

LIONESS





WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION

(Incorporating the QMAAC & ATS Comrades Association)

Registered Charity No. 206184, founded in 1919

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The Archbishop of Westminster

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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”.

What a fantastic 6 months we have had both as an Association and on a national level celebrating 100 years of women serving in the Army.

I think one of my proudest moments has to be watching our National Standard Bearer marching across the central arena in the Royal Albert Hall at the start of the Festival of Remembrance. The tribute paid by the Royal British Legion to the 100 ladies from all walks of Service life was a true testament to all those who have served across the decades. This was followed by 100 members of the WRAC Association being on parade at the Cenotaph for the national service of remembrance. Once again we had 5 ATS members with us who, I hope, will be with us for years to come. I think the photos within this edition of the Lioness shows the pride and joy felt by all involved.

Continuing with the theme of celebration, it is the 80th Anniversary of the ATS in 2018 and the Association is hosting an event at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas on 8th July 2018. This will take the form of a service to re-dedicate the ATS Statue. As was notified in the previous Lioness we are having to relocate the statue due to building works. I have consulted with some ATS ladies and we have agreed that the most appropriate place for her is the Association plot. This relocation means we can now take on the maintenance and ensure that the ATS Statue will be at the NMA for many years to come.

The WRAC Association continues to operate in interesting times. We are making plans to develop our benevolence reach and looking at how we can target our marketing and publicity efforts. The aim of both of these pieces of work is to ensure we are sustainable into the future both in terms of membership numbers and also in increasing the number of beneficiaries we can assist.

I remain extremely grateful to all Area Chairmen, Branch Secretaries and Treasurers and anyone who organises and provides for any kind of meet up or fund raising activity; this is the only way 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.

Our members are the heart and soul of our Association and deserve the best we can give 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. This is the chance for any member to hear our plans for the Association and to ask any questions they may have.

Wishing you all a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2018.

Ali Brown

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FRONT COVER Top to bottom

Left: Field of Remembrance

Middle : Festival of Remembrance (Royal Albert Hall)

Right: Cenotaph

BACK COVER: Women at War 100
Army & Navy Club Reception



Welcome to 2018! I hope you all had a happy, safe (and in some cases dry and snow-free) Christmas and New Year. 2018 promises to be another busy one for the Association, particularly as we build towards the Association's 100th anniversary in 2019.

This edition again includes some reports and photos from various events etc. connected to the 2017 'Women at War 100' commemorations. These include the RAG Club Reception which some Members were lucky enough to be invited to, in the presence of our Patron HM The Queen, and HRH The Princess Royal. There was also a special dinner at Sandhurst, opened up to all ranks, as well as officers; and, of course, all the events surrounding 2017 Remembrance-tide were dedicated to the past 100 years. I hope you managed to catch some, if not all, of the BBC's documentary series, and enclosed here-in are the notes from an interview I did with Dame Kelly Holmes on the process of making the documentary.

Every year Remembrance-tide, in particular, brings a flurry of new Membership applications. We welcome all new Members, and thank those who remain Members for your past commitment to the Association. We have revised the Membership Application Form slightly this year to encourage more of you to connect with your local branch - which is where you will best find the esprit de corps, friendship and support - along with years and years of memories, recollections and laughs - that the Association engenders through its network. Naturally, the network of 'informal' branches and facebook groups continue, along with the branches that are more 'national' (eg the Band).

Your Annual General Meeting is fast approaching, 17th March, at the Victory Services Club in London. This is your opportunity to see and hear what your Association has been doing for the past twelve months, and to meet old friends and make new ones over afternoon tea. We'd love to see you - but do need your returned form so we can ensure sufficient catering.

For those Branches looking to nominate someone for a 'Mention in WRAC Despatches', your Branch Secretary will be in receipt of the current nomination form. We ask that you use this updated version, and then pass it onto your Area Chair for forwarding to the Association offices, from where it will go to the next meeting of your Council. As always, successful nominees will be included in the next edition of Lioness.

Looking forward - you will see that notification is included about a special Rededication Ceremony we are holding at the National Memorial Arboretum on Sunday 8th July in honour of all those ladies who served in the ATS. 2018 marks the 80th anniversary of the founding of the ATS, and the Ceremony will co-incide with the Arboretum's relocating of the ATS Lady statue into the WRAC Association plot. We will also be dedicating the 2018/2,

September, edition of Lioness to the ATS, so please send us your memories, stories, photos, etc so we can make it a bumper celebration issue.

We have also included more details about some of the things we are working on for 2019 - but if you have any ideas please do let us know. Also, let us know what your Branch and/or Area are planning so we can promote and publicise as much as possible.

We are very grateful to those of you who kindly make donations to the Association, and to those who have signed a Gift Aid declaration. As our regular readers will already be aware, if you are a UK taxpayer making a donation to the WRAC Association (whether regular or one-off) we ask you to complete a Gift Aid declaration, 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

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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.



AREA CHAIRMAN VACANCY East Midlands Area

After 12 years in post Dot Ryder has decided to stand down as Area Chairman for the East Midlands Area. Dot is looking to encourage someone to take over the role of visiting branches, co-ordinating any Mention in WRAC Dispatches, attending twice-yearly WRAC Association Council meetings, and generally supporting HQ, Branches and members. If you are keen to take this on please do contact Dot and/or Ali Brown and/or HQ office.

Colonel (Retired) Amanda Hassell WRAC Trustee



I joined East Midlands UOTC in 1987 whilst a student at Nottingham University. Thoroughly enjoying all the TA had to offer, I decided to try for a commission and attended WRAC TA course 4/89 where my Directing Staff were Capt JVH Burrows and SSgt GA Cross with Lt Col JCA Smith at the helm. This gave me a real taste for Sandhurst and Army life and after completing my degree and a spot of travelling I passed the Regular Commissions Board at Westbury gaining a Reg C pass into the WRAC.

I attended WSC 921 under the watchful eye of Capt Ali Forster-Knight (now Brown) and SSgt Sarah Hickson, commissioning into the AGC (SPS) in August 1992. My first tour as AAdjt was with 16 Signal Regiment in Krefeld Germany, with Capt Louise Callow as my RAO and Lt Col Sue Westlake kept a close eye on us as Female Focus in Rhine Area Germany. Hence my early years in the Army were very much influenced by these strong WRAC female role models. After a tour as Platoon Commander with the REME Apprentice College Arborfield and as RAO with 1 Cheshire in N Ireland, I then returned to Germany as SO3 G1 UKSC(G) in Rheindahlen where Lt Col Di Davies was Chief G1. Several staff jobs followed including an eight-month tour of Iraq on TELIC 9 (2006-7).

My first tour as an SO1 was in PS10(A) and I thoroughly enjoyed my time in MoD London. I was honoured to be selected to command the Training Support Unit in Worthy Down in 2010-12, following in the footsteps of another inspirational female role model - Nicky Murdoch – it was one of the high points of my career and I thoroughly embraced all the tradition and history that had built up in Worthy Down since the formation of the AGC in 1992, including hosting the 20th Anniversary celebrations. I then moved to Army HQ in Andover to serve in DSPS(A) until its break up under the Army Command Review in 2016. I finished my Army career in what many will remember as the old colonel

tech job, where I was integral to delivering the new Army Pension scheme and the new Pay system, working closely with PS10(A) and DBS (formerly SPVA).

I think it is so important to embrace military life in the widest sense and I certainly did that through sport - as a competitor, organiser, official and latterly as Chairman of several sports at Corps, Army and Inter Service level. It was my involvement in sport that provided the icing on the cake to my career.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my military career and have been particularly inspired by the many women that I have worked for, with and commanded over the last 30 years. Whilst the WRAC was succeeded by the AGC, the values that it stood for and the high standards that it demanded have continued throughout my service in the Army and have now spread far and wide through every cap badge and regiment in the British Army, making a real impact on the next generation of women starting their military careers.

As a trustee, I will hope to continue to celebrate the achievements of the past and the comradeship of the women who have served in the WRAC, but I will also work to encourage the ambitions and achievements of the next generation. So much has been achieved and yet there is still so much to do to further the cause of women in the Army as they strive to gain greater equality and be truly recognised for their ability, talent and sheer hard work. We have always had female ambassadors and role models, but they play an even greater role as we move forward to truly empower the next generation.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF.... Tanya-Jayne Park



When Penny asked me to write something about what I do during a typical working day I had to chuckle as there are no two days alike for me, so instead I thought I would let you know some of the main tasks that take up my time throughout the year.

First and foremost I'm the first point of contact for anyone who contacts the Association, and especially you, our members. One of the enduring pleasures of my life is speaking with our members and hearing their fascinating memories of their time serving either in the ATS or the WRAC. So it's me you would contact if you wished to apply to join the Association or as a member if you needed to change your details, for example if you'd recently moved house, or to let me know that you've not received the latest copy of Lioness (sooner rather than later please!) through to applying to attend any of the events that the Association is involved with.

Another large part of my role is processing any members' payments to the Association before passing them on to Julia our Finance Officer, these include subscription payments, memorabilia purchases and donations. Subscriptions particularly keep me busy from September through to January as this has traditionally been the time when they've become due, then from January through to March I'm helping the Association Secretary with preparations for either the Grand Reunion or the AGM. When I first started working for the Association in 2012, a week after starting I attended my first Grand Reunion at Bristol, a 'baptism by fire' you might say! These events are always very busy but enjoyable events for me, I love to put faces to the names of those I may have only spoken with on the phone or exchanged emails with.

From March onwards I'm then starting to deal with many of the other events that go on throughout the year including events organised by the Not Forgotten Association, Royal Hospital Chelsea, Armed Forces Day and others. Off course the most important of these events are the Remembrance events in November, because of increased security concerns over recent years I need to have names and details from those wishing to attend by the end of July, 4 months before they actually take place.

I'm also the technology guru in the office so I help to sort out any technical issues that arise, keep the database up to date, updating the website and our Facebook page or looking at ways to improve how we use technology to improve how we work.

My working day for the Association starts at 7am and finishes at 1pm, this then allows me to head home to my partner Dawn and our Jack Russell Heidi, I then spend some time each day working in my own businesses which are all technology based. Outside of work I love walking in the lovely countryside near us either the New Forest or the South Downs and then during the summer months I enjoy volunteering at music festivals and helping in their Accessible Camping areas.

Letters

Dear Lioness

I was wondering if you have any knowledge of the MOWE twins, Jean and Joyce Mowe.

They were at 12 Bn WRAC Richmond Park, Surrey (They used to say Jean would be a good Sgt Major!). I was there 1959 – 1962. My number was W/403621. Their numbers were similar. I travelled on the War Office Whitehall bus from the camp. Jean and Joyce travelled likewise.

Jean (a L/Cpl, like sister Joyce) used to play her guitar (eg "Michael row the boat ashore") sometimes on the coach, or someone would trigger a song (eg "Standing on the corner watching all the girls go by"). They came from 488 Henley Rd, Coventry, Warwickshire. Jean Mowe was born 1938 in Finchay? Jean and Joyce Mowe were in their late teens / early 20s when at Kingston.

They were small in stature; slightly stocky in build. Jean was more 'tom-boyish' than Joyce, who was, I think, more feminine (eg lipstick). They would now be 75+ years in age, if alive. It is possible their names have changed for marriage?

*Miss M E Marshall
Bickley, Nr Bromley, Kent*

[Editor – we received two letters/cards just before Christmas, from Chelsea in-pensions, with the following -]

*Dear Ali and All at WRAC HQ
June Lowes wrote to thank us for her Christmas present, and apologising again for not being at the lunch. She wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and healthy new year.*

Marjorie Cole wrote thanking us for the kind Christmas gifts, going on to say how wonderful it was to get everyone together. She also enjoyed chatting about their former army service days and recalling fellow colleagues they served with. She concluded by wishing everyone a very happy Christmas and New Year.

To the Editor, Lioness

Having served in Aden 63/64, I watched very closely the 'Last Post' on the BBC. It brought back many memories. We were the first WRAC Company sent to Aden. I was the hairdresser! Seriously, very aware of what was going on around us. In my profession there I met many, many interesting people but, alas, not kept in touch. Looking back, some of the incidents were very disturbing but security was always there for us. Nevertheless, I still have some very good memories of my time in Aden.

*Ursula Phillips (Mrs.)
nee W/411495 L/Cpl. Regnart*

AGM 2018. There are still some spaces available for this year's 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 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 **Tuesday 31st July 2018**. 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 31 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.

Please note that the RBL have changed the criteria for this Parade, along with reducing the number of tickets available. Participation is only open to Veterans (no carers, unless they also served) and you will need to be in possession of 2 forms of ID, one of which must be photo ID.

Thu 08 Nov 18 Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey
Sun 11 Nov 18 Cenotaph Parade – Ticket applications need to be made by letter via Tanya, or email only (office.manager@wracassociation.org.uk), no later than 01 July 2018.

Sun 11 Nov 18 Westminster Abbey Service - Ticket applications to be made **no later than 30 Sept. 2018** by email (office.manager@wracassociation.org.uk) or letter only. If demand exceeds supply a ballot will take place, as with all events.

Guildford – Places are available each year at the Service of Remembrance in Guildford (the 'mother' city of the WRAC Association). If you are unsuccessful with tickets for the London Cenotaph and/or would like to attend the Guildford ceremony please apply to the Association Office (office.manager@wracassociation.org.uk or letter only).

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 24th November 2018 at The Victory Services Club. For more details email wracofficersdc@gmail.com or visit the Facebook Closed Group 'WRAC Officers' Dining Club'.

HQ BRANCH MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION YOUR BRANCH NETWORK NEEDS YOU



FACT *Of the 2,850 members of the WRAC Association, just under 50%, 1,300, are listed as HQ Branch members. This means just 1,550 are members with/through a 'geographical branch'.*

The WRAC Association has a long standing network of Branches, divided into Areas. It is these branches that epitomise our esprit de Corps, and support network, for many years.

Membership of a Branch provides for many things including access to regular Branch meetings and social activities, participation in local events and many opportunities to meet up with the wider community of those who have served in the ATS and WRAC. Some event invitations received by HQ office are easiest handled by offering through the branch network.

In order to reflect their members better, some branches have become 'unofficial', and/or changed their meeting arrangements, and many now have active social media groups for the sharing of Service memories. There are many examples of old friendships being renewed, and new friendships being made. But some Branches are still struggling to attract new members and numbers are dwindling.

There may be a Branch near you – we have a network that covers the whole UK and some parts Europe. All of the Branches are listed in the Lioness along with contact details of the Secretaries. If there is no Branch near you then why not start one? This is very easy to do and we will provide any advice you may need.

We are hoping that all individual branches will get involved in some way in celebrating the 80th anniversary of the ATS's formation (2018) and the joint 70th and 100th anniversaries of the formation of the WRAC and the WRAC Association in 2019. So joining your local branch, or starting one, would be an ideal way for each Member to feel personally involved in the celebrations.

For many years our Association Branches have been the very essence of the Association. Please support them.

Ali Brown

EVENTS
FRIENDSHIP
ESPRIT
DE CORPS



FUN
SUPPORT
NEWS

WEBSITE UPDATES

Over the past few months we have been busy reviewing, and updating where appropriate, various forms, lists and information for use by Members, Branches and Areas. These include:

Membership Application Form – A slightly revised Form has been designed, a copy of which is included in this edition of Lioness. If you are aware of anyone wishing to join please encourage them to use this form.

Mention in WRAC Dispatches – A slightly revised Form has been designed for use by Branch Secretaries, which then need forwarding to your Area Chairman, for them to send onto Headquarters. The nominations will be taken to the next Council meeting and successful nominees will be honoured in the next edition of Lioness.

Events Tab, on website – hopefully this now makes more sense of who meets where, when etc. A revised form for submission of events has been sent out to Branches by Tanya – please use this form if at all possible, as it makes her task of inputting that information onto the website that much easier and quicker.

WRAC LIONESSES 6th FUNDRAISING EVENT

Event: Norwich 10k Run
Place: Norwich
Date: Sunday 5th August 2018
Time: 0900 (approx)

If you are interested in joining our team of WRAC LIONESSES please contact Wendy Hooton by email wendyhootonski@aol.com, on Facebook Wendy Hooton or through the WRAC Association HQ 0300 400 1992.

If you would like to sponsor us, you will find our fundraising page on the Virgin Money Giving website www.virginmoneygiving.com/team/wraclionesses6 We are raising funds for the WRAC Association, so any fundraising you can do would be amazing.

Wyn Carnegie has started off next year's fundraising by knitting 50 pairs of bed socks for me to sell. They were all sold at the WRAC Dinner Club raising £150! If you would prefer to send a cheque please contact me on my mobile 07775 505326.

You can find information about the event and details of the route at www.runnorwich.co.uk COME AND SUPPORT US if you're not a runner or walker. It's so encouraging to see a sea of WRAC green fleeces, t-shirts, banners etc en-route.

Thank you for your previous support ladies and gents.

Wendy Hooton

ATS COMMEMORATION SOLO WALK 2018



This will be the fifth annual 100-mile walk I have attempted for charity. To commemorate the 80 years since the formation of the ATS, and dedicated to those amazing ladies past and present, I will be walking my 100 miles in Norfolk in May 2018. I will be starting near Swaffenham, walking The Peddars Way to Hunstanton and then along the Norfolk

Coast Path to finish in Great Yarmouth. I have chosen this route because on 11th May 1943 the Whitfield House Hostel, where ATS were billeted, was bombed and 26 ATS girls died. I hope to finish my walk at the Burlington Palm Court Hotel (which was built on the bombed site) where a memorial plaque has been placed.

This year funds raised will be split 50:50 between the WRAC Association and the Cancer Charity at Worcester Breast Care Unit.

You can donate to my walk through Virgin Money Giving, by searching for me on the VMG site using my name "Margaret Davies" or by following the link <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/MargaretDaviesWRAC> Alternatively, you could contact me direct via my email address: 43margied1@gmail.com

If all else fails, you could pass your details through the WRAC Association and I will contact you.

*Thank you.
Marg Davies*

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.**

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION Kyrenia Branch No. 3651

Patron: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II
President: Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon GCD
CBE ADC

Vic President: Mr Sabri Abit Musinoğlu
Chairman: Major (Rtd) Brian Thomas BEM
Vice Chairman: Mr Leslie Keith Evans



The British Cyprus Memorial Book

Since members of WRAC served with distinction during the Cyprus Emergency 1955-59; the Summary Proposal, below, may be of interest & consideration by some of you. All contributions will be gratefully received & faithfully applied.

Thank you
Faithfully
Keith Lloyd

Background

The now defunct British Cyprus Memorial Trust arranged & financed the erection of the British Cyprus Memorial, located in the Old British Cemetery in Kyrenia (Girne) in the north part of Cyprus, being unveiled & consecrated on Remembrance Sunday 2009. The memorial consists of eight polished granite panels, and feature the names (& units) of three hundred & seventy-one (371) British Servicemen who lost their lives whilst on active service during the Cyprus Emergency April 1955 to April 1959.

Revised Proposal

Due to restrictions on space, local planning regulations, logistics & projected costs, a plan to add another panel was considered unfeasible. It is now proposed that a Memorial Book containing the names & units of ALL the British Servicemen (now established to be 402) who died in Cyprus during the Emergency April 1955 – December 1959, be produced. It will be produced to a high standard, & housed on permanent display in St Andrews Church in Kyrenia, North Cyprus.

Projected Costs and Funding

These are yet to be finalised; initial indications are in the region of £9K. Positive indications have been received that contributions to the costs of The Book will be forthcoming from those Royal Navy, Royal Marines, British Army & RAF Assns which lost people in Cyprus; arrangements have been made for donations to be made via www.GoFundMe.com

SERVICE AND/OR MEDAL RECORDS

We often get enquiries into HQ office about finding service and/or medal records, army pensions, and benevolence support. As our Benevolence pages explain, the WRAC Benevolence Fund is open to any lady who served in any part of the ATS or WRAC, even for just a day, before 1992, whether a WRAC Association Member or not. All requests for possible assistance should start by contacting The Royal British Legion and/or SSAFA, who will provide case workers to work alongside you. Below is some information on 'Veterans Gateway' and 'Veterans UK', which both provide very good, general information on various service records and support.

VETERANS' GATEWAY

The first point of contact for veterans seeking support

"We put veterans and their families in touch with the organisations best placed to help with the information, advice and support they need – from healthcare and housing to employability, finances, personal relationships and more".

Veterans' Gateway is made up of a consortium of organisations and Armed Forces charities, including The Royal British Legion, SSAFA – the Armed Forces charity, Poppyscotland, Combat Stress and Connect Assist (and ourselves, the WRAC Association).

"Our connection with additional key referral partners and information organisations – both within and outside the Armed Forces sector – means we can get you to the right organisation who can help".

Funded by The Armed Forces Covenant, this group has come together formally to deliver a service to help the Armed Forces community. So if you, or someone you know, is looking for help please point them in the direction of Veterans Gateway. They can be contacted by telephone (0808-802-1212) or email (via their website 'contact form'). For more information look at their website: <https://www.veteransgateway.org.uk/>

VETERANS UK

Another good source of information on a variety of issues and subjects relating to veterans is the Veterans UK website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk>). They can help with War Pensions, Service Records and Medals enquiries, among other things. So, if you, or someone you know, have any queries please do contact them.

Although we are the WRAC Association, we only hold records on our current Members, and this does not include past service records. Telephone: 0808-1914-218 (there is a different number if calling from overseas). Email: veterans-uk@mod.uk.

Information on the RBL and SSAFA will appear in future Lioness editions.

DMWS

Meeting the specific needs of female soldiers and veterans of all ages

The St John and Red Cross Defence Medical Welfare Service (DMWS) has been providing a person-centred medical welfare service to the Armed Forces Community since 1943. In that time they have supported over 1,000,000 patients and their families, ensuring that no one goes through the worry of injury and illness alone. Their highly trained welfare officers provide practical and emotional support to those receiving medical treatment.

The benefits of providing additional welfare support to the Armed Forces community has been recognised, and the DMWS service is available in hospitals and recovery centres across the UK, Germany and Cyprus for the serving community, and across the UK for veterans and their families. DMWS aims to improve mental wellbeing, encourage a positive approach to treatment and recovery, and promote independence, achieving better outcomes for those we support.

Female veterans, and women who are currently serving, say they feel neglected, especially when it comes to support of female related health issues. Support for serving and ex-forces women who are diagnosed with cancer and other long-term or life-threatening health conditions, can be particularly complex. In 2017 Forward Assist also identified that a much smaller proportion of female veterans access mental health support than their male counterparts - mental health support is a key area for DMWS welfare officers, all of whom gain a Level 3 Diploma in Welfare Studies and are qualified in Mental Health First Aid.

For more information on how DMWS might be able to help you please visit www.dmws.org.uk or call their Helpline on 0800-999-3697. They are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Christine Pilbeam
Marketing & PR Manager, DMWS

IDENTIFICATION OF UNKNOWN PROVOST AT ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA

Thank you to everyone who tried to help but in the end Charmaine Coleman (ex-WRAC (Provost)), one of our in-pensioners, recognised Corporal Margaret Robinson (nee Tozer). Charmaine is still in contact with Margaret.

