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LIONESS



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THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 206184

Founded in 1919

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Dedication of the ATS Statue, July 2006

Back Cover

PTIs Reunion, September 2006

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EDITORIAL



Welcome to the first edition of *Lioness* of 2007. As you will soon see, this edition must hold the record for the greatest number of photographs – nearly 190 in total! I suppose that it is a reflection of the digital camera age. However, I would just ask that you use some restraint when sending them in – one or two really good ones will do! Also bear in mind that we are still on a “dial-up” Internet connection so we easily get overloaded when too much is attached to an e-mail.

I am delighted to say that this edition has many of my favourite “we met up again through the *Lioness*” letter/articles. Please do keep sending them in. Also, many of you have enjoyed the hospitality of the “Not Forgotten” Association. This is a remarkable charity responsible for providing outings and social occasions for veterans and we are very grateful for all their invitations.

Could I make a plea about keeping us up to date with your address? There is a form in the pullout section to make it easy for you. It would be good if we could reduce the number of returned magazines we receive...or indeed the telephone calls from members who wonder why they have not received their copy and then remember that they have moved and not informed us!

I do hope you enjoy this edition. There are lots of photographs and the majority are of ex ATS or WRAC enjoying themselves. Being in the Association is all about camaraderie and reunions – make sure you attend all the functions you can. I know that some of you cannot for very good reasons so my wish is that the photographs may still bring back happy memories for you of reunions and events you have enjoyed in the past.

Jane Freebairn

Message from the Vice President



Although I am writing this on 21 December 2006, I know that you will not be reading it until well into the New Year. I do hope that you all had a lovely Christmas and that 2007 will be a good year for you all. For me, it will be a very special year as I will be retiring from the Army after 36 years service – 21 spent in the WRAC and 15 in the Adjutant General's Corps. My final day of service will be 8 November 2007 so it will be appropriate that my

last duty in uniform will be to represent the WRAC Association at the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on that very day. Although I am leaving the Regular Army, I shall continue my work with the Association; indeed, I shall have more time to devote to you all. (Did I hear a groan from the General Secretary?!). My diary is already filling up with Branch visits and Area Reunions which is the most important and most enjoyable part of being your Vice President.

The *Lioness* continues to be a lifeline for so many of our members who are unable to attend Branch meetings or Reunions. I think you will agree that the last edition was exceptional with lots of interesting articles and photographs – please keep them coming! At the last meeting of Association Council, we discussed whether subscription costs (which include the cost of the *Lioness*) should be raised as the *Lioness* barely breaks even. Subscriptions have not been increased since 1996! The Trustees took into account that the majority of our members were pensioners who should not be discouraged in any way from renewing their membership. However, we agreed that we should spread the word to individuals and Branches that the *Lioness* runs on a shoestring and encourage them to make donations to the journal. In the meantime, I would like to thank our Editor publicly on your behalf for producing such a superb journal.

The Executive Committee of Council is just embarking on a large publicity and advertising campaign to increase awareness of the Association to encourage new members. We plan to use local radio stations and newspapers as well as the national press. Some Branches are already very active in this field and have already done local radio broadcasts and we are keen to spread the word – so watch this space!

I am pleased to report that the work on the Commemorative Plaque and benches on our Association Grove at the National Memorial Arboretum has now been completed. The Grove is becoming increasingly more attractive now that the planting has begun to mature. The three benches, dedicated to the QMAAC, ATS and the WRAC, are now in place and give the visitors the opportunity to sit for quiet contemplation. Some members of the ATS have collected separately and had a statue of an ATS servicewoman erected on a separate site within the Arboretum. Obviously, as an Association committed to all three services, we could not afford to erect a statue to each of these Corps so concentrated on making the main Association Grove an interesting and significant place to visit.

All that remains is for me to wish you all Good Health and Happiness in 2007 – whatever challenges it might bring. I look forward to seeing as many of us as possible during the year at one of our many Association occasions.

Sue Westlake

Articles of Interest

THE QUEEN MOTHER'S MEMORIAL GARDEN

By Mrs. (Retd.) Isobel Gordon, TD
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It was an honour for me to represent the WRAC Association when Her Majesty the Queen opened the Queen Mother's Memorial Garden in Edinburgh on 7 July 2006. The Queen wore an attractive coat and hat in lilac and was accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh and the Duke and Duchess of Rothesay – as the Prince of Wales and his wife are styled in Scotland.

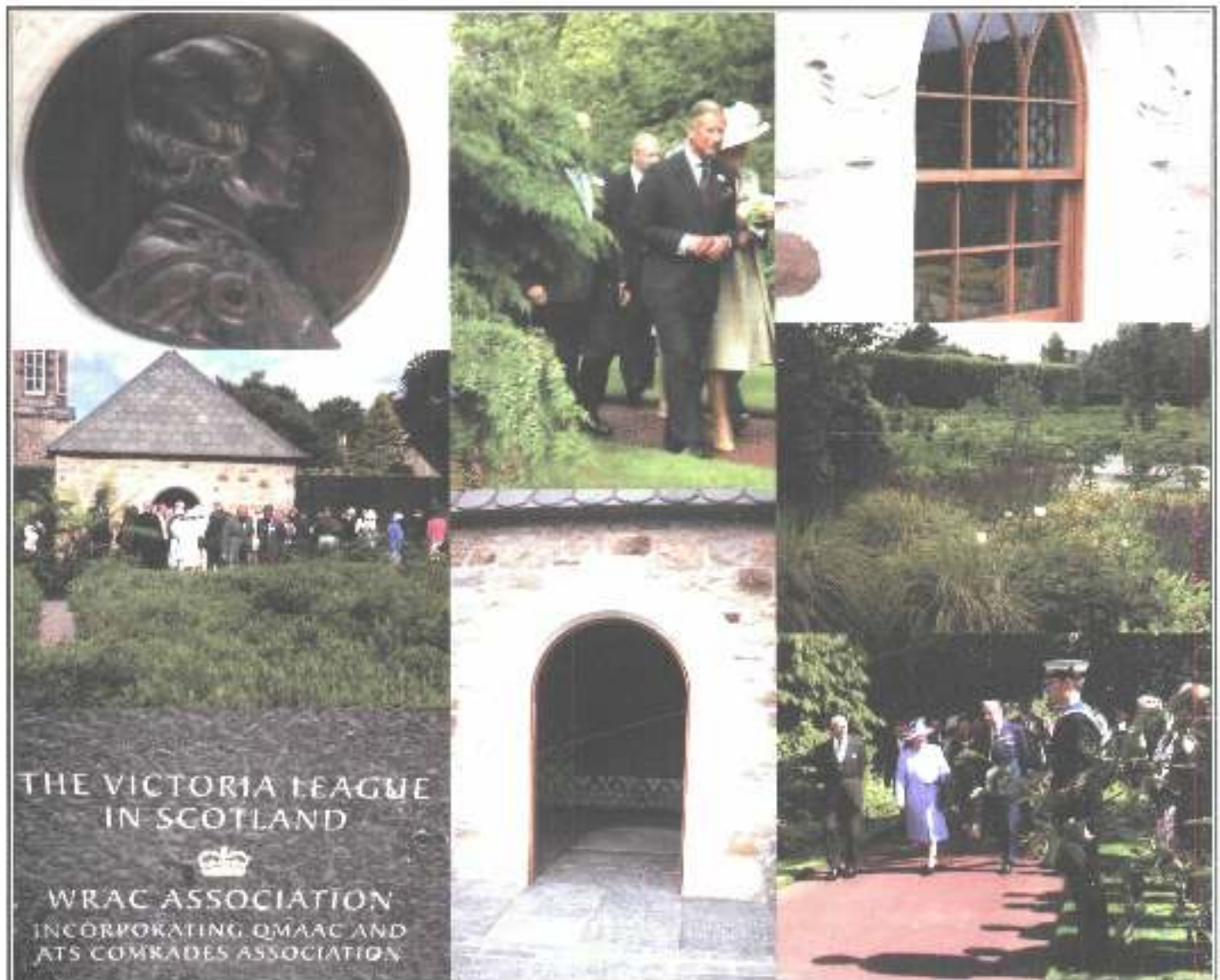
After an introduction by David Bowes-Lyon, a cousin of the Queen Mother, and a brief speech by the architect, Lachlan Stewart, the Duke of Rothesay made a touching speech about his 'beloved grandmother' and about the Memorial Garden project before inviting the Queen to open the Garden formally.

When the Royal party left, I was able to have a close look at the Garden which is situated within the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh. There are four circular "secret" enclaves surrounding a central labyrinth which forms an "E" for Elizabeth. On the east side there is a

lovely little sandstone pavilion, roofed with Cairnness slate, which reflects the Queen Mother's love for the Castle of Mey in the north of Caithness. Inside, the walls are clad with patterns of seashells and pebbles which were collected by school children across the length and breadth of Scotland as an educational project. In the centre is a relief bust of the Queen Mother copied exactly from the bronze of King George VI and the Queen Mother in the church on the Royal estate at Sandringham.

I walked around the Garden's perimeter which is lined with slabs incised with the titles of the organisations with which the Queen Mother had an association and of those who contributed to the Garden's creation. And yes, there it was – "The WRAC Association incorporating the QMAAC and ATS Comrades Association".

There are many more thoughtful details, too numerous to mention here, touching on the Queen Mother's life. If you are visiting Edinburgh, I would urge you to see the Memorial Garden for yourself. It is a lovely tribute to our late and much loved patron.



THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET! FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF THE LADIES WHO LUNCH IN LINCOLN

Chris Corker

In the last edition of the **PDF Compressor Free Version** entitled 'Ladies Who Lunch in Lincolnshire' and I am now updating you all on our progress. Due to articles in a selection of the Lincolnshire Press and a 20 minute interview on BBC Radio Lincolnshire, our number has grown from the initial 3 to 22 and we are now (as at November) in a position to form the 'Lincoln & District Branch' of the Association at the beginning of 2007. I am now throwing down the gauntlet to all WRAC. Can you do better?

If you were at the WRAC Dinner Club on the night of Saturday 7 October, imagine a thread with no beginning and no end, which, as we sat that night, was touching each and everyone of us and going out beyond the walls of the Holiday Inn in Birmingham and reaching all those who could not be with us, whether in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and especially all those thousands of women within the UK. They do not know it is there but it is binding us all into this unique and special sisterhood – an extremely exclusive club – and if they did but once experience the indescribable weekends that we all share, they would never want to miss another. Some may belong to the Association and others may not even know it exists.

Now who is going to take up the challenge and see what you can achieve in 6 months? A letter to the Editor of your local paper is all you need to get started, as out there are women who need just that personal touch and someone to contact. Start as we did with a lunch or drink in a local pub or a trendy wine bar. Someone, somewhere is waiting to hear from you!!

Ladies in Lincolnshire please contact:
Chris Corker (née Appleby) 01526 830483
email: Corker3@aol.com
Gwyneth Stratten (née Hayes) 01400 230656
email: g.stratten@btinternet.com

VOLUNTEER – ATS

W/171294 Mrs Mary Hughes, née Lloyd
105 Preston Road, Longridge, Preston, Lancs PR3 3BA

In November 1941, my twin sister volunteered to go in the ATS. I volunteered in June 1942 and our two younger sisters were called up in the next 12 months. They all served with the Royal Signals but I went into 559(M) IIAA Battery, 168 Regiment RA and became a Predictor operator.

After training at Lancaster, Oswestry and the Isle of Anglesey, our Battery was sent to a gun site at Wolverhampton and then, in 1943, we moved to Kingswinford. As the War wore on, more Batteries were transferred to the East Coast and in 1944 our Battery was sent to the shore ship, HIMS GANGES, at Harwich Harbour. We had only been there a week when the doodlebugs started coming over. Life became rather hectic with the constant air raids. I had always liked

Patience Strong's poems and writings and, pre-War every Saturday, one of her poems was printed in a daily newspaper so I always bought one. Luckily this continued during the War years. After a particular busy night I decided to write to Patience and ask her if she could write a poem for all 'Ack Ack' girls. I told her a little of what we did. As I was only a Private, I composed the letter but got my friend Corporal Mabel Snape to sign it, hoping for a quick reply. We soon received a nice reply, which I still have.

Patience said it wasn't always easy to write a special request poem but she would do her best. Not long afterwards, our poem, BARRAGE was printed.

Editor: I was very pleased to publish this poem in Lioness 2/2006 and thought that you would be interested in the background story.



'QUIET CORNER'

Daily Mirror, Geraldine House, Jettie Lane, London, ECA

February 17th 1944.

Dear Miss Snape,

I thank you for the letter which I received from the 22 girls of your Battery and for their kind words of appreciation of my 'Quiet Corner'.

It was good of you all to let me know that you enjoy reading my little verses and I can assure you that the receipt of such letters from my unknown friends, my readers, gives me great help and encouragement in my work.

With regard to your request, it is difficult for me to make promises about special verses but I will do my best to get one published for the special benefit of the Ack-Ack girls who are doing such a fine job of work.

Again thanking you for your interest and with every good wish to all of you, I am,

Yours sincerely,

Patience Strong

Letter from Patience Strong



Mattie Watson, née Bruce, Mary Hughes, née Lloyd and Hilda Stringer, née Walton

At the end of the War, our Battery was disbanded and we transferred to other units. Luckily my special friends, Hilda Walton, now Stringer and Mattie Bruce, now

Watson and myself, were transferred into the RAOC and sent to the RAOC Depot at Feltham. We retrained as Clerks and were kept busy making up orders for the war in Burma and other places until our demob in 1946. We are still in touch and have met up at many reunions over the years. ~~Maureen~~ **PDF Compressor Free Version** Hilda wasn't able to make it. Perhaps there are some other ladies who were in 559 Battery who may remember us.

EDEN CAMP

W/53010 Mona Schofield, nee Woolfenden
Zen111921@zen.co.uk

The Rochdale Branch went to Eden Camp in Yorkshire on Sunday 10 September and had a really good time. The proprietor opens the Camp to ex members of the Services and holds a Service of Remembrance which is attended by all the Services. I think there were 250 standards on parade and, although we members are all too frail today to carry our standard, the ATS standard was paraded by Lauren, a cadet from Rochdale Army Cadets. She said afterwards how proud she felt to be associated with such a terrific parade. For the last two or three years she has carried our standard on Remembrance Parade.

Eden Camp is open nearly all the year round. There are 21 huts, all with wartime themes which are very well presented, and there are picnic facilities, or you can purchase a meal from different cafes (all with a military theme). We really enjoyed our day there and wondered if other people who didn't know about it would be interested in a visit.

The address of the Camp is:

Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 6RT
Phone No. 01653 697777
E-mail admin@edencamp.co

A UNIQUE CHARITY SHOP

W/406423 Pte J M Knight, 27 Manby Road,
Great Malvern, Worcs WR14 3BU



Pte J Knight second from the right....then



And now.....

On a return journey from Port Merion recently, my family and I decided to take a refreshment break at Welshpool and to my astonishment came across a WRAC Charity Shop. Unfortunately due to the lateness of the hour the premises were closed. My curiosity finds it very interesting to know if this WRAC shop is unique. I must admit to being totally unaware of this or any other Charity shops existence.

Editor: I am sure we would all be grateful for any more information about this shop. Who can help us out?

NORMANDY VISIT - SEPTEMBER 2006

Capt Andrew McArthur TD

WRAC girl Ann McNeill participated in a visit to Normandy in September 2006 along with Royal British Legion Scotland Hamilton Branch Vice - Chairman, Andy McArthur. Ann supports the RBL's Glasgow and Western Counties Standard Bearing Drill Team of which



Ann McNeill with RBL Scotland colleagues

Andy is a member. They joined a party of Normandy Veterans and fellow Standard Bearers visiting the region. Staff Sergeant George McNulty, 4/7 Royal Dragoon Guards, Sergeant Angus Morrison, Royal Scots Fusiliers and Signaller Alexander (Sandy) Munro provided continuous commentary. Their experiences gave the visiting party a personal insight to the events at Normandy where they had landed and fought through.

At the village of Cruelly, George spoke at the Memorial to the 4/7 Royal Dragoon Guards. Adjacent is the chateau allocated to Field Marshal Montgomery for use as a Headquarters. He chose to use a mobile caravan to follow the rhythm of the battle and maintain contact with the fighting units. The village "casse" gave the BBC a vantage point to overview the battle and relay reports back to Britain. The town of St Mary Eglise Airborne Museum contained many items of interest depicting the Allies airborne landings. The layout takes the visitors through the story of the landings with an emotional documentary showing film footage taken in 1944. Pegasus Bridge provided a fitting stop at Café Gondre where George was warmly greeted by Madame Arlette Gondre, a life long friend. At the Village of Hermanville a wreath was laid in respect of the troops who fought in that sector of Normandy Beach. Angus was delighted to meet the local cat owner Enri and his faithful dog Winston. The visit culminated in a visit to Arromanches. The Commonwealth Graves visit allowed members of the party to pay individual respect to the fallen. In Arromanches a wreath laying service took place at the Memorial on the sea front. The Standard Bearers paid homage along with the many visitors to the region who witnessed the ceremony. Andy presented Ann with a WRAC Tie Pin to thank her for her participation.



THE "NOT FORGOTTEN" ASSOCIATION BUCKINGHAM PALACE GARDEN PARTY Joan Whittingham, Norfolk Branch

At the beginning of May the Secretary of our Branch rang to say I had been nominated for an invitation to a garden party at Buckingham Palace on 19 July. I was so thrilled to have this privilege and accepted straight away without consulting my diary. Four members were invited from our Branch, Linda Craver our Chairman, Joan Asberry our Secretary, Joyce Hale from Dereham and

myself. We decided to travel to London on the day before the party to give us time to settle down.

We met up at Norwich Station on a very hot morning and travelled, fortunately, in a train with air conditioning that actually functioned. On arrival we shared a taxi to our hotel in Belgravia. In the afternoon and in spite of the intense heat, Linda, who is an avid book enthusiast and I, braved the tropical heat of the tube to do some shopping. Joan and Joyce wisely spent the afternoon resting and getting up their strength for the next day! The weather on those two days were the hottest on record – 52C (125.6F) on the buses and 47C (115.6F) on the tube.

Early next morning, Linda and I braved the tube again, Linda to a few bookshops and me to do some exploring. I was keen to discover Hanover Square where some of my father's forebears had lived in the 1800s. On arrival at Oxford Circus we fell into a bookshop serving life-saving coffee. Hanover Square was not far away and I was very pleased to see the area where my distant relations had lived. There are a few of the lovely 5-storey buildings still standing between the modern office blocks. In St George's Street, adjoining the Square, I saw St George's church where, from researching my father's family, I knew that my great grand-father had married. I left Linda relaxing in the little park nearby and went to explore the beautiful church. The churchwarden, who gave me some literature about the church, told me a number of famous people had married there, including Asquith, Pitt, Roosevelt, Gladstone, the novelist George Eliot and the poet Shelley. On returning home I checked computer records and found quite a number of my family were involved in that area.



Joyce Hale, Joan Asberry and Joan Whittingham

We all met up at the hotel; changed into our finery, got a taxi, found a shady spot in St. James' Park until it was time to be admitted to the Palace. At the gate the police checked our credentials, wished us a happy afternoon and we entered the Palace into the State Rooms and were welcomed by the Committee of the "Not Forgotten" Association. In the garden we were fortunate to find seats under trees by the lake and there was a gentle breeze to add to our pleasure.

The buffet tea was excellent – dainty salmon and ham-and-egg sandwiches, lemon curd tartlets, chocolate cake, iced coffee eclairs, ginger cake – all very delicious. Afterwards we were served with strawberries and cream.

The Yeoman Warders assembled in front of the steps from the Palace and the Princess Royal arrived, looking lovely in a turquoise blue suit and a cream straw hat. She came to our side of the lawn and her husband visited the marquee on the opposite side. The Princess Royal is the Patron of the **PDF Compressor Free Version** and spoke at length to a long line of old soldiers, airmen and sailors. We spotted Vera Lynn, looking very sprightly, and the Band of the Irish Guards played all afternoon.



Joyce Hale, Joan Whittingham, Joan Aubrey and Linda Graver

As we were making our way out, we met 2 ladies wearing insignia and many medals, so stopped to speak to them. They were over by special invitation from California with their husbands. One was still serving in the American Air Force and her friend had been a nurse for 28 years with the American Army. They were delightful to talk to and we exchanged experiences with them.

After a lovely afternoon, and with many memories to sustain us, we (after a very, very long wait) found a taxi back to our hotel to collect our luggage and then on to Liverpool Street Station where we found our train was already late. The incoming one had been delayed by a faulty engine. Nevertheless it was the same engine attached to our train for the return journey and – only to be expected – broke down again at Manningtree. We finally limped back to Norwich an hour and 10 minutes late to be welcomed by patient relatives who wanted to hear ALL ABOUT EVERYTHING.

PORTSMOUTH BRANCH AT THE GARDEN PARTY

Gillian Utting, Portsmouth Branch

Four ladies from Portsmouth Branch were invited to the "Not Forgotten" Association Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. After many searches, we were allowed to park our car on the Palace forecourt. Jumping out, we hastily changed our shoes and donned our posh hats. Jasmine's fluffy concoction took off straight away and blew out of reach under a coach. As we rescued it, Her Majesty the Queen and Prince Philip drove past us. Did I see her smile?

Inside the gardens, we found seats in the shade and sat down for our delicious afternoon tea. There were plenty

of cooling drinks available which we sipped as we watched the parade of celebrities from stage and TV walk past us.

Having read, inwardly digested and obeyed the directive – HATS WILL BE WORN, I was dismayed to see just how few hats were being sported. We only spotted one duplicate – yes, one just like Jasmine's! The hats were beautiful little flirty ones, huge Ascot ones, filly, spirally, teathery concoctions in every colour and size imaginable. Some of the clothes were stunningly spectacular but others might not have been out of place doing the weekly shop!



Gillian Utting, Jasmine McCree, Sally Watson and Andrea Smith – suitably hatted and attired

While the band played in the Bandstand and guests sipped their iced coffees, we edged around the Lake to the "Lavatories". Here, ladies in smart black dresses were on hand to make sure we did not make off with the fittings! The facilities were clean, cool and well-stocked.

Returning to our seats, we continued to watch out for faces we knew. Isla Sinclair and her husband came to speak to us as did the lovely comedienne, Faith Brown. She was with her husband but he stayed in the background while she met her fans. We saw many actors who we recognised but could not remember their names.

Honestly, it was a fantastic day. The police both inside and outside the Palace were friendly and incredibly helpful with so many disabled visitors. It was the hottest day of the year yet they pushed and shoved to get wheelchairs moving over the gravel pathways to get the disabled carefully back to their vehicles.

Was the expense worth it? Yes, of course it was!

A TRIBUTE TO ALL WRAC SERVING AT GUILDFORD DURING SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1974

Miss V L Gale, Manorstead Bungalow, Manorstead,
Tilford Road, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6RA
Tel: 01428 602907

I am writing in memory of Privates Caroline Slater and Ann Hamilton who were killed and those who were injured in the Guildford bomb blasts that shocked and reduced our platoon in October 1974.

I was just 18 when I enlisted and was the youngest recruit within the platoon. This was an enormous adventure for me and will remain a subject of discussion throughout the years. The training was tough, the mornings were early and the ironing was never ending. Starch and starching was a daily activity. I just add I learned never to run out. I never really got used to the separate white collar that was attached to our shirt by a plastic object, the most uncomfortable thing since corsets.

I wrote home every week with news of my achievements, or in the case of the parade square and learning drill, my downfalls. Changing step on the march was especially difficult for me and often I would be told off for skipping. I wanted so much to get it right but had no co-ordination for any of the complex moves. I had 6 weeks to perfect this before the passing out parade. I must have succeeded as our platoon won the drill cup!

After the fourth week I was beginning to feel extremely fit and becoming used to all the unusual routines and our 48 hour pass was drawing close. We were all looking forward to going home and telling our parents of our adventure.

Arrangements were made to meet up in the Horse and Groom public house to celebrate a 21st birthday. I had been shopping that afternoon in Guildford town with Caroline, buying baby clothes for her sister who was expecting a baby and phoning home with much excitement of coming home the following weekend. At the end of our shopping spree, I was feeling a little unwell and decided to give the celebrations a miss. I said my au-revoirs to Caroline and told her that I would meet up with her back at barracks later that night. It was to be the last time I saw her.



Women's Royal Army Corps
Queen Elizabeth Park - Guildford, 1974

On returning to barracks, the girls were hurriedly getting ready for their night out. I remained with the girls that were on duty and played cards. As the evening went on, one of our girls arrived back at barracks in a state of distress and much grief, unable to talk any sense. After several attempts we were able to understand that two bombs had exploded in public houses in Guildford; one in the Horse and Groom and one in the Seven Stars. This was the start of a night that we will never forget.

The following morning news of the fatalities was delicately announced in a special meeting; it was then I learned the news about Caroline. The room was silent momentarily and the sound of sobbing broke the silence as we learned of the losses and injuries our platoon had suffered. Phone lines were extremely busy as anxious recruits phoned home to inform their loved ones that they were safe.

Although thirty two years have passed, the memories of that tragic night still remain with me. I have written this in memory of Caroline and Ann who sadly lost their lives tragically all those years ago at the tender ages of 18 and 19 respectively. My thoughts are always with their families and with all those who were injured, especially Jan, Sam and Carole and not forgetting those whose names have shamefully escaped me. Many of us carried on serving in the WRAC in tribute to those who lost their lives. I remained in service for 13 years and reached the rank of Sergeant.

If there is anyone who happens to remember me from our 6 weeks of training at the Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Guildford, it would be lovely to hear from you. I was then W/454312 Pte Lynn Gale. I joined up with Jan Ford from Southampton, who I had met at the Portsmouth recruiting office. If you read this Jan, please get in touch.

Editor: By one of those extraordinary coincidences, the following article arrived in the same post.

WRAC STANDARDS AT THE NORTHERN IRELAND VETERANS ASSOCIATION - ANNUAL SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

Vee Moore, Secretary, WRAC Dinner Club and NIVA
www.info@nivels.org.uk

Maureen Deeley, WRAC Association National Standard Bearer and Sue Dolphin, Birmingham Branch Standard Bearer, took part in the third annual NIVA Service of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, Staffordshire on Saturday 23 September 2006. NIVA, a young association, whose motto "A Bond for Fellow Comrades", was formed to remember those men and women of the Armed Forces who were killed during the troubles in Northern Ireland.



Maureen and Sue in the Parade of Standards

There were minutely detailed Regulations and Orders to be studied, analysed, understood, written up and memorised. It's all there, dutifully recorded in my exercise book. Towards the end of the course, each of us had to give a talk to the class on an allotted subject. Mine was "Cats". I don't know how this fitted in the brief, but nonetheless, I was as qualified on the subject as anyone and spoke movingly about present and past pets. Thinking about it later, it occurred to me that the subject might have been CATS – some obscure Army Regulation which had escaped my notice during a sleepy period in lectures. No doubt that is why I got only a C-.

A BICYCLE MADE FOR TWO

Marianne C Hooker, The Briars, Church Road,
Newcastle, Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 8QL.
Tel: 01566 640553

I have just returned from visiting my brother who is a motor bike enthusiast. He let me copy the enclosed photo from the January 2003 issue of 'The Classic Motorcycle' magazine. I think it's great but you may have seen it already. The caption underneath the photo read: "Stop that smiling and sit to attention, you're in the Army now! Fifty years after it would have been doing it's duty on the battlefields of WWI, this 1914 Triumph provides an interesting glimpse of how Army motorised transport had evolved by the mid-60s. Seated on the bike are Averil Pearson and, behind her, fellow squaddie Carol Carpenter."



The location for this picture is one of the cavalcades of military transport held at Aldershot. The Model H Triumph did sterling service as a military model and was the first in a long line of Coventry machines to see service with the forces. In WWII, the 350cc 3HP were khaki and an example of this model was the 400,000th motorcycle issued to the Armed Forces. After the war, the TRW, a sv 500cc twin, made sure military contracts would continue to come to Meriden.

