

1997

No2

Lioness

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THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

REGISTERED UNDER THE CHARITIES ACT 1960- No 206184

Founded in 1919

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HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF KENT, GCVO

VICE-PRESIDENT

Brigadier A Field, CB, CBE

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Cover Photographs

Front Cover

"Ready for Parade"

Back Cover

"Records from the Great War"



Member of the Association of Service Newspapers

Contributions for next issue by 13 OCTOBER 1997

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ENTRIES FOR LIONESS

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

1. Entries should be typed whenever possible
2. Branch Notes, Obituaries, Golden Weddings etc should copy the format from earlier Lioness editions as far as possible. (This saves re-editing)
3. 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.
4. Include maiden names or names at the time of the event as that is how you will be remembered.
5. Please enclose self-addressed envelopes for return of photographs.

EDITORIAL

By the time you read this, the Blackpool Reunion and Corps Day 1997 will have taken place. All the hard work by Mrs Rosemary Perry and Mrs Lois Gilbert was not in vain, since the vast majority of ladies thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Even the bomb scares of the IRA did not deter our members from venturing to Blackpool. The centre pages are devoted to the Reunion.

Corps Day 1997, although not as warm as last year, still continues to be an ideal venue to meet up with old friends in military surroundings. We hope to have a report and pictures in the next issue.

The Council of the Association, on your behalf, entertained to lunch, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother at the Army and Navy Club London. As ever, our Patron was interested to hear news of the Association.

Our Vice President and Chairman, Brigadier Anne Field, will be retiring from Council in November. She has been a tireless Chairman for 12 years. We thank her for her unfailing support and wisdom.

There are several reunions taking place in the autumn throughout the country. I look forward to hearing, and seeing the photographs (stamped addressed envelopes for their return) for printing in the next LIONESS.

BURMA STAR ASSOCIATION FAR EAST EXHIBITION AT DUXFORD

If any Ex-ATS who served in the Far East wish to contribute to the cost of this Exhibition, to which the National Fund is contributing, they should get in touch with:

Mr E J Cooper
Far East Exhibition Appeal Fund
Little Foxes
Hay Green
Therfield
Herts SG8 9QJ

THE ARMY TAUGHT YOU NEVER TO GIVE UP, SO DON'T

So there you are in civvy street. Completely at a loose end. But...why?...The Army's what you're good at. What about joining the TA? It's part of the British Army so you'll still be a soldier.

There are two options open to you. First, you can join one of the Territorial Army Independent Units based in the TAVRA region in which you have decided to settle. An ideal route for those who wish to serve locally. Which Unit you join will depend on those available in the area you live in. Second, if you are leaving a Corps, you could retain your capbadge and become a member of either an Independent Unit as above, or a TA Specialist Unit. In either, you can maintain and extend the special skills that you have learned.

The minimum commitment as a member of the Independent TA is 6 weekends, a two-week Summer Camp and some weekday evenings. As a Specialist we ask only 15 days training and 2 weekends. In return, you will earn Army rates of pay and an annual tax-free bonus.

Anyway, I can't imagine you in a suit and tie all of the time. Go on! Phone or write. We need you.



BE THE BEST

Phone 0345 300111, or write to The Territorial Army, Freepost 4335 (Ref: 9100), Bristol BS1 3YX.

Remembrance

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Proformas will be sent to Secretaries in July for members and standard bearers wishing to attend the above parade.

Extract from the Royal British Legion letter about Remembrance Sunday.

Marshalling on Horse Guards Parade

There have been a number of complaints about the organisation of the Parade and of the inaccurate coverage by the BBC. It is our intention to meet the wishes of all Associations that their members should march together. We will therefore plan an Order of March for Associations within each column and allocate a space for each. The BBC in turn will be acquainted of that Order of March and thus be better able to identify particular associations or groups. They can also be guided by the wreaths carried by members on the front left of the column as they pass the Cenotaph. In order to bring about the improvements which have been requested by many of you I would be grateful for your assistance as follows:

The appointment of one member from all associations with more than half a dozen on parade who can act as co-ordinator. His/her tasks are:

- To report to Horse Guards Parade at 0900 hours.
- Collect a marker board and stand in the space provided for his association under the direction of the Parade Marshals.
- Return the marker prior to moving off.

Please may I take this opportunity through the Lioness of thanking members for their cards, phone calls and messages of Get Well.

I am now discharged from hospital after treatment for cancer. The support from members has been overwhelming. Thank you all.

I am now on the way to recovery.

Chris Cowley

'NAAFI IN PARTNERSHIP'

Reports of the demise of Naafi are unfounded. Instead people will see a new Naafi, a professional and dynamic organisation offering choice, efficiency and value for money. To achieve this Naafi is working in partnership with leaders in particular business areas, using their expertise to help provide an unbeatable service.

In March Spar was awarded the contract to convert Naafi's 200 UK shops into a world class operation. Newly refurbished shops, with longer opening hours, will have a more extensive range of stock, focused on what the customer wants.

Naafi, not merely content with modernising its clubs, is going into the fast food business.

In conjunction with Eurest, part of the Compass Group, trial partnerships are being conducted to introduce a number of leading branded foods to clubs, for example Mama Mia Pizzas and Not Just So Donuts.

Other initiatives from Naafi include the creation of Naafi Select, Naafi's new mail order catalogue and a new financial services company, Warrior Group. Naafi Select offers non food goods to Service personnel worldwide at high street prices while Warrior Group will offer all of those services currently available through Naafi Financial Services as well as many new products.

The Armed Forces can be assured that Naafi will continue to service as it has done since 1921. There is a positive future for Naafi and most importantly, its increased profits are returned to the Service's welfare funds.

Naafinews

Officers' Lunch

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 13 September 1997.

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 in the Dining Room of the Officers' Mess. Wine will be served with the meal.

Inclusive price for morning coffee, pre lunch drink, lunch with wine will be £15.00.

Please send your cheque for £15.00 made out to WRAC Association with the application form below and an sae for return of your ticket.

Please apply no later than Monday 1st September 1997.

CLOSING DATE MONDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 1997

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

From:

.....

.....

I wish to attend the Officers Lunch on Saturday 13 September.

My car details are:

Make Colour Reg No.

I enclose a cheque for £15.00 for the lunch.

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

CHEQUES MADE PAYABLE TO
WRAC ASSOCIATION PLEASE

Date Signed

WRAC OFFICERS DINING CLUB

At the final meeting of the WRAC HQ Mess the proposal to form a WRAC Officers Dining Club was floated and met with considerable support. Two years on, the club was formed and continues to this day.

The aim of the club is to hold one dinner each year, normally in Autumn, one in the north of England and one in the south. To date, two dinners have been held. The first inaugural dinner was held at the Army and Navy Club in London on 14 October 1995. The second dinner was held at the Stakis Hotel, in York, on 19 October 1996. The third dinner is planned for 1 November 1997 at the Army and Navy Club.

The WRAC Officers Dining Club currently has a membership of 200 and is open to anyone who held a commission in the WRAC, including a TA commission.

The club has to be self supporting financially and an initial subscription of £5.00 is required to help cover basic administrative expenses.

If you are not a member and wish to join, please complete the proforma below and return it to me, with your initial subscription, by 15 September 1997.

WRAC OFFICERS DINING CLUB

Lt Col (Retd) V E Trout
Maybank
28 London Road
Amesbury
Wilts
SP4 7DY

I support the idea of a dining club and wish to join. My cheque for £5.00 made payable to **WRAC Officers Dining Club** is enclosed.

I would like to make the following suggestions in respect of possible venues or other related matters:

I would like to attend the dinner on 1 November 1997 (delete if not applicable).

SIGNED

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

TEL NO:.....

RANK/TITLE

RETURN BY 15 SEPT 1997 PLEASE

Letters



Ladies, please use this page to air your views,
good or bad.

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Dear Editor

Marie McCreadie (née Gemmell) and Kath Taylor (née Byrne) would like Edith Gray (née Ashe) to know that they remember her very well from life in the WRAC Officers' Mess, Catterick Camp, in 1949/50.

While visiting Kath in South Australia recently, Marie (from South Croydon) was looking at a photograph album of Catterick days and Kath was reading Edith's letter in a 1996 issue of the Lioness. We sought and found a photograph with Edith and her Siamese cat, included herewith.

We remember Pat Gray with his distinctive headdress very well, and send all good wishes and a warm hello to Edith.

Marie McCreadie
17 Croham Park Avenue
SOUTH CROYDON
Surrey CR2 7HN

Kath Taylor
21 Halifax Court
ELIZABETH DOWNS
South Australia 5113

Dear Editor

The enclosed photograph was found in the effects of a deceased member of our Branch, Miss Doris Sayers. We have no knowledge where it was taken or who the Officers are with HM The Queen Mother.

Miss Sayers was a Sergeant Major who served most of the war on Salisbury Plain.

Hon Secretary
Mrs S H Musgrave
7 Horseshoe Walk
Bathwick
Bath
BA2 6DE



Dear Editor

I would like to write a few lines in answer to the letter you published in the Lioness this year about the wearing of green berets and the general appearance of the column at the Cenotaph.

Whilst I was at the front of our column and therefore could not see the rear, I would like to say that I saw no signs of scruffiness around the area I was in.

With regards to wearing the berets, whilst I agree it would be nice to see everyone wearing one, it is not always easy to get one. My local shop closed many months ago as have many others in this town, so I parade in the beret I was issued with whilst I was serving.

But are we not getting away from the real reason we parade? That is to remember those that gave their lives so that we could live in a country free from tyranny.

So please, while I can understand the lady being proud of being in the A.T.S. as I am myself, please do not make an issue of this subject, let us remember in our own way and don't insist on everyone wearing a beret.

Mrs F T Goff
3 Moorland Road
NEWPORT
Shropshire
TF10 7PZ



WRAC OFFICERS' MESS 1959/50 CATTERICK CAMP
BACK ROW: Olive White, Kath Byrne, ?, ?, ?
FRONT ROW: Marie Gemmell, ?, ?, Jill ?,
Joan Crooke, Edith Ashe



Dear Editor

After reading the rather strong letter by one of our members who obviously wished to remain anonymous for whatever reason (Lioness No. 1 1997) I for one was rather disgusted to say the least. Did it really matter what any one person was wearing if they looked clean and tidy, it wasn't a Fashion Show, it was an Act of Remembrance to so many of our colleagues who died giving us the right to Freedom? Many of the people who attended that Service at Whitehall had most probably saved every penny they could afford just to have the honour of being there. Yes, many of us did wear a full green uniform/green beret - we were the lucky ones who could afford these items of clothing. Laws must NOT be passed telling our ladies what they can and cannot wear otherwise numbers attending will decrease not increase. I felt honoured and very, very proud to be in the same company for the same reason as all those people who marched with heads held high at the Cenotaph Remembrance Service on November 10th 1996 and, please God, will let me attend in November 1997 I shan't feel ashamed.

Mrs Barbara Castell
164 Leicester Road
Groby
Leicester
LE6 0DP

Dear Editor

We are grateful for the letter sent in to 'The Lioness' magazine about the appearance of our Association, the ATS, on parade at The Cenotaph last November. Our thoughts entirely.

We have been to the parade in London every November now for some years.

The WRAF and WRNS seem very organised on parade, all uniforms in front and others at the back, and all looked very tidy.

We agree that our Association has a lot more in numbers. If we could rely on someone to organise the group this would be of benefit. In 1995 one lady did try to take on this task but someone questioned her authority, leaving the lady feeling upset and unable to continue. This lady was very smartly dressed in green. Our Association did notice that she was not present at the 1996 parade.

Thanks to the lady for trying.

ROCHDALE BRANCH
The ATS Association
The WRAC Association

See Royal British Legion Letter - Editor.

Dear Editor

On June 26th, 1943, then Cpl Madeleine Rees, my marriage took place at St Mary's Church, Norwood Green, Middlesex.

The guard of honour consisted of members of the British Red Cross Society, (an active member myself before military service), and colleagues from Wimbledon Civil Affairs Staff Centre. On the extreme right is Staff Sergeant Judith Bridge, then LCpl Nona Curtis, Private Cherry Brown, Corporal Robbins, the first officer is Junior Commander Doreen (Dinks) Hinckley, second officer unknown.

J/C Hinckley subsequently married becoming Hancock and posted to the Blackpool area. Her replacement was J/C Gunning.

Cherry Brown and I have corresponded regularly and recently I found and visited Dinks in Somerset.

At one time I tried to organise a reunion but only had two replies from advertising. I'd love to hear from anyone who remembers Skelmorlie, Parkside, Wimbledon, where we messed. A V1 fell on one of our billets but fortunately there were no casualties except the piano which sailed out of a window. The building was without doors, windows and roof for quite a while. I slept in an old larder.

Mrs Madeleine J Croll
8 Woodvale Avenue
Chestfield
Whitstable
Kent CT5 3NJ



Mrs Madeleine Croll

Dear Editor

I served in the ATS from 1942-6 and have lost touch with all my friends from those days.

I search the magazine for my Ack Ack Battery and lo and behold in Norfolk and Suffolk detailed list in The Lioness was 481 (M) A A Bty. I was Joan Beckett OFC. I was with 481 in Hyde Park - Kent, and Hastings, - Belgium, Germany and the name Winnie Armitage does seem familiar.

What a good idea, perhaps other Branches will copy Norfolk and Suffolk.

My nick-name was Becky as there were so many Joan's.

Perhaps you will be kind enough to publish this letter, to see if Winnie Wigg remembers me!!

Mrs Joan L Lappen
7 The Cloisters
Priest Hill
Caversham Heights
READING RG4 7RQ
Tel: 01189 463103

Dear Editor

I attended a Remembrance Day service on 10th November 1996, at a Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery, at Menteng Pulo, Jakarta, Indonesia. It was a very moving experience, and as I was the only person in attendance who was old enough to have been involved in the 39-45 conflict, I found myself to be made rather a fuss of. I have some photos of the cemetery, and of the War Memorial, and having been with (M)HAA I made a point of taking a photo of a Gunner's grave. After the representatives of the various Commonwealth countries had laid their wreaths the whole assembly moved across to the India and Pakistan memorial, where the ceremony was repeated, with a change of prayers, in deference to the Sikh, Gurkha, Hindu, and Moslem fallen.

Winifred Lee (née Barton) in her article, Lioness No 1, 1997, did not dig deep enough. She said that there were no Mentions in Despatches for the whole of AA Command. I was very privileged to be awarded one, and I cannot believe that I was the only one.

W/135608 Ex WOII 531 & 539 (M) HAA Btys

Muriel R Poole
17 Brockhurst Gate
143 De La Warr Road
Bexhill on Sea
E Sussex TN40 2JJ

Dear Editor

Get fell in Major Lance !
My number was W/404.
Any lower takers ?

Jill Huxtable (née Gill)
10 Copenhagen Walk
Goldsmith Way
Crowthorne
Berkshire RG45 7QU
Tel: 01344 750607

Dear Editor

I was only 4½ when war broke out, so I was only vaguely aware of a change of tempo in our lives. Father became an Airman, Mother worked hard growing extra food on allotments, raised ducks, chickens, goats and bees, and took in evacuees and nurses as lodgers. We used to scuttle down to the vast cellars of our Victorian house near Northampton when the air raid sirens went off and our town was actually bombed and Father's shop had a crater in its back yard; I remember going to see it. Also I vividly remember the German pilot in a burning plane that I saw from my bedroom window just seconds before it crashed into the fields only a few yards from our back garden. That was the extent of my war and as I have read stirring stories in The Lioness from the girls in the ATS and the TA who served and fought during and immediately after the war I did not feel that I had a tale to tell until I read the letter from M D Evans, née Grundy, in which she asked "What's happened to the WRAC of the 50's?". My immediate response was that we are most likely to be hovering around retirement age now and as such will soon have more leisure to participate in WRAC Association activities, as indeed I have been able to do for the past year for that very same reason. Now I expect you will be inundated with letters from the new batch of OAPs.

The Suez Crisis galvanized my spurt of Patriotism, well, that plus the fact that after trying my hand at farming and then training as a cook, at 21 I was restless and this was just the boost my questing spirit needed.

Friday 13th April 1956. I was in the Army and ready to do my bit after the obligatory 6 weeks at Guildford. It was suggested that I become a cook! You what? I want to be a driver! I ended up as a trainee mechanic at REME Barracks Woolwich, the 2nd WRAC mechanic at that time, though I'm sure many more were to follow. The WRAC quarters were in a house near the Royal Academy parade ground, our spare time was mostly spent at Joe's cafe down the road listening to Tab Hunter and Fats Domino on the juke box and eating egg and chips. I worked at the REME workshops, crossing the Academy parade ground daily on my BSA 125 motorbike with my beret creased across the top to create a slipstream and my old black and yellow school scarf flying in the wind and in defiance of regulations, anyone remember me? I was mostly known as "That mad WRAC on a bike".

As I worked, I daydreamed of exciting desert warfare, the nearest I got to that was repairing, maintaining and camouflaging vehicles for desert use! The dispatch vehicles were my favourite. I loved to test them out on Woolwich and Greenwich Commons, somewhat to the consternation of a few motorists who were surprised to see a "girl" riding such a large bike. I spent time at GCHQ Moenchengladbach 1957 and 58 and finished my time at RAOC Donnington in the stores office. My three years were up and I decided there was still a big wide world to discover so I took my papers and went off to seek my fortune in the USA but that's another story.

Ruth (Robbie) Jennings
1 Little Ash Gardens
Saltash Passage
PLYMOUTH
Devon PL5 1JZ

Dear Editor

There was a photograph of 'Dippy' Portway with whom I played tennis in 1956 and she didn't look a day older! On page 9 of the same issue I noticed you are 'Calling all Veteran Tennis Players'. I should be interested in playing, though I am somewhat slow about the court now. Could you put me in touch with the appropriate person, or is it still Capt Nikki Rochelle? I think it was 1956 that I was playing in the WRAC 1st Tennis VI and even the Inter Services Singles at Wimbledon. I think we played on Courts 2 & 3 that year after the Wimbledon Championships were over. I also went on a tour to BAOR with Dippy Portway, Myrtle MacCagan and Jane Walters, I think was the 4th. We stayed in the mess at Rheindahlen which was very nice. Some years later when in Podenbow with my husband, I joined up with Audrey Mitchell (née Williamson) for a ladies doubles tournament at Rheindahlen, but I don't think we did very well.

I look forward to hearing from you.

PS Left WRAC Jan '59 on marriage.

Elizabeth Harthard (née Liz King)
2 Cove House
Ashton Keynes
Wiltshire
SN6 6NS
Tel: 01285 861221

Dear Editor

It was with some surprise when myself, on the right and Mary Potts were walking back from Westminster Abbey, not being able to march any more. We were so touched when three young men of the Parachute Regt Association came over, gave us a hug and said how proud they were of us. Needless to say, our thoughts were of these young men who were also wearing their medals with pride.



Jean Webster (née Brennan)
35 Hulme Street
Crewe
Cheshire CW1 3PB

Dear Editor

With reference to the letter from Mrs Evans of Luton in Issue 1 of 1997, I too have wondered why contributions from ex-WRAC are virtually non-existent.

I joined the WRAC in December 1963 and served until my marriage in May 1968 and I know of the whereabouts of only one of my contemporaries, and she lives in Belgium. I have looked in vain through my previous copies of Lioness for familiar faces and the only one I have seen is that of Brigadier Field, whom I worked near in Aden and Ministry of Defence, Lansdowne House, when she was a Major, and who was kind to me on several occasions.

Possibly one of the reasons there are few contributions from ex-WRAC is because joining the Association was not suggested during or at the end of service. Certainly no-one mentioned it to me when I left and in fact I did not join until about twenty years later.

There is also the point raised by Mrs Evans that post-war life may not appear as interesting or dramatic as wartime service but we had our moments too, both exciting and alarming. Nevertheless, I thoroughly enjoyed my 4½ years and have always thought that joining the Army was one of the best things I ever did. It changed my life for ever and for the better.

I think I could write a potted history of my Army career, if anyone is interested, as I quite agree it is up to us younger members to keep the Association going.

Peggy S Bush (née Wells)
W/420705 Sgt
7 Meadow Close
Sundorne
Shrewsbury
Shropshire SY1 4PU

Dear Editor

I wonder if any ex-ATS who are lonely, loss of husband, family or friends would like a pen pal to meet up with for outings or holidays.

Mrs Maisie Harradine (née Puttock)
1 Smock Mill
Wymondham
Norfolk NR18 0PG

Dear Editor

Here is a picture of Mrs Margaret Renwick with Lord Scarsdale of Kedleston Hall. She organised a reunion there and took a party of 41 ladies.

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I, Mrs Monkman, was a staff and troop courier driver at Kedleston Hall some years ago.



Dear "Lioness"

It is only recently that I have heard of your magazine.

Issue No 2, page 94

I was a shorthand/typist to the Director of Transportation (Ports, Docks, Harbours and Railways) in GHQ Home Forces (later to become HQ 21 Army Gp when Monty took over from Sir Bernard Paget). At Hammersmith I was billeted with my two closest friends - Joyce Days (nee Brassington) and Jean Copland (nee Willingale) in a top flat in Argyle Mansions opposite the old Olympia which was our mess. Sadly, both Joyce and Jean have now died. We worked in two houses in Edith Road. We were bombed out of both of them and eventually moved to Nevern Mansions near Earls Court.

I was sent to Normandy and there are many tales to tell of those first days in the apple orchard outside Bayeux. My typewriter groaned into activity every morning, not liking the damp atmosphere under canvas despite the special metal covers which had been issued for our machines. After a week or two I was asked to see the D Tn and two of his officers. It appeared I was to accompany them with a detachment of Royal Engineers being sent forward to Rouen. They became a forward arm of HQ in charge of reinstating the railways which had been heavily bombed.

Being the only girl I was billeted with a French family, M et Mme Medard, who had had a pretty bad time during the occupation. Their daughter had been arrested and taken with the retreating Germans just before my arrival and they had no idea what had become of her. While I was in Rouen,

General de Gaulle visited the town and asked specifically to meet the Medards. I was invited to the service held in the cathedral before they left for an informal gathering to meet him. I still have the newspaper of that day among many photographs.

After a month we moved on to Amiens where I was billeted with a very different French family consisting of M et Mme Busseuil, Grandmere Helen and their maid Berthe. They were well known for their weekly bridge parties. Although I had neither the time, nor the ability to join them in playing, I met a great many local people including two school teachers who insisted I visited their school. Later my photograph was displayed in their hall. They were talented pianists and sadly showed me their treasured grand piano in their home which had been badly damaged during the occupation.

I was away from the main HQ for about six months, during which time I had an insight into the effect the German occupation had had on the French people. The one thing they were not short of in Amiens was eggs; oeuf-à-la-neige and pancakes were served up wherever I went, which was rather better than the food I was eating in the Sergeants' Mess with the men. Unlike Eileen Stapleton I had been fortunate enough to be issued with Wellington boots, which was as well because it was very cold, bleak and snowed heavily most of the time.

At the end of February 1945 we moved on to Brussels where I was billeted on the first night in the bathroom of what had been a former ambassador's mansion in Avenue Louise. This was because no-one was expecting me and it took a few days to discover where I had come from! However, I was once again working in the D Tn's office with my former colleagues in the Shell Mex building in the heart of Brussels. And I was pleased to be billeted with my two friends, Joyce and Jean, even though it was in that awful former SS headquarters further down the Avenue Louise.

We flew into Germany soon after VE Day and were taken from Minden airport to Bad Oeynhausen in trucks along the massive autobahns.

I still have some of my air tickets - including one for the return journey to and from Croydon airport when I had a few days compassionate leave from Brussels.

Issue No 1 1996, page 50

I have been delighted to have been in contact recently with our former CO Ann Fraser-Tytler (now Lady Erskine) and another of 21 Army Gp's officers, Mrs Treadaway.

Sylvia Wild (née Cook)
'Craigdale'
1 Cardinal Drive
Lisvane
Cardiff
S Glamorgan
CF4 5GD

Friends from New Zealand

Dear Editor

Here is a photograph of my friends Joan and Bill Connor. We all served with 122 RASC(MT) Coy in Haywards Heath, Sussex.

We all three, (me, Mary Santer) met up after 50 years at the VE Celebrations Hyde Park. They have now returned to New Zealand where they have lived for many years.

L. Mary Santer, Bill and Joan Connor



Friends from New Zealand

From: Mrs Ann Needle
Branch Recruitment Officer
SSAFA Forces Help
19 Queen Elizabeth Street
London SE1 2LP

As the National Recruitment Officer for SSAFA Forces Help, I am constantly looking for more volunteers to carry out our work. Our volunteers cover every village, town and city throughout the U.K. We also have branches in Germany, Cyprus and Malta.

We estimate 14 million people today are eligible for our help, support and friendship should they need it. Our work continues to increase annually. Well over 85,000 people call on us each year – the highest percentage from the Army.

I would appreciate any help you can give me in this matter.



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Name

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Address

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Mail to: Major D B Taylor, Secretary
The Army & Navy Club
36 Pall Mall
London SW1Y 5JN
Tel: 0171 930 9721
Fax: 0171 930 9720

Iness97

Letters From Abroad

MRS SYBIL M GRAHAM (née LEAMON)
15 ALBANY CRESCENT, ASPENDALE, VICTORIA,
AUSTRALIA 3195

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I joined the ATS in March 1942 and did my training at Honiton from where I was posted to the Citadel at Plymouth in April 1942. My service number was W159542. In May 1943 I was transferred to Fort Stamford across the Cattwater at Turnchapel.

Whilst at Stamford I met, firstly, a good friend called Doreen (Jill) Finnigan and secondly my future husband, David, who was an Australian Airman serving with the Australian No 10 Sunderland Squadron at Mountbatten. We married in November 1944 and I came to Australia as a war bride in May 1946.



Mrs Sybil M Graham (née Leamon)
15 Albany Crescent, Aspendale, Victoria, Australia 3195

My husband belongs to the Royal Australian Air Force Association and in an ex 10 Squadron Newsletter, mention was made of the Mayor of Plymouth (a Councillor Jack Finnigan). Thinking that he must be related to Jill I wrote to him and unbelievably, 3 weeks later I received a letter from Jill which was a great thrill. The odd part is that Jack Finnigan is not related to Jill but is a close ex school friend of Jill's husband, Bernard Chapman, and they visit each other regularly.

We now keep in close touch and she very kindly sends me each edition of the Lioness which is wonderful as it transports me back over 50 years. I pass the magazine on to another former ATS girl, Irene Archibold, who is also a war bride and whom I meet at the Ex Service Women's Bowls Day.

