

FRIENDS OF THE BUFFS

(Royal East Kent Regiment)



NEWSLETTER



Summer 2018

Welcome

Committee

President

Revd. Keith Fazzani

Vice President

Colonel. P. Bishop OBE DL

Chairman

Major P. R. White MM

Treasurer

Mr J. Clark

Secretary

Mrs B Correa

Committee Members.

Major J. Barrell OBE TD

Mr. F. Hills

Mr. C. Hewett

Mr. B. Supple

Mr. J Correa

Mr. R. Cook

For the benefit of our new readers, Friends of The Buffs was formed a few years ago and I think it is important to understand why it was thought necessary to form "Friends of The Buffs", especially as we have had such a strong Queen's Own Buffs Regimental Association. That Association, however, will sadly, close on 31st December 2019.

The Buffs, one of the oldest infantry regiments in the British Army and the only one to span two Elizabethan reigns, no longer has 'Stand Alone' regimental museum in their ancestral home city.

Following the re-design and refurbishment of the Beane Institute in Canterbury, the regiment now has just one display cabinet featuring silver relating to some of the regimental activities in the 19th century. Consequently there is now the danger that the unique history of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment), covering nearly 450 years, not just the 19th century, will fade from the public memory. That would be a very sad state of affairs.

Whereas membership of the Regimental Association is quite rightly limited, in the main, to ex members of the forebear regiments

the "Friends of The Buffs" is open to all who have an interest in preserving the name, history and traditions of The Buffs.

Following the very sad passing of Alan Marchant, a great driving force of the Friends, there has understandably been a loss of momentum mainly due to the fact the Alan's computer was password protected and bank account details and membership lists were not possible to access. That situation has now been addressed which will allow for re-generated communication systems enabling members to be kept up to date with plans and events etc.

There will be an Annual General Meeting organised this autumn and members will be advised of the date either by email or by post. At that AGM the proposed changes to the committee will be confirmed. It is proposed that we attract more younger members of the general public especially those who have a close relationship with the regiment to become involved. With the passing of our President, Lt. Colonel Cecil West OBE an approach has been made to the Reverend Keith Fazzani, the Association Chaplain, to become the new president. Keith, a very talented and experienced Buff historian, specialising in WW1 and an enthusiastic supporter, has agreed and a formal proposal will be made for his appointment at the AGM together with additional committee members

The committee wish to take this opportunity of thanking those of you who are supporting the Friends with donations and standing orders. This generosity, has allowed the Friends of The Buffs to provide three benches surrounding the Buffs statue in the Precincts of Canterbury Cathedral and also to make a grant to the band of the PWRR, all volunteers, to assist in buying uniforms. The band have been great supporters over the years and it is interesting to note that they receive no financial support from the MOD for uniforms or instruments. We now have an exhibition kit demonstrating the history of The Buffs and other equipment will allow to offer lecture services, with a relevant donation to the Friends, to be undertaken to various groups and organisations throughout the county.

With a strong base we will be in a position to offer membership of the Friends to the general public in East Kent, in particular through the considerable number of History Clubs and societies that there are here in Kent

If you have an organization or club in your local area who would welcome a visit and presentation from our lecture team then please contact me on 07522914562 or by email on friendsofthebuffs.com.

So what about the future, as you know Friends of The Buffs is not part of the organisation of the Queen's Own Buffs Regimental Association and like some of the QOBRA we intend to operate well into the future. We will continue to work closely and support, wherever we can, events organised by those branches who have chosen to carry on after 31st December 2019 but also the Regimental Association of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment who intend, eventually to take over some of our heritage events.

To that end we are intending to recruit some of the younger element of the public who may have relatives who have served in the regiment or just those who have an interest in military history. With the infusion of fresh blood, as it were, we can rest assured that the history of The Buffs will live on for many years to come.

One date for your diary, which is some time away yet, is 1st March 2022, a date that will mark the 450th anniversary of the review by Queen Elizabeth 1st at Greenwich of the Trained Bands of London from who all of us who have worn the Tudor Dragon are descended. Our committee is already considering several options to how we can celebrate such a historic milestone.

