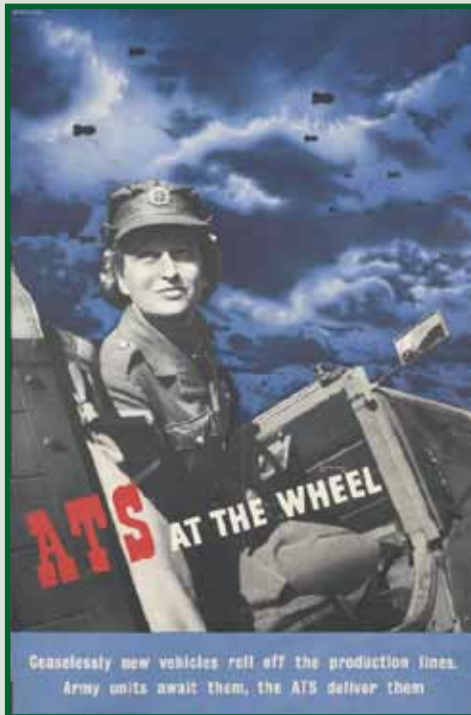


LIONESSES

ATS 75TH ANNIVERSARY, 9TH SEPTEMBER 1938 - 9TH SEPTEMBER 2013





WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

(Incorporating the QMAAC & ATS Comrades Association)

Registered Charity No. 206184, founded in 1919

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Front Cover: Images courtesy of the Imperial War Museum

Back Cover: Lioness covers from 10, 20, 30 and 40 years ago

Contributions for next issue by 13th December 2013 to editor@wracassociation.org.uk, full details on page 38

Message from the Vice President

Our Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) members are celebrating the 75th Anniversary of their formation this year. Although advancing years may preclude some of them from participating in Association activities, I can assure our readers that there are a good many ATS still holding Branch appointments and attending Branch meetings - their indomitable spirit is an inspiration to us all. Congratulations ATS from all your Sisters-in-Arms!



I was thrilled to see so many of you at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) on 13 April for our AGM and to have such positive feedback about our new Association granite memorial from those who were able to view it at first hand. I hope that you will enjoy the photos of that memorable day which appear in this edition of 'Lioness.' You will also find enclosed a pull-out copy of the revised Constitution of the WRAC Association, as approved by members at the 2013 AGM. This version of the Constitution supersedes all previous versions, the most recent of which is the green booklet entitled Rules 2003. Please now destroy any copies of the green booklet that you hold.

Our plan to site a Memorial Cabinet within Guildford Cathedral is still in its preliminary stage but we hope that it may be in place by next Spring. The QMAAC, ATS and WRAC Memorial Books have now been reproduced and are ready to go into the Cabinet; they are exact replicas of the originals which were on display in the WRAC Centre Church and which are now held in the National Army Museum. The Cabinet will be situated in an alcove adjacent to the Lady Chapel in the Cathedral.

There is one final task to complete to round off our association with Guildford and that is the placing of engraved granite plaques on the two Obelisks situated within Queen Elizabeth Park (site of the ATS and WRAC Training Centres for over 50 years) at Stoughton. We are in negotiation with the Chairman of the Residents Committee at QE Park who is extremely enthusiastic about this project. All the roads on this housing development have already been named after ATS and WRAC Directors and Directors of Music. The engraved plaques, which will include the ATS and WRAC capbadges, will ensure that the history of this site is secure.

Congratulations and sincere thanks to Wendy Hooton (Chairman Eastern Area) and her 'Lioness' team who ran in the BUPA Great Manchester Run on 23rd May and raised over £1,800 for our Association and a similar amount for Troop Aid (in memory of Maureen Deeley). Well Done The Lionesses! I also would like to make special mention of Janette Cowie, who organised a reunion weekend in Fort William in April for members of the WRAC Facebook group and any ex WRAC who wanted to attend; she raised nearly £1,000 for the 'Lioness' fund. Janette only discovered and joined our Association in January 2013 through the Facebook group – truly inspirational! The Association has also received several generous legacies this year- we are so grateful to those who make provisions for us in their

Wills or to those families and friends who donate in memory of their loved one.

I trust that you will all be pleased and proud in the knowledge that the Association will soon have permanent memorials both at local level in Guildford (Cathedral and QE Park) and at national level at the National Memorial Arboretum. They will be our lasting legacy and will ensure that we will never be forgotten.

Sue Westlake

Editorial

Thank you for the many positive comments about the tweaks we made to the layout of Lioness 2013/1. This edition sees the introduction of sections detailing Branch Meetings and an update on the vital work of the ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund. I hope that by publishing Branch Meeting details some HQ members might find that there is a branch close to them that they might like to start attending. If there is no Branch listed for your area but you would like to meet up with like minded members,



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and consider forming a Branch, contact HQ WRAC Association.

We are planning to have this edition of Lioness recorded and made available as an audio magazine on CD. If you suffer from failing eyesight and would like to receive an audio version of Lioness please email officemanager@wracassociation.org.uk or phone HQ WRAC Association on 0300 400 1992.

We have recently completed a major project to have all back copies the Association magazine since July 1920 scanned. In due course the magazines will be available to search, in electronic form, via the members area of the website. The Old Comrades Association Gazette (QMAAC) was published from July 1920 to April 1942, the QMAAC and ATS Comrades Gazette was published from May 1942 to June 1950 and The Lioness from July 1950 to February 1974. In June 1974 the word 'The' was dropped from the title and the magazine has been known simply as 'Lioness' ever since.

Thank you for all your contributions, please keep them coming in as without you there would be no Lioness!

Sue Hatton
editor@wracassociation.org.uk

Dear Editor,

*I served proudly in WRAC from Jan 83 - July 91
I then emigrated to New Zealand and served in
104 Transport Troop, 10 Regiment Royal Corp
Transport Reserve in Napier.*

*Later this week, 25th April will be ANZAC day,
our chance to remember our fallen, injured and
passed/present members. The march pass is
a humbling experience as it crosses not only
through the generations but is very cross cultured
where everybody is welcomed from around
the globe. This year will be particularly hard
as we remember Lcpl Jacinda Baker, a medic
from Christchurch who was killed along with 4
other New Zealand soldiers earlier this year in
Afghanistan. Our first female to lose her life since
Vietnam.*

*I would like to finish with with a huge thank you
to the WRAC and New Zealand Army for the
comradeship and training received that I continue
to utilise to the present day.*

*W473216 LCpl Mary Harborne
Port Chalmers, New Zealand*

Dear Editor,

Lancaster University Research Project: In 2015 we shall be marking the 70th anniversary of the conclusion of WW2, it will also be the 10th anniversary of the unveiling of the Memorial to the Women of WW2. I research memorials dedicated to women, and I am aware that this was and remains a very contentious memorial. But one thing I hope it does is trigger an interest in the development of women's roles in the Armed Forces and their origin.

My query is this: the auxiliary forces were disbanded after WW1, but not after WW2, and have had a vibrant history ever since. When you were serving how was that history presented to you, if at all? Were the origins of specific roles traced back to their inception? Was any vocabulary or rituals and traditions passed down from those original women to their successors? I know the male regiments draw proudly on stories of their exploits in the past, and have insignia and practices to call those to mind: is the same true for women's units?

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Editor: Dr Corinna Peniston-Bird from Lancaster University conducts research based around memorials dedicated to women. The above is a precis of a letter outlining her research, if you would like to comment or help please contact Corinna direct at the address above. Please note that this is a piece of private research and is not connected to the WRAC Association in anyway.

'SPEAKING' LIONESS

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Articles of Interest

ARMED FORCES DAY NOTTINGHAM

29 JUNE 29 2013

Sue Slattery



Lynn Wenham parades the Leicester & Nottingham Branch Standard

On a wet Friday morning Carol and I met Cathy Munro with the intention of doing a recce and erecting the Leicester & Nottingham Branch stand in readiness for the following day, fortunately we were in the Veterans marquee and so remained dry. The stand took shape very quickly but Cathy needed to return to Peterborough to collect the rest of the memorabilia, she then returned to the site later that evening and finalized the stand arrangement. Cathy then stayed overnight at a Premier Inn ready to make an early start the next morning. Although she is a Cambridge Branch member she had offered to help us on Armed Forces Day.

Saturday dawned bright and early as we travelled to Nottingham and we were able to be dropped off outside the castle. We meet up with our other Branch members in the grounds where we stood waiting for one and a half hours before we marched off. Perhaps as well that most of us had decided not to have too much to drink that morning! Following a twelve gun salute our Standard and eleven ladies marched smartly down the hill. We were all proud and humbled by the sight and sounds of thousands of people lining the route, clapping and cheering as we passed. We had to smile when a voice from the crowd shouted, "look, the Land Army". Suddenly the band was drowned out by the Red Arrows passing overhead but we kept going, enjoying every moment and continued into the market square, just managing to miss the horse deposits!

The Service, in the presence of HRH the Duke Of Gloucester, lasted one hour, during which time none of our ladies fainted or required assistance, how good are we! At some point during the service four tornadoes flew over the square.



Lynn Wenham and Barbara Danter meeting HRH The Duke of Gloucester



Leicester & Nottingham Branch members at Armed Forces Day Nottingham

After photographs we caught the local bus to Victoria Embankment. Wow, what a sight! There were thousands of people, making it almost impossible to move with any urgency as our first priority was to try and spot the line of small blue boxes, for which the queues seemed endless. Next we visited Cathy at the Branch stand, which seemed to be permanently surrounded by people. Her display was impressive and eye catching as was the laptop showing the history and what life had been about in the ATS. Considerable interest was shown by ex serving WRAC, and current members of the Association who did not seem to belong to any of the geographic branches. A number of ladies were from all over the UK and some of these stopped and spoke to our members who were in uniform, to ask for information and advice. We quickly realised why Cathy had given out around one hundred enrolment leaflets.



Cathy Munro running the Leicester & Nottingham Branch stand

At this point we decided to find something to eat and after queuing for another hour for a jacket potato we had to sit on the grass as no seats were available, the biggest laugh being we oldies trying to get up again! Between Cathy (a great ambassador for the WRAC Association) and our own branch ladies we were certainly noticed. Hopefully the Association membership should see an increase, so ultimately we will have achieved our aim. There was something for all ages on the site; military vehicles of air, land and sea, numerous displays in the arena, a fly past of the Battle of Britain flight, other aircraft, a Marine attack by boat on the banks of the river Trent and other attractions far too numerous to mention.

It was a hard but enjoyable day for we aging ladies but we wouldn't have missed a minute of it. Thanks to Cathy and all of you for giving your support and time to our branch on this special occasion.

A DAY AT THE PALACE Lt Col Rowena C Griffiths MBE

Every posting I have had in the Army has been different and as I have got older and more senior there is no doubt that the system wants its pound of flesh. However, I have also discovered that every so often you get some excellent benefits – whether it was taking part in Elephant polo as part of the unit team whilst serving in Nepal or sailing in the Baltic Sea.

However the most amazing honour was bestowed upon my in the New Year's Honours List when I was awarded the MBE. When I received the phone call from my 1*, during breakfast 2 days before the list was published in the papers, it left me lost for words (an unusual situation) and stunned but very happy. The MBE was for my work as the Chief of Staff Rear Operations for OP HERRICK 15 during the period Aug 11 – Jun 12. I can say, hand on heart, that my days (and weekends) were busy and long and often the work was emotionally draining as we sadly lost 22 servicemen and sent out over 250 Battle Casualty Replacements to Afghanistan. Being a Germany based Brigade supported by a Northern Ireland based Brigade with no units based in England (where our casualties returned to) meant that everything was a little bit more difficult, but being typically Army we made it work.

My day at Buckingham Palace to receive my MBE from HRH Prince Charles was wonderful, although it felt surreal to be in my very fortunate position. I was able to take 3 guests so accompanied by my mother,



Lt Col Rowena C Griffiths MBE

husband and son we headed to the Palace for a day to remember. On arrival at the Palace the recipients were separated from their guests and we were taken into a wonderful Reception Room to be briefed and await our call forward. We were all briefed when to move, when to curtsy or bow, how many steps to take etc – it was all very

serious and we were as nervous as a child about getting it wrong. Luckily we also identified the people who would prevent us getting it all wrong, the whole process is so smooth with Palace staff every few metres to guide you, without appearing to be martinets! Soon it was time to go into the Ballroom and have the MBE pinned onto my uniform and it seemed to go very quickly. I managed to take all the right steps and curtsy when I was meant to (all very strange as I was in uniform with head dress on but not allowed to salute!). Prince Charles was really charming and asked various questions regarding my work for OP HERRICK, and then all too soon I was marching out of the Ball Room.

Feeling greatly relieved, but on a real high, I then got to watch the remainder of recipients get their awards, which was great as the Paralympic Coxed Fours crew, and 2 other Olympians were also receiving MBEs. After it was all over we left the Palace into sunshine (but freezing temperatures) to have the traditional photos taken before heading to the Savoy Hotel for a memorable lunch. A day to remember!

Editor: Rowena Griffiths is a Trustee of the WRAC Association.

BUPA GREAT MANCHESTER RUN 2013 **Wendy Hooton**

Where did it all begin? My friend Vanessa (Nell) Frary sent me the link for the Manchester Run as she does every year, and I ignore it! To her amazement I replied telling her I had entered. However, as I had entered I thought I would run for a charity and rope some others in with me! What perfect timing.....the WRAC Dinner Club in October. After everyone had enjoyed dinner and alcoholic refreshment I pounced like a true Lioness! I managed to get 11 victims to divulge their email address and telephone number. On my return home I sent all of them the details of the run so they could enter online, and to remind them our charities would be the WRAC Association and TROOP Aid, in memory of our National Standard Bearer Maureen Deeley. I then waited patiently to see who would actually enter or even remember they had pledged to enter! Slowly I had some acknowledgements and finally had 6 willing runners which was brilliant, the WRAC LIONESSES were born!!



Back row: Tina HANK Hancock, Sharon SHAZEE Burman, Wendy HOOTS Hooton, Christine WHITTERS Whitworth

Front row: Debbie DEBSTER Ashton, Christine CHRIS Wallace, Karen RADDERS Radford

We needed t-shirts so who better to ask than Cathy MUNCHKIN Munro. We decided what we would like on the t-shirts and not only did Cathy come up with the design but she donated them for free! A huge thank you from all of us, they were fabulous. The training then began with us all keeping in contact on the Facebook Group "The Soldiers Formerly known as WRAC".

The day had arrived, and with much excitement we all travelled to Manchester and met up late Saturday afternoon. We found a brilliant Danish restaurant called KRO where we were able to have a good chat and get to know each other better. We all had an early night ready for the run the next day. The morning arrived, the city was buzzing and we had all arranged to meet near the start line. Everyone looked great in their WRAC Lionesses t-shirts. We wandered around looking for celebrities and saw the elite runners set off. By this time some of our supporters had arrived looking good in WRAC Fleeces and t-shirts. They took the collection buckets and off they went. Our supporters were; Ann Leyland, Patricia Barker (and husband Keith), Babs Blay, Debbie Davies (and daughter Natasha), Malcolm Burman and William Wallace. Thanks also to our friends Nell Frary and Tina Bonham for supporting our team and running with us.



Patricia Barker and Ann Leyland

At 11.30 we went to the warm up area for the "compulsory" exercises. The music was booming and before we knew it the countdown was done, the start gun had been fired and we were off! The route was filled with spectators cheering us on. It was an amazing atmosphere with bands playing and DJ's mixing their music, it really encouraged you to keep going. We ran past some iconic landmarks, Old Trafford Football Ground being one of them. Finally we all made it to the finish line and each received a bag with our well deserved medal inside, a FINISHER 2013 t-shirt and other edible goodies. We had arranged to meet at the nearby Charity Village where our wonderful supporters joined us. After a photo shoot and lots of laughing we found a nearby bar for well deserved light refreshments before going back to our hotels to change for the evening. We all managed to walk to a nearby hostelry for supper and to celebrate.

It was a brilliant weekend, and I would like to thank all the other WRAC LIONESSES on their magnificent achievement and for supporting me, be very proud of yourselves. It was a privilege to run with you all and re-live the Esprit de Corps we all shared many years ago. Thank you also to all our amazing supporters and

to everyone else; WRAC Branches, work colleagues and friends who sponsored us, your generosity and good wishes have been overwhelming, you are awesome. We exceeded our fundraising target of £1000 by raising £4000 (including Gift Aid) to be shared between the two chosen charities.



Debbie Ashton

"Pleasure to be able to run for such worthy causes and meet everyone on the day."

"Sunday 26th May saw a fine body of women travel to Manchester to take part in BUPA 10k run. Great to see them in their LIONESS t-shirts proudly displaying the WRAC insignia together with a poignant statement "In memory of Maureen Deeley" Suaviter in modo fortiter in re, Gentle in Manner Resolute in Deed."

"I have been involved in many events in my lifetime but to take part in the BUPA 10k Run with my new found friends in memory of our amazing Mo Deeley just about tops them all. I felt very proud of everyone, Mo would have been cheering us on that's for sure. A huge thanks to our supporters who on the day spurred us on to complete the event. Lets hope this is the start of many events to come."

Watch this space for the next venture for the WRAC LIONESSES...be at the WRAC Dinner Club in October to hear first!

A VISIT TO YPRES

Lyn Wenham

Leicester & Nottingham Branch Standard Bearer

I attend Leicestershire & Rutland Standard Bearers school which is run by the Royal British Legion. Last August they organised a trip to Ypres which I went on along with three Branch members; Anne Atkinson, Barbara Danter and Joan De Vall. We arrived on the Friday and had Saturday free which we used to look around this lovely town. The town was raised to the ground during the war but rebuilt using the original stone from the ruins. Saturday was Barbara's 85th birthday so all through the day we gave her small presents to open and at the evening meal she had a birthday cake which we had taken with us.

On Sunday we visited three WWI cemeteries where we paid homage to the fallen. The last cemetery was Hooze Crater where we had time to visit the very interesting and well laid out family museum.



**Wendy Hooton, Tina Hancock, Christine Whitworth,
Sharon Burman, Karen Radford**

A few quotes from the WRAC LIONESSES:

"Proud to have completed, proud to have raised some money. I wonder what Wendy Hooton will talk me into at this years Dinner Club?"

"Overwhelmed by the support of fellow soldiers patting me on the back and encouraging me round as they recognised the Corps badge and belt."



Hooze Crater Cemetery

On Sunday evening we were to take part in the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate. Anne, Barbara and Joan were to lay our Branch wreath at the service and they asked me what they had to do. Not knowing I advised them to bring up the rear of the wreath layers so that they could see what happens. I marched on parade with the Standard bearers and to my surprise there were Anne, Barbara and Joan right in the front as the lead wreath layers, having been given that honour by the marshall. What a job they did, all in step and managed the steps leading up to where they had to lay the wreath and back down again very smartly. Amazing for ladies of 85-87 years of age, they did our Branch and the WRAC Association proud.



Wreath laying at the Menin Gate



Crowds gather quite early for this service which is held every night at 2000 hours, the buglers are the town's firemen. As the Last Post sounded everyone went silent, not even a baby crying. I could feel the goosebumps on my arms, it was all so moving and a great honour to have been part of it. We are now saving up for the 70th anniversary of the DDay landings in Normandy in 2014.

FACEBOOK WARRIORS

Babs Blay

A few years ago someone came up with the bright idea of social networking. Most of us grown ups were somewhat sceptical and refused to have anything to do with this cyber chit-chat. Stories abounded of cyber bullying and people's on-line security being breached. Some of us more adventurous, 'catch me if you can' girls decided to try out this new craze and see what happened. It became a useful tool for us to watch what our children were up to and even keep in touch with relatives on the other side of the globe. It was also clear that we could set our profile in such a way that we could only be seen by those we wanted to see us and control how others contacted us. We would be notified if anyone posted something on our wall or even made a statement on their own wall. It was possible to put as much about ourselves on our profile as we wished and many ladies decided to proudly mention the fact that they had served in Her Majesty's Armed Forces.

It wasn't long before groups were formed which consisted entirely of serving and ex-service personnel. Suddenly, we could talk to each other in that language which only we know, about subjects which only we understand and about social matters which needed discussing. Groups were formed to re-unite those who had lost contact many years before. At last, lots of people discovered their best buddy from their favourite posting or someone who was in their block at the same time but they didn't know each other. Old photos were posted for everyone to examine to find old friends and new photos for comparison. It was now possible to post photos of events as they happened. Sharing the joy of the arrival of a new grandchild or a son or daughter passing out of basic training or the sorrow of losing a loved one. Great exam results and achievements could be shared instantaneously. The world was suddenly our oyster.

Within these groups there was an underlying and determined trend to point people towards the WRAC Association and the WRAC Dinner Club. There were puzzled faces at Branch meetings when suddenly there were strange, younger members turning up with very big smiles on their faces. The WRAC Dinner Club witnessed an influx in October 2011 and then a massive surge in 2012. It was easy within the groups to put up a link to the websites so that the new recruits could join directly. Having new websites for the Association and the Dinner Club helped tremendously. The group administrators could sit back and feel the glow of success as they watched the impact their recruiting drive had had. It is normal to see a recommendation to join the WRAC Association and the WRAC Dinner Club mentioned at least once a day.

The first real event which many of the newly recruited WRAC Association members attended was the Grand Reunion in Bristol. They were the last girls standing on the dance floor on both nights and then, at the church service on Sunday, they were the nervous girls with the collecting plates. Did you notice them? When asked how they felt about the reunion, they all said "It's like coming home."



Facebook Warriors at the Grand Reunion 2012

Marching at the Cenotaph became the aim of many group members and talk within the groups of getting tickets and then the excitement as they started to hit the doormats was tangible. Such was the success of this push to 'be there' that it is probably going to be necessary to limit the tickets by ballot this year. The chat on-line in the run up to last year's Remembrance Sunday resulted in a mass of marchers descending on Covent Garden to meet up the night before for a pre-march get-together. The Punch and Judy must have wondered what had hit it. Following the march there was another get-together before everyone set off home. Though the mood at the Cenotaph was suitably somber, the relaxed atmosphere afterwards was joyous.

The most underestimated things to come out of Facebook groups are the social and welfare aspects. It is possible to send personal messages (PMs) to each other if there is something private or personal to say and some people watch a thread (conversation) to see that a friend needs advice or support. This is where a PM comes in. Behind the scenes there is a network of helpful souls, willing to give of their time, knowledge and experience to help a fellow ex-soldier. Occasionally, it is possible for a group member to be there in person when there is an important meeting or an appointment. Watching each other's back is something we are very good at.

A silly post by one of the crazy girls can start a thread of 1000 comments. The subject matter is of no consequence once they get going and conversations move from WD40 to sweeties to tea towels to favourite tunes to Cub Scouts effortlessly. Many of us confess to having tears rolling down our faces with laughter at times and making it worse by trying to explain it to our loved ones who are watching us giggling for all we are worth. Our groups are cathartic in a way that nothing else can be. There is an understanding within the membership about what is acceptable and what isn't. Normal standards of behaviour is expected and admin is always on the lookout to maintain a healthy balance.

Admin also recommend that our members change their settings so that they don't get notifications every time someone posts or comments. Having your mobile ping hundreds of times a day or getting emails by the score can be annoying. That's how busy our groups are.

Facebooking has given us a whole new vocabulary which used to belong to our youngsters. We are now talking as if we have baggy trousers and headphones stuck in our ears. We can LOL with the best of them. (Laugh Out Loud). The rest of the phrases can be left to the imagination. The younger generation cannot baffle us any longer with their acronyms. We've 'got it down.'

Many members of the groups live all over the globe. Since leaving the Army they have picked up their old kitbags and moved to warmer climes or followed their career, or that of their partner. It is lovely to be a part of their lives even though we have never met. Sharing a conversation with someone thousands of miles away brings a smile to our faces.

Occasionally, something will happen in someone's life and they invite group members to join them in celebrating it. A birthday for a Facebooker will result in hundreds of messages of good wishes and for those who have exchanged addresses, a card through the post too. The careless mention of a party and girls will be rushing to their laptops to sort out trains and accommodation so that they can be there to dance and laugh the night away. On one occasion a casual comment about a visitor coming for the weekend resulted in a whole houseful of revellers, who gatecrashed what was supposed to be a quiet event. It was exactly like being back in the NAAFI on a Thursday night after being paid. One of the participants was well on the way to being very tipsy when she realised that she had been drinking non-alcoholic beer all night. The atmosphere of the party was enough to make her light headed. Seeing middle aged ladies snuggled into sleeping bags all over the house that night was very amusing.

There are sometimes serious events which must take priority on the group such as the loss of one of our servicemen, servicewomen or other public servants. The members will express their sorrow and unite in a way that doesn't happen in Civvy street. We might change our profile photo or agree to do something particular the next day, for example, making sure we say hello to every police officer we see. Losing Drummer Lee Rigby in such a grotesque way sent waves of shock, sadness and disappointment through the group like nothing else had previously. Despite the anger we were able to discuss all aspects of the incident and work through our emotions together. Whenever there is such a tragedy someone will post up the WRAC Association Collect. We will read it together and draw comfort from it. Very often our Corps motto is mentioned. *Suaviter in modo, Fortiter in re.* Gentle in manner, Resolute in deed. We read this to mean 'Don't mess with us'. There are occasions when we feel the need to band together and go forward with determination. We bolster our fellows with our messages of support and move, in the words of our group's motto 'Onward and Upward!'

Last year was a difficult one for many members who knew Maureen Deeley. She was very seriously ill and we all knew it. Every day a report of Mo's progress and all the daft things she said and did were posted for everyone to keep up to date. It was at this time that we started coming together at 9pm every evening to think about Mo and all others in the group who needed our prayers. One of the girls coined the phrase 'Our Mo-ment' and we continue with it to this day. As Mo's end drew near we were all poised and ready to wish her well on her journey to the big parade square in the sky. The day arrived and the dreaded news was posted within minutes of her departure. Immediately, condolences and messages came in from around the world. These thoughts were later collated and read out at her funeral. The arrangements for the funeral were relayed to all members and many expressed their wish to be there to bid farewell to such an inspirational person. There were over 250 folk saying their goodbyes and lots of them had never even met Maureen. The power of the written word and the inspiration that was Maureen came to the fore in the groups. Whenever one of our ex-comrades is given a promotion to a higher place it will be mentioned and everyone will offer their condolences. For example, many of our girls served with Brigadier Anne Field and were saddened to hear of her passing. Their messages were shown to the Brigadier's family and much appreciated.

Another example of when the group came together is when our Vice President, Lt Col (Retd) Sue Westlake was celebrating a special birthday. The mere mention of it caused many of us to rush out and send her greetings c/o Headquarters. Sue was overwhelmed with cards from people she didn't even know.

Some of the membership in the groups prefer to watch the goings on from the sidelines, enjoying the banter and coming forward with an idea when the mood takes them. Whatever the time of day there is always someone there to talk to. If anyone needs support or advice or just the name of 'that' song, a voice will chirp up. A message to someone who is feeling down, a phone call out of the blue to crack a joke or the start of yet another crazy thread about knickers,

you never know with this lot.

By the time this edition of the Lioness is delivered, it will have been anticipated with excitement in the Facebook groups. Then it will be dissected and discussed at length before being referred to ad nauseum for the next two months.

There are many facets to the phenomenon that is Facebook. Despite the bad press, most of them are good ones. Facebook is what you make it. If you are sensible about who you accept as friends and check your profile security you will enjoy the experience. You can use it as much or as little as you wish but here is a word of warning; Facebook is addictive.

ALDERSHOT BRANCH FINALE 2002 **Brenda Killick former Branch Secretary**



This photo was taken at the last meeting of the Aldershot Branch in November 2002. I can hardly believe 11 years have passed, and how sad that several of the members shown are no longer with us.

WEBSITE MEMBERS AREA

Over the past few months a lot of work has been put into the Members Area of the website. One of those changes is that Members who have provided the Association with an e mail address have now been provided with their own user name and password to login to the website. If you have an e mail account and have not been notified please contact the Office Manager on 0300 400 1992 or officemanager@wracassociation.org.uk.

The re-invigorated website includes features to enhance the experience of members, including an 'opt in' members directory to enable members to search and contact each other. It is hoped that ?????

75th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FORMATION OF THE ATS 9 SEPTEMBER 1938

Editor: The following photos and text are published courtesy of the Imperial War Museum. The Imperial War Museum website contains numerous images, many of which are available to download under the terms of the IWM Non Commercial Licence.



At a Ministry of Supply experimental station, trials of rocket fuels were made to determine accuracy. Members of the ATS manned observation posts along the coast from which they observed and recorded the position of shell bursts. About 40 members of the ATS were engaged in this work. The picture shows the plotting room at headquarters where members of the ATS compile statistics on rocket behaviour from observer reports. © IWM (TR 2596)

A member of the ATS serving with a 3.7-inch anti-aircraft gun battery, December 1942. © IWM (TR 460)



Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) girls at the Royal Artillery Experimental Unit at Shoeburyness in Essex, recovering shells from the mud flats at low tide, 1943. © IWM (TR 743)



Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) girls at the Royal Artillery Experimental Unit, at Shoeburyness in Essex, using the Window Position Finder to sight shell bursts in the air or water, 1943.

