shopping trip to Taunton has been arranged and some of us are going to the Veterans Lunch in Dorchester in December. We attended the Services of Remembrance locally on 12th November, in Weymouth and Portland, and attended the evening service of the Royal British Legion. Our Standard was paraded.

Our Treasurer and her husband have had their own special celebration this year on the occasion of their Golden Wedding. Happy anniversary to Muriel and Jack Pearce.

Now all members are able to attend meetings, as some live in the Bridport and Dorchester areas, but the average attendance is 20-24 members, and we are a very happy crowd.

WILMSLOW. Although having only nineteen members our meetings are well attended and numbers are growing.

In April several members accepted an invitation to attend the Chester Branch 'Tea Dance'. It was quite an enjoyable afternoon. Members boarded a coach in June to visit Rhyl 'VJ Tea Dance'. Held in the Town Hall the wind was bitter outside but, inside the welcome was as warm as it has been on previous occasions. Wilmslow Branch was a year old in July so we combined the meeting with lunch at a nearby hotel.

Here in the North West one evening in August was held a mass display of Service bands at the G.Mex Centre in Manchester. This was to celebrate 50 years since VJ Day, the Centre was filled with Service and ex-Service men and women.

Seven members travelled to London the 10th November, and in the afternoon we kept an appointment at the Ritz Hotel for tea. We are already talking of going again next year.

Saturday afternoon was spent at the Albert Hall. Quite a different show this year, with members of the Commonwealth performing, we all enjoyed the performance.

Remembrance Sunday morning at the Cenotaph was very moving and fortunately the weather was kind to us.

WIMBLEDON. The June tea party this year paid homage to history with a search through old cookery books which provided war time fare. A certain amount of dressing up was de rigueur and amused everyone.

The date of our July meeting coincided with the rail strike. Many members made heroic efforts to reach Wimbledon but inevitably our numbers were down and the supply of cakes for our competition somewhat depleted.

On the 2nd September 15 members attended the reunion at Aylesbury which was a very happy occasion where one was able to meet friends old and new. We congratulate Aylesbury on a splendid occasion.

At the September Association meeting we tried a new idea - everyone was asked to bring in something old and interesting. There was an array of fascinating objects and many members spoke for a few minutes about their piece of memorabilia.

October this year provided us with the largest recorded attendance for a Bring and Buy - 29 - and many tables were covered with a variety of objects. Frankie Fox came to our aid and auctioned the remainder with her customary zeal. Several members attended the ATS Dinner Club Luncheon in October.

On Remembrance Sunday the Wimbledon Branch was represented in Whitehall, Westminster Abbey and the War Memorial, Wimbledon.

At the AGM the President, Iris Smith, was re-appointed and the Committee elected in 1994 was re-elected en bloc.

Chairman:	Marjorie Hindley
Vice Chairman:	Beryl Douglas
Secretary:	Bessie Wright
Treasurer:	Betty Syrett
Social Secretary:	Peggy Abbott
Other Members:	Mary Rulton, Jean Collyer, Vera Neil, Nan Thomas and Marie Wade

Preparations for the London Group reunion to be hosted by the Wimbledon Branch on Saturday, 7th September 1996 are in progress.

We are pleased to state that our membership has now reached 100.

The Wimbledon Branch is very pleased to announce that Iris Smith (née Steed) has been presented with the Normandy Commemorative Medal for her service in the Normandy Campaign of 1944. After many long hours of



Mrs IRIS SMITH (née Steed)

waiting in the boats on this side of the Channel the troops finally sailed as part of Montgomery's 21st Army Group landing on Gold Beach where they found conditions were tough but character building. Iris is a former Chairman of the Branch and is the present President.

WOLVERHAMPTON. To follow on from our report in the last Lioness - we were represented at two VJ Services in Wolverhampton. On Tuesday, 15th August the Wolverhampton Branch of Toc H held a VJ Vigil in the main church in the town. Mrs Joan Nicholas, one of our members, is their Chairman. When the Toc H members were organising the Service they did not expect a large congregation, but on the day were overwhelmed by the number of townspeople attending. Then, of course, we took part in the VJ Parade, Service and March Past on Sunday 20th August. The Rector of Wolverhampton gave the Address at both Services, and it was interesting to hear his memories of the War in the Far East, because, although a child at the time, he had been in India as his step-father was an RAF Chaplain.

Our Standard was carried at the Festival of Remembrance in our Civic Hall on 5th November, and we were represented at the Civic Remembrance Day Parade and Service on 12th November.

Several of our members were in London for the VE and VJ Parades, and also for the Remembrance Day Cenotaph Parade.

In October we joined other members of Wales and West Area for the Re-union in Hereford.

During the summer Mrs Betty Clyne visited Great Yarmouth and went to see the memorial plaque that was unveiled in 1994. There was a little posy of flowers by it from one of the Branches (she cannot remember which Branch),

so she bought some silk poppies from a local shop and put them by the plaque with a card from our Branch.

At our AGM in November, Mrs Pat Ash resigned as Treasurer, and her place has been taken by Mrs Eileen Salter. Thank you, Pat, for the work you have done, and thank you, Eileen, for what you are going to do!

We continue to meet monthly and have very enjoyable meetings as we are a very happy Branch and all get on well together. We generally have about 22 at meetings, which is good considering the distances some members have to travel. At the AGM our Chairman concluded her report by saying "We hope the Branch continues to flourish, though we are all getting older. But, as the words of the song say "Old soldiers never die, they only fade away". At the moment, we aren't fading — we're still going strong".

With best wishes to all our members, whether you live near or far, and to other friends in the Association. Also, to Mrs Phyllis Martin who has moved from our area and has transferred her membership to Hereford Branch.

WREXHAM. The Branch is still quite active although we have had setbacks with death and sickness during 1995.

The Branch was represented at London for the AGM in April, also at Hereford for the Wales and West Reunion in September.

Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month and this year we have had a few new members.

Some members who were attached to the Royal Artillery were at York for the Reunion and met up with many old friends as well as new ones.

Our Treasurer has been in hospital for a Hip Replacement but is now back home.

YORK. We have had a very busy and enjoyable year here in York.

The VE celebration organised by the York and District Council of ex-Service Associations was attended by 26 of our members along with hundreds of other local ex-service personnel. The service in the Minster was very moving and 15 of us joined the WW2 veterans parade. We proudly marched through York behind our Standard which was carried by Joan Holden, then the whole parade was wined and dined by York City Council.

The Army took over the VJ celebrations. Once again a moving and impressive service in the Minster and a parade through York with the streets lined with cheering crowds. The Duke and Duchess of Kent took the salute at the March Past. As our contingent approached the Saluting Base the band struck up with 'I'll be a Moor' and according to onlookers our chests all rose in unison and the sight was impressive.



