

LIONESS





WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

(Incorporating the QMAAC & ATS Comrades Association)
Registered Charity No. 206184, founded in 1919

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Message from the Vice President

I hope that this edition of Lioness arrives to all after a good start to 2015. The last 6 months have been quite busy at the Association and I have enjoyed getting out and meeting as many of you as I can. Thank you to those Branches who fed and entertained me so well over the Festive period. I hope to meet many more of you in 2015.



November saw remembrance events all over the country and I was very honoured to represent the Association at the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey in the presence of HRH Prince Harry. I was joined there by about a dozen Association members, some of whom had made long journeys to attend so thank you. Later that week the National Service of Remembrance saw 120 of us on parade in London on a glorious sunny morning. The atmosphere was electric as we moved at the very last moment, onto Whitehall from Horse Guards and it was brilliant to see and hear HM The Queen being clapped as she retired from the parade. The crowds and the noise were truly extraordinary and I look forward very much to seeing as many of you as possible there next year.

In December Maggie Purkis and I went to the unveiling of the WRAC Paviour, a paving stone engraved with the WRAC badge, in the presence of HRH Prince William at the National Memorial Arboretum. The Paviour will sit alongside the other antecedent Corps of the Adjutant General's Corps (AGC) within Heroes' Square and is thus a lasting reminder of how the AGC came into existence. Special thanks must go to the members of the WRAC Dinner Club who made the purchase of the stone possible. December also saw Sue Hatton and I being hosted to a very enjoyable lunch at the Royal Hospital Chelsea where we now have 6 ATS and WRAC in-pensioners.

I am sure that some of you will have noticed that the Association has moved from its' office at Worthy Down to a commercial office in Winchester, the address of which is in this edition of Lioness. This move was necessitated by the implementation of Project Wellesley (redevelopment of the barracks) at Worthy Down which meant there was no space allocated to us on a permanent basis. Thanks must go to Sue, Gabi and Tanya for completing the move so seamlessly, we are now firmly settled in to our new accommodation.

My thanks to those members who completed and returned the questionnaire in the previous edition of the Lioness. Whilst the return rate was low, (7.7%) those completed questionnaires we did receive have given us an indication of members' thoughts as to how we might develop as an Association in the future. The work on the strategic direction of the Association will continue and your suggestions will be followed up. Those members who indicated a willingness to be a Trustee of the Association will be contacted by myself over the next few months. Within this edition there is a short article on the Governance structure of the Association aimed at giving all of you an insight into how your Association is structured and how it is run.

This year sees two major events aimed at bringing as many of you together as possible. The first is the Grand Reunion over the weekend 20th – 22nd March 2015 in The Majestic Hotel, Harrogate. There will always be room for late applications,

although not too late, and the weekend will be a fantastic opportunity to catch up with friends and enjoy the entertainment being provided. Another event not to be missed is National Armed Forces Day in Guildford on Saturday 27th June. The Association is represented on the planning committee and we are hoping to participate in the parade, exercising the WRAC's Freedom of the Borough of Guildford (awarded on 22nd June 1988), and have a stall in the Veterans Village at the Military Show in Stoke Park. Planning is still in its early stages but we will keep in touch as this evolves and update the website and Facebook page. If you are planning to attend and wish to take part in the Parade please complete and return the proforma in the centre pullout pages.

Thank you to all for your support to the Association and I look forward to meeting many more of you in 2015.

Ali Brown

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Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition, and thank you also to those who returned the questionnaire from the last edition with comments on Lioness. I am always striving to improve the content and to that end I need your help in order to make some of the suggested changes. A number of readers asked for more 'recent' and 'younger' WRAC photos and articles, by recent I'm guessing 1970's, 80's and early 90's. Many of us served (or are still serving) in other Corps long after 1992 so don't forget that readers are always keen to hear of your experiences and see your photos.



Many readers are probably unaware that, contrary to popular belief, we do not hold a stock of library photos at HQ WRAC Association, not even your course intake photos. To that end could I ask that if you would like to see more WRAC articles that you help me get the ball rolling by delving into your own archives (and lofts, spare rooms, storage boxes etc) and submit some photos and articles for the next edition of Lioness. It's probably also worth reminding readers that I edit and publish the copy that is submitted to me by members, I don't have the resources (or time!) to write articles from scratch. It's very much your magazine and the content reflects what you, the members, submit.

The Grand Reunion in Harrogate is almost upon us, all of us at HQ WRAC Association look forward to meeting you there. Also make a note in your diary for Armed Forces Day on 27 June 2015 when the national event will be held in Guildford.

Sue Hatton

Dear Editor,

A pleasant surprise during a holiday in Bournemouth in July 2014 was an unexpected meeting with a member of the WRAC Association (whom I had not met before) who invited me to attend the next get together of the Bournemouth Branch. I was delighted to do so and I sincerely thank them all for making me feel so welcome. I recalled that in 1941 I had been stationed at the Savoy Hotel, Bournemouth and the Signals School in Boscombe.

Regrettably none of the members had been through the portals of the Central London Recruiting Depot during the period 1954 to 1977 when I served there. Each and every one of the members that I met had fond memories of their time in the ATS and WRAC and spoke with great enthusiasm of their service.

My holiday therefore will be remembered for the pleasurable afternoon that I experienced with members of the Association.

Jeanne Kick BEM

Dear WRAC Association Members,

**26802 Worker Annie May Martin
WAAC/QMAAC 1890 - 1981 (Telephonist)**

I am researching female telegraphist and telephonists who served with the WAAC/QMAAC at Abbeville, Calais. I know Annie was born in Charlwood, Surrey (Horley) on 27 July 1890 and moved to London where she worked for the Central Telegraph Office. She mentioned living in a flat in Clapham and seeing a Zeppelin in St John's Wood.

Does anyone remember Annie May Martin? I made a transcription of an interview she did with the Imperial War Museum in 1973. I have her service record which fortunately is held at the National Archives and I believe she was a member of the London Branch of the Association. There is a reference in the 1937 Old Comrades Gazette under London Branch members 'Martin AM' Signallers Abbeville, Calais and in July of the same year 'Miss AM Martin' as one of the members who took part in the Royal Review parade. A Miss AM Martin is listed in a 1967 Lioness as a Trustee of the ATS & WRAC Benevolent Fund. I would also like to confirm where Annie died as I have one source which says Dec 1981 Canterbury, Kent but the Lioness 1981 issue No 2 says Martin, Miss Annie Martin QMAAC of Acton London 28 Oct. Would this be Annie May or another lady? I know there is references in the Gazette to another Miss Martin and she is referred to as Miss A Martin.

What I would love to have is a picture of her, ideally one during her service, or be able to get in touch with any relatives. I know she never married and she had siblings, although a brother was killed during WW1. If anyone could give me any information I would be very grateful.

*Tina Pittock
Curator
Royal Signals Museum
Blandford Camp
Blandford Forum
DT11 8RH
curator@royalsignalsmuseum.co.uk
Tel: 01258 482248*

Dear WRAC Association Members,

I would dearly love to hear from anyone who served with my aunts:

Mary Pellatt served with the ATS during the war, attached to the Intelligence Corps. She was at Kedleston Hall (listening station for Bletchley Park) and later was among the first group of ATS to go to India. At the last minute she was put in charge as the officer i/c was struck down with tonsillitis and admitted to Netley isolation hospital!

Trixie Pellatt served in the WRAC from 1949 as a shorthand writer. She was at the War Office and a secretary to a Brigadier who had a passion for cricket. This was just as well as Trixie played for the WRAC and during the summer had matches. She was released from her duties provided she took at least one wicket - she was a spin bowler and had quite a tweak of the ball. There was regular practice in the office in Whitehall and a strange report appeared in one edition of the *Evening Standard* about tennis balls falling from the sky, I believe one even found it's way onto a double decker bus!

I am a former member of the Staff Band, serving from 1971 to 1987, and would love to hear from anyone who served with me.

Ann Pellatt
3 Ninth Avenue
Grantham
NG31 9TF
01476 569966
a.fairbrother199@btinternet.com

Dear WRAC Association Members,

Ivy Margaret Carr née Enoch ATS 1904 - 1998

I wonder if anyone can help me with my research into the family history of Ivy Margaret Carr nee Enoch born in Newmarket in 1904? On 15th November 1940 Ivy Margaret enrolled at Salisbury in the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), E Company Bucks and Herts Group. The address given on her enrolment form is Polhampton Lodge, Overton, Hampshire.

Her occupation on enrolment is children's nurse. It also states that she had been a Guide Captain. On her service record it states that her trade was as Mess Steward. She served mainly in the south west of England including Portsmouth, Honiton and Salisbury. On 5th November 1942 according to a form attached to her service record Ivy Margaret Enoch married Captain Harold John Carr of the 10th Royal Hussars at Whaddon, Herts.

At the end of the war Ivy Margaret was demobbed after exemplary service. In September 1945 she was demobbed and came to live at 13 Hillbrow Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth (this was a house for "service" people for 6d a night). She then moved to Wimborne in 1946 where she lived until her death.

Carole Dumbleton c.dumbleton@sky.com
Woodland Glen
Candy's Lane
Corfe Mullen
Wimborne
BH21 3EE

Dear Editor,

Naafi, Knickers and Nijmegen: The Postwar Adventures of a WRAF Airwoman

I would recommend this book to readers, once you start you cannot put it down. It's a most informative book which made me laugh and cry at the same time. Anyone who ever took part in the Nijmegen Marches, as I did, will enjoy this book. The author was stationed in Rheindahlen and I too enjoyed my time there whilst attached to the RAOC. The antics these girls got up to, only people who served in the forces will know what I mean.

Reading this book felt like I was reliving my time in the Army. Like many others I miss the comradeship, my biggest regret in life is that I wish I had signed up for a longer period instead of just 4 years. Thank goodness we have Lioness magazine to keep us abreast of all the goings on and to link up with old comrades.

The book can be bought on Amazon or by contacting Woodfield Publishing on 01243 821234 or enquiries@woodfieldpublishing.com (£9.90).

Jill Hunt
West Wickham

AGM 2015. The 2015 AGM will be held at 11.00 on Saturday 21 March 2015 (as part of the Grand Reunion) at The Majestic Hotel, Ripon Road, Harrogate, HG1 2HU.

Change of Address. Please don't forget to notify us of any change of address. Every time *Lioness* is distributed a number of copies are unnecessarily returned as members have failed to inform us that they have moved.

Donations. Did you know that you can send a donation to the Association at any time? 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. 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 (see centre pullout) 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.

easyfundraising.org.uk. If you ever shop online easyfundraising.org.uk provides an easy way for you to raise funds for the WRAC Association with no effort or cost to yourself. Sign up at <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/wrac>, download the find and remind toolbar and carry on shopping. easyfundraising work with the UK's **best-known retailers** including many popular names such as **Amazon, M&S, John Lewis**. When you buy something up to 15% of the purchase price is donated to your good cause – at no cost or effort to you!

Event Tickets. We occasionally receive free tickets for events, or invitations to attend functions organised by The Not Forgotten Association. Historically, these have primarily been offered to regional Branch members. However If you are an **HQ Branch member** and would like to register your interest in being sent information about these events please email office.manager@wracassociation.org.uk and type **EVENT TICKET REGISTER** as the subject heading. Please note that the vast majority of these events take place in London or the South.

Lioness (audio version). *Lioness* is 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 office.manager@wracassociation.org.uk or phone HQ WRAC Association on 0300 400 1992

Lioness. Articles for inclusion in the next edition of *Lioness* must be received by **Friday 10 July 2015**. Please email to editor@wracassociation.org.uk. **Please type the text into the body of the email, not as an attached document.** Please only send a maximum of 3 or 4 good quality photos (jpg format only).

Medals and Badges Etiquette. Etiquette rules for wearing medals only allow the wearing of official awards. Unofficial purchased medals and foreign medals which do not have the Sovereign's permission to be worn are not allowed. The medals awarded to a deceased Service/ex-Service person may be worn on the right breast by a near relative (no more than one group should be worn by any individual). The WRAC Association badge and the Veterans badge may be worn on the left lapel by the position of the button hole. Unofficial medals, or badges other than the WRAC Association badge/pin and Veterans badge, should not be worn when representing the 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, Unit 39 Basepoint, 1 Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, SO23 0LD. To check stock availability before ordering please call 0300 400 1992.

WRAC Association 2015 Diary	£2
WRAC Association ballpoint pen	£5
WRAC Association A5 lined hardback notebook	£10
A5 notebook & ballpoint pen purchased together	£12.50
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	£15
History of the WRAC (booklet)	£2.50
WRAC Association Fleece	£25
WRAC Association Polo Shirt	£19.50

Remembrance. Tickets are open to any member of the WRAC Association who wishes to attend, prior attendance or Branch participation are not a prerequisite.

Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey (Thu 05 Nov 15)

Tickets - If you work or live in central London and can spare an hour on the morning of Thu 05 Nov 15 we would love support for this event. Applications to be made not before 01 Jun 15 and no later than 31 Aug 15 by email (office.manager@wracassociation.org.uk) or letter only.

Cenotaph Parade (Sun 08 Nov 15) Tickets - Ticket applications as above, if demand exceeds supply a ballot will take place in early September.

Westminster Abbey Service (Sun 08 Nov 15) Tickets - Ticket applications as above.

Overseas Members. Overseas Members are requested to pay an additional £3.50 per year to cover additional *Lioness* postage costs. Only sterling payments can be accepted.

Subscriptions. Annual Members are reminded that subscriptions are due as at 01 October. Subscriptions can be paid via your Branch, online, by phone (0300 400 1992) or by post with a cheque/postal order (sterling only) payable to WRAC Association.

Veterans UK. Veterans UK is your one stop shop for all queries about Service Records, Medals, Pensions and much more. Go to www.veterans-uk.info or phone 0808 1914 2 18.

WRAC Dinner Club. The WRAC Dinner Club meets every year on the second Saturday in October, full details can be found at www.wracdinnerclub.co.uk or by contacting the Membership Secretary, Miss Maggie Bradshaw, Myrtle Cottage, Tatworth, Chard, Somerset, TA20 2NZ. Tel: 01460 221617

WRAC Officers' Dining Club. Subject to confirmation the WRAC Officer's Dining Club Dinner takes place at the Victory Services Club on the third Saturday in November. For further details contact Debbie Coupland, The Chimes, 1a Ranworth Avenue, Bragbury End, Stevenage, SG2 8SL. Email: debbiecoulpland14@gmail.com Phone: 01438 222851

Remembrance 2014

40th ANNIVERSARY OF GUILDFORD PUB BOMBING

Sunday 5th October 2014 marked the 40th anniversary of the 1974 Guildford pub bombings in which 5 people were killed: Private Ann Ray Hamilton and Private Caroline Jean Slater of the Women's Royal Army Corps, Private William Forsyth and Private John Hunter of the Scots Guards and Mr Paul Craig. Guildford Borough Council, in conjunction with Holy Trinity Church, conducted a short service of commemoration. A wreath was laid by Sue Hatton and Sharon Joyce paraded the WRAC Association National Standard.



Memorial Plaque, Quakers Acre, Guildford



Sharon Joyce

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE WESTMINSTER ABBEY Thursday 06 November 2014



ROTHERHAM



Mary Cartledge laying a wreath in Rotherham

ALONE ON PARADE Kath Kyne (W/388638 LCpl Kathleen Martin)

Here I am in the garden before setting off for Luton to join the Remembrance Parade. This year I was the sole representative of the WRAC Association, usually Christina Frame marches with me but this year Chrissie was on the high seas.



I felt immensely proud to be there and lay a wreath in honour of the ATS women who gave their lives for the country in the WW2. The streets where we march are lined with people who have also come to honour the fallen. They show their appreciation by clapping with vigour, this is very uplifting. As usual the large Parade following the pipe band went without a hitch.

GUILDFORD



The WRAC Association was represented in Guildford by our National Standard Bearer Sharon Joyce and by Association Trustees Audrey Smith and Rowena Patrick MBE, who read a lesson and laid a wreath, respectively.

L-R: Rowena Patrick MBE, Sharon Joyce, Audrey Smith

CENOTAPH PARADE Carol Traynor

One of the marshals called out "well done ladies your marching is excellent" and that really did make us feel as though we had done our best on that very thought provoking morning.



The feeling in the air was almost tangible as we walked over Westminster Bridge in the early morning sunshine from our hotel. Smart uniforms of all descriptions all making their way to Horse Guards Parade Ground and the public beginning to line the streets all to remember those who gave so much.

Horse Guards Parade looked beautiful bathed in sunshine, St James Park opposite stunning with the trees in splendid autumn colours. The parade ground filling up all lining up for the parade with the WRAC contingent looking good in a sea of green fleeces and berets. The scene was truly wonderful.

Marching along Whitehall is both poignant and uplifting, and such a proud feeling, and as we wait for our turn to march past the Cenotaph the bands play tunes we all remember, and everyone joins in with the singing which brings such a wonderful atmosphere of togetherness.

There is a mixture of emotions and thoughts on this special day, marching along Whitehall is an overwhelming feeling, and as we marched back onto Horse Guards Parade Ground, with the crunching of the gravel beneath our footsteps that took us right back to our service days.



ATS REMEMBRANCE George Herschel



Elizabeth Herschel (centre)



Field of Remembrance Westminster Abbey

My mother Elizabeth (Betty) Herschel, née Lowery, aged 91 (and a half) served with the ATS from 1940 to 1945 at Wellington Barracks, London and Victoria Barracks, Windsor. I was able to take her to London for the 2014 Remembrance events. She is also a war widow and on Saturday 8th November we joined the War Widows Association for their parade muster and then attended the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall. On Sunday 9th November we took part in the Cenotaph parade with ATS and WRAC members of the WRAC Association. She was so proud to join all the "girls" on the parade, and may I say they looked so smart and professional. I then escorted her over to Belgium and France where we took part in the Armistice Day parade in Ypres on Tuesday 11th November, returning again in the evening. We also laid wreaths at Dunkirk and Tyne Cot.

WHERE POPPIES GROW

Gail J Newsham



LCpl Joe Newsham

There was a man I never knew, who lost his life in War
He answered our nation's call to arms like we'd never seen before
As part of Kitchener's Army he signed up to fight the foe
Full of anticipation, he couldn't wait to go.
Off to defend our liberty, although he did not know
He would ne'er return, from the land where poppies grow.

A patriotic fever had swept right throughout our land
As young men in their thousands joined, united they did stand
Singing as they marched away they waved a fond goodbye
With eager hearts and spirits high, and victory was their cry
'We'll all be home by Christmas'; 'we'll have Gerry on the run'
It seemed a big adventure; they thought it would be fun.

As a Pals Battalion, they went to fight this bloody War
They little knew the horrors of just what lay in store
They could ne'er imagine what sights from hell they'd see
Nor the fear that would engulf them 'will the next to die be me'?
Young men in their thousands, some of them just boys,
Were soon to learn at firsthand how quickly War destroys.

In trenches full of rats and mud, their flesh infested with lice
Then came the order, 'over the top', to face the ultimate sacrifice
The smell of rotting corpses, the bodies piled so high
Praying that God would help them, they didn't want to die.
Bombs and bullets everywhere and carnage all around
The cries of dying comrades were a constant harrowing sound
What terror must have gripped them, we will never know
But now they rest together in a land where poppies grow.

And this young man I never knew was my great uncle Joe,
A soldier of Kitcheners Army, he couldn't wait to go.
He was a Lewis gunner, fighting to take High Wood
Trying to make a difference for the greater good
Uncle Joe fought bravely; but it was his fate to die,
And he perished on the Somme on the 23rd of July
Was it really worth it, just what does history show?
Row upon row of white headstones, in a land where
poppies grow.

