

LIONESS

PDF Compressor Free Version



Brigadier E J Nolan C B

PDF Compressor Free Version



THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 206184

Founded in 1919

PATRON

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

PRESIDENT

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF KENT GCVO

VICE-PRESIDENT

Lieutenant Colonel S J Westlake AGC (SPS)

Chairman:

Vice-Chairman:

Life Vice-Presidents of Council:

Lieutenant Colonel S J Westlake AGC (SPS)

Mrs M B S Purkis

Miss M M Thomson TD

Brigadier A Field CB CBE

Lieutenant Colonel The Lady Martha Bruce OBE TD DL

Lieutenant Colonel M W Soames OBE

Brigadier Dame Joanna Kelleher DBE

Brigadier The Honourable Dame Mary Pihl DBE

Brigadier G K Ramsey CBE

Brigadier S P Nield CBE

Colonel F M Cook

General Secretary:

Honorary Treasurer:

Editor of Association Magazine:

Assistant Editor:

Major J A Freebairn

Lieutenant Colonel M Woollard MBE AGC (SPS)

Major J A Freebairn

Mrs A Schofield

ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds

Chairman of Trustees:

Chairman of Grants Committee:

Case Secretary:

Lieutenant Colonel S J Westlake AGC (SPS)

Colonel A J Smith

Mrs M E Wroot

Headquarters, WRAC Association, AGC Centre, Worthy Down, Winchester SO21 2RG

General Secretary: Direct (01962) 887570 or ATN (94271) 2570

Chief Clerk: Direct (01962) 887478 or ATN (94271) 2478

Fax: (01962) 887478

Benevolent Funds: (01962) 887612 or ATN (94271) 2612

E-mail: wracassociation@milnet.uk.net

Website: www.wracassociation.co.uk

Cover Photographs

Front Cover

Brigadier EJ Nolan CB
1920-2005

Back Cover

16/60ers 2005 Reunion

Contributions for next issue by 20 June 2006

Published by the WRAC Association, Worthy Down, Winchester, SO21 2RG.

Printed in Great Britain by Warwick Printing Company Ltd, Caswell Road, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV31 1QD.

Distributed by SK Direct Ltd, Unit 6, Solent Business Centre, Millbrook Road West, Millbrook, Southampton SO15 0HW.

CONTENTS

Message from the Vice President.....	1
ATS Reminiscences.....	1
Reminiscences of the WRAC	11
Where Are You Now?.....	14
Branch News.....	17
Unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II.....	38
Events to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of World War II.....	47
Reunions.....	56
Articles of Interest.....	61
Weddings.....	66
Letters to the Editor.....	69
Poems.....	73
Obituaries – their Final Salute.....	75
WRAC Association Accounts as at 31 October 2005.....	80

EDITORIAL



Welcome to this bumper edition of the *Lioness*. Although it is sad to report the news of Brigadier Nolan, it is perhaps rather fitting that her photograph should be on the front of this edition which contains so much about the 60th Anniversary of the end of World War II. Brigadier Nolan's service started during the War and she enjoyed strong and active connections with the ATS, the WRAC and the Association for just over 60 years. We salute her and will miss her.

I have been very impressed with the range and quality of the articles I have received for this issue and hope that it will encourage more of you to send in material. Please just let me reiterate the problems about photographs. THE ORIGINAL IS BEST! I cannot do anything with photocopies of, or indeed the original of newspaper articles. Most editors are now asking for digital photographs of at least 3 million pixels. I will accept less but there is no doubt that they will not reproduce so well.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Kath Barker as Chief Clerk. Kath arrived in October 2005 and is, amazingly, still smiling as you can see from her photograph.

Kath is already an associate member of Winchester Branch and is looking forward to meeting so many of you at the Grand Reunion.



I would also like you to "meet"
Margaret Wood.



Margaret is the Case Secretary for the Benevolent Fund: an aspect of our work at Worthy Down which often goes unsung. Last year, we dealt with 630 applications for assistance and disbursed just over £150,000 in one-off grants. Please remember this very valuable aspect of our Charity when you are fund raising. Of course, it is good to know you are supporting other causes but just look at the accounts at the back of the magazine and see how you could help with donations to the Benevolent Fund or the Association itself.

We three constitute the full-time staff at Worthy Down. I heard a rumour that some of you think that all the ladies whose names appear inside the front cover actually work at the Association on a daily basis. Not so – it's just us and we do enjoy being here. Our Vice-President fortunately works at Worthy Down albeit in a different building. It does mean though that we see her most days which is a great support.

Looking forward to the Grand Reunion. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy this *Lioness*.

Jane Freebairn

Message from the Vice President



It is with much sadness that I begin this edition of the *Lioness* with news of the death of Brigadier Eileen Nolan on December 29th 2005. The picture on the front cover was her favourite and shows her at her desk in MOD whilst Director WRAC. Brigadier Eileen was a staunch supporter of the Association and a Life Vice President of Council. She enthusiastically attended meetings of the Aldershot Branch until its

closure. The Association was well represented at her Funeral at the Royal Memorial Chapel, Sandhurst on Thursday 12th January. It is hoped that many more of us will be able to attend her Memorial Service at Sandhurst on Friday 24th March at 12 noon.

Among Brigadier Nolan's greatest achievements was gaining official recognition for the Senior Women Officers of the NATO Alliance and as Chairman of that committee, she became the most senior woman in the NATO Alliance. It was during this time that she forged such strong links with her counterpart in the American Women's Army. As a result, Brigadier Eileen was a frequent visitor to the USA and was an honorary member of their Association. She played a key role in the dedication of the Women's Memorial and Museum at Arlington Cemetery and was guest speaker at their Reunion on several occasions. Her significant contribution to the WRAC as Director is well documented and you will find a full obituary on the next page. I have passed on the Association's sincere

condolences to Brigadier Eileen's sister Betty and her family. Brigadier Nolan was highly respected and will be remembered with great affection by all of us who had the privilege to serve with her or who met her through the Association.

PDF Compressor Free Version

Turning now to the main event in the Association's calendar, our Grand Reunion. By the time you receive this *Lioness*, the Reunion will be little more than a week or two away – unbelievable, where have the last three years gone? I do hope that those of you who are able to attend will have an enjoyable and memorable weekend – it should be the best yet and I am looking forward to it immensely and hope you are too. Please remember that the whole weekend is designed to enable us Army Women (irrespective of the cap badge we wore or are still wearing) to reminisce, to catch up with old friends

and to meet new ones but, above all, to have fun. During the weekend, we will think of those of you who are unable to attend because of ill health or travelling difficulties and hope that you will enjoy hearing about it from friends who attend or reading about it in the next *Lioness*. If you have not applied but wished you had (!), please give Association Headquarters a ring just in case there are any last minute cancellations through illness – it's worth a try and you might be lucky.

I will close with my very best wishes, albeit belatedly, to you all for 2006. I look forward to meeting up with many of you throughout the year whether it be at the Grand Reunion, your local Branch or Area Reunion. Keep the flag flying!

Sue Westlake

BRIGADIER E J NOLAN CB

DIRECTOR WRAC 1973-1977

DEPUTY CONTROLLER COMMANDANT 1978-1984

LIFE VICE-PRESIDENT WRAC ASSOCIATION

19 June 1920 – 29 December 2005

Eileen Joan Nolan was born in Bournville, the estate created by Cadbury for its employees. Her father was a technical advisor in the company and Eileen worked there in sales and advertising before joining the ATS in November 1942. After initial training in Halifax, she attended an NCOs course at Pontefract and remained involved with training until attending OCTU in Windsor in early 1945. Second Subaltern Nolan was commissioned in April 1945.

In 1946, Junior Commander Nolan was posted to Guildford and, in 1948, she moved to B Coy, 12 Battalion at Prince's Gate, Kensington, London. She commanded some 300 women who worked in the War Office in Hobart House. During that time, she also led the contingent taking part in the Festival of Remembrance at the Albert Hall.

In March 1952, Captain Nolan went to Kingston, Jamaica, commanding WRAC and locally enlisted servicewomen, and returned in March 1954 to attend the WRAC Staff College at Frimley. Following that, her initial staff appointment was as Staff Captain 'Q' at the War Office. Her responsibilities included the movement of freight to and from the Middle East. This was over the period of the Suez Crisis which often meant around the clock working in the Ops Room.

In 1957, Captain Nolan was promoted to Major and a year later was in Tripoli commanding the 90 strong WRAC contingent and filling a 'Q' staff appointment in the Headquarters. In 1961 she came back to the North of England as Schools Liaison Officer before being posted as DAAG responsible for officers' postings. From there she became OC Cadet Wing at the WRAC College in 1965. Following promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in 1967 and a short tour in Scotland, she moved to Singapore as Senior WRAC Officer and 'Q' Staff Officer with particular responsibility for Quartering in Malaysia.

Returning, on promotion to Colonel, in 1970, she was appointed as Colonel AAG AG16. In May 1973, she was promoted to Brigadier and became Director WRAC, an appointment she held until June 1977. She was appointed CB on retirement and served on as Deputy Controller Commandant until 1984. Even after that, Brigadier Nolan took a lively interest in the WRAC Association. As a Life Vice-President, she enjoyed attending Council Meetings, Grand Reunions and WRAC Officers' Dining Club functions – she never missed. Her last appearance was in July 2005 when she lunched with Council and clearly enjoyed herself immensely.

During her career, Brigadier Nolan experienced several significant changes to the employment of women in the Army and, indeed, to the structure and very existence of the WRAC itself. In Libya, she had to balance the strict Muslim rules about the behaviour of women in public with the gregarious way of life which servicewomen wanted to follow. At Camberley, she was involved in broadening the field training of the WRAC cadets in line with those of their male counterparts at Sandhurst and in MOD, both as Colonel AAG AG16 and as Director, she was in constant negotiation and discussion about the future employment of women, whether or not they were combatant and the whole issue of the introduction of weapon training. All of these issues were dealt with in her usual firm, diplomatic but determined manner. Brigadier Nolan was not one to sway or, indeed, be swayed, once she had made her decision – a decision based always on what she believed to be in the best interests of the servicewomen under her command.

Brigadier Nolan should also be remembered for the outstanding work she did for the WRAC in the international arena. She was instrumental in organising the Conference of the NATO Senior Women Officers in London and was the Chairman of that Conference between 1975 and 1977. She also had long and close associations with the US Women's Army Corps and forged a lifelong friendship with her counterpart there, Brigadier General Mildred C. Bailey.

In 1983, Brigadier Nolan was appointed as a Freeman of the City of London and also held appointments in her local Royal British Legion Branch and Conservative Party Committee. She was also a Friend of the Memorial Chapel at RMA Sandhurst and a Memorial Service to celebrate her life will be held there at 12 noon on 24 March 2006.

ATS Reminiscences

A YOUNG OFFICER WITH 102 "Z" BATTERY

PDF Compressor Free Version

7 The Crossroad, Ellington, Surrey KT24 5PD

Although I have been a Life Member of the Association for ages I have never written to you before but your obituary of Mrs J L Thomson, née Mary Dixon OBE has prompted me to put pen to paper.

In October 1939 I joined the ATS, although only 16 I lied successfully! Having served as a clerk with RAMC records I was posted to Honiton Transport Centre as a Cpl – training early conscript intakes. In 1942 the CO suggested I apply for a commission – which, of course, required me to supply a Birth Certificate! Of course there were then doubts about sending me to a Selection Board – however I did so and after training at Windsor was commissioned on 28 August 1942.

Having had a week's leave I was told to report to 35 Brigade Group HQ at Bursledon. When I arrived – very nervous and quite ignorant about life in an Officers' Mess – I was told that the Group Commander (Mary Dixon) would see me in her quarters. To my great embarrassment and discomfiture when I knocked on her door and was told to "come in," I found her changing for dinner and in a state of undress! I will never forget how charming she was and how simply she put me at my ease, asking me to have dinner in the mess and go to her office afterwards.

Having been told at OCTU that very young officers would not be posted to small units I was sent, that very evening, to 102(Z) Rocket Battery at North End, Portsmouth where I was the only woman officer. My predecessor, having handed over the Imprest Account and the Q Stores, disappeared into the night! However I survived and met my future husband there.

In 1943 I was posted to 35 AA Brigade HQ and promoted to J/Commander. Finally in 1945 I was discharged, and much to my surprise received a handwritten letter of appreciation from Mary Dixon who was then Controller at HQ Eastern Command.

Incidentally in all the years I've been reading the *Lioness* I've never seen any mention of the AA "Z" Regiments – we fired 64 rockets simultaneously to break up enemy aircraft formations.

May I say how much I enjoy the *Lioness* – the wartime stories and photographs all very nostalgic. Certainly my service days have left me many memories – both sad and very funny, a great experience!

93rd SEARCHLIGHT BATTALION REUNION

Violet L. Middleton

36 Cottage Grove, Bockings Ebn, Clacton-On-Sea,
Essex CO16 8DJ

In June I attended the 93rd Searchlight Reunion at Larkhill in Wiltshire. We were made most welcome all

day and dined in the Officers' Mess (that was a first). Vera Lyton spent most of the day at the Reunion and lunched with us. They had a searchlight which is the only working one left. Keith Brigstock who arranged the day for us restored it. I was interviewed by the BBC and am now on the website WW2 Peoples War www.bbc.co.uk/dna/ww2.



I did my army training at the Ocean Hotel, Brighton for 6 weeks then on to the 93rd Anti Tank Regiment at Aldershot. We moved to Church Stretton in Shropshire where I was a cook for 2 years. I volunteered to join the 93rd Searchlight Regiment and did my training at Kimriel Park, North Wales. On the website is an account of the fire I was in when our spider hut was burned to the ground. A soldier saved me. I was on various sites in Hertford, Kingsborne Green was my first, then it was to Hemel Hempstead and Watford our HQ. I would like to get in touch with Peggy Rattery who came from London and was our "Don R".

CHRISTMAS 1942 FELSTED PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mrs Madeleine J Croll, née Rees

Tarnby, 8 Woodvale Avenue, Chestfield, Whitstable,
Kent CT5 3NJ

In my life there have been many memorable Christmases but 1942 was the most outstanding. I was serving in the ATS at Felsted Public School and on Christmas Eve I was

promoted from Private to Lance Corporal! In the evening there was a dance and cabaret in the school's splendid Grignon Hall.

On Christmas Day a traditional festive dinner was held in the men's mess. **PDF Compressor Free Version** After my billet friends and I went for a walk to combat the over-eating. Along the road the men were holding hands to form a long chain to bar access so when any ATS girls came along they would be surrounded and kissed before being allowed to proceed. The evening saw us at a Christmas party in the Grignon where auditions were held for a part in a play called 'Chastity's Crossroads'. I was sitting on a soldier's lap so he and his friends pushed me forward to take part. At one point it was necessary for Chastity to go on her knees and plead for mercy from the villain. Now, at this time, I had a beautiful pair of caniknickers (now called Teddies) made in apple green satin edged with coffee coloured lace. When I had to kneel they were visible to the audience who clapped, cheered and wolf whistled. No guesses as to who got the part! Also my dancing partner and I won a novelty prize and I danced with the Signals Officer who I rather fancied.

The next day there was Church Parade in the morning with the RA Watford Band and in the evening another concert. On December 28th I was NCO on duty but on the 29th there was a Signals Concert Party to entertain us.

December 30th, a film show, and on New Year's Eve several of us girls celebrated at a local pub with three Scots. There was little to drink but we managed to find something. The weather was bitterly cold with heavy snow. On the way back to the billets we played leapfrog and I attempted to climb a telegraph pole. It was covered in snow and slippery with the result that I slid gracefully down to sit in a pile of snow. My clothing was sodden but I was not bothered a bit.

Well, all good things have to end so the start of 1943 was an anti-climax and we were all back to the realities of the daily grind and the drabness of our lives. I wonder how many of my companions are still alive and if so can remember that very special Christmas as vividly as I can?

SERVICE IN SUSSEX WITH 459 BTY 70TH (SEARCHLIGHT) REGIMENT

Miss I (Pat) Goodman
36 Jay Close, Eastbourne BN23 7RW

In the week of the Munich Crisis - September 1938 I, with many others, queued up in Preston Park in Brighton where I was living at the time, in order to enlist in the ATS. When I reached the grizzled old First World War Sergeant he said, "You can't join because you are in the ARP!" pointing at my badge. Undeterred, I went to the back of the queue took my badge off and was duly accepted. During the next twelve months we met weekly for drill and instructing and were formed into two platoons with some being made up to Sergeant with immediate effect.

That summer a few of us were selected to join the Royal

Sussex Regiment on their summer camp. Initially, I had not been selected. However, one girl was unable to go and I managed to get into her uniform so I went. It was a tight fit - but I made it. We went for a week and I just loved it. I was W/2546 Volunteer Goodman known as "Goody".

Our CO had served in the Great War. Initially we met in the Royal Engineer's Drill Hall. Later we transferred to the Drill Hall of the 459 Battery, 70th (Sussex) Searchlight Regiment RA TA. We continued happily throughout that year, though the war clouds were definitely gathering. One day in late August, on my return from the office, my mother handed me an OHMS envelope. I was told to report to the Drill Hall the next day. My mother was very anxious (as if I was going to be thrown into the front line she knew not where). The day dawned and I was so excited. Joining the rest of the Company we spent the whole of the day having medicals etc. The Southdown Coaches were waiting to transport us. Finally we were all off and travelled to our destination which turned out to be Ditchling only 5 miles away!



We were billeted in the village and spent our days under canvas except when we were in the cookhouse. This was part of an old chicken house with a field kitchen with those great metal drums for potatoes etc smoking away. It was a very wet autumn so we lived in wellies.

Our CO said we would only be there for a few weeks then all go home. Our pay would be 30/- a week. We didn't go home and our pay turned out to be 1s/4d a day. Initially we had signed on for 4 years then when that expired we were asked if we wished to be released or to stay on for the duration. Of course we all opted to remain for the latter.

On Sunday 3rd September 1939, I was at the village crossroads on sentry - the CO was in the office in a nearby cottage. Most of the villagers were at Church when a policeman came by on his bike. He was blowing his whistle and had a placard on his chest stating that war had been declared. We then heard the first air raid warning siren of the war.

Before Christmas we were all moved to Offham, near Lewes to a large country house called Coubie Place with a half mile drive up to it. Initially, I and another girl were billeted at the bottom of the drive with the Courage (Brewery) family. Later, we were put in the top floor of the house that quickly became known as the Army Officers were below us, Admin below them, then the men in the basement. Before the war I had been having lessons from a Royal Sussex man in learning to play the bugle. So now at last I was playing a kind of reveille!



Bugler Goodman with Jackie

That winter many went down with flu. I thought I was going to get away with it but it caught me in the end. Although I was quite ill with it, it was the last time I ever had flu.

Dates escape me I am afraid but by the summer of 1940 we had moved to Broadbridge Heath, near Horsham. There was a purpose built hutted camp erected before the war intended for the newly conscripted Militia. Apart from our entire unit, there was still plenty of room to receive batches of raw recruits. We felt sorry for them then as they arrived in their civvies carrying their little suitcases. But very soon they were in uniform and spent their days in the very hot sun square bashing. I was so happy to be there and was finally deployed in the Orderly Room as I had originally enlisted as a clerk. This was the first time we had experienced a proper Army Camp – complete with a NAAFI.

Many local families in Horsham adopted us and we would go to tea with them. By Christmas 1941 two of us went to tea but I did not feel well so could not eat very much. I

went to the MO and he thought the blotches on my legs were due to scabies. When I told him that I had a tummy ache he thought it was due to over indulgence – it being so close to Christmas. On Boxing Day I was meant to go the AIS Training Camp at Guildford to be deloused. Fortunately my CO realised I wasn't well enough to go on the bus as had been arranged so I was taken in the ambulance. When the MO examined me there she said I did not have scabies but that I did have appendicitis. I was quickly transferred to the Royal Surrey County Hospital whilst the staff were enjoying the festivities. I was operated on the next morning and felt much better.



Finally, in 1942 we were transferred to Boyton Cross, near Chelmsford and there I remained until I was finally invalided out in August 1943. I count those years as the most enjoyable of my life and I wouldn't have missed it for the world. Sadly, all trace of the Regiment seemed to disappear after the war and I have never seen the 459 mentioned in the *Lioness*.

I will close with the Battery song, a tune was also composed for it – I remember it so well.

"Soldiers, stand together – fall in line we're the
Battery 459.
Our detachment are the best they make – on the
target all the time.
We have pledged our loyalty to the King to defend old
England's name.
So take a warning enemy aircraft – and beware of the
459!"

**TEA AND SANDWICHES DELIVERED
THROUGH THE WINDOW
ST OMER BARRACKS 1946**

Mrs E Chapman

26 Orchards Way, West End, Southampton

PDF Compressor Free Version

I was W/350872 Pte Cane and working as a Cook in the Sgts' Mess at St Omer Barracks. After preparing supper, I went back to my spider and met the Orderly Officer and Sergeant coming out of the block. They asked where I had been and I explained I had just come back from work.

When I got to my room, the other girls told me that they had not been allowed out and were starving because they had missed their tea. Some one had left one of "Lord Nuffield's freebies" under the bath. They were told that if the person who had left it took it away everything would be OK. No one did so everyone was confined to the block.



Mavis (with belt) and I at St Omer

I managed to attract the attention of one of the sergeants in the opposite spider. He helped me out of the window and we went to the Sgts' Mess. Several sergeants helped me to make sandwiches and tea and to deliver them – and me – back through the window! The Orderly Sergeant came back in looking for me so I jumped straight into bed and hid the tea underneath. The steam was rising up and some one had to shout at me to take my hat off quickly. Luckily I got away with it but I wonder if anyone else remembers the incident?

FROM "TAY" TO JUST "Y"

Mrs Thelma Snyder née Clarke/Bowler
7620 SE 114th Ln, Belleview, FL 34420, USA



"B" Watch Harrogate

(l-r) Back Row: Margaret Siddall, Kit Backway

*Middle Row: Edna Williams, Me. Flora Campbell,
Jay MacDonald*

*Front Row: Kay Henson, Betty Baldwin, Mervyn Harris,
Hilda Banyard*

I was 17 when I joined the ATS. My mother accompanied me to the recruiting centre in Swansea, S Wales and she cried all the way. However, I was told to come back in three months when I was the correct age i.e. 17 + 3 months. In April, and I can't remember if it was 1941 or 1942, I was sent directly to Shrewsbury and was put to work in the office where I was filing pay cards. I knew I was capable of doing a lot more and I was not happy there at all, but I did meet a lot of wonderful people. One was a LCpl in the office where we reported and she and I got along extremely well. She even made sure I had a comfortable bed away from the fireplace where there was a draft that froze me on the first night. Her name was Rosa Crook (could be Crooke) and for about 9 months we were inseparable. If she sees this I hope she will be in touch with me, but she was a couple of years older than me and we lost touch when I obtained a transfer to the Isle of Man to train as a "Y" Operator. I stayed with the "Y" service until the end of the war, based in Harrogate in "B" Squad.

If Rosa, or anyone I knew in Shrewsbury, sees this and remembers me, also any of my "Signals" friends, please let me hear from you. We have so much to chat about.

I enjoyed my service with the ATS. It was quite an experience and I wouldn't have missed it for anything in the world. I have travelled half way around the world and eventually married and settled down. I love receiving the *Lioness* and the last one got my attention. My thoughts when I saw the *Lioness* service and I really got some recognition, but it was not a "Y" on the front but a victory march by many ATS. What a beautiful sight. I am still in touch with a few ATS and love to receive either their e-mails or letters. I met one "Y" when at my reunion near Harrogate, we shared a table on the train returning after the reunion was all over and it turns out she was born in a little village in South Wales named Clydach and that was my birth place too. We have never stopped talking, via letters, since.

My best wishes to all ex-ATS. God Bless you all. I was blessed when I served in the ATS.

A GOOD LIFE IN THE ATS

Written by Pearl (Pat) Crew, née Millard and submitted by her daughter, Margaret Watson, née Crew



W165989 Pearl (Pat) Crew, née Millard

I joined the ATS in 1942 and on 29th May was posted for initial training to Denbury near Newton Abbot in Devon. We were there for 6 weeks, the time being spent kitting up. What sights we looked in ill-fitting uniforms. The issue undies were hilarious – especially the khaki passion killers as they were called. Our arms were living pincushions with injections for everything the MO could

think of. Our junior officer was 2nd Subaltern Mary Anderson – daughter of Sir John Anderson of shelter fame. Many years later, my daughter, Margaret met her in Singapore. By then she was Director WRAC, Brig the Hon Dame Mary Anderson (later Phil).

Amongst my new friends at Denbury were twin sisters from London. One Sunday we made our way to Torquay where we met up with two sailors. We hadn't been on the beach long when one of the twins said, "Oh look at those planes – aren't they a pretty colour – yellow with black crosses". One of the boys yelled out "My God they're Jerries!" Next thing we knew we were face down in the sand with the two of them trying to shield us with their bodies. The planes started firing on us but, although they were flying low, none of us was hit.

Christmas 1943 was spent with my future family in Harpenden when my fiancé and I announced our wedding date. We only received 10 clothing coupons a year which didn't go far. I was lucky enough to be able to borrow my cousin's dress and my ATS friend Dora (married name Morris) was one of my two bridesmaids. When I got back to the Hoo after my leave, Audrey Best (married name Dodd) had been posted there. We struck up a friendship then which still goes on from strength to strength.

I was in Signals with Dora, Audrey and many other good friends. They were teleprinter operators whilst I was in the signals office – by now a L/Cpl and on locations. It was a difficult job trying to keep track of troop movements and, of course, highly secret. We had had to sign the Official Secrets Act.

Tuesday night was "barrack" night when we had to stay in and do our "chores" – allowed out for just a NAAFI break. Conditions at the Hoo weren't quite up to Ritz standard. We were about 12 girls to a hut with one NCO to each. I was in Hut 4 – a wooden building heated only by a "tortoise" stove. The ablutions were some yards away – the water was more often cold than hot and we were only allowed one bath a week. The toilet block was also some yards away but it seemed more like miles in the dark weather.

We worked 3 way shifts. I can't remember the exact hours but on Day 1 we worked in the afternoon. Day 2 we worked in the morning and overnight and Day 3 was a sleep day. [Editor: I can confirm that we still used that pattern of shift working in 16 Signal Regiment into the 1970's!] We took our supper with us for night duty having collected a tray from the Mess on the way up to the house – the kitchen we had to use was so infested with rats that we often went without rather than go in there to get it. It was more often than not thick doorsteps of bread and marg and cheese. In spite of many hardships we were a really happy crowd with good officers and Sgts – with the exception of one CSM. It was one of her duties to take us for drill etc during our off duty periods. There was great rejoicing when she couldn't take us and the duty fell to me. We used to go along Farm Road where I put one girl on the watch for the CSM and the rest of us sat on the grass until we got the danger signal when we would go into drill action.



PDF Compressor Free Version

In March 1945 I was called into the Company office where the CO dropped the bombshell that I was to be sent for a month on a Sgts course at Craigmillar in Edinburgh. A coach took us there from our accommodation in a house which the Army had requisitioned in Leith Walk, near Princes Street. I enjoyed switchboard and wireless but found "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party" terribly hard to do correctly in the time allowed as I hadn't touched a teleprinter keyboard since I had left Queensbury nearly 3 years before. I don't know about coming to the aid of the party but someone must have come to the aid of Cpl Crew because I finally managed it and passed the course.

I was at Craigmillar when we were all assembled on the square and told the War was over. We had the rest of the day off. Some of us had booked to see "The Merry Widow" that evening. When we came out all the people in Edinburgh had gathered in Princes Street. It was quite frightening as well as exciting. I will never forget the sight of Edinburgh Castle floodlit after the years of blackout. When we got back to Leith Walk, we had to barricade ourselves in our rooms in order to keep out the Polish soldiers billeted in the next house. They had been celebrating well but not wisely.

I was so proud when my daughter followed in my footsteps and joined the WRAC and served with Royal Signals.

Editor: Sadly Pat died in March 1997 not long after her family had persuaded her to write her life story.

HAPPY MEMORIES OF THE GREEN DRAGON, HEREFORD

Mrs E H (Ann) Maher née Robshaw
124 Morden Road, Sunnybank Hills, Queensland 4109,
Australia

I joined the ATS at Ripley Barracks, Lancaster in May 1942 and was posted to Hereford. I was attached to the RAOC Dept as a Clerk and was the only girl in office manned by men. The Depot was right next to the Cattle Market and billeted in the lovely Castle Pool Hotel!

In 1943 I was posted to the RIME Depot, still in Hereford, until I was demobbed in April 1946. I have lots of photos of the Green Dragon and D Coy Wye Group and yes – CSM Boucher! I hope to revisit Hereford in 2006 when I go to see my sister in Poulton-le-Fylde, Blackpool, my hometown. I was at the reunion there in 1997.



*Doreen Askew? Kay? Sylvia?
Mary House Gladys Hancock Me
(Occupants of Room 6 right over front door of the Green Dragon!)*

I wonder what happened to the girls pictured above?
Would love to hear from them!

TRAINING AT RIPLEY ORPHANAGE, LANCASTER

Mrs Ruth Taylor née Washington
(26616/ Subaltern ATS)
73 Ashley Road, Farnborough, Hants GU14 7HB

The very first letter in the AIS Reminiscences section in *Lioness* 1/2005 was from Mrs Francis Nunnally in USA writing of her basic training at Ripley, Lancaster. It brought memories flooding back. Ripley I believe was an orphanage at one time. Mrs Nunnally spoke of a huge dormitory – as a Corporal I was in charge of one of them and remember the long stone corridors. I often wondered about the orphans!

I volunteered to join the AIS in 1941 and started my basic training at Ripley on 18th April 1941. On completion, I was posted to HQ Coy Ripley and appointed as a training NCO for the recruits. Conscription came in at the end of 1941 and intakes increased. Girls came from everywhere not knowing what to expect.

Does anyone remember the 'NITTY DORM' and having their hair cut? – I did my best! I especially remember the "International intake" – my expression. Like so many, they had come from Europe and did their basic training at Ripley. From there, they were posted to Ilfracombe. At the end of their training, at 5.30 am one dark morning, they were on parade waiting to march to the Railway Station. They had lanterns at the front and lanterns at the back of the column. As they marched out of the gate they shouted 'Goodbye Washy'. I wonder what the CO thought?

I would love to hear from them or anyone who remembers Cpl/Sgt Washington. After an NCOs Course at Whittington Barracks Lichfield, I was promoted to Sergeant and posted to Bowerham Barracks, Lancaster – "The Tower" where new recruits were kitted out and stores for Rtd **PDF Compressor Free Version** the book, "I saw Two Englands" by H V Morton given to me when I left Bowerham. Junior Commander Lynus-Grey and all the GIRLS – three of whom are standing with me in the photograph taken on the morning of my 21st birthday – signed it. Where are you all now?



Taken on my 21st birthday – August 1941

I went to OCTU in Windsor in December 1942. I married Lt James Taylor RASC in September 1945 and was demobbed on the 26th November 1945.

I WORE A VARIETY OF BADGES

Maureen Walsh W/42969 (nicknamed Paddy)
by QMS when getting her uniform
35 Balk Road, Ryhal, Stamford, Lincs PE9 4HT

I joined the ATS late in 1939. I was 19 years old. I trained



Llandudno 1940

in Bournemouth where I was considered suitable for clerical work and sent to the Coast Artillery School in Llandudno. We worked in Gogarth Abbey Hotel and lived in local houses that were commandeered by the army, 10 girls in a house. We were given an army blanket, a mattress cover and pillowslip and were told to fill them with straw from the shed. We slept in our dressing gowns with handkerchiefs over the pillows to stop the itching. Sheets were supplied two weeks later.

I celebrated my twenty first birthday there and a civilian lady, living nearby, gave me a party. Six friends were invited. We had a lovely time including jellies etc for tea. They were a very kind family.

A well known national magazine came to Llandudno to do an article on "The ATS at Play". I was chosen, with four others, to be photographed on the beach. Sadly for the camera man, the tide crept in behind us and we were cut off from the shore in water 12 inches deep.



Kay Pearson and Maureen Walsh "At Play"

We were in swimsuits which was OK but the small photographer in his best suit, and carrying a large camera, had to be carried back to dry land, with much laughter.

In 1941 volunteers were needed for radio location training. I volunteered and was sent to Oswestry on a six week course. I became Number 1 and joined 513 MIX H.A.A. Battery at Newcastle "Tyne Johnny". From there we went to firing camps in Scotland and North Wales for further training. It was pretty tough and very active during the raids. Maintenance work on the power unit

was no joke during the winter but it had to be done. At one time we were issued with fur coats with no zips or buttons. You had to put them over your head like a jumper. They were very claustrophobic and a hazard when rushing to get on duty during an air raid. They were soon re-called. There was plenty of good company, friendship and NAAFI entertainment. In 1943 volunteers were wanted for the Military Police, guess who volunteered? I did my police training at Blackdown and Aldershot, then posted to Manchester and later to Northampton. My duties were varied in the extreme.



Maureen as a Policewoman

I was part of the Guard of Honour when HRH The Princess Royal visited Manchester and I also acted as



*L-r: Back Row: Carol Baker, Mary Bates
Centre Row: John Bennett, Maureen Walsh,
Cpl Anglinetta, Josie Christopherson and Fern Bower
Front Row: Sgt Self, Li Titt, Kathleen Bridges*

escort to POWs landing at Tilbury. Early in 1944 my unit was due to be posted to Egypt. My mother begged me to apply for a transfer as I had one brother wounded who had been taken prisoner of war at Arrhem. Also, my younger brother had been wounded at Monte Casino and was in hospital in Italy. I got my transfer and was sent to the RAPC in Marylebone Road, London. After a while RAPC was transferred to Whitechurch.

I was demobbed from there on 3rd December 1945.

After the war I worked as a civil servant and then for the NHS. I retired at 60 and my daughter decided that I needed a hobby and bought me a spinning wheel. I have learned to spin, dye and weave and have created numerous items for my family and for exhibition with the Spinners and Weavers Guild. I am now nearly eighty-six and still spinning, a little slower, but the wheel keeps turning.



Maureen today

PS. I have just completed a course at my local college called 'Computers for the Terrified', so 2006 will see me emailing and Internet shopping – and attending the Grand Reunion!