YORK CONTINGENT

Later the Duke and Duchess chatted with us at a Tea Party by the River Ouse. It was a memorable day for all who took part, particularly our Standard Bearer who was officially introduced to the Duchess.



YORK STANDARD BEARER
(Mrs Joan Holden (née Swales))

The North East Reunion was once again held in York. 20 of our members joined about 250 ladies from the northern area for a very enjoyable lunch. The volume of noise as news was exchanged between old friends was proof that the event was going with a swing. The guest speaker, Major General Cordingley, kept us enthralled with some of his experiences in the Gulf War! All agreed it was a wonderful day.

We have had an average attendance of 26 at our monthly meetings which included: our usual Fund Raising Auction; an interesting talk by the husband of one of our members on his work with SAAFA; a trip to Whitby, the highlight being fish and chips at the famous 'Trenchers'; a Garden Party, this year's weather making the event perfect, most of us found adequate shade!

We have invited Scarborough Branch to our Pre-Christmas Shopping Lunch in November, looking forward to that.

Some of us will attend the dedication of the Garden of Remembrance in York and 30 of us will be attending the Festival of Remembrance at the York Barbican Centre.

About 15 of us are planning to march on the York Remembrance Parade.

Our last meeting of this memorable year will be the Annual Christmas Lunch which is to be held at a restaurant in York, always an enjoyable occasion.

REUNIONS

ATS DINNER CLUB

The 1996 Luncheon of the ATS Dinner Club will be held at the Grand Hotel, Birmingham on Saturday 5th October 1996. Details will be in the newsletter but any former ATS who are not members of the Club but wish to attend should contact:

Mrs Doreen Brookes
99 Meadow Road
COVENTRY
CV6 4GW

93 SEARCHLIGHT REGIMENT

A Reunion for former members of 93rd Searchlight Regiment will be held in Birmingham in March 1996. Details from:

Mrs I Brindley Mayne
Flat 15
The Old Palace
ST ASAPH
CLWYD
LL17 0RQ

MIXED HEAVY ANTI AIRCRAFT REUNION

The 4th Reunion at York for members of World War II Mixed Heavy Anti Aircraft Regiments and Batteries is to be held in York on Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th August 1996.

Details from:-

HQ York Garrison
Imphal Barracks
Fullford Road
YORK
YO1 4AU



RADAR MEMBERS OF 435 BATTERY AT 1995 YORK REUNION

*Seated: Kate Wilkinson (Cook), May Hadley (Ward)
Standing: Joyce Wright Alison Hill (Edgeley)*



SEVEN MEMBERS OF 473 BATTERY/135 REGIMENT
*L to R: STANDING Olive Browne, Elsie Blanchflower (Marshall), Millie Davies, Emmie Wearing (Rhodes)
SEATED: Una Heap (Miller), Bing Bingley, Edith Turner
MISSING FROM PHOTO Peggy Moore (O'Neil)*

WALES AND THE WEST

The Group Reunion for 1996 for Wales and the West will be held in the John Chard Drill Hall, Swansea on Saturday 12 October 1996.

For details call the Group Secretary, Mrs Edith Francis on 01270 663130 or the Swansea Secretary Mrs V Barrington, 81 Mumbles Road, Norton Swansea SA3 5AA.

ATS RECORDS WINCHESTER

The Reunion of those who served at King Alfred College, Winchester will be held on 5th/6th July 1996. There will be a lunch at The Eagle Hotel, Winchester on Friday 5th July and a reunion at the College on Saturday 6th July. Anyone interested in attending should contact:-

Miss Cl Ellis
Whithaven
Boyatt Lane
Otterbourne
Winchester
SO21 2HP

"L" COMPANY ATS (WAR OFFICE)

"L" Company are to hold a reunion at the Victory Services Club in London on Wednesday 1st May 1996. All are welcome. Details from:-

Mrs M Benson
1 Hawksview
Fairmile Park Road
COBHAM
SURREY KT11 2PG

Telephone 01932 865131

WRAC POSTAL & COURIER OPERATORS REUNION 1996

For details of the 1996 Reunion write to:-

Mrs Joan Round
5 Park Road **PDF Compressor Free Version**
Askern
DONCASTER
DN6 0AT

LONDON GROUP REUNION

The Wimbledon Branch will host the London Group reunion at the Community Centre, St George's Road, Wimbledon on Saturday 7th September 1996. Details will be circulated to Branch Secretaries of the Group.

ONTARIO REUNION

The ATS Reunion Association will hold their 1996 Reunion in London, Ontario on 13th/14th/15th September 1996. Details from:-

Betty Anderson
389 Wharnccliffe Road
LONDON
ONTARIO
CANADA N6G 1E4

NORTH WEST GROUP REUNION

The annual reunion of the North West group will be held in Chester Town Hall on Wednesday 17th July 1996 from 1.00 pm to 5.30pm. Tickets will cost £6.50 and are available from:-

Mrs V Hamblet
9 Caldry Drive
Great Sutton
South Wirral
L66 4RN

Deadline for applications is 7th July 1996.

NORTH EAST GROUP REUNION

The North East Group Reunion is to be held at the Marton Hotel & Country Club, Marton, Middlesbrough on Saturday 12 October 1996 commencing at Noon. Tickets at £10.00 may be obtained from:-

Mrs G Friday
25 Murton Grove
Billingham
CLEVELAND
TS22 5AZ
Telephone 01642 556101

WRAC OTHER RANKS REGISTER/LUNCHEON CLUB

Mrs Ann Deakin, while enjoying the comradeship of the Association, is anxious to form a group which will allow former members of the WRAC to have a chance of getting in touch with friends from their days in the Corps. The intention is to establish a register of those who are interested and eventually form a Luncheon Club which can arrange reunions.

If you are interested please send all relevant details of your service, Number, Rank, Name (name while serving as well as married name). Dates of service and units served with, your present address and telephone number plus any other facts which you deem noteworthy.

Send all this with a stamped self addressed envelope to:

Mrs Ann Deakin
Cobblestones
No 2 Chesham Road
Beaconside
STAFFORD ST16 3JP

Telephone 01785 49992/249992

OFFICERS BRANCH REUNION

The Annual lunch of the Officers' Branch of the Association will be held at Worthy Down on Saturday 21 September 1996. See page 29 for an application form.

