

LIONESS





WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

(Incorporating the QMAAC & ATS Comrades Association)

Registered Charity No. 206184, founded in 1919

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Maj (Retd) D Ryder (East Midlands)

Ms A Orlinski (Northern)

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Mrs B Anderson (Wales & West Midlands)

Mrs S Bingham (South & South West)

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STATE OF THE NATION



Association Vision Statement

“To be a recognised and accessible charity, supporting women who served in the ATS, ATS TA, WRAC, WRAC TA and WRAC TAVR, to which our members are proud to belong”.

We have continued with the work to ensure that the Association moves into the future on a sustainable financial basis. I am very pleased to be able to say that, due to internal re-balancing and taking some cost-effective decisions, we now have financial plans in place to underpin our activities well into the future. A full brief on our strategic activities will be given by myself at the AGM in March 2018 and I hope as many of you as possible will be able to be there.

This has been a busy 6 months with the fantastic weekend in Stratford upon Avon in March celebrating 100 years of Women in the Army and culminating with the Women at War 100 celebrations at the National Memorial Arboretum in July. The profile of women in the Army has been raised considerably and has received a considerable amount of media coverage. This has been a fantastic lead in for us as we approach the Association's Centenary in 2019 which also marks 70 years since the formation of the WRAC. You will see that this edition of the Lioness is full of photos from the many events.

I wish to pay tribute to our magnificent ladies who served in the ATS. These ladies are a testimony to those pioneers who ensured that our careers were possible and I hope that these ladies continue to attend events for many years to come. The service of the WAAC, QMAAC and the ATS is now recognised at national level with the new displays at the National Army Museum, re-opened this year after extensive renovation. I am delighted to be able to announce that our National Standard will be paraded at the Festival of Remembrance in the Royal Albert Hall this year; this is a first ever and will be a very proud moment for us all.

As ever my thanks go out to all those who support our Branch network. The way we now operate and communicate with our members is evolving but the spirit and camaraderie that I see when I attend events is the same as it always has been. I am extremely grateful to all Branch Secretaries and Treasurers and anyone who organises and provides for any kind of meet up or fund raising activity; this is how our Association will be able to continue in its current role. I will go wherever I am invited and I enjoy meeting as many members as I can.

Please continue to pass the word about the Association as widely as possible.

Finally, we have had a number of changes of key personalities both at HQ and also at trustee level. These are detailed within the Lioness and I am sure you will join me in welcoming all of them.

I hope to see as many of you as possible at the AGM on 17th March 2018 at the Victory Services Club in London.

Ali Brown

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Having glanced back through a few past editions of Lioness, I see you have all come up trumps again to make this edition another bumper one. I hope you enjoy the articles, Reports, memories and photographs contained within this edition. One new additional thing we are offering this time is making a 'photo gallery' on our website for the wonderful photographs that we just don't have space to include within these pages. You all send such a great selection of pictures that it is difficult to pick just the handful that will fit herein. So, please take the time to have a look - if successful this is something we hope to develop going forward.

In this edition you will find reports from the: WAAC/QMAAC Centenary Dinner in Stratford-upon-Avon, in March, along with a copy of the AGM Minutes and report of Marg Davies' 100-mile walk which finished in Stratford. Hull 10K - the participants and supporters of which deserve a huge Thank You, for raising the profile of the WRAC Association and for raising such a wonderful amount of money (£9,766) for the Association. The Women at War 100 commemorations at the National Memorial Arboretum. Armed Forces Day - in Liverpool and other venues and, of course, your ever-busy Branches (home, abroad and the band).

As you will see, the front cover includes a copy of your new Strapline and Ali Brown has included the new Vision Statement in her piece.

In this edition you will find advance notice of the 2018 AGM, which will be held at the Victory Services Club in London on 17th March, along with a reply slip. Also, there is a 'Make a Note in Your Diary' about the 2019 Grand Reunion, which will be held in March of that year based in Southampton.

And finally another quick reminder that if you are a taxpayer making a donation to the WRAC Association we ask you to complete a Gift Aid declaration (see centre pullout), so that we can make a claim from HMRC and thereby increase the overall value of your kind donation. You only need to complete the form once, not with each donation. If you are unsure if you have previously completed the form please submit one with your donation or phone us first on 0300 400 1992.

Penny Muxworthy
editor@wracassociation.org.uk

Disclaimer: The contents of Lioness are strictly copyright and all rights are expressly reserved. The views expressed herein are not necessarily the views of the Editor or the WRAC Association, and accordingly no responsibility for these will be accepted. The Editor reserves the right to amend or omit articles and photos. Photos will only be returned if a SAE is provided.

Association Vision Statement and Strapline

At a meeting of your Trustees in February 2017, and as confirmed at the March AGM, the following Association Vision Statement and Strapline have been adopted:

Association Vision Statement

*To be a recognised and accessible charity providing support for women who have served in the ATS, ATS TA, WRAC, WRAC TA and WRAC TAVR,
to which our members are proud to belong.*

Supporting Strapline

Supporting Women who Served

along with a **Trustees Vision Statement:**

To be an effective Board of Trustees who deliver the Charity's vision both now and in the future.

MENTION IN WRAC DISPATCHES

JOYCE LOGAN Stirling Branch

Joyce stepped in as Treasurer when our previous treasurer died suddenly in 2012. She has done, and is still looking after, the accounts of the Branch along with purchasing cards and flowers for members who are in hospital.

Joyce has to struggle daily with arthritis in feet and hands but attends all our meetings. When I was unable to attend as Chairperson, Joyce called to see me at home before and after meetings to keep me up to date.

Jo Young

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP WHY NOT 'FIRE AND FORGET'

Wouldn't it be a great if you didn't have to remember to make an annual membership payment? Help is at hand as now when you renew online it will automatically set up a recurring payment using your debit or credit card (you can cancel or change this payment at any time). To renew online go to the members area of the website, if you have forgotten your login details use the link provided at the login screen.

Comings and Goings

WRAC ASSOCIATION PERSONALITIES CHANGES

We have said farewell and hello to the following in the last 6 months:

Colonel (retired) Audrey Smith left her role as Chairman of the Benevolent Fund Grants Committee. This was a post she had held since January 1999. In addition Audrey has served as a Trustee of the Association since January 1996. At the AGM in Stratford upon Avon we said a formal thank you to Audrey for her magnificent service and welcomed her appointment as a Life Vice President.



Isabel McCord has assumed the office of Chairman of the Benevolent Fund Grants Committee with effect from 1st July 2017.

Sue Hatton left from the Association Secretary post after 5 years. At the AGM in Stratford upon Avon we said a formal thank you to Sue for the transformational work she had completed as Association Secretary and wished her well for her new role as Membership Secretary at the Sandhurst Trust.



Penny Muxworthy has assumed the post of Association Secretary.



Welcome to Barbara Davies to the office of Honorary Treasurer. Barbara is in her second year as a Trustee of the Association.



Maggie Purkis stood down as Area Chairman of the Wales and West Midlands Area in May. Maggie has held this role since 1992 and as such has given an enormous amount of her time and energy to the Association. The Area has flourished under her dedicated leadership and care and has weathered the changes that have taken place over the last 25 years. We said a formal thank you to Maggie at the last Council meeting. Maggie will be missed but will still remain as Chairman of Phoenix Branch.



Babs Anderson (Blay) has assumed the role of Area Chairman of the Wales and West Midlands Area:

"I joined the WRAC Association in 2005 and although I didn't get involved at Branch level until after the death of my mother in 2008, I have thrown myself into its activities with gusto ever since. Within a couple of years I was elected to the post of Birmingham Branch Secretary and also Treasurer to the WRAC Dinner Club committee. Then in October 2013 I was proud to become Secretary of Wales and West Midlands Area. I was actually invited to a Branch function in my capacity as Area Secretary once!!

I was still wearing my school uniform one sunny day in 1968 when I took the oath in Birmingham. I served as a Pay Clerk in RPO Brighton and then the Unit Pay Office at 16 Battalion, COD Bicester. The resultant understanding of finances helped when I worked for the Department of Transport and ran a budget of £32 million on motorway and trunk road maintenance. I apologise for being responsible for thousands of coned off West Midlands carriageways in the mid 80s. I was also responsible for use of the newly constructed M42 by film companies and so on, before it was opened to the public. Incidentally, Eddie the Eagle's failure to beat the skiing speed record, strapped to the top of a car was not my fault, despite what he said at the time.

After the birth of my children I worked for the Ministry of Defence in Bicester and then with 35 Signal Regiment (V) in Birmingham. When the Regiment moved to new barracks I transferred to the Army Medal Office in Droitwich. I loved that job but transferred to the Department of Transport and the Environment when I earned promotion.

During my time as a Civil Servant, part of my job was to answer Parliamentary Questions. Sometimes my work would involve writing a draft speech for the Housing Minister to give in Parliament and occasionally, the Prime Minister would need a brief. Having the management of up to 40 civil servants at a time gave me skills in leadership and the ability to get the best out of people.

I have worked with computers since I was 17 and have learned about social networking during my grey hair days. I have found Facebook to be a very useful tool in giving and receiving information and I am admin on several Facebook groups, which are mostly WRAC based. I also wrote and maintain the WRAC Dinner Club website. Although I am fairly new to website writing I am quite pleased with it so far. I enjoy adding new photographs every October, as the members like browsing to find themselves, however embarrassing the photo.

I believe that my enthusiasm for everything to do with the WRAC Association is obvious to everyone who knows me. My willingness to get involved is evidenced by my presence at official WRAC Association events and more informal get-togethers like Benidorm and Fort William. I have been a part of the WRAC Lionesses Fund Raising Group since Wendy Hooton first came up with the idea in 2013. We have raised many thousands of pounds under the leadership of Hoots Hooton and will probably continue so long as our little old legs will carry us.

I have made sure that my knowledge of the WRAC Association is fairly extensive so that I don't make mistakes in my dealings with our members and outside bodies. I am particularly interested in seeing us further develop the benevolence work of the Association whilst continuing with our efforts to recruit new members into our ranks.

My appointment to the post of Chairman, Wales and West Midlands Area is a great honour. I know that I have very big boots to fill as I follow on from Maggie Purkis but I will do my best to live up to her high standards. Maggie's unstinting dedication has been inspiring. Although I cannot promise to deliver any comical ditties before meals, I will promise to do my best, to do my duty to God and to the Queen, to help other people and to keep the Cub Scout Law. No, waitthat's Scouts. Oh well. The sentiment is the same.

I am looking forward to getting my teeth into my new role and hope that I can help the WRAC Association to push forward as

we move into year 101 of women having served in the British Army.



Nina Smith – Area Chair London and South East

I would like to thank everyone who had the confidence in me to support my application to become the Area Chair for London and the South East. I believe my role is to support the Branches in my area, for them to become the best that they can and also, hopefully, introduce new women into the Association so that they also become a part of this fantastic community.

In respect of a bit of background of me - I am a 47 year old woman who is currently living in London. I served in the WRAC as a staff clerk between Dec 88 and Dec 97, enjoying my two tours of London, Germany, Northern Ireland and down in Wilton working at HQ Land Command. On leaving the Armed Forces I carried on within the administrative profession and became a Personal Assistant but couldn't decide as to which sector I wanted to work in so I started my career as a "Temp". Initially I worked in Bristol and gained some experience working in various different sectors. I moved to London in 2002 to help start up a business with a friend, unfortunately this didn't work out and I again signed up with a temping agency here in London, where I have mainly worked in central government departments. I am passionate about the PA/EA profession, am a member of a couple of networks, and have mentored those who are new to the profession. I have been a temp now for 20 years and continue to enjoy it.

In respect of hobbies, I read a great deal, but my choice of reading is quite random in that I read Mills and Boon and then I will read a true life crime book; my Kindle is with me where ever I go. I love arts and crafts and can be found with a crochet hook making granny squares. I also enjoy making beaded jewellery and cross-stitch though I haven't done a lot of this recently however I have been watching You Tube and seen a couple of ideas for bracelets/necklaces which I hope to make soon.

We are also pleased to welcome:

Colonel (Retired) Amanda Hassell – as a new Trustee

More information on Amanda will follow in the next Lioness

PAYMENT SLIP

In the centre pull out of this Lioness you will find three Payment Slips. If you are sending a cheque to the WRAC Association it would be helpful if you could complete and return one of the Payment Slips with your cheque.

SO JUST WHO IS THIS NEW ASSOCIATION SECRETARY?

Penny Muxworthy



I joined the WRAC Association in June with a background in administration and event organisation within the charity/not-for-profit sector, both as a volunteer and in an employed capacity.

I grew up on the family farm in north Devon, where we had daily interaction with the RAF, whose Hunter Hawk training aircraft flew over the farm – at very low altitudes. The school I attended had many girls from service families, several from German bases (and was, apparently, a regular and successful recruiting ground for Sue Westlake). On leaving school I qualified as a farm secretary and had my own business doing accounts and record-keeping for a variety of farms and local businesses for many years.

During this time I was also a member of Young Farmers Clubs, successfully participating, competing and training at all levels from club to national. For those of you who have never come across Young Farmers the organisation's success and survival depends on members organising anything/everything they want to do themselves, from competitions to meetings to social activities. It was out of this experience that I decided I wanted to pursue a career in event management ...

... and so I went to London, where I worked for St Paul's Cathedral for 7½ years as their Events Co-ordinator. I started with VE50 and ended with The Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations. In between we welcomed the world for the Millennium celebrations, and the American community for 9/11 commemorations as well as their Annual Thanksgiving Day Service. We also hosted many national and international services, concerts, wreathlayings, VIP-tours, etc. requiring liaison with Royal Palaces, Embassies, national and local government, charities and security services. We regularly hosted service-based wreathlayings, memorial unveilings and commemorative events – including VJ-day, Bomber Command, Falklands and many more. It was here that my experience of working with various military organisations and individuals grew – my boss' were successional a Brigadier and a Major General; the many military and national events meant regular liaison with military personnel, either serving or retired, and included everything from security briefings to administrative and organisational details.

I then worked for an American ex-pat church in Surrey, where I was the only British staff member and responsibilities included ensuring registration for, and compliance with, English charity law. Upon relocating to the Bristol area I worked for the Bristol Law Society as their General Manager; and then the Wildfowl & Wetland Trust at Slimbridge as Events Manager and PA to the Centre Manager (which included six months between Managers).

In 2012 my husband decided to change careers (from 25 years in architecture) and become a train driver, with South West Trains, based in Salisbury. From 2013 to earlier this year I worked as Show Secretary for the Romsey Show – one of the oldest and largest one-day agricultural, horse and countryside shows in the country.

My husband and I have one cat and one dog (see photo), but no children. We live on the outskirts of Salisbury Plain, surrounded by army and airforce – Tuesday night seems to be helicopter night-training night! Our immediate neighbours are Porton Down Campus which, of course, was established by the government in WW1 to research into chemical and biological warfare and particularly its antidotes. Most recently it has been at the centre



of the fight against Ebola in Africa.

So – No, I have never served in the military. But one way or another my life seems to have been linked to various elements of the services in some way. However, I am keen to learn as much as I can about the WAAC, QMAAC, ATS and WRAC, etc. I also hope that my skills and experience in the charitable sector, particularly in event organisation and administration, can benefit the WRAC Association now and in the future. I look forward to working with you; learning about and from you; and to meeting you in the future.

Penny Muxworthy

WRAC Association (incorporating ATS and WRAC Benevolent Fund)

Anti-Discrimination Policy

The WRAC Association does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status in any of its' activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, employment of staff, selection of Trustees and Council members, membership and esprit de corps activities, and the distribution of Benevolence and other services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all our members.

A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF... Julia Doig



Dear Members, it's me, Julia the Finance Officer. Want to hear about my year?.....

Can you believe that when you read this it will be 2 years since I started working for the WRAC Association? So I thought what better time to let you know how I've got on as Finance Officer. Especially as I've seen a full financial year through from Day 1 and with any luck have seen most of what the charity can throw at me.

Let's go back in time to 1 November 2015. I was still the new kid in the office; busy getting to know the rest of the paid staff. You all know Tanya, the Office Manager. I soon learnt that she and I would be working closely every day. My job relies on Tanya keeping track of all your payments for memorabilia, subscriptions, raffle tickets etc. And her smart methods of record keeping and excellent use of IT systems definitely makes my job easier. Never before have I worked in an office with such efficient sharing of information - Tanya's our IT guru for sure and I have learnt a lot.

Then there's Sue and Gabi. Sue, as the Association Secretary, planned all the events, public relations and networking, produced the Lioness and generally kept the Trustees on track with a series of meetings and minute taking throughout the year. I guess you could say that pretty much most of what Tanya and I do is in support of the Association Secretary. The remainder of what I do is to support Gabi as Ben Fund Secretary. Gabi convenes the Grants Committees, having prepared the casework first, records decisions made and does any follow up work necessary with other charities.

Hardly a surprise but as ex-Army, never before have I worked in such a nice office; perfectly suited to purpose, modern loos, a kitchen and friendly management. I remember the days of an office with bars on a tiny window so high I couldn't see out of it - no that wasn't the guardroom cell!! Just an office deemed worthy of a lowly second lieutenant back in the 1990s.

It is a real shame that you're having to pay for commercial property since the MOD could not continue to accommodate the charity at Worthy Down. But Basepoint sure is worth every penny.

Before I knew it, Christmas was looming and I learnt that the charity gives Christmas gifts of money and a card to the Chelsea Pensioners and the ladies residing at Scotland's Erskine Homes for veterans. I was astonished to hear that there were 7 ATS and

WRAC ladies (when you read this there will be 13); not something the general public would realise.

Then it was the New Year and planning for my first Executive Finance Committee and Trustees and Council Meetings... aaaahhhhh! I had met The Honorary Treasurer, Isabel McCord, at my interview of course, and since then we fell into a good rhythm of regular communication. Likewise Ali Brown had been to visit me in the office. But still I felt a little nervous in front of Trustees with spreadsheets in my hand; it was the spreadsheets that made me nervous not the Trustees! What became very clear to me was the amount of work the Trustees do. For a start, as volunteers, some of the Trustees work some serious hours, especially Ali Brown as the 'Boss'. As a volunteer she seems to be on hand as often as a paid Boss would be. And Rowena Griffiths as Deputy VP still serving in the Army - I take my hat off to her. It was enough for me to keep my own family on track whilst holding down a full time appointment in the army.

And so with the first round of meetings under my belt I moved into 2016 with more confidence in the job. And I could see the purpose of the Executive and Finance Meetings doing the groundwork on projects and reporting to the Trustees Meetings for decisions to be made. And likewise the important channel of communication with members of Council too.

A highlight for me, away from the desk, was to attend The Royal Hospital Chelsea Founders Day which I loved. The music was tremendous and it was a joy to see the Pensioners on parade.

My first AGM in March 2016 I was told was a small affair; just tea and cakes for 350 members in the Victory Services Club. And standby for when there's a Grand Reunion planned, said fellow staff, Trustees and Members alike, "you'll never have seen the like!"

Another round of EFC, Trustee and Council meetings in July and it was clear to me that there's a great deal to be done in order to keep the Association on the road. No wonder a team of four paid staff and a facility such as Basepoint are needed; it's a busy charity with 3000 of you to support and the necessary website, social media, Lioness Journal, memorabilia sales, event planning, fortnightly Ben Fund Committees to hold and so on. It was July and we already had the ATS Centenary Dinner planned for March the next year!

And so to September and finalising the accounts for the whole year. Every 3 months I'd had the benefit of being audited by one of you, a Member of the Association. Another volunteer, Sarah Morris, who works at ATR Winchester visited the office to check the bookkeeping and financial records. After all we have to be sure that we are looking after the Association and Ben Fund monies the best we possibly can. But at the end of each year the professionals are invited in to scrutinise everything. And the charity pays Rothman's to do this. My main contact, Sam Day, goes through every single transaction. The team behind her also offer advice and support. It was they who helped me get to grips with the intricacies of our accounting package Xero and gave me the confidence to streamline our bank accounts into Xero too. I really do feel that Rothman's are there for us the whole year through.

So there it is, my year in a nutshell! It's just one part of the work that goes on to keep the Association, its Members, you, and the Ben Fund on track!

Dear Editor,

A BIG THANK YOU to all the PTI's who nominated me for the Dora Nightingale Achievement Award at the PT Reunion September 2016. Yes I was completely overwhelmed, gob-smacked and speechless, as the Award was totally unexpected. I was unable to find the words to express my immense gratitude on receiving the beautiful glass Rose Bowl. I went as a wicked witch and came away with an Achievement Award!



The Award was given in recognition of a fund raising event to enable a severely disabled guy the holiday of a lifetime. Jonathan was extremely pleased to hear of the Award and says a huge thank you for your sponsorship. Jonathan and I have become good friends and he has met many of the sponsors including several Army Tennis players who were competing in the Inter-Services Tennis Championships at Wimbledon. He also met many sponsors at the Lensbury Tennis Club in Teddington. So I just may invite Jonathan to the Netball match at the next PT Reunion in 2018.

Love to you all

Jenny McMahon

Dear Editor,

I am a PhD student at the University of Bath and am researching the involvement of women in British counterinsurgency campaigns, in particular in Malaya and Northern Ireland (as well as Afghanistan and contemporary operations).

I have been researching the work of the Women's Institute and British Red Cross with Lady Templar in Malaya and know that 4 Independent Company of the WRAC were also deployed in Malaya commanded by Anne Field. I am struggling to find out about the work of 4 Independent Company and whether they had any interaction with the Malayan community.

I am also interested in the employment of the WRAC in Northern Ireland in an operational capacity including special duties, intelligence or any work with the community or women's groups.

If anyone can offer an insight into either campaign, I would be keen to hear from you. Please email me,
Hannah West, hrw38@bath.ac.uk.

Thank you,

Hannah West

Dear Editor,

Colonel Frances Cook: Biography

I would be very grateful for any memories, stories or photographs that anyone who knew, or served with, my late aunt, Colonel Frances Cook, would be willing to share.

I met a number of interesting people at her recent funeral and feel that stories about her life from those who knew her in whatever role, could produce a fascinating biography which could also serve to document part of the history of the WRAC and the WRAC Association.

Julie Skinner

Editor's Note: You can contact Julie Skinner direct via email (drjulies@live.co.uk) or write to her care of the Association address.

AGM 2018. The 2018 AGM will be held at on Saturday 17th March 2018 at the the Victory Services Club - Further details, and booking form, in Centre Pages of this edition.

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. More information can be found inside back cover. Donations can also be made online via the Association website or by phone 0300-400-1992. Whatever you decide to do, PLEASE make sure that we have a Gift Aid form (see centre pullout) from you. If you pay tax, we can reclaim the tax and the government adds to the donation you have made, without it costing you any more.

Dress on Parade. In line with the Royal British Legion and other Regimental Associations, parade dress is to be smart and appropriate; the norm is for dark colours. Within the WRAC Association the tradition has arisen to wear a green WRAC Association fleece or a bottle green blazer. Please note that this form of dress is not mandatory and those who do not possess it are still very welcome to parade, as long as they are dressed smartly and appropriately.

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 or USB stick. 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 Thursday 30 November 2017. 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) as attachments, do not embed them in a document (or email)!

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 buttonhole. Unofficial medals, or badges other than the WRAC Association badge/pin and Veterans badge, should not be worn when representing the WRAC Association.

Memorabilia. Items are available to purchase on-line via the website, by post (prices include P&P) or by phone. See page 27 for details.

Overseas Members. Overseas Members are requested to pay an additional £5.00 per year to cover additional Lioness postage costs. Only sterling payments can be accepted.

Remembrance. 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.

**Thu 09 Nov 17 Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey
Sun 12 Nov 17 Cenotaph Parade - TICKET APPLICATIONS
HAVE CLOSED FOR 2017**

Sun 12 Nov 17 Westminster Abbey Service Tickets:

Ticket applications for Westminster Abbey to be made no later than 30 Sept. 2017 by email (office.manager@wracassociation.org.uk) or letter only. If demand exceeds supply a ballot will take place.

Service Records. 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 218.

Subscriptions. Annual Members are reminded that subscriptions (£10.00 for UK, £15 overseas) 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. You can also set up a recurring payment by debit/credit card via the website.

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 218.

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

WRAC Officers' Dining Club. The WRAC Officer's Dining Club Dinner will take place on Saturday 25th November 2017 at The Victory Services Club. For more details email wracofficersdc@gmail.com or visit the Facebook Closed Group 'WRAC Officers' Dining Club'.



ATS STATUE AT THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

The ATS statue at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) has been a focus point for remembrance for some time now. The Association has recently been informed that, due to plans to build a conference centre at the NMA, the location of the ATS statue is going to have to change.

I am extremely keen to consult with as many ATS ladies as possible to discuss the options available prior to any decision being made.

I would ask anyone who has an interest in this to contact me on: ali.brown@wracassociation.org.uk or 07885 577096 or By letter to the WRAC Association office

Ali Brown

UPDATE ON THE WRAC ASSOCIATION WEBSITE

We continue to develop and improve the Association website. Recent developments have been:

- The addition of the strapline
- The addition of an Events Tab showing all the events taking place across the branch network
- The updating of the information on the Benevolence Funds.

We are always open to suggestions on how to improve the website. Please forward any suggestions to: Tanya.park@wracassociation.org.uk

We are also looking to include a Photo Gallery link so you can view more photos from events than we can realistically print in any copy of the Lioness – eg photos from the 'Women at War 100' event at the NMA in July.