WRAC SWEATSHIRTS FOR SALE

Bottle Green Sweatshirts, Polo shirts and
T-shirts embroidered with the WRAC badge

Sizes 36 — 46

Other colours available

Also
Knitted WRAC Dolls

Price list and further information from:
**Miss B P Butcher, 15 Westwood Drive,
Swanpool, Lincoln. Tel: 01522 878413**

Reminiscences of the WRAC

WRAC INTAKE, AUGUST 1955 QUEEN ELIZABETH CAMP, GUILDFORD, SURREY

Mrs Sandra Steadman, née Sandra Bernice Vian White,
W/389465
29 Ash Road, Ilford, Bristol BS7 8RN



Here are some of the names of my intake and a copy of the photo. The names have been taken from the signatures on the photograph itself so I am afraid that some are now illegible – must be age?!

Marina Thorne, LCpl Lockhart, Jean Green, Rita, Margaret, Chris Ballantyne, J Bing ? LCpl Phyllis Davey- 'Jock' Silvia May Lees, Sadie O'Neill, Shirley O'Connor, Joyce Sawyer, Agnes 'Bobby' Robinson, Joyce Saunders, BA Wilson, Cpl Adams, Lilian Oxley, Betty Stevens, Ada Cook, Rona Thompson, Mavis Smales, Hilary St John, Bobby Always, Sgt Davies, Cpl M Hancock, Joan Ord, E. Proctor, M Star, P Page, Evelyn Nolan, Irene Thornhill, Glenys Black, Pte Rogan, Joan ?

Perhaps someone might recognise themselves or friends. If anyone would like a copy – I'll send it.

THE TURKISH INVASION OF CYPRUS LIFE IN THE COMMAND PAY OFFICE Hermie Emary WRAC

Where were you when the Turks invaded Cyprus in July 1974? I was a Cpl WRAC/RAPC serving at the Command Pay Office in Dhelakia.

It was all pretty much a low key affair as far as I was concerned. Some of the chaps in the office went off to man the Ops Room at HQ Dhelakia Garrison, but I did not have an Operations role so had to help in the office. Most of our civilian staff were unable to get to work, the Turks, because the Sovereign Base Area was in the middle of a Greek area, and the Greeks, because most of whom lived in and around Nicosia, were cut off by the Turks landing at Nicosia airport.

I got back to the block one afternoon and was asked by an RMP friend if I minded helping out down at the Civilian Evacuation Centre that had been set up at the other end of the Sovereign Base Area. I got on my trusty Honda 90 and reported to Lt Col Bate RADC. I was given the task of greeting the evacuees as they arrived and making sure they knew what was happening.



It was all very well organised. All evacuees were sent to the field at the bottom of the hill where they formed into orderly queues (don't the British just love queuing!). They were then transported up the hill to be processed; we tried to look after everyone as the evacuees including tourists as well as some locals, adults and children. The only people who tried to queue jump were the Press trying to get to the other end of the island with their film and stories. Needless to say they were told to "go away".

We felt a bit happier when HMS Bulwark arrived with its contingent from 41 Commando. They did a helicopter landing behind the Civilian Evacuation Centre and then were told to go back and do it all again because the Press wanted to film it and they had not been ready. We had 2 marines based permanently at the civilian Evacuation Centre, one who did the communications and a gofer (it was he who "liberated" the petrol for all our vehicles). All they had was in their packs and they did not rotate back to HMS Bulwark so after a couple of days I offered to wash their kit for them. Well it was Cyprus in mid-summer.

It was all quite exciting really. One poor South African journalist (who had waited), collapsed in my arms with an epileptic fit. He recovered well and for some reason was very embarrassed. Edward Woodward, who was very prominent on the TV at the time, turned up. He had a home at Kyrenia and insisted on evacuating himself and his Greek staff by driving at great risk through Turkish occupied territory. When he did finally arrive, he insisted on waiting in line with the rest of the evacuees. He was a perfect gentleman.



In between working at the Civilian Evacuation Centre, I visited the office everyday to see if I was needed there. Most places, including the banks, were closed. However, soldiers still needed cash, so the pay offices around the island were making cash payments – not a problem until we ran out and the Command Paymaster had to go in an armed convoy to Nicosia to get some from the Central Bank of Cyprus.

All in all an interesting experience. To finish the story, I visited the Dental Centre at Worthy Down some years later and who should be the dentist...that's it Col Bate. Don't think I got an annual inspection that year!

WRAC REVIEW – SPRING FEVER SINGAPORE APRIL 1958

Sandra Steadman (W/389465 Sandy White)

I am enclosing a copy of the Singapore Free Press of 17 April 1958 reporting the show we put on to help send Malays to the Asian Games in Tokyo. I wonder if any of the girls are still around? We had a lovely time and one evening Mr Ng, the Minister of Culture attended. He brought a case of brandy! Therefore when Sylvia Wragg and I were doing "A Couple of Swells", Sylvia had to kick me extra hard to send me floundering out through the wings.

Editor: Unfortunately, as always, newspaper cuttings are not good enough to be reproduced but the following is a précis of the article.

One of the outstanding events of WRAC Corps Week will be the presentation of an all-girl review called 'Spring Fever' in aid of the Singapore Asian Games Fund. Cpl Sylvia Wragg will produce a two hour show and her "showgirls" come from many walks of Army life – stenographers, clerks, typists, telephonists and a host of other administrative jobs. Cpl Wragg is a trained acrobatic dancer and, under her leadership, the girls have sacrificed many of their off-duty hours. She has had to be resourceful and even made the Top Hats out of cardboard!

The all-girl review had its origins in a Christmas show put on by the Junior Ranks of 4 Ind Coy for their friends. However, it attracted huge publicity and even Radio Malaya broadcast some of the acts.

Editor: Photographs in the article showed that several types of dance would be included from minuets, jive and ballet to

the can-can. Names of those appearing included: Capt J Lindsay, Hilda Gibson, June Cox and Mary Malley. However, Sandy White and Sylvia Wragg appeared as a double act several times and were obviously very talented.

SCOTTISH 317 BATTALION WRAC TA GOES TO FRANCE

Lt Col The Lady Martha Bruce, WRAC Association Life Vice-President

I recently came across a bundle of letters I had written to my parents and I felt that the one from St Valery gives some realistic background. PFAT stands for Personnel Feminin L'Armée de Terre. We stayed at their Depot and went there twice; once under our own steam and the second time from a TA camp at Shorncliffe. The Flag Ceremony was when we handed the WRAC Flag to the PFAT officer representative. After these visits, several PFAT members visited us at future camps in Scotland. The photographs also include one taken aboard the Dieppe ferry and a show we put on for Brigadier Danu Mary Colvin depicting our "French evacuees".





DIEPPE

18 Jun

Dearest Mother

We are having a tremendous success here and have just completed our morning's visit to St Valéry-en-Caux (exhausting).

We left at 8.30 am and met up at St V with the Maire, complete with standard bearers. We formed the girls up in the canteen then we processed in and held a small service with a few words by me in English and French "très sympathiques". Following on, myself, the PFAT and the Maire laid wreaths and off we went to the Divisional Memorial on the top of the cliffs. There we laid another wreath, then on again to the French Memorial on another cliff with another wreath.

Next we retired to the Hôtel de Ville for the Vol d'Honneur which was champagne, and more speeches. The girls behaved beautifully and I think your two Red Cross enjoyed themselves as well. We haven't had many sick for them to deal with so whenever any girls feels the slightest bit unwell she is rushed on board and put.

We leave our Paris trip on Tuesday and then it will almost be time to come home. I haven't had a moment to do any shopping but hope to visit les magasins in Paris.

Love to all
Martha

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for next year are due for payment on 01 October 2006

Members of Headquarter Branch should send their subscription together with their membership card and SAE to:

WRAC Association
AGC Centre
Worthy Down
Winchester
SO21 2RG

COPY DEADLINE

Articles for inclusion in the next edition of the *Lioness* must be received by

20 June 2006

PUNS 1

1. Two antennas met on a roof, fell in love and got married. The ceremony wasn't much but the reception was excellent.
2. A jumper cable walks into a bar. The bartender says, "I'll serve you but don't start anything".
3. Two peanuts walk into a bar and one was a salted.
4. A dyslexic man walks into a bar.
5. A man walks into a bar with a slab of asphalt under his arm and says: "A beer please and one for the road".

OVERSEAS PAYMENTS

Please note that in future, all payments for subscriptions, postage and memorabilia will only be accepted in Sterling. Please ask your bank for a Money Order or Sterling Cheque.

We regret to have to impose this restriction, but due to the vagaries of exchange rates, the majority of overseas payments fall significantly short of the amount due.

Where Are You Now?

Anne M Dickinson W/31805

125 Queen's Road, Bishopscote, Bristol BS13 8QB

PDF Compressor Free Version



1940/41 Scottish Company

Are any of these 1940 Scottish lasses still around? Do they remember this photograph being taken in a 15 minutes "FREE" time opportunity at Burrowhead in Scotland?

The only early number I could see in London on July 9th was of Eileen Green W/32126 AFS October 1939. No further information. It would appear that 8,500 women joined between October - February 1939/1940. It is very important that we should have a record now of all these ladies who joined.

Editor: Service records are held by the Army Personnel Centre, Historic Disclosures, Mailpoint 100, Kentigern House, 65 Brown Street, Glasgow. G2 8EX You can write to them to ask for a printout of your record of service. You will need to tell them your Service Number and dates of enlistment and discharge.

Mrs Joyce (Judy) Ford, nee Lane W/150656

39A Graham Road, Bicester, Oxon. OX26 2HS

In June 1942 I was called up and did my basic training at Aldermaston then went on to Devizes to do a 3 month course on radar. From there I joined up with 'B' Troop 577(M) HAA Bty and we were stationed at various sites including Wyke Revis, Lychett Minster, Chickercell and when Ack-Ack broke up we were sent to Weedon, Northants for retraining. I went to 9 AV Depot near Mersham as a clerical assistant in Kits office. I was there until I was demobbed in March 1946.

In particular, I wish I could find Cynthia Pratt, Sue Jeavons, Lily Noble, Joyce Holmes, V M Scarlett, Joyce Kagsbury, Zilpha Moore, Phyl Aggett, Josie Caham, Joan Sparks, Cpl Pearce, Dot Johns and a young woman I only knew as Johnny.

Please get in touch if you read this. Perhaps you may remember me as Judy Lane - or Joyce Lane.

Mrs M Wilson

47 Bridge Street, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 1BP

Were you stationed at Tanglin in Singapore from 1966 - 1968 as a Telephonist or Concen Op? If so, we would

love to hear from you in time for the get together at the WRAC Dinner Club next year.

If anyone knows the whereabouts of any of the following girls please get in touch with Margaret Watson (Cpl Crow) on 07977 707856

Joy Gandy
Dusty Maudsley
Brenda Rhodes

Moira Watson
May Wilson
Margaret (Millie) Minott

584 HY A A BTY

Mrs R Haffenden

48 Manor Road, Harwich, Essex CO12 4DY



This photograph was taken in September 1942 at Golf House in Seaford, Sussex. The "Girls of 584 Hy AA Bty" are:

Back Row:	Rosemary Haffenden, Pat Saniforth, Grace Sainsbury, Ivy Godbold, Kath Tomlin, Eileen Clifford
Middle Row:	Betty Sneed, Mary Beck, Betty Crawford
Front Row:	Betty Dollin, Phil Scarie

Please contact me if you were there!

CAD KINETON 1959 - 1962

Miss J Hunt W/401838

2 Cunningsham Close, West Wickham, Kent BR4 9PJ

I read with interest Cpl Gladys Allen's letter about CAD Kington - I too was an ammunition examiner for 2 years before going on to driving the Lansing Bagnall which I took over from Jean Watson. Like Cpl Allen, we too had our good times at Kington. We were the lucky ones. Our billet was a modern block, not Nissen Huts, thank goodness.

In 1961, I was posted to, Rheindahlen, Moenchengladbach and unfortunately lost contact with all my friends.

Whilst reading the "Yours" magazine, I came across an advert from H Hawksworth enquiring if anyone had been stationed at CAD Kineton from 1959 - 1961/2. I answered the advert and it turned out that I knew this person. Her name was Scotty Miles - Hawksworth was her married name. She also informed me that her sister-in-law was Bronwen Hawksworth, née Ball. They also keep in touch with Daisy Bastow, as she was known.

We cannot locate Betty Leadbetter. She used to live in Worthing, Sussex, but moved soon after she was demobbed. Has anybody any idea of her whereabouts?

So come on Kineton girls, put your pension hooks away, and get your pen and paper out - write to the *Lioness*.

WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA

Mrs J Scanlan

39 Meyrick Crescent, Colchester, Essex CO2 7QY



Rita Mayman, Joan Scanlan, Freda Mann

Rita where are you?

We three girls were together at Westcliff-on-Sea in the last war. Rita Mayman (her single name) is on the left, Freda Cowperthwaite née Mann is on the right, I am in the middle - Joan Scanlan née Coustable. Freda and I were Privates but Rita went into the stars and became a Sergeant.

We have never met since those days, so it would be good to know that she is well. Of course we are all in our 80's now. Freda and I are still well and attend the Colchester ATS Club. Not so many of us left now sad to say. Anyways let's hope Rita is OK. My phone number is 01206 542521.

1 PLN 'A' COY, NO 7 TRAINING CENTRE 1942

Mrs Greta Stratford

16 Granta Crescent, Grantham, Lincs NG31 9PJ

In 1942 at 16 years I put my age on a year and joined the ATS. I was in training at Guildford where the enclosed photograph was taken. From there I went to Queensbury and York for training in the Royal Corps of Signals. Over the next three years I was stationed at Middlesborough, Harrietsham, and for the longest period at Wickhambreau near Canterbury. Happy days. I would love to hear from anyone who knew me then. My name was Greta Winchester.



Greta is on the left in the front row

WHO ARE YOU?

Editor



This photograph was obviously taken at the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II. Mrs Kathleen Brownbill of Bournemouth Branch took it. She does not know the lady in the ATS Blazer but would like her to have the photograph.

Mrs Brownbill has sent the photograph to the *Lioness* so, if you are the lady in the photograph, please contact The Editor on 01962 887570.

SEARCHING FOR WAR ZONE SPEEDWAY VETERANS

Mr Trevor Davies

21 Gatten Way, Hucclecote, Gloucester GL3 3DG

Tel: 01452 619793 evenings

01452 712612 ext 7362 daytime

If you or a service colleague were present at any wartime speedway events in Egypt, Libya, Italy, Malta or Germany between 1944-52 then read on.

Following the successful production of an RAF booklet covering speedway riders, Trevor Davies, the RAF's Command Reprographic Manager based at HQPJC

Insworth, Gloucester is now researching the whole subject of War Zone Speedways which were very popular as a sporting activity as WWII ended.

Taking up the story Trevor explains "during the research for the 'Speedway' book many persons contacted me re their exploits at such places as RAF Kahir, Tel-el-Kahir, Shalafah, Derversour (Egypt), Naples, Bari and Triari (Italy) and Hanover, Hamburg and Kiel (Germany). Many of the tales regarding team speedway, inter Army v RAF matches and even England v Scotland clashes on temporary and even purpose built tracks set me exploring this largely forgotten era of Armed Forces sport. I would be delighted to hear from anyone who rode, spectated, tuned bikes or has any programmes, pictures etc from this era".

Anyone who has any information or speedway memories regarding their times in Egypt, Italy, Libya, Malta or Germany is asked to contact Trevor Davies.

THORNET WOOD ZS26

Jennie Randall

23 Greenway, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 6JQ

I am researching the history of Jubilee Country Park for its Friends group. During the Second World War the site became a heavy anti aircraft gun park, manned by the Royal Artillery, ATS and Home Guard. At that time it was known as Thornet Wood, ZS26. It is situated between Bickley and Petts Wood. We are keen to gather people's memories and photographs of Thornet Wood to build a lasting record of what it was like to live and work on such a site.

If anyone who served at the Thornet Wood site would like to share their memories or photographs, please contact me at the address above or telephone 07840 542261.

EMMIE MAY PRING

From: Pete.Pring@ons.gsi.gov.uk

The Pring family is looking for a photograph of Emmie May Pring W/86518 during her service with the ATS in WWII.

Emmie was a much loved cousin of my father Tom Pring who is 4 years her junior. He never saw her again after she joined the ATS and was serving in a Transport unit on a base somewhere in the Midlands (possibly Wolverhampton?) when she was tragically killed on 17th March 1942 at the age of 21. Emmie is buried in a War Grave, Grave 47 Block 29, in Newport (St Woollos) Cemetery.

Tom would dearly like a photograph of her in uniform taken by a comrade who served with her. We have contacted the immediate family of her brother Billy and the WRAC, but neither have any photographs of Emmie in uniform. If any surviving comrade or their family would like to make contact we would be deeply appreciative.

BOVINGTON 1967 - 1969

From: lesley.annable@bt.com

My name is Lesley Annable and I was stationed at

Bovington in Dorset from 1967 to 1969. I am trying to find some of the other girls whom were there at the same time for a reunion in 2006. We had a mini one last year but there were only 5 of us there.

They are:

Pat Kelsey, June Haunch, Kathy Powick, Jan Watt (married name), Toni Knight, Marlene Hobson, Cher Hayden, PE Instructor I think called Ellen Johnson and anyone else whom I have forgotten but was there during 1967 to 1969.

CLUMBER PARK, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Jill Beckett

I am conducting research on behalf of the National Trust for a forthcoming exhibition at Clumber Park in Nottinghamshire. The exhibition, which has been funded by the Home Front Recall programme, is focusing on people and events at Clumber during World War II. At that time Clumber was an ammunition depot - No 24 Ammunitions Sub-Depot. We believe that a number of ATS were stationed there. As part of the exhibition we would like to record reminiscences relating to this period and wondered if any of your members who were stationed at Clumber Park would be willing to talk to us about their time there.

I would be most grateful for any information you are able to provide. Please contact me via e-mail jillbeckett@tailisman.fsworld.co.uk or telephone 01949 851677.

THE FIRST INTAKE OF JUNIOR LEADERS

AUG 75 - FEB 76

Denise Mackie, nee Milcheson, 26 Victoria Terrace, Catchgate, Stanley, Co. Durham DH9 8JZ

I enclose a copy of the photograph of the first intake of Junior Leaders.

Four of us have managed to find one another but it would be wonderful to find more. If not all, of the 28 who joined at 16 years of age. It would also be great to find our officer and NCOs, 2Lt Suzette Beaumont, Sgt Nerys Owen, Cpl Anna Downes (PTI) and Cpl Glynn Cardy (MP).

I would be delighted if any one who recognises themselves in this photo could contact me - we are overdue a 30th Anniversary reunion!



Branch News

ABERDEEN BRANCH

PDF Compressor Free Version

The Aberdeen branch is ticking over. We only meet for an hour on the first Monday of the month. This may seem very little but it suits our branch and we do keep in touch by phone.

Our members also do other things apart from the domestic. Jean Savage our Treasurer "treasures" for other groups she is in. Mary Newton produces beautiful craft work and Pat Valentine is often off travelling down south. Mary McLeod and Helen Thomson work in the Gordon Highlanders' Museum tearoom plus Mary helps in Church House and Helen works in our local hospice. Jess Gellathy helps with SAFFA and Jean Bartlett works for OXFAM.

This year 5 of us went to Glasgow for the Scottish AGM. We applied for and got a grant from "Awards For All" which meant we could spend two days in Glasgow which made for a very relaxed weekend with no rushing between rail stations and hotel. We are very appreciative of this grant. Because of unforeseen circumstances we were left with quite a lot of the grant money which we have got approval to change to other uses for the group. Thank you "Awards For All".

This year 2 of our members went to London for the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II. I went to Falkirk to the 60th Anniversary Celebrations run by the Royal Signals Association. We were treated well by Falkirk Council who provided a lunch and special badges to those attending. Aberdeen's own celebrations were attended by several of our members and much enjoyed.

We are all looking forward to our Christmas Lunch and to any outings we may have in 2006. We usually take trips to outlying towns and have lunch.

ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH BRANCH

We have just had our last AGM which is a sad thing to happen. However, we have had a good year, starting with Christmas lunch. Unfortunately it was not up to our expectations at a venue we had not previously tried. We are off to our local this year – very local – since it is only 300/400 yards from where we meet. We often have one of our summer lunches there, so we know the standard we shall get.

One of the cafes in Ashby is in a very very old building and in February we held our meeting there. The proprietor gave us a very interesting talk on the origins of the place, its hauntings and its progression, in time, to become a dwelling and, eventually a restaurant.

Joan Noble – a member – talked to us about the Tower of London and in October, Doreen Peters entertained with a collection of limericks.

The Wales and West Reunion was greatly enjoyed and now we look forward to the Grand Reunion in March 2006.

Doreen Peters and Marjorie Ottey were privileged to attend the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II and cherish photographs of The Queen, Baroness Betty Boothroyd, and even Cherie Blair, who sat and talked to the people in the next row.

Sadly, our stalwart member, Mavis Litchfield-Parry has moved away from Ashby. Not only do we miss her vivid personality, but also her work as Treasurer. Having no volunteers for the job, the Chairman/Secretary's husband, Alec, has taken over the accounts.

We send our greetings to all our friends "out there"!

BATH BRANCH

We have had a very busy few months as many Ex-Service Associations in the Area have commemorated the 60th Anniversary of the end of World War II with events to which we were invited.

We were very pleased to welcome our new Area Chairman to the meeting in July, Major Anne Maskyns-McIntyre, known to us as Major Mack. We had an informal lunch with her and our members were most interested in her history of her service days. We look forward to welcoming her again at our Christmas Lunch, which hopefully will have taken place when you read this account in the *Lioness*. We are also welcoming Major Jane Freebairn and other guests who support our Branch. (*Editor: It was indeed an excellent lunch!*)

We have attended Services for the commemoration of both VE and VJ days. The first time the Branch has ever paraded was for the Service in Bath Abbey when the City's Mayor inspected us. We were very thrilled to have our National Standard Bearer leading us. Maureen Deeley came all the way from the Midlands to do this for us. She did us proud!

In September we hosted one of the biggest events the Branch has ever undertaken. Over 200 people, mostly from other Ex-Service organisations, attended a Coffee Morning in one of the city's largest hotels, very kindly hired for us by a generous benefactor of our branch. We were able to donate £350 from this event to SSAFA. We continue to hold our regular Coffee Mornings and have quite a "following" for these. The Branch's AGM was well attended and we had an "American" Lunch beforehand. It was the first time we tried this idea and we shall definitely repeat it as it was such an enjoyable meal. We welcomed onto our Branch Committee Mrs Marjorie Marsh, who, of course, the Birmingham members will know. Mrs Joan Ferguson was thanked for her services to the Committee over many years.

We welcome to the Branch Mrs Gwen Johns (Guy) who served in Belgium. She was a Sergeant serving from 1942 – 1946. Maybe someone will remember her! If you do, phone 01225 445497.

We have a full and varied programme for 2006 and 15 of us will see some of you in Coventry.

BEXHILL BRANCH

We are quite a small branch with 30 members and about 20 regularly attend our monthly meetings. Two members come from the north of the county and make a day of it, enjoying the **PDF Compressor Free Version** as they come in from Hailsham, a distance of about 15 miles. The rest of us are very locally placed.

Our usual afternoon is spent on Association business, tea and a speaker, with a competition and a book sale to bring in a little money. This helps to pay for the three or four tea parties that we hold each year and to which we sometimes invite visitors.

Our Christmas Lunch is held at the 19th Hole of a rather swish golf club – one of us being a member there. We look forward to that every year because we eat a very good meal in beautiful surroundings.

We have had outings to The Royal British Legion Poppy Factory, to the Royal Hospital Chelsea and to the Army Museum.



L-R Doreen Orr, Jenny Nye, Joan Atkins and Peggy Williams (and a lady from Leics and Notts Branch in uniform on the left!)

Five of us attended the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II on July 9th, just two days after the London bombings. Serving soldiers, sailors and air force personnel of both sexes were on duty and they took great care of us, as did the police and members of FANY (all managing to look just like Honeysuckle Weeks) in their lovely old-fashioned uniforms. When the ceremony was finished, The Queen and Baroness Boothroyd led the way to the reception held in the Pillared Hall of the Ministry of Defence, followed by other dignitaries and by invited members, amongst whom we were proud to be included. We passed through a guard of honour as we entered the MOD building. That afternoon in Whitehall is something that we shall never forget.

BLACKPOOL BRANCH

The Holidaymakers have nearly all gone home and soon the famous Blackpool lights will be switched off. Every bulb is intact owing to our Indian Summer!

Our lunch meetings continue to be a success with lots of chat and reasonable food.

Our Chairman attended the Laying up of the Rhyl Branch standard at the Church of St Thomas in Rhyl in September. The service was beautiful, well attended and quite moving. Afterwards there was a get together and a lovely buffet. Thank You, Rhyl Branch.

Two of our members attended the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II. On holiday on Lake Garda in Italy, our Chairman shared a table with a lady who had served in the ATS for 3 years. Small world and potentially a new member.

Seven of our members will be attending the Grand Reunion (two of them for the first time). We look forward to meeting old friends.

BOURNEMOUTH BRANCH

So much has happened since my last report that it is difficult to know where to start. Our June meeting went quite well when our speaker gave us an insight to the National Trust properties and Gardens in Wessex.

It was with great regret that we had to cancel our annual trip to the Veterans Festival in Weymouth, due to various factors, mainly illness. Only seven people expressed a wish to attend and, as we had booked a coach for 18 at cost of £110, this just was not viable. We had applied for a £500 Home Front lottery grant, which we gratefully received but, unfortunately, not in time to finance the Weymouth trip.

Quite a number of us were privileged to attend the various celebrations in London on 9/10 July. The Living Exhibition in St James' Park was very well thought out and evoked many memories and, despite the heat and all the walking involved, we enjoyed that very much. Saturday saw a group of us witnessing HM The Queen unveiling the Memorial to the Women of World War II. This was quite a proud moment and, love it or hate it, the Memorial signifies just how many women, from all walks of life, were prepared to buckle to and do whatever they could to help the war effort.

Sunday morning, an early start to get to Westminster Abbey for a most moving Service, shared by Her Majesty and other members of the Royal Family. After lunch there was a spectacular show on Horse Guards Parade which I am sure will also remain long in our memories. Particularly memories for me personally were the surge of patriotism; the way members of the public, both from UK and Overseas, came up to us and thanked us for our wartime service; and outstanding, the image of HM The Queen standing with the Duke of Edinburgh in an open car on their return to Buckingham Palace. I wonder which other Head of State would have been prepared to do that within days of their capital city being bombed by terrorists.

To return to our Branch activities – in July we enjoyed a bumper Garden Party, with a WW2 theme at which some of us sported 1940s dress or uniform. We were pleased to welcome Major Mack, our new Southern Area Chairman. We do not have a meeting in August but Bournemouth Council had arranged a Civic Service followed by a cream tea for WW2 Veterans.



PDF Compressor Free Version

Bournemouth Branch WWII Garden Party July 2005

In September we all enjoyed a laugh when Connie Creighton, the entertainer, talked of her 22 years with Sony. In October, we held a Bring & Buy sale to boost funds and presented a proposed programme for 2006. In November we have our AGM. On December 15 we are looking forward to welcoming our Vice President, Lt Col Sue Westlake as our Guest of Honour at our Christmas Lunch being held at the East Anglia Hotel.

We have had quite a few "casualties" in the last few months – mostly age related, I'm afraid: new hips, new knees, cataract ops etc but all are recovering well. Also I sadly report the death of Brenda McFarlane-Mirrlees. Brenda only joined us last October. She suffered a stroke in May from which she didn't really recover and she died in September. Condolences are sent to her husband, Bill.

We send Greetings for 2006 to everyone – see you at the Grand Reunion!

PS. I thank everyone for the Branch Members Footnote in *Lioness* No 2 of 2005 – I felt most embarrassed when I read it; none of what I do would be possible without the backup and help of my committee and a super branch.

BRISTOL BRANCH

Greetings from Bristol. We have had a busy summer. In June our Chairman, Mrs Esme Davidson, was asked if she would help with a video being planned by Outreach and Programming Team of Bristol City Council. It was to be produced with schoolchildren interviewing various people from all walks of life about their experiences during the war. A copy will be given to all schools in the area. We were invited to a tea party to which the Lord Mayor was invited and a preview of the film was shown.



Our Secretary was at Weymouth in June for the Veterans weekend and in July we had a Tri-Service day out when we went for a Cream Tea in very nice surroundings.

We were especially pleased that one of our members Jean Edwards who lives in Gloucester, and whom we had not met, was able to join us. It was nice for her to meet with the Branch.

July 9th. Unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II in London. Some of our members went and joined the crowds that were there. On the 10th, one of our members was lucky enough to be at the show on Horse Guards. We were so pleased that the weather was good. What a brilliant show it was and I am sure that there were a few tears shed that day.

In August we were invited to attend a Service for the Burma Star Association. We were also involved in a 40's weekend at the City Industrial Museum. We had a stall which generated lots of interest. Our friends from the City Archives were also there. They were long days but well worth the effort. On the Sunday a Tea Dance was organised and several of our members attended. Taxis were provided to bring them and take them home afterwards. It was nice to see so many of the young people participating by wearing clothes of the 40's – they looked quite glamorous.

In August we had a Branch Lunch. Everyone enjoyed this and it was just nice to relax and talk. The Lord Mayor of Bristol held a Garden Party and people were invited to submit their names for an invite along with a companion. Our Chairman wrote and was lucky enough to receive an invite so the Secretary accompanied her! One of our members was also there with her daughter. It was a lovely afternoon and we met some interesting people.

Quite a few of us attended the WRAC Dinner Club in Birmingham. It was a brilliant weekend, organised very well. The girls must have worked really hard to make it the success it was, our thanks to them.

The following weekend we were in Wilton for the Southern Area meeting. Ideal for some retail therapy before the meeting. This was the first one to be hosted by Major Maskens McIntyre. We had a most successful meeting and splendid lunch which was once again organised by Joan Ford. All the branches gave a report of their activities during the past year. My, what a busy lot we are. Major Mack talked of the forthcoming Grand Reunion, and how this year due to all the activities taking



place that there was no Southern Area Reunion. It was decided therefore that next year there would be a Southern Area Reunion which Bristol will be hosting on the 1st July 2006. We were already making plans for this.

One of our members went to Australia for a while. Whilst there she arranged to meet and spend the day with 'Bunty' Beattie of 451 Bty in Sydney with whom our Chairman Esme Davidson corresponds.

November and Remembrance Weekend. We had members attend the service at the Cenotaph here in Bristol and our Chairman laid a wreath on our behalf. The Branch Secretary was in London and carried the wreath for the Association.

We are already planning for the New Year. We are having a plaque dedicated to honour the role of women in the Armed Forces. This is to be placed in the Foyer of Bristol City Council House on 20 January and will be attended by City dignitaries and Major Jane Freebairn, our General Secretary.

February 9th we are having our Annual Branch Lunch to which the Lord Mayor and his Lady have been invited. We are also inviting Lt Col Sue Westlake, the Vice President of the Association.

We are looking forward to the Grand Reunion and meeting with old friends.

BURY BRANCH

Six ladies from our branch arranged to go to London on 7 July 2005. Two had been lucky enough to receive Red Bordered Invitations to attend the Reception after HM The Queen unveiled the Memorial to the Women of World War II.

Four ladies arrived at Piccadilly Station in Manchester on Thursday 7 July to be told that no trains were running into London because of the "incidents". Disappointed, they returned home, and only then learned how serious the incidents were.

The other two ladies had booked to travel on Friday 8 July. A porter took care of their cases, found them a seat on the first train into Euston and they enjoyed a comfortable journey into London. London public transport was badly disrupted so travelling anywhere in the city meant using taxis to get around. This proved quite costly, but would have been more so except for the kindness of "London Cabbies" reducing prices. Some refused payment for the veteran ladies who had refused to be daunted by the bombings (after all Hitler held no fears for them 60 years ago).

Two of the four unable to travel on the Thursday, arrived in Whitehall on the Saturday morning in time for the unveiling. The two who could not make it were the two with the Red Bordered Tickets - sadly. It was a wonderful atmosphere, sitting in Whitehall awaiting the arrival of The Queen, Lady Thatcher, Baroness Betty Boothroyd, Jimmy Saville and Maj (Retd) David Robertson to name a few.

The monument itself still proved a disappointment to a lot of veterans present. It is very black compared to the white

Cenotaph. Seventeen sets of women's clothing, some being uniforms, are hung around the monument on pegs, depicting that the women had "hung up" their war-time uniforms and returned home. Will future generations understand the meaning of this? That remains to be seen.

They all enjoyed visits to the "Living Museum" on both Saturday and Sunday.

After Saturday's unveiling ceremony they all returned to the Victory Services Club and joined in the singing and dancing there. Mary Gregory again met up with Iris Boyter from New Zealand. She was thrilled to be there meeting old and making new friends. Iris once more sends greetings to old and new friends, especially Chris Cowley and Mary Beeson.

On Sunday afternoon, after attending communion service at The Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks, Mary and Lily sat in brilliant sunshine under shady trees, outside the NAAFI canteen watching the show from St James on huge BBC TV screens. It was wonderful. At the end of the show they encouraged everyone around to join hands and sing "We'll Meet Again" (The ATS anthem). A joyful and emotional end to a perfect afternoon.

Our two intrepid 80+ year olds then joined about a million others walking up The Mall towards Buckingham Palace to see The Queen and family on the balcony and collect poppies dropped from the Lancaster bomber.

Finally they managed to get a taxi back to the Victory Services Club and spent a somewhat quieter evening with friends old and new, exchanging memories of years gone by. A wonderful weekend, despite the horror of bombings, and another that those who were there will never forget.

Some of our members have booked their places for the Grand Reunion in March 2006, also the Ack-Ack Assembly in Blackpool in May, and look forward to meeting old and new friends.

CANTERBURY BRANCH

Our meeting in early July was tinged with sadness when members learned of the death of our Vice-President, Lt Col (Retd) Angela Cobb. She was an enthusiastic and much respected member of our Branch, serving as our



Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Alan Willetts, meets
Lt Bella Mephum, Mercy Jordan and Maisie Halliday
Photograph courtesy of Barry Duffield, photographer

President and latterly, Vice-President. We will all miss her kindness and friendship at our meetings.