I enclose a photograph of the girls at Fort Stamford in 1943 and also one of Jill and myself taken at my home whilst on leave in 1943. I am on the right.



CHRISTINE "TONI" PARTRIDGE
94 EILEEN STREET, GOSNELLS 6110,
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

In the last issue you had letters asking for more input from the WRAC and I have also noticed a marked absence of this. I served in Maryhill, Glasgow, and then with 4 Independent Co Tanglin, Singapore during 1959/1960, at GHQ Farelf in the Signal Centre. I keep tabs on six of my old Army pals and they are Corporal Vanda McFarlane, Corporal Jean Trevelyan, Private Janet Hughes, Private Jaqueline Hollander, Private Robbie Masson, Private Gwen Milne, I also remember two others, Dot Brown from Willesden, London, and Moira Chapman who married a Chinese/Singapore national who worked for the Army. Moira was discharged and her consequent plight living in a local Kampong was the subject of an article in an English daily newspaper. I have tried many avenues in Singapore to find Moira but to no avail, we all wondered what became of her. Of the above mentioned soldiers, Vanda McFarlane lives in the Isle of Man, Jean Trevelyan lives in Birmingham, Jackie Hollander in Helsby, Janet Hughes in Gosport, Robbie Masson in Johannesburg/S Africa, Gwen Milne in Perth/Australia, and myself also Australia. It would be nice to have a register for WRAC Overseas and the UK. I sincerely hope this brings some reaction. In the meantime, best wishes to everyone.

MRS PATRICIA NEAL (née HARRIS)
5041 214A ST, LANGLEY BC, V3A 8K9, CANADA

Does anyone remember me, Patricia Harris W/284472? I was on a Driving Course at Camberley in 1943 and then to Slough, Bucks. I was finally demobbed in 1946 from Dorchester on Thames as Cpl Harris (Pay Cpl).

MRS DORIS E MADILL
1404-200 DUFFERIN ST, TORONTO, ON, M6K 1Z4,
CANADA

BAND REQUEST

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I am a long standing member of the International Military Music Society (Canadian Branch). Does anyone know of the location, origin and background of the march "The Padstow Lifeboat March", foghorns too!!? I would be most appreciative if I could be informed and I will pass it on. I would reimburse mailing expenses.

FOOTNOTE: Music of the Staff Band of the WRAC is still being played on Radio Band Shows.

MRS ELSIE LOWE (née JONES)
13 GLANWORTH AVENUE, ST THOMAS, ONTARIO,
CANADA, N5R 1E5

This is my first letter to the Lioness. What has prompted me to write is my desire to congratulate Norfolk & Suffolk Branch on the listing of their members which is a great contribution, and also complies with the request in each issue of Lioness that maiden names, or names at the time of the event be included. The name we bore whilst we were serving is the name that we are remembered by.

I read my copy from cover to cover, scanning faces and wondering if among them are any with whom I served, but end up being frustrated.



**SOUTH WEST DISTRICT, H.Q. SOUTHERN COMMAND
WINTER OF '46 AT SHERFORD CAMP, TAUNTON,
SOMERSET**

*L-R Sgt. O. Turner, next five unknown, ? Ivy Trotter,
Sgt. S. Bruton, Sgt. E. (Jones) Lowe, Pte. T. D. MacKenzie,
Cpl. Daphne ?*

I was also pleased to see included in the aforementioned list that there was a member who attended the ATC Clerks School, Golders Green, I was there April/May 1945 prior to my posting to HQ Southern Command at Taunton, Somerset. With the greatest respect to the HAA girls who obviously are more in number and perhaps more interested in corresponding than other trades, it behoves the latter to "get in there!" as one of our NCOs used to say frequently, and contribute to the magazine, I have at last!

My thanks to Vera Cole for the chuckles in reading what happened when she first experienced "The Joys of Joining



**SOUTH WEST DISTRICT BARRACK OFFICE STAFF,
SHERFORD CAMP, TAUNTON, SOMERSET. 1946**
*L-R Sgt. Gould, Capt. McKie Stokoe, C. C. Fred ?
Sgt. E. (Jones) Lowe, Cpl. M. (McCanna) McCallum,
C. C. Mr. Mott*

the ATS' similar to mine at the KOYLI barracks in Pontefract, Yorks.

The No 1 1997 issue of Lioness has several entries that I am sure were very much the same for most of us.

PS I am a member of ATS WRAC Assoc, London, Ontario, and a paid up member of the Women's Royal Army Corps Association.



**'H' COY SOUTH WESTERN GROUP ATS 1947
ORDERLY ROOM STAFF, ASHCURCH CAMP, GLOS.**
*Back row names unknown, Front L-R Cpl. Betty Robinson,
Sgt. Elsie (Jones) Lowe*

MR E H FRASER
(husband of MARGARET (TIM) FRASER)
TAIORAHI, 195A SHAKESPEARE ROAD, MILFORD,
AUCKLAND 9, NEW ZEALAND

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I am writing to you on behalf of my wife, an ex-ATS Officer of WWII. Her name on joining up at the beginning of the war was Margaret HALL. After initial training she became a teleprinter operator, attached Royal Corps of Signals and for a time was stationed at the War Office in Whitehall. For some time she was also seconded to the Polish Forces HQ at the Rubens Hotel. At a later stage, about 1941 or 42 she was posted to the War Office Signals in Cheltenham.

After that she was posted to various stations, mostly on the South Coast on "Hush-hush" assignments.

Her number (possibly only after being commissioned?) was 211264.

She married me on 100643 (Corporal EVELYN HAROLD FRASER of 3 Tp No 10 (IA) Commando).

She resigned from service in the ATS. Her nick-name, by which everyone knew her, was "TIM".

We would be extremely gratified if we could be put in touch with any ex-ATS members who remember her from Cheltenham WO days. Perhaps you would be able to publish this request and our address in New Zealand (where we have lived since 1952) in any publications you may be circulating.

KEITH ROBERTS
35 TRIG HILL ROAD, ONETANGI, WAIHEKE ISLAND,
NEW ZEALAND

As an avid and fortunate reader of the 'Lioness', I felt it was time I wrote to express my awe to your contributors. To the many women who have given me an insight into a period of their lives. To read of their experiences, especially those who served in times of conflict. Their courage, determination and fortitude, is inspiring to say the least.

You see at the various Remembrance parades these 'ageing gracefully' ladies, medals shining, trying, (as much as the arthritis will allow), to stride it out in tune to the music. From the onlookers you hear, "ATS, who were they? What did they do?" They may well have swivelled a cannon pointing skywards or decoded ciphers of some impending battle or driven a truck with vital supplies.

Through your stories I've got to know you better. In one way I have been fortunate, in that my Mum is ex-ATS, all 5 feet nothing of her!! A member of the Auckland NZ branch who through the pages of Lioness located the 'girls' she served with, all those years ago. Thank you ladies.

ATTENTION!
ALL BENEVOLENT FUND
KNITTERS

Yes, I mean you; All the Ladies who have kindly provided me with jumpers, cardigans, hats, gloves, scarves etc for the Benevolent Fund throughout this past year. **Congratulations to you all, through your efforts we have been able to send woollens to 70 families in 1996. A huge leap from 43 families in 1995.** I know that I have written to you all, but I thought it would be a good idea to tell all the readers of the Lioness about the wonderful work you do on our behalf throughout the year.

For those that are wondering what this is all about, the Benevolent Fund is very fortunate in having a loyal band of Ladies and Association Branches around the country who knit a variety of children's clothes from baby size up to large 10 year olds. These are then forwarded to me as the Benevolent Fund's representative, for dispersal.

Through the work of the Benevolent Fund, we hear of former members of the Corps who require our help from time to time. In addition to its normal work, the Fund operates a system, whereby families with children aged 10 years and under are sent parcels of excellent hand knitted woollies made by former ATS and WRAC Ladies. Many of the woollens are "made to order", for example, there was a situation earlier in the year when we have several very well built 10 year olds, and nothing suitable to hand – a quick letter to our Ladies and back came unisex jumpers of all colours as well as the ubiquitous school grey – to fit the requirement. For my part, and having spoken on the telephone and by letter to many of "my Knitters", it is a most satisfying way for us to continue feeling part of "the family" which we all joined, and also to feel that we can still help one another. Some of my Ladies, who are part of this huge countrywide Knitting Circle, have told me that they themselves have been helped in the past by the Benevolent Fund and now they very much enjoy being able to help in return. That all the goodies which are sent to our families are welcome is borne out by the number of letters we receive back at Association Headquarters at Worthy Down. It is a joy to be able to give, but it is an even greater joy to know that the gift is most welcome!

If you would like to know more about the work we do, and perhaps join our Knitting Circle, please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you.

Mrs Babs Mitcheson
King's Hill Cottage
Netheravon
Wilts SP4 9PL
01980-670285

Reunions

WRAC SENIOR RANKS DINNER NIGHT

SAT 8 MAR 97

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The inaugural WRAC Senior Ranks Dinner Night was held at the AGC Centre WOs' & SGTs' Mess on Saturday 8 March 1997. Thirty four ex serving and serving ladies attended as follows:

Kate Arnold, Sandy Barclay, Karen Ballard, Maureen Brown, Andrea Denham, Agnes Doig, Gail Farmer, Andrea Ford, Jan Ford, Betty Green, Joan Grimston, Angie Hamilton, Wendy Hooton, Jenny Jackson, Liz Lawrence, Mary Linnegan, Rene McGregor, 'Mitch' Mitchell, Norma Nicholas, 'Paddy' Rhodie, Gill Rich, June Rigby, 'Sammy' Simon, June Skelton, Elaine Smith, Madge Smith, Sue Taylor, Jill Trainor, Val Trout, Jill Turner, Jacquie Warsop, Nicki Wellings, Julie White and me.

Our two guests were Lt Col Sue Westlake AGC (SPS) and the RSM of the Mess, Ian Pendlebury.

The evening started at 1900 hrs. There was a buttonhole and bucks fizz for everyone on arrival (there was also supposed to be a photographer to take a group photo of us all prior to sitting down to our meal, but I am afraid he let us down). We were fortunate to obtain the services of a pianist who played throughout the dinner which was very pleasant indeed. Port was passed around the table for the Royal toast, followed by liqueurs and speeches (Col Westlake and myself). I also read out a very nice letter which I had received from Brigadier Anne Field (Vice President of the WRAC Association), which I shall repeat here for the benefit of those who could not, but would have liked to have attended, as I think it was very kind and thoughtful of her.

"Greetings from the Vice President and Members of Council of the WRAC Association on this your inaugural Ex WRAC Senior Ranks Dinner Club Dinner. Have a splendid evening and a memorable occasion".

Before we left the table and adjourned to the bar there was a small raffle and we also discussed the feasibility of making this an annual event. I explained that what Andrea Denham and myself had organised for the evening could, perhaps, form a basis which could be built upon in forthcoming years. As a result I am delighted to say that SSgt Julie White (currently stationed in London) volunteered to organise the Dinner for next year.

Judging by the laughing and talking that then went on at the bar into the wee small hours, I think I can safely say, that it was a splendid evening and a very memorable occasion.

Mrs Lesley Trattles

WRAC LUNCHEON CLUB

The first WRAC Luncheon will be held on 11 October 1997, at Tillington Hall Hotel, Stafford. The cost of the 3-course lunch, glass of wine, coffee and mints will be £20. The Hotel are offering accommodation, Fri/Sat/Sun, plus full English breakfast, at a special rate of £25 per person per night based on two people sharing a twin bedded room. Single rooms are available with an added supplement. Anyone requiring a vegetarian meal please let me know at the time of booking. Would ex WRAC, who are interested in attending this unique occasion, please complete the application form below, send a cheque made payable to WRAC Luncheon Club, with a stamped addressed envelope to Ann Deakin, 'Cobblestones', 2 Chesham Road, Stafford, ST16 3JP. The closing date for applications must be 13 September 1997. If you want to re-create the atmosphere of Blackpool, then you need to be at Tillington Hall Hotel on 11 October 1997. Numbers are limited.

ANN DEAKIN

'COBBLESTONES'

2 CHESHAM ROAD

STAFFORD ST16 3JP

I wish to attend the WRAC Luncheon, to be held at Tillington Hall Hotel, on Saturday 11 October 1997.

Full Name (Mrs/Miss/Ms)

Maiden Name

WRAC Register Yes/No

Serial Number

Date Enlisted

Vegetarian Diet Yes/No

Hotel Accommodation Required

Single/Twin Bedded Room
(delete as applicable)

I enclose a cheque for £20 for the Luncheon.

I enclose a stamped addressed envelope for my receipt, ticket, hotel information etc

CHEQUES PAYABLE TO WRAC LUNCHEON CLUB

SignedDate

**WRAC STAFF BAND
BAND BRANCH REUNION 1998**

Calling all ex-members of the WRAC Staff Band. There is to be a reunion lunch at the Victory Services Club in London on Saturday 21 March 1998.

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Morning coffee will be available from 11am, and lunch will be served at 12.45pm. Bar available for drinks 12 noon to 3pm.

Tickets £24.00 each, includes morning coffee and 3 course lunch.

Admission by ticket only.

Guests welcome.

Please send your application form to:

Miss G Sale
21 Park Road
Aldershot
Hampshire GU11 3PU

Please enclose an SAE for receipt & tickets.

For further information contact the Band Branch Secretary,
Gill Sale, on 01252 330250

CLOSING DATE 1st FEBRUARY 1998

APPLICATION FORM

(photocopies of this form are acceptable)

From:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

Postcode:.....

Telephone:.....

I wish to attend the Band Branch Reunion on 21st March 1998 and require (Number of Tickets). I enclose a cheque for:

£

(made payable to "WRAC Association Band Branch")

ATS Dinner Club Luncheon at Mount Royal Hotel, Bryanston Street, London, on Saturday 4 October 1997. Details in next newsletter. Non-members who would like to join, write to: Mrs Doreen Brookes, 99 Meadow Road, Coventry, CV6 4GW.

The 1997 ATS Reunion will be held on September 12, 13 and 14, 1997. The event takes place at the Ramada Inn, Niagara Falls, Ontario. For information please contact: M. Chamberlain, 26 Dunleaven Ave, St. Catherines, Ontario, L2M 6A7.

**SCOTTISH AGM & REUNION
11 OCTOBER 1997**

The Scottish AGM & Reunion 1997 will be held at the Cairndale Hotel, English Street, Dumfries on Saturday, 11 October at 1100 hrs. Coffee will be served from 1030 hrs and the price of the tickets includes 2 course lunch plus coffee/tea at 1500 hrs.

The normal Raffle will take place following a Regular Army Speaker on 'Life for Women in the Army today'.

Dumfries is a lovely area to visit and the Cairndale Hotel is offering favourable terms for those attending the Reunion (Tel 01387 254111).

TICKETS PRICE £13.00 ARE AVAILABLE BEFORE 19 SEPTEMBER FROM:

Miss S Marcroft BEM
245 High Street
Dalbeattie DG5 4DW

Please come and join us.

Area Reunion for Wales and the West will be held at Priory Hall, Coventry University on Saturday 20 September 1997. Tickets/Information from the Secretary: Mrs D Brookes, 99 Meadow Road, Nunts Park, Coventry CV6 4GW. Tel: 01203 362866.

NORTH EAST GROUP REUNION 1997

The North East Group Reunion 1997 will be held in Cleethorpes on Saturday 27 September 1997 at the Winter Gardens. Reception at 11.30am followed by Luncheon. Tickets £10. For further information phone 01642 556101 or write to Mrs G. Friday, 25 Murton Road, Billingham, Cleveland TS22 5AZ.

**ARE THE BARRACKS STILL
STANDING?**

Have you ever wondered what became of the Camps you served in? Do you have favourite memories of a particular barracks? Do you have stories that would add to their history? Or do you have a photo of yourself – or just one of the barracks? If you have and you're curious to know what became of it, do write in and we will see if we can find out what's happening there now.

NETLEY VETERANS REUNION AND DISPLAY
14 MAY 1998

We are proposing to hold a Reunion in conjunction with the Netley Branch of the Royal British Legion at Royal Victoria Country Park, the site of Britain's largest Military Hospital.

The event is to mark both the Centenary of the Royal Army Medical Corps, and the 20th Anniversary of the closure of the Hospital. The proposed date of 14 May 1998 is also the exact 100th Anniversary of HM Queen Victoria visiting Netley to award VCs to Piper Findlater (Gordon Highlanders) and Private Vicary (Dorsetshire Regt) for actions in the Tirah Campaign in India. Various events and historical displays are planned for the day.

The Reunion is open to all service and civilian medical nursing and support staff who have worked at Netley. If you are interested in attending please complete and return the enclosed form so we can judge the numbers who may wish to attend. Full details will be sent to you in Spring of 1998 if there is sufficient interest in such a Reunion being held.

Please pass this information on to any Netley veterans you may be in contact with.

Your sincerely

Patrick Kirkby
Historian, Royal Victoria Country Park, Netley.

Netley Veterans Reunion and Display - 14 May 1998

Netley Veteran Ticket Request

Name/Rank

Address

.....

.....

Connection with Netley

Regiment Association and Branch (if any)

Name of Guest (one only)

Please return by 30th July 1997 to:

Patrick Kirkby, 2 Colson Road, Winnall, Winchester, Hants,
UK, SO23 0EX

Please note: This is not a formal booking but to register your interest so we can judge the number of people interested.

National Army Museum
Royal Hospital Road
Chelsea
London SW3 4HT

NEWS RELEASE

SOLDIERS OF THE RAJ

**A Major Exhibition at the National Army Museum,
opening on 15 August 1997**

To mark the Fiftieth Anniversary of the end of British Rule in India the National Army Museum is mounting a major Special Exhibition commemorating the achievements and experiences of the men, both Indian and British, who served in the armies of the East India Company and the British Indian Empire.

The items on display will be drawn from the extensive collections of Indian Army material in the National Army Museum, one of whose objects upon foundation was to preserve and record the achievements of this, the largest volunteer army in history. They will include striking oil paintings, watercolours, uniforms, medals, weapons, books, photographs, maps and documents, all illustrating the life of the 'Soldier of the Raj' in peace and war.

Among the items to be seen will be pieces of ordnance cast by the East India Company in India, the telescope used by Sir Henry Havelock during the siege of Lucknow, General Sir Sam Browne's pistols, the full dress uniform of a trooper, the first Victoria Cross to be awarded to a Jewish soldier and a copy of the last order ever issued to the Army of British India.

Many of these exhibits will be well known items from the Museum's collections although some have not been on public display before. For example, one of the key paintings in the Exhibition, Hamilton's painting of the Gurkhas at the Battle of Peiwar Kotal (1878), has not been on display in London since the Museum acquired it in 1951.

The exhibition will open on 15th August 1997, the 50th Anniversary of Indian Independence. It will be open to the public until 1999. Admission will be free

For further information please contact Julian
Humphrys or Lucinda Brown on 0171 730 0717
ext 2210 or 2243

Poets Corner

BLACKPOOL BANQUET BAND

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There were hundreds who came to meet and to chat,
While the band played on
They sat down to dinner dressed in their best,
As the Band played on,
Their memories went back over the years
They spoke of their hopes, they banished their fears,
There was laughter and joy - sometimes a few tears,
As the Band played on,

They ate as they talked about this, about that,
And the Band played on.
The years rolled away for each WRAC and each AT,
As the Band played on.
Before the Band left ladies all took their chance
To get up and march - or was it to prance
Let's say it looked like a conga-style dance
Then the Band played out.

Came Sunday morning - time for the church
And the Band came too.
Hundreds and hundreds of women rode in
And the Band arrived too.
They waited an hour then squeezed in somehow,
To listen, to laugh and to learn that their vow
Of service and discipline is relevant now
Then the Band played again

Outside they "fell in" in smart ranks of six,
And the Band fell in too.
Simmy Simons and others licked them all into shape,
Then the Band played on.
So with heads held high they marched all serene,
Proud of their Standard, their uniform green,
To end this reunion, what a joy it had been
Thank you to all - and to the Band too.

Author: BETTY MITCHELL



TO MABEL, WITH LOVE

Now once we had a Sergeant, her name was Mabel Dee,
Beneath her firm exterior, she was soft as she could be.
Where we had any trouble there wasn't any doubt
If it was really possible our "Dee" would work it out.
We've many happy memories of our days at Danson Park,
And the friendships that we made there have really left their
mark.

Then on the Essex Marshes, and also Belgium too
In mud and snow and ice there, we still came smiling
through.

Each year we hold reunions, and hope for many more,
But this one's really special - our Mabel's reached four
score!

Though many years have passed now, and the War is at an
end

We'll drink a toast to Mabel, our Sergeant and our friend.

Author: ROSA RILEY (née DAVID) 525 M HAA Battery

THEN AND NOW

Did you see the shadow?
Did you feel the past?
Wasn't it a fresh breeze
Tumbling memories as it passed.

Did you feel the strength we knew?
Did you hear the laughter?
There was the comradeship
That never knows departure.

Did you see the young girls?
Did you see their smile?
Drifting through your memories
Just for that brief short while.

Did you see the years fly by?
Did you see today?
Yet the youth within our hearts
Is always there to stay.

No matter how or where we are
No matter where we rest
Good friends like these are always there
Thank God we are so blest.

Authors: CAROL BURBRIDGE Ex ATS WRAC
JEANNE BURRIDGE Ex ATS WRAC

FOUR ATS FROM LONDON

We're four ATS from London, we're perfectly topping
We're from Ealing and Kensington, Poplar and Wapping
We've never been this far from London before
We find life in Norfolk a terrible bore.
There isn't much fun or excitement at all
In Necton, or Swaffham, Holme Hale and Sporle.

We've been used to a cinema just over the way
Now we cross half the county to see Frances Day
And a nice Fish and Chip shop was just down the street
And a snack bar where only the best people meet
And rows of shops - Harrods - the Co-operative Stores
And Woolworths and Selfridges, where you buy scores
Of interesting things that you can't buy at all
In Necton and Swaffham, Holme Hale and Sporle.

There were buses and trams, and plenty of trains
Central Heating, and constant hot water — and drains!
There were hundreds of fellows to take us about.
In Sporle we all cheer if we see a Boy Scout!
There isn't much fun where there aren't any men
So we just have to creep off to "Bye Byes" at ten
We long for Romance, but it's no good at all
In Necton and Swaffham, Holme Hale and Sporle.

In Necton and Swaffham, Holme Hale and Sporle
There are hundreds of acres of nothing at all
Except wheat fields, and beet fields, and cattle and sheep
It's enough to make us poor Londoners weep
Though we like all you people we feel we must say
That each night at Necton we kneel down and pray
That it won't be too long before Armistice Day
Then we'll tear down to London again and go gay
In our native surroundings - it's perfectly topping
In Ealing and Kensington, Poplar and Wapping.

Author: UNKNOWN

ANNIVERSARY

November!

Remember?

Recall with pride and sorrow
The dead of yesterday.

The old men of tomorrow
Will mourn the heroes of today.

Author: BARBARA REEVES

REGULAR FORCES EMPLOYMENT ASSOCIATION

Our task is to assist all ex-Regular servicemen and women who did not hold commissioned rank to find employment, provided they served with good character for a minimum of three years, (or less if discharged on medical grounds). We take a long term interest and can, as a registered charity, offer our free counselling service to them throughout their working lives. Since March 1996 this service has been extended to any officer who served in the ranks for a minimum of three years.

The RFEA works together with the Tri-Service Resettlement Organization, the Services Employment Network.SkillBank, the Officers' Association and the Employment Service, as part of the Forces resettlement service.

Our Employment Officers maintain close contact with local employers, also offering them a free service, from our 39 Branches spread throughout the United Kingdom. Their addresses and telephone numbers can be obtained through Resettlement Officers, Corps and Regimental Associations, Job Centres, Yellow Pages and local telephone directories.

Sadly, only half of those eligible to register with the Association do so but during the period 1 April 1996 - 30 June 1996 the Association assisted 2,992 men and women with their resettlement and placed 1,157 in employment. That is a 38.7% success rate. Of those placed, 556 were men and women from the Army.

Why not contact us and see how we can help you?

Sport

TALES OF A NORDIC SAGA THE ARMY LADIES BIATHLON TEAM SEASON by Captain R Grimes RLC

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On a bleak November morning last autumn, seven females set sail to Norway to begin training as the Army Ladies Biathlon Team. They had spent the previous summer months roller skiing, swimming, running and generally being pushed to their physical limits. Once in Norway it was time to learn the Nordic technique of cross country skiing.

The team consisted of five RAMC soldiers and two members of the RLC. Their coach was a PTI and he leaned heavily upon the Elm Street side of nightmares. Training in Norway comprised endurance sessions in the morning, shooting in the afternoons and sprint circuits at night. (The local pistes were lit up so there was no such thing as an early night!)

We were to spend the first two months of the season just outside Lillehammer, training with the Infantry Nordic ski teams. As the only all female team we caused quite a stir at the Infantry Ski championships and after we had convincingly beaten a fair few of the male teams our confidence was lifted. The only shock to the Army Ladies was the loss of Pte Stevens, who fell and broke her leg along a steep section of one of the races. (Proof that Nordic skiing is an adrenalin sport.)

From Norway we went on to compete at the UK Divisional Ski Championships, Exercise Spartan Hike. In fantastic weather and outstanding scenery, we again proved that Nordic skiing is not just a testosterone sport. The ladies came 15th out of 35 teams in the biathlon relay and 21 in the 4x10k relay.

From Serre Chevalier we drove to the Army Winter Sports Association's 50th Anniversary and competed against some of the top male teams within the Army. Saint Moritz is one of the most impressive resorts in Europe and the opportunity to ski there provided a memorable experience.

The highlight of the season was racing at British Ski Week. Although the Army Ladies main rivals, the RAF Ladies Team, failed to make an appearance, the girls were able to thrash the civilian competition. So much so that three of the Team are now being considered to ski for Great Britain at the Lowlanders International Races next January.

The Biathlon Team enables female soldiers to become fit and sound marksmen. It provides them with the chance to live in exclusive ski resorts and race on Olympic standard courses.