One hundred years have passed us by since that awful
War began

And it still remains the bloodiest fight ever known to man
A poppy is a symbol now to show that we remember
And we commemorate their sacrifice every 11th of November
For saving our tomorrow they gave us their today
Our freedom and our life, a debt we can't hope to repay.
But I'm sad I never knew him, my brave great uncle Joe,
Who is resting somewhere with his Pals, in the land where
poppies grow.

Editor: The Association receives an allocation of tickets for the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on the Thursday prior to Remembrance Sunday, for the Cenotaph Parade and for the service in Westminster Abbey on Remembrance Sunday. Tickets are open to any member of the WRAC Association who wishes to attend, prior attendance or Branch participation are not a prerequisite.

Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey (Thu 05 Nov 15) Tickets - Due to space restrictions we only receive a limited number of tickets. However if you work or live in central London and can spare an hour on the morning of Thu 05 Nov 15 we would love some more support for this event. Applications to be made not before 01 Jun 15 and no later than 31 Aug 15 by email (officemanager@wracassociation.org.uk) or letter only. Ticket applications as above.

Cenotaph Parade (Sun 08 Nov 15) Tickets - Ticket applications as above, if demand exceeds supply a ballot will take place in early September.

Westminster Abbey Service (Sun 08 Nov 15) Tickets - Ticket applications as above.

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.



The 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, Unit 39 Basepoint, 1 Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, SO23 0LD.

INVESTITURE



Sue Westlake received her MBE (for services to ex-Servicewomen) from our Patron, Her Majesty The Queen, at Windsor Castle on Friday 5th December 2014.



Dear Friends,

I have been so completely overwhelmed by your response to my MBE award in the 2014 Queen's Birthday Honours List that I felt I must write to you all via Lioness and, at the same time, apologise for the impersonal nature of my message. I have had so many lovely cards, letters, emails, phone calls and texts that it has been impossible to reply to you all individually. I just want to say how much I have appreciated your many kind words and sentiments.

With my sincere thanks,

Sue Westlake MBE

A PERMANENT MEMORIAL TO THE WRAC AT THE NMA

Maggie Purkis
President WRAC Dinner Club

Regular readers of Lioness Magazine may remember that issue 1 of 2012 carried an article about how I found out that the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas was hoping to fundraise for their new Visitors Centre, by selling engraved paviers which would be positioned in the proposed Hero's Square. The article went on to say that the memorial paviers cost £3,000 each; that the members of the WRAC Dinner Club had raised that sum, and the pavier was ordered.

In November 2014 Ali Brown, our Association Vice President, and I received an invitation from Major General Patrick Cordingley, on behalf of the NMA Appeal Council, to attend a brief ceremony (in the presence of a "VIP!") to unveil the paviers in their temporary home (to await permanent positioning when the Visitor's Centre is completed). The ceremony was to take place on Friday 12th December 2014. Ali and I met at the NMA on a cold and rainy Friday morning in "WRAC time" i.e. early for our appointment. By then the national media had reported that the "VIP" was to be HRH Prince William. Sadly, His Royal Highness was somewhat delayed at the opening of the memorial to the Christmas Football Truce of World War I so Ali and I made our way out to inspect the pavier "in situ".



Ali Brown and Maggie Purkis

Shortly after that we were shepherded out to stand beside the paviors as HRH Prince William was about to arrive. His Royal Highness spoke briefly to several school children visiting for the day, and to those who were instrumental in the provision of the paviours, before examining them himself.



I understand that when permanently sited our pavior will be placed together with those of the other antecedent Corps of the AGC. At the moment, all the paviors are grouped somewhat haphazardly, but I have to tell you that ours looks wonderful. Made of Scoutmoor stone, it is brilliantly engraved, and will doubtless stand the test of time to ensure that our Corps will never be forgotten.

NATIONAL STANDARD

The WRAC Association National Standard, carried by Sharon Joyce, had a busy end to 2014. The Standard was on parade at the following events; 05 October 2014 service to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Guildford Pub Bombings, Guildford on Remembrance Sunday, Hereford on Armistice Day and at the Birmingham International Tattoo at the end of November.



**40th Anniversary of
Guildford Pub Bombs**



**Remembrance Sunday,
Guildford**



**Armistice Day,
Hereford**

BLIND VETERANS UK Katherine Evans

When someone loses their sight it can be devastating, and the challenge of having to adjust to life with sight loss can be even harder without the specialist services and support from organisations like Blind Veterans UK. Blind Veterans UK believes that no one who has served our country should have to battle blindness alone. It doesn't matter how a veteran lost their sight, or how long ago they served, if they are now battling severe sight loss, Blind Veterans UK can help.

Veteran Maria Pikulski joined the Women's Royal Army Corps at the age of 18. Maria served for over 13 years before leaving as a Corporal in 1993. Almost 10 years after leaving Service Maria began having difficulties with her eyesight. Maria was diagnosed with the genetic condition Leber's optic neuropathy. Maria's eyesight rapidly deteriorated, meaning that she became registered as blind later that same year.

Maria said: "When I lost my sight my world fell apart around me, and there were times when I didn't even want to carry on living. But Blind Veterans UK saved me. Until that point, I had no concept of how I would even carry on. However, the more time I spent training at the Brighton centre, the more I realised that, with their help, I could turn my life around."



Maria Pikulski

Because of her Service Maria was eligible for free, lifelong services and support from Blind Veterans UK. Since getting in touch with the charity Maria has received specialist equipment, training and emotional support to help her adjust to life with sight loss. Maria said: "Blind Veterans UK has helped me regain my confidence in basic life skills as well as encouraging me to do things I never thought I would do. I really do feel like I have my independence back. Blind Veterans UK's support has been life-changing and my happiness and independence is down to them and the help they've given me."

It is estimated that there are over 68,000 blind and vision impaired veterans, just like Maria, in the UK who could be eligible for the charity's free, lifelong support but who are not currently aware of it. If you are, or know of, a vision impaired veteran and would like to request more information about Blind Veterans UK, visit www.noonealone.org.uk or call freephone 0800 389 7979.

THE NOT FORGOTTEN ASSOCIATION CHRISTMAS PARTY ST JAMES'S PALACE Marg Davies

In mid October 2014 I received an unexpected email from the WRAC Association asking me if I would like to attend the Not Forgotten Association's Christmas Party in the State Apartments at St James's Palace. The Not Forgotten Association's Patron, The Princess Royal and her husband, Vice-Admiral Sir Timothy Lawrence, would be attending. The Not Forgotten Association is a

Tri-Service Charity founded in 1920 in response to the hardship suffered by serving and ex-service personnel post 1918. The Association's main work is to provide leisure and recreation for the benefit of service personnel who are wounded or have sustained permanent injuries. At the Christmas Party approximately 300 guests of all ages come from across the UK and included serving and ex-service personnel, as well as representatives from the many service associations, organisations and ex-service care homes.

I had been told that Sharon Joyce, the WRAC Association National Standard Bearer, who lives a couple of miles away from me, had also been invited to attend. We decided to travel down together for the day by train from Worcester. So on Thursday 4th December Sharon and I travelled by train from Worcester to London, with our party clothes in suitcases to save them getting ruined before we got there. We changed at the Victory Services Club and caught a taxi to St James's. We passed Buckingham Palace and proceeded up The Mall. Our driver advised us to save money and walk the couple of 100 yards to the entrance, we took his advice. We were greeted by a large police presence at the entry point where our invitations and ID were scrutinised. Fortunately we managed to convince them that we were genuine guests.

We moved into the building and handed our outdoor jackets to one of the many cloakroom attendants. We were ushered up a staircase, past a carol singing choir (whose conductor was precariously balanced on a tiny box), past serving tri-service personnel (who were there to help us "doddering oldies") and on up to the State Apartments. As we entered the brightly lit room we were each handed a souvenir pen by Santa's Little Helpers (who towered over me!). It took me some time to realise that the 31 party tables were spread out over three inter-connecting rooms. The Throne Room contained the first 10 tables, The Tapestry Room the second 10 tables and the Queen Anne Room the remaining tables. Our table number was 31! Each place setting had a large chocolate coin and a miniature bottle of port together with a programme of events. Also on Table 31 were two members of the Royal Signals Association from Devon with their wives, a Royal Marine Association member and his wife and two gentlemen from the Royal Tank Regiment Association. Everyone was very friendly and we were soon chatting away. We were sitting beside a fabulous wind quintet provided by the Irish Guards.



Sharon Joyce & Marg Davies

The food, drink and entertainment was non-stop. There were sandwiches and savoury and sweet finger food; copious quantities of mulled wine, tea, coffee and lemon squash. Whilst we ate and drank we were entertained by a crooner, followed by two gentlemen drawing caricatures, three magicians and a balloonist, all of whom were accompanied by the wind quintet.

Without warning the quintet struck up the National Anthem announcing the arrival of Princess Anne and her husband and we all got to our feet. After the National Anthem we were asked to be seated and we carried on with our party food. We thought that the Royal Guests would probably run out of time before they reached our table, the last one of all. The buzz of excitement grew as they entered our part of the State Apartment. Princess Anne zigzagged her way down one side whilst her husband zigzagged down the opposite side. They shook hands and talked to each person as they made their way round the tables. To our great pleasure and huge excitement Princess Anne arrived at our table and proceeded clockwise around the table and finally came to Sharon and myself. We shook hands as she greeted us and, to be perfectly honest, I'm not entirely certain what she or we said. I know we introduced ourselves as representatives of the WRAC Association. We both remembered to call her ma'am. We mentioned the use of social media and the internet in expanding our membership to which she commented "Oh! So it is good for something then!" She asked us where we were from and we said Worcester. She said that she knew Worcester's Shrub Hill station well which surprised us. Then she had moved on and out into the anteroom to meet the celebrity guests and entertainers.



We were quickly moved into the concert room where we were wonderfully entertained by MC Mickie Driver in his Pearly Suit and a cast of quite a few! My favourite was the very funny ventriloquist Paul Zerdin and his slightly rude puppet, Sam. As well as the acts some of the celebrities had a stage spot. Richard Arnold asked us to remember the much loved supporter of The Not Forgotten Association, Lynda Bellingham, who had been hoping to attend prior to her final illness. Esther Rantzen reminded us that Christmas and New Year was a difficult time for some people and that there was a new free helpline called The Silver Line, available 24/7 and 365 days per year. She asked us to remember the number, which I did, (It's 0800 4 70 80 90). She then had us in stitches telling a slightly rude story!

Before we knew it the party was over, more than half an hour later than anticipated. Sharon and I made a swift exit as we had a train to catch. We raced to The Mall and successfully hailed a cab. Once back at the VSC we chucked our party clothes into our cases and got back into our travel clothes. The VSC doorman again found us a cab and we made our way safely back to Paddington. We had time to grab a hot drink and a baguette before boarding the crowded train back to Worcester. Fortunately we'd booked our seats so were able to enjoy the long journey back rewinding the day's events in our minds as we rested our eyes in the "Quiet" carriage. And all the way back I kept thinking . . . I can't believe that I've just shaken hands with and spoken to The Princess Royal.

TENBY MEMORIAL GATES

Editor: The following is taken from an article published in Lioness 1994 No.2. An update for 2014 has been added at the end.



Tenby Memorial Gates (photo taken 2006)

1994. On Thursday 26 May 1994 badges of the ATS and WRAC were added to the gates of the War Memorial in Tenby. The gates had been manufactured by the workshop of the Royal School of Artillery to commemorate the closing of the School of Anti-Aircraft Artillery at Manorbier in 1972 and had the badges of the RA, R SIGNALS and REME on them. It was Major Joan Crooke who had noted the omission of the ATS and WRAC badges and put up a project to have this remedied. Major Crooke had served in both the ATS and WRAC. Conscripted as a Private in the ATS in 1942 she rose to be a Senior Commander by 1947. In 1949 she obtained a Regular Commission in the WRAC. She commanded the WRAC unit at Manorbier from 1960 to 1962 before becoming 2IC at the WRAC Centre, Guildford. She retired in 1968 to nurse her ailing mother but later took up a post as a Retired Officer.

Because of her desire to have the service of women at Manorbier from 1943 to 1972 recognised she approached the Director WRAC, the Mayor of Tenby and the Royal School of Artillery to achieve her project to add the ATS and WRAC badges to the gates. Sadly Major Crooke died on 20 December 1993, before the project was complete. However her brother was able to represent her at the handover ceremony on 26 May 1994. Brigadier M S Rutter-Jerome, Commandant Royal School of Artillery, handed over the badges to the Mayor of Tenby, Councillor Lewis Day, at the ceremony. Major Margaret Athoe and Mrs Veronica Barrington represented the WRAC Association.

The £1,500 project was financed by grants from the Royal Artillery Institution (£750), the WRAC Association (£250) and the late Major Crooke's estate (£500).



Refurbished gates 2014

2014. Ex-Gunner and local Tenby man Jeff Thornton has been influential in the restoration of the Gates at Tenby Memorial Garden. After several years of neglect, Jeff contacted the local council with a plan to have the gates restored to their former glory. Jeff says "it has taken a long while for the badges and gates to be completed. Originally, only the badges were going to be renewed by Tenby C.C. but then Pembrokeshire C.C. who claimed ownership of the War Memorial came along and (using part of a grant for the 100 year celebrations of the Great War) decided to renew the gates and arch". The badges on the gates represent the units which supported the RSA Manorbier.

WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2015

The 2015 AGM will be held at The Majestic Hotel, Harrogate at 11.00 on Saturday 21 March 2015. Any HQ Branch member or Branch Secretary who wishes to submit an item for inclusion in the agenda is to do so by 02 Mar 15 to sue.hatton@wracassociation.org.uk

Provisional Agenda:

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Confirmation of 2014 Minutes
4. Business Arising
5. Trustees Report
6. Financial Report
7. Report of Editor of the Association Journal
8. Reports of Committees
9. Resolutions
 - a. Trustee/Council
 - b. Branch
 - c. Re-election of Honorary Treasurer
10. Any Other Business
11. Date of Next Meeting

WRAC Association Benevolent Fund

WRAC ASSOCIATION BENEVOLENT FUND - MAKING A DIFFERENCE

From a SSAFA Caseworker... 'I have just got off the phone to Miss X and to say she was delighted would be an understatement, 'overwhelmed' might be a more accurate word. She has asked me to thank you most sincerely for this wonderful support. As we so often find in these cases, when someone is falling, to provide a branch to cling to often allows them to climb back up by themselves'. £1,000 for carpets and debt.

In the 2013/2014 financial year your Benevolent Fund received 366 applications for assistance from former ATS and WRAC servicewomen and awarded £183,000, of which just over £25,000 was on Nursing Home Fee top-ups. A further £21,000 was awarded in the form of Princess Royal's Memorial Fund maintenance grant to 24 beneficiaries. Your oldest beneficiary was 101 and your youngest 41, and applications were received from as far afield as the USA, Canada, Zimbabwe, Jamaica and France.

Who is eligible for help?

Any former servicewoman, including TA, with one day's paid service or more is eligible for assistance.

From a SSAFA Caseworker... 'You will remember Mrs Y who turned up back in the UK with 2 suitcases and her children fleeing from a broken relationship only to find that she was destitute and unable to access benefits for 3 months. Her ASAP Adviser has stated that the speed at which funding was awarded was instrumental in taking the case to a happy resolution'. £1,000 general needs grant.

Are there any other criteria?

Yes, you must be in need of financial help.

There's also a limit on the amount of savings that you can have above which the Benevolent Fund is unable to make an award. To qualify for a maintenance grant you must be living alone on a basic state pension and in poor health.

How your Benevolent Fund can help

Since the start of this financial year your fund has helped with grants in a wide range of categories including:

How your Benevolent Fund can help

Since the start of this financial year your fund has helped with grants in a wide range of categories including:

bathroom adaptations	central heating/boilers
house repairs and adaptations	carpets
EPVs and electric wheelchairs	clothing
riser-recliner chairs	furniture
stairlifts	tv's and tv licences
funeral expences	white goods
priority debt	removal expenses
food vouchers	rent, deposits and
respite breaks	bonds
travel and transport	maintenance grants
	care home fee top-ups

'I would like to thank you for helping me. It was a very tough year for me with no income and my mother's ill-health, eventually leading to her going into hospital where she did not recover. My own health was suffering from the stress so your help with my travel is very much appreciated. My circumstances are different now financially and I have a job opportunity so everything looks better for me.' £300 for travel to visit her sick mother.

Is there anything with which your Benevolent Fund cannot help? Your Benevolent 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 via the NHS.

'I wish to thank you from the bottom of my heart for helping me to fund the funeral costs for my late husband. I don't know what I would have done without your help and I shall never forget what you did for me. It has been so hard for me losing my husband and I also lost my Mum on the same day but with people like you who care it has helped – you are so wonderful'. £1,500 towards funeral expenses.

So how do you apply for help?

If you are a former ATS or WRAC regular or TA servicewoman who needs assistance, 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 the full range of assistance that you need. The caseworker will complete a report that includes details of your household income. This is called means-testing and ensures that your Benevolent Fund's charitable money goes to those in real need. When the report is complete it is sent to the Benevolent Fund Secretary. Once received, applications are considered at the appropriate grants committee meeting and a decision is taken.

'Thank you very much for the £300 you gave me for the television. I am 92 years of age so really it is my life-saver. I hope that you are enjoying your service life as much as I did. The friendships you make during your service stay with you forever' £300 for a television.

How often do the grants committee meetings meet?

There are 2 types of grants committee meetings:

Minor grants committee meetings are held daily as required and can award immediate grants up to **£1,000**

Major grants committee meetings (MGCM) are held at least once a month and can award grants up to the annual maximum of **£3,000**. The MGCMs also consider applications for care home fee top-up fees and maintenance grants, and for applicants with fewer than 6 months service.

'I am writing to thank you for your generous donation towards the decorating and carpeting of my flat. Without people like you ex-service people would be in an entirely different place'. £1,150 carpets, redecoration and house repairs.

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. This means that SSAFA or the RBL receive the grant immediately and are able to ensure that it is used for the specific purpose for which it was awarded as soon as possible.

WRAC PT REUNION 2014 Kate Bettison

The Hogs Back Hotel near Farnham was the new venue for the 9th WRAC PT Reunion held in September 2014. The decision to move to somewhere more spacious and comfortable certainly seemed to be a success.

Our weekend began on the Friday with three of us playing in the RAPTC Golf Competition held at Pine Ridge Golf Club in Camberley. None of us broke any records but we very much enjoyed the day.

That evening we all assembled for a 'Onesie' Party. The get-ups were superb and the judging committee; Josette Foster, her sister Linda Phillips and Chris Appleby (nee Jones), debated long and hard before eventually awarding the winner's prize to Leslie Scott as a very believable Andy Pandy, with runner-up Sue Jennings as a Sgt PTI. She finally made it! Thanks go to Pat Rosewell and her gang for all the photos and decorations which gave everyone the opportunity to reminisce.



Onesies!

On the Saturday morning it was a return to Fox Gymnasium for the customary netball match against the serving ladies of the RAPTC. Both sides had lost key players this year so many of the supporters were dragooned into playing, including Jenny McMahon who somehow thought she was playing bowls and Pat Rosewell who barely reached the waists of some players! As usual the match was played in very good spirit with the Golden Oldies once again hanging on to the Peglar Trophy with a 19 – 9 win. Our team captain, Chris Appleby, received the trophy from her husband Lt Col Paul Appleby, so quite a family occasion!



Netball victory

The Saturday evening Dinner was great fun and we were able to welcome Anthea Banks, all the way from Canada, to her first PT Reunion. She loved meeting up with all her old friends and I don't think stopped talking for the entire weekend! She was, of course, the obvious choice as 'Guest Speaker' and gave

us a very interesting account of her life in Canada, complete with a powerpoint presentation. It was unbelievable to think that her journey since leaving English shores had included periods in both the Canadian Army and Navy.