"To all involved, thanks for your help; now got to talk to Charmaine and perhaps get Margaret back here for the day sometime! Opportunity for a piece for the Lioness in the making methinks.

Regards
John Rochester BA(Hons) MA(Hist) MIIRSM, MInstLM
Heritage Manager, Royal Hospital Chelsea

SPECIAL 'ATS' EDITION OF LIONESS 2018/2

To fully recognise the contribution of all those who served in the ATS, Lioness 2018/2 will be dedicated to the ATS. We are asking now for as many ATS reminiscences, both written and photographic, as possible to be sent to the editor over the next few months. We really want to be able to fill the Lioness with a living record of the contribution made by the ATS.



80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FORMATION OF THE AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL SERVICE (ATS)



Keep the date

On 8th July 2018 a Service of Rededication will be held at the National Memorial Arboretum at Arlewas to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the formation of the ATS. The Service will take place in the WRAC Association plot and will serve to rededicate the ATS Statue following its relocation. The Service will be held by our Padre, Sue Wing.

This will be an opportunity for members of the Association to come together to celebrate all those who served in the ATS, to remember all of their contributions, and to give thanks to these early pioneers.

While at present we are still finalising exact details (like time, although it is likely to be an early afternoon event with tea to follow), further details of the event will be published as soon as possible. However, in the meantime, please use the Reservation Form, in the centre pages, to indicate if you wish to attend so that we can progress arrangements accordingly.

PLANNING FOR OUR CENTENARY A YEAR OF CELEBRATION IN 2019

WATCH THIS SPACE

The year 2019 marks the Centenary of the WRAC Association, with the formation of the Charitable Trust in 1919, and also the 70th Anniversary of the formation of the WRAC. This is going to be the only Centenary we celebrate and thus is deserving of a year of celebrations involving as many members as we can, in as many Branches as possible along with at least two national events. The Centenary Year is a real opportunity to spread our message far and wide and I want to give you, our members, an insight into the planning already underway.

We are looking at planning a series of events in different locations throughout the year with the main event being the Grand Reunion in Southampton over the weekend of 22nd to 24th March 2019. The other events might look something like this:

February **A launch event to start our Centenary celebrations.**

March **Grand Reunion**

June **Unveiling of a commemorative piece**

August/September **Ceremony at the NMA –
new inscription on our plinth**

November **Remembrance in London and Guildford**

Our hope would be that these centrally organised events will be complemented by Area and Branch events and activities. We have so much history to celebrate and it would be fantastic if every member could have the opportunity to participate wherever they might live.

The Association has already approached our Patron, and this will be finalised further in 2018. We have also started making contact with the Army, and thinking about branding and memorabilia for the Centenary.

Clearly this is very early days and there is still much to plan. As we move forward we will do our best to communicate the details to you all.

If you, as a Branch and/or Area, are planning something special for this once-in-a-lifetime year of celebrations, please do let HQ office know as soon as possible so we can include it in the Events Listings.

Ali Brown



EVENTS DIARY

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	DETAILS
2018			
JANUARY	EFC Meeting		Members of EFC committee only
FEBRUARY	Council meeting	Union Jack Club, London	Council members (inc Area Chairs)
	Trustees meeting		Trustees only
MARCH 17 TH	A.G.M.	Victory Services Club, London	Open to all Members Please BOOK IN ADVANCE
JUNE 30 TH	National Armed Forces Day	Llandudno, Wales	
	EFC Meeting		Members of EFC committee only
JULY 8 TH	A.T.S. Commemoration Day	A.T.S. Commemoration Day	Unveiling and Re-dedication of ATS Lady, into the WRAC plot 80th anniversary Commemoration of ATS formation
JULY 17 TH	Council meeting	Union Jack Club, London	Council members (inc Area Chairs)
17 TH	Trustees meeting		Trustees only
NOVEMBER 8 TH	Remembrance: Field of Remembrance	Westminster Abbey	
9 TH	Festival of Remembrance	On TV, from Royal Albert Hall	
10 TH	Remembrance Parade	Cenotaph, Whitehall	
10 TH	Act of Remembrance	Guildford, Surrey	
2019			
FEBRUARY 1 ST	Evensong Attendance	Guildford Cathedral	Service to commemorate 70th anniversary of WRAC formation, and to launch WRAC Association Centenary celebrations
MARCH 22 ND - 24 TH	Grand Reunion (including AGM)	Southampton	
JUNE	National Armed Forces Day		
JULY 7 TH	WRAC Association Commemoration Day	National Memorial Arboretum	
NOVEMBER 7 TH	Remembrance: Field of Remembrance	Westminster Abbey	
9 TH	Lord Mayor's Show	City of London	
9 TH	Festival of Remembrance	On TV, from Royal Albert Hall	
10 TH	Remembrance Parade		Cenotaph, Whitehall
10 TH	Act of Remembrance	Guildford, Surrey	
2020			
MARCH	A.G.M		Including end of Centenary Celebrations

A CENTURY OF PROGRESSION CELEBRATION WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION Ali Brown

On 12th October 2017 the Army and Navy Club hosted a Reception to mark 100 years of women serving in the Army in non-nursing roles. The Reception was in the presence of our Patron HM The Queen, and we were fortunate enough to have 37 members of the WRAC Association present including veterans from the ATS and the WRAC and a serving officer from the AGC (SPS). The Reception was also held to mark the Centenary of the WRNS, and veterans of the "senior" service were present along with serving members of the RN. The Patron of the WRNS, HRH The Princess Royal accompanied Her Majesty.



Under Army Council Instruction 1069 of July 1917 the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAACs) was formed and the first party of 14 WAACs arrived in France on 31 March 1917. Eventually 9,000 women were to serve there. On 9 April 1918, largely as a result of their sterling conduct during the German March offensive of that year, the service was renamed Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps (QMAAC), with the Queen becoming Commander-in-Chief. Once the QMAAC were disbanded they were quickly followed by the formation of the ATS on the outbreak of World War 2. In 1949 the ATS was disbanded and the Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC) was established. During the next 43 years WRAC servicewomen were involved in emergencies, security threats and incidents involving the British Army worldwide. The WRAC was disbanded in 1992, and 2016 was the milestone year with women being able to serve in all roles including front line combat with the Royal Armoured Corps and Infantry.

Her Majesty was welcomed into the Library by the Vice President of the WRAC Association, Colonel (retired) Ali Brown and then went on to meet four groups of Army veterans. The first three of these saw service from the 1950s to the 1990s and beyond and had built up some 500 years of service. Her Majesty chatted to each and every veteran and some smiles were raised with the telling of anecdotes from training days. Her Majesty was very interested in the different roles that women have filled over the decades represented.

The next stage of the Reception was a move into the Wellington Room to see a photographic display charting the progression of

of women serving in the Army from 1917 to the current day. The images were selected to reflect the changing roles and the widening of opportunities within the Army over the last 100 years. Her Majesty met more veterans alongside the display including three members of the ATS in which Her Majesty also served during World War 2. The ATS ladies present were Barbara Danter who worked in the Army Post Office, Joan de Val who served in Anti Aircraft (Ack Ack) Batterys and finally, Betty Webb MBE who was stationed at Bletchley Park from 1940 to 1945 and then went on to serve at the Pentagon in Washington.



Joan de Vall, HM The Queen & Rowena Griffiths

This marked the end of the Reception as Her Majesty and HRH The Princess Royal moved through to the Pall Mall Room to meet club members. A truly enjoyable evening and thank you so much to all at the Army and Navy Club for making it happen.

Website: www.wracassociation.org.uk
Supporting Women Who Served

CELEBRATING THE CENTENARY OF THE FORMATION OF THE WOMEN'S ROYAL NAVAL SERVICE AND THE WOMEN'S ARMY AUXILIARY CORPS Club Report

The Patron of the Army & Navy Club, HM The Queen, and HRH The Princess Royal attended a Reception at the Army & Navy Club which celebrated the Centenary of the formation of the Women's Royal Naval Service and the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps.

The Queen was greeted by the Club Chairman, Colonel Ian Paterson OBE TD, and Senior Trustee of the Army & Navy Club, Major General Michael Shellard CBE, on arrival.



In the Library, the Queen and the Princess Royal were met by Commander Rosie Wilson, Chairman of the WRNS100 Project Group and Colonel Alison K Brown, Vice-President of the WRAC Association. The Queen and Princess Anne were then introduced to several serving officers, as well as veterans who joined the ATS in 1941 and worked at Bletchley Park until VE Day, during the 45-minute engagement.

In the Wellington Room, the Queen viewed a photographic display which showed the progression of women serving in the Army from 1917 to the current day. The images have been chosen to reflect the changing roles and the widening of opportunities for women over the last 100 years. Her Majesty met three members of the ATS, in which Her Majesty also served during World War 2 - Barbara Danter, who worked in the Army Post Office, Joan de Val who served in Anti-Aircraft (Ack Ack) Batterys, and finally, Betty Webb MBE who was stationed at Bletchley Park from 1940 to 1945 and then went on to serve at the Pentagon in Washington. A total of 37 Members of the WRAC Association were present.

THE QUEEN & PRINCESS ROYAL CELEBRATE THE CENTENARY OF THE WOMEN'S ROYAL NAVAL SERVICE AND THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY ARMY CORPS.

From 'Royal UK' website

The reception celebrated 100 years since women were recruited for service in the Army and Navy in a non-nursing capacity for the first time.



The Queen is the Patron of the Women's Royal Auxiliary Corps (WRAC) Association, which incorporates the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC) and the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS). The WAAC later became the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps, when The Queen's Grandmother, Queen Mary, became its Patron.

The Princess Royal has a long connection with the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS); she is Patron of the WRNS Benevolent Trust, the Association of Wrens and the WRNS100 Project. HRH is also the Admiral and Chief Commandant for Women in the Royal Navy.

At the reception, The Queen and The Princess Royal met many members of the Association's and heard about their experiences. The Queen joined the ATS 1945, aged 18, and became the first female member of The Royal Family to join the Armed Services as a full-time active member.



HM The Queen with WRAC Assoc. members

The WRNS and WRAC Association also put on a display that charted the progression of women serving in the Army from 1917 to the present day.

The WAAC and WRNS were originally established in 1917 in reaction to the deteriorating man power situation, as so many men had been killed or injured. By the end of WWI, the WRNS had approximately 5,000 ratings and nearly 450 officers. Jobs included sail-making, driving, signalling & coding.



Rowena Griffiths showing HM The Queen the new display stand

The Queen became the first female member of the Royal Family to join the Armed Services as a full-time active member when she became a member of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) in 1945. The ATS is now incorporated by the WRAC Association, of which she is patron.

In the Nelson Room, the display of the Women's Royal Naval Service showed the formation and history of the WRNS and the role of women in the Royal Navy today. It also celebrated the valuable work still done by the WRNS Benevolent Trust and the Association of Wrens. A cross section of veterans from all generations attended. Among them was Joan Berfield, a wartime WREN coder and a sprightly 95 years of age. Serving members of the Royal Navy, included Chief Air Engineering Officer Sandra Parkinson, were also in attendance.

Princess Anne, The Princess Royal, is Patron and supporter of the WRNS Benevolent Trust, Patron of the Association of Wrens and is also the Patron of the WRNS100 Project. She is Admiral and Chief Commandant for Women in the Royal Navy.

The Queen and Princess Anne signed the Club's visitor's book in the Front Hall before departing.

THE QUEEN MET A BLETCHLEY PARK VETERAN AS SHE HELPED MARK THE CENTENARY OF THE WOMEN'S ROYAL NAVAL SERVICE (WRNS) AND THE WOMEN'S ARMY AUXILIARY CORPS

Nicola Harley , The Telegraph
12 October 2017

The visit to the Army and Navy Club was the Queen's first public event in London since her Balmoral summer break.

It comes a day after the announcement she will not lay a wreath at the Cenotaph this year as part of the annual Remembrance Sunday ceremony.

Accompanied by the Princess Royal, the Queen was given an insight into the work of the WRNS100 project, which is celebrating the formation and history of the organisation and recognising the role of women in the Royal Navy today.



Barbara Danter, HM The Queen & Rowena Griffiths

The Queen will watch the Remembrance Sunday ceremony on November 12 in Whitehall from the balcony of the Foreign Office and the Prince of Wales will take her place in laying the floral tribute on behalf of the nation.

Mrs Webb said: "It is saddening but I think it is wise because all that standing for that length of time - it would frighten me to death. Just knowing that she will be there will be important. "We were both in the ATS at the same time. The Queen was younger than me - she was serving as a mechanic when I was serving in Bletchley Park." After meeting the Queen, Mrs Webb said: "It was absolutely wonderful. She was so sweet. She is such a gracious lady."

The Queen asked a small group of ATS veterans - all aged between 90 and 94 - where they served. Joan De Vall, 92, of Leicestershire, was in the ATS from 1943 until 1946. After speaking to the Queen, Mrs De Vall said: "She (the Queen) said I was looking very well and I said 'so are you ma'am'." She added that being part of the ATS had made her feel "that every soldier to me is (like) my brother."

WRNS100 in 2017 is celebrating the valuable work still done by the WRNS Benevolent Trust and the Association of Wrens.

There are about 116 national and regional events planned, culminating in a service at Portsmouth Cathedral in November, during which a commemorative stone marking the formation of the WRNS and all the women of the Naval services will be dedicated.



HM The Queen & HRH The Princess Royal

The Queen, who is patron of the WRAC Association, met senior naval and army members alongside veterans who joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) in 1941 and worked at Bletchley Park until VE Day.

Betty Webb, 94, of Birmingham, was with the ATS from 1941 until 1946. She worked at Bletchley Park registering the messages which came in and said she felt "very privileged" after meeting the Queen.



Ali Brown with HRH The Princess Royal

WOMEN AT WAR 100 – BBC Documentaries

Hopefully many of you will have seen the week-long series of documentaries the BBC made and showed in the run up to Remembrance Sunday. Quite a lot of our members were interviewed for the programme, including Ali Brown, Dame Kelly Holmes (see below) and some ATS ladies. The programmes were a compilation of personal stories of Service from World War 2 to the current day from the ATS, WRAC, WRNS and WRAF.

INTERVIEW DAME KELLY HOLMES Penny Muxworthy



On a chilly 20th December, I drove from Salisbury to Kent to meet and interview Dame Kelly Holmes – ex-WRAC, successful Olympian and inspirational & motivational businesswoman. Dame Kelly was one of the WRAC ladies interviewed for the BBC documentary, but I wanted to find out what the documentary process was like etc.

Kelly grew up in the same village where she now owns a successful café (Café 1809) that is but a stone's throw from her childhood home. As she mentioned in the documentary, she joined the army to get away from home, and escape the 'small-town' atmosphere. She wanted to be proud of her chosen career – which she certainly was/is. She still feels that the benefits (learning new skills, meeting others, educational, career and other opportunities, etc) of joining the military are vast. She certainly looks back on her army time with fondness and gratitude – sometimes wishing she could have served longer (perhaps even still serve?).

In making the documentary, Kelly was keen to speak to both male and female recruits – the intake she met included recruits varying in age from 17 to 26. The opportunities that now exist for women (being able to have children once joined up; or to have a career with child-care possibilities) are so much more than they used to be. Every person on the course was there on 'merit' and deserved to be there. The army rules and regulations did not bother either gender.

Kelly had served at the PT school in Guildford, and wanted to get involved again – which the documentary allowed. However, the WRAC remain a very important part of her life – although there have been many changes. She had the opportunity of participating in big international tournaments, both within the army and inter-service. The 1992 amalgamation of the WRAC into the main army did split women up. While she thinks mixed gender groups are good, there is still a place for single-gender groups as well. Pirbright still has an all-female platoon.



***Dame Kelly Holmes
and Betty Gash
Beaconsfield 1993***

The documentary filming was carried out over three days, just a few weeks before 'airing', in October. Filming venues started at the PT school, and included her café, Tonbridge Castle and Bovington. Pirbright and Bovington were also happy with the outcome – although she did not do the assault course!

She loved the tanks at Bovington. At present the Tank Regiment has one female officer transferring, and one in training, although none are actually serving yet. Kelly can see some of the logistical issues that will need to be overcome as personnel can be totally inside a tank for up to 72 hours – eg the motion sickness, and the heat when shut down. She has the utmost respect for those that serve in this regiment, but can see that it will take some time to adapt to having females in tanks (sleeping, eating, toileting, etc). She thinks that in some roles and regiments the practicalities of having total integration will take a lot of thought, and possibility some adaptations – although she is all for the principle. If you are good enough – go for it!

As part of the documentary Kelly met Pippa, the first female Royal Marine to complete the same training as the men – proving that if you are good enough, go for it. She also met Charlotte, the first female to kill on active combat duty; and the totally amazing and inspirational Joan de Vall, standing so tall and sprightly and with a great story to tell. On listening to Joan, Kelly felt that during the war/ATS-years women had more opportunities (whether by design or necessity) than they did between the war and the modern day. On talking with all of them she came away even more convinced 'that if you are good enough, go for it!'

Dame Kelly was happy with the resulting programmes, and is keen to continue to retain and strengthen 'useful' links and connections with the current army. She is particularly looking to focus on and highlight just a few charities that particularly work on military transitions, young people and on mental health issues. She wants to be voice for the 'unheard' charities.

Hopefully the Association will continue to enjoy close links with Kelly, and see her at some of the special events we have planned over the next 18 months.

WOMEN 100 PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE DINNER Saturday 9th December 2017

For many of us Army Veterans we do not often get the chance to attend a 'Black Tie' event, and with miniature medals, so it was nice to be given the opportunity on such a special occasion.

I was overawed by the whole event, from first setting foot back at the Royal Military Academy after 20 years, (where I had spent over 3 years working as a Chief Clerk at the Academy HQ and many miles pounding the streets/roads within the perimeter (and occasionally Barossa officer training area) as an Army athlete), to meeting some wonderful females during the evening from the past, present and future Army.

The reception in the Indian Army Memorial Room was a relaxing atmosphere - to listen to the Military Wives Choir, Middle Wallop, look at various exhibits, and chat to people from old and meet some new veterans. It was interesting to hear that a former RSM became a bus driver! The staff ensured our glasses were never empty – plenty of prosecco flowing!

Move to the Old College Dining room, passing through corridors and admiring the paintings, then on entrance to hear the music of The Band of the Scots Guards – a 5 piece band playing at the far end of the Dining Room, a must photograph for the album. The Welcome, Address, Grace and Vignettes followed each course read by Past, Present and future females. The dinner was delicious, accompanied by Chile Sauvignon Blanc or red wine, and followed by coffee and mints.



W100 Past, Present & Future dinner

What a great privilege for me to be seated on a table with a cross section of interesting ladies. From 2 veterans (and one Theresa Canney-Campbell that I had not seen in person for 31 years and we had arranged to meet and attend the function together), a Commonwealth-serving mother and daughter, Chelsea Pensioner, potential officer, a Reserve Officer/ member of University Officer Training Corps (UOTC) based in Scotland, an Officer Cadet from Northern Ireland who was being commissioned the following week and the New College Commander at the Royal Military Academy.



L-R: Theresa Canney Campbell, Officer Cadet Sandhurst, Reserve Officer, Betty Gash

It was surreal talking to the New College Commander - Lieutenant Colonel Lucy Giles, whose first words to me was that she knew me from Army Athletics of 1994/1995 along with Dame Kelly Holmes! I was so surprised that we had so much in common: both being runners and represented the Army at Athletics in 1994, long army service (28 years for me), married with 2 children and son attended a preparatory school as a boarder, both served at South Cerney and RMA with operational tours to Bosnia and Iraq. The main topic was the role of females in the British Army with 5 of us engaging in conversations on fitness, equality, officer training, combatant roles, male counterparts, females serving with children and much more. Not forgetting, I was so fascinated by the New College Commander's 'handbag hook' for the table as I had never seen one before – what a clever piece of kit!



Betty Gash (ex WO2) and Lt Col Lucy Giles

It was great to hear the positivity, enthusiasm, commitment and pride of Lieutenant Colonel Lucy Giles and all the potential officers I spoke to. By attending this event and meeting some aspiring females I now believe that the wider female role in the army is achievable and all that serve will have an even greater future!

The evening went too quickly so I didn't get the chance to speak to as many people as I would have liked. The driver had arrived at 11.45 pm and it was time for me and Theresa to depart.

We bid farewell to some of the ladies at the Johnson's Bar and made our way through the Old College. Driving through the Royal Military Academy and passing the Academy HQ brought back fond memories of my posting at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst 1993 to 1997!

Betty Gash, Grimsby Branch



W100 Past, Present & Future dinner

On Saturday 9th December 2017 Virginia Hopson, Christine Barnwell and myself (Helen Morse) from Greater London Branch attended the reception to celebrate 100 years of Women in the Service. On arrival at the Academy we were met, and moved into the reception room for pre-dinner drinks and a welcome by Lt. Gen. James Bashall CBE. The Middle Wallop Military Wives Choir and the band of the Scots Guards entertained all of us during this period. This gave us time look around the Academy and see the various items within the Museum. On returning to the reception room I was introduced to the General as one of the oldest members and having served in the ATS. He asked where I had served and in which branch of the services I was attached to; I informed the General I was attached to Royal Signals and served in Singapore 1947, Hong Kong 1952, Egypt and Cyprus 1955/56. We were then called to enter the dining room and sit at our respective tables.

The ADDRESS: Col. Anna Kimber Late RLC

GRACE: Revd Amy Walters and Katie Watkins

Vignettes : To (Follow each course)

Past Read by: W.R.A.C. Association

Present read by: 'Courage and Sacrifice' Lt.Col. Melissa Emmett MBE & W.O.2 Leslie Bell

Future: 'To the next 100 years.'

THE TOASTS Loyal Toast - The Queen

During dinner we were entertained by the Scots Guards and at intervals during this period various members related their stories. The evening came to a close with Coffee and Mints. It was certainly a wonderful experience. Goodbyes took some time to draw the whole evening to a close.

Helen Morse



Dinner table at Sandhurst



Helen Morse & Lt Gen James Bashall CBE

ATS 80TH ANNIVERSARY – 2018

Yes, 2018 marks the 80th anniversary of the founding of the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

The WRAC Association, of which the ATS is an important part, will be marking this with a special Lioness edition dedicated to the ATS and those who served in it.

We would love to publish your stories, recollections and photos (if you have them) – please send them to the WRAC Association head office in Winchester by email or post. If you require photos posted back please let us know and we will sort accordingly.

