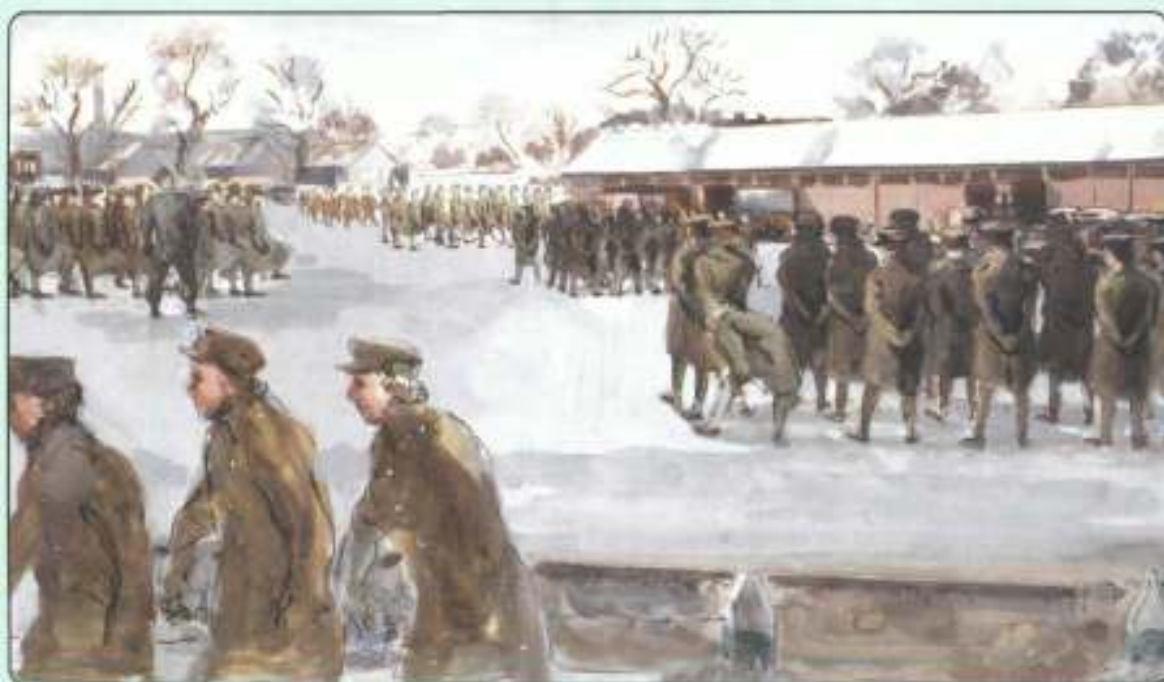


LIONESS

PDF Compressor Free Version

AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE



1938 – 2008

PDF Compressor Free Version



THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

(Incorporating the QMAAC & ATS Comrades Association)

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 206184

Founded in 1919

PATRON

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

PRESIDENT

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF KENT GCVO

VICE-PRESIDENT

Lieutenant Colonel S J Westlake

Chairman:

Vice-Chairman:

Life Vice-Presidents of Council:

Lieutenant Colonel S J Westlake

Mrs M B S Purkis

Miss M M Thomson TD

Brigadier A Field CB CBE

Lieutenant Colonel The Lady Martha Bruce OBE TD DL

Lieutenant Colonel M W Soames OBE

Brigadier Dame Joanna Kelleher DBE

Brigadier S P Nield CBE

Colonel F M Cook

Colonel E J Bowles

General Secretary:

Honorary Treasurer:

Editor of Association Magazine:

Assistant Editor:

Typist:

Major J A Freebairn

Lieutenant Colonel M L Woollard MBE

Major J A Freebairn

Mrs A Schofield

Mrs Noreen Unsworth

ATS and WRAC Benevolent Funds

Chairman of Trustees:

Chairman of Grants Committee:

Case Secretary:

Lieutenant Colonel S J Westlake

Colonel A J Smith

Major G M Shanahan

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

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

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

Fax: (01962) 887478

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

E-mail: wracassociation@googlemail.com

Website: www.wracassociation.co.uk

Cover Photographs

Paintings by Stella Schmolle from the Imperial War Museum Collections

Contributions for next issue by 20 June 2008

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

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

CONTENTS

Message from the Vice President	1
Paintings by Stella Schinolle 1908-1975	2
Articles of Interest	3
Branch News	7
ATS Reminiscences	29
News from Overseas Members	34
WRAC Dinner Club	38
Reminiscences of the WRAC	42
Where Are You Now?	46
Reunions	50
Weddings	54
Letters to the Editor	56
Obituaries - their Final Salute	59
WRAC Annual Accounts	64

Editorial



Welcome to *Lioness* 1/2008 and particular thanks to our overseas members who took up my challenge. You'll see that they have a section of their own - easy to check up a few contacts if you are going there on holiday!

With this edition we have sent you an Association badge with a peel off backing. We are hoping that you might be good enough to put it in your car or somewhere else where it might attract some attention. I am aware that it can be quite pale on a car window. The best thing to do is to put some white paper on the back and it will stand out a treat.

Sadly, Mrs Margaret Wroot, our Benevolent Fund Case Secretary, decided to retire at Christmas and almost immediately embarked on a three-month world cruise! I am delighted to welcome Major (Retired) Gabi Shanahan née Bushell as the new Case Secretary. Gabi served in the WRAC and the AGC (SPS) so comes with a strong military background!

Please note that we have a new e-mail address, wracassociation@googlemail.com which should cope better with the increasing number of e-mails we get. However, we are still on dial up which sometimes struggles with huge photographs. We recently had a single photograph which would have filled SEVEN floppy discs.

Please keep the articles coming in. I cannot print what I don't receive so come on, stop muttering about what you do not see in the *Lioness* and write that article - one side of A4 and a good photo, with names, is all that is required.

Jane Freebairn

Message from the Vice President



I must start by saying a very sincere thank you to so many of you who have kindly sent your good wishes and congratulations to me on my recent retirement from the Army - I did so appreciate your thoughtfulness and kind words. On my last day in the Army, I was privileged that my last duty was to represent the Association at the Field of Remembrance on 8th November. It was a close shave because a disruption at West Byfleet meant that all trains from the South West were delayed and I reached our plot outside Westminster Abbey just a few minutes ahead of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh. Although I might look relaxed and calm in the photos, in reality, I had been a touch stressed five minutes beforehand!

Now that I have more time on my hands (!), I can commit it to the Association and think about the strategy for the future. Although it might seem that there are many things conspiring against us e.g. the closing down of Branches, a decreasing membership, the seeming lack of interest from the WRAC members to take on the responsibilities of running the Association which has been built up through the hard work of ATS members, charity legislation, budgetary cuts to name but a few, I am not despondent - far from it! I am extremely confident that the Association will continue to thrive well into the future - perhaps not in its current format and certainly not as large. Let us not forget that there were many more ATS than WRAC even though it existed for many more years than the ATS and so there is not such a large pool of potential members. Nonetheless, the desire to meet up, socialise, reminisce and 'reune' will always be there and we must be prepared and organised to support this which leads me nicely into future celebrations!

You will need no reminder that 2008 is the 70th Anniversary of the formation of the ATS and I approached Buckingham Palace to see if there might be a chance that our Patron could join us. Sadly, this is not possible but we still plan to hold a Birthday Party on 4th April 2008 in the Victory Services Club. You will find full details of the Celebration in this journal - suffice to say I am hoping that there will be a real cross section of the Association there - it is not just an ATS function and I trust that the WRAC members will come along to support their 'Sisters in Arms'. 2009 will be the 60th Anniversary of the formation of the WRAC AND the 90th Anniversary of the Association - it is also Grand Reunion year!

So, lots of celebrating to be done and celebrate we must! I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on 4th April as well as visiting you in your Branches or at your Area Reunions - my diary seems quite full already! All that remains is for me to wish you all Good Health and Happiness in 2008.

Let the party begin.....!

Sue Westlake

Paintings by Stella Schmolle 1908 – 1975

Jane Freebairn, Editor

PDF Compressor Free Version

The paintings on the front and back covers were completed by Stella Schmolle who was in the ATS and was employed by the War Artists Advisory Committee over a number of years. The Imperial War Museum in London, has some 30 of her paintings in their collection but these were chosen because, hopefully, most of you will be able to identify with one or more of them. It would be great to hear from someone who can remember working in Aldershot Command Bakery. I understand that there was a Bakeresses Tug of War Cup!

The full descriptions written by the Imperial War Museum are:

Front Cover:



Recruits on the Barrack Square: ATS No 7 Training Centre, Guildford.

A square surrounded by low barracks where groups of uniformed ATS are standing at ease, facing away from the viewer. On the right, at the back of the nearest group, one woman is leaning over to adjust her stocking. Another group is marching into the frame on the left side of the square. In the foreground, three ATS in uniform are walking one behind the other out of the frame.



ATS Pay Parade: At the Royal Military College, Camberley, 1943

A queue of ATS waits to be paid in a military hall half filled with tables and chairs. In the centre, an ATS servicewoman stands with her back to the viewer, saluting the two officers who sit behind a table covered with piles of coins. To the right, another ATS servicewoman is putting some money into a Red Cross tin watched by a seated officer.

Back Cover:



Beginners learning about the engine on stationary vehicles: Cordwallis MT Training Centre, Camberley, 1943

A row of Army trucks marked with 'L' plates is parked next to goalposts in a football field. Groups of soldiers and ATS personnel gather round the bonnets of the vehicles and peer into the engines while another group of ATS sit on a nearby bank and watch.



The Dough Room: Aldershot Command Bakery, 1943

In the foreground, a woman in a white overall and cap sits at the side of a machine moving balls of dough into a balanced bucket. Behind her, three women force a huge mound of dough in through the top of a machine. On the right, three other women are leaning over a large vat, up to their elbows in dough.

Articles of Interest

A DAY IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Olive Kinghorn
Cleveland Branch

Raby Castle was chosen for our Annual Outing in August. We were only 17 in number but we had a super day. "Thanks" should go to our Secretary and Treasurer for a well organised trip. The sun shone for us all day and the Castle was a picture in all its splendour – the gardens were superb. The staff were very welcoming to us and were most interested in our group especially as one of our members served at Raby during WW2 (what a posting Ivy Rattuel!)

We were shown a DVD of the Castle rooms and then escorted to the Cook-house. They made sure we saw everything of interest (the cheese cutter looked feudal) – this made the visit so worthwhile. After looking round the lovely grounds, we then went to Barnard Castle. This is a lovely old country town, not too far from Catterick (Signals ladies will remember Catterick I think). It was market day with quite a lot of farmers' stalls. After a little look at the market we were whisked away to Staindrop Village for a surprise afternoon cream tea. The owner opened up just for us – a nice touch which finished the day just right!

Jenny Severn, née Parnham (W/418496) who served with the Royal Army Pay Corps, has given her permission to use this photograph of her in a "Sound of Music" pose!



Jenny Severn

ACK-ACK PLAQUE IN YORK MINSTER

W/283063 Mrs P M Jefferis née Jolley
3 Pinewood Court, 179 Station Road, West Moors,
Ferndown, Dorset BH22 0HR

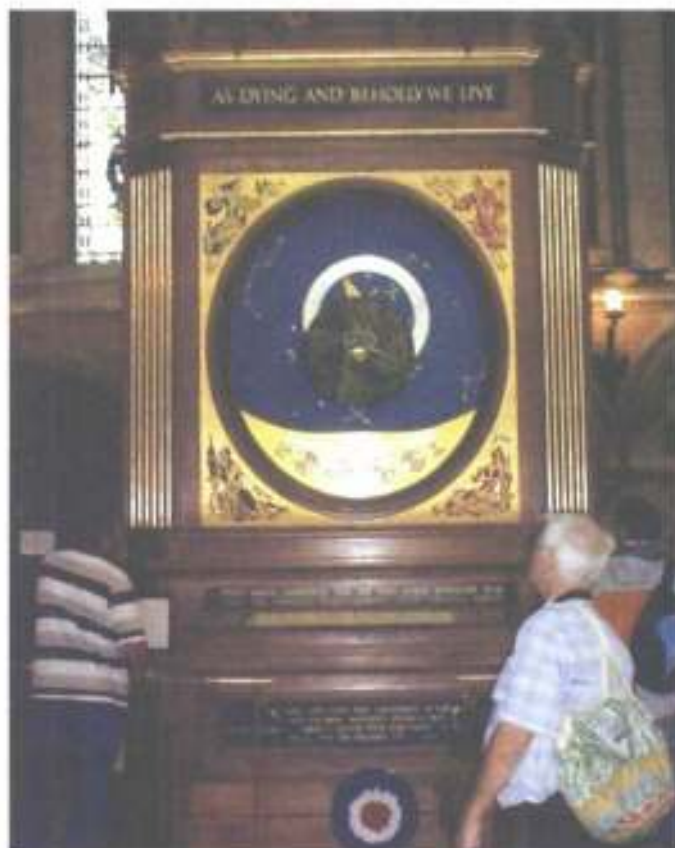
I am one of the ex ATS Ack Ack "girls" who for several years attended the Annual Weekend Reunion at Imphal Barracks in York. They were the most wonderful occasions. On Sunday, we all attended a Service in the Minster, followed by a March Past – towards the end some in wheelchairs, some hobbling, but we made it! Sadly, due to the understandable fall in numbers, the

weekends came to an end. At one of the last Services in the Minster a plaque was dedicated and was to be hung there at a later date.

My son lives in York and recently invited me to stay with him and his wife. One of the visits I wanted to make was to the Minster. Despite all our Services there, I had never actually explored the building and was also interested in the problems they were having with the deterioration. Naturally, I also wanted to see our plaque in place. Although I was initially disappointed with the position of the plaque tucked in a corner by the clock, I have come to understand how proud we should be to have a plaque there at all.



The Ack Ack commemorative plaque in York Minster



Visitors to the famous clock will be very close to the plaque which is on the wall just to the right of and behind the clock.

Maj (Retd) David Robertson who organised it is now living in Thailand but he e-mailed me to explain that getting the Minster to agree to have a plaque at all was "quite a to-do" and the request had to go through all sorts of committees who had the power to approve or reject the request. He also decided there it should be located. There are already many hundreds of plaques in York Minster, many of them dating back hundreds of years. The ATS Ack Ack connection with the Minster was through holding the annual Reunion Service there over the last 13 or so years, whereas, for example, 1 PWO was raised from the lads of York and had a connection with the Minster for over 100 years.

THE WHEREABOUTS OF A 100-YEAR-OLD ATS/WRAC OFFICER

Robbie Emmerson

24 Pound View, Darlington DL1 1LD. Tel: 01325 285373



Edna Shields – 100 plus and still smiling

In April 2007, I was looking through my local paper when a picture took my eye. It was a photograph of a lady celebrating her 100th birthday in a local care home and reading a telegram from the Queen. What interested me most was a small photograph of her in ATS uniform with the caption "Army days: Edna in uniform".

Edna May Shields was born in Hull but moved to Darlington at an early age and obtained a Scholarship to High School. She worked as a buyer for Binns, the local department store, and, at the age of 35, joined the ATS with whom she served to 1949. She then transferred to the WRAC and continued to serve, reaching the rank of Major, until her retirement in April 1962. Unfortunately it didn't report anything more about where she had been posted throughout her service, so I was intrigued!

Editor: I found her in an old copy of the Army List and her Officer Number was P/223309 but I cannot add any more.

A few days later I rang the Riverside Care Home to ask if I could pay her a visit. The staff were delighted that someone was interested as she didn't receive any visitors, but they warned me that her memory was short term.

On arrival I found Edna sitting reading the newspaper. I was surprised by her appearance – it was true to the photograph. She had hardly any wrinkles and was able to stand upright and walk unaided except for a walking stick. Edna unfortunately could not remember much about her Army Service except that she had spent 6 years at Catterick Garrison as an "Officer Commanding". She had never served abroad and never married as she wished to be near her ageing mother.

I asked if I may take a photograph of her, so she sat bolt upright, took off her glasses and posed. I told her she was still vain for her age and she laughed.

On leaving the home I enquired if they could tell me anything further about her Army Service but unfortunately not, so I would very much appreciate it if anyone does know this remarkable 100 year old Major – would they please contact me, as I'm still intrigued!

BAILEY BRIDGE

W/338306 Eileen Mander née Clarke

14A Sheean Drive, Brodick, Isle of Arran KA27 8DH

Tel: 01770 302860



The El Alamein near Bückeburg, Westphalia 1947

Does anyone remember the Bailey Bridges in Germany at the end of WW2? I was an ATS driver in 721 Car Company stationed at Rhine Army HQ at Bad Oeynhausen in 1947. Two bridges come to mind, bridges which I crossed many times, one of which was the El Alamein bridge. **PDF Compressor Free Version** and which spanned the River Weser. The other bridge was called Harry's Last – they were all given names by our Royal Engineers. I was intrigued by its title and one day asked my Colonel, as we rattled across it. I imagined poor Harry had been killed during the building of the bridge. Our men were under constant attack by the retreating German forces and many lost their lives. The Colonel assured me that Harry lived to tell the tale. It was the last Bailey Bridge he built before he left the Army for civvy street. I cannot now remember the location of Harry's Last but think it may have been in the Ruhr. Can anyone enlighten me?

On my first week in Germany in August 1947, the Army gave us "a day out" and took us to Hamelin! I was most impressed by this quaint old town with its Pied Piper associations. I bought a small pack of tourist snaps – obviously taken post-War because one snap depicts a bridge into Hamelin over the Weser and on close inspection I realised it was a Bailey Bridge! After the War the British made it illegal for streets to retain the names of the Nazi leaders but I was amused to discover a tiny little lane, leading down to the river Weser bearing the name Herman Goring Strasse. One we missed obviously!

By the way, there is a splendid book, published by the Ministry of Defence in 1991. It is called "A Bridge to Victory – the untold story of the Bailey Bridge" and was written by Brian Harpur. It really is a good read with not a dull page in it. Donald Bailey, later Sir Donald, made a major contribution to the successful outcome of WW2 with his unique method of bridge building. I think we can be justly proud of this man and the Sappers who carried out his revolutionary ideas.

THE FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE, WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Jane Freebairn, General Secretary

I am again grateful to Edna Lee for the photographs of the ATS and WRAC plot at the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey. There is a ceremony there on the Thursday before Remembrance Sunday. It is open to



anyone and no tickets are required. However, you do need to be there early – by 1030 at the very latest. Also, leave plenty of time as you have to queue to go through the security checks. In 2007, the Duke of Edinburgh reviewed the individual association plots.



You can also see that Edna managed to catch the then Prime Minister's attention when he was visiting the Royal Hospital Chelsea in his last few weeks in post!



Edna and Tony Blair

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY – CENOTAPH SERVICE AND PARADE

Jane Freebairn, General Secretary

I am also grateful to Jackie Naysmith, Secretary of Bristol Branch, for the following photographs of our contingent on Remembrance Sunday at the Cenotaph. The photographs show us forming up on Horse Guards before marching through to Whitehall for the service and march past. **PLEASE, PLEASE**, think about coming along next year. **We do need your support.**

This is not an easy task – form up by 10am, wait, march through to Whitehall, wait, watch the Royal Family and Heads of Government lay their wreaths, wait, take part in the Service, wait, march down Whitehall, along Parliament Square and back up past St James' Park into Horse Guards (about a mile and a half), wait and then dismiss around 1230 pm. If all the waiting sounds familiar then you will understand the requirement and should be more than capable of being in our contingent! Very few

of our ATS colleagues are now mobile enough to take part – come on WRAC you can do it! Each year one or two more new faces join us and, once they realise the tremendous camaraderie of being part of this National commemoration, they always return.

PDF Compressor Free Version

You do not need uniform as you can see – your presence is more important. **You do need a ticket so you must let me know by the end of August if you want to come along.**



THE LEICESTER SEVEN

Mrs Barbara Danter

30 Blake Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5JL

Well where did that year go then? For the seven of us who travel about a bit, it has at times been most interesting. In May we visited Blackpool for the weekend to be with our Royal Artillery friends and had a lovely time. Further on in the month, three of us were invited to a 40's night out. It really amuses me to see the way the girls in re-enactment uniforms wear their hats – I would love to put them on a charge! It was a great evening of fun though.

As I was in the Army Post Office, and also a committee member, I regularly attend their June reunions at Llandudno. Our numbers were down a lot at the last gathering, but I am happy to say that we are once again on an upward trend for next year. It is so lovely to meet the friends we served with from the War years – we still have so much in common.

27 June was Veterans Day and we supported the men of the Naval Club in Leicester by joining them in a church parade and after that a Hog Roast. It rained of course, but it did not dampen our spirits because in the afternoon we had been invited to take tea with his Worship, the Lord Mayor of Leicester, Mr Gary Hunt. He was a very charming man and showed great interest in our exploits whilst in the Army. He had one of his aids take photos of us with him, which were sent on to me later and I understand that this was used on his web site, which I thought was a very nice gesture.



Barbara Danter, Vi Rawlings, Mr Gary Hunt, the Lord Mayor of Leicester, Joan Devall, Frank Clarke, Normandy Veteran, Sheila Grewcock

On 30 June we were invited to help the Lord Mayor and the Lord Lieutenant of Nottingham to present Veterans Badges to many ex-Service people. This was because our photo had been acquired by the City Council and used for advertising the Veterans Celebrations due to take place here in Nottingham. I had downloaded a copy for myself and was very surprised to see a picture of the seven of us on it. I managed to track down who had used it at the Council offices and discovered that they were amazed to know that we were real ex-ATS and not re-enactors ... that is why we got noticed! We were a bit spoiled at the events we attended and we loved every moment.

In September we supported quite a number of Service events, i.e. Battle of Britain, Airborne, Normandy Veterans and others.

November was also extremely memorable for us all as, whilst in London prior to the Remembrance weekend, we visited the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey and were honoured to be spoken to by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. We also went to the Royal Albert Hall on Saturday afternoon – the 10th, and took part in the Cenotaph service and parade on Sunday 11th.

All in all an unforgettable year and though I do not want to wish the time away – “here’s to next year”!

And finally, I would just like to say thank you to all involved with publishing the *Lioness*. It is a great read from cover to cover and enjoyed (and kept) long after publication.

Branch News

BATH BRANCH

PDF Compressor Free Version

The year 2007 was a memorable one for the Bath Branch as we celebrated our 60th anniversary. We held a Civic Lunch early in the year when we welcomed visitors from our Association and from the City. Later in the year the members enjoyed a visit to the Museum situated in the small village of Wormelow, near Hereford, dedicated to the very brave Violette Szabo G.C. who served in Ack-Ack in the ATS before transferring to SOE. Violette was put to death at the age of 22 years by the Gestapo in January 1945. Members may remember the film "Carve Her Name with Pride" which depicted her service. The Museum was founded by a Miss Rosemary Rigby OBE and is situated in her garden and it was opened by Virginia McKenna who played the part of Violette Szabo in the film. It is situated in beautiful countryside and in the next village is a pub run by an ex-Serviceman where we had a most appetising meal. We can recommend it to other Branches!

We are looking forward to the 70th anniversary of the ATS. We have made plans to celebrate it and also hope some of us will be able to join in the celebrations in London next April.

We average twenty members at our twice monthly meetings with a varied programme. We wish we could entice younger members to join us from the WRAC but in spite of extensive advertising we do not have much success!

We were very sorry to know that some of our Branches suffered in the floods this last year and we do hope they will soon be able to return to their homes in the New Year – we were so lucky in Bath to escape flooding. 2008 sees our Branch as the Hosts for the Area Reunion in May so we are looking forward to meeting up with members from the South West Area.

BEXHILL BRANCH

It has been a quiet six months since our last piece appeared in the *Lioness*. We have continued with our small competitions, the proceeds from these slowly building up our bank balance.

This month we are having our Christmas tea party and the committee members have been busy buying and making their contributions towards this event. This will be followed a week later by Christmas lunch at a local hotel.