The evening could not have passed without a celebration to commemorate the award of the MBE to Sue Westlake, who served as AIPT from June 1983 - 1985. Sue is very popular among the PTI's and always attends our Reunions so it was very fitting that we should present her with our own Achievement Award. After Major Dora Nightingale died her sister presented us with a beautiful cut glass rose bowl in memory of Dora. We



decided that in order to make best use of this lovely item we would present it every two years to the person who has achieved the most memorable accolade. Sue was very thrilled and we were all able to toast her success. We now look forward to seeing photos of her special day.

Sue Westlake MBE receiving the Achievement Award

The next PT Reunion will be held in Aldershot during the weekend of the 10 -12 September 2016. If you are a former WRAC PTI and would like to join us in 2016 please email katebettison@tiscali.co.uk

WRAC POSTAL BRANCH 26th REUNION Miss Margaret Grant MBE mgrant2009@live.co.uk



Our 26th annual weekend reunion was held at the Campanile Hotel in Glasgow and we were made very welcome. The food was good apart from a few hitches with the Diets but was sorted out by some of the staff. The staff could not be faulted as they were very kind and helpful and the accommodation was good.

In our private room we played Bingo and held a raffle with prizes donated by the Hotel and some kind members and friends. We also had 2 quizzes and the winners were given toy medals by me what a laugh we had. Afterwards a few games were played and we nattered and laughed and viewed photos into the wee small hours of the mornings.

Some members went on an open top bus tour which was a good way to see around Glasgow. Museums, Galleries and a Tall Ship were also visited. A good time was had by all. The members travelled from near and far and said their farewells on the Sunday and Monday. Bookings have already been made for our 27th reunion in 2015 so hope to see many of you there

ABERDEEN Joan Bartlett

Like a lot of other Branches the Aberdeen Branch is shrinking but the 8-10 of us who meet monthly intend to keep going. To that end we got going and went to the Gordon Highlanders Museum for lunch in August, boy what a day we picked! There was a gale blowing and we arrived half drowned, even those who only had to walk from the car park! Being damp did not stop us having a nice time, there were 9 of us plus Irene's husband Ian who is now an honorary member of the Branch (and happy to be so). Irene is our card maker in residence and she does make some beauties, including one for me showing a bowler (well everyone needs a hobby) bending down delivering a bowl. The reverse of the card shows the rear of the bowler(!), much hilarity followed.

Helen Thompson and Jean Bartlett went to a seminar in the Aberdeen Town House about the work of Erskine, part of Veterans Scotland. We learned about the up to date measures they now use, a very worthwhile cause. Sandra Lemmon, Mhairi Irving, Moira Thom and Joan Bartlett attended the Scottish AGM in Perth. The meeting went well, the meal was as good as usual and Aberdeen won 4 raffle prizes. The competition to design a tablemat was won by a pair of patchwork mats which were superb.

Our Christmas lunch was held at Ma Cameron's and was a lovely event. We Aberdonians wish you all a "guid" 2015.

BATH Sylvia Musgrave

Bath Branch continues to meet twice a month, albeit with reduced numbers. Members are mostly former ATS so age is catching up with us, bringing mobility and transport problems. Happily we recently welcomed a new member, Lorna Almonds-Windmill, who served from 1963 to 1969.

We could no longer afford to hire a meeting room but were very fortunate to be offered use of the restaurant at the National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases, located in the city centre. We are able to have lunch there before our meeting commences at 1.30pm. Membership covers a wide area including parts of Somerset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire so we try to meet members who are unable to travel to Bath for meetings. We visit various places with the use of our Bus Passes or by the kindness of two members who drive and 'ferry' us around. Recently we were able to visit Wells to meet Kay Rolfe (who lives near Taunton) and Nan Webb (who lives in Bradford-on-Avon). We have little Sales, mostly produce from our gardens, and are very grateful to Jean Kelly who makes delicious marmalade which she has to carry on public transport from Rudgeway (north of Bristol). Last summer we were able to visit her home with its stunning garden.

Thanks to the help of Bristol Branch Secretary, Jackie Naysmith MBE who collected me en-route, I was able to attend the Area meeting. As always it was enjoyable with and a very appetizing lunch. It is always interesting to hear what other Branches are doing. We'd also like to thank Southampton for organising the Area Reunion. We are looking forward to the Grand Reunion in Harrogate in March.

BIRMINGHAM Babs Blay

Birmingham Branch has seen another frenzied few months of activity. At the beginning of October we held our AGM, when the business of the Branch was decided and the Committee were persuaded to carry on for another year. Betty Webb is leading us as our Chairman whilst Babs Blay and Chris Fretwell continue to deal with the admin side of things.

Many of our Branch members attended this year's WRAC Dinner Club. They enjoyed every minute and are looking forward to next year already. The rules of the WRAC Dinner Club make it possible for members to invite a guest on a one time only basis. This year one of our ATS ladies, Margaret Walkeden, was invited and enjoyed herself tremendously.

Members of the Branch attended the Wales and the West Area Reunion at the Lord Hill Hotel in Shrewsbury at the end of October. It was a lovely occasion which gave everyone the opportunity to meet with our new Vice President, Ali Brown. As a bonus our Branch managed to win enough prizes in the raffle to make the trip north well worthwhile.

Sixteen of us were lucky enough to obtain tickets to march at the Cenotaph. As usual it was an exciting yet emotional day. It was unfortunate that the organisers hadn't quite got everything in place so that we were very nearly left back on Horseguards Parade Square as the two minutes silence was heralded by the gun. Yet again the BBC tried to avoid sight or sound of us but it was a little difficult to miss us altogether when there was a contingent of 120 ladies. We were very smart and marched proudly past the Cenotaph and then further along the route past HRH the Duke of York, Prince Andrew. We always turn out on 11 November in Birmingham and gather with other veterans at the Hall of Memory in Centenary Square. Our standard was paraded by Rosie Garrison and she did us proud. There were also an encouraging number of members of the public present.



Visiting the Tower of London on Remembrance weekend



Armistice Day in Birmingham

One of our regular visits is to the Birmingham International Military Tattoo. Twenty two of us gathered in our excellent seats to witness an extravaganza of music and military shenanigans. We even spotted a couple of Lincoln Branch ladies in the audience. Our standard bearers, Mary Wright and Rosie Garrison, were both on parade in the arena and we were very proud of them as usual.

Our Vice President, Ali Brown, was able to join us for our Christmas lunch this year. She was press ganged into judging the 'dress up the table decorations with random bits and bobs' competition. Despite the attempted bribe Ali remained unbiased but then elected to split the prize between two tables. Nobody said it was a cop out but they might have thought it. There were many Christmas jumpers in evidence this year which added to the festive fun. The fun continued into the next week when 14 of us gathered for our quarterly Pizza Night, we had to be separated onto two tables to fit in. Earlier in the day 10 of our ladies had attended a Christmas lunch hosted by the Not Forgotten Association, they were treated like honoured guests and were still smiling all evening.

Looking forward, apart from the usual exciting events such as the Grand Reunion, we have a few more irons in the fire. In February 2015 we have teamed up with Shropshire Branch to see a show at the New Alexandra Theatre, Calamity Jane! We have plans to do a lot more as joint ventures and are happy for other branches to come along. We are thinking of short break holidays and such like. Please let us know if you are interested.

As our older ATS sisters become more frail we have noticed that they are not attending meetings so often and sometimes are forgetting to pay their subs. We have decided to pay memberships subs out of Branch funds for all our ladies when they reach the age of 85, in order that they continue to be members and receive their Lioness. We have our Welfare Officer, Lesley Wallace, keeping a watchful eye on them in case they need support in any way.

So, on we go into another year of camaraderie and fun. Remember, you can count on Birmingham Branch, we have an abacus.

BOURNEMOUTH Val Wright

Bournemouth Branch is still up and running, well not exactly running but we keep going. We started the year with our post Christmas Bring & Buy in February which raised some funds

for the branch. Then in March we had the first of our informal chat gatherings in the bar of Premier Inn, which we repeated in May and October.

In April we had a visit from Jan Rimbolt, founder of the Oakhaven Hospice in Lymington (what a dynamic lady), who kept us captivated with the story of the hospice formation. In June we had a talk on the Welfare side of the Royal British Legion from a local Legion Officer.

July was our summer Cream Tea at the Hermitage Hotel, where we enjoyed the location facing the pier and Bournemouth bay, as much as the tea. That was followed by the S&SW Area Reunion at Romsey Golf Course. This was a most successful event hosted by Southampton Branch. For the 12 members able to go there it was the highlight of the year for our Branch. After the August break we met in September for our 2nd Bring & Buy event and a forward planning discussion.

On Remembrance Sunday our Branch wreath was laid at the Cenotaph in Bournemouth by Freda Brown. Later in that week it was our AGM, stalwartly supported by 15 members. Our final event for the year was our Christmas Lunch, returning to the Mayfair Hotel, where we welcomed Major Mack as our guest.



Enjoying Christmas lunch

Sadly we have lost two members this year; first Molly Iles passed away and then shortly afterwards Elizabeth Mattison slipped away, having just made her 90th birthday. These ladies were good friends and used to support all our branch activities, sharing a taxi as they became more infirm.

As our members grow older they find it progressively more difficult to get to meetings so we restrict our events to local ones in familiar places. However, that said if there are any younger members out there in the very large Bournemouth area who would be able to assist the Committee we would be delighted to welcome them. The Branch meets at the Premier Inn on Poole Road on the 2nd Wednesday of most months, from 2-4 pm in summer and from 1.30-3.30 in winter.

BRISTOL Jackie Naysmith MBE

It has been both a busy and rewarding few months for Bristol Branch. We had our Annual trip to Weston super Mare for our Fish and Chip lunch. The weather excellent, the food was good and we sat on the prom afterwards enjoying the sunshine and eating ice creams. Due to members going on holidays our numbers were down for some of the meetings, but that was fine because we did get to hear about members trips and how they were taking advantage of the good weather.

At our Branch Meeting in September we had the Poppy Coordinator for Bristol and Gloucester Area as our guest. We were invited to take part in a Poppy Launch in the Shopping Centre in November. As the date fell on our Branch meeting we put that back to the following week so that we could give our support. We held our Branch AGM in October, this was very well attended but there were no new volunteers to serve on Committee. However we are fortunate that those members attending always organise the refreshments and volunteer to go round with the raffle.

November and we were told to report for the Poppy launch mid morning. Tea and coffee had been organised for us, about 20 members, mainly in uniform attended. There was also the RHA Band which was going to play in the centre. We did a very slow march behind them. We then formed up once more and were introduced to the Lord Lieutenant, Mrs Mary Prior, and her husband John plus the Lord Mayor Alastair Watson and Mayoress Mrs Sarah Watson. There was also representation from the BUOTC by WO1 Sarah Bottrell and her colleague Mark Budd, we had our photos taken with them. We then had another surprise when we were told that we were having lunch at a very well known restaurant, Brasserie Blanc (owned by Raymond Blanc). We were greeted by the staff who showed us to our seats, so nice to be waited on, and Sarah and Mark came along and joined us. It was a superb meal with wine or soft drink if we wished. Our members felt very privileged to have been given such an unexpected treat and made us feel 'special'.



Jean James and Jackie Naysmith MBE prepare for the Bristol Cenotaph parade

It was then all systems go for our December meeting when we had our usual Xmas nibbles and Raffle. Usually we also have a bring and buy but this was put on hold until our January meeting. WO1 Sarah Bottrell and her colleague were invited and they came along and once again thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We have been invited to visit them in February and have our meeting there, they will wait on us. This is an invite that we are looking forward to.

We wish you all a Happy New Year and look forward to seeing many of you in Harrogate.

BURY & ROCHDALE

Susan Feeney nee Reeves

This has been a busy six months for our members, one of the biggest events was a weekend to commemorate the outbreak of WW1. On Saturday 2nd of August five members were to be found manning a stall to advertise ourselves in the Castle Armoury in Bury. On the Sunday there was a parade through the town of Bury in which we marched with various organisations, this was followed by a moving Church Service. The Bury Times did a wonderful two page spread in which we as the WRAC were mentioned and then our photograph was captioned 'Greater Manchester Ambulance Service Staff' (they also wear green), we are just glad we were not called upon to administer First Aid.

During October and November some of our ladies sold Poppies in Marks and Spencer in Bury, next year we will be in Debenhams. Also we managed to recruit a new branch member so a warm welcome to Jacqui. In November a number of our members made the journey to London to represent our Branch at the Remembrance Day Parade. Some of those who didn't attend London marched in Bury with 'The Lancashire Fusiliers', on dismissal they were found to be propping up the bar in our Branch meeting place, 'The Old White Lion'. On Tuesday 11th November, before our branch meeting, we laid a wreath at the Minden Garden memorial outside the Fusilier Museum.



Bristol Poppy Launch, Cabot Circus



Branch members with WO1 Sarah Bottrell and Mark Budd

Our November meeting the following week was obviously full of praise and thanks for the treatment and respect that we had received from RBL. On Remembrance Sunday members attended their local Remembrance Parades and Service; there were three of us at the Bristol Cenotaph where the Branch Secretary laid wreath on behalf of Bristol Branch.



This year two of our ATS ladies have reached the young age of 90, we as a branch are extremely proud and fond of our ATS members. On 9th December we had our branch Christmas Lunch, this was a wonderful afternoon with great food and alcohol.

This year we are planning a number of outings and some members will be going to the Grand Reunion and Dinner Club, so we are all looking forward to 2015.

CAMBRIDGE **Avril Williams**

We have been holding our meetings in a pub, The Railway Vue, Impington. However the Branch has been struggling this year, and we had to cancel a few meetings due to low attendance. We have decided that it is impracticable to continue holding formal meetings at the Railway Vue due to the low numbers who are able to attend the evening meetings and the travelling involved. We therefore plan to get together at lunch time at different locations (see Branch Meeting pages for contact details).

We did manage to attend an Eastern Area lunch at Norwich in July, to thank Sue Westlake for all she has done in her role as Vice President, and congratulate her on her MBE. In August five branch members, plus four guests from the Eastern Area, had a very enjoyable lunch at The Cutters Inn in Ely. This was followed by a mini cruise on the River Ouse. We ended the day with a few drinks at the Liberty Belle Micro-Pub.

We look forward to meeting up with you all at future Association events through the coming year.



L-R: Lorri Weights, Kerry Warnes, Wendy Hooton, Avril Williams, Lyn Hatch, Jean Farrington, Carol Armstrong



L-R: Lorri Weights, Jean Farrington, Avril Williams, Kerry Warnes



Kerry Warnes

CANTERBURY **Sue Foulks**

At the beginning of the year we were undecided as to whether Canterbury Branch would be able to continue. Well, we're still here, and I'm pleased to report, still flying the flag for the WRAC Association in Kent. Our strawberry tea party in July was a great success and grateful thanks must go to our Vice Chairman, Kate McGregor, for providing all the homemade scones and delicious cakes, and not forgetting Chairman Sue Wing for preparing all those punnets of Kentish strawberries. Much appreciated and enjoyed by us all.

Our meetings continued into September and our AGM was held in October. In November we discussed our forthcoming Christmas meal. On the 3rd December 20 of us, including members, associate members and guests, sat down to a lovely festive meal at the Miller's Arms in Canterbury. Our first meeting of 2015 will be held at 1.00 p.m. on the 1st April. Our venue is Housing 21, Cowdray Place, Canterbury CT1 3PB. No doubt those of us who

are fortunate enough to attend the Grand Reunion in Harrogate will be regaling members with our memories of what we hope will be an exciting weekend.

If anyone would like to join us please don't hesitate to contact me, Sue Foulks, Branch Secretary. You can be sure of a very warm welcome from our members.

CHESTER **Pat Sanders**

The Chester Branch had a very busy 2014 with meetings and outings. We started the year off in January with a lunch with the Royal Signals in Christleton and then a trip to Shropshire for their Post-Christmas meal. Both were excellent days out and we enjoyed ourselves tremendously, by the way Chris Powell, thanks for the eggs. In March 5 of us went to the AGM at Guildford, the memories came flooding back when we visited our old barracks and we all wished we could turn the clock back to the "good old days". We had a lovely talk by Maj Dawn Jones about Women in the Army Today at our April meeting. Maj Jones is the sister of Hazel Edwards, a member of our branch, and everyone enjoyed meeting and listening to her talk.

May saw us off to Shropshire Branch again for the annual Race Day, what a laugh we had plus the excellent buffet and some of us even won! We also had a trip out to Hack Green Secret Bunker, it was secret as we had trouble finding it! We did eventually find the bunker and it is well worth a visit with lots of interesting information and items on display. Dunham Massey was our trip for June, the house had been changed back in time to the WW1 hospital that was there in 1916. It was very interesting with loads of information on how the patients were treated, and the grounds and restaurant were also worth a visit. In July we had our yearly get together and invited other branches to our 1914-2014 Centenary Celebrations. We had a lovely afternoon, Hazel Edwards produced a great quiz which went down very well with everyone and many ladies dressed up in the fashion of the last century. Francis Rimmer, a new member to the branch, celebrated her 90th Birthday in July and was presented with a lovely bouquet of flowers at our monthly meeting.



1914-2014 Centenary Party

August saw us on our annual Canal Trip, this year we had 49 attending and had a wonderful afternoon. Half way through we moored up and members proceeded to the quayside where we conducted a short memorial ceremony. Dot Garnett gave the Kohima epitaph and we threw poppy leaves into the canal; we have done this ceremony for many years to remember past members, friends and of course the members of HM Forces who have given their lives for their Country.

September saw the branch join the Parade to Commemorate the PALS from Port Sunlight march. We joined in the march from Chester Cathedral to the Castle. Well some of us marched, Elsie Roberts caged a lift from the police car that was following us, she was seen waving at the crowds as if she was Royalty. Afterwards we went for lunch in a local pub and gave our aching joints time to recover. November saw the branch again being invited to another Royal Signals Lunch and members attended various Remembrance Parades. Joy Griffiths laid a Wreath on behalf of the Chester Branch at the Chester Remembrance Parade.



Joy Griffiths

The year ended with our Christmas Party, we had 45 attendees from various branches and had a great day. Chris Powell came dressed as an elf, including the ears, luckily we did not run out of Brandy this year. We would like to congratulate Hazel Edwards, a member of our branch, on becoming our new North West Area Chairman. Hazel is already making plans to meet all the members of the branches in the North West Group. Although we have lost a few members in recent years we are slowly starting to build our membership again with 4 new members; Francis Rimmer, Joyce Collins, Sheila Brown and Pat Wakefield, welcome girls.

Sadly we have lost three members in the last 12 months, Audrey Barlow passed away on 26 December 2013, Molly Choppen passed away the day after attending the Royal Signals Lunch in January 2014 and Edith Penkeith passed away in July 2014. All the ladies will be missed by everyone, especially Molly who was a founding member of the Chester Branch and had great sense of humour which will be missed by everyone. Well that is all from the Chester Branch if you would like to join us you would be made very welcome, we wish you all a belated Happy New Year.

CLEVELAND BRANCH **Audrey Grainge**

In July 2014 we had a guest speaker, Don Costello, who entertained us with music and tales from his travels all over the world when he was in the Guards playing the flute and other instruments with the Corps of Drums. He had two of our ladies dressed up and dancing the Hula Hula to Hawaiian music. He caught me out when asked who thought they had a name in which there was no song written about then he played Happy Birthday to me.