Seven members travelled to London on the 9th July for the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II. The following are in the "Mail on Sunday" Maria Middleton, Barbara Coleman and Rosina Luck were drilled to find themselves pictured in front of the Memorial as part of an article on the role of women in the Army. On the same day, those members who were unable to attend the unveiling participated in a parade through the centre of Canterbury followed by a Thanksgiving Service in the Cathedral.

Our August meeting was held on a lovely, sunny day at Mavis' beach hut – not many intrepid swimmers this year but we all enjoyed our day by the sea. September saw us collecting subscriptions and those members who had been to London regaled us with their memories of an amazing day. In October we held our AGM and in November our speaker was Dennis Worcester who gave us a very entertaining talk on making walking sticks. Next month, December, we look forward to our Christmas meal, which we will be enjoying in the beautiful and ancient surroundings of the Dominican Priory in the centre of Canterbury where we hold our monthly meetings.

We look forward to meeting old friends and making new ones at the Grand Remmon.

CHELMSFORD BRANCH

16TH Anniversary of the Branch. On 19 July we gathered at the RAFA Club to celebrate another anniversary. Twenty eight of us tucked into a cold meats buffet with delicious sweets and spent a really happy time together. We were so grateful to Mary Butling for supplying a decorated cake to round things off. Many thanks Mary.

September meeting – It was good to meet again after a holiday break in August and we listened to an interesting speaker who gave a talk on the "Good Life". The slides showed how he and his wife had set up a smallholding from scratch and were remarkable.

October meeting – Once more our AGM was upon us. The Committee hosted tea for members which was a first (and we hope not the last!). The meeting seemed to want those doing a job to carry on – so we are! Also we added Vi Duckett to our Committee.

November 5 – A special occasion. Twenty six of us travelled by coach to share in an Eastern Area Group Lunch held at the Garrison Officers' Club at Colchester hosted by our Regional Chairman, Patricia Stevenson. We took advantage of the scheme offered by the Home Front Recall and were successful in obtaining enough money to cover all our expenses of the day. The grant was available to associations like ourselves to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of both VE and VJ days. We enjoyed a lovely meal together and the opportunity to meet members of other branches.

November 15 – At this meeting we were entertained by a talented speaker who spoke to us on "Christmas Customs" and demonstrated her many and varied

Christmas tree decorations from other countries; she gave an interesting description of the history and country of origin which we found fascinating.

December 8 – Our Christmas Lunch again at a hotel on the outskirts of Chelmsford. A much enjoyed celebration with a big raffle! We are pleased that our Area Chairman could join us and also Vi Nutall who is now a member of our branch but lives a long way away.

We usually meet at the RAFA Club in Chelmsford on the third Tuesday of the month and would be very pleased to welcome new members. Contact the Hon. Secretary if you would like to come along. Tel: 01245 251088.

Since our last report we have lost another valued member of this Branch. Margaret Robbins died on 7 August 2005. She had served in the ATS from 1942-46 rising to the rank of Acting Sergeant. Scottish by birth, Margaret took a very active interest in the branch from the day she joined it in 1968. In our early days we held an annual sale of goods to raise funds and Margaret's clear ability to see good second hand clothing was very apparent, so she always got the job. When large quantities of "bargains" appeared and hung up on rails very professionally before being sold at rapid speed, we always knew who had been responsible for Margaret herself took a great pride in her appearance. She had a keen appreciation also in the branch affairs and would offer constructive help whenever needed. Sadly her health had deteriorated over a long period before she died. We shall miss her and were glad that several members were able to attend the Service of Thanksgiving for her Life at Chelmsford Crematorium.

CLEVELAND BRANCH

Since our last report, we have had rather an exciting few months! As we told you last time, and like a lot of other branches, our Secretary (Gwyn Friday), scooped a wonderful grant which took some of our members to the 60th Anniversary events in London. Despite the bombings the previous day, six intrepid ladies left the "Train take the strain", and off we went. Some pics are elsewhere in this journal.

With money left over from the grant, we had a party in July for all our ladies. It was a smashing afternoon, with the hall decorated in Red/White/Blue flags and bunting. Plenty of lovely food and a little wine. The centre where we have our meetings is not officially licensed, but for



Phyllis and Edna and Gwyn Friday enjoying the North East Reunion

extra special occasions, they look the other way! (Don't tell anyone will you?) Then, in September, we were off to the Northern Area Reunion at Harrogate. Yes, we still had enough pennies left to pay for the coach. Harrogate branch – you did us proud! It was a lovely hotel, superb lunch and grand entertainment. More flag waving, and the inevitable rain! I won an umbrella and the sun hasn't stopped shining since. Thank you Harrogate Ladies – you are stars!

My copy of *Lioness* plopped on the mat this morning, so that was a good reason to put the kettle on and settle myself down for a couple of hours. My application form was filled in for the Grand Reunion and is winging it's way to HQ as I type!

Our AGM is held at the end of this month – the books balance up to now, so I can trip off to Ibiza next week quite happy. We send our best wishes to all branches – good health to all, and keep enjoying your meetings.

CREWE BRANCH

We have had a very poor year this year and our first meeting was not held until August due to bereavement. We have lost 4 members of the branch, Mrs Q Moores, Mrs M Rees, Mrs B Hope and our Chairman Mrs Betty Patton. Our condolences go to their partners and their families.

Mrs Joan Berry is our new Chairman and Mrs M Lightfoot is the new Social Secretary. In July Mrs E Francis and Mrs M Mitchell went to London to see the Memorial being unveiled and Molly managed to have a chat with HM The Queen.



l-r Edith, Joan, Betty Patton and Mabel at a Birthday Party

Seven of us from the branch went to the Reunion in Shrewsbury. What an enjoyable day. Many thanks to Irene Hall and helpers for the lovely day. In October, with help from our friends, we attended our yearly dance that was much appreciated by all.

Five members went to London for the Remembrance weekend. On arrival Molly Mitchell had a slight accident with her case in a taxi. Luckily Mabel Lightfoot was at the hotel and was able to attend to Molly and take her to hospital. Molly had medical attention, which included stitches to her leg, but it did not disrupt her weekend. She was still able to visit the London Eye and cruise along the Thames with the rest of the group. Three members

went to Westminster Abbey and 2 went to the Whitehall Parade. A good weekend was had by all despite the earlier accident.

In December we have the Christmas Panto and our Christmas Lunch. We break for Christmas and resume in February 2006.

DARLINGTON AND SOUTH DURHAM BRANCH

We at The Darlington and South Durham Branch are only a small branch of 6 members, who meet regularly on the first Thursday of the month. For the past 2 years we have met at a member's flat in Darlington. This was our associate member Mrs Marjorie Giroux, ex-WRAF, who was a very good, supportive member and always made us very welcome. Sadly, Marge passed away on 30th May 2005. We then continued our meetings at Mrs Mary Wright's flat in Darlington; unfortunately Mary passed away suddenly on the 31st July, 2005. Recently we have met at The Cobbler's Hall Hotel, at Newton Aycliffe, having changed our meeting time and day, to the first Monday of the month, at 11.30am. Hopefully, in the New Year, when my house will be newly decorated, we will meet on the first Monday of the month but in the afternoon. At the moment we are a total of 4, but we are happy to continue as we are. Our Christmas Dinner was on 5 December at the Cobbler's Hall and Ann Johns, our only driver, is to pick up our oldest member, Mrs Maisie Waggot. We are delighted she can attend our dinner because she cannot usually attend our meetings. Nevertheless, she very kindly sends us a donation every year.

DUMFRIES BRANCH

Gosh – it's nearly Christmas! I was saying that the 'New Millennium' seemed a long time coming but here we are 5 years on. Where did the time go? Anyway, as always, many of our Branch members, despite ill health, bad weather or location of venues, still attend our get-together throughout the year. They are a 'grand lot'.

This of course was a special year with so many celebrations taking place throughout the country. Like



Dumfries Branch celebrating the 60th Anniversary of VJ Day

Back Row l-r: Susan Marcroft, Elizabeth Ross, Alexa Machar, Nancy Risien, Rosemary Cochrane-Dyck, Phyllis Kershaw, Helen Jeffries.
Front Row: l-r Helen Craig, Ruby Gray, Dorah Muirhead, Lilian Hodgson, Margaret Walker, Joan Kerr.

many branches, we celebrated VE Day with the financial support of Home Front Recall and we thank them.

Four of our members attended the Scottish AGM hosted by Glasgow Branch. A great time was had by one and all. Thank you Glasgow!

PDF Compressor Free Version

On behalf of the Dumfries Branch, I attended the Service of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on 13 November. As always, it was a pleasure and an honour to be there. It was good to see that it was well attended this year with no seats to spare! Is it me, or does it always 'seem' to be a sunny day when I go to that Service? Yes it's cold, but always bright and sunny! I expect many members will now say about all the times they have been on parade in the pouring rain, wind, etc. I do take my hat off to them for the long periods that they stand in all weathers before actually marching. But what a wonderful sight to see all the veterans on that day! The Field of Remembrance outside Westminster Abbey is always worth a visit as well.

During the year, like many branches, we have lost some members. Sadly, in October, Janet Dearie, a long term member, died in hospital. We shall miss her.

Well, it's nearly 2006 and we are working on our new syllabus that we hope our members will support and enjoy. A regular event is our monthly get together for afternoon tea at the Old Bank Restaurant in Dumfries. This will be on the last Wednesday of each month. At least one Committee member will be there to chat to anyone who likes to come along between 14.30 and 15.30. So, if you are a Dumfries member, friend or a member on holiday or just passing through, you are very welcome to join us.

In the meantime, we all hope you have enjoyed Christmas and, if I am lucky enough to get a ticket for the Grand Reunion, I look forward to seeing you there.

EASTBOURNE BRANCH

Members enjoyed the ATS Dinner Club lunch held in the Royal Green Jackets Club, London.

Two attended a South Downs College/BBC event as they wanted to know all about the ATS in detail. What did we wear – uniform – was it comfortable? We learners were helped to put it on computers and have signed for a short computer course. Very nice tea.

Our Treasurer laid our ATS wreath and in the evening four members attended the Remembrance Concert held in the Congress Theatre, Eastbourne. The Sea Cadets and Marine Cadets gave an excellent display of rifle/bayonet drill. The Union Flag and the Standards were also there.

The Eastbourne Branch of the Royal Artillery arranged a coach outing to the RA Museum, Woolwich. It contained a Medal Room, many guns from other countries and a Guy Fawkes miscellany. The small gun used to make the Victoria Crosses was there. We found the Museum very interesting.

Members helped raise funds in the Arndale Centre, Eastbourne, for the Royal Star and Garter Home, the total being nearly £700. We are now very busy with other commitments and send our Best Wishes to all.

GLASGOW BRANCH

For us old ATS Vets this has been a year to remember, and I hope also, for our younger WRAC members who joined us in all our Commemorations and Celebrations. Perhaps it gave them an insight into the happy, and sometimes not so happy, times we young ATS shared in wartime. We may be a bit battle-scarred with age now but when oldies get together we are back in Hut 14 or wherever.

Our 60th Commemorations started in May 2005 at Falkirk with 2 days of Remembrance, a Service, the laying of Poppy Wreaths, marching in the rain, dining, dancing and singing. It was a very happy weekend. On August 11th our next stroll down memory lane was with the Glasgow Branches of WRNS, WAAF & ATS. We had a very enjoyable lunch together with lots of "and where did you get to in the war?" It was the first time some of us had been close to the other Women's Services to ask what they had done in the war.

August 14th was a very special day for Glasgow ex-service veterans. The Royal British Legion and Glasgow City Council combined to make it a very special day for us, starting at 1100 hrs with coffee and going on until 1930 hrs. We were taken by bus to the Cenotaph at Glasgow City Chambers for a Remembrance Service and laying of Wreaths. We VIPs were seated throughout the day's entertainment. There were Military and Pipe Bands, a group of entertainers performing the songs and dances (did we really jitterbug?) of wartime. August 14th was the hottest day for many years and by this time we were a bit weary but still game. Once more we boarded the buses and were taken back to the venue where we had started the day with coffee. We had a delicious meal, more entertainment, a speech from the Lord Provost – tired but happy we made our way home.

Saturday 15th October we were hosts for the Scottish Area AGM & Reunion. Having applied and been successful in receiving a grant from "Home Front Recall", we were able to give all who attended a free lunch at The Hilton Glasgow Grosvenor Hotel who in turn gave us accommodation at a reduced price for the 3 nights. Our guests were Lt Col Westlake and Maj (Retd) Freebairn. We had a happy and successful day and the raffle raised the sum of £267.

Susan Sinclair, one of our Committee members, was invited to receive the Freedom of Falkirk, the town where she was born. On the day, along with 300 other veterans born in Falkirk, she received a handsome medal and scroll.

2006 promises to be a more peaceful year.

GRIMSBY BRANCH

The members of Grimsby Branch were bitterly disappointed when our trip to London, funded by a Lottery Grant, had to be cancelled due to the bombings on 7 July. However, we all watched the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II and the events of the Veteran's weekend on TV. I think we saw more on TV than we would have done in London but we missed the festive atmosphere. I personally felt so proud watching The Queen (ex-ATS) as she led her veterans' parade in an open vehicle.

There was some good news because the Lottery Fund allowed us to have a weekend of remembrance and reminiscence with the money granted to us. Twenty members and carers of the Grimsby Branch went in September to London. Stewart from Sherwood Travel re-arranged an extra coach for us to travel to London in the coach with the alacrity of a London taxi driver dodging in and out the traffic with a 35 seater coach!

The ladies saw the recently unveiled Memorial in Whitehall. There were varying opinions as to the depiction of different coats, hats, bags etc hung on pegs on the oblong block of the Memorial. Some ladies would have liked people and faces, but the concept is the clothing worn by women doing various jobs during the war years.

All agreed that the highlight of the weekend was the Ceremony of the Keys at the Tower of London. This is an ancient ceremony performed each evening to secure the Tower. The Yeoman Warder who met us at the gate looked about 20 years old (does that say something of the ages of our members). He was in fact an RSM with 22 years service!

We visited the Cabinet War Rooms and saw where Churchill lived and worked during the war. He was a hard taskmaster. I'm glad I wasn't his typist with all the rules and regulations about not rustling the carbon paper when putting it in the machine. The furniture and offices and bedrooms are as he left them when the war ended. I noted that the armchairs left out for us to use in one area were the same as my mother had in our front room all her life.

Churchill's Britain at War Museum near Tower Bridge was the next venue. A huge lift almost the size of a small bedroom takes you down into the subway air raid shelter where people slept in bunk beds. The tableau of a bombed street was a bit scary with "hodies" strewn across bombed out houses.

The London Eye was an experience not to be missed even although some of the older ladies were nervous. Our Chairman "Little Audrey" kept her eyes tight shut all the time! What a wonderful panoramic view of the mixture of buildings of architectural designs ancient and modern all jumbled into the City of London spread out like a living map.

A look round the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace showed us transport through the ages from the wonderful "Golden Coach" made for the Coronation of King George IV through to the State Coaches and the Royal limousines used more often today. We saw the horses tack room where the staff must spend hours cleaning and polishing to maintain the standard of excellence we have all come to expect.

The journey home on Sunday was broken by a visit to Windsor and a scenic trip on a boat on the Thames; a peaceful finale to a hectic weekend. Before we reached home we all enjoyed a meal together in a hostelry outside Lincoln.

Grimsby Branch also attended the Northern Area Reunion at Millstones in Harrogate. Our ladies always enjoy these reunions when they meet up with their friends from other nearby branches. The meal was delicious and it was thought to be an ideal venue for the event.

At our AGM in October all officers were once again appointed unopposed. We are either running the branch OK or the other members have dementia and don't notice! In November we were all busy selling poppies for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. We ran a stall in Asda for the week and raise quite a lot of money apart from swapping gossip with all our friends as they visit the store.

HARROGATE BRANCH

A most satisfactory year with two new members; one ATS and the other WRAC. Both have good tales to tell and new blood to liven up meetings. However, like all Branches, our numbers attending are dwindling due to old age and infirmity. Whenever possible, our Chairman, Barbara Dawson, collects any "walking wounded". Strangely, members who have moved away cannot find a Branch and miss our meetings and us very much. We miss them and their contribution to discussions and points of interest. Whenever possible (and when funds allow) we have a speaker. At our meetings this year we had a slide show on a visit to China by our Secretary; reminiscences by a National Service Soldier (hilarious); advice for ladies by a female solicitor; and the work and experiences of a voluntary driver of the Happy Wanderers Bus. There was also music and a wonderful display and demonstration of needlecraft. Our Annual Trip this year was to Beverley with tea at Driffield. Unfortunately, it poured with rain all day and our Secretary, who organised the event, was in hospital with a ruptured Achilles tendon. This did not deter her from attending the Unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II and the 60th Anniversary VE celebrations on July 9/10 with her husband who pushed her everywhere in a wheelchair. Both said it was well worth the effort.

York Branch invited us to their 60th Anniversary celebrations in that lovely city. Three members travelled there by train and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. First of all, there was a Service in the Minster followed by transport to Ingham Barracks where there were food and drinks. Then there was entertainment and, finally, Beating Retreat.



Harrogate Chairman Barbara Dawson dancing with Carol Tyler from Grimsby Branch at North East Reunion

One of the highlights of our year was being able to welcome all the Branches from the NE to our Annual Reunion, held at Millstones in September. There was lovely food and surroundings, with good entertainment. In spite of sticks, crutches, etc., many got up to dance, and the above photo shows our Chairman, Barbara (the small one) dancing with Carol Tyler (the tall one) from Grimsby Branch. How could you see which way to steer Barbara? It was such a success that, at our Secretaries Meeting in York, chaired by Col Cook, it was suggested that we meet here again in 2006. These meetings are good. We exchange ideas, get to know the other Branches and share their problems, as well as being happy occasions. Every year, in late October, the British Legion organise a Field of Remembrance, a small grassy patch outside St Peter's Church in the town centre. Dozens of organisations take part in the Service and plant miniature crosses for their organisation. Our Chairman and Secretary attend and have been known to plant more than one cross. Of course, a contingent always stands at the Cenotaph on Nov 11th for the 2 minutes' silence when a gun is fired from the Stray. On Remembrance Sunday, although we cannot march any more, we form a small platoon on parade, and our Chairman lays a WRAC Association wreath.

Although we dwindle in numbers, we are strong at heart, enjoy great comradeship, and never regret having served our King or Queen and country. Memories are made of this!

HASTINGS BRANCH

Since our last entry in *Lioness* our branch activities have followed the usual pattern of happy and sad events.



At the beginning of November we were delighted to share in the 100th Birthday celebrations of a Founder Member.

Mrs Molly Steele, née Roffe. It was indeed a most enjoyable party which was held in the St Leonard's Blind Centre where Molly now lives. The party was attended by Councillor Pam Brown, Mayor of Hastings, by her nephew and about fifty guests. Molly received a beautiful card from The Queen and many other gifts and greetings. The Branch sent roses and lilies with their strong aroma. Our photograph shows the Manager of Abbeyfield where Molly spent many happy years; our Chairman, Monica Ellis; Michael Roffe, Nephew; and the Mayor. Molly is seated with one of the representatives from the Blind Centre. Molly joined the ATS in 1938 and was awarded a

Certificate of Appreciation from the General Headquarters, Home Forces, in June 1942.

November was indeed a busy month with Poppy Planting, the Two-Minute Silence, the Sunday Morning Memorial Service at the War Memorial in Alexandra Park and the Festival of Remembrance in the White Rock Theatre. It was all rather sad because due to age and infirmity we have had to resign from the Joint Council of Ex-Service Associations which means we no longer attend these functions in an official capacity. The Festival of Remembrance was particularly near-jerking because the Comptroller asked the entire audience to stand in honour of the nine ATS/WRAC who were still capable of marching on to the stage having done so for 23 years!

Again we held our Strawberry Tea in the garden of Joan Lovell, our Vice Chairman and a founder member of the Branch. This together with a visit to the Magistrates' court, a talk by a local historian on 1066 Country and a visit to Haver Castle all made for enjoyable events.

Sadly, six members have died this year but we have gained three new members. Also Elsie Hillier née Hoyer is seriously ill in the Conquest Hospital – she has dealt with our raffles for the past 21 years always ensuring sufficient tickets and prizes at meetings and other events. We wish her a speedy recovery.

We hope you have a happy time and we send best wishes for 2006.

HEREFORD BRANCH

This year has been very busy as always for the Hereford branch, we have had our share of ups and downs but we march upwards and onwards.

Our President Mrs Ena Price celebrated her 90th birthday and as she had so many friends and family she had to have two parties. She would have no presents but asked for donations to the 'Air Ambulance' and such is



Rosemary Jones and Ena Price celebrating Ena's 90th Birthday

the feeling she instils in everyone that donations amounted to £600. We in the Hereford branch wish her so much joy and happiness on a very fruitful life and no doubt she will be still ordering us around on her 100th birthday.

PDF Compressor Free Version

Rosemary Jones has been honoured with a Certificate of Appreciation for all her hard work in driving and picking up members who are less able to get to the meetings – among many other things (she is a great cook).

Not to be outdone, the members cannot stop raising money, this year for the Poppy appeal. Eva Burton raised £900, Rosemary £838.99 and Joyce raised £1,960.

Our love goes to Mary and Joyce Nicholls on the loss of a loved husband and father. They both continued bravely to carry on their work commitments within the Branch during a very difficult time. Sadly too, Mary Davis passed away peacefully on the 3rd December 2005. Goodbye old friend.

Hereford would like to thank Irene Hall and Maggie Purkis for all the hard work in arranging the Wales and West Area Reunion this year in Shrewsbury. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves despite the rain.

A wreath was laid on the behalf of the branch on Remembrance Sunday by Rosemary Jones.

Our new meeting place, the Wye Inn, Hereford is turning out to be successful so come and join us and be assured a friendly, relaxed evening.

LEEDS BRANCH

Along with most branches we have many members who are ill or unable to get to meetings. This includes our Chairman who we are missing greatly. We seem unable to attract ex WRAC members so are battling on with our regular 12-16 attenders.

Those able to take part in the July Celebrations had a wonderful weekend. The organisation could not be faulted, security tight but unobtrusive. The Queen and other VIPs joined in the fun. We saw them in a different light. The Victory Services Club pulled out all the stops to entertain us and we shall remember the whole weekend for a long time.



Leeds members and friends enjoying a knees up at Vee Robinson's Ack Ack Weekend

In August we learned that our Chairman was in hospital, a real bombshell. We are keeping our fingers crossed for her return to health.

In September, 4 members joined Vee Robinson's Ack Ack Weekend in the Midlands with visits to the National Memorial Arboretum where we dedicated a Log to be used as a seat. Our plot looks really good. We then visited the Air Museum at Cosford to see the V1 and V2 which caused us so many headaches. Sunday we were at a private Airfield where members were given rides in small aeroplanes and helicopters. The Gala Dinner was a great success as the photo shows. What a wonderful way to remember the 66th Anniversary of the outbreak of WW2

Twelve members attended the Northern Area Lunch arranged by the Harrogate Branch. It has been voted one of the best.

In October in the absence of our Chairman we held an impromptu AGM. Two members volunteered to act as Treasurer and Assistant. Nobody wants the branch to close so we are considering a change of venue to make travelling easier.

In November we had a full report from Northern Area and HQ regarding the plot at the Arboretum and changes in committee. All members were involved in Remembrance Services and Poppy collection. Those interested have booked for the Grand Reunion we hope to see many friends there. In December we are having our usual Christmas Lunch at Thomas Danby College.

We wish everyone better health in 2006.

LEICESTER AND NOTTINGHAM BRANCH

Following on from our last report our programme for the year has run as planned.

In June we held our usual Nibble and Natters, this being the holiday season and then in July we had a welcome return visit from Avril Lencox MBE. This time Avril brought her medals along to show our members and also some items which would assist her in the many sports and competitions she organises. She had brought these with the donation we had given her.

Also in July of course the 60th celebrations for the end of World War 2 were taking place. Beforehand when our ladies applied for tickets there was excitement for those who had gained a ticket and some disappointment for those who were 'reserves' but then they also were given tickets, all for Horse Guards Parade, and could join in with preparations. Some of our members had also applied for tickets to watch The Queen unveil the Memorial to the Women of World War 2 and so spent the weekend in London. It is sad to say that the Memorial to the Women of World War II is such a disappointment to many servicewomen, but at least there is one and in Whitehall. We had one lucky lady Sylvia Schofield accompanied by her husband Peter who joined The Queen for lunch on the Sunday. Our Standard Bearer, Vi Rawlins, paraded our Standard in the long, very hot march along The Mall to Buckingham Palace and the rest of our members took their seats at Horse Guards Parade. All said they had had a wonderful weekend and it would be a very special memory.

Our main Leicester celebration took place in August with the Royal British Legion and City Council holding a service at Leicester Cathedral on August 14th with all the city dignitaries and veterans associations attending. Then a parade of Veterans took place ending with a buffet at our County Hall. Six of our members took part and Heather the daughter of Barbara Castell, over here from Canada, pushed her mother in her wheelchair for the parade and found the event very moving.

We spent another happy day at the Sailing Club and held our mini celebration with wine and a large cake. Doris Duswell, Irene Bell and Sandra Smith decorated the club with union flags as always work so hard to make this a very enjoyable occasion. Our photo shows our ladies enjoying a photo-call in the sun.



Leicester members enjoying the sunshine at the Sailing Club

In September we held our Harvest Festival with the proceeds from the sale of goods going into our funds. We also had an extra meeting with members on a trip on Birmingham Waterways. We had lunch on the narrow boat and then were taken by coach to Hatton Country World, a complex that has many small craft shops and also a farm with rare and baby animals.

Also in September, 9 members attended the Wales and West Area Reunion at Shrewsbury and had a very good afternoon. The only snag was that the train arrived at Shrewsbury at noon instead of 10.30 am; the second year running Central trains have let us down.

Our AGM took place in October with a good attendance and our programme for next year arranged. This was followed in November with a Christmas Fayre where members bring unwanted presents for others to buy. The proceeds from this and our other fund raising activities enabled us to donate £150 to the WRAC Association and £50 towards the Arboretum Fund. *(Editor: Thank you – a very generous donation and much appreciated.)*

Our Standard bearer, Vi, and some of our members have taken part in services and parades of other Associations and the Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance in Leicester. Also, 8 members attended the Service and Parade in Whitehall (The WRAC group appeared much smaller this year). The weather was fine but very cold, the wind always seems to be strong along Whitehall when standing waiting for the service to start.

We have gained 7 new members this year and two.

Cynthia Hubble and Brenda Watkins have managed to attend our meetings. On a very sad note we lost another member Pat Cooke. Pat had been in and out of hospital over the past year but her death was unexpected. Some of our members attended her funeral and formed a guard of honour. Other members of our branch have had falls or have been unwell. We wish them all well and hope to see them back at our meetings.

We have our Christmas Lunch to look forward to in December and then into 2006 when 30 of our ladies will be attending the Grand Reunion in March with thanks to the Lottery for the grant given to us.

To all our members and friends we thank you for your support and wish you a happy and healthy 2006.

LONDON BRANCH



Courtesy of Bromley Fairo

As 2005 draws to a close I am sure you must have some very happy moments to look back on. What a year! Like many Branches we were represented at many of the events held in London in July – Lunch with The Queen, The unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II, The Party in the Park, sing songs, and the moving Service at Westminster Abbey. The Branch also went to the Reunion at Luton, which was a great success thanks to some very hard work by Luton Branch. All this plus local events to thank Veterans will make 2006 seem very tame. Or will it? We do have a very Grand Reunion in April!

We still have an average attendance of 28 'girls' at our meetings. We did wonder what would happen after July 10th, but here they were all merry and bright again on July 21st for John Doran to take them through their paces of Tai Chi. Not only is he doing us good teaching us the exercises but he is very amusing. And on the 21st of July he was worth his weight in gold as the news of another threat to the Underground and buses reached us. We were told to stay put. He was great and we continued to enjoy ourselves, taking our minds off the big question – how were we going to get home?

We were well represented at the AGM in April and at the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey 10th November. Fewer of us attempt the marching these days and opt for Westminster Abbey on Remembrance Day. I must say, I don't think it is the actual marching deters us. Most of us love that moment when the bands strike up, shoulders are pulled back with pride and we are off. It is the standing waiting for that great moment. Age has a lot to answer for.

Still we did win the quiz against the WRENS and The RBL Women's Section yet again at Pall Mall. Four years running, not bad. So our minds are OK even if our backs and legs are a bit iffy.

With that thought we wish you a healthy 2008.

PDF Compressor Free Version

LUTON BRANCH

It has been a hectic few months for Luton Branch. Back in January we decided to apply for a Lottery Grant, through the Home Front Recall Scheme, for an event combining the London Area Group Reunion and a commemoration of the end of WWII. Just in case we got the grant, we started more or less straight away, contacting possible entertainments, and the venue, and made tentative bookings. Luckily all those approached 'pencilled us in' on the date agreed, September 3rd. Mind you every conversation contained the phrase "provided we get the grant". Then in May, we heard the good news - we had our grant! Planning really took off, confirming the venue and entertainment, and inviting the guests. There were tickets to be printed, menus to agree, begging letters for raffle prizes to be written, to local and national firms.

Special thanks must go to Eleri Pirie who produced the very attractive tickets and other paperwork. We had a ceiling of 200 capacity for the venue, so we decided to ask representatives of all our local ex-service organisations, plus the Bevin boys, Red Cross, St. Johns & WRVS in fact anybody whose organisation had contributed to the War effort. We were honoured to have 2 Gurkha Sergeants from the Gurkha Signals at Bramcote, 2 Chelsea Pensioners, the High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, Mrs Farnborough and Bishop Farnborough, and His worship the Mayor of Luton. The youth element was represented by the ACE, ATC and the Sea Cadets.



Courtesy of Joanna Cross, *Luton News*

Some of the branch went to the Thistle Hotel on the Friday evening, to prepare things for Saturday, everything that could go wrong did! We comforted ourselves with the theatrical adage "Bad dress-rehearsal Good opening night" which luckily proved correct.

Saturday 3rd September - all systems go. At 10am we welcomed our comrades from the London Area Group. Lt Col Sue Westlake and Maj Jane Freebairn from HQ at Worthy Down. Then our other guests started to arrive - and they kept coming. Admission was by ticket only, but I'm sure we came very near to the 200 ceiling.



Madge Evans with the Anniversary Cake
Photograph from Edna Lee, Greater London Branch

Everyone seemed to enjoy the entertainment - what a surprise when the Morris Mens' vocalist sang "Greensleeves," one of 'our' tunes. Luton Youth Jazz orchestra were great, as were the Irish dance troupe, and Ron Larby from the Korean Vets Assn. Thanks to them all. I am somewhat puzzled though, as how, when BBC Look East were invited, Anglia TV turned up. Sincere thanks to everyone who came, and to our Luton branch members - we said on our Lottery application "We are a small, but enthusiastic branch" - I think we proved it. In the midst of all the above goings-on, we still managed to retain the WRAC v Far East Vets Assn Shield and beat the Association of Wrens in our annual quiz fixtures. The football team are not the only winners in Luton.

Four of our members were privileged to attend the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II, and the reception at the MOD. We had the pleasure of meeting Baroness Bonthrope, very down to earth and charming lady. The young service personnel who looked after us were great, no fears about the future with them around.

Six members paraded on August 21st at Luton's VJ day commemoration. Eleri Pirie carried our Branch Standard to the Parish Church where, with some 17 others, it was blessed.



Anne Stewart, Mary Fitzpatrick, Josephine Connaughton, Madge Evans, Jean Taylor (London Branch) and Diana Lidstone - she is hidden behind Madge Evans, just her foot shows.

MEDWAY BRANCH

The branch members have come back to earth with a bump after spending the last six months attending various functions in connection with the 60th Anniversary of the end of World War II. **PDF Compressor Free Version**



October was the Branch AGM and all the committee volunteered to stand for another year.

Branch funds are boosted by donations from those that are unable to attend the meetings. Other members raise funds by coffee mornings, cream teas, raffles, boot fairs, bring and buy and we are grateful for all their contributions.

We are lucky to get the Garrison Hall free in Gillingham but we make a donation to the Garrison Church for flowers.

In November, members will attend various services of Remembrance throughout Medway, laying poppy wreaths.



Christmas Lunch has been booked in December. After the disappointment at the old venue we thought we would go for a new one this year.

We hope all goes well at the Grand Reunion in April. Medway members will not be there this time.

Good health and wishes to all Association members.

NORFOLK BRANCH

Notice the new Title! It is with mixed feelings that the Norfolk and Suffolk Branch accepts that it has been divided between the two Counties – pleasure that at last

meetings are to held in Suffolk but sadness in losing some thirty long-standing members. I attended the inaugural meeting in Ipswich and was so pleased to find that their new secretary, Mrs Liz Ives, had been able to recruit so many new former WRAC ladies. It was a very jolly and friendly occasion. We send the new Branch our very best wishes.

At the 60th Anniversary service at Norwich Cathedral we met and were delighted to find a new member; she in turn recruited a friend, who in turn recruited a friend, who in turn recruited another. FOUR new members within the space of a month! Well, five really, as we welcomed a former WRAC lady from the Shropshire Branch who has moved home to Norfolk. And welcomed was the word. We need more young blood!

Unfortunately our Chairman, Mrs Olive Brown, has had to resign her post through ill-health. Olive had done a sterling job over the last 8 years of her Chairmanship for which she receives our gratitude. Fortunately she is getting a little more mobile and hopes to be able to get to meetings again.

We have very happy memories of the wonderful weekend in London when seven of us were at the unveiling of the Memorial and two present at the reception afterwards, six were at the ceremonies in Horse Guards and Audrey, our Treasurer, at the Buckingham Palace garden party. At one of our later meetings we showed a video recording of the unveiling ceremony for those who were not fortunate enough to be there in person.



Mrs. Marjorie Spears, Joan Awhery, Madge Freeman, Helen Green

Several of us marched to and were present at the Norwich Cathedral on July 3rd for VE/VJ commemoration and again in October for the very well attended 90th Memorial Service for Nurse Edith Cavell who is buried within the Cathedral precinct.

In August we gave ourselves a birthday tea-party to celebrate the Branch's 25 years.

