



The  
Regimental Association  
of  
The Queen's Own Buffs  
(PWRR)



THE JOURNAL

August 2002



# **THE RULES OF THE REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION**

## **THE QUEEN'S OWN BUFFS (PWRR)**

**Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II of Denmark**

1. **HEADQUARTERS** The Headquarters of the Association shall be at RHQ PWRR, Howe Barracks, Canterbury CT1 1JY. Telephone Number: Canterbury (01227) 818052.
2. **REGIMENT** The term 'Regiment' shall include The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment), The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, The Queen's Own Buffs, The Royal Kent Regiment, The Queen's Regiment and The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment.
3. **OBJECTS**
  - a. To promote and maintain esprit de corps;
  - b. To help past members of the Regiment to obtain employment;
  - c. To help past members of the Regiment who want to keep in touch with one another and with the Regiment;
  - d. To assist, in time of need, those who have served in the Regiment or are the dependent widows or orphans of those who have served;
  - e. To support, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment in every way possible, in particular, recruiting for the Regular and TA Forces.
4. **MEMBERSHIP**
  - a. Full membership of the Association shall be open to all ranks who are serving or have served in any unit which bears or has borne one of the following titles:  
  
**The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment)**  
  
**The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment**  
  
**The Queen's Own Buffs, The Royal Kent Regiment**  
  
**The Queen's Regiment**  
  
**The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment**  
  
Or who wears, or has worn, the badge of one or more of those Regiments.



# **MAJOR ANDERS LASSEN V.C, M.C. & TWO BARS**



**Commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, General List 1942.**

**Transferred to The Buffs 1943**

**Attached to Special Boat Squadron 1943**

**Awarded The Military Cross 1943**

**Awarded Bar to The Military Cross 1943**

**Awarded 2nd Bar to The Military Cross 1943**

**Awarded Victoria Cross 1945**

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## EDITORS PAGE

Dear Readers,

Time not only flies when you're having fun it seems to fly even faster when you have deadlines to meet. Many thanks to all who have produced articles & photos for this issue, keep them coming in.

In the past year we have seen our subscription mailing list increasing steadily and we now mail out 420 copies of the Journal each issue, an increase of over 100 in the year. This has led to more than 70 new members joining the Association as well. Branch subscriptions have also shown an increase and we now send out 152 copies direct to the branches. The target for the end of this year was to try and increase overall subscriptions to 600 and we are now running at 572 so we only need another 28. Currently we enjoy an income of just over £2,800 from annual subscriptions, in fact a little more than that as several subscribers send in donations for the Journal as well. This means that we can only just afford to maintain the three issues each year. Consequently once this issue has been put to bed advertising has got to be concentrated on, hopefully with some assistance from you all. The annual cost of advertising will be £75 for an eighth page, £100 for a quarter page & £175 for a half page, a charge which will cover 3 issues. If you do know of any company or organisation etc. who would care to advertise please let me know.

A lot seems to have happened since our last issue: the Lassen memorial was dedicated on April 9th in Italy, a special 'Turning of the Page' took place in Canterbury Cathedral on April 16th, Colchester Branch's new standard was dedicated on April 27th, and Canterbury Branch's annual trip to Ypres took place on June 2nd. July 7th saw the Grand Reunion at Aldershot and the Canterbury Reunion was held on 4th August.

We were incredibly lucky with the weather for the Grand Reunion and a very enjoyable day it was too despite a few administrative shortcomings which are mentioned in some of the Branch notes. Those problems aside we should all be very grateful to our hosts, 2nd Battalion PWRR, who must have found it difficult as they were in the middle of an "Arms Plot" move at that time and to the organisers at RHQ.

Canterbury Reunion was, as always, a great success despite the weather trying to wash out the march to the Cathedral. There was some debate as to whether or not the march should take place. One stalwart was heard to say "*they didn't cancel the battle of the Somme because of the rain*" whilst another members' wife was heard to pronounce "*if you think my husband has come here to get pneumonia you have another think coming.*" The foremost sentiment won hands down and as the weather miraculously cleared, the march took place and pneumonia was avoided by all, thanks no doubt to the intercessions of the Revd. Bernard Foulger, Sittingbourne Branch and Revd. "Tug" Wilson of the 62 Club.

The day was marred when, on the march from the Cathedral, the Standard Bearer of the Ramsgate Branch, Tony Pidduck, collapsed and died. A tribute to Tony is included in the "Last Post" section.

This issue includes the concluding part of Bert Jones's excellent article 'A Prisoner of War in Poland' and covers the dreadful march of the prisoners from their POW camps in Poland back into Germany before the advancing Russians. Bert was one of many who were prisoners of war and took part in those marches. In the next issue I would like to include a list of those other prisoners, with their photographs and a brief personal history. Bert will be the first to agree that his story is also theirs as well and it is only right that they should be included. So come on, no false modesty etc, let's have the details. WE WANT TO KNOW.

You may like to know, if you do not already, that our Regimental Secretary, Major Dennis Bradley BEM, has been elected Mayor of Hythe. Many congratulations Dennis from us all, you obviously have a 'thing' about wearing funny, or is it furry, hats; although this time I understand the bears are being given a break!! We wish you and Maive every success.

The deadline for the next issue is 15th November. If you can please send in your article on a floppy disc or CD it will certainly make the editors' lot much easier.

My contact address etc is: 54 South Eastern Road  
Ramsgate CT11 9QE. Tel: 01843 580914  
email. peter@warnerwhite.freemove.co.uk

# BRANCH NEWS

## BROMLEY BRANCH

**SECRETARY:** B L Bartlett, 185 Park Crescent, Erith, Kent DA8 3EB.

**MEETING PLACE:** Bromley United Services Club. 33 London Road, Bromley.

**MEETING:** Last Saturday in the month at 20.00 hrs.

At our AGM in April the Chairman, Alan Wright, and Vice Chairman, John Bushell, changed places. Alan wanted to retire from office and John was prepared to move up. As Secretary, I asked the meeting to appoint a replacement for me as I too wanted to step down but will continue to hold the reins for a while. Fred Blackford remains as Social Secretary.

Our May and June meetings were very much under-strength due to many of our members attending other functions such as the dedication of the new R.N.A. standard in June. If we were a bit light on the ground with members we have not been light on activities. The 12th May saw us in Swanley supporting the Royal British Legion on their annual parade and Service of Dedication. On the 18th the Branch Standard was present in Maidstone for the "Churching" of the Mayor and Borough parade and on 22nd April the Branch was represented at the Dedication of the new Colchester Branch Standard. On that day there was a very good turnout to enjoy the sun, ceremony and an excellent buffet prepared by the Branch Ladies.

On 4th June the Branch Standard, representing all of our branches, took part in the Jubilee Parade. An experience never to be forgotten. The crowd were fantastic, cheering and clapping us all along the Mall.

On the 23rd June the Branch were represented at the "Churching" of the Mayor of Hythe, who happens to be our Association Secretary. A solemn but memorable occasion for those present and the following week attended the Festival parade in Hythe which was led by the Kohima Band.

On the 7th July I, together with, Alan Wright, Dave Newman, Ted Hills were at the Grand Reunion in Aldershot. Overall it was a good day apart from just a few admin setbacks.

On 10th July the standard bearer was on parade to attend the funeral at Beckenham Crematorium of Stan Petty and ex member of 6th battalion Queen's Own. The family were so grateful for our attendance and for the Regimental Wreath, a sad note to conclude with. Here's hoping to see you all at Canterbury and Maidstone.

BB

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## CANTERBURY BRANCH

**SECRETARY:** H G B Delo, 46 Ulcombe Gardens, Canterbury, CT2 7QZ

**MEETING PLACE:** The Chaucer Club, Chaucer Hill, off Military Road, Canterbury.

**MEETING:** Last Thursday of month at 20.00hrs

Well here we are awaiting another exciting and informative journal. May I say again what an excellent April edition. Come on you non contributors and purchasers give the editor your fullest support or we maybe reduced from 3 copies to 2 and we don't want this to happen. You won't find another association journal with so much news and information at such a reasonable cost.

Our sick parade stands at present at 4, Ted Clark MBE. still in hospital, Sid Pullman is in hospital where he will remain until at least August, Jessy Mathews who has been in hospital for an operation on his foot and Mr Peter Turney who has had a heart bypass operation in London but is now home recovering. When Sid was visited recently in the William Harvey Hospital, Ashford, Kent he stated that he WOULD be attending the August reunion. He was told that he must first ask the surgeon if he could have a day out and transport arrangements would be made for him. Unfortunately the reply from the surgeon was "No Way" but he was told that next year he would be able to march on the parade, this cheered him up no end He will be celebrating his 78th birthday in hospital on Sunday 21st July. **HAPPY BIRTHDAY SID FROM EVERYONE.**

Our Coffee morning in May organised by Harry Crooks our social secretary was well supported which gave an excellent boost to branch funds~.

The branch Annual Dinner held at the Canterbury Golf Club on Saturday 11th May was again very successful. John Shuman the branch's ex Vice Chairman, who now lives in Hertfordshire, was our guest along with his lady Francis. The Silent Toast to Albuhera was taken by members at the conclusion of dinner. The port for the Loyal Toast etc. was generously donated by Nobby Clarke, the table wine, which we all enjoyed, was donated by John Lane, Associate member and secretary of the local branch of the RA Association.

Once again, Good Food, Good Music, Good Company and Very Good Liquid refreshments made for a tremendous evening. All those who organised and contributed to the dinner were thanked by the Chairman Mr Bob Gawler on a job Well Done.

The branch joined forces with the Ramsgate branch and attended the Grand Reunion at Aldershot with a full coach. The result "Very Disappointing" I wish to make no further comments on the various aspects of the arrangements for the day as they are too numerous to mention. However congratulations to John Ferneyhough on running an excellent PRI stall, your efforts were much appreciated.

On Sunday 14th July the branch, along with its standard, attended the 80th Anniversary celebrations of The Royal British Legion, Herne Bay branch. The Church Service, Parade and celebrations were well organised and a very good day was had by all who attended.

By the time you read these notes the branch would have had its annual day trip out on Sunday 27th July. This year we are going to the RHS Gardens, Wisley in Surrey and at the end of the day a cream tea has been organised by the catering staff at Wisley. May the weather be kind to us

#### A WISE OLD OWL

When receiving recently an application form to join the Association I noticed in the place where it asks if the person has any decorations it said NO but had added, bravery in the NAFF1 queue. How many medals were struck for this campaign?

Well, that's all for now friends, hope you enjoy the Canterbury Reunion and we send our Best Wishes to all association members far and near also we wish all members who are on sick report a speedy recovery

because there are not many of us left who remember the Good Old Days.

HD

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#### RAMSGATE BRANCH

**SECRETARY:** John Ferneyhough, 7 Keith Avenue, Ramsgate.

**MEETING PLACE:** The Royal British Legion Club, Allenby House, 14/16 Cliff St. Ramsgate

**MEETING:** 3rd Friday in the month at 19.45 hrs.

Hello, greetings from us all here in Ramsgate. I must start with the news that Peter and Catherine Fitcher have made Pam and Eric Grandparents. The whole Branch extend to them our congratulations, we can now call Sylvia Greatgranny. Whilst on the subject of the up and coming youth, we all send our congratulations to Danielle and Jamie for making David Jones a Great-Granddad for the second time, this time a bouncing boy.

It is with great sadness that I have to record the death of our Comrade and friend Bill Joy. He had a record of real service to the Branch, he had been a member for a number of years, in fact he went back to the halcyon days of the Branch. Bill was really a Gunner, but was drafted to the Buffs towards the end of the war. He also served as Chairman of the Ramsgate Branch Italy Star. His cremation was attended by a good turn out of the Branch and at least 8 Standards. We will miss Bill very much. For many years he held the office of Beagle in the City of London, an office now held by his son and fellow Branch member Richard, we extend to Richard and all Bill's family our sincere condolences at the loss of a good man.

We also attended the Grand Reunion at Aldershot - I am given to understand that there was some disappointment at the Coach Parking arrangements, and the non-availability of a cuppa on arrival. The slowness of the catering was also commented upon. Lack of enough chairs and tables also caused some discomfort and the meagre composition of the Band with no Beating Retreat was a great disappointment together with a faulty P.A. system. However it did have its good side, we enjoyed the company of the Canterbury Branch on the Coach, it is our Chairman's



considered opinion that the coach sharing by Branches is the best way forward with the falling numbers being able to attend and the ever increasing cost of coach hire. Over to you for comment and action.

All my reporters have been away on holiday, or have not paid their' phone bills, and I have little more to report. Any Branch is welcome to visit us, just give John a bell to prepare him, and give him a chance to roll out the red carpet.

I have just heard of the sudden death of Tony Pidduck, our Standard Bearer. Tony was a stalwart member of our branch and will be sorely missed. I understand that a tribute is to be included in "The Last Post" of this issue. I know that I am joined by all of our members when I say that we were as proud of Tony carrying our standard as he was to carry it. Our deepest sympathy is sent to Tony's family.

Jim Peall

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### COLCHESTER BRANCH

**SECRETARY:** G. Arnot, 30 Cairns Road, Colchester, Essex CO2 8UZ.

**MEETING PLACE:** The White Hart Public House, West Bergholt.

**MEETING:** 3rd Sunday in the month at 10.00 hrs.

#### *Greetings from the Colchester Branch*

The highlight of the year from the Colchester Branch was Sunday 27th April 2002. The day our new Branch Standard was dedicated at the Garrison Church, Military Road, Colchester. The day was bright and sunny and the church was packed to capacity. The Mayor of Colchester and Councillors were in attendance, along with the Commander of Colchester Garrison, for the St. George's Day Service and the dedication of our Standard.

The Association was well represented by our President: Colonel C Champion; Chairman (East Kent) Lt. Colonel P Critchley; Chairman: (West Kent) Major P A Gwilliam; Secretary Major D Bradley; the Editor of the Journal: Major P White; together with the Standard Bearers from Ramsgate, Maidstone and Bromley, and many members of the Association



**Tony Pidduck (Ramsgate Standard),  
Dave Perfect (Escort Colchester Standard),  
Brian Bartlett (Bromley Standard),  
Clive McGrath (Colchester Standard),  
Brian Mitchison (Escort Colchester Standard),  
Ken Parker ( Maidstone Standard)**

throughout Kent. The Branch President Major Rex Shearburn, asked the Garrison Chaplain to bless and dedicate our new Standard. Lt. Colonel M R M Newell read the Historic Collect. Colonel H B H Waring OBE received the Standard from the Chaplain and presented it to the Colchester Branch Standard Bearer, Colonel D F Easten gave the R.B.L. Exhortation and after the Last Post and Reveille, the Kohima Epitaph.

It was gratifying to have so many past senior officers of the Regiment take part in the ceremony. After the service there was a short march past into the barracks, where our Association President, Colonel C Champion, and the Mayor of Colchester took the salute.

Our thanks must go to our Branch President, Major Rex Shearburn for all his hard work in organising and arranging the service. Refreshments were available in the church hall, which were enjoyed by all. Our thanks go the several wives of members of the Colchester Branch for the catering arrangements.

Twenty members and their wives sat down for dinner to commemorate Albuhera Day and an enjoyable time was had by all.

The BBQ and camping weekend at the end of June went well and the weather was kinder than last year, our numbers were down from previous years, but this

could be because it was the weekend after the Grand Reunion at Aldershot.



**Just a few of those attending the Dedication Ceremony. Well it was a hot day and the pub was just across the road**

Colchester was well represented at the Grand Reunion, where many old friendships were rekindled and the day went far too quickly. It was obvious by the large numbers attending that grand reunions are as popular as ever. We now look forward to the Canterbury Reunion. Rumours are circulating throughout the Branch that Scouse Sturgeon is actually going to march this year. We will wait and see.

