

LIONESS

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1919–1999
HAPPY BIRTHDAY
80 YEARS

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THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

REGISTERED UNDER THE CHARITIES ACT 1960- No 206184

Founded in 1919

PATRON

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER

PRESIDENT

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF KENT GCVO

VICE-PRESIDENT

Brigadier S P Nield, CBE

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Vice-Chairman:

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Mrs R R Watt

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Mrs R R Watt

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Honorary Treasurer:

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Mr Maurice Mager, Mrs L Gilbert, Mrs S J Stevens

ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds

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Cover Photographs

Front Cover

WRAC Association.

Back Cover

Brigadier Helen Meechie CBE and Mrs Alice Matthews with best wishes for the future.



Member of the Association of Service Newspapers

Contributions for next issue by 17 October 1999

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EDITORIAL

Well this is my second magazine and I have now been in the chair for over 6 months; regrettably this will also be my last as I am at the end of my short term contract and a proper Retired Officer has been found to fill the post. I have very much enjoyed my time with the Association and hope you will give my successor the same degree of support you gave me.

It was lovely to see so many of you at the AGM and at the various branch gatherings I have been able to get to so far. To date I have been over the water to Northern Ireland, across the border to the Scottish reunion, and with all the meetings regarding Cardiff, I'll be in Wales in the near future.

The plans for Cardiff are ongoing and a provisional programme is printed further on. Please remember that it is only a provisional programme and will certainly change a little. Full details for the formal dinner and the AGM will be published in the No 1 of 2000 Lioness.

Some of the sharper eyed members of the Association have observed that some of the small adverts appeared twice. The reason for this is that the printers use these articles as fillers to balance the type setting of pages rather than leave blank spaces.

Apologies go to Mrs Rogerson page 30 No 1 99 who was printed as Mrs Robertson, once again I must ask you all to print names to help with the accuracy.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR PAGE

As you will all be aware we are trying to keep the Lioness within budget; to this end not all replies to the letters page will be printed. If you are replying to a letter please send your reply to the address at the bottom of the appropriate letter. If you feel that you would like your reply to be published send a copy to the editor and we will try to fit it in, **no promises** though.

MEMORABILIA PRICES

ATS BADGES	£2.75
WRAC ASSOCIATION BADGES	£2.50
WRAC KEY FOBS	£1.80
WRAC LAPEL BADGES	£1.50
ABF SCARVES	£2.50
WRAC BOOKS	£0.50
SANDWICH TRAY	£4.60
SQUARE TRAY	£4.80
TEAPOT STAND	£3.50
PENS	£1.80
TEN POSTCARDS	£1.00

If Branches order between 10 – 20 badges (the same) they may deduct 5% from the cost.
For all orders over 20 badges (the same) they may deduct 10% from cost.

All prices are inclusive of posting and packaging.

All cheques payable to WRAC Association and sent to:

WRAC Association HQ, Block 32, AGC Centre, Worthy Down, Winchester, Hants SO21 2RG

WRAC Lunch & Dinner Club Weekend

Tillington Hall Hotel, Eccleshall Road, Stafford

8-10 October 1999

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The weekend package includes:

Friday Evening

Check In 2.30 pm
Informal Table d'Hôte Dinner
Accommodation

Saturday

Full English Breakfast
WRAC Private Dinner
Accommodation

Sunday Morning

Full English Breakfast
Church Service - in Hotel
Check Out 11.00 am

Residents have full use of all leisure facilities - swimming pool, gym, jacuzzi, sauna, sunbed etc. The Hotel has a lift. A small number of rooms can only be accessed by stairs. There is a large car park. Tillington Hall Hotel has easy access to the M6 - Junction 14.

Single Room - **£110**

Twin/Double Room - **£100 per person**

WRAC Dinner only - **£25**

- Your husband/partner/friend is welcome to attend the weekend as your Guest but, they will NOT be able to attend the Private Dinner on Saturday evening unless they served in the WRAC/TA.
- If your Guest is ex WRAC/TA please ask for a separate application form.
- Guests, other than WRAC/TA, will dine in the Hotel's Potters Restaurant on Saturday evening.

WRAC DINNER CLUB WEEKEND

Tillington Hall Hotel, Stafford - 8-10 October 1999

Full Name: Mrs Miss Ms Rank.....

Address:

Postcode: Telephone No:.....

Maiden Name: D.C. Membership No:.....

Army Serial No: Rank:

Trade/Job: Year Enlisted: Demobbed:

1. Weekend Accommodation Required

Single Room () Twin Bedded () Double Room ()
Smoking () Non Smoking ()
Disabled Facilities () Difficulty with Stairs ()

I have arranged to share with:/ I am willing to share if necessary: YES NO

* Any special dietary requirements/allergies?

Name of Guest:*Special Requirements?

2. WRAC Dinner Only: Yes ()

*Special Requirements?

Check List: a. **Option 1 - £20 deposit per person () Option 2 - £25 per person ()**
b. Cheque payable to: **WRAC DINNER CLUB HOTEL A/C** ()
c. 2nd class stamp for receipt, ticket etc. ()

Signature: Date:

WRAC Lunch Club and Register

Dear Editor

The idea of a WRAC Register was formed in 1995, but it was 1996 before I actually gave birth to the idea, with just a handful of names. Three years later we have 280 members who live in England, Wales, Scotland, Germany, New Zealand and Australia. Their service ranks range from Pte to Lt Col. The aim of the Register was to try and reunite old friends and I am very happy to say that this has happened on more than one occasion. I would like to say thank you to all the members, who have not only supported me, but who have actively publicised the Register. Their efforts have increased the membership, creating more opportunities for reuniting friends. I would particularly like to mention Gladys Jones-Pope, Janet More-Watkins, Laura Waldo-Kirk, Madge Grundy-Evans, Irene Whittaker-Maclean, Irene Hall, Marie Roberts and Joyce Winter-Seward to name but a few.

Your readers may also be interested to know about the tremendous recruiting effort that is being made 'down under'. W/353908, Joyce (Tubby) Winter-Seward, Driver, 1949-1955 who has organised Luncheons, for ex ATS/WRAC, in her home town Rochingham and in the city of Perth. Letters from

Australia confirm how popular they have become. Joyce, who is a member of the WRAC National Register, shares any information she gets from England. In an early morning telephone call Joyce informed me that 30 ladies had attended the Luncheon at Anzac House, Perth in May. During the Luncheon Joyce's copy of the National Register was passed around for everyone to see. There was a scream of delight from W/368661 Cpl Betty Murray-McDowell, Clerk/SHand Writer, 1952-1955, who was spotted "running round like a chook with two heads". Among the names on the Register she had found a long lost friend. I had the great pleasure of ringing W/374713 Sgt June (Spence) Spencer-MacCunn, Secretarial, 1952-1955, to give her the good news. This task is definitely a perk of the job and I love every minute of it. Joyce and I are working together in an attempt to establish and combine the aims of the National Register in England and W. Australia. The WRAC National Register does work as Chris Jeyes/Jenny Dennis, Chris Corker/Margaret James, Kathleen Hughes/Pamela Richards, Margaret Main/Mary Pearce/Ann Roberts can tell you. All you need is faith and, most important of all, patience.

Ann Butler-Deakin

Sport

Dear General Secretary,

I've just put my tennis hat on for another year in office and found this photo of last year's Army Ladies Veterans. We won all our matches at the Inter Services Championships, at Wimbledon, on 4 August. Brigadier Field was keen that I should send it to you, possibly with an article, for inclusion in the Lioness. As I'm ex QARANC I asked my team colleagues for some background information on themselves but they were too shy, so, better late than never, all I can tell you are their names! - they are, from left to right:



Back row: Sadie Tilbrook, (nee Kerry) Pauline Lewis, (nee?) Julia Dixon, Angie Lynch, (nee Wood).
Front row: Di Morgan, (nee Feaver), Chris Tinker, (nee Daybell) Margaret Robinson, (Crawford) Sue Stott, (Messom)

We are always on the lookout for other eligible players, i.e. they must be 40 years old and have served for not less than 5 years. I currently have 22 on my mailing list.

Mrs A R C Lynch
Secretary Army Ladies Veterans Tennis Section
76 Lees Gardens
Maidenhead
Berks
SL6 4NT

Letters from Abroad

Dear Editor,

Our 60th Anniversary of the ATS was held at the monthly meeting of the Ex-Servicewomen's Group of the Darling Range Returned and Services League sub-branch in Kalamuada, on 9th September 1998. Pat, the President of the Group, instigated the celebration, at which we had a cake with the ATS crest, made by Gladys's daughter-in-law. We unselfishly shared it with the ex-WAAFs and Australian Women's Services.

We are glad to hear that Mrs Joyce Seward of Rochingham, WA is organising occasional lunches of ex-ATS/WRAC, the next one to be held on 16th May, and we hope perhaps to meet old friends. I did feel for all those many branches whose functions had to be altered or cancelled due to bad weather. Here, high temperatures and hot sun are the enemies!

Barbara Harper-Nelson, 4 Silverdale Road, Les Murdie, West Australia 6076.

WRAC Association Grand Reunion 2000

8 & 9 April 2000 - Cardiff

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I do hope all your plans for the millennium are going well, HQ is now looking ahead to the Grand Reunion at Cardiff on the 8th to 9th April 2000. Many people are asking for some idea of the proposed programme. The programme below is only PROVISIONAL and will most certainly have some changes, however it should help you all with your personal planning.

SATURDAY 8th APRIL 2000

10.00	Doors open and registration begins
11.00	Secretaries meeting
12.30	Secretaries Lunch
14.30	AGM starts. Please be seated by 14.15
19.00	Doors open for reception dinner

20.00	Dinner is served
01.00	Conference centre closes

SUNDAY 9th APRIL 2000

10.30	Luggage room open at conference centre
11.00	Drumhead service in the conference centre
12.00	March Past

Throughout the weekend there will be an information desk staffed by local branch members who will share their local knowledge. Refreshments in the form of sandwiches, pastries, tea and coffee will be available at various kiosks on a cash basis.

APPLICATION FORM

APPLICANT

Surname

I wish to apply for the following events:

Maiden Name

Grand Reunion Dinner @ £25 ... YES/NO

First names

Church Service YES/NO

Address

I enclose a Cheque/Money Order made payable to "WRAC ASSOCIATION".

Note: Tickets and Information Sheet will be sent out in early 2000.

Association Branch

Send to:

HQ WRAC ASSOCIATION, BLOCK 32, AGC CENTRE WORTHY DOWN, WINCHESTER, HANTS SO21 2RG

TRANSPORT

Members are responsible for their own transport to Cardiff and the International Arena for the Secretaries Luncheon, Annual General Meeting Dinner and Drumhead Service.

Further details will be announced in Lioness No. 1 of 2000, due out in February.

WANTED BACK ISSUES OF THE LIONESS

Does anyone still have old copies of the Lioness?
I am interested in publications prior to 1988 but more particularly those published in 1962-66.
If you can help, contact Ann Butler-Deakin,
'Cobblestones', 2 Chesham Road,
Stafford ST16 3JP
or telephone
01785 249992.

THE EAST SURREY REGIMENT

If anyone who served in the Depot at Kingston during the Second World War has a photograph of a member of the ATS wearing the Surrey's cap badge, and is prepared to lend the photograph for copying, would she please notify the
Editor of the Queen's Royal Surrey
Regiment Newsletter
c/o 9 Langdon Close, St Margaret's-at-Cliffe,
Dover, Kent CT15 6JP

Stories

YOUNG MEETS OLD

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The following is an extract from a GCSE project by a 15 year old girl who was studying World War II.

Mrs Moore who is now in her mid 70's joined the Territorial Army for women in 1939 as a single girl, Pat Dobson. She had a medical examination at the Radcliffe Hospital Bradford and was posted to Didcot army camp. On arrival at Didcot station she was met by a Sgt Major and together with other girls was marched to the barracks where she lived in a 10 bedded hut. The hut had a locker and a simple bed for each girl with a washroom and toilet and was heated by a big stove in the middle of the floor. After training as a cook she worked in the cookhouse cooking for soldiers for 2 years.

The war was by then becoming more violent and the Blitz had started so she was transferred to the searchlight battery at her own request and served in Bristol. The searchlights were used by the Ack Ack guns to pin point enemy aircraft when defending Bristol from heavy bombing. She enjoyed 2½ years on the lights working with the troops. Living conditions were very poor and heavily bombed, it was a frightening time. People living in the area allowed the women troops to use their bathrooms to wash themselves. People shared their food on the site, which was basic bread and vegetables, with meat sometimes available, supplemented by soldiers catching a rabbit in the fields near the guns. The people on the site formed very close relationships because of the hardships. One lady who is now 92 years of age has kept in touch since the war, and sometimes they meet up.

Mrs Moore was then posted to Catterick Camp and was a cook in the Officers Mess. She used this time to improve her cookery skills and became an instructor. Her unit came second in the British Army in a cookery competition. The food here improved slightly and the living conditions in a brick built barracks became better. In 1944 when the bombing started again she returned to the south to an Ack Ack site at Holworthy. It was here that she first saw black soldiers from America preparing for D-day. This was the first contact she had ever had with coloured people. Regrettably at this time black and white American soldiers were separated, as segregation was still going on in America.

In 1945 the unit was posted back to York and she returned to teaching cookery. At this time she met her husband who was a soldier at the York Barracks. They did their courting in Fulford and Heslington walking about in the fields where York University is now built. No-one had any money to spare and a big treat was an occasional night at the cinema or a drink in the Fulford pub. During this time Mrs Moore cooked for the Princess Royal who visited the Officers Mess at York. An afternoon tea consisted of simple sandwiches and sponge cakes; eggs were not available but powdered dried egg was used in baking. Sometimes soldiers obtained fruit jams which were a big treat and sometimes units coming back from abroad returned with oranges. In 1945 Len Jackson who later became a York policeman was the paper boy delivering the Press to the Officers Mess. At Christmas he was given one banana, which was the first he had ever seen as a young teenager, so he took it home and shared it with his family who were the envy of the neighbours.

Food in the Barracks was strictly rationed but was probably better than that which the people of York had. Mrs Moore married her husband and was discharged from the army in 1948 to look after him when he became ill. For her services to the country Mrs Moore received the BEM (British Empire Medal). Although these years were very hard and dangerous Mrs Moore considers them to be the best years of her life; every one was equally fed and clothed and worked together as a team.

IS YOUR WRAC NUMBER HIGHER THAN MINE?

I served in the WRAC from May 1990 until its disbandment and I continued to serve first in the ACC then the RLC until June 1997. I have read in *Lioness* several people who believe that they have one of the earliest numbers, I suggest that my number is one of the highest as the WRAC was disbanded 18 months after my joining. My number was W0815745 (maiden name Petty) and I was part of intake number 556 (6 platoon) in May of 1990. Our passing out parade was on the 19 July, a fact I will not forget as this was my 18th birthday.

Recently I was lucky to be able to visit the old barracks in Guildford with Jane Smith and enjoyed comparing my experience of modern training with times past, although it was rather sad to see the place almost exactly as I last remember it, but without the cheerful banter and lively conversation that used to be part of the camp. It was as if the life had been removed from it but I am glad that I went and will always remember the place where I had my first taste of Army life (not to mention Army food).

I am interested in old uniforms and badges especially WRAC and ATS and have come by some items of past uniform. I would very much like to find out about the people who wore them, where they served, which year etc. Firstly: a hat or cap bearing several names and numbers the first is a sewn in white tape with red embroidery W/88006 D D R, a written name D ROUTLEDGE, perhaps this is the D D R., also a written name M BROWN 157480. The second item is a collar bearing the later number of W/352395 and the name GILTROW KM.

If this is you, or perhaps you have a number close by or can shed any light on who owned these items, please let me know.

I also have a brass WRAC cap badge with a King's Crown and would like to know if these were issued to all ranks; or was there a separate badge for officers? I believe that the badge was only made from the foundation of the WRAC in 1949 to the coronation of the Queen in 1953.

I hope someone reading this will be able to help me in my search.

Contact:

Mrs S A Beadle (nee Petty)

16 Waldon, East Tilbury, Essex RM18 8SQ.

Tel: 01375 851769

Editor's Note: We believe the Crown on the cap badge was changed on the death of King George VI in 1952 and succession by Queen Elizabeth II, not on the formation of the WRAC. Badges of all the serving (male and female troops) were changed as well as coins, stamps etc.

"DRAB" STOCKINGS An excerpt from the Daily Express of 25 February 1939 Belfast, Friday.

One hundred Ulster women are learning how to march. Every week they meet in gymnasiums throughout the country, number from four, and drill to the commands of regular Army sergeant-majors. They are the first recruits of the women's Auxiliary Territorial Service. Every county now has the kernel of a company.

The woman whose job is to organise this volunteer army is Mrs Ogilvie Graham of Hollywood Road, Old Strandtown, Belfast - Chief Commandant of the Ulster forces.

Service is "for women only". Purpose is "to perform various non-combatant duties with the military and air forces in the event of a national emergency."

"As part of their peace-time training they will assist the services by performing these duties as and where it is practicable to do so."

Hundreds of women have already volunteered, many have had to be refused because of their inability to attend the training centres.

The Army want cooks, orderlies, storewomen, motorists, typists and clerks. They must attend at least 10 drills every year and spend not less than eight days at an annual camp. The regulation officer's uniform must be similar to the Army officer's.

Officer's uniform is a belted khaki cloth coat and a skirt 14 inches from the ground, wide enough to allow of free movements. Stockings must be of "drab material" to match the skirt and shoes must be plain brown with low heels.

Chief Commandant Mrs Graham told me today: "We have only officers' uniforms yet. The others should be here in the spring. We need every girl or woman who will join, but we must have those first who can attend the regular drills. I went to England for a one-week officer's course."

Senior Commandant of the service is Lady Brooke, wife of Ulster's Minister of Agriculture.



At the office headquarters in Bedford Street, Belfast, she told me: "We hope to have our first camp this year. We want full numbers in every section, and we want every volunteer to be fully trained as soon as possible. Many regular Army men can be released in an emergency when we are prepared."

Also on the headquarters staff is Company Assistant Miss Patricia Mulholland, daughter of the Speaker of Ulster's Parliament. In the gymnasium of the centuries-old Royal Victoria Barracks, I watched the Belfast No. 8 Clerical Company at drill.

Most of the members are city typists. Some had come straight from the office and would not leave until 9.30 pm. But all of them had attended to practise marching formation drill and to listen to army lectures.

CORPS DIARY 1954 - Extract

The following article is an extract from the Corps Diary of 1954. Are there any more recent diaries about?

- 1907 Formation of FIRST AID NURSING YEOMANRY.
- 1915 Formation of WOMEN'S LEGION.
- 1916 Formation of WOMEN'S ARMY AUXILIARY CORPS.
- 1917 WAAC went to France.
- 1918 HM Queen Mary became Commandant-in-Chief and the Corps became Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps.
- 1919 QMAAC disbanded.
- 1921 Formation of QMAAC Old Comrades Association.
- 1927 FANY and WOMEN'S LEGION MT Section received official recognition from Army Council.
- 1936 Formation of Emergency Service.
- 1938 Emergency Service received official recognition from Army Council.
- Royal Warrant for Formation of Auxiliary Territorial Service.
- HRH The Princess Royal accepted honorary appointment as Controller (Yorkshire).
- 1939 Formation of ATS Council.
- First Director appointed - Chief Controller Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, DBE.
- Mobilisation - 17,000 ATS volunteers called up for service.
- Duchess of Northumberland Comforts Fund started.
- 1940 First ATS overseas BEF France (March), and to Middle East (November).
- QMAAC Old Comrades Association opened membership to ex-ATS.
- ATS Benevolent Fund started.
- 1941 Comrades Association changed title to include ATS and membership extended to serving ATS.
- Defence (Women's Forces) Regulations. ATS members of the Armed Forces of the Crown.
- Granting of Commissions to women appointed as officers in the ATS (Order in Council 30th May).
- Chief Controller J M Knox succeeded Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan as Director.
- Change of Titles of ATS Officers and other ranks.
- ATS in USA.
- HRH The Princess Royal gazetted as Controller Commandant ATS.
- 1942 National Service Act (5th March) direction of labour for women.
- ATS Provost Wing started.
- ATS officers given Staff training and employed in graded staff appointments.

- Strength (December) 180,000
ATS in East Africa.
1943 ATS in Caribbean.
Peak point of ATS strength over 215,000.
Chief Controller L V L E Whateley succeeded Chief
Controller M J C Tyrwhitt as Director.
1944 ATS with Allied Forces in North Africa and Italy.
ATS full military Band first played for Passing Out
Parade OCTU Windsor.
ATS India - first Director of WAC (I) seconded from
ATS.
ATS in Norway, India and Far East.
1945 Release programme started.
HRH The Princess Elizabeth granted honorary
commission in the ATS.
1946 Senior Controller M J C Tyrwhitt succeeded Chief
Controller, Dame Leslie Whateley, as Director.
Extended Service Scheme Officers.
1947 Extended Service Scheme other ranks.
Guard of Honour - Marriage of HRH The Princess
Elizabeth.
1948 Women's Services Display - Royal Tournament
Olympia.
ATS competitor Olympic Games - Sub Williamson.
First award of George Medal to ATS - L/Cpl
Richards.
1949 Formation of WRAC as a Corps of the Regular
Army.
Senior Controller M J C Tyrwhitt, OBE, WRAC,
appointed first Director WRAC.
1950 Women officers granted the same rank titles as
male officers in the Army.
Major-General H R H The Princess Royal took the
Salute at the Passing Out Parade of the first regular
WRAC Officer Cadets in August.
Major-General HRH The Princess Royal opened
the Corps Museum at the WRAC Training Centre,
Guildford.
1951 Brigadier M F Coulshed, CBE, succeeded Brigadier
Dame Mary Tyrwhitt, DBE, ADC, as Director on 1st
January.
WRAC Staff College Frimley opened by Adjutant-
General to the Forces General Sir John Crocker,
GCB, KBE, DSO, MC, ADC.
Award of Territorial Efficiency Decoration to officers
of the ATS.
1953 Alliance between Women's Royal Army Corps and
New Zealand Women's Army Corps.
WRAC contingent marched at Coronation of Queen
Elizabeth II.

We would like to hear from anyone who has more of this type of information which would be of interest to ATS or WRAC ladies.

THE BOX - by Mrs J Hill née Hiett

During my ATS Service I was posted to Basic OCTU Mons Barracks Aldershot where I served for two years 1946-48, and met my husband. I worked in the Quartermaster's office and issued documents and clothing coupons to the men on completion of their courses.

Years later I went back to Aldershot with my husband to present to the Para museum a box which we think was made by British Prisoners of War as it had on it a picture of Arnhem. The box has a picture of the fight for the bridge at Arnhem on the top. The front of the box has a picture of two Para soldiers either side of a Military Cross. If anyone has

seen it there I would like to know. About two years ago I went back to find that the whole area had changed and many of the buildings had gone.

Contact:
Mrs J Hill
25 Keyston Road
Fairwater
Cardiff CF5 3ND

FROM TRASH TO TREASURE - by Doreen Thompson

Since becoming Honorary Secretary to Somerset Branch I have become an obsessive collector of ATS and WRAC memorabilia which takes my husband and me to several places. One such place was in Bedale, Yorkshire where there is the Museum of Badges and Battledress owned and managed by an ex RMP gentleman. A most interesting display of all things most of us remember; and a modest admission charge will keep one interested for hours. This gentleman very kindly gave me a few mementoes.

The venue that has been most successful is the Militaria Fair at Bristol. The last visit saw me walking away with WRAC No 1 cap, complete with Stay Bright badge. Through such excursions I have been able to make a complete collection of cap badges through the ages.



Doreen holding her "Treasure".

The highlight of a recent visit to Bristol was when I saw a WRAC badge - but what a badge! In cast alloy, 12 inches tall by 8 inches wide and looking sad for need of a little TLC. The paintwork was tatty to say the least. The lady stall holder and I struck a deal and the memento of the year was mine! Its original purpose is unknown, maybe a door insignia at Guildford, but latterly was found in a junk shop in Weymouth! What a dishonourable finish! It is now newly painted, mounted and ready for display. It really is my "Trash to Treasure". The accompanying photo may jog someone's memory as to where it was originally on view. I would be interested and can be contacted at 4 St Mary's Court, Barry Close, Weston Super Mare, BS24 9NL. Telephone 01934 814076.

As yet another year and another Remembrance Day passes by I looked through an old photograph album recently given to me by one of my brothers, although it is well worn it highlights my family's history.

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A photo of my grandfather in uniform before his 1914-18 war service where he lost an eye. One uncle I had never known who was a pilot and killed on active service. Another uncle survived the war in a POW camp in Java. My own father served in the Navy from a boy till after the war. Of my five children, one son served in the Royal Engineers, another son in the RCT, a third son was a Royal Marine and killed in 1989. One daughter was in the WRAC, my second daughter married into the Royal Artillery. She wanted to join the army but failed her medical because she had had glandular fever.

I served in the ATS/WRAC until I married a Royal Engineer. In the Army I was known as 'Jolly Alice' because my maiden name was Jolly.



"Jolly Alice" wearing her hat.

I enjoyed my service and would do it all over again. On the photograph I am the girl in the front on the right.

Contact:
109 Upstairs Balcony, North Anderson Drive, Aberdeen
AB16 6HR.

Bessie Goodman was born on 5th November 1919 at Edward Street, Oldham. She joined the ATS early in the war aged 22/23 and became W/143732 Pte Goodman B, with the trade of shorthand typist and languages. She could speak French and was learning Russian. The next piece of information available about Bessie Goodman was in the following letter of 31 January 1946 written to Bessie's mother from the War Office in Liverpool:

"Madam,

With reference to the notification addressed to you on the 8th October, 1945, by the Officer-in-Charge of Auxiliary Territorial Service Records, Winchester, regarding your daughter, W/143732 Private B. Goodman, Auxiliary Territorial Service, I am directed to inform you that a full account of the circumstances in which the aircraft was lost has been received from the Air Ministry.



Pte Bessie Goodman

The Lancaster aircraft in which your daughter was travelling as a passenger took off from Glatton Airfield at 1 a.m. on the 4th October, 1945, en route to Italy; the flight was correctly authorised and full briefing instructions were given which covered meteorological conditions over the route, the safety heights at which to fly and the usual signals briefing which emphasised distress procedure. The aircraft was serviceable before take off and the pilot, who had over one thousand hours flying experience including five similar flights, was considered fully competent. The route to be followed was over Southern France to a point on the coast south west of Marseilles, across the northern part of the Mediterranean to a point 30 miles north of Corsica, and thence to Naples.

The briefing instructions to the crew of the aircraft stated that contact was to be made with its home base by wireless telegraphy when crossing the Meridian 070 East and that wireless frequency was then to be changed over and contact made with No. 205 Group at Foggia, Italy. At 4.40 a.m. the aircraft had contact with its home base and a few minutes later called Foggia, Italy; these messages were received and acknowledged in both instances. No further communication was received from the aircraft, and at no time were distress signals received.

The question of carrying parachutes in trooping aircraft has received very careful consideration and a decision has been made that they would not provide any safeguard to passengers or crew on such flights. This decision is in accord with civil aviation practice and it is explained that to abandon a large aircraft loaded with passengers necessitates careful and repeated drill beforehand; it is considered that there is a greater measure of safety in such cases from an emergency landing.

I am to say that in view of the lapse of time during which no further news of the aircraft or its occupants has been received, it is deeply regretted that there can now be little hope of your daughter's survival. Further investigations are, however, being made and in the meantime Private Goodman will remain posted as missing.

I am to convey to you an expression of the Department's sincere sympathy in your anxiety and to assure you that you will be kept informed of all developments."