Unfortunately only three members were able to go the November 11th commemoration at the plaque in Gr Yarmouth this year – but we were supported, as usual, by the husband of our member Amy Maund, and by Mr Val Grimble, the historian who was at the very beginning of the research into this terrible incident in 1943. A spray of poppies was laid on our behalf by Mr Grimble. The owner of the hotel on which the plaque is displayed told us it

receives a considerable amount of attention and enquiries from visitors in summer-time.

The local county museum at Gressenhall hosted a party for Veterans during September which was a very friendly affair.

PDF Compressor Free Version

Then of course there was the memorably enjoyable reunion of East Anglian Branches at Colchester on November 5th when we met members of the Cambridge, Chelmsford and Suffolk Branches and Colchester friends, who, though not now an official branch, are still able to meet occasionally to keep in contact. It was a great pleasure to have Major Jane Freebairn as our guest; she revealed some of the inner workings of headquarters – a revelation to some who perhaps thought that the Association ran itself! Her presence was greatly appreciated. Special thanks, too, go to the Chairman of the East Anglian branches, Mrs Patricia Stevenson who made all the complicated arrangements that ensured the occasion was so enjoyable and that everything ran so smoothly (on the surface at least!).

A very Happy New Year to all our friends at Headquarters and in Branches everywhere.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH

We continue to hold our meetings every third Thursday of the month in the Companions Club and are fortunate to have good attendances. We average 20-25 members and we have lately 3 new members. As Secretary I am indebted to our Chairman and Treasurer for their help over the past year during my illness. I try to go to the meetings when I can as I love to be with the members.

In July we enjoyed joining Veterans in Newcastle for a service at St Thomas Church and then a buffet at Exhibition Park with entertainment afterwards. Two of our members, Mrs K Smith and Mrs P Convery, enjoyed a weekend in Edinburgh and were well looked after by the "Not Forgotten" Association.

In August our members joined hundreds of veterans at the large "Garden Party" at Doxford Hall. All had Fish and Chips brought in by helicopter from Seahouses, refreshments at tea time and plenty of entertainment. A lovely day and all provided by the kind owner of Doxford Hall. Eighteen of our members went to the North East Reunion at Harrogate. All enjoyed their day, good lunch and entertainment.

The Lottery Fund helped us with the cost. Good health and companionship to all members.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH

We have had quite a busy year yet again. Last year I thought we were busy enough with the SW Area Reunion but this year with many parades, services, invitations to parties, BBQ's and lots of other outings to celebrate VE/VJ Day most of us have had a very busy, enjoyable time. Thanks to the help and support from Jennie, Betty, Doris and Mary we have very successfully completed another year.

I have been to London twice this year: in April with Jennie, for the Secretaries meeting and AGM and then with Mary and Eileen in June for our super holiday with the 'Not Forgotten' Association. We were treated very well indeed; I have never been so pampered and spoiled. Nothing was too much trouble for Rosie and Rosemary, of the NFA, and they both earned my admiration for never getting in a flap or appearing to be worried or annoyed or even tired. I'm sure they did not get rest breaks as we did between trips. Our thanks too, to all the kind people who we either saw very little of or indeed not at all, because without their organisation and support in the background, these holidays would not happen. As the NFA invites veterans and disabled ex-service personnel to a variety of functions each year they give a wonderful service for all those they invite. We thank them very much indeed.

Still in April, after the London adventures, we had a branch outing, by coach, to Polperro. We had a visit to the Methodist Chapel which is celebrating its centenary. The sewing group have open days to show and sell their lovely crafts for the chapel's up-keep and other charities. Most of us ended up in the Buccaneer Restaurant for lunch and then we dispersed for walkabouts in the village. Good weather enhanced the day. Three intrepid souls came with me to my sister's house for coffee; we went by the exceedingly steep cliff path with very deep steps; which go almost vertically to the top. One of our little party discovered an acute sense of vertigo and ended up on hands and knees, being pushed by one of us and pulled by another, with us all collapsing in untidy heaps with laughing and breathlessness on the bench above. We got a ride back to the coach!

We have been treated to parades, memorial and thanksgiving services, lunches of various types and barbecues. From May 1st with the Merchant Navy Association, 25th June a RAFA concert then on the Hoe with them on the Sunday morning for a Wreath Laying Service. July 9th and 10th saw several of our ladies in London for the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II, the Horse Guards Parade, Westminster Abbey and Buckingham Palace. Some of our ladies have accepted invitations from the Civil Service Assn, The Malaya and Borneo Assn, The City of Plymouth Wartime Museum and a Heritage Open Day Exhibition at the Devonport High School for Boys.

We have attended services, with lunch, for the Battle of Britain and the Battle of the Atlantic. The Festival of Remembrance and concert by the Royal Marines Band was held on November 11th at the Plymouth Pavilions.

Fourteen of us in four cars went for lunch to Badger's Holt on Dartmoor. We've had two committee/social meeting/lunches also at a restaurant on the moor and our final party for the year will be the Christmas Lunch in December.

Our AGM was in October and all officers and general non-official helpers agreed to remain at their posts for another 12 months. The loyal and continuous attendance of our members to our meetings shows me that we are still needed and appreciated. This year we have had a very regular average of 15 'bods' from the Plymouth area, occasionally more and in bad weather less but the overall picture is still looking good and without those ladies'

appearance and support we would be nothing. We still have over 70 members throughout Cornwall and Plymouth with North and South Devon and hope to attract more WRAC ladies as time goes by. Thank you all for your loyal support and help.

PDF Compressor Free Version

Here is a happy incident. At the AGM last April, I asked if any branch had a pair of gauntlets for sale, perhaps, if they had laid up their Standard. Edith of Crewe said she thought we could have theirs and in due course we were able to purchase, for a very reasonable fee, their gauntlets and our standard bearers are delighted with them because our original pair is very small and fitted very few people. Thank you, Crewe, for your help.

Sadly we have two members who have died recently, Phyl Whiter, who moved to Essex quite a few years ago and Isobel Brunley, who also moved some years ago, to Co Antrim. We have welcomed two new members to Plymouth Branch too. Mrs Joan Francis lives in Bodmin. Joan hasn't managed to get up to see us yet but hopes to do so in the near future and she tells me she is determined to come to our Christmas Lunch. Maureen McLean has very recently joined our branch and we hope we will soon get to know her too. We would love to see other 'out-of-towners' too, so please try to come if you can. Evon Roberts has carried our Standard for us twice this year and Carol Martin, who joined us earlier this year, has agreed to be bearer for the Festival of Remembrance because it would be too strenuous for Evon who would like to be Escort with Mary Davis.

Contact telephone numbers are:

Ruth Jennings, Secretary	01752 363118
Betty Mitchell, Assistant Secretary	01752 348632

PORTSMOUTH BRANCH

We started the year sadly with the death of one of our long serving members, Mabel Couzens. Although she had not been very active for 2 years she did a lot in the past and we shall miss her. Our Standard and 6 members attended her funeral.



Portsmouth Branch Standard and supporters

Our first event was a parade and service on VE Day at Chichester Cathedral as guests of the Italy Star Association. It was the first parade for our new Standard Bearer Sally Watson. She did it very well although the weather was cold and damp. We paraded round Chichester in the rain. Then followed services at the D-Day Stone on the front and the Falklands Memorial in Old Portsmouth on 6th and 19th June.

As part of the Trafalgar 200 Celebrations, there was The Review of the Fleet by HM The Queen which took Portsmouth with ships and sailors. Most members saw a lot of the events, review and fireworks etc some in pouring rain.

On Wednesday 28th June there was an International Drum Head Service for the Navy. Some of our members attended - as did Lt Col Westlake and Maj Freebairn! It was a very moving service, ended with a fly past and HMS Invincible (Air Craft Carrier) sailing along the front with the crew all manning ship. *(Editor: What was remarkable was the huge number of Navy reps from many overseas countries and the way the Service involved so many young people)*

At the beginning of July all events turned to London. Saturday 9th July five members went to the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II and our Australian member Rance Thompson came over especially to attend.

Saturday 10th July saw 10 members on Horse Guards Parade. They all thought it was a wonderful event and are still talking about it - in spite of the hard part walking back to Waterloo Station to come home.

Monday August 15th our Standard was carried by Phyllis Price and a few members went to VJ Service and Parade at Portsmouth Cathedral, after which poppy wreaths were cast into the sea. Just a few social events followed August Coffee Morning hosted by Jasmine McCree. In September we enjoyed a Lunch Party at Harvester Pub in Fareham. On October 22nd we had an American Tea party at Joy Elmer's home in Fareham.

November 8th members were at The Dedication of a new Memorial for the Servicemen, Women and civilians of Portsmouth who died in the 2nd World War. It has taken 60 years to get this. It was a simple ceremony carried out by HRH Princess Alexandra. Two members, Edna Methereil and Mary Willis, went to the reception in the Guildhall afterwards and met Princess Alexandra.



The last parade was on Remembrance Sunday in the Guildhall Square. Four members attended and our Standard was very well carried by Sally Watson and our wreath laid by Andrea Smith. In the afternoon few members went to the Royal British Legion Service at St Mary's Parish Church.

PDF Compressor Free Version

We still meet at Hampshire Ex-Servicemen's Club second Tuesday of the month at 11 am and get a few to meetings. So far number of members are the same.

SALISBURY BRANCH

Salisbury Branch has had a most enjoyable year. At our meetings we have had many interesting topics and speakers including "Village Churches" by an old friend of the branch, Kathy Quinn; "Kinesiology" – an introduction from Irene Lock; "Living with The Boss", Margaret Adams, a farmer's wife; and a humorous talk from an undertaker!

We have visited the many Military Museums in Winchester, and Jane Austen's House in Chawton, Hampshire.

The weather was not very kind for our summer garden party at Amesbury, hosted by our secretary Val Trout, but we all enjoyed the event. We were very pleased to welcome our new Area Chairman, Major Maskens McIntyre.

On 6 July four members of the branch were invited by the Not Forgotten Association to attend a D Day celebration at Lydiard House in Wiltshire. They were greeted on arrival with a glass of Buck's Fizz and treated to an excellent lunch. During the afternoon they were entertained by comics, dancers and musicians who put on a 1940's style performance which brought back many memories for so many. It really was a great day out and Thirza Sillick, Dorrie Rose and Netta Townsend will remember it for years to come. Val Trout attended as driver/escort but insists she is much too young to recall the wartime events!

At the AGM in September the committee was reappointed en bloc. Our President, Joan Freeland gave a vote of thanks for all their hard work. Chairman – Alison Ogden, Secretary – Val Trout, Treasurer – Jill Trainor and Press Officer – Gladys Pope.

During our October meeting Val gave a talk on her diverse career in the WRAC which we all found most interesting. We had not realised we had such a genius in our midst! Val has arranged an equally good programme for the coming year and we look forward to another large gathering for the Christmas Lunch.

We all enjoy receiving the *Lioness*, many thanks to the Editor and the team for such a splendid magazine.

SHROPSHIRE BRANCH

Hello everyone, once again it is report time, so here is our account. We are still marching on, enjoying our monthly meetings. In June, three of us went to the "ATS

Dinner Club" lunch, at The Green Jackals Club in London. We arrived there (after walking about half an hour in the wrong direction) and had a really good day.

Our highlight has been the "Awards For All" money, granted to us, which enabled us to visit the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, with lunch included. We had a very interesting day and the RASC Asen joined us too. Joan was dashing about on her hired scooter. Still in July, we celebrated the 25th Anniversary of Shropshire Branch, with a special cake.



Shropshire Branch outside Buckingham Palace

We went by train to London for the 60th Anniversary Events of the end of WWII. We had a fantastic weekend, very hot, consuming gallons of water. Lucy carried the ATS Standard on Horse Guards Parade, but what a disappointment for those Standard bearers. They did not see any events on Horse Guards, as they stood outside the arena, behind the Royal Box, until it was their turn to march on. Edith Ubbt, Standard-bearer for the "Women's Section" of Wellington Branch, Royal British Legion, carried the ATS Standard down The Mall. Thank you, Edith.

In August, we joined The Royal British Legion on their coach trip to Llandudno, Guess what? It rained!

Also in August, we celebrated the 60th Anniversary, with our VJ Party.



Our AGM in September saw the same committee reinstated with Hilda Dakin as our Social Secretary. We enjoyed our Area Reunion at The Lord Hill Hotel in Shrewsbury, with Joan Purcell 'dancing' in her wheelchair!

In October, we had a **PDF Compressor Free Version** Association Social Event, with horse racing and a very nice buffet. We have sent £25 to the Benevolent Fund.

The "Heroes Return" visits, where veterans can visit areas they were in, during WWII, with some expenses paid for them, has been a wonderful opportunity to travel, for many of us. Nancy Tipton went in October, visiting where her husband was, with 13rd Reconnaissance Regt and RTR, around Arnhem and Nijmegen, and laying a wreath on the Stalag XI-B POW Camp Memorial at Fallingb., Germany, where Roy and his comrades were prisoners. Fortunately, Roy came back.

In November, some of us attended Donnington Garrison Church Service of Remembrance and Lucy carried our Standard. (By the way, Lucy has carried out Standard 167 times to date. Well done, Lucy.) Afterwards, we had lunch and drinks in the Sgts' Mess, where the atmosphere and comradeship was really special. It always is with serving and ex-service personnel.

Best wishes to you all, for a Happy and healthy 2006. In March, we hope to travel to London, to see the Memorial to the Women of World War II and other places of interest, with thanks to "Awards for All".

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Firstly if I may, I would like to say a big "Hello" to all of my friends up in Sunderland. Come down here the weather is great, well most of the time.

Like most branches, we have had a very busy year with it being the 60th Anniversary of VE and VJ Days. Apart from some individual members doing their own things throughout the celebrations, seven of us also managed to get to Southsea for the Trafalgar 200 International Drumhead Service. A multitude of Standards including our own, carried by Margaret Barham, were displayed - I think that ours was the only Army one on Parade!

At our July meeting Major Mack paid us a visit to introduce herself and gave a talk on her service career. Things were a bit hectic as it was our first night in our new venue and we were still trying to find the layout of the building. We found the kettle and the essentials so it went off alright.

The rest of July was quite busy with Gail Langdon's Annual Luncheon on the 9th. It was well attended and excellently presented as ever. Stephanie Caws ran the raffle for this event (prizes galore donated by members). Stephanie was so impressed with the prize she provided that she managed to take it home again after winning it! We attended the 60th Anniversary Memorial Service in Eastleigh on the 10th of July. The weather was so good for this that a member of the Army Cadet Service fainted but with medics on hand he was quickly attended to and back on his feet again.

During August, the Eastleigh Carnival was held and we were in attendance as usual. Audrey Boyce and Hazel Hutchins managed the stall as they do every year, with the able assistance of our Treasurer, Margaret Woodhead. The gazebo provided once again by Gail Langdon was quite handy as the rain made an unwelcome appearance but it failed to dampen the spirits of the participants. Hazel and Audrey are proper little treasures, collecting months in advance and working very hard to make sure the stall is a success. The selling of someone's own umbrella to a pleased member of the public helped to boost the funds raised this year to £115.

Also in August we had Betty Rush's Annual Tea Party. We know that Betty always looks forward to this occasion but more so this year as she has been very poorly and missed quite a few meetings. It was nice for everyone to sit in the garden and relax and chat for a couple of hours. Betty was even able to get Irene Hanford to her tea party. Irene has also been very poorly and is undergoing Chemotherapy.

In September, with the generous Lottery donation from "Homefront Recall", we were able to organise a trip to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas. During the visit there were quite a few emotional moments from our members and the short service of remembrance in the chapel was so moving. I have included a couple of photographs showing Beryl Allinson and myself at the WRAC Association Grove (Beryl's wearing the glasses) with the Japanese Prisoner of War memorial in the background.



The whole group was taken as we had a short stop off for "essential personal maintenance" at Stratford upon Avon on the way home. A visit to Milestones a local "Days gone by" venue was our destination during October. Another wonderful trip down memory lane.

PDF Compressor Free Version

The November meeting hosted a mini Guy Fawkes competition judged by our Chairwoman, Jean Doe and myself (we aren't very good at making things but we know what we like). The competition was followed by an Arts and Crafts session which was very good but Jean and I still can't make things, no matter how they try to teach us.

At the time of writing this, we are looking forward to our Christmas Function at the Royal British Legion in Romsey where our guests of honour will be Major Jane Freebairn and Major Mack. *(Editor: Another good Christmas party – thank you!)*

In closing we hope that you have all had a wonderful Christmas and are having a prosperous New Year. Good health to you all.

STIRLING BRANCH

The branch has 3 life members and 26 annual members and about 15 members attend monthly meetings held in a City Centre Hotel on the last Saturday of the month for a bar lunch. All are agreed that the branch should continue.

Thirteen members attended the Scottish Area Reunion in Perth and three members attended the Final Ack-Ack Reunion in York last July. This was a very special occasion and everyone was sad that it had to be the last one. Five members attended the 51st Highland Division Veteran's Association, 60th Anniversary VE Day in Perth on 14th May 2005. The weather was perfect and the crowded streets gave them a rapturous reception. A day to remember!

One member attended the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II and was fortunate to get a ticket for the reception held in Whitehall after the unveiling. Another member got 2 tickets for the event on Horse Guards Parade on 10th July but due to incidents on the London Underground that week, trains from Scotland terminated at Peterborough. We didn't require the posh frocks and big hats to watch the celebrations of the 60th Anniversary of VE and VJ Day on television!

The Branch wishes to express its appreciation of the work that goes into producing the *Lioness* twice a year. Each issue is eagerly awaited.

SUFFOLK BRANCH

This really is a first! The Suffolk Branch newly formed on 20th October 2005 is making its first contribution to the *Lioness*. You will have read about us but may not be aware that we really do exist. We do and have held our first and second meetings.

Having joined the Norfolk and Suffolk branch, Liz Ives, was "volunteered" by Joan Awbery with the support of

Regional Chairman, Patricia Stevenson to form the new branch. Liz was not then aware that these two ladies carried such clout (in the nicest possible way) and so without too much ado agreed to think about it. You know the rest!

Our first meeting was held in Ipswich at the Central Conservative Club and 26 ladies attended. Many thanks to you all for your support, enthusiasm, encouragement and the offers of assistance. It was a great afternoon. So much chatting and most of us made a new friend that day or met someone who had served with or near them.

It was somewhat higgledy-piggledy as meetings go. Everyone wanted to join in and make their contributions but we finally agreed on many things. Two brave ladies volunteered to be on the committee and Liz found herself voted in as Secretary. The Chair is Maj (Retd) Jan Brodie-Murphy and Treasurer, Marjorie Lambert. All the committee are ex-WRAC and their service spans 47 years from 1953 to 1990. It was really good to find at our second meeting that numbers were equally divided between WRAC and ATS with an age range covering from 50 plus to mid 80s. We youngsters must look to our laurels if we are to keep up with our feisty elders.

It has been a really enlightening experience forming the new branch. Finding so many ex-service women and all with stories to tell. Wartime exploits; the social life at the time; the hardships they suffered, comparing notices – basic training comes into that category whichever service we were in. Several WRAC members remember Hobbs Barracks, Lingfield. Old Spiders with brown lino, metal beds and green lockers come to mind. Cold April days on the square mastering marching, saluting, falling over in the snow, brasses to clean and labels to sew on after lights out. Oh joy!

Very special thanks must go to Joan Awbery, Secretary of the Norfolk Branch. (Do you feel there is something missing now Joan?) She has been so supportive and encouraging, answering any questions and came to our first meeting in person. Thank you for everything and we hope that the two branches may meet soon. Also to Patricia Stevenson, Chairman of the Eastern Region and Maj Jane Freebairn and the Chief Clerk for their assistance and advice.

Another thank you to Heather Heniger of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, who phoned the Secretary having read of the new branch in the *Lioness*. Heather went to Canada as a war bride in 1947. She passed on the names of two ex-ATS ladies who live or lived in Suffolk. We seem to have found one of them and will be making contact. Proof that the ex-service grapevine does work yet again. Several members have also called to tell us of other ex-service women in this part of Suffolk who are not members – yet.

Our third meeting is to be held on 24th January 2006 – 2pm – at the Keys, 15 St Marys Plain, Ipswich and we are planning to watch the 1940s film of ATS training called 'The Gentle Sex'. There are plans for an evening meeting to include those members who work during the day. Please contact Liz with suggestions for this.

For information about the branch or other business please call Liz Ives, 01473 327059. We would love to see

any members from other areas or branches and look forward to a successful, and happy first year.

Merry Christmas and a very Happy New year to you all from Suffolk.

PDF Compressor Free Version

Editor: This is excellent news. We all wish Suffolk Branch a successful future and hope that Joan Ambury does not feel too bereft only having Norfolk to contend with!

SUNDERLAND BRANCH

Greetings to all other Branches from Sunderland. Unfortunately this will probably be our last Report as due to falling numbers and lack of volunteers for the Committee it has been agreed that the Branch will close early in the New Year.

Thanks to funding from "Home Front Recall" several of our members were able to attend the NE Reunion held at Millstones and hosted by Harrogate. We all enjoyed ourselves thoroughly – good food, good entertainment and good company – what more could anyone ask for? Jean Wise also met someone she had known while serving in NAAFI in Rheindahlen – her surname then was Armour.

Coventry branch will be sad to learn of the death of one of their former members – Mrs Esther McGill. Esther had been suffering from cancer and, although she had put up a very brave fight, she died very peacefully in a local Hospice where she had been very well looked after. Six of us attended her funeral and formed a Guard of Honour.

On a happier note, the same members attended Gladys and Fred Parkes' Diamond Wedding "surprise" party, organised by their son Peter. I will never go to Heaven as I had to keep a straight face when Gladys was talking about the dinner her Grandchildren were organising for her. Her face was an absolute picture when we all jumped out saying "Surprise".



Fred and Gladys on their Diamond Wedding – 25 August 2005 together with some of the "girls" from Sunderland Branch

Everything is in hand for our Christmas Party which, this year, will all be free. The catering and entertainment have been booked so all that remains is for everyone to have a good time. This will also be our farewell party. Good Luck, God Bless and all the best for the future to all other Branches.

WILMSLOW BRANCH

The members of Wilmslow branch send good wishes to you all.

On July 7th we arrived at our usual hotel for our 11th Birthday Lunch and were horrified to see on the television that three bombs had exploded on the London tube trains and one on a bus. The latter was very close to the hotel where we always stayed when down for the Remembrance Parade. We wondered how it would affect the events in London which would be held on 9 July but we British were not to be deterred and in the event everything went off splendidly.

Unfortunately, our two members who had tickets were very disappointed that personal circumstances prevented them going but I'm sure there will be many reports from other branches which we will be very interested in reading.

We arrived at our September meeting to hear that our secretary had just fallen and broken her arm. It was a nasty break and she was kept in hospital for a while. We are glad to say she is now without the plaster and is having physiotherapy so we hope she soon gets back the full use of her arm.

On 2nd October Wilmslow and District Lions Club arranged a marvellous day in celebration of the 60th anniversary of VJ Day. From 11 am to 2.30 pm and 4 pm to 5.30 pm the Wilmslow High School was open to all. The entrance and the assembly hall were decorated with bunting, tables had been arranged around the walls of the hall and on them were displayed memorabilia from our Branch members, members of the British Legion and other Forces associations. Bands were playing all the time so those who wanted to could dance.

Soup and rolls were served for lunch and afterwards taxis took us to the Parish Church for a Memorial Service. The Lychgate and the path to the door were decorated with bunting and a youth band entertained us until everyone had arrived and entered the church.

The service was taken by the Rt Revd Nigel Stock, Bishop of Stockport. In the congregation were the High Sheriff of Cheshire, the Mayor of Macclesfield and other town dignitaries, members of the British Legion, the Japanese Labour Camp Survivors Assn, Normandy Veterans, The Cheshire Regt Assn Stockport, Martin Bell, Lions Club members and friends. The Sermon was by the Bishop of Stockport who told us about his two uncles who were Japanese Prisoners of War. Both were in Holy Orders but never lost their courage or their faith even though they endured the most appalling treatment. The New Testament Reading was from John 15 v 12-17. There weren't many dry eyes at times during the Service.

Afterwards, taxis took us back to the High School where a delicious afternoon tea was laid on for us. Bands were playing again in the hall and people were dancing. The music was the old time tunes we danced to in our energetic youth! We WRAC Assn girls (girls?) then went home to get changed and ready for the evening.

PDF Compressor Free Version

We had been invited to attend a Dinner in a rather posh hotel along with the other ex-servicemen and special guests. The meal was Roast Beef (of course) and Yorkshire pudding followed by Apple Pie. After the Loyal Toast were the speeches. Martin Bell was very good and a very funny lady comedienne who had been in the ATS and then ENSA followed him.

It was a wonderful day. The members of the Lions Club worked very, very hard. They must have been exhausted but never lost their patience or their friendliness. We cannot speak too highly of them. The following day a letter of thanks was sent to those lovely people.

On 6 November eight of our members attended a Festival of Remembrance at the Stockport Plaza presented by the Ashton on Mersey Showband which was very enjoyable. The Festival's purpose is not to glorify war but to remember the fallen comrades, gallant deeds, lasting friendships and above all to pay our respects. The beneficiaries of this year's Festival will be Broughton House that is a well known local charity providing quality care for severely disabled ex-servicemen.

We will be having our Christmas lunch in December as usual but have chosen a local hotel this time so there will be no problem of arranging transport as some of our members no longer drive. Up to now we have always gone to the same hotel where we are well known. The end of an era for us.

Two of our members have been ill in hospital and are unable to attend meetings. We miss them very much and hope they will soon be well and with us again. We send greetings to Betty Masterman who now lives in Wales but is still one of our members and Joan Broadhurst who lives in Australia and is so kind to us.

We send our best wishes for the year 2006 to you all.

WINCANTON BRANCH

Our Branch has had a full and varied year. We are rather a small Branch but, with a number of willing drivers, we manage to accommodate all our members.

We continue to meet on the 4th Tuesday of each month. Fourteen members attended our April meeting when we heard a most interesting speaker, Mrs Morny Davidson, who is a "visitor" at Felton Young Offenders Prison. Her organisation is to be admired for their dedication in helping the boys not to re-offend when they have served their sentence.

A Garden Party at the home of our President was a great success. Strawberries and cream were served together with delicious cakes made by members. A Coffee Morning held in May was very successful and raised

nearly £170 for funds. We visited Wimborne in Dorset for a summer outing. Travelling by minibus we visited a very interesting Craft Centre, then onto a thatched pub, where a delicious lunch was served. The afternoon was spent exploring the town.

At the AGM, Diana, our Vice-Chairman said she had decided not to seek re-election. She has been on the Committee ever since the branch was formed serving as Vice-Chairman most of that time. We are delighted she will continue to attend Committee Meetings.

A number of us are attending the Remembrance Service with the Parish Church, laying our poppies and remembering those war years which must not be forgotten.

We now look forward to the Christmas Lunch, which will be held in the Dolphin, our favourite hostelry.

Best wishes to all Branches.

WINCHESTER BRANCH

What a hot summer we have just had and we must have picked the hottest day to have our Party in our Secretary's Garden. Members that were able gathered at Hermé's house for what was supposed to be an evening of puzzle solving, gossip and food. Well the puzzle solving soon got ignored in favour of the gossip. It was so hot that even the large amount of food, supplied by Hermé and Sue Westlake was ignored until later in the evening when it did begin to cool off a bit. The wine and beer seemed to go down OK even if it wasn't very cool. Everyone had a small gift bag to go home with and we also had a raffle which raised £19 for branch funds.

In July one of our ATS members, Patricia Pierrepoint, attended the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II in London. Pat made a weekend of it attending the unveiling, visiting the Living Museum and then enjoying the events on Horse Guards on the Sunday.



The usual suspects at the AGM

August saw us hold our AGM at the local Civil Service Club. Members must be getting used to finding the club now as no one seemed to go for an unscheduled trip around the village having missed the turn. Unusually(?) for the branch, gossip yet again took over from Skittles which we all enjoy. The Compressor-Free-Version usual as although the Secretary had prepared an agenda she had forgotten her notes. It's more fun when you have no idea what is going on. Beth agreed to carry on as our Chairman, Hermie agreed to carry on as Secretary and editor of our newsletter and Stella volunteered to take over as Treasurer. Gerry has had to resign as Treasurer prior to her imminent move to live in France. She had decided to stay a member of the branch so we await our invitation to visit her new home. I get the feeling though that any visitor should go armed with at least a paint brush! We once again held a raffle that raised £19, and everyone went home with a prize.

We would normally have a meeting in November, but our chosen venue, the Alresford Chocolate Company, asked if we could visit in October as November was a bit near Christmas for them, so the 14th October was agreed with a limit of 10 people. It soon became apparent that one visit would not be enough as lots more than 10 people wanted to go. We also found out that we had picked the one day of the year when Alresford town is closed off because of their annual fair. It was decided therefore to have 2 visits but the change of dates did mean unfortunately that a number of members who wanted to go could no longer do so a third visit is under discussion for next year. Both visits proved to be very successful, Debbie the chocolate maker, gave a very informative talk about the origins of chocolate and its uses, the difference between dark, milk and white chocolate AND lots of samples to try and buy.



Alison Schofield, Gill Sale, Moggie Gardiner, Cath Cox, Katie, John Schofield and Debbie Carter

WOLVERHAMPTON BRANCH

Wolverhampton Branch continues to have an average of 12 members at each meeting. Since the last report, we had a quiz at one meeting and at another we took along photographs and other memorabilia of our childhood

days. We had a very happy time at the Wales & West Area Reunion held in Shrewsbury in September and congratulate our Area Chairman and Secretary for the excellent arrangements they had made. Also, the members attending the functions in London on 9th & 10th July had a very enjoyable time.

We have again been represented at several local events: in June, the Civic Service and in August the VJ Service and Parade. In November, as usual, the Festival of Remembrance was held. The Secretary, Mary Davies, represented the Branch in the Parade and Mary Beeston gave the Exhortation and the Homily. Also, in November, the Branch was represented at the 11th November Service by the Wolverhampton Cenotaph, and on the 13th at the Remembrance Service in St Peter's Church. Unfortunately no one was able to travel to London this year.

We send our very best wishes to our friends everywhere and hope that 2006 will be a good year for them.

WREXHAM BRANCH

I expect you thought Wrexham had disappeared off the face of the earth. No – we are still here and can't boast about being the strongest branch in the Association. The story goes that the longstanding Secretary, Phyllis Rzesewski, retired some 2 years ago and none of the other remaining branch members wanted to take over. The Area Secretary (Irene Hall) was informed that the members wished to close the Branch. Not wishing the Branch to close, Irene contacted me (Liz Lawrence), I had been a member of the branch for some 12 years but due to the fact I was serving until 1999 and the meetings were held in the afternoons it had been impossible for me to attend. Anyway with one arm halfway up my back I agreed to take it on.

As most of our members could give me the odd 30 years or so we decided we would meet at least once a year to hold our AGM. We have had two very well attended Christmas Dinners, both held close to Wrexham despite the fact the members are as far away as Towyn and Machynlleth.

An informal garden party was held this summer on Sweeney Mountain attended by the Area Vice-Chairman Edith Francis, Irene Hall, Area Secretary and 14 members from all parts of our area. Despite the cool weather we all had a good time with much chat and reminiscing. All the ladies attending were Life Members and had not been to any events before. It is hoped to repeat the event in the summer of 2006. We now hope to recruit members gathering in more of the ex-servicewomen in the area.

Editor: Stop Press – Wrexham Branch has been re-christened to Marches and Mid-Wales so anyone in that area, who currently belongs to Headquarters Branch and would like to transfer to this revived branch, please contact us at Worthy Down – 01962 887478.

Unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II

PDF Compressor Free Version

Editor: Thank you so much for all your letters and photographs about the Unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II, the events on 10 July and other commemorative events held throughout the country. It has been impossible to print them all verbatim. I have had to edit them and I hope I have done that sensitively. What I have done is remove much of the repetition from one article to the other e.g. we all know that Her Majesty The Queen unveiled the Memorial and that Baroness Boothroyd gave the introductory remarks. We should also remember the great amount of work put into this project by Maj (Retd) David Robertson.

More than anything, we will all remember the horrific events on Thursday 7 July. We all wondered how much this would jeopardize the 60th Anniversary events. We should have known better – as many of you said, having been through the War, nothing was going to stop you from attending. Unfortunately, some were prevented from going: not through lack of willingness but because of travel difficulties. However, the majority kept the flag flying and played a full part in the many commemorative events not just in London but throughout the country. Well Done!

MAKING THE MEMORIAL

O J Odley ex-ATS W/274220 1943-46
Long View, Dunnlow Road, Rayne, Braintree,
Essex CM77 6KZ

I wasn't able to attend the unveiling of the Memorial to Women of World War II by HM The Queen on July 9, but I did have the privilege of a private viewing before the monument left Braintree for London. It was made at Art Foundry in my home town. I was very impressed with the building of this great monument and I was able to speak with the men who had the task of working on it. I felt very proud watching the unveiling ceremony on TV and wished I had been there.

I have a friend who was also in the ATS and lives in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. I met her at Glen Parva Training Centre in 1943. We were both posted to Didcot and have been friends ever since. I pass my *Lioness* on to her and she in turn passes it on to her sister in law. The both look forward to reading it, so you see the *Lioness* is a vital part of our Association.

FINALLY IN POSITION



Courtesy of Edna Lee, Greater London Branch

THE ROAD DIGGING PHASE



Preparatory Works – June 05

Courtesy of Mary Davies, Wolverhampton Branch Secretary





PDF Compressor Free Version

Courtesy of Pat Pierrepont, Winchester Branch

Mrs E. M. Sinclair
4 Willow Court, Grand Avenue, Worthing,
West Sussex BN11 5BJ

Words cannot describe how proud I was to be at the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II. Camaraderie with everybody: young police, young soldiers, all had respect for us. We were even given a bottle of water, a lovely programme and a commemorative badge. As I was wearing my AFS and Veteran's badges even people on Victoria Station were chatting to us. I met another member from our ex-Worthing branch and recognised another one in the audience.

A large coincidence – as we were leaving, a young, fairly new, VERY smart female soldier approached us and enquired as to whether we had enjoyed the experience. During basic training she was in the same troop as my friend's granddaughter. Of all the thousands attending, she picked us, AND I had a photo with me. They are both in Logistics.