UPDATE ON THE WRAC ASSOCIATION PLOT AT THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM



Those of you who have visited the WRAC Association Plot at the National Memorial Arboretum will have seen that we are well into our programme of improvements. Since last year we have;

- Replaced all of the raised bed timbers
- Replanted all of the shrubs and trees
- Replaced the 3 benches dedicated to the WAAC, QMAAC, ATS and WRAC
- Ensured that the current maintenance contract with the NMA is enforced

The next step is to commence work in August to lay a path from the avenue to the central plinth. This will be laid in an inverted V shape and will facilitate entry to our Plot for wheelchairs and mobility scooters. The laying of the path will have the added bonus of reducing the level of flooding that is an annual occurrence at the moment.

All of the works have been funded by the Association and will ensure that our Plot is an appropriate and beautiful place suitable to be visited by all women who have served.

Ali Brown



FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE 2017

I am delighted to be able to announce that the Royal British Legion have invited our National Standard Bearer, Sharon Joyce, to parade at the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall.

The invitation has been made on the basis that 2017 marks the Centenary of the formation of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in July 1917. This will be the first time the WRAC Association National Standard has been paraded at this national service of remembrance.

Ali Brown

**THE NOT FOTGOTTEN ASSOCIATION
BUCKINGHAM PALACE GARDEN PARTY
TUESDAY 30 MAY 2017
Helen Morse and Virginia Hopson**

Thank you very much to The Not Forgotten Association and the WRAC Association for the invitation to the Buckingham Palace Garden Party.

We had a most enjoyable afternoon and the weather held out. Our ticket arrived in plenty of time and it was then that we found out His Royal Highness Prince Henry (Harry) would be the guest of honour.

We met for lunch in Victoria and then made the short walk to Buckingham Palace to join the queue for when the gates opened at 14.00. It did not take us very long to go through security, walk across the courtyard and up the stairs into Buckingham Palace. The route was lined with serving personnel who were to help us up the stairs and show us to our table.

We queued for afternoon tea which was served from 14.15 and there was a delicious selection of dainty cakes and precision-cut finger sandwiches. Thankfully there was enough for seconds!

After tea we stood by the barrier to wait for the arrival of Prince Henry. We also met Aled Jones and Olympic javelin thrower Fatima Whitbread, as well as DJ Tony Blackburn. Prince Henry walked along the route meeting dignitaries and then made his way to the Royal Tent for afternoon tea. Whilst he was having his tea, we were able to listen and watch The Beating of the Retreat on the lawn.

The final treat of the day was fresh strawberries and cream and it was then time for Prince Harry to leave.

During the Garden Party we were pleasantly surprised to meet, again, some of the veterans who were with us when we toured the Normandy battlefield with the Not Forgotten Association.

Too soon 17.00 arrived and it was time for us to bid farewell and make our way home. But it certainly was a most enjoyable afternoon.



Jo Teague at UJ Club before Garden Party



Kerry Warnes & Carole Vincent at Buck Palace





Kerry and Carole with Fatima Whitbread



*Grimsby Branch at Royal Garden Party
L to R Maisie Wilson, Alyson Wilson, Pam Givens,
Gail Davy, Lily Corby and Carole Tyler*



Viginia Hopson, Christine Barnard and Helen Morse.



KINETON 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Julie Thompson

Been so looking forward to this, didn't know how the old camp would be. Served there 1980 - 1983.

My daughter and myself had got there early so that I could take her for a drive around the areas we used to walk from when I was based there. Didn't realise how far we used to walk - glad I took the car as my breathing now wouldn't have been up to those walks. Drove up to Northend and then down to see the Red Lion, which looked shut but was told later it seems to always be under new management. Drove the back way round to Kineton Village and Gaydon. New houses everywhere.

Arrived at camp (now known as Kineton Station Marlborough barracks, not Temple Herdwyke) about 14.00 and was met by the security and a soldier. I had already booked my vehicle in by email, so they knew who we were. Drove round to the training wing, parked up and waited for my mate Alyson (Billy Bremner) Cordner; noticed the housing is now outside of the wire.

At 15.00 we went into Eastman Lecture Theatre for a talk, first off by the Station Commander Lt Col Wayne Davidson RLC, then by Chief ATO LT Col John Gilbert. They both welcomed us all and thanked the very small WRAC that had come that day, as we were just as important as all others who had served. They both explained that the base is not as big military-wise as it used to be, due to things now being out of their control e.g. housing, cooking, quite a bit of security and haulage - most stuff now done by civvies. I used to work platform 2 - it's still there but they don't use the railway system much now. The WRAC block that was is now full of Sergeants etc for training courses.

At 16.00 we went into The Instructional Exhibits Room for coffee. A talk was meant to be given but most people were ex ATOs. so one of them walked round with us and explained bits to my daughter, which I thought was a lovely touch. Just wish I could have remembered his name.

17.00 we went for a walk to visit the EOD Memorial for those whose lives had been taken in active EOD service. This was not far from the main gate and church, and a very fitting statue was there and a little garden. GOD BLESS THEM.

18.00 walked to the Sergeants' mess to see a static display of photos and press clippings from Kineton history. Also had an army curry supper.

We left about 21.30 - it was a really lovely day and everyone made us feel important. My daughter even played a few of them at pool and they were all willing to play when she asked them. I must say the people we met were kind and very helpful and nothing was too much trouble. I think they enjoyed the stories we could tell about the old camp.

ARMED FORCES DAY, LIVERPOOL

Anna Orlinski

For information about this day please see Liverpool's and Wirral's Branch News reports.



WRAC National Standard at Liverpool Armed Forces Day



DICK KERR LADIES GALA DINNER

Anna Orlinski

For information about this day please see Liverpool's and Wirral's Branch News reports.



Liverpool Branch with HRH Prince Edward



Amanda Wilkinson, Sue Brown, Lenore McNulty, Ann Butcher, Helen Rolley, Gail Newsham



Nicola Scott, Anne Gwynne, Belle Jenkinson and Marie Smedley



Training in the rain!
Amanda Wilkinson, Christine Hardman, Lenore McNulty, Sue Brown, Angela Hampton, Ann Butcher, Gail Newsham



Birmingham AFD 2017
L to R: Babs Anderson, Rosie Garrison, Kath Adams, Chris Fretwell, Lisa Beech, Marilyn Preece and Pat Neale



Leics & Notts Armed Forces Day



WRAC Veterans walking football team



WRAC table at Dick Kerr Ladies football Centenary Dinner

WAAC, QMAAC CENTENARY DINNER SATURDAY 18TH MARCH 2017 Ali Brown

The first party of 14 women arrived in France on 31st March 1917, and eventually 9,000 women were to serve there. The WAAC was formally established by Army Council Instruction 1069 of July 1917. On 9th April 1918 the service was renamed the QMAAC. The QMAAC ceased to exist on 27th September 1921, but some 57,000 women had served with the Corps, both at home and abroad. As part of the mobilisation of the whole country this milestone in the push for equal rights formed the basis for women's service in the British Army to this day.

Just under 350 members of the WRAC Association, including In Pensioners from the Royal Hospital Chelsea, arrived in Stratford upon Avon to celebrate this momentous anniversary. Our guests were Brigadier Fiona Gardner CBE and Colonel Frances Castle MBE. Music was provided throughout the day by The Yorkshire Military Band (TYMB) including their Corps of Drums led by WRAC Association member Louise Lingard-Snape and back by popular demand.

The Dinner was preceded by two events. Firstly the arrival of Marg Davies having completed her 100 Miles for 100 Years Walk raising funds for charity including the WRAC Association. Marg's arrival was to the accompaniment of a Jazz Band arranged by Babs Blay and approximately 120 members cheering loudly. After some time Marg was allowed to say a few words and then gratefully disappear from the limelight for at least 12 months.

Secondly a Beating Retreat was held at the entrance of the Crown Plaza Hotel at sundown. There was much humming along to the military music including of course Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill; always a huge crowd pleaser.

The Dinner started with pre dinner drinks and then we moved quickly into the Ballroom and took our places. The evening passed quickly with great food, fantastic music and a rousing speech from Brigadier Fiona Gardner in which she paid tribute to all those women who had gone before who had given all of us the opportunity to serve in the British Army. The evening continued with dance music and finally a disco for those who wanted to dance late into the night.

It was a truly memorable evening with old friendships renewed and new friendships made. The noise at dinner was evidence of

the success of the evening and we celebrated in style.

On Sunday morning the sun shone and the parade of members and Standards, led by TYMB, formed up alongside the canal. The Parade set off in style watched by many bemused members of the public. The Salute was taken by Brigadier Fiona Gardner CBE and Colonel Frances Castle MBE. The dismissal marked the end of a fantastic weekend of celebrations.



Centenary Reunion - Stratford



Lincoln Branch Anniversary Lunch Branston Hall



Including Jackie Walton, Diane Walsh, June Hopkins, Anna Orlinski, Wendy Wall and Chelsea Pensioners 'Joan'



Sheila Johnson, Joyce Nicholls and Mariam Unwin



Including Betty Gash, Pat William, Lesley Wallace and Norma



Including Maggie Purkis, Rowena Griffiths, Julia Doig, Gabi Shanahan, Sue Hatton, Ishbel Thomson, Tanya-Jane Park and Col Frances Castle



FORT WILLIAM 2017

Jayne "CJ" Johnson

Originally set up to run every two years, the Fort William event is now so popular that demand dictates it now runs on a yearly basis at the beginning of April. This year we had 62 attendees, almost double our number from the year before! The whole purpose of the weekend is to allow ex servicewomen (and partner/children/kitchen sink) to enjoy a weekend of friendship, fun and frolics! While raising money for the WRAC Association.



On Friday our WRAC Flag hung proudly from the flag pole and everyone arrived to enjoy meeting up in the bar ... even if the Quiz was rather hurried due to the Hotel putting on entertainment that was not expected! But laughter rung out, new friendships born and old one's rekindled! and the staff of the Croit Anna Hotel once again met us all with smiles and the occasional whisper of "oh no... she is back!"

On Saturday we enjoyed our games day ... and again, amongst the blatant cheating, laughter rung out. It truly is amazing how much fun can be had with a £2 coin and a pint glass ... but the biggest laughs (and screams) were for the balloon game, and the winning team of Jenny's Devils, led by Jenny Simms, proudly grasped the winners mugs before rushing to the bar to fill them.

The theme for this year's dinner was "Tartan", and what a wonderful array of tartan we had; it was like the meeting of the clans, although Sam Stretch did insist on flashing her "England" pants that she had on under her kilt. The winner of the "Tartan Award" was Kath Harrison and her "Nessie" headgear, with Pat Sanders a very, very close second!



Sam Stretch



Lancs branch



Ready Steady Go!



*It's the taking
part that
counts*





We all had a lovely surprise from a first time attendee Marian Clark who had knitted little yellow Easter chicks for everyone, and had even supplied a Crème Egg .. a truly thoughtful gift and very much appreciated by everyone!

There was much dancing, singing and laughing ... and a new Fort William motto was born "It wisnae me".

On Sunday, surprisingly, we were all up bright and early to visit our WRAC plaque at the Commando Monument at Spean Bridge, and this year we were joined by a couple of WRNS who laid a plaque beside ours. This was a special year as it is 100 years since women have been allowed to serve in the army in non-medical roles, coincidentally, it is the same for the women of the WRNS and 2018 will see 100 years of the WRAF and so we hope that next year we will have a WRAF plaque to lay to celebrate us all being "Sisters in Arms".

We had a short service which included our regular "wee lassie Piper" Laura, who, from being a 14 year old, is now a very grown up 18 year old and driving herself to "gigs" ... nothing like that to make you feel your age! We also celebrated this year by singing "I vow to thee my country" and a huge thank you has to be said to Lynda Oldfield for her fabulous singing!

After our service we then hopped back on the coach to enjoy a trip to Aviemore for lunch and then to Culloden, the site of the last battle in Scotland and then a trip back down the side of Loch Ness was a great treat for many who had wanted to do it for years. No sign of the Monster though!



Sunday night was to see the return of Paula MacAskill ... a brilliant singer and entertainer, who was helped along by Gail Newsham singing "10 guitars" but there was more to come when our fabulous singer Lynda Oldfield took the mic to give us a rendition of "The Doggy song" ... all about why dogs greet each other the way they do ... there are simply no words (that I can use here!) that can describe the song or the laughter that ensued!! Needless to say, a legend was born and, no doubt, this will be a yearly feature that we will all join in with in the future!

This year we raised £1,310 for the WRAC Association and in 2018 the event will be opened up to women who have served in all of the three services .. we truly will become "Sisters in Arms", and the friendships we have made already will be strengthened and widened as we welcome new visitors to our meet. As we say in Scotland, (unashamedly pinched from Rabbie Burns!) HERE'S TAE US; WHA'S LIKE US? GEY FEW

Until next year ...



TRANSCRIPT OF SERVICE AT COMMANDO MONUMENT Jayne "CJ" Johnson

Good morning "Sudgers" and welcome to our wee ceremony as we pay respect to our sisters who are no longer with us.

The first Fort William event was in 2013, when we had a "memorial tree" down the fairy forest .. sadly, that fairy forest is no longer, and now we meet here, at The Commando Monument Memorial Garden to remember and honour all women who have served and fallen in the service of their country.

Today our WRAC Plaque will no longer be the sole beacon honouring Women who have served, as today Kimmy Stokes will be laying a plaque alongside our WRAC plaque to honour the women of the Women's Royal Naval Service. Kimmy, on behalf of all of us I would like to say "Hello Sailor" ... and please come forward to place your plaque.

(Kimmy comes forward to lay plaque)





Commando Monument - WRAC & WRNS plaques

2017 sees 9% of the British Forces being made up by women, and is a very special year for all women who served in the forces ... it is 100 hundred years since the first women were allowed to join the Navy and the Army in a non-nursing capacity for the first time, when the Women's Royal Naval Service and Women's Army Auxiliary Corp (WAAC's) were formed .. The WAAC's later became Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corp (QMAAC) and members of the QMAAC served with the British Expeditionary Force in France, winning 3 Military Medals for gallantry.

In 1918 2,000 WRNS who had served with the Royal Naval Air Service were transferred to become the first members of the WRAF, but sadly after the war the WRNS were disbanded in 1919, the WRAF in 1920 and the QMAAC in 1921.

The WRNS were revived in 1939 at the beginning of the Second World War, with an expanded list of allowable activities, including flying transport planes. One of the slogans used in recruiting posters was "Join the Wrens—free a man for the fleet", and at its peak in 1944 there were 75,000 serving WRNS and they served in Malta, Gibraltar and Italy and were very involved with the D-Day Landings. Throughout the war there were 100 deaths. It remained in existence after the war and was finally integrated into the regular Royal Navy in 1993 when women were allowed to serve on board navy vessels as full members of the crew. In October 1990, during the Gulf war, HMS Brilliant allowed the first women to officially serve on an operational warship.

The Women's Auxiliary Air Force, was also revived in 1939, and was to be renamed the Women's Royal Air Force in February 1949. The WRAF and the RAF grew closer over the following decades, with increasing numbers of trades opened to women, and the two services formally merged in 1994, marking the full assimilation of women into the British forces and the end of the Women's Royal Air Force.

The History of Women in the Army is a bit more complicated ... The Auxiliary Territorial Service, or ATS, were formed in September 1938 and more than 250,000 women, including Princess Elizabeth, now, of course, our Queen, was commissioned in March 1945 and wore the uniform of the ATS during World War II. Members of the ATS served in most of the overseas theatres of operation as well as the defence of the UK... they worked in Anti Aircraft Command, as drivers, orderlies, store women and cooks - seventy two were killed in action and 313 were wounded.

But let us not forget the other women too ... the women who served in the WRVS, the Land Army and as Lumber Jills.

Although they did not work on the front line, they were a necessity and made a huge contribution to Britain's war effort.

On the 1st of February 1949, the ATS became the Women's Royal Army Corp (WRAC), and women worked in over 40 different trades and served in many places during times of conflict ... including Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus, Singapore, Aden and Ghana, and, in more modern times, they also served in Northern Ireland, The Falklands, The Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq.

In 1992 the WRAC officially disbanded, with women transferring to various corps with whom they still serve today.

All of us here today, are Veterans from many corps and regiments, and, of course, services. What we have in common is that we all served our country with great pride; we are united in spirit, no matter our badge or the colour of our uniform.

The women in all the forces have often faced terrible conditions, some of us faced warzones and conflict that today are just a memory, but for four women, their bravery and strength under fire won them the honour of the Military Cross - Corporal Sarah Bushbye, Able Seaman Kate Nesbitt, L/Cpl Michelle Norris and L/Cpl Kylie Watson. Four women, who saved the lives of colleagues with no thought for their own safety. They stood united with their colleagues, despite being under fire.

On the base of the monument on which the 3 commandos stand there are three words, "United we conquer", and indeed in these times of terrorism and unrest we should perhaps take those three words to heart.

Every person who has served in the forces pledged their allegiance; we were all young, fit and had no idea that by joining up, we would not only learn some harsh lessons but also find great pride and great friendships too. We are in many ways "family", and although at times, like all families, we may bicker, inside we all have hearts that beat that little bit faster when we gather together on days like this. And what better way to celebrate that camaraderie and pride than by now singing "I vow to thee my country":

*I vow to thee, my country
All earthly things above
Entire and whole and perfect
The service of my love
The love that asks no questions
The love that stands the test
That lays upon the altar*

*The dearest and the best
The love that never falters
The love that pays the price
The love that makes undaunted
The final sacrifice*

*And there's another country
I've heard of long ago
Most dear to them that love her
Most great to them I know
We may not count her armies
We may not see her King
Her fortress is a faithful heart
Her pride is suffering
And soul by soul and silently
Her shining bounds increase
And her ways are ways of gentleness
And all her paths are peace*

We have all come a long way over the years; our hair is greyer, our belts a lot more tight, and it is not the wrinkles in our shirts we worry about. Over the years many of us have had to say goodbye to many colleagues and friends, but in our hearts we are still the same proud soldiers and sailors as the day we first put on our uniform. We have travelled a journey, that all of us chose to start, and it is a journey that has taught us much about life, love and friendship. So to close this tribute to our lives and to our sisters, who are no longer with us I would like to share with you a reading called "Our Journey":

*Our journey through life will reach many destinations
Some pretty, some ugly, but most will be a mixture of both
We travel life like we travel the world
The freer we are, the more we see
The lighter we travel, the more we gain
But no matter how much we plan, there will be surprises
We will experience things that others can only dream of, or dread.
But it is our decisions, our paths and our moments that make each life unique.
We will meet as strangers and leave as friends, and sometimes the other way around
But each person will make our journey just that little bit more special.
If we are lucky, we will always get to choose our path and no matter who, or what, we meet on our journey, whether it be adventure, love or happiness, in the end all we can hope for is that we have taken a journey that was fulfilling and gave us peace.*

**Sauviter in Modo, Fortiter in Re
"Gentle in Manner, Resolute in Deed"**

WOMEN AND THE ARMY: 100 YEARS OF PROGRESS? SATURDAY 24TH JUNE 2017, NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM Penny Muxworthy

On a wonderfully sunny and hot day in late June, after I had been with the Association just three weeks (and was on the last part of my holiday), I found my way to the new National Army Museum for the above conference. We were presented with a packed day of presentations, kindly hosted by Dr Alastair Massie (National Army Museum) and his team. Questions were welcomed by each speaker – an opportunity always taken up!

The programme included:

Dr John Black (independent researcher) – "Not in this man's army". The mobilization of the reserve army of labour and the relationship between the Women's Legion and Women's Army Auxiliary Corps.

Dr Krisztina Robert (University of Roehampton) – 'Designing and embodying the servicewoman'. Fashion, militarism and identity in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, 1914 – 1920.

Dr Katrina Kirkwood (author of 'The Mystery of Isabella and the string of beads: a woman doctor in WW1). 100 hundred years plus one: the first women doctors to be recruited by the army.

Dr Samantha Philo-Gill (author of 'The Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in France 1917 – 1921: Women urgently wanted). 'The Women's Army Auxiliary Corps – more than one battle front: the response of the government, army and society.

Jane Clarke (University of Manchester) – The 'Sister Services'. Friendships, comradeship and identity in the Old Comrades Associations, 1919 – 1939.

Sarah Paterson (Imperial War Museum) – the forgotten women of the British Army: The Army Schoolmistresses.

Dr Alastair Massie (National Army Museum) – Fear and loathing in the Auxiliary Territorial Service. Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, Jean Knox and the ATS history that never was.

Hannah West (University of Bath) – The women's services and the battle for the hearts and minds of the women of Malaya, 1952 – 1954.

Dr Kathleen Sherit (Independent researcher) – 'Choosing to integrate'. The demise of the Women's Royal Army Corps, 1992.

Rebecca Newell (National Army Museum) – 'Ministry of Women': a new way of telling the stories of women in the army.

Lt-Colonel Sarah Pringle-Smith (RMP) and Major Anna Fraser (RLC) – The modern military woman: the practitioners view.

Having already read some of the WRAC's history booklets I was already aware of some of the historical things that speakers included, but to hear such a breadth and depth up to modern-day was fascinating, along with the opportunity of talking with the speakers over refreshment breaks (the Museum did us/them proud), and making contacts for potential future Lioness articles. As someone who has never served I found the day interesting and informative; but I also got the impression that those in the audience who had served also found it so, and hearing their observations during Q&As bore this out. Their comments were fascinating and certainly put the day into context.

We were also given a copy of 'Ministry of Women' – a graphic anthology to commemorate 100 years of women in the army (by Carol Adlam and Helen Cross).

We may not have been large in quantity, but we certainly made up for it in the quality of speakers, topics and attendees – a mixture of academics, served and serving military women and 'interested' parties. While we may not have had much time to look around the museum itself, the conference certainly made us all more aware of our shared history.

WRAC LIONESSES 5TH ANNIVERSARY ASDA FOUNDATION HULL 10K RUN

Wendy Hooton

The WRAC Lionesses 5th Anniversary, where to go? I decided on Hull as it was the UK City of Culture 2017. I hadn't been to Hull before but after doing a recce at Easter, I was really impressed with this beautiful city. The entrance to the city over the Humber Bridge was breathtaking, the architecture was stunning and the people so friendly and helpful. There were plenty of bars and restaurants too, all within walking distance of the hotels. Thank you to Dorothy & Rob Mitchelmore and Jo Inman for showing me around, your knowledge was invaluable.

After posting details of the run, entries were coming in thick and fast and in no time we had 50 runners/walkers and 30 supporters. The fundraising page was opened online, sponsor forms emailed to entrants and our fundraising began.

The countdown had started too, encouragement was given on our facebook group page by the infamous Betty Gash and soon the weekend was upon us! Runners/Walkers/Supporters were arriving at the hotels full of excitement and our first-time runners probably a bit nervous. Friday was a casual night to just relax and enjoy the delights of Hull. Saturday saw everyone meeting at Garbo's Bar & Grill to pick up their "technical" t-shirts kindly provided by the WRAC Association. We had 5-year stickers to give out too.....for a donation! Thank you to my Klingons Nell Fray and Dawn Mackender for their help in this process. After a short briefing and lots of chat and laughter we all retired to bed ready for the big day.

HOWEVER.....all was not peaceful at the City Centre Premier Inn, the fire alarm went off at 2am so it was everyone out!! We thought there were some of our people missing and it was going to cost them a donation in the fundraising bucket. A photograph was taken of those outside as evidence we were there, but unbeknown to us there was another meeting point the other side of the Hotel and Mary Woollard had taken a photo of their group too. No money in the bucket that time but interesting there was time to grab your phone before leaving the building!! Getting your priorities right.....Memories of Active Edge were recalled and we were finally allowed back in at about 3am with no comment as to the cause of the alarm going off, and we never did find out.

At 6.30am Sunday morning Dawn Mackender and myself took our new WRAC Lionesses banner, donated by Annette Jackson and Pam Malcolm, to the Start/Finish line and cable tied it to the railings. We all met in Queens Gardens at 8.30am for a photograph. The run is organised in memory of the inspirational late Jane Tomlinson and it was a pleasure to meet her husband Mike who came over to our group and had a photograph taken with us. One of our supporters Jacquie Courtney, passed away weeks before the run so we had a 2 minute silence to remember her. We were fortunate in that her husband Pete still ran the 10k with us and her sister Marilyn Preece came to support us.

We all made our way to the start line, it was a hot 31 degrees!! which was hotter than last year's 10k run in the London Olympic Park. The locals were fantastic, hoses at the ready, and cups of water at hand. It was a flat course to everyone's relief! I have to mention the photographers, Heather Gaughran and Rosie Garrison, everytime we turned a corner you were there!! We tried very hard to smile and not grimace. Thanks again for giving up your time to support us and take such awesome pictures. This year we had 2 teams pushing wheelchair entrants. A special mention to both teams, they did brilliantly especially in the heat and coping with the cobblestones!! Team A pushing Sue Stick (Elksnis), Jennie Thomas, Pat Budgie Rosewell, Sue Jennings and Bev Acres. Team B pushing Cheryl Jones, Leona Goffin, Karen Baxter, and Gina Spacey. We had some great results, 5 people ran sub one hour, Pete Courtney 49 mins 20 and 1st in his category, Jo Inman 50 mins 33, Andrea Mills 54 mins 02, Helen Meades Davies and Jenny Simms both 59 mins 08. Well done to all.