So that's it for now, you are all up to date with the situation. If you are not yet a member then please use the enclosed application form and if you can please consider making a regular



donation by Standing Order, I promise you that it will be an excellent investment in the history of the regiment.

PW

Warriors' (Buffs) Chapel

As you may know the Warriors' (Buffs) Chapel re opened after extensive refurbishment earlier this year. We are indebted to the Cathedral and in particular Heather Newton, Head of Conservation, for the remarkable transformation.

The daily Turning of the Page continues unabated with the indomitable Ex Drum Major Sammy Supple co-ordinating the Page Turners. We now have nearly 30 on the rota and this means that we will be able to continue to support this unique event way after the closure of the Regimental Association should it prove necessary.



Recently the Regimental Association were approached by Lt. Commander Frank (Sandy) Powell Royal Navy of the Submariners Association who, on 12th May 2018, were unveiling a Blue Commemorative Plaque to Lieutenant ROBERTS VC, DSC, RN at 1400 at The Kings School where he was educated. Sandy asked if it was possible for the Submariners Association to

attend the Turning of the Page ceremony on that date and that their President, Rear Admiral Niall Kilgour, be allowed to Ring the Bell of HMS Canterbury. On the day Lt. Commander Sandy Powell Rang the Bell and Rear Admiral Kilgour Turned the Page .

That must have been a first in the long history of the ceremony. See picture below.



Queen's Own Buffs Regimental Archives & Website

Following the closure of PWRR Regimental Headquarters at Howe Barracks arrangements were made for the Queen's Own Buffs archives, primarily relating to The Buffs, to be moved to the University of Kent reference library in Canterbury. The Queen's Own Buffs have paid for the cataloguing and indexing of the collection and this has now been completed.

The University have also agreed to provide a Queen's Own Buffs home page within their website together with other pages relating to the history of the forebear regiments.

Part of this project, for which we are responsible, is to digitalize in searchable format as many of the old Dragon magazines as possible together with those of the Queen's Own. Great progress is being made as time allows and a considerable number have now been uploaded onto the QOB website: [www:thequeensownbuffs.com](http://www.thequeensownbuffs.com). It will take many months to complete the project but we are getting there.

These old regimental magazines are fascinating to read and give a great insight into our past history. Apart from this they are a gold mine of information for those researching individuals or events and are proving highly successful. To date the QOB website has received 182,780 visits with an average rate of 3,500 per month. They are remarkable figures and shows the interest that there is in our regimental histories by the general public. Should you wish to search those Dragon Magazines, QO Gazettes or the current Journal the following tips may be useful: If searching for say a name that you believe should appear try just using part of it instead, so try using say 'smi' instead of 'smith'.

Past Dragon Magazines will be available on the Friends of the Buffs web site www.friendsofthebuffs-rekr.com when it goes live shortly.

Useful Internet Links

Friends of The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment)

www.friendsofthebuffs-rekr.com

The Queen's Own Buffs Association's website:

www.thequeensownbuffs.com

PWRR & Queen's Museum (Dover)

www.armymuseums.org

Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment Regt. Association

www.pwrr.co.uk

National Army Museum

www.national-army-museum.ac.uk

Imperial War Museum

www.iwm.org.uk

Union Jack Club

www.ujclub.co.uk

The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada:

qor.com

Past & Present Association The Buffs (London Branch) & the annual Tower of London Service

The London (Buffs) branch of the Queen's Own Buffs regimental association is the last remaining direct link with The Buffs as, in 1961, along with the London branch of the Queen's Own, it retained its former identity. Now, 57 years after the amalgamation, the branch continues to prosper with a full programme of meetings at the Union Jack Club and visits to sites of interest.

The highlight of the branch calendar is the annual service in the Chapel Royal in the Tower of London, a tradition which started in the 1930s. Held on the first Sunday in September, followed by lunch in the nearby Tower Hotel, the service is always well supported by many former Buffs from many parts of Kent - and wider afield.



The new Hymn board



The Book of life signed by King Frederik of Denmark, in which names of members of London Buffs who have passed on are recorded.