We had an invitation from the Not Forgotten Association for four of our ladies to go on a cruise down the River Tees with the added bonus of lunch. Chris Minns, Irene McLean, Jenny Severn and Pam Ashenden were chosen as they were the longest serving members who were able to attend. For our annual outing we went by coach to Ripon to visit the Workhouse Museum for a guided tour, then on to the Police and Court House Museums.



Ann Mahoney, Jenny Hall, Wendy Wall, Chris Mimms, Jenny Severn, Judith Gallagher, Hazel Crammen, Irene Maclean, Sharon Enderwick plus guests

Ann, our Standard Bearer, had a busy six months parading our Standard at many events including Armed Forces Day and parades commemorating WW1. She told us a lovely story of when she visited a school and received a card thanking her for fighting in the 1914-18 war, bless her she is only 80 years old. We had a good turnout for the Dinner Club, with some of our ladies taking the table theme to another level didn't they do well.



WRAC Dinner Club - Jan Landess Williams, Jenny Hall, Jenny Severn, Batty (Newcastle branch), Hazel Crammen, Wendy Wall, Maxine Lane

This brings me onto our October meeting when we celebrated Anne's 80th birthday with afternoon tea and a birthday cake brilliantly iced in Corps colours and a lovely image of Anne. Fortunately Sylvia Cree was over from France so she was able to join us.



Ann Mahony

This year we had a healthy contingent who went to the cenotaph in London. With seven members marching. Our branch goes from strength to strength with another new member ex WRAC Connie Meakins. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy and Prosperous New Year and lots of great comradeship throughout 2015



Cenotaph Parade - Kath Steel, Jan Landess Williams, Jenny Severn, Suzanne Allan, Sylvia Cree

GRIMSBY **Gail Davy**

Grimsby Branch summer outing was to Harrogate and Skipton, a pleasant summer's day with plenty of opportunity for shopping and eating in a choice of cafes. In September 4 of our members attended the North East Area lunch, they enjoyed meeting with old friends and a very good meal.



Enjoying the NE Area Reunion

Our Christmas lunch was at the end of November to avoid a clash with other events members attend. It was once again held at Cleethorpes Golf Club, as usual a splendid meal which left us all with full tummies. The guest this year was a serving soldier, Cpl Jackie North, who is in the Army Reserve and also works full time for the MOD in Grimsby and Hull as an administrator. She has served in Iraq and told us some interesting tales in the life of a female soldier.



Christmas Lunch

Also in November four of our members were invited to a presentation afternoon at Royal British Legion Headquarters in Grimsby. Betty Beebie was presented with a 25 year badge, Monica Barnes and Carol Tyler received 20 year badges and Pam Givens a 10 year certificate. These were presented by Gail Davy, Poppy Appeal Organiser for Grimsby and WRAC Association Grimsby Branch Secretary, who received a 35 year award.

The first meeting in 2015 was a New Year party to start 2015 with bang. We are also planning more outings and maybe a trip to Market Rasen Races Ladies Day, so get the big hats out girls.

HEREFORD Sharon Joyce

2014 was an important year for Hereford Branch as in July the Branch would be 25 years old and we had decided to have a party to celebrate. A suitable venue was found and invitations sent out, the ball was in motion!

The main fundraising event was a Walk across the Malvern Hills. The date was set for the 25th of May, a Bank Holiday Sunday, and members were asked to either take part, help sponsor or support those walking. We had seven ladies agreeing to walk, and three dogs. We gathered at the North Malvern Clock Tower at 10am and off we went, heading south with a spring in our step.



At the Worcestershire Beacon

Chatting as we went the miles to cover before lunch slipped by quickly, which meant at the lunch stop we had a little longer to enjoy our pack lunches and liquid refreshment. Having being fed and watered off we went to rendezvous at the finish point, where we knew fellow members (with perhaps a little more sense) would be waiting to welcome us. The good news is everyone made it with no blisters to report, and as we all enjoyed it so much we are thinking of making it an annual event, but somewhere a little flatter! The other good news is that we raised £596 towards our party. Well done ladies, also a big thank you to members who donated monies.

The big day arrived for our 25th Anniversary Lunch, Saturday 12th July 2014. The scene was set with beautiful clear blue skies and lots of warm sunshine. Our guests were the Lord Lieutenant of Hereford Lady Darley and WRAC Association Vice President Sue Westlake MBE (this was to be her last official duty as vice president) plus members of Birmingham, Tamworth and Mid Wales & Marches Branches. Heather Gaughran (Birmingham Branch) had kindly agreed to take photos on the day, thank you Heather.



*Branch Secretary
Sharon Joyce
meeting lunch
guest
the Lord
Lieutenant of
Herefordshire
The Countess of
Darnley*



Enjoying the 25th Anniversary Lunch



Branch President Ena Price



*Founder Members of Hereford Branch: Ena Price,
Mary Nicholls, Win Birt, Vera Denning*

At this stage I must say, on behalf of all Hereford Branch members, a big thank you to Mary Woollard MBE. Mary took on the task of finding a venue and arranging everything required to make the day truly memorable. Going by the many thank letters we received from members and guests Mary certainly achieved this.

In August our Branch President Ena Price (now 99 years young), Chairwomen Mary Nicholls and myself, plus guests, were invited to a WW1 Commemorative Service at Hereford Cathedral, with drinks in the Bishops Garden afterwards. This was an occasion we will remember for a long time. August also saw our annual Picnic and Summer Draw at Queens Wood near Leominster. The day was enjoyed by all members, especially Lynda Armstrong's mum Sheila who thanked us all for making her feel so welcome.

The Branch Standard, carried by Sharon Joyce, attended a RBL Poppy Concert at Ross on Wye in October and then in November, carried by Jo Foster, at the Remembrance Sunday Parade in Hereford. A wreath was laid by Heather Bradbury on behalf of the Branch. On Armistice Day the Standard was paraded by Sharon Joyce for a short service at the War Memorial in Hereford.

I hope 2014 will be remembered by Hereford Branch members as a good year and we look forward to another 25 years.

LEEDS Pat Harpin

The year has flown and it's time to think about the events of the months gone by. We enjoyed the North Eastern Area Lunch in York, it is always good to meet up with friends and enjoy a meal together. Several of the ladies enjoyed the Dinner Club weekend and their time in London for the Remembrance Day Parade. Our Christmas Lunch was very enjoyable, 13 ladies sat down to a delicious meal at the Skyrack in Headingley. This was a new venue and one I am sure we will visit again.



Christmas Lunch in Headingley

The Not Forgotten Association invited us to join them for a Christmas Luncheon. This was a very enjoyable occasion, we had a delicious meal with a festive musical accompaniment. It was a chance to meet up with service people from around the area and talk about their experience in the forces.



L-R: Trish Barker, Betty France, Elizabeth Bustard, Paddy Barker, Agnes Atkinson, Mary Clements, Iris Kidd, June MacCunn, Ann Sykes, Pat Harpin

One or two of our members have been ill this year so we wish them better health for 2015 and look forward to them being able to attend meetings again. We would like to wish you all a Very Happy New Year and look forward to renewing friendships at the Grand Reunion. You will receive a warm welcome to Yorkshire, Harrogate is an interesting place to visit. Don't eat too many cream cakes in Betty's Cafe.

LEICESTER & NOTTINGHAM Sue Slattery

July. Our Standard Bearer Lyn reported back to the branch about their trip to France which was a very enjoyable and moving occasion. Also the ladies who attended the Garden Party at Buckingham Palace shared memories and photographs from their amazing day. Seven of us attended Shropshire Branch Horse Racing afternoon and buffet. Once again we had a fabulous time, thanks to Chris and her team. Sadly this month we lost Sybil Ward age 92.

August. We were visited by Major Leavis, a Corporal and his sniffer dog from the Defence Animal Centre, Melton Mowbray. Major Leavis explained about their role in the army and the training of the dogs, horses and the soldiers. The dog was then put through her paces to find what had previously been hidden in the room. Unfortunately she was easily distracted by a room full of our ladies trying to make a fuss of her. It was a very enjoyable afternoon and thanks to Jo for arranging it all.



A visit by a sniffer dog

Our August visit to the Sailing Club was slightly different as hot food was served, consisting of faggots, sausages, mash and mushy peas. Planned and cooked by Carol and served by a team of volunteers. After cold desserts a special cake, made by Alison, was served to us all on the occasion of the Branch's 60th birthday. A great day and many thanks to the team of volunteers who gave up their time for two days to clean and decorate the Club House and clean up again at the end of it all.

September. Our Harvest Festival raised a tidy sum of £143 for our funds. Joan De-Vall and Ann Atkinson had travelled to Belgium for WW1 commemorations. Joan was also our sole representative at the Airborne Forces Parade in Somerby, we can always rely on Joan. Pam Richards, our Welfare Officer, reported that a few of our ladies have been ill and or admitted to hospital. Sadly too many of our ladies have been in need of extra care, but as usual Pam keeps us informed of their progress.

October. Our AGM saw the re election of all our existing Officers for another year. Four ladies attended the Festival of Remembrance service at De Montfort Hall and seventeen

members made the short trip to Solihull for the WRAC Dinner Club week end. Again a fabulous time had by all, thanks to the Committee for all of their hard work. Six ladies attended our Area Reunion at Shrewsbury. Most of the ladies who were there on Friday night had a meal at the local chinese restaurant where Sue was treated to another pretend birthday! The AGM preceded lunch and a raffle on the Saturday.



Attending the WRAC Dinner Club

November. This meeting consisted of our Christmas Fayre which included mince pies and a glass of wine. We again raised £143.63 which will help to subsidise 2015 outings. Seven ladies attended the poppy football match, selling poppies for the county British Legion. At half time we paraded around the pitch with our Standard and the other veterans. Five of our ATS ladies were interviewed by Radio Leicester to talk about their service and experiences during WW2, this should be broadcast at a later date which as yet is to be confirmed.



Meeting 'Gilbert' at the Poppy Match

We also welcomed a new member, Dee Calladine from Loughborough. Sixteen ladies made the journey to Lincoln for a quiz, buffet and a raffle. Sorry to say but there appeared to be a small amount of cheating going on by our Leicester members! Thanks to Chris and all her team for a great afternoon and we look forward to a repeat in 2015. Another successful year for the Branch and my thanks for continued support from our committee and Branch members. We now look forward to the Grand Reunion in March. Our best wishes to you all for a happy and healthy 2015.

LEICESTER AND NOTTINGHAM Annual Sailing Club Lunch and 60th Anniversary of the Branch 19 August 2014 Yvonne McCarthy

The annual Sailing Club lunch at Syston was upon us once again and with it came new challenges. Our three wonderful members Sandra Smith, Doris Doswell and Irene Bell felt it was time to step down as they had been organising the annual event since its

conception. It goes without saying that we, the Branch, give them our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for all the hard work involved each year to make it a day to remember. Now it was up to the younger members to step in. Needless to say Sue Slattery and Carol Morris, with a small number of volunteers, rose to the challenge and with their excellent organisational and culinary skills the whole day was a rip roaring success.

It also happened to be the 60th Anniversary of the Branch. The theme for the event was to be Remembrance of the First World War. The day before the marquee area had to be cleaned and decorated. A small working party of volunteers achieved this and the marquee looked superb. On the 19th over 50 members arrived and all were delighted with the decoration. Carol, with one or two others, worked tirelessly in the kitchen to produce the most delicious meal. The food was in keeping with the fare of the times, simple but very tasty. A singer had been organised and he sang some of the old favourites. All the members enjoyed the day singing along and catching up with all their news.



Doris White cuts the 60th Anniversary cake

Alison Inglis produced the most beautiful cake for the celebration of our Anniversary and Doris White our Chairperson had the honour of cutting it. We, the Members, would like to say a big thank you to our Secretary Sue and Events Secretary Carol for all the hard work they continuously do for the Branch. We all look forward to next year's Lunch!

LINCOLN & DISTRICT Chris Corker

Sadly our report for the first half of 2014 was not received at Worthy Down and must still be out in cyberspace, this report therefore covers the whole year. I should however begin by saying we had a wonderful 2013 Christmas Lunch at the Carre Arms, Sleaford, again organised by the members of the branch who are still working namely Sue Beevers and Linda Hilton. No meeting was held in January due to previous years inclement weather but we shall be re-instating this from 2015.

In February WO Steve Shirley came to show us photos and talk about his collection of fire-fighting equipment and vehicles. This was followed in March by a visit of eight members and assorted friends and family to RAF Scampton to visit the Heritage and Firefighting Centre. The collection includes fire-fighting memorabilia from not only military sources and historical effects but also many items from around the world. After an excellent lunch members viewed the Heritage collection which covers the history of RAF Scampton with an emphasis on aircraft

especially the Lancaster Bomber and the Dambusters. March also saw the election of a new committee at the AGM. Dot Ryder as Chairman, Chris Corker as Secretary, Jackie Walton as Treasurer, Gwyneth Stratten as Events Co-ordinator and Jan Burchett-Vass as member.

In April we held our 7th Anniversary Lunch and were delighted that Sue Westlake was able to attend. At the beginning of May a walk was held in Castor (just outside of Peterborough) in lovely sunshine and ended as usual in a very pleasant hostelry. May also saw the members enjoying an "Around the World Picture Quiz". Many a laugh was had trying to identify various mountains and buildings.



7th Anniversary Lunch

On Tuesday 2nd June four of us travelled by train to London to see the Governor's Parade at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, but unfortunately it teemed with rain during the entire parade. As you can imagine those wonderful Pensioners stood their ground and as usually happens at these events just after they all marched off the rain stopped, the clouds cleared and the sun put his hat on! We then spent several interesting hours with the lovely lady In-Pensioners Bimbo Coleman, Madge Cole and Audrey Merton BEM.

On Saturday 21st June several members went for a tour of Bateman's Brewery in Wainfleet where, after a pleasant walk, we enjoyed lunch and adjourned to the garden for games of Connect 4, Draughts, and Snakes and Ladders! Then we had a very informative tour of the family run brewery which is 140 years old.



Mary Faver, Dor Ryder, Chris Corker, Karen Smith, Linda Hilton, Sue Beevers

On Saturday 28th June the branch had a stall in the Market Square, Lincoln for Armed Forces Day and it was quite a spectacular event. There were a stalwart few of us who were there from before 08.00 to after 16.00. Thank you to all those in the branch who came along to support us and especially to Chris Whitworth who came all the way from Scunthorpe.



Standing: Gwyneth Stratten, Jan Burchett-Vass, Chris Casburn, Maureen West, Chris Corker Seated: Jackie Walton, Beryl Butcher, Dot Ryder, Shirley Dawe

We welcome new members Marion King and Sylvia Stubbs from Worthing branch and Chris Casburn. Chris is a very new member and, although she has only attended one meeting thus far, helped out on AFD. This was also quite a sad occasion as it was the last event to be organised by Gwyneth Stratten who has stood down as Events Co-ordinator and is taking a break from the branch. Thank you so very much for all your hard work in the past, Gwyneth, we shall miss your enthusiasm and expertise in organising events for us. A volunteer is now required! July 22nd saw members attend an evening meal in the Carre Arms, Sleaford where we are always greeted like long-lost friends.

The first Tuesday in August saw us at the Barge on the Brayford in Lincoln for the summer lunch and the weather was kind to us so that we could sit out on the deck. (You will note that we are a branch that likes to eat out!).



Quite a few members attended the WRAC Dinner Club in Solihull and the weekend was a great success. A record number of attendees this year and the chance to catch up with friends old and new. If you have never been, give it a try (this is me with my Dinner Club recruiting hat on!). Three members attended the Cenotaph Parade in London on Sunday 9th November which again saw a record increase in the number of WRAC marching. It was lovely to see so many new faces.

At the November meeting we hosted a visit from Leicester & Notts Branch and 16 ladies arrived for a quiz and lunch. The Lincoln members rallied to the call and the lunch spread was second to none. As I close this year's report we are preparing for our Christmas Lunch again at the Carre Arms in Sleaford (eating out yet again!). Look forward to seeing those of you who will be attending the "big bash" in Harrogate in March.

Don't forget if you are in Lincoln on the third Tuesday of the month you can find us at the Central Methodist Church Hall, High Street, Lincoln LN5 7PR at 12.00. You can be assured of a very warm welcome.

MARCHES & MID WALES

Marianne Hooker

After seeing Christine Tinker on the front page of our local newspaper we invited her to join us at a lunch we had planned in February. Chris, a member of Shropshire Branch, is a caseworker for the Royal British Legion. She was planning to do a sponsored 10,000ft parachute jump to raise funds for them. She had never attempted such an exploit before but a friend who put her up to it was willing to jump with her. We were so impressed with Chris's

imminent bravery we had an impromptu whip round and were able to sponsor her to the tune of £71. They had to wait for good weather but their eventual jump was successful and Chris raised the splendid total of £1,205.



Christine Tinker ready to jump

We met at the National Botanic Gardens of Wales for our summer meeting, where the BBC's 'Gardeners Question Time' team were holding their Summer Garden Party. Members had the choice of attending 2 recordings of the flagship radio programme. Then they could look at exhibitions or listen to talks given by the likes of Bunny Guinness, Pippa Greenwood and Chris Beardshaw. In fact the entire GQT team were there, along with both the programme Presenters. Despite the heat everyone enjoyed listening to The Morriston RFC and The Carmarthen Male Voice Choirs. This entertainment took place in the awesome Great Greenhouse, the largest single span greenhouse in the world, which is filled with many of the world's most endangered plant species. It was a very educational day in more ways than one.

Thank you to everyone in Hereford Branch for inviting us to your 25th Birthday Party. You had obviously worked very hard to make it such a success. Carys, Kath and I had an enjoyable and very memorable day with you all and I'm sure that Sue Westlake couldn't have wished for a better send off into retirement. We turned our autumn meeting into a 90th birthday lunch for Doris Parkes, one of our 2 remaining ATS ladies. In order that Doris wouldn't have to travel too far we used the nearby Sweeney Hall Hotel in Oswestry, a lovely venue that I'm sure we will use again. As well as Maggie Purkis, we were also pleased to see Judi Watt who came with her Carer, and Eileen Carter who had been so very ill back in the Spring. Doris was so proud of the ATS badge on the cake that Carys made for her that she wouldn't let anyone cut into it, small portions were carefully cut from around the edge for us all.

Doris really enjoyed her party and was still able to give me directions when I took her home! Doris was a Driver and she loves to tell the story of how Princess Elizabeth came to her camp to do her Driver training.



Doris Parkes celebrates her 90th birthday

Between them our two Poppy Appeal Organisers, Deanna (aided by some of our members) in Newtown, and Joan (aided by her husband Tom) in Barry, raised the splendid sum of £61,000 and counting. Carys, Joan and Christine laid Association wreaths at Clun, Barry and Newtown respectively. Joan has since passed her baton on as she has been elected to the well earned position of President of Barry Royal British Legion. It has been quite a year for Joan as she was also nominated, by her granddaughter, for an ITV Wales 'Pride Of Britain' award. She made it to the final 4 and found herself entertaining a television crew for an entire day. Well done Joan, we are all very proud of you!

Mary Littler (nee Fenner), our other ATS member, lives all the way up in Wrexham. To celebrate her 90th birthday we accepted a kind invitation from nearby Chester Branch. Five of us travelled up to attend their Christmas lunch and met Mary and her daughter Jennifer there. Mary was a Corporal in the Ack Ack and I have just learned that when she was based on the South Downs, in a defensive role just north of Portsmouth, I was a tiny infant just 30 miles along the coast in Chichester! Thank you to all the members of Chester Branch for your kind hospitality which we enjoyed very much indeed.



A 90th birthday cake for Mary Little

NEWCASTLE Tanya Hall

Newcastle Branch members were joined by War Widows and relatives of former POWs for a Christmas lunch at The Assembly Rooms, Newcastle on 11 December 2014.