© IWM (TR 744)



Two ATS girls operate a range finder on an anti-aircraft gun site at night.

© IWM (TR 471)



Private Patricia 'Paddy' Riley, who trained as an Auxiliary Territorial Service recruiting corporal with the North West Recruiting Division based in Manchester. Private Riley

came from Blackburn and worked in an ordnance factory before joining the ATS.
© IWM (H 24884)

A Military Policeman with two ATS 'Redcaps' - Corporal Joyce Collings and Lance Corporal Cecilia Strong - watch over traffic near Bayeux, 15 August 1944.
© IWM (B 9205)



Private Kay Elms of the ATS, a member of 281st Battery, 137th (Mixed) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, carries a Sten gun at a camp in Belgium, 26 January 1944.
© IWM (H 41228)



The first members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) to serve with the British Army of Occupation in Germany. This group worked at a military telephone exchange

in Minden. © IWM (BU 6953)



A member of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) sits on her suitcase beside the luggage trolley as she waits for her train. She is accompanied by a dog, identified in the original

caption as the unit mascot.
© IWM (D 18961)

Members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) taking part in a roller skating lesson at a Northern Command depot, 1 March 1940. Their Army instructors keep the line steady at either end.
© IWM (HU 104550)



ATS women working on Sherman III tanks at an AFV depot at Chilwell, Nottingham, 25 April 1944.
© IWM (H 37771)



Two ATS trainee motorcycle despatch riders and a Royal Army Service Corps instructor at York, 23 May 1941.
© IWM (H 9941)



*HRH Princess Elizabeth
(centre) with
officers of the
ATS Training
Centre.*
© IWM (H 41676)

Women of the ATS sort air mail letter cards at the Army Post Office, 'somewhere in the Midlands' in 1944. Air mail letter cards were the most popular form of correspondence at this time, with over 3 million being sent overseas every week.

© IWM (D 20388)



At an ATS School of Cookery auxiliaries are seen undergoing training on outdoor stoves.
© IWM (H 26470)

An ATS girl with 'A' Troop, 484/139 (Mixed) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery at her position in the control room at Haecht in Belgium, 10 January 1945.

© IWM (B3529)



ATS DINNER CLUB **Mrs Audrey Juby**

Although the final lunch and disbandment of the ATS Dinner Club officially took place on 1 October 2011 the Chairman, Mrs Joy Balmain, suggested arranging an informal lunch each year in October if enough members would like to attend. In 2012 a small and enthusiastic number enjoyed lunch at the Victory Services Club in the company of Major Jane Freebairn. Unfortunately age and disability, not to mention the tiring travel involved in a journey to London, have made it very difficult to continue. Therefore, as Vice President, I have regretfully decided we will not be arranging any further reunions.

Members will be sad to hear of the death of Mrs Joan Higgins a long-standing and valued member of the Committee. We would all like to send our very best wishes to Mrs Joy Balmain. In my role as Treasurer the accounts were finalised and there was a balance of £800 remaining. In the certainty that all members would be in agreement this amount has been passed to the ATS/WRAC Benevolent Fund. I am sure we all have happy memories of the meetings, lunches and weekend holidays we have enjoyed together over the fifty years of the Club's existence and I send my very best wishes to all.

PHOTO MEMORIES **Hetty Eames née Siddle**



*1942 (age 21)
Stationed at
Kimmel Park,
Rhyl whilst
undergoing
Searchlight
training*



*Hetty Eames meets HRH The Queen at a
WWII Veterans event*

MYTCHETT 1943

Sylvia Johnson née Brightwell



This squad of ATS girls had just completed a course to become Military Police women. I was stationed at Mytchett where they would like to practice unarmed combat on us lesser mortals, all good fun! Seventy years on and it seems like yesterday.

REMINISCENCES PART ONE

Margaret Smith neé Paine

ATS 1942 - 1946

So there I was, all 5' 3" and 7st 10lbs wet through, offering to repel the invading Hun from the shores of Fair Albion; which should have put the fear of God into Hitler when he got wind of it! I had presented myself at Glen Parva Barracks, Wigston, Leicester as requested and now stood in fear and trembling of a dancing whirling dervish with 3 stripes who was shouting, "Stand up, left turn, head up, move forward, Stand Still!" and "Where do you think you are going? Please join us, we will wait for you, don't rush". What had I done?.... there were a few more equally shocked into submission. We were walking Zombies, taken to be kitted out - now that is a poem on its own. If you could do up the buttons, it fitted, size large and very large. I just disappeared in the very large section, although, she of the loud voice had to concede that I looked like a refugee from WW1. We were, after all, wearing elastic bloomers from that war, legs finished at the knees and the waist under the armpits. But whatever we had to do, it was at the double - Why? Did they think we would miss the war if we didn't hurry?

We staggered under the pile of clothing into our future abode, the 'Nissan Hut'; stone floor, very cold, no heating until 6pm when we were allowed one (small) bucket of coal for the stove in the middle of the hut. Then we went to collect pillows, blanket and 'biscuits' (for sleeping on). These were 3 horsehair squares, (I think mine still had the horse in it) which made up our mattress on the iron bedstead, with just one thin blanket. If the enemy didn't kill us the cold would! Then followed the endless talks, lectures, demonstrations of or about nearly everything and in between. There was the Dental Inspection, the FFI, (free from infection), there was no privacy at the medicals and certainly no dignity. There were foot inspections for this, that and t'other. Every minute of every day was accounted for and we would be doing something or other; but when

we were told how to dispose of sanitary towels I lost the will to live.

Despite the long days of square bashing, route marches and P.T we did have leisure time; we made up a useful hockey team with lots of away fixtures, dances at the weekend in the Gym, basket ball and rounders. Then came the Passing Out Parade, behind the band of the Leicestershire Regiment, with the men marching with us. Talk about showing off with our shoes shining, knees wobbling but feeling right chuffed. After dismissal and a nice meal even 'she who shouts' told us she was proud of us, no one out of step....something unheard of until then.

Then came the meetings to be told where we were going and what we would be doing. Career Choosing Selection was somewhat haphazard, to say the least; girls hardly out of college with no experience of anything were told "Oh, you can fire an Ack-Ack gun", others who just helped at home went into the cookhouse. I was a receptionist in a photographic studio so it was assumed that I knew all there was to know about films. So off they sent me to a film unit to become a projectionist; billeted in St John's Wood, London and attending Holloway College for the next 8 months. The initial 6 weeks of 'square bashing' taught us teamwork, camaraderie and sharing; I enjoyed it all and so did the others. That gave us experience for when we moved and met another group; we were very quickly once again a team. We all had to have a few lessons in advanced Maths that we had forgotten about. We learnt how to mend a broken film, (splicing) strip a projector without having any bits left over when reassembled and, joy of joys, we at last could thread a film through the projector. We had training films of tanks, (hull down), aeroplanes, (leading edge wings) and a few sensitive ones. We knew about the Mulberry Harbour but to us it didn't mean a lot.

We used to catch the bus at the end of the road for the $\frac{3}{4}$ hour journey to the college. Most of us did our homework on the upper deck, much to the amazement of the civilian passengers who didn't understand a word of what we were talking about. Neither did we, really! "That should be π r squared, but it can't be!" and so it went on. We got to know a lot of people and the drivers all knew us and waited for us even if we were a little bit late. Class started at 9am and finished about 5pm; a long day with just about enough energy left for a meal and then to bed, real beds, not palliasses! We had plenty of leisure time, visiting the West End, the sirens going, running to the shelters, but not as fast as the Yanks. Cinemas were open during the afternoon but closed by 9 pm when the bombing raids started. We would go to the Palais in Hammersmith which was packed at the Saturday night dances but finished by 10 pm.

London, during the raids was a nightmare, there was just nowhere to go to hide. We were terrified but did our share of helping the bombed-out people the next morning. It was unbelievable; fires raging, ambulances' sirens going, fire engines' bells, hell on earth and children crying for pets that had been killed. We were late a good many times and we had to work hard to catch up. No excuses were asked for and none given; this was the real war and we didn't like it! When I heard the Ack-Ack guns firing I wondered if they were manned by some of our intake at Glen Parva,

those girls were very brave and a number lost their lives. During all this interference by the enemy we had to do revision and study for the week of exams. Fortunately, we were all in civvy billets and I had lots of help from the 2 sons of my landlady. The postman came with the usual brown envelope and mine sat on the table; I didn't open it. Then Paul, one of the sons, opened it and there was the result, a pass of 84%; which I thought was good, and the coveted first stripe. Can you imagine 8 L/Cpls waiting for a bus, people cheering us, the bus driver nearly had a fit; he tooted and stopped other drivers going in the opposite direction, it was pandemonium, and on the bus as well. All the usual passengers who we had got to know congratulated us, it was a very happy group that morning at college. We were all told that we had done extremely well, but we had to move on, to the driving school! To be continued in the next issue.....

GREAT YARMOUTH 11 MAY 1943 **Marjorie Spears**

A detachment of ATS girls were stationed in a hotel in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk. They returned to their hotel in the early morning, chatting as young girls do. They did not hear or see a German plane in the sky and the next thing that happened was a bomb hitting the hotel. We pray that their deaths were quick and the 26 girls would not have suffered.

All 26 girls were in their early twenties and had left home for the first time, their lives were an adventure and they may not have realised what war really meant. Only one girl survived but she suffered emotional scars for years. Six girls were buried in the cemetery in Great Yarmouth, two girls in the Roman Catholic cemetery and others were buried in their home cemeteries. What a waste of young lives in war, no country wins, everyone loses.

On 11 May 2013, the 70th anniversary of the bombing, ATS members of Norfolk Branch attended a service in front of the memorial plaque in Great Yarmouth. Veterans of other services attended, including the Royal British Legion. The vicar of St Nicholas church officiated at the service.

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.

As a reminder the rates for overseas membership are as follows:

Annual Member - £8.50

Life Membership Annual Postage Charge - £3.50

GIFT AID

Gift Aid is an easy way to help both the WRAC Association and the ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund maximize the value of your membership subscriptions and donations. Many of you who are UK tax-payers have already signed Gift Aid declarations and because of that both the WRAC Association and the ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund have benefited from thousands of pounds of tax that we have reclaimed from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in the past - and without you having to do anything!

Why does this matter?

Since 1 April 2012 your Association has had to pay for all staff costs from Association's funds. As a result of this your Association's income is less than its expenditure on providing the services and support that all Association members enjoy. The Gift Aid reclaimed for the WRAC Association in 2012 alone virtually covered the cost of postage for one edition of Lioness. All the Gift Aid we reclaim makes a real difference to how far we can make our budget stretch.

What has changed?

HMRC has revised the wording for Gift Aid declarations and, unless we replace all our existing Gift Aid declarations with a new declaration that incorporates the new wording, the declarations that have been signed to date will no longer be valid. This is a legal requirement and we have no option but to comply with this change. Failure to do so will result in a loss of income as we will not be able to reclaim the tax.

What are we going to do?

At the end of September 2013 every member of the Association will receive a letter containing a brand new, HMRC-compliant, Gift Aid declaration. The new Gift Aid declaration will also include an option that can be selected by non-tax payers or those of you who would prefer not to Gift Aid your membership and/or donations. We hope that everyone, tax payers and non-tax payers alike, will complete and return the new Gift Aid declaration and there will be various incentives to encourage you to do so, including a stamped addressed envelope to ensure that this can be achieved with the minimum of effort or expense on your part.

Other benefits

By returning the completed Gift Aid declaration, even if you are a non-tax-payer or opt out of Gift Aiding your membership and/or donations, you will assist us in our constant effort to keep your Association's membership database as up-to-date as possible.

What about the cost?

You are absolutely correct if you think this is not a cheap exercise - it's not! But it is a legal requirement and hopefully will increase the number of Gift Aid declarations that in turn will increase our Gift Aid income now and into the future.

PHOTO MEMORIES Helen Morse née Black



22 Independent Platoon WRAC, Hong Kong 1952
Front Row: 3rd from right Helen Black



23 Independent Platoon WRAC, Kykko Camp, Cyprus 1954-1955
Front Row: 3rd from left Helen Black
Editor: A full nominal roll is available for this photo (too large to publish)



TA Unit, Glasgow WO1(RSM) Marian McKie, Sgt Greenslade, QM Brown, Sgt Helen Black

CYPRUS HOSPITAL DASH Charles W Jones

Reading Jenny McMahon's midwifery experience in Benbecula in the 2013/1 issue of Lioness (page 43) brought home to me how close I was to a similar experience some 50 years ago. Having joined the War Department Works Department as a civilian, and following service in the RAF in Malta and Northern Ireland, I was posted to the Deputy Directorate of Works at Fayid in the Canal Zone, Egypt. I subsequently moved to an embryonic Episkopi Cantonment, Cyprus where we lived in tented

accommodation until the permanent Messes were built. With WRAC, Royal Signals, RAF and GHQ temporary Messes scattered around and an "unhealthy climate" outside the cantonment due to the EOKA terrorist campaign, the Messes thrived and it was in 27 Independent Company WRAC Mess that I met my future wife, Joan Shepherd. Joan had been posted to Cyprus for the Suez Operation.

We enjoyed each other's company immensely but, as "sod's law" would have it, I was soon posted to the Chief Engineer's Branch in Nicosia and found myself living in a hiring in the Turkish village of Ortakio, some two or three miles north of Nicosia. The pull was too great though and, despite the hazards of travel in those days I motored whenever possible for a weekend at Episkopi. One day I was invited by Joan to the Halloween Ball in the Mess but, being a mere male and not familiar with such things, I arrived one week early! Thinking that I would not be making the journey the following week Joan volunteered for 'bar duty' and as a result I spent most of the evening at the bar instead of 'on the floor'. That is until my best mate, a married man living in quarters, with whom I stayed at the weekends, came over to us and said "why the devil don't you two get married?" It didn't take long to think it over and after such a romantic proposal we formalised the engagement in the Ledra Palace Hotel, Nicosia. We were married by the Rev. HCC Bowen, CF, on the 14th March, 1959 in All Saint's Church, Episkopi, a consecrated Nissen Hut used by all denominations. What a memorable day it was. The Army really pulled out all the stops to make it unforgettable, even providing armed escorts to our new home, a hiring in a Greek area of north Nicosia. As we came out of church to face the world as newlyweds WO2 'Dodger' Green's 10 year old daughter had been primed to come up to me and say "hello Daddy". Such is service humour!



Charles and Joan Jones (W/106398 Sgt J W Shepherd ATS/WRAC)

An eventual posting back down to Episkopi saw us living in a hiring in Ayia Zoni Street, Limassol. We'd only been there a matter of days when we noticed that a Greek priest (a 'Baba') regularly took short a cut through our garden to get to the coffee shop on the other side of the street. We were initially not very

impressed with this 'audacity' but realised that he would have been doing it before we arrived and would, no doubt, be doing it after we left. Although neither of us could speak the others language, it was not long before he invited me to the coffee shop for a couple of tots of "firewater". Despite the 'emergency' I thought it prudent to accept and occasionally invited him to my home for a glass of Bass beer which, with a "chirrup", he would down in one go.

More important though was the strong friendship that developed between Joan and 'Baba' Anthony's wife. Joan was expecting our first child and, being alone in Limassol while I was at work in Episkopi, she really took Joan under her wing, often patting Joan's tummy and saying "maru". When not at school, Yannoula, the priest's daughter would interpret for them as neither could understand the other's language. Then came the day. We had been informed that now the hospital at RAF Akrotiri had been completed, all maternity cases had to go there. Previously, the focal point had been the MRS at the Devonshire & Dorset Regiment at nearby Polemidhia. An old Lord Kitchener camp of huts blackened with age and with tiny window panes and the ubiquitous brown lino. But no MRSA or C.Diff. in sight.

I was awakened by Joan around six o'clock in the morning to say that "something was happening", so I went across to the coffee shop to telephone Akrotiri only to be advised that my explanation didn't sound like the baby was due to be born, did I think the tummy upset could be the result of something that she had eaten! Joan had other ideas and was in a hurry so we set off down the by-pass which then circumvented Limassol but is now an inner-city road in a much larger city. After a minute or two we reached Polemidhia crossroads and I had to decide whether to turn right to the MRS, a couple of miles away, or carry on through the Phasouri orange groves, some 15 or so miles (I think) to Akrotiri. Something made me turn right and was I glad that I did. We awoke the snoozing orderly lance-corporal who alerted the MO and in no time Joan was on a stretcher being rushed to a curtained-off part of the children's ward, passing me in the entrance having been told to 'wait there'. It was ladies business in those days!

Eventually the MO re-appeared with an enormous grin on his face to inform me that I was the father of a bonny girl that I could go and see once the nurse had tidied things up. A proud National Service MO delivering babies before breakfast! When I went to the ward, there were quite a number of children outside the curtains peeping in. Apparently because of activity in the ward the children were awake and there was the inevitable 'hubbub'. When the baby cried a hush descended on the ward and the not entirely unexpected ball came over the top of the curtains followed by a youngster who, having retrieved the ball, went out to declare "Cor, there's a lidy in there and she's bleedin' to deff". Hence the 'peeping toms'. I don't think I ever saw a happier Joan. We eventually moved into married quarters, then to the UK where three years later Glynis had a sister. Then service in Chessington, Catterick, Cardiff, Nepal and Bielefeld.

After 4 years of declining health, neuropathy, diabetes, cancer and surgery Joan died in April 2011. During that time I never once heard her complain or moan. A brave and altruistic "Lioness" who kept her wonderful sense of humour to the end and left me with many cherished memories, some re-kindled thus.

HORSEGUARDS 1967 **Denise Rensch**

We were on a Signals training course at the MOD. We all served in 751 Tp 45 Essex Sig Sqn, part of 36 Eastern Sig Regt Volunteers base at Chestnut Grove TA Centre,



L to R: Elaine Morris, Deinse Rensch, Florrie Booker

Brentwood (now sadly demolished). As you can see we were all dressed in uniforms from the 2nd World War, mine was dated 1943.

1973 RECRUITING BOOKLET 'A COMMISSION IN THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS' Kate Howie



**Cpl Mitchell and Kate
Howie 68 Sqn RCT,
Rheindahlen**



Anna Barrington-Ward



**Alison Cox (red 5) at RCB,
Lt Col Hazel Powell WRAC
examining**



**Kim Bellingham-Smith at
Mill Hill**



**Wendy Hall serving with
the Royal Signals White
Helmets**

ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund

Your Benevolent Fund

The ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund was established in May 2000 but its roots go back to the ATS Benevolent Fund established in August 1944 and the Women's Royal Army Corps Association Benevolent Fund established in December 1950. Its 'Objects' are:

- to promote the interests and welfare of persons who have served in the Corps in such ways as are charitable in law; and
- the relief of persons in need who are either;
- persons who have served in the Corps; or
- the children or dependents of any person (alive or dead) who has served in the Corps

* Corps encompasses WAAC, QMAAC, ATS and WRAC.

Since 1944 it has helped 37,339 WAAC, QMAAC and ATS, and 7,292 WRAC servicewomen. In the last financial year alone your Fund received 495 applications for assistance and awarded a total of £193,000 in the form of one-off grants, care-home fee top-ups and Princess Royal's Memorial Fund annuities. Your oldest beneficiary was 99 and your youngest was 39, and applications were received from as far afield as the USA, Canada, Zimbabwe, Cyprus and France.

Who is eligible for help?

We share the vision of The Soldiers' Charity and will consider an application for assistance from any servicewomen with one day's paid service or more.

Are there any other criteria?

Yes, you must be in financial need. There's also a limit on the amount of savings you can have above which the Fund is unable to make an award. To qualify for a Princess Royal's Memorial Fund annuity you must be in poor health and living alone on a basic state pension.

Types of assistance

Since the start of this financial year on 1 November 2012 your Fund has awarded grants in the following categories:

Is there anything with which your Benevolent Fund cannot help?

Your Fund is unable to assist with clearing non-priority debt such as overdrafts, bank loans, credit card bills, HP payments, legal fees or medical and dental procedures available on the NHS.

So how does someone apply for help?

If you are a former ATS or WRAC servicewoman who is struggling to make ends meet, or if you know someone who is, then your first port of call is your local branch of SSAFA or regional RBL office. SSAFA or the RBL will arrange for a trained caseworker to interview you in your home to establish what sort of assistance you need. The caseworker will complete a report that includes details of your household income. This is called means-testing and ensures that your Fund's charitable money goes to those who are in need. Once the report is complete it is

submitted to the Benevolent Fund's Case Secretary either electronically or by post. Once received, and when all the supporting paperwork is in place, the case is considered at the appropriate Committee Meeting and a decision taken.

How often do the Grants Committees meet?

There are 2 types of grants committees:

- Minor Grants Committee Meetings are held daily as required and can award immediate grants up to £600.
- Major Grants Committee Meetings (MGCM) are held monthly, usually on the 2nd Wednesday, and can award grants up to the annual maximum of £2,000. The MGCMs also considers applications for recurrent grants such as annuities and care-home fee top-up fees, and for applicants who have fewer than 12 month's service.

What happens next?

When a grant is awarded it is paid by digital bank transfer to either SSAFA or the RBL rather than direct to an applicant. A digital bank transfer means that SSAFA or the RBL receive the funds immediately and are able to ensure that it is used for the specific purpose for which it was awarded as quickly as possible.

It's worth noting that, in addition to our own grants, our married beneficiaries often receive assistance from their husband's regimental associations and we always ask SSAFA and the RBL to apply any occupational charities for assistance too. We also receive tremendous assistance from The Soldiers' Charity who make one-off grants and are currently supporting 20 annuitants and 12 recipients of care home fee top ups with grants totalling £39,106.

... and this is the difference your Fund can make ...

'... Your generous charitable grants towards my mother's needs are very much appreciated by her. The grants will contribute towards enabling us to make the appropriate modifications and adjustments within my mother's home to accommodate her disabilities and health conditions. Your support will make a significant difference to her mobility, comfort levels and overall safety moving around and living in her own home. We thank you for your kindness...' £1,500 for a replacement cooker and towards a bathroom adaptation - ATS

'... I would like to take the opportunity to send my heartfelt thanks to the ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund for the donation of £600 to help me move from homeless accommodation into my flat. Your generous donation and the endless help from my SSAFA caseworker made my transition so much easier. I enlisted into the WRAC in 1989 and thoroughly enjoyed it before re-badging in 1992...' £600 for furniture - WRAC

'... This means so much to me and renewed my life in getting around. I will always remember how you helped me. I'm proud to be part of the WRAC. I dream of the wonderful things I did in my youth. Words cannot thank you all enough, I'm so lucky...' £600 for Electrically Powered Vehicle - WRAC

'... I am writing on behalf of my mother to thank you for your recent donation that has enabled her to buy a new cooker. It has made all the difference to her and I am so much happier knowing that she can cook safely...' £225 towards a replacement cooker - ATS

GRAND REUNION 2015 SAVE THE DATE!

Start saving now to ensure you can attend the 2015 Grand Reunion!
Following a 30 year gap the Grand Reunion will return to Harrogate for the first time since 1985.
The event will take place in Harrogate over the weekend 20-22 March 2015.
Further details will be published in Lioness 14/1

Why not follow in the wheels of Le Tour 2014, have tea in Bettys, take a Turkish Bath, enjoy a stroll in the Valley Gardens.....or just enjoy 'reuning'.

(Please don't pester HQ for further details right now, we don't have them!)



Harrogate Valley Gardens



Harrogate Turkish Bath

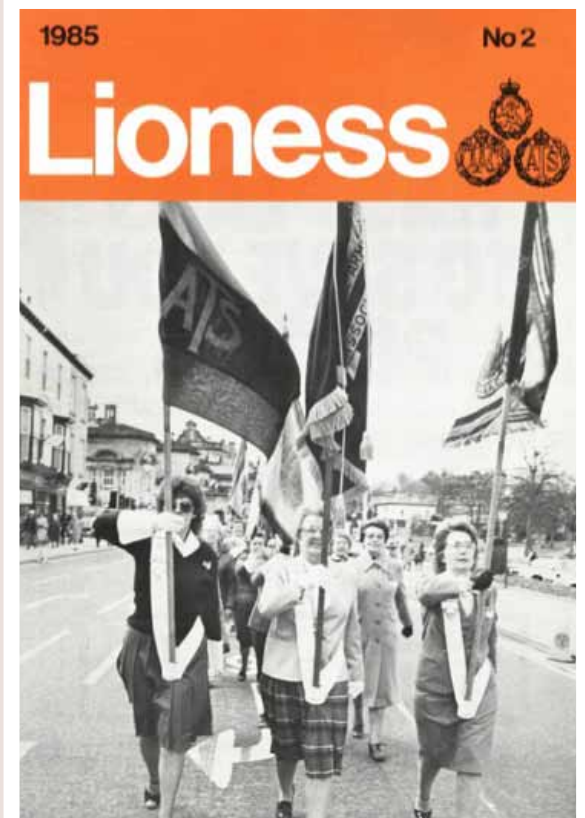
Grand Reunion Harrogate 1985



Bettys Tea Rooms



View over Harrogate



JOINT SERVICE SIGNALS UNIT (CYPRUS)

Corporal Angela Cleave AGC(SPS)

The Joint Service Signals Unit (Cyprus) (JSSU Cyprus) is a non deployable unit, although we provide individuals to fill operational tours. We do however, experience the same sun and dust storms like Afghanistan but with the added bonus of beer and free time. The unit is mainly based in the north east part of Cyprus but has sections located around other parts of the island.

We are a very small but busy detachment, consisting of one Royal Navy, five Army, four Royal Air Force and one civilian to carry out administration to 350. You may think that 11 personnel administering 350 sounds easy but with overseas postings comes additional allowances and rules for their implementation. As a detachment we do find time to welcome new faces or say farewell to those departing and we pride ourselves on working together, providing an excellent customer based service and having a really good time.

I have almost come to the end of my two year tour in Cyprus and I would recommend this Tri-Service Unit to anyone in any Service. I would stay if I could and indeed I asked to – who wouldn't? It's like any other unit from 0645hrs -1350hrs but after that, the fun begins.

During my tour in Cyprus I have undertaken three Adventure Training courses which included an AGC exercise to Ethiopia, a Basic Kayaking course and Advanced Acceleration Free Fall Parachuting Course (AFF). All have been enjoyable and supported by my line manager. The courses are readily available to anyone interested in doing them as there is an Adventure Training centre based on the island which also offers a lot more.

It can't be all play without doing some work and I have also completed a P1 Discipline course which is equivalent to the Army Staff Support Assistant course. This does go to show Tri-Service units do adapt to suit each of the single services requirements. I have found each service to have its positives and negatives which I believe is good, as it helps us to learn different skills from each other whilst maintaining our single service identities. I have met some really friendly and helpful people in this relaxed yet effective Tri-Service unit and I hope to stay in touch with them in the future. I am looking forward to my next assignment and to what future new challenges life has to offer me.



Tri-Service Akrotiri to Brize Norton Charity Challenge

All of the junior detachment members got together to raise money for each Service Benevolent fund by taking part in the Akrotiri to Brize Norton Charity Challenge. The challenge involved a 25 strong team running/cycling 2,592 miles, the distance from Akrotiri to Brize Norton, culminating in a swim or row of the remaining 84 miles. Each detachment administrator also helped to support the challenge by collecting money or making posters to advertise the event.

The challenge took us four days to complete. The challenge was great as it was tailored to all levels of fitness and as administrators we could fit it in around work. There was lots of banter going across the three services regarding which was the fitter, but I will let you come to your own conclusions in the interests of unit happiness.

At the end of the challenge there was also a charity auction to help raise money for the Benevolent charities which consisted of football memorabilia, spa treatments, make up, food etc. The total amount raised from the event was £2,500, a considerable amount given the size of the unit. I would willingly support this worthwhile charity again given the opportunity.

6th BATTALION RIRLES Warrant Officer Class 2 Tracy Freer AGC(SPS)(V)

Our focus this year has been to ensure that our detachment is current, relevant and to raise our profile both within the Unit and externally so when the opportunity came to pen an article I jumped at it, or was I pushed?

Integrating the deployment of an Operational I-Hub into the Battalion Exercise weekends has provided us with the opportunity to raise our profile and move out of the Company Offices. The SPS Volunteers have developed their skills in working tactically and under pressure to achieve precise data collection and manipulation in the field environment. This was tested to the full when we provided statistical support to the Unit Skill at Arms Meeting at Sennybridge. Our role in the weekend was recognised by the Training Major as a contributing factor to the weekend's success.

The detachment jumped at the opportunity to have a go at Mountain Biking at Haldon Forest near Exeter as part of our Team Building activities. Our very own Major George Vosper is a keen cyclist and took the lead in showing us how it was done with elegance and ease. It had been some 20 years since I had used pedal power, so I was a little slow at the start. I am sure they gave me a dodgy bike as it just wouldn't go up the hills. I have concluded that I am definitely no competition for Victoria Pendleton. What I can say from the experience is that although we may have been a little saddle sore we all truly enjoyed ourselves.

The return of Lance Corporal Katrina Lindfield from Operation Herrick with 1st Battalion Rifles has enriched the detachment informing us on current procedures and working conditions in Helmand. The most pleasing

outcome of this deployment was the relative ease with which she integrated into the regular SPS detachment.