Above left the new Cruet Set and on the right, The Colours of 1 Buffs carried at the Battle of Punnier on December 29, 1843.



In September 2014, London Buffs Past & Present Association marked their long Association with the Chapel Royal presenting to the Chapel a new hymn board surmounted by a bronze cast Buff Dragon, designed by Peter Birkett, the talented sculptor who designed the Buffs statue. The following year the Queen's Own Buffs Regimental Association presented a cruet set, inscribed with the regimental badge for use during communion services held in the Chapel Royal and St. John's chapel in the nearby White Tower.

The cruet set alongside the 'Punnier Colours' of The Buffs and the hymn board will continue to serve as a constant

reminder to future generations of the Buffs unique connection with the chapel and the City of London.

Those former members of the branch who have passed away are remembered with their names recorded in an impressive Book of Remembrance on permanent display in the Chapel Royal.



London Buffs marching into the Tower led by Major John Barrell OBE TD, Branch President, with the two branch standards, London Buffs and 141 Regt RAC (The Buffs) with Frankie Hills Branch Chairman.

The branch is proud of its heritage and any former Buffs, or those with a link with the regiment, will be most welcome to join.

London Buffs hold regular meetings on the 3rd Saturday starting at 2 pm at the Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, London.

Our next meeting will be on 18th August followed by 17th November all are welcome, if you are not already a member of London Buffs please advise their secretary that you will be attending on 01227 634663 or by email: bettycorrea53@icloud.com.

JB

Editor's note: In the crypt of the Chapel is the tomb of Sir Thomas Moore. On top of the tomb are two wooden candlesticks engraved with the cap badge of The Buffs. It is proposed by Friends of The Buffs to replace these with a set of silver candle sticks, engraved with the regimental cap badge of course. This will depend on sufficient funds being available of course but with increased membership, donations and income from fund raising events this is not an unrealistic challenge so watch this space.

Friends of The Buffs meetings:

1. The Annual General meeting will be held on
2. To Follow Work in Progress.



One of the three benches purchased by Friends of The Buffs adjacent to the Buffs statue in the Precincts of Canterbury Cathedral



The Submariners Association at the Warriors' Chapel with 12th May 2018

Dates for the Diary 2018

Saturday 28th July:

Friends of The Buffs summer BBQ.

For details contact: friendsofthebuffs.com

Sunday 5th August

**Queen's Own Buffs Canterbury Reunion
(Buffs Sunday)**

Sunday 2nd September

London Buffs Tower of London Service

For details contact: bettycorrea53@icloud.com

Sunday 16th September

Queen's Own Buffs Maidstone Reunion

For details contact secretary@thequeensownbuffs.com

Sunday 16th December

Canterbury Branch Carol Service

Garrison Church, Military Road, Canterbury
starting 2pm.

**Thursday 27th September Friends
Annual General meeting**

**Saturday 15th December. Association
Xmas Party**

Photo Gallery



The re-opening of the Warriors' (Buffs) Chapel. Heather Newton, Head of Conservation can be seen on the left, Colonel Peter Bishop OBE DL centre left and Chris Crooks the Vesturer holding their Buff wine glasses presented to them in appreciation of their support over the years.



Pictured above, the standard bearers and wreath layers at the Act of Remembrance at the Buffs Statue in the Cathedral precincts, 11 November 2017. Standard Bearers, L to R. Duty Bugler, Sammy Supple (Canterbury Standard) , Charlie Hewitt who laid the Buffs wreath, Rick Bamford (PWRRRA Standard), David Osmond who laid the QORWK wreath, Brian Mitchell (Danish Branch Standard) and Joe Correa (London Buffs Standard.)

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of Friends of The Buffs offers several benefits as under:-

1. Priority allocation of tickets, at concessionary rates where applicable, to various events, lectures, band concerts and social, that are organised by the Friends.
2. Receipt of two Newsletters per year.
3. Priority allocation of tickets, at special rates, for Battlefield Tours of the Western Front when and where arranged.

An application form is enclosed along with the Friends' constitution.

If you require any further information please email: friendsofthebuffs.com