CORNWALL SCHOOL, DORTMUND, GERMANY

Former pupils and teachers of Cornwall School at Dortmund, Germany are invited to attend a reunion on 27 July 1996. If you want to know where it will be and any other details then contact:-

Sharon Selman (née Stephenson)
58 Northleigh Close
Loose
MAIDSTONE
ME15 9RP

tel: Home 01622-743100 or Work 01622-773260

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FORMER WRAC OFFICERS DOESKIN MESS JACKETS

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Major G H Jones of the Glamorgan Army Cadet Force is anxious to acquire unwanted WRAC Mess Kit jackets and the associated cummerbund.

Please contact her at:

Maindy Barracks, Cardiff, CF4 3YE
or telephone 01222 343020.

BERLIN BELLES

A Reunion of those who were part of the British Troops in Berlin during the Russian blockade in 1948/49 was held at the Dalmeny Hotel, Lytham St Anne's on 8/9 September 1995. The Reunion was a great success including a civic reception in the Mayor's Parlour. It is proposed to try another get together during the Grand Reunion in Blackpool in 1997. Anyone wishing to join in should contact Mrs Jean Eastham (née Hart) at 11 North Houses Lane, Lytham St Anne's, Lancashire FY8 4NT.

CENTRAL ORDNANCE DEPOT – OLD DALBY

A Reunion of members of the COD Old Dalby was held in the Rockwell Restaurant, York on 26th July 1995. It resulted in an appeal in a 1994 Lioness. Anyone who missed the occasion should contact Mrs Joyce Hall (Formerly Sergeant J Laws) at Moray House, St Boswells, Melrose, Roxboroughshire, TD6 0AP.



OLD DALBY REUNION 26 JULY 1995



BERLIN BELLES REUNION

L to R (using maiden names) Pte Dorothy Dick, Pte Vina Coupar, Sgt Kathleen Fielding BEM, LCpl Mickey McCornick, J Cdr Edna Chester, Cpl Jean Hart, Sgt Freda Gregson, Sgt Margaret Forshaw, Cpl Dorothy Vernon, Cpl Elsie Wilkinson.
(Photo courtesy Lancashire Evening Post)

BOOK REVIEWS

THAT OTHER ARMY by Frank Beard

Mr Beard was Officer Commanding 443 Battery of 130 Regiment, Royal Artillery at Bearsden, Glasgow during the Second World War. The book is of personal reminiscences of life on the gunsite with ATS and Gunners. Anyone interested should contact the author:-

Mr Frank Beard
29 Rectory Farm Road
Little Wilbraham
CAMBRIDGE

MILITARY DORSET TODAY by Colin A Pomeroy

The 160 page book contains over 170 photographs and details of sites used for military purposes in Dorset during the Second World War and used subsequently or still in existence. If you served in the ATS or WRAC in Dorset this book might interest you.

Copies are available for £13.95 (incl p & p) from:
Colin Pomeroy, Westacre, Clyffe, Tincleton,
DORSET, DT2 8QR.

CORRESPONDENCE

On Remembrance Day in Canada two old Comrades met after 50 years. They were Marjorie Perry (née Stevenson) who went from Canada in 1937 and served in the ATS from 1939 to 1945. She served with 4 Post Offices in Barry Island, South Wales and Stourbridge. She met up with Margaret Mason (née Hunt) who joined at Guildford in 1944 and was stationed at Tonyfanu, North Wales and then Felixstowe.



ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION HALL, ONTARIO
Marjorie Perry and Margaret Mason

ATS AND WRAC HANDPAINTED WALL PLAQUES

These are available from Cavalier Supplies,
PO Box No2, Gilberdyke, BROUGH,
EAST YORKSHIRE HU15 2TN
or telephone 01430 441315 or 01459 115560.

Branch Secretaries may obtain a discount
for bulk purchases and the Benevolent Fund
could receive some commission.



MARGARET A HARDMAN (Née OLSEN) WAAC

Another letter from the USA comes from Mrs Margaret Olsen of North Carolina. She sent this picture of her 99 year old mother in her World War I WAAC uniform which she put on again for the 75th Anniversary of the Armistice.

Mrs Alice Thomas (née Haggas) of 17 Swann Street, York YO2 1AF would like to find ex-members of 545 (Mix) Heavy AA Battery. Names which come to mind are Staff Sergeant Gilbert, Lance Corporal Westbrook, Annie Clarkson and Phyllis Hodgson.

Miss Jean Chapman of 5 Wimberley Way, South Witham Park, Nr Grantham NG33 5PU recognised herself in the photograph of cooks at Maidstone sent in by Sgt Terry Hart and published in the last edition. She was sitting beside Terry.

Mr BAC Burt of 2 Darcy Court, Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire DL9 4SG is anxious to compile a list of those who served in Royal Signals units in Singapore and Malaya 1960 to 1963 and Borneo 1966 to 1968. Mr E Wilkinson of 23 Gleneagles Drive, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 2SD would like to obtain photographs of the barracks at KASR EL NIL, Near Cairo in Egypt and hear from anyone who was serving there.

Mrs Jean Norris (née Morbey) of 35 Malpas Close, Bransholme, Hull HU7 4HH (telephone 01482 827096) would like to hear from anyone who served with her in 'K' Company, No 5 London District Group, Sloane Square and later at Lansdowne House and Hobart House. Names which spring to mind are Gwen Carpenter, Ruby Norton, Ann Wehrner, Brenda Milner, Joan Clark, Annie Macauley and Joyce Wheeler.



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY IN DUBLIN IN 1947
Norah Fallon is 4th from the left in front row
(Photo courtesy Irish Times)

Miss Norah Fallon of 17 Bakers Almshouses, Lea Bridge Road, London E10 7EF, Telephone 0181 558 7384 sent in this photograph taken at the British War Memorial, Islandbridge, Dublin, Republic of Ireland in 1947. She adds that they were cheered through the streets of Dublin during a March Past.

Mrs Peggy Sheridan (née Hall) is in the centre of this photograph of three friends who were stationed in Dover in 1942 as part of 71 AA Brigade Signals Squadron. The meeting was in Bath but Mrs Sheridan now lives at Lynford, Westover Road, Milford on Sea, Hampshire, SO41 0PW.



REUNION IN BATH AFTER 55 YEARS
Betty Pinney, Peggy Sheridan (née Hall),
Pat Marsh (née Parr)

Sylvia Crooks Battery Linking project has produced a request from the USA. Can anyone remember Pte Beryl Banbridge (Known as Bambi) Mrs Hoadley living in Michigan, USA. Anyone with further information or who recognised this photo is asked to contact Sylvia Crook, 14 The Larches, Horsell Vale, WOKING, GU21 4RE. Sylvia herself is trying to trace Cpl Eleanor Parr-Dudley of 488 Battery who was on a PT Course at Beaumaris, Anglesey in January 1944.