Congratulations to Corporal Tracy Millard on passing her System Coordinators Course and to Lance Corporal Carly Mainwaring and Private Carol Powell on passing the Service Integrated Personnel Administration Course (SIPAC-V). All achieved strong passes and are eager to develop their technical skills further.

This year saw a first for our detachment as we entered a team for the AGC Triple Crown March and Shoot. The team comprised of Major George Vosper, Warrant Officer Class 2 Stan Matthews, Lance Corporal Carly Mainwaring and Lance Corporal Charlotte Kidston. All were tired but exhilarated by completing the challenge. I am proud to say that the team were the only regional TA unit to enter and they were very pleased to see the Commanding Officer at the finish line with a crate of beer. With an incentive like that, plans are already underway to select a team for next year.



The March and Shoot team at the Triple Crown. L to R: Stan Matthews, Charlotte Kidston, Corps RSM Nicky Roberts, Carly Mainwaring, George Vosper and Director SPS Branch, Brigadier Paul Burns

The hard work of the detachment has not gone unnoticed with the Lord Lieutenant's Certificates being awarded to Major Roger Courtice, Warrant Officer Class 2 Terry Crocker, Staff Sergeant Mel Ripley and Sergeant Val Bartlett. As I write Val Bartlett has just returned from the Olympics where she managed to bag tickets for Athletics, Hockey and the Great Britain Ladies Football Team historic victory over Brazil at Wembley. How cool is that?

The detachment is now busy planning for the Battalion's Annual Camp in Germany, Exercise Leopard Star. We are looking forward to playing a key role in the Exercise and further cement our position within the Battalion.

4 LOGISTIC SUPPORT REGIMENT REAR OPERATIONS GROUP

Corporal Charmaine Hawkins AGC(SPS)

The Regiment deployed to Afghanistan in the second week of March 2012 in a variety of roles such as the Command Support Logistic Regiment which conducts the combat logistic patrols, Theatre Logistic Group providing first line stores to the forward operating bases, and Brigade Advisory Group working in conjunction and helping mentor the Afghan National Army. The rest of the Regiment remained behind to form up the Rear Operations Group (ROG).

Once the Regiment was fully deployed to theatre we pushed forward with preparations for the Rear Operations Group Health Check whilst still providing support to the Regimental Forward Operations Group and ploughing through the rigorous training programme in order to complete the mandated tests. We took on board the key roles, many challenges and grasped the opportunities that came our way whilst keeping the morale alive with numerous activities, supporting the Forward Operating Group, and numerous other UK operations such as Olympics 2012, Operation Escalin and the Queens Diamond Jubilee.

At the beginning of April we started training for the Triple Crown in May; we went on numerous tabs and long distance runs to build up our stamina. We entered one team on the day which was made up of Corporal Joe Forson, Lance Corporal Lucy Olivieri, Lance Corporal Gun Rana and myself. We completed the 12 mile march in just over three hours which was a superb result considering the extremely high temperatures that day.



The Triple Crown team: Gun Rana, Lucy Olivieri, Charmaine Hawkins and Joe Forson

The Queens Diamond Jubilee Medals arrived and details were finalised for the upcoming parade with special guests, the Station Commander, Colonel Ed Newman (Late Royal Logistic Corps) and Mr Phil McDermott, head of the company that made the Jubilee medal. The morning was a huge success despite the weather; families and friends turned out in full support.

This was followed by a ROG's Got Talent show that evening. Corporal Joe Forson, Lance Corporal Gun Rana, Private Jayne Lax (RLC) and I decided we would relish this once in a lifetime opportunity and enter our own act. We then set about doing a Ghanaian themed song and dance with vocals by Corporal Joe Forson and myself. The whole event was a huge success and raised an astonishing amount of money.

As a reward for all our hard work and achievements over this period, Lance Corporal Lucy Olivieri organised a boat trip for the day and we sailed down the Thames in various obscure fancy dress costumes. The Gladiator amongst us attempted his impersonation of Leonardo de Caprio in Titanic and nearly sunk the boat. We arrived and surprised the locals, who took a double take when they saw Big Bird, Cookie Monster, a Chicken, a Ladybird, and others spill ashore for lunch.



Charmaine Hawkins and Lucy Olivieri

MILITARY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT ON OPERATIONS

Warrant Officer Class 2 Laura Toomer AGC(SPS)

I deployed from Management Accountancy Services (Army) in Andover to join the Joint Force Support Headquarters (Afghanistan) in January 2012. The Headquarters is a busy and challenging environment and it supports all personnel deployed in the Joint Area of Operations to sustain and develop the campaign. On arrival it was clear to see that you had to hit the ground running as the pace of life is relentless in order to support the boots on the ground.

I worked within the Branch that was responsible for the supervision of all in-theatre public financial and commercial activity to ensure propriety, governance and regularity. The Branch comprises of one Military Management Accountant and ten MOD civilian volunteers from various government departments bringing together a wealth of experience.



Laura Toomer (3rd from left) with civilian colleagues

My main role within the Headquarters was to ensure that the quality of Business Cases and costings were of a high standard and that the requirements were legitimate and critical for operational effectiveness. Utilising my accountancy skills to build financial models, I provided accurate costings to accompany Business Cases to inform the decision making process, improve business practice and make the process more effective and expedient.

Business Case requirements varied from ground and air infrastructure, fleet, equipment and most memorably goats and chickens for the dog training compound. The goat we procured surprised us by giving birth a few weeks later; two for the price of one was certainly considered value for money.



Value for money goat

One of my major tasks was to assist with the Reverse Supply Chain Business Case requirements and costings. The Reverse Supply Chain covers the withdrawal of all MOD assets from Theatre. This case involved extensive analysis of the material, equipment and vehicles we must return and those assets we no longer require in the future. Cost effectiveness is always at the forefront of my mind and decisions on whether it is better value to dispose of assets by selling, gifting or scrapping rather than returning them to the UK are sometimes difficult and require a lot of confidence to present the argument.

In addition to the analysis of assets I had to assist in estimating how the process flow would operate; the different delivery options available, how many personnel would be needed, how much equipment would be required and how much it is all likely to cost. As a Military Management Accountant, this is a very typical piece of work you would be expected to complete.

Once a week, when work permitted, I dedicated time to complete a diploma in dog grooming. My customers at the Theatre Military Working Dog Section were very grateful for their pampering sessions and new haircuts which assisted them greatly in the scorching temperatures. Working with the military dogs and improving their welfare was really rewarding and a very welcome escape from the hustle and bustle of the Headquarters environment.

In an operational environment the tempo is high and projects must be delivered swiftly. It is very satisfying to see the end product of your work; be it a newly erected camp, or a life saving piece of equipment, come into service only a few months after the requirement landed in your tray. Military Management Accountants on operations certainly add value to the mission by ensuring public money is spent justifiably and in the right direction; towards the boots on the ground.



Editor: Thank you to all the Branches who included details of their monthly meetings. These have been edited out of the Branch reports and instead appear as a separate list at the end of this section. It is intended that the list will remain a permanent fixture in Lioness so don't forget to send in any amendments or updates to editor@wracassociation.org.uk.

ABERDEEN BRANCH Joan Bartlett

The Aberdeen Branch is soldiering on though we now have two fewer in our group. Pat Valentine has moved to England to live with her daughter as her health is not what it was. Pat was 90 in May, we all wish her well. Sadly Betty Fleming, who was also 90, died on 27 April 2013. Two members went to her funeral which was standing room only, and I met her children. Betty told me once that her daughter was lovely and her lads were 'strapping'. Right again Betty!

We had our May lunch at the Burnett Arms Hotel, Banchory. The weather looked good but it was actually freezing cold. However good plain fare and the odd libation made us forget the temperature outside. I passed on the news that the AGM competition this year is for a Christmas tree decoration. We all looked blankly at each other and said "Och we'll think of something." Personally I'm still thinking. Best wishes to all Branches

BAND BRANCH Ann Jones

Hello all my musical ladies, time goes by so quickly and we had our reunion at Stratford-upon-Avon on May 10th. I am pleased to say it was very successful, the weather was so, so but we had a comfortable hotel with a very nice choice of food breakfast and evening meal. I rather think we may be a pound or two heavier now. I think a little more time there would have been useful, as there was so much to do, especially as we had 2 audiences with the Fire Brigade! There were front line seats for those who were at the theatre, luckily no one was hurt and the show did finish. Then again at the Open Top Bus Stop outside Debenhams where the Fire Brigade arrived to put out a minor fire, we had a very good view as we were waiting for the bus!

We had a very good tour of Warwick Castle and then on to Shakespeare's house. The third happening was when I and three others were on the way home, the vehicle broke down, but fortunately we were then delivered to our homes on the back of a large lorry, good views all round. We have decided that our next reunion will be at the next Grand Reunion so I do hope many more of you will save up and come to that, we see so little of each other it would be great to see more of you.

Our sad news is that we lost dear little "Taffy" a.k.a. Jan Allen nee Pitten, very hard on her family we, wish them well. I hope you have enjoyed a better summer and will be in touch again.



Band Branch members enjoying a Reunion at Stratford upon Avon 10-13 May 2013

BATH BRANCH Sylvia Musgrave

The beginning of this year was not a happy one for our Branch with the death of two of our members. Jo Morris, a long standing member who joined in 1949, had been in ill health for some time so her death a few days after her 90th birthday was not entirely unexpected. However members had a great shock at the news of the death of our Treasurer, and former Chairman, Betty Keating. Betty was also known in the Southampton area where she had held office in that Branch before moving to Bath. Betty Keating joined the ATS in 1938 and served with the Royal Signals in Cairo during the war. She was in the King David Hotel in Jerusalem when it was bombed during a terrorist attack, those standing next to her were killed.

Jo Morris, in her capacity as Chair of Bath Branch, had held the inaugural meeting to set up Bristol Branch, which at the time was Chaired by Esme Davidson. Esme was a link between our two Branches and always greeted us warmly when the Branches met up. Emse sadly died in April of this year. All three ladies worked hard for their Branches and are much missed.

We are very fortunate that Patricia Edridge volunteered to take on the role of Treasurer and although membership is declining we average 12-14 attendees at our two monthly meetings. We are greatly indebted to our 2 or 3 car drivers who kindly take us out to nearby places to visit and enjoy a meal. Speakers are too expensive these days so we have quiz's, competitions or a talk from a member on their experiences, meeting are never dull! We have a scheme for money raising by saving the coppers we receive in change when shopping. Once a quarter we bring them to a meeting and have fun counting how much we have collected! We did hold a Spring Fayre but it was hard work and we shall not be holding another one. We hold small Table Top sales at intervals, a small raffle at each meeting and a Harvest sale once a year.

It appears that many Associations are suffering from a reduction in membership numbers; we have welcomed

two ex WAAFs and one ex WREN to our Branch because their own Association Branches have closed. We also have two new WRAC Association members allocated to Bath Branch but we have yet to meet them; Deborah Williams lives in Swindon and Jean Simpson in Corsham. Welcome!

One of our WAAF members accompanied me to our Area Reunion hosted by Bristol Branch. Many thanks to the hard work of Bristol Secretary Jackie Naysmith who introduced the theme of the 60th anniversary of the Queen's Coronation. Thanks to all Bristol members for an enjoyable event. We try to visit once a year with our members who live beyond Bath and look forward to meeting members we rarely see. However we do keep in touch with regular newsletters and phone calls. We send best wishes to all and hope that by the time you read this we will have experienced some summer weather!

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH

Babs Blay

Here at Birmingham Branch we have had yet another fun packed 6 months, starting with our usual visit to Tamworth to take on all comers at skittles. I am pleased to report that the winner was Rosie Garrison of Brum Branch, we are definitely on a winning streak. Thank you to Tamworth Branch for continuing to invite us despite having to give us a trophy on most occasions.

Some of us met up for our quarterly visit to the local Pizza Hut in March. When I say some, what I mean is 3, a bit low on the ground this time but people had other commitments. By the time you read this we will have consumed more pizza in June and hopefully it will have been a bit better attended. Anyone finding themselves in Birmingham on the 2nd Wednesday in March, June, September or December please feel free to join us at Pizza Hut on New Street, next to the Odeon Cinema.

April saw ladies from several Branches gathering for our Beetle Drive, yet again we laughed until our sides ached. Several people said that they had played Beetle Drive with their grandchildren since attending our little events and the children had thoroughly enjoyed it. Our next cartoon drawing contest will be on 4 September. There was a good turnout from Brum Branch at the WRAC Association AGM, held this year at the National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas. It was a great opportunity to meet up with friends, old and new whilst taking time to visit the brand new plinth in our plot. We were all very impressed and proud of the beautifully inscribed plinth.

On 1 May there were 67 ladies at our Birthday Lunch. We had members join us from Leicester and Notts, Tamworth, Shropshire, Phoenix, Cambridge and Hereford along with our Area Chairman, Maggie Purkis and Area Secretary, Irene Hall. Our special guest was Madge Cole, Chelsea Pensioner. We had a fabulous time despite the fact that before the proceedings Trudi Banning took a dive in the restaurant at BHS, severely cutting her head and resulting in an overnight stay in hospital. Our thanks go to Rosie Garrison who gave up her lunch to stay with Trudi during her trip to hospital and Debbie Ashton, our First Responder, who looked after the medical side until the

arrival of a rather gorgeous paramedic. Next year we will dispense with the dramas please ladies.

At our Birthday Lunch we were able to announce that 20 members of our Branch had been invited to attend a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace by the Not Forgotten Association. We drew lots for the lucky attendees and there were several excited screams as names were announced. The search for suitably posh dresses and hats is underway and there will be photographic evidence in the next issue of the Lioness. On 18 May we were invited to join Phoenix Branch for lunch at the NMA. Nine of us were able to attend and we had a lovely time walking round the grounds and chatting with friends. No doubt there is a photograph of all those present somewhere in this edition.

Birmingham Branch have again booked a stall at the Armed Forces Day celebrations in the City Centre. Birmingham City Council make a big effort every year so we will again be seen marching in a parade of veterans as well as looking out for ex-members of the ATS and WRAC. Last year we found Fran Legg, Sandy Hawkins and Benita Davies. They are all regular attenders now.

For the past couple of years we have been lucky enough to have been holding our meetings at the Britannia Hotel on New Street. Unfortunately, the powers that be have decided to convert the meeting rooms into bedrooms so we were made homeless. A concerted effort by the committee has resulted in splendid accommodation being obtained for the foreseeable future at the Irish Centre, Deritend, Digbeth. It isn't very far from New Street Station, Moor Street Station, Digbeth Bus Station, there are 10 bus routes pass the door and there is a multi-storey car park quite nearby. The Ring and Ride service will be able to drop members at the door too. To save us walking upstairs to the smaller rooms the General Manager has given us use of the ballroom so it looks like Brum Branch are taking up dancing. Watch this space.

Although we have sent two of our members to the big parade square in the sky we have gained several new members too. We have welcomed Susan Pearce, Janet Given, Yvonne Thick and Jules Davies. We look forward to the next few months with excitement as we anticipate the Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, marching at the Cenotaph and attending the Birmingham International Military Tattoo. Please remember ladies, you can count on Brum Branch, we have an abacus

BOURNEMOUTH BRANCH

Val Wright

On Remembrance Sunday our branch Poppy Wreath was laid by Freda Brown at the Cenotaph in Bournemouth. Next we were fortunate to receive an invitation for 6 of our members to go to the Not Forgotten Association Christmas Lunch in Bournemouth on 14 December. This followed our own successful Branch Christmas lunch, which was enjoyed by 28 members and some guests.

2013 meetings started in February with a visit from the female recruiting Warrant Officer at the Bournemouth office who gave a lively and interesting talk on recruiting into the Army of today. In March members enjoyed a

social gathering and then in April there followed a Bring & Buy Sale. Despite declining membership we still see about 18 members each month. Sadly, many of our longer term members can no longer manage to travel to meetings. Our most senior member, Mrs Margaret Sheridan, reached the remarkable age of 100 years and celebrated her birthday in the rest home near Lymington where she has lived for some years. The local cubs laid on an entertainment for the residents before the cakes were cut. The picture is courtesy of the Lymington Advertiser and Times.



Chairman Stella Fogg receives her 'welcome back' flowers

One of our members Mary Perkin has now moved to be near her family, as her move coincided with our meeting day we were unable to say a 'proper goodbye' to her but she has promised to visit us when she can. We welcomed a new member in March, Pauline Sims who is ex WRAC. It was with sadness that in April our ex Chairman Esme Davidson died, many of us including Maj Mack attended her Funeral and the Secretary recited our Association Collect.

In May we were very pleased to welcome our Chairman back to our meeting, we presented her with some flowers. Bristol were the hosts for this year's South and South West Area Reunion. Various venues were visited before final decision was made. It was decided that the Bristol City Marriott Hotel, where our Grand Reunion was held, was the ideal place. The Buffet menu was very, very good, including our request for Spam sandwiches (which were all eaten) and Coronation Chicken. We decided that as it was so near the Coronation date of HM the Queen we would have that as a theme. It worked very well, we had plenty of bunting, newspaper reports of the Coronation and a selection of sweets that were available in 1953. Included in our desserts were red and blue jelly (courtesy of Chairman's niece) brought from the USA. We had a brilliant Raffle and we thank all those who brought a Raffle prize, we were able to send a cheque to HQ for Lioness for £150. Lioness was chosen as we know and appreciate how much joy it brings to members who unfortunately cannot attend meetings. We had some of our ladies meeting and greeting those Branches who joined us and had quite a long journey, we hope you all enjoyed it.



Enjoying the South West Area Reunion



Margaret Sheridan

Most recently 9 branch members enjoyed the S&SW Area Reunion hosted by Bristol Branch at the Bristol City Marriott Hotel. They travelled in 2 cars, both of which circumnavigated Bristol several times before finding the hotel. A 'SATNAV' is on the agenda for any further visit to Bristol! In June we await a visit from New Forest Ice Creams, following the great success of Purbeck Ice Creams on a hot day last summer. We hope to conduct a comparative tasting and that the weather will be appropriate.

Sadly we have lost two of our long term supportive members, Amy Weightman and Carole Peters. More able members of the branch were able to attend their final farewell.

BRISTOL BRANCH **Jackie Naysmith**

Bristol Branch started the New Year very well with good attendance at our meetings. The Secretary and Joy Smith visited one of our members who is unable to attend meetings but is very supportive to the Branch. We took her a card and flowers for her 90th Birthday. Our Annual Lunch was held at a different venue this year, it was held on Feb 14th and we did a special valentine theme. Everyone went home with a rose and love heart sweets. Unfortunately our Chairman, Mrs Stella Fogg, was unable to attend as she was receiving hospital treatment. We were pleased that our Area Chairman, Maj Mackens-McIntyre, was once again able to join us. Fortunately the weather was kind to us, especially for those members who have to travel quite a distance.

We are planning events for the Summer months, but this will depend on the weather. We have representation at WSM for Armed Forces Day. The Chairman and Secretary have been invited to attend Flag Raising on June 24th for Armed Forces Day, and the Secretary and some of our members are attending Flag Raising on the 25th June at South Gloucester. We hope you had a good Summer and send our best wishes to you all. Happy holidays.

Editor: Many thanks to Bristol Branch members Rita Head and Sheila Holley who agreed to be interviewed about their ATS experiences for a short film promoting the launch of the Range Rover Evoque Women in Engineering (WISE) Scholarship. If you go to the News section of the WRAC Association website and click on the link you can watch the film, alternatively it is available on YouTube. Thanks also to Jackie Naysmith who facilitated the interview and filming.

CANTERBURY BRANCH

Sue Foulks

Canterbury Branch continues to meet monthly, albeit our numbers are dropping. However, all is not lost; recently we have been joined by Whitstable Association of WRNS. No longer having a suitable venue in which to meet, they were in danger of disbanding and therefore were pleased to accept when it was suggested that they take part in our meetings. A case of the Army saving the Navy, perhaps! However, the increase in numbers has meant that our meetings are more interesting and we can have a speaker from time to time.

Sadly in January our President for many years, Jenny Wells, passed away. Her funeral was well attended with both the Branch and the British Legion standards paraded. In April Marje Dagless passed away. Marje had been a keen supporter of the Branch for more than twenty years and was our caterer, always ready to keep us well provided with tea and biscuits and is missed by us all.

In November 2012 we were pleased to welcome one of our Life Members, Imogen Corrigan, who gave a very interesting talk on the Searchlight Brigade, the only all-female brigade to serve in the ATS during WWII. Our Christmas meal in December was a great success thanks to the combined efforts of Susan, Kate and everyone who helped make it so. The first meeting of 2013 was in February when we discussed the programme for the coming months. In March we welcomed Cherry Buchanan who talked about her role as an Advisor with SSAFA. In April we held our fish and chip lunch, and in May Susan and Kate spoke about the recent Association AGM held at the National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas. This was followed by Susan talking about her time at RMAS.

Our year continues. In June we have a talk by the Chairman of the Whitstable Association of WRNS telling us about the Tom Thumb Theatre in Cliftonville, Margate. In July we will be hosting a very special summer tea party. Association Vice-President, Lt Col Sue Westlake (Retd) will join us along with members of branches in the South East. We look forward to an afternoon meeting old friends and new, with plenty of tea, chat and lots of strawberries.

and cream, at the Dominican Priory in the centre of Canterbury where we normally hold our monthly meetings.

CHELMSFORD BRANCH

Gina Shadrack

In memorium: It is with great sadness that we record the death of Eileen Mickleborough, Branch Chairman who died on 19 January 2013 peacefully at home.

February: Our first meeting of this year was at the home of the Hon Secretary where we enjoyed a chat and prolonged cups of tea. This was because there were problems with the hall where we meet, including no heating; and we had, at that time, no intention of going anywhere where it was cold!

March: During March a commemorative service to mark the 1953 flooding of Canvey Island, Holland and France was held in Chelmsford Cathedral. Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal was Guest of Honour and read one of the lessons. The Hon Secretary was invited to attend to represent the Branch, and Margaret Kliskey also attended representing the local branch of the WRNS. As part of the service a drama group from Canvey Island re-enacted the collapse of the sea wall which caused the death of 200 people. Representatives from Holland, France (where the death toll was much higher) and Canvey Island all lit a candle in remembrance. It was an honour to feel the Branch had been included in this poignant occasion. Many thanks to Tanya for bringing this to our attention. We held our March meeting as usual and enjoyed a contribution from Margaret (K) who spoke to us on some of the history of Cornwall.

April: Reminiscences are probably the best way to describe an insight into events of the life of Margaret Tebbutt, who spoke without a note, telling us of her earlier days in scouting and suchlike. Margaret followed this up with some poetry and provided us with some enjoyable listening. As she is the person who makes the tea we are indebted to her on both counts!

May: We held a craft workshop at this meeting and members made a birthday (or other) card from scratch. Those taking part showed just how adaptable they are and made a collection of cards anyone would have been more than happy to receive - such talent, it must be our army training! We look forward to holding another workshop in the future.



Craft workshop cards on display

June: We welcomed a former speaker, Dorothy Wells, to her second talk on "Life in a Vicarage". Both amusing and informative, this was well received.

July: It is planned to hold our Anniversary Lunch during July and we look forward to seeing Jane Freebairn, the former General Secretary of the Association. Happily retired but up to her wellies in plants, she is making time to visit us in Chelmsford, brilliant!

CLEVELAND BRANCH

Audrey Grainge

In December we had our Christmas lunch at the Toby Carvery, we had good turnout even our French ex pat Sylvia Cree managed to make it.



Jan, Barbara and Suzanne getting into the spirit

Our January meeting was cancelled due to the bad weather but in February we had our annual auction, always a hilarious event, with Irene Mclean and Dot Ryder in charge. In March we had a return visit from Ollie, a policeman at the Teesside Port Authority, he gave us an insight into the workings and policing of one of the busiest ports in the United Kingdom. Our speaker in May was a lady who has written two books based on the lives of the Land Army girls in WW2. She told many anecdotes told to her by the ladies whom she had met through giving her talks, and the problems and pitfalls she had to go through to get her books published at the age of 57.



Branch members visiting the Association plot at the NMA



Gwyn found things a little tiring

Fifteen of our members attended the AGM at the NMA in April, this turned out to be a great day meeting new people and getting reacquainted with old friends. After lunch we visited the new memorial and Cathy Monro kindly took a photo of the branch members. It must have been a long day for Gwyn though and she felt the need of a lay down.



Visiting the Penguins at Redcar

Sylvia Cree managed a visit to England in early May and Dot, Christine, Sylvia and I met for lunch in Redcar. After we had visited the new vertical pier we went to see the penguins looking very fresh in their new coat of paint. We all met again two days later and had a great day out in Whitby the weather was kind to us although it was very windy along the pier. We then went for fish and chips in a restaurant overlooking the sea. Two of Sylvia's passions are sea views and fish and chips though not quite sure in which order they come.

Jenny and Barbara, two members who live in Darlington, have joined their local branch of the Veterans Club and at present are the only female members. They are enjoying hearing all the stories the men have to tell. We have recently gained two new members to the branch; Jenny Hall who served 1975-1976 in the regulars and from 1986-2012 in the TA as a clerk, Allison Palmer was in the Royal Logistics Corps as a driver from 1996-2002, she used to drive tanks around on big transporters on the front line, scary stuff and very brave.

Our Standard bearer Anne Mahoney, continues to do a

sterling job, here is an account in her own words: "On Sunday 28 April I went to the Royal Hospital Chelsea, it was Royal Artillery Day and I paraded our Standard and also attended the church service. My next exploit was to Blackpool for Royal Artillery weekend where we paraded our Standards for the Master Gunner and then marched in for a short service and laid up our Standards. In the afternoon I entered the drill competition and came third and was presented with a cup and £20. That evening we had a sunset ceremony which was great. I met a few girls from the Birmingham Branch who were so happy to see our Standard on parade. Although they didn't like me being last, but as I was the shortest it's tallest on the left shortest on the right.

One of the Standard Bearer said he had never seen such a small Standard Bearer (I won't tell you my nick name!). Since December I have had our Standard out twenty three times. I am always proud to carry our Standard and hope I can for a long time to come."

Well done Anne we are proud to have you as our Standard Bearer.



Silverware won in a Drill competition



Anne Mahoney at Chelsea with In Pensioner Dorothy Hughes

FIFE & TAYSIDE BRANCH **Kate Arnold**

Fife & Tayside recently held their AGM at the Salutation Hotel in Perth. It was a good meeting, well attended and following our meeting, 17 of us enjoyed an excellent lunch served by the hotel. Doreen Peggie, Branch Secretary, reported that the Branch was doing very well with 15 Annual Members and 39 Life Members. However, it was with much regret that for health reasons, she was resigning as Branch Secretary. She hoped to continue as an active member of the Branch and intended to keep in touch with other Branch members. The Chairman proposed a vote

of thanks to Doreen for all her hard work on behalf of the Branch over many years. It was agreed that Kate Arnold would take over as Branch Secretary. Kate then gave a brief report from the Secretary's Meeting of the WRAC Association held at the National Memorial Arboretum on 13th April. Lt Col Jo Young also addressed the meeting regarding the revised Constitution and Governance Structure of the Association.

The next Annual General Meeting of the WRAC Association Scottish Area will be held at The Queens Hotel, Perth on Saturday 28th September 2013. If you would like to attend the AGM but are not affiliated to a Scottish Branch, please contact the Scottish Area Secretary Kate Arnold on 01577 830136 for further details. The cost for a ticket is £25.00. This covers the cost of tea or coffee with shortbread on arrival, a three course lunch followed by tea or coffee. All other beverages would need to be paid for on an individual basis. There will be a raffle and a competition and the Secretary will provide details of this and accommodation prices on request

HEREFORD BRANCH **Sharon Joyce**

Firstly may I welcome two new members to the Hereford Branch; Katherine (Jo) Fielden and Barbara Davies, both are ex WRAC. We started 2013 with our usual Festive Meal, 25 members attended and a good time was had by all. We don't have a meeting in February because the weather can be a little uncertain so the next branch gathering was at the Association AGM at the National Arboretum, Alrewas on 13 April. Eleven members attended (see photo) some for the first time, the weather was very kind, the food good and the company excellent. Put all that together and a great time was had by all. The new WRAC plot Plinth looks stunning.



In March of this year Joyce Nicholls, our Treasurer, celebrated 40 years local service as a telephonist with 18 Sig Regt at Credenhill near Hereford. To her surprise, whilst on duty, her OC and the RSM of the Regt presented her with a bottle of Regimental champagne and a kiss from both, congratulating her on 40 years service. Both mentioned that neither of them were born when she started work there! Later the OC and SSM of 264 Sig Sqn came in with 2 bottles of wine, again with many congratulations on her loyal service. In the afternoon her OC asked Joyce and other staff members to join him in another room for a talk (the switchboard to be manned by soldiers). On entering the OC had called a full "A Parade" to mark Joyce's 40 years service. Joyce was taken aback to say the least. When asked how many in the room were born in 1973 only 4 put their hands up. This made Joyce feel a little old but with all her friends she laughed it off, typical of Joyce. Joyce is a founder member of the Hereford Branch, with her mother Mary Nicholls (Chairwomen), back in 1989 (we celebrate 25 years in 2014). She has been Treasurer for many years and is a very active member of the Branch. Well done Joyce from all the members.