We have had several successful lunches out at various venues and it is believed that members would like to continue doing this, perhaps including a few casual pub lunches. We were also pleased to welcome a new member recently.

Next year's programme is out and includes four speakers, with room for more if they can be found.

Our Secretary placed our cross in the Garden of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on 8 November and then stayed in London in order to welcome two of our WRAC members who went up to see the Cenotaph Parade on 11 November. *Editor: Perhaps they would actually like to march with us next year?* They felt that the onlookers and the number of marchers were greater than ever in London. Only three members attended the Bexhill War Memorial service and they were ex-ATS, the eldest of whom, a lady well into her 90s, laid our wreath (and she did it beautifully). Rain threatened and actually fell as the service began, continuing dismally throughout the ceremony and ceasing as the service ended. I stood behind a line of Boy Scouts and watched with fascination as the rain ran off their hair and dripped inside their collars. They made no complaint, just lifted a hand occasionally to brush the rain from their heads. Later, we agreed that, both in London and in Bexhill, the crowds seemed greater and more respectful than on previous Remembrance Sundays. I have not seen so many young people gathered together, behaving so well and showing such obvious interest in the service and I felt that our future is in safe hands. I wonder if there are similar feelings in other parts of the country.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH

Following on from our item of news in *Lioness* 2/2007, the reporter from the *Birmingham Mail* failed to arrive at our July meeting. Lesley Wallace persevered and a reporter and photographer came to the Birmingham United Services Club and spent two hours with six ex-ATS members listening to their stories and taking photographs.

On 11 November the edition of the *Sunday Mercury* had a double page spread featuring "women at war", complete with photographs and edited versions of their stories. The quality of the photographs is not such that they can be reproduced from the paper apart from the copyright laws but we may obtain some prints for the next edition of the *Lioness*.

On page 37 of the *Lioness* 1/2007 there is an article written by the husband of Muriel Evans née Wheeler W/56708. She must have been with our latest member to join us – Elizabeth Grogan W/238249 who also landed on Omaha Beach with the Royal Signals. *Editor: sadly, you will see that Muriel Evans has died.*

Since our last newsletter, we have been given a talk by the Liaison Officer of the Birmingham Branch of the National Servicemen's Association and also a talk from SSAFA. We aim to have some amusing speakers next year and also a poetry session (also amusing)! We also plan to visit the National Memorial Arboretum to view the new Armed Services Memorial.

We also enjoyed the Wales and West Area Reunion at Shrewsbury. The food was excellent as usual at The Lord Hill Hotel and good company of course including Sue Westlake and Jane Freebairn – thank you Maggie and

Irene for your hard work in organising this. Maureen Peach again represented us at the Cenotaph in London and Frances Jenkinson carried our wreath at the Service in Birmingham.



*Vi Horsley, Rosie Thompson, Joyce Smith and Mary Gunning.
Photographer: Pat Oakes*

Four of our members were fortunate enough to be invited to a "Not Forgotten" Association Christmas Lunch at the Arden Hotel just outside Birmingham and Mary Gunning has written this paragraph about the occasion. Altogether, there were some 400 guests and it was lovely to talk to ex WAAFs and WRENS as well as all the other veterans. The entertainment was a good old sing along and everyone had a good time. Rosie Thompson, the lovely organiser is such a friendly person with time for everyone. Colonel Stephen Rowland-Jones, their Director, also introduced himself – a most charming man!

We held our Branch Christmas Lunch last week at the College of Food, Tourism & Creative Studies (the old College used to be known as the College of Grub & Scrub) and the students performed admirably: both the food and service thoroughly enjoyed by us all.

The following day we had mince pies and our Christmas Raffle at the December meeting. In January several of us will have lunch followed by a visit to the pantomime – arranged as usual by Vi Horsley who incidentally was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation for all she has done for the Branch and still does.

All good wishes for a Peaceful New Year.

BLACKPOOL BRANCH

We continue to meet on the third Friday of each month at 1pm at the venue – Cleveleys. Our numbers fluctuate at each meeting but we all make the effort to attend. We are all now sporting our Veterans Badge. Moreen Royal was presented with her badge on top of Blackpool Tower! Quite an achievement at 80 – no – she got the lift up!

The enclosed photograph shows our July luncheon meeting with Ann Nightingale, ex ATS, who lives in Florida, who joined us for lunch.

Finally thanks to the Committee of the WRAC Dinner Club for a great weekend in Liverpool.



*Back Row: Irene Miller, Dorothy McFall, Ann Nightingale, Doreen McLaughlin, Jean Eastham & Irene Charlton
Seated: Janet Greenwood, Irene Copley, Joan Moran & Doreen Stubbs*

And now a personal message from Marie Hemmings: On the recent death of my husband, John, I received many letters, cards and phonecalls from friends – ex WRAC and ATS – many were here with me at the funeral. Thank you all very much for your kind words and support. Let us hope that the Association and the Dinner Club keep us together forever.

BRISTOL BRANCH

What a miserable summer we had! The weather wasn't at all kind but we did have some dry days and fortunately some of them coincided with the Branch going out and enjoying ourselves. We participated and supported events with the Burma Star and Normandy Veterans Associations – both are very pleased that we give our support.

A special day out for a Cream Tea at Banwell Castle which is just outside Weston-super-Mare. This was very popular and will be repeated next year. We also had a very good lunch at the local Chew Valley lakes; again we were very lucky with the weather.

Our favourite trip was to Wilton/Salisbury which is always very popular. The date is arranged so that the Secretary and Chairman can enjoy some retail therapy before attending the South and South West Area AGM at Wilton. A big thank you to Joan Ford for organising lunch and her husband for assisting her. Yes please, we always want seconds.

October is a very busy time for us. We held our AGM which was very well attended, our Committee all stood for re-election and Sandra Steadman was elected on to Committee. It is always pleasing that the present Committee decides to stay on and give their support. We are very fortunate that they are so willing to do anything asked of them.

Some of us went to the WRAC Dinner Club held at the Adelphi in Liverpool. We all had a good time, good food, plenty of drink and plenty of talking. Some of us had a trip on the Mersey and a walk round the dockside. It is a time to meet up with old friends. Our thanks to the Dinner Club Committee for organising the weekend.

At the end of October we had a stall at a Festival of Age event organised by the local council. We hope that those who took away membership forms decide to join us. However it was a good day for us.



Esmé Davidson and her helpers

November and the Festival of Remembrance at the City Colston Hall, again we had representation with four of our ladies on stage. The Band of the Royal Marines attended and the theme was the 25th Anniversary of the Falklands conflict. Remembrance Sunday, whilst the rain cleared in London, I gather that others were not so lucky. In Bristol the ladies did get wet, but they 'soldiered' on. It was a surprise to see their photograph in the local paper, very unusual as it is usually the men who are featured – must say that the ladies looked very smart. Well done to them.

Greetings and Good Wishes to our many friends in the Association.

BURY BRANCH

Greetings to everyone! We wish you all a happy and healthy 2008.

We have not much to report this time but we are pleased to say that the Metrolink from Manchester is now back in operation. This means that we are able to enjoy the company of all our members who travel some distance.

We are looking forward to our next meeting which will be our Christmas Luncheon at the White Lion Hotel in Bury.

P.S. Sorry the typewriting is not up to scratch....the machine is wonky and old like me! *Editor: It was fine! The important thing is to keep in touch and to let us all know that Bury Branch is still there. Thanks.*

CANTERBURY BRANCH

Our Branch continues to thrive with an average of twenty members attending our monthly meetings. 2007 has certainly been a busy year for the Branch. After a hectic June meeting, when we held our 60th Anniversary tea party, things calmed down a little in July when our speaker from the Friends of the Marlowe Theatre gave us an insight into the history and work of the theatre and the careful planning which goes into every performance.



Barbara Coleman, Rosina Lock, Kay Perfect, Louise Dick, Eileen Powles and Sue Foulks outside Buckingham Palace

On 16 July, ten members from both Canterbury and Medway Branches were invited by the "Not Forgotten" Association as guests at a Royal Garden Party in the grounds of Buckingham Palace. Fortunately after heavy rain and thunderstorms the previous day, the sun shone and we had a wonderful time meeting many celebrities including Rolf Harris, Dame Vera Lynn, Honor Blackman, June Whitfield and one of the few remaining veterans of the First World War, Henry Allingham, amongst many others. The highlight of our afternoon was when five of us had the honour of being presented to HRH The Duchess of Gloucester.



Janet Cameron, Secretary Medway Branch and Sue Foulks, Secretary Canterbury Branch meet HRH the Duchess of Gloucester

Our August meeting was held at Mavis' beach hut in Herne Bay. This year it was sunny and warm and we enjoyed a lovely afternoon – our grateful thanks go to Mavis and her sister who always entertain us so well. Sadly, a few days later, we attended the funeral of one of our members. Roggie (Roxanna) Stinson had been our Treasurer for many years and a good friend to the Branch. Kay Perfect carried the standard and Mavis Middleton and Eileen Powles acted as escorts.

In September it was time to collect the annual subscriptions and October saw us holding our AGM. In November, Liz Cork from the Donkey Sanctuary in Dorset paid us a return visit. We now look forward to our Christmas lunch in December, when our friends from

Medway Branch and members of the WAAF Association will join us for a festive meal at our usual venue, the Dominican Priory in Canterbury, where we hold our monthly meetings.

PDF Compressor Free Version CHELMSFORD BRANCH



July – we met to celebrate the 17th Anniversary of the branch. We were very pleased that our Area Chairman, Mrs Patricia Stephenson, was able to come and share the occasion with us. She presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Eileen Green who has a long record of service in the ATS, serving as a WO2 and for sometime stationed at Warley Barracks in Essex where we have a plaque to commemorate all the ATS who served there.

September – we resumed our meetings and had as our speaker, a representative from the Salvation Army who gave a talk on "Tracing Families".



Area Chairman, Mrs Patricia Stephenson, presents Eileen Green with her Certificate of Appreciation

October – our AGM was held at this meeting. The Committee provided scones and jam and this proved popular so we shall most likely repeat it next year!

November – as this is the run up to Christmas meeting we try to have a speaker to reflect this so we invited Anita Howard to talk to us. However, we had already heard her talk about Christmas so we listened to an account of "Life in the 40's and 50's" which drew many comments from members – ("our time" isn't it!). Also in November, a wreath was laid at the War Memorial in Chelmsford on Remembrance Sunday.

We regret that we have to record two deaths since our last report. Vi Duckett, a former WO2 in the ATS, was a very keen member who was liked by all who knew her. We shall perhaps remember her best for her love of competitions, puzzles and composing limericks. She nearly always managed to win as it was something she so much enjoyed, but Vi was a great support in the work of the branch and we miss her cheery personality. Daphne Thomas was an affiliated member having served in the WAAF. She too was an enthusiastic member and enjoyed the company of friends within the branch and coming to meetings.

Our membership is declining but for those of us who are able to come to meetings – thank you for the support you give and to those of you who cannot come along for any reason – thank you too – please keep in touch with your branch.

Very best wishes for the New Year to all the readers from Chelmsford. We hope the New Year will be a good and peaceful time for us all.

Please contact the Honorary Secretary if you would like to become a member of our branch. Tel: 01245 251088.

CHESTER AND DISTRICT BRANCH (INCLUDING WIRRAL SUB BRANCH)

We are very proud to report that our members figured prominently at the Armistice Remembrance Parade, more so as Sunday 11th November was the 90th anniversary and in consequence was very nostalgic and emotional. There are still many of us who had fathers and relatives who served in the 1914/18 War and we grew up with the slogan "The War to end Wars". What was not taken into consideration was a dissatisfied Germany who required reparation and believed they had a debt to pay back.

Consequently our generation and nearly every country in the world are left with memories of the hopeless blood bath which followed in 1939 to 1945. How can we ever forget especially when, like myself, so many lost close relatives and were bombed out of their home.

This year we paraded at Birkenhead because so many of our sub-Branch WRAC members live on the Wirral, as does our new Standard Bearer – Joy Griffiths ex-WRAC. We were complimented by other Service members on parade and were proud to receive a letter from the Mayor of Birkenhead thanking us. It would seem that it was the first time that Birkenhead had a representative of the Women's Services on parade. Ladies where are you?



Joy Griffiths – Standard Bearer for Chester Branch

The Branch was also honoured by one of our members Mrs Molly Choppen, who acted as Standard Bearer for the Branch as did Mrs Kath Jones before they had to retire. Molly attended the events in London and was

requested to lay a wreath on behalf of a New Zealand Group of ex-Services at the Royal Artillery Memorial. She truly represented our Association and the memory of the New Zealanders.

There seem to be very few WRAF, WRNS, ATS and WRAC who parade in other cities beside London – we should take the opportunity of showing our unstinting service to our Country. *Editor: I think that you will see many of our branches report their involvement with local Remembrance events.*

The Branch joined with other ex-Service Associations for a Christmas Lunch – there is always a happy atmosphere. We have attended Dunkirk Veterans, Eighth Army, Normandy Veterans, Air Crew Association members and of course "Us" – no show without Punch.

Looking back over 2007, we had an excellent year. Both the ATS Luncheon Club and the WRAC Dinner Club had memorable re-unions – grateful thanks to the hard working volunteers who go to so much trouble to arrange these events. It would be pleasant if both Clubs had a joint Lunch. There are plenty of places it could be held, in either Liverpool or Manchester – both easily reachable.

If wonder if members would be interested in a scheme run by the 8th Army Manchester Branch? A team of members visits schools in the Greater Manchester area and talks about their experiences in pre-War and post-War peacetime and also their Service days. I understand that it is very popular and surprises the present day youth.

I have spoken to several school classes and enjoyed the shock and surprise when the pupils realise that Grandma has done it all before – driven lorries, manned guns, served overseas and so on. We emphasise the loyalty and bravery and the fun we had. For a time it puts us "oldies" on par with Dr Who – without the Tardis! We had The War Office instead.

We look forward to our first outing which will be to the National Memorial Arboretum on 23 April – St George's Day. A most suitable date to pay our respects and tributes – especially to the new memorial to all those who have died for their beloved country since 1945.

We are very proud of the Wirral sub-branch and the meetings are on the first Wednesday of the month at Barney's Café, Oxtown Road, Birkenhead. Enquiries to our Assistant Secretary Miss Pat Sanders on 07733 270567. Do join us – we are not a bad bunch!

All our Members at Chester and Wirral send their belated wishes to all for a happy, healthy and successful year.

CREWE BRANCH

As I write this, one of our members, Louise Rhodes, is enjoying a World Cruise with her daughter. What a good idea!

Our Branch trip to Southport in July went down well – we enjoyed a lovely lunch at the Nostalgia Restaurant. We held our AGM in September and the current officers were returned unopposed.



Crewe visiting Southport. Betty Cooke, Margery Timms, Edith Francis, Louise Rhodes, Joan Berry and Milly Pover



*Standing: Joan Berry and Louise Rhodes
Seated: Margery Timms, Milly Pover and Edith Francis,
Branch Secretary at the Area Reunion*

We held our Autumn Dance in October which was a success. Five members attended the Area Reunion at Shrewsbury: a very pleasant day, thanks to Irene Hall, Area Secretary, and her helpers.

After reading a recent article in our local paper, we have sent 4 shoe boxes containing ladies toiletries etc for the girls serving in Afghanistan. *Editor: If other branches are interested in doing the same, contact Support our Services on 0788 2284497.*

We are now thinking about our Christmas Lunch. Although our numbers are fewer, we are still working hard for the Association.

FIFE & TAYSIDE BRANCH

Our year has been a good one. An article was placed in our local paper about the WRAC and we had a good response leading to five new members.

Our Secretary attended the Secretaries Meeting in London and was able to pass any information to the Branch members. Our own AGM was in April but due to illness and other reasons it was only attended by 18 members. Better luck next year.

In September, courtesy of the "Not Forgotten" Association, four of us had a Barge Trip on the Union Canal in Edinburgh. What a wonderful day we had. Apart from the cold wind blowing, the day was fine and sunny and after a 3-course lunch we boarded the barge where we were given tea/coffee and shortbread. It was most enjoyable and we are very grateful to the "Not Forgotten" Association for their very kind hospitality.

Our Thursday meetings continue with an average number of about twenty members attending. Some of our members have had to give up their membership due to illness and age. We shall miss seeing them at our meetings.

In December we meet as usual for our Christmas lunch at the Royal George Hotel in Perth.

GLASGOW BRANCH

We started our new session on 10 September. It was nice to see old friends again. Our AGM was on 8 October when we also had a Bring & Buy sale. The proceeds from this go to Erskine Hospital for disabled Servicemen and women.

Six of our WRAC girls attended the WRAC Dinner Club in Liverpool. They had a bus tour around local interests and enjoyed a sail on the Mersey Riverboat, a visit to the Beatles Experience Museum, saw the Gothic style Anglican Cathedral and also the Roman Catholic Cathedral which is nicknamed Paddy's Wigwam. They had a very enjoyable dinner on the Saturday evening with music and dancing until late. However, they were up bright and early for the Church service on Sunday morning and then it was time to say good-bye to friends old and new.

On 20 October the Scottish Reunion and AGM was held in Glasgow. Not so many ladies were able to attend this time but we had a very enjoyable time. The Area Chairman, Lt Col Jo Young conducted the AGM. We then had a lovely lunch. So a big thank you to the Scottish Committee for organising the event.

The Armistice Service was held in Glasgow's George Square on 11 November. Three ex-ATS and four WRAC ladies were on parade.

For our November meeting we had a film about 'The Flowers of Scotland' which grow wild in the lowlands and in the highland mountains and hills.

We are now looking forward to our Christmas lunch which will be held on 13 December.

As this was being written, we heard the very sad news that Mae Lang had died on 6 December 2007. A founder member of Glasgow Branch, she was the Branch Secretary for many, many years. Mae was with us at the Scottish Area AGM but, unfortunately, went into hospital soon afterwards. We will certainly miss her good counsel, her great support of the branch and her wit and humour.

GRIMSBY BRANCH

At this time there is some bad news and some good. We regretfully report the death of Ruth Jenner a founder member of Grimsby branch and long time treasurer. Ruth was a very fond contributor to the branch who's opinions and decisions were not always universally popular but she was greatly respected by all.

The good news is that we have recruited a young ex WRAC TA lady to take on the post of Treasurer: Alyson Wilson. Ruth would have been delighted that she is following in her footsteps. Welcome to the branch Alyson.

HARROGATE BRANCH

Greetings to all. We hope you are all in good fettle in spite of old age catching up with us. Our branch soldiers on with a steady number attending all meetings. Sadly some of our members, due to illness and infirmity, cannot join us but keep an interest in all we try to do.

We have had some interesting speakers, sometimes with slides on topics from Operation Noah (Green/Ecology) through Opening Doors for the Disabled - Wartime Memories as a Child, the Confessions of a Driving Instructor (Army), our Annual Musical hour and a talk from the Headmistress of a local school for the disabled.

The greatest treat was a visit by the Ripon Hornblower to explain the traditions of keeping the Wake in Ripon (10 miles away and a Cathedral City) since 887 AD. Even in Wartime the horn was blown on all four corners of the Market Square at 9 pm every night. Of course we have had some super Social Events - lunch at the local College, a trip round the Dales, a Beetle Drive/Tea Party and, of course, a Traditional Christmas lunch at a local hotel.



The Ripon Hornblower visits Harrogate branch

Unfortunately, we had to leave our meeting place at a Wesleyan Chapel here in Harrogate after many years. We were fortunate enough to be invited by the Vicar of St Peter's Church to meet in the Choir Vestry (I had to reassure our members that they did not have to sing)!

In spite of much publicity in and around the town we still have no new members which is very disappointing.

Best wishes for the long continuance of the Association from the Harrogate Branch.

HEREFORD BRANCH

This has been a good year for the ladies of the Hereford Branch. Numbers have increased with the addition of four new members: two ATS and two WRAC. They are most welcome. Our annual picnic, in a summer of continual rain and floods, was actually held on one of the rare glorious days and made all the more enjoyable by visitors, friends and animals. All were well behaved and the animals were very good as well. Sitting among the forest of mature trees it was decided that we would celebrate the life of one of our members by sponsoring a mature tree. This is to be in Queens Wood where we can be shaded by the branches at our future picnics and her family can visit to enjoy the peace and tranquillity.



Thanks to Jo Foster for this photograph of Hereford Branch - two and four-legged members - at their annual picnic.

Buckingham Palace Garden Party and both Joyce and Mary Nicholls went along - what a combination! Joyce was nominated by her employers for the 30 years of dedicated work and she was invited in July 2007. Joyce's first choice was to take her mother, so the WRAC/ATS stood shoulder to shoulder. Having bought outfits and hats they set off. Joyce met up with Lin Thornton, a lass she served with in 16 Signal Regiment and they spent time reminiscing: where else but a local hostelry.



Joyce and Mary Nicholls ready for the Garden Party

The Garden Party took place on a Tuesday and they had to queue for the gates to open. Then they were escorted through the lovely reception rooms before moving out into the garden. They got comfortable with a table and chairs and settled down to finger sandwiches and cakes, sipping tea or coffee. The weather was fantastic and the bevy of ladies in their floating summer outfits made this a day to really remember. Joyce's comment was that the icing on the cake was being able to attend with her mother.

Hereford celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Falkland Islands Campaign, with a ceremony in High Town. Our standard was flown and made all the more poignant by the standard bearer having served in the Falklands at the time.

The members of the Hereford Branch attended the Wales and West Reunion with normal gusto and raised £200 to donate to the proceedings. They were enjoying themselves so much it may have been noticed I had to herd them out and like lambs, just when you think you had everyone, one slipped the net. Thank you Maggie and Irene, a great day and really enjoyed.

Christmas dinner next week and we have over 25 attending; this will no doubt be another lively event. It follows on the tail of our AGM when the committee did not move fast enough and got voted in again. Next year we need to learn how to duck more quickly under the parapet. WRAC will be picking up the less able ladies and



Another from Jo with Mary Nicholls, Chairman of Hereford Branch. It shows the great camaraderie enjoyed regardless of the age difference – maybe it is to do with the “tippie” mentioned above. Mary has recently celebrated her 85th birthday so what better present than to have three photographs of yourself in the Lioness?

ensuring they get home safely. They are able to have a tippie while the younger ones have to stay sober. What are we doing wrong?

HULL BRANCH

Our Branch is continuing as well as possible and we have 19 Annual and 11 Life Members and we were delighted to welcome Mrs Dorothy Parker, née Hermann, ex WRAC to the Association. We celebrated our 60th Anniversary on 9 July 2006 although we had not been aware of this until we delved into the old papers and read the original Minute Book commenced by Lady Swinton.

We meet on the first Friday of the month at The Royal British Legion HQ, 44 Beverley Road, Hull, which is near the City Centre. Because of difficulties created from the relocation of bus termini over the years, we brought the meeting forward to 1330 hours and opened the doors from just after midday. This gives us time to have our get-together over tea/coffee and ‘pack-ups’ before the business meeting enabling us to disperse earlier to our homes. This seems to be working very well. The new Paragon Interchange has now been opened with the new St Stephen’s Centre.

We advertise in the Hull Daily Mail Community Events Diary and the East Riding News, also in the Central Library which has an accessible Web Site too.

The Meetings are regularly attended by ten to fourteen members with others joining us when work and family commitments allow. November is our Planning Session. The Christmas Meeting and Christmas Lunch were very much enjoyed. We do not meet in January (New Year Week) so February Meeting covered the GHQ/Secretaries letter/information and Greetings received. During March/April/May, Mrs Enid Long, our Treasurer, ably led the meetings in the absence of myself (visiting family in Australia with husband).

We all enjoyed the North Area Reunion very much and this time instead of the scenic route, the bus broke down! However we arrived just in time for the Corps Collect and were greeted by a welcoming cheer. Unfortunately our oldest member, May Kirby (97), was not able to come due to continuing ill health. She joined the Association in 1947.