Private Bambi Banbridge (now Hoadley)

Beryl Middleton (née Hayford) of 190 Eversley Avenue, Bexleyheath, Kent DA7 6SW asks where have all the drivers gone who were at Gresford in 1946 as trainees and 1948/49 as Instructors.

Perhaps they were all at Ingatestone Hall in Essex watching a van being rescued! Photo by Sport & General came from Mrs Mary R Salmon (née Windley) of Flat 217, Havencourt, Victoria Road, Chelmsford CM1 1EA (tel 01245 350965).

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DRIVERS AT INGATESTONE HALL

Mary Salmon is at top right and Peggie Palmer next to her is talking to a reporter



SKIING IN CORTINA

Mrs Mary Beeston sent this group photograph of a PTIs Course which she attended while serving with 93 Searchlight Regiment in August 1943.



PTIs COURSE

Mary Beeston is third from right in middle row



APRES SKI IN CORTINA

Two photographs from a gentleman trying to trace lost friends. He is Mr Dick Suttie of 9, Pitmeddan Wynd, Auchtermuchty, Fife KY14 9BB. The pictures were taken in Cortina, Italy during January/February 1946 when he was with the 78th Battleaxe Division. Do you recognise yourself?



OFFICERS AT LEICESTER 1942/43

Major Edna Shields of 12 Highbury Road, Darlington DL3 7QF has loaned me this photograph of the ATS Officers at Leicester in 1942/843.

Any former ATS Band members are asked to contact Mrs Roma O'Flaherty (née Halsey) at 20 Wingfield Grove, Newdigate, Dorking, Surrey RH5 5AZ (tel 01306 631 399).

Sergeant K Thomas W/241750 who was at Droitwich in 1946 is asked to contact Mrs Vyoyenne Reeves, 79 Sandy Lane, Fair Oak, Eastleigh, Hants SO50 8GA.

Patricia J Davies, 17 Sligo House, Beaumont Grove, Stepney Green, London E1 4ND would like to hear from anyone who knew her mother who served in the name of Laura Victoria Mary Arnold.

Does anyone know of Mary Ruth Etelson Sutcliffe, born 11 May 47 who was at the WRAC Centre in Guildford 1965/66. If so please contact the Editor.

Mrs TM Diffeey (née Hart) saw the picture of the Salute the Soldier Parade in Belfast and wrote to say that she was a Driver in Belfast at the time. She sent in this group photo which may interest others who were there.



**Private Ivy Park and friend on Burns Night
(note badge on haggis)**

Mr Geoff Harrison is anxious to make contact with friends of his late wife Ivy (née Park) who was stationed at Salisbury, Bulford and Sherringham, Norfolk. His address is Alum Bay House, Totland, Isle of Wight PO39 0JA (Tel 01983 754546).



NORTHERN IRELAND RASC UNIT - 1944
Driver Hart is third from right in second row from back

Mrs Elsie Rothmund (née Daniels) of 29 St Michael's Avenue, Edmonton, London, N9 9DE had this photo taken at the Ex POW Rehabilitation Centre at Kneller Hall, Twickenham and would like to hear from others who were there.

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KNELLER HALL 1945
Pte Daniels is in centre

Mr J E Peppin formerly in the 12th Lancers assures me that he has no ulterior motive in trying to trace W/413xxx Jenny Webb of Send near Guildford who was at the WRAC Centre in 1959. His telephone number is 01803 326536.

All you seekers after comrades might follow the example of Mrs Jean Webster (née Brennan) of 35 Hulme Street, Crewe, CW1 3PB who used the TeleText Service Pals system and met up with old pal Mrs Betty Morris of 932 Coy RASC after 51 years.



Betty Morris and Jean Webster

In response to a note about Theobalds Park from Miriam Hartley (née Crabtree), Dorothy Wooley of 152 Waterhouse Moor, Harlow, Essex CM15 6BJ has written to say that she has a photograph of an AA Plotters Course in 1943 with the following names on the reverse: Anne KCS, M Wilson, KM Manns, M McElwell, Olive M Spungell, Betty Costel RCS,

93 Searchlight Regiment again. This time at Bignels Corner on Great North Road with Troop 301 Battery. Mrs Peggy Little (née Mitchell) of 22 Warrington Road, Knowle, Bristol BS14 9HG sent in the photograph.



'C' Troop of 301 Battery of 93 Searchlight Regiment
Bignels Corner

Mrs Diana Clay (née Negus) of Drake's Cottage, North Cheriton, Somerset BA8 0AL would like to hear from anyone who remembers her. She sent in this photo taken when Brigadier Dame Frances Coulshed was DDATS Anti Aircraft Command in June 1950.



STAFF OF DDATS AT AA COMMAND 1950
Betty Hardiman, Dodie I, Hilary Partington, Diana Negus, the late Beth Rosenbaum and Daphne Lance

Ann Drucker (OWL), Jean Andrew MCL, Dorothy Routand R Rodger of Bangor. Dorothy Wooley is prepared to have the photo copied if there is any interest.

Miss Mary Santer from the London, England Branch of the Association was visiting Canada and kindly took with her the Certificate of Appreciation which had been awarded to Mrs Doris Madill (née Bunch).



PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATE SEPTEMBER 1995
L to R; Mrs Madill and Miss Santer

Another PTI picture comes from Mrs Irene Kaye (née Hill) of 13, Rock road, Urmston, Manchester M41 9WD and shows a group at the PT School at Droitwich Spa in 1943.



ATS PT SCHOOL DROITWICH 1943
Pte Hill is at left shoulder of Commandant

Mrs Margaret Heterich (née March) has written a detailed account of her service entitled "Cotton Waste Soldiers" (ie those who were there to clean up the mess!). She lives at Common Farm, Tomkyns Lane, Upminster, Essex RM14 1TP and would like to hear from anyone who remembers her from Warrington in October 1942; Oswestry November 1942 February 1943; Yeadon Moor March 1943; Oakham; Garforth December 1943; Sheringham Spring 1944; Norton Nr Sheffield June 1944; West Hartlepool; Leicester December 1944; Aqualate Park Nr Donnington; VRD Stafford; Ynysias and Aberporth in Wales. She also sent this photograph of herself with a modified Kine-camera being used to track the embryo 'Blue Streak' missile.



EARLY DAYS AT THE ROCKET RANGE

The 93rd Searchlight article and photograph in the last edition also prompted Mrs Mary Rose to send in this photograph of the HQ Team of 'C' Troop 495 Battery at Isleworth with Subaltern Baxter (who wrote the article) at the right hand end of the back row while Mary Rose plays bookends at the other end.