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE THURSDAY 9TH NOVEMBER 2017 Ali Brown

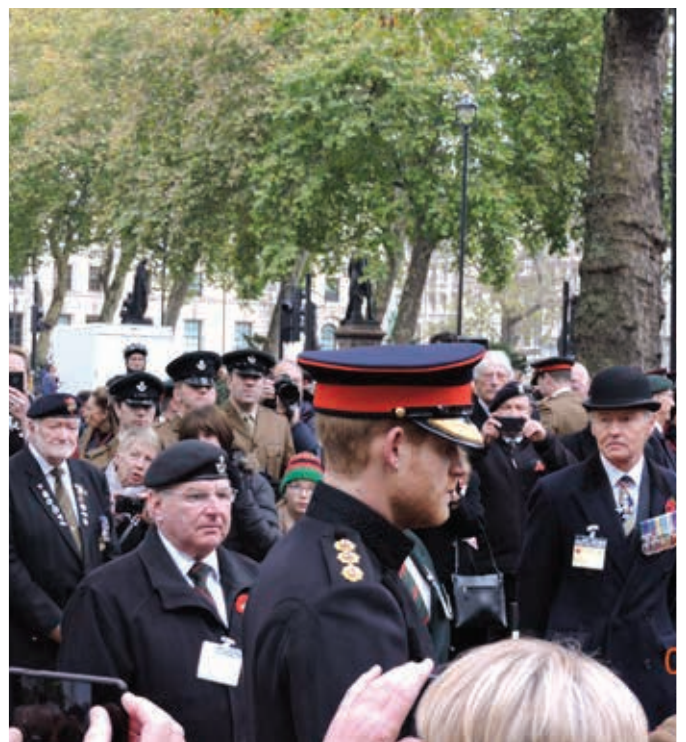


By WRAC Assoc. plot

On a chilly morning on 9th November 2017, eight members of the WRAC Association met at the Association plot in the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey to join hundreds of other regimental representatives in a service of remembrance. Our numbers included two members who had seen service in the ATS and a good turnout from Greater London Branch. The morning started with a short service and then on the hour of 11 the Field fell silent.

The following walkabout was conducted by HRH Prince Harry who, as always, stopped and spoke to as many people as possible. This included our ATS ladies who were able to chat about the forthcoming Festival of Remembrance and the fact that the WRAC Association was to be represented there.

The WRAC Association always receives a small allocation of tickets for this event. If you are interested in attending on **8th November 2018** please do get in touch with Association HQ.



THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE 'WOMEN 100' Saturday 11th November 2017 Barbara Davies

On Saturday 11 November 2017 fifteen members of the WRAC Association were lucky enough to be selected to represent the Association at the Royal Festival of Remembrance in the Royal Albert Hall alongside that of our National Standard Bearer Sharon Baker-Joyce. Sharon had already been invited to parade the WRAC Association Standard by the Royal British Legion to mark the Centenary of the formation of the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps in July 1917. The Festival of Remembrance has become an event of international significance, with thousands joining in to BBC One and Radio 2 to pay their respects. A concert has been held in the arena since 1923, but the Festival as we know it began in 1927, and this year celebrates its 90th anniversary.

How did they get selected is the question on everyone's lips? Following a last-minute request from the BBC requesting 15 WRAC veterans to perform in "Women 100", the contingent was required to form up alongside other veterans and regular service women from the Royal Navy, Army and RAF and women in uniform to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Women at War. This meant that the contingent would have to come from women who already had accommodation booked and would be free to attend rehearsals on the Friday and Saturday. Fortunately, volunteers came from ladies already booked for the Cenotaph Parade on the Sunday.

Participants reported on the Friday for security clearance and passes, not the easiest of processes when 1,400 personnel were also booking in! Armed with our green security passes we reported to WO1 'Vern' Stokes the Garrison Sergeant Major, London District whose job was to size off 100 women in the confines of the Berry Brothers Bar, no mean feat. A quick briefing was given, and the mixed contingents were divided into two, 50 to enter the arena from staircase H and 50 to enter from staircase M in single file. WO Donna Trenholme RAF was responsible for supervising staircase M. She managed us all in professional style with patience and a smile.

The performance of the 100th Anniversary of Women at War was centred around Melanie C singing "You Raise Me Up", the Torch of Remembrance being carried into the arena by Squadron Leader Gemma Lonsdale, accompanied by Lieutenant Colonel Lucy Giles, the first female College Commander at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. The Festival Citation was read by former Cypher Officer, 97 year old, Joan Picton. The effect of descending down the steps to Mel C singing was magical, even after five rehearsals; getting it right for the BBC and, more importantly, getting it right for the GSM, was hard work; the FitBits certainly recorded more than 10,000 steps. Our very own ATS representative Joan De Vall was given a personal escort for the two days so that she did not have to keep going up and down the numerous steps around the arena, a lovely gesture by the BBC.

Final rehearsals on the first day finished at 1630 hours, or should we say 'WRAP' in BBC terminology? This then allowed some of the ladies to make a quick visit to the Westminster Abbey Field of Remembrance to plant their crosses.

Saturday morning was an early Reveille for most with full dress rehearsals starting at 0830 sharp from Activity Room 2 at Imperial College, sited next door to the Royal Albert Hall, and the dressing room for all the women veterans and standard bearers. The BBC allotted a number of runners to accompany the ladies around the site making sure everyone was at the right place at the right time. The WRAC contingent was fortunate, and quick-thinking, in ensuring we were all allocated to entrance M, and were accompanied throughout by the very patient and lovely young Sasha from the BBC. Three cheers for Sasha!



**Barbard Davies & Wendy Hootton
during rehearsal break**

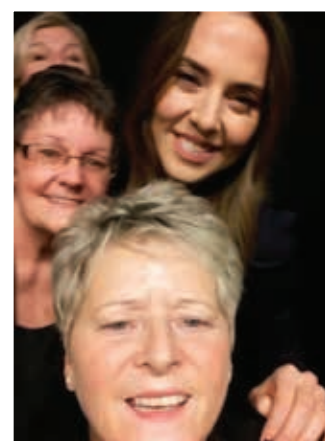


**"Feeding the 5,000"
in the Royal Albert Hall**



At 0925 hours precisely the first dress rehearsal started in the auditorium. The descent down the steps was good but the exit from the arena was not quite right so another repeat was required with our very own Melanie Howell given the responsible job of starting the exit on the queue of "97 year old Joan Picton". Perfect. All off before the RAF Queen's Colour Squadron arrived. No mobile phones were officially allowed but Wendy Hooton, none other, managed to hide one away and we are grateful for the addition of some unauthorised photographs! It was then back to the dressing room in Imperial College to keep ourselves amused before the Matinee Performance. Tea and coffee was a little bit slow but packed lunches turned up and everyone managed to keep themselves occupied until roll call at 1330 hours. At this stage everybody was getting butterflies at the thought of a live audience, but everything went well, and everyone was buzzing after arrival back at the dressing room. The disappointing part was that we were unable to view the complete performance. We were, however, promised seats following the evening performance.

The highlight of the afternoon was the guest appearance of Melanie C following her request to meet all the ladies. She was singing an accompaniment for the arrival of 'Women 100'. A wonderful thought on her behalf. She was completely at ease with all the ladies and patiently posed for photographs and to sign programmes. This, indeed, was a special moment and a welcome lift to everyone's morale at just the right time. Immediately afterwards Sasha escorted everyone to an evening meal provided down in the catering area of the Royal Albert Hall, another 10,000 steps recorded. It was absolutely amazing that a hot meal was being provided for 1,400 performers, and a decent meal at that.





Before we knew it, it was time for the Final Performance in the presence of HM The Queen and a full capacity audience of over 5,000. Trying to keep 100 ladies quiet in the corridors of the Royal Albert Hall was a bit tricky, but eventually everyone hushed, and with nerves tingling, the last descent down the steps was made. After that everyone could eventually relax in allocated seats and enjoy watching the remainder of the performance. A mad dash was made at the end by a number of our ladies to pick up a bunch of poppy petals as a keep sake of this special occasion, (1 million poppy petals fall from the ceiling of the Royal Albert Hall during the two-minute silence).





It really was a special occasion and a real high point for the WRAC Association and the celebrations marking 100 years of women serving in the Army. Many new friends were made and there was real camaraderie between the Royal Navy, WRAC, RAF, and other female representatives.

Just a few of the comments from various social media:

'Very moving'; 'A wonderful group of ladies, so proud to know you all'; 'really, really exciting'; 'so emotional'; 'An amazing weekend'; 'wonderful memories of a fabulous weekend'; 'It was great to meet you all. Typical banter and laughs from all services. Will stay with me for always'; 'Awww, wish we could do it all again, just loved everything and meeting new people'; 'One of the proudest moments of my life; to stand with so many serving and veteran service women was a huge honour. It was emotionally overwhelming'; 'A privilege to be one of the 100'; 'It was the most mind blowing weekend'; 'Met such a wonderful group of women from all services. I am such a proud woman'; 'It was a proud day for us all and a wonderful choice of song as we entered the arena'; 'I was so proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with you amazing veterans and our young service women of today. You raised me up, to hear Mel C's voice as we walked down those steps made me stand 6' tall even though I'm 4'10". Such an honour to meet you all'.

And lastly a message from a male Navy Chief Photographer 'Saturday was amazing and you know what...I did have tears and I'm not ashamed to admit it. You all showed so much pride in your commitment to the service of your country. As we get older it suddenly means so much more to us'.

That just about sums it all up.

CENOTAPH SUNDAY 12TH NOVEMBER 2017 Ali Brown

Early on a very cold morning on 12th November 2017, the move towards Horseguards began. From 0900 onwards 100 members of the WRAC Association started to converge on the area marked B. As the numbers gathered the excitement started to build. This was even more so given that we had been placed at the front of Column B in recognition of the fact that 2017 marked 100 years of women in the Army. We started to form up and I was thrilled to see that we had 5 members of the ATS with us who, as always, took their rightful place at the front of our contingent. At 1015 we moved through the arch onto Whitehall and we kept on moving forwards until we found ourselves directly down from the Cenotaph with a full view of the wreath laying. As ever, the crowds clapped and cheered our arrival and we settled to wait for the start of the Service.







At 1100, bang on, the chimes of Big Ben, who had come out of refurbishment for the occasion, rang out and the Service began. We watched the members of the Royal Family lay their wreaths followed by the politicians and representatives of the Commonwealth. This was followed by the hymns and prayers. We watched the column to our right move off and knew that we would be next. Then it was our turn, and the contingent was moving swiftly and smartly down Whitehall, led by Lt Col Rowena Griffiths MBE, past the Cenotaph and the Memorial to the Women who served in World War 2. Wreaths were laid for the WRAC Association and also for the Women's Land Army and the Women's Timber Corps.



The crowds were amazing all along the route, cheering and clapping and, in no time at all, we did an eyes right to the Saluting Dias on which stood HRH Prince Edward, and halted back on Horseguards. The whole event was just brilliant and, as seen on the BBC later, the WRAC Association contingent was one of the smartest on parade that day.

This is a fabulous event that is open to any member of the Association. It is just perfect to have so many ATS still with us and long may this continue. The WRAC Association always receives a limited allocation of tickets for this event. If you are interested in attending on 11th November 2018 please do get in touch with Association HQ (the earlier the better as we are sure this will be a very popular one to attend, with it coinciding with the 100th anniversary of the end of World War One, and being on Armistice Day itself).

GUILDFORD

We are very grateful to Audrey Smith and Rowena Patrick for once again representing the WRAC Association at Guildford City's Remembrance events.

Of course, Guildford is the Association's 'home city', having been afforded Freedom of the City some years ago; and the Cathedral is home to many of the laid-up Standards and the Book of Remembrance. It would be lovely to remember this Honour bestowed upon the Association, and to see more ladies attend Guildford's Act of Remembrance. With ticket allocations for the London Cenotaph event being constantly under review, and always over-subscribed, why not continue to make a weekend of it but pay your respects in Guildford instead. It is a beautiful city, with lots of 'retail therapy' options, and surrounded by lovely countryside and wonderful places to visit. Please contact the Association office to register your interest in attending this event later this year – Sunday 11th November.

PASSCHENDAELE

Diane Lawrence
Weymouth & Portland branch



Joan Ford and Diane Lawrence

Joan Ford (ex-WRAC RSM) and Diane Lawrence (ex-WRAC TA) were honoured to be invited by the 'Not Forgotten Association' to join the Passchendaele Centenary Commemoration Tour in July/August, where we visited various cemeteries in and around Ypres.

At the first cemetery, Llyssenhoek, Joan and I were asked to stand either side of the grave of a nursing sister, Nellie Spindler, and to place a cross on behalf of the WRAC. She was the only female to be buried in this cemetery.

The trip included visits to museums where they had set up video films showing the horror of the dead and wounded, and the medical staff who tried to help.

Whilst visiting the Flanders Field Museum we bumped into our Prime Minister, Mrs May, and had a few minutes conversation with her explaining we were part of the 'Not Forgotten Association' tour for ex-service personnel. That evening we made our way to the Menin Gate for the Last Post.

The tour was ended at the Oxford Road War Cemetery where we had a private Service of Remembrance and laid a wreath from the 'Not Forgotten Association'.

THE WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION UNKNOWN WARRIOR COMMEMORATION 10TH NOVEMBER 2017 Ann Colclough

During the beginning of November this year, a number of comments were made on the WRAC Association and related pages on Facebook, concerning the Service held annually in memory of the soldier commonly known as "The Unknown Soldier".

Although I had heard of "The Unknown Soldier", I knew little more than the basic facts. The information given on Face Book and using search engines interested me, especially when I heard that the service happened at Victoria Station. I was due to travel on the Gatwick Express to Victoria on the very day of the service, so I decided to go.

A number of other ex WRAC members indicated an interest in attending, including two ladies I had served with at the Office Cadet School of Instruction in Hindhead, in the 1960's. I am in regular contact with both Pat Williams, and Lesley Wallace (Pat is on the left, I am in the middle and Lesley is on the right, shown below) and we have met up several times during the last few years.



I wasn't sure if their arrangements for the day included the Service, so I was delighted to see them at Victoria Station in good time for the service, although it was very cold!

We really didn't know what to expect, there were very few people around when we got to the area between Platforms 8 and 9 at the station, but we read the plaque on the iron railings with interest, and the details of the service handed out by volunteers. They recorded the fact that "The body of the Unknown Warrior, sealed in a casket, was brought to Platform 8 at Victoria Station on 10th November 1920 at 20.32, an overnight vigil was maintained by servicemen".

As time moved on, many people arrived for the service, they included many ex Service personnel, Serving personnel, and representatives from various organisations. It was estimated that approximately 100 people were there to remember "The Unknown Soldier".

The format of the evening was Assembly, Parade Assembly, Narration and Prayer, Last Post and One Minute Silence, followed by Reveille and the presentation of Wreaths. By sheer coincidence the service finished at 2031, just one minute before the coffin arrived at Platform 8 in 1920, the silence was maintained for that minute.

I am so glad to have been able to attend this service to pay my respects, and grateful for the company of two other ex soldiers (and friends), Lesley and Pat.

The following day I attended the service at Westminster Abbey with another ex WRAC friend, Shirley Taper. We were able to see the "Unknown Soldier's" plaque in the floor surrounded by many beautiful poppies, and we then looked at the many poppies "planted" by many Regiments and Corps out in the garden. Again, the day was bitterly cold, but bright and sunny, and I was delighted to have been able to attend both services with friends.

OXFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Oxfordshire and area ladies all met for the Remembrance Parade on Sunday 12th November in Bicester. For the laying of Wreaths Mary Wright did us proud; then after the service we mustered for parade. I had asked the parade marshal earlier if the ladies could lead it as it was 100 years of women serving; he politely told me that he was aware of this and as he had 350 people marching... [he stopped there], I took it to mean he didn't have time to keep an eye on us so I would organize the ladies - so I did! We went to the front where the men veterans were and said "I had spoken to the parade marshal and we could go to the front", which they gladly agreed to; one even said "It is the girls year". So we lined up just behind the Legion Standard and lead the parade. I am sorry to say I could not join them but am so proud of them. We finished by having lunch at our usual haunt at the Littlebury.





LAND ARMY MEMORIAL SCOTLAND

Mhairi Irving



On a very cold Friday morning in November 2017, whilst on a weekend trip away to Nairn, I decided that a small detour was needed to visit the Women's Land Army Memorial which was opened in 2012. It is in a great position overlooking the Moray Firth. I had seen pictures of the memorial, but wanted to see it in

person. It was definitely off the beaten track. If you're ever in the area, it's well worth a visit, but I would probably go back on a less blustery cold day. I have just started to get feeling back into my fingers.

I found out that my cousin – Wilhemina Paterson – Minnie to her friends, was one of those ladies; she actually worked on a farm in Star, Markinch until she retired, so farming stayed with her. I wish I had taken the opportunity to find out more about her days in the Land Army, but unfortunately she passed away in 2005. We spent many great days visiting her and helping her bring in the cows and hoping there were calves that needed bottle feeding. She also used to keep pigs, as you can imagine the piglets were really cute, but unfortunately my dad wouldn't let us bring one home! She won many prizes for her baking and was a regular at the Royal Highland Show, Edinburgh.

Satnav: AB56 5EQ at Clochan, nr Fochabers, Moray
womenofscotland.org.uk/memorials/memorial-work-womens-land-army-scotland

A.T.S RESEARCH

Debbie Amphlett

Whilst doing some family history research on members of the A.T.S. on the Commonwealth War Grave website, I managed to compile a list of 969 names of A.T.S. that had been killed by enemy action or died in service between 1st October 1939 and 30th December 1947. From this list I noticed two dates that stood out, namely the 11th May 1943 and the 4th October 1945. After some further research I discovered the following information.

On the morning of the 11th May 1943 women of the A.T.S. had been exercising, and just returned to their quarters, at Whitfield House No 8 North Drive Great Yarmouth when 18 FW-190 fighter bombers flew low over Great Yarmouth. Their quarters received a direct hit and 26 A.T.S. were killed. There is a memorial plaque on the Burlington Palm Court Hotel that was built on the site.

The second incident happened on the 4th October 1945 when a Lancaster bomber (PA278 "PM-P" of 103 Sqn., RAF) was being used in "Operation Dodge", bringing back to the United Kingdom military personnel from Italy and the Middle East. The aircraft departed RAF Connington at 00:30 on the 4th of October 1945, with a crew of six, carrying 19 female passengers, 2 of them nurses and the others members of the Women's Auxiliary Territorial Service. All were travelling back to Italy and the Middle East after being on leave in the UK.

PA278 and an accompanying Lancaster crossed the French coast west of Marseille, on course for Naples. Not long after, a radio message was sent to the other plane from PA278 indicating that the bomber had engine trouble and was turning back to Marseille. Nothing further was heard, but at 04:40 an explosion was seen by the crew of the other Lancaster. The aircraft was reported missing, crashed into the Mediterranean Sea, 30 miles N.N. West of Cape Corse, Corsica. The bodies of the 19 passengers and 6 crew were never found. The names of the 17 ATS personnel are listed on the Brookwood Memorial in Surrey.

I have a full list of name, ranks, number and other details from the Commonwealth War Grave Commission of both incidents if you would like them. I would be interested to hear from anyone who has further information or memories of this time. Please contact me via my email wrac.cardiff.branch@gmail.com.

NATIONAL CARIBBEAN MONUMENT

Pauline Milnes

Two years ago, whilst on a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum, it was brought to my attention that there were no monuments or memorials in recognition of sacrifices and contributions made over centuries by men and women of the Caribbean. Following this revelation I and several other ex-service personnel formed "The National Caribbean Monument Charity" (TNCMC). Our aim is to install a befitting monument to those men and women in the National Memorial Arboretum. More information can be found on our website www.tnccmc.org



During WWII many women from the Caribbean joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS). Some carried out their service at home whilst others travelled to Britain serving in various roles.

From the 1960's women of Caribbean origin began joining the WRAC in larger numbers, and still continue to serve in today's modern army.

I served 1970 -1974

WRAC Assoc. STANDARD BEARER'S NEWS Sharon Baker-Joyce National Standard Bearer

2017 what a year for The Association and all ladies who wore a uniform in the last 100 years.

In July I attended the NMA twice; once for the AGC 25 years of formation, bearing in mind that many of the WRAC were re-cap badged AGC, and again for the RBL Women at War 100 years Ceremony.

In October, as the National Standard Bearer, I was invited to a reception commemorating "The Hundred Years of Women in Uniform" attended by the Queen and the Princess Royal. All attendees were spoken to and I even had the chance to "promote" the Association to Her Majesty.

For the first time ever, our Standard had pride of place at the Albert Hall Festival of Remembrance. Being in London, it also gave me the opportunity to march with our ladies at the Cenotaph, another very proud moment.

At the Birmingham International Tattoo in November we were part of "The Colour Party" which led the parade of Standards at the opening and closing ceremony.

2018 and 2019 will be busy for us and I will hopefully be given the opportunity to represent you all with our Standard. For me it is always such an honour. It has been disappointing that we have not had the coverage due by the press. I also promote the Association by giving talks to several local WI's and groups calling myself "The Lady in Green".



ATS WWII Jamaica



ATS WWII Trinidad



ATS girls from the West Indies pictured in London in 1944.



Articles Of Interest

ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA CHRISTMAS GRANTS VISIT

5th December 2017

Penny Muxworthy

As some of you will know, we have 14 ATS and WRAC in-pensioners at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. We have a lot of contact with this wonderful band of ladies and for me one of the special occasions, along with it being my first, was the annual Christmas Grants visit. Myself, Audrey Smith and Rowena Patrick met up in the bar (obviously!) on 7th December and joined the half-dozen who were able to be with us for the morning and lunch.

Our in-pensioners include Maria Andrews, Pauline Franklin, Dorothy Hughes, Mary Johnston and Joyce Schulte (all ATS); and Marjorie Cole, June Lowe, Joan McLoughlin, Audrey Merton, Monica Parrott, Pamela Richards, Jean Simmons and Charmain (Bimbo) Coleman. In the week before our visit the original 13 were joined by a new resident, Mary Guidera. Not everyone was able to join us due to health and other reasons, but we trust they all enjoyed the gifts we gave them.

It was great to meet these ladies, hear their stories and catch up with their latest news. They were also kind enough to show me some of the sights of the Hospital, particularly the Chapel. Everywhere was looking at its very best, as always, but particularly in its Christmas best. Sadly, for reasons that this non-super-hightech person cannot understand, none of the photos I took came out ... oh, what a shame, I will just have to take them up on their offer and visit again!

We wish you all a very happy and peaceful 2018, and I look forward to seeing you on some other occasion(s).



NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM Kirsty Parsons



The National Army Museum, Chelsea, London

The National Army Museum, based in Chelsea in London, seeks to tell the story of the British Army, the personal experiences of the soldiers who have served in it and to connect the British public and its Army by demonstrating how the role of the Army and its actions are still relevant today.

It re-opened in March 2017 after a three-year re-development project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). During this time five permanent galleries and a temporary exhibition space were created – Battle, Society, Army, Soldier, Insight, and the first temporary exhibition is War Paint: brushes with conflict.



View of the atrium and Society Gallery inside the National Army Museum



QARANC cape on display in the Army Gallery

For 2017, the Museum's overall thematic was 'Women at War' to celebrate the 100th anniversary of women being legally permitted to serve in the British Army. The Museum held many events throughout the year to engage with the subject, including a conference entitled Women and the Army: a hundred years of progress? It also took an exhibition out to Duke of York Square in Chelsea and to Sandhurst Heritage Day to ask the public their opinions about women becoming eligible to serve in combat roles for the first time in the British Army's history.

The National Army Museum holds the WRAC Association archive and the entire collection is available to view. If your branch would like to visit the Museum you can come along and conduct a self-guided visit or you can get in touch and arrange something with our curators. We can arrange a curator led tour, a talk, a workshop or anything in between.