BRIXMIS

Sandy Warne WRAC 1987-1996

From September 1946 until December 1990 a Joint Service Unit, both Army and RAF, operated behind the Iron Curtain throughout the entire Cold War. This small, highly specialised and intensively trained group openly collected intelligence against the Warsaw Pact forces based in East Germany. From the Baltic coast to the Czechoslovakian border and from the Inner German Border (IGB) to the Polish frontier they operated unarmed, using Soviet identity cards and in full view of the enemy. Accommodated, fuelled and fed by the Soviets, accredited with an East German bank account, forced to employ East German Stasi agents as staff and working from a watched house in Potsdam, they routinely monitored and recorded the composition, strengths, technology, morale and training of the hundreds of thousands of Warsaw Pact troops stationed in East Germany. They would be the first British military personnel to report from the ground that the Warsaw Pact had mobilised against NATO in Europe. Often at enormous risk to their own safety these men and women were themselves regularly watched, followed, rammed, beaten and shot at during the course of their function as the eyes and ears of the intelligence community beyond the Iron Curtain.

On 16 September 1946, following the division of Germany into 4 allied controlled zones and in accordance with Article 2 of the Agreement of the Control Machinery in Germany 1944, Soviet and British Commanders-in-Chief exchanged Military Liaison Missions. The rules of exchange, contained in the Robertson-Malinin agreement, gave licence and flexibility to the new unit. The organisation was titled British Commander-in-Chief's Mission to the Group of Soviet Forces of Occupation in Germany, shortened to BRIXMIS and known by the people who worked there as the 'Mission'. An equivalent Soviet organisation was similarly created and shortened to SOXNIS. Both Missions' objective was to maintain liaison between the staffs of the 2 Commanders-in-Chief and their respective military governments, unhindered and with full diplomatic immunity. Both also had hidden agendas. The



Sandy Warne with Soviet soldiers at the Annual Soviet May Day Parade. The Soviet Memorial is in the background.

fundamentals for a legitimate spying operation had been created.

That there was a requirement to spy rapidly developed out of the early mistrust created between the Soviets and their Western **PDF Compressor Free Version** to resolve the German question. The tacit acquiescence of the Western Allies to the division of Germany and Berlin, its microcosm was merely rejoined by the bullying, intransigent and frustrating Soviet Union. Germany became the fulcrum of Soviet leverage against the West and the focal point of tension, disagreement and bitterness that was ever the Cold War. Mistrust fuelled suspicion and suspicion had to be satisfied. The Mission was ideally situated and, with additional special training, its operatives could answer the questions that face to face encounters and direct questioning between politicians and diplomats could not. Such questions ranged across all aspects of Soviet involvement in the DDR from industrial output to the latest tank design. At every major political crisis from the Berlin Airlift in 1948 through the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 to reunification in 1990 the Mission was able to give military analysis and reaction to internationally significant events as they occurred on the ground.

The Mission's intelligence gathering activities were conducted in three men vehicle patrols. They were known as tours in order to disguise any hint of implied aggressive reconnaissance operations. They lasted from two to seven days and covered all manner of military, industrial and civilian targets that were considered relevant. Anything that tours could see, touch or hear was consumed for the intelligence community. They talked, listened, removed and recorded in an effort to construct the intelligence picture on a would-be enemy. Tasked by all the major intelligence agencies in the Western world, the Mission product was promulgated to its customers for further analysis, comment and wider disposal as seen fit. Simultaneously, SOXNIS undertook the same task for the Soviet Union in West Germany. The special operatives chosen to carry out these roles of liaison and observation were drawn from all parts of the Armed Forces. With language ability, driving expertise, military service in the SAS and 14 Company Northern Ireland together with a range of specialist technical skills from lock picking to photography, they were asked to



Sandy and Soviet soldiers at the Soviet War Memorial May 1990

operate beyond the front lines drawn up at the end of the Second World War, beyond the assistance of the most forward NATO reconnaissance units and into the centre of the Soviet controlled East Germany.

From the mid 1960s up until 1990 when the Mission ceased in its operation, the WRAC initially had two staff attached to BRIXNIS: a Sgt who was the Orderly Room Sgt, a Cpt who was the Chief BRIXNIS PA and, from the mid 1980s, a LCpl who provided the administration required to support the operational element for the men who toured East Germany. I was that person, individuals could not apply to serve in BRIXNIS – it was strictly invitation only! I was based in BRIXNIS from 1989 until the end of 1990 so saw for myself the fall of the Soviet grip on East Germany along with the Berlin Wall. The WRAC also represented not only our Corps but women in general when we annually visited Ravensbrück Concentration Camp just north of Berlin, the scene of mass murder of innocent women and children through WWII.



Removing sections of the Berlin Wall adjacent to the Brandenburg Gate with German police and RMP

In Part 2 which will be published in the next edition of the *Lioness*, several ladies who served in BRIXNIS will tell their stories and what it actually was like to serve at such an exciting and unique unit. BRIXNIS also has its own Association and website that can be visited at www.brixnis.co.uk.

A PILGRIMAGE TO ARNHEM AND THE RHINE CROSSINGS

Mrs Betty France, 11 Warwick Avenue, Golcar,
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD7 4BX

In September, four ex-AA Ladies – Emily, Poppy, Celia and Betty joined a Battlefield Tour run by Leger. Coming from different towns, we met up as promised at Dover. There was the usual banter as we joined the Coach wearing our blazers as our fellow passengers were mainly men. When they got to know us better they were extremely helpful. After a smooth crossing, purchase of suitable liquor and a very long journey, we were profusely welcomed to our hotel in Holland.

Next morning it was raining so we had to don coats and umbrellas. First stop the Drop Zone at Ginkel Heath

vividly described by our guide as the first mistake of this ill prepared operation. Not sufficient attention had been paid to the intelligence supplied by the Dutch underground. It was too far from Arnhem and the RAF had insufficient planes and gliders to do it all in one drop.

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We travelled on to Oosterbeek where most of the fighting centred and in slight drizzle planted our crosses at the Memorial. As the Commemoration had been held the previous weekend, all the Memorials were covered with wreaths and flowers and each headstone had a flower placed there by Dutch schoolchildren.

We continued on to the Café Restaurant Schoonoord, generally known as Airborne Pub No 1. It was used as a Field Hospital during the Operation but is now where Veterans congregate on Anniversary Day. We were welcomed as Veterans and enjoyed a lunch and a drink. We proceeded to the Museum in the Hartenstein Hotel which was used as HQ in 1944. The nearby Memorial dedicated by the Dutch to their so called Liberators brought tears to our eyes. Some of us climbed up to the bridge, now quite beautiful, to take photos of the Block House left in its original state complete with shell fire damage.

It was an early start the next day to travel to Nijmegen where American 82nd Airborne captured the Bridge intact due to the non function of the German detonators. In the winter of 1944/45, operations were halted due to the stand by the Germans at the Battle of the Bulge and atrocious weather conditions. By March plans were being made to cross the Rhine and invade Germany. The Americans had received information that the Bridge at Remagen was intact so they made a swift advance to recapture it. We halted at Meckenheim Station which was flattened by the US Air Force, then took the route through the villages taken by the US into Remagen where we had lunch. We toured the Museum which has been located inside the original support towers of the Bridge. We then crossed the Rhine by ferry "without getting our feet wet" courtesy of the US 9th Infantry Division. Although the Bridge was taken intact and used to transport troops to the Eastern end, it had been repeatedly bombed by the American and German Air Forces and eventually collapsed killing US Engineers working on it. It has never been re built.

Our tour took the actual Operations in reverse order so we first inspected the 3 British Rhine crossings. We stood near the river while our Guide gave us a vivid description of the careful planning and execution of the Battles. The Memorial at the Hotel used as Operations HQ is one of the most impressive we have seen. It was constructed by the Dutch and embodies helmets, pieces of aircraft and empty shell cases all recovered from the Battlefield. It was totally covered by wreaths and flowers – truly a sight to be remembered for ever. We spent a little time at The Reichwald Cemetery overcome by the number of graves in which whole bomber crews had been buried together.

As a follow on to our visit to Normandy for the D Day Anniversary this was a wonderful experience brought vividly to mind by an excellent Guide. We recommend this tour as well worth the effort.

BIKERS IN AUSTRALIA

W/72949 Ma Emily (Bunty) Jones nee Beattie
3/1 King Street, Warrawong, New South Wales 2502

Editor: I spoke to Bunty Jones on the telephone recently and persuaded her to send me the photographs of our 'Hell's Angels' in Australia.



Bunty Beattie in August 1941



Bunty celebrating her daughter's 60th birthday in October 2006

Bunty served in 451 and 670 AA Blys in 133 Regt RA. She now is heavily involved in organising the British Ex-service girls in her area. They meet on the first Monday of each month for lunch and also have lunch together after the monthly meeting of the Returned Services League. This **PDF Compressor Free Version** Legion and lunch is free. Usually 10 ladies and 140 men attend the meetings. Many are British but many are Australian veterans from the Second World War. There are also representatives from National Service and Vietnam veterans.



Bunty's friend Ann Dickenson, ex-ATS, at Ayres Rock now called Uluru

ANNUAL REMEMBRANCE SERVICES AND PARADE

Jane Freebairn, General Secretary

I am very grateful to Edna Lee of the Greater London Branch for the three photographs in this piece and wish to use them to encourage more of you to take part in the Remembrance Day activities in London. I know that many of you play a vital and active part in Services in your local area and you only need to look at the Branch News to see that. However, how many of you know that you can apply for a ticket to join in the Service at the Cenotaph and take part in the March past afterwards? Let me explain how you can get involved in the various activities.

Thursday before Remembrance Sunday. Outside Westminster Abbey, there is a Field of Remembrance and the photographs show the main wreath and the plot dedicated to the ATS and WRAC. The Association provides many of the crosses you can see but many others are placed there by individuals in memory of friends, family and loved ones. The Vice-President, Lt Col Sue Westlake, leads us in our own Act of Remembrance before the main one at 11 o'clock. Afterwards, a senior member of the Royal Family reviews the individual plots. Recently Her Majesty the Queen and/or the Duke of Edinburgh have attended. No tickets are required but you must be there by 10.30 at the very latest or you will not be allowed into the Abbey precincts.

Remembrance Sunday - Service in Westminster Abbey. On Remembrance Sunday, there is a Service in



The Field of Remembrance outside Westminster Abbey



Lillian Hollis, Edna Lee, Jackie Naysmith and others form up on Horse Guards

Westminster Abbey. This begins at 10.30 and you can apply for a ticket through Association HQ. You must apply in the first two weeks of September – not before because you must be sure that you will attend – last minute emergencies apart! We simply cannot afford to have empty seats. **PDF Compressor Free Version** The service is over in enough time for you to watch the main parade come down Whitehall and into Parliament Square on its way back round to Horse Guards.

Cenotaph Service and Parade. For many, this is the highlight of the Remembrance commemorations. Televised live throughout the country, it is, at the same time, a solemn and uplifting occasion. **YOU COULD BE PART OF IT.** Many of our ex-ATS colleagues are no longer able to take part but many of you could. It does require a fair amount of stamina. The programme is to be on Horse Guards at about 09.30am, form up and move through to Whitehall at about 10.15, stand throughout the wreath laying and Service before marching down Whitehall from 11.30. The Parade finishes back on Horse Guards Parade about 12.15. This year our contingent was only 30 strong – down from about 60 three years ago! We need to do better this year. Again, tickets can be obtained from Association HQ and you should let us know at the beginning of September if you wish to participate. PLEASE think about it. I had many phone calls and letters from members thinking we had not taken part because we had not featured on the television coverage. Of course that is not the point of us being there but there is no doubt that a large contingent of marching ladies is likely to catch the producer's eye. Come and join us or else we may have to consider whether or not we can be represented at what is the national Remembrance event.

CLAIMING FOR CAMPAIGN MEDALS ESPECIALLY FROM WORLD WAR 2

Jane Freebairn, General Secretary

We receive many letters, telephone calls and e-mails asking about medals so I thought I would explain the procedure. Much of the following is taken from the Veteran's Agency website which I highly commend to you for all sorts of information relevant to ex-service personnel. www.veteransagency.mod.uk

As a general rule, most WWII personnel were not issued with medals before they were de-mobbed. This differed from WWI when medals were sent out individually and automatically to personnel who were entitled. This was not possible after WWII because most people had returned to 'civvy street' before the medals were instituted and manufacturing commenced in the late 1940s. It was therefore decided that only those who remained in the Services would receive their medals automatically. Everyone else had to claim them. Many did not and even today, the Medal Office receives hundreds of initial applications each month.

To claim medals which have never been issued, replace stolen/destroyed medals (see special instructions below) or to find out if an individual is entitled, please write to the medal office at:

**MOD Medal Office
Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency
Building 250, RAF Innsworth
GLOUCESTER GL3 1HW**

You must include the following information: Service number, Regiment/Corps, full name, date of birth, rank and date of discharge plus your current name and address. Medals can be issued to the legal next of kin of deceased ex-service personnel but proof of kinship will be required. The Medal Office cannot accept queries by e-mail.

Lost/stolen medals. Once medals are issued, they become the sole responsibility of the recipient or his/her next of kin. They will not be replaced by MOD if they are lost. The only exception to this rule is if the medals are stolen or accidentally destroyed in circumstances beyond the control of the owner, for example in a house fire. The loss must be proved in the form of a Police Report or a claim to an insurance company. A charge is made to cover the cost of manufacture and administration. The medals are stamped as replacements to avoid any confusion should the originals ever be found. If you have lost your medals in other circumstances, do not contact the Medal Office. Approach a reputable medal dealer.

CLEVELAND BRANCH LUNCH IN PENRITH WITH THE "NOT FORGOTTEN" ASSOCIATION

Irene Maclean

Six of our members were invited to an hotel in Penrith for a Christmas Lunch hosted by the "Not Forgotten" Association. Nothing startling you might say – apart from having to be out of bed before the streets were aired and all of us on different trains by 0745hrs! Well as most of you know, there is only one 8 o'clock in my day and it is not at this end. Three ATS and three WRAC members made up our group – all bright as new pins and raring to go. The first two train journeys went without any hitches but then we arrived at Carlisle and CHAOS struck.

Whilst waiting for our train to Penrith – only a fifteen



Robbie, Gwyn, Liz, Ivy and Irene. Dot Ryder is the photographer

minute tootle down the track – an overhead power cable snapped just near where we were standing. There were flashes of lightning and cracks of thousands of volts all around us. Railway staff were yelling, "Stand back, ladies – you are in danger!" Were we bowtered? Not a bit. We had a luncheon **PDF Compressor Free Version** our train was. It had to back out of the station and go to another platform so we had to go back up the steps, over the bridge and down the other side.

The train came about 20 minutes behind schedule and, on arrival at Penrith, it was pouring with rain. We spotted a people carrier taxi and all six of us piled in. The driver was not best pleased that his taxi got very wet but we tipped him handsomely so he drove away happy.

The lunch and entertainment were excellent. During a medley of songs, they played an Irish Jig and our very own Robbie Emmerson did her version of 'Riverdance'. It was hilarious and received much applause.

On our way home, we had a 30 minute wait for our train from Carlisle so we did what ladies do best. We went into the Station Café for a cuppa! When we started taking a few more photographs, a member of staff informed us that we were not allowed to take photographs on the Railway Station for security reasons!! Now we have heard EVERYTHING! Then one of our members was spotted taking drugs but it was only Irene taking Paracetamol as her head was aching from laughing so much.

All in all, we had a fantastic day even although the journey seemed to take for ever.....a bit like going to Italy to get to France. We returned home tired but very happy and extremely grateful to the "Not Forgotten" Association for their kind hospitality.

SHAEF REUNION IN WASHINGTON DC

W/227277 Annie Carr Nightingale

11656 Dove Hollow Avenue, Boynton Bch, Florida 33437

While attending the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force reunion in Washington DC in October 2006, I was invited along with sixteen of my fellow veterans to meet President George Bush in the Oval Office of the White House. The rain was pouring down and cabs took us from our hotel to the White House. We still had a block to walk but we were met by young men and women who accompanied us with umbrellas. We went through security checks then we were escorted to the Roosevelt Room and sat in the chairs where Cabinet Meetings take place. After a short wait, during which we were greeted by Mr Ben Bernanke (Head of the Federal Reserve Bank), the door to the Oval Office opened and there was the President.

He greeted each of us with a hearty handshake and a few words and we stood in a semi-circle around his desk. He told us that it was a gift to the White House from Queen Victoria which made Harry Parker and I (the only British veterans present) very proud. President FD Roosevelt had a panel added to the front of the desk to cover the fact that he was in a wheelchair. President JF Kennedy had it removed and you might recall a famous photograph

of John Jr. hiding there. We were also pleased to see a bronze bust of Winston Churchill in the office. We chatted for a full half hour which was wonderful and then he stood at the door and shook our hands again whilst thanking us for our efforts during the War.



Shaking hands with the President

Next day, we visited the Church near the White House which the President attends. We were introduced to the congregation and received a one-minute standing ovation. After that we visited the war memorial. What a great five days we had. Our reunions are getting fewer as we get on and we will miss our visits to the Citadel, Air Force and Naval Academies and West Point. On our 50th Anniversary, we returned to France, Luxembourg and Germany. It was especially good to visit the barracks in Versailles.....fond memories of jitterbugging with the handsome GIs in No 8 Ballroom!



SHAEF veterans in the Oval Office

On the 60th Anniversary of D Day I went with the Normandy Veterans to all the beaches and saw the war memorial graves with my husband who was a D Day veteran. We met in Germany after VE Day and were married for 59 years before he passed away last year. I have lived in Florida for the past 29 years.

Branch News

ABERDEEN BRANCH

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Hello to all from Aberdeen. This year has seen two new members added to our merry band. They are most welcome.

We spent a very pleasant day in May at Peterhead (made famous by a recent TV programme) and indulged in a rather nice lunch. In July we again went to the Gordon Highlanders Museum for High Tea (Afternoon Tea really). It was as we say up here "affa fine". Seven of us went to Perth for the Scottish AGM. It was nice to see friends again.

The Branch Members send their appreciation to Grants For All (Lottery Fund) for allocating us the money to fund our outings. All the best for 2007 to members of the Association.

BATH BRANCH

We in Bath are fortunate in having very friendly relations with other Service Associations. Seven members of the WRAC Association are also members of The Royal Signals Association and have enjoyed their barbeque and also their curry lunch at the Officers' Mess, 2 Signal Bde at Pockeridge House, Corsham, Wilts and also their Annual Luncheon in October and Christmas Lunch at the WOs' and Sgts' Mess, 21 Sig Regt at Colerne, Wilts. Being a member of the WRAC Association with its strong membership of ATS personnel implies a real loyalty to the Armed Forces, so it is particularly agreeable to meet serving personnel and hear what is happening in the current Army.

Four members are also members of the Bath United Services Association and this year have taken part in several of their activities and outings, including a really splendid trip to the Edinburgh Tattoo; joining them for their charity lunches; and taking part in their 10th Anniversary Dinner in Bath. Some members also joined The Africa Star Association in their trip to Portsmouth.

Nearer to home, member Jenny Stevens hosted a coffee morning in Batheaston in May and in July, Mary Bazett gave us a lovely tea at her home in Coaley Dursley, to help Branch funds. In October, the Branch also held a coffee morning with bric-a-brac and tinned/bottled stalls, for the same purpose, in the city. This was a real success as all members who could turn up, did so, as did some members of the other military organisations.

The bi-monthly meetings are well attended and the members have enjoyed a varied programme, including a talk on "Life in The Royal Navy" by a Lt Cdr, the grand daughter of member Doris Hawley. We are looking forward to the Branch's 60th Anniversary in March which we hope to celebrate with a Civic Lunch in the Mayor's Parlour and a summer tea party.

BEXHILL BRANCH

We have had a good year on the whole. Membership,

although dwindling in numbers due to the passing years, has remained loyal, and generous too, both financially and in their willingness to give assistance whenever needed.

Jenny Nye is our live-wire Secretary/Treasurer and we are grateful to her for keeping us informed and arranging our outings, etc. Jean, our Chairman, keeps us together and generally advises us. She is keen to get us to meet at local pubs and restaurants for lunch between general monthly meetings and these events are taking off and may well become a regular date in our calendar. The Committee (all with a job or two to do) meet in the home of one of our members and from those meetings come the ideas to put to our general meetings for approval. It works well – especially as our hostess on these occasions provides a delicious slice of home-made cake!

During 2006 we have had an interesting cookery demonstration, an outing to Jempsons at Peamarsh for tea and a country drive, coupled with a bread making demonstration and an opportunity to buy groceries in the Jempsons store, an entertaining talk from a wartime evacuee, a visit to the Chelsea Pensioners' Founder's Day, a Harvest Festival auction and various competitions.

Three of us attended the Royal British Legion service at the Royal Albert Hall on 11 November and four went to the Remembrance Service at Westminster Abbey on 12 November. Jenny placed a cross in the Field of Remembrance to those who died in the wars from WW1 onwards. The Branch placed a wreath on the War Memorial at Bexhill.

We send greetings to all our HQ and Branch friends, together with very special thanks to those who produce that excellent magazine – *Lioness*!

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH

As I write this, in late November, the sun is shining, the temperature is in double figures and we are having our Christmas Lunch next week. We still hold our meetings on a monthly basis although we have decided not to meet in January – maybe we will have snow – those who know our meeting place will agree it could be a wise decision!

Several members visited the National Memorial Arboretum, always a very moving experience. The QMAAC/ATS/WRAC plot now looks very good and a young man visiting the Arboretum was extremely interested to hear about the part played by women during the last War proving that the Arboretum is not only a place of remembrance but also of education for young people. We also viewed the statue of the girl in ATS uniform on another site.

In the second half of 2006, we had two excellent speakers and our second Bring & Buy sale.

We have lost several members but also gained new ones. The sick list grows unfortunately but so does the age of members.

The Standard was carried at the usual Festival of Remembrance and a wreath taken to the Remembrance Service/Parade in Birmingham. We were also represented in London for the Remembrance Services held there.

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Our programme for next year is being compiled whilst I write and we hope to have our two Bring & Buy sales, three or more speakers and make several visits, also our Birthday Lunch in May and Christmas Lunch in December.

The sun is still shining!

BOURNEMOUTH BRANCH

I am writing this on a grey, autumnal day as we turn the clocks back and the evenings lengthen again. It is not that I am complaining – I know many hate the nights drawing in but, peculiar person that I am, once those curtains are drawn and outside doors are locked, I feel snug, safe and warm. Maybe it is the hibernating instinct in me!

Our coach trip into the New Forest went very well and we all enjoyed the cream tea at Holmsley. Only one of our members arrived at Bristol for the South and West Reunion. I started off extra early, changed trains at Southampton, only to see the earlier Bristol train departing. Then, after a minor panic (thinking I had lost my purse) the next train to Bristol on which I was booked was cancelled – so it was not my day. However, I am assured that the day went very well for everyone else. Thanks are due to the Bristol Branch for their hospitality. (I returned to Bournemouth, hot and frustrated, only to find my purse had fallen onto the floor of my car).



Having just enjoyed a cream tea after a coach trip in the New Forest

In July, Kate Greenaway gave a most amusing talk about her varied life and some of her 47 jobs – varying from model to traffic warden! Two of our members enjoyed a trip organised by the "Not Forgotten" Association. They sailed from Poole Harbour to Brownsea Island and then along the Jurassic coast – the weather was glorious, the food super and they met some very pleasant people.

We do not meet in August because it is holiday time. The September meeting was enhanced with an illustrated talk by Dr Hoyle from the Dorset Air Ambulance Service. This was most interesting and very well received and we donated our raffle takings to this cause. In October, we

held a very successful Bring and Buy sale and boosted our funds by £42. Also, during the meeting, a young student from Bournemouth University interviewed some members and recorded their various wartime memories as she is doing a piece of work about Women of World War 2. This was very successful and she has asked if she may join us at our November meeting and hopes to attend the wreath laying at Bournemouth War Memorial Service on 12 November.

Our Vice-Chairman, Mrs Drew, accompanied by branch member Mrs Lynn, attended the South and West Area AGM at Wilton in October. Three members of the branch will be attending the service in Westminster Abbey on 12 November, but I'm afraid age is against us for marching in Whitehall (or Bournemouth). Our branch poppy wreath will be presented at the Bournemouth Service by Mrs Penny.

A letter was sent to all branch members in August explaining that running monthly meetings was becoming difficult and it was proposed that formal meetings be cut to quarterly and that the intervening months would give an opportunity for informal 'get togethers' at a local hotel for a drink and/or bar lunch. For those members who are able to attend and keep in touch it was felt that this would be preferable to closing the branch. We have over 80 members but only 25 are actively taking part in meetings or activities, due to age and infirmity. A vote was taken at the October meeting and this was unanimously approved and will be ratified at our AGM in November.

BRISTOL BRANCH

I wish to thank everyone who attended the South and South West Area Reunion which we hosted in July 2006. One of our members, Sandra Steadman, made the cake and also did the flowers and Stella Fogg made the gold coaches that were on the tables. We thank you for the support that we received. It was a very hot day and branches came in cars, coaches and by train to join us. I thank them for the letters which were received after the event. But, once again, thank you to you all for making it special.



Reunion cake made by Sandra Steadman

We visited the Violette Szabo museum in Wormelow, Hereford in August and Miss Rosemary Rigby made us most welcome. What a peaceful and restful place it is – our members want to go back for another visit. We presented Miss Rigby with a photo of our plaque which she will put in the museum. One of our members was travelling to El Alamein and took a rose from the garden to take with her. (Violette's husband was killed in El Alamein).



Vice Chairman Stella Fogg presenting copy of plaque to Rosemary Rigby

We held a Tombola Stall in September but unfortunately the weather was not kind to us, so we didn't do very well at all. Our AGM was held in October, all the Committee stood for re-election and we also had another member join us on Committee. We had a very good meeting. We invited Beryl Furey-King to join us as an Associate member of the Branch in recognition of the work she does in running the web site ATS Remembered. Her mother was in the ATS and Beryl was thrilled to be asked and she did accept.

October saw some of us attend the WRAC Dinner Club at Birmingham, another good weekend when it is always good to meet up with friends. My thanks to Maggie Purkis for giving me the verse she read out at our service. It was beautiful and so full of meaning; there were lots of tears. Beryl Butcher as usual led a wonderful service. It is appreciated because it is one of the few times that we can share and think of those who are unable to join us. We look forward to Liverpool next year.

Our South and South West meeting was held once again in Wilton (a chance for more Retail Therapy). Joan Ford once again put on a splendid meal for us, a special thank you to her and especially her husband who is behind the scenes washing up.

We attended the Royal British Legion Poppy Launch on 26 October at Yeovil football ground. For some of us it was a trip down memory lane as the football ground is near where Houndstone Camp was. Unfortunately we couldn't recognise any landmarks. We had representation at Bristol Cenotaph for Remembrance Sunday, also in London for the Parade – thank



Major Mack and Maureen Peach on Horse Guards Parade

goodness the weather was kind to us. We attended another local one the following week, torrential rain and winds were forecast but, again we were lucky and it stayed fine.

We are having a Bring and Buy sale at our December meeting as well as a Christmas Buffet.

Lots of plans for the Branch next year, but in the meantime like us you will all be writing your cards and busy buying those gifts which makes Christmas so special. Our best wishes for the New Year and we look forward to meeting up with lots of you once again.

BURY BRANCH

Greetings and best wishes from Bury Branch. Last July a few of our members visited the National Memorial Arboretum and in August we had the pleasure of a visit from Gladys Isaacs (née Walden) BEM who had enlisted in the ATS at the same time as our member Marjorie Newbould (née Farrington). Marjorie saw an article in *Lioness* 1/2005 about Gladys and she made contact. They had not met for over 60 years but instantly recognised each other. It was interesting to hear about their service days and afterwards.



Marjorie and Gladys

Wendy Steven, our Territorial Army Captain, brought with her the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate of Commendation awarded to her for long and outstanding service to the TA. She also showed us a photograph taken with her sister Lesley on their visit to the Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. Wendy was presented with Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Greater Manchester by Colonel Sir John Timmins, Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester on 4 May 2006 at University Barracks in Manchester.

Wendy joined the WRAC(V) in June 1980 attached to The Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry as a Clerk and attended her courses to become a BI Clerk still working with the Yeomanry. On amalgamation of The Yeomanry in March 1992 she transferred to Manchester & Salford Universities Officers Training Corps into their newly created Pay Sergeant's post and worked hard on improving the Units Pay records. She went on more courses and is currently the Regimental Administrative Officer in the rank of Captain.