On 10th August we will have held our annual Picnic and Summer Draw at Queens Wood near Leominster. There is a great wood to explore with a fantastic view point looking over into Herefordshire and Wales. No doubt a report and photos will be published in the next edition of Lioness.

HULL BRANCH

Lynne Marsh

A number of things have changed over the last year, the main one being our meeting place. We still meet on the first Friday of the month, from 12-2pm, but we have yet to find a permanent home. Anybody wishing to visit or join us any month will be very welcome. Exact details can be obtained from Janet on 01482 809042, or Lynne on 01964 615973. We are hoping to encourage our working members to an evening at our local Bowling Rink in the Autumn.

We had an eventful 2012 with our main recruiting/ awareness event being the Hull Veterans' Weekend in July. We had a Tombola stall, next to the main tent and opposite the bandstand, so constant refreshments and 40's music for 2 whole days! Tough but someone's got to do it. Luckily we had good weather all weekend and a very successful time as far as fund-raising goes, but totally unsuccessful with our recruiting. Where are all the serving and ex-serving women from Hull and around?



We all went to the Hull Truck Theatre to see a play based on Land Army women's letters and memories. In the audience were 3 Land Army "girls" (picture above)

who took a bow at the end of this wonderfully emotional and funny play. They were all in their 90's and about 5 foot and a "tealeaf" tall. How on earth did they manage such arduous work in such atrocious conditions? But we did understand the camaraderie, teamwork and laughter under pressure, as well as making the most of one's very precious free time.

We also had a wonderful day out in the National Memorial Arboretum in August as well as a hilarious time at our local Lifeboat Station at Hornsea. We started our monthly meetings on 1 March and have had an "Awareness of WRAC Association" day at ASDA, Beverley Road in March and a city walk round Hull. Our highlight event so far this year was an invitation to the REME Association's Dinner at the Masonic Lodge in Hull. It was certainly an opportunity to get the glad rags on, and enjoy an excellent meal in superb company.



Visiting Hornsea Lifeboat Station



The 'Land Train' at the NMA

At the time of writing we have arranged days out to Pocklington Gardens, Eden Camp and the National Memorial Arboretum to look forward to as well as our stall at Hull Veterans' Weekend, not forgetting our themed monthly activities such as Coronation day and Wimbledon meeting. Best wishes to all branches, hope you enjoy 2013 and go from strength to strength.

LEEDS BRANCH

Pat Harpin

We are continuing to meet and enjoy each other's company. We had a new venue for our Lunch in May. The food was good but the venue is larger and not as intimate as the old Thomas Danby College. In August we are going to Wetherby for a Fish and Chip Lunch and a walk round the Market, this is a new venture for us.

Betty attended the AGM and was impressed with the new WRAC Granite Block and garden. We are looking forward to the N.E. Area lunch in September and one or two members will be attending the Dinner Club weekend. We like the facelift to Lioness and look forward to the next issue.

LEICESTER AND NOTTINGHAM BRANCH

Sue Slattery

December. We held our Christmas lunch as usual, at Devonshire Place. In attendance were 35 members plus guests including the Lord Lt of Leicestershire Jennifer Lady Gretton, who wrote a lovely thank you letter to us in the new year. The meal and service was up to the normal standard and Santa Claus (Maurice Freer) made sure everyone had a present from his sack. Our great afternoon finished with the close harmony choir entertaining us. Four of our ladies travelled to Birmingham Branch to join them for their christmas lunch. On a sad note this month we lost our comrade, Mavis Tritchler (WRAC) and her funeral was attended by our Standard and ten members.



Doris White presenting Joan Thornton with a 93rd Birthday gift



Christmas lunch

January. Our usual nibble and natter began the New Year, where we discussed our social programme for the forthcoming year. Pam Richards (Welfare Officer) updated us on members who were poorly and had been visited and sent cards and flowers over the Christmas period.

February. A talk and demonstration on the current 24 hour ration pack was given by Carol (Social Secretary). Some members took home items of food to try for themselves. Joan Thornton was presented with flowers and cards for her 93rd birthday.

March. Our Bring and Buy sale raised £112. We were invited to Tamworth Branch for Skittles (14 ladies attended), unfortunately our scores did not rival that of our previous matches. Sadly this month we lost another one of our members Betty Kendrick. Pam Richards was presented with a plant and cards, much to her surprise as she is the person who normally arranges this for others.

April. This month began with 9 members travelling to Fort William, Scotland where we spent 4 nights at the Croit Anna hotel on the shore of Loch Linney. The main reason for the

visit was to place a WRAC plaque on a tree in the Fairy Forest. We met up with Chris Smith, one of our members who moved to Scotland 2 years ago, it was as if it was only 2 weeks ago not years. Chris enjoyed herself so much she extended her stay by another night. It is difficult to describe these few days; they were mad, noisy, full of laughter and we consumed plenty of food and drink. We even participated in silly Highland Games which were hilarious but most of us oldies suffered a few aches and pains afterwards. We managed a trip on the gondolas to the top of Ben Nevis, but we chose the wrong day as it was foggy and snowing so the view was obscured.



Visiting the Fairy Forest



Enjoying lunch at the hotel in Fort William

We returned from our trip just in time for the Branch meeting as Yvonne McCarthy's daughter, Christina Jones, came to give us a talk of the changing roles of females in the modern army. Christina is a serving soldier of many years and gave us a most interesting and informative talk. She stands around 5ft tall in her size 3 boots and how she manages to carry kit including bergen, helmet, body armour and weapon just amazed us. A thoroughly enjoyable afternoon. Yvonne said her daughter thought we were great and enjoyed meeting us. She also said Christina never stopped talking about us on their way home. A new member, Lynda Pollard, has joined the branch. Eight ladies attended the Association AGM at the NMA where lunch was provided and there was time to catch up with comrades. Before leaving we visited the new Association granite memorial which is quite impressive. Many thanks to HQ for organizing this day.

May. Ten ladies attended the Birmingham Branch birthday lunch where surprise, surprise, we won most of the raffle prizes. We paid a 2nd visit to the NMA this year to join our comrades of the Phoenix Branch for lunch, 26 were in attendance, many who had not seen our new memorial. Jessie is organized the quiz at our May meeting. Three ladies and our standard will be in attendance at the Normandy Veterans service and parade.

Sadly we have lost our third Branch member this year, Kath Wells (ATS) who died on May 12th. Ten ladies and our Standard attended her funeral at Kettering on May 30th.

Thanks to the committee and members who continue to work and support our Branch to make it so successful and long may it continue.

LINCOLN BRANCH **Jean Evans**

The first half of 2013 has been a more quiet time for the Lincoln Branch due to both snow and rain. Our Anniversary Lunch at Branston Hall on 20 April was a great success. Regimental Secretary Gabi Shanahan joined us and updated members on HQ reorganisation. Regional Chairman Dot Ryder also supported us and detailed the September Regional Lunch.



Anniversary Lunch at Branston Hall

On 11 May Linda Hilton organised a trip to Eden Camp and drove the mini bus. As she later took us on the assault course and proceeded to climb the tower we were delighted that she was able to evacuate in time to take us home. We have an exciting programme planned for the rest of 2013 so watch this space.



Adventures at Eden Camp

LONDON BRANCH

Lauren Fia McKenzie

Let us introduce ourselves. We are the newly re-formed London Branch, having started our Branch in January this year. We may be small but we are a fun loving bunch, meeting once a month. We have no permanent home at the moment but we must look at that in the future, at the moment we are enjoying the beautiful city and what she has to offer. We had our first meeting in January this year where we celebrated the reopening of London Branch at the Punch and Judy pub in Covent Garden. It was a wonderful afternoon and friendships were made. We have subsequently met at the Natural History Museum and even a cosy corner of Oxford Street. We are enjoying our adventures. Our Branch Secretary and another member attended the AGM at the National Memorial Arboretum in April. It was a very proud day for us to be in such a special place with a very special contingent of ladies who were encouraging and uplifting. Our Branch was welcomed by our Vice-President Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Sue Westlake in her speech on the day, and we thank her very much for the kind words of encouragement. We shall endeavour to foster the spirit of the Corps and do you proud.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH

Tanya Hall

Wow, what a time we have had in the Newcastle Branch since we were last in Lioness! We have a new committee made up of all ex WRAC ladies; Jane Benn remains as Chairman, Tanya Hall is Secretary and Jenny Andrews has taken over as Treasurer. Molly Summerell has resigned as Treasurer after over 12 years of exceptional dedication to the Branch, the entire Branch are very grateful for all her hard work.

In August 2012 the Branch visited Eden Camp with the help of a legacy from Joyce Stephenson who sadly passed away. Eden Camp has changed alot over the years and now has a display hut dedicated to women who have served in the Army, it was very enlightening for our younger members. Some members enjoyed the Concert Hut and had a very loud sing-a-long! Did Gracie Fields really have the biggest aspidistra in the world?

In September the Branch had some very sad news, we lost two of our ladies. Emily Ornsby went to the Parade Square in the sky on 18 August and was joined by Mary Elliot on 6 September, both ladies will be very much missed. We did not have any time to recover from these losses when we were informed that we had also lost Mary Henderson on 22 October, Mary will also be missed by the Branch.

Several Branch members attended the North East Area Reunion in York, a wonderful time was had by all the ladies. It was exceedingly nice to be able to reunite with friends from other Branches. Many of our members are looking forward to attending again this year. In December we joined the National Ex-Prisoner of War Association NE Branch for a Christmas meal at the Old Assembly Rooms, Newcastle. This has been a long running engagement as Mrs Betty Herschel and her son George organise it each year; Betty's husband Stan was held prisoner in Poland during WWII. This engagement will soon be taken over by our Branch as sad as it is the numbers of POWs is gradually declining. Our Secretary has informed the WRAC Association North East Secretaries that members are invited to join us at the 2013 Christmas Luncheon on 12 December.



Grace Fatherley, Jenny Andrews, Helen Dixon, Denise Redding, Irene MacLean

Newcastle Branch also had the honour of presenting Mrs Olive Kinghorn with a well deserved Certificate of Appreciation. It was not earned at our Branch but for all the hard work that Olive did for Cleveland Branch. Olive moved house to be nearer her family and has now joined Newcastle Branch, we enjoy her company and are pleased that moving house does not mean you can't be in an Association Branch.



Jane Benn presents Olive Kinghorn with her Certificate of Appreciation



Kath Smith, Jenny Andrews, Evelyn Vinsome & Grace Fatherley visiting Eden Camp

In March of this year we suspended our usual monthly meeting to celebrate the 90th birthday of our lovely member Mrs Betty Herschel. Cakes were supplied by our Secretary and other nibbles came via her son George. All available members attended and a good time was had by all, even the bar in the Companions Club was used!



Members of Newcastle Branch

Well that's what we've been upto during the last year or so, but don't worry, we have days out planned and will keep you informed of any future events. So for now ladies it's time to go, but we won't be going quietly!

NORFOLK BRANCH **Joan Awbery**

For the past year we have enjoyed monthly meetings, except in January when the weather defeated us, for lunch either at a hotel in Norwich or when more adventurous, further afield. We had a trip on the light railway between Aylsham and Wroxham, a river and Broads boating afternoon, lunch in Dereham to meet members living there and our annual attendance at the service in Yarmouth on 11th May. Now we are looking forward to meeting Wendy Hooton, our Area Chairman, for lunch and in June, a gathering in Joan's garden. This is known (by Joan) as a "Never Again" party. Joan's first one was five years ago and annually after each one declares it will be the last. But with so much help and co-cooperation from so many members they are well worthwhile, with friends and neighbours joining in each one has been enjoyable and successful in fundraising.



**Left to right: Peggy Bell, Beryl Manthorp,
Lorna Lansdowne, Joan Awbrey**

11th May this year was the 70th anniversary of the destruction of their billet by enemy bombing in Gt Yarmouth when 26 ATS girls died and as usual members of the Norfolk Branch held a service and laid flowers in their memory. This ceremony has taken place each year since the Plaque was unveiled in 1994. This year the service was conducted by the Curate of St Nicholas, the Minster Church of Gt Yarmouth and was very well attended. The local Branch of the Royal British Legion brought their Standard and laid a poppy wreath. The people of the town and county were made aware of this occasion with publicity in the local newspapers, with a graphic article describing the carnage of that terrible day. A lecture "Remembering the Times the Bombs fell" was held later in the Assembly Room, the raid of 11th May being given prominence.



Memorial Service Great Yarmouth
**Left to right: Marjorie Spears, Beryl Manthorp,
Audrey Juby, Joan Whittingham, Peggy Bell,
Irene Warren, Maisie Capes, Joan Awbery**

We send greeting to all Branches and hope a warm and sunny summer will permit us all to take part in outdoor activities. By the time this appears in Lioness we shall know!

PHOENIX BRANCH **Sheila Johnson**

Inevitably the 2012/2013 winter period had impacted upon members but the post festive season luncheon went ahead as planned. The venue in January was the Lord Hill Hotel, Shrewsbury where those who made it had the opportunity of meeting up again with friends from Chester, Shropshire and Marches and Mid Wales Branches. The raffle prizes on offer were more or less won on an equal basis between the branches, to whom thanks are due for their generous support.



Pat Sanders & Irene Hall



Phoenix Branch members at the Lord Hill Hotel, Shrewsbury

Such pleasant gatherings remind us all that some of our former members are now unable to benefit from them. A case in point is that of Edith Francis who was the Crewe Branch Secretary for many a year. Edith now resides in a Care Home in Cheshire and was visited in April by Sheila Johnson on behalf of Phoenix Branch. Edith's ATS colleagues Joan Berry and Millie Pover also intended to visit Edith. Unfortunately the winter weather put a block on their intentions and Joan suffered an arm fracture which further restricted her desire to visit Edith. We remain hopeful that a joint visit will occur in what we trust will be a decent summer!



Truro lunch group

from the old Exeter branch. In April we were sorry to lose Margaret Drummond and Marion Edwards. Marion had 3 daughters, Valerie, Christine and Debbie, she joined the ATS attached to the Royal Artillery. Later she worked in the hospital in the blood storage dept. She joined Plymouth Branch in the mid 90's and went with her daughter Debbie, Mary Davis and Thelma Rendle to the Cenotaph annually and also enjoyed going to Weymouth for the MVT with Mary. She was escort to our Standard for a while with Doris McCoy as Bearer, she will be sadly missed.

We continue to have monthly meetings at The Abbey Hall in Plymouth on the fourth Tuesday of each month but our numbers are dwindling due to age related problems but thanks go to the loyal few who continue to support meetings and other branch events.



Edith Francis & Sheila Johnson

PLYMOUTH BRANCH **Nikki Rochelle**

Our year ended with a Christmas dinner in Stoke. On a day when Plymouth saw more rain than Noah, 28 ladies braved the elements to meet and eat at the Masonic Hall, we were pleased to welcome our area chairman Mack who had made the journey through hell and high water from Dorset and also 5 WRNS. In April Jane, Ruth and I made the journey to Alrewas for the AGM. It was a first visit for Jane and myself and we enjoyed taking time to walk around the Arboretum viewing the various memorials. In May we enjoyed our annual jaunt to Truro and again were pleased to welcome Mack and 18 of us enjoyed a buffet lunch.

In June a mini bus load of us are off to Dart Farm near Exeter where we have arranged to meet some members

SHROPSHIRE BRANCH **Chris Powell**

Well here we are with another edition of Lioness branch news. Doesn't time fly by when you're having fun, and so far this year that is just what we did.

January, the week before the snow brought most of the country to a standstill, we held our Post Christmas Lunch. How lucky could we be as it was a super day weather wise to welcome friends old and new, not only from our own branch but also from Marches & Mid Wales, Chester, Phoenix and also Shropshire REME. Everyone enjoyed the food (well I didn't get any complaints, and saw only empty plates going back to the kitchen) plus we had a super raffle, prizes went from the normal chocs and bottles to trays of farm fresh eggs and fillet steaks. Thanks to Sheila and Edna for selling all those tickets and Sandra Davies our Chairperson for her welcome address. Maggie Purkis, you are not allowed near those party poppers again. Once you started popping them they all followed your lead, it took me days to get those bits of paper out of my ears! Some members were accompanied by friends or relatives, it was so nice to see them join in and also hear how much they enjoyed themselves. I do hope they will join us again at other events. At the end of January when the snow was having it's wicked way, I was able to make it to the Phoenix Branch lunch. This wasn't as difficult as it sounds, as they held it on our patch in Shrewsbury.

Due to the snow some guests had to leave early, but we all had a good time whilst there. Thank you for the invite Phoenix.



Enjoying a January Christmas lunch



Visiting Phoenix Branch

February we held our first monthly meeting of the year, congratulations to those that made it. Most of those attending our meetings now come early so they can take advantage of the meal deals. Not saying anything about you or I Nancy, everyone knows how little we eat!

March found us ready for the Tamworth skittles afternoon. What can I say but 'We was robbed!' Sheila Johnson did us proud and came second, only one point in it. Chris Rangecroft was also our secret weapon. Me! I was so happy just to keep the ball in the same room. Sandra Davies did an excellent job of getting us there and making sure we bowled in the right order, very hard when it was Sheila, Sandra, Chris R and Chris P. I wasn't sure if I was at the start or end. Be warned Birmingham, come the rematch in September Sheila will not be allowed to sip that Merlot until after the match! Seriously we had an afternoon full of laughter as always. Remember ladies, you don't have to play if you don't wish to, you can just come along and support us and put the other teams off. Bella of Tamworth Branch makes us all very welcome, and does an excellent buffet.



Skittles with Tamworth Branch

April came upon us so quickly, and four of us went to Fort William. Sandra, Chris and Sheila entrusted me to drive us to Scotland and back. The laughter started from pick up and didn't cease. The snow had decided to stop, and we had bright sunny weather all the way. We decided to break our journey by stopping overnight at Motherwell and can now recommend some excellent accommodation and food. The motel staff asked what our visit was about and next morning the receptionist took a super picture of us all in our 'omo bright' Fort William T shirts. We wanted to make sure everyone who saw us knew we were WRAC on Tour, and on the back of our T shirts we had printed our names and Shropshire Branch. This would also help should we end up getting lost or forget who we were! I'm sure by now you will have heard, read and seen pictures of all that happened at Fort William. Please note I followed the car in front when we went to the tree dedication service, it wasn't my fault we got lost! I was in good company though with Babs Blay from Birmingham, Maggie Purkis Phoenix branch, Chris Corker and Dot Ryder from Cleveland Branch in another lost car. They did send out a search party though and our little band of four lost cars eventually joined everyone else. Afterwards we went to play some Highland Games. Those that could, made up eight teams of ten and played, or cheated in some cases. Our team came 3rd in the Highland Games and 1st on the assault course. Mainly because the other teams were penalised for moving the hurdles whilst we were jumping over them. As you can imagine by the end the teams had become very tired (and injured), so there was not a big take up for the last game, Tug of War. Don't ask me how, but I ended up on one team with Chris Rangecroft and Sheila Johnson on the other. Sandra was the sensible one and sat it out. The team I was on won, but the last pull caused our team to stagger back and fall into a disorderly heap. We then limped into the bar, need I say more. The weekend was such a success that this "One Off" is going to happen again next April. We did some sightseeing whilst up there but if I went into full details my report would take up too many pages. But just to say on our return journey we did stop at Gretna Green, but no one came forward and offered to marry any of us. Fort William is a must for your diary next year ladies.



We hadn't been back from Fort William a week and it was time to attend the WRAC Association AGM at the NMA. Unfortunately the weather was against us that day, very cold with rain and wind. So only the brave had a look around and saw the new plinth on our site. Again an excellent AGM and super lunch. Met up with lots of old friends and also some new ones we had made the week before.



AGM

May and it's Birmingham's Birthday Lunch. As always the food and company at Birmingham was excellent. So good to see so many coming together to celebrate. We just had time for a quick look round the new Birmingham New Street Station, then it was time to get on the train back to Shropshire and our monthly evening meeting.

Shropshire Branch AGM will take place at 19.00 on 4 September 2013.

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Jean Doe

Hello everyone, Southampton calling, with the unpredictable weather we struggle on! How have other Branches coped? We were disappointed to miss the AGM at Alrewas. We had hoped to get a small grant to enable us to make a weekend of it but alas it came to nothing. It seems that grants go to groups of young people, I think it is rather sad that senior groups tend to get overlooked.

If we get a 'summer' we hope to have a cream tea in the New Forest. We are fortunate in having several locations to choose from, especially as the forest is fairly near. We have also been invited to Armed Forces Day in Portsmouth; last year was disappointing, apparently the organisers had a nightmare day, everything went wrong. Here's hoping we have a good day, 2011 was superb.

The Branch had a post Christmas get together where a presentation was made to Lyn Jenkins in appreciation of her services as Secretary. At the May meeting our Mother and Daughter members were able to join us; mum was delighted with the cake to celebrate her 90th birthday!

I will end with an apology, we were unable to fill a coach to attend the Grand Reunion in 2012, this would have made the fare too expensive for the few. So sorry Bristol, but we did hear it was good! Until next time.

SUFFOLK BRANCH

Sheelagh Wilson

Where does the time go, it only seems five minutes since I wrote the last Branch news. Numbers have been very low this year due to the weather, illness and never ending road works chaos - so called traffic improvements according to the local council. We welcomed two new members at our meetings this year, Thurl Craft and Gwen Greenwood. It's always nice to meet new faces and see member numbers increase.

January was very quiet as only a few members attended so we just chatted and put the world to rights. February was a quiz from Sylvia Johnson about colours. We didn't do too badly so our brains are not too rusty for us old 'uns'. In March we talked about the jobs we did before and after our Army days. A great variety of jobs were done including catering, sewing and housekeeping. Another quiz in April compiled by yours truly about flowers. All members did very well on this one, so either they know their flowers or I made the quiz too easy! In May it was all about 'A luxury we would like but can't afford.' Some luxuries included private health care, first class travel or someone to do the housework.

Well that's all for now folks, until next time, from all of us to all of you all the best for the remainder of 2013.

TAMWORTH BRANCH

Vee Moore

The Tamworth branch year has been a fairly busy one with many events which most of us attended. First we had the Dinner Club in October 2012, it was very well supported by our ladies and greatly enjoyed by them all. Next we had our annual visit to the Lord Hill Hotel in Shrewsbury for the Wales & West Area Reunion, again well supported by the branch.

In November a small party of us went to the Royal Albert Hall for the Remembrance Ceremony. What an experience, I feel it's something everyone should do once in their life. The Remembrance parade at the London Cenotaph was attended by Pat Williams. Tammy proudly carried the branch standard at the annual parade in Tamworth. We had a lovely Christmas dinner at the Castle Hotel in Tamworth, again well supported by the ladies of the branch and their guests.

On 15 March we had one of our twice yearly skittles matches to which we invite other branches, and as usual Tamworth lost. I deputised for Belle, our Branch Secretary, at the WRAC Association AGM held at the National Memorial Arboretum. I was later joined by Tammy and Nicola who had been representing the branch at the funeral of Pat Williams' husband Brian who had sadly passed away. We will really miss him as he was a welcome supporter of the branch and an 'Honorary Girlie' who attended many of our functions and was always around to help when needed.

Our branch AGM was well attended and we welcomed Maggie Purkiss and Irene Hall our Area Chairman and Secretary respectively. We also had the pleasure of meeting new member Sheila. On 18 May we had

another visit to the NMA when we attended the, now annual, Phoenix Branch lunch. What a lovely day and such great company! Thank you ladies for being there you really made it special. Cath Munro took a picture of us all standing close to the restaurant but lo and behold when the picture was put up on the Facebook page we were actually standing in front of the Armed Forces Memorial. How does that girl do it?



Nicola Scott, Vee Moore, Tammy Kirkwood

Next came the Birmingham birthday lunch, well, what can I say about it that hasn't already been said? It was superb as usual. Thanks Brum for another great day. Unfortunately our branch quiz on 7 June wasn't very well attended but those who did come had a good time. Despite the lack of numbers we were still able to donate £100 to our chosen charity this year "Scotty's Little Soldiers". This is a charity that gives the children who have lost a parent in Afghanistan the chance to have a much needed holiday or just something special to cheer them up. I know first hand that losing a parent at any early age and in such horrific circumstances can be very traumatic for these 'little soldiers.'

Looking forward we are eagerly anticipating Armed Forces Day on 29 June when a number of us will be visiting the NMA and joining in with their celebrations. On 20 September we will be having our second Inter-Branch skittles and we again hope to see many of you there. We can promise you a good time and lots of laughter. So ladies I recommend you start doing a few press-ups to get your bowling arm in practice.

Skittles again for us when we hold the Inter-Association challenge. For this we invite members from the Royal Signals, RCT/RAOC and Royal Engineers Associations and we all have a fish and chip supper at half time, yum. We finish as we started with the Dinner club which looms large on the horizon as does our area reunion on 26 October. Both events eagerly awaited. Take care all.

ULSTER BRANCH

Jean Hopper

On 19 December the members of Ulster Branch went to the pantomime in Belfast to see Cinderella at the Grand Opera House. There was a good turnout of members and their guests and we all had a most enjoyable afternoon. Prior to the pantomime I met up with some of the members and we treated ourselves to a little shopping and a very tasty meal. The pantomime was really great as usual, and we came away feeling totally enchanted with the beautiful costumes, scenery and music. It certainly put us in the mood for Christmas, as did the little bottles of Baileys which Sylvia Connachan kindly brought along for everyone, and the tempting chocolates.

We held our Annual Reunion Luncheon on 23 February at the Beechlawn House Hotel, Dunmurray. The meal was excellent and the staff kindly put extra heating in the dining room just for us as it was a very cold day. It is a real treat to be fussed over like this and it was much appreciated. We held a bring and buy sale and raffle before the meal to help boost funds and this was greatly enjoyed by everyone. There is nothing that creates such excitement as a raffle, especially when there are very acceptable prizes on offer. One of our guests, Lesley Sewell, took a very nice photo of the members which appeared in the local paper, quite a number of people congratulated us on how well we looked.



Annual Reunion Luncheon

On the last Saturday in May we had our usual bus outing. This year we went to the Giants Causeway area of Antrim. We travelled along the scenic Antrim coast road from Belfast, stopping in the Londonderry Arms Hotel in Carnlough for coffee. The coastline is peppered with little fishing villages, the tiny harbours with their sailing boats gleaming in the beautiful sunshine which stayed with us throughout the day. This particular coastline is reminiscent of the Mediterranean coast, with large chunks of rock forming arch like tunnels here and there along the route. When we came to Ballycastle we travelled up over the mountain with the beautiful yellow gorse and little lakes as far as the eye could see across the vast landscape. We were a little late arriving at the Causeway Coast Hotel for lunch but the meal was absolutely superb, well presented and served, and thoroughly appetizing. I went into the hotel with all my wonderful dietary intentions, but they were soon forgotten. When we came out we had the usual photo shoot and we managed to get our driver Eddie to join us. Then on to Coleraine for some retail therapy before heading home. In the bus we discussed some of our purchases. Stephanie Harris bought a wok for her son who

is a chef and Rae Halley bought some beautiful shoes. Everyone was happy.



Outside the Causeway Hotel

Our Spring weather has been very cold and miserable so I feel we were very lucky in having such beautiful sunshine for our outing. May I take this opportunity to wish everyone a pleasant summer and hopefully the Summer weather will continue.

WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND BRANCH **Diane Lawrence**

Our numbers have decreased by one during the past year. Barbara Davies moved back to Worcestershire in July last year, Sue Kirby moved to Somerset in March of this year and we were very sorry that Pauline Hughes passed away in March. Pauline was cremated in Weymouth and had a good turnout of friends, family and Branch Members to see her on her way. The Branch Standard was paraded. To make up the membership numbers we welcomed Melissa Thomson. Melissa is married and her husband is serving in Afghanistan but he gets home every three or four months. They are busy building a new home in Blandford and move into the new house in June.

The Veterans Parade was held on 24th June last year and there was a very good turnout. As usual the crowds were there to cheer and clap the marchers. There were quite a few Standards paraded and nearly 1,000 WW11 vehicles. Our annual summer luncheon was held at the Rembrandt Hotel and quite a few members were there to enjoy a convivial time. We then had a cream tea held at the Lobster Pot on Portland, always an enjoyable occasion. Unfortunately our President Peg McElwaine, was unable to join us there as she had a fall resulting in a damaged hip. She had a replacement hip fitted and now is our Bionic President and we are all very pleased that she is able to continue with Branch affairs in the future.

As 2012 was our Branch's 55th Anniversary we held a special luncheon at the RAFA Club, again a very convivial occasion. The members of RAFA Club joined in the celebrations. Our Christmas Party was held on 4th December with members bringing the food and wine/soft drinks were provided from Branch funds. We then closed Branch meetings until February 2013.

On 5th March we held a Bring and Buy with sale proceeds paid into Branch funds. We discussed methods of transport to Bristol for the Area Reunion. Melissa Thomson said that

she would probably be able to provide a minibus which she would drive herself. At our AGM on 19th March it was proposed by Mack and seconded by Peg Moore that the existing Committee be voted over en bloc provided they would confirm their willingness to serve which they did, and the proposal was agreed unanimously. On 2nd April we had a very enjoyable game of Bingo which was enjoyed by all members present. Mack had very kindly called the numbers.