Recently, her great niece Mrs Vickery decided to investigate further as both she and her grandmother felt there should be more information available. She wrote a letter to MOD (RAF) and received the following reply:

"Thank you for your reply dated 15 February 1999, which was passed to us for reply by the Personnel Management Agency, RAF Innsworth, and concerned your Grandmother's Sister, the late W/143732 Bessie Goodman, who sadly lost her life in an RAF aircraft accident.

Our records show that Lancaster Mk I, Serial No PA278, of No 103 Squadron, No 1 Group, Transport Command, was reported missing during Operation 'Dodge' whilst flying between RAF Glatton and Pomigliano, Italy, on 4 October 1945. 'Dodge' involved the transportation by air of military personnel from Italy back to the UK during 1945/46. Lancaster PA278 was believed to have crashed into the sea in the approximate position of 43 18 N, 08 55 E, about 30 miles NNE of Cape Corse, Corsica, as a fire had been seen by another aircraft. It was believed that the aircraft had crashed due to loss of control in bad weather, or possibly because it had been struck by lightning. Lightning and turbulence had been experienced by other pilots on the same route. Those on board were listed as follows:

CREW (6)

189687 Act. Flt Lt G Taylor - Pilot
1626816 Flt Sgt J A Reardon - Navigator
1818104 Sgt R G Steel - Flight Engineer
1894110 Flt Sgt N R Robbins - Wireless Operator/Air Gunner
53481 Flt Lt J P Whymark DFC - Air Gunner
2208930 Sgt W J Kennedy - Air Gunner

PASSENGERS (17 ATS & 2 Nursing Sisters)

W/23244 L/Cpl W Allen
W/77451 Pte P Bacon
W/184715 Cpl H Cosens
203386 Pte S Courtman
W/252761 Pte B D Cullen
P.236425 Sister Curran
258692 Pte C Edwards
W.155271 Pte R A Fraser
W/143732 Pte B Goodman
W/237256 Cpl J Goring
W/154454 Pte J Larkin
W/74459 Pte A Lillyman
W/170036 L/Cpl S McLeod
W/236937 Pte M E Mann
W/147946 Pte B E Precious
W/144264 L/Cpl E D Rice
25486V Sister S M Sadler
W/7326 W/S/Sgt J E Semark
W/99752 Pte M Taylor

I hope this information is helpful."

Mrs Vickery would very much like to hear from anybody who recognises her great aunt from the photograph or remembers her from her ATS Service. Please contact:

Mrs A Vickery
2 Helen Close
Cambridge
CB5 8TW

A MEMORABLE DAY AT EDEN CAMP

On Wednesday 18th November 1998, over 200 of our members attended a Joint Service of Dedication of a Plaque commemorating those who served in the ATS during World War Two, and for the Laying Up of the ATS Standard of the Bradford Branch. The service took place at Eden Camp, near Malton, North Yorkshire.

During World War Two, Eden Camp was a Prisoner of War Camp housing German POWs. It has now been refurbished as a Modern History Theme Museum giving extensive coverage of both Military and Civilian participation in the War. Most of the original POW huts have been converted to reflect a particular aspect of the War, and one of them is now the Museum Chapel which is progressively being filled with Memorial Plaques and Ex Service Associations' Standards. Large numbers of visitors, in particular parties of school children, visit the camp every day.

The day was organised by the York Branch who were accorded excellent co-operation and facilities by the Museum Director Mr Stephen Jacques and his staff. Because of the large numbers attending, the service could not be held in the Chapel, and so one of the huts normally used as a lecture hall was converted into a Chapel for the day. We were most fortunate and honoured to have the service conducted by the Association Chaplain, Colonel The Reverend Susan Wing, this being one of her first tasks since taking up her new appointment.

The Plaque was manufactured under arrangements made by the Museum Director at no cost to the Association. It bears the ATS Badge and is inscribed:

In memory of the quarter of a million members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service who served their country 1939-1945, of whom:

67 Were Killed in Action
 9 Died of Wounds
 16 Were Posted as Missing
 313 Were Wounded in Action

A total of 405 War Casualties

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(The Photograph shows the Plaque prior to being mounted on the Chapel Wall)

The Standard was proudly borne for the last time through the congregation to be presented to the Chaplain by Norah Kendall, the Standard Bearer of the Bradford Branch.

After the Dedication of the Plaque and the Laying Up Ceremony, the Chaplain handed the Plaque and Standard over to Mr Nick Hills, the Deputy Director of the Museum, for safekeeping and display in the Chapel. An additional presentation then took place when two beautifully embroidered Hassocks (Kneelers), one bearing the ATS Badge and the other the WRAC Badge, were presented to the Museum by the Leeds Branch. These are now on display in the Chapel alongside the Standard.

Members attending from as far afield as Newcastle Upon Tyne, Grimsby and Sheffield then took the opportunity of visiting the many display huts and exhibits. Most of us also enjoyed our lunch in the reproduction NAAFI Canteen, to the accompaniment of tapes of wartime singalong music.

All in all, it was a very nostalgic but most enjoyable day. It is hoped that members visiting Yorkshire in the future will be able to make time to go to the Museum to see these items at first hand.

THE EXIGENCIES OF WARTIME SERVICE

When I joined up my name was Dorothy Hope, my number was W/237018 and I served from 1941-1946. I was first posted to 25th Western Command FANY Unit, then we became the 585 CMT Coy at Newport. Later on we moved to Newport Barracks from where I was demobbed as LCpl Hope. I still keep in touch with four of my old friends - we always find lots to talk about.

I am enclosing a photograph of a typical wartime wedding. Mary, the bride, was an orphan and when her young man returned from overseas they decided to marry. We all gathered round and helped to make plans. I lent her my bridesmaid's dress, her bridesmaid had a dress of her own. Mary's flowers were from the Vicar's garden. The three tier wedding cake was wonderful, all iced with powdered milk. We had a grand reception in our billets and lots of girls including our Junior Commander Jackson attended the ceremony. Bill and Mary were delighted.



Mary's Wedding

Unfortunately I am now a widow, I have rheumatoid arthritis and have had my right leg amputated. I am a member of the Exeter Branch although I am no longer able to attend the meetings because of my disablement.

Mrs D Pine
 35 Wishings Road
 Brixham
 S. Devon TQ5 9PD

ATS/WRAC VISIT TO CATTERICK GARRISON 29 JULY 1998

Thirty intrepid ladies from the Cleveland Branch of the WRAC Association arrived at Catterick Garrison on 29 July to relive some of their memories of serving in the area during the 2nd World War. Having been employed in such jobs as PAs, cooks, despatch riders and signallers, they served their country and have some amazing stories to tell!

After a warm welcome to 3 AEC by OC Major Morris, the group made its way to Gaza Barracks to be met by 19 Signals Squadron 2IC Captain Vaudin, ably assisted by Lieutenant Griffiths and Staff Sergeant Steele. While walking around the Barracks we were given an insight into the history of the Royal Signals at Catterick.

The ladies were then given the opportunity to look at a Signal Command Post and have a go on the radios followed by a quick trip round the Parade Square in one of the Signals APCs! A splendid time was had by all, but it was rather stuffy in the back of those vehicles!

After a fabulous buffet lunch at Gaza Officers' Mess, we were taken to 24 Field Ambulance by Lieutenant Bryenton to have a look around a mock Dressing Station set up especially for us and had to listen to the incredibly loud siren on the new ambulance!

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After tea and biscuits in the cookhouse we made our way back to the Education Centre for any final questions and more coffee, before the ladies boarded their bus, clutching Army "glossies" to read later on.

A very enjoyable visit, both for us as hosts and for the ladies, and we look forward to visiting the WRAC Assn branch in Cleveland for one of their meetings!
2Lt Avril Stanton AGC(ETS)

A ROYAL VISIT TO HYDE PARK JULY 1943

In 481 Battery of 137 Regiment we were used to dignitaries "dropping in" sometimes with little or no warning. As we were in Hyde Park the site was by way of being a show site.

However, this particular time we knew it was someone special - we were polished to within an inch of our lives and our barrack room shone! The floor was washed and polished and everything was dusted whether it needed it or not. So that we didn't spoil the floor polish we plodded round in stocking feet. When the Orderly Officer and Orderly Sergeant came to inspect we followed them round with the mop.

Imagine how we felt when it started to rain and we pictured all those dirty wet shoes and boots on the floor that had taken us so long to polish to perfection!

Imagine our delight though when later in the day, the convoy of motor cycles and cars arrived at the camp gates and we realised our visitors were Her Majesty the Queen and the Princess Royal. Of course we couldn't stand and stare as we were all supposed to be getting on with our jobs, but we did manage to see them as they toured the site. I was in the Battery Headquarters as Orderly Room Sergeant and we in the office did hope that maybe they would pop in to see how the admin side of 481 Bty was organised, but, no luck.

When the Princess Royal, who was in uniform, was getting out of her car she must have bumped her head and consequently she started the tour with a large dent in the

front of her hat. This was soon rectified, no doubt by her lady-in-waiting - but it did prove that even royalty were capable of being improperly dressed!!

Her Majesty looked so pretty, so tiny and petite. She was dressed then as she continued throughout the years in her own style of pastel matching hat, coat and dress. What really impressed me was the fact that she had on short rubber booties over her shoes to protect her from the wet ground. I think that at some time we have all owned a pair. Peculiar as they looked I maintained that what was good enough for the Queen was good enough for me!! I wonder where they went?

The rain stopped in time for the inspection and the site was shown in all it's glory - the guns shone and the paths were a sight to behold with their newly painted posts and stone edges. A day to remember.

Mrs I Luscombe
41 Dunstall Road
Halesowen
West Midlands
B63 1BD

BEING A STORY OF COINCIDENTAL REUNION AFTER HALF A CENTURY

By Mrs Freda Lyon, Bournemouth Branch

I have been long an interested but casual observer of the many reunion announcements and of the 'Where are you now?' type of entry in varied and diverse publications, many of which kindled memories of service life.

This is a tale of amazing coincidence.

Called up for service in 1942, I enlisted into the ATS, and survived initial training at Guildford (what a culture shock that was) where it seemed then that 98% of the camp had, and exercised, complete authority over my newly acquired status of the lowest form of military life - the 'Rookie', the other 2% being fellow draftees.

Following the trauma of Guildford I was posted to Oswestry for training with the Ack Ack but within a few days of arriving there volunteered for a training course on searchlights at Kinmel Park Camp, Rhyl from where I was posted to 495 Battery, 93rd Searchlight Regiment (this I believe to have been the only completely ATS Regiment of all time!)

Stationed at Hanwell, near Ealing, West London on the edge of a golf course, the all female crew of a dozen girls lived in a nissen hut and were responsible for our own local administration (well the cooking, cleaning etc), as well as manning the largest searchlight I ever saw, together with a good tempered generator that only took one of us (where are you now Audrey?) to swing into action.

How pleased we all were to be isolated from the rest of the military world, with our men sized ration scale, our strange items of clothing. Who else had a standard issue of 'fur coats'?

There were the odd drawbacks - such as being obliged to operate the searchlight during all the hours of darkness and in all types of weather and we found that daylight hours were spoken for - we only had to service the equipment, cook (on the cook's day off), and eat, and sleep - oh beautiful, sleep!



Of course the common knowledge was that every rear gunner of every Luftwaffe bomber overhead was squinting down his sights along the beam of light at one end of which was our stalwart (mainly scared stiff) ATS crew. Certainly the No. 5 of the crew wished for a much larger and thicker steel helmet! **PDF Compressor Free Version**

Social life on the site was very limited, our duties being such that it was difficult to fit in socialising - I suppose we managed, but how we appreciated the local Rotary Club who, appreciating some of our difficulties, gave us an occasional 'Dinner' during the afternoon! Bless them, we trusted that they knew how much the diversion from normal routine was appreciated and the rare opportunity to dress up - best uniform - complete with the Ack Ack 'bomb or grenade', as the badge over our left top pocket was called, the white lanyard (which we were very proud to wear) and our 'bow and arrow' divisional patch - we were real soldiers then.

At the cessation of the war in Europe the call for searchlight activity was less than minimal and the Regiment was disbanded and the troop dispersed. Our crew having served together for years were devastated to find that each of us had been posted to different units, at home and abroad.

I was fortunate in that I knew the clerk responsible for processing the postings and as a result found myself reporting to the Royal College of Organists, next door to the Royal Albert Hall in Kensington, joining London District as a clerk with my office in Curzon Street, Mayfair. What a let down after the fur coats, jerkins, overalls, all night and day working hours. - Never mind, it was surprising how quickly I adjusted to sleeping at night, regular meals, an opportunity to wear a smart uniform (but I did resent having to surrender my white lanyard), an office as a workplace and no mud!

My particular friend and room-mate whilst at London District was a beautiful girl who had travelled from British Guiana soon after war broke out, in order to enlist in the ATS. A purely voluntary decision to do her bit. Nice to know you Jeanne Carter.

I mentioned coincidence - well some years ago I worked in the BT Management College in Bournemouth, sharing an office with Yvonne Maingot who became a friend. It was in the course of conversation it transpired that she had lived in British Guiana (as Guyana was then). On my mentioning that I had served with a Jeanne Carter she said that she knew that a family called Carter had lived in Georgetown. To cut a long story short through various cousins and friends Yvonne was able to give me Jeanne's address. I soon got in touch and found that she had gone back to Guyana after the war, then worked in Venezuela, married an American she met there and now lived in Florida, so I lost no time arranging to meet her and her husband whilst visiting Florida last year. It was quite a meeting - I found her just as she always was way back in the '40's', with the exception of that first sign of age - grey hair. We have been corresponding about every couple of months now and still find plenty to write about.

However - it doesn't stop there. Last year my friend Margaret Drew, drew (sorry about this) my attention to an announcement in the local paper concerning a meeting of an WRAC/ATS Association in Bournemouth. We 'enlisted' and have had some pleasant outings and meetings as a result.

I had seen in a Saga Magazine in 1997 about a reunion of the 93rd Searchlight Regiment to be held at the Union Jack Club in London and decided to attend but was disappointed that there wasn't anyone I had served with. Deciding not to give up I made the journey again in 1998 with Joyce Faris, from the WRAC/ATS Association, who had also been with the searchlights but not my battery, and we met Beth Lapham there, who was arranging a reunion of the regiment in the North of England.

So at the end of March 1999 Joyce Faris, Margaret Crook (another WRAC/ATS Association member) and myself found ourselves in Derby at the northern reunion of the 93rd. Among the assembled throng in the reception area of the hotel before dinner was a face that seemed very familiar and after a few enquiries she astounded me by saying 'you're Freda Bailey', yes it was my old friend Paula Norwood with whom I had spent so much of the war. Her memories were much sharper than mine - I was very impressed by her remembering all the names of the girls on site. Needless to say we have solemnly sworn never to lose touch again.

I now conclude by again pointing out that Jeanne and I shared a room whilst working for London district and during the whole of my stay (years and years and years, or so it seemed) on site Paula slept in the bed next to mine in our nissen hut home on the searchlight site at Hanwell.

So for those still searching, if at first you don't succeed - try just that little bit harder.

THE SCHOOL OF AIRCRAFT RECOGNITION, WHITE WALTHAM

A former local newspaperman had long been fascinated by the history of his home village, White Waltham in Berkshire and was puzzled that there were so many war-time activities centred in such a small community. Here were the headquarters of Air Transport Auxiliary (the organisation which ferried over 300,000 service aircraft to Military airfields or to Maintenance Units); a RAF Station which played a major role in preparing signals staff for their part in the invasion of Europe, the Army School of Aircraft Recognition training men and women from gunsites and searchlight posts; ML Aviation, a factory in the forefront of technical developments for the aviation industry and the Anti-Attrition Metal Company, a factory making parts for aircraft engines.

As with all such ventures, the author, Mr Dennis Tomlinson, began by searching for former employees and associates of these firms and for RAF and Army personnel who had passed through the airfield and the Army School of Aircraft Recognition. He encountered difficulties in the latter case; official records didn't help and he came to a dead end. By coincidence, at that time a story about the Norwich meetings of the WRAC Association was published in the local newspaper mentioning that our members were all former ATS. Mr Tomlinson then asked me, (at that time I was secretary of the Branch) to find out if any of our members had been through the School - learning, as he put it - to recognise friend from foe. None had, but through the publicity of a small paragraph in LIONESS NO 1 OF 1977, former members of the ATS got in touch and passed on their memories of the time and the place. Mr Tomlinson was delighted with the response and his book was published in December 1998, mentioning all these ladies by name. It proved very popular and has just gone into its second edition.

If any Association members would like to have a copy would they please send a cheque for £7.50 post free (£10 outside UK) made out to MR D Tomlinson to Amelle Press, 66 Greenborough Road, Sprowston, Norwich NR7 9JH.

There are reminiscences from civilians and service people, from the Home Guard and ARP and stories from villagers of the time. The book contains over 30 illustrations and many flashes of war-time humour. It is a fascinating account of when life in an English village was turned upside down.

Joan Awbery, Norfolk and Suffolk Branch.

CROSSING THE GENERATIONS

WO2 Lisbeth Woods of the Adjutant General's Corps was on duty as Standard Bearer for the WRAC Association when there was a service in Guildford Cathedral on 18th April 1999 marking the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the WRAC and the 80th of the Association. Immaculate in her uniform, she was the target of many cameras as she stood outside the Cathedral prior to the service.

Then she was hailed by one of the ladies who said, "I detect a Scottish accent. Where do you come from?"

"OH" WO2 Woods replies, "I come from a little place you probably don't know. It's called Brechin".

"Really," Major (Retd) Isobel Gordon remarked. "I come from a little place just south of that - Forfar".

The two of them exchanged notes about their home county of Angus and about their Army service - WO2 Woods a Regular servicewoman approaching the end of the 22-year stint and Major Gordon having served 25 years in the Territorial Army.

After the church service, Brigadier Helen Meechie, a former Dundonian, joined the Brechin and the Forfarian for a conversation in dialect.

As one of the trio remarked, "There's not another soul here would understand a word of what we're saying".

But what a coincidence that the three ladies should meet like that having been born within a 30-mile radius of each other.

MEMORIES OF THE WRAC

After 44 years I've finally got around to joining the WRAC Association. I was a member of the WRAC from May 1949-53, having been in the TA before then at the age of 17. My fellow recruits did not understand why my number (W/356187) was so different from theirs until I pointed out I had retained by TA number.

I came in as a hairdresser, and was given by the WRAC my own smart little "Salon" at 22, Lower Sloane Court, West Chelsea, half an hour from my own house. I then decided I should have a change of jobs if I wanted to go overseas so I was sent to Gressford for clerical and typing training. After this I was posted to the Sigs (M) Regt in Edinburgh in Oct 1950. I still remember that damp miserable cold evening at Waverly Stn where as a 19 year old I arrived lugging my kitbag and my violin, only to go to the wrong guardroom. The Orderly Officer said "Hoot, lassie ye look like a drowned rat - would ye like a cup of hot cocoa?"

At these kind but un-military words, I almost burst into un-military tears, but restrained my sniffles and said "Yes please - Sir". After, I was driven to the Womens quarters and was grateful for a hot bath. For a Londoner it was an interesting, different experience to be in Scotland for 6 months, even though I never got warm! After this in June 1951 - I asked for and was posted to Singapore. What excitement on the plane as we were coming in to land!

Singapore was a great posting (especially for a single woman in her 20's). We had a good social life. However, I wish the Army had given us some cultural information. A few of the local ways were quite surprising to English women!! We also needed to know more of the Community Emergency situation than we did at the time. I did learn to use chopsticks and had my 21st birthday at the Raffles Hotel and danced the night away. I was back there 4 years ago - some things are the same but a lot of changes. Tanglin Barracks is still in use. Fort Canning was on the point of being torn down when I saw it. I met my first husband in Singapore, 2nd Officer E B Cooper with the American President Lines (I think in 1952 or early 53 our engagement was also in the Lioness). I came back to UK in May 1953 - was demobbed and worked in London for a year before marrying and moving to the SA in 1954.

I was interested to see that mothers are now allowed to stay in the Army. How on earth do they manage? So many differences since my WRAC years, and now there is no WRAC any more, I understand.

Although, naturally, I didn't enjoy every minute in the WRAC, overall, it was great experience. It taught me to be very punctual (even my 4 babies arrived on their due dates!). Also, I saw a part of the world I probably would not have seen otherwise and worked with Chinese, Indians and Malays.

I would love to hear from anyone who remembers me, especially Gwen Jones (who came to my wedding in London in 1954), Valerie Alsop and Dot Green, and not forgetting RSM Mackay who I knew in both London and Singapore. I look on my service time with a grin and good memories (funny what the passage of years will do). My 1st issue of the new (to me) Lioness was enjoyable and I look forward to the next. Is there a history of the ATS-WRAC written I wonder?

Sincerely, Barbara M Parks (formerly B H Michaels)

MRS EMILY ROBERTS - 100TH BIRTHDAY 3RD APRIL 1999



Mrs Beeston presenting Emily Roberts with her flowers

Although March weather had at times been wet and cold, on the 3rd April the sun came out, and we had perfect weather for a perfect day. My husband and I had been invited to the 100th Birthday Party of Emily Roberts, who is a member of the WRAC Association, Wolverhampton Branch. Emily is a very special member. Having joined when the Branch was formed, she had served in the QMAAC, 1st WW. Her birthday was indeed a 'Grand do' for a grand lady, there were approximately 80 people at the party. The majority were grandchildren, their offspring, and cousins of cousins. Along one wall were photographs of Emily's life from a baby sitting on her mother's knee, then in Army uniform and getting married, spanning her 100 years. Her family, a son and two daughters said they would take her out for a meal. Imagine her surprise and delight when, in a wheelchair, she came into the room amid applause and cheers. The photograph was taken when I presented the basket of flowers from all members of Wolverhampton Branch WRAC Association.



Emily is on the right

SERVICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

When I arrived in Northern Ireland Bobby Sands had just died after his hunger strike. My first experience of a bomb exploding was while I was working in my office, and I remember thinking that I now knew what a mild earthquake would be like.

Although the bomb had gone off in the town fortunately nobody was killed but the blast had shaken buildings for miles around.

I worked as secretary for the NI TA and Cadet Team, with two local ladies. I asked them why they continued to work in such an environment but they said that it was their home and why should they move!

Approximately twice a month I did an overnight operations duty which involved dealing with and recording all incidents in Northern Ireland.

On one occasion I lent my Ford Escort to my friend and her boyfriend to go to the cinema. During the evening several reports came in of Ford Escorts being stolen when suddenly it registered with me that I had one! At that point my friend phoned to say that my car was missing from the cinema car park.

When it was located, I had to leave my duty, change my clothes, and was taken in the back of an armoured RUC

vehicle to where the car was. It proved to be roadworthy but vandalised. If it had been proven that it had been used for terrorist activities the Northern Ireland office would have paid for repairs.

I do recall what a lovely country it was particularly the beaches, it was such a pity it was marred by the troubles.

There was a constant pressure all the time, you could never let down your guard, you had to watch what you said, always check your car for bombs, and were constantly aware that all it took was to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The pub I had been at one evening near the coast was bombed a few days later and several people killed.

One great asset was the thirteen pubs on camp so that we had somewhere to socialise and let our hair down. Drink was cheap so there were many headaches.

I do have one very good souvenir of Northern Ireland, my engagement ring which was bought in Belfast.

LCpl S E Brain (nee Ross), Fife and Tayside Branch

MRS TUCKER (NEE RICHARDSON) - PAST TIMES

I volunteered for the ATS in February 1942, and left home on Friday 13th (!) for initial training at the Royal Welsh Fusiliers barracks at Wrexham. From there I went for GL training to 232 Camp at Devizes, but instead of then going to Firing Camp on the coast (e.g. Bude) we were sent straight out on to gun-sites - in at the deep end, as it were. I was with 508 (M) H AA Battery, at Chestnut Avenue, Eastleigh and our HQ site was at Marchwood, Southampton and later at Holbrook, which was situated near HMS Collingwood, about half-way between Fareham and Gosport. I well remember the build-up of troops and equipment prior to D-Day and having leave cancelled in 1943 which made us think the invasion was going to happen then.

In late 1943, I think, after a trip to Weybourne Firing Camp, the battery moved to Beckenham, with the (off-site) at Shirley, near Croydon. During this time I met my best friend, Meg Law (nee Stevens), and also my future husband, Roy Tucker, who was in REME. I was later on different sites - Danson Park where we were sent to familiarise AA personnel from Liverpool area who were sent south to relieve us during the doodlebug period, Ravensbourne, Petts Wood and Sittingbourne.

I spent a memorable VE Day in London with Iris Morrell. After this I was posted North to a dreadful site at Dunsdale, near Guisborough, Yorkshire. We understood it had been condemned for Italian POW's - evidently British AA personnel were tougher! Then we heard we were going to a site at Brambles Farm which sounded idyllic, but turned out to be almost in the shadow of the Dorman-Long Steelworks at Middlesbrough! From there I went on leave to get married, and applied shortly afterwards for demob., as there was obviously no future in AA any more!



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**HR HOGG
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Corporate & Employee Services

Memorial for the Women of World War II

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We have now raised £21,000 of the £50,000 we need so that we can apply to the Lottery Fund to ask them to match our fundraising. We estimate the total sum required for the project will be £100,000. We believe the Memorial should be sited in the centre of London, our capital city. We have held provisional discussions with Westminster Council who suggested a variety of sites, which might prove interesting. However, since those discussions, we have been made aware that there is an empty plinth in Trafalgar square, which actually belongs to the Government. Readers may remember we mentioned in a previous article that we had an Early Day Motion tabled in the House of Commons to gain support from the House to find a suitable site for the Memorial. 280 MPs signed up to that motion. We are expecting an invitation to go to the House in the near future and hope to put our case to one of the MPs who, we are advised, is connected with developments in Trafalgar Square. In addition we have discovered that Sir John Mortimer (creator of Rumpole of the Bailey) has been nominated to chair an advisory body, which is to sift proposals for the plinth. We are hoping Betty Boothroyd our Patron will make a strong and influential case to him as well. We now have about 13 Sculptors who are interested in doing the artwork for the Memorial. We have also got three eminent Sculptors who are members of the Royal Society of Art, who we have invited to act as a Panel of Judges on our behalf. We will be asking the Sculptors to submit their ideas as drawings, together with quotations to the Judges by September. The Judges will then be asked to select the three best ideas and to review the Sculptors portfolios. The three Sculptors will then be asked to submit Maquettes (scaled models) of the Memorial so the panel can make a final selection. As you can see, we are making very positive progress on the three principal fronts of Site, Sculpture and Fundraising, but we do still need help. Write to your MP and tell him/her to write to Sir John Mortimer to support the Project. If you would like an Information Sheet, which will tell your MP what we are all about, please phone us on 01904 662291. All you need to do then is a little covering letter telling him/her what you want them to do! We also still need a further £29,000 to reach our target of £50,000. If anyone would like to make a donation, please send to Major (Retd) David M Robertson, c/o HQ York Garrison, Imphal Barracks, York, YO10 4AU, with cheques made payable to Central Bank York Garrison. We are registered under the Charities Act 1960 as number 1069791.

Life After WRAC

Mrs Sheila Lloyd-Graham (née Barnes Cox)

I served in the WRAC from 1970-1977 my number was W/439035. I enjoyed every moment of it and was reluctant to leave when departing for Berlin with my husband who was in 2 Para. I was the first Private to gain permission to marry and stay in the WRAC, which I did for 3½ years balancing working hard at both lives.

In the WRAC my trade was Physical Training Instructor, and the qualifications I gained at the PT School at Aldershot stood me in good stead for my new career in Germany when, as a civilian, I worked for the Americans in Sports Management. We returned to UK and I am still in the Fitness Business in Cirencester. I have attended the first two PTI Reunions at Hammersley Barracks renewing old friendships. I am also proud to say that my "Green Tracksuit" is in the APTC Museum. I enclose a photograph of our wedding in January 1974.