Enjoying Lunch



Tanya Hall and Kirsten Percy

PHOENIX Sheila Johnson

On 20 September 2014 seven members of Phoenix Branch assembled at Shrewsbury Beaconsfield Club for lunch prior to boarding the 1936 Leyland Coach to take us on an afternoon mystery tour. The coach was driven by Shaun, with his father acting as chief gate opener/closer as we reached each destination. We departed Shrewsbury via Quarry Park, where we viewed the floral tributes to WWI, thereafter our journey took us through the Shropshire countryside to our final destination Attingham Park.



L-R: Joan Berry, Mary Davies, Millie Pover, Louise Rhodes, Irene Hall, Maggie Purkis

Shaun had excelled himself by putting additional livery on the front of the coach which ensured our arrival was well publicised. This attracted many waves and photos from passers by, especially children. On arrival at the National Trust's Attingham Park we had a delicious cream tea followed by an escorted tour. All in all a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon.



Joan Berry

The coach then returned us to Shrewsbury Rail Station for the final leg of the journey home, hardly the unique mode of transport to which we had become accustomed earlier in the day! Thanks must go to Irene Hall for organising the whole event plus a raffle. The Branch donated monies to a local charity, Hope House Children's Hospice, as a group 'thank you' for being able to enjoy such a pleasing day out together.

In a delightful coincidence the mystery tour destination turned out to be the place where Joan Berry was stationed during part of her ATS service. Joan was a Driver and the MT Section vehicles were parked in the grounds of Attingham Park prior to delivery, in convoy, to Army depots elsewhere. Joan's accommodation was bordering on the luxurious as her bedroom was on the top floor of the house overlooking the splendid parkland. However Joan and her fellow Drivers were 'encouraged' to use the side entrance rather than the main portals of the house. Joan has fond memories of her time at Attingham although her tenure was relatively short as she was subsequently posted to Bardley, Lincolnshire where she continued to ferry saloon cars, 15 cwt lorries and 3 tonners.

PORTSMOUTH Margaret Bush

Once again 'Hello' from everyone in Portsmouth and surrounding areas. All is well though our numbers are still low, so we welcome any ladies who would like to join us at our monthly meetings. At our coffee mornings we have, as a group, been putting spare change in a jar with which so far we have paid for 3 names on the new Portsmouth memorial dedicated to civilians who lost their lives during the war. We are well on the way to raising sufficient funds for another 3 names, not bad for spare change so well done ladies.



In July we attended the Area lunch held by Southampton Branch. Well done to them for a most enjoyable day and the lunch was delicious too! In November some of our ladies paraded in Portsmouth and I attended a reunion for Northern Ireland veterans in Blackpool. I thoroughly enjoyed it, it was great being amongst like minded people and the banter was great. On the Saturday evening there was a social evening with a raffle that raised £800 for the charity for Homeless Veterans. On the Sunday we paraded in Blackpool remembering, along with everyone else lost comrades, a somber moment but a very enjoyable weekend .

More recently a few of us went to a Southampton Branch meeting at Eastleigh Working Men's Club to hear a talk by Sue Westlake, taking us through her Army career. A thoroughly enjoyable evening and we look forward to part 2 with photo's! Thanks once again to Southampton Branch and the lovely spread, I think there was quite a few doggy bags! To conclude we would just like to wish everyone a very prosperous 2015.

PLYMOUTH **Ruth Jennings**

On 27 June 2014 our city once again celebrated Armed Forces Day on Plymouth Hoe with a very good turnout and many attractions for locals and visitors alike. This year we did not think that we were able to take a table in the Veteran's Marquee because we just can't muster enough ladies to be on duty all day with very little and sometimes no respite. However Evon's daughter, Ruth Bishop, planned to have a stall for the Alzheimer's Memory Clinic so Evon took our memorabilia and shared her table, which I am told worked very well! Thank you Evon and also many thanks to Jean Cundy-Borge for going up to the Hoe to relieve them at lunch time; sadly that did not bring us any new members but they talked to a lot of very interesting people.

On 30 August this year we had an outing to Knightstone Tea Rooms for our first organized lunch there. It was very good and 17 of us had a lovely time together, we intend to go again 2015 on Saturday 29 August, all are welcome. In October 2014 the WRAC Dinner Club in Solihull was, as always, a great weekend. Our thanks to the hard working Committee and their helpers and everyone else who work so hard to get so many ladies mustered into one building for the dinner and dance which gives all of us a really enjoyable long weekend. The following weekend I attended the Secretaries' and Officer's South and South West Area AGM at the Wilton Bowls Club. Thanks to Joan for a very good lunch.



Enjoying Knightstone Tea Rooms
L-R: Hilary, Nancy, Anne, Victor, Les



L-R: Ruth, Brenda, Doris, Jean, Evon, Ruth B, Val, Ivy, Eileen

A group of us meet for lunch at the Chinese restaurant called Buffet City, at the top of Royal Parade, before our monthly meetings. In addition we have some spur of the moment lunches, sometimes just 3 or 4 of us decide to have an impromptu lunch within a few miles of the city, which helps to keep us laughing and swapping interesting tales of our lives, past, present and to come.

Our Christmas Lunch was on Friday 12 December, sadly the WRNS Assn have closed this year but we still have some WRENS who socialize with us and join us for our Lunch at the Masonic Hall in Stoke and I am sure we will enjoy all of our dates in 2015's social calendar.

The 4th Tuesday of the month, 27th January 2015 was our 1st meeting of the year at 13.30 in our usual venue, the Lower Abbey Hall, Catherine Street (just behind the Minster Church of St Andrew on the Royal Parade). Our contact details are now found in the new branch listing pages in the Lioness which is a great idea. I have had several requests to put our lunch dates into the Lioness because visiting out of towners think they may be able to join us at one or two of them, all welcome to come to all occasions, but please book with me (Ruth Tel 01752 363118) in order that I can reserve seats in the venue. Our dates for 2015 are: Saturday 14 February at the Windy Ridge Eating House, Trerulefoot, PL12 5BJ at 12 noon; Saturday 16 May at The Kernow Club, St Mary's Street, Truro 12 noon for 12.15 (we like going on the train from Plymouth, it is a lovely ride); Saturday 20 June at Darts Farm, Topsham, Exeter at 12 noon for 12.30; Saturday 29 August at Knightstone Tea Rooms, Yelverton.

SHEFFIELD **Brenda Colley**

The highlight of our year was of course Remembrance Day in London, six of us marched this year, almost a full complement. Once again we were lucky with the weather; we got wet on Saturday, but Sunday dawned sunny and bright, cold but dry. We thought the poppies at the Tower of London looked amazing and couldn't believe how many folks went to see them, day & night. Our hotel rooms overlooked them, a fantastic sight. We spent Friday evening at Chelsea Barracks, a really lovely evening but disappointing that Bimbo Coleman was unable to join us as she was unwell. We were each given a Canadian poppy which are a bit different to ours i.e. a maple leaf pin badge in the centre. On the Saturday we went to the Ceremony of the Keys in the Tower of London, followed by delicious fish & chips. A super weekend altogether.

In September we went to York for our annual Area Reunion; always an enjoyable day with good food, and good company. Also in September two of us went to the NMA with the NVA to see their new Memorial unveiled by the Duke of Gloucester. Our Autumn lunch coincided with Brenda's 80th birthday, so we combined both events at one of our favourite restaurants. Once again delicious food, good company and everyone enjoyed it.



Enjoying the Area Reunion: Ann Williams, Brenda Colley, Joyce Renton, Iris Howe, June Lowe



80th Birthday Lunch

Standing: June Lowe, Ann Williams, Jean Smith, Meg Sparrow, Chris Spencer, Maureen
Sitting: Iris Howe, Brenda Colley, Joyce Renton

We held our Christmas Lunch at the same venue as 2013, why change a good thing? There was lovely food, music for dancing and a really good time was had by all. In the same week Brenda and Jean went to Wakefield for the Suez Veterans Final Christmas Lunch; very sad, but the Branch is closing. We attended the SUOTC carol service in the Cathedral before Christmas 'proper' was upon us.

We lost another member this year, Connie Smithdale whose Obituary is on page 55. She hadn't attended a meeting for a good while after an accident suffered while on holiday. She lost all her confidence and it changed her life completely. We have welcomed one new recruit though, Janet Brown who joined us in November. Janet is a serving Police Officer and will join us whenever her work shifts fit in with meetings.

I wish everyone a healthy & happy 2015.

SHROPSHIRE Sandra Edwards

Let me first say a warm hello from all of us here at the Shropshire Branch for 2015, although we are a little way into the new year! On June 28th five branch members plus one guest made the short trek to RAF Cosford for Armed Forces Day. The weather was set to be dodgy but thankfully changed its mind at the last minute for a Dakota flyby, it is always the highlight of the day and was just wonderful. Our branch gourmand was part of the gathering and gave her seal of approval to the catering, yet again, thank you Nancy!

On 12th July Chris P, Debbie, Sheila and Sandra formed a posse to forge an attack on the trains heading into the capital for the London 10k run on Sunday 13th. Just as a lite reminder, we were supporters not runners! The weather was well hot and our spirits were high (nothing to do with the liquid contained in our hip flasks!). After all our gallant ladies had crossed the line we all gathered at the Civil Service Club for some falling down water! We were tempted by the good price of the pimm's and sampled about 3 jugs of it. On our way back to the VSC we decided to take root in Hyde Park with the aforementioned hip flasks, propped up by some railings in the shade. Later on in the evening we thought about watching the world cup final in the Naval lounge but decided against it as the place was rather full. Instead we stayed in the bar, we didn't have far to travel for refills that way!



Sheila J, Sandra, Chris P, Debbie

On 19th July we held the Shropshire Branch Race Day. We were kind of hoping for cooler weather because in 2013 we almost cooked. It was raining and only slightly cooler than last year, we knew that it was cooler because the cream cakes didn't melt as much. I can report that the afternoon was deemed a roaring success. It was so good to see so many members from other branches join us.



Chris P and Mel enjoying the Race Day

August 2nd found us remembering WW1. Chris P, Debbie, Nancy and Sandra made the journey to the Dingle in Shrewsbury for the unveiling of a floral dedication by the STC horticulturists to mark the start of 5 years of WW1 commemorations. It was whilst we were at this event that we were asked by the RBL if we would like to attend a service in Shrewsbury Square in our greens on the 4th. So on Monday 4th August, dressed in our best bib and tucker not to mention our best behavior, the same gang of 4 turned up in the square only to be informed that they'd like us to take the salute during the last post, what an honor that was. The only down side was the local paper made no mention of us having been at the service let alone taking the salute.

On 20th August we had been invited to join the Chester Branch Canal Lunch. Chris P, Debbie, Sheila, Francis, Sandra and guest Pat did a spot of train terrorising in order to meet up with Sheila at Chester station. A short walk up the road was the Mill Hotel where the boat departs from, the weather was good for us thankfully. The food was as good as last year and of course we had to sample some more falling down water from the very same canal side pub that jumped out at us in 2013! So the stagger back, oops sorry, I should have put walk back to the train station was full of laughter!

August 27th found us on a REME trip to Liverpool. Chris P, Sandra and guest Pat made this trip, well Sandra almost didn't.

She only finished work at 0600 and thought that the coach was leaving at 0930 when it was actually 0900. After a mega flap, quick call to Chris P, she washed, dressed and flew down to the Wellington bus station with 5 minutes to spare, not bad going. We met up with Chris's sister at the pier head. We of course had to do the ferry across the Mersey, with added vocals from Sandra, which for some reason was not appreciated, can't think why.

September's meeting was given over to our AGM, once again our hostess with the mostess was none other than our resident gourmand Nancy. She kept us fed and watered throughout the meeting, a big thank you Nancy. We had a quiet September, we thought that we'd give the trains time to recover! We did however join the REME on their recruitment day on the 6th at Telford Town Centre. The dynamic duo of Chris P and Nancy went but there wasn't much in the way of ex-WRAC so it's doubtful that we'll do it again for a while.

In October Lucy Bowyer and Nancy Tipton took part in a 5 day WW2 Veteran's Battlefield Tour to Normandy arranged by The Not Forgotten Association. They represented not only the Shropshire Branch but also the Association, this was deemed such an honor. We have been hearing about their antics which had us in fits of laughter but most of all made us so very proud.



Nancy Tipton and Lucy Bowyer

On 25th October we went to the Wales & West Area Reunion. Our attendees were Chris P, Nancy, Alison, Debbie, Lucy, Chris R and Francis what a good turn out it was too, they had a good afternoon meeting up with other branches. On the 29th Chris P, Lucy, Sheila, Chris R and Sandra joined the REME Association for their first Social Evening meeting at the Sgts Mess at Parsons Barracks in Donnington. The evening was a bit on the quiet side to what it normally is but still we had a good time.

On Remembrance Sunday 9th Lucy and Sandra (with the Standard) joined the regulars from Donnington Barracks for their annual church service at St Matthews in Donnington Wood. Sandra paraded the Standard alongside the REME Association whilst Lucy laid the Branch wreath at the altar. Afterwards we were invited back to the Sgts Mess for a cold buffet. On Armistice Day Nancy and Sandra (with the Standard) attended the service in Wellington Square. The weather held off till the very end. After the service we were approached by an ex WRAC who was really pleased to see us out on parade, we hope that Mandy Dale will carry out her promise to become a branch member. Chris P, Mel and Sheila made the jaunt to the big Cenotaph parade where they were joined by almost 120 other ex WRAC, a big turnout and they were so proud to have been there. I know because I too have paraded at the Cenotaph, it's something that will never be forgotten.

In December we were back on the rail network terrorising trains to Birmingham and Chester for their Crimbo lunches. We would like to thank them very much for the kind invites. To end with I'd like to send fond New Years wishes to our ladies now residing in Care Homes, Beryl Lane and Hilda Dakin, we miss you both so much at the meetings and trips. In 2014 we bid a sad farewell to 2 of our much valued ATS gang, Liz Henderson and Eileen Talbot, Rest in Peace.

SOUTHAMPTON **Jean Doe**

Writing this as we experience the first winter frost it's hard to remember that glorious hot summer day at Romsey Golf Club where we held the South & South West District Area Reunion. Thank you to everyone who attended, if we made your day believe me you made ours; all the way from Plymouth to Worthing. We also had the added bonus of a new member who read the report! We also look forward to meeting two more new members.

We must be a hungry lot as the following week we had Gail's Annual Lunch, this is always a great event and one not to be missed. Unfortunately we were unable to accept an invitation from Bournemouth Branch to take a ride on the Land Train from Hengistbury Head to Mudeford. Hopefully we can take part in 2015.

On 03 December we held an evening meeting at which Sue Westlake MBE kindly gave us a talk about her Army career. We were joined by 4 members of Portsmouth Branch and finished the evening with refreshments and mulled wine. We rounded off the year with a Coffee Morning at Gail's and a trip to Christchurch and Burley for lunch on 10 December.

Best wishes to all for a happy and healthy 2015.

STIRLING **Liz Dixon**

Ho, Ho, Ho, Merry Christmas, a wee bit late but hope you all had a brilliant time and best wishes for 2015. In June 2014 the City of Stirling was host to the National Armed Forces Day 2014 and a big parade was held. Eight members of the Branch attended this parade; all dressed in WRAC green fleeces, berets & medals shining, with heads held (boobs out) high.



L-R: Wendy Velzain, Jean Halliday, Kate Hughes, Liz Dixon, Chris Smith, Dorothy, Lynn Connolly

In August we had a Branch day out, a wee trip to Poppy Factory Scotland which started with a brief insight into the history of PFS; From its establishment after the 1914-1918 war, The Earl Haig Fund acquired its poppies from England. In 1926, Countess Haig, wife of the Field Marshal, suggested that a factory, employing those men disabled by war, should be started to make poppies for Scotland. See more at www.ladyhaigpoppyfactory.org.uk/factory-history.

There was then a tour showing us how they made the wreaths, the templates for the Royal wreaths and the standard Scottish poppy (no leaf). All employees were ex servicemen who were suffering from a disability. To start with all the guys were quiet and well behaved and then we started, and the banter flowed. They even gave us a wee shot at making one, but don't panic guys your jobs are safe, some of our handiwork would not have passed inspection.



Isabel making a Poppy



L-R: Dorothy, Jean, Isabel, Pauline and Joyce outside the Poppy Factory

The Scottish AGM was held in September and 7 of our members were in attendance, once again the food was delicious. On a sad note I would like to announce that we did not win the craft shield this year! We were robbed, only joking, the winner was well and truly deserved.

We would like to welcome Chris Smith to the Branch monthly meetings it's great that you come along for a bite to eat and a yap (there's a lot of yapping). Stirling Branch of the Association meet on the last Saturday of each month at 12:00 at the Allanpark Hotel. Any members of the Association are welcome to join us.

SUFFOLK **Sheelagh Wilson**

Hopefully all members had a good festive season with plenty of cheer and very little snow and ice. We have had three new members join our Branch; Rosemary Cook, Claire McCartney and Deborah Cadman. We've not yet had the pleasure of meeting them but hopefully that will change in the coming year.

July was all about food, our favourite and most memorable meal. A good variety on the menu but all was good, old fashioned home cooking, just like mother made! In August we had a visit from our Area Chairman, Wendy Hooton, it's always nice to see her and hear news of the Association. The theme of Septembers meeting was supposed to be based on the TV show 'Room 101', however we were easily distracted and only got as far as Room 100!

We held our AGM in October and it was agreed that Sylvia Johnson and Sheelagh Wilson would continue in their roles as Chairperson and Secretary/Treasurer. We voted to donate money to Lioness, purchase a wreath for Remembrance Sunday and a gift for the Labour Club for use of the room.

On Remembrance Sunday Sheelagh Wilson laid a wreath at the War Memorial, Christchurch Park, Ipswich. Sylvia Johnson and Barbara Norton also attended. For our November meeting we had a Secret Santa, we had also planned to include favourite carols but got sidetracked again! We held our Christmas Lunch on 11 December at The Plough, Ipswich. That's all for now ladies and hope the rest of 2015 is all good.

SWINDON **Sharon Bingham**



Sharon Bingham, Beverley Backstrom and Brenda Goodfellow enjoyed lunch and a trip to Highgrove with the Not Forgotten Association

TAMWORTH **Vee Moore**

This report is short because our Secretary, Belle Jenkinson, has been tied up with life outside of the Branch. As a result some of our events had to be put on the 'back burner'. We plan to be back on track in 2015 and apologise to those Branches that extended invitations to us but which we unfortunately had to decline. Thank you for your invitations, please keep them coming. We are also pleased to report that Branch member Nancy Puckey is in better health following chemotherapy treatment.

Five members attended the Wales & West Area Reunion last year and we all enjoyed the day immensely. Not many of us won raffle prizes but we are hoping to do better this year. In May Margaret Davies did her walk to raise funds for Cancer Research and the WRAC Association. We had a drink with her at a local hostelry

and invited her to our Branch meeting to tell us about her walk and why she was doing it. Well done Margaret.

In July five of us attended the Hereford Branch Birthday lunch at the Green Man, Fownhope. I had been on holiday in Devon with my husband who was to drop me off at the railway station where Pat and Ann would pick me up and we would then drive to the Green Man. We had great fun finding the pub and went all around the houses looking for it only to realise once we got there that I had already passed it once today with my husband on our way from Devon to Hereford. I had even commented to him that there was a pub with an 'Aztec' on its sign. Once settled in we had a fabulous time and what a great day was had. Thank you Hereford Branch.