*Queen Elizabeth's ATS uniform on display
in the Army Gallery*



*Members of the public answering the question
"Should women fight on the front line?"*

If your branch would like to arrange a visit to the Museum please contact Kirsty Parsons at kparsons@nam.ac.uk or on 0207 881 2459. If you would like to arrange to see items from the WRAC Association archive on an individual basis, please contact our Templer Study Centre at tsc@nam.ac.uk.

POEM Val Odell

"You've joined the What?"

*Many, many years ago,
I joined the WRAC.
I phoned my Dad to let him know, here's what he
said to me.*

*"Congratulations, daughter dear,
I'm sure you will go far,
But don't you think you really should,
Have bought a motor car?"
I had to let the old man know
I'd joined the WRAC
To Save my previous country,
Not joined the R.A.C!
He said "Ah well, now I know
The country is in good hands.
But I think I'll get a passport,
And move to foreign lands."*

*Now more than 50 years have passed,
I've re-joined my faithful friends.
And we'll try to keep old England safe,
From all barbaric fiends.
We meet to have a meal and chat,
And put things in perspective.
We are just a little group,
But then we are selective;
Only ladies who have reached the age,
Yet are not past their shelf life,
And know how to enjoy themselves,
Can join us for the bright life.*

CONTACT QUERY

Catherine Buchanan of Bury St Edmunds has asked if "anybody knows how Janet Lawson is" (WRAC Scotland member). Catherine received a letter saying that she was not well, but has not heard anything since. If anyone has any new of Janet please contact the office and we will pass the information on.

LIONESS 2018 / 2

Copy deadline 31st July 2018.

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

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 2018 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 Keyring

£2.00

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



WRAC Association Brooch

£5.00



WRAC Pin Badge

£4.00



ATS Pin Badge

£4.00



WRAC Association Tea Towel

£7.00

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



WRAC Association Wristband

£2.00

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



WRAC Association Notepad

£10.00

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



WRAC Association Paperweight

£15.00

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



WRAC Association Ballpoint Pen

£5.00

High quality WRAC Association branded ballpoint pen in dark green



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

ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund - Making A Difference

The ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund awards one-off and recurring financial grants to purchase specific goods, services or facilities for eligible servicewomen, or their dependents, who are in need. The charity also provides annual maintenance grants to former servicewomen who are elderly, alone, living on low incomes and in poor health, and makes contributions to top-up care home fees.

During the financial year 1 October 2016 – 30 September 2017 the ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund received 292 applications for assistance from former ATS and WRAC servicewomen and awarded just over £192,294 in one-off grants and care home fee top-ups and a further £50,775 in annual maintenance grants. The oldest beneficiary was 96 and the youngest 46 and applications were received from as far afield as the Republic of Ireland, USA, Canada and Zimbabwe.

In the first 3 months of this financial year, October 2017 – December 2017 inclusive, your Benevolent Fund has considered 84 applications and awarded £46,768 on one-off grants and nursing home fee top-ups and a further £18,684 in annual maintenance grants. In the most recent Major Grants Committee Meeting applications there was a 62-year age gap between the oldest applicant, who is 105 and 9 months, and youngest who is 43 years and 9 months!

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?

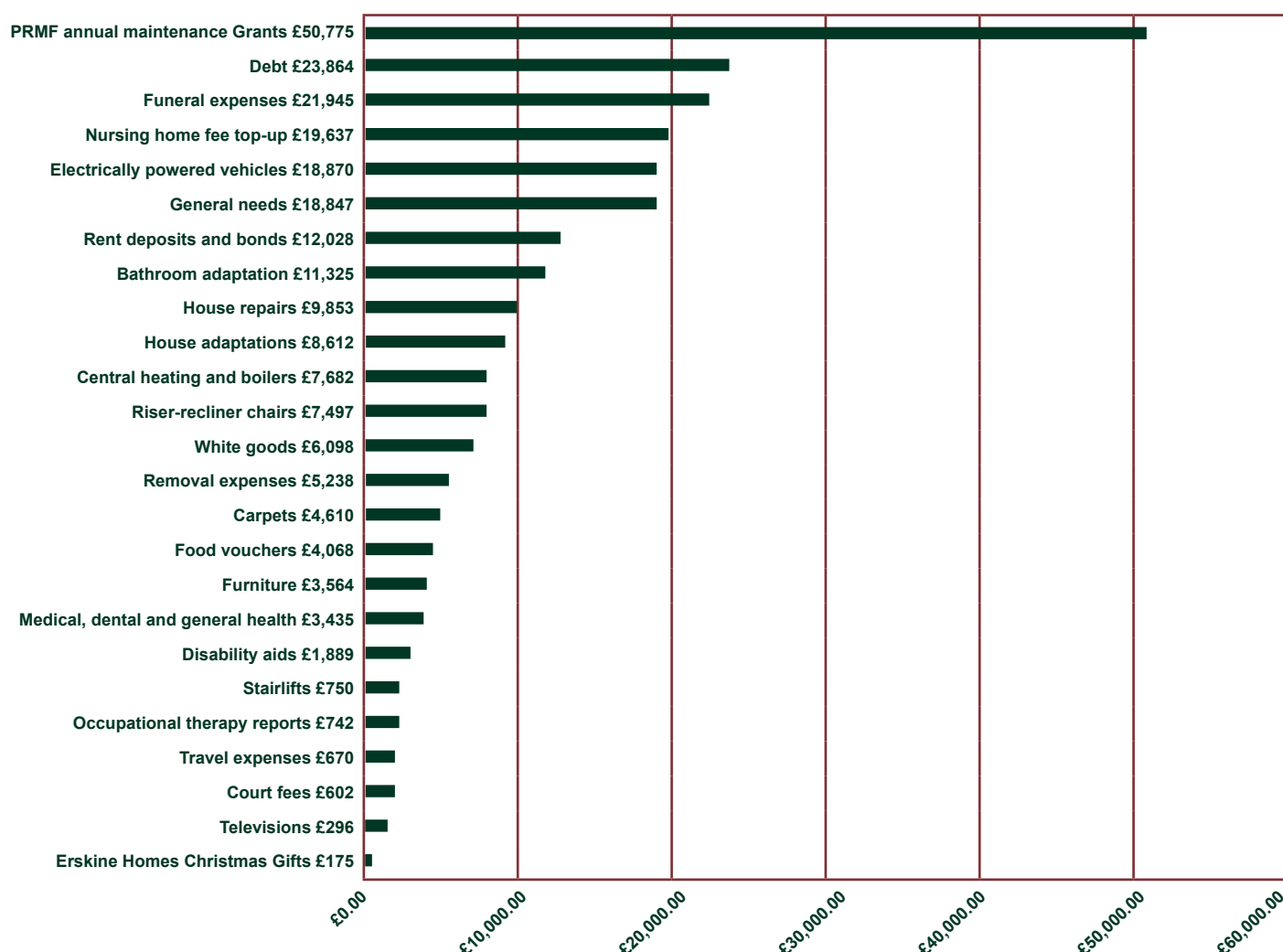
Yes, you must be in need of financial help.

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 am writing to thank you for the £36 per week that you have awarded to me. I'd like you to know how much this award means to me. Although I receive housing benefit it doesn't cover the cost of my rent and I have to use my pension to make up the shortfall. Pension credit allows me to pay my bills. With what little is left over and now this award I can buy food and don't have to visit the food bank. So, thank you again. Life is easier and brighter'. £36 per week PRMF annual maintenance payment.

ATS & WRAC Association Benevolent Fund Expenditure Financial Year 2016-2017



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 top-ups	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.

"On behalf of my husband and myself we would like to thank you one and all for the generous donations which enabled us to have our stair-lift fitted. I cannot tell you how relieved we were not to have to climb the stairs at last as we find it very difficult as we are both disabled". £750 stair-lift.

How often do the grants committee meetings meet?

There are 2 types of grants committee meetings:

- Minor grants committee meetings are held daily as required and can award immediate grants up to £1,000
- Major grants committee meetings (MGCM) are held at least once a month and can award grants up to the annual maximum of £3,000. The MGCMs also consider applications for care home fee top-up fees and 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.

"I felt I had to write to you about the magnificent amount you and others awarded to raise the £10,000 needed for a room to be built on to the house for my sister-in-law. You have not only made her life more bearable but also the rest of her family...I know she would be cross if she knew I had written to you about the tough life she has but I thought it was important for you to know what a wonderful gift you have given to make her life that bit easier. My sincere and heartfelt thanks to you all for all you have done". £3,000 for a ground-floor extension and wet-room.



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

ABERDEEN Mhairi Irving

The ladies of the Aberdeen branch will have met up on the 4th December 2017 for our Christmas Lunch in Ma Cameron's, Aberdeen – hopefully I will be able to share some news on that in the next edition.

Over the last few months our numbers have dwindled slightly, this is due to ailing health of some of our members, we now have seven ladies that meet regularly on the first Monday of the month at 11am in the Snug Bar, Ma Cameron's, Little Belmont Street, Aberdeen.

We would like to wish Pat Truscott a long and happy retirement from ScotRail and we look forward to seeing her at our monthly meetings now she is a lady of leisure.

BIRMINGHAM Babs Anderson

Well, here we are again. Happy as can be. Where does all the time go? Birmingham Branch are still careering through life at a rate of knots and enjoying every minute. Hardly a week goes by when we are not doing something together.

First of all, I am sad to tell you that we have had to say goodbye to one of our ATS sisters, Pat Oakes, at the age of 98. She served during WW2 as a driver and saw service in Italy. She became an advisor in her later years to Annie Murray, the author when she was writing *Soldier Girl*. Pat was an action girl and never saw her age as a barrier to doing exciting things. When she was in her late 80s she did a wing walk and at 90 she was abseiling down a tall building in Birmingham City Centre with her grandson. There was no stopping her there though, at 92 years of age she threw herself from an aeroplane to free fall to ground totally unscathed. She was a very active member of the Branch until very recent times and we will miss our little dare devil.

A couple of years ago it became necessary for us to move our Branch meetings from the Irish Centre back to the Britannia Hotel. We were sad to leave but it now appears that we weren't the only group to be driven out by the bad manners of the manager. Anyway, to cut a long story short, we discovered that the old manager had left and has been replaced. We visited the new manager and she was really pleased when we said we would like to return to holding our meetings there with effect from February. The Irish Centre is on a busy main road with several bus routes running past the door. It is an easy walk from Birmingham Moor Street station and only a little further from Birmingham New Street station. There is a large car park to the rear of the building and is also easily accessed by Ring and Ride for our less mobile members. As with most things in life, there is a small problem on the horizon - The Irish Centre is to be demolished and rebuilt as an hotel with function rooms. The work is due to start next October and may take as long as a year. The manager hopes that they will have secured alternative, temporary accommodation to cover the build period but it isn't arranged yet. We are confident that we can find places to meet if it doesn't work out. Watch this space for further details.

I am happy to report that all members of our Branch Bionic Platoon are doing well and recovering from their various replacement joint operations.

It has been a very busy few months since we last reported to you. A few of us joined Hereford Branch for their annual picnic in August and our members had a lovely time but managed to avoid all the best raffle prizes. We hope to attend again next year and be better at winning.

We have continued to hold our quarterly Pizza Nights and have a great time, laughing and chatting. We meet up on the second Wednesday of March, June, September and December. We gather at the Britannia Hotel at 1830hrs before trotting across the road to Pizza Hut. Everyone is very welcome to join us.



At Royal Hospital Chelsea



Benita Davies, Chris Fretwell, Pat Neale & Rosie Garrison with Royal Hospital permanent resident



In-pensioner Pam entertaining Birmingham Branch at RHC



Chris Fretwell, Benita Davis & Heather Gaughran at National Army Museum



Marilyn Preece, Melanie C, Sue Dolphin and Morag Hardie at Festival of Remembrance



Dayout in London

At our Branch AGM in October we galloped through the usual items and ended the meeting with the usual suspects being elected to the committee, effectively meaning no changes. However, since the meeting we have agreed to a rather lovely rearrangement - we decided at a Branch meeting that we would promote Betty Webb to be our Branch President. She very graciously accepted the post and declared it to be a great honour. Our previous President, Gwen Finney (a founder member of the Branch) had passed on and we felt that we needed a figurehead of great standing. We believe that we had the perfect person already waiting to jump in and be amazing. Obviously, this left a vacancy of Chairman and after much thought it was agreed that we asked Sue Dolphin to take on the role. She was happy to become our new Branch Chairman and is looking forward to getting stuck in.

At the beginning of October 20 members of Brum Branch rocked up at the Copthorne Hotel in Merry Hill, Dudley for the WRAC Dinner Club. It was the usual joyous occasion, and everyone had a great time. It's the perfect opportunity to interact with other members from all over the world. Our Branch enjoys a good party atmosphere.

A good number of us marched past the Cenotaph in November. We were very pleased to be a part of the squad as we proudly kept in step all the way round the route. We always enjoy the weekend in London, sharing in the camaraderie and generally enjoying each other's company and that of our fellow WRAC Association friends. The evening before saw three of our Branch members, Sue Dolphin, Marilyn Preece and Morag Hardie involved in the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall. We were all very proud to see them on the TV and then to see the photos with Mel C of Spice Girls fame.



Birmingham Branch on Horseguards Parade Square after marching past the Cenotaph

By the time you read this we will have been celebrating Christmas. Birmingham Branch Christmas Jumper Bash is bound to be a great success because everyone gets into the spirit of the event and we don't mind if we look a little bit silly. On 13 December we will celebrate further with our Pizza Night and then again on 14 December as we join the Not Forgotten Association for Christmas lunch. There will be several post-Christmas events for us to attend too, so we will be full of Christmas cheer by the end of January.

Best wishes to all our friends, far and wide. Be happy, be safe and remember, you can count on Brum Branch, we have an abacus!

BRISTOL **Jackie Naysmith MBE**

It's been a mixed few months for our Branch, looking back on my last report there were plans to be made and fulfilled. How easy things can change.

In August one of our ATS members, Mrs Noreen Harvey, passed away. Noreen will be, and is, sadly missed having always attended Branch meetings. Noreen was in the ATS from 1942-1945; we were always told of her time when she was at a dance in Swansea and danced with Richard Burton. Her funeral was in September, when the Secretary read our prayer at the service. Many of our members attended.

At our Branch meeting in September, details and preparation for our AGM in October were given out. Unfortunately, the AGM

was put back until later in month due to the Secretary not being well. The Branch meeting was held later in month, but it was an informal one due to the Secretary still not being able to attend. Our Chairman, Pat Carter, informed members that she was moving home and would be leaving the Area, so would not be able to stand for Chairman at AGM. Our loss is another Area's gain.

The Secretary attended the November meeting and informed members that the AGM was now delayed until March due to ongoing illness. Members were supportive of the Secretary and have assisted the Branch in forthcoming events.

Representation for Remembrance Sunday - Mrs Jean James laid the wreath in Bristol, and Pat Carter and Angela Forsyth represented us and laid a wreath at Weston Super Mare. Unfortunately, in Bristol at the time of wreath laying there was a heavy hailstone shower which was not so good, whilst Weston was dry. For the first time, the Secretary was not able to attend any Remembrance event, but well done to our ladies who were privileged to represent the Association at the Albert Hall and on Cenotaph Parade, they did our Association proud.

In December we had our usual Bring-and-Buy and Xmas nibbles, again members rallied and had decided amongst themselves who would bring the food. It was a good meeting.

Our lunch is in February, and we are honouring our ATS members. An invite is being sent to our Vice President Col (Retd) A K Brown, also invites to our Area have been sent via our Area Chairman, Mrs Sharon Bingham.

I look forward to our Association AGM in March at the Victory Services Club, when we hope to meet up with friends and 'catch up'.

May I take this opportunity to wish our Trustees, Members of Council and all our Association Members a Healthy Happy New Year.

BURY

Kathleen Kirtley & Susan Feeney

We at Bury Branch have been quiet during the summer months but this month we have made up for it. 1st Photo our night out girls at their Christmas do. 2nd/3rd Photo Branch Christmas meal. 4th photo 4 of us were invited to another Christmas party by the Not Forgotten Association. After all these meals before Christmas and then afternoon tea in February I think we will all have to have a few exercise classes in March. Hope everybody had a enjoyable Christmas and hope to see loads of you during 2018



Night out at Christmas 'do'



Branch Christmas Meal



Bury branch at Not Forgotten Assoc. Christmas meal

CARDIFF

Debbie Amphlett

Firstly, I must send best wishes to all of those Cardiff branch members who have been unable to attend our monthly get togethers due to illness and other issues. I would like to also thank all members who have attended the meetings, as some have a quite a distance to travel which is especially hard on these dark wet nights.

Since the last report that took us up to July 17, it has been very quiet on the events front, however in September we celebrated our 2nd anniversary as a branch. In October a number of branch members attended the WRAC Dinner Club and in November some travelled to London to the Parade at the Cenotaph and attended the Royal Albert Hall to the Festival of Remembrance. November saw a number of new members join the branch and two were able to join us for our meeting. We look forward to meeting the other new members in the New Year.

Hopefully I will have more news for the next edition as we have a few events and trips planned for the Spring and Summer.

The Cardiff branch meetings (informal chat and drinks) are held on the second Wednesday of each month and are attended by between 6 and 10 members. 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 group.

WOMEN'S ROYAL ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018

LAST CALL TO BOOK for:

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.

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)

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.

Please use Reply Form, on reverse, or email reply to: office.manager@wracassociation.org.uk.

Please ensure you tell us both about attending the AGM and afternoon tea.

.....

ATS 80TH COMMEMORATIONS



A Service of Commemoration for the ATS, and to Rededicate the ATS Statue into the WRAC Association Plot will take place on **Sunday 8th July 2018** at the **National Memorial Arboretum**, Alrewas, Staffordshire.

DRAFT programme: 14.00 Service of Commemoration & Rededication
 15.00 Afternoon Tea

Exact start time and programme will be confirmed.

Please use Reply Form, on reverse, to indicate your wish to attend this event. Replies can be sent by post to: Unit 39, Basepoint, 1 Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, SO23 0LD, or by email to: office.manager@wracassociation.org.uk. Replies required by Friday 15th June 2018.

BOOKING FORM for the AGM, on 17th March 2018

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:

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

BOOKING FORM for ATS COMMEMORATION/STATUE REDEDICATION 8th July 2018

I wish to attend the ATS Commemoration / Statue Rededication Service, and afternoon tea on Sunday 8th July 2018 at the National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire:

Surname: Christian Name (known as):

Email:

Tel No:

Address:

.....
Post Code:

Dietary Requirements:

Return to: WRAC Association, Unit 39, Basepoint, 1 Winnall Valley Road, Winchester, SO23 0LD
by **15th June 2018**, or email to office.manager@wracassociation.org.uk

MEMORIES

We want, and need, your memories and stories from when you served!

As part of our celebrations and commemorations for the ATS 80th, WRAC 70th and WRAC Association 100th, we are looking to promote the Association, and the Benevolence Fund. The best way of doing this is to tell people about you and your friends – when you served, where you trained and served, what parts of the Army you were attached to, what you did (and got up to). Were you the ‘first’ or ‘last’ to do something, be posted somewhere, etc. What skills, friendships, etc. did you get out of the ATS and WRAC? Did those skills come in useful when you left the Army? Were you one of the last WRAC, transferring in 1992 to another Regiment/Corps, and cap-badge? Has the Benevolence Fund assisted you, or a relative or friend, in any way – in what way, and how has that helped?

To you, and your service friends, what you did in your time in the Army may have just been “doing my job”, “going to work” – but to many others, you did something different and unusual. [Editor – just today I heard a couple of ladies say they never went on exercise in their service time]. Even today, the number of women in the Army is far less than the number of men – so that alone makes you different and ‘special’.

We need your stories, like this, received from Mrs Martha Watson, now of Fife:

“In 1942 I joined the ATS. Then from Inverness Barracks to Oswestry, then Anglesey in Wales, then for a while at Wolverhampton. In 1943 to HMS Ganges, opposite Harwich, as a Predictor Op.

The Navy doctor said I far too thin and gave me two pints of milk every day (never made any difference – I have been the same weight all my days!).

Then one day, we girls were told we were no longer called ‘gunners’. We were surprised and annoyed. We were told that Mr Churchill did not want any daughters being a Gunner. Years later I was told I did not exist; we were never at the Ganges. We all lost our hearing and had no Army Pension. My eyes are going as well (so please excuse my writing).

Near the end of the war we were sent to Feltham, to office work. I wanted to go driving, so was moved to Hounslow; still in an office; a massive office, really a hanger. The male officer, who always had the smell of drink (?!), said I wasn’t the type to be a driver. He said “Drivers were common and coarse”, so I just said “you are talking about Princess Elizabeth” – no more was said and I got on small trucks, and I found the girls to be super; nothing like what that officer said.

I could talk all day – so I will now stop. God Bless you and Yours.”

Mrs Martha Watson

On the insert enclosed in this edition you will find a version of the ‘Satisfied Soldier’ form that some of you may be familiar with.

We have called it “Wonderful Women” and hope it will help you to pass on your stories, to us and the rest of the nation. We have also included a ‘pre-paid’ envelope so you returning the form to us will cost you nothing. A copy of this form is also on our website, should you prefer to do it ‘electronically’.

We will hold all stories in the WRAC Association HQ office. We will publish some in forthcoming Lioness magazines; but we hope you may also be willing to let us share your stories with various local and national press and media – and perhaps be happy for someone to interview you about your story. We understand some may not wish to do this, so have included an appropriate ‘tick box’ on the form.



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]

CHELMSFORD

Gina Shadrack



Bletchley was interesting as it was where they broke the Enigma Code. Blenheim Palace was fantastic, there is so much to see everyone was shattered by the end of the day.



The Dinner Club came next in October, this year only Joy Griffiths and Pat Sanders went from the Chester Branch and Jan Gillison and Lynne Cooke from the Wirral Branch. Everyone really enjoyed themselves meeting up with old friends and of course the Saturday night meal and entertainment was of the usual high standard. We are looking forward to next year.

November saw our members attend the Remembrance Parade, the attendance is getting bigger each year although the veterans are getting fewer which is a shame. We also attended the Royal Signals dinner in November, we always get invited I think it is because we do the raffle.

Finally, we ended the year with our Christmas Lunch. Unfortunately a few of our ladies got snowed in, but the rest of us enjoyed the lovely food and everyone went home with at least one raffle prize. Sheila Brown won the quiz which, for the first time, went without a hitch.

Well that was our second half of the year. We have had some great trips out with the Wirral Branch, especially the monthly meals. Andrea Jenkins, the new Wirral Branch secretary, will be telling you all about them.



Chelmsford Christmas Lunch held at The Bay Horse in Chelmsford on Tuesday 5th December.

CHESTER

Pat Sanders

I hope everyone had a lovely summer and are looking forward to Christmas. The Chester Branch has been busy with our meetings and outings again.

July, we had a lovely trip out to Speke Hall with our Wirral friends and had a brilliant day, a few of the girls decided to have a game of snooker (permission granted) and we were laughing so much that they ended up with an audience of other visitors.

We had our annual trip on the Chester canal in August, the weather and meal were gorgeous. The ladies from Shropshire and the Wirral joined us and left with most of the raffle prizes; we will get our own back when we visit your Branches.

September saw us off to Prescot to see the Royal Signals Motorbike display team (they are disbanding after their next display); we had another day full of laughter and finished off with a lovely meal in a pub. Also in September we had a coach trip out to Bletchley Park and Blenheim Palace.