Sybil Worledge gave a very interesting talk and demonstration on Rag Rugging, which is making rugs from strips of old wool garments, blankets etc. Sybil brought finished rugs of different designs, including medieval patterns, all in different colours. Sybil dyes the strips herself and then hooks them on the design which she has drawn on canvas. Some she uses as floor rugs and others she mounts onto a rod and hangs them on the walls of her home. One rug was made up of six smaller oblongs depicting nautical designs such as a yacht, naval vessel, lighthouse, windsurfer and lifeboat etc. This is hanging in the Portland Olympic Sailing Centre. All the members attending found this subject extremely interesting and thanked Sybil for bringing the items along to our meeting.

On 11th May, nine members of the Branch, including Mack, attended the South and South West Reunion in Bristol. A very interesting time was had by all, apart from a problem with parking. We were lucky that we had Melissa to drive us there in the Minibus. She managed to find a suitable parking place and we had a comfortable journey there and back (the minibus was brand new and had not been driven at all before). On 21st May Peter Easton returned to give a third talk, this time on the subject of "The Answer is in the Soil". He gave a potted history showing how soil was formed and the importance of worms who eat the compost thus providing the right consistency for plants to grow. Now we can look forward to our Veterans Parade along the seafront at Weymouth and the summer lunch, details in a future report

WINCHESTER BRANCH **Herme Emary**

On 13th September 2012 members of the branch met for our AGM at the Golden Lion. Twenty members answered the call (well 23 actually but 3 were unable to make it on the night, apologies were received), so many in fact that we could not hold a normal AGM with a verbal question and answer session. We were also split between 3 tables which although next to each other made discussion difficult. I decided therefore to write everything down and produce a voting sheet so that members could all vote in their own time. So even those unable to attend were able to send in their views. The Golden Lion once again kept us extremely well fed and we had live Irish music in the background.

On Thursday 15th November 2012 thirteen members met at the Porterhouse in Winchester for a lunchtime get together. We welcomed Ursula, a Bournemouth Branch member living in Winchester, who has asked to join us for some of our meetings. The Porterhouse provides a special lunchtime menu, with slightly smaller portions than the evening menu. Excellent food.

On 17 Jan 2013 eleven of us met up at Zizzi's Restaurant in Winchester. As well as the girls we also welcomed Ray and Chris Margaret and Janet's other half's. The weather was kind to most of us. Wet snow in Winchester, which did not settle and a bit chilly, but not bad driving weather (says she who caught the bus into town and went home in a taxi!). Kim managed to join us from Basingstoke travelling by train rather than car. Janet and Chris traveled from Church Crookham. Six members had to cancel for various reasons including the weather which was not so kind elsewhere. Everyone had a good evening the meal was very nice and had Lynn managed to download a voucher which helped with the bill (£40 off in fact well done Lynn). Thanks to all who took the trouble to turn up.



Lunch at the Porterhouse and dinner at Zizzi's



On 25 April 2013 twelve of us met up at the Golden Lion. Unfortunately 5 others were unable to attend at the last moment. As well as Jane F, Lynn, Sarah, Sue W, Jane M, Penelope, Maggie (and Bailey), Kim, Janet and Cath we also had 2 guests; Ian, Curator of the AGC Museum in Winchester and Pam ex WRAC/RAPC. We were supposed to be discussing what had happened at the Association AGM, but true to form we were more interested in catching up with each other. I also managed to speak to Ian about our visit to the Museum in November. It was a lovely evening, both company and weather. I was lucky in finding a parking place in the pub car park but I gather that a number of people who arrived after me had a good hike along the road after eventually finding a slot. The good weather obviously brought out everyone. Thanks to all who managed to make it on the night.

HOW DO I SUBMIT AN ARTICLE FOR LIONESS?

Articles for inclusion in the next edition of Lioness must be received by Fri 13 Dec 13. Please email to editor@wracassociation.org.uk. I am happy to receive copy in many formats including handwritten and hard copies of photos. However if you have access to technology I'd be grateful if you could adhere to the following guidelines:

Text

- If you have access to email the easiest way to submit copy is simply to type it into the body of the email. I don't need a beautifully laid out document as it all gets copied and pasted into Lioness format anyway.
- If you do attach a document can you please ensure it is in Word (Windows) or Pages (Mac) format. This means that the attached document has a .doc or .pages ending.
- Short articles are really appreciated, please try to stick to the equivalent of no more than one side of A4.

Photos

- Please send photos as attachments in a .jpg format.
- Please don't embed photos into the text of documents, they are difficult to work with.
- Hard copies of photos sent by post are also accepted as we can scan them for you.

WRAC ASSOCIATION FLEECE & POLO SHIRT

The WRAC Association has a stock of dark green fleeces embroidered with the Association Badge on the left side. The current range are men's sizes so tend to be on the large size. Sizes are as follows: XS 34 inches, S 38 inches, M 42 inches, L 44 inches, XL 48 inches. Cost: £25 including P&P. Sale: We also have some XXS size fleeces available for sale at £20 including P&P. These are a petite size 8-10 and would suit height circa 5ft.



The new WRAC Association Polo Shirt is a high quality, unisex Fruit of the Loom cotton shirt with embroidered WRAC Association logo. Unisex sizes S, M, L. Cost: £19.50 including P&P.



Fleeces and Polo Shirts can be purchased on-line via the website, by post, or phone 0300 400 1992. Cheques should be made payable to WRAC Association and sent to WRAC Association, Gould House, Worthy Down, Winchester, SO21 2RG.

Branch Meetings

Editor: *It is planned to make this list a permanent fixture in Lioness, with the information duplicated on the website. This is definitely a work in progress and is by no means 100% correct, if you wish to amend your details please email editor@wracassociation.org.uk or phone 0300 400 1992. If there is no Branch listed for your area but you would like to meet up with like minded members, and consider forming a Branch, contact HQ WRAC Association.*

LONDON

Greater London

When: 14.00 on a Saturday in March, May and September
Where: Hyde Park Barracks, Knightsbridge, London
Contact: Val Gaff Tel 020 8854 8477

London

When: 1st weekend of each month
Where: Location varies, phone to confirm
Contact: Lauren Fia MacKenzie Tel 07709 172351

SOUTH & SOUTH WEST

Bath

When: 14.00 on the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month, except on a Bank Holiday when the meeting is held on a Wednesday
Where: Manvers Street Baptist Church, Manvers Street, Bath, BA1 1JW
(www.manversstreetbaptist.wordpress.com)
Contact: Sylvia Musgrave Tel 01225 339904

Bournemouth

When: 2nd Wednesday of the month, except January and August
Where: Premier Inn, Poole Road, Bournemouth, BH2 5QU
Contact: Val Wright Tel: 01202 314047

Bristol

When: 10.30 on the 1st Thursday of the month
Where: Broadmead Baptist Church, 1 Whippington Court, (entrance on Union Street), Bristol, BS1 3HY
(www.broadmeadbaptist.org.uk)
Contact: Jackie Naysmith MBE Tel 0117 971 2524

Plymouth

When: 4th Tuesday of the month (except December)
Where: Abbey Hall, Catherine Street, Plymouth, PL1 2AD
Contact: Nikki Rochelle Tel 07840 486829

Portsmouth

When:
Where:
Contact: Sally Watson (Phone HQ WRAC Association - 0300 400 1992)

Salisbury

When:
Where:
Contact: Lt Col (Retd) Val Trout (Phone HQ WRAC Association - 0300 400 1992)

Southampton

When: 19.00-21.30 on the 1st Thursday of the month
Where: All Saint's Church Hall, Desborough Road, Eastleigh, SO50 5NH
Contact: Lynda Jenkins Tel 02380 470965

Torquay

Editor: *If you would like to join a number of members in the Torquay area who are planning to get together and meet on a regular basis please contact: Elaine Harwood Tel 07821 942947 or 01803 394323, alternatively email elaine.wayne@hotmail.co.uk*

Weymouth & Portland

When: 13.00 on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month (no meetings from late December to late February and late June to late September)
Where: RAFA Club, Maiden Street, Weymouth, DT4 8AY
Contact: Di Lawrence Tel 01308 425149

Winchester

When: 2nd Thursday of January, March, September and November plus a summer outing
Where: Location varies depending on lunch or evening meeting
Contact: Herme Emary sec.wrac.winchester@gmail.com

SOUTH EAST

Bexhill

Editor: *Bexhill Branch are experiencing difficulty maintaining membership numbers for meetings and are in danger of closing. If you live in the Bexhill area and would like to meet up with like minded members why not contact Branch Secretary Jenny Nye on 01424 731882. There are over 150 WRAC Association members living in the BN and TN postcode areas!*

Canterbury

When: 13.00 on the 1st Wednesday of the month (except January and August)
Where: The Dominican Priory, St Peter's Lane, Canterbury (just behind the Marlowe Theatre)
Contact: Sue Foulks Tel 01304 823824

Medway

When: Meetings held monthly, location varies.
Contact: Janet Cameron Tel 01634 854298

Worthing

When: 10.00 for 10.30 on the last Tuesday of the month (except December)
Where: Cornerstone Methodist Church, Brighton Road (by Steyne Gardens), Worthing, BN11 3EA
Contact: Janet Goldsbrough-Jones Tel 01903 207485

EAST

Cambridge

When: 19.30-21.30 on the 1st Monday of the month (2nd Monday if a Bank Holiday)
Where: The Railway Vue, Station Road, Impington, Near Histon, CB24 9NP
Contact: Avril Williams Tel 01954 210859

Chelmsford

When: 13.30 - 15.30 on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, except January and August
Where: RAFA Club, Oliver House, Hall Street, Chelmsford, CM2 0HG
Contact: Georgina Shadrack Tel 01245 251088

Norfolk

When:
Where:
Contact: Elizabeth Winter (Phone HQ WRAC Association - 0300 400 1992)

Suffolk

When: 14.00 - 16.00 on the 3rd Thursday of the month, except December
Where: Ipswich Labour Club, 35 Silent Street, Ipswich, IP1 1TF
Contact: Sheelagh Wilson Tel 01473 725707

EAST

Cleveland

When: 13.00 on the 4th Wednesday of the month
Where: Newport Youth and Community Settlement Centre, St Pauls Road (off Union Street), Middlesbrough, TS1 5NQ
Contact: Hazel Crammen Tel: 01642 290830

Darlington

When:
Where:
Contact: Sandra Hubbard (Phone HQ WRAC Association - 0300 400 1992)

Doncaster

When:
Where:
Contact: Doreen Lowery Tel: (Phone HQ WRAC Association - 0300 400 1992)

Grimsby

When: 14.00 on the 2nd Friday of each month
Where: Cartergate Social Club, Cartergate, Grimsby, DN31 1QZ
Contact: Gail Davy Tel 01472 347868

Hull

When: 12.00-14.00 on the 1st Friday of the month
Where: Location varies
Contact: Confirm location with Janet Marshall Tel 01482 809042 or Lynne Marsh Tel 01964 615973.

Leeds

When: 12.30 on the 1st Wednesday of each month (except January)
Where: The New Headingley Club, 56 St Michael's Road, Headingley, Leeds, LS6 3BG
Contact: Pat Harpin Tel 01226 201628

Lincoln & District

When: 12.00-14.00 on the 3rd Tuesday of the month
Where: Central Methodist Church Hall, High Street, Lincoln, LN5 7PR
Contact: Jean Evans Tel 01673 842509

Newcastle

When: 12.00 on the 3rd Thursday of the month
Where: Newcastle Companions Club, 45-47 Leazes Park Road, Newcastle, NE1 4PG
(www.newcastlecompanionsclub.webs.com)
Contact: Tanya Hall Tel 07552 758093

Sheffield

When: 13.30 on the 1st Thursday of the month except January and August
Where: Victoria Hall, Norfolk Street (Chapel Walk entrance), Sheffield, S1 2JB
Contact: Brenda Colley Tel 01709 365828

York

When: 14.00-16.00 on the 1st Wednesday of the month (except August), phone to confirm
Where: Haxby & Wiggington Methodist Church Hall, Haxby, York, YO32 2JJ
www.haxbyandwiggintonmethodistchurch.org.uk
Contact: Feona Dixon Tel: 01904 633438

NORTH WEST

Bury & Rochdale

When: Monthly Meeting at 13.30 on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at The Old White Lion, 6 Bolton St Bury, BL9 0LQ
Contact: Pat Oldham Tel 0161 761 7926
Informal Evening Meeting on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Toby Carvery, Burnley Lane, Chadderton, OL1 2QS.
Contact: Susan Feeney on 07813 313508 or Kath Kirtley on 07912 617694

Chester

When: 13.00 on the 2nd Monday of the month
Where: Chester Military Museum, The Castle, Chester, CH1 2DN
Contact: Pat Sanders Tel 07733 270567

Liverpool

When: 13.30 on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, 12.00 in the hotel foyer if you would like to join us for lunch
Where: The Adelphi Hotel, Ranelagh Place, Liverpool, L3 5UL
Contact: Pat Brown Tel 0151 733 3453

Wirral

When: 19.30 on the 1st Wednesday of the month
Where: TA Centre, Chetwynd, Wexford Road, Birkenhead, L43 9TF
Contact: Pat Sanders Tel 07733 270567

WALES & THE WEST

Birmingham

When: 12.00 on the 1st Wednesday of the month (except January). There is also an evening meeting every quarter (phone for location)
Where: Irish Centre, 14-20 High Street, Deritend (Digbeth), Birmingham, B12 0LN www.irishcentrebirmingham.co.uk
Contact: Babs Blay Tel 07748 300492

Derby

Editor: Judy Smith would be interested to hear from any members living in the Derby area who would like to meet up on a regular basis. Please contact: Judy Smith email judy.hirst123@ntlworld.com or phone 07790 848364.

Leicester & Nottingham

When: 19.00 on the last Tuesday of the month
Where: The Herdsman, 54 Widemarsh, Hereford, HR4 9HG
Contact: Sharon Joyce Tel 01905 821189

Marches & Mid Wales

When: 3 - 4 times per year
Where: Location varies, phone for details
Contact: Carys Palmer Tel 01588 640985

Phoenix

See details at end of Branch listings.

Shropshire

When: 14.00 or 19.00 (alternates month by month) on the 1st Wednesday of the month. Come 1.5 hours earlier if you wish to join us for lunch/dinner
Where: The Red Lion, Holyhead Road, Wellington, Telford, TF1 2EW
Contact: Chris Powell Tel 01743 241646

Tamworth

When: The last Wednesday of the month
Where: Royal British Legion, 7 Aldergate, Tamworth, B79 7DL
Contact: Belle Jenkinson Tel 01827 64156

SCOTLAND

Aberdeen

When:
Where:
Contact: Joan Bartlett (Phone HQ WRAC Association - 0300 400 1992)

Dumfriesshire

When:
Where:
Contact: Dorah Mundell (Phone HQ WRAC Association - 0300 400 1992)

Fife & Tayside

When: Last Thursday of the month
Where: Salutation Hotel, 34 South Street, Perth, PH2 8PH
Contact: Kate Arnold Tel: 01577 830136

Glasgow

When: 13.00 on the 2nd Monday of the month
Where: RHF Museum, 518 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3LW
Contact: Joyce Steele Tel 0141 322 5639

Stirling

When: 12.00 on the last Saturday of the month
Where: Allanpark Hotel, 20 Allanpark, Stirling, FK8 2QG
Contact: Irene Watterson Tel 01786 469597

NORTHERN IRELAND

Ulster

When: Meetings 3-4 times per year
Where: Location varies, call to confirm details
Contact: Jean Hopper (Phone HQ WRAC Association - 0300 400 1992)

UNAFFILIATED

Band

When: The Band Branch is a national Branch and does not meet on a monthly basis. Phone for details of our next meeting.
Contact: Ann Jones Tel 0117 9406185

PHOENIX

Although administered from Wales and the West Area the Phoenix Branch exists to provide a focus for all those who would like Branch Membership (regardless of location) and the chance to meet friends, albeit only 3 or 4 times a year, but are unable to make it to regular monthly meetings. We'd love for you to join us, especially at our annual lunch at the National Memorial Arboretum. Call Maggie Purkis on 01952 251717 or 07808 139543.

Donations

Did you know that you can send a donation to the Association at any time? We are often asked if this is possible and the answer is, "Yes, of course it is." Many branches send us donations in memory of members who have sadly passed away but it is possible to make a donation at any time for whatever reason. You can specify whether you want your donation to go to the main Association account – please make cheques payable to WRAC Association – or, if you want it to go to the ATS & WRAC Benevolent Fund then make your cheque payable to ATS & WRAC Benevolent Fund. It is important that you do make out your cheque to the right account. Donations can also be made on line via the Association website or by phone **01962 887570**.

Whatever you decide to do, PLEASE make sure that we have a Gift Aid form from you. If you pay tax, the funds can reclaim the tax and it adds to the donation you have made without it costing you any more.

Gift Aid forms are available from the WRAC Association HQ at Worthy Down. If you have made a donation in the past, and you have not sent us one before, please request one now.

If you have never sent us a donation, perhaps you would be kind enough to think about it now and send it in with the Gift Aid form.

Even if you are not thinking of making a donation now, why not fill in the form anyway and send it back. We will file it and have it to hand if you should be kind enough to make any donations in the future. You will not have to look out the for

FOUNDER'S DAY AT THE ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA 6 JUNE 2013

Lt Col (Retd) Sue Donovan née Burwell

When I received an invitation from the Regimental Secretary asking whether I would like to attend Founder's Day at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, in my capacity as a Trustee of the Association, I leapt at the opportunity and was delighted to accept! Having had the honour of being the Aide de Camp (ADC) to our President, HRH The Duchess of Kent, when she was the Reviewing Officer at Founder's Day in 1981, I was already familiar with what this very special day represented. The ceremony had made a lasting impact on me then as a young officer, and I still remembered it with considerable pride and affection.



Capt Sue Burwell, ADC to HRH The Duchess of Kent in 1981

For those who are not au fait with it, Founder's Day at the Royal Hospital is an annual event which occurs as close as possible to the birthday and restoration date in May 1660 of King Charles II. It commemorates his forward-thinking and enterprising vision in creating a home for veteran soldiers. However, it was not until 1692, during the reign of William and Mary, that the first in-Pensioners entered the Royal Hospital for the first time. Founder's Day is also known as Oak Apple Day in memory of Charles's

escape capture by the Parliamentary Forces. By way of marking this, each year the King's statue in the Figure Court of the Hospital is decorated with oak leaves for the parade, and both participants and spectators wear oak sprigs. The Royal Hospital proudly maintains close links with the Sovereign to this day, and since 1980 a member of the Royal Family has been the Reviewing Officer at Founder's Day.

This year the Reviewing Officer was HRH The Duchess of Cornwall. On a beautiful warm and sunny June morning, and after a brief chat with some of our ex-WRAC In-Pensioners looking extremely smart in their distinctive red uniforms, I took my seat with other members of the Association who were attending the parade. The Duchess arrived to a fanfare played by the trumpeters of the Band of the Scots Guards and then inspected those on parade. She spoke to as many of them as time would allow and we had an excellent view of her as she approached the front row of our stand to talk to some of the guests. We were even able to catch a few snippets of her conversation! The In-Pensioners stood on parade for well over an hour in the heat and this was all the more remarkable given that their average age was 82. As the ceremony came to a close, the Duchess of Cornwall gave a speech in which she remarked that being the proud daughter of a highly decorated soldier, she was honoured to be present to review the parade. She went on to say that 111 of the Chelsea Pensioners fought in the Second World War, and that many had fought in other conflicts including Korea, Malaya, Borneo, Africa and the South Atlantic. She concluded by saying "To you all who are on parade today, not forgetting those who are unable to be with us, I can only say that you are a constant reminder of the great debt we owe to those who served this nation over the years – I salute you all and wish you health and happiness in this illustrious and historic hospital". I am confident that her words summed up the feelings of all of us who were so fortunate to witness such a very moving and memorable Founder's Day.



Lt Col Rowena Griffiths AGC(SPS) MBE and Sue Donovan on 6 June 2013



Winifred Phillip's on parade (centre of front rank)



Marjorie Cole on parade



Sue Westlake and Winifred Phillips

Editor: There are now 6 female Chelsea In-Pensioners, 5 of whom are ex ATS/WRAC. Those not caught on camera at Founder's Day were Charmaine (Bimbo) Coleman, Dorothy Hughes and Audrey Merton.

AS TIME GOES BY Marjorie Cole

It is 4 years since women were accepted into the Royal Hospital Chelsea as In-Pensioners, my life as a Chelsea Pensioner began on 27 July 2009. 2012 was unfortunately my Annus Horribilis as I was laid low with a serious back problem which left me unable to take part in many duties and events. I was devastated not to be able to take part in the Guard of Honour for the Royal Family at Chelsea Harbour on the day of the Diamond Jubilee, or the opening of the Olympic Games. I spent much of June and July in the Infirmary and had appointments twice a week with a Consultant Physiotherapist in Chelsea Harbour. This was made possible by the Governor's wife, Lady Watt.

I did manage to go to the Grand Reunion in Bristol in March, what a superb time it was. I'm glad I was able to take part in the Parade. Another event I attended, along with one other male Chelsea Pensioner, was the naming of a train for the Jubilee at Fenchurch Street Station. I don't think any Chelsea Pensioners have done that before.



Naming a train 4 May 2012

I am glad to say that I am fit again. I had hoped to be in the Guard of Honour for Baroness Thatcher's funeral, alas the Doctor and Sister told those selecting the Pensioners that they thought I would not be able to stand for that length of time! I was devastated. However I had a wonderful time at the Birmingham Branch Birthday Lunch at the Britannia Hotel on 1 May 2013. It was a perfect joy to see so many familiar faces. My thanks to Birmingham Branch for inviting me, especially Chris Fretwell for putting me up and looking after me.

Finally as most of you know Bimbo Coleman joined us as an In Pensioner last May. She's settled in well and takes part in lots of things. Yes, she's behaving herself, no jokes or tricks! Ha ha!

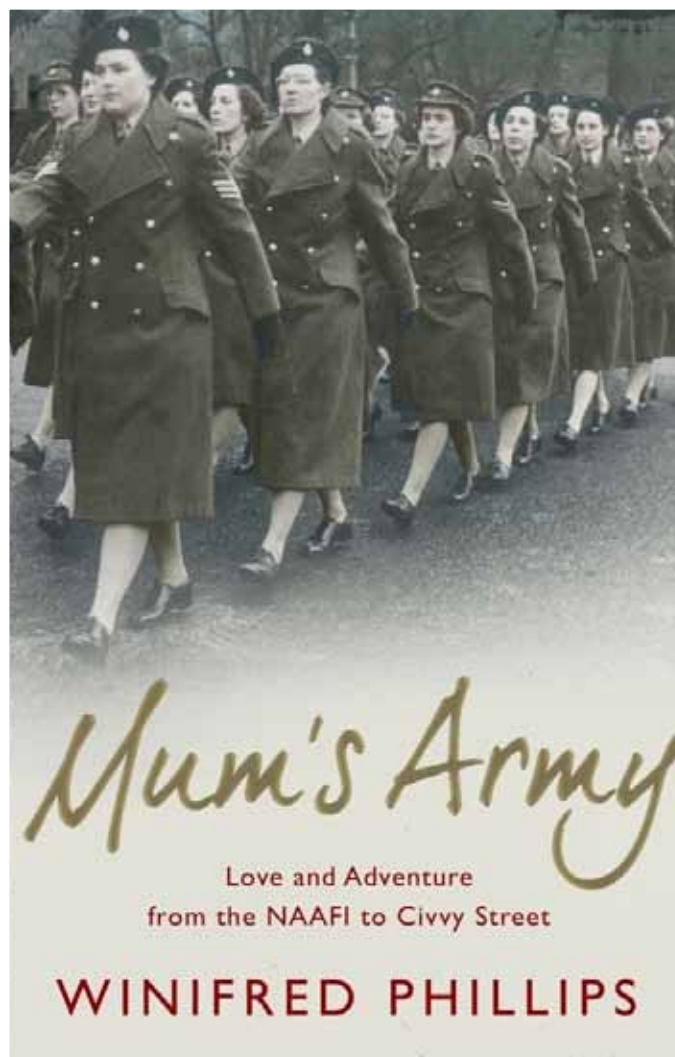


Bimbo Coleman and Marjorie Cole celebrating New Years Eve 2012

PUBLISHED AUTHOR

Editor: Chelsea In-Pensioner Winifred Phillips is the author of 'Mum's Army' which was published by Simon & Schuster UK on 14 February 2013. ISBN-10: 1471111253, ISBN-13: 978-1471111259

Precis: Winifred Phillips was born in Ilford, Essex, in 1926, one of four children. Sent to a convent boarding school, which she loathed, she trained as a nursery nurse and met George Wheeler, a 19-year-old RAF trainee wireless operator. The pair fell in love and spent a happy year together, only to say goodbye in 1943 before he was sent on bombing missions to Germany. They kept in touch with regular letters but he went missing in 1944 and nobody knew what happened to him. Determined to see something of the world, Winifred joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1948 and enlisted in the Women's Royal Army Corps a year later. For the next two decades she travelled the globe and reached the rank of Warrant Officer Class 2. Her story offers a unique insight into the lives of female service personnel in the 1950s and '60s. She writes wittily and candidly about her time in the army, how life was lived in the mess and the NAAFI, and the scrapes she got into. But she never forgot George. And she never married. At the age of 70, she went on a journey to find out what happened to the only man who would ever win her heart and, 50 years after he disappeared, she was finally able to pay her respects. In 2009, after ten years of campaigning, Win became the first ever female Chelsea Pensioner to be accepted at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, where she lives today.



A recent painting of Winifred Phillips by Susan Edwards. The painting now hangs on the corridor wall close to her Berth.

BELLE OF THE REDCAP BALL Jim Enness RMPA (London)

On the weekend of 16 March 2013 a number of former "Redcaps" held an informal gathering in Walsall. This was our second gathering the first being in Blackpool last year. At both events Necia (Nikki) Rodger was our "Belle of the Ball"



Necia Rodger in 1946

Nikki was a sweet young 17 year old in 1945 when she volunteered and became W329019 LCpl ATS Provost. After completing basic training at Mychett, she was attached to HQ London District, Sloane Square from where she carried out foot patrols in London's notorious Soho District. WWII, although drawing to a close, was still being fought and London was under continual V2 rocket attack. Further postings to Bulford and Aldershot followed. In 1947 she met her beloved Eric Wolfe (LCpl CMP), to whom she married in 1948 and left the military, for life as a wife and mother. Although her service was short, Nikki remembers it with fondness.

It was during last year's gathering that it was suggested that Nikki apply for her medals and to her delight and surprise was awarded her 1939–1945 War Medal. This she so proudly wore to the Dinner Night, much to the delight of those attending.



Nikki (centre front row) finally united with her 1939–1945 War Medal

The photograph shows the "Redcaps" do have a feminine side, with Nikki front and centre (with medal). The other ladies are Andrea Mathews, Jean McGovern, Linda Kaye, Lynne McBride, Maggie Pollock, Jackie Stewart, Sue Beck, Linda Beck, Caroline Getter, Helen Barry, Tina Bridges, Charmaine Bowers and Gwen Mitchell, all apart from Gwen were Provost, however she did marry into the RMP family so was allowed in the photograph. The other (Redcap) ladies present at the gathering, but missed the photo shoot (well the bar was open) were Joan Dearden, Shelia Paynter, Brenda Valentine, Lynda Waddilove and Maria Halliday.

FORT WILLIAM 6 APRIL 2013

CJ Johnson (& many more!)

There are times in your life that will stay with you forever, the Fort William weekend was one of them. Over 80 ex WRAC women met up in Fort William to celebrate their time in the army and to remember friends and colleagues who have left to march in the great parade square above. The years fell away as we celebrated friendships, old and new, danced like we were all 30 years younger and partied like tomorrow would never come. We became one again, the celebrated sisterhood of women that join together in comradeship that we cannot explain to those who have never served in the forces.

Our most poignant moment was the tree ceremony, where we dedicated a tree to our comrades and memories of our past. The words spoken by Maggie Purkis brought a tear to everyone's eye as we stood in the most beautiful forest, overlooking a loch and onto the grandeur of Ben Nevis. It is memory that united us all, the ladies of the ATS and WRAC - the Sisters in Arms. **(CJ Johnson)**



It is easy to name occasions when Facebook has been the cause of pain or annoyance but how often do we hear of those other times when it has resulted in sheer unmitigated joy? A casual first meeting of virtual friends on a Facebook group called 'The Soldiers Formerly Known As WRAC' was the catalyst for an event which far outstretched everyone's imagination. CJ Johnson and Janette Cowie took themselves off for a walk in a forest just outside Fort William and the seed of an idea was born. They had realised that the date of their meeting was the twentieth anniversary of the disbandment of the WRAC and thought that it should be marked in some way. They found themselves in the Fairy Forest where people adopt a tree and dedicate it to people or causes. It seemed appropriate to them that we should adopt a tree and dedicate it to our Corps.