Our Branch events usually start with Skittles in April and hopefully this will go ahead in 2015 but it will be held in what is now called the Aldergate Club. This is the same club as before but it is no longer the Royal British Legion club. Further details and invitations will be sent out at a later date. May we wish all our friends throughout the Association a very happy 2015.

WIRRAL **Pat Sanders**

We had a great year with our meetings and loads of outings with the Chester Branch. The highlights were the 1914-2014 Centenary Party at the Cheshire Military Museum where we all dressed up, great fun was had by all. The Canal Trip was another lovely day out, we look forward to this every year as the food is delicious and it is great meeting up with the girls from the Chester and Shropshire Branches again. Finally there was the Christmas Lunch at the Cheshire Museum which we all thoroughly enjoyed. Some of us joined the Chester Branch in the Port Sunlight PALS March from Chester Cathedral to the Castle, we then went for lunch in a local pub. Although some of us had not marched for many years we really enjoyed ourselves.



Remembrance Day

L-R: Dot Thomas, Andrea Jenkins, Pat Wakefield, Jessica Lawton (Standard Bearer), Sheila Brown, Pat Sanders

This year saw the Wirral Branch march in the Remembrance Parade for the first time. Dot Thomas laid a wreath on behalf of the Wirral Branch and our new Standard Bearer Jessica, a member of the local Army Cadets, did a marvellous job carrying the Standard in the Parade. Andrea Jenkins, Pat Wakefield, Sheila Brown (all new members this year) and Pat Sanders

marched and we all got very emotional when the public started clapping as we marched past. We all felt proud of being members of the WRAC and of taking part. We all agreed that we would be marching again next year and hopefully more members of the branch will be able to join us.

We hold our meetings at Chetwynd Barracks, Birkenhead and would welcome anyone who would like to join us. All the best for 2015.

WORTHING **Janet Goldsbrough-Jones**

It has been a quiet but very happy 6 months here in Sussex. Right at the end of June we had another highly successful Armed Forces Day, I mentioned it in the last report but did not include a photo.



Armed Forces Day 2014

Eddie Sinclair, Caz Hill, the two Heathers (Digweed and Thayre), Janet McKechnie, Jackie Bentley, Edna, and Maggie Costan

On 12th July we went to the South & South West Area Reunion, thank you for the invitation. We had an excellent day in beautiful sunshine at the Romsey Golf Club. The food was equally good, and the company all that we could ask for.



South & South West Area Reunion

Eddie Sinclair meets two more ATS ladies, Florrie and Penny from Southampton

On 28th July we had a birthday lunch for Caz Hill and Chris Troak, and were joined by old friends Sylvia Stubbs and Marion King. Marion was presented with the picture she had won in our Armed Forces Weekend raffle, beautifully drawn and framed by our own Margaret Ladd. On 17th August some of us attended the Canadian memorial service on Worthing beach. It's held opposite the houses where the Canadians were stationed immediately prior to Dieppe and D-Day, it is a lovely little service.



Eddie Sinclair with the Canadian Military Attache, Lt Col Jean Trudel

In October we arranged a trip to The Blind Veterans Home (St Dunstons) but the weather was so bad that it was called off. We hope to go sometime in 2015. At our end of November meeting we had our usual Christmas lunch, with all the expected jollity.

We are looking forward to even more fun and games in 2015.



Chris Troak, Heather Digweed, Janet Goldsbrough-Jones and Brenda Mead.



'Flora MacDonald', otherwise known as Greta Carlisle



Guildford is honoured to host

Armed Forces Day National Event 2015

Saturday 27 June

- High Street military parade
- Spectacular show and entertainment at Stoke Park
- A special service at Guildford Cathedral
- Events throughout Armed Forces Week

Find out more at

www.guildford.gov.uk/armedforcesday



Branch Meetings

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 (Informal Branch)

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
or Jillian Hurst Tel: 01202 679433

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: 13.30 on the 4th Tuesday of the month (except December)
Where: Lower Abbey Hall, Catherine Street, Plymouth, PL1 2AD. See page 27 for details of regional lunches.
Contact: Ruth Jennings Tel: 01752 363118

Portsmouth

Contact: Sally Watson Tel: 02392 641747

New Forest (Informal Branch)

Contact: Madge Evans Tel 01425 620995

Salisbury (Informal Branch)

Contact: Lt Col (Retd) Val Trout Tel: 01980 623692

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: Jean Doe Tel 01794 523146

Swindon (Informal Branch)

Contact: Sharon Bingham slbingham1@yahoo.co.uk

Torquay (Informal Branch)

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-on-Sea (Informal Branch)

When: 14.00 on the 1st Thursday of the month (except January)
Where: Poppins, 40 Devonshire Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN40 1AX
Contact: Jenny Nye Tel: 01424 731882

Canterbury

When: 13.00 on the 1st Wed of the month
Where: Housing 21, Cowdray Place, Canterbury, CT1 3PB
Contact: Sue Foulks Tel: 01304 823824

Medway

When: Meetings held monthly, location varies.
Contact: Margaret Gallafent Tel 0208 308 0521

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: Lunchtime on the 1st Monday of the month (2nd Monday if a Bank Holiday)
Where: Location varies, phone for details
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 (Informal Branch)

When: Once per month (most months) for an outing or lunch, phone for details.
Contact: Joan Awberry Tel 01603 455070

Peterborough & District

We are pleased to announce the arrival of the Peterborough & District Branch. We are currently building up to our first meeting in Peterborough. If anyone is interested in joining please contact one of the following:

Dot Ryder: dot.ryder412@aol.co.uk Tel: 01476 979422

Chris Corker: chris.corker425@aol.co.uk

Tel: 01476 979422

Maggie Bradshaw: m.bradshaw399@btinternet.com

Tel: 01460 221617

Admin email: wracpeterborough@gmail.com

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/WRAC-Peterborough/>

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

NORTH 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

Contact: Sandra Hubbard Tel: 07923 572917

Doncaster

Contact: Doreen Lowery Tel: 01302 729463

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 & East Riding

When: The 1st Friday of the month

Where: Wenlock Barracks, Anlaby Road, Hull, HU3 6PB

Contact: Confirm details with Janet Marshall
Tel 01482 809042

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: 01964 534280

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: 11.00 on the 1st Thursday of the month except January and August

Where: Wetherspoon, Cambridge Street, Sheffield

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

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 Tel: 07813 313508 or

Kath Kirtley Tel: 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.irishcentreirmingham.co.uk

Contact: Babs Blay Tel: 07921 832094

Derby (Informal Branch)

Contact: Judy Smith at judy.hirst123@ntlworld.com or phone 07790 848364.

Hereford

When: 19.00 on the last Tuesday of the month

Where: The Herdsman, 54 Widemarsh, Hereford, HR4 9HG

Contact: Sharon Joyce Tel: 01905 821189

Leicester & Nottingham

When: 13.30 on the 2nd Tuesday of the month
Where: Devonshire Place, 78 London Road, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 0RA
Contact: Sue Slattery Tel: 0116 259 2743

Marches & Mid Wales

When: 3 - 4 times per year
Where: Location varies, phone for details
Contact: Marianne Hooker Tel 01588 640553

Phoenix (a regional Branch covering Wales, parts of the Midlands and North West)

When: Every 3 months
Where: Phone for details
Contact: Maggie Purkis Tel: 01952 251717 or 07808 139543

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
chris.powell3@mypostoffice.co.uk

Tamworth

When: 19.30 on the last Wednesday of the month
Where: The Moat House, 35-36 Lichfield Street, Tamworth, B79 7QQ
Contact: Belle Jenkinson Tel: 01827 64156

SCOTLAND

Aberdeen

When: 10.15 on the 1st Monday of the month (except January & May)
Where: Ma Cameron's (Snug Bar), Little Belmont Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1JG
Contact: Joan Bartlett Tel: 01224 596520

Dumfriesshire

Contact: Dorah Mundell Tel: 01387 811524

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: Liz Dixon Tel: 01786 743635

NORTHERN IRELAND

Ulster

When: Meetings 3-4 times per year
Where: Location varies, call to confirm details
Contact: Margaret Pridgen Tel: 07745 791620 or maggiepridgen@gmail.com

NATIONAL & OVERSEAS

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

Mediterranean

When: At least every 6 months or more, 1st meeting to be held in Benidorm on 28 May 15

Contact: Melanie Howell melphil@britvegas.com
Tel: 0034 9658 78963 Mob: 0034 622 036333

Postal & Courier (Informal Branch)

When: A WRAC Postal & Courier reunion is held once per year.

Contact: Margaret Grant MBE Tel: 01875 611777 or mgrant2009@live.co.uk

WRAC LIONESSES 3rd FUNDRAISING EVENT

Event: BUPA Great North 10k Run

Place: Gateshead

Date: Sunday 5th July 2015

Time: 1030hrs

If you are interested in joining the WRAC LIONESSES team please contact Wendy Hooton by email wendyhootonski@aol.com on Facebook or via the WRAC Association HQ (Tel 0300 400 1992). If you would like to sponsor us you will find our fundraising page on the Virgin Money Giving website www.virginmoneygiving/team/wraclionesses3. We are raising funds for the WRAC Association and Cancer Research UK (the events main charity).

You can find information about the event, details of the route, and how to enter at www.greatrun.org/north10k We finish the run (although you can walk) at the famous Gateshead International Stadium.

If you're not a runner/walker COME AND SUPPORT US, we would be delighted to see you cheering us on along the Newcastle Gateshead Quayside and at the finishing line wearing your green WRAC Association fleeces, t-shirts or hoodies, it would be amazing. Oh, and it's a fabulous weekend too - NOT TO BE MISSED!

RAPC & ATS KIDDERMINSTER REUNIONS Betty Carney



2011 Reunion - reminiscing about Wolverley

I served in the ATS, attached to the RAPC, at Wolverley Camp just north of Kidderminster. Originally the UK base of the US Army 52nd General Hospital the camp then became the home of the RAPC & ATS Regimental Pay Office. For over 30 years we held an annual Reunion at the Gainsborough House Hotel in Kidderminster, sadly, due to the fact that many of us are now in our 90s we held our last Reunion in 2011.

ATS EASTBOURNE
petercousins@ntlworld.com
Tel: 0116 292 92324

I am Chairman of the Leicestershire & Rutland Family History Society and when talking recently with a lady about her Aunt being in the ATS in WW2 she showed me this picture. It shows a group of ATS girls with soldiers lined up at the back, all of which, looking at the cap badges, seem to be in different regiments.

The photograph was taken in the Eastbourne area according to the stamp on the back. I wondered if anyone recognizes themselves?

W/158369 PTE E M DEARLOVE Mrs Edna Simson, South Australia

I joined up in December 1941 and was finally called to report on 20 March 1942 for Basic Training in Guildford followed by Radar Training in Devizes. I was posted to 550(M) HAA Bty and served with them in Portsmouth, Southampton, Southsea Common, New Brighton and Finsbury Park. I transferred to the RAPC in Manchester in mid 1945 which is where I met my husband. I was demobbed in 1946 and we emigrated to Australia in 1950 to start a new life.

In the late 1980s a new member of the British Ex Servicewomen's Association turned out to be one of our 550 Bty GL (Radar) girls, we have remained friends to this day. I joined up with a friend called Daphne Brown and sadly lost touch with her. I would love to know what happened to her?

MOVING HOUSE?

If you have moved recently, or are about to move please let us have your new address (and email address) as soon as possible. This will help us reduce the number of Lioness magazines which are returned undelivered.

Please email your change of address to office.
manager@wracassociation.org.uk, phone us on
0300 400 1992 or post to

WRAC Association, Unit 39 Basepoint, Winnall
Valley Road, Winchester SO23 0LD.

PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR OLD POST CODE.



GUILDFORD LIDO IN THE 1960s

Jane Smith

(formerly W/425499 Sgt Stark P J)

One advantage of being based at Queen Elizabeth Barracks was easy access to the wonderful 1930s lido situated just outside the town centre. As a member of the WRAC Staff Band we were usually touring during the summer but I do recall going there just the once on 15 August 1966. We were 18 at the time but got in for half price - unintentionally! It was a boiling hot day but, as I wrote home to my parents, the water was freezing and too cold for swimming so we settled for sunbathing instead.



Jane Smith (nee Stark) at Guildford Lido on 15 August 1966



Shirley Prime (nee Wilks) at Guildford Lido on 15 August 1966

In July 2014 I went there again for the first time in almost fifty years and am pleased to report that it is absolutely lovely! I had forgotten just how large Guildford Lido is, with plenty of room for serious swimming. The water is now heated so it was possible to have a long swim. The buildings have been refurbished, the surroundings re-planted and the pool itself is well managed and maintained. However, as is the case with so many other lidos, the diving boards were removed in the 1970s and the cascades no longer function, with the one shown in my photograph now a flower bed. The refreshment pavilion at least is still in existence.

I wonder, does anyone else have memories of what the Lido used to look like? Do you remember how often you went and what you did there? I've been researching the history of lidos for some years now and would be pleased to hear your reminiscences and, even better, to see your photos! Just drop me a line on pjs@thearbour.plus.com



Guildford Lido 03 July 2014

PETTICOAT MAGAZINE 20 JUNE 1970 W/432793 Avril Major née Went



In 1970 I was a Cpl B2 Clerk serving in Horse Guards Parade (Q Branch, involved in the building of Hyde Park Barracks) and was told I was to have my photo taken for an article to be published in Petticoat magazine. On pages 6-7 of the magazine there is a write up of the three services. There was myself, a WRAF and a WREN lined up in a photographers studio. It was only when it was published that I realised that the army write up was about a Margaret Miller.

DOES YOUR COUNTRY NEED YOU?

Would you enjoy a life in the services? Jane Ennis talks to four girls who do

The advertisements ask why not join the Women's Army, Royal Navy, Police Force, Royal Air Force? And why not? After all, they say it could be a lot of fun.

The advertisements promise "an exciting and varied social life"; "you'll love the travel and the sheer variety"; "there's a NAAFI dance every week and there's never been a dull one"; "food deliciously prepared by expert cooks"; "gets you out of a rut"; "comfortable rooms". Under a photo of a couple getting married it says, "This Wren is getting married to a sailor and we're looking for someone to take her place."

These recruiting advertisements are invariably accompanied by photographs of pretty but unmemorable girls beaming out from under peak caps or berets, as if they agree wholeheartedly with the exotic descriptions of life in uniform.

But can we believe them? Is life in the forces really all fun or is it as we suspected all along: a whole lot of discipline, marching, saluting and shouting with no privacy, no individuality, early rising, cold showers and standing about in the rain?

I asked the only people qualified to give a straight answer: girls already in uniform.

One of a top-line team

At the age of nineteen, **Sergeant Margaret Miller** is one of the youngest sergeants in the Women's Army. She works in Whitehall, London, as a personal assistant to a Major General and wears civilian clothes.

Brought up on a Scottish farm forty-five miles from the nearest town, with the prospects of marrying a farmer or leaving home and taking a nine pound a week typist's job in a strange city before her, the Army seemed like a pleasant alternative.

She says, "Life as a farmer's wife didn't appeal to me and at seventeen, I thought I was too young to marry. The other choice was to leave home and take a poorly-paid job in Edinburgh. A friend and I decided we'd join the Army. We sent for all the forms but when it came to it, she backed out and I went in alone. I was very shy at first, but I thought, ah well, we're all in the same boat; it's strange to all of us."

Margaret had the Scottish equivalent of two "A" levels when she joined up, so promotion came swiftly. Today, her job is much like that of a top-line personal secretary, the difference being that she lives in Army quarters in North London with the usual military restrictions, and her food is provided.

Margaret says she enjoys Army life because she likes the feeling of being one of a team but that she wouldn't recommend it for everyone. "If you resent communal living you'd hate it in the Army."

COD Donnington 1956 Marianne Hooker

PICTURE FROM THE PAST



Staff car gets a spruce and polish

These three drivers from the Women's Royal Army Corps were making sure that one of the staff cars at COD Donnington was in tip-top condition in March 1956.

Published in the Shropshire Star 16 January 2015

2015 WALKING CHALLENGE Marg Davies

After my successful Heart of England Walk in 2014 when I raised £2,800 for charity my new Personal Challenge for 2015 is to walk the Llyn Peninsula Coastal Path, a distance of 100 miles. I will be starting from Porthmadog on Saturday 18th April and walking west and then north through Criccieth, Pwllheli, Abersoch, Aberdaron, Nefyn, Trefor and finishing in Caernarfon on Saturday 25th April.

My main chosen charity this year is Dementia UK, in memory of my grandmother, great-aunt and mother who all succumbed to either Dementia or Alzheimer's. Donations will be allocated as follows (as it's thanks to Cancer Research and the WRAC Association that I'm here, fit and able to do this): Dementia UK 80%, WRAC Association 10%, Cancer Research UK 10%.

You can donate online through Virgin Money Giving by following this link:

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/>

MargaretDaviesWRAC. Please Gift Aid your donation if you are a Tax Payer, it costs you nothing but benefits the charities. If you would like any more information please email me at 43margied1@gmail.com



Photo by J.P.R.S. (Aden)

Cpl. B. A. Clewlow throwing the javelin



"Present Arms"—14 Signal Regiment honour the W.R.A.C.



Air Vice-Marshal T. U. C. Shirley presenting the Inter-Services Netball Cup to 2/Lieut. S. E. Tarry



Photo by Public Relations
Anything can happen when you join the Army! Eighteen months' service, and a posting as a switchboard operator, eventually led to Pte. Brenda Hore meeting the Beatles recently during a break in the shooting of their new film on Salisbury Plain.

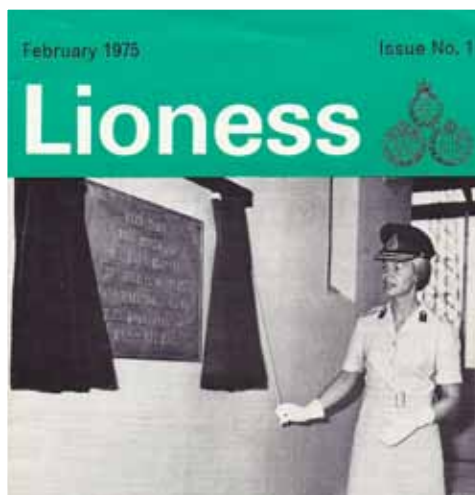
Long Service and Good Conduct Medals



Photo by Public Relations
W.O.I K. R. O'Shea



Photo by courtesy of "The Scotsman"
W.O.II J. Bead, B.E.M.



LCpl M. Woodruffe of Sunderland preparing for the Christmas mail rush in Hong Kong.



HRH The Duchess of Kent meeting Pte L. Clayton a Radar Operator



L to R: Pte Porter, Cpl Dixon, Pte Fitzgerald, LCpl McKenzie, LCpl Van Horrick, Cpl Burleigh, LCpl Jones, Pte Morrison, LCpl Muir.



Members of 8 CPCCD RE at the end of the 4 days Nijmegen March 1974.



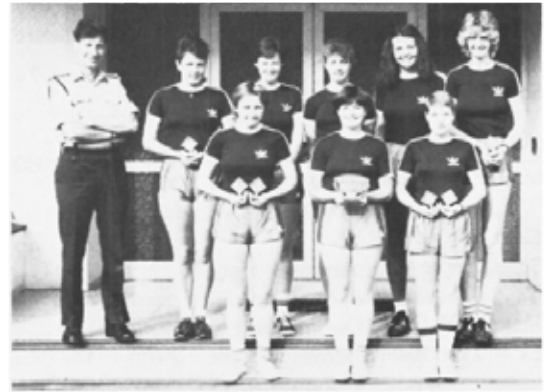
WO2 D. F. Lodge performing with the APTC Gynastics Team on their visit to Gibraltar 1974.