Mrs S Lloyd-Graham, Spring Lakes, Station Road, South Cerney, Cirencester, Glos GL7 5TU



FOR SALE

AMMO & CO at Woking have the following items for sale

Anodised Cap Badges 1 piece, 2 colour with V hook fitting – £2.20 each
Officers Cap Badges 1 piece, gilt/silver burnished finish – £3.50 each

Orders please with remittance to WRAC Association by 30 October 1999.

Reunions

Harriet Wilson (née Moreton)

W77526 459 bty 134 Regt A.A. Radar operator
4206 E Wonder Lake Road
Wonder Lake, Illinois
60097-8332
U.S.A.

Nov 5th 1998

Another year has passed and we had a wonderful turnout for our re-union and to celebrate the 60th birthday of the A.T.S. there were over 100 girls plus their guests in attendance. It was held in London Ontario, Canada on Sept 11-13th, the weather was just perfect.

We honoured two of our members Majorie McRae and Amelia Craig who answered the call in 1939, also Majorie Bogle was made life member. Congratulations to all. Each member was presented with a beautiful china cake plate and server (made in jolly old England) to mark the Anniversary.

The entertainment was excellent with Bob Finlay who gave us a rendition of all the old songs of long ago and stories. We had a town crier from London who did a marvellous job, plus a D.J., and of course our own drill Sgt Jessie Seddon and Col George-ina on parade.

We would like to express our many thanks to Wyn Raven and Betty Anderson for all their hard work getting everyone together next year will be at London and the year 2000 is being planned to be held in Victoria B.C. - Winnie Kirk has agreed to host the program. There was a very nice selection of hand crafts for sale, which everyone donated.

Thanks to Connie Vantichlin who brought sweat shirts embroidered with the A.T.S. crest very nicely done.



WRAC PT REUNION by Capt (Retd) Kate Bettison

The Second WRAC PT Reunion Dinner was held at the WO's and Sgts' Mess ASPT on 6 June 1998 and was attended by over sixty former members.

The evening began with a Champagne Reception during which the Attendance Book was signed by all those present. This was followed by the customary photo call before dinner was served. As usual all the WRAC pieces of silver were displayed on the tables including the

magnificent Adventure Training Trophy presented by Maj Frances Canham during her tour as AIPT, and also making her reunion debut.

Following a delicious dinner it was time to welcome several newcomers, including former Lcpl Eunice Jones (nee Ruddock) who joined the Army in 1946 and became a PTI in 1949, and Capt Peggy Spurr who also signed on in 1946, but who arrived fully trained from a civilian P.E. college. Moving the clock further forward we were delighted to see former WO2 Josie Beard (nee Kemp) best remembered for her Army Netball and Handball fame, and WO1 Pat Rosewell (alias Budgie) notorious for her diving and gymnastic skills.

Since the last reunion several of our members have recorded some notable achievements and congratulations were extended to them all. Maj Jackie Pollock and Capt Nikki Rochelle have both taken degree courses and now sport BSc after their names. Capt Lyn Higgs, the current Q.M. at the ASPT, was selected for the British Veterans Half Marathon Team, and at the World Championships held in Japan earlier this year won an individual gold medal and a silver team medal.



Medals old and new - left Capt Lyn Higgs with Capt Audrey Mitchell right.

The Final Accolade was paid to Capt Audrey Mitchell (nee Williamson) who, in the 1948 Olympic Games at Wembley, came second to the famous Flying Dutchwoman, Fanny Blankers-Koen, in the 200 metres. Maj Jackie Whitehead paid tribute to Audrey's outstanding achievement in this the 50th anniversary of the Games and presented her with a

powder compact embossed with the APTC crest. A congratulatory letter to Audrey was also received from ex Sgt Kelly Holmes, herself now a Commonwealth, European and World Medallist, who is currently training for the Year 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. Audrey replied with a brief account of her memories adding that she was delighted to be presenting her Olympic blazer, beret and running spikes to the APTC Museum.

The evening's formalities were concluded with a vote of thanks by the irrepressible Pat Rosewell who also added how thrilled she was to be back among all her PTI comrades.

It is hoped that the next reunion will be held in 2001. If there are any former WRAC PTIs or PT Officers who have not yet formally registered and would like to attend, they are invited to contact Kate Bettison at:

19 Olde Farm Drive
Darby Green
Camberley
Surrey
GU17 0DU
Tel: 01252 873174

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA CALLING - OCTOBER 1998
AND FEBRUARY 1999**

Inspired by reading reports in the last issue of the "Lioness" of intended commemorative activities for the 60th Anniversary of the formation of ATS, I placed a letter in the local Community based newspaper requesting any ex-service personnel to contact me with a view to holding our own celebration.

Although Rockingham is often called "Little England" having the highest number of English migrants in the area (and a 'listen in' to voices in the local Shopping Centre will make you think you are back in northern UK) I was not too hopeful of anyone bothering to reply. How wrong I was, when I had a total of 17 ex-ATS/WRAC respond.

All were very enthusiastic about a 'get together' which was arranged for 10th October at a local restaurant. Although only two had enlisted together, the time differences in

enlistment dates were ignored as comradeship learnt whilst serving quickly came to the fore. In fact, those who met as they entered the restaurant were talking before they reached the table!! Unfortunately, one had other commitments, but it was the wish of all who did attend that another luncheon 'get together' be arranged for early next year - so maybe it will be the beginnings of a WRAC Luncheon Club "down under" - who knows?? My back numbers of the "Lioness" were pored over, the History of the ATS/WRAC recently received from HQ was perused, and enrolment forms for the WRAC Association were handed out - as well as old photographs of service days being well and truly inspected. Needless to say "a good time was had by all".

Imagine my surprise when I again put a letter in our local Community papers about another luncheon I had arranged at the request of our 'founding group' and ended up with a total of 34 names on my list!! All wanted to come, but because of the distances involved only 23 of us were able to meet up. Replies had come from Northern and Eastern suburbs of Perth (not from the West as that would have been the Indian Ocean!), whereas previously there had only been local replies.

What a ball we had. How our tongues wagged - yet none had ever served together or met before. "Why can't we do this more often?" "When can we meet again?". I was asked so many questions about getting ATS/WRAC badges, the Association, future lunches etc.

In order to cater for those others who replied but lived too far from Rockingham, I am now arranging for yet another luncheon to be held this forthcoming May, but this time the venue will be in Perth, which is more centrally placed for all outlying suburbs. Thanks to the Returned Services League (Australian "British" Legion) we are being allowed to use their Club Premises - so it is going to be interesting to see how many more will respond to a further letter in our Community press.

I received a letter from Ann Deakin mentioning the possibility of a WRAC Luncheon Club (Australia); however, I feel that because of the long distances involved it would not be feasible. Even our state of Western Australia is five times the size of the British Isles.

List of those present:

Number	Name	Née	Nickname	Service		
W/399951	Margaret Collins	Insall	Margo	58-61	WRAC 1	WRAC
				63-66	London, Berlin	
W/345558	Christine Garrard	Norton	Dead Reg	45-47		ATS
W/7594	Eileen Harris	Perkins	Perkie	40s	UK	ATS
W/389457	Rosemary Fielding	Stevens	Kim		N Ireland	WRAC
W/	Muriel Payne	Morris			UK	
W/	Patricia Morton	Cashmore	Pat	56-59	R Sigs UK	WRAC
W/377364	Ann Phillips	Thurkle	Turkle	52-55	UK	WRAC
W/	Betty Provan	Jeffries	Jeff	39-46	UK	ATS
W/377363	Emily Ross	Whinney		52-55	UK MELF	WRAC
W/32342	Ella Scott-Key	Webzell	Cinders	45-48	UK	ATS
W/353908	Joyce Seward	Winter	Tubby	49-55	UK MELF Kenya	WRAC
W/329103	Elsie Shaw	Browne	Pat	45-47	UK	ATS
W/	Maisie Sims	1. Ashby		49-52	UK	WRAC
		2. Crafts				
W/161451	Betty Simpson	Gawthorpe		41-45	UK	ATS
W/135763	Irene Spencer	Tanner	Sixpence	42-45	UK	ATS
W/16115	Patricia Wilson		Pat	39-45	UK	ATS
W/369075	Pamela Zander	1. Brown			UK	
		2. Haven				

Unable to attend - Margarent Piper

Joyce Seward, Unit 32 6 Sepia Court, Rockingham, Western Australia 6168

16 SIGS REGT REUNIONS

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Including HQ BAOR Sig Tp. For details
contact Chris Bartlett, 45 Whitehouse Rd,
Leigh on Sea, Essex SS9 5SR
Telephone: 01702 524620
E-mail: (1) chris60s16er@tesco.net
(2) chris60s@hotmail.com

160 contacts to date, Annual reunions.

Chris Bartlett

1999 CANADA-WIDE REUNION OF WORLD-WAR TWO CANADIAN WOMEN'S ARMY CORPS VETERANS

Commencing Friday evening September 24th, 1999 until
closing on Saturday evening September 25th, sponsored by
the C.W.A.C. Unit # 47 of the Canadian Corps Association.

WILL YOU BE THERE?

FOR COMPLETE REUNION BROCHURE WRITE TO:

C.W.A.C. Veterans Reunion Committee
201 Niagara Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5V 1C9

Telephones: (area code 416) - 781-2871
239-0057 (after 6pm)

Gunners Corner

GUNNERS FOREVER

Dear Editor,

Would it be possible please to publish the 2 enclosed
photographs in 'Gunners' Corner' of 'Lioness'? The group
photograph was taken in the Summer of 1944 when 514 (M)
HAA Battery, 151 Regiment, RA was stationed on a gun-
site situated on Reepham Road, Norwich and amongst the
personnel of 'A' Section are two Predictor Operators - Ada
Ewer and me, Betty Holder (nee Lewis), 3rd and 4th from
the right on the 2nd row up respectively.



Both these 19 year olds had been 'called to arms' on Jan
2nd 1942 into the ATS. Following Basic Training at
Honiton were 'invited' to volunteer for Ack Ack, even
though we had both chosen to do other jobs when we
enlisted in 1941! I might add at this point that neither of us
regret the path we took. Serving in a mixed Battery was
like being a part of a large family as most of us stayed in
the same unit throughout the war. Being on gunsites with
the other 3 sections B, C and D, when we moved from
Lancashire to Humberside, South Yorkshire, Norfolk and

SCOTTISH AGM AND REUNION - 16 OCTOBER 1999

The Scottish AGM and Reunion 1999 will be held in
Glasgow City Chambers, George Square, Glasgow on
Saturday 16 October at 1100 hours. Coffee will be served
from 1030 hours and the price of the ticket includes a 4
course lunch with wine plus coffee/tea in the afternoon.

The usual Raffle will take place, for which contributions are
very welcome, and entertainment has been arranged.

Tickets price £10 are available before 18th September from
Mrs May McGavin, 11 Woodend Court, Woodend Road,
Mount Vernon, Glasgow G32 9QZ.

ATS Dinner Club

The Annual Luncheon of the ATS Dinner Club will be held
this year on Saturday, 2nd October 1999 at the Cumberland
Hotel, London.

Tickets will be available from June onwards and should be
obtained from the Ticket Secretary, Mrs Margaret Rogers,
103 Lion House Road, Hailsham, East Sussex, BN27 2SE.
Please enclose S.A.E.
Further details will be in the next A.T.S. Dinner Club News
Letter.

County Durham, we knew each other very well.
Friendships were made which have lasted some 57/58
years.

Naturally our paths divided when the war ended and those
of us who married were involved with husbands and later on
with children, who have grown up and made lives for
themselves, so that now we are Grandparents and Great-
grandparents! However, the friendships we made and the
memories we shared, although 'put on hold' for 50 years or
so, have never been forgotten and, blessedly, some of us
have 'found our old friends' again through Ex-Service
Associations, books which have been written, reunions
organised and the Battery Linking. We have so much for
which to thank Vee Robinson, Sue Crook, Major (Retd)
David Robertson and not least our own Association and the
Lioness.



Long Lost Friends

After 54 years Ada and I 'found each other' through the RA Association. After corresponding, chatting on the 'phone (long-distance between Warrilla Australia and Dronfield Derbyshire!), exchanging home videos etc - we finally met up when Ada and her husband were in the UK for Remembrance Sunday '98. We arranged our reunion to take place at the Meadowhall Shopping Centre, Sheffield and, as the other photo shows we'd plenty to reminisce about - no wonder both our mouths are open!! Ada (on the left) and I never stopped talking and listening until she and her husband caught their train for the return journey to Pontefract. Thank-you ATS, WRAC and RA Associations. We're older, slower and a little bit frail but inside those 70+ year old bodies are 'teenagers', a name we hadn't even heard of in the 40's.

Contact:

Mrs Beryl Holder, 10 Dale Road, Dronfield, NE Derbyshire S18 1YG.

544 BTY MINI REUNION

Five ladies from D Section 544 Bty held a mini Reunion in London last June. It was a joyful occasion for some of us hadn't met for 53 years. You may be sure though that we soon made up for lost time and we enjoyed every moment of it.

This meeting became possible because of Sue Brookes Battery Linking with just one name.

I am enclosing a photo taken at Whitehall. Reading from left to right the names are: Mary Willett (Fitzpatrick), Rita Coles (Lightwood), Sybil Barker (Coombs), Vera Allison (Scott) and me Gladys Warner (Humphrey).

Contact:

Mrs G Warner, 5 Bracken Walk, Tonbridge, Kent, TN10 3LF.



BATTERY LINKING - GUNNERS CORNER

I now have 1,750 names with Ack Ack batteries and still welcome any new enquiries from anyone hoping to make contact. Usual details please.

Contact:

Mrs Sue Crook, 14 the Larches, Horsell Vale, Woking, GU21 4RE.

93rd SEARCHLIGHT REGIMENT ANNUAL REUNION 1999

Friday 26th March found us gathering together once again for our annual reunion. This was an extremely enjoyable weekend, helped, I have no doubt, by the Hotel we stayed in it could not be faulted. The management and staff were very friendly and attentive at all times. According to what one of the waitresses told me, they all thought we were not too bad either, so full marks, girls!

Derby offered various interesting places to visit. Some of the ladies visited the Museum, others went to the Crown Derby factory which was very interesting, where demonstrators were on hand to explain different aspects of their work. The market and shopping centres were always a magnet. One or two of the ladies took a train ride out to Buxton. They enjoyed this but found Buxton a bit hilly for legs not quite as young as they used to be!

Next year we have decided to go back to the same hotel again. The dates for this will be Friday 14th April to Monday 17th April 2000. This is the weekend before Easter again. Lastly, can I please stress that this reunion is for all the ladies of the 93rd Searchlight Regiment, all three batteries, and not just one particular battery. Battery numbers 301, 342 and 495.

Contact:

Mrs E Lapham, 31 Barnfield Road East, Stockport, Cheshire SK3 8TT.

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Where are you now?

Should anyone have success from any of the WAYN articles we would be interested to hear from you.

MRS CELIA ANDREW (nee HEPPELL)

I would be delighted to hear from anybody who remembers 74 Squadron Special Operations in Palace Camp August-December 1943.



Palace Camp 1943

Contact: 35 Jessopp Avenue, Bridport, Dorset DT6 4AT

MRS VALERIE CHENERY (nee BRADFORD)

I would love to hear from anyone who remembers me as Valerie "Frankie" Bradford W/393309 PTE. I joined the WRAC at Guildford in April 1956, progressed to Yeovil for driver training and then on to Hounslow, as Land Rover then staff car driver. In 1958 I was posted to HQ Rheindahlen, RASC 68 Coy as a staff car driver. I was demobbed in 1960.

Contact: 3 Mayfair Road, Bungay, Suffolk NR35 1SA

MR I S WORTH

Mr Worth would like news of two former WRAC ladies, both of whom were stationed at St George's Barracks, Bicester 1958-1960: Miss Terry Soughton (W/408051) and her friend Miss Joyce Vagus.

Contact: 68 Roman Pavement, Monks Tower Estate, Lincoln LN2 5RU

MRS J M LOVEGROVE (nee CLARK)

Do you recognise yourself in the photograph of the Officers Mess Staff at Horseshoe Barracks, Shoeburyness in 1945?

Contact: Mrs J M Lovegrove, 11 Keenes Bungalows, Broomfield Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1RL



Officers Mess Horseshoe Barracks Shoeburyness 1945.

MRS P M E BEAMES (nee W/351075 PATES)

I would like to hear from a lady called Win Turner who was a switchboard operator instructor at Catterick in 1950, also a lady called Margaret Currie whom I met at Liphook on a course in 1951 and who was stationed in BAOR.

Contact: 40 Grenville Road, Beeston, Nottingham NG9 1LN



Mrs P Beames (nee Pates)

MRS H DURLING (nee KNIGHT W/298662)

I would like to be in touch with some of the girls I knew in 1944-45. Our battery was situated in Whalebone Lane, Romford and then Winchmore Hill. Binnie, Josie, Mary Ferguson and Marion Haydon are the girls I remember, they were at my wedding in 1945. The photograph was taken last year.

Contact: 27 Moody Road, Fareham, Hants PO14 2BP



Mrs H Durling (nee Knight).

NANCY FORD

Mr Robert Cooke would like to trace a lady with whom he served at Bovington Camp during the war, her name then was Nancy Ford.

Contact: 42 Harbut Road, Battersea, London SW11 2RB

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MRS PATRICIA SINCLAIR

Mrs Sinclair would like to trace former Junior Commander Elizabeth Bodkin who was in Eastern Command 1945-47. She later married and became Mrs Jameson.

Contact: 4704 E Paradise Village, PKY N, Apt 229, Phoenix, AZ 85032

MRS GWEN FINNEY (nee COOK)

Mrs Finney would like to trace a lady called Cpl Gaye Morse with whom she served in No 1 Coy, WO Signals in London. She would also like to know the whereabouts of Ex CSM Patterson who is sixth from the left front row of the photograph. Mrs Finney is sitting fifth from the right, front row.

Contact: 15 Woodgreen Croft, Oldbury, Warley, West Midlands B68 0DG



ATS Company

MRS PEGGY LESLIE (nee MURRAY)

I would like to know the whereabouts of the drivers in the photograph taken at Shoeburyness 1943-1944. Their names were Frankie Page, Queenie Mallett, 'Wee' Lil, Winnie Locke, Mary Hughes, Molly and Nora. I was a Corporal in the Ration Stores.

Contact: 5 Queen Margaret Drive, Glenrothes, Fife, Scotland



Shoeburyness 1943-44.

MRS BEATRICE CLYNE (nee MOYSE)

Does anybody remember me? I trained at Northampton then served three years with REME at Ashford, Kent as an Officers' Mess cook. From there I went to Brussels, then on to Herford and Bad Oeynhausen. I returned to Guildford and was demobbed in 1946.

Contact: 3 Brantley Avenue, Finchfield, Wolverhampton WV3 9AP



Mrs Clyne (nee Moyses)

IS THIS YOU ?

I wonder if any Association members may recognise themselves or friends on the picture, taken at Worthy Down in December 1967? They are L to R: (Back) Pte Tustain, Pte Torrie, Pte Gillatt, Pte Gill, Pte Wales, Pte Henshaw, Pte Woosey, Pte Green. (Front) Pte Whittle, Pte Magee, Pte Hall, WO2 Lawson, Sgt Haswell, Pte Thomson, Pte Morrison, Pte Lang.

Please Contact: Mrs Kantypowicz, 94 Paynels, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough PE2 5QW



Worthy Down 1967.

MRS D E SOWTER (nee JOHNSON)

I would like you, please, to publish my photograph as I am sure it will not only jog a few memories but will give pleasure, not only to those appearing in it but to others with whom we served. Our billet was the Old Bulls Head at Quorn, Leicestershire in about 1942. Those appearing are from L to R: Lily Smith-Hallam, Sgt Betty Watson, Dorothy Markam, Rose Page, Miss D Smith, Miss Able-White, Miss Wade. Front: Dvr Ainsworth, Eva Young (killed in London Blitz), Doris Johnson. Please contact: Mrs D Sowter, 139 Althorpe Drive, Loughborough LE11 4QT



ATS Leicestershire 1942.

MRS PATRICIA NEAL (nee HARRIS CPL W/284472)

Although Mrs Neal who is a widow is living in Canada she maintains links, and visits this country to see her family. She would be very pleased to hear from anyone who recognises her from the photograph. Contact: 5041 214A ST, Langley BC V3A 8K9



Mrs Patricia Neal (nee Harris).

BYGONE MEMORIES OF A NEW ASSOCIATION RECRUIT

I have recently joined the WRAC Association. How I have enjoyed reading the 'Lioness'. I was Cpl Jean Wesson ATS, my last posting before demob was 604 CMT RASC Fenham Militia Camp, and 609 CMT Coy RASC Clifton, York. I worked in the Admin Office alongside Jnr Cdr Cleaver, Sgt Betty Spens, Sgt Major Smethurst, Sgt Pat Coombes, Cpl Betty Phillpott and Dizzy in the pay office, to mention but a few. I would enjoy hearing from anyone who remembers me.

Contact: Mrs Jean Gainsess nee Wesson, The Old Cottage, Willoughby Waterleys, Leicester LE8 6UF.



*L to R Top: Cpl Jean Wesson, Sgt Betty Spens.
Front Row: Sgt Major Smethurst, Jnr Cmdr Cleaver,
Barbara Eales.*

MRS K COWPE (nee W/14212 SGT EAST)

I was stationed at the RAOC Depot Chilwell and worked in the Fanfold Typing Pool for six years. It would be lovely to hear from any of my old friends. Contact: Mrs K N Cowpe, 10 Castleton Boulevard, Skegness, Lincs.



Mrs K Cowpe (nee Sgt East)

WHO IS JOAN?

Ex New Zealand Fleet Air Arm pilot Allen Burgham and his wife would like to trace an ATS girl called Joan from the Lincoln area who served in London in 1944. She and Allen met at the Sussex Pub near Leicester Square Station. Unfortunately I cannot remember her surname.
Contact: 1107-165 Ontario Street, Kingston, Ontario, Canada K7L 2Y6.

MRS MARY ROGER

I was wondering if any of your readers could help me with any information about the people in the enclosed photograph. My late Mother Mary Rogers M/S GILES, possibly called "Pat" is in the front row, second from the left. All the information I have about my mother's ATS career is that she was a L/Cpl in Ack Ack and as a Plotter on a gun site 1942-1945 and was demobbed at Felixtowe. Contact: Mrs E Wilson, 13 Pinkerton Road, Glenrothes, Fife, Scotland KY7 4JH.



Mrs Mary Rogers (Giles) ? Felixtowe 1942-45.

CALLING THE SCALEY BACKS

After reading the article in the 1999 issue of Lioness under "REUNIONS" "ENIGMA REUNIONS" I would like to contact any Ex ATS Signals Cipher Operators who were stationed at "SHAEF" Headquarters, Bushey Park, Kingston on Thames in 1944. The name I remember is Sgt Henderson. She was later posted to Paris after my discharge. Please contact: Mrs L Hooper, (nee Beebee) 61A Fairview Road, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, Staffs WV11 1BT.



*Mrs L Hooper formerly Hawley nee Beebee
ATS Signals 1942-44.*

WHERE ARE THE TREGANTLE GUNNERS?

I would be very pleased to hear from anyone who remembers me from the photograph taken at Tregantle in 1942/43. Back left Winnie Ward, Centre Netta Sweeney, Back Right Dixie Williams, Front Left Margaret North, Front Right Olive Pearson.

Madge Smith is missing so I presume she was the photographer. I think the floral display growing out of Netta's head and my knock kneed pigeon toed pose plus kitten adds a little extra to the picture!

Please contact: Mrs O Jewell, 16 The Drive, Kippax, Leeds, LS25 7NQ



Tregantle 1942-43.

MRS J DIXON

I enjoyed reading my first Lioness as I am a very new member of Taunton Branch.

I wonder if there is anyone out there who also served with 5 HQ Signals at SHAEF. I served with them from 1943-1947, first at Bushey Park then below Goodge St tube station and Portsmouth for D Day. Finally we were flown to Versailles where we were lucky to enjoy American food and PX rations, but our living quarters were horrendous! We finally transferred to Neinburg.

In those days I was June Woodall along with Claire Ottway (now Aust), Kay Ayres, Gwen Rowley and Katy. I would love to hear from anybody who was with SHAEF at that time.



Versailles Barracks 1943-47.

I enclose a photograph taken at Versailles Barracks. Left to right: myself, Katy Gould, Clair Ottway and Gwen.

Contact: Mrs J Dixon, Honeysuckle Cottage, High Street, Buckland Dinham, Nr Frome BA11 2QR.

ANGELA BENNETT

I am writing in hope that you can help me. I served with the WRAC from 8-6-83 to 12-8-85. After getting married and moving several times I lost touch with a friend who I would really like to contact again. My service no was W0473671 and my friend was in the intake before me. Her name was Angela Bennett, although I don't know if she has since married.

Contact: Mrs N M Cain (nee Emmett), 3 Newlands Drive, Cross Hills, Keighley, West Yorks BD20 7OH.

CALLING PEGGY LABAZIEWICZ

Three of us who served at the Royal Army Education Corps Depot at Wilton Park, Beaconsfield, would love to know if Cpl Peggy Labaziewicz is still around. I am enclosing a photograph of her and myself outside the WRAC quarters in 1955. I very much enjoy reading 'Lioness' and send a big thank you to the staff for all the work that goes into publishing it.

Contact: Pauline O'Connell nee Yeo, Cumbrae, Cumbrae Place, Wanganui, North Island, New Zealand.



*Pauline O'Connell and Peggy Labaziewicz
Beaconsfield 1955.*

DOES ANYONE RECALL A RED-HEADED SERGEANT?

Can anyone help me please? My name when in the ATS was Lester, Sgt W 66244. I served from 1939-1948 in Southern Command, at The Close in Salisbury, and all round Wilton and Salisbury finally finishing up at Tidworth Military Hospital. My VAD instructor was a Betty Wainwright, my Cpl was Cara Tuck, and my pal on joining was Lilian Banell. Lilian and I both come from Birmingham. If anyone can remember me, my horrible nickname was, I regret to say, that damned Redheaded Sgt!. Aged 82 my hair is now still auburn but out of a bottle!

Contact: Mrs Betty Homer (nee Lister), 32 St Peters Court, Cirencester, Gloucester, GL7 1RZ.



"That Damned Redheaded Sgt Lester" 1939-48.

MISS BESSIE WRIGHT

I served in the ATS from November 1942-April 1946, my army number was W/233073 and I held the rank of Sergeant. I was stationed, for the whole of my service, at 206 Brompton Road, London, where I was attached to the General Operations Room as a Plotter. After the war in the TA I was there again with 64 Fire Command Troop. I enclose a photograph of the Plotters/Radar Course held at Theobalds Park in April 1943. I wonder how many are members of the Association? Should anyone remember me or recognise themselves I would like to hear from them.

Contact: Miss B Wright, 58 Rokeby House, Lochinvar Street, Balham, London, SW12 8PX.



Plotters/Radar Course Theobalds Park - April 1943.

MRS M STORIE

Please find enclosed a photo of 495 Bty 93rd S/L Regt, taken, I believe, when we were on an Army Battle Instructors Course. I am sitting second on the right front row. Later I became Sergeant Major of 495 Bty, known then as Mickey Hutton. Does anyone remember my name?
Contact: Mrs M Storie, 6 Pheppie Road, Muchalls, Stonehaven, Scotland AB 39 3XU



Sergeant Major Mickey Hutton, Army Battle Instructors Course 495 Bty 93rd S/L Regt.