That evening the idea was floated past the other 600+ members of the Facebook group and it took off like a forest fire. There was a resounding 'Yes please.' so CJ and Janette agreed to organise something for 6 April 2013. Before anyone could catch their breath the numbers grew and grew until it was obvious that we were going to need a hotel to ourselves and maybe the locals should move

out for the weekend. There was soon a separate Facebook group set up for all those interested so that all the information could be posted and accessed easily. A countdown started and the excitement began to mount.

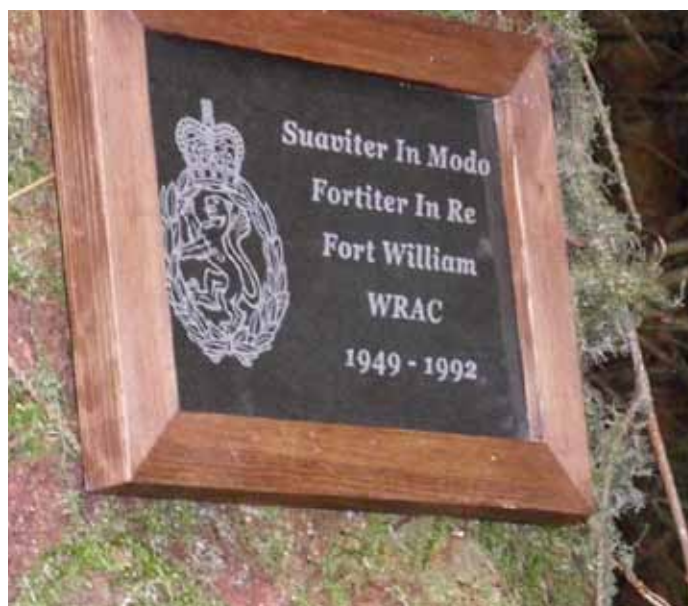
Girls from all corners had declared an interest and soon there were trains, planes and automobiles booked for the journey. A couple of WRAC Association Branches decided to travel en masse and make it into a Branch holiday, stopping over on the way. In France, Sylvia Cree decided that this sounded like it was right up her street and booked her 4 or 5 trains each way. She met up with a few others in London and travelled all the way up on the sleeper to Fort William. They collected Maggie Purkis along the way and sat giggling in the bar on the train until the early hours. It was a great adventure as none of them had ever travelled on a sleeper before. A couple of group members came over from Ireland, along with people from all over England. Lots of our Scottish friends, who would not normally have been able to travel to events found this too tempting to miss.

Before we knew it, the date arrived and people started making their way to Fort William. We had heard that there were to be several items on the programme for the weekend so we were all agog with excitement. Little did we know just how exciting it would turn out to be. Some of the more over excited arrived at the hotel on Thursday 4 April and proceeded to turn the hotel bar into



a NAAFI. Who knew that bingo with a coach party from Yorkshire could be such fun, especially when one of our girls won. Most of the participants arrived during the next day. The sleeper train travellers were met by mini-bus and whisked straight off to the Nevis Range. They scaled the mountain the easy way, by gondola, and admired the views from the visitor centre. The weather that day was beautiful so the views were stunning. By the time most of us had arrived at the hotel the WRAC had taken over the bar and were sitting in the sun on the balcony, glass in hand. It was already raucous and there was barely a straight face. Although several of us had met through the WRAC Association, WRAC Dinner Club or Facebook meetings there were some who had not met up with any of us and were a little nervous. That didn't last long though and it was just like we had all known each other forever. It has been said that meeting up with ex-Army girls is like coming home. Quite a few people came home this weekend.

Saturday morning dawned and there was the usual banter over a lovely breakfast. Janette arrived in the mini-bus and we formed a convoy to head for the Fairy Forest. There must have been twenty cars so it is hardly surprising that four of them went AWOL and had to be rescued. A



local girl piper played to welcome us to the Fairy Forest as we all gathered around our tree overlooking the loch, and the ceremony began. Cathy Munro read the WRAC Corps Collect and many of us joined in. Then the serious business began as Maggie Purkis gave a moving speech about our Corps which left not a dry eye. A plaque telling any visitors to the forest who we are was affixed to the tree prior to the ceremony so it only left us to decorate it with our memories. We had all written little messages or brought along photos to place inside clear baubles. Each one was tied to the tree and it made a splendid sight. It was rather poignant to watch everyone hanging their bauble, each one of us with different memories and thoughts. Once the obligatory photos had been taken we made our way to a local social club for a buffet lunch and Highland games. Decorum went out the window as grown up women, a couple of men and two young lads, made total fools of themselves throwing things, jumping over things, tug o' war and throwing themselves headlong down a bouncy castle slide. It was hysterical. It is also amazing what people will do for a chocolate WRAC medal or a presentation pen. Once the giggles had died down a little we made our way back to the hotel for a well earned glass of pop in the bar in preparation for the dinner dance later in the evening.

A couple of seasoned Dinner Clubbers were asked to look after the raffle ticket sales and the many donated prizes made the table creak. Runners and spotters were organised and the prizes were distributed at a fair rate of knots. Then everyone settled down for a night of dancing. A lady showed us how to do the various Scottish country dances and we made a right dog's dinner of it. Luckily there were more recognisable records played too so we could perform our usual frog in a blender dances. People took themselves off to bed at various times but there were still a few who didn't go up to their rooms until after 4.30am.

Sunday arrived and some of the gathering were obliged to head home. They departed in dribs and drabs, each of them not really wanting to go. There is something very special about an event that makes you laugh until you cry for hours or even days on end. It is good for the soul and should be taken twice daily.

Those of us who were lucky enough to be staying another night went our various ways. A few intrepid souls headed for the Nevis Range and its gondolas, some for the Commando Monument in Spean Bridge, whilst a big gang went into Fort William to do a treasure hunt along the High Street. A couple of pubs had to be visited in order to collect answers to clues. The difference with this treasure hunt was that the answers had to be photographed or videoed with a smart phone and posted on the Facebook group for fun. Group members who had not been able to join us in body were able to take part in this way. Janette was there to ferry us about in the mini-bus again and soon had us back safe and sound in the bar.



After another fabulous dinner we found ourselves voting to play bingo as our evening pastime. A satisfactory bevy of wins put us in the mood for more frivolity but this time in the form of a lady called Paula playing a keyboard and singing. She was very funny and soon had the measure of us. She was ably assisted by Angie Hamilton who sang a couple of songs. At the end of the evening we discovered that Paula's minder/husband was ex-ACC so he spent most of his time grinning.

Monday morning at breakfast was fairly quiet as there were heads to nurse and goodbyes to say. Eventually, the departing bodies gathered in the car park and it was time for everyone to say their farewells and tootle off from whence they came. It had been an amazing weekend brought about by the wonders of technology, in this case it was the much maligned Facebook. The germ of an idea grew into a wonderful, satisfying celebration of what it's like to be WRAC. Whether we served together at the same time, in the same place or not, it is a sisterhood to which we all belong. (Babs Blay)

It was an amazing experience attending the Fort William WRAC reunion. I travelled by train alone at the start of my journey, but it wasn't long before more WRAC Sisters had alighted the train. It was our green fleeces that gave our destination away. It was no ordinary journey, after we passed Glasgow the picturesque views of the Scottish Highlands took my breath away. Mountains blanketed in snow, mirror images of surrounding countryside reflected in the still waters of the Lochs.

On arriving at the Croit Ann Hotel, I was greeted by familiar faces and it wasn't long before I made new friends. We were as one again, WRAC Sisters united. I thought the journey up was a bonus, I was in shock to discovery there were more bonuses to follow.

We had morning parade Saturday for a head count, then it was off on a journey to the Fairy Forest for a WRAC Tree Dedication Service. The event was truly magical. As we tied our baubles to the tree, I know I wasn't the only one that shed a tear and had a lump in my throat. For those of us that are ageing a bit, we were truly thankful for all the help and assistance we received by the fit young uns. The WRAC Highland Games were absolutely brilliant. Although I was unable to participate I had just as much fun watching them. Full credit to all those that braved the elements and did participate. The Treasure Hunt gave us an opportunity to see Fort William town centre. It truly is a wonderful town.

My whole experience of the weekend, of the comradeship, the accommodation, the entertainment, the food, the memories I brought back with me, is all due to the brilliant organisation and hard work by CJ, Janette and Cathy and all WRAC Sisters that made it such a memorable event, one that I will never forget and was proud to be part of. Thank you to each and everyone. (Wendy Crossley)



Since May last year we had waited and looked forward to our visit to Fort William and because it was such fun filled with love and laughter it was gone in the blink of an eye. The Fairy Forest was an experience which touched the hearts of all those present. Now we must wait with a great deal of patience till next year and a repeat performance - well maybe some of it! (Chris Corker, Dot Ryder)

I travelled to Fort William accompanied by my husband, Alan, and I felt a little trepidation knowing that the male of the species would be very much in the minority! We needn't have worried because everyone made Alan and the other husbands more than welcome and they soon felt at ease and able to join in! It was truly fabulous to meet up with friends we have made online and to cement those friendships by meeting in person! One of the highlights for me was to come face to face with someone I've not seen for 30 years, the years just slipped away! The tree ceremony was very special, the setting was breathtaking and the words spoken by Maggie were very moving, you could almost hear the collective roar of past WRAC members coming from all corners of the world and from on high! The Highland Games, the Dinner and the evening's entertainment were thoroughly enjoyable and I, along with most present, haven't laughed so much in a long time! The staff at the hotel were second to none, nothing was too much trouble for them, I think because they were enjoying themselves as much as we were! **(Alison Inglis)**

SOUTH & SOUTH WEST AREA REUNION

**Bristol City Marriott
Saturday 11 May 2013**



Meeters & Greeters Pauline, Vi and Pat



Enjoying a 'Coronation' Lunch



Stella Fogg enjoys a patriotic pudding



What a brilliant weekend! I met a couple of ladies, who are still serving, who enjoyed it so much that they have decided to join our Dinner Club rather than attending their current annual reunion. I am no stranger to WRAC reunions, but the esprit de corps and pride exhibited at the Fort William event will stay in my memory forever. **(Maggie Purkis)**

A kaleidoscope of emotions at the tree dedication ceremony in the Fairy Forest, so proud to be there, to be part of the WRAC to share something so wonderful with my sisters but so sad for those who were gone, but never forgotten, sisters always. On to the gondola ride up Ben Nevis, the fantastic waterfall and then the celebrations, what a weekend, what scenery and what a wonderful group of ladies to share it with. Thank you one and all, loved every minute of it. **(Jan Burchett-Vass)**

Editor: As mentioned in the Vice President's message a big thank you must go to all who attended this event and raised over £900 for Lioness.

WRAC Officers Dining Club

SPRING LUNCHEON Saturday 4 May 2013

Thirty two members of the WRAC Officers' Dining Club enjoyed an excellent lunch at the Victory Services Club, London on Saturday 4 May 2013, yet again the food was of a very high standard.

Nine members of Commissioning Courses 30, 31 and 32 (1963) used the occasion to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their commissioning and enjoyed reuniting and reminiscing. Helen Jeffries had organised a celebration cake, beautifully decorated with the WRAC Association badge, which everyone enjoyed with coffee. The cake had been made and decorated by Jenny Livingstone, a friend of the Dumfries Branch. Colonel Nan Robertson was invited to cut the cake as she had been their Course Admin Officer at the time. Both Nan Robertson and Kate McGregor gave a short speech and toasted 'absent friends'.



Nan Robertson cuts the cake



Jill Catt, Dame Mary Richardson, Barbara Harris, Nan Robertson and Penny Spink



L to R: Jennifer Alt (née Barker), Celia Hickman, Helen Duncan (née Murdoch), Helen Jeffries (née Beaver), Nan Robertson, Kate McGregor (née Collins), Joanna Finlay (née Perry), Alice Matthews (née Ferguson), Jan Carson (née Hill), Fiona White (née MacFarlane), Frances Hutley (née Greaves).



Anne Irvine, Frances Hutley, Joanna Finlay, Fiona White



Joanna Finlay & Nan Robertson



Frances Hutley, Helen Haynes MBE, Jackie Walton



Fiona White, Sue Westlake, Kate McGregor



Rowena Griffiths MBE & Emma Ford

The next event will be the WRAC Officers' Dining Club Dinner on Saturday 23 November 2013 at the Victory Services Club, London. There were well over 100 attendees at the dinner in 2012 and there is plenty of room for more! Why not get in touch with your contemporaries and use the occasion to hold a mini reunion, guests are also welcome. If you would like to attend the dinner and are not yet a member of the WRAC Officers' Dining Club please email wracodc@gmail.com.

WRAC ASSOCIATION MEMORABILIA

The following items are available to purchase on-line via the website, by post (prices include P&P) or by phone. Cheques should be made payable to WRAC Association and sent to WRAC Association, Gould House, Worthy Down, Winchester, SO21 2RG. If you want to check stock availability before ordering please call 0300 400 1992.

WRAC Association 2014 Diary	£5
WRAC Association Brooch	£4
ATS pin badge	£3
WRAC pin badge	£3
WRAC Association Trolley Token	£2
WRAC Association Wristband	£1.50
WRAC Association Tea Towel	£7
WRAC Association Paperweight (Bristol Blue glass)	£15
History of the WRAC	£2.50
WRAC Association Fleece	£25
WRAC Association Polo Shirt	£19.50

2014 DIARY AVAILABLE NOW!

Due to popular demand the WRAC Association Diary is back for 2014, buy now to avoid disappointment (limited stock). The diary features one week to a page with the opposite page available for notes. Only £5 including P&P. Purchase online via the website, by post, or phone 0300 400 1992.

Cheques should be made payable to WRAC Association and sent to WRAC Association, Gould House, Worthy Down, Winchester, SO21 2RG.



Where Are You Now?

Editor: It is not current policy to give out private addresses, however email addresses are listed when submitted. Should anyone wish to respond to any of the articles below they can do so through the Office Manager or email editor@wracassociation.org.uk.

ATS PT SCHOOL, SOUTH WIGSTON 1945

Gwen Alderman née Cooper
b0b1guard-coop@yahoo.co.uk



242935 Cpl Gwen Cooper (nickname Coop)

I joined the ATS in March 1943 and was sent to Northampton for basic training. After basic training I was posted to the RASC at No 9 PD (Petrol Depot) Waddesdon, Bucks where I manned the switchboard and also had to climb onto the huge fuel tanks to measure and report on the amount of petrol they contained.

The group picture below was taken in March 1945 when I attended a PT training course before returning to Waddesdon as a Corporal PT Instructor. The photo was taken outside Gym No1, ATS PT School, Glen Purva Barracks, South Wigston, Leicester. That's me front row, second from the left. Can anyone help put a few names to faces I wonder?

It was while at Waddesdon that I met my husband Lt Dennis Alderman and we married in July 1946. We have been married now for 66 years.



HQ 1BR CORPS BIELEFELD 1964-1966 **Madeline Cox née Phillips (WRAC)** **mad4colin@btinternet.com**

I am trying to contact Thelma Jacques (TEJ). We shared a room in Ripon Barracks Bielefeld and last met in Singapore 1971.

ANN WHATMORE 1957? **Pat Wallin Tel: 0121 430 7063** **(evenings)**

I am trying to find a friend called Ann Whatmore who joined the WRAC in 1957 or 58. In 1956 she worked at the Cadbury Bournville factory where she met a Tony Wallin and went to his 21st birthday party. Tony lived in Gorleston Road, Birmingham and I believe Ann lived in Harborne. I would love to hear what became of her.



KATHLEEN TOZER née KNUTTON ATS **Harry Ellis, SSAFA Tel 01626 862858** **aitchellis@mypostoffice.co.uk**

I am trying to contact anyone who served with Kathleen (Kathy) Tozer née Knutton. Kathy joined The ATS on 17th September 1941 and was demobbed on 24th June 1945. She was unmarried when she joined, when her maiden name was Knutton She subsequently married Thomas Tozer, a Royal Navy naval rating in 1943, when she changed her name to Tozer. She served with 506,512 and 644 AA Battery, Royal Artillery and Royal Army Ordnance Corps. She later transferred to 187 Company in Lancaster. She had two nicknames, one was 'Terry,' and after she was married she became known as 'Tosh,' Tozer.

In the winter of 1942 she was at Lobley Camp or may be Gateshead. The following were serving with her at the time: Cpl Rowena Kimberley, Bombardier Skelly, Irene Williams, Patricia Poynton and Iris Nicholas. The OIC was Maj Jerlais or Gerlais (believed French), Iris Nicholas was her bridesmaid at Leeds Registry Office on 18th March 1943.

The names are not listed in order, can you identify anyone?

Anna Bousfield, Diana Colstro, Mary I Johnson, Winnie Barnes, C Franklin-White, Mary A Sells, GM Aldridge, Joan Hawes, Dorothy R Morley, Stella Glynn, SE Wickes, Olivia Stark, Iris Littlejoy, Hilda White, Ruth Headley, GL Palmer

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY Frank and Ella Reast née Cameron



15 June 1963

Frank and I met in Hong Kong where we were both serving; I was with 22 Independent Platoon WRAC and Frank was with the Royal Engineers. Frank arranged a Christmas Dinner & Dance and sent an invitation to the girls in Victoria Barracks. He made sure (via a friend) that I would attend and arranged the seating plan so that we were next to each other. We danced all night and that was it! In 1962, when he was going home on the troopship, he called out "will you marry me", of course the answer was "yes".

We married on 15 June 1963 in my hometown of Girvan and honeymooned in Scotland, England and Wales. We have two daughters who both joined the Army and served in Hong Kong. One daughter is still serving and is now a WO1, just like her father was. The other daughter is now a Police Officer and has given me two lovely grandsons. We are off to the Maldives to celebrate our wedding anniversary.

Ella & Frank, photo taken in December 2012



DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARY Charles and Barbara Cameron née Coulson



14 February 1953

On the 16th of February this year my husband Charles and I were given the lovely surprise of a church service to reaffirm our vows to celebrate our 60 years of marriage. Conducted by the Reverend David Milner, Area Dean of Newark and Southall, we had lots of family and friends attend including our original acting Father of the Bride and Bridesmaid. I was also delighted that members of the Leicester and Nottingham ATS branch could attend including Barbara Dante and Doris White.

Our day started with our daughters, Jane and Shirley, picking us up in a lovely white Mercedes with pink ribbons, and they whisked us off to the church where everyone was waiting. They had organised flowers, music, a display of all our photographs from past times and a lovely buffet for everyone to enjoy afterwards. We had a lovely afternoon chatting with everyone about past times, including my experiences during the war with the ATS when I was attached to No 5 Company RASC at Harpenden and Wentworth Park.

Charles and I met in 1952 at the Palais de Danse in Nottingham when I was a Despatch Clerk at the Debenhams factory and he was a Signaller in the RAF. We had a whirlwind romance and he proposed to me while he was running for the train to get back to the Barracks in time. We were married in Screddington on the 14th of February 1953 at a time when we were still on rations, so everything was borrowed or bought on a shoestring with ration books. We have had a wonderful 60 years together and would like to thank everyone for sharing our special day, especially the girls from the ATS.

16 February 2013



THE ATS LEGACY Sandy Acathan

There are some very special women
To whom we owe a great debt,
They do not boast of things long past
But neither do they forget.
Khaki clad with boundless mettle
They served country and the King.
Seeking not reward or favour
They did a very honourable thing.
The many duties they fulfilled
Stories and experiences they tell,
So many brave young women
And so many in wartime fell.
We have inherited their will to serve
Resolute and with great pride,
The former women of the WRAC
Had a Lioness at their side.
Yet in the passing of the years
As numbers dwindle and grow less,
We cannot ignore our heritage
Or the legacy of the ATS.

AN ODE TO A TO Z

Submitted by Carol Gazzard, revised by
Anne Dickinson

I got this little moped, a 49cc
For freedom of the road, to get from A to B!
One fine day without a map, I rode out contentedly
While the road to home, confused and more than
worried me!
I asked, and went, directions in a maze
Roundabouts and junctions, and roads off just a daze!
I looked at lorries, some passing by at speed
On the motorway? Illegal! I should not be there indeed!
Relief to see a name I know, following was easy
But a long way round to get to home, feeling rather queasy!
Brown rabbits hurrying, late and not in time for my tea
Family worried too, plus their anxiety for me!
Next time I'll take a map for the roads I wish to ride
Straight, curved or uphill and no need to wish to hide!
All directions, time and place docketed with pride
Experiences I hope to gain on my journey with my guide!

BITS Joan Awbery

It seems to me quite fitting
That I should still be sitting
At half-past eight on a Saturday night
Just doing my knitting
Not for me now the heady nights
Out on the town in fishnet tights
Wrinkled skin and double chin
Showing up in the neon lights
With elbows and knees a-creaking
And an ominous hint of leaking

Beehive hair mini skirts with a flare
Is a style I'm not actively seeking

No call now for lipstick and mascara
And hours in the beauty parlour
Pills and potions and bottles of lotion
Have taken their place with cascara
As the waist and the bottom grow fatter
And the chesty bits get flatter
The legs grow stout and the ankles give out
No chance now of flaunting the latter

Dizziness sets me reeling
So the foxtrot's not now appealing
It's possible no longer to do the conga
On legs that have lost their feeling

The tango's always in season
But I'm not taking part for good reason
Letting rip with a dodgy hip
Would quickly lead to a lesion

The cha-cha has lost its attraction
With its incessant action
Cramping of muscle in the area of the bustle
Could only be cured by traction

Even the staidest of waltzes
Could easily displace my falsies
My one twinkling toes in elegant hose
Now need to be shod by Dolcis

I might be up for tea dancing
With its' less energetic prancing
But the difference a cake on a plate might make
Would have to be life enhancing

All those nights at the Palais and Lido
In amidst all that libido
I wasn't just sitting doing my knitting
Down at the Trocadero

REMEMBRANCE Sandy Acathan

Past the Cenotaph they marched
Shoulders back and heads held high,
Those of us left at home to watch
Gulped a sob and wiped a tearful eye.
The fleeces of green with the Lioness proud
Major 'Mac' leading the women on parade,
Arms swinging and everyone in step
Such a splendid troop they made.
Along the London road they went
Receiving admiration and applause,
The Association of the WRAC and ATS
Were united in their fellowship cause.
Everywhere the symbolic scarlet poppy
Bring us together on National Remembrance Day,
For friends and colleagues who served the Queen
No longer with us for their Peace we pray.
We must never forget for that would be a crime
Our duty to each other is obviously clear,
To remain steadfast with a loyal friendship
Not just now but for each and every year.

WRAC ASSOCIATION APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Send to:

WRAC Association
Gould House
Worthy Down
Winchester
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 “**WRAC Association**”

Subscriptions include “Lioness”

Overseas members should contribute an extra £3.50 a year to cover postage of “Lioness”

Please complete this form in **BLOCK LETTERS**

ATS/WRAC/TAVR Army Number

Last Rank Held: (Present Rank if still serving)

Miss/Mrs/Ms: Surname:

Given Names:

Surname when serving: Date of Birth:

Address for Correspondence:

.....

.....

Post Code:

E-mail: Telephone No:

Units during service:

Date of Enrolment: Date of Release:

NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

On Saturday 13 April 2013 over 140 members of the Association travelled to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire to attend the AGM and lunch and to view the replacement memorial plinth in the WRAC Association plot. Due to the poor state of the original brick built plinth and metal plaque the Council of the WRAC Association had decided to commission a more durable, long lasting replacement. We were fortunate to be able to use the services of Stonemason Nick Johnson, from Young Johnson of Westbury, who has built many of the structures at the NMA including the Basra Memorial Wall, The Falklands Memorial, and memorials for The Household Division and The Royal Green Jackets.

Both before the AGM and after the excellent buffet lunch Association members had the chance to visit the WRAC Association plot and view our new, polished green granite memorial stone. The memorial has been relocated to sit in the centre of the plot to emphasise the 'W' (for Women) shape of the planting







WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM, SATURDAY 13 APRIL 2013

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks. The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all those attending. She thanked everyone for making the effort to make the journey to the NMA; it was an opportunity for members to visit the Association plot and view the new granite memorial, in addition those who lived further north had not had so far to travel. She continued by introducing her support team:

Col (Retd) Ali Brown	Chairman of the Executive Committee
Col (Retd) Audrey Smith	Chairman of the Grants Committee
Maj Leona Barr-Jones	Honorary Treasurer
Maj (Retd) Gabi Shanahan	Regimental Secretary
Maj (Retd) Sue Hatton	Assistant Regimental Secretary & Editor Lioness

The Chairman thanked the Executive Committee and GROTS for their hard work which resulted in a very successful Grand Reunion 2012 in Bristol. She thanked Council, Standard Bearers and the The Revd Susan Wing for their support in the laying up of the QMAAC & ATS Standards at the Service of Rededication at Guildford Cathedral on Sun 20 May 12. In addition the Chairman thanked members of the Association and the National Standard Bearers for assisting with several funerals including those of Alison Schofield, Maureen Deeley, Nina Garnham and Lt Col Joyce Edwards.

a. HQ Update. The Chairman outlined the changes in HQ WRAC Association due to the cessation of MOD funding on 31 Mar 13; the three members of staff had been funded by the Association since 31 Mar 12, the office would be relocated within Gould House (existing location) by Oct 13 and it was expected that the MOD would not request payment for rent and utilities. It was explained that Worthy Down would be undergoing a large redevelopment to absorb the RLC and the WRAC Association would wait to see how RLC antecedent Corps would be housed. The Chairman reassured the meeting that members would not notice any difference in the service received from Association HQ, instead there were benefits associated with new electronic working practices and website development. A redirectable local phone rate and fax numbers had been set up and the Association could now accept card payments.

b. Voting. The Chairman explained that an amendment to the Constitution would be dealt with later in the agenda, however part of the amendment was to move from Branch voting to one person one vote. As there were no objections, one person one vote was unanimously agreed and came into use at the AGM with immediate effect.

c. Branch Officers. The Chairman paid tribute to all the Branch Secretaries and thanked them for their hard work and support, appreciated not just by Association HQ but by each one of their members. Every Secretary was part of a significant team which included their Chairman and Treasurer and together they underpinned the Branch network.

d. Programme. The Chairman outlined her programme of visits to individual Branches and Area Reunions:

02 May 12	Birmingham Branch Lunch
08 May 12	Plymouth Branch Lunch (Truro)
20 May 12	Guildford Cathedral, Laying up of QMAAC & ATS Standards and Service of Rededication
05 Jun 12	Diamond Jubilee Service of Thanksgiving, St Pauls Cathedral
28 Jun 12	Salisbury Branch 65th Anniversary Lunch
21 Aug 12	Leicester & Nottingham Branch Lunch
04 Sep 12	Funeral of Maureen Deeley, National Standard Bearer
14 Sep 12	WRAC PTIs Reunion
29 Sep 12	Scottish Area Reunion & AGM
08 Nov 12	Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey
11 Nov 12	Remembrance Day, Cenotaph. The Chairman thanked Maj (Retd) Maskens-McIntyre for her significant contribution as Parade Commander.
21 Nov 12	Grimsby Branch Christmas Lunch
04 Dec 12	Chelmsford Branch Christmas Lunch
06 Dec 12	Royal Hospital Chelsea Christmas Lunch and gift presentation

The Chairman read a message from the Patron of the Association thanking all members for their loyal greetings and support. She also read a message from the President of the Association thanking all members for their loyal greetings to mark her 80th birthday on 22 February 2013.

2. Apologies for Absence. Apologies had been received from many individuals, several Branch Secretaries and the following members of Council: Brig (Retd) Nicky Moffat, Col (Retd) Isabel McCord, Lt Col (Retd) Sue Donovan, Mrs Eileen Carter and Mrs Karen Loftus.

3. Confirmation of Minutes. The Minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated in Lioness 2012/2, no comments had been received.

Proposal: It was proposed that the Chairman sign the minutes of the 2012 AGM as a true record.

Proposed: Ann Deakin
Seconded: Jane Evans
Unanimously agreed

4. Business Arising from the Previous Minutes. There was no business arising that would not be covered by other Agenda items.

5. Trustees Report. The Chairman stated that Council has met twice since the last AGM; firstly in Jul 12 at Worthy Down and secondly in London at the Union Jack Club in Jan 13. The main items of interest had been:

a. Retirements from Council. Lt Col (Retd) Gerry Fahy and Lt Col (Retd) Nicky Murdoch had stood down from Council on completion of their tenures.

b. Newly elected members of Council. Col (Retd) Isabel McCord and Maj (Retd) Rowena Patrick MBE were elected in Jan 12.

c. Governance. A Sub Committee of Trustees, under the Chairmanship of Col (Retd) Ali Brown, had been established to conduct a Governance review of the Association's Constitution. The report would be briefed to the AGM at item 8.

d. Appointment of Auditors. Following a tender process Rothmans LLP had been appointed as auditors in place of Baker Tilly. Rothmans have an office in Winchester and had completed their first audit of the Association Finances.

e. National Memorial Arboretum (NMA). A new granite plinth had been installed in the WRAC Association plot. This replaced the original brick plinth with a metal plaque which had weathered badly and deteriorated.

f. Memorial Books Guildford Cathedral. Approval had been received from Guildford Cathedral to site a memorial cabinet and books in an alcove close to The Lady Chapel (behind High Altar). Three original memorial books (2 x ATS, 1 x WRAC) which had previously been on display in the chapel at the WRAC Centre had been located in the National Army Museum (NAM) archives. Unfortunately as these had been formally 'gifted' to the Museum the Association could not reclaim them. The NAM would not permit the books to be 'loaned' back to the Association or the AGC Museum for long term display. The books had therefore been digitally copied and bound to look like the originals. A fourth book had been created for the QMAAC. Quotes were being obtained from cabinet makers and the selected design would then be submitted to the Cathedral Fabric Advisory Committee for approval.

g. Queen Elizabeth Park Guildford. When the Queen Elizabeth Park housing development was built on the site of the former WRAC Centre two stone obelisks were erected by the developers. HQ WRAC Association would follow up on a plan to engrave or place an engraved plaque on each obelisk to commemorate the former use of the site.

h. Branches. Harrogate and Luton Branches had closed. Bury and Rochdale Branches had merged and London Branch had re-formed. Phoenix Branch, a new regional branch under the auspices of Wales and West, had been formed to provide a meeting opportunity for members of Branches that had closed in the Area.