"SHE FLIES LIKE A BIRD" by Major S J Cadec AGC(SPS)

From Icarus to the Bird Man of Selsey, man's desire to fly like a bird has always been an elusive dream. The advent of hanggliders and paragliders, however, has meant that these dreams have gradually become reality. Paragliders, as opposed to parachutes, allow one the opportunity to travel long distances without recourse to mechanical assistance, relying solely on natural phenomena such as thermals and wind. Conscious of ever increasing years but not one to miss an opportunity to try something new, I got the chance to attend a paragliding course in Southern Germany. During a 10 day course, one can generally obtain Club Pilot (CP) rating which allows one to fly without supervision. SP means that one has grasped the basics but needs to consolidate the training with a number of high, longer duration flights. I went to Bavaria to try and upgrade to CP.

Following kit withdrawal and canopy inspections, it was off to the slopes for low level revision training. I'd forgotten how heavy and bulky the total kit was, easily 35 lbs and encased in a large, ill fitting rucksack. Struggling to the launch site, I recalled that whilst fine, dry conditions are a bonus of the sport, it does mean that one ends up hot, sticky and sweaty and looking less than elegant.

Revision consisted of launch techniques; one quickly remembers how important it is to run at full pelt if you want to become airborne at the first attempt, pussyfooting around is not tolerated - "Up, check canopy, off the risers and run, RUN, RUN, RUN! Get those little legs moving....."

Once airborne, the flying is relatively straightforward, though all too quickly the ground appears and a strong flare is needed to avoid a heavy landing. The chute is then gathered and the long trek up to the top of the hill begins. Being less than well endowed in the height stakes, coping with 75 sq m of canopy can be tricky. Five more flights (and trips to the top) followed before we collapsed hot and sweaty into the minibus.

Next morning, driving to the landing site and viewing the launch site, towering some 1451m above sea level I began to wonder whether I really wanted to do this after all. Viewing the launch site and looking down from the top of the mountain confirmed my fears. The launch site was relatively short in length with a slight drop over the edge. If you weren't off the ground by the time you reached the

edge, chances were that you'd have to start again. Chivalry did not enter into the order of launch - as the only woman I was quite happy for "After you, men first" to apply. That way I could watch their launches, learn from any mistakes and have time to decide whether I really did want to fly or not. Paragliding is one of the few sports where you are not put under any pressure to fly. You have to be confident in yourself, in your chute and in the skills learnt. Once in the air, although in radio contact with the instructor, you're very much on your own. If you fail to react when faced with difficulties, you're likely to injure yourself badly. I decided to go for it. The launch went smoothly and I rose and flew off in the necessary direction. Flying at height isn't the unnerving part, I found it was the unexpected reaction of the canopy that threw me. You can feel the air buffeting in and against the cells. On occasions it felt quite turbulent and the automatic tendency was to over compensate resulting in a bumpy flight. At that point I doubted my sanity and swore at the instructor to "Get me down". Fortunately, I hadn't depressed the pressel so he was oblivious to my yells.

Clearing the road, I had to put in a series of S manoeuvres to lose height over the landing site before lining up for touchdown. Landing on my feet, my knees which had gone to jelly, gave way in the infamous mud. This was not my idea of fun.



She Flies Like A Bird

However, I was down safely and in one piece. "Any landing is a good landing" as the instructor said. "You did what you were taught - that can only be good". That's as maybe but as I handed back the kit I thought "Sally, it's time to grow old gracefully". That was 4 weeks ago. Back on terra firma, when the sun is shining and the sky is clear and blue, the urge to fly and to experience that sense of freedom had resurfaced. Maybe I will try again next year because when it's good, it's wonderful but when it's difficult, it's what adventure training is all about - try it and see.

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Stories

FORMATION OF THE ATS - DOROTHY DIXON **PDF Compressor Free Version**

As September 1998 marks the 60th Anniversary of the formation of the ATS, could members be requested to approach their local Council Parks and Gardens Department with a request that our insignia, as shown, be planted in a prominent place? It would be lovely to have them displayed throughout the UK with golden coloured flowers.



'AND MOTHER CAME TOO' MRS JOYCE STERIO AND HER MOTHER, MRS AMY BROADWAY 467 & 540 BTYS, 158 REGT RA BY IMOGEN CORRIGAN

When I met Mrs Joyce Sterio (née Broadway) in Wales last March, she told me her remarkable story. She and her mother both joined the ATS together in 1942. Mrs Sterio had been in service for a year and came home, deciding to join up but she had reckoned without her mother. Although just 16, she went to the nearest recruiting office where she was asked if she was 18. She told them she was and, of course, they didn't query it as her mother (Amy) was with her. Just in that split second, Amy had decided to join up as well. 'I didn't really think she meant it, but she did - she put

all the furniture in storage and we went off to Honiton on the train together', Mrs Sterio told me. In fact, this wasn't her mother's first taste of army life as she had joined up during the First World War and had been attached to the Royal Flying Corps. Readers may know that there were upper and lower age limits for girls joining up in the Second War, but, if you had served before, the rules were waived and you could join up to the age of 50.

So, off the two of them went, not telling anyone on the train that they were mother and daughter. 'I think she did it to look after me really. I was so young that I joined up wearing a gym slip, and I remember how concerned she was about me when we had our injections which were very painful.' Of course, the truth about their relationship came out quite soon, not least when they were allocated to their rooms and the mother and daughter found themselves together, mother on the bottom bunk and daughter on the top.

Despite the fact that it's evident that they had a very good relationship, things didn't go entirely smoothly. Joyce Sterio likes order and found it easy to adjust to army life. Strangely, it was her mother who rebelled. 'She didn't seem to mind joining up older than the other girls, but she just carried on as normal'. She wouldn't do square bashing, wouldn't salute for her pay, wouldn't wear her gas mask correctly or her hat around Camp - a Sgt Major's nightmare. On pay parade, Joyce would go in first and her mother would nudge her, saying, quickly - what's my number? Then she'd go in and just brush her hand across her forehead in a semblance of a salute. As I listened, my jaw was dropping, trying to imagine how Amy escaped unpunished. Some people do get away with things and, in Amy's case, it may have been because she was so well liked. She worked in the Officers' Mess and probably mothered them as well. She never drank or smoked, but she had a passion for whist and taught all the officers to play cards. One officer confided to Joyce her mother was leading them into bad habits.

There were pros and cons for Joyce. On the one hand, her mother cleaned her shoes and buttons for her. On the other, Amy insisted on being with her daughter, always managing to get a pass at the same time, going to the pictures with her and there was certainly no chance of Joyce ever having a boyfriend. Joyce was selected to be No 1 on the Predictor. Amy became a Mess Orderly. After recruit training, they should have parted, but no - the army had reckoned without Joyce's mother too. Interestingly, Amy had no qualms about her daughter going on to a gun site - she just went too. They were together at Honiton, Arborfield and Aberdour.

Despite all sorts of possible problems, things went fairly swimmingly until the great day came when Joyce was selected for promotion. 'I thought I had sewn the stripe onto my greatcoat but I must have sewn it onto hers! Mother

got up in the morning and said she must have been promoted. I said I hadn't heard about it, but she insisted - after all the stripe was on her coat.' At this point, Amy's rebellious streak really began to show itself but then, how many mothers would take orders from their daughters?

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Eventually the army intervened and mother and daughter were parted. Amy was moved to another part of the Battery a few miles away from Aberdour, but they could still meet in the town. Soon after that, Amy was invalided out leaving Joyce, I should think, breathing a sigh of relief. 'It seems funny now' said Mrs Sterio, 'but it wasn't at the time, but also, I never realised then how unusual it was for this to happen at all.'

The story doesn't end there. In 1945 Amy introduced her daughter to Clifford. They were married 3 months later and are still together after 52 years. Sadly Amy died young, when she was 52. She died on Joyce's birthday whilst staying with her. 'She certainly never intended me to forget her'.

* * * * *

Joyce and Clifford Sterio now live at 1, Blaenant Street, Duffryn, near Port Talbot, West Glamorgan SA13 3HB.

* * * * *

Mothers, Daughters, Sisters, Aunts Are there any more stories of relatives serving together or near each other? If so, let us know -we'd love to hear them.



Mrs Joyce STERIO

FRANCES NUNNALLY

7139 CHEROKEE ROAD, RICHMOND, VA 23225, USA

Memories of World War II conjure up visions of tanks rumbling over desert sands; dogfights in the sky; Flying Fortress formations taking off at dawn for missions over the continent. All, after an interlude of more than 50 years, stuff for romantic films. So, then, what am I doing still dreaming of pots filled with steaming stews and enormous platters of suet puddings with treacle poured on top?

I served in the ATS from 1941 to 1946 and during those years submerged in cookhouse and mess-hall life. The troops needed to eat to sustain the rigorous training that would help win the War. I remember standing in front of the cookhouse doors and pouring cocoa into mugs as the soldiers filed by for their "elevenses". I poured and I poured enough liquid to launch a battleship!

We fed many hundreds of men each day. And we actually did have a "dishwashing" contraption, a huge machine that groaningly washed the plates we fed into its yawning interior. We called it "Old Bertha". But although "Old Bertha" served us well, once a week for reasons of hygiene it was required that we wash all plates and utensils by hand. In hot, soapy water, of course.

Soap in beleaguered England was not exactly kind to your hands. After they had been submerged in that brew, scrubbing plates for several hours, the skin was peeling off our fingers in strips. So, when we girls had dates that night we were hard put to explain the condition of our hands to our boyfriends or dancing partners. Not a thousand tortures would have elicited from us that our glamorous wartime jobs consisted of running a dishwashing machine and washing plates!

Over the span of 50-plus years, our vanities have shrunk and we see things much more realistically. The cookhouses and mess-halls of wartime England were weapons as powerful as guns and tanks. I am proud to have had a share in fighting and winning that War.

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL L. HUXTABLE RASC (RETD)
10, COPENHAGEN WALK, GOLDSMITH WAY,
CROWTHORNE, BERKSHIRE, RG45 7QU**

Readers might like to see this photograph (in fact a postcard) of eighteen members of the Women's Legion taken during the Great War of 1914-18. It recalls a time when women made major inroads into the working life of the country, in this case, female drivers with the Army Service Corps (ASC). Research shows that 613 MT Company ASC was formed at Chester in February 1916 being given the functional title of 25th Auxiliary MT Company. The Unit's role was to provide support for Western Command which consisted then of the counties of Cumberland, Lancashire, Cheshire, Shropshire,

Gloucestershire and Wales. During the period March to June 1916 so many men joined the Army that training centres and hospitals were opened all over the command, which required more drivers and more vehicles: additional duties were hauling timber for the Canadian Forestry Corps in the Penrhin and Abergavenny areas as well as providing transport for the National Shipyard in Chepstow. Initially there were 6 Officers, 170 men and a total of 133 vehicles of different types, but changes through the war led to the following strength by the latter half of 1918:

20 officers	78 cars	145 motor cycles with side cars
500 men	54 box vans	169 lorries and 97 ambulances

In addition, some 150 Women's Legion drivers were employed, as well as 50 members of the Queen Mary's Auxiliary Army Corps (QMAAC), half of them being Mobile and half Immobile (which I think refers to their posting position, not their physical characteristics!). In August 1916 the Company HQ moved to Liverpool and its four sections (platoons) were in Chester, Liverpool, Manchester and Cardiff.



The photograph bears close examination: 'Central Section' probably means that this was the section which was in effect the company headquarters; the variety of headdress and the way the hats were worn say much for the sense of independence and character of these women; ages seem to vary between 20 and 50; there is a good selection of gloves and coats, not to mention footwear, with the left-hand seated woman wearing long spats, or gaiters, three other seated women wearing high lace-up boots and the right-hand seated woman wearing leather leggings; one woman in the front is wearing the waist belt of a Sam Browne; two women (left standing and central sitting) are clearly wearing ASC shoulder titles and all of them are wearing ASC cap badges and Women's Legion collar badges. The notice to the left of the door refers to 'enquiries should be made at 19 Low Hill round the corner', which confirms the location as Liverpool.

Major N.S.M. Durnford ASC was the OC of 613 Company but there is no record of who these women are. Could any of your readers help?

A POSTAL WORKER REMEMBERS BY MAUREEN BROWN

In 1953 it was decided to include the trade of postal worker into the WRAC. The first batch of girls, after 5 weeks basic training at Guildford, were posted to Richmond Park, Kingston on Thames under the command of 12 Bn WRAC.

We travelled, daily, to Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, to be taught how to sort 1,000 letters, by hand, an hour. How to tie them into bundles, breaking the string with a twist and a strong tug, with our fingers. How to tie up a sack of letters with string and a lead seal. Learnt the postage rates of letters, packets and parcels, airmail and surface, to the different BFPOs all over the world.

Armed with all this knowledge we were now able to deal with the real mail. We then travelled, daily, to Home Postal Depot (HPD/RE) which was situated in Raphael Street, London, near Harrods. It was originally a night club that was damaged during the war and was patched up for our use. There was no heating or modern facilities, we wore slacks and leather jerkins, and in winter worked in overcoats as well during the night shifts.

Our CO was Lt Col Reading RE, and in the beginning all the NCOs were RE, and we did exactly the same work as the lads. We worked three shifts round the clock: 0600-1400, 1400-2200 and 2200-0600, six days a week for a 48 hour week. In the build up to Christmas we started an hour earlier and finished an hour later, overlapping the shifts, making a 60 hour week. The night shifts were 5 weeks long and the other ten weeks with one week early and one week late alternating. There were no mechanical aids and a full mail sack is quite heavy. We soon learnt that two hands on the top of the sack, knee in the side, a heavy kick and lift and it could be thrown into the back of a 3-tonner.

The mail came from all the London Railway Stations day and night. We sorted it into air mail and surface and bagged it up to the various destinations. The airmail was flown from Heathrow daily and all the weights had to be phoned to the airport, before dispatch, in 'kilos' (no faxes in those days). It was unheard of for a truck to be late and miss a flight, and at night during the London Smog it had to leave earlier with two people, with lamps, in front of each wheel walking to guide the driver round the traffic islands and parked or crashed cars.

How many can remember being on early shift and running for the coach, which left on the dot of 0500, with a cup of tea and a bacon sandwich, because the cooks had overslept again?

I was on SOIII shift and my name, then, was Maureen Merritt. Does anyone remember me?

**TWO MACKAYs AT CAMP AUGUST 1939
MRS ROBINS MBE
HILLVIEW, SNOWHILL, DINTON, SALISBURY,
WILTS, SP3 5HN**

Does anyone remember OTTERPOOL CAMP LYMPNE (Kent) in the summer of 1939?

My sister Peggy (later Gibbs) and I volunteered at Canterbury in 1938. We were encouraged by our parents to do something for Defence, in those days of the Munich crisis. We chose the TA. I was just 18 and my ATS number was W/768. Can anyone beat that? I did meet someone at the Bath reunion with a lower number, but she was very elderly and sadly could not remember much about those early days.

I was "Local Service" because of my tender age! 50 years later at 16 one is considered "grown up" and by 18, often a mother, perhaps married or unmarried.



TWO MacKAYS

My sister was assigned to General Service, so she went to the unit cookhouse! There for a week she wallowed in wellies in a sea of mud. I was put in the unit Orderly Room. I think it was the Royal West Kents. All I can remember about it was that I spent hours checking attestation papers, the document signed by all who volunteered to join the TA. Most of them seemed to live in Maidstone, and many worked for Sharps Creamy Toffees!

It was the lack of camping equipment that I can remember most clearly. We were each given a palliasse which we had to fill with straw. I suppose we had a groundsheet, although I don't remember that. We slept 8 to a Bell tent, on our palliasses with three blankets only. Later, when I was in barracks at Hounslow in 1940 we had "Biscuits". These were a mattress divided into 3 equal squares. The Camp

Commandant thought we would be safer on the floor, so he took away all our bedsteads, but that perhaps is another story.

The uniforms, (or lack of them) were as the picture suggests, long and loose. We had got the issue khaki cotton lisle hose (stockings) and shoes, but only a few of us were properly dressed. We also had granny-style long legged khaki knickers made of Celanese, a sort of knitted artificial silk we all hated.

It was a very wet week. My husband, who is now 93, was RSM to 2nd London Corps Signals (second line) later 5th London Corps Signals, was in camp near Corfe Castle and he remembers the continuous rain. We didn't know each other then!

As my sister was General Service she was called up immediately and was posted to an RA unit at Lydd (Kent) to work in the cookhouse, I believe, in the Sergeants Mess. Her career then followed through with the Gunners, while mine went to the Signals, and we never served together.

I had to wait a week for my call up. I had to report to Rochester Police Station on the following Sunday and was allotted a billet with a builder and his family in Rochester. My work was at Fort Bridgewoods, outside Rochester, a radio intercept station, along with a group from Maidstone mainly, also from Sharps Creamy Toffees!

I was a typist, and I found myself on a teleprinter, and for the next six months we banged out code to No.4 Intelligence School, as it was then called. It was code that the radio operators took from German transmissions and Japanese diplomatic traffic.

They were halcyon days, almost boring, until Dunkirk when we were considered to be in danger, and the whole place was closed down and moved, and we were all posted. I went to Eastern Command Signals at Hounslow and into the London Blitz, but with lots of new friends and camaraderie and fun. It was very cold, and we used to follow the coal lorry and pick up the coal that was dropped in order that we could light a fire in our room to help us keep warm, but life went on and I enjoyed it all.

**MRS ENID COX
50 YEARS ON**

1997 rang more than one bell in my mind. Firstly I had reached the ripe old age of 80 plus 25 pence and secondly I had been a member of the Assn for 50 years.

In 1947 I was posted to the School of Artillery as CSM of "F" Coy ATS. The RSM, on a visit "persuaded" us to join the Assn. Serving members could pay 1/6d and receive their own copy of Lioness in addition to the unit copies.

The 1947 Reunion was held in the Albert Hall and it was incredible to think that we filled the hall, sitting proudly under our Command signs: Northern Eastern, Western, Southern Scottish, Ack Ack, MELF, SEAC, BEF and others.

In 1950 I was posted to 46(M) HAA Regt RA, the only peacetime mixed Regt RA. The senior "ma'am" said I had to attend a meeting at Duke of Yorks HQ as the Secretary of the Unit Branch.

What a shock that meeting was - we "serving secretaries" sat at the back and listened as the Branch Secretaries gave their reports. Then we were called upon. 46 Regt RA had run a Regt dance and sent the money raised to the Benevolent Fund so thankfully I was able to report something. These meetings were chaired by Dame Helen Gwynne Vaughan and later by Dame Regina Evans. Members who served in the 1940s at Chilwell may well remember her as their CO.

When the first WRAC from 46(M) HAA Regt were posted to Gibraltar in 1952 they became part of 54 Regt RA and "mixed" 94 (New Zealand) Bty RA. Our CO, Major E Askham WRAC, became the Chairman and I the Secretary of the newly formed branch.

Posted home in 1954 to 308 Bn WRAC TA, the CO sent me to collect the books of the lapsed Leicester Branch of the Assn from a former CO. We reformed the branch, Major W M Smith as Chairman and yours truly as Secretary. I was so pleased to read in the last issue that they are still a flourishing branch and celebrated 42 years.

307 Bn WRAC TA Nottingham was my next posting. The CO, Major L M Stephens, and myself started the Nottingham Branch and held our meetings at the Derby Road Drill Hall, Nottingham, the branch is now incorporated with the Leicester Branch. The Northern area under its Chairman, Col Stead, and Secretaries, Daphne Suttle and later Monica Bradley, held regular meetings for the Secretaries and contributed much to the Assn. On retirement I became a member of Bradford Branch and, on moving to Cromer, am now a life member of Norfolk and Suffolk Branch.

PRIVATE NORA CAVENEY

CAVENEY, Pte NORA, W/91467. Aux. Territorial Service, att'd 505 Bty, 148(M) HAA Regt, Royal Artillery. 17th April, 1942. Age 18. Daughter of John and Hannah Caveney, of Walsden, Todmorden, Yorkshire. 2210.

The Netley Parish Council have asked if anyone in the Lioness knows details of Pte Nora CAVENEY. She is buried in Netley Cemetery and was believed to have been killed in action whilst manning Ack Ack Guns in the village. Rumour has it that Pte CAVENEY was the first woman to die in active service in the UK.

Please send any information to Patrick Kirkby, 2 Colson Road, Winnall, Winchester SO23 0EX.

MEMORIES FROM MRS M P CHILES

A lot of water has gone under the bridge since I was Driver Pam Wade W/284742 after almost four years service in the ATS 1943/1947.

My initial training was at Guildford (I was a volunteer at 17 years old). We were kitted out completely in khaki and taught what the ATS was all about. I was then posted to Camberley to a driver maintenance course. There we had to learn all about the maintenance, changing tyres, greasing nipples on a variety of vehicles. I took my test on

an ambulance (which I think may have survived from WW1). During the course we had to learn how to march properly, being instructed by a sergeant major from the Brigade of Guards. Our farewell song in the show we put on went something like this:

Thanks for the memories of FANY NCOs
Trips to NAAFI shows and all those silly lectures which
drove us all insane

Thanks for the memories of driving in the rain back, to
drill again

Manys the time we were drowned off
And many's the time we were ticked off,
But we just told them to B..... off,
We did have fun and no harms done etc etc... (others
may have a better memory!)

Then our postings came, we went in all directions, mine to Larkhill on Salisbury Plain. From there in 1946 I was posted to the occupation forces in Germany.

In the Lioness No 1 1997, a Mrs Braddock and Mrs Powles asked if anyone remembered the South Mimms Transit Camp. Yes I was there on my way to Germany in 1946 and sailed from Hull to Cuxhaven, to an eventual destination Bad Oeynhausen. I was driving Humber Super Snipes there in that terrible winter of 1946/47. I met a lovely person in transit too, Daphne Mullin, great fun with a lovely Irish sense of humour. We still keep in touch. She is now Daphne Crowley and lives in Liverpool, so it's not easy for us to see each other frequently. I had my 21st in Germany.

Demob came in 1947, and I joined the Official Car Service in London from 1947/48 when I flew out to New Zealand to visit one of my sisters who had married a New Zealand pilot here in the war. The flight took 16 days, because air travel had scarcely begun. I had then to work to save up enough to come home, which I did in 1951. It was quite an experience picking up the threads again when I did arrive home in 1951. Neither of my parents were alive. In December 1952 I was married. And here we are, our Mayoral year ends on May 5th, my husband having been Mayor of the Borough of Reigate and Banstead. Something I never thought would happen in my lifetime, but it has been very interesting. Our generation were so disrupted by war, my father in WW1 and me in WW2. We also remember the 30s..... and my mother was killed in an accident in 1933.

But on the good side, the ATS taught us a lot, we had no luxuries unless you consider "drawers woollen long ATS for the use of" luxuries, I am sure we did in the freezing cold and often drenched through to the skin!! Everyone was the same and my word we were all in it together. There were bad times, but I tend to forget them.

You can imagine the thrill when I was on the march in London to Commemorate VJ Day in London. My husband was there too. Somehow it took me a bit by surprise when I met up in Birdcage Walk, and just about everyone had grey hair! But the determination was there, in spite of the heat, as there had been 50 years before.

P.S. I don't pretend to be a typist - but I've had a go! I do enjoy the Lioness.

TOPS FOR TRACEY

Success for the third time around has come for LCpl Tracey Rayner when she attended her RSI course during April this year. Not only did LCpl Rayner Pass the course, she came top. No mean achievement, but to make the occasion extra special LCpl Rayner becomes the first female RSI in the RLC. (Regimental Signal Instructor)

LCpl Rayner joined the Army in 1992 and completed her basic training at Guildford. During her driver training at Leconfield she attended a presentation on the Radio Operator Trade. From that moment on her only ambition was to be a Radio Operator. Her enthusiasm was so great that she was immediately put onto a B2 course and to her credit she came top of the course.



Tops for Tracey

With no experience of Army life she was posted to 8 Regiment in Munster, Germany. Serving in a Transport Squadron she soon found herself deployed to NI gaining all the experience she needed. When that tour was over she rejoined the Regiment, this time in the Radio Troop in Catterick where they had moved. She attended her B1 course in October 1995 and once again came top student. In July 1996 LCpl Rayner was posted to sunny Aldershot where she joined SSgt Holdings Radio Troop in 27 Transport Regiment. Before attending her RSI course she was sent to Bosnia and served for 6 months as a Detachment Commander with 23 Para Field Ambulance.

April 7 1997 was a very big day for LCpl Rayner; she had been working towards her ambition to be an RSI for a long time and now she was at Leconfield. She said "Sitting there on day one I was very nervous and very apprehensive. I had heard so many horror stories about the course it made me think twice about attending". She went on to explain "I was told from day one, you were bombarded with work, so much so that you would not be able to cope. Also, you were expected to know everything and you would work until the early hours every night. It just wasn't true, when you attend you really need to be at the right level, plenty of experience and not afraid to stand in front of a class and talk with authority about your subject. There was lots of hard work and plenty of pressure, we worked late just about every night but overall it wasn't at all bad. The instructors were always there to help you, including during the night time and contrary to popular belief they did

not mess us around at all. All in all it was a very hard but enjoyable course".

LCpl Rayner did very well to come top of the course against some very good competition. Being the first female RSI will no doubt encourage some of the other first class female radio operators to attend the same course. She now has her sights firmly set on being an instructor at the Signals Division. When she reaches the rank of Sergeant, no doubt she will achieve her new aim and be the first female instructor at the Signals Division. Could she also be the first female Divisional Warrant Officer in the not too distant future?

CLERK MARGAURITE GETS HER MEDALS 50 YEARS LATE

More than 50 years after she left the service a former ATS Clerk applied for her Second World War medals.

Now the Countess Margaurite d'Auray she was Margaurite Whitbread when she joined the ATS as a clerk in April 1941 serving until July 1945. During her service she met and married a Canadian Officer, the Count d'Auray who was serving in England with the Canadian Army. They returned to Canada after the war. Now a widow the Countess lives mainly in Spain but often visits England.

NB. If you are entitled to a medal and have not yet claimed it, please contact: Army Medal Office, Government Buildings, Droitwich, Worcestershire WR9 8AU. EDITOR



Clerk Margaurite gets her medals 50 years late

Marie Claire Magazine in their Careers Section interviewed Cpl Kirsty Evans and the interview is shown here.

PDF Compressor Free Version

SOLDIER

Name: Kirsty Evans.

Age: 24.