*(Editors Note. We used to hear the same rumour when he was actually serving!!)*

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### LONDON (BUFFS) BRANCH

**SECRETARY:** A. J Pinder, 162 Seymour Avenue, Lower Morden, Surrey SM4 4QY Tel: 0208 330 2292. email: Pinder23.fsnet.uk

**MEETING PLACE:** Ives Lounge, The Royal Hospital Chelsea.

**MEETING:** 3rd Saturday in the month at 19.00 hrs.

The format of the new journal gets better with each edition, lots of interesting reading and photographs, keep it up Ed you are doing a great job and it is much appreciated, I hear nothing but good comments.

In June, I and several from the branch including Joe with the standard attended Veterans week in Weymouth, the day started with a short service at the towns war memorial followed by a march along the Esplanade to the pavilion, a distance of about a mile. There were about 2,500 in the parade which included six bands and followed by an impressive column of

World War 2 military vehicles, we met many old friends during the day and found plenty to talk about, the weather in the morning was disappointing windy and a bit wet but it dried up as the parade started and the sun came out. It was too late to re-instate the fly past of the Battle of Britain trio which had been cancelled due to the conditions but, never mind, the day went very well.

Last Sunday was the day of the Grand Reunion at Aldershot, the first one since Basingbourne closed its doors to us and I must say I enjoyed it more mainly because there was no wind to blow you off your feet. I thought the lunch that was provided was excellent value for money consisting of a Bar-B-Q of large sausage, ham, drumstick and beefburger with salad and roll and butter and for 4 quid how, apart from the queuing, could you complain but I bet some did.

We formed up and marched onto the square to the music of the Kohima band and for old soldiers the parade was very smart, even the RSM congratulated us, a Drumhead service was held on the square and apart from the sound system being up the creek it didn't stop us from belting out the hymns, after the service Brigadier Holmes took the salute as we marched past to the regimental marches of all the forbear regiments. After we were dismissed we made our way to the marquees where the food and drinks were being dispensed. We met a Sgt in the New Zealand army who was on a six months transfer to the PWRR and at the end of the afternoon the Kohima band beat retreat and although it was a slightly shortened version without the evening hymn it still went down very well, while we were dispersing the Kiwi came over and invited several of us to join him in the Sgt's mess for a farewell drink, how could we refuse? It was the end to a very good day.(Henry Delo eat your heart out).

Our next foray will be "Buffs Sunday" at Canterbury which we are all looking forward to. Our coach is laid on, we have had a reasonable response and are looking forward to seeing everyone again, the only thing is I hope the weather is a lot better than it has been lately although we are usually lucky with the weather on Buffs Sunday, lets hope it remains that way.

On Wednesday I shall be off to the Tower of London to put the names into our Book of Remembrance. There are two names to go in this year, Ted "Churby" Watts and Stan Lacey, I hope the other branches with their Standards will support us again this year especially our

old stalwarts the Ramsgate branch and others from Sittingbourne and Canterbury to whom we thank in anticipation, it is the usual format this year - forming up at 10.15hrs by the east gate end of the Tower.

Well that is about all I have got to say for the present, Stay Healthy.

BP

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### SITTINGBOURNE BRANCH

**SECRETARY:** Mr. A. Chesson, 16 Cedar Close, Sittingbourne, ME10 4JV

**MEETING PLACE:** The Ivy Leaf Club, Dover Street, Sittingbourne.

**MEETING:** 4th Tuesday in the month at 19.30 hrs.

The meetings have gone very well since the last report; wouldn't say it's been quiet, we've had our ups and downs but things are settling down again. At the present time we are without a Treasurer. Bill Jackson, who has done a grand job since he joined our ranks, has decided to forsake the delights and fleshpots of Sittingbourne and go and sit on a deckchair at Eastbourne. Unfortunately nobody is rushing forward to fill the vacancy at present and that leaves us with a problem which no doubt will be resolved in the fullness of time.

The attendance figures have not been too good lately, probably due to sickness and holidays. Dave Pope, Fred Dawson, "Woosie" Woollven, Doug Clist, "Mo" Swinyard have not been at all well: Gerry Cork and George Antrichan the Elder are back with us after spells of sickness and it's nice to see them back. A new member has joined us - Dave Brearly, late Royal Navy man - and we welcome him.

About 50 of us travelled to Whitehall to see a rehearsal of "Trooping of the Colour", a very colourful display as usual. I did not think the standard of drill was quite up to that of my old regiment, especially when I was on parade, but then we were unique. I won't mention the name of my regiment as some people are apt to make remarks of a mocking nature; I shall simply whistle the tune of "Farmer's Boy" just to enrage them. After the ceremony we made our way to the Royal British Legion Club at Swanscombe where a buffet was laid on and a few drinks were consumed. A good day out!

Concern has been voiced by some members about the state of the Union flag used by some undertakers to drape on the coffin at funerals of our deceased comrades. "Tatty" was the word used. The possibility of purchasing our own flag was discussed. On enquiry it was discovered that a really decent one would cost about £100. I am pleased to say that an anonymous donor has come forward and agreed to pay the full amount. We thank him for his generous gesture.

A coach load of us attended the Regimental Reunion at 2 P.W.R.R. Barracks at Aldershot. It was good to meet up with old friends. Unfortunately the occasion was marred a little by some of the arrangements going wrong. The public address system didn't work properly. I, personally, didn't hear a word of Brigadier Richard Holmes's address, which was a pity as he is usually very interesting. The barbecue was good but some people waited an awful long time in queues to get it. Insufficient tables and chairs was another problem. No doubt all these items have been noted. I did hear some comments unfavourably comparing the arrangements with those of our Canterbury and Maidstone re-unions, but of course the numbers attending at Aldershot far exceeded those. Still, the primary objective- that of a get-together - was achieved.



**Sittingbourne Branch members at Horse Guards with Ernie enjoying a bit of shut-eye in the sun!!**

Finally, congratulations to Major Dennis Bradley on being elected Mayor of Hythe (A Cinque Port no less!). Judging by his hard work and efforts on behalf of our Association he will make an excellent Mayor.

We hope to see you all at the Re-unions later this summer (what summer?). Greetings from Sittingbourne.

EAW



# A PAGE OF HISTORY

by Robin Tuke

*(40 years ago, on 23rd June 1962, The 1st Battalion of The Queen's Own Buffs received its new colours from the then Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment, His Majesty King Frederik of Denmark. On the same parade the old colours of 1st Battalion The Buffs and 1st battalion The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment were trooped for the last time. The following article was written by Robin Tuke and was published in the July 1962 edition of Invicta, the Journal of the Queen's Own Buffs, The Royal Kent Regiment.)*

All the pomp and panoply of peace assembled in the amphitheatre to honour and greet the young warriors as they marched into the arena. The sun beamed in blazing glory and a gentle breeze fluttered the old Colours of the two historic Regiments, now merged to make anew one. The verdant hills beyond encircled the scene like a frame to some great artist's masterpiece. A poignant page in history was in process of being woven on a green tapestry. In the Royal enclosure the shimmering creations of the ladies contrasted with the sober hies worn by many distinguished gentlemen who had borne the brunt of the great battles and campaigns of this turbulent twentieth century, and as is the habit of the British Army, had won the final round. The scarlet and gold of the dignified mayors of the ancient City of Canterbury and the boroughs of Kent, led by the Mayor of Folkestone, and accompanied by their bewigged and learned Clerks, reminded the onlooker that the profession of Arms in this sceptred isle as always subservient to Civil authority.

All the spectators must have been seized with admiration at the smartness of those on parade and the perfection of the drill, some of which was new to old soldiers. For instance, it must be a century or more since soldiers shouldered arms instead of sloping them, but the new rifle has imposed a reversion to an old practice - and how well it was performed!

The long ceremony of trooping entails a lengthy period of standing to attention, but not a man moved. The whole battalion might have been frozen stiff yet, no doubt, the blazing sun was grilling them. The splendour of noble pageantry was enhanced by the presence of our Colonel-in-Chief, his Majesty King

Frederik of Denmark, the Viking King, who addressed the parade with stirring phrases. It was an honour and a delight, too, to observe our Royal Colonel, Princess Marina at his side looking charming in a loose fitting coat of emerald green. His Majesty's Consort, Queen Ingrid, too was near the dais in a beautiful dress of salmon pink to add lustre to the scene.

It must be unique for the Deputy Colonel, Major General D E B Talbot, formerly of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, and the Associate Colonel, Major General R W Craddock, late The Buffs, with the Colonel-in-Chief and Colonel to be all on parade together.

Certainly never before in the long history of the two Regiments have the four Colours been trooped together, and it can never happen again. That is a sad and even dreary thought, for it marks the departure from precedent and the end of an epoch. When the Band struck up the strains of Auld Lang Syne, with its haunting notes delving back into the past, the Colours, streaming in the breeze, moved slowly and solemnly down the ranks, and then quitting them to proceed at a funeral's pace towards the wings, while the music was muted. At that solemn moment many veterans amongst the spectators choked down a lump in their throats and tears of sorrow and regret were not far from their eyes and in some cases, indeed, blurred their vision. The obsequies of the two great Regiments had been accomplished, and were to be followed, as it were, by a wedding.

The Consecration of the first Colours of The Queen's Own Buffs, The Royal Kent Regiment, was a marriage solemnised with great dignity, in which the blessing of God was invoked, of The Buffs and The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. On the new Colours may be seen the combined battle honours of the two old Regiments, thus the treasured traditions of both have been maintained.

*Editors note: The new Colours were presented on that historic day to, and carried by, Lt. C. Champion (Queen's Colour) and 2nd Lt. P. Gwillam (Regimental Colour).*

## TURNING THE PAGE

*(On 16th April 2002 Bendt, who was on holiday in England at that time, was invited by Canterbury Branch to 'Turn the Page' of the Book of Life in the Warriors Chapel. On returning to Denmark Bendt sent this letter.)*

HELLO AGAIN ALL YOU DEAR OLD "BUFFS".

Once again back in Copenhagen-having had time to think about a glorious holiday-some events keep coming back in thoughts and talks, so memorable and living that they will forever live in my mind and heart. Each of the events were so very different-and yet they have the same everlasting value that make them so unforgettable.

Turning the page - I can see you all there-lined up-so smart and erect-the atmosphere intense, so solemn-for me a moment of great emotion and honour. On turning the page. I see all the names of brave soldiers having given their lives so others could live- and these hero's families in great sorrow. And here I was- alive - an unbelievable moment.



**Bendt. with his wife Joyce, by the Book of Life**

The lunch afterwards at "The Victoria Hotel" - was another unforgettable event. The lovely surroundings - these old soldiers present. I thought they all looked young of age, acted young of spirit - in spite of the many years passed by since their youth. The lovely food being served could at any time match "A Danish cold table". Yes, it is there - locked-up in the memory of happy events. To support it all - when time passes by - tokens were received.

The engraving of "CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL" (Year 1829) - the very symbol of this old city - is now improving an empty place on a wall in our home which seem to have waited for just that picture. Also you all made it possible to add to my personal Buffs Regimental collection with. the lovely embroidered banner with The Golden Dragon on the blue background - golden tassels on the sides - this Banner also found its special place in my collection.

Later my personal guardian "Nobby" alias R.J. Clarke, and I were given permission to walk around Howe Barracks. I must admit great - very great changes had taken place -in fact - I could not have recognized much, if it was not for "Nobby's" excellent knowledge of old time and new changes.

At the end of our holiday, we were the private guests at Alan and Sylvia Marchant's lovely home, where also the Canterbury Branch Chairman Bob Gawler and his wife Irene, were present. It was a lovely evening where during our talks we moved all around the world, at sea and land - and in the air (it so happened that Bob Gawler and I had been in our 2 countries different Navies and Joyce had been in The WAAF). Need I say that all the conversation took place during a superb English dinner, prepared and served by Sylvia, who made us feel so very much welcome and at home.

Let me finish this review by telling you how Joyce and I - (On top of different busses - saw the beautiful Kentish landscape in full spring - so lovely in colours and shape - passing through picturesque villages on our way to different coastal towns. So glorious it was - all of it.

Here I finish. I thank YOU ALL, especially Bob Gawlor, Henry Delo, Nobby Clarke, Sid Pullman and Maurice Samson for organising everything and for being just YOU - and Joyce sharing these wonderful days with me sends her love. She is as English as can be - in spite of all the years in Denmark - and I'm glad being able to share that very spirit with her.

Yours very sincerely

Bendt Ole Arndt

# THE LASSEN MEMORIAL AT COMACCHIO

Anders Frederik Emil Victor Schau Lassen was born on 22nd September 1920 on the estate of "Hovdingsgaard" near the village of Mern on the Danish island of Sjaelland to his parents Emil Victor Schau and Suzanne Marie Signe Raben-Levetzau. When he was 11 years old Anders was admitted to the public school "Herlufsholm", Naestved, and after three years he was transferred to the grammar school in Lundby so that he could live at home. After a few months at Ollerup Physical Training School, he took berth as a cabin boy on the freighter "Fionia" bound for Bangkok, from where it returned to Copenhagen on the 11th of May 1939. On 21st June he sailed on the tanker Eleonora Maersk. He never saw his home and country again- his mother met him at Hamburg for the last time on 11th August 1939.

9th April 1940 Denmark was occupied by the German Army, and Anders Lassen was onboard his ship Eleonora Maersk in the Persian Gulf. The Captain was ordered to sail to a German or Italian harbour, but he never obeyed that order. Most of the ships crew wanted to sail to an Allied harbour, and signed the ships logbook to that effect. The ship sailed to Bahrein where a British prize crew came aboard. Arriving in Colombo, the ships crew were asked by the British authorities if they would sail under British Colours and on the same terms as the British crews. Almost all said "yes", a few transferred to a cargo ship, but Anders Lassen stayed and when an anti-submarine 4.7 inch gun was fitted onboard he had 3 weeks training as a Gunner.

As he wanted to go to England to join up, he left the Eleonora Maersk in Capetown and signed on in the SS British Consul sailing in a convoy bound for Scapa Flow and Oban. On arrival in Great Britain he left the SS British Consul and travelled to Newcastle where he met other Scandinavians, and was asked to join a group of Danes travelling to London to enlist into the British Army. First he insisted he would join the R.A.F., but after reconsidering, he went to London to enlist in the Army. On January 24th 1941 together with 14 other Danes he swore an oath of loyalty to the Danish King Christian X, as they felt they were fighting as Danish soldiers, even if they were in British uniforms.

On 20th May 1942 Anders was appointed to an emergency commission as a 2nd Lieut on the General

List and was transferred to The Buffs in the rank of War Substantive Lieutenant on 1st March 1943. Having already been awarded an M.C. in July 1943 Lassen was awarded a bar to his M.C. whilst commanding a patrol of the SBS which attacked the Kastelli Pediada aerodrome, the citation concludes with the following: *"Throughout this attack, and during the approach march, the keenness, determination and personal disregard of danger of this officer was of the highest order."*

Just 5 months later he was awarded a second bar to the M.C. when he *"despite being a sick man, displayed outstanding leadership and gallantry throughout the operations by his detachment in the Dodcanese. He personally, although crippled with a badly burned leg and suffering from internal problems, stalked and killed at least 3 Germans at the closest range. At that time the Italians were wavering and their recovery was due to the personal example and initiative of this officer. He continued to harass and destroy German patrols throughout the morning and later, despite his wound, personally led the Italian counter attack which finally drove the Germans back to their caiques with the loss of 16 killed, 35 wounded and 7 prisoners as against a loss of one killed and one wounded."*

By October 1944 he was an acting Major and had transferred to the Special Boat Squadron. On 4th/5th April 1945, Major Anders Lassen's 'M' Squadron SBS and the Partisans of the 28th Garibaldi Brigade were given the task of securing four islands in the middle of Lake Comacchio from which raids could then be launched on the German positions on the north shore of the lake. The islands were duly secured and Lassen began his raiding operations. Major Lassen was killed on the night of 8th/9th April 1945.