Our supporters were brilliant as always, it was wonderful to see them cheering us along en-route and at the finishing line, thank you. After the run we all met back in Queens Gardens for a group photograph wearing our medals. There was lots of chatting and relief that we had all survived. Our mascot Mo Bear was carried by Pat Rocky Barker this year and having completed the run, received her medal. She has now been promoted to Sergeant. Some of us then adjourned to Wetherspoons for light refreshments and food whilst others said their goodbyes and made their way home.



The Sunday evening was a sit down meal at Silvers Bar/ Restaurant. There were 57 of us and you couldn't fault the food or the service. The staff couldn't do enough for us, so helpful and friendly. The cocktails were second to none and looked amazing. There was one more surprise, Alison Inglis had visited us all on the Saturday to wish us good luck, but really she had come to deliver one of her fabulous cakes for the WRAC Lionesses 5th Anniversary. It looked fantastic, and tasted delicious. We had all eaten dessert so it was decided to take the cake to Jacquie Courtneys' funeral which was the following day at Kettering Crematorium. Her family were really grateful for the kind gesture and the cake was enjoyed by all.



Another year over, all that is left to do is to collect the sponsor money in. At the time of writing this, we are on almost £8000 with Gift Aid to be added (**Editor's note – we can confirm that the final figure is £9,766, including Gift Aid. A huge thank you**). The money this year is for the WRAC Association only. My grateful thanks as always to the facebook groups (WRAC/ATS, WRAC and ATS (women who have served or serve in the Army)), Womens Royal Army Corps (WRAC) and the Branch facebook groups who allow us to promote our Annual fundraising event. Thank you to everyone who has donated so generously online or sponsored us, and to all the runners and supporters who have fundraised for us.

My final thanks to the runners, walkers and supporters who have joined us this year, you are amazing. I look forward to you joining us next year, the location to be announced when I get a date confirmed. I will post it on the WRAC LIONESSES FUNDRAISING GROUP facebook page first.

SUPPORTING WOMEN WHO SERVED

TICKETS FOR EVENTS

We occasionally receive invitations to, or free tickets for, events and/or functions organised by The Not Forgotten Association and others.

Historically these were primarily offered to regional Branch members through Branch Secretaries. However, it became apparent that HQ Branch members could be missing out, and so it was agreed that if HQ Branch Members registered their interest in being sent information about these events, we would include them in a contact list (the contact list already being populated with Branch Secretaries).

HQ Branch members are asked to please email their interest to:
office.manager@wracassociation.org.uk and type EVENT TICKET REGISTER as the subject heading.

If you are a Branch member and would like to be certain that you hear of events please contact your Branch Secretary.

Please note that the vast majority of these events take place in London or the South, that the number of invitations/tickets are often very limited and sometimes the timescales are very short.

GRAND REUNION 2019 22nd - 24th March 2019

SAVE THE DATE

Planning is now underway for the next Grand Reunion, which this time will be held in Southampton, and will co-incide with the celebrations for the 100th anniversary of the WRAC Association. Precise details, including pricing, is still be worked on but in outline:

Friday - late afternoon/early evening

Reception at Guildford Cathedral

Evening Drinks Reception followed by informal dinner with opportunity to dance (and talk) the night away

Saturday - Morning Annual General Meeting

Afternoon 'At leisure' (the hotel is in the heart of Southampton and close to all its amenities and retail-therapy opportunities. The hotel also has its own spa centre, should you wish to book yourself some relaxation)

Evening Formal Drinks Reception followed by formal dinner, and again the opportunity to dance the night away

Sunday - Morning Drumhead service

Followed by Parade

The hotel is very central and easy to access by rail and road.

More details, including hotel (and its facilities), prices (for hotel and the Reunion), who/what/where/when will follow as they are confirmed. So for now – PUT THE DATE IN YOUR DIARIES and keep your eyes peeled. If this is as popular as it may be then early booking will be recommended, to avoid disappointment.



NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM – FRIDAY 7 JULY 2017

Ali Brown

“As Patron of The Royal British Legion and Patron of the Women’s Royal Army Corps Association, I send my good wishes to all those present both commemorating the centenary of the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps and celebrating women who have served the Crown on military operations or in uniform. The Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps was the first unit to be formally established in the British Armed Forces – an important moment in history for women in the military. During the Second World War I experienced at first hand the challenges that faced women at war when I served as a mechanic and driver in the Auxiliary Territorial Service.....”

Elizabeth R

The Royal British Legion hosted a ceremony to mark the Centenary of Women in the Army at the National Memorial Arboretum on Friday 7th July 2017. Just under 1,000 women from across the military and related civilian services gathered for a Drumhead Service and Reception. The Service started with the march on of the Tri Service Military Band comprised entirely of female musicians drawn from the majority of the Bands in the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force. The Service was led by Reverend (Wing Commander) Ruth Hake MBE and the guests included senior members of the 3 Services.

Over 100 members of the WRAC Association participated in this commemorative event and watched the Drumhead Service as it proceeded through the readings, hymns, prayers and then finally the laying of poppies. The Service closed with the Last Post, Reveille, Kohima and, after the recovery of the drums, the National Anthem. To our delight the Standards departed to the strains of the WRAC Regimental March, amidst much clapping and cheering.

We all moved on to the reception for an excellent lunch and an opportunity to meet women from all walks of life, both serving and retired. Women at War Poppy Tributes were handed out and many of these found their way to the WRAC Association Plot. As we walked around the Arboretum it was just great to see so many women enjoying the celebration of our service histories. There was also the opportunity to see the Timeline Exhibition charting 100 years of women at war.

My personal thanks must go to The Royal British Legion for hosting such a fantastic event and to our members who made the journey in such numbers. A day to remember.



Betty Webb, ATS surrounded by serving soldiers from the Intelligence Corps
Betty served at Bletchley Park in WW2



ORDER OF CEREMONY

Ali Brown

Your Vice-president, Ali Brown, who participated in the Ceremony, has kindly lent us a copy of her Order of Ceremony in order that we may give you a flavour of the formal proceedings, especially those of you who may like to have attended but were unable to do so for whatever reason. So included were:

A message from the Patron of the Royal British and yourselves, HM The Queen

A summary of 'a century of women at war' by Elizabeth Shipton, author of 'Female Tommies'

The list of participants

The Ceremony commenced with music from the Tri-service Military Band, and continued with:

Welcome and introduction by Rvd (Wing Commander)

Ruth Hake MBE

Drumhead assembly

Reading of 'Letters of Elizabeth Johnston (WAA), read by (our own) Ali Brown

Reading of 'Special Operations Executive Letter, from November 1942, read by Cadet Warrant Officer Amy Watson

Singing of 'I vow to thee my country'

Reading of reflection on 'Falkland Islands – Her Majesty's Hospital Ship Uganda, 1982) by Senior Nursing Officer Nicci Pugh, Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service (who also wrote the piece)

Reading of 'Packing up an injured female's bed-space' by Jo Young (who also wrote the piece)

Singing of 'Abide with me'

The Act of Remembrance including: The Exhortation,

Last Post,

Two minutes Silence

Reveille

'Kohima'

Recovery of the drums

(Poppies were laid at the Drumhead by: Captain Alison Hoffman (RN), Major General Susan Ridge (Army), Air Vice Marshal Alison Mardell (RAF), Commandant Kim McCutcheon (FANY – on behalf of the Civilian Services), Clare Pillman (Director – Culture, Tourism and Sport, Dept for Culture, Media and Sport), and Mrs Una Cleminson (National Vice-chairman, The RBL).

Singing of the National Anthem

There was also opportunity for individuals to participate in their own act of remembrance with special 'Women at War 100' poppy tributes; and view the photographic exhibition adjacent to the Remembrance Centre.



WENDY HOOTON WRITES

I had the pleasure of meeting ex Falklands Veteran Senior Nursing Officer Nicci Pugh QARNNS who read of her experience in the Falklands. I was wearing my late husband's (WO2 C.R. Hooton RAPC) Falklands medal so was able to tell her about his role in the conflict.



WOMEN AT WAR 100

Bob Gamble OBE

Commemorative Events Lead

Excerpts from a letter written to all involved organisations:

Dear All,

On behalf of The Royal British Legion and the Commemorative Events Team in particular, may I offer my sincere thanks for the contribution of your organisation to the Women at War 100 event held at the National Memorial Arboretum on Friday 7 July - it was genuinely heartening to see your Association so well represented. From the Legion's perspective, we consider the event to have been a huge success and we recognise that the contribution of our key partner organisations was integral to that. We have already received a great deal of positive feedback regarding the event – both internal and external.

I have taken the liberty of including below some useful key statistics from the event.

ATTENDANCE

- Approx. 900 public attendees (figures still being calculated)
- The TRBL National Vice Chairman hosted the service
- The service was led by Wing Commander Reverend Ruth Hake and supported by Director of Music, Captain Lauren Petritz-Watts and a tri-service all female military band

- The most senior representative present was Lt Gen Tim Radford (COMARRC – 3*)
- Those who laid poppies at the Drumhead were Major General Susan Ridge (Army), Air Vice Marshal Alison Mardell (RAF), Captain Ali Hoffman (RN), Commandant Kim McCutcheon (FANY – on behalf of the civilian services), Clare Pillman (DCMS) and Una Cleminson (TRBL)
- The youngest representative present was a 14 year old cadet, the oldest a 101 year old balloon operator. The age range between these was equally represented and 95% of guests were female.

MEDIA RESULTS

The event achieved media across national audiences - 'Women at War' overall media reach of approximately 68.5m. National broadcast highlights included BBC1 1 0'clock news, ITV News at 1 and News at 10, CH4 6pm, CH5 News at 5, BBC Radio 5 Live breakfast, Regional TV mentions x 70 stations, Regional Radio mentions x 68 stations. The event was well attended by photographers and media representatives.

Thank you once again for the support you have collectively demonstrated for this special event. I sincerely hope that we have the opportunity to work together again soon.



THE 100 YEAR WALK Margaret Davies

Between the 12th and 18th March 2017 I completed my solo 100 Mile Walk to celebrate the 100 years that women have officially been part of the British Army. I did it to raise the profile of the Women's Royal Army Corps Association and hopefully to raise a total of £2,500 for the Women's Royal Army Corps Association and Cancer Research UK.



Good luck cake by Alison Inglis

As well as this main event I raised money through various fundraising activities and raffles. As part of this some of my lovely neighbours donated some fantastic prizes which I was able to raffle. All funds raised by my walk and its supporting activities go directly to my two chosen charities as I was entirely self-funded. I am sure that well over 80% of the money I raised came from ex members of the WRAC so a huge thank you to you all.

I started from the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, Staffordshire at the statue to ATS women who served in WW2. I was honoured to be able to enjoy the company of half a dozen Auxiliary Territorial Service veterans and also have paraded six Women's Royal Army Corps Association Standards in the company of around 30 W.R.A.C. veterans.



The walk, via the canal towpaths of central England, was challenging at times but the weather was kind and the route took me through some of the most quintessentially "English" scenery I have experienced; from pastoral to industrial past and present. I met many amazing people along the way including those whose families had been touched or were being touched by cancer and those who had served in the British Forces 'Family'. In each case a bond was struck which only those who have suffered or served might understand.



Arriving back in Stratford

I arrived to a formidable welcome-party comprising a 'local' Jazz Ensemble called "Shades" and around 100 W.R.A.C. Association members. My arrival coincided with the AGM of the W.R.A.C. Association (which was very well attended) and in the evening a dinner attended by around 250 female veterans to celebrate the 100 Years that women have served in the British Army in non-nursing roles.

I know that people like to know about the minor disasters that befall me on my walks and this year was no exception! Those who know me know that I like my food and get a little 'miffed' when hungry. Day one was a bit of a nightmare with an untypically awful Premier Inn breakfast, a bowl of thin soup for lunch and an end of walk meal that didn't happen because I ordered 5 minutes after orders had closed! And, to cap it all, I'd forgotten to pack my emergency cake-bars & chocolate in my rucksack! Compared to that the walking was a doddle!! The other day that was more challenging than most was the 3rd one. I 'lost' the lunchtime pub (unlike me I hear you say!) Well, one would think a canal-side pub would be beside the canal not up a hill and round a corner!! After that delay I was then further delayed by miles of ankle deep mud on the towpath where the slipping and sliding with a heavy backpack slowed me right down. Finally, at a couple of miles from the end of the day the towpath was blocked by engineering work. There was a large arrow pointing the way round which took me into a thickly wooded area . . . and then . . . nothing!! Fortunately my hosts for the evening came and rescued me.

My thanks in particular to June and Den and then Elaine and Phyl for putting up with me, picking me up at the end of the day and dropping me off the following morning having fed me till I could hardly move!! To both households, your hospitality was amazing. Thank you.

I have been overwhelmed by the support that this walk, my fourth 100 Mile walk for charity, has received. Up to the date of this article my efforts for this year have raised over £4,535 (£5,215 including Gift Aid). Of this the Association should receive over £4,000 plus Gift Aid, as Cancer Research UK also get 10% of the donations. I know that the money will be well used by both my charities and I am extremely grateful to all those who have donated so generously. I am also hopeful that I have been able to raise the profile of the W.R.A.C. Association and its work in supporting female veterans like myself.

My Fundraising Page at Virgin Money Giving is still active so donations can still be made on line either by searching for me by name (Margaret Davies) on the Make a Donation page or through the following link: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/MargaretDaviesWRAC>. Also, if you have access to the internet and would like to know more about how the walk went please check out my Blog at: margdaviesswalks.blogspot.co.uk.

THE QUEEN OPENS THE NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM Babs Anderson

Back in December 2015 a number of Birmingham Branch were asked to get involved with the National Army Museum on a project they were doing about Women in the British Army. The plan was that we would recall the highs and lows of our service and they would be turned into a book. There were to be cartoons drawn to complement the stories and they would also be on display in the NAM, once the refurbishment had been completed. The book was published and we all received one to keep for our own bookshelves.

We heard nothing more until late in February when I received an invitation to represent Birmingham Branch at the Royal Preview, taking place on 16 March 2017. Also, would I wish to be presented to Her Majesty The Queen, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and HRH The Duke of Kent. How could I turn down such an invitation?

The great day arrived and I donned my very best outfit, hoping that food nor drink would throw itself at me. When I presented myself at the NAM I was surprised at the number of dignitaries and celebrities on show, some of whom have been on my 'wish I could meet them' list for years.

I was collected and lined up in my allotted position to await the arrival of Her Majesty. There was an excited buzz as she was guided through an upper level door. We could see her from our lowly semi circle. As she moved round the upper tier I became worried when she neared the top of a flight of stairs. It was obvious that she was going to come down these stairs and I hoped she was up to the job. Like every other subject in the land, I am fully aware that this lady is 90 years old and might not be as sprightly as she used to be. In my mind I planned what I would do if she fell headlong down towards me. Obviously, I was going to throw myself on the floor to break her fall. At no point did it occur to me that she was perfectly safe and had enough fitter people than me to ensure her safe negotiation of the stairs. I was ready, just in case.



The next thing I knew, she was beside me, taking my hand gently in hers and asking me about my involvement with the National Army Museum. I told her about my Branch and the work we had done about our memories. She told me that she was finding it difficult to remember everything nowadays so it was a good idea to get those memories written down. I managed to mention the WRAC Association three times and the fact that she was its Patron. We chatted for about half a minute before she moved on to far more important people, such as the accountant and the archivists. I spoke briefly to The Duke of Edinburgh and then The Duke of Kent before they wandered after Her Majesty, who was by this time making her way to her very shiny car.

All too soon it was over and I was switching on my mobile to share the special moment with my family and friends. They in turn were on the lookout for any snippets on the news. A couple of my friends managed to find a video which did indeed show Her Majesty standing next to me. It actually shows the back of my head and The Queen laughing. The question is; how do my friends recognise me from the back of my head? Is that their preferred view?

Anyway, this is one of the occasions which makes it onto my list of things with which to bore people when I am in my nursing home. Please feel free to visit me there and confirm my story.

Memorabilia Shop

All items can be purchased online 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. All prices include postage & packing.

See page 55 for information on our new WRAC Association membership gift vouchers



WRAC Association Fleece

£28.00

Green fleece with embroidered WRAC Association logo.
Sizes XS, S, M, L, XL
(these are unisex and come up large)



WRAC Association 2018 Diary

£5.00

Get organised with the WRAC Association 2017 Diary, week to two pages



WRAC Association Polo Shirt

£20.00

WRAC Association Polo Shirt is a high quality, unisex Fruit of the Loom cotton shirt with embroidered WRAC Association logo.
Sizes S, M, L, XL



WRAC Association Umbrella

£15.00

Dark green golf style umbrella with WRAC Association logo



WRAC Association Brooch

£5.00



WRAC Pin Badge

£4.00



ATS Pin Badge

£4.00



WRAC Association Keyring

£2.00

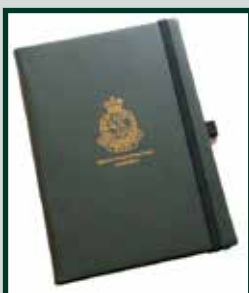
Next time you go shopping don't be caught without a coin for your trolley



WRAC Association Tea Towel

£7.00

Superb quality large tea towel (50x80cm) with green WRAC Association logo



WRAC Association Notepad

£10.00

A5 lined hardback notebook in dark green with gold embossed badge and logo



WRAC Association Wristband

£2.00

A simple and stylish way to show your support for the WRAC Association



WRAC Association Ballpoint Pen

£5.00

High quality WRAC Association branded ballpoint pen in dark green



WRAC Association Paperweight

£15.00

A beautiful 4 inch diameter paperweight crafted from Bristol Blue glass (includes display stand)



WRAC History Booklet

£3.00

A short history of the WRAC from 1949 to 1992

WRAC Association Notepad and Pen

Purchase the A5 notebook and ballpoint pen together for only £13.00



Mike Donne (left) of ssafa and Nicky Tulloch (right) of the Alzheimer's Society present a new laptop to WRAC veteran Sophia Krywyszyn at her home near Cockfield in County Durham.

A Veteran who helped military families cope with the challenges of Army life has received a helping hand from the ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund after being diagnosed with dementia.

During her 22-year military career, Warrant Officer Sophia Krywyszyn supported families at times of peace and conflict, ensuring their mental and physical needs were taken care of. Her welfare role included tackling issues such as domestic violence, and breaking tragic news to the loved ones of soldiers serving in campaigns including the Falklands War.

When Ms Krywyszyn, 61, was diagnosed with dementia in 2015 she never considered approaching a military charity for help, but was delighted when the Alzheimer's Society did so on her behalf. Nicky Tulloch, one of the Alzheimer's Society's dementia advisors, was concerned Ms Krywyszyn could become isolated in her rural home at High Lands, near Cockfield in Teesdale, County Durham. And when she discovered her client's laptop was not working, she contacted the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (ssafa) for help.

"ssafa carried out an assessment and arranged for a replacement laptop," said Mrs Tulloch. "It's wonderful to have achieved this positive outcome. Sophia will be able to use the laptop over the winter months for shopping and to talk to friends and family. It's also great to work in partnership with another agency."

Ms Krywyszyn said: "The laptop means I can stay in touch with my family through Skype and email. I also hope to get some special games to exercise my brain. I know what dementia is and how it can affect people. My mum had it and I looked after her for 14 years. I want to stay positive. I have my down days of course, but my dogs always cheer me up."

Ms Krywyszyn, originally from Scunthorpe in Lincolnshire, joined the Women's Royal Army Corps in 1972 and initially served as a driver.

Mike Donne, chairman of the ssafa County Durham branch, said the charity had secured funding for the laptop from the ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund.

Editor: With thanks to The Northern Echo (published 08 Nov 16) and with the permission of all individuals.

Who is eligible for help?

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

Are there any other criteria?

Yes, you must be in need of financial help.

There's also a limit on the savings that you can have above which the Benevolent Fund is unable to make an award.

To qualify for an annual maintenance grant you must be living alone on a basic state pension and in poor health.

"I would just like to say a huge thank you for your help. I received a new mattress and cooker. I have also been awarded a maintenance grant which has come as a lovely surprise and will; be most helpful. Thank you once again for the assistance from the ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund – you have been fantastic". £80 for a mattress, £260 for a cooker and £34 per week maintenance grant.

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	house repairs
house adaptations	central heating/boilers
electrically powered vehicles	carpets and flooring
electric wheelchairs	clothing
riser-recliner chairs	furniture
stairlifts	white goods
disability aids including electric beds	removal expenses
annual maintenance grants	rent, deposits and bonds
care home fee topups	funeral expenses
general needs	priority debt
respite breaks	food vouchers
travel and transport	

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 free via the NHS.

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.

"I wish to thank your Association for your donation which enabled ssafa to purchase a riser-recliner chair for me. I have been using this for over a month and feel the benefit of it already. Once again, thank you very much for your gift".
£800 riser-recliner chair.

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 twice 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 annual maintenance grants, and for applicants with fewer than 6 months service.

What happens next?

When a grant is awarded it is paid by digital bank transfer to either ssafa or the RBL rather than direct to an applicant. 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.

A wife writes, I want to thank your Benevolent Fund for the generous contribution via ssafa towards the installation of a stair-lift for my husband and myself. Without this funding he would remain a prisoner in his bedroom as we were unable to carry him downstairs all the time. It has made a great deal of difference to his life, even though with his dementia and other complex medical issues he did not realise it, and the fact is, my life is a lot better for it. Thank you so much for your help". £1,000 for a stair-lift.

**Please find below the
contact details for SSAFA and
the Royal British Legion if you,
or someone you know, are in
need of assistance.**

SSAFA

www.ssafa.org.uk

0800 731 4880

9.00 am – 5.30 pm: Monday Friday

The Royal British Legion:

www.britishlegion.org.uk

0808 802 8080

+44 (0)20 3376 8080 from overseas

8.00 am – 8.00 pm: 7 days a week

WELFARE SPOTLIGHT ADMIRAL NURSES

Editor: The information below has been reproduced from outside sources, the WRAC Association takes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information.

Admiral Nurses are specialist dementia nurses who provide practical and emotional care and support for family carers, as well as the person with dementia. The Royal British Legion has teamed up with Admiral Nurses (a service run by Dementia UK) to provide expert support, information and advice to ex-Service personnel with dementia, as well their families.

What do Admiral Nurses do?

Admiral Nurses provide support to families throughout their experience of dementia that is tailored to their individual needs and challenges. They provide families with the knowledge to understand the condition and its effects, the skills and tools to improve communication, and provide emotional and psychological support to help family carers carry on caring for their family member.

The service includes:

- Skilled person-centred assessments of the needs of the carers, families and individuals with dementia.
- Practical advice and information on dementia, its impact and how to cope.
- Psychological support to help family carers understand and deal with their feelings.
- Helping Carers to develop and improve skills in care giving.
- Therapeutic, educational and social support carers group.
- Guidance on eligibility for other Legion support and services.
- Referrals to other appropriate services.
- Advocacy support.

How do I get help?

To use the Admiral Nurse Service, the person with dementia or their carer must be a beneficiary of the Royal British Legion. The Royal British Legion Admiral Nurse Service currently only operates in Lancashire, West Midlands and Somerset/Hampshire. If you do not live in any of these areas, Admiral Nurses can still provide information and support through one of their regional centres.

Contact Admiral Nurses.

For more information about the Admiral Nurses service in any of these regions, please call the appropriate number below:

Lancashire/West Midlands helpline: 0845 257 9406

Somerset helpline: 01823 218443

Hampshire helpline: 02382025787

For more information direct@dementiauk.org or phone 0800 888 6678

ABERDEEN Mhairi Irving

One lesson you learn early in your army career is to never volunteer for anything. Unfortunately the ladies had no problem in volunteering me to become the Chair of the WRAC Aberdeen branch. They will be difficult shoes to fill as Joan Bartlett has been in the chair for many years. I hope I don't disappoint. A vote of thanks was given to Joan for her outstanding contribution to the branch and her ongoing invaluable support.

I am going to take you a bit back in time, so you have an up-to-date picture of our branch activities.

Aberdeen Armed Forces Day 2016 & 2017

We had representation at both AFD parades, where two of our ladies - Irene Thomson & Margaret Muirhead took part, doing a great job in representing the Aberdeen Branch.



Irene Thomson & Margaret Muirhead

WRAC Scottish Area AGM – September 2016

At the 2016 Scottish Area AGM, our chair at the time Joan Bartlett managed to win the annual craft competition; the subject this year being Jewellery. As you can see from the photo, she is so proud of her win. I noticed that the shield made an appearance at the Christmas Lunch.



Scottish Craft winner 2016 - Joan Bartlett

Christmas Lunch – December 2016:

In December 2016 we had our annual Christmas meal, our preferred location was the Station Hotel, Aberdeen where it was attended by 8 of our members. Our number were swollen that day as we extended the invitation to the ladies of the Perth & Tayside Branch and we were so glad to welcome Lt Col Jo Young

(who is also the Chairman of WRAC Association Scottish Area), along with Florence Green & Isobel Gordon. Branch members attending were: Margaret Muirhead, Joan Bartlett, Helen Thomson, Moira Thom, Moyra Brodie, Sandra Lemmon and myself Mhairi Irving (photographer).

So far it's been a pretty quiet year for the branch; we met in February, March & April in Ma Cameron's Snug as always, our average attendance is 8.