Apparently the Haslemere Branch does not approve of the Memorial which I am sure is in the minority. We all think it is wonderful to recognise the efforts of all the Women.

At 83 I enjoyed the whole experience and would love to have attended the celebration in Horse Guards Parade the following day. It proves that we still have the old 'war time' spirit, even the young ones outside Buckingham Palace were enthusiastic.

Mrs M. Huxham
Stoney Bottom House, Crossways Road, Grayscott,
Hindhead GU26 6HD

I'm writing to let you know how much I enjoyed attending the Unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II. The weather was kind and the seating was very good. Many of my friends were present, including one I had known since 1942.

I had written to Westminster Planning Department when

the problems about the underground pipes arose and threatened to delay the erection and unveiling of the Monument. They responded to the letter I sent and later confirmed their positive decision. Thank you for contacting me and allocating me a seat on 9th July. It was a very satisfactory, well organised event.

Mrs Josephine Water, née Mells
51 Lodge Road, Fetcham, Surrey KT22 9QY

The unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II was extremely well organised. We were escorted to our seats by Service personnel and given a bottle of water and a veteran's badge. We had plenty of time to talk to each other and to sing the old songs together, remembering the old friendships that we knew.

Baroness Boothroyd made a very impressive speech and I liked the words of the Bishop of London very much.

HM The Queen, who had been a servicewoman herself, and is now our Patron, graced the Service with her presence. On the following day she rode the length of The Mall in an open carriage, just three days after the bomb blast. I can't think of any other leader who would do the same!

Mrs Jessie Low
24 Graham Terrace, Gilmerton, Crieff,
Perthshire PH7 3NB

My daughter and I flew down from Glasgow Airport on Thursday 7th July with the expectation of being met by a lady from SSAFA to take us to the Sanctuary Hotel near Westminster. However, a male taxi driver awaited us at the airport with a large notice 'Mrs Low'. He spoke very little English but we gathered the lady had ordered the taxi because of the bombing which had taken place. Transport was at a standstill, but he drove us through crowds of pedestrians and up back streets before arriving at our hotel about three hours later.



Jessie ready for the unveiling

The following day we strolled along to St James Park. The stands with Wartime Uniforms and machinery brought back many happy memories. Having served in Ack Ack on the south coast I was interested in their mock air-raid with height finders, predictors, spotters and gunners. **PDF Compressor Free Version** it looked as if it was put together like a child's toy. We had lunch in the NAAFI followed by an excellent ENSA show with all the wartime songs.

Saturday was my big day! We walked to Whitehall just after 11 am. We had time to enjoy a coffee with some of the guests. While we were waiting Baroness Boothroyd came out of the gates, smiled and said "Good Morning, Ladies".

A very smart female soldier wearing her medal ribbons of Bosnia and Iraq showed us to our seats. There were also FANYs now called Princess Royal's Volunteer Corps in honour of their Commander in Chief. Our seats were in the front row opposite the Royal Party. When the RAF Band played 'White Cliffs of Dover' Baroness Boothroyd was nudging Vera Lynn. Jimmy Saville was there and went round us all speaking to some. Baroness Boothroyd gave an inspiring speech pointing out that it had taken 60 years to acknowledge the part played by women all over the country.



The RAF Band

Courtesy of Pat Pierrepont, Winchester Branch

The Memorial is a wonderful piece of work showing 17 outfits just as if we had hung up our hats and coats when the war was over. The Queen walked round and we all got a good view and many photos were taken. As it was a special day my daughter took me to a very posh restaurant for dinner called 'The Cinnamon Club'. It had been a library with the gallery still showing old books. The meal was first class.

On Sunday a Special Service was held in Westminster Abbey. We watched the visitors arrive before The Queen and Prince Phillip and returned to the hotel to watch on television. In the afternoon we again visited the Living Museum. It impressed me to see all those old men with rows of medals on their blazers. We watched the concert with The Queen on Horse Guards Parade on a large screen in the NAAFI grounds, which was amazing. When 'God Save The Queen' was played everyone stood to attention.

Monday morning came all too quickly when the lady from SSAFA did arrive to take us by taxi to the airport. She drove us all around Buckingham Palace pointing out places of interest, down Oxford Street with all the wonderful shops before arriving at Heathrow.

I was very privileged to have been able to go and to represent Tayside Branch.

Mrs E Hall

354 Louse Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 9TT

I was pleased to be at the Unveiling of a memorial to all women in each Armed Service and Civilian organisations to recognise their part in defending Britain against Nazi invasion and freeing Europe of the Hitler menace of subjugation for all, with special dire threats against Britain for daring to defend itself.

We travelled up to London by train to Victoria and bus to Parliament Square. Whitehall was closed to traffic – as also was The Mall, because of our seating. Young Service Personnel and volunteer FANYs whose organisation started before the First World War as Ambulance Drivers and First Aid escorted us to our seats. They had been helping all the day before with the bombing casualties.

Near us, just at the end of the front row, arrived a very elderly lady in a wheelchair. This row was reserved for special "Medallists". The Press came and interviewed her and various people visited her. We discovered later that she was 92 and had been known to the Gestapo as "The White Mouse" – the most decorated woman in the War. She looked very frail. Her name is Nancy Wake and she was born in Roseneath, Wellington, New Zealand on 30 August 1912. She married twice. Nancy Wake was awarded the George Medal from Britain for her leadership and bravery under fire, the Resistance Medal, Officer of the Legion d'Honneur and Croix de Guerre with two bronze palms and a silver star from France, and the Medal of Freedom from America. Nancy Wake lives in England having come back to England on 6 December 2001. She lives in a London Hotel.

The Queen walked through a Guard of Honour of female Royal Horse Artillery, dressed in black with knee-boots and sabres, gold braided tunics and black head-gear. Very smart and all extremely slim. I wished I had photographed them, but of course we all stood up, and heads were in the way.

W/32892 May Kirby

119 Westcott Street, Hull HU8 8LZ

I felt very honoured that I should be so lucky to get an invitation to the unveiling. When the envelope dropped on the mat my relatives started immediately to arrange how to get me there as I was just out of hospital. They had to organise a wheelchair and then transport and accommodation.

After further hospital treatment I was discharged on the evening of 6th July. When I received the devastating news the following morning of the happenings in London

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

PDF Compressor Free Version

To the General Secretary
The WRAC Association
AGC Centre, Worthy Down,
Winchester, Hampshire
SO21 2RG



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 October

Date: Signature:

All cheques must be in **sterling** and made payable to "**The WRAC Association**"

Subscriptions include *Lioness*

Overseas members are asked to contribute an extra £3.50 a year to cover postage of *Lioness*

Please complete this form in **BLOCK LETTERS**

ATS/WRAC/TAVR Army Number: Last Rank Held:
(Present Rank if still serving)

Miss/Mrs/Ms: Surname:

Given Names:

Surname when serving: Date of Birth:

Address for Correspondence:

.....

.....

Post Code: E-mail: Telephone No:

Units during service:

Date of Enrolment:..... Date of Release:

Decorations:

**GIFT AID DONATIONS IN RESPECT OF
THE WRAC ASSOCIATION
(Reg No 206184)
including
THE ATS AND WRAC BENEVOLENT
FUND**

Since 6 April 2000, Deeds of Covenant have been replaced by Gift Aid as means of giving to charity.

- If you are a UK Taxpayer, you can make a Gift Aid Declaration when you make a donation to charity. By making such a declaration, the receiving charity can reclaim any tax you have paid on your donation. This will give the Association or the Benevolent Fund an extra 28p for every £1 you donate.
- Gift Aid Declarations may be written or given orally over the telephone.
- If your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income and/or capital gains at least equal in amount to the tax that the charity reclaims, you should cancel your declaration.
- You can cancel the declaration at any time simply by notifying us that you wish to do so. If an oral declaration is cancelled within 30 days from the date on which written confirmation is sent, it will be as if the oral declaration had never been made.
- If you are a high rate taxpayer, you can claim further tax relief in your Self-Assessment Tax Return.
- If you are unsure whether or not your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief, please contact the Association HQ on 01962 887570 or ask your local tax office for leaflet IR 113 Gift Aid.
- Please notify the Association HQ of any change of address.

Release of Service Records

Under the terms of the Data Protection Act, 1988, MoD are required to release Service Records including medical records to certain entitled people. These are:

- The ex-Serviceman/woman to whom the information belongs
- The widow/widower of a deceased ex-Serviceman/woman
- The legal next of kin, if both the ex-Service person and their spouse is deceased

In all normal cases the service is free. Details are available at www.veteransagency.mod.uk in the 'Service Records' section. The application form and procedures can be downloaded. Or call the Helpline on 0800 169 2277. MoD is required to satisfy your request within 40 calendar days.

Means Tested Benefit

Recently released Government figures reveal an alarming national picture – a massive £2 billion worth of means tested benefit was left unclaimed by pensioners throughout the UK during 2000/2001. The benefit being left unclaimed by older people is contributing to their financial hardship and poverty. A new user-friendly guide entitled "Can You Claim It" has been produced.

Copies can be obtained by sending a 34p SAE to:

Information Team
Help the Aged
207-221 Pentonville Road
London
N1 9UZ

WRAC OFFICERS' DINING CLUB
PDF Compressor Free Version
ANNUAL LUNCHEON 2006

The annual Officers' Luncheon will take place in the Officers' Mess of the AGC Centre at Worthy Down on Saturday 20 May 2006.

Please send applications together with a Cheque for £20 made payable to WRAC Association by 5 May 2006.

To: WRAC Association
AGC Centre
Worthy Down
Winchester SO21 2RG

I would like to attend the annual Officers' Luncheon on Saturday 20 May 2006 and enclose a cheque to the value of £20.00

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

* I will/will not be travelling by car

My car details are:

Make and Model:

Colour:

Registration No:

THE PASSING OF COMMON SENSE

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Mr Common Sense. Mr Sense had been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm and that life isn't always fair. Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting strategies (adults, not kids, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Mr Sense declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer aspirin to a student but could not inform the parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense finally gave up the ghost after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a bit in her lap and was awarded a huge financial settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason. Two stepbrothers, My Rights and Ima Whiner survive him.

Not many attended his funeral because so few realised he was gone. If you still remember him, pass this on.

WHAT GENDER IS A COMPUTER?

A Spanish Teacher was explaining to her class that, in Spanish, unlike English, nouns are designated as either masculine or feminine. "House" for instance, is feminine: "la casa." "Pencil," however, is masculine: "el lapis".

A student asked, "What gender is 'Computer'?" Instead of giving the answer, the teacher split the class into two groups, male and female, and asked them to decide from themselves whether "computer" should be a masculine or a feminine noun. Each group was asked to give four reasons for its recommendation.

The men's group decided that "computer" should definitely be Feminine ("la computer"), because:

1. No one but their creator understands their internal logic;
2. The native language they use to communicate with other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else;
3. Even the smallest mistakes are stored in long term memory for possible later retrieval; and
4. As soon as you make a commitment to one you find yourself spending half your pay cheque on accessories for it.

The women's group, however, concluded that computer should be Masculine ("el computer"), because:

1. In order to do anything with them, you have to turn them on;
2. They have a lot of data but still can't think for themselves;
3. They are supposed to help you solve problems, but half the time they ARE the problem; and
4. As soon as you commit to one, you realise that if you had waited a little longer, you could have got a better model!

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for next year are due for payment on 01 October 2006

Members of Headquarter Branch should send their subscription together with their membership card and SAE to:

WRAC Association
AGC Centre
Worthy Down
Winchester
SO21 2RG

WRAC SWEATSHIRTS FOR SALE

Bottle Green Sweatshirts, Polo shirts
and T-shirts embroidered with the
WRAC badge

Sizes 36 — 46

Other colours available

Also
Knitted WRAC Dolls

Price list and further information from:
**Miss B P Butcher, 15 Westwood Drive,
Swanpool, Lincoln. Tel: 01522 878413**

OVERSEAS PAYMENTS

Please note that in future, all payments for subscriptions, postage and memorabilia will only be accepted in Sterling. Please ask your bank for a Money Order or Sterling Cheque.

We regret to have to impose this restriction, but due to the vagaries of exchange rates, the majority of overseas payments fall significantly short of the amount due.

WRAC NATIONAL REGISTER

Are you interested in trying to find
old friends?

Did you serve/enlist between 1949
and 1992?

Why not join the WRAC National
Register?

Contact:
E Ann Butler-Deakin
14 Ash Rise, Moss Pit, Stafford ST17 9HE
Tel: 01785 249992

I could hardly take it in. My niece who was to accompany me to London was waiting for news of her two sons who live there. It was a relief to hear that one had already got to work and the other was at home.

We then heard the **PDF Compressor Free Version** cancelled as the hotel we should have used was the Holiday Inn, Russell Square. We were also told they were not issuing rail tickets on the Saturday... I almost gave up in despair.

We were eventually lucky enough to get rail tickets for the 10 am train on the Saturday. I didn't think it could possibly get us there on time. My great nephew, who was to be my carer, was already waiting on Kings Cross Station. After a taxi ride and a dash down Whitehall we just made the deadline of 2 20 pm!



Waiting to cross the road into Whitehall

It was a most enjoyable afternoon and a moving ceremony. After the unveiling I was taken closer to the Monument where photographs were being taken. Several came and asked if they could take my photo, I agreed but regret I did not ask who they were. **If any member happens to know who they were I should dearly like a photograph.** I am the 85 year old in a wheelchair and wearing a large pink hat. They couldn't mistake me: it was the hat that did it.

We then moved on to the Pillared Hall in MOD to attend the reception. We saw Sir Jimmy Saville and I was pleased to shake hands with Baroness Thatcher. On leaving the unveiling ceremony I joined up with my relatives at the Living Museum.

What a wonderful experience in the short time I had there. A presenter from the BBC asked me for an interview and I understand it was on Radio Humberside on the Sunday morning but I was still in London. We could have done with longer at the Living Museum but we had to cram so much into our weekend.



Moy with her great nephew directly behind her

Sunday found us at the side of the Thames. My relatives thought it was far too packed to attempt to take a wheelchair into The Mall. It was a scorching hot day. We stood on a bridge and watched the planes come over and drop the poppies.

I finished the day by being taken on the London Eye.

Miss M Morley

42 Bateman Close, Barking, Essex IG11 8QR

On July 9th 2005 it was my pleasure to attend the unveiling and then attend the Reception afterwards in the Pillared Hall, MOD. It was a brave and wonderful afternoon and very well attended considering the suicide bombing two days before - but us old ladies are made of stern stuff!



Miss Morley at the Memorial

The reception was excellent. Wine or Champagne, sandwiches, quiche, sausages, chicken various dips and well looked after by eager and cheerful young people. I actually met, shook hands with and chatted with The Queen, a truly gracious lady. As we were both drivers in the ATS we had something in common!

I spent almost four years in the ATS and had an interesting and at times an exciting time. For most of the time I was attached to 920 MT WO. We moved around a

Not mainly because our hillers kept being bombed: Kensington, Chelsea, Sloane Square. We were in Regent's Park Barracks at one time and could hear the lions roaring in the zoo. I was driving Humbers mostly and met many interesting people in my cars. Aneurin Bevan, Lord Alton of Liverpool. I was in the car when we were moved out of London for a rest and I went down to Devon and Cornwall and celebrated VE day on Plymouth Sound with the Navy!!



W/270401 Pte Morley - Driver

I remember my days in the ATS with great affection and pride. I still have two friends whom I met during that time. One of them married General Wingate's driver who narrowly missed travelling with the General when he was killed.

Kay Gardner Bergl
381 I U Willets Road, Roslyn Heights,
New York 11577, USA

I flew all the way from New York to attend the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II.

When the news of the terrorist attacks came in I wondered if I should cancel. Of course I decided to go ahead, having survived bombings in London when I served in the ATS Signals Division of the War Office in Whitehall. Once in London I found the city oddly normal and the event I attended was a tremendous success. I left with feelings of great admiration for the people of London, my former home.

Mrs N N Orbell
44 Baker Road, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 5LW

Attending the unveiling was truly a great treat for me. I have never been so close to our Queen. The most shocking events on July 7th seemed above everything to bring out the friendliness of everyone and the orderly simplicity of our arriving on the reservation area was unbelievable. To be among so many compatriots was incredible.

However, when it came to realising the absolute size of this Memorial, no wonder the water pipes gave the City of Westminster Planning Dept a few headaches. It was tremendous and the gleaming bronze images are beautiful. To be part of that was just overwhelming.



Courtesy of Pat Pierrepoint, Winchester Branch

I was delighted to see on Page 25 of the last *Lioness* something seldom mentioned and that was reference to ATS "Y" Wing. After my initial training at Queen Ethelburga's Boarding School, I was eventually posted to 7 Div Signals at Shenley in Hertfordshire as 5 ATS "Y" Wing.

Mrs Rane V K Thompson, née Strachan W/76176
Vila 147, the Village Glen, 335 Eastbourne Road,
West Rosebud, Victoria 3490, Australia

In 1998 whilst attending Ask Ask Command Reunion at Imphal Barracks, York, Major David Robertson suggested that a Memorial to The Women of World War II should be erected. I made a small donation and waited 7 years for this to come to fruition.



Ranee Thompson

Once definite plans were confirmed, Miss I Bray (Teddie) Secretary of the Portsmouth Branch of which I have been a Life Member since 1981, as well as being a Life member of ATS Members of AA Command RA Association since 1996, put my name forward along with 4 other members of that Branch to attend the unveiling. I was thrilled to receive an invitation to attend. Soon after 12pm on 9 July

Teddie and I took our seats, third front row facing the Memorial, opposite the seating arrangement for HM The Queen and VIPs. We were able to see the unveiling on a large screen set above head height.

PDF Compressor Free Version



Miss Imogen (Teddie) Bray, Secretary of Portsmouth Branch

My granddaughter Samantha, who is Australian and working in London, stood in the unrestricted area, amongst a large crowd. Samantha found us after the ceremony and joined Teddie and I for a late lunch at a nearby Pub, after which we travelled by tube to our destinations.

I received my Service Records from APC Glasgow last year and my Veterans Badge. At 85 years of age, I am proud of my achievements. I have also renewed my British Passport free this year!

Patricia Pierrepont, Winchester Branch



It was a beautiful sunny day and the very smart Band of the Royal Air Force, who played the old wartime songs, entertained us. We all joined in and were very surprised that we remembered the words! I noticed Sir Jimmy Saville was sitting opposite me. He was singing with great gusto and also knew all the words! He was singing

beside three senior women officers, from each of the three services and it appeared he was keeping them highly entertained. Only later did I discover that he was one of the principal donors and supporters of the Memorial Fund. (Editor: His sister was in the ATS!)

The Queen arrived, accompanied by Baroness Betty Boothroyd and after the National Anthem, there was a fly past of helicopters crewed by women from the three services and two Tornados, also crewed by women – well done the girls!

We sang Jerusalem and then the Dedication and Prayers were led by the Bishop of London, who thanked all those who took part in the struggle for freedom – especially the women of World War II. There were also dedications from Her Majesty The Queen and Baroness Boothroyd. The Queen and Betty Boothroyd, with their military escort, spent time examining the Memorial. Then, to our delight, Her Majesty went walk-about through us all – stopping and chatting with the crowd. We were so surprised at how happy and relaxed she appeared – she really seemed to be so at home amongst us all. When an ex-ATS said to her "Thank you for joining the ATS", she replied rather quizzically, "Not for long!"

By now we were all going walk-about giving us a chance to meet and chat to one another. A 92-year-old Army Nursing Sister told me about serving in North Africa and wore her Africa Star with pride. Sitting behind me was Doreen Peters 531 Bty, a plotting officer, who had been stationed at Wilreik near Antwerp, where my Bty was stationed in 1944 and we shared memories of VIs and V2's. I also met three jolly Land Army girls who were in the Lumber Corps, felling trees and building roads. Other ATS girls I met (we all felt like girls again!) had been drivers, GI Operators and many more – it was a lovely party atmosphere.

Many people have had their say about the Memorial itself but in my mind this is a wonderful monument. It is very impressive in reality – both in position and in its creation. Placed as it is in Whitehall, close to the Cenotaph, no photographs do it justice. Cast in solid bronze, 22ft high, it depicts 17 uniforms and working clothes worn by women during WW2. It is very emotive – in all, an expression of recognition and thanks, not only to those who died but also to those who took part in whatever capacity.



Baroness Betty Boothroyd, who has worked so hard as Patron of the Memorial Fund, even appeared on 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire', raising £8,000 to boost the charity. She said, "This monument is dedicated to all the women who served our country and the cause of freedom, in uniform or in civilian clothes. The future generations who pass this way, will ask themselves, What sort of women were they? and look at our history for the answer".

PDF Compressor Free Version

My daughter and I visited St James Park. Various museums – The Tank Museum, Bletchley Park Trust (the decoders), the Post Office, Air Force Museum and many more – presented small exhibitions where veterans and young service personnel were available to answer questions and talk over the part their service had played in WWII.

There was a good anti-aircraft display with a Bofors Gun in a sand-bagged position with a re-enactor operator explaining its uses. This certainly stirred up memories for me, as did the only working example of a WWII searchlight in existence!

Re-enactors manned an Ack-Ack Command Post and Field Kitchens were producing WWII recipes – we didn't stay to try the results! Round the corner was Monty's Rolls Royce which had been landed at Juno Beach, Normandy of June 9, 1944, just 3 days after the start of D-Day. This was the first civilian vehicle to land in France. The Royal Signals exhibited training films teaching the art of espionage and displayed the suitcase radios taken to France by SOE agents such as Odette and Violet Szabo.

What a wonderful day, full of memories, fun, chat and a feeling of being amongst old friends. 2006 will stay with me for many a long day.

Mrs Vera Denning née Skinner W/108112
19 St Annes Road, Claines, Worcester WR3 7PG

What a wonderful day, at 83 years old, the story seems to be told now. I am enclosing a copy of the Claines Royal British Legion Magazine which published the following about my day:

"Approximately 1000 women were invited but Vera was one of the lucky 500 who was also invited to the champagne reception held afterwards at MOD. The Queen was circulating, talking to guests during the reception and Vera



Vera in uniform

was lucky enough to speak very briefly to her. Vera told The Queen how pleased she was to meet her and that she had a friend in Alberta (where The Queen has recently visited) but the appalling weather had prevented her friend going to see her. Vera returned to Worcester the same day. It was a very memorable day out!"



Vera at the Monument

Rosina Lock, Canterbury Branch

Six of us from Canterbury Branch, some travelling by coach and others by train, dressed in our green Association uniforms, met at Victoria Station. We were looking very smart with gleaming medals and shiny shoes proving that elbow grease still works wonders.

As we stood there a taxi pulled up and was immediately commandeered by Doreen our Vice Chairman, and off we went to the Victory Services Club. On the way the driver gave us a commentary including the impressive memorial to the animals who also served in the War! On arrival, although the meter had ticked on relentlessly, the driver only asked for a fiver, which was the start of the way we were treated all day. So it was a cup of coffee and wash and brush up before we had to set off for Whitehall driven this time by a young taxi driver who on arrival said, "Have this one on me with many thanks for what you did".

The ceremony was beautiful and the fly past by five helicopters and two Tornados, piloted by women of the RAF was very impressive. Her Majesty went on a walkabout and spoke to many ex-servicewomen. Those who were going to tea with The Queen left us and we spent some time taking photographs and posing for some

cool! It was the uniform that did it! At last we tried to make our way back along Whitehall and young people with questions and thanks stopped and thanked us for our war work. People from many nations spoke to us and we were amused when some Americans asked if we had known their **PDF Compressor Free Version**

Soon we were back at Victoria Station with one last cup of coffee before the journey home. A young man followed us into the café saying, "Whatever you want it's on me!" Truly a day to remember with so much love and kindness from everyone.

Jean Eastham, Blackpool Branch

Maureen (Moj) Royle and I were thrilled to receive two tickets. We were off to London to see The Queen! Arriving in London by train we caught a London bus, in defiance, to Whitehall. Having come through the Blitz and other hardships we still have the spirit to carry on.



L-r: Joan Eastham, née Hart and Maureen Royle

The Memorial is very impressive but we, like many others, could not distinguish the Services. We finished up with a good singsong accompanied by the RAF Band and a wonderful fly past by women pilots of Tornados and helicopters. What a proud day! Thanks to the taxi driver who refused to take our fares! Let the women come forward.

Rosa Minks, née Byrom and Doris Wallington née Holmes Chester Branch

As friends who only met 13 years ago, we discovered that we had both trained at the Welsh Fusiliers camp in Wrexham within a month of each other in 1942. Our paths then divided, so we were thrilled to both receive invitations to the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II. We are both in our 80s and live in North England, but were determined to be there. We booked the coach and Hotel (the Strand Palace) through National Express and planned to spend 4 nights in

London. Then the search was on for suitable outfits. The hats were the problem! Although not compulsory, we felt that we would need them in case it was windy or – horrors – raining. As we are both quite small, we looked like mushrooms in large brimmed hats but eventually we found suitable ones and were glad of them to shield our heads from the glorious sunshine.

Saturday July 9th dawned warm and sunny and you could feel the festive mood. If Her Majesty The Queen was willing to carry on in spite of terrorists' threats, so were we. We spent the waiting time taking photos of the scene and singing to the RAF Band. The flypast of helicopters piloted by women got a special cheer from us. The Memorial was more impressive than we had expected and we understood that it honoured the women who undertook jobs not normally expected of them so that men could be released to fight and at the end of the war they had gratefully hung up their coats and uniforms to return to civilian life.

At 3 o'clock the Rt Hon Baroness Boothroyd of Sandwell OM PC, dressed in turquoise and black, welcomed HM The Queen who looked lovely in green and peach. After the moving dedication and prayers given by the Bishop of London, HM The Queen unveiled the Memorial. Afterwards she moved unstintingly among us, shaking hands and speaking to us, a truly memorable experience.

We then visited the Living Museum in St James's Park and went to have another look at the Memorial which was now accessible to the general public. We were amused to be asked by numerous people including tourists, questions about the war including "had we carried guns and had we shot anyone?" They also wanted to know what the food had been like and what had been missing. We easily answered – Bananas, chocolates and cream cakes! We felt like celebrities.

Next day was Sunday and we met lots of ex-servicemen and women who were taking part in the Victory Parade. The sun still shone and the comradeship was visible everywhere. We wouldn't have missed it for the world.



Mrs Rosa Minks née Byrom, W/208731 and Mrs Doris Wallington née Holmes, W/179847

Mrs Josephine Waters, W/111378 Cpl Mills J
51 Lodge Road, Felcham, Surrey KT22 9QY

I was fortunate enough to be invited to the unveiling of the Moment to Women of World War II. It was a wonderful occasion and I am missing it as I should feel lonely not having anyone with me (I am not disabled) but there was a wonderful warmth and we all talked and laughed and sang together and greatly enjoyed each other's company.

The speeches of Baroness Boothby and the Bishop of London were both very appropriate and interesting. It was a very good idea to have a video showing all the different kinds of work the women did.

Sir Jimmy Saville came and made himself known to the various groups. Altogether a great day to remember a long time.

The Vice President was also at the unveiling as the following photographs show!



With Rosetta Zurovick nee Brewer



With Baroness Boothroyd and Sir Jimmy Saville. Thanks again to Edna Lee.

Events to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of World War II

PDF Compressor Free Version

Mrs Myra Reavley, née Nicholson W117400
18 Stanhope Close, Spennymoor, Co-Durham DL16 6LZ

I was delighted and considered it a great honour to attend Westminster Abbey on 10th July. My daughter, Jennifer, accompanied me and we spent an unforgettable 2 days in London. I have already spoken of our wonderful experience to my Women's Group at Church with Jennifer, wearing our complete outfits that we wore for the great occasion.



Myra and Jennifer

A photograph is enclosed, taken in St James's Park with Buckingham Palace in the background. The Service in the Abbey had an atmosphere of great joy and thanksgiving, of being together and sharing some wonderful and inspiring moments. There was also great sadness as prayers were said for the victims of the bombings which had taken place just 2 days previously.

There were 2000 in the congregation including Her Majesty The Queen and several members of The Royal Family who were sitting quite near to us. I wonder how many of my friends from ATS were there, if any?

After the Service we viewed the Memorial to the Women

of World War II and then, as we made our way to the Veterans Village in St James Park, we encountered the concert. We sat beside a Chelsea Pensioner under the shade of a tree watching the excellent entertainment, via huge TV screens.



Chelsea Pensioner and Myra

The concert was in Horse Guards Parade where we again saw The Queen and other members of the Royal Family arrive and depart. We were sorry to see many of the audience being wheeled out of the arena due to the excessive heat of the sun.

Eventually we arrived at the Living Museum along with some 90,000 visitors and I was able to show Jennifer some examples of how we lived during the War Years. Before returning to our Hotel at West India Dock we went to Trafalgar Square and saw the 115,000 Victory Flags (one was mine) flying proudly over the square; a most impressive sight and a generous one to Churchill's 'Unknown Warriors'.

I also received my Veterans Brooch thanks to Mrs Maisie Waggott, who keeps me up to date with all the news in your magazines. She is a wonderful lady who I greatly admire.

I joined the ATS late in 1941 and reporting for training at Penicuik, Scotland then posted to Fenham Barracks, Newcastle upon Tyne (Home of the Northumberland Fusiliers) kitting out new intakes of girls. In 1943 I was posted to RAOC, Donnington, Shropshire where I was promoted to Corporal and enjoyed my work attached to the Accountancy Section in the Depot. I worked there for 3 years together with 11 other girls where our home was a semi detached house; 13 Church Walk, and the photo enclosed was taken outside my room. I am on the left and the 3 girls who shared the room opposite to me are Lily, Nellie and Mary.



Mary, Nellie, Lily, Myra

Mrs E Powles
30 Vale Square, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 9DB



To my utter surprise I received an invitation to Luncheon at Buckingham Palace. There were 2,000 of us in the marquee and each one was allowed to take a carer. I took my niece. The Queen looked lovely in yellow, the Duke was in Naval uniform with all his medals. They walked in one side of the marquee, had lunch in the middle and walked out the far side so everyone had an opportunity to see her.

The lunch was lovely and we had Salmon with Herb Mayonnaise, Salad with Peas, Tomatoes and Asparagus and New Potatoes. For pudding we had Gooseberry Shortbread followed by Coffee.

Mrs Doreen Hill née Durose W/15207
and 238025

16 Priory Court, Priory Gardens, Wellington,
Somerset TA21 9HB

I am a member of the Royal Corps of Signals Association and attend their meetings at Exmouth. One evening I was asked if I'd like my name to go forward into the draw for tickets to attend a luncheon to meet The Queen during the forthcoming commemorations of the 60th Anniversary of the end of WWII. Of course I jumped at the opportunity. You can imagine my feelings when I was told that I was one of the lucky ones!

I was asked if I would like to have an escort, and my thoughts immediately turned to my son Roderic, who is a petrologist living in Whitehorse in the Yukon. He agreed at once to fly over to accompany me, saying that he'd just had his only suit cleaned, and would it 'do'. Then of course I started to wonder what I should wear, and decided I should have a new suit. This is where my daughter came in. Gillian is a super dressmaker, but it was decided that I'd buy a new rig-out and Gillian would search online to find me a hat to go with it. Finally I had assembled suit, hat shoes and gloves, and all met with her approval.

Next came the travel arrangements. Rod arrived from Canada a few days beforehand, ready to travel up to London with me. I had booked rooms for the weekend at the Victory Services Club where I had stayed several times before when attending meetings.

On the day before the luncheon Rod and I caught the train from Taunton and arrived at the club to find there was a dinner party that evening. We joined in of course, and wore big hats covered with Union Flags. It was very jolly.

Then at last came the day. Rod and I took a taxi from the club to Buckingham Palace. Many roads were closed because of the dreadful events that had taken place three days before, so we arrived slightly later than we'd planned, but luckily we weren't too late. At the Palace we showed our invitations and passports to prove our identity and were shown in the front door and through the Palace to the Gardens. There was a huge marquee into which we were ushered and shown to our table which was for the Royal Corps of Signals.

Very soon we stood up as The Queen and other members of the Royal Party arrived and took their places. The Queen wore a very smart outfit of bright gold that made her look so very young. The meal was delicious and just right for such a very hot day. It was lovely. If I looked to my left I could see The Queen just two tables away and if I looked to my right there was Prince Andrew. The time passed very quickly, and soon the Queen said a few words of welcome and invited us to spend a couple of hours in the garden while she and the rest of the Royal Party moved off to continue their duties elsewhere.

Rod and I crossed the lawns and sat under the trees for a while, the heat being quite severe. I waited while Rod took some photographs. A lady walked towards me, and when she came alongside, we both cried 'snap!' Our outfits were exactly the same! When the time came to leave the Palace grounds we walked across to St James' Park and sat for a while listening to the music from the concert in Horse Guards. There were no seats, so we ended up sitting on the ground.

The time came to return to the Palace to watch the flypast of the wartime planes. It was really exciting when we could see the million poppies coming down towards us. I missed them of course, but a young girl beside me at the Palace railings grabbed a handful and insisted that I should have hers.

Then it was all over and it was time to go. The taxis had

all disappeared of course, so I was glad of the arm of my dear son as we started walking very slowly, before finally finding a cab to take us back to the club.

What a wonderful day!

PDF Compressor Free Version

Mrs Lucy (Gladys) Collins, née Ingram
W/226675

43 Hodder Avenue, Peacehaven, E Sussex BN10 7PH



Wedding day 13 April 1946



Buckingham Palace 10 July 2005

I joined the ATS on 15th September 1942, and after training at Pontefract, I was posted to Oswestry for training on GL. From there I joined 602 Battery, 185 IAA Regt, in Northern Ireland. From there to Hayling Island where I volunteered for overseas in 1944, and joined a gun site in Belgium, where I met my husband who was in RMLE and out of the lines on rest. On the war ending I was posted to Potsdam in Berlin. Ian and I only met 5 times when we got married on 13th April 1946. As you can see we were very fortunate to be picked to go to lunch at Buckingham Palace on 10th July 2005.