Occupation: Lance Corporal with 27 Transport Regiment Royal Logistic Corps, based at Aldershot, Hampshire. Route to job: Kirsty left school after GCSEs and worked at Thomas Cook in Peterborough for nine months before joining the Army in April 1990. After training as a driver at Leconfield, Yorkshire, she was posted to 41 Squadron Royal Corps of Transport at Aldershot for eighteen months, then joined the 1st Armoured Division Transport Regiment in Germany for a year to drive four-tonne trucks. She then went on a six-month operational tour of Canada, laying minefields with the Royal Engineers, before moving to 1 General Support Regiment in Germany for a year, where she was promoted to Lance Corporal. She spent a year at a Territorial Army unit in London, running the transport section, then moved to 27 Transport Regiment in October 1995. In the past year she has represented the Army in the Ladies Nordic Ski Team in Norway.

Dress: Combat trousers and jacket, regulation boots and a blue beret.

KIRSTY'S DAY

'I get up at 7am, leave the house at 7.45am and drive five minutes to work. There are about 90 of us in the squadron and we gather outside the squadron offices at 8am. We are brought to attention by the Regimental Sergeant Major, have our names called, then fall out and go to our duties. Quite often I don't know what my duties will be, but it's mainly driving, which usually involves moving ammunition, troops or stores to different bases.'

'At the moment we're training for an operational tour, so we're working to a weekly programme of PT lessons, lectures, assault courses, driver training, weapon-handling and firing, and circuit training. We also spend whole days on the range, where we practise firing weapons. We have a regular Combat Fitness Test (CFT), which is an eight-mile run in two hours, carrying 22lb in weight and a weapon. Last week we did a 'trailer run' - a team of ten of us had to run round the camp pulling a trailer for an hour. We often have lectures throughout the day on anything from health and hygiene to the Geneva Convention. There's a break from 10am to 10.30am when we go to the NAAFI for coffee and a snack. Lunch is in the main cook house at 12.30pm for an hour. Most Wednesdays we have a

sports afternoon. 'If I'm not too exhausted by 4.30pm, when we finish for the day, I'll go rollerblading. I also teach disabled children to ski on Saturday mornings. 'I love my job because it's never mundane - there's always a new challenge. There are about fifteen to twenty other women in the squadron, but I'm always competing with the men. If you keep up with them, you feel you're just as good as they are. I like the fact that in the Army, things can change daily. One day you're out on the ranges and the next day you could be off on a tour of Rwanda without warning.'

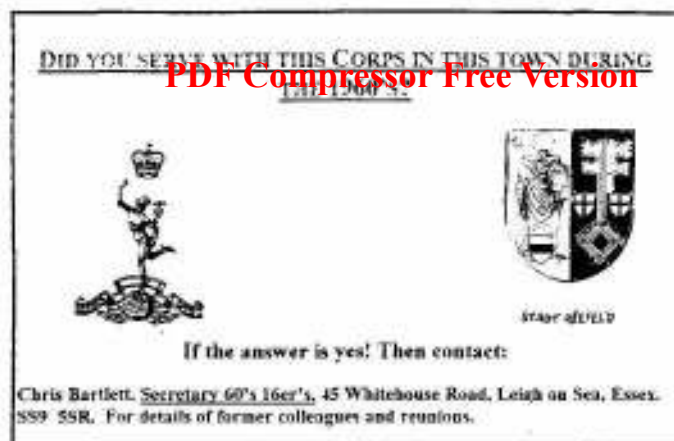


CAPTION COMPETITION
All Answers by 1st October 1997



Puncture !!

Where are you now?



Mrs Ann DEAKIN (née Butler)

2 Coy 2 Platoon October 1962
Lingfield

Below is an alphabetical list of all the girls who signed my photograph on the 27 November 1962. Unfortunately, I can only put a few names to the faces in the photograph. Working from the left on each row I can identify:

Back Row: 7th Helen Tudor
Third Row: 2nd Joan Barratt
Second Row: 6th Ann Nunn; 8th Gina Cartwright;
last Fiona MacFarlane
Front Row: 6th Cpl Churchill; 7th SSgt McKim;
8th Cpl 'Winky' Hacker; 12th Ann Butler
(me)

W/382503 Pte Ann IRVINE

I have received a letter from W/382503 Pte Ann Irvine, June 1953-56. Her postings included the Manor House, Latimer 1953, Wilton nr Salisbury 1955, Didcot 1954-55 and Richmond Park 1956. She served as a Waitress in the Officers' Mess. She is interested in finding Sally Heathcote, Ann Lydon, Cpl Gwen Denman, Sgt Nichols, SSgt Helens. There is one person in particular that she would like to contact and that is Sgt Major Cullan/Cullen who was stationed at Didcot in 1954-55. Anyone who knows Ann, or the whereabouts of her friends, would they please contact Ann Deakin - 01785 249992 - who will pass on the information.

Mrs Lilian Penfold (née White) (W/64014) would like to hear from Mrs Murray (ex Sgt). 6A Downs Avenue, Eastbourne BN20 8TL.

Mr N Brookes wants to hear from LCpl Betty Guntrip who was stationed at Shrewsbury, Salop. Please reply to 1 Pine Mall, Heacham, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE31 7AL.

Mrs Joan Ester Maryan (née Cooper) W/93123 1941 - 1945 ATS would like to hear from anyone who knew her. Please reply to 24 Winchester Road, Delapre, Northampton NN4 8AY.

Mrs Marjorie Ovadia (née Craig) would like to hear from any of the 16 members of the Teleprinter Section, 516 Coy ATS - 3 GHQ Signals Cairo MELF who served with her from 1942/46, especially Jean Tasker (née Waters), Diane Timbell (Sgt) Eve Cherry, Joy Webb, Jean McKay (Capt) and any members who joined the CADMS whilst in Cairo and who took part in support of the Benevolent Fund in "Maid of the Mountains" - and Rose Marie in 1943. Anyone who can help in tracing these wartime friends, please contact, Marjorie Ovadia 4 Tysoe Drive, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B76 2UJ.

Winifred Mary Letitia Hover. If anyone remembers her or knows of her whereabouts would they contact the Association HQ.



2 Coy 2 Platoon October 1962

Are you one of the girls in this photograph? Can you put a name to any of the faces in the photograph? If you can then please let me know.

Ann Bell	Joan Barratt	Ann Basford
Hazel Bolton	S Butler	Georgina
Cartwright		
Cpl Churchill	Gillian Clark	Helen Clarke
Patricia Cotton	Carole Dibb	Ann Dixon
D C Ellis	June Gabbestas	Eileen Griffiths
Cpl 'Winky' Hacker	Rochelle Hall (Tush)	Olive Hartley
Elizabeth Hastings	Josie Heath?	Laura Higginson
Christine Hill	Betty Hutcheson?	Chris Inman
Jean Jackson	Margaret James	Mary Jones
Anne Lowdon	Fiona MacFarlane	SSgt M McKim
Gay Marsden	P A Mellors	E A Nesworthy
Ann Nunn	Margaret Revitt	M Robertson
Irene Shaw	Carol Simpson	Angela S
		W/416641
Marion Smith	Janet Sylvester	Helen Tudor
		W/416722
Sandra Weedon	Birdy	Eileen
Jenny	'Monty'	

Contact Ann Deakin (née Butler), 'Cobblestones', 2 Chesham Road, Stafford ST16 3JP 01785 249992

Joan Angell and Ann Ryan wish to contact

Dorothy Gibbs Pat Spragget Joan Tippet
Bobby Hall Violet (Blue Bell) Paddy (Anne) Ryan

They were the first group of women to be trained as Telecommunications Mechanics in 1945.

411-801 Mt Pleasant Road, Toronto, Ontario, Canada



Joan Angell

Peggie Ricardi DUDGEON

Where are you FORMER Waverly Lawn girls?

Marjorie Cubby Molly Turne Jean Cavalry
Elsie Wilson Vera Pluckett Ellen Gorman
Shirley Smith Pearl Goodman

Would love to hear from you

Peggie Ricardi Dudgeon, PO Box 958 Murrells Inlet, SC
29576-8174

Are you in this photograph? If so Nora August would love to hear from you. It's a March Past in Newbury S Wales somewhere around 1942 - 43 by the G L girls from Heavy Artillery Battery 549. Any replies to N August, 32 Martin Drive, Whiting NJ 08759



Mrs N August

Mr Morley would like to hear from anyone who might recognise his mother from this photograph. It was taken at Glen Parva in Leicester. Mrs L Morley is seated third from the right on the front row. Any replies to Mrs L Hollis (Hon Sec), 3 Parklands Avenue, Groby, Leics LE6 0BL.



Mr Morley

Mrs Lily QUICKFALL (née McCann)

Whilst browsing through the latest edition of "The Lioness" Mrs Lily Quickfall (née McCann) thought it would be nice to meet up or chat to old friends from 439 (H) AA Battery. Joan Skeicher, Ivy Clapsom (Brummie), Joan Hickey, Ivy Williams, Doris Lee, Ivy French, Phyllis Hughes, Mary Cornelius (1942 - 1946) or do you recognise yourself on this photo? All replies to Mrs Lily Quickfall, 15 Nelson House, Albert Street East, Grimsby.



Mrs Lily Quickfall

Mrs Chris Wilkes (née Walsh) of 96 Queens Road, Radcliffe On Trent, Nottingham would like to hear from any WRAC serving at WRAC Centre Guildford 1966/1968 and Hong Kong 1968/1969. She served in the Medical Centres.

Mrs Rosina Lock (née Goddard)

I would very much like to hear from these girls. If anyone knows their whereabouts would they please get in touch.

They are from Top Left, Joan Messant, Kay Moffatt (classmate from Halbutt St. Senior Girls School, Dagenham, Essex), Doreen Glavin from Bristol. Bottom Left, Kay Struthers, LCpl Rosina Goddard (myself) and Patricia Greensit.

Replies to: Rosina Lock, 27 Percy Avenue, Kingsgate, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 3LB.



Mrs Rosina Lock (née Goddard)

Mrs Anne BRADSHAW (née Ranyard)

York Military Hospital 609 Coy RASC Ambulance Drivers 1945/46

Where are you now?

Lily Gavin - Peggy Stone - Una Birt - Betty Allen - Audrey Priestly - Betty Evans - Pam Baxon - Daphne Day - Margaret Buck - Maureen Walsh - Stella Fulford - Mildred Smith.

Would love to get in touch. Anne Bradshaw (née Ranyard) - I married the guy in the middle 50 years ago! Tel: 01530 836798, 77 Castle Rock Dr, Coalville, Leics.



York Military Hospital 609 RASC Ambulance Drivers 1945/46

Mrs Crystal REEMAN (née Syrett) Ex 531 (M) HAA Bty

Would like to hear from old friends, and in particular would like news of Cpl Betty Baxter who served with Middle East Land Forces. The latter went to school with Crystal at Barrow, Nr Newmarket. Please write to "Threeways", Bentley Road, Bergholt, Suffolk IP9 2DH or Tel: 01473 310649



Mrs Crystal Reeman (née Syrett) Ex 531 (M) HAA Bty

Mrs D DUNBAR

I am trying to trace the girl on the left of this photo. All I know is her name is Margaret. She was on a ship bound for India at the beginning of 1945. Also Lieutenant Peter Crump 323558 of the Northants Regt. Please contact Mrs D Dunbar, 43 Beauvale Dr, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8RY Tel: 0115 9328790



Mrs D Dunbar

Gladys Howarth (née Semken) would like to contact ex Cpl Sylvia Hodgkiss from Wolverhampton who served with her for over two years (1943/45) with 907 Coy RASC 1 AA Group or any other members of that unit. Replies to: 33 Hollywood Lane, Wainscott, Rochester ME3 8AG or Tel: 01634 721507

Mrs Doreen BROOKES (née Green)

Where are you Doreen Douglas? The other Doreen is trying to find you?

Replies to: 99 Meadow Road, Nunts Park, Coventry CV6 4GW



*Doreen Brookess (née Green), Doreen Douglas,
Luton Hoo, Luton, Beds LU1 3TQ*

Mrs Jean STOUT (née Nott)

Please help me Jean Stout (née Nott) to find my Army friend. Her name was Eve Neve, and we were with the Ack Ack site of Ramsgate, Sittingbourne during 1943 - 1944 (see photograph). When disbanded I went to Ordnance at Nottingham, I have discovered that Eve went abroad. I would be grateful for any help or information you may have. Replies to: Mrs Jean Stout, 16 Penrith Road, Harold Hill, Romford, Essex RM3 9NS



Mrs Jean Stout (née Nott)

**Mrs F E STARKEY, The Mansion House,
Luton Hoo, Luton, Beds LU1 3TQ**

Should any of the members of your organisation have served at Luton Hoo during the last war, or attended the Foundation College as it was called, prior to demob; then I would appreciate their names so that I may get in touch with them.

Mrs Pamela Bence (née Cpl P Brise-Johnson 86448)

Wants to trace any comrades from VRD Charlbury, Oxon. Replies to: 5 Oxcars Drive, Dalgety Bay, Fife KY11 5UG

Mrs Joan Ester Maryan (née Cooper) W/93123

Joan Ester Cooper W/93123 (see photograph) would like to hear from anyone who may have known her. She was a driver stationed at Hereford, Blandford and York. Replies to: 24 Winchester Road, Northampton NN4 8AY.



Mrs Joan Ester Maryan (née Cooper) W/93123

Mrs Sue Steel (née Johnson) is looking for anyone who was in 2 Coy 8 Pln Guildford Aug - Dec 12971 or Squad 7106 RMP Depot Chichester Dec 71 - Feb 72. Replies to: Salisbury Branch

Mrs Rachel Davison (née Pre Ray Darling) of 14 Hatfield House, Borough Road, North Shields, NE29 6JZ. Would like to hear from anyone from West Norfolk Sub District or Luton Hoo Eastern Command.

Mrs L C Duddridge (née Browne)

I would like to contact any Ex ATS members who took part in the Salute the Soldier Campaign during 1942 - 1945. I joined this exhibition from Cove Camp Farnborough touring round the Home Counties. I had a Colonel and Sergeant with me, are you still active?

Replies to: 47 Danes Road, Kings End, Bicester, Oxon OX6 8LN.



Mrs E. Duddridge (née Browne)

Mrs Marie Roberts is looking for anyone who served with her at Guildford in 1966, see photograph. Replies to: 109 Scorton Avenue, Layton, Blackpool, Lancs FY3 7HD.



Mrs Marie Roberts

W/68333 ATS Cpl MEREDITH (née Beeston)

Where are you now? asks W/68333 ATS Cpl Meredith, (née Beeston) Nancy, (known as 'B') seated front, right, was the first ATS Driver at 12th LAA Penhale, Cornwall 1942/43.

'B' was Col Church's driver for 3 yrs, and actually had a room of her own! She would like to hear from anyone on these photos. Replies to: Mrs N Meredith, 41 Bishton Road, Albrighton, Nr Wolverhampton, Staffs WY7 3LP.



W/68333 ATS Cpl Meredith (née Beeston)

Derrick Carr is trying to trace Elizabeth (Betty) Mehegan from Merthyr Tydfil who served in the ATS on the cadre of Special Operators Training Squadron. Replies to: 46 Homelea Crescent, Lingwood, Norwich NR13 4BN.

Miss Mildred Veal is looking for Sgt B A Baines (BIDGE), 30 Milton Court, Ridings Park, York YO3 6PU.

Blackpool

KNEELER PROJECT KEPT MARIE IN STITCHES

It took 36 hours and 700 stitches for Marie Roberts to create this church kneeler for the Blackpool WRAC Association.

Marie, who lives in Scorton Avenue, Layton, made the kneeler from a specially commissioned design for the Women's Royal Army Corps Reunion, attended by 1000 ex-servicewomen, at the Norbreck Hotel.

It has now been presented to St John's Church, Blackpool.

Marie, who served in the WRAC, was helped by her needlecrafts tutor, Catherine Beaumont, who teaches adult education classes.

Marie joined her Thursday evening class at St Mary's High School. She is a keen part-time student and has tried her hand at soft furnishings, dressmaking and tailoring, stained glass, calligraphy, book-keeping and French and is planning to join a gentle exercise class in September to help her arthritis.



Rev Michael Manly is presented with the kneeler by Marie Roberts, watched by, from the left, Olive Driver, Evelyn Harris and Catherine Beaumont

Sunday 20 April 1997 soon came around. I arrived at the church at 1045 hrs to find to my astonishment a queue a mile long. Spirits were high and there was a warm and welcoming atmosphere as I explained the agenda of the morning to groups of people. At one stage I felt like a film star as there were so many requests for photographs. What I would like to know was which lady offered me the good advice that if I wanted my voice to last the day I should shout from the stomach? After all I was not expecting a problem, as my tonsils had been well lubricated with the port that I had had with breakfast.

After a memorable Church Service the Warrant Officers worked quickly and swiftly to form up their detachments. For those looking on it must have been a wonderful sight, everyone knew what they were doing and where they should be. Never in my 20 years service have I witnessed such an event. Some 15 minutes later everyone was formed up with the band in the centre of the parade and the standard bearers behind them. Approximately 800 ladies were awaiting the word of command. In complete silence (you could have heard a pin drop) it came, 'Quick March' they stepped off together with the rear detachments marking time. All these ladies marched with pride, heads held high and staying in step. (I do believe that they have had more practice than myself). They were a credit to themselves, the WAAC, QMAAC, ATS and WRAC. As the end came, emotions were high as they bade farewell, with the exception of those ladies meeting in the British Legion later. I felt a great element of relief that it was over and had gone so well. My fellow Warrant Officers and I were honoured and privileged to have been part of something which meant so much to all those who attended. A day which will live long in our memories.

RAFFLE

There were so many donations to the raffle that we were unable to name everyone individually.

A very big thank you to all those who contributed.

Editor.

BLACKPOOL REUNION CHURCH PARADE SUNDAY 20 APRIL 1997 (BY WO1(RSM) SIMON)

Parade Commander

Lt Col Westlake

Parade RSM

WO1(RSM) Simon

Detachment Commanders Detachment Warrant Officers

Maj Young
Maj Thomson
Capt Lawrence

WO2 Sleightholme
WO2 Denham
WO2 Thorne
SSgt White

In March, I received a letter from Mrs Fiona White asking me to take control of the Grand Reunion Parade in Blackpool. My initial thoughts were 'Oh what a nightmare'. With just a few weeks to go I took over the reins from WO2 Andy Denham, who had already done most of the hard work.

WRAC ASSOCIATION CHURCH KNEELER MADE BY MARIE ROBERTS (BLACKPOOL BRANCH)

Order Code KGT 322

1-2 Kits £35.75 each plus post & packing ú3.50.

Lettering extra 85p letter.

Size 14" x 10" x 3"

5 holes to inch.

Took 36 hrs to do, including making up
7,525 cross stitches

Details from:

Jacksons of Hebden Bridge
Croft Mill
Hebden Bridge
West Yorkshire HX7 8AP
Telephone: 01422 842964
Fax: 01422 842385

RAFFLE HELD AT WRAC REUNION DRAWN ON SATURDAY 19TH APRIL 1997

Number of Ticket	Name	Branch	Number of Prize
016633	Betty Robson	Rhyl	1 Wine
011699	B. Lister	Barnsley	2 Food Hamper
004286	W. Hooton	Bury St Edmunds	3 Travel Voucher
003870	D. James	Medway	4 £50.00 Voucher
008934	J. Wilson	Blackburn	5 Bottle of Whisky
007941	M. Evans	Cleveland	6 M&S £10 Voucher
009574	M. Bowing	Leicester	7 Whisky
009170	D. Partridge	Plymouth	8 £25.00 Voucher
015353	R. Lock	Canterbury	9 Work Basket
004103	A. Matthews	R.H.Q.	10 Jewellery Box
008340	G. Manderson	Bucks	11 Olympus Camera
016171	Debbie R.	Wrexham	12 Pack of Bedding
017127	M. Cox	Aldershot	13 Kettle
011253	D. Vernon	Liverpool	14 Wine and Silver holder
013259	M. James	Leeds	15 Cool Box
002536	M. Mitchell	Keighley	16 Whisky
010739	Seward Australis	Room 17	17 Tea Party Basket
019013	D. Tiplady	Hull	18 Calculator
004356	W. Simon	Beaconsfield	19 Rowenta Brush (Electric)
002375	C. Woodward	Fife/Tayside	20 Hair styling brush
016096	M. Ricards	Wrexham	21 Hamper
019302	A. Hudson	Bradford	22 Wine
010833	E.R. Griffiths	York	23 Hand Vac
019136	B.M. Laverick	Gt. London	24 Set of Cases
018060	Ivy ?	Cardiff	25 Set of Towels
014868	B. Swift	Bucks	26 £15.00 Cash
010688	H. Thompson	Colchester	27 VIP for the Day
607306	D. McGee	Wilmslow	28 £50.00 Voucher
004520	A. Farlow	Richmond	29 National Garden Voucher
019151	J. Hayward	Gt. London	30 Bottle of Brandy
003895	J. Friend	Medway	31 Bottle of Whisky
018450	B. Venworth	Birmingham	32 Flower Vase
003620	B. Griffin	Wincanton	33 Case of Wine
000997	S. Grafton	Hereford	34 £5.00 Voucher
015753	P. Taylor	Blackpool	35 Meal for 4
003923	A. Moir	Stockport	36 £10.00 Boots' Voucher
008809	S. Whitehead	Accrington	37 Meal for 4
002132	L. Hayes	Sheffield	38 Table Mats
013803	I. Carroll	Newcastle	39 Spellmaster
010456	D. Gabbott	Manchester	40 Desk Fan
017095	K.P. Gibson	Gt. London	41 Hamper
007149	P. Johnson	Wilmslow	42 Tablecloth
002333	G. Black	Perth and Tayside	43 £15.00 M&S Voucher
008628	Mrs. Goodwin	S. Wirral	44 Wine Voucher
007300	J. Lynne	Channel Isles	45 M&S Voucher
014555	I.G. Rounds	Wolverhampton	46 Wine
018677	M. Daniels	Somerset	47 Whisky
007586	Mallcock	Crewe	48 Sherry
009969	Scammell	Gt. London	49 Surprise Parcel
018058	J.M.	Cardiff	50 Tin of Biscuits
001530	M. Sutcliffe	Shipley	51 Holiday toilet bag
019187	F.K. Head	Gt. London	52 Glass Dish
013790	A. Brown	Newcastle	53 £25 Tyre Voucher ATS
007373	D.M. Reid	Gt. London	54 Meal for two
008844	J. Leyland	Accrington	55 Jewellery Box
008997	I.P. Mulley	Accrington	56 Bird Watching Voucher
003167	E. Shepherd	Coventry	57 Bottle of Whisky
006879	M. Howard	Blackpool	58 Pr of Edinburgh Crystal candlesticks
012352	B. Smith	Dumfries	59 Surprise Parcel
007720	K.R. Rigby	Crewe	60 Crystal Bottle
002126	J.A. Wood	Sheffield	61 Travel Clock (Batteries)
000339	E. Alexander	Glasgow	62 Clock
002095	P. Elson	Sheffield	63 Toiletries and Hangers
008051	N. Judge	Rochdale	64 Bottle of Whisky

Blackpool

PDF Compressor Free Version



Rhyl Branch setting off



Norbreck Steps – Rochdale Branch



A night out at Thornton Cleveleys – Eastbourne Branch



Daphne Jervis née Prior receiving her Certificate of Appreciation from Brigadier Anne Field, CB, CBE.



Enjoying a glass of wine at the Secretaries Lunch



THE TOP TABLE
L - R: Brig. Field, The Mayor of Blackpool, Col. Marriott, Mrs Hemmings at the Grand Reunion



The Crewe Branch at Dinner



The Church Queue



London Branch at Dinner



Standards to Church



The Spice Girls



Off to the Parade



Members of Salisbury Branch go to Church



PDF Compressor Free Version

The Morning After



On Parade



The Adjutant Generals Corps on Parade



Ready for the Off



On Parade



Maj J Young



Lt. Col. S. Westlake - Parade Commander



WO1 (RSM) Simon Parade RSM

Blackpool Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

My members had asked me to express our gratitude for all the kind letters received for our work in making the 1997 Reunion go so well, "Well done Fiona".

Our member from Canada, Mavis Wannamaker, was with us and we all enjoyed meeting her.

We still have some souvenir tea-towels and will gladly forward same on request.

Once again thank you all. Come again.

Olive Driver JP
(Secretary Blackpool Branch)

Dear Editor

I attended the Grand Reunion last week with a friend, with whom I served. We both enjoyed it very much and thought the standard of the hotel and the food was excellent.

However, one thing seriously spoiled our weekend, and I felt it was important to let you know our thoughts on this matter, so that you could pass our comments on to the relevant quarters.

We had indicated on the booking form that we wished to attend the Church Service, and we did book early in the year. When we reached the Church on the first available transport, and having queued for over half an hour in the cold, we were told that there were no seats, indeed, no room at all. An official said perhaps we might stand, even the gallery was full, also the porch. Since I recently had a major operation I could not possibly have stood for the service.

On waiting for a taxi to take us back to the hotel we met a very distressed lady who had come especially from Ontario for the Reunion. She was just given a copy of the Order of Service. Since she was walking with two sticks and was crippled with arthritis, we did feel that this should be brought to your attention. I think you will agree, a most unsatisfactory situation.

Why were tickets not issued, as in St. Paul's on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee in 1988?

I understand that the Norbreck Castle Hotel was prepared to allow the service in the ballroom, and the march past outside. Surely this would have been more satisfactory?

We should be grateful if you would pass on these comments to whoever was in charge of making the arrangements.

Mrs Joan Riggs
(Exeter Branch)

The numbers we were given from the proformas sent out indicated that St. John's Church could accommodate everyone. The Norbreck was never considered as a venue for Church.

Sadly we were not able to issue yet another set of tickets as we did not have enough staff to cope. Editor.

Dear Editor

Please pass my thanks to all those "behind the scenes" personnel who made the 1997 Reunion such a "grand" affair. Logistically it must have been a nightmare but on the night, for us attendees anyway, it appeared fault-free.

It was my first Reunion and I was staggered to see 997 seated for dinner and all credit to the Norbreck Castle Hotel for producing such a good meal - and it was hot - a feat in itself I thought.

I was delighted to see some "old" faces - Audrey Purton, Janet Lawson and the every youthful "Bimbo" Colman.

The Band of the AG Corps gave a superb performance and, as ever, their choice of music was spot on.

All in all, a great night and hopefully, I shall be there at the next one.

Sue Steel (nee Johnson)
(Salisbury Branch)

Dear Editor

I would like to extend my personal thanks for a wonderful weekend at Blackpool. The accommodation, the facilities, the food, and of course, the atmosphere, was terrific. I congratulate you, your Committee and the Blackpool Branch for the undoubted success of the weekend. The weekend will be talked about for many a long day because it was GREAT. Comments such as "brilliant", "a smashing weekend", "good Reunion wasn't it" have been repeated over and over again so I think you can take it we all enjoyed ourselves. Let's repeat it again in the year 2000.