Wendy was presented with her Certificate exactly 32 years after her father Major Derek Steven MBE received his Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Lancashire also for services to the Territorial Army.

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Colonel Sir John Timmins presents Wendy with her Certificate



Wendy with both Certificates – her father's is on the left

September brought the sad news of the death of our member Dorrie Hubbard (née Cannon). She was well known in Bury, being a stalwart of the Royal British Legion and was President of the Ladies' Section. She was born at Bury Barracks; her father, Jack Cannon, was Bandmaster of the Lancashire Fusiliers.

In October we were sad to hear of the death of another friend – Hilda Stringer (née Walton). She served with 559(M) HAA Battery along with her friend Mary Hughes (née Lloyd). They met on their first day in the ATS and their friendship continued until Hilda's death. Together

they attended all the reunions including the Ack Ack reunions at York.

We are looking forward to a varied programme in the future and wish everyone a happy and healthy 2007.

CANTERBURY BRANCH

Our branch continues to thrive with an average of 25 members attending our monthly meetings. In July our speaker from the RSPCA cancelled at the last moment but our President, Jenny Wells, stepped in and we discussed our programme for 2007. Our August meeting is always held at Mavis' beach hut in Herne Bay. The last week in July was very hot and we looked forward to a lovely afternoon by the sea but for the first time for many years it rained. The day was overcast and showery and umbrellas were much in evidence. Nonetheless we were determined to carry on and Mavis kept us going with lots of tea and biscuits.



September is always a busy month when we collect our annual subscriptions and we held our AGM in October. In November, our speaker was Yvonne Nulty a very interesting lady who told us of her escape as a teenager from wartime France to England and her life as a nurse in the early years of the NHS.

We now look forward to our Christmas lunch in December. It will be held at our usual venue, the Dominican Priory where we hold our monthly meetings.

CHELMSFORD BRANCH

Since our last report about 20 of us have managed to meet at the RAFA Club in Chelmsford, usually on the third Tuesday of the month. During the year the usual pattern of meetings has been severely disrupted by repairs to the floor. The most serious of these was when our Anniversary Lunch, due to be held in July, had to be rearranged at very short notice to the garden of the Honorary Secretary. However, this had mixed blessings and, despite the extreme heat, almost everyone came and we had a great time together devouring a splendid buffet and drinking gallons of water – it was too hot for anything else! After that we all went off to enjoy our holiday time in August.



Trying to find some shade!

19 September we listened to one of our best speakers Mr Ron Kennedy – a former magistrate who spoke of "The Fear of Crime". Ron has a wealth of knowledge and we enjoyed his insight and ability to put this subject over so well.

12 November. A few of us met at the War Memorial in Chelmsford for the Service of Remembrance held by the Chelmsford Borough Council and led by the Royal British Legion. A wreath was laid on behalf of the Branch.



Branch Secretary, Gina Shadrack laying the wreath

21 November. Belatedly we held our AGM and slight changes on the Committee were made. The Honorary Treasurer is now Joyce Wright who replaces Eileen Mickelborough who is standing down. We thank Eileen for her contribution during her term of office and welcome Joyce who has done the job before. Eileen will remain on the Committee and the rest of the Committee remains unchanged.

Quite shortly in December we will hold our usual Christmas Lunch and look forward to welcoming the Vice President, Lt Col Sue Westlake, the General Secretary, Major (Retd) Jane Freebairn and our Area Chairman Mrs Patricia Stevenson as guests. *Editor: An excellent lunch it was! Unfortunately, the Area Chairman was unable to attend.*

In Memoriam. It is with sadness we record the unexpected death of Emily Bristow who was a Founder member of our Branch. Liked by all, Emily was a great supporter of the Association and of "her" Branch. It was because of her commitment and all she had contributed to it that she was about to be awarded a Certificate of Appreciation. It was later given to her Family who were overjoyed to receive it on her behalf.

We welcome new members and if you wish to join us please do so by contacting the Honorary Secretary Gina Shadrack – Tel: 01245 251088.

CHESTER AND DISTRICT BRANCH

It is that time of the year in many branches when members look back at the year nearly finished and wonder what may be in store in the next because, although this report is written before Christmas and the New Year and before many of us have held our Christmas parties, it is not published until after the festivities are long gone. However it does not stop us trusting all our members will have a good New Year. We sadly look back and remember three of our members who regularly attended our meetings. They are all missed very much and remembered especially in November.

Our Christmas Luncheon is to be held on 6 December and we are joining members of the 8th Army Association and other groups. We are honoured by having some Dunkirk Veterans among our number: one will be celebrating his 90th birthday. So guess what our Christmas wish and ambition will be!

We had a good year and still have a happy lot at our meetings even if the numbers lessen. It does not affect the comradeship and "nattering" – in fact at times it becomes impossible to continue to conduct the meeting! One of our members intends to parade in London on Armistice Sunday – we all envy her, but Molly was a Sergeant Cook – so she has stamina.

We look forward to 2007 and will be visiting the National Memorial Arboretum again and, no doubt, take our usual sail on the Chester Canal. We do intend to continue to enjoy ourselves as much as possible.



The ATS Statue at the National Memorial Arboretum

A Family to be proud of. An interesting family matter was raised during a recent meeting. One of our members, now Mrs Louisa Stretch, was talking about her two sisters' service and her own in the ATS. She commented that they had followed in their mother's footsteps as she had served in the QMAAC during the First World War. Unfortunately, this had only come to light latterly in their mother's life and she was unable to remember fully all her service details and experiences.



Doreen, Martha and Louise

Louise Stretch, née Gleghorn, was born in Seaham Harbour, County Durham and her family had lived there since the early 1800s. Louise and her two sisters, Doreen and Martha, all volunteered to join the ATS. Doreen's married name was Cutting and Martha's Halliday. Does anyone remember them?

This next photograph shows Martha Moore, Louise's aunt, aged about 20, on the left. A younger sister is in the centre and the mother of the three sisters is on the right. We think Louise's aunt and mother were in the QMAAC. The more elderly couple are their parents, Martha and William Moore.



Family photograph

Little is known of the conditions or type of service actually carried out by the two sisters in the First World War but we thought that this was a significant family story – and possibly a unique Association record? *Editor: I am sure that I will soon find out if there is a rival story! Do we have someone who served in the WRAC whose mother was in the ATS and whose grandmother served in the QMAAC? You know where to write!*

We take this opportunity to thank our General Secretary, Maj (Retd) Jane Freebairn and her staff for all their work and also all the members of The Council who give so freely of their time on our behalf. We think that we could not be more admirably represented in today's Army than by Lt Col Sue Westlake – truly it is a case of "Batteries not required". Lastly but not the least, thank you to all for the *Lioness*, especially the contributors.

CLEVELAND BRANCH

Once again, a big hello from Cleveland. We enjoy our meetings, always on the look out for new members. At our June meeting, which almost coincided with the new Veterans Day, we remembered all Servicewomen who had gone before. Then we had a bite to eat to celebrate. August saw us in the ancient city of York for our Annual Day Out. Some members took a ride on the new "Eye", celebrating in style with Champagne and Strawberries! Of course we hit the shops (big time), stopping off for lunch at a pub with a courtyard, so we ate outside.

By the time we all met to get the coach home, our ladies were shopped out and had had a lovely day. Quite a few of our members had to cancel for various reasons – those who made it "enjoyed the journey".



Brenda Horness, ex- DR



Chairman, Margaret Flick and Secretary, Gwyn Friday waving the flag!



I.-R Dot Marsh, Brenda Horness, Irene Maclean, Elsie Matthews, Renee Stainthorpe and Dot Ryder (Northern Area Chairwoman)

On 30 September we were delighted to invite our Vice President to our Northern Area Reunion at Millstones Hotel at Harrogate. Apart from a couple of glitches, the day went well. There was a double presentation as Col F M Cook and Mrs Friday had retired from their posts as Area Chairman and Area Secretary respectively. The retirement gifts were presented by Lt Col Westlake and were very well received. Thank you Col Frankie and Gwyn Friday; we have a hard act to follow. Oh! I nearly

forgot, Dorothy Ryder who is our new Area Chairman, gave a resume of her 30+ years in the WRAC. According to Gwyn Friday she covered some of the naughty bits as well!

Our Branch AGM went well and only one lady, Pat Hill, resigned from the committee. Mrs Robbie Emmerson was promoted to the dizzy heights. We are already in the throes of our Christmas lunch and starting to plan 2007. We are starting to comb the area for those ex WRAC girls who must be there somewhere. In the meantime, I thought you would like to see our Committee (taken before Pat Hill resigned!) – don't we all look happy!



*Back Row: Ann Mahoney (Standard Bearer), Dot Marsh, Dot Ryder (Area Chairman), Olive Kinghorn, Marjorie Ratcliffe, Brenda Horness and Pat Hill.
Front Row: Irene Maclean (now the Northern Area Secretary), Margaret Flick and Gwyn Friday*

DUMFRIES BRANCH

Another busy year nears its end! 2006 where did you go? Dumfries members and friends enjoyed the start to 2006 with a spring lunch in March at the Cairndale Hotel, Dumfries. Many of you will know this hotel as it is where we have held the Scottish AGM in the past.

In the same month, and hoping to see the daffodils out, we were invited to our Chairperson's home to have a social afternoon tea. This was a lovely event and we thank Rosemary Cochrane-Dyet for her hospitality. Two Dumfries members attended the Grand Reunion at Warwick University and had a really great time meeting up with friends from across the UK. Thank you for asking, but the hangover has gone now!

In June, members went on an outing to Rheged which is in Cumbria. It is a great place to visit as it has restaurants, shops, and a huge Imax cinema screen which shows wonderful films such as Shackleton or The Grand Canyon, which is the one we saw. The remarkable thing about Rheged is that it is all concealed inside a hill!

October saw two members attend the Scottish AGM in Perth. They enjoyed meeting up with old and new friends. We have a Bring & Buy event in November and a Christmas (Italian) lunch in December which we hope many of our members will attend.

We are very grateful to all our members who come along to our events that the committee put together and also to

the friends of our members who come along and support us. I don't know what we would do without them! We had an extra event in September. To recognise their loyalty and length of service they have given to the ATS/WRAC Association, nine women from the Dumfries branch were presented with specially produced badges obtained from Corps HQ. Lt Col Janet Lawson carried out this pleasurable task on 13 September 2006, during afternoon tea at the Station Hotel, Dumfries. The recipients were: Margaret Walker, Ruby Gray, Jean Kerr, Jean Trowbridge, Lilian Hodgson BEM, Dorah Mundell, Elizabeth Smith, Eleanor McLauchlan and Mary Hogg. Together they have given 457 years of service to the ATS/WRAC Association! Congratulations to you all.

Unfortunately, not all the named people were able to attend, due to ill health etc. We wish those members in particular a speedy recovery to full health and look forward to seeing you at future events. It is hoped that all members will come along to some if not all the events that are planned for 2007.

EASTBOURNE BRANCH

We are still made welcome in the Chatsworth Hotel. We will be holding our Christmas Tea there in December and our Christmas Lunch in January 2007. The RA Association Eastbourne organised an outing to Dover Castle on 31 October and we went through the secret wartime tunnels. They were like a camp, being complete even with an operating theatre, and functioned 24 hours every day. Lunch was in the cafe/restaurant next to the tunnels and labelled 'NAAF'.

The weather was perfect and the views from the Castle unbelievable. We all enjoyed the outing very much. Best wishes to all for Christmas and 2007.

FIFE & TAYSIDE BRANCH

The branch remains unchanged and still quite active. Our membership is 83 members, 41 Annual and 42 Life members. Nine members attended the Grand Reunion at Warwick University and six of us were at the WRAC Dinner Club in Birmingham. On average, 18-20 members meet on the last Thursday of each month for lunch at the Royal British Legion Club in Perth.

We have lost a few ladies but have acquired some new members. Some of our ladies have been in hospital having hip and knee replacements and cataract operations.

The Scottish AGM was held on 14 October 2006 at the Quality Station Hotel, Perth and was attended by about 90 members. Special guests included Brigadier Field, Sue Westlake, Janet Lawson and Jane Freebairn. Isobel Gordon, after three years as President, handed over to Jo Young with Janet Lawson taking on the role as Vice President. The meeting ended with a 3 course lunch and a Raffle which raised £249. The next meeting is to be held in Glasgow on 20 October 2007.

Our Christmas Lunch is at the Royal George Hotel in Perth and we are all looking forward already to meeting up with our colleagues at the next AGM.

GLASGOW BRANCH

We meet on the second Monday of each month and our meetings are well attended by 30-40 ladies. Our new session began on 11 September when we were entertained to an afternoon of enjoyable musical entertainment by two ladies and a gentleman. On 9 October we held our AGM which included a Bring and Buy sale. This raised £100 for Erskine hospital for ex-Servicemen and women.



Taken at Aberfoyle June 2006.

Back row: May McGavin, Margaret Raltray, Kath Russell and Cathie Lindsay

Front row: Rose Watt, Susan Sinclair and Peggy Kerr

On 14 October, thirty of our ladies travelled to Perth for the Scottish AGM and reunion. It was so nice to meet and chat with ladies from other branches. We also had a very enjoyable lunch. It was a lovely day and much enjoyed by all that attended. We thank the ladies of the Scottish Area Committee for their hard work.

On 12 November, three of our ladies attended the Remembrance Service which was held in George Square. On 13 November, we were entertained by Mrs Sylvia MacFarlane who told us about her childhood recollections. As the year 2006 draws to a close we are now looking forward to our Christmas lunch at the Grosvenor Hotel.

GREATER LONDON BRANCH

We don't go into print very often as we only meet three times a year. We cannot compete with our sister branches around the country. Our average attendance is 40 which is pretty good for our ages and the distance which must be travelled to get into central London. We are now very pleased with our new venue at Knightsbridge Barracks and we hope we will be fortunate enough to be able to stay there for many years to come!

At our September meeting, we had a most enjoyable talk from a SSAFA worker who told us of his adventures as a National Service soldier. Prior to that, he had been a Bevan Boy leading ponies in the pit, so was enrolled in the Veterinary Corps because of his experience with animals!

We were represented at the Field of Remembrance outside Westminster Abbey. The Cenotaph Parade and also the Westminster Abbey Service on Remembrance

Sunday. We are lucky to be on hand for the London highlights and we will fulfil our usual tasks at the Association AGM in 2007 at the Victory Services Club.



September Branch Meeting

GUERNSEY BRANCH

It was with mixed emotions that six of us met recently for our last lunch of our branch. We hope to continue to meet periodically for as long as possible but are too few to function officially. Our seventh member is in a Residential home, unable to get about at all, although her memory is still excellent. One member lives in Alderney so can rarely join us.

Guernsey branch was formed 50 years ago and Lucille, Peggy and Lorna are founder members. I have been a member about 33 or 34 years, Janet for 24, Helen 10 and Cynthia 8. Our lunch was at a local hotel and we had an excellent meal. Janet, our Secretary had brought along a gold helium balloon which floated above the table and Lorna, the Chairman, produced photos and an invitation to our Silver Anniversary Dinner and Dance – interesting to see that we then numbered over 30 and the Dinner and Dance ticket cost £5! The gold balloon puzzled our fellow diners as there were no men present and we were all obviously past our 50th birthdays! Also there was lots of laughter as we reminisced about life in uniform 60 odd years ago. One lady couldn't contain her curiosity and came over to find out what the occasion was.



Standing: Norma Newman, Cynthia Giles, Janet Laine and Helen Scott. Sitting on wall: Kay Tucker and Peggy Giles. Unable to attend: Lucille Hamilton and Pat Hart

Most of us were volunteers but Lorna was in the Regulars and automatically became WRAC later. I will give more details along with this letter as we would all love to hear from anyone who served with us. Cynthia was the only one to serve overseas.

I have written this report as our Secretary is very sadly losing her sight and I volunteered to do it, not having learned my lesson! My father, when I volunteered, said "never volunteer", but he did himself – before 1914! May we all wish all our fellow members the very best wishes, and if anyone out there remembers any of us, please do write.

W/131892 Mrs Kay Tucker, née Richardson. Faite, Rue de la Corderie, Vale, Guernsey GY3 5BR

Short service details of the Guernsey ladies are:

W/34076 Lucille Hamilton, née Surre. Enlisted at Southampton and completed initial training at Aldermaston. Served throughout with her twin sister, Jacqueline who now lives in Suffolk. She was a clerk with the Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry in Bodmin, Penhale and St Agnes. After a course at Frowbridge, she was employed with Royal Signals and went to Quorn in Leicestershire (billeted in Beaumanor), which was a War Office Establishment with connections to Bletchley Park.

Peggy Giles, née Pearce. Enlisted, I believe, in Kingston, Surrey. After initial training in Lancaster, was a clerk in the War Office for the rest of her service. Cannot remember her number!

W/307372 Norma Newman, née Dredge. Enlisted at Richmond, Yorkshire and trained initially at Pontefract. Became a cook/Sgt and served with the RASC at Northampton, Colchester and Bordon in Hampshire.

W/131892 Kay (Catherine) Tucker, née Richardson. Met and married during the War so served in both names. Enlisted at Cardiff and trained at Wrexham at Royal Welch Fusiliers Depot, AA Training on G.I. at 232 Camp, Devizes then on the South coast – Southampton, Fareham, Gosport and then Beckenham in Kent – all with 508(M) HAA Bty. Then served at various sites during the doodlebug era, Danson Park, Bromley, Bickley, Petts Wood and Upchurch near Sittingbourne with different batteries.

W/70921 Janet Laine, née Maitland. Enlisted at Aberdeen, trained at Inverness and served as a clerk with Royal Scots Fusiliers. Then at Herwick, Inverness and Edinburgh. She too married during the War and served in both names.

W/47207 Cynthia Giles, née Rowley. Enlisted at Plymouth, trained at Aldermaston then served with RA – LAA – both in the UK in Cornwall and Exeter and overseas in Cairo as a clerk. She was married in Cairo Cathedral and served in both names.

Helen Scott, née Brown. Enlisted at Glasgow and trained at Pontefract. Was a clerk in the QM's stores with REME at Carterick then at Northolt on the outskirts of London. Cannot remember her number!

W/ 54742 Pat Hart MBE, née Barclay. Lives in Alderney – a 10 minute flight from Guernsey but costing

around £80 return! Enlisted in Bristol and trained at Gloucester before serving as a clerk with the RE in the Deputy Commander's Office at Gloucester and also at Tannock and Oxford. After demob enlisted into the TA.

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HARROGATE BRANCH

Greetings from the Yorkshire Dales! We are so lucky to have such a thriving Branch although not all of our members can get to the meetings, parades and social events. During the year, we have admitted two new members – can you believe that we thought we had lost our oldest member, Dorothy Wilcockson, but when visiting Olive Whelan in a nursing home we found Dorothy, although very frail, still holding on.

Our speakers included a Methodist Minister who had lived with 400 women all at one time (Padre at a boarding school), slide shows ranging from the Yorkshire Dales, via Beamish Open Air Museum, Chester le Street and Russia, to a demonstration of men's ties, the history of the St John's Ambulance Brigade, as well as poetry and music (must have some culture).

Our Annual Lunch in March was held at a local bistro. Instead of a Christmas Party we are to try the Harrogate College Metro restaurant where young men and girls train for their NVQ in catering. Our Annual Outing found us touring the Dales via Richmond where we had a splendid conducted tour of the Green Howards Regimental Museum.

Three of us went to the Grand Reunion at Warwick University, Coventry which was superb from every point of view (except perhaps for the genuine fire alarm in the middle of the Grand Dinner). It was very well organised – such camaraderie, lots of fun and reminiscences. It was our pleasure to have the North East Reunion at Millstones again this year and especially to welcome our Vice President, Lt Col Sue Westlake. The highlight of the event was the presentation of engraved crystal bowls to Col Frankie Cook (retiring Chairman) and Mrs Gwyneth Friday (retiring Secretary/Treasurer) and to welcome their successors, Maj (Retd) Dot Ryder and Mrs Irene Maclean.



Chairman Barbara counts donations for the Benevolent Fund at the North East Area Reunion

We continue to support local charities which they much appreciate. At our local Cenotaph we always field a good contingent at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th

month for the 2 minutes' silence. For the Remembrance Parade we are split up into different locations.



Pam Shearstone & Sheila Pantin before the Service of Remembrance at Harrogate Cenotaph.



The whole Branch lines up



Mary Wilson outside St Peter's Church Field of Remembrance

Best wishes from all at the Harrogate Branch.

HASTINGS BRANCH

It is time for another entry to *Lioness* and, while at our AGM, it occurred to the writer that our Chairman's Report may make good reading – so this is it:

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Another year has flown by and here I am reviewing what has happened during that time. I think our programme has been on much the same lines as previously. Two interesting talks – one on the Pearly Kings and Queens and another with slides which took us along the countryside to Winchester. Apart from January and August when we did not meet, we have had, in addition to routine meetings, this Annual General Meeting, our Birthday tea in April, the strawberry tea in June at the home of our Vice Chairman and in July a mystery tour ending up with tea at Lidington Tea Rooms. The latter was a delightful afternoon despite the heat and the fact that from the coach a notice could be seen indicating the road to the village was not suitable for coaches! However, we got there safely and the afternoon was voted a great success both by our own members and the WRNS members who joined us.

We took no official part in the Remembrance events since we have resigned from the Hastings Joint Council of Ex-Service Associations. However, a Cross was planted in memory of those ATS who gave their lives in the Second World War and Win Wakelin placed our wreath on the War Memorial. We have also continued to support other Ex-Service Associations at their Services such as the Battle of Britain, Royal Artillery on St Barbara's Day and SSAFA/FORCES help.

Our welfare commitment had kept us busy with visits to those unable to attend meetings and a special visit to Molly Steele on her 101st Birthday. We will, of course, be visiting members in Residential Homes and those who are housebound just before Christmas. Our Christmas Party will be on 8 December and arrangements are in hand for more carols and less quizzes!



Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex at the SSAFA/FORCES Help Service, with our Standard Bearer, Margery Lucas.

In the past a small group of members raised funds for the Star and Garter Home in Richmond but this we can no longer do. However, during the years a total of £3,670 was raised for the Home – well done.

By the time you read this, Christmas will have gone and we will be well into 2007 which we hope will be an excellent year for you all.

HEREFORD BRANCH

We are saying goodbye to three of our members, who will be sadly missed. Margaret Irene Pugh passed away on 27 April 2006 and though she lived in Brecon and did not attend our meetings, she was a strong supporter and her story features in our Branch book. Grace Morphew was living in a nursing home in Wantage, Oxfordshire. She did not want to lose her contact with Hereford and loved to receive her newsletters and read about the antics of Hereford in the *Lioness*. She died peacefully on 21 July 2006. Kay Portman (real name Kathleen) a quiet lady who kept a strong friendship with Joyce and also enjoyed newsletters, died in the last days of August having enjoyed one last beautiful summer. Kay was on the beaches of Dunkirk and her story was lost to us but having been rescued off the beaches it would have made an amazing contribution to our tales of Army life.

We have continued to meet regularly at the Wye Inn and why not. First we must extend our thoughts to Peggy Rose for a speedy recovery. We hope she is back with us soon. In August we had our annual picnic at Queens Wood and as with every year it is well attended with as many WRAC as there are ATS. The younger elements were seen in the hut of the park rangers 'lifting' benches for the benefit of the more sedate members of the branch. As you can see by the picture it was the case of Hear, See and Speak nothing. I did return them at the end of the day. The weather was glorious and plenty to eat.



We also had the pleasure of seeing our standard flying at the remembrance parade. The local paper printed a very beautiful photograph which illustrated how moving the parade was. Every year we lay a wreath for lost friends and comrades. Our AGM was held in October and Joyce and I did not move fast enough and were re-elected along with Mary Nicholls as chairperson. We are asking all our members if they wish to receive their newsletters via e-mail, as an attachment, saving on postage, printing and ink. We will let you know how this goes.



▲ The two-minute silence at the war memorial in St Peter's Square, Hereford, on Remembrance Sunday. 05:45-6:00
Picture by Ben Housman

The ladies of Hereford Branch made a donation to the upkeep of the *Lioness* and received a lovely letter from the General Secretary. We are holding our Christmas Dinner on 6 January 2007 and it looks like we will have a fair turnout to take on the rigours of next year.

HULL BRANCH

On Saturday 30 September 2006, eleven members of the Hull branch travelled to the Millstones Restaurant, on the outskirts of Harrogate, for the Northern Area Reunion. There should have been twelve of us but unfortunately Enid Long our treasurer had broken her foot and was in hospital. Due to the driver of our mini coach, who didn't know the way, we arrived at Millstones later than planned but managed to arrive just in time for lunch.

Before lunch we were all warmly welcomed by the new Area chairman, Maj (Retd) Dorothy Ryder. But as I knew her, we were both members of the WOs' and Sgts' Mess of 4 Coy WRAC in Singapore 1969 – 1971. (Is it really 35 years ago) wow! After lunch and the Loyal Toast, the Vice President Lt Col Westlake spoke and told us she hoped in time to visit all branches of the Association in the Northern area.

A young lady dressed in a WRAC Recruiters uniform entertained us with memorable songs. After the raffle was drawn, tea and coffee were served and people began to start (in most cases) their long journey home. Thankfully the journey back to Hull was quicker than it was coming. I think I speak for everyone in saying a good time was had by all.

We have enjoyed many other activities as well. Our Christmas lunch was held at the Age Concern Complex and was enjoyed by fourteen members. Each member brought a wrapped gift and placed it in a large bag. After an excellent lunch everyone had a lucky dip in the bag so

we all had a surprise gift for Christmas morning – if members could wait that long!

We had a Bring and Buy on 3 February 2006 with ten members present and in March we welcomed Mrs Jean Robinson, ex WRAF as a visitor. We were all sad to learn of the death of Sheila Lawn on 17 March 2006. This was the week after she and May Kirby had attended the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of World War II in London. She was a gunner in the ATS and joined the Association in 1995. A number of members attended her funeral.

In May we presented Mrs May Kirby with her Gold badge for over 40 years membership and Mrs D Baker, Miss M Cole and Mrs D Mirfin bought silver ones for over 25 years membership.

The June summer outing was finally held on a brilliantly sunny day, the lunch was good too. 27 June 2006 was Veterans Day and fourteen of us had lunch and entertainment at the City Hall, Hull with the Lord Mayor. The lady singer wore her medals and was an ex-colleague of our member, Miss M Cole.

Our meetings are now being advertised in the 'Community Events' Diary in the *Hull Daily Mail* as well as in the central library on an effort to attract new members. The Minister for Veterans Affairs and the Hull City Council sponsored a Veterans weekend held in East Park on 5 and 6 August. In September we had our Harvest sale and Mrs Jean Norris was presented with her Gold badge for 40 years membership.

LEEDS BRANCH

We are still managing to meet monthly with fourteen loyal members. Contact is kept with those unable to join us. Every member helps with the running of the Branch to keep it functioning without all the work falling to one or two.

In September, our Chairman and Secretary along with friends made the pilgrimage to Arnhem and the Rhine Crossings. *Editor: see article in the Articles of Interest section.* Our guide, an ex paratrooper, vividly described both actions of WWII: one a disaster and the other a success. Apart from the serious point of the trip, we enjoyed the company, the weather and the experience of being in Holland and Germany.

Eleven members travelled to Harrogate for the Northern Area Reunion and Lunch trying out our free bus travel. We hope to take further advantage of this facility in the summer. In October, we held our AGM and the Committee was re-elected en bloc! Our finances are in good order. In November, members helped where possible with the Poppy Appeal and attended Remembrance Day Parades. We are looking forward to our Christmas Lunch.

Next year will be our 40th Birthday and we plan to celebrate this at our Spring Lunch. VIPs have been invited. Members are hoping to join other ex AA and Searchlight ladies at Alveston Hall in April and many have booked to attend the RA Association General Assembly in Blackpool in May.

LINCOLN AND DISTRICT BRANCH

Just a short report to confirm that we are forming our branch on 16 January 2007 and at the time of writing (24 November) our membership is now 31. On Saturday 11 November 2006 we attended the Service at the Lincoln City Memorial. Numbers were low due to the short notice and the next year we hope to field a larger contingent. Gwyneth Stratten did us very proud by laying our wreath. We shall also be lunching for Christmas on Tuesday 5 December at the Touch Restaurant in Lincoln.