## THE VICTORIA CROSS

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the posthumous award of the VICTORIA CROSS to:- Major (temporary) Anders Frederik Emil Victor Schau LASSEN. M C. (234907)

*"In Italy, on the night of 8th/9th April, 1945, Major Lassen was ordered to take out a patrol of one officer and seventeen other ranks to raid the north shore of Lake Comacchio. His tasks were to cause as many*



*casualties and as much confusion as possible, to give the impression of a major landing, and to capture prisoners. No previous reconnaissance was possible, and the party found itself on a narrow road flanked on both sides by water. Preceded by two scouts, Major Lassen led his men along the road towards the town. They were challenged after approximately 500 yards from a position on the side of the road. An attempt to allay suspicion by answering that they were fishermen returning home failed, for when moving forward again to overpower the sentry, machine gun fire started from the position, and also from two other blockhouses to the rear.*

*Major Lassen himself then attacked with grenades, and annihilated the first position containing four German and two machine guns. Ignoring the hail of bullets sweeping the road from three enemy positions, an additional one having come into action from 300 yards down the road, he raced forward to engage the second position under covering fire from the remainder of the force. Throwing in more grenades he silenced this position which was then overrun by his patrol. Two enemy were killed, two captured and two more machine guns silenced. By this time the force had suffered casualties and its fire power was very considerably reduced. Still under a heavy fire Major Lassen rallied and reorganized his force and brought his fire to bear on the third position. Moving forward himself he flung in more grenades which produced a cry of "Kamerad". He then went forward to within three or four yards of the position to order the enemy outside, and to take their surrender.*

*Whilst shouting to them to come out he was hit by a burst of Spandau fire from the left of the position and he fell mortally wounded, but even whilst falling he flung a grenade, wounding some of the occupants and enabling his patrol to dash in and capture this final position.*

*Major Lassen refused to be evacuated as he said it would impede the withdrawal and endanger further lives, and as ammunition was nearly exhausted the force had to withdraw.*

*By his magnificent leadership and complete disregard for his personal safety, Major Lassen had, in the face of overwhelming superiority, achieved his objects. Three positions were wiped out, accounting for six machine guns, killing eight and wounding others of the enemy and two prisoners were taken. The high*

*sense of devotion to duty and the esteem in which he was held by the men he led, added to his own magnificent courage, enabled Major Lassen to carry out all the tasks he had been given with complete success."*

## **WAR OFFICE,**

Colonel Crispin Champion writes:-

"On 8th April 2002 I flew to Bologna with Major Peter Critchley, now aged 85, who was a Company Commander in 1 BUFFS at the Comacchio battle in April 1945 where he was wounded on crossing the lake, not very far from Argenta, and by his son Lt. Col Philip Critchley. We stayed at a hotel near Comacchio with the SAS delegation, headed by Earl Jellicoe, and also with Countess Bente Bernstroff-Guilderstein, Anders Lassen's sister and several other Danes.

It was at Comacchio that Major Anders Lassen, cap-badged Buffs but permanently attached to Special Boat Section, won a VC, to add to his MC and two bars, while protecting his patrol in their withdrawal from a harassing raid and was killed.

57 years later the Comune di Comacchio decided to erect a stone memorial near the point where he was killed to commemorate not just him but also the others killed with him, including Corporal Edward Roberts of the SBS and originally in 5th Bn The Royal Hampshire Regt., Fusilier Stanley Hughes MM of the Royal Irish Rangers and Trooper Alfred Crouch.

The commemoration began with speeches of welcome in the new conference centre in the little town and was followed by two addresses describing what happened in Italy from the time of the allied landings until the German surrender in May 1945, only a month after the battles around Argenta and Comacchio. Brig Allan Mallinson, our Defence Attache in Rome (the well known historical novelist), also spoke. We then moved to the site where The Countess, Earl Jellicoe and I laid wreaths which were all recorded in the Italian Press and on the Italian television news. There was a Guard of Honour, bugler and recordings of the National Anthems. We then retreated from the cold, wet and windy memorial to be entertained to a memorable feast in Comacchio town where I presented a Regimental drum ice bucket to Mayor Pierotti.

The theme of the memorial and its *raison d'être* was to educate the young and future generations of the



### The memorial

The 90 year old local boatman who helped the Special Boat Squadron to cross the obstacle strewn Lake Comacchio with Mayor Pierotti and the Town Clerk at the ceremony.



sacrifice made by so many to defend democracy. This theme was repeated time and again, The part played by the Italian partisans was brought out together with the violent German reprisals on the town. A particularly poignant moment was meeting a 90 year local boatman who helped the SBS to cross the huge lake area by canoe and to surmount the many obstacles made when the Germans flooded the neighbouring areas to impede allied progress.

After lunch the Danes, SAS and ourselves went to the Argenta Military Cemetery where we laid wreaths on the graves of Major Lassen, and on selected graves of the Buffs who lost over sixty men at the battle. We also saw the well tended graves of others from our former Regiments, notably those of 5 RWK but also from The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment and East Surreys. On behalf of the Regiment I thanked the Italian groundsmen who keep the Cemetery in such pristine condition".



Lt. Col. Phillip Crichtley with his father Major Peter Crichtley laying a wreath at the graveside.



# THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S ROYAL REGIMENT

(The following is a transcript of Brigadier Holmes's speech at the Grand Re-Union)

The Regiment is in fine form and just about fully recruited. This is unique in today's army and is all thanks to the effort of many members of the Regiments Recruiting teams and input of Regimental money.

The 1st Battalion is still based in Tidworth and returns for another tour of Kosovo in May 2002 in the Armoured Warrior role. The period covering the end of last year up to now has been hectic and busy. They had a training team in South Arabia, which was very successful. This did not receive much publicity as the emotive subject of British troops training the South Arabian Forces might have caused a media nightmare.

'C' Company hosted a French Company from the 35 Infanterie Regiment and then went to Alsace to train with them. Their fresh rations of raw horse meat and armadillo giblets were questioned? Recces for the next tour have taken place. The Battalion will return to Pristina. The summer is the traditional fighting season and the Kosovo Albanian insurgents will be looking for the usual scrap. Training has taken place in Otterburn and Dartmoor and Sennybridge to the usual mixture of good and really awful weather. The Battalion is in fine form.

The 2nd Battalion is based in Aldershot and will "Arms Plot" move to Ternhill (Shropshire) in August 2002. This means that they give up their role as Mechanised Infantry (Saxon) and move to a new role of difficult terrain and fast deployment. The Battalion has a new Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel J P Clover MBE as Lieutenant Colonel S F Deakin OBE has been promoted and moved to the Staff. Arms Plot move time is a hectic period with a thousand and one things to do, from administration together with recces and continual briefing of families and all ranks. They will just have time to settle in the new Barracks, spending Christmas and then off to Kenya on Exercise in January for 8 weeks. It is then into intensive Northern Ireland training and deployment to Northern Ireland in June 2003. The Battalion will be sad to leave Aldershot.

Since the last input into the journal the Battalion has supported other units training for Northern Ireland, run inter platoon competitions, completed various Skill at Arms competitions and run various Tiger Trophy

sports competitions. The Battalion's ski teams (Alpine and Nordic) did well in the Divisional Competitions narrowly missing out on a place in the Army Championships. In addition Captain J Featherstone is planning a major expedition to Costa Rica in July. The 2nd Battalion will also be hosting the Grand Reunion.

The 3rd Battalion is going from strength to strength, with Lieutenant Colonel Patrick Crowley ensuring that life is worth while in the TA. The continued annual cycle of training has moved from fighting in woods or forests (FIWAF) to urban operations. Each different scenario requires separate specialists skills. The Battalion entered a successful team in the Cambrian Patrol competition in Wales and also Exercised with the French in France. The Battalion's Shooting Teams seem to win every competition in sight! There are also 23 members of the Battalion serving in Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) with the Regular Army in Sierra Leone, Bosnia, Kosovo, Cyprus and Germany. This is excellent and produces a professional backbone to the Battalions. Sport has also been covered with teams entering sailing, golf and adventure training and a 50-mile charity run. 'B' (Queen's Regiment) Company The London Regiment are now training at Platoon Offensive level which has involved weekend training sessions at SPTA and local areas. The Company took part in the ceremony of the new Lord Mayor of London and joined the march past. They came 2nd in the SF (concentration) which was a UK concentration. This was an excellent achievement. They also have FTRS soldiers serving in Bosnia and UK. The Company is in fine form under the command of Major Alex Bond.

'C' (The Duke of Connaughts Own) PWRR Company The Royal Rifle Volunteers goes from strength to strength. The Colonel of the Regiment visited the platoon in the Isle of Wight in February and saw training and gave a lecture on the Isle of Wight Rifles. This was to a packed drill hall of Company personnel, Association members and Cadets. They are now working up for Annual Camp in the Ukraine in September 2002.

In summary the Regiment is in fine form and well motivated.



# YPRES

2nd June 2002

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from falling hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
in Flanders fields.*

As the words of the last verse of this moving poem by John McCrae, spoken on this special day by John Bishop, drifted away on the summer breeze, a cross of remembrance was laid on the grave of 4013 Private H. Pullman, East Kent Regt. (The Buffs) who was killed on 23rd January 1916. The clear notes of The Last Post, sounded by Mr. A. Orbie, rang out across the Menin Road South Cemetery and the four standards were lowered in salute and the small group of Association members on parade stood rigidly to attention. The silence left each of us with our own thoughts but all regretting that our colleague, Sid Pullman, could not be with us as we paid our respects to his grandfather. Henry Pullman was one of the thousands upon thousands of the Nation's sons, including so many Buffs and Royal West Kents, who are buried in the numerous cemeteries in the area of the Ypres Salient.

The stirring notes of Reveille were followed by a piper playing a lament which made an already sombre moment all the more poignant.

Canterbury Branch had arranged this trip, which they do on an annual basis. This year as a special surprise for Sid they had arranged for the graveside ceremony to honour the memory of his grandfather. John Bishop and Harry Crooks had made all of the arrangements, in particular John with his contacts in Belgium, and it marks their attention to detail that they had even brought a wheelchair for Sid just in case he could make it.

The coach left Canterbury at just after 7 am on a glorious summer's day, maybe just a little too hot for 'suits and boots' and we literally drove straight on to the ferry at Dover with no waiting at all. A very smooth crossing followed with just a few of the party enjoying a "full english", whatever that is. Within a short time of leaving Calais we were on the outskirts of Ypres. We had in fact caught the earlier ferry than the one planned so were ahead of schedule and a very welcome stop for a cool drink was made at the cafe at Sanctuary Hill close to the Canadian and British Cemetery.



**From L to R: John Bishop, Harry Crooks, Brian Reynard (Royal British Legion Standard), Sammy Supple (Canterbury Branch Standard), Johnny Wyffels (British Torch of Remembrance Standard), John Lane (Royal Artillery Association Standard) and Piper Jan Dedeyene**

After the ceremony at the Menin Road South Cemetery the coach took us into the main square in Ypres where we were piped across the square to the restaurant for a very welcome lunch. During the lunch John Bishop presented bottles of whisky as a token of our gratitude to those who were local to Ypres and had helped so much with the arrangements, Johnny Wyffels & Noel (Paddy) Carlyle. After lunch we all went our separate ways to enjoy the beautiful city of Ypres.



**John Bishop presenting  
"Paddy" Carlyle with a  
bottle of "Scotch"**

A band was playing next to the Cloth Hall which turned out to be The Cranbrook Town Band and they were really quite excellent. We were to meet them again a little later at the Menin Gate.



**The Cloth Hall in the main square Ypres. This  
beautiful building was totally destroyed in 1914,  
rebuilt in the 1930's**

After a very interesting wander around the Cathedral, and St. George's Church with Nobby Clarke, who is a mine of information by the way, some visited the museum in the Cloth Hall followed by a walk in the shade along the tree lined city ramparts. That left just enough time for a cooling drink before the evening ceremony at the Menin Gate at 8 pm.

The Menin Gate Memorial, inaugurated in 1927, was built on the location of one of the original city gates



through which so many passed to the front line and the battlefields of the Ypres Salient. Since 1929 the Last Post has been sounded each evening. The only exception to this was during the four years of the German occupation of Ypres from 20th May 1940 to 6th September 1944.



**The buglers of the Ypres Fire Brigade sounding  
Last Post and Reveille**

On the walls of the Gate are inscribed the names of 54,896 officers and men of the Commonwealth forces who died in the Ypres Salient between 1914 and 15th August 1917 and who have no known grave. The names of a further 34,984 who were killed between 16th August 1917 and the end of the war and who also have no known grave, are recorded at Tyne Cot Cemetery, on the slopes just below Passchendaele.



**Our small group marching into the Menin Gate**

Every evening the busy road through the Gate is closed to traffic shortly before the ceremony. For a few moments the noise of traffic ceases and a stillness descends over the memorial and after a short ceremony up to six buglers of the Ypres Fire Brigade sound "The Last Post".

On the evening of our visit the Cranbrook Town Band attended the ceremony and played two hymns

including "Abide with me" and the ceremony was that little bit longer than usual and, I am sure, much enhanced. Our small party with the four standards took part in the ceremony and three wreaths were laid by Major Alan Marchant and Alf Addy of Canterbury Branch and John Lane of the Royal Artillery Association.

As the Last Post was sounded and the silence fell, standing under the towering arches of the Gate surrounded by the names recorded on the inscribed panels which included over 500 Buffs and 500 Royal West Kents, we were privileged to be in such good company.

"He is not missing he is here."

PW



**"A corner of a foreign field"**



# THE GRAND RE-UNION ALDERSHOT 7TH JULY 2002



**Our Association forming up prior to the March On and Drum Head Service**



**Two generations on parade  
George Antrichan senior  
with his son George junior**



**Bernard Foulger, Tony Chessun, Jim Read, Ernie White, Dick Read  
and Paul Fleming waiting patiently for the bar to open.  
"WHAT NO WHISKY"**



**The March On.**



**Charlie Watts, in his 90th year, came all  
the way from Norfolk to take part. Great  
to see you Charlie.**



# KENT ARMY CADET FORCE

## KOHIMA PLATOON (MAIDSTONE)

Various activities, other than military subjects, are undertaken by the County's Army Cadets. Community Service is an important part of the ACF syllabus, and cadets undertake various activities in their local areas.

'D' Company's Kohima Platoon, made up of four Maidstone detachments, (Monckton, Boxley Road, Burham and Snodland) is a good example of how the cadets are able to help organisations in their locality. They have recently been involved in an RSPCA event and will form the arena party for the show jumping classes at the Kent County Agricultural Show in July. For the past two years they have helped as waiters and waitresses at the Kohima Reunion at Ditton and Boxley Road.



**Cadet Rebecca Millson (13) and L/Cpl. Adam Cursley (15)**

### **Proud to be badged PWRR**

They will also attend the Maidstone Branch of the Queen's Own Buffs Association Reunion and Service of Remembrance in September, when a strong contingent will parade at Brenchley Gardens for wreath laying, and march through the town to All Saints for a church service. The marching group will include a colour party parading with their own standard: the 4th Cadet Battalion, The Queen's Regiment Colour. The colour party will then take part in the Standard Bearers Competition after the service.

First Aid is another 'life skill' that cadets learn as part of the Army Proficiency Certificate (APC) Syllabus. This subject is taught at detachment level by ACF Instructors who are themselves qualified first aiders. St John Ambulance awards are worked for and the cadets are tested on specially arranged First Aid weekends.

On one such weekend two cadets from Boxley Road, Cdt. Grant Barden and L/Cpl. Hannah Rubie-Todd, completed a 'Young Life Saver Plus' First Aid Course, and received certificates from their Platoon Commander to mark their achievement. In October the platoon will take part in a Casualty Simulation exercise which will test their First Aid skills to the full.



**L/Cpl Hannah Rubie-Todd (15) and Cadet Grant Barden (15) being presented with their Lifesaver Plus Certificates by Capt. John McNeil, Kohima Platoon Commander**

The sixty Cadets and eleven Adult Instructors that make up the platoon are led by Capt. John McNeil. He is a keen devotee of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and is the Company's D of E officer. Cadets who take part in this Scheme, whether at Bronze, Silver or Gold level are developing their powers of leadership, self reliance and the ability to work successfully as part of a team, all qualities that will stand them in good stead in their adult life. This summer cadets from the Platoon will be among those undertaking an expedition in the Peak District as part of their Gold D of E Certificate.