CLEVELAND

Audrey Grainge

We started this half of the year with our annual summer outing in August with a trip to Keswick and we were well and truly blessed with good weather. A couple of the members even risked a boat trip on the lake, the rest of us settled for a Fish and Chip lunch and a stroll around the shops.

As usual, our standard bearer Anne has had a busy six month attending many funerals, although no WRAC/ATS but is sad all the same. She attended many Parades commemorating 100 Years of Women at War and 100th Anniversary of Passchendaele. She was invited to attend an evening with the Maoris watching their dancing - they wished to see people in uniform. The children at a school in Hartlepool planted a tree in their Grounds as a tribute to a former teacher who was killed in action in WW1; Anne took her Standard along.

Many of our ladies were involved in selling Poppies this year - Hazel, Jan, and Suzanne at Middlesbrough, Judith and Anne at Hartlepool, and myself (Audrey) in my local village where I have been a Poppy Organiser for many years.

COLCHESTER & DISTRICT Kerry Warnes

Our annual day at the beach known fondly as "seaside havoc", took place 30th July 2017 at Clacton on Sea. We enjoyed a 'fish n chip' lunch followed by some wonderful cakes supplied by Dawn Amey and Wendy Hooton. After stuffing ourselves silly, it was time for making complete fools of ourselves while at the same time, entertaining the tourists. We all laughed endlessly through the games of volleyball, especially when some of our members constantly fell in the various craters created by the children building sandcastles. I guess we should have moved the net, but it was too funny, so we left it where it was.



Hazel, Jan and Susanne in Middlesbrough



Suzanne and Jan and unknown ex para at Middlesbrough



Audrey Grainge in her village

Suzanne Allan laid our WRAC Wreath at the Cenotaph in Middlesbrough after she had bravely marched in the Parade. Jenny Hall marched in the Parade at Washington - Oh to be that young and fit. One of our members, Connie Meeking's husband Phil, played the bugle at his Church. He is a keen supporter of the branch and always makes sure that Connie gets to the meetings and accompanies her on our trips out as she is in a wheelchair.

We now look forward to our Christmas Lunch outing.

As usual, we would be pleased to welcome anyone wishing to join us at our branch meetings. Just come along and give it a go - we do have fun and lots of laughs. We meet at the HUB Middlesbrough on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 1300hrs.



Sunday 3rd September - we held a Summer BBQ for our members and guests in support of our local Veteran's Breakfast Club. We raised enough to make a donation to help with the funds for the Veteran's Breakfast Club, which was gratefully received by the landlord. It was a fantastic turn out with friends and guests travelling great distances to support us. As usual, I thought I was feeding the 5000! We enjoyed Beef burgers, Cheese burgers, Hotdogs, Chicken kebabs and enough salad to feed the animals at Colchester zoo!! Once again, we enjoyed more homemade cakes kindly supplied by our very own Mary Berrys, Dawn Amey and Wendy Hooton.



A small contingent of the Branch attended the 20th WRAC Dinner Club; we all had a fantastic weekend, meeting old and new friends once again. It is the highlight of the year for many of us, and we are looking forward to attending the 21st Dinner Club next year. Thank you to all of the committee for all of the hard work.



Our Pre Christmas meeting was held at the Bricklayers public house on Saturday 21st October, where we discussed the final details for our Christmas Dinner Night and remembrance parade in Clacton. Sadly, it was at this meeting that Carol Vincent informed us that she will be stepping down as Branch secretary in March 2018. I would personally like to thank Vinnie for all of her hard work and support over the last 3 years, it's been full of laughs, and I wish her well. We will be voting for a new secretary at our first meeting of 2018, which will be held at the Bricklayers public house on Saturday 3rd March.

3 members of the Colchester and District branch attended the remembrance parade in Clacton. Myself, Carole Vincent and Midge Whitcomb were even in the local paper. Hopefully next year we will have a few more members attending. It was very cold, but an awesome turnout of 800 marching.



The Christmas Dinner Night took [will be taking] place at the Best Western Claydon House Hotel on 2nd December 2017. We are looking forward to welcoming new members and guests, hopefully they got the memo about wearing the wackiest Christmas jumpers!!

The Colchester and District Branch hopes that everyone had a Happy and Safe Christmas and New Year.

COLWYN BAY (Informal)

A new, informal, Branch has been formed in the Colwyn Bay area. They have regular meetings planned and Linda Goodier, their contact person, is happy to receive phone calls if you need any more details. (See Branch Meetings list).

GRANTHAM Chris Corker

Our numbers have increased this year to 14. We meet on a Thursday evening about once a month. There are also a few of us that attend the Grantham Breakfast Club.

For further details if you live in the area contact Chris Corker on 01476 978422 or 07811537258.



GREATER LONDON Chrissie Mills

Since our last report we've held our September meeting which included four guests from the Guildford branch of the Women's Royal Naval Services Association. It was a pleasure to meet them and we hope it is the beginning of a long and happy friendship. We also hope that when they come back to see us they will give us a talk about their naval careers and experiences.

Dorron Phillipson entertained us at the meeting with a very interesting and funny talk about being a tourist guide in the City of London and we're already looking forward to the next instalment!

At present it seems the branch is going from strength to strength with new members joining. Of course we have several ladies who can't get to meetings anymore, mostly because they are no longer able to travel into central London and some others now live in care homes. It's especially sad as they were among the most regular attenders and staunchest supporters of the branch and we send our fondest wishes to them all.

Eight members, including Kay Allan who unfortunately isn't in the photo, attended the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey which is one of our regular events. And no, the Chelsea Pensioner doesn't belong to us! We are very proud that Pat Rosewell was one of the team chosen to represent the WRAC in the Festival of Remembrance and she and several more of our ladies took part in the march at the Cenotaph while others went to the service in Westminster Abbey.



Greater London branch with Chelsea in-pensioner

A few of us recently spent a pleasant Saturday afternoon at the National Army Museum for a guided tour of their exhibits marking 100 years of women in the army and we are planning more branch outings in the coming year.



By the time you read this we'll have had our Christmas lunch at the Civil Service Club and there'll be more on that in our next report.

We close by saying we look forward to meeting up with some of you at the AGM in March.

HEREFORD Lynda Armstrong

In August we held our annual picnic at Queenswood Park, Hereford. This event is always perfectly organised by Joyce Nicholls, the weather was very kind to us and we all had a lovely day. Our annual picnic again had a good crowd of us and such an enjoyable day.

In September, we had another fabulous day trip to Weston Super Mare, arranged again by Miriam Unwin. The luxury coach picked up members and guests at various locations and arrived in Weston late morning. We had a wonderful day, the skies were blue and the fun was in abundance. Following a super lunch in Tiffanys on The Grand Pier, we played a VERY competitive game of Crazy Golf. The winner was decided by the player with the

most holes in one and the very worthy winner of the amazing trophy with a total of 4 was ... Mrs Elizabeth Milton.

October saw a number of our members attending a Royal Reception at the Army and Navy Club in London, in the presence of HM Queen Elizabeth II and Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, The Princess Royal. We had a very memorable evening celebrating the Centenary of the Formation of WRNS and WAAC with serving members and veterans present. Then for several of us we were Dudley bound, for the Dinner Club 2017 and, as always, an amazing weekend in such brilliant company.

Also in October a few of us attended a Service of Remembrance in Worcester. The ceremony was organised by the Worcester and Sherwood Foresters Association, to mark the 103rd Anniversary of the Battle of Gheluvelt. Sharon Baker-Joyce paraded our National Standard and Alison Brown laid a Wreath on behalf of the Association and Hereford Branch.

On Saturday 11th November, Barbara Davies and Miriam Unwin were fortunate to be selected to participate in 'Women 100' at The Royal Albert Hall, as part of The Festival of Remembrance. Along with 98 ladies from other Services, both veterans and serving members, the 100th Anniversary of Women at War was celebrated. Sharon Baker-Joyce was also invited to parade our National Standard on this special occasion. So very smart they all looked too.

Remembrance Sunday saw a number of Hereford Branch members form up to march with a 100 strong WRAC/ATS contingent, at the Cenotaph in London. Again, the sun was shining for us and a marvellous parade took place.

Jo Foster paraded our Branch Standard at both the Ross on Wye service on the 9th November and again on the 12th at The City of Hereford Service of Remembrance Parade.

There are a few events on the agenda for December, with Christmas lunches in various venues. In addition, the Past and Present All Ranks Dinner to be held at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, will be attended by a number of our Branch members.



Hereford Branch annual picnic

ISLE OF WIGHT (Informal) Tracy Biddlecombe

We are a newly formed informal group on the Isle of Wight of ex-servicewomen of the WRAC/ATS. We are a small group of ladies who meet several times a year for social contact, chat, coffee/ lunch, meeting at various different venues around the Island.

Our first meeting was held on 25th March 2017, at Prego Italian café, East Cowes, and was a time of getting to know one another and reminiscing about our army days. Some members bought along photos to share.

We have had several meetings since, and on 9th November 2017 four of us attended a Garden of Remembrance Service at Carisbrooke Castle to remember the Island's dead/fallen, along with other uniformed services and members of the public.

We laid RBL crosses in the garden and a piper was seen on the castle battlements playing a lament during the service. At the end everyone went into the Castle for coffee/cake supplied by the WI. Whilst at the Castle we visited St Nicholas Church where the IW WRAC Standard is laid up and had our photo taken



Ex-WRAC Veterans Viewing and remembering the WRAC Standard, Carisbrook Castle Church

The other photo attached shows some of our group members sitting on an ATS Memorial bench located at St James Churchyard, Yarmouth, IW which we hope to soon get repaired. The ATS memorial bench commemorates those women who served and gave their lives in the Second World War.



ATS Memorial Bench. St James Churchyard, Freshwater

If you are ex-WRAC/ATS and interested in joining our group; live or visiting the IW you are very welcome to join us anytime. Please get in contact with me via the WRAC Association for my contact details.

LEICESTER & NOTTINGHAM Sue Slattery

When you read this report 2018 will be here, so may we wish you all our best wishes for this year and look forward to seeing some of you at the Association AGM in March.

We continue to hold monthly meetings, to which around 25 ladies are still fit and able to attend; of course we are blessed to have 8 ATS ladies who attend most meetings and our outings. Here's what we have been up to.

July - Doris and Sandra organised our popular beetle drive ,trying to keep everyone in order, prevent cheating, and all the other amusing factors that always seem to crop up.

8 ladies attended the RBL drum head service at the NMA to mark the 100 years of Women at War. Also there was a service to commemorate the battle of Passchendaele which was held at Leicester Cathedral and attended by 2 of our ladies.



L-R: Barbara, Ann, Vi, Chris, Lyn & Joan

August - This month was a cake-and-catch-up meeting to discuss our annual sailing club arrangements for the following week. This event is always well attended by branch members and guests, 2 of which included our East Midlands Area Chair and Secretary, Dot and Chris. We enjoyed a buffet lunch followed by cakes and trifle supplied by Sandra; most ladies put foil wrapped parcels into their bags containing an assortment of food to be eaten later. Once again thanks to Carol and her team who made this day a great success.



Sailing club afternoon



Sailing club 'feeding time'



Joan de Vall's 92nd birthday with Doris White (chairman)

September - Our harvest festival raised £75; one of our 3 yearly fund raisers.

On the 10th of this month our Standard and 3 ladies attended the service and parade through Somerby, with the Parachute Regiment Veterans.

Our branch hosted the 2nd East Midlands Area lunch at Devonshire Place attended by 22 of our own branch ladies - good food and the chance to meet the ladies from other branches in our area. It has now been confirmed by our area chairman that next year's Area lunch will also be held at Devonshire Place.

Flowers and a card were sent to Barbara Danter on the occasion of her 90th birthday.

Sadly, we lost our 3rd lady this year; Yvonne McCarthy who lost her battle with cancer on the 25th of this month having fought so bravely for many months, she never gave up hope despite numerous hospital admissions and treatments. All our members were very saddened at her passing at such an early age. She served on our social committee and was very much a team player, always willing to help when and where needed. We saw Yvonne last at our sailing club event in August.

October - Our AGM this month saw most of our committee re-elected with one exception, Chris Gardner who volunteered to assist on our social team.

Joan, Barbara and Ann Danter were invited to attend a reception at the Army & Navy club in London in the presence of her Majesty the Queen, a very special evening.



Joan de Vall and Barbara Danter at RAG Club Reception

A number of branch ladies attended the Dinner Club weekend at Dudley.

Our Standard and 17 ladies attended Yvonne's funeral on the 16th, where we formed a guard of honour. As we left the chapel Yvonne was still able to make us smile as we all sang along to Tina Turner singing "Simply the best". Yvonne had even arranged the wake at Beaumanor Hall; Bless you Yvonne, we will all miss you.

Also this month, our Standard and 4 ladies formed part of the muster at the De Montfort Hall for the RBL Festival of Remembrance. The next day 3 members sold poppy's outside the King Power Stadium, home to Leicester City football club, then at half time we marched around the pitch with Standards, veterans and cadets. 31,000 in the crowd clapped us as we proudly marched round which brought a lump to our throats.

We had quite a surprise when Sheila (Eliie) Armitage, after a long absence, joined us at this month meeting.

November - Our Christmas Fayre raised £112. 50p.

The Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall was attended by a number of our association ladies one, of which was Joan De Vall. 6 branch ladies joined the rest of our Association for the march past on Whitehall, 3 in their wheelchairs, heading off with the other ladies; just spotted them on the television as they arrived at Horse Guards Parade where Joan was interviewed by the BBC.

In 2017 we have commemorated 100 years of Women at War with special events which has made us all so very proud.



*Ali Brown, Joan de Vall and members
at Field of Remembrance*



Barbara Chandler, Spilsby



ATS ladies at Whitehall

We say farewell to 2017 with our Christmas Lunch on December 12th. My thanks to all our branch ladies who support our branch. Our thanks to H/Q for all they do for us. We wish all our ladies who have been ill this year a speedy recovery in 2018 and our best wishes to you all.

LINCOLN & DISTRICT

Jo Worsdall

Our members attended numerous Remembrance Parades and Services across Lincoln and District areas. Former WRAC member, Barbara Chandler, is an escort to the Standard for the Spilsby and District Branch of the Royal British Legion. Barbara has held the post for two years and has been elected for a third year at the recent Branch AGM. Standard Bearer, Mike Lenton, is delighted to have a female escort for her professionalism and says she adds a little glamour to the role.



*Jo Worsdall,
Lincoln*



*Sylvia Stubbs and Marion King,
Mablethorpe*



On Tuesday 22nd August several members of the branch attended a lunch in Mablethorpe organised by Sylvia Stubbs and Marion King. A beautiful sunny day for a walk along to the beach and an ice cream! Members are Sue Smith, Pat Wood, Jackie Walton, Chris Corker, Dot Ryder, Sylvia Stubbs and Marion King.

A group of our ladies had a lovely afternoon tea at Doddington Hall in Lincoln, they enjoyed wonderful food and even brought doggie bags home with them.



Nora Jones and Marilyn West



Joyce Gough and Marie Palmer

One of our members, Marie Palmer joined the ATS 70 years ago on 20 November 1947, congratulations Marie from all of the Branch!

September - Some of our members enjoyed a lovely lunch at Devonshire Place in Leicester for the East Midlands Area Reunion Lunch on 16 September, thank you to Sue Slattery; Carol Morris; Dot Ryder and Chris Corker for organising.



We hope you all have a lovely Christmas and best wishes for 2018, from all at Lincoln and District Branch

We continue to meet monthly in Lincoln, (third Tuesday of the month 1200-1400hrs) please pop in if you are nearby it would be lovely to see you. We have a new venue from January: St Mary-le-Wigford Church Hall, St Mary's Street, Lincoln, LN5 7EQ

MARCHES & MID-WALES **Elaine Smith**

Yes, we are still an active group, just too active (or in my case too lazy) to find time to come up with anything for the Lioness. To make up for this year's lack of input here's our news ... not in a nutshell.

The weather in our area is somewhat unpredictable, to say the least – for some of us it might be bright sunshine, and for others it may be gales and downpours. It can be difficult to get to the meetings, not just because of the weather but transport and distance plays a huge part in it. Over the past year 3 of our members have regularly travelled from south Wales to attend meetings but are no longer able to make the journey due to poor health. Some of our active members live in Shropshire (it's got a well-known town there, the pronunciation of which is somewhat of a debated topic. As I write this one of my cats has just brought in a dead shrow (that's your clue!)). Some of us live in even more unpronounceable places often beginning with double Ls with double Ds and usually double Ns with Fs that are Vs and Ws that are OOs somewhere in the place name – and since when do the letters rystwyth go together?? (OK, Wales) so we try to get together in locations spread fairly between the two areas.

In January we kicked off our year with our post-Christmas gathering in Y Trallwng (known to us as Welshpool) managing to get a Christmas Dinner without the 'office party compulsory festive fun' going on around us and at our AGM in February we welcomed a new member, Gillian Brench.

This year's summer meeting was held at Sweeney Hall in Oswestry (this town has changed hands between the English and Welsh many times during the Middle Ages and has many Welsh street names being only 5 miles from the Welsh Border – but it is presently in England). Sweeney Hall is a grand building with

lovely food and fantastic company, especially as yet another new member (though she didn't know it then) was welcomed into the fold.

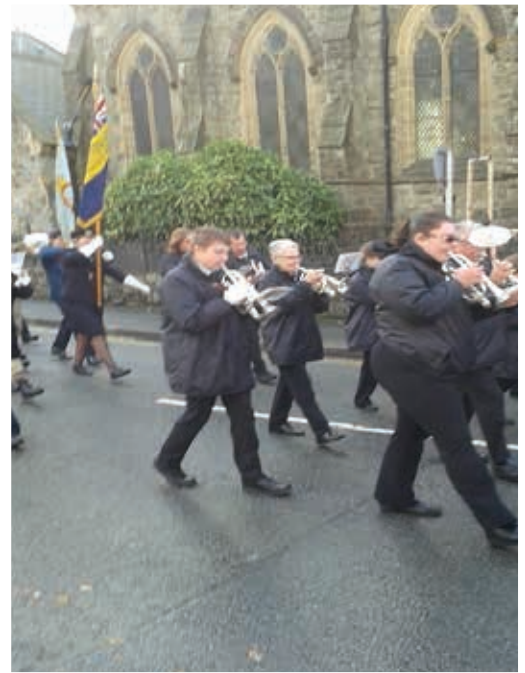
Whatever you think about Facebook, there's no denying that it can be beneficial in tracking down old friends and acquaintances and this new member found her ex 29 Coy WRAC Chief Clerk on there and promptly got in touch, just in time to be invited to come along to the summer meeting. Well, she definitely made an impact: those of you who know Michelle Boyden will know what I mean! What a live wire!! Her old 'Chief' Elaine Smith has more 'laughter lines' on her face now to prove it (except most of hers go downwards and not up!).

After the actual meal and meeting we went off to visit the British Iron Works just up the road and no, we didn't put on steel toe cap boots, leather aprons, gloves and visors ... it's not that kind of Iron Works. If you've never been there then it's worth a visit as it is like going to a safari park but you can touch all the animals which are scattered around the large grounds – all of them life size and made of metal plates. King Kong stands tall and made entirely of spoons. Another huge statue, The National Monument against Violence and Aggression, is a statue of an Angel made from daggers and knives which were all handed in during a weapon amnesty or seized by the police during criminal proceedings is a shocking reminder of how violent our society has become. So, if you want to buy a BBQ that looks like a warhog or just a little metal ladybird for your garden they've got everything there including a good restaurant and very interesting shop. If you want something bespoke there are outbuildings where you can watch artisans in action, including a blacksmith. This was a really enjoyable summer meeting – much better than last year when we sat in a gazebo in the pouring rain 'up a hill in the valley' trying to be heard above the sound of the downpour – but there again, we were in Wales then!

In September we went to The Lakeside Restaurant in Garthmyll (Shropshire or Powys - does the y and ll give it away Boyo?). Only 8 of us sat down to eat but the chat and laughter flowed as the laughter lines grew (I know it should be grew but I used poetic license there). Thanks Michelle for livening us up once more!

Our final meeting for the year was held in November, the month of Remembrance. It should be noted here that one of our members, Deanna Williams (Honorary member, ex Australian Air Force (WAAF)) has been involved in the British Legion Poppy Appeal since 1997 when she began collecting on the street. Since 2001 she has been the Coordinator for Newtown and District, in her first year coordinating the collection of £10,000 from the locality and up to 2016 has raised £190,742 (and 85p). This year she thinks they have raised £15,000. Of course, this isn't without the help of her collectors who include our own Pauline Rodway (ex R Signals) and Gill Turner (ex Medic/Admin) who manned the Appeal Stand in Morrisons. They deserve a huge thank you.

Pauline Rodway laid the wreath for us at the Garden of Remembrance in Newtown whilst Elaine, a cornetist with Newtown Silver Band, played hymns during the wreath laying (no, not as a soloist, but with the rest of the band – she's not that good!). Meanwhile Gill Turner was in Cardiff at the Remembrance Parade there and took the opportunity to visit our old friend Kath Hughes and present her with a lovely 90th Birthday Cake made by Carys Palmer MCB (Master Cake Baker ... I made that up). We miss Kath and the other S Wales ladies, Joan Lake and Cordelia Harding, at our meetings.



Elaine Smith marching with the Newtown Silver Band at the Remembrance Service



LtoR: Pauline Rodway, Eileen Proctor/Carter, Gill Turner, Irene Hall, Deanna Williams, Elaine Smith, Michelle Boyden, Judith Bradbury, Carys Palmer, Liz Lawrence, Maggie Purkis at the November Meeting in The Royal Oak, Welshpool.

Back to the November meeting in Welshpool at The Royal Oak Hotel. This was well attended – and it was great to see Judith Bradbury (ex Clk) there coming all the way from Aberystwyth (the place where the letters rystwyth fit together). The food was lovely (just not enough of it for some of us – cordon bleu means 'go home hungry'). We had yet another special birthday, our very glamorous Eileen Proctor/Carter (fondly known to some of us as 'The Brigadier' because we think she looks like Eileen Nolan) would be 90 on Christmas Day, but as we wouldn't be meeting again until January we decided to celebrate it at this meeting. Carys again excelled herself and produced a beautiful 90th Birthday cake, decorated with a photograph of the branch members (a transfer onto icing) which we presented to Eileen along with a beautiful flower arrangement. We were also very happy to see Irene Hall who was seriously ill at the beginning of the year but who has slowly made a good recovery. Her Chauffeuse, Maggie Purkis (who doesn't have a cat, but if she did they'd bring in dead shrews ... another clue) was voted in as an Honorary Member.