WRAC Welfare Assistants photographed during their course at the WRAC College Camberley
(Courtesy of Soldier Magazine)



A sitting room in Katharine House



L-R: Back Row: Lt Col Howard, LCpl Gordon, Cpl Cullingworth, LCpl Evans, Sgt Exley, Cpl Lilley. Front Row: Cpl Reid, Sat Molloy, Cpl Sutherland.



L-R: LCpl Truby, LCpl Calder, Capt Gibson, 2Lt Allen.



The WRAC members of 68 Squadron take a short break to pose for the camera.



Looking very fit on three winters and no summers!



L-R: Back Row: Cpl Minty, Cpl Burnham, LCpl Lendrum. Front Row: Pte Oakley, Cpl Budworth, Brig Meechie, SSgt Arnold.



LCpl Dardowski receiving the Stacey Cup from Col Duddridge.



Proudly displaying their Institute of Advanced Motorists awards.

Just under one hundred serving and retired Officers and guests enjoyed an excellent evening at the annual WRAC Officers' Dining Club Dinner at the Victory Services Club on Saturday 22 November 2014. The event was wonderfully organised by Debbie Coupland and as ever we welcomed some first time attendees, please do spread the word for future years. Mark the date in your diary now for the third Saturday in November 2015.

*Editor: Please help Debbie in the planning and organisation of future events by ensuring that you return your application form and payment **before the closing date!** Perhaps your email details have changed, or perhaps you have just found us? Either way just email Debbie on debbiecoupland14@gmail.com.*



Ali Brown, Carol Prosser, Lt Col Rowena Griffiths MBE



Members of Commissioning Course WRAC 853 (Apr 86) Col Frances Castle (née Evans), Glynis Gunning-Stevenson (née Ireland), Brig Fiona Gardner CBE, Ishbel Thomson, Sue Mackenzie (née Kingham)



Antoinette Fish (née Leask), Janette Deans, Jenny Ogden



Audrey Purton OBE, Janet Lawson MBE, Bernadette Duncan (née Rimmer), Pepe Simpson (née Hollingsworth)



Barbara Davies, Kathy Hill (née Collet), Anne Griffith (née Whittaker), Annette Harper (née Gall)



Lynne Joyce, Ruth Watt (née Littlejohn), Alison Hoult



Jane Watt, Gilly Potts, Janette Deans



*Louise Lush, Carol Prosser, Sue Evans (née Currie),
Kate Blackburn*



Liz Saxon, Rowena Patrick MBE



*Members of Commissioning Course WRAC 4 (Apr 84)
Rear: Louise Lush, Sarah MacKinnon
Middle: Kate Blackburn, Robina Upton
Front: Carol Prosser, Sue Evans (née Currie), Morag
Philpott, Lucy Mellor*



*Sue Westlake MBE, Mack Maskyns-McIntyre, Jane
Freebairn, Alice Matthews (nee Ferguson)*

WRAC ASSOCIATION BENEVOLENT FUND

Do you need assistance or know of someone who might benefit?

If so your first port of call is your local branch of SSAFA or regional Royal British Legion office.

SSAFA or the RBL will arrange for a trained caseworker to interview you in your home to establish the full range of assistance that you need.

**SSAFA Forcesline 0800 731 4880
Royal British Legion 0808 802 8080**

The caseworker will complete a report that includes details of your household income. This is called means-testing and ensures that the WRAC Benevolent Fund's charitable money goes to those in real need.

When the report is complete it is sent to the WRAC Association Benevolent Fund Secretary.

Applications are then considered at the appropriate grants committee meeting and a decision is taken.

See page 13 for more details

WRAC DINNER CLUB Babs Blay

Anticipation is a big part of the build up to the WRAC Dinner Club every October and this year was no exception. Discussions about what to wear, where to eat on Friday and how many old friends would be there had Facebook buzzing. Messages declaring that journeys had begun were posted so that friends could plot progress as it happened.

New arrivals reported to our reception; to book in, collect their information booklet, buy raffle tickets, buy a new polo shirt, try to win a beautiful piece of artwork, get told where to go by the tourist information desk, order wine or take part in this year's fun event - the Tombola! Everyone wanted to win a teddy sporting a WRAC Dinner Club 2014 T-shirt, a bottle of wine or a consolation chocolate bar. The usual banter amongst Dinner Clubbers ensured that the hotel bar buzzed from Thursday through to Sunday, and even longer for some stalwarts.

The weekend progressed in a frenzy of laughter and reminiscing until the Committee closed down the reception room at 4pm on Saturday, to give themselves time to take a few deep breathes, before dressing in their finery ready for the main event. The sound checks had been done and the WRAC Regimental March was loaded with a finger poised over the play button. Noise levels were off the scale as the doors were flung open and the members paraded into the Gala Dinner. Gasps of delight greeted the spectacular room setting and the newly purchased table decorations. Then everyone clapped along to our Regimental March, Lass of Richmond Hill as they found their tables and settled handbags under chairs. As soon as Chairman, Dot Ryder, had welcomed members to the WRAC Dinner Club 2014 the delicious food started appearing at the tables and then disappearing just as quickly. It seemed like only a few minutes before the traditional raffle was under way and the prizes were whizzing out via the team of runners to the winners. Excitement was gathering momentum as the time arrived to dance until we dropped. Our regular entertainers, Kim and Jake, got under way and the dance floor was full immediately. We had the pleasure of the company of Lady Gaga, Neil Diamond, Frank Sinatra and our favourite, Tina Turner. Kim's rendition of Simply the Best is always the highlight of the evening, with everyone in the room caterwauling along, ensuring very croaky voices the next day. Happy, smiling members headed for their beds at various stages throughout the night, although some stayed in the bar as late as 5am before finding their rooms.

Breakfast on Sunday morning found Dinner Clubbers still on a high. The staff at The St John's Hotel in Solihull bustled non-stop from kitchen to hotplate to keep up with the demand. It's amazing how hungry a person can be after a night of singing and dancing. Every year we hold a Farewell Service before we wend our way home. Under the leadership of Sharon Burman, a packed room sang a rousing hymn, the National Anthem and our WRAC Song, penned by Maggie Purkis. As we said our goodbyes to the strains of Always Look On The Bright Side Of Life, we were looking forward to doing it all again next October. Members will be eagerly awaiting their newsletter at the end of February giving details of the next event.

A small selection of photographs from hundreds taken during the weekend show how much members enjoyed themselves.

Anyone not yet a member of the WRAC Dinner Club might like to have a look at the website on www.wracdinnerclub.co.uk for details and joining application forms.



The Yahoos



The Committee



The oldest attendee Betty Webb (91), seated 2nd from left



New member Madge Cole surrounded by fellow revellers



Angie Hamilton & Linda Armstrong



WRAC Dinner Club Carol Traynor



Kim & Jake



*L-R: Carol Traynor, Jeanette Thirlwell,
Patricia (Flogger) Gates, Pat O'Neil*



Rita Bloomfield, Margaret Smith, Anne Gurney, Lesley Annable, Carol Traynor, Christine Greenwood, Irene Maclean



Carol Traynor & Kath Hughes

where she has lived for 50 years since leaving the services. We last saw her in 2009 when she came to the Blackpool Grand Reunion, it was great to have you with us again Jeanette, look forward to seeing you again in Harrogate for the Grand Reunion.

What is amazing are the ladies who have had major health setbacks but make the journey to be there each year and are nothing less than inspiring. No matter what they turn up each year with a smile and join in with the weekend fun. Amongst many is the lovely, wise Kathleen Hughes who Anne Gurney and I met in the Reception at our first dinner in 2003 at Stoke On Trent. She made us feel welcome straight away, saying to us with her lovely lilting Welsh accent "Well then you are new girls are you? You will have a fantastic weekend, you will dance, laugh, reminisce, and have a wonderful time, and you will come back next year". Well that prediction of Kathleen's certainly came true, you couldn't keep us away after that first dinner, we have attended every one since. It has certainly has been worth it to see Kathleen each year and listen to her tales of service days and homely advice. Then there is Jackie Folds who is recovering from a horrific accident when a car ran into her at a bus stop last year. In spite of still having to contend with the aftermath of her injuries she gallantly came to see us for the day on the Saturday and stayed for the dinner. A kind friend had brought her all the way and took her back home again that evening, just so she could be with her old pals for a few hours. Jackie is so over the moon at being in touch with old pals from Singapore and other postings. Jackie you are a shining example to us in how to deal with what life throws at us. Another example of dealing with adversity is Agnes Biog. Lovely Agnes, always with a wonderful smile happy to be with her comrades again, it makes the packing and the journey certainly worth while to see these brave ladies each year, and makes us resolute and determined to try to follow their example. Thank you ladies you are simply the best.



Includes: Irene Maclean, Carol Traynor, Anne Gurney, Jackie Folds



Includes: Irene Maclean, Carol Traynor, Anne Gurney, Jackie Folds, Madge Cole

We had another fabulous WRAC Dinner in Solihull in October 2014, seeing pals old and new at these annual events is always heart warming. The fun and laughter and banter as always is just wonderful and takes us right back to our service days, if it could be bottled we would make a fortune because it is something very special indeed. Jeanette Thirlwell joined us from America

Kim and Jake's entertainment on the Saturday evening dinner was fantastic yet again. They always make the Saturday evening dinner sparkle and know exactly the right kind of music for us to invade the dance floor from the first song till the last tune (aching feet allowing!). Thank you Kim and Jake, long may you be with us. You have gelled so well like no other entertainers could possibly do, your professionalism and enthusiasm is amazing, we are getting quality entertainment which beats anything on the TV!

A big thank you to the Dinner Club Committee, you give up your weekends to enable us to have these wonderful dinner weekends. You enable us to meet old pals and make new ones and have a weekend in a nice hotel with good food and lovely staff, which is very much appreciated. We are so lucky to be able to have these fabulous events in our lives. Here's to many more happy times together, best wishes to all in the WRAC Dinner Club.

Mentioned In Dispatches

*Editor: 'Mentioned in Dispatches' is a new feature for Lioness and serves to replace the long standing system of considering regional Branch members for the award of a Certificate of Appreciation. This new process will allow all Association members to be eligible for nomination, and enable everyone to read about the contribution an individual has made, either to their Branch or to the Association. The method of nomination for an individual remains via **Branch Secretaries to Area Chairman** for regional Branch members, or direct to Association HQ for those who are HQ Branch members (i.e. not a member of a geographic Branch). All nominations are submitted for approval at a meeting of the Council of the WRAC Association (held twice per year).*

MRS JOAN LAKE

Cardiff/Marches and Mid Wales Branch



Regardless of the distance, Joan has attended every major Association event over the last 20 years and has thrown herself into helping at those events upon her arrival. Every November Joan travelled to London where she represented the Branch in the Cenotaph march past. However, due to her husband's failing health and her own heart condition, in 2013 finally accepted she could no longer stand about in the cold.

When Cardiff Branch closed at the end of 2007, Joan transferred to Marches and Mid Wales Branch along with Kathleen Hughes and Cordelia Harding. Kath and Cordelia have leant heavily on Joan for transport ever since and she has been the mainstay of that little group.

Maggie Purkis

'SPEAKING' LIONESS

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 (local rate call, including mobiles).

MRS KATHERINE KYNE Luton Branch Secretary 1999 - 2012



Kathy's sterling service to both Luton Branch and the Association has, thus far, gone unrecognised. I met her first at Aylesbury Branch, she was then instrumental in the formation of the Hemel Hempstead Branch.

When she moved to the Luton area we welcomed her with open arms. Fortright and honest, she was an extremely competent and hard working Branch Secretary for many years. She could always be relied upon to support any outside activities we were involved in, as long as she had time for her beloved bowls. Whenever you needed Kathy she was there, I'm proud to call her a friend.

Madge D Evans
(former Chair Luton Branch)

MRS SYLVIA MUSGRAVE Bath Branch

Sylvia Musgrave was a founder member of the Bath Branch in 1947 and is, I believe, the sole remaining member of that group. She has held the posts of Chairman and Secretary at various times throughout the last sixty seven years; and since our Chairman, Betty Keating, died at the end of last year Sylvia has filled the double post of Chairman and Secretary.

Sylvia rarely, if ever, misses a meeting and has entertained the Branch members in her own home. In spite of severely reduced vision she is indefatigable in promoting the interests of the Branch. Over the years she has obtained support for Branch activities from other organisations such as White Ensign and Bath United Services Association and commercial organisations such as Waitrose.

Sylvia Musgrave is the axle around which the members of the Bath Branch revolve.

Patricia Edridge

ATS MEMBER REACHES HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

Jane Cooper (Niece and Goddaughter)



Mary Susan Westwood was born on 26th January 1915 at Wolverhampton. She was educated at Hiatt Ladies' College, Wellington, Shropshire and then Royal Holloway College. At the time of the Munich Crisis in the autumn of 1938 Mary joined the Auxiliary Fire Service as a part-time volunteer, working as a driver, an observer and a member of a pump crew. In 1939 she started helping with the Red Cross Library and books for the troops, which later became the St John & Red Cross Hospital Library Service, the beginning of an interest that became very important in her later life.

On the evening of 2nd September 1939 Mary was at the bungalow of the AFS Section Officer, helping to fill sandbags. She arrived home in the small hours, so was still in bed the following day (Sunday) to hear Mr Chamberlain, the prime minister, broadcast at 11 a.m. that Britain was at war with Germany. Almost immediately the air raid sirens wailed over the radio. In 1940 she was transferred to a Fire Service Section nearer home, mainly on cookery duties ('tripe & onions'), not fire-fighting. As her age group was coming up for conscription (26) she

decided to volunteer rather than be called up and was allocated to the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

She spent her whole army career in England, advancing from Local Acting Unpaid LCpl training the new intakes, through full LCpl, Cpl, Sgt, and finally passing her WOSBE and OCTU to become a 2nd Lt. She was sent on courses, on the secretarial side of looking after a Company office; on the work of an NCO, on make do and mend, electrical work and maintenance; on a pay course which qualified her to be on audit boards checking company accounts. In 1945 she went home on compassionate leave because her mother was ill and this was the end of her army life.

Although she did not see service abroad the army had given her training in many skills which she put to good use in a lifetime of different kinds of voluntary work. She became a caseworker for SSAFA, which continued for 40 years altogether. She received a certificate from SSAFA in recognition of her work. She also resumed her work with the OSJ and BRCS Hospital Library Department. With the advent of the NHS it was felt that some basic training in Librarianship was advisable, as a capitation fee was being paid for each patient served. So she attended the course at Grosvenor Crescent in 1953 and was awarded the Rosamund Brown cup for 1953-54 as she achieved 93% in the Librarian Category Training Examination.

Politics was another sphere of activity for Mary. She started working for the local Conservative Association in 1948, as a volunteer, and continued for 18 years (3 years full-time). She called herself 'dogsbody' but she seems to have more or less run the election campaign office. In 1951 she was responsible for arranging that anyone who could possibly need it had a postal vote. 650 postal votes were registered and Enoch Powell, who first became Conservative MP for Wolverhampton in 1951 with a majority of 691, said that Mary's work had won the election because the figure was so close to the majority. She was very proud of their association and his friendship.

In February 1969 Mary's mother died and she and her sister moved to Bognor Regis. Her life there was also filled with voluntary activity. The chairwoman of the local Conservative party, on hearing of her previous experience in hospital librarianship, immediately asked her to start a housebound library service. Knowing that hospital readers mostly wanted westerns, thrillers and romances, Mary realised that housebound people would probably have the same tastes. Local libraries were not usually prepared to allow large numbers of this kind of book out on long loans. So she began with notices in a local newssheet, asking not only for volunteers but also for contributions of books. She soon had 500 books collected in the top attic of the house she shared with her sister. More space was needed, and once it was discovered that the RAF had a hut in the town with an adjoining store that they did not use, the housebound readers' books were moved there. The service was growing all the time and by the end she had 70 volunteers and three to four hundred readers. Mary was awarded the MBE for this work and I had the great pleasure of being present, with my husband, in Buckingham Palace to watch her receive it.

After 43 years in Bognor a fall in 2012 landed her in hospital for the first time in her life, and much to her indignation. In order to be nearer to her remaining family she then moved to a nursing home in East Sussex where she still lives.

Governance Of The WRAC Association

GOVERNANCE OF THE WRAC ASSOCIATION

This article is aimed at giving members of the Association an insight into the governance of the Association with particular reference to the Trustees and Council. These are the two main governing bodies within the Association and both are answerable to the members at the Annual General Meeting. They are supported by the Executive and Finance Committee (EFC) and the Benevolence Fund Grants Committee.

CHARITABLE OBJECT

The Charitable Object of the WRAC Association is to promote the efficiency of the Army by:

- Maintaining contact between former members of Queen Mary's Auxiliary Corps (QMAAC), the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), the Auxiliary Territorial Service Territorial Army (ATS TA), Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC), Women's Royal Army Corps Territorial Army (WRAC TA), WRAC Territorial and Volunteer Reserve (WRAC TAVR) and women still serving in the Army, fostering mutual friendship between them and providing for social gatherings.
- Fostering esprit de corps, comradeship, welfare and preserving the traditions of the QMAAC, ATS, ATS (TA), WRAC, WRAC (TA) and WRAC (TAVR).

The administration and activities of the Association are governed by the WRAC Association Constitution 2013 which is available to all members and can be read either in hard copy or on the Association website.

TRUSTEES. The Trustees of the Association are effectively the guardians of the Charitable Object. They are responsible for the management of all of the monies and investments to the benefit of the Association and are also responsible for the strategic direction of the Association. The Trustees must plan ahead looking at the requirements for the running of the Association, events promoting esprit de corps and the distribution of benevolence in the future and make all of the financial decisions. The Trustees currently meet twice per year and submit the Association accounts to the auditors and the Charity Commission on an annual basis.



Meeting of Trustees 15 January 2015
Standing: Rowena Patrick MBE, Karen Loftus, Chris Corker, Sue Donovan, Jackie Walton
Seated: Isabel McCord, Rowena Griffiths MBE, Ali Brown, Audrey Smith
Trustees not present: Brig (Retd) Shirley Nield CBE, Brig (Retd) Nicky Moffat CBE

The Constitution 2013 currently allows for up to 16 Trustees to include the 4 Officers of the Association who are; the Vice President, the Chairman of the EFC, the Honorary Treasurer and the Chairman of the Benevolent Fund Grants Committee and up to 12 Elected Trustees. Elected Trustees must have served in the Army as listed above, be a member of the Association and are elected for an initial term of 3 years. Officers and Trustees are elected on the basis of their interest in the Association, their skills and they must have the time available to give to the Association of 6 – 10 days per year. Expenses are paid in accordance with the Association Expenses Policy.

COUNCIL. Council sets the strategy for the maintenance of the close relationship with the Association Branches and all members. Council also is a decision making forum for strategic and operational change as it affects the members of the Association. Council currently meets twice per year and these meetings are the bridge between the members of the Association and the development of policy. Any Association member can raise issues through their Area Chairman to Council.



Meeting of Council 15 January 2015
Standing: Hazel Edwards, Dot Ryder, Maggie Purkis, Ali Brown, Audrey Smith, Rowena Griffiths MBE, Isabel McCord, Wendy Hooton
Seated: Jo Young, Kate McGregor, Brig (Retd) Shirley Nield CBE, Mack Maskens-McIntyre

Council is currently made up of the Officers of the Association, the Area Chairmen and 2 Life Vice Presidents. Council members must have served in the Army as listed in the Charitable Object (above), be a member of the Association and are elected for an indefinite period. Area Chairmen represent all of their Branch members at Council and to the Trustees. Expenses are paid in accordance with the Association Expenses Policy.