'C' Troop of 495 Battery 93 Searchlight Regiment

Mrs Marjorie (Madge) Jones (née Davidge) has unearthed a group photograph but needs guidance on where, when and why it was taken!



SEARCHLIGHT TRAINING COURSE
Madge is in rear rank fifth from the right

Mrs M Watson of 31 Mariners Close, Gorleston, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR31 6TU remembers the third Anniversary celebrations for 442 (Mixed) Heavy AA Battery at Roundhay Park, Leeds on 17 June 1944.



SPORTS DAY AT ROUNDHAY PARK
L to R: Willie Bincall, Anne Dixon, Joan Yates, Sheila Frizzell, Jessie McLeod, Maisie Brown, Ivy Howell, Connie Thomas
(Photo courtesy Yorkshire Evening News)

ROYAL TOURNAMENT 1996 9-20 July 1996

For details on how your branch might obtain
discounted tickets for this years

Royal Tournament at Earls Court 9-20 July
please call Jane Taylor on 0171 370 8399.

Peggy Rowe (née Roberts) remembers being on leave in Bruxelles with Jean Brown. She was at the time with the Control Commission in Berlin in 1946.



BRUSSELS 1946
Peggy Roberts, Maurice, Jean Brown

Mr A W Page of 6 Catways, Hursley, Winchester SO21 2JT (Tel 01962 775374) is anxious to trace Jean, Sylvia and Freddie who were at West Hayes, Sarum Road, Winchester between 1944 and 1946.



Jean, Sylvia and Freddie



CSD Lincoln 1945/46
*L to R :Nancy Tipton (Scott), Christine Hunt (Gray), ?,
Rose Evans (Clark), Betty Pye*

Mrs Nancy Tipton (née Scott) of 91 Dawley Road, Wellington, Telford TF1 2HT would like to hear from anyone in this photo taken at CSD Lincoln in 1945/46.

Mrs Betty Patton (née Buckley) of 4 Chapelmere Court, Coppenhall, Crewe CW1 4SW asks if anyone in this photograph taken at 93 Searchlight Regiment location in Ayot St Lawrence could please contact her.



AYOT ST LAWRENCE
*On gate Sgt Mac Elder, Iris ? And Sonia Britton
In front: Betty Patton, Christina McPhail*

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

BUCKINGHAM-PLEWES On 30 July 1946 at the Parish Church, Goole Harry Buckingham ex 8th Army to Mary Plewes, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present address: 12 Westfield Avenue, Rawcliffe, N. 14A

COURT-FRY On 27 October 1945 at St James's Church, Shirley, Southampton William Court, Honorable Artillery Company to Mavis Fry, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present Address: March Acres, High Lane, Sloothby, Alford, Lincolnshire LN13 9NR.



The Courts on their Wedding Day

DANIEL-MILDREN On 26 January 1946 at Burraton Methodist Chapel, Saltash, Cornwall Gunner Fred Daniel Leicester Yeomanry RA to Private Margaret Mildren Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present address: 20 Orchard



Daniels Today



Wedding Day for the Daniels



Smiling Dolmans

DOLMAN-RISEBURY On 29 September 1945 Sergeant Eric Dolman Sherwood Foresters to Private Lydia Risebury, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present address: 25 Queen's Drive, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE11 0EG.



Dolmans showing the same picture and still smiling

DEBBAGE-PHILLIPS On 9 April 1944 at St Alfred's Church, Burnt Oak, Edgeware, Middlesex Gunner Walter James Debbage, Royal Artillery to Private Elsie Margaret Phillips, Auxiliary Territorial Service.



The Debbages with an ATS Guard of Honour

FICK-STONEHOUSE On 22 September 1945 at Rosemount Methodist Church, Douglas, Isle of Man Lieutenant Bernard Fick MC, The Royal Hampshire Regiment to Private Margaret Rose Stonehouse, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present address: 70 High Street west, redcar, Cleveland TS10 1SG.



The Ficks on their Wedding Day



The Ficks 50 years later

ATS MEMORIES NEEDED

Were you in the ATS during World War II ?

If so you are invited to share your memories of recruitment and general issues with:

Sandra Jackson
Principal Lecturer
Thames Valley University
St Mary's Road
EALING W5 5RF
Tel 0181 231 2386

Sandra Jackson is writing a post graduate academic paper on the subject.

She would be happy to send you a brief questionnaire with a stamped envelope for its return.

GREGSON-LAWRANCE On 12 June 1945 at Penn Parish Church, Wolverhampton, Sapper Peter Gregson, Royal Engineers to Corporal Denise Lawrance, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present Address: 4 Fir Tree Vale, Moortown, Leeds LS17 7EY.

HOPE-JAMES On 24 November 1945 at St John's Evangelist Church, Miles Platting, Manchester Frank Hope, Royal Army Ordnance Corps to Blanche James, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present address: 31 Weaver Road, Nantwich, Cheshire CW3 5NP.



The Hopes in 1995



The Hopeful Couple

MACDONALD-WHELLENS On 3rd September 1945 at St James Presbyterian Church, Alnwick, Northumberland Ronald Macdonald, Royal Air Force to Staff Sergeant Edythe Whellens, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present address: Lindisfarne, Carr Bridge, Invernessshire PH23 3AU.

PEARCE-PENNOCK On 26 September 1945 at St Savours Church, Scarborough, Yorkshire Lance Corporal John Worden Pearce, Royal Engineers to Private Muriel Pennock, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present address: 14 Rodwell Avenue, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 8UX.



The Pearce Wedding Day photograph

REDFERN-BOWEN On 25 August 1945 at St Paul's Church, Sheffield Leslie Redfern, Royal Army Ordnance Corps to Mabel Bowen, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present Address: 48 Weaver Road, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 5NP



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The Redferns today



Wedding Day photograph of the Redferns

RYDER-WAKELIN On 22 December 1945 at St Peter's Church, Levenshulme, Manchester Guardsman James Ryder Irish Guards to Corporal Jean Wakelin, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present address:- 1 Blytheway, Burnham on Sea, Somerset.

A GOLDEN WEDDING PLUS TWO (Is this super-gold or mini-emerald?)

LANDIN-WILLIAMS On 13 November 1943 at St Andrew's Church, Kimbolton, Huntingdonshire Second Lieutenant Dennis Landin Royal Artillery to Lance Corporal Olwen Williams, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present address: 26 Elm Grove, Rhyl, Clwyd LL18 3PE.

EMERALD WEDDING

MOORE-SWARTZ In December 1940 at the Registry Office, Bath Trooper RA Moore, Royal Armoured Corps to Volunteer J M Swartz, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present Address: 71 West Belvedere, Danbury, Chelmsford, Essex.