At Lincoln City Memorial – Chris Corker, Gwyneth Stratten, Teri Marshall and Marion Rutishy



*Back Row: Chris Corker, Fiona Baker, Gwyneth Stratten, Maureen West, Veronica Chamberlain
Middle Row: Beryl Butcher, Averil Ward, Bimbo Coleman, Nancy Miller, Joyce Gough, Jean Sperry, Jacki Walton
Front Row: Teri Marshall, Jean Booth*

LIVERPOOL BRANCH

The Liverpool Branch meets monthly at the Adelphi Hotel in the city centre. Most meet for lunch in the Hotel Carvery before the meeting starts at 1.30pm.

This year, on Remembrance Sunday, we were invited by the Lord Mayor of Liverpool to send two members of our Association to join the Civic Remembrance Service. I represented the ATS and Dawn Missen, the WRAC. We laid a wreath to honour our comrades.

The following Wednesday, on 15 November, the Lord Mayor of Liverpool joined us for lunch. Thirty members were present and the Lord Mayor spoke to us afterwards. She spoke about the building and alterations taking place in the city, ready for the "Capital of Culture" year of celebrations in 2008. We took some photographs (which hopefully will be sent for a future issue) after which she left for her next appointment – with the dentist!

Hope this arrives in time for the next magazine, and may I say, a good time was had by all. Best Wishes,

LONDON BRANCH

At our June meeting we requested members to relate 'An Army Tale'. We did have tales – but not all Army – shows we don't live in the past, but do like a good natter – which continued into July's meeting when members recalled Veterans Day Events. Three of our members were invited to 10 Downing Street for tea. Others joined Brian Turner – Ready Steady Cook Chef at the Imperial War Museum. We received a letter from Buckingham Palace thanking us for the Birthday card we sent to Her Majesty the Queen. So there really was something to natter about at that meeting.



At No 10 – Chris Gibbs & Eva Ellison



Jean Taylor with Brian Turner

We closed the year, 29 September, brilliantly with a lunch at the Victory Club. The food was great, the staff helpful – they happily coped with wheelchairs and crotchety legs with a smile.

Thanks must go to the committee who set up an impromptu reception corner for signing in and everyone receive a knitted medal bearing their name – thanks to Jean Taylor our arts and crafts expert we didn't forget each others names. Each member also received a WRAC Association Badge magnet and ATS bookmark souvenir. Thirty-seven members attended, travelling from far and wide by train, tube, bus and taxi.



Enjoying lunch



Jean Taylor, with knitted medal, and Chris Gibbs

MORE MEMBERS NEEDED

This is a plea from London Branch to ex-WRAC members. In 13 years, this Branch will celebrate its centenary and what a celebration that will be! Sadly, not many of us will be there – but you could be. We are very proud of this Branch and need your support to carry on. We meet at the Green Jackets Club in Davies Street which is just across the road from Bond Street tube station. If you can help, please phone Gladys Stewart on 0208 460 5982. Come along to a meeting and see if you like us...we do not live in the past and enjoy a good laugh and a natter...we would like to meet you. We already have ex-WRAC members as well as ex-ATS but we do need new blood.

We held our 87th AGM in October and like many other Branches find it difficult to find new committee members and officers. Age seems to be catching up with us. For the same reason only two members marched at the

Cenotaph and five tickets requested for Westminster Abbey. Our hearts are willing; it is our backs and legs that are the trouble. Even so we have an average of twenty-eight members attending meetings, so it's not all bad.

May we wish you all a happy and healthy 2007 – see you in April at the AGM.

Editor: With my General Secretary's hat on, I am sure that all Branches could equally well make this plea. Come on ex WRAC members – the future is in your hands.

LUTON BRANCH

We have had our usual varied events throughout the last few months, including talks on 'Tax for Recycled Teenagers', how to make a Will, Luton at War, and one very interesting one on hedgehogs, the speaker bringing a tame specimen with her! We still hold the inter-service shield, having beaten the Association of WRNS, but we were beaten by the Far East Vets for the first time in 5 years. Don't worry; we'll murder 'em next time round.

We have also been getting out and about, visiting the Royal Hospital Chelsea in June for the Governor's Review of Founders Day, and the RAF Museum at Hendon. Both were very enjoyable trips. We have plenty of things planned for 2007 – our programme gets fuller every year.

Remembrance services went off without a hitch although we were rather thin on the ground. Our WLA associate member, Sylvia Odell, was resplendent in her Land Army hat! One member's niece worked in a local hat factory which are few and far between these days, and the staff there all helped to supply Sylvia's hat!

We send our regards to our 'mates' around the country and we shall endeavour to keep Luton's flag flying.

MARCHES AND MID WALES BRANCH

Our web page template makes the formation of a new branch sound like a 'piece of cake', please read on. My first meeting with Lizzie Lawrence was due to the direct intervention of Irene Hall in her capacity as Wales and the West Area Secretary. Irene was trying to keep Wrexham branch alive so she twisted Lizzie's arm to hold a garden party at her house on Sweeney Mountain during the summer of 2005. At that time, I was 'loitering' in the cosy alleyways of retirement. Those of you who know Irene will be aware that she has no time for loiterers! Un-be-known to Lizzie, Irene invited me "to help make the numbers up!" Of course we now know she had other plans for me!

I had a pleasant, relaxed afternoon in the company of some friendly ATS ladies but I don't think many came from Wrexham. In contrast, Lizzie was like a cat on hot bricks: NOT because Irene was breathing down her neck but because one of her beloved Exmoor ponies was due to give birth at any minute! Lizzie invited me to see her beautiful ponies. They were pedigrees and as well as 'Sweeney Mountain' (but of course!) their pedigree titles were suffixed with the name of an apple variety. Now she needed to find another 'apple' name for the new arrival. I 'volunteered' to ask a friend who works at Bulmers.

"I wouldn't want to put you to any trouble," said Lizzie. "Are you sure?" I have lived to question the wisdom of saying my next words, but how easily they tripped off the tongue. "If I say I'll do something, I'll do it." A few days later Lizzie had every 'apple' name known to man!

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A year ago Lizzie told me over the phone that Irene was pressing her to start a new branch and she asked me to be the secretary. We'd only met once but I knew that she was helping to run the family farm, caring for her frail mother, not to mention her deep involvement with her ponies and the Riding for the Disabled Association so she already had her hands extremely full! ME – A SECRETARY? Ever since my Army days when I was 'manoeuvred' out of a driver's cab and into an MT office as a complete novice, I have detested office work. Drivers made dreadful clerks! If I'm honest it was a combination of sympathy and loyalty that made me agree. Sympathy for Lizzie, who already had quite enough to fill a 24/7 existence, yet I also saw in her the same loyalty to the Association that, deep down, I still had.

It had obviously been a tough decision to wind up Wrexham branch, but it was when Lizzie asked me to draft a letter to its members that I felt the full weight of emotion that everyone else was experiencing. Then I drafted another letter to all HQ members with SY postcodes. A meeting was arranged with Maggie Purkis, Area Chairman, and Irene. We squeezed into a corner table in Harry Tiffin's café at Churchstoke. Maggie and Irene gave us the 'do's and don'ts' on how to run a branch over Fish and Chips and mugs of coffee. Memories of the NAAFI came flooding back. It was at that meeting that Lizzie and I won the debate about the name for the new branch.

As we strolled to our cars Lizzie said, rather hesitantly. "There must be some WRAC out there somewhere". I enjoy a challenge, but at that stage the idea of starting a new branch seemed daunting. Well, the letters went out to you all and you all responded in your different ways. Lizzie was right – (did you ever meet an RSM, or indeed a Captain who wasn't right?) there were some WRAC out there, and some ATS, and the venue had been staring me in the face every time I went shopping in Newton. I will never forget Duanna approaching me when I was arranging our first meeting in the Monty Club. She asked if it was right that the "women's army" was coming to the club. When I assured her that it was I thought she was going to hug me. She threw her arms open and said, "Oh, thank goodness! I was in the Royal Australian Air Force; I've been the only female member here for such a long time. Can I join you?" I had been trudging around Wales all day, leaving adverts in shops and supermarkets, and here was my first result!

Closing Wrexham branch was, to say the least, difficult. It pulled at everyone's heart strings. Through my own involvement, I know that a green shoot was taken from the Wrexham branch and grafted onto the WRAC Association's mother tree. Over the last year, that shoot has grown to produce a strong and thriving new branch. Proof of that came recently, when, all the remaining ATS ladies who made up Wrexham branch, sent me letters expressing their support and good wishes for Marches and Mid Wales.

Now I'll let you into a secret that I don't think even Lizzie knows. I wasn't a member of the Association when I went

to her 'bash' up on Sweeney Mountain and I didn't rejoin until October 2003! Well, I had to, didn't I?

I know I also speak for Lizzie when I say, many thanks to Maggie and Irene for their help and advice, but the biggest thank you must go to our members. With thanks to you, forming Marches and Mid Wales branch was a 'piece of cake'. May we all, young and old, ATS and WRAC, have many more worthwhile moments and anniversaries in Marches and Mid Wales.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH

We are still ticking over quite nicely and we have been kept on the go somewhat since our last report. In June, two of us joined quite a large gathering of the ATS Dinner Club at the Victory Services Club and, during our brief stay in London, we both had the pleasant experience of a visit to the London Eye! Very enjoyable!

In July, a group of us went to a very old inn at Boulmer in Northumberland. This is on the coastal area which currently houses the RAF Air Sea Rescue Service. The old inn is called the Fishing Boat Inn which we nickname the FBI! A marvellous lunch was enjoyed by all as was the bus journey.



Outside the FBI!

On 6 August, the Veterans Day was celebrated in Newcastle and we had a reasonably representative group from our Branch to join the mixed marchers and standard bearers at the Ceremonial Way in the grounds of St Thomas the Martyr Church in the Haymarket area.



of the city. The Lord Mayor, who this year is a lady, made a special visit and after her speech had a few words with the marchers here and there along the route. We had some photographs taken by the daughter of one of our members, Betty Templeton which were donated to us free of charge. **PDF Compressor Free Version**



Still in August, on the 15th, we had yet another appointment – this time at Duxford Hall – also in Northumberland. The owner invited 2500 ex-service personnel, carers and disabled from care homes etc. We also had some Pearly Kings and Queens and Chelsea Pensioners. We were treated to cream scones and strawberries followed later by fish and chips, tea and coffee. There were lots of helpers from all walks of life, and the owner is now in the Guinness Book of Records for the greatest weight of fish and chips eaten at any one session!

September and our trip and meal etc at Millstones was again enjoyed. It seems a good central venue for the North East Area Reunion! We incorporated our AGM in the October meeting and all was OK. The year's activities will end with us joining the NE POW Association on 13 December for lunch at The Old Assembly Rooms, Newcastle. We have a member Betty Herschel who sees to this! Happy 2007 to all *Lioness* readers!

NORFOLK BRANCH

We could not possibly have sustained the hectic first few months of 2006 and the second half has been much quieter. We had two most enjoyable outings; one to Springfield's Garden Centre and a shopping outlet near Spalding, which left some of us rather out of pocket. We shopped as if we had never seen a shop before. Well, it was an exceedingly cold and windy day in the fens and far too inclement to spend time in the gardens, perhaps next time. Then we tripped off to Cromer to meet some of the ladies who belong to the Branch but cannot get to meetings. We were fortunate to recruit a new member there, so welcome to Mrs Cullen. A lovely sunny day by the sea.

Several of us were at the very well-attended annual Service of Remembrance to Nurse Edith Cavell in October. This was held at her cathedral grave side by the vicar of the village church where she had lived and where her father had been parson.

The particular highlight for four of us, Linda Graver, our

Chairman, Joyce Hale, Joan Whittingham and Joan Asberry, our Secretary, was an invitation from the "Not Forgotten" Association, Patron the Princess Royal, to a Buckingham Palace Garden Party. This was on the most memorable occasion – "the hottest day on record". Joan Whittingham has written elsewhere about our enjoyable time there.

One afternoon our speaker was a gentleman whose full time hobby is the weather. He made this most universal topic very interesting. He isn't a great supporter of the theory of global warming, believing more in the idea that the climate has been in change since the dawn of time. Mostly our meetings have been of the high-decibel variety – chat and cup of tea sessions with the chat much to the fore.

At our AGM in November, our Treasurer, Audrey Juby, resigned and her place taken (a volunteer I'm glad to say) by Lyn Hatch, whom we welcome warmly. Audrey has been treasurer since 1999 and in spite of physical difficulties over the past few years she has carried on magnificently. Our grateful thanks to you, Audrey.

I received a letter from New Mexico from a gentleman who had asked me several years ago to help find out about his late wife's ATS life and has kept in touch ever since. This present letter contained a splendid reproduction of a magazine photograph of the ATS Statue in the National Memorial Arboretum. So New Mexico knows all about it!

At the time of writing, 11 November, we have just returned from a service of remembrance at the plaque in Gt Yarmouth to the 26 girls who lost their lives in 1943.

Good wishes to members and HQ staff from all of us here in Norwich. Come up and see us sometime! We meet on the first Saturday of each month at the RBL Club at 1330 and would be delighted to see any holiday makers in the region. Ring Joan on 01603 455070.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH

The second half of 2006 was very enjoyable with plenty of social activities. In June, we were asked to hold another "tea at 3" party in order to raise funds for St Luke's Hospice, Plymouth. We do this within our monthly meeting giving the proceeds of our regular Bring and Buy. With the help of a lovely Panda Bear to rattle, donated by Betty Freak, we raised over £50. Our ladies were out in force also to collect for the Army Benevolent Fund Flag day on three days at four locations and collected £343.

On 1 July, we went up to Bristol for our first Southern and South West Area Reunion and we were invited to parade our Standard in St Andrew's Church and on the Hoe, Plymouth on several occasions for services and photo calls for press releases. On the last day of July we had a treat. The "Not Forgotten" Association invited us, plus around 80 other veterans from all services to a luncheon cruise on our lovely River Tamar. First up the river Plym, as far as the tide and Laira bridge would allow, then, while we were served with a very tasty lunch, we cruised across Plymouth Sound passing the Citadel, the Hoe, Drake's Island and on into the Tamar, past the dockyard, under the Tamar Road Bridge and Brunel's beautiful rail bridge, as far as Carkeel with lovely riverside woodlands,

then we turned for our return to Mount Batten for disembarkation.

With Plymouth being the hub of the tourist trade in the South West in the summer, we tend to keep a low profile and keep off the busy roads as much as possible in the school holidays. As soon as life calms down a little we pick up where we left off. So, in September, we had Mrs Bell come to speak to us about Hearing Dogs for deaf people. She brought her dog, Jingle, to demonstrate their close working relationship. Back to St Andrew's Church on the 17th for the Battle of Britain service and on the 20th, we went to Truro to meet with members in Cornwall who can't come to Plymouth to see us. We met, by arrangement, in the Royal British Legion Club. The caterers had a very good a la carte menu planned for us and we had a great time.



Autumn started with our AGM, all officers were returned unanimously! For the WRAC, there is our annual Dinner Club, this year held in Birmingham. A busy week in November for Remembrance with the festival at the pavilions on the 10th, a service at St Andrew's on the 11th and on Sunday 12th a service on the Hoe.

Earlier this year we said "goodbye" to Gill Davidson who moved from Plymouth to Doncaster. We welcomed Mrs E Shone, ex ATS, to Cornwall, and Mrs Bernie Davey, ex ATS/WRAC, to Plymouth. We have also recently been informed of the death of Miss M R Robins in Cornwall. Statistically, our membership remains the same this year.

We have our meetings in the Royal Fleet Club, Devonport. 1.30 - 4pm on the first Monday of the month except when there is a bank holiday, the meeting is then moved to the second Monday. There is no meeting in January. Please feel free to join us. Contact the Secretary, Ruth Jennings, on 01752 363118.

PORTSMOUTH BRANCH

Thankfully we have not lost any members this year although old age is catching up with a good few. We have 41 life members and 17 annual spread over a wide area. We look good on paper but not many take an active part in Branch events. Beginning of the year started with our usual attendance in May at the service and parade in Chichester Cathedral as guests of the Italy Star Association. Our standard was carried smartly by Sally Watson. The weather was fine and about six members marched in the parade.

D Day 6 June we were on the front at the D Day Stone. Standard carried by Phyllis Price, about six members present. The parade was the usual muddle but the service was very nice. The next weekend saw us down at the Falklands Memorial in old Portsmouth. Usual members present with our standard. Hope next year we can muster more support for the 25 years anniversary. Our AGM was on 11 July. Sad to say only 5 members were present but we managed to plan events for the rest of 2006.

On 19 July four members attended the "Not Forgotten" Association garden party at Buckingham Palace, we understand they had a wonderful time and a report by Gillian Utting and photograph is a separate item.

Through the summer a number of events were held including an American tea party at Joy Elmer's home in Fareham. A very good afternoon lunch on 27 September at the Harvester pub in Fareham was well attended and a few members out of Portsmouth were able to come. Another coffee morning held by Jasmin McCree at Gosport was also well attended. All these small events enable members to get together and raise funds for the Branch.

Last parade was on Remembrance Sunday in the Guildhall Square. Four members attended and our standard was carried by Phyllis Price and our wreath laid by Teddie Bray. This year some members found it difficult so regret next year we shall be fewer in number. This year will finish with a coffee morning in Portsmouth. We still meet on the second Tuesday of every month at 11am at the Hampshire ex Service Club, Fratton Road, Portsmouth.

SALISBURY BRANCH

Writing this report in November, we would like to wish all our Association friends, and in many cases they are scattered around the world, a peaceful and prosperous New Year - by publication date perhaps we could also add, Happy Easter!

Our June meeting was a visit to the Oceanarium at Bournemouth, when we all enjoyed a breath of sea air. In July, we had a glorious summer's day for our garden party at the home of our Secretary, Val Trout. We were also very pleased to welcome our Vice President, Lt Col Sue Westlake, our General Secretary, Maj (Retd) Jane



Lt Col Westlake and Frances Green

Freebairn and Chief Clerk, Kath Barker. Lt Col Westlake presented Frances Green with her Certificate of Appreciation and congratulated her on the 30 year contribution she has made to Salisbury Branch activities and to the Association.

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The whole Branch and guests

There were a number of competitions, which seem to get more difficult each year, or could it be that the writer is getting older and has more senior moments of late! Winners were May Brown, Alison Ogden, Kath Barker and Chris Over. Our report of this event in the local paper brought us a new member, Brenda Maxwell whom we welcomed at our September meeting.

In August, we were delighted to welcome our Area Chairman, Major Maskens-McIntyre who gave a very informative talk on Alpacas. Did you know that a young alpaca is called a 'cria'? (They could not answer that on an 'Jiggheads?' programme I saw on TV). Major Maskens-McIntyre had to hurry home as she had two expectant mums to attend to.

Our AGM in September went as expected and all the committee members were re-elected en bloc! It is good to know our members are so happy with the programmes our Secretary arranges. Our October meeting gave us an opportunity to just have a good chat over a cup of tea/ coffee. Sometimes we forget that this is just as important as having a speaker.

We look forward to hosting our Area Reunion in 2007 and to welcome all the Branch members in our area. Anyone else visiting Salisbury would be welcome at any of our meetings, just let us know when.

SHIPLEY BRANCH

It is with sadness that I have to report that the Shipley branch of the WRAC Association is closing in December 2006. Many of our members can no longer get to the monthly meetings because of age. We will have a Christmas lunch for our final meeting.

SHROPSHIRE BRANCH

Here we are again, as happy as can be, (so the song says) and, although few in number, we are a happy branch when we meet, still at the same venue, Haywood/Lonsdale Court Community Room, Glebe Street, Wellington. First Wednesday of the month, 2-4pm.

But no meeting in January.

Following on from our last report, in June, three of us went by train to the ATS Dinner Club lunch, at the Victory Services Club in London. We enjoyed an excellent meal and good company. I think nearly everyone won a raffle prize; it was a nice day out.

At the 43rd Reconnaissance Reunion at Patchway, Bristol, Nancy met an ex ATS lady from Scotland who didn't know about our Association but decided to join us immediately. It is a sad fact, that out there in the great wide world, such a lot of ex Army girls have no idea that the Association exists, and therefore miss out on such good friendships, happy reunions and help when needed. But it is wonderful when we do find another one of us.

On July 15, we travelled to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas in Staffordshire, to see the unveiling of the ATS Statue. It was a very memorable day with the service and the Northfield Caledonia Pipes and Drums looking resplendent in their kilts. Soldiers and ATS from the living history group were there with their search lights.



The new ATS Statue

On "Lions Day" in Wellington, we helped the Royal British Legion on their Tombola Stall, during gale force winds, which blew a gazebo over the cars, but we did manage to stay on our feet. Was it ex Army stamina? At



Sharing the cake

our August meeting, Brenda brought in a splendid cake, with her wedding picture on it, and we celebrated Brenda and Bill's golden wedding anniversary.

The same committee were re-elected at our AGM. Nancy Tipton – Chair, Nancy Adams – Vice Chair, Brenda Adams – Secretary, Brenda Adams – Treasurer, Hilda Delkin – Social Secretary.

We had a nice day in October at the Waies and West Area branch officers' committee meeting. The Lord Hill at Shrewsbury is a splendid venue – the meal and wine were excellent and the meeting very informative. The REME Association gave us a wonderful night out once again and every lady received a box of chocolates. Remembrance weekend was very eventful in our area. Lucy Bowyer carried our standard at the garrison church and Beryl Lane laid the wreath. The Royal British Legion service and parade in Wellington was remarkable with 1000 people attending. Nancy carries their standard. The evening "Festival of Light" was at Oakengates Theatre.

We are sad to report that two more members have passed away – Mrs Olive Dowle of Dornington and Mrs Mabel Thomas of Shrewsbury. We do remember them and miss them.

As mentioned earlier in the report, the new member to join the Association is Mrs Helen Forrester (née Berry Ross) ATS, RAPC, SCYR, living at the Riggs, Rosemarkie, Scotland. It doesn't seem like a year since last December but it's nearly Christmas again. We are looking forward to a meal out this year instead of our usual Christmas party.

Now you are reading this, it is 2007. To all branches out there, keep soldiering on. Thank you HQ for your endeavours and achievement with *Lioness*, it holds us all together. To all friends and members of our Association where ever you are, have a happy New Year, look after yourselves and keep the flag flying.

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Hello Ladies who we know far and wide. A special mention (if I may) to Norah Forsyth from Sunderland who is a very dear friend of mine and has been very poorly. Norah, get well soon.

July saw us heading to Gail Langton's for her annual luncheon which is a treat to behold. The weather always seems to be so good and, although Gail puts on a lovely spread, she still manages to raise money for the Branch. Also in July was Betty Rush's tea-party which again was a great success and Betty made a donation to the Branch. Where do these ladies get their energy from?

In August we had our competition of skittles against the Signals. I think we all enjoyed ourselves even though I think some of the men played to win – we'll have to give them a handicap next time. My eldest granddaughter, Morgan, and Beryl Allinson's grandson, Louis, set up the skittles each time so we get a work party and they get a nice present at the end of the evening.

In September, we had Jim Wilson from the Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service giving us a talk and small film

show. Ladies, if you get the chance to have these wonderful men giving your branch a talk, it is well worth it. The information and advice from them is great. Again in September a few of us went to Naomi House which is a respite centre for terminally ill children. The centre has an Open Weekend once a year for anyone to visit. What a fabulous place with swimming pool, Jacuzzi, play areas, quiet areas – basically everything a child could wish for is there. Beautiful grounds and staff that are so friendly and dedicated it makes you feel very humble. There is no feeling of illness, just calmness and serenity.

October was our AGM with a slight change on the Committee. Margaret Woodhead has stepped down as Treasurer due to ill-health and Stephanie Caws has stepped into the breach. Jean Houghton has become Vice-Chairwoman and Pauline Keane Assistant Entertainments & Assistant Secretary. After the AGM, my husband John, put on a small display of woodturning and a table of things that he had made for the evening which I think the members found interesting. We also had a trip to Dorchester Market in October. It was very good with a lovely place for lunch. In fact John and I met up with people from the North East (small world) but who now also live in Southampton. The trip was so well received that the members want to go again. (I think they were thinking of the following week!)

In November, Maria from the Body Shop gave Gail a make-over. We all sampled some of the items and went home at the end of the evening smelling just like the Body Shop. December will see us putting on our glad-rags once again for the Christmas function. We have a change of venue this year but hopefully it will be just as enjoyable; maybe slightly more so as we haven't any stairs to climb. The day after that we have Gail's coffee morning. It will be the last chance to hand our Christmas cards and to sample Gail's mince pies, with a raffle as well – it will be a hectic couple of days. We now have our programme for next year, so hopefully the members will enjoy it as much as last year. Without their input this branch couldn't go on, so thank you one and all.

It is with deep regret that I have to report that we lost another of our founding members on 30 September 2006.



Jean Frances Hamilton Allen, Sgt Admin 1938-1945

Ida Barnett spent a lot of time contacting members about Frances. Ida lost a valued friend but still thought of others, this was much appreciated. Despite the short notice, 10 members were able to attend the memorial service to Frances. We hadn't seen Frances at meetings for a while but what a truly lovely person Frances was. There was so much we didn't know about her! Played golf for England and Hampshire and was a member of several clubs. She was also a keen angler or was it fly-fisher? A really lovely and clever lady.

More of the Southampton Branch adventures in the next edition. Look after yourselves and each other.

STAFFORD BRANCH

Our meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 2.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Stafford. We endeavour to enjoy ourselves by varying the meetings as much as possible.

19 Jul A summer party where everyone brought a plate of goodies and enjoyed a good chat. We never seem short of something to say.

16 Aug The branch took a break as many members were on holiday enjoying their gardens or looking after grandchildren during the school holidays.

20 Sep Stafford ladies should be proud of themselves because subs had been paid prior to the AGM. Well done ladies. The AGM elected, en bloc, to retain the present committee: Chairman – Joan Higgins, V. Chairman – Muriel Lakin, Treasurer – Marjorie Powell and Secretary – Ann Deakin.

27 Sep I was privileged to be invited to the 60th anniversary of the Wolverhampton Branch. It was a lovely day. The venue was great, the meal was superb and the company was terrific. Even the sun decided to shine for us. Many thanks to Mary Davies and the committee for all their hard work in creating such a special occasion. Well done.

14 Oct An Area Secretaries meeting at the Lord Hill, Shrewsbury, attended by Joan Higgins, Muriel Lakin, Marjorie Powell and myself. Thanks to Maggie Purkis and Irene Hall – it was a brilliant day.

18 Oct We intended to have a quiz followed by toasted teacakes but we were so busy toasting the teacakes that we forgot about the quiz. You have to get your priorities right, don't you?

12 Nov A basic lesson in sign language from Jeannie. Edie Rayner's daughter-in-law. Jeannie's mum has been profoundly deaf for many years but they still enjoy a natter using sign language. Jeannie even provided us with sign language cards so we can practise at home. Thanks Jeannie.

13 Dec To end the year we had, yes you've guessed it, a Christmas party with presents. "Merry Christmas to you all and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year".

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the ladies of the Stafford Branch for their continued support during the year. Special thanks must go to the Committee. Joan, Muriel, Marjorie and Dorry Newton for all their help and support but most importantly for the laughter and for their friendship.

As you can see, the Stafford ladies know how to enjoy themselves. All they need is a good cup of tea and, of

course, a biscuit. If you would like to join us sometime, then give us a call.

STOCKPORT BRANCH

Greetings to all members at home and abroad. It is some time since we sent in a report but we continue to meet at 2pm on the second Thursday of each month at The Armoury in Stockport. About 16-18 members attend the meeting and we all enjoy a cup of tea and a chat at the end of the afternoon.

January. Sadly one of our members Eileen McKnight died and the McKnight family provided us with the means of making a memorial buffet lunch. We invited Eileen's daughter Denise to join us and it all went very well.

February. We had a Body Shop demonstration by Hazel, the daughter of one of our deceased members, Alice Moir. It was enjoyed by all of us.