W/301737 MARGARET LEWIS (nee SMITH)

I enlisted in the ATS on 1 May 1944 at Newcastle, the photo was taken on 3 July 1944. I did my training at York and Pontefract where I did a Cooks Course. I would like to trace my friends whose numbers were near mine, also Mattie Dalrimple from Cambuslang and Jean Booth from Yorkshire. We were stationed at Ashley Court in London.
Contact: Mrs M Lewis, 14 Bleasdale Crescent, Old Penshaw, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne & Wear.



Mrs M Lewis (nee Smith).

ATS REGISTER

Mrs Powis has taken over the organisation of the ATS Register. In September 98 I sent out a letter of introduction to all members and this month I sent out my first Newsletter to all current members on the Register. I have a list of contacts needed by former ATS together with a list of contacts already made by some Register members. The annual subscription is £2 payable to "ATS REGISTER" and should be sent to our Treasurer - Mrs J E Gough, 229 Boultham Park Road, Lincoln, LN6 7SQ (telephone 01522 520753). We ask for a SAE whenever any member requires an answer/receipt.

The following list of ladies are sought by members of the Register:

Norfolk & Suffolk Branch Secretary
Elsie Parker nee Axton - 1942/46 at "Y" Quorn
June Stapley from Bidderton, Kent
Scottie (Vera) Elars of Sheffield (may have remarried)
Marie Multon of Stroud, Gloucestershire
Betty Perkins of Buxton, Derbyshire
Mary Knowles of Douglas, Lanarkshire
Nessie Ireland of Douglas, Lanarkshire
Pauline Morton nee Coul
Barbara Buck (met at Honiton in ATS)
Any former friends of Mrs Vera Parkinson nee Ashley (Cook at Harrogate, Leicester, Winthorpe, Collingham, Hainton, Tamworth)
Any former friends of Mrs J O'Doughty nee Rolfe formerly of London - clerk at Honiton, Winchester, Dalkeith, Hindhead, BAOR Hamburg).
Anyone wishing to make contact should address letters:
c/o Ellen Powis, 16 Vincent Naughton Court, Rodney Street, Birkenhead, Wirral L41 2ZA.

MISS E M CATHERALL

Miss E M Catherall who was a Captain in the ATS and WRAC until her retirement in the 60s is now in a nursing home in Norfolk and sadly is blind. However, she would be very pleased to see or hear from anyone whom she may have known during her time in the Service. Her sister Nancy is also a resident in the home and would be delighted to read letters to her.

Contact: Miss E M Catherall, Sunderlands Nursing Home, 136 Norwich Road, Wymondham, Norfolk NR18 0SY.

MRS STUBBS nee CUTTER

We never seem to hear anything about Northern Command Headquarters and I'm wondering if anyone remembers the staff of DDATS who worked at Ashfield on the Tadcaster Road at Dringhouses, York until about 1945 when we moved down to the HQ building in Fulford Road, York. I'm enclosing a photo of Controller Wagstaff and Senior Commander Berry - I can't remember the names of the



other officers. On the back row is Cpl Margaret Ford, Cpl Pat Trimble, SSgt Margaret Moffat and CSM Rita Harley. Sitting in front on the left is ? Trautman and me, Doreen Cutter. We lived in requisitioned houses, Littlemead, (which I believe is now the HQ of the WI), Kingsland and Bradleigh on Tadcaster Road. When we later moved to the HQ building we went to live in the Cavalry Barracks, York. I keep in touch with several of those who came later but would love to hear from anyone else who remembers those days.

I'm also enclosing a photo taken in 1946 - me, (now a Cpl) Doreen Cutter, Kathleen Robson, Cpl Joan Cutter, my sister who was the company medical orderly.



Please contact: Doreen Stubbs (nee Cutter), 6 Glenholme Gardens, Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancs FY6 7PX

MRS ANN WORKMAN (nee SCOTT)

As this is the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the WRAC in 1949 I have enclosed a photograph of the very first intake into the New Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Guildford in August 1964. I am in the back row, 3rd from the left.

I did my Trade Training at Houndstone Camp, Yeovil, Somerset and my first posting was to HQ Eastern Command, Caverly Barracks, Hounslow, where I worked in the WRAC Company Office from November 1964 to June 1965.

My 2nd posting was to 28 Coy WRAC, Steamer Point, Aden and I worked in the office of HQ RCT from July 1965 to January 1967.

My 3rd and final posting was to 29 Coy WRAC, BAOR and I worked in HQ BAOR from February to December 1967 when I came out on marriage.

Should anyone remember me please contact: Mrs Anne E Workman (nee Scott) 7 Cuikenburn, Penicuik, Midlothian EH26 0JG



FRIENDS FROM "WAY BACK"

One of my great joys in life is receiving the "Lioness" and searching for names that I may remember from way back. What a still greater thrill it would be for me to hear from one of those "Girls" from those days who served with me ' Spike Morgan' W112928, 522 Bty (M) HAA 154 Regiment. The enclosed photo may help identify me. I would especially like to meet up with any of my friends who served with me at Netley, Fawley, Southampton.

My husband and I visited Netley a few years ago and were reminded of the fact that my Bty 522 took over from 505 Bty, 148 (M) HAA Regt, which was Pte Nora Caveney's Bty. We understand Nora was the first woman to die on active service in the UK.

One of the very special services I believe "Lioness" provides is that it helps to maintain a spirit of comradeship amongst those of us who had so much in common and would love to maintain it.

Contact: Mrs E M Rose, Ty-Rhosyn, 3 Gorman St, Modbury, S Australia 5092.



MRS MARY GREGORY (nee ANGEL)

Mrs Gregory (Bury Branch) (nee Mary Angel) who served with the Royal Army Pay Corps at the Command Office (Imprest Section) in Edinburgh 1942-1946 would like to hear from ex colleagues.

Contact: Mrs Mary Gregory, 11 Royd Street, Tottington, Bury BL8 3NH.

MRS MARGARET MASON

I was in basic training at Guildford in 1944.

The photograph is of our group of 456 (W) HAA Bty at Felixtowe in 1944. I am the second one in from the right in the first row.

I haven't heard from any of the girls or seen anyone from 456 Bty in the Lioness so I hope someone will recognise me.

Please contact: Mrs Margaret Mason (nee Hunt) 107-33 Thistlewood Avenue, Woodbridge, Ontario L4L 8V8



A CHARM OF COOKS

I would like to know if there is anyone who could recognise themselves from the picture, taken in the West Mess at Harper Barracks, Ripon between 1948-49. I was Pte Ellen Chapman (3rd from the left) now Ellen Steadman. Now residing at 32 Rosewood Avenue, Elm Park, Hornchurch, Essex.



GUILDFORD BAY CITY ROLLERS

As I come to the end of my 22 years service I wonder where the other members of the Platoon ended up. We formed up as No 3 Platoon 1 Company at Guildford on 25th July 1977 and had our Pass Off Parade on 1 September 1977. Only recently I discovered that the Platoon Cpl, Cpl (Sue) Elliott, lives five doors away from me in Aldershot. Do you remember the Bay City Roller concert and our Platoon song? If you recognise yourself or others and would like to have a Platoon reunion I can be contacted on 01962 887611 (work) or 01252 314806 (after 7pm).

Lisbeth Woods (nee Rose) 5th from the right in the second row.



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WRAC Senior Ranks Dinner Night

Saturday 13th March 1999

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The third WRAC Senior Ranks Dinner Night was held in the Sgts' Mess AGC Centre on the 13th March 1999, attended by 24 serving and 41 ex serving ladies.

The Guest of Honour for the evening was Maj (Retd) Maskens McIntyre, kindly escorted by Lt Col Westlake AGC(SPS).

The evening started with a photograph taken in the Armstrong Hall, then back to the Mess for pre-dinner drinks prior to a fabulous meal.

Before we left the table speeches of thanks and appreciation were read out by WO2(CSM) Thorne, thanking the RSM, the Mess staff, Ssgt Avril Laver for her hard work and assistance, all those who came for the Dinner and finally the Honoured Guests. The Guest of Honour delivered a fine speech and some good jokes which were enjoyed by all.

The party then transferred to the bar where we held the WRAC Quiz, 20 questions were laid on to test the knowledge and to get people together, the winning team was captained by Lt Col Westlake who were all presented with WRAC key rings, the second and third placed teams also carried off prizes which were WRAC lapel badges and pens/pencil sets.

The Sgts' Mess Dining Room was converted into a dance floor and then the party really began!! great displays of Saturday Night Fever and the Full Monty went on until the early hours. A great night was had by all judging from the letters and phone calls received after the event. I now gladly hand over the reins to SSgt Dawn Bagnall our volunteer for next years event.

Finally I'd like to thank everyone again for coming and supporting the Dinner, and I look forward to seeing you all next year.

WO2(CSM) Nancy Thorne

Officers' Branch Luncheon

The annual meeting of the Officers' Branch of the WRAC Association will take place in the Officers' Mess, AG Corps Centre at Worthy Down Winchester on Saturday 11 September 1999.

The meeting will assemble mid-morning for coffee. This will be followed by a talk from a serving officer 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. Wine will be served with the meal.

Inclusive price for morning coffee, pre lunch drink, lunch with wine will be £16.00.

Please send your cheque for £16.00 made payable to WRAC Association with the application form below and an SAE for return of your ticket.

CLOSING DATE WEDNESDAY 25 AUGUST 1999

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

From.....

I wish to attend the Officers' Lunch on Saturday 11 September 1999.

My car details are:

Make: Colour: Reg No:

I enclose a cheque for £16.00 for the lunch.

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

**CHEQUE MADE PAYABLE TO
WRAC ASSOCIATION PLEASE**

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

OFFICERS' LUNCHEON

Please note that the Officers' Mess is still undergoing renovation and a certain amount of disruption has been caused. Location of rooms for morning coffee and lunch are still unknown at the time of going to press.

Poems

MEMORIES

PDF Compressor Free Version
Foxgloves on the Quantocks,
Cider in the town.
RA drilling ATS
Pounding Tarmac down.

Rhododendrons lining pathways
To the dentist's hidden lair,
While budding Radar numbers
Spin wildly in mid air.

Tall chimneys lit by moonlight
Much softer than the beam
Which lights the wayward couple
Where only sheep should dream.

Midnight feasting in the cookhouse
From dinners cold remains
And high above the rose beds
Drones that ever circling plane.

Dawn breaking on the Quantocks
With the sea a distant view.
"Stand down" bellows the RSM,
With his grudging "Guess you'll do."

Kathleen Laming nee Parker
ex. Hangmans Hollow, A Troop, 301 Battery, 93 S/L Reg.

TIME MARCHES ON!

Young, innocent, naive and brash -
Too young to appreciate what we have,
We bend, we stretch, we jump, we run -
Busy youth, just having fun.

The hands of time move slowly on,
We realise that our youth has gone,
What we had we took for granted
Now our fitness is the 'late lamented'.

No longer can we run and jump,
Joints seize up, a solid lump.
Eyesight dims, and fingers fumble,
We keep on moving, though we may stumble.

Memories take over now -
Remembering what we were and how!
Our golden youth has long departed
But army girls don't get down hearted.

Life is precious, oh so sweet -
We keep on moving our pals to meet.
We meet, we talk, we laugh, we cry
But always keep our heads held high.

Jean Cundy-Borge
(formerly Driver Evans 36 then 68 Coy, RASC BAOR)

FOR ENGLAND IN 1943!

Do your bit for England
Was what was said to me
So I joined the Women's Army
In nineteen forty three.

To do my best for England
Was easy for a while
I drilled and marched, paraded
Obtained a certain style.

To do my best for England
To Scotland I was sent
In a village in the Highlands
The next six months were spent.

To do my bit for England
I learnt to be an O.W.L.
A wireless operator
Not a night-time hunting fowl!

Strathpeffer in the Highlands
So beautiful, serene,
Set midst woods and mountains
The fairest I had seen.

Such happy days I spent there
On my Operators course
Learning procedure, Electric Magnetism,
And high-speed codes in Morse.

My heart was in the Highlands
As poets have said before.
What I learned there in Strathpeffer
Helped England win the War!

In nineteen eighty seven
I took a holiday,
A coach trip to the Highlands,
Strathpeffer for Nine Days!

I'll walk those hills and mountains
And jump across those streams
Alas! my legs are over seventy!
I jump only in my dreams.

The village is still lovely
The hills and valleys glow.
I'm glad I did my bit for England
But oh so very long ago!

Molly Schnessele
A.T.S W/242772 Pte Bailey E M, Wireless Operator B2

ATS POEM

There's many little friendships,
That in our lives we make,
We'll never quite forget them,
Just for Auld Times Sake.

(Sgt) "Binkie" 1944
Sub-Depot HQRTS, Chilwell

TO MY CHILDREN

When I spill some food on my nice clean dress
or maybe forget to tie my shoe,
Please be patient and perhaps reminisce
about the hours I spent with you.
When I taught you to eat with care
plus tying laces and your numbers too.
Dressing yourself and combing your hair.

Those were precious hours with you
so when I forget what I was about to say,
Just give me a minute or two,
it probably wasn't important anyway..
I would much rather listen just to you.

If I tell a story one more time,
though you know the ending through and through.
Please remember your first nursery rhyme
when I rehearsed it a hundred times with you.

When my legs are tired and its hard to stand
or walk the steady pace I'd like to.
Please take me kindly by the hand
and guide me now as I so often did for you.

(W185577 Cpl M Riddall)
Mrs M Wiggett

BETTY MITCHELL'S SAD POEM

We asked our great city fathers for some flowers arranged in
a bed.
The answer came back "No, you can't". no matter whatever
we said.
"This is our 60th birthday", we told them with joy and with
pride.
The ATS did great sterling work, and many of them died.
When Plymouth suffered back in the Blitz, Ack-Ack girls were
manning the guns.
Is it too much to ask that, 60 years on, you honour your
daughters as well as your sons?
But, no, we still couldn't have any flowers, no matter
whatever we said.
So we raised a whole lot of money for a memorial seat
instead.
We've given this to the city as an amenity for folk on the Hoe,
Then we asked again for some flowers - and again the city
said no.
This birthday year is the 50th of the peacetime women's
corps:
Our WRAC daughters, who followed after the war.
So the flower beds in Plymouth will be filled with the usual, I
guess;
It seems it was much too difficult to spell out our name - ATS.
And now for the WRAC, that seems impossible, too.
If you gave us the tools, we'd roll up our sleeves. That's a
job we'd very soon do!
Up and down this fair land of ours, in 24 other big towns
Beautiful tributes have been made; thanks for our service is
shown.
To Plymouth, I say that I'm saddened that a city with such a
fine name
Should be so petty-minded. It reflects on this council with
shame.

by W42300 EX-SERGEANT BETTY MITCHELL, ATS

WHY WEAR A POPPY?

"Please wear a poppy," the lady said
And held one forth, but I shook my head
Then I stopped and watched as she offered them there
And the face was old and lined with care
But beneath the scars the years had made
There remained a smile that would not fade.

A boy came whistling down the street
Bouncing along on carefree feet.
His smile was full of joy and fun.
"Lady," he said, "can I have one?"
When she had pinned it on he turned to say,
"Why do we wear a poppy today?"
The lady smiled in a wistful way
And replied "This is Remembrance Day
And the poppy there is the symbol for
The gallant men who went to war.

And because they did, you and I are free,
That's why we wear a poppy, see.
I had a boy about your size with golden hair and big blue
eyes.
He longed to play and jump about,
Free as a bird he would race and shout.
As the years went by he learned and grew
And became a man as you will too.
He was fine and strong with a boyish smile,
But he seemed to be with us such a short while.

When war broke out he went away
I still remember his face that day.
He smiled at me and said 'Goodbye,
I'll be back soon, Mum,
So please don't cry'.
But the war went on and he had to stay
And all I could do was wait and pray.
His letters told of the awful fight
With tanks and guns and cruel barbed wire
And the mines, the bullets, the bombs and fire.

Until at last the war was won, so that's why we wear a
poppy, son".
The small boy turned as if to go
Then he said "Thanks Lady,
I'm glad to know.
That sounded like an awful fight
But your son, he came back all right?"

A tear rolled down the folded cheek,
She shook her head but did not speak,
I slunk away feeling sick with shame
And if you had been me you'd have done the same.
For our thanks in giving is often delayed,
Though our freedom was bought..
and millions paid.

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◀ *Mrs Doris Mathers
with members of her
branch*

► *"A bevy of Brigadiers", Brigadier
Shirley Nield, Brigadier Helen
Meechie and General M C Bailey*



Col Anne Clissitt holding the fort.

▲ *Betty Mitchell, Beryl
Montague-Butlin and
Pauline Grundy* ►



*"It's all her fault" ►
Mary Linnegan,
Karen Ballard and
Jol Audrey Smith at
the souvenir stall*



*◄ Anne Bray, Sue Barker
and Joyce Edwards
organising the raffle*



*▲ "She said, he said and I said"
Gill Sale and Mary Linnegan
deep in conversation*

*◄ WO2 (SQMS) Lizbeth Woods
and her colleagues*

THE WOMEN WHO WENT TO WAR

When Hitler started the Second World War,
He had dreams of being a Czar.
But the people who soon put a stop to his dreams,
Were the women who went to the war.

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The cry went out "Women, we need your support",
So they came from both near and afar.
Just give us the tools, and we'll finish the job.
Said these women who went to the war.

We sacrificed husbands, our brothers, our sons,
We left homes and mothers to serve on the guns.
We cooked and we washed up like running a bar,
We women who went to the war.

We drove the big buses, we flew the light planes,
We drove every make of a car.
The great naval transport had no fear for us,
We women who went to the war.

We put on our khaki, our two shades of blue,
We put up our wings and our stars.
We worked on munitions, made bullets and bombs,
We women who went to the war.

We dug up potatoes, we harvested corn,
We milked all the cows in the byre.
No job was too little, no job was too big,
For the women who went to the war.

We worked as telephonists cracking the codes,
Of the message that came from afar.
We sold tea and sandwiches out of a van,
We women who went to the war.

We typed out the orders, we made up the pay,
Of the boys who were fighting afar.
We worked as policewomen keeping the peace,
We women who went to the war.

We drove the top brass all over the place,
We maintained our own little car.
We drove heavy lorries from the works to the docks,
We women who went to the war.

We manned the First Aid posts, we doled out the pills,
Took samples of things in a jar.
We pulled the dead bodies from out of the Blitz,
We women who went to the war.

We worked in the Quarters Store, clothing and food,
We counted the stripes and the stars.
We worked as batwomen, cleaned buttons and belts,
We women who went to the war.

We made camouflage clothing, while still in our teens,
When our factory went up with a roar.
We laid down our lives for our Country and King,
We women who went to the war.

We worked in the Post Office, sorted the mail,
And saw that it always got there.
Through numerous postings we still got our mail,
We women who went to the war.

We nursed all the wounded, drove ambulances too,
With no lights to see by, but the stars.
We used the big hoses to put out the fires,
We women who went to the war.

Now I have finished the listing of jobs,
We women did during the war.
If your job was left out, just give me a shout,
I'm a woman who went to the war.

Though it was over a long time ago,
And we that are left bear the scars.
We hope you'll remember and never forget,
We women who went to the war.

Mollie Davies W/9951 (nee Wilkinson)
11 Burhanan Street, Charlton, NSW 2218

AID TO DAILY RATES OF PAY

(Notes from a Pay Clerks Course in 1943)

Mrs G Hansford (ex-WO2 Shreeve)

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

FOR THE HONOUR OF THE CORPS

In wartime England food was short and folk encouraged to report
Neighbours guilty of the sin of putting in their rubbish bin
Food not eaten. For the common good. First to go.
With scarce resources at the time wasting victuals was a
crime.

Behind Buck House in a quiet street nestled a dwelling small
and neat
With rose mirrors, chandelier and chattels to the owner dear.
This house, from carelessness to save, and spare the
ravages of war
Its titled owner gladly gave to Ladies of the Signal Corps.

One day in nervous state the cook, wearing a harassed
anxious look,
As though anticipating doom, came up into the Anteroom.
"Private Atkins has confessed a joint of meat is past its best.
It came here from the CSD, - on my day off. No one told me.

I couldn't possibly foresee she'd put it in a bain marie."
The Cypher buff said "Have you thought, if the dustmen
should report
That we put it in the bin what trouble we should all be in?"
They called a meeting right away to see how best to save the
day.

The street ran into Belgrave Square. The stately mansions
standing there
Looked on a tennis court and trees where residents could
take their ease
While hedges kept it quite secluded and railings passers-by
excluded.
The officers received a key to use this kind facility.

A Cabinet Minister lived next door, a diplomat at 44.
Past their dwellings while they slept that night four shadowy
figures crept,
And silently their progress made carrying rucksack, torch
and spade
To the gateway in the fence, courtesy of the residents.

Carefully they turned the key and the gate gave easily.
Nocturnal creatures rustled leaves. Officers rolled up their
sleeves.
They picked a spot where earth was soft, then held their
breath as one girl coughed
But all the Square was fast asleep. They dug a hole there
round and deep.

When the joint was laid to rest the burial party did their best
To cover tracks with earth and leaves, then crept out like a
band of thieves.
Wary they should be suspected of practices which no
respected
Officer should even try, but soon they were home safe and
dry.

So if you dwell in Belgrave Square remember those who
ventured there
In case the Corps should suffer shame, risked their honour
and their name.
When on balmy summer days you watch the tennis or just
laze
Think, perhaps beneath your feet lies an ancient joint of
meat.

Jane C Knight

Did you know?

**Last year Naafi invested
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Branch News

ACCRINGTON

In October we had a dinner to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the ATS, it was held at the Copper Kettle Restaurant, Accrington and was attended by the Mayoress of Hyndburn. Everyone who attended enjoyed the evening, we also had an anniversary cake made by one of our members, Isabella, with plenty of rum and brandy in it. Hope nobody got breathalised on the way home!

At the AGM in November there was an election of officers, we now have Isabella Hamilton as Chairperson and Lillian Howarth as Secretary, they are both looking forward to their year in office and hope to raise as much money as possible.

Once again in February the Branch attended the service for the Accrington Pals, the parade and service is organised by one of our members Miss Shelley Whitehead (Cpl/TA).

The Branch heard with deep sadness of the death of Joan Nadin ATS from the Bolton Branch. When the Accrington Branch was formed Joan gave us lots of help and she was a staunch worker for the Bolton Branch and was their Secretary for many years. She will be sadly missed by those of us who knew her as a friend.

On Friday 30th April the Branch held a dinner to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the WRAC, at the Walton Arms, Simonstone. It was well attended by members and friends of the Branch, as always a good night was had by all.

Next year we hope to be united with lots of friends at the Cardiff reunion, Kiwi Ann may be coming from Australia ex ATS.

ALDERSHOT

After our winter hibernation the Aldershot branch has sprung to life again with a vengeance! The first engagement was the fascinating and illuminating talk by Colonel Rosemary Cornwell about her work with BLESMA; food for thought indeed. Food in another form, although not strictly a branch activity, was deliciously on the agenda in another form when four of our ex-WRAC members, including our President, serving officer Lt Col Sue Westlake resplendent in mess kit, attended a dinner to celebrate the founding of the Aldershot branch of the Royal Signals Association. It was a splendid occasion made poignant when a section of the Royal Signals band played Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill in honour of the WRAC, followed by the regimental march of the Adjutant General's Corps in which our President now serves.

Our next engagement was the Association AGM at Guildford University, which falls within our branch area. At this meeting we were happy to provide "third echelon" backing for the Corps HQ admin team and also to welcome back Kate McGregor and Margaret Purkiss, former branch members now active in the Association in those areas to which they have re-located. On the following day we attended the service at the cathedral, when we commemorated 50 years of the WRAC; we were very proud that so many of our members took an active part in this service - WO2 Lisbeth Woods carried the Association standard to and from the high altar with appropriate dignity

and faultless bearing. RQMS Andrea Denham read the first lesson and Brigadier Nolan read the second lesson; we also believe that our branch provided the oldest member of the WRAC to attend - Major (retd) Eva Dixon (known to many as "Dixie") who is now 93, came in her wheelchair, in which she looked the picture of elegance. A special vote of thanks is due to husbands; firstly Lisbeth Woods' husband who gave up his whole week-end to drive the minibus which transported many members around the university site and to the cathedral and secondly Peter Easton, husband of our Vice-Chairman Gwenda, who spent the whole day taking photographs and running errands to collect forgotten essentials.

Only two days after these excitements our branch monthly meeting was held - it had been quite impossible to postpone it because our popular lecturer had had to be booked two years in advance! Nonetheless the evening, at which we were joined by the local branch of the Royal Signals Association, was a great success; a total of 64 members and guests enjoying an interesting history of the last days of the Romanovs, followed by a buffet supper. A return visit by a team of ex-WRAC to a quiz night organised by Royal Signals is viewed with a certain amount of trepidation, pitted as we are to be against teams from Sandhurst, the Staff College and various local regiments.

BATH

Bath Branch have welcomed ten new members to the Branch this year, Mary Bazett from Coaley Dursley, Pamela Briddon from Sea Mills, Bristol, Brenda Clarkson from Limpley Stoke, Bath, Ruth Cuthbert from Calne, June Dixon from Buckland Dinahm near Frome, Grace Dutton, from Frome, Jean Edwards from Innsworth, Gloucester, Sheila Holley from Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, Gillian Keen from Portishead, and Joy Smith from Keynsham. Obviously it is not possible for some of these new members to attend our twice monthly meetings, but we try to keep in touch with regular Newsletters.

To commemorate our 60th anniversary of the formation of the ATS we have donated a tree which was planted in the Parade Gardens in the centre of the city by our Deputy Mayor Cllr. Marion McNair who invited us back to the Mayor's Parlour for tea. Last year we were honoured to have our floral badge also in these gardens.



ATS - Commemorative tree planting.

The Secretary, Sylvia Musgrave, and Audrey Stevens attended the AGM at Guildford, which was an enjoyable weekend. We congratulate our new General Secretary Ruth Watt, and our new clerk Sue Myers for looking after us all so well.

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Events for Branch members this year include a visit to Dents Glove Factory at Warminster followed by a tea party at the home of Oriance Burton, a lunch at the home of our Vice-Chairman Betty Keating from Peasdown-St-John, and towards the end of the year we hope to have a shopping trip to Wilton and Salisbury.

Several members attended the Area Reunion at Boscombe and we thank the members of the Bournemouth Branch for their hospitality.

We are now saving hard for the Grand Reunion next year in Cardiff.

BEXHILL

Another six months have flown by, how hard it is to think back to last year. We did have a pleasant December with two celebrations, one was a Christmas Party in the hall where we hold our meetings. On that occasion we invited the two young ladies from the television company who are doing the documentary on our "Love Lives in WW 2". I do not think anybody from our branch was willing to divulge their secrets but we are wondering what has happened to the programme or has it bitten the dust?!

Our second Christmas gathering was lunch in a pub, about 22 came together for that, despite a few not being well enough on the day to join us. In February we had a very interesting talk about Sainsburys; it certainly made us realise what a complicated task shopping is these days and could take all day, if we stopped to read the labels!

We had a super Easter Party, quizzes, a chocolate egg each and a lovely tea. Our newly formed social committee did us proud and our congratulations go to them.

Sad to report the loss of two of our members, Betty Brewer and Mary Bentley, they regularly came to our meetings and we miss them so.

We are looking forward to our next six months together and making plans for enjoyment, whilst never forgetting what we are all about. Thanks to "my girls" for their support all along the way!

May Jackson, Secretary.

BIRMINGHAM

First of all we are sorry we have not been able to send any report to Lioness recently as we have had a lot of illness at the branch. Some of our ladies have been in hospital including our Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. However, now we are all on the mend and back to normal.