Well polished shoes at the Moores Wedding



The Moore's cut their Golden Wedding cake

CORRECTIONS

Lioness No 2/95 page 139. The Harper Hunter wedding was in December 1945 NOT December 1944 at Parish Church, Otley, Yorkshire. Lioness No 2/95 page 143. The Prior Eeles wedding was in January 1946 NOT December 1946.

The 'Bunker' Military Museum – Ontario, Canada

Colleen Belding of the Bunker Military Museum at Box 43, Cobalt, Ontario, Canada, P0J 1C0 is anxious to acquire an ATS uniform and cap and is willing to pay necessary expenses. Please write to her or J W Jones if you feel able to help.

WILLS

You are asked to consider when making or revising your Will to leave a bequest to the Corps Benevolent Funds.

For example words such as "I bequeath the sum of £XXXXX to the ATS & WRAC Benevolent Funds, presently at Worthy Down or their successors.

I wish my legacy to be used to relieve the current needs of those eligible to receive help from the said funds".

OBITUARY

ADLAM. Miss Sylvia Adlam of Mountain Ash, Mid Glamorgan in October 1995. ATS

ALLCOCK. Phyllis Eleanor Allcock of Wymondham, Suffolk on 7 July 1995. ATS

BARCLAY. Mrs Irene Bridget Barclay (née Blewett) of Woodford Green, Essex on 14 October 1995. ATS

BARNES. Mrs K M Barnes (née Harrison) of Stockport, Cheshire on 13 October 1995. ATS

BARRETT. Mrs Marjorie Barrett (nee Miller) of Stroud in January 1995. ATS

BEEDLE. Major Elise Sylvia (Jake) Beedle (née Jacobs) of Litchfield, Staffordshire on 31 October 1995. ATS & WRAC

BODLE. Miss Alice Mary Bodle of Wacton, Norfolk on 2 July 1995. ATS

BULLOCK. Mrs Iris Marion Bullock (née Bailey) of Leicester on 29 July 1995. ATS

BUSHELL. Mrs Blanche O Bushell of Worsley, Greater Manchester on 3 October 1995. ATS

CASSON. Lily Casson of Gravesend, Kent on 5 September 1995. Staff Sergeant ATS WRAC

CLAYTON. Mrs P Clayton (née Duff) of Liskeard, Cornwall in November 1994. ATS

COLES. Mrs Joyce Audrey Coles (née Fleming), Southsea, Hampshire in December 1995. ATS

COLLINS. Mrs M Collins of Moffat, Dumfriesshire on 15 June 1995. ATS

CROSS. Miss VM (Vicky) Cross of London on 28 June 1995. WRAC (TA)

DACK. Mrs Geraldine E Dack of Norwich, Norfolk on 30 October 1995. ATS

DAVIES. Miss Margaret Elizabeth Pamela Davies of York on 21 December 1995. WRAC

DENNE. Colonel Elizabeth Rosemary Denne MBE of Fleet on 7 February 1996. WRAC

DE ROS. Miss (WO II) Eleanor De Ros of Billericay on 23 July 1995. ATS

DONOVAN. Mrs Joyce Donovan (née Bassett) of St Budeaux, Plymouth on 9 November 1995. ATS/WRAC

ECCLES. Miss Margaret Rachel Eccles of Ludlow, Shropshire in 1995. ATS

FLETCHER. Miss Isobel Fletcher of Bangor, County Down on 22 June 1996. ATS, WRAC and WRAC(TA)

FORTUNE. Mrs Elizabeth Margaret Fortune (née Hendry) of Southsea, Hampshire in October 1995. ATS

FOWKES. Mrs Pauline Fowkes (née Capewell) of Halesowen, Birmingham in 1995. ATS

GREENE. Miss Anne Frances Greene of Bangor, Northern Ireland on 1 August 1995. QARANC (at WRAC Centre 1964/65)

HAFSETH. Mrs G Hafseth (née McAngus) of St Leonards on Sea on 3 July 1995. ATS

HARRAP. Mrs KB Harrap (née Sidey) of Southend, Essex in 1995. ATS

HARRISON. Major (QM) EE Harrison MBE of Bournemouth on 24 July 1995. WRAC

HARRISON. Mrs Iris Harrison of Grimsby in 1995. ATS

HIGDON. Miss Gwendoline Higdon of Romford, Essex on 13 September 1995. ATS/WRAC

HUMPHERY. Colonel Mabel Dorothy Milbourn Humphery CBE of Hartley Wintney on 2 October 1995. ATS & WRAC

JOHNSTON. Mrs T Johnston (née Joseph) of Australia in July 1995. ATS

KENT. Mrs Joan Jessie Kent of Stretchford, Birmingham on 23 December 1995. ATS

KIDD. Mrs Patricia Corrairie Kidd (née Congreve Maitland) of Salisbury on 28 July 1995. ATS

KILLICK. Lady Killick MBE, formerly Junior Commander Irene Easton (known as Bill). In January 1996. ATS

LAURANCE. Mrs Vera Laurance (née Abrahams) of London on 14 October 1995. ATS

LAW. Miss Diana Law on 24 January 1996 at Star & Garter Home, Richmond. ATS/FANY

LEITCH. Mrs Anne Lee Leitch (née Robertson) of Perth on 21 October 1995. ATS & WRAC(TA)

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LYON. Mrs Rosalie Lyon of Hull on 21 August 1995. ATS

MARTIN. Mrs Alice Turnbull Martin (née Richardson) of Wallsend, Tyne & Wear on 31 May 1995. ATS

McMAHON. Miss Sarah McMahon of Ayr in September 1995. ATS

MEDLAM. Mrs Lilian Mary Medlam (also Evison) of Goole in September 1995. ATS

MERCER. Miss Edith Olive Mercer of Dorking Surrey on 30 September 1995. ATS

MILLINGTON. Lieutenant Colonel Mildred Sydney Frances (Millie) Millington OBE TD of London and Cheltenham on 11 October 1995. ATS/WRAC.

MORGAN. Mrs Eveline Mary Morgan (née Kerr) of Luncarty, Perthshire on 8th May 1995. ATS

NASH. Mrs Mabel Nash (née Skeats) of Mitcham, Surrey on 24 December 1996 Aged 99 years. QMAAC

NEAVE. Mrs Edith (Yedith) Neave (formerly Lang) of Horsham, West Sussex on 25 July 1995. ATS

PEARSON. Mrs Nancy Pearson (née Wright) of Blyth, Northumberland on 16 November 1993. ATS

PHILLIPS. Miss Dorothea Flavia Phillips MBE of Chippenham, Wiltshire.