We send Greetings to all our sister branches and thank them for their support during the June floods, especially Bath Branch, who astonished us by sending a donation of £50 each to two of our Hull Members who lost the most because of the flooding. Thank you. Esprit de Corps.

LEEDS BRANCH

We continue to have very friendly monthly meetings at which any members living in and around Leeds would be most welcome. Nine members enjoyed one of the best Northern Area lunches and re-unions. Thank you to the Committee and all helpers for making it such a success. Train travel has improved 100% so we arrived in Middlesbrough in good spirits.

In October we had our AGM where the Committee agreed to carry on with the help of all members. We hope to have more outings in the spring and summer possibly including a visit to the Arboretum.

November saw our usual involvement in the Veterans Appeal and Remembrance Day services. Our Chairman was entertained in the Officers' Mess by members of 269 Bty RA TA. Five members attended the Royal British Legion Womens' Section AGM in Huddersfield. Some hope to attend the National AGM in April.

Our Christmas Party is arranged as usual at Thomas Danby Catering College in Leeds where we always receive Gold Star service.

Best wishes to all members for a happy and successful 2008.

TERRITORIALS

Mrs Betty France thanks the twelve members who have contacted her – there must be more! She was thinking of arranging a reunion but wonders if as many as possible could attend the 70th Birthday Party at the Victory Services Club and they could meet up then. Why organise a reunion when it is being organised for you? Come on the true Territorials, let's see you there!
Editor: I wonder if Jayne Knight has contacted Betty France? See her details in the Letter Section.

LEICESTER AND NOTTINGHAM

Following on from our last report, our proposed visit to Ulverscroft Grange and Manor, courtesy of the Shuttlewood Clarke Foundation, took place on a fine sunny day. We were warmly welcomed by the volunteer helpers with tea, coffee and biscuits after which some of our more active ladies walked in the grounds. At midday, a very nice lunch was served and we then either sat in the lounge listening to music or went out again before having tea and cakes and leaving around 3pm. We all thoroughly enjoyed the visit and hope we may visit again in the coming year.

In August our meeting at the Sailing Club was a really special occasion. Lt Col Sue Westlake, Major (Retd) Jane Freebairn, Maggie Purkis and Irene Hall, our Area Chairman and Secretary, joined us for an informal day which, although wet, was greatly enjoyed by all. We had



Lt Col Sue Westlake with members at the Sailing Club

a wonderful buffet and even the rain gave up for a while so that some of our braver souls could take a trip around the lake thanks to Sandra Smith acting as skipper. Six members were presented with the 40 years gold badge. Two of the recipients, Doris Doswell and Irene Bell, actually started our branch and our Chairman Doris White, Sandra Smith, Gwen Edwards and Jenny Hearsey, are some of the very early members.



A happy bunch – after an excellent buffet lunch

£56.50 was raised at our Harvest Festival in September by selling some lovely fresh produce and other gifts donated by our ladies. Barbara Danter oversaw it and did most of the pricing. She is becoming a first class sales lady.



Lyn Wenham, new branch Standard Bearer and Irene Hall, Area Secretary

At our AGM in October, there was no change to officers or committee. However our Standard Bearer, Vi Rawlings, stood down after representing us for 15 years. In all that time, I can't remember Vi ever refusing to attend a parade. She also had the honour of representing our Association at the Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance at the Albert Hall. We are delighted that Lyn Wenham has volunteered to take over and we hope she will enjoy being our Standard bearer for a long, long time.

For her final parade Vi, Lyn and 2 other members Joan Devall and Lilian Hollis accepted the kind invitation to the dedication of Lincoln and District Branch's new Standard. The church was full and after a very nice service we joined other guests for a lovely buffet.

November was to be our Christmas Fayre but very nearly wasn't. We were locked out from our usual

meeting place and two telephone calls didn't bring any joy. Our Treasurer, Doris suggested we go across the road to Age Concern to ask if they had a spare room. Unfortunately they didn't, but the receptionist kindly asked the chef if we could use the room at the back of the cafeteria. **PDF Compressor Free Version** Their wares made their way to the back room and we had our sale there. There were some curious looks from some of the people in the cafeteria and some came in hoping to buy, but only our own members were allowed to. We had a good meeting and raised £86 thanks to the generosity of Age Concern and their chef.

Also in November seven members again made the journey to London for the Whitehall Remembrance Service and for the first time attended the Field of Remembrance Service at Westminster Abbey. HRH Prince Philip laid the cross this year and after the short simple but moving service he made his way around the Field of Remembrance speaking to various people standing by their association plots. To our members surprise he came over and spoke to them. On Saturday afternoon at the RBL Festival of Remembrance at the Albert Hall, the monitor screen showed Prince Philip speaking to our ladies. They had no idea that they had been filmed.

On Sunday morning, there should have been seven members on parade in Whitehall, but unfortunately Ann Atkinson collapsed in the lift as they were leaving the Union Jack Club. She was taken to St Thomas' Hospital accompanied by two members, where they suspected she had a blood clot in her legs. However, after a thorough examination, she was discharged and a check up at a local hospital proved she had an infection and not a clot. It was quite an eventful weekend.

We have our Christmas lunch to look forward to in December and hope it is an improvement on last year's meal! This brings our year to an end. We wish for all our members and friends, especially those who are ill or just under the weather, better health and a happy and peaceful 2008.

LINCOLN & DISTRICT BRANCH

Well, what a year we have had so far and it is only our first! We had a lovely lunch on the Barge on Brayford Wharf in June and boat trip along the River Witham in July.



Chris, Terri, Helen & Jackie

On 5 September we went to the National Arboretum at Alrewas and the weather was absolutely wonderful with wall to wall sunshine the whole day.

The highlight of our whole year was the Dedication Service held on Sunday 30 September. Despite a desperate and sometimes despairing hunt for the correct beech brown material, we located a supply at the Fabric Warehouse in Grantham. We were extremely fortunate to find a local manufacturer near Skegness who produced a beautiful standard for us to display. On Wednesday 26 September our wonderful 'volunteer' standard bearer, Fiona Baker, rehearsed with the standard for the first time.



Lincoln & District

On the day we were overwhelmed by the response of our members and the church at St Mary-le-Wigford was full. Beryl Butcher led a moving and uplifting service which was enjoyed by all. Our thanks go to Sue Westlake and Jackie Whitehead for reading the lessons and to the ladies from Leicester, Grimsby, Shropshire and Tamworth who came along to support us. Also present were His Worship the Mayor of Lincoln and the Mayoress, and Capt John Lee RBL and Lex SA.

In the Church hall, after the service, we had a buffet provided by June Booth and Marion Raithby. Marion's grandson, Gareth, worked tirelessly all day with his helpers - Marion, Terri Marshall and Nora Jones. Without the generosity of our members and the support of family and friends we would not have been able to reach our target and hold this memorable occasion. Thank you all Ladies of Lincolnshire - long may we prosper and grow.



Lincoln & District & Friends

November saw us at the City Memorial in Lincoln – a slightly larger contingent than last year. Welcome this year on parade to Maggie Ashmore, Margaret Anstey, Nora Jones, Beryl Butcher and Averill Ward. Chris, Terri and Gwyneth were there for the second year. Well done to Gwyneth who was the official wreath layer.



Footnote: In case anyone is thinking of replacing or buying a new standard, I can recommend the following family run company:

Newton Newton
The Bishop Tozer's Chapel
Middlemarsh Road
Burgh-le-Marsh
Lincs PE24 5AD.
Tel: 01754 768401. Website: www.newtonnewtonflags.com

LIVERPOOL BRANCH

The Liverpool Branch continues to meet courtesy of the Adelphi Hotel in the city centre. About twelve of us meet on the third Wednesday of the month for lunch and then others join us for our get together. We have our Christmas Party at the hotel – we are looking forward to this one on December.

In June we had a speaker from one of the oldest department stores in Liverpool – a Mr Lefton from T J Hughes, he was very interesting and entertaining. One of our earlier members, Helen Hudson, kindly left us a small legacy in her will through which we could



Eleanor Gibson, Margaret McHenry, Irene Drew, Kay Goodchild, Beryl Hepworth and Margaret Bridge by the ATS statue.

enjoy some social events, so in September a party of us went to the National Memorial Arboretum for a visit. Two small poppy wreaths were laid, one in remembrance of fallen ATS comrades and the other for Helen.

They all had a good day and enjoyed lunch thanks to Helen.

In October we entertained our sisters from the WRNS Association for lunch, a good time was had by all. On 10 December some of our members will be going on a river cruise with the "Not Forgotten" Association.

I have just taken over as Secretary to the Branch and would like to thank Margery Hay the previous secretary for all her hard work – hope I can meet her standard. We will give a warm welcome to any ex-ATS or WRAC who would like to join us – we look forward to hearing from you.

Hope this is okay for a first attempt – best wishes for Christmas and New Year. *Editor: looks fine to me! Well done on volunteering to take over as Branch Secretary as well.*

MARCHES & MID WALES BRANCH

When we started the branch we couldn't have foreseen the far-reaching area we would be serving. Over the last year we have welcomed new members from Newcastle upon Tyne, Jersey and Australia as well as Wrexham and Pwllheli up in North Wales. Indeed the scattered nature of our membership, coupled with poor public transport links have been instrumental in dictating the way the branch is run.

Our meetings are restricted to four a year, which, on average, are attended by ten of our 30 members. From the outset, we were very conscious of those who wouldn't be able to attend meetings, so decided that the best way to keep in touch with everyone would be a quarterly newsletter. Although expensive, this has proved popular and an excellent way of ensuring that no one feels isolated or forgotten, particularly our senior members. We are very grateful to our neighbours up in Chester Branch who continue to invite our north Wales members to their events.

Our main fund raising event of the year was intended to be a June garden party hosted by Carys who lives in the beautiful Clun Valley. The incessant rain and threat of the river Clun bursting its banks put paid to our plans and everything was postponed to the end of July. Fortunately Carys was able to dispatch all the cakes etc she had made to her tearoom in Church Stretton. (Some of us have been known to meet there for a chat over morning coffee or a cream tea).

Still it rained but, undaunted, Carys rolled up her sleeves and baked for us for a second time. I don't know who fixed it for us but I woke on the morning of our meeting to the phone ringing. It was Carys asking me to bring my garden furniture because the sun was shining and our garden party was ON! It was the first sunny day we had in over two months and we were very grateful for Carys'

chilled, homemade lemonade to cool us down! Indeed it was hard to do justice to all her delicious flans and cakes. We were pleased that Irene Hall, Area Secretary, was able to join us for this event and with thanks to the money raised on the day, we were able to give her £50 to help defray the cost of a future reunion.

PDF Compressor Free Version

Thank you for all your hard work in making the reunion possible for us Irene. Our members are all agreed that it was a most enjoyable and memorable occasion. Hopefully those who have had to work etc will be able to make it to our meetings next year. To give you plenty of warning here is our calendar for 2008:

Spring meeting	– Sat 8 March
Summer meeting	– Sat 21 June
Autumn AGM	– Sat 27 September
Wales and the West Area Reunion	– Sat 13 September

NEWCASTLE BRANCH

Such a poor summer and we had got into the habit of taking our waterproofs etc everywhere! This we did on our short bus journey from Newcastle to Newburn where we went to celebrate our Veterans Day on 28 June 2007. That day got brighter and we were a little overdressed! – photographs will show this!



It was a beautiful sunny day when we arrived at the Country Park which houses the Keelmans Lodge at Newburn – north of Newcastle: a very good restaurant in a lovely area of the North Tyne Riverside. We had booked well in advance and our lunch meal was excellent

which we were given ample time to enjoy! Afterwards we took a leisurely stroll through the grounds to the bankside of the north end of our great River Tyne. Here it is slow moving and there were small boats moving around and people generally enjoying the peaceful surroundings! We enjoyed our version of Veterans Day.

Regarding the gravestone of Louise Maxwell in a South Gosforth cemetery, I am still in direct contact with the representative of the War Graves Commission who is, with difficulty, trying to persuade the City Council to bring this grave and those of other ex-Service personnel up to a better standard.

Sadly our yearly big day out each August had to be cancelled indefinitely due to circumstances beyond the control of the owner of Doxford Hall, Northumberland, Mr Brian Burnie. We have thanked him and his wife Shirley for their past efforts.

Some of our meetings this last half year have been somewhat depleted due to members inability to attend due to illness, hospital appointments etc but in August we were pleased to welcome back both Betty Amor and Pat Cole. Pat had been looking after her husband who died and she herself had been very ill. Betty Amor has bravely endured difficult surgery. She had her left hand amputated and now has a cosmetic one but is still bright and cheerful and coping magnificently. It was also good to see Peggy Binns again after a lengthy absence because of illness.

Our meetings continue to be very cheerful and in November we welcomed a new member at our meeting who served in the WRAC from 1963 to 1967. She is Heather Brunton who served in Guildford. Another recent member who served in those same years is Francis Joan Turnbull. Any of their friends who recognise their names are welcome to contact us. We were also delighted to congratulate Joyce Stevenson and Peggy Binns who both celebrated their Diamond Weddings this year and received cards from the Queen.

On a personal note, I enclose a photograph of myself taken in Vancouver in September. I was staying there with friends over my 90th birthday and they were so kind and arranged a wonderful party for me.



Mabel Bolton with her hostess, Joya

Several will go to a Christmas lunch on 12 December at The Old Assembly Rooms, Newcastle. This is in connection with the North East group of ex-POWs and other veterans and we are invited along by our member Betty Herschell who is connected with the organisation.

PDF Compressor Free Version

At the time of writing, arrangements for a day trip in March 2008 to Eden Camp have been set in motion and will be reported in our next bulletin.

Best wishes to all members wherever you are!

NORFOLK BRANCH

The summer, such as it was, passed quickly and monthly meetings came round remarkably rapidly. There is always SO much to talk about after an absence of 4 weeks.

We sent representatives to the service in the Memorial Garden here to remember those people who died in the bombing raids on Norwich; to the Veterans' Awareness Day in the City Centre and to the Edith Cavell Memorial Service at the Cathedral. For the first time since 1994, we were unable to hold a service at the Great Yarmouth ATS Plaque on 11 November, although poppies were placed there by two members of the Branch.

Instead of our usual meeting in July we were invited to a private Museum of WW1 and WW2 artefacts – this was a very sociable event and we were all treated to a delightful afternoon with teas and cakes in the owner's garden.

A very jolly outing to Southwold was followed by fish-and-chips on the beach at Dunwich.

In one meeting we were entertained by a former member of the QAs relating her early days of nursing training, her service right through the War and beyond. Her stories were both revealing and amusing, and her sense of humour must have been an asset to her through the terrible times on the battlefield. Her patients knew who was in charge – and had to obey her instructions to recover rapidly. She was held in great esteem in the Forces.

By kind invitation of the WRENS Branch, we joined them on a river trip on the Cam upstream from Cambridge. It rained steadily throughout but we were comfortably ensconced around the dining tables and cared not a bit for the weather.

The highlight of the year – for 8 of us – was again joining the local WRENS in their sponsored trip to London to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their Branch. A complete tour of the Greenwich Hospital, the Painted Hall, the Chapel and a splendid lunch took up the morning and most of the afternoon. Accommodation was in the Union Jack Club from which we sallied forth that evening to the Lyceum Theatre to see *The Lion King*. Up early – and fairly bright – for a trip on the London Eye, or a city walk for those not so inclined, and a hearty luncheon on the return journey to Norwich. All arrangements went with a swing.

We shall have our usual Christmas party at the December meeting, an annual luncheon in January and

we have tentative proposals for a visit to Eden Camp in Yorkshire in the spring and to the National Arboretum in the autumn – to celebrate in style the 70th anniversary of the formation of the ATS.

We shall be very interested to know what arrangements other branches are making to celebrate this momentous occasion. I am sure many of us can recall 1938, not then having the slightest idea of how our future would bring us together and that 70 years on we should still be enjoying the comradeship that started from that time.

All good wishes to everyone and especially to the people we rely on so greatly at Headquarters.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH

In May, as recounted in last spring's *Lioness* report, we had a reunion in Truro. Queenie, Ivy and Enith were awarded Certificates of Appreciation by Col Sue Westlake, for their long term dedication to our Branch. Ethel England was also due to receive a certificate but was not well enough to travel to Truro. A couple of months later our Chairman, Jennie, Eileen and I went to Ethel's house to present her with her certificate. She is very pleased and honoured to be recognised for what she described as 'not doing much'!



Plymouth Branch celebrates Christmas
Photographer: Lucy Blake. Courtesy of the Herald Newspaper, Plymouth



Jennie, Ethel and Eileen

The Falkland Veteran's Day – 15 July – was held on the Hoe and was supported by crowds of people and Service

personnel, all enjoying various organised activities performed by the Royal Marines and the Grenadier Guards. Betty had 'been volunteered' to organise an ATS table to promote Plymouth Branch. At her request, her grandson, Ben, had produced an amazing backcloth with the ATS badge. **PDF Compressor Free Version** and the servicewomen who took part.

Unfortunately Betty had a nasty fall just before the event which necessitated her missing it all: a great shame after all her hard work. However a mixed gang of our ATS and WRAC ladies all came according to their rotas and stayed over to fill in as needed. We also had a young lady, Jenny Reeves, from the Military Vehicle Trust, who came in ATS uniform to help us with our promotion. The weather was not on its best behaviour but we set up shop in a huge marquee which, because it was away from the main events, prevented the interest we had hoped for and sadly we didn't get any positive results from talking and cajoling and giving out leaflets all day! Our ladies have attended services, parades and concerts for several events.

A service for Sea Sunday was held at St Andrew's church on 8 July. August 11th saw a good contingent of us over in Saltash, attending Evon's party to raise funds for Cancer Research. This she did in lieu of taking part in the annual 5k 'Race for Life'; which she usually joins in June, but this year wasn't able to do so. We think she put a lot more effort into the party which ran from 2-8 pm, plus prep work and tidying up. She raised a whopping £210.

In September, we were invited to the RAFA Service of Thanksgiving for the Victory granted to our nation in the Battle of Britain 1940 in St Andrew's church and later to enjoy light refreshments at their HQ. Carol carried our Standard for us, along with approximately 16 ladies and gentlemen from many Services. Her mother, Joy, who was in the WRAF, came too.

Eileen, Mary, Ethel, Thelma and I went to Torpoint across the river Tamar in Cornwall, for their RBL Poppy Appeal Concert which was really good to listen to. We were then invited to stay for refreshments - we went but had to look a bit sharp because we needed to catch the 11 pm ferry back to Plymouth because crossings are down to every ½ hour after 10 pm.

Two nights later, Joan and I went back into Cornwall by the bridge this time to the Saltash RBL Poppy Appeal Concert. Again, a lovely evening, with the Plymouth Area Police choir and the HMS Drake Volunteer Band, some of whom had been in Lourdes with us in May, singing and playing beautifully.

Earlier this year we welcomed Sheila Beaumont, ex-WRAC as an attending new member and Patricia Fox, also ex-WRAC joined us for the first time at our November meeting. This brings us to one ATS, Janie, a regular attendee and four WRAC members, two who live too far away from Plymouth to attend; but with these new ladies our numbers are holding steady at the moment.

We booked our seats for November's Festival of Remembrance at the Pavilions the day they went on sale so that we could get the front seats for our ladies to be

together. Carol Martin carried our Standard and was escorted by Mary Davis and Evon Roberts. Our grateful thanks to them all, but especially Carol, who not only paraded on the evening of Friday 9th and also on Saturday 10th for the Youth Parade at St Andrew's Church; on Sunday 11th for a service and a further parade on the Hoe and then paraded in Saltash in the afternoon from bridge level to the top of town and back again! That is dedication and stamina. Thank you, Carol. Check www.wracassociation.co.uk (Plymouth Branch) for Carol's own account of that weekend. Her most recent parade was on Thursday 29 November at the Belvedere Memorial on the Hoe for the 40th anniversary of the withdrawal of troops from Aden and to dedicate a plaque to their fallen comrades. The sun shone beautifully for us all.



Carol Martin and Evon Roberts outside St Andrews Church

Sadly for us, our Chairman, Jennie Stimpson, left Plymouth in October to return to her old home in West Sussex. She did a great job for us during recent years and she will be very much missed. We welcome our new Chairman Mrs Betty Mitchell - long may she reign.

Our Christmas lunch will again be at St Aubyn's Masonic Hall, Stoke on 14 December - we are expecting around 25 ladies to be there.

We have our meetings in the Royal Fleet Club - 1.30-4 pm, on the first Monday of the month. If it clashes with a Bank Holiday, the meeting is moved to the 2nd Monday. Please feel free to join us anytime.

Contact telephone number: Ruth Jennings Secretary 01752 363118.

PORTSMOUTH BRANCH

Portsmouth still has about 58 members and, although not all are able to attend our meetings, we still do our best to keep going.

Our first outing was in April to the Area Reunion in Salisbury. We all really enjoyed it and send our thanks to Salisbury members for all their hard work.

The D-Day Parade in June was held on a very cold day and only two of us attended. Edna Dawes did not go as she was still getting over her hip operation.

We went to the Falkland Islands Service but did not parade. Veterans came from all over and it was a male only parade. Veterans Day at the end of June was held in the Naval Museum in the Dockyard. Some veterans were interviewed and the refreshments were all made from a war time cookery book. Most were nice but some were not so very good!

Nine members attended our AGM in July and we planned our programme for the next twelve months – starting with a tea party in August in Joy Elmer's garden. Very nice day but very hot.

In September we had a pub lunch in Fareham which was well attended and in October we had a coffee morning at Jasmine McCree's in Gosport. The few of us who managed to attend had a lovely time. Our November coffee morning was hosted by Gillian Utting in the community room of the sheltered flats where one of our members, Grace, lives. Our Area Chairman, Major Maskens-McIntyre, was able to join us and it was interesting to hear about her Alpacas.

We managed a small presence at the Remembrance Parade at the Guildhall. Sally Watson carried our Standard and Phyllis and Andrea paraded. Andrea laid the wreath and four other members were seated in the veterans' area.

We still have some coffee mornings to come after Christmas: one in Portsmouth, one in Porchester and one in Waterlooville. We still meet on the second Tuesday in the month at 11am at the Hampshire Ex-Service Club in Fratton Road. It would be nice if more members could come along to support us.

SALISBURY BRANCH

The weather may have made summer a "non-event", but this is not so at Salisbury Branch. All our meetings are "an event"!

In June our speaker was authoress Edna Dawes (ex-WRAC) who has books published under two pseudonyms – Elizabeth Darrell and Emma Drummond. She spoke of her research for the book "The Savage Sky". This tells the story of the first 100 British airmen sent to Florida to do their training. They were based at an airfield near a small town which she has visited, making contact with people who remembered them well, and she has forged friendships with them. It was most interesting.

In July we indulged in a pub lunch at the George and Dragon.

Once again in August we were lucky to have our garden party at the home of our Secretary, Val Trout. The

weather was fine, good food, plenty of brain-testing games.



Summer Garden Party in the Branch Secretary's garden

No surprise then that at the AGM in September the committee was re-elected "en bloc". Our President, Joan Freeland thanked them for all their hard work enabling Branch members to enjoy all the meetings.

At our October meeting there was plenty of tea, coffee, biscuits and an opportunity to chat to everyone.

Jill Trainor and Gladys Pope organised a quiz in November which all members enjoyed. The winning "Christmas Puds" team of Dorrie Rose, Frances Green and Eileen Pennell were only half a point ahead of the "Maryhills" team of May Brown, Irene Grey and Maureen Robertson. Secretary Val Trout presented plaques to the winners and biscuits to the runners up.



The "Christmas Puds" receive their plaques

Unfortunately this report has to be in before our Christmas lunch in December, but we are sure to have another splendid meal at the RBL Salisbury and it will be another enjoyable event. Three of our members attended the National AGM in London and we have welcomed a new member, Sue Dixon (ex-WRAC Signals) and a new associate member, Eileen Pennell (ex-WAAF).