LEICS AND NOTTS BRANCH VISIT - LONDON

Barbara Dancer, Joan De Vall, Vi Rawlins and Sheila
Grewcock ex-ATS
Leics/Notts Branch



Vi, Sheila, Barbara, Joan at the Memorial

The date is 7th July and three of my friends and myself are preparing for our trip to London to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the end of WW II. I phoned one of them to ask how she is coping – she is just putting the finishing touches to her packing, but says to put on the TV and when I do, I am horrified at the scene that appears. London our capital, is under attack from suicide bombers, and I felt that our visit must be cancelled. But with true British grit, and never forgetting the tragedy that is taking place, our weekend goes ahead.

On the following day, the four of us with big lottery funding, make our way to London by train and on to our hotel. After settling in, and having a meal, we set off for St James Park to visit the displays. It is all very interesting, and as we come to the NAAFL we call in for a cuppa and a chat. We pass an ENSA show, take part in an air raid (again), watch an enactment of ATS girls manning a gun site (40s enthusiasts), and then I see an Army Post Office. I stop for a chat and am told that there is another APO a little further on. There is so much to see but we do find it and we all have a chat about how much has changed since I sorted mail for our forces overseas at the Home Postal Centre in Nottingham back in the 40s. Jackie, the female Sergeant was really pleased to talk to someone from back then. I do believe she thought that we had all gone to that great white sorting

office in the sky. However, it was a lovely start to our time there.



The Leics/Notts (4) plus a postal worker Sgt Jackie of today's Army Post Office, RK



*A proud moment in St James Park
Ex ATS Cook (Vt) (Medical) Ex ATS Barbara Army
Postal (RE) and Ex ATS Joan Ack-Arb (RA)*

The following day dawned bright and sunny, and we had invites to the unveiling of the Memorial to Women of WW II. That all went off very smoothly – Betty Boothroyd was a wonderful speaker and Queen Elizabeth looked very nice indeed, and seemed to enjoy the occasion. We thought the flypast of helicopters all piloted by women was a very nice touch. After the formalities, we were asked to pose for a great many photos in front of the Memorial for visitors from other countries. I could imagine that on showing the photos to people back home, on being asked who the ladies in uniform were, the answer would be "I don't know, but they looked the part!" Vera Lynn and Jimmy Saville waved to us, but the highlight of the afternoon was when our very own Lt Col Sue Westlake came to speak to us, and oh Ma'am how we have all regretted the fact that we lost the opportunity to have our photo taken with you. Otherwise it was another great day.

We don't know what to say about our afternoon at Horse Guards Parade. We were well looked after by members of today's forces, the entertainment was first class, and a

good time was had by all. I am sure that the Royals enjoyed it too – you could tell. As Her Majesty and the Duke travelled by in the very open Land Rover, they seemed to be defying security along with the good natured crowds doing the unhurried walk behind the police horses down The Mall. Then came the fly past and the poppy drop, the cheering crowds, the appearances of the Royal Family on the balcony, (they seemed to get most of the petals!) We were sorry when it was over.

All that is left to say is Thank You London – in your sorrow you did us proud, and we grieve with you for those who were hurt and for those that were lost. Truly a weekend to remember.

**Mrs Suzanne Gordon (ex 445 Bty 129
Mixed HAA Regt and
531 Bty 155 Mixed HAA Regiment)
15 St Lawrence Close, Stratford-sub-Castle,
Salisbury SP1 3LW**

National Commemoration week took place from 4 July – 10 July 2005, in St James' Park, London. The commemoration ended with a Service of Prayer and Thanksgiving in Westminster Abbey, led by HM The Queen, on Sunday, 10 July. Through the WRAC/ATS Association, my husband and I were lucky enough to receive tickets for the Service in the Abbey.

We decided to spend the weekend at Roy's Club and arrived there at mid-day on the Saturday. London was in a state of full alert having experienced the terrible bombings of three underground stations and the No 30 bus at Tavistock Square. Leaving Roy at his club I set off on a No 9 bus for Trafalgar Square to watch the unveiling of the Memorial to Women of World War II. Just as the bus reached Trafalgar Square there was a loud bang at the rear. An eerie silence followed until it was realised a car had hit the bus!

Whitehall was closed to traffic so I walked up the road. I had no ticket for the ceremony but a kind policeman directed me to a bus shelter where I could sit and watch the arrival of The Queen and Betty Boothroyd. The Memorial is now affectionately known to some as the 'coathanger' because of the many uniforms, both military and civilian, which adorn the monument.

The next day, Sunday, we were up at 7.30 for an early breakfast. The Club was full of elderly veterans like ourselves. A coach had been booked to take us to Westminster Abbey and we left at 9.30. The bells of the Abbey were ringing when we arrived. It was a glorious sunny morning with ladies in their hats and best dresses, the chaps were in suits or uniforms; all wore medals. We had to submit to security checks and to prove our identities; following which we went through metal detector screening. I set off the alarm bells! Embarrassed, I asked if my medals were the cause. 'No' said the policeman; 'It is your bra, Madam!' We were shown to our seats just inside the Great West Door.

Before the service began we were regaled by the music of J S Bach, Marcel Dupré and Elgar. The dignitaries began to arrive. The Speaker of the House of Commons,



Sgt Ldr R W Gordon and Mrs Suzanne Gordon

the Prime Minister, the Lord Chancellor followed by clergy of Her Majesty's Forces; members of the Royal Family. A fanfare was then sounded to announce the arrival of The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh. Her Majesty, looking lovely in a yellow ensemble, placed flowers on a stone commemorating all who died in the course of the war; she was assisted by two children whose great grandmother served as a Land girl and whose grandfather fought in the D-Day landings of 1944.

Various readings followed. Excerpts of wartime newsreels were displayed on screens in the nave. In silence, seven Books of Remembrance listing the names of all British civilians killed in WW II were placed on the altar. The word of God was read by Andrea Catherwood: JOSHUA 4 : 1-9, 19-24. The address was given by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Duke of Edinburgh read the Gospel: MATTHEW 5 : 3-16 Blessed are the poor in spirit... The Choir sang the Anthem: The light of the Lord. This was followed by the Prayer, the Thanksgiving and the Act of Commitment by the Dean: We will honour their memory... Finally, the Blessing was given by the Dean of Westminster, Dr Wesley Carr, a fanfare was sounded and we stood to sing the National Anthem.

As the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were conducted to the Great West Door, the bells of the abbey were fired (struck simultaneously) a technique used on occasions of great celebration. This had been done on both 8 May and 15 August, 1945, to celebrate the end of the war in Europe and Japan. The congregation now moved out to blazing sunshine to be greeted by a large crowd in Westminster Square.

After lunch and a short rest we took a taxi to Bird Cage Walk and joined the large crowd outside Buckingham Palace. The Queen and the Royal Family appeared on the Palace balcony and were greeted with loud cheers by the assembled crowds. We cheered the flypast of vintage aircraft with its highlight of a Lancaster aircraft dropping thousands of red poppies onto the Mall. A Spitfire and a Hurricane aircraft escorted the Lancaster. The great mass of people were not just veterans but many were young persons with families and their friends, both national and foreign. Their support for the Royal Family was clear.



Flypast

LONDON EVENTS

Audrey Juby, Norfolk Branch

Five of us from the Norfolk Branch, Madge Freeman, Helen Green, Marjorie Spears, Joan Awbery and myself met at Norwich station on July 8th to travel to London for the events to mark the 60th Anniversary of VE/VJ Days. All of us were to attend the unveiling next day of the Memorial to the Women of World War II. Madge and Joan were going to the reception afterwards and all to the events on Horse Guards Parade the following day.

After the memorable ceremony of the unveiling I returned to the Victory Services Club to spend the weekend. The majority of visitors were there for the purpose of attending the celebrations. We were entertained by singing from the VE Celebration Song Book and a very convivial evening was spent by us all.

On Sunday morning I met two other former-ATS ladies from the North who, like me, had been fortunate enough to receive invitations to the lunch in the gardens of Buckingham Palace. High security arrangements were in place but hundreds of people gathered by the barriers to wave to us – not that I could be seen or see much – sitting between my friends sporting enormous hats!

Her Majesty The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh with other members of the Royal Family greeted us and were present at the luncheon. The menu was superb. After coffee The Rt Hon Tucker Walker VC gave a short speech, the Royal Family left and we were conveyed to Horse Guards to watch some of the final events there and the magnificent fly-past when The Queen and family members were on the Palace balcony and poppies scattered along The Mall to mark the end of a magnificent two days' festivities, in which it had been a great honour to take part.

ALTERNATIVE VIEWS

Joan Awbery, Norfolk Branch

Friday 8th July, we ('we' being Audrey Juby, Madge Freeman, Helen Green, Marjorie Spears and Joan Awbery) met for a video chat and decided to travel to London by rail. Very few passengers on the train. Comparing notes we wondered if we were being foolhardy in rejecting our families' warnings about the state of terrorism in London? NO, we had told them, nowhere will be more secure, and we had been through worse things in the 1940s. (Ah yes, they had said, you didn't have any choice then, but you do now). There was a great resurgence of comradeship and of course the journey was comfortable and uneventful and we all had the spirit of adventure to bolster us.

The reluctance of a good many visitors to risk a London trip meant that we were fortunate enough to find spare rooms in the Travel Inn at the old County Hall – right on the doorstep so to speak. Long rambling evening walks along quiet streets and over the South Bank cobbles ensured we spent an untroubled night and were ready for the unveiling ceremony in good time on Saturday.

Here we met up with two more members who had travelled independently, Jackie Cormack and Marjorie Sacre. Jackie, Marjorie and Joan were approached by a man bearing a name badge and a furry animal on a stick – he wanted our views on the Memorial for some broadcasting station or other – we never did find out. Jackie and Joan expressed their views. He tended to ignore us and focussed on Marjorie who, probably more articulate, got his full attention. Jackie and Joan slunk away and left them to it. I wonder which local station got the benefit?

Joan and Madge had privileged seats in front of the Memorial with invitations to the reception afterwards. Audrey had a front seat and got a good view of the VIPs in the Grand Stand opposite. Marjorie Spears too was privileged. She sat right alongside the man with the cymbals in the Band and juddered every time it was his turn to clash. Her hearing cleared, eventually.

Joan and Madge supported each other at the reception and stood in line – twice – for The Queen's walkabout. She may have fleetingly imagined we had doubles. We were shaken by the hand by Lady Thatcher who thanked us for our support in the past and she "couldn't have managed without people like you". Our fifteen minutes of fame.

The sandwiches and cakes were extensive. Having gone through everything twice there was still a surplus, and as people by then were leaving in quantities, the waitresses pressed us to have more. Our skirts were already let out to the maximum, so we gathered together several large heaps, wrapped them up in napkins and bore them off to feed our less fortunate friends waiting patiently in St James' Park. The sandwiches were devoured with great relish, so, duty done and pleasures shared.

Sunday morning we foregathered in St James' Park to visit the truly magnificent Living Museum show. Having drunk quantities of tea elsewhere, we were passing the

NAAFI hut, presided over by splendid body who yelled "ARE YOU GALS ATS? "Yes", we said. "TEA IS FREE TODAY FOR ATS" she shouted. We couldn't refuse and stepped up to the counter of which stood the obligatory chipped glass bowl of well-worn sugar. We each took our teas and Joan said to Madge "You take sugar, don't you, Madge?" and indicated the bowl. Madge helped herself liberally. "MADGE" should the stout body "You took TWO sugars. DON'T YOU KNOW THERE'S A WAR ON?"

After bearing up wonderfully in the heat of Horse Guards (several elderly gentlemen had to be stretchered off but, significantly, no old ladies that we could see) we stood in The Mall with ex-service people, Londoners, visitors and friendly Americans to see the magnificent fly-past and dropping of the poppies. During the two days we had encountered parties of Americans, some bewildered by events unknown to them, asking us questions, taking photographs and generally being very interested and friendly. The final events of the day were a superb tribute.

On our weary way back to our hotel we were adopted by a London worthy, offering to show us a 'short way' back. Naturally it turned out to be a long way – mainly because he was so delighted to tell us intimate details of London history and geography, of which his knowledge was inexhaustible. We were spell-bound. We now know that replicas of Nelson's ships of the line top the lamp standards in The Mall; at the top of the Duke of York's steps is a memorial to Kaiser Wilhelm's dog in a little mausoleum with a small hidden door. If we hadn't been so weary, so broken up and separated by the press of people on the pavements we might have remembered so much more of his fascinating talk. We have forgotten so much – which church has the dome that contains an architectural plan so that, should it ever be destroyed, it can be rebuilt exactly. Does anybody know? We would never be able to find him again. Our meeting obviously made him a happy man.

We flirted with the young policemen who responded happily – they didn't know their way round London either, they had been drafted in from all the country. They accepted sweets from us and gave back as good as they got in banter. We loved the way we were looked after and made so welcome by all the young serving members of the Forces, many of them had so willingly given up their free time to be there.

We gleefully recounted our stories to relieved families who perhaps now better understand the 'spirit of the age'.

VETERANS AWARENESS WEEK

Edna M Lee, Greater London Branch
7 De Vere Gardens, Kensington, London W8 5AR

The Living Museum in St James' Park, London was very interesting with Exhibitions, Displays and re-enactments of many aspects of life during the wartime period. On display was the wartime Spitfire and the Singapore Training Locomotive, captured by the Japanese in 1942 in memory of the POWs taken by the Japanese. There was also Field Marshal Montgomery's Rolls Royce.



Walking through the Exhibition I met some very interesting people, as I was wearing my blazer with my WRAC Badge. I was recognised as a member and was asked about the Association so hopefully there will be new members.

The vehicles displayed along The Mall were very interesting including Her Majesty The Queen's Car, as driven by her when she was Princess Elizabeth in the ATS. The highlights for me during the week, were the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II on 9th July the Reception at the Ministry of Defence afterwards when I met Her Majesty The Queen who asked me about my service in the ATS which I was proud to tell her about.

Then on National Commemoration Day 10th July for Veterans of World War II, I was invited by special invitation by Her Majesty The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to the Luncheon at Buckingham Palace. This was a most marvellous occasion from the time I arrived, seeing all the crowds outside the Palace, and being taken through the main gates, past the Sentries, walking onto the Red Carpet, through the Main Hall, down to the lawn, where the band was playing, and waiters lined up serving us with drinks. The marquee was beautifully laid out with huge floral arrangements and chandeliers and tables all laid up, with waiters serving us with a superb luncheon, with champagne and wine. We were seated quite near Her Majesty The Queen and Prince Andrew. Other members of the Royal Family were on separate tables around us, including The Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers and other dignitaries.



Edna accompanied by Roland

I spent sometime walking around the grounds and meeting many interesting Veterans. Then afterwards went outside the Palace to see The Royal Family on the Balcony, and then the flypast of WWII aircraft, dropping the poppies from the Lancaster Bomber. A marvellous sight. I managed to collect some of the poppies which fell. A wonderful end to the Commemoration Week.

CLEVELAND LADIES IN LONDON

After the bombings in London - we made it! Two pictures for the *Lioness*. Two Cleveland ex-ATS Veterans on the Mall. Mrs Marjorie Kitchie and Mrs Dorothy Dunn. Next, our Standard bearer getting ready for the Parade - Mrs Ann Mahony.

Our 2 ladies enjoyed the unveiling ceremony by HM The Queen, and they were sitting next to Fern Brittain and also spoke to our Lt Col Westlake. Good eh!





Ann Mahony

Joyce Jameson, Cleveland Branch

After coffee in Soho(?), St James Park on Saturday afternoon, Haagen Dazs ice-creams in Leicester Square, we were all enjoying ourselves. But Sunday was the highlight for me. We took our two ATS ladies to the concert, had some lunch in the Veterans NAAM (where we met two lovely old gentlemen veterans). We then made our way to The Mall to pick our spot. The flags, the people, the atmosphere was wonderful. In fact, I phoned my husband, and he thought I was drunk! We were singing Land Of Hope and Glory at the time.

HM The Queen and Prince Philip in their landau, followed by Prince Charles, Camilla and Prince Harry sent the crowd cheering. We watched the concert on a big screen wonderful. Then The Queen returned in an open Landrover, and the crowds went wild! The biggest cheer was when the Standards in all their colours and twinkling medals came past. Our very own standard bearer was in the first row, column three, and she heard us cheering!



Sent by Ann Mahony, Cleveland Branch
Standard Bearer. You can just see her legs - third in from the far end!

It was an outstanding weekend, helped all along the way by the organisation of Irene. From luggage assistance, porters, train times and an excellent hotel. I would not have missed it for anything.

Mrs Ann Mahony - Standard Bearer, Cleveland Branch

The Living Museum was marvellous and we spent almost all day there. I must say though, the highlight of my weekend was the march up The Mall. Nothing could prepare me for the emotion I felt carrying our Branch Standard and the roar of the crowd (five of them from my own branch).

Then, being in the forecourt of Buckingham Palace for the Poppy drop. What a weekend - what a day. Enclosed is a picture of Maureen, who carried the Association Standard, me, Ann, with the Cleveland Standard, and a smart chap we just picked up!



MY WEEKEND OF REMEMBRANCE - 2005 IN LIVERPOOL

Edna M Lee

I was pleased to attend the Field of Remembrance Westminster on 10th November and meeting the Association members. This year it was nice having Major Jane Freebairn representing us. *Editor: A great privilege for me too!*

The following morning I dashed off to Liverpool at the invitation of The Lord Mayor of Liverpool, where I was made most welcome. I was then ushered into The Lord Mayor's Parlour to meet the Lord Mayor. We then had a general talk while having coffee and biscuits. Afterwards I was taken on a conducted tour around the Town Hall. A most impressive building. I was most impressed by the Maces and other City Silver and I must mention the chandeliers are some of the finest I have ever seen. I was taken out onto the Front Balcony, where I had stood 60 years ago, at the end of World War II.



2005

I was shown the Banqueting rooms and also the Court Rooms. After this I was given a very nice Luncheon in the Lord Mayor's Dining Room. I met a number of the staff who all made me feel very comfortable and put me at my ease. I was then given an Official Invitation to go to the Commemorative Service at St George's Hall, Liverpool on Sunday 13th November. A taxi was then laid on to take me back to my Hotel.

The following morning I went for a mini-cruise on the Mersey River and at one Quayside there was a memorial service which I attended. I then visited Liverpool Cathedral and was taken to the top of the tower to see the magnificent views from there.



1945

The following morning, Sunday 13th November, I went to St George's Hall to meet a number of dignitaries. The wreaths of poppies were laid out in many rows, on tables. I was asked to lay a wreath at The Cenotaph which I did and dedicated this to the ATS and WRAC Association. The Media, Press, Television and Radio then interviewed me about my experiences in the ATS.

I then attended the Civic Reception in St Georges Hall before saying good-bye to The Lord and Lady Mayoress of Liverpool.

WALES REMEMBERS 1939/45 ON SUNDAY JULY 10TH

Mrs J Hill, née Hielt W/328731
25 Keyston Road, Fairwater, Cardiff CF5 3ND

We marched (or walked) from St David's Centre, down Duke Street, past the Castle, into the entrance of the Castle ground to Coopers Field. There was quite a long

queue waiting to go to our seating place. There were two large TV screens on each side of the stage and it was marvellous how they seated us all. Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall came and we had a great service. Prince Charles laid a wreath in the style of three leathers on the drum which was later taken to the Memorial in the park. Seven aircraft flew overhead and after the Prince and his wife left we all went to a big hall where we had lunch. In the afternoon there was a concert with Aled Jones, Katherine Jenkins and other artists singing Welsh and war-time songs.

I left before the end after a very remarkable day that I shall remember with my ATS friends for the rest of my life.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF VE-DAY HELD IN PERTH ON 14 MAY 2005 Miss Anne Borthwick, Stirling Branch

On a lovely sunny morning on 14th May, five members from the Stirling Branch travelled to Perth for the 60th Anniversary of VE Day. On arrival, all veterans were welcomed by Provost Bob Scott and treated to tea, coffee, homemade pancakes, scones and cakes at St Matthew's Church Halls. As it was a hot day the Minister opened up the church so that anybody could go in and have quiet moments.

Everyone then made their way to St John's Kirk for the Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving at 12 noon. Once more, the Provost was there in full regalia to greet everyone personally. The Parish Minister, The Reverend David Ogston, conducted the Service and Douglas Roger and Anne Walker gave readings. The Very Reverend Dr James Harkness CB OBE gave the sermon. The Massed Pipes and Drums and the Military Band were there to lead the parade to the North Inch. The representatives from the Cadet forces were there with wheelchairs for the people who had difficulty walking.

When we came out of St John's Kirk, the streets were lined with young and old, both visitors and locals. In fact, you could not move on the pavement as the crowd was so thick. Young and old were there cheering us on with the cries of, "Good on you, lass" and, "Well done, mate". This happened all the way to the North Inch for the Drumhead Service. The Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross and the Provost took the salute and senior officers representing Her Majesty's Armed Forces were in attendance. There was a fly-past of aircraft from the University of Glasgow and Strathclyde Air Squadron.

After the Drumhead Service we all retired to the Bells Sports Centre for lunch and it gave the Veterans time to renew old friendships. There were Veterans from BLSA, Russian Convoy and Old Highland Regiments, Women's Land Army, Wrens, WAAF and ATS. A good time was had by one and all and it was tired Veterans who made their way to the buses to take them back home.

The people of Perth, the car park attendant, the Police and the Provost should give themselves a pat on the back for making this reunion a very memorable one. This will be the last, but I am sure it will be talked about for many years to come.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH CELEBRATES END OF THE WAR

Mrs Evelyn O'Neill

33 Bede Burn View, Jarrow, Tyne & Wear NE32 5PQ

Many of our members attended a celebration in Newcastle on July 10th. We attended the Church Service in St Thomas Church, then went on a March Past Parade, with the women veterans leading the parade after the band. This was quite unusual for us as we are often at the back!

Coaches took us to Exhibition Park and we had an excellent buffet lunch. There was "forties" music and entertainment by a Pipe Band, a Naval Cadet Band, Scottish Dancers and a show of wartime vehicles. The weather was lovely so we had a really good day.



Mrs Holton, Newcastle Chairman laying their wreath

Reunions

NORTH EAST AREA REUNION,

30 SEPTEMBER 2006

AT MILLSTONES RESTAURANT,

SHIPTON ROAD, HARROGATE – 11am – 5pm

Cost is £17.25 per head and this will include a 3 Course Lunch and Entertainment. There is a spacious car park and transport can be arranged from Harrogate Railway Station. We had a very successful reunion at Millstones in 2005. If you would like to join us in 2006, e-mail me at irenemaclean@nthworld.com or telephone 01642 892238.

WRAC PROVOST ON PARADE

Mrs Gwyneth Stratton, nee Hayes W/372658 1955-1959

Eighteen ex-members of the WRAC Provost met at the RMP HQ in Roussillon Barracks at Chichester on 20/11 September. The occasion was the RMP 'Farewell to Chichester' after forty one years. Their new HQ will be at Portsmouth.

We were blessed with glorious sunshine for two days



L-R: Chris Barratt, Iris (Bunny) Howe, Sheila Smith, Janet Lawson, Audrey Parton, June Jackson, Gwyneth Stratton, Margaret Smith, Helen Berry, 'Rincha' Coleman, Pat Stark

whilst the rest of the country had torrential rain. On Saturday morning we joined the crowd of ex-military policemen assembling for the parade. All looked chaotic as we shuffled about on the lawns, at the same time admiring the superb lines of Regulars assembled behind the band. Not having marched for nearly fifty years I doubted my ability to remember what to do. Finally we formed up on the road behind the professionals. The band struck up whereupon a miracle happened. Suddenly there was a perfect line up. Proudly the parade marched through the centre of Chichester soundly cheered by the crowds lining the street. We were so pleased when our group got an extra loud cheer. (What a pity our drill instructors couldn't have seen us).

The Beating Retreat ceremony at the end of the day was particularly emotional because it was the last formal occasion when the flag would be lowered.

We had a very hospitable welcome from everyone at Roussillon Barracks with superb entertainment throughout the afternoon culminating in a magnificent fireworks display. It was an opportunity for 'catching up' as old friends met and reminisced. After Church Parade on Sunday we enjoyed a delicious lunch, said our farewells and left for home taking with us many happy memories.

It took me all day Monday to come back to earth!

WRAC POSTAL ASSOCIATION WEEKEND REUNION – OCTOBER 2005

Miss M H Grant MBE

Forth Cottage, 234 Church Street, Tranent,
East Lothian EH33 1BW

The Hotel at Harrogate was fantastic, the accommodation, food management and staff could not be faulted. The weather was also kind to us. As there was no entertainment in the Hotel some of our Members provided Quizzes, fun games and disco over the weekend.



PDF Compressor Free Version

Many of the games were played for charity which resulted in £116.60 being collected for the Great Ormond Street Hospital.

A great weekend was had by all. Next reunions are as follows:

Kendal	October 2006
Harrigate	October 2007

Book early to Margaret Grant MBE. Contact number is: 01875 611777

SPANISH REUNION MAY 2005

Mrs Jenny Jackson
314/316 Adkern Road, Toll Bar, Doncaster,
S Yorks DN5 0QR

Thirty years after meeting and becoming friends during our WRAC tour of duty attached to 27 Signal Regiment Hong Kong, six friends PLUS 1 adopted WRAC driver still keep in touch and meet up as often as possible.



L-R: Julie Silver, June Shelton née Hawkhead, Elaine O'Sullivan née Jenkinson, Karen Loftus née Bates, Lesley Goff née Tudor, Wendy Hooton née Barton, Jenny Jackson née Mann on a recent holiday in Nerja, Spain.

We all meet on a yearly basis at the WRAC Dinner club weekend in October. At one of the dinners June introduced Karen (ex Driver) to our group and from that time she has become an adopted member of our Signals 'gang'. The other six met during our time together as Data Telegraphists at the communications centre in Victoria Barracks, Hong Kong.

During the past 30 years we have all kept in touch with one another, but it was the Dinner Club that started us meeting at least once a year. But this year as a

celebration of some of our 'gang' becoming 50 years of age, (not mentioning names!!) we decided to meet up during spring and celebrate in style and for a week! AND what a celebration it was.



At a local club with 'Tina Turner'

From meeting at the airport at the start of the holiday to our return we partied continuously. The week was spent lazing by the pool/shopping/sightseeing/shopping, the local paella/shopping/drinking sangria (or in memory of Hong Kong San Miguel beer) and of course shopping! There was a constant buzz of conversation and much laughter and hilarity.

We all had a terrific week away and since then have managed to meet up once again to enjoy a weekend at Jenny's home to reminisce, view the photos and eat more paella and drink more Sangria!

Our next get together will be in October in Birmingham at the Dinner Club and hopefully over the next few years we are planning a return trip to Hong Kong possibly in 2010.

LIFE IS NOTHING WITHOUT FRIENDSHIP

"THE BERLIN BELLES"

Mrs J E Eastham
North Lodge 11 North Houses Lane,
Lytham St Annes, Lancs FY8 4NT

Here we are again for our third get together in St Annes on Sea, Lancashire our favourite venue.



L-R: Dorothy Lyle, Freda Williams, Jean Eastham, Venus Fraser, Dorothy Nixon.

Five of us met up and had a most wonderful time together. We never stopped talking of course but missed our friends very much and spoke of them constantly. Four of whom were unable to travel including our Junior Commander, Edna Quinlan, Kathleen Paul (Canada), Elsie Hardy and Margaret McCue. **PDF Compressor Free Version** ago. Here we are outside the same hotel 10 years ago.



L-R: Dorothy Lyle, Vina Fraser, Kathleen Paul, Mickey Corstin, J Commander Edna Chester, Jean Eastham, Freda Williams, Mary McCue, Dorothy Nixon and Elsie Hardy.

We have a very strong bond. There are so few of us and we served together in such dangerous and troubled times in Berlin, 1948 – 1949, during the Russian Blockade and miraculous airlift. Out of an ATS company (of approximately forty) ten of us is not bad after all this time is it? We would particularly like to hear from five of our "Gals" who met American GIs in Berlin 1948 – 1949 and subsequently married.

The rest of us are in regular contact by telephone and the occasional meeting in Lancashire and in Scotland. Three of us have already booked for the Grand Re-union next year at Coventry and are looking forward to meeting with many more of the wonderful ex-ATS and WRAC. We are very proud to be part of this Association.

Happy New Year to everyone...see you at Coventry.

60s-16ers

Lorraine Moore

28 Fore Street, Camborne, Cornwall TR14 8AZ
01209 719897

I am the membership secretary of the 60s-16ers which is a reunion club for those who served with 16 Signal Regiment through the 60s to the 70s. We have annual reunions and I enclose a photograph of our last reunion which was in Loughborough in October 2005.

Editor: The photograph was so large I had to put it on the Back Page!

We have a very good reunion every year with more and more members coming. Next year's gathering will be in Harrogate and we would like to see you there. For more details, please contact me at the above address or email me Lorraine@28fs.fsnet.co.uk I look forward to hearing from you.

SUEZ VETERANS' ASSOCIATION

Mr Harold R Heath, SVA Organiser
30 Mendip Avenue, Hillcroft Park, Stafford ST17 0PG

We are planning a Service and Parade to mark our service in the Suez Canal Zone of Egypt ending with the final evacuation of British Service personnel in 1956.

It will be held on Tuesday 30th May 2006. It is being held then because the covered accommodation at the venue, National Memorial Arboretum, is inadequate for the numbers we expect to be present. It will have to take place outside so hopefully the weather will be kinder in May.

If anyone wishes to come or if they wish to hear more about the aims and objectives of the Suez Veterans Association then I would be pleased to hear from them.

SERVICE, ROYAL SIGNALS, ATTACHED INT CORPS

Daphne Brookes, née Bower
Bournemouth Branch

It was good to see articles and photographs of 2 ex "Y" girls in the *Lioness* 2/2005: Cynthia Humble and Noel Leadbetter. There are still quite a few of us around and for the past eleven years a group of us have been attending the Enigma Reunions at Bletchley Park. Sadly the group is now smaller than it used to be and September 2005 the Enigma Reunion coincided with a "Y" Group Reunion so we had split venues, which was unfortunate. There have been other happy times when we have been able to 'get together' in Harrogate, Douglas Isle of Man, Wetherby and Leicester. I am still in touch with a Morse Instructor from Palace Camp days – does anyone else out there remember Cpl Terry Cattini (now Duffy)?



Pam Elliott, Gladys Gowing, Daphne Brookes, Marjorie Willey, Marjorie Arbory and Irene Kell from Listening Stations Harrogate, Beau Manor and Kedleston Hall – Bletchley Park September 2005

REUNION OF EAST ANGLIAN BRANCHES

Joan Awbery
Norfolk Branch

Got a grant from "Home Front Recall". Took the names. Booked the Community Coach. Waited for the day – November 5th, a date making it pretty certain the

reunion would go off with a bang. All the arrangements for the luncheon had been made by Mrs Patricia Stevenson, Chairman of Eastern Area – so, no worries there then.

First hitch; **PDF Compressor Free Version** will only take 16" – so some must go by rail (a happy relief for the one or two who view coach travel with misgivings, being prone to travel-sickness). Colchester, only a short trip down the London line, trains run every half-hour. It will be a dawdle.

After five rail tickets were booked and in hand, coach numbers began to dwindle. Once the driver embarked on his collection of intending passengers, numbers had dwindled further, so that he had a less than capacity crowd of eleven. I understand the Community Coach journey was uneventful, comfortable and early to arrive at the Officers' Club in Colchester.

Not so the rail trip. "Work on the line" was the doom-laden warning on arrival at Norwich station. Bus from Norwich to Ipswich, train from Ipswich to Colchester. We were crammed into an already full to bursting coach of very large passengers with very large luggage. The so-called main road to Ipswich is narrow, winding and dull. For a long, long stretch our very cross driver had to dawdle behind two small cars whose drivers made sure they stayed well below the speed limit and stuck religiously to the white line down the middle. It is a wonder the coach didn't erupt from the scething inside. By the time we were released from our frustration at Ipswich station our train connection had departed. Visions of our missing the lunch loomed. Kindly Linda went to the bookstall and plied us with packets of Maltesers and other chocolate delights as by that time our morale and blood sugar were pretty low.

We had a comfortable but very leisurely trip on the next train that had obviously been pensioned off from LNER days. Got to Colchester station finding it deserted. No one else alighted. I grappled with the train door – panicked at first as I couldn't open the window far enough to reach down from the outside lever and a vision appeared of all being trapped and carried on to Liverpool Street naked, unwashed, and probably with half an arm. Cambridge station is supposed to have the longest platform of all, but Colchester runs it a close second. After a lengthy tramp and some difficulty we finally located the exit (via the subway) immediately piled into two taxis and arrived at



l-r: Audrey Juby, Joan Whittingham, Irene Warren, Peggy Heli, Elsie Debbage

the club to find that blessed Patricia Stevenson had managed to rein in the hungry and waiting participants for half an hour – until our arrival.

After that it was upheav all the way – we had a very jolly time and the rafters rang. The meal and the company very enjoyable; it was good to meet friends from Cambridge, Chelmsford, the new Suffolk Branch and members who belong to the Colchester ATS group.

WALES AND THE WEST AREA REUNION

Maggie Purkis, Area Chairman

The 2005 Wales and the West Area Reunion took place at The Lord Hill Hotel, Shrewsbury, on 10th September. The choice of venue was very popular as Shrewsbury is fairly central, has a good rail link with the majority of towns within the Area and the Hotel has a function room accessed easily from the car park – no pesky stairs to be negotiated.

The Secretaries met in a private room at 11 o'clock. Last year we attempted to have a photograph taken of all our Secretaries but ran out of time. This year we had the photo taken before the meeting.



While the Secretaries meeting was being held, our fundraisers were doing sterling work with raffle tickets on sale, a "guess the weight of the cake" stand, "guess the length of the Millennium Bridge", "guess the number on the £20 note", and "guess the number of Bath Pears". Many thanks to all those who helped with the fund raising, enabling us to donate £300 towards the cost of the Grand Reunion.

Chris Coker, Ann Protheroe, Joyce Russell, Carole Montessori-Gorman, Sharon Joyce, Sue Wilson and Joyce Nicholls



We invited no official guests and the delicious lunch was very much a family fair. We were entertained after the meal by Tailor Made; those who attended the WRAC Dinner Club in Birmingham in October will know the band, and we sang along to many of the songs specially chosen to reflect our Centenary and British Venture.

PDF Compressor Free Version



The reunion was closed at 1630 hrs, ours is a large (geographically speaking) Area and many of those attending had long distances to travel to get home. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who attended and helped to make the day such a success.