As the Army Cadet Force Charter says *"Its aim is to inspire young people, aged between 13 and 18 years old, to achieve in life with a spirit of service to the Queen, their country and their local community and to develop in them the qualities required of a good citizen"*.

*(If you would like more information about the KACF please contact Madeleine Duffield, KACF Public Relations Officer on Tel: 01227 275058 )*

# CALL UP AND CONSEQUENCES

## A CHRONICLE OF ONE MANS WAR 1939-1946

By 6346153 Ex. Sgt. Martin B. C.  
The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment

*(In the last issue Bernard had arrived on the beaches of Dunkirk and, along with the many thousands already there, waited patiently for rescue.)*

As I arrived on the beach, in common with most of the troops already there, I tried, in between the outbreaks of shelling and dive bombing, to locate comrades and friends. All around the beaches and out to sea could be seen the devastation of war, clouds of black smoke hung over the area and the wrecks of naval ships and rescue vessels lay offshore. Time seemed endless, days and nights passed almost unnoticed while we waited.

Along with a few others I managed to get onto the concrete mole before it was taken over for the exclusive use of the wounded, our attempt came to nought as the mole was dive bombed and the blast blew us into the water and a long swim back to the beach was our reward. It was now the night of 5th/6th June and in the morning I, and a small group, managed to wade and swim out to a fishing boat- FE (Folkestone)- where willing hands heaved us aboard until the boat, already very low in the water, seemed about to capsize. Regardless the skipper set sail for England and after what seemed ages, through the mist, we sighted Folkestone. We entered harbour, to be greeted with loud cheers, clambered ashore, totally bewildered, shocked and utterly exhausted.

The sights and sounds of England and English voices, the kindly helping hands of the ladies with cups of tea, were a great tonic. I, and all the other lucky ones, will never forget the outstanding bravery of the crews of those "little ships" and I will always remember the letters "FE".

After resting awhile refreshed by numerous cups of tea and buns, we were marshalled into the station and we entrained for destinations unknown but definitely in the direction of London. As daylight broke it was obvious that we were on the line which went through Bromley South, so among the local lads hope soared that we would stop there. Well the train didn't stop there, it did however slow down and as we approached the platforms there was a great clanging of doors as the local lads left the train, shot up the stairs and caught various buses to go home.

For the benefit of the readers and the Military Police, it was not our intention to desert, but merely to ensure that our loved ones knew that we were safe. After a good long sleep and some home cooking, I, in keeping with many others I know, made my way to R.T.O. Waterloo where I was given a warrant to Hall Green, Birmingham. I was received there like a prodigal son, re-kitted and would you believe it, sent home on 14 days leave. Being home at last with my family and back with the regiment seemed just too good to be true after such a traumatic experience.

After a super fortnights leave with my future bride, our family and friends, enjoying great food despite rationing, about which we in the army knew nothing of, it was time to say goodbye. During the leave there had been some sad moments when relatives of some of our lads who had been killed, wounded or captured called for news. It was hard to explain what had happened to their loved ones, but I guess it was some comfort to them. After some tearful farewells it was back to Birmingham.

So it was back to Hall Green and our billets with those lovely friendly people. Our Mess Hall was in Shaftesbury House, a well known orphanage, and we had very little to do at that time. The friendliness of the locals was, at times, embarrassing. In local shops and pubs they wouldn't let us pay for anything. I will never forget their generosity and kindness.

Now once again "Cookies Crystal Ball" indicated a move afoot and on June 29th we moved to Haxey Village and the Owston Ferry area where we were once again billeted with local people. We were near Doncaster and the aerodrome at Fimminly so we heard and witnessed plenty of air activity.

Village life seemed so calm after the bustle of Birmingham, one street, two pubs, The King's Arms and the Duke's Head, and the village church.

Now re-equipped and made up to strength, the menu was, apart from firewatch up on the church tower, training. We were soon hard at it with day and night schemes, patrols, and mock battles plus the inevitable cross country runs. Once again "Cookies Crystal Ball"

accurately foretold of a move again this time back to our own county. On November 4th we moved to Dymchurch on the Kent coast for a coastal defence role. The civilian population had, in the main, been evacuated and we were billeted in empty houses with my platoon occupying a large house right on the sea-wall. Our tasks consisted of building anti-barge traps of tubular steel scaffolding, right on the water's edge and digging defence trenches above the high water mark.

We had many scares with dive-bombers, one of which strafed our billet roof and burst the water tank soaking all our beds. 'Stand To' was a regular affair, whenever a sea mist appeared, which during the autumn was pretty regularly. It was in the local church of St. Peter and St. Paul's that the banns of my forthcoming marriage were read out, while by a strange coincidence my future bride, who had been evacuated to Crawley in Sussex, was hearing them read in St. Peter and St. Paul's church in Ifield near Crawley.

So came the great day and with a 14 day pass and travel warrant I made my way to Crawley where we were married on December 21st 1940 (the longest night of the year over which I had my leg pulled incessantly). After a lovely meal at the George Hotel with our families we left for a brief honeymoon in Hastings. Although without its usual happy pre-war atmosphere and with few people about, coastal defences etc it was none the less a wonderful few days. All too soon it was time to part and get back to the unit, this time as a fully fledged married man which afforded me a new nickname of "Pop".

It was strange to see the Hythe and Dymchurch miniature railway decked out with armour plate as part of the coastal defences, I wonder who thought that one up!

Soon after my return we moved this time to Herne Bay where we were billeted in the skating rink on the pier. Once again we had the same task of coastal defence but it all seemed pretty quiet apart from the anti-aircraft fire from the Ack Ack forts in the estuary and the searchlights over London at night. We all started to feel a certain frustration at being unable to do anything more constructive in the war effort.

We managed to keep cheerful and having found some roller skates we set about learning to skate in our off duty hours with many hilarious results. One day when the Company Commander and 2 i/c called in I was

skating around and I found great difficulty in standing still on skates let alone saluting. Needless to say that put an end to our skating experience.

Before long we moved again, this time to Kingsdown near Walmer. Here we occupied a large empty house overlooking the rifle range. It was quite comfortable although we were issued with "dry" rations and had to cook for ourselves on open fires. Many dubious menus appeared but we survived.

It was here that one of our sergeants was arrested for taking coal from a shed behind an empty house which adjoined our billet, his only concern was to get fuel so that his platoon could cook their rations. Incredibly he was charged with looting and sentenced to four years. The serious charge of looting was used as the area was deemed to be under enemy shell fire.

We got great pleasure, and some satisfaction, from hearing our own heavy guns firing at the "Hun" across the channel. We had a brief respite from our coastal defence responsibilities with range re-classification followed by some intensive training. Manoeuvres were afoot code named "Binge", "More Binge" and "Great Binge" followed by the battle of Plucks Gutter. Also we experienced a new innovation in cross country runs - 6 miles in full kit in one hour. Luckily for me I missed most of this having been attached to RAF Manston to help train the ground staff in weapon handling. This was a very welcome break and the RAF made the job a lot easier.

On my return to Kingsdown I was sent straight off to M22 OTU in Warwickshire to repeat the exercise. The training programme was received with the same enthusiasm as at Manston and even the WAAF's were included causing quite a few awkward moments on the rifle ranges. This station was truly international as all of the pilots were either Commonwealth, Poles or Czechs. They were all very young and high-spirited with many a prank up their sleeves from dropping empty beer bottles over the airfield - causing a whistling sound very like a dropping bomb to putting coloured flare pellets down the barrack chimneys. On leaving we had a tremendous party and it was back to the Kent Coast, a Royal review of the battalion and embarkation.

On December 17th we paraded before our Colonel-in-Chief, The Duke of Kent and we knew from experience that each time we had a large parade and inspection it heralded either another move or

embarkation. This time it was to be a move first and on April 4th 1942 the 44th Home Counties Division moved to Coulsdon in Surrey where our "B" Company were billeted in empty houses on the Dutch Village Estate. The local pub, The Red Lion was, by coincidence, the terminus of the very same bus route we had been able to use in the early days of the war. The number 75 bus passed the end of my road and my father and brother came out to see me for a pleasant drink in the Red Lion, heavens knows how they knew where I was.

The area had a reputation as an embarkation point so it was no surprise that inoculations, kit inspections and general re-organisation were the order of the day. Then to confirm our suspicions we were given 14 days embarkation leave and I was able to spend a lovely leave with my new bride and our families. The eventual parting was that bit more painful as we knew that were heading East either to the Far East or the Middle East.

Back to Coulsdon, still not knowing our final destination although rumours were rife. Someone had seen pith helmets and khaki drill in the stores along with sand coloured paint, while another clairvoyant swore that he had seen transport painted a sand colour so you took your pick, Egypt or India.

On May 14th we were inspected by H.M. King George VI which confirmed our suspicions of an imminent departure for foreign shores. A few days later we entrained at Tattenham Corner, Epsom Downs, (the nearest I ever got to the Derby) and by some circuitous route arrived at Liverpool docks. After a short spell in a transit camp we trooped aboard the liner *Orontes*, which with another P & O ship, *The Orcades*, and the liner *Laconia* made up the convoy. Being fast enough to outrun "U" boats we only had a Royal Navy escort through the Irish Sea, which was its usual nasty self. Although the ship was "liner size" it really stood on end and rolled incessantly. Many of us were sea-sick and our MO said that we had to eat something and we would feel better. So down we trooped to the mess deck to find the meal was "Tripe and Onions". The sight of those bits of tripe sliding back and forth across the plate in a colourless gravy added to the smell of onions led to a very rapid evacuation of the mess deck. I did however learn that mal-de-mer is a great leveller and anyone can succumb to it, the sight of the Brigadier on his way to the "heads" clutching a P & O chamber pot to his very green face made me feel much

better and indeed started my recovery. These liners had been painted grey but not completely converted to troopships. The lower decks were fitted with bunks and hammocks, the upper deck cabins were for officers, so had not been changed at all, while the WO's and Sgts shared the tourist class cabins. The ship's shop had become the NAAFI.

Life aboard consisted of early morning PT and marches round and round the deck to toughen up our feet which were getting pretty soft from wearing gym shoes all the time. There were concerts, lectures, training films and in the evenings 'Housey Housey' and many other games not to mention the odd card school.

As time passed we were sure that we were heading for America until one day we noticed that the sun was in a different position. We were told that we had indeed been heading west to avoid known "U" boat areas but were now heading for Africa. We seemed to be slowing down and had lost sight of the rest of the convoy, we had developed engine trouble and would have to put into Freetown for repairs. The heat while we were sailing had been bearable but once we anchored off Freetown it was murder and the mosquitoes had a field-day as we had no nets for protection.

After the "blackout" in England it was strange to see Freetown lit up at night, just as if there was not a war on. Seeing the locals coming out in their small boats to sell their wares was a welcome distraction as was watching the Sunderland Flying boats taking off from the RAF Seaplane station.

Soon the repairs were complete and we headed south towards Capetown. Entry into the harbour there is very tricky as there two very strong conflicting currents at the harbour entrance. We had one totally unrehearsed laugh when our OC was holding company orders on deck. Several miscreants were lined up under the stern eye of the RSM, resplendent as always. The ship suddenly gave a violent lurch and threw the whole lot, including the RSM plus tables and chairs into a very untidy heap against the deck rail. I think everyone was admonished.

Our next task was to harden our feet and so we donned our boots for the first time since leaving Liverpool and disembarked for a route march round Capetown.

to be continued:



## CANDID CAMERA



The Regimental Bungee Jumping Champion pictured at a recent competition. When asked if it was dangerous, our champion replied *"Only if you let go with both thumbs at the same time!"* John Ferneyhough, seen behind in a suitable position of respect was heard to mutter *"I bow to you're shadow Effendi"*.



Ready when you are, Mr Spielberg Nobby seen here studying his lens cover at the Grand Re-union



Sid Pulman being visited and "treated" by "Doctors" Alf Addy and Sammy Supple. We are assured by the hospital that their visit has only delayed Sid's recovery by a few weeks

## PHOTO GALLERY



**Sittingbourne Branch, July 23rd 2002**  
Photo by Andre Tong



**Band Sgt. Frederick Weller,(on the right) 2nd Bn Buffs pictured here on Christmas Day 1907 in Harrismith, South Africa with his wife Sarah and Florence their first of five children. Sgt. & Mrs Weller were the parents of Irene Trite whose obituary appears in "The Last Post". Sgt Weller was killed in action on 15th March 1915.**



**John Bishop, Canterbury Branch,(right) seen here with Ivan Sinnreve (Shrapnel Sam) on the recent Branch visit to Ypres. Ivan, who is disabled, is a very talented model maker using old lead from bullets and shrapnel (hence the nick name) found on the World War 1 battlefields.**

## PHOTO GALLERY



4665 Private John James Powles, pictured left, enlisted in The Buffs on 21st November 1894 at the age of 18 and served with the 2nd Battalion. He was discharged on 31st December 1902 after 8 years service, which included 6 years in India and South Africa. He was entitled to wear the India Medal 1895, Punjab Frontier 1897-98, South Africa Medal 1902.

After his discharge he worked as a postman in Ramsgate and was a member of the Ramsgate Branch of the Regimental Association until his death in 1961.

Maintaining the tradition, his two grandsons, Harry King and his younger brother Deric are members of the branch, Harry acting as Treasurer and Deric as Welfare Officer.



Rifle team of 4th Battalion Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regt. pictured at Hythe on the 6th August 1949.

Standing left to right:  
Sgt. T. Shapland, Cpl. P. Everett, Major C.W.L. Bird (Team Captain), Lt. Col C A de B. Brownlie MC, Capt. I H Roper MC, RSM P Byrne DCM.

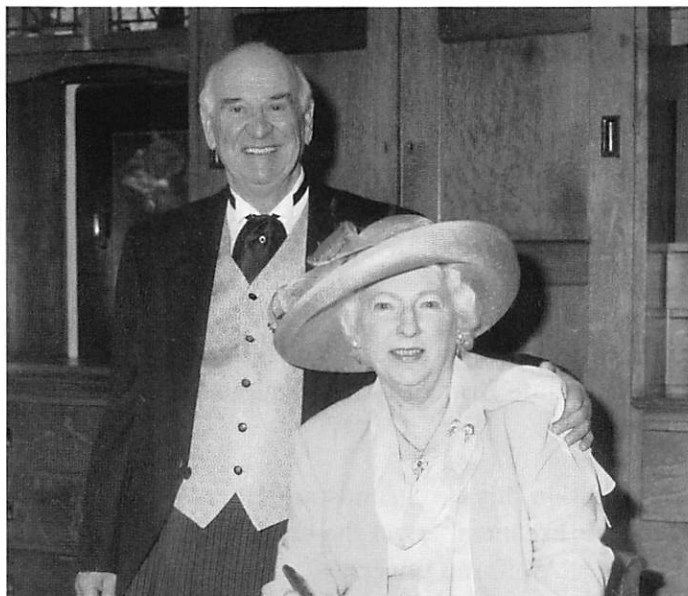
Kneeling left to right:  
CSM C Woolley, Sgt. J Jackson, CSM A Wilson, CSM H Hills



The laying up of the Colours of the 4th/5th Battalion Queen's Own Royal West Kents in 1981 at All Saints Church, Maidstone. Colonel J B Ogilvie, who at that time was A.D.C. to the Queen, is seen here handing the Colours to the Bishop of Maidstone. These Colours had been carried by the 6th/7th Battalion The Queen's Regiment from 1970 until 1981



## PHOTO GALLERY



**Fred & Joy Francis-Smith pictured at their wedding on April 20th at Holy Trinity, Folkestone. Fred recently joined our association having served in 2nd Battalion The Buffs from May 1946 until 1948. Many congratulations.**



**Major Dennis Bradley BEM seen here on the day of his inauguration as Mayor of Hythe with our Association President, Colonel Crispin Champion.**

**Is this what they call the “Chain of Command”?**



The above picture is of a young Lance Corporal T C Hurley MM. Tom joined The Buffs in 1928 and served with great distinction in the last war during which he rose to the rank of CSM being awarded the MM and being Mentioned in Despatches for his actions in the battle of Alam Halfa. Tom retired in 1953 in the rank of WO 1. On Saturday 10th August 2002 Tom and his wife Kay celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary with a party at their daughters home near Woking. Their best man at their wedding in 1932 was Wif Jolly, now 97 years of age, who was also a CSM in the 2nd Battalion. Many congratulations to Tom & Kay from us all.