The "Maryhill's" receive their Runners Up awards

SHROPSHIRE BRANCH

Greetings to you all from our Branch and all friends round the Wrekin.



Hilda and Nancy with friends at the National Memorial Arboretum

Thinking back to Veterans Day in June last year, we had a nice sunny day at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas – everyone had a good day there, especially Chas and his harem! At the same time Lucy and Beryl were living it up in London seeing the sights and feeding their tums, courtesy of The "Not Forgotten" Association.



Lucy feeding a horse peppermints during Veterans Week in London

Members who went on the day trip with REME Association to Llangollen Steam Railway didn't have a steaming hot day there after all – it rained and was very cold. It would have been nice to have a roaring fire in the waiting room just like old times but no such luck.

At our August meeting, Beryl brought in a surprise birthday cake for Nancy with a huge 80 on the top: a tasty treat for us all and it was soon devoured. Quite a few of us have the OBE status now – "Over Blinking Eighty"!

Nancy was able to represent Shropshire Branch at the dedication of the Lincoln and District Branch Standard at St Mary Le Wigford Church in Lincoln. It was a memorable and very moving service – what a wonderful achievement for the members of the Branch in such a short time. Nancy was particularly impressed being a Lincolnshire Lass herself, in other words a Lincolnshire Yellow Belly!

The same Committee was reinstated at our AGM. Our Area Reunion at the Lord Hill, Shrewsbury was a great success. Thanks to everyone for their hard work.



Lucy and Beryl try to bring a souvenir back from London

In October we had another racy evening out, being invited to the REME Association Social. We were looked after very well, the food and wine flowed freely and the 'Race Horses' seem to gallop faster each year. Afterwards our gallant knights in shining armour took us all safely home (in their cars).

November was a busy month. Lucy, Beryl, Nancy and Sandra were selling poppies in the supermarkets for the Royal British Legion. This year's Remembrance Day

Services attracted more people than ever. The Garrison Church was full. Sandra Davies, our new Standard Bearer, carried our Standard and Lucy laid the wreath. Sandra also carried our Standard at the Festival of Light at Oakengates Theatre. Our November meeting was held at Beryl's flat. Unfortunately our usual venue suffered a severe fire – is Guy Fawkes still around?



Lucy hands over to Sandra



Shropshire Branch and Standard

On 4 December we went out for our Christmas Dinner at the White House Hotel, Muxton. We made it a very special day by officially handing over our Standard from Lucy Bowyer to Sandra Davies. Lucy has carried our Standard 173 times in the last 19 years, both here and abroad. She has done us proud – our sincere thanks to you, Lucy. We thought we may have had to lay our Standard up. However, Sandra has accepted the challenge and we look forward to her representing us in the years to come. Thank you, Sandra.

A Happy and Healthy 2008 to everyone and a special toast to the *Lioness*.

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Hello to all our friends. By the time you are reading this it will be 2008, so I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

At our AGM, we decided to have nibbles after the serious business was out of the way. It was a fantastic evening and I would like to thank all members for voting us, the Committee, back in again (I think).

We now have a new location for our branch meeting; Jean Doe has found us a great venue in All Saints Church Hall in Eastleigh, with our Committee meetings taking place at my house. Everyone is more than pleased with the church hall and they can laugh and have fun to their hearts content.



At the Eastleigh Carnival where we have a stall with big notices advertising the WRAC Association. Audrey and Hazel with Penny Bailey, who is a great asset to the branch, make such a memorable stall for this occasion. The monies that they take are a welcome addition to our funds. The weather was fantastic and they do such a great job I'm thinking of applying for a position next year. A great day and a sun tan into the bargain.

With the help of all members that attended the November meeting, we now have next year's proposed programme including a programme of what trips we will arrange, so once the details are printed out our members will have an idea of what is going on.

With the resignation of Margaret Barham as our Standard Bearer who held the post for a number of years (we would like to thank Margaret for the great job she did), up jumped (or was she pushed?) Carolyn Forward. Carolyn had her first parade at the Earl of Mountbatten Service at Romsey and she did a fantastic job. Her brother, Steven, is the top Standard Bearer in the County of Hampshire so she can get plenty of advice if she needs it.

As Jean Kingdon was indisposed, one of our newer members, Jessica Denby, stepped up to lay the wreath at the Remembrance Parade in Eastleigh. Thank you very much Jessie; it was much appreciated.

We went to Boscombe Market in November, encouraged by our "Recce Officers" Audrey and Hazel who said it was a great place for shopping. They were right and we managed to fit in a meal as well.

PDF Compressor Free Version



Just a few bagfuls of shopping from Boscombe market

December will see us going to Portsmouth for the Victorian Festival of Christmas which by all accounts is a must.

Good health to everyone.

STAFFORD BRANCH

It is with great sadness that I report the death, in August 2007, of our founder member, Daphne Jervis TD.

Editor: A full obituary appears in that section.

We still continue to hold our meetings on the third Wednesday of the month at Trinity Church, Stafford. Like many branches, attendance numbers continue to dwindle due to health and mobility problems and, once again, our report reflects this fact. Those members who can make it are still enthusiastic and very supportive after all these years.

I would like to extend a warm Staffordian welcome to Mrs Patricia Pedley, née Smith, who is the latest addition to our Branch. Patricia, who served with the WRAC Provost, and her family have recently moved to Stafford from the London area.

September's AGM saw the re-election of existing committee members, Joan Higgins, Muriel Lakin, Marjorie Powell and Dorry Newton. My eternal thanks to all our members for their continuing support during the last 12 months – there wouldn't be a branch without you!

October was supposed to be 'Quiz and Toasted Teacakes' but somehow the business of toasting the teacakes became a priority and we forgot about the Quiz. What are we like? I was looking forward to attending the Wales & West Area Reunion in October, always a good do, but was prevented from going by a nasty chest infection.

Instead of a Christmas lunch this year, we opted for a New Year party instead. We thought we would start 2008 off in a typical Staffordian style – eating and enjoying ourselves. I definitely need to go on a diet.

Members of the Stafford Branch would like to wish you good health, wealth and a very happy 2008. God Bless to all of you from all of us.

STIRLING BRANCH

The Branch has three life members and twenty-three annual members and about fifteen members attend monthly. The Branch meets in the Terraces Hotel on the last Saturday of each month and all are agreed that the Branch should continue.

Joyce Logan represented the Branch at the Royal British Legion, Scotland, Falkland Islands 25th Anniversary Commemoration Event on 14 June 2007. The Parade assembled at the War Memorial in Edinburgh Castle and marched to the Church of St Giles for a service followed by a Civic Reception. It was an honour to be involved in this historic event.

The Branch wish to express their appreciation of the work that goes into producing the *Lioness* twice a year and each issue is eagerly awaited.

STOCKPORT BRANCH

Greetings to all members wherever you may be.

We still hold our meeting on the second Thursday of each month at 2pm at The Armoury in Stockport. Numbers at meetings have been varied this year, all due to weather, ill health and our increasing age. I do admire our members who travel such distances so cheerfully to attend our meetings. Joyce Edwards, our Treasurer is wonderful: she has a long way to travel and will pick up ladies en-route when necessary which is a great help.

In May, we held our spring lunch at our usual haunt, Heaton Moor Catering College. Fourteen ladies attended and we had such a lovely afternoon. The food of course, as usual, was wonderful.

24 May: Five of our members went on a canal trip. Having made our way to Marple (in Cheshire), we left the Marple Basin at 10am. The skipper and his mate were so informative and knew so much about the area we were in. It was all very interesting, so peaceful; so much to see and the sun was so warm and pleasant. After sailing for over two hours we stopped for lunch at The Miners Arms and it was lovely. After lunch, we leisurely made our way back to Marple, well fed, sun soaked and very relaxed – all in all a great day.

2 July: A Bring and Buy at Joan Clarke's home in Bramhall. Twenty-six members and guests attended and we had a wonderful afternoon. Refreshments were served – so good as usual and we raised £158.25.

19-31 July: Our Secretary, Elizabeth Lapham, went on a cruise. One of the places she visited was Iceland. She saw so many things including icebergs which must have been amazing – she really enjoyed it and can't wait for the next time.



*Elsie Edwards, Barbara Bainbridge, Sally Douglas, Lilian Day, Joan Clarke (Hostess!), Brenda Logan, Maureen (her daughter), Joyce Edwards, Jean Buckley, Jean Latham (hiding as usual), and Ivy (guest)
Front: Maggie Brady and Jean Browne*

September: The ATS Luncheon Club met in Blackpool. Very enjoyable, three of us from Stockport attended but unfortunately one of us was ill on the journey and had to return home – such a shame.

October: We had lunch at the Buxton Catering College which is in such a beautiful place. It was originally the Devonshire Hospital, now the University of Derby. Phyllis Warren who lives in Buxton, but is unable to attend meetings, joined us for the lunch and it was wonderful to have her with us.

November was a mixture of good and bad. Sadly, two of our members passed away. Helen Gardiner, a founder member of the Stockport Branch, died on 5 November. Helen did so much good not just for us but for many other people – a truly remarkable lady who will be sadly missed. Also, Emily Reavey, a former Secretary of our group, died on 21 November. Emily did a lot of excellent work until she became ill. She will also be sadly missed. The services for Helen and Emily were attended by members of our group. November also saw the visit of three of our members to London. The weather was not too kind but thankfully they returned safely having had a good time.

28 November: Another of Joan's Bring & Buys. This was well attended and the refreshments were fantastic as usual! The total raised was £160.00. This money will be used to go towards the hire of a coach to take us to the Arboretum in spring. Well done Joan – another great success!

On 12 December we have our Christmas Lunch at the Heaton Moor Catering College. Hopefully there will be about eighteen members dining. I am sure we will all have a wonderful time and this will be the start of the Christmas Celebrations!

We would like to take this opportunity of wishing everyone a very Happy Christmas and Best Wishes for 2008.

ULSTER BRANCH

Following a very enjoyable meal in Pizarelli's Restaurant in Lisburn, the members of the Ulster Branch proceeded to the RBL building where we had our AGM at which we had a good turn out. We all look forward to our AGM which gives us the opportunity to meet with old friends and discuss the events of the preceding year. The office bearers were re-installed and, after the official business, we had a raffle and bring and buy sale. As well as being good fun, it gives us the chance to pick up that much sought after bargain!

We have had quite a lot of illness and one of our dearest members, Peggy Couser, is awaiting hospital treatment. We all send her our best wishes for a full recovery. Her happy smile and cheerful demeanour are an asset to our Branch and we hope to see her back with us very soon. We also send our deepest sympathy to Alison Warnock, one of our previous long serving Secretaries, who recently lost her husband and to Dorothy Wraight, our current Assistant Secretary, whose sister passed away very suddenly.

One of our members, Mrs Vi Jones, placed a wreath on the Cenotaph at Belfast City Hall in memory of fallen comrades. The Garden of Remembrance at the City Hall, although in the centre of a very busy city, exudes a feeling of peaceful tranquillity – a suitable setting to reflect on the ultimate sacrifice which was made on our behalf.

We missed our summer bus trip this year and are determined that we will not miss out in 2008. We have already set the wheels in motion (!) and we will put our thoughts for a summer outing to our members at the reunion luncheon in February. Although transport is rather costly, I feel that with true grit and determination, which we in the Ulster Branch have in abundance, we should be able to arrange something for 2008.

In December, we will be going again to the pantomime in the Grand Opera House, Belfast. We really enjoyed it last year – the costumes are so colourful and exciting, the music superb and, of course, there is always the opportunity for a "singalong" which we all enjoy. Indeed, I, myself came out last year feeling at least 10 years younger so pantomime is to be recommended.

We now look forward to Christmas and to the beautiful Christmas hymns and songs. Although it is the season to be merry, we also think of those who are sad at this time. Our thoughts are with you. We wish our HQ staff and all our members a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND BRANCH

2007 was the 50th Anniversary of the founding of our Branch – but more about that later.

Our numbers have not changed dramatically during the past year. Nora Carr was attached to us after her move from Bolton and a fellow resident from her block of flats, Melba Chapman, was recruited to the Association so in essence we are two up and have twenty-six annual and twenty life members. A core of about sixteen to twenty

members are able to attend our meetings which are still held twice monthly with the exception of the summer months of July and August, and over the Christmas/New Year period. We still meet in the RAFA Club in Weymouth and give a donation to them at Christmas.

PDF Compressor Free Version

At our AGM in March, Edna Moore resigned as our Treasurer and our thanks were passed to her. Joan Young agreed to take on the post and will be ably assisted by Peg McElwaine for a short while until she feels able to manage on her own. The remainder of the Committee were voted for a further term.

A contingent from the Branch attended the Area Reunion hosted by Salisbury and a good time was had by all.

During May, Mrs Pam Seaton brought along a collection of antique fans and talked about their history which was most interesting. Also in May, Esther Pring, held her coffee morning and she raised £94.50 which was put towards Branch funds. A wonderful effort.

The Veterans Parade was well attended – it was a pity that Maureen Deeley was unable to join us but perhaps next year. We held our usual sea front stall during Veterans Week and raised £100 which was sent to HQ for the Lioness Fund. *Editor: Many thanks – much needed and greatly appreciated!*

After the summer break, Joan Young gave us an illustrated talk on her memories as a WRAC recruit. For those of us who had joined the WRAC, it brought back many memories and the ATS girls realised that things were not all that different to their days.



A very special Birthday cake

On 9 October, we had a special luncheon to celebrate our 50th Anniversary. We were honoured by the presence of Lieutenant Colonel Sue Westlake, Major Jane Freebairn and the Mayor of Weymouth and his Lady. A cake, decorated in the Corps colours and with an Association Badge as the centrepiece was a point of great interest. The lady guests were presented with a bouquet of flowers and two original members (Peg McElwaine and Peg Moore) were also given flowers to mark their long connection with the Association.

Our South and South West Secretaries meeting was held ten days later at the Wilton Bowls Club. As always, Joan

Ford provided a super luncheon before we started the business of the day and our thanks were offered to her.



Peg McElwaine and Diane Lawrence with the Branch Standard

In November, we were represented as usual in the parade along the seafront.



Standards "at the dip" at Weymouth on Remembrance Sunday. Photograph courtesy of Dorset Echo

WILMSLOW BRANCH

The members of Wilmslow Branch send our best wishes to you all.

As this report goes to HQ, we will all be busy with preparations for Christmas, the older one gets, the quicker the years seem to fly by, so once again we will be racking our brains deciding what to buy for family and friends. Then it will be New Year, so we send you all our Best Wishes and hope you had a Happy Christmas and will enjoy Good Health in 2008.

In December, we will have our Christmas Lunch at our usual hotel, the table is always very festive looking being decorated with streamers and crackers; we are always

made very welcome and have been going there since the Branch was started; we also have our Birthday lunch there too, although our numbers have fallen now owing to some of our most faithful members dying. This year promises to be rather special as we have invited Mr and Mrs Burton who are friends of the Wilmslow Branch of the Lions Club and who very kindly arranged for a coach to take us to the Arboretum in 2006 for the unveiling of the ATS girl and in 2007 for Veteran's Day.



Courtesy of the Wilmslow Guardian

We enjoyed Veterans Day: a few showers sent many to seek shelter while the school children were singing old wartime songs, though a few of us stayed to listen. The showers soon eased off so it was on to watch the March Past and wave our Union Flags.

Then we watched the 1940s fashion show and that brought back a few memories. The clothes were such a change from contemporary fashions with most women wearing trousers and young folk taking the top garment of the pile, then the next, etc. I think it's called the Layered Look. The little girl model wore some lovely dresses, one had a fully smocked bodice – does anyone remember making dresses like that for their children?

The Armed Services Memorial to all those who lost their lives in Service since WW2 was well on its way to being finished and looked very impressive as it stood on rising ground. It has since been unveiled by HM Queen Elizabeth, and let us hope and pray that very soon there will not be any need to add any more names.

While driving down we noticed such a lot of fields under water because of the heavy rains and though it was suggested there might be a shortage of vegetables, so far it hasn't happened – what would we do without our sprouts and carrots for our Christmas dinner?

On 4 July Mary Guest, one of our founder members and her husband Geoffrey celebrated 65 years of marriage – we wish them both Good Health in the future and many more years together.

The day of our November meeting happened to be the birthday of our Secretary so we made up a little buffet between us and had a party which was very enjoyable.

One of our members, Betty Masterman, who left us to live in a rather isolated spot in the Welsh hills, has now moved to the south of Spain where we hope she will be very happy. We still miss her at our meetings and hope that one day she will pay us a visit.



Geoffrey and Mary on their 65th Wedding Anniversary

We send our best wishes to all of you 'out there' and to Joan Broadhurst our member in Australia.

WOLVERHAMPTON BRANCH

Since our last report we have enjoyed our monthly meetings but, unfortunately, have been short of several members who have been unwell or not able to make the journey from their homes outside Wolverhampton. They are all remembered.

The members travelling to Shrewsbury for the Wales and West Reunion had an enjoyable time and were pleased to meet Sue Westlake and Jane Freebairn. Now we look forward to the 2008 Reunion knowing the arrangements are in good hands.

The Branch was represented at the Festival of Remembrance in Wolverhampton and also at the Remembrance Sunday service in St Peter's Collegiate Church.

Although our Christmas Lunch was not held until after this report was written, I am quite sure I can say it was a very happy occasion.

How we look forward to 2008, with friendly meetings and good health amongst our members.

We send our best wishes to all readers of the *Lioness*.

YORK BRANCH

A Happy New Year to all our comrades far and wide. It only seems like yesterday that we were welcoming 2007.

Time certainly does fly when you are having fun. Unfortunately, due to bad weather and illness, our yearly visit to Scarborough had to be cancelled. We are hoping to meet up with the girls early in the New Year. We are looking forward to catching up on all their news.

PDF Compressor Free Version

In September, we once again attended the Thanksgiving and Remembrance Service at Eden Camp in Malton. There were 108 standards on parade and nearly 1,500 ex-service personnel marching. Feona Dixon and myself, Pam Nesbitt, found ourselves leading the parade as the photo shows.



Five of our members attended the North East Area Reunion in Middlesbrough. A big vote of thanks goes to our new Area Chairman, Maj (Retd) Dot Ryder, for the excellent organisation. In November, we had our AGM. Luckily all serving committee members agreed to serve again for a further year. Mary Robinson, our very valued member, has not been well and is still awaiting a hip replacement. I am pleased to report that Col (Retd) Hazel Powell is back on her feet after her hip replacement.

Eighteen of us managed to attend the Festival of Remembrance in the York Barbican Centre. We always manage to get front row seats that enable a good view of the proceedings. The Heavy Cavalry and Cambrai Band entertained us with dance band favourites and xylophone



York ladies in celebratory form

duets. They also accompanied the audience in community singing. The Tynesider Choir, who were the Backworth Male Voice Choir founded in 1951 by miners, sang a medley of tunes arranged by their Musical Director – what beautiful voices to come from the pits. Children of 246 Gurkha Signal Squadron performed traditional Nepalese dances and the York Ladies sang a medley of old favourites. We had an excellent evening.

In December, we had our annual Christmas Tea Party and also celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the reformation of the WRAC Association in York. Pam, Chairman, produces Bucks Fizz for everyone and a large cake for both Christmas and our anniversary. A good time was had by all. We are saving our Christmas lunch until February after we have recovered from our family celebrations.

Five members were invited by the "Not Forgotten" Association to their Christmas Lunch at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel in Wetherby. Their Events Officer, Rosie Thompson, had recently completed the New York Marathon to raise fund for the Association and was proudly showing off her medal. I'm sure that many of you will recognise Rosie.



Feona Dixon, Rosie Thompson and Betty Hudson

Editor: The WRAC Association receives several kind and generous invitations each year from the "Not Forgotten" Association and we are very grateful. I am sure that many of you will have been kind enough to sponsor Rosie in her Marathon efforts and we congratulate her on her success.

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.

ATS Reminiscences

HISTORY OF 455 MHAA BATTERY

Miss D Whitmarsh, Flat 21, Hanover Court, Old Vicarage Road, Dovercourt, Harwich, Essex C012 4BU

I was Cpl Dorothy (Dot) Whitmarsh and this is my reply to Hazel Dawn née Tyler "Where are all you Girls?" I was a great friend of Bella Gault and Mary Martin. I was NCO of Spotters-Plotters of 455 MHHA Battery. I kept in touch with them for some years - Bella married and had three boys, Mary married and had two girls. Unfortunately my personal diaries and papers were lost in one of my moves so I lost touch.



Cpl Dot Whitmarsh

I ended up as medical orderly and was sent back to 455 MHAA. I was flown home on VE Day for a long spell in hospital and was discharged with a full war disablement pension. Here are all the places 455 MHHA Battery were stationed:

455 MHHA formed - Tycross, Anglesey, Wales
Myrehd Farm, Dunfermline, Scotland
Donibristle Point, Firth of Forth
Sighthill, Nr Edinburgh
Primrose Farm, Rosyth, Scotland
Burrow Head, Whithorn, Scotland - Firing Camp
Merrilees Camp, Philipstoun, Scotland
West Pilton, Edinburgh - Clifton Mains Camp, Ratho,
Midlothian - Rest Camp
Totlely Wells, Winchburgh, Scotland - Liberton Camp, Nr
Edinburgh
Dalmeny, Scotland
Grangetown, HR Docks, Middlesbrough - Redcar,
Yorkshire
Sheringham, Norfolk Firing Camp - Cromer Firing
Camp
Back to Redcar
1944 - Lydd Romney Marshes, Doodle Bug Alley under
Canvas
East Bedfont and Yeading, Middlesex - Golders Green,
London

Disbanded Weybridge, Surrey - Reformed 137 MHAA Regiment

476 MHAA Battery - To Southend, Cliftonville - Tilbury to Board some old Steamboat. On board 3 days before we could sail

Ostend - Bruges one night, to Overysche, Belgium - Gun Site

Brussels, Antwerp - Kloosterzand - Holland - then Germany

No Mans Land - flown home VE Day to hospital for some months

Discharged VJ Day

Editor: Amazing - what an incredible and useful summary of all the locations for this unit.

LUCKY ESCAPES

W/277067 Alice Alexander née Siesel
23 Brodie Road, Chingford, London E4 7HF

Miss Brett's article about her attendance at the first Grand Reunion of the QMAAC & ATS Comrades Association on page 7 of *Lioness* 2/2007 brought back memories. I too became a member of the Association after joining the ATS in 1943 and attended two reunions in the Royal Albert Hall. At the one in 1950, HM the Queen, then Princess Elizabeth, was present, as well as Field Marshall Slim who, after a chat, gave me his autograph.

I had articles in both the QMAAC & ATS Comrades Association Gazette for September/October 1945 and the one in March/April 1947. The outer cover of the Gazette was bordered with the ATS colours and the 1947 edition carried an advert for Cherry Blossom Boot Polish at 3d a tin. Happy days!



Left to right: Sgt Siesel, Cpl Moseley and Cpl Garrett at the QMAAC & ATS Reunion on 26 March 1949

While still in training in Pontefract, I immediately fell foul of Army regulations. Due to heavy rain I had naively rushed across the barrack square clad in my civilian raincoat over my uniform. I was pulled up for having

transgressed against the holy of holies, namely treating the square as a shortcut. In addition I was wearing what was deemed to be an officer's trench coat. At least this explained my having been saluted on my approach to the guardroom. On this occasion the crimes of an ignorant raw recruit were forgiven.

PDF Compressor Free Version

Having been fully inducted as a soldier (!), I was ready for serious work on being posted to Park Hall Camp, Oswestry. I assisted the Messing Officer in devising the daily menus and, with a corporal, was responsible for ordering the food supplies from an ordnance depot, as well as their distribution to the camp's cook houses and messes, based on their daily strength returns. Provisions were carefully weighed and allocated based on pre-determined allowances for each soldier. We in the stores needed to keep accurate records of all deliveries and issues. Requests for additional rations were regretfully declined. I must here confess that on one occasion the corporal invited me to join him in enjoying a clandestine steak as 'perks of the job'.