My personal recommendation for a venue, in the year 2000, would have to be the Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool. A suggestion to overcome the problems of overcrowding at the church would be to bring the church to the Norbreck Castle. The Norcalympia, where the Grand Dinner was held, would be ideal. Transport would be unnecessary, the disabled would have fewer problems and the hall would be able to accommodate everyone for the service. If you can secure the services of the Reverend Brian Stevenson once again, to give the Address, then you can guarantee that everyone will travel home with a smile on their face.

Once again, my thanks and appreciation to everyone concerned for all the hard work. It was a memorable weekend.

Ann Deakin (nee Butler)
W/416734 1962-1965

Dear Editor

I attended the ATS/WRAC Association Grand Reunion at the Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool 18-20th April 1997 and was very disappointed the programme did not conform to that advertised originally in the 'Lioness'; on the strength of which many ex Servicewomen decided to attend. This contravened the Trades Description Act. 'Outings to local areas of interest' did not take place, nor did the 'Reception hosted by the Mayor of Blackpool'. There were insufficient raffle tickets for sale which were unavailable from 2 hours prior to the draw. Personnel attending this sort of event are mostly very elderly; infirm; and some handicapped, and did not think they were expected to wander about not knowing what they were supposed to do. Not even cloakroom facilities were provided for those coming into the hotel to attend the dinner, until eventually reception came to the rescue, and provided coat racks so that the ladies needn't carry them with them all evening.

The dinner and band entertainment was enjoyable; everything else lacked proper organisation, and unless future reunions show no improvement I'm afraid a large number of ex-Service ladies will think twice before spending so much money on travel and hotels, for a non event.

E Duncan Ex Sgt
(Leicester Branch)

Cloakroom facilities were available in the foyer from 6pm onwards. Raffle tickets were on sale in Branches, and at Blackpool from Friday evening onwards. Editor.

Dear Editor

On attending the "Grand Reunion" at Blackpool last weekend, had to pen a few lines, as the small group of us from Leicester (not Leicester Branch) were very disappointed at the organization.

I do feel, thought should have gone into that a very large number of ladies were disabled and partially disabled and not able to get about very well. Some arrived after lunch on Friday and never left the "Norbreck" until Sunday morning when transport was laid on. A couple of coach outings during Saturday would have been appreciated I am sure, as a large number said they would not attend a "Reunion" again. The last Reunion in Glasgow was so well organized and the members, not as young as some, thoroughly enjoyed the coach outings laid on.

I did ask one of the "Blackpool" ladies on duty about the above, and she said "They have the AGM and the Swimming Pool and they can take taxis and the tram into Blackpool!"

I understand too that a cloakroom was not organized until later, as members were asking us, who were staying at the "Norbreck", to look after their coats as they had nowhere to put them.

I would add the "Dinner" was enjoyed by all and the Band was excellent.

Barbara Lannon (Mrs)

Dear Editor

We all had a wonderful time at Blackpool and thank the Committee for the hard work they must have done in organizing such a large event. A special thank you should of course be given to the members of the Blackpool Branch, they must have been exhausted by Sunday evening.

Mrs Betty France
Hon Social Secretary

ATTENTION! **ALL BENEVOLENT FUND** **KNITTERS**

Yes, I mean you; All the Ladies who have kindly provided me with jumpers, cardigans, hats, gloves, scarves etc for the Benevolent Fund throughout this past year. **Congratulations to you all, through your efforts we have been able to send woollens to 70 families in 1996. A huge leap from 43 families in 1995.** I know that I have written to you all, but I thought it would be a good idea to tell all the readers of the Lioness about the wonderful work you do on our behalf throughout the year.

For those that are wondering what this is all about, the Benevolent Fund is very fortunate in having a loyal band of Ladies and Association Branches around the country who knit a variety of children's clothes from baby size up to large 10 year olds. These are then forwarded to me as the Benevolent Fund's representative, for dispersal.

Through the work of the Benevolent Fund, we hear of former members of the Corps who require our help from time to time. In addition to its normal work, the Fund operates a system, whereby families with children aged 10 years and under are sent parcels of excellent hand knitted woollies made by former ATS and WRAC Ladies. Many of the woollens are "made to order", for example, there was a situation earlier in the year when we have several very well built 10 year olds, and nothing suitable to hand – a quick letter to our Ladies and back came unisex jumpers of all colours as well as the ubiquitous school grey – to fit the requirement. For my part, and having spoken on the telephone and by letter to many of "my Knitters", it is a most satisfying way for us to continue feeling part of "the family" which we all joined, and also to feel that we can still help one another. Some of my Ladies, who are part of this huge countrywide Knitting Circle, have told me that they themselves have been helped in the past by the Benevolent Fund and now they very much enjoy being able to help in return. That all the goodies which are sent to our families are welcome is borne out by the number of letters we receive back at Association Headquarters at Worthy Down. It is a joy to be able to give, but it is an even greater joy to know that the gift is most welcome!

If you would like to know more about the work we do, and perhaps join our Knitting Circle, please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you.

Mrs Babs Mitcheson
King's Hill Cottage
Netheravon
Wilts SP4 9PL
01980-670285

Gunners' Corner

10 GIRLS REUNION

Reunion in Harrogate. The girls who were Radar Operators for 612 'B' Battery HAA around Newport and Cardiff 1943-44.



"10" GIRLS REUNION

L to R: Gwen Evans, Betty Settle, Mary Wilson, Jean Galbraith, Ida Jowett, Ivy Finch, Peggy Akers, Brenda Palmer, Moira Parkin, Edie Ruz

THE REUNION OF THE 93RD SEARCHLIGHT REGIMENT RA HELD IN NOTTINGHAM ON 15/16 MARCH 1997

On the 15 and 16 March 1997, the ladies held their annual Regimental Reunion in Nottingham at the Westminster Hotel. The staff were kind and attentive at all times. The Westminster will be recommended I am sure by all the ladies.



Some of the ladies who attended the reunion

On the Saturday night, at dinner, we were entertained by the South Nottinghamshire Hussars' band which was arranged by Alan Booth, the son-in-law of one of our ladies. They played light music for us during dinner and afterwards we had a sing-a-long which we all enjoyed. Afterwards the bandsmen left to go to a previous engagement which they had delayed on our behalf.

On Sunday morning, after breakfast, the ladies who wished, were taken along to the Hussars' museum which is a little way outside the City limits. They found this very interesting.

It was great for all three batteries to be so well represented once again and the camaraderie was wonderful.



The organiser, Mrs E Lapham, with the members of the South Nottinghamshire Hussars

The next reunion will be held in Leamington Spa on the weekend of 4 and 5 April 1998. Looking forward to seeing all the girls again, and perhaps some others who haven't yet been able to join us.

Information will be sent out to all in due course. Please write to Mrs Lapham at the address given if you wish to know more. I will write to everyone on the mailing list.

Thanks to everyone who sent me such lovely letters.

Mrs E LAPHAM
31 Barnfield Road East
Stockport
Cheshire
SK3 8TT

477 HAA (M) BTY RADAR MEMBERS

Where are you? Sgt's Madge Walters, Peggy Hods and Betty Palmer, Pte's Alice Preen, Nora Spence, Lyndsey Williams, Midge Mitchell, Red McMurdo, Gladys Potter, Pte Hipwell, Dot Firth

Contact Rita Luckman (now Fellows) - 01684 577063

323 AND 438 BTY

Miss Catherine Mayor would like to hear from anyone who served in the above regiments

38 Mountcombe Close
Upper Brighton Road
SURBITON
KT6 6LJ

544 (M)H AA BTY

I enclose two photos of 554 (M)H AA Bty. The girls on motorcycle photo were friends of my late wife Mavis (née Fry). I am occasionally in touch with them. Talking of their time together in 554 Battery.

I read the Lioness from cover to cover and find it very nostalgic and I also find other men who read it via their wives enjoy it.

Mr W COURT
Marsh Acres
High Lane
Sloothby-Alford
Lincs LN13 9NR



*L to R: Dizzie Desmond (Kent), Jean Green (Bristol),
Lauren Johnston (Pouys)*



544 Mixed HAA Battery - Do not know names

41 ACK ACK BTY

Mrs STELLA MOSS née DAY wants to hear from anyone from the above Battery.

566 COASTAL DEFENCE REGT RA

A lot is written about the girls in Heavy Ack Ack but no mention is made about the ones in Coastal Defence RA.

We were plotters in Coast defence with 566 Coast Regt based at the Citadel in Plymouth and stationed at the Gun Placements at Wembury Point on the Coast. Shipping was our "interest". We have recently had a Reunion in the lovely city of Plymouth (now of course completely rebuilt) and a great time was had by all. Our third meeting in over fifty years. Wembury is now HMS Cambridge.

Peggy BAKER née Bush

WOODHOUSE EVES

I am a student at Sunderland University and I am currently gathering information concerning the ladies of the ATS, particularly those stationed at Woodhouse Eves during the war years. I would love to hear from ladies who would like to share their memories with me. I can assure you of the utmost respect for your privacy.

I can be contacted at the following address:

12 Tower Street
Hendon
Sunderland
Tyne & Wear SR2 8NF
or Tel: 0191 565 8700

"THE CANAL ZONERS"

If any Ex-ATS who served in the Suez Canal Zone wish to join "The Canal Zoners" they should write to:

Mr Godfrey Jezzard
16 Bridgeway
Twickenham
TW2 7JJ

For details of the proposed Association

Branch News

Ayrshire Branch

Our branch has been saddened by the deaths of four of our members over the past two years. Our Honorary President, Mrs Joyce Neilson, died just a few months after celebrating her 100th birthday. Mrs Neilson was the founder of our branch and was an inspiration to all of us. Mary McLean, who had served in the WAAF and was an associate member of the branch, died last year and recently Grace McTavish and Betty McCaw passed away. They are all greatly missed by the members.

We continue to meet monthly for bar lunches which have proved very successful. Our secretary Jenny Hill had a serious illness last year and we were grateful to the other office bearers who kept the branch going. At our AGM we had the usual allocation of funds to charities, which included a donation of £140 to Erskine Hospital for ex-servicemen and women raised by personal donations of members at the bar lunches.

We have enjoyed two joint reunions with the local WRNS Association and these were very happy occasions.

Berwick Branch

Although our numbers have dropped considerably, some moving to be near their families, others have gone to the Parade Ground in the sky, we still meet regularly. We used to meet in the British Legion Club, but were moved to a room where we were unable to have tea-making facilities. We now meet in the Kings Arms Garden Restaurant, where we enjoy good food, grand company and fun galore!

Congratulations on producing such a splendid Lioness this time. It's good reading from cover to cover.

Blackpool Branch

On the 16 May, we had a lovely lunch at Muttens Restaurant in Cleveleys and plan a trip to York in June when friends are also invited.

Our lunch with the Lancashire Regiment is scheduled for November this year. We had a great day last year, visiting their Museum and lunch in the Sergeants' Mess was just great.

We are a new branch, only 3 years old, with 52 members and meet every third Friday at the RBL Club in Thornton-Cleveleys directly opposite the bus station and have a great chip shop opposite.

So if you should be in Cleveleys any third Friday call and see us. All welcome.

Bradford Branch

The Bring and Buy sale at Undercliffe Cricket Club was a great success. This year we were pleased to have the Dunkirk Veterans join us. This was a most enjoyable day with £130 profit to swell the funds. Thanks again to Ivy Wheelhouse who arranged the use of the tea-rooms for the day.

A large contingent travelled to Harrogate to attend the dedication of a bench to the memory of Monica Bradley, in recognition of her long and valued service to the Association. After a short service, attended by many members from the North East, we proceeded to the Church of St Peter for a service to mark the 75th Anniversary of the Royal British Legion. Many thanks to the ladies of the Harrogate Branch for the wonderful tea provided by them.

The AGM was held in September in order to send balance sheets in early as requested. As this was the same date as the Golden Wedding Anniversary of Elsie Walmsley and husband Jack we also had an impromptu party. Our best wishes for many more happy years together. (No more broken ankles please, Elsie.)

We were invited to the Civic Service of the Lord Mayor of Bradford held in Clayton Parish Church in October.

The North Eastern Reunion was held at Marton Hall Country Club and hosted by Cleveland Branch. After a magnificent luncheon the aforesaid ladies entertained everyone with a concert, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all present.

In November, the Festival of Remembrance was held at the St George's Hall. This was a very special occasion as it was the 50th Anniversary of it being held. This was followed a week later by the Remembrance Day Parade and service in Bradford.

The annual lunch for the Veterans of the 14-18 War was held on the 16 November. Our one surviving veteran, Mr Harry Holmes, was to celebrate his 99th birthday three days afterwards, and to this we also invited the Dunkirk Veterans, who all agreed it was 'a right good do'.

Our Christmas lunch was at the Pine Room of Bradford University. A very good meal was enjoyed by all.

Canterbury Branch

In early March of this year, Marjorie Jones ex ATS and member of Canterbury Branch, was admitted to the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford, Kent. In the first bed was a very unhappy lady named Violet Stuart who had moved to Wye a year ago following the death of her husband so as to be nearer to her daughter. Unfortunately she had not settled in the town and had made no friends or contacts. In conversation, Marjorie discovered Violet had served in the ATS during the war but had not heard of the Association. Violet's daughter regularly visited her Mum in Hospital and always wore a pendant of the Royal Norfolk Regiment in which her father served. Marjorie's husband landed in Normandy with the same Regiment and has faint memories of Sgt Stuart.



Violet with the Vicar of Wye, Rt. Rev David Stuart-Smith, Rev David Say with Marjorie Jones looking on

Joyce Haynes, also of Canterbury Branch, visited Marjorie in hospital and found that Violet lived only a short distance away in Wye, but they had never met.

Since returning home, Marjorie and Joyce have visited often and Violet is now a very proud member of Canterbury Branch and although unable to attend meetings due to illness, is keen to hear all the news.

The Hospice staff felt that Violet would be more comfortable on a recliner chair. SSAFA were contacted

and in no time at all funds were donated by the WRAC Assn, Royal Norfolk Regiment Assn, Normandy Veterans Assn Folkestone Area, the Royal British Legion Maidstone and the RBL Ashford Branch and the chair was delivered quickly.

The Vicar of Wye visited Violet often and she expressed a wish to be confirmed. It was decided to hold the service while she was still able to go to the Parish Church. So, on a lovely sunny afternoon, accompanied by her family and friends, over 50 in all, Violet was confirmed by the former Bishop of Rochester, Rt. Rev David Say. The lesson was read by Joyce and Veronica, Warden of the House where Violet lives, sang a solo. Violet proudly wore her Association badge on her dress. Afterwards all returned to Violet's home where tea was enjoyed and she thanked everyone for their support on this her very special day. Although she is aware of her condition, Violet is now a contented lady with many friends who visit regularly. Without these contacts in Hospital and through the Association, perhaps none of the above would have happened to a now happy Violet Stuart.

We have proved that "Esprit de Corps" still lives on in our lives.

Cardiff Branch

We still continue to have our Branch meetings, on the second Tuesday of each month for which we have very good attendances of between 22 and 30 members. Also we have very good raffles at each one, and our popular Bring & Buys twice a year, and had four new members since February.

Ten of us had a very entertaining afternoon in May at Harry Ramsden's, which in the near future I am sure we will be repeating. We would like to thank the Blackpool Branch members for the wonderful weekend we spent at the Grand Reunion and the work they did for that weekend; also not forgetting the impressive church service on the Sunday morning.

We are looking forward very much to the Reunion in Coventry in September.

Chelmsford Branch

Our first Meeting of the New Year saw us welcoming two members from the Samaritans. They cover a very large area of Mid-Essex and apart from the work they do at their Headquarters in Chelmsford they also have a van with a soundproof room in it which they take to pop festivals, agricultural shows etc. Some of their volunteers also visit Chelmsford Prison where some of the inmates take up training to help others in the prison who are suffering from stress.

February brought us a new member whom we welcomed warmly. We manage to keep our membership up in spite of our increasing age! Today's meeting was a general get together, business, then a chat over a cup of tea and biscuits, followed by some games of Hoi organised by one of our members.

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In March, we welcomed Sister Peggy Boyne who spoke to us about her life in the Church Army. She was most amusing, as well as being very informative. A Singles Club is being opened shortly in Chelmsford for single, divorced, separated and widowed women, and Daphne Attridge, our Secretary, was able to give further details to those who were interested. We have a tablecloth with the ATS Motif embroidered on it, together with the names of all of our members and now new members are being invited to put their names on it too.

April brought us a fascinating talk by Rusty Ryan who served as a WAAF Officer during the War, working in Intelligence and using her fluent German in breaking down the German codes. Her talk ended too soon and we are hoping that she will come back again to tell us more.

In May, we held our May Fayre where members contributed cakes, clothes, plants, books and items for the White Elephant Stall. Everyone is very generous and we make a good profit which goes towards subsidising our Christmas Party. We had a very enjoyable visit to a pretty little Essex Village called Steeple Bumpstead where we met a very vivacious lady called Julie and her assistant, Caroline. Julie unveiled the mysteries of chocolate making and afterwards a very good tea was provided and we were able to purchase some of the products she had been demonstrating.

Ten of our members attended the AGM at Blackpool and the general consensus of opinion was that it was extremely well organised and most enjoyable. Congratulations to all those involved in it!

By the time this report goes to print we shall be going on our annual holiday to Warners - this time to their latest hotel at Littlecotes, near Newbury. We are well known at the various venues for, as a Group, we are prepared to take part in the various quizzes, fancy dress, swimming and any other pursuit.

Chester Branch

The last twelve months at the Chester Branch has been a mixture of sunshine and sorrow - as sadly it is for many of us.

We have lost several members not the least, Molly Coulter from Ellesmere Port, who had been a loyal and much liked member of the Branch. Molly presented the Branch with the Standard and she will be long remembered.

The highlight of our year was arranging a reunion for all the Branches in our area. This was held at the Town Hall,

Chester, on July 17 1996. We were honoured by the presence of the Lord Mayor of Chester who confessed that she was totally amazed by our potted histories of our various service with the ATS and even more amazed by our vigour. Colonel Batchelor was our special guest and we take this opportunity of thanking her for her ever present support. At the end of the day we were able to forward £400.00 to the Benevolent Fund. All Branches of the North West Group supported us and we have had appreciative compliments from nearly all Branches attending, especially the very kind remarks made by the Manchester Branch. A special thank you to them and to our hard working members.

We have obviously had a very busy and interesting year. Sadly our standard bearer for many years, Mrs Pam Bowdler, had to stand down owing to ill health, but as always a willing and excellent volunteer succeeded, Mrs Molly Chopin, who has continued to carry our standard very proudly - indeed as we are of her - to the Remembrance Parade in Chester Cathedral, the Reunion in Blackpool and other parades to which we are invited.

Members attended the special birthday party held by the Southport Branch - we say have more birthdays! The Tea Dance was hosted by The Rhyl Branch. Believe me, Rhyl Branch, as befits a Welsh seaside town, can really push the boat out. They hosted a remarkable afternoon and are to be congratulated on the happy atmosphere and the wonderful home made buffet. The only blot on the afternoon was when our very popular secretary, Mrs Vera Hamblett, in collecting a magnum of champagne slipped and hit the floor rather harder than she would even if she had already sampled the champagne; fortunately there were no bones broken and the Town Hall staff are not polishing the floor as vigorously as they used.

We welcomed three new members during the year and continue to have a very pleasant meeting with tea and biscuits in a very welcoming hotel in Chester.

The same hotel put on a super Christmas Lunch for us and although we might not have got as "tiddly" as we did 50 years ago, we enjoyed ourselves tremendously.

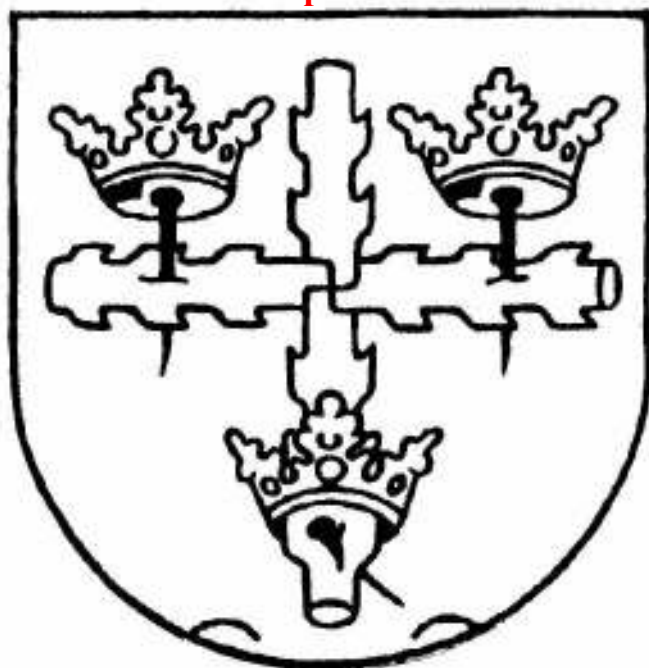
All our members have asked that we put on record their grateful thanks for the "Lioness". We feel the magazine does more to keep us together and also leave us hopelessly nostalgic than anything else in the Association. A very excellent Journal which never fails to leave us dewy eyed.

We remember the wet and cold and the scratchy khaki - the ablutions which always left a lot to be desired, the PT, the cold showers, cold huts and wet feet and whisper it, sometimes, not so hot food. But above all that we remember the laughter and fun, that friend who was always there to help, the different places we all finished up in, that rather handsome airman or was he a corporal in the REs or was it the RAs or was it the RAF? We remember those who did not return and whom we have lost since but now, as then, most of all we remember each other.

Colchester Branch

We now have 143 members and meetings are still well attended.

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COLCHESTER

There were several heavy snowfalls in the Colchester area during January making travelling difficult. However, 45 brave souls came to our monthly meeting and were entertained by a group of four lady musicians. They were a light-hearted group with a great sense of humour and went down well with our mince pies. It turned out to be a lively and happy meeting for all of us.

During February we had the pleasure of meeting the author, Imogen Corrigan, who is at the moment working on a book about the ATS. She was most interested to hear the many tales we were able to recount about our time in the Service. At the start of our meeting we received the sad news of the death of one of our much loved members, Ivy Bracegirdle, at the age of 85. Ivy, who for some years remembered all our birthdays and illnesses without fail, was a remarkable woman and happiest when helping others. She joined the ATS in 1938 and served in the Rifle Brigade as W1199. After several postings she was drafted to No 1 ATS Clerical Company in Nairobi (Kenya) and demobbed in October 1946 with the rank of WOII (SQMS). One of her most memorable experiences was to receive the first teleprinter message announcing the end of the war in Europe. She was awarded the Certificate of Good Service by Eastern Command HQ and her other decorations included the 1939/49 Star Defence Medal, and Territorial Efficiency Medal. Some years after the war she and her husband, Jack, were founders of the Wivenhoe branch of the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. Her funeral was attended by a guard of

honour mounted by our members in memory of a truly remarkable woman.

At our monthly meeting in March we were given a fascinating demonstration by Mrs Small on the subject of egg decoration. She showed us her varied collection of beautifully decorated eggs of all sizes which was most interesting. Also during March we enjoyed a meal at Clacton Golf Club - always an event to look forward to. During the month I noticed the obituary notice in the Daily Telegraph of Brigadier Dame Mary Tyrwhitt who had died aged 93. It was interesting that two of our members remembered her well. Helen Thompson, who was her Chief Clerk at one time, and Louisa Carr who met her while on an NCOs course. During this month we also lost our oldest member, Jessie Cook, who had only recently celebrated her 90th Birthday. Sadly she did not see her photograph in a recent edition of Lioness. Once again we were proud to mount a guard of honour at her funeral.

In April, 15 of our members, including our Secretary Vera Cole, attended the AGM at Blackpool and despite the cold weather seemed to have enjoyed themselves. Now we are looking forward to the summer months and have several outings planned so we are keeping our fingers crossed for some nice sunny weather.



Ivy Bracegirdle who died aged 85 at Colchester

Crewe Branch

We started celebrating Christmas early by having a Christmas outing at the very popular Stapeley Water Gardens near Nantwich at the end of November. For our Christmas outing in December, a party of us with our friends and relatives enjoyed an evening at Crewe Theatre to see the pantomime starring Gordon Kaye and other TV favourites.

We then had a break until the February meeting when we planned our fund raising activities for the year. On February 15, our member Elsie Walton took a party of us out to lunch at the Dane Bank College, Crewe, which was very pleasant. Since then she has been ill in hospital but I am pleased to say she is now recovering at home. So with our good wishes to her, we hope she will soon be joining us again.

Our Chairman, Betty Patton, attended the 93rd S/L REG Reunion at Nottingham on March 15. She had a very pleasant weekend and sends best wishes to her searchlight friends. The Branch was invited to a dance on March 22 given by the Royal Marines Association, Stoke-on-Trent. Several of us were able to go and we were made very welcome. It was a lovely evening.

Of course, a group of us went to the Grand Reunion at Blackpool on April 18. In spite of the travel difficulties that day we all managed to get there. It was a very enjoyable weekend. The hotel was great and they coped with us all marvellously. It is a wonderful feeling when so many of us get together in comradeship as it is something we all cherish very much.

Our first fund raiser this year was on April 12 when we held a charity stall in Crewe Market which did very well. We are having a Gala Dance on May 15 at the Crosville Club Crewe. We are also holding our annual Coffee Morning at Nantwich on May 31. The Branch has been invited to a 50th Anniversary Night with the Royal Artillery Association North Staffs on May 27 which we are looking forward to.

We shall be attending the usual civic and service parades and we also hope to fit some social outings in, too, during the summer period, one of which is an invitation from Rhyl Branch to a Welsh Tea on July 24. We are hoping some of us will be able to go to that.



Ladies of the Branch at Stapeley Water Gardens

Dacorum Branch

Our Branch here continues to flourish, our membership has now risen to 36 and we are still thriving. Our monthly meetings, at the Scout Hall, Queensway, Hemel Hempstead on the first Tuesday of each month, from 2-4pm, are well attended.

In January we all enjoyed a talk on Guide Dogs for the Blind given by Jill Graves, a puppy walker who brought her puppy with her. Both were brilliant.

For our meeting in March we had a talk from Ruth Chapman, the Dacorum Council Woodlands Officer, very informative and entertaining.