At our last meeting our Lady Mayoress visited us and spoke to all the ladies in turn. She also talked about the memorial that was being placed in London for the women of World War II. The Mayoress had planted a tree in Highbury Hall Gardens for our Sixtieth Anniversary, after which we all enjoyed a cream tea with her. We have had a collection and

also a Bring and Buy sale for the Memorial Fund and were able to send a donation towards the fund.

Our next big event is our Eleventh Birthday Party to which we have invited Coventry members one of our ladies is making the cake.

Some of our ladies are going to Guildford for the AGM Weekend. It will be nice to see the Cathedral Window again, which was dedicated to the WAAC, QMAAC, ATS and WRAC. It is good to know that we are being recognised after such a long time.

Two more events that we are all looking forward to is our Area Reunion at Crewe and also the Grand Reunion at Cardiff.

I take this opportunity to thank all our members who have given us their support through the year. Thank you very much from the Committee.

BLACKPOOL

Our usual monthly meetings still average 20-30 members. Our talks by guest speakers have included a solicitor on making wills and a representative from 'Stalwart' on turning property into cash whilst still living in it. Trips to Garden Centres are always popular.

The branch recently discovered that a Mr Raymond Walsh of the East Lancashire Regiment had completed his research project on the Graves of the ATS. He has published a book titled "The Roll of Honour of the ATS (later renamed the WRAC) 1939-1947. Costing £18.00 plus £2.00 postage UK, £3.00 overseas. It is obtainable from THCL Books, 185 Lammock Road, Blackburn, Lancs BB1 8LH.

BOLTON

Last time I wrote to say that we had presented Mrs Joan Nadin with an inscribed goblet for all her hard work as Branch Secretary for 17 years; sadly, on 25th February Joan died unexpectedly. She had represented the branch at Combined Services meetings where she was Treasurer and had worked hard on our behalf and will be sadly missed. We also lost two more members, Dorothy Schofield and Alice Chandler in the same month, both of whom had been ill for a long time.

On 22nd October we celebrated our annual lunch at Bolton Technical College and in December we had Christmas Lunch at Smithhills Coaching House. On 10th November we attended the British Legion Concert of Remembrance. To celebrate 60 years of the ATS two of our members led the Standard Bearers and were given a place of honour on the stage; it was very moving. Next day we marched past the Cenotaph in Bolton at the Armistice Day Service. One of the charities we subscribe to, Vision Aid, invited our members to their Open Day. It was very interesting and enlightening to see their work for partially sighted children.

We have now settled into our new venue which is very pleasant and we hope we can now arrange speakers for our monthly meetings. It is also hoped to organise a visit to The Armories in Leeds during the summer. Finally our branch, along with Blackpool, Accrington and Rochdale are delegated to run the Tombola at the NW Grand Reunion to be held in Preston in June.

BOURNEMOUTH

We had a busy and successful year (1998) tinged with sadness. In April we were greatly saddened by the sudden death of Peggy Baker (sister of Betty Smith), followed in May by that of Freda Aspinall, both had been members of the Branch for many years and are greatly missed.

Our monthly meetings continue to be well attended by an average of 35 members - just under half of our total membership.

Our speakers have varied from a Horologist telling us about the history of clocks and watches, from water clocks, Cleopatra's Needle, to the first mechanical clocks made by Benedictine Monks in 1292, right through to modern time pieces, navigational aids etc. Another speaker, the Reverend Timbrell gave us a really hilarious talk, basically on the use of herbs in medicine, but with many amusing asides. Our Chairman, Doreen Snell, also gave a very interesting talk on her trip to Iceland, which had many of us wanting to go there. In June we attended an afternoon garden party at the home of our Treasurer, Mrs Nickless, and in July we had our annual coach outing, touring the beautiful Dorset countryside, followed by afternoon tea, provided by the ladies of Bere Regis Branch, British Legion. Both of these occasions were greatly enjoyed.



Dedication of a Floral Tribute.

August 18th saw us attending a service to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the formation of the ATS and the dedication of a floral tribute. This was held in Boscombe Gardens on August 23rd. A group of us attended Southern Area Reunion, hosted by Aldershot Branch. A good chance for a happy 'get together' marred only by heavy rain. At our September meeting we held a very successful Bring and Buy sale, instead of our usual monthly raffle.

October 6th, 20 of us were given a conducted tour of Blandford Camp, home of No 11 Signals Regiment, followed by a very informative tour of the Museum. In November we held our branch AGM and in December 52 of us enjoyed our annual Christmas Dinner. Also in December 16 members were entertained to a Coffee Morning held by the local WAAF Association.

In addition to our monthly meetings, throughout the year individual members and groups have attended other functions and these included:

Royal Signals Association Corps Day, Blandford in July.

Quarterly Luncheons Intelligence Corps Association.

The superb A/A reunion in York - what a wonderful atmosphere and welcome York gave us! Followed by an extra visit to Eden Camp - who could forget that?

In September a group thoroughly enjoyed a week's holiday at the Lord Kitchener's Memorial Home, Lowestoft.

Also in September members attended the 93rd Searchlight Regiment reunion at the Union Jack Club, London, the ATS Dinner Club lunch in Birmingham, the Enigma reunion at Bedford - with trips to Bletchley Park and Chicksands: also the dedication of the 'Y' Section (Signals) part of the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire and planting of Yew trees.

Two members have been volunteers, serving in the museum shop at Blandford occasional weekends.

All in all a very active group despite our passing years!

And so into 1999:

In January our meeting took the form of a general chat after business was dealt with.

In February we held a further Bring and Buy sale to raise funds to help finance our programme for hosting Southern Area Reunion. Also two students from a college in Winchester interviewed members about their wartime service, this was for a college project.

Also in February, 16 members enjoyed a visit to the Royal Hospital, Chelsea and the Army Museum.

At our March meeting we were addressed by Mr Tomlin about his duties as a Yeoman of the Royal Guard. This was a most interesting talk, with some humour too.

At our April meeting we held a quiz and another Bring and Buy sale. The WRNS Association also invited us to join them on an afternoon boat trip from Bournemouth to Swanage.

Our membership has increased and we welcome several ex WRAC but unfortunately as several are now employed in civilian jobs, they are unable to join our afternoon meetings.

As this goes to press early in May, we look forward to our hosting of the Southern Area Reunion on May 23rd, Worthy Down on June 12th and a Remembrance Service and Parade at Weymouth on June 13th. Details of these and all our further activities will be in our next report.

BRADFORD

Meetings continue to be well attended each month.

November is always the busiest month of our calendar, beginning with the annual Festival of Remembrance concert. It was the 52nd Festival with the Lord Mayor, Lady Mayoress, Chief Constable and many other guest dignitaries.

With a few of our members we spent three days before Remembrance Sunday selling poppies. On Remembrance Sunday we proudly marched to the war memorial for the laying of poppy wreaths. A smaller parade and service was

held elsewhere in the afternoon, but nevertheless, it was just as touching.

Our annual veterans lunch took place in mid November but sadly there will be no more as our last veteran, Harry Holmes, sadly passed away in February. Harry was a real gentleman, always alert and cheerful and had celebrated his 101st birthday on 6 November.

When the veterans' lunches started in 1982 we promised to carry on as long as veterans could attend. Now 16 years and 93 veterans later we have lots of fond memories to look back on. Many thanks to all members who worked so hard to make everything a success.

Christmas lunch was held at the Pine room where we were joined by DVA members and their wives. A New Year's party was held at the Branch meeting in January.

It is sad to report the death of Anne McLeod on 28 February. Anne had been ill for a long time and some of our Branch members attended her funeral. The Standard would normally have been present, but unfortunately I had also been in hospital therefore it was not possible.

CANTERBURY

We started off our meetings of 1999 with cold January while our Secretary, Maria Power, swanned off to warmer climes on a World Cruise and our Chairman disappeared to Barbados. We were all very envious of both of them and wished that it could have been us. February came and Doreen our Chairman came back from Barbados, slightly injured; we all wish her well, and she is on the mend now. In March we were entertained by Jean Collyer with her excellent talk on Blue and White Porcelain and it was most informative. We all went home to see if we had any valuable pieces hidden away. We also received a postcard from Australia (our Secretary) saying that she had reached the half way mark and was on her way home. April came and Maria our Secretary was there to get her fish and chips (we might have known). It was nice to have her back, so we all sat and gorged ourselves, listening to tales of hurricanes and cyclones; perhaps we are glad we didn't go after all. After our sumptuous fish and chip lunch we were entertained by a flower demonstration (we didn't know that a twig, 4 irises and 2 leaves made such a lovely arrangement). This was followed by our small container competition and three people won a prize. We followed this with our raffle and all the flower arrangements were given as prizes - we had a great afternoon. Our next meeting in May was slightly warmer and we just had a get together after the meeting, which was very pleasant.

Thanks go to Kay Perfect for taking over as Standard Bearer and what a great job she is doing. Well done Kay.

Those of us who went were so pleased to be with everyone at Guildford. Was that really our Mavis Middleton who they were talking about when she received her Certificate of Appreciation? It was, we were all thrilled for Mavis, she has put in so much hard work for our branch and she richly deserved her certificate.

We have not been very active this first half of the year but we look forward to our branch outing to the Nature Reserve, The Royal Tournament and our holiday to The Lord Kitchener Home in Lowestoft later on in the year.

That is all the news from us at present, another report will be hot off the press for January 2000.

CHELMSFORD

We are glad to be able to say that since our last report in the Lioness our branch has continued to flourish with several new members. Most of them have transferred from other areas but one or two have joined the Association recently. We welcome them all to our meetings where an average of 40 ATS and Affiliated Members enjoy time together.

It is with regret we report the death of Vera Chilver, a member of the Branch since 1989. Vera was a cheerful and friendly person who sadly lost her memory during the last part of her life. When she attended meetings it was Vera who made a large boiled fruit cake for our special occasions, for which we were always grateful!

Last October saw the formation of a structured Committee at our first AGM. The team who are now keeping the ball rolling have agreed to serve for one year and we do appreciate all the many jobs which are done by those on the Committee and also our "helpers" who give support so willingly. To mark the contribution made by Daphne Attridge, the former Secretary who has now stepped down, she was presented with an inscribed ATS plaque and a bouquet on behalf of all members as tokens of appreciation.

In November we spent a day in Norwich "Christmas Shopping" and enjoyed goodies on the coach coming home. We also went back to Corton Holiday Centre near Lowestoft for a few days which proved a good holiday with excellent entertainment. Thank you Joyce and Joan.

Our Christmas Lunch was particularly special as we celebrated our "60 years of the ATS". We were delighted to have as our Guest of Honour Lady Val Kemble who made a long journey to be with us. We had a group photograph taken and no doubt shall look on it in years to come with happy memories. After our meal and entertainment we enjoyed a slice of cake which had been made and decorated by the daughter of Emily (one of our members). To finally commemorate the occasion members were given an inscribed bookmark as a keepsake.



Christmas Lunch 1998 to commemorate 60 years of the ATS.

Since January we have enjoyed talks from representatives from the Chelmsford Library Service, a further talk from a former Royal butler and a visit by an Owl Breeder who brought his owls with him! We also have had a beetle drive and a word competition. About 30 of us visited the Chelmsford Civic Theatre to see 7 Brides for 7 Brothers - a first class musical which was much enjoyed by those who went.

During the last six months we have entertained a group of housebound people to tea at the request of Age-Concern in

Chelmsford. We were very happy to provide tea, a sales table and company for those who live alone and are unable to get out and about, we hope we may be able to do this again in the future. Some of us attended the Armistice Service at Chelmsford Cenotaph and a wreath was laid on behalf of the Branch. The Branch is also represented by a few members at the United Services Association which holds meetings in Chelmsford.

Our meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of the month and are from 2-3.30pm at the British Legion Hall, London Road, Chelmsford. If you receive a copy of the Lioness but do not at the moment belong to our branch but would like to do so, please get in touch with the Secretary, Mrs Gina Shadrack, Tel No 01245 251088 who will be glad to give you details.

CHESTER

It has been a while since we have gone to press! We are still a very active branch even if old age is creeping slowly up on us. We have gained a few Ex ATS members but do try to attract Ex WRAC. We wish that some would join.

Sadly we are having to change our meeting place due to hotel alterations and as from May 1999 will be meeting in the Belgrave Hotel, City Road, Chester - as usual the second Monday in each month at 1.30 pm.

As always several of our members attended the Remembrance Parade in London, a time of sadness and memories. The wreath for our Branch was laid at the Cathedral by Mrs Megan Hughes and the local newspaper featured her and the representative of the Chester War Widows Association - reproduced in the Lioness. We were very proud to be represented by Mrs Hughes as she is one of our older members and 'sadly' is having eyesight difficulties.

We received an invitation to attend the birthday party - complete with cake - at the Rhyl Branch and later the dedication of their new Standard at the Rhyl Parish Church which we supported with our Standard proudly carried by Mrs Molly Choppen.

Our Christmas lunch was attended by 24 members and again we had a photograph of all present in the local paper. It was a very pleasant day and the chattering had to be heard to be believed - a bunch of budgies had nothing on us!



Chester Branch - Christmas Lunch.

We are looking forward to the North Western Group Reunion in Preston on June 12th. Ear plugs obligatory.

Some of our members are again attending the Normandy Veteran's Pilgrimage in June. The comradeship between us all is always there.

We have sent donations to the Association Benevolent Funds and also to The Royal British Legion Chester. Being on the tourist trail is very expensive and accommodation is difficult to find at a reasonable price - but we keep endeavouring to raise funds, especially for the Benevolent Funds.

We send our best wishes to all Branches and especially to sick members - may you soon be better.

Looking forward to the reunion in Cardiff next year - we never even thought we would be here for the year 2000 when we were on fatigues or doing PT or marching here, there and everywhere - not forgetting the dancing and general fun we all used to have. No doubt the knees will be up in Cardiff, if not quite so high as they used to be!

CLEVELAND

Greetings to all "Lioness" readers from the North East. Our Secretary, Mrs Gwyn Friday, is also Secretary for the Northern Area, so she has asked me, a rookie, to inform you of our activities. Let's hope I make a good job of it, otherwise I am in big trouble!!

Sadly, I have to report on the deaths of three of our members. Mrs Earnshaw, a Treasurer for many years, Mrs Marsay and Mrs Richardson - all three are sadly missed.

On a lighter note, our Christmas Lunch at the Marton Country Club was superb, with a very special cake to celebrate sixty years of the "Birth" of the ATS.

We have a very lively Branch, with a membership of seventy, and never less than forty in attendance - growing almost every month.

February saw us being treated to a demonstration by an aromatherapist, the perfumes were wonderful!

April sees our Annual Coffee Morning in the Parish Church in Stockton-on-Tees. It is a fun morning and the Market Day shoppers always support us to raise money for the Branch, from which we send a donation to our Benevolent Fund.

We have our Summer outing to look forward to, and also the Northern Reunion - this year at York.

A group of our ladies had a great day at Catterick Garrison, and were well looked after by today's Army.



Our poor standard bearer - in a wheelchair, having broken her ankle. She's fine now, and in full working order!!

Another memorable time was had at Arnhem, visiting War Graves and attending services along with our standard, (and bearer) Ann Mahoney.

Some of us went to Stafford, along with members of the newly formed Darlington Branch. We joined the WRAC Dinner Club, and, thanks to the organising skills of Ann Deakin, we "had a ball".

Plans are under way for "Cardiff 2000", so we are hoping to meet everyone again, in friendship, like we did at Blackpool.

(W/418121 LCpl Whittaker) Irene Maclean (The Rookie)

COLCHESTER

Our meetings are still well attended although age is now catching up on us all I think! However all seem to enjoy our monthly get-togethers and our trips around the countryside. During our December meeting we were entertained by two ladies who despite their advancing years soon had us singing some of the old popular songs to the accompaniment of an electronic keyboard. Soon after this we had a very enjoyable Christmas lunch at Clacton Golf Club which has been our favoured venue for the past few years.

This year we have had a succession of most interesting speakers at our meetings including a most informative talk about the British Legion by Mr Tucker, the Essex County Field Officer. This organisation does so much good work for members and ex-members of the Forces, which often goes unseen. Another popular item was when members of the Branch have been invited to stand up and describe interesting experiences while serving in the Army.

During March we had another super meal and excellent entertainment at the Grand Hotel in Clacton, which again was much appreciated by members. In our future programme we have several trips organised including a visit to the lovely town of Bury-St-Edmunds and our neighbouring seaside resort of Felixstowe. We are also looking forward to visiting the Sue Ryder establishment at Hadleigh.

We were very pleased to hear that one of our members, Brenda Manning, has been awarded a Certificate of Appreciation for her efforts in running the raffle from the onset of the Branch which has now been going strong for 11 years.

We are now looking forward to our Summer outings and hope that the weather is kind to us this year.

CREWE

In October our two WRAC members Mabel Lightfoot and Glenys Fitzpatrick went to the WRAC Dinner Club Reunion at Tillington Hall, they had a great weekend and are looking forward to the next one now.

Our last fund raiser before Christmas was a Market Stall at Crewe and it so happened we were given an outdoor stall that time. The day started off wet and it got wetter and wetter and so did we, however true, to our army grit and determination we battled on, but in the end we were defeated by the weather.

We had a much happier occasion later when we went to Crewe Theatre for our annual visit to see the pantomime

with our friends and relatives - everyone thoroughly enjoyed the night out.

Then we had a break until February which was just as well because January was when the dreaded Flu hit us.

Our main target this year is the Area Reunion we are hosting at Crewe in September. Betty and Edith went down to Stafford in February for a get together with Stafford and Shropshire members who are helping us. Also on Sunday February 28th we had our delayed Christmas Lunch at the Crewe Arms Hotel, husbands were invited. We all enjoyed it so much we said we would do it again later in the year.

In March our Chairman Betty Patton went to the 93rd S/L Regt Reunion at Derby, they all enjoyed the weekend so much that they have voted to have it at the same Hotel again next year.

Our next Market Stall was on April 10th and this time we were under cover and we got a nice day and it was very successful, so we went home happy this time.



Our Happy Market Stall.

We have our first Dance this year at the Crosville Club on May 13th so we are preparing for that. We shall be attending the usual Civic and Service Parades and we hope to fit in some social outings too during the summer period. We also have another Market Stall booked for June 13th, after that we shall be concentrating on the Area Reunion.

We are looking forward to seeing all our friends here at Crewe and are planning to make it an enjoyable day for everyone.

DACORUM

In July 1998 we moved our meetings from the local Scout Hall to the Guides Hall just down the road. We now meet on the first Wednesday of every month, from 2pm to 4pm. We have a very good attendance at every meeting and will always welcome new members. We have had a successful 1998-1999, with some very interesting speakers and subjects.

January we had a talk about life in a personnel office.

February we had a "getting to know each other," something we had never really had time for at other meetings, it was suggested that we bring photographs of our service days to

the March meeting, when we were going to have a bring and buy sale.

April: we had "Embroidery through the ages"; our guest brought along a lot of superb samples of work that she had collected over the years, some very fragile pieces that could not be handled. She was very informative of the history of embroidery and needlework through the ages.

May: a brain testing quiz.

June: a well informed speaker from the C.A.B. talking about consumer rights, there was so much we did not know. We also went on to Syon Park the following week.

July: an old fashioned Beetle Drive, so much giggling as we tried to remember how to play it.

August: an ordinary meeting, followed by some gentle exercise.

September: A.G.M. followed by a brain testing quiz. On the 12th we had the London reunion, our Hosts were the Luton Branch; a good day, with a very nice lunch, thank you Luton.

October: the work of the Ian Rennie Hospice at Home, an emotive talk. Kathy Booth had a Coffee Morning at her home to raise money for the Memorial for the Women of World War II, a healthy donation.

November: Do you remember? adverts etc.

December: a Christmas Lunch, which we decided to do ourselves, a very successful end to the year.

January 1999: we were very sorry that our Secretary had to resign owing to health problems, we all wish her well, now we have another person trying to put together our activities for the year.

Our first meeting of the year was well attended, after the usual formalities we played Scrabble, once again those of us who had not played for many years had to really search our memories for a game that used to be so easy; we enjoyed it, and hope to play it again at a later date.

February: Mr Laurie Coe from the British Red Cross Society came and gave us a talk with slides showing us the wide range of work they do all over the world, much admired by us all.

It was also decided that we would have a sponsored knit to raise money towards the Memorial for the Women of World War II, starting in May.

March: Jean Westrope held a very successful auction and raised money towards the Memorial for the Women of World War II.

April: we had a talk and slide show about our local History, it was given by a well known local Historian, fascinating, so many things we did not know.

Future activities include a talk on thimbles, the history and present use of the Grand Union Canal, and a talk by Age Concern. We are also making several visits to different locations, including Kew Gardens.

Our best wishes to everyone, and many thanks for our 'Lioness', we all welcome it, and appreciate the work that goes into it.

DONCASTER

This is our first Branch report. On 25th March 1999 we held our first meeting of the newly formed Branch of Doncaster WRAC Association. The Mayor of Doncaster, Mrs Woodcock, opened our meeting. Col Cook our Group Chairman came along, also nine members of the Sheffield Branch. We had a very nice afternoon and hopefully there are many more to come.



Members of the newly formed Doncaster Branch with the Mayor.

DUMFRIES

Sadly I have to report the death of Major (Retd) Mrs Jane Hendicks nee Ravenscroft who had been chairperson for many a year. She will be a great loss and members will remember her as constructive in her thinking, kind and generous. Mrs Jessie Petrie died on September 5th 1998, a long time member since 1970.

During the year we had two lunch parties, a summer outing to Keswick, and a Benevolent Fund-raising afternoon.

Nine members attended the Scottish WRAC AGM in Glasgow and two members received certificates of merit.

EDINBURGH

On the 24th October 1998 the Scottish AGM and Lunch was held at Redford Barracks, Edinburgh with a record attendance of 155 members. This was marvellous considering the weather was bleak, wet and windy.

Many had travelled long distances, a sentimental journey for those who served there during and after the war. We were fortunate having the use of the barracks which had recently been modernised.

To some of us the corridors seemed to get longer as the day went on. However as always on these occasions comradeship takes over and new friendships are made.

A most interesting talk was given by Brig H G Meechie CBE on the wider aspects of her work as Vice President of the Association.

Our first inter-branch competition took place. Entries of individual tapestry work were handed in for judging. The standard of work produced was excellent - such talent, ladies! The judge was Mrs Margaret Burdett, an ex WRNS and member of the Embroiderers Guild. She was delighted to present the shield to the winner - Miss Eileen Butt of

Edinburgh. Our raffle was held in a modern and very comfortable NAAFI and realised the sum of £228.95 for association funds. Thanks to all branches for their most generous contributions for the raffle.

The afternoon was rounded off with a much needed cup of tea and biscuits. The weather had improved in time for return journeys! A very memorable day.

Edinburgh Branch meets in the afternoon on the first Thursday of the month for part of the year. Our meetings are held at the Scots Guards Club at Haymarket with around 15 to 20 members present.

Our next event is on 6th May when we have our annual lunch in the Overseas Club in Princes Street.

Later in the year we have invited members of the WAAF Association to join us for afternoon tea and chat. For the past few years they have invited us to their informal Christmas Carol Service, held in St John's Church at the West End of Princes Street with a most enjoyable tea afterwards.

We are looking forward to the next Scottish AGM in October which is being held in the City Chambers, Glasgow.

FIFE & TAYSIDE

We now have a total of 90 members, and among the most recent are a few ex-WRAC. We are very happy about this, as it gives us a varied age group which will, hopefully, enable the branch to continue well into the Millennium.

We had a very pleasant day with all the Scottish Branches at the AGM held at Redford Barracks in October 1998. Lots of memories were being exchanged, thank you Edinburgh. Our Scottish Competition Shield was won by Edinburgh Branch for the best tapestry submitted and there were many entries, all beautifully done.

Quiz sheets were sold, the theme being how many words could be made out of "WRAC ASSOCIATION". This was won by Mrs Joan Smith of Dundee, with 426 words (unbelievable). The quality of the entries was first class so thanks to everyone who entered. Selling at 50p each, we managed to make £40.

We had our Christmas lunch at the Grampian Hotel, Perth on the 14th December which was enjoyed by all (if not on a diet). Our Christmas raffle and sales table made a total of £142.17. Little pin-on woollen badges were made by Mrs Joan Smith, Dundee. They were in the shape of Christmas trees, plum puddings etc and sold very well as they are popular.

Our 'Fellowship' roses are now in place at the memorial bower in the Walled Garden of Murray Royal Hospital, Perth. The name was chosen to celebrate our 10 years as a branch. All the Scottish Branches contribute to the bower so if anyone is on holiday in Perth or surrounding, please try to find time to pay the garden a visit.

Our Dundee members have unfortunately had to give up meeting at the Naval Club in Dundee, but we have extended a welcome to them to join us at our lunches and meetings at the Royal British Legion Club in Perth, when they can manage to come.

One of our recent members heard of us through a friend in Australia! Is it because we are gaining notoriety?

Our ex-WRAC member Maureen Lowson was running in the London Marathon again this year for Mental Health Research. We sponsored £44 but she has so far collected £800 with money still coming in. Last year the money collected went towards setting up a music department at Murray Royal Hospital, Perth, and many patients have benefited from this 'so once again' well done Maureen.

We are trying to compile a Cookery Book by the Scottish Branches as a whole, so if any Scottish Branch Members would like to send me their recipes this would be appreciated. Fish, meat, soups, bakery or tips. A few have been coming in but we would like more.

We had our AGM at the Grampian Hotel on the 29th April which was enjoyed by all members. Our Chair Lady Martha Bruce was presented with the Association Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of her long service and dedication to the Association. A bouquet of flowers was also presented by the members.

We are hoping to travel by coach to the Cardiff Millennium AGM and are hoping to get together with any other Scottish Branches members who would like to travel with us.

The Scottish AGM and lunch is being hosted by Glasgow Branch on 16th October and we are all looking forward to that.

Thank you Hazel Wise of London Branch for your letter and best wishes to our branch - this is much appreciated by all of us, and we return our best wishes.



Certificate of Appreciation - presented to Colonel The Lady Martha Bruce.

Clockwise from top left: Mrs Betty Berwick, Branch Secretary; Mrs Florence Green, Branch Treasurer; Colonel The Lady Martha Bruce; Major (Retd) Isobel Gordon.

Courtesy of D C Thomson and Co Ltd.

GLASGOW

Our meetings are still held in the Multicultural Centre in Glasgow, this allows our members to come from "Airts & Pairs". Come September, we will change to Monday afternoon at 1400 hrs. Hopefully some of our ladies will find this a better time.

Once again, our opening meeting was a Bring and Buy sale, in aid of Erskine Hospital, followed by a talk given by Mrs Land, one of our members, on her early days in the service. She was called up before war was declared in 1939.

October was our AGM. Following that, apart from our Christmas Dinner in December, we had a varied and assorted programme. Mrs Ada Younger spoke very amusingly but with depth about her work in the Dennistoun district of Glasgow.

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Rev Levy, who for many years has been Pastor at Glasgow Synagogue spoke of his experiences when incarcerated in firstly Belsen and then Auschwitz as a boy of thirteen, till his release in 1945. It didn't seem possible that a wee lad who had endured such horrors could be standing there in front of us.

We also had three members from the East Kilbride speakers club whose entertainment was very different from anything we've had before (they did all the talking).

Another evening we spent in the company of "Al Jolson and Howard Keel", singing along. This was Mr Smith's second visit, and much enjoyed.

Our final meeting for the session was spent in the company of our WAAF and WRNS friends, all of us being entertained by an excellent singing group. A happy evening to conclude our year. As a branch we particularly look forward to holding the Scottish AGM in October here in Glasgow.

GRIMSBY

Greetings to all members from Grimsby branch.

November saw us all taking our turn in the local Asda store selling poppies. This year we excelled ourselves and raised over £1,000 for the Poppy Appeal. Many thanks to all who helped.