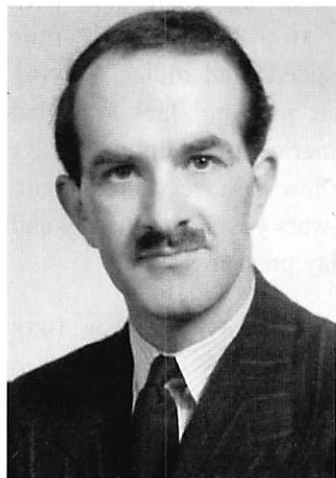


## Little Miss Perfect

**Lois, granddaughter of Dave Perfect here supporting her grandad and other members of the Colchester Branch at the dedication of their new standard in April**

# THE LAST POST

## Major D. O. Faulkner



Denis Odin Faulkner, who died on 25 October 2001 was born on 24th November 1916 in India, where his father was working at the time. He was educated at The Dragon School and Bradfield where he excelled at cross-country running and shooting. He joined the 5th Battalion

Territorial Army and then the 1st Battalion Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment being commissioned into the former on 15 April 1936 and the latter on 29 January 1938. He said his pre-war pay was £16 per month but that his mess bill was also £16 per month; his father had had to agree to provide him with a small income in order that he could join. He went to France as part of the British Expeditionary Force but was captured while endeavouring to return to Dunkirk. He spent an unhappy war trying to escape only to be caught and then developed an expertise for unpicking locks so that others could try.

Denis married Monica Grant, on 4th September 1948 and they were posted to Malaya and later Germany. In Malaya he was at Battalion Headquarters where amongst other things he organised the building of a cinema and the regular showing of films for all. In Germany (Hamburg and Bielerfeld) he worked in Claims and Hirings. In his "spare time" he studied for and passed his bar exams.

On retiring from the Army in 1959 he was concerned about the financial security of work as a barrister but after a year as a Headmaster of one of the Pitman Secretarial Colleges he retrained as a Solicitor. He became a partner at Sherwin Oliver Solicitors in Portsmouth and moved to Calcot House, Curdridge, Southampton in 1966. He was a keen sailor and horse rider most of his life.

Major Faulkner is survived by his wife a son and daughter, who are both married with two grandchildren each.

## John Tumber (1919 - 2002)

John was born in Birchington, and spent a large part of his life there. He attended school in Birchington and went on to finish his education at the Margate Central School, (of glorious memory). He was a talented and enthusiastic footballer, playing for Birchington Schoolboys, Margate Schools and the Kent Youth side; in the summer he was also a keen cricketer. On leaving school, John, as was the custom in those days, entered the family firm of The Operative Builders to serve his apprenticeship as a Joiner. He was called up into the Army in October 1939, second intake of The Militia, and did his basic training at Canterbury Barracks. From whence he joined the 5th Batt. John came overseas, to France, with the Batt as the operator of the platoon Boyes Rifle, in 'C' Coy. we were captured a day or so later after the fracas of 20th May '40 in the area of Doullons/Arras. We were registered together, with lots of others, at Fort 17. Stalag XXA. Thorn. John with Reg. Bradley left Fort 17 some time about August, going out as tradesmen on a working party, and I did not see John again until May 1945, when he called at my home to compare notes. He had been very fortunate in that he landed back in Blighty, at RAF Manston, and through the good offices of Lady Carson, who lived in those days at Acol, he was released into her care and spent his first night at home, returning in the morning to be sent on to Rehab. For documentation and debriefing before some well-deserved and overdue leave.

On his demob John returned to the family firm where he laboured faithfully, including making some very handsome pews for the village Church He married Pat and raised a family of two daughters Kay and Lynn. With the death - after a long illness, during which time John tenderly nursed her-of Pat, John concentrated on the education and caring for his girls, and then emigrated to New Zealand to marry Vicky the widow of his old pal - Reg Bradley; This was when I lost touch with him and know very little of what transpired, after a few years, John felt homesick and returned, to live out his retirement in Westgate and Birchington, when we renewed our friendship after he turned up at a 1940 Dunkirk Veterans' meeting. And joined the Ramsgate Branch The Queen's Own Buffs. There was deterioration in his health during the last few years and he was unable to take a very active part



in Branch activities, although I know he took great pleasure in visits from Deric, our Welfare Officer. I am afraid I was not able to visit him as often as we would have wished, but when we did; we enjoyed a session of "do you remember"

John was an accomplished flautist until an accident in N Z cost him a finger or so. He also could play the accordion, and enjoyed good music. His greatest pleasure was in his family particularly his grandchildren. He was a good friend to have and his family will not be the only ones to miss him. Others and I have lost a pal. RIP.

J.P.

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## A. J. Gilbert MM.

Mr Gilbert died on 11th April 2002. There are no other details available at the moment other than he served with 6th Battalion Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment in the last war.

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## Captain William John (Jack) Tyrrell

(Lt. Col (Retd) C. T. F. West OBE writes:)



Jack died peacefully at his home in Donhead St Mary on the 8th February 2002, aged 96. A Thanksgiving Service was held in the Parish Church on the 19th February. He was born in 1905, in Whitehall, in a London so different from now, alive as it was with horses and carriages. His father

was a surgeon in the Indian Medical Service who became an Honorary Member of I BUFFS Mess when he and the battalion were in the Malakand Field Force at the siege of Chitral in 1897; he earned much respect and gratitude for operations conducted in difficult conditions. His mother was, as the French would say, "formidable"!

Jack was educated at Charterhouse and went on to Pembroke College Cambridge where he took a Double First in architecture. The family moved to

Folkestone in the 1920s. One of Jack's passions was cars, which with three friends of similar interests, he used to drive around the local hilly "circuits". They were also in the habit of fishing on the Tamar, to which each would drive in his own car, with recognised refreshment stops en route, thus accommodating different speeds and routes. Playing village cricket was another pastime. Jack travelled widely, including South America, often on his uncle's yacht, and was one of the few to have visited South Georgia. The between-the-wars years were happy and carefree, without present day pressures.

Jack had joined the Territorial Army, and from 1938 was virtually on full time service. He was gazetted to 4/5 BUFFS in May 38. The 4th and 5th Battalions had been amalgamated in 1921 but resumed separate identities in June 39 when Jack was posted to 5 BUFFS. He owned a Lagonda and an early Morris of which more anon; he used to wear his father's blue patrol jacket (now No 1 Dress) which was built in 1885 but fitted him perfectly. When the Second World War began his mother's chauffeur, Little, joined up and became his batman.

My father, Major A A (Tim) West, who had served in the Leicesters in the First World War was also in 5 BUFFS. aged 47. At Jack's instigation the younger officers used to call him "Uncle Tim".

After an autumn and winter guarding "outstandingly vulnerable public conveniences" as the subalterns called them, 5 BUFFS went to France in Apr 40, initially employed as a labour force at the railhead established in Rouen. Later, in May 40 the battalion was deployed to try to plug a gap in the line of defence east of Rouen but was inadequately equipped for the task, with limited ammunition or other essentials. Most of the battalion were captured, although some were killed: others managed to escape and were evacuated through the Channel Ports. A photograph of the officers of 5 BUFFS in one of the prison camps appeared in the Daily Telegraph on 14 Oct 41 and includes Jack, Uncle Tim and Joe Parry (later CO I BUFFS and subsequently promoted to Brig).

Jack was to spend the remainder of the war as a POW, being moved from camp to camp. After capture Jack and the others endured a series of marches towards Germany. It was in a break that some water and biscuits were found and a communion service celebrated which concluded, to the Germans'

annoyance, with the lusty singing of Jerusalem. Life as a POW was not fun but eventually Red Cross parcels got through in which were paper and paint which was a relief to those of artistic bent such as Jack and Uncle Tim. Some of Jack's beautiful paintings hang in their house today.

At the end of the war Jack went up to the Lake District with his mother, to recuperate. In the hotel was another mother and her daughter visiting a younger daughter at school nearby. Betty the elder daughter, had just been demobbed after service in the FANY and ATS. Jack was not one to make instant decisions but at the end of the weekend, when Betty was due to leave, he made one which he never regretted and proposed; it was, however, typical of him that he was concerned lest she should not wish to be involved with someone so much older! Latterly he said laughingly that it was just as well he overcame his concern otherwise he would not have benefited from the tender loving care she bestowed on him.

After they were married Jack made another uncharacteristically prompt decision, to buy the first Morris Traveller to appear in Folkestone; this was to replace the ancient Morris left in his mother's garden, which, when he returned from his imprisonment, had a tree growing through it. He explained to Betty that with a burgeoning family (in due course they had two daughters) it was an ideal car. He was very proud of his three exceptionally attractive girls!

They lived in Folkestone and later moved to north of Hythe, where Saltwood was their Church. He worked post-war in an antique shop in Hythe and with a firm of architects in Folkestone. Subsequently when the children had flown the nest he and Betty moved to Dorset to be nearer her family.

He loved the sea, walking, fishing and all things to do with architecture, antiques, archaeology, natural history and animals. He had a special affinity with dogs and the younger generations. It was a measure of the respect in which he was held that his three godchildren made the pilgrimage to the Thanksgiving Service from afar and spoke movingly about him; he would always spare time to assist with a puzzle, to enthuse over a Lego building project, or repair a broken toy or hike. Others spoke of his kindness to the young who were shy or diffident at some function, not in the sense of being patronising but in treating them

as equals, and with a genuine interest in their aspirations.

He was held in high regard and affection in the Parish of Donhead St Mary where he and Betty took a full and active part until his health declined; as the Rector said "There was about Jack something noble, which disability could not diminish, and neither should death; it was a humbling experience to meet him".

He was a man of unfailing courtesy, with a great sense of humour which was sustained during the physical confinement of his latter years (he became blind and deaf). He depended increasingly on Betty who eared for him to the end magnificently; he did indeed make a sound instant decision in 1945.

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## **Captain Desmond F Hackforth.**

(The following notification has been received from D. M. Wood, a family friend)

Desmond Hackforth died in South Africa on 10th March 2002 aged 84 years. He was commissioned into 5th Battalion Royal West Kent's on 17th July 1939. From then until September 1940 he served at Depot RWK in Maidstone. From 1941 until 1945 he attached to East Africa Division and served in Africa, Ceylon, India and Burma. In 1949 he left the army and moved to South Africa.

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## **Irene Constance Trite.**

Irene, the daughter of Lance Corporal Frederick Weller, 2nd Bn. Buffs who was killed on 24th March 1915, died on 4th July 2002, two days after her 92nd birthday. Irene was always very proud to be a "daughter" of the regiment having been born during the battalion's tour in Hong Kong in 1910. There followed tours in India and Singapore before the family returned home to England on the outbreak of the 1st World War.

Irene's funeral was held at St. Mary's Church, Llanwern on Tuesday 16th July 2002. She is survived by her daughter Coral Westcott and her son Bill Trite, to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.

PW

## Colonel A. C. Rawlings MBE



Anthony Clive Rawlings, - "Bill" to his fellow Buffs and "Tony" to all others, - died on 16th June 2002 in a Malvern hospital in his 88th year after some 8 years of illness mainly spent in a nursing home. Son of a Royal Navy Admiral, he was educated at Malvern College and R.M.C. Sandhurst and commissioned into The Buffs (Royal East

Kent Regt.) in 1935, joining the 1st Battalion in Lucknow, India. He arrived with a reputation of shining in a wide range of sports, - boxing, cricket and all-round athletics to the fore. He later became a life member of the MCC and played for the Free Foresters. In boxing his style was that of Mohammed Ali, - skillful, agile and very fast on his feet, - and in 1937 he won the All-India Officers Open Welterweight Championship.

In late 1938 the battalion was moved to Palestine where Rawling's platoon found itself engaged in preventing Arabs (in open rebellion) from ambushing and blowing up railway movement, and in one such incident he was wounded. In another similar incident his somewhat unorthodox tactics got him into some trouble which led to his posting home. It was known that the local force commander at the time was heard to comment "If we had more Rawlings' around there would be fewer troubles facing us".

In 1939 he was posted to the newly-mobilised 5th. Battalion the Buffs which, with little time for training, was moved to France in April 1940 for mainly guard duties in the rear areas around Doullens and Amiens. On May 19th, nine days after the Germans invaded Belgium, the Battalion was overrun by tanks of an enemy armoured division racing to the channel coast. Only 80 of the 605 men who landed in France reached England unwounded and Bill Rawlings was among the survivors taken prisoner, spending the rest of the war in German POW camps.

After the war he transferred into the Royal Military Police (RMP), and in the 1950's was awarded the MBE for services in the Korean War. Service in the R.M.P. clearly suited him, and promotion to Lt. Col. came in 1958 with appointments following in Rhine Army, Austria, Western Command (Chester), and Singapore.

promoted to full Colonel he commanded the "Home" of the R.M.P. before retiring in 1967.

Bill Rawlings was a man of many facets, - his colourful, indeed glamorous personality, charm and striking good looks drew much admiration from the distaff side which he returned with interest. He happily embarked on a new career, joining the actors union, Equity, and appeared as an extra in numerous cinema and television films, he also worked as a model in the field of advertising. At the same time there was a very serious side to his unconceited character which expressed itself in a strong religious faith and a real talent as a poet (he published several collections of his poems).

Bill was twice married, and is survived by his sons Lance and Alexander, and two granddaughters to whom he was devoted.

E.L.C.E.

*(I am grateful to Lt. Col. C T F West OBE for his kind permission to reproduce the sketch of Bill Rawlings drawn in 1940 by Col. West's father.)*

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## Henry (Bill) Joy.

Bill was born in Folkestone on 11th April 1923 and whilst he was still very young the family moved to Ramsgate. He attended Hereson School and represented them at both cricket and football, two sports which thoroughly enjoyed playing in his younger days, after leaving school he played for the Ramsgate Albion team. When he eventually hung up his boots he carried on his interest by assisting with the training and organisation of the Pfizer football team during his time with the company. In later years he had to confine his involvement to watching these two sports on television, in fact Bill thoroughly enjoyed the recent World Cup Final only the day before he died so suddenly.

In the 1939-45 war Bill served in the Royal Artillery mainly in Africa and Italy where he took part in the battle at Monte Cassino.

After the war Bill served many years with the Territorial Army in 5th Bn The Queen's Regiment and following on from that became a member of the Ramsgate Branch of the Queen's Own Buffs Past & Present Association. Bill also helped his great friend, Alf James, and others to form and build the East Kent Branch of the Italy Star Association eventually

becoming Branch Chairman a post which he held for some considerable time until ill health forced him to step aside.

Bill also enjoyed membership of other organisations including The Royal Artillery Association, The Battle Axe Club (his old divisional emblem whilst serving with the 8th Army in Africa and Italy) and of course the Royal British Legion. He would support as many other Associations and organisations as possible attending gatherings to raise funds and taking part in parades of remembrance and other functions.

Bill was also very proud of his daughter Mai and son Richard and their service careers and supported their families whilst they were unable to be there due to service commitments and duties, and many times since.

Bill was deeply honoured to be asked to serve as Beadle to his old Colonel, Sir Richard Gardenthorpe, the then Sheriff of Bishopsgate Ward, within the City of London. He undertook these duties with great pride alongside his old friend and RSM of 5th Queen's, Fred Green.

In 1981, Sir Ronald, who was later to become Lord Mayor of the City of London, was instrumental in the presentation to Bill of the Freedom of the City of London. A gift that he accepted with great humility and honour, a very proud occasion for Bill and family. In 1981 Bill was joined by his son Richard when they both carried out the duties of Beadle for Sir Ronald's Lord Mayor's Parade. After Sir Ronald's passing Bill carried on with his ceremonial work and was still in regular contact with the many friends he had made during his time in the city.