April saw us off for an outing to Luton Hoo, a mansion house set in beautiful surroundings, the home of the Wernher Family, who have been host to our own Royal Family many times in the past.

Now we come to Friday 18 April when 6 members met at Hemel Hempstead to await the coach, coming from Aylesbury with their members already on board. Then on to Luton to get the main contingent from Luton and Wimbledon, and off we set for Blackpool and the Grand Reunion, and a great weekend, all organised by Madge Evans of Luton Branch. Well done Madge, a big thank you for a most exciting trip.

The coming months are already planned with talks, quizzes and outings. More about them in our next report.

Eastbourne Branch

We now have about 70 members. This year has been much quieter after the 50th Peace Anniversary Celebrations. We have had interesting lectures, especially those given by members about "What they did in the war".

Our October meeting was a coach trip to Boulogne via the Channel Tunnel, a first for many of us. We had our usual Remembrance Day activities and later members visited the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. Members with our Standard attended the Grand Reunion in Blackpool which we ended with fish and chips in Harry Ramsden's. All much enjoyed. Various other annual reunions were attended, including that of the Kines who visited Manorbier Camp where all Kines trained.

Our thanks to all who helped to make Blackpool such a success, in spite of the bomb scares.

Fife and Tayside Branch

I am pleased to say we now have 28 Life Members and 56 Annual Members. We include in this a member from Wellingborough, Northants, who was stationed with one of our members and wished to join our branch and receive all the news. We also have a member from Canada who originally came from this area but is now widowed and joins us when she comes on holiday most years.

Our monthly venue is held at the Royal British Legion Club, Perth. About 23 to 27 of us meet for lunch and a chat. Then we have a small raffle which all helps to raise funds. Each month they voluntarily pay 50p each towards eventually being able to send a cheque via our treasurer for Benevolent Funds.

As last year was going to be a very busy year for us, we started off early by holding a few boot sales to raise a bit of extra money towards our Scottish Branches AGM last October. This went off very well with a large attendance. We decided to try something new, in fact a "good as new" and this appeared to go down very well. There was also guitar entertainment to which we were able to sing along. Local businesses and distilleries were very generous with raffle prizes; the treasurer and I were becoming very expert in writing coaxing letters!!!!

We heard that our local mental hospital had hoped to start off a project which involved reviving their old walled garden that had lain in a state of desolation for many years. They were hoping through sponsorship to be able to do this, so we decided to get involved as we had been visiting ex ATS who had been patients in the hospital. An arbour was decided upon and after many months of planning and visits, it all came to fruition last October. Two cherry trees were planted and a variety of trailing and climbing plants have gone in. Even the gardener and patients have been involved and have put in quite a few bulbs. A plaque has gone up as this is a memorial garden and all the Scottish Branches have contributed to it. A fund is also being set aside to replenish any plants where necessary. Also, there are two seats which we have put in the arbour as part of the memorial arbour.

In December last year we met for Christmas lunch at the Royal George Hotel, had a few games, then had a sales table and raffle table. The daughter of one of our members made a Christmas cake and we had fun "guessing the weight" at 20p a time.

Next week, 26 April, we are off to the Royal George Hotel again for lunch and AGM (Branch). Our entertainment this time will be in the form of a magician and mind reader. Quite a lot of interest is being shown and we think it will be interesting in more ways than one.

May I, on behalf of Fife & Tayside Branch, wish yourself and colleagues all the best. We appreciate your hard work on our behalf.

Glasgow Branch

We continue to meet in the Garnethill Community Centre on the second Tuesday of the month.

Our meetings are very well attended by our members. September starts our session with a bring and buy sale, the proceeds going to Erskine Hospital for Ex-service people. In October, Mrs Cox told us of her life in the Middle East. We also attended the Scottish AGM in Perth where the members of Perth Branch entertained us so well and we thank them sincerely.

We attended the Armistice Service in George Square and a wreath was laid on the Cenotaph.

Mr Keigh gave a slide show of scenes of Scotland which reminded us that we live in a very beautiful country.

We had a very successful lunch at Christmas in the Town House Hotel.

For the start of 1997 we had representatives from British Rail showing slides of rail journeys.

A lady from Social Services explained her work with sufferers of dementia.

We invited ladies from the WRNS and WRAAF Associations to our guest night and were entertained by a group who are known as the French Connection. We were invited to visit the WRAAF Assoc and had a very enjoyable afternoon.

Twenty five members travelled to Blackpool for the Grand Reunion and we thank the Blackpool Branch for a very well organised weekend.

We close our session in May with a Social Evening.

Grimsby and District Branch

First of all I have to say congratulations to all concerned in the new look "Lioness". We all think it has improved tremendously (not that it was bad before) but it is now even better. In December our Branch was ten years old. To celebrate we held a luncheon at the "Inn On The Park". The Park being Blundell Park, the home of Grimsby Town Football Club. We had the honour of the company of Col Cook as our main speaker. Members so enjoyed this event that they asked for a repeat next December, so this was booked by our Secretary. Col Cook took advantage of her stay here to visit the "Winter Gardens" along with our Secretary, Eunice Dillerstone, to make sure all was in order for our Northern Area Reunion in September which Grimsby Branch is hosting. The Colonel thought it was an ideal location.

In March, we were invited to join our friends at the Hull Branch for an afternoon. What a lovely time they gave us. Colonel Cook was there, too. There was a large table absolutely groaning with food, and a very good raffle with loads of prizes. We all had a good natter and more than a few drinks. Very many thanks to the Hull Branch ladies for your hospitality. We sang all the way home.

Fourteen of our Branch went to the National Reunion at Blackpool. We very much enjoyed our weekend. The dinner was excellent, we only had one complaint and that was having to queue for quite a long time for the church service and then to find there were no seats available when we finally got into church. We had to stand all through the service. We loved the Canon who gave a very hilarious sermon, but with a very good message in it. By the way, in all the years I have been attending church this was the first time I have ever heard a Canon, Vicar, Priest or any one else receive such a tremendous applause. He helped us forget our aching legs. Is it possible to issue tickets next time as you have in the past?

The band as usual provided us with excellent entertainment on Saturday night, and again on Sunday morning when they led the Parade. We give them ten out of ten. Unfortunately, we have lost four of our members since my last epistle. One of them being Chris Pinnock who used to write on Branch news for several years. They will all be sadly missed.

Coming events include a Summer Fayre in June and also a days outing to "Heartbeat" Country and Whitby which we all look forward to. Until next time best wishes to all who write in and read our magazine.

Hereford Branch

It is with sadness that I have to report, we have lost three of our ex ATS members since this year began. Mrs Joyce WARDMAN died in February, Mrs Beryl MORTON died in March and Mrs Dot HANCOX died in April. We shall miss them greatly.

On a brighter note, we have had three ladies join us. Jane Murchison, Nicole Turvey and Evelyn Radford. We welcome them to our Branch. Also Mrs Sue Walton has had her second baby, David, and along with daughter Rachel, they often join us at the monthly meetings. These are held on the last Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm in the RBL Hall in Belmont Road, Hereford. All members are most welcome. We average 15 at each meeting.

We held our Christmas lunch at the Wye Inn on December 10 1996 and 24 ladies attended and one husband "braved" the occasion! We held a raffle for Branch funds and sold badges, diaries, pens and some of the plaques that Mrs Billy Cordner had painted for our

1995 area reunion in Hereford. We still have a few more ATS and WRAC left if anyone would like to purchase. They are all framed and the Wye Inn landlady bought a "double one" and it has pride of place now, over the Bar!! Everyone had an enjoyable time, and several messages and cards were read by the secretary from distant members. Debbie Casey in Cyprus, Bill Cordner in Evesham, Jackie Keeble in Cumbria, Philippa Williams now in Ross-on-Wye, Sybil Grafton in Wigmore and Phyllis Martin in North Wales. In January, our meeting was held at the home of Mrs Ena Price who kindly provided a "Board Room" for the meeting and an excellent buffet lunch. It was lovely - thank you Ena. Mrs Maureen Roberts, the daughter of one of our members, Mrs Lilian Cross, who is in a nursing home in Shrewsbury, has sent us two dolls to use in a raffle. One she made herself and it is beautiful and like the one she made for our reunion. Thank you Maureen and our "best wishes" to Lilian who has just celebrated her birthday. In February we sent a £150 donation to the ATS and WRAC Benevolent Fund. The long awaited Newsletter was sent out this month by Miss Nicholls and Mrs Walton. Joyce and Sue had been helped by Sue's husband Kim and everyone agreed it was a great success. Thank you Joyce, Sue and Kim! One of our members living in Worcester, Mrs Vera Denning, was thrilled to read in the last Lioness about "The Gentle Sex", a film made about the ATS during the last war. It brought back many memories for her as she had been "chosen" to take part in it. In March, a few of our members sent generous donations to Branch funds. Thank you very much ladies - it is much appreciated. Also, Mrs Nora Maunder who has not been at all well this year, gave us a lovely cool box. We subsequently sent this on to our General Secretary, as a prize for the Grand Raffle at the AGM. Happily, Nora is in good health now. Thank you Nora!

In April, of course, the AGM in Blackpool, eight members attended and enjoyed it immensely. Our thanks go to Council and all other helpers, Blackpool Branch also. The Band entertainment on Saturday was much enjoyed. On Sunday the Church Service was moving and what about that address by the vicar of Blackburn - wasn't it good!? Then of course the great "March Past" and another great - the splendid Sgt Major and her helpers. We did enjoy that march and the Band also. We were all back in uniform - in our minds anyway! We now look forward to the next one!! Since that "March Past" one of our younger members has been running a private raffle to raise funds for our very own standard. Mrs Jackie Neave is determined to raise the money one way or another and we hope to apply to the local Council also for help. Jackie has even offered to be standard bearer - so any contributions will be gratefully received.

At the May meeting, the Secretary, Jo Anscombe, announced she had received two beautiful bed-shawls from Mrs Phyllis Martin - hand crocheted by Phyllis. These will be raffled at a later date. Thank you Phyllis. Mrs Sybil Grafton won a £5 Boots Voucher at the AGM - our only win

this time! Mrs Neave bought a Crystal Box at AGM and handed this in for a future raffle prize - thank you Jackie! A beret and shoulder flashes have been sent to our Area Chairman, Mrs Maggie Purkis, along with a price list and hopefully this item will be raised at the next Council meeting. Several Branches had shown interest at the Blackpool AGM. Eight members have booked to go to Worthy Down on June 14 for Corps Day, and twelve members are booked for area reunion in Coventry on September 20. We are looking forward to both events.

A car boot sale and Market Stall are booked for July 13 and July 15 respectively. Any contributions will be gratefully received. Please ring Joyce Nicholls on Hereford 356240 or Jo Anscombe on Hereford 270165. This for our own members obviously.

We send our best wishes to all our members, especially those who are not too well and wish them speedy recoveries. Thank you for all your donations and letters etc. They are much appreciated. We wish Mrs Burton's husband Harry lots of luck in his recovery too. Eva and Harry are the RBL stalwarts at the club we attend for our meetings.

Last but not least - congratulations to our General Secretary and Editor, Mrs Fiona White and helpers for an excellent Lioness. We look forward to the Journal with great eagerness. Our grateful thanks also to Jo Anscombe's daughter Judi, for typing the reports sent to Lioness.

Leeds Branch

We continue to meet on the first Wednesday of the month in Headingley British Legion Club (by kind permission of the Commission). All former members of the ATS or WRAC will be made most welcome.

16 members enjoyed four days in Blackpool in spite of the very cold windy weather. We filled the Thornton Cleveleys British Legion Club and all joined in the dancing, singing and bingo. We had bracing walks on the sea front and sampled the fish and chips. The stalls on Saturday were much too close together for comfort but we bought our sticks of Blackpool rock as a reminder of long gone days of childhood.

Those who attended the AGM were pleased to meet Mrs White, hear about the help given to needy comrades by the Benevolent Fund and the success of the Association in its new home. One thousand ladies sitting down to dinner was a sight to remember. The sermon on Sunday was one humour and yet left us all with something to think about. A fitting end to a memorable Reunion. We have started saving for the next one.

At one of our meetings we had a talk by a member of Alcoholics Anonymous which made us realise what sorrow this condition can cause to families of those afflicted and what help they get from meeting together and talking over their problems. We also get help from one another by meeting regularly. Long may it continue.

We entertained 14 members from York Branch at our May meeting and were thrilled to have Col Cook. A most friendly afternoon was rounded off with a buffet tea and special raffle. We shall be pleased to have them again sometime.

Our Secretary, Emily, will be at the Mixed Hy AA Weekend at Holme Lacy, and 15 will be joining the Combined Services weekend in Bridlington. We are sharing a coach with Bradford Branch to attend the Northern Area Reunion in Cleethorpes in September which will conclude a most enjoyable year.

Liverpool Branch

It is a little while since we offered a report for the "Lioness", but due to changes in Branch officials, combined with sickness, alas, this has regrettably lapsed. However we are still up and running and hold regular monthly meetings on the third Wednesday of each month, except January and August. We meet, currently, at 1.30pm in the Clubroom on the Ground Floor of the Liverpool City Branch of the RBL at 34 Rodney Street, Liverpool 1. After our business matters have been dealt with, we usually have some "activity" such as a quiz, bring and buy sale, dutch auction, beetle drive or the like. Apart from the 50p which members pay at each meeting for a cup of tea, a biscuit or cake and a raffle ticket, our income comes from the various sales of goods given by members and generous donations to Branch funds from time to time, also by members. The meetings are very busy and lively, and new members are always made very welcome.

The past year has been quite eventful. A large number of us attended the North West Group Reunion at Chester Town Hall in June 1996. This was very enjoyable, and we are grateful to our host branch, Chester, who worked hard to make the afternoon a great success.

Later in the year several of our members joined Rhyl Branch at their Town Hall for their usual Welsh Tea Dance, which is always such a happy event, well organised, and we are always made so welcome. It is good to meet up regularly with our friends from all the attending branches.

We also attended the Liverpool Scottish Regimental Service at St Davids Church Childwall, and joined the West Lancashire County RBL at their annual service at the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral. This is always well attended, and the March Past through the city which follows, with standards and colours unfurled, attracts many spectators which is good, for it is important that the present

generations NEVER forget the great sacrifices made during successive conflicts that they may enjoy their freedom

"If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though Poppies grow
In Flanders' fields."
- Col John McCrae.

We shall be supporting these events again this year.

Three of our members celebrated their golden wedding anniversaries: Maisie Dovaston on 18 May 1996, Betty Doyle on 20 July 1996, and Doreen Vernon on 5 April 1997. We sent each our congratulations, but sadly, we heard that Ron Doyle lost his lengthy battle against illness on 28 April 1997. We shall look forward to seeing Betty again at our meetings when she feels able to attend. This also applies to one of our oldest members, Flo Bolton (93), who sadly lost her husband Harry in April after a long illness. Harry and Flo had been tireless workers for their branch of the RBL, and we know that his place will be very hard to fill.



LIVERPOOL BRANCH 50TH ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON

Back Row (L - R): Dorothy Parker, Stacia Cunningham, Eveline Cooper (Sedman), Mary Taylor (Downs), Lillian Humphreys (Davies), Eileen Marsden (Dixon), Doreen Vernon (Weir), Betty Doyle (Henley), Trudie Orchard (Williams), Beryl Hepworth (O'Donnell)
Middle Row (L-R): Kay Foxley, Marjorie Hay (Blacklock), Kay Goodchild (Neafsey), Vivienne Boughton, Sylvia Lewis, Sadie Smith (Furby), Ethel Myers (Holmes), Agnes Lappin (Davies)
Front Row (L-R): Dot Cook (Hitchin), Margaret Barton (Edwards), Audrey Hayward, Frances Rimmer (Parr), Gwen Learmouth, Flo Bolton (Evans), Maisie Dovaston (Dodson), Hannah Kennedy (Jenkins)

The highlight of 1996, for us, was our celebratory lunch to mark our FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY as a branch. This was held on the 11 December 1996 at Garston Masonic Hall and 27 members were able to attend. A special cake was made for the occasion kindly provided by our Treasurer, and our President, Miss A G Learmouth MBE TD, performed the cutting ceremony. The photographs were taken for our Branch album, and names have been supplied in case any are recognised. This event was such an outstanding success that we may have set a precedent. Many members feel that we should have a regular Christmas luncheon.



50th Anniversary Cake

It has been nice to welcome back our former Secretary, Margaret Barton, after a quite distressing illness which caused her to resign her post after 27 years of loyal service to our Branch. We do sincerely thank her for all her efforts on our behalf and at our September 1996 meeting a presentation was made to her.

On a sad note, we have just been advised of the passing of a former member, Mary McChesney, in March 97. Our condolences have been sent to her family.

Finally, we are trying to recover from the "GRAND REUNION", which has been voted without doubt an excellent "do". May we offer our sincere thanks to the North West Group, but particularly to the members of the Blackpool branch who worked so very hard to ensure the great success of the event. Here's to the next Grand Reunion and the Millennium.

London Branch

Another Grand Reunion was enjoyed by many from the branch, even though some of us had such a protracted journey because of security alerts. Our train never did get to Crewe in sharp contrast to the many times that I seemed to get stuck there when I travelled on leave from Manchester to London. From memory it always seemed to be the middle of the night. How many of you recall that gloomy station and the overcrowded train with sleeping bodies and kitbags jammed into every conceivable space!? Why was Crewe always such a black spot? We thank everyone who this time organised such a joyful occasion at Blackpool. In January we were happy to welcome Major Imogen Corrigan to our meeting and I believe that she was able to garner quite a few memories to add to her projected collection. We look forward to reading her book which I am sure will be worth the wait. Unlike the lamented ATS and WRAC, the F.A.N.Y. still soldier on and in February, Captain Decia Stephenson, their Records Officer, told us about their current activities which include manning the telephones when the City of London is struck by disaster, as for instance during the recent IRA bombing. The Sue Ryder Foundation was the subject of an illuminating talk

at our March meeting and I think most of us were very surprised at the world-wide scope of this wonderful humanitarian organisation. We continue to gain new members but sadly we have lost several old friends this year, including Win Arnold and Sadie Williams who will be greatly missed at our meetings.

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Manchester Branch

For the winter months we meet each month but are unable to join many activities as members are far-flung so save our energy for the lighter evenings.

This, of course, did not stop our meeting up at Blackpool along I understand with 947 other ATS. This is a most exciting time for all and we were able to meet some of our friends from further afield.

The whole weekend was a great success, finishing up at St Johns Parish Church in Blackpool for a Service of Remembrance before we all separated to go our different ways.

On return we were met with invitations from other branches to meet up again with them in the near future; so even though the branch is few in number we manage to squeeze in many activities.

Some of the members are Ex Anti Aircraft Gunners so are looking forward to another reunion in York in August, more friends to meet and perhaps to continue friendships we made at the Blackpool Reunion.

Medway Branch

This past year has been hard regarding fund raising, due to the lack of transport, so we are keeping to the bring and buy stalls.

In the year we have a good increase in membership and three WRAC members. It's a pity more don't attend the meetings.

Our meetings are still at the Medway Art Centre on the second Tuesday of the month.

Sandhurst will be our first march of the year.

Sittingbourne Group are still going well, eleven members saving themselves a journey to the Medway Towns.

Well what a wonderful time we all had at the Reunion; I was sorry I could not join the marching round the tables. I was fortunate to meet up with two ladies I was stationed with at Bicester. I do like the idea of the register for the WRAC ladies. Ann Deakin is doing a good job.

Many of us managed to get into the church. We felt sorry for those who had to stand. It was lovely just being there. I am sure Grace would like to thank Doreen for her great performance of the Sunday episode of Coronation Street. It's a wonder we weren't thrown out!!

Thanks to all those who made the Reunion worthwhile.

Plymouth Branch

The beginning of 1997 has brought great sadness to Plymouth Branch. Our Chairman and standard bearer, Doreen Greenaway, died on January 26. Her death was a shock to the Branch because, although we knew she was not well, we all felt that her indomitable spirit would bring her through. Then tragically, on the day of Doreen's funeral, February 3, our President, Mary Byers, collapsed and died at home as she was preparing to go to the funeral.

Mary Byers was the first chairman of the Branch when it formed in 1978 and throughout its 19 year history she was one of its mainstays and guiding lights. She became President in 1985 and as such, was a font of knowledge, always ready to help and advise; in her gentle, kind manner she could be firm and fair and everyone respected her and loved her. Mary had initially served as a radar operator in the RAF but later she became a Captain in the TA and was awarded the Territorial Decoration for her dedicated service. She was well known for her great love of animals, always ready to take in a stray and care for it. Mary was truly a lady who was "gentle in manner, resolute in deed".



Mary Byers

Doreen Greenaway died suddenly of a heart attack in Derriford Hospital on January 26. She had served with the ATS during the war as a driver at Aldershot. Later she was based in Plymouth with the TA working in the "Ops Room" and taking part in exercises on Dartmoor. As our standard bearer she was a credit to Plymouth Branch and the Corps; her proudest moment was when she carried the standard in St Paul's Cathedral at the Golden Jubilee of the ATS in 1988. She also represented our Branch at the Federation of Ex-Services Associations in Plymouth. Doreen was well known throughout the WRAC Association, she made friends wherever she went; the Branch has had many cards from other Branches expressing their sorrow at her death and we

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Doreen, Greenaway

thank our comrades nationwide for their kind thoughts and tributes. Everyone remembers Doreen as a dynamic, bubbly person who was there to help whenever she was needed.

To remember Mary and Doreen and all past members of the Branch, we are starting a Remembrance Book which will be dedicated at our Anniversary Service in St Catherine's on the Hoe at the Citadel on 6 July.

As a Branch we shall endeavour to carry on as Mary and Doreen would have wished. Our comradeship in the Association will help sustain us.

Rochdale Branch

Meetings have continued throughout the winter, and have been well attended. One or two members are on the sick list and our prayers are with them for a speedy return to health.

As usual, a group of our ladies gave their time to sell poppies for the Royal British Legion (picture enclosed).

Twenty six of us wended our way to Blackpool on 18 April 1997. After a lot of problems we all finally arrived at the Norbreck. We were lucky, living more or less on the doorstep, but many members had lots of aggro with the bomb scares and road and rail closures. As usual we all enjoyed our weekend, searching for and meeting old friends, taking trips to Fleetwood, Cleveleys and Blackpool town. Most of us took advantage of the invitation to visit the British Legion at Cleveleys and a good time was had by all.

The Reunion Dinner was a great success, the speeches were really interesting and enjoyed, and the band was great.

Sunday saw us dressed up and ready to go. We had quite a wait to get into church and it was unfortunate that not everyone could be accommodated. It was a very enjoyable service, the address by the Rev. Brian Stevenson being well received.



L-R: Mary Campbell, Doris Huntback (our standard bearer), Mona Schofield

The RSM had us all assembled and ready for our march, in quick time and her fellow WOs and Sgts were really efficient. The band, in the centre of the parade could be heard by all, which I know improved our marching. It brought back happy memories to yours truly who was a WO at the Eastern Command Training Centre.

Roll on our next Reunion, the Millennium - I wonder where we shall be then?

Rhyl Branch

After our AGM in October we were looking forward to our Christmas lunch at the Oriel Restaurant attached to our Pavilion Theatre. Some members went there with the Dunkirk Vets for their Christmas lunch. We had a successful Christmas fayre and then into the New Year. Our meetings are usually well attended and active and enjoyable. We celebrated St David's Day going first for dinner, then into the Special St David's show at the Pavilion Theatre. We have coffee mornings and table top sales which help our funds. The Coldstream Guards had a show at the Theatre to which some members went. There was a trip to Southport, and six members went as guests of the Rhyl Branch WRNS to a united service at Bowring Park, Liverpool. Sixteen members joined in the coach travel to the Grand Reunion in Blackpool with the Chester members. What a memorable weekend that was, the weather kept fine and it was great to meet up with so many old friends. Whilst there, one of our members braved the "BIG CONE" and members sponsored her for funds for our Branch. She did it quite successfully. We are now busy preparing for our 'Welsh Tea' afternoon in July, and have ordered a nice sunny day for our visitors.

The Branch extends congratulations to Yvonne, our Treasurer, and Frank on the occasion of their Golden Wedding. They are also guests of Her Majesty at the July Garden Party. Our congratulations also to Mrs Fiona White and her staff on the success of the Grand Reunion Weekend, and the hard work put in by the Blackpool Branch.

Salisbury Branch

Our monthly meetings continue to be well attended but the gremlins seem to be getting at our speakers! In March Suzanne was unable to attend so we missed her slides of France and Imogen was unable to attend in April.

In February we had a most interesting up-date on the activities of the Royal British Legion from our County Field Officer, Peter Dougals. We have held small 'fund-raising' activities to help towards the transport costs for the Reunion. The most enjoyable was lunch with Clare when we were treated to a 3-course 'gourmet' meal on a beautiful sunny day.

Twelve members went to Blackpool and enjoyed the weekend, especially the service and march-past on Sunday morning. Well done to everyone concerned.

Scarborough Branch

January-June 1997

- January 1997 Christmas Lunch at a local hotel. Individual gifts to members.
- February 1997 Raffle books - 47 books distributed and sold.
- March 1997 A Buffet Lunch was prepared and served at one of the member's houses incorporating the monthly meeting.
- April 1997 Monthly meeting in the form of a buffet lunch at another member's house.
- April 18/19 WRAC Reunion (Blackpool). Members attending (five). In spite of British Rail and their strike.
- May 1997 Suggested visit in July 1997 as Branch outing. Not yet confirmed.
- June 1997 Combined Services w/e Bridlington 13/14/15 June 1997.

Sheffield Branch

The members still meet on the first Thursday of each month at the Victoria Hall. Sadly we lost two members recently who will be greatly missed.

1996 ended with our annual Christmas lunch which we all thoroughly enjoyed. In January we went to see the pantomime "Aladdin" performed by the Major Operatic Society at Sheffield City Hall.

The AGM took place at the March meeting and was well attended. We managed to iron out some outstanding matters. We retain our Chairman, Mrs Margaret Hawksworth, and Secretary, Miss Florence Bell. We have a new Treasurer, Mrs Lorna Hames, who we know will be as excellent as our former treasurer, Mrs Beatrice South, who has had to retire owing to ill health.