A posting to the orderly room in Corsham came next. After duty some of my friends and I repaired to the little town's local 'flea pit' where, because of its small size, the best seats were already occupied. Resorting to a simple stratagem by which to gain control over preferred places, we brought in freshly fried fish and chips, sprinkled with vinegar, wrapped in newspaper. After a chorus of sniffing, huffing and tutting, people in front and behind shuffled around, thus affording us the best seats to see films in supreme comfort.

On another occasion, returning from an outing to Chippenham, our gang had overstayed the time on our leave passes. Uneasy about being disciplined, we boarded a non-stopping train, but not before having first arranged with its driver to slow it to a halt adjacent to a large field approaching Corsham. Ever ready to oblige young girls in uniform, the driver dutifully met our wishes. In the darkness we jumped over ditches, clambered under barbed wire and over other obstacles, reaching camp unnoticed. Retrospectively some of the tactics employed by my friends and myself to alleviate some of the tedium and routine of Army life are quite embarrassing. Fortunately I have never been put on a charge. My failures having escaped notice over 5 years, I was happy to accept a certificate of 'exemplary conduct' on discharge!

ATS CAMERON BARRACKS

Mrs C J Morrison née Chisholm

2 Boyd Terrace, Uig By Portree, Isle of Skye, Inverness
IV51 9YQ

With reference to the photograph printed on page 36 of *Lioness* 2/2007, I confirm that it was taken at Cameron Barracks, Inverness in early September 1939 and that it represents the 40th Company ATS. Our leaders were Lady Maud Baillie, Mrs Fraser Tyler and Mrs Greig and I was marching near the front rows but I can pick out the top of my head only. However the march consisted of more than the original pre-War Volunteers and probably they were trainees who came to the Barracks when it became an Infantry Training Centre.



Volunteer ATS, Cameron Barracks, June 1939

I enclose another photo of members of the 40th Volunteers which appears to have been taken in Wartime but which was taken in June 1939. While the male Cameron Territorials went to Camp, we were told to report to Cameron Barracks for a fortnight. Cameron Reservists were being called there for training and we were told that we would be doing jobs that we would have to do if called up in the event of War. We were actually called up on 1 September 1939 and slipped quite easily into our Wartime jobs – mine being in the Orderly Room giving out paybooks to the Reservists and taking shorthand notes from the Colonel. I only had one other posting shortly afterwards and that was a transfer to Code & Cipher Branch, War Office Main Building, Whitehall, where I stayed until I was demobbed in 1945.



ATS chorus of the Itcats Concert Party, June 1939

The Cameron Men seemed to treat us as one great laugh – so I had a chat with the FANY Drivers and suggested that we challenge the Cameron Men to a hockey match. They accepted the challenge and enlisted the help of RAF stationed in the town – and we beat them hands down! Later we (ATS) and the Camerons (Infantry Training Centre Cameron Barracks) formed a Concert Party called "The Itcats" and visited the various Depots (Norwegians, French Canadians, Poles, Czechs etc) in the area until the advent of ENSA.

HAPPY MEMORIES OF EDINBURGH, CAMBERLEY AND WINDSOR

W/140633 Cpl Irene Warren née Burman
"Woodlands", 4A Newmarket Road, Cringleford,
Norwich, Norfolk NR4 6UE

PDF Compressor Free Version

A visit to Edinburgh last year brought back happy memories of my ATS Service. In 1942, I did my initial training at Glen Parva Barracks in Leicester and my most vivid memory was having to do PT in our khaki knickers! I then went to No 1 Motor Transport Training Centre at Camberley and already being a driver, I trained to be an instructor. My first posting was to No 3 MTTC Dregthorn Barracks in Edinburgh where we took over from the men of the RASC who went to Burma. We trained on 30 cwt Bedford lorries that had frame covered canopies which jutted out 6" either side behind the cabins. The students never allowed for this and going along Princes Street the side mirrors were often taken off the trams – many an accident report I had to make! How different Princes Street looks now.

After a year, No 3 MTTC was disbanded and I went back to Camberley where I spent the next three years driving, instructing and as a spell as a mechanic. We had a 16 task system which I had to teach the students, each on the care and maintenance of the vehicles. On a theory paper, one question was, 'What do you do if your lorry gets stuck under a bridge?' One student answered, 'Jack up the bridge'!



Her Majesty the Queen being presented with the clock

When the students passed their driving tests they were allowed to drive through Windsor Great Park on their own. This was usually on a Saturday morning but they had to leave their log books behind as I had to make them up for the week. Two students hadn't left them and, as I was on a weekend pass, I thought I'd better go and find them. I had a motor bike to do convoy training, so off I went on my bike through the park and, not being able to find them and coming to a sharp bend, my bike went up a bank and I was thrown into the middle of the road. An American soldier who was quietly taking pictures of the Castle came to my rescue and taking off my crash helmet his first words were "Gosh you're a Gal"! Luckily I was not hurt and was able to ride my bike back to camp – without the log books!

Her Majesty the Queen completed her ATS training whilst I was there and when the course ended she was presented with a clock made in wood by the workshop people; on one side of the clock was a truck and on the other a field ambulance – I often wondered if it ever stood on her mantelpiece?

After we disbanded at Camberley in 1945, we had to clear the camp and we found a few bicycles that were left behind we loaded them into a field ambulance and sent them to a worthy cause. I was then posted to Southampton to the RASC as a mechanic and I did inspections on vehicles and lorries up to 5 tons and on test drives – I found it very hard going with crash gear boxes and no power steering!



Hannah and myself at Sandhurst

My granddaughter Hannah is now serving in the British Army and was at Sandhurst at the same time as Prince William. It was wonderful to attend Sovereign's Parade and to see Her Majesty the Queen take the salute at her grandson's commissioning. Hannah has just completed a posting to Afghanistan where she served in the front line with the Grenadier Guards. I am so proud of her.

10 RCB, HASLEMERE

W/352221 Mrs Norma Kinson née Ransome
15 Cotswold Drive, Skelton, Saltburn-by-the-Sea,
Cleveland TS12 2JN

The photograph of the 10 RCB staff was taken by Pte Doreen Joyce Wright taken in 1949 at 10 Regular Commissions Board, Fernhurst Camp, Haslemere, Surrey.

She is sat outside the Barrack room and also with a group of cooks whose names I cannot remember. The camp was our first posting and we were part of the skeleton staff sent to clean it out as it had been empty



since the Canadian Army had left it at the end of the War. We were waitresses in the Officers' Mess; Controller Mary Railton was the senior officer, also Major Humphreys and Major Rivett Drake were there. *Editor: A famous line-up – two out of the three became DWRAC!* Our OC was Captain Thorn and Subaltern Aileen Butt was one of the junior officers. When the unit disbanded, one year later, we were posted to the New Carlton Hotel in Edinburgh and then sent to the ORs dining room of 1 Bn Royal Scots. We were demobbed in June 1950 and subsequently lost touch.

I would love to hear from my pal, Pte Wright – her last known address was in Curzon Crescent, Willesden, London NW 10. We had happy times at Fernhurst. I rejoined the WRAC in February 1951 and was posted straight to Becket Hall, Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham, but left to get married in April 1952. My time in the Army was the happiest and I met some great people who I remember with fond memories.

I managed to contact Aileen Butt a few years ago and she sent me a group photograph of most of the staff of 10 RCB. Sadly she passed away a couple of years ago in Edinburgh but it was great to see that photograph after 50 years and I shed a few tears. I was 17½ and the youngest in the camp.

THE YORKSHIRE TILLER GIRLS

Lena Edith H Stanford née Whatley
18 Dickens Road, Tilgate, Crawley, Sussex RH11 5AR

At the start of the War I was an Invoice Clerk in Bradford. My cousin and I enlisted in January 1941. After our initial training, along with five other Bradford girls and one from Sheffield, we were posted from Pontefract Barracks to the RAPC in Ilfracombe. We left Pontefract at 6 am, marching through freezing slushy snow to the station. We arrived at Ilfracombe at 10 pm after changing trains six times.

After a very acceptable curry supper (which none had ever had previously) we were shown our beds in the Grosvenor Hotel. I slept on the first floor with the windows wide open. I felt I was in an entirely different climate. We became known as the Yorkshire girls and were conspicuous with our own accents. The Entertainments Officer persuaded us to form a dancing group and we were trained by Doreen Richards who previously taught the famous Tiller Girls.



The whole cast: Miss Richards wearing the Top Hat, I am the 4th chorus girl from the right, my cousin is the 2nd from the left

ATS 70th ANNIVERSARY

PDF Compressor Free Version

VICTORY SERVICES CLUB

FRIDAY 4 APRIL 2008

The ATS was formed in September 1938 and, to celebrate this 70th Anniversary, there will a Luncheon held in the Carisbrooke Hall of the Victory Services Club in Seymour Street, London on Friday 4 April – the day before the AGM.

The plan is that a buffet luncheon will be served at 12.30 p.m. and that it will be followed by musical entertainment and then tea before dispersal at 5 p.m.

There are only 200 tickets available so, if you would like to attend, please complete the form as soon as you can and return it with your cheque to:

WRAC Association
Worthy Down
WINCHESTER
SO21 2RG

Please bear in mind that the Carisbrooke Hall is on the lower ground floor of the Victory Services Club so those coming along must be able to negotiate one flight of stairs....there is a small lift which usually works but.....

Although this is a celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the formation of the ATS, we would also welcome those who served in the WRAC. This is an Association function to recognise the huge contribution made by the ATS while they served their country. We also hope that some of you who served in the WRAC would like to share in this celebration. Should there be a problem with numbers then priority will be given to ATS but otherwise, this party is open to all members.

ATS 70th ANNIVERSARY

VICTORY SERVICES CLUB

FRIDAY 4 APRIL 2008

I would like to attend the ATS 70th Anniversary Luncheon at the Victory Services Club.

My details are as follows:

Mrs/Miss

First Name

Surname

Maiden Name

Address.....

Post Code

Tel No:

I enlisted in the ATS/WRAC on.....

I was discharged on.....

I enclose a cheque for £15 made payable to WRAC Association. I also enclose a stamp so you can send me a confirmation letter nearer the time. [Please only send the stamp and please DO NOT stick it on this form or your cheque as we will not be able to re-use it. Thank you.]

APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED
BY THURSDAY 20 MARCH 2008.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

PDF Compressor Free Version

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



I wish to join the WRAC Association as a Life Member and enclose £50 cheque

OR

I enclose £5 cheque for Annual Membership, which is in payment
of the first annual subscription up to the 31 October

Date: Signature:

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

Subscriptions include *Lioness*

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

Please complete this form in **BLOCK LETTERS**

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

Miss/Mrs/Ms: Surname:

Given Names: Decorations:

Surname when serving: Date of Birth:

Address for Correspondence:

Post Code: E-mail: Telephone No:

Units during service:

Date of Enrolment: Date of Release:

GRAND REUNION

PDF Compressor Free Version

FRIDAY 20 – MONDAY 23 MARCH 2009

The Grand Reunion in 2009 will be held at the Norbreck Castle Hotel in Blackpool. This is a venue well known to many of you and has been deliberately chosen because it offers all the facilities we require under one roof – something which is rarely available – at what we believe is a reasonable and affordable price.

The format will be similar to the last one: there will be a themed dinner on the Friday night to get us all in the mood, the AGM will be held on the Saturday afternoon followed by a Gala Dinner in the evening. On the Sunday we aim to have a short Parade prior to a Church Service and then a relaxing time after that.

The main difference next year – yes it is only 12 months away! – is that we have organised accommodation on the Sunday night as part of the reunion package. You do not need to be reminded how difficult and unpredictable travel by public transport is on a Sunday so we hope many of you will be able to stay on for the additional night and hopefully enjoy a more peaceful and stress free return journey on the Monday.

It is planned that the cost should be under £150 for the whole package – and, again, it is sold as a package. We would like everyone to join us in the same accommodation for the whole weekend. So, start saving now for the Grand Reunion next year.

Don't forget, we will be celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the formation of the WRAC in 1949 and the 90th Anniversary of the formation of the Association – then the QMAAC Old Comrade's Association – in 1919.

**COME ON – YOU HEARD HOW
GOOD THE LAST ONE WAS –
DON'T MISS OUT ON THE NEXT
ONE. APPLICATION FORMS WILL
BE IN THE NEXT LIONESS –
BE READY!**

WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2008

The next AGM will be held at the Victory Services Club, Seymour Street, London on **Saturday 5 April 2008** 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 **Thursday 20 March 2008.**

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

I will be attending the AGM on Saturday 5 April 2008

Name:

Address:

Telephone Number:

SENIOR WEDDING

Jacob age 92, and Sarah age 89 living in Florida, are all excited about their decision to get married. They go for a stroll to discuss the wedding and on the way they pass a drugstore. Jacob suggests they go in.

Jacob addresses the man behind the counter: "Are you the owner?"

The pharmacist answers "Yes".

Jacob: "We're about to get married. Do you sell heart medication?"

Pharmacist: "Of course we do".

Jacob: "How about medicine for circulation?"

Pharmacist: "All kinds".

Jacob: "Medicine for rheumatism, sclerosis?"

Pharmacist: "Definitely".

Jacob: "How about Viagra?"

Pharmacist: "Of course".

Pharmacist: "Yes, a large variety. The works".

Jacob: "What about vitamins, sleeping pills, Geritol, antidotes for Parkinson's disease?"

Pharmacist: "Absolutely".

Jacob: "You sell wheelchairs and walkers?"

Pharmacist: "All speeds and sizes".

Jacob says to the Pharmacist: "We'd like to use this store as our Bridal Registry".

ENGLISH v GERMAN

The European Commission has just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the European Union rather than German, which was the other possibility.

As part of the negotiations, the British Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a 5-year phase-in plan that would become known as "Euro-English".

In the first year, "s" will replace the soft "c". Certainly, this will make the civil servants jump with joy. The hard "c" will be dropped in favour of "k". This should klear up konfusion, and keyboards kan have one less letter.

There will be growing public enthusiasm in the second year when the troublesome "ph" will be replaced with "f". This will make words like fotograf 20% shorter.

In the 3rd year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be expected to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible. Governments will enkourage the removal of double letters which have always ben a deterrent to akurate speling.

Also, al wil agre that the horibl mes of the silent "e" in the language is disgrasful and it should go away. By the 4th yer people wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing "th" with "z" and "w" with "v".

During ze fifz yr, ze unesesary "o" kan be dropd from vords containing "ou" and after ziz fifz yr, v evil hav a reil sensi bl riten styl.

Zer vil be no mor trubl or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu understand ech oza. Ze drem of a united urop vil finali kum tru.

THE COMPUTER SWALLOWED GRANDMA!

The computer swallowed grandma
Yes, honestly it's true!
She pressed 'control' and 'enter'
And disappeared from view

It devoured her completely
The thought just makes me squirm
She must have caught a virus
Or been eaten by a worm

I've searched through the recycle bin
And files of every kind
I've even used the internet
But nothing did I find

In desperation, I then asked Jeeves
My searches to refine
The reply from him was negative
Not a thing was found 'online'

So, if inside your 'Inbox'
My Grandma you should see
Please 'Copy', 'Scan' and 'Paste' her
And send her back to me.

During March, a concert by the RAPC personnel was produced in the Garrison theatre.

I recently celebrated my **90th Birthday**. I would be interested to hear if any of the Yorkshire girls are still alive. I enjoy reading about events in the *Lioness*.

ATS STATUE
Mrs Margaret Rogers
103 Lion House Park, Mill Road, Hailsham
East Sussex BN27 2SE

I am enclosing a small version of the label inside the Visitors' Book for the ATS Statue at the National Memorial Arboretum. I do hope that as many members as possible can visit the Arboretum to see the statue and we would be grateful if they would be kind enough to sign the book.



AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE

DEDICATION OF MEMORIAL
SATURDAY, 15TH JULY, 2006
The National Memorial Arboretum



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

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?

WRAC OFFICERS' DINING CLUB

ANNUAL LUNCHEON 2008

The WRAC Officers' Dining Club will meet again at the Officers' Mess, Worthy Down on

Saturday 17 May 2008

Please put this date in your Diary now!

If you are not a member of the Officers' Dining Club, ring 01962 887570 and the details will be sent to you.

COPY DEADLINE

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

20 June 2008

News from Overseas Members

THANKS FOR THE MEMORY – 413 Bty

W/256858 Muriel Watson née Brown
9 Crystal Gardens, 84 Kitchener Street, Trigg,
Western Australia 6029

I do not know whether there is anyone else who would remember this song, which I first learned when in Fulford Barracks, York in November 1941 with 413 Battery:

Thanks for the memory
Of leaving Civvy Street
Getting Kits complete –
Marching round the Barrack square
With blisters on our feet –
How lovely that was

Thanks for the memory
Of lectures by the score –
Polishing the floor –
And those inoculations
That left each of us quite sore –
How lovely that was

Everyone here has been charming
And we hope that you will believe it
When we say we're sorry to leave it
But we must go, so cheerio
And, thanks for the memory
Of happy 413
A darned good battery
We hope to meet you all
When this old world is free
So thank you so much

Then spoken "Thank you so much".



Scarborough, a few weeks before D-Day. Betty (Chippy), Muriel Brown, Edie Fosney. Just look at our hair – how did we keep our hats on?



Driver: Evelyn Leech (née Richards), Passenger: Muriel Watson (née Brown). Standing: Betty Cowan (née Hall) and Joyce Seward (née Winter) on the running board

If anyone recognises one of us – we would be glad to hear from them. We might be a long way from UK but our memories of our wonderful days and wonderful comrades remain as fresh as ever.

HOME THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD

W/74662 Barbara Fosdick née Mason
304-1217 Pandora Avenue, Victoria, British Columbia,
Canada V8V 3R3

I was just 17 when I volunteered for the ATS and served from 1941 to 1946 as a "gunner" with several Ack Ack Batteries, including 473, 451 and 670.

In 1947, I emigrated to Canada and after a stay of two years in Toronto, where I met my husband, we moved to Edmonton and then, with two young children, to Victoria BC. Life was good and I had an interesting job at the University Library until I retired in 1989. My husband died in that same year.

Some years later, needing something to fill that empty gap I saw a sign advertising an ex-Servicewomen's Bazaar. I was so surprised to find myself face to face with not only Canadian ex-Servicewomen but at least ten ex-ATS as well as WAAF and Wrens. I had a field day and in no time became a member of Branch 182 of the Royal Canadian Legion. Now twelve years later I have been President of the Branch for four years and have made many friends.

I have kept in touch with veterans from all over the world, including Bunty Beattie Jones with whom I spent a month in Australia, Peg Binns who first wrote to me after the Australian visit account appeared in the *Lioness*, Bats Hall and Mabel Bolton have both been out to Canada for a visit. Editor – more about that in the *Newcastle Branch report*! I have also heard from Margaret Fuller and Elsie Blanchflower – so I consider myself very lucky to have been in touch with so many who remember the old days. I wonder if anyone remembers Mary Bell from West

Hartlepool? She was also in 451 Battery, and was a member of Branch 182 here in Victoria. She was as they say "a character" and I still miss her several years after her death.

PDF Compressor Free Version



Barbara on trek with Bobby Sox

Our Branch is made up of about 100 women veterans from all Services, Canadian Women's Army Corps, Canadian Wrens and WAAF as well as Nursing Sisters and Land Army "girls" and many Allied Women veterans from other parts of the world, mainly the UK. We celebrated our 62nd Anniversary of our Branch this year. We raise and contribute many thousands of dollars for good causes, such as veteran's homes, family resource centres and comforts for injured troops who have fought in Iraq and Afghanistan, and we have a great deal of fun while we do it.

Living in a "Navy Town" we are invited each year to the Naval Base for a slap-up Christmas dinner, and have also been out for a day's cruising on a destroyer. As an old gunner, they let me handle one of their guns, much to the consternation of Eileen (Burley) Smith ex ATS and the sailors kept well out of range "just in case". It really wasn't loaded!



Barbara leads the boarding party taking over HMCS Ottawa!

We have been invited to visit several times for meals at Government House and many other "perks" come our way. My favourite time is around Armistice Day when I

go out to schools to talk to as many as 2,000 high school students and last year to a large school that had to hold two assemblies to cope with the number of grades 9-12 students. They are fascinated to hear that women actually served on gun sites and I'm always proud to boast that our Battery 473 was the first to shoot down an enemy plane in the South Shields, Newcastle area on 16 December 1941.



Irene Ward, MP for South Shields, Barbara Mason and Cpl Lorna Venning

Although I have been a Canadian for many years, I still think of the UK as "Home" and visit as often as I can. I also read every word in the *Lioness* – please keep it coming.

MEMORIES OF ATS SERVICE IN SCOTLAND

Mrs Rane Thompson née Strachan
Villa 147, The Village Glen, 335 Eastbourne Road,
West Rosebud 3940, Victoria, Australia

In September 1939, when the first siren sounded through the night, my sister and I would take our mattresses off our beds and carry them downstairs to our parent's bedroom and lay them on the floor, and we would stay there until the "All Clear" sounded. On the way down we would knock on our younger brother's door "to come down" but alas he went back to sleep!

My call up was deferred for 2 years as the boys in the office were being called up. I joined up on 15 August 1941 and did my training at Cameron Barracks, Inverness. One of the events of my Service was on 21 November 1941 when I was admitted to the Military Hospital, Edinburgh for acute appendicitis. I was there for 15 days and had 28 days sick leave. Thereafter I was in Class 1 billets along with other ATS whilst Nissan Huts were being erected for several weeks. We marched, (Cooks, Telephonists, Drivers, "O" stores personnel) to the gun site at Craigentinny Golf course to carry out our various duties. I was a clerk/typist in the Battery Office and as I was the only ATS. By then I was a Corporal and was fortunate to eat my lunches in the Sergeants' Mess. We were a Mixed HAA "Z" Regiment RA with rockets. The unit next door had 3.7 HAA Guns. When the mixed Batteries were first formed, there was little enemy activity over the country and consequently they had little opportunity proving themselves in action.

Along the English coast, AA "Z" Batteries fired 64 rockets simultaneously to break up enemy Aircraft formations. We were all very proud when we were issued with the white Lanyard by which the guns used to be fired, worn on the right shoulder as well as the "Bomb" badge over the left breast. We were the only ones recognised as AckAck.

I caught up with Margaret Greig when attending a Grand Reunion in Glasgow in 1991. We had worked together in the Battery Office but I had not seen her since leaving the ATS in 1945! We kept in touch regularly and I visited her often over the years. In 2003, when visiting the UK, we decided to see the Golf Course at Craigentiny where we spent most of our Army life. After looking through the fence at the Golf Course outside we recognised the Scout Hall where Jean Bird and George Wood had their wedding reception. Jean borrowed a blue bracelet I owned, being something blue to wear. I remember colouring blank writing paper, blue, pink, yellow and cutting it in strips and using the desk punch for confetti.

I was sent on various courses throughout Scotland and England. One of my assignments was to take a group of girls by train to London. As all the carriages were full, we sat on our kitbags for the 6 hours (in those days) journey – my return journey was more comfortable.

I now live in a Retirement Village and there are over 800 residents here. I bought a 2-bedroom villa with lounge, dining room, bathroom and kitchen with garden front and back seven years ago. We have an indoor swimming pool and a 9 hole golf course with a club house and a restaurant which is open daily. We have many activities, including bridge, croquet, mah-jong (which I enjoy), line dancing, pottery, snooker, Saturday night lounges, indoor and outdoor bowling, tai chi classes and a workshop, village shop, computer room, a Library and craft centre. *Editor: Don't we wish this idea would catch on in this country!*

MESSAGE TO OVERSEAS MEMBERS

Frances Nunnally, née Huppert

7139 Cherokee Road, Richmond, Virginia 23225, USA

Your message to "Overseas Members" and invitation to tell about life in other countries prompted me to write. I am former ATS Private Frances Huppert, W/99790 serving from November 1941 until February 1946.