In 1988 Bill sadly lost his beloved wife Dorothy (Doll). they were a devoted couple and were quite inseparable.

Bill had a long, happy and fulfilled life for which he was so grateful. He was a much loved, well respected and honest man who would do all in his power to help those less fortunate. He will be sorely missed by his family and by the members of his Regimental Associations.

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## **Anthony (Tony) Richard Pidduck**

(1937-2002)

Tony Pidduck collapsed and died carrying the Ramsgate Branch Standard on the return march from Canterbury Cathedral after the Service of Remembrance and Re-union on August 4th.

Tony was born in Ramsgate on 1st August 1937 and attended local schools, Ellington Infant, then St. Lawrence Junior and finally St. George's School. Tony then joined the post office starting as a Telegram Boy in 1952 and after



service in the Army in the Royal Army Service Corps he became a postman. Although Tony thoroughly enjoyed the job after nearly 20 odd years he decided on a change of direction and became a school caretaker. Over the next 25 years Tony worked in Newington Junior, Birchington Primary and ultimately at Christ Church Primary School, Ramsgate where he spent 7 happy years as the very popular caretaker until he retired just a few days ago.

Tony maintained his interest in the army and joined the TA and served for many years in 5th Battalion The Buffs.

Tony had also been a member of the Ramsgate Branch of our Association for a long time and was the branch Standard Bearer. He had looked forward very much to his retirement so that he could spend more time studying military history and gardening. His farewell present from the staff and pupils of Christchurch School was a battlefield tour, which he was due to enjoy in a few weeks time.

Tony came from a large family and is survived by his wife Elaine, four children, Steven, Deborah, Louise and Kate and nine grandchildren together with a sister Diana, and two brothers John and Reg, and his Mother, Rose, to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.

Tony was a mild and gentle man, always courteous and helpful. He played a full and active part in our association and it is an understatement to say that he will be missed. Always smartly turned out, he was a credit to our branch, our association and the regiment whose badge he wore with so much pride.

PW



# THE CANTERBURY RE-UNION

Sunday 4th August 2002



**Kentish Man & Man of Kent**

Photo: Andre Tong

**The late Tony Pidduck (Right)**

**(Below) Canterbury Branch**

Photo: Courtesy of Kent Messenger







**The Lord Mayor of Canterbury, Councillor Mary Jeffries, taking the salute accompanied by our President, Colonel Champion**

Photo: Andre Tong



**Brian Reynard (Canterbury Branch) handing the Canterbury City Standard to The Archdeacon.**

Photo: Andre Tong



**Sittingbourne Branch Marching Past**

Photo: Andre Tong



**Ramsgate Branch with  
Major Eric Ransley MC**



**The parade to the Cathedral led by the Association President, Colonel Crispin Champion, with the Chairmen, Lt. Col. Phillip Critchley and Major Patrick Gwillam, followed by Colchester Branch.**

Photo: Courtesy of Kent Messenger



**The Standards**

Photo: Andre Tong

# A PRISONER OF WAR IN POLAND

*The concluding part of Bert Jones's story starts with the phrase- 'The Russians are coming!'- that struck fear into the hearts of his Nazi captors.*

So began what came to be known as 'The Black Hunger March' and commenced on Friday, January 26th 1945. We started marching from Poland, into Germany - before the advancing Russian Army. From this point the account is taken from my diary which I kept during 1945.

## **Day One. January 27th. 1945. Saturday**

Took wagon and two horses, for our kit. But threw loads of it away. Bags of snow and cold weather, in fact there were two days of blizzards and on the bridge of the Prinz Eugen, just off the coast to the north of us at this date, the thermometer dropped to 0° F (-18° C). Hear fighting all the time. Our guard is rather 'shaky'. We walked about 45 kilometres today (about 27 miles). Wandered all around the Zempleburg area. We started off going North towards Tuckel ('Tuchola'), but after a time we met some retreating German front-line soldiers. They told our guard that if we carried on going North we would run into the Russians so he turned us round and we walked back the way we had come. We spent the night in a barn in Waldowo. When we began, there were only a few of us from Waldowke but as the days passed, we encountered other small groups of prisoners-of-war, also being marched around the countryside by their German guards, from other farms in the area. And so the German guards integrated all the groups together as we went along. Thus eventually, there was a very long, straggling column of prisoners, and a lot of guards to supervise us.

## **Day Two. January 28th. Sunday**

Before leaving our farm we managed to get some grub to take with us. We got a few loaves, some dripping and also pork. We left once again moving West. We sleep in barns at night.

## **Day Three. January 29th. Monday**

Passed through Hammerstein about this date, but not sure of the day. Luckily we got some Yankee Red Cross food parcels here. Three parcels between two men. Smashing parcels. 100 fags, 1lb Margarine, two bars of soap, and 1/21b chocolate, etc.

## **Day Four. January 30th. Tuesday**

Before passing Hammerstein, we passed Friedland. This is not far from the Polish/German border. The Jerries we saw around here were all passing by with our Red Cross parcels in their packs, or on their bicycles. And smoking English fags that we should have received.

## **Day Five. January 31st. Wednesday**

So far it hasn't been too bad for food. We can't say that we're really hungry.

## **February 1st**

Managed to get a loaf of bread per man. We gave the 'Froggies' who were working there, a Red Cross parcel in exchange for about 30 loaves. About this date (though not certain of the exact day) we went through Neu Stettin.

## **No diary entry for 2nd and 3rd February**

## **February 4th**

Been on the march now for 9 days. About 70 of us, and Yanks; also thousands of Serbians. Not far from Neu Stettin. Feet sore at their backs.

## **No diary entry for 5th, 6th & 7th February**

## **February 8th. Thursday**

Did about 18 or 19 kilometres today (about 12 miles). Slept in barns tonight. Got a bread ration (one loaf to five men) for when we leave in the morning. Feet very sore when we begin every day.

## **February 9th. Friday**

And still we are marching. We're not far from Shivelbein. Scrounging bread etc. on the way. The guards we've got with us at present are good. We're about 80 in number now, English and Americans. Also with us are 1,600 Serbian Officers. Doing about 14 or 15 kilometres (9 or 10 miles) daily at present. Tonight, we slept in a big pig breeding place, in the sty's.

## **February 10th. Saturday**

We left the pig farm at midday today. Marched about 18 to 20 kilometres (about 12 miles) Ended up in a village called Raddow. Feet pretty bad. Sleeping in a large barn.

## **February 11th. Sunday**

We've got a days rest today. Stayed here in the barn at Raddow. Another 25 British joined us here and some Yanks. Got 1 loaf of bread issued between every 7 men. Bread very scarce now. The boys made a good soup. Plenty of pork. We've got a dead pig with us.

## **February 12th. Monday**

Approaching Naugard - another 4 kilometres. Walked 19 kilometres today (about 12 miles)

We 103 Britishers sleeping in a huge barn. Cold. Although we sometimes get a bread issue of 1 loaf to every 7 men, we're always hungry and thinking of grub.

**February 13th. Tuesday**

Stopped at this place today near Naugard. A large barn. Very cold. At midday 400 Russians arrived. Terrible crowd. Started tearing the barn apart to make fires.

**February 14th. Wednesday**

We did about 18 kilometres today (about 11 or 12 miles). Stopped at Gravenshagen (a small village). 'Lofty' (my mate. He's in the Leicestershire regiment) and myself are starving. Got nothing to eat. However, we did get some soup tonight. We are talking about English food most of the time.

**February 15th. Thursday**

Staying at this place today. (Gravenshagen). Things are pretty bad. Weather very cold. All Lofty and I have eaten in the last two days is a tin of potato soup each. If I get back to 'Blighty' o.k. I'll make sure I'm never hungry. Our dinner today was two cwt of spuds, boiled in their skins between 103 men.

**February 16th. Friday**

We had some bread issued yesterday. One loaf between 7 men. We finished that before marching off this morning. The guards that have been with us so far, were taken off our column. They were decent guards too. We're with Russians now. Rotten guards. Kicking our lads and hitting us with sticks. Did about 18 kilometres today (about 11 miles). Lovely weather - very warm. We're near a place named Wietstock.

**February 17th. Saturday**

Only marched 8 kilometres today (about 5 miles). Stopped at a small village.

**February 18th. Sunday**

Passed through a place called Wollin today. And passed over the island at the mouth of the river Oder. This is called Swinemunde in German. Plenty of food - a few cold spuds. We marched about 36 kilometres today (about 22 miles).

**February 19th. Monday**

'Christ'!!! We were glad to move off today. We sat around fires in the field last night - absolutely freezing. We got across from the first island to the island today by ferry. Passed through Swinemunde. Saw several large ships here. One was a warship. (This was the Heavy Cruiser Lutzow, previously the Pocket Battleship Deutschland) Did 22 kilometres today (about 17 miles). Got nothing to eat at all today. Slept in a barn tonight.

**February 20th. Tuesday**

Moved off at dinner time. Only marched 1 kilometre. Slept in another barn. We got bread issued (last night). 1 loaf to 6 men. We're getting soup here tonight -

Spuds and turnips. The boys are pinching spuds etc., and eating them raw.

**February 21st Wednesday**

Marched 30 or more kilometres today (nearly 20 miles). We've crossed over these islands at last after passing through Usedom (The home of the Peenemunde Research Establishment where the German 'V' weapons were designed and tested.) and across the final bridge. We had to cross into Germany via these islands as the Russians had already reached the Oder further South.

Getting very weak. All I've had to eat, (until this evening) was half a raw turnip. Tonight we were issued with 1/6 of a loaf each.

**February 22nd. Thursday**

Marched 25 kilometres today (15 miles). Passed through Anklam. Greatly demolished through air raids. No food today, but brought some mashed spuds in exchange for a bar of soap. Later - had bread issued. Seven men to one loaf.

**February 23rd. Friday**

Marched 15 kilometres today (10 miles). Stopped at a small village. Got a loaf between two men, and an issue of margarine. 'They' also made soup for us. It's grand to feel a bit fuller. We also made our own soup, in tins. Spuds, and pea powder - smashing!

**February 24th. Saturday**

Stopped at this village from yesterday again today. Got half a loaf of bread each, and margarine issued. Also some spuds boiled in their skins. Don't know how long the bread has to last. Maybe three days (I could eat it all in one go).

**February 25th. Sunday**

Marched approximately 18 kilometres today (about 11 or 12 miles). Arrived at a very large barn. The farm is owned by a Graf (Count). Farm is 4,000 acres in size. Got spuds issued in their skins tonight.

**February 26th. Monday**

Stopped at this large farm again today. Bread was issued. one loaf. to seven men. We're about 5 miles from Neu Brandenburg, only about 20 miles from Ravensbruck Concentration Camp. Fortunately our group of marchers was turned away to head West towards Schwerin. There's a large Stalag near here (POW Centre) and Bill Hirst went there with some Jerries to see about getting us some Red Cross food parcels. One chap fainted with hunger today.

**February 27th. Tuesday**

"Cheers! The brightest day of the century". Bill Hirst came back with one Red Cross parcel per man, from



the Stalag, and we've heard that Turkey has joined our allied troops. (There are five men dying daily in the Stalag). We got a bread issue of seven men to a loaf. There were no fags with the food parcel, but our bellies are turning over at the thought of the food parcels.

#### **February 28th. Wednesday**

I wonder if a Jerry could hate a Tommy the way we Prisoners of War hate and despise the whole German race. After getting the Red Cross parcels yesterday, the Jerries won't issue any, although they can't feed us, and we're starving. *(In early March Hitler was to make a speech which could have made life much worse for us POW's, He was considering denouncing the Geneva Convention.)*

#### **March 1st. Thursday**

A 'blondie' corporal and myself went to an American and British camp a mile or two down the road from here today. The boys there a loaf of bread between five men and they said Red Cross parcels were plentiful. We're still waiting for the Jerries to issue our 'Canadian Red Cross food parcels'.

#### **March 2nd. Friday**

The -----'s decided to issue our Red Cross parcels at last. Cheers were heard when they came into our barn. Chocolate etc., was eagerly scoffed at once. We were issued with bread today. One loaf between five men. The Jerries have got a bit better in our estimations now.

#### **March 3rd. Saturday**

Well Lofty and I have got a few loaves in the last few days. We've flogged (sold) what little kit we had, in exchange for bread. Two pairs of slacks, pairs of spare socks, a tin of butter. We also got 80 fags. Now we're both feeling decidedly improved in health.

#### **March 4th. Sunday**

We're still lying in the barn here. It snowed a good deal today. We're drinking 'bags' of tea. The lads are making tea outside the barn on their fires. We're all feeling better (thanks to our Red Cross parcels).

#### **March 5th. Monday**

We're still in this barn, and eating the good old Red Cross food. We get one loaf between five men issued daily.

#### **March 6th. Tuesday**

Whilst 'spud-peeling' yesterday, we scrounged some spuds, another lad has got some peas, so we're making a good soup between eight of us,

#### **March 7th. Wednesday**

Started marching again. Did about 30 kilometres (almost 20 miles). 'Flogged' more of our kit yesterday. Got three loaves for it.

#### **March 8th. Thursday**

Passed through Graveshagen today, this is the second time we've been here. *(In fact this was a different village with a similar name. The earlier one which we passed through on 14th February was on the other side of the Oder in present day Poland.)*

Stopped 3 kilometres (2 miles) outside of village, in barns. All the boys 'mucked in' on making soup. Two hens, spuds, carrots, peas, onions. (More than we could eat). Lovely grub. Did about 10 miles today.

#### **March 9th. Friday**

Nearly everybody suffered with their feet today. Marched about 20 kilometres (approx. 12½ miles). It's impossible for anyone to like the German race after this march. Everyone wants their revenge on them..

#### **March 10th. Saturday**

We marched 34 kilometres today (approx. 21 miles). Deadly! Nothing to smoke and only a tin of bully beef between us, to eat. We were each issued with 2/5ths of a loaf to last for two days. About 12 miles back, we passed through a place called Waren.

#### **March 11th. Sunday**

Days rest today. We were issued with 2 soups, and 8 Red Cross parcels. (This was one parcel between ten men). Lofty and I got chocolate, raisins, marmalade, and cheese (we sold the marmalade for 25 fags).

#### **March 12th. Monday**

Today, we passed through a place called Karow. We stopped in a small village about 3 miles further on. We marched 28-29 kilometres today (about 18 miles).

#### **March 13th**

Most disgusting thing I've seen yet on this march, happened tonight. Two coppers (boilers) full of spuds boiled, should have been shared between us. But the men being so hungry, rushed the boilers, and the cooks fled. Whilst our chaps fought like wolves amongst themselves, plunging their hands into the scalding water. Nobody would believe these beings were Englishmen.

#### **March 13th. Tuesday**

Stopped in barns again, about 5 miles the other side of Goldberg. We found a store of carrots, under the floor of the barn. Everybody 'raided' it. Did about 25 kilometres today (15 to 16 miles). (We've been getting 1/5th of a loaf each, issued quite regularly lately).

#### **March 14th. Wednesday**

We had no bread issued today at all. Maybe we'll get two lots issued tonight (if we're lucky). We're about 29

kilometres from Schwerin (about 18 miles). This is supposed to be our final stopping place. Been living on raw carrots today. Maybe we will get Red Cross parcels when we reach Schwerin. Marched 25 kilometres today (about 16 miles).

#### **March 15th. Thursday**

These 'Square-headed' b- 's marched us about 30 kilometres today (about 19 miles). And we're still about 26 kilometres from Schwerin. We've had no bread to eat for 3 days now, and have lived on raw carrots. (We must be marching around in circles).

#### **March 16th. Friday**

Our 'generous protecting power' gave us a loaf of bread between every six men today. Only 2 slices each, but it tasted better to us than cake or pudding. The first bread we had tasted for three or four days. We're still at the place we arrived at yesterday. (We can't scrounge spuds or anything here). Just laying here in the straw, feeling very weak.