Outing - May 2017

After lots of debate on lunch menus, of which there were many, we settled on the Station Hotel Aberdeen again for our May 2017 outing. Unfortunately a few of our members were unable to attend due to illness, but we still had a respectable turnout of 8. The meal & drinks were ordered, one lady ordered a sherry - now this is a first for me, it came on the rocks! I had to chuckle. We also had some confusion over other orders but got there in the end. Those in attendance were: June Fisher, Margaret Muirhead, Moira Thom, Moyra Brodie, Sandra Lemmon, Mhairi Irving, Joan Bartlett & Helen Thomson



If you are ever in the area we normally meet on the first Monday of the month at 11am in the Snug Bar, Ma Camerons, Little Belmont Street, Aberdeen, though we don't meet in January. Our May & December meeting can sometimes be in different locations due to May being our annual outing and in December we like to celebrate with a Christmas Lunch. So please drop by and say hello.

BAND Ann Jones

I am sorry to say the band members are increasingly finding it quite hard to travel for reunions. However, they were very impressed with the Yorkshire T.A. Band conducted by Mr. Barnsley, which was a joy to listen too.

I was sorry to miss the 100 Years of Women in Uniform celebrated at the Stafford Arboretum, with the Band made up of the Ladies who now serve in the Regiments; what a wonderful sight that was. I did look forward to that day, unique, as it will not happen again. I do hope those of you who got there really enjoyed your day.

There are of course many of our wonderful Staff Band veterans who are still playing. Tewksbury are lucky to have Betty Clark (nee Chadwick) playing in the town band which has been very busy with the summer engagements, which included a visit to Miefbach Germany for a four day Street Fair.

Likewise, Shelia Burton (Nee Huxley) is tooting her flute in several bands, also traveling far and wide. Please let me know

of any more of you are keeping busy in your present bands. My e-mail will be at the end of this entry.

I do hope you were able to catch the 1st night of the Proms this season on the T.V., it was extremely impressive, with choir and orchestra, compelling the continuation of staying glued to the program until the ending. I have now booked the recording for the rest of the series; I do hope you enjoy it as much as me.

So now to all you ladies who have not signed up to the Association and the Band branch - where are you all who served in the 1960s 70s, 80s and 92s???? We do need you to join us, as unfortunately we are missing many of our older ladies now. I do hope to hear from you soon and look forward to getting to know you.

I wish you all the very best of health.

mrs.ann.jones@gmail.com

BIRMINGHAM Babs Anderson

I wouldn't be exaggerating much if I said that Birmingham Branch are so busy that we sometimes meet ourselves coming back. Since my last report, Brum has been involved in many events. We have been pleased to welcome Sue Perkins and Norma Cooper to our happy band.



L to R: Andy Oleson, Rosie Garrison, Marilyn Preece and Chris Fretwell

Brum Branch continue to hold Pizza Nights once a quarter and welcome anyone from other Branches if they want to join us. We meet in March, June, September and December. Sometimes there are only 4 of us and at other times 14, but we will keep on meeting up just for the fun of it.

In mid-January a bunch of us went to the pantomime - oh yes we did. We met up for a Chinese meal before walking to the theatre, where we laughed ourselves silly. We have already booked our tickets for next year. There will be 27 members shouting "He's behind you".

If you were at Stratford for the WAAC/QMAAC Centenary Dinner you will have spotted a lot of Brum Branch around the place as it was a home game for us. We all turned out on Saturday morning to welcome Marg Davies as she completed this year's 100 mile walk and Stratford's own 'Shades on Black' band played as she danced across the car park to her waiting fans. The band just hadn't learned the bit where they stop when asked, so that speeches could be made. They're a work in progress. Anyway, roll on 2019 for the next big event.

A select band of us sang our way through Dreamboats and Petticoats at the theatre in May. Happily, we knew all the songs and were able to help the cast out at full volume. The Chinese meal beforehand was delicious as usual and I'm sure it gave us the energy to sing with such gusto.

Five members of Brum Branch joined Benidorm Babes in May, but what happens in Benidorm ... Thanks to Mel Howell and her assistant, Chris Powell for making it such a fun packed week.

On Wednesday 17 May, we had lunch with the Lord Mayor of Birmingham. He is a top man and made us laugh and himself blush. His mother was Land Army and he entertained us with some of her stories. As he will be Deputy Mayor over the next year he would like us to invite him to join us on some of our trips out. Happy days.



**Brum Branch with the Lord Mayor of Birmingham
L to R: Heather Gaughran, Andy Oleson, Chris Fretwell, Sue Pearce, Rosie Garrison, Morag Hardie, Yvonne Thick, Benita Davies, Pat Neale, Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Betty Webb, Sue Dolphin, Marilyn Preece, Marg Davies, Babs Anderson, Janet Given and Maureen Lay**

We have been lucky enough to be invited to Hereford and Shropshire Branches for some of their events. They were thoroughly enjoyable and we are now looking forward to Hereford's picnic in the summer. We will always do our best to join any Branches who invite us to their do's.

5 Brum girls were running/crawling in the Hull 10k this year and another 6 shouted encouragement. We had a fabulous weekend, despite the fire alarm going off the night before the run at 02.30hrs.

Armed Forces Day turned out to be a bit of a disappointment this year. Lots of us turned out to march in the parade but the male veterans' numbers were quite depleted for various reasons. The highlight for us was that our Standard, carried by Rosie Garrison, lead the parade of veterans in recognition of Women at War 100. The Branch are discussing ways of celebrating Armed Forces Day in the future. Perhaps a road trip is on the cards.

We have a new platoon in Birmingham Branch, called the Bionic Platoon. So many of our members have had replacement joints that we could keep security at the airport busy for days with their scanners bleeping. Good luck to the Bionic Platoon's growing number of future members and those in other Branches too.

So, there you have the short version of our antics. Please feel free to join us for any meeting or event and remember, you can count on Brum Branch, we have an abacus.

BRISTOL

Jackie Naysmith MBE

It seems so long since our last Report but as usual I am 'last minute'. We held our Branch Lunch at Bristol City Marriott Hotel in February and our theme was the 60's, which was 50 yrs since the WAAC became the first all-female unit. Place names had a new 1967 threepenny piece above their name and also a WRAC or ATS engraved Pen in a nice red case. As usual we were made very welcome and looked after, the meal was very good and enjoyed. Always good to see our ATS ladies.



Unfortunately 3 of our ATS ladies over the past few months have fallen and so have been unable to attend meetings. They are missed. Our Chairman, Mrs Stella Fogg, decided that she would 'stand down' as Chairman at our Branch Meeting, and our Vice Chairman Pat Carter took over until our AGM in October. Stella was presented with a photo album with lots of photographs taken over the years. Stella is still attending our meetings on a regular basis.

At our June meeting we always honour Her Majesty, and to celebrate we had cream cakes for our refreshments, which was very well liked.

We do not hold formal meetings in July and August due to members being on holiday. Pat Carter organised our Annual Branch Fish and Chips event at Weston-super-Mare in July. We could not have asked for better weather, food was delicious and everyone enjoyed themselves. Again only one of our ATS ladies was able to attend; her son and daughter-in-law brought her.



A couple of our members have organised informal get togethers which have proved popular. They decide the venue and people just turn up, some are not in the Association but it is a chance for them to know more about us.

Armed Forces Day - there was no specific event in Bristol. I was at local RBL but unfortunately that was not very well supported. WsM held their AFD the week before, over two days and was brilliant. I met the National Chairman of RBL and his wife and also the Somerset County Chairman.

We have a Committee meeting in August to discuss our AGM in October and plan future events.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our retired Editor Sue Hatton and also previous Chairman of Grants Committee, Audrey Smith, for all their support and dedication to our Association. I am only sorry I was not at AGM to thank them in person.

CANTERBURY

Jenny Smith

With the winter months behind us it was lovely to meet up in April and catch up with everyone. Susan Wing and Kate McGregor attended the AGM and dinner in October and brought us up to date with all the news. They recalled happy memories meeting up with old friends during the wonderful dinner celebrations. We then helped Rose Watson to celebrate her 90th Birthday with a delicious cake and ever refreshing cup of tea. Many congratulations Rose.

In May our guest speaker was Gerry Ferret from the British Legion who kindly gave us a very informative and entertaining talk and slide show of his many trips to the Military Cemeteries around the world. Although we had a poor attendance through holidays, work and sickness, Gerry recalled many special events and memories while helping families, comrades and friends to find their loved ones.

Our June meeting was given over to Sharon Addis who had recently been back to the Falklands to visit Port Stanley, where she was stationed between August 1984 and January 1985. Sharon was the first female port trained officer in the Falklands and had some lively memories to share. From her recent visit she had taken photographs to compare with those taken during her posting. The Port has grown considerably through tourism, which for the Island is very good, but the difference in the buildings that they used were quite shocking and sad to see because they are now in a dilapidated and derelict state. Thank you Sharon, your talk brought back lots of funny and happy memories for our members.



Sharon Addis with Port Stanley photo album

July was the time we have all been waiting for, our Strawberry Tea, this year hosted by Jan Edis. Unfortunately I was on holiday in Bakewell (enjoying a piece of their famous Bakewell tart) but I am assured that everyone had a wonderful time. Jan who is recovering from a recent fall was the hostess with the mostess (as they used to say) - the strawberry cream scones were delicious, the numerous cakes gorgeous and the tea kept flowing. Thank you so much Jan, sounds like I really did miss out.

WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018

The 2018 AGM will be held in the Carisbrooke Hall, Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour Street, London, W2 2HF on Saturday 17th March 2018. Any Branch Secretary or HQ Branch member who wishes to submit an item for inclusion in the agenda is to do so by 5th February 2018 to penny.muxworthy@wracassociation.org.uk.

TIMETABLE

12:30-13:00	Branch Secretaries Meeting (balcony of the Carisbrooke Hall)
14:00	AGM
15:30	Afternoon tea (for Association members only, must be pre-booked)

DRAFT AGENDA

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Confirmation of 2017 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

Refreshments: Afternoon tea will be served on completion of the AGM. This is only available to WRAC Association members who have pre-booked by completing the form below.

.....

Return to: WRAC Association, Unit 39, Basepoint, 1 Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, SO23 0LD
by 23rd February 2018, or email to office.manager@wracassociation.org.uk

I wish to attend the AGM and afternoon tea on Saturday 17th March 2018 at the Victory Services Club, London:

Surname: Christian Name (known as):

Email:

Tel No:

Address:

..... Post Code:

Please tick as appropriate:

- ☐ I wish to attend the AGM and afternoon tea.
- ☐ I wish to attend the AGM but will not be staying for afternoon tea.

Dietary Requirements:

WRAC ASSOCIATION APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Send to:

WRAC Association
Unit 39 Basepoint Business Centre
1 Winnall Valley Road
Winchester
SO23 0LD



I wish to apply for membership of the WRAC Association:

UK Annual Membership: I wish to join the WRAC Association as an Annual Member, I enclose a cheque for £10.	
Overseas Annual Membership: I wish to join the WRAC Association as an Annual Member, I enclose a cheque for £15.00 (Overseas Members are asked to pay an additional £5.00 per year to cover postage of Lioness magazine).	

Date Signature

All cheques must be in **sterling** and made payable to “**WRAC Association**”

Subscriptions include Lioness magazine

Please complete this form in **BLOCK LETTERS**

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

Miss/Mrs/Ms: Surname:

First Names: Known as:

Surname when serving: Date of Birth:

Address for Correspondence:

.....

.....

Post Code:

Email:

Home Tel: Mobile Tel:

Date of Enrolment: Date of Release:

Do not worry if you can't remember all your Service details, just complete as much as you can

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

The WRAC Association AGM held on 21 March 2015 at the Majestic Hotel, Harrogate ratified the following amendments to membership subscriptions:

To cease Life Membership for all new applications, effective 21 March 2015. Existing Life Membership status to remain unchanged. To increase the Annual Membership subscription from £5 to £10 (£15 for overseas members), effective 21 March 2015 for new members.

What this means for you?

Life Member. If you have been a Life Member for over 10 years you are clearly receiving excellent value for money. Your membership remains unchanged however you might wish to consider setting up a Standing Order to donate the equivalent of an Annual subscription.

Annual Member. You may continue to pay by post, phone, online via the website or via your Branch. Alternatively you might wish to consider making an online recurring payment (via website) or setting up a Standing Order to pay your subscription.

Online Recurring Payment. We now have the capacity for you to set up an online recurring payment for subscriptions or donations using your debit or credit card. Please see the website for more details www.wracassociation.org.uk.

Standing Order Details.

Sort Code: 16-34-25

Account No. 10004831

Reference: Please use the following format for the 'Reference' when you set up the Standing Order.

- **For Subscriptions:** 'SUB [space] first initial [space] surname'
For example Mrs I M Guildford would be 'SUB_I_Guildford'
- **For Donations:** 'DON [space] first initial [space] surname'
For example Mrs I M Guildford would be 'DON_I_Guildford'

Your surname may well be longer than the number of characters permitted, please include as much of your surname as possible as this is the only way we can identify individuals.

Direct Debit. We regret that due to the overhead costs involved we are not in a position to accept Direct Debit payments.

If you set up a Standing Order please complete and return the form below.

.....
Return to: WRAC Association, Unit 39, Basepoint, 1 Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, SO23 0LD

Surname: Initials..... Postcode.....

Email:

I have set up a Standing Order, effective from/...../....., using the following reference (complete as applicable):

[illegible]

GIFT AID DECLARATION

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below:

☐ I want to Gift Aid my donation of £_____ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to:

Name of Charity - WRAC Association and ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

My details

Title First name or initial(s) Surname.....

Full home address

.....

.....Postcode

Email address.....

Date.....Signature.....

Please notify the WRAC Association if you:

- want to cancel this declaration
- change your name or home address
- no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

If you are a non UK tax payer or do not wish to sign this declaration it would still be good to hear from you. If this is the case please complete name and address above and tick below:

☐ I do not wish to complete this Gift Aid Declaration

and/or

☐ I am a non UK tax payer or do not pay enough Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax to make it worthwhile.





There is no meeting in August, so we are now looking forward to our day trip out in September, paying our subs in October, catching up in November and ending the year with our Christmas lunch in December. So until next time, take care of yourselves and may we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from everyone at our Canterbury branch.

CARDIFF **Debbie Amphlett**

Firstly, I must send best wishes to all those Cardiff branch members who have been unable to attend our monthly get togethers, due to illness.

In August '17 Cardiff Branch will see its second anniversary since Karen Francis re-established the branch and brought together the group from members in the area and beyond. In April Karen indicated that she wished to stand down from the post of Secretary in order to pursue her considerable other interests. All members of the Cardiff branch would like to thank Karen for her considerable efforts in re-establishing the branch and for organising numerous meetings, two Christmas meals and a trip to Bletchley

I have reluctantly taken over as Secretary and with luck, if members' time and diary commitments permit, and if I can match Karen's organisational skills, we will continue to meet up and hopefully arrange some trips further afield. We are currently planning a weekend trip to the National Memorial Arboretum. In June, four members attended Armed Forces Day in Caerphilly, taking pride of place and leading the veterans march right behind the Standard Bearers. We even made the local news channels and Twitter, even if the media on the Twitter feed mistakenly called us WRENS. We quickly searched out or should I say hunted down the culprit and the mistake was soon corrected!!



Cardiff branch at Caerphilly Armed Forces Day

In July we had a very competitive ten pin bowling match with two teams of five, plus our enthusiastic cheerleader. I am pleased to report the side that I was on this year was the winning team, storming ahead in the second game and ended up with a convincing win (no thanks to me I may add). This is turning into an annual event so I am sure all will be back to do battle again next year.



10 pin bowling - Winning team on the left

A few of us who will not be going to London for the Remembrance Day parade are planning to parade at the cenotaph in Cardiff this year.

The Cardiff branch meetings (or should I say more a drink, chat and laughter as there is not an agenda or minute in sight) are held on the second Wednesday of each month and are attended by between 6 and 10 members, some of whom meet prior to the meetings for a meal. The meetings are held at the Toby Carvery in Whitchurch, Cardiff just off the M4 unless there is a special event arranged such as the bowling night or Christmas Dinner. If you would like to join us please feel free to contact me either by email on wrac.cardiff.branch@gmail.com or via the WRAC Cardiff Branch Facebook page which is a closed group.

CHELMSFORD **Gina Shadrack**

We have continued to meet regularly during the year at the RAFA Club in Chelmsford, usually on the third Tuesday. We spend the afternoon chatting to each other over a cup of tea - thank you Diane and Margaret. Sometimes we have a speaker or other item during the afternoon and in:

March - we listened to an account of a holiday Margaret (Kliskey) enjoyed in Italy.

April - Following several floral demonstrations we have enjoyed in the past, we were invited to create our own arrangement. This was a happy and successful afternoon in which we could all take part.

May - At this meeting we had as our speaker a lady who though suffering from a debilitating illness took up screen printing. She titled her interesting talk "My second journey" and despite the problems she faced managed to achieve many things. Her handsome scarves were delightful and we were able to purchase them if we wished.

June - Planned as a non-event afternoon together we were glad of the offer to hear about Margaret's latest trip. Being a much-travelled person, she had had a completely different type of holiday - in Dorset, travelling on steam trains. To quote her own words, "different to staying in Youth Hostels"!

July - The anniversary of the branch means we celebrate and this year we are having a fish and chip lunch together.

This is new of our branch up to printing date, but we hope to meet in September and later have a Christmas lunch together.

CHESTER **Pat Sanders**

Well what a year we have had so far with our trips out with our sisters from the Wirral Branch. We started our year with the yearly lunch with the Royal Signals in January; also in January we had our trip out to Shropshire Branch and had a lovely meal and collected our 12 trays of eggs - the drivers face was hilarious.

March saw us off to the WAAC 100 years Centenary, where we had a great time. The Association did us proud, everything was well organised, apart from the lifts but that was the hotels responsibility and we did get a refund. The band on the Saturday evening was excellent and the food delicious.

Well what can you say about Fort William, it gets better every year. The laughs started on the way up and lasted all weekend. CJ and her crew do us proud every time we go. Kath Harrison from the Wirral Branch won first prize for her costume and Pat Sanders came second. We are eagerly waiting for CJ to give us the signal to start booking for next April.

We had 3 outings in May - a canal trip with the Royal Signal Chester Branch; and a visit to the Lady Lever Museum in Port Sunlight, if ever you are down visiting on the Wirral it is an excellent museum. Some of us braved the trip to Chester Zoo, there is so much to see and do we tend to miss half of it that is why we keep going back.

June again was also a busy month with visits to the National Arboretum, Hawarden Library, Speke Hall, and again a lunch with the Royal Signals, but the best day we had was at the AFD in Liverpool. We had a stall right on the Pier Head and this was manned by Andrea Jenkins (Secretary Wirral Branch), Pat Sanders and Sheila Brown. Many people stopped and took pictures, Pat and Andrea were sat with smiles on their faces until they realised they were taking pictures of Bentley the dog Pat was looking after and couldn't leave him all day on his own. The highlight of the day was when we met Prince Edward, he stopped and spoke to all the girls who were there. Sharon from the Wirral Branch was wearing her MBE and told him his nephew gave it to her. He was very interested in the WRAC and ATS. HRH was asked if we could have our photo taken with him and he said yes, I don't know how many was taken but he smiled in every one. Bless the Royal Family. Well that is the outings now for the Branch.



Chester Branch Armed Forces Day Liverpool with HRH Prince Edward

We have had 2 new members - Barbara McCarthy WRAC and her carer, who is an Honorary Member, Kath Fenton. Dot Garnett, ATS, had an operation on her knee in May; we were not expecting her to come back to the meetings until July but she turned up at the June meeting and I believe ran up the stairs. Ellen Roscoe, ATS, had a fall and broke her hip and I have just heard she will be home on Monday, a week since her fall. You cannot keep these ATS girls down. 2 of our ATS ladies have had to go into homes and we will miss them - Elsie Roberts, who many of you will remember as being quite a character had a bad fall and is now unable to live at home, the same as Megan Jones. Doris Wallington, also ATS, is also not able to attend the meetings now and they are all missed by the girls.

Well that is it, half way through a busy year and looking forward to the next half. If you would like to come and join our Branch and come out on our trips you would be made very welcome. Chester Branch wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and you never know you might bump into one of us at an outing.

CLEVELAND **Audrey Grainge**

Since our last submission to the Lioness there has not been much activity in the Branch. Due to very few attending our March meeting we had to abandon our usual bring and buy sale, also a planned visit from Anna Orlinsky had to be cancelled at the last meeting due to her being poorly, but we enjoyed the refreshments we had laid on and had a fun quiz, always a source of much hilarity.

Sadly, Irene McClean has stood down from her position as Branch Chair, also she has resigned from the Branch; we thank her for all her hard work in the past and wish her well for the future. Jan Williams Landess has stepped up to the position as chair.

This year we attended the AFD at Stockton, Middlesbrough and Redcar - a great many THANKS go to Jan and Kath Steele for all their hard work, not only for the days but all the run up and organising it took over the weeks previous to the events. We had our usual Tombola which seems to go down very well and donations were sent to BLESMA and the WRAC Association.



L to R: Jan Williams Landess, Ann Mahony, Kath Steel

Our August outing and Christmas lunch has been organised and we look forward to both.

Once again our Standard Bearer has done her sterling work with the many funerals and parades she has attended. Here is a report in her own words:

Hello Everyone,

I swear I have got shorter, I've been out with our Standard so much lately, that either the standard has grown or I have shrunk. Sadly I have been to many funerals lately, also to different functions with the Royal Artillery. The master Gunner didn't believe how old I was, and asked if I was sure. They are so pleased to see the WRAC Standard on parade, and as long as I am capable I will carry on doing it.

The Chelsea Pensioners always welcome me there and have given me a nickname - it is unprintable!!! I was asked to go to Guisborough in May where an ATS Lady was being presented with her War Medal. She was in the War Office and told me all about it - she is 93 years old and her name is Mabel Welsh.

Kindest Regards, Ann Mahony

Ann has been a little modest, as she also presented Mabel with a little ATS Plaque. She has also done Drumhead Services, Parades in Blackpool and Larkhill, and an Unveiling of a Statue to Tom Dresser VC. Well Done Ann for flying our flag!!! Maybe she will let me tell you her age in my next newsletter!!



Cleveland Standard Bearer, Ann Mahony, having a break

Our Branch continues to thrive with around 15 members regularly attending on the 4th Wednesday of the month, but a few more members would be made most welcome. Our secretary Hazel Crammen is awaiting for your calls.

COLCHESTER & DISTRICT Kerry Warnes

On 4th March 2017 we enjoyed a quiet (haha) meeting at the Bricklayers public house, where we welcomed our new members to the branch and Facebook group. A few beverages were also consumed (naturally).

Our AGM was also held at the Bricklayers public house on 20th May 2017, I am very pleased that the committee was voted to stay unchanged for another year. Thank you ladies for your support, and for attending our various events.

The Colchester and District Branch had the great honour of being invited by The Not Forgotten Association to attend Prince Harry's 1st Garden Party at Buckingham Palace 30th May 2017. One of the stipulations for the day was that only members in receipt of a war pension were to be invited. As it turned out myself and Carole Vinnie Vincent (the youngest members of the branch) were the only ones who fell within that criteria and could attend.

So, after much hunting around for something to wear for the very special day, the morning of the 30th had arrived. To say we were two very excited little veterans is an understatement. I was to be presented to Prince Harry along with a few others, yes, I was a little nervous, but as he approached our group and shook our hands, the nerves totally evaporated. Prince Harry was very friendly and enjoyed listening to the stories told to him by the WW2 survivors of the Japanese prison camps. Overall, he is a lovely young man.



Kerry Warnes being presented to Prince Harry

After the meeting, we were encouraged to tour the palace grounds and to enjoy the very posh sandwiches, cakes, tea and strawberries and cream. Whilst enjoying the sun, we bumped (stalked) into a few celebrities, they all enjoyed having their photos taken with us!

We headed home around 17.00, but didn't want the day to end, so we got diverted to the Bricklayers to finish off what was a fantastic day, one that neither of us will ever forget. I would like to thank The Not Forgotten Association for inviting us and organising a truly amazing day.

Seaside Havoc will be taking place 30th July 2017 at Clacton beach, where we will enjoy a fish-n-chip lunch and fun and games in the sun (hopefully).

Sunday 3rd September we will be having a BBQ for members, family and friends at The Ancient Briton public house in Colchester at 14.00 hrs. The Ancient Briton hosts our veterans breakfast club twice a month, so we thought that it would be great to show them our support. If any of you ladies are in the area, why not pop along.

Our Christmas Dinner (yes, I said the 'C' word), will be taking place again at the Best Western Claydon House Hotel near Ipswich on 2nd December 2017, timings and menus will be confirmed at a later date, but if last year was anything to go by, we will have another fantastic night.

By the power of the Lioness and Facebook, I would like to welcome ALL of our new members, and look forward to meeting new members in the future.

DONCASTER

Veronica Hanson

We paid another visit to the VC museum in Doncaster for our September meeting. They had a lot of new exhibits. We were allowed to have a go with some of the rifles on display under supervision by the tour Guide.

In October we had an invitation to go and see the library at RAF Cranwell. The library is very extensive with books referring to the RAF. We had lunch in the Officers mess, then coffee in one of the private lounges. We were escorted by Dr Kerry and her husband. The curator of the library allowed us into the room the royal family use when they visit the base. It was a very interesting day



Rose Ratcliffe, Veronica Hanson, Christina Seymour, Joan Round, Pamela Morgan, Valerie Hitchen, Eileen Ridge, Dr Kerry and her husband

Four branch members went to London on a sightseeing and shopping break. We stayed at the Victory Club and places we visited included The Mall and Covent Garden Market. We tried to get into the Duke of Wellington's House but it was closed for the season.