My special thanks to Irene Hall, the Area Secretary, who organised the function so brilliantly. Next year, as we have a Grand Reunion in March/April, we will not hold an Area Reunion as such, but Branch Officers will be invited to attend a meeting, again at the Lord Hill Hotel, Shrewsbury.

WRAC DINNER CLUB Editor

Throughout the *Lioness*, you will see references to the WRAC Dinner Club. It is an excellent club and meets once a year. In 2005, it met in Birmingham and the Dinner was on Saturday 8 October. Most who go stay at least on the Friday and Saturday nights but it has become such a good weekend that many stay on the Thursday and Monday as well.

The following photographs tell the story. Particularly the one from Joyce Nicholls which emphasises the great enjoyment when you meet up with "old" pals! Thank you to Jackie Naysmith for the others.

Enquiries about the WRAC Dinner Club: 01978 846223



Avril Williams, Jane Freebairn and Wendy Hooton



Major Mack and Beryl Butcher hoping that the WRAC Flag will stay up



Joyce Nicholls and Lin Thornton. They met up for the first time in nearly 40 years having served together in Germany. Hilda Grawston who now lives in Australia put them back in touch.

WRAC DINNER CLUB PHOTOGRAPHS ~ AN APOLOGY:

I was mortified to find that, for the second year running, my printer was unable to print the photographs taken at the WRAC Dinner Club to a sufficiently high standard. The printer was specially chosen to enable photographs to be sold as a fund raising opportunity, but for reasons passing understanding (I know they are not designed to be transported around the country, and ideally sit on a desk for the whole of their useful life) the photograph resolution was appalling. I have since reprinted all the photos and distributed as many as I have been able. If you were at the function and had a photograph taken but have not received a reprint, please contact me with your address and I will send the replacement. I will need to know which photograph to replace. Ideally send the original back, but I understand that many, if not all, may have been thrown away. My address is c/o 6 Sulby Drive, Leegomery, Telford TF1 6FP. I can be reached by phone on 01952 251717 and by e-mail at megpurkis@hotmail.com

Meg Purkis

PS: My printer has just gone through the square window!

Articles of Interest

PENELOPE EMBROIDERY KITS

Pauline Meakin W/284192 (1943 - 1947)
61 Anvil Crescent, Broadstone, Dorset BH18 9DZ

Does anyone remember the 'Penelope Embroidery Kits' issued to some members of the ATS during the last war? I was recently looking at my small stock of tray cloths and table cloth. I could not believe how I had worked the intricate stitches without the aid of bifocals or a large magnifying glass. However, my eyes were only just eighteen years old then!

The designs were beautiful and the linen has stood the test of time. As we stitched away did our thoughts turn to happy days ahead when our knife, fork and spoon would be replaced by delicate china and NAAFI SPAM sandwiches by (dare I say it!) chocolate éclairs?

I was a shorthand typist attached to a Royal Engineers Transportation Stores Depot in Hampshire. I still have weekly conversations on the telephone with Irene and Brenda who shared the room with me in converted Army Quarters. We have many happy memories of those far off days.

IN EDINBURGH WITH THE NOT FORGOTTEN ASSOCIATION

Mrs Kath Smith, nee Hodges W/332524
18 Rye Haugh, Ponteland NE20 9BA

In August I spent two days in Edinburgh with Paddy Convery, another member of the Newcastle Branch, at the invitation of the "Not Forgotten" Association. We stayed in the Pollock Halls of Residence at the University. There were about 20 in the group, all ex-service. We were the only ex-ATS. Some from Northern Ireland had travelled over with a mini bus which took us out and about to the various venues.

Our programme included a visit to the Military Tattoo at the Castle which was fabulous. Having seen it on TV many times, it was great to see it live. We visited the Falkirk Wheel, a brilliant piece of engineering which lifts boats between canals on different levels. We also visited the Lady Haig Poppy Factory where the staff made us very welcome. We saw how the poppies and the wreaths were made which are sent worldwide. We went on board The Royal Yacht Britannia and had a sightseeing bus tour of the city - the only time it rained. Luckily I had a plastic mac and umbrella with me. I felt like Mary Poppins, luckily the wind did not whisk me up in the air. It was all good fun.

On our last night we were taken to a residential house for veterans which is supported by the NFA. A group of Scottish musicians, a female and male vocalist and a comedian entertained us. Everyone was invited to sing along, one of the NFA group brought a lady over to our table to meet us. She was ex-ATS and had served during the war with the Ack Ack. She is a life member of the Association, her details are as follows:

W/129073 Vera Robinson who served from 1940 - 1946. Her address is Whitetord House, Canongate, Edinburgh EH8 8BS. If anyone remembers her, I'm sure she would love to hear from you.

Our two days in Edinburgh were very hectic and memorable. We met some lovely people from all over the world. I hope to be at the 2006 reunion still hoping to meet someone from my ex-service days 1946 - 1950, ATS Signals.

SOUTHPORT STANDARD

Mrs M M Dawson
11 Red Cat Lane, Buracough, Lancs LA0 0RA

In the *Lioness* you asked about the whereabouts of Standards of branches which have closed. I was the last Chairman/Secretary of the Southport Branch which closed in 2001 owing to a very depleted membership.



Mrs Dawson with the Southport Standard

We laid our Standard up at the town Hall in March 2002 where it is on display with several others.



Members and friends with the Mayor

Editor: Thank you very much. An excellent start to the records of our Standards. Any more?

THE SINKING OF THE KHEDIVE ISMAIL

Lt Col (Retd) Gerry Fahy

Two items in *Lioness* June 2/2005 were of particular interest to me. The first was the article by Brian Austin (p20) 'Lost at Sea' and the second was the letter from Mrs Pauline Ripper from her husband, David Ripper.

On the 12th February, 1944, less than two months after my own unit, No 2 (East Africa) Clerical Company ATS, disembarked safely from HM Troupship Arundel Castle at Mombassa, Kenya, a five-ship convoy sailing from Mombassa to Ceylon was attacked in the Indian Ocean (near Addu Atoll) by a Japanese submarine which had penetrated the ships' escort. One of the troopships in convoy was the Khedive Ismail, whose complement included servicemen from the 11th (East Africa) Division and eighty-three servicewomen (WRNS, Army nurses, and Women's Territorial Service (East Africa)/FANY (incorrectly reported at the time as ATS). The submarine fired four torpedoes, two of which hit the Khedive Ismail. The boiler-room exploded and the side of the ship was ripped apart. She sank within two minutes. In all a total of 1,297 souls were lost. Those who survived included six servicewomen, 143 servicemen and 22 crew: a total of 171 survivors. Tragically, the captain of one of the destroyer's escort was compelled to drop depth charges as men and women struggled in shark-infested water for several hours. The Japanese submarine was forced to the surface and later sunk by torpedoes of the escort.

Because of wartime security blackout, records of the Court of Inquiry on the Khedive Ismail were sealed for 40 years. The wireless operators who learned of the sinking at the time were ordered not to talk about it. (This also applied to some of our ATS girls who were working then at 2nd Echelon and who knew of the tragedy). Two of the wireless operators, (WRNS Sheila Robinson and Sheila Harmer) worked in the wireless room of Motor Vessel Trinemalee when the signals were received. They determined that the memory of those lost in the disaster should not go unrecognised. A Service of Remembrance was subsequently held in the WRNS Church of St Mary le Strand, London.

In the course of my own researches on the sinking of the Khedive Ismail, I have been in touch with Diana Francis-Jones (née le Pour Trench and born in Kenya). Her aunt, Sgt Patricia le Pour Trench, WTS/FANY, was one who was lost in the disaster. A record of the sinking of the Khedive Ismail has since been painstakingly researched and published in Brian James Crabli's book *Passage to Destiny*.

On my own long journey, on the Arundel Castle, from UK to Kenya (Nov/Dec 1943) our convoy was attacked on two occasions in the Mediterranean Sea. David Ripper's wife (then Sgt Pauline Wooten ATS) was one of my comrades on the ship. Thank you David for your tribute to Pauline, a good companion then and until her untimely death in 2004.

Later as we were travelling down the Indian Ocean, there were rumours of Japanese submarines in the vicinity. The rumours had more than a grain of truth, as evidenced later by the tragedy of the Khedive Ismail.

NAAFI GIRLS?

Mrs L Butcher, W/338705
49 Sedgemere Road, Birmingham B26 2AX

The answer to 'Who Are They?' on Page 12 of *Lioness* 2/2005. I think there are four maybe five NAAFI girls. The one I am not too sure of is third on right, with the jacket on. She is most likely the ATS driver of the car. We NAAFI girls were issued with khaki skirts and shirts, ties, jackets and overcoats and hats. Our buttons were not of shiny 'material' made from the same as civilian buttons, dark brown in colour. Our hats were same as Land Army shape, with a pale blue, dark blue and red band round, and a dark brown badge with the letters NAAFI cut out. We also had khaki gloves and stockings and brown shoes.



NAAFI Girls?

Because the Women's Services were closed to recruitment when I became old enough to join in 1943 aged 17 years, my friend and I were offered the Land Army or NAAFI. I was very upset at the time as my sister was in Acl-Acl. We chose the NAAFI and I enjoyed every minute of it stationed at RAF Northolt. I served until the end of 1945 - through a lot of bombs! Then, in 1946, I decided to join the ATS. In spite of me being in the NAAFI, working very long hours during the last 2 years of the War, I am not allowed to be classed as a VETERAN. The Land Army girls are praised for their War efforts. NAAFI girls are never mentioned. Very unfair in my estimation. I wonder where other unpraised NAAFI girls served?

Editor: Thank you. This is the only response I've received and I'm pleased to give the NAAFI girls a mention.

CHISELDON CAMP

Mrs S Passmore
Mount Pleasant, Chiseldon, Wilts SN4 0NA

Some years ago I contacted your Association with a request for information about Chiseldon Camp in Wiltshire. Several of your members were kind enough to respond. The book 'The Story of Chiseldon Camp' Part 2 by David Bailey, has now been published - (Book 1 covered WWI).

Copies are available from the above address, price £8.50 + £1.50 p&dp. Please make cheques payable to Chiseldon Local History Group.

Many thanks to all those who contributed their stories.

LONDON - WITH THE "NOT FORGOTTEN" ASSOCIATION

Mrs Eileen Morgan

461 Crownhill Road, Plymouth, Devon PL5 2HQ

I would like to tell you about a recent trip I and Ruth in London spent with Mary and Ruth. We were invited by The "Not Forgotten" Association, and what a time we had! We met up at the Union Jack Club and joined a group of 30 ex-service men and women from all parts of the country, had a wonderful dinner that night and met all the hard working people who were to escort us for the holiday.

Our first trip was to visit the Household Cavalry, then on to the Guards Museum, for a buffet lunch. The evening was a visit of the Tower of London to see the 'Ceremony of the Keys'; I loved every minute of it.



Eileen and Mary at tea in the Wingfield Restaurant. The empty chair belongs to Ruth who is taking the photo!

Then we were off for a day at Wimbledon, with seats on Centre Court. I never thought that at 86 years I would be standing with my program and pencil begging for the players to sign their names as they left the court, but they did and I was delighted. We were taken to the Wingfield Restaurant, strawberry tea, of course and a lovely cuppa! On the last day but we still had a lot to see and do. A trip on the London Eye, then off again, to the Imperial War Museum, well worth a visit if you are ever in London. Home again to the club and the evening was our last 'goodbye's, with a lovely dinner and entertainment with songs and music. I even had a little dance with one of the 'lads' and couldn't resist the Lambeth Walk with the Cockney lad who was singing. We had a wonderful time and were looked after by Rosie and Rosemary like family. Nothing was too much trouble for them and help was always at hand if anyone of us got tired or needed that extra push! We met some lovely people and all got on so well, just like when we were serving our time in the army. There were 3 WRNS and 2 WAAF 'girls', us 3 and the rest were men from many different services and all had tales to tell. It's a holiday that I won't forget in a hurry and am so pleased that I could share a few of my memories with you all. It took me a few days to get over the hurting joints but it was worth every ache!

ANOTHER PLYMOUTH MEMBER ENJOYS LONDON

Mrs Mary Davis

80 Shortwood Crescent, Plymstock, Devon PL9 8TJ

We arrived safely after a train journey from Plymouth to Paddington and thence by taxi to the Union Jack Club. Checked in and were given keys, vouchers for meals, badges and agenda. I was on the 10th floor with an en-suite room, Eileen and Ruth were on the 17th floor, no en-suite! I had a visitor at 6.45 am for a shower each morning! At dinner, Brigadier Heywood hosted our table. Super meal, wine flowing, hence, a lively evening, (we put the world to rights, I think!)



Mary's friend, the handsome Captain

Tuesday am. Took the coach to Wellington Barracks. On arrival, greeted by a handsome captain, (I fell for him) who explained the duties and inspection procedure of the Blues and Royals lined up on parade. Eileen fell for the duty RSM! The troops left for Buckingham Palace and we visited the forge, stables and harness and uniform depot, with explanatory talks at each stop. We enjoyed meeting the four legged troopers in the stables, beauties, every one of them. Do you remember Seton the survivor of the bomb attack? You will be pleased to hear that there is a 'Seton 2' now on duty. Sergeants Mess for drinks and lunch was served in the Guards Museum. Looking around, I spied a model of The Queen on Burma, the horse she rode at the Trooping of the Colour. Back to base for tea. In the evening, we were taken to the Tower of London for the Ceremony of the Keys. Very impressive. The respect given to the 'Keys' is the same as to the 'Colours'. We were honoured and proud to be present. This was followed by a visit to the Tower Bar and then back to base at 10.30 pm.

Wednesday 11 am. All into the coach to go to Wimbledon for an afternoon on Centre Court, a very hot and sunny day with Ruth sporting a much decorated hat! We watched Marret Sam win his match against Mark Philipoussis. The highlight of the game was when the net collapsed. We managed to get autographs as they came off-court as we were seated right by the dug-out. Strawberries and cream, savoury sandwiches and cakes were served in the Wingfield Restaurant, plus a packet of Benson and Hedges, if required. Back to the courts for the ladies singles which was won by Miss Mirza of India.

Thursday. The London Eye gave us a wonderful bird's eye view, wonderful. So comfortable with the air

conditioning and a slow easy ride. Back to earth and off to the Imperial War Museum for guided tours, or if preferred, we could walk around at our own pace before we were given a very good buffet lunch. When passing a group of children I was startled when the teacher loudly said "There's **PDF Compressor Free Version** our role during the war. Spotting Eileen, I asked her to tell them of her work as Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant. They were delighted. That evening we had a guest of honour at the farewell dinner, a Devon and Dorset Sergeant, who had been wounded in Iraq and had just taken part in the Freedom of City March in Plymouth. Lots of fun and laughter. Good entertainment. Eileen gave us the Lambeth Walk, I had a dance, Ruth sang well, having been amply fuelled by the ever-flowing wine!! Well laid back! We had a wonderful holiday. Comradeship with each other and pleasure all the time. Heartfelt thanks to Rosie and Rosemary for all their care, also to ALL the lovely people who organised and financed the wonderful work that the 'Not Forgotten' Association does for ex service and disabled Veterans.



Ruth, Mary and Eileen high above London

MORE NEWS OF RICHMOND PARK

Mrs J M Knight, W406423 Pte Knight
27 Manby Road, Great Malvern, Worcs WR14 3BD

I would love to take this opportunity to thank Major (Retd) F O'Dell, née Saffery for providing the title of the film - The Mau Who Finally Died.

It was great to finally know the title and so after all these years of never having seen the film I am now the proud possessor of "The Mau Who Finally Died" albeit on DVD and not Video.



This photograph was taken on 16th December 1961 at 12th Battalion's Christmas Show at Richmond Park with CO, Lt Col Berthe Tansley-Witt, Major Anne Cresswell (first row), Miss Pearce, Miss Tweed and Subaltern Helen G Macchie can be seen in the third row.

ROYAL FLYING CORPS

Mrs June Booth, nee Beckett
3 Cedar Drive, Holbeach, Spalding PE12 7JP

I refer to your query in the last edition of *Lioness* regarding the Royal Flying Corps. My mother was a member of the Royal Flying Corps and I enclose a photograph of her, she was 19 at the time.



A few years ago I was travelling to Eastern Europe doing charity work. Namely helping men and women who escaped from occupied countries and fought alongside our own troops. On one visit to Prague one of our lady beneficiaries told me how she and many other men and girls had walked from Prague to Palestine. It took them 4 months. It was of course a great pleasure to me to meet up with these former "Auxiliaries".

I left it 49 years before I became a member, better late than never but I very much enjoy the *Lioness*. I am also enclosing a group photograph taken at Pirbright - I am the one wearing glasses! Does anyone recognise themselves?



Guards Armoured Training Wing - Pirbright August 1943

Guards Armoured Training Wing, Pirbright, August 1943

MORE MILITARY MUSIC

Jean Collyer, née MacDowall
Le Mas d'Estaing, St Privat, 82160 France

Editor: These incidents are extracted from a "list of funny events" sent to me by the ex Director of Music who arranged the WRAC Quick March.

I have read in the *Lioness* many tales of courage and prowess by women in the Forces. But I thought I might write about some amusing incidents during the Second World War.

When I left the Royal Academy of Music where I was a student I went for an interview to join the FANY. I was accepted and, inexperienced as I was, I went to train as a Driver in Camberley. We lived in a beautiful Spanish style house and I was astonished to find that we slept 6 in a room. We had an "old" lady who was over forty and who snored all night.

A Guards RSM, who shouted unintelligible falsetto words of command, drilled us. When I passed my driving test (on a coal lorry which I had to reverse down a narrow, twisted lane with ditches each side) we paraded at Sandhurst. Unfortunately, I never heard the command "HALT" and took a few paces too far, ending inches from the Bandmaster. I immediately said to him, "Oh, I'm so sorry!" He did not twitch a muscle - this was my introduction to military music!

I was posted to Bristol and on my first day I was taken to the Army Blood Supply Depot at Southmead Hospital. I was shown how blood samples were taken, and how red corpuscles were separated from white, and this was to check whether I would faint at the sight of blood! One other task I was given was to drive a pick-up truck with a Bofors L.A.A. Gun, manned by a lance bombardier and a gunner, round and round Avonmouth docks. This was to reassure rather demoralised dockers because the Bristol docks had been heavily bombed. After two weeks, visiting every canteen and drinking endless cups of tea. I asked the men how they would fire the gun, and they told me that they had not yet been given any instruction and did not know how to fire it!

After sometime there, I was sent to Oxford and Didcot. Annie Locke was a Lance Corporal there (later major WRAC) and I have to say she was the only ATS I knew who could give an "Eyes Right" when on a bicycle.

When occupying requisitioned houses we always gave them suitable names - "Hell Inside" and in Cheltenham "The Spinsters Retreat". When I was promoted to LCpl I became the driver to the Sub District Commander and Brigade Major. One Sunday I drove them to the Cotswolds - just below the Escarpment. It was normal on a Sunday to visit and inspect the Home Guard. However, on this particular Sunday, when we arrived, my Colonel alighted and was saluted by the NCO in charge, but my Colonel said, "Morning, Admiral" and to the next Pre he said, "Morning, General." It was obvious that the Platoon included many veterans.

They all eventually marched away and I settled down in the Staff Car to read a book! After half an hour, I suddenly heard, "Whee-plop", "Whee-plop" and I realised I was being fired at. So rather stupidly I lay down on the floor of the car in case of broken glass. Suddenly I heard footsteps and the Colonel, Major, and many of the Home Guard came rushing to see if I was alive! The Home Guard had obviously mistaken my Staff Car for their target!

As for music - most requisitioned houses seemed to have odd pieces of furniture and pianos left in them. This gave me the chance to practise and play at Army Troops' Concerts. My choice was the "Warsaw Concerto" - last played with The Gordon Highlanders' Band - Alas no more!

SOMEWHERE BEHIND THE MORNING

Some of you may have enjoyed Frances McNeil's book *Sisters on Bread Street*. In that case, you will be pleased to know her latest novel, *Somewhere Behind The Morning*, is now out for sale.

In the book, teenage sisters Julia and Margaret struggle to survive grinding poverty in 1914. Their German-Jewish father's search for work proves hopeless. Julie keeps the family afloat by hawking home-made pies on the streets while at the same time secretly supporting the pacifist No-conscription Fellowship.



Weddings

DIAMOND WEDDING – POWELL – NEWMAN

Mrs Phyllis Powell, née Newman
44 Belvedere Court, High Street, Hoddesdon,
Herts EN11 8LX



Phyllis and Jim on their wedding day



Celebrating 60 years later

W/252012 Corporal Phyllis Newman TPO/OKL ATS attached to Royal Signals married 2346827 Corporal Jim Powell Royal Signals on 15 September 1945. He had just returned from Ceylon after serving 5 years abroad.

Phyllis writes: "I joined the ATS in 1943 at Queen's Camp, Guildford then went to Strathpeffer Signal School – on again to D Coy Signals, Taunton with further duties at Bristol and Truro, finishing up at Salisbury where I met Jim. I have many happy memories of my ATS friends at Lyngford House and Pyrland Hall, Taunton.

We now live in Hoddesdon and I am a member of the Luton branch, but unable to attend meetings because of the distance".

DIAMOND WEDDING – LEAN – SHEPHERD

Mrs Dorothy Lean, née Shepherd
26 St Leonard's Court, Longley, Sheffield S5 7JR



Dorothy and Kenneth 10 November 1945



Diamond Wedding 2005

Diamond Wedding (Lean – Shepherd) on 10th November 1945 at St Aidens Church, Sheffield, Tpr Kenneth Lean (1st Recce Corps) married Pte Dorothy Shepherd ATS, Chibwell (RAOC).

After 3 years service in the Middle East, Ken had to re-join his unit in Palestine to wait for de-mob, and Dorothy too had to wait for her release.

DIAMOND WEDDING – HUNTER – HARPER
 Mrs Florence Harper
 104 Great Knightleys, Basildon, Essex SS15 3AW

PDF Compressor Free Version



Wedding Day 22 December 1945



A few years later!

Private Flo (Mush) Hunter H M A A married Corporal.
 Richard Harper – Royal Marines on 22nd December 1945
 at the Parish Church, Otley, West Yorks.

DIAMOND WEDDING – HALLDEARN – HULSE
 Mrs Betty Hulse
 Flat 3, 2 Stirling Road, Bournemouth BH3 7JG

On the 22nd September 1945, W/198094 Betty Halldearn
 married Cpl Leslie Hulse, RAF, at St Lawrence Church,
 Gosall, Stafford. Les had just returned from serving for
 4 years in the Middle East and I came home from
 Germany to get married.

The ATS Guard of Honour was arranged by my friend
 Madge Marsden (Cox). We joined together, but after
 training, Madge was posted to Donnington and I to HQ
 Western Command at Chester. Madge now lives in South
 Africa.



Betty and Leslie on 22 September 1945



60 years later

**WRAC OFFICER'S DINING CLUB
 ANNUAL DINNER 2006**

Following another successful Dinner at
 the Victory Services Club, the WRAC
 Officers' Dining Club will meet there again
 on Saturday 25 November. Please put
 this date in your Diary now!

A separate letter will be sent to Dining
 Club members in June/July. If you are not
 a member and wish to join, please
 contact the General Secretary on
 01962 887570.

DIAMOND WEDDING – OVADIA – CRAIG

Mrs Marjorie Ovada née Craig W/48153
4 Tysne Drive, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B76 2UJ



Joe and Marjorie Ovadia met in Cairo in 1943. She was one of the very few women to be sent abroad in her role with the War Office (duties which are now carried out by GCIIQ in Cheltenham).

Joe, a stockbroker before the war, was playing drums with a band in Cairo and he met Marjorie for the first time when she stood up to sing a Vera Lynn song with his band in a nightclub. Joe passed on his telephone number; the couple courted for 2 years and decided to marry at the beginning of 1945.

Marjorie said: "Joe was a very handsome man. There were 16 of us sent over as part of a Signals Unit to send coded messages around the world. Joe was certainly a ladies' man because all of my colleagues had been given a picture of him."

The British Army did not encourage marriage to foreign nationals and on VE Day Marjorie was given 48 hours' notice to be shipped home. Joe, with various contacts in the Army, worked hard to keep Marjorie in the country and it worked. An 11th hour order came in, which allowed them to stay and to marry soon after, on June 17. Joe added: "We moved to the canal district after the war, but things became bad at that time." The couple, came to the UK in 1949 and lived in Lincolnshire. In 1960 they moved to Walmley and that is where they have stayed to raise their family.

Editor: This was taken from a photocopy of an article in the Sutton Coldfield News and several other photographs describing this fascinating story accompanied it. Unfortunately, we simply cannot reproduce such copies. The quality is not good enough for us to scan and print them.

DIAMOND WEDDING 30TH OCTOBER 2005

W/127817 LCpl Vera Edwards – Gur Leonard
Waddington



Vera and Leonard when serving

We met in 1941 in Saltash, Cornwall, where I lived. Leonard was stationed there for a while. I was later sent to India and we exchanged letters. I joined the ATS and, in 1945, Leonard came home to Leicester where we met again but we returned to Saltash to get married.

We have a son and daughter, four grandchildren and three great grandchildren. We had a family get together for our anniversary.



The happy couple today

PUNS 2

6. Two cannibals are eating a clown. One says to the other: "Does this taste funny to you?"
7. "Doc, I can't stop singing 'The Green, Green Grass of Home'." "That sounds like Tom Jones Syndrome". "Is it common?" "Well, It's Not Unusual".
8. An invisible man marries an invisible woman. The kids are nothing to look at either.
9. Deja Moo: The feeling that you've heard this bull before.
10. I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day but I couldn't find any.

Letters to the Editor

PDF Compressor Free Version
Jon Aldridge, W/145384, Cpl J C Mustoe (Delamont) Feb '42 - Mar '46
17 Wordsworth Crescent, Woodthorpe, York, North Yorks, YO24 2RX

Dear Editor

I have today received my *Lioness* and spent quite a while reading it, always wondering what news it will contain and something I knew would be there - the obituary for Lt Col W D Andrews OBE (always Andy to me). I knew her for over 60 years and we always exchanged Christmas cards. I missed hearing from her last Christmas so knew something was amiss and I heard through my Association 'Andy had died'. I miss her phone chats - her Welsh accent always bright and cheerful.



Andy in Germany

During my time in the ATS, Andy helped me through a very unhappy time when I lost my first husband who was 'missing over Aachen, Germany' just before 'D' Day, serving as a Flight Sergeant Bomb Aimer RAF on a Lancaster - never to return. Then several years later I met my second husband who also knew Andy. We were married happily for 52 years but he died suddenly 7 years ago. I have two lovely sons and five grand children. Colonel Betty Metcalfe's words were such a good description of Andy.

I am 84 years now, but good friends and happiness shared is never forgotten. Due to advancing years and slight arthritis I cannot attend ATS meetings - but, I keep active with writing and watercolour painting. As a dear friend once said to me, "Keep up the ATS Spirit." How right he was!!

PS. My Veterans Badge is great. I wear it with pride!

Mary Dawson
Kingsbury House, 61 Percy Park,
Tynemouth, Tyne & Wear NE30 4JX

Dear Editor

In the last copy there is a letter asking if anyone was on the ship "Alcantara" that sailed to Singapore in 1945. Well I was one of those girls having retrained as a telephonist after 4 years in Ack-Ack. We went to take over from the men returning from India at Changi and Tanglin. In the short space of 6 weeks I got engaged and later came back to England to get married. Sadly my husband died 30 years ago but we had a very happy marriage and I have a marvellous son and daughter. On my return journey I sailed on the 'Monarch of Bermuda' and 3 days after we docked at Southampton it burnt out. In those days I smoked and the joke among my friends was that I must have left a lighted cigarette in my cabin. The point was I had stopped smoking as my fiancé didn't smoke so though they were only teasing I was clear of burning a large liner.

I look forward to all future *Lionesses* as I am housebound and cannot walk (age 90).

Mr John W Greenwood
3 Earlswood Park, New Milton,
Hampshire BH25 5GY

Dear Editor

I am seeking information on the ADA, Auxiliary Drivers Association. It was I believe, an early WW2 Ladies Unit associated with the Mechanised Transport Corps. They wore khaki with bronze badges and buttons. I have tried the IWM and NAM without success. Can any of your members help?

Editor: The RASC/RCT
Association has not heard of
this organisation either.
Who can enlighten us?



Buttons of the Auxiliary
Drivers Association

Mrs Marianne C Hooker
The Briars, Church Road, Newcastle,
Craven, North Yorkshire YO7 8QJ

Dear Editor

I was so surprised to see my article entitled 'Bridging The Generations' published within Hereford Branch News in the *Lioness* Issue 2 2005. I wrote it for inclusion in the 2003 Issue 2 as a surprise for the three ladies mentioned, when they received their certificates.

Since the article has been given no attribution they are probably not only surprised but also a little mystified as to who wrote it, especially as I am no longer a member of Hereford Branch.

I hope they will feel as I do, that everything comes to those who wait, and I send them my best wishes.

Editor: I have already apologised to Mrs Hooker as I was very embarrassed by this. Everyone who is kind enough to write an article for the magazine should be given true recognition.

Anne Page, née Doherty
(ex Captain WRAC) formerly OC WRAC
Provost, London District 1972-73

Dear Editor

Yet another of those "I was so pleased to see the article about....." referred to in your editorial in the last *Lioness*.

It was such a pleasure to see the photographs of Brigadier Nolan on her 85th birthday. She was OC Cadet Wing at the WRAC College, Camberley in 1967 when I went through and I later knew her as Director WRAC before I left the service in 1973. She was a very warm compassionate lady and much admired by us all.

These days I am one of the newest (and possibly the youngest) member of the Perth Western Australia ATS/WRAC Branch which has a delightful cohort of girls, led by Joyce Seward of Rockingham WA. We meet quarterly for lunch at the Returned & Services League Club in Perth. Joyce contributed an excellent article with photographs of the branch's activities to the *Lioness* 2/2004.

With best wishes to you all.

PS. I wonder if anyone in the Exeter area has contact with Major Pam Farwell, who left the service about the same time as myself. Pam lives alone on her parents farm (and still manages it) at the following address: "Wykeleigh", Wyke, Axminster, Devon EX13 8TN.

Patricia Eldridge
14 The Firs, Combe Down, Bath BA2 5ED

Dear Editor

I was interested to see that you were with the Royal Signals, and hoping that you are a member of the Royal Signals Association, thought you would be interested to know there is a flourishing Bath Branch of this Association of which I was secretary for ten years.



We are fortunate in Bath in that there are Signals Units close by so our meetings are held in the WO's and Sgts' Mess, 21 Signal Regt, Colerne, Wilts and Officers' Mess, Pockeridge House, 2 Signal Bde, Corsham.

To commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the end of the war with Japan, we held a commemorative lunch at Colerne with the pleasure of a fly-past by the Bristol University Air Squadron. I enclose a photograph taken at this time.

I am standing on the left of the photograph. Next to me is Betty Keating, the Chairman of the Bath Branch of the WRAC Association also a member of Royal Signals Association. Next to her is Audrey Stevens, also a member of both Associations. Next to Audrey is Sylvia Musgrave, the Secretary of the Bath Branch WRAC Association, in front of Greta Keeling, an associate member.

Editor: I was delighted to be able to tell Mrs Eldridge in person, at the Bath Branch Christmas Lunch, that I belong to the Aldershot Branch of the Royal Signals Association! I wonder how many of you also belong to other associations?

Eileen Smith, née Burley
210 St Andrews Street, Victoria BC, Canada 1 250 383 0163

Dear Editor

PDF Compressor Free Version

What a wonderful year this has been! To think it has been 60 years since we put away our uniforms and went back to "Civvy Street". I will always have fond memories of a wonderful life in the ATS. Here in Canada we have been acknowledged and thanked for our share in the war. Recently, my husband and I each received a lapel pin from Britain and very proudly wear it, alongside the Veterans pin which Canada presented to us. I served in the RAPC in Leicester and Exeter 1942 - 1945 and would love to hear from anyone I served with. I belonged to the "Concert Party" in Leicester (Light AA) and our officer in charge of entertainment was Clifton James, aka Jimmie. He became "Monty's Double", so each time I see that film I feel very proud to have known him personally.

I would also like to add that my husband, Frank A Smith DSM "Greatest Raid of All" (and other raids) and myself Eileen M Smith W/231473 were married 63 years ago in Warley, Birmingham on 26 December 1942. We met on Boxing Day 1941, married on Boxing Day 1942, and have been "boxing" ever since! We are both in really good health and keep very busy helping the less fortunate, especially veterans.

Mrs Joan Frampton,
née Pte Jex W/69088
68 Alan Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 8EY

Dear Editor

After reading my last *Lioness* magazine, I applied to my branch of the Royal British Legion, and yesterday I received my H M Forces Veterans badge.

I am very proud to wear this now. Thank you for all the tales of ATS Life.

Editor: This badge has proved very popular so I make no apology for repeating it. WWII veterans should apply to: THE VETERANS' AGENCY, NORCROSS, BLACKPOOL, GY5 3WP

Mrs P O'Connell
3 Cumbrae Place, Aromoho, Wanganui,
New Zealand

Dear Editor

My husband was very interested in the story on page 10 in the last *Lioness* from Mrs Gladys Scully, née Cpl Allen. He was an ammunition examiner in the New Zealand RAOC. He served for twenty-six years and retired as a Sergeant Major.

I do enjoy reading my Lioness but would love to hear from more who served at the Army School of Education, Wilton Park, Beaconsfield. I was L/Cpl Pauline Yeo.

Mrs P M Bearham, née Phillips W/315195
40 Dunster Close, Romford RM5 3AT

Dear Editor

I was lucky in getting a ticket to the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of WWII. The RAF Band entertained us and there was a flypast of Chinook Helicopters - all crewed by women. Vera Lynn, Baroness Lady Thatcher and Cherie Blair were on the dais and Baroness Boothroyd accompanied The Queen.

It was a very moving ceremony and seeing we've had to work 60 years for this memorial - I suppose we should all be grateful!

I was a bit apprehensive about going after the terrorist bombing on the Thursday - but I said - "Phyllis, you went through the bombing of London in the Blitz - and survived the ATS" - so I changed my mind on Saturday morning and went. It will be something I'll remember to the end of my days.