During my early years I was a most unlikely recruit for His Majesty's Service. I grew up in Vienna, Austria, the youngest member of a loving Jewish family. Then at age 16 disaster struck and turned my life around. Hitler invaded the country and cruel persecutions became the order of the day for us. In despair, my parents sent me to England where I lived with a family earning my keep as the mother's helper. In 1941 I joined the ATS. It was the experience of a lifetime.

After training in the north of England I was posted to Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk. Our platoon consisted largely of refugees, like myself. We proudly wore the British uniform, but basically we were still "enemy aliens" from Germany and Austria. As such we were only

permitted to do certain jobs, like being cooks or Mess orderlies.



Frances in 1944 in Torquay

Our base in Bury St Edmunds was "Gibraltar Barracks", a huge training centre for British troops. There we manned the kitchens and Mess halls, feeding many hundreds of soldiers every day. We carried kettles of food that weighed more than we did, scrubbed scores of Mess hall tables and swilled floors the size of a football field. In midmorning we stood outside behind enormous tubs of hot cocoa, dishing out mugs of "Elevenes" to the men. It was all hard work, but there was plenty of fun as well. There were dances and concerts and downtown Bury St Edmunds had three cinemas.

Many of us girls lost our families in the Holocaust and stood alone in the world. We formed friendships which often lasted a lifetime, corresponding with each other for decades after the last shot in Europe had been fired.

I came to the United States in 1950, joining some distant relatives. It was what my lost parents would have wanted for me to do. For in 1938 after the Nazis came into Austria, my entire family attempted to seek refuge in America, but it was not to be. My mother was deported to Minsk, where on arrival she was shot by a Nazi firing squad. My only brother died in Flossenbürg, one of Hitler's most dreaded concentration camps.

In America I met my husband. We both worked hard all our lives. We bought a house and had a family – two sons and a daughter. America is a wonderful country, but it is not Paradise. Hard work is often the key to survival.

Unfortunately the Health Care system does not cover everyone as it does in many European countries. Millions of Americans do not have Health Insurance and often go without needed care.



Frances and Aubrey Nunnally in 2007

I do not know of any ATS ex-Service organisations here, but have been fortunate in receiving the *Lioness* for a number of years. Your wonderful magazine takes me back to the days when I was an ATS girl – young, strong

and full of energy. Yes, it would be great to have an "International Section" in the *Lioness* and learn about former Service members' lives in many countries of the world.

I always look forward to the postman delivering the *Lioness*. When it arrives I usually drop everything and glance through the magazine's pages hoping to see a familiar face from long ago!

THE BIKER FROM OZ

Bunt Jones

Caerlee House, 5/1 King Street, Warrawong,
New South Wales 2502, Australia

I had a ball showing off the *Lioness* to the Aussie Group at the last RSL meeting. They were really very interested in all the letters, snaps and information of other things – and they had no idea what we "girls" were involved in. It seems they thought all we did was wash dishes, make beds and jump to attention whenever we saw an officer – the mind boggles?

I keep busy organising lunch every 1st Monday of the month (British), XS Womens, 3rd Wednesday, RSL 4th Tuesday, and of course I do meals-on-wheels – some rather sad, others a real hoot.

Regards to everyone and keep well.

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".



MY NEW SPELL CHECKER

Eye halve a spelling chequer
It came with my pea sea
It plane lea Marx for my revue
Miss steaks eye kin knot sea

Eye strike a quay and tie pay whirred
And weight four it too say
Weather eye am wrong or write
It shows me straight a weigh

As soon as a mist ache is maid
It nose bee fore two long
An dye can put the air or rite
Its rare lea ever wrong

I've run this poem threw it
I'm shore your policed two no
Its let a purr faked awl the weigh
My chequer tolled me sew

WRAC Dinner Club

WRAC DINNER CLUB

10th ANNIVERSARY
6 OCTOBER 2007

Editor: This full report was written by Vee Moore who is the Secretary of the WRAC Dinner Club. I have included photographs sent in by Vi Slater, Wyn Carnegie, Chris Corker, Avril Williams and Alison Schofield. Carol Traynor has also sent in a report and the photographs she sent me have been included in her own report which follows this one. Many thanks to all the contributors.

A welcoming cup of tea or coffee and biscuits was served to members who had started arriving at the hotel on Thursday excited to get a good start to a great weekend of shopping and enjoying each other's company.

A WRAC Dinner Club reception desk was set up in the Hotel's main lobby where members signed in and were given their programmes for the weekend. After the hotel staff allocated rooms, the reception returned to its normal peace and quiet until the next batch of ladies arrived. Ladies continued arriving on Friday with a few stragglers on Saturday.

Unfortunately we were unable to raise the WRAC Standard this year as the hotel was being renovated and there was scaffolding right along the front and sides of the hotel.

The Business meeting took place in the Pearce Room on Saturday with almost all the members who had booked the weekend attending. The President welcomed everyone to the meeting and said it was good to see so many members present and taking an interest in the spirit of comradeship in what was, essentially, their Club. Lady Kemball went on to detail the difficulties the committee have to overcome in order to administer the dinner club, particularly when sourcing a venue large enough to take us all at our annual dinner.

The main business of the day was that of electing the committee which was conducted under Item 9 of the agenda. As stated in the constitution, the committee stand down after a term of 3 years so that other members can put themselves forward for election to the committee. However, no applications for either of the committee posts had been received, therefore the committee, with the exception of Sue Thomas, who was to retire on ill health, would continue to serve if they were re-elected. Bel Jenkinson was elected as Hotel Negotiator. Sue Thomas will be on hand to offer her expertise and assistance if necessary. The full committee was elected unopposed.

The business meeting over, the members were free to do what they wanted to for the afternoon – which was mostly shopping of course. Well it's what we ladies do best after all.



This group smiles throughout – Friday night.....



....Saturday out in Liverpool.....



...dancing after Dinner on Saturday night.....



...and Sunday night!

The Dinner

More than 200 women attended the 10th anniversary dinner, which was held this year at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool. It was lovely to see all our comrades enjoying themselves as only ex-WRAC can! Our President, Lady Val Kemball, expressed her delight at seeing so many friends, both old and new.

By 1800 hours the ladies started gathering in the annex to the ballroom where a bar had been set up for us. There was a glass of sherry with the compliments of the hotel conference staff, to start the evening. The bar opened at 1830 hours and, naturally, our ladies made full use of it! Promptly at 1900 hours the bugle announced that dinner was to be served.



Elaine Smith and Sue Westlake



Wendy Hooton, Avril Williams and Jean Farrington

When we entered the ballroom it almost took our breath away – it was so beautiful. It had huge glittering chandeliers along the length of the room and mirrors on the walls which sent the reflected light from the chandeliers bouncing around the whole room. The tables had been laid with white cloths and in each place, alternately laid in either green or gold, was a napkin imprinted with the Corps crest. Sue Thomas had 'volunteered' her mother and herself to cut and sew the fabric into lovely souvenir napkins for each of us to take home. In the centre of the tables were balloons, again in Corps colours, which bobbed and swayed as people walked by. Two bottles of wine had been provided to each table and the wine glasses sparkled invitingly.



Agnes Doig and Betty Green



Agnes Doig and Sue Taylor.....how to arm wrestle without a table!

A group of Adjutant Generals Corps musicians appeared on stage and played and sang a medley of popular music throughout the dinner. The raffle commenced at 2100 hours and, thanks once again to our wonderful members, we had lots of lovely prizes to give away. Lady Val Kemball must have been quite hoarse by the time the last prize was won. As a special 10th anniversary prize the committee had ordered from the Royal British Legion catalogue a beautiful crystal decanter and 6 matching brandy glasses each engraved with the Corps crest. Joyce Nicholls had also donated a set of coasters with the WRAC crest as a second special prize.



Frank or "Elvis"



Carrole Montessori-Gorman twists the night away

After the raffle the band came back to entertain us and we tapped our feet and danced along to their music until 2230 hours when Frank 'Elvis Presley' took over. Frank did his spot dressed in his white 'Elvis' suit much to the delight of Sue Westlake who received a scarf from 'Elvis' which she wore for the rest of the evening and even to breakfast (and beyond?) the next day. Frank is always a popular entertainer at our dinners. He was top of the bill at the first dinner so we thought it would be a fitting tribute to have him entertain us at our 10th anniversary dinner - I think the ladies agreed with us.



Lincoln Branch in their finery



Some familiar faces!

Dancing, interspersed with marching around the room to 'Lass of Richmond Hill', continued well into the wee small hours when we drifted away to our beds. There were a few sore heads on Sunday morning and even more sore feet and rickety old knees but one thing is for sure, we WRAC do know how to enjoy ourselves, don't we?

Vee Moore
Secretary WRAC Dinner Club

WRAC DINNER WEEKEND 5-7 OCTOBER 2007 Carol Traynor

Another wonderful weekend - the dinner and entertainment were superb. We had brilliant sunshine for the whole weekend and visited the Albert Dock, the Cathedrals, had a ride on the Mersey Ferry, went to see Anthony Gormley's Iron men sculptures at Crosby and had a tour on the open top tourist bus - as usual the weekend went far too quickly as there was so much to see and do.

Many thanks to the WRAC Dinner Committee and helpers for all their hard work in arranging another fantastic weekend for us, a lovely service on the Sunday morning and at the end when Andrea Bocelli's "Time to say Goodbye" was played with us all linking hands - we certainly needed our hankies!



Waiting for dinner



*Back row: Margaret Beattie, Sandy Taylor, Carol Traynor, Sue Thomas and Christine Harbon
Front: Rita Broomfield, Anne Gurney and Patricia (Flogger) Gates*



Irene Maclean, Margaret Beattie and Pat (Tricky) Bird



Rita Broomfield, Margaret Beattie, Rose Friend, Jackie Foulds, Anne Gurney, Margo Fraser and Carol Traynor



Rita Broomfield, Carrole Montessori-Gorman, Anne Gurney, Carol Traynor, and Scatty takes centre stage on the front row



Christine Harbon, Anne Gurney, Rose Friend, Patricia Gates, Carol Traynor and Sandy Taylor

WRAC SWEATSHIRTS FOR SALE

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

Sizes 36 - 46

Other colours available

Also
Knitted WRAC Dolls

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

Reminiscences of the WRAC

MEMORIAL WINDOW, GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL

PDF Compressor Free Version



Beryl accompanying the Princess Royal when she visited Bicester

Beryl Montague-Butlin, who served in the WRAC as Beryl Sims, when she was known as "Simmie", is a guide at Guildford Cathedral. For 5 October, she placed a small chaplet of poppies beneath our Commemorative window to mark the anniversary of the Guildford bombings. If you happen to be in Guildford and would like to visit the Cathedral, Beryl would be delighted to show you round. Please telephone her first to be sure that she will be on duty. (01483 272506)

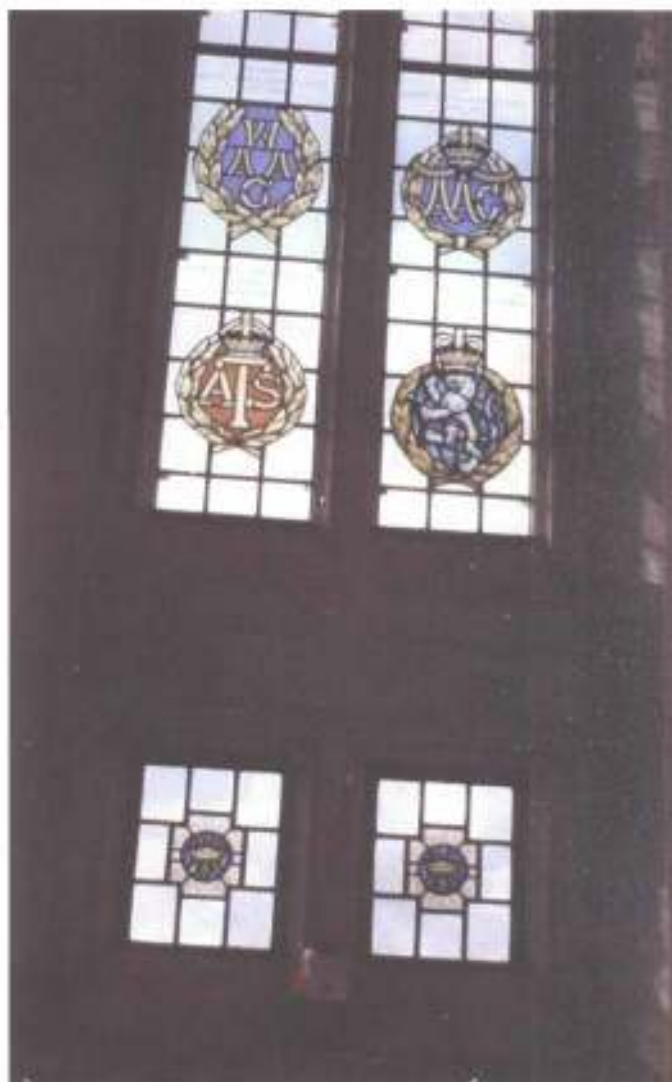


**In memory of
W/454500 Private Ann Hamilton
And
W/454448 Private Caroline Slater
Who were killed when
The IRA attacked Guildford
On
5 October 1974**

Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re

Beryl reported that the Cathedral mentioned the event in their weekly service sheet and that she met a retired police officer standing in front of the window. He had

been on duty on the night of the bombings and had helped to retrieve the girls' bodies from the wreckage.



SOME OF THE HISTORY OF INGLIS BARRACKS, MILL HILL

Inglis Barracks was named after Colonel (later Lieutenant General), Sir William Inglis who coined the nickname of The Middlesex Regiment as "Die Hard" at the battle of Albuhera 16th May 1811. The Barracks were first used as the depot of The Middlesex Regiment on 4th April 1905. MX Units 5th, 26th Bn (Militia) plus the Tower Hamlets (Militia) were the first units to be stationed there.

The Barracks were known as a "Garden Barracks", situated 100 feet higher than the dome of St Paul's Cathedral. In the latter part of the 1914-18 war, cavalry ponies were located in the area of the Sports Ground.

In November 1922, HRH the Prince of Wales unveiled the Middlesex Regiment War Memorial which is located adjacent to the Officers' Mess. The ashes of many old "Die-Hards" have been scattered around the base of the memorial.

At the end of the 1939-45 war, Polish Troops, German Prisoners of War and Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), in addition to the Middlesex Regt rear party were all stationed in the barracks. In May 1955, new gates were erected at the entrance to the Barracks to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the occupation of the Versaille. The Mayor of the London Borough of Barnet performed the ceremony and the gates were later used as the entrance to the Officers' Mess.

During the period 1962-64 the Barracks were rebuilt and finally occupied in 1964 by the HPD RE (also known as HPCD RE & HPCCD RE) and also 12 Coy WRAC who moved out of their barracks at Richmond. This was commemorated by the laying of a Stone in the wall of the Junior Ranks Club, by HRH, Princess Mary, Princess Royal, Controller Commandant WRAC, on the 31st October 1962. 12 Coy WRAC were based in Inglis Barracks until the Corps was disbanded in April 1992.

INGLIS BARRACKS, MILL HILL - THE LAST POST

Sue Foulks, Secretary Canterbury Branch
111 Newlands, Whitfield, Dover, Kent CT16 3ND



WRAC Accommodation 1965

In April 1964 the final parade of 12 Battalion WRAC was held before Kingston Gate Camp in Richmond Park was closed and the WRAC moved from the old wooden accommodation huts to new, purpose-built quarters at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill. These barracks were to be the base for the Home Postal & Courier Communications Depot Royal Engineers and our unit which was renamed 12 Indep Coy WRAC.

Forty-three years later, on 7 July 2007, my husband Reg and I made a nostalgic trip to Mill Hill for the first Open Day before the barracks finally closed and the Postal Depot relocated to RAF Northolt, Middlesex.

We both remembered the Camp as a bustling, noisy place, always busy 24 hours a day, with shift workers walking to the sorting office to carry out the vital work of forwarding mail to our forces worldwide. Each day coaches carried WRAC into London to work in various MOD and Government offices. During the summer months, two weeks at a time, TA units would swell the numbers. The square often resounded to the

unmistakable sounds of drill squads being put through their paces for parades in London. What a difference the years have made.



Sue Goodison, Mo D'Ambrosio, Babs(?), Wilma Armstrong and Pat Heap relaxing on a Sunday afternoon

Most of the blocks were still standing but, sadly, many were empty and neglected. The WRAC Guardroom remains but weeds grew between the broken paving slabs - what would the RSM say? The WRAC Sgts' Mess was the Junior Ranks Dining Hall, the Cookhouse where Reg and I first met, the Courier Branch. We went into the Education Centre where we were shown how technology and the use of e-blueys and faxes have vastly speeded up the Forces postal service. Our next stop was the Junior Ranks Club. It always seemed busy with a long counter, jukebox playing the latest hits in the corner and a small bar near the front entrance. Now it was quiet and empty except for an exhibition of old photos - few went back to our era, the 1960s. We walked across the grass to a field post office and I glanced over at the WRAC Orderly Room fully expecting someone to shout "Get off the grass" but alas no one was there - just empty offices.

We wandered back to the RE Sgts' Mess to meet up with old friends, some of whom were staying for the Gala Dinner that evening. I understand that the Officers' Mess, a listed building, with its memorial to the Middlesex Regt in the grounds, will remain once the bulldozers move in but it looks likely that the rest of the barracks will go the way of many others and become a housing estate before too long.

CLOSURE OF MILL HILL Margaret Grant MBE

On Thursday 5 July the Inglis Barracks Farewell Parade and Cocktail party was held and a Farewell Ball on the Saturday. The closure of the Barracks marks the end of 43 years as the home of the Postal and Courier Services.

A number of us toured the Camp and the Post Office for the last time which brought back many happy memories. I met lots of comrades and the Farewell was quite emotional but I am sure that the good work will carry on at the new Post Office. I wish everyone success and happiness and I hope to visit in the near future.



12 Coy Offices



Sgts Mess



COURSE PHOTOGRAPHS 1966 AND 1967

Jane Freebairn, General Secretary

I was given both these photographs by Lt Col (Retd) Val Trout who is the Secretary of Salisbury Branch. We would like your help to identify the ladies on the courses. We all forget to put the names on the backs of photographs at the time because we genuinely believe that we will never forget the names of our colleagues. However, we all know what tricks the passage of time can play on our memories so, if you do know any of those on the photographs, please let me know. Thanks.



Sgts Course, WRAC College, Camberley, 5-27 January 1966



Hockey Skills Course, Aldershot
19 September – 3 October 1967

DO YOU KNOW WHO THIS IS?

Chris Salaman

30 South Street, Weedon Bec, Northants NN7 4QP

I wonder if you can help me to identify the officer in this photograph?



Cartoon

I recently acquired this framed print from a bric-a-brac dealer who assured me that it was a "high ranking lady police officer!" The original was drawn and signed by an artist know as PARK in 1963. Other than that, I know nothing. Can anyone help?

Editor: I think the rank is Lieutenant Colonel because I am fairly sure there are two badges of rank on the epaulettes.

WHO WAS AT GUILDFORD WITH MARIE ROBERTS IN 1966?

My Platoon was training together on 11 January 1966 at Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Guildford, Surrey. We did 6 weeks' training together. **PDF Compressor: Free Version**
are now ladies? In those days we were girls aged 17 years to 21 years. Some of them came from the Plymouth area.

There are 32 ladies in my group photograph. Found 2. Set of twins Margaret and Patricia Glen came from Glasgow but could be living in the West Country.

Names:

Eileen Bryant
Maureen Casey
Lynn Briercliff
Christine Hanham
Jane Clapham
Vicky Hurbert
Patricia & Margaret Glen
Pat Johnstone
Edwena Male
Bridie Mulloy
Jenny.....
Elizabeth Welsh
Joyce Wagstaff
Pauline Shaw
Margaret Spencer
Denise.....
Lynn Rudd
Pauline Rudderford
Betty Peace
Valerie Wilson
Joello Stevenson
Christine Wenysa
Joan Ryan
Rosemary.....
E H Thompson
Jackie Savage
.....Hazel Laird
Linda Beckett



I have not seen them all since our Army days 41 years ago so please do your best to put this story in. I'm hoping to arrange a reunion. There is a register and dinner club they can join and I can put them in touch with the secretary who does that.

Email: mlr116wrac@hotmail.co.uk
or call or text Marie Roberts on
07842 577722

COPY DEADLINE

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

20 June 2008

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:

Post code

Tel. No.

E-mail

Send to:

WRAC Association, AGC Centre,
Worthy Down, WINCHESTER SO21 2RG

WRAC INTERNATIONAL REGISTER

The Register is now complete and has been winging its way to all new applicants since July 2007. The additions list for the period June 2004 – 31 May 2007 has now been sent to all existing members. Due to my personal commitments, this distribution had to be done in batches. Sorry if you had to wait.

What has been a little scary is the number of returns I have received. Members have moved house but have forgotten to let me know. If you are a member of the Register and have moved in the last two years, please could you let me have your new address? If one of your friends has moved during this period, could you give them a reminder too?

If you would like to join the Register or maybe find out a little more about it, then please contact me:

Mrs Ann Deakin, 14 Ash Rise, Ashflatts Lane
STAFFORD ST17 9HE
Tel: 01785 249992

W/416734 Lcpl Ann Butler

Where Are You Now?

**WERE YOU IN SINGAPORE OR HONG KONG
IN THE LATE 1950s?**
W/395224 Evelyn McGeachy nee Blundell
Email: Evelynmnl@aol.com

PDF Compressor Free Version



Evelyn Blundell

I would so like to get in touch with anyone who knew me in UK, Singapore or Hong Kong. I served with the Royal Signals and I sailed from Southampton on 25 January 1957 on the Empire Orwell.



Enjoying the sun on Empire Orwell

I sailed with Mary Smith, Connie Helens, Peggy Cummings, Francis Trumper, Betty Coward and a Staff Sergeant. I am now on the WI speakers' list and I give talks on "My life in uniform". I got married in 1960 to the young man who was our steward on the Empire Orwell. I do hope that as many friends as possible get in touch.



Evelyn with her steward husband

INFORMATION ABOUT ALICE BESSIE HILL

Miss B Bennett

7 Beech Grove, Owslebury, Winchester, Hants SO21 1LS

Tel: 01962 777755

Email: barbara.b1@btinternet.com

Do you recognise any of these ladies or gentlemen? I am desperately trying to trace anyone who knew my aunt Alice Bessie Hill (Betty).

Two units are mentioned: 485(M) HY AA BTY RA and 139(M) HAA Regt RA but I do not where the photographs were taken. These and more have been found at the back of an old wardrobe where they have been for many, many years.

So if you have any information at all, please contact me, Barbara Bennett, asap. You would certainly make me very happy after years of trying to find out about Auntie Bess.



*Back row, first left: Alice Bessie Hill (Betty)
Signatures on back on photo: Jill Pearce, S J Davis,
A McKenna, G M Jones, Margaret E Milan, C Jukes,
Rita Belton, Eunice M Fletcher, Verina Batch, Pauline
Dowding, May Francis (Glaf), Ruth A Greensmith*



*Front row, second on left: Alice Bessie Hill. Most of the
signatures on the back of this photo are the same as above*

MELTON MOWBRAY 1964-1965

W/409821 Mrs P J Griffiths née Marriott
1C Westminster Road, Ellesmere Port CH65 2EE



Vi, Pat and Jan

I would like to trace any WRAC who served with the RAVC at Melton Mowbray in 1964-1965. I can remember Val Flower, Vi Bowen and Jan from Erith, also Pat Herbet and twins from Scotland and Sue Glass. We looked after the remount horses and the dogs.

Also if there are any WRAC in the Chester area, please come and join our Branch which meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at Belgrave Hotel, City Road at 1pm.

DID YOU SERVE WITH MURIEL PROFFITT?