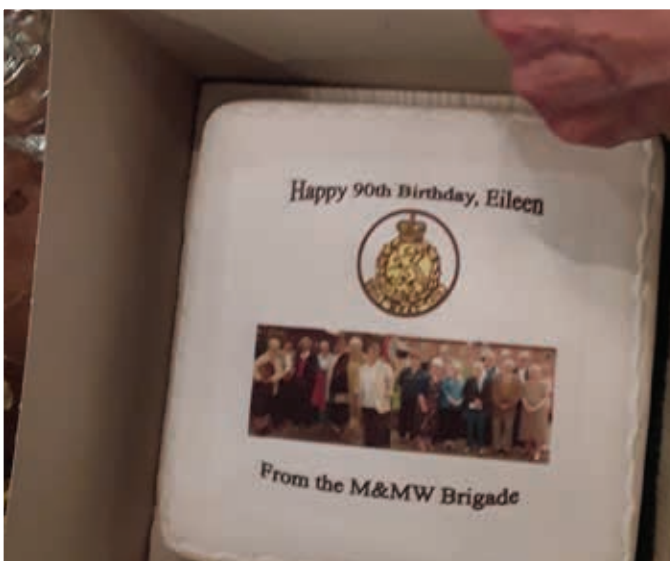


Irene Hall

(During the November meeting our Secretary Carys asked if anyone would volunteer to write something for the Lioness as we'd not had anything in there for quite some time (what year was it???). Carys runs her own business (making cakes believe it or not!) and had managed to get out our newsletters but found little time to trawl for items for the Lioness. A National Plea (well not quite, but it felt like it) was put out and so, feeling extremely guilty that I've probably more 'free' time on my hands than all the other members put together, (and despite the fact that I've got an ancient PC that has only 2 USB ports (so the mouse takes one, then the printer and flash drives have to take turns with the 2nd one) crammed into a cupboard with a 12ft lead to reach the socket and I have to put my chair into the cat bed with the mouse mat balanced on my knee and my notes continually falling on the floor – I volunteered. Saying that, I have been responsible for a few years now to design, print and despatch all the branch Birthday Cards so I haven't been that bad. All I have to do now is put this on a USB stick and go to Drenewydd (Newtown) to use the public library computers where I can hopefully pick up emailed photographs to accompany this missive and email it hoping to catch the deadline of 30 November – (if only we had Broadband at home!)). Oh, and feed the cats and pick up another dead shrow.

MEDITERRANEAN Ann Oldfield

Unfortunately, we have to start our edition with some sad news, the passing of BRENDA BAKER (Nee Hall). A lot of us only met Brenda at Benidorm 3 due to her fellow PTI friends being involved, but all those that met Brenda felt we had known her for years. We all have memories of Brenda charging down the street on the "Madgemobile" we had organized for her with the rest of us charging off behind in the knowledge Brenda had never been on one before and disaster could strike at any moment. Luckily one (either Budgie or Sue Jennings, PTIs of course) managed to stop her before any accidents. She joined Mediterranean Branch that weekend and was looking forward to seeing everyone this year, sadly that was not to be, but she has left us all with lasting memories of her time with her and she told Mel what a fantastic weekend she had had feeling like she was back in the WRAC. God bless you Brenda.



Eileen Carter's birthday cake

There, of course, was the compulsory raffle and one of our members who has already been mentioned a couple of times had her eye on a particular prize, a lovely Christmas Tablecloth. Having remarked multiple times about its beauty and how it would look so good on her Christmas Table she then proceeded to hide it under tins of sweets, china mugs, candles and multiple cakes (thanks again Carys), in fact anything that would help hide it from the eyes of those of us who hadn't clicked that she wanted it. Although some of our members are a little hard of hearing I think we, and the rest of the hotel, got the gist. Our raffles usually end up with everyone getting a prize whether they like it or not so the first prize winners claimed their bounty, tempted by these prominently positioned tins of sweets, chocolate and beautiful cakes then luck struck and with a whoop of glee MICHELLE BOYDEN (did you guess?) grabbed the tablecloth, stood up and cheered as she waved it above her head – not just us but everyone in the hotel was laughing and we haven't been banned – yet.

Like all of the other Assn Branches we miss the members/friends who can no longer attend our meetings for one reason or another, but often health reasons are the main cause. Kath Hughes, Cordelia Harding, Joan Lake and Elma McGrath – we miss you all and hope you enjoy keeping up with our news.



Brenda Barker (nee Hall)

Myself, Mel and Joan Edmunds crossed the pond to attend Dinner Club and met up with Ann Woodward from Malaga who joined the Mediterranean Branch. We hope to meet up with her again in the not too distant future. Talking of Dinner Club, Mel had a terrible time getting there having originally booked with Monarch so, without going into all the details, spent 48hrs at the airport and following 2 cancelled flights and a 4hr delayed repatriation flight finally arrived at the Dinner Club much relieved as she also had the menus, seat allocation and other DC paperwork.

Mel represented us at Shropshire Branch Cream Tea Afternoon and also the Phoenix branch Summer Extravaganza, not to mention the wedding of one of our colleagues Janet Edwards. She was also one of the 15 chosen for The Royal Albert Hall Festival of Remembrance and told me she was so proud to have the honour to be there. Obviously, she also took part in the march past at the Cenotaph; now we have learned that she has been picked out to represent Shropshire Branch (her first branch before opening Mediterranean) at St James' Palace with the Duchess of Gloucester what a year she has had.



At Royal Albert Hall



Melanie Howells at Festival of Remembrance

She is now busy arranging the next Benidorm Babes 4 which takes place 7th – 15th May, and I personally am looking forward to the AGM and the BBQ which takes place on the rooftop garden of Mel's house – a definite highlight of the visit. I imagine the Benidorm Babes will be looking forward to meeting up and finding out what outings etc Mel has planned for them - I know I am.

PHOENIX Sheila Johnson

The Annual Summer Lunch was held on 2 September 2017 at the Beaconsfield Club, Shrewsbury, where members and friends numbering 27 gathered. Their being successful in the raffle stakes added to the enjoyment, as per usual. This year, Irene Hall and Millie Pover's presence was particularly pleasing as both ladies were able to overcome health issues and make the journey to the venue.



Diane Lewis & Maggie Purkis (before Diane's move)



*Millie Pover, ex-ATS
and inaugural member of Phoenix branch*

It is hoped that the Branch's Christmas Lunch, due 16 December 2017, will also see them 'all present and correct'! Inevitably one absentee is likely to be Diane Lewis, who moved to Cyprus in September 2017. Happily, we understand her move has been successful, which is good news for everyone.

Best wishes for 2018.

PLYMOUTH Jean Cundy-Borge

The Plymouth members of the WRAC Association are still meeting in the Dingles restaurant of the House of Frazer on the 4th Tuesday of the month for coffee/ lunch; this enables us to arrange our Saturday trips out.

Our summer visit to Tamar View Nurseries was very enjoyable as was our lunch gathering at Windy Ridge Trerulefoot.

The October WRAC 20th Anniversary dinner in the Copthorne Hotel in Dudley was very successful, thanks to Ruth for booking a car and driver to take all 4 of us in comfort to the hotel on Thursday 12th. Then after a very entertaining weekend we were picked up on the Monday and driven home. So the door to door service took away all the worry of travelling. Brilliant!!!

We are now looking forward to our November 25th visit to the Tamar View Nurseries, their Christmas Grotto is always very imaginative and makes a lovely photo.

Four Plymouth members have booked to attend the AGM in March next year at the Victory Services Club.

Anyone who would like to join us for coffee can telephone Evon on 01752 215780 or Jean on 01752 567844. For more up-to-date youngsters Evon has also posted details on facebook.

SHROPSHIRE Ali McGowan

What a year it has been for the Shropshire Branch. At our monthly meetings we have been able to welcome a number of new members and we have seen our numbers grow from an average of 6-8 members to a magnificent 17-19, we now take over the majority of the Red Lion! We decided to celebrate our growing success with afternoon tea at the Tayleur Arms in August, we also took the opportunity for a more up to date Branch photo.



October saw Chris, Debbie, Maggie, Mel, Sheila Johnson, Sheila Murphy, Sue Jackson attend the 20th Anniversary of the WRAC Dinner Club. What a wonderful weekend it was (well I would say that wouldn't I, I am on the Committee). It was great to meet up with friends old and new. Also in October a number of members attended the REME's annual Race Night. A good time was had by all, although some were more successful than others with their bets, weren't they Mel? What do you mean your horse was nobbled!



REME Race Night

The Branch was represented at the local Remembrance Day Service by Nancy, Sandra, Sue and Sheila, Pat and myself, whilst other members of the Branch went down to London for the Weekend. Chris Powell and Melanie Howell were picked to be amongst the 100 women who represented the Centenary of Women at War at the Festival of Remembrance at the Albert Hall and shown on television. We were very proud of you and I know how much it meant to you both.



Wellington Remembrance Day

As I write this it is the run up to Christmas and we have various outings coming up including visiting other branches Christmas parties and culminating in our now annual visit to the Pantomime which we look forward to. May I take this opportunity to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and New Year and send greetings from the Shire.

SOUTHAMPTON

Jean Doe

Hello to you all. Winter seems to have come very early this year, but to cheer us up we had the news of Prince Harry and Megan's future wedding!! A day of TV, no doubt.

We have got back to having trips out again – we had a day at 'Milestones', near Basingstoke. Most enjoyable looking back at times past; they also have a pretty good restaurant.

This was followed by a trip down the Solent – a very hot day, and great fun. Later we went on to Dorchester Market, and whilst most markets have suffered in recent year, this one has managed to buck the trend. Members had a good day with wallets – purses a lot lighter on the return trip!

The autumn day out was to Rosebourne Garden Centre, near Andover. Unlike other such venues this one is totally different, and the members love this – one big plus, to be taken to your table in the restaurant, no queuing to get your food. This is a definite place for a return visit.

It really is very rewarding to have members come along to our meetings and have the enthusiasm for our day trips – we also aim to turn up for the AGM in March. Of course, none of this would run smoothly without the skill of Stephanie, who gets all the organising done, and for which we are all so grateful.

Overall, we have had a better year than 2016; our three new members appeared to have settled in well! We were also fortunate when Beryl Allinson laid our wreath on Remembrance Sunday – Benge has informed us that the town is to have a new Cenotaph next year, and so we must make a big effort to attend the service there.

So, hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year Wishes to you all.

TAMWORTH

Marie Smedley

In an effort to encourage more members, Tamworth and District Branch have been out and about during our meetings. In September we met at The RAFA Flarepath Club in Tamworth and after our meeting we joined the members of the Royal Engineers Association for a drink and a raffle. In October we were enjoying the wind and rain in Lichfield. We quickly adjourned to The Chapters tearoom (opposite the Cathedral) for lunch and a great time was had by Nicola Scott, Ann Gwynne, Judy Hasnip, Pat Williams, Janet Bourke, Lesley Wallace and Marie Smedley.



Poppy in Ashby

November saw the Branch in several locations and at many events during the Remembrance Weekend. Marie Smedley was able to add a special touch to the Poppy display at a local school in Ashby de la Zouch. Marie, Pat Williams and Lesley Wallace were lucky enough to get tickets for the Remembrance Festival at the Albert Hall (mainly due to Pat's determination and skilled use of several IT devices at once). Pat and Lesley placed a tribute to Women who have served in the Armed Forces for 100 Years in the Garden of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey and they marched with the WRAC contingent at the Cenotaph Parade in London. Our Standard and the lovely Tammy Kirkwood were at St Editha's in Tamworth on Remembrance Sunday along with Nicola Scott, Ann Gwynn, Judy Hasnip and Belle Jenkinson.



Tammy and the Tamworth Standard.

Tamworth & District Branch would like to wish all Veterans, their families and those involved with the Women's Royal Army Corps Association a Merry Christmas and a very Happy 2018.



Tamworth Branch on parade



Pat at Field of Remembrance 2017

ULSTER Joan McCabe

After a quiet first part of the year, we held our AGM on Saturday 9th September. We met at our usual location of Pizarellys in Lisburn, and had a lovely lunch; the owner looked after us well. Onwards to the local branch of the British Legion where our meeting began.

The election of members changed somewhat, as three members stood down - Rae Halley our treasurer for many years decided that it was time to hand over to someone else, Mary Wilson our Chairperson also decided that she would give up her seat as Chairperson, and Maggie Prigden, our Assistant Secretary, is too busy travelling with her work to sustain the post. These posts have now been filled, with the exception of Maggie's, as the branch agreed that there was no real need to replace her. The new posts are:

Treasurer: Hilary Ballance

Chairperson: Sylvia Connaghan.

I would like to thank Rae, Mary and Maggie for their support over the past few years, they have been invaluable to me and helped me settle in to my role in the early days. I would also like to welcome Hilary and Sylvia to their new posts and thank them for taking up the slack.



L - R: Hilary Balance, Joan McCabe and Maggie Prigden at Belfast Cenotaph



L - R: Hilary Balance, Joan McCabe and Maggie Prigden

Our Christmas lunch on Saturday 9th December will be held at the Beechlawns Hotel, who provide an excellent lunch every year, and we are looking forward to that.

So all that is left is for me, on behalf of the Ulster Branch Members, to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year



Sylvia Connaghan, Hilary Balance and Joan McCabe at Not Forgotten Christmas lunch

WIRRAL **Andrea Jenkins**

Another fun filled 6 months for the ladies of Wirral Branch, in August we set off on the high seas as we enjoyed a relaxing Lunch on the Chester Canal.

A trip through the history books of Mostyn Hall, as we began the tour our Sheila managed started chatting to a very dapper young man we where then told that he was non other than Lord Mostyn himself (cant take her anywhere) afterwards we where treated to a cream tea, with homemade cakes and scones we couldn't have asked for more (although the cake was so good some of us did) Of course a trip to Mostyn would not be the same without dropping into Aberkhan first to pick up a few crafty supplies. Not that any of us have any spare time with all the things we like to get out and about doing.

Weekend away at Blenheim Palace and Bletchley Park it was great being able to see and get hands on with the code-breaker gear, its fascinating all the little things you thought you knew are only a small part of the work done.

A trip into Liverpool to the Royal Court Theatre to go to the Variety Lunch scouse afternoon it was a great afternoon, a nice hot bowl of "proper" scouse with bread followed by the entertainment of a comedian and singer from the local operatic society.

Royal Signals lunch in Chrisleton a great dinner with the Royal Signals. Us girls do like to eat well when we venture out. Pauline managed to win the top prize in the raffle without even realising it so now she has a lovely little carriage clock for her mantle.

We where invited by the Sea Cadets to their Reindeer races which the ladies loved and had a very amusing night, they even took it upon themselves to dress the part, not a red nose in sight though.



Sea Cadet Reindeer Race night

We again visited Chester Branch for a fab Christmas dinner with a bunch of great ladies, great food and the atmosphere couldn't be beat a lot of giggling from start to finish. Food was fantastic as always, and Pat's quiz was again so funny, although I'm pretty sure that when shes making it at home its not as funny as it becomes.



And finally I can't not mention the monthly dinner evenings we manage to fit in during all these activities, one thing that people can definitely say is us women on the Wirral certainly know how to mix fun days with dinners. It is these nights that make us a great branch.

Roll on the New Year with lots more fun and laughter heading our way.

NORTHERN AREA **Anna Orlinski**

I am happy to announce after a long time searching we now have a full complement of Northern Area Committee:

Chair - Anna Orlinski, Liverpool Branch

Vice Chair - Pat Sanders, Chester secretary and Wirral Chair

Secretary - Helen Rowan, Leeds Branch Secretary

Treasurer - Pat (Rocky) Barker, retired Leeds Branch Secretary

Cleveland Branch have kindly said they would like to host the next AGM and we we have had discussions accordingly.

Thank you everyone for your patience; it has taken a long time to arrange our committee but I am very pleased with the set up. It is a strong team and hopefully the Northern Branches will get stronger.

SCOTLAND Jean Halliday

The WRAC Association Scottish Area held its Annual General Meeting at the Queens Hotel in Perth on Saturday 16th September 2017. The meeting was well attended and the hotel was, as usual, first class with a good time had by all. It was good to catch up with familiar faces as well as some new ones who attended for the first time. We do hope they will return next year.

Six of our Ladies have been Mentioned in WRAC Despatches since the last meeting. They are, the late Kate Arnold; also Lilly Bell, Lady Martha, Florence Green, Joyce Logan and Ann Page. Congratulations ladies.



Recipients of 'Mention in WRAC Despatches' 2017

After the formalities of the AGM our guest speaker, Chair of Perth & Kinross SSAFA, Sqn. Ldr. Terry Shearer RAF (Retired), gave an interesting and informative talk about the many roles that SSAFA plays in the support of both serving and veteran military personnel.

The winner of the competition "Something to Celebrate" 100yrs of women in the forces, was Stirling Branch member Isobel Bodman. Well done!



Presentation to Isobel Bodman

Thanks to everyone for all their wonderful support during the year.

WHAT DOES BEING A MEMBER OF A BRANCH MEAN?

Ali Brown

EVENTS
FRIENDSHIP
ESPRIT
DE CORPS



FUN
SUPPORT
NEWS

This was a question asked by myself at the Council meeting in July 2017. The answers received were diverse and varied. Much of belonging to a Branch is variable and intangible so I thought it would be interesting to publish some of the replies I received to share them with you.

If you read this and like the sound of it, all you have to do is join a Branch. Branches are now formal, informal or on Facebook. All of these are an integral part of the WRAC Association.

"I certainly see Branch membership as a much-valued part of the life of the Association; especially for those ladies who are on their own. It gives them a sense of belonging and interest, so they look forward to every meeting as for many it is a key part of their social life. It gives them a network of people from a common background who look after each other in sickness and in health, and there is a bond of friendship which becomes stronger with age. The Branch network can provide an individual with friendship, companionship and care with likeminded people who have shared experiences, and can provide them with a sense of belonging and opportunities for fun, laughter and social interaction".

"I think being in a Branch rekindles the comradeship experienced during service and provides for the meeting of old and possibly new friends. Members are offered friendship, advice and generally look after each other. This works whether the Branch is formal or informal".

"It is the uniqueness of belonging to a really special group that you cannot buy your way into. The Armed Forces, as a whole, is a unique family. If someone is wearing a military badge there is always a conversation to be had. All service is important, irrespective of length or type, and we all have memories we wish to share and celebrate".

"The advantages of belonging to a Branch are many and varied. To name a few - knowing someone is always nearby for you night and day; that feeling a warm personal welcome gives you; forming the kind of friendships you have not made since your service days; being able to share the up and downs of your life with friends; and the pride one gets from turning out for events with fellow Branch members. Members go home from our meetings feeling happy, loved and wanted. Being a member of a Branch gives us the additional joy of belonging".

Supporting Women who Served

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, July and September
Where: Hyde Park Barracks, Knightsbridge, London
Contact: Chrissie Mills Tel: 020 8578 2715

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

Isle of Wight (Informal Branch)

For details of when and where please contact:
Tracy Biddlecombe, IW WRAC/ATS Informal Group Leader. Tel: 07980673402 mobile

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: Pauline Marr Tel: 07787763779, alternatively email paulinemarr55@gmail.com.

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.

Herts/Bucks/Beds (Social group)

If you are interested in joining them please
Contact: Wendy Hooton 07775-505326 wendyhooton-ski@aol.com

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

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: St Mary-le-Wigford Church Hall, St Mary's Street, Lincoln, LN5 7EQ

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 & Wigginton 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

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

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 gaildki@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 724 5966 (*Please note new number - Editor*)

Newcastle

When: 12.00 on the 3rd Thursday of the month

Where: Leazes End Club, 45-47 Leazes Park Road, Newcastle, 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: The Irish Centre, 14-20 High Street Deritend, Birmingham B12 0LN

Contact: Babs Anderson Tel 07921 832094

Cardiff

When: 2nd Wednesday of the month

Where: Toby Carvery, Tyn-Y-Parc Road, Cardiff, CF14 6BH
(Please check via email or facebook before attending in case date or venue has changed)

Contact: Debbie Amphlett on wrac.cardiff.branch@gmail.com or the WRAC Cardiff Branch Facebook page

Colwyn Bay (Informal Branch)

When: Every Wednesday

Where: 22 Station Road, Colwyn Bay for lunch

Contact: Linda Goodier Tel: 07392729387; Email: goodierlynda@yahoo.co.uk

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/Where: Meetings held monthly, location varies, contact for more details

Contact: Marie Smedley on marie.tamworth.branch@gmail.com

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: Allankpark Hotel, 20 Allankpark, 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, joan.mccabe24@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.

Contact: Cathy Munro MBE cathmunro@hotmail.com.

Tel: 01733 201231 (working hours)

Mobile: 07786 260988

Facebook page: WRAC Griffin Branch

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

WRAC DINNER CLUB

It is normal practice after Dinner Club for one of the committee to write an article for the Lioness. Last year we asked an existing member to put something together from their view and it went down well. So this year I approached a brand new member (we refer to them as DC Virgins) and asked if she would write an item for us. She agreed, and we happily ask for the following to be included in the next Edition.

LOSING MY VIRGINITY Dorothy Mitchelmore

I awoke at my usual time on Friday 13th of October full of anticipation and mixed this excitement. This was the day I was longing for My first Dinner Club.

The long journey began from my home in East Yorkshire by car to the local train station Brough, as in (rough) not Brow as in (Slough), as my roommate for all occasions Ann Stack found out once when visiting me. She asked the train conductor if the train was going to Brow; he quickly corrected her. We giggle a lot about this and Brough is now known in our circle as Brow !!

What seemed like an endless journey of a car ride followed by three separate train journeys and a taxi I eventually arrived at the Copthorne Hotel at Merryhill to find my friend Ann Stack waiting in the car park for me.

Off to the room to unpack, but first going to the registration area to book in. It was lovely to see some familiar faces who came and warmly greeted me. This was much appreciated after my long journey and this made me feel amongst friends. Our room was lovely and overlooked the water. It was way past lunchtime so it was decided we would check out the shopping centre and have a bite to eat. What a nice touch to hire a mini bus to ferry us over and back again. This service was much appreciated and Babs Anderson's son Dave was our driver. He even waited for us on our return. What a gent.

We booked to have the buffet during the evening as by then I had no energy left to leave the hotel. So off to the bar we went. It was lovely to see all the girls singing, at the tops of their voices, Happy Birthday to Pykie. No need to ask if she had a good one as she never fails to enjoy herself to the max. A lovely evening was spent meeting old friends and new and a few beers were washed down too.

On going to bed I was still unsure if I'd LOST anything yet?



Next morning we had a lovely breakfast and due to the long journey the day before, I decided to make use of the leisure facilities at the hotel. So, a long relaxing day in the jacuzzi and swimming pool was the order of the day. Of course there was plenty of other things on offer had we so chosen to do but we wanted to have plenty of time to glam up for the main event. (Takes a little longer these days).

At this stage I was still not sure if I'd lost anything yet?

Out the door and ready to attend my first DC, I was not disappointed. Everyone was so friendly and the company on Table 5 was fantastic. There was a real buzz about the evening and with great food, company and entertainment the night whizzed by. I have to say I danced most of the night as the choice of music was spot on. Loved, loved, loved it. Soon it was time to gather our special commemorative glass and head off to bed.

By now I definitely felt I had lost something!







WRAC OFFICERS DINING CLUB SATURDAY 25th NOVEMBER 2017 Ali Brown

On Saturday 25th November 2017, 119 serving and retired officers met in the Victory Services Club representing over 25 commissioning courses. These courses include the Long Commissioning Course, the Short Commissioning Course, the combined Graduate/Non graduate WRAC Course on the change over from Camberley to Sandhurst, the Women's Standard Course and the TA Commissioning Course. Finally graduates from the (Common) Commissioning Course were present too. The earliest course represented was from 1960 and the latest from 1993. This progression in types and lengths of training is part of the background to the events this year to mark the Centenary of Women serving in the British Army.