April. A 'Bring and Buy' sale at the home of Joan Clarke in Bramhall. Joan is an associate member and a great asset to our group. The sale went well and the amount raised was £121 towards our funds; a lovely afternoon.

June. Lunch at our local Catering College – fourteen members and guests attended. The food was excellent. During the month we also enjoyed a six hour sail up the Manchester Ship Canal. We sailed from Salford Quays to Liverpool – a glorious day enjoyed by all twenty ladies, a mix of members and guests.

July. Eleven members attended the unveiling of the ATS statue at the National Memorial Arboretum. A wonderful day with perfect weather.

September. We had a day out to Kirkby Lonsdale for a Victorian Fair. The weather was woeful. The rain continued all day and we were soaked but it didn't dampen our spirits, good company and good food. We all enjoyed it.

We also had another Bring and Buy at Joan's home in Bramhall. £227.00 was raised towards the upkeep of the ATS statue. This is in memory of Joan's sister Lillian Provost (ATS). Lillian would have been very pleased and



Members at the Bring and Buy in Joan's garden

proud. Joan received a letter from Mary Beeston thanking her and all the Stockport ladies for such a magnificent donation.

October. Once again we had lunch at our Local Catering College. Fourteen members and guests attended and enjoyed wonderful food – a lovely afternoon!

November. Five members went to London for the Remembrance weekend. One marched and 4 of us went to Westminster Abbey. A very moving service as usual after which we had lunch – it was a really special time. Barbara and Lillian had been to the Theatre on the Saturday and Joyce and I (Jean) watched The Lord Mayors Show. We had never seen it live before so there was plenty to talk about. Mona (our more energetic member) enjoyed her march and met lots of her friends. So much to see, so much to do but sadly time runs out and it's time to go home until the next time.

December. Our Christmas lunch is planned for 20 December when twenty members and guests will meet to start our Christmas celebrations in style! Where? Our local Catering College of course...we like it there!! I am sure we will have a lovely time.

However, now it is time to go...the end of the year is getting near. I do hope you all enjoyed a very Happy Christmas. We send you all our best wishes for a very Happy New Year and may 2007 be very kind to you all.

SUFFOLK BRANCH

The Branch has now seen the end of its first year. It has been interesting from every point of view. We did some of the things we planned to do and the year has flown by.

Finding accommodation for our meetings at the right price and in the right location was quite a problem in the beginning, as no doubt other branches will appreciate. Thanks to one of our eagle-eyed members, we now meet monthly in the Plough Inn, Dogs Head Street, Ipswich at 2.30pm on the third Thursday of each month. The Landlord looks kindly upon us and we have the dining room to ourselves for several hours in the afternoon. This means we can now begin to have speakers and other entertainment or just a good chat – which most members enjoy on a regular basis. Our thanks to Sylvia Johnson for her quizzes which are guaranteed to make us laugh and scratch our heads at the same time.

Four members attended the Grand Reunion at Coventry. All agreed it was a fantastic weekend and please, let's do it again soon.

Thanks to Jan Brodie-Murphy for chairing our first year. She has been a great support to all of us so enjoy your travels Jan and come back to us soon. Welcome to Molly Clegg who has agreed to take on the job for the coming year – or three! Also to Margaret Garrard, our new Treasurer, who volunteered her services.

Plans for the next year involve a lunch, a speaker and hopefully at least one outing and a visit to our Norfolk friends. The imminent Christmas Lunch will be our first big venture. An evening meeting is also planned for the New Year for those working members who cannot join us during the day. They are not forgotten.



Members attending the AGM in October

On Remembrance Sunday, the Secretary, Liz Ives, and Treasurer, Margaret Garrard, laid wreaths on behalf of the WRAC and ATS. It was quite moving being the first time for both of them and the Branch.

We will be pleased to see any members or prospective members of the Association who would like to visit us. Word is out now that we do actually exist. We are no longer Scotch mist.

ULSTER BRANCH

On Saturday 2 September, we had our AGM in the Lisburn British Legion during which the officers were re-elected for the ensuing year. However, a note of sadness marred the proceedings when we learned that a well loved member of the ATS, Mrs Grace Herbert, who had worked with SSAFA and who had been in ailing health for quite a number of years, had passed away.

Prior to the meeting our new venue for lunch was the Island Centre Restaurant in the Lisburn Borough Council building which is indeed situated on a small island in the middle of the River Lagan. This is an exciting new "state of the art" building of which the citizens of the area are very proud. One of the highlights is a large cascading water spout in the centre of the river just opposite the main entrance and there is also a quaint little boat, bedecked with flowers, enticing tourists on a trip along the river.

Before the meal the members had a wine reception in the foyer during which our guest of honour, Councillor Betty Campbell (who had been a nursing officer/captain with the WRAC), was introduced to the group by our Treasurer, Mrs Ray Halley. We were then absolutely delighted to discover that one of our members, Mrs Peggy Couser, had served with Councillor Campbell in the WRAC so Peggy was given the pleasant task of presenting her former "boss" with a floral basket in appreciation of her visit. Everyone enjoyed the lunch during which Councillor Campbell gave us a short talk about her busy workload as a member of Lisburn Borough Council and her previous time as Lord Mayor.

We were delighted that a few of our members had been able to attend the 90th Anniversary of the Battle of the

Somme in Belgium where they laid a wreath at the Menin Gate in memory of those who died in the First World War. The members who attended were Mrs Florence Logan, Mrs Margaret Jenkins and Mrs Margaret Couser BEM. They also attended a very poignant remembrance ceremony at Tiersmen in France which was also attended by HRH Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall.



With the wreath for the Menin Gate

We are now in the autumn of what has been quite an eventful year for the Ulster Branch and, at the request of the members, we are all very much looking forward to a visit to the Pantomime "Peter Pan" in Belfast Grand Opera House just before Christmas. One of the TV stars from the series "Bad Girls" is in a leading role which should make the visit even more exciting and especially for those of us who are ardent TV fans.

Over here in Ulster, we have also enjoyed the especially hot summer weather and as things are beginning to take on a serene autumnal look, we are already planning ahead for 2007. May I take this opportunity on behalf of the Ulster Branch to wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year.

WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND BRANCH

Our numbers are still fairly static, but we have to record the loss of one long standing member, Joyce Le Page on 3 September. Although Joyce had been unable to attend meetings during the last year or so, she kept in touch with us and will be sadly missed.

We had a very good Veterans Parade this year and photographs of the event were published in the last issue of the *Lioness* courtesy of Jackie Naysmith. We missed the presence of the National Standard Bearer Maureen Deeley, who had another engagement, but maybe she will be able to come to Weymouth next year. She always shows all the other standard bearers how it should be done!

In July, 16 members attended the South & South West Area Reunion in Keynsham, which we thoroughly

enjoyed, despite the heat in the coach – you would have to pay a lot of money for a sauna like that. Congratulations are due to Bristol Branch who hosted the affair.

Our Treasurer, Edna Moore, is not very well at present and is doubtful if she can continue in office. However, we wish her well and do hope that her health improves enough for her to be able to take on the mantle of that very important post in the Branch.

Maj Mack Maskens-McIntyre gave us a very interesting and amusing talk on her holiday in China. She showed photographs and brought various hand made items which were really beautiful. Pity it is too expensive to have our annual outing in that part of the world.

As 2007 will be the Branch's 50th Anniversary, we are looking forward to celebrating in style. Plans are in their infancy, but a special luncheon is certainly on the cards.

WILMSLOW BRANCH

Greetings to you all. No-one from our Branch went to London for the Remembrance Parade this year, age is taking its toll, and instead we attended our own churches, War Memorials and Parades.

In July, we had a coach trip to the National Memorial Arboretum for the unveiling of the ATS statue, which we all thought was very good. It was a short but very nice ceremony and the attendance was good too – it was nice also to meet some of our old friends there. The weather was very hot, all the grass was brown and parched, but



The Shot at Dawn Statue sculpted by Andy de Comyn who also created the new ATS Statue

after all the rain we have had since, it should have recovered and be lovely and green again. We hope none of the young saplings suffered from the dry weather as they need lots of water until they are well established.

On the way down to the Civil Service Club we seemed to do anyway as we detoured many times and then found ourselves on a narrow lane where we were slowly inching forward with the hedge scraping the near side of the coach as a van was coming towards us and trying to pass. We all held our breath and slowly it was accomplished, but there must have been just an inch or two between us. We should have gone on the motorway. All this made us late so were unable to finish all the meal that had been arranged for us. I wonder what the chef thought as he was left with all the puddings.

Two of our members visited the Arboretum again with Handforth Royal British Legion but this time there was no incident.

At our last meeting, one of our members, Erin Jenner who is very clever at quilting brought a beautiful quilt which she and members of her church had made. It was to be raffled off for their church funds. There must have been many hours of work put into it but regrettably none of us won it. It would have looked lovely on the bed or made a very special Christmas present.

We are very pleased to welcome a new member. Our monthly attendance is now usually about ten or eleven so we are glad to see the numbers increase if only by one. We meet at Wilmslow Royal British Legion about 12.30 on the first Thursday of the month so if you are ever in the neighbourhood at that time please join us; you will be very welcome.

Kath Owen who, last year was taken ill while on holiday abroad and had slowly been recovering is now back in hospital, quite ill again after breaking her hip in a nasty fall. We miss her at our meetings. *Editor: Sadly, we learned that Kath died on 30 November 2006.*

The December meeting will be our Christmas lunch at our usual hotel and then that will be another year over. Time is a funny thing. When we are young a week seems to last forever but when we are old it goes so fast we want to grab it to slow it down. It seems just a short time since there was all the to-do about the Millennium, yet it was seven years ago, gone in a flash! Yet the six years of war seemed never ending.

At the time of writing this we are all looking forward to Christmas, buying presents and writing our cards, but we will also be remembering those of our Branches who are no longer with us and who we miss very much.

We send our greetings, good wishes and thanks to Betty in Wales and Joan in Australia and wish they could join us for our Christmas lunch. We send our good wishes to you all for 2007.

WINCHESTER BRANCH

Having all come back down to earth after the AGM, we did not hold a meeting in May, sorry girls. We made up

for it in June though by having a Party in the Garden at Lt Col Sue Westlake's house. What an evening! We all managed to find it especially as there were balloons on the hedge to guide the way. A lovely garden with lots of places to sit on what turned out to be a beautiful evening, with only some of the gathering having to head for the indoors as the evening wore on. Sue Taylor, who was in charge of the catering, produced a wonderful mixture of food that just seemed to keep coming. There was even a game, which sent people hunting high and low for an owl. Yes, we knew what we were looking for but still could not find it. Someone did in the end but only after a great deal of hinting! I won't mention Jane who looked at the owl without seeing it. Everyone was enjoying themselves so much that the Secretary even ran out of raffle tickets to sell – a definite first!

September saw us once again back at the Civil Service Club for our AGM. A slightly disappointing turnout with only eleven members out of forty turning up, but it is our usual number for the AGM. The Secretary provided a small buffet and we held our normal raffle. We even allowed some of the Civil Service Club members who had "volunteered" to buy some tickets win a couple of the prizes.



In November we held our very popular Fish, Chips and Skittles night. Unfortunately (or fortunately) we did not get around to play skittles. We just sat around eating excellent Fish and Chips and putting the world to rights. Maggie Gardiner, our new Branch Chairman, once again saved the day by providing the salt, vinegar and ketchup. We welcomed a new full member – Lynn Blowes, the new RAPC Association clerk, and a new Associate member, Kathy, for the first time.

WOLVERHAMPTON BRANCH

Since our last report, Wolverhampton Branch has reached its 60th Birthday. The first meeting was held early in August 1946 in a small cottage which was "bursting at the seams" with so many ex-ATS anxious to know more about the QMAAC & ATS Comrades Association as it was then known. We still have two members who were at that first meeting and one who joined a couple of months or so later. All three were at our Celebration Lunch in September and we were pleased to welcome Mrs Edith Francis, our Area Vice Chairman, and Mrs Ann Deakin from Stafford who is a member of Council, as our guests. Unfortunately, our Area Chairman and Area Secretary were unable to attend due to holidays. Another absentee was Pauline Jones who

had done a Sponsored Walk to raise money towards the cost of the lunch. Unfortunately, her husband had a hospital appointment for the same day so she was unable to come. True to form the appointment was cancelled at the last minute but too late for Pauline to join us.

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This report is written at Remembrance time and once again our Branch was represented at the Festival of Remembrance: the Royal British Legion 11 November Service at Wolverhampton Cenotaph and the Remembrance Sunday Service in St Peter's Church.

At our November meeting we shall again be making a Christmas table arrangement under the tuition of Pat Ash who is an expert in such things.

Our thoughts are now turned to the Programme for 2007. During 2006 we had an average attendance of eleven members at meetings. We hope this will be maintained and that poor weather and health problems during the early part of the year will not prevent members from attending our very friendly meetings.

We send our best wishes to our friends in other Branches.

YORK BRANCH

Greetings and a Happy New Year to all our friends in the WRAC Association far and wide; especially to our members who are unable to attend our meetings through illness etc.

In January 2006 we had our annual Christmas Lunch with the WRNS at the Prospect Restaurant just outside York. Unfortunately the owners have now retired and closed the business so we are looking for a new venue for 2007.

Seven members attended the Grand Reunion at Warwick University. I must say this one was the best one ever. Plenty of eating, drinking and meeting old and new friends. Feona Dixon our Secretary couldn't resist a visit to Coventry Cathedral and Pam Nesbitt, our Chairman, won a bottle of Champagne for guessing the height of the New Freedom Tower in New York. (York Ladies will be enjoying the Champagne at the December Tea Party).

We have missed our boat trip this year but are looking forward to one in the near future. We embark on the boat at 1030 am, have a leisurely cruise along the Ouse - orders are taken for lunch and phoned to the Ship Inn and the meal is ready to be served on arrival. For anyone visiting York, the River Trips are to be recommended. A good view of the Archbishop of York's residence, Bishopthorpe Palace, can be had from the boat.

In August, three of our members (who live in York) and four who live in Scarborough met up for coffee and lunch in Scarborough. We couldn't have picked a worse day as the skies opened and down came the rain. But it was a lovely day and we had a good old natter.

On Sunday 10 September 2006, five ladies attended the Thanksgiving & Remembrance Service at Eden Camp in Malton, North Yorkshire. There were 110 Standards

from all over the country followed by about 1000 veterans. At the front of the parade were none other than the Chairman and the Secretary of the York Branch of the WRAC Association. Next day I had a 'phone call from the President of the York Branch Royal British Legion congratulating us on our smartness and saying that we were a credit to the Branch.

Ten members attended the North East Reunion in Harrogate and thoroughly enjoyed the meal and entertainment. A vote of thanks to Major Dot Ryder and her band of helpers for such a great afternoon. It was such a privilege to have Lt Col Westlake, the Vice President of the WRAC Association, as our guest.

In October thirteen members came to the AGM. Unfortunately it was a bad month for attendance due to illness and holidays. The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were once again voted in and agreed to serve for another year.

On 5 November 2006, we attended the Festival of Remembrance held at the Barbican Centre in York. Remembrance Sunday is 12 November 2006 and once again we will be represented by the Chairman and Secretary who will be laying the wreath in memory of the fallen of two World Wars and subsequent campaigns.

Three of our members qualified for the Silver Association badges and these were presented in June to Joan Holden, Phyl Lindzell and Pat Carpenter. Three members, Irene Quarrie, Joan Holden and Pat Carpenter have all spent time in hospital for various operations and are all on the way to recovery. We wish them very good health for the future.

Six members have been invited by the "Not Forgotten" Association to their Christmas lunch at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel Wetherby on 13 December 2006.

We will be ending our year with a Christmas tea party on 7 December 2006. Hopefully we will meet again in January 2007 for our Christmas lunch.

On a sadder note we have to announce the deaths of Mrs Sybil Baum and Mrs Joan Armitage. Joan will be sadly missed by all our members especially by Nancy, Gwen and Vi who served with her throughout the war years and remained close friends.

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 Pitt
Stafford ST17 9HE
Tel: 01785 249992

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

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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:

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WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS DINNER CLUB

Application for Membership

Membership No: DC/.....

Present Name:
(Miss Ms Mrs Rank if serving)

Christian Names:

Address:
.....
.....

Postcode: Tel No:

Email:

Mobile:

Army No: P/ W/ WO/

Surname when serving:

WRAC Service From: To:

TA Service From: To:

Last Rank held/still holding:

Trade/Job whilst serving:

Decorations:
.....

Please return to:

WRAC Dinner Club – Membership Secretary
Carole Austin, 'The Gables', 20 Redcar Road, Blackpool, Lancashire FY1 2LR
Tel: (01253) 352259

I wish to join the WRAC Dinner Club and enclose:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|---|
| * 1 Years Membership | £ 4.00 | £ |
| * 3 Years Membership | £ 7.00 | £ |
| * Life Membership | £12.00 | £ |
| * delete as appropriate | | |

Cheque/Postal Order should be made payable to: WRAC Dinner Club

Signature: Date:

A 2nd class postage stamp would be much appreciated. Thank you

'Suaviter in modo, Fortiter in re'
'Gentle in manner, Resolute in deed'

WRAC DINNER CLUB
10th Anniversary Dinner
5-7 October 2007

The 10th Anniversary dinner will be held on Saturday 6 October at the Adelphi Hotel, Ranelagh Place, Liverpool

As in previous years a booking form will be sent with the Newsletter to all current members in February 2007. If your membership has lapsed please contact the membership secretary, Carol Austin, on 01253 352259.

An application for membership of the Dinner Club can be found in the centre pages of this copy of *Lioness*.

Please note: due to the Adelphi hotel being fully booked up in the 2nd week of October, the dinner is being held on the FIRST weekend in October.

SMILES OR GROANERS?

I went to the butcher's the other day and I bet him 50 pounds that he couldn't reach the meat off the top shelf. He said "No, the steaks are too high".

My friend drowned in a bowl of muesli. A strong current pulled him in.

"You know, somebody actually complimented me on my driving today. They left a little note on the windscreen which said Parking Fine - so I thought that was nice of them".

A man walked into the doctors and said "I've hurt my arm in several places". The doctor said "Well don't go there any more".

I went to a seafood disco last week...and pulled a muscle.

Two elephants walk off a cliff boom, boom!

What do you call a fish with no eyes? A fish.

WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2007

The next AGM will be held at the Victory Services Club, Seymour Street, London on **Saturday 24 March 2007** commencing at **2.30 p.m.**

Provisional Agenda:

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Confirmation of Minutes
4. Business Arising
5. Report of the Council
6. Financial Report
7. Report of the Editor of the Association Journal
8. Reports of Committees
9. Resolutions:
10. Motions of Urgency
 - a. Council Resolutions
 - b. Branch Resolutions
 - c. Any Other Business
11. Date of Next Meeting

Please notify your intention to attend the AGM by returning the proforma below by **Friday 16 March 2007**.

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

I will be attending the AGM on Saturday 24 March 2007

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

**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.

**HAVE YOU MOVED RECENTLY
OR
ARE YOU ABOUT TO MOVE?**

PLEASE let us have your new address as soon as you can and help us to reduce the number of *Lioness* magazines which are returned undelivered.

Mrs/Miss..... Initials.....

Surname

**FIRST LINE AND POST CODE
OF OLD ADDRESS**

.....

.....

NEW ADDRESS

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.....

.....

.....

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.....

Post code

Tel. No.

E-mail

Send to: WRAC Association, AGC Centre,
Worthy Down, WINCHESTER SO21 2RG.

ATS Reminiscences

KINMEL CAMP

Mrs Hetty James
27 Betty Entwistle House, Holyrood Crescent,
St Albans AL1 2NA

I was taken on a surprise visit to Kinmel Camp when I was on holiday with my daughter. I was welcomed by a young Captain who explained that we had arrived just in time because it was all going to be bulldozed within the next few weeks! I wonder how many of you remember being posted there?



Hetty at the gates to Kinmel Camp



General view of the accommodation



The Dining Room



This way to Kinmel Camp

13TH INFANTRY TRAINING CENTRE PRESENTS DICK WHITTINGTON

W/270260 Pte Gee Spiera, née Thomas
Cwm Merddug, 14 Itton Street, Cwm
Ebbw Vale, Gwent NP23 7RP

I was born in a Welsh mining village in 1922. At the start of the Second World War, and during the bombing of London, I was aged 16 living with a married sister in Edgware and working in London as a Clerk. But I never forgot my Welsh roots and was evacuated back there before being called up for the ATS in 1943.

*To be born Welsh is a privilege
Not with gold or silver spoon,
But with a song in your heart
And poetry in your soul!*

I went to Wrexham for three weeks training and my first 48 hour leave was spent altering my uniform especially the skirt so that it no longer was down to my ankles. My posting was to Maidstone in Kent (Doodlebug Alley) and later to Tunbridge Wells attached to the Royal Engineers. I was billeted with my colleagues in requisitioned flats in Wordsworth and Byron Roads. They were close to Foley House in Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone which housed the office of the Royal Engineers Chief Clerk. I was later posted to Heatherlands in Tunbridge Wells. My lasting memories are of a great bunch of colleagues.



Wordsworth Road, Maidstone

Something which was most memorable was the performance of Dick Whittington, the pantomime, which we put on at the Invicta Lines Royal West Barracks in Maidstone.

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Byron Road, Maidstone



The cover and inside of the programme for Dick Whittington

I also remember very well the VE Day celebrations in Maidstone and the outstanding VJ celebrations at the end of the War. When we heard that the War had ended, we got on a train to London where we sang and danced with the crowds. Then we stood outside Buckingham Palace calling for the Royal Family. At the Embankment, our line of revellers grew longer and we got on a boat on the

Thames. All the bridges we went under were thronged with people waving, joyful that the War had finished and that Peace had arrived. I remember a Royal Air Force officer who joined us and we both pledged that we would tell our future grandchildren about this wonderful day - I wonder if he did?

I have raided my old address books and would be delighted to hear from any of these ladies who have survived the years between to the present day:

Molly Cave	Vera Spain	Kath Toll	Mary Gore
Mary Bradley	Joan Pratt	Betty Woodruff	Ouida??
Freda Hough	Vina??	Terry Edwards	Paddy Priestley
Dinah Wilcott			

We were all going to meet up 25/50 years hence. After demob, we all went our separate ways. To each of you, I raise a glass and say "God Bless and Thank You". Lechyd da.

480 HEAVY ANTI-AIRCRAFT (Mixed) BATTERY

Connie Evans née Britten, 21 Windsor Avenue,
North Hillingdon, Middlesex UB10 9AT

At our ATS/RA meetings at Imphal Barracks, York, I mentioned to other ladies (not from my own Battery), that at Newton Ferrers, Plymouth we had six 3.7 inch guns. We worked the elevation and bearing by electrical units (run off our jennies) and that, when not on gun site duty, we carried shells to the gun pits and empty shells back down during raids. There were two shells in each case and I think the weight was about 70-75lbs. I know I was not really believed. Until June this year I never had photographic proof among my own memorabilia. My friend, Mary Watts, née Whitely, only had one photo and the enclosed is that one! Needless to say Mary and Ron now have copies of all my photographs.



Proof at last!!

We also had to clean the NAAFI when on guard duty which was 2pm-2pm but we came off, I think, between 8pm and 6am when the men took over. We were W section and were relieved by girls from C Section at 1.30pm to enable us to go on gun park duty or other duties at 2pm. We only had a pickaxe handle, not a gun (WW1 Lee Enfield), when on guard. I expect the Germans knew this and said "daft British" or did they

call us Englishers? Perhaps this will stir some ATS/RA memories.

The usual compliment of guns was four or six. No extra men or girls came to the battery when we got the two extra guns. I did not know any of the other batteries. I know some batteries had orderlies who did fatigues etc. I enjoyed life in the ATS, made good friends and we still keep in touch, although there are not so many to phone or write to now.

THE McGRATH SISTERS

Peg Messenger, Weymouth & Portland Branch

In 1940, the four McGrath sisters were evacuated from Guernsey before the German occupation of the Channel Islands. They arrived in Weymouth with many other evacuees. In the reception centre they met a number of the ATS who were helping there and the sisters decided to volunteer. Very soon, after medicals and other formalities, they were enlisted and posted to Verne Citadel in Portland. After a few months they were all posted to Sandhanks, near Bournemouth.



Pat, Helen, Kay, Maureen and Peggy

When the islands were free again, they went back to Guernsey to be reunited with their parents and youngest sister. Sadly, Peggy (Mrs le Provost) is the only one still alive. She is now a widow and still lives in Guernsey.

ELIZABETH RAPLEY - BEAUMANOR (Y GROUP)

W/254505 Joan Hodsdon, née Aiken,
59 Morley Drive, Balcatta,
Western Australia 6021

I read with interest and some envy the tales of reunions, marches, victory celebrations etc with great interest. I was never there but one place I was at was Beaumanor (Y Group) as visited in the film ENIGMA. There were about 40 of us actually working in the Manor itself on Army Research. In the grounds in huts were hundreds of intercept operators listening, listening.....

Probably my most wonderful experience was having one of the best seats at the Opening Night of AIDA at the re-

opening of the Baths of Caracalla Outdoor Theatre in Rome. My most entertaining one was on the return journey home, when we docked at Dover. The NCO in charge of disembarkation called all Class A females and the various Section females off, then Class A males, Class B males and the various Section males off. I stood on the deck alone. "What are you here asked?" "Class B female" I replied. "Never had one of them before, where are your travel documents?" "With the Sergeant", "Better go find her".

Every Red Cap and Blue Cap I passed I asked "Where's the ATS Sergeant?" and was duly put in the right direction until I got on the train and found her. "Sergeant, when do we go through Customs?" "Trust you, Aiken" she replied. I had sailed straight past them!

Next morning I reported to the Orderly Room where Junior Commander Churchill started my documentation. A WO1 Miss Rapley entered the Orderly Room and went out again. Miss Churchill left the room to get some material and I asked the people on duty whether Miss Rapley had just returned from the USA. She had and they wondered how I knew. She is my first cousin and when she re-entered the Orderly Room I introduced myself and naturally we talked about family. When Miss Churchill returned she was surprised to see the WO1 and Lance Corporal in animated conversation. I explained that I had met my first cousin for the first time in both our lives and commented to Miss Churchill that my first boss was her Father, Sir Winston Churchill. He was First Lord of the Admiralty when I commenced there in January 1909. Just before he became Prime Minister. I worked a few offices along from his and quite often saw him as I came to work when he was standing at the top of the stairs talking to the First Sea Lord, Sir Dudley Pound.

Elizabeth Rapley never married and went to live in the USA. I spoke to her on the telephone a couple of times when visiting our Aunt in Toronto.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF ARRANGING A WEDDING 62 YEARS AGO!

W/284281 Mrs J Marshall, 5 The Street,
Kirby Laoken, Frinton-on-Sea,
Essex CO13 0EH

I was so pleased to receive the recent *Lioness* - what a lovely lot of letters and photographs. I laughed when I reached page 71 and saw the photograph of Grace Mathers. I said, "She's wearing my woolly". I have its twin knitted many years ago.

Photographs of weddings - I well remember trying to get mine organised. Originally we were going to have the wedding at my mother-in-law's, but her house had received some bomb damage. That was no good so my mother said, "I suppose we'll have to fit it in." Both my parents were working in Woolwich Arsenal at the time and Dad was also a Special Constable, on 24 hr pass, two weeks before the wedding. I collected my wedding dress from the dressmakers and we all went to bed later on feeling quite satisfied. At 2 a.m. a rocket dropped across the road, knocked down most of the street and pushed

the front and side of our house down. Mum and Dad were safe in the Morrison shelter – I was still in bed, half way through the floor into the cellar and wrapped in the lin. When I'd been washed and dressed by the friendly WVS next morning, I phoned the Camp to tell them I'd be late. The girls **PDF Compressor Free Version** right. On being put through to the officer, I was just told, "Get back to Camp straight away".

I eventually got married from my cousin's house. Lots of the girls came along and we had ham sandwiches (off the ration from a friendly grocer) and although the jellies wouldn't set, we all had a good time. My husband and I went off to Windsor for 3 days – the girls and my family went off to the pub and a good time was had by all – oh happy days. We have been married now for 62 years and I'm still in touch with 3 of the girls who came to the wedding.