#### **March 17th. Saturday**

These b-----s had us working today. We were in the woods here, and carrying wood. Felt very, very weak. Finished work again at 11a.m. We got some of our back rations today. A quarter of a loaf each.

#### **March 21st. Wednesday**

Working again today and got soup issued! Cheers! We got the American Red Cross parcels we were hoping for! One parcel per man! And another one parcel between six men as well! Also, 100 fags each! The men are happier now than they've been for weeks. Had a sing-song tonight. This place is called Banzcow.

#### **March 22nd. Thursday**

Ordered to move on again today. Our kit is pretty heavy with the Red Cross food stuff. Got half a loaf per man issued for four days rations. It's like summer today.

#### **March 19th. Monday**

Had to work again today. (We were carrying wood again). The local burgermeister (mayor) told us we would get soup for working, but as usual it never turned up. Instead, we got 6 boiled spuds per man. But our cooks issued us with their own soup from our cook house.

#### **March 18th. Sunday**

Another of those grand days. The interpreter with us, went to Schwerin with the guards, and they came back with American Red Cross parcels for us. One parcel between two men. Lovely to eat, smoke, and have a decent drink once more. Had bread issued to us also. One loaf to eight men, also a bit of sausage each.

#### **March 20th. Tuesday**

Never worked today. One of our lads with a bit of 'go' in him, is going back to Schwerin again tomorrow, to try to get some Red Cross parcels again. Saw an allied plane chased by four German fighters tonight. It was brought down. Spring is here. Sent a letter/card home a few days ago. Don't know if it will ever arrive.

#### **March 23rd. Friday**

Terrible weather for marching today. It's like summer. We were marching in our great-coats too. Everybody 'deadbeat'. We marched 35 or 36 kilometres today - 22 miles. We stopped at a good barn tonight. The owners supplied us with wood, and spuds. So we made our own stew with 'bully beef'.

#### **March 24th. Saturday**

We stopped here for a days rest, and we were cooking all day. Spuds and meat and vegetable rations from our American Red Cross parcels. Also spuds and sardines, and bread and paste and jam. Also coffee to drink. It's lovely to be able to eat like this again. But it wouldn't be possible, but for the Red Cross organisation.

#### **March 25th. Sunday**

Marched 20 kilometres today (12 1/2 miles). Another scorching day. And our great-coats are a dead loss to us now. Much too hot. Just before stopping in a little village tonight, we passed a place named Domitz. About 1,000 Yanks joined us today. So we sold some coffee and soap. We got 6lbs of bread and some stuff like oats in return (a good deal).

#### **March 26th. Monday**

We mingled with the Yanks again this morning, and got another 6lb loaf and a bag of macaroni in exchange. We had macaroni boiled up, and put milk and sugar with it. Thick and hot, it tasted swell. We also got one American Red Cross food parcel issued, to every two men. The parcels were in the town of Domitz. "Smashing". We also got a days rest here today. Tonight we got another 12lbs of bread; (bartered our coffee and chocolate).

#### **March 27th. Tuesday**

Marched nearly 30 kilometres today (about 18 miles). Very hot. And our packs are heavy (Lofty and I are carrying about 9lbs each). Good stuff to have though. And we got a bread issue from the Jerries tonight also. 1 loaf to 3 men.

#### **March 28th. Wednesday**

Walked about 20 kilometres today (about 12¼ miles). We stopped at a village a few kilometres from a large town called Uelzen. We got some spuds and got a fire going, then made a stew with the spuds. Smashing.



### ROUTE OF "BLACK HUNGER MARCH"

1. ----- route of the march from Poland in to Germany covering over 1,000 kilometres in appalling weather conditions with very little food.
2. The Peenemunde Rocket Research Station is marked (1).
3. Schwinemunde Roads where we saw the Lutzow is marked (2)
4. The Bay of Danzig, this is where the Lutzow was shelling the Russians.

Weather is very hot again. We've got 6 kilos of bread left.

#### **March 29th. Thursday**

We walked around Uelzen today and stopped at a small village about 14 kilometres from it. Altogether we walked about 18 kilometres today (11 miles).

#### **March 31st. Saturday**

Marched about 30 kilometres today (about 19 miles). We stopped tonight in a large armaments town. We slept in a sort of hanger. Bags of ammunition and a good many targets for our RAF if they ever came around.

#### **April 1st. 1945. Easter Sunday**

Marched about 14 kilometres today (8 or 9 miles). We stopped at a German Air Force Base, Fassberg which operated Heinkels 111's. We were put in some old huts on the camp which previously had held Ukrainian POWs. Issued with 1 loaf to 2 men plus soup each. Soon, after arriving, 70 men were sorted out to go away working somewhere.

#### **April 2nd. Easter Monday**

The 70 men went away early this morning. We are 20 men to each room. And we got our stove going. We are sleeping on the floor. We were issued with 2 litres of soup again and a loaf between 5 men. Lofty and I started on our last loaf this morning. All our Red Cross food is finished, except for some margarine.

#### **April 3rd. Tuesday**

Walked half-a-mile to work this morning. Got soaking wet. Returned to the camp. Went out again, at dinner time. We had to unload railway wagons of stones, at the side of the flying fields. Big place here. The air-raid sirens went last night. But the planes went right over us. (5.30pm The alarm has just sounded again).

#### **April 4th. Wednesday**

We were marching out of here at 6.00am this morning. We were taken to a place to be deloused. They put all our clothes in a big oven affair and the heat is supposed to kill off the lice and the eggs. But it never seems to kill them all. We walked about 35 kilometres (about 21-22 miles) and also got soaking wet into the bargain.

When we returned this evening, we found the air-force base had been bombed whilst we were away. (*The airfield was the primary target of B-17's of the 1st. Air Division, US 8th Army Air Force. During this raid over 400 tons of bombs were dropped on Fassberg.*) We also ran into another air-raid coming back across the airfield, and we had bursts of machine-gun fire across

the roof of our hut (Lofty and I were 'spread-eagled' on the floor with our great-coats over us for protection)!

#### **April 5th. Thursday**

Today we were told to turn out for work at 7.00am. We all decided this was too early, and we eventually turned out about 9.00am. We had to fill in all the bomb craters on the airfield, which our planes had caused the previous day. This place is getting pretty dangerous for us chaps.

#### **April 6th. Friday**

We were filling in the bomb-craters again today. Lots of them. In the raids the other day, there were 7 Jerries killed and lots of wounded. They are all 'brownd-of?' with the war now, and are saying it will finish in a few weeks. Hanover, which is 40 or 50 kilometres from us, is reported to be surrounded by the Allies.

We get swedes issued for food and one small loaf to five men.

#### **April 7th. Saturday**

Working again this morning until the alarm sounded again at midday, to 12.15. There were 'bags' of fighters circling around here. Then, 5 or 10 minutes later there were loads and loads of 'our' bombers passing overhead. Have to admit we were all 'shaky'. At 3.10 pm the planes came back again. On their way homeward this time. I suppose they had been on a bombing mission somewhere, and had some left to get rid of. They dropped bombs all around our 'lager' (camp) and the hangers. Shook us all up. One bomb landed 50 yards from one of the hangers. The German guards dived outside into the air-raid shelters, after locking us inside the huts first.

#### **April 8th. Sunday**

After our narrow escape from the RAF planes yesterday, we moved out at 5.00am -and we weren't sorry. We marched about 35 kilometres today (about 22 miles). And then ended up about 10 kilometres (about 6 miles) from Uelzen. (*6 days later Uelzen was attacked by British 8 Corps and after four days of heavy fighting it fell on April 18th.*)

Our front line is reported to be about 20 to 25 miles from us. Feeling very weak, after that week in the last place. Issued with bread today - 1 small loaf to 5 men and an issue of soup which was like water. (We couldn't pinch any vegetables here).

#### **April 9th. Monday**

Marched about 36 kilometres today (16 miles). Feet are very sore. And the sun has been scorching. We ended up in a small village, where we made a soup of spuds and turnips - quite good. We had a bit of trouble



because our lads were pinching everything that was going. We got a bread issue of 1 loaf between 3 men,. There are large numbers of Jerry soldiers in the villages around here.

#### **April 10th. Tuesday**

We were supposed to remain at yesterday's stopping place, for today also. But owing to our lads pinching so much stuff the local civilians got our guards to move us all out and we all went off to pack up our kit. However for some reason they changed their minds and we were allowed to stay where we were. After dinner - hundreds of our bombers passed overhead.' (One plane dropped a large empty gasoline container beside the barn we're staying in).

#### **April 11th. Wednesday**

We walked about 23 kilometres today (15 miles). Ended up in a small village called Helenburg. We can hear a lot of gunfire around here.

#### **April 12th. Thursday**

At 5.00am today the German Captain moved out together with the guards and about 200 of the prisoners. Because we were a long time getting dressed, and ready to move off, about 100 of us were left behind in the barn without any guards. The gunfire is quite near us now. Reckon we either get recaptured or else killed. (Lets hope for the best anyway). There's plenty of spuds here for us to cook. Plenty to eat. (except bread). Feel too full, now.

#### **April 13th. Friday**

Spent last night and up until this dinner time at this place. Aubrey Gracey and myself, went into the village here, and brought back some eggs and bacon and a bit of bread. (We had swapped the things which the other 200 prisoners left behind them when they moved out so fast at 5.00 am yesterday). Amongst the stuff they abandoned were blankets, pairs of pants, etc.

A lot of the remaining men here, at present, have also left now. They are going to try to make their way to where the front lines are. The few of us now left here were rounded up by a German army bloke, and he took us about 6 miles from this village and then left us.

#### **April 14th. Saturday**

After the guard left yesterday we all (about 50 of us) split up. Six of us, went to a small village nearby called Oldendorf . Lofty, myself and an American, went to the local Burgermeisters house (mayor) to get food and somewhere to stay. Smashing place here. Got fried eggs and spuds, also white and brown bread, and some cake. Also jam, sausage, fat, coffee, sugar and milk etc. Yippee!! Moved out early this morning.

#### **April 15th. Sunday**

Arrived at another village, the people at a farm here would be willing for us to stay here, and work, but some retreating German troops came in, and they shifted us, to a French POW camp - place called Clenze. There's also a few Yanks here.

#### **April 16th. Monday**

This French camp being full, we had to sleep on the floor. We had fried bacon, fried bread, and chips for breakfast. And we made pea soup for dinner.

#### **April 17th. Tuesday**

Moved out of this camp this morning. Our guard tried to find us work on the farms we passed on the way - no luck. Got some soup from one farmer, at midday. Marched 10 miles. Ended up outside place named Tannenberg (Dannenberg) in another French prisoners camp. We got some fags and some Red Cross food off the blokes there.

#### **April 18th. Wednesday**

We got to a small village this side of the river Elbe called Quickborn. They put us eight in a Serbian camp here. There are only 19 Serbs here.

We can't get any bread, but their guard got us some spuds and the Serbs gave us several tins of Red Cross food stuff We've seen lots of Jerries with our Red Cross food parcels. Our guard says we will stop here until the war is over. Hope so.

#### **April 19th. Thursday**

Well, we didn't stop there. Early today our guard told us we must cross the river Elbe, together with 14 or 15 Yanks. There were 18 killed, and four wounded (Yanks). Shot up by our own planes. We ended up in another barn tonight, on our way to Ludwigslust. Boiled up some spuds to eat. We've got about 30 Jerries with us. Our planes have been over, strafing us again.

#### **April 20th. Friday**

Only walked a few kilometres today. Our guards, and us, were too scared of our planes. They were over strafing again. Midday got some boiled spuds - and spud soup tonight. But no bread,

#### **April 21st. Saturday**

We went to Ludwigslust, and drew Red Cross parcels from a French POW camp here. Wonderful! We left our wounded there. The rest of us went to the railway station to sleep. Whilst we were there, the Jerrys wanted us to shift some ammunition from a wrecked train up the line. We all refused, and were lined up to

be machine-gunned for refusing, until a German officer intervened and stopped it!

A plane came over today and was fired at by the German ack-ack guns. One bullet from the plane hit the ground about a foot from Lofty and me .

What a day! Hoping to get on a train from this railway station sometime.

#### **April 22nd. Sunday**

Boarded a train from here at 6.40am. Never moved until 12 o'clock. Hope we're not strafed or bombed today. We've had no bread issued to us since being 'picked up' by the Army again, on April 15th. One week!

#### **April 23rd. Monday**

This camp isn't bad. Better than always marching. Especially with our planes around. There are Russian, Pole, Serbians, and French etc. here, All kept in separate compounds.

Bread issue - 1 loaf between 17 men. Some days, no bread at all but get flour issued instead. (Which we mix with water, and stick on the stove). The soup issued resembles water. Thank goodness we've got our Red Cross food parcels to help us out.

#### **April 24th. Tuesday**

Some more lads arrived today, so we had to move out to make room available to them, because they were all 'sick' cases. We were moved into what had been a concert room for the 'Froggie prisoners' in earlier days.

No bread issued again. Got some flour, and margarine instead. There's 30 blokes in this room, and Aubrey Gracey is in charge.

#### **April 25th. Wednesday**

Got another Red Cross parcel issued per man. (American food parcels). At present, our syndicate of five men 'pool' all our food parcels. And we've got loads of 'Red Cross'. I never thought we'd have so much again. Flour issued instead of bread.

'Our' Allied fighter planes flew very low over our camp tonight and we are hearing lots of machine-guns firing outside our camp in distance.

#### **April 26th. Thursday**

Got bread issued at last, 2 loaves between 17 men. But it's grand to be in a place like this after marching for so long. In fact four months today.

More wounded brought into our camp today. (They were wounded by attacks from our own planes)

Good job we've got the Red Cross food parcels. We'd be starving without them.

#### **April 27th. Friday**

Many POW's have been killed or injured by attacks from our own planes. It's unsafe to leave a camp like this. Especially in a large group.

We had flour issued again instead of bread. I got my old boots exchanged, for another old pair, but were in a better state of repair. Did my dirty washing yesterday, and repaired it today.

#### **April 28th. Saturday**

Well, we're still hanging on at this camp, and 'sweating' that we won't be sent outside on any working parties. Still enjoying our Red Cross food. We had flour issued again today, instead of bread. I fried a lot of 'Chupatties' for our gang of five, tonight. (Made them with the flour issue).

Latest 'news' is: All German troops from the Western front, to be sent to Berlin, to fight the Russians.' Hope this is true, because our lads should soon be here now.

*(On April 23rd Hitler had sent the following order to the 12th Army: 'Soldiers of the 12th Army! An immensely important order requires you to withdraw from the combat zone against our enemies in the West and march East. Your mission is simple. Berlin must remain German. You must at all costs reach your planned objectives, for other operations are also in hand, designed to deal a decisive blow against the Bolsheviks in the struggle for the capital of the Reich and so to reverse the position in Germany. Berlin will never capitulate to Bolshevism. The defenders of the Reich's capital have regained their courage on hearing of your rapid approach; they are fighting bravely and stubbornly, and are firmly convinced that they will soon hear your guns roaring. The Führer calls you! You are getting ready for the attack as before in the time of your victories. Berlin is waiting for you!')*

#### **April 29th. Sunday**

Another day towards freedom, and also, another day eating Red Cross food. We're certainly getting a lot fitter now, compared with when we were on the march.

#### **April 30th. Monday**

We were certainly in luck when we hit this camp. We've had another American Red Cross food parcel per man issued. Our lads flew over again tonight, blowing hell out of the Jerries not very far from here. Machine-gunning also. It shook the huts up, here.

*(Hitler committed suicide at about 16.00 hrs on this day.)*

### **May 2nd. Wednesday**

TODAY! The day that we've waited for, for five long years. Today, before dinner, all our German guards 'cleared out' and our own officers took command. Our own mates took over guard-duty in the camp here. And now, at midday, we're waiting for the arrival of our own forces. Our tanks are supposed to be only a mile or two away, in Schwerin. We saw an observation plane of ours an hour ago.