Then we attended the WRAC AGM in Stratford Upon Avon.



Doncaster branch ladies at WRAC AGM
Top row: Pamela Morgan, Eileen Ridge; Bottom row: Joan Round, Veronica Hanson, Christina Seymour

We try to get out and about as much as we can. We are a close-knit branch. Our meetings are held every last Thursday in the month at the Barley Twist in Doncaster

DUMFRIES

Susan Marcroft

Hello everyone, it's ages since we put anything in the Lioness, so I thought it about time we rectified this and let you all know that we are still alive and kicking here in South West Scotland. A few members meet from time to time for enjoyable lunches in Dumfries throughout the year and it was with pleasure that at our last lunch (just a week ago - early June), we had Col Jo Young (WRAC Association Scotland President) as our guest, we appreciated Jo taking the time to drive so far. We also had a really good talk and slide presentation on 'Help for Heroes', this was given by Elizabeth and Martin Graham, the local representatives for H4H.

Sadly, we lost a member this month, Isabella Cowan. Isabella did war service and when I visited her at her home, she would tell me about how she still keeps in contact with her 'service' buddies. A lovely interesting lady who will be missed by many.

We still have lots to look forward to later this year, lunches, AGM Scotland, Remembrance Service to name a few. In June, two of our members are going on Parade for Armed Forces Day in Dumfries. Unfortunately I shall only be there on the side lines this year. But we all 'Fly The Flag' here in Dumfries. We send our best wishes to all our members who can't always get to our lunches, you are thought about often. Dumfries sends best wishes to all members far and wide.

FIFE & TAYSIDE

Margaret Selfridge

In March four members of the Branch attended the WAAC/QMAAC Centenary Dinner in Stratford upon Avon. As I am sure there will be a full report elsewhere all I will say is it was an amazing weekend.

The Branch held its Annual General Meeting on 27 April at The Salutation Hotel in Perth. Eleven members attended and we had a very productive meeting followed by an enjoyable lunch and raffle. Membership now stands at 42 as we have acquired two new members, Sheila Warrender and Helen Jephcote. Due to work commitments, we have yet to meet Helen but she is hoping to come to the Scottish AGM in September.

Sadly we have lost two members this year. One of our ATS ladies Joan Smith (nee Knight) passed away suddenly in early April. Joan was a founding member of the branch, having transferred from the Edinburgh Branch in 1988. She will be sorely missed.

In early July Kate Arnold lost her battle with cancer. Kate was a member of Fife & Tayside Branch for nine years and Branch Secretary from 2013 to 2016. She also served as Scottish Area Secretary and Treasurer from 2008 to 2016. On 21st July twenty-two members from various branches in Scotland attended her funeral. We will miss her laughter, sense of fun, her kindness, her stories and amazing organisational skills.

The Branch continues to meet on the last Thursday of each month at 12 noon in Reid's Bar of the Salutation Hotel in Perth.

GRANTHAM Lou Davies

This is an unofficial Grantham group of WRAC veterans. We met at the Tollemarch Inn in Grantham for our Breakfast Club on 24th June Armed Forces Day. We had a wonderful time.



Chris Corker, Rae Broughton, Lou Davies, Val Odell, Elaine Frampton, Jenny Shepherd and last but not least Dot Ryder

We meet on a regular basis for a meal and a chinwag! If there are any other WRAC veterans in the area that would like to join you would be most welcome. Please contact Chris Corker on 07811537258.

GREATER LONDON Chrissie Mills

We're not sure if we've appeared in these pages before; if we have, it was a very long time ago and as with many branches much has changed since then.

We moved from our old meeting place in the basement of Orange Street Congregational Church, near the National Gallery, to Hyde Park Barracks around ten years ago and we are now looking for a new venue which will be more convenient and easier to navigate for our older members.

We have recently had a complete change at the top. Val Gaff, our long standing and hardworking Secretary/Treasurer who ran the branch almost single handed for thirteen years, has stood down owing to family commitments and Margaret Smith has had to resign as Chairman because she now finds it difficult to get to meetings. So the new committee is Chairman, Virginia Hopson; Secretary, Chrissie Mills and Treasurer, Lin Thornton with Elaine

(Ozzy) Osborne as Social Secretary; and Welfare Officer, Wendy Clifton Whale. Val and Margaret are hard acts to follow but we'll try and do our best.

Nine members went to the AGM and centenary dinner in Stratford upon Avon in March, and what a good weekend that was. In fact, we enjoyed everything about it - except the hotel's lifts! We also recruited three new members there which made it even more worthwhile. Patricia Rosewell is an ex PTI who served from 1969 to 1992, Dorron Phillipson was at Mill Hill from 1972 to 1975 and in the TA from 1977 to 1986 and Kathleen (Kay) Allan was in the ATS for seven months and then served in the WRAC from 1949 to 1954.

Our annual Summer Lunch was held at the Civil Service Club, Whitehall on 15 July, and we were delighted to have Ali Brown as our special guest. It was her first visit to us and we hope it won't be the last! It was a very enjoyable event with good food and good company.



Greater London branch Summer Lunch

The next item on our calendar is our AGM in September and then we shall begin organising our Christmas Lunch, probably again at the Civil Service Club. In the meantime we send our good wishes to all you other ladies out there and hope we will meet up sometime soon.

GRIMSBY Gail Davy

In March we started our outings for the year with a trip to our favourite fish and chip restaurant and were served with a complimentary cake for our secretary Gail's birthday.

At the April meeting, which we held a week later than usual, on 21st April we had a buffet to celebrate the Queens 91st birthday (see top photo of img001.pdf).

May proved to be a busy month as 16 members went by minibus to visit the Workhouse at Southwell. It was very interesting to see how the poor lived and worked in Victorian times. It was a huge building which segregated men from women and children. All those that could worked in the house and grounds growing their own food. Later in the day we went to a garden centre for lunch.

Later in the month 6 of us attended a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace invited by the Not Forgotten Association and hosted by Prince Harry. It was a very exciting day travelling down to London in a luxury taxi in our finery. We arrived to strict security and were allowed to park in the courtyard and entered the gardens through the main entrance. Prince Harry looked very handsome and spoke to people quite close to us. There was a military band to entertain us and Scottish pipers during the afternoon. The food was delicious and we finished with bowls of strawberries and ice cream



June was a quiet month allowing us to rest before our next outing to the National Memorial Arboretum in July to celebrate 100 years of Women at War. A mini coach was hired to take 11 of our members to the service and reception

Several of our ladies took part with our Standard at the Armed Forces Weekend and manned the Royal British Legion stall. It was a sunny day and thousands of people arrived at Cleethorpes to join in the parade and see the displays and bands.

We are eagerly looking forward to our next outing to Hornsea Freeport.

HEREFORD Lynda Armstrong

In January, Hereford Branch held their Post-Christmas lunch at The Greenman in Fownhope. 29 members attended with 7 visitors. As always an enjoyable occasion with some excellent food served. This was followed a week later by attendance at the Post Christmas lunch of our friends in the Shropshire Branch, and a lovely day it was too.



Hereford branch at Shropshire Port Christmas lunch

January hit a few of our members hard and unfortunately found some of them in hospital for a while, but these ladies are made of stronger stuff and are all well on the road to recovery. January also saw Mrs Rosemary Jones kindly accept our invitation to fill the vacant post of Hereford Branch Honorary Chairwoman. Rosemary has been a proactive member of the Branch, always available to assist at Branch events and for those not aware, has been a 'Poppy Girl' for over 55 years; a feat recognised when she was presented with the Royal British Legion Long Service Award by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Herefordshire, Lady Darnley.

In the New Years Honours List, one of our members, Mrs Babs Mitcheson, was awarded The British Empire Medal in recognition of her work with Flood Prevention. Massive congratulations to you Babs.

March saw a large group of us attend the NMA to give our very own Marg Davies the send-off she deserved, for her charity walk of '100 miles for 100 years of women in the forces'. The following weekend we, with many others, attended the Grand Reunion and AGM in Stratford upon Avon where Marg was given a celebratory welcome on the successful completion of her walk.

March also saw our Branch President, Mrs Mary Nicholls and guest, invited to a Civic Service at Hereford Cathedral, for a service dedicated to Herefordshire's young people. Mary took along her daughter Joyce and they enjoyed a lovely service with beautiful singing from a Cantabile Choir. A collection was taken and all monies raised were donated to 'The Haven Breast Cancer Trust'. An afternoon tea was then enjoyed by all at Hereford's Town Hall.



Hereford Branch WRAC President Mrs Mary Nicholls, attending Hereford Cathedral with her daughter Joyce

April's monthly meeting coincided with 'Bake for Heroes' week, so with the help of Mrs Joy Harvey, Hereford Branch held our own cake bake raffle, with all the monies going to Help 4 Heroes. With 19 members present, we raised a grand total of £105.



Joy Harvey with Hereford's Bake for Heroes display

In May a handful of our members travelled to Birmingham for the Wales and West Midlands Area reunion and AGM. At this event, after 25 memorable years in the seat as Chairman, Maggie Purkis passed the baton, so to speak, to another stalwart of the Association in Babs Anderson. Hereford Branch looks forward to working closely with Babs over the coming years.

June has seen Sharon Joyce parade our Branch Standard at the 35th Falklands Remembrance Service and Parade at Ross on Sunday 4th June, (over 36 Standards were on parade and what a wonderful sight it was). On Saturday 10th June, Sharon again paraded the Standard at the Royal British Legion at Llanwarne.

The weekend of 17th-18th June, 8 of our Branch members took part in the Hull 10km run/walk. Like last year in London, the heat was in the 30s, but we all managed to complete and the weekend was amazing. Many thanks again to the brilliant organisational skills of Wendy Hooton. We had all been training in preparation for this event for many months and have enjoyed some eventful walks around our area, some flat, some hilly and some in mud! Walks normally take place on a Monday ('when we're not busy' to quote Ali Brown), so please come and join us if you're free.

July saw 11 of our Branch attend the NMA to celebrate the Women at War 100 yrs celebrations; what an amazing day, it was enjoyed by all. July also brought us our annual Veterans lunch, again held at the Greenman, Fownhope, diligently arranged, as always, by Mary Woollard. A lovely turn out again and a superb meal as always.

Coming up over the next few months, we have in August, our annual picnic at Queenswood Park to look forward to, as always, fabulously organised by Joyce Nicholls; then in September, we are hoping to have Weston-Super-Mare 'The Return', again under the management of Miriam Unwin, a trip we are all looking forward to with our buckets and spades at the ready. I'm sure other teams would like to try to win the cup away from Mary Woollard's team from last year, (not saying for one minute us ladies are very competitive).

HERTS, BEDS & BUCKS

Mandy Kriehn

On Sunday April 23 St. George's Day we met at The Saffron Hotel, Saffron Walden. I would like to thank everyone for travelling some distance to attend a lovely lunch. We were privileged to have our Vice President Ali Brown with us. We were also joined by the Area Chairman Eastern Region Wendy Hooton.

Our member Diane Lidstone formerly ATS/WRAC (REME) told us some interesting stories of her past encounters in the war whilst serving. Diane then presented Ali Brown with a framed copy of a poem titled 'Absent Veterans' that her husband wrote during the Korean Campaign in 1950/51. She kindly gave us all a copy of the poem. I would like to thank her daughter Catherine for bringing her and staying with us for the meal.

This was only our third get together and it was really enjoyable meeting up with old friends and new.

Looking forward to our next meeting sometime after the summer holidays, it would be lovely to see new faces to increase our numbers.

LANCASHIRE

Gail Newsham

Its two years in June since we started meeting just on the outskirts of Preston. Our first meeting was in a coffee shop, but we soon progressed to having lunch at the Walton Fox just across the road. The venue was chosen because of its central location with easy access off the motorways, having M6, M61, and M65 right on the doorstep.



We're not an official branch as such, but all ex WRAC meeting informally on a mutually convenient date, and we have formed quite a happy little group. From being total strangers at the beginning, we have now become firm friends.

It has actually evolved into a bit more than 'just meeting for lunch', and some of us have done things we would probably never have had the opportunity to do. Last year, Helen Rolley and Gail Newsham took part in the Remembrance Day Parade at the Cenotaph for the very first time and what a truly unforgettable and emotional day it was. In April this year, Sue Brown, Ann Butcher and Gail Newsham travelled up to the WRAC Fort William event for the fun and 'heeland shenanigans' that are organised by CJ Johnson. It was a fantastic weekend catching up with old friends, making new ones, taking part in all the fun and games and enjoying the beautiful scenery that only Scotland can provide.

Some even took part in the first ever National Women's Walking Football Tournament on 2 July in a WRAC Veterans team. (Lenore McNulty as our goalkeeper and honorary member) We all took it seriously and met up for several training sessions as some of the ladies had never played football before, some even managed to play on Preston North End's hallowed pitch too, but all were eager to do their best for the team and honour all the ladies who had been part of the Armed Forces over the last hundred years. The tournament was part of the centenary celebrations dedicated to the Dick Kerr Ladies football team, but it seemed appropriate to also acknowledge both centenaries, and having the WRAC on parade was rather special.

So yes, it's more than just meeting for lunch, its opening doors to the opportunity to experience new adventures. Wonder what we'll be getting up to next?!

LEEDS Helen Aitken

This year the Leeds branch have moved our meetings to a new location. The location is at the Royal British Legion which is based in the heart of Leeds. The facilities are excellent and the staff of the RBL have welcomed us with opened arms. Their willingness to help us out with any ideas we put forward has been wonderful. The motivation for the move to a more accessible location was the hope that it would make arriving to the meeting much more straightforward for our current members and hopefully attract new members. We felt it was important that our current members felt supported in anyway possible.

In other news, our lovely Patricia Barker ran the 10k marathon in Hull recently with other members of the WRAC to raise extra funds for the Association. The girls did magnificently especially as it was a rare day of glorious sunshine! We would like to say once again that we appreciate their efforts and a big "well done!" to everyone involved! Patricia seems to have caught the fitness bug and has been attending her local gym regularly and keeping fit in preparation for her next challenge. It just goes to show that its never too late to get started and Patricia has seen some amazing results!

A few of the girls attended the Queen's Garden Party earlier this year and thoroughly enjoyed the day including all of the preparations. A huge effort was made by all to pick their outfits and hats and the end result was stunning (we do scrub up well!). There was even a sighting of Prince Harry on the day!



Ann Sykes, Christine Harbon, Jayne Brown, Linda Slade, Annie Rhodes, Patricia Barker

So a big thank you to Ann Sykes, Christine Harbon, Jayne Brown, Linda Slade, Annie Rhodes, Patricia Barker for representing the Leeds branch.

Finally, four of us attended the Women at War 100 at the NMA. We were lucky enough to have wonderful weather and thoroughly enjoyed the day which was held outside in huge marquees. There were lots of new faces in attendance and a great turnout overall by the WRAC.

We were accompanied by Paddy who is one of our ATS members. Paddy served in WW2 as a signaller. At the age of 95, she is still a very active member of the Branch and supports us as much as she can. Finally, I would like to thank Ann Sykes for looking after us all by finding activities for us to do to keep us entertained; keep up the good work Ann, looking forward to more fun days out together.



Pat Barker, Ann Sykes, Mary Barker and another ATS lady called 'Barbara'

LEICESTER & NOTTINGHAM Yvonne McCarthy & Sue Slattery

Once again the Branch was invited to attend the Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving on Armed Forces Day in Leicester Cathedral on 24th June 2017. HM's Lord Lieutenants of Leicester and Rutland both in attendance along with members of the Royal British Legion, past and present members of the Armed Forces and other dignitaries. The Cottesmore Military Wives Choir sang a beautiful rendition of 'Bring him Home' and a 'Thousand Years'. Our very own serving member of the Association WO2 (SQMS) Christina Jones AGC (SPS) currently serving as the Regimental Administration Warrant Officer with the 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards spoke about her Service to date, 19 years so far. We are all very proud of Christina, especially because many people including dignitaries sought her out afterwards to congratulate her for her wonderful reflection on her service to date. Following the service in the cathedral, members of the Armed Forces, Veterans and Cadets paraded through the city with Lady Gretton HM Lord-Lieutenant of Leicester taking the Salute. We were all invited to participate in refreshments afterwards.



2016 Finished with another successful Christmas lunch at Devonshire Place attended by 36 branch members and 13 guests, one of which was Tim Webster from the Lieutenancy Office at County Hall Glenfield, the person who sends us all the numerous invites in the city and county. The branch agreed to donate £75 to our local Air Ambulance charity, finally we made a presentation of flowers and cards to Peggy Marr who is leaving our branch to live in Hertfordshire - we will miss you Peggy and hope to see you again in the future.

2017 January 23 ladies were present at our first meeting of the year during which we discussed our forthcoming programme and events. We presented flowers, chocolates and cards to Lilian Hollis for her 90th birthday. We have a number of our ladies who are not well at this time and we send them all our best wishes for a speedy recovery. For the first time this month our standard and 10 ladies attended the funeral of Olive Grieve, an ex-ATS lady who had been in a care home for some years.

February, Chris Gardner gave us a talk about her recent holiday to Malta - thanks for sharing this with us Chris, our Chairman was absent this month the first time I can ever remember!!! Yvonne McCarthy has not been well for a number of months, as some of you who are on Facebook will have been aware, all our best wishes we send to you Yvonne and your family at this stressful time.

With deep regret we informed the branch that Pam Hughes passed away on the 7th of this month, it is always very sad to lose any branch member but it is worse when someone had been a personal friend of Carol and Sue for many years.

March - Our bring-and-buy raised £78. Other events this month included our standard and 6 ladies attended the NMA to send off Marg Davies on her walk to raise lots of money, she finished at Stratford a week later, where 10 of the branch ladies enjoyed the weekend celebrating the WAAC/QMAAC Centenary dinner and parade, thanks to all at H/Q for all their hard work on our behalf.

Ann Atkinson and Phil Bates have been unwell recently all our best wishes to you both for a speedy recovery.

Pam Hughes funeral on the 1st of this month was attended by our standard and 17 ladies who formed a Guard of Honour for Pam. During the service a choir (close harmony), of which Pam was one of the founder members, sang her favourite song "Somewhere over the rainbow", a fitting tribute to a lovely lady who will be sadly missed.

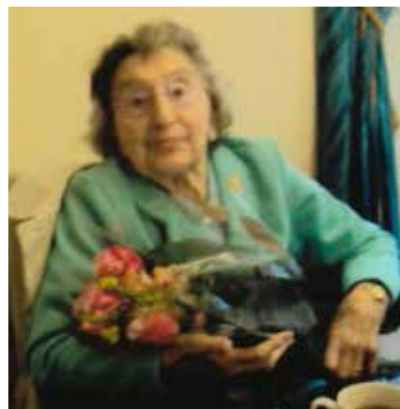
April - 29 ladies enjoyed our quiz supplied by Sandra Smith and Doris Doswell; no cheating was noticed!!!

We welcomed Christina Jones and Sharon Burman to our meeting. Finally our secretary Sue was invited to attend a community lunch in the presence of HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh in St Martins house next to the Cathedral after she had presented the Maundy money, what a special honour for myself and our branch.

May - 17 ladies hit the town for lunch at a local Wetherspoons - good food, drink and company once again well behaved!!!

Roz Stewart told us at our meeting that Jacquie Courtney had been admitted to Kettering hospital after she collapsed at home, a card and all our best wishes were sent to her.

June - 24 ladies had the opportunity to visit one of the masonic lodges upstairs, and afterwards Mark Taylor gave us a talk about their history. Afterwards we presented flowers, chocolates and cards to our Chairman Doris White for her forth coming 94th birthday on the 30th. We had also planned to present the same to Ann Atkinson for her 90th on the 29th but she was unfortunately unwell so her friend Joan De'Vall kindly agreed to take them to her.



Doris White - Chair of Leics & Notts - on 94th birthday

Sadly after a short stay in hospital Jacquie Courtney passed away this month, her funeral took place at Kettering Crematorium attended by our Association National Standard, standards from our branch and Birmingham's, to which Jacquie's sister Mari is a member. Many ladies from our branch and other branches came to pay their respects to Jacquie; afterwards we all went to the Brewers Fayre for a glass of red wine, her favourite tipple. 4 ladies attended Armed Forces Day flag raising service at county hall. The next day 26 of us met up at Loughborough for a narrow boat trip to Normanton for lunch where Carol and Lyn, with their dogs Gus and Bailey, joined us.

Finally this month, our standard and 9 ladies attended a service at the Cathedral, followed by a parade in the city centre for Armed Forces Day.

Another busy 2017 so far, sadly 3 more funerals we have attended.

Thanks to everyone at the branch for all their hard work and dedication they put in for all our ladies.

LINCOLN & DISTRICT

Jo Worsdall

The Lincoln & District Branch welcomed two new members recently, Shirley Barnes and Sue Smith (who was promptly voted in as Secretary, thanks Sue) and we welcomed back Jean Evans.

Saturday 18 March - WRAC Association AGM & Centenary Dinner Stratford upon Avon. Some of our members attended the Centenary Dinner and had a lovely weekend of fun and comradery.

Saturday 22 April Branch Anniversary Lunch Branston Hall - A lovely afternoon was had at Branston Hall where the food was delicious and the company wonderful, lots of laughs and chat. Thanks for organising Sylvia and Marion and thanks also for all the raffle prizes!



18 June, HULL 10k - Our very own Betty Gash completed the Hull 10k on a blistering hot day, well done Betty and all the runners and supporters who took part raising over £8,000!!

We continue to meet monthly in Lincoln, (third Tuesday of the month); please pop in if you are nearby it would be lovely to see you.

LIVERPOOL **Pat Brown**

Liverpool Branch continues to meet every third Wednesday at the Adelphi Hotel, sadly we are at the moment a very small branch with only 7 of us meeting regularly. We hope to build our numbers but it seems hard going. On 24th June we had the honour of hosting Armed Forces Day here in Liverpool, it was a fantastic event. We had a marque to show some memorabilia both ATS and WRAC and some of us took part in the march past, attended by HRH Prince Edward. Members of the Association travelled from far parts to join us, which was really good. Maybe we will attract some new members from the publicity.

On the 30th May all seven of us had a trip of a lifetime, when we were invited by the Not Forgotten Association to a garden party at Buckingham Palace in the presence of HRH Prince Harry, what a brilliant time we had, we will remember it for a long time. Unfortunately due to my lack of tech knowledge I cannot add photographs at this present moment, hopefully I can remedy this for the next issue. We had two and a half days in London and apart from a rather horrendous journey down on Bank Holiday Monday we enjoyed every minute of it, having a laugh and remembering past glories as well as the Palace visit on Tuesday afternoon.

MEDITERRANEAN **Ann Oldfield**

My introduction to the WRAC Association started in 2015 when my niece Sian Edmunds (ex WRAC) got in touch to say she had recognised me on a photograph that was taken in Cyprus where I served from 1961 -1962. One of the ladies in this photograph was looking for me and although she lives in New Zealand now (which is obviously too far to meet up) we do correspond with each other. She also told me about others that she was still in touch with who were there at the same time. After my husband died I was really down and after going on holiday with my daughter to Relleu I really thought I would like to live there. So nothing ventured nothing gained, I bought a villa and moved in January 2016. I love it here even though I left my daughters and grandchildren behind, they visit often and I go back as often as I can.

I was reading the Lioness when I spotted that there was a Mediterranean branch so I applied to join. When I spoke to Chris Powell, the Treasurer, she asked for my details and then I spoke to Mel Howell who was really pleased as she lives in the next village. We get on really well and I visit when I can, I have met so many people that Mel has introduced me to and I love the camaraderie.

I had heard so much about the 'Benidorm Babes' that I was really looking forward to meeting them. I wasn't there the first night at the hotel, but apparently the DJ was so impressed with their dancing that he awarded them a certificate each and two certificates to Pat "Budgie" Rosewell who dances around the

floor as if she is on springs. I met her the second night, when I visited the hotel and was on the dance floor and couldn't believe my eyes as this (dare I say) small person kept leaping about between the dancers (an amazing sight that has to be seen to be believed). The whole bunch were so friendly (and mad).



Benidorm Babes and dancing certificates

Mel organised a full programme of days out for them. Unfortunately, due to family commitments in the UK, I only went to a couple of events, but one of the highlights was the trip to the "Rich Bitch" Showbar. It was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone and Andy Oleson celebrated her birthday in, shall we say, "Grand Style"!!!!

I went to the AGM, which was hosted by Mel on the stunning rooftop garden of her home. The food and ambience were great and everyone enjoyed it. Ann Colclough was standing down as Chairman and I was voted in. Although I wasn't sure what I had to do, Mel soon informed me that not only would I chair the meetings but I had to write an article twice a year for the Lioness so here I am doing just that! My sister in law (ex WRAC) also moved here to Relleu in January this year, so I made sure she joined the Med branch too.



Several other excursions were organised, including a trip to Valencia and a visit to the Albufera, where the Group enjoyed a traditional Valenciano Paella and a boat ride around the rice lagoons. Time went all too quickly and before long it was time to say (and in some cases sing) "So long farewell" until next year's 'Benidorm Babes' reunion, planned for 7th – 15th May 2018.

I have booked to go to my first Dinner Club this year, as I have heard so much about it. I am really looking forward to it and to meeting up with friends old and new.