Our trip to Blackpool for the 1997 Reunion was a memorable occasion. The hotel was excellent, as were the food and the staff. On our first night we visited the British Legion where some of our members managed to find old friends whom they had not seen for 50 years. A lively evening followed - we listened to an organist, then played an hilarious game of bingo, followed by a good old sing-song. The following morning we went to the Norbreck Hotel to buy souvenirs and after lunch we rested in our hotel to prepare ourselves for the big event. The evening began back at the Norbreck when we good humouredly waited our turn, wine bottle in hand, to enter the restaurant. Before the speeches we were entertained by the Band of the Adjutant General's Corps. The rest of the evening was spent taking photographs, singing war-time songs and just moving from table to table reminiscing. We returned to our hotel exhausted but happy. Sunday morning we packed into church for an interesting and humorous service. Our hymn singing nearly raised the roof! We formed up outside the church and paraded past the Lord Mayor of Blackpool - more like twenty-year olds than our real ages! It was a wonderful end to a weekend which none of us will ever forget.

DOROTHY O'NEIL (Ex ATS) née PEARSON. ATS SIGNALS 1941-45.

Dorothy has been a member of the Association since 1965. She is a Royal British Legion Gold Badge Holder having more than 52 years service. She also serves on the Pensions Committee and has done so for the past 40 years.

An ardent church worker for St. Andrew's Church in Keighley, as a token of the esteem in which Dorothy is held, she was nominated by her church, to receive from Her Majesty the Queen, a gift of Maundy money when the Queen visited Bradford to officially open Centenary Square and perform the distribution of the Maundy money in Bradford Cathedral on the 27 March, 1997.

We in Shipley Branch are very proud of Dorothy and her achievements and we were all very interested in the Maundy money she brought for us to see.

If any of the readers of the Lioness recognise Dorothy, she would be delighted to hear from anyone, she served as a Switchboard operator. Her Maiden name was PEARSON.



**DOROTHY O'NEIL (Ex ATS) née Pearson
ATS Signals 1941-45**

We start our Report on a sad note, having lost two of our members, Beryl Podd died in October, and Nan Allen in November. Nan was the sister of our Vice Chairman, Chris Grigg. Several of our members formed a Guard of Honour for Nan, and a donation of £25 was sent to the Assn Benevolent Fund.

Dawley Parish Council, of which, Chris Grigg is Chairman, held their civic service in October, Lucy Bowyer paraded our standard, with Beryl Lane and Nancy Tipton as escorts. We all enjoyed a buffet lunch afterwards at the rest room.

On November 10, Lucy paraded our standard at the Ceremony of Light, in Oakengates Theatre. On the 11th, she was on duty again at Charlton School Remembrance Service at 9am, then in Wellington Square at 11am. Lucy's batman (husband Charles) certainly has his work cut out, for Lucy always looks so immaculate.

Also in November, we had an exciting and memorable evening at the theatre in Wolverhampton. Our Social Secretary, Irene Hall, arranges pleasant surprises, and outings for us.

Once again in January, we catered for the Dawley Senior Citizens belated Christmas Party. About 40 guests were present.

We let our hair down at our Annual Dinner in February, this time at the Buck's Head Hotel in Wellington. We had an excellent meal, and afterwards, Lucy Bowyer was presented with a framed embroidered ATS Insignia, in appreciation for parading our standard countless times over the years. The Insignia was expertly embroidered by Joan Purcell.

In our spare moments we have the usual attic sales etc, to boost funds. We have had a few enquiries from would-be members, but unfortunately they cannot attend our evening meetings.

In March, we put on "A Bit of a Do" for one of our members, (also our Area Chairman) Maggie Purkis, and husband Colin, celebrating their Silver Wedding. (See photograph elsewhere). We consumed a delicious buffet, Lucy Bowyer makes exceedingly good coconut tarts, amongst other things. Terri Goff made a beautiful iced cake, and Beryl Lane's trifle was out of this world, quite intoxicating!

Suitably refreshed, the amateur dramatics started. "Flannagan & Allen" appeared (Chris Grigg & Beryl Lane) singing their well known songs, then "Henry & Liza" (Nancy Tipton & Lucy Bower) were quite frustrated over the 'Hole in their Bucket!' There were monologues, recitations, etc, followed by a good old sing along.

Now we are looking forward to the Grand Reunion at Blackpool, we shall enjoy every minute of it.

Stafford Branch

Time seems to fly these days and it doesn't seem many weeks since the last report was sent off to the Lioness.

We have recently gained 4 new members. Two live in Stafford, Betty Crisp and Glen Lorenz née Getrych. The other 2 live in the Potteries, Peggy Dutton née Bilton and Marjorie Seaton née Brookes. Unfortunately, we lost 4 members at the beginning of the year so our numbers remain the same:

8	Life Members
25	Annual Members
1	Associate Member

At our December, February and March meetings we were given instruction on First Aid and Resuscitation by a member of the Ambulance Service. As well as being a good instructor he was also a very good comedian and made the sessions very enjoyable for us all.

As December is always such a busy month, we decided to postpone our Christmas lunch this year and 15 members enjoyed a New Year lunch instead. We celebrated our 32nd Anniversary of the Branch formation on 18 April 1997 by having lunch at a local public house.

Next came the highlight of the year with our visit to Blackpool in April. What an enjoyable Grand Reunion it was. Congratulations and our thanks to all who had a hand in making it such a memorable occasion. Owing to the security alert in the Midlands on the Friday morning, some Branches had a very long and frustrating journey. All the inconveniences were soon forgotten when they met up with friends. Everything about the weekend was perfect – the hotel, the food, the Grand Dinner on Saturday Night (once someone found us a table), the Church Service and last but not least the Parade. Some of us could have gone on marching for a while longer, as we were just getting into our stride.



**SOME OF THE STAFFORD BRANCH MEMBERS
AT BLACKPOOL**

*Back Row: Elsie Howard née Ballard, Marjorie Powell
née Watson, Kath McCabe née Kenny, Ann Deakin née Butler
Front Row: Cath Phillips née Evans, Joan Higgins
née Shaw, Linda Ball née Chichester, Win Plant
née Kennedy, Dpahne Jervis née Prior*

Our Chairman, Ann Deakin, worked very hard over the weekend meeting WRAC members and adding the names to her Register. She is to be congratulated on her results.

The highlight of our Secretary, Daphne Jarvis' weekend was the presentation of her Certificate of Appreciation, which was long overdue. She was surprised after the Grand Dinner by the arrival at her table of a large bouquet of pink roses and carnations, together with numerous congratulations cards and a garden gift voucher from her colleagues in the Branch.

Instead of our usual May meeting we had a very successful coffee morning which was held at the home of our Secretary, Daphne Jarvis.

We are looking forward to the Wales and West Reunion which is being hosted by the Coventry Branch on Saturday 20 September 1997.

Stirling Branch

The branch has one life member and 55 annual members and continues to have a good attendance at the meetings on the last Saturday of each month.

A donation of £50.00 was sent to the ATS Benevolent Fund and £100.00 to Erskine Hospital and, due to donations from members, a healthy bank balance is maintained.

We have been fortunate to have speakers from Strathcarron Hospice with their musical entertainment, a talk by the organiser of the Library Service for the Housebound, one of our own talented members gave us an hour of Scots readings and verses and another member gave a demonstration of various types of patchwork. A bus run was organised to Strathcarron Hospice followed by a tour round the Fintry Hills. A collection taken for the Hospice realised £160.00 which was much appreciated.

Four members took part in the Festival of Remembrance at Falkirk Town Hall in November 1995 and in December we had our annual Christmas Lunch. In August, four members travelled to York for the ACK ACK Reunion which had a surprise visit from Noel Edmonds and Gloria Hunniford with their Big Band. We look forward to seeing a recording of this on TV on Christmas Day.

The branch wish to record their appreciation of the work that goes into producing the Lioness twice a year and many friendships have been renewed through the requests for contacts.

Swansea Branch (SPOTLIGHT)

I called on Swansea Branch in March 97 to find them celebrating their St David's Day Meeting with a glass or two of wine. (It's so important to get your timing right!), I should add that tea and Welsh Cakes were also available and were being freely distributed around the imposing Guildhall (where they have their meetings) in the interests of good public relations. Mrs Veronica Barrington (President/Secretary and, indeed, Founder of the Branch) showed me round the Guildhall where it was plain from the staff's reactions that the Branch is held in some affection. Should you ever go there, I recommend that you see the 17 enormous painted panels by Sir Frank Brangwyn which were originally destined for the House of Lords.



Swansea Branch - March 1997

The Branch holds its meetings on the first Wednesday afternoon of every month and will always gladly welcome new recruits. So far, it has 31 ordinary members and 12 life members. Although only 18 of them had made it through pouring rain the day I visited, a sense of family spirit came through clearly. Swansea Branch was started by Mrs Barrington in 1983 and had its first meeting on 14 March of that year. Looking at the original minutes (they're very organised in Swansea), it's evident that the Branch members started out as they meant to with a programme of outings, fund raising events and so on. At the meeting I attended, there was discussion of plans for those going to Coventry for the Wales & West Area Reunion and also to Blackpool, as well as for more local outings and guest speakers. In April the Lord Mayor of Swansea will make his annual visit to the Branch. This has become a tradition that always includes an official photograph with the Lord Mayor. At their visits, successive Lord Mayors have the opportunity to talk to Branch members and discover (perhaps to their surprise) that the ladies there have such varied backgrounds as Mrs Flo Maker who was RAMC, Mrs Joyce Sterio who joined up with her mother (see separate article), Mrs Sylvia Oats who cooked for the Military Police, Mrs Enid Goodwin who worked at COD Donnington (and who seeks a Women's Legion cap badge, by the way, should anyone know of one) to name but a few.

Swansea Branch is run by:

Chairman:	Miss Dorothy Llewellyn (Major QARANC)
Treasurer:	Mrs Violet Bates
President/Secretary:	Mrs Veronica Barrington

Sadly, one of their founder members died in January. Mrs Enid Lewis who joined the ATS in 1938 will be greatly missed by all members of Swansea Branch.

Ulster Branch

We held our Annual Luncheon in February with 62 members attending. Our usual Bring and Buy stall was held.

We held an outing in May with 42 members going to Tyrone Crystal factory where we had coffee, then a tour of the factory. Onto the city of Armagh, which is of great historical interest, for lunch. This was followed by a lovely meal at Loughgall Presbyterian church provided by the ladies of the church.

In October, 32 members travelled 80 miles to join the Omagh Branch for their Annual Lunch. In November we held our AGM in Bangor with 48 members present and again we had lunch beforehand.

We are most fortunate to have several new members who are serving in the Royal Irish Regiment (formerly UDR) and hopefully they will bring more colleagues in the future.

Thirteen members are hoping to attend the Grand Reunion in Blackpool.

Weymouth Branch

On 25 March 1997 Weymouth and Portland Branch celebrated their 40th Anniversary at the Kingswood Hotel, Weymouth. The Guest of Honour was Lieutenant Colonel Valerie Trout, and thirty four Members from Weymouth, Portland, Dorchester, Bridport, Chideock, and district enjoyed a splendid lunch, ending with the cutting of our anniversary cake. We had plenty of time to chat and look back over forty happy and successful years.

A party of fifteen members went to the Grand Reunion at Blackpool, and had a very enjoyable time. We made this a "mini holiday", travelling to Blackpool by coach on the Thursday and returning home on the Monday. We were happy to have with us two members who, although having moved from Weymouth are still by their own requests, members of our Branch -Doreen Woolcock now living in Bristol, and Kathleen Williams who now lives in Worcester. Our coach stayed with us in Blackpool, and took us on the Friday to Lake Windermere, where some of us had a

very enjoyable (and smooth!!) boat trip on the Lake. Saturday was a busy day - the Secretaries meeting, followed by an excellent buffet lunch, when we would meet with our opposite numbers from other Branches and exchange Branch news. Then the AGM in the afternoon and the Grand Reunion Dinner in the evening - and what a crowd! It is on these occasions that we get a glimpse of how big our Association is. Community singing and a "Conga" brought a happy evening to a close. Church parade on Sunday morning also brought back memories of other Church parades! We did not all get seats in the body of the Church, but eventually some of us went aloft to the gallery, where we had seats.

We had another lovely coach drive on Sunday afternoon to the Trough of Bowland and the Ribble Valley and our coach brought us safely home on Monday after a very happy Reunion weekend.

Since our last report we have sadly to mention the death of Joan Wratten, one of our long standing members, on January 5. Two committee members visited Joan before Christmas, and found her bright and happy to see them, but in the New Year she had another stroke from which she did not recover. Her funeral on January 13th was attended by seven members; we shall miss visiting Joan in the Nursing Home where she was always so well cared for. Joan was one of our long-standing members.

There are busy days ahead of us. A Military Festival here in June, and we plan to have a charity stall on the Esplanade on June 19 for our ATS & WRAC Benevolent Funds. At Sherborne Castle, also in June, there is a Military Tattoo where we shall be helping and also enjoying ourselves, as we are making this event our summer outing.

After this, we do not meet again until September, which gives us a break to have holidays and to welcome relatives and friends for a holiday here with us.



**WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND BRANCH
40TH ANNIVERSARY - 25TH MARCH 1997**
L-R: Rose Stanbridge - Secretary,
Necia Trent (née Polley) - Chairman,
Lieutenant Colonel Valerie Trout, Guest of Honour,
Peg McElwaine (née Tenucci) - President
Muriel Pearce (née Pennock) - Treasurer

Wilmslow Branch

Our members enjoyed the visit to Blackpool for the AGM.

Thanks to the Blackpool Branch for arranging the Friday evening welcome at the Cleveleys British Legion, and the stalls at the Norbreck Hotel on Saturday. Two of our members won raffle prizes.

Saturday's evening entertainment by the Regimental Band was excellent but we did think the dinner was disappointing.

The highlight of our visit was the church service on Sunday morning. The visiting vicar, Brian Stephenson, from Blackburn was hilarious. I don't think that church has ever echoed to so much laughter. It made the long wait for the doors to open worthwhile.

Our Branch are making plans for days out during the summer months. Also, we are preparing for our visit to London, for the Albert Hall and Remembrance Parade. Ten of our members will attend. On Friday afternoon we will be taking tea at the Grosvenor Hotel - it will make a change from our usual place - the Ritz!

At our last meeting, a lady who was on holiday from Australia paid us a visit. She was in the Australian Air Force during the last war. We made her welcome and invited her to join us on our day out.

We would welcome any ex-service ladies to join us. We meet every 1st Thursday of the month at 1.00pm at Wilmslow British Legion.

We cannot promise a funny vicar but we can promise a friendly welcome.

Wolverhampton Branch

Since our last report we have two new members, both ex ATS and we are pleased to welcome them to our Branch.

We continue to enjoy our meetings which are very friendly. In January we had a quiz which all members thoroughly enjoyed. Because of the unsettled weather we decided to have a bingo session in February. March brought us to our Easter Fayre, the proceeds of which went to our Branch Funds.

April, of course, brought us to the Grand Reunion in Blackpool. 20 of our members attended this and despite the antics of the IRA on the Friday we all arrived at Blackpool safe and sound. Our Grand Reunions are always memorable events and everyone returned looking forward to the next.

We have an outing to Weston Park in June and we have been invited to visit an old member of ours in August who moved away. One of our members, Mary Hodgson, is to have a painting exhibited in London in May. The EAC (Elderly Accommodation Counsel) attracted entries from artists aged between 60 and 94 and Mary was one of 73 entries out of 3,200 to be short listed in the contest.

Wimbledon Branch

One of the most enjoyable occasions of the year is the Christmas Party. Last Christmas, 26 members attended and had an extremely entertaining afternoon. As ever, the food was delicious and everyone supported our effort. We were pleased to have Captain Carter as our Guest of Honour and she took the opportunity to thank the Wimbledon Branch for organizing a successful Reunion last September.

We do not meet in January and this year we were delighted because the weather was so atrocious, practically no one, certainly no elderly lady, would venture forth. The wind was straight from Siberia. In addition the train service is now so erratic that hanging around on railway stations is not recommended.

In February, we had a most interesting talk by David Roe who has spent the last 20 years looking, enquiring and noting the history of English pub signs - quite an unusual thing to do. We found his talk most entertaining. There were excellent slides and the history of some of the older signs was quite fascinating. A very good talk enjoyed by 24 members.

In March, we were visited by Epsom Coaches, a very well known organization in this part of the world. They sent along one of their younger members of the staff who told us about the history of the firm and particularly about the coaches and the way they have been modernized and reconstructed over the years. The lecturer had some excellent slides going back to the early 1930s and these were of great interest to a lot of our ladies, especially those who live around the Epsom area. The attendance was not as good as we had

hoped, only 20 members turning up but we did have two husbands who seemed to enjoy it all very much.

The Bring & Buy held in April is one of our popular events. It is also a very important meeting because it is one of the three fund raising occasions we hold during the year. It is surprising the number of objects that the ladies seem to find at home which they bring in to sell to each other and there is always a lot of excitement as everyone crowds around the tables looking for bargains. When most of the things have been sold and we cannot really sell anything anymore, we then turn to Frankie Fox who is our very talented auctioneer and who keeps us highly amused, as well as selling off seemingly unsaleable items for really rather silly prices but it is very good fun. 24 ladies attended and several others very kindly sent in donations, for which we are extremely grateful.

On the 25 April the Chairman, Marjorie Hindley, held a Committee meeting in her home. Due to some forward planning, we are pleased to be able to state that this Branch will not have to close down in the coming Autumn as we feared. Volunteers have come forward to take up the executive positions on the committee in October, so Wimbledon will be business as usual. After the meeting lunch was served.

In May, 22 members were present and enjoyed the talk given by Mrs A Roberts, Secretary of the Kensington Branch of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, which received its present name in the middle of the last century. This was a fascinating talk full of historical detail and statistics. A brave body of men and women, of whom we should be proud.

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LI

WRAC Register

Listed below are brief service details of everyone included on the ex WRAC REGISTER. This list only includes those who registered before 14 May 1997. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has written, telephoned or faxed me at any time during the last 18 months. Thank you for the compliments, the encouragement, the support and best of all the stories and the laughs. I have strolled down memory lane so often that my family have had to send out a search party for me. May I also apologise, in advance, for any errors that I may have made but I have been working to a deadline date, very late at night, as well as going to the office, packing for a holiday, attending Line Dancing classes, Tai chi etc etc. Housework! Ironing! I don't have time for it. If I have made any serious errors please ring or write.

W/					
24186	Sgt	Hayler	Hilda Muriel	Recruiting	1939-1975
32892	Sgt	Redmore	May	Clerk	1940-1963
112553	Sgt	Garrett	Estella	Clerk	1941-1955
112675	WOII	Kenny	Kath	Ops/AckAck etc	1941-1952
249639	Capt	Prior/Jervis	Daphne	Wireless Op/Teleprinter	1943-1967
295552	Pte	Owens	Margery/Marge	Driver	1943?-1955
342789	Sgt	Zanelotti	Pamela Mary	Clerk	1947-1958
345485	SSgt	Race	Barbara/Bobby	K-T Operator	1947-1960
347794	Pte	Morgan	Delia	Cook	1948-1950
350308	Pte	Jones	Connie	Pay Clerk	1948-1950/1
350662	Cpl	Skinner	Bridget/Bridge	Cook/PTI	1948-1953?
350724	Cpl	Paul	Joan	Pay Clerk	1948-1954
351078	Sgt	Pates	Phylis	SBoard Op/SH Typist	1948-1957
353475	LCpl	Ballard	Elsie Elizabeth	Telephonist	1948-1950
353908	SSgt	Winter	Joyce/Tubby	Clerk	1949-1955
354351*	?	Kelly	Mary	Librarian	1949-1953
354630	Sgt	Fox	Jacque	Bandswoman	1949-1959
89268	Pte	Jones	Edna	Ambulance Driver	1950-1958
362563	Cpl	Collier	Diana	K-T Operator	1950-1954
362688	Pte	Halsey	Betty/Gerry	Batwoman	1950-1954
364517	Dvr	Bodill	Mary	Driver	1950-1955
369015	Pte	Grundy	Madge	Driver	1950-1953
371578	Dvr	Evans	Jean	Driver	1951-1955
372016	SSgt	Chatham	Doreen/'Chat'	MT	1951-1961
374713	Sgt	Spencer	June/Spence	Secretarial	1952-1955
375520	Pte	Norton	Evenlyn Margaret	Waitress etc	1952-1955
376490	Cpl	Rutter	Ellen	Signals	1952-1955
377051	LCpl	Abbott	Rita Elizabeth	Teleprinters etc	1952-1956
377077	Cpl	Flower	Irene	Clerk	1952-1955
377094	Pte	Rooney	Celia/Micky	GDOOrderly	1952-1955
379990*	LCpl	Edwards	Ann	?	1953-1956?
380880	Pte	Rummey	Sheila	Storewoman	1953-1956
381041	SSgt	Hill	Mary/Titch	Staff Band etc	1953-1968
382359	Pte	Stockton	Brenda	Batwoman	1953-1955
382419	SSgt	Merritt	Maureen	Postal Worker/Clerk	1953-1968
382503	Pte	Irvine	Ann	Steward/Waitress	1953-1956
383057	Cpl	Ryder	Joan	Technical Stores	1953-1962
385626	WOII	Gray	Jean	Clerk RAOC	1953-1975
388376	Cpl	Sturgess	Kathleen	Clerk	1955-1961
388481	LCpl	Fairbrother	Jessie	Driving Instructor	1954-1957
388638*	LCpl	Martin	Kathleen J	?	1955-1957
389148	LCpl	Martin	Mavis	Driver	1955-1958
389156	Cpl	Jones	Gladys	Shorthand Writer	1955-1960
389170	Pte	Hope	A Edna	Shorthand Writer	1955-1958
393476	Pte	Brown	Irene	Clerk	1956-1959
393804	Pte	Lane	M	Ord/Postal Worker	1956-1960
394272	Pt	Leach	Doreen	Switchboard Operator	1956-1958
397016	Sgt	Harris	Hilda	Clerk	1957-1964
397397	LCpl	Armstrong	Ruth	Clerk	1957-1960
397413	Pte	Dennis	Jenny	Mess Stewardess	1957-1960
397423	Pte	Jeyes	Christine	Clerk	1957-1960
397492	Pte/ P/Maj	Maskens/ McIntyre	Ann	RAPC/Admin	1957-1995
398524	SSgt	McNeil	Patricia	Clerk	1961-1983
398968	Pte	Beer	Janet	Vehicles	1958-1961
399100	LCpl	Smith	Janet/Jan	Switchboard Op	1958-1961
399402	Cpl	Boyle	Cicely	Vehicles/Clerk	1958-1965
401861	Lt	Webster	Valerie Geraldine	Recruiting	1959-1962
402541	SSgt	Carnegie	Winifred Ann	Regimental Stores	1961-1983

402574	Sgt	Mandeville	Mandy	Exp Asst Gunnery	1959-1965
403595	Cpl	Davies	Mary	Signals	1959-1963
404985	Cpl	Harris	Phylliss	Clerk	1959-1966
405152	LCpl	Earley	Betty/Kim	Signals	1959-1962/3?
405255	LCpl	Terry	Maureen	Waitress Offrs Mess	1959-1963
405468	LCpl	Procter	Pam	Postal Worker	1959-1962
405658	WOI	Emerson/Wallen	Helen/Robbie	Clerk	1959-1981
1003499	Pte	Davis	Janet Ann	Clerk	1959-1962
406423	Pte	Knight	Jan	Batwoman/Waitress	1960-1963
408976	Cpl	Pitcher	Sheila	PTI	1960-1963
410608	Pte	Adam	Mabel E	Postal W/Storewoman	1961-1964
410971	Cpl	Shelley	Sally	Signals	1961-1966
412023	WOII	Ryder	Dorothy/Dot	Data Telegraphist	1961-1993
413142	Pte	Lowery	Jean	Punch Card Operator	1961-1963
414005	Pte	Moore	Janet	Tech Clerk	1962-1964
414779	WOII	Phillips	Peggy/Phil	Clerk/RAPC/Admin	1962-1987
416439	Pte	Matthews	Margaret	Clerk	1962-1965
416707	Cpl	Cartwright	Georgina	Clerk	1962-1965
416714	Cpl	Ingham	Lillian	Cook	1962-1968
416734	LCpl	Butler	Ann	Clerk	1962-1965
418121	LCpl	Whittaker	Irene	Signals	1963-1966
418917	LCpl	Phillips	Madeline	Postal	1963-1966
418940	SSgt	Marcroft BEM	Susan	Provost/Dvr/Recruiter	1963-1992
418964	Pte	Thorne	Christine Ann	Stewardess	1963-1965
418984	Pte	Light	Jenny	Driver	1963-1966
420211	Pte	Cully	Mary	Comcen Operator	1963-1964
420251	Pte	Waind	Sue	Comcen Operator	1963-1967
420747	Cpl	Hickman	Pat	Clerk	1963-1966
420792	WOII	Colquhoun	Moira Elizabeth	Clerk	1963-1986
420923	Cpl	Mead	Doris	Driver	1964-1967
421039	LCpl	Hughes	Glenys/Gee	RAPC	1964-1968
421926	Pte	Goodinson	Margaret	Office Orderly	1964-1966
421972	Pte	Scott	Anne	Clerk	1964-1974
423176	Sgt	Dunn	Helen	Switchboard Operator	1964-1972
423234	WOII	Kerr	Jeannie	Comcen Op/Data Op	1964-1974
423286	LCpl	Buck	Patricia	Signals	1964-1966
425624	Pte	Veness	Jan	Clerk	1965-1968
425889*	Sgt	Appleby	Chris	?	1965-19?
427477	Sgt	Turner	Isabel/Paddy	Driver	1965-1968
427926	Pte	Price	Margaret	Comcen Operator	1965-1967
428557	Pte	Nicholls	Joyce	Signals	1966-1968
429115	Pte	Walsh	Christine	Medic	1966-1969
429433*	Pte	Hayes	Carol	?	1966-1968
429763	Pte	Nash/Clark	Maureen	Clerk	1966-1969
430114	LCpl	Windsor	Josie	Clerk/Dental Hygienist	1966-1988
430438	Pte	Penn	Sharon	Comcen Operator	1967-1969
430494	LCpl	Lloyd	Lesley	Signals	1967-1970
430923	LCpl	Holland	Susan	Tech Clerk	1967-1970
432193	Pte	Woosey	Kathy	Pay Clerk	1967-1968
432664	Pte	Baird	Margaret	Clerk	1967-1971
432730	WOI	Taylor	Susan/Sue	PTI	1967-1990
433171	LCpl	Jeffrey	Eleanor/Rigby	Comcen Operator	1968-1972
433867	Pte	Smythe	Lorna	Driver	1968-1969
434025	Pte	Rowley	Audrey	Switchboard Operator	1968-1972
435658	WOII	Boden	Elaine/Bodie	PTI	1969-1979
435730	Pte	Sobotowska	Laura Anne	Pay Clerk	1969-1971
435795	LCpl	Dyer	Susan	Cook	1969-1974
435867	Sgt	Panting	Paula	PTI	1969-1974
439550	WOII	Haynes	Valerie/Ginge	Welfare/Admin/Signals	1971-1993
443199	Pte	Andrews/Everitt	Rona	Signals	1972-1974
444615	WOII	Terry	Jane Marguerite	Analyst Programmer	1972-1987
444938	WOI	Smith	Elaine/Smithy	Clerk	1973-1995
454188	Pte	Bastin	Gillian	Tech Clerk	1974-1977
455010	WOI	Rochelle	Nicola/Nikki	PTI	1975-1997
457674	Pte	Harwood	Elaine	Stewardess	1976-1978
457946	Cpl	Frost/Freer	Christine A	Signals	1976-1983
458180	Pte	Giles	Yvonne	Clerk	1976-1980
458501	LCpl	Witney	Deborah Ann	Commcen Op	1976-1983
460634	LCpl	Gardner	Diana/Mowgli	Clerk/Driver	1978-1982
462465	Sgt	Wells	Maria/Shortie	Staff Clerk	1978-1990

466467	SSgt	Turner	Gillian	Medic/Admin Asst	1979-1994
466939	Pte	Bremner	Alyson	Driver	1980-1982
470840	Sgt	Pierce/Pirie	Eleri/Taff	Shorthand Writer	1982-1989
473725	LCpl	Foote	Deborah Diane	?	1983-1985
807869	LCpl	Watkins	Sharon Donna	Staff Clerk	1989-1991
P488975	Capt	Lewis/Banford	Catherine Mary	Catering Officer	1969-1979
P....	Maj	MacIntyre	Ann	RAPC/Admin	1957-1995
P493179	LtCol	Westlake	Sue	AGC	1971-To date

Awaiting service details of the following:

SSgt	Aillon/Phillips	Marjorie	
	Benson	Alma	
	Gilmore	Diana	1963
	Neal	Jean	1958
Pte	Stewart	Irene	Vehicles 1957-1960
Pte	White	June Linda	Signals 1964-1966

Members of the Stafford Branch - service details unavailable at present.