Next it was Remembrance Day Services. We had representatives at St Peter's Cleethorpes and St James' Grimsby for the morning services and the usual parades. Poppy wreaths were laid at Grimsby and Cleethorpes Cenotaphs.

In the afternoon, many of our members, along with a standard bearer, went to St Andrews' Service of Remembrance. This is a special service to our Branch as the names of four Grimsby ladies who gave their lives during the war, while serving in the ATS, are read out. Our Chaplain, Rev Wendy Isam, also read the names of civilians killed by enemy action in this area during the war. We always find this a very emotional service.

At night, a few members attended the Salvation Army Service, so you can see we had a very hectic day.

Late in November we held our Christmas Fair. The weather was against us, as usual, but the turn out was quite good and we had a successful day.

Next came our Christmas Dinner. We had a change of venue this year and decided to give the Rose & Crown a try. We were a little disappointed in the service, but the couple who had taken over from the previous tenants were new and not used to catering for a large number of people. They were also let down by a waitress, so there was only one to serve all forty of us, so in the circumstances they did quite well.

We held a Jumble Sale in February and were pleased to have a lovely, spring-like day for it. We made around £50,

which didn't seem much for all our hard work but we enjoyed ourselves and got rid of our unwanted bits and pieces.

7th April was the day when about 6 members of the Committee entertained York ladies for the day. Pauline arranged for the Mayor Civic, Chris Dixon and her Mayoress, Norma Lincoln to meet the ladies for refreshments and a tour of the Town Hall. Eunice had arranged for them to have lunch at Leon's Fish Restaurant and then to tour the Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre. I think they all enjoyed their day. I gave up half-way, but the rest kept on until they were nearly legless!

We are now busy planning our trip to Cardiff next year. Ruth has opened a book for people to pay in advance. We intend making a long weekend of it, so come on Grimsby, let's make it a full bus this time!

Best Wishes to all from Grimsby Branch.

Editor's Note: Grimsby Ruth, not HQ Ruth

HARROGATE

Many members attended the annual Remembrance Day parade (six actually marched, one laid our wreath as usual and the rest 'filled in' at the Cenotaph). On the 11th November on the eleventh hour eighteen members formed a very impressive and dignified squad at the Harrogate Cenotaph. We were joined by 2 ex ATS and 1 WAAF (she has now joined the branch).



Marching Proudly - Members of Harrogate Branch.

We have had two most successful coffee mornings and so boosted our Charity Funds.

Our Christmas party was the usual riotous(?) success and our Annual meal this year was held in Church House with private caterers. This proved, with only 17 able to attend, much more friendly and cosy than using a large local hotel.

Excellent speakers at our monthly meetings have given us a voyage by narrow boat on English Canals, a trip to Nepal, a most amusing hour on Dialects and a quiz on antique ironmongery, amongst many others.

Sadly, just before going to press we lost one of our members, Marjorie Armitage. She was a bright hardworking colleague who will be greatly missed.

Our membership keeps on an even keel with well-attended meetings.



Harrogate Branch - Summer Trip.

HEREFORD

Since my last report, several of our members have either been hospitalised or ill at home. Happily all are now recovering well and out of hospital. Not all are 100%, so our thoughts and prayers for "Get Well Soon" are with them all.

We have 41 Life and 25 Annual members and still meet on the last Wednesday of each month except December, at 2.30pm in the RBL Hall in Belmont Road, Hereford. Owing to our Chair and Treasurer being on holiday last September, and flooding in October, we had to postpone meetings, and so there was no business conducted.

In November, our Standard was on Parade at the Civic Service of Remembrance by the Royal British Legion, and Standard Bearer, Jackie Neave, was proud to be a part of it, with eight members supporting her. Five members were again at a service on November 11th 1998 at the Memorial.

In December our Christmas lunch was at the Newmarket Inn, our raffles were well supported, making profits for the Branch and Social Funds.

In January 1999 the Secretary received a reply to her request for a carpet flower bed for the WRAC. Sadly, we were turned down, owing to the Council only being able to afford two commemorative beds this year. We were extremely disappointed. February saw us donating to the Association Benevolent Fund and also to the RBL Poppy Appeal fund, to BLESMA and to SSAFA. Also Joyce Nicholls and Sue Walton produced Issue 5 of the Newsletter which is very popular and much praised.

In March we held a Table Sale in the Butter Market. It was a bit disappointing, though still made a profit. The weather was dreadful and customers sparse.

April brought a sponsor form from Phyl Bates ex Ack Ack member who requested we give generously to the proposed memorial in London to "Women who served during WW2". Several ladies at the meeting did give generously and as a Branch we gave £50. Our contributions were doubled by National Power and a letter of thanks was received by Major (Retd) David Robertson from York Garrison, Imphal Barracks, York. He tells us that we are hopeful of an empty plinth in Trafalgar Square for our Memorial, so please members, do give generously for a long awaited project.

Our raffle in April was successful and lovely prizes given. Thank you to everyone who contributed and bought and sold tickets.

Four of us are off to meet Cardiff and Swansea members on May 18th to discuss further the plans for April 2000 reunion. May 9th we are planning a Car Boot. In July we will celebrate our 10th Anniversary as a Branch.

Thank you to all those members who are so supportive in a variety of ways. "Get Well Soon" to all those who are not 100% and don't forget to keep in touch. We hope to meet area friends in Crewe at the September 1999 reunion.

KEIGHLEY

Our AGM was held last October, when our Chairman Mrs E Wilson retired due to ill-health, and Mrs M Hamblin took the Chair. We have 24 members and our meetings are usually well attended.

A Wreath was laid on the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday, and members enjoyed the Festival of Remembrance at St Georges Hall, Bradford.

In mid-November we held a pre-Christmas and Anniversary Lunch at the 'Airedale Heifer', to commemorate the Branch 15th Year. Col Cook, the North East Chairman, was our Guest, and everyone enjoyed the afternoon.

One of our members attended the Provost reunion held in March at Huddersfield, and even though she was the second oldest there, had an enjoyable evening.

Unfortunately no one was able to attend the AGM in April.

A Bring and Buy is being arranged for later in the year, and four members will attend the North East Reunion at York in September.

With our Best Wishes to all Branches.

LEEDS

We are continuing to attract new members who are most welcome. The Pantomime visit was voted a success.

Those members who braved the cold and rain to attend the ceremony at Eden Camp, full report elsewhere, consider it one of those never to be forgotten experiences.

Our President, Secretary and one ex-WRAC member attended the AGM and Cathedral Service in Guildford, a most enjoyable weekend.

For our May meeting we were very kindly invited by York Branch to share with them. It was a perfect day, enabled us to see round this most beautiful of Cities, enjoy the hospitality of the York members and gorge ourselves on a most substantial afternoon tea.

Members will be joining the Mixed Hy AA Holiday weekend at Bodellwydden Castle and the Combined Services weekend at Bridlington.

Plans are in hand for Cardiff 2000.

We are all very sad to learn of the death of one of our stalwarts, Mrs Audrey Cox, who has been in failing health for some time. We shall attend the funeral and remember her in our prayers.

Apologies for two errors in our last issue. Our President Mary Conley was presented with her Certificate for Service to the Association by Col Cook, not Col Stead who was our President until her death last year. Under Golden Weddings, Reg and Elizabeth Bustard still live in Bramham not Ilkley as stated.

LIVERPOOL

We continue to meet every third Wednesday of the month (except January and August) at 1330 hrs at the Royal British Legion in Rodney Street, Liverpool.

Since our last report we have gained one new member but sadly two of our members have died, Mrs Florence Bolton on 8th June 1998 and Mrs Trudy Orchard on 2nd December 1998.

In November we had a good attendance at the Remembrance Service in St Johns Gardens and also the main service on Remembrance Sunday. Our pre-Christmas lunch was held at the Garston Masonic Hall on 9th December. We were well fed, and everyone enjoyed themselves. There was no meeting in January but the February meeting was well attended - we held a Dutch Auction and raised £18 for our funds.

On 3rd March we were again invited to an inter-services reunion by the WRNS Association at the Naval Club in Bowring Park. As always they made us most welcome, laid on an excellent buffet and gave us a very pleasant afternoon for which we are most grateful.

Our March meeting fell on 17th March so we held a St Patricks Day party which was enjoyed by all who attended.

On 8th April ten of our members attended a ceremony at St Georges Hall in Liverpool where the freedom of the City was presented to the Royal British Legion. We were entertained with music played by Maghull Town Band and The Royal British Legion Band. After the ceremony we enjoyed excellent refreshments. It was a memorable day for all who attended.

Another member and myself attended the AGM at Guildford on 17th and 18th April. I personally enjoyed every minute of it, everyone was so friendly and went out of their way to help you. It was like going back in time to the time when we had the spirit of comradeship which is so sadly lacking these days. We would like to pay tribute to the staff at Surrey University for their kindness and help. We would also like to thank everyone that we came in contact with during that weekend for helping to make it so pleasant, especially to the Ladies of the Aldershot and Plymouth branches. We look forward to seeing you all again at some other events.

LONDON

After reading the news from Fife & Tayside Branch (Lioness 2/98) about the Emergency Information Scheme supported by the Police and other services, Hazel Wise got in touch with her local station which is the City of London force. She found that they have a similar scheme running but so far it only covers that particular area. However the Police

Constable who has organised the scheme was good enough to come to our meeting in February and give us full details. Several members have now approached their local force and hopefully it will become more widely used. It will be an invaluable help to those of us who live alone and may have an emergency at home when we are incapacitated. The ambulance services who reach us will immediately have to hand knowledge of medication etc which might well be vital. London members come from such a wide area that we have not one central service to deal with.

In March we had a nostalgic afternoon of "Music from the Shows" presented by Georgina Brazier-Potter and in April we were delighted to welcome our Chaplain, Colonel the Reverend Susan Wing. She kept us enthralled and amused as she told us about her long service in the WRAC, with interesting postings in many countries. A few of us were at the AGM at Guildford and at the service in the Cathedral to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the WRAC and the 80th of the Association. London Branch is also 80 this year and we will be celebrating with a lunch on 16th September.

Our first outing this year was to Polesden Lacey in May and although it was very windy and threatened rain we had a very good day and enjoyed the interesting collection of porcelain and pictures.

LUTON

I have been accosted, both in person and on the phone, by several friends, branch members and acquaintances. "Where was your branch report in the Lioness?" they all asked. Guilty as charged - I did not read the last date for submission in the magazine, so I now have to rack my brains to bring you up to date.

We continue to enjoy a varied programme with quizzes, talks etc. We spent quite a lot of time in the first half of 1998 in making arrangements for the London Area Group Reunion. It was a very successful event (at least we thought so) with the usual raffle, visiting speakers and an organist who played whilst we had lunch. The speakers were Norman Chamberlain of SSAFA/Forces Help, and Zena Skinner the TV cook of yesteryear, who is a local girl. She was in the WRNS just after the war, and regaled us with some hilarious anecdotes of both her service life, and of working for the 'Beeb'. One of our number, who shall remain anonymous, asked the organist if he would play 'Mademoiselle from Armentieres'. Of course the assembled company struck up with 'It wasn't the Wrens who won the war, the ATS were there before'. Zena stood up saying "I think I'll go home now" - she didn't of course, and we all enjoyed her talk and her company. Norman Chamberlain has been instrumental in helping one of our members obtain a motorised disabled scooter, with the help of the Benevolent Fund - our sincere thanks to all concerned.

We were all geared up to parade on Remembrance Sunday, when disaster struck, our numbers were decimated by illness, including our standard bearer. Our only serving branch member, Major Patricia McParlane RLC, stepped bravely into the breach. The male standard bearers at the assembly point gave her a quick refresher course and she was splendid! Thanks again Patricia.

We held our Christmas party in December at our usual venue, and followed this in January by an Anniversary Lunch at a local hostelry. We like to party at Luton Branch.

Arrangements are in hand for our trip to Cardiff in April 2000. It may seem a trifle early to some, but the response so far has been very good. We may have some places left by the time this is published, so if you wish to go with us, please contact Madge Evans on 01582 617313. Cost for the weekend, including travel, is £115 for a shared room, £135 for a single, plus an optional £5.50 for insurance, which covers the outlay. Pick-up points will be Luton, Hemel Hempstead and Victoria, and we shall be staying at the Forte Post House Hotel at Pentryn, (about 4 miles from Cardiff city centre). As in Blackpool in '97, we shall have the use of the coach to get us into the events. If you do wish to come along, please note that PAYMENT IN FULL WILL BE REQUIRED before your booking can be accepted.

In June the branch has been challenged to a Quiz by the local branch of the Far East Veterans Association - we shall do our best to uphold the honour of the Association, and will appraise you of the results in our next report. Until then, all good wishes from us all to all our comrades across the British Isles and indeed the World.

MEDWAY

For the first time since this branch opened we had to cancel a meeting, the January one was washed out by bad weather.

Five members attended the AGM at Guildford and at the secretaries meeting we sorted out minor problems.

Sadly, we were unable to have a Floral Display depicting 50 years of the WRAC as we did for the 60 years of the ATS.

Our speaker for May is the author Mr Ogle who has written many books on Kent life. He will be talking to us about Doodlebugs (V1s), many of which found their way over Kent.

We will take part in the British Legion Annual Sandhurst Parade in June when eighteen of our members will march watched by their families, hopefully. it will not rain this year.

In July eleven of our members will join other branches at the London Reunion.

In September we will have a Tombola Stall at Strood Steam Fair when we hope to raise money for the branch and Benevolent Fund.

October brings the WRAC Dinner Club, which five members will attend including Betty Freak (with Sellotape!).

Thanks must go to all the staff at Worthy Down who work so hard on our behalf, and for such a good and interesting AGM.

NEWCASTLE

We are still having our happy meetings on the third Thursday of each month at the Newcastle Companions Club. As we cover a wide area, some of our members have a fair journey, but our venue is pretty central to the "Big City" so there is an added incentive to attend!

We shared our Christmas festivities with the Normandy Veterans Club and our little band of "Artistes" made their contribution to the entertainment there. In January we held our own "party" when we had a varied assortment of food etc and again our own brand of entertainment.

We have represented our branch by invitation at two functions, RAF and Normandy Veterans, when the new standards were dedicated. These occasions were held in St Thomas' Church in the Haymarket, Newcastle.

There is considerable interest in the Cardiff Millennium events and a savings club is underway, being carefully organised by our efficient Secretary Evelyn.

Some of our members will be attending the Anti-Aircraft Command reunion at York from 31st July to 1st August 1999. Our next venture currently being undertaken will hopefully have been achieved when the magazine is issued. This is a trip to one of the most attractive parts of Northumberland, Rothbury, where one of our members has a relative in the hotel trade who will be catering for us.

We have some members who have long term illnesses and we should like to pay tribute to the courage shown by them over a long period of suffering. We send our best wishes to all who are unable, due to illness or other circumstances, to attend the meetings. We regret to record the death on 2nd May of one of our members, Nancy Duffin (nee Forster) ATS.

NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK

We begin our contribution by saying Hello! and sending our best wishes to all our members who are unable to attend the Branch meetings because of distance of travel, and, of course, for other reasons.

On November 8th 1998 seven members travelled to London to attend the service and parade in Whitehall, four members attending the parade and three members attending the service in Westminster Abbey. Later on in the day we were very pleased to learn that we were actually filmed, also mentioned on the television, a far cry from other years from just being "The forgotten ones" and never mentioned! or being asked the most annoying remark of all "Do you belong to the ATS Tyre Service?".

On November 11th 1998 a few members once again paid homage at the ATS Plaque in Great Yarmouth for our usual Armistice Service and the placing of a Poppy Wreath. The service was well supported by the arrival of a few Normandy Veterans from the Norwich Branch of the NVA. We thank all who attended.

On December 9th 1998, we once again travelled to Winterton-on-Sea for our Christmas outing at the "Highwayman", twenty members enjoyed a Christmas lunch and show.

We ended our 1998 meetings on December 5th with twenty members enjoying a Christmas tea party, festive food, with a Christmas raffle with prizes brought in by the Committee and members. The afternoon went well, a few visitors were invited, husbands of a few of the members.

Our 1999 year started off on January 18th with thirty members attending our New Year Luncheon at the "Hog In Armour" Public House function rooms in Norwich - by the sound of chatter going on in the room all had an enjoyable day.

Our February, March and April meetings were all well attended, the Branch having speakers for February and April. We continue to keep quite active and we are now

looking forward to our outings for 1999, and the rest of our meetings.

We at the Norfolk and Suffolk Branch wish to send our praises to the members of other branches for getting their councils to give us such lovely floral tributes for our 60th anniversary, it was a real delight to see them in the "Lioness". We tried so hard in Norwich, but the answer was NO. However, with the help of our member from Kings Lynn we were represented, and we thank Elsie Plummer once again, and also for the photograph entry in the "Lioness".

Several of our members and also their friends still continue to knit for the Helping Hands Charity, the articles are collected from one of our branch meetings about every three months thank you for your help ladies. Since our last report we have gained three new life members, but 'sadly' we have lost ten annual members owing to some having special reasons and others lapsed because of unpaid subs for 1999. The branch now has sixty six annual members and seventy one life members.

We once again thank our members for their continuing support to the Branch.

OMAGH

We held our ATS Association Luncheon on 3 October 1998 and we were joined by the Ulster Branch to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the ATS, we all had a very enjoyable meal.

One of our members, Mrs M K Twist, was awarded the MBE in the New Years Honours List, we are all very proud to have her in our branch.

On the photograph she is second from the right.



ONTARIO

Sadly, the branch in Ontario, Canada notified the General Secretary that the Branch has now closed, although many members of the branch continue to actively promote the memory of the ATS.

The London branch raised funds to support the refurbishment of the Museum of the Royal Canadian Regiment. A symbolic gold brick was purchased in memory of the ATS.

London born Mrs Jean Crawley of the "famous 93rd" continues to raise funds for the proposed memorial to women in the UK. Good luck with your project.

Mrs Ethel Bladen is still prepared to act as a point of contact for members, her address is:
808-450 Sandringham Crescent, London, Ontario N6L 5TQ.

PLYMOUTH

Plymouth Branch have a current membership total of 82, up to 30 of those members live in and around the City and attend our meetings. On November 11th after parading our Standard at 11am, a large portion of that number battled the wind to get on to Plymouth Hoe to join our Lord Mayor, Councillor Mrs Eileen Evans J.P. and Lady Mayoress Mrs Suzanne Paine for the dedication of our 'ATS 60th Anniversary Memorial Seat'. The seat is on the promenade and looks out to Drakes' Island, a wonderful view for visitors to the Hoe. After the dedication we entertained all our guests to tea at the Astor Hotel. A memorable event enjoyed by all.

Our efforts to have a floral tribute in Plymouth for both the 60th Anniversary of the ATS and the 50th Anniversary of the WRAC have met with no luck! Our city did not see fit to honour us in any way, despite all the helpful publicity given to us by our local Radio Devon and the Plymouth Extra newspaper. Betty Mitchell summed up our efforts in a poem which really says it all. Plymouth would like to congratulate all the successful floral tributes, they were a joy to see.

We followed this in December with our Christmas lunch, catering by courtesy of a former Colour Sergeant and his wife, an excellent team - food fit for royalty. February, being the 21st Anniversary of the formation of the Plymouth Branch, saw us eating again, a beautifully decorated cake donated by one of our ladies and her daughter. A further birthday celebration took us to Liskeard, where we had a splendid lunch at the Windy Ridge restaurant. Then we visited St Martin's Church in order to view the memorial to those who gave their lives in the World War '39-'45. It is a beautiful panel carved in relief; the left hand panel represents the 3 Services, 3 male and 3 female, while the right hand panel consists of 5 women and 1 male.

At our April meeting we had a very topical speaker, she was a refugee from Austria in the war and was able to give a very graphic description of life at that time. In June we have our annual service in the Church in the Royal Citadel, this is followed in the same week by the SW Area Reunion hosted by the Somerset Branch, they enticed us with an interesting menu!

We have an interesting programme for the rest of the year and if you are on holiday in or around Plymouth on the first Monday in any month please join us at the Royal Fleet Club in Devonport, where you can be assured of a warm welcome.



Plymouth Branch Members.

RHYL

Greetings from us all at Rhyl. Since we last reported our news to you we have been very busy raising funds for a Branch Standard. We are pleased to report that we have now acquired it. This has been made possible by outside organisations generous donations and our ladies 'hard work', holding a barbecue, coffee mornings, table top sales and more. We had the Standard Dedicated at St Thomas's Church Rhyl on Sunday 14th March during the Mothering Sunday Service. We were supported by Standards from the Royal British Legion, The Normandy Veterans, The Dunkirk Veterans, The Association of WRNS, The Rhyl Sea Cadets, The Welch Fusiliers and the Chester ATS/WRAC Standard. Our thanks to all these Associations for making this such a lovely day for us all.

We have 10 members going to Normandy from the 4th to 10th June with the Normandy Veterans. We then have the Group Reunion on the 12th June at Preston, which we are looking forward to, this is followed by a trip to Bridlington for the Combined Ex-Services Weekend there on the 18th June.

We will then be able to relax for a few weeks and will then be holding our Annual Social Afternoon at Rhyl Town Hall on 12th August at 1.30pm to 5pm. This is always a very good afternoon and the Ladies all work very hard to make this such a success.

We then move to September and a few of the ladies will be going to Crewe for the Wales and West reunion.

There are 3 of our members who were in the WRAC and they have joined the WRAC Dinner Club and will be going to Stafford for the first time in October and they are looking forward to this.

We are planning other fund-raising events in the form of coffee mornings, afternoon teas, table top sales and a further jumble sale.

We have 5 new members since our last report - 4 ATS and 1 WRAC. We are always looking for new members at the branch and as you will see from our diary of events, new members would be guaranteed a very busy social life.



Rhyl - Mothering Sunday - Dedication to the Standard.

ROCHDALE

On 6th November 1998 a party of us joined in the 28th Annual Festival of Remembrance at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Oldham. This is always a very moving and happy occasion, based on the ceremony at the Albert Hall in London, but on a much smaller scale!

At the end of December nearly all members were present at our Christmas Luncheon, which was held at the Rochdale Masonic Hall - the same venue as our 15th Birthday Party. Needless to say a good time was had by all (photo enclosed). We also joined our Eighth Army Veteran friends at their Christmas Lunch in Radcliffe, Manchester.

The January and February meetings were not well attended due to the dreaded flu virus.

On 4th March the British Legion Branch presented our members with a plaque in recognition of their unstinting service over the years selling poppies and helping out in other ways.

Early in April our friend Helen Linzmaier died, five members attended her funeral with the Standard.

Donations have been made to the Army Benevolent Fund - £75 and Springfield Hospice - £25.

We are busy making plans for our visit to Cardiff next year. We Thirty-eight and Thirty-niners are getting a bit slow on our pins, but our hearts are still in the right place and still full of enthusiasm, "thank God!"



Rochdale Branch - Christmas Party.

SALISBURY

Our meetings continue to be well attended and our branch Newsletter is very well received.

At the AGM in September we welcomed two new officers: Joan Freeland as President and Alison Ogden took over the Chairmanship. Our long serving Secretary and Treasurer, Joan Morgan and Veronica Dodkins, were re-elected. We have 60 members. Suzanne Gordon paid tribute to our retiring president, Barbara Taunton, for all her support and generosity as a founder member of the branch (Barbara has not been too well but is back home now and we look forward to seeing her again at our meetings soon).

At our October meeting there was a good selection of 'goodies' for a faith lunch, which was much enjoyed, and a bring and buy sale raised £48.

In November our member Thirza Sillick conducted a very interesting 'Antiques Roadshow' when members were asked to value the items she had brought and described. These included a Salisbury Jubilee Plate (1935), two exquisite purses from the 1855 Paris Exhibition and a mourning locket from the 1890s. Dinkie Harper was the member with the most correct valuations.

34 members enjoyed a Christmas Lunch at the Red Lion in December when the loyal toasts were proposed by Alison Ogden.

For our first meeting in 1999 we were treated to an illustrated talk by Suzanne Gordon on life in Gibraltar where she spent 15 of her early years. Slides from those days and how it looks now show many changes.

In February Veronica Dodkins fascinated us all as she recalled her life in Germany where she was working at the outbreak of WW2. She was eventually arrested and imprisoned, but in 1942 was part of a prisoners of war exchange with Portugal. From there she returned to England by flying boat and within one month received her call-up papers for the ATS!

Members who joined the outing to the American Museum at Bath in April had a very enjoyable day and the weather was kind!

Frances Green was our only member to attend the happy WRAC weekend at Stafford. Four members attended the National AGM and the Service in Guildford Cathedral.

We look forward to the Area Reunion hosted by Bournemouth Branch and Corps Day at Worthy Down.

SCARBOROUGH

On Sunday 8th November 1998 we attended the Remembrance Service at Olivers Mount. We used the front cover of Lioness showing the ATS Badge as a centrepiece of our wreath which was laid by branch members. In November some ladies attended the Service of Dedication of the ATS/WRAC Plaque in the Chapel, a ceremony they all enjoyed.

In December we were invited to the TA Centre for a buffet lunch and drinks which was a good start to Christmas. We held no meetings in January and February due to holidays and illness.

At our March meeting we discussed the North East Group Reunion at York Racecourse in September 1999 and the tenth anniversary of the formation of the Scarborough Branch which was September 1989.

June brings the Combined Services Reunion at Bridlington and July the Anti Aircraft Reunion at York followed by an outing being arranged by our Chairman.

SHIPLEY

Since our last report in the Lioness I'm afraid we have had a very sad time and have to report that we have lost three of our members. First was Florence Dearden who had been ill for a long time and died in a nursing home. Up to her illness Florence had been a loyal member who was at one time on our committee and was always a cheerful person.

Then we lost Eleanor Whately who suffered from ill health but tried to attend our meetings whenever she felt fit enough for her husband to bring her, and we still miss her quiet presence.

Our third member was Mrs Edna Oldham who died very suddenly at her home on 19th November 1998. Edna was a very loyal member, so cheerful and friendly, always willing

to help and often provided us with her home-made biscuits for our cup of tea at our meetings. She will be very sadly missed by everyone.

We are very sorry to report the loss of another member of our Shipley Branch - Mrs Edna Hipkin (Ex ATS) who has died after a very short illness, in Bradford Royal Infirmary on the 16th March. Edna was a loyal and well loved member of our Branch and a hard working member of our committee, and will be sadly missed by us all.

We have had our usual programme of interesting speakers, enjoyed our trip to Eden Camp for the Remembrance and Veterans Parade, and were pleased to see the ATS Plaque and ATS Shield on display. Some of our members were able to attend the ceremony of the laying up of the ATS Standard at Eden Camp.

We have continued fund raising efforts which have enabled us to send our donations to the ATS/WRAC Benevolent Fund, the Princess Royal Benevolent Fund and also to the Bradford Millennium Scanner appeal. We had a very interesting talk and slide show by the organiser of the Scanner appeal and we feel that by supporting the appeal it may in the future be of help to our members.

Now everyone is looking forward to the year 2000 and the Reunion in Cardiff when we hope we shall be able to join in the celebrations and meet up with old friends once again.

SHROPSHIRE

Following on from our last report, at our October meeting we had a Reminiscence, each member relating stories from her Army days, all very interesting and hilarious.

October 25th, Civic Sunday at St Leonards Church, Malinslee, this being 'our' Chris Griggs event, (Councillor for Greater Dawley Hamlets). Lucy paraded our Standard, with Beryl and Nancy as Escorts, a packed Church, everyone enjoyed our Buffet afterwards and Chris donated £20 to the Benevolent Fund.