Editor: Gold Star to Mrs Bearham - this was the first letter received about the unveiling on Saturday 9 July - it arrived on Thursday 12 July!

Sylvia Goldingham
35 St Peters Court, St Peters Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1RZ

Dear Editor

PDF Compressor Free Version

I enclose the draw ticket stubs and a donation towards the cost of the *Lioness*.

I never thought I'd get as old as I have, particularly having been told before I was 21 not to expect to ever do a full day's work. Pooh to Doctors! I have worked very hard in farming and with horses so a Life Membership has proved worthwhile!

Editor: I do hope that this letter will make you smile as much as it made me smile!

Mrs Lucy Bowyer
3 Berberis Road, Telford, Shropshire TF1 6XF

Dear Editor

I wish to express my grateful thanks for being chosen and given the honour of carrying the ATS Standard at the 10th July celebrations at Horse Guards along with the other veterans. It is something I will never forget and everyone was so kind and considerate. After handing over the standard to a younger person I was unable to break ranks as arranged. I finished up marching with the flow along The Mall into the forecourt of Buckingham Palace. Head held high but oh - my poor feet!



V E Day in Belgium 8th May 1945

What a pleasant surprise to see in *Lioness* 2/2005 a photograph of the girls from 487 (M) HAA Battery in the Monty Services club in Brussels. As I was their Sergeant at the time I recognise them all and can recall their names. There was only one mistake: A Millar was shown as A Willay. I was in the "Grande Place" at the time with many of the local policemen and am enclosing a photograph of the occasion. I am sure Mrs E Laurence-Smith MBE who was then Subaltern Goad will remember how cold the winter of January 1945 was and how we soldiered on regardless.



Filling sandbags at Neerjische

With the help of a Heroes Return Grant I returned to the area of our gunsite at Neerjische last year but was unable to find the actual spot as the village is quite built up now. Nobody was about to answer my questions so I came away with my memories.

P.S. Thank you for an excellent magazine the only problem is that I have to wait to get it off my husband who grabs it first as soon as it arrives.

PUNS 3

11. I went to a seafood disco last week.... and pulled a mussel.
12. Two fish swim into a concrete wall. One turns to the other and says, "Dam!".
13. Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft. Unsurprisingly it sank, proving once again that you can't have your kayak and heat it too.
14. A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour, the Manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse. "But why?" they asked, as he moved off. "Because" he said, "I can't stand chess-nuts boasting in an open foyer".

Poems

Mrs Diane M Libstone (ex ATS)
 'Cromarty', 98 Bishopscote Road, Luton,
 Beds LU3 1PB

My late husband wrote this poem as a tribute to those who had fought in the Korean War. It was read out at Westminster Abbey at a service to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Korean War. It was also read out in Wellington Cathedral, New Zealand and in Ontario, Canada at a big convention. Copies have been sold all over the country in aid of the Korean Veterans and it is his memorial.

Absent Veterans

Would that you could wander still
 Through grassy fields, by wooded hill
 When morning bird-song fills the air
 And yet another spring is here.

If only you could still feel sun
 Upon your face when winter's done,
 And smell sweet scented flowers fair
 When yet another summer's here.

But Fate decided otherwise
 And you, beneath Korean skies,
 A gallant band of comrades lie.
 Your duty done, your merit high.

No changing seasons can erase
 That once familiar name, that face
 Which comes and lingers in each thought
 Of those with whom we lived and fought.

D U R Libstone
 Private, the Gloucestershire Regiment
 Korea - 1950/51

Frances Nunnally (W/99790)
 7139 Cherokee Road, Richmond,
 VA 23225, USA

Sometimes at night when silence falls,
 I hear those long-forgotten calls:
 "Head up! Stand straight! Eyes to the right!"
 At drill I was a sorry sight!

We worked in office, cookhouse, store:
 And scrubbed many a mess hall floor.
 We manned the guns and fought the foe.
 But it is all so long ago!

Where once we stepped at lively pace,
 We mostly now remain in place.
 We think of old friends who have gone,
 We're tired. But we soldier on!

Mrs Irene Maclean, nee Whittaker
 (W/418121)

Girls in Green - Ode to a Recruit circa 1963

I left home one dark winter's morning
 Yes-it was January 1963.
 The first time I'd left all my family
 My handbag, my suitcase - and me.

I arrived in the middle of nowhere
 It was Lingfield - in time for tea.
 I was cold, and lonely, and hungry
 My handbag, my suitcase - and me.

"They" escorted us all to the cookhouse
 With a tin mug, and our own "cutlerie"
 All strangers, that cold winter evening.
 My tin mug, my handbag and me.

"They" soon had us all marching smartly
 And making our bed properlee
 And soon I was no longer lonely
 My tin mug, some good pals - all WRAC.

Kathleen McBurney
 53 Salisbury Place, Halifax, W Yorks HX3 6ND

An Invitation Accepted

I encountered two answer machines in my need to know,
 If my journey to London was a yes or no.
 For almost two days there was no way that showed
 I could be in Whitehall without the plan to unfold.
 Travelling to Kings X Station, keeping the timing spot on,
 Was the only way to go, I knew this all along.

Now I faced a dilemma as the news unfurled,
 My orderly thoughts were tossed into a disorderly whirl.
 When my confidence had assured me that nothing could spoil,
 My priority plan for a day to London Whitehall.

The suicide bombers had killed and been killed,
 On a London red bus and on underground railways
 with people filled,
 Everything had changed into a topsy turvy venture,
 But I held onto hope, I would 'phone the Major.

An answer 'phone gave me an answer so grand,
 The Queen will unveil the Monument in Whitehall as planned.
 Then a special 'phone number given by GNER - direct and formal,
 The trains will be running to Kings X as normal!

The girl stood at the pearly gates
Her head was bent and low.
She went up to the man outside
And asked "What have you done?"
"What have you done?" St Peter asked
"Is all your years down there".
"I was a WRAC Private, Sir,
For many, many years".
St Peter opened wide the gate
And gently pressed the bell.
"Just go inside and choose your harp...
You've had your share of Hell!"

Anon.
Submitted by Lt Col (Retd) VE Trout

Wishing for One More Year?

Today, dear Lord, I'm 80 and there's much I
haven't done,
So I hope dear Lord, you'll let me live until I'm
81.
But then, if I haven't finished all I want to do,
Would you please let me stay awhile until I'm 82.

So many places I want to go, so very much to
see,
So do you think you could manage to make it 83
The world is changing very fast, there is so
much to store,
I really would like it very much to live 'til 84.

And if by then I'm still alive, I'd like to stay 'til 85.
More planes, even rockets, up in the air, so I'd
really like to stick
and see what
happens to the world when I'm 86.

I know, dear Lord, it's a lot to ask (and it must be
nice in heaven).
But really I would like to stay, until I'm 87.
I know by then I won't be fast, and sometimes
will be late,
But it would be, oh so pleasant, to be around at
88.

I will have seen so many things and had a
wonderful time,
So, I'm sure that I'd be willing to leave at 89.
Maybe, just one more thing I'd like to say dear
Lord and I thank you
kindly,
But if it's OK with you, I'd love to live - to being
well past 90.

Submitted by Sandra Steadman
(W/389465 Sandy White) and "borrowed"
from the Sun Life/AXA Magazine

June Booth
3 Cedar Drive, Holbeach, Spalding PE12 7JP

Another Poem

That's an idea. Really lets
Hurry up and join the ATS.
And so we go all through the land
Straight to the door of Sarafand.

Once you are in - you have to stay
No matter what you think or say,
And far too many girls are present - you
May consider this unpleasant.

But from the first day on they start
To make you shining, make you smart.
And even cut - it is not fair-
Your beautifully curled long hair!

Like stranded on an island's shores
You look when once you leave the stores.
And many a tear was shed in vain
You won't look your old self again.

But you can also have your fun
In shouting, "Corporal, Sergeant, Ma'am!
I can't get up at 6 am
Why don't you understand that, Ma'am?"

But surely you are never late
For dinner dance and pay parade.
And so you are - I must agree-
After a month a fit trainee.

A soldier, more - an ATS
To bring us honour nonetheless.

I'M FINE

There's nothing the matter with me
I'm as healthy as I can be,
I've got arthritis in both my knees
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.
Arch supports I have for my feet
Or I wouldn't be able to walk on the street.
My pulse is weak and my blood is thin
But I'm awfully well for the state I'm in.
The moral is this as my tale unfolds,
That for you and me who are getting old
It's better to say 'I'm fine' with a grin
Than to let folks know the state we are in.
How do I know that my youth is all spent?
WELL, my 'got up and go' has got up and went!
Old age is golden or so it is said
But I sometimes wonder when I'm going to bed
With my ears in a drawer and my teeth in a cup
My specs on the table until I get up.
'Ere sleep overtakes me I say to myself
Is there anything else I could lay on the shelf?

Anon. Submitted by Crewe Branch

Obituaries – their final salute

IN MEMORIAM

PDF Compressor Free Version

The events in London on July 9th and 10th were wonderful and we were so privileged to have been able to take part in them.

It must continually be in our minds, particularly in this anniversary year, that hundreds of young girls never returned; who didn't live to take part in the euphoria at the end of the war and to join in the 60th anniversary of the end and who were not granted the sixty long years of peace that we have enjoyed.

It is good therefore that we speak of them from time to time; the twenty-six girls killed by enemy aircraft at Gt Yarmouth in 1943, the seventeen who lost their lives in an air crash when returning to Italy in 1945, the brave private Nora Caveney, the first ATS to be killed on duty, the five in the accident on Salisbury Plain in October 1943, those whose names are on the Brookwood Memorial, those who died in the Blitz – those whose graves are within their own home towns and are still tended by their relatives.

Joan Awbery

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

MRS DOROTHY WHITE

Mrs E Preston

12 Harris Street, Denton's Green, St Helen's WA10 2NW

The passing away of Dorothy White will leave a gap in many lives especially her four remaining ex-ATS friends. They were going on holiday to Croatia and a tour of Europe which has now been cancelled.

Dorothy wrote the following letter for the Company Newsletter:

"Experiences during the many years we served together could fill several volumes. It was 38 years before we ladies met again at a very tearful reunion – a week's stay in a Somerset cottage was the setting. It will forever live in our memories. The lapse of time was nothing – our first greetings were as though we had returned from a week's leave. We were loaned a REME flag by HQ and a huge cake adorned with the REME badge and a couple of bottles of bubbly.

Over the years we have had more holidays together and have wonderful memories".

Farewell, dear friend, you will be sadly missed

Mrs E Preston (Gish)
Kath Ripley
Mary Hegarty
Edna Cotton

LT COL (Retd) A V COBB MBE TD DL

Angela Cobb, née Stebbings, died at her home in Birchington, Kent on 18th June 2005 after a long illness

borne with great patience and fortitude. People who attended the Service of Thanksgiving on 4th July 2005 were to learn of the many aspects of her life. The church was packed with family, friends and representatives of the many organisations which had benefited from her support and friendship. The Lord Lieutenant of Kent led the official representation and the Revd Nicholas Stacey, with whom she worked on Kent County Council, gave an "Appreciation of Angela".

During her ATS service, Angela was given the task of forming the Band. Her eyes would light up with amusement when she remembered the high-ranking officers she was able to approach for support. It started as a small bugle band and attracted much publicity for the ATS. By early 1944 it had grown from 17 to 42 members including 9 pipers who were granted permission by His Majesty The King to wear skirts in Hunting Stewart Tartan. Soon 10 reed instrumentalists were added, thus enabling it to parade as a full military band, a drum and bugle band, a pipe band, a string orchestra band or a dance band. In April they played for the first time at a passing out parade at the Windsor OCTU in the presence of HRH Princess Mary, Princess Royal. At the end of the year its status was increased by being officially recognised as a Corps Band.

Angela enjoyed a happy family life with her husband David. Both continued their service with the Territorial Army in Kent and somehow Angela found time to give birth to her beloved daughter Carolyn. Time was also found for local politics and Angela became a County Councillor serving on the Social Services Committee at a time of great social change. She later became a Deputy Lieutenant for Kent.

Members of the Canterbury Branch of the WRAC Association feel a particular loss of their very popular Vice-President. Angela never stood on ceremony and was happy helping with any tasks that needed to be done. During her long year in hospital she remained appreciative and kind to all who looked after her, setting an example by her lack of self-pity or complaint. Someone wrote to her daughter, "She enlivened any party that she went to, and she was at most of them!"

Kate McGregor

MRS MEGAN JOHNSON

It is with great sadness we report the death of Mrs Megan Johnson. She joined the ATS in August 1942, training in Glencorse near Edinburgh for six weeks then on to Oswestry to use a Vickers and Sperry Predictor. She was 'claimed' by her elder ATS sister at Chiswell, Essex Battery 450 M/HAA then on to 476 Battery till January 1945. She went to Belgium (Oversche) (in deep snow in May) to Morbeke and ended up in Hanover in Germany in an office block. She always remembered an American Barracks close by. They used to play for reveille "I can't do without you". From there she was demobbed.

We shall always remember Megan as a very brave lady in

her later years. She joined us at London Branch in 1995 she had a very husky voice. As the years went by a notepad was needed for her to communicate with us. Even later this was impossible due to rheumatism in her hands. This did not deter Megan and often, travelling alone, she attended our Parades, Battle Reunions and our WRAC Grand Reunions.



Megan Johnson – with brocky!

Megan will be greatly missed. Her determination to continue her life as normal as possible will always be remembered.

Glacys Stewart

MRS HEATHER M B O'HAGAN **25 April 1925 – 2 June 2005**

One of the highlights of Heather O'Hagan's ATS/WRAC career was Coronation Day in 1953. Serving in Singapore, Lt Heather White, as she then was, led members of 4 Independent Company in a parade that brought hundreds of personnel together on a large grassy area called the Padang. "Marching on grass is not easy as you cannot hear the step", Heather wrote in an article in the *Lioness* in 2003. "But I called 'Eyes Right' at the saluting base and no one had fainted or fallen out, so we felt quite pleased".

A day that had begun at 5 am – to avoid the worst of the tropical heat – ended at 2 o'clock the following morning with Heather and her friends listening to The Queen broadcasting from 10,000 miles away. "It was a moving moment. We felt very nostalgic".

Heather was the second of five children, born and brought up in Somerset. She attended the Franciscan Convent in Taunton before, at the age of 16, leaving for the Royal Academy of Music in London. It was 1941 and she spent many nights fire-watching from the top of St Martin-in-the-Fields. A bout of TB brought her Academy education to a premature end, but when she recovered, she joined the Land Army – "the most useful years of my life". She joined the ATS in 1947, serving at Barton Stacey and Manorbier before being commissioned into the newly-formed WRAC and posted to Guildford. There she taught new recruits. Her friend and fellow officer Pauline Brown née Bower recalls: "Heather was very kind and understanding. If a recruit was in trouble or unhappy, it was Heather they would talk to. She was someone people felt they could trust".

It was also in Singapore, in 1953, that Heather married Alan O'Hagan, a Sapper Captain she had met at Guildford and who joined her directly from serving in the Korean

War. Heather then retired from the Corps, giving birth to David in 1954 and Simon in 1957.



The family settled in Kent and Heather spent many years working as a School Secretary and Matron. She was a member of the PCC and a WRVS meals-on-wheels organiser. A keen sportswoman, she had in her WRAC days played racket sports at District and Command level, she continued with her tennis into her late seventies.

In 1984 Heather and Alan moved to Langley, a village a few miles outside Maidstone. They had a wide circle of friends, and the superb garden Heather created was the backdrop to many a summer party. Three adored grandchildren came along before, in 2000. Heather and Alan suffered the dreadful shock and sadness of David's sudden death from coronary artery disease.

The huge response to Heather's death, from cancer in June 2005, a few weeks after her 80th birthday, testified to her gifts of kindness, practicality, humour and optimism which never failed her in spite of the great challenges that later life presented. The courage and faith she showed during her final illness were an example to all.

Alan O'Hagan Major RE(Retd), Butlers Farmhouse,
Horseshoes Lane, Langley, Maidstone, Kent ME17 3JY

MAJ (Retd) G F SIMMONDS MBE **15 January 1917 – 23 August 2005**

Maj Liz Simmonds enlisted into the ATS on 21st November 1941 when she was 24 years of age. Throughout the war, she was attached to the RAPC as a Pay Clerk based at the Army Pay Office in Reading. In September 1947, she qualified for officer training and went to OCTU at Windsor. Liz Simmonds' first posting on Commissioning was as a platoon officer (General Duties) in Eastern Command HQ Ind Coy.

On promotion to Captain in 1954, Liz was posted to the

Army School of Education at Beaconsfield as the OC WRAC Detachment and Instructional Admin Officer. This was to be one of her happiest and most memorable tours.

She was a keen sportswoman and is best remembered for her prowess at both squash and tennis. Her Commandant wrote that "Capt Simmond's work has been marked by energy and drive, attention to detail and a willingness to assist whatever the task. She has controlled the WRAC personnel under her command in a most capable and efficient manner and though at times this has not been easy, her care and man management has resulted in a happy and contented detachment". It was during this tour that Liz was awarded the MBE in 1958. Her final tour was from 1970 - 72 as 2IC at the WRAC College at Camberley.



Although small in stature, she made up for it with her huge personality - she had tremendous energy and was a great contributor. She will be remembered by us all with great affection.

SJW

Alice Elizabeth Davey

Alice Elizabeth Davey, who died on Saturday 20 August 2005 at the age of 90, joined the ATS in December 1939 serving in a number of locations in the UK before moving firstly to Holland in 1945 and then to Hamburg. In May 1949 Elizabeth had completed her wartime engagement and took discharge but by November she had enlisted into the newly formed WRAC. During the next 18 years Elizabeth served at home, BAOR and the Far East with the Royal Signals, RAOC, RCT and RAEC. Elizabeth, or Betty, as she was known, served as Chief Clerk WRAC 1, PA to DWRAC, Chief Clerk Q (Routine) HQ 1(BR) Corps, Chief Clerk WRAC Centre and Chief Clerk to DDWRAC. In 1968 she was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal in recognition of 27 years "good, valuable faithful and meritorious service".

Elizabeth retired in 1968 to Shipdham in Norfolk where she lived with her mother, caring for her until her death at the age of 93. Elizabeth immersed herself in community life becoming a Committee Member in the local Horticultural Society and an active member of the Catholic Parish of Dereham. She worked tirelessly for the shrine at Walsingham taking her turn running the gift shop. Elizabeth was a Life Member of the WRAC Association and a member of the ATS Dinner Club.

In 2001 Elizabeth suffered a stroke that resulted in her

needing Nursing Home care. She moved to Chatterwood House in Liss, Hampshire so as to be closer to her goddaughter Anne Gullborne. Although confined to a wheelchair Elizabeth retained a sharp wit and a clear memory. Elizabeth spent all her life helping others whether teaching clerical skills to recruits at the WRAC Training Centre; taking sick or disabled on Lourdes Pilgrimages or giving gardening advice to a neighbour. After her stroke she was concerned that she had become a burden on others.

I first met Elizabeth when on a Clerical Training course at Yemil where I witnessed her kind and generous nature at first hand. Over the years and subsequent meetings she became a firm friend, Godmother to my second daughter and Auntie to my children and grandchildren. She was part of our family, attending all the weddings, baptisms and family gatherings. By moving her to Liss we hoped to repay in some small measure Elizabeth's kindness over so many years. On 10th April Elizabeth enjoyed her 90th birthday at her goddaughter's home in Petersfield surrounded by her adopted family.

Mrs Ann FitzPatrick, nee Heath W/395462
Winchester Branch



Major General Errol Lonsdale, the Army's Transport Officer in Chief presents WOH Davey with the Meritorious Service Medal

MAJ (Retd) P R RUSTON MBE
24 September 1918-22 November 2005



Pat Ruston was born in West Bromwich. After attending West Bromwich Grammar School, she was initially employed as a shorthand typist at Mills Aluminium Works before joining the Civil Service as a Post Office Switchboard Operator and then as a Supervisor Class II.

PDF Compressor Free Version

She enlisted into the ATS, again as a Switchboard Operator in 1942 and spent 5 years in the ranks before being commissioned in 1947 and 2 years later transferring into the newly formed WRAC. Throughout her career, she was attached to the Royal Signals serving in Aldershot, Scotland, Germany and for a long period, as an Instructor at the School of Signals, then in Camerick.

In 1967 she was posted to Cambridge as the Senior WRAC Officer in 54 (EA) Signal Regiment (TA), in time becoming the permanent Squadron Admin Officer when the unit was reformed as part of 38 (E) Signal Regiment (V) in 1967. She held the post until her retirement in 1983 when she devoted herself with equal conviction and commitment to the Barnado's Charity Shop in Royston.



Universally known by all ranks as "Auntie Pat", she devoted herself to the welfare of the soldiers within the Squadron, frequently being mistaken by them for the Squadron Commander. She took huge pride in her work as an Admin Officer, always insisting that the pay sheets were completed on time, even if this meant completing them in bed! In younger days a gifted athlete, she maintained an interest in the sport to the end, as she did in crosswords and newspapers in general.

An active member of the Altrusens, the Lady Taverners, the Mission to Seafarers and the WRAC Association as well as a stalwart of the RSA Blandford Reunion, Pat was awarded the MBE in 1983. Fitting recognition of a life of devoted service to her country.

Brigadier D A Hargreaves

MRS IRENE TRUEMAN, NÉE SMITH

My late wife, Irene Trueman, W/34461, served in the ATS from 1939 until 1946 when she left and we were married. She died on 19 July 2003.

In about 1943 she joined the Military Police and eventually became a Cpl. She also served with the American Soldiers at the Nuremberg Trials and escorted German prisoners. She rejoined the Military Police after we were married. We could not find a house but I think she came out again in 1950. We were still married and had a good life. But it all went wrong when I was 78 years old I had 3 strokes and she looked after me. But 4 years ago she lost her memory all together and in January she had to go into hospital at Sandwell. She was later transferred to Rowley Regis where she died. She had many friends.

I myself served in the Royal Navy from 1940 (til 1946) in both the Russian and Malta Convoys.

Mr Henry Trueman



*Photo taken in Glasgow
April 1991*



Taken in Trafalgar Square with Olive Dallas

LT COL (Retd) MURIEL GIBSON 29 November 1912 – 22 October 2003

Muriel Gibson was born in Glasgow and joined the VAD at the outbreak of war. It was obvious that she enjoyed and excelled in military life and was soon encouraged to join the ATS. She served in Africa, Italy and Germany and was mentioned in despatches for her courage and dedication to duty. Lt Col Gibson was always fair and proved an inspiring leader even under the most trying of conditions. Although she returned to civilian life after the war, she decided to rejoin the Army and served another 23 years in the WRAC.

After retirement from the WRAC, Lt Col Gibson had active interests in the Red Cross, St Andrew Society, Royal Scottish Country Dance Society of which she was organising Secretary for over 10 years and the Scottish National Party. She was active in politics before joining the Army and had to put them to one side whilst she served. However, on leaving the service, she again became thoroughly involved and she stood in the 1970 general election for West Edinburgh.

Within the WRAC Association, she will best be remembered for her long and active membership of the Edinburgh Branch even although recent illness prevented her from attending as much as she would have wished.

JAF

BAILEY Miss Anne Bailey of Cornwall on 17 May 2005
BANTON Mrs Dorothy Banton, née Heath, of Ellesmere Court, on 17 October 2004. ATS
BROCKBANK Miss Rhoda Brockbank, of Morecambe on 2 July 2005. ATS/WRAC
BROMLEY Mrs Isobel Bromley, née Blacks, of County Antrim on 23 September 2005. ATS
BROWN Mrs Joy Brown, née Labrum, of Suffolk. ATS
BUCKLY Mrs Patricia Buckly, née Taylor, on 23 July 2005. ATS
CAMPBELL Mrs J Campbell, née Mackinnon, of Glasgow in July 2005. ATS
CHAMBERS Mrs Rita Chambers, née Carroll, on 12 October 2005. WRAC
CHANNING Mrs Audrey Channing of Middlesex, on 10 December 2005. ATS/WRAC
COCHRANE Mrs Josephine Mary Cochrane, née Lovell, of Exeter. ATS
COOK Mrs Hazel Doreen Cook, née Curtis, of Wolverhampton on 27 June 2005. ATS
COLISON Miss Barbara H Colison of Tarrant Keyneston, on 15 October 2005. ATS/WRAC
COLLEY Mrs Margaret D Colley, née Lander, of St Leonards-on-Sea, on 11 October 2005. ATS
COOKE Mrs Patricia Cooke, née Taylor, of Leicester on 13 September 2005. ATS
COVEN Mrs Edwina Olwyn Coven CBE, née Instone, of Eastbourne on 15 December 2005. ATS/WRAC
CURRAN Miss Isabel Patricia of Hastings on 7 July 2005
DOUGHTY Mrs Ethel Doughty, née Ellis, of Wednesbury on 5 October 2005. ATS
DOWIE Miss Mary Dowie of Dumfries on 7 December 2005. ATS
EVANS Miss M E (Betty) Evans of Swansea on 1 January 2006. ATS
FORDHAM Mrs Susan Fordham, née Phillips, of Falkirk on 27 September 2005. ATS
GILL Mrs Irene Gill, née James of Elizabeth South Australia on 24 June 2005. ATS
GRIGG Mrs Hilda Christin Grigg of Uttoxeter on 11 December 2005. ATS
HANNON Mrs S B (Bell) Hannon of Donaghadee on 5 October 2005. WRAC
HAWKINS Mrs Aileen Daisy Doreen Hawkins, née Clough, of Gillingham, Dorset on 10 January 2006. ATS
HOPE Mrs Blanche Hope, née James of Nantwich on 15 July 2005. ATS
HOULDSWORTH Mrs Nora Houldsworth, nee Hay of Bradford on 8 September 2005. ATS
HUDSON Miss Helen Elizabeth Hudson of Liverpool on 12 September 2005. ATS
JEFFERYS Mrs Norah Jeffreys, née Godfrey, of Colyton on 3 July 2005. ATS
JOHNSON Mrs Magan Johnson, née Farr, of London. ATS
JOHNSTON Mrs Jean Peggy Johnston. Southampton. ATS
KEATING Mrs Olive Keating of Chelmsford, Essex on 20 September 2005. ATS
KEMP Miss Cecilia (Kempie) Kemp of Derby on 19 November 2005. WRAC
LIVELY Miss Gladys Kathleen Lively of Amesbury on 2 December 2005. WRAC
LUDLOW Joan Ludlow of Eastbourne in December 2005. ATS
MARTIN Mrs Ella Martin, née Whiffin, of Wealdstone on 12 July 2005. ATS
MASON Mrs Edith Mason, née Stoker, of Clifton, Yorkshire on 25 October 2005. ATS
MATTY Mrs Peggy Margaret Matty, née Smith, of Burton-upon-Trent on 7 November 2004. ATS
McFARLANE-MIRRLEES Mrs Brenda McFarlane-Mirrlees, née Hibbs, of Bournemouth in September 2005. ATS
McGILL Mrs Esther McGill, née Hillam, of Seaham on 1 August 2005. ATS
MEADE Mrs Mary Freda Meade, née Tully, of Australia on 17 September 2005. ATS

MILLS Mrs Isabel Scot Mills, née Kelly, of Shrewsbury on 17 December 2005. ATS/WRAC
MOLE Mrs C Mole, née McNeil, of Erskine on 7 July 2005. ATS
MORRIS Mrs H Morris, née Norris, of Sherborne on 10 July 2005. ATS
MORRIS Mrs L Morris, née Whittle, of Burgess Hill in October 2005. ATS
MUSGRAVE Miss Dorothy Musgrave of Whitby in July 2005. ATS
ORMISTON Mrs Theresa Ormiston, née Enoch, of Leeds in July 2005. ATS
PACE Mrs Mollie Pace of Ainsdale, Lancs on 27 August 2005. ATS
POMROY Mrs Freda Mary Pomroy, née Cox, of Ontario on 29 October 2005. ATS
POWELL Mrs Eunice Vera Powell, née Judge, of Australia on 17 October 2005. ATS
RAY Mrs Ivy Ethel Ray, née Lane, of Looe, Cornwall on 16 October 2005. ATS
REES Mrs Margaret Sarah Rees, née Jones, of Crewe in March 2005. ATS
ROBBINS Mrs Margaret Robbins, née Aitken, of Billericay on 7 August 2005. ATS
ROBINSON Mrs Frances (Frankie) Dorothy Robinson, née Piesing, of Harold Wood on 2 March 2005. ATS
ROTT Mrs Win Rott, née Jaynes, of Swansea on 20 June 2005. ATS
SEARLE Mrs O C Searle of Middlesbrough in July 2005. ATS
SHARP Mrs Hilda Sharp, née Griffith, of Leicester on 24 February 2005. ATS/WRAC
SPEDDING Mrs Irene Spedding of Middlesbrough in June 2005. ATS
STANBRIDGE Miss Rose M Stanbridge of Weymouth on 30 September 2005. ATS
TAGGARTY Mrs Catherine Burnett, née Watt, of Glasgow on 4 December 2005. ATS
TAUNTON Mrs Barbara Taunton of Salisbury on 11 November 2005. ATS
TOWNSEND Mrs Margot E M W Townsend, née Roach, of Andover on 12 September 2005. WRAC
TRUEMAN Mrs Irene Trueman, née Smith, of West Bromwich, Birmingham on 19 July 2005. ATS/WRAC
TRUMAN Mrs Joyce S Truman, née Warren, of Great Missenden on 1 October 2005. ATS
VAUDIN Mrs Elsie May Vaudin, née Serle, of Dorset on 29 July 2005. ATS
WADE Mrs Marie E Wade, née Lewis, of Morden in July 2005. ATS
WAKEFORD Miss Margaret Wakeford of Aberdeen on 27 July 2005. ATS
WALKER Mrs E R Walker of Stirling on 14 March 2005. ATS
WARDLAW Mrs Violet Wardlaw of Chelmsford on 2 October 2005. ATS
WHEELER Mrs Violet May Wheeler of Chippenham. ATS
WHITE Miss Dorothy Rosa Ida White of Bicknoller on 14 August 2005. ATS
WHITER Mrs Phyllis Whiter, née Partridge, of Essex on 18 August 2005. WRAC
WILCOCKSON Mrs Eileen Elizabeth Wilcockson, née Duncan, of Woodbridge on 29 March 2005. ATS
WILLIAMS Mrs Margaret Matilda (Peg) Williams, née Warner, of Charing on 27 July 2005. WRAC
WOOD Mrs Winifred Wood, née Archer, of Birmingham on 4 October 2005. ATS
WORLAND Mrs Elizabeth Ann Worland of St Leonards on Sea on 14 August 2005. ATS
WRIGHT Mrs Mary Wright, née Hill, of Darlington on 31 July 2005. WRAC
YATES Mrs Sylvia Yates, née Franklin, of Essex on 29 November 2005. ATS

THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

for the year ended 31 October 2005

	Notes	Unrestricted			Total	Total
		General Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	2005	2004
INCOME & EXPENDITURE						
Incoming resources:						
Subscriptions	1	2,146	2,050	–	4,196	3,038
Income from branches		76,422	–	–	76,422	61,905
<i>Lioness</i> publication income	2	12,454	–	–	12,454	15,799
Investment income	3	15,744	–	166,477	182,221	172,804
Donations	4	1,505	–	21,724	23,229	229,678
Other income	5	1,229	–	311	1,540	1,315
Total incoming resources		109,500	2,050	188,512	300,062	484,539
Resources expended:						
Direct charitable expenditure:						
Grants & donations	6	–	–	171,340	171,340	151,431
Expenditure by branches		70,054	–	–	70,054	69,743
<i>Lioness</i> publication costs		16,653	–	–	16,653	15,986
Other expenditure:						
Management & administration	7	3,427	–	20,509	23,563	29,086
Grand Reunion			–	–	–	–
Total resources expended		92,287	–	194,403	286,689	266,913
NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES BEFORE TRANSFERS						
Transfers between funds		17,213	2,050	(5,891)	13,372	217,626
		3,213	(3,213)	–	–	–
NET INCOMING RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR		20,426	(1,163)	(5,891)	13,372	217,626
OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS & LOSSES						
Profits/Losses on investments:						
Unrealised		31,801	–	425,958	457,759	230,693
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		17	52,227	(1,163)	420,067	471,131
Fund balances brought forward at 1 November 2004		405,440	29,444	4,156,152	4,591,036	4,142,717
Fund balances carried forward at 31 October 2005			£457,667	£28,281	£4,576,219	£5,062,167
					£4,591,036	

The net movement in funds for the year arises from the charity's continuing activities.

No separate Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses has been presented as all such gains and losses have been dealt with in the Statement of Financial Activities.

THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

BALANCE SHEET

PDF Compressor Free 31 October 2005

	Notes	2005	2004
FIXED ASSETS			
Investments	10	4,417,859	3,860,899
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock of badges & souvenirs		1,854	2,299
Association standard		209	199
Debtors	11	39,220	1,295
Cash at bank & in hand	12	684,449	737,980
		725,732	741,773
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	13	81,424	11,636
NET CURRENT ASSETS		644,308	730,137
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		£5,062,167	£4,591,036
FUNDS OF THE ASSOCIATION			
Unrestricted funds:			
General funds		457,667	405,440
Designated funds:			
Membership life subscription fund	14	6,853	7,381
<i>Lioness</i> life subscription fund	14	21,428	22,063
Restricted funds:			
The Benevolent Funds	15	3,848,358	3,490,374
The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund	16	727,861	665,778
TOTAL FUNDS	17	£5,062,167	£4,591,036



Back row (L to R): Anne Fossett, Noreen Byrne, Rae Stewart, Brenda Whitton, Laurie Torrie, Liz (Carol) Morris, Sandy Hanna, Hazel Crocket.

Middle Row (L to R): Lynn Foy, Joy Sancto, Elizabeth Evans, Audrey Bradbrook, Margaret Kerr, Pat Merchant, Ann Upritchard, Judy Watson, June Hawkhead, Jackie Warhurst, Sue Gallantree

Front Row (L to R): Rosalyn Watson, Marlene Coulter, Josephine Watts, Bridget Smith, Gwen Smith, Brenda Joyce.

Absent from picture are: Terry Crow, Rose Harding, Dot Ryder, Rita Priddle (NAAFI)