Catherine Bradbyry - 1991-1994
Pte Marion Henshall - 1950-1952
W/438904 LCpl Anne Whyatt - 1970-1974
W/473144 M D Wilton - 1983-1988



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SHOPPING LIST

The Association Badge is available for sale from the WRAC Association HQ. These cost £2.50 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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Winchester
SO21 2RG

New Items

Association Key Fob – £1.80
Association Lapel Badge – £1.50

Please allow 28 days delivery for all items.

Birthdays

Nell SHADFORD – 90 years

Nell Shadford (nee Neal) one of the six ex-ATS residents in Halsey House celebrated her 90th Birthday on 12 March, 1997.

Residents and friends joined in the celebrations.

Nell joined the ATS in February 1939 and served with the 40th Norwich Coy.

Whilst at Annual Camp at Britannia Barracks, Norwich, and on the declaration of War on 3 September, 1939, she remained there as a Stores Orderly with the Royal Norfolk Regiment.

She was transferred to the Royal Ordnance Corps at Mousehold, Norwich, and became a Technical Storewoman.

Later she served with HQ 13 Coy RAOC at Elstree, Herts and finally at AFV RAOC Brackley, Northants where she was demobbed in September 1949 with the rank of SSgt.

Nell is a member of Leicester Branch WRAC Association who sent their congratulations and presents and visit her throughout the year.



Nell Shadford - 90 Years Old

Alice Sarah DODKINS – 100 years

Mrs Alice Sarah Dodkins, a former member of the QMAAC, was 100 years old on 12 June 1997.

She was born Alice Sarah Harwood in Stoke Newington, London, into a large family. Her father was a master plasterer. Sarah - as she now likes to be called - did very

well at school; they wanted her to stay on and train as a teacher, but financial pressures meant she had to go out to work. She and her three sisters worked in a tailoring factory, she soon had a good position as a cutter. She joined up on 19 January 1918 and served at Caterham and Purfleet, either as a cook or an orderly. She was discharged on 26 October 1919.



In 1921 she married and had known her husband since their school days. James William Dodkins volunteered for military service in the first week of September 1914 and fought in the Royal Fusiliers. After the war he served in the TA in the Tower Hamlet Rifles. They had 5 children. At the beginning of the War he was posted to Aldershot on the staff of the ACC Depot and Training Centre, and the family moved there from the London area. Their eldest daughter had already joined the ATS, and their son was soon called up to the Rifle Brigade.

Sarah later became the caretaker of the Aldershot Manor House, where the Registry Office was situated and several Health Clinics. She now lives in a comfortable Home in Farnborough where she is frequently visited by her children and her many grandchildren. A big lunch party is to be held on the day at a nearby hotel. All her life she has been keen on the theatre and particularly enjoyed musical shows. She has often told me of an evening at Caterham



Left Side - Mrs Sarah Dodkins

Barracks spent sitting on the dustbins singing with the star Jack Buchanan, celebrating his birthday with a bottle of champagne. I do not know if he was well known in those days; she told me that he had been thrown out of the Officers' Mess but whether he was a young officer or just a mess waiter was not revealed! She is a very wonderful mother-in-law. Veronica Dodkins.

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ENTRIES FOR LIONESS

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

1. Entries should be typed whenever possible
2. Branch Notes, Obituaries, Golden Weddings etc should copy the format from earlier Lioness editions as far as possible. (This saves re-editing)
3. 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.
4. Include maiden names or names at the time of the event as that is how you will be remembered.
5. Please enclose self-addressed envelopes for return of photographs.

R A MUSEUM

The new museum, under construction at Woolwich, is desperately needing memorabilia of the ATS.

At the moment, they have very few items to prove we actually did exist during WWII years.

So please, if you have anything at all which would help to dispel this myth – cap badges, shoulder flashes – clothing – any insignia of any kind – pictures of the girls in action, doing their normal jobs – you name it, the museum wants it. So come on girls, please help.

Send to :

Mr Marc Sherriff
RA Historical Trust
RA Institution
Old Royal Military Academy
Woolwich
London SE18 4DH

Marc will acknowledge all contributions.

Weddings

SILVER WEDDING

PURKIS. Maggie and Colin at their Silver Wedding Party given by the Shropshire Branch.



GOLDEN WEDDINGS

BALLS-GUEST. On 3 May 1947 at St Mathew's Church, Withernsea. CSM Fred Balls RASC to Private Molly Guest, Auxiliary Territorial Service. Present address: 156 Westella Road, Kirkella, Hull, East Yorks HU10 7RP.



50 Years Ago

The Balls are off to Buckingham Palace on 15 July to attend the Queen's Golden Wedding Garden Party.



The Balls Today

TIPTON-SCOTT. On 2nd August 1947, at Wellington Register Office, Trooper Roy Tipton, 43 Recce RAC, Catterick, to LCpl Nancy Scott, ATS RASC, Catterick. Present Address: 91 Dawley Road, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire TF1 2HT.



Wedding Day

SAMPSON-PALMER. On the 2 August 1947 at St Wilfrid's Parish Church Northenden, M/C. Corporal Frank Sampson to Yvonne Doreen Palmer, Auxilliary Territorial Service. They have been invited to the Queen's Garden Party, to celebrate her 50th Golden Year with many other couples. Present address: 'Sea Crest', 145 Coast Road, Rhyl, Denbighshire LL18 3PS.

LONGSTON-LIDDELL. On 8 March 1957 John and Martha were married at Carlin, Scotland. Present address: 295 11th Avenue Box 1461, Lively, Ontario, Canada P3Y 1N1.



Wedding Day



The Longstons Today



Wedding Day



Fifty Years On



*J Peggie (Ricardi) Dudgeon and Husband on their
50th Anniversary, 30th August 1997*

Present address: 607 Live Oak Drive, Garden City, South
Carolina 29576, USA.



Wedding Day



Peggie when serving

CANNING-WOOD. On 12 July 1947 at St John's Church,
Harlow, Essex William J Canning ex Royal Marine to
Barbara Wood ex ATS. Present address: "Ortolans", 3
Rainbow Road, West Mersea, Essex CO5 8RE.



The Cannings in their garden today

CHRISTIE-SMITH-LEWIS. Edna and Theodore were married on 25 January 1947 at St Margaret's Church, London. After meeting in the Corporals' Mess at the Royal West Kent Depot in Maidstone.

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Wedding Day

JONES-WILLIAMS. On 6th September 1947 at St Giles' Church, Derby. Reuben Jones, Royal Welch Fusiliers C/Sgt, to Barbara Williams Sgt, ATS of Hay-on-Wye. Present address: 28 Momington Crescent, Mackworth, Derby DE22 4BD. We met in the Sgts' Mess at Guildford in December 1946, the ATS were taking over the camp from the Demob Centre, as a Training Centre, later to become Queen Elizabeth Camp.



Wedding Day



Edna and Theodore at their Golden Wedding cutting the cake on 25 January 1997 at the Quarterdeck Hotel, Poole, Dorset



The Jones' Today

OWENS-VINER. On 24th May 1947 at Hope Baptist Chapel, Highbridge, Somerset. Bombardier Artificer Henry Owens formerly with 51st Highland Division married Edith Viner formerly Cpl ATS with 494, 643, 524 (M) HAA Batteries. Present address: 1 Smallwoods Mews, Quarry Road East, Hoylake, Wirral.

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The Owens Today



Wedding Day

RESEARCH INTO ATS

The research is going well but more information is needed. If you are willing to write down your memoirs or be interviewed, please get in touch with:

Maj (Retd) Imogen Corrigan
52 Wakefords Park
Church Crookham
Fleet
Hants GU13 0EY

Many thanks to all those individuals and Branch Secretaries who have been so generous with their time.

Were you an ambulance driver in your service days? Do you have any memories that I could use in a book I am compiling about the British Army Ambulance? Any experiences, photographs or details of service life, whether humorous or dramatic would be of interest, and also information about ambulance units, especially 753 Field Ambulance Unit.

Please write to:

Mike Homer
69 Ashdown Way
Saxon Meadows
Romsey
Hants SO51 5QR

or telephone me on Romsey (01794) 513982 to ensure that the ATS/WRAC perspective is included in this book.

Obituary

BRIGADIER DAME MARY TYRWHITT

Brigadier Dame Mary Tyrwhitt, DBE TD, Director of the Women's Royal Army Corps, 1949-50, died on February 13 aged 93. She was born on December 27, 1903.

The founder-director of the Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC) when it was formed in 1949, Mary Tyrwhitt played an inspirational role in ensuring the future of women in the British Army. The WRAC sprang out of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) which had proved itself in the years of the Second World War.

But in the postwar period it was not a foregone conclusion that a women's corps had a role to play. At a time of uncertainty and doubt for the ATS, it was her advice to the Army Council and her faith in a continuing women's role in the Army that helped to bring the WRAC into being.

Although she did not herself join the ATS until she was almost 35, Mary Joan Caroline Tyrwhitt came from a thoroughly martial family - albeit naval, not military. Her father, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Reginald Tyrwhitt, had made his reputation during the First World War as commander of the celebrated Harwich Force of cruisers and destroyers, which was renowned for its buccaneering spirit in constant clashes with the enemy.



Brigadier Dame Mary Tyrwhitt

Her brother, Admiral Sir St John Tyrwhitt, who died at the relatively early age of 56, was a Second World War destroyer commander and Second Sea Lord from 1959 to 1961. Mary Tyrwhitt was therefore brought up much in the traditions of the Senior Service, and as a young girl she travelled the world with her parents.

As war clouds gathered, and it was apparent that, as they had in the First World War, women were going to have to play a role again, she joined the ATS on November 11, 1938, twenty years to the day after the Armistice. The ATS had been established two months earlier on September 9, its purpose, to provide women auxiliaries to release Territorial soldiers for active service in the event of war.

She soon proved herself to be an officer of outstanding ability. Her first task was to raise a platoon at Cranbrook, Kent, which was affiliated to The Royal East Kent Regiment (The Buffs).

On the outbreak of war she was in charge, first, of general duties personnel and, early in 1940, was appointed company commander in charge of cooks, clerks and orderlies at Chatham. She was then appointed to be an instructor at the first ATS Junior Officers' School.

This was followed by appointments as chief instructor and the commandant of the NCOs' School (then located at Royal Holloway College in Egham, Surrey) with the rank of Chief Commander. After senior appointments on the staff and on regimental duty, she became Deputy Director ATS as a Controller, and in 1946 took over from Dame Leslie Whateley as Director.

She was immediately faced with the responsibility of advising the Army Council on the possible formation of a new corps of women as part of the Regular Army. It had to be decided to what extent this new corps should be governed by the normal regulations of the Army. There was a good deal of discussion, in which Mary Tyrwhitt played an important part, and it was not until February 1, 1949, that the new corps came into being. Senior Controller Mary Tyrwhitt became the first Director Women's Royal Army Corps, in the rank of Brigadier, retiring a year later.

She was appointed OBE in 1946 and DBE in 1949. She was awarded the Territorial Decoration in 1950. She held the appointment of Hon ADC to King George VI from 1949 to 1950.

She retired in 1951, but remained as a member of the WRAC Council for the following three years and also became President of the ATS Dinner Club - an appointment which she enjoyed for many years.

She had served in the Army for more than 12 years and in her retirement joined the Women's Royal Voluntary Service

and became an assistant regional administrator in the Southern Region until 1965. She lived for many years in Pewsey, Wiltshire, before moving finally to Tiddington near Stratford-upon-Avon.

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Always interested in the progress of the WRAC, she kept in touch with the Corps throughout the years. In 1988, although by then in her eighties, she was very happy to become ATS representative on the committee formed to arrange the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Service.

In that year she travelled up to London for the many meetings, insisted on doing all the tiring walking around the Barbican and gave her fellow members of the committee the greatest pleasure by her unfailing interest, enthusiasm and humour.

She was unmarried.

Courtesy of THE TIMES (28 Feb 1997)

NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM RECEIVES BRIGADIER DAME MARY TYRWHITT'S MEDALS



Brigadier Anne Field, Ian Robertson (Director of the National Army Museum) and Sir Reginald Tyrwhitt with Mary Tyrwhitt's Medals

The National Army Museum in Chelsea has been presented with the medals of Brigadier Dame Mary Tyrwhitt, one of the foremost servicewomen of the 20th Century. Mary Joan Caroline Tyrwhitt was born in Dublin on 27 December 1903. On 11 November 1938, aged thirty four, Mary Tyrwhitt joined the newly formed Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) and proved to be an officer of outstanding ability. After a number of highly responsible posts she became Deputy Director and then, in 1946, Director ATS.

Since 1993, the National Army Museum has been home to the Collection of the Women's Royal Army Corps, much of which is currently on display in a Special Exhibition entitled "The Right To Serve". Mary Tyrwhitt's

medals will shortly be added to this Exhibition in a case which already includes items relating to her career.

Brigadier Dame Mary Tyrwhitt's medals were presented to the Museum by her nephew, Sir Reginald Tyrwhitt. They are as follows:

Order of the British Empire,
Badge and Star of a Dame Commander,
Defence Medal 1939-45,
British War Medal 1939-45,
Efficiency Decoration 1951,
Women's Voluntary Service Long Service Medal.

COLONEL A A KELLY BA

Colonel Gail Kelly first joined the Army as Officer Cadet Hutcheson when she became a member of Queen's University Officer Training Corps in October 1962. A student studying for her BA she was bright, bubbly, keen and full of fun. She tackled everything put in her way. It was no surprise that she chose an Army career on successfully completing her degree and was commissioned into the Regular Army in November 1965.

Initially she worked with Royal Signals doing a tour in SHAPE, then located in Paris, but did not get a further posting outside the UK until she went to Germany on promotion to Colonel as Commander WRAC/Chief G1 HQ BAOR in 1987. The majority of her career was spent working for the Corps. She worked as a Staff Captain and later as a Major in MOD AG16 and then as SO2 WRAC2, WRAC Directorate. She worked at the WRAC College and then commanded Richmond Wing RMAS after the move from Frimley. She was an outstandingly good staff officer.

During her 24 years service she worked selflessly for the good of others of all ranks as a caring, loyal and conscientious officer. Popular with her peers, officers and servicewomen she was always ready to help anyone at anytime.

She married Bill and took on her new family with love, enthusiasm and an added zest for life. She was always so proud when her stepsons achieved success in their Army careers. Our deepest sympathy goes to Bill, and the family, over her sudden death last December. She is sorely missed and mourned by many colleagues, family and friends.

ACREMAN: Pamela Frances (née Cook) of Aylesbury on 16 November 1996. ATS

ALLEN: Ann (née Gamble) of Dawley Bank on 5 November 1996. ATS

ARNOLD: Ethel Winifred on 31 January 1997 at Barnet. ATS

BLACKADDER: M S Miss of Hamilton on 23 October 1996. ATS

BLAND: I.E (née Potter) Blue Water AUSTRALIA on 13 January 1997. ATS

BONFIELD: Winifred May (née Martin) in November 1996 in Plymouth. ATS

BOWKER: Kathleen Anne (née WISBEY) on 14 April 1997 in Seal. ATS/WRAC

BRACEGIRDLE: Ivy Elizabeth (née Shepherd) on 12 February 1997 in Colchester. ATS

BROWN: D F (née Moffat) on 26 April 1997 at Brentford. ATS

BROWN: Janet Miss on 10 December 1996 at Callendar. ATS

BYERS: Mary Miss on 3 February 1997 at Plymouth. ATS

CHANDLER: Ethel Kathleen aged 101 on 21 January 1997 at Portslade. QMAAC

CHASE: Marion (née Davidson) on 10 April 1997 at Lockheath. ATS

CHIDGEY: Margaret Elizabeth (née Ratcliffe) in January 1997 at Bruton. ATS/WRAC

CLARK: Gladys May Miss on 17 September 1996 at London. ATS

COOK : Jessie (née Barber) on 6 March 1997 at Clacton On Sea. ATS

DEWER: M (née Telfor) on 1 January 1997 at Frimley. ATS

DRAKE: Sheila Lt Col on 28 April 1997 at Shaftesbury. ATS/WRAC

DRAYTON: Alice Dora (née RAYTON) in December 1996 at Hull. ATS

ELLINGTON: Edna (née Austin) on 7 April 1997 in Norfolk. ATS

ESDALE PEARSON: MARY (née HARRISON) on 3 April 1997 in Cowes.

FIELD-SMITH: Meriel (née RICHARDSON) on 16 November 1996 in Ascot. ATS

FITZPATRICK: Lady Mary (née CAMPBELL) in July 1996 at Otley. ATS

FLOREY: Esther Florence (née McCully) on 13 December 1996 at Chatham. ATS

GALPIN: Eileen (née Butler) on 18 January 1997 at Hayling Island. ATS

GIBSON: A Miss in February 1996 at Dumfries. ATS

GREENAWAY: Doreen Mrs on 26 January 1997 at Plymouth. ATS

GREENSIDES: M D Miss on 19 February 1997 at Bridlington. ATS

GRINDLEY: M F (née Mullins) on 22 December 1996 at Kingsbridge. QMAAC

GUY: Catherine B on 30 April 1997 at Glasgow. ATS

HANCOX: Irene (née Baker) in April 1997 at Worcester. ATS

HELMSLEY: Renata (née Serafini) on 16 February 1997 at Stirling. ATS

HENDERSON: Davina Mary Miss at Cromer. WRAC

HULME: Kathleen (née Connolly) on 15 October 1996 at Crewe. ATS

JONES: Phyllis Mary (née Penny) on 20 February 1997 at Orpington. ATS

KAYE: Cecil, Beatrice (née Knight) on 13 October 1996 at Chepstow. ATS

KELLY: Abigail Col (née Hutheson) on 28 December 1996 in Ireland. WRAC

KIDSON: L in January 1997 at York. ATS

LEYLAND: D (née Hunt) on 25 January 1997 at Coventry. ATS

LUCAS: Peggy Mrs on 23 December 1996 at Huntsville, Texas. ATS

MacTAVISH: Grace Ann (née Goldsworth) on 5 January 1997 at Ayr. ATS

McCAW: Betty Mrs in March 1997 at Prestwick. ATS

McCHESNEY: Isobel Mary (née Miffy Smith) on 31 March 1997 at Southport

McINTOSH: Iris Mary (née Whitbread) on 16 December 1996 at Cleethorpes. ATS

MANN: J H (née Walker) on 21 June 1996 at Sutton. ATS

MORTON: Beryl Edith on 1 April 1997 at Hereford. ATS

NEILSON: Joyce of Ayr in her 101st year. WAAC/ATS

PALMER: Joyce Evelyn at Swansea. ATS

PAYNE: E M (née Dove) on 2 January 1997 in London. ATS

PINNOCK: Christine Margaret (née Ravensdale) on 18 February 1997 at Leicester. ATS

PLANT :Joan A W on 21 December 1996 at TRING. WRAC

POD : Beryl (née Harding) in October 1996 at Telford. ATS

PRICE: Selena (née Whitehouse) on 1 January 1997 at Coventry. WRAC

QUARRIE: Lt MBE Joan Elizabeth in December 1996 in Leicester. WRAC

REDFERN: Eva Johanna (née Feilchenfeld) on 31 December 1996 in London. ATS

REES: Vera Ballard Miss on 8 February 1997 in London. ATS

REID: Margaret (née Kerr) on 7 December 1996 at Omagh. ATS

SAVAGE: Phyllis (née ARMSTRONG) on 25 December 1996 at Cleveland. ATS

SLADEN: Mary on 28 December 1996 at Seaford. ATS

SPALTON: Peggie Rosemary Miss on 28 December 1996 at Gillingham, Dorset. ATS

SPENCE: Henrietta Taylor on 9 April 1997 at Edinburgh. ATS

TAYLOR: Maureen (née Harper) in December 1996 at Darlington. ATS

THOMAS: Alice (née Haggas/Wrigley) on 5 February 1997 at York. ATS

TORTOISE: Margaret Elizabeth on 10 January 1997 at Haywards Heath. ATS

TWIGG: Edith Eileen (née Sarney) on 27 February 1997 at Gosport. ATS

TYRWHITT: Brigadier Dame Mary DBE TD on 13 February 1997 at Stratford Upon Avon. ATS/WRAC

WAGSTAFF: Patricia Ruth (née Richardson) on 20 April 1997 at Eastbourne. ATS

WALKER: A L Miss on 10 April 1997 at London. ATS/WRAC

WARDMAN: Holly Joyce in February 1997 at Hereford. ATS

WATKINSON: Veronica Miss in July 1996 at Leicester. ATS

WHEADON: Kay (née Kirk) on 27 December 1996. ATS

WHITAKER: A (née Ramsden) on 25 January 1997 at Norwich. WRAC

WILLIAMS: Alice May on 27 March 1997 at Rhyl. ATS

WILLIAMS: Sadie (née Keeton) on 10 April 1997 at Wandsworth. ATS

WRATTEN: Joan Mrs on 5 January 1997 at Dorchester. ATS

ENTRIES FOR LIONESS

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

1. Entries should be typed whenever possible
2. Branch Notes, Obituaries, Golden Weddings etc should copy the format from earlier Lioness editions as far as possible. (This saves re-editing)
3. 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.
4. Include maiden names or names at the time of the event as that is how you will be remembered.
5. Please enclose self-addressed envelopes for return of photographs.

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 these badges offered by London Branch in the last Lioness has been exhausted.)

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 relieve the current needs of those eligible to receive help from the said funds."

Your Country Needs You

ENROLLED FOR DURATION OF WAR MOBILE.

WARNING.—If you lose this Certificate a duplicate cannot be issued.

Certificate of discharge of No. 23206

(Name) Stanwood Alice Sarah

Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps

who was enrolled at London

on the 19-1-1918

She is discharged in consequence of on

TERMINATION OF ENGAGEMENT.

(Place) Perth

(Date) 26-10-19

Signature of Officer i/c
Records, Q.M.A.A.C.

M. E. Druggan Major.
i/c RECORDS Q.M.A.A.C.

Description of the above-named woman on discharge:—

Age 22

Marks of scars, whether on face
or other parts of body:

Height 5ft. 5"

Build Medium

Eyes Brown

Hair Light Brown

(P. 11 22) WORTHINGTON 2008 11/18 HWY(P) 1356

N.B.—Any person finding this Certificate is requested to forward it to the Officer i/c Records, Q.M.A.A.C., War Office, London.

We hope you will JOIN THE

Q.M.A.A.C.

OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

You can become a Member by sending your Subscription (2/6 for One Year, or 25/- for Life Membership) to the Hon. Treasurer, at the Office. The address is

Q.M.A.A.C. Old Comrades Association,

DUKE OF YORK'S HEADQUARTERS,

KING'S ROAD, LONDON, S.W.3.

The Association is being formed to keep alive the spirit of Comradeship which exists among us and to give advice and assistance to members.

If you call at the Office, or write to the Hon. Secretary, we will do all we can to help you.

(Signed)

FLORENCE LEACH,

Controller-in-Chief Q.M.A.A.C.

Army Form W. 2677.

WARNING.—If you lose this Certificate a duplicate cannot be issued.

1. Women's Army Auxiliary Corps.

Character on discharge of No. 23206

Name Stanwood Alice Sarah

Grading Book

Enrolled at London on 19-1-18

Discharged Perth on 26-10-19

2. Work.

Her work during the time she has been in the Corps has been

Very good.

Signature L. Patricia Dennis RA.

Date 16. 2. 20.

3. Personal Character.

Her personal character during the time she has been in the Corps

has been Very good.

Signature L. Patricia Dennis

Date 16. 2. 20.

(P.T.O.)

(T. 29 23) W2013-2P2008 16,500 8/18 HWY(P) 10/28

N.B.—Any person finding this Certificate is requested to forward it to the Officer i/c Records, W.A.A.C., c/o the Secretary, War Office, S.W.1.

Description of No. 23206 Stanwood Alice Sarah

Women's Army Auxiliary Corps

Age 22

Marks or Scars, whether on face
or other parts of body:

Height 5ft. 5"

Build Medium

Eyes Brown

Hair Light Brown

Signature

Date 26-10-19