On November 8th, we attended the Remembrance Service and Parade with our Standard at Donnington Garrison Church. At the end of the Parade we, and other Associations, were asked to march through a Guard of Honour formed by the Regiments of BOD Donnington, who enthusiastically clapped us in appreciation of our support and attendance with them over the years. We found this



Shropshire Branch at the dedication of their ATS Anniversary Plaque at Donnington Garrison Church.

very moving, but also sad, as it was their last Remembrance Parade; they will be leaving BOD this year. Afterwards WO1 RSM Steve Yafai, RLC invited us to join them in the Sgts Mess. Later we had Lunch at the Swan Hotel, Wellington.

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November 11th, our second Remembrance Service took place at Charlton School, Wellington. Lucy, with our Standard, and Nancy (both RBL Members) joined the RBL Members with their Standards. Lucy was asked to give an account of "Women at War", which she did admirably, holding the children's interest; you could have heard a pin drop. Later, the children were genuinely interested as they talked with us. Then we had tea and biscuits in the Teachers Office, the staff asking about our Wartime Activities. After leaving the school, we assembled in Wellington Square for the Two Minutes Silence at 11am. Radio Shropshire duly arrived, interviewing people, a large crowd had gathered. Afterwards, our Group were invited to the Civic Centre for tea and biscuits with local Councillors.

On 27th November we accepted an invitation from RSM Steve Yafai to the Sgts Mess again. We had a wonderful evening at the Cabaret, including Dancing/Singing and filling ourselves with Beefburgers and Chips. The friendly comradeship of the personnel reminded us of our Service days; we had a lot of fun, especially with Kathy, a Sgt in the AGC.

December 2nd, was a Special event, celebrating the 60th Anniversary ATS. At our Christmas Party, we put on a delicious buffet and Fran Firminger made our Anniversary Cake. The local Press came, resulting in another new Member for us - we welcome Joan Gold.

December 6th, some of our Members and Lucy with our Standard enjoyed an evening at the Birmingham Tattoo.

December 8th, getting up at the crack of dawn, we travelled by minibus (some of us with our eyes shut) to London, to the Houses of Parliament. What a wonderful day we had. After a small delay going through the Security Check Point, the alarm went off, it was discovered that Nancy Meredith had a knife in her bag! I can assure you there was no malicious intent! The Guide, Richard Stern, gave us an interesting tour round, this visit was organised between local Telford MO Mr Bruce Grocott, and Chris Grigg. We had an interesting chat with Bruce, in Committee Room No 10. Afterwards we had our Lunch at the Victory Club.

On January 15th, we attended the Memorial Service for Carol Ann Maxwell Rowat ex WO1 MBE WRAC. Lucy took our Standard to this sad occasion. Carol was young, very talented, and very kind person, she is sorely missed by all her many friends. The service took place at the Garrison Church Donnington, after which, there was a Reception at the Buckatree Hall Hotel. We donated £10 to the Benevolent Fund.

Also in January we had our Annual Dinner at the Swan Hotel, Forton, and at our March Meeting we had a Bring and Buy Sale.

March 6th, we catered for the members of the Dawley Rest Room Party to celebrate the reopening of the completely restored building, now called 'Dawley House'. The festivities included a puppet show, bingo and a raffle. Chris officiated, we were able to donate £50 to the Benevolent Fund.

Other new members we are pleased to welcome are: Margaret Langford, Vera Ostrowski, Violet Barnes, Muriel Willoughby and, of course, Carol Rowat, a dear friend of Muriel; sadly, Carol was only with us a short while.

SOMERSET

Our branch goes along very happy with its core of stalwart members. Its continuing raffles, bring and buys and sundry activities keep the funds at a healthy total. Our membership remains generally constant, although we have of late lost two recent ladies to another branch purely on the grounds of easier travelling. We are sorry to lose them, but it's obviously much easier for them. It's the Somerset Branch's turn to host the Area Group Reunion this year, so everyone is geared up to make it an outstanding success. Invitations have been sent so all we want now is good weather, masses of visitors and raffle prizes by the load. But most of all is to hear from our friends and visitors that they all had a wonderful day out!

SOUTHAMPTON

Since our last report of October last year we have held our AGM and enjoyed our usual Christmas party, which seems many moons ago now.

Jean Kingdon (nee Black) and Dorothy Inglis once again attended the Remembrance Service at Westminster Abbey, and Margaret Barham (nee Hope) took part in the Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph in London, laying a WRAC wreath on our behalf. Also in November a coffee morning and raffle was held at the home of Betty Rush.

We started off 1999 with mince pies and a bring and buy similar to the first meeting the Branch held over 50 years ago. Speakers so far this year were an Authoress, a Southampton Tour Guide and a local Historian.

One of our highlights each year is our Annual Dinner, held in April, to which we welcomed special guest Mrs Ruth Watt, the General Secretary, who kindly presented a Certificate of Appreciation to our Honorary Secretary Doreen Pledge. Also welcomed to the Annual Dinner was Mrs Sue Myers, the Association Clerk.

Eleven members once again enjoyed a day out to the Isle of Wight to help celebrate that Branch's Birthday Luncheon.

We are now looking forward to the Southern Area Reunion to be held at Bournemouth on 23rd May - all will be revealed in the next Lioness!

Our love and very best wishes are sent to Mrs Ruth Young and Marjorie Williams who have recently needed to move into Residential Homes, but we are still very much in touch. Also to Pat Whelan who is still in hospital having received treatment there for the past five months.

Our membership is still on the increase and stands at 36 Life and 49 Annual members.

STOCKPORT

The ladies of Stockport had a rather quiet second half of 1998. Although we still had our monthly meetings, nothing much happened apart from one or two of our ladies

attending the annual re-union at York of the Ack Ack Branch.

In November, our Chairman, Lilian Provost, retired from office. Lilian had had a successful term and she was presented with a glass football which she was delighted. Lilian also elected to carry on with the welfare correspondence she had been doing for some years. When one of our members is ill, or for some reason unable to attend the meeting, Lilian writes or sends a card so that that person will know she is not forgotten.

Beatrice Tait was elected to take the Office of Chairman, she is one of the founder members of the Stockport Branch. Over the years she has done her stint as an Officer, being Treasurer when we first started and when money was so thin on the ground she had a hard time to find anything to treasure. However, she fought on until things became easier.

In November a few of us migrated to London for the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall and the Service of Remembrance on Whitehall and the march past the Cenotaph. Always a moving experience.

For anyone who is unable to march, the service in the Abbey is a joy.

On Wednesday, 11th November we gathered at our local War Memorial for the Service of Remembrance which was also attended by our Mayor, councillors and representatives of organisations within the Borough. The two-minutes silence was observed.



Ladies of the Stockport Association at the War Memorial in the town centre on November 11th 1998.

Our December gathering was the Christmas party. Each member brought a wrapped gift for a free raffle and took away a parcel of their choosing - a surprise gift. We also each received a gift of chocolates from the Commanding Officer of the Armoury where we hold our meetings. This was a lovely surprise and we were all delighted. Later in December we went to a local Hotel for a Christmas lunch, and this got full marks from everyone.

One or two of us have booked our seats for the last performance of the Earls Court Tournament. Pity this function has to finish but all good things come to an end.

We are now looking forward to Cardiff.

SUNDERLAND

A party of 24 of us visited Eden Camp in November for the Dedication of the ATS plaque and the laying up of Bradford Branch's colours. Although the weather was not too kind, we enjoyed the trip and visited the Chapel once the plaque and Colours were in place.



Sunderland Branch Members at Eden Camp.

We enjoyed a very good Christmas lunch and were entertained by "The Andrews Sisters" (alias Mrs Norah Forsythe and two of her sisters). The Secretary also demonstrated that Line-dancing is not all "stomping" and "Yee-ha" by performing "The Gypsy" and the "Southside Shimmy".



"The Andrews Sisters".

Eight of our members have booked their accommodation for the Grand Reunion in Cardiff 2000, thanks to our Chairman's husband and his computer.

In March, we were visited by a reporter from Radio Newcastle who interviewed some of our members about the role they had played during the war. The programme was broadcast at a rather early time on a Friday morning, but mention was made of the fact that this year was the 50th anniversary of the WRAC. Hopefully some ex-members may have heard it and will make contact.

In April we have our "Easter Bonnet" competition and later in the year we are hoping to arrange a trip to Hartlepool Historic Quay.

We have also received an invitation from Tynemouth TAVR to take part in their dual celebration 40/140 years in August. So far 12 of our members are keen to take part in the march and service to be held in Tynemouth Castle grounds.

SWANSEA

In December we had an interesting talk and demonstration by Mr Trehearn on pottery made in and around Swansea in the past.

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Our Christmas lunch was held in December at the Oxwich Bay Hotel, we enjoyed a lovely meal and the weather was beautiful. You can see by the photograph we all enjoyed ourselves.

We are pleased to welcome three new members to our branch, they are: Mrs Vera Rattenbury, Ann May Inman and Mrs Mary Kane.

Our January meeting was cancelled. February was our AGM, with tea and a chat.

In March we celebrated St David's Day with Welsh Cakes and a glass of wine.

April began with a visit on the 7th to the Mansion House where the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress stay during their year of office. We were welcomed by the Lady Mayoress, and after having our photograph taken in the gardens we had coffee and Welsh Cakes in the lounge. This was followed by an interesting talk about the beautiful antiques and the history of the house, which is set in beautiful grounds and dates back to 1858. Then we had lunch in the Guildhall restaurant followed by our usual meeting in the Guildhall itself.

In May we are off to Cardiff for the day and hope to meet up with the Cardiff ladies. Also on 9th May, a few members will be at the monument THE GUN for the VE Day Parade and service.

We are busy preparing our venues for the rest of the year and the reunion at Crewe in September.



Members of Swansea Branch - Appealing for members of the Womens Resistance Force to come forward.

ULSTER

About 30 members attended our AGM in October which was held in Bangor. The pressure of 29-to-1 ensured that the important job as Hon Secretary is filled for the umpteenth time by Alison Wamock, her annual protests are annually

ignored! Our President, Maureen Robinson, Chairman, Winnie Jackson and Treasurer Peg Baillie also cheerfully accepted office, along with their Assistants Ruby Agnew and Dorothy Wraights.

Forty members enjoyed the Annual Luncheon on 27 February with two guests from Omagh Branch. Unfortunately our Chairman was unable to attend and missed our special guest, Mrs Ruth Watt, General Secretary of the WRAC/ATS Association. After 9 years in the Army Ruth has been just 4 months as General Secretary and we were pleased to meet her so soon, and delighted to hear that her husband comes from Jordanstown, Co. Antrim.

Muriel Wallace, already a holder of the Royal British Legion gold medal, had travelled to Liverpool to receive an even higher award and we congratulate her. Some members had joined the ATS as early as 1938 and Kathleen Twist must surely hold the record of low Army Numbers; whilst most of us were W/six digits Kathleen was W/12,

Our next get-together will be at the end of May when our Annual Outing will take us to Cookstown and the beautiful Sperrin Mountains.

WIMBLEDON

Meetings continue to be held at the Wimbledon Community Centre in St George's Road, Wimbledon and we normally have between 20 and 25 members attending.

In October we held our Annual General Meeting and although only 20 members were present apologies were received from 7 others.

Twice a year we hold Bring and Buy sales to help finance the cost of the room and charitable donations. We held one in November and it was well supported.

In December we had our Christmas Party when members all brought something towards the festive table and we welcomed Mrs Eileen Carter the Chairman of the London branch.

We do not meet in January, and in February were entertained by Mrs Pat Elliott who, with the aid of slides, gave a most interesting talk on "Toys and Dolls Through the Ages" taking us back before Anno Domini.

In March a lady from a Private Care Service told us of the services available, which in some cases were not covered by Social Services. Several of our members had worked for Social Services in their London Boroughs and spoke of their experiences.

WOLVERHAMPTON

How time flies and here we are half way through the year again. Our Branch still flourishes and we have an average of 20/25 members attending each month. We still meet on the 4th Wednesday in each month at the Methodist Centre, Darlington Street, Wolverhampton. All ex-ATS & WRAC are welcome. We have welcomed a new member, Mrs Kath Russo, who served with the Royal Canadian Women's Army and we hope she will be happy with us.

January, when the weather is unpredictable, we enjoyed a Bingo session and in February we welcomed Mrs Jeanne Owen who spoke to us of her experiences of "50 years behind the counter", a most enjoyable and humorous talk.

March brought us our Easter Fayre in aid of Branch Funds which will help to keep us solvent.

April we had a most interesting talk from Mr David Nicholls on "All that Glitters" which gave us many tips for looking after our gold and silver.

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Mary Davies kindly attended the AGM in Guildford on our behalf and received a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of Hilda Zur who was in turn presented with it at our April meeting.

One of our members, Mrs Emily Roberts, was 100 years old on April 3rd, she was a member of the QMAAC, and her two daughters, who came to the April meeting brought us some cake and wine and also brought some photographs of their mother during her QMAAC days.

WORTHING

We are nearing the end of our first year as members of this Association, and from humble beginnings we now have a thriving branch. Our membership which started with just three has now risen to 85. We have an average of 30 members attend each month. We have had a number of interesting talks, with some of us attending the 60th anniversary at Hastings. 28 of us sat down to a Christmas Lunch at a nearby hotel, very enjoyable. This year we have a full programme, some going to the AGM at Guildford, Bournemouth and the AGC Corps Day in June.

Through this magazine I would like to express my thanks once again to those who gave us so much help in starting this Branch - Miss Bray (Portsmouth), Helen Dodds (SE Area Rep), Margaret Rogers (Eastbourne), Dorothy Dixon (Hastings) and also Bexhill Branch.

YORK

Our monthly meetings are well attended and we now have a new venue. Since the York Branch was reformed in November 1982, we have held our meetings in the RAFA Club in Aldwalk where the RAF Association members have really looked after us. To them we must offer our most sincere thanks for their hospitality and generosity in letting us use their amenities and providing us with a gentleman to man the bar. We unfortunately needed to move due to some of our ladies in the branch finding the stairs too steep for them to climb. Our new venue, St Laurence's Church Hall, (200 yards East of Walmgate Bar) is on ground level, with good facilities and space for larger groups, enabling us to entertain members from other branches.

In November we had a memorable day out at Eden Camp, a report of which should appear under "Stories".

During December we had our Christmas Lunch at Churchill's Restaurant. 20 members attended and it has now been voted our annual venue.

January was a "Bring a photo of you as a baby" day and unfortunately not one member was recognised in her baby days!

In February we had a very interesting talk by a member of the Witness Support Group.

During March one of our members, Miss Vi Taylor gave us a talk on Yorkshire Heritage and also some really appetising recipes.

In April, we are looking forward to our visit to Grimsby where their members will be meeting us and showing us around the Heritage Centre etc.

In May we will be entertaining the Leeds Branch (the first of many I hope) in our new venue.

We are looking forward to the North East Reunion in September to be held once again in York and also to the return to York for our Guest Speaker, Brigadier (Retd) Gael Ramsey CBE.

We are sorry to report the death in January of Mrs Joyce Atkin who served from 1939-1945.

A number of our members have been in hospital during the past year, namely Anne Jamieson, Cora Calvert, Anne Green, Flo Palphramand and Colonel (Retd) Hazel Powell, and all are now home and well on the way to recovery. Irene Quarrie is unfortunately still in hospital having had a hip replacement and we all wish her a speedy recovery.

Our former Secretary, Mrs Phyllis Linsdell, was duly presented with her "Certificate of Meritorious Service to the WRAC Association" by Colonel (Retd) Frankie Cook. Our congratulations to Phyl for all the hard work she put in while she was the York Branch Secretary.



The photo shows the commemorative Plaque and Kneelers as presented to Eden Camp on 18 November 1998. Members from left to right - Miss Mary Robinson, Mrs Patricia Carpenter (Secretary), Mrs Pam Nesbitt (Chairman), Mrs Joan Aldridge and Mrs Joyce Marriott, all members of the York Branch.

The Royal British Legion Pilgrimage Department
are proud to present their latest two videos

Chindit Commander and Escaping from Colditz

These videos can be obtained from:

**The Pilgrimage Department,
The Royal British Legion Village,
Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NX.**

Tel: 0044 1622 716729/716182. Fax: 0044 1622 715768.

The requested donation is £7.00 inc P&PP per video.

Golden Weddings

STEADMAN - CHAPMAN On the 20th August 1949 at Bishop Auckland Registry Office LCpl Raymond Steadman serving in the 1st Field Regiment, Harper Barracks, Ripon married Ellen Steadman (nee Chapman Ex ATS). This year they celebrate their Golden Wedding. Now residing at 32 Rosewood Ave, Elm Park, Hornchurch, Essex.



FERNEYHOUGH - WATT Edna Ferneyhough married William Watt on 16 April 1949. They celebrated their Golden Wedding on 16 April 1999. Present address: 63 Wilson Street, Wombwell, Barnsley, S Yorks S73 8LX.



RICHARDSON - TUCKER On 27 July 1945 at St Mary's Church Rodbourne Cheney, Swindon Roy Tucker married Kay Richardson. They will celebrate 54 years of marriage on 28 July 1999. Present address: Failte, Rue de la Corderie, Vale, Guernsey GY3 5BR.



MEMORABILIA PRICES

ATS BADGES	£2.75
WRAC ASSOCIATION BADGES	£2.50
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If Branches order between 10 – 20 badges (the same) they may deduct 5% from the cost.
For all orders over 20 badges (the same) they may deduct 10% from cost.

All prices are inclusive of posting and packaging.

All cheques payable to WRAC Association and sent to:

**WRAC Association HQ, Block 32, AGC
Centre, Worthy Down, Winchester, Hants
SO21 2RG**

Letters

HOLLAND HOUSE

I am researching the history of Holland House. This noble Jacobean mansion in Kensington was bombed in 1940, and lay derelict until 1952, though the grounds are, however, said to have been used as a site for either an Ack Ack Battery or barrage balloons during the war. Can any of you throw some light on this part of the house's history?

Please Contact: Mr C Wood, 21 Kenton Court, 356 Kensington High Street, London W14 8NN.

WAR GRAVES

Dear Editor,

I would like to bring to your readers attention a service which to my mind has far too little publicity. This service is run by the Royal British Legion, and is a wreath laying and photographic service. Firstly you need to know where the grave is, by contacting the:

Commonwealth Graves Commission, 2 Marlow Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire - Tel 01628 634 221.

They will do their best to help you. Try to tell them as much as you know about the deceased, i.e. Service (Army Navy, Airforce), Number, Name, Rank (if any), Date of Death etc. Once you have the details contact:

The Poppy Appeal, Royal British Legion Village, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NX - Tel 01622 717172.

You should then receive leaflets and information about the ordering of a tribute, there are crosses, wreaths, chaplets etc., and they also tell you which countries accept certain tributes, (one cannot place a cross in some countries). You pay for the production of the tribute and you are asked to make a donation.

It was quite by chance that I heard about the service, it was either after the Festival of Remembrance or the Cenotaph, when the commentator made a remark about the poppies. I contacted Pall Mall at once and as a result I have for the last 4-5 years been able to have a wreath placed on my brother's grave in Tel-el-Kebir, Egypt.

My husband, a member of the Burma Star Association, has recently searched for and found the grave of a Captain in The Veterinary Corps. His sister, the last of the family, knew that he was buried in Burma and nothing more. The grave was found in Imphala, and through the Royal British Legion a wreath was laid on his grave and a photograph taken. His 89 year old sister now has all the ends tied up and once they had been mounted she donated his medals to Derby Museum (Military Section).

There must be many of your readers who have friends or relations lost on overseas service, there have been other wars since World War 2 and peace time deaths. This is a wonderful way to pay respects to the deceased whose graves they, like me, will never visit, and a boost for the poppy appeal.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Barbara Jones (ex Sgt W/32363 Williams), 28 Mornington Crescent, Mackworth, Derby DE22 4BD.

DORNIER IN FLAMES

Lioness has received many replies regarding the Dornier Flash, sadly, too many to print. Thank you all for your contributions.

Dear Editor

With reference to the letter on Page 16 of the 1999 Lioness No 1 sent in by Eileen Sullivan. When I joined the ATS in 1941, it was suggested that ladies served on gun-sites as an experience. It was voluntary and we first served around

the London Area. The badge requesting an explanation (and to the best of my memory) was a sword through an enemy plane. I enclose a photograph of me wearing the badge. When service of ladies on gun-sites proved successful, we had to remove our first badge, and were issued with the Red Flash with Bow and Arrow.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M Stringer (nee Mitchell), 13 Burchell Court, Shadwells Road, Lancing, West Sussex BN15 9DX

Dear Editor,

In response to Eileen Sullivan's letter in the first issue (1999) of the Lioness, I think the flash she refers to is the insignia of the 1st AA Division (London). Originally this flash was issued on a khaki background and depicted the Sword of London pointing skywards transfixing a "Dornier". Later it was given a sky-blue background. Subsequently it was superseded by the AA Command flash (sometimes known as Cupid's Cavalry). I hope this will be helpful.

Yours sincerely

Mr T Acres (ex RAOC/REME) 86 Wood Lane, Wickersley, Rotherham S66 1UP.

Dear Editor,

I was delighted to read Eileen Sullivan's letter re the flaming Dornier. 451 Hy(M) AA Bty was formed in June 1941 and joined by the ATS in July. We did our Gun Park and Vocal training at Arborfield Firing Camp at Burrowhead, taking over from a male Battery at Cribbs Causeway and Rodway gun sites in the Bristol area. We were part of 133 Regt Southern Command. We were issued with our insignia in Oct 1941. The patch was a pale blue background with a falling Dornier in black with a red shell burst on the fuselage. I would think all badges and insignias of the Royal Artillery will be fully recorded in the Annals of WW II in the Military College of Science, which used to be (pre WW II) in Woolwich. I believe the museum is now in Arborfield.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Buntly Jones (nee Beattie), Caerlee House, 5/1 King St, Warrawong, NSW 2502.

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the letter about "Ack Ack" and the Blue Flash. I was in the Signals - stationed at Brompton Road 'Gun Operations Room', Knightsbridge, London: 1st Ack Ack Corp, 11th Fighter Group, if I remember it rightly. We wore the Blue Flash but in about 1943 it was changed to the Red Flash with the bow and arrow - I don't know why.

Does anyone remember "B" Team and Sergeant Charlie Gibbons who looked after us like a father? We plotted the German planes into the London area.

Yours

Mrs Ivy Duly (nee Masters), 132 Overstrand Road, Comer, Norfolk, NR27 0DW

Dear Editor,

In one of the letters regarding the Reunion at York the ladies were a bit puzzled about the Flashes we wore on our sleeves and some had never heard of one of them. Well, the answer is - the one with the Blue Flash and the flaming Dornier belonged to Southern Command and the Red Flash with Bow and Arrow belong to Northern Command. That is what we were told and I wore the Blue Flash for 4 years - February 1942 - 1946 - and was very proud of it - we called it the flaming plane.

I was with 529 H AA Bty stationed around Southampton and Portsmouth. If there is still anyone around of the 529 I would love to hear from you. I still keep in touch with a few. I was Eveline Hartley (now Goodinson) W/119003. Enclosed photo of me showing the Blue Flash. I am now 80 hears young!!
Yours

Mrs E Goodinson (nee Hartley), 20 Airedale Mews, Carleton Park, Skipton, N Yorks BD23 2TF.



Dear Editor,

I am replying to Eileen Sullivan's letter in the 1999 No 1 issue regarding the Dornier flash. I was with 505 (M) H.A.A.Bty R.A. 163 Reg as a G.L. Operator from 1941 to 1946. The Battery was formed at Weybourne and our first Gunsite was at Nursling, Southampton. We were never issued with the Bow and Arrow Flash, instead we wore the Flaming Dornier which was the silhouette of a Dornier in flames embroidered on a square of khaki material - no blue background on our flash. I am enclosing a drawing of my original Flash which I still have in my possession. We had to make and embroider our badges ourselves!

Yours

Mrs D R Strivens (nee Tranter), 17 Mulberry House, Silkweavers Road, Andover, Hants SP10 1QT.



WHERE ARE THE TA LADIES?

Dear Editor,

I enjoy every copy of the Lioness. The varied letters and articles recalling memories of past service during and after the war, make it very interesting reading. Unable to join any of the services due to domestic reasons, I achieved my ambition to do so in 1953 when I joined the WRAC/TA at Finsbury Barracks, EC1. First with HQ Coy, 326 (City of London) Bn and then 79 (City of London) Coy. I spent 13 very happy and worthwhile years in the service and made many friendships. A few are still in touch. I wonder where many of the other members are? I would love to hear from anyone who still remembers me. There must be many Ex-WRAC/TA members who have memories to recall but few seem to write to the Lioness. It would, I'm sure, be very interesting to hear about their experiences.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Pearce (W/382120 WO2 WRAC/TA) 42 Davidson Road, Croydon CR0 6DB (Tel: 0181 654 7477)

SUCCESS OF A WAYN

Dear Editor,

In the 1997 Issue 2 of Lioness, you printed a letter from Maisie Harradine (Puttock) requesting Pen Pals.

As I frequently visit the area that she lives in I contacted her and we arranged to meet. The day we met for the first time was amazing, we recognised each other immediately, although we had never met (can it be the military bearing?). We never stopped talking and anyone watching would have thought we had known each other all our lives. We were truly caught in a "Time Warp".

In spite of distance we have met several times and hopefully will continue the friendship for a long time.

Although we Ex-ATS may be a dying breed, hopefully The Lioness will continue to bring Ex-Service people together. I enclose a photo of Maisie and me taken outside her home, at Easter this year. Perhaps someone else will recognise us and get in touch.

Yours faithfully,

Pamela M Green, 5 Mill Lane, Woodford Green, Essex IG80UN



EXIT DORNIER ENTER WITCH

Dear Editor,

I was very interested in the article in *Lioness* 1-1999 about shoulder flashes. My battery 517(H) HAA Bty was formed in early 1942 and our original flash was a witch on a broomstick. **PDF Compressor Free Version**

To date I haven't met anyone who can remember this flash. Can anyone help me in my quest? I too attend York every year accompanied by my husband who thinks the reunion is great and one of the highlights of the year.

Contact: Mrs N Williams, 21 Grampian Avenue, Chester-le-Street, Co Durham DH2 3AY.

DRIVERS AND AMBULANCE DRIVERS - BELSEN LIBERATION

Dear Editor,

Contact is sought with any reader who has knowledge of any A.T.S. who served on duty either as a driver or ambulance driver at the Liberation of the Belsen Concentration Camp. This information is sought by an ex soldier of the Norwich Branch of the Normandy Veterans who was also on duty at Belsen during the Liberation. Please contact Mrs Trudy Bond who will pass on any information to the person seeking it.

Mrs Trudy Bond

Hon Secretary W.R.A.C. Association, Norfolk and Suffolk
29 Middleton Crescent

New Costessey

Norwich

South Norfolk

NR5 0PX

Military & Veterans Festival 1998

Dear Madam,

The Weymouth Cine & Video Club (WC&VC) members made a video film covering the Military & Veterans Festival held in Plymouth during the period of 13-19 June 1998. The video has been well received by the Veterans Association and a number of copies have been sold.

Military personnel played a major part in the proceedings and the video film shows that a number of ATS "Veterans" took part in the parade. It is anticipated many of your members would be interested in not only seeing the video but also purchasing their own copy.

The Weymouth Cine & Video Club members are amateurs but the video was edited by professionals. The Club hopes to raise sufficient funds to purchase a video projector and profits, if any, from selling the video will go towards cost. A video projector will allow members' films to be viewed by a much wider audience.

The Military & Veterans video, which is about one hour in length, is on sale for £9.95 but we will happily agree to the ATS & WRAC taking £1.00 for each copy sold.

We would be pleased to provide your members with a free showing.