PHIPPS. Mrs Kathleen Doris Phipps (née King) of Birmingham on 4 July 1995. ATS

POWER. Miss Marian Power of Bournemouth on 22 December 1995. QMAAC & ATS

PRICE. Mrs Jessie Price (née Hayhurst) of Burnley, Lancashire on 4 January 1996. ATS

PRIMMER. Mrs Dilys E Primmer (née John) of Peterborough. ATS

RANSON. Mrs Doris Gertrude Ranson (née Totterell) of Chelmsford on 22 July 1995. ATS

ROBINSON. Miss C Robinson of London NW8 on 4 December 1995. ATS

ROCK. Mrs Winifred Elsie Rock (née Spicer) of West Mersea, Essex on 26 August 1995. ATS

ROSENBAUM. Major Beth Rosenbaum of South Africa and London on 5 September 1995 in Medway Towns. ATS and WRAC

RUTHERFORD. Mrs Doris Rutherford (née Storey) of Cullercoats, Tyne & Wear on 31 October 1995. ATS

SANGSTER. Mrs Alice Sangster (née Rose) of Brampton, Cumbria on 17 October 1995. ATS

SEYMOUR. Mrs Evelyn Grace Seymour (formerly Pratt/Mallett) of Westcliffe on Sea on 26 July 1995. ATS

SWASH. Mrs Esme M Swash (née Adams) of Brightstone, Isle of Wight on 13 October 1995. ATS

TRATT. Mrs Ethel A Tratt (née Andrews) of Southampton on 9 December 1995. ATS

USHER. Mrs Daisy L Usher (née Jiggins) of Chelmsford on 7 June 1995. ATS

VETCH. Chief Commander Elizabeth Mary (Betty) Vetch TD of Edinburgh on 29 December 1995. ATS

WALKER. Miss Louisa Irene Walker of Bootle, Merseyside on 19 November 1995. ATS

WATERHOUSE-BROWN. Mrs Sally Alice May Waterhouse Brown of Hereford in December 1995. ATS

WHITE. Mrs Domini Eunice White (née Saxon) of Hove, Sussex in November 1995. ATS

WOOD. Miss Ethel Noel Wood TD of the Wirral on 17 July 1995. ATS

WYE. Mrs Gladys Mary Wye of Brighton on 3 November 1995. ATS

YOUNG. Mrs Phyllis Edna Young of Southport on 14 August 1995. ATS

TRIBUTE

COLONEL M D M HUMPHERY, CBE

Dorothy Humphery died in hospital in October 1995. Born in 1914, on St George's Day, she joined the ATS while living at home with her father and elder sister Ena, in Bembridge, Isle of Wight. She vividly remembered going over to Portsmouth once a week for Drill Nights!

She was commissioned in 1939 having completed a short training course at the OCTU at Saltdean. Both her brothers were killed during the war.

She had a varied war time career serving for some time in Anti Aircraft Command and at the Central Ordnance Depot at Chilwell. In 1944 she was selected, as one of the first three ATS officers, to attend the United States Army Command and General Staff College Course at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

During the transition from ATS to WRAC she served on the Regular Commissions Board working with Dame Molly Railton and Dame Jean Rivett Drake whose Deputy she later became.

"Humph", as she was affectionately known, was the senior WRAC officer at Far East Land Forces based in Singapore in 1948/49 during the Emergency in Malaya.

She served as Commandant at the WRAC College at Camberley. Always approachable, she possessed a great sense of duty and loyalty and a lovely sense of humour. In her retirement she supported the Association in many ways. She was Chairman of Council in the 70s, she was a Trustee of the Benevolent Funds and was still a member of the Grants Committee at the time of her death. She was also a great supporter of the Funds financially.

Very many members of the Corps and the Association will mourn the passing of a first class officer and good friend.

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL
M S F MILLINGTON OBE TD**

Mildred Sydney Frances Millington had a long and distinguished career in the British Army. She joined the ATS early in the War when they were intended simply to be auxiliaries to release male TA soldiers for duty at the front. As the role of the ATS expanded she had many appointments and in 1949 was one of the officers selected to form the cadre of officers in the newly formed WRAC. She served with distinction including a tour as Commandant of the WRAC Training Centre and her last three years of service were in Northern Command. In all she had 22 years service in the Corps half in the ATS and half in the WRAC.

She retired in 1960 and in early 1961 became the first Corps Secretary and General Secretary of the Association at its new offices in the Duke of York's HQ in Chelsea. She held the appointment for eleven years finally retiring in 1972. However, that was not the end. She was then a founder member of the Greater London Branch of the Association and its first Treasurer. One of her successors on the Committee of the Greater London Branch writes: "I remember the delicious lunches at her flat in Greencroft Gardens, the scramble for her preserves at branch bring and buy sales, her friendship and wise counsel. In every sense a true gentlewoman." Another friend who knew her at Corps HQ writes: "She was most helpful, absolutely meticulous and marvellous at dealing with the constant stream of people who came to the office. She had very high standards in everything that she did. I am glad to have known her."

COLONEL LUCY DAVIES

Colonel Lucy Davies who died recently, aged 82, was a long serving officer in the Army, a racehorse owner and keen racegoer. Lucy Myfanwy Anwyl-Passingham was born 8 April 1913 the daughter of Colonel AMO Anwyl-Passingham CBE, DL, JP. Educated at Francis Holland Graham Street School, her early life contained annual visits to Royal Ascot and the South of France. Her great love of horses and card games, with her until her death, stemmed from this period. With the threat of war in 1938 she joined the FANY as a driver. Aged 25 and with her background she was soon selected for officer training and was commissioned into The Auxiliary Territorial Service with antedate to her 25th birthday. In 1949 she converted her commission to the newly formed Women's Royal Army Corps. She was Commandant of the WRAC Training Centre from 1961 to 1964 at a critical time when the unit was moved from Guildford to Hobbs Barracks at Lingfield while the Centre was completely rebuilt in brick on the site of the old hatted Queen's Camp at Guildford. She rose through various appointments to become Deputy Director in 1964 and in 1967, a year before her retirement, she took on the additional duties of Deputy Controller Commandant. She was only the second holder of this appointment (which equates to Colonel of the Regiment) and again it was a crucial time. Princess Mary, Princess Royal who had been Controller Commandant since 1941 had died in 1965 and Her Royal Highness, The Duchess of Kent had only just assumed the role of Controller Commandant in February 1967. After her retirement, aged 55, in 1968 Colonel Davies maintained her close connections with the Corps. She remained as Deputy Controller Commandant for a further nine years and was a member of the Council of the WRAC Association in various capacities, latterly as a Life Vice-President, until her death. She was an assiduous attender and forthright delegate. She was Chairman of the ATS &

WRAC Benevolent Fund Trustees for ten years and an active member of its Grants Committee for over twenty years. She served on both the Army Benevolent Fund and the Victory Services Association Grants Committees. She was created an OBE in 1962 and a CBE in 1968.