6. Financial Report. The Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet for the year ending 31 October 2012 had been published in Lioness edition 2013/1. The Honorary Treasurer presented the Financial Report and explained that the total value of the funds (Association and Benevolent Fund combined) as at 31 Oct 12 was £5,569,761, an increase of £123,305 on FY 2010/2011. It was explained that the funds were divided between 'Restricted Funds' (Benevolent funds), 'Unrestricted Funds' (Association Funds) and 'Designated Funds' (Life Subscription Funds). The value of the Benevolent funds was £4,941,354 and the combined

Unrestricted and Designated (Association) funds was £628,407.

The Honorary Treasurer thanked the Regimental Secretary for all her hard work in managing the accounts and Tanya Jayne Park for her role in moving the accounts to the new Zero software.

Proposal: It was proposed that the financial statements be accepted and that the audited accounts be ratified.

Proposed: Sharon Joyce
Seconded: Rev Susan Wing
Unanimously agreed

7. Report of the Editor of the Association Journal.

The Editor explained that production of Lioness had been moved from Warwick Printers to TigerInk, a local company who had updated the layout of the magazine. It was requested that where possible submissions for Lioness should be typed in the main body of an email (not as an attached document) and photos be attached rather than embedded. Handwritten hard copy and photos would always be acceptable. Although some members had agreed to receive Lioness in electronic format to reduce costs it was confirmed that printed copies would always be available for those who preferred them.

The Editor outlined an ongoing project to scan and digitize all past copies of Association journals, these would eventually be available to members through the members area of the website.

8. Reports of Committees.

a. Executive Committee. The Chairman of the Executive Committee (EC) briefed the meeting on the work of the Governance Sub Committee and initial planning for the Grand Reunion 2015.

(i) Governance Sub Committee. All Branch Secretaries and AGM attendees had been sent a copy of the proposed revised WRAC Association constitution and briefing note outlining the changes on 21 Mar 13. The Chairman of the EC outlined the main changes:

- Council had become too large and unwieldy and would be split to accommodate two separate meetings, the Trustees and Council. The Trustees Meeting would deal with statutory responsibilities, encompassing Charity Commission and legal and financial responsibilities. The Council Meeting would comprise of the Area Chairman, Life Vice Presidents, Officers of the Association, Editor Lioness and Honorary appointments and would focus on membership issues.
- The EC and Finance Committees would merge to prevent duplication of effort and meetings.

Proposal: That the 2013 revision of the Constitution of the WRAC Association be accepted.

Proposed: Melody Baker
Seconded: Nicky Rochelle
Unanimously agreed

The Chairman formally thanked Colonel Brown for all

her hard work over the past 12 months in producing and driving through this amendment to the Constitution, ensuring that it met all the necessary legal and other requirements of the Charity Commission. She also thanked Lieutenant Colonel Griffiths for her contribution as the other member of the Governance Sub Committee.

(ii) Grand Reunion 2015. The Chairman of the EC stated that a provisional date of 20-22 Mar 15 was being considered. The locations shortlisted were Nottingham, Harrogate, Liverpool and York. It was planned to publish the confirmed date and location in Lioness 2013/2.

b. Benevolent Fund Grants Committee. The Chairman of the Grants Committee gave an update of the work of the Benevolent Fund in the financial year 2011/12. The total number of cases for the year 2011/2012 was 495, compared to 466 in 2010/2011; a 6% increase in case numbers compared to a 4% reduction in case numbers in 2009/2010 and a 10% reduction in 2009/2010. The ceiling for a minor committee one-off grant remained at £600. The ceiling for a Major Committee grant was increased to £2,000 at Council in Jul 11. Major grants committee meetings are held once per month and can authorize; one-off grants up to £2,000 (awarded twice during 2011/12), new Princess Royal's Memorial Fund (PRMF) annuitants and new or increased nursing home fee top-ups.

(i) PRMF Annuities. As at 31 Oct 12 there were 14 former servicewomen receiving annuities from the PRMF, 2 fewer than at 31 Oct 11. The annuity for the year 2011/2012 was £17 per week with a Christmas bonus of £60 giving a total of £944 per annum. Of the 14 PRMF annuitants only 12 were 'active' during the financial year and as a consequence the PRMF only paid £11,830 of a maximum liability of £13,216.

(ii) ABF The Soldiers' Charity Annuities. In addition to PRMF annuitants, ABF The Soldiers' Charity also provides an annuity to eligible individuals. As at 31 Oct 12 there were 18 ATS and WRAC beneficiaries of an ABF The Soldiers' Charity annuity, 4 fewer than at 31 Oct 11. The ABF The Soldiers' Charity annuity for the year 2012 was £936 per annum, £8 per annum less than the PRMF annuity. ABF The Soldiers' Charity annuity for 2013 increased to £25 per week (£1,300 per annum) in Feb 13.

(iii) Nursing Home Fee (NHF) Top-ups. As at 31 Oct 12 there were 29 recipients of nursing home fee top-ups, one fewer than at 31 Oct 11. Of these 29 beneficiaries, 5 renewals were outstanding as at 31 Oct 12. Contributions ranged from £6 per week to the then maximum of £30 per week, a total of £40,000 over a 12 month period. ABF The Soldiers' Charity maximum NHF contribution increased from £35 per week (£1,820 per annum) to £40 per week (£2,080 per annum) in Nov 12. We remain grateful to ABF The Soldiers' Charity for NHF top-up contributions to 11 of our 29 recipients with grants ranging from £4 per week to its maximum of £35 per week.

(iv) Budgets. In Jul 12 Council increased the Benevolent Fund budget for the financial year 2011/2012 from £170,00 to £190,000 and decreased

the PRMF budget from £20,000 to £15,000 to reflect that the PRMF no longer funds NHF top-ups. Total expenditure was £193,187 for the Benevolent Fund and £11,830 for the PRMF. This represented a 1.67% overspend for the Benevolent Fund and a 21.2% under-spend for the PRMF. ABF The Soldiers' Charity raised their annuity rate to £25 per week and their maximum NHF top-up to £40 per week. Council therefore agreed in Jan 13 that the PRMF annuity be increased to £24 per week with a £60 Christmas bonus and the maximum contribution towards NHF top-ups be increased from £30 per week to £35 per week for the FY 12/13. To accommodate these increases, it was agreed that the annual budget for the Benevolent Fund be increased from £190,000 to £200,000 and the PRMF from £15,000 to £21,500.

The Chairman of the Grants Committee thanked SSAFA, the Royal British Legion, and the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League for the sterling efforts of all their caseworkers who provided the link between applicants and the Benevolent Fund. Thanks were also made to all the benevolent funds that provided support and to all members of the major grants committee. The Chairman concluded by reading some thank you letters that had been received.

9. Resolutions.

a. Motions of Urgency. There were no motions of urgency.

b. Council Resolutions. The 2013 revision of the Constitution of the WRAC Association had been agreed at item 8a (i).

c. Branch Proposals. There were no Branch proposals.

d. Re-appointment of Honorary Treasurer. The Chairman explained that the Honorary Treasurer, Major Leona Barr-Jones, would be standing down at the end of her 3 year tenure in Jul 13. Council had endorsed her continued appointment until Jul 13 and a replacement with the relevant skills, experience & strategic vision was being sought. The Chairman thanked Major Barr-Jones for her significant contribution as Honorary Treasurer and for her support and advice over many years as a Trustee. She would be missed.

10. Certificates of Appreciation. Dorothy Ryder, Area Chairman North East, accepted a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of:

Mrs Elizabeth Bustard Leeds

Since the 2012 AGM the following member had been awarded with a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of devoted service and significant contributions to their Branch and the Association:

Mrs Jane Savage Aberdeen

11. Any other Business. There was no other Business.

12. Date and Time of Next Meeting. Subject to confirmation, the next AGM would be held on a Saturday in March or April 2014. The date and location would be confirmed in Lioness 14/1.

Signed as a true record. Chairman: Date:

Obituaries - Their Final Salute

COL BRIDGET FORBES ADAM MBE **5 March 2013**



Bridget and her twin sister Isobel were born into a military family. Their father, Sir Ronald Forbes Adam, was Adjutant General during the Second World War, a close friend of the Chief of General Staff, Lord Alanbrooke. Bridget also chose to take up a service career, joining the WRAC. There were the usual courses and junior appointments and a spell in Intelligence at the War Office; but a more congenial posting was to Scottish Command where Bridget was tasked with monitoring the welfare of all the WRAC personnel based north of the border. Stationed in Edinburgh, Bridget found numerous opportunities to visit the Highlands, which greatly appealed to her as a keen naturalist and bird watcher. She never lost her affection for Scotland.

Bridget's most exacting appointment came in the late 1950s when, as ADC to the Quartermaster General, she was responsible for women's accommodation in all army bases overseas. In recognition of her fine work in this role she was awarded the MBE in 1960. Later in her service Bridget toured schools (mainly in the south of England) giving lectures and advice to girls considering the army as career. One of her more memorable duties was to help with the organisation of the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall which she did for several years. Bridget completed her career in the rank of Colonel as Deputy Director, Women's Royal Army Corps.

On retiring to Netherhampton Bridget soon became part of village and church life. She was a devoted gardener and at Ardmore House created a lovely garden and open house for her many friends. By the early 1990s Salisbury Cathedral Refectory was supported by volunteers

from church groups in the diocese who welcomed visitors, served at table and did the washing up. The Netherhampton volunteers, of whom Bridget was one, were a delightful group and built a camaraderie which held together for many years. Bridget was particularly generous with her time to St Catherine's.

With her interest in art Bridget was drawn to the National Association of Decorative & Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS), and when the Sarum Society was set up in the late 1980s she joined the Steering Committee as Membership Secretary. She really enjoyed her NADFAS years and was always so good in committee, welcoming new members, helping with coffee and generally oiling the wheels. Bridget also worked for a number of charities local to Netherhampton including an education trust, she also actively supported the Wilton Branch of the RNLI.

Sadly the last four years of Bridget's life were clouded with ill health, however she never complained and her courage and cheerfulness were remarkable. Fortitude was one of the hallmarks of her character, as was fidelity to her family and friends. But there was so much more, a quiet modesty, great charm and a lovely sense of humour.

Keith Symons

W/345097 WO1 (RSM) EILEEN **NEEDHAM ATS/WRAC** **26 February 2013**



Eileen was born and brought up in Sheffield. She was employed as a Shorthand Typist before enlisting into the ATS in 1947. She did her Basic Training at Guildford during which the Personnel Selection process wanted her to continue her shorthand but Eileen had other ideas and was adamant that she wanted to be a Driver or nothing!

Following her Driver training, Eileen served with the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) in Bad Oeynhausen, Hounslow, Figsbury and Glasgow. She served in Rheindahlen (68 Company RASC) as a Sergeant, in Leeds with a RASC/TA unit before going to Belgium on promotion to WO2 (CSM). In 1965 she was selected to be WO1 (RSM) and was posted to 4 Independent Company WRAC in Singapore. On her return to UK, Eileen reached the pinnacle of her career as RSM at the WRAC Centre. Her final two postings were to Chester and Woolwich (with the RA) from where she retired in 1971.

On leaving the WRAC, Eileen retired to Plymouth and started another career running the despatch department of a local firm for 12 years. When she finally finished work Eileen was able to enjoy her hobbies of gardening, horse racing and travelling (world wide including visiting her old Army haunts!).

In her final 3 years, Eileen sadly succumbed to Alzheimer's disease and died peacefully on 26 February 2013 in Plymouth. She considered the Army to be a family, something she lacked being an only child. She was extremely proud of her service both in the ATS and the WRAC and was a lifelong member of the WRAC Association.

LT COL (QM) JOYCE EDWARDS OBE 1931 - 2013



Joyce was born in Dartmouth in 1931 and was the third of four daughters. Her father was in the Navy and when war came, he joined the Arctic Convoys and the family moved to Plymouth. The city was badly bombed during the war and Joyce's family had to move home frequently. She left school when she was 14 and went to work in a shoe shop. Her eldest sister, Jean, who had been ATS Provost during the war persuaded Joyce to leave war torn Plymouth and join the newly formed Women's Royal Army Corps; this she did on the 27th October 1950. Although she only ever visited and never lived in Plymouth again, she never lost her lovely Devonian accent and was always extremely proud of her West Country roots.

Joyce's character, stature and personality meant that she was destined to follow in her sister's footsteps as a Military Policewoman with WRAC Provost. Most of her service was in Germany although she did serve in Cyprus for 3 years during the EOKA campaign. On one occasion Joyce had to host the WRAC Deputy Colonel Commandant, Col Lucy Davies, (a very formidable character for those of us who remember her!) who was visiting the island. In her own inimitable way, Joyce made a case to Colonel Lucy that the Provost girls needed to be able to wear trousers to perform their duties more effectively and, against all odds, she persuaded the DCC that it was a good idea as only Joyce could; however, as the wearing of trousers in the WRAC was always a taboo subject, Col Lucy agreed to the proposal with the proviso that the zips be removed from the front of the issue trousers and resown into the sides of the trousers. True to form Joyce organised this (or probably got someone else to!) and the Provost servicewomen were overjoyed. During this tour Joyce had a lucky escape from an overturned land rover, fortunately she was not seriously hurt and lived to tell the tale. At one stage, Joyce was posted to Singapore. Unfortunately, with her kit already dispatched to the Far East she was informed that the posting had been cancelled and she was to proceed on another tour of Germany. As you can imagine, for one who was always so smart, to be left with only the very basic kit was clearly upsetting and unacceptable.

On one of her tours in Rheindahlen, Joyce was faced with a litter of kittens that had been born overnight in company offices – the mother cat, who was a stray and who had adopted the Provost Company, obviously decided that she was to be Joyce's main priority that day and actually gave birth in Joyce's In-Tray! Joyce apparently was completely unfazed by the whole episode and one can only begin to guess what she really said on discovering her new little family!

Joyce's qualities were recognised early on in her service; she rose rapidly through the ranks reaching the pinnacle of her career as a soldier when she was promoted and posted as Regimental Sergeant Major London District Provost Company. Not surprisingly, Joyce's fine reputation was acknowledged by the WRAC as well as within her own Provost circles, and so her final posting as a Warrant Officer was to the WRAC Centre at Guildford as RSM - a real accolade for a Redcap.

Joyce made a seamless transition from Soldier to Officer status when she was granted the Queen's Commission in October 1967. She left the Sgt's Mess at Guildford as RSM one day and came back into the Officers' Mess as

Assistant Quartermaster the next. Her subsequent postings were to the WRAC College at Camberley as an Instructor on the WO & NCO Training Wing, then back to a Provost appointment as OC Training Control at Chichester before finally returning to the WRAC Centre as Quartermaster.

Many Senior and Junior NCO's passed through Joyce's hands at Camberley where she was a Military Law instructor – her unique teaching methods and sense of fun endeared her to all her students. One of her permanent staff members at Chichester wrote 'Joyce was my boss for 18 months and was a great laugh. She made training fun for the recruits and gave them a very happy atmosphere to live in'.

Following these two training appointments, Joyce returned to Guildford for her final tour. And it is as Quartermaster at the WRAC Centre, Guildford, where she served for almost 10 years, that she is best remembered and loved. Quartermasters are a rare breed, and are the linchpin of any unit – one upsets them at one's peril! However, Joyce was an extremely approachable QM who was an expert at 'getting things done' and who would go 'the extra mile' to ensure that subordinates and superiors alike got the Service they deserved from the 'Q' stores. She enjoyed a challenge and was rarely beaten. One of the Recruit Training Company Young Officers remembers that it was not only the recruits that were in awe of the Quartermaster, most of the officers were to! She recollects that Joyce could always tell if one of her platoon was pregnant just by looking at the way she stood during clothing parade for No 2 Dress tailoring. Invariably Joyce's suspicions were absolutely correct and it often came as a great surprise to the recruit as well!

A former Commandant at Guildford recalls Joyce's resourcefulness and sense of humour when the unit was hit by a severe case of flu and the Medical Centre was bursting at the seams. As QM, Joyce had made contingency plans to open up a makeshift Medical Centre elsewhere on the unit with the help of the Matron. The day came when the plan needed to swing into action so Joyce sent a message to the Commandant via the Adjutant. The message went something like this 'Excuse me Ma'am, but the QM says 'the elastic has snapped', she said you will know what she means!' On another occasion, the Cpls Mess were playing the Sgt's Mess in a mock FA Cup Final, and all the unit was in attendance but they had no one to present the prizes. Always game for a laugh, Joyce was approached and agreed to do the honours. She really entered into the spirit of the occasion by dressing up to the nines, wide brimmed hat and all, just like Royalty, to do the presentation. However, despite her willingness to present sports trophies, she was not a great fan of sport! The Basic Fitness Test (BFT), which was introduced for all army personnel in the mid seventies, was an anathema to Joyce and on most occasions she successfully managed to outwit the various unit PTIs and wriggle out of taking the dreaded test. It was during this tour that she was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and was awarded the OBE for her outstanding and significant service and contribution to the Corps and WRAC Centre in particular. On 2 November 1984 Joyce retired from the WRAC and went to live in Liphook with her great friend, Anne.

After she left the Army Joyce, who as I have just said had resisted any form of sport during her career but who had been told she must regularly exercise, took up golf seriously! She became a dedicated and prominent member of Liphook Golf Club, serving on the Committee and persuading Anne to take up the hobby too. Thereafter, they spent many happy years playing golf and going on golfing holidays at home and abroad. When she was no longer able to play through ill health, she became a social member of the Club and always supported Ladies Days. She was also a member of Liphook Royal British Legion and was its Poppy organiser for several years. Latterly, Joyce joined the University of the Third Age, attending monthly meetings and in particular the Antiques group in which she had a great interest.



Not surprisingly, Joyce was also a great supporter of the WRAC Association and on retirement she and Anne became stalwarts of the Aldershot Branch where Joyce was Chairman for several years as well as being a conscientious committee member. She made a significant contribution to all Branch activities and was very sad to see the Branch close in 2003 due to declining membership. She enjoyed Reunions of any kind and WRAC Officers' Dining Club functions; it was lovely to see her last May at Guildford Cathedral when our Association standards were laid up there in a Service of Rededication. Joyce enjoyed socialising in any shape or form, she loved parties and knew how to let her hair down – she absolutely adored Elvis Presley and would always request his music ; I have a very vivid memory of her 'bopping' to 'Its Now or Never' during a BBQ at my home several years ago!

In her last year, her underlying and debilitating health problems severely tested her, yet she dealt with these frailties with her usual strength of character, cheerfulness and determination. Hugely respected and extremely popular, Joyce lived life to the full and touched so many lives along the way. To those closest to her Joyce was an outstandingly loyal and trusted friend whose kindness and generosity knew no bounds. Her infectious sense of humour coupled with her enormous energy, warmth and bonhomie will ensure that Joyce's memory and legacy live on – she will be remembered with the greatest of affection.

NINA HAMILTON née MACKIE
7 July 2012



Nina Hamilton passed away peacefully on 7 July 2012 at age 91. She served in the ATS from 1942 to 1945 with the all female 93rd Searchlight Regiment Royal Artillery. One of Nina's proudest moments came on 8 May 1945 (VE Day) when, at the request of Winston Churchill, her Regiment lit up the sky above St Paul's Cathedral with searchlights in a 'V' for victory symbol.

In 1992, when browsing at an antique book sale, she found a book titled 'The Forties in Vogue' and told the salesman "if I'm in it I'll buy it". Imagine his surprise when Nina flipped through the pages and saw a photo taken in 1943 of herself with the girls in her ATS group. The salesman sold her the book at half price. Gone but not forgotten, forever in our hearts.

Albert Hamilton

W/70468 PEGGY SMITH
22 January 2013



Peggy Smith joined the Army in 1941 serving on gun crews around the country and was demobbed in February 1946. In later years she proudly carried the ATS wreath in the Bedworth Armistice Day parade. She was a keen member of the WRAC Association and enjoyed meeting her ATS friends for monthly lunches around the Coventry area. She will be sadly missed.

David Smith

UNA FAIRLESS née ADAMSON
11 June 1922 - 19 March 2013

Una Fairless passed away peacefully on 19 March 2013 after a short illness. She was laid to rest in Earlham Crematorium Memorial Garden, Norwich with her husband John who died three years earlier. She is sadly missed by her daughters Barbara and Caroline, sons-in-law and grandchildren.



Una served in the ATS, working in Sunderland as secretary to a Colonel, she always said how much she enjoyed her ATS service. Although painfully shy she was proud to work as a member of the team using the secretarial skills she had learnt at school. The Colonel was a very kind man who encouraged her, giving her confidence. She came from a poor family and said that she had never been better fed than when she was in the Army. She told a story of how she crashed the Colonel's car when he was trying to teach her to drive. She would never learn to drive.

Una married her childhood sweetheart John at the end of the war. They moved from Sunderland to Birmingham so that John could find work, and then on to Salisbury where they lived for many years and brought up two daughters. Una and John moved to Norwich to be near one of their daughters for the last 10-13 years of their lives.

Una was an elegant and creative lady; a devoted wife and mother, accomplished at sewing, cooking, decorating, upholstery and making ends meet. When John retired she took up painting, using acrylics, watercolours and oils. Her family have a wonderful collection of paintings to remind them of the area where they lived, and of places in Italy that she visited. She enjoyed popular music, wartime songs and opera; introducing her children to fun songs like Mairzy Doats and Dozy Doats by the Merry Macs.

She often recited a poem, Old Dog by Stephen Foster, illustrating her enduring sadness about the loss of loved one; but felt uplifted when listening to Vera Lynn singing The White Cliffs of Dover.

MARY C ELLIOT née O'CONNELL
6 September 2012



Mary lived in London at the start of the second World War and from there she joined the ATS. After weeks and months of training and various jobs in the army Mary, then a Corporal, joined an Ack-Ack unit which travelled to most parts of England; North, South, East and West. It was while she was stationed in the North East that she met her husband to be William (Bill) Elliott who was on leave at the time from the Front. Bill's Regiment was the Queen's Own 4th Hussars. When he returned to duty after his leave they vowed to see each other again. Mary and Bill were married in uniform in August 1945. After the war they settled down to live near Newcastle-upon-Tyne and had one son, Ralph, who was born in 1947.

Bill died at the young age of 51 when Mary was 49 years old. She worked full time as a supervisor in the food industry. Later in life Mary dedicated her life to helping her son and his wife with their family; taking her grandchildren to school every morning and collecting them in the afternoon, making dinners for the family, even looking after their Red Setter dog during the day and holiday times. Like all grandmothers her kindness, generosity of her time and unselfishness could never be repaid. She also gave a lot of time helping with Ralph's mother-in-law who was housebound and in ill health for a number of years.

After her grandchildren were grown up Mary joined various charities and societies to give her help. Mary was an original member of the WRAC Association in Newcastle and attended the monthly meetings for many years. She always said that she very much enjoyed going to the Branch meetings every month to see her ex-service friends who were the friendliest and sociable of people. Mary was always very proud to say that HM The Queen was also in the ATS during the war. She was a great follower of the Royal Family and had an excellent memory. She could name every member of the Royal Family; brothers, uncles, cousins past and right up to the present day.

Many's memory, both present day and past events, was very good right up to the last however she suffered very painful arthritis in her legs, hands and shoulders. Mary died suddenly at home on 6 September 2012 aged 93.

She was a kind, considerate and respectful person; highly thought of in the local community. She is greatly missed and leaves behind a son Ralph, daughter-in-law Margaret, two grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

ESME DAVIDSON
11 May 1923 - 4 April 2013

Esme was a past Chairman of Bristol Branch. Her last visit was at the Grand Reunion in 2012, where her daughters brought her to meet some of the ladies. Esme will be missed, she opened so many doors for us when I started the Branch, always there for me at the drop of a hat. I am so pleased that our Branch was able to have the pleasure of her winning ways and her lovely lovely smile which lit up the room. I was able to take her to Chelsea Hospital to meet the husband of her friend Etty who she served with in the ATS and whom I found out had died. It was wonderful to see them both looking at photographs, and talking about their families. I shall never forget her kindness to me.

Jackie Naysmith

W/14784 BETTY HACK née THORNTON
17 February 1921 - 15 December 2012

Mary Golden was born on 26th June 1922 to a family of seven other children at Seaham Harbour, County Durham. At a young age she, like so many other girls went into Domestic Service followed by a period of factory work. In 1940 at the start of the 2nd World War she joined the ATS and went into catering. She initially worked in the Officer's Mess at Carlisle, followed by a period at Newark where she subsequently met and married her first husband, Walter Dixon, in 1946. For some time she was a Housekeeper until she married Thomas Golden. She worked for many years at Newark Hospital and even in retirement this busy lady continued to work as a hospital volunteer. Mary was a woman of many talents, always eager to extend her knowledge and talents, one of which was the writing of delightful poems reflecting her love of County Durham. She loved to travel and was always eager to explore new pastures.



She became a founder member of the Lincoln & District Branch in 2006 and, as always, proved to be an enthusiastic supporter and participant in all the branch activities. Over the past few years Mary had unfortunately been unable to attend meetings but members of the branch kept in touch with her, keeping her up to date.

Her family said that she loved to receive her copies of the *Lioness*.

Mary passed away on 10 April, Gwyneth Stratten and Beryl Butcher represented the Lincoln & District Branch at her funeral on Wednesday 24 April.

Jean Evans

BETTY KENDRICK née HATTER **18 July 1920 - 28 February 2013**



Betty Kendrick was born on 18 July 1920 in Hugglescote, Leicestershire and joined the ATS on 9 October 1942. After one month's basic training at Glen Parva Barracks, Leicester Betty moved to Arborfield Garrison in Berkshire and chose to volunteer for Ack-Ack duties with the Royal

Artillery. There followed a posting for gunnery practice on the cliffs at Weybourne on the bracing Norfolk coast. The camp was full so Betty and other girls were billeted in the Grand Hotel in Sheringham. Christmas came and like so many others it was their first festive season away from home.

In early 1943 Betty was posted to 602 (Mixed) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery, 185 (Mixed) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment in Ballysnod Road, Larne, Northern Ireland. Later that year the Battery moved to Hayling Island on the south coast, with the task of defending Portsmouth and Southampton. "We arrived during a bitterly cold spell and our location was an isolated spot called Sinah Common. I was a Height and Range Finder and situated pretty close to the guns, I thought I would go deaf. 'Fairways', a largish private house on Ferry Road was our HQ and another, 'Lisheen', was the Officers' Mess. Our NAAFI was lovely and because it was nearing D-Day some of the lads used to come into our camp for a dance. Sgt Lewington played the piano and Tony Dashwood the accordion." Betty had an excellent singing voice and was regularly taken by jeep to Northney, a pre war holiday camp. Lots of troops were billeted there and with her microphone she sang all of Vera Lynn's numbers of the day. The troops loved her!

It was reported that 602 Battery saw the first 'Doodlebug' of the war, it came from the southeast and fell on Southsea with a violent explosion. On 20 December 1944, with the need for Gunners diminishing, Betty was posted to Greenford Central Ordnance Depot, London

and employed as a switchboard operator "We took the tube into the centre of London and saw the terrible devastation caused by the Blitz. It was not a safe place with V2s joining the Doodlebugs, there were explosions while we were there. On VE Day, with my friend Cookie, we stood right in front of the gates at Buckingham Palace and saw the Royal Family and Churchill waving to us all. I was pleased, but much happier on VJ Day when I heard my fiancée would soon return from the Far East. Les was captured at Singapore and spent nearly 4 years as a POW on the Burma-Siam 'Death' Railway. For years I did not know if he was dead or alive but I waited nevertheless. We married on 15 December 1945 and had 60 years of happy marriage until Les died in January 2006. We had 3 children, Michael, Maureen and Pamela, grandchildren and one great-grandchild has followed."

JOAN MARY HODSDON née AIKEN **10 June 1922 - 30 October 2012**

Joan Hodsdon, who died on 30 October 2012, lent her specialist skills to the British effort in cracking the Enigma Code used by Germany's military in WWII. Undisciplined, insubordinate and unruly, Joan was nevertheless an academically bright schoolgirl who at 17 began working as a clerical assistant in the War Office just after the outbreak of hostilities. After training she found that her first boss was Winston Churchill MP.