I am unable to attend any of our meetings in Colchester as I'm getting a bit too wobbly on my feet. My granddaughter sent me a fridge magnet recently and it depicts women who served during the War – ATS, WRNS, WAAFS, Land Army, and the Fire Service. They are marching along under a Union Jack and every time I pass the fridge I can hear our drill sergeant at Oswestry camp. "Head up, shoulders back, chest out, chin in. Swing-ing-ing those arms." Oh happy days.

15 AUGUST 1945 - VJ DAY CELEBRATIONS IN NAIROBI, KENYA

Mrs Gloria A Ireland (née Reynolds),
7 Tuffley Lane, Gloucester GL4 0DT

This is just an extract from an old diary, when I was Sergeant Reynolds.

Something was in the air but we went to work as usual in 2nd Echelon and around midday we heard peace had been declared. Everything ceased and we were all allowed to stop work in order to celebrate. Everyone seemed to go mad with excitement; even the Heavens were weeping tears of joy. Every two minutes the sound of guns burst forth. Soon we were all ensconced in trucks covered with flowers and returned to camp where we prepared for the parties which were held everywhere.



Victory Parade in Nairobi

The following day we assembled early for inspection. 360 of us all told, then proceeded to highly decorated trucks to be whizzed into Nairobi with a convoy to take our place in a city parade. Every arm of the services was represented. We marched in rows of 9. The locals gathered to cheer and clap as we came into view and many took our photographs. Sir Philip Mitchell, Governor of Kenya, took the salute. Celebrations continued for a long time afterwards in the hotels. It was a time in history never to be forgotten.



ATS contingent

THE ATS AND THE WELSH GUARDS

Roy Lewis, Vice President, Welsh Guards Association
195 Badminton Grove, Ebbw Vale, Gwent NP23 5UN

The Training Battalion Welsh Guards moved to Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher, Surrey in the summer of 1940 and were soon joined by a platoon of the Auxiliary Territorial Service. It did not take long for them to become part of what was, and still is, very much a family Regiment. The girls wore the Welsh Guards cap badge, the Leek, on their uniforms and for all of them it was their first experience of meeting Welshmen.

The platoon was commanded by Sergeant Maisie Seymour who, with her sister (later to become a Regimental Sergeant Major at the War Office) had enlisted in 1938, the year the ATS was formed. Doris Lex, who was a Corporal in the platoon, was working for a book maker when war was declared but racing was stopped and she decided to volunteer. Her home was nearby in Kingston and she remembers travelling on the last bus to Esher on a Sunday listening to the Guardsmen singing. Doris recalls, "If you have never heard a bus load of Welsh Guardsmen asking their Great Redeemer for guidance you haven't lived!"

Being attached to the Regiment changed many lives of the ATS girls and there were several who married Welsh Guardsmen. Sergeant Seymour became Sergeant Foard when she married Sergeant John Foard who had returned from active service in Italy. They were both married in before the Company Commander for permission to marry and later he presented them with a set of silver spoons. Maisie, a Surrey girl, says she is Welsh by marriage!



St David's Day, Sandown Park 1943. The Regimental Lieutenant Colonel Welsh Guards, Colonel AM Rankier, inspecting the ATS Platoon, accompanied by Sergeant Maisie Seymour. The right marker is Corporal Daisy Lee

There were happy times at Sandown Park but tragedy struck on 30 June 1944 during a Battalion sports day at the Metropolitan Police playing fields at nearby Timber Court. A VI flying bomb landed in the middle of the arena, killing 18 Welsh Guardsmen, a CSM of the Army Physical Training Corps and W/148928 Private Jean Jeffries of the ATS. There were many wounded and those who could, walked back to Sandown Park in a state of shock.

Maisie Foard, who lives in Andover, and Doris Lee in New Malden recall that day with great sadness. Their stories of the war years are part of the history of the Welsh Guards and an article on them in the Welsh Guards Regimental Magazine for 2007 is appropriately headed, "Members of the Family".

Last November I had the privilege of visiting both ladies and their memories of those days are as fresh as ever. They still wear the Lock and there are many Welsh Guardsmen who served with them and who remember them and the ATS platoon with great respect and affection.

TELEPHONIST'S MEMORIES

W/215449 Mrs Kathleen McBurney, née Munk
53 Salisbury Place, Halifax HX3 6ND

When War was declared, I was nearly 18 years of age and already working as a telephonist in an office in Doncaster. The war time restrictions affected everybody including the blackout arrangements, the six inch black line around the bath as a water level and all the air raid precautions as German planes flew over us on their way to the steel works at Rotherham and Sheffield. We lived near to a main road and could hear the convoys and heavy guns being moved at night. The vibrations never failed to shake the house but we became oblivious to that as long as the sirens gave us a night of undisturbed rest.

After 3 years as a war time civilian and twice deferred from call up by the firm I worked for, I was called up in 1942 as a telephonist. Initial training at Pontefract was gruelling. I am definitely not a keep fit sort of person but I learned to obey orders! Then came further telephonist

training on a six week course crammed into three weeks. The final test was to connect 100 calls in half an hour using the correct army procedures. We did this in a new school down Deanstones Lane, Queensbury. We slept in Nissen huts down a bleak hillside, swept by icy cold winds and torrents of rain.



Taken in 1942 in Nottingham shortly before being posted to Old Dalby

After short stays at Newcastle and Chilwell, a huge Ordnance Depot with a large exchange, I was asked to help out at a smaller exchange in Old Dalby, Leicestershire. It is near Melton Mowbray where the famous pork pies are still made today. We worked long hours of shift work to man the switchboards and teleprinters day and night. In the first year, we only had one day off a month and that was usually after a week of night shifts!

I remember someone in authority saying, "Do it first - grumble after". In spite of everything, we always managed to laugh at our predicaments. We really looked forward to our three weeks leave every three months. My first break happened to coincide with my 21st birthday - going home was the best present I could have had. Again, we were accommodated in Nissen huts. Part of a large shed in the depot served as a dance hall on Saturday nights and for ENSA stage shows. It was also used for church services once a month. When shifts allowed, a few of us walked to Nether Broughton village church.

Life long friendships were made. I keep in touch with three ATS signals friends: two near Nottingham and one in Kent. I also met Jeff who was to become my husband. Five months after we married, he was drafted to Sierra Leone. We kept in touch with daily air mail letters as promised. When he returned, he was able to return to my family in Doncaster. When Jeff returned, he went back to his old job in the Borough Treasurer's Office in Halifax until he died in 1970.



At a Veterans reunion at the Town Hall Halifax in 2005

You might like to read my entry in the Visitor's Book at Moynash Café:

"This is a treasured memory of a visit to 'Moynash Café' on the Leicestershire Fosse Way a few miles from Old Dalby where I was stationed at an Ordnance Depot during World War II as a telephonist in the ATS Signals, 1942-1945. When off duty for a few hours between shifts, we walked to the café for a treat of poached egg on toast (free range eggs) and home made strawberry jam on toast plus lashings of tea."

Editor: Mrs McBurney also wrote to say that, in October and November 2006, she visited schools in Calderdale, Halifax to talk about her war time experiences and to show them memorabilia. "The response and genuine interest was heart warming". Perhaps you have had a similar experience which you could tell us about.

COPY DEADLINE

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

20 June 2007

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION REMINDERS

Are you an annual member? If so, your membership runs out at the end of September. If you belong to a geographical Branch, please give your Secretary or Treasurer your subscription renewal in good time. If you belong to Headquarters Branch then you must send your subscription directly to WRAC Association, AGC Centre, Worthy Down, Winchester SO21 2RG.

Cheques should be made payable to WRAC Association and arrive as soon as possible after 1 October.

It is very important that you renew your membership in good time. If you leave it too late, you will not receive your *Lioness* at the right time and it will cost more in money and time to update your membership records accordingly and to post out your *Lioness*.

PLEASE HELP US TO ENSURE YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS KEPT UP TO DATE

PS Why not become a Life Member and then you will not need to worry about renewing your subscription each year? A bargain at £50. Why not ask your family and friends to club together and buy it for your Christmas or Birthday?

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

Sizes 36 – 46

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Price list and further information from:
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15 Westwood Drive, Swanpool, Lincoln
Tel: 01522 878413

Reminiscences of the WRAC

WRAC MEMORIES

Josephine Manning, 14 Beacon Court, Park Walk,
London SW10 0AL. Tel: 0207 751 4182

I arrived at Guildford in January 1952, joining No 2 Company, which had green flashies as opposed to the yellow ones of No 1 Company. Sergeant Garfield, Cpl Arnold and LCpl Parker looked after us and I remember the volume of Cpl Arnold's voice to this day! Miss Street was our 2nd Lt and I remember her as a very nice, rather diffident girl who looked as out of place in the Army as I felt! After a rather sheltered upbringing it was a bit of a shock to be pitched into a 20 bed barrack room with very little heating but I quickly got used to it and began to enjoy a boarding school atmosphere.

The first setback came when we went to the stores to be issued with our uniforms and I discovered that I was too fat to get one to fit. Only one battledress blouse fitted, no tunic and no skirt, so I spent the first few months wearing what khaki I had with a delicate mauve tweed skirt! This caused great hilarity on my Board for entry into the RAEC. The WRAC officer on the panel asked why I was not in uniform and I had to tell her that I had been too fat to get one to fit. The two male officers on the board could not contain their amusement and the interview continued in a very jolly mood.....and I passed!

Until the next course at Beaconsfield began after Easter, I was held at Guildford and in my turn became a training LCpl when I discovered that my voice was at least as loud as Cpl Arnold's. Most of my friends went off to other units. I remember that Jo in the next bed went to Provost in Rochester Row where I worked many years later and Gill went off to train as a clerk. I had made a particular friend in a Scottish girl, with whom I spent most of my spare time but I was always so thankful that I had gone home for the day when the police arrived to arrest her and take her back to Scotland. We never found out why but she didn't return.

The really momentous occasion in our training period was the death of our much loved King George VI. I remember the lowering of the flag that morning. Many civilians came to stand outside the fence and watch and we had a memorial service with the staff band. It was a sad time for everyone in the middle of one of the coldest winters on record.

Around Easter I was posted to the Army School of Education at Beaconsfield to train for six months as an Education Instructor. We were a very small unit. Val, Ruth and myself on the course, Sgt Major Kelly, with whom I became very friendly and I would love to see again one day, two female Orderlies and Captain Corns. I think we were the only women in the lower camp. Halfway through the course we went on detachment and I went to Drivers' and Clerks' Training School at Winterbourne Daintsey near Salisbury. I did my teaching practice under WO2 (now Col) Hazel Powell who must have given me a good mark as I passed the course. I had hoped to see her again at the Grand

Reunion but fate intervened and I spent that weekend in hospital. With luck we shall both be there in 2009 and I can thank her in person!

After the course I was posted to 8 Ind Coy, Bicester and for two years I tried to get storeroom and cooks through their Army exams. We lived in unlined corrugated steel Nissen huts with a small coke fire in our rooms to keep the cold out.... unsuccessfully in most cases. I wonder what today's Health and Safety officials would have made of them. Our's was a very small Sergeants' Mess, two WOs, one SSgt and four Sgts. All the others had served through the war in the ATS and I felt very out of things until Sgts Jones and Sizeland arrived as they were much the same age as I was. (A year ago I discovered that Eileen Sizeland, now Newstead, lived very near my daughter's house in Norfolk and we have had several happy reunions talking about old times.) I discovered soon after my arrival that my training LCpl Parker had been posted to Guildford from Bicester where her friends told me that "Maggie" had been a bit of a tearaway and always up for a lark. She had certainly changed a lot by the time that I met her! Later during my stay there, we had a new Sgt Major who turned out to be the Sgt Crodd who had led the No1 Platoon during my training days at Guildford. A very small world.



I don't know whether it was the bleakness of Bicester in those days, the cold of the winters in our far from luxurious accommodation, or just itchy feet, but I decided that my 3 year engagement was enough and left the Army in 1955 to join the world of banking and investments.

Since then my work has taken me all over the place and, as a member of the WRAC Association as well as the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women and the British Legion, I have paraded with the Australian Women's Services on ANZAC Day in Cairns, joined the Sydney Branch of the NSW Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and women for a Remembrance Day Service and lunch, marched for very many years to the Jewish Remembrance at the Cenotaph.....only the knowledge that my bladder would not be able to cope with the length of time standing at the Remembrance Day Ceremony each year has kept me from attending that one!.....attended Remembrance Services at Arras and Bayeux War Cemeteries, visited the cemeteries at Arnhem, where the brother of a friend of mine is laid, Calais, where the site contains Chinese and Arab labourers from the first World War as well as German

and Empire (as it was then) soldiers, and countless others through Europe.

I am generally very proud of my short service with the Crown. This last year I was at Alrewas for the unveiling of the memorial to all the Jewish Forces who have served since the Jews were allowed to return to this country by Oliver Cromwell 350 years ago and I visited the WRAC Association grove and ack-ack gardens nearby. It is a truly inspiring place and I recommend it as a visit to anyone.

So if any of you out there remember W/374212 Hyames Jose, do please get in touch. I would love to hear from you to see what has happened to you in the last 50+ years!

WHY I MARRIED A SCOTSMAN

W/371985 LCpl Doreen Peggie (née Lelyveld)
115 Hamilton Street, Broughty Ferry, Dundee DD5 2NW

I joined the WRAC in November 1951 signing on at Derby. I made my way to Queen Elizabeth Camp, Guildford where we were kitted out, had medicals and injections. As I had recently returned home from Malta, I did not see the point of me having the injections and objected very much but the powers to be thought otherwise. After learning how to march, it was nearly Christmas and we went on leave and our new postings.

I had always wanted to be a truck driver but according to the Army I was too light and too short to drive. After sitting a test paper, the Army decided that I would make a very good clerk.

In January 1952 I arrived at the Drivers' & Clerks' Training Unit at Winterbourne Damsey, Salisbury. It was a freezing winter, but I passed and became a Bill Clerk. In the winter of 1953 I attended a course in Winchester and was upgraded to Bill. My father was an RSM and wanted to keep an eye on his teenage daughter in case she strayed from the 'straight and narrow' so he put a 'claim' in for me and I was posted to the camp nearest him which was Chilwell. So off I went to join 11th Ind Coy where I served until I got married. I did get two overseas postings but both were cancelled. I wonder why?

The RSM did not like the Scots and had little time for them so I called his bluff and married one!

WRAC OFFICERS' DINING CLUB

ANNUAL DINNER 2007

Following another successful Dinner at the Victory Services Club, the WRAC Officers' Dining Club will meet there again on Saturday 1 December 2007.
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.

HOW TO KNOW WHEN YOU'RE GETTING OLD

Everything hurts. What doesn't hurt doesn't work!

The gleam in your eye is the sun shining on your bifocals.

You feel like the morning after but you haven't been anywhere.

You get winded playing cards.

Your children begin to look middle-aged.

You join a health club but haven't the energy to go.

You have all the answers but nobody asks you the questions.

You look forward to a dull evening out.

You need glasses to find your glasses.

You turn the light out for economy not romance.

You sit on a rocking chair but you can't make it go.

Your back goes out more than you do.

You put your bra on back to front – it fits better.

You sink your teeth into a steak and they stay there.

Your house is too big but the medicine cabinet is not being enough.

Your birthday cake collapses from the weight of the candles.

Sent in by Gwyn Friday – Cleveland Branch

Where Are You Now?

CROWN HILL BARRACKS, PLYMOUTH

1942-1943
PDF Compressor Free Version

Mrs Olive Kinghorn, nee Helyer
22 Annan Road, High Grange, Billingham TS23 3EY



Ladies from top left: Pat Nixon, Joyce Himsworth, Marjorie Beedham, Rosemary Harrett, Iris Lemon, Gwen Fiddess, Betty Nelson, Nancy Carter, May Schofield, Mary Witham and Bessie Carrie.

Mrs Kinghorn belongs to the Cleveland Branch and wonders if anyone recognises themselves on this photograph taken in Plymouth.

SGT ALICE BESSIE HILL

Miss B Bennell

Kims Cottage, Landshipping, Narberth,
South Pembrokeshire SA67 8BD. Tel: 01824 891533

I am trying to trace anyone who served in the ATS and who may have known my aunt. I have inherited war items of great interest from her and would like to learn more if possible. Her details are as follows: Sgt Alice Bessie Hill, ATS. She was awarded a citation in April 1946 for her courage in North Europe. She lived in Tormons Road, Shirley, Southampton. I do hope you can help.

MY LIFE AS A GUNNER

Mrs R D Haffenden, nee Fleming,
48 Manor Road, Dovecourt, Harwich, Essex CO12 4DY
Tel: 01255 554450



I wish I had known about the WRAC Association many years ago! I used to go with my late husband who was a Sgt in the RAF to his Association Clubs. Now I am a member of the Association but age is creeping up and it's not so easy to get out and about. I would love to hear from anybody from 584 Heavy Ack Ack or 'K' Coy, MT Wye Group. I was a clerk with Sgt Bennet.

WERE YOU ON THAT TRAIN?

W/394925 Miss Babs Thorpe
39 Parkhill Road, Barnby Dun, Doncaster DN3 1DP
Tel: 01302 880524

In August or September of 1956, I left Doncaster by train to begin my first day in the Army. My Recruiting Sgt, Dorothy Coulson, had arranged for me to meet up with several girls travelling from Hull and we all made the onward journey via Kings Cross and Waterloo to Guildford. It took me by surprise, to say the least, to realise that this memorable event took place 50 years ago!

Curious as to what has happened to my fellow travellers on that day, I began a little research via the WRAC Association and the Royal British Legion. As a result I have made contact with Enid Long (W/394971) from Hull who believes she made the same journey with me in

1956. Both Enid and I remember arriving at Guildford Station and having to climb into the back of a truck and being driven up to the Camp.



Babs Thorpe in 1956

Were you on that train? If so, and would like to be in touch, please contact me at my home address. The photograph – please don't laugh, was taken in the NAAFI.

Happy, happy days and very happy memories.

Editor: Babs and I served together in Hong Kong so it was good to hear from her again. Don't forget, that's what the Association is all about! Write in with your details and see who you might find again.

**W/240283 MARGARET LANHAM,
NÉE COLEMAN**

2 Addington Court, Keats Avenue, Milford-on-Sea,
Hants SO41 0WN. Tel: 01590 643749

In July, I visited the National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas, near Stafford. It was an amazing experience and so beautifully kept. The ATS statue was outstanding and I enclose a photograph of me beside it.

I would like to hear from anyone who knew me at Normanton Barracks in Derby – 1942-1946.



ROBERTS HALL, SHRIVENHAM

Mrs J Bradley, 15221 Purdy Street, Westminster 92683,
California, USA

I do enjoy the *Lioness*. It is the only connection so many of us have with our friends and colleagues. Although 72, I can still remember all the time I was in the WRAC. I would recommend it to any young woman who is thinking of joining. What a difference on my outlook to life I experienced from the day I joined to the day I left: even to learning how to make a bed look right! Here's to all the new recruits – go for it! You will never look back and the good experiences will outweigh the bad ones.

I would like to hear from anyone stationed as a Mess orderly at Shrivenham, Near Watchfield, Swindon, Wiltshire at The College of Science (Roberts Hall).

YVONNE SMITH, NÉE ZANELLOTTI

2 Hynes Court, 48 Woodside Road,
Portswood, Southampton SO17 2GQ

I served from 30 June 1944 until 18 July 1947 and would like to hear from anyone who remembers me. I was a driver and did my driver training at No 2 Trg Centre Camberley. Thereafter I was posted to 'B' Coy, 35 AA Bde at Bicester and finally to 802 Coy RASC at Wormwood Scrubs. From there I was discharged and joined the Police Force in Sheffield.

Unfortunately due to ill health I haven't been able to join the WRAC Association before but hope to join the Southampton Branch in the not too distant future.



Yvonne (on the left) and a friend at Bicester

ANY INFORMATION ABOUT AGNES DOWIE

Mrs Iris Johnston
28 Riverside Drive, Lisburn, Northern Ireland
BT27 4HE Tel: 02892 602270

I would like any information regarding Mrs J. M. Agnes Dowie. She was also known as Nan. She joined the ATS in Edinburgh in 1941 and was discharged for family reasons in 1945. Her regimental number was W/79260. She re-enlisted in 1946 and was discharged in 1949. Her new regimental number was W/335697 and she was a Storewoman TMT and served with the following units: 6 MT Coy RASC, 28 MT Coy RASC and 644 Coy RASC.

If you have any information, please do contact me.

W/227277 ANNIE NIGHTINGALE NÉE CARR

Mrs Jean Eastham, née Hart, North Lodge,
11 North Houses Lane, Lytham St Annes,
Lancs FY8 4NT. Tel: 01253 722081

Does anyone recognise or remember Mrs A Nightingale who was Pte Annie Carr? She served in Bradford, November 1942 and was in Paris on VE Day

Recently Annie came over from Florida to stay with her daughter and was kind enough to look me up – (seeing my name and address in the *Lioness* magazine). Obviously we spent a few hours reminiscing and although I didn't know Annie in the ATS, I took this photograph with a promise to send it to our magazine, hoping someone may remember her.



Annie Nightingale August 2006

Annie did try in *Lioness* 1/2004, page 14, with a photograph during her ATS days. She lives at: 11656 Dove Hollow Avenue, Boynton Beach, FLORIDA 33437, USA.

Editor: There is a photograph of Annie shaking hands with President Bush in the Articles of Interest section.

PAM AND SHEILA FROM BICESTER

W/327489 Mrs Dorothy Gibbons, née Done
19 Delamare Lodge, 68 Chester Road, Stockport,
Cheshire SK7 5NY

In 1945/6, I was stationed at Bicester and met Pam Northend from London who I met again in 1948 after being demobbed. I also met Sheila Quinlan from Southern Ireland. They worked together in the workshop and I worked in the office. After Bicester, I went to education training at Chilwell and then to the War Office.



Dorothy in 1946

I have tried a few times to find Pam. We often went out on our bicycles when we were off duty to enjoy the local countryside. We went to Blackpool on holiday in 1945 and had our photographs taken on the front. Those were happy days and I enjoyed my time in the service. I am a Life Member of the Association and belong to Stockport Branch and thoroughly enjoy the comradeship – just like in the ATS.

TELE-PLOTTERS FROM 65 SEARCHLIGHT REGT

Mrs Daphne Attridge, née Williams
141 Baddow Hall Crescent, Chelmsford CM2 7BU

Are there any ex-tele-plotters out there who were with 445 Bty, 65 Searchlight Regiment? We were based in Rise Park, Skirlaugh near Hull. Our CO, Colonel (Chalky) White bought us all red and white PT outfits because he did not like the ATS issue which was so dull!

What a hoarder I am! Anyway, I would really love to hear from anyone else who remembers this unit which I don't recall ever being mentioned before.

Daphne can still get into her red and white PT kit – 63 years later!



**W/185631 L/CTL PHIL BURR
NÉE KETTERIDGE**

27 Laurelwood Avenue, Pukekohe 2120, New Zealand

I was in the ATS from 14 August 1942 until June 1946. I did my six weeks training at Winton, Angus, Scotland. My AA training was at Camberley and I was then posted to 496 Mxd HAA Bty, Western Avenue, Cardiff and Mardy Farm. Have a photo (now showing a lot of wear and tear) of the whole battery at firing camp near a lovely little place called Rhosneigr, North Wales. I sailed in 1944 with 481 Bty to Huldensburg Belgium and Lt Col MW Soames OBE was one of our subalterns. I was then posted to the 2nd Echelon in Brussels and finally to the Stars Dept in Herford, Germany.

Unfortunately, my autograph book with all my addresses was lost. I would love to hear from any old friends still out there.

NAN GOLDTHORPE NÉE TYSON
nangold@hunterlink.net.au

Nan Goldthorpe is now living in Australia but would love to hear from anyone who served with her in Middle East Land Forces Fayid, GHQ MELF and 3 GHQ Nicosia Cyprus. She served there from 1953-1956 as Cpl Nan Tyson.

ST ROSE'S URSULINE CONVENT
Pamela.Kraus@shcglobal.net

The former Miss Pamela Evan Wong (now Mrs Kraus) originally of British Guiana, seeks any information regarding ATS veterans Kathleen Fitzgerald, Margaret Watson and Elsie Sadler. They all attended St Rose's Ursuline Convent in Georgetown, British Guiana. They joined the ATS and moved to England in the late 1930s. I would be delighted to hear from any of these ladies.

W/342575 PEGGY WESTLEY
Ms Margaret Westley
42 Sheffield Close, Potton, Sandy, Bedfordshire
SG19 2NY

I was born in 1926 and served from 1947 until 1960 reaching the rank of Sergeant. My postings included Egypt, Berlin and the UK. When serving in Berlin, many



Margo, Peggy and Jane

years ago, I made friends with Margo in the WRNS and Jane in the WAAF. We were out one day and someone came along and took our photograph.

I am afraid that I cannot recall their surnames but it would be wonderful if anyone could let me have any information about them.

Editor: I do know that we have several ex-WRNS and WAAF associate members so it would be excellent if the Lioness could help re-establish this tri-service friendship!

CANAL ZONE

W/378342 Cpl Doris Galbraith, née Ashbolt
14 Burgh Hall Park, Tower Road, Fleggburgh
Norfolk NR29 3DW

I enclose some photographs taken while I was serving in the Canal Zone from the end of 1952 until the end of 1955. I would love to get news of anyone else who was there at the same time. They were some of the happiest times I remember.



I am also sending a copy (below) of a group photograph of PTI recruits taken at Guildford in 1953. Like so many people, I did not write down the names at the time and now my memory cannot recall them. However, I would like to hear from anyone who recognises themselves.



Reunions

COLCHESTER WITH PATRICIA 'FLOGGER' GATES

PDF Compressor Free Version

Mrs Irene Maclean, nee Whittaker
5 Widdale Crescent, Fairfield, Stockton on Tees
TS19 7IU

In 2005 it was York and in 2006 it was Colchester! Thanks to the WRAC Dinner Club and the Grand Reunion, we got together again to meet our old pal 'Flogger' Gates. She has not been too well of late so we travelled from the North East and the Midlands for a long weekend at Wivenhoe. Once again for our reunion, we had wall-to-wall sunshine, wonderful retail therapy, lovely food and even a paddle in the sea at Walton on the Naze. Of course, we went down Memory Lane again as all of us served together in either Germany or Singapore in the early to mid-sixties with Royal Signals.



Irene Maclean, Carol Turner, Christine (Cherry) Tordoff, Sue Simpson and Patricia Gates

The cameras were flashing the entire time from meeting at Peterborough Railway Station until it was time to say 'Goodbye' – again at the station. We are all eligible now for Senior Railcards! So here's to the next one which has already been pencilled in for the Lake District.

ANOTHER REUNION STORY FROM IRENE MACLEAN

In late November/early December, I had the chance to go on a "Winter Week" to Tenerife. Knowing that Ann Deakin was there on holiday, I texted her. Yes – with thanks to my eight year old granddaughter, I have mastered the text button on my mobile! Ann was staying just a short bus ride from my hotel so we met up for lunch. It took us almost three hours to eat our lunch as we spent so long catching up on each other's news.

It just goes to prove that reunions can take place anywhere. Sunshine in December is a great tonic and I can thoroughly recommend it.

Editor: In the last edition we had ladies luncheoning in Lincoln, now they are luncheoning in Tenerife..... any more luncheoning stories from exotic locations?



Ladies who lunch in Tenerife

WRAC PT REUNION 2006

Captain (Retd) Kate Bettrison

The fifth WRAC PT Reunion was held in Aldershot over the weekend of 15-17 September 2006 and once again was combined with the APTC.

The Friday Social evening in the Sgts Mess was highlighted by the appearances of Bobby Davro and Kenny Lynch who provided a very entertaining cabaret. There was much lively interaction with the din, including a remark from Bobby Davro, the son of a former APTC gentleman, who mistook Jackie Whitehead for Dot Cotton from Eastenders! We were delighted that Lt Col Sue Westlake was able to join us for the evening prior to sailing to Guernsey the next day.



Lyn Wenham, Jennie McMahon and Judy Graham

Fox Gym provided the venue on Saturday for the long awaited return netball match against the APTC ladies. Following our resounding victory in 2004, the Commandant ASPT, Lt Col Ian Horu, had ordered that every fit and able netball player be available for this match or risk a posting to Afghanistan! Included in this line up was Kelly Morgan an English junior netball player who is now a Commonwealth javelin thrower. We wondered if this was scaremongering tactics!