Melanie Howell and Ann Colclough represented the Mediterranean Branch at the NMA on 7th July for the '100 years Women at War'; both said they thoroughly enjoyed their day, albeit it being very emotional and filled with a tinge of sadness.

In September we are looking to hold meetings at the Albir Arms, Albir on 2nd Wednesday of each month - starting 12th September.

NORFOLK

Lyn Hatch

Living so close to the gateway of the Norfolk Broads on Saturday 24th June, also Armed Forces Day, a party of us boarded the Belle of the Broads for a trip around the enchanting landscape of the Wroxham and Salhouse Broad.



As we all gathered waiting to board the grey clouds started to clear and the sun finally broke through. We were lucky to be boarded first and managed to get seats that allowed us some wonderful views. Our captain and guide kept us entertained with his rich knowledge of the flora and fauna as well as the conservation of the properties on the banks of the waterways.

Once back at Wroxham relaxed from our tour we headed off for a late lunch and, for a few, the chance of some shopping at the renowned Roy's of Wroxham.

OXFORDSHIRE

Christine Townsend

This month in Oxfordshire is our second birthday, we started with 5 of us in the Penny Black in Bicester later moving to the Littlebury hotel where we have been for the past year. We have grown in number as well, we now have 20 on the books with 12 of us meeting regularly on Saturday lunch times for lunch and a chatter. Four of us went to Stratford for the AGM this year; we have attended Dinner Club; and are slowly planning on other trips out. We will be laying our first wreath this year on Remembrance weekend.

Looking forward to the future and the growth of the group.

PHOENIX

Sheila Johnson

Regrettably, three ladies have passed away since the previous edition of Lioness. Edith Francis on 22 December 2016, Louise Rhodes on 23 January 2017 and Mary Davies on 8 March 2017. These ladies were inaugural members of Phoenix Branch.

Birmingham Branch thoughtfully arranged the presence of their WRAC Standard Bearer for Edith's service, held in Crewe; a poignant gesture, as Edith had enacted this role herself for many a year. Louise had attended Branch functions when able, and spoke of her military/ATS service with fondness, contributing her memories in the article in Issue No 2 2014 of Lioness. Mary was a stalwart of Wolverhampton Branch as Secretary and much admired for her work over the years. The families of all three ladies expressed their heartfelt appreciation for the presence of Association Branch Members at the services held to honour their loved ones' service in the ATS.

The WAAC commemorative Centenary Dinner, held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Stratford upon Avon on 18 March 2017 was a fortuitous event to lighten the mood. The accommodation, catering and entertainment, Yorkshire Military Band and Corps of Drums, and experienced DJ combined to create a pleasurable weekend for members attending.

Branch members were privileged to attend the National Memorial Arboretum where The Royal British Legion staged the 'Women At War 100' ceremony on 7 July 2017. The music for the Drumhead Assembly was provided by the Tri-service Military Band. Given the good weather and open-air setting, everyone was treated to a very moving afternoon's spectacle backed by the extremely talented musicians. Ali Brown was one of the day's readers.

Phoenix's AGM took place on 8 July 2017. The Crewe Arms Hotel was the venue once again. The customary group photograph was commissioned, as was the raffle where its winners numbered 100%! Embedded with the Association members were two former members of the QARANC who had been dubbed as Honorary Association Members for the occasion. A vote of thanks for the work done by Maggie Purkis and Janet Edwards to arrange the meeting was proposed by Diane Lewis, who had announced that she was going to reside in Cyprus from September 2017. We wish her well.

Best wishes to Branches for continued success during 2017.

PLYMOUTH

Jean Cundy-Borge

Our meetings, in Dingles restaurant of the House of Frazer, for lunch on the 4th Tuesday of each month are successful and produce happy meetings and we have also arranged our Saturday trips. Our day in the Veterans tent for "Armed Forces Day" was very successful; we hope to meet new members as a result.

Saturday 8th July we visited Tamar View Nurseries for lunch and shopping and had a very happy time.

Saturday 9th September we are meeting for lunch at Windy Ridge, Trearulefoot.

October 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th - Four of us are attending the 20th Anniversary Dinner at the Copthorne Hotel in Dudley.

Saturday 25th November another visit to Tamar View Nurseries for lunch and Christmas Shopping.

Friday 8th December, our Christmas lunch at St. Aubyn's Masonic Hall Stoke.

Any ex-ATS or WRAC who would like to join us can telephone Ruth on 01752 363118 or Jean on 01752 567844, for more up to date youngsters Evon will post details on facebook.

PORTSMOUTH Margaret Bush

Well here at the Portsmouth Branch our year has started off well at our new meeting place 'The Royal' in Portsmouth. The landlord and his staff make us feel very welcome and all serving personnel and veterans get a 10% discount; very nice, especially if you decide to stay and enjoy a lunch.

We also enjoyed a visit from our illustrious leader Sharon Bingham - sorry to say that I missed your visit but the ladies assured me that it was a very enjoyable morning. Hopefully you will visit again.

Also in February we said a sad farewell to 'Teddy Bray' who no doubt many ladies may have known as she was a member of the association for 50 years, and who I took over from after Gilly as Branch chair. Teddy had a lovely turnout and us ladies stood tall and proud to pay our respects to a very special lady. Phyllis carried our standard (which Teddy brought for the branch), also RBL standard was in attendance thank you both ladies.



Portsmouth branch and standard at 'Teddy Bray's' funeral

Our branch meetings are regularly attended by between 8 - 10 members, except where illness/holiday/work etc affects. We are hoping to arrange some outings, when we all get together to agree a date etc.



We held our Christmas Lunch on 8th December, at the Novotel and lastly a very warm welcome to our latest recruits Val Dukes and Patricia Bennett. Have a good summer.

SHROPSHIRE Ali McGowan

Hello, and once again I send greetings from the Shire. I can hardly believe we are over half way through this year so it seems a bit late to wish you all a Happy New Year!

It is with sadness that I have to report the death of another of our ATS ladies, Beryl Lane, who died on 20th February 2017. Beryl was a founder member of the Shropshire Branch and until the last few years took an active role in all we did. Her family asked if it was possible for our Standard and fellow Association members to attend the funeral. Happily we were able to acquiesce and our Vice President, Ali Brown, Sharon Joyce with the National Standard together with members of the Branch represented the Association.

The first event of this year was our Annual Post-Christmas Lunch at the Mytton and Mermaid Hotel in January. This was very well attended and included representatives from Birmingham, Chester, Hereford, Tamworth, Marches and Mid Wales, Mediterranean, Phoenix and Tamworth Branches. Thank you all for your support.



Shropshire post-Christmas lunch

On 11th March we were invited to the National Memorial Arboretum to send Margaret Davies on her way and wish her luck for her 100 mile solo walk to mark 100 years of Women in the Forces and to raise money for both the Association and Cancer Research UK. Chris, Debbie, Mel, Sheila and I attended and I took the Branch Standard. Chris, Mel and Sheila were also in Stratford the following week to welcome Marg as she completed her epic journey.

May saw the 3rd Annual Benidorm Babes Trip and our Branch was represented by Chris, Sheila and myself. A very good time was had by all, but what happened in Benidorm stays in Benidorm!!!



July is the birthday of one of our ATS ladies, Nancy Tipton and this year she is 90. We celebrated the fact at our latest Branch Meeting, Chris Powell organised a splendid cake and Nancy loved her Teddy Bear.

Nancy Tipton's 90th birthday

Finally we were delighted to get an invitation to attend a Drumhead Service at the NMA to celebrate 100 years since the formation of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). It was a very moving and poignant service which Chris, Maggie, Mel, Sheila and I were pleased to attend.

That is the comings and goings of Shropshire Branch so far this year, we still have lots planned and will fill you in next year

SOUTHAMPTON

Jean Doe

Hello everyone. Hope you are all well and enjoying the sunshine!

We started the new year with a lunch at Chris Hebburn's home – a lot of work went into making this a success and all enjoyed the day; the look on Hazel's and Penny's face in the photo shows their contentment. We also had the pleasure of a new member who served in the RMP for 21 years – Babs is proving a very valuable member to us, having had a successful career. I also had, at about the same time, an answerphone message from a lady asking to join us - my phone was red hot with a reply! This was Bobby and despite a health problem is determined to enjoy our meetings. Due to Bobby, 7 of us enjoyed a lovely trip down the Solent on the Alison Magregor – a really great afternoon on the Monday in the recent heatwave.



Southampton branch enjoying lunch



Southampton branch 1st meeting of 2017

Two of us, Chris Hebburn and myself, attended the Reunion in Stratford – good to see so many like-minded people – the hotel would have been excellent, if the lifts had been working! Looking forward to next year in London.

So far so good after a difficult 2016; we are really trying to get going! We have plans in progress for a couple of minibus trips, including on 3rd of August when we hope to have a minibus trip to Milestones, near Basingstoke. Possibly like many branches (not just us) an influx of new members would be the best tonic and motivation for all of us!

I will close by wishing Penny Muxworthy a long and happy stay with us all. I also would like to thank Sharon Bingham for looking after her 'branches'. I am very interested in her 'stall' and will keep an eye out for any events.

SUFFOLK

Sheelagh Wilson

Sadly lost two members this year. Olive Wilson - although not always in good health, Olive was a staunch supporter of our branch and attended meetings whenever possible. Mary Hay - attended meetings regularly until January this year, and gradually health problems occurred. Both ladies were 94 years young when they were summoned to the parade square in heaven. Olive and Mary will both be greatly missed.

Numbers at our branch meetings this year have been very low but we carry on regardless and have our monthly lunches and debates putting the world to rights. In April several members had lunch with Wendy Hootton in the Conservative Club. Always good to catch up with Wendy and hear all about her activities etc.

This is all from Suffolk for 2017. Have a great festive season and all the best for 2018.

SWINDON (Informal)

Sharon Bingham

We are only a small number of ladies who meet several times a year. After much debate on where to go for our yearly meets we have managed to visit Bletchley Park and the National Memorial Arboretum; and on both visits the heavens opened up to greet us. But as good soldiers you carry on and embrace the moment, which we did with true style.



Swindon branch at NMA

Tina Davies, Brenda Goodfellow, Sharon Bingham and Betsy-Jane Lawton

Our annual Christmas get together was very vocal with lot of chattering and no pictures taken. Myself and Betsy-Jane Lawton even had an invite through the Not Forgotten Association to attend their Christmas party at St James Palace. We had the most overwhelming moment of meeting Princess Anne.

Our last meeting together was afternoon tea at the Plum Tree Hotel in Purton, which has some parts of the building dating back to the 1400's. This was held as a joint event to celebrate Armed Forces Day and our Annual Summer Meeting. We were very lucky to have the library all to ourselves and enjoy the historic fireplace which is dated in the era of King Henry VI. To our surprise the weather was fantastic and most enjoyable to admire the garden.



Swindon at Plum Tree Hotel for Armed Forces Day
Sharon Bingham, Nina Smith and behind the flag is Joy Mutlow, in front of flag left to right Sharon Marie King, Tina Davies and Betsy-Jane Lawton

So now that the summer is upon us I would like to say happy cruising to Tina Baker and Betsy-Jane Lawton on your future travels and adventures. And please welcome Rose Kilpatrick, Karen Rosier-Jones and Helen Elizabeth to our Swindon Informal Branch.

TAMWORTH

Marie Smedley

After a quiet start to the year Pat Williams and Nicola Scott joined the Chelsea Pensioners at the Royal Hospital, London on Thursday 8th July for the Founders Day Parade. They had great fun watching the Parade - taken by the Earl of Wessex - as well as meeting up with old friends Bimbo Coleman and Margery Cole.



Pat Williams and Nicola Scott with Chelsea Pensioners

A beautiful and sunny Saturday 24th June saw Nicola Scott, Ann Gwynne, Belle Jenkinson and Marie Smedley parading at the National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas on Armed Forces Day. The three ladies who marched even managed to make the front rank of veterans on parade.

Wednesday 5th July Tamworth Branch went along to the Silk Mill in Derby to see the weeping wall of Poppies previously seen at the Tower of London. After sharing the train with Ben Fogle, who was on his way to a Marmite tasting, Marie Smedley, Ann Gwynne, Nicola Scott, Pat Williams and Lesley Wallace made new friends at the display when we bumped into ex-WRAC girls Sally Ann Kelly (who was serving cakes in the cafe) and Sandy Scaife (a volunteer host). After the obligatory photo shoot, we had a wander around the Cathedral and partook in a lovely lunch in the aptly named Standing Orders Pub.



Finally, on Friday 7th July Tamworth Branch was at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas for the Drumhead Service to Celebrate 100 Years of Women in Uniform. Nicola Scott, Ann Gwynne, Marie Smedley, Pat Williams, Judy Hasnip and Lesley Wallace partook in a moving and celebratory Service held in glorious sunshine. We enjoyed the readings given by Ali Brown, SNO Nicci Pugh, Jo Young and especially the reading by Cadet WO Amy Watson, so confident for someone so young. We also enjoyed singing along to the WRAC March at the the close of the service. This was followed by a delicious light lunch served in jam jars accompanied by wine, soft drinks and cheesecake. With over 400 serving and veteran members of the Armed Forces represented for this auspicious occasion it was an honour and a privilege to attend this once in a lifetime celebration.

ULSTER

Joan McCabe

The Ladies started our first meeting this year with a visit to "The War Years Remembered" Museum in Ballyclare, Co Antrim, kindly organised by Shelley Ashe on 11th February. Everyone enjoyed the day finding out what things were like during the War, and indeed some of our members have experienced this first hand, having played their part as ATS during the Second World War. The museum very kindly provided tea and biscuits for the group, and everyone went for a late lunch to finish off the day.

In April another trip was organised to visit the Somme Heritage Centre in Newtownards, a visit which everyone seemed to enjoy, with the usual sticky buns, scones and tea/coffee and a catch up.



Ulster branch visit to the Somme Heritage Centre
Sarah Cairns and Rosemary Ryan

On 15th April the Ulster Branch ladies attended the Veterans Day Protest at Belfast City Hall (organised protests around the Province, against Veterans being prosecuted for incidents/shootings during the "Troubles" in NI). Intelligence warned that there would be a counter protest from Nationalists, which turned out to be true, but still the branch ladies attended and did us proud, the protest passed off without any Major incidents.

There were several Armed Forces Days held throughout NI in June, most members attended their local venue; the one I attended in Bangor, ran throughout the whole weekend and was a great success.

The Branch have recently formed a relationship with the "Not Forgotten Association" and occasionally they invite us to their functions which most of us have attended at one time or another.

Sylvia, Florence and Sarah attended "Old Soldiers Day" at Palace Barracks in June, and thoroughly enjoyed the day together.



Ulster branch attending 'Old Soldiers Day' at Palace Barracks - Florence Logan, Sara Cairns & Sylvia Connaghan

In a year that celebrates 100 years for us ladies, be proud of yourselves and what women have achieved in the Armed Forces. Until the next time, have a great summer, lets hope the weather is good to us in August!!

WINCHESTER Herme Emary

On 20 January 2017, 13 members and 1 husband came to the lunch at the Winchester Hotel. The theme for this year's meal was the Centenary of the WAAC, which was reflected in the menu card that I had printed and also in the muffins that were given out at the end of the meal. We all gathered in the bar and, for a change, did not totally rearrange the furniture. Lynn once again managed to get everyone's payment before the meal. The menu this year was excellent and everyone enjoyed their meal.

On 10th March, 9 of us met at Cote in Winchester for lunch. We welcomed our new Area Chairman Sharon for the first time. Some members had eaten at Cote before but it was a first for me. We had a table upstairs and considering that the place was quite busy, where we were sitting was quiet enough to hear what everyone was saying.



Winchester's WAAC muffins

In May we once again decided to visit Porterhouse, always a popular venue. At one point we had 11 joining us which, for May (holiday time), was quite good, then Janet discovered she had double booked and at the last minute had to pull out. Despite the low numbers, or because of them, we were actually able to have a decent chat without having to shout. The meal as usual was excellent and the service friendly and efficient.

In July we decided to visit MR So, as a branch we had not eaten there for a number of years. We started off with 8 people but ended up with only 5. A good opportunity to have a good chat, put the world to rights and spread out over a large table; oh yes, and have a very nice meal as well.

WIRRAL Andrea Jenkins

Well what a year we have had so far, with our trips out with the Chester Branch and our monthly meetings; we are also now meeting for an evening meal middle of the month, so yes, we are very busy.

This year I took over from Joy Griffiths as Secretary and landed in the deep end; trying to get our Chair Pat Sanders to hand over some of the jobs that the Secretary should be doing was hard going but slowly she is letting go.

We were very proud when we were informed one of our members, Sharon Broderick, had been awarded the MBE in the Queen's Honours. Sharon was awarded her gong for all the hard work she did whilst in the police with the community.

We have had another new member joining us Karen Stower, so we are building up nicely. Sadly Pat Jackson had a severe stroke and will no longer be able to attend our meetings but we will keep in touch with her - she will be missed at our meetings by everyone.

As I have said previously we have had loads of outings with the Chester Branch but I am not going to repeat them again as you will have read them already. The only one I will mention was the AFD day in Liverpool where I helped man the WRAC table with Pat Sanders and Bentley. I have never seen a dog have so many photos taken by so many people! We were really proud when we saw the photos of our girls marching, they looked so smart. Kath Harrison and Sharon Broderick are 2 of the funniest people you could meet and bring hilarity to our meetings and outings,

they are getting quite a reputation. When we met Prince Edward they had him laughing with their comments about Sharon's MBE and his mother being in the ATS. They also talked him into having his photo taken with us - by the time he left us he was way behind with his schedule.



We still have loads of outings to look forward to for the rest of the year along with our nights out. I cannot believe how busy we have been since the start of the year. I think we will need a holiday to get over the year.

WORTHING **Janet Goldsbrough-Jones**

Although we have met frequently over the last 6 months we have not been on many jaunts together, and I do not have a lot to report, or any photos.

Four of us went to the annual Dinner Club weekend.

We continue to meet at Lancing Parish Rooms every last Tuesday of the month at 10,00 am.



L to R: Janet Goldsbrough-Jones, Carol Bidmead, Janet MacKechnie, Greta Carlisle, Marion King, Carolyn Hill, Sylvia Stubbs. The last two are Pat Williams and Lesley Wallace,

A very cold morning complete with a dusting of snow to pay our respects on Anzac Day, we had a good turnout despite the 5 30 am parade. After the service we all retired to our local cafe which had opened up early especially for us to be greeted with a tot of rum and a bacon butty.

Almost forgot the pictures of the big event. What a fantastic weekend we had and the parade on Sunday just topped it off; we felt 18 again and very proud to have served

Over the last 6 months Worthing Branch has been as busy as ever. We officially meet once a month, but half a dozen or more meet regularly once a week to 'do lunch'. Then, when the weather is warmer we like to go on day trips together. On 11th May a few of us used our bus passes to travel to Eastbourne. We had the

necessary fish and chips lunch, then went for a walk along the promenade. The bus journey was long but very picturesque, and FREE.

On 11th May we were privileged to be invited to The Blind Veterans Home on the Seafront in Brighton. This was part of a special week for ladies. Some had been invited to stay for the week and we were invited to join them for lunch, along with three senior Naval Officers (all female of course). The meal was wonderful and the company great. One of the ladies staying was an old friend of our own Eddie Sinclair, whom she had not seen for many years. A great reunion. We were then given a lovely cream tea before we left.



Armed Forces Weekend on 24th and 25th June went as well as ever. We were all there on Saturday and made a bit of money for our branch. Ours is always a popular stall with the public. A few of us were at the Drumhead service on the Sunday, especially the organiser Janet Goldsbrough-Jones who, in her capacity as RBL chairman, spoke the exhortation.

On 12th July some of us went on a coach trip to and round the Isle of Wight. It was a beautiful day and thoroughly enjoyed. We were given roast lunch with all the trimmings and visited the most wonderful cream cake shop in the afternoon.

We have had several special birthday lunches and I enclose pictures from one in March, this time for Greta Carlisle.



Sadly Jackie Bentley is about to leave our area to move back to be closer to her family. We will miss her dreadfully but will be sure to see her again sometime. I enclose a happy photo of her with Heather Digweed.

York **Feona Dixon**

Though York has quite a few members most of them are ex-WRAC and mostly working full time so unable to get to meetings. However a small number of us continue to meet informally on the second Friday morning in the month at Pret a Manger coffee bar at the McCarthy Glen Designer Centre, York, 10.30 to about noon. The Centre is park-and-ride bus No 7 from opposite York Railway Station or there is ample car parking. Combine a visit to us with a browse round the Centre. We manage the occasional lunch together and attend Parades in and around York.

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.

SOUTH EAST

Canterbury

When: 13.00 on the first Wednesday of the month (except Jan, Feb, Mar)
Where: Newport Court, Cowdray Place, Old Dover Road, Canterbury, CT1 3PB
Contact: Jenny Smith Tel: 01843 833867

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

Medway (Informal Branch)

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

Worthing

When: 10.00 on the last Tuesday of the month (except December)
Where: Lancing Parish Hall
Contact: Janet Goldsbrough-Jones Tel: 01903 207485

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: Lynton Court Premier Inn, 47 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, BH1 3PA
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

New Forest (Informal Branch)

Contact: Madge Evans Tel 01425 620995

Plymouth (Informal Branch)

Contact: Jean Cundy-Borge on 01752 567844 or Ruth Jennings on 01752 363118

Portsmouth

When: 11:00 1st Saturday of the month
Where: The Royal Pub, 334a Commercial Road, Portsmouth, PO1 4BT
Contact: Sally Watson Tel: 02392 666712

Southampton

When: 19.00-21.30 on the 1st Wednesday of the month
Where: Eastleigh Working Mens Club, 18 Upper Market Street, Eastleigh, SO50 9FD
Contact: Jean Doe Tel 01794 523146

Swindon (Informal Branch)

Contact: Sharon Bingham slbingham1@yahoo.co.uk

Torquay (Informal Branch)

Contact: Elaine Bell Tel: 07914 936079, 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: sec.wrac.winchester@gmail.com

EASTERN

Cambridge

When/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

Colchester

If you are interested in joining the newly forming Colchester Branch contact Vinnie Vincent on 07814 869520 or via Facebook.

Norfolk (Informal Branch)

When: Occasional social events
Contact: Lyn Hatch Tel: 07929 070665
Facebook: WRAC/ATS Veterans Norfolk

Suffolk

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

EAST MIDLANDS

Derby (Informal Branch)

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

Doncaster

Contact: Veronica Hanson Tel: 01226 714575

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 Mitchell Tel 01482
508087 or Janet Marshall Tel 01482 806799

Leicester & Nottingham

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

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: Sylvia Stubbs Tel: 01507 622575

Peterborough & District

Contact: Pam Sussex Tel: 01733 243944.
Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/groups/WRACPeterborough

Sheffield

When: 11.00 on the 1st Thursday of the month except
January and August
Where: The Benjamin Hunstman (Wetherspoons),
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

NORTHERN

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, phone for details
Contact: Susan Feeney on 07813 313508 or Kath Kirtley
on 07910 925070

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

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

Cumbria (Informal Branch)

If you are interested in joining a newly forming Cumbria
Branch please contact Kerryanne Wilde on 07972 799307
or email khtraining@aol.com

Lancashire (Informal Branch)

If you are interested in meeting for the occasional informal
Saturday lunch at the Walton Fox, Bamber Bridge, Preston
contact Gail Newsham on 07939 505485 or email gaildkl@talktalk.net

Darlington

Contact: Sandra Hubbard Tel: 07923 572917

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: Helen Rowan Tel: 07842 772681

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

Newcastle

When: 12.00 on the 3rd Thursday of the month
Where: Leazes End Club, 45-47 Leazes Park Road, New-
castle, NE1 4PG
Contact: Tanya Hall Tel: 07590 323497

Wirral

When: 19.30 on the 1st Wednesday of the month
Where: TA Centre, Chetwynd, Wexford Road, Birkenhead,
L43 9TF
Contact: Andrea Jenkins Tel: 07808 648509 or email
andrea-jenkins1@hotmail.com

WALES & WEST MIDLANDS

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: Britannia Hotel, New Street, Birmingham, B2 4RX
Contact: Babs Anderson Tel 07921 832094

Cardiff

When: 2nd Wednesday of the month
Where: Earl Haig Memorial (Royal British Legion) Club,
23-25 Penlline Rd, Cardiff, CF14 2AA
Contact: Karen Francis on ranaridibunda@hotmail.com or
phone 07702 618100

Gloucestershire (Informal Branch)

If you are interested in joining a newly forming Gloucestershire Branch please contact Frances Fairclough on fran.f@btopenworld.com or 07739 344846

Hereford

When: 19.00 on the last Tuesday of the month
Where: The Herdsman, 54 Widemarsh, Hereford, HR4 9HG
Contact: Lynda Armstrong Tel: 01443 837592

Marches & Mid Wales

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

Oxfordshire (Informal Branch)

If you are interested in joining a newly forming Oxfordshire Branch contact Christine Townsend Tel: 07756 681441 or 01869 324319

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 (except December and January). 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: Marie Smedley Tel 01530 273980

SCOTLAND & N IRELAND

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: Susan Marcroft BEM Tel 01556 611944

Edinburgh (Informal Branch)

When: 2nd Saturday of the month
Where: Location varies, phone for details
Contact: Senga Palmer Tel: 07876 782773
Facebook: Edinburgh and area WRAC/women who served, social group

Fife & Tayside

When: Last Thursday of the month
Where: Salutation Hotel, 34 South Street, Perth, PH2 8PH
Contact: Margaret Selfridge Tel: 01738 639882

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

Ulster

When: Meetings 3-4 times per year
Where: Location varies, call to confirm details
Contact: Joan McCabe Tel: 02842 788013 or 07702 751010, joanmccabe24@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

Griffin Branch

Griffin Branch is a virtual Facebook group primarily designed to unite those ex members of the WRAC who do not yet belong to the Association, or if they do already belong do not have a geographic branch to attend.