Mrs M Baker née Proffitt

9 Beverstone Grove, Lawn, Swindon, Wilts SN3 1EY

I always wished that I had taken home addresses of the girls I was with for most of my three and a half years in the ATS. I joined up on 2 March 1945 (same day as Her Majesty the Queen) and went to Fleet for driver training. From there I went to Sheldon Hall Shrewsbury - a small friendly unit. The cooks enjoyed their work and looked after us. We were in a car pool, so each day we would look in a book to see who we would be driving the next day, where we were going and which car to drive. We had time to study the route which of course was very important in the days when sign posts had been taken down. One day we would be invited to have lunch in a hotel (luxury in those days). Next day we would be sitting on boxes eating fish and chips! We went on tours in beautiful North Wales. I had to sleep in some funny places, once in a completely empty house - wouldn't fancy it now I'm older! After a year, my friend and I moved to a VRD in Lancaster and Rena and I drove troop carriers and were able to take the girls to Blackpool and Morecambe at the weekends, dancing in the Tower Ballroom, full of airmen, never short of a partner.

From Lancaster we were posted to Germany to Army Headquarters at Bad Oeynhausen. I was driving a troop carrier and then a 3-ton lorry. In the cold winter of 1947 truck driving was good because we could wear our long woollen pants under trousers, boots and gaiters. The engines were inside the cab. However, I went back to staff car driving and that was a different story - we had to wear skirts and you had to drive a car several miles before it would warm up. The winter of 1948 was very bad, but by then I had been attached to the Medical Corps and was driving a Major General who allowed us to wear trousers. In England we travelled about 100 miles a day but in Germany we more than doubled that. We took our leave in Brussels and Berlin and a 3-week leave to Austria to learn to ski.

I would dearly love to hear from any of the girls, especially Edna Tate from Whitby, (she was going to be a taxi driver when she left the ATS), Josephine Stanley from Dorchester, Val from Glasgow - did you marry your Yank? Mollie from Birmingham, Jean Tatham(?) from Altrincham - did you ever write your book? Please get in touch.

ATS SERVING AT CATTERICK AND YORK

W/257038 Cynthia M Needham née Thornton
39 Barkham Close, Cheddington, Beds LU7 0RT

Would you please publish these photographs in the next

issue of *Lioness*, as I am trying to find some of the girls that I was with in the ATS. I was at Catterick, Chilwell Ordnance Depot and York. If any of you are "out there" please get in touch.

PDF Compressor Free Version



Cynthia Thornton



Group photo - York Aug 1946

Signatures on back: Betty Russell, Elsie Warburton, Sue or Eve Worthington, Joan?, Betty B, Joan Halliday, All the NCOs, F W Ward

INFORMATION ABOUT THE LATE CONSTANCE CROOK

Mrs Susan M Taylor
92 Bramshott Road, Southsea, Hants PO4 8AW
Tel: 02392 612505

I am trying to find out more about my late Aunt, Constance Eliza Cawse née Crook who was born on 24 July 1921. I have found a couple of photographs of her of which I enclose copies as the originals are very brittle with age. I would really appreciate it if you could publish Connie's details.



Connie in uniform with a RAOC Badge





Connie kept contact with Joan Widgery (maiden name not known to me) who now lives in Selby, North Yorkshire. Connie sadly passed away on 17 August 2007 most unexpectedly and, as she had no children, I have taken it upon myself to preserve as much of her "story" as I can. I have many fascinating cine films from the late 50s onwards, taken during her holidays with her husband, many of them travelling abroad by motorbike and sidecar. Details of her ATS years would be a fascinating addition to "Connie's archives".

MARGARET RICHARDS, NEWPORT 1943-1944

Rod W Copeland, Attorney at Law
107 East Third Street, Prophetstown, Illinois 61277, USA

I am trying to help a friend of mine who was in the US Army stationed in Newport, Wales during WW2 make contact with a lady who was in the ATS at the same place. The lady's maiden name was Margaret Richards. She was adopted, raised in Pontypridd, Wales but they met when they were both serving in Newport.

My friend's name is Arlyn Cady and he would love to hear again from Margaret Richards. Arlyn can be reached at PO Box 1, Prophetstown, Illinois 61277 USA.



Arlyn Cady in his wartime uniform

SEARCHING FOR JOAN NEIL

W/413938 Mrs H King née Bassant
"Sybeth", 24 School Lane, Toftwood, Dereham,
Norfolk NR19 1LS
Tel: 01362 693045

I don't know how or where I can trace a girl I was with in the WRAC. I was stationed in Marchington, Staffordshire in 1963 and her name was Joan Neil. I know she married another soldier whose name was Michael (Mick) and lived in Kent but I lost contact with her. Her Army Number was near mine. If Joan is out there or if anyone knows her whereabouts, please get in touch.

MARGARET COUSINS

I am writing this on behalf of a very good friend of mine who lives in Sunderland. Vinnie Burgham would very much like to get in touch with Margaret Cousins. They met when they served in the ATS at Neville's Cross, Co Durham. They were both chosen to go to Stonebridge Park. So, if Margaret or anyone who knows either Vinnie or Margaret, wants to get in touch, can you contact me, Lynn Jenkins on 02380 470965. I am currently the Secretary of Southampton Branch and I will pass messages on to Vinnie.

W/74430 PTE ELSIE FLORENCE SWIFT

Glenis B Burton
24 Hallam Road, Mapperley, Nottingham NG3 6HP
glenisbburton@btinternet.com
Tel: 01159 504759

I am looking for friends or acquaintances who may have known my mother ex-ATS W/74430 Private Elsie Florence Swift who enrolled as a Private on 6 August 1941. She was posted to No 2 Training Centre on 15 August 1941 and served with 43rd Kent Platoon M Company on 30 October 1941. She also served in Western C Company, North Company East Lancaster Group and H Company Scottish Command. From there she went to Holding Unit in 1943 for training and posted to No 8 Holding Unit in October 1943 from where she was discharged in April 1944. She had the War Medal 1939/1945.

I would be delighted to hear from you no matter how little information you have.

WHO CAN HELP?

Editor

My sincere apologies but this lovely photograph, I believe sent by e-mail, has been separated from any text which might have accompanied it. I would be grateful for any information and will publish an appropriate piece in the next edition. Thank you very much.



Reunions

ADEN VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Wid 11865 Sheila Parker nee Rea
43 Park Avenue, Withernsea, East Yorkshire HU19 2JX
Parkcol@tiscali.co.uk

Friday 21 September began a weekend in Blackpool of both the annual reunion of the Aden Veterans Association and the Commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the withdrawal of British Troops from Aden. Friday evening was dinner and entertainment which everyone thoroughly enjoyed. The AGM was held on the Saturday and was followed in the evening by dinner and dancing. But the main purpose of the weekend was never far from our thoughts.



Brigadier Field and Aden Veterans in the Norbreck Castle Hotel

Sunday morning saw us all in our best bibs and tuckers, medals were worn and what a lovely show of colour there was on parade. At the Cenotaph, there was a service of remembrance followed by a wreath laying ceremony. Our Patron, Brigadier Anne Field CB CBE,



Sheila Parker and the WRAC Association wreath. The whole weekend went very well and we had a most enjoyable time as well as remembering our service in Aden.

former Director WRAC, laid a wreath on behalf of the Aden Veterans Association. I laid one on behalf of the WRAC Association, followed by various other wreaths being laid on behalf of other regiments that had served in Aden over many years. My husband, who himself had been badly injured in Aden, laid a wreath on behalf of the Coldstream Guards.



WRAC Aden veterans at the Blackpool Cenotaph

NORTH EAST AREA REUNION 12 SEPTEMBER 2007 – CAPTION COMPETITION

Irene Maclean, Cleveland Branch sent the first photograph and Babs Dawson, Harrogate Branch sent in the second one. The Area Chairman, Maj (Retd) Dot Ryder features in both but you can decide what she is saying to Colonel Frankie Cook or why Babs Dawson is surreptitiously checking her watch – maybe she is hoping it is time to disappear!



WRAC POSTAL BRANCH ASSOCIATION REUNION

Miss Margaret Grant MBE
Forth Cottage, 254 Church Street, Tranent,
East Lothian EH33 1BW

PDF Compressor Free Version

The Reunion was held at Harrogate this year during October. The Hotel was a delight to stay at and everything was perfect even the weather. £205 was collected for the Rainbow Charity by games etc organised by Beryl and Brenda. Some members paid a visit to Eden Camp on the Sunday which was well worthwhile seeing.



After Dinner

*Front: Margaret Smith, Margaret Grant MBE, Sylvia Knowles
Middle: Isobel Duffy, Brenda Daley, Sheila Simpson, Jean Legg, Pam Sussex, Chris Fretwell
Back: Yvonne O'Brien, Patsy Cook, Pat Carter, Beryl Sandy, Joan Smith, Val Sanders, Margaret Moule, Pat Holman, Dorron Phillipson, Laura Meacher, Maggie Watt*



Outside Hotel

*Front: Chris Fretwell, Margaret Grant MBE, Pat Holman
Middle: Joan Smith, Jean Legg, Val Sanders, Pam Sussex, Pat Carter
Back: Maggie Watt, Margaret Smith, Sylvia Knowles, Isobel Duffy*

REUNION

I was asked one day what reunion meant
What did the word imply?
I knew in my heart what the answer was
But only in words could reply

A reunion of people who, long, long ago
Thrown together by chance in a War
Laughed and cried, fought and sang
And travelled to countries afar

We cannot forget, we do not intend
It's something which grips you inside
You hear a name, you see a face
And memories come in like the tide

You remember occasion, laughter or tears
You see them, it seems generations ago
You forget the present and can't even guess
What the future might have to show

Just a picture of the past appears
And you reach for that far distant shore
How can the ordinary person know
How can they even guess?
They can't understand what goes on inside
At a hand on the shoulder caress.

"Oh no" they say, "It's a drinking do
That's all reunions are for"
But we who know and understand
Reply "They are far, far more."
They show a spirit that is fine
In peacetime or in War.

A spirit to help us in the present day
For the world's understanding is poor
A last reminder to you my friends
That includes everyone too

May you always have strength to carry on
And God guard you whatever you do.

Submitted by Barbara Danter, Leicester and Nottingham Branch

SHOEBURYNESSE PROOF & EXPERIMENTAL ESTABLISHMENT (P&EE) 17th INDEP COY WRAC 8TH BIENNIAL RE-UNION - NOVEMBER 2007

W/388700 Miss Janet A James
5 York House, 18 Kew Gardens Road, Richmond, Surrey
TW9 3HF. Tel: 020 8940 4665

Thanks to the efforts of former Sgt Jo Crutcher and her willing cohorts, former members of the 17th Indep Company and its successor unit have, since 1993, been enjoying biennial re-union weekends at various locations around the country.

We celebrated the latest reunion at the end of October 2007, near Kings Lynn and, thinking that we could not let the PTIs get away with all the (re-union) glory, wondered if you might find the enclosed photographs and report of

interest to the magazine. Editor: Of course they are! I believe that reports of reunions are a vital part of the *Lioness* so keep them coming in....any more groups out there who are still hiding away? You never know – a quick mention and a photograph in the *Lioness* might help to recruit more members!

PDF Compressor Free Version



Shoeburyness Range Office – Spring 1956

The unit at Shoeburyness was disbanded in the mid-1980s when much of the work was taken over by civilians. But the spirit of the unit still lingers on and our numbers this year were as good as ever. Including spouses, many of whom served at Shoeburyness with the Royal Artillery, around 55 of us gathered to reminisce.



Kings Lynn – October 2007 – As we are now!

We are always keen to catch up with any former members who spent their time on the ranges and who might like to join us at our next re-union – time and date will be announced later! If you contact me, janetjames@ukgateway.net or Jo, jojocrutch@hotmail.co.uk, we will let you know where and when the next gathering will take place: probably sometime in the autumn of 2009.

We do cover quite a wide range of age groups, from those of us who were at Shoeburyness in the mid 50s and early 60s, to veritable youngsters who were there in the 1980s. But it would be especially good to hear from any one who served there before 1954, when our combined memories begin. We know that you are out there somewhere!

The black and white photo was taken I think around

Spring 1956 and most members of the unit at the time who could be spared were included, three of whom are on the coloured photograph of our re-union group. The photograph of four girls and a boy (again of the 1956 vintage) was taken when we visited Sandringham Gardens during the weekend.



Harry and Audrey Pears, née Tyrell, (celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary during the reunion weekend!), Chris Leaman née Browne, Mary Roger née Savage and Janet James

ATS DINNER CLUB REUNION IN BLACKPOOL

Editor: I received two reports about the ATS Dinner Club Reunion. One from Joy Balmain, ATS Dinner Club Secretary, and one from Joan Higgins, the main organizer. I have taken the liberty of combining them.

Sixty ATS Dinner Club Members met in Blackpool on 24 September at The Norbreck Castle Hotel for a 4-night stay, not only to see the lights but mainly to reminisce over days in the Service during the Second World War and in the times following. They were accompanied by four husbands/partners who enjoyed the time with the group as did everybody who attended the celebrations.

The President, Lady Mary Crofton, who was thrilled to be among some of her contemporaries, graced the Reunion. Sadly our Chairman, Audrey Juby, was unable to come along as she was in hospital following an operation and sent her apologies for non-attendance. Also, our Patron, Brigadier Anne Field CB CBE, was unable to attend and sent her apologies. It was pleasing to all members that our one remaining founder member, Mary Beeston, was with us and accompanied by her husband.

The welcome meeting was held on Monday evening, the introduction being made by the Secretary, Joy Balmain, who was standing in for the Chairman and she in turn introduced Joan Higgins who had organised the whole event and who talked about the plans made for the four days of the reunion. This included a trip by coach to see the lights on Tuesday evening after dinner. On Thursday we had a trip through part of the Lake District and stopped at Grasmere for luncheon. Luckily we were graced by good weather during our time in Blackpool, so these outings went off very well.



Joan Higgins & Joy Balmain with her husband, Bruce
Courtesy of Joan Awbery, Secretary Norfolk Branch

Everyone enjoyed all the events arranged and the Hotel management was extremely helpful. The rooms were good and we had one section of the dining hall to ourselves. Plenty of choices were offered for meals at which we helped ourselves.

Dinner was taken on three nights in the main dining room but we had a private room for our Gala Night on Wednesday. The tables were all decorated with green and yellow serviettes (they couldn't get khaki!). Here the dinner was served at the tables, the Hotel management providing an entertainer who played keyboard, sang songs and told jokes for us. We asked him to play old War-time songs and some of the ladies were able to dance. After Dinner, we had an excellent Raffle with

many prizes and we are grateful to Margaret Powell and all the ladies who helped to organize this very successful part of our reunion.

We do hope everyone was pleased – it was great to meet old – and make new – friends. Would we like to do the same next time, or another venue?

REUNION IN MALTA

Well – slight exaggeration. When Jo and Roddy Young went to Malta they were not planning a reunion. However, they were delighted to bump into Helen Merrington-Rust and Penny Gold at the Airport...and enjoy an evening out with them.



Roddy, Helen, Jo and Penny

WRAC Officers' Dining Club

**WRAC OFFICERS' DINING CLUB
LUNCHEON TO BE HELD AT THE OFFICERS' MESS
WORTHY DOWN
SATURDAY 17 MAY 2008**

Jane Freebairn, General Secretary

A very successful Dinner was held on 1 December 2007 at the Victory Services Club and nearly 120 officers and partners attended. It was a great gathering and again we had wonderful music provided by a group of musicians from Kneller Hall under the baton of Student Bandmaster Tina Crowley. This time the 'pièce de résistance' was when they played the Post Horn Gallop using the COACH Horn which had been presented by Brigadier Helen Meechie when she relinquished her post as DWRAC. It was a triumph!

Our numbers are definitely increasing and those who attend really do enjoy themselves and are determined to come again next time. If you cannot wait until the Dinner – Saturday 22 November 2008 – why not come to the Annual Luncheon at the Officers' Mess, Worthy Down?

If you are a member of the Officers' Dining Club you will receive a personal notification. If not, please ring on 01962 887570 and I will add you to the list!

SATURDAY 17 MAY 2008 – WORTHY DOWN – SEE YOU THERE

Weddings

DIAMOND WEDDING

JOHN MANNIOTT and JOYCE NICHOLSON
9 Low Well Park, Wheldrake, York YO19 6DS
Tel: 01904 448562



Wedding Day - July 1947

Joyce, a Command Post Telephonist, who served with 486 and 539 (M) HAA Btys and John, a REME (AA) SSgt, met on a gun-site in Doodle Bug Alley in 1944. After John served a tour in Gold Coast (now Ghana) with WAEME, they were married in Hull in July 1947 and lived in Bristol for 40 years.

As part of their Diamond Wedding celebrations they were treated to Afternoon Tea at The Ritz and several



Afternoon Tea at The Ritz

theatre visits, courtesy of their children, son-in-law, grandchildren and one recent great granddaughter.

They have lived in York for 20 years and sadly miss the Annual Reunions of the ladies of AA Command.

DIAMOND WEDDING

ERNIE BRACHER and FLORENCE (DEB) DEBNEY

17 Hertford Way, Gorleston, Great Yarmouth,
Norfolk NR31 7LH

My name is Florence Bracher née Debney (W/67647), Deb to my mates in the ATS.

I joined the ATS in 1941 and underwent my basic training at Warrington and from there was posted to REME - RAOC Records at Leicester where I met my future husband, Ernie, who was with the Training Company at Stoneygate. We were able to spend some time together before I was posted to East Africa in 1943 and Ernie to India in 1944 where we stayed until demob - January 1946 for me and April 1946 for Ernie. (Thank you for publishing my letter re the VJ day in East Africa in your '60 years of the ATS' edition in 1998!)



Wedding Day in 1947



60 years later

We were married in St Peter and St Paul Church at Burgh Castle near Great Yarmouth on 27 September 1947. We now have a daughter, son and 3 grandchildren.

We will be celebrating our Diamond Wedding together with 30 family and friends at a luncheon party at the Cliff Hotel, Gorleston which the family have organised.

DIAMOND WEDDING

JOHN BINNS and MARGARET BELL

22 Denbeigh Place, Benton, Newcastle upon Tyne
NE12 8DE

Peggy (W/163515) and John Binns, ex-RAF, celebrated 60 years of a very happy marriage on 20 September 2007. They were married in St Anthony's Church, Newcastle and were blessed with a daughter and son. They met at a party for other family members after both of them



20 September 1947

returned from serving in the Services, Peggy in the ATS and John in the RAF, happily surviving almost 4 years in a Japanese POW Camp, ending up in Nagasaki experiencing the dropping of the Atomic Bomb.

The 60th Anniversary celebrations lasted all day! Several family members went by mini-bus, firstly to the "The Forge Inn" in Ulgham, Northumberland, for lunch followed by a drive along the coast to Seahouses, a coastal fishing village, for tea. Finally the celebrations continued at home in Newcastle with a 60th celebration cake being cut and more champagne being enjoyed. On show was, of course, the lovely Congratulation Card from the Queen. This also pleased the Postman who said during all his service this was the first 60th wedding greetings he had been able to deliver from the Queen.

They were delighted to share the day with daughter Carol, their American daughter in law, Mary, two grandchildren, Katie and John and their sixteen month old American born great granddaughter, Julia. Unfortunately, their son was in Nigeria on the day but took them out for further celebrations on his return.



John and Margaret celebrate their Diamond Wedding Day

LUDICROUS LAWS

A little-known law which prohibits people dying while in the Houses of Parliament has been voted the UK's most ludicrous piece of legislation.

Another law which states it is treason to use a postage stamp upside down was placed in second place by those polled by UKTV Gold.

Other lesser-known laws making the top 10 included one banning eating mince pies on Christmas Day and another stating it is illegal to enter the Houses of Parliament wearing a suit of armour. Almost half of those asked confessed to breaking the mince pie law, which was brought in by Oliver Cromwell in the 17th Century.

The Law Society last year revealed other bizarre UK laws still in existence on the statute book. They included a ban on firing a cannon close to a dwelling house (Met Police Act 1839); a ban on the use of any slide upon ice or snow (Town Police Clauses Act 1847); and the prohibition of driving cattle through the streets of London (Metropolitan Streets Act 1867).

Letters to the Editor

PDF Compressor Free Version

W/296829 Mrs B Thomson née Cpl Bryce
ATS/WRAC

5 Newcombe Court, Beech Grove, Sale, Cheshire
M33 6RU

Dear Editor

Thank you for my copy of the *Lioness* which I enjoyed very much.

Regarding the "Senior Moment" referred to by one of the correspondents; recently the Counter Assistant in my local Post Office told me, when I used this phrase, that it had now changed to "An intellectual overload". This might be a nice little snippet to slip into the next magazine!

Editor: and a much nicer way of explaining away those certain moments which we all know only too well!

PROUD OF MY FOUR DIGIT NUMBER

Mrs Y J T Kingdon, formerly Caudr, née Black
123 Cranbury Road, Eastleigh,
Hampshire SO50 5HH
Tel: 023 8061 2661

Dear Editor

In *Lioness* 2/2007 Betty France of Leeds asked for volunteers who joined the ATS before the outbreak of War. I did – I think it was actually in 1938. I joined at the Leigh Road Drill Hall (now the Leigh Ball Room) in Eastleigh and was attached to The Hampshire Regiment later to become The Royal Hampshire Regiment. I was actually "called up" before the outbreak of War. My Army number, of which I am very proud, is W1554.....

PS: I attended the ATS Dinner Reunion in Blackpool in September. I understand there were 60 members in attendance – all over 80!

W/137181 PTE VICKY CLARK NÉE WARREN

A & V Clark

20 Dunlop Place, Milngavie, Glasgow G62 7LL

Tel: 0141 956 4118

Dear Editor

I'm writing this for my wife who is registered blind. She was W/137181 Pte Vicky Warren, 559 Mixed Battery at Shotley where we met aboard my ship HMS COSBY DE 559.

After a hectic courtship due to her being moved to Feltham and later shipped to Plymouth, we had few quality times together. Our longest time together was at August Bank Holiday 1944 when we got stranded in Colchester – bus and train services were cut. Although we were assured that we would get a lift back to Dovercourt, we had to walk 26 miles and never met a soul. However it was a lovely balmy Autumn evening with the glint and sound of running water and the night time countryside. We eventually got married on 26 March 1945 and we are looking forward to our 63rd anniversary.

However, we nearly did not get married because a few days before, my leave was cancelled as we had to deal with a U-Boat in the Channel. We went out to chase the submarine but we got the worst of it when an acoustic torpedo blew up a couple of fathoms from our stern. Either one of our depth charges set it off or it hit one. Anyway confusion everywhere – engines cut out – no lights etc (we were listening for water coming in but were lucky).

Following that, I had difficulty in making contact again with Vicky as there was confusion about whether or not she had gone on leave as intended but we finally met up again. All plain sailing now except when Vicky said, "You have got the ring". Me, "No I thought that you were getting it". Shout to bus driver "Stop the bus – need a wedding ring for weekend" – funny looks all around!

We managed a one night honeymoon before I had to go back to my ship but then that was what courting and marriage was like then!

WE NEED TO ADVERTISE MORE

W/401658 Miss Jill C S Hunt
2 Cunningham Close, West Wickham,
Kent BR4 9PJ

PDF Compressor Free Version

Dear Editor

I get so excited (no its not my hormones playing up)!! The *Lioness* has just been delivered through my letterbox. What do I do next? I lock the front door, take the telephone off the hook, get the teapot out, put my feet up and hibernate for the day (utter bliss).

I never knew about the WRAC Association until an ex-WRAC friend of mine sent me an application form. Now a Life Member – worth every penny. I was thinking there must be a lot of ex-ATS and WRAC girls who might be trying to find their Army pals and not knowing of our existence.

Talking of not knowing, where have all the Army girls gone who were stationed at CAD Kineton during 1959-1962? I am lucky as I have found three of my friends who were stationed at Kineton – Bronwen Hawksworth née Ball and Rita Hawksworth known to all as Scotty Miles, Jean Kirk née Watson. They all keep me up to date with news about Kineton.