Sadly for us, we were a little depleted as last minute illness meant the loss of our team captain, Josie Foster, née Kemp. However, the day was saved by our very own Mandy Watts who managed to get us a couple of players from her local club – including a fourteen year old Goal Attack. Little did we know that this young player would turn out to be...



Leslie Scott, Dora Nightingale and Col Vere Fisher

The match got underway with our supporters in great voice. Our team quickly edged ahead through the shooting skills of Judy Hinton and her young accomplice. At half time, it was 14-10 in favour of the WRAC. Lt Col Horn meanwhile was having a panic attack and accused us of pulling in a ringer. At this point, he ordered Kelly Morgan, who had been umpiring, on to the court. We watched her warming up and were somewhat stunned into silence as she worked her way around the shooting circle without missing the net. This raised our adrenalin levels even higher and once again, the centre court expertise of Jackie Walker, née Pollock and Pauline Frampton with Chris Jones, née Burgess and Mandy Watts saved the day. They cut the supply of passes to Kelly Morgan and we emerged victors by 23-16.

Lt Col Horn was magnanimous in defeat, warmly congratulated our warriors and asked Col Vere Fisher to present the Janet Peyler Trophy to Chris Jones. In her speech, Col Fisher recalled fond memories of her time as AIPT at the ASPT between 1967/69.



Jackie Walker, Jackie Whitehead, Pat Russell and Joyce Tunney

Our Saturday dinner was held at the Falcon Hotel, Farnborough. Thirty-six ladies dined and a warm welcome was extended to Col Vere Fisher and Leslie Scott who were making their reunion debut. Flowers were presented to our very loyal octogenarians, Peggy Spurr, Dora Nightingale, Vera Fisher and Eva Hughes who, once again, had driven all the way from Austria to be with us and brought delicious Mozartkugeln chocolates for everyone.

The after dinner entertainment was provided by Sheila Lloyd-Graham, née Barnes Cox and Betsy Clewlow. As guest speakers, they gave very amusing and interesting accounts of life in and out of the Army. Needless to say, Betsy wasn't allowed to escape without singing a song or two and acquiesced to a special request from June Dabbs to sing "Autumn Leaves".



June Dabbs, Carol Knight, Leslie Scott and Kate Bettison

Sunday morning dawned and a good crowd of us attended the Garrison Church of St Andrews for the APTC service of commemoration. This was followed by lunch in the respective Messes which signalled the finale of another well supported and enjoyable reunion weekend.

Editor: Please see the back cover for a wonderful photograph of all the ladies at the reunion. This is the second time recently that such a photograph has been used on the back cover. Come on – some other group must be able to challenge the PTIs' hold on this prime site by sending me a similar large reunion group for the next edition! On a more serious note, I know that everyone who attends these reunion weekends is very grateful to Kate Bettison for all the hard work she puts into organising the event...many thanks, Kate!

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.

Weddings

DIAMOND WEDDING – ERNEST EDWARD

MAHON and AMY KEMP

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Amy and Ernest on their Wedding Day

Amy and Ernest celebrated 60 happy years of marriage on 1 June 2006. They first met in Belfast when they were both serving there with the Military Police, Amy in the ATS and Ted in the RCMP. At the end of the war they married in Amy's home town of Nuneaton and afterwards lived for a short time in Reading.

In 1947, they moved to Great Yarmouth to care for Amy's grandparents and have lived for the past 50 years at Gorleston-on-Sea where they have been greatly involved



The happy couple 60 years on

with the social life of the area. They were keen members of the local Gilbert and Sullivan Society up to a few years ago and are now honorary members. Both were volunteers at the Elizabethan House Museum in Yarmouth and members of the Yarmouth Music Society. Amy says that the fact they have so many shared interests is the secret of their long and happy life together.

On 10 June they were given a celebratory lunch with 70 of the friends they had made over the years. To Amy's delight, her bridesmaid, an old school friend, was able to travel from her home in Gloucester to be present.

GOLDEN WEDDING – WILL ADAMS and BRENDA MYERS

Tanglin, 19 Craft Way, Muxton, Telford TF2 8NE



Will and Brenda on their Wedding Day

Will and Brenda first met whilst working in Field Records Singapore in 1954. Cpl Brenda Myers was serving in the WRAC and Sgt Will Adams was in the RASC. They married in Brenda's local church, St Wilfrith's, at Moorends in Yorkshire on 4 August 1956 and they have shared 50 years of wonderful happiness. Will continued serving and was accompanied around the world by Brenda and their three children.



The happy couple 50 years later

Will and Brenda celebrated their anniversary quietly with family including four grandchildren, one great granddaughter and a few friends. The weather was excellent and, as their son and family had made the trip from Germany and their younger daughter, a slightly longer one from the Cayman Islands, where she lives and works, the celebration was all that much more delightful.

**DIAMOND WEDDING - PETER CLYNE
and BETTY MOYSE**

3 Brantley Avenue, Finchfield, Wolverhampton WV3 9AP
Tel: 01902 764320



Betty and Peter on their Wedding Day

Betty and Peter met in Brussels in 1945. About a week later Peter went by convoy to Herford, Germany and they never thought that they would meet again! But about two weeks later Betty and other ATS were flown to Germany and landed up at Herford where she did indeed meet Peter again.

Betty was demobbed in September 1946 and Peter came back on leave. They were married on 2 November 1946 in the village of Helboughton in Norfolk. They shared their celebration with friends and family - 28 in all.

Peter and Betty would love to hear from anyone who recognises them!



The happy couple 60 years on

WANTED - LADIES
SSAFA FORCES HELP NEEDS YOU!

The Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association - Forces Help (SSAFA Forces Help) needs you.

The Charity exists to serve anyone who is, or has been in the Armed Forces, Reserves and TA. They and their families can call on us for the rest of their lives. More than 14 million people in the UK today are eligible for our help, good advice and friendship.

More than 80,000 call on us each year and a much greater demand is anticipated in the future. Our army of 7,500 volunteers cover every village, town and city.

If you like being part of a very important team, please volunteer. Training is given and all out-of-pocket expenses are paid. You tell us how much time you can spare.

Your help could provide many of your comrades with a much better quality of life. The work is immensely rewarding.

Please contact: Ann Needle, Branch Recruitment Officer
19 Queen Elizabeth Street, LONDON SE1 2LP
Telephones: 020 7463 9223

Letters to the Editor

ATS STATUE - NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

Mary Davies

4 Carol Crescent, Lyndale Park, Wednesfield,
Wolverhampton WV11 3JF

Dear Editor

In the last *Lioness*, Chester and District Branch reported that they had visited the National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas, and referred to the ATS Statue which was there "Thanks to the ATS Dinner Club and the Wolverhampton Branch, especially Mrs Mary Beeston".

I would like to say that this Statue was erected due to the hard work in fundraising, etc by Mrs Mary Beeston (Wolverhampton) and Mrs Margaret Rogers (Eastbourne), and was NOT the responsibility of the ATS Dinner Club or Wolverhampton Branch. Mary and Margaret should be congratulated and thanked for their efforts in getting this Statue in place, and so quickly after they started their fundraising campaign.

The WRAC Association Grove is now complete with the seats in place and the plinth with its beautifully worded plaque there for everyone to see. I hope many members will visit it as well as going to see the ATS Statue. It is a very tranquil place to spend a little time.

A THANK YOU TO ALL

Joan Smith

22 Wellgrove Street, Lochee,
Dundee DD2 2QY

Dear Editor

While waiting to take the enclosed photograph at Coventry on 2 April 2006, a lady approached me (she wasn't old



enough to remember the war years) and asked me to pass on her thanks to all those taking part in the march, and for all they did to help in the war.

My thanks to all who put the *Lioness* together, keep up the good work,

THE CANADIAN CONNECTION

Marjorie Huggett (née Cpl Matthews)

103-15367 Buena Vista Avenue, White Rock, B.C.
Canada V4B 1Y7

Dear Editor

I came to Canada in December 1998 aged 78 to live near my youngest son, my eldest son having died in August 1998 in Wokingham, Berkshire. Having been a widow since 1960 I needed to be near my only close relatives and my three grandsons. It's a very pleasant area to live, lots of more elderly people than young, lots of lovely trees and flowers everywhere and a friendly population.

I joined the ATS in August 1941 at Cardiff and served in 469 (M) H.A.A.Bty, in the London area and also around Sussex during the V.I. bombardment, empty houses at Hastings, a block of flats and under canvas in several places. I was demobbed in September 1945, being one of the first out, as I married in 1944 and married women were first to be demobbed. I was a life member of the Medway Branch while in England and still keep in touch with several members. I also attended the 'Ack Ack' Reunions in York.

I thought you and your readers might be interested in the enclosed cutting from "The Vancouver Sun";

FEMALE FIRST WORLD WAR VET NEARS 107TH BIRTHDAY

She turns 107 years of age on Wednesday and is likely the last female First World War veteran who is still alive. Gladys Powers, who lives at Vulhaven care home in Abbotsford, remembers how she enlisted in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in England in 1915 – at 15 years of age. "I had to lie about my age...you were supposed to be at least 17 to get in," she recalled.

Powers was transferred to the Women's Royal Air Force, where she became a barracks waitress. "It was a terrible time," she said of the war years. She eventually married her first husband, Canadian soldier Edward Luxford and came to Canada as a war bride in 1920. Powers remarried a few times – even walking from Calgary to Vancouver with Luxford in 1924 along the railroad tracks – before marrying Andrew Powers.

Editor: I would be delighted if anyone could add to this story. I have e-mailed the newspaper but have not had a reply.

MY 90TH BIRTHDAY
W/119935 Ex Sgt Eileen K Hall (née Heron)
354 Loose Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 9TT

Dear Editor **PDF Compressor Free Version**

I am writing to mention that we celebrated my 90th Birthday on Sunday 14 June 2006 and had a party of 27 relatives and friends. We had a Buffet Lunch and Tea in a private garden area of an hotel just off the M20 at Wrotham, Kent. This location was chosen because many nephews and nieces came down from the Midlands and from other far away places.

My ATS colleague of Camberley days came up from Cornwall – her son is my Godson – and my goddaughter even came over from the Channel Islands. My grandson could not make it as he was in the middle of Physics exams at Lancaster University. We had a beautiful sunny day at the start of the summer heat wave and we managed to sit outside all day.

I am the oldest remaining member of Her Majesty the Queen's cadre course at Camberley in March/April 1945 and was invited to the Imperial War Museum when she opened the Women at War Exhibition on 14 October 2003. We were lined up with 2 of the 3 vehicles that Her Majesty trained on and she and the Duke of Edinburgh spoke to us as they left the exhibition.



Eileen cuts her cake



Eileen Heron in 1942



*Outside the
Imperial War
Museum
October 2003*

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER?



The WRAC Association now has badges to denote how long you have been a member of the Association. The badges are based on a plain version of the Association badge and the silver one is for 25 years membership and the gold coloured one is for 40 years membership.

You can buy the badges from WRAC Association HQ at Worthy Down. The silver coloured ones are £3 and the gold coloured ones are £4. Cheques should be made payable to "WRAC Association".



THE LORD KITCHENER MEMORIAL HOLIDAY CENTRE

W/376653 Mrs Brenda Colley, née Dutton
131 Bawtry Road, Brintworth, Rotherham S60 5NB

Dear Editor

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I enclose a photograph taken outside the Lord Kitchener Memorial holiday centre in Lowestoft. W/423409 Elaine Brooks, née Wibberley of Rochdale Branch is on the right and we met there three years ago. We now meet on a yearly basis with our husbands for a relaxing holiday. Should any members wish to stay there, they should ring the manager on 01502 573564. It is in a superb position, facing the sea, very comfortable and they serve really good food. The rates are very reasonable for ex-service personnel and visitors book the same weeks for the following year, year after year.



Arnold (ex Royal Signals) and Brenda Colley, an anonymous Chelsea Pensioner at the back and Alan (ex ACC) and Elaine Brooks on the right

Elaine and I also met up at the Grand Reunion in Warwick and what a really super time we had. Congratulations to all who had a hand in organising it. One of our Sheffield members, Iris Howe, had her photograph in the *Lioness* three times! Our Secretary, Margaret Duffy, and I did not manage to be in any of them but we had a marvellous weekend nonetheless.

Hot websites to have a look at:

www.saynoto0870.com Fed up with ringing expensive 0870 numbers and being put on hold? Check this site out for real numbers to talk to real people

www.forcesdiscounts-mod.co.uk There are lots of discounts on offer at this site which are also available to veterans

www.buyatwrac Do you shop online? Head to this site first and click the link to your shop. It doesn't cost you anything, but it will make some cash for the Association.

SUEZ VETERANS' SERVICE AND PARADE 30 MAY 2006

Harold Heath, SVA Events Organiser
30 Mendip Avenue, Hillcroft Park, Stafford
ST17 0PG
Tel: 01785 660900

Dear Editor

In November 2005, you kindly published the details of our commemorative event at the National Memorial Arboretum on 30 May 2006. This coincided with the 50th Anniversary of the landings and invasion. Through the *Lioness*, we enjoyed hearing from many of your interested members and they were very welcome guests among the 1200 who attended on the day.

We have produced a DVD of the day and these can be ordered from me at the above address. They last for about 50 minutes and cost £14 incl p&p.

Please make cheques payable to D.L.A. Production.

DID YOU SERVE IN THE FALKLANDS?

25TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS

The main event will take place on Sunday 17 June 2007 on Horse Guards Parade and all veterans, serving or retired, who received the South Atlantic 1982 Medal are eligible to attend. More information about the event can be found on www.falklands25.com

All details and an application form can be downloaded from the Veterans Agency website or e-mail tracy.shapherd1@veteransagency.gsi.gov.uk

Unfortunately, all the forms have to be submitted by 28 February and this edition of the *Lioness* may not have been distributed by then. However, if you are a Falklands veteran and have not heard about this event before, it is worth contacting the e-mail address above. The WRAC Association does not have a list of WRAC who served there so this is the only way of trying to make contact with any eligible veterans.

If you are one, why not write to the *Lioness* with your story of the time you served there with some photographs. It would be good to include Falkland Islands memories in the next edition of the journal. PLEASE let us have your stories and photographs. It is the only chance we have of creating that part of the Corps' history.

The ATS Statue

THE UNVEILING OF THE AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE STATUE

PDF Compressor Free Version
ON 15 JULY 2006

Mrs M D Rogers, 103 Lion House Park, Mill Road,
Hailsham, East Sussex BN27 2SE, Tel: 01323 440265

I have long thought we should have one. Being a Borderer (Berwick-on-Tweed) and a Kinc. and not liking insults, I mentioned this to Mary Beeston, a Geordie (Newcastle-upon-Tyne). She agreed with me and preparations began: Mary to be our Fund Raiser and me to be Liaison Officer for the project.



Mary and Margaret with the statue during construction in March 2006. The photograph was taken in Andy de Camyn's workshop near Birmingham



In the morning before the service

We were allocated a plot in the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas in November 2004 and started to raise funds in February 2005. I wrote to branch secretaries asking them to tell this news to their ATS members and later took great pleasure in announcing the Dedication and Unveiling of the first specific Memorial to the ATS - 1938 to 1949.



Draped with the Union Jack prior to unveiling



Rev Brian Weaver and bugler during the service

Her Majesty the Queen sent the following message:

Please convey my warm thanks to the Auxiliary Territorial Service veterans for their message of loyal greetings sent on the occasion of the unveiling of the first ever memorial dedicated to the Auxiliary Territorial Service which is being held today at the National Memorial Arboretum. I much appreciate your kind words and, in return, send my best wishes to you all for a most memorable occasion.

ELIZABETH R.

15 July 2006

We had a fly-past by a Spitfire, the Northfield Pipers to march us to our Statue and back, a very nice Service led by Padre Brian Weaver. Royal Marine bugler Aidan

Harper and lone piper Andy de Comyn, our Sculptor, played a Lament for our Killed and Missing in Action, with the Exhortation and the Kohima message.

Mary Beeston and I unveiled the Statue as regrettably Jean Crawley. PDF Compressor Free Version as arranged. The weather was perfect, the occasion well attended by ex-ATS, ex-servicemen and the public. Donors were invited to the Conference Room for tea/coffee and biscuits and to sign our Visitors Book.



Dispersing after the dedication



Searchlight team in WWII uniforms

We wish to thank all our donors without whom we would not have a Statue and also to thank our anonymous Benefactor who enabled us to have our Ceremony earlier than expected. Thanks to all who helped us on this memorable day. All bills have been paid and the funds left are now being transferred to the Royal British Legion to be used for the repair and maintenance of our Statue.

A DAY TO REMEMBER

Joan C McLellan JP, "Braeside", Penycae Road, Ruabon, Wrexham LL14 6EB

I wish to record the feelings of those members in the North West who are indebted to Mrs Mary Beeston and Mrs Margaret Rogers for conceiving the idea, collecting the money and arranging for the statue to commemorate the service given by the ATS.

I think because we have always been loyal to our memories and comrades over the years – both during the war and after, we have been reluctant as an ATS Group to express our concerns and dismay at the final conception of the Memorial to the Women of WWII. We would never grudge, in any way, a memorial to the civilian women and widows and all the other Services. However, many of us thought the final sculpture was ill-conceived as a reflection of the sorrows and privations endured by women during the war. To add insult to injury we were never consulted in spite of a very large donation made specifically by members of the ATS.

Mary Beeston picked up the feeling of seething resentment which was so harsh that some branches demanded their donations back. She enlisted Margaret Roger's support and they conceived the idea of a statue at the National Memorial Arboretum: then began the hard task of arranging such a venture. With donations and the help of the Royal British Legion, a plot was purchased and the good offices of a Sculptor sought. We were very lucky that Mary, once again, sought the help of a Mr Andy de Comyn who designed and sculpted the so true to life statue of an ATS Private. We congratulate and thank him so very sincerely as well as The Royal British Legion and all members and branches who helped financially. Any further donations may be sent directly to The National Memorial Arboretum to help towards the upkeep of the statue.

UNVEILING OF ATS STATUE - 15 JULY 2006

Mrs Joan Higgins, 10 Fellfield Way, Parkside, Stafford ST16 1TN

What a wonderful day it was! The sun shone brightly and many ATS veterans had travelled from all over Britain to see the unveiling. Our grateful thanks must go to Mary Beeston and Margaret Rogers for their untiring effort in writing letters and contacting many people to raise the funds required for this memorial. Many ATS veterans were happy to send contributions towards such a great cause.



Marjorie Powell, Chris Cowley and Molly Chappon



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The same three enjoying some refreshments

It was also marvellous meeting and greeting old friends, having lunch together in the restaurant and then having a short walk to the statue which was covered with the Union Jack. Seats had been provided so most people were able to sit down. The pipe and drum band arrived and quite a few ladies decided to march behind them. We all felt very proud to be there.

A short service was led by the Rev Brian Weaver and prayers were said for departed friends and for those still serving in the forces. A lone piper, Andy de Comyn, played a lament. Mary Rogers read a letter from Her Majesty the Queen and Mary Beeston thanked everyone who had contributed to the event including the piper. Andy de Comyn, who had also sculpted the statue.



Reverend Brian Weaver leads the parade towards the ATS Statue



Mary Beeston on the right



Andy de Comyn - sculptor and piper



The Sculptor with his finished work

At exactly 2pm, when the march ended, a Spitfire flew over, not once, but several times. Then Mary and Margaret unveiled the statue; a very emotional moment and most of us had tears in our eyes. We were then provided with cups of tea and a biscuit. It was then time to say goodbye to old friends. Hopefully, we will be meeting up again on Remembrance Day or at the next ATS Dinner Club gathering. What a wonderful day, one which we will never forget.

WRAC Dinner Club

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN

PDF Compressor Free Version
Gardolc Montessori Gymnasium,
2 Godre r-Mynydd, Rhos Mountain, Pen-y-Cae,
Nr Wrexham LL14 1UC,

It was that time of the year again, where had the time gone? Kathy Ellis and I arrived at the Birmingham Holiday Inn for yet another WRAC Dinner Club Weekend. We booked in at Reception only to find that I had been allocated three rooms and Kathy two. I knew I had put on a little weight but that was ridiculous! After sorting it out and settling in, we searched out our intrepid team to see how things were going.

I remember thinking to myself, "Good Lord, I do hope we are not going to have too many problems this year." WRONG! Booking into the hotel proved to be somewhat of a nightmare for some of the ladies. Double bookings, smoking instead of non smoking, no booking at all and single instead of twin or double rooms! Thank goodness for my little happy pills or to put it more accurately, my bottle of 'Kalm's' (herbal remedy). Two pills later and I was smiling sweetly and feeling a lot calmer.



Anne and Rose a bit excited at the prospect of another WRAC Dinner weekend!

Later that day, together with some of the committee members and a few friends, we opted to eat out and settled for a jumbo combo at Nando's. It proved to be a good choice. Plenty to eat and good company – a wonderful way to end our first evening.

Friday

Kathy and I were up with the lark and down to breakfast. 'Hi there!' 'Hello!' and 'Nice to see you again!' were the greetings together with lots of hugs and smiles. How I love to meet everyone again and share that wonderful comradeship. A steady flow of arrivals continued throughout the day and we were kept busy with the normal hiccups and problems with booking in.

Sue Thomas informed us that she had been visited by a small army of invaders from the insect fraternity and she

had been left a reminder of their visit in the form of a cluster of bites on her back! Nasty little devils! The hotel management were informed and after investigation the invaders were found to have ensconced themselves in an armchair in Sue's room. The said chair was rapidly removed and replaced, "What next?" I wondered. The day however proceeded without further problems.

The flag raising ceremony was performed as always by our own Major Mac in the finest tradition, ably assisted by Beryl Butcher delivering the Blessing and prayers.



Maj Maskens McIntyre and Beryl prepare for the flag raising ceremony on the Friday evening. Yes – it is the back of the flag which is why the Lioness is facing the wrong way!



Mack and Beryl tying the flag - it was very windy up on that balcony

We spent the evening in the company of a number of the ladies in the hotel restaurant under the watchful eye of Orlando who kept us fully amused and well looked after. Following our wonderful repast we retired to the bar to meet more of our comrades. I was pleased to see Bimbo Coleman back **PDF Compressor Free Version** not lost any of her sense of humour or her gift for playing practical jokes! I remember one particular year when I had returned to my room after dinner to find the bed seat had been covered with cling film! Needless to say that the prank had the desired result!

It was nice to see Olive (Ollie) Sykes with us this year having made the long journey from her home in New Zealand. I also heard on the grapevine that she is getting married in the New Year. All the best, Ollie. I am sure everyone joins me in wishing you happiness for the future. Stella (Scatty) Scantleberry also joined us this year. Oh! The memories, Scatty! Singapore 1966. It was great to talk over old times and see the photographs. Were we ever so young and carefree?

Patricia (Flogger) Gates was another welcome face. You have come on in leaps and bounds through your illness Flogger. Oops! Sorry. I mean Patricia! You will always be Flogger to me, my friend! I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Tugliners for all the support they have given to Patricia over the past few years.



Patricia Gates (Yes - "Flogger") being met by the WRAC Dinner Club Chairman, Carole Montessori-Gorman



Scatty, Christine Hardman, Dawn Missen, n/a Potter and Jan Vones at the Chinese Restaurant on Friday night



The compulsory raffle ticket sales table!

Saturday

The Extra Ordinary meeting to discuss the 10th Anniversary went well on the whole. The venue came down to a choice of two; Blackpool or Liverpool. By a winning vote the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool is now the venue for 2007. A few mumbles and grumbles reached my ears regarding the committee but this seems to be par for the course. My answer to those ladies is please feel free to put yourself forward for selection next year. All the committee places are up for grabs!

The Saturday moved along swiftly until it was soon time for the Dinner. Averill Ward did us the honour of a trumpet fanfare calling us to dine. That was of course when we eventually managed to get the staff to open the doors and let us in! The evening progressed well. The return of Frank's Classic Cabaret featuring the one and only King himself 'Elvis' was a great success. I have since learned that Frank had been quite ill over the weeks prior to the dinner but he put on a brave face and carried on as he did not want to disappoint us. Thank you, Frank! It was greatly appreciated. Everyone enjoyed themselves very much so it was all worthwhile.

Sunday

The Sunday Service, conducted by Beryl Butcher, brought yet another weekend to a close and everyone said their goodbyes.

Well ladies, I do hope you enjoyed yourselves and we look forward to seeing you all again next year in Liverpool. In closing I would like to thank my wonderful committee for all their hard work throughout the year. 'Well done girls!' Not forgetting our President, Val Kemball, who always adds her own sense of humour and charm to the proceedings.

A WONDERFUL TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!
Carol Traynor. By e-mail Traynor189@aol.com

Once again it was wonderful to meet up with old pals and the new ones that we have made since joining the WRAC Dinner Club. It is a very special occasion that we all look forward to from year to year but the trouble is, it goes by much too quickly!

Friday was spent excitedly greeting each other and having an evening meal. On the Saturday, the weather

was kind to us with lovely sunshine so we spent a relaxing day by the canal nearby and had a leisurely ride on a canal boat – not that we noticed the scenery too much – we were so busy laughing and chatting.

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Sandy enjoying a boat ride



Margaret and Rita enjoying a cuppa by the canal



How many more can you squeeze into a canal boat?

Saturday night's dinner was excellent, the food superb. The hotel is well kept and the staff very good. Breakfasts were lovely which all helps to make our weekend go smoothly and the hotel is perfectly placed for the nice shopping centres nearby.

Then suddenly it is Sunday and, after breakfast and morning service, it's time for goodbyes for another year, everyone agreeing that it has been another superb weekend.

Many thanks to the Holiday Inn Hotel, Birmingham for the excellent food and service. A big thank you to the WRAC Dinner Club Committee for all the hard work they do in order for us to have a lovely weekend.



Mary Plumb, née Church, Lin Thornton, Zoe Stephens, née Cook and Di Green, née Smith



Jan Vaness, Josie Annable, Anne and Carol Traynor



Scatty, Ollie Gerrard and Dawn Missen, née Potter

Editor: I am very grateful to Vee Moore, Lin Thornton, Pat Smith, Carol Traynor and Jackie Naysmith who took and/or sent in photographs about the WRAC Dinner which was held on 13 October 2006. For those of you who cannot wait for a Grand Reunion every third year **JOIN THE WRAC DINNER CLUB!** This is an all ranks dinner held each year and is a great fun way to meet up with folks you have not seen for ages. There is an application form in the central pull-out section. It is being held in Liverpool this year – see you there!



Three ex-Tangliners: Dorothy Blake, née Turner.
Jean Moffitt and Gwenda Bennett, née Griffiths.
Visit www.tangliners.com for more news of Singapore days!



Gwenda Bennett, née Griffiths, Jean Moffitt, Kath Hughes
and Dorothy Blake, née Turner



Doreen Bridle and Jackie



Mary Plumb, née Church and Pat Baker, née Trickey



Lin Thornton, Jean Moffitt, Gwenda Bennett, née Griffiths
and Dorothy Blake, née Turner



Mary Plumb, née Church, Pat Baker, née Trickey and Zoe
Stephens, née Cook



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Rose, Anne, Dawn, Joyce, Lesly and Carol



Kath Hughes and the "WRACettes" giving Delilah the treatment!



Patricia, Sandy, Rose, Carol, Anne and Christine



Rose, Rita and Margaret



Table 11



Carole, Christine and Patricia



Scotty, Patricia and Olive from New Zealand



Carol, Anne, Margaret, Rose and Rita



Christine, Sandy and Anne



The Lisburn 5: Lorraine Lunders, Belle Jenkinson, Anlie Smith, Margaret James and Chris Corker



Margaret



Waiting for dinner



Patricia and ??



Ann Deakin making a serious point with Agnes Doig!



Rosemary Jones and her Toyboy



Ann Prothero, Cardiff Branch



Beryl Butcher ready to take the service on Sunday morning

WRAC Officers' Dining Club

WRAC OFFICERS' DINING CLUB
DINNER HELD AT THE VICTORY SERVICES CLUB

SATURDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2006

Jane Freebairn, General Secretary

A very successful Dinner was held last November and at last, we managed to break the 100 barrier as 109 members and guests came along. A significant number of serving and recently retired "young" officers attended for the first time and hopefully, as the word spreads, more and more of the younger generation will start to support this annual opportunity for officers to "reunite".