In 1943 she volunteered to join the ATS. Joan excelled and after 2 weeks basic training she was sent to the Isle of Man for 6 months of intensive special wireless training in which she learnt Morse and shorthand. Her training was then put to good use at Bletchley Park from where she helped find the geographic source of the German encrypted signals. This was invaluable to scientists who eventually deciphered the Enigma code. It was not until 2009 that she shared her wartime experience with her family when she was awarded the Bletchley Park Commemorative Badge, presented in Australia by her local MP Michael Keenan.

The adventure she so craved as a child continued in wartime when she served overseas in Gibraltar, Naples and Rome. In 1948 she married Don Hodsdon in Barnet, London. In 1950 they decided to emigrate to Australia, first arriving in Papua New Guinea where they ran a photography shop for 2 years, supplying photos for local newspapers. They moved on to Maryborough, Queensland and in 1958 she gave birth to twin daughters Lesley and Terry, the first of five children in five years, followed by Shaunne, Ben and Kiely. In 1968 the family moved to Perth, Western Australia. When her husband died in 1972 Joan secured a government job and worked tirelessly to ensure all her children continued to attend the private Trinity and Mercedes Colleges. She achieved her goal whilst progressing her own career.

On retirement she took to travel, visiting many countries and even embarking on an African safari on the back of a truck. Visits to family in England were reciprocated. She gave lifelong support to community activities which included umpiring netball, educating women in public speaking and sitting on school committees. She was the first woman appointed to State council of the Parents

and Friends Federation in Western Australia. Latterly she was involved with Probus, National Seniors Australia and Liberal Party politics, enduringly a reliable advocate for rights of the aged.

Joan Hodsdon died on 30 October 2012 aged 90. She leaves five children, nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Ben Hodsdon

WO441887 S/SGT CAROL ANN GILL née STEPHENSON



Carol was born into a military environment, with her father serving in the REME her childhood life was influenced by travel and military ethos from the start. At the end of his military service the family settled in Middlesbrough. Following in her father's footsteps Carol enlisted in the WRAC as a Staff Clerk in January 1972. After basic and trade training Carol was first posted to the Ministry of Defence in London, then followed service in Singapore, BAOR, UK and Zimbabwe, during which she rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant. Carol loved the military camaraderie and friendship. She made many friends some of whom she kept in contact with throughout her life. She also played many sports for her units. While serving in BAOR she had a 3 months detachment at the 1(BR) Corps ski hut becoming a proficient downhill skier and was selected to travel to St Moritz to compete in downhill events.

In 1977 Carol married Roger who was serving in the RAOC, and was able to accompany him on subsequent postings. In fact he was the RQMS who de-kitted her on her discharge in 1986. That same year Roger was posted to Bracht and Carol got a job with the Postal and Courier Service in Rheindahlen. On leaving she was presented with a German postal horn, which she could never play.

On completion of Roger's service in 1988 they moved back to the UK, settling in Bridlington. Carol took employment within the NHS administrative staff at Bridlington Hospital whilst Roger worked for BAE in Saudi Arabia. When accommodation became available Carol then joined Roger in Saudi where she enjoyed the sunny climate becoming a proficient diver, water skier and tennis player. After 6 years Carol returned to Bridlington and was re-employed in her

old job and settled back into the system, regaling all with tales of sunny days and strange happenings in foreign climes. Carol also loved dogs, the bigger the better, over the years she'd owned and cherished 4 Great Danes.

Carol was killed in a road traffic accident on 5 April 2013 whilst driving to visit her family in Middlesbrough. There was a large turnout for her funeral, reflecting the love, friendship and high regard that everyone had for Carol. She was loving, caring, adventurous, funny and lots more. She is sadly missed.

Roger Gill and Karen Blake

W/14784 BETTY HACK née THORNTON 17 February 1921 - 15 December 2012



Betty was born on 17 February 1921, the youngest of four children born to Harold and Florence Thornton. Her older siblings were sister Dorothy and brothers Donald and Alan. Betty's father was an engineer working for the Bristol Aeroplane Company and her mother was a milner. Betty was still very young when the family moved, firstly to Headingley, Leeds and then later to Preston, when her father changed jobs again. She still remembered the address in Leeds over 70 years later when we found the house quite easily when on a trip to the city.

Betty was still in her early teens when her father died, an event that had a profound effect on her. The family found it very hard to cope, both emotionally and financially, they were helped by their uncle John who used to send food hampers. The Masons also supported the family as Betty's father had been a member. Betty's mother was an accomplished needlewoman and Betty inherited this talent, creating some beautiful pieces of needlework.

Betty joined the ATS in 1939, she completed her in camp training at Fulwood Barracks, Preston and served in Droitwich amongst other places. She became a Staff Sergeant serving with the Royal Army Pay Corps and this is where she met her husband Herbert. Herbert and

Betty were married in 1948 and settled in Brentwood, Essex. Herbert became the Rating Officer for the town and Betty joined the NHS. She had a superb mathematical brain and rose through the ranks to become Chief Accountant for a group of hospitals in the Brentwood area. She remained in accountancy until her retirement at the age of 60, at this time she decided to move north to Retford to be near her sister Dorothy and her niece Ann. She lived in Retford for over 32 years and became actively involved in the local community; she was a member of the Area Health Authority for many years, Treasurer of the local Townswomen's Guild and supported the local Cheshire Home and helped run a tea bar in the local hospital. Several military charities were close to her heart and she was a generous donor to the Royal British Legion and the Gurkhas.

When at home she loved her garden and spent a lot of time tending plants and visiting local garden centres. In retirement she adopted two rescue dogs, Jet and Rosie, who both gave her enormous pleasure and companionship. In the last 12 months of her life, with her health failing, she accepted that she would be unable to cope at home any longer. At her request she moved to a nursing home in Truro to be close to her family. She was so looking forward to moving to Cornwall but sadly only lived there for 16 days. However it was long enough for the family to spend quite a lot of time with her and in those 16 days had many visitors. She passed away peacefully in her sleep with all her family close by.

Carolyn Wilkinson (niece)

**W/16311 WO1 (SUB CONDUCTOR)
GLADYS ISAAC née WARDEN BEM
5 October 1920 - 30 April 2013**



Gladys was born in Rochdale, Lancashire and was conscripted into the ATS in 1942. After training at Bowerham Barracks, Lancaster she was posted to Donnington. In 1946 she was chosen to march in the Victory Parade in London and in 1949, on the formation

of the WRAC, she signed on to complete 22 years service. On promotion to WO1 Sub Conductor (the only one in the WRAC at the time) she was posted to Chilwell. She was awarded the British Empire Medal in the 1954 Queen's Birthday Honours List, one of her proudest moments. Her parents were invited to the presentation which was made by Maj Gen R P Harding CB, DSO GOC North Midlands District and took place at Chilwell.

Whilst at Chilwell and Bicester she met some of her dearest friends, in particular Sgt Eileen Sizeland with whom she remained in contact throughout her life. Gladys was keen to serve overseas and her chance came in 1960 when she was selected to fill a previously male vacancy in Singapore. She enjoyed her tour of duty in GHQ Tanglin and 3 BOD Singapore, at the end of her posting she took leave to cruise to Vietnam, Hong Kong and Japan.

In 1962 she returned to Bicester and renewed old friendships. During her last year of service she met SSgt Charles Isaac REME and they married on 25 April 1964 at St Mary's Parish Church, Ambrosden, Bicester. Warrant Officers from the RAOC formed a Guard of Honour and their wedding reception was the first to be held in 16Bn RAOC Sergeants Mess.

Gladys retired after 22 years service on 9 October 1964 however Charles continued to serve for a further 8 years. She was always keen to point out that for 21.5 years with the RAOC she was known as Gladys Warden, it was only in the last 6 months that her name changed to Isaac. Gladys and Charles settled in Chester where they led very active lives. She was quite a formidable lady with and infectious laugh. She loved anything glamorous and remained so all her life. That she will be remembered by many people is evident from many friends and neighbours. She touched many lives with her kindness and generosity and fought her last battle with courage. She died peacefully in the Countess of Chester Hospital.

(W/420570) Carilyn Telford née Warden

**W/353729 LCPL PAMELA HARTLEY née
DRYDEN-CARVER
19 September 2012**



Pamela joined the ATS in February 1949, and after Basic Training at Guildford and Trade Training as a clerk at Gresford, was posted to the Military College of Science Shrivenham, where she met her future husband. In 1951, Pamela was posted to HQ, British Troops Berlin, where she served until her discharge in December 1952. In 1953, she married Thomas Hartley. Pamela enjoyed army life, and the many friends she made during her service. She was a member of the Greater London Branch.

Pamela enjoyed reading 'Lioness' and scoured the pages for any hint or mention of old comrades. Sadly, she only found one such friend, but there may be more out there who will recall the good times of the Cold War period.

Thomas Hartley

W/149161 CPL JOSEPHINE N FLINN née MOSELEY
27 May 1920 - 15 January 2013



Josephine's wartime service in the ATS was one of the most important and memorable times in her long life. It was a life-changing experience for a shy, home loving girl who had rarely left her home area until she set off from Sussex to the training camp at Wrexham. She made many long-lasting friendships, and was still in regular contact with at least five of "the girls" until she died. She had not actually met most of them for well over 60 years but kept in touch by letter, and later, by telephone. All over 90 now, they would reminisce at length over the old days, and relive the moments they shared at Chester, Dumfries, Ayr and Taunton between March 1942 and November 1945. The family knew all her favourite stories off by heart; she really enjoyed recounting the (usually) amusing situations she had often found herself in.

Josie was always delighted to receive the latest copy of "Lioness"; we bought her a life subscription many years ago, and she never thought she would still be receiving it until 2013. She certainly had her money's worth!

Wendy Oakeshot

LT ZOE E PARSELL née PAGE TD
29 September 2012

I first met Zoe in 1951 when I went to work at the Cambridge University Department of Pathology, where she was a Senior Laboratory Technician. She joined the Territorial Army in Cambridge in the early 1950s as a Driver in 301 Bn WRAC/TA. She rapidly rose to the rank of Sgt, and by this time had persuaded me to join the Platoon with her. She was subsequently Commissioned and became one of the Platoon Commanders.



The Platoon Commander, 2nd Lieut. Z. Page.

Following a Government 'Reorganization of the TAVR' in the 1960s, the Platoon had to change its role. It became 1 Cambs Platoon APIC TA (which was part of 71 (City of London Coy) WRAC/TAVR. The women in the Platoon were doing 'General Duties' – Cooks, Clerks, Stewardesses - and spent their Annual Training at RAF Brampton, near Huntingdon. The Officers (who became Aerial Photographic Interpreters) did their training at JARIC at RAF Upwood and occasionally went to RAF bases in Germany for their Annual Training. It was a most interesting period for us as we were training with members of the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force and we were the only unit in the Territorial Army with this role.

In 1968, the Government again decided to 'Reorganize the TA'. This time, the Platoon again changed its role and became part of 54 (E) Signals Squadron, TAVR which became part of 36 (E) Signal Regt TAVR. Zoe served with that Regiment until she retired (on marriage) in 1973, with the rank of Lt.

Maj (Retd) Marion Lant, TD née Lilley

W/216962 PTE EDNA JOYCE BILLINGHAM née TOWNER
27 September 1920 - 15 April 2013

Mrs Edna Joyce Billingham nee Towner (Private W/216962) 65 A.A.RDE (IND) COY ATS, born 27th September 1920 in London, passed away on 15th April 2013 in Liverpool, her home for the last 50 years, aged 92 years. Edna was stationed at Wawne, Yorkshire from 1942 - 1945.

Elaine Johnson

JOAN MEIRION PILLMAN née EVANS
29 April 1920 – 22 April 2013



**Princess Elizabeth and Subaltern Joan Evans,
 Liverpool 1949**

Joan Evans joined up on September 3rd 1939 and was stationed at various times during the War in Kent, Norfolk, Cambridge, Leicestershire, Yorkshire, Northumberland and London District. She did OCTU in Edinburgh in 1942. She served in ATS units attached to RA searchlight and anti-aircraft batteries, in some cases as Messing Officer, feeding hundreds of troops. After being de-mobbed in 1946, Joan served in the TA in the Liverpool area, and commanded an ATS detachment at the visit of HRH The Princess Elizabeth to Liverpool in 1949.

In 1950 she married Lt Col J R Pillman TD RE, and brought up three children in the Chester area. She died in a nursing home in Gresford on 22 April, and her funeral at All Saints Gresford was attended by a party from the Chester Branch WRAC under Pat Sanders.

Clare Pillman

**W/49489 JOYCE (TINK) SHORT née
 MILLS**
12 December 2012

Joyce was born in Welling, Kent on 21 June 1924 to Harry and Daisy Mills who ran a large nursery business which had been established in 1889, she was one of 6 children. War arrived and in 1940 Tink was just 16 years old and desperate to do her bit and join up. She knew she was too young but, being strong willed and determined, went to the recruitment office in London and gave them her sisters name Violet Mills (who was 2 years older), stating she would 'pop' her birth certificate in later. Of course she never did, she got away with it and joined the ATS.

Training in Bournemouth for Signals followed, learning morse code, cryptography, decoding and communication skills.



On completion of her training, Tink was stationed in Nottingham. In later years she spoke to her son about her work and the heartbreaking messages from soldiers on the front line, in places like Arnhem and the D-Day landing beaches. She was asked to relay message to their loved ones, how much they loved them and missed them, not sure whether or not they would get through this. Tink remembered seeing her colleagues in her office, as they broke down and cried at some of the message coming through. She recalled how she would walk home on leave in London, the city pitch black during an air raid, listening to the explosions and 'rattle' and 'bang' as shrapnel ricocheted all around her. Only afterwards would she realise that she could have been killed.

Tink met Frank during the pre war year when he had been playing clarinet in the local band. With Frank away in the Navy during the war, they eventually got together and got married at Christ Church, Bexleyheath. Achieving the rank of Lance Corporal, 'Violet' was discharged on the 8th April 1945 after 4 years and 93 days service. She had never disclosed her real name or age, and was really embarrassed when her friends laid on a 'surprise' 21st birthday party in Nottingham when she was still only 19!

Her son David was born 5 months after Tink was demobbed in the September of 1945. Her family were now living back at home on the farm with her parents. They moved to South East London, where they were involved with BBC stage shows and radio productions and got to meet many celebrities including Tony Hancock, Sid James, Kenneth Williams, as well as the cast for Hancocks Half Hour and the Carry On films.

In 1956 Tink and her family joined the exodus to Canada. However there was an economic depression and unemployment which resulted in their return back to England, travelling from New York to Southampton on the QE1! They worked in the Public Trustees office and the War Office in London, later they bought the lease on a run down Little Chef in Welling, renaming it the 'Honeydew' after an ice cream parlour in Canada. This became a thriving business, and they bought another run down cafe in Old Bexley naming it 'Upstairs, Downstairs' after the TV series, providing good wholesome English cooking. Selling everything up they then bought a 17 bedroom hotel in Broadstairs with David and Val, Amanda and Theresa (Tink's granddaughters).

The tourist trade slowed down, the hotel was sold and Tink and Frank more or less retired to Portugal. When Frank passed away on the 28th May 2001 Tink returned to Broadstairs where she did voluntary work in a local charity shop and in a friends clothing shop. In 2005, out of the blue she received a personal invitation addressed to Mrs 'Violet' Short to attend the unveiling of the 'Women's Memorial' in Whitehall. Tink rang the representative, and finally explained the story of who she really was! to be told 'bring your invite and a guest'. She accepted and spent a most wonderful day out seeing the Queen and chatting to many ex service women. Tink was a wonderful woman, her legacy of love, friendship, strength, humour and fun will always endure. Her husband Frank always used to say she "was put on this earth, to help others."

David Short

**JENNY JACKLYN WELLS née FLINT
ATS/WRAC**

4 July 1921 - 14 January 2013

Jenny was born in Canterbury and enlisted into the ATS in 1940 aged 19. She became a PTI and after training was attached to the Welsh Guards and developed a love of most things Welsh. She served until 1947 and then married Eric, her husband, they had a daughter and a son. However the call of uniform was strong and she joined the Royal British Legion (Women's Section) and the ATS Association in Canterbury. She served both for over 40 years in various posts. She became standard bearer of the RBL(Women's Section) Canterbury and then did the same for the WRAC Association (Canterbury Branch) for about 25 years having received the Standard on its dedication in 1957. She was often in uniform working for RBL and her children remember the business of cleaning, polishing and preparing for various events. She was the official Poppy Appeal organiser from 1977-1994.

The Army was always Jenny's first love and she rejoined the colours in 1964 as WRAC Recruiting Sergeant in Canterbury, recruiting amongst many others, her own son. This was her dream job and she remained in post until 1976. She was an energetic Chairman of Canterbury Branch of WRAC Association for many years until increasing ill health forced her to take a back seat. She became a lifelong President of the Branch. From 1995 her ability to attend meetings diminished until she went into a home. Jenny is remembered for her tremendous

enthusiasm and drive and her devotion to the WRAC Association and the RBL. Her hard work and devotion to both organisations was recognised with her attendance at several events including Royal Garden Parties where she met both the Queen and the Duchess of Kent. Jenny bravely fought Parkinson's disease and arthritis for many years, typical of her character.

Susan Wing



**Dedication of Canterbury Branch Standard 1957
Mavis Middleton, Jenny Wells, Florrie Driver**

**W/327489 DOROTHY GIBBONS née
DONE**

7 January 1928 - 28 December 2012

Dorothy was born in Furness Vale on 7 January 1928 and with her beloved elder brother Harry was one of two children to Ted and Amy Done. Dorothy was educated at New Mills School in Stockport and went on to Loburn

College to become a shorthand typist. She joined the ATS in July 1945 and had postings to Bicester, Chillwell (Teacher Training College), Fulford Barracks York and the War Office in London. She worked hard to achieve the rank of Corporal, enjoyed her time spent in the ATS and was demobbed in 1948.



She had known her future husband Alan since the age of 7 and they married on 27 November 1948. Alan had served in the Navy during the war. Dorothy and Alan enjoyed dancing at Stockport Town Hall, they were active members of Probus, the RBL and Disley Townswomen's Guild. They enjoyed participating but also contributed. They proudly represented their RBL branch at the Royal Albert Hall and also at the Cenotaph on two occasions in the 1990s.

Dorothy worked in retail, initially in the growing Television and Radio sales industry where her experiences in the Services were an asset. She later bought and ran her own sweet and tobacconist shop in Stockport town centre. Alan and Dorothy had one daughter, Ann, and two grandchildren, Elizabeth and Andrew. When Alan died in 2004 Dorothy relocated to an apartment in Hazel Grove. Ann encouraged her to remain as active as her failing sight and heart condition would allow. She kept in touch with old friends and enjoyed outings and visits with her family.

Dorothy was a Life Member of the WRAC Association and attended meetings of the the Stockport Branch until ill health prevented her. In 2007 she contributed a letter to Lioness appealing for old Comrades to get in touch. She was proud her time in the ATS and enjoyed the comradeship of the Association.

**W/265853 DORIS M BELL née COOK
4 April 2013**

**Dot Bell (far right) with Luton Branch at RAF Museum
Hendon**



Doris Bell was one of the small but loyal band of ATS/WRAC who made up the Luton Branch. Doris, better known as Dot to her friends, was very popular and loved by all who knew her. She had served at Bletchley Park and in October 2009 had the honour of returning there to receive a medal for her wartime work. The medal was presented to Dot by David Milliband, who at the time was Secretary of State for Commonwealth and Foreign Affairs. Dot was very proud of this moment, as were all her comrades when she brought the medal to the next branch meeting for us all to admire.

Kathy Kyne

**W/417490 STELLA C SCANTLEBURY
WRAC
2 June 2013**



Stella, affectionately known as 'Scattie', was born in Liverpool and lived her early years in the North of England. After a short time in the Territorial Army Stella joined the WRAC in 1964 where she served for 22 years as a Chef; attaining the rank of W02 she served in Larkhill, Singapore, NI, Guildford and Aldershot. It was whilst serving in NI at the height of the troubles that Stella was Mentioned in Dispatches; when the unit in which she was serving had received severe bomb damage Stella, with her staff, ensured that the unit personnel were fed and watered under difficult circumstances. After NI Stella was posted to the WRAC Training Centre as a W02, responsible for the unit catering. After that she served in Aldershot at the Army School of Catering and it was from there that she finished her career.

Although a northerner, Stella made her home in the quiet Nottinghamshire village of Ollerton where, supported by friends, she quickly obtained employment working in a school and various other establishments as a chef. At a later date she managed a small cafe in the Ollerton indoor Market. Stella also became involved with the St Joseph's Church and its' Social Club where her bingo sessions became renowned;

she was a popular member of the Church and its club.

Stella was proud to have served in the WRAC and would never miss an opportunity to relate her war stories to her civilian friends. Over the recent years Stella's health had deteriorated but she would, when her health allowed, attend the annual WRAC Dinner Club as well as the WRAC Association Grand Reunion's. A lady with a big heart, smile and personality she will be sadly missed. Rest in Peace.

Jackie Walton, Lincoln Branch

**W/12202 MOLLIE HENDERSON
4 October 1916 - 22 October 2012**



May 1941 - Manton Road Camp, Newark

Mollie Henderson served in the ATS from 1939 to 1945. She later rejoined the Army as a WRAC recruiting Sgt.

LAST POST

ALLEN, Miss Joan M, of Malvern on 16 April 2013, WRAC.
BEATTIE, Mrs Maud, née MacGillivray, of Nairn on 27 October 2012, ATS.

BELL, Mrs Doris M, née Cook, of Luton.

BENNETT, Miss Joan, of Belfast in September 2012, WRAC.

BILLINGHAM, Mrs Edna J, née Towner, of Liverpool on 15 April 2013, ATS.

BLACKHALL, Mrs Mary, née Newlands, of Barnt Green on 28 July 2012, ATS.

BLUEMAN, Miss Beth, of Pickering on 17 December 2012, WRAC.

BONE, Mrs Thelma, née Stanley, of Kidderminster, ATS.

BROWN, Mrs Olive, née Thomas, of West Earlham on 03 March 2013, ATS.

CARTER, Miss Edith M, of Bexhill on Sea on 30 November 2012, ATS.

CROPPER, Mrs Lily, née Healey, of Bury on 18 December 2012, ATS.

DAGLESS, Mrs Marjorie, née Dilks, of Canterbury on 21 April 2013, ATS.

DAVIDSON, Mrs Esme I, of Bristol on 4 April 2013, ATS.

DAVIS, Mrs Diana M, of Scunthorpe on 13 June 2013, ATS.

DRUMMOND, Mrs Margaret, of Plymouth on 7 April 2013, ATS.

EDWARDS OBE, Miss Joyce, of Liphook on 09 February 2013, WRAC.

EDWARDS, Mrs Marion, née Tregaskis, of Plymouth on 13 April 2013, ATS.

ELLIOT, Mrs Mary C E, née O'Connell, of Chester-le-Street on 19 March 2013, ATS

FLINN, Mrs Josephine N, née Moseley, of Rustington on 15 January 2013, ATS.

FAIRLESS, Mrs Una, née Adams, of Norwich on 19 March 2013, ATS.

FLEMING, Mrs Elizabeth, née Skilling, of Aberdeen on 27 April 2013, ATS.

FORBES ADAM MBE, Miss Bridget I, of Salisbury on 23 February 2013, WRAC.

FOSTER, Miss Grace, of Portsmouth on 17 October 2012, ATS.

FUNNELL, Mrs Marion N, née Lomax, of Three Oaks on 08 April 2013, ATS.

GARNHAM, Mrs Nina, née Pitt, of Ruislip on 09 December 2012, ATS.

GERRARD, Mrs Kathleen, née Edwards, of Northwich on 19 April 2013, ATS.

GIBBONS, Mrs Dorothy A, née Done, of Hazel Grove on 28 January 2013, ATS.

GIBSON, Miss Helen M, of Melrose on 25 January 2013, ATS.

GILL, Mrs Carol A, of Bridlington on 05 April 2013, WRAC.

GOLDEN, Mrs Mary, née White, of Mansfield Woodhouse on 10 April 2013, ATS.

GRACE BEM, Mrs Chérie M, of Ware on 03 October 2012, WRAC.

GRAY, Mrs Marjory, née Davies, of Harrogate on 07 January 2013, ATS.

HAAS, Mrs Evelyn V A, of Guildford on 23 January 2013, ATS.

HACK, Mrs Betty, née Thornton, of Retford on 15 December 2012, ATS.

HALL, Mrs Eileen K, née Heron, of Maidstone on 02 February 2010, ATS.

HAMILTON, Mrs Nina, of Ontario on 7 July 2012, ATS.

HARTLEY, Mrs Pamela, née Dryden-Carver, of Reigate on 19 September 2012, ATS/WRAC.

HENDERSON, Miss Mollie, of Newcastle upon Tyne on 22 October 2012, ATS/WRAC.

HIGGINS, Mrs June, née Hood, of Middlesbrough, 2013, ATS.

HILLIARD, Mrs Heather I, née Jermy, of New Zealand in 2012, ATS.

HODSDON, Mrs Joan M, née Aiken, of Australia on 30 October 2012, ATS.

HOLDSWORTH, Mrs Doris, née Fudge, of Crawley, ATS.

HORNER, Mrs Rona D, née Cribb, of Selsey on 20 November 2012, ATS.

HUGHES, Mrs Pauline G M, of Weymouth in 2013, ATS.

KENDRICK, Mrs Betty, née Hatter, of Loughborough on 28 February 2013, ATS.

ISAAC, Mrs Gladys, née Warden, of Chester on 30 April 2013, ATS/WRAC.

JOB, Mrs Eileen E M, née Twelftree, of Eastbourne on 16 March 2013, ATS.

JONES, Mrs Margaret, née Thomas, of Deeside on 23 April 2013, ATS.

JONES, Mrs Marjorie D, née Davidge, of Ashford, ATS.

LAWSON, Miss Mabel, of Moreton in 2013, ATS.

LESLIE, Mrs Margaret J, née Murray, of Glenrothes in October 2012, ATS.

LINDELL, Mrs Phyllis E, née Braund, of Belper on 15 March 2013, ATS.

LITTLE, Mrs Doris M L, née Cook, of Luton on 04 March 2013, ATS.

MALY, Mrs A D, née Fish, of Morecambe, on 31 May 2013, ATS.

McCLUSKE, Mrs Dorothy, of Sale on 09 February 2013, ATS.

MERNANE, Mrs Jose, née Hyames, of Kensington, on 25 November 2012, WRAC.

MICKELBOROUGH, Miss Eileen, of Wickford on 19 January 2013, ATS.

MORRIS, Mrs Joyce, née Crank, of Bristol on 22 January 2013, ATS.

NEECH, Mrs Daphne M M, née Whittingham, of Peterborough on 29 January 2013, ATS.

NEEDHAM, Miss Eileen, of Plymouth on 26 February 2013, ATS.

PAGET, Miss Dorothy, of Garsington on 21 January 2013, ATS.

PARSELL, Mrs Zoe E, née Page, of Willingham on 29 September 2012, WRAC.

PEARCE, Miss Josephine V, of Guildford on 29 October 2012, ATS.

PETERS, Mrs Carole, née Quarrell, of Bournemouth on 13 April 2013, ATS.

PILLMAN, Mrs Joan M, née Evans, of Wrexham on 22 April 2013, ATS.

PRZYWALA, Mrs Margery B, née Brooke, of Hodge Hill on 09 April 2013, ATS.

PUXLEY, Mrs Aline C, of Newbury on 18 December 2012, WRAC.

RICHARDSON, Mrs Marion, née Cameron, of Berkhamstead on 27 September 2011, ATS.

RUSSELL, Mrs Isabel, née Totten, of Reading, ATS.

SANTER, Miss F Mary, of Benington on 26 August 2012, ATS.

SCANTLEBURY, Miss Stella C, of Newark on 02 June 2013, WRAC.

SHORT, Mrs Joyce (Tink), née Mills, of Broadstairs on 12 December 2012, ATS.

SMITH, Mrs Peggy, of Bedworth on 22 January 2013, ATS.

SNYDER, Mrs Thelma, née Clarke/Bowler, of Florida on 13 March 2013, ATS.

SILCOCK, Miss Jean, of Heywood in December 2012, ATS.

STEWART, Mrs Margaret, née Ferguson, of Dunfermline on 30 December 2012, WRAC.

THOMAS, Mrs Thelma E, née Rowney, of Abergavenny in 2012, ATS.

TRITCHLER, Miss Mavis, of Leicester on 03 December 2012, WRAC.

WAKELIN, Miss Winifred M, of St Leonards On Sea on 19 February 2013, WRAC.

WALKER, Miss Mary U, of Dunmow on 02 February 2013, ATS.

WATT, Mrs Eleanor A, of Berwick upon Tweed on 06 April 2012, ATS.

WELLAND, Mrs Isabelle M, née Tolley, of Burnham on Sea on 10 May 2012, ATS.

WELLS, Mrs Amelia K V, née Vilmer, of Kettering on 12 May 2013, ATS.