This year marked our return to the Victory Services Club, having moved to the Army and Navy Club last year. We returned to a refurbished Carisbrooke Hall and all enjoyed the new menu. The annual dinner has become an opportunity for reunions with WSC 931 leading the way this year with almost two tables filled. The noise levels were testament to the mass enjoyment of the evening and the dinner is now a firm fixture in the diary for meeting old friends and catching up.



Members of LCC 83 and LCC 84



Brig (Retd) Nicky Moffat CBE, Brig Fiona Gardner CBE

Next morning all that was left to do was pack. I sat and wondered how could the weekend just fly by so quickly. Off to breakfast and then gather for the farewell. Sat before us were all those responsible for my loss. You all know who you are!!

What more could I say. To everyone who contributed to my loss, may I say a personal thank you. With all your dedication and hard work.....

I AM NO LONGER A DC VIRGIN.

In the words of Arnie ... I will be back



***Sharon O'Connor, Ishbel Thomson,
Bernadette Duncan MBE, Crispin O'Connor***



Sue Mackenzie, Bernadette Duncan MBE



1974 Commissioning Course



Carisbrooke Hall



Cathy Lowe, Sue Hatton



Members of WRAC 851

The Officers' Dining Club was a real success this year with many saying they would be back next year. Come and join us. You do not have to be a member of the Association to attend and you will meet people who you served with.

The date of the next Dinner is Saturday 24th November 2018 at the Victory Services Club.

WRAC STAFF BAND REUNION: 50 YEARS ON The Union Jack Club, London, 20 May 2017

Following the death and funeral in July 2016 of Director of Music, Major L. Hopkin, thirteen of us got together back in May at the Union Jack Club for lunch, a jolly good chat and a chance to reminisce about life in the Band in the 1960s and 70s. 2017 sees the 50th anniversary of the official photograph of the Band, set out below, plus various special events such as the visit of the Duchess of Kent to the bandroom at Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Guildford on 9 July 1967. In comparison, the second photograph below shows us fifty years on.



In spite of not seeing each other for years, it seemed that we just carried on talking where we had left off, encouraged by all the nostalgic photos. It was good to catch up with everyone's doings and remember those no longer with us. Length of service varied from Marjorie Friend at 23 years to Shirley Prime at 3 years, a period of almost 30 years, 1963 to the disbanding of the WRAC in 1992.



While our service might not have had the same significance as those women who served during the World Wars, nevertheless, the 1960s in particular was the time of the Cold War, the assassination of President Kennedy and everyone expecting the bomb to drop at any moment. National Service had ended in 1962 and the government were keen to recruit women for the women's services. It was also the time of the "Swinging Sixties" and I remember going to the cinema in Guildford to see all the latest films, such as "Alfie". Favourite records on the juke box in the YWCA included those by Dusty Springfield.

Brenda Bailey (nee O'Rourke) had initially suggested the Reunion. Her hard work in organising it, in spite of a badly injured arm, was much appreciated, and our thanks go to the Union Jack Club for providing the congenial setting.

Jane Smith,
WRAC Staff Band 1965-1969.

WRAC COLLEGE COURSES '49, 50 & 51 Philippa Jarman

Sorry, but we are not very good at communicating with you all about our 2-yearly Reunions. The photos below are from the latest one, held near Morecombe Bay, hosted again by Cathy Ranford (nee Lewis) in August 2017.



**L-R: Sue Hatton (nee Stewart), Ruth Macaulay (nee Henderson), Pippa Jarman (no nee!),
Bobbie Hooker (nee Barrett)**



L-R : Carrie ex Blanch (nee Sykes), Di Lloyd-Jones (nee Kinchin), Wendy Greenfield (nee le Gassick),



L-R : Maryanne, Cathy, Bar, Sue, Wendy, Di, Mary, Rosemary, Carrie



L-R : Rosemary Scoffham, Ruth Macaulay, Barbara Crabbe (nee Rowbottom), Cathy Ranford, Mary Thomas (nee Rosser)



L-R : Ruth, Pippa, Bobbie, Rosemary, Mary

REUNION-THE CYPRUS FIVE! Irene Maclean

In November 2016 a group of the "TANGLINNERS" were in London for the Remembrance Parade and decided to celebrate some of their big 70 birthdays in the sun in 2017. So Rita, Jenny, Annette and two "associate" members, Lesley and Irene were invited - hence the Cyprus Five! So a plan was born, and throughout the winter months Rita contacted another pal from their 4 Coy days and secretly arranged a reunion. Her name was Margaret Minott (aka Millie) who lives in Cyprus and who had Jenny and Rita as her bridesmaids in Singapore in 1967. They found one of Millie's wedding photographs and that was where the plan was hatched.



L-R : Di Lloyd-Jones, Wendy Greenfield, Maryanne Richey (nee Linklater), Mary Thomas



One of our pals has a lovely son who has a house near Polis on Cyprus and he gave us the keys for a couple of weeks!!!! We soon had flights booked and off we went, still not knowing Rita's top secret!! Rita told us a table was booked for Jenny's birthday, so we got the glad rags on and off we went, totally unaware that Millie had travelled from her home in Aya Nappa to decorate our table with WRAC bunting. Jenny was so surprised to have this birthday party - it was hilarious, and next day Millie came to "our house" before going back to work. A wonderful holiday made special by a WRAC pal not seen for 50 years - and she hasn't changed bit!!!



L-R front row. Margaret Smith. Margaret Grant. MBE. Sylvia Knowles; Middle row. Brenda Griffiths. Janice Bond. Pam Sussex. Chris Fretwell, Isabel Bodman; Back row. Maggie Watt. Pat Gray. Margaret Moule. Val Hicks, Val Sanders. Debbie Davies. Doreen Phillipson



WRAC POSTAL & COURIER BRANCH REUNION Margaret Grant MBE

Our 29th Reunion weekend was held at Morecambe from the 19th to the 23rd October 2017. We all had a great time and apart from the lift being out of order, the accommodation, meals and service could not be faulted. The Manageress and all the staff were most helpful and kind.

Members enjoyed our evening entertainment and our outings during the day although the weather was not very good. The winner of our fancy dress competition was Janice Bond, second was Pamela Sussex and third was Brenda Griffiths.



Fancy dress competition winner Janice Bond,

P & E E SHOEBURYNNESS WRAC 13TH BIENNIAL REUNION Janet James

Once again, and at the same location in Barford as in 2015, we held our Shoeburyness reunion, yet again organised by Jo Crutcher and her collective of enthusiastic helpers. Our numbers are holding up remarkably well, especially given that the unit was disbanded in the mid-80s when the ranges were civilianised; and most of those who attended our reunion in 2015 were able to make the rendezvous again. This made a total of around 40 participants, of whom there were 23 former WRAC members, both EAsG and admin staff, and included many husbands who also served at the P & E E.

We did not have any 'newbies' attending this year, but through the photographs in Lioness in 2016 we were thrilled to discover that one of our 'old girls', Joan McLoughlin, has become a Chelsea Pensioner and we have been able to make contact.

The WRAC company/detachment at Shoebury was never a very large unit so any new former colleagues who may appear on the horizon are doubly welcome. Once again....are there any more of you out there? Do get in touch if there are. Next reunion hopefully in 2019.



Back Row: L-R: Eileen Kenny, Erica Barnes, Monica Lucas, Gill Pulger, Diane Want, Dianne Stafford, Jo Crutcher, Cynthia Dowers, Andrea Kewin, Joyce Giles, Sue Bryan, Lynda Hole, Christine Bugg, Janet Bagnell; Front Row: L-R: Ann Cresswell, Mandy Knight, Dee Calladine, Mary Roger, Janet James, Christine Leaman, Sheila Dodsworth, Sandy Hall

PTI's FLY TO THE SUN Kate Bettison

An invitation to spend a week in sunny Cyprus needed no second thoughts. Josette Foster, who lives there fairly permanently in her stunning villa, decided last year that another two years was too long without seeing her favourite people! So it was that a dozen of us flew out to Paphos in October for a week of sun, sea and frolic.

We were accommodated in some self-catering apartments surrounding a pool with the beach not too far away, so it wasn't long before the swimming costumes were out with the water beckoning. The first day was spent relaxing on the beach to eradicate any potential jet lag! Plenty of swims and some ball games were the order of the day.



Josette had devised a fairly hectic programme for us, so we were able to see some of the sites and visit some of her favourite restaurants. We had three cars between us, so transport was not an issue. There was one occasion when three of our adventurous party, with an average age of sixty-five, decided to parasail around Paphos Bay from a boat. The rest of us gazed in amazement at their bravery!

We had good cause for a celebration during the week, with Sue Jennings celebrating a 'half way there' birthday. There were high jinks in the morning as our modelling and make-up expert, Sheila Lloyd-Graham, made everyone up and dressed us all in a variety of glamorous clothing, much of it from the local charity shop. There were various poolside poses in Sheila's bright red costume for the older model, much to the amusement of the other residents. In the evening, we went for a celebration meal, complete with a lovely cake for Sue.

Unfortunately, there were a few instances of food poisoning during the week, with the suffering souls being confined to camp. However the amusing side to this was when we put a 'sick bay' and 'medical centre' sign outside two of the apartments a lady of foreign extraction banged on the door demanding a bandage. She wasn't too amused to be sent to Reception by our 'self-appointed MO' Pat Rosewell.

On our last day, we visited Aphrodite's Rock, which promises eternal youth to all those who manage to swim around it. Sadly, despite our best efforts, we are all still waiting! We returned home thoroughly refreshed and full of happy memories of a fantastic week. Josette did a superb job with the organisation, even hinting that we might be invited back. Our fingers will remain crossed!

N.B. Our next PT Reunion will be held in Aldershot from 14 - 16 September 2018.

BIRGELIN VETERANS ASSOCIATION REUNION WEEKEND SEPTEMBER 2017 Wendy Wright

President: Maj (Retd) Fred Searle Vice: Peter Westwell
Chairman: Keith Clarke Vice: Ron Miller
Treasurer: Mike Morby Secretary: Gwen Sangster

This was my 2nd time at the reunion weekend so we knew what to expect of the quirky Cavendish Hotel. With our expectations at rock bottom we were pleasantly surprised by our room which was at least clean and comfortable. The food was fine and

Mick Morby manages to secure rock bottom rates – we definitely got our money's worth.

The first port of call is of course the bar. The gang congregated on the terrace, though this year some who had rather overdone the cake and prosecco on the train on the way down from "up north", were sleeping it off.

I remember my trepidation from the previous year when I was to introduce my husband who has no connection to Birgeline or the forces. It didn't matter – he was warmly welcomed as one of our own, as are quite a group of others in similar situations.

After dinner in the hotel we repair to the bar (again) where entertainment by the hotel is laid on - it is singer /entertainer – that's their description not ours!! No matter – we had a great night – it was just like being back in the mess.

Next day is your own to do as you please. Most stagger down to the water front and re-group at TAC HQ - AKA Vaughan's Wine Bar!! Some manage a bit of shopping on the way, some even take the ferry to Brixham and back, but whenever you get there, there is bound to be a group of us. Note to self – Plymouth Gin is very strong and if you drink it neat the walk up the hill back to the hotel is going to be very difficult!

Saturday Evening is the Gala Dinner – The committee put in a lot of work to make this a lovely evening. We all dress in our best. The room has been adorned specially for us by our committee. The food is good, the wine is flowing and the hotel entertainment this evening is better. So much so he puts us on FB live to prove to his prospective clients what a good time we were having.



L - R: Jean Morby, Wendy Wright (nee Howe then Coulling), Ida Carmichael (nee Fowler)

Sunday – I don't remember much about the breakfast, but it is followed by the AGM which showed me how much work had gone into keeping this group going, but not only that but the charitable works they do too. It turns out that the easiest way for the BVA to keep going is to make it a bit less official and more of a lunch club / weekend-away club. From my point of view not much will have changed except I will have saved myself the £5 membership fee.

This is followed by a route march to the pretty little village of Cockington. It is not more than a couple of miles away and guess what? we congregate at the one and only pub there too.

We all regroup for our evening meal and entertainment back at the hotel, but for my part I think I had run out of energy by now.

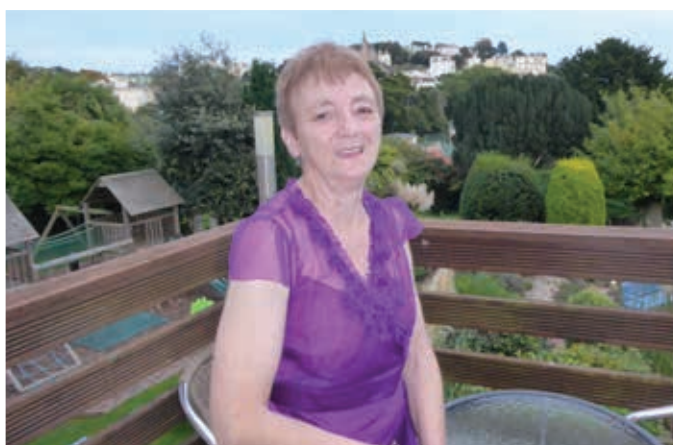
Monday morning is breakfast and farewells and promises to keep in touch.

We really enjoy this weekend away. I especially like the feeling you get of being part of the troop again. In fact, when it came to the decision whether to attend this year, it was my non-military husband who wanted to go almost more than me. He certainly has been made to feel very welcome. We have made some really lovely new friends and its great to catch up with some old ones too. Thanks to all who have made this weekend such a success.

I haven't touched a drop of booze since that weekend, we need to dry out in time for next year.

So if you served with 1 Wireless Regiment / 13 Signals Regiment (Radio) or any of their sub-units, regardless of service, agency, gender, rank or Corps, or even if you were a dependant, then why not join us next year, it truly is a fantastic weekend. So put it in your diary for 21-24 September 2018 and contact the BVA website www.birgelenets.org. You can stay for 1, 2, 3 or 4 nights or just come to the Gala dinner on the Saturday night, the choice is yours.

Report by Wendy Wright (nee Howe then Coulling) 1977 – 1984 (mostly 3 sqn)



Pat Hickman (nee Williams)



Maj Helen Jephcote and husband Jeff

Mrs Alison Halford-McLeod Fife & Tayside Branch

Alison has been a member of Fife and Tayside Branch for 20 years and is currently holding the post of Treasurer, which she does with great efficiency. Alison brought to the Branch her wide experience of the Regular Army and her knowledge and organisational skills are a very valuable asset which is much appreciated by the other Office Bearers. Although Alison is not able to attend Branch meetings as regularly as in the past, her enthusiasm is unaffected, and she maintains a conscientious and keen interest in all Branch affairs. Alison is a valued attendee at Area events where her contribution to discussions is always pertinent and I value her thoughts and input. Thank you, Alison, from all of us for what you have done and continue to do for the Association here in Scotland. It is very much appreciated.

Mrs Ann Page Fife & Tayside Branch

Ann Page has been a member of Fife and Tayside Branch for at least 30 years. She has never held a post within the Branch but is a reliable and conscientious member who has supported the Branch through thick and thin. She makes every attempt to attend everything that she possibly can and particularly the monthly lunches. Her Branch Chair writes that "members like Ann are the bedrock of any Branch", and this is true. Without ladies like Ann who make such a significant contribution to the Association, our Branches would be much poorer places. Whenever I visit Fife and Tayside, Ann is there and I am always pleased to see her at the AGM. Thank you, Ann for your many years of support to Fife and Tayside Branch and the Association as a whole. I know that you are finding things a little more difficult now, but be in no doubt that your continued support is appreciated by us all.

Mrs Lilia Bell Fife & Tayside

Lily was one of the founding members of Fife and Tayside Branch back in the mid 1980's and brought with her wide experience from the Territorial Army and Cadet Service which she has put to tremendous use. Lily has a common-sense approach which combined with a wonderful sense of humour has helped guide Fife and Tayside Branch through the peaks and troughs of the past 30 years. Although she has not held a formal position, Lily is very well regarded by the membership, is reliable, conscientious and a key member of the team. Lily represents the Branch at Area Committee meetings where her input and support is invaluable to the Area Office Bearers. Lily's organisational skills are outstanding and anything she sets her mind to will be achieved to the very highest standard. Thank you, Lily from all of us for the huge contribution you have made to Fife and Tayside Branch, Scottish Area and the Association as a whole, it is very much appreciated by us all.

Mrs Florence Green Fife & Tayside

Florence Green has been a member of Fife and Tayside Branch for 25 years during which she held the post of Treasurer from 1995 to 2008. Florence has a keen and ongoing interest in the progress of the Branch and is a key contributor who can be relied upon to provide valid and relevant comments to all discussions.

Florence has a particular interest in the welfare of the members and I know this is very much valued and respected by all the ladies. Florence often represents the Branch at Area Committee meetings where her input is valued a great deal. The Area AGM would not be the same without Florence organising the raffle, which she does with huge enthusiasm and a great deal of preparation prior to the event. A big thank you from us all Florence for your support to the Association at all levels.

The Lady Martha Bruce Fife & Tayside

Lady Martha was the instigator of the Fife and Tayside Branch in the mid 80's and was Chair of the Branch between 1987 and 2002. Lady Martha brought to this post her wartime, Territorial Army and Prison Service experience. She has a strong sense of duty and a most practical approach to everything, which combined with her compassionate and encouraging advice, remains hugely valued by the Office Bearers at Fife and Tayside. Lady Martha is a very respected member of the Association here in Scotland and as Chair, I very much value her willingness to provide me with wise counsel which is always pertinent and welcomed. Lady Martha is a very keen supporter of the WRAC Association, attends meetings and events whenever able and we feel very privileged to have her with us here in Scotland. Thank you, Lady Martha, for all that you have done in establishing and supporting the Fife and Tayside Branch and the WRAC Association.

JOYCE LOGAN Stirling Branch

Joyce has been a key member of Stirling Branch for many years and currently the Treasurer, a post she moved into in 2012 when sadly the previous Treasurer passed away. Joyce took up the post with her typical enthusiasm and has brought to it a very caring and compassionate attitude. She sends cards and flowers to those who are unwell or in hospital which is very much appreciated. Despite her own difficulties, Joyce does not let anything deter her from being a regular attendee at meetings and supports all Branch activities. During a period of ill health, the Branch Chair very much appreciated Joyce taking the time to visit her and brief her on meetings in order that she was kept up to date. Joyce is a keen supporter of Area events and it is always a pleasure to see her at the AGM where she is willing to give a hand if needed. Thank you very much Joyce for all that you are doing in Stirling Branch and the Association.



Obituaries - Their Final Salute

Eileen Carter / Proctor MBE TD



I am speaking to you today not only as a Life Vice President of the Women's Royal Army Corps Association, but also as one who is proud and privileged to call Eileen my friend.

Eileen joined the Territorial Army in May 1957 as a potential driver in the RASC but on moving to Northern Ireland in 1959 she served with the Royal Signals and remained with them for the rest of her career. Due to her husband's occupation they moved almost every year, so Eileen served with many regiments throughout the UK.

Not surprisingly, her leadership and personal qualities were soon recognised and in November 1961 she was commissioned into the WRAC TA. By then she was with 53(W) Signal Regiment and she stayed there for four years, before moving to the London area where she served with various regiments as a Troop Officer. She was awarded the Territorial Decoration (TD) in 1971 for her loyal and dedicated service. In 1974 she became a Permanent Staff Officer and was posted to 31 Signal Regiment as Officer Commanding 47 Signal Squadron and as OC WRAC to the Regiment; she stayed there for 15 years until her retirement in January 1989. She was honoured with an MBE that year in recognition of her exceptional and outstanding career both within the Royal Signals and the WRAC.

As a WRAC TA Officer, Eileen was fully integrated into the WRAC Chain of Command and was included in all Corps activities both at work and socially. She came under the jurisdiction of Commander WRAC LONDON District during her time at 31 Signal Regt, and one of these Commanders, Col Nan Robertson, is in the congregation today. She recalls that Eileen was an absolute 'Gem' as OC WRAC and that her attention to detail and commitment to the women in the regiment were 'second to none'. On one occasion when 31 Signal Regt was on Exercise in Belgium, Col Nan went to visit Eileen and her girls 'in the field'. When it was time for the evening meal, in true Eileen style, the Dinner duly appeared; not only was it a cordon bleu masterpiece finishing with Nan's favourite dessert of Pavlova, but it was also beautifully served on a table covered in a white tablecloth with a jam jar of wild flowers to provide the finishing touch! On another occasion, Eileen invited Col Nan and Arthur Lowe (better known as Captain Mainwaring!) to Lunch at the Regiment's HQ at Princess Louise's TA Centre in Hammersmith because this was the infamous drill hall used in 'Dad's Army'. During her service Eileen became firm friends with Brigadier Anne Field,

who was a former Director WRAC and a Life Vice President of the Association. The two of them socialised frequently, going on trips, battlefield tours, lunching at the Army and Navy Club, or enjoying concerts together; they were a formidable pair and great fun to be with.

Eileen became very active within the WRAC Association when the WRAC was disbanded in 1992 and she became Area Chairman of London Area, an appointment she held until her move to Wales in 2008. London Area comprised of Greater London Branch, London Branch and Luton Branch. She was an extremely diligent and conscientious Area Chairman and knew ALL her members well (she was still that OC WRAC at heart). For over 20 years she and her 'London ladies' attended and supported the Vice President at the Association plot at the Annual Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey.

She was a very active member of Council and never missed a Meeting, an AGM or a Grand Reunion. Her contribution at meetings was always measured and pragmatic; during my tenure as Vice President, I would often seek Eileen's advice on controversial or sensitive issues and she never failed me. She was also a stalwart member of the WRAC Benevolent Fund Grants Committee which benefited greatly from her experience and wisdom. When she retired to Wales she was elected an Association Life Vice President; a fitting accolade for such devoted service.

Although her move to Wales meant that she could no longer be Area Chair of London, she still kept in close contact with her London ladies by letter and telephone. They greatly respected and admired her and I know they will remember her with the greatest affection. On arrival in Wales Eileen quickly joined the activities of Wales and the West Area, becoming a staunch member of Marches and Mid Wales Branch and despite her ill health latterly she still made it to the meetings.

Eileen was a very special person and a great contributor; an exceptional woman who dedicated her life to the service of others. As a former Vice President of the Association I consider Eileen to be totally unique and completely irreplaceable; we shall not see her like again. If I could have given a 'Lifetime Achievements Award' to any member of our Association it would have gone to Eileen.

Thank you Eileen for touching all our lives along the way and for the legacy you have left us – we will endeavour to continue to uphold your high standards and outstanding service within the Association. We will certainly be the poorer without you.

Our Corps motto, 'Gentle in manner, Resolute in deed' truly epitomises Eileen. I cannot think of a more fitting Epitaph.

Eileen, we salute you!

Sue Westlake

Additional information received from Robert Carter, her son in Somerset:

Mr Carter sent a letter saying that "within her papers, we found the enclosed biography of her Army life, with the request that we forward it to you". It was also sent to the Berkshire Yeomanry Signal Squadron and Middlesex Yeomanry Association.