Mediterranean

When: At least every 6 months or more - 2nd Wednesday of each month (from 12 September 2017)
Where: Albir Arms, Albir
Contact: Melanie Howell melphil@britvegas.com
Tel: 0034 9658 78963 Mob: 0034 622 036333

Perth (Australia)

Contact: Ann Page ann.page3@bigpond.com

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

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.**

Reminiscences and Remembrances

GREAT YARMOUTH 2017 Lyn Hatch

A minute's silence on a sunny and warm morning on 11th May 2017 was in sharp contrast to the moment on this spot and on this day in 1943. Under cover of cloud and thick early morning mist a lone enemy bomber flew in over the coast releasing a bomb making a direct hit on their hostel, killing 26 ATS girls..

Our commemoration service in front of the plaque bearing all their names, was taken by the RBLs Chaplain in the presence of the Mayor and Mayoress of Gt Yarmouth, some 22 members of the ATS, the WRAC, members of the Gt Yarmouth Branch of the Royal British Legion, and many friends. Wreaths were laid by the ATS 'In Memory of our Comrades' and one from the Yarmouth RBL

Afterwards all gathered in the Burlington hotel to share memories and experiences.

Since the dedication of the plaque in 1994, annual services have been organised by the ATS group of the Norfolk Branch. Our numbers are now diminishing, so we are very grateful to the Chairman of the Gt Yarmouth RBL Mr Paul Williams for assuring us that they will take over the responsibility for future commemorations, carrying on our tradition.

Next year, 2018 will be the 75th anniversary and we hope the service will be strongly supported.

While I was there met two ladies from Canada that were doing some research ready for writing a book on women during the Great War, so I gave them the details of the QMAAC ladies. Maybe they will make it in there too.



DIARY PAGE TWO OF THE STAFF BAND Ann Jones

It was very gratifying to know that we were to be filmed for the T.V. as we were appearing at the Earls Court in the intermission of the much loved Victor Sylvester's Dancing Competition, along with all the beautifully clad ladies in their wonderful evening dresses, and pretty shoes; but, oh what a nightmare, (apparently it showed in our faces, I was told later), all due to the fact that the practice then was to "sugar" the floors so the dancers could glide over it, but not so good for us, keeping in the formation, playing the music, and then trying not to end up looking very silly sliding across the floor.

There was the similar experience at Edinburgh Castle - the marching area is built on a slope, O.K. when dry but as it was then laid with cobble stones and then wet, (which was often the case being Scotland) slippery as eels underfoot. It was always great fun to be up there and meeting many folk from different nationalities, which made up for some of the strain.

Friday Night Is Music Night, a show broadcast by the BBC, which we had attended on several occasions, and at the time the rage for the music, was My Fair Lady. There are beautiful melodies in this lovely show, but when you are playing it almost daily, it does become a bit of a drag.

To remember one very special occasion was in Holland, we were staying at Queen Julianna's camp and sitting very informally having tea, when we were joined by this very sweet little lady with bicycle clips and a head scarf on - no less than Her Majesty Queen Julianna, with no airs and graces, she joined us and was very gracious, remembering that we wore a similar uniform to our own Queen.

I am running out of tales to tell, please do get in touch and offer me more to write for future editions. Thank you.



QMAAC RESEARCH Lyn Hatch

Attached photo shows the names of all nine QMAAC. I have managed to research four of them so far; a lot of them from Scotland. Once I have done it all I will send a copy.

I will go out late May next year and as Abbeville is only half an hour from where I stay and it being the Centenary of the bombing I will go and lay some flowers.

TRAIN TO NOWHERE

Jules Gribben Bloomsbury Press

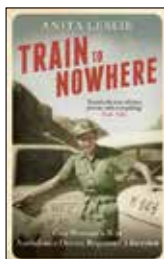
This memoir tells the story of the adventures of a female ambulance driver, first for the Mechanised Transport Corps and then the Free French Forces, serving in Libya, Syria, Palestine, Italy, France and Germany, witnessing the best and worst of humanity throughout.

First published in 1948 Anita was a fully trained mechanic and ambulance driver during WWII, serving in Libya, Syria, Palestine, Italy, France and Germany. She was also the daughter of a Baronet and cousin of Winston Churchill. Published in August this year, here is a copy of the press release which, I hope, will give you a flavour of the book.

B L O O M S B U R Y

TRAIN TO NOWHERE

ANITA LESLIE



Published by Bloomsbury . Hardback . 24 August 2017 . £16.99

One Woman's War: Ambulance Driver, Reporter, Liberator

A captivating war memoir seen through the sardonic eyes of Anita Leslie, a funny and vivacious young woman who reports on her experiences with a dry humour, finding the absurd alongside the tragic.

Published to mark the end of the Second World War (2 September 1945), *Train to Nowhere* follows the adventures of a female ambulance driver, first for the MTC and then the Free French Forces, serving in Libya, Syria, Palestine, Italy, France and Germany, witnessing the best and worst of humanity throughout. Ahead of her time, Anita bemoans 'first-rate women subordinate to second-rate men,' and, as the British Army forbade women from serving at the front, joined the Free French Forces in order to do what she felt was her duty.



'We had long known the ATS were short of recruits, and we insisted this was due to their grim senior officers and hideous hats ... I could have borne wearing a funny hat but not the ignominy of being a base ambulance driver, forever kept out of the fighting zone by regulations.'



Writing letters in Hitler's recently vacated office and marching in the Victory parade contrast with observations of seeing friends murdered and a mother avenging her son by coldly shooting a prisoner of war. Unflinching and unsentimental, *Train to Nowhere* is a memoir of Anita's war, one that, long after it was written, remains poignant and relevant.

Originally published in 1948, *Train to Nowhere* was written for an audience that was not yet ready for it; a society that wanted women to step back into their roles as wives and mothers...

With a new introduction by Pennyerrick.

Anita Leslie (1914–1985), daughter of a Baronet (Sir John Randolph Leslie) and cousin of Sir Winston Churchill, was a writer of memoir and biography. She joined the Mechanised Transport Corps as a fully trained mechanic and ambulance driver during WWII, serving in Libya, Syria, Palestine, Italy, France and Germany. In the latter part of the war she drove an ambulance for the Free French Forces, and was awarded the Croix de Guerre in 1945 by General Charles de Gaulle.

For more information, please contact Lily Capewell: lily.capewell@bloomsbury.com . 020 7631 5839

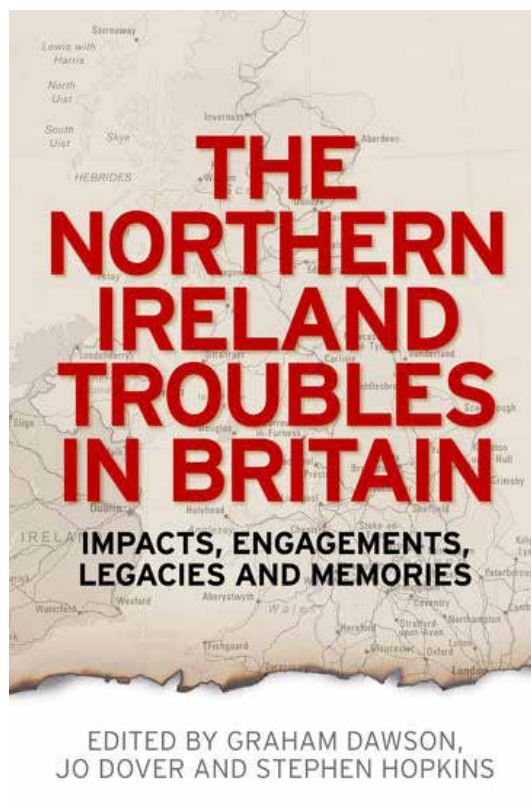
The Northern Ireland Troubles in Britain

Jenny McMahon

I attended this Book Launch in London in January this year which has been four years in the making and is predominantly written by academics, scholars and researchers. A few others including myself have made a brief contribution giving an account of our own personal experiences.

From 'Oxford University Press - Academic' website: This "Breaks new ground in addressing the complex legacies of the Northern Ireland Troubles in Britain, and sets an agenda for further research on this neglected topic. It develops wide ranging interdisciplinary debates surrounding post-conflict remembering and forgetting of the conflict; Pays attention to previously unaddressed aspects of the British dimension of the Troubles, including the experiences and understandings of those who fought in the conflict, who were injured and harmed by it, or campaigned against it; and Advocates the necessity of acknowledging, remembering and interpreting the legacies of the Troubles in Britain, in the context of the broader debate about 'dealing with the past' in the Irish peace process.

(It is available from a wide range of outlets, particularly online - Editor)

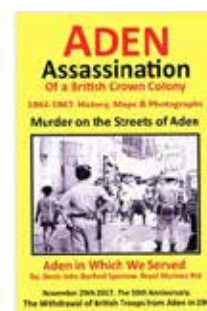


ADEN - ASSASSINATION OF A BRITISH CROWN COLONY

Denis Sparrow

As you can see I have completed my third book on Aden. This book covers the final years of terror on the streets of Aden, including the article sent to me by Judy Hasnit. The book is A4 size, giving the hundreds of photographs alongside the text a real feel of the situations they cover. The details I have written about comes from those who were there - no flannel, no embellishment - covering all the units I could extract details from.

The book is available direct from myself djsparrow@live.co.uk or 01453-763552.



WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT CROWN PLAZA, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON SATURDAY 18 MARCH 2017

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks. The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all those attending. She thanked everyone for making the effort to make the journey to Stratford-upon-Avon for the AGM and to celebrate 100 years of women serving with the British Army in non nursing roles. She continued by introducing her support team:

Rowena Griffiths MBE	Chairman of the Executive & Finance Committee
Isabel McCord	Honorary Treasurer
Audrey Smith	Chairman of the Grants Committee
Sue Hatton	Association Secretary & Editor Lioness
Julia Doig	Finance Officer
Gabi Shanahan	Benevolent Fund Secretary

The Chairman thanked all those who had raised funds or donated to the Association since the 2016 AGM, following an appeal in the Lioness donations had risen by 50% on the previous year. She went on to thank Marg Davies (100 mile walk), Wendy Hooton (Lionesses 10K) and CJ Johnston (Fort William) for their fundraising efforts.

The Chairman paid tribute to all Branch Secretaries and thanked them for their hard work and support, appreciated not just by Association HQ but by each one of their members. Every Secretary was part of a significant team which included their Chairman and Treasurer and together they underpinned the Branch network which was at the core of the Association. She also thanked all members who continue to support the aims of the Association, be it through organising events, acting as Admins on Facebook groups, or in another capacity. The Chairman thanked all the Branches who had hosted her in the preceding 12 months, she also thanked the HQ team of Sue Hatton, Gabi Shanahan, Julia Doig and Tanya Jayne Park for their work and support throughout the year.

The Chairman thanked members for participating in the selection of the Association Vision and Straplines, they had been confirmed by a meeting of Trustees on 07 Feb 17 as:

Association Vision Statement

To be a recognised and accessible charity, supporting women who served in the ATS, ATS TA, WRAC, WRAC TA and WRAC TAVR, to which our members are proud to belong.

Supporting Straplines

Supporting women who served

Trustee Vision Statement

To be an effective Board of Trustees who deliver the Charity's vision both now and in the future.

The Chairman clarified the financial situation of the the Association (unrestricted) funds. Trustees had taken steps to examine the major overheads and to put in place a plan aimed at achieving a minimum of 9 more years funding for the regimental (membership) side of the Association. An Investment Manager (Brewin Dolphin) had been appointed in 2015, this had resulted in increased returns on the funds invested.

The Chairman went on to clarify the situation regarding the relationship of the Benevolent Fund within the Association, concern had been raised by some members as to what would happen to the Benevolent Funds should the Association close.

It was confirmed that should the Association need to close the Benevolent Fund could be re-formed as a separate charity, there were no current plans at to incorporate the funds into to any other charity i.e. ABF or SSAFA

The Chairman read a message from the Patron of the Association thanking all members for their loyal greetings and support. She also read a message from the President of the Association thanking all members for their loyal greetings to mark her 84th birthday on 22 February 2017.

2. Apologies for Absence. Apologies had been received from a number of individuals, several Branch Secretaries and the following Life Vice Presidents, Trustees and members of Council: Brig (Retd) Shirley Nield CBE, Brig (Retd) Nicky Moffat CBE, Col Frankie Cook, Lady Martha Bruce, Eileen Carter TD, Sue Mackenzie, Helen Merrington-Rust.

3. Confirmation of Minutes. The Minutes of the previous meeting had been published in Lioness 2016/2, no comments had been received.

Proposal: It was was proposed that the Chairman sign the minutes of the 2016 AGM as a true record.

Proposed: Sharon Baker-Joyce **Seconded:** Sue Donovan
Agreed

4. Business Arising from the Previous Minutes.

There was no business arising that would not be covered by other Agenda items.

5. Chairman of Trustees & Council Report. Trustees had met three times and Council twice since the 2016 AGM; The main items of interest were:

a. Trustees. The focus of the Board of Trustees was the financial and governance aspects of the Association, ensuring that all of the requirements of the Charity Commission were met. Members were reminded that volunteers would always be needed as Trustees and Area Chairmen, anyone interested should contact the Chairman of Trustees.

(i). Retirement. Six Trustees would be retiring with effect from 01 Jul 17: Audrey Smith, Rowena Patrick MBE, Jackie Walton, Chris Corker, Karen Loftus and Sue Donovan.

(ii). Appointment of Trustees. Barbara Davies, Barbara Johnson and Sue McKenzie had been appointed since the 2016 AGM.

b. Council. The focus of Council was the regimental aspects of the Association, including the Branch network, the membership and the representational aspects of the Association.

(i). Area Chairmen. Sharon Bingham had volunteered to be Area Chairman S&SW.

(ii). Branches. A number of new Facebook groups were forming, some of which were evolving into Association informal Branches.

c. National Standard. The Chairman thanked Sharon Baker-Joyce for her role as National Standard bearer.

d. Appointment of Auditors. Rothmans LLP were reappointed as auditors on 07 February 2017.

6. Financial Report. The Honorary Treasurer presented the Annual Report 2016, it was explained that due to changing the end date of the Association FY from 31 Oct to 30 Sep that the 2016 Annual Report only covered 11 months. The total value of the funds (Association and Benevolent Fund combined) as at 30 Sep 16 was £6,240,398, an increase of £320,707 (5.1%) from the Annual Report 2015. It was explained that the funds were divided between 'Restricted Funds' (Benevolent funds), 'Unrestricted Funds' (Association Funds) and 'Designated Funds' (Life Subscription Funds). The value of the Benevolent funds was £5,598,887 and the combined Unrestricted and Designated (Association) funds was £641,511.

The Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet for the year ending 30 September 2016 would be published in Lioness edition 2017/2. The Honorary Treasurer thanked the Finance Officer Julia Doig for working with the auditors to produce the Annual Report.

Proposal: That the financial statements be accepted and that the audited accounts be ratified.

Proposed: Sue Wing **Seconded:** Pat Sanders
Agreed

7. Report of the Editor of the Association Journal. The Editor of Lioness outlined the changes to Lioness funding that had been implemented by Trustees. In 2015 Trustees sought professional legal advice on a number of aspects of the Association governance relating to the Constitution and the Schemes on which it is based. A specific question related to the wider use of the Benevolent Funds. Lawyers advised that the use of Benevolence Funds for Lioness met the objects of the Benevolent Fund Scheme 16 May 2000. In Sep 15 Trustees voted to fund the 2016 editions of Lioness from the Ben Fund. In July 2016 Trustees voted to extend the funding for 5 years for the 2017-2021 editions, the decision would then be reviewed.

8. Reports of Committees.

a. Executive & Finance Committee. The Executive & Finance Committee (EFC) had sat 3 times since the 2016 AGM. The Chairman EFC outlined the key areas of work:

(i). Constitution 2013 Review. A working group (WG) comprising Rowena Griffiths (Chairman EFC), Sue Donovan (Trustee) and Maggie Purkis (Council) had been formed to conduct the triennial review of Constitution 2013. A draft of the amended Constitution (Constitution 2017) had been circulated to AGM attendees and Branch Secretaries prior to the the meeting.

(ii). Salaried Staff Review. A Salaried Staff Review was ongoing. Chairman EFC thanked the WG members (all Trustees); Rowena Patrick MBE, Barbara Davies and Barbara Johnson.

(iii). Risk Register. The Association Risk Register had identified the greatest risk to be the Benevolent Fund database. Trustees had agreed funding to implement a replacement.

b. Benevolent Fund Grants Committee. Audrey Smith, Trustee and Chairman of the Grants Committee, would be retiring from her roles with effect 01 Jul 17. Having been in post for 18 years she highlighted some changes that had occurred during her tenure.

	FY 2015/2016	FY 1997/1998
No. Of Cases	332 (average for 12 months)	902
ATS	27%	70%
WRAC	73%	30%
Benevolent Funds	£5,598,887	£3,746,212

The Chairman of the Grants Committee thanked all those who had given their time to help the Benevolent Fund, the volunteers who had worked diligently behind the scenes and those who had been members of Grants Committees. She also thanked the Benevolent Fund Case Secretaries who have processed all the cases over the years; Alice Matthews, Ruth Watt, Jane Freebairn, Margaret Wroot, and Gabi Shanahan.

9. Resolutions.

a. Trustee Resolutions.

(i) Revision of Constitution

Proposal: That the 2017 revision of the Constitution of the WRAC Association be accepted.

Proposed: Ann Colclough **Seconded:** Marjorie Cole
Agreed

b. Branch Proposals. There were no Branch proposals.

c. Election of Honorary Treasurer. The AGM is required to ratify the appointment of Honorary Treasurer on an annual basis.

Proposal: To ratify Isabel McCord in her appointment as Honorary Treasurer.

Proposed: Dot Ryder **Seconded:** Anna Orlinski
Agreed

10. Any Other Business.

a. Trustees. The Chairman thanked 6 Trustees (Audrey Smith, Rowena Patrick MBE, Jackie Walton, Chris Corker, Karen Loftus and Sue Donovan) who would be retiring with effect from 01 Jul 17, for all their hard work and dedication to the role.

b. Association Secretary. Sue Hatton, Association Secretary, would be moving to a new role with The Sandhurst Trust after 5 years with the WRAC Association. The Chairman thanked her for her work and support.

c. Chairman Benevolent Fund Grants Committee. The Chairman thanked Audrey Smith for her hard work and dedication to the role over the past 18 years as Chairman of the Benevolent Fund Grants Committee and 17 years as a Trustee. During that time she had Chaired over 1,000 Grants Committee Meetings and distributed over £13 million to over 8,000 beneficiaries.

11. Date and Time of Next Meeting. Subject to confirmation the 2018 AGM would be held on Saturday 17 March 2018 at the Union Jack Club, London.

Signed as a true record.

Chairman:

Date:



CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS

As per the Minutes of the 2017 AGM, the triennial review of the Constitution made certain recommendations, which have been accepted by your Trustees and Council. A Briefing Note was drawn up, along with notes on the Areas of Revision - namely:

BRIEFING NOTE FOR ASSOCIATION MEMBERS FOR AGM REVISION OF CONSTITUTION DOCUMENT

The Trustees decided a number of years ago that the Constitution should be reviewed every 3 years to ensure that it was in line with the latest legislation, guidance from the Charities Commission and was in line with the working practises of the Association. This revisions were worked on by a Sub Committee of the Executive and Finance Committee. It was circulated on a regular basis to Council members for their direction and guidance, and the revised Constitution document was presented to the Members of the WRAC Association at the Association's AGM on 17th March 2017.

AREAS OF REVISION

The main area that has been revised is Part 3 - Governance Structure, however Part 2 - Membership and Insignia has one minor amendment.

a. Membership and Insignia.

- i. The constitution has been brought into line with the subscription changes that were agreed at the AGM in 2015, i.e. ceasing life membership for new members.
- ii. The dress for members of the Association is reiterated as there being no required form of dress only that members should be appropriately attired for the occasion.

b. Governance. The following areas have been updated to provide better direction and to enable the Trustees and Council to provide the Association with the support it requires to go forward.

- i. **Trustees.** Refining the process for appointing the Officers of the Association, and direction on their powers and proceedings. Trustee guidance on Conflict of Interest and savings provisions bring us into line with Charities Commission advice.
- ii. **Non-Executive Members.** In order to provide the Trustees with specialist advice not available from within Non Executive Members can be appointed to fill the gaps of knowledge, they are non-voting members but will bring a very useful perspective to the Trustees when they shape policy and strategy.
- iii. **Council.** The role and appointment procedures for both the Life Presidents and the Area Chairmen have been clarified.
- iv. **Committee Meetings.** The process for meetings has been refined to ensure that good working practises are achieved and to enable attendees at the various levels of meetings to be able to prepare fully in advance and make the most appropriate decisions for the Association. The new Constitution enables the Association to hold meetings by electronic means.

SUMMARY

The revised Constitution document provides an updated document that fully meets the requirements of the Charity Commissioners. The revised governance structure will enable the Association to meet the demands of the future in a more transparent, efficient and effective manner. A full copy of the current (revised) Constitution is available from our website or the Association Office.

WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018

ADVANCE NOTICE - Please put the date in your diaries now

The 2018 AGM will be held in the Carisbrooke Hall, Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour Street, London, W2 2HF on Saturday 17 March 2018. Any Branch Secretary or HQ Branch member who wishes to submit an item for inclusion in the agenda is to do so by 5 February 2018 to penny.muxworthy@wracassociation.org.uk.

Proposed Timetable

12:30-13:00	Branch Secretaries Meeting (balcony of the Carisbrooke Hall)
14:00	AGM - See Centre Pages for Draft Agenda
15:30	Afternoon tea (for Association members only, which must be pre booked using the form that will be published in the early 2018 Lioness)

Booking Form available with Draft Agenda
in Centre Pages

WRAC ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP GIFT VOUCHERS

Do you know anyone who served in the ATS or WRAC who is not yet a member of the Association?

Why not give the gift of WRAC Association Membership?

Membership Gift Vouchers are now available to purchase online, by phone (0300 400 1992) or by post. Cheques payable to WRAC Association.

UK Annual Membership £10
Overseas Annual Membership £15

Statement Of Financial Activities

THE WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE PERIOD 1 NOVEMBER 2015 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2016

		Unrestricted			Total Funds Period 01.11.15 to 30.09.16 £	Total Funds Year Ended 31.10.15 £
	Notes	General Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £		
INCOME FROM:						
Donations and legacies	1	29,935	-	8,728	38,663	59,745
Charitable activities	2	571	-	-	571	31,986
Investments	3	15,993	-	162,944	178,937	174,349
Other income	4	6,953	-	235	7,188	9,185
TOTAL INCOME		53,452	-	171,907	225,359	275,265
EXPENDITURE ON:						
Raising funds	6	3,946	-	26,218	30,164	-
Charitable activities	7	78,866	-	232,478	311,344	410,777
Total Expenditure		82,812	-	258,696	341,508	410,777
Net Gains / (losses) on investments	9	29,834	-	407,022	436,856	(13,543)
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)		474	-	320,233	320,707	(149,055)
Transfers between funds	15	2,775	(2,775)	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		3,249	(2,775)	320,233	320,707	(149,055)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:						
Total Funds brought forward	18	614,864	26,173	5,278,654	5,919,691	6,068,746
Total funds carried forward		618,113	23,398	5,598,887	6,240,398	5,919,691

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2016

	Notes	2016 £	2015 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Fixed Assets	8	3,072	4,199
Investments	9	<u>6,175,591</u>	<u>5,764,238</u>
		6,178,663	5,768,437
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stock	10	2,429	4,181
Debtors	11	11,039	51,319
Cash at bank and in hand	12	<u>65,300</u>	<u>106,765</u>
		78,768	162,265
LIABILITIES			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	17,033	11,011
		<u>17,033</u>	<u>11,011</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		61,735	151,254
TOTAL NET ASSETS		<u>6,240,398</u>	<u>5,919,691</u>
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY			
Restricted Funds:			
The Benevolent Funds	16	4,700,451	4,475,229
The Princess Royal's Memorial Fund	17	898,436	803,425
Unrestricted funds:			
General Funds	18	618,113	614,864
Designated funds:			
Membership life subscription fund	15	23,398	26,173
TOTAL FUNDS	18	<u>6,240,398</u>	<u>5,919,691</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 7 February 2017 and were signed on its behalf by:



Colonel (Retired) Alison Brown, Chairman

Obituaries - Their Final Salute

KATE ARNOLD (nee Bain) **18 February 1954 – 6 July 2017**



Kate was born in Hamilton and later went to school in Dunfermline. She joined the WRAC in 1973 as a Shorthand Writer and after basic training at Guildford moved to HQ SE-Div in Aldershot as PA to the Colonel Quatering and was soon promoted to Lance Corporal. In less than a year her organisational skills, accurate shorthand and typing had been recognised and she was pinched by the Chief of Staff and promoted to full Corporal.