Tradition now has it that Reverend Sue Wing and, soon-to-be, Reverend Frances Canham compose a suitable Grace on the train coming up to London. Unfortunately Sue could not be with us but Frances came up trumps. She gave me permission to reproduce it as long as the Archbishop does not see it before her ordination! Here goes:

In our social calendar, today's marked with an "X"
Some claim this special dinner exceeds the joys of sex!
An annual opportunity that never should be missed,
For buying drinks for long lost friends – and getting
rather – merry!

Lord, help me to recall the name, when I see a face I've
known,
Despite the extra wrinkles and a waistline that has
grown.
And make me understanding, when others can't recall
A single thing about me – or, even meeting me, at all!

We thank you, Lord, for all your gifts for food and
friends and fun
For memories of those we've known whose earthly days
are done.
We pray for those around us, Lord, and those who can't
be here
Please give us all a firm resolve to come again next year.

The great triumph was that we had music! Thanks to Lt Col Nicky Murdoch, Chief of Staff at Kuebler Hall, we had a group of military musicians led by Student



Sgt Day

Bandmaster Crowley – female! It was also a great delight to see three members of the WRAC Staff Band who are still playing in military hands. A quintet played during dinner and we were entertained afterwards to some very clever playing highlighting individual talents. Yes, of course, they played the Post Horn Gallop!



The Post Horn Gallop

However, for many, the highlight was the Corps March. Not just because it was good to hear it again, but because it was conducted by Jean Collyer, née McDowell who, as Director of Music, had personally arranged it when it was first introduced over 50 years ago. I hope that Jean will allow me to share her thank you letter with you:



Director of Music, Jean Collyer, back in command

"What was such a surprise was when I was asked to conduct the March. I had no idea of this but, when warned, I held back on the wine! It was for me an emotional moment. Did I tell you of my problems writing it? In my time everything had to be written free hand and it took ages – **PDF Compressor Free Version** and I was not want to make errors! Angela Cecil (Bless her soul) who was CO at the Depot sent me a sharp letter saying that I could not go with the Band to Berlin unless I finished it within 4 or 5 days. How could the full Band manage without their Director of Music? Somehow I managed it."



Army band musicians

We all managed it – will you manage the next one?
You better had.

VICTORY SERVICES CLUB SATURDAY 1 DECEMBER 2007

WRAC OFFICERS' DINING CLUB LUNCHEON SATURDAY 19 MAY 2007

If you cannot wait until the next Dinner, why not come along to the Officers' Lunch in the Officers' Mess at Worthy Down? All members of the Dining Club will receive individual notification with a reply slip. If you are not already a member, please contact Jane Freebairn at Association HQ for the necessary forms.

The luncheon is a very informal occasion and hopefully the weather will be pleasant enough for us to have coffee on the patio before the actual lunch.

PUT THE DATE IN YOUR DIARY NOW!

DVD – GRAND REUNION

Hermé Emary, our Webmaster, has compiled a DVD containing all the photographs we received for the *Lioness* and some video footage that she took of the Parade and the Church Service. They are available from Association HQ for £5 each. Please make cheques payable to: "WRAC Association".

A WOMAN'S PLACE

Sensible advice to womenfolk preparing for their husband's return from work, from 13th May 1955 issue of *Housekeeping Monthly*.

- Take 15 minutes to rest so you'll be refreshed when he arrives.
- Touch up your make-up, put a ribbon in your hair and be fresh-looking.
- Be a little gay and a little more interesting for him. His boring day may need a lift and one of your duties is to provide it.
- At the time of his arrival, eliminate all noise of the washer, dryer or vacuum. Try to encourage the children to be quiet.
- Listen to him. You may have a dozen important things to tell him, but the moment of his arrival is not the time. Let him talk first – remember, his topics of conversation are more important than yours.
- Make the evening his. Never complain if he comes home late or goes out to dinner, or other places of entertainment, without you. Instead, try to understand his world of strain and pressure.
- Arrange his cushion and offer to take off his shoes. Speak in a low, soothing and pleasant voice.
- Don't ask him questions about his actions. Remember, he is the master of the house and as much will always exercise his will with fairness and truthfulness. You have no right to question him.

Poems

602 MIXED HEAVY ACK-ACK BATTERY

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It was during the dark and traumatic days of the Second World War,
A time when Germany's aircraft bombed our cities by the score.
A retaliatory roof over the motherland was an essential need,
Anti-aircraft defences needed with operators from a brave breed.

Dear mother, we will always be so very proud of you,
Especially when you were an ATS girl of a mere five feet two,
The local Glen Parva barracks, basic training and a smart uniform,
Off to Arborfield, trigonometry, sums and new duties to perform.

Memories of Sheringham and billets in the Grand, a red brick hotel,
Army trucks that bumped, bounced and shook you to hell,
Gunnery practice, stormy wintry winds on cliff tops at Weybourne,
Young ATS girls bitterly cold, sleepless nights, feeling forlorn.

Much vaunted Luftwaffe began dropping their deposits on Belfast
Rapid posting of 602 Battery to Northern Ireland, action at last
Stationed at Ballysod, off duty walks down to Larne to view the sea
Enemy raids, dances in the NAAFI – soda farks and a cup of tea.

Christmas '43 and 602 are transferred to Hayling Island, Sinah site,
In April '41 Junkers 88's flattened the ramp in a display of might,
Betty Hatter, richly dark curly hair and eyes of dazzling blue,
In a danger zone, near to Portsmouth with its sea of greyish hue.

'Action Stations' called in the middle of winter nights,
A regular occurrence with dangers enough to give frights,
Sprinting in darkness along narrow pathways to the gunnery green,
Once Pte Hatter operated in pyjamas and tin hat for a surreal scene.

[Hostile aircraft approaching – a familiar orbital engine throb]
Civilians scurry to shelters or sit under winding stairs,
Hope that brave Ack-Ack gunners will answer their prayers,
Height and Range Finder:
"Bearing 154...Angle 20"...shouted Private Hatter:
"Bearing 158...Angle 20"
"Height Finder on Target!"

Searchlights, Barrage balloons and hufors: never to forget,
"FIRE"...4.5 inch guns with thunderous roar and flash of flame,
Four guns of volcanic power that even the Devil couldn't tame.

D-Day and ATS girls witness Hayling's deadly beach scene,
Mother transferred to Greenford Barracks for a switchboard routine,
VE-Day with friend, 'Cookie,' at the Palace and Leicester Square
December 15th 1945 and marriage to her Les and a lifetime to share.

The years do happily pass and mother's eyes still clear and blue,
A wonderful singing voice, she sang during the War for the forces too
Dear mother, we are so very proud of you
Especially when you were an ATS girl of a mere five feet two!

Michael Kendrick, son of W/210073 Betty Kendrick. nfe Hatter
266 Forist Road, Old Woodhouse, Nr Loughborough, Leics
LE12 8UA

GUNSHOT IN THE POPPY FIELDS A WORLD WAR ONE POEM

Soldiers standing row on row
Attentive listening for the blow
Lined up in the poppy fields
Not a word, silence.

Bluebirds over the white cliffs of Dover
But do they know how long it'll last
In the boggy trenches standing still
Where all they hear is constant blast.

"Gas!" comes the cry and there's a fumbling
Gunshots like a quiet rumbling
One of the platoon gone
Days so far? Just the one

11th hour
11th day
11th month

It is this time when we pay tribute
To the ones who lost their lives
Us the freedom of speech and actions
People without guns and knives.

So: Rest in peace
Rest in Frieden
Rust in vrede
Repos dans la paix

Editor: This was sent in by Florence Lyons in
Bury. It was written by her 14 year old
granddaughter, Katie Woodward who had been
studying the history of the 1914/18 War at
school. Quite remarkable.

THE SOLDIER

It is the soldier, not the reporter, who has give us
freedom of the press,
It is the soldier, not the poet, who has given us
freedom of speech,
It is the soldier, not the student activist, who has
given us the freedom to demonstrate,
It is the soldier, not the lawyer, who has given us
the right to a fair trial,
It is the soldier who salutes the flag –
Who serves under the flag –
And whose coffin is draped by the flag,
Who permits the protester to burn the flag.

Submitted by Isobel Gordon, Chairman, Fife &
Tayside Branch, "Borrowed" from a Royal British
Legion journal

PLEASE REMEMBER THIS

Thousands of people
Many are now dead
So very abominable.

Why kill?
What is the meaning of War?
Many cruel people hate each other
They want land and try to steal
No-one likes that
They take the land back
They retaliate and then they kill.

More and more death
People slaughter and get slaughtered
Blood rains upon the land
Creating a bloodbath
But some of the blood is innocent blood
Innocent people sent to war
Because of someone else's selfishness
'One People' Hitler said
Because of him
Thousands are dead.

No-one should go to war
More people dead than in a century
Look at what has happened
Compromises can be formed
But no-one should go to war.

Editor: And this one was written by Elliott, 12 year old grandson of Sheila Wilkins, née Flitter, of Bristol Branch. He specifically printed it in red for obvious reasons. Another remarkable effort.

APRONS

I don't think our children know what an apron is.
The principal Use of Grandma's apron was to protect the dress underneath, but along with that, it served as a potholder for removing hot pans from the oven.

It was wonderful for drying children's tears, and on occasion
Was even used for cleaning out dirty cars.
From the chicken coop, the apron was used for carrying eggs,
fussy chicks, and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven.
When company came, those aprons were ideal hiding places for shy children.

And when the weather was cold, grandma wrapped it around her arms,

Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow,
bent over the hot wood stove.
Chips and kindling wood were brought into the kitchen in that apron.
From the garden, it carried all sorts of vegetables. After the peas had been shelled, it carried out the hulls.
In the fall, the apron was used to bring in apples that had fallen from the trees.

When unexpected company drove up the road, it was surprising how much furniture that old apron could dust in a matter of seconds.
When dinner was ready, Grandma walked out onto the porch, waved her apron, and the men knew it was time to come in from the fields to dinner.

It will be a long time before someone invents something that will replace that "old-time apron" that served so many purposes.

Send this to those who would know, and love the story about Grandma's aprons.

REMEMBER

Grandma used to set her hot baked apple pies on the window sill to cool.

Her granddaughters set theirs on the window sill to thaw.

Submitted by Jackie Naysmith, Secretary, Bristol Branch

THE ARMY (AS IN 1945)

Miss Blanch C Rice, 9 Buckingham House, Croxteth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool L17 3AH

I served with the ATS from 1945 to early 1948 and I have written, or rather typed, this small poem in remembrance of ATS days in 1945, when I was at Glen Parva Barracks, South Wigston, Leicester. By the time I was demobbed, conditions had improved.

Stand to attention, stand at ease
Swing your arms, as you please
March head erect and come to a standstill
Before marching up the hill.

Smarten up and parade for inspection
See your uniform is up to perfection
Stand very still to be inspected
With the discipline that becomes infected
With the desired standard of smartness
For the Army battledress.

Rise early in the morn
At the very crack of dawn
Shower, dress and fold one's bed
Putting the bedding at the head.

Hurry down to breakfast
Then up again at last
To sweep the floor and make oneself tidy
For the Company-Sergeant-Major to see.

Then off you march to work
For duties you must not shirk
Then comes lunch and you munch
All ready for the afternoon duty
After which you parade for tea.

Then you can change into truth
And spend the evening as you please
Then it is time for bed and lights out
And that is what the Army is all about



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WRAC Association Memorabilia

All items of memorabilia can be obtained from the Association Headquarters.
Please make cheques or postal orders payable to WRAC Association and forward with your order to:
WRAC Association, AGC Centre, Worthy Down, Winchester, Hants. SO21 2RG.

All prices include postage and packing



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Bells £ 1.50
Table Mats £ 6.50

Obituaries – their final salute

MAJOR (RETD) HILDA MAY SHENTON

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My Aunt, Hilda Shenton, was born on 24 July 1920 in Houghton-le-Spring, Co. Durham (now Tyne & Wear). She enlisted in the ATS in 1942 and served in 'Ack Ack' during the war. She remained in the service and, on the changeover to WRAC, decided to make the Army her career. Her postings included Liphook, Hindhead, Cyprus, Camberley and Guildford. Her lifelong friends were Hilda Sanders (Sandy), Winifred Andrews (Andy), Di Morgan and May Connolly (Conley?).



Hilda is on the back row third from the left

Hilda retired in 1975 and returned home to look after her father who was 90 years old. Her thirty two years in the Army had given her a very varied and interesting career. In 1997 she moved to Solihull to be nearer her family. A long period of ill health took over and she died in the Priory Nursing Home, Solihull on 26 September 2006.

Mildred Brinich
16 Coverdale Road, Solihull, B92 7NX

W/125013 ELISE MITCHELL

Born in 1918, Elise Mitchell qualified as a chiropodist before the outbreak of war and then volunteered for the ATS prior to the introduction of conscription. After basic training at Cameron Barracks in Inverness, she served with 166 'Ack Ack' Regiment, firstly in Devon and then in Kent. Such was the shortage of personnel on the gun sites in those dark days that instead of allowing anyone time off to visit a chiropodist, the chiropodist visited the gun sites!

Elise resumed her professional career in happier surroundings after demob and also became an active member of the WRAC Association in Glasgow. Over the last year, however, her health slowly declined and she died on 14 August 2006. Mae Lang, long time Secretary of Glasgow Branch, represented the WRAC Association at Elise's funeral and her presence was much appreciated by the surviving members of her family.

Mr R M Mitchell (Brother)
20 Fleurs Avenue, Dumbreck, Glasgow, G41 5AP

W/123684 JOYCE LE PAGE ATS

Joyce Le Page died aged 88, on 3 September 2006. She was a driver and drove an ambulance during the war, serving in London, Shorncliffe and Bristol. Her one claim to fame was that she climbed Ben Nevis at the age of 60 and was awarded a certificate by Sir Edmund Hillary.

She loved England so much that she always refused to move to California to live with her son Roger and family. Always a very quiet lady, Joyce bought a plot and a young oak tree in Woodlands Park, Wimborne and was buried there. Joyce will certainly be missed by all Weymouth and Portland Branch members.

Mrs P McElwaine
2 Moorcombe Drive, Preston, Weymouth, Dorset,
DT3 6NP

BETTY TONDZIEL née FRANK

Mrs Betty Tondziel nee Frank, my Mother, passed away at home on 20 May 2006 after a short but brave fight against cancer. She died just three days after her 79th birthday and only fourteen weeks after her husband, Nick.



Betty joined the ATS in 1944 as a driver but she had difficulty taking an engine out and putting it back again. She only weighed seven and a half stone and was not

very tall. So she became a nursing orderly on the strength of having done a first aid and nursing course. She was stationed at Gordon Barracks, Aberdeen 1945-1946 and at Carlisle and Saughton Camp, Chester and later Tidworth Hospital.

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Betty was demobbed in 1948 when she met a soldier from the Polish Forces, Nick Tomziel, and they married and had two sons and a daughter. She went on to resume her nursing career despite a dreadful car accident in 1967 and she joined the Blood Transfusion Service and the British Red Cross.

After retiring, Betty founded and became the Secretary of the Cleveland Branch of the WRAC Association in 1986. In the beginning there were only four members and by 1988 there were over ninety. She then started Middlesbrough Branch and again became Branch Secretary. They all had a great time sharing stories and being together. She organised concerts to raise money for the charity and holidays and day trips for her members. Sadly she had to close the branch in 2001 due to diminishing membership.



Betty had bundles of energy during her life and anyone who met her was touched by her forthright and caring nature. She helped out at Teesside Hospice shops and Carers Together. Betty faced her illness in true style and grace. She was brave and dignified, generous even humorous throughout her final weeks. A fighter all her life, she was a fighter to the end. She will be sorely missed.

Mrs Val Graham
7 Tidkin Lane, Guisborough, Cleveland, TS14 8BX

W/135181 GLADYS MAY PARKES NÉE CLINTON

Gladys was a founder member of the Sunderland Branch and acted as Treasurer for many years until she resigned due to family commitments. Many will remember her attending the AFS Dinner Club and she also

accompanied the Secretary to North East Area meetings on many occasions. Although latterly not in the best of health, she seldom missed a Branch meeting and was present at the final meeting when the Branch closed recently.

Gladys had been in hospital for four weeks but it was still a shock to hear that she had died. The previous night, when her husband, Fred and son, Peter had visited her, she had apparently been 'on top form'. She will be sadly missed by all her family and friends.

Mrs Shirley Smith, previously Secretary, Sunderland Branch.
129 Hardie Drive, West Boldon, East Boldon NE36 0HA

SSGT SHARRON ELLIOTT (Int Corps)



SSgt Sharron Elliott, 34, died along with three UK servicemen when their patrol boat was hit by a booby-trap bomb on a waterway in Basra on Remembrance Sunday, 12 November 2006. Sharron enlisted into the WRAC in 1991 as one of the first female aircraft technicians. She initially transferred into REME before joining the Intelligence Corps in June 2003. She had served in the UK, Northern Ireland, Belize, Cyprus, Kosovo and Iraq.

Ssgt Elliott had very recently left the Defence College of Intelligence where she had been an instructor. She was with the Cyprus Joint Security Unit from where she had been deployed to Basra, Iraq.

ALLEN Mrs Jean Francis, née Halbert, of Southampton, on 30 Sep 2006. WRAC

BARCLAY Mrs Annie, née Thompson of Aberdeen, on 5 Jul 2006. ATS

BARNACLE Mrs Joan, née Burch, of Leicester, on 16 Sep 2006. ATS

BARNES Mrs Vera Mary, née Wellington, of Gillingham, on 23 Dec 2006. ATS

BLACKWOOD Mrs Doris May, née Fisher, of Cleveland, on 12 Aug 2006. ATS

BLADEN Mrs Jessie, née Eve, of St Leonards, on 29 Sep 2006. ATS

BOWRING Mrs Mavis, née Cooper, of Leicester, on 25 Jul 2006. ATS

BRACEY Mrs Cynthia Vera, née Henley, of Cheltenham, on 11 Aug 2006. ATS

BRICE Mrs Vera Elsie, née Gammons, of London, on 9 Jul 2005. ATS

BRISTOW Mrs Emily, née Malthouse, of Chelmsford, on 11 Aug 2006. ATS

BROWN Mrs Lilian, née Blakeman, of Birmingham, on 12 Jun 2006. ATS

CKETTE Mrs Isabella, née Allen, of Glasgow, in Oct 2006. ATS

CAMPBELL Mrs E (Betty), née McKay, of Helensburgh, on 25 Nov 2006. ATS

CAMPBELL Mrs R, of Glasgow, on 19 Oct 2006. ATS

CARRIGAN Mrs Kathleen Margaret MBE, née Gresty, of Chester, in Aug 2006. ATS

CASTELL Mrs Barbara May, née Squire, of Groby, on 15 Aug 2006. ATS

CLOKE Mrs May Jessie, née Edwards, of Lanarkshire, on 26 Jul 2006. ATS

COCKFIELD Mrs Katherine, née Parker, of Redcar, on 12 Jul 2006. ATS

COOMER Mrs Mary, of Chelmsford, on 2 Nov 2006. ATS

CROFT Lady Lucy Elizabeth, née Jupp, of Whitstable, early 2006. ATS

DODDS Mrs Lily, née Wooler, of Bradford, in Dec 2006. ATS

DUDLEY Miss Jessie V, of Broadstairs, on 12 Sep 2006. ATS

DYSON Mrs Elizabeth, of Eastbourne, on 12 Sep 2006. ATS

ELISON Mrs Margaret Isabel, née Blee, of Isle of Wight, on 18 Nov 2006. ATS

FARLOW Mrs Agnes, née Easby, of Richmond, in Nov 2006. ATS

FLOWER Mrs Mary, of Norwich, on 11 Nov 2006. WRAC

GAREY Mrs J, née Woodley, of Baldock, date unknown. ATS

GOODWIN Miss Marjorie Gwendoline, of Eastbourne, on 22 Jul 2006. ATS/WRAC

GREATHURST Mrs Violet, née Dixon, of Woking, on 26 Jul 2006. ATS

HEAD Miss Freda Kate, of Surrey, on 13 Jun 2006. WRAC

HEPWORTH Mrs K E (Elaine), née Derwent, of Bradford, on 9 Oct 2006. ATS

HIBBERT Mrs Mary Margaret, née Benfield/Little, of Peterborough, date unknown. ATS

HORNBY Mrs Jean, of Norwich, on 27 Dec 2005. ATS

HUBBARD Mrs Dorothy May, née Cannon, of Bury, on Sep 2006. ATS

HUXTABLE Mrs L M, née Gill, of Crowthorpe, on 14 April 2006. ATS

JACKSON Maj (Retd) Biddy, née Rooney, of Brittany, on 13 Dec 2006. WRAC. Requiem Mass at Westminster Cathedral 11.30 a.m. Wednesday 7 March 2007

JESSOP Mrs Bridie, of Calverley, date unknown. ATS

JONES Mrs Helen, née Murdoch, of Leighton Buzzard, on 26 Aug 2006. ATS

KERR Mrs M H (Peggy), née Forsyth, of Glasgow, on 24 Oct 2006. ATS

KERSHAW Mrs Janet Lillian, née Cooper, of Wroughton, on 14 Aug 2006. ATS

LE PAGE Joyce Mildred, of Dorchester, on 3 Sep 2006. ATS

LAURENT Mrs Mary Anna, née Tucker, of Australia, on 18 Aug 2006. ATS

LEARMOUTH Ms Annie Gwynneth (Lottie) MBE TD, of Liverpool, on 25 Nov 2006. ATS/WRAC

MAIN Mrs Evelyn, of Aberdeen, on 16 Nov 2005. ATS

MALONE Mrs Cynthia Enid, of Toronto, on 26 Jun 2006. ATS

MASTERMAN Mrs Audrey, née Fisher of USA, in Oct 2006. ATS

MATTHEWS Mrs Betty Constance, née Dey, of Australia, on 4 Oct 2006. ATS/WRAC

McGHIE Mrs Winifred Eunice, née Holland, of Glasgow, on 4 Aug 2006. ATS

McROBERT Miss Frances, of Erskine, on 11 Sep 2006. ATS

MEREDITH Mrs Agnes (Nancy), née Beeston, of Albrighton, on 14 Dec 2006. ATS

MILLER Mrs Annie, née McKenzie, of Paisley, on 11 Aug 2006. ATS

MILLS Mrs Daisy Irene, née Paget, of New Melton, in Nov 2006. ATS

MILNER Mrs Patricia Frances, née Evans, of Curdworth, in Aug 2006. ATS

MITCHELL Mrs Elizabeth, née Douglas, of Glasgow, on 12 Aug 2006. ATS

MOORE Mrs Elizabeth (Betty), née Partridge, of Bromley, on 5 Nov 2006. ATS

MORPHEW Mrs Grace, née Lewis, of Wantage, on 21 Jul 2006. ATS

MULVEY Mrs Elizabeth, née Fennelly, of Australia, on 12 Jul 2006. ATS/WRAC

OWEN Mrs Kathleen, née O'Connell, of Wilmslow, on 30 November 2006. ATS

REYNOLDS Miss Marjorie, of Rochdale, in Sep 2006. ATS

ROBINS Miss Marie Rosette, of Cornwall, on 28 Sep 2006. WRAC

RUFFLEY Mrs Ivy Irene, of Rhyl, on 3 May 2006. ATS

RUSTON Miss Marjorie, of Stockport, on 2 Nov 2006. ATS

SCOTT Mrs Sheila, of Barnet, on 22 Oct 2006. WRAC

SHENTON Miss Hilda May, of Solihull, on 26 Sep 2006. ATS

SIMMONS Mrs Robertina (Bertha), née Brown, of Glasgow, on 6 Jul 2006. ATS

SOTHERN Mrs Phoebe Diana, née Ievers, of Dublin, on 8 Aug 2006. ATS

STAINGER Mrs Hilda, née Waltow, of Cheshire, on 5 Oct 2006. ATS

THOMAS Mrs Mabel, née Peck, of Shrewsbury, on 22 Sep 2006. ATS/WRAC

VERNEY Miss Marguerite Aileen, of Yeovil, date unknown. ATS/WRAC

WAGGOTT Mrs Maisie, née Robinson, of Spennymoor, on 10 Nov 2006. ATS/WRAC

WARD Miss Celia Esme, of Ipswich, on 6 Aug 2006. ATS

WESTON Miss Ivy MBE, of Bradford, on 20 Aug 2006. ATS

WHARTON Miss Joan Sybil, of Loughborough, on 3 Nov 2006. ATS

WILLIAMS Mrs Mary Frances, née Fair, of Horsham, on 25 Sep 2006. ATS/WRAC

WINKWORTH Mrs Edith, née Gardiner, of Maidenhead, in Mar 2006. ATS

WITHENSHAW Mrs Hilda, née Dutton, of Warrington, in Aug 2006. ATS

THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES for the year ended 31 October 2006

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		Unrestricted				
	Notes	General Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2006	Total 2005
INCOME & EXPENDITURE						
Incoming resources						
Incoming resources from generated funds:						
Voluntary Income	1	4,686	2,050	23,123	29,859	27,425
Activities for generating funds	2	78,804			78,804	-
Investment Income	3	17,287		169,707	186,994	182,221
Incoming resources from charitable activities	4	71,076			71,076	88,876
Other incoming resources	5	2,488		1,186	3,674	1,540
Total incoming resources		174,341	2,050	194,016	370,407	300,062
Resources expended:						
Cost of generating funds:						
Cost of generating voluntary income	6	115,052		18,847	133,899	23,707
Charitable activities	8	89,500		175,538	265,038	258,154
Governance costs	9	2,643		1,900	4,543	4,829
Total resources expended		207,195	-	196,285	403,480	286,690
NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES BEFORE TRANSFERS		(32,854)	2,050	(2,269)	(33,073)	13,372
Transfers between funds	15	3,220	(3,220)	-	-	-
NET INCOMING RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR		(29,634)	(1,170)	(2,269)	(33,073)	13,372
OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS & LOSSES						
Profits/Losses on investments:						
Unrealised		45,441		587,691	633,132	457,759
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	18	15,807	(1,170)	585,422	600,059	471,131
Fund balances brought forward at 1 November 2005		457,667	28,281	4,576,219	5,062,167	4,591,036
Fund balances carried forward at 31 October 2006		473,474	27,111	5,161,641	5,662,226	5,062,167

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

at 31 October 2006

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	Notes	2006	2005
FIXED ASSETS			
Investments	11	5,050,991	4,417,859
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock of badges, souvenirs & standards		5,937	2,063
Debtors	12	365	39,220
Cash at bank & in hand	13	618,967	684,449
		<u>625,269</u>	<u>725,732</u>
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	14	14,034	81,424
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>611,235</u>	<u>644,308</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u><u>5,662,226</u></u>	<u><u>5,062,167</u></u>
FUNDS OF THE ASSOCIATION			
Restricted funds:			
The Benevolent Funds	16	4,348,072	3,848,358
The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund	17	813,569	727,861
Unrestricted funds:			
General funds		473,474	457,667
Designated funds:			
Membership life subscription fund	15	6,343	6,853
Lioness life subscription fund	15	20,768	21,428
TOTAL FUNDS	18	<u><u>5,662,226</u></u>	<u><u>5,062,167</u></u>



Owen Munford Studios

WRAC PT REUNION DINNER – 16 September 2006

Tel: 01252 310717

Rear:- Betsy Clewlow Jackie Langborne Lesley Evans Marion Zycinski Chris Jones Pauline Frampton Kym Lofthouse Judith Mullet
Standing:- Mandy Watts June Dabbs Sadie Tilbrook Lyn Wenham Judy Graham Sue McCann Paula Berry Sue Barker Sheila Lloyd-Graham Lyn Hatch
Col Cas Bolland Leslie Scott Katie Bettison Jackie Whitehead
Sitting:- Carol Knight Audrey Mitchell Col Vere Fisher Dora Nightingale Eva Hughes Peggy Spurr Lt Col Joan Freeland
On Floor:- Jennie McMahon Judy Hinton Joyce Tuomey Pat Rosewell Jackie Walker Sally Cranwell-Child