Should any Association member be interested in serving as a Trustee, their first point of contact is the Vice President on ali.brown@wracassociation.org.uk or the Association HQ on 0300 400 1992

NORTH WEST AREA CHAIRMAN

Editor: Hazel Edwards has just taken over the post of North West Area Chairman from Carole Montessori-Gorman.



My name is Hazel Edwards and I enlisted into the WRAC at Guildford in 1975 and served a term of 3 years before leaving to get married. I did my trade training at Blackdown in Camberley and spent twelve months at COD Donnington then a further two years at Middle Wallop finally returning to COD Donnington before leaving the army.

I joined the WRAC Association in 1981 as an Annual Member and have been a member of both the Wrexham and the Chester branch. In 1988 I became a Life Member of the Association and have been a regular member of the Chester branch for the last four years. I became a life member of the WRAC Dinner Club in 1998 and served on the committee as the Dinner Club Secretary for a three year term.

I married shortly after leaving the WRAC and we have two sons and celebrate our 37th wedding anniversary very soon. When my children were younger I helped to coach the local gymnastics team and became the Club Treasurer of the local junior football club both my sons' played for. My husband recently retired and we've purchased a motorhome so hope to spend some time travelling around the United Kingdom and Europe.

Since leaving the WRAC most of my career was spent in Retail and Area Management until being medically retired in 2001. In the last twelve years I have been a Volunteer Advisor for the CAB and organised a Global Online Support Group for patients with autoimmune diseases and I'm currently the Area Contact for Anticoagulation Europe which helps patients on Anticoagulants. I look forward to meeting and getting to know the other ladies of the North West Area and will be attending the Grand Reunion in Harrogate.

HOW DO I SUBMIT AN ARTICLE FOR LIONESS?

Articles for inclusion in the next edition of Lioness must be received by Friday the 10th July 2015. 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

- Please **type the text into the body of the email** if at all possible, I don't need a beautifully laid out document.
- **Try to avoid sending text in attached documents.** If you do attach a document can you please ensure it is in Word (Windows) or Pages (Mac) format i.e. the attached document has a .doc or .pages ending.
- **Short articles** are really appreciated! The equivalent of no more than one side of A4.

Photos

- **3 or 4 good photos only, you select the best, I don't have the time to sift!**
- Send photos as attachments in a .jpg format.
- Do not 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 MEMBERSHIP

Joining is easy and membership is open to any woman who has served in the ATS or WRAC as a Regular or Territorial Army soldier.

Annual Membership £5

Life Membership £50

Overseas Annual Membership £8.50

**Apply on-line via the website
www.wracassociation.org.uk,
email**

**office.manger@wracassociation.org.uk
or phone 0300 400 1992**

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES For the year ended 31 October 2014

		Unrestricted				
	Notes	General Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2014 £	Total 2013 £ (As Restated)
INCOMING RESOURCES						
Incoming resources						
Incoming resources from generated funds:						
Voluntary Income	1	35,291	4,150	28,944	68,385	119,288
Investment Income	2	17,558	-	124,926	142,484	158,695
Incoming resources from charitable activities	3	3,777	-	-	3,777	4,637
Other incoming resources	4	10,691	-	1,780	12,471	4,860
Total Incoming Resources		67,317	4,150	155,650	227,117	287,480
Resources Expended						
Cost of generating funds:						
Cost of generating voluntary income	5	58,851	-	21,822	80,673	88,606
Charitable activities	7	29,879	-	211,627	241,506	236,745
Governance costs	8	9,819	-	3,012	12,831	16,181
Total resources expended		98,549	-	236,461	335,010	341,532
NET (OUTGOING)/INCOMING RESOURCES BEFORE TRANSFERS		(31,232)	4,150	(80,811)	(107,893)	(54,052)
Transfers between funds	15	3,176	(3,176)	-	-	-
NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR		(28,056)	974	(80,811)	(107,893)	(54,052)
OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS & LOSSES						
Gains / (losses) on investments:						
Unrealised	10	4,011	-	53,500	57,511	603,419
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		(24,045)	974	(27,311)	(50,382)	549,367
Fund balances brought forward at 1 November 2013	18	692,794	26,824	5,399,510	6,119,128	5,569,761
Fund balances carried forward at 31 October 2014	18	668,749	27,798	5,372,199	6,068,746	6,119,128

The net movement in funds for the year arises from the charity's continuing activities

No separate Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses has been presented as all such gains and losses have been dealt with in the Statement of Financial Activities

BALANCE SHEET
As at 31 October 2014

	Notes	2014 £	2013 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Fixed Assets	9	3,903	1,368
Investments	10	5,947,782	5,937,956
		<u>5,951,685</u>	<u>5,939,324</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock		5,526	5,722
Debtors	11	49,747	68,908
Cash at bank and in hand	12	83,962	115,219
		<u>139,235</u>	<u>189,849</u>
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	13	22,174	10,045
		<u>117,061</u>	<u>179,804</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		<u>6,068,746</u>	<u>6,119,128</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
		<u>6,068,746</u>	<u>6,119,128</u>
FUNDS OF THE ASSOCIATION			
Restricted Funds:			
The Benevolent Funds	16	4,562,415	4,592,136
The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund	17	809,784	807,374
Unrestricted funds:			
General Funds	18	668,749	692,794
Designated funds:			
Membership life subscription fund	15	27,798	26,824
TOTAL FUNDS	18	<u>6,068,746</u>	<u>6,119,128</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008)

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 15/01/2015 and were signed on its behalf by:



Colonel (Retired) A K Brown, Chairman

Royal Hospital Chelsea



Audrey Merton BEM Poppy Collecting with Strictly star Simon Webbe



Audrey Merton BEM with former Strictly Come Dancing professionals Flavia Cacace and Vincent Simone at the Ceremony of the Christmas Cheese



Dorothy Hughes meeting HRH Prince Harry at the WRAC Association plot at the Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey



Marjorie Cole and Bimbo Coleman claimed a spot on the Prime Minister's Christmas card.



Christmas Grants Lunch: Dorothy Hughes, Audrey Merton BEM, Bimbo Coleman

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL (RETIRED)
MARY W SOAMES OBE née HICKSON
14 June 1916 - 22 November 2014**



It is with great sadness we report that Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Mary Soames OBE, née Hickson, passed away on 22nd November 2014. Mary was a Life Vice President of the WRAC Association and Chairman of the ATS & WRAC Benevolent Funds Grants Committee for nearly 30 years.

A Memorial Service will be held in Farnham Castle Chapel on Tuesday 19 May 2015 at 2pm. The Reverend Susan Wing, Honorary Padre of the WRAC Association, will be officiating. Association members will be warmly welcomed by Mary's family and are requested to email sue.hatton@wracassociation.org.uk or leave a message on 0300 400 1992 by 01 May 15 if they wish to attend, this is purely for catering purposes. A full obituary will be published in the next edition of Lioness.

Sue Westlake MBE

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL (RETIRED)
JOAN FREELAND née Temple
18 July 1927 - 03 December 2014**



Visiting CAD Kineton 25 October 1977

Joan enlisted as a mature entrant, aged 27, on 9 September 1954. After initial training at the WRAC Centre, Guildford she completed her officer training at Hindhead and was commissioned on 27 July 1955.

Her first posting was as OC Pln and Asst Adj 12 Bn WRAC, then in Richmond Park. Joan served with this unit until 1957 when she was posted, as a Staff Captain, to the Amphibious Warfare HQ in London where she remained until 1960. This HQ had only recently been formed from the wartime Combined Operations HQ which had been responsible for the planning, execution and administration of all Tri-Service operations such as the Normandy invasion. It isn't possible to know exactly what Joan did because she would never talk about this posting but it would have been integral to making sure the correct planning and preparation had been made to help the success of future Tri-Service operations.

After that Joan became the Adjutant at the School of Instruction at Hindhead. In 1963 she was off to Tripoli where she was appointed OC 19 Ind Coy WRAC. Her next posting was again on promotion and she became OC 10 Coy WRAC in Aldershot. However her passport was soon needed again and in 1967 she was off to Cyprus where she served until 1970.

Back to UK again as DADWRAC based at HQ Scotland, Edinburgh. At that time I was an Officer Cadet with Tayforth UOTC which took in cadets from St Andrews, Dundee and Stirling universities. Joan somehow arranged for our Scottish Country Dancing Team to dance in the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall in 1971. It was the first time such a "turn" had been included and it was a huge privilege to take part. Then it was back south to Aldershot as AIPT/OC WRAC, at the Army

School of Physical Training. Joan was an excellent tennis player and played at Army level.

In 1973 she was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and appointed as ADWRAC based at Bulford and responsible for South West, West Midlands and Wales. After 5 years in post, she decided to retire in March 1978 after some 24 years commissioned service.

In November of the same year Joan joined the Salisbury Branch of the WRAC Association and was appointed as Branch President in September 1998, a post she held until she passed away. As well as being a supportive and active member of the branch, she was also a regular attender of the Officers' Dining Club lunches and dinners which were initially held at the Army and Navy Club.

Jane Freebairn

JEAN BROOKS née Gardiner 18 April 2014

It was when the war ended and the annual ATS Reunions at the Royal Albert Hall ceased in 1949 that Jean Brooks was determined to keep in touch with 30 or so friends and colleagues she had served with at Essex & Suffolk District HQ. For the following 55 years she personally arranged for annual Reunion luncheons at the Victory Services Club in London for ex Felstead and Newmarket ATS friends.

By 2002 numbers had sadly dwindled, death and illness having taken its toll. Yet Jean still organised for the remaining few of us left to meet annually at the club for an aperitif, followed by lunch in the VSC or at an Italian restaurant in the Edgware Road. By 2007 Jean became unable to travel and she sadly passed away in April 2014. Surely 59 privately organised reunions of ATS personnel who served together must be a record for friendship and comradeship.

Margaret Pollitt

W/153913 DOROTHY DUNN née Angus September 2014

Cleveland Branch are sorry to announce the death of one of our founder members, Dorothy (Doff) Dunn. Doff served in the ATS from 5th June 1942 until 20th May 1946 in Ack Ack radar.

A member of the Branch Committee for a number of years Doff was always there to lend a hand at any task, including assisting the Treasurer from 2000 until just recently, when she could no longer get to meetings. Most years saw Doff at the AckAck Reunion at York and at our next meeting she would be buzzing about all the ladies had done. At the 75th Anniversary of the formation of the ATS we managed to get some of our older sisters to join us for a special meeting. We had a CD to watch of wartime, a cake, some wine and they all went home with a bunch of flowers and were very happy!

We will all miss Doff as she was always smiling and so very proud of the Association and of course her years in the ATS.

Irene Maclean

WO2 JENNIFER A PAYNE 29 August 1948 - 21 September 2014



Jenny joined the WRAC in 1966 aged 18, after basic training at Guildford she completed Driver training at Yeovil and went on to serve for 22 years.

I first met Jenny in 1968 at HQ BAOR in Rheindahlen Garrison, we were both serving in the WRAC as drivers attached to 68 Sqn RCT. It was the time of the Cold War and we were on constant standby to repel the Russians should they advance! We worked very long hours but when off duty we let our hair down in the local Hostelrys. Some could be a bit rough and were out of bounds, forbidden to us by the Army, but we went anyway and when fights did break out we always made good our escape before the Royal Military Police arrived.

We also made the most of our free time; camping and visiting many places in Germany, Holland and other countries. Jenny was well travelled visiting Kenya, Australia, New Zealand and America. She was an accomplished sportswoman, accruing many awards and trophies for running, long jump, rounders and netball. She also enjoyed sailing, canoeing, white water rafting, horse riding and many other sports.

Jenny could be very critical of other people, especially their driving. One time, when we were on holiday in Cornwall together, I had just bought a new Renault 12. It was easier to let Jenny drive it than put up with the constant criticism, that was until she crashed it into a Cornish 'hedge'. Cornish 'hedges' are made of stone so I was not best pleased!

Jenny came to my aid in the 1970s when I bought my first home, a terraced house in need of a lot of renovation. At that time I had a big ginger tom cat called Ginger. He and Jenny would wind each other; he would pester her and follow her up ladders, in the end she got really annoyed and said "that cat is possessed chuck him out before I break my neck". I did as I was told but Ginger, undeterred, climbed to the outside of the window that Jenny was painting and proceeded to follow her brush up and down with his paw. It was at this time that Jenny taught me to cook chilli con carne. It became my favourite dish at dinner parties and Jenny would never fail to tell everyone that it was she who taught me to cook.

Jenny could be outspoken and critical, we used to say Payne by name and nature, but she had a very kind heart. She was a good and loyal friend to me and to many other people, she will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by us all.

WO2 Josie Windsor

DOREEN I PLEDGE **21 April 1929 - 12 May 2014**

Pledge sadly passed away rather suddenly in a local nursing home. "Pledge" was how she loved to be known and everyone in the TA recognised that. Generally she was a happy person and I can't remember her missing a Drill Night during the time we served together.

Leaving home she took a job with British Rail and moved to Southampton where the Girls Friendly Society (GFS) Hostel became her "home", as I recall she had a top floor room. In the early 1950s she joined the TA, No.2 Platoon MT; her work was varied, she excelled at admin but enjoyed driving, drill and map reading.

On reorganisation of the TA Pledge, Mary Baker and myself joined the Aldershot Branch of the WRAC Association. We later discovered there was a Southampton Branch which we then transferred to, it wasn't long before Pledge was made Secretary.

Sadly an earlier hip problem returned in the 1980s, many operations followed with long stays in hospital and eventually she became reliant on a wheelchair. Unfortunately we all lost touch, due in part to patient confidentiality rules, and it was some time before contact details were made available.

Many of us will no doubt remember Pledge in her TA days, when she was happy, loyal and very popular.

Jean Doe

W/236631 CONNIE SMITHDALE **née Gregory** **04 April 1926 - 14 September 2014**



Connie served in the ATS from January 1944 to January 1947. She was a Driver/Mechanic and would go up to Scotland

accompanying convoys in order to do running repairs and keep them all moving. She went alone, wherever there were broken down vehicles and drove to Scotland in mid winter, dreadful weather conditions and she was absolutely frozen by the time she got there.

She was a valued member of Sheffield Branch, rarely missing a meeting until she had a fall while on holiday. She was quite badly injured and spent one week in Newcastle Infirmary before being transferred to a Sheffield hospital.

She served for 25 years as an official timekeeper/judge at swimming Galas and was a keen member of her local Townswomen's Guild. Connie is sadly missed by all her fellow members of the Association.

Brenda Colley

W/372016 DOREEN E THOMPSON **née CHATHAM** **01 October 2014**



Doreen served from 1951 until 1961 both in the Regular and Territorial Army with 329 (Warwickshire & Worcestershire) Battalion WRAC (TA) reaching the rank of Sergeant. She appears to have served mainly in MT as her numerous black and white photos show a variety of motorcycles, cars, jeeps and trucks being driven or posed with.

Doreen went on to become a claims assessor for 10 years before her second career began in 1973 as a Driving Examiner in Weston-super-Mare. In 1984 she was appointed Senior Driving Examiner for the Western Traffic Area, Department of Transport, a relatively rare achievement for a woman in those days. After retiring she travelled extensively with car and caravan throughout the United Kingdom and Western Europe.

She suffered from diabetes for over 50 years and suffered a leg amputation three years ago, but still managed to carry on driving, albeit a mobility scooter. In 2013 she launched the Weston-super-Mare Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal; looking resplendent in a WRAC Association blazer, driven around in a specially adapted motorcycle/sidecar combination.

There is no doubt that the WRAC was the making of Doreen and she lived up to the Corps motto 'Gentle in manner, resolute in deed'. She leaves behind husband John, step-children Richard and Jan and their children Lee and Lewis.

Richard Thompson

LAST POST

ANNIS, Mrs Phyllis K, née Newson, of the Isle of Wight on 17 October 2013, ATS.

BANTOCK, Miss Vera, of Four Marks on 28 September 2014, WRAC.

BRAYBROOK, Mrs Dorothy M, née Pook, of Bournemouth on 04 January 2015, ATS.

BROOKS, Mrs Jean, née Gardiner, of Cheltenham on 18 April 2014, ATS.

CHARLESWORTH, Miss Madge, of Rotherham on 07 April 2013, ATS.

DIXON, Miss Dorothy, of Hastings on 11 September 2014, ATS.

DORNEY, Mrs Carole, née Wood, of Plaistow on 25 May 2014, WRAC.

DUCK, Mrs Joan, née Mewitt, of St Leonards-on-Sea on 05 May 2014, ATS.

DUNN, Mrs Dorothy, née Angus, of Middlesbrough in September 2014, ATS.

FOWLER, Miss Brenda, of Kirkby-in-Ashfield on 12 December 2014, ATS.

FREELAND, Mrs Joan D J, née Temple, of Heytesbury on 03 December 2014, WRAC.

HAYWARD, Miss Audrey, of Taunton on 02 October 2014, WRAC.

HAMMOND, Mrs Beryl, née Brown, of Bournemouth on 28 August 2014, ATS.

HARPER, Mrs Dorothy B, of Salisbury on 06 September 2014, ATS.

HENDERSON, Mrs Liz, née Dale, of Shrewsbury in 2014, ATS.

HILL, Mrs Dorothy M, née Wiles, of Whittlesey on 24 August 2014, WRAC.

KAY, Mrs Christine, née Jukes, of Eastbourne on 13 August 2014, ATS.

KIRTON, Mrs Doris, née Dummer, of Tewksbury on 12 December 2014, ATS.

KITCHEN, Mrs Amy, née Tomkinson, of Castle Bromwich on 11 February 2014, ATS.

LAWLER, Mrs Joan L, née Jackson, of Tiptree on 29 August 2014, ATS.

MACKENZIE-INCE, Miss Christina M, of Portmahomack on 07 October 2014, WRAC/RMP.

MATTISON, Mrs Elizabeth, née Fry, of Bournemouth on 15 September 2014, ATS/WRAC.

MEPPEM, Mrs Lilian, née Keller, of Rye on 30 September 2014, ATS.

MORAN, Mrs Joan, née Cutler, of Poulton-le-Fylde on 28 October 2014, ATS.

MULLEY, Mrs Mary I, née Hayton, of Barnoldswick on 05 February 2014, ATS.

MURPHY, Mrs Alma, of Lisburn on 16 November 2013, WRAC.

NORRIS, Miss Monika, of New Ollerton on 28 November 2014, WRAC.

PARKIN, Mrs Beryl P, née Bennett, of Heanor on 29 September 2014, ATS.

PAYNE, Miss Jennifer A, of Northampton on 21 September 2014, WRAC.

PLEDGE, Miss Doreen I, of Southampton on 12 May 2014, WRAC.

QUAR, Miss Gillian, of Croydon on 02 August 2014, ATS.

RAYNER, Mrs Edith M, née Mayne, of Burton-upon-Trent on 25 September 2014, ATS.

SMITH, Mrs Iris, of Wimbledon on 31 October 2014, ATS.

SMITH, Mrs Margaret, née Paine, of Landrake, Cornwall on 31 December 2014, ATS.

SMITHDALE, Mrs Connie, née Gregory, of Sheffield on 14 September 2014, ATS.

SOAMES, Mrs Mary W OBE, née Hickson, of Farnham on 22 November 2014, ATS/WRAC.

TALBOT, Mrs Eileen, of Lilleshall in 2014, ATS.

THOMPSON, Mrs Doreen E, of Weston-super-Mare on 01 October 2014, WRAC.

VALE, Mrs Winifred P, née Compton, of Hastings on 10 May 2014, ATS.

VERNON, Mrs Doreen J S, née Weir, of Bootle on 09 December 2014, ATS.

WOLTON, Mrs Irene, née Threadgill, of Leighton Buzzard on 05 November 2014, WRAC.

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