She had a brief spell at the Ministry of Defence in London before being promoted to Sergeant and sent to Cyprus as the PA to the CO Land Forces Middle East. She returned to Scotland following the failure of her first marriage and, having left the army, remained there for a year or so before re-enlisting in November 1979.

At that time, the UK Government had a Commonwealth Monitoring force in Southern Rhodesia to oversee the handover of power under the command of General Acland (her old boss from Cyprus) who needed a PA; he asked for Kate. Within a week she was on her way to Rhodesia where she tackled the long hours with her typical zeal, commitment and attention to detail. During her time there, she met Robert Mugabe, Joshua Nkomo and several other senior political figures as well as working closely with the Aide-de-Camp to General Acland – a young subaltern by the name of Iain Duncan Smith! To her credit Kate was one of the very few women to be awarded the Rhodesian Campaign medal.

From Rhodesia, she went back to the Ministry of Defence in London, this time as PA to the head of the Army, General (later Field Marshal) Bramall, the Chief of the General Staff. It was during this tour that the Falklands War took place and it was Kate who typed up General Bramall's notes from his meetings with Margaret Thatcher and the War Cabinet. She became very adept at looking surprised when watching the late-night news in the Mess at Mill Hill and a British attack was announced!

In 1982 she was posted to Gibraltar as PA to the Governor & Commander in Chief. The Governor's office and residence in Gibraltar was called The Convent and Kate - because she was also in charge of all the WRAC girls on the Rock – was known affectionately as "The Mother Superior"! (Those of you who knew Kate well will appreciate the irony!)

In 1985 she returned to the UK to be PA to the DWRAC Brigadier Helen Meechie until leaving the army in 1987 with the rank of WO2. She moved back up to Scotland and began work in the Rosyth Royal Dockyard.

On her return to Scotland, Kate became a member, and later Secretary, of the Edinburgh Branch. In 2006 she joined the Fife & Tayside Branch of the WRAC Association, being an outstanding Branch Secretary from 2013 – 2016. She became Scottish Area Treasurer and Secretary in 2008 and continued until she resigned 8 years later because of her failing health. Kate was painstaking and conscientious in her duties, outstandingly efficient, capable and hugely popular with all the ladies. She was great company, loved to laugh and was always willing to go the extra mile. Nothing was ever too much trouble and she was a huge support to me in my role as Area Chair. She will be remembered for being lovely, smart, down to earth, having an enthusiastic sense of humour, noisy, efficient, talented, warm hearted and friendly.

At Kate's funeral service in Perth which was attended by about 180, we learned about her love of music, the arts, travelling, her contribution to the local community and her many, many friends. We also learned that Kate had a fiery Scottish temper and that she was furious she was not going to live long enough to receive her State Pension!

Kate met David Arnold, a Naval Health Inspector, in Gibraltar. They married in 1984 and were within days of their 33th wedding anniversary when she died. She played "wicked step-mother" to Dave's 3 children; Joanne, Tracey and Matthew, was a dear sister to brothers Iain and Colin and much loved by Alfie her beloved West Highland Terrier.

Kate will be remembered with the greatest of respect and affection by all her army colleagues and the WRAC Association here in Scotland will be a poorer place without her.

Jo Young
Area Chair Scotland and Northern Ireland

MARGARET CLARKE (nee Harris)

Margaret Harris died on the 1 June 2017, in a nursing home in Cornwall, where she had sadly spent the last nine years, incapacitated due to a series of strokes.

Margaret served in London District, Berlin, SHAPE and Rheindahlen. She married John Clarke, ex-RMP Rheindahlen, and together they built up an exceptional [partnered] business in Liverpool under the name of "Clarke and Young". Sadly John died in 1979.

She was a very, very precious friend to her cohorts at 145 WRAC Provost Company, Rheindahlen 1959 – 1963.

Pax Tecum.

Marjorie Kay, June Shell, Wendy Forsyth, Crys Grant, Sandy Lawson, Adrienne Lewis.

COL. FRANCES MARY COOK
14/09/1924 – 03/08/2017



Frances, or Frankie as she was known to many, was an inspirational woman. She was born in Sunderland to John and Jane Cook, the youngest of their 4 children and only daughter. She was educated at Redby School and later gained a scholarship to Monkwearmouth Central Girls' School.

Frances worked briefly in a clerical position for Coles Cranes in Sunderland; joined the Home Guard and subsequently, on 11th April 1944, joined up as a private in the A.T.S. Her basic training was at Dalkeith, followed by clerical training at Golders Green, where her R.S.M. was more frightening than the air raids!

On 16th August 1950, by now a lieutenant, she embarked on the HMT Orduna and arrived on 12th September at the commencement of a posting to Singapore. She became a Captain in January 1956 and was posted to Cyprus on 11th October 1956. The rank of Major followed in November 1960, and in November 1962, after a posting to Manchester University, she was sent to Libya as a Staff Captain. Following a variety of UK postings, she was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on November 19th 1973, and to Colonel on 26th July 1976, before she joined her final posting as Commandant of the WRAC in Guildford, from whence she retired on 25th July 1980.

Frances was my aunt, an important and influential part of my life, and a trusted confidante, friend and advisor. She was a life-long Methodist, a lay preacher, a keen photographer, amateur ornithologist and a loyal friend to many.

She was a Life Vice-president of the WRAC association and continued to be associated with many of its members until her death. The remaining members of her small family appreciate and respect what she has given to us, and to so many, and I will always be grateful for the experiences she has provided for me, shared with me, and given to my children and grandchildren. RIP Frankie.

Julie Skinner (niece)

STELLA DAWSON
10 May 1931 - 05 December 2016



Stella Dawson, aged 85 years, passed away peacefully in Australia on December 5th 2016, holding the hand of her loyal sister Lilian till the end. Stella served in the WRAC for 22 years and rose to the rank of Warrant Officer. She was stationed in Singapore for many years, which she adored every minute of. When she came to visit she would bring us the latest gadgets, duty free and would regale us with her Army stories.

When I was 5, still living in England, I have the vivid memory of running down to the end of our garden to watch the train go by when I knew Auntie Stella was coming to visit. There she would be, standing in full uniform, waving to us out of the train door and I would shriek "There she is" and we would jump in the car and pick her up from Redcar Station.

Injuring her spine in 1974, Stella was pensioned out of the Army and came to live with us in Australia, becoming an integral part of our family and home. She absolutely loved her Army days and those memories became a great solace to her in her later years. Although in constant pain she led a fulfilled life and had an extraordinary work ethic in everything she did, this I believe resulting from her army background. Always immaculately dressed and with a tenacious spirit, Stella was extremely kind with a generous soul and a contagious laugh. We will miss her greatly but she will be in our hearts forever; Lest We Forget.

Sally-Anne Upton (Niece)

If anyone remembers or served with Stella Dawson can they please contact me via email uptongirl@pacific.net.au as I am putting together a history of her life in WRAC.

LANCE CORPORAL EDITH FRANCIS
1922 – 2016

Edith was born on 28 Sep 22 in Crewe. She joined the ATS in Manchester on 23 Dec 41 (at the age of 19), and was posted to No 4 ATS Signals Company, Chester after completion of basic training. She was appointed Paid Acting Lance Corporal on 17 Aug 44 but relinquished her rank on posting, on 16 Dec 44, before being taken on strength 21 Army Group Signals. Edith embarked for North West Europe on 11 Jan 45, took up her post at ATS Signals Germany where she was again appointed Lance Corporal. Edith returned to the UK on 03 Mar 46.

During her service, Edith was awarded the France and Germany Star, the Defence Medal 1939-1945 and the George VI Service Medal. Edith was relegated to the Unemployed List on 13 May

46 and, at the end of her engagement, gained her discharge on 01 Apr 54.



Edith Francis at Preston 1943

After demob, Edith returned to Crewe and worked as inspector at Rolls Royce until 1959, when she married Roy Francis. Edith and Roy had 3 children (John, Anita and Pauline) but sadly Roy died in 1966, leaving Edith to manage as best she could alone. Edith took herself off to night school to learn typing, French and dressmaking in order to gain qualifications which would enable her to find a second job to augment her salary as an auxiliary at the school which her children (all under the age of 7) attended.

In 1974, Edith joined the Crewe Branch of the Royal British Legion; in May 1978 she became the first woman to be elected to the Executive Committee of that Branch, eventually serving as its Secretary, its Standard Bearer and later its Chairman.

In 1984, Edith became one of the founder members of the Crewe Branch of the WRAC Association. She served as the Association's National Standard Bearer and proudly paraded our National Standard at the Royal Albert Hall on several occasions, as well as taking part in the Remembrance Service and Parade in Whitehall. On two occasions Edith accepted invitations to garden parties at Buckingham Palace in appreciation of her work for the WRAC Association and the Royal British Legion.

By 1992 when the WRAC disbanded, Edith had become Area Secretary of Wales and the West Area, a post which she held until 2013, when her ill health forced her to stand down.

On a personal note, I remember the help and advice Edith gave me when I accepted the appointment of Chairman, Wales and the West Area. I also remember the whiskey marmalade she made and presented with a wink and an "apology" that her arm had slipped when adding the whiskey. Edith's hands were seldom still, even when relaxing at the end of the day, she sewed, knitted and crocheted, providing many items to become gifts for her friends and family as well as several highly sought after raffle prizes.

Sadly, on 22 Dec 16, while sitting happily by a window in the sunshine, Edith passed away. Edith was well known by the members of the WRAC Association and is remembered with affection, respect, and gratitude.

Maggie Purkis

BERYL LANE **20 February 2017**



Beryl was a founder member of the Shropshire Branch and until the last few years she took an active role in all we did. Unfortunately Beryl's memory steadily worsened and she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. For the last few years she was in a home and didn't recognise any of her old friends. The ATS and Association at one time played a very important role in Beryl's life and her family requested, if possible, for the Standard and fellow Association members to be present at her funeral. We were happy to acquiesce and our Vice President, Ali Brown, Area Chairman, Maggie Purkis, Sharon Joyce with the National Standard and members of the Shropshire Branch attended the funeral.

EILEEN GLADYS MORGAN (née Rouse) **23 May 1919 - 26 September 2016**



Eileen was born in Plymouth on 23rd May 1919; being raised, educated and working locally until she heard the bugle call her to join the ATS around 1939. She worked in the Regimental Quarter Master's Stores and over the years was promoted until she reached the dizzy heights of Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant. She regretted that she didn't get posted overseas; which she really longed to do, but as jobs at the near top of the ladder were scarcer than those on the lower rungs, she had to balance her desire to travel and be able to see all the places that she heard about when kitting many, many groups of ladies to various exotic and some not so tempting stations overseas, with the practicalities of being extremely valuable to the force by staying at home, and of course she gained promotions and esteem also.

She was obviously thought highly of because she was sent to London to help set up a new QMS somewhere near Paddington. We know this because every time we went to London for AGM's etc she always told us the story; she even had a wonderful taxi ride with Mary Davis one year, they hailed a cab and asked the cabbie, who naturally, turned out to be an ex-service man, to take them on a tour of her old stamping ground during the war, he was so delighted by these two elderly, genuine soldiers in their blazers with WRAC Assn badges and medals proudly worn, that he took them on a great trip of around about an hour and didn't charge them a penny, said a tearful and grateful 'good bye' to them, and left them to seek other adventures. They were on such a high that they went to Westminster Abbey, gained free entry and a guided tour; followed by a free trip on the London Eye without having to wait in the very long queue! That was Eileen, very exuberant and enjoyed her life to the full.

She was tall and very smart and joined in with any lunch outing going to anywhere. She worked a great deal for Plymouth Branch in the early days of the '70's to late 90's but gradually slowed down, but was always excited and ready for a trip until just 6 months before she died. That's the Eileen that I knew. After the war she married Bert and they had one daughter, Pat, who married John and they also only had one daughter, Sarah. In due course Sarah married and had two sons, much to Eileen's delight.

JOAN G STOTT **12 NOVEMBER 1922 – 10 JUNE 2017**



Joan Graham Stott, was born and grew up in the city of York; educated at York College for Girls. She joined the ATS in January 1944 and served until June 1949. She spent 5½ years in the Royal Signals, employed as a telephonist and supervisor. She spent 4 years at Northern Command HQ Exchange as a telephonist and assistant supervisor, also doing relief work on branch and district switchboards. In January 1948, she was promoted to Sergeant, spending 6 months at Darlington, York and 12 months as supervisor at Eastern Command HQ Exchange, Hounslow.

After her demob, Joan was employed as a telephonist in the London Clinic for 5½ years before taking employment as a telephonist at the BBC, Broadcasting House in Central London where she worked for 22½ years, commuting from her home in Tenterden, Kent until her retirement in December 1979. Joan passed away peacefully aged 94 on 10 June 2017 at the residential care home in Andover, Hampshire here she had been since December 2014.

My mother, Barbara Brown (nee Sampson) – W/311111 and Joan, both Yorkshire lasses, met whilst serving in the ATS stationed at Northern Command York and remained life-long friends. Following my mother's marriage in 1950, whilst posted to Singapore, Joan became godmother to me and my older sister, and has been an integral part of our lives.

Lesley Philippa (Pip) Brown (Goddaughter)

MISS AUDREY TOLD **1922 - 2017**

Audrey joined the Norfolk and Suffolk Branch of the Association in 1988, transferring from Ilford Branch where she had been a member since the inception of the Association.

In 1939 Audrey joined the Land Army, transferring to the ATS in 1940, spending time at RAOC Depot, Weedon; No 8 Trg Centre, Glen Parva; No 19 TC Fenham Barracks, Leicester and Sub District Bournemouth. By that time she was one of the youngest Sgt. Majors at the age of nineteen. She then embarked for Egypt, spending time at Tel-el-Kabir in charge of a troop of Middle Eastern girls, some with no knowledge of English. She returned to Didcot where she was recommended for training at OCTU, Windsor. Posted to Chelmsford from there she was demobbed at Guildford in 1949 with the rank of Lieutenant.

Back in civilian life Audrey trained on a youth leaders' course, working with the disadvantaged and vulnerable in Essex, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. Her leadership skills and, no doubt, her army training stood her in good stead. While living in Ilford she continued her social work and was promoted to Principal Officer in Social Services, responsible for over 400 employees. In 1960 Audrey had found time to join the Territorial Army, resigning in 1966, based at Colchester.

On her retirement from Social Services in 1988, Audrey moved to Cromer where she had spent happy childhood holidays. Here, she had no intention of being a 'retiree' but joined many groups, the RNLI, the British Legion, the Soroptomists, was a pastoral worker for the church and a church guide for holidaymakers during the summer. She also was a great supporter of the meals-on-wheels service. A citation was awarded to her for the immense contribution she had made to the town. For recreation, Audrey played bowls to a high standard until her eyesight failed her.

She touched many people's lives in Cromer and beyond, as was evidenced by the vast attendance at her funeral service in the parish church on 7th July. Audrey will always be remembered by the Norfolk Branch as a strongly supportive member.

GLADYS GWENDOLINE WALKER (nee Beavan) **11 April 1918 - 28 April 2017**



Gladys Gwendoline Walker was born a few months before the end of the Great War in 1918. Gladys, who was born and brought up in Walsall in the West Midlands, was called up for the ATS in early 1943 at the age of 24. Off she went to complete her basic and trade training as a telephonist and, on completion, was posted to the South Downs in Sussex attached to a Royal Artillery Gun Unit. Gladys loved her time in the ATS and relished her job as a telephonist, and like many other service women, believed that she contributed a great deal to the war effort in the nature of the work going, not only at her base but the many other units along the coast of Southern England. Gladys thoroughly enjoyed the 3.5 years in the ATS and often talked about her service life and the many friends she made during those years. There was little down time, but on the odd occasion that there was a 48hr pass available, off she would go with some colleagues to London and enjoy what nightlife there was in between the air-raid sirens.

After Gladys was demobbed in 1946 she went home to the West Midlands and eventually married her long-term love Ray, who had also been away during the war years serving with the Royal Navy. She continued to work as a switchboard operator but took a gap when her beloved son Tony was born. Gladys continued to work throughout her life until she retired aged 62 which allowed her and Ray to travel to their caravan in North Wales where they spent many happy holidays. In-between the holidays Gladys started doing voluntary work which initially involved preparing patients for leaving hospital to live back in the community. She then volunteered to serve in the new League of Friends shop at the Manor Hospital Walsall which opened in 1990. Gladys worked in the shop regularly for the next 27 years until November last year when, on finishing her shift, she fell and broke her hip hurrying to catch the bus home!

Gladys continued her association with the Army in her retirement years and was a member of her local branch of the ATS association in Wolverhampton until it was disbanded in 2011. Her highlight in later years was attending the WRAC/ATS Grand Reunion weekend in Blackpool in 2008 (in her 90th year) where she had a fabulous time with a broad mix of fellow association members. That weekend, whilst out with the girls, she had a fall after visiting the Pleasure Beach and sustained a cracking black eye. She nipped off to hospital to have it checked and was still back at the venue for the Saturday evening dinner and entertainment wearing sunglasses! This was a woman with a real zest for life, and after her husband Ray died in 1996, at the age of 78, travelled the world. She rode an elephant in Bangkok; had afternoon tea at the famous Raffles hotel in Singapore; flew over the Canadian Rockies; went over and under the Niagara falls; paddled on Waikiki Beach; cruised the Caribbean; missed her ferry in Hong Kong, and finally, walked the Great Wall of China! Oh, I forgot to mention, Gladys sat in the front row of the 2007 Wimbledon men's tennis final with her good friend Heather and watched Roger Federer win his 5th singles title - what a life!

The fall Gladys unfortunately had in November 2016, where she broke her hip, had serious consequences. After 2 operations and a determination to get back on her feet Gladys sadly passed away on 28 April 2017 at the age of 99. Her funeral was held on 25 May 2017 at Hatherton United Reformed Church in Walsall and was attended by a wide section of the community, many who knew Gladys from her voluntary work and church life, but also the few who had heard of this wonderful lady and wanted to pay their respects.

Gladys was an inspiration to everyone who knew her and will be sorely missed.

REQUEST FROM HERITAGE MANAGER AND THE ROYAL HOSPITAL, CHELSEA

Jeremy Green, RMP Regimental Secretary, recently received an email asking for help in identifying persons in four photos that recently appeared on Facebook. They have already identified that "... it is certainly pre-1970". They have additionally asked "... if there is anything anyone can add to our sum of knowledge and help identify the WRAC (Provost) individuals by name, it would be gratefully appreciated".

Please let the WRAC office know if you can shed any light.



BAILEY, Miss Jenny, of New Ollerton, on 25 April 2017

BRAY, Miss Imogene (Teddie), of Cosham on 13 January 2017, ATS.

BRIDGMAN, Mrs Dorothy M, nee Tomkinson, of Cirencester, on 28 April 2017, ATS

BROOK, Mrs Doris, nee Freeman, of Dereham, Norfolk, on 27 June 2017, ATS

CARR, Mrs Joan, nee Gilby, of Lincoln on 15 March 2017, WRAC.

CLARK, Janice of Stanley on 25 August 2017. WRAC & AGC

COURTNEY, Mrs Jacqueline (Jacquie) nee WATT, of Kettering on 1 June 2017. WRAC

COWAN Mrs. Isabella C. (Isobel Kelly) of Whithorn, Wigtownshire and Torthorwald, Dumfries. 3rd June 2017. ATS

COXON, Mrs Chrissie, nee Allen, of Weymouth, on 12 March 2017, ATS

DAVIES, Miss Mary, of Wolverhampton on 08 March 2017, ATS.

DAWSON, Mrs Adrienne M, nee Standage, of Ontario on 04 January 2017, ATS.

DAWSON, Mrs Margaret (Peggy) of Burscough on 4 May 2017

DRENNAN, Mrs Brenda, nee Whitmore of Nottingham on 20 January 2017, WRAC.

FISHER, Vere of Callington on 31 July 2017.

GARRETT COWTON, Miss Norah, of Filey on 23 March 2017, ATS

GRIEVES, Mrs Olive J, nee Goodacre of Somerby on 11 January 2017, ATS.

HAMMOND, Mrs Maureen A, nee Croston of Worthing on 18 February 2017, WRAC.

HARDY Miss Margaret of Wigton, in September 2016 (*Apologies, original notification not published for some reason - Editor*)

HASLAM, Miss Pamela of Tranent, East Lothian on 30th July 2017

HOWARTH, Mary, nee Watson, of Carlisle on 16 March 2017, ATS

HUGHES, Miss Pamela, of Countesthorpe on 08 February 2017, WRAC.

JUBY, Mrs Audrey, of Dereham, on 25 June 2017. ATS

KENDALL, Mrs Nora, of Shipley on 08 March 2017, ATS.

LANHAM, Mrs Margaret H, nee Coleman, of New Milton, on 02 April 2017

LEESE, Mrs Daphne, nee Greetham, of Purley on 16 December 2016, ATS.

LITTLER, Mary Ellena, nee Fenner of Wrexham on 17th July 2017

McINTYRE, Mrs Mariann, nee Jones, of Osmington on 05 March 2017, WRAC.

MELDING, Mrs Vicky, nee Morris, of Snaith, on 2 February 2017, ATS

RHODES, Mrs Louise, of Newcastle-under-Lyme on 23 January 2017, ATS.

SEWARD, Mrs Joyce, nee Winter of Australia on 30 August 2017.

SMITH, Mrs Beryl (Betty) M, of Bournemouth on 19 February 2017, ATS.

SMITH, Mrs Irene, nee Pearson, of Prenton on 01 October 2016, ATS.

SMITH, Joan nee Knight, of Dundee on 5 April 2017

STEVENSON, Mrs Ursula nee Worts, of Baldock on 14th August 2017, ATS

STILLWELL, Mrs Eileen, nee Robinson, of Loughborough on 25 March 2017, ATS

WALKER, Mrs Gladys G W, nee Beavan, of Walsall, on 28 April 2017

WARD, Mrs Doris M, nee Davies/Patterson, of Beckenham on 03 March 2017, ATS.

WILSON, Mrs Olive M, nee Wilson, of Ipswich on 11 January 2017, ATS.



Supporting Women who Served

Lioness 2018 / 1

Copy deadline 30th November 2017.

Send in your articles, reports, reminiscences, photos, etc, etc as soon as you have them – it helps beat the rush and helps the Editor in putting the magazine together.

Photos welcome, but please try and include as separate attachments to the associated report (not within it). Also, if you can let us know who is in each photo we will endeavour to attribute accordingly.

Many thanks
Editor



LEGACIES & DONATIONS

The WRAC Association Needs You



Those of you who read the Annual Report, or the excerpts published in *Lioness*, might have the impression that the WRAC Association is well provided for financially, with the total worth of our funds being approximately £6 million. However, due to the way that the original trust funds were set up the vast majority of the money, some £5.4 million, is mainly for the use of the ATS & WRAC Benevolent Fund. This means that anyone who has served in the ATS or the WRAC for any period of time, who is in financial need, can be considered for help by the Benevolent Fund (providing they meet the grant giving criteria). The youngest person who served in the WRAC before it was disbanded in 1992 would now only be just over 40 years old and therefore, with life expectancy increasing all the time, there will still be applicants eligible for assistance for over 50 years. All costs of administration of the Benevolent Fund have always been paid for by the Fund and the Trustees are confident that the reserves held will be sufficient to provide for the all future needs.

The Association provides other functions to members who are not in financial need but are a great benefit and support to those women who have this special bond of having served, irrespective of the length of that service. You all wait eagerly for *Lioness* to arrive twice a year and for those who are visually impaired we have financed a recorded version. Many of you enjoy Area and Branch functions and attending the Grand Reunions. Additionally there are several important anniversaries to commemorate in the next few years, however there are financial implications that we now have to consider. As you know we have a plot at the National Memorial Arboretum, which has to be maintained, and we are always anxious to establish permanent memorials, most of which also need funds to maintain them. In order to ensure that all that was achieved by women up to 1992 is not forgotten we must make sure that we continue to have representation wherever possible, particularly connected with Remembrance events.

Until recently the staff and overhead costs of the Association was provided by the MOD, however the Association now has to cover the full cost of staff and office space. We must continue to provide these key functions and as part of this you have already agreed to increase the membership fee to £10.00. This was very welcome but this will not prevent the speedy depletion of the Association Funds, as we strive to maintain the Area and Branch network and continue our representation at a national level. We therefore need to consider raising funds in other ways.

Many members already make regular and one off donations or are kind enough to leave legacies which help the WRAC Association to continue its work, for which we are very grateful. As the future of the Benevolent Fund is secure, if you are considering making a donation or leaving a legacy please consider making such a donation or legacy specifically to the WRAC Association, rather than to the ATS & WRAC Benevolent Fund. This will enable us to continue to provide you with all of those activities that contribute to esprit de corps and comradeship, both now and well into the future.

The WRAC Association is so very grateful for all of your support so far. This appeal is made with the aim of ensuring that the Association can continue in its' key role; that of supporting and maintaining our esprit de corps.

Leaving a legacy to the WRAC Association is a special way to give help, as it costs nothing now and a gift of any size will make a big difference. Legacies do not get taxed, so every penny comes straight to the Association. It can also reduce Inheritance Tax because the taxable value of the estate is calculated after charitable bequests are made. We appreciate that leaving a gift in your will is a big decision and you will want to take professional advice prior to any decision.

Thank you.

WRAC Association Charity No. 206184

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