Later: To resounding cheers, American infantry of the US 8th Division drove up to our camp and past, up the road, behind the retreating Germans. After that, droves and droves of Jerry prisoners were passing our camp here, all day. The flags of different nations are flying in our camp now. A lot of the lads have got outside now, and are taking revolvers, watches, binoculars etc., off the beaten Jerries. It's what happened to our lads when we were captured, so we're getting what's due to us.

### **May 3rd. Thursday**

All the lads from our camp are carrying automatics and wearing watches and binoculars. We've got radios, boxes of cigars, and German motor-cycles, and cars, are being driven round and round the camp. Some are even riding horses around..

We also got outside the camp, and have been collecting some souvenirs from German prisoners. I've got three watches, and a Luger pistol. We are eating our Red Cross food quickly now, because we're hoping to be moving soon.

### **May 4th. Friday**

Aubrey Gracey got 'our' car today. (We saw it in the grounds of a house here, and told the woman in the house, that we were taking it). However, after driving 6 miles, we were stopped by the American Army. They said we couldn't go any further because the Russian Army was just up the road.

The roads here are packed with German prisoners, and all their helmets, and arms, and also personal belongings, are lying in the roadside ditches. Everywhere is chaos. This evening Aubrey Gracey and myself went out in our car again. Had a smashing time. Our car is an Auto-Union. We went around with some Yanks, joy-riding in trucks.

### **May 5th. Saturday**

A New Zealand Officer arrived at our camp today. He told us that soon we would all be going home. Flying back to England. I managed to write a few lines home from here.

I should mention that we were told as soon as the Yanks arrived here, to remain in the camp and not get outside, as we were 'POWs', and under the rules of the 'Geneva Conventions'. And as ex-prisoners we were not allowed to take-up arms, or to rejoin any army unit engaged in fighting. And remain where we were until being repatriated. However, as soon as the Yanks arrived at our gates they threw some wire cutters over to us and in no time at all there were large gaps in the wire and all orders to 'stay put' were ignored. Aubrey Gracey, Lofty and I went to Schwerin in our car however later someone stole it and we had to spend the night at an American Military Hospital.

### **May 6th. Sunday**

We're leaving the camp today. It's a pity but we've had to leave behind boxes of Red Cross food parcels and loads of clothing. We moved out at midday in American trucks. Later we stopped at an ex German Barracks and we all had a bath and a 'delousing' and were given clean clothing, cigarettes and food.

It's great to see the Jerry prisoners working. (Pity it wasn't harder). We are at a place called Luneburg.

*(General Montgomery's Tactical Headquarters was close by on Luneberg Heath. It was there that, on 4th May 1945 at 18.20 hrs that General-Admiral von Freideberg signed the 'Instrument of Surrender'. Hostilities ceased at 08.00 hrs BST on Saturday 5th May 1945.)*

### **May 7th. Monday**

The sick men were flown home today. the war in Germany is finished. Got issued with new boots, pants and a scarf today Filled in some POW interrogation forms. Monty was here today, we're all feeling very excited now.

### **May 8th. Tuesday**

More of the lads went home today. We're all impatient to go although we are having an easy time here.

### **May 9th. Wednesday**

Just waiting to fly home 5 years and a few days since being captured. Lying here on the airfield at Lubeck. Our plane, a Lancaster, will be number 37.

We left Lubeck at 3.00pm and landed at 6.00pm at Wescott Aerodrome.

**Blighty at last**

# THE QUEEN'S OWN BUFFS (PWRR) SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE AND ANNUAL REUNION, MAIDSTONE - SUNDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2002

## GENERAL

The parade is to form up in Brenchley Gardens for a wreath laying ceremony at the Cenotaph. The parade is to march to All Saints Church, led by the Surrey Army Cadet Force Military Band. They are to march past the Mayor and Association President at the Town Hall. After the Service of Remembrance a Reunion Luncheon, Band Concert and Standard Bearers Competition will be held in the Corn Exchange (Kent Hall) Maidstone.

The Rear Party Warrant Officer Rudman of 1 PWRR will be the Parade Marshal.

## PARKING

Coaches may be parked in Priory Road during the Service and can be brought to the large lay-by at All Saint's Church at 12:00 hrs. Car parking is available in local public car parks only, which are free of charge on Sunday.

## BUFFET LUNCHEON

There will be a Grand Buffet Luncheon available for ticket holders in the Kent Hall. Tickets can be obtained from:

Mrs J Allen  
3 Sermon Drive, Swanley, Kent BR8 7HS  
Tel: 01322 666007

The price of the buffet to members is £5.00.

This is a self-service buffet. The closing date is Monday 26th August. Lunch tickets will not be available after this date or at the reunion. Branch Secretaries are requested to consolidate requirements. A stamped addressed envelope with orders please. Cheques made payable to: "Queen's Own Buffs General Account"

## BRANCH CONCERT

A musical concert will be given during lunch by the Surrey Army Cadet Force Military Band.

## STANDARD BEARERS COMPETITION

Instructions for the competition will be forwarded to Branch Secretaries under Separate cover nearer the occasion. Major D. Bradley BEM and the Rear Party

Warrant Officer from 1 PWRR will judge the competition.

## PROGRAMME

1025 hrs - Fall In for inspection.

1035 hrs - Inspection complete.

1040 hrs - The Mayor, Chaplain and members of Maidstone Borough Council arrive.

1045 hrs - Service at Cenotaph.

1055 hrs - Parade reforms

1100 hrs - March past..

1115 hrs - Arrive at All Saint's Church

1130 hrs - Service of Remembrance.

At the end of the service members of the Association are to make their own way to the Kent Hall.

1300 hrs - Buffet Lunch

1300 - 1415 hrs - Band concert

1430 hrs - Standard Bearers Competition.

1530 hrs - Raffle drawn.

1545 hrs - Presentation to winner of 'Standard Bearers Competition.

1645 hrs - Bars Close

1700 hrs - Reunion ends.



# **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

**2002/03**

<b>AUGUST 4TH</b>	<b>CANTERBURY REUNION AND SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE</b>
<b>AUGUST 7TH-11TH</b>	<b>CANTERBURY CRICKET WEEK</b>
<b>SEPTEMBER 1ST</b>	<b>TOWER OF LONDON SERVICE - LONDON BUFFS (TBC)</b>
<b>SEPTEMBER 8TH</b>	<b>SEVASTOPOL DAY</b>
<b>SEPTEMBER 8TH</b>	<b>MAIDSTONE REUNION AND SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE</b>
<b>OCTOBER 6TH</b>	<b>WO'S &amp; SGTS PAST AND PRESENT DINNER ( ALL FOREBEAR REGIMENTS ARE WELCOME) KENT &amp; CANTERBURY UNIVERSITY</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 7TH</b>	<b>FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE - ST. MARGARET'S WESTMINSTER</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 10TH</b>	<b>REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 16TH</b>	<b>RAMSGATE BRANCH DINNER &amp; DANCE</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 22ND</b>	<b>REGIMENTAL DINNER (PWRR OFFICERS' CLUB - LONDON (TBC)</b>
<b>DECEMBER 7TH</b>	<b>COLCHESTER BRANCH XMAS BUFFET &amp; DANCE</b>
<b>DECEMBER 8TH</b>	<b>CANTERBURY BRANCH CAROL SERVICE -ST. PAUL'S CHURCH 14.45 HRS</b>
<b>DECEMBER 11TH</b>	<b>SITTINGBOURNE BRANCH CHRISTMAS PARTY</b>

**2003**

<b>JANUARY 21ST</b>	<b>SITTINGBOURNE BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b>
<b>APRIL 5TH</b>	<b>REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING &amp; DARTS COMPETITION</b>
<b>APRIL 18TH</b>	<b>RAMSGATE BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b>

# EX-SERVICE HOMES REFERRAL AGENCY

## ESHRA

### Part of the British Legion

ESHRA - the 'Ex-Service Homes Referral Agency' was set up in 2000 and became fully operational in January 2001, to provide help and advice to the ex-service community and their dependants on Care Homes providing Residential and Nursing Accommodation. We were initially funded by COBSEC (Confederation of British Service and Ex Service Organisations) which includes: Royal British Legion, SSAFA Forces Help, RAFBF, Army Benevolent Fund, KGFS, St Dunstan's, BLESMA and QMRT. A review was carried out at the end of 2001, and it was found that due to its success, ESHRA is to continue officially under the Royal British Legion, from August 2002.

We offer advice on all ex-Service Care Homes, Respite and Short Welfare Breaks, as well as Independent Living, Sheltered Accommodation, and funding problems. In conjunction with the advice we give regarding the ex-Service homes and accommodation, we also use a database, which incorporates registered Care Homes providing Residential and/or Nursing Care in the Voluntary and Private sectors. It does include information for Local Authority homes as well. details are also available on Retirement Housing to rent and buy. We also use other sources, which enables us to widen our search if required.

We have accumulated information from various sources, like Help the Aged, Counsel & Care, and numerous others, which enables us to pass on relevant and useful information to people who often find themselves not knowing where to start. Here are a few examples:

*A loved one is suddenly in hospital having had a stroke, when do they go from here?*

*A couple just wants advice on Respite places, or they want to move into sheltered accommodation in a different.*

*A person is suddenly being evicted or given notice in his present home, when can they go now?*

*Somebody has Alzheimer's, and the family is unable to locate suitable homes.*

*A person is unsure what to do when their partner needs nursing care, will they have to sell their house?*

*An elderly gentleman would like to locate an ex-service home where he will be with like-minded people.*

*Someone is looking ahead 'just in case' and would like general advice.*

The subjects are varied, and we do our best to give impartial and sound advice, and help people find suitable accommodation for themselves or their families. Our advice is mainly geared towards the elderly ex-Service personnel, but we will help younger enquirer's as well if we can, and if not we will normally 'know a man who can'.

We have a web site - [www.eshra.com](http://www.eshra.com), which is updated regularly, and includes information on all ex-service accommodation, We have a general email address, which goes to both Care Provision Advisors - [eshra@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:eshra@britishlegion.org.uk).

We are a very small team; there are one and a half of us. Annie works full time and Maureen works part time: Maureen has a background working for the Local Authorities in Kent, and in Banking. Annie's background is working as a SSAFA Forces Help Caseworker in Camberley, and as a Victim Support volunteer, also working at The Royal Military Academy during her husband's final posting. She is still an active SSAFA Forces Help caseworker in Bedford.

ESHRA advisers can provide guidance regarding Social Services assessments/funding; welfare benefits, service charities and other organisations that provide help to the senior citizen.

Should you require any further information then please contact the Helpline on 0207 839 4466 which is staffed from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and 2.00 am until 4.00 pm on weekdays.

## WRITE TO REPLY

12 Kelvington Road  
Peckham  
London SE15 3EQ  
Tel: 0207 732 5121

*Dear Editor*

I wonder if the following will be of interest to the members of the Regimental Association. On 3rd September 1959 I reported to Maidstone Barracks, Depot of the Q.O.R.W.K Regt. to start my National Service. Seven years earlier, in 1952, as a 14 year old school boy, I had attended the passing out parade of my elder brother who served with the Regiment.

That day, in 1952, was a very special day in the history of the Regiment for another reason. This was the day on which the Victoria Cross, posthumously awarded to Lance Corporal John P. Harman, was presented to the Regiment by his father.

While recently doing some research at the Kent Archives, County Hall, Maidstone, I noted that two reels of film, which recorded this historic event, are held in the archives. Perhaps if the Archivist could be approached by the Regimental Association, it would be possible to find out if the film could be viewed, or better still copied onto video. I am sure that some members would be interested in seeing the film.

Yours sincerely  
Terry Carney

---

11 Sunnyhill  
Collingbourne Ducis  
Mr. Marlborough, Wilts SN8 3EP  
Tel: 01264 850620

*Dear Peter*

Congratulations on the last issue. the photograph of the WO's/Sgts of 1 Buffs 1961 brings back happy memories, unfortunately there are many faces there that are not around today. I hope that you manage to get a similar photograph of 1 Q.O.R.W.K's, and follow that up with that the one taken in Shorncliffe of 1 Queen's Own Buffs after the amalgamation parade.

You may be aware that Ray (Iska) Wright died in Australia last May, but since there was no

mention of it in the last issue, I thought you would wish to know. We hear from Mary from time to time, she is in good health and being well looked after over there by the family.

All the best  
Ben Lyons

*(Ben, great to hear from you. Peter)*

---

47 Oakham Drive, Highham  
Rochester, Kent, ME3 7BD

*Dear Sir*

I would be most grateful if you could help me. I am searching for a photograph of a former soldier. I know he served from the 1950's firstly with the Queen's Own, then with the Queen's Own Buffs and then the Queen's Regt. His details were : - 22775098 CPL. R. Vale.

I am of course willing to pay for any costs incurred

Yours sincerely  
GR Poole

---

Ridgeway  
6 Berkshire Road  
Henley on Thames, Oxon

*Dear Editor*

Many thanks for sending me a copy of The Journal. It was most interesting and I am surprised that I have not heard of its existence before, having been a member of the 62 Club for many years. In fact I joined the regiment as a 14 year old from an orphanage in Sevenoaks along with Bill Worsley DCM. We served together in India for five years and then both went to Kneller Hall together and then to France in 1939.

The article "A Prisoner of War in Poland" was also most interesting as I too was taken prisoner during the Dunkirk Campaign.

I look forward to the next issue and enclose my payment and subscription form.

Yours sincerely  
Ken Clarke

## FINAL WORD

Once again it is time to close the Journal for another few weeks, although work has already started on the next one. In the December issue I hope that you will see some advertisements for without them we will have to reduce down to two, albeit slightly larger, issues a year. Personally I think that would be a retrograde step at a time when we, as an association, can ill afford to start slipping back. I need your help here so please do your bit to help to keep The Journal running in it's present format and with three issues a year.

In an effort to stimulate and increase subscription further what better than to print a picture of a very pretty girl and a special one at that.

Jane Staines, pictured below, has volunteered to undertake a sponsored tandem parachute jump with the Spitfires later this summer in aid of Regimental Association Funds. Jane aged 20 works at Stonelees Golf Centre, Ramsgate and has never parachuted



before but John Ferneyhough convinced Jane that our Association was a good cause.. At the time of going to press Jane has already raised £400 herself with another £230 having been pledged by various branches. Jane has to pay for this privilege and aircraft hire does not come cheaply So now is the time to dig deep in your pockets, if Jane can risk life and limb for our association then we can surely forego the odd pint or two. Please make your cheques payable to Queen's Own Buffs General Account and send to the

sponsorship co-ordinator John Ferneyhough, 7 Keith Avenue, Ramsgate, Kent. A list of sponsors will be published in the next issue of "The Journal".

Jane will be at the Maidstone Reunion so we will be able to record our gratitude then to Jane and also to the sponsors, and I am sure there will be a great number of those!!

GOOD LUCK JANE

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### £10 REWARD



No one claimed the reward.

The answer was:

Colonel Waring pushing a certain Major Patrick Gwillam in a child's wheelbarrow which, by the way, still exists

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### STOP PRESS

#### CANTERBURY REUNION

#### UNCLAIMED RAFFLE PRIZES

At the time of going to press the winners holding the following tickets had not claimed their prizes:

White Ticket No. 391

Green Ticket No. 364

Blue Ticket No. 260

Pink Ticket 301

If you are one of the lucky winners please call Harry Crooks on 01227 273911

Until next time

The Editor



## **LOCATION OF BRANCHES**

There are Branches of the Regimental Association in:

BROMLEY

CANTERBURY

DENMARK

DOVER

HYPHE, FOLKESTONE

LONDON (BUFFS)

LONDON (RWK)

MAIDSTONE

MEDWAY

RAMSGATE

SANDWICH

SITTINGBOURNE

COLCHESTER

## **LADIES GUILDS**

CANTERBURY

RAMSGATE

## **THE FOLLOWING ARE AFFILIATED TO THE ASSOCIATION:**

70TH BATTALION THE BUFFS

6TH BATTALION QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGT OCA

20TH BATTALION THE LONDON REGIMENT

THE '62' CLUB

141ST REGT RAC (7 BUFFS)

THE 'OLD PLAYBOYS' ASSOCIATION (B SQN 141 REGT)