Should you require copies or have any queries please contact the Video Club's sales co-ordinator, John Guiver, whose details are as follows:

Mr J Guiver, 10 Almond Grove, Weymouth DT4 9UH

Tel: 01305 774993

Obituary

JEAN MAGILL (nee O'LOUGHLIN)

Jean Magill (nee O'Loughlin), of Stockport, Greater Manchester, formerly of Huddersfield, passed away on 5 January age 78. She served in the ATS from 1939-45. She took up her army connections again in the early 1980's, and attending ATS events gave her so much enjoyment. I would like to thank those who met her for their friendship in these later years. Stephen O'Loughlin, her son, 21 Colwyn St, Huddersfield HD1 4PQ.

Major JANE D M HENDRIKS (nee RAVENSCROFT)

Like her family and friends I was shocked to hear of the sudden death of Jane at her home near Dumfries on 11 November 1998.

At the beginning of the Second World War Jane joined up as a Wren. She loved the life with a variety of jobs ranging from welfare (often having to write compassionate letters to bereaved mothers) to being involved with the plans for the D Day Landings. She quickly gained promotion.

Following demobilisation Jane found she could not settle into civilian life and, appreciating that by then she would have lost her seniority in the WRNS, she applied and was commissioned as a Captain in the WRAC. Taking to her new Career with enthusiasm she served in Colchester, Chester, Guildford and abroad in Jamaica and Kenya. Immediately after completing Staff College she had been posted to Kenya where the Mau Mau were still very active. On hearing of her posting Jane's mother predicted that

Jane will soon sort them out' and sure enough, two weeks after her arrival the hostilities ceased!

In Edinburgh in the middle sixties whilst working as a Schools Liaison Officer, Jane met her future husband a Cameronian Officer who was about to retire. He persuaded Jane to marry him and retire too. They had a very happy life together until his death in 1983. Jane having nursed him devotedly for the last few years.

In 1994 Jane became Chairman of the Dumfries Branch of the WRAC Association and also became involved with Stroke Victim Support, collecting for Poppies and many other charities and local organisations.

Jane and I first met in 1957 when, as a newly commissioned officer, I joined the Depot at Guildford in HQ Company. Jane was OC 1 Training Company. Jane had many tales to tell of her days in the Navy. She was also very kind to myself and the other subalterns and as one of the few car-owning officers was generous with her offers of lifts even if we did have to share with Chad, her dog at the time!

I did not meet up with Jane again until 1982 when, as the Secretary of the Scottish WRAC Association, I visited the Dumfries Branch and to my delight saw Jane. Both being English wives married into Scottish Regiments and settled in Scotland gave us a great bond, I spent many happy hours in her company.

The Dumfries Branch will miss her as Chairman, she was caring and very conscientious, feeling that the strength of

the Association was in its Branches, "We must always look after each other" she would say. She willingly supported Scottish Area when it hosted the Grand Reunion in 1991 and as a member of its Committee her constructive contributions helped to make it the success it was.

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Coming from a happy, close knit family, Jane made a very happy home where all were made welcome. She loved cooking and her garden was a delight. She had lived a full life and her death was just as she would have wished, but we will all miss her.

Our sympathy goes to her sister Pamela, her two brothers Harold and Eric and her many nephews and nieces of whom she was so fond.

MISS DORIS HODGSON EX R.S.M. ARMY NO W/269044

27 years service with A.T.S. and W.R.A.C. died aged 72 on 24 th December 1998.

She served with Ack Ack and helped with Lynmouth disaster over 50 years ago. As a Warrant Officer she helped to organise the 50 years Womens Service celebrations at Westminster in presence of Her Majesty the Queen. She trained Officer Cadets as R.S.M. of Huron Camp, Hindhead and TA in Scotland and England, and was R.S.M. in Germany and Guildford Depot. Latterly before retirement in May 1975 she was Warrant Officer at Brighton and Swindon Recruiting Offices covering Salisbury and Bournemouth.

Our Corps Motto "Gentle in Manner, Resolute in Deed" said it all for Doris Hodgson. After leaving the Army Doris was a devout voluntary worker for Wiltshire and Devon Social Services as driver and escort, hospital car service, meals on wheels, animals in distress and Rowcroft Hospice to name just a few. All this shared by her friend and companion of 43 years, Jean Moore. She was the official car driver also for Jean who was for many years a County and District Councillor in Wiltshire and Devon. Latterly she drove Jean all over South Devon on her tribunal work right up to her death. A most sterling, steadfast and loyal friend to Jean but to many others also. Remembered also with great affection by her Army colleagues.

AN A.T.S. IN THE "Y" SERVICE JEAN MARY RAIDERS (nee SMITH)

JEAN MARY RAIDERS, nee SMITH, was born 1st November 1922 and moved to Fenny Stratford, North Bucks, in 1929, the home of her maternal grandparents. Educated locally, Jean enlisted in the A.T.S. at the Drill Hall, Northampton on 23rd August 1942. 12 days later on 4th September Jean waved goodbye to Fenny Stratford and went to nearby Bletchley, reporting to the A.T.S. Training Centre in Harrogate, becoming W/214542 Private Smith, J.M.

Billeted at Queen Ethelburga's, a peacetime Boarding School for young ladies. After initial training she was posted, firstly to Trowbridge, then to Douglas in the Isle of Man, training as Special Operator for the "Y" Service.

On completion of the six months training in April 1943 she was posted to Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire, becoming one of those anonymous operators listening for enemy messages; often at night when traffic was light she would search the airwaves for any new transmissions.

These ladies, many of whom were A.T.S., played an

important role for our Intelligence Services. Without their dedication and ability to record the sometimes weak signals, the Code Breakers of Bletchley Park would not have achieved their now famed contribution to victory in W.W.II.

These girls received scant recognition for their efforts.

Leaving Kedleston Hall in 1944 Jean's next posting was to Forest Moor, Harrogate where she remained until 1946. How ironical that, with home a mile or so away from Bletchley Park, and having visited local shows on the then Leon estate, Jean should be obtaining information and was unaware of it being used so close to home.

Demobbed in April 1946 and returning to Fenny Stratford she took employment with the Control Commission for Germany and Austria at Bletchley Park.

However, recognition of the wartime service was yet to come. With the opening of the Museum at Bletchley Park Jean became a Volunteer, making the "Y" Room her domain. In here so many ex "Y" operators were met, memories exchanged, and a wealth of information amassed. Many friendships were made; there will be more than a few who will miss Jean Smith.

Jean Raiders, nee Smith, ex A.T.S. Special Operator "Y" Service; member of the W.R.A.C. Association, died on 15th March 1999.

ANSTEY. Mrs E M of Plymouth on 1 April 1999. ATS.

ARMITAGE. Mrs Marjorie (née Goodwill) of Harrogate on 18 April 1999. ATS.

ATKIN. Miss Joyce of York on 1 January 1999.

BALMER. Miss B M of Appleby-in-Westmoreland.

BENTLEY. Mrs Ivy Mary (née Dawson) of Bexhill on 1 November 1999. ATS.

BEXHILL. Mrs Norah (née Syrett) of Brighton on 26 February 1999. ATS.

BLAND. Miss Lilian Edith of London on 2 December 1998. ATS.

BOLTON. Mrs Florence on 8 June 1999.

BOWDEN. Mrs Anne (née Bowden) of Burnham on Sea on 18 February 1999. ATS.

BRAIN. Miss K M of Wakefield on 1 December 1998. ATS.

BREWER. Mrs Betty (née Woodward) of Bexhill on 25 February 1999. ATS.

BRUCE. Ms A E (née Hands) of London on 1 December 1998. ATS.

CARRUTHERS. Mrs E D (née Frewin) of Dorchester. ATS.

CECIL. Mrs Elsie Louise (née Griggle) of Luton on 5 April 1999. ATS.

CHANDLER. Alice (née Faulker).

CHILVER. Vera of Chelmsford.

CLARK. Mrs B M of Swindon on 1 April 1999. ATS.

CLARK. Mrs Barbara R. (née Badcoe/Ha) of Kilburn on 21 February 1999. ATS.

CLEGG. Mrs Gladys Rose (née Kenney) of Exeter on 1 December 1998. ATS.

COALTER. Mrs Sylvia V W (née Lavelle) of Birmingham on 2 May 1999. ATS.

COOTE. Marjorie Amelia (née Matherton) of Harlow on 1 September 1997. ATS.

COX. Mrs Audrey (née Denham) of Chapel Allerton on 2 May 1999. ATS.

CRAWFORD. Miss Jessie Edmond on 1 June 1998. ATS.

DENTON. Florence May (née Christison) of Richmond. ATS.

DEXTER. Maj. G. of Hythe on 9 April 1999. WRAC.

DOWNES. Mrs (née Lewis) of Teignmouth on 30 October 1998. ATS.

DUFFIN. Mrs A. (née Forster) of Newcastle on Tyne on 2 May 1999. ATS.

DUNN. Mrs May (née Campo) of Northumberland. ATS.

DYE. Mrs Sheila (née Frizzell) of Bromley on 19 December 1999. ATS.

EARNSHAW. Mrs of Cleveland.

FOWLER. Miss Dorothy A. of Dorchester. WRAC.

GOLDBERGER. Miss Deborah of Colwyn Bay on 3 January 1999. ATS.

HAMBLEY. Mrs Brenda (née James) of Isle of Wight on 5 September 1998. ATS.

HASLAM. Mrs Kathleen E. (née Tidon) of Newton Abbott on 31 January 1999. ATS.

HAYWARD. Mrs N. (née Vincent) of Plymouth on 8 November 1998. ATS.

HENDRICKS. Mrs Jane D. M. (née Ravenscroft) of Dumfries on 12 November 1999. WRAC.

HIGGINS. Mrs Lillian (née Chappell) of Cambridge on 17 January 1998, ATS.

HIPKIN. Mrs Edna of Shipley on 16 March 1999. ATS.

HOCKLEY. Mrs Kathleen (née Cook) of Leicester on 1 December 1998. WRAC.

HODGSON. Miss Doris of Paignton on 24 December 1998. ATS.

HULL. Mrs May 9 (née Monks) of Wigan on 1 December 1998. ATS.

LAWSON. Mrs Eileen Mary of Belfast on 20 October 1998. ATS.

LINZAMIER. Mrs Helen of Manchester. ATS.

MADGIN. Mrs Robina of Lyndhurst on 1 February 1999. ATS.

MAGILL. Mrs Jean (née O'Loughlin) of Stockport on 5 January 1999. ATS.

MARSEY. Ms of Cleveland.

MATTHEWS. Mrs F. E. M. of Daventry. ATS.

McCOMB. Mrs Frances of Belfast on 23 August 1998. ATS.

McKENZIE. Miss Cathleen of Argyll on 20 June. ATS.

McLEOD. Mrs Anne of Bradford on 28 February 1999. ATS.

MITCHELL. Mrs E. M. of Belfast on 20 October 1998. ATS.

MONTWILL. Mrs Olive M. (née Buchanan) of Fife. ATS.

MOORE. Miss Jean of Paignton on 24 May 1998. WRAC.

MUSGROVE. Mrs Helen (née Cruttenden) of Rainham on 17 April 1999. ATS.

NADIN. Mrs Joan (née Bolton) of Bolton on 25 February 1999. ATS.

OLDHAM. Mrs Edna (née Wilkinson) of Bradford on 17 November 1998. ATS.

ORCHARD. Mrs Trudy (née Williams) of Cheshire on 2 December 1998. ATS.

PARKER. Mrs Jean Jemima of Glasgow on 25 August 1998. ATS.

PARKER. Mrs M. I. (née McManus) of Moulton Eaugate. ATS.

PARRY. Mrs Gertrude of Liverpool on 2 December 1998. ATS.

PETRIE. Mrs J. C. of Dumfries on 5 September 1998. ATS.

POOLEY. Mrs S. L. (née Welch) of Crowborough on 5 August 1998. ATS/WRAC.

PYE. Mrs Iris of London on 14 December 1998. ATS.

RAIDERS. Mrs J. M. (née Smith) of Bletchley on 15 March 1999. ATS.

REDFERN. Mrs Jean Isobel of Herne Bay. ATS.

RICHARDS. Mrs Christine late 1988.

RICHARDSON. Mrs Winifred (née Potter) of London on 19 April 1999. ATS.

RICHARDSON. Mrs of Cleveland.

ROSE. Mrs Margaret (née Petrie) of Hove on 4 March 1999. ATS.

SCHOLFIELD. Mrs Dorothy (née Linguard) of Nottingham on 26 January 1999. ATS.

SKELLAND. Mrs Holly Edna of Manchester on 13 April 1999. ATS.

SMITH. Mrs Joan (née Fairweather) of Cambridge on 20 January 1999. ATS.

SPROAT. Mrs May of Prestwick on 1 August 1998. ATS.

STEELE. Mrs Muriel (née Lewis) of Shrewsbury on 9 December 1998. ATS.

TAPP. Miss Alice Ypres of East Sussex. ATS.

THOMSON. Miss Jessie of Ayr. ATS.

TOPPING. Mrs of Blackpool on 28 April 1999. ATS.

TURTLE. Mrs Helen (née Morton) of Southampton on 1 May 1998. ATS.

TYSON. Mrs Ivy Marjorie (née Vickery) of Sittingbourne on 10 November 1998. ATS.

WARD. Mrs A. L. (née Jones) of Wrexham. ATS.

WHATLEY. Mrs Eleanor of Shipley on 17 November 1998. ATS.

WHITLAM. Mrs Ellen (née Neville) of Dittingham on 1 December 1997. ATS.

WIDDAS. Mrs B. A. of Gloucestershire on 3 April 1999. ATS.

WILKINSON. Mrs Pauline (née Grayley) of Leeds on 21 November 1998. ATS.

WILLCOCKS. Mrs Kitty (née Heayns) of Lostwithiel on 2 December 1998. ATS.

WINTER. Mrs Jean (née Mounser) of Bicester on 21 January 1999. ATS/ WRAC.

QUIZ RESULT

The winner of the Guildford AGM Quiz is Plymouth Branch.

Congratulations for your encyclopaedic knowledge.

ATS and WRAC Statuettes

direct from makers, by Austin Farina

Made in solid brass, in fine detail and highly polished.

Both figures are 6" tall in dress uniform and at the salute posture

Mounted on a 4"x2" rope edged brass base with the appropriate ATS. or WRAC badge alongside.

Received and appreciated by many ATS and WRAC Association Members. Full refund if not delighted.

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Please make cheques payable to: "Austin Farina" at
Black Horse Cottage, Gorrcott Hill, Nr Redditch, Worcs B98 9EU.
Telephone: 01527 852831



ROBERTSON – BIRTH

On 21 October 1998 Maj Val Robertson WRAC/AGC(SPS) and Maj Struan Robertson HLDERS increased their family with a daughter Kirsty Ellen, a sister for Fraser. Maj Val Robertson is still serving and has returned to work.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

SSAFA Forces Help is a leading National Services' charity, established to relieve hardship and to assist service and ex-service personnel and their families. We care for over 86,000 people every year.

Caseworkers, visitors, team leaders, treasurers and fundraisers are required in many parts of the UK.

Our volunteers are the last line of defence for the 14 million people entitled to call on us for help. They meet the ever increasing needs of the past and present service people and their dependants, among them an ageing Wartime Generation.

Enlist today – We offer training, all out of pocket expenses, and job satisfaction.

For more information contact Ann Needle on 0171 403 8783, or write to her at 19 Queen Elizabeth Street, London SE1 2LP.

THE SOLDIERS, SAILORS, AIRMEN AND FAMILIES ASSOCIATION – FORCES HELP

Registered Charity Number 210760. Est. 1885

Application for Membership

To the General Secretary
THE WRAC ASSOCIATION
AGC Centre Worthy Down
Winchester Hampshire
SO21 2RG

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I wish to join the WRAC Association as a Life Member and enclose £50 cheque

OR

I enclose £5 cheque for Annual membership which is in payment of the first annual subscription up to the 31 December.

Date..... Signature.....

Subscriptions include "LIONESSE" (Please complete in Block Letters)

QMAAC/ATS/WRAC/TAVR Army Number

Last Rank held (Present Rank if still serving)

Surname Miss/Mrs/Ms

Christian Names

Surname when serving

Address for Correspondence

.....

.....

..... Post Code.....

Telephone

Units during service.....

.....

Date of Enrolment..... Date of Release

Decorations..... Date of Birth

WRAC ASSOCIATION ACCOMMODATION OFFER – BRITANNIA ADELPHI HOTEL

WHY NOT JOIN FORCES WITH US

A Special Offer to all members of the WRAC Association

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Yes, We Did Say 1 – 2 – Free

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(William was previously at the Norbreck Hotel in Blackpool)

Farewell to Brigadier Helen Meechie CBE

Early last March I returned from the Netherlands and slightly nervously presented my self for interview to Brigadier Helen Meechie and Colonel Barry Johnston at Worthy Down. The last few times I had seen or spoken to Brigadier Helen were as a junior Subaltern asking for funding for a sailing expedition, and at the Final WRAC Parade and Cathedral service at Guildford in 1992.

To my great relief I found she was very approachable and was in fact already known to my husband and our best man in her role as the Regimental Colonel of the Tayforth UOTC where they had enjoyed more than one party together; what a small world. Incidentally Brigadier Helen had been a Senior Under Officer in the St Andrews UOTC one of the antecedent UOTCs amalgamated to form Tayforth UOTC. Indeed at a wedding in Scotland in June I met yet more of her erstwhile Officer Cadets from the UOTC.

As the new and green General Secretary I have found Brigadier Helen a tremendous support. She has answered the most peculiar and obtuse questions with endless patience, explaining the why's and where fore's of various situations. My peculiar spelling mistakes have always been met with a rue smile and the odd comment about spell checkers not being infallible.

She has always made time for me to come and visit her, listening to my plans and ideas tempering my enthusiasm with experience and tolerance. After my first visit I remembered to wear trousers as 'Duffy and Clyde' were still highly inquisitive and excitable puppies; even the firmest 'be quiet', or 'down' from a senior Brigadier had no effect. I can now report that age and training have quietened them down, however, they still demand to play ball in the garden given half a chance.

Brigadier Helen is standing down due for health reasons. She regrets she is no longer able to fulfil all her commitments to the Association but leaves the Association in a strong position for the next Millennium. She has overseen the modernisation of the rules and the re-writing of the various Trust deeds to meet current legislation and the needs of the Association and Benevolent fund for the future. We all send our very best wishes to her and hope she at last has time to master computer golf and win!

Farewell to Mrs Alice Matthews.

What a change is happening in Corps Headquarters this year. Sadly, in addition to saying farewell to Brigadier Meechie, we also have to say good bye to Mrs Alice Matthews, a fellow Scot. She has been Joint Secretary and Case Secretary of the Benevolent Funds, as well as Honorary Treasurer of the Association, for the past 9 years - service indeed. During this time, Alice has seen 4 General Secretaries and 4 Chief Clerks come and go, and has had to contend with 3 office moves, staff reductions and computerisation. Through out it all she has continued to ensure that our former servicewomen, ATS & WRAC, have received the help they need, doing her best to seek funds from all possible sources, including the National Lottery Board.

She is a mine of information. To date I don't think I've ever seen her short of an answer yet. If she does not know immediately, she 'knows a man or woman who will' and goes in search of a solution. Her experience and depth of understanding have been essential in the modernising and re-writing of the Rules and various Trust Deeds. She has been generous with her time and knowledge, patiently explaining the reasons why things had been done in a particular way and what had driven particular decisions, in addition to meeting the demands of her own Benevolent Fund case work. As a new General Secretary I needed every bit of help I could get.

We thank Alice for all her work over many years. We wish her and her husband all the best for their planned move to the wilds of Herefordshire and hope they enjoy a little more time to themselves. We also thank her family - Geoff, Helen and Neil - for their patience and tolerance of the all-consuming WRAC Association.

THE EAST SURREY REGIMENT

If anyone who served in the Depot at Kingston during the Second World War has a photograph of a member of the ATS wearing the Surrey's cap badge, and is prepared to lend the photograph for copying, would she please notify the Editor of the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Newsletter, c/o 9 Langdon Close, St Margaret's-at-Cliffe, Dover, Kent CT15 6JP

SUBSCRIPTIONS

REMEMBER TO PAY FOR 2000

BY

FRIDAY 12TH NOVEMBER 1999

Any problems please contact Chief Clerk Mrs Sue Myers at Headquarters

Vice President

Brigadier Shirley Nield took over from Brigadier Helen Meechie as the Vice President of the WRAC Association on the 8 July 1999.

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On behalf of the Association we would like to welcome her and wish her an enjoyable term of office.

BRIGADIER S P NIELD CBE

Brigadier Nield is a graduate of Sheffield University where she took a degree in Psychology followed by a post graduate Diploma in Social Science. She was a member of Sheffield University OTC for four years during which time she was commissioned to the TA.

On leaving University she took up an appointment as Probation Officer with the City of Manchester at the same time joining 320 Bn WRAC TA as a subaltern. She found both "early learning experiences" of a very special kind.

In 1960 she decided to run the gamut of the Regular Commissions Board and succeeded. After training at the WRAC School of Instruction Liphook she was commissioned to the Regular Army in June 1961.

Making use of her academic qualifications she was appointed Personnel Selection Officer for the WRAC and QARANC.

From 1975 she moved from Selection and held a series of regimental appointments including OC 12 Coy Mill Hill, Commander WRAC Northern Ireland (76-77), Commander WRAC BAOR (77-80). From 1982-84 she commanded the WRAC College Camberley when it was the fourth College of RMA Sandhurst. She became Director WRAC in 1986 and retired from this appointment in 1989. During her service she has acted as UK Representative the the NATO Committee on Women and was awarded the CBE in 1989.

Since then shen has occupied the summit uplands of retirement. She has travelled extensively, improved her skills in drawing and painting producing work in charcoal, oils and pastels. As a local Councillor she is actively involved in the community. She is looking forward to renewing acquaintance with many friends and colleagues in the Association.

She divides her time between her homes in Norfolk and London.



Brigadier S P Nield CBE

WANTED BACK ISSUES OF THE LIONESS

Does anyone still have old copies of the Lioness?
I am interested in publications prior to 1988 but
more particularly those published in 1962-66.
If you can help, contact Ann Butler-Deakin,
'Cobblestones', 2 Chesham Road,
Stafford ST16 3JP
or telephone
01785 249992.

OVERSEAS LIFE MEMBERS

Now that the dispatch of the Lioness magazine has been taken over by a distribution company it is only possible to operate a one tariff postal system.

It wil therefore be necessary to request an annual contribution of £3.50 to help with the cost of printing.

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WRAC SENIOR NON COMMISSIONED OFFICERS DINNER NIGHT - 13TH MARCH 1999

Row 5: WO2 Woods, Sgt Owtrim, June Raynor, Kate Woodcock, Jill Trainor, Rose Murphy, Sgt Walter, Sgt Summerell, Ann Butcher, Madge Smith, Jan Ford, WO2 Denham.
Row 4: SSgt Bagnell, Karen Loftus, Wendy Hooton, Nicki Wellings, SSgt Hopewell, SSgt Green, Hilary Steeden, Lani Ferrand, Elaine O'Sullivan, SSgt Manketelow, Lesley Holt, Kate Arnold.
Row 3: Lesley Goff, Kath Hagley, Sandra Elliott, Sgt Calabrese, Sue Taylor, Karen Ballard, Gill Rich, Sgt Goffin, Sgt Ellams, Bernie Dolan, Jennifer Podesta, SSgt Adamson, Tracy Dodd.
Row 2: Rena McGregor, Julie Wilcox, Elaine Smith, June Skelton, Sharon Hope, Sgt Bradbury, Mary Linnegan, Capt Lawrence, Pat Coley, Chris Wolf, Jenny Jackson, SSgt Tindall, Angie Sillett, Margeret Gallafent.
Front Row: SSgt Baxter, Anne Hamilton, WO1 Cadd, WO1 Hamilton, Lt Col Westlake, WO2 Thorne, Maj (Retd) Maskens McIntyre, WO2 Callaghan, Sgt Rigby, SSgt Laver, Mitch Mitchell.

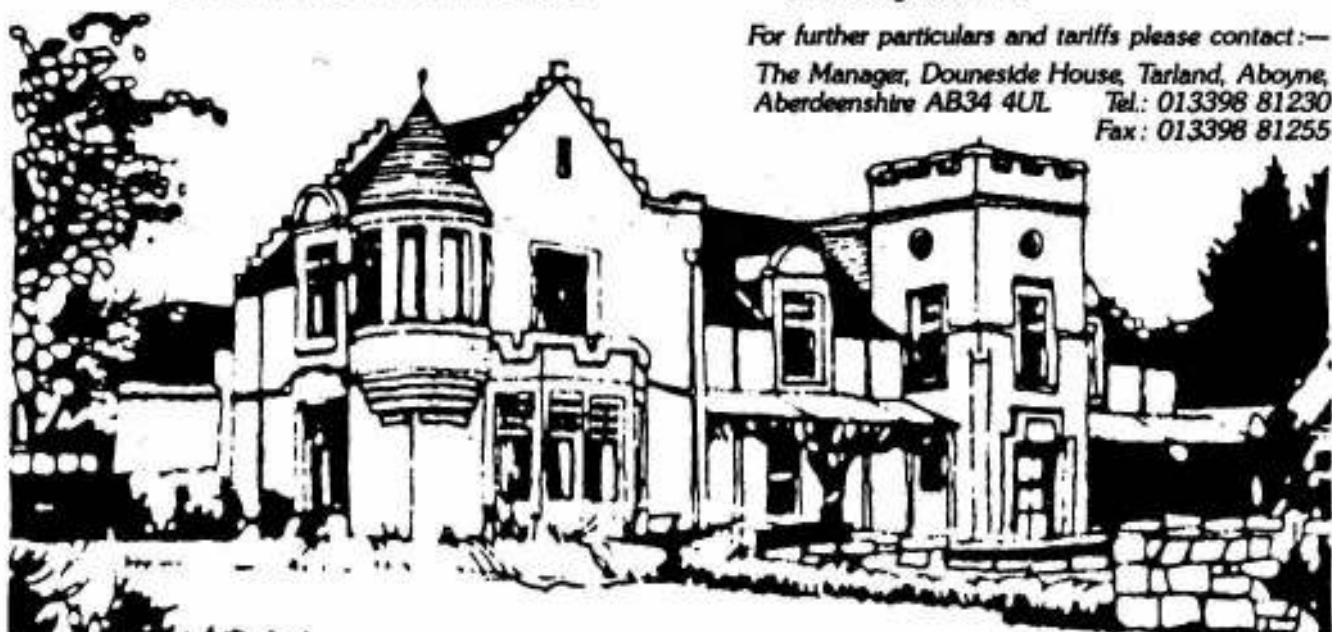
Douneside

Country House for Officers and their families

Situated in its own beautiful gardens on a 6,500 acre estate in the heart of Royal Deeside, Douneside House is a delightful country house owned by the MacRobert Trusts (a group of registered charities established by the late Lady MacRobert). The House is open to serving and retired officers of the Armed Forces and their families at substantially subsidised rates for holidays at Christmas and from Easter to October. Winter breaks are also available. The House has its own leisure centre including a swimming pool, spa and saunas. During the remaining months Douneside House is used as a conference centre offering a wide range of facilities.

For further particulars and tariffs please contact:—

The Manager, Douneside House, Tarland, Aboyne,
 Aberdeenshire AB34 4UL Tel: 013398 81230
 Fax: 013398 81255



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1959

1959 - 1962

1962 - 1964

1964 - 1967

1967 - 1970

Colonel R.D. Coate
Colonel H. Cooper M.B.E.
Colonel L.D. Slater C.B.E.
Colonel J.C. Gould
Colonel A. Borthwick Clarke
Colonel T.A.
Colonel
Colonel