Perhaps we need to advertise ourselves more. I intend to submit a poster to our local Age Concern Pop in. On cars you see AA badges – how about WRAC badges – good way of advertising. We need more people to join the Association in order to keep this "life line" going.

I would like to take this opportunity in thanking all the staff at Worthy Down for all their hard work in producing a first class magazine. WE YOUR READERS ARE LIKE LIONS – WAITING FOR OUR NEXT *LIONESS*.

WHY CHOCOLATE IS BETTER THAN SEX?

The word "commitment" doesn't scare off chocolate.

You can have chocolate even in front of your mother.

You can ask a stranger for chocolate without getting your face slapped.

When you have chocolate it does not keep your neighbours awake.

With chocolate size doesn't matter.

Good chocolate is easy to find.

THREE PERSONAL MEMORIES PROMPTED BY LIONESS ARTICLES

Jane Knight née Sandy
Owl Oak, 4 Grassy Lane, Maidenhead, Berkshire
SL6 6AU

Dear Editor

In the last publication of *Lioness* there were several matters of personal interest to me in letters from readers so I felt the urge to write.

Yes, Mrs France, there certainly is at least one true Territorial left. On the day the formation of the ATS was announced I cycled down to the drill hall in Aldershot and joined the 1st Hampshire Company. We were trained by the Regular Army, on the square by the drill sergeant of the Grenadier Guards and in small arms by the 12th Royal Lancers. I was a student at the time so I had to bend the truth about my age. In July the following year, by which time I had left college, we went to camp with the 2nd Bn the Lincolnshire Regiment and the entire South Midlands Group ATS (about 1200 I believe) for 2 wet weeks in Tidworth Pennings. Three weeks later the Army Reserve and the Territorial Army were mobilised.

Eva Hughes wrote from Austria about Monte Battaglia and the Bodensee Division. I have visited Battaglia a number of times in recent years and believe I may well be the only ex 8th Army war time soldier who in the present decade has walked the whole way up. An ex-Sergeant of the Regiment who frequently had stayed with friends in a local village and visited Battaglia felt affronted by the fact that, although memorials to allies had been erected, there was no commemoration of the final taking of the mountain by the 1st Guards Brigade. This had been achieved at great cost. Being George Webb, he took his grievance to Wellington Barracks and approval was given for a memorial. In October 1990, the Grenadier Guards Association were joined by General Sir John Nelson who had commanded the Grenadiers battalion on the assault on the mountain. The General, accompanied by Lady Jane, had travelled down from a Scottish island for the occasion and we were joined also by officials from our Embassy in Rome. We had taken with us a bugler from the Regiment to sound the calls. It was a very emotive ceremony. I remember General Nelson pointing with his walking stick at a little stone building and telling me that was the farm where the Welsh Guards were attacking up the rugged and daunting mountainside. Every few years since then we have been back.

Several years ago a lady writing to the *Lioness* spoke of her days at Queen Anne's Gate and being there on the Sunday in 1944 when a V One demolished the chapel in Wellington Barracks. On that fateful Sunday I was one of the congregation of the Guards Chapel, a subaltern in No 10 (London District) Signal Company. I was their only casualty and was posted missing.



PDF Compressor Free Version

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



**Association
Badge £3.50**



**ATS Badge
£2.75**



**WRAC Badge
£2.75**



**Calculator
£3.75**



**Fridge Magnet
£2.00**



**Note Book
£1.00**



****Special Offer****

Square Tray
Sandwich Tray
Teapot Stand
All £2.50 each

****Special Offer****



**Trolley Coin
£2.00**



**PVC Coaster
£2.00**

Other Items For Sale:-

Pens	£ 2.50
Paperweights (Boxed)	£12.00
Bookmarks	£ 1.50
Bells	£ 1.50
Table Mats	£ 6.50

Obituaries – their final salute

JEAN GIFFEN

PDF Compressor Free Version

Jean graduated BSc at Edinburgh University in 1943 and after commissioning in the ATS in 1944 went to the Army Radio School at Petersham, Surrey. There followed various RMO postings in AA Command in East Anglia between 1944 and 1947 and a spell at Burscough. VE Day saw her with HAA and Searchlight units around New Holland, Lincs. She liked to tell of the misunderstandings that could be created in the minds of people overhearing her in telephone conversation with one of her radar mechs whose name was Darling.

From 1947 to 1953 Jean was EME Tels at HQ Western Command, Chester. She was granted a regular commission in 1953 and became the first WRAC officer to be permanently attached to REME. Jean attended No 12 REME Officers Long Electronic Engineering Course at Arborfield in 1954/54 and featured in an article in the 'Soldier' magazine of May 54 headed 'The Woman Technician Is Here'. Her next posting was to an MAG at Malvern followed shortly by the WRAC Staff Course at Frimley in early 1955 and then briefly to the AA Command School at Lydd.

Jean married in 1956 resigning her commission as was required then. She followed the flag for 16 years making homes in UK, Cyprus, Germany and Malaya. Jean had three children. In 1972 she left Service life behind and with her family returned to her native city of Edinburgh where she was a member of the REME Association Scotland Branch.

Jean was proud of her Army career and her association with REME. She formed many Service and post-Service friendships and actively maintained them. Her outstanding characteristic was loyalty to her family and friends. She died suddenly at home on 10 July 2006, aged 82, a few days after celebrating her 50th wedding anniversary.

From: "The Craftsman" – January 2007

MAJOR (RETD) DAPHNE JERVIS TD née PRIOR 14 JULY 1924 – 7 AUGUST 2007

W/249639 Daphne Prior joined the ATS in 1943. She completed her basic training at Harrogate before going to Strathpeffer to train as a Wireless and Teleprinter Operator. Daphne was then attached to 112 Infantry Brigade which was posted to Blackburn, Lancaster and Abergavenny. A prized overseas posting was at GHQ Cairo 1945-1946.

After a short spell in Civvy Street in the Treasurer's Department, Stafford Borough Council, Daphne rejoined WRAC/TA, was commissioned and served until 1967 in an administrative capacity in TA Centres in Lichfield, Stafford, Stoke on Trent and Wolverhampton amongst others. She was already a founder member of the

Stafford Branch (1965) of the WRAC Association and her enthusiasm has ensured the success of the Branch to this day. Stories of outings and reunions have echoed down the years, all filled with laughter. At a reunion in Scotland Daphne won a raffle prize – a case of Campbell's soup! The only way she could get the soup home was to empty her case and put the cans in it. Her clothes were distributed amongst her friends and her knuckles were on the floor by the time she got home to her family!



Not content with being the long term Secretary/Treasurer of the Branch, in 1995 Daphne became the Treasurer of the WRAC Register and in 1997 was not only a founder member, but also the Treasurer, of the WRAC Dinner Club.

Daphne will be sadly missed by all who knew her. The Branch will remember her patience, good humour and unstinting support. The WRAC Dinner Club will remember the kiss she got from Elvis. We were all jealous and she didn't wash her cheek for a week! We will certainly miss her.

Ann Deakin and all the members of the Stafford Branch

W/56708 MURIEL LUCY EVANS née WHEELER

Muriel served with SHAEF Forward and 30 Corps Signals in Neiburg, West Germany as a teleprinter operator. A brief account of her experiences and landing on Omaha Beach in 1944 and Farewell Home Page 37 of 37 12/2007



Glynn and Muriel in Ypres

Muriel died on 30 September 2007 at age 83 and her final farewell service was with military honours. Fifteen veterans and the Standards of the Normandy and Market Garden Associations formed a Guard of Honour and a Union Jack covered her coffin. The crematorium Chapel was crowded to overflowing, Glen Miller music "Moonlight Serenade" was played before the Service and "String of Pearls" afterwards. Mr Eddie Wallace, the Normandy Veterans Association Chairman, read the Eulogy.

Glynn Evans (Husband), 5 Gilpin Close,
Fishbourne, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 3QW

PATRICIA MAY WOODS (PAT) 3 JULY 1928 – 21 JUNE 2007

Pat was born and, initially grew up, in Crich, Derbyshire. Later the family moved to Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire where she finished her education at Watford Grammar School.

In 1946, Pat enlisted into the ATS and trained as a clerk. She then served with the ATS and WRAC and had postings in Britain, Hong Kong and Singapore until her discharge in 1952. Her last posting was as a Section Chief Clerk in the Intelligence Branch of GHQ FARELF in the rank of Staff Sergeant (a position that undoubtedly gave her that air of authority and decisiveness that carried through into civilian life!) Also during her Army service Pat was an enthusiastic sportswoman, playing hockey, tennis, netball and cricket.

When she left the Regular Army, Pat enlisted in the Territorial Army, serving in London and Derbyshire, before finally retiring as a Captain in 1979 after 27 years

TA service. From conversations with Pat and mementoes she kept, it is apparent that her Army and TA Service was a particularly important and happy part of her life.

In civilian life, Pat studied and became an Architect. She worked first for British Railways then for Luton Council and later Derbyshire Council. Eventually the family moved back to Derbyshire and Crich, the village where she first grew up. Here Pat became actively involved in village life, serving on the Parochial Church Council and as a School Governor, including periods as Secretary and then Chairwoman.



Pat was a strong and authoritative character who is remembered with great respect and affection by family and friends.

Robert Michael Larimore (Cousin)
18 Chesterton Road, Spondon, Derby

MRS JOAN SHREEVE

Joan, whose death was announced in the last *Lioness*, was instrumental in re-forming the Norfolk and Suffolk Branch after a lapse of several years and she remained its Chairman and leading light until 1991. Before the war, Joan was working at the Norwich Union when she and a friend decided it would be 'fun' to join the Territorial

Army. At the end of their first camp in the summer of 1938, to their astonishment, they were instructed to report for full-time duty the following week. As a pre-war volunteer, Joan had the benefit of local service conditions and was able to live at home when she was not on duty. She had joined the Army thinking that it would be a change from her secretarial work and found herself relegated to kitchen and mess duties at Britannia Barracks in Norwich. Here she met her future husband, Ivan, who, as a member of the Royal Norfolk Regiment, was captured at Singapore and was a prisoner of the Japanese until the end of the war.

During her long life – she celebrated her 90th birthday in some style – Joan was generous with her abilities and talents. She supported many charities, particularly the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, The Red Cross and Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children. She supported funds to provide humanitarian aid to people caught up in many national disasters and to provide loans and grants to young people in developing countries to further their work and skills. Joan set an example to us all to follow with her leadership, compassion and generosity.

Joan's son Paul has always been a great support to his mother, and to our Branch, and it is he who has contributed to this obituary.

Joan Awbery, Secretary, Norfolk Branch



On leaving the Army she joined the Victoria League with its worldwide contacts with the Commonwealth. Whilst there she was talent spotted by Lady Dunrossil and quickly appointed as Staff Officer to the Superintendent-in-Chief of St John Ambulance at Grosvenor Crescent, where her background enabled her to fit in perfectly. Here she subsequently laid the foundation of what became the St John Fellowship with over 300 branches worldwide. For this she was promoted to OBE for her work with the Order.

Lt Col (Retd) Gerry Fahy and the Order of St John

**W/71927 WO2 MARY MCARTHUR MCLEAN BEM
'MRS MAC'
18 JANUARY 1922 – 25 OCTOBER 2007**

Molly, as she was then known, joined the ATS at the outbreak of the Second World War and served for 27 years reaching the rank of WO2. However, she will probably be best remembered as the Mess Manager of the Officers' Mess at the WRAC Centre, Guildford. In those years, she met many VVIP visitors to that Mess including, Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, Her Majesty the Queen, Queen Noor of Jordan and the Duchess of Kent, to name but a few.

Mrs Mac ran a tight ship and was an industrious, proud and loyal Mess Manager who took a great deal of kindly interest in the well being of "her officers" – senior and junior alike. Anyone who served there will have their own memories of Mrs Mac and the influence she had on

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL SHEILA PUCKLE OBE
TD BA**

Sheila Puckle was one of those quiet, enigmatic characters who worked quietly in the background of whatever held her attention, invariably dedicating her efforts to human and national interests. Even the year of her birth was a mystery, but it is believed that she was about 85 when she died on 24 May 2007 after a brief illness following a stroke.

Sheila came from a long line of senior Army officers; her Grandfather was a General. Educated in Switzerland and Cheltenham Ladies College, she then obtained a BA in History and Egyptology at London University before joining the Army in 1938. In the years that followed she was associated with MI5 at GCHQ Cheltenham as well as the SOE; later seeing service at the Army Staff College, Ministry of Defence, Hong Kong and in Germany at HQ BAOR. Her staff papers were always impeccably argued and filled with clear-headed logic. She was instrumental in forming and presenting the staff case for the formation of the WRAC and it was mainly for this work that she was awarded the MBE before retiring in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

On promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, Sheila was posted as 2IC Medical Services and WRAC Records Office in Winchester. She was completely devoted to finding the "right person for the job" and always made sure that the individual's skills and career prospects would be fulfilled as well as the needs of the post itself.

their time in the Mess. She was also an extremely private person with an enormous faith which gave her the challenging standards she strove to achieve.

Mrs Mac died in Guildford on 25 October 2007.

PDF Compressor Free Version



FRANCES ANNIE TODD

Frances Todd died on 29 July 2007, aged 84. She joined the NAAFI early in the War and then transferred to the ATS in 1944. One of the first ATS to land in Normandy, on Gold Beach, she was stationed initially in Bayeux. From there, she went to Brussels and was demobbed in 1947. Frances then spent the rest of her working career as a Personnel Manager with Marks and Spencer.

Frances was the only woman to be a full member of the Sheffield Branch of the Normandy Veterans Association and was also a member of the Operation Market Garden Veterans Association. She helped in the organisation of both Associations and was one of ten ex-service people from Sheffield who travelled down to a Garden Party in Buckingham Palace to mark the 60th Anniversary of D-Day in 2004. A guard of honour was formed by veterans from both the Normandy Veterans Association and the Operation Market Garden Veterans Association at her funeral at Grenoside Crematorium.

LIKE POPEYE – I EAT SPINACH OR HOW TO REDUCE THE LIKELIHOOD OF MACULAR DEGENERATION

Why spinach? Well, not only that – I add to it sprouts, broccoli any sort of greens really, except cabbage (memories of being forced to eat it at school have put me off for life). We both love spinach – it must be a hangover from all those Popeye cartoons in our childhood! Plenty of fresh fruit is important as well.

Scientists tell us that what you eat is very important if you want to have healthy eyes. When you hear that about half a million of us in the UK suffer from macular deterioration and that getting on for half of those who have it are over 75, you realise that this is yet another of those “nasties” that could make our later years less enjoyable than we would like.

So, what is age-related macular deterioration (AMD for short)? Put simply it's a loss of central vision which affects fine sight and recognising colours. (Just think how important this is if you want to go on driving). It happens when part of the retina of the eye is damaged (by illness or old age) and although some people are unlucky enough to inherit the chance of getting it, the majority of us can take serious steps to help in avoiding it. How? Eat your greens, (choose the ones you really like, then you'll eat more of them), wear good sunglasses when the weather is bright (think what that'll do for your image) and put on a hat with a good shady brim.

Alison Schofield

COPY DEADLINE

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

20 June 2008

ASDELL Mrs Jean Elizabeth, née Bedwell, of Micheldever on 2 Sep 2007, ATS

ANDREWS Mrs Mary Wandless, née Brotherton, of Halesworth on 11 Sep 2007, ATS/WRAC

ANDREWS Mrs Agnes, née Leece, of Pickering, ATS

AYRES Eileen, of Porchester, Oct 2007, WRAC

BASTOW Mrs Muriel, of York on 6 Aug 2007, WRAC

BEAUFREIRE Mrs Winifred, of Hastings on 20 Oct 2007, ATS/WRAC

BROWN Mrs Joy, née Manners, of Chichester, ATS

CARPENTER Mrs Alice, née Howard of Plymouth on 21 Aug 2007, ATS

CAUSE Mrs Constance Eliza, née Crook, of Seaford in Aug 2007, ATS

CHENERY Mrs Gladys, née Frisby, of St Leonards-on-Sea on 13 Nov 2007, ATS

COOPER Mrs Evelyn, née Stedman, of Denbighshire, in Sep 2007, ATS

COX Mrs Mary, née Cockerell, of Bruton on 30 May 2007, ATS

CRAWLEY Ms D M, of Bournemouth on 4 Nov 2007, ATS

DOWLE Mrs Olive, of Donnington on 17 Jun 2007, ATS

DUCKETT Mrs Violet Edith, née Phillips, of Chelmsford on 28 Jul 2007, ATS

EVANS Mrs Muriel Lucy, née Wheeler, of Chichester on 30 Sep 2007, ATS

FOGGITT Miss Kathleen Mae, of Grimsby, ATS

FULLER Miss Beryl, of Bournemouth on 19 Jul 2007

GARDINER Mrs Helen, née Poulston, of Stockport on 5 Nov 2007, ATS

GASKINS Mrs J, née Wilson, of Bicester, ATS

GOLLOP Mrs Peggy, née Clalkey, of Addlestone, ATS

GOW Mrs I, of Edinburgh on 24 Jul 2007, ATS

HAWORTH Mrs Dorothy, née Collins, of Blackpool on 1 Aug 2007, ATS

HIRST Mrs Ivy Florence, née Cripps, of Bishops Hull, ATS

HORNER Mrs M, née Morris, of Glasgow on 9 Sep 2007, ATS

JAMES Mrs Auriel, née Courtney, of Bristol on 12 Aug 2007, ATS

JENNER Mrs Ruth, of Grimsby, Nov 2007, ATS

JERVIS Mrs Daphne, née Prior, of Stafford on 7 Aug 2007, ATS/WRAC

KEFFORD BEM Miss A M (Muriel), of Byfleet on 11 May 2007, ATS/WRAC

LAINE Mrs Janet, née Maitland, of Guernsey of 29 Aug 2007, ATS

LAMBERT Mrs Maureen Patricia, née Seear, of Colyton on 8 Dec 2007, ATS

LANG Mrs Mae, of Glasgow on 6 Dec 2007, ATS

LINTON Miss Marnet, of Pitlochry, on 19 Feb 2007, ATS

LOVELL Mrs Janet, née Will, of Coventry on 25 Jan 2007, ATS

MATHEWS Mrs Elsie May, née Bowskill, of Middlesbrough in Aug 2007, ATS

MAUNDER Ms Nora, of Hereford on 26 Jan 2007, ATS

MAURICE Mrs Carol, née Cusslin, of Selby on 11 Jul 2007, WRAC

McINDOE Mrs K, née McEwan, of Glasgow on 12 Jul 2007, ATS

NORRIS Miss Audrey, of Verwood on 6 Oct 2007, WRAC

NORRIS Mrs Mary, on 25 Nov 2007, ATS

O'BERST Mrs Violet, née Wood, of Canterbury on 5 Aug 2007, ATS

OATES Mrs Sylvia, née Long, of Swansea on 21 Aug 2007, ATS

OLIVER Mrs Dorothy, née Papworth, of Coventry on 20 Aug 2007, ATS

OWEN Mrs Kitty, née Prince, of Sutton Coldfield on 3 Oct 2007, ATS/WRAC

PAMMENTER Mrs Margaret, of Edinburgh on 28 Nov 2007, ATS

PARKIN Miss Grace (Parky), of Dover on 27 Nov 2007, ATS

PECK Mrs Violet, née Harrison, of Doncaster on 17 Sep 2007, ATS

PFEFFER Mrs Helen, née Dobson, of Pickering on 21 Nov 2007, ATS

PINNOCK Miss Joan, of Norwich on 27 Aug 2007, ATS

PLANT Mrs Winifred, née Kennedy, of Stafford on 12 Feb 2007

PLUMMER Miss Thelma, of Bognor Regis on 16 Aug 2007, WRAC

POWELL Mrs Phyllis, née Newman, of Hoddesdon on 22 Oct 2007, ATS

RALPH Mrs Joan, of Leatherhead on 26 Aug 2007, ATS

REAVEY Mrs Emily, née Houlton, of Stockport on 21 Nov 2007, ATS

RICKETT Mrs Edna, née Cross, of Colchester in Nov 2007, ATS

ROBISON Mrs Norma, née Scholey, of Annan on 30 Jul 2007, ATS

SCARLETT Mrs Bernadette, née Harte, of London on 6 Sep 2007, ATS/WRAC

SEYMOUR Mrs C, of Brighton on 9 Aug 2007, ATS

STEELE Mrs Molly Edna, née Wright, of St Leonards-on-Sea on 22 Jul 2007, ATS

STINSON Mrs Roxanna (Roggie), née Rivington, of Canterbury on 12 Aug 2007, ATS

SWANN Mrs June Christobel, née Keighley of Skipton on 18 Sep 2007, WRAC

TODD Miss Frances, of Sheffield on 29 Jul 2007, ATS

TOWNS Mrs Eleanor Edna, of Leeds on 30 May 2007 ATS/WRAC

WAGSTAFF Ms A M, of Beaworthy, WRAC

WAITE Mrs N J, née Robertson, of Chichester, ATS

WARDMAN Mrs Cicely, on 8 Nov 2007, ATS

WOOD Miss Patricia (Pat) M, of Matlock on 21 Jun 2007, ATS/WRAC

YORK Mrs Pearl, née Hughes, of Stafford in Mar 2006, ATS

YOUNG TD Mrs Barbara Mary, née Soman, of Sunbury on Thames, 22 Dec 2007, ATS/WRAC(TA)

THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES for the year ended 31 October 2007

PDF Compressor Free Version

		Unrestricted				
	Notes	General Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2,007	Total 2,006
INCOME & EXPENDITURE						
Incoming resources						
Incoming resources from generated funds:						
Voluntary Income	1	3,891	2,310	75,252	81,453	29,859
Activities for generating funds	2	-	-	-	-	78,804
Investment Income	3	19,022	-	178,606	197,628	186,994
Incoming resources from charitable activities	4	55,639	-	-	55,639	71,076
Other incoming resources	5	1,925	-	500	2,425	3,674
Total incoming resources		80,477	2,310	254,358	337,145	370,407
Resources expended:						
Cost of generating funds:						
Cost of generating voluntary income	6	5,298	-	22,897	28,195	133,899
Charitable activities	8	56,049	-	191,682	247,731	265,038
Governance costs	9	3,283	-	6,000	9,283	4,543
Total resources expended		64,630	-	220,579	285,209	403,480
NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES BEFORE TRANSFERS						
		15,847	2,310	33,779	51,936	(33,073)
Transfers between funds	14	3,200	(3,200)	-	-	-
NET INCOMING RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR		19,047	(890)	33,779	51,936	(33,073)
OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS & LOSSES						
Gains on investments:						
Unrealised		10,591	-	190,003	200,594	633,132
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	17	29,638	(890)	223,782	252,530	600,059
Fund balances brought forward at 1 November 2006		473,474	27,111	5,161,641	5,662,226	5,062,167
Fund balances carried forward at 31 October 2007		503,112	26,221	5,385,423	5,914,756	5,662,226

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 2007

PDF Compressor Free Version

	Notes	2007	2006
FIXED ASSETS			
Investments	10	5,251,584	5,050,991
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock of badges, souvenirs & standards		5,183	5,937
Debtors	11	440	365
Cash at bank & in hand	12	666,754	618,967
		<u>672,377</u>	<u>625,269</u>
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	13	9,205	14,034
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>663,172</u>	<u>611,235</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u><u>5,914,756</u></u>	<u><u>5,662,226</u></u>
FUNDS OF THE ASSOCIATION			
Restricted funds:			
The Benevolent Funds	15	4,555,053	4,348,072
The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund	16	830,370	813,569
Unrestricted funds:			
General funds		503,112	473,474
Designated funds:			
Membership life subscription fund	14	5,923	6,343
Lioness life subscription fund	14	20,298	20,768
TOTAL FUNDS	17	<u><u>5,914,756</u></u>	<u><u>5,662,226</u></u>

PDF Compressor Free Version