She was a keen bridge and poker player and could often be seen leaving her offices in Lansdowne House in Berkeley Square and making her way directly to the club in Curzon Street. Her great love was horse racing and she was a familiar figure on the racecourse, always immaculately turned out and always with a hat. She attended Royal Ascot this year despite being in great pain. During her years as an owner she had over 40 winners including Midsummer Lad, Rapid Coracle and Options Open. For the past ten years she had been in a syndicate with her second cousins Charles and William Hamer and Richard Hannon her trainer. Her greatest ambition was to win a race at the Ebor Meeting at York. She achieved this ambition a year before her death when her Horse Options Open won the Acomb stakes on the first day of the 1994 meeting in a record time for the course. It was a tribute to her gambling instinct that she had turned down a very large offer for the horse only the night before.

She married Major David William Davies TD, Royal Army Medical Corps, in 1955 but was widowed in 1959. She had no children of her own but is survived by her step-son, John Farr-Davies.



The late Colonel Lucy Davies

THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION (INCORPORATING QUEEN MARY'S ARMY AUXILIARY CORPS AND AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE COMRADES ASSOCIATION)

TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE PREPARATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Charity law requires trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the association and of its surplus or deficit for that period. In preparing those financial statements, trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Association fund and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 1960. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the association and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION (INCORPORATING QUEEN MARY'S ARMY AUXILIARY CORPS AND AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE COMRADES ASSOCIATION)

We have audited these financial statements.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIRECTORS AND AUDITORS

As described earlier the trustees are responsible for the preparation of financial statements. It is our responsibility to form an independent opinion, based on our audit, on those statements and to report our opinion to you.

BASIS OF OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by trustees in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charity's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

OPINION

In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the Association at 31 October 1995 and of its results for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 1960.

BAKER TILLY, Registered Auditor
Chartered Accountants,
The Clock House, 140 London Road,
Guildford, Surrey GU1 1UW

1995

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for the year ended 31 October 1995

	1995	1994
INCOME		
SUBSCRIPTIONS		
Annual	1,305	1,416
Proportion of life subscriptions	840	814
	2,145	2,230
THE LIONESS PUBLICATION		
Subscriptions	5,230	5,518
Proportion of life subscriptions	1,339	1,211
Advertisement revenue	1,645	844
	8,214	7,573
OTHER INCOME		
Income from investments	12,860	12,426
Deposit account interest	1,226	1,342
Surplus on sale of badges and souvenirs	947	273
Surplus on investment sales	—	2,674
Donation for commemorative window	125	—
	15,158	16,715
TOTAL INCOME CARRIED FORWARD		
	25,517	26,518

	1995	1994
TOTAL INCOME CARRIED FORWARD	25,517	26,518
EXPENDITURE		
BRANCH EXPENSES		
Grants	66	96
THE LIONESSE PUBLICATION		
Cost of publication	21,269	18,592
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES		
A.G.M. Expenses	2,347	2,070
Printing and stationery	1,673	1,275
Postage	794	1,477
Subscriptions and donations	1,463	1,105
Travel expenses	117	324
Audit and accountancy fee	1,199	1,199
Sundry expenses	614	259
Bank charges	245	570
Commemorative window	—	2,038
	8,452	10,317
	29,787	29,005
(DEFICIT) OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	(4,270)	(2,487)
Unrealised gains/(losses) on investments	10,100	(16,036)
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	£ 5,830	£ (18,523)

BALANCE SHEET
31st October 1995

ACCUMULATED FUNDS	Notes	1995	1994
GENERAL FUND			
Balance at 1 November 1994		169,899	178,422
Less: Surplus/(deficit) for the year		5,830	(18,523)
Transfers from other funds		11,320	10,000
		187,049	169,899
LIFE SUBSCRIPTION FUND			
Membership life subscription		10,042	10,185
Lioness life subscription		16,759	15,308
		26,801	25,493
REUNION FUND			
		—	11,320
		£ 213,850	206,712
REPRESENTED BY:			
INVESTMENTS	4	195,792	185,692
CURRENT ASSETS			
Badges stock		1,541	174
Association standard		199	199
Sundry debtors		26	524
Cash at bank:			
– Current account		2,691	357
– Deposit account		16,240	22,192
Cash in hand		146	234
		20,843	23,680
Less: Sundry creditors		2,785	2,660

..... Chairman

..... Treasurer

Approved by the Council on 18 January 1996

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 31 October 1995

1. FORMAT OF ACCOUNTS

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The accounts have been prepared, as appropriate, in accordance with Statement of Recommended Practice No. 2 "Accounting by Charities" issued by the Accounting Standards Committee.

2. BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with applicable accounting standards.

INVESTMENTS

Investments are stated at market value where as previously they were included at cost. The effect of this change of policy is to increase the surplus for the year by £10,000 (1994: Decrease £16,036) being the unrealised increase in market value of investments during the year. Comparative figures for 1994 have been adjusted accordingly. The unrealised gains/(losses) are taken to the Income and Expenditure Account.

INVESTMENT INCOME

Investment income is accounted for once the dividend or interest has been declared. All investment income during the year was received gross.

3. TRUSTEES

No Trustees received any remuneration for services as members of the Council.

4. INVESTMENTS

	Market Value 1995	Cost 1995	Market Value 1994	Cost 1994
M. & G. Charifund 12,495 Units	90,089	55,238	85,228	55,238
8% Treasury Loan – 2002/06 £12,193.14	12,322	11,587	11,569	11,587
7.75% Treasury Loan – 2012/15 £6,548.12	6,463	3,679	6,180	3,679
12.75% Treasury Loan – 1995 £5,991.31	6,379	5,765	6,304	5,765
8% Treasury Stock – 2003 £38,037.38	39,737	37,375	37,340	37,375
12.25% Exchequer Stock 1999 £10,030.00	11,640	10,570	11,408	10,570
14% Treasury Stock 1996 £3,123.04	3,294	3,544	3,492	3,544
4.375% Index Linked Stock 2004 £8,669.72	9,912	10,000	9,377	10,000
2% Index Linked Stock 2006 £8,772.02	15,956	15,000	14,794	15,000
	£ 195,792	£ 152,758	£ 185,692	£ 152,758