Eileen joined the Territorial Army in 1957 and served until 1989. She joined 303 Battalion WRAC in Southend on Sea and intended to become a driver. At that time she was married with two small children, and being married to a civil engineer meant moving around the country quite regularly.

After only a few months, she moved across the Thames to join 301 Battalion WRAC in Chatham. From there it was across the Irish Sea to Belfast to join 40 (Ulster) Regiment Royal Signals; and so began a new career with the Royal Signals, to become a BIII Switchboard operator.

Whilst there it was suggested Eileen seriously think about being Commissioned, and after moving to The Wirral and serving with 42 (Lancs) Signal Regiment in Liverpool, that goal was reached.

In January 1961, the newly commissioner 2nd Lieutenant went to live in Swansea and served four years with the 53 (Welsh) Signal Regiment in Cardiff. In that time she was promoted to Captain and served in various capacities before moving to the London Area in 1966. After a brief spell of being attached to 34 (Middlesex) Signal Regiment, Eileen felt she could not ask the Ministry of Defence for another transfer.

However, fate stepped in and a knock on the door requested a female officer to serve with 805 Signal Troop in Reading. On the re-organisation of the TA, the Troop was moved to Windsor to serve as part of 84 (Berkshire Yeomanry) Signal Squadron which was to become part of the newly formed 71 Signal Regiment, and Eileen served as a Troop Officer in 885 Troop with Lord Glanusk.

In 1974 Eileen sadly became divorced but subsequently became a permanent Staff Administrative Officer with 31 (GL) Signal Regiment based at 47 (Middlesex Yeomanry) Signal Squadron in Harrow. At that time, a Regiment with a percentage of WRAC was entitled to a female PSAO.

She quickly became the Senior WRAC Officer in the Regiment, and in that role became very involved with the WRAC element at London District, and found herself advising on TA matters and giving lectures at Camberley and Sandhurst to the WRAC Regular Officer Cadets on "The demands of being 'Twice a Citizen'". Eileen officially retired in January 1989 and was awarded the MBE – she has lived, loved and thoroughly enjoyed her years of service but never became a driver!

She has been one the founder members of the Royal Signals Association Branch formed in Reading in 1970, and a Member of the WRAC Association since 1976. She became the London Area Chairman of the WRAC Association where she served until her move to Wales in 2008, and was made a Life Vice President on the Association in January 2010.

Col. Vere Fisher **2nd September 1921 - 31st July 2017**



Good Afternoon. For those of you that don't know, or know of me, I am Jayne Marlin, Colonel Vere Fisher was my Great Aunt, and so for those of you that knew her as Vere please grant me that I will call her Auntie.

Auntie was a very strong influence and presence in our family, and her guidance and support will be greatly missed. For me personally I feel a great loss at her passing, even though I know she had a fabulous and enjoyable life both in the Army and in her Retirement.

Auntie had her family with us. We are now spread all over the UK, from England to Scotland & Ireland. She also had a family here in Stoke with her great friends Charles and Elizabeth Mayhew, and their children, Tim, Sarah and Ben. She spent many a happy Christmas with them and the stories we heard about those times, always of fun and laughter. She always enjoyed, and was very thankful for, their continued friendship and support over the years.

Auntie was always keen to hear about how we were all doing and what our hopes and dreams were. She was always very encouraging of anything sporty or academic, and these were things she was well informed on. As many of you know, within her Army career she enjoyed hockey, golf, and I believe she was also the only female officer to accompany the Marines on their ski training in the Norway Mountains. This I believe had its own disadvantages, as Auntie would say "on how and where to spend a penny"

Aunties Life

Auntie was born and brought up in Devonport, which is now the outskirts of Plymouth and educated at Devonport High School for Girls. On leaving school, she passed the Civil Service exam and was working as the Deed Clerk & Cable officer in Whitehall, London. War was declared the day before Auntie turned 18. As Auntie's work was a reserved occupation, the fact that she wanted to join the forces, was a NO GO.. but after 12 months, and in Aunties words, "of nagging them", she was allowed to enlist.

As a servicewoman she trained as a Kine Theodolite operator. This was a very small band of women working with the Ack-Ack units during the war. The Army soon recognised Auntie's unique leadership skills and she was told that she would be applying for a commission, "As this was what the Army wanted". Auntie joined the ATS in November 1944. After the war Auntie continued her service, and in 1949 she became a W.R.A.C. Officer on its formation as a full Corporal in the regular Army.

During her service Auntie, climbed the ranks, and earned the respect of all who knew her for her approachability, fairness and good humour, and always looking immaculate. After reading through letters written about Auntie as she moved from post to post, there is a very similar thread to them all, and that is she would be great in her next post and also would be sorely missed from her current post. Apart from the ones which have a small note in Auntie's writing saying "writer anti women in Army!" .. well they didn't know Auntie that well did they. Copies of these letters I have with me and will be in the Old school later.

Having spoken with several ladies who served under Auntie, she was recognised at the PT matriarch, and will be sorely missed. The training and career management of her ladies was very important.

Auntie took up her last post as Commandant of the W.R.A.C. Training Centre at Guildford. It is from this position in 1976 that she retired and returned to her beloved Cornwall.

In 1974, with retirement looming, Auntie purchased a cottage, 'Treovis Mill' in Luckett, which is where she retired to. At the time I was 5, and my sister Sam was born that summer.

In our summer holidays, that is my sister and I, used to come down and spend several weeks at a time with Auntie. This is something that Auntie also did with my Mum, Sharon and my Uncle Steven, for special days out and holidays at Whitsands Bay. Village life was very important to Auntie, she was always interested in who was doing what and wanted to be involved in her own way. I'm sure that you all have many stories on this.

As you will all be aware Auntie liked things organised and planned. During our summers, the menus were all planned and organised - no rabbit food was always the order of the day. The trips were organised, and the programme for the Stoke Climsland flower Show acquired. We used to spend hours down at the ford looking for stones and leaves and all sorts of things to make stone animals or raking through bags of potatoes looking for the best shape to make into something to enter into the Show. One year, Sam won best prize for this with Dougal, the potato.

For me I will never forget the year that I entered the adult Victoria sponge cake competition - I was so proud of that cake, especially as I won 1st Prize. That year I beat Mrs Elizabeth Mayhew's sponge I never entered again, as I couldn't get any cake as good as that one. Also, I was so astounded that I beat Mrs Mayhew's cake as hers were exceptional, as many here will know.

When we went out, even for a walk to the Horsebridge pub, (they have a great beer garden), we always had to look smart, hair done and always attention to detail. Auntie always dressed immaculately, her handbags and shoes always matched and depending on the weather and what was happening, gloves as well.

There was one year that my Mum put my sister & I on the train from Reading to Plymouth on our own, I knew where to get ready to get off as the train goes right along the seafront, Plymouth is not far after that. Well, Mum phoned Auntie and told her that we were on the train and what carriage we were in. Auntie left Luckett not long after that call as she had to make sure that she was on the platform waiting for us. She was so relieved when we got off the train. She must have been concerned to stand on the platform for hours waiting for us. We had a fabulous summer that year, as we did every year. Sam continued to stay with Auntie for

several years after I stopped coming down, and the process was the same. Fun and games had by all.

Auntie's birds were important to her; every morning she would feed them and it was always the same routine - crumb the brown bread into a box, clean the bird table and then put seed on the table for the table birds, put the bread crumbs along the wall for the birds that didn't like the table and then fill the nut hangers. The birds would all be sitting in the garden trees waiting for their breakfast. Then we would have ours.

During Auntie's life she had many charities that she sponsored. I could talk for ages just on this, but Auntie was always quiet and didn't fuss about this part of her life. She has sponsored numerous children through their education in Lebanon & Burundi, there are so many other areas that she touched the lives of so many people.

Auntie, in retirement as in her Army career, continued to travel all over the world. She travelled a lot with her partner in crime, Caroline Parkinson. The cruise boats became a great way for them to see places - one trip that they went to was Yugoslavia, and that was the year the troubles started out there. Auntie was never one to shy away from anything.

In 1997 Caroline & Auntie moved in next door to each other here in Stoke. Auntie continued to be involved in village life, enjoying community lunches and music recitals. She also became a key holder for the church - Auntie would open and lock the church on a daily basis, hence her plot out front so that she can watch to make sure this happened correctly.

Auntie, know that you will always be remembered in the hearts and minds of all the people whose lives you touched.

Sleep well.

Notes on Vere Fisher's military life by Sue Westlake

Vere joined the ATS as a servicewoman in the trade of Kine Theodolite operator, a very small and select band of young women working with the AckAck (Anti Aircraft) units during the war. Her leadership and personal qualities were soon recognised and she was commissioned into the ATS in Nov 1944. She remained in the Service after the War and became a WRAC Officer on its formation in Feb 1949 as a full time Corps in the Regular Army. She had various postings during her long and distinguished career (which you may be able to name, sadly I don't have a record of Service for her). One that she enjoyed particularly was Assistant Inspector Physical Training (AIPT) at the Army School Of Physical Training in Aldershot about which Kate Bettison will be writing to you separately. Her last two postings were as Officer in Charge WRAC Manning and Records Office in Winchester, responsible for the career management and postings of all WRAC servicewomen and finally as Commandant, WRAC Training Centre at Guildford, a prestigious appointment from where she retired and returned to her beloved Cornwall in 1976. I was fortunate to serve with her in that final posting at Guildford. As a young Captain I was slightly in awe of Col Vere because she was the epitome of what a WRAC Officer should be: always immaculately turned out in uniform and civilian clothes with never a hair out of place, extremely elegant and disarmingly charming. She was held in extremely high regard by all her staff for her firm but fair leadership; yet underneath that Commandant's veneer she had a great sense of humour and was fun to be around. I was fortunate to see her from time to time during her retirement years at PTI Reunions (which she never missed until frailty prevented her from travelling), at the WRAC

Officers Dining Club and, latterly, in her residential home. On my last visit to see her just before Xmas last year she was thrilled to tell me that she had chosen and 'got her plot' at Stoke Climsland Churchyard for her Ashes to be interred. Organised and efficient to the end. She never changed and remained that same immaculate, elegant lady right to the very end of her life. She will be sadly missed and will be remembered with the greatest of affection and respect by all her WRAC colleagues. Life certainly will be the poorer without her.

Reflections on Vere Fisher by Kate Bettison

Colonel Vere will be best remembered by the WRAC Physical Training Instructors, when she was a Major in the post of Assistant Inspector of Physical Training, based in Aldershot, from 1967 to 1969. She was responsible for the overall training, career development, and postings of all the PTI's. Col Vere was much respected by all who knew her, for her approachability, fairness and good humour.

In retirement, she travelled up to Aldershot for our PTI Reunions whenever she could manage it. In 2010 she was thrilled to be invited to open the WRAC PT Exhibition in the Army Physical Training Corp Museum, before attending, with us all, the 150th Anniversary Dinner of the Army Physical Training Corp. An evening she very much enjoyed.

Col Vere was recognised as our PT matriarch and will be sorely missed.

BRENDA BARKER (Nee HALL) 1951 - 2017



Brenda was born in North Tyneside on the 18th September 1951. As a young 17 year old Brenda joined the WRAC in October 1968. After completing her basic training at Guildford she was posted to the WRAC PT Wing for PTI training course in Aldershot.

After qualifying, she was selected to join the Parachute Regiment/ Army Physical Training Corps/Women's Royal Army Corps combined Gymnastic display team that was part of the British Tournament and Tattoo that was to tour North America and Canada. The team toured from September to December 1969 and visited 28 American and Canadian Cities. Brenda was one of only 6 WRAC members in the team alongside 40 male gymnasts. After her return to UK Brenda was posted to 12 Training Reg RCT in Aldershot and to the RAC Centre Bovington.

Brenda left the WRAC and met her husband Rob, and 18 years ago they both moved to Millena, Alicante. Brenda joined the WRAC Mediterranean Branch and despite having suffered an illness was still able to join her PTI friends at "Benidorm Babes 3". Sadly it was her first and last but she left us all great memories and said how happy she was to have met up with all the girls again.

BARBARA BROWN (nee Sampson) ATS/WRAC (W/311111) 3 October 1926 – 5 October 2017



Barbara Brown (nee Sampson) had one sibling John, and was born, educated and grew up in Moorthorpe, near Pontefract, West Yorkshire. She worked briefly as a shop assistant at a milliners' shop before she enlisted in the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) aged 18 in 1944 and served until 1951. She spent 7 years in the Royal Signals, employed as a switchboard operator and later a supervisor. She served at HQ Northern Command, 50 (N) Div, Sandhurst and 69 Bde HQ Langton York prior to being posted overseas to the Middle East; GHQ MELF Cairo in 1946, GHQ Palestine in 1947 and GHQ FAYID the Suez Canal zone of Egypt in 1948. She was re-engaged into the Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC) on its formation in 1949 and had short postings to Didcot and Aldershot (where she was promoted Sergeant) before being posted overseas to Singapore; GHQ FARELF and HQ Nee Soon during 1949-51. She looked back on her Army days with great affection, cherishing the memories, particularly her time in Palestine – which enabled her to celebrate Christmas in the Holy Land. She remained in contact with friends she made when she joined the Army.

In 1950, whilst posted to Singapore on leave in Malaya, she met her future husband Kenneth William 'Rusty' who was an instructor at FARELF Jungle Warfare School, Johore Bahru, Malaya, and after a short romance they married at Tanglin Garrison church and honeymooned in the Cameron Highlands, Pahang, Malaya. Due to the rules of service in 1951 she had to tender her resignation on starting a family. During her military service she was awarded three medals; War Medal 1939 – 1945, General Service Medal with clasp Palestine 1945 – 1948 and General Service Medal with clasp Malaya.

Following her marriage Barbara devoted herself to family life - her daughters Barbara Ann (born in Yorkshire in 1951) and Lesley Philippa (in Dorset in 1955). The family accompanied Rusty on his posting to Accra, Ghana, West Africa in 1957-59 and various postings to BAOR, Germany during the 1960s. On returning to the UK in the late 1960s she worked part-time as a school lunchtime playground attendant.

In the early 1970s she returned to a military environment when she became a civil servant with the Ministry of Defence at Tidworth. When Rusty retired from the Army in 1974, the family purchased a home in Andover and Barbara worked at HQ Support Command and the former HQ Maintenance Command RAF Andover. She subsequently transferred to Logistic Executive (Army) in 1977 when the Army moved in. She completed her career working as clerical support at the Ministry of Defence, retiring in 1991 at the age of 65.

In addition to her family and children she spent several years as a Tawny Owl with the Tidworth Garrison Brownies; she enjoyed local social club theatre trips and outings, cruises with her husband and reading; her two seal-point Siamese cats (Pye and Paris) and garden also gave her great enjoyment.

Over the last few years Barbara suffered failing health and mobility issues but this did not dampen her cheerful disposition or outlook on life. Barbara passed away peacefully on 5 October two days after her 91st birthday in The Countess of Brecknock Hospice, Andover. Her husband Rusty and daughter Pip were by her side.

A devoted wife for 67 years, a loving mother, Barbara leaves behind her husband Rusty and two daughters Barbara Ann (Ann) and Lesley Philippa (Pip) and a grandchild and great grandchild.

Lesley Philippa (Pip) Brown (daughter)

Ruth Baxter, ex-WAAF

Little Ruth was a wartime WAAF who worked at Bletchley Park during the war. Years later (like so many) she found out through conversations about the Branch and promptly joined. A rather quiet lady, she enjoyed meetings and trips out. Sadly she was admitted to a very small private care home. I visited her there periodically and members sent cards – we only found out she had passed away when I telephoned the care home for a check-up. They informed me of the news and I contacted the daughter who didn't think of informing us. Those of use who knew Ruth were quite upset.

Jean Doe

Doris Eileen Connolly (nee Collins) 22nd March 1926 - 17th June 2017



Doris was born and educated in the City of Portsmouth, going on to be employed as a junior civil servant in H.M. Dockyards. Doris joined the ATS in 1943 when she was seventeen and served with 156(M) Anti Aircraft Regt also 497 Battery, RA until December 1946 until she met and married her husband, Malcolm. Together they were successful in the retail trade until 1997 when they both retired and settled into the village of Ludgershall. Doris was one of the founders of the WRAC Branch in Andover and was Treasurer until it closed. Doris will always be remembered with great affection, respect and gratitude.

Malcolm Connolly

Joan Garwood, Chaplains Assistant on 19 October 2017

Joan may be remembered by some as she served as Chaplains Assistant at depot for a while and at Bicester, and probably elsewhere; she was a lovely lady. Joan was of a very good age and continued to work for her Lord and others around her into retirement. Joan died at her home in Bromley, Kent, last October; and the funeral was held at her home church.

God Bless Sue Wing

Mary Green, nee Fry 1 January 1922 – 22 September 2017



Mary was born in Bolney, Sussex and enlisted in the ATS on 22 April 1941, aged 19. She was stationed at Crowborough, where she passed various trade tests in cookery and achieved the rank of L.Cpl. Whilst at Crowborough, Mary met Stanley Green, who was serving in the RAF. Mary married Stanley in November 1945 and was discharged from the ATS on 19 January 1946.

Mary and Stanley had three children and four grandchildren. In 1981, they moved to Rustington, in Sussex where they lived in a bungalow with a large garden. Mary loved her garden and had green fingers, anything would grow for her. Stanley died in 1997, and Mary remained alone in the bungalow, but always with a dog for company. Sadly, Mary had to move to a nursing home in September 2016, as osteoporosis had affected her spine so badly that she could no longer walk. She died at the nursing home a year later.

Nina Teeder (daughter)

Mrs Noreen Beryl Harvey Died on the 18th August 2017

Mrs Harvey was a much loved and valued member of Bristol Branch. Noreen was ex-ATS and served from August 1942 to July 1945. Her 'claim to fame' was that she once danced with Richard Burton when she was stationed in Wales.

Eight members of Bristol Branch attended her funeral and formed a guard of honour. I spoke our Association Prayer at the service and we all paid our respects to her.

Her two daughters, who used to take it in turns to bring her to our meetings, are going to join us at our meeting in December when we hold our Xmas Bring and Buy and have Christmas treats; this is something their mum always looked forward to.

Jackie Naysmith MBE Bristol Branch Secretary

Betty Gladys Rush

Sad to report that one of our founder members, Betty Rush, died rather suddenly. Apparently she had a fall and passed away shortly afterwards. Betty was rather frail and moved into a rest home where she was very happy and taught other residents how to play scrabble – that was typical of her!!

During her very active years in the Branch, she took many posts on the committee, never afraid to express her opinion! Every year she held a tea party in her garden and it was always a lovely day!!

Jean Doe

Winifred Anne Stewart 14th November 2017

Winifred, known to her family and friends as Anne, served in Egypt during her time in the WRAC. In later years Anne joined the Luton Branch WRACA where she became the assistant Standard Bearer, carrying the Standard for the branch when Eleri Pirie was unable to do so. Unfortunately Anne developed Parkinson's Disease and was in a care home in Dunstable, but for the last few years was moved to a care home in Barnsley to be near her daughter, where she died on November the 14th.

Anne was valued by all her friends and will be missed.

Kathy Kyne Ex Secretary of the Luton Branch

LAST POST

BRETT, Miss Mary of Ovingdean, East Sussex, on 12th November 2017 (ATS)
BUTCHER, Beryl, of Lincoln, on 21 November 2017 (WRAC)
CARR, Mrs Nora, of Weymouth, on 31 October 2017 (ATS)
CONNOLLY, Mrs Doris, of Andover, Hampshire, on 17 June 2017 (ATS)
DAVIDSON, Ms Liz, of Bridlington, on 24 December 2017 (WRAC/RAPC)
DAVIS, Mrs Dorothy, of Camberley, Surrey, on 23 October 2017 (WRAC)
DE-VALL, Mrs Joan, of Leicester, on 26 January 2018 (ATS)
FICK, Mrs Margaret, of Redcar, Cleveland, on 26 December 2017 (ATS)
FORREST, Miss J, of Loughborough, on 2 September 2017 (WRAC)
GREEN, Mrs Mary, of Rustington West Sussex on 22 September 2017 (ATS)
GREIG, Miss Margaret, of Hastings East Sussex on 3 October 2017 (WRAC)
HAMPTON, Mrs Margaret, of Cleveland, on 24 October 2013 [informed Jan 2018] (ATS)
HARVEY, Mrs Noreen, of Bristol, on 18 August 2018 (ATS)
HAY, Mrs Mary, of Needham Market, Suffolk, on 7th June 2017 (ATS)
LITTLER, Mrs Mary Ellena, of Wrexham Clwyd, on 21st July 2017 (ATS)
LUCKETT, Miss Mary, of Orkney Islands, on 10th August 2017 (WRAC)
MARTIN, Mrs Sheila Gwendline (nee Hooker), of Fielding, New Zealand, on 14 October 2017 (ATS)
McCARTHY, Mrs Yvonne, of Hinkley Leics, on 25 September 2017 (WRAC)
McGARRY, Miss Maureen, of Tenterden Kent, on 22 February 2017 (ATS)
PARKES, Miss Doris, of Llanymynech, on 12th December 2017 (ATS)
PETERS, Mrs Doreen, of Ashby De La Zouch, Leicestershire, on 8 August 2017 (ATS)
PHILLIPSON, Mrs Violet Mabel, of Moreton Wirral, on 2nd November 2017 (ATS)
POWELL, Miss Hazel, of York, on 24th January 2018 (WRAC)
RIVETT-CARNAC (formerly Elsey), Mrs Ann (known as Doey), of Norwich, on 30 August 2017
SANSOM, Mrs Kathleen, of Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, on 19 January 2018 (ATS)
SHARP, Mrs Brenda, of Penryn, Cornwall on 3 February 2018 (ATS)
WARREN, Mrs Irene nee Burman, of Norwich, on 1st December 2017 (ATS)

CORRECTION (from 17/2 edition)

HUGHES, Miss Pamela, of Countesthorpe - passed away 07 February 2017 (not 08 February, as printed)



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



IN MEMORIAM

During Financial Year 2017 kind donations were made by individuals and Branches in memory of the following personnel:

The Late Esther Mary Pring	The Late Eleanor Bowles	The Late Audrey Purton OBE
The Late Mary Soames OBE	The Late Jean MacDowell MBE	The Late Bridget Forbes-Adam MBE
The Late Joan Freeland	The Late Laurretta Ruth Arnold	The Late Imogene (Teddy) Bray
The Late Margery Margarette Sealey	The Late Audrey Clarkson	The Late Audrey Annie Juby
The Late Edith Francis	The Late Margaret Liddell	The Late Mary Hay
The Late Kate Arnold	The Late Frances Cook	The Late Irene Wardrobe

LEGACIES

During Financial Year 2017 the Association very much appreciated the legacies received from the following, which varied from £200 to £60,000 but every penny of which will ensure the continued work of the Association:

The Late Audrey Purton	The Late Helen Roberta Emmerson	The Late Rosemary Joan Watson
The Late Eileen Phyllis Green	The Late Margaret Ritchie	The Late Violet Elsie Moll
The Late Doreen Joan Peters	The Late Imogene 'Teddy' Bray	The Late B Harper-Nelson
The Late Elizabeth Waller	The Late Ellen Margaret Sheridan	The Late Phyllis Marie Pye
The Late Betty Venworth		The Late Eric Arthur Vallis

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